

Family - Cichlidae

Distinguished by a deep, strongly compressed body, and large head. A rounded or truncate caudal fin and a discontinuous lateral line. A large family native to the warm freshwaters of Central and South America, Africa, Syria, Palestine, southern India, and associated islands such as Cuba and Madagascar. Three of the 150 species imported into Australia for aquarium purposes have managed to maintain self-sustaining populations.

Convict Cichlid ***Cichlasoma nigrofasciatum*** (A. Gunther).



(A. Gunther)

Other names: Zebra cichlid.

Description: Small, deep-bodied, compressed, ovate fish. Large triangular head, with small mouth and thick lips. Single long based dorsal fin (XVIII, 7-8); anal fin (IX, 6); posterior rays extended; large pectoral and pelvic fins (13-14, and I, V). Ctenoid scales of moderate size (29-30 along lateral line). Reaches lengths of 150 mm and a weight of 16.5 g.

Distribution: Confined to the heated waters of Hazelwood Power Station cooling ponds near Morwell, Victoria. Extremely localised considered unlikely to survive in the lower temperatures of the adjacent waterways.

Natural History: A native to Central America (Guatemala, El Salvador, Costa Rica, Panama). Has now become established in ponds around Miami, Florida and in springs in southern Nevada, near Banff, Alberta. Was first recorded at hazelwood in 1978.

Tilapia ***Oreochromis mossambicus*** (Peters).



(D. Bludhorn)

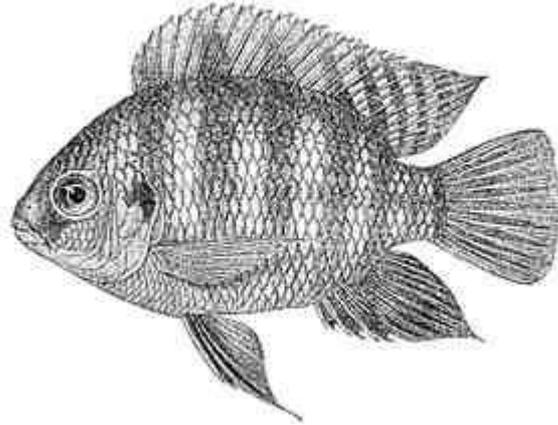
Other names: Mozambique mouthbrooder, or Mozambique tilapia.

Description: Medium-sized, deep-bodied, compressed and ovate. Large triangular head with small mouth and thick lips. Single long-based dorsal fin (XV-XVII, 10-13); anal fin long-based (III, 9-12); posterior rays extended; large pectoral and pelvic fins. Scales in 3, sometimes 2, rows on cheeks, 30-32 in lateral line. Can reach 360 mm in length and 2 kg.

Distribution: The most widely distributed and problematic of the tilapiine species. Occurs in drainages around Brisbane, Townsville, and Cairns, including the Upper Barron River and Tinaroo Dam, in Queensland and in the Gascoyne-Lyons River system, in Western Australia. It does not occur in the wet tropics area of north Queensland. Concerns that it may become established in other river systems, including the Murry-Darling.

Natural History: Endemic to warm, fresh and brackish waters of Africa, South and Central America, southern India, and Sri Lanka. Is also found in heated waters of Europe and Japan. Was first introduced to Australia as an aquarium species, with the first wild population being recorded in south-eastern Queensland in 1977, Townsville in 1978, and Carnarvon, western Australia in 1981.

Black mangrove **Tilapia mariae** Boulenger.



(A. Gunther)

Other names: Niger cichlid.

Description: Small to medium sized, deep strongly compressed and ovate body. large triangular head, with rounded snout and small mouth. Single long-based dorsal fin (XV-XVI, 12-15); anal fins shorter-based (III, 10-12), rays long; large pelvic and pectoral fins (13 and I, 5). Cyclois scales moderate size cover body and cheeks, 28-30 along lateral line, which is disjunct. May reach 300 mm Reported to reach 235 mm and 325 g in hazelwood pondage.

Distribution: Confined to the heated waters of the Hazelwood Power Station cooling ponds near Morwell, Victoria, and in the La Trobe River. Populations have also been found in the Cairns region and the lower Barron River and its tributaries. It is unlikely that it would be able to survive the low-temperatures of most Victorian waters.

Natural History: Endemic to the lower reaches and coastal lagoons of rivers in West Africa, from the Ivory Coast to the Cameroons. Was first recorded in 1978 at Hazelwood possibly due to deliberate release by aquarists.

Jack Dempsey cichlid **Cichlasoma octofasciatum**



Other names: None.

Natural History: Native to inland waters of North and Central America.