

River Redhorse



Features: The River Redhorse (*Moxostoma carinatum*) is a thick-bodied sucker with a large, flat-topped head and a prominent snout. The red tail fin helps distinguish it from some other redhorses, but it is a notoriously difficult species to identify in the field, and consequently its distribution and abundance are not well documented. It prefers fast-flowing, clear rivers where it feeds on a wide variety of foods, including molluscs, using specially adapted teeth to crush the shells. Individuals can live to about 30 years old and attain a size of 80 cm and over 10 kilograms. In May and June, adults

migrate to spawning areas which are in fine gravel sections of fast-flowing, shallow streams.

Photo: Jann Atkinson, Jacques Whitford Environmental

Status: Special Concern Provincially and Nationally

Range: The River Redhorse lives in scattered locations through eastern North America. In Canada, it occurs in Quebec and Ontario where it has been found in Lake Ontario, Trent and Grand Rivers, and the Ottawa, Mississippi, and Madawaska Rivers in eastern Ontario. It has been reported historically from the Ausable River. [Range Maps](#)

Threats: The River Redhorse is susceptible to siltation and turbidity which can result from farming and urban development. Dams are a threat as they can prevent migrating fish from reaching traditional breeding areas.

Protection: The species has the general protection given by habitat sections of the *Fisheries Act*. There is a River Redhorse sanctuary on the Mississippi River to protect breeding fish.

Text Sources: [Parker 1987](#)

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SOURCE: (http://www.rom.on.ca/ontario/risk.php?doc_type=fact&id=80&lang=en)

PROGRAM LINKAGES

The project will directly complement existing stewardship activities at the RVCA and the Ontario Stewardship Council by helping to direct landowner stewardship activities to fish habitat SAR sites. It will also help local community groups and clubs to identify opportunities for conservation/restoration of fish habitat for species at risk in their local rivers and streams.

The information from the project could be incorporated into the Stewardship Tracking System and represents a significant opportunity to increase positive communication about species at risk and their habitat to landowners and practitioners in eastern Ontario.

The project will have lasting and long-term benefits for the recovery of several eastern Ontario fish Species at Risk. In the short term, the three target species noted above will benefit from the habitat suitability modelling and subsequent field confirmation of their critical habitat. Over the medium to long term, the three species will benefit from site specific habitat restoration delivered by various stewardship partners in eastern Ontario (consistent with recovery plans).