

SPECIES INFORMATION SHEET

Labrus mixtus

English name: Cuckoo wrasse	Scientific name: <i>Labrus mixtus</i>	
Taxonomical group: Class: Actinopterygii Order: Perciformes Family: Labridae	Species authority: Linnaeus, 1758	
Subspecies, Variations, Synonyms: –	Generation length: 11.7 years	
Past and current threats (Habitats Directive article 17 codes): –	Future threats (Habitats Directive article 17 codes): –	
IUCN Criteria: –	HELCOM Red List Category:	LC Least Concern
Global / European IUCN Red List Category LC/NE	Habitats Directive: –	
Previous HELCOM Red List Category (2007): EN		
Protection and Red List status in HELCOM countries: Denmark –/–, Estonia –/–, Finland –/–, Germany –/–, Latvia –/–, Lithuania –/–, Poland –/–, Russia –/–, Sweden –/LC		

Distribution and status in the Baltic Sea region

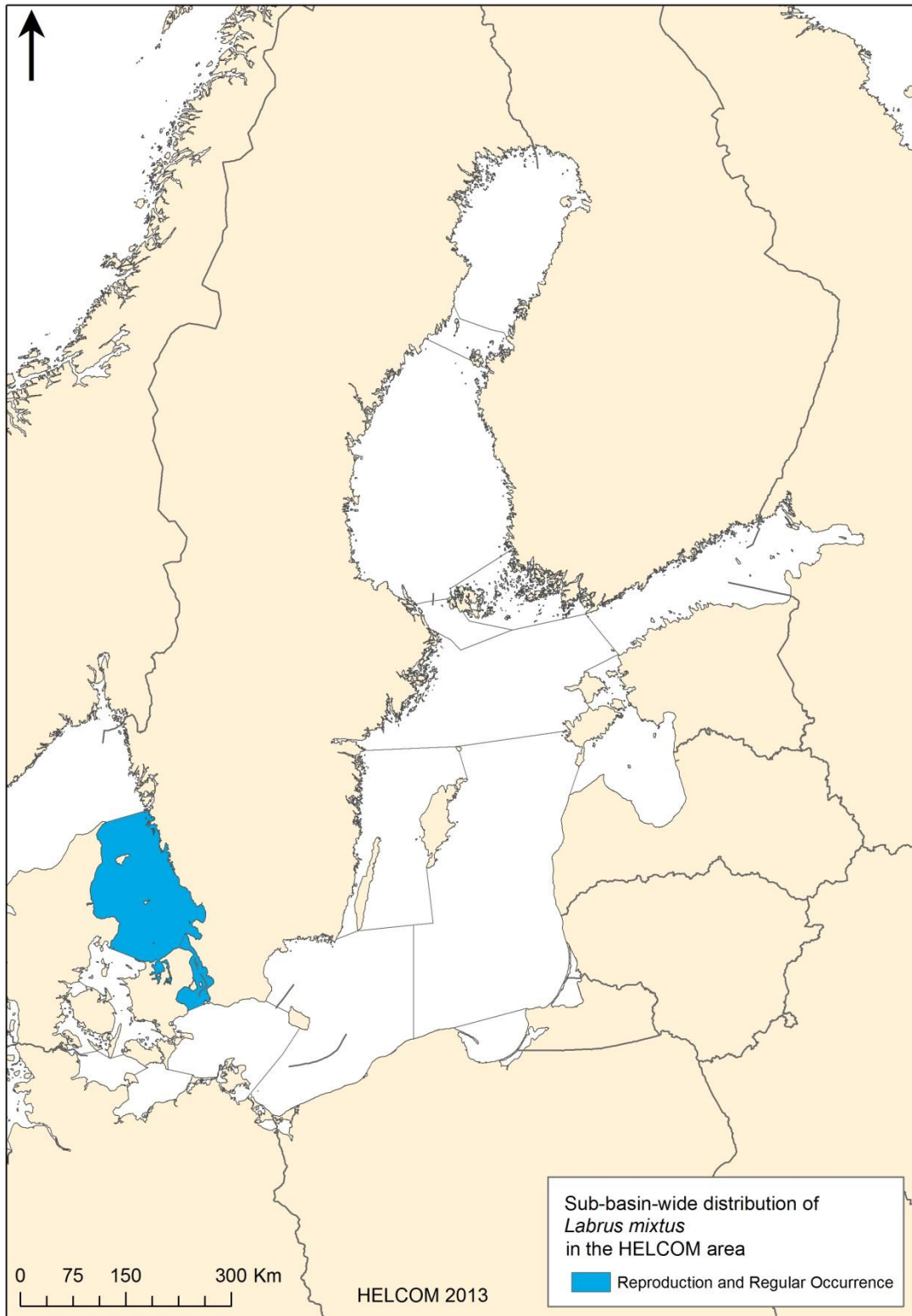
The cuckoo wrasse is a relatively common species in the Kattegat and more rare in the Sound. The cuckoo wrasse is caught sporadically at low numbers at monitory fishing in the Kattegat. Surveys have also shown that cuckoo wrasse is commonly occurring on offshore banks. It has hitherto not been used commercially.



Cuckoo wrasse's sexual colour dimorphism (male on the left, female on the right). Photos by Björn Fagerholm, Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences.

Distribution map

The map shows the sub-basins in the HELCOM area where the species is known to occur regularly and to reproduce (HELCOM 2012).



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Habitat and ecology

The cuckoo wrasse is a purely marine species living in close proximity to vertical rocky habitats or among algae down to 80 meters depth. In winter it generally swims deeper and the Atlantic Ocean populations are known to occur down to 200 meters depth. Its diet consists mainly of molluscs, crustaceans and fish. When they are 7–13 years old, some female cuckoo wrasse change color and sex and become fully functional males (terminal phase). These males are known as secondary males and spawn in pairs with females. The male excavates a nest and attracts the female with an elaborate swimming display. It has also been found that a very few cuckoo wrasse are born male but have the female coloring. These males are known as primary males and their role in reproduction has not been fully ascertained. (Quignard & Pras 1986, Muus & Nielsen 1999, Froese & Pauly 2012, Kullander et al. 2012)

Description of major threats

There are no major threats known for this species.

Assessment justification

The cuckoo wrasse is only known to reproduce in the Kattegat and in the Sound, meaning an extent of occurrence (EOO) of less than 40 000 km² but more than 20 000 km². Similarly, the area of occupancy (AOO) is probably less than 4 000 km² but more than 2 000 km². The limited distribution area however does not qualify for red listing since the species is not considered severely fragmented, nor have extreme fluctuations in abundance or available habitat. The cuckoo wrasse is only caught sporadically but there are no signs of continued decline in either habitat or abundance. Due to its complicated lifecycle and long lifespan, the species might be considered sensitive to any anthropogenic pressures, e.g. environmental deterioration, but no immediate threats have been identified. Therefore this species is classified as Least Concern (LC).

Recommendations for actions to conserve the species

No protection actions currently needed in the HELCOM area.

Common names

D: Kuckucks Lippfisch; DK: Blåstak (male)/rødnæb (female); FI: Sinihuulikala; GB: Cuckoo wrasse; LI: Dvidèmè lūpažuvė; LV: Plankumainā lūpzivs; PL: Wargacz tęczak; RU: Labrus; SE: Blågylta; Blåstråle (male)/rödnäbba (female)

References

- Froese, R., Pauly, D. (eds.) (2012). FishBase. World Wide Web electronic publication.
Available at: www.fishbase.org, version (10/2012).
- HELCOM (2007). HELCOM Red list of threatened and declining species of lampreys and fish of the Baltic Sea. Baltic Sea Environmental Proceedings No. 109. Helsinki Commission, Helsinki. 40 pp.
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- Kullander, S.O., Nyman, L., Jilg, K., Dellings, B. (2012). Nationalnyckeln till Sveriges flora och fauna. Strålfeniga fiskar. Actinopterygii. Artdatabanken, SLU, Uppsala. 517pp. [in Swedish]
- Muus, B.J., Nielsen, J.G. (1999). Sea fish. Scandinavian Fishing Year Book. Hedehusene, Denmark. 340 pp.

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Quignard, J.-P., Pras, A. (1986). Labridae. p. 919–942 In: Whitehead, P.J.P., Bauchot, M.-L., Hureau, J.-C., Nielsen, J., Tortonese, E. (eds.) Fishes of the North-eastern Atlantic and the Mediterranean. Vol. 2. UNESCO, Paris.