

Don't Let It Loose! – Oriental weatherfish, *Misgurnus anguillicaudatus*



Where does the species originate from?

Oriental weatherfish are native to eastern Asia from Siberia south to northern Vietnam, including Japan.

How they are introduced and spread?

Oriental weatherfish are commonly sold in the aquarium trade and can be introduced to the wild when aquariums are dumped, or bait buckets are emptied. Previous accidental introductions are from aquaculture facilities where fish escaped into the wild. Their use as a food fish is also linked with their purposeful introduction into the wild to create harvestable populations.

Environmental impact:

Oriental weatherfish can reduce populations of aquatic insects that are important as food to native fishes. They are voracious eaters, can adapt to a wide range of habitats, and breed prolifically. They can also increase turbidity and nitrogen levels in standing water, which may negatively impact water quality.

Fish facts:

- Before there was the weather guy on the news to recommend we pack a raincoat, people kept oriental weatherfish as pets to predict the weather. This popular aquarium species is highly sensitive to changes in barometric pressure, which can accompany a change in weather. Agitated activity and fast swimming in circles are sure signs major weather changes are imminent.
- Weatherfish can breathe atmospheric oxygen.
- Copious amounts of slime protect the fish against predation and desiccation.

Don't Let It Loose! Approximately 1/3 of aquatic nuisance species that currently threaten aquatic ecosystems originate from the aquarium and ornamental species trade (Padilla & Williams, 2004).