

Fish Identification

North Carolina Division of Marine Fisheries' Guide to Coastal Fishes



Fish Identification? How does it work? We've divided the fish which are commonly found in Coastal North Carolina into several categories. These relate to either the type of fish (tunas, billfish, etc) or the locations where they are most commonly caught. Of course, sometimes some of the fish in the Offshore/Reef group might swim closer to shore and be found where you would expect Inshore/Coastal fish. Likewise some of the Inshore/Coastal fish are as much at home offshore as inshore. We have also listed all the fish by name only, in case you have no idea where they are commonly caught.



All fish illustrations by Duane Raver, Jr. from the book
Fisherman's Guide
Fishes of the Southeastern United States
by Chuck Manooch and Duane Raver

For information on the book contact:
Chuck Manooch camanooch@starfishnet.com
252-726-4711 or Duane Raver 919-550-9873

Fish Identification

North Carolina Division of Marine Fisheries' Guide to Coastal Fishes

Atlantic Spadefish, Angelfish
Chaetodipterus faber

Size / Catch Limits: See Recreational
Coastal Waters Guide



Spanish Mackerel, Spaniard
Scomberomorus maculatus

Citation Size: see Citation Sizes Saltwater
Fishing Tournament

Size / Catch Limits: See Recreational
Coastal Waters Guide



Spottail Pinfish
Diplodus holbrooki



Spot
Leiostomus xanthurus

Citation Size: see Citation Sizes Saltwater
Fishing Tournament



Fish Identification

North Carolina Division of Marine Fisheries' Guide to Coastal Fishes

Northern Searobin
Prionotus carolinus



Sheepshead
Archosargus probatocephalus
Citation Size: see Citation Sizes Saltwater
Fishing Tournament
Size / Catch Limits: See Recreational
Coastal Waters Guide



Silver Perch
Bairdiella chrysoura



Skate
Raja eglanteria



Fish Identification

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Pinfish

Lagodon rhomboides



Pompano

Trachinotus carolinus



Red Drum, Channel Bass,

Puppy Drum, Redfish

Sciaenops ocellatus

N.C.'s State Saltwater Fish

Citation Size: see Citation Sizes Saltwater
Fishing Tournament

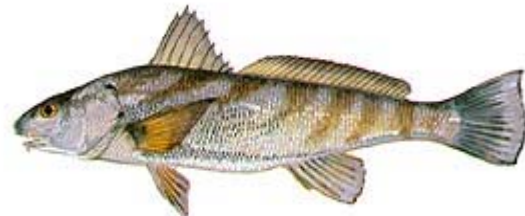
Size / Catch Limits: See Recreational
Coastal Waters Guide



Sea Mullet, Whiting, Southern Kingfish*

Menticirrhus americanus

Citation Size: see Citation Sizes Saltwater
Fishing Tournament



*N.C. is home to several very similar species of Kingfishes commonly referred to as Sea Mullets.

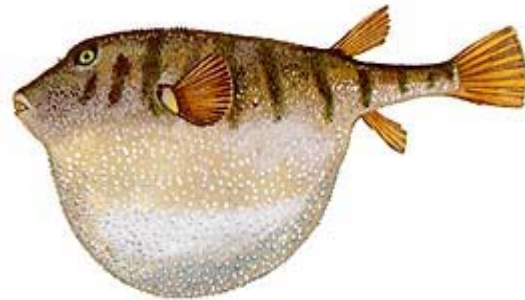
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North Carolina Division of Marine Fisheries' Guide to Coastal Fishes

Atlantic Menhaden, Pogy, Bunker
brevoortia tyrannus



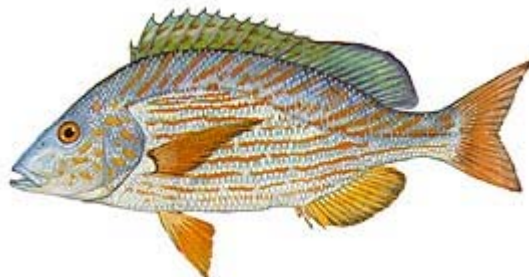
Northern Puffer, Swell Toad, Blowfish
Sphoeroides maculatus



Oyster Toadfish
Opsanus tau



Pigfish, Hogfish
Orthopristis chrysotera



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Hickory Shad

Alosa mediocris

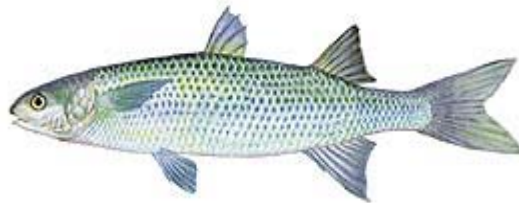
Size / Catch Limits: See Recreational
Coastal Waters Guide



Jumping Mullet, Striped Mullet

Mugil cephalus

Size / Catch Limits: See Recreational
Coastal Waters Guide



King Mackerel, Kingfish

Scomberomorus cavalla

Citation Size: see Citation Sizes Saltwater
Fishing Tournament.

Size / Catch Limits: See Recreational
Coastal Waters Guide



Inshore Lizardfish

Synodus foetens



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Cobia, Crab Eater, Lemonfish
Rachycentron canadum

Citation Size: see Citation Sizes Saltwater Fishing Tournament.

Size / Catch Limits: See Recreational Coastal Waters Guide



Croaker

Micropogonias undulatus

Citation Size: see Citation Sizes Saltwater Fishing Tournament.

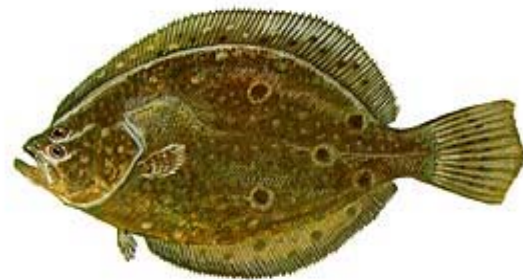


Flounder

Paralichthys dentatus (Summer)
Paralichthys lethostigma (Southern)
Paralichthys albigutta (Gulf)

Citation Size: see Citation Sizes Saltwater Fishing Tournament.

Size / Catch Limits: See Recreational Coastal Waters Guide



Gray Trout, Weakfish
Cynoscion regalis

Citation Size: see Citation Sizes Saltwater Fishing Tournament.

Size / Catch Limits: See Recreational Coastal Waters Guide



Fish Identification

North Carolina Division of Marine Fisheries' Guide to Coastal Fishes

Black Drum

Pogonias cromis

Citation Size: see Citation Sizes Saltwater Fishing Tournament.



Black Sea Bass, Sea Bass

Centropristis striata

Citation Size: see Citation Sizes Saltwater Fishing Tournament

Size / Catch Limits: See Recreational Coastal Waters Guide

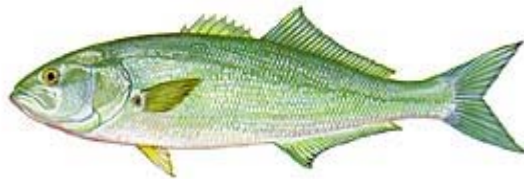


Bluefish, Snapper, Blue

Pomatomus saltatrix

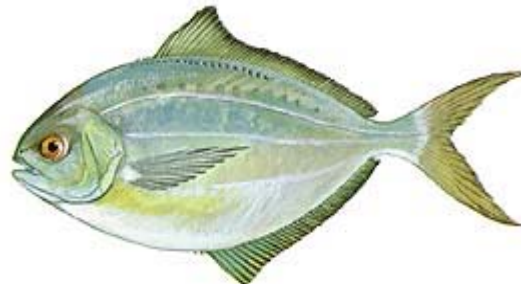
Citation Size: see Citation Sizes Saltwater Fishing Tournament.

Size / Catch Limits: See Recreational Coastal Waters Guide



Butterfish

Peprilus triacanthus



Fish Identification

North Carolina Division of Marine Fisheries' Guide to Coastal Fishes

Speckled Trout

Cynoscion nebulosus

Citation Size: see Citation Sizes Saltwater
Fishing Tournament

Size / Catch Limits: See Recreational
Coastal Waters Guide

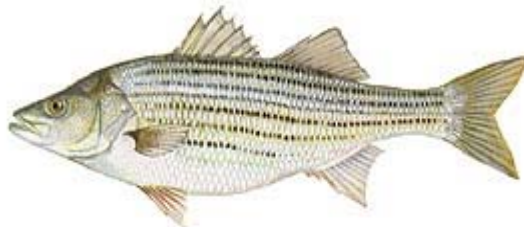


Striped Bass, Rock

Morone saxatilis

Citation Size: see Citation Sizes Saltwater
Fishing Tournament

Size / Catch Limits: See Recreational
Coastal Waters Guide



Tarpon

Megalops atlanticus

Citation Size: see Citation Sizes Saltwater
Fishing Tournament

Size / Catch Limits: See Recreational
Coastal Waters Guide



Stingray

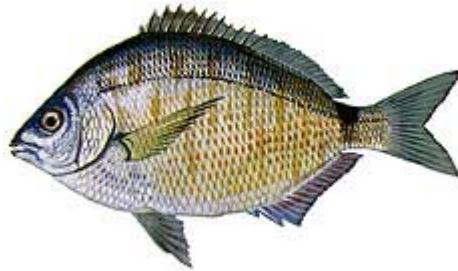
Dasyatis americana



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Spottail Pinfish
Diplodus holbrooki



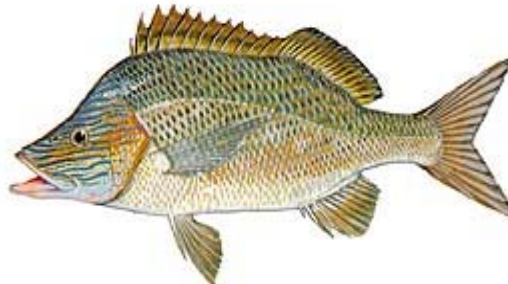
Vermillion Snapper, Beeliner
Rhomboplites aurorubens
Size / Catch Limits: See Recreational
Coastal Waters Guide



Wahoo
Acanthocybium solanderi
Citation Size: see Citation Sizes Saltwater
Fishing Tournament
Size / Catch Limits: See Recreational
Coastal Waters Guide



White Grunt, Grunt, Redmouth
Haemulon plumieri
Size / Catch Limits: See Recreational
Coastal Waters Guide



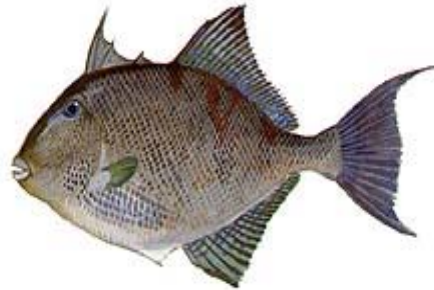
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Gray Triggerfish

Balistes capriscus

Size / Catch Limits: See Recreational
Coastal Waters Guide



Scamp

Mycteroperca phenax

Size / Catch Limits: See Recreational
Coastal Waters Guide



Silver Snapper, Red Porgy

Pagrus pagrus

Size / Catch Limits: See Recreational
Coastal Waters Guide



Speckled Hind, Strawberry Grouper, Kitty Mitchell

Epinephelus drummondhayi

Size / Catch Limits: See Recreational
Coastal Waters Guide



Fish Identification

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Hogfish

Lachnolaimus maximus

Size / Catch Limits: See Recreational
Coastal Waters Guide



King Mackerel, Kingfish

Scomberomorus cavalla

Citation Size: see Citation Sizes Saltwater
Fishing Tournament

Size / Catch Limits: See Recreational
Coastal Waters Guide



Knobbed Porgy

Calamus nodosus

Citation Size: see Citation Sizes Saltwater
Fishing Tournament

Size / Catch Limits: See Recreational
Coastal Waters Guide

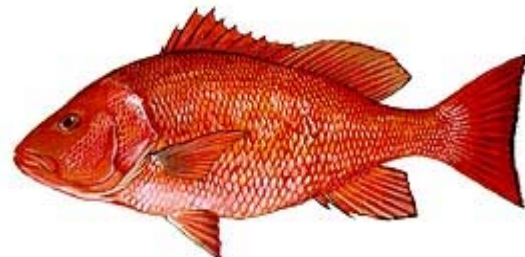


Red Snapper, American Red Snapper

Lutjanus campechanus

Citation Size: see Citation Sizes Saltwater
Fishing Tournament

Size / Catch Limits: See Recreational
Coastal Waters Guide



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Bluefish, Snapper, Blue *Pomatomus saltatrix*

Citation Size: see Citation Sizes Saltwater
Fishing Tournament

Size / Catch Limits: See Recreational
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Blueline Tilefish

Caulolatilus microps

Size / Catch Limits: See Recreational
Coastal Waters Guide

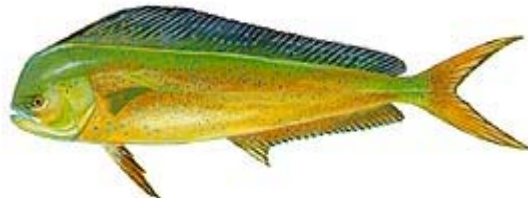


Dolphin

Corypaena hippurus

Citation Size: see Citation Sizes Saltwater
Fishing Tournament

Size / Catch Limits: See Recreational
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Gag

Mycteroperca microlepis

Size / Catch Limits: See Recreational
Coastal Waters Guide



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Amberjack

Seriola dumerili

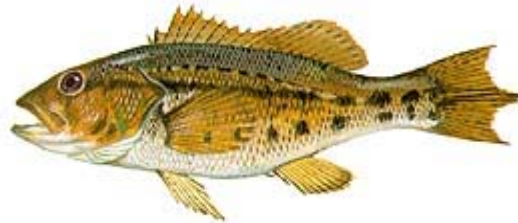
Citation Size: see Citation Sizes Saltwater Fishing Tournament

Size / Catch Limits: See Recreational Coastal Waters Guide



Bank Sea Bass, Yellow Sea Bass

Centropristis ocyurus



Barracuda

Sphyraena barracuda

Citation Size: see Citation Sizes Saltwater Fishing Tournament



Black Sea Bass, Sea Bass

Centropristis striata

Citation Size: see Citation Sizes Saltwater Fishing Tournament

Size / Catch Limits: See Recreational Coastal Waters Guide



Fish Identification

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Yellowedge Grouper, Grouper

Epinephelus flavolimbatus

Size / Catch Limits: See Recreational
Coastal Waters Guide

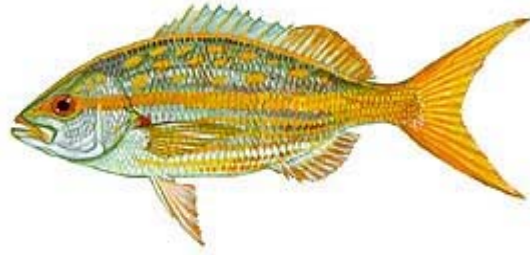


Yellowtail Snapper

Ocyurus chrysurus

Citation Size: see Citation Sizes Saltwater
Fishing Tournament

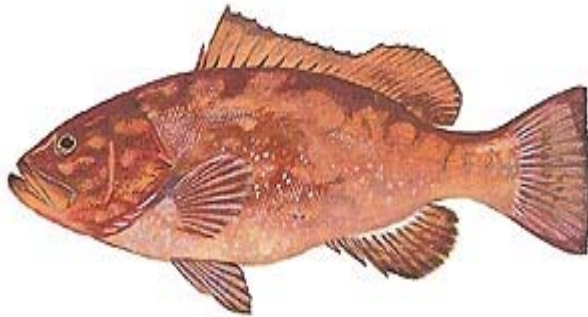
Size / Catch Limits: See Recreational
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Red Grouper, Grouper

Epinephelus morio

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Albacore, Tuna
Thunnus alalunga



Atlantic Bonito, Bonito
Sarda sarda



Bigeye Tuna, Tuna
Thunnus obesus
Citation Size: see Citation Sizes Saltwater
Fishing Tournament
Size / Catch Limits: See Recreational
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Blackfin Tuna, Tuna
Thunnus atlanticus
Size / Catch Limits: See Recreational
Coastal Waters Guide



Fish Identification

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Bluefin Tuna, Tuna

Thunnus thynnus

Citation Size: see Citation Sizes Saltwater
Fishing Tournament

Size / Catch Limits: See Recreational
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King Mackerel, Kingfish

Scomberomorus cavalla

Citation Size: see Citation Sizes Saltwater
Fishing Tournament

Size / Catch Limits: See Recreational
Coastal Waters Guide



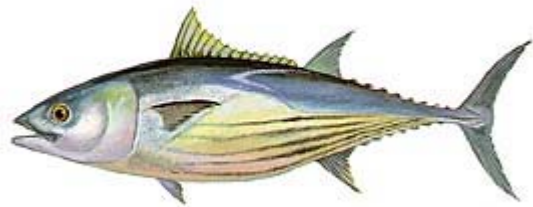
Little Tunny, False Albacore, Spotted Bonito

Euthynnus alletteratus



Skipjack Tuna, Albacore, Oceanic Bonito

Euthynnus pelamis



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Spanish Mackerel, Spaniard

Scomberomorus maculatus

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Wahoo

Acanthocybium solanderi

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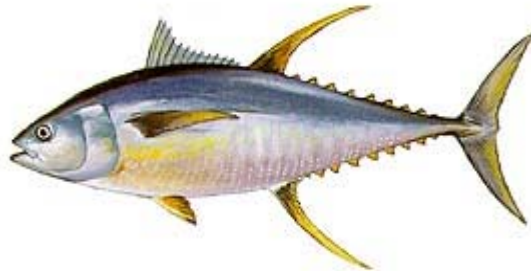


Yellowfin Tuna, Longfin Tuna

Thunnus albacares

Citation Size: see Citation Sizes Saltwater
Fishing Tournament

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Blue Marlin

Makaira nigricans

Citation Size: See Citation Sizes Saltwater Fishing Tournament

Size / Catch Limits: See Recreational Coastal Waters Guide



Sailfish

Istiophorus platypterus

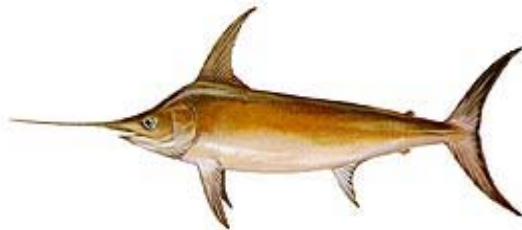
Citation Size: See Citation Sizes Saltwater Fishing Tournament

Size / Catch Limits: See Recreational Coastal Waters Guide



Swordfish

Xiphias gladius



White Marlin

Tetrapturus albidus

Citation Size: See Citation Sizes Saltwater Fishing Tournament

Size / Catch Limits: See Recreational Coastal Waters Guide



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Black Tip

Carcharhinus limbatus

Size / Catch Limits: See Recreational
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Hammerhead

Sphyrna lewini

Size / Catch Limits: See Recreational
Coastal Waters Guide



Mako

Isurus oxyrinchus

Size / Catch Limits: See Recreational
Coastal Waters Guide



Tiger

Galeocedo cuvieri

Size / Catch Limits: See Recreational
Coastal Waters Guide



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