



For immediate release

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Have you seen this ferocious looking fish? The Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory is calling on anglers to photograph or collect samples of worm gobies, especially one known as the Worm of Death, to help fill a big gap in science research and share anglers' stories.

These peculiar worm gobies share the same Top End estuaries and river mouths as the prized Barramundi. Also coined the 'Freaky Fish,' 'alien' or 'deep sea monster', anglers might accidentally lure these small 5-30 cm fish on their Barra foray as the Wet Season arrives. Samples so far include scaleless, small black eyes or blind gobies, while others feature beards. The Worm of Death is a specific thin golden-pinkish worm-like fish with vicious large fangs. New worm goby species are still being discovered and scientists appreciate assistance from anglers at the same time can identify the catch. MAGNT can share fascinating stories about the unique catch.



“Top End anglers can become citizen scientists to help find out more about these mysterious fishes. Worm gobies are difficult to catch with traditional research equipment under the muddy silt. If fishos accidentally lure a Worm of Death, photos or donations of specimens to MAGNT can help advance scientific knowledge. Your support helps MAGNT’s researchers document the biodiversity found in the Northern Territory waters for future generations,” explains MAGNT Curator of Fishes Dr Michael Hammer.

If you have hooked a worm goby, please contact info@magnt.net.au or call 8999 8264.

What do researchers know so far?

- Gobies are one of the most diverse fish families on Earth with around 2000 species.
- Worm gobies are a special group in the family that has adapted to live underground — well in the mud.
- They have poor eyesight, but lots of sensory features to help detect prey and predators.

“The MAGNT Fishes Collection is unrivalled in representing the biodiversity of tropical northern Australia and its near neighbours. The strength of this collection is its representation of species in the varied habitats of the Northern Territory,” said MAGNT Director Marcus Schutenko.

MAGNT is custodian to vast and distinct cultural, natural science, history and art collections. The collections are representative of the Northern Territory and region. MAGNT's team research and interpret with rigour and facilitate innovative scientific activity.

MEDIA KIT

View [high-res images and videos here](#).

AVAILABLE FOR INTERVIEW

MAGNT Curator of Fishes | Dr Michael Hammer

If you wish to arrange an interview, please contact:

Communications Coordinator Rebecca Campart rebecca.campart@magnt.net.au

IMAGE CREDITS

- Front view of the Worm of Death with its large glass like teeth, this type of worm goby is a particular focus of the citizen science. Photo: Nathan Litjens
- Bearded Worm Goby *Taenioides* species (medium to large size: 10–35 cm). Photo: Darren Kenny

