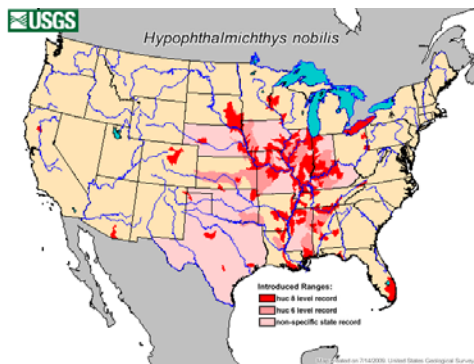


Bighead Carp

Hypophthalmichthys nobilis

Identification Easy to recognize because of its large size and large, scaleless head.

Why is it a Problem? Asian Carp are a significant threat to native ecosystems, because they are large, extremely prolific, and consume vast amounts of food, disrupting the food chain for native fish.



Range/Habitat Have been found throughout the Mississippi River basin and in the Great Lakes; although they have not yet been found in Maryland, sightings have been reported in Virginia and West Virginia.

Similar Species Not easily confused with other species.

Legal Status Prohibited from import, transport, sale, purchase and possession in Maryland.

Control and Prevention Do not bring live bighead carp into the State.

Method of Introduction Bighead carp and the closely related silver carp (*H. molitrix*) were imported to the United States to remove excess or undesirable plankton and thus improve water quality in sewage treatment plants and aquaculture facilities in the 1970's. However, some fish escaped into the Mississippi River basin, where they are now firmly established.

Want to know more? Check out www.dnr.maryland.gov for more on invasive species in Maryland and what you can do about it.