

Hypophthalmichthys molitrix
Silver Carp

Cyprinidae, the carp family



Diagnostic Characteristics

- Thick and uniformly silver body
- Tiny scales covering body except for head and opercles which have none
- Mouth is toothless, upturned, and large
- Unusual positioning of eye, similar to bighead carp
- Adults have strong spines in their dorsal and anal fins

Background

- Native to China and Russia; introduced through escapes in southern U.S. aquaculture facilities
- Occurs in lakes, rivers, and canal systems
- Any disturbance in the water will cause fish to leap completely out
- Voracious consumers of phytoplankton; will consume zooplankton when phytoplankton are not abundant
- Outcompete native fish by altering the food web
- Known to injure individuals when jumping out of the water and into watercraft

Photo Credit:

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