

ESCAMBIA MAYFLY

Baetisca escambiensis



Order: Ephemeroptera

Family: Baetiscidae

FNAI Ranks: G2G3/S1S2

U.S. Status: none

FL Status: none

Description: *Baetisca escambiensis* is distinct from all congeners. It differs in the adult stage in having wings flushed with ruby color, in shape of the penes, and in eye pattern (banded with vertical stripes). Nymphs are distinct in having unusually long genal and very long, thin mesonotal spines, as well as lack of frontal projections on the head (Berner 1955).

Similar Species: *Baetisca escambiensis* is distinct from all other members of the genus. It differs in the adult stage in having wings flushed with ruby color, in shape of the penes, and in eye pattern (banded with vertical stripes). Nymphs are distinct in having unusually long genal and very long, thin mesonotal spines, as well as lack of frontal projections on the head (Berner 1955).

Habitat: Nymphs inhabit sandbars in small to medium sized rivers, where they have been found partially buried in shallow, slow-moving waters from 4-5 inches to 1 foot in depth; clay can be mixed with sand (Berner 1955, Pescador and Berner 1981).

Seasonal Occurrence: This is a late-emerging mayfly. Half-grown nymphs were found in late August, and mature nymphs in late October; the latter emerged in the lab in early November (Berner 1955).

Florida Distribution: This species has been documented in Escambia, Santa Rosa, and Okaloosa counties in the western Panhandle, where it is known from the Perdido, Escambia, Blackwater, and Yellow-Shoal river drainages.

Range-wide Distribution: *Baetisca escambiensis* is known from extreme northwestern Florida and southeastern Mississippi (Pescador and Berner 1981), although it likely occurs in southern Alabama upstream in the same rivers in which it occurs in Florida.

Conservation Status: This mayfly is only known from four rivers in the far western Panhandle; one of these (Escambia) is known to be degraded by pollution. According to Pescador and Richard (2004), the species used to be common and abundant within its range but is now difficult to find and has been extirpated from some former localities. There have been only four records of this species from 1973 to 2009, whereas there were 15 records from 1954 to 1973 with less collection effort (Donald Ray, Florida Department of Environmental Protection, personal communication to D. Almquist, 2009).

Protection and Management: Coordinate with land managers of known and potential sites on conservation lands (minimally including Blackwater River State Forest, Eglin Air Force Base, and the Escambia and Yellow River Water Management Areas) to assure proper management for this species and its specific inclusion in their land management plans. On private lands, protect inhabited drainage basins from development to the extent possible; encourage landowners and developers to maintain the ecological integrity of streams within drainage basins (i.e., prevent impoundment, siltation, and pollution); and protect water quality by appropriate regulations. Monitor known sites on both conservation and private lands.

References: Berner 1955, Berner and Pescador 1988, Pescador and Berner 1981, Pescador and Richard 2004

No photograph is available for this species.