



Apron (*Zingel asper*)

Order: Perciformes - Family: Percidae



Also known as: Rhone Streber, Apron du Rhône

Type: Freshwater; demersal - Gamefish

Description: The Apron, (*Zingel asper*), is a species of fish in the Percidae family that is at a high risk of becoming extinct.

Physical Characteristics: Dorsal spines (total): 8 - 13; Dorsal soft rays (total): 10-14; Anal spines: 1-3; Anal soft rays: 8 - 12; Vertebrae: 43 - 45. The presence of 57-65 + 3-6 scales along lateral line distinguishes uniquely this species from its congeners. Can be further separated from other species by the combination of the following characters: first dorsal fin with 8-9 spines; second dorsal fin with 1-2 simple and 9-12½ branched rays; Scaleless cheeks. Caudal fin with 17 soft rays

Size: It reaches its full maturity after 1 year, and its length ranges from 10-cm to 20-cm. Max length : 22.0 cm TL male/unsexed; max. published weight: 100.0 g

Color Form: Typically dark brown, green or gray in color.

Sexual dimorphism: Females usually grow faster and live longer than males

Reproduction & Spawning: The fertility of a *Zingel asper* is related to its size; short-lived species reported to live in fast-flowing rivers with a gravel substrate. Occurs in main course of rivers and large streams and in riffles. Found on stone bottom. Lurks on the bottom during the day and comes out for crepuscular feeding (Ref. 11941). Feeds on aquatic invertebrates. Larvae feed on plankton under surface, then at about 2.5 cm SL, they move to benthic habitats. Attains first sexual maturity at 2-4 years of age. Spawns in deeper parts of riffles. Deposits on gravel strongly adhesive eggs, 2.2 mm in diameter, which hatch in about 14 days at 13° C. Threatened due to habitat destruction and pollution

Lifespan: It has a short life span (2-3 years)

Behavior: Not much is known about the behavior of the apron, but it is believed to behave in a similar way to the closely related streber (*Zingel streber*), which lives in small colonies or schools of several individuals that have territories scattered through the habitat. The apron lurks on the bottom of the river bed during the day, coming out to feed at twilight. Most of the feeding and growth of this species occurs during the spring and summer.

Temperate; 49°N - 43°N, 3°E - 9°E

Habitat / Biotope: The *Zingel asper* can be found in the River Durance and River Beaume. The *Zingel asper* lives in habitats similar to that of the River jelly ionen, *Lamprheuela*, and the *Phoxinus phoxinus*.

Diet: The *Zingel asper*'s diet consist of smaller fish which include Diptera, Baetiidae and Hydropsychidae, and varies by season. Diptera is consumed primarily during the winter. Its diet consists of different types of invertebrates, consuming flies and midges in winter, and mayflies and caddisflies during the rest of the year.

Origin / Distribution: Europe: Rhône drainage, except Lake Geneva basin (France, Switzerland). Originally widespread, but following habitat alterations, distribution is now much fragmented and restricted. Main subsisting populations in the middle Doubs (France, Switzerland) and Durance and Ardeche (southern France).

Conservation Status: The Ministry for the Environment and the Fishing Federations are responsible for protecting our region's natural water. Spurred European, particular attention is now paid to the human environment (Habitats Directive) whose spawning grounds in particular. However, several species of fish, which provide variety of biological legacy, are endangered by their lifestyle and their low density, leading to a fatal genetic isolation. These species are listed in the Habitats Directive. Without economic value, these fish are indicative of the health of our waters. They might be saved through the development of sites to support their latest interim populations. It is clear however that the restocking is not an end in itself but a transitional stage in the renaturation of rivers and wetlands. One can add that the principle of active support for endangered species by this route is part of the recommendations of the Development Master Plan and Water Management Basin.

Compatibility / Temperament:

