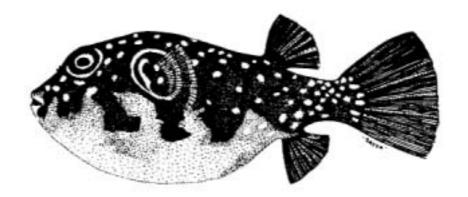
Arothron hispidus (Linnaeus, 1758)



English Name:Whitespotted pufferfishFamily:TETRAODONTIDAELocal Name:Lahjehi koliOrder:TetraodontiformesSize:Max. 48 cmSpecimen:MRS/P0482/97

Distinctive Characters: Dorsal fin with 10-II rays. Anal fin with 10-I1 rays. Pectoral fin with 17-19 rays. Small spinules on head and body except snout and posterior caudal peduncle. Nostril consisting of two fleshy flaps from a common base (characteristic of the genus). Caudal fin rounded.

Colour: Greyish to greenish brown with small white spots on head, back and sides. I or 2 yellow rings and several yellow spots around pectoral fin. 2-5 bars across sides, always a short dark bar below eye and another below pectoral fin.

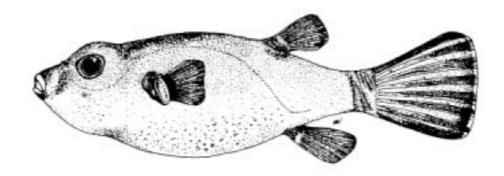
Habitat and Biology: Generally found in shallow protected areas to depths of 25 m. Juveniles seen in weedy areas. Diet highly varied; feeding on molluscs, tunicates, sponges, corals, anemones, crabs, tubeworms, sea urchins, brittle stars and starfishes (including crown-of-thorns), and hydroids.

Distribution: Indo-Pacific and Eastern Pacific.

Remarks: Arothron hispidus like other pufferfishes, is highly poisonous. The degree of toxicity of puffer fishes varies greatly with the species and apparently also with geographical area and season.

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Arothron immaculatus (Bloch and Schneider, 1801



English Name: Blackedged pufferfish
Local Name: Fukkoli
Size: Max. 30 cm
Family: TETRAODONTIDAE
Order: Tetraodontiformes
Specimen: MRS/0001/86

Distinctive Characters: Dorsal fin with 9-10 rays. Anal fin with 9-10 rays. Pectoral fin with 15-16 rays. Body round in cross-section. Nasal organs of two tentacles joined at the base. The body except posterior part of tail, base of anal and snout covered with slender spines. Teeth fused into bony plates.

Colour: Brownish above, lighter below. Upper and lower edge and margin of caudal fin blackish. No markings on body except dark blotch at pectoral fin base.

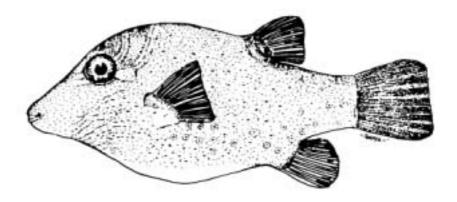
Habitat and Biology: Generally found in shallow protected waters, to depths of 15 m. A solitary species. Sometimes swims over unsheltered sand and sea grass areas.

Distribution: Indo-West Pacific.

Remarks: *Arothron immaculatus*, like other pufferfishes, is capable of inflating its body into a spiny ball to deterpredators. They also produce powerful toxins in their tissues, especially in the liver and in the ovaries. Eating of these fishes has resulted in serious illness and sometimes death. Previously recorded under the genus *Tetraodon* in the Catalogue of Fishes of the Maldives, Vol.1, page 146.

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Canthigaster amboinensis (Bleeker, 1856)



English Name: Ambon sharpnosed puffer Family: TETRAODONTIDAE

Local Name: Haluvi thaakihaa koli Order: Tetraodontiformes

Size: Common to 8 cm; max. 15 cm Specimen: MRS/0245/88

Distinctive Characters: Dorsal fin with 11-12 rays. Anal fin with 10-11 rays. Pectoral fin with 16-17 rays. A ridge of skin mid-dorsally. Snout conical and attenuate. Caudal fin slightly rounded.

Colour: Brown dorsally on head and body shading to whitish ventrally with small pale blue spots on body and basally on caudal fin. Small dark brown spots on lower side mixed with blue, and blue lines radiating from eye. Numerous close set small pale blue spots or irregular lines on cheek.

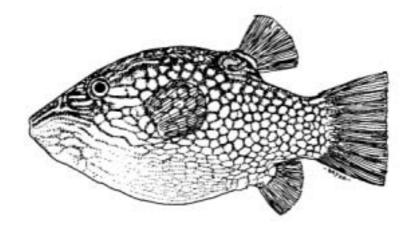
Habitat and Biology: Occurs in shallow outer reef areas, often in the lower reaches of the surge zone to depths of 10 m. Omnivorous; feeding on algae and a wide variety of benthic animals.

Distribution: Indo-Pacific.

Remarks: Canthigaster amhoinensis is one of the faster swimming species of the genus. They have a repelling substance in their skin, which protects them from predators.

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Canthigaster janthinoptera (Bleeker, 1855)



English Name: Honeycomb sharpnosed puffer Family: TETRAODONTIDAE

Local Name: Thijjehi thaakihaa koli Order: Tetraodontiformes
Size: Specimen: MRS/0246/88

Distinctive Characters: Dorsal fin with 9-10 (usually 9) rays. Anal fin with 9-10 (usually 9) rays. Pectoral fin with 16-18 (usually 17) rays.

Colour: Brownish orange with close set pale blue-green spots on head and body and blue-green lines radiating from eyes. A dark occllus sometimes present at base of dorsal fin. Fins largely unmarked.

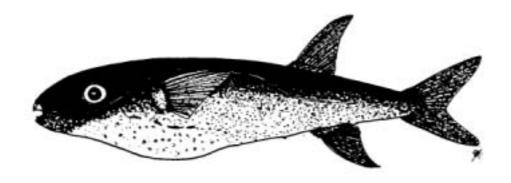
Habitat and Biology: Usually found in caves. A cryptic species.

Distribution: Indo-Pacific.

Remarks: Canthigasterjanthinoprera is closely related to the Hawaiian endemic C.jactator (Jenkins) and the Tropical Eastern Pacific C. punctatissirna (Gunther). These small pufferfishes (or tobies) enjoy some freedom from predation as a result of their repelling skin toxin.

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Lagocephalus lagocephalus (Linnaeus, 1758)



English Name: Pelagic pufferfish
Local Name: Raagondi koli
Size: Max. 60 cm
Family: TETRAODONTIDAE
Order: Tetraodontiformes
Specimen: MRS/0014/86

Distinctive Characters: Dorsal fin with 13-15 rays. Anal fin with 11-13 rays. Pectoral fin with 13-16 rays. Body smooth except for well developed spinules on belly from chin to anus. In adults lower caudal fin lobe is longer than upper. Caudal fin emarginate.

Colour: Adults dark green, brownish grey, or blue dorsally, white below. Juveniles to about 18 cm have about 9 uniform bars on back from eye to dorsal fin; dark spots on front and middle of belly and on side near pectoral base in fish less than 33 cm.

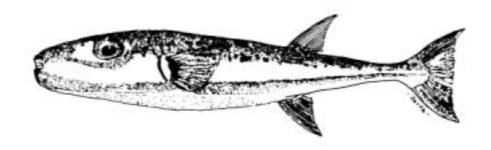
Habitat and Biology: Pelagic and oceanic, but occasionally coming closer to reefs.

Distribution: Circumglobal in warm and temperate seas.

Remarks: Although Lagocephalus lagocephalus is not common in Maldives, it is occasionally caught with frigate tuna (Auxis thazard). Previously recorded under the family Lagocephalidae in the Catalogue of Fishes of the Maldives, Vol.1, page 86. A highly poisonous fish. Is thought to have been responsible for some cases of fatal fish poisoning in Maldives in the past.

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Lagocephalus sceleratus (Forster, 1788)



English Name:Silverstripe pufferfishFamily:TETRAODONTIDAELocal Name:Giulhu koliOrder:TetraodontiformesSize:Max. 85 cmSpecimen:MRS/P0484/97

Distinctive Characters: Dorsal fin with 10-12 rays. Anal fin with 8-11 rays. Pectoral fin with 15-18 rays. Body almost square in cross-section. Body and caudal peduncle elongate, depressed. Spinules on back extend past dorsal fin almost to caudal fin. Caudal fin moderately lunate.

Colour: Dorsal surface greenish with dark brown or black spots. Belly white. A broad silver band along sides from mouth to caudal fin. A silver blotch in front of eye. Pectoral base and inside of gill opening black.

Habitat and Biology: Pelagic and oceanic, but occasionally coming closer to reefs.

Distribution: Indo-West Pacific.

Remarks: Lagocepha/us sceleratus is one of the largest species of the family. It is not common in Maldives. Previously recorded under the family Lagocephalidae. A highly poisonous fish. The skin, liver, and particularly ovaries of most puffer (perhaps all) species contain an extremely potent alkaloid poison called tetrodotoxin.

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