

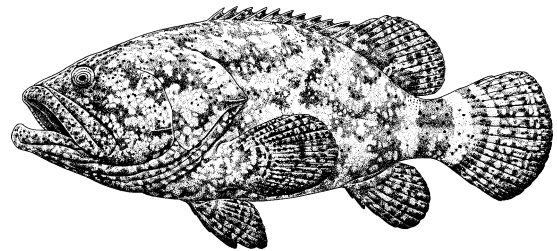
Threatened fishes of the world: *Epinephelus itajara* (Lichtenstein, 1822) (Epinephelidae, formerly Serranidae)

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Keywords Goliath grouper · Jewfish · Guasa

Common names: Goliath grouper, Jewfish, guasa, cherna. *Conservation status:* IUCN Red List — Critically Endangered A2d. *Identification:* Body is robust, elongate, brownish-yellow; black spots present on dorsum, cranium and fins becoming smaller with growth; small dorsal spines and rounded caudal fin. Head is broad and flat with relatively small eyes. Max size 250 cm, 320 kg (Heemstra and Randall 1993; Sadovy and Eklund 1999). *Distribution:* Recently found to occupy a smaller geographic range (Craig et al. 2008): the Gulf of Mexico, Caribbean, and tropical/subtropical waters of the Atlantic (Heemstra and Randall 1993). *Abundance:* Rare (Sadovy and Eklund 1999); number of spawning aggregations extirpated unknown; stocks in Florida and Eastern Gulf of Mexico recovering (Cass-Calay and Schmidt 2008). *Habitat and ecology:* Inhabits mangrove leaf detritus as larvae (Lara et al. 2009),



estuaries and red mangroves as juveniles (Koenig et al. 2007), ledges, patch reefs, caves and wrecks as adults (Sadovy and Eklund 1999). Consumes crustaceans, fish, octopus, stingrays and juvenile hawksbill turtles and can live at least 37 years (Bullock et al. 1992). Exhibits strong site fidelity (Sadovy and Eklund 1999). *Reproduction:* Mature at 4–6 years old at a size of 1100–1150 mm length (males) and 6–7 years 1200–1350 mm length (females), no evidence of protogynous hermaphroditism (Bullock et al. 1992). Nocturnal, aggregative spawning occurs from June–September–Caribbean (Bullock et al. 1992) and December–February–Brazilian waters (Cavaleri-Gerhardinger et al. 2006) unresolved linkages to lunar phase (Mann et al. 2008; Lara et al. 2009). *Threats:* Setlines, spearfishing, habitat destruction, (Sadovy and Eklund 1999; Graham et al. *in press*) and pollution (Evers et al. 2009). *Conservation actions:* Moratorium on fishing

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1990 (United States) and two consecutive 5 year bans on harvesting, transporting and trading the *E. itajara* from 2002 to 2012 (Brazil). *Conservation recommendations*: 1) spearfishing bans and moratorium on fishing throughout its range, 2) investigate status throughout range, and 3) research reproductive biology.

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