

# Oriental weather loach

*Why releasing pets and aquaria just doesn't make sense*

## **A fish that forecasts the weather!**

Although this fish is rumored to forecast the weather (it becomes more active in response to changes in barometric pressure) it has become yet another problematic species that is invading freshwater habitats in all Pacific Region states. This small, eel-like fish is well-liked in the aquarium trade because it is hardy and helps keep a clean tank, as it eats virtually anything that falls to the bottom. But several introductions into natural waterways have resulted in one major negative impact: reduction in populations of aquatic insects important as food to native fishes. Weather loach populations may be on the rise. They have been found living in channels off the Columbia River, and in the Malheur, Owyhee, Boise, and Snake River systems. Hawaii has seen an increasing population since the 1960s due to its use as a bait fish, increasing its chance of spread.

To learn more about the Oriental Weather Loach:

<http://nas.er.usgs.gov/queries/FactSheet.aspx?SpeciesID=498>



Image: Joanne Kearns



Image: USGS



Image: [www.dec.ny.gov](http://www.dec.ny.gov)

Weather loaches thought to be connected with aquaria release, caught in 2010 in NY. The largest is about 8 inches.