

KAINE M. DIEHL, DESTINEE DAVIS, & ZACHARY LOUGHMAN, Department of Biological Sciences, West Liberty University, West Virginia. *A Behavioral Study of Lacunicambarus thomai in a Field Setting*

Crayfish respond rapidly to environmental changes, this responsiveness to environmental changes makes them good detectors for degradation in the environment. Contaminants in the environment may influence crayfish by making them absent in what would be prime habitat. It may also affect the population densities of areas by decreasing the number of individuals in area that superficially look like prime habitat. This study was conducted on *Lacunicambarus thomai* in a field setting to gather information on the life history of a primary burrowing species of crayfish. Some pre-existing information on the behavior and parts of the life history of *Lacunicambarus thomai* were incomplete and, in some cases, incorrect. The data showed that what was perceived to be a fully nocturnal species or spends most of its time underground may not necessarily be true. Findings of this study conflicted on multiple instances with the previously believed notions. This project provides a better understanding of the life history of a primary burrowing crayfish species: the life history of primary burrowing crayfish has been less than stream dwelling species. This could lead to more studies being conducted on other species to obtain a better understanding of this elusive type of crayfish. The results of this study could be used to get a baseline of the basic life history of these animals as well as other types of burrowing crayfish species.