



# Indigenous High Value Ornamental Fishes of Western Ghats

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## Denison Barb

(*Sahyadria denisonii*)



- **Habitat of the fish:** Fast-flowing, oxygen-rich hill streams with rocky substratum.
- **Ornamental quality:** Red lateral stripe with black band; schooling behavior.
- **Ornamental market value:** High; premium ornamental species.
- **Export and domestic market:** Exported to EU, USA, and SE Asia; good domestic demand.
- **Market size, weight and length:** Slender body; up to 15 cm length.
- **Breeding and culture status:** Captive breeding achieved; wild capture regulated.
- **Research done on the species:** Well studied in ecology and conservation.



## Chalaky Red Barb

(*Sahyadria chalakkudiensis*)

- **Habitat of the fish:** Endemic to the Chalaky River basin, Kerala.
- **Ornamental quality:** Intense red coloration; streamlined body.
- **Ornamental market value:** Very high due to rarity and endemism.
- **Export and domestic market:** Limited export; niche, premium domestic trade.
- **Market size, weight and length:** Reaches 12–14 cm in length.
- **Breeding and culture status:** Limited captive breeding; mainly conservation-oriented culture.
- **Research done on the species:** Moderate research, largely taxonomic studies.

**Malabar Danio**  
(*Devario malabaricus*)



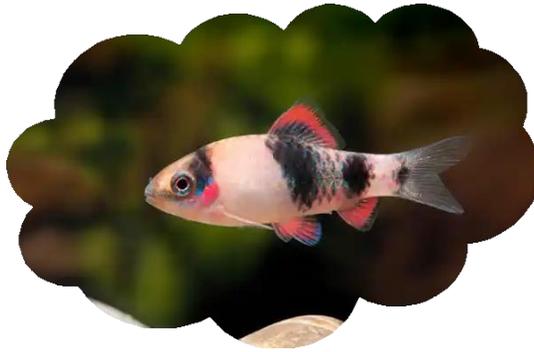
- **Habitat of the fish:** Clear streams and rivers with moderate flow.
- **Ornamental quality:** Silvery body with blue iridescent stripes.
- **Ornamental market value:** Moderate; popular schooling fish.
- **Export and domestic market:** Mainly domestic; limited export demand.
- **Market size, weight and length:** Grows to 8–10 cm.
- **Breeding and culture status:** Easily bred in captivity.
- **Research done on the species:** Well documented in aquarium biology literature.



**Giant Danio**  
(*Devario aequipinnatus*)

- **Habitat of the fish:** Fast-flowing, oxygen-rich rivers and streams.
- **Ornamental quality:** Large size; active swimming behavior.
- **Ornamental market value:** Moderate to high value for large displays.
- **Export and domestic market:** Domestic and limited export markets.
- **Market size, weight and length:** Maximum length around 15 cm.
- **Breeding and culture status:** Captive breeding possible.
- **Research done on the species:** Moderate research literature available.

**Melon Barb**  
(*Haludaria fasciata*)



- **Habitat of the fish:** Slow to moderately flowing streams.
- **Ornamental quality:** Vertical bands and color enhancement under good conditions.
- **Ornamental market value:** Moderate ornamental value.
- **Export and domestic market:** Mostly domestic ornamental trade.
- **Market size, weight and length:** Attains 6–8 cm length.
- **Breeding and culture status:** Captive breeding reported.
- **Research done on the species:** Limited focused research available.



**Filament Barb**  
(*Dawkinsia filamentosa*)

- **Habitat of the fish:** Rivers with moderate flow and sandy substratum.
- **Ornamental quality:** Filamentous dorsal fin rays in males; vibrant breeding colours.
- **Ornamental market value:** High ornamental appeal.
- **Export and domestic market:** Domestic trade and selective export.
- **Market size, weight and length:** Grows up to 15 cm.
- **Breeding and culture status:** Captive breeding achieved.
- **Research done on the species:** Moderate research publications.

**Black Ruby Barb**  
(*Pethia nigrofasciata*)



- **Habitat of the fish:** Shaded forest streams with slow flow.
- **Ornamental quality:** Red-black breeding coloration in males.
- **Ornamental market value:** High ornamental value.
- **Export and domestic market:** Export-oriented species with domestic demand.
- **Market size, weight and length:** Length 5–7 cm.
- **Breeding and culture status:** Captive breeding well established.
- **Research done on the species:** Well-studied ornamental species.



**Rosy Barb**  
(*Pethia conchonius*)

- **Habitat of the fish:** Widely distributed rivers and ponds.
- **Ornamental quality:** Bright rosy coloration and hardy nature.
- **Ornamental market value:** Moderate ornamental value.
- **Export and domestic market:** Strong domestic and export trade.
- **Market size, weight and length:** Size up to 14 cm.
- **Breeding and culture status:** Easy captive breeding.
- **Research done on the species:** Extensive aquaculture literature.

## Malabar Puffer

(*Carinotetraodon travancoricus*)



- **Habitat of the fish:** Slow-flowing rivers and vegetated streams.
- **Ornamental quality:** Miniature size and intelligent behavior.
- **Ornamental market value:** Very high value in nano aquariums.
- **Export and domestic market:** High export demand.
- **Market size, weight and length:** Maximum length ~3 cm.
- **Breeding and culture status:** Captive breeding difficult but reported.
- **Research done on the species:** Good number of behavioral studies.



## Indian Glass Fish (*Parambassis ranga*)

- **Habitat of the fish:** Rivers, reservoirs and backwaters.
- **Ornamental quality:** Transparent body tissues; unique appearance.
- **Ornamental market value:** Moderate ornamental value.
- **Export and domestic market:** Domestic trade and limited export.
- **Market size, weight and length:** Length 6–8 cm.
- **Breeding and culture status:** Captive breeding common.
- **Research done on the species:** Well documented species.

## Malabar Leaf Fish (*Nandus nandus*)



- **Habitat of the fish:** Slow-moving waters with dense vegetation.
- **Ornamental quality:** Leaf-like camouflage and predatory behavior.
- **Ornamental market value:** Moderate ornamental interest.
- **Export and domestic market:** Limited ornamental trade.
- **Market size, weight and length:** Grows up to 20 cm.
- **Breeding and culture status:** Captive breeding rare.
- **Research done on the species:** Limited ecological studies.



## Pearl Spot (*Etroplus suratensis*)

- **Habitat of the fish:** Freshwater and brackishwater systems.
- **Ornamental quality:** Pearly spots and robust body.
- **Ornamental market value:** Moderate ornamental and food value.
- **Export and domestic market:** Domestic ornamental ponds; minimal export.
- **Market size, weight and length:** Length up to 30 cm.
- **Breeding and culture status:** Captive breeding well established.
- **Research done on the species:** Extensively researched species.

## Orange Chromide (*Etroplus maculatus*)



- **Habitat of the fish:** Slow-moving freshwater habitats.
- **Ornamental quality:** Bright orange coloration.
- **Ornamental market value:** High ornamental value.
- **Export and domestic market:** Domestic trade and export.
- **Market size, weight and length:** Size 7–8 cm.
- **Breeding and culture status:** Easy captive breeding.
- **Research done on the species:** Good research base.



## Malabar Snakehead (*Channa diplogramma*)

- **Habitat of the fish:** Large rivers and reservoirs.
- **Ornamental quality:** Distinct color patterns in juveniles.
- **Ornamental market value:** Juveniles valued ornamentally.
- **Export and domestic market:** Limited ornamental trade; conservation concern.
- **Market size, weight and length:** Can exceed 100 cm.
- **Breeding and culture status:** Captive breeding limited.
- **Research done on the species:** Moderate conservation research.

## Dwarf Snakehead

*(Channa gachua)*



- **Habitat of the fish:** Streams, ponds and wetlands.
- **Ornamental quality:** Colorful breeding phase.
- **Ornamental market value:** High value among exotic hobbyists.
- **Export and domestic market:** Export and domestic trade.
- **Market size, weight and length:** Length 20–25 cm.
- **Breeding and culture status:** Captive breeding successful.
- **Research done on the species:** Moderate research publications.



## Malabar Rasbora

*(Rasbora daniconius)*

- **Habitat of the fish:** Rivers and streams.
- **Ornamental quality:** Slender body with dark lateral stripe.
- **Ornamental market value:** Moderate ornamental value.
- **Export and domestic market:** Domestic market focused.
- **Market size, weight and length:** Size 6–8 cm.
- **Breeding and culture status:** Captive breeding possible.
- **Research done on the species:** Moderate research literature.

## Red Line Rasbora

(*Rasbora rubrodorsalis*)



- **Habitat of the fish:** Western Ghats hill streams.
- **Ornamental quality:** Red dorsal stripe; rare species.
- **Ornamental market value:** High ornamental value.
- **Export and domestic market:** Niche export and domestic trade.
- **Market size, weight and length:** Length ~5 cm.
- **Breeding and culture status:** Captive breeding limited.
- **Research done on the species:** Few research publications.



## Indian Whisker Catfish

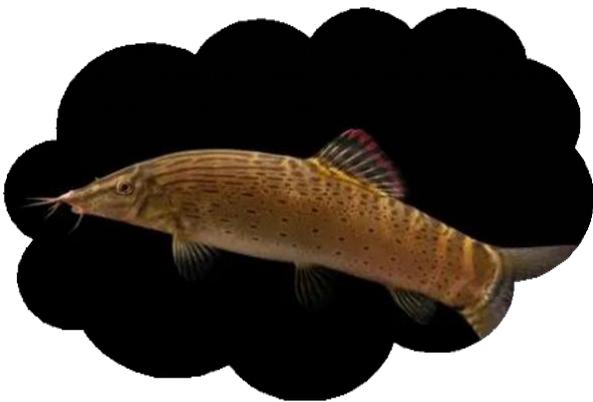
(*Ompok bimaculatus*)

- **Habitat of the fish:** Rivers and reservoirs.
- **Ornamental quality:** Elongated fins and silvery body.
- **Ornamental market value:** Low to moderate ornamental value.
- **Export and domestic market:** Occasional ornamental use.
- **Market size, weight and length:** Length up to 45 cm.
- **Breeding and culture status:** Captive breeding limited.
- **Research done on the species:** Well studied as food fish.

**Zebra Loach**  
(*Botia striata*)



- **Habitat of the fish:** Fast-flowing rocky streams.
- **Ornamental quality:** Bold zebra-like striping.
- **Ornamental market value:** Very high ornamental value.
- **Export and domestic market:** Strong export demand.
- **Market size, weight and length:** Size 8–10 cm.
- **Breeding and culture status:** Captive breeding rare.
- **Research done on the species:** Moderate research available.



**Indian Tiger Loach**  
(*Syncrossus hymenophysa*)

- **Habitat of the fish:** Large rivers with rocky beds.
- **Ornamental quality:** Tiger-like vertical bands.
- **Ornamental market value:** High ornamental value.
- **Export and domestic market:** Export-oriented species.
- **Market size, weight and length:** Length up to 25 cm.
- **Breeding and culture status:** Captive breeding difficult.
- **Research done on the species:** Limited research.

## Malabar Catfish

(*Horabagrus brachysoma*)



- **Habitat of the fish:** Rivers and floodplain wetlands.
- **Ornamental quality:** Yellow body with black lateral band.
- **Ornamental market value:** Juveniles highly ornamental.
- **Export and domestic market:** Domestic and export trade.
- **Market size, weight and length:** Grows to 45 cm.
- **Breeding and culture status:** Captive breeding achieved.
- **Research done on the species:** Good research literature.



## Kerala Catfish

(*Mystus montanus*)

- **Habitat of the fish:** Hill streams of Western Ghats.
- **Ornamental quality:** Long barbels and slender body.
- **Ornamental market value:** Moderate ornamental interest.
- **Export and domestic market:** Local ornamental trade.
- **Market size, weight and length:** Length 15–20 cm.
- **Breeding and culture status:** Captive breeding limited.
- **Research done on the species:** Few studies available.

**Stone Loach**  
(*Nemacheilus*  
*triangularis*)



- **Habitat of the fish:** Fast-flowing streams with stones.
- **Ornamental quality:** Cryptic coloration and benthic behavior.
- **Ornamental market value:** Low but niche ornamental value.
- **Export and domestic market:** Limited trade.
- **Market size, weight and length:** Size 6–7 cm.
- **Breeding and culture status:** Captive breeding rare.
- **Research done on the species:** Limited ecological studies.



**Western Ghats Goby**  
(*Stiphodon* spp.)

- **Habitat of the fish:** Amphidromous streams.
- **Ornamental quality:** Bright male breeding colors.
- **Ornamental market value:** High ornamental value.
- **Export and domestic market:** Export-oriented niche species.
- **Market size, weight and length:** Length 5–6 cm.
- **Breeding and culture status:** Captive breeding difficult.
- **Research done on the species:** Moderate taxonomic research.

## Rainbow Trout Barb

(*Hypselobarbus jerdoni*)



- **Habitat of the fish:** Fast-flowing rivers.
- **Ornamental quality:** Large size and attractive body sheen.
- **Ornamental market value:** High conservation-oriented ornamental value.
- **Export and domestic market:** Limited ornamental trade.
- **Market size, weight and length:** Can reach 60 cm.
- **Breeding and culture status:** Captive breeding limited.
- **Research done on the species:** Conservation-focused research.



## Malabar Killifish

(*Aplocheilichthys lineatus*)

- **Habitat of the fish:** Surface waters of ponds and streams.
- **Ornamental quality:** Golden stripes and surface swimming.
- **Ornamental market value:** High ornamental value.
- **Export and domestic market:** Domestic and export markets.
- **Market size, weight and length:** Length 8–10 cm.
- **Breeding and culture status:** Easy captive breeding.
- **Research done on the species:** Well studied species.

## Striped Panchax

(*Aplocheilichthys blockii*)



- **Habitat of the fish:** Freshwater pools and streams.
- **Ornamental quality:** Slender body with longitudinal stripes.
- **Ornamental market value:** Moderate ornamental value.
- **Export and domestic market:** Domestic trade mainly.
- **Market size, weight and length:** Length ~6 cm.
- **Breeding and culture status:** Captive breeding possible.
- **Research done on the species:** Limited research.



## Indian Spiny Eel

(*Macrogynathus guentheri*)

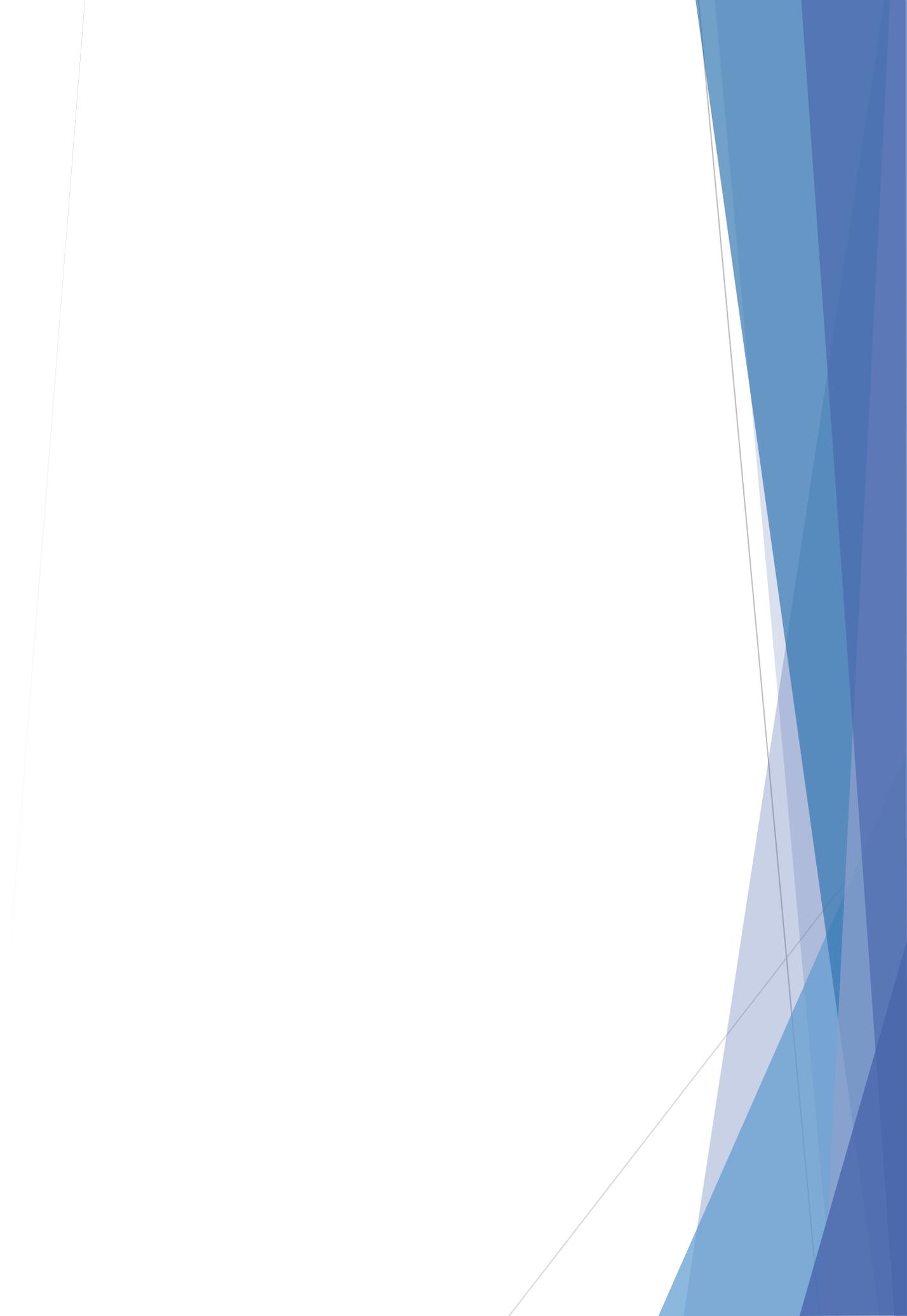
- **Habitat of the fish:** Slow-moving rivers with sandy bottom.
- **Ornamental quality:** Decorative body markings.
- **Ornamental market value:** Moderate ornamental value.
- **Export and domestic market:** Domestic and export trade.
- **Market size, weight and length:** Length 30–40 cm.
- **Breeding and culture status:** Captive breeding rare.
- **Research done on the species:** Moderate research.

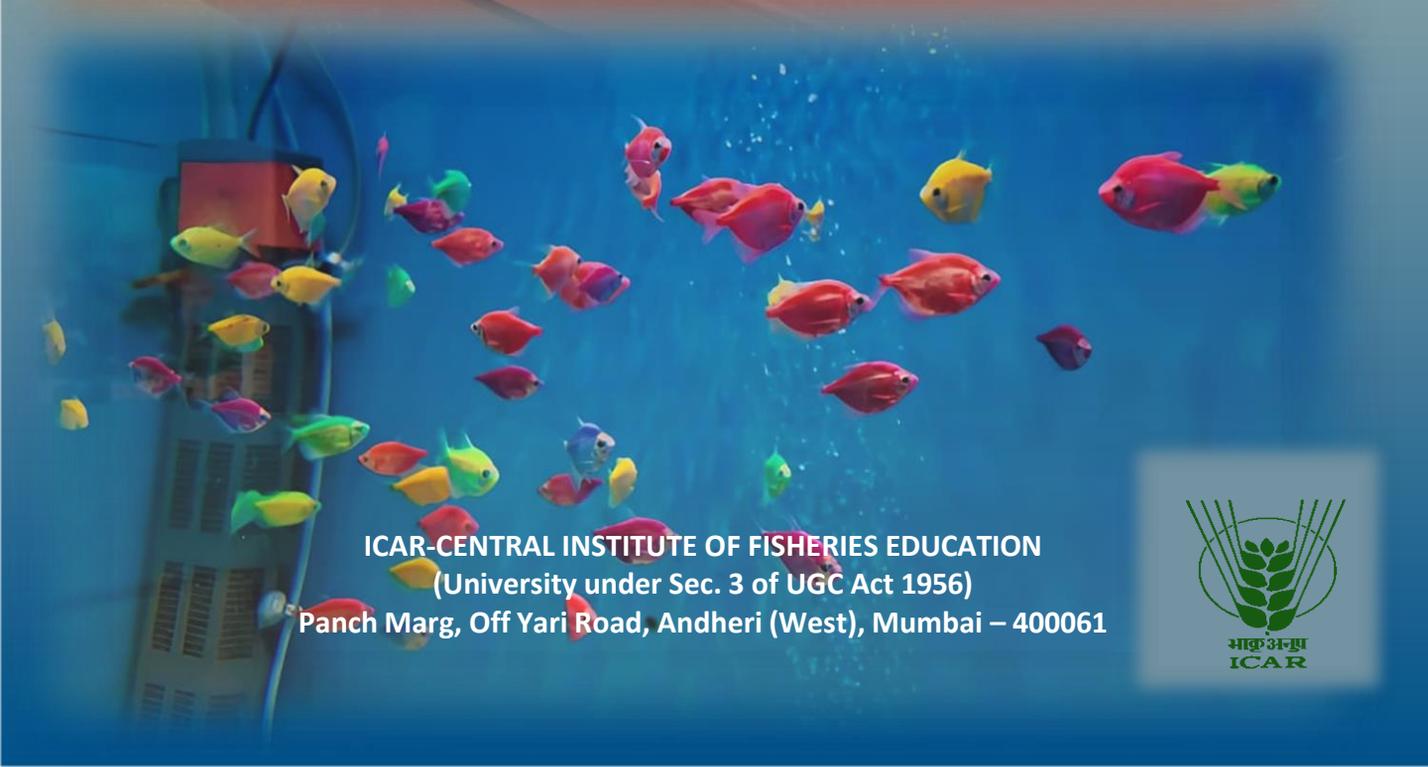
## Peacock Eel

(*Macrogynathus aral*)



- **Habitat of the fish:** Rivers and reservoirs.
- **Ornamental quality:** Eye-like ocelli on posterior body.
- **Ornamental market value:** High aesthetic appeal.
- **Export and domestic market:** Export-oriented ornamental species.
- **Market size, weight and length:** Length up to 60 cm.
- **Breeding and culture status:** Captive breeding limited.
- **Research done on the species:** Good research coverage.





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