



FACT SHEET

Cape Moony

Monodactylus falciformis

Family: Monodactylidae

Other common names: Full moony, Oval moony, Kitefish, Kaapse maanskyvis

Description

A diamond-shaped body which is strongly compressed. Bright silver in colour with a mother-of-pearl sheen on the base of the dorsal and anal fins. The other fins are grey or translucent, but the dorsal and anal fins have black tips. Juveniles have 11-12 narrow vertical bars on the flanks. Distinguished from the Natal moony (*Monodactylus argenteus*) which have yellow dorsal and anal fins and juveniles have 2 dark stripes across the head.

Distribution

Western Indian Ocean from the Breede River to Tanzania. Also reported from Madagascar.

Habitat

A shoaling species found in shallow rocky and sandy surf-zone habitats. Juveniles use estuaries and harbours as nursery areas, usually found in association with seagrass or algal beds. Tolerant of fresh water.

Feeding

They mainly feed on zooplankton in the water column including copepods, crab larvae, isopods, amphipods and insects.

Movement

Juveniles recruit into estuaries at a size of 5-10 mm. They remain in these estuarine nursery habitats until reaching maturity whereafter they return to the sea.

Reproduction

They reach maturity at about 15 cm total length. Spawning occurs in the sea, often near estuary mouths, from October to February.

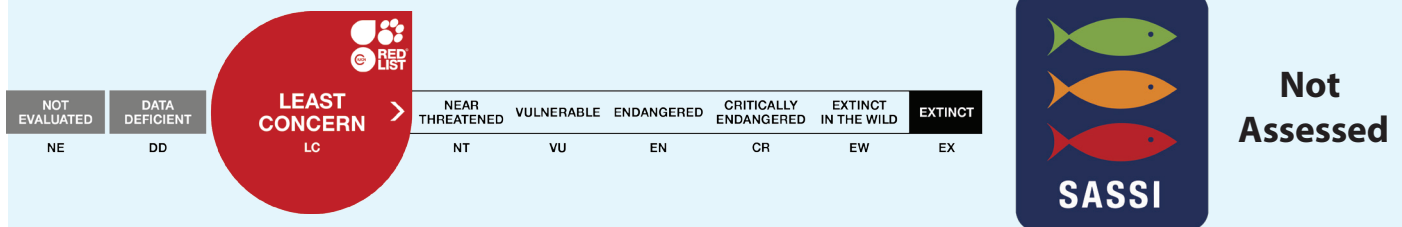
Age and growth

They can reach a maximum size of about 20 cm total length and a weight of 0.3 kg. They have not been aged.

Current status

Not assessed but populations may have declined due to estuarine degradation. They have been evaluated as Least Concern on the IUCN Red List (2016).

South African Sustainable Seafood Initiative (SASSI) List:
Not assessed.



Capture

Generally too small to be of much interest to anglers, sometimes caught by young children using ultra-light tackle. A popular aquarium fish.

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): It is likely that this species receives protection within inshore no-take MPAs and estuarine protected areas throughout its distribution.

Reference

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



INCORPORATING

