



Hawaiian Surgeonfish

Fishinar 2/25/2018

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Questions? Feel free to contact me at janna@REEF.org



Achilles Tang (*Acanthurus achilles*)

Size: Up to 10"

Where found: In and just below the surge zone

ID features: The big orange 'Achilles heel' marking on its back

Photo by: Ralph Turre



Goldrim Surgeonfish (*Acanthurus nigricans*)

Size: Up to 8"

Where found: Surge zone down to about 30 ft.

ID features: Yellow 'gold rims' lining the top and bottom of its body. 'Gold' scalpel

Photo by: Ralph Turre



Whitespotted Surgeonfish (*Acanthurus guttatus*)

Size: Up to 11"

Where found: Surge zone

ID features: Rear half of body covered with many tiny white spots (which might provide camo in bubbly water). Crazy thick upper lip.

Photo by: Janna Nichols



Whitebar Surgeonfish (*Acanthurus leucopareius*)

Size: Up to 10"

Where found: Surge zone

ID features: White bar, sandwiched between two dark bars on its cheek.

Photo by: Keoki Stender



Convict Tang (*Acanthurus triostegus*)

Size: Up to 10"

Where found: Shallows down to 30 feet, just below surge zone.

ID features: Six thin black bars (convict's uniform). Scalpel not obvious.

Photo by: David Andrew



Brown Surgeonfish (*Acanthurus nigrofuscus*)

Size: Up to 8"

Where found: Shallow waters near shore.

ID features: Light to dark brownish-gray body with lavender tinge, dark around scalpel, dark dots at base of tail (top and bottom). Orange freckles.

Photo by: Bill Stohler



Bluelined Surgeonfish (*Acanthurus nigroris*) Endemic

Size: Up to 10"

Where found: Usually over the coral reef. Mix with schools of other surgeonfishes.

ID features: Light to dark gray, with wavy blue lines along body. Also has 2 dark dots at base of tail (top and bottom). But the scalpel is almost invisible on this fish!

Photo by: Janna Nichols



Yellowfin Surgeonfish (*Acanthurus xanthopterus*)

Size: Up to 22"

Where found: Over compacted sand or midwater.

ID features: Broad yellow stripe between eyes, yellow pectoral fin. Can have white at base of tail. Scalpel is dark.

Photo by: Bill Stohler



Ringtail Surgeonfish (*Acanthurus blochii*)

Size: Up to 17"

Where found: Over compacted sand or in schools of same or different species.

ID features: White ring at base of tail. Dark pec fin. Dark scalpel. Little or no yellow on face.

Photo by: John Hoover



Eyestripe Surgeonfish (*Acanthurus dussumieri*)

Size: Up to 18"

Where found: Under ledges or in sand channels, 20 ft and deeper

ID features: Bright white scalpel. Yellow stripe between eyes.

Photo by: Bill Stohler



Orangeband Surgeonfish (*Acanthurus olivaceus*)

Size: Up to 12"

Where found: Over sand and reef.

ID features: Unusual half-and-half pattern. Orange Band behind gills.

Photo by: Bill Stohler



Thompson's Surgeonfish (*Acanthurus thompsoni*)

Size: Up to 10"

Where found: Midwater

ID features: Dark or light uniform blue-gray. Dark spot at top of base of tail.

Photo by: John Hoover



Black Surgeonfish (*Ctenochaetus hawaiiensis*)

Size: Up to 11"

Where found: Shallow turbulent areas

ID features: Greenish black with fine wavy lines. Deep dorsal and anal fins.

Photo by: Keoki Stender



Goldring Surgeonfish (*Ctenochaetus strigosus*) Endemic

Size: Up to 7"

Where found: Over the reef.

ID features: Bright gold ring around the eye. Blue mouth. Fine horizontal lines.

Photo by: Jim Spears



Yellow Tang (*Zebrasoma flavescens*)

Size: Up to 8"

Where found: Rocky shallows

ID features: All bright yellow, with white spine.

Photo by: YK Tea



Sailfin Tang (*Zebrasoma veliferum*)

Size: Up to 15"

Where found: Over the reef

ID features: Alternating brown and white bars. Dorsal and anal fins are very large when extended.

Photo by: Janna Nichols