



tubenose goby

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Common Name	tubenose goby
Genus & Species	<i>Proterorhinus semilunaris</i>
Family	Gobiidae (gobies)
Order	Perciformes (perches)
Class	Actinopterygii (ray-finned fishes)

Diagnosis: The tubenose goby is mottled brown in color with two dorsal fins and grows to lengths of up to 11 cm long. This small fish is characterized by conjoined pectoral fins forming a suction cupped disc that anchors the species to hard substrate in flowing water conditions. This species can be easily differentiated from the round goby (*Neogobius melanostomus*) by the presence of tube shaped protuberances extending from each anterior nostril.



Ecology: The tubenose goby dietary and habitat needs greatly overlap with native darter populations within the Great Lakes and their drainage basin. Their diets consist mainly of benthic invertebrates such as dipterans and amphipods and have been shown to strongly compete with the rainbow darter (*Etheostoma caeruleum*) for resources. These fish typically breed in reservoirs and channels building nests beneath woody debris, rocks, or shells. The males die after reproduction has occurred and the females will guard the nest from predators.

Habitat & Distribution: The native range of this particular Eurasian goby includes fresh to brackish waters from the Black and Caspian seas, the Aral Sea, the Sea of Azov and rivers in northern Aegean. *P. semilunaris* introduced range covers three Great Lakes including Lake Superior, Erie and Huron and is most abundant within Lake St. Claire and the St. Claire River. It occupies a variety of slack waters from estuarine to slow flowing freshwater streams. The tubenose goby habitat overlaps with that of another highly invasive species, the round goby. They can generally be collected from dense vegetation or coarse rocks and are often quite abundant in backwaters and lakes.

Status: Tubenose gobies were first recorded from the St. Claire River in 1990 and are believed to have been introduced via ballast water in the late 1980's. In 1994 it was found at the northern end of Lake St. Claire and by 1997 a single specimen was documented in northwestern Lake Erie. The species has spread since then to the majority of the western basin within Lake Erie and in 2001 was reported from Duluth Harbor in Lake Superior. The species has also been collected from Lake Huron and also Swan Creek which drains to Lake Erie. Dispersal patterns within the littoral zones are estimated to continue though out all five Great Lakes and continue into the streams and rivers that make up the drainage basin.

USGS Fact Sheet: <http://nas.er.usgs.gov/queries/FactSheet.aspx?SpeciesID=714>