澳洲肺鱼

现生肺鱼中的古老代表

澳洲肺鱼是现存六种肺鱼中最古老、最原始的一种。其自然分布范围极窄，仅见于澳大利亚昆士兰州的少数河流。与非洲、南美肺鱼相比，澳洲肺鱼身形粗壮，体表覆盖较大鳞片，保留了大型桨状肉质偶鳍，其内部骨骼结构更接近陆生脊椎动物祖先。澳洲肺鱼仅具有一个功能性肺，平时主要依靠发达的鳃在水下呼吸，只有水体严重缺氧时才浮出水面吞咽空气。澳洲肺鱼没有演化出钻泥夏眠的能力，依赖稳定水域生存，水体彻底干涸便无法存活。该物种寿命可达百年，受栖息地萎缩影响，被 IUCN 列为濒危（EN）物种，受到澳大利亚严格法律保护。

Neoceratodus forsteri

An Ancient Representative Among Living Lungfishes

The Australian lungfish is often regarded as the most conservative of the six living lungfish species. Its natural distribution is extremely restricted, occurring only in a few rivers in Queensland, Australia. Compared with African and South American lungfishes, it has a more robust body covered by large scales and retains broad, paddle-shaped fleshy paired fins whose internal skeletal organization resembles that of early sarcopterygians. It has a single functional lung and normally relies on well-developed gills for aquatic respiration, surfacing to gulp air only when dissolved oxygen becomes very low. Unlike the other living lungfish lineages, it cannot survive complete desiccation by burrowing and aestivating. Individuals may live for many decades, and the species is listed as Endangered (EN) by the IUCN and is legally protected in Australia.