Crenidens crenidens 
(Forsskål, 1775)

Body oblong to oval. Dorsal profile of head in juveniles and subadults convex with pit-like indentation to produce a “nose” (this indentation is absent in specimens larger than 17 cm). Jaws extend back to vertical of anterior nostril. Three rows of teeth in each jaw, upper front with 8-9 brown-tipped incisors, each tooth bearing five denticulations (the three median more distinct) giving the teeth edge a wavy appearance. The inner rows with a few similar shaped teeth, other teeth granular. Scales finely ctenoid. Scaly cheeks. Interorbital scaleless.

**Color:** silvery (large specimens) to yellow-silvery with somewhat darker spots on the scales, giving it a striped look.

**Common size:** 10-16 cm, max. 30 cm (in Mediterranean 20 cm).

**Distinguishing Characteristics**
- Species of Diplodus, Sparus, Pagrus, Rhabdosargus, Acanthopagrus and Lithognathus: lateral teeth molariform.
- Species of Dentex, Oblada, Boops and Spondylisoma: lack of incisor teeth.
- Sarpa salpa: a single row of incisors; 10-11 fine, very distinct, longitudinal yellow lines.
**Biology / Ecology**

Feeds mainly on algae and, to a much lesser extent, on small invertebrates. Eggs and larvae planktonic.

**Habitat:** shallow coastal water, above sandy substrate, often covered with sea grass.

**Distribution**

**Worldwide:** two subspecies are recognized as coexisting in the Red Sea. *Crenidens crenidens crenidens* occurs also in eastern Africa and the second subspecies, *Crenidens crenidens indicus*, extends to the Arabian Gulf and Nicobar Islands.

**Mediterranean:** recorded first in Bardawil Lagoon, northern Sinai, Egypt (Lourie and Ben-Tuvia, 1970); successively recorded in Israel (Golani, 1992) and Libya (Al-Hassan and El-Silini, 1999; Shakman and Kinzelbach, 2007).

**Mode of Introduction**

Via the Suez Canal.

**Establishment Success**

Rare.

**Importance to Humans**

Caught in small quantities in Bardawil Lagoon (northern Sinai) by purse seine and trammel net. Rare elsewhere in the Mediterranean.

**Key References**