

## REDISCOVERY OF A PRESUMED EXTINCT RIVER MUSSEL, *DYSNOMIA SULCATA* (UNIONIDAE)

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Several commercial mussel boats were sighted on the Cumberland River in July 1976. A visit was made to the area on September 1, 1976, to determine the species of mussels being taken commercially. Among the species found were several specimens of one that had been presumed extinct (Stansbery, 1970) or reduced to a single river system (Stansbery, 1971). The species was later taken live near Cumberland River at mile 296.8, the same general area in which the mussel boats had been working. This species is believed to be confined to this portion of the Cumberland River in Tennessee.

Lea (1829) described the species as "Shell sub-elliptical, inequilateral, ventricose, slightly marginate; valves thick; beaks nearly terminal; cardinal and lateral teeth large, and double in both valves; nacre purple." The type locality was listed by Lea as Ohio in his plate 8, fig. 12.

*Dysnomia sulcata* (Lea, 1829) was reported to exist in the Cumberland River by Wilson and Clark (1914), who commented on its distribution: "Although this species seems to be pretty well distributed along a considerable stretch of river, we obtained only occasional examples here and there along the shore . . . It can probably be procured in large numbers during low water."

"It is common enough to be pretty well known to the clammers, who call it 'peewee' on account of its small size, or 'cat's-claw' because of the peculiar clawlike structure on the marsupial expansion of the female."

Ortmann (1925) provided good locality records for *D. sulcata*. However, he considered the species an "immigrant" in both the Cumberland and Tennessee Rivers, its principal distribution centered clearly in the Ohio and Wabash Rivers.

Neal and Allen (1964) reported finding only one specimen during their study of the mussels of

the upper Cumberland River. This specimen was found at Neeleys Ford near Burkesville, Kentucky.

Stansbery (1970) stated that "The big river *D. s. sulcata* form having a purple nacre may be extinct, but the white-nacred *D. s. perobliquus* is still occasionally found in streams tributary to western Lake Erie or Lake St. Clair." However, Stansbery (1971) stated that *D. sulcata* was reduced to a single river system, the Green River in Kentucky.

Lack of recent locality records for this species may result from limited amount of collecting being done in big rivers, especially the Cumberland River. The last comprehensive study of the middle and lower Cumberland River was by Wilson and Clark (1914).

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