

FACT SHEET

SAND SOLDIER

Pagellus natalensis

Family: Sparidae

Other common names: Natal pandora, Tjor-tjor, Rooi tjortjor

Description

Small fish with a pinkish upper body and numerous rows of small, iridescent blue spots along the sides of the body.

Distribution

South-western Indian Ocean from from Mossel Bay to Tanzania. Also recorded off southern Madagascar.

Habitat

Adults are extremely abundant offshore, forming large shoals over sandy and muddy bottoms in depths from 20-250 m. Juveniles appear to be more abundant in shallower water in depths less than 20 m. Eggs and larvae of this species are distinctive and extremely abundant in shelf waters.

Feeding

They feed on a variety of small bottom dwelling invertebrates including small crustaceans, echinoderms, polychaete worms and molluscs.

Movement

Unknown.

Reproduction

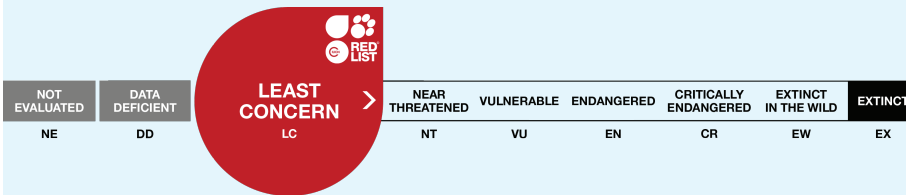
They appear to have an equal number of males and females. Spawning mainly takes place in spring (August to October) probably throughout their distribution.

Age and growth

Unknown.

Current status

Little is known but it is an extremely abundant species sometimes called “fish of the future”. Categorised as Least Concern on the IUCN Red List (2009).
South African Sustainable Seafood Initiative (SASSI) List:
Not assessed.



Capture

Caught as bycatch by the inshore trawl fishery in the southern Cape and to a lesser extent by the KZN prawn trawl fishery. Seldom caught from the shore but occasionally caught and used as bait by ski-boat anglers.

Current recreational fishing regulations

Daily bag limit: 10 per person per day
Minimum size limit: None
Closed Season: None
Other regulations: None
Marine protected areas (MPAs): Well represented in many MPAs throughout its range in southern Africa.

Reference

Information from the ORI Fish App. www.saambr.org.za



INCORPORATING



Helping people to care for our ocean