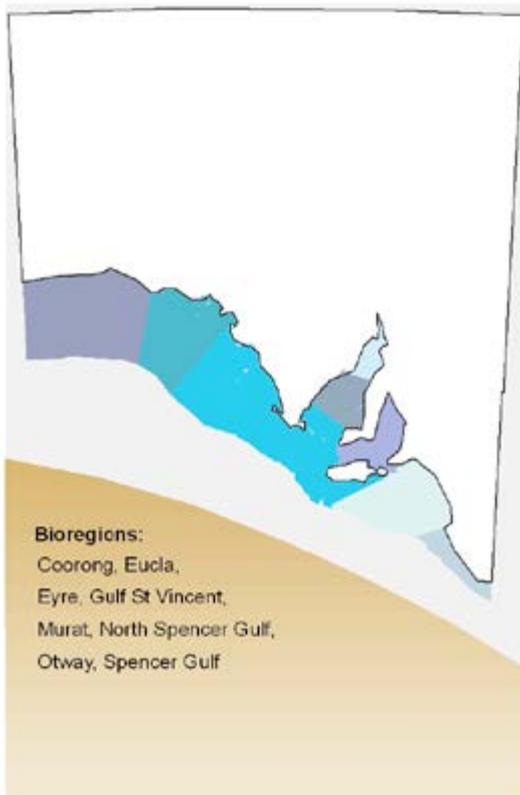


King George Whiting

Sillaginodes punctata



Map courtesy of Mapping Unit, Customer and Commercial Services.

Map is not intended to indicate spatial distribution of the species, only the bioregions in which the species is found.

King George Whiting was named as a South Australian icon species in 2004 and the species has been a popular target for both recreational and commercial fishers. There are greater numbers in South Australian waters than the other states and they are one of the most popular fish to eat for South Australians.

The largest of the whiting species, King George can live for up to 15 years and can grow up to 70cm long but have an average length of 35cm. Their bodies are silver but appear pale yellow from above with a pattern of brown spots. Long and slim in shape, they commonly weigh 300g– 1.4kg. Their natural predators include larger fish, dolphins, sharks, rays and birds.

Diet

They eat mostly benthic species (species that live on the sea floor) such as bristle worms, bivalve molluscs (e.g. cockles) and small crustaceans. Their small mouths are adapted to sucking up food from the ocean floor.

Breeding

King George Whiting spawn from April to June usually in deep, offshore waters. Fertilised eggs and larvae are then carried by ocean currents to sheltered bays and estuaries with warmer water. Juveniles remain in shallow waters of mangrove creeks and estuaries for the first two to three years of their lives and quickly grow to around 28 cm long. At three to four years of age they reach maturity and move to gulf and offshore waters up to 100 metres deep.

Habitat

King George Whiting are endemic to the waters of southern Australia. Generally they prefer channels, broken reefs and seagrass meadows as their habitats.

Threats

Recreational fishing was at one point the greatest threat to King George Whiting. However, in 2012, recreational fishing catch limits came into effect to help ensure stock sustainability. Habitat loss due to the destruction of seagrass meadows from pollution is another major threat to the survival of this species.



King George Whiting sometimes migrate up to 200 km!

Conservation

You can help the King George Whiting by:

- always observing bag limits and size restrictions when fishing; if it's too small put it straight back!
- not polluting – anything washed down the storm-water drain goes straight out to sea.

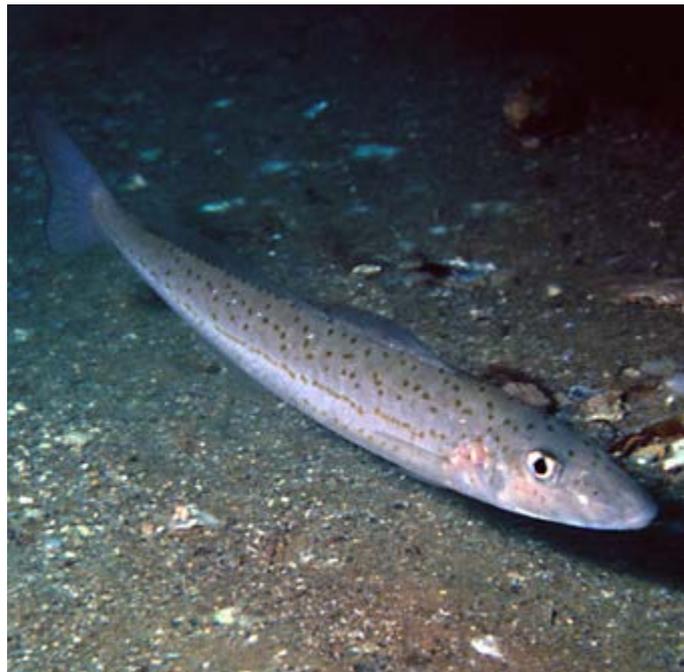


Photo © MLSSA

King George Whiting

For further information

Public enquiries

For more local information on any of the species in this resource please contact your nearest Natural Resource Centre office on:

Eastwood: (08) 8273 9100

Gawler: (08) 8523 7700

Lobethal: (08) 8389 5900

Willunga: (08) 8550 3400

Education enquiries

For teachers wanting more information about environmental education resources and opportunities please contact the relevant NRM Education sub regional team on:

Northern Adelaide: (08) 8406 8289

Barossa: (08) 8563 8436

Central Adelaide: (08) 8234 7255

Southern Adelaide: (08) 8384 0176

Southern Fleurieu: (08) 8551 0524

