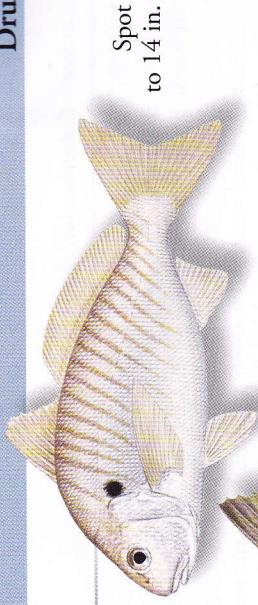


Spot - *Leiostomus xanthurus* Lacepède, 1802

FEATURES: Silvery gray with coppery to pinkish highlights dorsally. Silvery on sides and below. Upper body with 11-15 oblique, brownish bars. Distinct black spot behind upper opercular margin. Snout short, rounded. Mouth small, nearly horizontal. Dorsal profile arched. **HABITAT:** MA to FL, in Gulf of Mexico from FL to Veracruz. Found in coastal waters over sandy and muddy bottoms from near shore to about 197 ft. **BIOLOGY:** Spot feed mainly on bottom-dwelling worms, crustaceans, and detritus. Migrate into estuaries in summer and fall.

Spot
to 14 in.**Southern kingfish - *Menticirrhus americanus* (Linnaeus, 1758)**

FEATURES: Silvery gray to golden brown dorsally and on sides. Ventral area white. Intensity of color varies. Often with 7-8 faint to dark brownish bands on upper body when present, first two bands form V-shape. Mouth small, nearly horizontal. Ventral profile nearly straight. Abdomen flattened. **HABITAT:** MA to S FL, Gulf of Mexico, western Caribbean Sea to Brazil. Rare in S FL and Venezuela. Over sandy mud to hard sand bottoms in shallow coastal waters. Also in surf and estuaries. **BIOLOGY:** Feed on bottom-dwelling invertebrates. Other name: Southern kingcroaker.

Southern kingfish
to 23.6 in.**Gulf kingfish - *Menticirrhus littoralis* (Holbrook, 1847)**

FEATURES: Pale silvery gray dorsally and on sides. Ventral area white. First dorsal-fin tip dusky. Upper caudal-fin tip usually black. Body otherwise unmarked. Mouth small, nearly horizontal. Ventral profile nearly straight. Abdomen flattened. **HABITAT:** VA to FL, Gulf of Mexico, western Caribbean Sea to Brazil. In surf and over sandy and sandy mud bottoms. Occasionally in estuaries. **BIOLOGY:** Feed on bottom-dwelling invertebrates. Sought as foodfish. Other names: Gulf whiting, Sea mullet.

Gulf kingfish
to 23.6 in.**Northern kingfish - *Menticirrhus saxatilis* (Bloch & Schneider, 1801)**

FEATURES: Silvery gray to golden brown dorsally and on sides. Always with at least five broad to narrow bands on upper body. First and third bands form V-shape. Horizontal stripe from about mid-body to caudal fin. Mouth small, nearly horizontal. Second dorsal-fin spine elongate. Ventral profile nearly straight. Abdomen flattened. **HABITAT:** ME to FL, in Gulf of Mexico from FL to Campeche Bay. In shallow coastal waters over sandy mud bottoms, also in surf and in estuaries.

Northern kingfish
to 18 in.**Atlantic croaker - *Micropogonias undulatus* (Linnaeus, 1766)**

FEATURES: Silvery gray dorsally with pinkish to golden reflections. Sides silvery to golden. Ventral area silvery. Brownish spots on sides form numerous oblique, broken bars. Dorsal fins with dusky spots along base. Dark blotch at pectoral-fin base. Preopercle serrated, spiny at corner. Caudal fin trilobed in adults. **HABITAT:** MA to FL, in Gulf of Mexico from FL to Campeche Bay. Over sandy and muddy bottoms in coastal waters from near shore to about 197 ft. Also in estuaries. **BIOLOGY:** Atlantic croaker feed on bottom-dwelling worms, crustaceans, and small fishes. Caught by hook-and-line and in trawl bycatch. Other name: Croaker.

Atlantic croaker
to 19.7 in.