

## Gurnard Species: 4 of 9 different ones



### **African Gurnard - *Chelidonichthys lastoviza* - Afrikaanse Knorhaan**

**Other Names:** Streaked Gurnard

**Appearance:**

The African Gurnard has a large head with a steep forehead. Uniquely amongst gurnards, the body is covered with transverse ridges of skin that originate at the lateral line. The lateral line scales are enlarged and armed with small spines. It has two dorsal fins, the first with 9-11 spines and the second, like the anal fin, has 14-17 rays. The caudal fin is truncate. The streaked gurnard is red above and pale below with dark spots on the head and back. The grey pectoral fins have large dark blue spots.

**About the Species:**

The African Gurnard is distributed in the Eastern Atlantic: Norway continuously south around Cape of Good Hope to Mozambique. This demersal species is found in open areas over gravel and sand from the coast down to a depth of about 150m but usually 40m. It feeds on crustaceans.

**Biology:**

Length at maturity: 15.0cm. Max length: 40.0cm TL; Common length: 15.0 cm TL. Max reported age: 18 years.

**SA Status:**

**IUCN Red List:** Unknown, Least Concern 14 July 2014

**Citation:** *FishBase, The IUCN Red List of Threatened Species*



### **Bluefin Gurnard - *Chelidonichthys kumu* - Blouvin Knorhaan**

**Other Names:** Blue Gurnard, Pacific Red Gurnard

**Appearance:**

The Bluefin Gurnard is a bottom-dwelling fish known for its bright red body and large, colorful pectoral fins with a large black eye-spot in the center and surrounded by a bright blue edge. Its natural color is a splotchy pale brown, generally only becoming red when stressed and the belly is paler or even white. It has a boxy, bony head which is protected by backwards-facing spines along the front of the snout and around the eye as well as on the hind margin of the operculum and tapers into a laterally elongated body. There are 8-10 gill rakers and 70-80 scales on its lateral line, which is uninterrupted. Its two tall, triangular dorsal fins have a total of 15-16 soft rays and 9-10 spines. There is no adipose fin. The anal fin has 14-16 soft rays and no spines. The Bluefin Gurnard's large, fan-like pectoral fins are one of two pairs with 13-14 soft rays and its pelvic fin has 5 soft rays and a single spine. The pectoral fins' first three rays are modified and separated from the rest of the fin. They are used as sensory organs, sometimes referred to as "fingers", permitting it to probe the sea bottom to detect prey buried in the sand or the mud. These spectacular fins make the red gurnard look like a butterfly of the sea, however their role is not entirely known. They could be used to attract a mate or frighten off predators. These fan-like fins can also be used to give stability during swimming.

**About the Species:**

The Bluefin Gurnard is an Indo-Pacific searobin, distributed from Mozambique to South Africa in the western Indian Ocean. In the Pacific, this species ranges from Vietnam, north to Japan and South Korea. It is also reported in the Pacific from southern Australia and New Zealand and Hong Kong. The Bluefin Gurnard is a benthic species that is found over open sand, mud and sandy shell bottoms, at a depth range of 1–200m. It is a continental species associated with nutrient rich waters, and is often found in rivers, estuaries and transitional waters. The juveniles of this species may occur in bays.

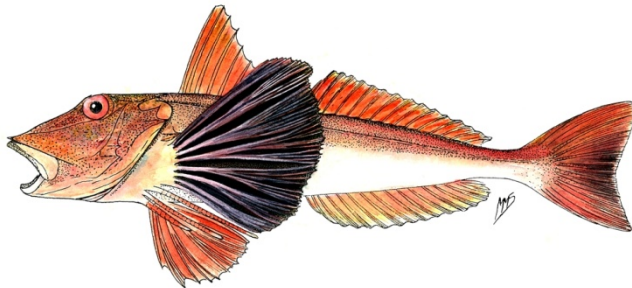
**Biology:**

Length at maturity: 23.0cm. Max length: 60.0cm TL; Common length: 40.0 cm TL. Max published weight: 1.5kg; Max reported age: 15 years. Males are smaller than females at around 26cm and 33cm respectively.

**SA Status:**

**IUCN Red List:** Unknown, Least Concern 04 February 2009

**Citation:** *FishBase, The IUCN Red List of Threatened Species, Wikipedia*



## **Cape Gurnard - *Chelidonichthys capensis* - Kaapse Knorhaan**

### **Other Names:**

### **Appearance:**

Dorsal spines: 8 - 9; Dorsal soft rays: 15-17; Anal spines: 0; Anal soft rays: 14 – 16. The snout is more elongated than the African Gurnard.

### **About the Species:**

Distribution: Southeast Atlantic and Western Indian Ocean: Cape Fria, Namibia south around the coast of South Africa to Maputo, Mozambique. It is found at depths ranging from 10 to 390m. It is a demersal species found on soft-bottom (sandy and muddy) substrates. The diet comprises mainly of crustaceans, cephalopods and fishes.

### **Biology:**

It is a pelagic spawner that exhibits a long laying reproductive period with spawning seasons ranging from November to January and from March to April with maximum spawning activity occurring in January and April. Males reach first sexual maturity at 37 cm total length at the age of 5 years, while females reach first sexual maturity at 35 cm total length at the age of 4 years. The estimated maximum age for this species is 16 years at 67.5cm TL for females. The maximum recorded length for this species is 75cm TL. Common length: 35.0cm TL.

### **SA Status:**

**IUCN Red List:** Stable, Least Concern 21 June 2017

**Citation:** FishBase, *The IUCN Red List of Threatened Species*



### **Lesser Gurnard - *Chelidonichthys queketti* - Kleiner Knorhaan**

**Other Names:**

**Appearance:**

Dorsal spines: 9; Dorsal soft rays: 18-19; Anal spines: 0; Anal soft rays: 17 - 18.

**About the Species:**

This species is found from Cape Town, South Africa to Maputo Bay, Mozambique. It has been collected at depths ranging of 0-500m, but is commonly found at depths of 50-150m. While this species appears rare throughout most of its range, it is considered to be the most common and abundant species of Triglidae in Agulhas Bank. is commonly found inhabiting various sediment types. It is a fast growing and long-lived species. The diet comprises of amphipods, brachyurans, polychaetes, echinoderms, crustaceans, and molluscs and fishes.

**Biology:**

It is an iteroparous species (living to reproduce repeatedly) that spawns throughout the year with peak spawning activity occurring in the spring and late summer months. The age and size at first sexual maturity for females is 1 yr at 19.5cm. The maximum recorded length is 35cm TL. The maximum recorded age is 7 years.

**SA Status:**

**IUCN Red List:** Stable, Least Concern 21 June 2017

**Citation:** *FishBase, The IUCN Red List of Threatened Species*