

## SPECIES INFORMATION SHEET

*Ballerus ballerus*

English name: <b>Blue bream, Zope</b>	Scientific name: <b><i>Ballerus ballerus</i></b>	
Taxonomical group: Class: Actinopterygii Order: Cypriniformes Family: Cyprinidae	Species authority: Linnaeus, 1758	
Subspecies, Variations, Synonyms: <i>Abramis ballerus</i>	Generation length: 6.2 years	
Past and current threats (Habitats Directive article 17 codes): –	Future threats (Habitats Directive article 17 codes): –	
IUCN Criteria: –	<b>HELCOM Red List Category:</b>	<b>NA Not Applicable</b>
Global / European IUCN Red List Category: LC/LC	Habitats Directive: –	
Previous HELCOM Red List Category (2007): VU		
Protection and Red List status in HELCOM countries: Denmark –/–, Estonia –/–, Finland –/LC, Germany –/* (Not threatened, Baltic Sea), Latvia –/–, Lithuania –/–, Poland –/–, Russia –/–, Sweden –/LC		

**Distribution and status in the Baltic Sea region**

The blue bream is a freshwater fish which sometimes migrate into estuaries in the Baltic Sea. The blue bream occurs in abundance especially in the large estuaries of the Bornholm basin. It may occur also in other major estuaries along the southern coast of the Baltic, as well as southern Finland and Sweden and the Russian part of the Gulf of Finland.



Blue bream. Photo by Vivica von Vietinghoff, Deutsches Meeresmuseum.

**Habitat and ecology**

The blue bream prefers larger, slow flowing rivers and adjacent seasonally flooded pools. It matures sexually at about 15 cm standard length and at age of 3–4 years. The short reproductive period takes place in spring. Each female lays 5 000–20 000 eggs on submerged vegetation in areas with gravel. The species undertakes migrations and can therefore also be found in estuaries. It feeds mainly on

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zooplankton (Kottelat & Freyhof 2007, Lelek 1987). The common standard length of the blue bream is 20–30 cm, maximum standard length 50 cm, and maximum body weight 750 g.

### Description of major threats

No major threats known.

### Assessment justification

The species was excluded from the assessment as it is neither likely to be reproducing within the assessment area, nor is a significant part of the European population regularly occurring in the assessment area.

### Recommendations for actions to conserve the species

No protection actions currently needed in the HELCOM area but information on the size of the populations should be collected.

### Common names

D - Zope; GB - Blue bream; EST - Abakala; DK - Brasenflire; FIN - Sulkava; LV - Spāre; LT - Sparis; PL - Rozpiór; RUS - Sinetz; S - Faren

### References

- 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.
- HELCOM (2012). Checklist of Baltic Sea Macro-species. Baltic Sea Environment Proceedings No. 130. Helsinki Commission, Helsinki. 203 pp.
- Kottelat, M. & J. Freyhof (2007). Handbook of European freshwater fishes. Publications Kottelat, Cornol / Switzerland. 646 pp.
- Lelek, A. (1987). The freshwater fishes of Europe. Vol. 9. Threatened fishes of Europe. Aula-Verlag, Wiesbaden / Germany. 343 pp.
- Thiel, R., Winkler, H., Böttcher, U., Dänhardt, A., Fricke, R., George, M. Kloppmann, M., Schaarschmidt, T., Ubl, C. & Vorberg, R. (2013). Rote Liste und Gesamtartenliste der etablierten Neunaugen und Fische (Petromyzontida, Elasmobranchii & Actinopterygii) der marinen Gewässer Deutschlands. 5. Fassung, Stand August 2013. Naturschutz und Biologische Vielfalt 70(2): 11–76.