

## MULLIDAE

goatfishes

### *Upeneus pori*

Ben-Tuvia and Golani, 1989



Photo : David Darom

Relevant synonyms: None  
 Misidentification: *Upeneus asymmetricus*, *Upeneus tragula*,  
*Upeneus vittatus*  
 Meristic formula: D1, VII; D2, 8-10; A, I + 6-8; P, 13-16; V, I + 5;  
 LL, 28-33; GR, 24-2

#### SHORT DESCRIPTION

Body elongated, subcylindrical in front and somewhat compressed from midpoint. Two well-separated dorsal fins. First dorsal spine the longest. Second dorsal fin opposite anal fin. Caudal fin deeply forked. A pair of barbels on the chin, their length 15-20% from SL. Villiform teeth arrange in 3-4 rows in front and 1-2 in the back. Elliptic patches on the palatine. Four scales between dorsal fins.

**color:** back and sides mottled brown-reddish. Belly whitish. Upper lobe of caudal fin with 3-7 reddish-brown bars with white interspace. Lower lobe with 4-5 of the same color.

**common size:** 5-14 cm (max. 17 cm).

#### DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERISTICS

- *Upeneus moluccensis*: very distinct single yellow longitudinal stripe; lower caudal lobe without stripes; eight dorsal spines (first quite small).
- *Mullus* spp.: no teeth in upper jaw.
- *Pseudupeneus prayensis*: spine on opercular margin; no stripes on caudal fin.
- *Parupeneus forsskali*: black longitudinal stripe and a black dot on the caudal peduncle.

### BIOLOGY / ECOLOGY

Feeds on small hypobenthic invertebrates, mainly crustaceans and, to a lesser extent, polychaetes, which they detect with their barbels. Spawning season lasts from April to September. Planktonic eggs (diameter 0.3-0.4 mm) and larvae. Settlement occurs 6-9 months after hatching, upon reaching length of 3-4 cm.

**habitat:** benthic. Sandy and muddy substrate to 50 m.

### DISTRIBUTION

**Worldwide:** Red Sea and Gulf of Oman.

**Mediterranean:** recorded first at Iskenderum, Turkey (Kosswig, 1950) as *Upeneoides* (= *Upeneus*) *tragula* ; successively recorded in Israel (Ben-Tuvia, 1953) (as *Upeneus* sp.) and Egypt (El Sayed, 1994). Also recorded in Turkey, Cyprus, Libya, Tunisia and recently in Sicily (Deidun *et al.*, 2018).

### MODE OF INTRODUCTION

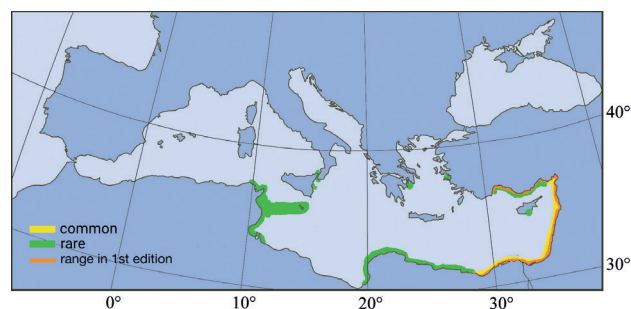
Via the Suez Canal.

### ESTABLISHMENT SUCCESS

Very abundant in the Eastern Levant.

### IMPORTANCE TO HUMANS

Caught in large quantities by trawl in shallow waters of 10-40 m.



1<sup>st</sup> Med. record  
Iskenderum,  
Turkey, 1950.

### KEY REFERENCES

- Deidun A., Zava B., Insacco G., Corsini-Foka M. 2018. First record of the Por's goatfish *Upeneus pori* (Actinopterygii: perciformes: Mullidae) from Italian waters (Western Ionian Sea). *Acta Ichthyologica et Piscatoria*, 1: 93-97.
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- Golani D. 1994. Niche separation between colonizing and indigenous goatfishes (Mullidae) of the Mediterranean coast of Israel. *Journal of Fish Biology*, 45: 503-513.
- Kosswig C. 1950. Erythräische Fische im Mittelmeer und an der Grenze der Ägais. *Syllegomena Biologica. Festschrift Kleinschmidt*. Leipzig: Akademie Verlag. Pp 203-212.