

Tetrosomus gibbosus (Linnaeus, 1758)



Photo By: Ramin Ketabi, Tehran Univ. Kish Inter. Camp., Iran
Editor: Shahla Jamili, Iran Fish. Sci. Res. Inst. (AREOO), Iran



Kingdom: Animalia

Phylum: Chordata

Class: Actinopterygii

Order: Tetraodontiformes

Family: Ostraciidae

Genus: *Tetrosomus*

Species: *T. gibbosus*

Tetrosomus gibbosus, commonly called **humpback turretfish**, **helmet cowfish**, **camel cowfish** and **thornbacked boxfish**, is a species of boxfish native to the Indo-West Pacific. *T. gibbosus* is mainly found at depths of 37–110 m on slopes or over muddy bottoms, but can sometimes be seen near hallow seagrass beds also off the coral reef and in the contiguous submarine prairies, on the sandy and detrital. We report for the **first time from Iranian Waters (Persian Gulf, Kish Island)**, we found it at depth of **3m**, and Maximum length is 30 cm in **Kish Island (Iranian Waters)**. It reaches up to 30 cm in length, but is more common at around 20 cm. Like other boxfish, its flesh is poisonous and defending with the spines and poison. *T. gibbosus* is not a very good swimmer. The coloration varies from the sandy yellow to the blue, in the adult individuals. As for the *Ostracion* the skin emits defensive poisonous mucus, and in the small pools these toxins may aver fatal for the other fishes if it is repeatedly disturbed or if it passes away. *T. gibbosus* is a hermaphrodite protogynous species: which means that at the beginning all the animals are females and then, while growing, may transform into males. The humpback turretfish nourishes of sea-weeds, sponges, molluscs, worms and crustaceans it ferrets out on the bottom. The juveniles live in small schools, but the adults, apart the reproductive period, are usually solitary.

Food: *Tetrosomus gibbosus* feeds on a wide variety of invertebrates and algae.

Distribution: *Tetrosomus gibbosus* widely distributed in the tropical waters of the Indian Ocean and in the western part of the Pacific, **Persian Gulf**; South Africa and Madagascar, to the Red Sea, from where it has passed in the adjacent Mediterranean through the Suez Canal, to the Seychelles, the Maldives, India, Thailand, Australia, Indonesia, New Guinea, Philippines, Taiwan and China up to the southern part of Japan. Southwards, it reaches the New Caledonia.