



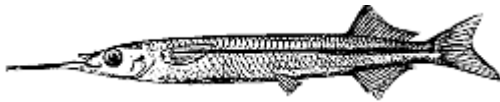
## Freshwater Fish of Victoria: Garfish

Fisheries Victoria, Melbourne

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### Common Name:

River Garfish

### Other Names:

Needle gar, Splinter gar

### Family:

*Hemiramphidae*

### Scientific Name:

*Hyporhamphus regularis* (Gunther, 1866)

### Status:

Native, Estuarine/Freshwater

### Description

Slender body, upper jaw much broader than long lower jaw. Lower jaw is former into a beak. Dorsal and anal fins are opposite each other. Greenish above, fins yellow and the long, slender beak can be tipped with red. Dark narrow streak running down middle of body on both sides.

### Distribution

From south Queensland southward to Lakes Entrance in Victoria. Seasonally abundant in some waters.

### Habitat

Commonly found in rivers, estuaries and coastal lakes, where it is usually associated with dense bodies of eel-grass. Surface schooling.

### Brief Biology

Grows to 38 cm in length. Little is known of its breeding biology.



### Common Name:

Southern Sea Garfish

### Other Name:

Sea garfish

### Family:

*Hemiramphidae*

### Scientific Name:

*Hyporhamphus melanochir* (Valenciennes, 1846)

### Status:

Native, Estuarine/Freshwater

### Description

Lower jaw formed into a bill or beak. Upper jaw is either as long as it is broad, or slightly longer than broad. Dorsal and anal fins are opposite each other. Colour is pale green above, silvery below. Silver band along each side. Tail fin has a dark edge.

### Distribution

Estuaries along the Victorian coast. Seasonally abundant in some waters. Very occasionally enters fresh water, such as rivers above estuaries.

### Habitat

A surface schooling species commonly found in shallow sheltered bays and estuaries.

### Brief Biology

Grows to 50 cm and 600g. Spawning begins in October and continues through the summer months. Some females mature at 22 cm, although most are 25 cm in length and at least 4 years old before spawning commences. Important part of the diet is "sea-grass" *Zostera* sp.

## Other Notes

Popular inshore recreational and commercial species.

## Regulations

The Fishing Regulations specify Recreational Fishing Licence requirements and the means by which the angler may take garfish. Details of licensing requirements and fishing regulations are provided in the Victorian **Recreational Fishing Guide** available free of charge from DPI Offices and RFL sales agents.

## 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 Garfish is contained in:

- *The Marine and Freshwater Fishes of South Australia*  
T D Scott, C J M Glover and R V Southcott

## Acknowledgements

This Information Note was developed by Charles Barnham PSM, with the assistance of Tarmo Raadik. The previous version was published in November 2003.

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