



Virtual Fisheries Forum 27/06/2023 (Prussian Carp: A Recent Invader To English Waters).

Q&A session

Q. What are we expected to do if we land one of these Prussian Carp or suspect it's Prussian?

A. (Andy) Anglers should put them back into the water where they have caught them. Certain identification of a Prussian Carp on the bankside in an angler's position is effectively impossible so we advise anglers to take pictures of the suspect fish, capturing its body and features from different angles. These can then be sent to us at non-natives@environment-agency.gov.uk with details of where they were caught for us to investigate. The Angling Trust have a very comprehensive information and ID tool on their website [AVAILABLE HERE](#).

Q. Have any of these species been found in rivers, canals etc?

A. (Gareth) So far all of the Prussian Carp we have confirmed to be present have been in stillwater fisheries, but we have had a single specimen of a different Carassius species (*Carassius langsdorfii*) being found in a south west river.

A. (Alex) Would it be fair to say Carassius species and Prussian Carp are not riverine fish or that they are not well suited to living in flowing water?

A. (Gareth) They do inhabit rivers on the continent but usually large slow-moving rivers.

Q. Are they also entering the country as 'water ballast' in pleasure craft?

A. (Gareth) The main consensus is that Prussian Carp's introduction has not been accidental unlike other invasives such as Killer shrimp which

have spread around through ballast water of boats. We can't rule ballast water out completely however, but it is not the main pathway.

Q. Is there a golden variety of Prussian Carp, like an ornamental?

A. (Gareth) No there is not a golden variety currently as there is with goldfish for instance.

Q. Given how these things can reproduce should an eradication process be started sooner rather than later; my fear would be that by the time the go ahead happened for any eradication it would be too late for the naturalised crucian that most of us hold dear?

A. (Andy) It is a difficult call as to when an eradication programme should be implemented. For Prussian Carp we want to understand their distribution and their likely impact before making a decision as to whether a full eradication programme or targeted removal is appropriate. They clearly pose a risk to Crucians and we want to protect arc sites as best as possible but currently common goldfish pose more threat to Crucians than the Prussian carp do.

Q. How big do Prussian Carp grow to?

A. (Gareth) Generally to a maximum of about 45cm in length and 3kg in weight. They do not grow huge, and this is probably one of the reasons they are popular on the match fishing scene.

Q. Do their eggs transfer easily on nets or on water plants removed from garden ponds?

A. (Gareth) We can't rule out this as a method of spread, but it is unlikely. The eggs of Prussian Carp are quite sturdy/resilient able to survive in very sub-optimal environments. A study was done in Hungary where ducks had ingested fertilized Prussian carp eggs and the eggs were still viable to hatch once retrieved from the duck's excrement.

Q. Are any legal actions/prosecutions being taken against the fisheries owners where Prussian carp have been discovered?

A. (Andy) We have ongoing investigations which I obviously can't speak about. Our work so far has focused on establishing the routes that Prussian carp have entered the country and the sources from which they

have got into fisheries. If, during our investigations, we do find instances of deliberate introductions then we will take appropriate enforcement action.

Q. Are Prussian carp's genetics dominant and if so, would hybrids regress back to a pure Prussian carp if they entered the country as hybrids?

A. (Gareth) If they were hybrids, they would produce other hybrids after breeding. They could still cross breed with a true Prussian carp, but pure Prussian carp would not result.

Q. More needs to be done to educate the general public re the reasons why they shouldn't drop their unwanted fish into the nearest pond, canal! - e.g., Koi, Goldfish?

A. (Andy) Absolutely, work has been done with the ornamental trade to educate customers around this issue but obviously it is an ongoing battle. We also got some great coverage in the general media from this year's non-native species week. This all helps to raise the profile of the risk posed by non-native species with the general public.

(Gareth) This also extends to us all as anglers and fishery owners where we are responsible for containing non-native species within permitted waters and not allowing them to spread into natural waterways.

Send all suspected Prussian carp reports/images to the Environment Agencies Brampton National Fisheries Laboratory team at:

non-natives@environment-agency.gov.uk

Key contacts from this forum meeting:

- Alex Clegg (Angling Trust National Angler Engagement Manager)
alex.clegg@anglingtrust.net
- Sam Hubbard (Angling Trust National Angler Engagement Officer)
sam.hubbard@anglingtrust.net
- Dr Gareth Davies (Environment Agency Brampton National Fisheries Laboratory)
non-natives@environment-agency.gov.uk
- Andy Martin (Environment Agency Fisheries Technical Specialist)

Funded by fishing licence income and
delivered in partnership with the



Environment
Agency

If you haven't already done so, buy your licence [here](#)