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Mugil cephalus *Flathead mullet*

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Mugil cephalus [Linnaeus, 1758](#)

Family: [Mugilidae](#) (Mulletts)

Order: [Perciformes](#) (perch-likes)

Class: [Actinopterygii](#) (ray-finned fishes)

FishBase name: Flathead mullet

Max. size: 120 cm SL (male/unsexed; Ref. 7399); max. published weight: 12.0 kg (Ref. 56527); max. reported age: 16 years

Environment: benthopelagic; catadromous (Ref. 51243); freshwater; brackish; marine; depth range 0 – 120 m

Climate: subtropical; 8 – 24°C; 47°n - 40°s, 143°w - 155°e

Importance: fisheries: highly commercial; aquaculture: commercial; gamefish: yes; bait: occasionally

Resilience: Medium, minimum population doubling time 1.4 - 4.4 years (K=0.09-0.15; tm=2-3; tmax=16; Fec=1.6 million)

Distribution: Cosmopolitan in coastal waters of the tropical and subtropical zones of all seas. Eastern Pacific: California, USA to Chile (Ref. 2850). Western Atlantic: Nova Scotia, Canada to Brazil (Ref. 7251); Cape Cod to southern Gulf of Mexico (Ref. 26938); absent in the Bahamas and most of West Indies and Caribbean (Ref. 7251, 9761). Eastern Atlantic: Bay of Biscay to South Africa, including the Mediterranean Sea and Black Sea (Ref. 7399). Reported in Sea of Okhotsk (Ref. 50550).

Morphology: Dorsal spines (total): 5 - 5; Dorsal soft rays (total): 7 - 9; Anal spines: 3; Anal soft rays: 8 – 9. Color olive-green dorsally, sides silvery shading to white ventrally. Lips thin. Pectoral fins short (not reaching the first dorsal fin).

picture (Mucep_u3.jpg) by [Cook, D.C.](#)



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Biology: Coastal species (Ref. 2850, 44894) that often enters estuaries and rivers (Ref. 2847, 3573, 11230, 44894). Usually in schools over sand or mud bottom (Ref. 2850) and dense vegetation (Ref. 30578). Mainly diurnal, feed on zooplankton, benthic organisms and detritus. Adult fish tend to feed mainly on algae while inhabiting fresh waters (Ref. 28724). Reproduction takes place in the sea, from July to October (Ref. 30578). Females spawn 5 to 7 million eggs provided with a notable vitellus. Sexually mature at 7 to 8 years (Ref. 35237). Widely cultivated in freshwater ponds in southeast Asia (Ref. 2847). Marketed fresh, dried, salted, and frozen; roe sold fresh or smoked (Ref. 9321); also used in Chinese medicine (Ref. 12166). Very important commercial species in many parts of the world (Ref. 26938).

Red List Status: [Not in IUCN Red List](#) (Ref. 53964)

Dangerous: harmless , [Honebrink, R.. 1990](#)

Coordinator: [Harrison, Ian](#)

Main Ref: [Harrison, I.J.. 1995. \(Ref. 9321\)](#)

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Countries	Common names	References	Collaborators
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Introductions	Sounds	L-L relationship	Heritability
Ecosystems	Reproduction	Length frequencies	Strains
Ecology	Maturity	Recruitment	Aquaculture
Diet	Spawning	Max. age & size	Aquaculture profile
Food items	Eggs	Metabolism	Diseases
Food consumption	Egg dev.	Morphology	Ecotoxicology
Ration	Larvae	Morphometrics	Processing
Predators	Larval dynamics	Gill area	Speed
Ciguatera	Biblio.	Brains	Swim. type
		Vision	Stamps

Note: No data available if label is black; please send relevant papers to: FishBase, MC P.O. Box 2631, 0718 Makati, Philippines, or attach files to 'Comments & Corrections' email below .

Tools: [Biogeographic modelling](#) | [Bio-Quiz](#) | [E-book](#) | [Field guide](#) | [Identification keys](#) | [Length-Frequency Wizard](#) | [Life-history tool](#) | [Point data](#) |

Internet sources: [None](#) [Alien/Invasive Species database](#) | [ECOTOX](#) | [CISTI](#) | [FAO aquaculture](#) | [FAO catch](#) | [Fishtrace](#) | [Google Books](#) | [Google Scholar](#) | [Google](#) | [GOBASE](#) | [FIGIS](#) | [GenBank](#) ([genome](#), [nucleotide](#)) | [ispecies](#) | [National databases](#) | [Public aquariums](#) | [PubMed](#) | [Recipes](#) | [Sea Around Us](#) | [Distributions](#) | [Scirus](#) | [Tree of Life](#) | [uBio](#) | [uBio RSS](#) | [Zoological Record](#)

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Kiel, Germany