

Lamprey



American eel

Chinook salmon



ARE LAMPREYS EELS OR FISH?

You might be surprised to learn that lampreys – and eels – are indeed fish!

At first glance, lampreys can be confused with eels (both have long, slender bodies). Although both species are fishes, they are very different and are not closely related.

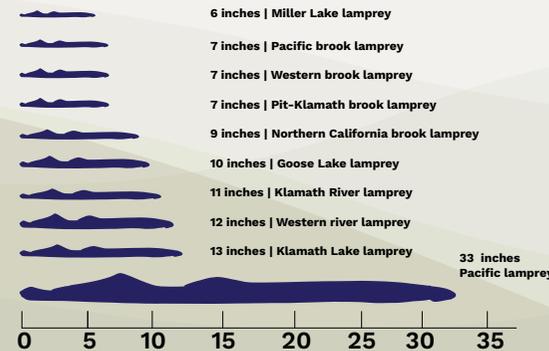
Lampreys arose several hundred million years ago, making them older than dinosaurs. Lampreys remain primitive. They have boneless bodies and sucking disk mouths. Eels, on the other hand, are much newer species arriving just a few million years ago and are more evolved with a bony skeleton and jaws.

Lampreys are indicators of a healthy and diverse stream ecosystem. About 40 species of lamprey exist worldwide, and Oregon is a hot spot for lamprey diversity with 10 native species.

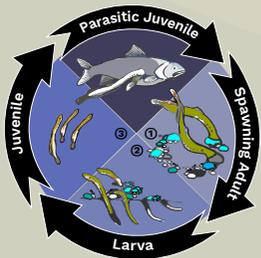
Five of Oregon's lampreys are state listed as Sensitive Species (facing threats to their populations and/or habitats): Miller Lake, Pacific, western river, western brook, and Pacific brook, all of which have conservation plans detailing their biology, status, and needs. These species also are all Oregon Conservation Strategy Species of greatest conservation need.

Oregon's other five lamprey species are: Goose Lake, Northern California brook, Pit-Klamath brook, Klamath River, and Klamath Lake.

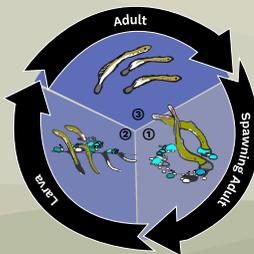
LAMPREY SIZE COMPARISON CHART



THE LIFE CYCLES OF LAMPREY ARE DIVERSE AND FALL INTO 2 GROUPS: PARASITIC AND NON-PARASITIC.



PARASITIC



NON-PARASITIC

Visit ODFW @ MyODFW.com



Original graphics courtesy of Great Lakes Fishery Commission. Graphics have been greatly modified.

Native Lampreys of Oregon



Miller Lake lamprey: Oregon's smallest lamprey species.



Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife

4034 Fairview Industrial Drive SE
Salem, Oregon 97302
503-947-6000 | ODFW.com
www.dfw.state.or.us/fish/species/lampreys.asp





Pacific LAMPREY

(parasitic) is culturally significant to several Native American tribes that harvest them for use in ceremonies and for food, medicine and other purposes. For more information on the Pacific lamprey, go to https://www.dfw.state.or.us/fish/species/docs/lamprey/pacific_lamprey.pdf



Western river LAMPREY

(parasitic) rear to adult size in the nearshore ocean and large estuaries before returning to freshwater to spawn and die. For more information on the western river lamprey, go to https://www.dfw.state.or.us/fish/species/docs/lamprey/western_river_lamprey.pdf



Western brook LAMPREY

(non-parasitic) spend their entire lives in freshwater and do not feed as adults. For more information on the western brook lamprey, go to https://www.dfw.state.or.us/fish/species/docs/lamprey/western_brook_lamprey.pdf



Miller Lake LAMPREY

(parasitic) is the smallest landlocked parasitic lamprey in the world, existing only in Miller Lake and its sub-drainage, and in the upper Williamson and Sycan rivers east of the Cascades. For more information on the Miller Lake lamprey, go to https://www.dfw.state.or.us/fish/species/docs/lamprey/miller_lake_lamprey.pdf

Large species illustrations are not shown to scale.

PIT-KLAMATH BROOK lamprey
7 inches | Non-parasitic



KLAMATH RIVER lamprey
11 inches | Parasitic



PACIFIC BROOK lamprey
7 inches | Non-parasitic



GOOSE LAKE lamprey
10 inches | Parasitic



NORTHERN CALIFORNIA BROOK lamprey
9 inches | Non-parasitic



KLAMATH LAKE lamprey
13 inches | Parasitic



At this time, little information is available for these six species.