

Tadpole madtom (*Noturus gyrinus*)

Freshwater Fish Pennsylvania Endangered

Global Rank: G5 (secure)

State Rank: S1 (critically imperiled)

Description

The tadpole madtom looks like a small catfish, growing to an average length of 50-85 mm. It has a stubby, rounded body that is compressed posteriorly. Its head is short and its mouth terminal with short barbels collected around it. Small eyes are near the top of the head. Its tail is broad and its fins are a dusky gold color. There is a dark line on the side of its gold-brown body (cnr.vt.edu).



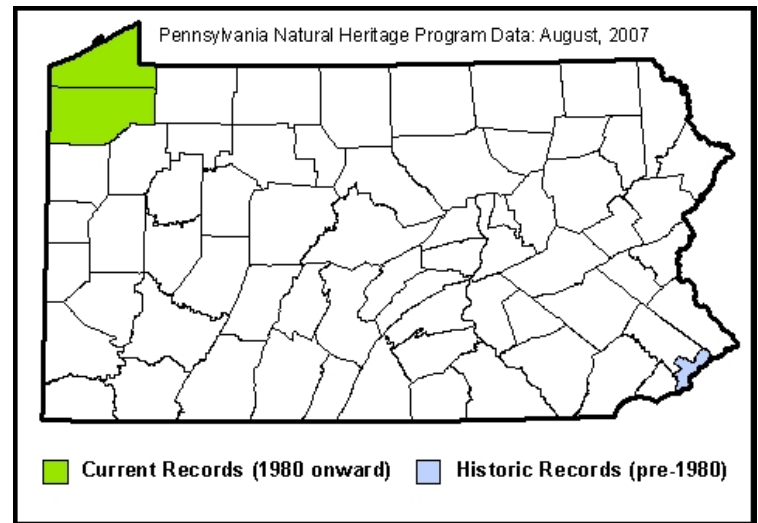
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Behavior

The tadpole madtom spawns in natural cavities or hollow objects such as tin cans or crockery. The parents guard egg masses, as well as the young. Catfish hybrids are rare, but there is evidence that hybrids between the tadpole and brindled madtoms from Lake Erie and other Ohio waters (Cooper 1983). The pectoral sting, of the barbels used for defense, of this madtom is toxic (cnr.vt.edu).

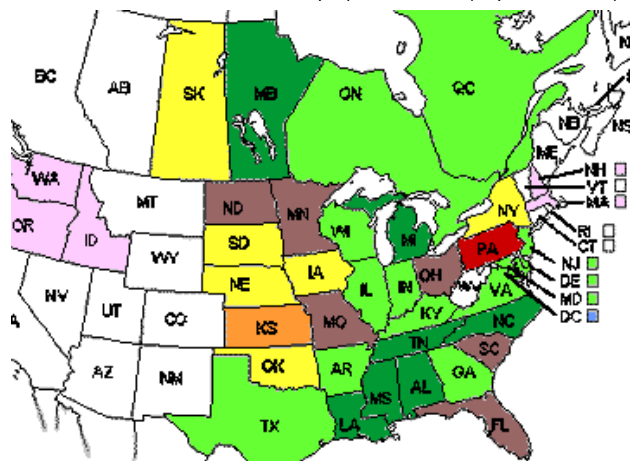
Diet

This madtom consumes a variety of food, from zooplankton and midges when young to larger items such as freshwater shrimp as it grows (Cooper 1983). It feeds at night on the bottom and among aquatic plants (natureserve.org).



North American State/Province Conservation Status

Map by NatureServe (September 2007)



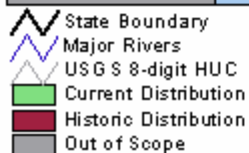
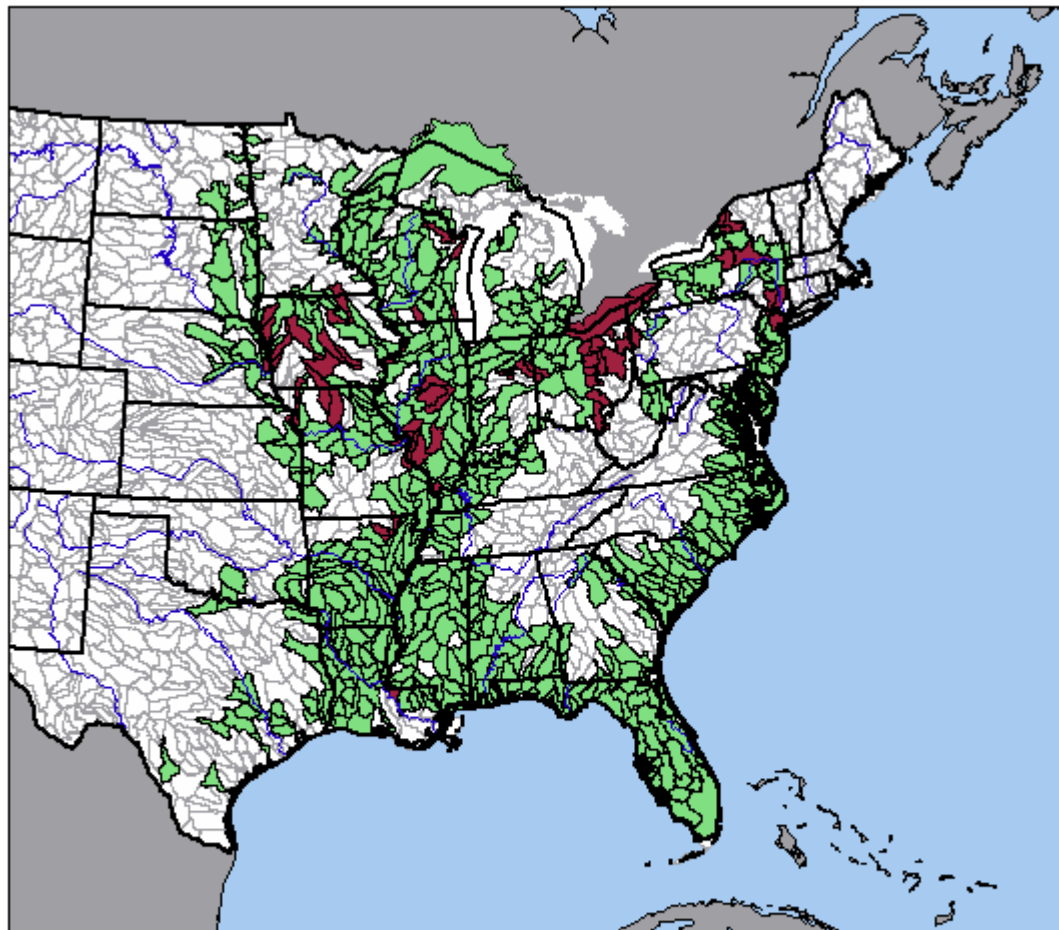
State/Province Status Ranks

- SX – presumed extirpated
- SH – possibly extirpated
- S1 – critically imperiled
- S2 – imperiled
- S3 – vulnerable
- S4 – apparently secure
- S5 – secure
- Not ranked/under review
- exotic

Threats and Protection Needs

The tadpole madtom is endangered in Pennsylvania and found only in the Ohio, Susquehanna, and Delaware drainages (Steiner 2000). According to Cooper (1983), there are many records of this species for Pennsylvania streams below the Fall Line years ago, but recent efforts have not yielded any catches. The tadpole madtom is a wide-ranging species and is globally secure. It is exotic to the Pacific Northwest as well as New

Hampshire and Massachusetts. Its population seems to be most adversely affected in Pennsylvania and there is little data available on protection needs (natureserve.org).



Noturus gyrinus
Tadpole Madtom

Map created June 2003

200 0 200 Kilometers



Habitat

This madtom species is most often found in quiet or slow running waters such as weedy, shallow bays or sloughs or streams, sometimes in great abundance. It is found throughout the eastern half of the United States and in many Atlantic drainages (Cooper 1983).

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).
- The Virtual Aquarium. Virginia Tech. <http://www.cnr.vt.edu/efish/families/tadpoletom.html>.



Pennsylvania Natural Heritage Program