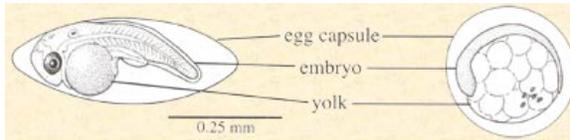


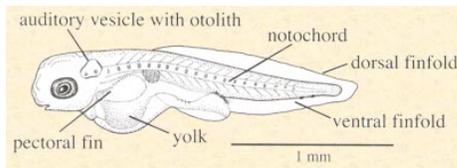
## Life Stages of Fish

### Egg



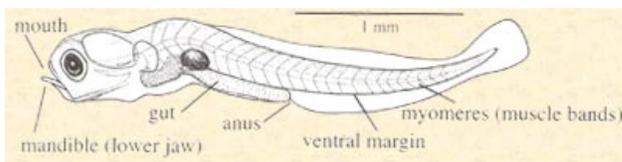
Bluegill eggs are tiny, only about 0.05 inch in diameter. They sink to the bottom of the nest where they stick to the gravel substrate. Depending on the temperature, they will hatch in 2 to 5 days. During this time, the male guards the nest from predators.

### Sac Fry



Bluegill sac fry do not look anything like adult fish. They are slightly larger than the eggs, about 0.15 inch long, and they cannot swim or eat. Instead, they remain in the bottom of the nest and survive by absorbing the yolk sac. They will remain in the nest for another 5 to 10 days during which time the male continues to guard them.

### Larval Fish



Larval bluegills still do not look anything like the adult, but they can now swim and eat. At this point, they leave the nest and are on their own.

### Juvenile Fish

Juvenile bluegills basically look like the adults – just smaller. Depending on the temperature, it may take several years before they become mature adults and able to spawn.

Illustrations from *Zooplankton of the Atlantic and Gulf Coasts (A Guide to Their Identification and Ecology)* by William S. Johnson and Dennis M. Allen.

<http://aqua-culture.blogspot.com/2007/03/stages-of-fish-development.html>