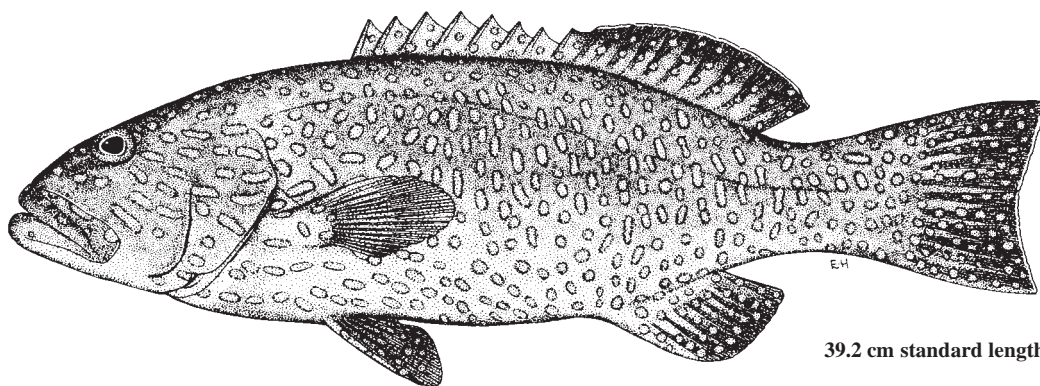


***Plectropomus pessuliferus* Fowler, 1904**

(Plate VII, 53)

**Frequent synonyms / misidentifications:** *Perca miniata* var. C Forsskål, 1775; *Plectropoma maculatum* var. D Playfair and Günther, 1867, *P. maculatum* var. A (in part) Boulenger, 1895 / *Plectropoma maculatus* (non Bloch, 1790).

**FAO names:** **En** - Roving coralgroupier; **Fr** - Mérrou-loche vagabonde; **Sp** - Mero errante.

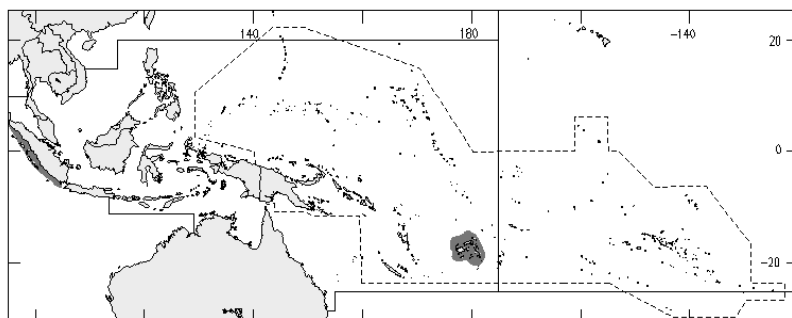


**Diagnostic characters:** Body elongate, robust, its depth 2.9 to 3.9 times in standard length; head length 2.7 to 3.1 times in standard length; suborbital depth 5.6 to 10 times in head length. Interorbital area without scales; preopercle broadly rounded, with 3 large, ventrally-directed spines along lower half; interopercle and subopercle smooth; opercle with 3 flat spines, the upper and lower spines covered by skin. Midlateral part of lower jaw with 1 to 4 enlarged fixed canines. Nostrils set in a shallow groove running forward from eye, nostrils subequal at less than about 30 cm standard length, the rear nostrils often enlarged in larger fish. First gill arch with 7 to 10 developed gill rakers on lower limb; gill raker at angle shorter than gill filaments at angle. Pyloric caeca 3, large and finger-like. Dorsal fin with VII or VIII slender spines and 10 to 12 soft rays, the third or fourth spines longest, 3.2 to 4.2 times in head length, the longest soft ray 2.3 to 3.0 times in head length; anal fin with III slender spines and 8 soft rays, the first 1 or 2 spines embedded and difficult see in large fish; **caudal fin emarginate (truncate in juveniles), the caudal concavity 4.6 to 6.2 times in head length; pectoral-fin rays 15 or 16, the fin about equal to pelvic fins, 1.9 to 2.3 times in head length.** Lateral-line scales 85 to 104. **Colour:** head, body, and fins brown to orange-red, with numerous small dark-edged blue spots; some spots on head and sides of body of adults are elongated (those on body usually vertically elongate); spots few or absent on ventral part of body; edge of orbit often blue (may be broken into segments).

**Size:** Maximum total length uncertain, at least 63 cm, perhaps 120 cm.

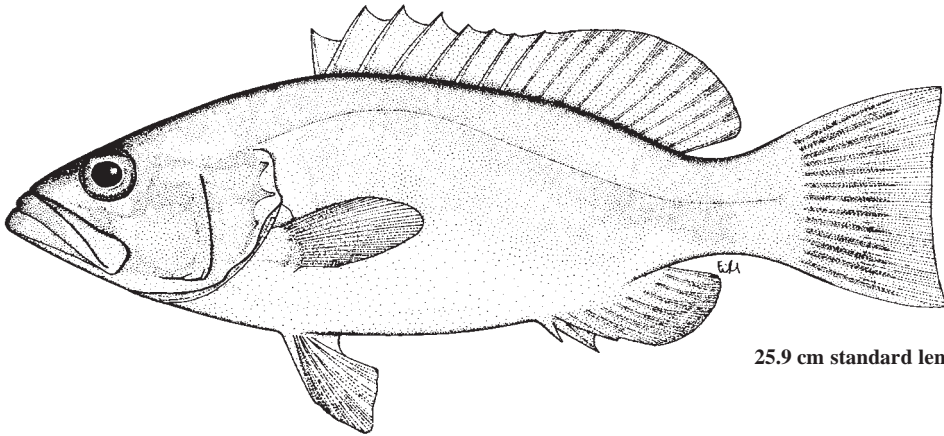
**Habitat, biology, and fisheries:** Coral reefs at depths of 25 to 147 m. Caught with hook-and-line, spear, and in trawls.

**Distribution:** Red Sea, Zanzibar, Maldives, St. Brandon's Shoals, Sri Lanka, Chagos, Andaman Islands, Nazareth Bank, Sumatra, and Fiji.



*Saloptia powelli* Smith, 1964

(Plate VII, 54)

**Frequent synonyms / misidentifications:** None / None.**FAO names:** En - Golden grouper; Fr - Mérrou d'or; Sp - Mero dorado.

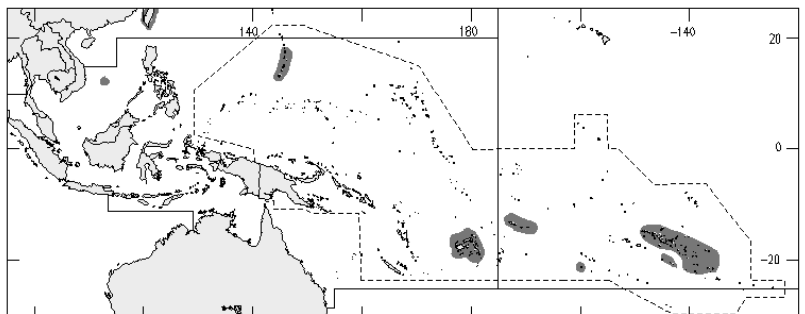
25.9 cm standard length

**Diagnostic characters:** Body oblong, robust, its depth less than head length and 2.6 to 3.0 times in standard length; body width 2.2 times in body depth; head length 2.5 to 2.6 times in standard length; dorsal head profile slightly convex; interorbital area flat; suborbital depth 0.4 to 0.5 times eye diameter and 13 times in head length. **Preopercle subangular, with 3 large curved spines (mostly hidden by skin) on lower edge**, the rear edge with minute serrae near the angle. Opercle with 3 flat, equidistant spines; upper edge of operculum distinctly convex; subopercle and interopercle serrate. A pair of canines at front of both jaws; lower jaw with 2 rows of teeth, but no enlarged canines at midside of jaw; vomer and palatines with teeth; posterior part of maxilla evenly expanded (no step, hooks, or knob on ventral edge); supramaxilla well developed. First gill arch with 8 or 9 on upper limb, 16 or 17 on lower limb. **Dorsal fin with VIII spines and 11 soft rays**, the fin origin behind vertical at rear end of operculum, the fin membranes slightly incised between the spines, the third spine longest; length of dorsal-fin base less than 50% of standard length; anal fin with III spines and 8 soft rays; dorsal- and anal-fin spines strong, the anal-fin spines quite distinct; caudal fin emarginate, with 7 branched rays in upper lobe and 6 in lower lobe; **pectoral fins short and rounded, the middle rays longest, subequal to pelvic fins, 2.2 to 2.4 times in head length**. Body scales small, distinctly rough, even on belly; no auxiliary scales; lateral-line scales 70 to 78; lateral scale series 115 to 133. A single curved supraneural bone anterior to tip of first neural spine; dorsal fin with 2 trisegmental pterygiophores, anal fin with 3; rear edge of first dorsal pterygiophore incised at tip of third neural spine; epipleural ribs on vertebrae 1 to 9. **Colour:** head, body, and fins yellow to orange-yellow, shading ventrally to white or pink, the snout, lips, and dorsal part of head suffused with red; dorsal-fin spines of some specimens streaked with red.

**Size:** Maximum total length about 50 cm.

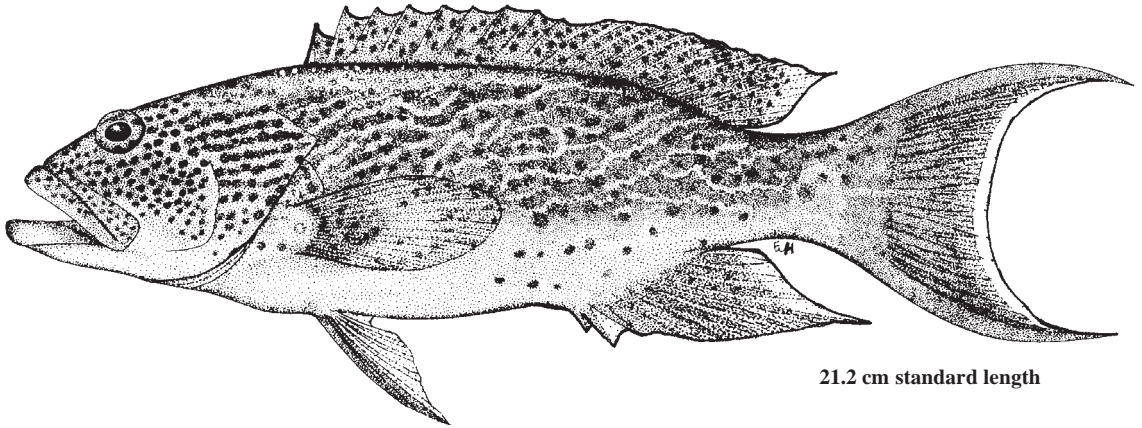
**Habitat, biology, and fisheries:** Rocky reefs at depths of 140 to 367 m. Biology unknown. Although it is not abundant, the golden grouper is an important food fish in the Ryukyu Islands of southern Japan and also in the Mariana Islands.

**Distribution:** Western Pacific to French Polynesia, including Okinawa, Taiwan Province of China, South China Sea, Mariana Islands, Society Islands, Cook Islands, American Samoa, Fiji, and Tuamotus.



*Variola albimarginata* Baissac, 1952

(Plate VII, 55)

**Frequent synonyms / misidentifications:** None / *Variola louti* (non Forsskål, 1775).**FAO names:** En - White-edged lyretail; Fr - Croissant queue blanche; Sp - Mero rabiblanco.

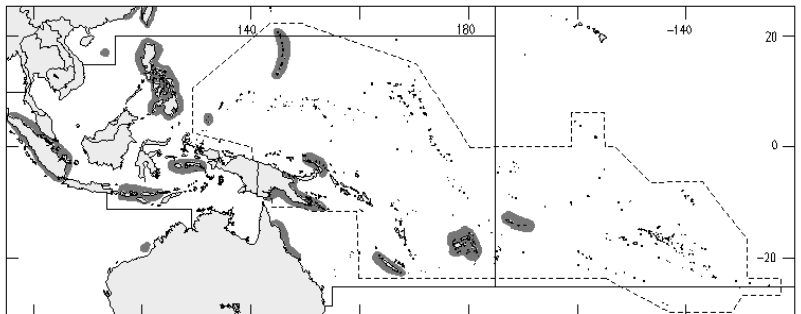
21.2 cm standard length

**Diagnostic characters:** Body oblong, its depth less than head length and 2.8 to 3.5 times in standard length; head length 2.6 to 2.8 times in standard length; interorbital area of adults convex; dorsal head profile slightly convex; preorbital depth 0.6 to 1.4 times eye diameter and 6 to 10 times in head length; preopercle rounded, finely serrate, the lower edge fleshy; opercle with 3 flat spines; upper edge of operculum almost straight; subopercle and interopercle smooth; rear nostrils not much bigger than anterior nostrils. Maxilla of adults with a distinct step on ventral edge; supramaxilla well developed; both jaws with a pair of large canines at the front; **1 to 3 large canines at midside of lower jaw**; palatines and vomer with teeth. First gill arch with 7 to 9 gill rakers on upper limb, 13 to 16 lower limb (including 4 to 7 rudiments on each limb). **Dorsal fin with IX spines and 14 soft rays**; anal fin with III spines and 8 soft rays; **caudal fin lunate, the upper and lower lobes produced, about twice length of middle rays**; pectoral-fin rays 17 to 19, the middle rays longest, 1.6 to 1.8 times in head length; pelvic fins usually not reaching anus, 1.4 to 1.8 times in head length. Midlateral body scales rough, without auxiliary scales; lateral-line scales 66 to 76; lateral scale series 109 to 127. **Colour:** body brownish orange or reddish purple, with irregular red bands alternating with yellow lines, the red bands containing small irregular pale blue to pink spots; head orange-yellow, densely spotted with red; median fins with small pink and red spots; rear margin of caudal fin usually dusky, with a narrow white edge; rear margin of dorsal and anal fins hyaline, without trace of yellow; pectoral fins yellow, the basal half of rays often reddish or dark brown. Juveniles similar in colour to adults, but with relatively fewer and larger pale blue or pink spots.

**Size:** Appears to be smaller than *V. louti*, the largest known specimen was 47 cm total length; probably does not grow larger than 55 cm total length, at a maximum weight of 1 kg.

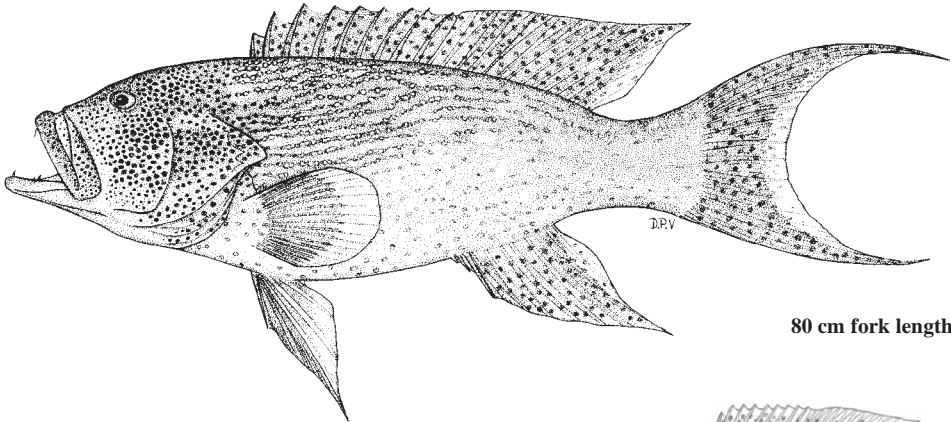
**Habitat, biology, and fisheries:** Coral reefs at depths of 4 to 200 m. Feeds on fishes. Females mature at 32 cm standard length. Because of its small size and rarity, of little interest to fisheries. Flesh excellent. Caught with handline, traps, and spear.

**Distribution:** From east coast of Africa (Zanzibar and Mafia Island, Tanzania) to Samoa, including South China Sea, Indonesia, Philippines, Taiwan Province of China, Ryukyu Islands, tropical coast of Australia, Papua New Guinea, New Ireland, New Caledonia, Guam, Palau Islands, Mariana Islands, Fiji, and Samoa.

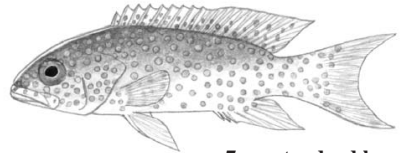


*Variola louti* (Forsskål, 1775)

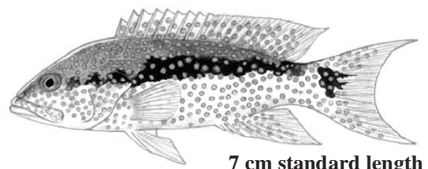
(Plate VII, 56)

**Frequent synonyms / misidentifications:** None / None.**FAO names:** En - Yellowedged lyretail; Fr - Croissant queue jaune; Sp - Mero luna creciente.

80 cm fork length



&lt; 7 cm standard length



7 cm standard length

juveniles

**Diagnostic characters:** Body oblong, its depth less than head length and 2.8 to 3.3 times in standard length; head length 2.5 to 2.8 times in standard length; interorbital area of adults convex; dorsal head profile slightly convex; preorbital depth 0.6 to 1.4 times eye diameter and 6 to 10 times in head length; preopercle rounded, finely serrate, the lower edge fleshy; opercle with 3 flat spines; upper edge of operculum almost straight; subopercle and interopercle smooth. Maxilla of adults with a distinct step on ventral edge; supramaxilla well developed; both jaws with a pair of large canines at the front; **1 to 3 large canines at midside of lower jaw**; palatines and vomer with teeth. First gill arch with 7 to 10 gill rakers on upper limb, 15 to 18 lower limb (including 6 to 8 rudiments on each limb).

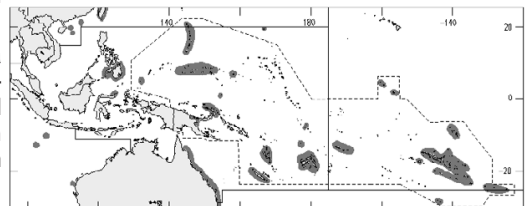
**Dorsal fin with IX spines and 13 or 14 soft rays**; anal fin with III spines and 8 soft rays; **caudal fin lunate, the upper and lower lobes produced, about twice length of middle rays**; pectoral-fin rays 16 to 19, the fin 1.6 to 1.8

times in head length; pelvic fins of adults reach past anus, 1 to 1.7 times in head length. Midlateral body scales rough, without auxiliary scales; lateral-line scales 66 to 77; lateral scale series 113 to 135. **Colour:** head, body, and median fins yellowish brown to orange-red (specimens from deep water more reddish) with numerous small round or elongate spots of blue, lavender or pink; **rear margin of median fins broadly yellow**; **pectoral-fin rays red to brown, the distal third abruptly yellow**. **Large juveniles (10 to 25 cm) with irregular black band along dorsal part of body ending below rear of dorsal fin and continuing on head (up to eye) as 3 irregular black spots**; **black blotch at base of upper caudal-fin rays**; **head and body (including black band) with small pale blue to pink spots**; **a pale yellow or white stripe middorsally on head from tip of lower jaw to dorsal-fin origin**. **Small juveniles (less than 7 cm standard length) lack the black band and black spots on dorsal part of head and body.**

**Size:** Maximum total length 100 cm; maximum weight 12 kg.

**Habitat, biology, and fisheries:** Coral reefs at depths of 3 to 240 m; usually seen at depths below 15 m. Prefers islands and offshore reefs, rather than continental shores. Feeds primarily on fishes, including a variety of coral-reef species. Females mature at 33 cm standard length. Common and important food fish, but often causes ciguatera fish poisoning. Caught with handlines, spear, and traps.

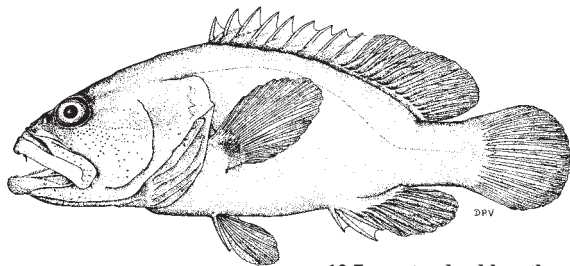
**Distribution:** Tropical Indo-Pacific region from Red Sea to Pitcairn Islands; known from most (probably all) tropical islands of the Indian Ocean and western Central Pacific. In the western Pacific, it ranges from Japan (southern Honshu) to the northern half of Australia (from Shark Bay round to New South Wales).



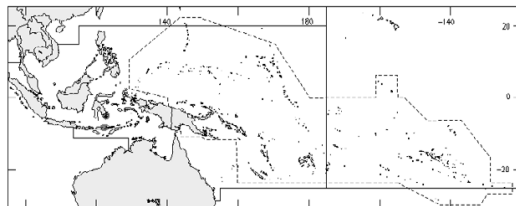
***Cephalopholis aitha*** Randall and Heemstra, 1991

**En** - Rusty hind; **Fr** - Vielle rouillé; **Sp** - Cherna herrumbrosa.

Maximum total length about 18 cm. Inshore, in protected or silty reef areas at depths of 5 to 33 m. Possibly taken in subsistence fisheries, but of no commercial importance. Caught in trawls and gill nets. Papua New Guinea, Indonesia (Sulawesi, Flores), and the Philippines.



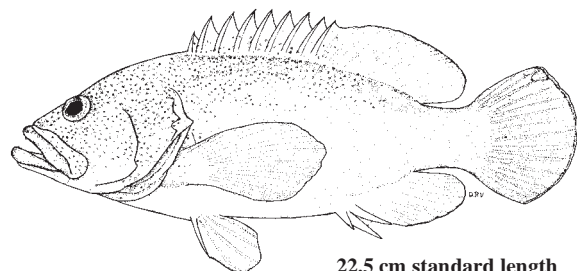
12.7 cm standard length



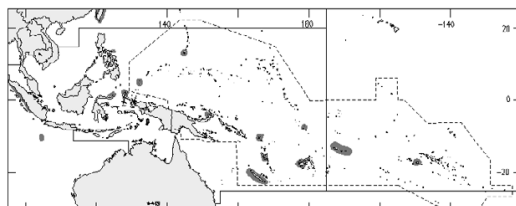
***Cephalopholis aurantia*** (Valenciennes, 1828)

**En** - Golden hind; **Fr** - Vielle dorée; **Sp** - Cherna dorada.

Maximum total length at least 30 cm. Usually caught in depths over 100 m. Specimens are rare in museums. Because of its small size and occurrence in moderately deep water, the golden hind is of little commercial importance as a food fish. South Africa and islands of the western Indian Ocean to the Central Pacific and Japan. Except for a single specimen caught off the coast of South Africa, there are no confirmed records from continental localities.



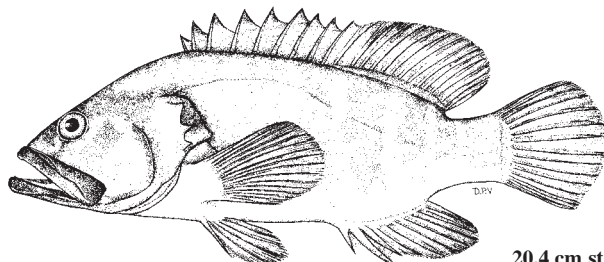
22.5 cm standard length



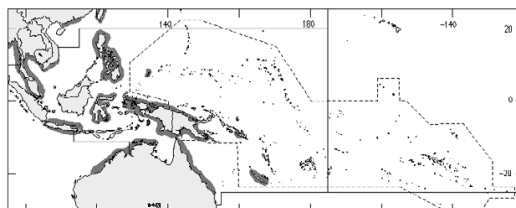
***Cephalopholis boenak*** (Bloch, 1790)

**En** - Chocolate hind; **Fr** - Vielle chocolat; **Sp** - Cherna chocolate.

Maximum total length 26 cm. Usually found in depths of 4 to 30 m on silty dead reefs in protected waters; also taken in trawls to depths of 64 m. Feeds primarily on crustaceans. Spawns in pairs. Too small to be of commercial importance as a food fish. Caught with hook-and-line, gill nets, traps, and in trawls. Primarily continental in its distribution, occurring from Kenya to southern Mozambique and eastwards to the western Pacific (Ryukyu Islands, Taiwan Province of China, China, Philippines, Indonesia, Papua New Guinea, New Caledonia, and eastern Australia). Not known from the Red Sea, Persian Gulf nor the islands of Micronesia or Polynesia, except for Palau.

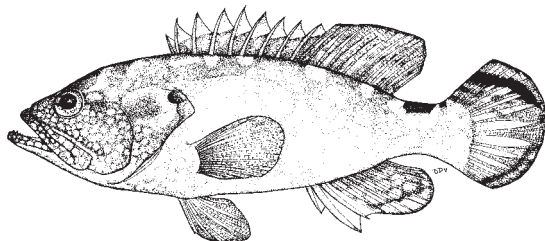


20.4 cm standard length

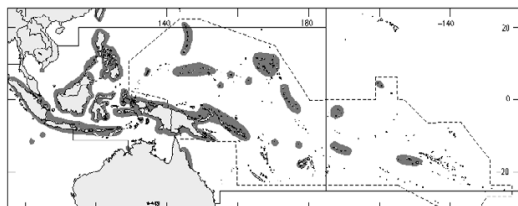


***Cephalopholis leopardus*** (Lacepède, 1801)**En** - Leopard hind; **Fr** - Vielle léopard; **Sp** - Cherna leopardo.

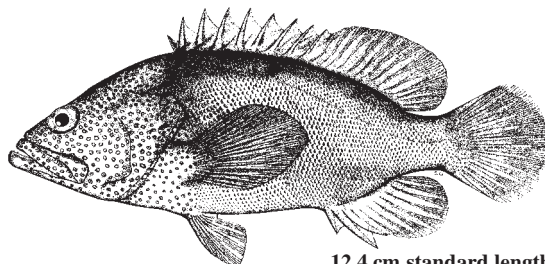
Maximum total length 20 cm (larger sizes reported in the literature are unsubstantiated). Well-developed coral reefs in depths of 3 to 38 m. Feeds on crustaceans. Like most small groupers, this is a secretive species, which is usually seen hiding in caves and crevices in the reef; too small to be of interest to fisheries. African coast to Central Pacific, including most islands of the Indian Ocean, Viet Nam, Indonesia, Philippines, Taiwan Province of China, Okinawa, Papua New Guinea, northern Australia, and most islands of the western Central Pacific.



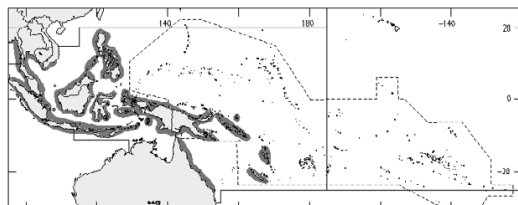
11.4 cm standard length

***Cephalopholis microprion*** (Bleeker, 1852)**En** - Freckled hind; **Fr** - Vielle tache de rousseur; **Sp** - Cherna pecosa.

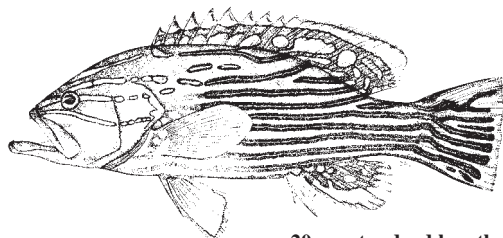
Maximum total length about 24 cm. Shallow-water silty reefs. Because of its small size, this species is of minor importance to fisheries. Caught with hook-and-line and probably in traps. Tropical eastern Indian Ocean and western Pacific: Andaman Sea, Gulf of Thailand, Indonesia, Philippine, Papua New Guinea, Great Barrier Reef, Solomon Islands, and New Caledonia.



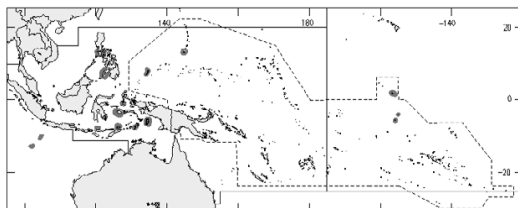
12.4 cm standard length

***Cephalopholis polleni*** (Bleeker, 1868)**En** - Harlequin hind; **Fr** - Vielle arlequin; **Sp** - Cherna arlequin.

Maximum total length 43 cm. Coral reefs in clear water on the edge of steep dropoffs; rarely seen in depths less than 30 m, it has been taken at 120 m and undoubtedly occurs deeper. Probably valuable as an attractive aquarium fish, but the species is apparently too rare and too small to be of commercial importance as a food fish. Caught with hook-and-line and traps. Islands of the Indo-Pacific region, from the western Indian Ocean to the Central Pacific (Palau and Line Islands); also reported from the Cocos-Keeling Islands, Christmas Island, Indonesia (small islands), Philippines, Okinawa, Guam, and New Britain. Not known from the Red Sea, Sri Lanka, Australia, larger islands of Indonesia, or New Guinea.



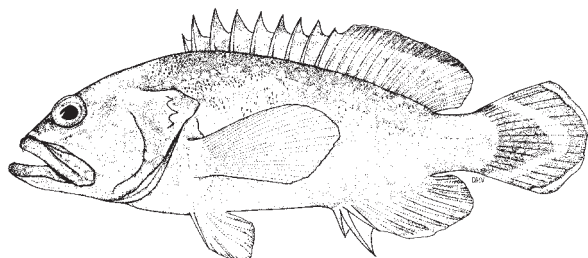
20 cm standard length



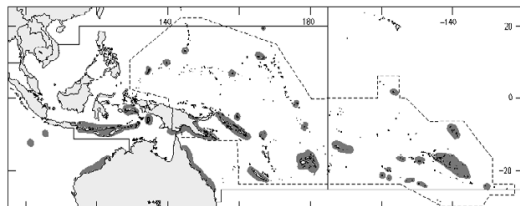
***Cephalopholis spiloparaea*** (Valenciennes, 1828)

**En** - Strawberry hind; **Fr** - Vielle fraise; **Sp** - Cherna frutillera.

Maximum total length 22 cm. Common on coral reefs in depths of 15 to 108 m. Nothing published on the biology of this species. Because of its small size and relatively deep habitat, the strawberry hind is of little commercial importance. Indo-Pacific from Pinda, Mozambique (15°S) to French Polynesia and the Pitcairn Group; ranges from the Ryukyu Islands to Heron Island at the southern end of the Great Barrier Reef. Except for the Pinda specimens, this species is known only from insular localities.



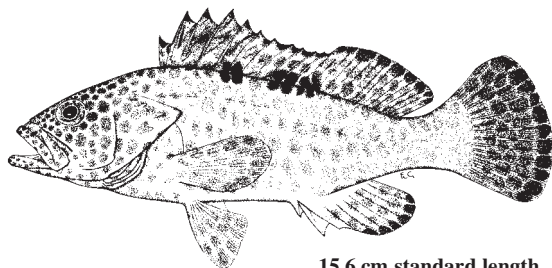
12.7 cm standard length



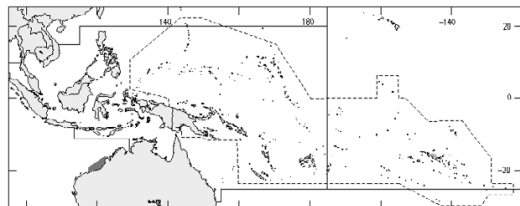
***Epinephelus bilobatus*** Randall and Allen, 1987

**En** - Twinspot grouper; **Fr** - Mérou gemine; **Sp** - Mero de pintas gemelas.

Maximum total length at least 33 cm. Coral reefs and rocky bottom in depths of 4 to 50 m. There is no published information on the biology of this species, or of its interest to fisheries. *Epinephelus bilobatus* is known only from northwestern Australia.



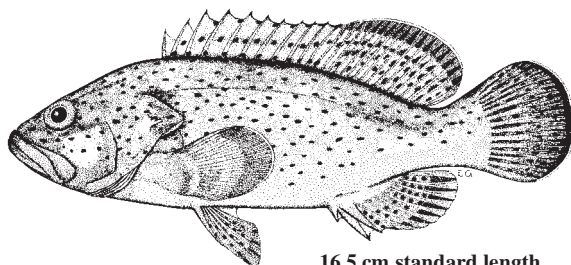
15.6 cm standard length



***Epinephelus bontoides*** (Bleeker, 1855)

**En** - Palemargin grouper; **Fr** - Mérou bord clair; **Sp** - Mero de margenes palidos.

Maximum total length at least 30 cm. Mud or rocky/cobble bottoms in depths of 2 to 30 m. Appears to be rare. Nothing has been published on the biology of this species. Probably caught with hook-and-line, trawls, and in traps. Not of interest to commercial fisheries. Western Pacific: Indonesia, Philippines, Taiwan Province of China, and New Britain.



16.5 cm standard length

