

# Spined Loach

## Species Description

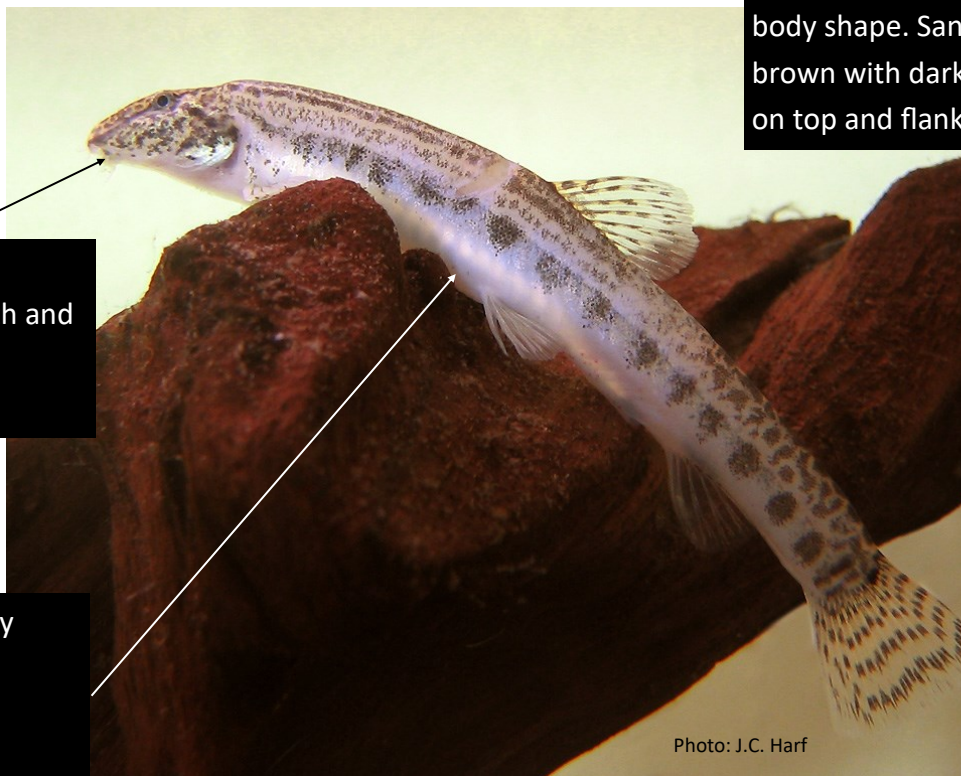
**Scientific name:** *Cobitis taenia*

The spined loach is a small (5cm) bottom dwelling fish, which is confined to the rivers and drainage channels in the Midlands and eastern England. In the day spined loaches tend to prefer habitats dominated by submerged vegetation, which may be important for spawning. At night they venture into more open habitats, probably due to the decreased risk of predation.

This species is listed on the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Red list of Threatened Species. The inclusion of this species on Annex II of the EC Habitats and Species Directive has resulted in an increase in interest in its conservation, and an obligation for member states to designate Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) in key areas where it occurs.



## Key ID features



Long, slim, cylindrical body shape. Sandy brown with dark spots on top and flanks

Small head with underslung mouth and six barbels

White-yellow belly

Photo: J.C. Harf