



SOCIEDAD DE ESTUDIOS ICTIOLÓGICOS

Aphanius iberus Conservation Project at the Delta del Llobregat Natural Reserve (Bcn). History and Results





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The Sociedad de Estudios Ictiológicos (SEI) is a Spanish very small, non-profit organization, founded in 2004.

Its goals are to study fish species from every point of view: natural habitats, captive maintenance, scientific research, development of conservation projects and collaboration with institutions who share any (or all) of these goals.



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Aphanius iberus is a fish species considered **In danger of Extinction** both in Spain and Catalonia and included in the Annex II from the EU Habitats Directive.

The **SEI** has developed a Conservation Project inside the **Delta del Llobregat Natural Reserve** since 2006, although the first contacts with the Managers of this Natural Reserve were held in 2004.





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The project is still running and has been based on the following items:

- 1.- Identification of the causes of decline of the fartet inside the Natural Reserve.
- 2.- Environmental education and mass media coverage (a lot of effort here!!)
- 3.- Captive and seminatural breeding of the fish.
- 4.- Release and monitorization of new individuals in controlled spaces.



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A brief history of the *A. iberus* at the Delta del Llobregat

Before 2006: Fish disappeared due to pollution of ground water (industries near Barcelona city), introduction of *Gambusia holbrooki* and some other predators, *Lepomis gibbosus* among them.

Some specimens kept by a particular person in his garden pond for years from where he could only recover a few fish which were released in the same place where they had been first caught.

EU Life Project developed without good results for the fish since the causes that put it in danger were not attacked.



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Why to develop a Conservation Project there? Reasons for that:

- 1.- Good knowledge of the zone (and the fish).
- 2.- Critical situation of the fish and up to that moment little interest shown. The Natural Reserve is rather orientated towards birds.
- 3.- Social and educational interest in this species because of being a native fish.



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Progress of the Conservation Project

2006. First field work done.

2007. First individuals captured among thousands of Gambusia.

Captive breeding done, orientated towards environmental education as well as establishing a captive breeding stock. First “Fiesta del Fartet”.

2008. More captive breeding. Every time less fish detected at the only place where the fartet is found inside the NR. Educational Project widened to involve more local schools. Second “Fiesta del Fartet”. Field work.

2009. Continuation of the same work. Field work. Project to introduce the fartet in new artificial lagoons dug for mosquito control.

2010. At last, larger breeding facilities set up. Release of fartet individuals in 3 artificial lagoons outside the public reach. In the most protected area of the NR.



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Some numbers about this project

- 4 years of work so far.
- 6 Primary Schools involved.
About 300 students have visited the NR
- 3 "Fiestas del Fartet" celebrated.
- Several thousands of fish bred, stocked and released.
- Important impact on local media.
- Fartet now in 4 locations inside the NR.



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Environmental Education





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MEDIA COVERAGE



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**EVALUATING
NEW POINTS
FOR THE
RELEASE
OF THE
FARTET**



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2011 GOALS:

- Increase the breeding facilities to breed more fish.
- Close monitorization of the places where the fish have been released this year.
- Continue with the field work.
- Release more *A. iberus* in new artificial lagoons created to fight mosquitos.



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THANK YOU VERY MUCH!

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