

Yellow Lampmussel (*Lampsilis cariosa*)

Freshwater Mussel Species of Concern
State Rank: S2 (imperiled), Global Rank: G5 (secure)

Identification

The yellow lampmussel (*Lampsilis cariosa*) is a bright yellow, medium-size freshwater mussel that can reach lengths of up to five inches. The mussel has an ovate to elliptical shell and the valves appear inflated in cross section. The shell is thick and strong (Connecticut DEP 2003; Nedeau 2000). The yellow coloration makes it fairly easy to distinguish from other freshwater mussels in Pennsylvania, but it may be confused with the tidewater mucket (*Leptodea ochracea*) and other *Lampsilis* species. The presence of fine green rays on the outer shell of the tidewater mucket is usually a key to distinguishing it from the yellow lampmussel. The yellow lampmussel is also more ovate and is more inflated in cross section than the tidewater mucket (Strayer and Jirka 1997).



Habitat

The yellow lampmussel inhabits medium to large rivers throughout most of its range, but is known from lakes and ponds in the north. In Pennsylvania, the yellow lampmussel is found within the Susquehanna and Delaware River drainages. This species occurs in a variety of substrate types including sand, silt, cobble, and gravel (Parmalee 1998; Strayer and Jirka 1997; NatureServe 2005).

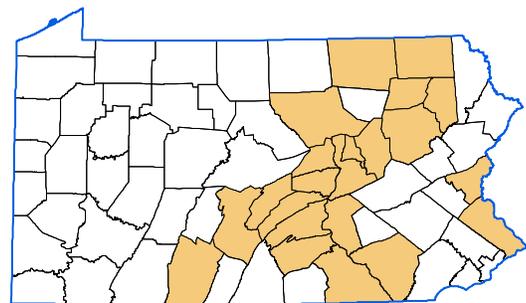
Host Fish

The only known larval hosts are the white perch and yellow perch (Wick and Huryn 2002).

Status

The Yellow Lampmussel ranges from Nova Scotia south to Georgia and west to West Virginia. The state status of the Yellow Lampmussel is vulnerable to apparently stable (S3S4) (NatureServe 2005). Though it appears to be relatively abundant in the Susquehanna River, it is less common in tributaries and other river systems in the state. More surveys are required to determine the status of this species and other freshwater mussels in Pennsylvania.

Pennsylvania Distribution by County



Pennsylvania Natural Heritage Program data 2007

North American State/Province Conservation Status

