

SPECIES INFORMATION SHEET

Mya truncata

English name: Blunt Soft-shell clam, Blunt gaper	Scientific name: <i>Mya truncata</i>	
Taxonomical group: Class: Bivalvia Order: Myoida Family: Myidae	Species authority: Linnaeus, 1758	
Subspecies, Variations, Synonyms: –	Generation length: 5–10 years	
Past and current threats (Habitats Directive article 17 codes): Eutrophication (anoxia; H01.05), Reduced water mass exchange (–), Fishing (Bottom trawling; F02.02.01)	Future threats (Habitats Directive article 17 codes): Eutrophication (anoxia; H01.05), Reduced water mass exchange (–), Fishing (Bottom trawling; F02.02.01)	
IUCN Criteria: A2c	HELCOM Red List Category:	NT Near Threatened
Global / European IUCN Red List Category NE/NE	Habitats Directive: –	
Protection and Red List status in HELCOM countries: Denmark –/–, Estonia –/–, Finland –/–, Germany –/2 (Endangered, incl. North Sea), Latvia –/–, Lithuania –/–, Poland –/–, Russia –/–, Sweden –/NT		

Distribution and status in the Baltic Sea region

Mya truncata is an arctic species that lives in deep waters of the Danish straits and western Baltic Sea. It is suspected to have declined although the data on the species is scarce. The species is negatively affected by eutrophication and it may suffer also from bottom trawling as it does not bury very deep in the sediment.

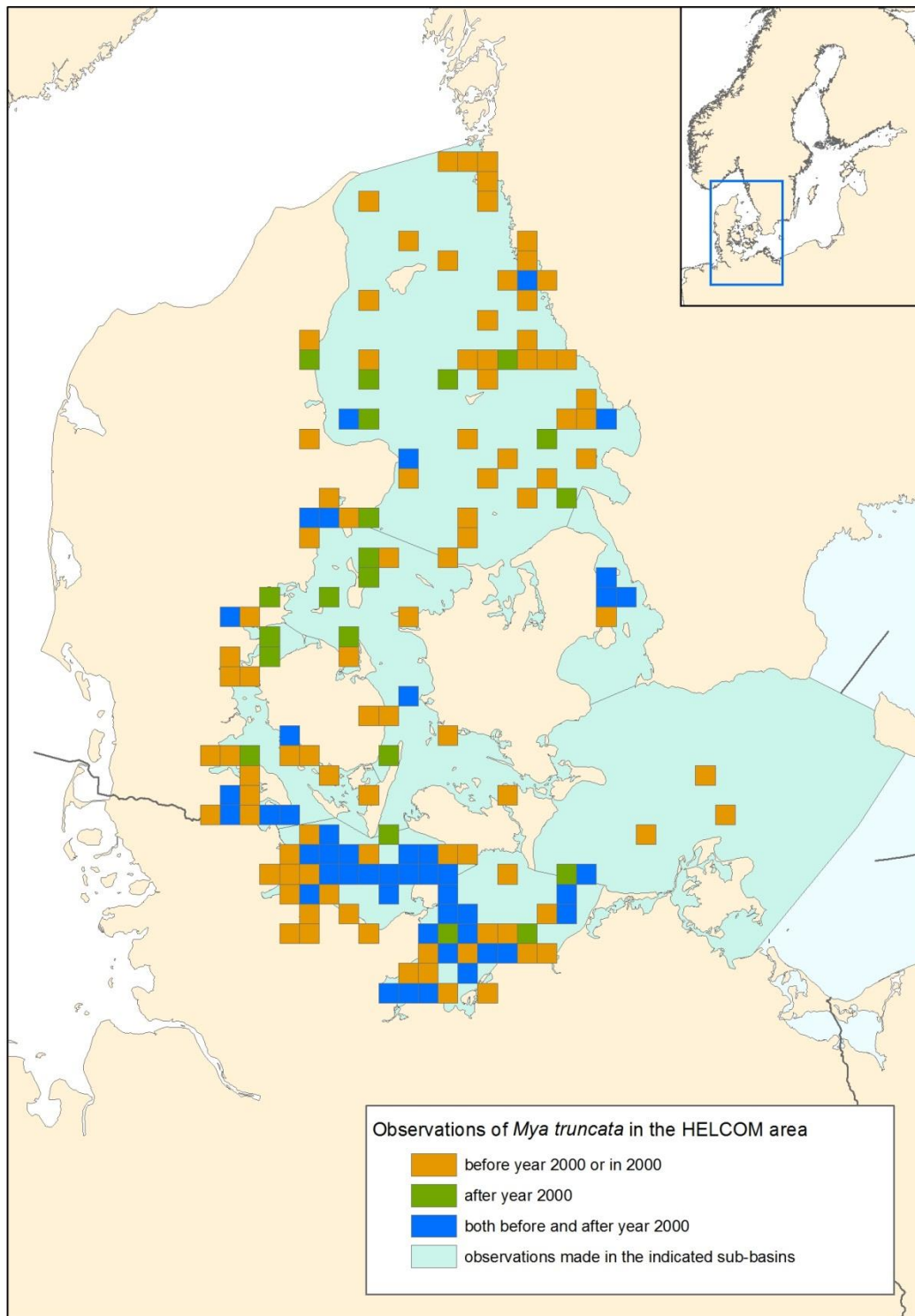


Mya truncata. Photo by Michael Zettler. Leibniz Institute for Baltic Sea Research Warnemünde (IOW).

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*Mya truncata***Distribution map**

The georeferenced records of species compiled from the Danish national database for marine data (MADS) and from the databases of the Swedish Species Information Centre (Artportalen), Swedish Meteorological and Hydrological Institute, International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES), Finnish Environment Institute, and the Leibniz Institute for Baltic Sea Research (IOW).



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Habitat and ecology

Mya truncata is restricted to muddy and sandy mud substrata in deep (10–30 m) and cold basins in the Kattegat and the Belt Sea (HELCOM). *M. truncata* needs salinity above 20 psu. It is rare in the Belt Sea with maximum densities of 1–10 ind./m². Reproduction takes place from October to January, and the larvae are pelagic. The species tolerates temporary oxygen deficiency.

Description of major threats

Reasons for threat are oxygen deficiency often caused by eutrophication in combination with poor water exchange (HELCOM). Bottom trawling can also affect the species negatively as it does not bury very deep in the sediment.

Assessment justification

In the HELCOM area, the distribution of the species is restricted to the deep, cold waters of the Danish straits and western Baltic Sea. In Germany, the recent data is seemingly abundant but it can give a wrong idea, as the effort for sampling has also increased so much. Furthermore, in German locations there have been only one/two specimens per sample, and the species is not abundant anywhere. In Swedish inventories in the 1930s it was found from ca. 40 locations along the west coast. In a similar inventory conducted in the 2000s only three records were made, all in shallow offshore banks. However, only a few of the old locations were resampled, and consequently the numbers cannot be directly compared. The difference between EOOs based on recent and old data indicates, however, that the available habitat has decreased in the HELCOM area, resulting in an assumed population decline of ca. 15%. The species is therefore categorized as Near Threatened (NT) according to criteria A2c.

Recommendations for actions to conserve the species

The species would benefit from actions decreasing eutrophication and oxygen depletion. The species may also benefit from restrictions to bottom trawling. The species burrows into the bottom sediment but only perhaps less than 15 cm, which means that the trawling may have a direct physical impact on individuals in some places.

Common names

Denmark: afstumpet sandmusling, Estonia: –, Finland: –, Germany: Abgestutzte Klaffmuschel, Latvia: –, Lithuania: –, Poland: –, Russia: –, Sweden: –

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