

# Importance of habitat and migration to sturgeons with emphasis on lake sturgeon

by N A Auer

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Canadian Journal of Fisheries and Aquatic Sciences (1996)  
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## Abstract

Sturgeons utilize a variety of habitat types throughout their life: rivers for spawning; rivers, lakes, estuaries, or the sea for feeding and wintering adults; and estuarine areas for feeding young. Distances covered by some sturgeons during spawning migrations show a positive relationship to average adult size. The lake sturgeon, *Acipenser fulvescens*, is the only sturgeon endemic to the Great Lakes basin. Most remaining populations in the basin are restricted in movement, yet a few, free-ranging populations still remain. Study of these populations will more adequately define range and habitat preferences of the species. Some state and federal agencies are now creating management plans for lake sturgeon. Those plans need to be based on information gathered from free-ranging groups. A barrier-free 250-300 km combined river and lake range is suggested as a minimum distance to support self-sustaining populations and distances of 750-1000 km should not be considered unusual. Fishery managers should give barrier removal or fish passage greater consideration than habitat enhancement for populations currently isolated and restricted in range.

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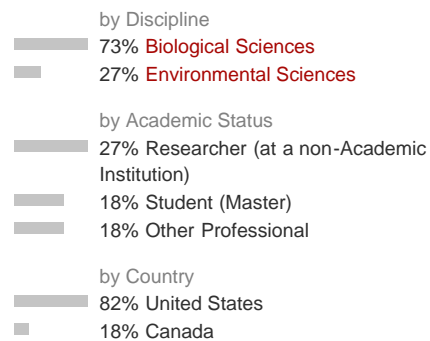
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