

Deccan Mahseer

The rivers of India flow with ancient tales and hidden secrets, woven into the very fabric of the land. For centuries, these sacred waters have been home to a myriad of mystical creatures, each with their own unique stories to tell.

The Deccan Mahseer, also known as the “tiger of the water,” is a majestic fish that inhabits the rivers and streams of the Deccan Plateau in southern India. With its shimmering scales and powerful build, the Mahseer is a symbol of strength and resilience in Indian folklore, revered by fishermen and spiritual seekers alike. Legend has it that the Mahseer possesses the ability to grant wishes to those who catch and release it back into the water, a testament to the deep spiritual connection that Indian culture has with the natural world.

Together, the Deccan Mahseer and the Ganges Shark represent the mysterious and wondrous nature of India’s rivers and the creatures that inhabit them. From the snow-capped Himalayan peaks to the arid plains of the Deccan, these mystical fishes are a testament to the beauty and power of India’s natural world, and a reminder of the importance of protecting and preserving it for generations to come.

Serial Number	Characteristics	Description
1	Common name	Deccan Mahseer
2	Scientific name	Tor khudree
3	Colour	Golden-brown scales with a silvery-white belly
4	Average length	Up to 1 meter (3.3 feet)
5	Average weight	Up to 25 kilograms (55 pounds)

6	Found in	The Krishna, Godavari, and Cauvery river systems
7	Habitat	Clear, fast-flowing rivers with rocky bottoms
8	Special traits	Strong swimmers and prized game fish

Features

The Deccan Mahseer, also known as Black Mahseer or Blue-fin Mahseer, is a species of freshwater fish found in the Western Ghats of India. This fish belongs to the family Cyprinidae and is scientifically named as *Tor khudree*.

As its name suggests, the Deccan Mahseer is characterized by its dark or black coloration, although some individuals may have a bluish tint on their fins. The body of this fish is elongated and streamlined, with a slightly flattened head and a small mouth. The scales of the Deccan Mahseer are large and firmly attached to the body.

On average, the Deccan Mahseer can grow up to 60 centimeters (24 inches) in length and weigh around 3 kilograms (6.6 pounds), although larger individuals weighing up to 18 kilograms (40 pounds) have been recorded. This fish is considered to be a prized game fish due to its impressive size and fighting ability.

The Deccan Mahseer is a fast-swimming fish that typically inhabits clear, fast-flowing streams and rivers with rocky bottoms. It feeds primarily on aquatic insects, small crustaceans, and fish, using its strong jaws to crush and grind its food. This fish is known for its elusive nature and can be difficult to catch, making it a popular target among anglers.

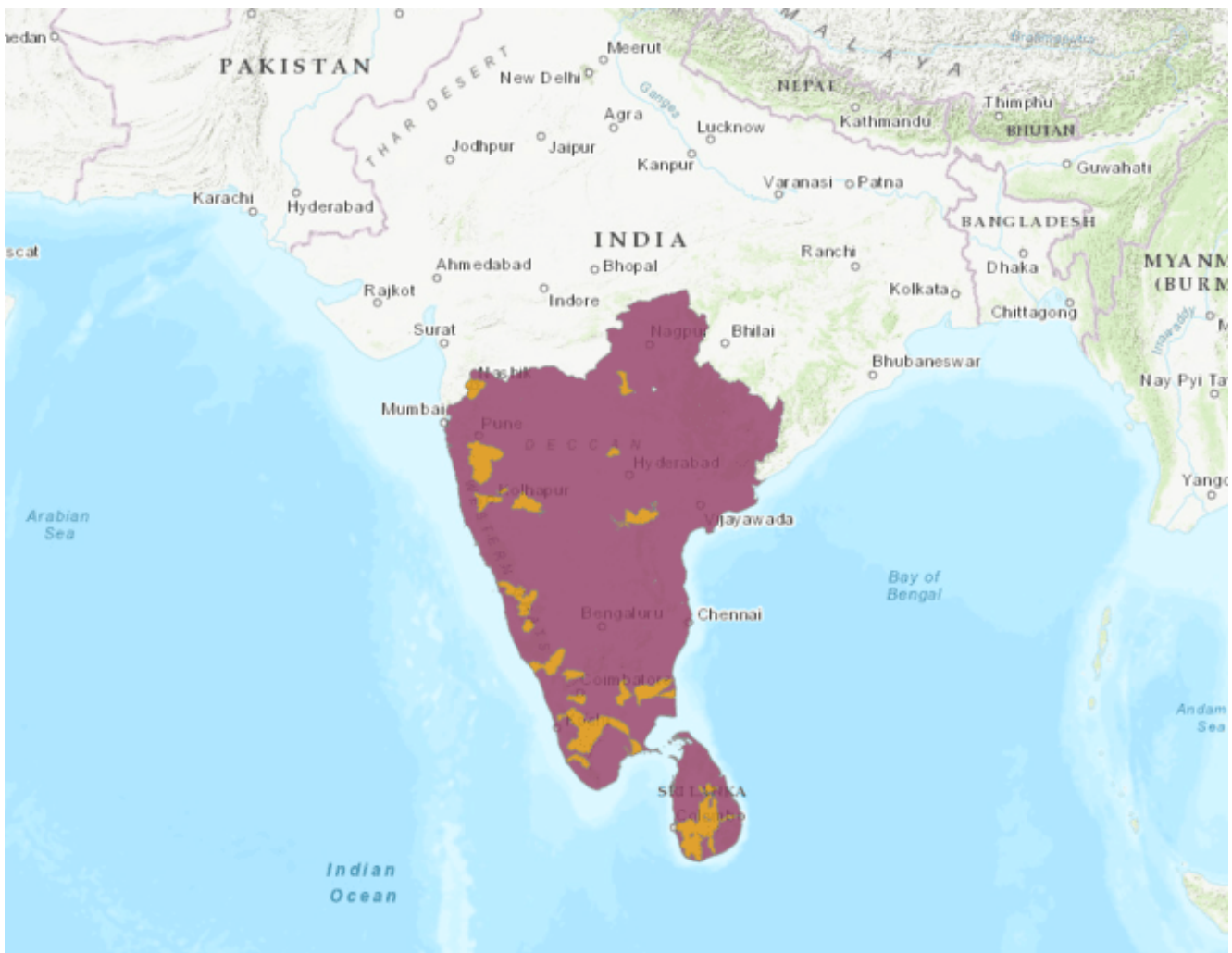
However, due to overfishing, habitat destruction, and pollution, the Deccan Mahseer population has declined

significantly in recent years. Conservation efforts are being made to protect this species, including the establishment of protected areas and regulations on fishing practices.

Habitat

Deccan mahseer is typically found in large rivers and their tributaries, including the Krishna, Godavari, and Cauvery rivers, which are located in the southern part of India. They prefer to inhabit clear and fast-flowing waters with rocky bottoms and deep pools. Deccan mahseer is known for its remarkable ability to survive in highly turbulent and oxygen-deprived waters.

River System



The Krishna river system is one of the most important habitats

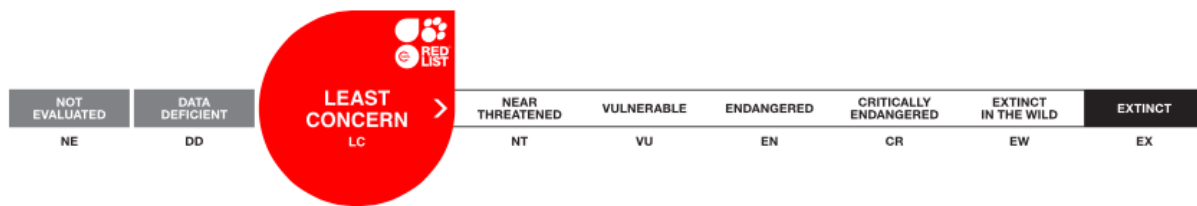
for Deccan mahseer. This river system originates in the Western Ghats and flows through the states of Maharashtra, Karnataka, and Andhra Pradesh before emptying into the Bay of Bengal. The river provides an ideal habitat for this fish, with clear and fast-flowing water, rocky bottoms, and deep pools.

Another important river system for Deccan mahseer is the Godavari river, which is also located in southern India. This river system originates in the Western Ghats and flows through the states of Maharashtra, Telangana, and Andhra Pradesh before emptying into the Bay of Bengal. The Godavari river provides a diverse range of habitats for Deccan mahseer, including deep pools, rapids, and rocky outcrops.

The Cauvery river, which is located in the southern Indian state of Karnataka, is another important habitat for Deccan mahseer. This river system originates in the Western Ghats and flows through the states of Karnataka and Tamil Nadu before emptying into the Bay of Bengal. The Cauvery river provides an ideal habitat for this fish, with clear and fast-flowing water, rocky bottoms, and deep pools.

Overall, the Deccan mahseer is an important species of freshwater fish that is found in several river systems across India. Its ability to survive in highly turbulent and oxygen-deprived waters makes it a remarkable species that is highly valued by anglers and fishermen. However, its populations have been declining in recent years due to overfishing and habitat degradation, highlighting the need for conservation efforts to protect this important species.

Threatened Status



Deccan mahseer is listed as 'Least Concern' on the IUCN Red List. The main reasons for its decline include habitat destruction, overfishing, and pollution. The construction of dams and water diversions has resulted in the fragmentation and loss of suitable habitats for fish. Additionally, illegal fishing methods such as dynamite and poison fishing have contributed to the depletion of the species. Pollution from industries and agricultural runoff also affects the fish population.

Historically, it has been an important food fish for many communities, particularly in South India. In some parts of India, particularly in the states of Karnataka and Maharashtra, Deccan Mahseer is still consumed as a delicacy. The fish is often prepared by marinating it with spices and then grilling or frying it. In some regions, it is also used to prepare curries and stews.

Deccan mahseer is facing several dangers that threaten its existence. Overfishing is one of the biggest threats to the species. Anglers target the fish for sport and food, and many of them are caught using illegal methods. The construction of dams and water diversion projects has also contributed to the decline of the species by changing the river's flow and altering its natural habitats. Pollution from industries and agriculture runoff also affects the fish population, making it difficult for them to survive in their natural habitats.

Several efforts are underway to conserve the Deccan mahseer. The Indian government has listed the species under the Wildlife Protection Act, which prohibits fishing or hunting of

the fish. Conservation organizations such as the Mahseer Trust are working to conserve and protect the fish by promoting sustainable fishing practices and habitat restoration. The Mahseer Trust also runs a breeding program to raise the fish in captivity and release them into the wild. The organization works with local communities to raise awareness about the importance of conserving the species and encouraging responsible fishing practices.