

Family - Cyprinidae

One of the largest families of fish. Found in a huge range in temperate and tropical waters of Europe, Africa, Asia, and North America. This family is characterised by no jaw teeth, mouth barbels, no adipose fin. Most closely related to the native families Ariidae and Plotosidae. Various sorts of carp are the best known, but the family also includes minnows, daces, and bitterlings. Four species have established self-maintaining populations in Australia since their introduction in 1862. Being small and brightly coloured many species of cyprinids are popular with aquarists, and some valuable economically.

Goldfish *Carassius auratus* Linnaeus



(R.M McDowall)

Other names: Carp, Crucian carp, Prussian carp.

Description: A small, plump, deep-bodied fish, with a large blunt head. Small, toothless protusible mouth and moderately large eyes. Dorsal fin (III-IV, 14-20); Anal fin small (II-III, 5-7). Tail moderately forked. Pelvic fins 7 rays; pectorals with 16-18 rays; many long gill rakers (40-46); vertebrae 27-28. Commonly grows to 100-200 mm, can reach up to 400 mm and 1 kg.

Distribution: Possibly one of the most widespread of the exotic species introduced to Australia. Appears in most freshwater systems in the southern half of Australia, extending from the Fitzroy River in Queensland, throughout New South Wales, Victoria, and South Australia in the inland Murray-Darling system and Cooper Creek, to the south-west of Western Australia.

Natural History: Is originally a native to eastern Asia, but now has almost worldwide range. Was imported to Australia in 1876 as an ornamental fish.

European Carp *Cyprinus carpio* Linnaeus.



(R.M.McDowall)

Other names: Carp, Common carp, Koi.

Description: Elongated fish with an arched back. Triangular head with a long, blunt snout and small eyes. Small to moderate mouth with two barbels at each mouth corner. Dorsal fin (III-IV, 15-24); anal fin small (III, 5); pectoral fin I, 15-16. Tail forked. Some variants known as mirror carp are only partly scaled. Can reach a length of 1200 mm and a weight of 60 kg. In south-eastern Australia reaches up to 10 kg, but 4-5 kg is more usual.

Distribution: Reported from the Warrego River, Queensland, to the mouth of the Murry River in South Australia, including most rivers in the Murry-Darling Basin. Found in several coastal streams in New South Wales, Victoria and Lake Frome in South Australia.

Natural History: Carp originated in China and spread throughout Asia. Human induced spread throughout Europe, and it is now established on all continents except Antarctica. The European carp was originally imported into Australia in Victoria and New South Wales, in the 1850s and 1860s as a sport fish. The early 1960s saw a strain of carp released at Boolarra in Victoria.

Roach *Rutilus rutilus* Linnaeus.



(R.H. Kuitert)

Other names: None.

Description: Relatively deep-bodied with a high arched back and a small head and mouth. Dorsal fin short based (III, 9-11), anal fin (III, 9-11). Distinctive forked tail. Scales of moderate size (40-45 along lateral line). Lateral line curves distinctly downwards; gill rakers short and stout. Usually reaches a length of 150-200 mm, but is known to reach 450 mm.

Distribution: This species is restricted to the South-east Coast Division of Australia. It is commonly found in the Murry River and coastal drainages of southern New South Wales and Victoria. Abundant colonies in Port Phillip Bay.

Natural History: Was originally introduced from Europe during the 1860s and 1880s for sport purposes.

Tench *Tinca tinca* Linnaeus.





(R.H. Kuitert)

Other names: None.

Description: A moderately thick-set fish with long, blunt snout and small eyes. Barbels at each mouth corner. Single dorsal fin (III, 8); anal fin (III, 6-8); pectoral rays 17-19, leading ray spinous. Scales very small (91-105 along lateral line); vertebrae 37-39; gill rakers 12-15 long and stout. Can reach up to 700 mm but commonly reaches 100-300 mm in length. Weight of nearly 9 kg.

Distribution: Are reported to be widespread and locally abundant in the Murry-Darling River system. Occasional found in southern New South Wales, as well as in coastal rivers of Victoria and South Australia. Is found in Tasmania although not in the Derwent River basin.

Natural History: Originally a native of Europe this species was introduced into Australia in 1876.

Rosy Barb *Puntius conchonus*.

Other names: None

Description: Can reach up to 40 cm.

Distribution: Found throughout several localities in Brisbane in the late 1970s, however has apparently not formed a self-maintaining population.

Natural History: A native to Northern India. This species was first recorded in Australia in 1970 as an escapee from an aquarium near Brisbane, Queensland.

