

	Common Name	Location	Feeding Period	Baits
	Pargo colorado	Reef, hard bottom	Nocturnal	Cut bait fish, sprat
	Dogtooth Snapper Mango Snapper, Pargo amarillo	Reef, hard bottom	Nocturnal	Cut bait fish, sprat
r	Virgin Snapper, Sama	Grass beds, hard bottom	Nocturnal	Cut bait fish, sprat
	Arrayado	Reef, hard bottom	Nocturnal	Cut bait fish, sprat
ionis	Cabra mora	Reef, hard bottom	Diurnal	Cut bait fish, squid
	Hine, Cabrilla	Reef, hard bottom	Diurnal	Cut bait fish, squid
ata	Mantequilla	Reef, hard bottom	Diurnal	Cut bait fish, squid
nt	Whipper, Ronco amarillo	Hard bottom, sand, seagrass	Nocturnal	Cut bait fish, squid
tum fish	Goo-too, Bluefish, Specktail, Loro			Usually caught in fish pots, not with baited lines
fish	Goo-too, Green bluefish, Loro verde			Usually caught in fish pots, not with baited lines
	Porgy, Bajonado, Pluma	Hard bottom	Diurnal	Squid
h	Oldwife, Peje puerco	Midwater	Diurnal	Cut bait fish, squid
	Black Oldwife, Pigger, Japonesa	Reef, hard bottom	Diurnal	Cut bait fish, squid
	Butterfish, Mantequilla	Reef, hard bottom	Diurnal	Cut bait fish, squid
us	Eaglemouth, Hog Snapper, Capitan	Hard bottom	Diurnal	Squid

Ethical Angling

- Help fish stocks increase through catch & release.
- Limit your take - don't always take your limit.
- Observe regulations & report violations.
- Bring all garbage in - don't teach it to swim!
- Captain your boat - practice safety afloat.
- Share what you know to help your sport grow!



For more information on recreational sportfishing visit:

dpnr.vi.gov/fish-and-wildlife

DPNR's Division of Fish & Wildlife

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Department of Planning & Natural Resources Division of Fish & Wildlife

Shallow Water Reef Fish Recreational Fishing in the USVI



Join the Fun!

Whether you fish from the shoreline, a dock, a boat with spinning rod & reel or handline fishing gear, sooner or later you're certain to feel the steady tug on the line from one of our brightly colored shallow-water reef fish.

All of these fishes are closely associated with the coral reef community, relying on its numerous crevices, holes, nooks & crannies as places to hide & as a source of food.

Herbivorous fish, such as parrotfish, feed on plant material that grows on the reef or bottom substrate. Carnivorous fish such as snapper, grouper & grunts feed on smaller fish or invertebrates such as brittle starfish, crabs, shrimp, sea urchin & mollusks.

Still others like black durgon are planktivores, feeding on minute crab larvae or other members of the zooplankton (animal) community carried by the ocean currents.

Colorful Camouflage

The coral reef consists of communities of brightly colored reef organisms, including corals, sponges, sea fans & sea whips. Coloration patterns of reef fish have evolved over the years to allow them to blend in with their surroundings. Special pigment bodies within the skin of the fish give them the ability to form a spotted, barred or wavy coloration pattern to match their background.

The jolthead porgy & mutton snapper, found at times in more open waters, may take on a silvery coloration to blend with a brightly lit, sandy background. Reef fish need not necessarily be fast swimmers because they are good camouflage artists. Camouflage allows them to avoid predation & snap up unsuspecting food items.

What's it's Name?

Reef fish have different local names, depending on where you live in the USVI. If you live on St. Thomas or St. John, parrotfish are called goo-too. There are redbelly & redbelly goo-too (female & male redbelly parrotfish). Black durgon are called black olewife, hogfish are called eaglemouth & schoolmaster snapper are called mango snapper.

On St. Croix, parrotfish are called bluefish. Female stoplight parrotfish are called redbelly bluefish or Buck Island soldier, while male stoplight parrotfish are called green bluefish. Black durgon are called pigger, hogfish are called captain or hog snapper (actually not a snapper at all but a member of the wrasse family), & schoolmaster snapper are called dogtooth snapper (not to be confused with a dog snapper). Confused yet?

Fortunately fishermen agree that grunts are called whipper, queen triggerfish are called olewife, coney are called butterfly & mutton snapper are called virgin snapper! Whew!!

You might wonder how some of these fish got such strange names, like grunt, olewife & butterfly. The family of fish called grunts got their name from the sound that is made by the grinding together of bony plates in their throat. The name olewife for the queen triggerfish comes from their thick, coarse, sandpaper-like skin used long ago by women for doing household chores like scrubbing.

The coney, one of the most common small groupers on the coral reef, has several color phases, one of which is bright yellow, hence the name butterfly.



Did You Know?

Did you know that the **queen triggerfish** has a trigger-like spine in front of its dorsal fin that it erects and locks when startled? With this raised, it can wedge itself inside a hole for protection or make itself look bigger and definitely more difficult for a predator fish to swallow.

Did you know that **parrotfish** are the most abundant herbivorous fish on the coral reef and the most important vertebrate sand producer? As the Stoplight Parrotfish or Red-band Parrotfish rasp the coral or limestone surface to eat algae they also grind up considerable amounts of coral to produce calcium carbonate sand.

Did you know that some fish change sex? Nature has a way of maintaining healthy fish stocks by providing some fish with the ability to change sex from female to male after sexual maturity is reached. The more brightly colored Parrotfish are all terminal phase males. Some Groupers change to males when they grow larger too.

Closed

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Locations Of Marine Regulated Areas & Seas

