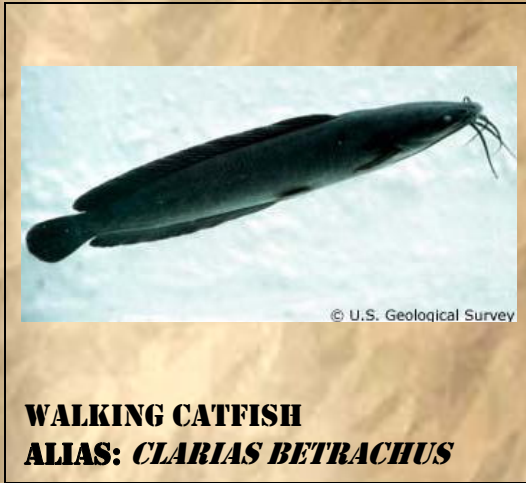


NOT WANTED



WALKING CATFISH
ALIAS: *CLARIAS BETRACHUS*

Distribution: Native to South East Asia including Malaysia, Thailand, eastern India, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Burma, Indonesia, Singapore, and Borneo. Well established in Florida. Also reported in the Mississippi River basin, Georgia and Alabama.

Size: About 1 foot in length maximum.

Description: This freshwater catfish has an elongated body that tapers to the tail, and has long dorsal and anal fins as well as several pairs of sensory barbels. The head is flat and wide. The skin is scaleless but covered with slime, which protects the fish when it is out of water. It is typically a uniform shade of gray or gray-brown with many small white spots along its sides.

Impacts to Aquatic Ecosystem: This creature is omnivorous; it feeds on smaller fish, mollusks and other invertebrates as well as detritus and aquatic weeds. In densely populated drying pools, these fish quickly consume most other species present. Native fish are displaced by large populations of walking catfish. Wild walking catfish carry the disease enteric septicemia (ESC) caused by the bacterium *Edwardsiella ictaluri*. Wild walking catfish could infect farmed catfish with the disease.

Means of Introduction: The first introductions in Florida apparently occurred in the mid-1960s when adult fish imported as brood stock escaped from a fish farm near Miami. Aquarium releases likely are responsible for introductions in other states.

Status in Maryland: Currently not in Maryland.



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

*Special provisions for delivering specimens to authorities, visit www.dnr.state.md.us/invasives.

For more information on invasive species in Maryland visit www.dnr.state.md.us/invasives.

