

# Barred Galaxias

<b>Common name:</b>	<b>Barred Galaxias</b>
<b>Species:</b>	<i>Galaxias fuscus</i>
<b>Description:</b>	A small mountain stream fish
<b>Conservation Status:</b>	Critically Endangered



The Barred Galaxias is a small fish found in the upper reaches (headwaters) of cool mountain streams where the cold water temperature best support them. They are currently listed as Critically Endangered due to the introduced trout which feed on them to extinction. Deforestation also plays a role in reducing their natural habitat and warming mountain streams by opening up previously dense and darker areas of mountain forest to full sunlight—warming water runoff.

## Description

A small fish growing to a maximum length of around 165 mm, though most often witnessed at around 55–95 mm. They prefer shallow streams that have a rocky or sandy bottom, with extremely clear and unpolluted water flowing over the rocks and sand. They are found predominately above 500 metres altitude and feed by taking tiny aquatic invertebrates flowing towards them.

## Status

Although *galaxias* can live for over 10 years, they are Critically Endangered and are now only found in the higher reaches of select mountain streams feeding the Goulburn River system, in the Central Highlands of Victoria. Introduced species of brown and rainbow trout are the main threat to *galaxias*, feeding on juvenile fish and eggs until the *galaxias* is eradicated from that stream. Deforestation via logging also threatens *galaxias*. While loggers often avoid known sensitive areas, logging further upstream from known sensitive areas opens up forest understory to direct sunlight, causing increased evaporation, lessening water flow into the small streams and causing a higher mortality rate through an increase in stream temperature.



# Barred Galaxias

## Habitat

Headwaters of mountain streams above 500 metres elevation. They hide around rocks and natural debris in small clear streams with a moderate flow rate.

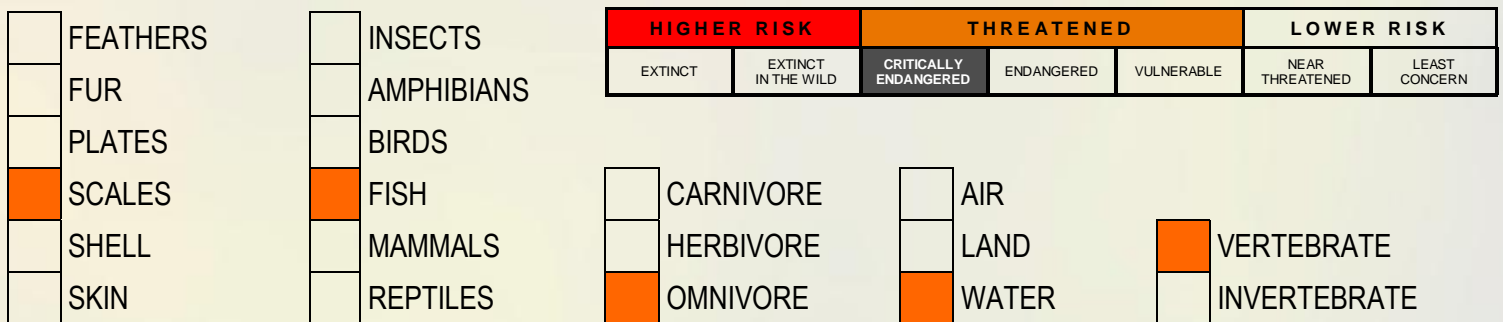
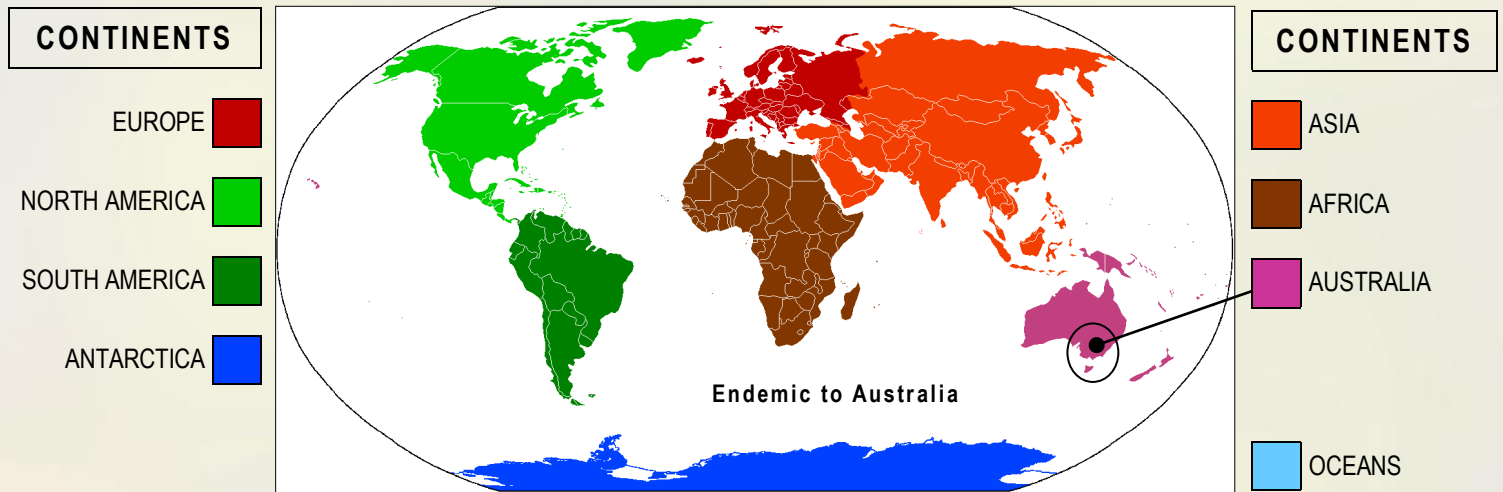


## Feed

It feeds by positioning itself illusively in areas of shallow streams that help hide its presence, catching tiny aquatic invertebrates in the water that are flowing towards them.

## Threats

The loss of natural habitat from deforestation resulting in a subsequent slight warming in mountain streams, as well as the introduced species of trout, make up the two most serious threats to the Barred Galaxias. A number of trout mitigation measures have been put in place in different areas, including a very visible one found in Gallipoli Park at Marysville, which prevents trout from jumping upstream. This has been achieved by the placement of a series of pipes which stream water flows through and then falls down to a pond below. Trout find this a major obstacle, being unable to jump the distance up into the small pipes, resulting in a highly successful protective measure. While this has had a successful outcome in this stream, many others have already had their populations of *galaxias* completely eradicated.



**MALES** ♂  
are called a  
**Male**

**FEMALES** ♀  
are called a  
**Female**

**BABIES** ○  
are called a  
**Fry**

**GROUPS** ○○  
are called  
**School**