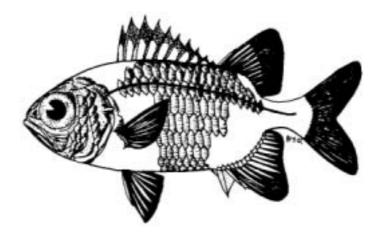
Myripristis adusta Bleeker, 1853



English Name:Shadowfin soldierfishFamily:HOLOCENTRIDAELocal Name:Hiyani dhanboduOrder:BeryciformesSize:Common to 25 cm; max. 32 cmSpecimen:MRS/0322/88

Distinctive Characters: Dorsal fin with 10 spines, followed by I spine and 14-16 rays. Anal fin with 4 spines and 12-14 rays. Pectoral fin with 15-16 rays. Body depth 2.1-2.6 in standard length. Body oblong. inner pectoral axil naked except for one (rarely two) moderate scales on lower half.

Colour: Silvery, suffused with pale salmon, distinctive black blotches on soft dorsal, anal and caudal fins. Spiny dorsal black except for clear stripe in the middle. Head dark.

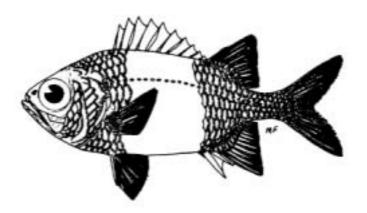
Habitat and Biology: Prefers shallow waters around coral reefs to depths of 30 m. Hides in caves during the day. Soldierfishes feeds at night mainly on the larger zooplankton.

Distribution: Indo-Pacific.

Remarks: Myripristis adusta is the largest species of the genus. Its size and distinctive colouration makes this species relatively easy to identify. Common in Maldives.

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Myripristis berndti Jordan and Evermann, 1903



English Name:Blotcheye soldierfishFamily:HOLOCENTRIDAELocal Name:Kothari reendhoo dhanboduOrder:BeryciformesSize:Common to 22 cm; max. 30 cmSpecimen:MRS/0323/88

Distinctive Characters: Dorsal fin with 10 spines, followed by 1 spine and 13-15 rays. Anal fin with 4 spines and 11-13 rays. Pectoral fin with 15 rays, pelvic fin with I spine and 7 rays. Body depth 2.3-2.6 in standard length. Body oblong. Lower jaw of adults prominently projecting when mouth closed; a single pair of tooth patches at front of lower jaw. Lateral line scales 28-31.

Colour: Silvery pink; a broad zone of orange-yellow on outer part of spiny dorsal fin. Leading edges of soft dorsal, caudal and pelvic fins white. Centres of scales silvery pink to pale yellowish; edges red.

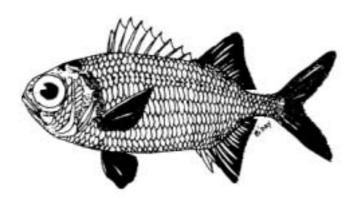
Habitat and Biology: Prefers shallow waters (usually depths of 3-15 m) around coral reefs or rocky bottoms which may be exposed to surge. Hides in caves during the day.

Distribution: Indo-Pacific.

Remarks: Mvripristis berndti is most likely to be confused with M. rnurdjan, but the two species can be seperated on the colouration of their spiny dorsal fins. M. herndti has an orange-red spiny dorsal like M. kuntee. These two species can be seperated on lateral line scale counts. The strongly projecting lower jaw is a particularly helpful character for identification.

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Myripristis kuntee Cuvier, 1831



English Name:Shoulderbar soldierfishFamily:HOLOCENTRIDAELocal Name:Fahdhemi dhanboduOrder:BeryciformesSize:Common to 16 cm; max. 20 cmSpecimen:MRS/0195/88

Distinctive Characters: Dorsal fin with 10 spines, followed by 1 spine and 15-17 rays. Anal fin with 4 spines and 14-16 rays. Pectoral fin with 15 rays. Body depth 2.2-2.9 in standard length. Body oblong. Third anal spine shorter than fourth. Small scales; lateral line scales 37-44.

Colour: Light red. Dark red-brown bar across top of gill opening to pectoral axil. Spiny dorsal orange. All fins with white leading edges; red pigment concentrated at tips of soft dorsal, anal and caudal fins.

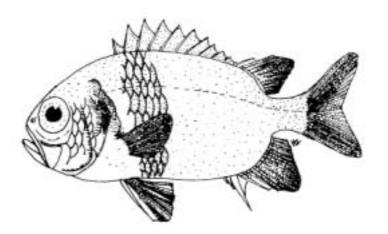
Habitat and Biology: Occurs in shallow waters around coral reefs to depths of 10 m. Nocturnal.

Distribution: Indo-Pacific.

Remarks: *Myripristis kuntee* is apparently closely related to *M. pralinia*. However, *M. kuntee* has a broad rectangular dark bar running from the upper edge of the gill opening to the axil of the pectoral, while the shoulder bar is more restricted in *M. pralinia*.

وَعُرَوْدِ وَسُرَحَةٍ

Myripristis melanosticta Bleeker, 1863



English Name: Blacktip soldierfish
Local Name: Kalhu kothari dhanbodu
Size: Common to 24 cm; max. 30 cm

Family: HOLOCENTRIDAE
Beryciformes
Specimen: MRS/0326/88

Distinctive Characters: Dorsal fin with 10 spines, followed by 1 spine and 13-15 rays. Anal fin with 4 spines and 11-12 (usually 12) rays. Pectoral fin with 14-15 rays. Body depth 2.1-2.5 in standard length. Total gill rakers 32-38. Body oblong. Corner of preopercie without sharp spine. Two pairs of tooth patches. one above the other at symphysis of lower jaw outside gape.

Colour: Body pale pink. Dark red bar across opercular edge. Red pigment on anterior part of head giving dark-faced appearance. Soft dorsal, anal and caudal fins red, with white leading edges and black blotches at tips. Outer part of spiny dorsal red.

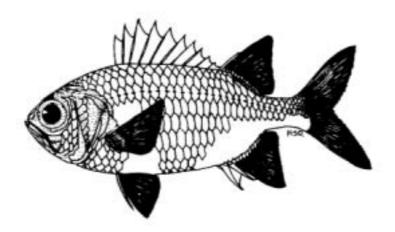
Habitat and Biology: Occurs in moderate, to deep water, generally more than 25 m. Observed in the shelter of reefs by day, over open bottoms at night.

Distribution: Indo-West Pacific.

Remarks: Mvripristis melanosticta is a moderately deep dweller. It is the second largest member of the genus after M. adusta.

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Myripristis murdjan (Forsskal, 1775)



English Name: Pinecone soldierfish
Local Name: Berebedhi dhanbodu
Size: Common to 18 cm; max. 27 cm
Family: HOLOCENTRIDAE
Beryciformes
Specimen: MRS/0327/88

Distinctive Characters: Dorsal fin with 10 spines, followed by | spine and 13-15 rays. Anal fin with 4 spines and 11-13 rays. Pectoral fin with 14-16 rays. Body depth 2.3-2.5 in standard length. Body oblong. Lower jaw of adults only slightly protruding when mouth closed. Numerous small scales on inner pectoral axil. Third and fourth anal spines subequal. Lateral line scales 27-32.

Colour: Head, body and fins reddish. Leading edges of soft dorsal, anal, caudal and pelvic fins white. Outer part of spiny dorsal bright red.

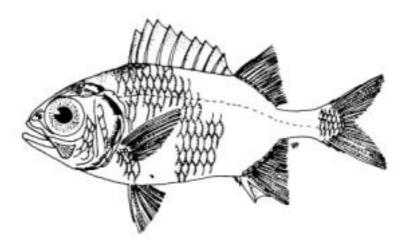
Habitat and Biology: Coral reef species found at depths of 1-50 m. Hides in caves and crevices by day. Sometimes seen in huge aggregations swimming far from sheltering reefs.

Distribution: Indo-West Pacific.

Remarks: Mvripristis murdjan is a common species in the Maldives. It can be distinguished from M. berndti by spiny dorsal colouration and M. "wittata by scale size.

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Myripristis pralinia Cuvier, 1829



English Name: Scarlet soldierfish Family: HOLOCENTRIDAE
Local Name: Ali dhanbodu Order: Beryciformes
Size: Max. 20 cm Specimen: MRS/0194/88

Distinctive Characters: Dorsal fin with 10 spines, followed by | spine and 14-16 rays. Anal fin with 4 spines and 13-15 rays. Pectoral fin with 15 rays. Body oblong. No scales on inner pectoral axil, fourth anal spine slightly longer than third. A single pair of tooth patches at symphysis of lower jaw just outside mouth. Front of lower jaw fitting into a shallow notch in upper jaw.

Colour: Head, body and fins scarlet. Upper part of opercular membrane black. Black blotch on pectoral axil. No black pigment on median fins.

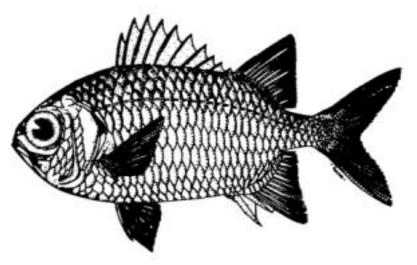
Habitat and Biology: Occurs on coral reefs usually at depths less than 10 m. Nocturnal.

Distribution: Indo-Pacific.

Remarks: *Myripristis pralinia* can be best identified by the restricted shoulder bar. Teeth on the outside of the lower jaw sometimes developed into conspicuous knob.

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Myripristis violacea Bleeker, 1851



English Name: Violet soldierfish
Local Name: Vailet dhanbodu
Size: Common to 18cm; max. 23 cm
Family: HOLOCENTRIDAE
Order: Beryciformes
Specimen: MRS/0197/88

Distinctive Characters: Dorsal fin with 10 spines, followed by I spine and 13-16 rays. Anal fin with 4 spines and 12-14 rays. Pectoral fin with 15 rays. Body oblong. Body depth 1.9-2.5 in standard length. Small scales usually present on inner pectoral axil. Third and fourth anal spines subequal or fourth slightly longer. A single pair of tooth patches outside mouth at front of lower jaw.

Colour: Bluish to reddish-silver, the scales on back broadly rimmed in deep purple to black, those on side and ventral part of body edged in red. Median fins mainly red without black pigment.

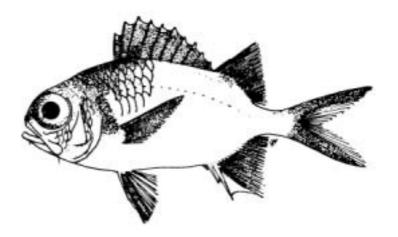
Habitat and Biology: A coral reef species of shallow water, particularly in protected areas.

Distribution: Indo-Pacific.

Remarks: *Mvripristis violacea* is very easily identified because of its distinctive colouration. Soldierfishes and squirelfishes are able to emit sounds both as warning signals and in order to communicate.

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Myripristis vittata Cuvier, 1831



English Name: Immaculate soldierfish
Local Name: Dhanbodu
Size: Max. 18 cm

Family: HOLOCENTRIDAE
Beryciformes
Specimen: MRS/0196/88

Distinctive Characters: Dorsal fin with 10 spines, followed by I spine and 13-15 rays. Anal fin with 4 spines and 11-12 rays. Pectoral fin with 15-16 rays. Lateral line scales 35-40. Third anal spine longer than fourth. No scales on inner pectoral axil. Single pair of tooth patches at symphysis of lower jaw just outside mouth.

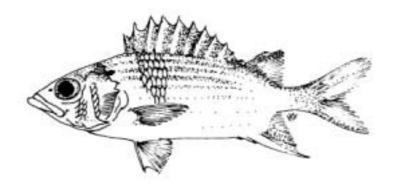
Colour: Body orange-red. No dark pigment on opercular membrane. Spiny dorsal red but with white tips. A bright red spot at pectoral fin base; pectorals red, other fins red with white leading edges.

Habitat and Biology: Occurs in outer reef areas at depths greater than 10 m. Nocturnal.

Distribution: Indo-Pacific.

Remarks: The small, bright coloured *Myripristis l'ittata* is one of the commoner soldierfishes in the Maldives. Its colouration is quite similar to that of *M. murdjan* but it can be distinguished by the presence of white tips to the spiny dorsal, as well as its smaller body and scale size.

Neoniphon aurolineatus (Liénard, 1839)



English Name: Gold-lined squirrelfish
Local Name: Ranrongu raivenmas
Size: Max. 22 cm
Family: HOLOCENTRIDAE
Order: Beryciformes
Specimen: MRS/0325/88

Distinctive Characters: Dorsal fin with 11 spines and 12-14 rays. Anal fin with 4 spines and 8-9 (usually 9) rays. Pectoral fin with 13-15 rays. Last dorsal spine equal to or slightly shorter than the penultimate spine and further from it than the first ray. Lower jaw strongly projecting. 3½ acale rows above lateral line to base of mid-dorsal spines. Lateral line scales 42-47.

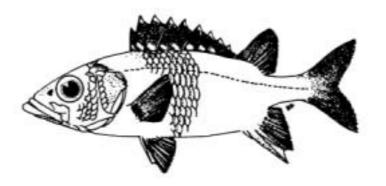
Colour: Silvery pink with several yellow stripes on body. Spiny dorsal red and white.

Habitat and Biology: Occurs in coral reefs at depths greater than 40 m. Nocturnal.

Distribution: Indo-Pacific.

Remarks: Of the four species of *Neoniphon* found in the Maldives, *Neoniphon aurolineatus* is the deepest dwelling. This species is known from scattered insular localities.

Neoniphon opercularis (Valenciennes, 1831)



English Name:Blackfin squirrelfishFamily:HOLOCENTRIDAELocal Name:Kalhu kothari raiverimasOrder:BeryciformesSize:Common to 23 cm; max. 32 cmSpecimen:MRS/0198/88

Distinctive Characters: Dorsal fin with 11 spines and 12-14 rays. Anal fin with 4 spines and 8-9 (usually 9) rays. Pectoral fin with 13-15 rays. Body depth 2.9-3.3 in standard length. Body moderately elongate. Lower jaw strongly projecting, last dorsal spine longer than the penultimate spine and further away from it than from the first ray. Corner of preopercle with sharp spine.

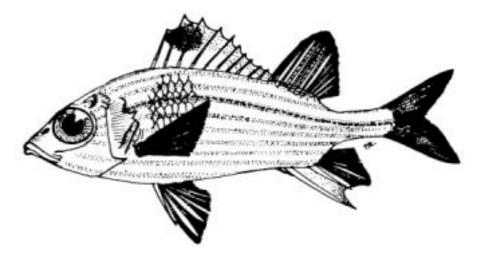
Colour: Silvery gold with a pinkish tinge given by red spot on each scale. Broad middle zone of spinuous portion of dorsal fin black; base and tips white.

Habitat and Biology: A reef species found in shallow to a depth of 20 m. Nocturnal in habit and shelters among the branches of large stout branching corals during the day.

Distribution: Indo-Pacific.

Remarks: *Neoniphon opercularis* is the largest and perhaps the commonest species of the genus in the Maldives. It is readily distinguished from other *Neoniphon* by the extensive black on the dorsal fin.

Neoniphon sammara (Forsskal, 1775)



English Name:Spotfin squirrelfishFamily:HOLOCENTRIDAELocal Name:Raiythiki raiverimasOrder:BeryciformesSize:Common to 23 cm; max. 28 cmSpecimen:MRS/0060/86

Distinctive Characters: Dorsal fin with 11 spines and 11-13 rays. Anal fin with 4 spines and 8 rays. Pectoral fin with 13-15 rays. Body depth 3.0-3.6 in standard length. Moderately elongated body. Preopercular spine broad. Snout pointed; lower jaw strongly projecting.

Colour: Silvery with reddish-brown horizontally elongated spots forming lines on the body. Lateral line scales with darker spots. A dark spot at the front of spinuous dorsal fin. Caudal fin yellowish, with submarginal dark streaks on lobes.

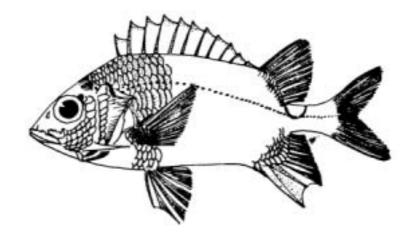
Habitat and Biology: Associated with coral reefs, most often in shallow waters and lagoons. Feeds at night on crabs and small fish.

Distribution: Indo-Pacific.

Remarks: *Neoniphon saniniara* is one of the commonest squirrelfishes in the Indo-Pacific waters. Among the first to leave shelter with the advent of darkness for feeding. This species was previously recorded under the genus *Ho/ocentrus* in the Catalogue of Fishes of the Maldives, Vol.1, page 70.

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Sargocentron caudimaculatum (Ruppell, 1838)



English Name:Silverspot squirrelfishFamily:HOLOCENTRIDAELocal Name:Asdhaanu raiverimasOrder:BeryciformesSize:Common to 18 cm; max. 24 cmSpecimen:MRS/0192/88

Distinctive Characters: Dorsal fin with 11 spines and 13-15 (usually 14) rays. Anal fin with 4 spines and 9 rays. Pectoral fin with 13-15 rays. Body depth 2.4-2.9 in standard length. 5 oblique rows of scales on cheek. Lateral line scales 40-43. Dorsal profile of head slightly convex. Preopercular spine long. Membranes between dorsal spines strongly incised.

Colour: Red. Silvery white spots or patch on upper caudal peduncle/posterior part of back.

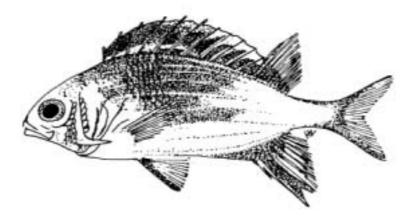
Habitat and Biology: A common shallow water reef species. Nocturnal. Squirrelfishes usually feeds on bottom-dwelling creatures such as shrimps, small fishes and bristle worms.

Distribution: Indo-Pacific.

Remarks: Sargocentron caudimaculaturn is one of the commonest squirrelfishes in the Maldives. The large preopercular spine of squirrelfishes is venomous.

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Sargocentron diadema (Lacepède, 1801)



English Name: Crown squirrelfish Family: HOLOCENTRIDAE

Local Name: Seetu raiverimas Order: Beryciformes
Size: Max. 17 cm Specimen: MRS/0190/88

Distinctive Characters: Dorsal fin with 11 spines and 13-15 (usually 14) rays. Anal fin with 4 spines and 8-9 rays. Pectoral fin rays 13-15 (usually 14). Body depth 2.4-2.9 in standard length. Dorsal profile of head slightly convex. Preopercular spine long. Membranes between dorsal spines strongly incised.

Colour: Red with narrow silvery white stripes. Spinous portion of dorsal fin deep red to nearly black with a whitish stripe (often disjunct). Silvery white spots or patch on upper caudal peduncle/posterior part of back.

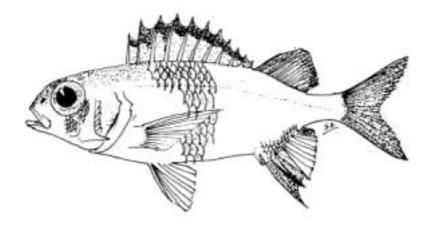
Habitat and Biology: A coral reef species usually found in depths of 2-30 m. Occurs in aggregations.

Distribution: Indo-Pacific.

Remarks: Sargocentron diaderna appears to be a relatively common squirrelfish. It is probably the most abundant red and white stripped species of Sargocentron in the Maldives.

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Sargocentron punctatissimum (Cuvier, 1829)



English Name: Peppered squirrelfish
Local Name: Raiykothari raiverimas
Size: Max. 16 cm
Family: HOLOCENTRIDAE
Beryciformes
Specimen: MRS/0191/88

Distinctive Characters: Dorsal fin with 11 spines and 12-13 (usually 13) rays. Anal fin with 4 spines and 9 rays. Pectoral fin with 14-16 rays. Body depth 2.7-3.1 in standard length. Interorbital width greater than snout length. Nasal fossa without spinules. Preopercular spine about half eye diameter.

Colour: Silvery with slight reddish tinge and bluish iridescence above. Scales usually finely dotted with black. Caudal fin pale red. Spiny dorsal fin pale with red outer margin.

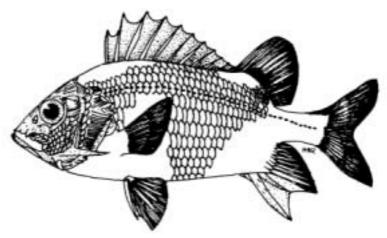
Habitat and Biology: Occurs on rocky shores and coral reefs exposed to wave action. Often found in very shallow waters. Feeds on bottom living animals.

Distribution: Indo-Pacific.

Remarks: Sargocentron punctatissirnum is, like other squirrelfishes, essentially nocturnal. It hides by day and ventures out to feed at night. S. lacteoguttatum Cuvier is a synonym.

Sargocentron spiniferum (Forsskal, 1775)

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English Name:Sabre squirrelfishFamily:HOLOCENTRIDAELocal Name:RaiverimasOrder:BeryciformesSize:Common to 35 cm; max. 45 cmSpecimen:MRS/P0113/87

Distinctive Characters: Dorsal fin with 11 spines and 14-16 rays. Anal fin with 4 spines and 9-10 (usually 10) rays. Pectoral fin with 14-16 rays. Body depth 2.4-2.6 in standard length. Dorsal profile of head nearly straight. Lower jaw projecting when mouth closed. Preopercular spine of adults longer than eye diameter. Spinous dorsal membranes not incised.

Colour: Body red. The edges of the scale silvery white. A large white vertically elongate crimson spot on head behind eyes. Spinous portion of dorsal fin solid deep red.

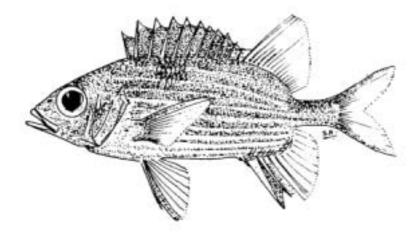
Habitat and Biology: Associated with coral reefs. Hides by day and emerges for foraging with the onset of darkness. Feeds on crustaceans.

Distribution: Indo-Pacific.

Remarks: Sargocentron spiniferum is the largest of the squirrelfishes. It is frequently taken by handlining at night and, despite its boniness, is considered to be a good eating fish.

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Sargocentron tiereoides (Bleeker, 1853)



English Name: Pinkstriped squirrelfish Family: HOLOCENTRIDAE Local Name: Berebedhi raiverimas Order: Beryciformes Size: Max. 16.5 cm Specimen: MRS/0189/88

Distinctive Characters: Dorsal fin with 11 spines and 12-14 rays. Anal fin with 4 spines and 9-10 (usually 9) rays. Pectoral fin with 14-16 rays. Body depth 2.7-3.0 in standard length. Nasal fossa without spinules. Preopercular spine about two-thirds of eye diameter.

Colour: Striped silvery red. Red stripes and silvery interspaces of about equal width. Spiny dorsal red with white tips. Other fins red; anal and pelvics with white leading edge.

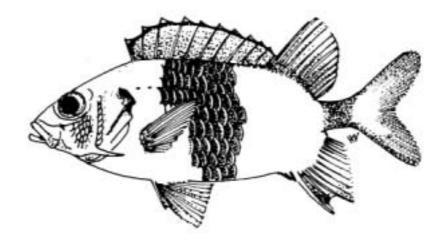
Habitat and Biology: Associated with coral reefs. Nocturnal.

Distribution: Indo-Pacific.

Remarks: Sargocentron tiereoides is an uncommon species, and the original report in the Catalogue of Fishes of the Maldives Vol. 3, p. 388-89. was the first record from the Maldives. It was based on a specimen collected from a cave in 35 m on the outer reef slope by Dr. John E. Randall and MRS staff.

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Sargocentron violaceum (Bleeker, 1853)



English Name:Violet squirrelfishFamily:HOLOCENTRIDAELocal Name:Raiykirulhi raiverimasOrder:BeryciformesSize:Max. 25 cmSpecimen:MRS/0193/88

Distinctive Characters: Dorsal fin with 11 spines and 13-14 (usually 14) rays. Anal fin with 4 spines and 9 rays. Pectoral fin with 13-14 (usually 14) rays. Body depth 2.6-3.0 in standard length. Anterior and posterior margins of nasal fossa with 1-3 spinules. Preopercular spine about equal to the eye diameter. Membranes of spinous dorsal fin not incised.

Colour: Violet, each scale with white border. Triangular red patch above pectoral axil. Spiny dorsal pale red with white tips and thin bright red submarginal band. Other fins pale but leading edge of caudal and anal fins red

Habitat and Biology: Associated with coral reefs. Nocturnal. It hides deep within caves and crevices in the reef slope during daytime.

Distribution: Indo-Pacific.

Remarks: Sargocentron vio/aceum does not appear to be especially common in Maldives, but can be readily distinguished by its violet colouration.