

BLACKNOSE SHINER (*Notropis heterolepis*)

Description

The blacknose shiner is a silvery or brassy minnow and has a lateral band that extends forward through the eye and around the snout but does not touch the chin. The lateral band is a row of crescent-shaped marks. The blacknose shiner reaches a length of about 2.5 inches (63.5 mm). Eats mainly various small invertebrates, and some plant material; probably feeds mainly on bottom or in beds of aquatic vegetation.

Distribution

The blacknose shiner, a relict population from cooler glacial times was once believed to be one of the most abundant species in eastern South Dakota and Nebraska. It has experienced a severe population decline, and has been collected in only two locations within the past twenty years. The most records are from Holt Creek, a tributary of the Keya Paha River. The other recent collection is from the Niobrara River east of Box Butte Reservoir

Habitat

The habitat of the blacknose shiner is not completely known. Habitat is generally shallow, weedy glacial lakes or bays or clear low gradient prairie streams with bottoms of sand, gravel, marl, muck, mud, or peat. In Nebraska they are found in clear, cool streams often associated with aquatic vegetation such as Potamogeton, Chara, and various forms of algae. This species is extremely intolerant of continuously turbid water.

Status

Global: G4-Apparently Secure. Federally not listed. State Endangered. Nebraska: S1-Critically Imperiled. This minnow is declining rapidly due to decreased water quality such as depleted oxygen, increased siltation, and increased runoff containing chemicals and livestock waste. Decline in south is due to increased turbidity, siltation of stream bottoms, and resulting disappearance of aquatic vegetation. Possible land disturbance (clearing, logging, overgrazing) and subsequent siltation and loss of vegetated backwaters as causes for the decline in the Ozarks of Missouri.

Management

Proper grazing management, stream bank erosion control, and careful management of pesticide and nutrient application will improve and maintain water quality and, therefore, habitat quality of the stream