

SCOMBRIDAE

tunas, mackerels

Scomberomorus commerson

(Lacepède, 1800)

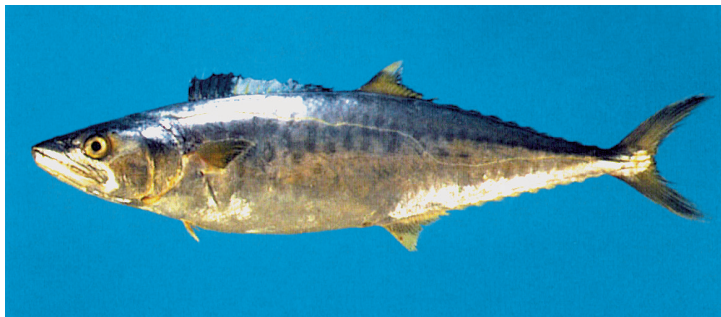


Photo : David Darom

Relevant synonyms: *Scomber commerson*, *Cybium konam*
 Misidentification: None
 Meristic formula: D1, XV-XVIII; D2, 15-20+8-11 finlets;
 A, 16-21+8-11 finlets; P, 21-24; V, I+5; Vert. 42-46

SHORT DESCRIPTION

Body elongated and compressed. Two dorsal fins narrowly separated. First dorsal fin lower than second dorsal fin. Second dorsal fin origin slightly in front of anal fin origin. Caudal fin forked (in small specimens) to lunate with two keels on its base and a median keel on caudal peduncle. Pectoral fin pointed. Large pointed head. Large mouth. Maxilla extends back beyond posterior of eye margin. Large triangular and compressed teeth in jaws and smaller teeth on the palatine and vomer. Lateral line bent downwards under the middle of second dorsal fin. Entire body covered with small scales. Juveniles with large oval dark spots on body; middle third of first dorsal fin white, the rest of the fin black.

color: back dark silvery grey with light grey belly. Numerous dark vertical and wavy bars, with spots on flanks.

common size: 25-150 cm (max. 240 cm).

DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERISTICS

- *Rastrelliger* and *Scomber* spp.: five dorsal and anal finlets.

Other scombrids: first dorsal fin higher than second dorsal fin; jaws with slender teeth (compressed in *S. commerson*).

BIOLOGY / ECOLOGY

Schooling species. Feeds on small schooling fishes, such as clupeids, engraulids and carangids. Young fish feeds also on benthic species. Reaches sexual maturity at 65 cm. Eggs and larvae are planktonic.

habitat: pelagic along coastal waters.

DISTRIBUTION

Worldwide: wide Indo-Pacific. Red Sea, eastern Africa to Capetown. Indian Ocean to Japan, western and eastern Australia and Fiji.

Mediterranean: recorded first in Palestine, as *Scomberomorus* sp. (Hornell, 1935) ; successively recorded from Lebanon (George and Athanassiou, 1965), Turkey [known from 1981, Gucu *et al.*, (1994)], Egypt (El Sayed, 1994) and Dodecanese Islands (Buhan *et al.*, 1997). More recently recorded in Tunisia (Ben Souissi *et al.*, 2006), and along the coast of Libya (Elbaraasi *et al.*, 2019).

MODE OF INTRODUCTION

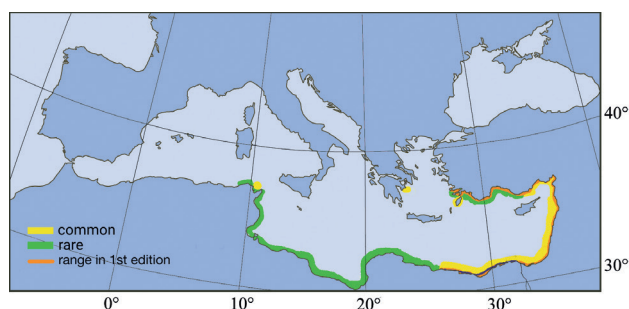
Via the Suez Canal.

ESTABLISHMENT SUCCESS

Very common.

IMPORTANCE TO HUMANS

Since the 1980s, this species has become very common in the eastern Levant, contributing greatly to purse seine and trammel net fishery. Elsewhere, commercially important throughout its range.



1st Med. record
Palestine, 1935.

KEY REFERENCES

- Ben Souissi J., Golani D., Mejri H., Zaouali J. and Capapé C. 2006. On the occurrence of *Scomberomorus commerson* Lacepède, 1800 (Osteichthyes, Scombridae) off northern Tunisia Central Mediterranean. *Cahiers de Biologie Marine*, 47(2): 215-218.
- Collette B.B. 1970. *Rastrelliger kanagurta*, another Red Sea immigrant into the Mediterranean Sea, with a key to the Mediterranean species of Scombridae. *Bulletin of Sea Fisheries Research Station*, Haifa, 53: 3-6.
- Elbaraasi H., Elabar B., Elaabidi S., Bashir A., Elsilini O., Shakman E. and Azzurro E. 2019. Updated checklist of bony fishes along the Libyan coasts (southern Mediterranean Sea). *Mediterranean Marine Science*, 20(1): 90-105.
- Golani D. and Ben-Tuvia A. 1995. Lessepsian migration and the Mediterranean fisheries of Israel. In: Armantrout N.B. (ed.). *Conditions of the World's Aquatic Habits*. Proceedings of the World Fisheries Congress, Oxford & IBH Pub. Co. Pvt. Ltd. New Delhi. pp. 279-289.
- Hornell J. 1935. Report on the Fisheries of Palestine. Government of Palestine. Crown Agent for the Colonies, London. 106 pp.