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Endangered freshwater fishes of Greece

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Abstract

The freshwater fish fauna of Greece includes 106 species of which 79 are native primary species. Of these 38 species are endemic to Greece and southern parts of neighbouring countries. Endangered species are divided into three groups: wholly endangered, locally endangered and rare and threatened. In the first group are eight taxa, usually found in a very restricted area (*Eudontomyzon hellenicus*, *Alosa caspia vistonica*, *Pseudophoxinus beoticus*, *Ladigesocypris ghigii ghigii*, *Barbus euboicus*, *Barbus cyclolepis cholorematicus*, *Pungitius hellenicus* and *Knipowitschia goerneri*). The second group includes five species with a wide area of distribution but some local populations which are extinct or in obvious decline (*Salmo trutta*, *Pseudophoxinus stymphalicus*, *Vimba melanops*, *Valencia letourneuxi*, *Proterorhinus marmoratus*). The third group comprises nine endemic taxa, mainly with a wide distribution in Greece, or widely distributed in Europe but represented in Greece by local populations, sometimes recognized as subspecies (*Phoxinellus pleurobipunctatus*, *Barbus prespensis*, *Gobio kessleri banarescui*, *Gobio uranoscopus elimeius*,

Carassius carassius, *Orthrias barbatulus vardarensis*, *Pungitius platygaster*, *Knipowitschia thessala*, *Economidichthys pygmaeus*). These taxa often have rare or threatened local populations. The main reasons for the decline of fish species are: agricultural and industrial activity, overfishing, partial or total destruction of many karstic springs, public and private works abstracting water, drainage, irrigation, tourist and industrial installations, dams, mixing of fish faunas of different origin and introduction of exotic species.



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Keywords

endemic; endangered; fish; conservation; Greece

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