

John dory



Zeus faber

John dory (*Zeus faber*), also referred to as dory or St Peters Fish (1), is highly regarded as a food fish. Although traditionally not a target species, John dory is an important by-catch in various trawl fisheries of the North East Atlantic. European catches originate mainly from the South and West of the UK, with France and Spain dominating the catches. The UK catch has been around 250 tonnes per annum for the past 10 years.

Biology

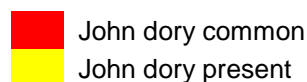
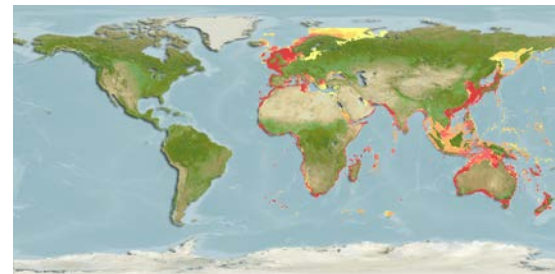
John dory is a demersal species found mostly over soft and muddy areas close to rocks, in depths ranging from 20 to more than 400 metres, however most of the catches occur between 20 and 160 metres. The average length is 40cm, with males rarely growing larger than 50cm, while females can reach 60cm or more. Maximum reported age is 12 years. Reproduction takes place at the end of winter and the start of spring in the North East Atlantic, earlier in the Mediterranean. Juveniles (less than 8cm in length) feed on small benthic fishes. Once they grow over 14cm they feed on schooling bony fish, for example pilchards. John dory is generally a solitary fish and is rarely found in great concentrations (2, 3).

Fisheries and gears

Because of its relatively sporadic occurrence this species mostly occurs as part of a mixed catch. However, it has been found that increasing the headline height, or rigging the trawl to fish higher in the water column can improve catches of this species.

Distribution

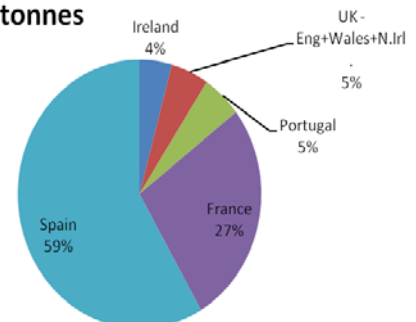
John dory is widespread and found in the Eastern Atlantic from Norway to the south of Africa, as well as in the Mediterranean, Black Sea, western Pacific and Indian Oceans.



John dory catches

European catches of John dory have increased approximately four-fold since 1988.

European John dory catches 2008 total
= 4,500 tonnes



Stock status

An ICES working group (WGNEW) (2) brought the most recent European information on John dory together in 2010. Research vessel data shows an increasing trend in abundance in most European waters from the late 1990s to 2009 when a decrease was observed. This is as a consequence of good recruitment of young fish into the population during 2001, 2004, and particularly 2007 (2).

It was not possible to run analytical assessment models on these data; so these survey results have to be regarded as indicative trends. They will remain the prime source of information on these stocks for at least another five years (2).

There is also some evidence that the abundances of warm-water fish species (such as John dory) have increased in UK waters during recent decades due to climate change, while many cold-water species have experienced declines (3).

Management and conservation

In Europe there are no management measures on John dory, so there are no limits on catches or minimum sizes in force. However, most of the fisheries in which they are caught are managed, and this is likely to indirectly constrain catches. These factors, and the increases in abundance in recent years suggest that John dory currently has a relatively low risk of being fished unsustainably

Product Characteristics

John dory is olive-yellow in colour and has a large dark spot and long spines on the dorsal fin. John dory is sold whole or filleted, fresh and frozen. It has a delicate, mild to sweet flavor and the fillets are white in colour. It can be steamed, fried, boiled, microwaved or baked.

Supply chain standards

There are supply chain standards from capture to retailer:

- **Seafish Responsible Fishing Scheme.** Sets best practice standards for fishing vessels: (BSi: PAS 72:2006).
- **British Retail Consortium (BRC) Global Standard/Safe and Local Supplier Approval (SALSA)** certification. Designed to raise standards in the seafood processing and wholesaling sectors.

Responsible Sourcing Services

This guide is one of a series of Seafish Responsible Sourcing Guides. **See:** <http://www.tinyurl.com/seafishrsg>

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References and sources

1. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-on-fish-labelling-regulations-2013>
2. <http://ices.dk/sites/pub/Publication%20Reports/Expert%20Group%20Report/acom/2010/WGNEW/WGNEW%202010%20.pdf>
3. <http://www.climateandfish.eu/default.asp?ZNT=S0T1O-1P195>

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