Gravel Chub (*Erimystax x-punctatus*)

Pennsylvania Endangered Fish Species
State Rank: S1 (critically imperiled) Global Rank: G4 (apparently secure)

Identification

The gravel chub reaches just over three inches. The head is elongated with moderately large eyes, and a rounded snout that overhangs the mouth, the corners of which bear a small, but noticeable barbel. The silvery sides of the body are marked irregularly with darker X- or Y-shaped markings. The small anal fin has seven rays; the dorsal and pelvic fins each have eight.

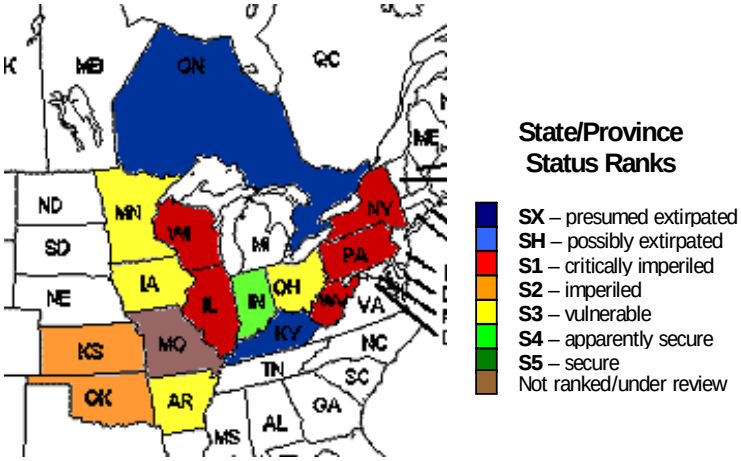
Biology-Natural History

Aside from observations concerning feeding competition with a similar *Erimystax* species, the biology of this species is unknown.

Habitat

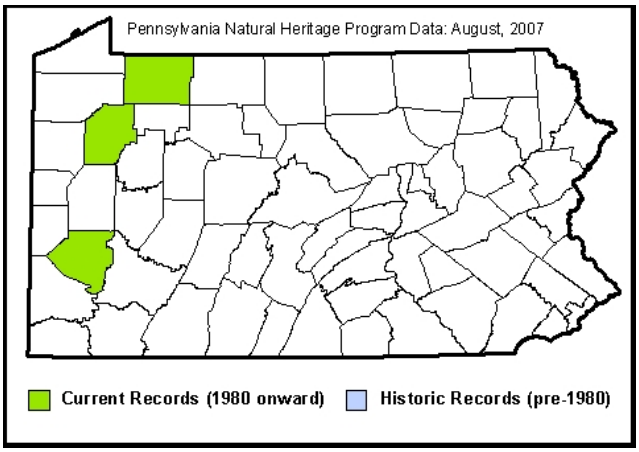
Moderately deep portions of large, clear creeks and rivers, or shallow riffles flowing over a sand-gravel-rock bottom, are preferred.

North American State/Province Conservation Status
Map by NatureServe (August 2007)



Reasons for Being Endangered

The gravel chub is known in Pennsylvania only from the upper Allegheny River and the lower end of French Creek, in glaciated terrain, where dams, attendant siltation and pollution have been less prevalent. It is an apparent hold-over from an earlier time when its required habitat was more continuous. It has today become very restricted in occurrence throughout its range.



Management Practices

Watershed management practices that prevent the physical and chemical deterioration of the once more widespread postglacial conditions required by this species are necessary to prevent its further demise. The mining and processing of glacial gravel within the watersheds where this species occurs must be carefully regulated.

Pennsylvania Natural Heritage Program

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.