

# **Triploid White Amur For Ohio**

## **Jerry Long**

Pond owners throughout Ohio are now eligible to purchase triploid white amur fish for their inland water impoundments(effective 9-15-87) according to the newly revised Ohio Codes: Sections 1533.31 and 1501:31-19-01.

Strict regulations will be enforced for the transport, sales and ownership of this triploid white amur. The diploid white amur remains illegal in Ohio. All Ohio dealers who sell or possess white amur must have a valid *White Amur Dealer Permit* which may be obtained through the Ohio Department of Natural Resources, Division of Wildlife, Columbus OH. (614)265-6343.

In addition to a "Dealer's Permit," any person wanting to transport 500 pounds or more of the triploid white amur fish must possess a *Fish Transportation Permit*.

## **History of White Amur Fish**

White amur (grass carp) are members of the minnow family. Although the white amur may resemble the common carp, these fish are longer, more slender, and have no barbels at the corners of the mouth as do common carp.

White amur have been introduced into more than fifty countries but have established breeding populations in only about five, including the United States. White amur may be found legally and illegally in most states east of the Rocky Mountain areas.

The fish species requires rapidly moving waters for reproduction. With adequate food supply, the fish exist in other types of water habitats as well.

White amur fish have been reported to weigh 100 pounds or more and live up to 15 years of age. Their maximum length ranges from 3-5 feet.

Fish baits of animal origin and other small fish species are not attractive to white amur. The chance of catching one of these fish by hook is slim. They feed on vegetative materials only. The triploid white amur is genetically altered and is sterile. As a result, it cannot reproduce.

## **Importance of White Amur Fish**

White amur are important for aquatic vegetative control in the United States. Although the fish can be eaten, as in their native land of China and the USSR, they are most commonly used here for controlling pond/lake vegetation like leafy rooted aquatic plants such as pond weeds and coontails. The specie also eats floating duckweed, green algae, and even cattails.

## Legal Concerns for Pond Owners

After September 15, 1987, pond owners can legally possess the triploid white amur provided the person having possession has the required receipt from the legal seller of the fish.

Pond owners who buy from a licensed dealer in Ohio are not required to have a permit. The *White Amur Possession Receipt* must be kept and available at request as long as the white amur is in possession of the pond owner.

Pond owners can legally transport less than 500 pounds of triploid white amur fish as long as the purchase receipt is in the hands of the pond owner transporting the fish.

It is illegal to stock the triploid or diploid white amur in non-impounded waters (streams) or in impounded waters where the fish would have access to streams or public waters. It is also illegal to possess, import, transport, or sell diploid white amur.

The responsibility to control possession of the triploid white amur belongs to the owner of the body of water. Where dams, overflow pipes, or structures exist in the pond or lake, a barrier is recommended to prevent the escape of the fish during high water movement. This barrier should hold any fish 10 inches or longer in size. Plans for such a barrier are available from the ODNR Division of Wildlife, your local county Cooperative Extension Service office or Soil & Water Conservation District Office.

## Stocking Triploid White Amur

Stocking triploid white amur in your pond/lake as an alternative to chemical weed control or for a reduction of chemicals will depend on two major factors. These are type and quantity of vegetation.

Stocking rates are recommended in the following table if the primary vegetation is milfoil, marsh grasses, pondweeds, or naiad:

<b>Percent of Pond Covered by Plants</b>	<b>Number of Fish per Acre *</b>
10-20	stocking not recommended
20-40	5
40-60	10
over 60	20

*\*If the vegetation is primarily coontail or elodea, the stocking rates above should be doubled.*

Stocking size of the triploid white amur should be 8-10 inches in length. Should very many large, Largemouth bass be present in the pond, then use the larger size of white amur (definitely not smaller than 8 inches).

It is recommended that stocking be done in mid-to-late fall or early-to-mid spring. At these times, the metabolic rate of fish is reduced, thereby resulting in easier handling of the fish.

Follow recommended fish management procedures as outlined in Ohio Cooperative Extension Service Bulletin # 374, *Ohio Pond Management*.

### **Obtaining Triploid White Amur**

All triploid white amur fish must be purchased through a licensed, permitted dealer. The certified dealer will provide you, the buyer, with proper papers for possession of the triploid white amur. It is expected that the law of possession will be strictly enforced.

Contact the Division of Wildlife, your local county Extension office, or your Soil and Water Conservation District office for a listing of licensed dealers.

### **Summary**

- Pond owners may legally stock the triploid white amur as of September 15, 1987.
- Pond owners must purchase certified Triploid white amurs from dealers licensed by ODNR.
- Pond owners have the legal responsibility to retain the possession permit as long as they have the fish in their pond/lake.
- Pond owners must legally keep the fish within the impoundment of water. In some cases, a restrictive barrier at outflow must be constructed.
- Triploid white amur feed primarily on vegetation.
- Stocking rate will depend upon percent and type of plant cover per surface acre of water.
- Diploid white amur continue to be illegal in Ohio waters.
- Enforcement of the white amur fish remains with the Ohio Department of Natural Resources, Division of Wildlife.