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An Evaluation of Unionidae diversity in the Rocky River and how Population density has Changed Over Time in comparison to Observations made over 15 Years ago

College of Sciences and Health Professions

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Faculty Advisor: Robert Krebs

Abstract

This study was undertaken to determine the changes in freshwater bivalve population since the survey conducted in 2001 in the northern region of the Rocky River, Ohio, USA. During our study, we discovered 69 live specimens and 58 shells most of which were found in two distinct locations near the top and bottom of the area surveyed. Our finds consisted of eight species in comparison to the nine that were seen in the same area of the 2001 study. Our results showed that *Leptodea fragilis* populations have decreased in the main stream of the Rocky River since the observation 2001, others species populations such as *Lasmigona costata* have slightly increased. However, the overall population of unionid mussels in this area have decreased and seeing as mostly older specimens were found, it appears as if they have not been reproducing despite the improvement of the water quality that has been taking place over the past 15 to 16 years.