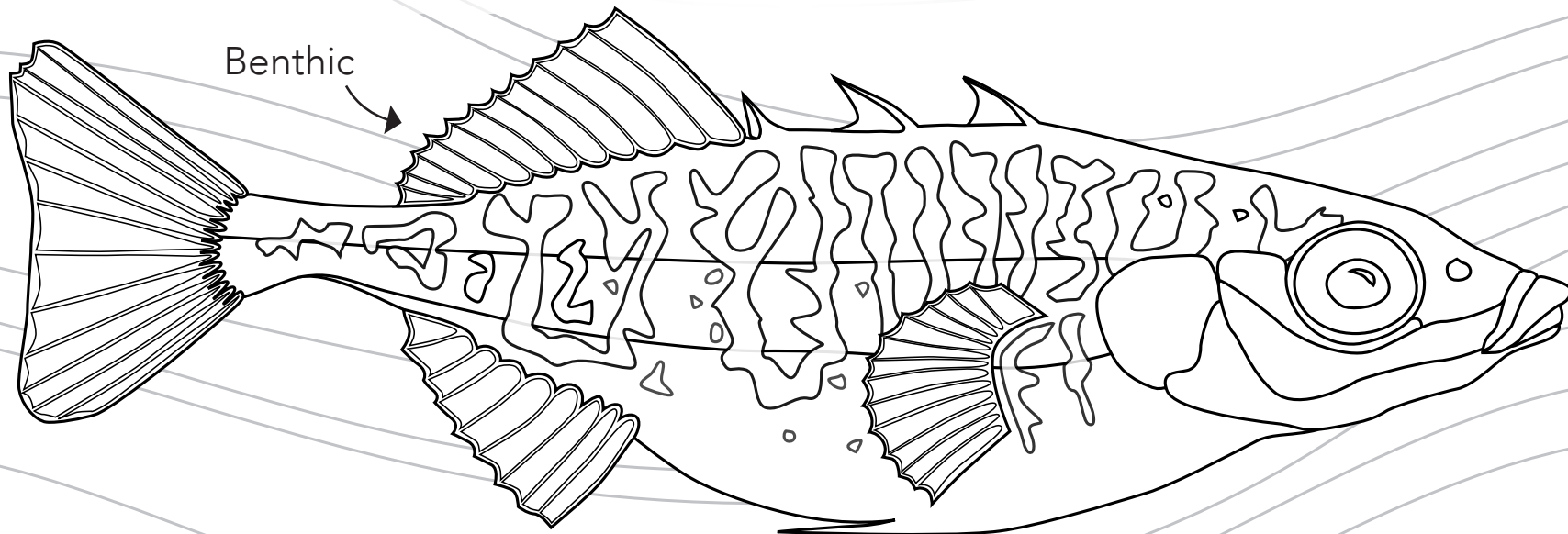


Limnetic

Sticklebacks

Benthic and **limnetic** stickleback fishes live in the same lakes, but look, act and feed very differently from one another - and so rarely interbreed. Benthic sticklebacks live on the bottoms of lakes. They are the larger of the two types, chunky and robust with dark-coloured bodies to blend in with vegetation on the lake floor. Limnetic sticklebacks live in the water column, above the lake bottom. They are smaller and more slender, with light-coloured bellies and silver sides for camouflage.

Researcher Mackenzie Kinney studies these fish. Sometimes, environmental pressures can cause closely related species (like benthic and limnetic sticklebacks) to hybridize so extensively that they collapse into a single species. Mackenzie studies whether hybridization between benthic and limnetic threespine sticklebacks produces fish that are better able to adapt to changing environments.



Benthic