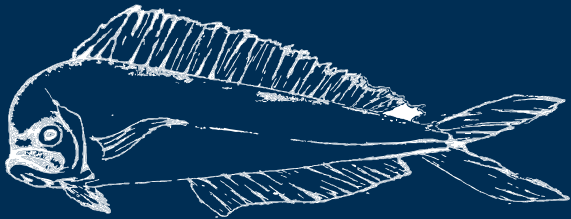


U.S. Salt Water Fish Guide

Game fish of the Atlantic, Carribean,
and Gulf of Mexico

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and Gulf of Mexico



Information compiled from the National Game and
Wildlife Association

Illustrations by
Jorge Luis Coya



About This Book

This is field guide reference to 15 of the top game marine fishes of the eastern North American coast from Arctic Canada to the Gulf of Mexico. This is a easy to use reference designed to identify 15 of the top game fish that live in coastal waters of these regions. Each illustration is as exact to each species as can be with all marks included to scale for identification of species.

Areas Covered

The areas covered run from the north Atlantic down the eastern coast of the United States down into the Florida Keys, the Caribbean Sea, and the Gulf of Mexico. This guide will tell you what regions each species can be found, approximate size for keeping, and what times of year each species is in season if they have a hunting regulation.

How To Use This Guide

This guide uses field guide identification of fishes seen either living underwater or caught and held in the hand. It is based on the illustrations and the text provided. To identify a fish in the guide first find similar body types that match that of your specimen. Then look for familiar markings and colors that might help identify your species. Pay particular attention to features such as fins and gill markings.

Map of Area Covered



Atlantic Ocean

Gulf of Mexico

Caribbean Sea



Atlantic Ocean

The second largest of the earth's four oceans the most heavily fished. Divided into two halves; North Atlantic and the South Atlantic. Its marginal seas— as followed. Gulf of Mexico and the Caribbean Sea.

Average Depth 12,881ft Surface Area 31,660,000

Gulf of Mexico

The ninth largest body of water in the world. Largely surrounded by the North American continent and Cuba. It connects with the Atlantic ocean thru the Florida Straits. It is an ocean basin with a circular shape.

Average Depth 14,383ft Surface Area 615,000,000

Caribbean Sea

The body of water adjacent to the Atlantic Ocean, south of the Gulf of Mexico. The entire area of the Caribbean Sea, especially the numerous islands in the sea, is known just as the Caribbean; Cuba, Haiti, Dominican Rep., Puerto Rico.

Average Depth 25,000ft Surface Area 1,063,000

Dolphin(mahi)

Coryphaena hippurus



Identification

Head and body bluish above:
golden yellow with dark flecks on the side; fins
bluish or greenish to a yellow. Pectoral fin which is
the fin located above the fishes head ranges to more
than half the head length. They grow up to 5.25ft.
and wiegh up to 88lbs.

Range

worldwide in tropical waters

Size Requirements

no size limit

Catch Per Day

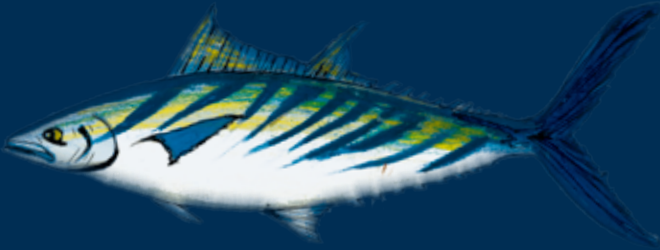
60 per person on boat

Seasonal requirement

no closed season

Atlantic Bonito

Sarda sarda



Identification

Body entirely scaled; Bluish above, silvery to whitish below. 7 or more oblique dark stripes on back. They can grow up to 3ft and weigh up to 19lbs.

Range

South Gulf of St. Lawrence to Argentina

Size Requirements

no size limit

Catch Per Day

60 per person on boat

Seasonal requirement

no closed season

Red Grouper

Epinephelus morio



Identification

Dark Brown with a redish cast, particularly around the mouth. Body frequently blotched with poorly defined pale areas. Small black spots around eye. They grow up to 3.5ft and wiegh up to 50lbs.

Range

Massachusettes, Bermuda and north Gulf of Mexico to south east Brazil.

Size Requirements

20" minimum

Catch Per Day

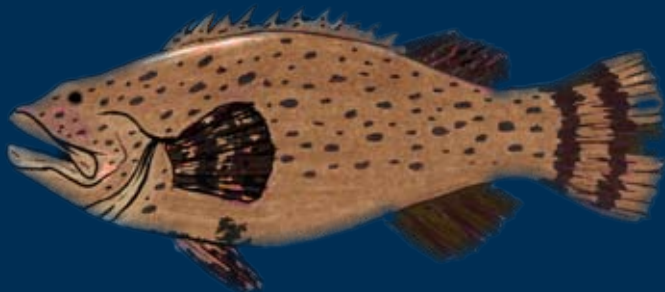
5 per person on boat

Seasonal requirement

no closed season

Jew Fish

Epinephelus itajara



Identification

Head and body pale dark brown with irregular brown bands. Large adults have brown spots on heads and fins. Spots are rounded at all sizes. They can grow up to 8ft and weigh up to 680lbs.

Range

Bermuda, Florida, and north Gulf of Mexico to south east Brazil

Size Requirements

no size limit

Catch Per Day

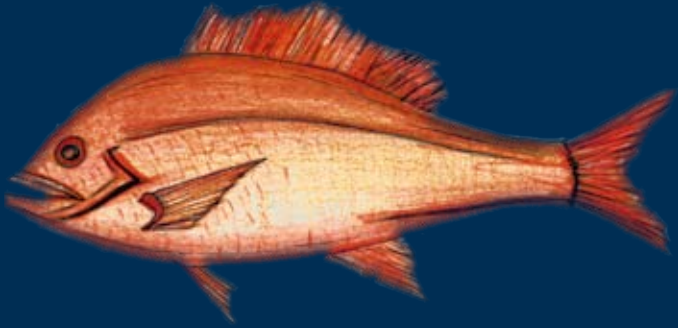
Catch and release only

Seasonal requirement

no closed season

Red Snapper

Lutjanus campechanus



Identification

Head and body entirely pinkish red, becoming whitish below. Iris red and anal fin pointed. They grow up to 3ft and weigh up to 35lbs.

Range

North Carolina to the Florida Keys and around the Gulf of Mexico to the Yucatan.

Size Requirements

20" minimum

Catch Per Day

No more than 2 per person on boat

Seasonal requirement

no closed season

Yellow Tail

Ocyurus chrysurus



Identification

Bright yellow stripes from snout to tail tip. Deeply forked tail olive or bluish spots and stripes with olive yellow spots. Dorsal fins mostly yellow. Grow up to 30" and weigh up to 5lbs.

Range

Massachusetts, Bermuda, and north Gulf of Mexico to south east Brazil. Also in east Atlantic

Size Requirements

12" minimum

Catch Per Day

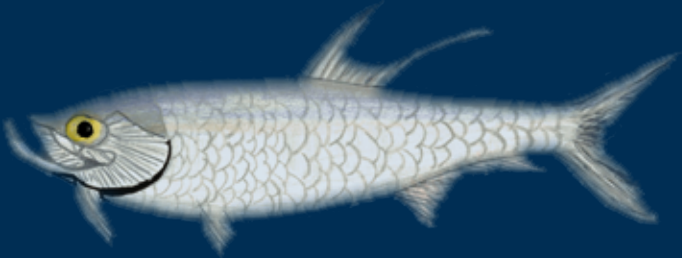
10 per person on boat

Seasonal requirement

no closed season

Tarpon

Megalops atlanticus



Identification

Silvery, with a dark greenish or bluish back. Mouth large, oblique, superior; lower jaw projects. They can grow up to 8ft and weigh up to 300lbs.

Range

Virginia , Bermuda, and Gulf of Mexico to Brazil; also east Atlantic; occasionally near the Panama Canal

Size Requirements

no size limit

Catch Per Day

1 per person on boat

Seasonal requirement

no closed season

Barracuda

Sphyraena barracuda



Identification

Grey with a greenish cast above. whitish below. Many irregular, small black blotches on lower side. Dark stripe on side.

Range

Massachusetts to south east Brazil; nearly worldwide in warm waters

Size Requirements

no size limit

Catch Per Day

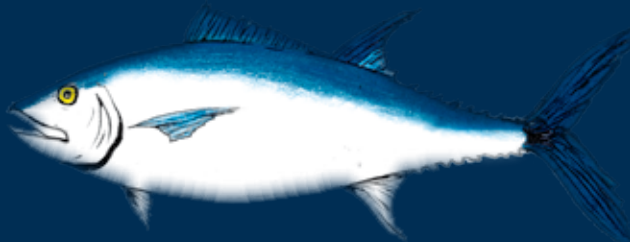
4 per person on boat

Seasonal requirement

no closed season

King Mackerel

Scomberomorus maculatus



Identification

Dark bluish above; silvery whitish below. Adults have no markings but young (not shown) have many round dark spots with a gold yellow cast. They grow up to 66" and weigh up to 100lbs.

Range

Massachusetts to north Gulf of Mexico to south Brazil.

Size Requirements

24" minimum

Catch Per Day

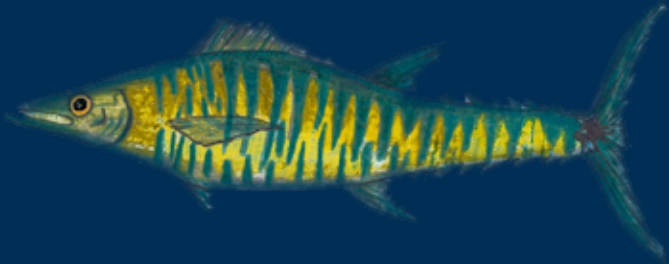
3 per person on boat

Seasonal requirement

March 1 to February 28

Wahoo

Acanthocybium solanderi



Identification

Body slender and elongated jaw form a pointed beak.
Dark bluish above with 30 or so dark wavy bars.
They grow up to 83" and weigh up to 183lbs.

Range

New Jersey, Bermuda, and north Gulf of Mexico to
northern South America; worldwide in
warm-temperate oceanic waters.

Size Requirements

no size limit

Catch Per Day

2 per person on boat

Seasonal requirement

no closed season

Spanish Mackerel

Scomberomorus maculatus



Identification

Many large dark brown and brassy spots, even in adults. Lateral line slopes evenly downward. 1st dorsal fin blackish. They grow up to 37" and weigh about 11lbs.

Range

Cape Cod to south Florida and entire Gulf of Mexico, Cuban waters and Haitian waters.

Size Requirements

12" minimum

Catch Per Day

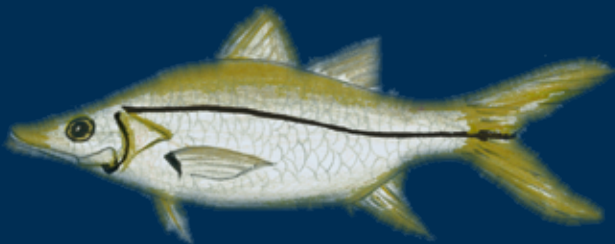
15 per person on boat

Seasonal requirement

March 1 to February 28

Common Snook

Centropomus undecimalis



Identification

Body slender and lateral line boldly outlined in black. Golden luster above with a fade to white. They grow up to 4ft and weigh up to 50lbs.

Range

South Carolina and Texas to south Brazil.

Size Requirements

8" minimum

Catch Per Day

8 per person on boat

Seasonal requirement

no closed season

Blue Marlin

Makaira nigricans



Identification

Lateral line branches into a network of hexagons that cover the sides of the fish. Dorsal fins are very spiny with a dark tint to them which lightens towards the belly. They can grow up to

Range

Gulf of Mexico, Bermuda, and north Gulf of Mexico to south Brazil; in tropical warm-temperate waters.

Size Requirements

99" minimum

Catch Per Day

15 per person on boat

Seasonal requirement

May be caught but not sold.

Tiger Shark

Galeocerdo cuvieri



Identification

Dark bluish gray to white with dark blotches and bars. Snout very short, broadly rounded from below. They can grow up to 24 ft. but is rare.

Range

Cape Cod to Uruguay, but most common from Florida thru the Carribean; nearly worldwide in warm waters.

Size Requirements

54" minimum

Catch Per Day

Catch and release

Seasonal requirement

no closed season

Ballyhoo

Hemiramphus brasiliensis



Identification

Tip of lower jaw and upper jaw pointed. Pectoral fin short. They grow up to 16"

Range

Massachusetts and north Gulf of Mexico to Brazil..

Size Requirements

No size requirement

Catch Per Day

15 per person on boat

Seasonal requirement

Caught by net only with intent to be used as bait

Inches

1

2

3

4

5

6





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More information please visit www.fws.gov