



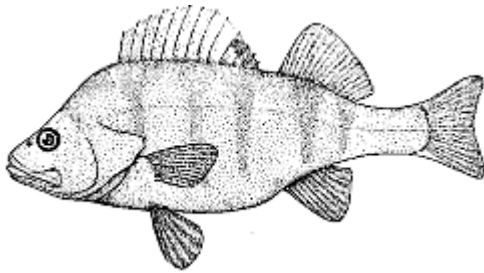
Freshwater Fish of Victoria: English Perch (Redfin)

Duncan Hill, (Melbourne)

Updated: March 2008

FN0040

ISSN 1440-2254



Common Name:

English Perch

Other Names:

European perch, Redfin perch, Redfin

Family:

Percidae

Scientific Name:

Perca fluviatilis Linnaeus, 1758

Status:

Introduced

Description

Deep body with a large head. Large mouth reaching back to below the eye. Large body scales. Two dorsal fins, but no adipose fin. Tail is slightly forked. Upper body usually grey to olive-green, greenish to silvery sides, white belly. Six or more vertical dark bands across the back and sides, more prominent in younger fish. Dorsal (top) and tail fins are grey to green with a distinct black blotch of the front dorsal fin. Other fins and lower tail fin are usually bright orange or red.

Distribution

Widespread and common in many Victorian lakes and streams. Distribution appears to be limited by an upper water temperature of about 31°C. Can be very abundant locally.

Habitat

Occurs in a wide variety of habitats, including lakes, dams, billabongs, swamps and the slower-flowing reaches of rivers and streams. Prefers areas with abundant weed, vegetation or other cover such as rocks and fallen timber. Does not occur in fast waters and is usually absent from high altitude areas.

Brief Biology

Known to reach 50 cm in length and 10 kg in weight in Australia, most fish in Victoria are smaller, rarely exceeding 2.5 kg. Redfin are usually 2-3 years old before reaching sexual maturity, but some individuals have been found to be reproductively mature at 12 months of age and 20 cm in length. A female fish can produce up to 100,000 eggs. Spawning occurs at night in late winter and spring (mid August to late October) when water temperatures reach 12°C, in quiet areas away from fast currents and often amongst aquatic vegetation and debris. Hatching occurs 7-8 days later, with juvenile fish schooling for some time before becoming solitary.

Carnivorous, with larger fish taking other fish as well as worms, molluscs, crustaceans and insects. Juvenile fish feed mainly on small crustaceans and insect larvae.

Other Notes

Native to temperate areas of Europe. Introduced to Australia by fish acclimatisation societies via Tasmania (1862) and Victoria (1868). A popular angling species, with good flesh.

Competes for food and space with native and introduced angling species. Redfin have impacted on native fish stocks by competition, and smaller native fish species through predation.

Redfin breed readily in still waters and tend to over-populate smaller bodies of water resulting in large populations of stunted fish. Redfin are now known to carry a lethal virus which in certain conditions can be transferred to other introduced fish, such as trout, and to native fish. For this reason the transfer of live redfin is discouraged.

Regulations

Recreational Fishing Licence requirements and regulations affecting the taking of English perch in Victoria are available in the Victorian Recreational Fishing Guide, available free from Recreational Fishing Licence sales agents and DPI Offices.

Further Reading

Freshwater Fish of Victoria is a series of brief information material on the native and introduced freshwater fish of Victoria's inland waters. Further, detailed reading on rainbow trout is contained in:

- *A Guide to the Freshwater Fish of Victoria*
Phillip Cadwallader & Gary Backhouse,
Department of Conservation and Environment

- *Australian Freshwater Fishes*
John R. Merrick & Gunther E. Schmida
- *Salmon at the Antipodes*
John Clements

Acknowledgements

This Information Note was originally developed by Charles Barnham PSM, with the assistance of Gary Backhouse, Phillip Cadwallader and Tarmo Raadik. The previous version was published in March 2007.

Illustration from *Freshwater Fishes of New Zealand*, R. M. McDowall

The advice provided in this publication is intended as a source of information only. Always read the label before using any of the products mentioned. The State of Victoria and its employees do not guarantee that the publication is without flaw of any kind or is wholly appropriate for your particular purposes and therefore disclaims all liability for any error, loss or other consequence which may arise from you relying on any information in this publication.