

Rudd

Scardinius erythrophthalmus

Iowa Aquatic Invasive Species Fact Sheet

Description: The rudd belongs to the large cyprinidae family that includes carp and minnows. It is a somewhat stocky, deep-bodied fish with a forked tail, and the mouth is distinct with a steeply angled protruding lower lip. The scales are robustly marked, the back is dark greenish-brown, and the sides are brassy yellow tapering to a whitish belly. The pectoral, pelvic, and anal fins are bright reddish-orange, and the dorsal and caudal fins are reddish-brown. The rudd can grow up to 19 inches in length. Young rudds consume macroinvertebrates, zooplankton, and occasionally small fish. Mature rudd feed mainly on submerged aquatic plant material.



Distribution: Rudd's are native to Eurasia and ranges from Western Europe to the Caspian Sea, and was introduced to the United States in the late 19th Century. Since their introduction into the United States, rudd have spread throughout much of the country, including 20 states and parts of the Great Lakes system. They inhabit weedy shoreline areas of lakes and rivers, and can adapt to a wide range of environmental conditions.

Threats: The impact of the rudd's introduction is relatively unknown. Lab studies have shown that rudd hybridize with the golden shiner, which is a primary forage species for many game fish. If introduced, rudd will hybridize with golden shiners with unknown consequences to wild populations of native species. Besides hybridization, the rudd can be expected to compete with native fish for food. Being omnivorous, the rudd can change its diet from insects and minnows to plants, unlike most native fishes. Rudd can negatively affect the inland waters it inhabits by: increasing the nutrient loading due to its inefficient means of processing plant material; depleting aquatic vegetation and potentially reducing the reproductive success of native fish species using near-shore areas for spawning and nursery sites; competing with native fish species for food and habitat in juvenile stages; and disrupting established predator-prey relationships.

Control: Bait bucket release is the primary mechanism by which rudd have gained access into open waters. It is suspected that because of the rudd's similarity to golden shiners, they accidentally become mixed in with shiner shipments to bait dealers and are therefore introduced into new environments by anglers. Anglers, commercial fishermen, and fishery professionals should learn how to identify the rudd. Your help is critical and reporting new sightings to prevent their spread.

Control (cont.): To prevent the spread of the rudd you can do the following: learn to identify it; dispose of your unwanted bait in the trash and do not release it into any water bodies or dispose on land; always drain water from your boat, livewell, and bilge before leaving any water access; never dip your bait bucket into a lake or river if it contains water from another water source; and never dump live fish from one body of water to another body of water.

Law: Iowa law makes it illegal to 1) possess, introduce, purchase, sell, propagate, or transport aquatic invasive species in Iowa, 2) place a trailer or launch a watercraft with aquatic invasive species attached in public waters, and 3) operate a watercraft in a marked aquatic invasive species infestation. The scheduled fine is \$500 for violating any of the above regulations. The law also requires the DNR to identify waterbodies infested with aquatic invasive species and post signs alerting boaters. The DNR may restrict boating, fishing, swimming, and trapping in infested waters.

