

Diplodus argenteus (Silver Porgy)

Family: Sparidae (Seabream)

Order: Perciformes (Perch and Allied Fish)

Class: Actinopterygii (Ray-finned Fish)



Fig. 1. Silver porgy, *Diplodus argenteus*.

[<http://www.mexican-fish.com/silver-porgy/> downloaded 23 October 2016]

TRAITS. *D. argenteus*, known as the silver porgy or sea bream, averages 15-20cm in length and 0.5 kg weight. As its name states, this species has a silver sheen which appears metallic, with a very faint pattern of yellow and black stripes (Fig. 1). Its dorsal (upper) fin has about 12 spines, and the anal fin about 3 spines, as well as soft fin rays. Its pectoral and pelvic fins are tapered and its caudal (tail) fin is divided into a V-shape. At the base of the caudal fin is a relatively large black spot (Allfishingbuy.com, 2016).

DISTRIBUTION. This species can be found between southeast Florida, USA, to Argentina, South America. They are native to the western and southern area of the Atlantic and to numerous countries such as Trinidad and Tobago, Brazil, Mexico and Jamaica, to name a few. Figure 2 shows the distribution of the silver porgy. However, its greatest population has currently been recorded to be near Cabo Frio, Brazil (Carpenter and Russell, 2014).

HABITAT AND ECOLOGY. Like many reef-inhabiting fish, the silver porgy can be found in rocks and corals of most coastlines of their distribution, for example, the Bahamas shores, up to depths of no more than 100m. This allows them to scour the rocks and seabed for invertebrates such as crabs, molluscs and small fish. Schools of porgies can be found feeding at one time, where they usually stay near the structures that house these benthic food sources. They are known to be diurnally-active, that is, they go about their activities during the daytime, and so

they can be easily caught for food or game. This species is known to live up to 17 years (Carpenter and Russell, 2014).

REPRODUCTION. One of the reproductive traits of *D. argenteus* is that it is known to show protandrous hermaphroditism. The fish is born male then as it matures, it changes its sex to female. Reproduction usually occurs from the months of August to February (Carpenter and Russell, 2014), where the female discharges a multitude of eggs into the open water where sperm fertilizes them. When this occurs, the offspring (larvae) are known to be pelagic (Snow, 2016).

BEHAVIOUR. The silver porgy is commonly found in groups or schools, as adults or juveniles, especially during feeding times (Carpenter and Russell, 2014). However, when not feeding or at rest, juvenile porgies remain near the shore, along rocks, reefs and vegetation.

APPLIED BIOLOGY. According to the IUCN Red List, *D. argenteus* is categorized as of Least Concern as the species is not recorded to have any threats, however, due to the nature of their habitats, degradation of these reef and rock structures may become of concern. Silver porgies are usually caught for game or food, but not to a large extent. In Cabo Frio, Brazil, it is a common food dish (Carpenter and Russell, 2014).

REFERENCES

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- Galvan, D., Gosztomyi, A., Irigoyen, A., Parma, A., and Venerus, L., 2005, Extension of the distributional range of the silver porgy, *Diplodus argenteus* (Valenciennes 1830), and the red porgy, *Pagrus pagrus* (Linnaeus 1758) (Sparidae) in northern Patagonia, south-western Atlantic, Vol. **21**
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Fig. 2. Distribution map of *D. argenteus* in the Caribbean and surrounding areas.

[<http://maps.iucnredlist.org/map.html?id=170154> downloaded 22 October 2016]

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