

## EMERALD SHINER (*Notropis atherinoides*)



*Image by Doug Watkinson*

**Other common names:** Lake shiner, icicle, pinhead, blues, buckeye.

**Identification:** Body is elongated, slender and fragile looking; strongly compressed laterally; moderately deep. Snout is bluntly pointed; mouth is moderately large (upper jaw extends back to leading edge of large eye); forward pointing and slightly upturned. Scales are large and easily shed resulting in dark blue or bluish-green patches. Fins are clear. Dorsal fin begins noticeably behind base of pelvic fins. Anal fin has 10-11 rays. Coloration: Back is light olive to bluish-green; sides are silvery with an iridescent, green or bluish-green band; underside whitish. Size: Average about 2-3 inches.

**Habitat:** This species occurs in large open lakes and pools and runs of large and medium size rivers preferring clear water and sandy bottoms. The emerald shiner is not a widely distributed fish in Vermont but is quite abundant in Lake Memphremagog and in Lake Champlain and the lower reaches of its larger tributaries.

**Bait use:** The emerald shiner is an important bait fish to Vermont anglers particularly during the ice fishing season, when it is commonly used as perch bait. Since it requires fresh, highly oxygenated water to thrive, it does not particularly hold up well in the bait bucket or holding tank for any long length of time. It is usually available from most commercial bait dealers either alive, frozen or salted.