



ASIAN CARP INVASION

Invasive Asian Carp in the Mississippi River destroy the ecosystem, causing the food chain to topple and the native species to die.

THE PROBLEM

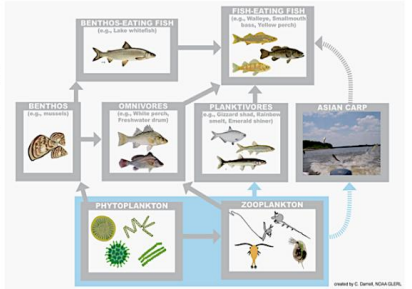


Asian Carp are an invasive species in the Mississippi River that have relatively no predators and out-compete many native species for food, habitat, and other resources necessary for survival, destroying the ecosystem. Invasive carp also weigh down fishing nets and leap out of the water which has become a human hazard. They were all introduced to control vegetation, plankton, and parasitic hosting snails, but not they do more harm than help.



WHY YOU SHOULD CARE

A large Asian Carp population in the Mississippi causes great effects to biodiversity, watershed health and water quality. All of these affect the Mississippi River which is the chief river of the second-largest drainage system in North America and is used greatly by humans for leisure and as a source of water.



ENVIRONMENT & SCIENCE

There are four types of Asian Carp in the Mississippi River: Silver Carp, Bighead Carp, Grass Carp, and Black Carp.

- Asian Carp effect water turbidity, dissolved oxygen levels, and alkalinity
- They outcompete native species like fish, turtles, and birds by eating plankton, vegetation, and mollusks
- Bank erosion, sediment pollution, and habitat loss are adverse effects of food chain collapse
- The lack of zooplankton and phytoplankton leads to an influx of nanophytoplankton, turning water green



ECONOMIC BENEFITS WITH REMOVAL

- An increase in tourism either for fishing or for admiring the water
- Less damage and maintenance costs for Carp destruction and the electric control barrier.
- Restaurants could make profits from selling Carp as a food source.
- Potentially use Carp to animals in the zoo as low cost feed
 - Good for fishermen and zoo management



SOCIAL IMPACTS WITH REMOVAL

- Fishing for Carp open to the public and makes water cleaner for people's pleasure.
- Asian Carp cause concussions by jumping out of the water so there would be more enjoyable boat rides.
- Fishers would have less trouble pulling up their nets from the water, as there would be no invasive Carp weighing them down.

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

Report sightings of Asian Carp when you see them to your state's Department of Fish and Wildlife facility.



Learn to identify and differentiate Asian Carp as opposed to catfish or small mouth buffalo.



Be cautious when transporting fishing nets or boats between bodies of water, as carp eggs can be attached.



POTENTIAL SOLUTIONS & ACTION

Fishing:

- Fishermen and restaurants could sell Asian Carp either as filets, burgers, or canned.
- Zoos could feed the animals with carp, as it is cheap and high in protein
- Sportfishing for Carp

Natural Methods:

- Introduce a new predator (Blue Catfish, Herons, Northern Pike, Walleye, and Largemouth Bass) to decrease the population
- Introduce a targeted parasite

Artificial Methods:

- Physical barriers to stop their spread into other bodies of water
- Alter habitats to limit the resources; increase competition

