



Australian Government



Native Fish Strategy

FISH FACTSHEET: OLIVE PERCHLET (AGASSIZ 'S GLASSFISH, GLASS PERCHLET, WESTERN CHANDA PERCH)



Scientific Name

Ambassis agassizii Steindachner 1866

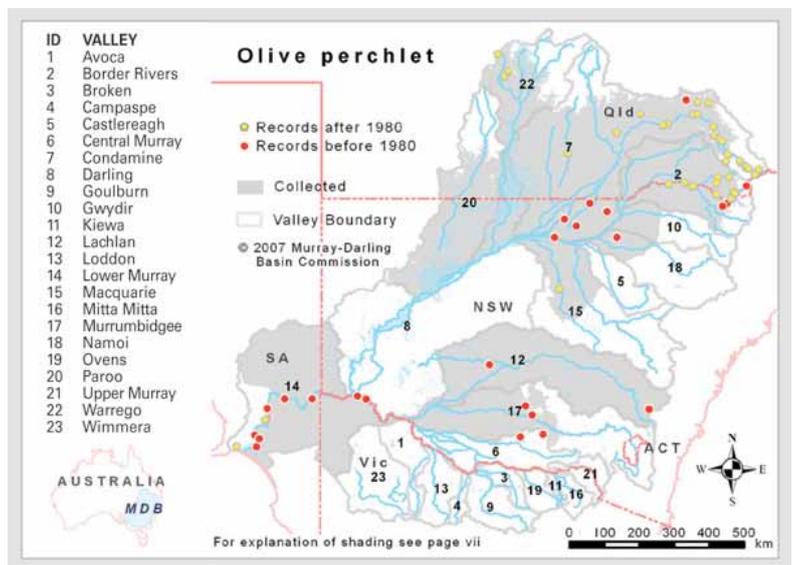
photo by Gunther Schmida

CONSERVATIONS STATUS

Threatened.

DISTRIBUTION AND ABUNDANCE

This species is still present in coastal streams from northern NSW to north Qld, but has undergone a significant decline in most of the Basin. It is now naturally extinct in SA, where it is present only as a single translocated population, and extinct in Vic. In NSW it is known from only a few localities in the Darling drainage upstream of Bourke, but is still locally abundant in the Border Rivers and Condamine-Balonne system and present in the Nebine and



Warrego catchments in Qld. Formerly, it was widespread in the lower Murrumbidgee, Lachlan and lower Murray rivers and throughout the Darling drainage in NSW. The species historic range only just extended to Vic where it was formerly present in an irrigation channel near Mildura, where it was last recorded in 1922. The last confirmed record from the Basin drainage in SA was in 1983.

IDENTIFICATION

Ambassis agassizii Steindachner 1866.

BIOLOGY AND HABITAT

The Olive perchlet inhabits the vegetated edges of lakes, creeks, swamps, wetlands and rivers, where it is often associated with woody habitat and aquatic vegetation in areas with little or no flow, particularly backwaters. It forms almost stationary, small schools during daylight hours in areas close to instream cover, which disperse during darkness. Both males and females are mature at 1 year of age, and live for 2-4 years, and females live longer than males. Spawning occurs from October to December, when water temperature reaches 22-23°C. Fecundity is usually 200-700 eggs, although a 49mm long female has been reported to contain 2350 eggs. The eggs are small (0.7mm diameter), adhesive and attach to aquatic plants and rocks on the streambed. Hatching occurs in 5-7 days at 22°C, and larvae are approximately 3mm long at hatching.

Olive perchlets are carnivorous, eating a range of microcrustaceans (copepods and cladocera), aquatic and terrestrial insects including mosquito wrigglers and small arachnids and, occasionally, small fish. This species feeds mainly during daylight hours. Little is known of its movement patterns in the Basin, but in coastal streams migration through tidal barrage fishways has been recorded.

POTENTIAL THREATS

The precise reasons for the decline of this species are unknown, but predation by alien species (particularly Eastern gambusia and Redfin perch), cold-water pollution that restricts spawning, habitat degradation, river regulation and related decline in wetland condition (e.g. loss of macrophyte beds in SA) are thought to be significant.

GENERAL REFERENCES

- Allen 1996;
- Allen & Burgess 1990;
- Cadwallader & Backhouse 1983;
- Lloyd & Walker 1986;
- Medeiros 2004;
- Milton & Arthington 1985;
- Moffat & Voller 2002;
- Morris et al. 2001.

PDF LINKS

Fishes of the Murray-Darling Basin: An introductory Guide;

<http://mdba.gov.au/files/publications/MDBA-Fish-species-book.pdf>

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