

CHAETODONTIDAE

butterflyfishes

Chaetodon auriga

Forsskål, 1775



Photo: David Darom

HABITAT AND ECOLOGY

Inhabits a variety of habitats, mainly in the vicinity of coral reefs, to depth of 40 m. Lives singly or in pairs, occasionally forming small aggregations. Feeds on coral polyps, small invertebrates such as polychaetes, anemones and crustaceans as well as algae. Eggs and larvae planktonic.

DISTRIBUTION

Mediterranean record: a single specimen was collected in 2015, off Capo Miseno, Tyrrhenian Sea, Italy (Tiralongo *et al.*, 2018). The adult specimen (121 mm TL) has a black spot on the dorsal fin, while specimens from the Red Sea population lack this spot. Hence its source is most likely from aquarium release.

Original distribution: wide Indo-Pacific, including the Red Sea.

KEY REFERENCE

- Tiralongo F., Lipari R. and Mancini E. 2018. A new exotic fish for the Mediterranean Sea: *Chaetodon auriga* Forsskål, 1775 (Perciformes: Chaetodontidae). *Mediterranean Marine Science*, 19(3): 491-493.

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Chaetodon austriacus

Rüppell, 1836



Photo: Daniel Golani

HABITAT AND ECOLOGY

Live mainly in pairs in the vicinity of rocky and coral reef substrate. Feeds on coral polyps in its native tropical region. Would have to shift to other food types in the Mediterranean. Eggs and larvae pelagic.

DISTRIBUTION

Mediterranean record: a single record in the vicinity of Tel-Aviv, Israel (Goren *et al.*, 2011).

Original distribution: Red Sea, Gulf of Aden, possibly also Gulf of Oman.

KEY REFERENCE

- Goren M., Gvili R., Galil B.S. 2011. The reef-associating butterfly fish *Chaetodon austriacus* Rüppell, 1836 in the Mediterranean: The implication of behavioral plasticity for bioinvasion hazard assessment. *Aquatic Invasions*, 6(1): s143-s145.