UC SANTA CRUZ CAMPUS NATURAL RESERVE

MACKENZIE'S CAVE AMPHIPOD

Stygobromus mackenziei (top) pictured above an aquatic isopod of the Asellidae family (either *Calasellus* or *Caecidota* genus)

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Scientific Name: *Stygobromus mackenziei*
Common Name: MacKenzie's cave amphipod
Global Rarity: Critically Imperiled; IUCN Rank: Vulnerable
State listing: Critically Imperiled
UCSC Rarity: Extremely Rare

General Description

The Mackenzie's cave amphipod is an extremely rare and cave-dwelling aquatic crustacean species presumed to be endemic to Empire Cave in Santa Cruz County, California. This species was described by Holsinger in 1974. Wang (2001) described collections taken in 1979: the largest females were 6 mm and the largest males were 4 mm. The species is distinguished by having 4 apical spines on the inner edge of the Maxilliped (a feeding appendage on the mouth). This species is smaller than *Styobromus imperialis*.

Conservation Status

Critically Imperiled

Life history

Habitat: Pools of water within Empire Cave

Diet: Unknown, but likely decaying organic matter

Predators: Unknown

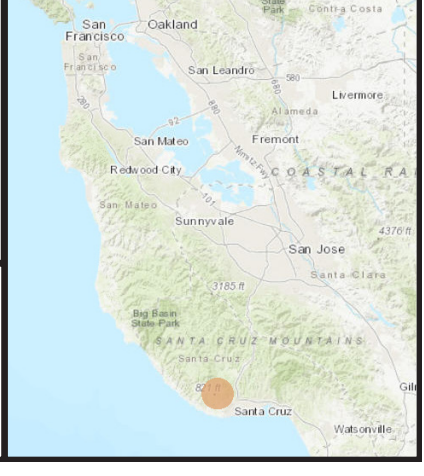
Geographic Range

The Mackenzie cave amphipod is presumed to be endemic to UCSC's Empire Cave within Santa Cruz County. They are not known to exist anywhere else on Earth.

Threats

UCSC campus

1. Disturbance from cave visitors
2. Changes in hydrology that may impact aquatic environments with Empire Cave



Ways you can help

1. Respect cave closures. If you are in a cave, do not step in puddles or wet cave floor surfaces.

References and Photo Credits

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