

# Yellow Lampmussel

*Lampsilis cariosa*

|   |   |  |
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| <b>STATUS</b>   | Special Concern  | Not Listed    |
| Special Concern  | Threatened     | Not Listed  |



## Species Description

The Yellow Lampmussel is an oval bivalve mollusc that reaches lengths of 110 mm, but is generally closer to 75 mm. It has a bright yellow to reddish-brown tinge to the outer surface of its glossy shell, and iridescent white to pink on the inside. Several fine, radiating lines circle the long slope of the outer shell. The soft living parts (mantle) are visible between the shell valves.

Generally occurs in rivers east of Appalachian Mountains; in Canada it is only found in the Sydney and Saint John watersheds of NS and NB.



## Habitat

Found in large, fast flowing, alkaline rivers, with sand and gravel bottoms. In Sydney River, however, it also occurs in a lake with vegetated, wave-washed shorelines, and in a dammed reservoir. Water depths range from 0.5 - 6.0 m, and it prefers sandy substrate.



Yellow Lampmussels are found in the riverbed of the Sydney River, Cape Breton, and of the lower Saint John River and its tributaries in New Brunswick.

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## Interesting Points

- They are an integral part of the river ecosystems where they occur, playing an important role in nutrient cycling, and serving as a food source for other animals.
- The dark rings that form around their shell are added one per year, like trees.
- They increase the clarity and quality of the waters in which they live by filtering out algae and bacteria.
- Adults have a unique modified "lure" that looks like a little fish, which they dangle out to attract potential fish hosts. When one comes nearby, they spew out little parasitic larvae that attach to the fish's gills.

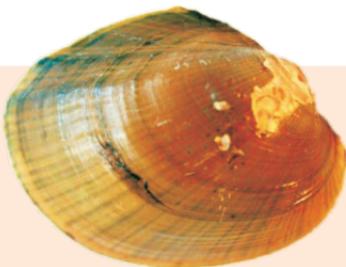


## Similar Species

Twelve mussel species occur in Atlantic Canada. This includes two other Lampmussel species (Eastern and Delicate).

### Tidewater Mucket:

Smaller, lighter yellow and more delicate.



Tidewater Mucket

## Threats to Survival

- Agricultural run-off and sewage causing sedimentation and eutrophication, as well as riparian development threaten some parts of the Saint John watershed.
- The population in the Sydney River is large and apparently stable, but since it is isolated and only found in a small geographic area, it is extremely vulnerable to pollution and habitat destruction at a local level.



## How You Can Help

Support habitat restoration projects, and pollution reduction programs. Limit your use of chemicals at home and at work, and do your best to keep our freshwaters healthy and clean.



## Contacts, Information, Sighting Reports & Stewardship Opportunities

**Contact:** DFO Species at Risk 1-866-891-0771

**Info:** [www.sararegistry.gc.ca](http://www.sararegistry.gc.ca)

**Sighting Reports:** 1-866-727-3447, or [www.speciesatrisk.ca/sightings](http://www.speciesatrisk.ca/sightings)