SHOAL AND OPEN-WATER FISH

Greater sandeel

Hyperoplus lanceolatus

Not recorded off Sussex in our sources | None listed



Greater sandeel (*Hyperoplus lanceolatus*). Picture: Julien Renoult, CC BY 4.0 (creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/), via Wikimedia Commons: commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Hyperoplus_lanceolatus_5471652.jpg.

IN SHORT

The greater sandeel is the biggest of the sandeels, and still not a big fish. Our sources do not record it off the Sussex coast. British boat record: none listed.

Key facts

IDENTIFY IT
Long, thin, eel-like silver fish with a lime-green back and a black smudge between eye and snout. Lower jaw sticks out.

SIZE
Up to 35 cm, the largest sandeel (Wikipedia).

HABITAT
From the low-water mark to over 100 m, usually over clean sand (Wikipedia).

OFF SUSSEX
Not recorded in our sources

AROUND BRITAIN
Breeds March to August (Wikipedia). This is a breeding period, not a catch calendar.

METHODS
Not given in our sources

GROUP
Shoal and open-water fish

COME FISHING WITH US

Fish with Kestrel Warrior from Brighton Marina

The greater sandeel is not one of the fish our sources record off Sussex, so no Kestrel Warrior trip targets it. Come and fish the Sussex coast on one of our eight trips (Prices 2027):

- **Sightseeing tour** 1 hour, £20 pp
- **Squid and cuttlefish trip** 3 hours, £55 pp
- **Sea fishing trip at anchor, multiple species** 8 hours, £75 pp
- **Wreck fishing at anchor** 10 hours, £110 pp
- **Mackerel trip** 90 minutes, £27 pp
- **Sea fishing trip, multiple species** 4 hours, £55 pp
- **Flatfish drift trip** 8 hours, £90 pp
- **Shark fishing trip** 10 hours, £150 pp

Free tuition and free gutting and filleting of your catch. Rod hire £10 per person; fishing tackle is included on the shark trip.

Scan to book

Book: ring **07896 471691** (8am to 9pm, seven days a week) · info@kestrelwarrior6.co.uk · kestrelwarrior6.co.uk/contact/

About the greater sandeel

The greater sandeel is the biggest of the sandeels, and still not a big fish. It is long, thin and eel-like, silver along the sides with a lime-green back. Look closely and you will see a black smudge between the eye and the snout, and a lower jaw that sticks out. Fully grown, it reaches about 35 cm. It lives from the low-water mark down to well over 100 m, usually over clean sand, which is why it belongs to sandy ground rather than reef or wreck. It breeds from March to August, so those months tell you about its life cycle, not when to catch it. The thing worth knowing is its place in the food chain: sandeels are a key food for seabirds and for other fish, so this slim silver fish matters far more to the wider sea than its size suggests. Our sources give no fishing methods, no catch months and no Sussex notes for it, so we have kept to what is known. It is a neat, slim, silvery fish, and it is worth being able to recognise.

On the boat

We do not have a verified method, month or ground for catching greater sandeels from a boat. The species record gives no fishing methods and no Sussex months, so nothing is guessed here. What is known is where it lives: clean sand from the shoreline down past 100 m. It breeds March to August, but that is a breeding period, not a catch calendar.

British boat-caught record

None listed

No British boat-caught record is listed for this species. The official June 2026 list does carry a greater sandeel in its mini-species table: 239 g, B K Le Breton, Amfroque, Herm, Guernsey, Channel Islands, in 1979. That table does not split boat and shore catches, so it is not confirmed as a boat-caught fish.

Care and rules

The greater sandeel is not listed on the Gov.uk minimum conservation reference sizes page (checked 2026), so no landing size is given there. Sandeels are key food for seabirds and fish, which is a good reason to handle any you catch gently. Rules change: check the current rules before you fish.

Did you know?

Sandeels are a key food for seabirds and for other fish, so this slim silver fish matters far more to the wider sea than its size suggests.

Sources: Wikipedia: Hyperoplus lanceolatus; BRFC sea fish listings June 2026; Gov.uk MCRS in UK waters. The full guide, with links to every source: kestrelwarrior6.co.uk/sea-fish-guide/greater-sandeel/