



FACT SHEET

BLUEFIN KINGFISH

Caranx melampygus

Family: Carangidae

Other common names: Bluefin trevally, Blouvin koningvis

Description

A powerful fish with an oblong body and a sloping head profile. Silvery to greenish-yellow on the upper body with numerous black and blue spots. Electric blue dorsal, pelvic, anal and tail fins. Strong lateral line scutes near the tail. The pale-yellow pectoral fins are long and sickle shaped.

Distribution

Widely distributed in the tropical Indo-Pacific from East Africa and the Red Sea to Mexico and Panama. In southern African waters they have been found as far south as Aliwal Shoal, but are rare south of Richards Bay.

Habitat



Strongly associated with coral reefs to depths of 30 m but may also be found over rocky reefs and in the surf-zone. Often hunts in small groups just above the reef. Juveniles are known to use sheltered surf-zone habitats and coral lagoons as nursery areas.

Feeding

They feed almost exclusively on small fish but will also occasionally take shrimps and squid.

Movement

A resident species but known to roam within home ranges of up to 10 km in extent. They have predictable movement patterns within their home ranges during the day and will often move from feeding areas in the early morning to cleaning and resting areas at midday and back to feeding areas in the late afternoon. There is some evidence that they aggregate at night, possibly to avoid predation.

Reproduction	They reach maturity at 40 cm fork length at an age of about 2 years. Spawning occurs during the summer months and they are known to form spawning aggregations.
Age and growth	They can reach a maximum size of about 100 cm total length and a weight of 12 kg. They have been aged up to a maximum of 12 years.
Current status	Not assessed in South Africa. They have been evaluated as Least Concern on the IUCN Red List (2016). South African Sustainable Seafood Initiative (SASSI) List: Red.
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Capture	A popular angling species for shore and ski-boat anglers in northern KwaZulu-Natal and known to fight hard on light tackle. They take a range of baits and lures and are particularly partial to jigs fished vertically. Also occasionally taken by spearfishermen.
Current recreational fishing regulations	Daily bag limit: 5 per person per day Minimum size limit: None Closed Season: None Other regulations: No sale recreational species. Marine protected areas (MPAs): Research has shown that this species receives protection in the no-take zones within the iSimangaliso and Ponta do Ouro MPAs.
Reference	Information from the ORI Fish App. www.saambr.org.za



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