HAEMULIDAE

Grunts
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Diagnostic characters: Oblong, compressed, perchlike fishes to 75 cm total length. Head profile strongly convex in most species. Mouth small to moderate, lips often thick; chin with 2 pores anteriorly and, in all but 1 genus, a median groove. Teeth conical, in a narrow band in each jaw, the outer series enlarged but no canines. No teeth on roof of mouth. Posterior margin of suborbital not exposed; preopercle with posterior margin slightly concave and serrated; opercle with 1 spine. Dorsal fin single, with 11 to 14 strong spines and generally 11 to 19 soft rays. Pectoral fins moderately long; pelvic fins below base of pectoral fins, with 1 spine and 5 soft rays. Anal fin with 3 strong spines, the second often very prominent, and 6 to 13 soft rays; caudal fin emarginate to forked. Scales ctenoid (rough to touch), small or moderate, extending onto entire head (except front of snout, lips, and chin). Colour: highly variable, ranging from uniformly coloured to striped, banded, blotched and spotted. Adult stages of most species have distinctive colour patterns. Early juveniles (2 to 5 cm) of Haemulon, Anisotremus, and Orthopristis share a pattern of dark dorsolateral and midlateral stripes, and a caudal spot. The length of the upper eye stripe, coupled with other characters, is essential to separating the extremely similar early juvenile stages of Haemulon. The early juvenile pigment pattern can also be ephemerally displayed in adults of many species.

Habitat, biology, and fisheries: Fishes of shallow, nearshore waters; nearly all from tropical and subtropical waters. Many species of Haemulon and Anisotremus inhabit coral reef or hardbottom areas and many forage nocturnally over nearby sand and grass flats. Species of Pomadasys, Genyatremus, and Conodon are characteristic of mud bottoms and turbid, often brackish water. Species of Orthopristis can utilize both softbottom and hardbottom habitats, primarily the former. The name of the family derives from the sound produced by the grinding of pharyngeal teeth. Juveniles typically occur in shallower water than adults and may show several ontogenetic habitat shifts during growth. Most species feed on a variety of benthic invertebrates, particularly crustaceans and polychaetes. Several smaller species may primarily feed on plankton, while several larger species feed in part on echinoids. Schooling is present in many species, but may become less common in older individuals. The absence of documented spawning events suggests that reproduction typically occurs after sunset. Several grunts are considered good foodfish and are actively fished for. Due to their abundance, many species are also obtained opportunistically and exploited commercially or recreationally. Juvenile mortality from shrimp trawl bycatch is high in several species. Fishing gear includes traps, hook-and-line, seines, and bottom trawls. FAO statistics from Area 31 report landings ranging from 11 335 to 18 081 t annually from 1995 to 1999.

Remarks: Prior family name, Pomadasyidae, may still be encountered. The systematic status and distribution of several species in South America is unresolved.
Similar families occurring in the area

Lutjanidae: canine teeth frequently present in jaws; no pores on chin; teeth present on roof of mouth; suborbital area scaleless; spines of dorsal and anal fins weaker.

Sciaenidae: anal fin with never more than two spines; lateral-line scales extending to posterior margin of caudal fin; often with rounded snout; barbels or canine-like teeth sometimes present; swimbladder usually large and complex (except in Menticirrhus where it is rudimentary, or absent).

Gerreidae: anterior part of lower head profile concave; mouth strongly protrusible; interorbital region slightly concave.

Sparidae: suborbital area scaleless; no serrations on margin of preopercle; 2 pores not present beneath chin.

Key to the species of Haemulidae occurring in the area

1a. Dorsal-fin spines 11; 2 of the spines at preopercle angle enlarged (Fig. 1) . . . . Conodon nobilis

1b. Dorsal-fin spines 12 or more; no enlarged spines on preopercle . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . → 2

Fig. 1 Conodon
2a. Soft portions of dorsal and anal fins densely scaled nearly to margins (Fig. 2); in fresh specimens, inner lining of mouth typically red; rare in turbid, low salinity areas. \(\rightarrow\) 3

2b. Soft portions of dorsal and anal fins naked or not scaled to margins; in fresh specimens, inner lining of mouth typically lacking red colour. \(\rightarrow\) 16

3a. Dorsal-fin spines 13 or 14. \(\rightarrow\) 4

3b. Dorsal-fin spines 12. \(\rightarrow\) 6

4a. Base of caudal fin without dark spot; scale rows below lateral line typically oblique to long axis of body; normally 5 yellow to brown longitudinal stripes on body, none ventrally; dorsal-fin soft rays typically 13 or 14, range of 12 to 15; anal-fin soft rays typically 8, range of 7 to 9. \(\rightarrow\) \(\text{Haemulon striatum}\)

4b. Base of caudal fin usually with dark brown or black spot; scale rows below lateral line typically parallel to long axis of body; pattern of stripes not as above; typical fin ray counts not as above. \(\rightarrow\) 5

5a. Dorsal-fin soft rays typically 15, range of 14 to 16; anal-fin soft rays typically 8, range of 7 to 9; 22 caudal peduncle scales; inner lining of mouth red in fresh specimens; common in shallow and deep waters throughout area. \(\rightarrow\) \(\text{Haemulon aurolineatum}\)

5b. Dorsal-fin soft rays typically 13, range of 11 to 15; anal-fin soft rays typically 9, range of 7 to 9; 24 or more caudal peduncle scales; inner lining of mouth white in fresh specimens; restricted to deeper waters of northeast South America. \(\rightarrow\) \(\text{Haemulon boschmae}\)

6a. Five or 6 equally-spaced body stripes, yellow in fresh specimens; scale rows below lateral line parallel to long axis of body; dorsal-fin soft rays typically 14 to 18, never or rarely 13. \(\rightarrow\) 7

6b. Pigment not as above; scale rows below lateral line oblique to long axis of body; dorsal-fin soft rays typically 14 to 18, never or rarely 13. \(\rightarrow\) 7

7a. At least 7 yellow or gold body stripes in fresh specimens; dorsal-fin soft rays typically 14 or 15, range of 14 to 16; anal-fin soft rays typically 8, range of 7 to 9. few other species typically show combination of both 14 or 15 dorsal-fin soft rays and 8 anal-fin soft rays (exceptions can occur in specimens of \(H.\) melanurum, \(H.\) bonariense, and \(H.\) plumieri). \(\rightarrow\) 8

7b. No yellow stripes, or faint and not extending through length of caudal peduncle; dorsal-fin soft rays 15 to 18; anal-fin soft rays 7 to 10; combination of 14 or 15 dorsal-fin soft rays and 8 anal-fin soft rays uncommon. \(\rightarrow\) 9

8a. Scales below anterior lateral line approximately twice the size of those above; oblique stripes below lateral line; yellow caudal fin; no spots/blotches below anterior eye. \(\rightarrow\) \(\text{Haemulon flavolineatum}\)

8b. Approximately equal-sized scales above and below lateral line; parallel body stripes; dark caudal fin; very diffuse spots/blotches below anterior eye. \(\rightarrow\) \(\text{Haemulon carbonarium}\)

9a. Black stripe extends along upper body from below anterior dorsal fin to both lobes of caudal fin; less than 8 faint yellow stripes. \(\rightarrow\) \(\text{Haemulon melanurum}\)

9b. Pigmentation not as above. \(\rightarrow\) 10
10a. Pectoral fins scaled to at least 1/3 their length; dorsal-fin soft rays typically 17, range of 16 to 19; anal-fin soft rays typically 8, range of 8 to 9. \(\text{Haemulon parra}\)  \(\rightarrow 11\)

10b. Pectoral fins not scaled beyond base; dorsal- and anal-fin soft ray counts never or rarely 17 and 18.  \(\rightarrow 11\)

11a. At least 5 thin blue stripes on head.  \(\rightarrow 12\)

11b. Stripes, when present on head, fewer than 5 and not blue.  \(\rightarrow 13\)

12a. Scales above anterior lateral line approximately twice the size of those below; dark stripes on head, only faint stripes on body; dorsal and caudal fins brown-grey to pale yellow.  \(\text{Haemulon plumieri}\)

12b. Approximately equal-sized scales above and below lateral line; many blue stripes along length of upper and lower body; portion of dorsal and caudal fins black.  \(\text{Haemulon sciurus}\)

13a. Yellow nape in fresh specimens; 3 or 4 dark dorsolateral stripes typically present; 26 to 28 gill rakers (total) on first arch.  \(\text{Haemulon macrostomum}\)

13b. No yellow nape pigment; no continuous dorsolateral stripes in adults; 21 to 25 gill rakers (total) on first arch.  \(\rightarrow 14\)

14a. No appreciable lateral stripes or spots; blotch under free margin of preopercle absent or very faint; largest Haemulon species commonly to 45 cm or more.  \(\text{Haemulon album}\)

14b. Discontinuous stripes or spots; black blotch often under free margin of preopercle; uncommon above 30 cm.  \(\rightarrow 15\)

15a. Dark oblique stripes, often wavy; scales lacking pearl grey centres; pored lateral-line scales 45 to 48.  \(\text{Haemulon bonariense}\)

15b. No dark oblique stripes, lateral scales with pearl grey centres that can form faint lines along scale rows; pored lateral-line scales 51 or 52.  \(\text{Haemulon steindachneri}\)

16a. Chin without central groove at symphysis of lower jaw; dorsal fin typically with 13 spines and 12 soft rays (Fig. 3).  \(\text{Genyatremus luteus}\)

16b. Chin with central groove at symphysis of lower jaw (Fig. 4); dorsal fin with 12, occasionally 13, spines and not fewer than 15 soft rays.  \(\rightarrow 17\)

\(\text{Fig. 3 Genyatremus luteus}\)

\(\text{Fig. 4 species of Anisotremus, Orthopristis, Haemulon, and Pomadasys}\)
17a. Adults with distinct black or white stripes or dark vertical bars; body deep, with depth typically 40 to 50% of standard length; lips thick (Fig. 5). *Anisotremus* → 18

17b. Adults lack distinct black or white stripes or vertical bars; body less deep, with depth typically 25 to 40% of standard length; lips thin. → 20

18a. Body brown with 6 narrow white stripes; 2 small spots on dorsal caudal peduncle; white band behind eye; in fresh specimens, inner lining of mouth red. *Anisotremus moricandi*

18b. Body lacking all pigment characters in 18a. → 19

19a. Yellow with 2 prominent black bands, one oblique through eye and one nearly vertical behind head; 13 to 15 gill rakers on lower limb of first arch; median fins yellow in fresh specimens. *Anisotremus virginicus*

19b. Silvery grey with large, diffuse vertical band on side; 16 to 18 gill rakers on lower limb of first arch; dark median fins. *Anisotremus surinamensis*

20a. Anal-fin soft rays 9 to 13 (Fig. 6). *Orthopristis* → 21

20b. Anal-fin soft rays 6 or 7 (Fig. 7). *Pomadasys* → 22

21a. Bronze spots on head only; dorsal-fin soft rays 15 or 16 and anal-fin soft rays 12 or 13; not recorded south of Mexico. *Orthopristis chrysoptera*

21b. Brown-orange spots on head, upper half of body, and dorsal fin; dorsal-fin soft rays 13 to 15 and anal-fin soft rays 9 to 11; recorded only from Central America to Brazil. *Orthopristis ruber*

22a. Dorsal fin typically with 12 spines and 13 to 15 soft rays; 10 scale rows below the lateral line; dorsal fin with a row of small scales on the membranes between the rays. *Pomadasys corvinaeformis*

22b. Dorsal fin typically with 13 spines and 11 to 13 soft rays; 16 scale rows below the lateral line; no scales on membranes between the dorsal rays. *Pomadasys crocro*
List of species occurring in the area
The symbol $\rightarrow$ is given when species accounts are included.

$\rightarrow$ *Anisotremus moricandi* (Ranzani, 1842).
$\rightarrow$ *Anisotremus surinamensis* (Bloch, 1791).
$\rightarrow$ *Anisotremus virginicus* (Linnaeus, 1758).
$\rightarrow$ *Conodon nobilis* (Linnaeus, 1758).
$\rightarrow$ *Genyatremus luteus* (Bloch, 1790).
$\rightarrow$ *Haemulon album* Cuvier, 1829.
$\rightarrow$ *Haemulon aurolineatum* Cuvier, 1830.
$\rightarrow$ *Haemulon bonariense* Cuvier, 1830.
$\rightarrow$ *Haemulon boschmae* (Metzelaar, 1919).
$\rightarrow$ *Haemulon carbonarium* Poey, 1860.
$\rightarrow$ *Haemulon chrysargyreum* Günther, 1859.
$\rightarrow$ *Haemulon flavolineatum* (Desmarest, 1823).
$\rightarrow$ *Haemulon macrostomum* Günther, 1859.
$\rightarrow$ *Haemulon melanurum* (Linnaeus, 1758).
$\rightarrow$ *Haemulon parra* (Desmarest, 1823).
$\rightarrow$ *Haemulon plumierii* (Lacepède, 1802).
$\rightarrow$ *Haemulon sciurus* (Shaw, 1803).
$\rightarrow$ *Haemulon steindachneri* (Jordan and Gilbert, 1882).
$\rightarrow$ *Haemulon striatum* (Linnaeus, 1758).
$\rightarrow$ *Orthopristis chrysoptera* (Linnaeus, 1766).
$\rightarrow$ *Orthopristis ruber* (Cuvier, 1830).
$\rightarrow$ *Pomadasys corvinaeformis* (Steindachner, 1868).
$\rightarrow$ *Pomadasys croco* (Cuvier, 1830).

References
Anisotremus moricandi (Ranzani, 1842)

Frequent synonyms / misidentifications: Anisotremus bicolor (Castelnau, 1855) / None.

FAO names: En - Brownstriped grunt; Fr - Lippu rayé; Sp - Burrito rayado.

Diagnostic characters: Body deep, compressed, its depth 37 to 45% of standard length. Two pores and a median groove on chin; preopercle finely serrate; gill rakers short, 15 or 16 on lower limb of first arch. Dorsal fin with 12 spines and 15 to 17 soft rays, anal fin with 3 spines and 9 soft rays; soft portions of dorsal and anal fins densely scaled at base, interradial membranes more completely scaled than other members of the genus. Pored lateral-line scales 56 to 58; 7 or 8 scales between dorsal fin and lateral line. Colour: body and head dark brown with 6 narrow white stripes, or resembling 6 wide brown stripes; dark blotch on posterior margin of opercle and on side of caudal peduncle; white bar behind eye; 2 small spots on dorsal caudal peduncle. Pelvic fins black, others light yellow; mouth red.

Size: Maximum to at least 18 cm total length, commonly to 15 cm.

Habitat, biology, and fisheries: Primarily inhabits hard bottom habitats in turbid, shallow waters. Feeds on crustaceans and other demersal invertebrates. Incidentally taken, but of little fishery importance. Separate statistics are not reported for this species.

Distribution: Recorded from Panama, Colombia, Aruba, Orchila Island (Venezuela), and Brazil.
Anisotremus surinamensis (Bloch, 1791)

Frequent synonyms / misidentifications: *Anisotremus spleniatus* (Poey, 1860) / None.

FAO names: En - Black margate; Fr - Lippu croupia; Sp - Burro pompón.

Diagnostic characters: Body deep, compressed, its depth 38 to 50% of standard length. Two pores and a median groove on chin; jaws with a row of closely set conical teeth and smaller teeth inside; preopercle slightly serrate; gill rakers short, 16 to 18 on lower limb of first arch. Dorsal fin with 12 or 13 spines and 16 to 18 soft rays, the soft portion of fin highest anteriorly; anal fin with 3 spines and 8 to 10 soft rays; soft portions of dorsal and anal fins with scales on basal part of inter-radial membranes. Pored lateral-line scales 50 to 53; 5 to 7 rows of scales in an oblique line between base of first dorsal-fin spine and lateral line. Colour: body pale, broad dark band extends from above lateral line to ventral midline in midsection of body; scales of back with a dark central spot, tending to form diagonal dotted bands. Fins black to grey, anal and pelvic fins darkest.

Size: Maximum to 60 cm total length, commonly to 45 cm.

Habitat, biology, and fisheries: Inhabits coral reefs and hardbottom habitats from the shore to at least 40 m. More cryptic than most grunt species. Feeds on crustaceans, smaller fishes, and echinoderms. Caught throughout its range, mainly with traps and hook-and-line. Separate statistics are not reported for this species. Marketed mostly fresh. Known also as Mexican bull or viejo in some areas.

Distribution: South Florida, Flower Gardens Bank, southern Gulf of Mexico, and the Bahamas extending southward to Brazil.
**Anisotremus virginicus** (Linnaeus, 1758)

**Frequent synonyms / misidentifications:** None / None.

**FAO names:** En - Porkfish; Fr - Lippu rondeau; Sp - Burro catalina.

**Diagnostic characters:** Body deep, compressed, its depth 42 to 50% of standard length. Two pores and a median groove on chin; jaws with a row of closely set conical teeth and smaller teeth inside; preopercle finely serrate; gill rakers short, 13 to 15 on lower limb of first arch. Dorsal fin with 12 spines and 16 or 17 soft rays, the soft portion of fin with a convex margin; anal fin with 3 spines and 9 to 11 soft rays; soft portions of dorsal and anal fins with scales on basal part of interradial membranes. Pored lateral-line scales 56 to 60; 10 or 11 rows of scales in a nearly vertical line between base of first dorsal-fin spine and lateral line. **Colour:** a diagonal black band from corner of mouth through eye to nape; a black band behind head; body posterior to band with alternating stripes of silvery blue and yellow. Head and fins yellow.

**Size:** Maximum to 40 cm total length, commonly to 25 cm.

**Habitat, biology, and fisheries:** Inhabits coral reefs and hard bottom habitats from the shore to at least 50 m. Feeds on molluscs, echinoderms, annelids, and crustaceans. Caught throughout its range, mainly with traps, seines, and hook-and-line. Separate statistics are not reported for this species. Marketed mostly fresh. Juveniles frequently sold in aquarium trade.

**Distribution:** From the Bahamas and Florida throughout much of the area, extending southward to Brazil. In the Bahamas, recorded primarily from the ventral and northern islands.
Conodon nobilis (Linnaeus, 1758)

Frequent synonyms / misidentifications: None / None.
FAO names: En - Barred grunt; Fr - Cagna rayée; Sp - Ronco canario.

Diagnostic characters: Body elongate and moderately robust, its depth 32 to 37% of standard length. Two pores and a median groove on chin; preopercle serrate, with 2 enlarged spines at lower posterior angle; teeth in jaws conical or pointed, in bands, the outer series notably enlarged; gill rakers moderate in length, 12 to 14 on lower limb of first arch. Dorsal fin with 11 spines and 12 or 13 soft rays; anal fin with 3 spines and 7 or 8 soft rays; soft portions of dorsal and anal fins with scales on inter-radial membranes. Pored lateral-line scales 50 to 53; 5 longitudinal rows of scales above and 11 rows below the lateral line. Colour: body dark brown above becoming paler on sides; sides with light yellow lines and with 8 wide dark vertical bars, broadest above; all fins with some yellow, particularly the pelvic fins.

Size: Maximum to 30 cm total length; commonly to 20 cm.

Habitat, biology, and fisheries: Found over soft bottom habitats to 100 m. Typically, in shallow, turbid waters. Feeds on crustaceans and small fishes. Caught throughout its range, mainly with seines, trawls, and hook-and-line. Separate statistics are not reported for this species.

Distribution: From Texas along the coasts of Central and South America to Brazil, also Jamaica, Puerto Rico, and the Lesser Antilles. Also recorded from the eastern coast of Florida.
Genyatremus luteus (Bloch, 1790)

Frequent synonyms / misidentifications: None / None.
FAO names: En - Torroto grunt; Fr - Lippu tricroupia; Sp - Ronco torroto.

Diagnostic characters: Body ovate, compressed, its depth 41 to 45% of standard length. Head small, mouth moderately large, 2 pores, but no median groove on chin; preopercle strongly serrate at angle; gill rakers weak, about 13 or 14 on lower limb of first arch, besides rudiments. Dorsal fin high, with 13 spines and about 12 soft rays, the fifth spine the longest; anal fin with 3 spines and 11 soft rays; caudal fin emarginate; vertical fins scaleless. Scales small, not parallel with lateral line, arranged obliquely above and horizontally below, largest below the lateral line; pored lateral-line scales 51 to 53; 11 longitudinal rows of scales above and 19 rows below lateral line. Colour: body silvery with a yellowish cast; preopercular margin yellow; dorsal fin with silvery spines and a black margin; pectoral fins with a yellowish tint; pelvics with a black posterior margin; anal fin yellowish; base of caudal fin yellowish, with a terminal black margin.

Size: Maximum to 37 cm total length; commonly to 25 cm.

Habitat, biology, and fisheries: Found over soft bottom habitats to depths of 40 m. Typically, in shallow, brackish waters. Feeds on crustaceans and small fishes. Caught throughout its range, mainly with seines and trawls. Separate statistics are not reported for this species. Marketed mostly fresh.

Distribution: Southern Lesser Antilles and northern coast of South America from eastern Colombia to Brazil.
Haemulon album Cuvier, 1829

Frequent synonyms / misidentifications: None / None.
FAO names: En - White margate (AFS: Margate); Fr - Gorette margate; Sp - Ronco blanco.

Diagnostic characters: Body oblong, compressed, its depth 38 to 40% of standard length. Head blunt, its upper profile moderately convex to a point above upper angle of gill cover, and more or less straight to tip of snout; 2 pores and a median groove on chin; **gill rakers (total) 21 to 23 on first arch**; preopercle serrated in adults. **Dorsal fin with 12 spines and 16 or 17 (usually 16) soft rays; anal fin with 3 spines and 7 or 8 (usually 8) soft rays**; soft portions of dorsal and anal fins scaled nearly to their outer margins. Scales ctenoid (rough to touch) from caudal fin to head; pored lateral-line scales 49 to 52; longitudinal scale rows immediately below lateral line oblique. **Colour**: body pale or olive green, membranes of spinous portion of dorsal fin white; soft portion of dorsal fin, caudal, anal, and pelvic fins dusky grey; pectoral fins chalky with grey rays; **black blotch beneath free margin of preopercle very faint or absent**; mouth pale red within.

Size: Maximum to at least 75 cm total length; common to 45 cm.

Habitat, biology, and fisheries: Found near coral reefs, hard bottom, or associated habitats to at least 40 m. Feeds chiefly on crustaceans, polychaetes, and other invertebrates. Caught throughout its range with traps, hook-and-line, and gill nets. Separate statistics are not reported for this species. Marketed fresh. Sold as “silver snapper” in some areas.

Distribution: From southeastern Florida and Bahamas throughout Antilles to Brazil; possibly occurs in northeastern Gulf of Mexico; also present in Bermuda. Presence in southwestern Caribbean uncertain.
**Haemulon aurolineatum** Cuvier, 1830

**Frequent synonyms / misidentifications:** *Bathystoma aurolineatum* (Jordan and Evermann, 1896) / *Haemulon striatum* (Linnaeus, 1758).

**FAO names:** En - Tomtate grunt (AFS: Tomtate); Fr - Gorette tomtate; Sp - Ronco jeniguano.

**Diagnostic characters:** Body oblong, compressed, its depth 32 to 36% of standard length. Head blunt, its upper profile slightly convex; 2 pores and a median groove on chin; gill rakers (total) 24 to 28 on first arch; preopercle serrated in adults. **Dorsal fin with 13 spines and 14 to 16 (usually 15) soft rays; anal fin with 3 spines and 9 soft rays;** soft portions of dorsal and anal fins scaled nearly to their outer margins. Scales ctenoid (rough to touch) from caudal fin to head; pored lateral-line scales 50 to 52; scale rows below lateral line parallel to longitudinal body axis; scales around caudal peduncle 22. **Colour:** body silver-white; head dusky grey-brown with grey snout; bronze yellow midlateral stripe, often wider anteriorly; narrow yellow dorsolateral stripe often present, other faint yellow stripes may also be present; large, dark spot often present at base of caudal fin; dorsal, caudal, anal, and pelvic fins chalky to light grey; base of soft dorsal and anal fins dusky grey; pectoral fins chalky; no black blotch beneath free margin of preopercle. Inner lining of mouth red.

**Size:** Maximum to at least 25 cm total length; commonly to 16 cm.

**Habitat, biology, and fisheries:** Found in association with a variety of natural and artificial habitats from the shore to at least 40 m. Can form large schools. Feeds on small crustaceans, molluscs, other invertebrates, plankton, and algae. Primarily caught by hook-and-line and seines. Separate statistics are not reported for this species. Marketed fresh and salted. Also used for bait.

**Distribution:** From Chesapeake Bay and Bermuda southward throughout much of the area to Brazil.
**Haemulon bonariense** Cuvier, 1830

**Frequent synonyms / misidentifications:** None / **Haemulon parra** (Desmarest, 1823); **Haemulon steindachneri** (Jordan and Gilbert, 1882).

**FAO names:** En - Black grunt; Fr - Gorette grise; Sp - Ronco rayado.

**Diagnostic characters:** Body oblong, compressed, its depth 33 to 40% of standard length. Head blunt, its upper profile moderately convex to a point above upper angle of gill cover, and more or less straight to tip of snout; 2 pores and a median groove on chin; gill rakers (total) on first arch 18 to 24; preopercle weakly serrated from angle through about half of its vertical length. **Dorsal fin with 12 spines and 15 or 16 soft rays; anal fin with 3 spines and 8 or 9 (usually 8) soft rays;** soft portions of dorsal and anal fins scaled nearly to their outer margins. Scales ctenoid (rough to touch) from caudal fin to head; **pored lateral-line scales 45 to 48, usually 46;** longitudinal scale rows below lateral line oblique; scales around caudal peduncle 21 or 22, usually 22. **Colour:** pale body with a series of undulating, oblique dark stripes along scale rows, pigment crossing through each scale in row; membranes of dorsal, caudal, anal, and pelvic fins dusky to dark brown; pectoral fins transparent; a black blotch present beneath free margin of preopercle.

**Size:** Maximum to about 40 cm total length; commonly to 30 cm.

**Habitat, biology, and fisheries:** Primarily found over soft bottom or low-relief hard bottom in relatively shallow coastal areas. Caught throughout its range by traps, hook-and-line, and seines. Separate statistics are not reported for this species. Marketed fresh and salted.

**Distribution:** Patchy distribution in northern Caribbean. Absent from Florida. In southern Gulf of Mexico, rare or absent in Cuba, common on banks off Jamaica. Semi-continuous distribution from Panama to Brazil.
**Haemulon boschmae** (Metzelaar, 1919)

**Frequent synonyms / misidentifications:** *Pristipoma boschmae* Metzelaar 1919 / *Haemulon striatum* (Linnaeus, 1758).

**FAO names:** En - Bronzestripe grunt; Fr - Gorette rui; Sp - Ronco ruyi.

**Diagnostic characters:** Body oblong, slightly elongate, moderately compressed, its depth 26 to 30% of standard length. Head blunt, its upper profile moderately convex; mouth small, 2 pores and a median groove on chin; **gill rakers** (total) 30 to 36 (usually 32 to 35) on first arch; preopercle serrated in adults. **Dorsal fin** with 13 (sometimes 14) spines and 11 to 15 (usually 13 or 14) soft rays; **anal fin** with 3 spines and 7 to 9 (usually 8) soft rays; soft portions of dorsal and anal fins scaled nearly to their outer margins. Scales ctenoid (rough to touch) from caudal fin to head; pored lateral-line scales 49 to 54 (usually 51 or 52); longitudinal scale rows below lateral line mostly parallel to long axis of body; scales around caudal peduncle 23 to 27 (usually 26). **Colour:** body grey silver to cream yellow or yellow; **prominent dark spot on caudal-fin base and anterior portion of caudal fin**; head brass to dusky, **longitudinal stripes on body brown to brass colour**; stripes on belly rust red to orange; fins grey to transparent; no black blotch beneath free margin of preopercle, but this may be replaced by a concentration of rust red pigment; **mouth white within**.

**Size:** Maximum to about 20 cm total length; commonly to 13 cm.

**Habitat, biology, and fisheries:** Less demersal than most grunts. Can form schools over softbottom areas to depths of 100 m. Feeds on small crustaceans and probably plankton. Taken incidentally in trawls and seines throughout its range. Separate statistics are not reported for this species. Unimportant as a market fish; used as bait in Venezuelan long-line fisheries for sharks.

**Distribution:** Northeastern South America from Colombia to French Guiana. Unconfirmed reports from northeastern Mexico. Range may be wider due to the undersampled depths this species inhabits.
Haemulon carbonarium Poey, 1860

Frequent synonyms / misidentifications: None / Haemulon sciurus (Shaw, 1803).
FAO names: En - Caesar grunt; Fr - Gorette charbonnier; Sp - Ronco carbonero.

Diagnostic characters: Body oblong, compressed, its depth 36 to 39% of standard length. Head blunt, its upper profile moderately convex; 2 pores and a median groove on chin; gill rakers (total) 23 to 25 on first arch; preopercle not serrated in adults. Dorsal fin with 12 spines and 15 or 16 (usually 15) soft rays; anal fin with 3 spines and 8 soft rays. Soft portions of dorsal and anal fins scaled nearly to their outer margins. Scales ctenoid (rough to touch) from caudal fin to head; pored lateral-line scales 49 or 50; longitudinal scale rows below lateral line approximately parallel to long axis of body; scales below lateral line approximately equal in size to those above; scales around caudal peduncle 22. Colour: body silver grey, belly dusky grey to black; darker stripes bronze to yellow, other stripes pale yellow; head steel blue with bronze stripes from snout to behind eye, those below eye forming a blotched pattern; chin white to dusky grey; upper and lower jaws dusky grey; a black blotch present beneath free margin of preopercle; dorsal fin black with bronze on membranes between spines and along base of soft portion; caudal and anal fins dark grey to black; the latter with a bronze posterior margin; paired fins dusky to dark grey or black; mouth red within.

Size: Maximum to about 40 cm total length; commonly to 25 cm.

Habitat, biology, and fisheries: Inhabits coral reefs or hardbottom areas to at least 30 m. Caught with traps, hook-and-line, and seines in some localities. Separate statistics are not reported for this species. Marketed mostly fresh.

Distribution: From southern Florida, the southern part of the Gulf of Mexico, and the Bahamas throughout much of the area to Brazil; also in Bermuda and along the coast of Central America.
**Haemulon chrysargyreum** Günther, 1859

**Frequent synonyms / misidentifications:** *Brachygenys chrysargyreus* (Günther, 1859) / None.

**FAO names:** En - Smallmouth grunt; Fr - Gorette tibouche; Sp - Ronco boquilla.

**Diagnostic characters:** Body oblong, slightly elongate, compressed, its depth 28 to 33% of standard length. Head blunt, its upper profile slightly convex; mouth small; 2 pores and a median groove on chin; gill rakers (total) 30 to 33 on first arch; preopercle serrated in adults. dorsal fin with 12 spines and 13 soft rays, anal fin with 3 spines and 9 or 10 (usually 9) soft rays; soft portions of dorsal and anal fins scaled nearly to their outer margins. Scales ctenoid (rough to touch) from caudal fin to head; pored lateral-line scales 49 to 51 (usually 50); longitudinal scale rows below lateral line parallel to long axis of body; scales around caudal peduncle 21 or 22 (usually 22). **Colour:** 6 yellow lateral stripes on silvery background; all median and pelvic fins yellow, pectorals chalky; no black blotch beneath free margin of preopercle; mouth red within.

**Size:** Maximum to about 23 cm total length; commonly to 15 cm.

**Habitat, biology, and fisheries:** Typically inhabits coral reefs or hard bottom areas to 30 m. Feeds on small crustaceans and plankton. Caught incidentally with traps. Separate statistics are not reported for this species. Marketed fresh.

**Distribution:** From central Florida, the Bahamas, and the southern Gulf of Mexico throughout much of the West Indies and coasts of Central and South America to Brazil.
**Haemulon flavolineatum** (Desmarest, 1823)

**Frequent synonyms / misidentifications:** None / None.

**FAO names:** En - French grunt; Fr - Gorette jaune; Sp - Ronco amarillo.

**Diagnostic characters:** Body oblong, compressed, its depth 34 to 38% of standard length. Head blunt, its upper profile slightly convex; 2 pores and a median groove on chin; gill rakers (total) 22 to 24, usually 23, on first arch; preopercle slightly serrated from angle throughout its vertical length in adults. **Dorsal fin with 12 spines and 14 or 15 soft rays; anal fin with 3 spines and 8 soft rays;** soft portions of dorsal and anal fins scaled nearly to their outer margins. Scales ctenoid (rough to touch) from caudal fin to head; pored lateral-line scales 47 to 50, usually 48 or 49; **scales below lateral line larger than those above, forming oblique longitudinal rows;** scales around caudal peduncle 22. **Colour:** lighter areas on back and sides bright yellow, belly cream to yellow; **oblique yellow stripes below lateral line; yellow bronze stripes above lateral line;** spinous dorsal-fin membranes yellow to chalky; pectoral fins chalky; a black blotch present beneath free margin of preopercle; mouth red within.

**Size:** Maximum to about 30 cm total length; commonly to 20 cm.

**Habitat, biology, and fisheries:** Found in association with a variety of structural habitat types in from the shore to at least 40 m. Feeds on small crustaceans and molluscs. Caught throughout its range with traps and seines. Separate statistics are not reported for this species. Marketed fresh.

**Distribution:** From South Carolina, the Bahamas, and the Gulf of Mexico throughout much of the West Indies and the coasts of Central and South America to Brazil; also in Bermuda.
**Haemulon macrostomum** Günther, 1859

**Frequent synonyms / misidentifications:** None / None.

**FAO names:** En - Spanish grunt; Fr - Gorette caco; Sp - Ronco caco.

**Diagnostic characters:** Body oblong, compressed, its depth 37 to 41% of standard length. Head blunt, its upper profile convex just anterior to dorsal fin and more or less straight to tip of snout; mouth large; 2 pores and a median groove on chin; gill rakers (total) 26 to 28 on first arch; preopercle not serrated in adults. Dorsal fin with 12 spines and 15 to 17 (usually 16) soft rays; anal fin with 3 spines and 9 soft rays; soft portions of dorsal and anal fins scaled nearly to their outer margins. Scales ctenoid (rough to touch) from caudal fin to head; pored lateral-line scales 50 to 52, usually 51; longitudinal scale rows immediately below lateral line oblique; scales around caudal peduncle 22. **Colour:** back below dorsal-fin base yellow; membranes of spinous portion of dorsal fin and margin of soft portion greenish yellow; dark midlateral and several dorsolateral stripes present; bases of all other fins dark grey to black except pectoral fins, which are yellow to olive; a black blotch present beneath free margin of preopercle; mouth red within.

**Size:** Maximum to at least 45 cm total length; commonly to 30 cm.

**Habitat, biology, and fisheries:** Usually found in clear water near coral reefs or hard bottom to at least 40 m. Unlike many species of grunts, rarely forms schools. Feeds on crustaceans and echinoderms. Caught with traps and hook-and-line. Separate statistics are not reported for this species. Marketed mostly fresh.

**Distribution:** From central Florida and the Bahamas through much of the West Indies to Brazil and along the Caribbean coast from Panama eastward. Possibly at the Flower Gardens Band, northwest Gulf of Mexico, and Mesoamerica.
**Haemulon melanurum** (Linnaeus, 1758)

Frequent synonyms / misidentifications: None / None.

**FAO names:** En - Cottonwick grunt (AFS: Cottonwick); Fr - Gorette mèche; Sp - Ronco mapurite.

**Diagnostic characters:** Body oblong, compressed, its depth 34 to 37% of standard length. Head blunt, its upper profile slightly convex; 2 pores and a median groove on chin; gill rakers (total) 21 to 23, usually 22 on first arch; preopercle serrated along most of its vertical length in adults. **Dorsal fin with 12 spines and 15 to 17 (usually 16) soft rays; anal fin with 3 spines and 8 soft rays;** soft portions of dorsal and anal fins scaled nearly to their outer margins. Scales ctenoid (rough to touch) from caudal fin to head; pored lateral-line scales 49 to 51; longitudinal scale rows below lateral line slightly oblique; scales around caudal peduncle 23 to 25, usually 23. **Colour:** body white to silver with yellow or black longitudinal stripes, belly white; **back below dorsal fin, upper half of caudal peduncle and caudal fin black;** dorsal-fin membranes chalky; soft portions of dorsal and anal fins dusky grey to black; pelvic and pectoral fins chalky. A black blotch often present beneath free margin of preopercle; mouth pale red within.

**Size:** Maximum to about 35 cm total length; commonly to 25 cm.

**Habitat, biology, and fisheries:** Found in clear water on coral reefs or hard bottom to at least 40 m. Feeds on crustaceans and echinoderms. Caught with traps and hook-and-line. Separate statistics are not reported for this species. Marketed mostly fresh.

**Distribution:** From the Gulf of Mexico, east Florida, and the Bahamas southward throughout much of the area to Brazil; also in Bermuda.
**Haemulon parra** (Desmarest, 1823)

**Frequent synonyms / misidentifications:** None / *Haemulon bonariense* Cuvier, 1829; *Haemulon steindachneri* (Jordan and Gilbert, 1882).

**FAO names:** En - Sailor's choice; Fr - Gorette marchand; Sp - Ronco plateado.

**Diagnostic characters:** Body oblong, compressed, its depth 36 to 39% of standard length. Head blunt, its upper profile moderately convex; 2 pores and a median groove on chin; gill rakers (total) 21 to 24, usually 22 or 23; preopercle not serrated in adults. **Dorsal fin** with 12 spines and 16 to 18 (usually 17 or 18) soft rays; anal fin with 3 spines and 8 soft rays; soft portions of dorsal and anal fins scaled nearly to their outer margins. Scales ctenoid (rough to touch) from caudal fin to head; pored lateral line scales 51 or 52 (usually 52); scale rows immediately below lateral line oblique; scales around caudal peduncle 21 or 22 (usually 22); **pectoral fins scaled**. **Colour:** pale body with brown to grey spots forming discontinuous stripes, often oblique, along scale rows; dorsal, caudal, anal, and pelvic fins chalky; a black blotch usually present beneath free margin of preopercle; mouth red within; **outer margin of eyes often yellow**.

**Size:** Maximum to about 40 cm total length; commonly to 30 cm.

**Habitat, biology, and fisheries:** Occurs from the shore to outer reefs (to about 40 m) in association with a variety of structural habitats. Feeds on crustaceans and other invertebrates. Caught throughout its range with traps, seines, and hook-and-line. Separate statistics are not reported for this species. Marketed mostly fresh.

**Distribution:** East-central Florida and the Bahamas, southward throughout much of the area to Brazil.
Haemulon plumieri (Lacepède, 1802)

Frequent synonyms / misidentifications: None / None.
FAO names: En - White grunt; Fr - Gorette blanche; Sp - Ronco margarito.

Diagnostic characters: Body oblong, compressed, its depth 37 to 39% of standard length. Head blunt, its upper profile moderately convex to a point above upper angle of gill cover and more or less straight to tip of snout; 2 pores and a median groove on chin; gill rakers (total) 21 to 27 (usually 25) on first arch; preopercle slightly serrated in adults. Dorsal fin with 12 spines and 15 to 17 (usually 16) soft rays; anal fin with 3 spines and 8 or 9 (usually 9) soft rays; soft portions of dorsal and anal fins scaled nearly to their outer margins. Scales ctenoid (rough to touch) from caudal fin to head; pored lateral-line scales 48 to 51 (usually 50 to 51); scales above lateral line larger than those below; longitudinal scale rows immediately below lateral line oblique; scales around caudal peduncle 22. Colour: body silver white, head bronze to yellow above, underside of head and belly white; dark blue and yellow stripes on head and anterior portion of body; margin of each scale bronze; often a broad green-grey shade behind the pectoral fin and below the lateral line; membranes of spinous dorsal fin chalky to yellow-white; soft dorsal, caudal, and anal fins brown-grey; pelvic fins chalky; pectoral fins chalky to light yellow; a black blotch often present beneath free margin of preopercle; mouth bright red within.

Size: Maximum to 45 cm total length; commonly to 30 cm.

Habitat, biology, and fisheries: Occurs from the shore to outer reefs (to at least 40 m) in association with a variety of structural habitats. Feeds on crustaceans, small molluscs, and small fishes. Caught throughout its range with traps, seines, trawls, and hook-and-line. Separate statistics are not reported for this species. Marketed fresh. A popular foodfish in some areas.

Distribution: From Chesapeake Bay and Gulf of Mexico, southward throughout much of the area to Brazil.
**Haemulon sciurus** (Shaw, 1803)

**Frequent synonyms / misidentifications:** None / *Haemulon carbonarium* Poey, 1860.

**FAO names:** En - Bluestriped grunt; Fr - Gorette catire; Sp - Ronco catire.

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**Diagnostic characters:** Body oblong, compressed, its depth 36 to 39% of standard length. Head blunt, its upper profile slightly convex; 2 pores and a median groove on chin; gill rakers (total) 27 to 31, usually 29 on first arch; preopercle not serrated in adults. **Dorsal fin with 12 spines and 16 or 17 soft rays; anal fin with 3 spines and 9 soft rays**; soft portions of dorsal and anal fins scaled nearly to their outer margins. Scales ctenoid (rough to touch) from caudal fin to head; pored lateral-line scales 48 to 51; longitudinal scale rows below lateral line slightly oblique to long axis of body; scales around caudal peduncle 22. **Colour:** body yellow bronze; blue stripes on head and body as far as caudal-fin base; spinous dorsal fin yellow; soft dorsal and caudal fins dusky grey to black; pelvic, anal, and pectoral fins yellow or pale; a black blotch often present beneath free margin of preopercle; mouth red within.

**Size:** Maximum to at least 40 cm total length; commonly to 30 cm.

**Habitat, biology, and fisheries:** Occurs from the shore to outer reefs (to at least 40 m) near a variety of structural habitats. Feeds on crustaceans and occasionally on small fishes. Caught throughout its range with traps, seines, and hook-and-line. Separate statistics are not reported for this species. Marketed mostly fresh.

**Distribution:** From the lower Gulf of Mexico, South Carolina and the Bahamas southward throughout much of the area to Brazil; also in Bermuda.
**Haemulon steindachneri** (Jordan and Gilbert, 1882)

**Frequent synonyms / misidentifications:** None / *Haemulon bonariense* Cuvier, 1829; *Haemulon parra* (Desmarest, 1823).  
**FAO names:** En - Chere-chere grunt; Fr - Gorette chere-chere; Sp - Ronco chere-chere.

**Diagnostic characters:** Body oblong, compressed, its depth 34 to 38% of standard length. Head blunt, its upper profile slightly convex; 2 pores and a median groove on chin; gill rakers (total) 22 to 25 on first arch; preopercle serrated from angle along its entire vertical length in adults. Dorsal fin with 12 spines and 5 to 17 (usually 16) soft rays; anal fin with 3 spines and 8 or 9 (usually 9) soft rays; soft portions of dorsal and anal fins scaled nearly to their outer margins. Scales ctenoid (rough to touch) from caudal fin to head; pored lateral-line scales 51 or 52, usually 52; longitudinal scale rows below lateral line oblique to long axis of body; total caudal peduncle scales (ring of scales around caudal peduncle) 25 or 26. Colour: body silvery grey, darker dorsally; scales on sides of body with pearl grey centres, forming oblique lines along scale rows; a black blotch beneath free margin of preopercle. Fins grey to chalky except base of caudal fin which has a large black spot; mouth pale red within.

**Size:** Maximum to about 30 cm total length; commonly to 20 cm.

**Habitat, biology, and fisheries:** Inhabits mainly soft bottom or low-relief hardbottom to depths of 30 m. Most common in moderately shallow coastal areas. Feeds on bottom-dwelling invertebrates. Caught throughout its range with traps, seines, and hook-and-line. Separate statistics are not reported for this species. Marketed mostly fresh.

**Distribution:** Juveniles recorded from Guatemala. Adults recorded from Panama along the coast of South America, Brazil. Also recorded from the tropical eastern Pacific from the Sea of Cortez to Peru. Systematic status unresolved.
**Haemulon striatum** (Linnaeus, 1758)

**Frequent synonyms / misidentifications:** Bathystoma striatum (Jordan and Evermann, 1896) / Haemulon boschmae (Metzelaar, 1919); Haemulon aurolineatum Cuvier, 1829.

**FAO names:** En - Striped grunt; Fr - Gorette rayée; Sp - Ronco listado.

**Diagnostic characters:** Body oblong, more elongate and less compressed than most species of *Haemulon*, its depth 26 to 32% of standard length. Head blunt, its upper profile slightly convex; mouth small, 2 pores and a median groove on chin; gill rakers (total) 28 to 34 (usually 32) on first arch; preopercle serrated in adults. Dorsal fin with 13 spines and 12 to 15 (usually 13 or 14) soft rays; anal fin with 3 spines and 7 to 9 (usually 8) soft rays; soft portions of dorsal and anal fins scaled nearly to their outer margins. Scales ctenoid (rough to touch) from caudal fin to head; pored lateral-line scales 51 to 53 (usually 52); longitudinal scale rows below lateral line oblique; scales around caudal peduncle 25 or 26 (usually 26). **Colour:** body grey-white to steel blue above and silver white on belly; head sometimes with a green-yellow snout; each scale above lateral line with dark grey margins. Typically, 5 bronze to black, stripes on sides; membranes of spinous portion of dorsal fin transparent, soft portion of fin and caudal fin red-orange; anal, pectoral, and pelvic fins chalky; no black blotch on free margin of preopercle; mouth red within.

**Size:** Maximum to about 25 cm total length; commonly to 18 cm;

**Habitat, biology, and fisheries:** Less demersal than most grunts. Adults form schools over shelf edge reefs. Can occur to depths of 100 m, deeper than most other species of the genus. Feeds primarily on small crustaceans and plankton. Occasionally taken incidentally by trap or trawl. Separate statistics are not reported for this species. Of no fishery significance.

**Distribution:** From the lower Gulf of Mexico, eastern-central Florida and the Bahamas southward throughout much of the area to Brazil.
Orthopristis chrysoptera (Linnaeus, 1766)

Frequent synonyms / misidentifications: Orthopristis poeyi (Scudder, 1868) / None.
FAO names: En - Pigfish; Fr - Goret mule; Sp - Corocoro burro.

Diagnostic characters: Body ovate-elliptical, considerably compressed, its depth 30 to 38% of standard length. Two pores and a median groove on chin; jaws with a narrow band of slender teeth; preopercular margin very slightly serrate; gill rakers short and slender, about 12 on lower limb of first arch. Dorsal fin with 12 or 13 spines and 15 or 16 soft rays; anal fin with 3 spines and 12 or 13 soft rays; dorsal and anal fin spines enclosed in a deep scaly sheath, the soft rays naked. Pored lateral-line scales 53 to 58; 10 longitudinal rows of scales above, and 15 to 19 rows below the lateral line. Colour: body light blue-grey above and shading gradually into silver below; each scale of body with a blue centre, the edge with a bronze spot, these spots forming orange-brown stripes extending obliquely upwards and backwards, on back and sides, those below being nearly horizontal; head with bronze spots; fins yellow bronze with dusky margins.

Size: Maximum to 40 cm total length; commonly to 30 cm.

Habitat, biology, and fisheries: Typically inhabits nearshore waters over soft bottom habitats. Often found in brackish water. Recorded occasionally from midshelf reef areas. Feeds on crustaceans and smaller fishes. Caught throughout its range with seines, trawls, and hook-and-line. Separate statistics are not reported for this species. Marketed mostly fresh.

Distribution: Atlantic coast of the USA from New York to Yucatán Peninsula, and Cuba; also in Bermuda.
Orthopristis ruber (Cuvier, 1830)

Frequent synonyms / misidentifications: Orthopristis poeyi (Scudder, 1868) / None.
FAO names: En - Corocoro grunt; Fr - Goret corocoro; Sp - Corocoro congo.

Diagnostic characters: Body ovate-elliptical, considerably compressed, its depth 36 to 40% of standard length. Two pores and a median groove on chin; jaws with a narrow band of slender teeth; preopercle slightly serrate; gill rakers very short and slender, about 15 on lower limb of first arch. **Dorsal fin with 12 spines and 13 to 15 soft rays; anal fin with 3 spines and 9 to 11 soft rays;** dorsal- and anal-fin spines enclosed in a deep scaly sheath, the soft rays naked. Pored lateral-line scales 52 to 55; **8 longitudinal rows of scales above, and 15 rows below the lateral line.** **Colour:** body blue-grey above and silver below; a brown spot on centres of scales above the lateral line, these spots forming streaks; **brown-orange spots on head and upper half of body; dorsal fin with rows of brown-orange spots.**

Size: Maximum to 40 cm total length; commonly to 25 cm.

Habitat, biology, and fisheries: Most commonly found over softbottom or low-relief hardbottom to depths of at least 70 m. Also found in brackish water. Feeds on crustaceans and other invertebrates. Caught throughout its range with trawls, hook-and-line, and traps. Separate statistics are not reported for this species. Marketed fresh and salted.

Distribution: Southern Caribbean from Honduras along the coasts of Central and South America to Brazil.
**Pomadasys corvinaeformis** (Steindachner, 1868)

**Frequent synonyms / misidentifications:** None / None.

**FAO names:**
- En - Roughneck grunt;
- Fr - Grondeur gris;
- Sp - Corocoro gris.

**Diagnostic characters:** Body elongate and robust, its depth 25 to 30% of standard length. Two pores and a median groove on chin; outer teeth in jaws somewhat enlarged; preopercle finely serrate; gill rakers short, 10 to 12 more or less developed on lower limb of first arch. **Dorsal fin with 12 spines and 13 to 15 soft rays; anal fin with 3 spines and 6 or 7 soft rays:** soft portion of dorsal fin with a low sheath of scales at base and **a row of small scales on the membranes between the rays.** Pored lateral-line scales 49 to 52; **5 or 6 longitudinal rows of scales above and 10 rows below the lateral line.** **Colour:** body dark olive above and more or less silvery below; a **dark line along each row of scales below the lateral line and scales above the lateral line with dark centres which do not form distinct lines;** a diffuse dark blotch on scapular region; fins punctate with very dark margins.

**Size:** Maximum to at least 25 cm total length; commonly to 20 cm.

**Habitat, biology, and fisheries:** Most commonly found over softbottom or low-relief hard bottom to depths of at least 50 m. Feeds on crustaceans and other invertebrates. Caught mainly with seine, trawls, hook-and-line, and traps. Separate statistics are not reported for this species. Marketed mostly fresh.

**Distribution:** Greater and Lesser Antilles, Central America, extending southward to Brazil.
**Pomadasys crocro** (Cuvier, 1830)

**Frequent synonyms / misidentifications:** None / None.

**FAO names:** En - Burro grunt; Fr - Grondeur crocro; Sp - Corocoro crocro.

**Diagnostic characters:** Body elongate, compressed, its depth 29 to 36% of standard length. Two pores and a median groove on chin; teeth in jaws small and wide apart, the outer scarcely enlarged; preopercle coarsely serrate; gill rakers short and blunt, 7 to 9 (exclusive of rudiments) on lower limb of first arch. **Dorsal fin with 13 spines and 11 to 13 soft rays**; anal fin with 3 spines and 6 or 7 soft rays; no scales on interradial membranes, anal fin with a distinct sheath of scales at base. Pored lateral-line scales 53 to 55; **5 or 6 longitudinal rows of scales above and 16 rows below the lateral line. **Colour:** body dark olivaceous above, silvery below; sides with dusky punctuations; fins all more or less dusky; soft dorsal fin with a narrow black margin.

**Size:** Maximum to 33 cm total length; commonly to 20 cm.

**Habitat, biology, and fisheries:** Found over soft bottom and vegetated habitats in turbid, shallow water. Often found upstream in fresh-water rivers. Feeds on crustaceans and small fishes. Caught mainly with seines and trawls. Separate statistics are not reported for this species. Marketed mostly fresh.

**Distribution:** Eastern-central Florida, north-eastern Gulf of Mexico, Cuba, Puerto Rico, southern Lesser Antilles and continental coast of the Caribbean Sea, extending southward to Brazil.