



🇬🇧 COMMON BARBEL

Barbus barbus

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Geographical Distribution

The common barbel is native throughout Europe and China and has become established as an introduced species in Morocco and Italy.

In the Iberic Peninsula there are several endemic subspecies. The most common is *Barbus bocagei*, other two species, the Algarve Barbel (*Luciobarbus sclateri*) and the Iberian Barbel (*Luciobarbus comizo*) are endangered.



Habitat

B. barbus is benthopelagic, meaning they are found at the bottom of rivers as well as in open water. They are typically found feeding in deeper areas of rivers with a rocky or gravel bottom.

Description

The barbel is ideally suited to fast flowing waters, adult size is up to 1.2 m in length and 12 kg in weight, although it is typically found smaller (50–100 cm length, weight 1–3 kg). It is slightly laterally compressed, lacks an adipose fin, has a dark brown or grey mottled appearance, the underside is light coloured and the fins have a reddish tinge.

The name comes from the four barbles (excrescences in the form of small fleshy spines) extruding from the upper lips.

Feeding behavior

Feeding is on benthic organisms, including crustaceans, insect larvae and mollusks. Typically it looks for food revolving the stones of the bottom with the fleshy lips of his mouth.

Fishing

Closed season: April 15-May 15. **Minimum retention size:** 20 cm. It is an edible fish but the flesh has little culinary value.