



Photo from USFWS

Egg: 8 Days

I'm an **egg**. I'm glued to a rock in a shallow area of a stream or river. My mom was 75 years old, and she left me here with over 1/2 million other eggs.



Photo from USFWS

Yolk-sac Larvae: 10 Days

I'm a **yolk-sac larvae**. I've just hatched out of my egg. I absorb food from a yolk sack near my belly. I am stuck among crevasses between the rocks to protect me from being eaten by predators.



Photo from Michigan Tech

Larvae: 5 months

After my yolk sac is gone, I get very hungry! I swim up out of the rocks and drift downstream from the spawning area until I find a sandy-bottom part of the river where I can feed on small invertebrates. I am now called a **larvae** and will grow rapidly over the next five months.



Photo from USFWS

Juvenile: ages 1-5 years

When I've grown 5 to 7 inches long, I'm called a **juvenile**. I remain in the river for the next five years and continue to eat more insects and snails as I grow rapidly to 20 inches long.



Sub-adult: ages 5-25 years

After five years, I'm a **sub-adult**, and I'm ready to *emigrate* into a large lake or river. I may travel hundreds of miles through large lake and river systems feeding on bottom-dwelling animals such as crayfish, freshwater mussels, and large invertebrates. Over the next twenty years I'll grow up to 45 inches long.



Photo from MNDNR

Sexually mature adult: ages 25-150 years for females, 15-100 years for males

After 15 to 24 years for males and 25 to 30 years for females, I'm an **adult**, and I'm ready to *migrate* from the big lake or river back to the same spawning area where I was born to reproduce. After I *spawn* (lay eggs if I'm a female, or fertilize eggs if I'm a male), I return to the lake or river. I will continue to spawn every 3-7 years throughout my adult life.