

Fight over bringing Aussie carp to Britain

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A private fishery in England is being inundated with letters and e-mails from anglers over plans to stock an 11-acre lake with imported Australian carp.

The Aussie version of carp can grow to twice the size of their 40-pound British cousins, and there are fears the monster fish will upset the ecosystem, The Times of London reported Monday.

Steve Couch, who runs the private fishery near the town of Yeovil, said the 110 Australian carp he imported are currently being screened and tested for viruses and disease.

"There is a demand in this country to have bigger carp. At the moment you have to travel to France or Spain to be able to catch a 50-pound-plus fish," he told The Times.

Popular with anglers because of their size and fighting nature, carp drive other species out of streams and lakes.

"Carp are viewed as vermin in Australia," Ruth Lockwood, chairwoman of the English Carp Heritage Organization said. "They come from an ecosystem that is completely different to ours, so there is every chance the two types of fish won't be compatible."

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