



FACT SHEET

BLACKTAIL

Diplodus capensis

Family: Sparidae

Other common names: Dassie, Kolstert, Ntimla

Description	A small, deep-bodied, silvery fish with a distinct black patch at the base of the tail. Juveniles have thin vertical bars and adults have blue colouration on the pelvic and anal fin.
Distribution	Endemic to southern Africa but two separate populations, one along the eastern seaboard of South Africa from Cape Point to southern Mozambique and the other from southern Namibia to southern Angola.
Habitat	Adults found in shallow rocky and sandy areas down to 40 m but predominantly found in the surf-zone, usually in close association with rocky areas. Juveniles found in intertidal rockpools, subtidal gullies, shallow subtidal reefs, sandy beach surf-zone and estuary mouths. Eggs and larvae are pelagic, distributed inshore of the Agulhas Current throughout distributional range.
Feeding	Adults are generalists feeding on a wide range of organisms including red and green seaweed, sea urchins, polychaete worms, sea anemones, limpets, mussels and red bait. Juveniles feed mainly on small crustaceans and polychaete worms.
Movement	Highly resident.

Reproduction	They mature at length of about 20 cm and an age of 3 years. Many blacktail mature first as males and some of these change sex to female. Spawning occurs from winter to early summer (July to December) and takes place on inshore reefs throughout their distribution.
Age and growth	They can reach a maximum size of about 47 cm total length and a weight of 2.7 kg. They have been aged up to a maximum of 21 years.
Current status	An abundant inshore species but there are some signs of localised overexploitation in heavily fished areas. Categorised as Least Concern on the IUCN Red List (2009). South African Sustainable Seafood Initiative (SASSI) List: Red.
	 
Capture	Primarily caught in the shore fishery along the entire south-eastern seaboard of South Africa, where it ranks as the third most important shore angling species. Generally caught on light tackle and will readily take baits such as sardine, squid, prawn and redbait.
Current recreational fishing regulations	<p>Daily bag limit: 5 per person per day</p> <p>Minimum size limit: 20 cm total length</p> <p>Closed Season: None</p> <p>Other regulations: No sale recreational species</p> <p>Marine protected areas (MPAs): Blacktail benefit from protection in coastal no-take MPAs throughout their distribution because of their high level of residency.</p>
Reference	Information from the ORI Fish App. www.saambr.org.za