



The Natural Laboratory Podcast Script: Return of the Tidewater Goby

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Meet the tide water goby, one of the most endangered fish in the Point Reyes National Seashore region.

As a fish found exclusively in estuarine waters, widespread coastal development has caused tidewater goby populations to plummet.

The fish landed on the federal endangered species list in 1994. By 2006, tidewater gobies had disappeared from 75 percent of their original habitat.

Leading government and state officials took action, traveling with nets in hand to the recently restored Giacomini Wetland, one of the few places in the region with a tidewater goby population.

National Park Service wildlife intern Michael Saxton and aquatic ecologist Darren Fong pull a seine net through the water to gather the gobies.

The little tidewater gobies were then gently taken from the nets and placed in buckets, which were used as their transport vehicles.

The gobies traveled ten miles to their new home in Tomales Bay State Park.

There, they were relocated to a lagoon, just inshore from the beach.

The fish spent three days in punctured buckets, slowly adjusting to their new environment.

When the release day finally arrived, Fong and Park Service intern Cassandra Brooks prepared the gobies.

Bree Hardcastle, an environmental scientist with California State Parks, uses a net to carefully place the gobies in the lagoon.

Fong helps Hardcastle release the gobies into their new home. Here, within the confines of the State Park, they will be safe from disturbance for many years to come.

And the tidewater goby may once again flourish in the Tomales Bay watershed.