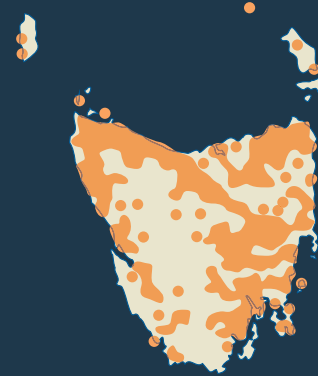


Short-finned eel

Anguilla australis



Common and widespread in coastal and lowland rivers.

Description: Elongated cylindrical fish with continuous dorsal-caudal-anal fins. The dorsal fin origin is located about level or slightly in front of the anal fin.

Colour: Adults vary in colour from dark brown to black on backs and sides, with a lighter or even silvery belly. They develop a silver white belly when they commence their spawning migration.

Size: Up to 1.1 m long and 3.2 kg in weight, but more commonly smaller.

Habitat: Occurs in a wide variety of wetland habitats including rivers, creeks, lakes and swamps but generally prefers still water.

Diet: Feed on a variety of aquatic fauna including insects, crustaceans, molluscs and fish.

Life Cycle: Adult eels migrate downstream upon sexual maturity to breed in deep waters in or near the Coral Sea. Adults die after spawning. Larval eels are swept back to the coast by ocean currents, where they transform into glass eels. They move into the estuaries from late Spring, where they become pigmented elvers. Elvers then move upstream over several years.

Distribution status: Native.

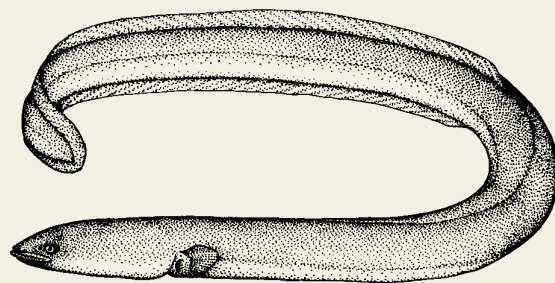
Original range: Tasmania wide distribution. Also found on mainland Australia and other islands of the South Pacific including New Zealand.

Reasons for change to distribution: Large instream barriers such as hydroelectric dams restrict their distribution. Commercial over fishing may also diminish stocks. The Inland Fisheries Service move eels upstream of large dams. Commercial fisherman move elvers into inland impoundments including farm dams.

Legal status: Angling, commercial.

Can it be taken? There is a daily bag limit of 12 fish and a possession limit of 24 fish with a minimum length of 300 mm.

Other names: Silver eel, yellow eel.



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