

# AQUATIC INVADERS



**COMMON NAME:** Goldfish

**SCIENTIFIC NAME:** *Carassius auratus* (Linnaeus 1758)

**NATIVE DISTRIBUTION:** Eastern and central Asia, including China, Russia, Korea, and possibly Japan and Taiwan.

**U.S. distribution:** The goldfish was the first foreign fish introduced into the U. S., and has been here since at least the late 1600s. The species can be found in the wild in every state except Alaska.

**Habitat:** The goldfish is a very adaptable species, and lives in a variety of natural and artificial habitats, including: lakes, ponds, reservoirs and slow-flowing streams. It is often found in areas with submerged aquatic vegetation.

**Life cycle:** Individuals become adults after about 1 to 2 years. During spawning, the females scatter their adhesive eggs over vegetation, roots, gravel or other substrata. The males then fertilize the eggs. Eggs hatch in about 3 to 7 days. Individuals typically live 6 to 7 years.

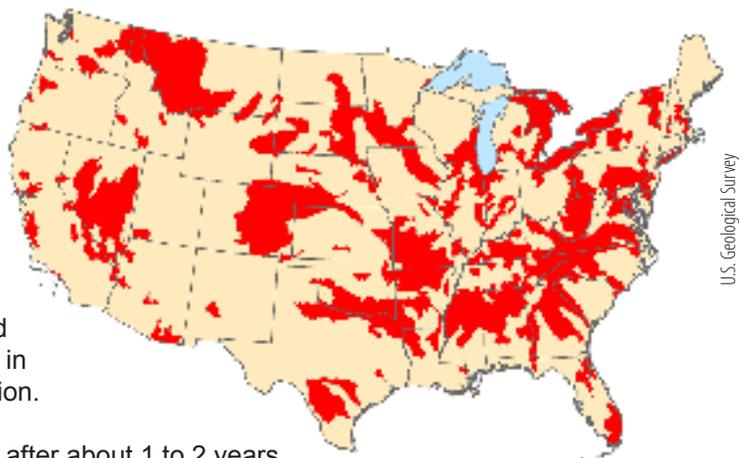
**Cool facts:** In the wild, the species is a dull olive-brown or bronze. The bright orange goldfish we are familiar with from pet stores is actually a mutation that has been selectively bred for by fish growers. When re-introduced to the wild, reproducing populations of bright orange goldfish quickly revert to the ancestral “wild” type coloration within a few generations.

**Pathways of invasion:** Aquarium releases, bait bucket releases, water garden flooding.

**Impacts:** Goldfish are messy eaters, stirring up the substrate while feeding. This suspension of silt causes excess turbidity in the water, which in turn can kill many kinds of aquatic plants. Additionally, suspended silt can cover the eggs of native species of fish and kill them. The goldfish competes with native species for habitat and food. This species is also a potential vector for diseases and parasites.

**Ways to prevent its spread:**

- Never release pets or any non-native organism into the environment.



- Make sure that in the event of a flood, the fish, plants, snails, etc. from your water garden will not be washed in to adjacent aquatic environments. Water runs down hill!
- Never dump your bait bucket into any water body.
- Report invasive species to local officials and the USGS <http://nas.er.usgs.gov/> or by calling 877-7867-267 (877-STOP-ANS)

These tips apply to ALL non-native fish.

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*Don't forget: You may be able to find native fishes for your aquaria, water garden or bait bucket.*

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