

PAINTED COMBER

Scientific Name:
Serranus scriba

Key Information

The painted comber is one of the Mediterranean Sea's most colorful fish! It has a cream to brown body decorated with dark vertical stripes, but its head steals the show: a mix of bright purples, electric blues, and fine lines that look like they were painted on by an artist, hence the name "painted" comber. Some even say the head markings look like old-fashioned handwriting, which is why its Latin name scriba means "scribe."

It usually grows up to 25 cm long, though larger ones can reach 35 cm.

Curoisities

One of the most fascinating things about the painted comber is that it is a hermaphrodite, it has both male and female organs at the same time! This means any two adult painted combers can mate with each other, and they can even switch roles depending on the situation. Pretty clever, right?

During mating season, they can be quite territorial and will chase away intruders from their favorite spots.



Photo by Meet the Sea

Food

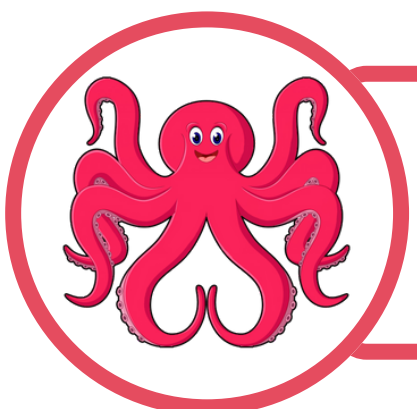
The painted comber is a carnivore. It mostly eats small fish, crustaceans like crabs and shrimp, squid and other soft-bodied animals

It's a sneaky predator, waiting patiently and then quickly snapping up its food with a strong bite. You might say it's a bit of an underwater ambush expert!

Habitat

You'll find the painted comber close to the sea floor, especially around rocky areas, reefs, and seagrass beds. It can be seen anywhere from shallow waters to depths of about 150 meters.

It often stays near caves or crevices, where it can hide from predators and sneak up on its prey.



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