

round goby *Neogobius melanostomus*

Kingdom: Animalia

Division/Phylum: Chordata

Class: Osteichthyes

Order: Perciformes

Family: Gobiidae

ILLINOIS STATUS common, nonnative

FEATURES

The round goby has a large head with eyes placed high on the head. Its tapered body has pelvic fins joined to form a sucker. The second dorsal fin and the anal fin are long. A dark spot is present at the back edge of the first dorsal fin, and there is a dark spot on each shoulder. The tail is rounded. The back is tan-gray. Dark blotches are present on the sides. This species may attain a length of up to 10 inches, although most individuals are four to five inches long.

BEHAVIORS

The round goby lives on the bottom of its water body along the shore. It spends the winter in deep water. Spawning occurs multiple times in spring and summer. The male guards the nest. The round goby feeds on small invertebrates and small fishes. This species was introduced to the Great Lakes in 1990 through ship ballast water discharge in Michigan and has spread tremendously.

HABITATS

Aquatic Habitats

Lake Michigan

Woodland Habitats

none

Prairie and Edge Habitats

none

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