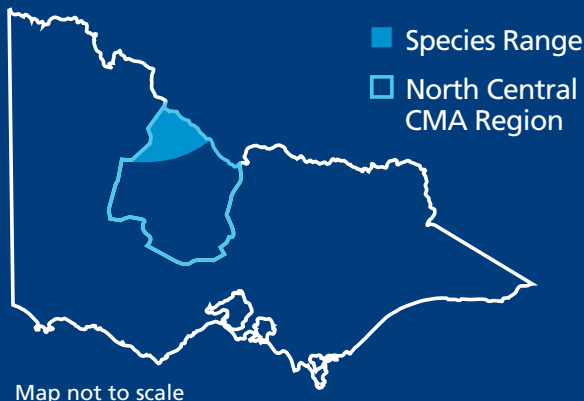


Un-specked Hardyhead *(Craterocephalus stercusmuscarum fulvus)*

Tail fin shape



Family: Atherinidae

Other common names: Fly-specked Hardyhead, Non-specked Hardyhead

Description: The Un-specked Hardyhead is a small, slender fish with thick lips and a small mouth. Scales on top of the head are large and irregular in shape. The body colour varies; males when breeding have a bright yellow belly. A dark stripe extends from the mouth, through the eye, to the pectoral fin. The adult size is about 50-60 mm (maximum size is about 78 mm).

Fins: Dorsal, pectoral, pelvic and anal fins are present. The tail is moderately forked.

Habitat: Usually found in the margins of large slow flowing rivers and in lakes and billabongs. It prefers slow moving or still waters with aquatic vegetation and sandy, gravel or muddy substrates.

Conservation status & distribution: The species is listed under the *Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988*. The Un-specked Hardyhead can be found in lowland areas within the Murray-Darling Basin.

Breeding: Spawning occurs from late winter to summer, peaking in spring when water temperatures exceed 24°C. This species is capable of multiple spawning.

Eggs: Usually only 20-107 eggs are dispersed; eggs are transparent with filamentous adhesive strands and are approximately 1.3 to 1.5 mm in diameter. Larvae hatch within four to seven days.

Diet: The species eats small insects including mosquito larvae and micro-crustaceans.

Threats: Reasons for decline are not known. However, increased salinity, habitat degradation, cold water pollution, in-stream barriers, river regulation and the impacts of alien species such as the Eastern Gambusia and Redfin Perch have all played a significant role in its decline.

Interesting facts and features: The Un-specked Hardyhead is usually found in schools. Little is known of its movements.

Spawning time	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
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The North Central Catchment Management Authority acknowledges Aboriginal Traditional Owners within the region, their rich culture and spiritual connection to Country. We also recognise and acknowledge the contribution and interest of Aboriginal people and organisations in land and natural resource management.

The information on this Fact Sheet is extracted from the North Central Waterwatch Fish Field Guide. Please visit the North Central Catchment Management Authority website, www.nccma.vic.gov.au for more information.

