

GOBIIDAE

gobies

Vanderhorstia mertensi

Klausewitz, 1974



Photo : M. Draman

Relevant synonyms: None

Misidentification: None

Meristic formula: D1, VI; D2, I+15-16; A, I+16-18; P, 16-18; V, I+5; LL, 52-62

SHORT DESCRIPTION

Body elongated and compressed. Large head (3.7-4-4 times in SL). Mouth oblique, jaws reaching back to the vertical of hind of eye. Several rows of small teeth on both jaws. Wide gill opening reaching below mid operculum. Cycloid scales before origin of second dorsal fin and ctenoid posterior from this point. Two dorsal fins, the 3rd-5th spines of first dorsal are filamentous. Second dorsal fin and anal fin opposite each other, originating in mid body. Pectoral fin round. Pelvic fins united, originating behind pectoral fin origin and not reaching the anus. Caudal fin lanceolate to slightly pointed.

color: Body white to light blue with yellow marks on the dorsal part of head and body. Five dark spots along the body, the first under the first dorsal fin and the last on the caudal peduncle.

common size: 40 - 70 mm (max. 110 mm).

DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERISTICS

- *Deltentosteus colonialis* and *D. quadrimaculatus*: the lengths of the 2nd dorsal fin caudal fin is less than 15% in SL.

Other members of **Gobiidae**: lack of longitudinal dark spots.

All other families: the pelvic fins are not united.

BIOLOGY / ECOLOGY

Live in symbiotic association with shrimps.

habitat: found on sandy or silty grounds to depth of 50 m.

DISTRIBUTION

Worldwide: Wide Indo-Pacific from the Red Sea to Japan and the Great Barrier Reef.

Mediterranean: Israel (Goren *et al.*, 2013), Turkey (Bilecenoğlu *et al.*, 2008; Gökoğlu *et al.*, 2011) and Greece (Tiralongo and Pillon (2019).

MODE OF INTRODUCTION

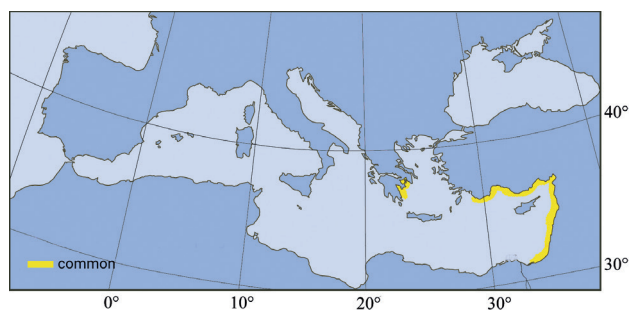
Via the Suez Canal.

ESTABLISHMENT SUCCESS

Known from dense populations in Israel, Turkey and Greece.

IMPORTANCE TO HUMANS

None.



1st Med. record
Gulf of Fethiye,
Turkey, 2008.

KEY REFERENCES

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- Gökoğlu M., Özbek E.Ö., Kebapçioğlu T., Balci B.A. and Kaya Y. 2011. The second location records of *Apogon smithi* and *Vanderhorstia mertensi* (Pisces) from the Turkish coast of the Mediterranean Sea. *Marine Biodiversity Records*, 3: e83.
- Goren M., Stern N. and Galil B. 2013. Bridging the gap: first record of Mertens' prawn-goby *Vanderhorstia mertensi* in Israel. *Marine Biodiversity Records*, 6: e63.
- Tiralongo F. and Pillon R. 2019. First record of *Vanderhorstia mertensi*-Klausewitz, 1974 from Greek waters: the westernmost record from the Mediterranean Sea. *Mediterranean Marine Science*, 20(3): 648.
- Yokeş M.B., Bilecenoğlu M., Goren M., Galil B.S. and Diamant A. 2009. Genetics evidence for wide distribution of the alien Prawn-goby, *Vanderhorstia mertensi* (Actinopterygii: Perciformes: Gobiidae) along the Mediterranean. *Acta Ichthyologica et Piscatoria*, 39(2): 153-156.