

Hotwater Physa:

Liard River Hot Springs



The Hotwater Physa (*Physella wrighti*) is an endemic freshwater snail that lives only within the hot spring complex found at Liard River Hot Springs Provincial Park. This small snail has a blackish / grey shell this is 3.25 - 9.1 mm in size.

The population of Hotwater Physa is small. Less than 10,000 individuals exist and their life-span is merely 1 year. It occupies a restricted habitat around the margins of two hot spring pools and an outlet stream. The snail is a habitat specialist; it requires geothermally regulated water and substrates near the water/air interface, without current. Population size of the species is thought to fluctuate greatly. Abrupt changes in water flow, chemical contamination or introduction of exotic species, could significantly impact the future of the Hotwater Physa. In 1998, it was designated Endangered by the Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada (COSEWIC) and was listed as Endangered under the *Species at Risk Act* (SARA), in 2003.

In 2007, the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans created an action plan to maintain and protect the population(s) of Hotwater Physa at Liard River Hot Springs.

For more information on the Hotwater Physa Action Plan, visit:

<https://www.canada.ca/en/environment-climate-change/services/species-risk-public-registry/action-plans/physa-hotwater-final.html#toc2>

References: Fisheries and Oceans Canada. 2018. Action Plan for the Hotwater Physa (*Physella wrighti*) in Canada. Species at Risk Act Action Plan Series. Fisheries and Oceans Canada, Ottawa. iv + 22 pp.

https://wildlife-species.canada.ca/species-risk-registry/species/speciesDetails_e.cfm?sid=548

Photo Credit: Hotwater Physa (*Physella wrighti*) on Chara spp., Fisheries and Oceans Canada, Pacific Region

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Species at Risk Act

The *Species at Risk Act* (s.c. 2002, c.29) protects species at risk from becoming extinct or lost from the wild. The act identifies habitat that is necessary for the survival or recovery of a listed wildlife species as 'critical habitat'.

The Hotwater Physa critical habitat is identified to the extent possible, using the best available information, and provides the functions and features necessary to support the species' life-cycle processes and to achieve the species' population and distribution objectives. The Hotwater Physa Action

Plan identifies the species' critical habitat area within Liard Hot Springs Provincial Park, as outlined on the map.

