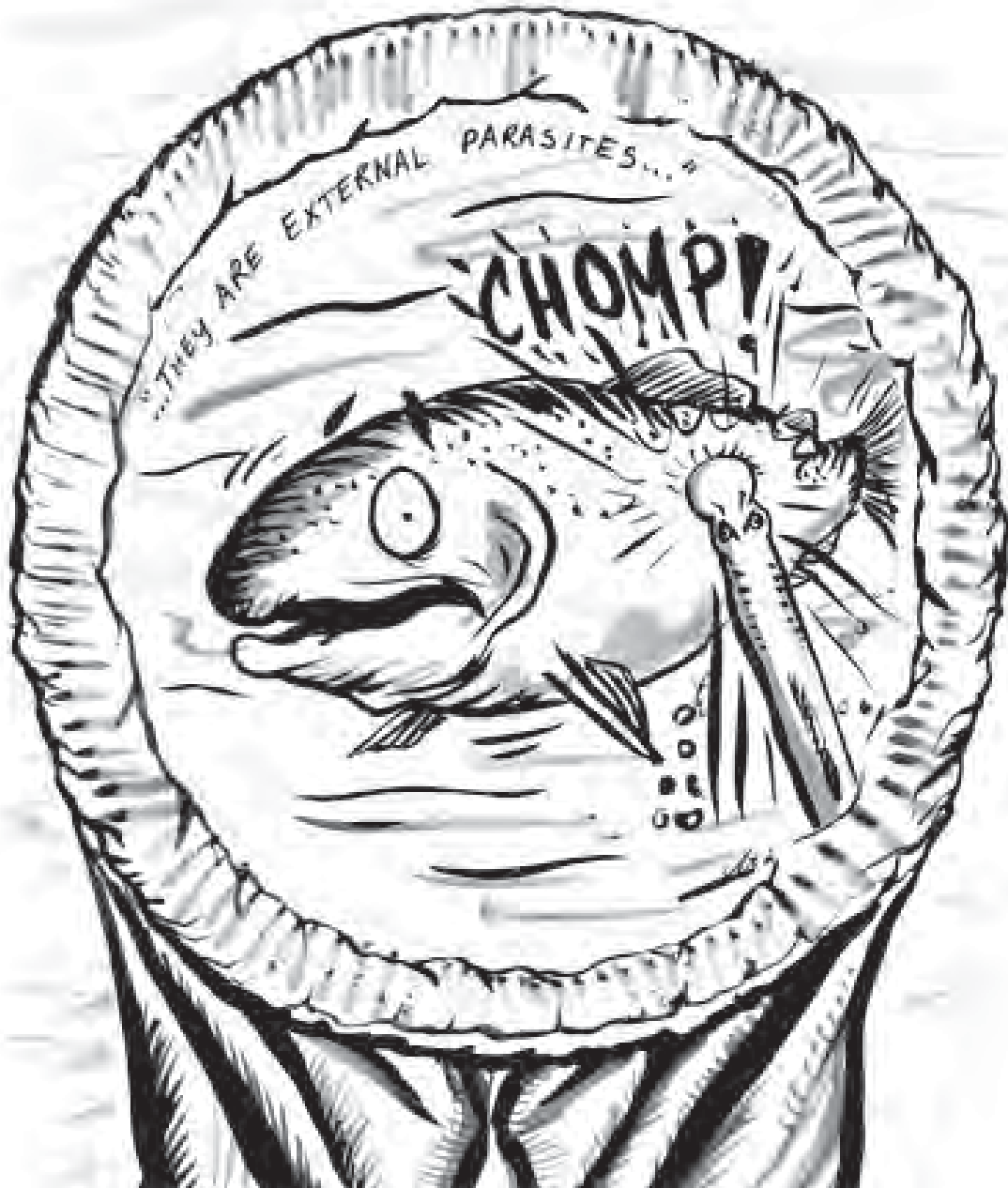


Life Cycle

Like salmon, the Pacific lamprey is anadromous, meaning that they spend all or part of their adult life in salt water and return to fresh water streams or rivers to spawn. They are a native species that ranges from southern California to Alaska.

Pacific lampreys live in the ocean as adults for 2 to 3 years, where they are external parasites on fish and marine mammals. A hungry Pacific lamprey will grip onto the side of a fish or marine mammal with its teeth. Its tongue, which has sharp edges like a file, will then make a hole in the animal, allowing the lamprey to feed on blood and other bodily fluids. This rarely kills the animal. Once full, the lamprey falls off until it is hungry once again.





Adult Pacific lampreys enter freshwater between July and September and spawn the following spring. Like salmon, Pacific lampreys do not feed during their upstream migration in freshwater.

Mating pairs of lampreys dig shallow nests in small gravel by moving their tails rapidly. They move larger rocks with their mouths. A female lamprey can lay 10,000 to 200,000 eggs. After spawning, Pacific lampreys die within a few days.

