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### Olympia Oyster

*Ostrea conchaphila*

A member of the family Ostreidae (“true oysters”), Olympia oyster is British Columbia’s only native oyster. Major population declines are believed to have taken place during a period of heavy harvest exploitation between the 1800’s and 1930. This species also goes by the name “California” or “Western” oyster. More commonly it goes by the name ‘Rock’ oyster.



Olympia Oyster Feet Wet Wikipedia



Olympia Oyster Feet Wet Wikipedia



Olympia Oyster theages Flickr



Olympia Oyster NOAA

## Characteristics

*Length 6-9 cm.* The Olympia oyster is a small oyster compared to commercial species which can be twice as long. The shell is circular and somewhat smooth. The valves of this oyster are different from side to side (top to bottom). The lower (left) valve is deeply cupped while the upper (right) valve is flat and fits inside the edges of its lower valve. The colour of the outer part of the shell ranges from white to purplish with the inside (nacre) being white to iridescent green to purple in colour. Olympia oysters are often attached by their lower valve to a stationary hard surface but can occur unattached singly or in clusters. Small populations still exist in the Salish Sea (Strait of Georgia) and larger populations are locally common off of Vancouver Island.

## Status

<b>Global Status:</b>	G5
<b>Provincial Status:</b>	S3
<b>SARA Status:</b>	Special Concern
<b>BC List Status:</b>	Blue (Considered to be of Special Concern)

## Resources

### Historical ecology with real and present biomass of an imperilled estuarine habitat

We examined records of wild native oyster abundance in the United States from a historic, yet already exploited, baseline between 1878 and 1935 (predominantly 1885–1915), and a current baseline between 1968 and 2010 (predominantly 2000–2010).

### Olympia Oysters The Nature Conservancy in Washington

### Life Histories and Environmental Requirements of Coastal Fishes & Invertebrates (Pacific Northwest) Olympia Oyster National Aquaculture Strategic Action Plan Initiative (NASAPI) 2011 - 2015 Canadian Council of Fisheries

## For further information see

### Once-abundant West Coast oysters near extinction

A disturbing nationwide decline in oysters and the life-giving reefs that they build is particularly dramatic in California, where the once-abundant native species has been virtually wiped out, according to a recent scientific study.

### BC Species and Ecosystems Explorer: Species and Ecosystems Search

A source for authoritative conservation information on thousands of plants and animals and hundreds of ecological communities in BC. From here connect to all provincial and federal recovery plans (including the SARA Registry), COSEWIC (Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada), Identified Wildlife guidance and conservation requirements for specific species and ecological communities of conservation concern impacted by forestry activities) and links to E-Flora and E-Fauna (the Electronic Atlas of the Plants and Wildlife of British Columbia).

### British Columbia's Coast Region Species & Ecosystems of Conservation Concern

A joint venture resource providing comprehensive information on a range of species and ecological communities specific to the Coast Region of BC (including the South, Central and North Coast, Vancouver Island and Haida Gwaii).

### Develop With Care Guidelines (see Lower Mainland Region section)

Environmental guidelines for urban and rural land development in BC.

### **Species at Risk & Local Governments a Primer for BC**

Learn what species are at risk in your area, search by name, habitat type, regional district and forest district.

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**Source URL:** <http://sccp.ca/species-habitat/olympia-oyster>

#### **Links**

[1] <http://www.sfgate.com/science/article/Once-abundant-West-Coast-oysters-near-extinction-3689709.php>

[2] <http://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/environment/plants-animals-ecosystems/conservation-data-centre/explore-cdc-data/species-and-ecosystems-explorer>

[3] <http://www.geog.ubc.ca/biodiversity/factsheets/>

[4] [http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/wld/documents/bmp/devwithcare2006/develop\\_with\\_care\\_intro.html](http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/wld/documents/bmp/devwithcare2006/develop_with_care_intro.html)

[5] <http://www.speciesatrisk.bc.ca/>