

MORE FISHES

River Redhorse (*Moxostoma carinatum*)

The River Redhorse is a large (up to 75 cm), thick-bodied sucker with a prominent, slightly overhung snout and red tail. This species inhabits fast-flowing, clear rivers with rocky pools and runs. River Redhorse populations are scattered throughout Ontario and Quebec and are geographically isolated from U.S. populations. The River Redhorse was historically found in the Ausable River but has not been found in over 70 years.

SPECIAL CONCERN



Greenside Darter (*Etheostoma blennioides*)

The Greenside Darter is a small (up to 11 cm), olive-green member of the perch family. This species is identifiable by the S-B green V- or W-shaped marks on its side. The Greenside Darter is a bottom dweller and is usually found in clear, fast-flowing, gravelly riffle areas of streams and rivers. In Canada, this species is limited to southwestern Ontario and populations, including those in the Ausable River, appear to be stable.

SPECIAL CONCERN



Bigmouth Buffalo (*Ictalobus cyprinellus*)

The Bigmouth Buffalo is a large (up to 1 m) member of the sucker family that resembles a common carp. This species is olive-brown to blue-grey in colour and it favours river habitat that is slow flowing, warm, muddy and highly enriched. The range of the Bigmouth Buffalo appears to be expanding in southern Ontario and it was found for the first time in the Ausable River in 2002.

SPECIAL CONCERN



Fish Illustrations: J. Joseph A. Tomelleri, MTOCC - New York State Department of Environmental Conservation



Photo: Department of Fisheries and Oceans

SO WHAT IS BEING DONE...

In the summer of 2002, the Ausable River Recovery Team was formed to oversee the continued survival of aquatic species at risk in the Ausable River. Instead of working on recovery plans for each species at risk in the Ausable River, it was decided that an ecosystem approach to recovery would be more effective.

Ecosystem recovery strategies assess the current status of an ecosystem and determine ways to improve the status of the species at risk within the ecosystem. The goal of the recovery strategy is to sustain and enhance the natural aquatic communities of the Ausable River. Currently, background information for the strategy is being assembled and important components of the strategy will include developing partnerships, stewardship activities and increased awareness regarding the species at risk in the river. Once a successful recovery strategy has been prepared and approved, it will be implemented through a variety of ways such as stewardship activities, habitat protection and restoration, monitoring, research and public information.

AUSABLE RIVER RECOVERY PARTNERS

National Water Research Institute of Environment Canada, University of Guelph, University of Windsor, Lakehead University, Royal Ontario Museum, Department of Fisheries and Oceans, Middlesex Stewardship Committee, Huron Stewardship Council, Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources, Natural Heritage Information Centre, Pinery Provincial Park, Ontario Ministry of the Environment, Ian Carmichael and the Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority.



Photo: Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority

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SPECIES AT RISK IN THE AUSABLE RIVER

There's more than meets the eye in the Ausable River. It casually winds through some of Canada's best farmland and was the focal point of many towns and villages during settlement. If you look closely, you'll discover a highly diverse aquatic community that has historically supported over 75 fish species, 24 species of freshwater mussels and over 10 reptile species. This variety of aquatic life makes the Ausable River one of the richest watersheds of its size in Canada. Several of the species found in the Ausable River have been listed as special concern, threatened or endangered at the provincial, national and/or global levels. Protecting and improving the river will help to ensure the long-term survival of all aquatic species, especially those that are at risk.



Photo: Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority

WHAT IS A SPECIES AT RISK?

A species at risk is one that is in danger of disappearing from Canada. Typically, these species are particularly sensitive to changes in the environment. All aquatic species are important to the proper functioning of a river ecosystem and if one disappears, it is a warning sign. Many of the species at risk in the Ausable River require a healthy environment such as clean water and adequate habitat to survive.

The Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada (COSEWIC) reviews the status of species at the national level. Each species that is reviewed is assigned a conservation status (listed below).



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| Extinct | - a species that no longer exists |
| Extirpated | - a species that no longer exists in the wild in Canada, but still occurs elsewhere |
| Endangered | - a species facing extinction or extirpation in Canada |
| Threatened | - a species that is likely to become endangered if limiting factors are not reversed |
| Special Concern | - a species that is particularly sensitive to human activities or natural events |
| Not at Risk | - a species that has been evaluated and found to be not at risk |
| Data Deficient | - a species for which there is insufficient scientific information to support status designation |

SPECIES AT RISK IN THE AUSABLE RIVER

FISHES

There are 10 fish species at risk in the Ausable River. The following are the 10 species at risk in the Ausable River.

Golden Trout (Salvelinus fontinalis) is a species of fish in the family Salmonidae. It is a member of the genus Salvelinus and is native to the mountains of the western United States and Canada. It is a popular sport fish and is also used for food.



Brook Trout (Salvelinus fontinalis) is a species of fish in the family Salmonidae. It is a member of the genus Salvelinus and is native to the mountains of the western United States and Canada. It is a popular sport fish and is also used for food.



Arctic Char (Salvelinus arcticus) is a species of fish in the family Salmonidae. It is a member of the genus Salvelinus and is native to the mountains of the western United States and Canada. It is a popular sport fish and is also used for food.



Whitefish (Coregonus artedii) is a species of fish in the family Coregonidae. It is a member of the genus Coregonus and is native to the mountains of the western United States and Canada. It is a popular sport fish and is also used for food.



REPTILES

There are 3 reptile species at risk in the Ausable River. The following are the 3 species at risk in the Ausable River.



Hellbender (Cryptobranchus alleganiensis) is a species of amphibian in the family Cryptobranchidae. It is a member of the genus Cryptobranchus and is native to the mountains of the western United States and Canada. It is a popular sport fish and is also used for food.



Spotted Salamander (Desmognathus fuscescens) is a species of amphibian in the family Desmognathidae. It is a member of the genus Desmognathus and is native to the mountains of the western United States and Canada. It is a popular sport fish and is also used for food.



Common Frog (Rana temporaria) is a species of amphibian in the family Ranidae. It is a member of the genus Rana and is native to the mountains of the western United States and Canada. It is a popular sport fish and is also used for food.

MUSSELS

There are 3 mussel species at risk in the Ausable River. The following are the 3 species at risk in the Ausable River.



Common Mussel (Mytilus edulis) is a species of bivalve in the family Mytilidae. It is a member of the genus Mytilus and is native to the mountains of the western United States and Canada. It is a popular sport fish and is also used for food.



White Mussel (Mytilus edulis) is a species of bivalve in the family Mytilidae. It is a member of the genus Mytilus and is native to the mountains of the western United States and Canada. It is a popular sport fish and is also used for food.



Black Mussel (Mytilus edulis) is a species of bivalve in the family Mytilidae. It is a member of the genus Mytilus and is native to the mountains of the western United States and Canada. It is a popular sport fish and is also used for food.