

Mountain Brook Lamprey (*Ichthyomyzon greeleyi*)

Pennsylvania Threatened Fish Species

State Rank: S2 (imperiled), Global Rank: G3G4 (vulnerable to apparently secure)

Identification

This fish is a non-parasitic lamprey similar to the Ohio lamprey and it typically reaches a smaller maximum length (to 10 inches). The sucking mouth disc bears 10 large teeth with two sharp cusps situated around the top and sides of the mouth opening and a single row of smaller, single-pointed teeth beneath the mouth opening. Regular rows of generally smaller single-pointed teeth occupy the remainder of the disc. The sucking disc is narrower than the body.



Photo Credit: Gary Meszaros

Biology-Natural History

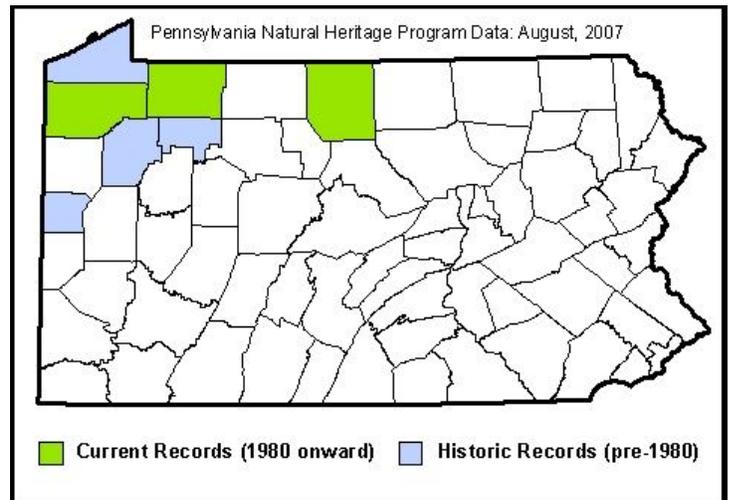
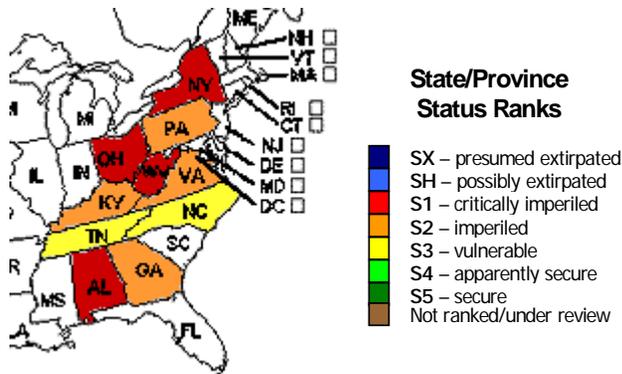
This species' spawning period partly coincides with the Ohio lamprey's. Both species have been observed using the same spawning depressions at the same time. Adults die soon after spawning; the ammocoetes, which cannot be distinguished structurally from Ohio lamprey ammocoetes, construct U-shaped burrows in which they remain until sexually mature. Food items consist of a variety of very small plants and animals carried by the current. Upon attainment of sexual maturity, the digestive system degenerates and teeth develop within the hooded mouth.

Habitat

The mountain brook lamprey inhabits some of the same waters inhabited by the Ohio lamprey, but it is usually found farther upstream.

North American State/Province Conservation Status

Map by NatureServe (August 2007)



Reasons for Being Threatened

The status of this species parallels that of the Ohio lamprey. Deterioration or destruction of the physical and chemical makeup have reduced its preferred habitat.

Management Practices

Strict watershed management is required to safeguard against the physical and chemical deterioration of the upper Allegheny River system. As the quality of this habitat goes, so go the species dependent upon it.

References:

- NatureServe. 2007. NatureServe Explorer: An online encyclopedia of life [web application]. Version 6.2. NatureServe, Arlington, Virginia. Available <http://www.natureserve.org/explorer>. (Accessed: August 21, 2007).



Fact Sheet adapted from: Felbaum, Mitchell, et al. Endangered and Threatened Species of Pennsylvania. Harrisburg, PA: Wild Resource Conservation Fund, 1995.

