



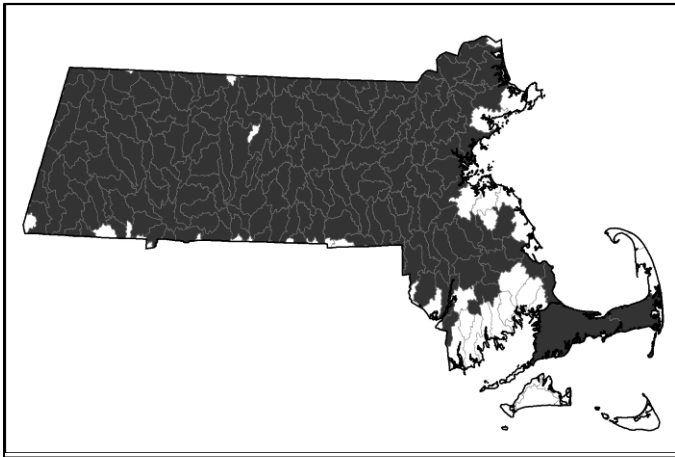
Massachusetts Division of Fisheries & Wildlife

White Sucker *Catostomus commersoni*

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

SPECIES DESCRIPTION: The White Sucker is similar in appearance to the Longnose Sucker except that its snout is rounded and barely projects beyond the upper lip when viewed from below. White Suckers have fewer than 75 scales in a lateral series and fewer than 11 scales above the lateral line. Three or more irregular lateral blotches are usually present in juveniles and some adults. Large specimens may reach lengths of 28 to 30 inches, but most individuals are less than 2 feet long. Spawning takes place in mid-April to May in Massachusetts, when adults move upstream into tributaries or into shoal areas if tributaries are not available. Young-of-the-year grow quickly and may reach 4.5 inches in length by the end of their first summer. Adults live up to 10 years. Food is mainly benthic invertebrates and fish eggs, but larval midges make up a portion of the diet.

DISTRIBUTION AND ABUNDANCE: In Massachusetts, White Suckers are found in virtually every drainage with the exception of Martha's Vineyard, Nantucket, and several of the smaller mainland coastal streams. This species is abundant in many locations.



Data from DFW Fisheries Surveys and Harvard Museum of Comparative Zoology

HABITAT DESCRIPTION:

White Suckers live in a wide variety of habitats in Massachusetts. They are most often found in ponds, lakes, and rivers, especially if there are tributaries with gravel runs in which to spawn.

THREATS: Water pollution, siltation and impassible constructions such as dams or poor culvert designs are potential 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.

Updated 2015

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

Massachusetts Division of Fisheries & Wildlife

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