

Rhinecanthus aculeatus (Linnaeus 1758)
White-banded Triggerfish



Photo by J. Randall, Bishop Museum

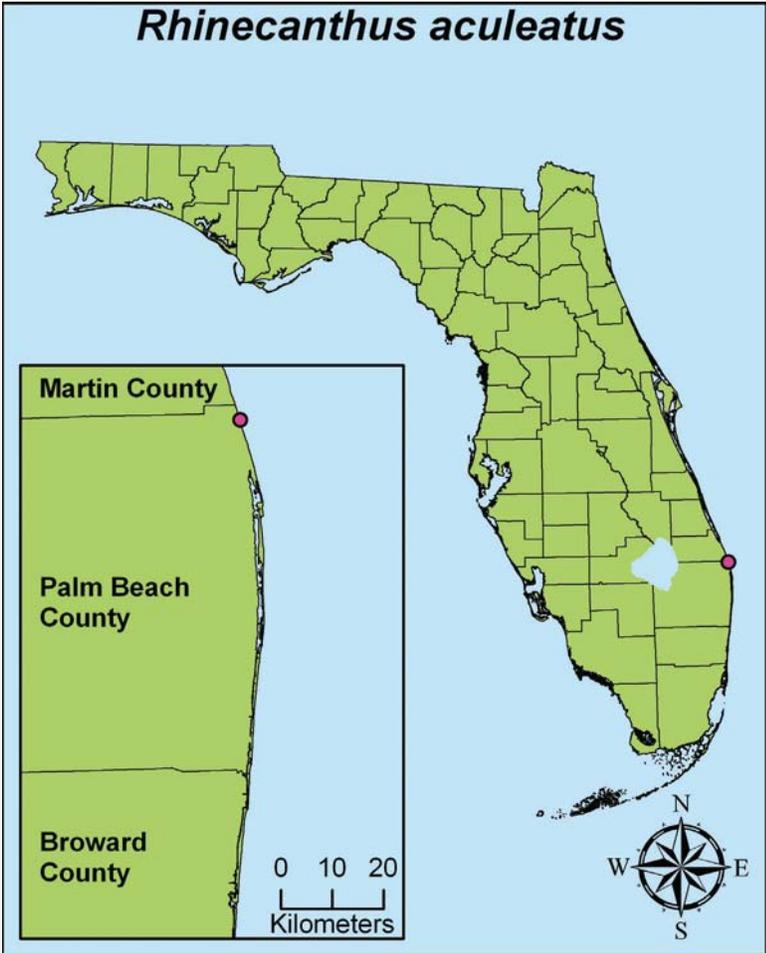
Identification: Body compressed with elongated head. Blue line above upper lip. Small mouth with yellow area surrounding mouth and extending to base of pectoral fin. Dark thick black banding near lateral line with smaller banding extending ventrally. Grows to about 30 cm TL. Also called Blackbar Triggerfish or Lagoon Triggerfish. Dorsal fin III (23-26), anal fin 0 (21-23), pectoral fin (13-14). From Randall (2005) and Allen et al. (2003).

Similar Species: Queen Triggerfish (*Balistes vetula*) lacks diagonal white ventral markings.

Native Range: The species is distributed in the Indo-Pacific from East Africa to Hawai'i and French Polynesia and south Japan to east Australia and Lord Howe Island. From Allen et al. (2003).

Ecology: The species inhabits lagoonal reef flats typically dominated by sand (Klausewitz 1974; Randall 2005). It feeds on a variety of benthic organisms including sea urchins, crustaceans, polychaetes, gastropods, ostracods, sipunculids, and algae (Kuwamura 1991). It is also very territorial and will engage in intra- and interspecific border fights (Chen et al. 2001). Reproduction has been documented by Kuwamura (1997) who found that the species is harem with male territories overlapping with approximately two or three female territories. Both males and females maintain territories for long periods, with some documented over eight years. Pair-spawning occurs around sunrise and females care for the demersal eggs until hatching.

Nonindigenous Occurrences: The species was observed near Jupiter Inlet in 2006.



Balistidae (triggerfishes)