

Common Carp (*Cyprinus carpio*)



(Common Carp; Photo credit: Shedd Aquarium, <http://www.sheddnet.org/>)

- Introduction
- Description
- Impacts
- Geographical Information
- Origin
- Distribution
- Control
- Useful Picture Collections
- Educational Resources
- Related Sites
- References

Introduction

DESCRIPTION

The **Common carp** (*Cyprinus carpio*) is a heavy bodied fish, and usually bronze colored with large scales. Carp are usually olive-green colored on the back, becoming yellowish on the belly. The lower halves of the caudal fin and anal fin are often reddish colored. The mouth is toothless with the upper jaw slightly protruding. Common carp also have two barbels on each side of the upper jaw, with the posterior pair more prominent and located at the corners of the mouth. Carp spawn in the spring and early summer in weedy, grassy, shallow areas of lakes and streams. Spawning occurs when the water temperature is 63 - 78 degrees. Adhesive eggs are deposited randomly and become attached to submerged weeds, grasses or other substrate. Carp are both bottom and surface feeders, and consume a variety of plant and animal tissue from mollusks to mulberries.

- **Length:** 15 to 22 inches
- **Weight:** 1 to 7 pounds
- **Coloring:** olive-green on back; yellowish belly
- **Common Names:** German carp, European carp, mirror carp, leather carp

(Source: Wisconsin sea grant, <http://www.seagrant.wisc.edu/greatlakesfish/framefish.html>; Nebraska Game and Parks Commission, <http://www.ngpc.state.ne.us/fish/fishes.html>)

IMPACTS

The **Carp** does have a negative impact on its environment. Carp stir up sediment from the bottom of streams, rivers and lakes as part of their feeding habits. These feeding habits cause an increase of sediment in the water, which in turn causes an increase of turbidity. Turbidity is detrimental to other organisms living in the same stream, river or lakes an aggressive bottom dwelling fish. In other words, the **Common Carp** decreases fish life by hogging the food and muddying the waters.

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(Source: Wisconsin sea grant, <http://www.seagrant.wisc.edu/greatlakesfish/framefish.html>) ; Nebraska Game and Parks Commission, <http://www.ngpc.state.ne.us/fish/fishes.html>)

✕ [Top](#)

Geographic Information

ORIGIN



Carp were first brought to North America from **Europe** in the early 1800's as a food fish. Today, carp are found throughout the United States and Canada, and inhabit almost many rivers and lakes in the United States. Carp are truly a fish that's here to stay.

(SOURCE: Nebraska Game and Parks Commission, <http://www.ngpc.state.ne.us/fish/fishes.html>)

DISTRIBUTION

🗺 [Link to USGS Carp U.S. Distribution Maps](#) ✕ [Link](#)

<http://nas.er.usgs.gov/fishes/maps.htm>

	Grass carp June 1999 ✕ Link		Silver carp June 1999 ✕ Link
	Bighead carp June 1999 ✕ Link		

✕ [Top](#)

Control Methods

Carp Control

To help control the spread of carp, people must first be able to identify them.

One control method is to provide useful information for fishing carp and to encourage people to catch carp because carp are wonderful, and strong fighters. Carp can be caught from early spring to late fall, making it a popular species in the hot summer months.

► Fishing methods

Fishing methods are rather simple for carp. The only rule of thumb is to keep the bait on the bottom. As far as fishing times go, anytime is carp time, but carp fishing in lakes appears to be best from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Don't forget other fishing opportunities carp present. Carp are perfectly suited for bow fishing and spearing, with flood times and spawning periods offering the best opportunities.

The two most common baits for carp are canned corn and dough bait. Tests show that canned corn is probably the most effective bait for carp fishing. Dough baits with crushed corn added appear to be as effective as corn.

► According to [Reuters on Thursday, May 09, 2002](#), Australian Scientists are planning to use new methods that genetically modified fish to wipe out a European species of carp. By inserting copies of a gene called daughterless into the fish they hope to stop them from producing female offspring, which will eventually kill off the European species.

► The other control methods is to provide good recipes and to encourage people to eat carp. Carp were a

popular food fish in Europe before introduction into North America.

Here are three recipes from the [Nebraska Game and Parks Commission](http://www.ngpc.state.ne.us/fish/fishes.html) (<http://www.ngpc.state.ne.us/fish/fishes.html>)

► **Carp Burgers** (Credit: *Alfred Johnson, Kearney, NE*)

- 4 pounds carp
- 1/2 teaspoon sage, powdered
- 1 teaspoon celery salt
- 1/4 cup onion, minced
- 1/4 teaspoon black pepper
- 1 teaspoon baking soda

Fillet carp, skin and remove rib sections. Mix baking soda with enough water to cover fillets and soak overnight. Rinse fillets under cold water and dry with paper towels. Run fillets through meat grinder with fine blade twice. Mix onion, sage, celery salt, pepper and carp well in a large bowl. Form into patties, roll in dry pancake flour and drop into hot oil. Fry about 2 minutes on each side until brown, drain on paper towels and serve with horseradish, mustard, or shrimp cocktail sauce.

► **Pressure Cooked Carp** (Credit: *Deloris Kneifel, Columbus, NE*)

- skinned carp fillets cut into pieces
- 2 tablespoon salad oil
- 1 teaspoon pickling salt

Pack carp into pint canning jars and add salad oil and salt. Pressure cook 90 minutes at 10 pounds of pressure. For a taste variation add 2 tablespoons catsup, or 1 tablespoon of dry mustard, or 3 tablespoons of Dorothy Lynch dressing.

► **Barbecued Carp** (Credit: *Mrs. Carroll W. Durr, Nebraska City, NE*)

- 1 carp skinned, with tail removed
- 1/2 cup chopped onions
- 1/4 cup margarine
- 1 cup barbecue sauce

Spread cavity with margarine then sprinkle onions, salt and pepper inside cavity. Spread 1/2 cup barbecue sauce on piece of heavy aluminum foil large enough to wrap fish, put fish on top of sauce, and cover with the remainder of the sauce. Wrap fish tightly in foil. Place in baking pan and bake at 350 for 1 1/2 hours. Turn 2-3 times during baking. When done place on platter and pour sauce from foil package onto fish to serve.

Source: 1. Nebraska Game and Parks Commission, <http://www.ngpc.state.ne.us/fish/fishes.html>; 2. Australians Plan GM Warfare Against Invading Carp: (Reuters on Thursday, May 09, 2002, http://enn.com/news/wire-stories/2002/05/05092002/reu_47171.asp)

✕ [Top](#)

Useful Picture Collections

	Credit: NEBRAKAland Magazine Org: Nebraska Game and Parks Commission (Carp)		Credit & Org: Ohio Department of Natural Resources (Common Carp)
	Credit & Org: Carp Universe/Saxon Tackle (Big Carp)		Credit & Org: Carp Universe/Saxon Tackle (Big Common Carp)
	Credit & Org: Berkley Digital Library (Frog)		Credit & Org: Berkley Digital Library (Baitfish)

Related Sites

[Australians Plan GM Warfare Against Invading Carp: \(Reuters on Thursday, May 09, 2002\)](http://enn.com/news/wire-stories/2002/05/05092002/reu_47171.asp)

http://enn.com/news/wire-stories/2002/05/05092002/reu_47171.asp

This article describes the plan of Australian scientists to use genetically modified fish to wipe out a European species of carp that has invaded its rivers.

[Grant Lakes Information Network \(GLIN\): Invasive Species in the Great Lakes Region](http://www.great-lakes.net/envt/flora-fauna/invasive/invasive.html)

<http://www.great-lakes.net/envt/flora-fauna/invasive/invasive.html>

This site includes a comprehensive information on invasive species in the Great Lakes.

▶ [Common Carp](http://www.great-lakes.net/envt/flora-fauna/invasive/carp.html) <http://www.great-lakes.net/envt/flora-fauna/invasive/carp.html>

[Grass Carp Distribution Map \(Jun. 1999\): the United States Geological Survey \(USGS\)](http://nas.er.usgs.gov/fishes/accounts/cyprinid/ct_idell.gif)

http://nas.er.usgs.gov/fishes/accounts/cyprinid/ct_idell.gif

This map shows the current geographic distribution of Grass Carp in the U.S.

[Silver Carp Distribution Map \(Jun. 1999\): the United States Geological Survey \(USGS\)](http://nas.er.usgs.gov/fishes/accounts/cyprinid/hy_molit.gif)

http://nas.er.usgs.gov/fishes/accounts/cyprinid/hy_molit.gif

This map shows the current geographic distribution of Silver Carp in the U.S.

[Common Carp \(Cyprinus carpio\): the Berkeley Digital Library](http://ellb.cs.berkeley.edu/kopec/tr9/html/sp-common-carp.html)

<http://ellb.cs.berkeley.edu/kopec/tr9/html/sp-common-carp.html>

This site provides very specific information about spawning, eggs, larvae, juveniles, and life history with figures and references.

[Introduction of the Silver Crucian Carp \(by Hungarian Researcher\)](http://spike.fa.gau.hu/~tejfol/ekarkis.html)

<http://spike.fa.gau.hu/~tejfol/ekarkis.html>

▶ [General character](http://spike.fa.gau.hu/~tejfol/ekarkis2.html) <http://spike.fa.gau.hu/~tejfol/ekarkis2.html>

▶ [Interests](http://spike.fa.gau.hu/~tejfol/ekarkis6.html) <http://spike.fa.gau.hu/~tejfol/ekarkis6.html>

[Bighead Carp \(Jun. 1999\): the United States Geological Survey \(USGS\)](http://nas.er.usgs.gov/fishes/accounts/cyprinid/hy_nobil.gif)

http://nas.er.usgs.gov/fishes/accounts/cyprinid/hy_nobil.gif

This map shows the current geographic distribution of Bighead Carp in Great Lakes.

[Introduced fish: American Fisheries Society](http://www.afsifs.vt.edu/) <http://www.afsifs.vt.edu/>

▶ [Common Carp](http://www.afsifs.vt.edu/carp.html) <http://www.afsifs.vt.edu/carp.html>

[Carp Universe](http://www.carpuniverse.com/index.html)

<http://www.carpuniverse.com/index.html>

This site provides lots of useful information on carp fishing including [recipes](#), [baits](#), [summer carping](#), [winter carping](#), [carp history](#), [fishing games](#), and [forums](#).

▶ [Common Carp](http://www.carpuniverse.com/frames_site_navigation_pages/common2.html) http://www.carpuniverse.com/frames_site_navigation_pages/common2.html

▶ [Crucian Carp](http://www.carpuniverse.com/frames_site_navigation_pages/crucian2.html) http://www.carpuniverse.com/frames_site_navigation_pages/crucian2.html

▶ [Mirror Carp](http://www.carpuniverse.com/frames_site_navigation_pages/mirror2.html) http://www.carpuniverse.com/frames_site_navigation_pages/mirror2.html

▶ [Grass Carp](http://www.carpuniverse.com/frames_site_navigation_pages/grass2.html) http://www.carpuniverse.com/frames_site_navigation_pages/grass2.html

▶ [Ornamental Carp](http://www.carpuniverse.com/frames_site_navigation_pages/ornamental2.html) http://www.carpuniverse.com/frames_site_navigation_pages/ornamental2.html

▶ [Wild Carp](http://www.carpuniverse.com/frames_site_navigation_pages/wild2.html) http://www.carpuniverse.com/frames_site_navigation_pages/wild2.html

[Canadian Carpin Holidays](http://www.canadiancarpin.com) <http://www.canadiancarpin.com>

The site provides carp fishing information along the St. Lawrence river.

[Carp Fishing at Les Etangs de la Croix Blanche](http://home.worldnet.fr/~gareth/) <http://home.worldnet.fr/~gareth/>

The site provides carp fishing information in France.

[Common Carp: Nebraska Game and Parks Commission](http://www.ngpc.state.ne.us/fish/fishbook/spec178.html)

<http://www.ngpc.state.ne.us/fish/fishbook/spec178.html>

This page provides a brief carp information including distribution, identification, life history, fishing, and recipes.

▶ [Fishes of Nebraska](http://www.ngpc.state.ne.us/fish/fishes.html) <http://www.ngpc.state.ne.us/fish/fishes.html>



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