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The climbing of the freshwater blenny

Oscar Gavira¹, Samuel Labado², José Antonio Cuenca², José María Heredia² and Sebastián Gonzalo Cuerda-Pérez²



The freshwater blenny (*Salaria fluviatilis*) is one of the few freshwater members in a marine lineage (family Blenniidae), being distributed across the Mediterranean basin. It has a patchy distribution in the Iberian Peninsula, where it has declined and even disappeared in several areas, being thereby considered a threatened species (Doadrio et al., 2011). The population of the freshwater blenny in the Guadaiza River (Malaga Province, southern Spain) is one of the smallest in the Iberian Peninsula (Gavira, 2006; Doadrio et al., 2011). The river is itself short (21 km before entering the Mediterranean Sea) and the freshwater blenny only occupies a stretch of some 3 km, between a dam and a natural waterslide (~ 1 m high and 2.5 m long). This natural obstacle is an important barrier to upstream movements, and hundreds of blennies seasonally concentrate at it. The blennies climb an almost vertical surface (seen on July 5th and July 26th 2020), reaching heights of up to 50 cm, which are not enough to overcome the barrier. For this climbing, the blennies emerge from the water and use the splashes area, avoiding the maximum current. Sometimes, tens of blennies are concentrated in the margin of the waterslide on the vertical rock. Marine blennies have been also shown to have climbing abilities out of the water, apparently to reduce predation risk (Ord et al., 2017), but, to our best knowledge, this is the first time that this climbing behaviour is reported for the freshwater blenny.

Climbing blennies
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AUTHORS' CONTACTS

1. Universidad de Málaga, Facultad de Ciencias, Departamento de Biología Animal, Campus de Teatinos s/n, 29071, Malaga, Spain. ogavira@hotmail.com
2. My Fish Room, C./Miguel Moreno Massón 8, 29007, Malaga, Spain. info@myfishroom.es

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AUDIOVISUAL MATERIAL

Check the FiSHMED YouTube channel to see two videos: [Climbing freshwater blenny \(*Salaria fluviatilis*\)](#) and [Group of climbing freshwater blennies \(*Salaria fluviatilis*\)](#)

RELATED REFERENCES

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