

Brief introduction of Korean fresh water fish

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The Korean peninsula is located in Northeastern Asia (34–42 °N latitude, 124–130 °E longitude) in a monsoon climate region with four distinct seasons. Annual rainfall is approximately 1,200 mm, but over 60% of this occurs in summer (from June to Sept.), producing an annual flooding pattern for rivers. Korean rivers are classified into 5 major river systems which are Han River, Nakdong River, Geum River, Yeongsan River, and Seomjin River. A total of 213 freshwater fish species classified into 39 families and 17 orders recorded throughout the Korean peninsula, 61 species (28.6%) are identified as endemic, and primarily occurring in mountainous regions. Fishes of Cyprinidae are 73 species (34.2%), and dominant in South Korea. Twelve exotic species are also present in S. Korea. Because of the paleogeomorphology of the peninsula, the Korean peninsula is geographically divided into three subregions—west, south, northeast—which are part of the Chinese Subregion or the Siberian Subregion. The geological characteristics influence the current fish distribution and diversity of South Korea. The Han River and the Geum River which are part of west subregion represent similar fish fauna, and have 17 endemic species. The rivers of south subregion, the Yeongsan River, Seomjin River and the Nakdong River, show similar fish fauna with Japan, and represent 13 endemic species. The northeast subregion contains small streams which flow into the East Sea, and fish fauna of this subregion is entirely different with other subregions of the South Korea.