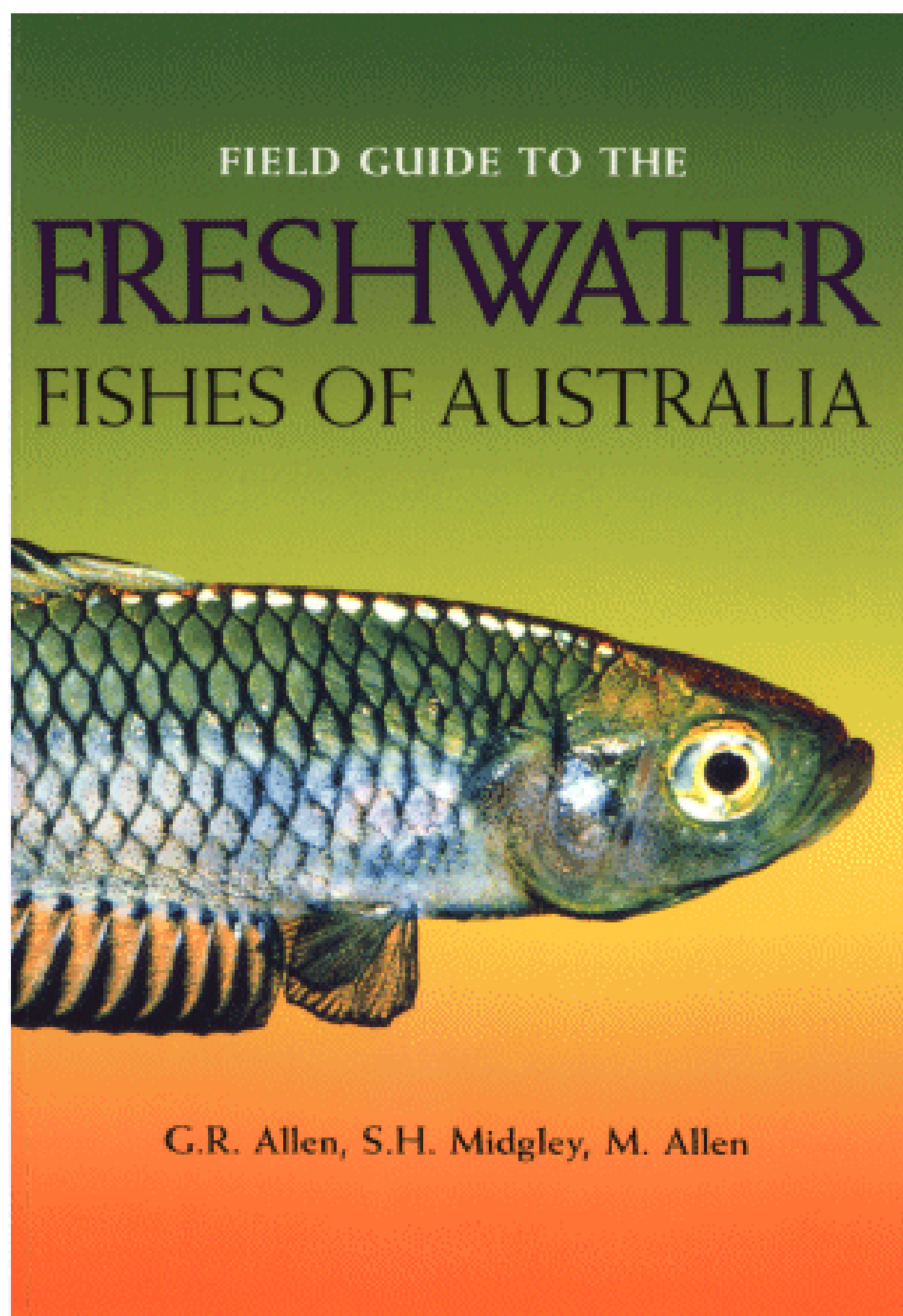




FIELD GUIDE TO THE FRESHWATER FISHES OF AUSTRALIA

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EDITION: 2002

ISBN: 0-7307-5486-3

PUBLISHER: Western Australian Museum

PAGES: 394

SIZE: 16x24 cm

PRICE: approx. \$45

COVER: Soft

ARTWORK: Illustrations generally excellent – distribution maps in colour, small but easy to see; colour habitat photos accompany each family discussion; the colour photos of the individual species are generally excellent and from many of our most renowned native fish photographers, including Gerald and Mark Allen, Neil Armstrong, Rudie Kuitert and Gunther Schmida; those few lacking photos are accompanied by coloured artwork by Jill Ruse.

Available from the ANGFA (Qld) Shop

REVIEW:

This volume makes a statement from the start with the bold wrap-around shot of *Rhadinocentrus ornatulus* on the covers and is a good size for a field guide that is meant to be carted around on trips. We have long needed such a publication – the last true field guide was by John Lake way back in 1978. From my experience with similarly-bound books in the field, modern bindings don't seem to last too well so perhaps we should all buy two copies – a working copy and a "good" one to keep at home on our bookshelf. At the current RRP it is certainly good value.

The publication is well- presented and attractively designed with colour-coded edge tabs for each family of primarily freshwater fishes, a section on estuarine-freshwater fishes and another on introduced fishes. A 46 page introductory section covers such topics as origins, composition and ecology of our FW fish fauna; reproductive biology; Australian drainage divisions; threatened species; classification, anatomy and an illustrated guide to families; as well as useful little sections on preserving fishes, fish photography, colour patterns in fish, dangerous fishes etc.

The majority (279 pages) appropriately is given over to coverage of those species that primarily inhabit freshwaters. It is interesting to see the term "primary"

now used for this group instead of saving it for those few who have been considered during evolution to have always been of freshwater origin e.g. the Queensland Lungfish – *Neoceratodus forsteri*. Each family is discussed succinctly after a typical habitat shot and "head shot" of a representative species, then follows the individual species information.

Each species rates at least one page including a distribution map, one or more colour illustrations and information under the headings of General Features; Recognition; Habitat; Status and Distribution; Remarks. For most "fishwatchers" the combination of habitat and recognition notes together with the photo and map will allow us to identify the fish in question and that's what a good field guide should do! So overall this publication fulfils the purpose admirably and I recommend it. I am sure it will sell well and deserves to become an obligatory companion on all ANGFA excursions