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Short Notes

A Carp-Goldfish Hybrid with No Caudal Fin

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Dawson (1964, 1966, 1971) lists a number of reports of fish lacking caudal fins. There are several reports of naturally occurring carp, *Cyprinus carpio*, and goldfish, *Carassius auratus*, without tail fins (Fiebiger, 1907; Breder, 1953; Ward, 1965). Apparently this is the first report of a hybrid of these two species with such an anomaly.

The first (ArkSU #624) was seined from an irrigation ditch near Jonesboro, T.13N, R.2E, Sec. 12, Craighead Co. Ark., (Fig. 1).

X-ray plates, not illustrated, show the fin to be lacking directly behind the 33rd vertebra with no apparent malformation. The large foci of scales taken from the end of the tail, as compared to scales above the lateral line, show tail scales to be replacement scales (Creaser, 1926) and indicate the tail was lost relatively late in life. The collecting site

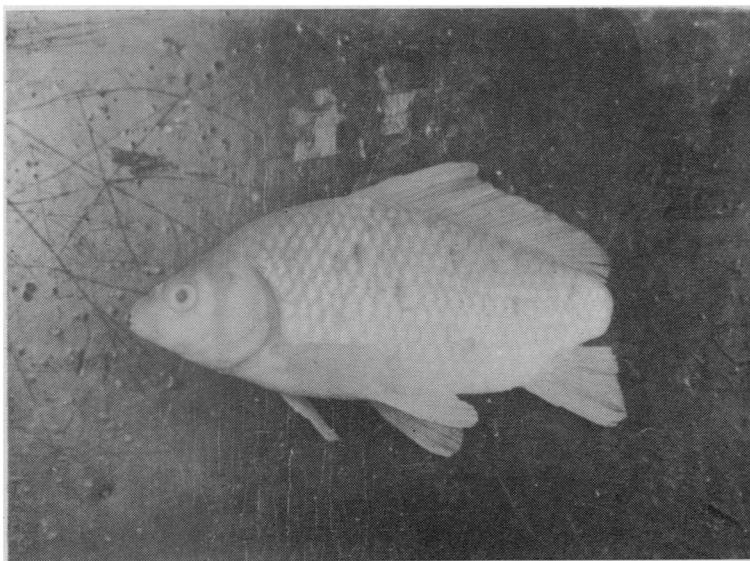


Fig. 1. Decaudate Carp-Goldfish.

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contained numerous predators capable of inflicting such a loss: bowfin, *Amia calva*; gar, *Lepisosteus*; water snakes, *Natrix erythrogaster* and *N. rhombifera*; and snapping turtles, *Chelydra serpentina* were taken from the small body of water (approx $3 \times 400\text{m}$).

The specimen compares well in size (3.7mm head, 6.0 trunk) to 15 other, normal, hybrid individuals of the same age group collected with the specimen (mean: 3.8mm head, 6.2 trunk). In a natural environment with extreme selective pressures, e.g. high predator concentration, the loss of a caudal fin apparently did not greatly hinder the fish's growth, if any, during the period from that loss until collection. Previous research indicates the relative unimportance of the caudal fin to some fish (Lagler *et al.*, 1962).

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