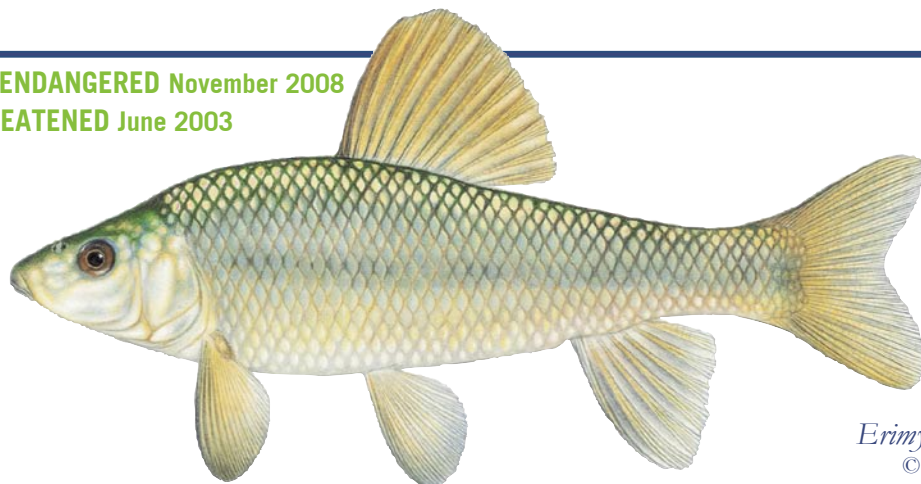




## The Lake Chubsucker... a *Species at Risk* in Ontario

**COSEWIC Status – ENDANGERED November 2008**  
**SARA Status – THREATENED June 2003**



*Erimyzon sucetta*  
© J. R. Tomelleri

This species has been identified as Endangered by the Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada (COSEWIC). It is listed under the federal *Species at Risk Act* (SARA) and is afforded protection

under SARA as of June 2004. Additional protection is afforded through the federal *Fisheries Act*. Under SARA, a recovery strategy must be developed for this species.

### General Description

The Lake Chubsucker (*Erimyzon sucetta*) is a member of the Sucker family (Catostomidae) and has the following characteristics:

- Small in size (usually less than 25 cm long);
- Robust and deep body with arched back, greatest depth at base of dorsal fin;
- Blunt snout and small, downward directed, protrusible mouth, typical of suckers;
- Shallowly forked tail;
- Dark olive green dorsal surface and upper sides, golden to silvery lower sides and green yellow to yellow underside;
- Scales on upper half of body are dark-edged giving a cross-hatched appearance in adults;
- Paired fins whitish, dorsal fin and tail olive-coloured in adults; and
- Small nuptial tubercles on the snout and anal fin in adult males.

## Distribution

The Lake Chubsucker is primarily a species of the southeastern United States, but it has two main centres of distribution; the lower coastal plain (Gulf and southeastern Atlantic states), and the southern Great Lakes basin. In Canada, it is known only from the drainages of the Niagara River, and lakes Erie, St. Clair and Huron in southwestern Ontario. This species was not reported in Ontario until 1949, suggesting that it may have always been rare in this area.

## Habitat and Life History

Lake Chubsuckers prefer clear, still waters with abundant aquatic plants such as marshes, stagnant bays, floodplain lakes and drainage ditches. Their preferred substrates include gravel, sand and silt mixed with organic debris. Spawning season likely occurs between April and early June in Ontario. Adults move into marshes where females will lay up to 20,000 eggs on submerged vegetation.

## Diet

Lake Chubsuckers have a diverse diet, feeding on plankton, molluscs and aquatic insects, filamentous (threadlike) algae and other plant matter.

## Threats

Increased turbidity, siltation and wetland drainage appear to be the greatest causes of habitat loss for this species.

## Similar Species

Creek Chubsucker (*Erimyzon oblongus*) resemble the Lake Chubsucker except for their dorsal rays and number of scales; however, Creek Chubsuckers are not found in Ontario. Young or juvenile Lake Chubsuckers may look similar to minnows with a black lateral band.

Text Sources: Mandrak and Crossman 1994; Scott and Crossman 1998; Staton, Vlasman and Edwards, Recovery Strategy 2009.

For more information, visit the SARA Registry website at [www.SARAregistry.gc.ca](http://www.SARAregistry.gc.ca) and the Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) website noted below.

## LAKE CHUBSUCKER DISTRIBUTION



*Cette publication est également disponible en français.*

DFO/2009-1615

©Her Majesty the Queen in Right of Canada 2009

Cat. No. Fs22-4/7-2009E-PDF ISBN 978-1-100-13104-7

[www.aquaticspeciesatrisk.gc.ca](http://www.aquaticspeciesatrisk.gc.ca)

Section 32 (1) of the *Species at Risk Act* (SARA) states that “no person shall kill, harm, harass, capture or take an individual of a wildlife species that is listed as an extirpated species, an endangered species or a threatened species.”