

# Anticipating the Future of the Blackbanded Sunfish

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## The Blackbanded Sunfish

- Found in acidic, freshwater, habitats throughout much of the east coast of the United States.
- 13 known Blackbanded Sunfish sites in Virginia.
- Decline is attributed to habitat damage and pesticide pollution.
- The effects of global climate change are likely to play a notable role in the future of the species.



A Blackbanded Sunfish. Source: May, N. 2016. Blackbanded Sunfish (*Enneacanthus caetodon*). NatureServe.

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## Fragilities inherent to the Blackbanded Sunfish and their habitat:

- Desiccation of habitat
- Disease
- Pollution
- Predation
- Capture
- Starvation
- Storm damage to habitat
- Habitat loss
- Water temperature fluctuations

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## Hazardous events that may impact the Blackbanded Sunfish:

- Drought
- Disease introduction
- Pollutant introduction
- Introduction of invasive species
- Hurricanes
- Severe air temperature fluctuations

(Note: these hazards can all be influenced by Climate Change)

Fragilities of the species, and the hazards that exploit these fragilities make interventions necessary to ensure that the species is not extirpated from the state.

The following interventions are recommended to the Department of Wildlife Resources for consideration:

- Develop an emergency plan to respond to hazardous events
- Develop a reintroduction plan to create new Blackbanded Sunfish populations
- Partner with local NGOs to spread awareness and gain support from volunteers
- Consider seeking a federal threatened status for the species



A typical Blackbanded Sunfish habitat. Source: image taken by author.