

Inland fishes of the Murchison River



The Murchison River is one of the very few river systems in the south of Western Australia that is free from introduced fishes. It houses a unique assemblage of fishes and remains in a relatively pristine state.

It is important that pest species such as the mosquitofish *Gambusia holbrooki*, *Tilapia*, swordtails, guppies and redfin perch, to name a few, that are currently entrenched in some waters of W.A., are not introduced into this system. These species compete with the native fish for food and habitat and often decimate native fish populations through predation.



The golden gudgeon, Murchison River hardyhead and spangled perch are freshwater species, while the black bream, Swan River goby and yellow-tail trumpeter are considered estuarine species. The Murchison River represents the most northern distribution of black bream and Swan River gobies, and is the most southern extent of the spangled perch and golden gudgeon. Golden gudgeons and Murchison River hardyheads are endemic to W.A. Other species are also found in the river, e.g. sea mullet, silver bream and whiting, but are generally restricted to the lower estuary which they utilise as a nursery.

