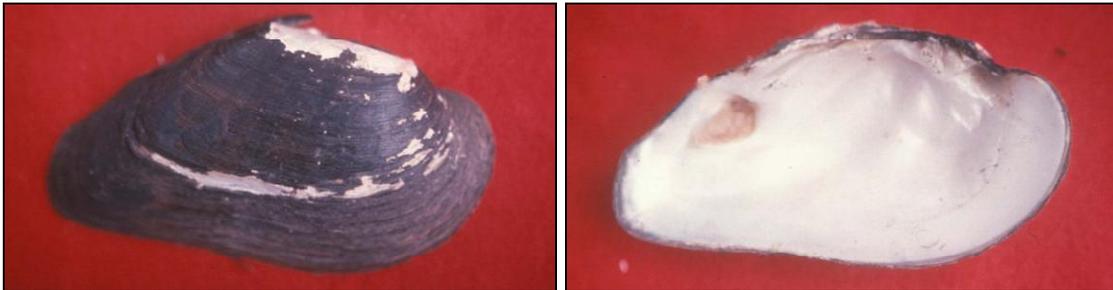




**Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries
Natural Heritage Program**

Ptychobranchus occidentalis
Ouachita kidneyshell



Identification: Oval shape, compressed laterally. The shell is thick, smooth, and barely shiny, rays more prominent on posterior portion of shell. Color is yellow to yellow-green or yellow-brown. Mother-of-pearl is blue to white.

Measurements: Length is 5.5 inches.

Taxonomic comments: No recognized subspecies.

Status: Global rank is **G3G4** and state rank is **S1**.

Habitat: Small rivers with a current and gravel or sand substrate. Found at depths between 2.5 and 75 cm.

Range: Mississippi river basin drainages in Arkansas, Kansas, Missouri, Oklahoma, and Louisiana.

Food habits*: Mussels are continually pumping water through their siphon. Their diet is composed of the various microscopic plants and animals from the water and organic matter from stream bottoms that they filter from this water.

Reproduction: Sexes are separate. Females release glochidia (intermediate parasitic stage) in groups of 200+ in early spring. The glochidia are eaten by host fish and thereby allowed the opportunity to attach themselves to the host. Host fish include the orangethroat darter, yoke darter, greenside darter, and rainbow darter.

Reason for decline: 1) Historically rare in Louisiana. *Loss of habitat as a result of siltation, impoundment, and the addition of pollutants to streams and rivers may also contribute to the decline of this species.

Interesting facts: Glochidial packets resume larval fish, increasing the likelihood of uptake and consumption by host fish.

* Indicates generalized information for freshwater mussels in the absence of information specific to this species

Known distribution in Louisiana:



Dates of documented observations are: 1992

References

Obermeyer, B.K. 2000. Recovery plan for four freshwater mussels in southeast Kansas. Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks.

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