

Family Danionidae

Zebrafish and allies

Danionidae is a large family of cypriniform fishes previously treated as a subfamily of Cyprinidae. The exact composition of this family is still under discussion, and the question of which genera should be included has not yet been fully resolved. Further work is needed to settle this unsatisfactory situation. The family is speciose, with approximately 300 species and 50 genera. It is particularly

diverse in sub-Saharan Africa and subtropical and tropical Asia, including numerous small rainforest species. Many of these are popular ornamental fish. The vertebrate model fish *Danio rerio* and the miniature fish *Paedocypris progenetica*, one of the smallest known vertebrates, are included in this family. All species are distinctive, small, herring-like fishes characterised by the lateral line on the lower part of the caudal peduncle. **Further reading.** Tang et al. 2010 (phylogeny).



Barilius mesopotamicus; Batman drainage, Türkiye; 45 mm SL.

Barilius mesopotamicus

Common name. Mesopotamian barilius.

Diagnosis. Distinguished from superficially similar species of *Alburnus*, juvenile clupeids, and *Cabdio occidentalis* by:
● one pair of short barbels / ○ 6–11 roundish, dark, grey blotches on flank. Size up to 65 mm SL.

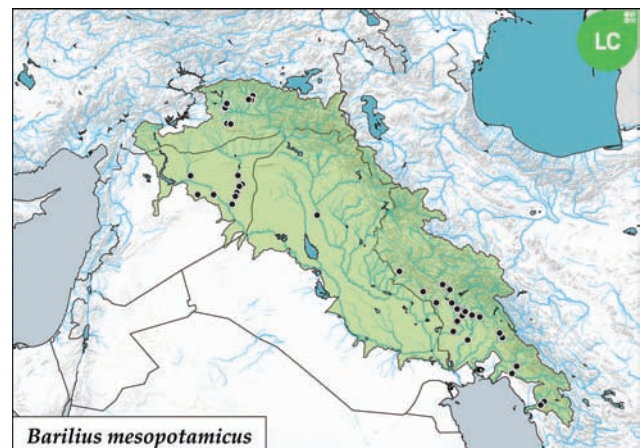
Distribution. Euphrates and Tigris drainages in southern Türkiye, Syria, Iraq, and Iran. In the lower part of Karun, Zohreh, Helleh, and Mond all flowing into the Persian Gulf. Also, in Dalaki, an endorheic basin nested within Tigris drainage.

Habitat. Upper water column near surface of small to large rivers with slow to moderate currents.

Biology. A wide range of fish of all sizes caught in late summer suggests multiple spawning and a 1-year maturity with a short life span. Absence from cold headwater streams indicates limited tolerance to low temperatures. Feeds on floating aquatic and terrestrial invertebrates.

Conservation status. LC.

Further reading. Coad & Krupp 1983 (description); Liao et al. 2011 (molecular phylogeny).





Cabdio occidentalis; Mashkid basin, Iran; ~65 mm SL. © H. Mousavi-Sabet.

Cabdio occidentalis

Common name. Persian morar.

Diagnosis. Distinguished from superficially similar species of *Alburnus* and juvenile clupeids by: ● mouth subterminal; and from *Barilius mesopotamicus* by: ● no barbels / ● infraorbital bones large, almost as deep as eye diameter. Size up to 150 mm SL.

Distribution. Iran and Pakistan: Mashkid basin and Garo toward Sarbaz and Bahukalat in Makran region east to Indus.

Habitat. A wide variety of small streams to large, slow-flowing rivers. Also found in reservoirs and lakes.

Biology. Omnivorous, feeding mainly on phytoplankton and zooplankton. Spawns in February–May.

Conservation status. LC.

Remarks. Populations in Indus drainage may belong to this species. Commonly identified as *Cabdio morar*. Formerly known as *Aspidoparia*, which is a synonym of *Cabdio*. Molecular data place it in *Salmostoma*, from which it is distinguished by a subterminal (as opposed to terminal or superior) mouth.

Further reading. Berg 1949a (description of Iranian material); Tang et al. 2010 (molecular phylogeny); Hossain et al. 2015 (feeding); Lalramliana et al. 2019 (diversity, molecular data); Jouladeh-Roudbar et al. 2023a (description).

