Saltmarsh topminnow

*Fundulus jenkinsi*

(Photograph by FWC)

**Taxonomic Classification**

**Kingdom:** Animalia  
**Phylum:** Chordata  
**Class:** Actinopterygii  
**Order:** Atheriniformes  
**Family:** Cyprinodontidae  
**Genus/Species:** *Fundulus jenkinsi*  
**Common Name:** Saltmarsh topminnow

**Listing Status**

**Federal Status:** Not listed  
**FL Status:** State Species of Special Concern  
**FNAI Ranks:** G2/S2 (Imperiled)  
**IUCN Status:** Not ranked

**Physical Description**

The saltmarsh topminnow is a smaller species of the Genus *Fundulus* (Gilbert 1992). This species can reach a body length of 1.75 inches (4.4 centimeters). Saltmarsh topminnows are light brown with two rows of black spots on the midside of the body (Florida Natural Areas Inventory 2001).
**Life History**

The diet of the saltmarsh topminnow primarily consists of insects and a type of crustacean called amphipods (Lopez et al. 2010).

Little is known about the reproduction of the saltmarsh topminnow. It is known to breed between the months of March and August, with increased breeding during high tides. Larvae can be found in May and June, while juveniles are first found in July. A lifespan of greater than two years is rare (National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration 2009, Lang 2010).

**Habitat & Distribution**

The saltmarsh topminnow inhabits low-salinity salt marshes and estuaries dominated by *Spartina* cordgrasses from Galveston Bay, Texas, east to the extreme western portion of the Florida panhandle (Peterson et al. 2003).

**Threats**

The saltmarsh topminnow is vulnerable to many threats as humans continue to develop previously undeveloped areas. Salt marshes are vulnerable from the practice of “dredge and fill”. Dredge and fill involves the dredging of salt marshes and filling them with sediment. This is performed to provide increased areas for human development including coastal housing. Dredge and fill practices can also cause a decrease in available prey for the saltmarsh topminnow. Marsh erosion and hurricanes have also caused damage to salt marsh habitat. Other threats include global climate change, as the accompanying sea level rise will cause increased water temperatures and increased salinity levels in prime habitats.

**Conservation & Management**

The saltmarsh topminnow is protected as a State Species of Special Concern by Florida’s Endangered and Threatened Species Rule.

- Biological Status Review (BSR)
- Supplemental Information for the BSR

**Other Informative Links**

- Encyclopedia of Life
- Florida Natural Areas Inventory
- NOAA Fisheries Service
References


