

Carp (*Cyprinus carpio*)

General Information

Carp are extremely tolerant of a wide range of environmental conditions including extremely low dissolved oxygen waters and are found throughout the state. Once considered a nuisance there has been a renewed interest in fishing for these giants.



Native Range

Native of Asia, carp are now found on every continent except Antarctica, and all forty eight contiguous states of the United States. (Edwards and Twomey 1982)

Habitat Description

Lake: shallow, warm, well vegetated lakes with mud & silt substrate, tolerant of turbid waters, littoral zone 25 - 50% of surface area with 35 - 55% covered in vegetation, extremely tolerant of low oxygen waters, will gulp surface air when d.o. levels < 0.5 mg/l, tolerant of brackish waters. Occupy shallow areas with thick vegetation in summer & early fall, as temperature drops move to deeper water. (Edwards and Twomey 1982)

River: slow moving, low gradient rivers with soft bottoms, extremely tolerant of turbid conditions, > 50 % cover in pools, tolerant of salinities up to 2.5 ppt (Edwards and Twomey 1982)

Optimum Habitat Requirements

Dissolved Oxygen	6 - 7 mg/l
Temperature	20° - 28° C
pH	6.8 - 7.5
Turbidity	< 75 JTU
Current	< 20 cm/sec

Diet

Fry	zooplankton, phytoplankton
Juveniles	worms, insect larvae, seeds, algae
Adults	worms, insect larvae, seeds, algae
Notes: Opportunistic feeders, utilize any available food source (Edwards and Twomey 1982)	

Growth (mm)

Age	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII
Recent growth data not available							

Notes: Population density is the most significant factor controlling growth, production is correlated to the number of summer days > 20° C

Reproduction

Time of Year	April - June	Age Males Mature	II-IV
Temperature Range	13° - 21° C	Age Females Mature	III-V
Water Depth	< 1.8 m	Nest	none
Substrate	flooded veg. (terr.)	Egg Type	adhesive
Time of Day	important	Parental Care	critical
Critical pH	none	Days to Hatching	none
Vegetation	adhesive	Stable Water Level	stable to rising

Notes: spawn over a prolonged period of time, eggs deposited on flooded vegetation. Eggs tolerant of fluctuating d.o. levels and can tolerate d.o. levels as low as 1.2 mg/l. Feeding & spawning activities increase turbidity. (Edwards and Twomey 1982, Scott and Crossman 1984)