

Diplectrum radiale (Pond Perch or Aquavina)

Family: Serranidae (Groupers and Sea Basses)

Order: Perciformes (Perch and Allied Fish)

Class: Actinopterygii (Ray-finned fish)



Fig. 1. Pond perch, *Diplectrum radiale*.

[<http://minhapescaria.blogspot.com/2013/06/peixes-de-praia-michole-de-areia.html>, downloaded 10 November 2016]

TRAITS. *Diplectrum radiale* is also called the pond perch or aquavina and was originally known as *Serranus radialis* (WoRMS, 2015). Pond perch have 10 dorsal spines, 12-14 dorsal soft rays, 3 anal spines and 7 anal soft rays. They have a light grey-brown colour with dark stripes running lengthways on their body (Fig. 1). Their anal and caudal fins have a yellow tint (Fig. 2) (Fishbase, 2016). Maximum size is 26cm and common size is 20cm.

DISTRIBUTION. This species is widespread in coastal waters of the western Atlantic (Fig. 3) (IUCN, 2015).

HABITAT AND ECOLOGY. Pond perches are found over sand/muddy bottoms at a depth between 20-80m (IUCN, 2015). They can also be found over sandy-gravel bottoms around stony reefs and inside depressions. They feed mostly on crustaceans; it was observed that they prefer decapod shrimps. They feed mostly during the day and their feeding strategies include; stalking, picking at small prey, drift feeding, nibbling and sit and wait predation (Gibran, 2007).

REPRODUCTION. *Diplectrum radiale* is a synchronic hermaphrodite (Lopez et al., 2002). This means that an organism has both male and female sex organs at the same time. The embryonic development is similar to that of pelagic species eggs. They lay their eggs straight into open waters. The eggs are spherical, transparent, non-adhesive, telolecithal with one drop of lipid and they float.

The larva grows steadily from the time of hatching and then stops after 24 hours. Growth is resumed at 53 hours after hatching (Lopez et al., 2002).

BEHAVIOUR. They feed mostly during the day and at twilight. Individuals less than 10cm can be seen together in groups of approximately six inside depressions. Chafing behaviour or intimidating display and following behaviour with a sea star has also been seen in this species (Gibran, 2007).

APPLIED BIOLOGY. IUCN (2015) has listed this species as Least Concern. There are no major threats to this species and it is not targeted but they occur as bycatch in shrimp fishery.

REFERENCES

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Fig. 2. Specimen of pond perch, *Diplectrum radiale*.

[<http://www.fishbase.org/Photos/PicturesSummary.php?StartRow=0&ID=7330&what=species&TotRec=3>, downloaded 20 October 2016]



Fig. 3. Geographic distribution of *Diplectrum radiale*.

[http://www.aquamaps.org/receive.php?type_of_map=regular, downloaded 29 October 2016]

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