

Pugnose Minnow

The Pennsylvania Fish & Boat Commission has identified the first known occurrence of the pugnose minnow in Commonwealth waters. This adds a new species to the list of fish found here. As part of a water quality study, Commission Fisheries Biologist Rick Spear and PA Dept. of Environmental Protection Water Pollution Biologists Ray Hasse and Joe Brancato conducted a fisheries survey September 23, 2000, on Cussewago Creek, Crawford County, in the Allegheny River Watershed. They collected 19 fish species, including two minnows captured by Spear that he'd never seen before.

"I knew that I had something different. And I knew what I thought it might be, but I couldn't be certain until we were able to take it back to the lab. What I didn't know at the time was that this minnow species had never been found in Pennsylvania before," said Spear.



Spear's identification was confirmed by Dr. Jay Stauffer of Penn State University.

The pugnose minnow is about 2 1/2 inches long. It has a compressed body, small head and blunt snout with an almost vertical mouth. It occurs in sluggish, clear, vegetated waters over muddy or silty bottoms. The pugnose minnow occurs in the Mississippi River Watershed and ranges from Ohio south to Louisiana. Future surveys will be conducted to determine population size and geographic distribution in Pennsylvania.



photos-Tim Stecko, Penn State