



Fish in Farm Dams, Swimming Pools, Backyard Ponds and Aquariums

Aquaculture SA

Background

PIRSA Aquaculture SA receives many enquires from people wishing to obtain further information on the stocking of fish for recreational purposes whether it be for fishing (dams and swimming pools) or pets (backyard ponds and aquariums). In response to this, PIRSA Aquaculture SA has developed this fact sheet to help answer some of those questions¹. ***It should be noted that a permit is required to stock the fish into a dam from PIRSA Fisheries (8226 2313).***

The System

Dams

Many people owning properties with dams wish to stock their dam with fish or yabbies for their own consumption and recreational purposes. The species of fish that are usually stocked within the dam will depend on personal preference and/or the general characteristics of the dam. Some dams are more suitable than others to hold fish and yabbies, and will depend on size of dam, its depth, whether it is exposed to wind for aeration, and how warm the water temperature reaches. Water in dams that are used to hold fish need to be of reasonably high quality and people using dams need to ensure that excess manure from surrounding stock

does not enter the system and cause an algal bloom. Chemical used on the farm also needs to be watched as pesticides are lethal to fish and yabbies.

If algal blooms or excess plant growth does occur from nutrients entering the dam, the dam will need to be flushed with clean water.

Swimming Pools

Some owners of swimming pools wish to use their pool for growing fish during the winter months when it is not used for swimming. This is fine however a number of elements must be considered;

- All chemicals, especially chlorine, must be cleared from the system before it is used,
- Swimming pools are normally very stagnant and thus a water fountain of some type may be incorporated into the system to promote water circulation and aeration,
- As pools are usually sterile systems (ie no aquatic plants, soil base etc) it is important not to overfeed the fish as this will cause algal blooms and oxygen problems.

¹ Please note that this fact sheet not intended for people wishing to enter the aquaculture industry. There are specific fact sheets available for this purpose



If the pool is only used during the winter months to grow fish, rainbow trout are perhaps the best fish as they will grow at reasonable rates throughout the winter season. Most native fish will require a longer period in which to reach consumable size.

Backyard Ponds and Aquariums

Using native fish and yabbies in backyard ponds is becoming increasingly popular. The majority of the time, backyard ponds and aquariums are only used to hold fish as pets and not for consumption. However it should be noted that although the growth of native finfish will be stunted in the smaller area, they will still grow to reasonable sizes to such a stage that they may outgrow the pond or aquarium. Information on keeping backyard ponds and aquariums can be obtained from aquarium shops and outdoor supply stores (eg: hardware stores). Contact details can be obtained from the Yellow pages.

Species

Rainbow Trout

Rainbow trout are a popular fish to stock in farm dams and swimming pools as they are easily accessible, fairly hardy and an excellent eating fish with good angling characteristics. Trout however are a cold water fish and thus only dams and swimming pools that reach a maximum temperature of around 22^oC are suitable.

There are a number of commercial pellets available for trout that can be obtained from fodder stores. As less natural food is present in swimming pools, trout will need to be fed more frequently around once a day. Trout in dams can be fed once per week if there is sufficient natural food present in the dam (ie water bugs, worms etc). Trout will usually reach a consumable size in around one to two seasons depending on water temperature and feeding. Stocking rates for trout fingerlings are around 50 fish per 0.1 of a hectare. Fish can be obtained from the following sources.

1. Tooperang Trout Farm
Cleland Gully Rd
Mt Compass
Ph: (08) 8556 9048
2. Salisbury Country Trout Farm
Lot 12 Diment Rd
Salisbury Nth
Ph: (08) 8280 8520
3. SA Fly Fishers' Association
Ph: (08) 8389 2293

Native Finfish

The use of native finfish to stock in dams and swimming pools are suitable where water temperatures reach above 20^oC thus making it unsuitable for Rainbow trout. Native finfish include Gallop, Murray cod, Silver perch and Catfish and will survive in waters ranging from 8^oC to 30^oC. Gallop, Catfish and Silver perch can be stocked together however as Murray cod are territorial animals, they will eat neighbouring fish. Murray cod and Catfish may breed naturally in dams if given the right conditions such as shelter and nesting material such as rocks and branches. There are a number of commercial pellets available for native finfish that can be obtained from fodder stores. As less natural food is present in swimming pools, native finfish will need to be fed more frequently around once a day. Native finfish in dams can be fed once per week if there is sufficient natural food present in the dam (ie water bugs, worms etc). Native finfish will usually reach a consumable size in around two to three years. Stocking rates for fish will depend on the species and size of the dam. Below is a table of recommended stocking rates.

Approximate area (ha)	Silver perch Catfish	Callop	Murray cod
0.04	25	25	25
0.07	25	25	25
0.11	50	25	25
0.16	50	50	25
0.22	75	50	25
0.29	100	75	50
0.37	125	100	50
0.45	150	125	75
0.54	200	125	75
0.64	225	150	100
0.75	275	200	125
1.00	350	250	150

There are a number of hatcheries that fish can be purchased from. A list is included at the end of this fact sheet. Please note that any fish brought into South Australia need to be disease free certified from the hatchery where the fish were sourced. For aquariums and backyard ponds where smaller numbers of fish are required, these can often be obtained from aquarium shops. Please look in the yellow pages for contact details.

Yabbies

Fishing for yabbies has been a pastime for many generations making them a popular addition to a dam. They also make entertaining, low maintenance pets for aquariums. Yabbies are hardy and once established will easily breed. They will feed on a number of food types including potatoes, peas, vegetable scraps and grains such as wheat, barley and oats. If yabbies are not already present in the dam they can be purchased from registered fish farmers through contacting the Australian Freshwater Crayfish Growers Association (SA Branch) on 8758 4000. For smaller numbers of animals required for aquariums and backyard ponds, yabbies can be purchased from some aquarium shops.

Further Information

Fact Sheets

Fact sheets on yabbies, trout and native finfish are also available. Although these fact sheets have been developed for the purpose of aquaculture, much of the information will be relevant to those who require further information on their chosen species. Fact sheets available include;

- Aquaculture Potential of Australian Native Finfish
- Yabbie farming in South Australia
- Trout farming in South Australia
- Water Quality in Freshwater Ponds

Fact sheets can be obtained through the PIRSA Web site www.pir.sa.gov.au or by calling 8226 0314. PIRSA Aquaculture SA also have produced a publication entitled 'Stocking Farm Dams and Swimming Pools with Fish in South Australia'. Although this publication was produced in 1992, it still contains relevant information. It can be purchased for a minimal cost through the Farmer Information Centre on 1800 356 446.

Books

There are a number of books available on this subject. These can be obtained from the following sources which are listed in alphabetical order;

Aquaculture Advantage
PO Box 582
TWO WELLS SA 5501
Ph/Fax: 08 8524 3962

Aquasonic
PO box 134
INGLEBURN NSW 2565
Ph: 02 9605 2999
Fax: 02 9829 2110
Email: sales@aquasonic.com.au Web:
www.aquasonic.com.au

Aquaculture Town or Country
868-872 Glen Huntly Rd
CAULFIELD SOUTH VIC 3162
Ph: 03 9523 1255
Fax: 03 9528 4229

AusAqua Pty Ltd
1 Michele St
WALLAROO SA
Ph: 08 8823 3467
Fax: 08 8823 3467
Email: Ausaqua@YP-connect.net

Crayhaven Aquacultural Indust.
PO Box 3
KARUAH NSW 2324

Ph/Fax: 02 4997 3002
Dosaqua
PO Box 647
HENLEY BEACH SA 5022
Ph: 0418 130 595
Fax: 08 8200 2491
Email: sales@ozefish.com.au
Web: www.ozefish.com.au

Total Aquaculture Supply
PO Box 240
WEST KEMPSEY NSW 2440
Ph: 1800 650 575 or 02 6569 0034
Fax: 02 6569 0043
Email: aqua@aquaculture.com.au
Web: www.aquaculture.com.au

Technical Information

Many aquarium shops and outdoor shops (eg: hardware stores) have plenty of information, both verbal and written, on keeping backyard ponds and aquariums. Listings of stores can be found in the yellow pages.

Hatchery Information

The following hatcheries will be able to provide you with fish depending on current availability. Fish will need to be certified disease free before they can enter South Australia.

FISH SPECIES	HATCHERY	ADDRESS	CONTACT
Golden Perch and Silver Perch	Bowman Native Fish Hatchery	PO Box 177 GLOUCESTER NSW 2422	Ph: (02) 6558 7560 Fax: (02) 6558 7444
	Uarah Fish Hatchery	Old Wagga Road GRONG GRONG NSW 2650	Ph: (02) 6956 2147 Fax: (02) 6956 2245
	Wartook Native Fish Culture	RMB 7389A Roses Gap Road WARTOOK VIC 3401	Ph: (03) 5383 6306 Fax: (03) 5383 6246
	Crayhaven Aquacultural Industries	Pacific Highway NORTH ARM COVE NSW 2324	Ph: (02) 4997 3002 Fax: (02) 4997 3002
	Hanwood Fish Hatchery Pty Ltd	Mail Service 361 MURON QLD 4605	Ph: (07) 3168 1558 Fax: (07) 3168 2548
	Harrison's Fish Farm	Lot 25 Valcan Rd WATTYL GROVE WA 6107	Ph: (08) 9359 1103 Fax: (08) 9359 1103
	Granite Belt Fish Hatchery	PO Box 11 SEVERNLEA QLS 4352	Ph: (07) 4683 5283 Fax: (07) 4683 5442
	Murray Darling Fisheries	1795 Old Narrandera Road WAGGA WAGGA NSW 2650	Ph: (02) 6922 9447 Fax: (02) 6922 9448
Murray Cod	Uarah Fish Hatchery	Old Wagga Road GRONG GRONG NSW 2650	Ph: (02) 6956 2147 Fax: (02) 6956 2245
	Murray Darling Fisheries	1795 Old Narrandera Road WAGGA WAGGA NSW 2650	Ph: (02) 6922 9447 Fax: (02) 6922 9448
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	Granite Belt Fish Hatchery	PO Box 11 SEVERNLEA QLS 4352	Ph: (07) 4683 5283 Fax: (07) 4683 5442
	Glencoe Fish Hatchery	1390 Murphy's Lake Road KERANG VIC 3579	Ph: (03) 5457 8218 Fax: (03) 5457 8278
Catfish	Bowman Native Fish Hatchery	PO Box 177 GLOUCESTER NSW 2422	Ph: (02) 6558 7560 Fax: (02) 6558 7444
	Crayhaven Aquacultural Industries	Pacific Highway NORTH ARM COVE NSW 2324	Ph: (02) 4997 3002 Fax: (02) 4997 3002
	Wartook Native Fish Culture	RMB 7389A Roses Gap Road WARTOOK VIC 3401	Ph: (03) 5383 6306 Fax: (03) 5383 6246
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