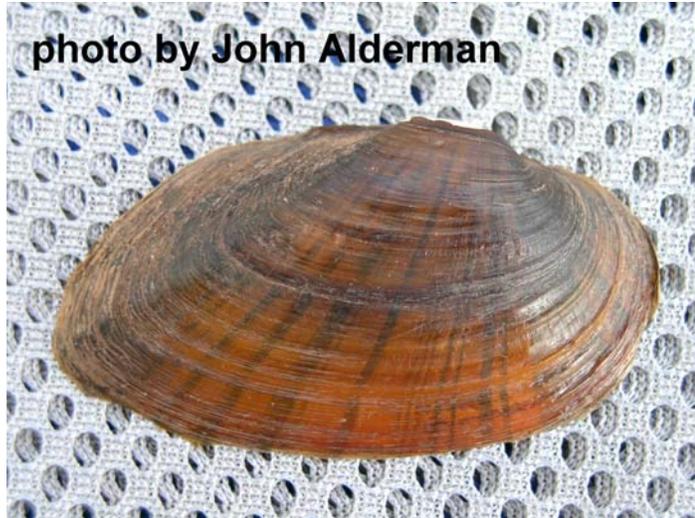


## Carolina Slabshell

*Elliptio congarea*

Contributor: Jennifer Price



### DESCRIPTION

#### Taxonomy and Basic Description

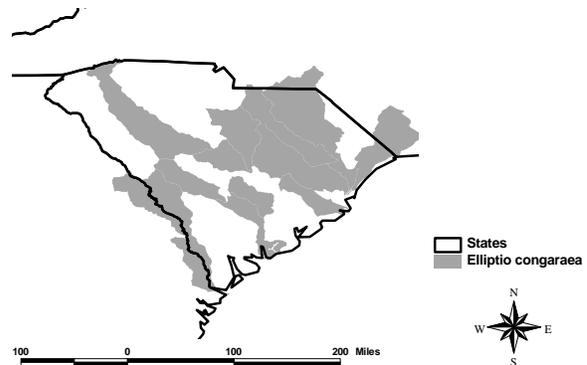
The shell of the Carolina slabshell is rhomboid, with the posterior end obliquely truncated above and biangulate below. The surface has irregular growth lines, usually wrinkled on the posterior slope. The outer surface of the shell is greenish-yellow or tawny and is usually rayed. The inner surface of the shell is purplish (Bogan and Alderman 2004).

#### Status

The global ranking of this species is apparently stable (G4), with a state ranking of vulnerable (S3) in North Carolina and in Georgia. It is not currently ranked in South Carolina (NatureServe 2005) but is currently a species of special concern in this state.

#### POPULATION DISTRIBUTION AND SIZE

This species is found in many river basins in South Carolina. The Pee Dee, Waccamaw, and Savannah Rivers contain particularly healthy populations. At many other sites, the species is very sparsely populated. Globally, it ranges from the Ogeechee basin in Georgia to the Chowan River basin in Virginia (Bogan and Alderman 2004).



#### HABITAT AND NATURAL COMMUNITY REQUIREMENTS

The Carolina slabshell species is found in a variety of habitats, including rivers and small streams. This species prefers sandy substrates (Taxonomic Expertise Committee 2004).

#### CHALLENGES

Observations suggest that this species is sensitive to channel modification, pollution, sedimentation, and low oxygen conditions, but we do not know how the relative sensitivity of this species to these challenges compares to other species.

## CONSERVATION ACCOMPLISHMENTS

There are no significant conservation accomplishments for the Carolina slabshell at this time.

## CONSERVATION RECOMMENDATIONS

- Continue to conduct surveys and monitor Carolina slabshell population density.
- Explore the need to list the Carolina slabshell in South Carolina, based on survey results.
- Conduct genetic analysis to determine the relationship between the Carolina slabshell and other species in the genus *Elliptio*.
- Protect critical habitats for the Carolina slabshell from future development and further habitat degradation by following best management practices and protecting and purchasing riparian areas.
- Promote land stewardship practices through educational programs both within critical habitats with healthy populations and other areas that contain available habitat for the Carolina slabshell.
- Encourage responsible land use planning.
- Consider species needs when participating in the environmental permit review process.
- Educate off-road motor vehicle operators of the negative affects of crossing streams at multiple locations and using stream bottoms as trails.
- Conduct further research to determine the degree of sensitivity of the Carolina slabshell to various point and non-point source pollution sources and land use impacts.

## MEASUREMENTS OF SUCCESS

Persistence of existing populations and an increase in numbers at sites where the Carolina slabshell is currently rare will indicate success.