

plain pocketbook *Lampsilis cardium*

Kingdom: Animalia

Division/Phylum: Mollusca

Class: Bivalvia

Order: Unionoida

Family: Unionidae

ILLINOIS STATUS common, native

FEATURES

The plain pocketbook mussel has a thin, round-to-square shell. The anterior end of the shell is rounded. The posterior end of the shell is pointed in males and squared in females. The shell is smooth, yellow or tan in color and may or may not have green rays. The plain pocketbook mussel grows to seven inches in length. The inside of the shell is white, blue-white or pink.

BEHAVIORS

The plain pocketbook mussel lives in the mud, sand or gravel bottom of creeks and rivers. This mussel often lives for more than 10 years, and some individuals may live for more than 100 years. The sexes are separate. The male releases sperm into the water. The female draws sperm in through the incurrent siphon, along with water and other particles. Eggs are fertilized internally. Fertilized eggs develop into an intermediate larval stage called glochidia. Glochidia are stored in the female's gills, providing them a safe place to develop and access to plenty of oxygen. In the spring or summer, glochidia are released from the female into the water, where they begin their parasitic stage. Glochidia attach to a fish and form a cyst. Within the cyst, the larva transforms into the adult form, a process that may take from one to 25 weeks depending on the host, water temperature and place of attachment. The adult breaks free of the cyst and drops to the bottom where it begins its adult life, if conditions are favorable. The plain pocketbook mussel is a filter-feeder, bringing in water and the organic matter it contains through the incurrent siphon, filtering the particles out, then sending the rest of the water away from the body through the excurrent siphon. Particles filtered include plankton and detritus.

HABITATS

Aquatic Habitats

rivers and streams

Woodland Habitats

none

Prairie and Edge Habitats

none

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