



FACT SHEET

SPOTTED GRUNTER

Pomadasys commersonnii

Family: Haemulidae

Other common names: Smallspotted grunter, Gespikkelde knorder, Inkolokolo

Description

One of the largest grunters with a distinctive, long, sloping forehead and a body that narrows towards the tail. Overall colour is silvery grey with numerous black spots on the sides. The spots do not extend onto the head.

Distribution

Tropical and warm temperate Western Indian Ocean from India to South Africa. Found along the entire eastern seaboard of southern Africa as far south as False Bay in the Western Cape.

Habitat

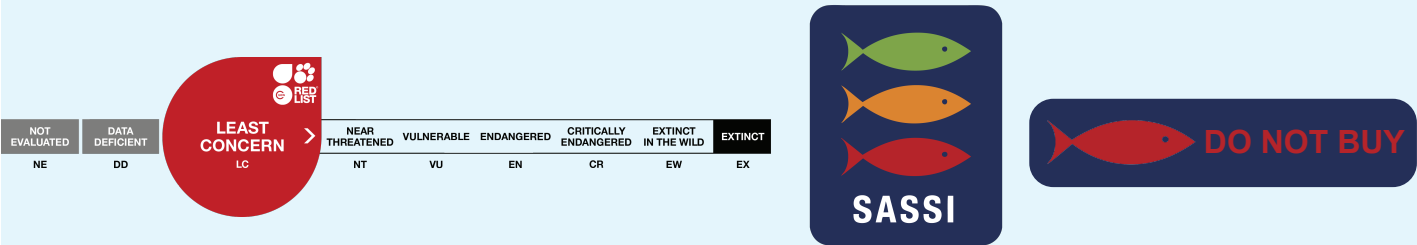
Adults are found in estuaries and coastal waters over soft sediments. Juveniles also mainly found in estuaries and harbours but also in coastal embayments and shallow coastal waters.

Feeding

Diet of adult fish in estuaries consists of crustaceans and molluscs such as sand prawns, mud prawns and pencil bait. Juveniles consume bivalve siphon tips, small benthic crustaceans and polychaete worms.

Movement

Despite making seaward migrations to spawn, spotted grunter are largely resident in one estuary. This species has been the subject of extensive research using both external dart tagging and acoustic telemetry.

Reproduction	They reach maturity at 33-39 cm total length and an age of 3 years, with males maturing earlier than females. Spawning takes place in spring and summer in close proximity to estuary mouths and harbours.
Age and growth	They can reach a maximum size of 91 cm fork length and a weight of 9.5 kg. They can reach a maximum age of 16 years.
Current status	The South African stock is considered to be overexploited as a result of overfishing and estuarine degradation. Evaluated as Least Concern on the IUCN Red List (2018). South African Sustainable Seafood Initiative (SASSI) List: Red.
	
Capture	Very important recreational angling species in estuaries throughout its distribution from the Breede Estuary to Kosi Bay. Also an important species in estuarine-based subsistence fisheries and illegal gill net and trap fisheries. Less important in the coastal shore fishery and ski-boat fishery. Occasionally taken by recreational spearfishers. Was historically taken as a bycatch by inshore prawn trawlers on the Thukela Banks. Generally caught on light tackle, spotted grunter will take a range of baits but are especially partial to sand and mud prawns.
Current recreational fishing regulations	Daily bag limit: 5 per person per day Minimum size limit: 40 cm total length Closed Season: None Other regulations: No sale recreational species Marine protected areas (MPAs): No-take estuarine protected areas throughout the distribution of this species will provide some protection. It is also likely that the uThukela Banks MPA will play a role in protecting adult spawning fish.
Reference	Information from the ORI Fish App. www.saambr.org.za



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