



FRESHWATER FISH
Congolli

Pseudaphritis urvillii

AUS	SA	AMLR	Endemism
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Photo: © Michael Hammer

Conservation Significance

The AMLR distribution is part of a limited extant distribution in adjacent regions within SA.²

Recommended for listing as Rare under NPW Act as part of the threatened species status review in 2003.¹

While the species remains reasonably widely distributed there is evidence to suggest a significant decline in abundance. This is supported by the loss of a commercial fishery at the largest known population (Lower Lakes) and a reduction in records for connected areas (i.e. River Murray as well as EMLR streams). Declines are predicted to continue if environmental conditions degrade further.³

Description

Small to medium sized fish species, highly variable in colour and reaching a maximum size of 35 cm (females), but more commonly 10-20 cm.⁴ Similar in appearance to the gudgeon but can be distinguished by very long second dorsal and anal fins.³

Other common names include Freshwater Flathead, Sandy and Tupong.³

Distribution and Population

Recent AMLR records come from the core habitat in the Adelaide region, southern Fleurieu, and Lower Lakes (also from coastal habitats of the South East). No recent records from wetlands and main channel of the River Murray or Kangaroo Island. An early disappearance was from the River Torrens although has recently returned to lower freshwater sections due to the installation of fish ladders. Distribution in

lowland streams of the eastern MLR and north of Adelaide has also declined (range and abundance) with the loss of previously permanent pools and reduced flow. Status in the west of SA is uncertain with the only recent records being from Port Davies and Whyalla.³

Within the AMLR the species occurs in the Fleurieu Peninsula, Gawler River, Myponga River, Lower Murray River, Onkaparinga River and Torrens River Basins, within the South Australian Gulf and Murray-Darling Drainage Divisions.²

Relatively widespread in freshwater systems with coastal access and in estuaries stretching along the coast of SA, although records from the west of SA are quite patchy. Records include Streaky Bay (1903), Upper Spencer Gulf near to the outlet of the Broughton River (1988-2004) and from the 'foot' of Yorke Peninsula (1931, 1969). Core distributional records come from:

- streams and estuaries in the Adelaide region (Gawler to Onkaparinga rivers)
- southern Fleurieu Peninsula (e.g. Myponga, Bungala, Inman, Hindmarsh and Middleton catchments)
- Lower River Murray region including the Coorong, Lower Lakes, EMLR and with intermittent records stretching upstream along the River Murray to the border
- coastal fringe freshwater habitat in the South East.

There are no records from Kangaroo Island. Formerly abundant in the River Torrens near Adelaide, and a commercial fishery existed for the species in the Lower Lakes.³

Habitat

Occur in a variety of habitats from purely marine to the mid sections of lowland streams (it has the ability to tolerate a direct transfer from marine to freshwater), but often occurs in or near areas of freshwater discharge and reaches its highest adult abundance in freshwater environments. Occupies habitat with soft silt or sand (especially lakes and estuaries) in which it can bury itself, or in streams with reasonable levels of instream cover (rocks and snags) and edge vegetation such as Bullrush.³

Biology and Ecology

An ambush predator. Diet includes fish, fish eggs, molluscs, crustaceans and aquatic vegetation. Appears to be pronounced size differences between

Further information:

Biodiversity Conservation Unit, Adelaide Region
Phone: (61 8) 8336 0901 Fax: (61 8) 8336 0999
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Prepared as part of the Regional Recovery Plan for Threatened Species and Ecological Communities of Adelaide and the Mount Lofty Ranges, South Australia 2009 - 2014



ADELAIDE AND MOUNT LOFTY RANGES SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Threatened Species Profile

Department
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males and females, with larger individuals being females. Reproduction occurs from May to September in the lower River Murray, and probably takes place in freshwater. Longevity not known but probably lives for four to five years. Traditionally known as a diadromous species (i.e. its lifecycle involves movement between fresh and salt water for different life stages), but such movements appear flexible and are not well understood.³

Aboriginal Significance

Post-1983 records indicate the AMLR distribution occurs in Ngarrindjeri Nation and Kaurna Nation. There are occurrences just inside Ngadjuri Nation.²

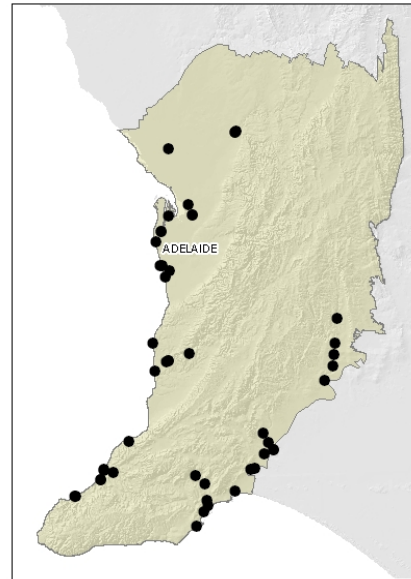
Threats

Threatening processes require greater investigation but known issues include:

- hydrological change and instream barriers to dispersal (e.g. barrages, weirs) blocking access to freshwater habitat
- reduced river/stream flow has led to a reduction in available habitat, reduced up and downstream movement, and an overall deterioration in the quality of habitat and food sources
- habitat loss or deterioration through changes to stream channel shape, vegetation cover and instream snags and impacts due to livestock damage
- water pollution or decline in water quality
- netting of spawning aggregations, especially in the Lower Lakes, may have contributed to regional declines³
- fishing - a potential target or bycatch in recreation fisheries (M. Hammer *pers. comm.*).

Additional current direct threats have been identified and rated for this species. Refer to the main plan accompanying these profiles.

Regional Distribution



Map based on filtered post-1983 records.² Note, this map does not necessarily represent the actual species' distribution within the AMLR.

References

Note: In some cases original reference sources are not included in this list, however they can be obtained from the reference from which the information has been sourced (the reference cited in superscript).

1 Department for Environment and Heritage (2003). *Review of the Status of Threatened Species in South Australia. Proposed Schedules under the South Australian National Parks and Wildlife Act 1972 Discussion Paper*. National Parks and Wildlife Council in partnership with the Department for Environment and Heritage.

2 Department for Environment and Heritage (2007). *Adelaide and Mount Lofty Ranges Regional Recovery Pilot Project Database*. Unpublished data extracted and edited from BDBSA, SA Herbarium (July 2007) and other sources.

3 Hammer, M., Wedderburn, S. and Van Weenen, J. (2007). *Action Plan for South Australian Freshwater Fishes: 2007-2012 Draft*. Native Fish Australia (SA) Inc., Adelaide.

4 Turner, M. S. (2001). *Conserving Adelaide's Biodiversity: Resources*. Urban Forest Biodiversity Program, Adelaide.

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