

Pacific lamprey (*Entosphenus tridentatus*)



OREGON
CONSERVATION



PACIFIC LAMPREY is culturally significant to several Native American tribes that harvest them for use in ceremonies and for food, medicine, and other purposes.

Adult Pacific lamprey live in the ocean and return to freshwater to spawn and then die, completing their lifecycle. Once hatched, the larvae drift to calmer waters and burrow into soft stream bottom sediment, feeding on algae and micro-organisms for several years. Emerging juveniles migrate to the ocean where they are parasitic feeders of fishes and marine mammals. There is no evidence Pacific lamprey negatively affect the abundance of these host species.

Size: about 33 inches long.

Weight: over 1 pound.

Lifespan: up to 13 years.

Diet: Larvae filter-feed on algae and micro-organisms; juveniles are parasitic feeders of fishes and marine mammals. Adults do not feed.

Habitat: Larval lamprey burrow into soft sediments of slow-moving freshwater streams that lead to the ocean. Juveniles can feed in the ocean at depths of 5,000 feet but more commonly occur between the surface and 1,650 feet.

Limiting factors and threats:

- Artificial barriers (dams, culverts, and fish screens) to migration routes.
- Water quality and quantity, and land use changes.
- Degraded habitat.
- Predation.
- Climate change.
- Poor ocean conditions.

Conservation actions:

- Provide education and outreach to natural resource managers, practitioners, and Oregonians.
- Provide passage and screening at artificial obstructions and water diversions.
- Protect and restore habitat.
- Conserve water.
- Prohibited commercial harvest.
- Limited non-tribal freshwater harvest.

Conservation plans:

- [The *Pacific Lamprey Conservation Initiative*](#)
- [ODFW's *Conservation Plan for Lampreys in Oregon*](#)
- [The *Oregon Conservation Strategy*](#)



■ Current distribution based on observation
■ Historical distribution based on observation

