



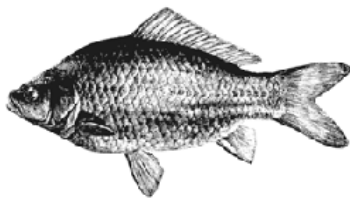
Freshwater Fish in Victoria: Goldfish

Duncan Hill, (Melbourne)

Updated: March 2008

FN0067

ISSN 1440-2254



Common Name:

Goldfish

Other Names:

Carp, Golden Carp, (Wrongly called "Crucian Carp")

Family:

Cyprinidae

Scientific Name:

Carassius auratus Linnaeus, 1758

Status:

Introduced

Description

No adipose fin and no jaw teeth. Thick, deep body, with a large blunt head, blunt snout and small mouth with a gape not reaching the rear of the eye. No barbels or whiskers at the mouth. Moderately large eye. Jaws of equal length, without teeth. A long dorsal fin. Upper body colour is usually olive-green to brown or deep gold, becoming paler to bronze or golden on the sides. Silvery-white belly, fins bronze or olive and translucent.

Considerable colour variation with red, orange, blue, white and even black specimens being taken, but the colour variation in the wild is not as wide or bright as the many aquarium varieties.

Distribution

Widespread and often locally abundant in most rivers and lakes of Victoria, except east of the Snowy River.

Habitat

Occurs most frequently in still, sluggish or slow flowing streams, dams and lakes. but specimens may be taken from a wide range of water conditions, temperatures, flows and

salinities. Common in quiet backwaters of rivers. Prefers weedy habitats. Can tolerate low oxygen levels and a wide water temperature range.

Brief Biology

Known to reach 40 cm and 5 kg, but is usually less than 500g, although fish are being more commonly taken in Victoria to the 1 kg mark. Sexual maturity is usually reached at 3-4 years of age, but may be reached at one year. Fish in the wild have been recorded to 10 years of age.

Spawning occurs from October to late January, with females producing several hundred thousand eggs which are laid among aquatic plants or amongst rocks. Larval fish attach themselves for a few days. Reservoir fish grow faster than stream fish. Omnivorous, feeding on a wide variety of plant material, algae, detritus, and small aquatic animals, mainly insects.

Other Notes

Native to eastern Asia; introduced to Australia in the 1870's. Not useful for either food or sport, and introductions to many waters have occurred because of its widespread use as fishing bait. A forage fish for large predatory native fish such as Murray cod and golden perch, and introduced fish such as brown trout and English Perch (Redfin).

Regulations

The Fishing Regulations specify Recreational Fishing Licence requirements and the means by which anglers may take estuary perch. Details of the licensing requirements and fishing regulations are provided in the Victorian Recreational Fishing Guide which is available free of charge from DPI Offices and RFL sales agents. The use of live goldfish as bait in Victorian waters is prohibited.

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 Goldfish is contained in:

- *Freshwater Fishes of South-Eastern Australia*
R M McDowall (Ed.)



- *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.

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