

What have we got here



NATIVE FISH

Waterways are a significant part of the Murray catchment, including rivers, creeks, dams, wetlands and billabongs. These places make great homes for some of our very special native fish.

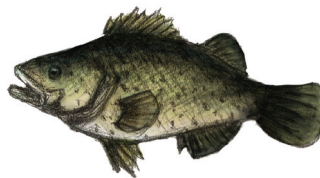
Southern pygmy perch:



65 - 85mm

- Pygmy perch are one of our smaller native fish and only grow to around 30-50mm.
- This endangered fish has only three populations left in New South Wales, the Billabong, Coppabella and Upper Lachlan catchments.
- Pygmy perch prefer to live in areas with reeds, rushes and water plants where they can hide from larger fish.
- Without slow moving water and submerged water plants, Pygmy perch cannot survive or breed.
- Pygmy perch are tiny predators - they feed on small crustaceans and invertebrates such as mosquitoes, mayfly and caddis-fly-larvae.
- Pygmy perch breed when they are around two years old - breeding occurs from late winter to early spring.
- The main threats to the Pygmy perch are draining wetlands, poor water quality, cold water from dams, rising salinity and the introduction of alien fish like Redfin and Mosquito fish.

Other native fish found in the Murray-Darling Basin include:



900 - 1000mm

Murray cod
Flat-headed gudgeon
Carp gudgeon

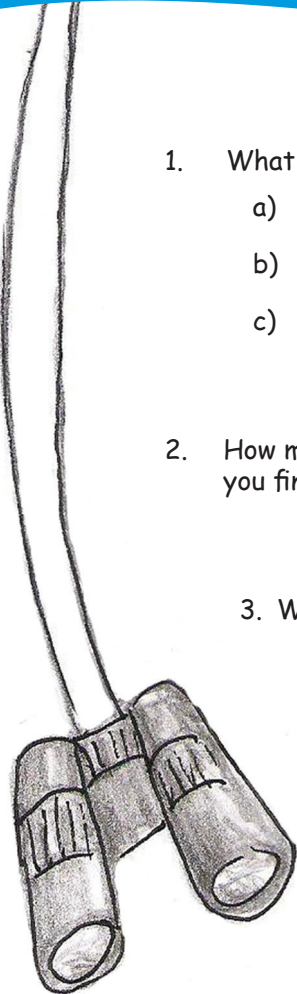


300 - 400mm

Golden perch or Yellowbelly
Silver perch
Freshwater catfish

- Like the Pygmy perch, these other native fish need places to live and breed (habitat) like hollow logs, branches, snags and water plants.
- These habitats are all under threat from removal of logs and snags, poor water quality and introduced fish.
- When fishing, be responsible - but also have fun.

ACTIVITIES



1. What is the conservation status of the Pygmy perch:
 - a) Vulnerable species
 - b) Threatened species
 - c) Endangered species
2. How many populations of Pygmy perch are left in New South Wales and in what catchments can you find them?
3. What type of habitat do Pygmy perch need to survive?
4. List some of the food that Pygmy perch like to eat:
5. What is the maximum size that the Pygmy perch can grow to? Now measure this out and see how big it is.
6. List two main threats to the Pygmy perch:
7. Out of the list of native fish, summarise information for two species making sure that you include: their maximum size, breeding habits, where they live, what they eat and their main threats.
8. What is something that you could do to help protect our special native fish?

For more information on alien and native fish please visit
the Murray Darling Basin Authority's website: www.mdba.gov.au

- Factsheets compiled by Miss Stacey Staunton-Latimer, Wirraminna Environmental Education Centre,
- Sketches drawn by Crystal Kirk, Year 9 Burrumbuttock
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