

Narranderra Fisheries

FACT SHEET

www.wirraminna.org/drdave-outback/

In the heart of Wiradjuri Country in New South Wales lies one of the keys to protecting the native fish of the Murray-Darling Basin. The Narranderra Fisheries Centre has been integral to the survival of our freshwater species since renowned fish scientist, John Lake, established it in 1959. Narranderra Fisheries has become specialised in the study, breeding and restocking of native fish species releasing up to 1.5 million Murray cod, Golden perch, Trout cod and Silver perch each year in to rivers and lakes across inland NSW.

Our native fish are important because they are unique to Australia and the Murray-Darling Basin. These fish have developed over millions of years and adapted to the natural conditions of the rivers, creeks, streams and marshes of the Murray-Darling Basin. It is essential that we work to protect and repair native freshwater fish populations and habitat to preserve the regions biodiversity.



KEY FISH SPECIES RESEARCHED AND BRED AT THE NARRANDERRA FISHERIES CENTRE



Murray cod



Golden perch or Yellow belly



Trout cod



Silver perch

Photos: © Gunther Schmida

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SHARING THE WATER

The water resources of the Murray-Darling Basin need to be shared between:

- town water supplies
- irrigators and farmers
- cultural requirements
- the environment

If the water quality and quantity isn't properly managed it has a significant affect on native fish species. They are unable to move freely throughout the waterways and find suitable habitat to live and breed. A balance between water users must be maintained if we are to protect the fish species.

FISH AND CULTURE

The native freshwater fish have a special cultural value to the Aboriginal people who have lived for thousands of years throughout the Murray-Darling Basin. The water brought life to plants and animals, which in turn brought life to the people. Fish were a plentiful and very healthy source of food that helped support the populations that lived along the many rivers, creeks and marshes.

Aboriginal people believe that "they are part of the land and by caring for it, the land will care for them by providing food, water and shelter". This meant that they would move from one area to another so that they didn't over-use the natural resources. They protected native fish numbers and habitats so that they would continue to supply food for future generations. This intimate relationship with the land and its animals (including fish) was also the basis of their spiritual life. Fish were respected and played an integral part in ceremony, celebration and Dreamtime beliefs.

We all could reflect and learn a lot from how the Aboriginal people protected and respected their resources and natural environments!



Artwork: Graeme Clifford



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ACTIVITIES

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Use the videos from the “Riverina Region Aboriginal Cultural Unit DVD” to complete the following questions.

FACTORS CAUSING THE DECLINE IN NATIVE FISH? (5:22)

1. If we are to research and understand native fish and why their numbers are declining we must first understand the factors that are putting pressure on them.

List the 6 factors given that cause the decline of native fish.

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TOOLS OF THE TRADE (6:30)

Narranderra Fisheries use several methods to provide a comprehensive picture of native fish in our rivers. They use fish traps, boat and backpack electro-fishing, special nets and underwater cameras.

2. In a short paragraph describe the process of how Narranderra Fisheries uses electricity to help them study fish.

3. What are the different measurements that scientists also take from the river?

Narranderra Fisheries ACTIVITIES

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HOW CAN YOU HELP? (10:30)

4. Trish Evans, the Narranderra Fisheries Centre Education Officer, mentions how everyone can take action to help our native fish. List the ways the students found out to help our native fish.



5. What does Stacey say is the challenge facing our native fish?

RAISING AWARENESS

6. Now you know about Narranderra Fisheries Centre and their quest to protect the native fish species of the Murray-Darling Basin. Your job is to create a poster that you think will educate people and raise awareness about our native fish species.