

THOUSAND COLORS FISH





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A good amount of light still reaches depths of up to 15 metres, which results in lots of algae and some plants that need the sun to be able to live to grow there; these provide food and a hiding place to countless animal organisms, among which the small colourful fish stand out.

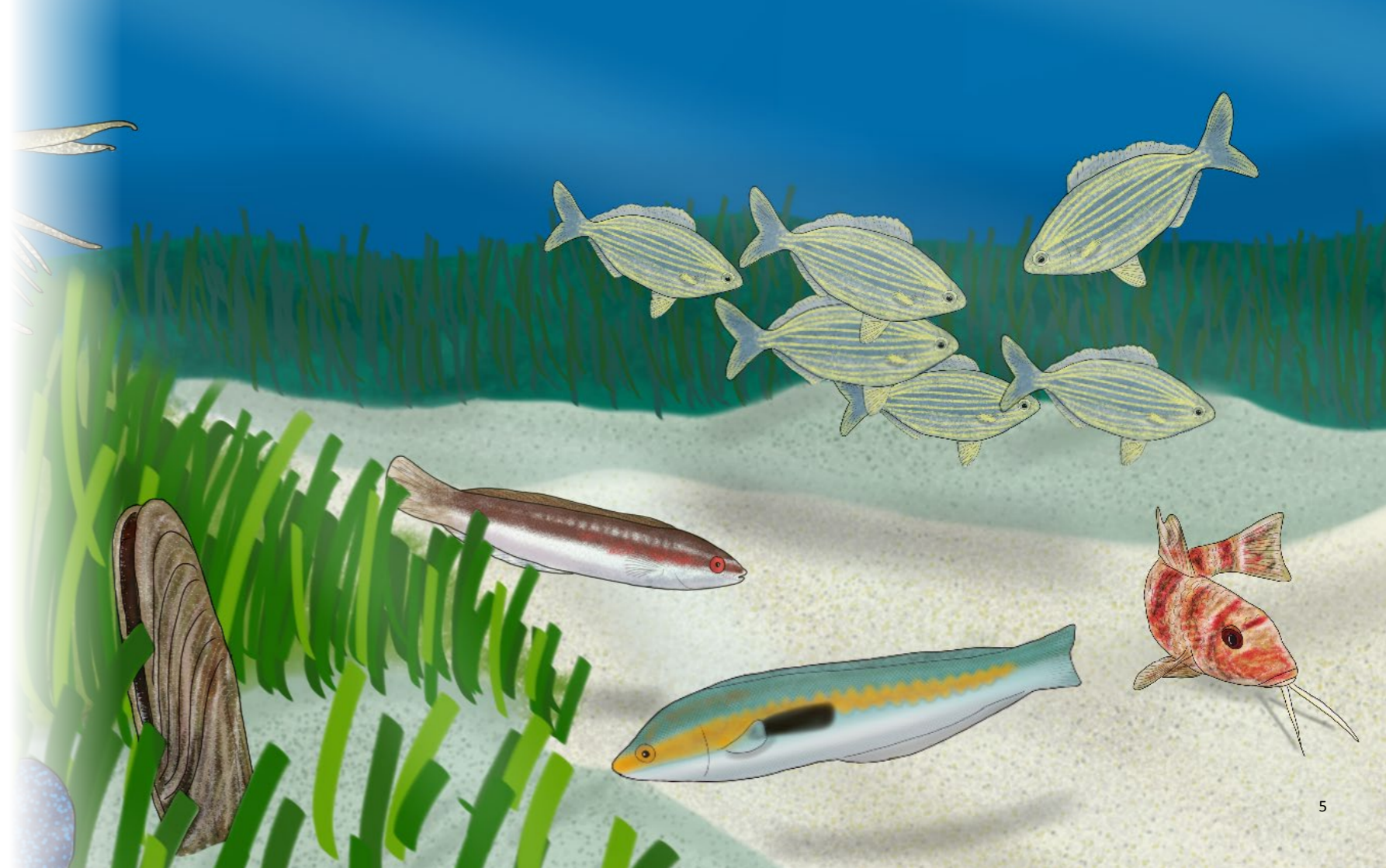
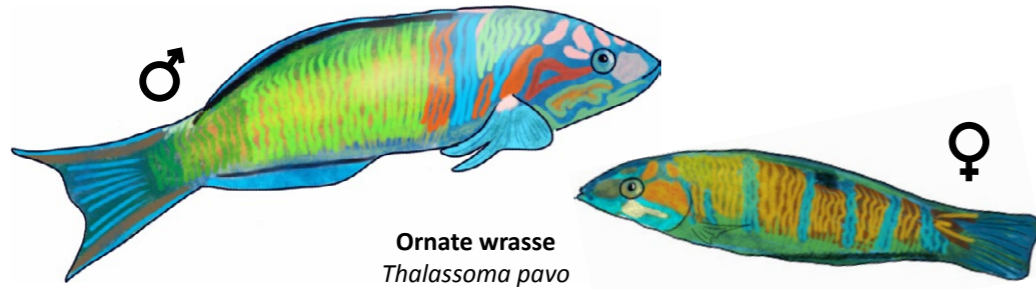
All of this creates a magical setting of intense colours and a play of light and shadow, full of contrasts. It is a fascinating habitat which snorkellers often enjoy more than divers, who go out further in search of greater depths.

SHALLOW AND FULL OF COLOUR

Seawater filters the colour red and covers everything in a bluish sheen which becomes more vibrant with each metre we descend.

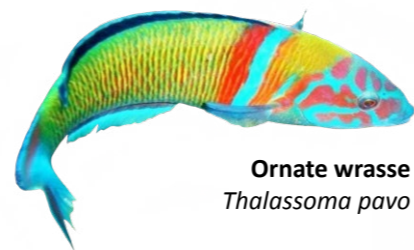
In addition, a basic preservation technique against predators is mimicking the environment, which is why the majority of the fish are silver, to camouflage themselves in the water column, or in various shades of brown and grey, to disguise themselves with the seabed further away from the light.

That's why only in this area, which the sun still penetrates, can we enjoy some families of these spectacular colourful fish, which remind us of tropical waters.

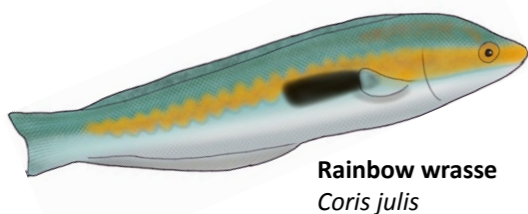


SMALL AND VERY COLOURFUL FISH, A MUST SEE

Ornate wrasse are undoubtedly the stars if we talk about spectacular colours and possibly one of the most beautiful fish to be found on our coasts. The bright green and turquoise blue colours are combined with oranges and pinks in an exquisite way. Like other species, the male is larger in size and displays different and more intense coloured patterns than those of females.



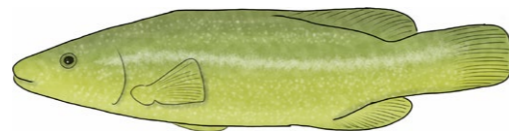
Ornate wrasse
Thalassoma pavo



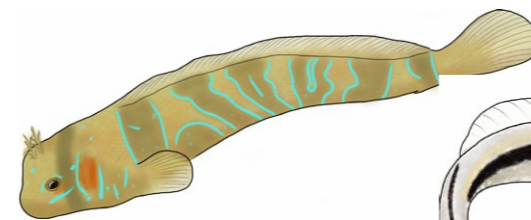
Rainbow wrasse
Coris julis

Different colours between the males and females can also be seen in the **rainbow wrasse**, with the females having a duller, reddish-brown colour and the males having yellow, blue and white pectoral fins.

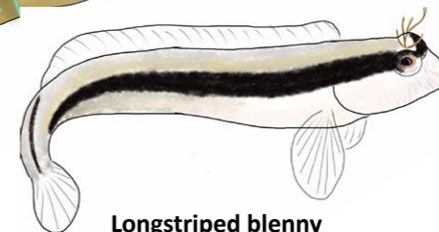
The **wrasses** or **labridae** are a family with a large number of species each of which with their characteristic colouration. We highlight among the most common the peacock wrasse, the green wrasse, the corkwing wrasse, the pointed-snout wrasse all with very bright colour patterns.



Green wrasse
Labrus viridis



Sphinx blenny
Aidablennius sphynx

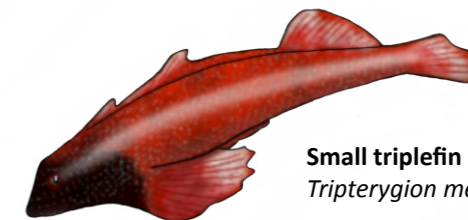


Longstriped blenny
Parablennius rouxi

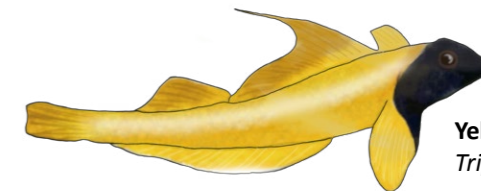
The **blennies** are a very diverse group of small fish that live on the seabed and don't swim much. Many of them have antennas and many species have astounding colour palettes that help them camouflage themselves amongst the algae.

The **tompot blenny**, or **threefin blennies** also live in these shallow places and are easily confused with other types of blennies, but they have a mouth with characteristic lips that helps identify them.

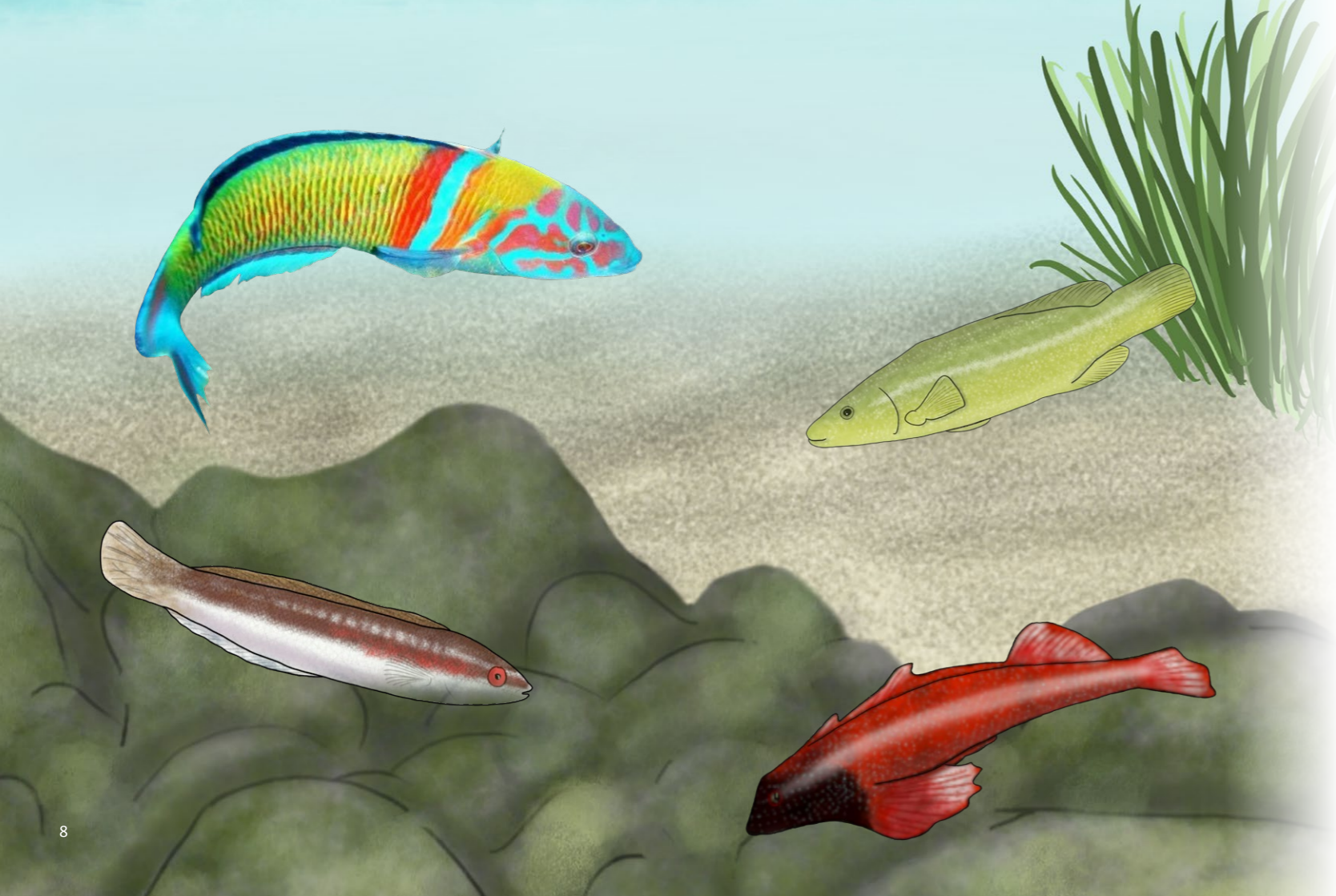
The bright blue of the young of the Atlantic pomfret, the orange of the cardinal fish, the gold of the salemas, the yellow and silver of the small annular seabream or the characteristic stripes and then intense blue mark of the painted comber, are some of the colours that we can also see easily.



Small triplefin
Tripterygion melanurum



Yellow blackfaced blenny
Tripterygion delaisi



DID YOU KNOW THAT:

The colouration of fish changes due to many factors, if it is during breeding season, as a result of stress, if they are young or adults, and some even change in the colour from day to night.

The blotched picarels, which are silver with a black rectangular spot on each side during the day when they swim in the water column, turn red and white at night when they sleep on the rocks, making them go unnoticed.

The mullets also go from being a cream colour by day to red at night and as for salemas, they display yellow and silver veins in the day, and white circles at night.

Atlantic pomfret, which are dark brown in colour when adults, are bright electric blue while they are still young, and there are fish that change colour when they are threatened, like the white seabream which can create vertical black strips in this case.

The male tompot blennies and other blennies adopt very striking mating colours in the breeding season only, and also the wrasses intensify their colour to attract a mate, which is why this time is associated with the most intense colouration moments. Moreover, usually between spring and summer, we can see unique behaviours such as the construction of nests with algae or holes in the sand for the spawning.

The fact that many fish are females when they are young and males when they are adults, causes the same fish to display different colouration patterns throughout their life.

WHERE TO SEE THEM

All the species described here are very common and easy to see at any point along the Costa Brava at a depth of between 3 and 5 metres.

Despite this, these shallow areas and their inhabitants, often go unnoticed by the divers, especially if they initiate their dives from boats, as they usually plan them with a descent to the maximum planned depth and return to the starting point by rapidly passing through the shallow waters without detecting the large number of small fish and the explosion of life that surrounds them.

A good way to enjoy this diversity is to take advantage of the safety stops and plan them for this purpose or to do some snorkelling too.



HOW TO SEE THEM

Spring and summer are breeding seasons for many species, which will make them shine with their most spectacular colours.

We just need to enter gently to enjoy the display put on by these colourful fish.

PRECAUTIONS

When snorkelling or diving in shallow waters, you should always keep an eye on the swaying motion of the waves, as they can still be felt in depths of up to three metres.

It is necessary to monitor buoyancy and kicks with the fins, and to move forward very slowly so as not to scare these small underwater inhabitants with our movements and our imposing size.



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