



**CLEAN  
DRAIN  
DRY**

Prevent the Spread of Aquatic Invasive Species

# Rosy red minnow (*Pimephales promelas*)

## ABOUT

Rosy red minnows, also known as Red minnows, are a breed of Fathead minnow commonly sold for private aquariums. Commonly sold as feeder fish, they have been intentionally released into British Columbian waterways by pet owners.

## LEGAL STATUS

Rosy red minnow is an invasive species in B.C. and is included on the Provincial Early Detection & Rapid Response (EDRR) list.

## DISTRIBUTION IN B.C.

Rosy red minnows have a sporadic distribution around B.C. Since 1978, they have been found in One Island Lake Provincial Park, in Millburn Lake, in ponds near Prince George and Kelowna, and in several artificial ponds in Metro Vancouver. It is unknown whether they have been able to spread from these water bodies, but there is evidence that they are able to breed and survive the winter.



## IDENTIFICATION



Rosy red minnows grow to 2-6 cm long. Their sides and bellies are silver, while their backs, tails, and head are orange-red or pink in colour. They have large eyes with a metallic iris. Their fins are translucent. You may see them congregating in shallow waters in large schools.

## ECOLOGICAL CHARACTERISTICS

**Habitat:** Rosy red minnows are a hardy fish, able to survive in low-oxygen waters and able to breed when water temperatures are between 10-21°C. In their native range, Fathead minnows occupy a wide variety of waterways, including streams, ponds, and shallow lakes. They prefer slow-moving, high-turbidity water that warms up during the day.

**Reproduction:** Female fish lay up to 400 eggs along a log or other flat surface with each spawning event. The male who fertilized these eggs will guard them until they hatch 4-5 days later.

## IMPACTS

As this species isn't yet widespread, it has not had a large ecological or economical impact on B.C. However, because this is a hardy species capable of tolerating unsuitable conditions and occupies a similar ecological niche to other small freshwater fish native to B.C., it has the potential to disrupt food webs and outcompete native species for food and habitat. In northern Europe, introductions have resulted in the spread of enteric red-mouth disease in trout and other salmonids.



## BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

**Prevention:** **Don't Let it Loose! NEVER** release pet fish into ponds, lakes, or other waterways, including artificial ponds. If you are unable to care for your fish, contact a pet store or the BCSPCA as they may be able to help you rehome it responsibly.



**Reporting:** If you find Rosy red minnows, report them to the ISCBC at [info@bcinvasives.ca](mailto:info@bcinvasives.ca) or by phone at 1-888-933-3722, or report them using the [Report Invasives app](#).

## REFERENCES/INFORMATIVE LINKS

- <http://iinnet.geog.ubc.ca/efauna/Atlas/Atlas.aspx?sciname=Pimephales%20promelas>
- <https://nas.er.usgs.gov/queries/factsheet.aspx?SpeciesID=621>
- [https://www.inaturalist.org/observations?place\\_id=7085&subview=grid&taxon\\_id=109536](https://www.inaturalist.org/observations?place_id=7085&subview=grid&taxon_id=109536)
- [https://archive.news.gov.bc.ca/releases/news\\_releases\\_2017-2021/2018FLNR0216-001556.htm](https://archive.news.gov.bc.ca/releases/news_releases_2017-2021/2018FLNR0216-001556.htm)



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