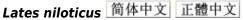


FULL ACCOUNT FOR: Lates niloticus



**System:** Freshwater

Kingdom	Phylum	Class	Order	Family
Animalia	Chordata	Actinopterygii	Perciformes	Centropomidae

persico del nilo (Italian), nile perch (English), Nilbarsch (German), nijlbaars Common name

(Dutch), sangara (Kiswahili), Victoria perch (English), victoriabaars (Dutch), chengu (Kijitta), mbuta (Kiluo), perche du nil (French), victoriabarsch

(German), perca di nilo (Spanish), nilabborre (Swedish)

**Synonym** Perca latus, Geoffroy Saint-Hilaire, 1827

Lates niloticus, var. macrolepidota Pellegrin, 1922

Lates albertianus, Worthington, 1932

Lates niloticus rudolfianus, Worthington, 1932

**Similar species** 

The Nile perch (Lates niloticus) is a large freshwater fish. Also known as **Summary** 

capitaine, mputa or sangara, it can grow up to 200kg and two metres in length. It was introduced to Lake Victoria in 1954 where it has contributed to the extinction of more than 200 endemic fish species through predation and

competition for food.



view this species on IUCN Red List

### **Species Description**

Large perch-like predator. Dorsal fin deeply notched, giving the appearance of two separate fins; the first part completely spinous; third dorsal spine enlarged. Lateral line continuous. Pre-orbital and pre-opercular bones with spines; a large spine on operculum.

### **Lifecycle Stages**

In Lake Victoria, male size at first maturity 50-55cm TL (ca. 2 years), females 67,5-85cm TL (2-4 years). Fifty percent maturity at 60-74cm TL for males and 102-110cm TL for females. Maturity sizes strongly decreasing in recent years.



FULL ACCOUNT FOR: Lates niloticus

#### Uses

Nile perch took decades to become evident in Lake Victoria and then burst into the huge biomass of the late 1980s and 1990s and the subsequent harvest for \r\r\nexport. It rose to become the main fishery species in the lake in the late 1990s and the basis of a huge export industry. This raised the price of Nile \r\r\nperch to something beyond the reach of many lakeside communities. All of this was documented in the first two phases of an IUCN-World Conservation Union's \r\r\nNile perch project, which culminated in the making of the film \"Big fish, small fry\". The project has moved on to conflict resolution and capacity building \r\r\nusing \"beach units\" to give more responsibility and management involvement to local people. This work is supported by the three riparian government fisheries \r\r\ndepartments, through the Lake Victoria Fisheries Organisation (LVFO), and is currently being reviewed.

\r\nIn recent years the Nile perch population has begun to stabilise and the availability of large fish has declined as has the catch which is now way below the \r\r\ncapacity of the factories which process and export the fish to USA, Europe, Australia and New Zealand. The view of the three riparian governments is that \r\r\nNile perch is an essential export earner and they have attempted to brand it as \"organic\", as it is wild and without artificial additives etc.(although cage rearing has begun). This same export has brought some benefits to the local people (in income from fishing and jobs in factories) and \r\r\nsome disbenefits from availability of fish for food and economic and social upheaval (Howard, G., pers. comm., August 2005).

### **Habitat Description**

Freshwater species, but living in brackish waters in Lake Mariout. Introductions in Lake Victoria were mainly from Lake Albert, but also from Lake Turkana. The present populations in Lake Victoria are apparently not pure *Lates niloticus* but contain some genetic material from *Lates macrophthalmus* from Lake Albert.

#### Reproduction

Free spawning over shallow sheltered areas, all the year round with peaks in rainy season. Up to 16 million eggs per breeding cycle.

### **Nutrition**

Large predator, feeding in Lake Victoria on haplochromine cichlids, the zooplanktivorous cyprinid *Rastrineobola* argentea, the prawn *Caridina nilotica* and juvenile Nile perch (cannibalism). Young stages feed on invertebrates.

#### **General Impacts**

The Nile perch is responsible through predation and competition for food for the decimation and possible disappearance of two hundred or more species of the unique flock of endemic haplochromine cichlids in Lake Victoria.

#### **Management Info**

Eradication of the Nile perch in Lake Victoria is impossible in practice, and is also not an option because of its economic success.

#### **Pathway**

Introduced for fisheries purposes.

### **Principal source:**

**Compiler:** Dr. Jos Snoeks, Africa Museum, Leuvensesteenweg, Tervuren, Belgium & IUCN/SSC Invasive Species Specialist Group (ISSG)

Review: Dr. Jos Snoeks, Africa Museum, Leuvensesteenweg, Tervuren, Belgium.



FULL ACCOUNT FOR: Lates niloticus

Pubblication date: 2005-04-13

**ALIEN RANGE** 

[1] CUBA [1] LAKE VICTORIA

[1] UNITED STATES

Haplochromis nyanzae DD

Haplochromis pallidus DD

Haplochromis obtusidens DD

Haplochromis paraguiarti DD

### Red List assessed species 145: CR = 51; EN = 2; VU = 17; DD = 62; LC = 13;

Astatoreochromis alluaudi LC Allochromis welcommei VU Astatotilapia piceatus CR Bagrus docmak **LC** Brycinus jacksonii EN Brycinus sadleri LC Haplochromis acidens **DD** Haplochromis aelocephalus CR Haplochromis antleter CR Haplochromis altigenis **DD** Haplochromis arcanus DD Haplochromis apogonoides CR Haplochromis argenteus CR Haplochromis artaxerxes **DD** Haplochromis barbarae CR Haplochromis bareli CR Haplochromis bartoni DD Haplochromis bayoni **DD** Haplochromis boops **DD** Haplochromis brownae CR Haplochromis bwathondii VU Haplochromis cassius CR Haplochromis cavifrons **DD** Haplochromis chlorochrous **DD** Haplochromis chromogynos VU Haplochromis chrysogynaion DD Haplochromis cinctus CR Haplochromis cinereus **DD** Haplochromis cnester CR Haplochromis coprologus CR Haplochromis crassilabris CR Haplochromis crocopeplus CR Haplochromis cronus **DD** Haplochromis cryptodon **DD** Haplochromis cryptogramma **DD** Haplochromis cyaneus EN Haplochromis decticostoma **DD** Haplochromis dentex CR Haplochromis dichrourus CR Haplochromis diplotaenia DD Haplochromis dolichorhynchus DD Haplochromis empodisma DD Haplochromis erythrocephalus DD Haplochromis estor **DD** Haplochromis eutaenia **DD** Haplochromis fischeri VU Haplochromis flavipinnis CR Haplochromis gilberti DD Haplochromis gowersi DD Haplochromis granti CR Haplochromis harpakteridion **DD** Haplochromis heusinkveldi CR Haplochromis humilior DD **Haplochromis hiatus CR** Haplochromis iris CR Haplochromis ishmaeli CR Haplochromis katunzii CR Haplochromis kujunjui DD Haplochromis labriformus **DD** Haplochromis lacrimosus **DD** Haplochromis laparogramma LC Haplochromis laprogramma **VU** Haplochromis lividus DD Haplochromis longirostris CR Haplochromis macrognathus CR Haplochromis macrops **DD** Haplochromis maculipinna **DD** Haplochromis maisomei **DD** Haplochromis mandibularis **DD** Haplochromis martini CR Haplochromis maxillaris VU Haplochromis megalops VU Haplochromis melanopterus VU Haplochromis melanopus DD Haplochromis melichrous **DD** Haplochromis mento DD Haplochromis michaeli CR Haplochromis microdon CR Haplochromis mylergates CR Haplochromis nanoserranus CR Haplochromis nuchisquamulatus **DD** Haplochromis nigrescens **DD** 

Haplochromis paropius LC

Global Invasive Species Database (GISD) 2025. Species profile Lates niloticus. Available from: <a href="https://iucngisd.org/gisd/species.php?sc=89">https://iucngisd.org/gisd/species.php?sc=89</a> [Accessed 17 November 2025]

Haplochromis obesus CR

Haplochromis pachycephalus DD

Haplochromis paraplagiostoma DD

Haplochromis pancitrinus CR



FULL ACCOUNT FOR: Lates niloticus

Haplochromis pellegrini DD Haplochromis perrieri CR Haplochromis phytophagus DD Haplochromis pitmani **DD** Haplochromis plagiostoma **DD** Haplochromis prodromus **DD** Haplochromis pseudopellegrini DD Haplochromis pyrrhocephalus LC Haplochromis riponianus LC Haplochromis serranus DD Haplochromis sphex CR Haplochromis sp. nov. 'micro-obesus' CR Haplochromis sulphureus CR Haplochromis teegelaari CR Haplochromis theliodon CR Haplochromis thuragnathus **DD** Haplochromis tyrianthinus **DD** Haplochromis vanoijeni VU Haplochromis vonlinnei CR Haplochromis xenognathus LC Hoplotilapia retrodens VU Macropleurodus bicolor VU Mormyrus kannume LC Oreochromis variabilis CR Platytaeniodus degeni LC

Haplochromis pharyngomylus DD Haplochromis piceatus VU Haplochromis plagiodon VU Haplochromis plutonius CR Haplochromis prognathus **DD** Haplochromis ptistes CR Haplochromis pyrrhopteryx CR Haplochromis saxicola DD Haplochromis spekii DD Haplochromis sp. nov. 'argens' VU Haplochromis squamulatus DD Haplochromis tanaos LC Haplochromis teunisrasi CR Haplochromis thereuterion VU Haplochromis tridens **DD** Haplochromis ushindi CR Haplochromis victorianus CR Haplochromis worthingtoni **DD** Haplochromis xenostoma CR Labeo victorianus LC Mastacembelus frenatus LC Oreochromis esculentus CR Paralabidochromis victoriae DD Pundamilia macrocephala VU Xenoclarias eupogon CR

Haplochromis percoides CR

#### **BIBLIOGRAPHY**

### 13 references found for Lates niloticus

Pyxichromis parorthostoma **DD** 

Yssichromis fusiformis VU

#### **Managment information**

Centre for Environment, Fisheries & Aquaculture Science (CEFAS)., 2008. Decision support tools-Identifying potentially invasive non-native marine and freshwater species: fish, invertebrates, amphibians.

**Summary:** The electronic tool kits made available on the Cefas page for free download are Crown Copyright (2007-2008). As such, these are freeware and may be freely distributed provided this notice is retained. No warranty, expressed or implied, is made and users should satisfy themselves as to the applicability of the results in any given circumstance. Toolkits available include 1) FISK- Freshwater Fish Invasiveness Scoring Kit (English and Spanish language version); 2) MFISK- Marine Fish Invasiveness Scoring Kit; 3) MI-ISK- Marine invertebrate Invasiveness Scoring Kit; 4) FI-ISK- Freshwater Invertebrate Invasiveness Scoring Kit and AmphISK- Amphibian Invasiveness Scoring Kit. These tool kits were developed by Cefas, with new VisualBasic and computational programming by Lorenzo Vilizzi, David Cooper, Andy South and Gordon H. Copp, based on VisualBasic code in the original Weed Risk Assessment (WRA) tool kit of P.C. Pheloung, P.A. Williams & S.R. Halloy (1999).

The decision support tools are available from:

http://cefas.defra.gov.uk/our-science/ecosystems-and-biodiversity/non-native-species/decision-support-tools.aspx [Accessed 13 October 2011]

The guidance document is available from http://www.cefas.co.uk/media/118009/fisk\_guide\_v2.pdf [Accessed 13 January 2009]. Clearwater, Susan J.; Chris W. Hickey and Michael L. Martin. 2008. Overview of potential piscicides and molluscicides for controlling aquatic pest species in New Zealand. Science for conservation 283. March 2008, New Zealand Department of Conservation

**Summary:** Available from: http://www.doc.govt.nz/upload/documents/science-and-technical/sfc283entire.pdf [Accessed 20 March 2008] Copp, G.H., Garthwaite, R. and Gozlan, R.E., 2005. Risk identification and assessment of non-native freshwater fishes: concepts and perspectives on protocols for the UK. Sci. Ser. Tech Rep., Cefas Lowestoft, 129: 32pp.

**Summary:** The discussion paper presents a conceptual risk assessment approach for freshwater fish species that addresses the first two elements (hazard identification, hazard assessment) of the UK environmental risk strategy The paper presents a few worked examples of assessments on species to facilitate discussion.

Available from: http://www.cefas.co.uk/publications/techrep/tech129.pdf [Accessed 1 September 2005]

Fryer, G. 1960. Concerning the proposed introduction of *Nile perch* into Lake Victoria. East African Agricultural Journal 25(4): 267-270. **Summary:** The suggestion that the fishery in Lake Victoria would benefit if the *Nile perch* were introduced is based on ignorance of several fundamental biological concepts. Such an introduction is not only undesirable but would jeopardize the existing commercial fishery.



FULL ACCOUNT FOR: Lates niloticus

Mendoza, R.E.; Cudmore, B.; Orr, R.; Balderas, S.C.; Courtenay, W.R.; Osorio, P.K.; Mandrak, N.; Torres, P.A.; Damian, M.A.; Gallardo, C.E.; Sanguines, A.G.; Greene, G.; Lee, D.; Orbe-Mendoza, A.; Martinez, C.R.; and Arana, O.S. 2009. Trinational Risk Assessment Guidelines for Aquatic Alien Invasive Species. Commission for Environmental Cooperation. 393, rue St-Jacques Ouest, Bureau 200, Montr@al (Qu@bec), Canada. ISBN 978-2-923358-48-1.

Summary: In 1993, Canada, Mexico and the United States signed the North American Agreement on Environmental Cooperation (NAAEC) as a side agreement to the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). The NAAEC established the Commission for Environmental Cooperation (CEC) to help the Parties ensure that improved economic efficiency occurred simultaneously with trinational environmental cooperation. The NAAEC highlighted biodiversity as a key area for trinational cooperation. In 2001, the CEC adopted a resolution (Council Resolution 01-03), which created the Biodiversity Conservation Working Group (BCWG), a working group of high-level policy makers from Canada, Mexico and the United States. In 2003, the BCWG produced the Strategic Plan for North American Cooperation in the Conservation of Biodiversity. This strategy identified responding to threats, such as invasive species, as a priority action area. In 2004, the BCWG, recognizing the importance of prevention in addressing invasive species, agreed to work together to develop the draft CEC Risk Assessment Guidelines for Aquatic Alien Invasive Species (hereafter referred to as the Guidelines). These Guidelines will serve as a tool to North American resource managers who are evaluating whether or not to introduce a non-native species into a new ecosystem. Through this collaborative process, the BCWG has begun to implement its strategy as well as address an important trade and environment issue. With increased trade comes an increase in the potential for economic growth as well as biological invasion, by working to minimize the potential adverse impacts from trade, the CEC Parties are working to maximize the gains from trade while minimizing the environmental costs. Available from: English version: http://www.cec.org/Storage/62/5516\_07-64-CEC%20invasives%20risk%20guidelines-full-report\_en.pdf [Accessed 15 June 2010]

French version: http://www.cec.org/Storage/62/5517\_07-64-CEC%20invasives%20risk%20guidelines-full-report\_fr.pdf [Accessed 15 June 2010]

Spanish version: http://www.cec.org/Storage/62/5518\_07-64-CEC%20invasives%20risk%20guidelines-full-report\_es.pdf [Accessed 15 June 2010].

Pitcher, T. J., Hart, P. J. B. 1995. The impact of species changes in African lakes. Fish and Fisheries Series 18, Chapman & Hall, London: 601pp.

**Summary:** This book covers the impact of species changes engendered by the introduction of fish species, impoundment and heavy exploitation. Aspects considered include reduction of biodiversiy, the conservation of unique endemic faunas, the assessment of changes in Witte, F., Van Densen, W. L. T. 1995. Fish stocks and fisheries of Lake Victoria. Samara Publishing Ltd., UK. 404pp.

**Summary:** The results of eighteen years research on the fisheries of Lake Victoria are presented. The introduction is followed by sections dealing successively with fish and fisheries, methodologies for sampling, gear and boats, methods for monitoring fish stocks,

#### **General information**

FishBase, 2005. Species profile Lates niloticus Nile perch

**Summary:** FishBase is a global information system with all you ever wanted to know about fishes . FishBase on the web contains practically all fish species known to science. FishBase was developed at the WorldFish Center in collaboration with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and many other partners, and with support from the European Commission (EC). Since 2001 FishBase is supported by a consortium of seven research institutions. You can search on <a href="Search FishBase">Search FishBase</a>

This species profile is available from: http://www.fishbase.org/Summary/SpeciesSummary.cfm?id=347i [Accessed 21 March, 2005] Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO), 1998. Aquatic Species Introductions Database (DIAS).

**Summary:** The database includes records of aquatice species introduced or transferred from one country to another and does not consider movements of species inside the same country. Coverage of accidental introductions of organisms (e.g., through ship ballast waters) is not complete and records on this topic have been generally entered only when important impacts on fisheries or on the environment have been caused.

Hauser, L., Carvalho, G. R., Pitcher, T. J. and Ogutu-Ohwayo, R. 1998. Genetic affinities of an introduced predator: Nile perch in Lake Victoria, East Africa. Molecular Ecology 7: 849-859.

**Summary:** Several populations of Nile perch have been used to stock the lakes of the Lake Victoria system. The taxonomic status of the introduced populations has been examined through enzyme analysis. Geneticially, introduced *Nile perch* in Lakes Kyoga and Nabugabo Howard, G., pers. comm., August 2005. Extracted from an email from Geoffrey Howard, Regional Programme Coordinator IUCN - East Africa Regional Office, Nairobi, Kenya.

ITIS (Integrated Taxonomic Information System), 2005. Online Database Lates niloticus

**Summary:** An online database that provides taxonomic information, common names, synonyms and geographical jurisdiction of a species. In addition links are provided to retrieve biological records and collection information from the Global Biodiversity Information Facility (GBIF) Data Portal and bioscience articles from BioOne journals. Available from:

 $\label{lem:http://www.cbif.gc.ca/pls/itisca/taxastep?king=every&p\_action=containing\&taxa=Lates+niloticus\&p\_format=&p\_ifx=plglt&p\_lang=[Accessed March 2005]$ 

Pringle, M. Robert., 2005. The Origins of the Nile Perch in Lake Victoria. BioScience 🏵 September 2005 / Vol. 55 No. 9