



FACT SHEET

Lyretail rockcod

Variola louti

Family: Serranidae

Other common names: Yellow-edge lyretail, Swallowtail rockcod, Geelrand-maanstert

Description

One of the most striking rockcods, distinguished by its red-orange body covered with numerous purple spots. The crescent-shaped tail has a bright yellow margin as do the posterior margins of the other fins. Juveniles look very different to the adults and have a two-toned colouring with the upper half being brownish orange and the lower half being whitish-yellow. There is an irregular black stripe from the eye to the base of the tail and the body is covered in numerous small blue spots.

Distribution

Indo-Pacific, from East Africa to Japan. In southern African waters found south to Port St Johns.

Habitat

Inhabits offshore coral and rocky reefs to depths of 240 m.

Feeding

Preys on small fish, crabs, shrimps and mantis shrimps.

Movement

Limited tag recapture data has shown that this is likely to be a resident species.

Reproduction

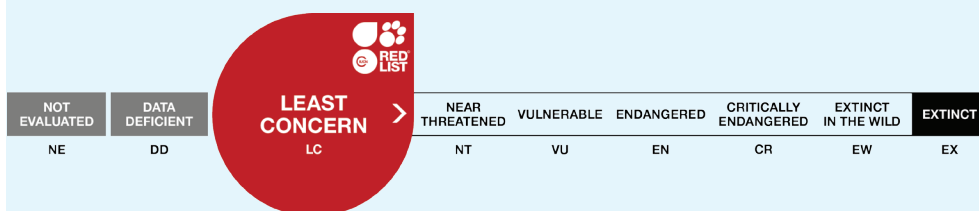
They reach maturity at about 48 cm fork length and it is possible that this species changes sex from female to male. Spawning occurs in summer.

Age and growth

They can reach a maximum size of 83 cm total length and a weight of 12 kg. They have been aged up to a maximum of 15 years.

Current status

Not assessed in South Africa. They have been evaluated as Least Concern on the IUCN Red List (2018).
South African Sustainable Seafood Initiative (SASSI) List:
Not assessed.



Not Assessed

Capture

Often caught by ski-boat anglers fishing over reefs and is known to come up off the reef and take baits or lures meant for other gamefish species. Also taken by spearfishermen. Elsewhere caught with handlines, spears and fish traps. Known to contain ciguatera toxins in parts of the Western Indian Ocean.

Current recreational fishing regulations

Daily bag limit: 5 per person per day
Minimum size limit: None
Closed Season: None
Other regulations: None
Marine protected areas (MPAs): This species is likely to benefit from protection within offshore no-take areas with suitable reef habitat throughout their distribution. They are abundant in the iSimangaliso and Ponta do Ouro MPAs.

Reference

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



INCORPORATING

