

BIGEYE KINGFISH

Caranx sexfasciatus

Identifying features:

The upper surface of this robust fish is silver to grey and the belly is white. There is a distinct black spot on the gill covers and the anal and dorsal fins have white tips.

Scientific Name: *Caranx sexfasciatus*

Common Name: Bigeye kingfish, bigeye trevally

Family: Carangidae

Size: Can grow to 80 cm fork length and weigh 7.8 kg

DISTRIBUTION

Bigeye kingfish are locally distributed from the Mozambique border south to Port Elizabeth and extend throughout the Indo-Pacific to Australia.

HABITAT

The adults are found in clear, warm water associated with coastal reefs and the juveniles are commonly found in estuaries, particularly those with cleaner water.

DIET

These fish usually hunt in small schools and move over reefs in search of small fish. The diet is supplemented with shrimps and crabs. Bigeye kingfish are most active at night (hence the big eyes to improve night vision).

REPRODUCTION

Sexual maturity is attained at about 50 cm fork length and spawning occurs during spring and summer offshore.

CAPTURE

The bigeye kingfish is a strong fighter and takes most fish baits and lures. It is a popular game-fish especially in northern KwaZulu-Natal where it is caught by both shore and ski-boat anglers and is occasionally speared. It is particularly popular with salt water fly-fishermen.

REGULATIONS

Daily bag limit: 5 per person per day

Minimum size limit: none

Closed season: none

Other Regulations: no sale, recreational species

SASSI: red list

STOCK STATUS

The current status of this fish population is not known and little is known about early life history, migration and growth. The adults may receive some protection in the Maputaland and St Lucia Marine Reserve Sanctuary areas.