

Common carp, German carp, European carp (*Cyprinus carpio*)

Species and Origin: The common carp is a large omnivorous fish. They have large scales, a long dorsal fin base, and two pairs of long barbels (whiskers) in its upper jaw. Native to Europe and Asia, it was intentionally introduced into Midwest waters as a game fish in the 1880s.

(Be aware of a native look-a-like: the native fish bigmouth buffalo looks like a carp without barbells)

Impacts:

- Common carp are one of the most damaging aquatic invasive species due to its wide distribution and severe impacts in shallow lakes and wetlands
- Their feeding disrupts shallowly rooted plants muddying the water
- They release phosphorus that increases algae abundance
- Carp induced declines in water quality causes declines of aquatic plants needed by waterfowl and fish

Status: They are established in 48 states.

They are distributed in hundreds of waters in the southern two-thirds, and a few waters in the northern third of Minnesota. See [US map](#)

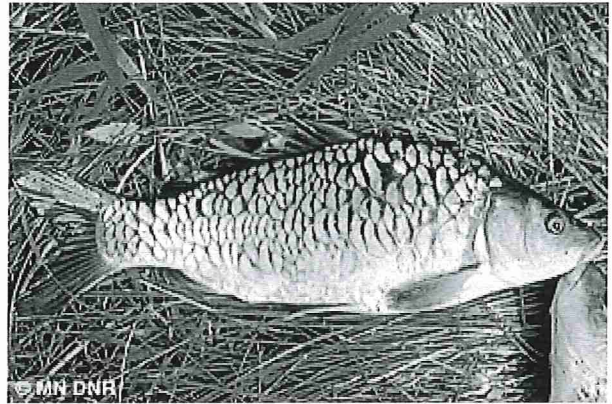
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Means of spread: The incidental inclusion and later release of live bait spreads common carp.

Where to look: They live in lakes, rivers, and wetlands and are often seen in spring when they spawn in shallow waters.

Regulatory Classification: It is a regulated invasive species (DNR), which means introduction into the wild is prohibited. Fish caught while angling may be returned to the same water body.

How can you help?



Common carp



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- Dispose of unwanted bait in the trash
- Don't release common carp into new waters