



80. BLEAK / UKELEI (*Alburnus alburnus*)

IDENTIFICATION: Bleak are slender, have a bite-sized body and a few bleak reach a length of 25 cm, most Bleak are considerably smaller. The bleak has a long (stretched out) body. Its sides are pressed. On first sight, the bleak resembles the herring. In the past, scales of bleak were used to obtain pearl essence, which was needed for productive artificial pearls. Other than that, Bleak are of no significance for fishermen.

HABITAT: The bleak inhabit still or slowly moving big waters.

FOOD: Most of the time, the bleak is found near the water surface where it feeds on plankton and insects that float on the water.

SPAWNING: Bleak spawn from April through June. They usually deposit eggs on flat, stony banks. During the spawning period, small, gritty lumps develop on the head of male Bleak, a rash characteristic of many Cyprinides. Because of their slender, bite-sized body, bleak is a favorite prey of predatory fish. Especially pike-perch and perch like feeding on them.