

Abundance: Rare

Introduction: These slender-bodied minnows are named for their sucker-like mouth. Barbels are absent. Adults range in length from 2 to 4.5 inches. The suckermouth minnow's diet includes insects and other bottom-dwelling invertebrates. Spawning occurs throughout the summer months.

Habitat: The suckermouth minnow seems to be most abundant in streams with moderate current and turbidity. They are intolerant of intermittency and need silt free sand, gravel and cobble substrates. In Wyoming this minnow is found rarely in tributaries of the North Platte River in Goshen County, and more commonly in lower Horse Creek.

Problems:

The population trend of the suckermouth minnow in Wyoming is believed to be declining but actual abundance is undocumented. Suckermouth are considered to be widespread, abundant, and globally secure. It is considered of special concern in Alabama, threatened in Louisiana, South Dakota, New Mexico, and West Virginia and endangered in Colorado. In Wyoming, the suckermouth minnow is rare and of special concern. A variety of anthropogenic and climatic factors have led to the dewatering of some streams, impacting this minnow. The suckermouth is especially sensitive to man caused/associated sedimentation of riffle habitats.

Conservation Actions:

- Studies are needed to better understand the population genetic structure.
- A better understanding of the habitat and flow requirements of this species is needed to assess the impacts of water and land use activities.
- A better understanding of the basic biology, life history and ecology is needed.
- Monitoring protocols and sites should be identified and routinely sampled.
- Surveys are needed to provide baseline data and monitor distribution and population trends. These data may be used to identify specific threats and identify management needs and priorities.

References and Additional Reading:

- Baxter, G.T., and M.D. Stone. 1995. Fishes of Wyoming. Wyoming Game and Fish Department, Cheyenne. 290pp.
- Cross, F. B. 1967. Handbook of fishes of Kansas. Univ. Kansas Mus. of Nat. Hist. Misc. Pub. 45:1-357.
- Weitzel, D. L., 2002. Conservation and Status Assessments for the Hornyhead Chub (*Nocomis biguttatus*), Suckermouth Minnow (*Phenacobius mirabilis*), and Orangethroat Darter (*Etheostoma spectabile*): Rare Stream Fish Species of the Platte River Drainages, Wyoming. Wyoming Game and Fish Department, Cheyenne. 40pp.

Suckermouth Minnow Distribution

