

REPRODUCTION IN LAMPREY

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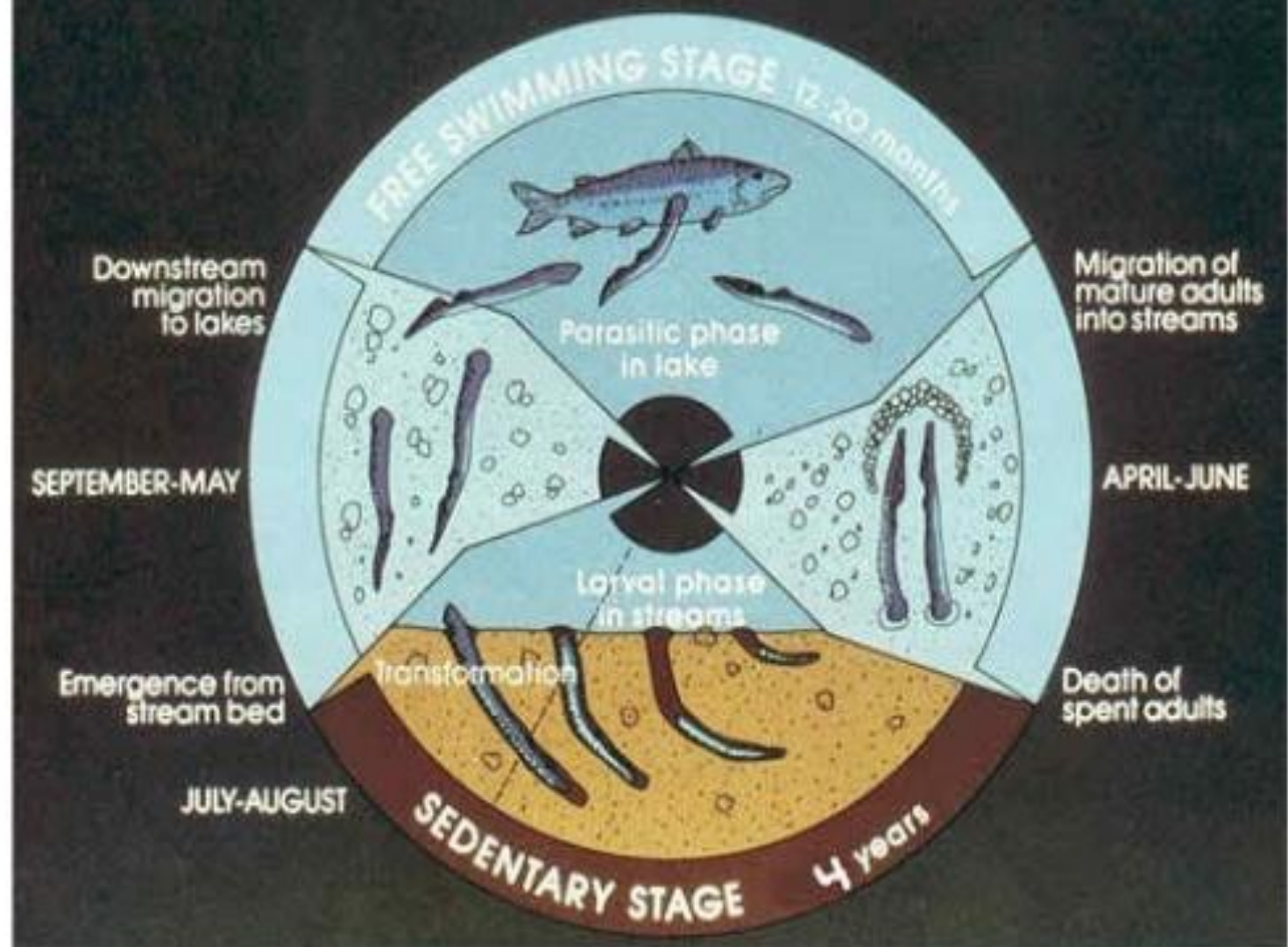
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Reproduction

- **Sexes** are separate.
- Mature sea lampreys **migrate** into rivers or streams in April to July for breeding
- Peak **spawning occurs in June and July** before the death of the adults
- Males move pebbles from a sandy bottom by their buccal funnel and **make a nest** in the form of a horseshoe shaped depression or pit
- Females will anchor themselves by their oral disc to a stone in the nest and a male winds his tail around her and **eggs and sperm are discharged**.
- Once the reproductive cycle is over, **both females and males die within days**
- Also, adults do not spawn, **die due to degeneration of internal organs**, lack of essential substances and the accumulation of poisonous metabolites

Life Cycle of the Sea Lamprey



Sedentary phase

- ✓ The eggs hatch after approximately 13 days and attained a length of approximately 6.4 mm. The blindworm-like larval lamprey is known as ammocoetes
- ✓ Small wormlike larvae swept downstream and when they locate suitable habitat- usually slit/sand stream bottoms and banks in slower moving waters- they burrow in and take up residence and undergo a sedentary phase
- ✓ The larvae feed micro-organisms, ciliates and diatoms from the water through filter-feeding
- ✓ Last from 3-17 years

Free swimming stage

- ✓ After sedentary phase, the larvae undergo metamorphosis. This begins in mid July and lasts until the end of September
- ✓ Obvious external changes occur in the sea lamprey including the development of functional eyes, a oral disc lined with teeth and a grasping tongue. Sea lamprey also change its color. Also their kidneys change to allow them to live in seawater
- ✓ Then lampreys leave the streams and enter the sea
- ✓ The lamprey parasitizes host fish by using their oral disc to suck blood and body fluids
- ✓ Once this parasitic stage is over, lamprey return to streams and the lifecycle begins all over again

THE END

Stay Home & Stay Safe