



91. STEINBEISSER (*Cobitis taenia*)

IDENTIFICATION: The Steinbeisser reaches a length of about 13 cm. Typically, the sides of the Steinbeisser are pressed flat and spotted. Below its eye, the Steinbeisser has a pointed flexible thorn. Sometimes the Steinbeisser is mistaken for the loach.

HABITAT: The Steinbeisser lives on and in sandy bottoms of clear waters and on the banks of lakes. During the day, the Steinbeisser can hardly be seen because it hides in the sand or mud.

FOOD: Feeds at night on small creatures plowing through sand and mud. The sediment is sucked into its mouth, food is filtered by gill thorns while the indigestible sand is released through gill silts.

SPAWNING: Steinbeisser spawn from April through June. Eggs are deposited on plants, roots, and small stones. Unlike loach stocks, which are big in the south and small in the north of Germany, Steinbeisser stocks are bigger in the north than in the south of Germany.