



Australian Government



Native Fish Strategy

FISH FACTSHEET: YARRA PYGMY PERCH



Scientific Name

Nannoperca obscura (Klunzinger, 1872)

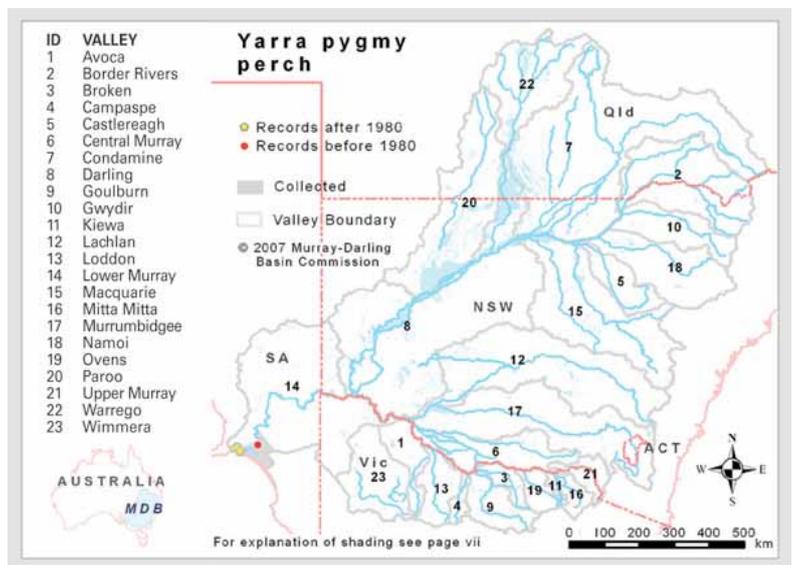
photo by Gunther Schmida

CONSERVATIONS STATUS

Restricted.

DISTRIBUTION AND ABUNDANCE

In the Basin, the Yarra pygmy perch is found only in Lake Alexandrina in the lower Murray. It is also found in coastal streams in western Vic and patchily throughout southeast SA, and it is locally common within suitable habitats in Lake Alexandrina.



IDENTIFICATION

A small, laterally compressed fish with a deeply notched single dorsal fin. Maximum size 75mm; usually less than 65mm. The tail is slightly rounded, and the mouth is small, reaching to just below the front of the eye. The lateral line is discontinuous. The lower, free edge of preorbital bone is straight, with the edge strongly serrated (compare with Southern pygmy perch). The body colour is gold to dusky brown-grey, paler on the belly, with dark spots or blotches in a row along the midline. The pelvic fins turn black in breeding males. The black pupil of the eye forms an imperfect circle (slightly notched compared with circular in Southern pygmy perch).

BIOLOGY AND HABITAT

In the Basin the Yarra pygmy perch is restricted to the Lake Alexandrina region in slow-flowing waters, wetland or drainage channel habitats with abundant submerged aquatic vegetation. It is found in small groups, often mixed with Southern pygmy perch. It breeds in spring, at water temperatures between 16 and 24°C. The diet includes microcrustaceans, molluscs and aquatic insects, such as mosquito larvae.

POTENTIAL THREATS

Predation by alien species such as Redfin perch and possibly Eastern gambusia may threaten the Basin populations. Habitat alteration such as loss of aquatic vegetation in irrigation channel/drain habitats or alienation of wetland habitats may also impact on the extremely localised populations of this species in the Basin.

GENERAL REFERENCES

- Allen et al. 2002;
- Cadwallader & Backhouse 1983;
- Hammer 2002b;
- Higham et al. 2005;
- Wedderburn & Hammer 2003;
- Woodward & Malone 2002.

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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