

## Floral Banded Wobbegong, *Orectolobus floridus*

Report Card assessment	Sustainable		
IUCN Red List Australian Assessment	Least Concern (Endemic to Australia)	IUCN Red List Global Assessment	Least Concern
Assessors	Huveneers, C. & McAuley, R.		
Australian Assessors	Kyne, P.M., Heupel, M.R., White, W.T. & Simpfendorfer, C.A. (Shark Action Plan)		
Report Card Remarks	Small wobbegong that is a minor bycatch with likely high post-release survival.		

### Summary

The Floral Banded Wobbegong is a small species endemic to Australia. The species is known only from a few specimens taken from the inner continental shelf off southwest Australia. Its biology and habitat use are poorly known, but it is thought to mainly



live in reef areas. The Floral Banded Wobbegong is a minor bycatch component of the Western Australian temperate demersal gillnet and demersal longline fisheries, which only catch approximately 40 tonnes of wobbegongs (all species) per year. In addition, the species is unlikely to be retained due to its small size. The species is also expected to have high post-release survival, similar to other wobbegongs. There is no evidence to infer or suspect population decline, although further research is required. Therefore, the species is assessed as Least Concern (IUCN) (Kyne et al. 2021) and Sustainable (SAFS).

### Distribution

The Floral Banded Wobbegong is known only from a limited number of individuals, all taken from the inner continental shelf off Western Australia between Geraldton and Augusta (Last and Chidlow 2008, Last and Stevens 2009).

### Stock structure and status

There is currently no information on population size, structure, or trend for the species. It is much less frequently observed in gillnet and trawl bycatch than other wobbegongs, especially the more common Western Wobbegong (*O. hutchinsi*) (R. McAuley, unpubl. data).

### Fisheries

The species, along with other wobbegong species occurring within the region, is primarily caught by demersal gillnets off the southern and lower west coasts of Western Australia. However, these fisheries mean annual wobbegong catch between 1999–2014 was about 40 tonnes per year and does not show any sign of decline (Department of Fisheries WA Fishery Status Report 1998–99 to 2013–14, Braccini et al. 2014). Although wobbegong catches are generally not reported to species level, small wobbegongs (< 150 cm) are selectively returned alive (Chidlow et al. 2007, R. McAuley, unpubl. data) due to low flesh recovery rates from smaller individuals. Thus, the Floral Banded Wobbegong is believed to be a minor component of those aggregated catches. In addition, post-release survival of all wobbegong species is thought to be high. Smaller wobbegongs also occur in commercial rock lobster pots throughout temperate coastal Western Australian waters (Chidlow et al. 2007). However, as all sharks and rays are now commercially protected throughout Western Australia unless specifically licensed, wobbegongs cannot generally be retained by State-managed commercial fishing vessels unless they are operating in the managed shark fishery. The retained catch of wobbegongs by recreational fishers in Western Australia has been estimated at approximately 1,000 animals per year (Sumner and Williamson 1999), while the estimated annual catch during 2011–12 by recreational fishing from boat licence holders was 1,535 wobbegongs, with 20% or 304 individuals retained (Ryan et al. 2013). Assuming the species composition of recreational wobbegong catches is similar to that of the commercial gillnet fishery, the Floral Banded Wobbegong is also likely to be a very minor component of recreational catches.

### Habitat and biology

The Floral Banded Wobbegong has been found on the inner continental shelf at depths of 42–85 m (Last and Chidlow 2008). Males have a recorded maximum size of 75 cm total length (TL), and females 71 cm TL (Last and Chidlow 2008, Last and Stevens 2009). The ecology of this species is poorly known, but as all known specimens were taken by demersal gillnets it is presumably associated with hard bottom habitats (Last and Chidlow 2008).

Longevity and maximum size	Longevity: unknown Max size: 75 cm TL
Age and/or size at maturity (50%)	Males: 73 cm TL Females: unknown

**CAAB Code:** 37 013021

**Link to IUCN Page:** <https://www.iucnredlist.org/species/161664/68638011>

**Link to page at Shark References:** <http://shark-references.com/species/view/Orectolobus-floridus>

### References

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