

Freshwater Mussels of the Lower Farmington River

Mussel Type:	Status	Habitat		Fish Required To Reproduce	Fish Status	Needs For Continued Presence of Freshwater Mussel
		Type	Locations			
1. Dwarf Wedgemussel	Federally endangered (the only one so designated in New England)	Stable substrates in slow or moderate currents	Three rivers in CT, incl. Farmington River in Avon and Farmington	Highly host specific; primarily tessellated darter. Slimy sculpin, Atlantic salmon, striped bass	Darters common in Eightmile R, but short lived and don't travel far.	Largest populations are in Connecticut R. watershed. Water pollution including sediments and chemicals from agriculture and developments likely contributed to decline. Relatively short life span, estimated less than 12 years.
2. Brook Floater	State endangered: CT, MA, and NH. May be extinct in RI.	Stable substrates, small rivers & streams, cool water	Isolated and fragmented in CT River watershed.	Blacknose and longnose dace, slimy sculpin, fallfish	Slimy sculpin require cold water. Dace common in Eightmile R.	Rare due to pollution, dams and introduced species. May be recently extirpated in Eightmile River in CT. No evidence of recent offspring in West Branch Farmington River.
3. Yellow Lampmussel	Endangered MA, threatened ME. Special concern CT (may change to endangered).	Shallow sandbars. Rivers and lakes.	Mainstream Connecticut River: Windsor to 50 miles N.	White perch, yellow perch. Possibly striped bass and banded killifish.	Yellow perch found at several % of fish population in Eightmile.	Only three live animals seen in CT. Still found in Connecticut River upstream of Springfield, MA but need to address combined sewer overflows and other runoff.
4. Eastern Pearlshell	Special concern in CT. Endangered in RI. Threatened in VT.	Rivers that support trout or salmon	Widespread in New England. Most common in CT in the north & NW	Atlantic salmon, brook trout, brown trout, rainbow trout	Salmon are a few % of Eightmile fish population. Trout similar.	Long lived - can exceed 100 years. Best population areas include Farmington River. Need to maintain coldwater habitats, and avoid acidity and sedimentation.
5. Tidewater Mucket	Threatened in CT (may change to special concern) and ME. Special concern in MA.	Medium to large rivers and coastal ponds	Two tributaries in Conn. River in CT, incl. lower Farmington R.	White perch, banded killifish	Neither was abundant in Eightmile R. surveys (2004)	Rare mussel in Connecticut River watershed. Range possibly expanding due to river restoration and recovery of anadromous fish runs. Address combined sewer overflows in MA.
6. Eastern Pondmussel	State special concern: CT, MA, NH	Variety, incl. coastal ponds, rivers, streams	Three large population areas in CT, incl. lower Farmington R.	Unknown		Few remaining populations are healthy and stable. Environmental pollution and habitat degradation thought to be causing decline.

7. Creeper	State special concern: MA, ME	Sand and gravel in rivers and streams	Widely distributed; 21 major Conn. River tributaries	Many: Includes creek chub, dace, shiner, fallfish, slimy sculpin	Fallfish was dominant fish in Eightmile R. surveys.	Rarely abundant. Farmington River watershed surveys from 2005 to 2007 identified less than 20 living. Most likely supported by diverse fish assemblages.
8. Eastern Lampmussel	State special concern: ME. Concern: RI	Streams, rivers, ponds, lakes	Common in Connecticut River watershed	Warm water species incl. yellow perch, pumpkinseed sunfish	Pumpkinseed was several percent in Eightmile R.	Widespread and abundant in Connecticut, more tolerant of habitat degradation and pollution. Considered healthy and stable.
9. Triangle Floater	State special concern: MA	Rivers, streams, variety of substrates	Widespread in Conn. River watershed	Common shiner, blacknose dace, longnose dace, fallfish	Common shiner was one of top 5 in Eightmile R.	Less sensitive to pollution and habitat disturbance than brook floater and dwarf wedgemussel.
10. Alewife Floater		Rivers & lakes with anadromous fish	Most major watersheds in CT, incl. Conn. River	Alewife, American shad, blueback herring	None was abundant in Eightmile R. surveys (2004)	Dams may have caused extirpation in some locales. Adequate fish passage facilities required at dams to enable anadromous fish migration
11. Eastern Elliptio		All types of substrates, variety of habitats	Found across the state	Many, incl. white perch, alewife, brook trout, American eel	American eel was one of top 5 in Eightmile River surveys.	Nearly always the most abundant and widespread freshwater mussel. Can withstand many forms of disturbance and pollution.
12. Eastern Floater		Wide variety of habitats. Likes lakes and ponds.	Found across the state	Warm water species incl. white sucker, pumpkin- seed sunfish	White sucker was one of top 5 in Eightmile River surveys.	Can thrive in deep silt and mud in lakes and ponds; introduced into manmade ponds. Tolerates warm water, low oxygen.

Notes: The Farmington River supports the highest diversity of mussels in the Connecticut River watershed. All mussels listed above were found in some part of Farmington River except Yellow Lampmussel.

Sources: Connecticut's Endangered, Threatened and Special Concern Species, CT Department of Environmental Protection, 2004
Freshwater mussels and the Connecticut River Watershed, Ethan Nedeau, 2008
Field Guide to the Freshwater Mussels of Connecticut, Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection
Initial Biological and Physical Attribute Survey of the Eightmile River, Diana Walden and Dr. Piotr Parasiewicz
Farmington River Watershed Association, Fall 2005, findings of Ethan Nedeau
Ethan Nedeau, Creeper Fact Sheet, December 2007