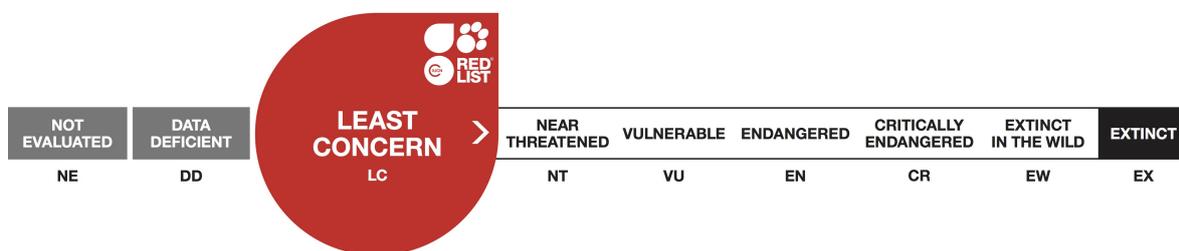


Gracila albomarginata, Masked Grouper

Assessment by: Choat, J.H., Amorim, P., Law, C., Ma, K., Myers, R., Nair, R., Rhodes, K., Rocha, L.A., Russell, B., Samoily, M., Suharti, S. & To, A.



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Taxonomy

Kingdom	Phylum	Class	Order	Family
Animalia	Chordata	Actinopterygii	Perciformes	Epinephelidae

Taxon Name: *Gracila albomarginata* (Fowler & Bean, 1930)

Synonym(s):

- *Aetheloperca albomarginata* (Fowler & Bean, 1930)
- *Cephalopholis albomarginatus* Fowler & Bean, 1930
- *Epinephelus albomarginatus* (Fowler & Bean, 1930)
- *Gracilia albomarginata* (Fowler & Bean, 1930)

Common Name(s):

- English: Masked Grouper, Rededged Cod, Red-edged Rockcod, Slenderspine Grouper, Thinspine Grouper, Thinspine Rockcod, White-margined Grouper, White-square Grouper
- French: Loche A Bords Blancs, Merou Bord Rouge, Merou Chataigne, Merou Pie, Vieille
- Spanish: Mero Paranjero

Taxonomic Source(s):

Craig, M.T. and Hastings, P.A. 2007. A molecular phylogeny of the groupers of the subfamily Epinephelinae (Serranidae) with a revised classification of the *Epinephelini*. *Ichthyological Research* 54(1): 1-17.

Taxonomic Notes:

Molecular phylogenetic analyses indicate that *Gracila albomarginata* is nested well within *Cephalopholis* and should be included in that genus; however, this hypothesis requires further analysis of morphological characters (Craig and Hastings 2007).

Assessment Information

Red List Category & Criteria: Least Concern [ver 3.1](#)

Year Published: 2018

Date Assessed: November 17, 2016

Justification:

This reef-associated species is widely distributed. It is a minor component of reef fisheries in some localities, but this is not considered a major threat at this time. Therefore, it is listed as Least Concern. The change in status from the previous assessment reflects an improved application of the Red List categories and criteria, as well as a better understanding of available data.

Previously Published Red List Assessments

2008 – Data Deficient (DD)

<http://dx.doi.org/10.2305/IUCN.UK.2008.RLTS.T132800A3455045.en>

Geographic Range

Range Description:

This Indo-Pacific species is distributed from northern Mozambique, east to French Polynesia, north to Okinawa (Japan) and south to the northern Great Barrier Reef (Australia). It is absent from the Red Sea and the Persian Gulf, but has been recorded from Europa Island (in the Mozambique Channel), Réunion, Mauritius, Maldives, Cochin, Indonesia, Scott Reef and Rowley Shoals (Australia). Its depth range is 15 to 120 metres.

Country Occurrence:

Native: American Samoa; Australia; British Indian Ocean Territory (Chagos Archipelago); China; Christmas Island; Cocos (Keeling) Islands; Comoros; Cook Islands; Fiji; French Polynesia; French Southern Territories (Mozambique Channel Is.); Guam; India; Indonesia; Japan; Kenya; Kiribati; Madagascar; Malaysia; Maldives; Marshall Islands; Mauritius; Mayotte; Micronesia, Federated States of ; Mozambique; Nauru; New Caledonia; Northern Mariana Islands; Palau; Papua New Guinea; Philippines; Réunion; Samoa; Seychelles; Solomon Islands; Somalia; Taiwan, Province of China; Tanzania, United Republic of; Timor-Leste; Tokelau; Tonga; Tuvalu; United States Minor Outlying Islands (Howland-Baker Is., US Line Is.); Vanuatu; Wallis and Futuna

FAO Marine Fishing Areas:

Native: Indian Ocean - western, Indian Ocean - eastern, Pacific - eastern central, Pacific - western central, Pacific - northwest

Distribution Map

Gracila albomarginata



Sources: Esri, HERE, Garmin, Intermap, increment P Corp., GEBCO, USGS, FAO, NPS, NRCAN, GeoBase, IGN, Kadaster NL, Ordnance Survey, Esri Japan, METI, Esri China (Hong Kong), swisstopo, © OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS User Community

Range

Extant (resident)

Compiled by:

IUCN Grouper and Wrasse Specialist Group



The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply any official endorsement, acceptance or opinion by IUCN.



Population

This species is rare or uncommon in most localities within its range and prefers deeper water. Out of 17,000 serranids, only five individuals were observed in surveys in the South Pacific (IRD database). Only one specimen was observed during 15 years of a recreational fishing survey in Guam (R. Myers pers. comm. 2008). It is relatively rare on reefs in Pohnpei; a survey of the Pohnpei reef fishery that recorded 1,848 serranids over a seven month period in 2006 did not record this species (Rhodes and Tupper 2007) and it was not present in catch monitored over a 12 month period in either 2005 or 2015 (K. Rhodes pers. comm. 2016). An underwater survey conducted from 2000-2016 in Pacific Remote Island areas that included Samoa and North Mariana recorded this species 817 times and the corresponding densities were as follows: Pacific Remote Island Areas = 0.04 m⁻², Samoa = 0.02 m⁻², and North Mariana = 0.18 m⁻² (CREP 2016). Underwater surveys conducted in British Indian Ocean Territories from 2010-2015 recorded the highest mean abundance of this species in Chagos (2.03/250 m² or 90.6 g/250 m²), while Comoros and Mozambique had 0.2/250 m² and 0.14/250 m², respectively (M. Samoily unpublished data 2016). A study conducted in the Lakshadweep Archipelago off India, reported that the average biomass of this species was higher in undisturbed sites (1527.69 g/500 m²) as opposed to disturbed sites (240.9 g/500 m²) (Karkarey *et al.* 2011).

Current Population Trend: Unknown

Habitat and Ecology (see Appendix for additional information)

This reef-associated species is an active swimmer usually found on outer coral reef slopes and channels adjacent to deep water. It hovers above the bottom and feeds primarily on fishes. It is uncommon and usually solitary, but has been reportedly occasionally sighted in groups of three or four fish (Myers 1989). Its maximum total length is 40 cm.

Systems: Marine

Use and Trade

This species is very occasionally taken by small-scale commercial and artisanal fisheries in some areas. It is a minor component of the grouper fishery in the Maldives (Sattar and Adams 2005), and is not a commonly exported species (Sattar *et al.* 2011).

Threats (see Appendix for additional information)

There are no known major threats.

Conservation Actions (see Appendix for additional information)

There are no species-specific conservation measures. Its range overlaps with some marine protected areas.

Credits

Assessor(s): Choat, J.H., Amorim, P., Law, C., Ma, K., Myers, R., Nair, R., Rhodes, K., Rocha, L.A., Russell, B., Samoily, M., Suharti, S. & To, A.

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External Resources

For [Images and External Links to Additional Information](#), please see the [Red List website](#).

Threats

(<http://www.iucnredlist.org/technical-documents/classification-schemes>)

Threat	Timing	Scope	Severity	Impact Score
5. Biological resource use -> 5.4. Fishing & harvesting aquatic resources -> 5.4.1. Intentional use: (subsistence/small scale) [harvest]	Ongoing	Minority (50%)	Unknown	Unknown

Appendix

Conservation Actions in Place

(<http://www.iucnredlist.org/technical-documents/classification-schemes>)

Conservation Actions in Place
In-Place Land/Water Protection and Management
Occur in at least one PA: Yes

Research Needed

(<http://www.iucnredlist.org/technical-documents/classification-schemes>)

Research Needed
1. Research -> 1.2. Population size, distribution & trends
1. Research -> 1.3. Life history & ecology

Additional Data Fields

Distribution
Lower depth limit (m): 120
Upper depth limit (m): 15
Population
Population severely fragmented: No

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