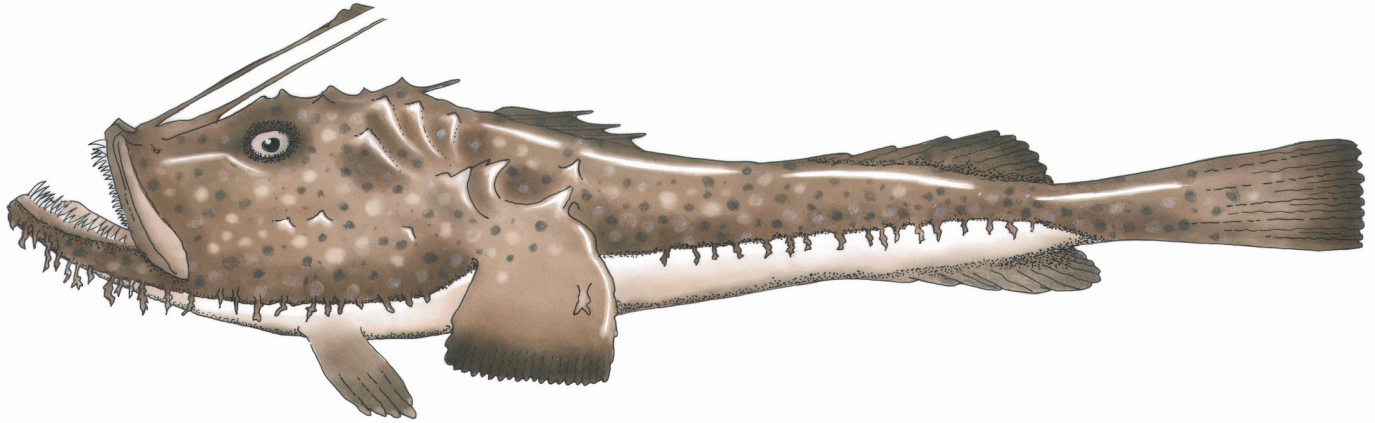


# Goosefish (*Lophius americanus*)

## Family Lophiidae, Goosefishes



**Common names:** anglerfish, monkfish, goosefish

**Description:** Goosefish are tan to chocolate brown above, fading to a white shaded underbody. Their body is narrow and tapered with a flattened, broad head that supports an enormous mouth. Both of their jaws are armed with numerous long needle like teeth that point inward. Their lower jaw, head and sides are edged with a unique fringe of fleshy flaps and they lack gill slits. Distinctive pectoral fins, resembling a pair of small arms, help them to move along the bottom. Several slender spines and two well developed dorsal fins can be found on top of their body. The first spine serves as a modified fishing lure that attracts their unsuspecting prey toward their mouth. Goosefish can grow to a length of over 4 feet and weigh up to 50 pound

**Where found:** inshore and offshore

**Similar Gulf of Maine species:** none

**Remarks:** Goosefish have enormous appetites and are capable of eating almost any kind of fish, bird or invertebrate that they can catch. Being bottom dwellers, they inhabit waters as shallow as a few feet to depths exceeding 1,200 feet. They can be found on all kinds of bottom types but prefer soft or sandy bottoms. Occasionally, anglers who are using live bait in search of other groundfish haul up a goosefish. Extra care should be taken when handling these fish because of the potential danger of their bite. The meat from a goosefish, sometimes referred to as "poorman's lobster," is both firm and free of bones and is considered a culinary treat.

**Records:** MSSAR:

handline: vacant

rod and reel: Nancy Lee Regimbald, 07/09/91, 49 lbs. 12 oz., Perkins Cove

fly rod: vacant

junior male: vacant

junior female: vacant

IGFA All-Tackle World Record: 49 lbs. 12 oz.

Fish Illustrations by: Roz Davis Designs, Damariscotta, ME (207) 563-2286

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