



Land-locked sea lamprey: We need your help!

The lamprey species are an elongate, eel-like fish but have no true jaws. Instead they have a sucker-like mouth that they use to attach to host fish. The sea and river lamprey normally live at sea as adults, attaching themselves to a wide range of host species. However, a limited number of non-migratory sea lampreys were positively identified from Irish lakes in the late 1950's and early 1960's. These samples were provided by anglers – with a number of valuable results coming from Lough Conn and Lough Derg.

WE NEED YOUR HELP AS AN ANGLER.....

Land-locked sea lamprey do not go to sea but will attach themselves to host fish in lakes. These hosts may well be the bigger fish present – adult salmon, large brown trout or adult pike. You may well land one attached to your prized fish. Or you may notice round or disc-like scarring marks on the sides of your fish – where the lamprey had been attached. We are anxious to collect information on both forms of 'evidence' of land-locked sea lamprey and you, the angler, are the best person to help.

What to do: If you land an angling fish with an eel-like fish attached PLEASE retain both. We hope you will enjoy your sport fish, either for eating or for catch-and-release BUT please retain the other fish for us to carry out a scientific examination. Put it in a freezer or post it or ring one of our contact numbers to arrange collection. Remember we need a date, location on the lake and type of fish to which the lamprey was attached!



If you notice round or disc-like markings on the fish skin with scarring of flesh we would love to hear from you with a record of the angling fish size, location and number of marks. A photo via digital camera or camera phone would be particularly helpful. Remember to include date and location of capture.

Your help can make this project a success! If you can help us with evidence of markings and/or landed lamprey please contact your nearest Fisheries Board staff listed below:

Contacts:

Shannon RFB: Head Office 061 300238 or Ken O' Neill 087 3296306

Northwestern RFB: Head Office or Kevin O'Boyle 096 22623

CFB: Jimmy King 087 6468608

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Photos courtesy Centre for Great Lakes and Aquatic Sciences Archives, University of Michigan