



Saving the Sturgeon • Study Guide

Jonathan travels to upstate New York to learn how biologists are working to save the sturgeon in the St. Lawrence river by rebuilding their spawning habitat and re-stocking the river. During a dive he films an amazing spectacle that has never been recorded before!

Objectives

1. Introduces viewers to the ancient group of fishes known as Sturgeons and their biology.
2. Demonstrates techniques for conservation and recovery of fish populations.

Questions for before watching the program

1. What is caviar? Where does it come from?
2. What is a Sturgeon?
3. How might fish populations become “depleted”?
4. What are some ways that a depleted fish population might be recovered?
5. Where is the St. Lawrence river and what bodies of water does it connect? Is it fresh water, salt water or both? (trick question!)
6. How are dams and hydro power plants a threat to fish populations in a river?

Discussion for after watching the program

1. What is caviar and how did it lead to the depletion of the Sturgeon in North America?
2. How do dams and hydro power plants contribute to the challenges facing the Sturgeon?
3. What are two major ways that biologists are trying to help the Sturgeon recover in the St. Lawrence?
4. Why were scientists collecting eggs from major Sturgeon?
5. Why are the eggs of a Sturgeon sticky?
6. What characteristics make for a good “spawning bed” in the river for Sturgeon?
7. What did Jonathan witness on the spawning beds that proves they work?
8. What parasite was attaching itself to the Sturgeon and how does it feed?