

## FAO SPECIES IDENTIFICATION SHEETS

FISHING AREA 51  
(W. Indian Ocean)

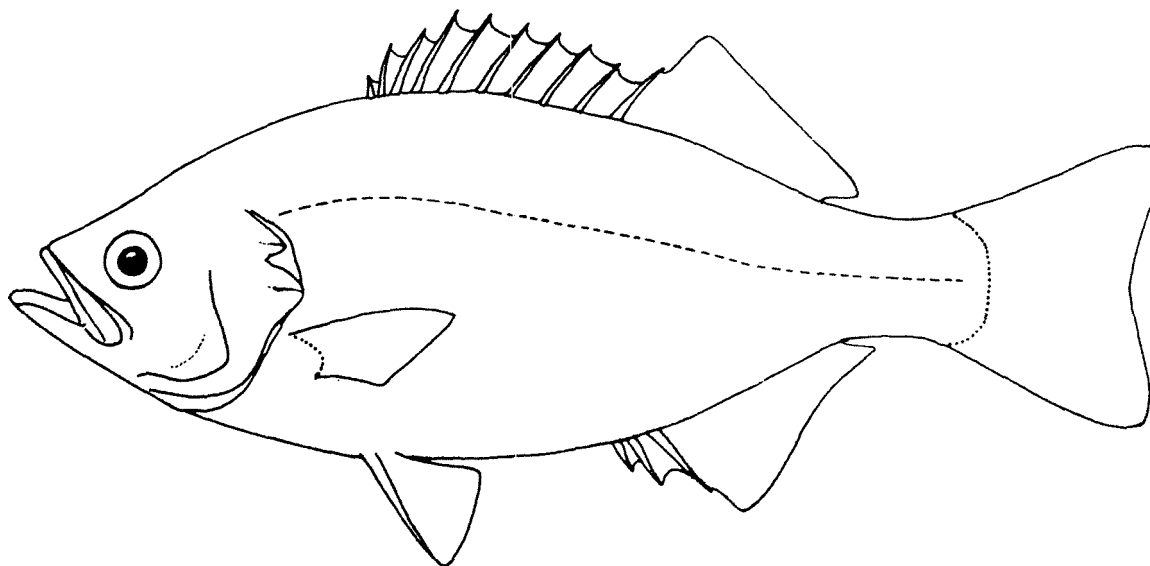
## KUHLIIDAE \*

Flagtails, daras

Body oblong, compressed. Maxilla mostly exposed, without supramaxilla; upper jaw slightly protrusible; jaws with a band of villiform teeth, also on vomer and palatines (roof of mouth); no canines; preorbital and preopercular bones serrate; opercle with 2 exposed, flat spines; gill membranes separate; branchiostegal rays 6. Dorsal fin with 10 spines and 9 to 16 soft rays; anal fin with 3 spines and 10 to 16 soft rays; pelvic fins with 1 spine and 5 branched soft rays; no scaly axillary process at base of pelvic fins; dorsal and anal fins with a low scaly sheath. Scales weakly ctenoid.

Colour: silvery, the species living in fresh water usually with dark spots on the body scales; median fins with dark spots, blotches or bands.

Moderate-sized, carnivorous fishes of the tropical Indo-Pacific; common in shallow water around reefs and in estuaries; some species apparently confined to fresh water. Flagtails are excellent eating fishes and probably of some value in artisanal fisheries, but they are usually too small to be of much commercial importance except as bait for larger fishes.



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\* The family name "Duleidae" has been used (erroneously) for these fishes. The family diagnosis applies only to the genus Kuhlia

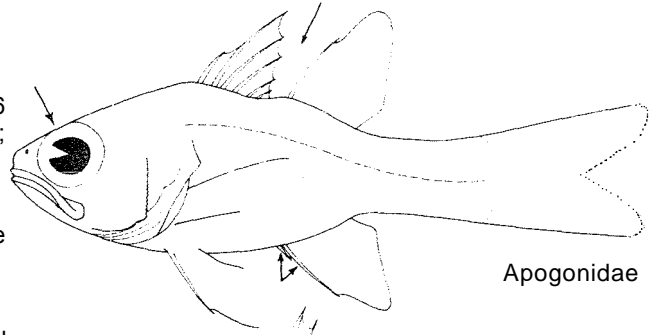
**SIMILAR FAMILIES OCCURRING IN THE AREA:**

Apogonidae: 2 separate dorsal fins, the first with 6 to 8 spines (a single dorsal fin with 10 spines in Kuhlidae); anal fin spines 2 (3 in Kuhlidae).

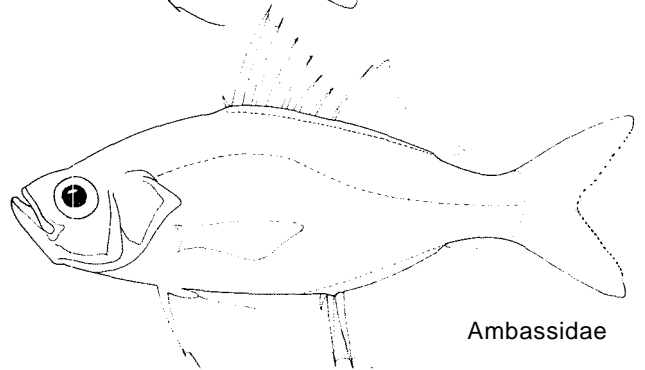
Ambassidae: dorsal fin spines 7 or 8; opercle without spines; scales cycloid.

Centropomidae (Lates and Psammoperca): dorsal fin spines 8 or 9; dorsal fin divided to its base before the last spine; anal fin soft rays 7 or 8 (10 to 16 in Kuhlidae).

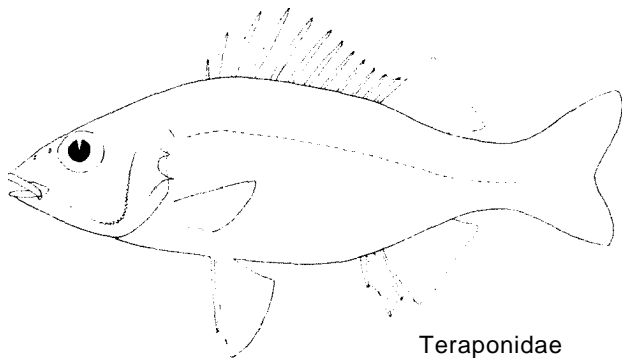
Teraponidae: dorsal fin spines 11 to 13.



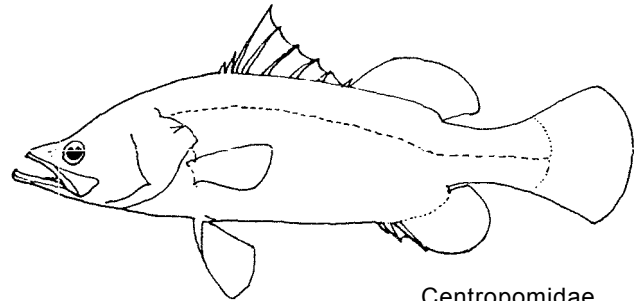
Apogonidae



Ambassidae



Teraponidae



Centropomidae

**KEY TO GENERA OCCURRING IN THE AREA:**

There is only one genus, Kuhlia, in the area. Dules has incorrectly been used for these species, but this generic name is based on a serranid fish.

**LIST OF SPECIES OCCURRING IN THE AREA:**

Code numbers are given for those species for which Identification Sheets are included

Kuhlia caudovittata (Lacepède, 1802) ?

Kuhlia marginata (Cuvier, 1829)

Kuhlia mugil (Schneider, 1801)

KUH Kuh 1

Kuhlia rupestris (Lacepède, 1802)

KUH Kuh 2

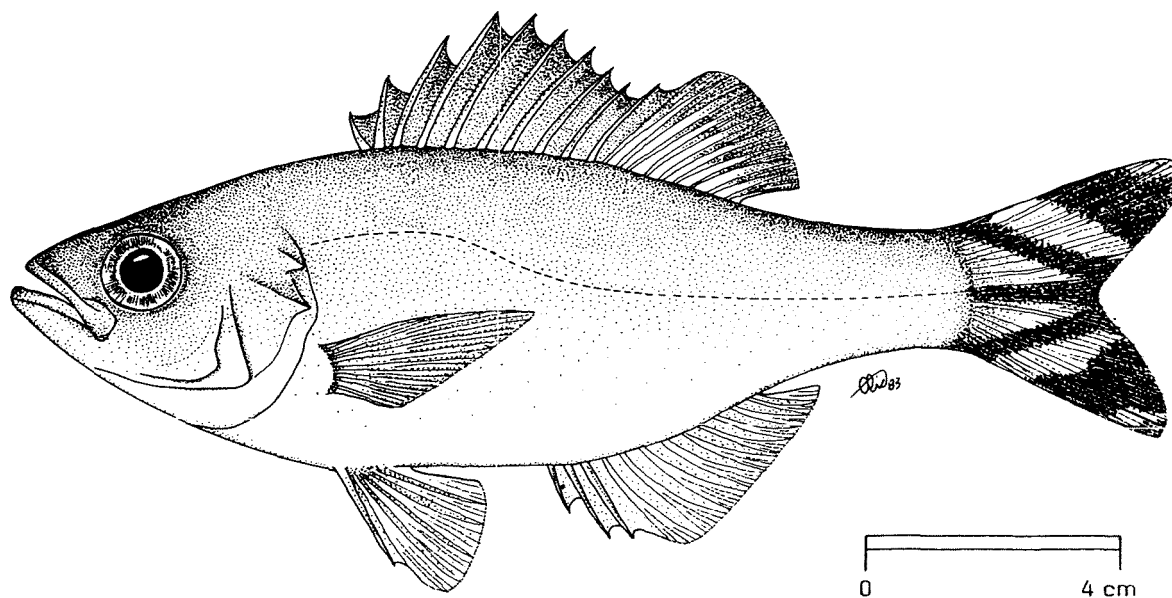
Kuhlia splendens Regan, 1913

Prepared by P.C. Heemstra, J.L.B. Smith Institute of Ichthyology, Grahamstown, South Africa

\* This list of species should be considered provisional, as the genus needs revision

## FAO SPECIES IDENTIFICATION SHEETS

FAMILY: KUHLIIDAE

FISHING AREA 51  
(W. Indian Ocean)Kuhlia mugil (Schneider, 1801)OTHER SCIENTIFIC NAMES STILL IN USE: Kuhlia taeniura (Cuvier, 1829)  
Dules taeniurus Cuvier, 1829

## VERNACULAR NAMES:

FAO : En - Barred flagtail  
Fr - Crocro drapeau  
Sp - Dara bandera

NATIONAL:

## DISTINCTIVE CHARACTERS:

Body depth 2.7 to 3.1 times in standard length, greater than head length. Naxilla not reaching vertical through middle of eye; gillrakers 10 to 12 on upper limb and 23 to 26 on lower limb of first arch. Dorsal fin with 10 spines and 9 to 11 soft rays; anal fin with 3 :spines and 9 to 11 soft rays; pectoral fin rays 14; caudal fin forked. Lateral-line scales 48 to 53 plus 5 or 6 on caudal fin.

Colour: head and body silvery, with dorsal. parts bluish grey. Two prominent black oblique bands across each lobe of caudal fin and a narrower black band along middle rays of the fin and extending forward onto posterior lateral line scales; spinous part of dorsal fin and outer margin of soft dorsal fin dusky; paired fins clear.

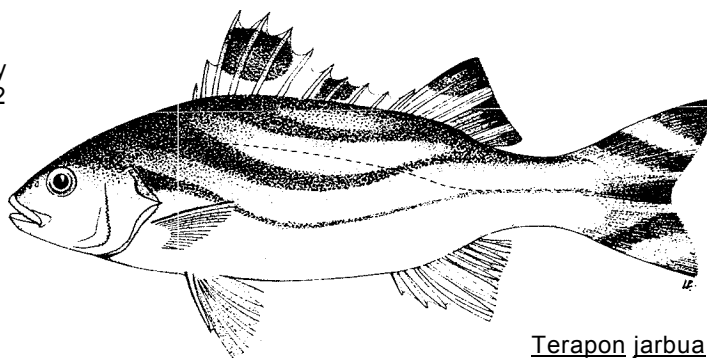
**DISTINGUISHNG CHARACTERS OF SIMILAR SPECIES OCCURRING IN THE AREA:**

Other Kuhlia species: none has black bands on caudal fin.

Terapon jarbua (Family Teraponidae): body with curving black lines; dorsal fin spines 11 or 12 (10 in K. mugil).

**SIZE:**

Maximum: 25 cm; common to 20 cm.



Terapon jarbua

**GEOGRAPHICAL DISTRIBUTION AND BEHAVIOUR:**

Distributed throughout most of the area. Also present in the Eastern Indian Ocean and across the Pacific to the Galapagos Islands.

Often seen in schools near reefs; juveniles are common in tide pools and estuaries.

Feeds on planktonic crustaceans and small fishes.

**PRESENT FISHING GROUNDS:**

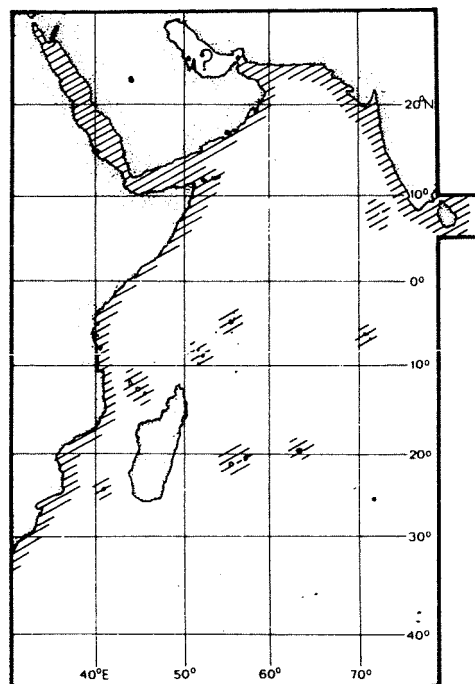
Taken incidentally throughout its range.

**CATCHES, FISHING GEAR AND FORMS OF UTILIZATION:**

Separate statistics are not reported for this species.

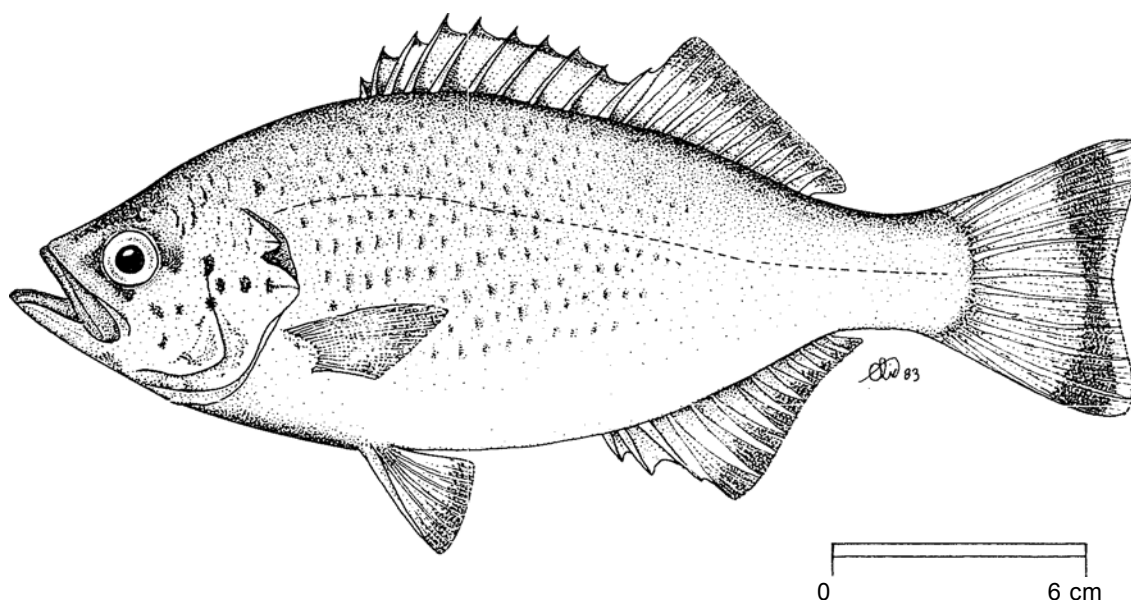
Caught with small hooks and light line, beach seines and thrownets.

Utilized fresh or dried salted.



## FAO SPECIES IDENTIFICATION SHEETS

FAMILY: KUHLIIDAE

FISHING AREA 51  
(W. Indian Oceans)Kuhlia rupestris (Lacepède, 1802)OTHER SCIENTIFIC NAMES STILL IN USE: Kuhlia sauvaqii Regan, 1913

## VERNACULAR NAMES:

FAO :           En - Rock flagtail  
                   Fr - Crocro sauvage  
                   Sp - Dara campestre

NATIONAL:

## DISTINCTIVE CHARACTERS:

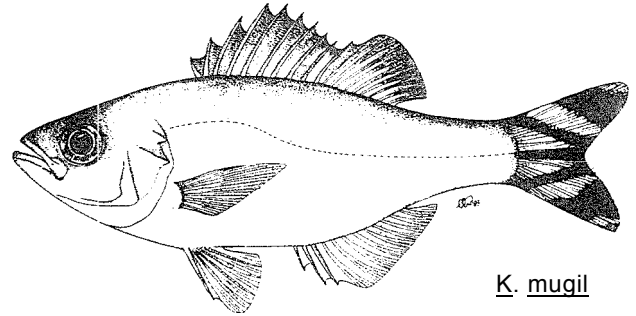
Body depth 2.5 to 3.0 times in standard length, subequal to head length. Maxilla reaches to or beyond vertical at middle of eye; gillrakers 6 or 7 on upper limb and 16 to 18 on lower limb of first arch. Dorsal fin with 10 spines and 11 soft rays; anal fin with 3 spines and 10 soft rays; pectoral fin rays 13 or 14; caudal fin emarginate. Lateral-line scales 38 to 43 plus 4 or 5 on caudal fin.

Colour: head and body silvery; each scale usually with a dark spot. Soft dorsal fin with a broad dark margin narrowing posteriorly; caudal fin of juveniles with a blackish blotch on each lobe, spreading to form a broad submarginal band in adults; anal fin usually with small dark spots.

## DISTINGUISHNG CHARACTERS OF SIMILAR SPECIES OCCURRING IN THE AREA:

Kuhlia mugil: caudal fin with 5 prominent black bands; lateral-line scales 48 to 53 (38 to 43 in K. rupestris); gillrakers 10 to 12 on upper limb and 23 to 26 on lower limb of first arch (6 or 7 and 16 to 18, respectively, in K. rupestris).

Other Kuhlia species: maxilla not, or barely reaching middle of eye; anal fin with 11 to 13 soft rays (10 in K. rupestris); lateral-line scales 48 to 53 (38 to 43 in K. rupestris, not counting scales on caudal fin).



K. mugil

## SIZE:

Maximum: 40 cm; common to 30 cm.

## GEOGRAPHICAL DISTRIBUTION AND BEHAVIOUR:

Widely distributed from South Africa to Zanzibar and across the Western Indian Ocean to India and Sri Lanka. Also found in the Eastern Indian Ocean and the Western Central Pacific.

Common in fresh water and in estuaries; rarely seen in the sea.

## PRESENT FISHING GROUNDS:

Rivers and estuaries; probably of some importance in artisanal fisheries.

## CATCHES, FISHING GEAR AND FORMS OF UTILIZATION:

Separate statistics are not reported for this species.

Caught with small hooks and light line, beach seines, gillnets and thrownets.

Utilized fresh or dried salted.

