

MITES IN MOLLUSKS IN THE UPPER MISSISSIPPI RIVER AND THEIR COMMUNITY STRUCTURE

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Abstract: Benthic community structure of streams and lakes in the prairie has become an essential part of the study of the prairie environment. More than 49 taxa of mussels (Bivalvia: Unionidae) are known to have occurred in the upper Mississippi River. Samuel L. H. Fuller and Daniel J. Bereza conducted a survey for the Academy of Natural Sciences of Philadelphia in 1977-78 and kindly sent mites from mussels that they collected and identified. Their surveys recovered 28 living species of mussels (Bivalvia: Unionoida) and a single species of snail (Gastropoda: Viviparidae) from a total of 66 stations sampled from the St. Croix River down to St. Louis, Missouri. Seventeen species of mites (Acari: Unionicolidae: *Unionicola*) were found in these mussels, including 7 species new to science. The benthic community structure (mollusks and mites) included a complex series of host-specific interactions between the parasitic mites and host mollusks. These data provide a base upon which results from recent survey work is compared.