

# Grouper

Groupers are an important group of fishes for coastal aquaculture. *Epinephelus tauvina* and *E. malabaricus* of the family serranidae have robust, somewhat compressed, oval-oblong and elongated body. There are 11 spines and 14-16 soft rays in the dorsal fin and 18-20 rays in the pectoral fin.

A large blackish blotch is present at the base of the last four dorsal spines extending on to the lower part of the fin in *E. tauvina* but absent in *E. malabaricus*, which possesses about five, more or less distinct and slightly oblique, irregular bars on the body. Also, three dark blotches are present on the inter-opercle in *E. malabaricus*.

The head and body are grayish, covered with small, dull, orange-red to dark brown spots. They grow to 50-65 cm and to 100 cm respectively. Hong Kong, Thailand, Singapore and Malaysia are the major producer of groupers in sea cages.

Groupers are suitable for culture in net cages, as well as in ponds. Limited success has been achieved in the hatchery production of groupers. Wild seed collection is the major source of seed for culture of groupers.