Threatened Species of the Northern Territory

FINKE GOBY
Chlamydogobius japalpa

Conservation status
Australia: Not listed
Northern Territory: Vulnerable

Description
The Finke goby grows to a maximum length of around 5.5 cm. Its colouration is pale yellow-brown or grey-brown grading to a lighter belly. There are darker markings dorsally giving an appearance of fine vermiculations. The first dorsal fin has a blue median band and paler yellowish submarginal band. Breeding males display more vivid blue/white fin colouration (Allen et al. 2002).

Distribution
The Finke goby has a limited distribution in the upper reaches of the Finke River system.

Conservation reserves where reported:
Finke Gorge National Park, West MacDonnell National Park.

Known locations of the Finke goby.
* = post 1970

Ecology
The Finke goby is similar in ecology to the Desert Goby (Chalmydogobius eremius) which feeds on small crustaceans, insect larvae, filamentous algae and detritus. Spawning occurs from November to March.

This species has no swim bladder. It rests on the bottom amongst detritus in shallow pools with rock, sand or gravel bottoms.

Conservation assessment
The Finke goby is restricted to the upper reaches of the Finke River but is reputedly common within its limited range. The species is considered vulnerable because of its restricted distribution and its potential susceptibility to decline as a result of introduction of non-native species. The species breeds well in captivity (D. Wilson pers. comm.).

The species is listed as Vulnerable in the Northern Territory (under criteria B1ab(iii)+2ab(iii)) due to:
- extent of occurrence estimated to be <20,000 km²
- area of occupancy <2,000 km²
- severely fragmented or known to occur at no more than 10 locations; and
- continuing decline, observed, inferred or projected in area, extent and/or quality of habitat.
Threatening processes

The primary threat to the Finke goby is the introduction of feral species, such as the mosquitofish (*Gambusia holbrooki*). This pest has the potential to affect the goby because it has been implicated in the decline of two other goby species in central Australia through competition. The mosquitofish is spreading rapidly in artificial and natural water bodies through central Australia (Wager and Unmack 2000)

Conservation objectives and management

The managing authority for this species is the Fisheries section of the Department of Primary Industry, Fisheries and Mines.

The management priority is:
(i) to prevent the introduction, or manage the spread of, potentially destructive feral fishes in the Northern Territory.

Complied by

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References


Wager, R., and Unmack, P.J. (2002) *Fishes of the Lake Eyre catchment of central Australia*. (Department of Primary Industries and Queensland Fisheries Service, Brisbane.)