

REDISCOVERING MICHIGAN'S LOST SALAMANDER: THE WESTERN LESSER SIREN (*Siren nettingi*)

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Abstract.— In 2019, we documented the first lesser siren in Michigan, USA in 55 years and the only living individual hitherto recorded in the Great Lakes Basin. Their rediscovery has resurrected questions regarding the current distribution, status, and origins of this northernmost population. We attempted to address these knowledge gaps with manual trapping surveys informed by a watershed-scale environmental DNA assessment. We successfully trapped and documented a breeding population of sirens at their only known Michigan location, yet similar trapping efforts across habitats testing positive for siren DNA did not yield any captures. We discuss the utility and limitations of environmental DNA as a survey tool and the implications of Michigan's only known population of lesser sirens.