

# Snuffbox Mussel

Use these words to fill in the blanks:

animal, clamps, foot, grows, mussels, quickly, rock

- ♦ The Snuffbox Mussel (*Epioblasma triquetra*) like other \_\_\_\_\_ has no head, arms, legs or eyes. It looks like a fleshy blob when its shell is forced opened.
- ♦ The shell \_\_\_\_\_ every year along with the mussel.
- ♦ When the shell is shut, which is most of the time, it is camouflaged and looks more like a \_\_\_\_\_ than an \_\_\_\_\_.
- ♦ Mussels move by extending part of their body (which looks like a tongue, but is called a \_\_\_\_\_) outside of their shell and firmly inserting it into the mud at the river bottom. When they pull their foot back into their shell they move just a little bit.
- ♦ In May the female snuffbox mussel finishes brooding her babies by dangling a fleshy lure outside her shell to attract a small host fish. When a fish (usually a logperch) goes to eat the lure the mussel \_\_\_\_\_ opens her shell and \_\_\_\_\_ down on the fish. Then her babies can attach onto the fish which is released unharmed. In a couple of weeks fully formed mussels harmlessly drop off the fish into a new area of



Map

■ Snuffbox Mussel Range

the river.

## Primary Threats:

Habitat disturbances ~ dams and dam removal  
Invasive species ~ zebra mussels and round goby

## Secondary Threat:

Pollution ~ agricultural runoff

## Key Facts

Mussel

Federally Endangered

Filter feeder

Bottom dweller

Cold blooded

Overall Length

Up to 3 inches

Overall width

Up to 2 inches

Thickest area

About 3/4 inch

Weight

4 to 10 ounces

Lifespan

About 100 years

Habitat

River bottoms

Stream bottoms