



## Nevada Fish and Wildlife Office Death Valley National Park



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### Devils Hole Pupfish Numbers Up

SOUTHERN NEVADA... The U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service, National Park Service, and Nevada Department of Wildlife, announced today, the number of Devils Hole pupfish has increased to 126, the highest number recorded since 2004. Fall pupfish population numbers ranged from approximately 400 – 550 individuals from the mid 1970s until 1995. For reasons that are still unclear, the population began a precipitous decline in 1996 dropping to a low of only 38 fish in the spring of 2006.

“This is great news,” said Bob Williams, Field Supervisor for Fish and Wildlife Service in Nevada. “It gives us a little breathing room but we still have a lot of work to do.” Fall pupfish surveys in 2006 and 2007 recorded 85 and 92 fish respectively. “This increase in autumn counts from 2006 through 2008 is the first steady increase in the Devils Hole pupfish population since 1995,” said Williams.

Biologists from all three agencies as well as university researchers and private entities have been working diligently to reverse the decline. Actions taken by the agencies including supplementing the natural food in Devils Hole and investigating the physical, chemical, and biological factors that contribute to pupfish reproduction and survival. Although the Devils Hole environment is small, it operates in subtle and complex ways. “We still have a long ways to go to fully understanding this system,” said National Park Service Assistant Chief of Resources Management, David Ek.

Devils Hole pupfish are one of the original species listed pursuant to the Endangered Species Act. It only occurs in Devils Hole, a disjunct portion of Death Valley National Park within the borders of Ash Meadows National Wildlife Refuge in Nye County, Nevada. It was also the basis of a landmark Supreme Court decision addressing groundwater rights.

The mission of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is working with others to conserve, protect and enhance fish, wildlife, plants and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. We are both a leader and trusted partner in fish and wildlife conservation, known for our scientific excellence, stewardship of lands and natural resources, dedicated professionals and commitment to public service. For more information on our work and the people who make it happen, visit [www.fws.gov](http://www.fws.gov).