

PLETHOBASUS CYPHYUS (RAFINESQUE, 1820)
Common Bullhead

SYNONYMY:

- Obliquaria cyphya (U. cyphia) Rafinesque, 1820. (Rafinesque, 1820:305)
Type Locality: "Aux chutes de l'Ohio." [The Falls of the Ohio River] at Louisville, Kentucky.
- Unio aesopus Green, 1827. (Green, 1827:46, fig. 3)
Type Locality: ". . . the rivers in the neighborhood of Pittsburg [sic]" (Call, 1900:497)
- Unio cyphia (Rafinesque, 1820). (Conrad, 1834:68)
- Unio cyphus (Rafinesque, 1820). (Say, 1834, no pagination, No. 6, Syn.: entry 23)
- Margarita aesopus (Green, 1827). (Lea, 1836:17; 1838:16)
- Margaron aesopus (Green, 1827). (Lea, 1852:23; 1870:34)
- Unio scypius (Rafinesque, 1820). (Kuster, 1861: 181, pl. 57, fig. 2)
- Unio cyphias aesopus (Green, 1827). (Paetel, 1890:150)
- Unio cyphus (Rafinesque, 1820). (Call, 1900:496, pl. 54)
- Pleurobema aesopus (Green, 1827). (Simpson, 1900:764)
- Unio compertus Frierson, 1911. (Frierson, 1911:53, pl. 3, fig. 2, 3, 4)
Type Locality: "Clinch and Holston rivers."
- Plethobasus aesopus (Green 1827). (Ortmann, 1912:260, fig. 8)
- Plethobasus cyphus compertus (Frierson, 1911). (Ortmann, 1918:544)
- Plethobasus cyphus (Rafinesque, 1820). (Ortmann, 1919:65, pl. 5, fig. 6; pl. 6, fig. 1, 2, 3)

CLASSIFICATION:

- Family Unionidae (Fleming, 1828) Ortmann, 1911.
Subfamily Ambleminae (Rafinesque, 1820) Morrison, 1955.
Genus Plethobasus Simpson, 1900.

CHARACTERISTICS: Shell medium size, angulate ovate, subinflated, solid; umbos full, moderately high, sculpture coarse, concentric; a row of low, broad, irregular swellings down the center of the disc; periostracum bright yellow to yellowish brown, smooth, highly polished; cardinal teeth moderately heavy, lateral teeth straight; nacre white.

SIMILAR SPECIES: Plethobasus cicatricosus (Say, 1829) is suborbicular; an irregular row of laterally expanded nodules down the center of the disc; periostracum silky, lacking a high polish.

RANGE: Simpson (1914:806) found this species to occur in:

"Ohio, Cumberland and Tennessee river systems; west to Missouri and Minnesota; Alabama River, according to Call."

RANGE IN OHIO: Museum records indicate that P. cyphus is not abundant in Ohio and that it is probably limited to the Ohio River and a few tributaries, particularly the Muskingum River system. At least up until Sterki's (1907:391) time, this species probably had a much wider range which included the Scioto, Mahoning and Tuscarawas Rivers.

HABITAT: Ortmann (1919:68) found that this species

". . . prefers riffles with coarse gravel and strong current, and in Beaver Co. [Pennsylvania] it is found upon the shell-banks in a strong and steady current. The same is true farther down the Ohio, where it is often obtained by the clam-diggers."

F.C. Baker (1928:112) found it in a different situation in Wisconsin:

"In Wisconsin cyphus is a species of the large rivers where it lives on a mud bottom in water 1-2 m. deep, in a rapid current (Wisconsin River). In Lake Pepin found on mud, gravel, and sand bottom in deep water in a good current."

Parmalee (1967:35) reported that

"It is usually found in current on a mud bottom at depths of 3 to 6 feet, although this large river species may live at much greater depths."

Specimens have been found in the Mohican and Wallonding Rivers in a coarse substrate beneath a few inches to a foot or more of fast-flowing water.

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