

Bluespotted Fantail Ray, *Taeniura lymma*

Report Card assessment	Sustainable		
IUCN Red List Australian Assessment	Least Concern	IUCN Red List Global Assessment	Least Concern
Global Assessors	Sherman, C.S., Simpfendorfer, C., Bin Ali, A., Derrick, D., Dharmadi, Fahmi, Fernando, D., Haque, A.B., Maung, A., Seyha, L., Tanay, D., Utzurum, J.A.T., Vo, V.Q. & Yuneni, R.R.		
Australian Assessors	Kyne, P.M., Heupel, M.R., White, W.T., Simpfendorfer, C.A. (Shark Action Plan) & Rigby, C.L.		
Report Card Remarks	Preference for coral reef habitats leads to low Australian fishing pressure, population increasing, and extensive refuge in marine parks.		

Summary

The Bluespotted Fantail Ray is a small continental shelf species that mainly inhabits coral reefs and is distributed throughout tropical and subtropical waters of northern Australia and across the Indo-Pacific. It is targeted and caught incidentally and retained for its meat across the Indo-Pacific, except in Australia. Its population has increased across its range over the past 30 years. In Australia, it is one of the most abundant stingrays on coral reefs and is not reported from trawl fisheries, likely due to its preference for coral reef habitat that is not trawlable. It is collected for the marine aquarium trade though the catch levels are likely sustainable. The species receives significant refuge in the extensive network of marine parks across its northern Australian range. The Bluespotted Fantail Ray is assessed as globally and in Australia as Least Concern (IUCN) (Kyne et al. 2021) and Sustainable (SAFS).



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Distribution

The Bluespotted Fantail Ray occurs in tropical and subtropical waters of northern Australia and across the Indo-Pacific from Papua New Guinea to South Africa (Last et al. 2016). In Australia, it has a wide range from Bundaberg (Queensland) to Ningaloo Reef (Western Australia) (Last and Stevens 2009, Last et al. 2016).

Stock structure and status

The Bluespotted Fantail Ray is one of the most abundant stingrays on coral reefs in tropical Australian waters (Last and Stevens 2009). The population is estimated to have increased over the past 30 years across its Indo-Pacific range, based on baited underwater video surveys (BRUVs) undertaken from 2015–2018 across 93% of the coral reefs in the species' range (Sherman et al. 2021).

Fisheries

The Bluespotted Fantail Ray is targeted and taken incidentally in commercial and artisanal fisheries across the Indo-Pacific (except in Australia) and retained for its meat for local consumption (Sherman et al. 2021). In Australia, it is not reported from the trawl fisheries, such as the Commonwealth Northern Prawn Fishery or the Queensland East Coast Trawl Fishery, likely due to its preference for coral reef habitats that are not trawlable (Fisheries Queensland 2021, Kyne et al. 2021). It is collected for the marine aquarium trade but in recent years stingray catch levels in Queensland have been minimal and it is unlikely the catch levels threaten its sustainability (Kyne et al. 2021, Queensland Fisheries 2021). Across northern Australia, many parts of the species' range have low fishing effort and the species would receive refuge in the extensive network of marine parks (Parks Australia 2023).

Habitat and biology

The Bluespotted Fantail Ray is demersal on the continental shelf at depths of 0–50 m but mostly occurs inshore to a depth of 20 m and inhabits coral reefs, remaining under ledges and in caves during the day, and also occurs in mangroves (Last et al. 2016, Weigmann 2016). Maximum size is approximately 35 cm disc width (DW) and males mature at approximately 20 cm DW (Last et al. 2016). Little else is known of its biology.

Longevity and maximum size	Longevity: unknown Max size: ~35 cm DW
Age and/or size at maturity (50%)	Males: ~20 cm DW Females: unknown

CAAB Code: 37 035009

Link to IUCN Page: <https://www.iucnredlist.org/species/116850766/116851089>

Link to page at Shark References: <https://shark-references.com/species/view/Taeniura-lymma>

References

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- Weigmann, S. 2016. Annotated checklist of the living sharks, batoids and chimaeras (Chondrichthyes) of the world, with a focus on biogeographical diversity. *Journal of Fish Biology* 88(3): 837–1037.