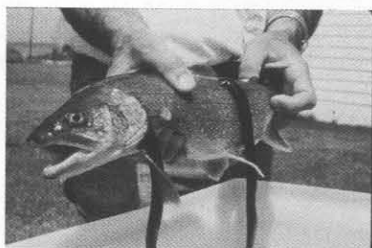


## Lamprey Facts: Did You Know?

- Sea lamprey adults return from the ocean in May and spawn in June;
- Lamprey nests, built by the males from gravel, form hummocky grooves in the streambed that are free of silt and sediment;
- When the adults die after spawning, their bodies return elements from the ocean, called micronutrients, to the stream; These nutrients are used by the tiniest plants and animals, like diatoms, protozoans, and algae, which are then filtered out and eaten by the young lamprey larvae;
- Lamprey larvae soon burrow into the silty or muddy part of the streambed where they remain and grow to a length of 6 inches and an age of about 5 years before they migrate to the ocean;
- In the ocean, lampreys become parasites, sucking the blood from host fish using special teeth to tear the fish's flesh and secreting anticoagulants to keep the blood flowing;
- When lampreys return to spawn in freshwater, they become blind and defenseless;

### When Lampreys Are Unwelcome

Sea lampreys are not native but have adapted to life in Lake Champlain and the upper Great Lakes. In those waters, the lampreys feed on lake trout and other fish during their adult or "ocean" phase and reproduce in tributaries to the lakes. That's why lampreys are considered to be a problem there and why their populations are managed in those lakes and not in the Connecticut River.



Sea lamprey parasitizing a lake trout.

The most sea lamprey ever recorded in the Connecticut River is 101,758 in 1998.

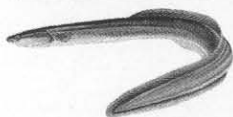
### Status of Lamprey

- The Connecticut River once supported the largest native sea lamprey population on the East Coast and numbers now range around 30-50,000 lampreys monitored annually;
- Lampreys benefit from fish passage facilities constructed for other species;

### Lamprey Geography

- Lampreys range from Labrador to Florida on the East Coast and in Europe;
- Within the Connecticut River, they range well north in NH and VT;

### American eel



Sea lampreys look like American eels but lampreys have no bones, no jaw, no paired fins, and the two have very different lifestyles.

To find out how many sea lampreys have returned to the Connecticut River, call the Fish Hotline: 413-548-9628