

Eastern mudminnow (*Umbra pygmaea*)

Freshwater Fish Species of Concern

State Rank: S3 (vulnerable) Global Rank: G5 (secure)

Description

The eastern mudminnow is a small fish that grows up to 11 cm in total length. It has a long slender body cyclical in front and compressed in the rear. It has cycloid scales and one dorsal fin and no fin spines. Pelvic fins are small and abdominal. A black bar is present on the caudal fin base. A lateral line is absent. The dorsal fin origin is far anterior to anal fin origin and the caudal fin is rounded. The back and sides have 10-14 dark brown stripes with pale interspaces (natureserve.org).



Behavior

A spring spawner, the eastern mudminnow will deposit its adhesive eggs singly on aquatic plants or hollowed out nests in algae (Cooper 1983) and guard them (fishbase.org). The eastern mudminnow is able to tolerate extremely low levels of oxygen and hides by burrowing beneath debris (Cooper 1983).

Diet

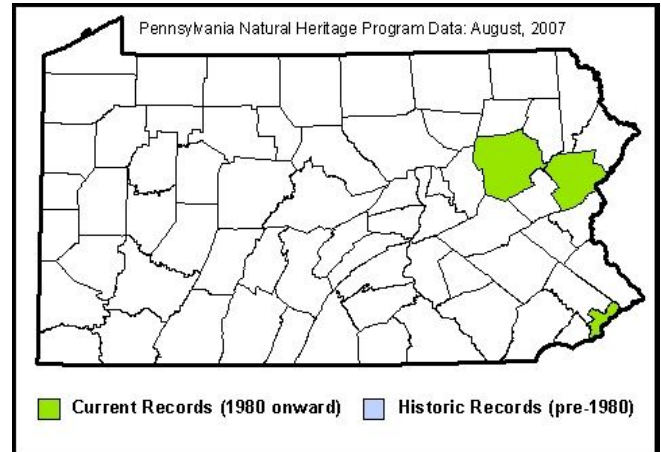
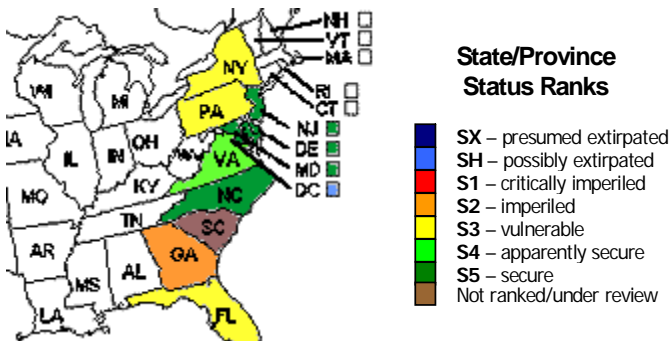
Diet consists of small aquatic and terrestrial invertebrates. The fish is known to occasionally leap from the water while feeding (Cooper 1983).

Threats and Protection Needs

The eastern mudminnow is common over most of its wide U.S. Atlantic slope range. It is globally secure (natureserve.org). In Pennsylvania the species is considered vulnerable and it is under candidate consideration by the state (naturalheritage.state.pa.us). There is little data for protection needs of this species.

North American State/Province Conservation Status

Map by NatureServe (September 2007)



Habitat

It is found in quiet, mud-bottomed, often heavily vegetated streams, sloughs, swamps, and ponds, particularly along margins, over sand, mud, and debris. It is found on the Atlantic and Gulf coasts from southeastern New York to Florida. It is common except at the extremes of its range (natureserve.org).

References



- Cooper, Edwin L. Fishes of Pennsylvania and the Northeastern United States. The Pennsylvania State University Press and University Park and London. 1983
- NatureServe. 2007. NatureServe Explorer: An online encyclopedia of life [web application]. Version 6.2. NatureServe, Arlington, Virginia. Available <http://www.natureserve.org/explorer>. (Accessed: September 4, 2007).