



FACT SHEET

NATAL STUMPNOSE

Rhabdosargus sarba

Family: Sparidae

Other common names: Yellowfin bream, Tropical stumpnose, Goldlined seabream, Silver seabream, Natalse stompneus

Description

Deep bodied with a rounded head profile. Body is bright silver with a streak of yellow on the belly. The pectoral, pelvic and anal fins are yellow. The golden centre of each scale gives the impression of longitudinal gold lines along the flanks.

Distribution

Widespread Indo-West Pacific species in tropical and subtropical waters, from southern Africa to the Red Sea, to China, Japan and Australia. However, likely to consist of a complex of genetically distinct populations. Common along the southern Mozambique, KwaZulu-Natal and Eastern Cape coast, occasionally extending as far south as Wilderness in summer.

Habitat



Adults are primarily marine, common in shallow coastal waters less than 50 m. An inshore species mainly found in the surf-zone in sandy areas and over shallow reefs. Juveniles make extensive use of estuaries, which serve as nursery areas, where they grow to maturity.

Feeding

Primarily hard-shelled invertebrates including molluscs, echinoderms and crustaceans, which are crushed by their powerful molars and pharyngeal jaws.

Movement

Adults appears to be resident within a relatively large home range of 1.1 km (linear distance) in the surf-zone, with some individuals undertaking large-scale movements in excess of 200 km. Juveniles are resident in estuaries until about 20-30 cm fork length, after that they disperse into the marine environment.

Reproduction	They reach maturity at 26 cm total length and an age of about 2 years, with males maturing earlier than females. Natal stumpnose can change sex from male to female but not all females are derived from males. Sex change occurs at an age of between 1-2.5 years. Spawning takes place between July-November along the KwaZulu-Natal coast, in the near-shore marine environment, close to large estuaries and river mouths.
Age and growth	They can reach a maximum size of 80 cm total length and a weight of 7.7 kg. They have been aged to a maximum of 16 years in South African waters.
Current status	The Natal stumpnose stock has been assessed as being overexploited with the spawner biomass being approximately 34% of the pristine level (determined based on juveniles in estuaries). Declines in the adult biomass in the sea have also been recorded, especially after the closure of Lake St Lucia estuary in 2002. They have been evaluated as Least Concern on the IUCN Red List. South African Sustainable Seafood Initiative (SASSI) List: Red.
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Capture	An important recreational angling fish in South African waters, sought after by recreational shore anglers, estuarine anglers and spear fishermen. Also caught by subsistence and artisanal fishers in St Lucia and Kosi Bay using fish traps and illegal gill-nets. Commercially exploited in trawl and gill-nets elsewhere in the world.
Current recreational fishing regulations	Daily bag limit: 5 per person per day Minimum size limit: 25 cm total length Closed Season: None Other regulations: No sale recreational species Marine protected areas (MPAs): No-take MPAs that include suitable surf-zone habitat in southern Mozambique, KwaZulu-Natal and northern parts of the Eastern Cape will provide protection for adults of this species. Similarly, no-take areas within large estuarine systems in this area will provide protection for juveniles.
Reference	Information from the ORI Fish App. www.saambr.org.za



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