

3. *Petrocephalus catostoma* (Gunther), 1866.

Synonym: *P. stuhlmanni* Boulenger, 1909.

Silver parrot-fish. Silwer snawelvis. Papegaaibek.

Attractively-coloured little mormyrids, growing to a size of about 6 inches. The dorsal surface is generally a darker silvery-brown with a lighter silvery or golden ventral surface.

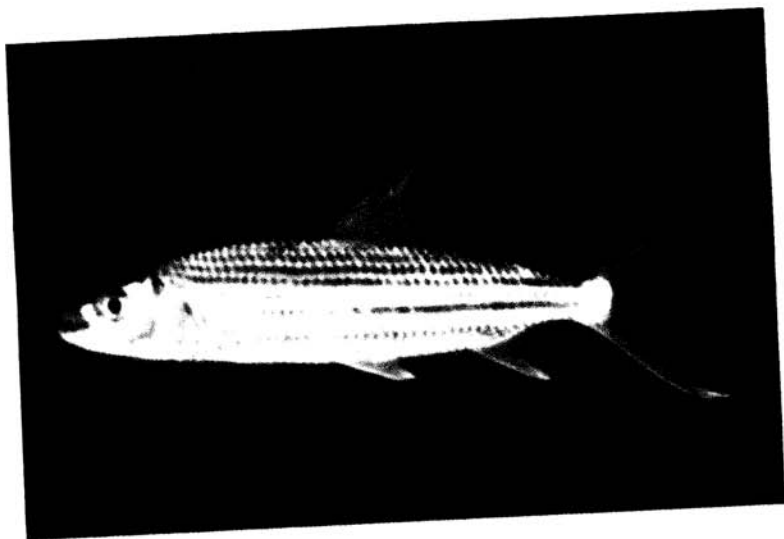
They are attractive aquarium specimens, where they do not molest other fish, but do not survive particularly well in view of their specialized feeding habits.

An ubiquitous species, but they inhabit mainly the deeper rocky pools of rivers, away from the swift current. They are also better adapted to survive in stagnant waters and are more often found in pools in seasonal rivers than *Gnathonemus*.

The males are easily distinguished from females by displaying a marked kink in the base of the anal fin (straight base in females).

Their diet consists mainly of bottom-dwelling insect-larvae, besides free-moving insects and small crustaceans such as *Daphnia*.

Distribution: All the perennial rivers of the Park as well as pools in the Nsikazi, Mbyamiti, Nwatimhiri, Nwaswitsontso and Ngotsa rivers. (Fig. ii).



4. *Hydrocynus vittatus* Castelnau, 1861.
 Synonym: *Hydrocyon lineatus* Bleeker, 1862.
 Tiger-fish. Tiervis.

This aristocratic and well-known inhabitant of our Lowveld waters is a strikingly beautiful object with its shining silver flanks and bluish sheen on the back, the blood-red tail fin edged with black and other fins tinged with red or orange. In live specimens a series of dark stripes which run parallel to the lateral line, is hardly conspicuous, but these dark lines become accentuated in formalin-preserved specimens.

Tiger-fish are inhabitants of open, well-oxygenated waters such as is found in the larger rivers and lakes. In the Park, it is hardly ever found in the smaller tributaries of the perennial rivers, except in those where large bodies of open water occur, such as in the Shingwedzi and Mphongolo rivers.

Breeding does not take place in Park waters and there would appear to be a winter migration of tiger-fish back to the lowlands of Mocambique, where they spawn during December and January along the shallow, grass-covered fringes of lakes and small streams. The young tiger-fish, as well as many large adults, then migrate upstream into the Lowveld waters of the Transvaal during the summer floods, but they are seriously hampered in these annual movements by weirs and other unnatural obstacles along our rivers.

The smallest tiger-fish yet caught in Park waters was one of 2 inches fork-length, which was netted along the lower reaches of the Letaba river during January, 1963. As a rule, it is rare to find tiger-fish of less than 5 inches fork-length in our waters even during the height of the summer floods. During this period, larger tiger-fish often swim up the larger seasonal tributaries of our main rivers, where they colonize some of the larger, permanent pools in the rivers, or pans along the flood plains bordering on the banks of the perennial rivers themselves.

In this manner, tiger-fish have been found in pools along the Shingwedzi river as far east at João waterhole, the Mphongolo river, Tsende river at

Shipandane, the Mutale river, Mbyamiti river 3 miles from its junction with the Crocodile and also in Hape pan at Pafuri. (Fig. iii).

Adult tiger-fish caught in the Park average around 3-5 lbs. in weight, but large specimens of 12-13 lbs. have on occasion been taken in the Sabi, Komati and Letaba rivers. In the lakes of Central and South East Africa, it is considered a valuable commercial species.

Numerous accounts have been published of the angling qualities of these fine fighting fish, but their gameness varies, and some large specimens put up a disappointing resistance when hooked. Different methods are adopted by the angler to catch tiger-fish, and these include trolling from a moving boat, spinning from the shore, fly-fishing and ledgering on the bottom with a fillet of fish or live minnow.

The streamlined and ferocious appearance of tiger-fish gives ample indication of their predatory habits and even young ones exhibit rapacious traits. Very young tiger-fish up to about 2-2½ inches in length, feed primarily on small ostracods, copepods and other small animals of the freshwater plankton, but soon change to a fish diet. Where there is an abundance of prey, this change-over is complete by the time the tiger-fish is about 3-4 inches long. Where there is insufficient prey to support the predator population, aquatic insects such as cadis larvae, are also taken.

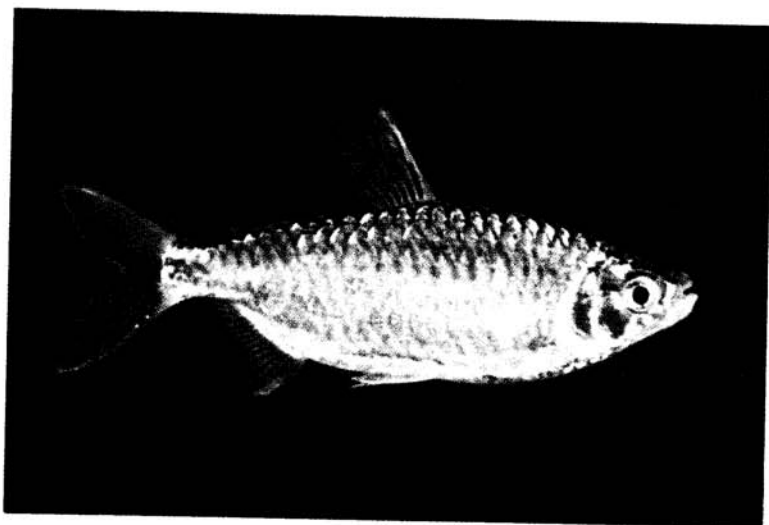
The prey is usually swallowed whole, head first, and this accounts for the size-limit of fish taken being usually about a third of the tiger's length. Adult tiger-fish are voracious feeders and may consume as much as 8 per cent of their own weight during a single meal. Common prey species are small *Barbus*, and *Labeo* spp., as well as bottom-dwelling gobies.

Their ceaseless foraging for food and fiercely predating habits have a profound influence on the lives of associated species wherever tiger-fish are present, but even these redoubtable predators sometimes underestimate their prey and come off second best in encounters.

During 1960 a 7 lb. tiger-fish was found dead in the shallows of the Letaba river at Mahlangene. On examination it was discovered that it had attempted to swallow a silver barbel (*Eutropius depressirostris*) of 5 inches in length head first. After passing the gills, the spines of the pectoral and dorsal fins of the prey became stuck in the gullet of the predator and the latter was unable to dislodge it and suffered a cruel death.

The principal enemy of young tiger-fish is undoubtedly adults of the species, although predatory birds such as fish eagles, also take their toll. Large tiger-fish are probably only preyed upon by crocodiles, otters and man himself. Tiger-fish are very sensitive however, to oxygen deficiency and to cold, and both these factors are probably instrumental in the natural regulation of tiger-fish populations. Tiger-fish soon succumb when trapped in poorly aerated, stagnant waters. Large numbers of tiger-fish, besides yellow fish, tilapias, mudfish and even barbel, died in the Sabi and Crocodile Rivers during the exceptional cold spells experienced during the winters of 1964 and 1965.

Distribution: The perennial rivers of the Park, particularly the eastern sections below 1,000 ft. elevation, as well as isolated pools in the Mutale, Mphongolo, Shingwedzi, Tsende and Mbyamiti rivers. (Fig. iii).



5. *Alestes imberi* Peters, 1852.
Spot-tailed dwarf tiger. Kolsterdwerghiervis.

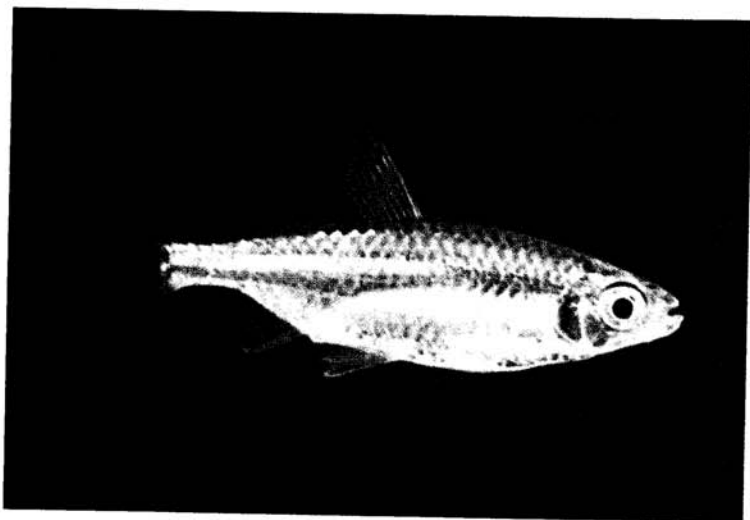
A bright silvery fish with large scales and yellowish fins. The upper segment of the eye and the adipose fins are tinged red in mature adults. A dark patch at the base of the caudal fin and a smaller dark spot behind the operculum show up more distinctly in preserved specimens.

Being a favourite prey of tiger-fish, this species is seldom found in any numbers in the deeper waters of the perennial rivers, but more often frequent the shallows and backwashes of such rivers as well as pools in the seasonal rivers, where they may occur in quite large numbers.

Although they are predatory to a degree, their diet is omnivorous and they eat almost anything of an animal or vegetable nature. Stomach contents examined have included such items as water-lily seeds, caddis flies and other aquatic insects, *Daphnia*, various copepods, filamentous algae, besides detritus, mud and sand grains.

Sexual maturity is attained at a length of about 4 inches and the fecundity of the species is shown by the record of 5½ inch females containing as many as 14,000 eggs. Spawning apparently takes place in late summer.

Distribution: All the perennial and many of the seasonal rivers of the Park. (Fig. iv).



6. *Micralestes acutidens* (Peters), 1852.

Synonyms: *Petersius woosnami* non Boulenger, 1907.

Micralestes humilis non Boulenger, 1899.

Silver minnow. Klein-bastertiervis.

A widespread and very adaptable species which is found in both still and running water. They are silvery minnow-sized fish with an olive-coloured dorsal surface and a streak along the flanks that darkens after death. The posterior edge of the caudal fin is flushed with pink and the dorsal fin tipped with black.

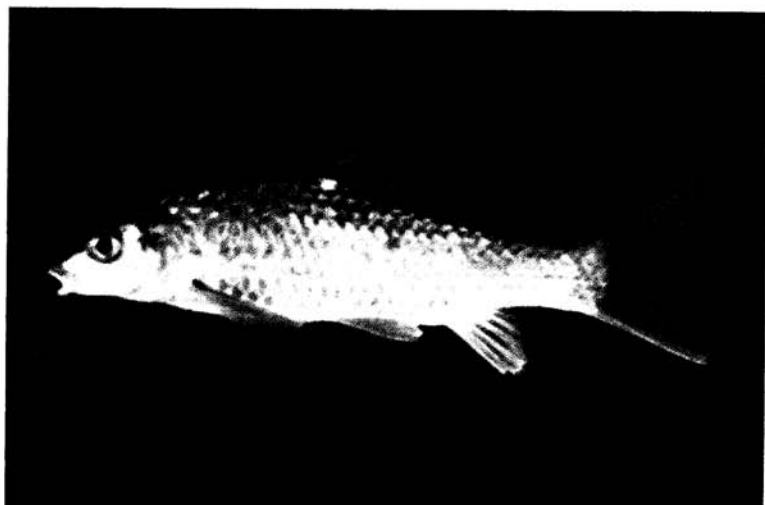
The silver minnows are hardy and pugnacious little fish which often occur in immense shoals in their chosen habitats, even to the extent of competing seriously with other species for food and living space. On the other hand, it is an important forage species for predators such as tiger-fish.

They are known to migrate upstream in shoals after the first good summer rains and become sexually mature at a length of less than 2 inches.

Despite its adaptability and less strict habitat selection, it nevertheless shuns excessively muddy or heavily silt-laden waters, and it is therefore of rare occurrence in the main stream of the turbid Levubu river. Large numbers may be found in the clearer waters of the seasonal tributaries of this river, however.

Micralestes is an active, predaceous little fish and feeds mainly on insect and other aquatic animal life, although it is omnivorous to a large extent. It also makes an attractive and distinctive aquarium fish and is easily kept, although it is inclined to bully smaller associated species and should be kept apart.

Distribution: Widespread throughout the perennial rivers of the Park, as well as their seasonal tributaries. (Fig. v).



7. *Barbus marequensis* A. Smith, 1841.
 Synonyms: *Barbus brucii* Boulenger, 1907.
B. cookei Gilchrist & Thompson, 1913.
B. dwaarsensis Gilchrist & Thompson, 1913.
B. fairbairnii Boulenger, 1908.
B. gunningi Gilchrist & Thompson, 1913.
B. inermis Peters, 1852.
B. rhodesianus Boulenger, 1902.
B. sabiensis Gilchrist & Thompson, 1913.
B. sector Boulenger, 1907.
B. swierstrae Gilchrist & Thompson, 1913.
B. victoriae Boulenger, 1908.
B. zambezensis (Peters), 1852.
Varicorhinus brucii Boulenger, 1907.

Large-scaled Lowveld yellowfish.

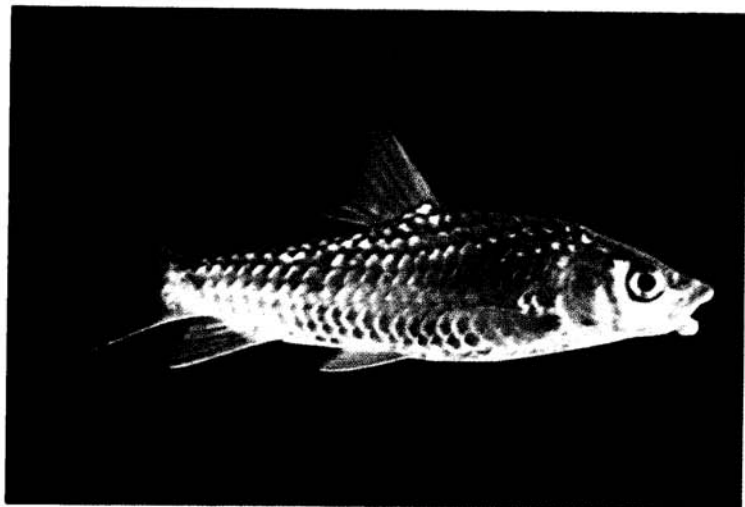
Grofgeskubde Laeveldse geelvis.

Depending on the turbidity of the water in which they live, these fish are either silvery to olive-grey to golden-yellow in colour, with the dorsal surface darker olive-green and the belly white. The cleaner the water, the more pronounced is the yellow colour of the fish.

It is an excellent angling fish and attains a weight of about 7 lbs. Larger specimens are rare indeed. These fish are usually taken on mealie-meal bait, grasshoppers, crickets, earth-worms and small crabs, whereas larger specimens may even take an artificial bait, such as a small silver spoon, or live bait such as frogs.

Although it also frequents sandy stretches of the rivers, as well as reed-fringed pools in both the perennial and seasonal streams, *B. marequensis* is very partial to deep rocky pools below rapids where the current is swift and strong.

These fish have the habit of moving upstream in spring and early summer.

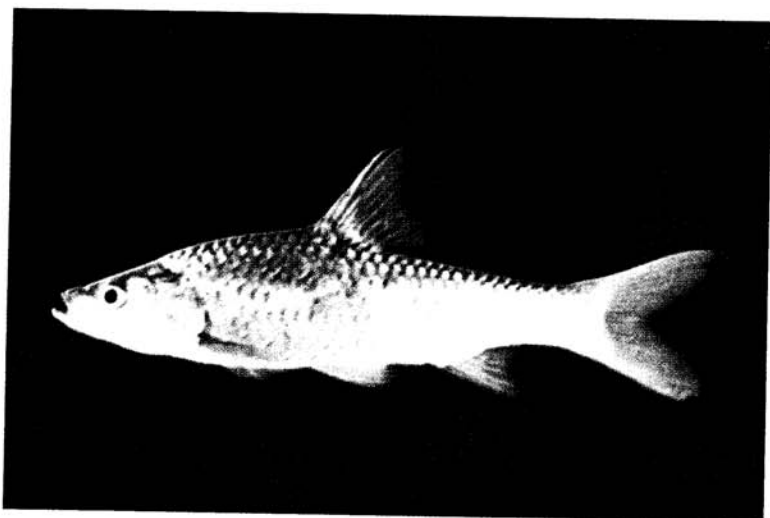


Barbus marequensis (rubber-lipped variety).

As in the case of another yellowfish species, *Barbus natalensis*, the mouth of *B. marequensis* has been found to vary from the *Varicorhinus*-like square mouth with chisel-like lower cutting jaw (forma *Varicorhinus*), to rubber-lip varieties with thick fleshy lips (forma *gunningi*), as well as intermediate stages (forma *sector* and *typica*). Although the significance of the 'rubber-lips' is not clearly understood, they appear to be associated with a rocky, fast-flowing habitat. They are of no diagnostic value and fish can grow or lose them at will.

The diet of adult fish is mainly carnivorous, consisting of aquatic insects, molluscs, crabs and small fish. Younger fish also feed on plant detritus from the river bed, midge larvae, mayfly nymphs and even spiders.

Distribution: Widespread in all the river systems and sub-systems in the Park. (Fig. vi).



8. *Barbus mattozi* Guimaraes, 1884.

Synonyms: *B. rapax* Steindachner, 1894.

B. sauvagei Pellegrin, 1912.

B. serrula Gilchrist & Thompson, 1913.

Silver-fish. Silwervis. Papierbek.

This elegant and beautifully-proportioned fish is generally silvery-white on sides and body with light olive dorsal surface. The dorsal and anal fins are tinged with orange. The characteristic dorsal spine is stout and with a serrated edge posteriorly.

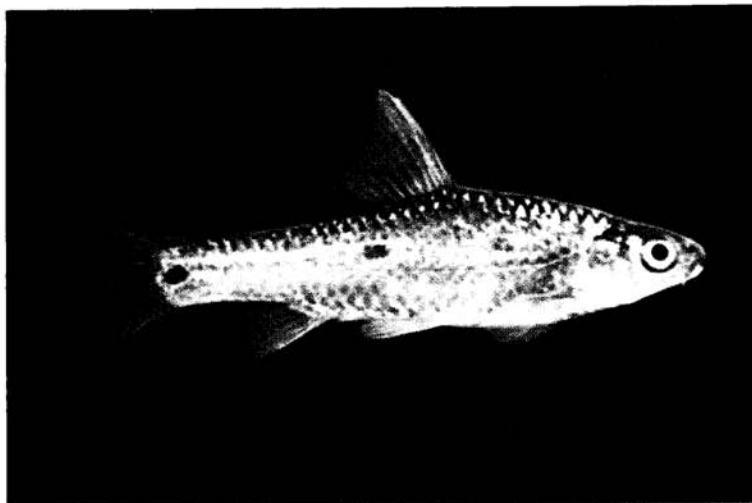
But for its relatively small size (it attains a maximum weight of about 2 lbs.), *B. mattozi* would be an outstanding angling fish. It is of rapacious nature and rises to artificial lures such as flies and small spoons and fights determinedly when hooked on very light tackle. In dams such as Rust-ter-Winter they are more of a nuisance to anglers though as they rarely exceed 10 inches in length. Here they are often caught on earthworm or grasshopper bait.

In the Park waters this fish appears to give preference to fairly deep pools below a rocky section of river or where a rocky dyke separates a pool from a sandy stretch.

Very little is known about the feeding habits of *B. mattozi*, but the large dorso-laterally situated eyes, the small number of gill-rakers, poorly developed barbels and large terminal mouth indicate carnivorous traits. It probably preys on flying insects such as flying termites, grasshoppers and others which are taken from the surface of the water, although small fish and other aquatic animals may well also fall prey to these active predators.

The thin transparent membrane, seen between the jaws when the mouth is fully opened, has led to the vernacular name 'papierbek'.

Distribution: Restricted to the Limpopo system in the Park, and here particularly to the seasonal Ngwendu, Shangoni, Nkayeni and Spirowiri waterholes. A single specimen was taken in a pool in the Olifants River at Nwamantse. During February, 1961, *B. mattozi* fingerlings were found attempting to negotiate the flooded causeway at Shingwedzi. (Fig. vii).



9. *Barbus trimaculatus* Peters, 1852.
Three-spot minnow. Driekol-ghielientjie.

A small minnow-sized fish which attains 6 inches in length and makes good bait for predatory fishes. Usually silvery to golden on the sides, with three characteristic dark spots. These spots, except for the one on the caudal peduncle, are sometimes elongate, forming a broken lateral stripe, or, are indistinct or absent. The dorsal surface, dorsal, caudal and anal fins are olive and belly white. The supporting spine of the dorsal fin is unserrated and the barbels are well developed.

This distinctive and handsome minnow is an inhabitant of pools with trailing grass or reed-covered fringes, particularly in well-oxygenated bodies of water either in permanently-flowing or seasonal rivers. It is a very common species in the Park waters, where it subsists mainly on insects, particularly the aquatic stages of midges, mayflies and caddisflies. Land insects such as ants are also taken when the opportunity occurs. Sexual maturity is reached at a length of slightly less than 3 inches. Females may produce up to 8,000 eggs or more and spawning takes place in early summer.

Another species which migrates upstream during the summer floods. It is a good aquarium fish.

Distribution: Widespread in all river systems throughout the Park. (Fig. viii).



10. *Barbus paludinosus* Peters, 1852.

Synonyms: *B. ivongoensis* Fowler, 1934.

B. longicauda Peters, 1852.

B. tsotsorogensis Fowler, 1935.

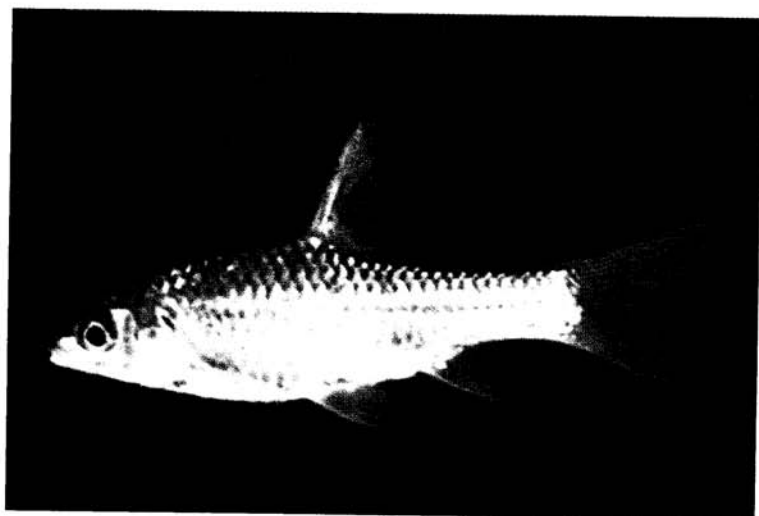
Slender serrate minnow. Petersse saagvin-ghieliemientjie.

A silvery to silvery-grey or pale golden minnow with darker dorsal surface and a later stripe following the dorsal contour.

This small fish is almost pan-African in distribution, being known in some or other form from the Nile to the Orange River system. The specific name means "of marshes", but it is equally commonly found in vegetation-clad pools along small streams as well as in more open waters. It is not particularly common in the Park and favours the southern waters of the Incomati system.

It has been found that *B. paludinosus* feeds mostly on insects, especially midge larvae and also small crustaceans such as copepods. A certain amount of plant material, particularly diatoms, is also eaten. The fish becomes sexually mature at a length of about 2 inches and females have been found containing up to 2,200 eggs.

Distribution: Peculiar discontinuous distribution, but mainly in the tributaries of the Incomati system in the Park. A few records were forthcoming from tributaries of the Olifants River. (Fig. ix).



11. *Barbus afrohamiltoni* Crass, 1960.

Previously known as *B. hamiltoni* Gilchrist & Thompson, 1913.

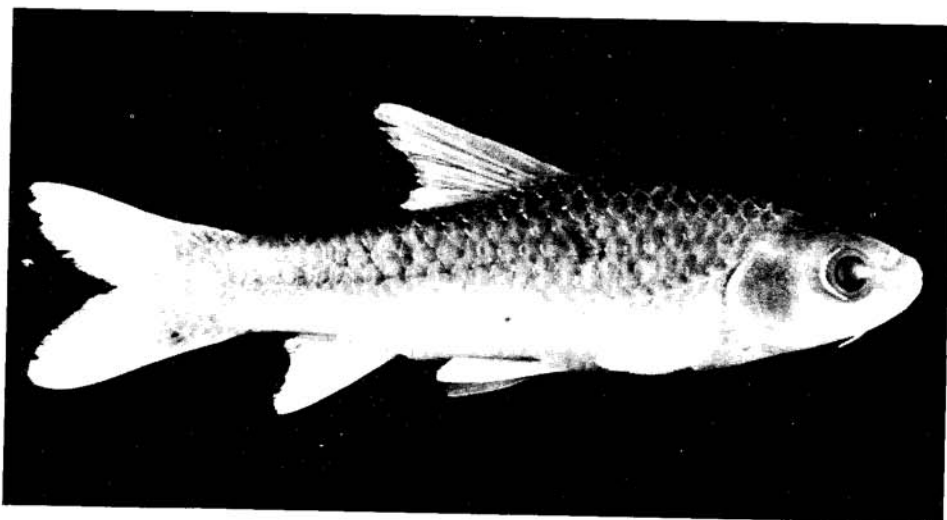
Hamilton's minnow. Hamiltonse saagvin-ghieliemientjie.

This large and distinctive serrate minnow is generally silvery with a faint lateral stripe. The body is deep and the dorsal spine well developed. There is a faint flesh-coloured tinge to the fins. Attains a length of about 7.8 inches.

The species has been very appropriately linked to the Kruger Park, as it has been named for its collector, the famous late warden of this sanctuary, Lt.-Col. J. Stevenson-Hamilton. *B. afrohamiltoni* inhabits mainly the more placid waters of pools and dams throughout the Park, where it is found in considerable numbers, in association with other species.

Very little is known of its feeding habits, but the diet would appear to be mainly insectivorous. Sexual maturity is reached at a length of just less than 3 inches.

Distribution: Widespread throughout all perennial rivers in the Park, as well as their tributaries. (Fig. x).



12. *Barbus argenteus* Gunther, 1868.

Synonym: *B....crocodilensis* Fowler, 1934.

Orange-finned serrate minnow. Oranje-saagvin-ghielientjie.

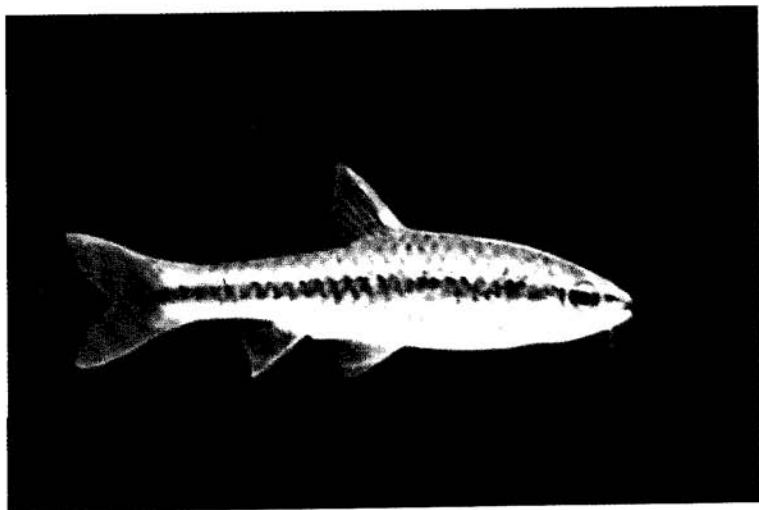
A bright silvery minnow with dark pigmentation on the upper part of the body. The caudal fin is the most colourful and is often bright orange-red. In length it grows up to $7\frac{3}{4}$ inches.

This handsome minnow is an inhabitant of well-aerated waters of the colder upland streams and is rarely found at elevations below 1,500 ft.

Only a single record exists from Park waters and even this one requires further confirmation. If it does indeed penetrate the Park from the west, it only does so during the cold winter months and must be regarded as a rare seasonal migrant.

B. argenteus feeds primarily on insects which it takes from the surface of the water, and it reaches sexual maturity at a length of about $2\frac{3}{4}$ inches.

Distribution: Only one has been captured, during fall, at Sabihoek, where the Sabi River enters the Park from the west. The water here is clear, cold and rapid-flowing over rocks and pebbles. (Fig. xi).



13. *Barbus eutaenia* Boulenger, 1904.

Synonym: *B. kerstenii* non Peters.

Banded orange-finned minnow.

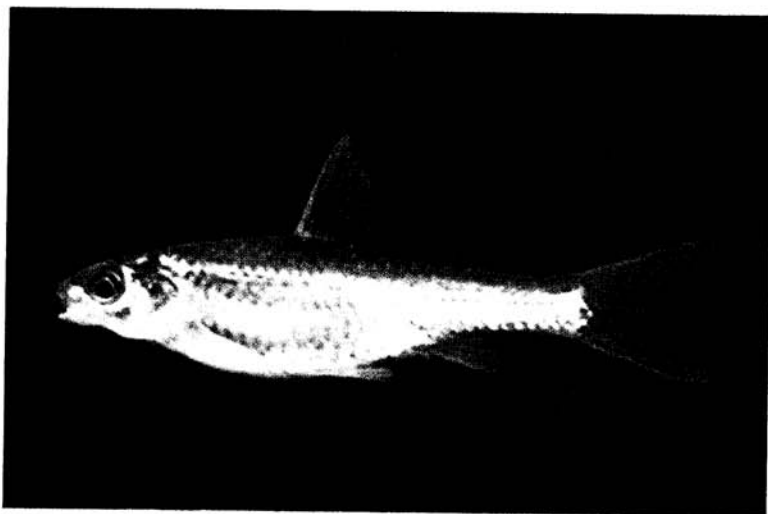
Gestreepte oranjevin-ghieliementjie.

This well-marked and attractive little minnow makes a beautiful aquarium fish and generally displays a dark olive dorsal surface, silvery-yellow belly and a broad dark lateral stripe which extends from the fork of the caudal fin through the eye to the snout. The yellow fins are tipped with orange and the dorsal fin has a distinctive dark-coloured adipose protruberance projecting into it from the back. It grows to a length of about 4 inches but most specimens are smaller.

B. eutaenia is an inhabitant of clear, well aerated and swiftly-flowing waters close to the torrential portions of rivers and streams. Very little is known of its feeding habits but in aquaria it feeds readily on ground insects, ants' eggs, etc.

The species is known to move upstream during the rains, probably to escape the silt-laden waters of the major rivers.

Distribution: In the Park it has only been recorded in the perennial tributaries of the Incomati system i.e. the Sabi and Crocodile Rivers. (Fig. xii).



14. *Barbus unitaeniatus* Gunther, 1866.

Synonyms: *B. macrurus* Gilchrist & Thompson, 1913.

B. labialis Gilchrist & Thompson, 1913.

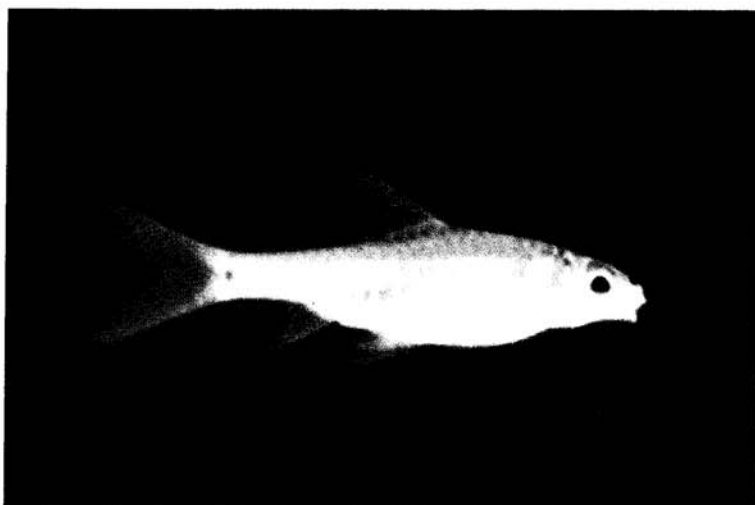
Single-banded or long-bearded minnow.

Langbaard-ghielientje.

Long, slender minnows which are mainly silvery with darker olive or bluish-grey dorsal surface and a darker lateral stripe. This form may be found with a wide range of body markings and configuration, including also the form 'labialis' which possesses extraordinarily long barbels. (Plate 16). Attains a length of some 5 inches, but is usually smaller. Sometimes develops thickened lips.

It is found in larger bodies of water generally, especially associated with weed or aquatic vegetation, but has also been netted in pools of smaller streams and flood-pans. An attractive and hardy aquarium fish, but little is known of its feeding habits. Breeding takes place in late summer.

Distribution: Widespread, although not common throughout the river systems of the Park. (Fig. xiii).



15. *Barbus viviparus* M. Weber, 1897.

Synonym: *B. bifrenatus* Fowler, 1935.

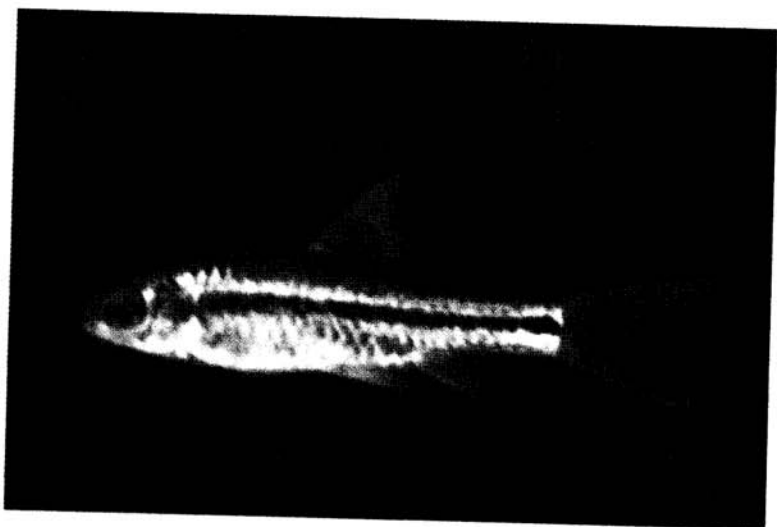
Bow-striped minnow. Boogstreep-ghielientjie.

A small species rarely exceeding $2\frac{1}{2}$ inches in length. It is mainly silvery with an olive dorsal surface, and faint lateral stripe. The tubules of the lateral line are often edged with small black dots, thus forming with the lateral stripe, the characteristic bow-shaped mark along the flank of the fish. In clear, sluggish-flowing waters and in habitats containing large masses of filamentous green algae, it has been found that this species assumes a beautiful golden hue instead of the more usual silvery colour.

The specific name is very misleading and the species is *not* viviparous. From the notes of Barnard (1943) it seems that Max Weber mistook some cichlid fry as the live-borne young of this species.

This species occupies sections of rivers or streams flowing through dense vegetation, and also more open waterways, as well as pools in seasonal rivers, but generally where marginal vegetation provides cover away from the main stream. It thrives well in aquaria and appears to feed on both vegetable and insect matter. Breeding occurs throughout the summer and females may lay as many as 8,000 eggs.

Distribution: A very common minnow and is well represented in all waters throughout the Park. (Fig. xiv).



16. *Barbus annectens* Gilchrist & Thompson, 1917.

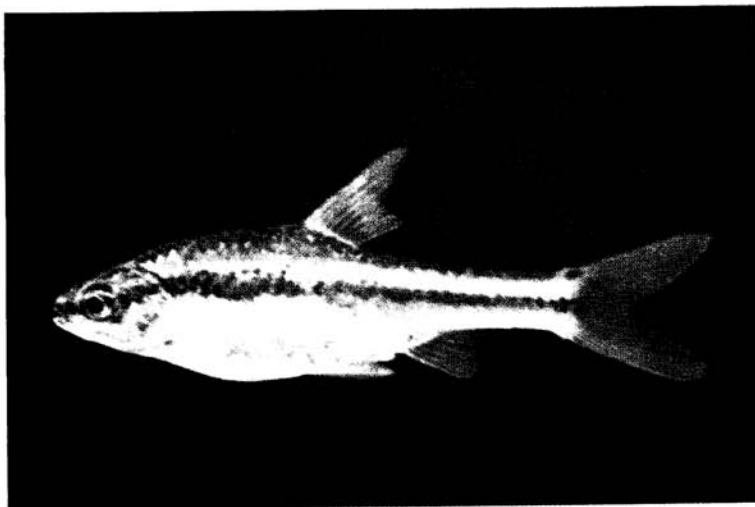
Sabi striped minnow. Laeveldse gestreepte-ghielientjie.

Another small minnow with relatively short barbels. In colour it is mainly silvery with a dark olive dorsal surface and a distinctive broad, dark lateral stripe. The maximum length attained would be about $2\frac{3}{4}$ inches.

This species was originally described from the Sabi River, Eastern Transvaal, and its range of distribution does not extend much beyond the present borders of the Kruger Park. It may, therefore, be regarded as a truly endemic form which is particularly adapted to local conditions.

B. annectens inhabits the reed- or grass-fringed banks of quiet-flowing streams, as well as pools in the perennial and seasonal rivers in the Park. As yet, little is known of its feeding or breeding habits.

Distribution: Widespread and not uncommon in all the river systems and sub-systems of the Park. (Fig. xv).



17. *Barbus toppini* Boulenger, 1916.

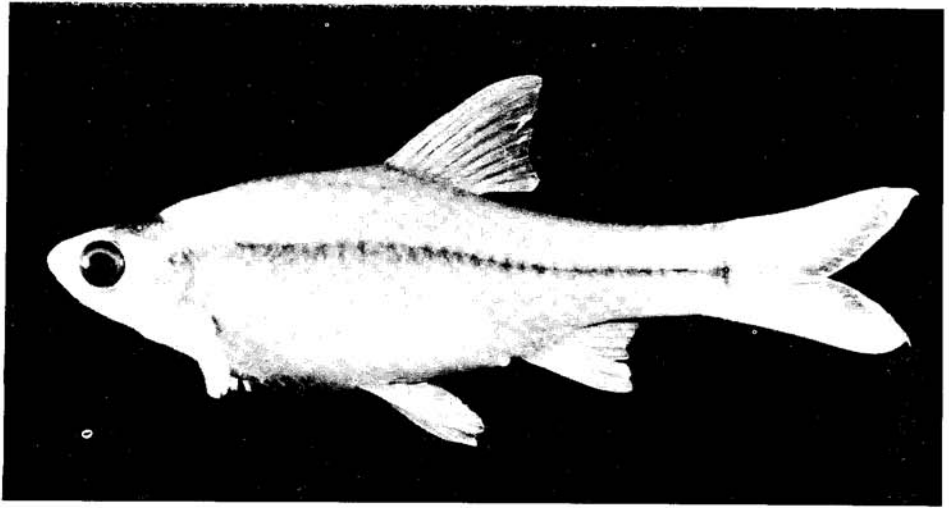
Synonym: *B. umbeluziensis* Groenewald, 1958.

Toppin's dwarf minnow. Dwerg- of kortbaardghieliemientjie.

This dainty little minnow is the smallest of the *Barbus* spp. inhabiting the Park waters, and grows to a length of only $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches. Live specimens are olive on top of the head and along the back; the iris, lower portion of the head and gill cover are pale gold. A distinct black streak, partly obscured by silvery iridescence below the dorsal fin, extends through the eye to the tip of the snout, and posteriorly, where it expands into a black patch which covers part of the central caudal fin rays. The flanks and belly are very pale gold, almost translucent, and the fins colourless. Barbels are either entirely absent or represented by one very short pair.

These small minnows have more or less the same habitat preferences as *B. viviparus* and *B. annectens* and are often found in association with them. The species breeds in late summer, but nothing is known of its feeding habits. There appears to be a spawning migration.

Distribution: Another typical Lowveld endemic which is common and widespread throughout the Park. (Fig. xvi).



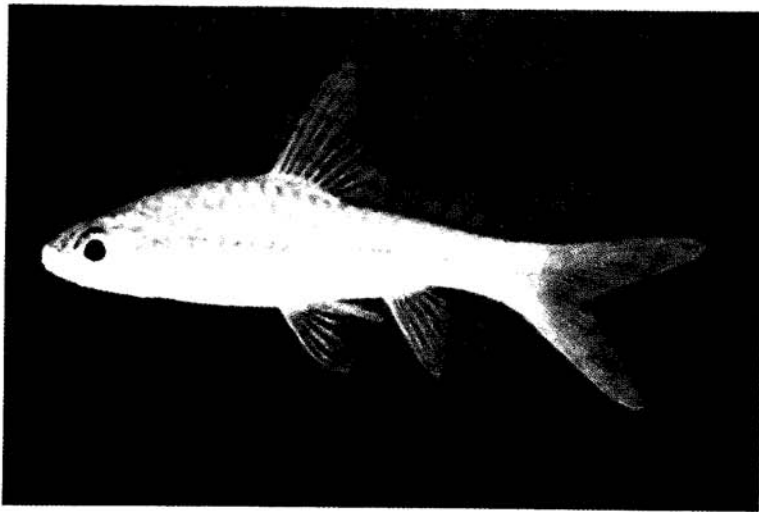
18. *Barbus rubellus* (Crass), 1960.

Red-eye minnow. Rooi-oogghieliemientjie.

Another small minnow species with a pair of very short barbels and which attains a length of $2\frac{1}{2}$ inches. Formalin-preserved specimens look very much like *B. toppini* but live specimens may easily be distinguished from the latter by the blood-red area in the eye, occupying the top quadrant of the iris. Both caudal and dorsal fins have orange-red colouration in their terminal portions, with narrow black edging. The body is bright silver, with a whitish stripe along the side.

B. rubellus was discovered originally in the Mzenyeni pan, on the Pongolo flood plain east of the Lebombo range, Natal. Subsequently, a group of small *Barbus* specimens from Mpale waterhole in the Shingwedzi was identified by Mr. Crass as *B. rubellus*. This has been the only record of the species within the Park waters to date, and requires further confirmation. Nothing is known of the food preferences of this rare form.

Distribution: Known only from Mpale waterhole in the Shingwedzi river, a tributary of the Limpopo system. (Fig. xviii).



19. *Barbus (Beirabarus) radiatus* (Peters), 1853.

Synonym: *B. (Beirabarus) palustris* Herre, 1936.

Red-fin minnow.

Rooivin-ghieliemientjie.

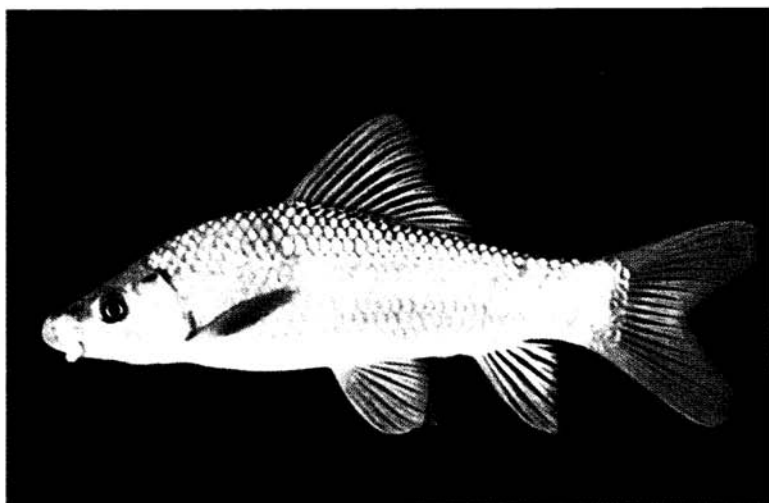
A larger species than *B. rubellus* and may attain a length of $3\frac{1}{2}$ inches in Park waters. Here again, however, the salmon or orange-tinted fins and red portion of the eye are most conspicuous. The dorsal surface is olive and the belly silvery-white. A dark lateral stripe, extending from the caudal fin to the snout is evident in most specimens. The centres of the scales above this lateral stripe are heavily dotted, giving the impression of faint longitudinal lines. These markings are more evident in preserved specimens. On the top and sides of the head there are minute mucus pores which can be seen with a hand lens.

The red-fin minnow is an inhabitant of larger bodies of well aerated water in both seasonal and perennial rivers, although it is rarely found in flowing currents and appears to prefer the placid waters of isolated pools in the seasonal rivers, particularly those associated with some aquatic vegetation and surrounding fringes of reeds or grass.

Vegetable matter appears to form a large proportion of its diet, but little is really known of its feeding and breeding habits.

This handsome little fish is another typical denizen of the Lowveld waters and is rarely found at altitudes in excess of 1,500 ft.

Distribution: Widely distributed, and common in all river systems and sub-systems in the Park. (Fig. xviii).



20. *Labeo rubropunctatus* Gilchrist & Thompson, 1913.
Red-spotted mudfish. Brons-gespikkelde moddervis.

A large, powerful, dark-coloured fish with a fleshy snout projecting well in front of the mouth. The ground colour is usually a dark chocolate-brown or sepia with a greenish flush to the dorsal surface of the head and each scale on the flanks bearing a paler pinkish or bronze-coloured spot. The fins are greyish-pink.

In the Sabi this mudfish grows to a size of about 8 lbs., but in the other perennial rivers of the Park, a 6 lb. specimen would be considered large. Although it is not often taken by anglers, *Labeo rubropunctatus* is a splendid fighting fish and displays immense stamina when hooked. Local anglers in fact think more of the fighting qualities of this fish than that of the average tiger-fish! They are sometimes caught on small hooks when fishing on the ground, and baiting with mealie-meal paste, earth-worms or some of the green, slimy and filamentous algae found on rocks in the water.

This fish is a vegetarian, like other *Labeo* species, and feeds primarily on aquatic algae. The vermiform feeding paths, which these fishes produce as they suck the algae off the rocks, leave characteristic patterns when these rocks become exposed during the dry season. They are often also seen in clear water in association with hippos, and here again, they feed on the slimy algae adhering to the skin of these aquatic mammals.

Although they are occasionally found in the larger pools of seasonal rivers (particularly young specimens), *rubropunctatus* is an inhabitant of the perennial streams and is partial to rocky habitats. It is particularly fond of the deep, clear rocky pools below a section of rapids or broken rocky dyke. Here they may often be seen on clear sunny days lying almost motionless in the shallower water, with the head directed against the current, only to dart away with remarkable speed on the first sign of alarm.

Distribution: Rocky pools in all the perennial and some of the seasonal rivers of the Park. (Fig. xix).