Murray Cod *(Maccullochella peelii)*

Tail fin shape

■ Species Range

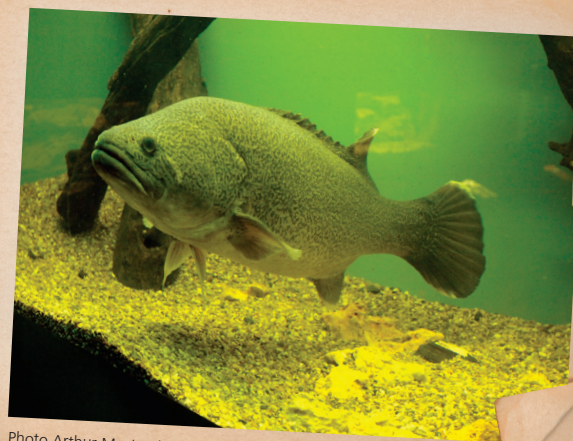☐ North Central CMA Region
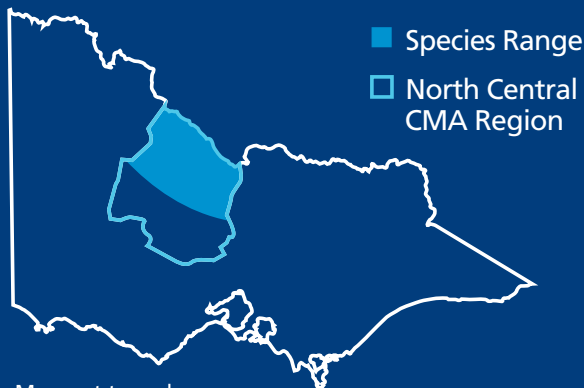
Map not to scale

Photo Arthur Mostead

Photo Gunther Schmida

Family: Perchichthyidae

Other common names: Cod, Goodoo

Description: The Murray Cod is the largest freshwater fish in Australia. It is easily identified due to its large mouth, creamy-white belly and mottled green pattern on the body and head. Individuals can grow up to 1800 mm in length.

Fins: Dorsal, pectoral, pelvic and anal fins present. The tail is convex.

Habitat: Found in slow flowing turbid water in rivers and streams at low elevations, or fast moving clear rocky upland streams. Murray Cod prefers deeper water around boulders, logs, undercut banks and overhanging vegetation.

Conservation status & distribution: The species is listed under the *Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988*, is vulnerable under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* and is listed as critically endangered under the *International Union for Conservation of Nature red list 2012*. Natural populations occur in the low and mid-ranges of the Murray-Darling Basin. Translocated populations also exist in the Nepean River in New South Wales and the Yarra River in Victoria.

Breeding: Spawning occurs during spring, after migration of up to 120 km. Maturity is around three to five years of age. After spawning individual fish will often return to the same area they occupied prior to migration.

Eggs: Eggs are large (3 to 3.5 mm in diameter), adhesive and are deposited onto hard surfaces such as rocks and logs. The males guard the eggs during incubation. Hatching occurs in 5-13 days.

Diet: The Murray Cod is an ambush predator; eating fish, crayfish and frogs.

Threats: It is thought that Murray Cod populations started to decline in the 1920s due to overfishing, habitat destruction, river regulation and the removal of woody habitat.

Interesting facts and features: The Murray Cod is a long lived species. The oldest Murray Cod recorded was aged at 48 years old.

Spawning time	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
									✓	✓	✓	

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