

Rabbitfish sentinels: first report of coordinated vigilance in conspecific marine fishes

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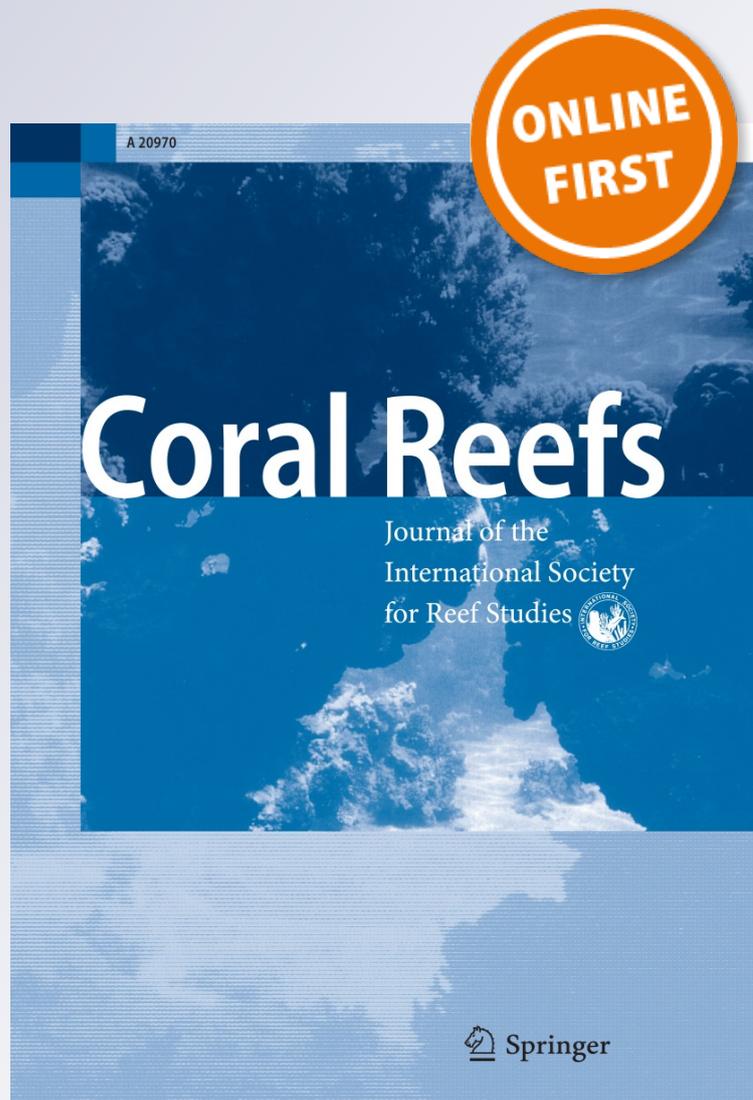
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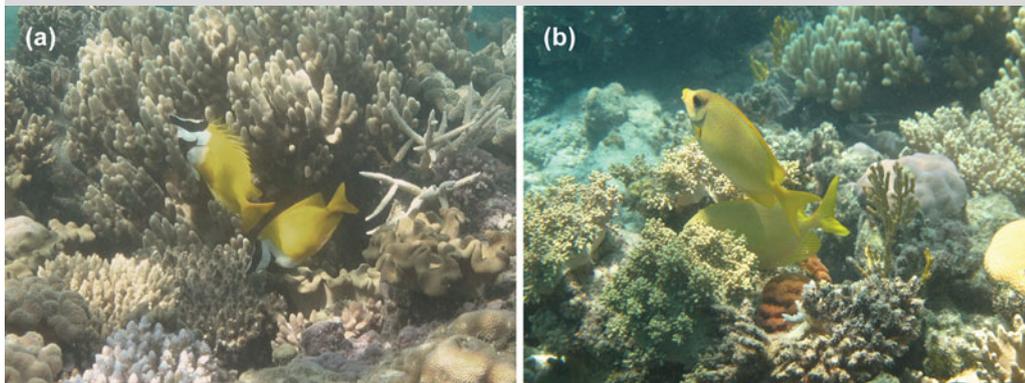


Fig. 1 Feeding behaviour of adult pairs of **a** *Siganus vulpinus* and **b** *S. corallinus* showing the sentinel position adopted by one member of the pair, whilst the other member feeds from a reef crevice or interstice

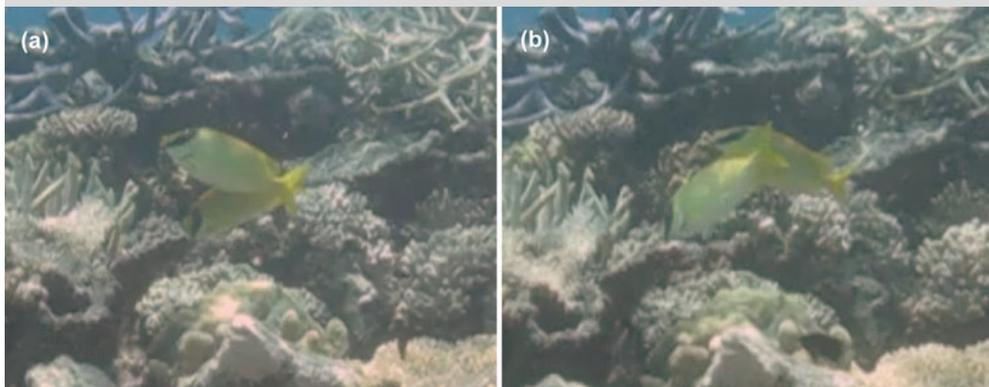


Fig. 2 Coordination of vigilance in a foraging pair of *S. puellus*. **a** Individual in the foreground adopts sentinel position whilst individual in the background feeds. **b** Individual in the background takes up the sentinel position and commences vigilance as individual in the foreground relinquishes vigilance and starts to feed. Images are taken from video footage. Identical reef surround in both images provides confirmation of frame of reference

therefore vigilance) is particularly compromised. We hypothesise that, in visually occluded habitats such as coral reefs, pairing species may gain a benefit by employing a strategy of coordinated vigilance, and we suggest that rabbitfishes may provide an alternative model organism with which to examine competing hypotheses regarding the evolutionary basis for sentinel behaviour.

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