



MarLIN

Marine Information Network

Information on the species and habitats around the coasts and sea of the British Isles

Cuckoo wrasse (*Labrus mixtus*)

MarLIN – Marine Life Information Network
Marine Evidence-based Sensitivity Assessment (MarESA) Review

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A report from:

The Marine Life Information Network, Marine Biological Association of the United Kingdom.

Please note. This MarESA report is a dated version of the online review. Please refer to the website for the most up-to-date version [<https://www.marlin.ac.uk/species/detail/1670>]. All terms and the MarESA methodology are outlined on the website (<https://www.marlin.ac.uk>)

This review can be cited as:

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A male cuckoo wrasse
 Photographer: Sue Daly
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See online review for
 distribution map

Distribution data supplied by the Ocean
 Biogeographic Information System (OBIS). To
 interrogate UK data visit the NBN Atlas.

Researched by	Paul Gregory	Refereed by	Admin
Authority	Linnaeus, 1758		
Other common names	-	Synonyms	<i>Labrus bimaculatus</i> Linnaeus, 1758

Summary

🔍 Description

A slim-line wrasse with a narrow long head and a pointed snout. The colouration of *Labrus mixtus* is different between the sexes and very variable. The female is rose-pink to orange-red in colour with 2-3 dark spots interspersed with white on the rear dorsal and adjacent tail fin. Young males are similar in colour to the female but lack the dorsal spots. Older males have dark blue heads with brilliant blue lines and blotches that extend along the flanks. The rest of the body and the fins are bright orange and the fins also have bright blue markings. Males can reach up to 35 cm in length and the females are generally slightly smaller.

📍 Recorded distribution in Britain and Ireland

Labrus mixtus can be found in rocky areas around most of the coasts of Britain and Ireland.

📍 Global distribution

East Atlantic, ranging from Norway south to Senegal, Azores, Madeira and the Mediterranean.

🏠 Habitat

Over rocks and hard ground, and in the algal zone, between 2 - 200 m but mainly between 20 - 80 m.

↓ Depth range

Q Identifying features

- Male up to 35 cm in length, female up to 30 cm.
- Functional males have a blue striped head and back, the rest of the body and fins are orange.
- Females and non-functional males are rose-pink or orange-red.
- Females have black and white blotches on back.
- Elongate body with dorsal fin uniform in height.
- The mouth is large with lips made up of 7 -9 folds.
- Scales are moderate in size and rather smaller than the pupil diameter of the eye.

🏛️ Additional information

The goldsinny wrasse, *Ctenolabrus rupestris*, is similar to the female cuckoo wrasse but lacks the three dark spots at the base of the dorsal fin and has a dark spot at the base of the tail fin.

✓ Listed by



🔗 Further information sources

Search on:



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