

Northern Madtom (*Noturus stigmosus*)

Pennsylvania Endangered Fish Species

State Rank: S2 (imperiled) Global Rank: G3 (vulnerable)

Identification

This small catfish reaches a maximum size of about four inches. The curved spines of each pectoral fin are strongly toothed on both front and hind margins. More dark mottling is evident on the body, as compared to the mountain madtom, and the middle of the tail fin is marked with a dark bar. Its adipose fin is higher than the mountain madtom's.

Biology-Natural History

Spawning occurs in the spring and in late July. Females deposit sticky egg masses beneath flat stones where there is moderate current. The male then guards the eggs and herds the young for a time following hatching.



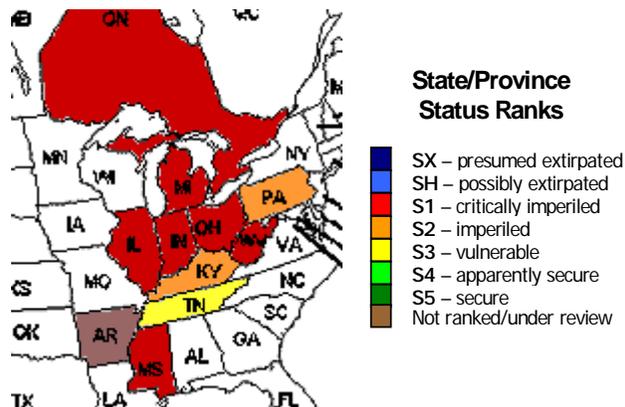
Photo Credit: Rob Criswell

Habitat

The northern madtom is found in the same habitat as the mountain madtom, but prefers a bottom of shifting sand and mud in moderate current. Swifter portions are usually avoided, as are very silted areas.

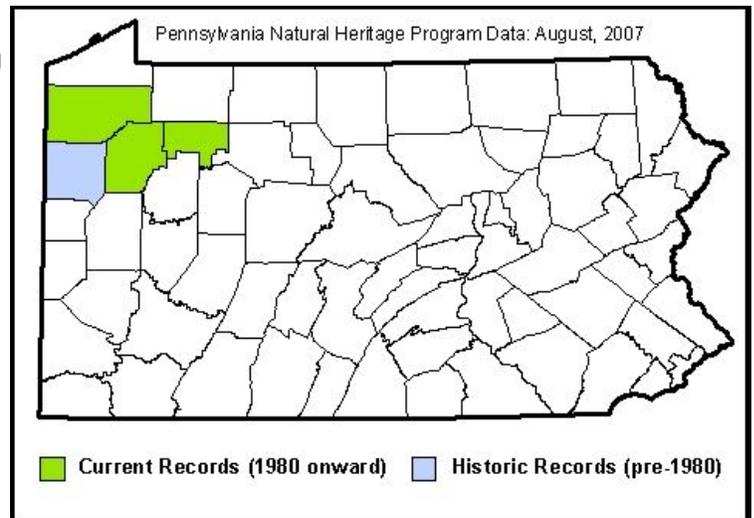
North American State/Province Conservation Status

Map by NatureServe (August 2007)



Reasons for Being Endangered

The situation with this species parallels that of the mountain madtom. It has a more restricted overall distribution than that species, and in Pennsylvania it is presently confined to French Creek.



Management Practices

Like the spotted darter and the mountain madtom, this fish, too, is dependent upon the quality of the upper Allegheny River system and is an excellent barometer of any habitat changes.

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).



Pennsylvania Natural Heritage Program

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

