The grass carp, also called the white amur, is native to China. This carp species has been stocked in the United States for biological control of vegetation such as pondweed, duckweed, and hydrilla. The first reports of grass carp in the wild occurred after several escaped from an aquaculture facility in the early 1960s. Now, grass carp are found across much of the country. Although they prefer several plant species, grass carp are generalist feeders. Capable of consuming all the vegetation within a pond or lake, they may alter the food web, wreaking havoc on native plant, invertebrate, and fish communities. In Pennsylvania, it is illegal to stock grass carp unless they are sterile triploids (incapable of breeding).

Silver carp are native to China. Initially imported to control plankton in nutrient-rich ponds and waste water treatment plants, they were also marketed as a tasty food fish. The first escape of silver carp into the wild was reported in 1980. Although several populations have been found in the western United States, these fish have primarily stayed within the Mississippi River basin. Silver carp are filter feeders, eating zooplankton, phytoplankton, bacteria, and detritus. They are detrimental to natural ecosystems because they compete for food with native fish species like gizzard shad. Silver carp have also been known to harbor a type of Salmonella bacteria which could be devastating to natural fish populations.

The black carp, also called the snail carp, black amur, or Chinese roach, is native to China, Eastern Russia, and Vietnam. A freshwater fish, it inhabits lakes and large, fast-moving rivers. Black carp can grow 1-2 m (3-6 ft.) in length and may weigh up to 68 kg (150 lbs.). They only eat mussels and snails and are potential hosts for a variety of parasites. Although black carp have been used as biological control agents in fish farms in the southeastern United States, there are few reports of this species in the wild. Black carp may compete with birds, fish, and other animals for food. In addition, intense feeding on snails and mussels may cause algal blooms.

Like other Asian carp, bighead carp can quickly grow to weights in excess of 20 kg (44 lbs.). When disturbed by boaters, bighead carp jump into the air (sometimes landing in moving boats) creating a hazard for people and property. This Chinese species escaped in the early 1990s from catfish farms where they were stocked to improve water clarity. As its range expands within the Mississippi and Missouri River basins, this voracious plankton feeder presents a growing threat to native mussels and fish that feed on plankton. Underwater electric fish fences are being tested to block the entry of bighead carp to the upper reaches of the Mississippi River and the Great Lakes. While the bighead carp ranks fourth in worldwide aquaculture production, introduced Asian carp have little economic value compared to the American sport fish they displace.