



Massachusetts Division of Fisheries & Wildlife

Blacknose Dace *Rhinichthys atratulus*

State Status: **None**
Federal Status: **None**

SPECIES DESCRIPTION: The Blacknose Dace has a barbel at each corner of the mouth, and a band of tissue (frenum) connects the upper lip to the snout. It is most similar to the Longnose Dace, but can be distinguished by the relative length of the snout, the eye size, the position of the eye in relation to the mouth, and the pigment stripe on the snout. A dark stripe running around the snout, through the eyes, and along most of the mid-body separates the olive-brown back and a silvery-white belly. In breeding males, the pectoral, pelvic, and anal fins are orange. Blacknose Dace usually reach a length of only 3 inches, but may grow to 4 inches. They feed on a wide variety of aquatic invertebrates and terrestrial insects. Aquatic fly larvae are a favored prey. Blacknose Dace may live for three to possibly four years.

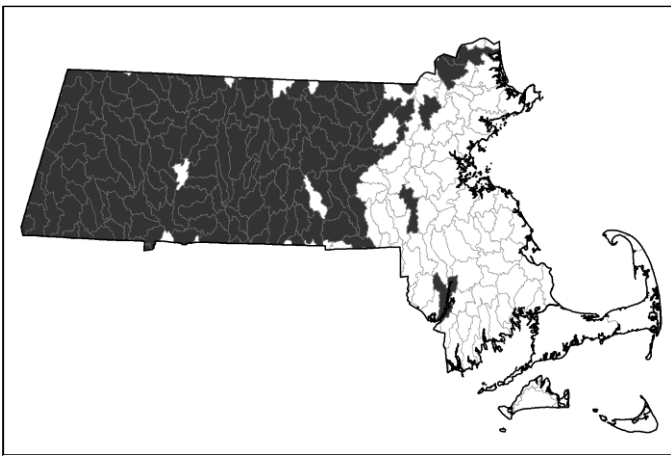
River, and in four streams in the Concord-Assabet River Drainage. The species is notably absent from all other Massachusetts coastal drainages.

HABITAT DESCRIPTION: This species appears to do best in small lotic habitats.

THREATS: Water pollution and sediment deposition in spawning areas are possible threats to this species.

REFERENCE:

This species description was adapted, with permission, from: Karsten E. Hartel, David B. Halliwell, and Alan E. Launer. 2002. *Inland Fishes of Massachusetts*. Massachusetts Audubon Society, Lincoln, Massachusetts.



Data from DFW Fisheries Surveys and Harvard Museum of Comparative Zoology

DISTRIBUTION AND ABUNDANCE: The Blacknose Dace can be found in almost every hill stream in central and western Massachusetts and is by far the most common stream minnow, occurring from the Hudson to the Blackstone drainages and north through western portions of the Merrimack River Drainage. In the eastern portion of the state, Blacknose Dace are now found only in five streams tributary to the Merrimack

Updated 2015

A Species of Greatest Conservation Need in the Massachusetts State Wildlife Action Plan

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