

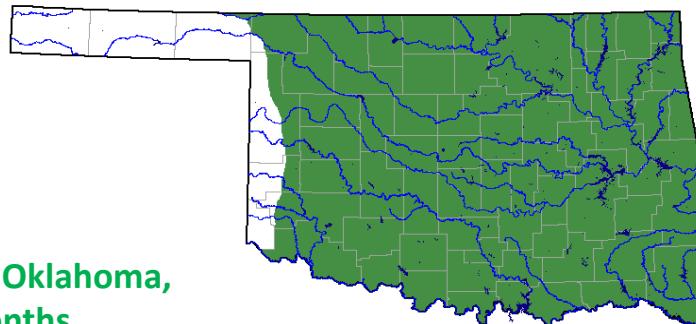
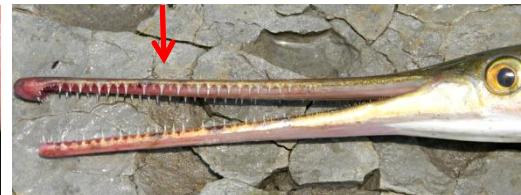
# The Gars



# Longnose Gar



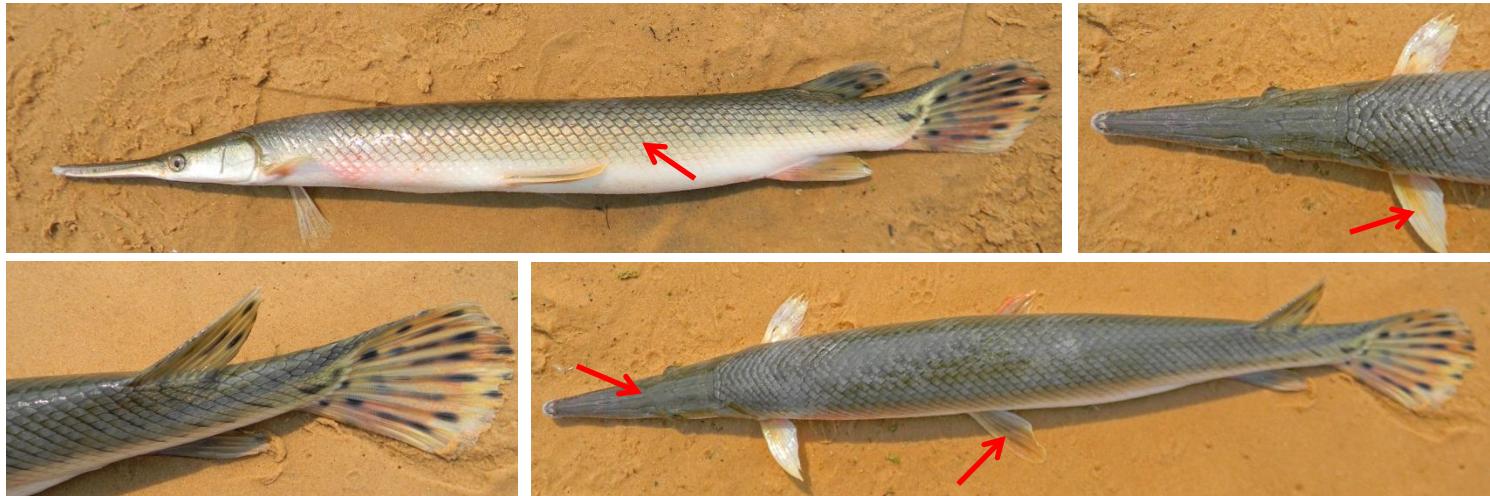
- Easily identified by their long, slender, toothy snout. Like all gars, they are covered with tough impenetrable diamond-shaped, ganoid scales.
- Fins may be well spotted with a yellow or orange tint. They may have scattered weak spots on the body and faint spots on the head.
- As ambush predators, they are often motionless for long periods of time and can blend surprisingly well with brush and branches.
- The have a primitive lung, which allows them to gulp air and survive in water with low dissolved oxygen levels.



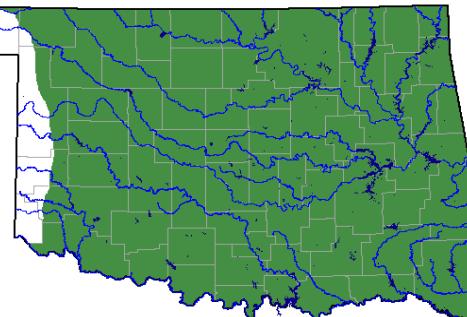
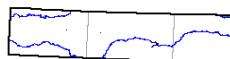
**Fish Fact:** Gar are one of the fastest growing fish in Oklahoma, growing nearly one inch per week during warm months.

Juvenile gar have a whip-like flagellum and dark lateral stripes.

# Shortnose Gar



- Shortnose gar are identified by their short, broad bill with no or very few weak spots. The paired fins and body have **no** spots.
- Like other gars, the shortnose possess a primitive lung and is often seen “gulping” air.
- Like alligator gar, shortnose gar may sometimes have two rows of teeth in their upper jaws. Rarely, shortnose from clear water may have darker body coloration and light spotting causing some anglers to call them “weed gar.” They are sometimes misidentified as young alligator gar.

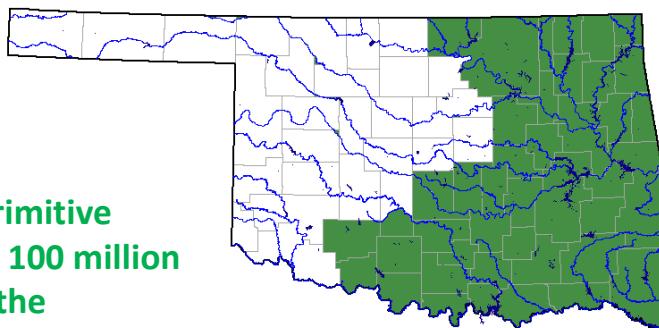


**Fish Fact:** Gar eggs are adhesive and toxic. They can sometimes be found in early summer stuck to submerged vegetation and rocks.

# Spotted Gar

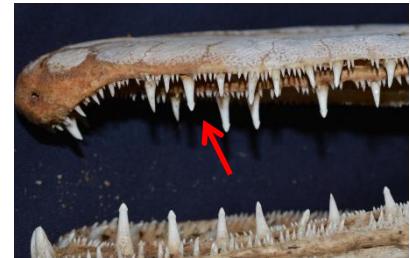


- Spotted gar are identified by a short, broad bill covered with spots.
- Fins (especially paired fins) are well spotted and are often tinted yellow or orange. Scattered spots on body and head.
- Spotted gar are often associated with vegetation and seem to prefer clearer water than other gars. Spotted gar from clear waters can develop striking coloration.
- Spotted gar often spawn in newly flooded vegetation and can sometimes be found in only a few inches of water.



**Fish Fact:** Like other gars, spotted gars are ancient, primitive fish. In fact, they date to the Cretaceous period 65 to 100 million years ago. This means that gar were swimming with the dinosaurs!

# Alligator Gar



- Alligator gar are Oklahoma's largest fish and can reach  $7 \frac{1}{2}$  feet long and nearly 200 pounds.
- They can be identified by their short broad, alligator like snout and two rows of large teeth on top jaw. Shortnose gar may also have two rows, but the teeth are smaller.
- Body unspotted and paired fins without spots.

**Fish Fact:** Alligator gar are sometimes seen as freshwater monsters or “trash fish”, but in fact eat mostly rough fish and often feed by scavenging. Their numbers are shrinking throughout much of their range and in OK, they are a species of special concern.

