



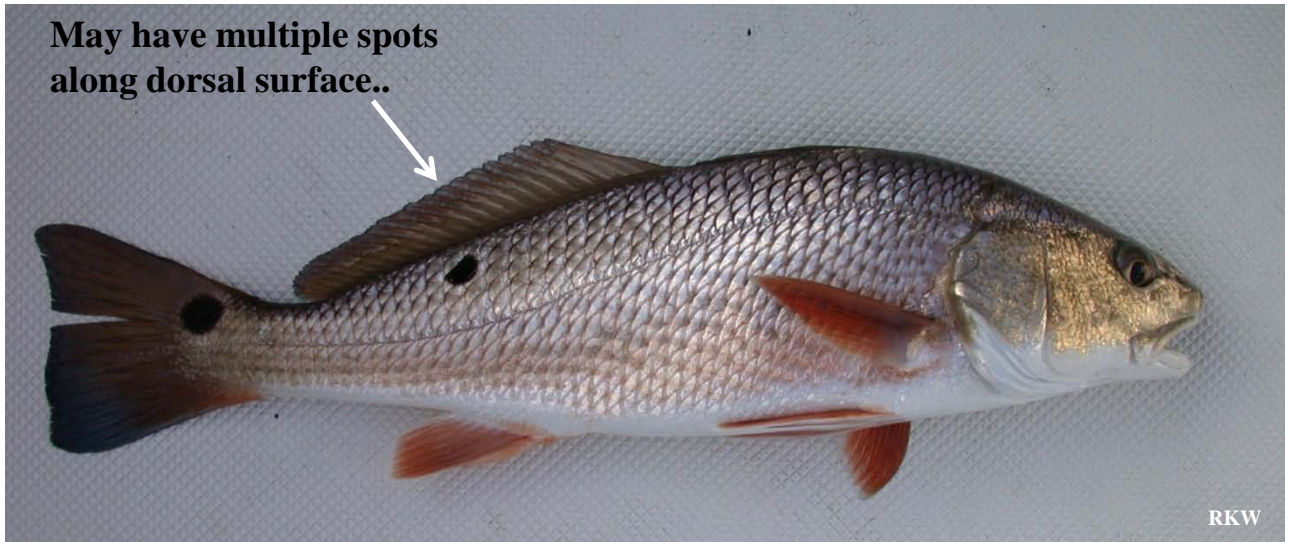
Identification Guide
To
South Carolina Fishes



Inshore Fishes

Red Drum
(Spottail, redfish, channel bass, puppy drum,)
Sciaenops ocellatus

May have multiple spots
along dorsal surface..



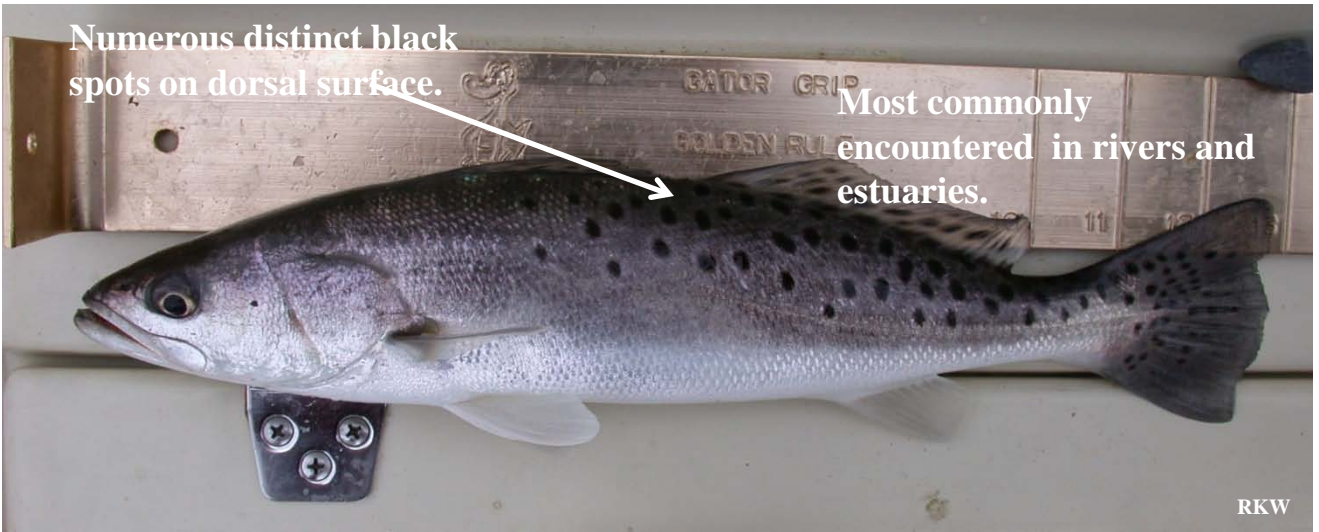
Black Drum
Pogonias cromis

Broad black vertical bars
along body.



Spotted Seatrout (Winter trout, speckled trout)

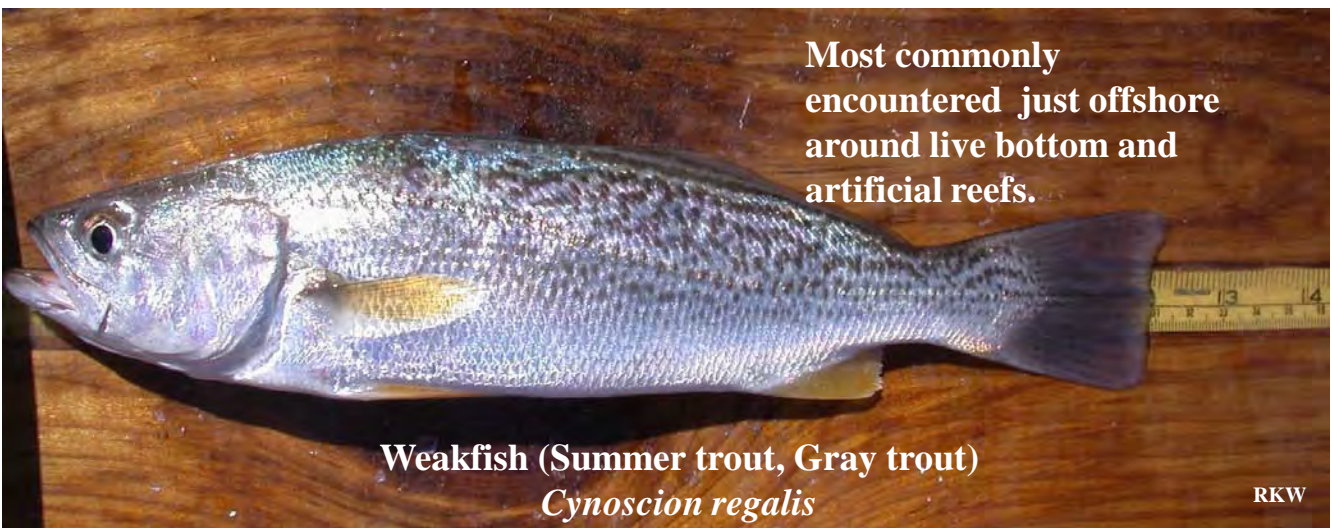
Cynoscion nebulosus



Numerous distinct black spots on dorsal surface.

Most commonly encountered in rivers and estuaries.

RKW



Most commonly encountered just offshore around live bottom and artificial reefs.

Weakfish (Summer trout, Gray trout)

Cynoscion regalis

RKW



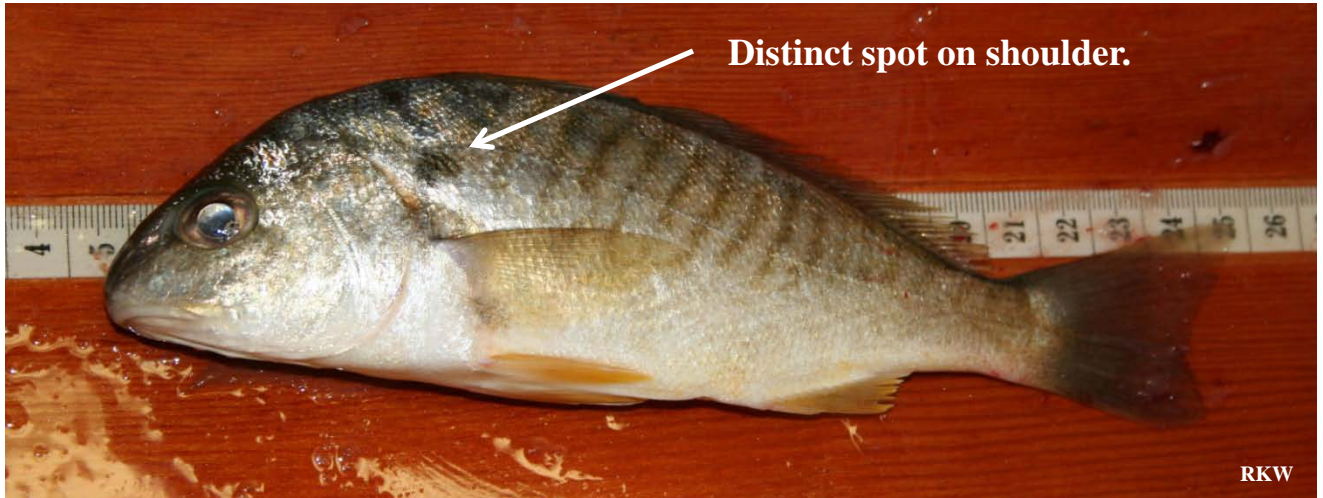
Silver coloration with no spots.

Large eye

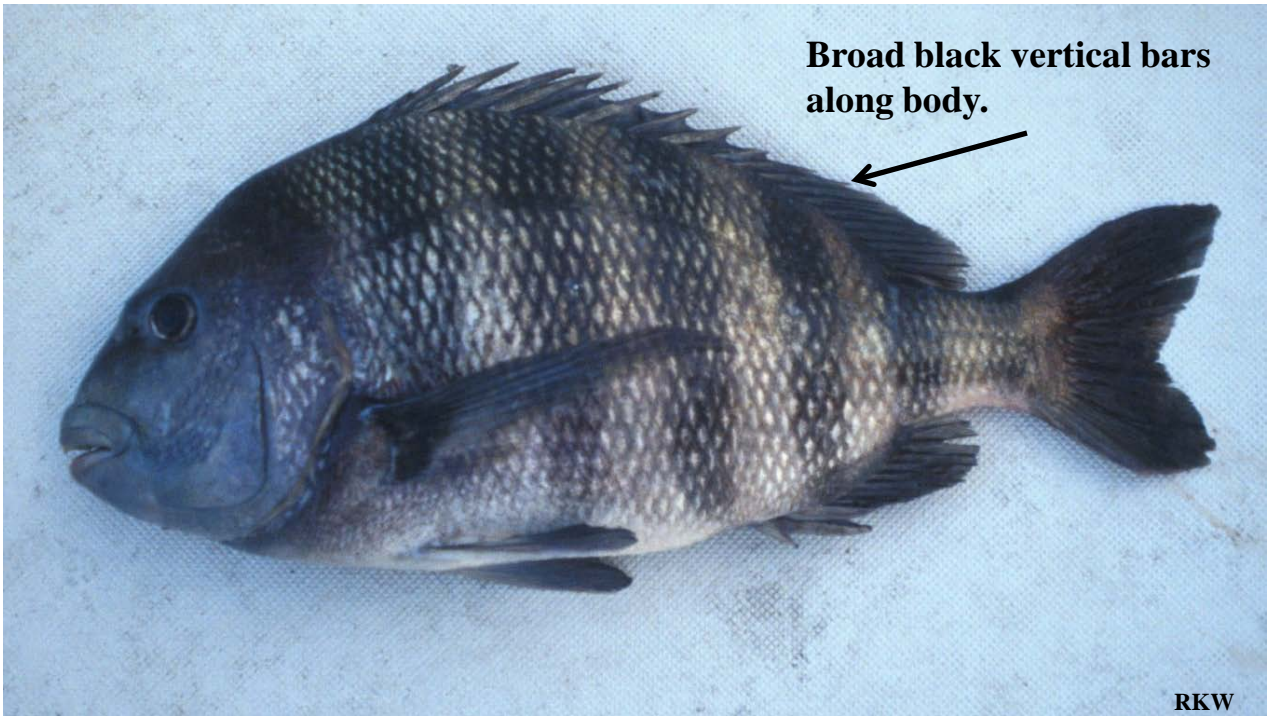
Silver Seatrout
Cynoscion nothus

RKW

Spot
Leiostomus xanthurus



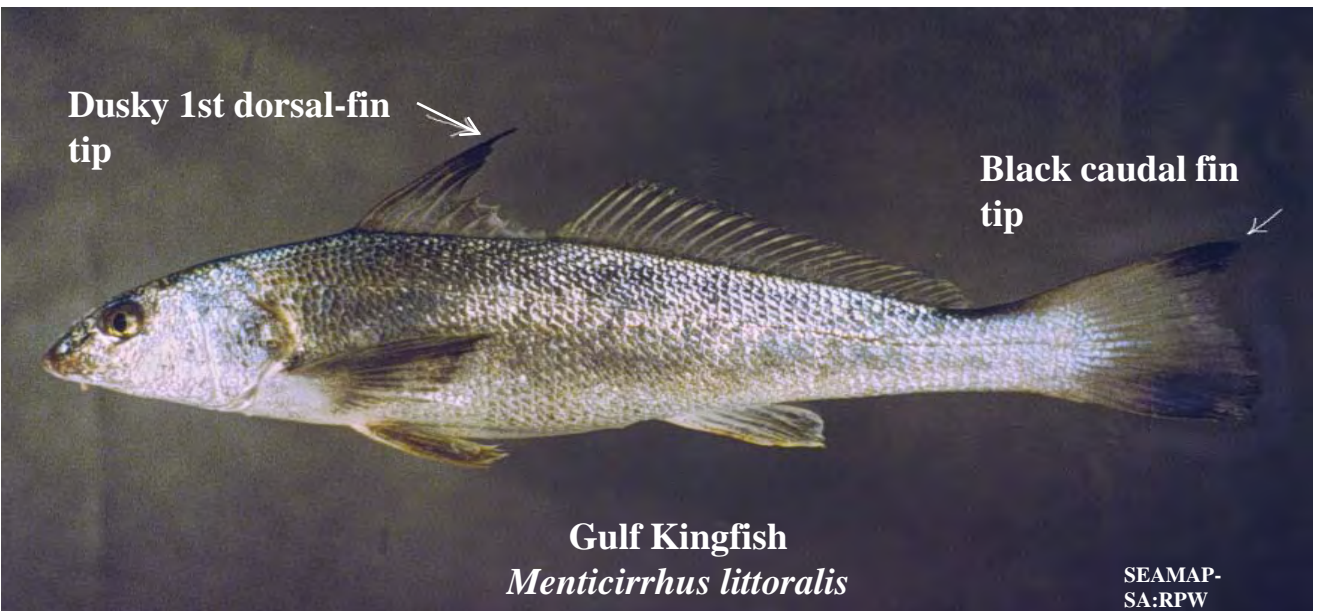
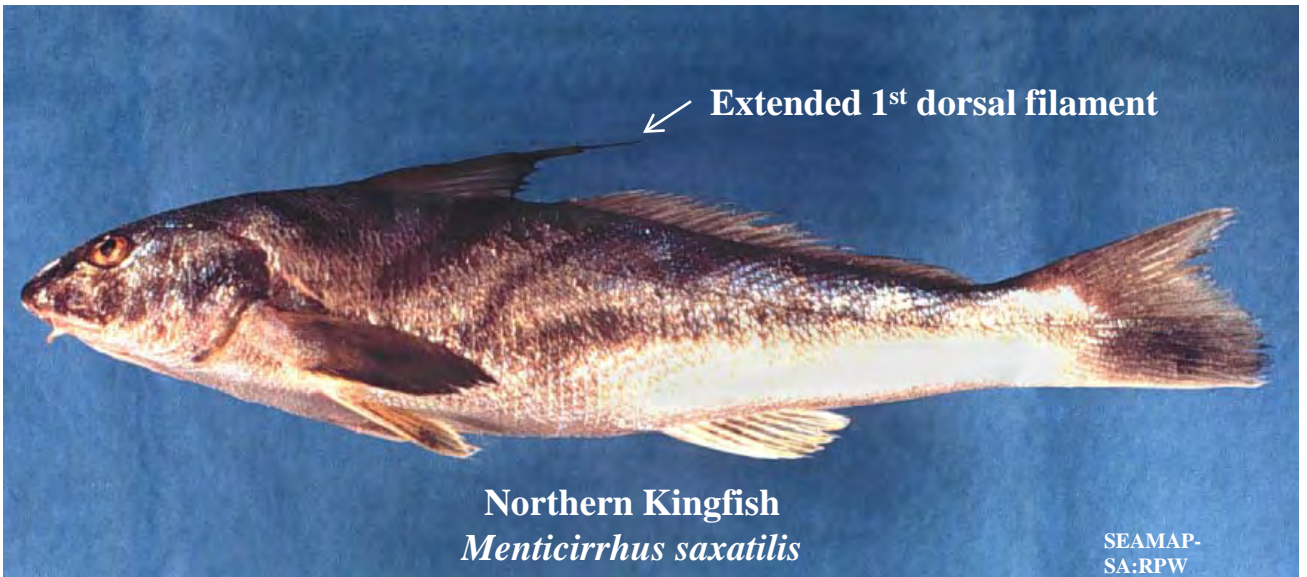
Sheepshead
Archosargus probatocephalus



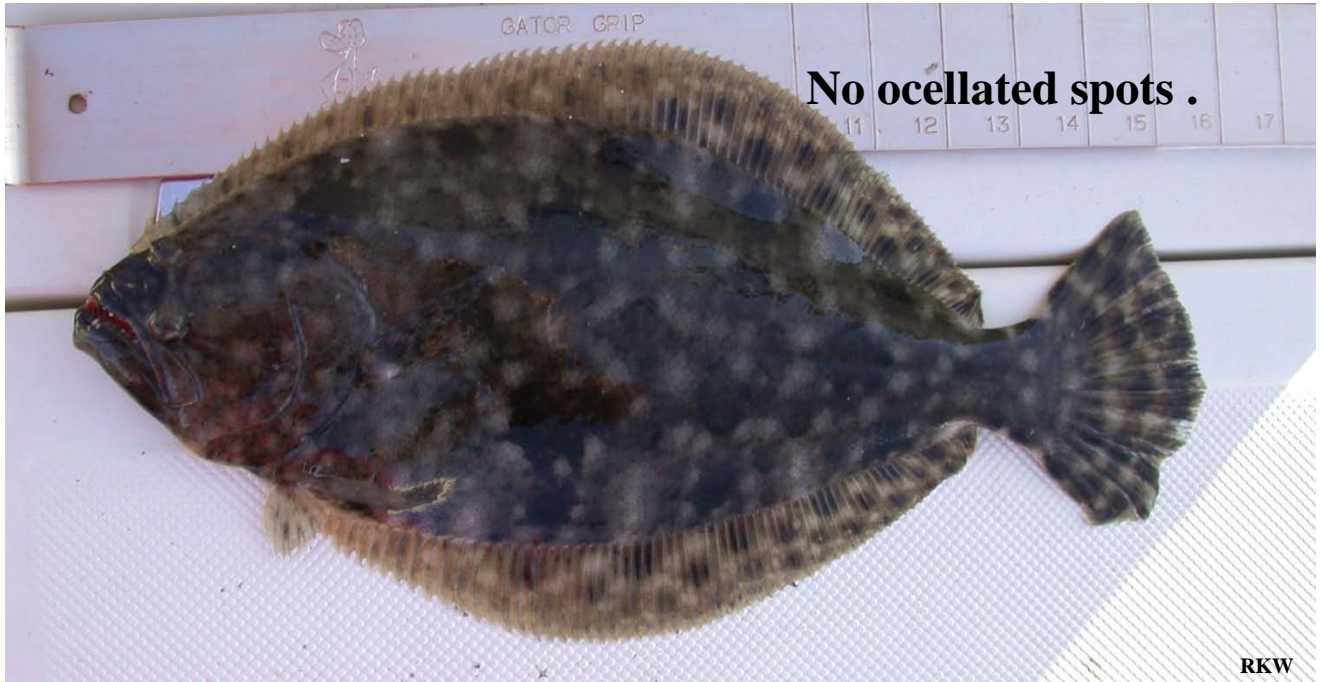
Pinfish (Sailors Choice)
Lagodon rhomboides



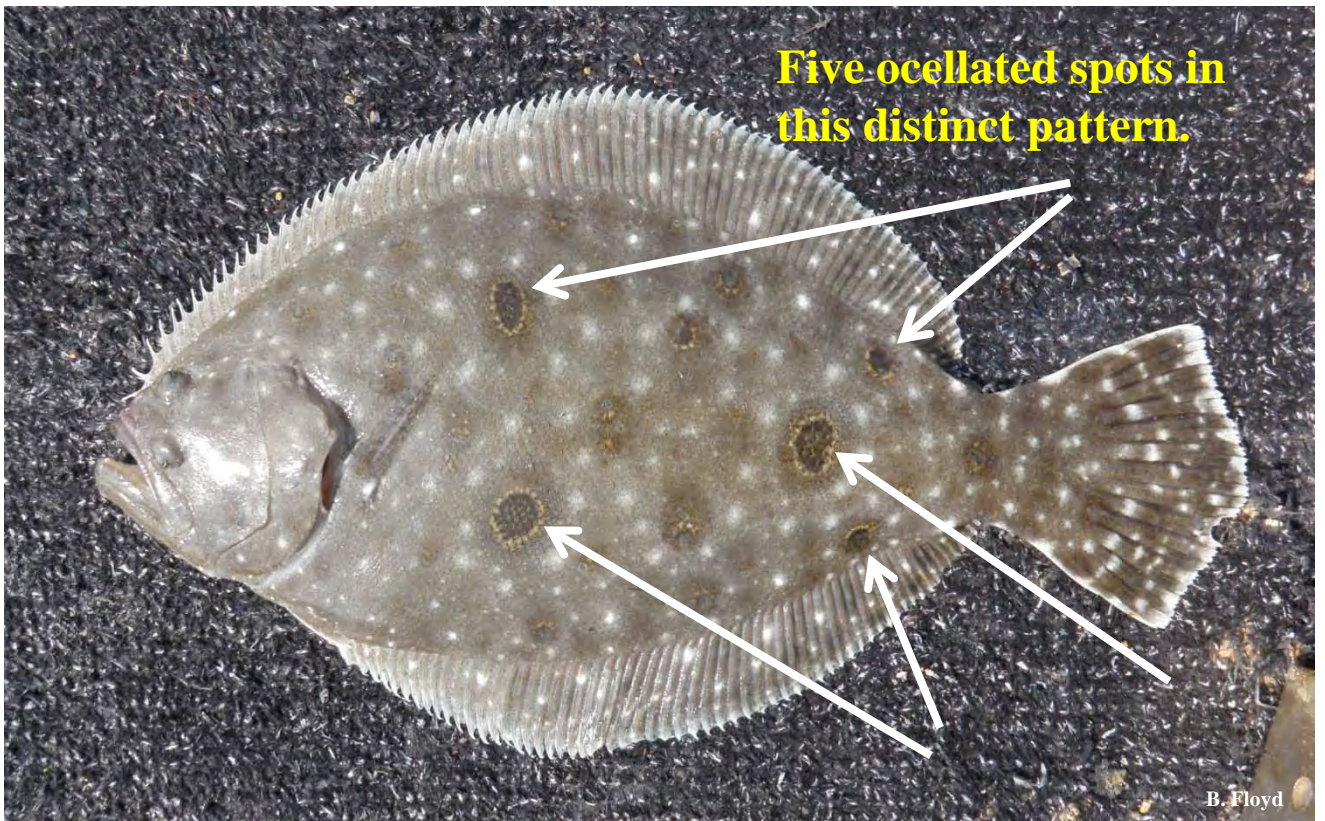
Southern Kingfish (Whiting)
Menticirrhus americanus



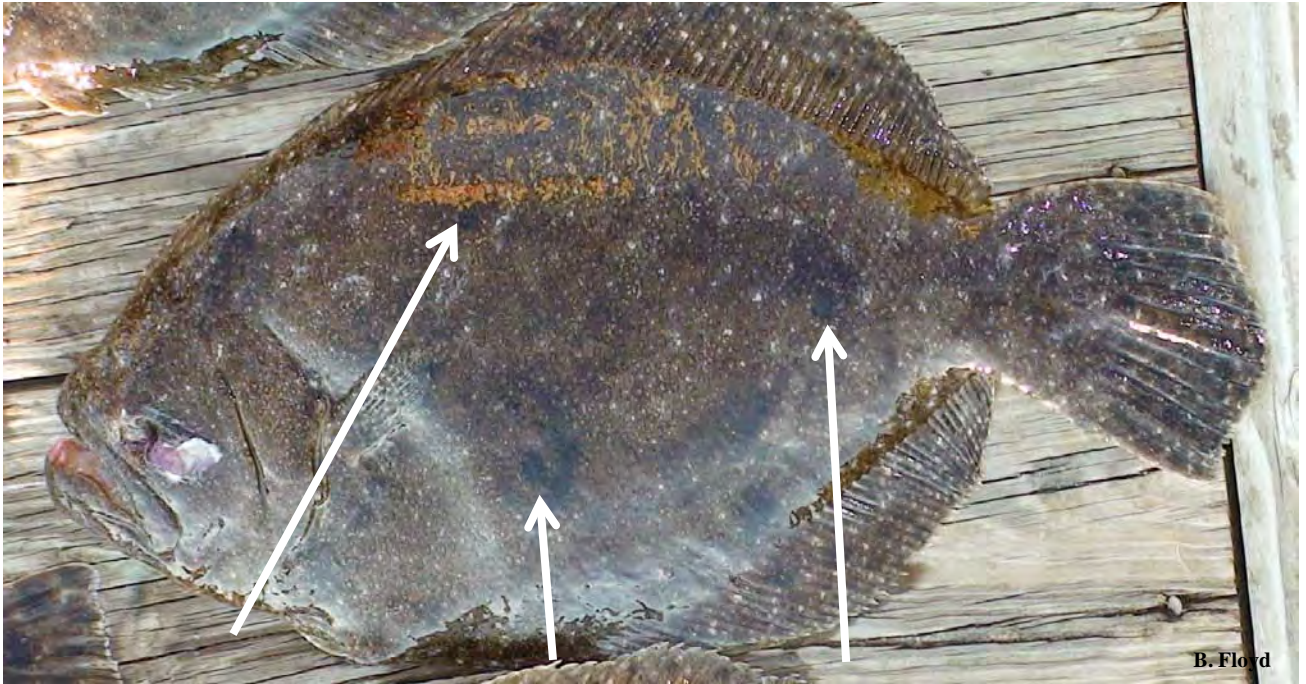
Southern flounder
Paralichthys lethostigma



Summer flounder
Paralichthys dentatus



Gulf flounder
Paralichthys albigutta



**Three ocellated spots in
a triangle pattern.**

Bluefish
Pomatomus saltatrix



RKW



Inshore Lizardfish
Synodus foetens

RKW



Ladyfish
Elops saurus

RKW

Florida Pompano
Trachinotus carolinus



RKW

Lookdown
Selene vomer



RKW

Spadefish

Chaetodipterus faber

Juvenile



Juvenile spadefish are commonly found in SC estuaries. Adults, which look very similar to the specimen shown above, are common inhabitants of offshore reefs.

Cobia
Rachycentron canadum

Adult



Juvenile



Adult cobia are considered a coastal migratory species and are commonly encountered in near shore and offshore waters. Juveniles may occasionally be caught inshore.



**Other
Inshore
Fishes**

Striped Burrfish
Chilomycterus schoepfi



E. Vernon

Northern Puffer
Sphoeroides maculatus



E. Vernon

Bighead Searobin
Prionotus tribulus



Batfish (sp. Unknown)
Ogcocephalus sp.



“Baitfish”

**or fish commonly caught in cast
nets or traps.**

White Mullet
Mugil curems



Striped Mullet
Mugil cephalus



Atlantic Menhaden
Brevoortia tyrannus



Striped killifish
Fundulus majalis



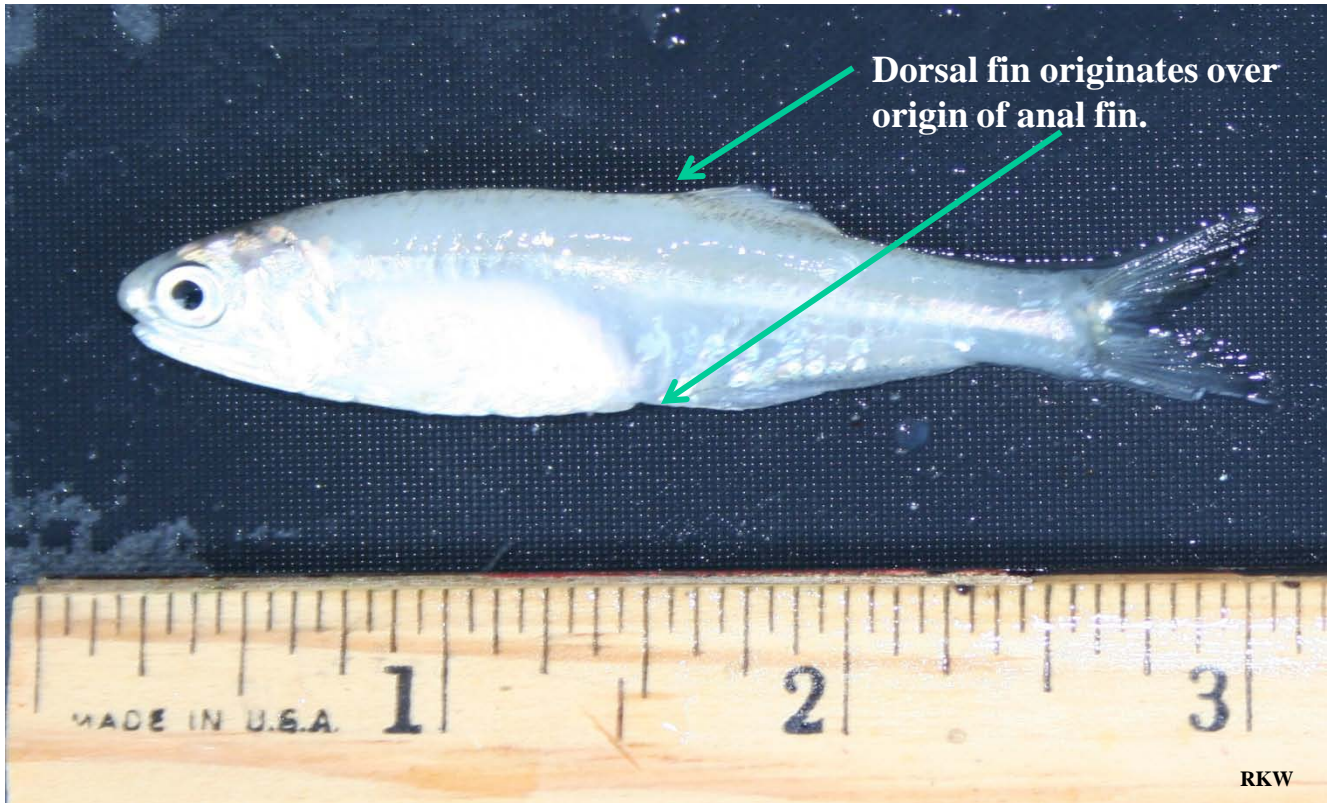
Mummichog (Mudminnow)
Fundulus heteroclitus



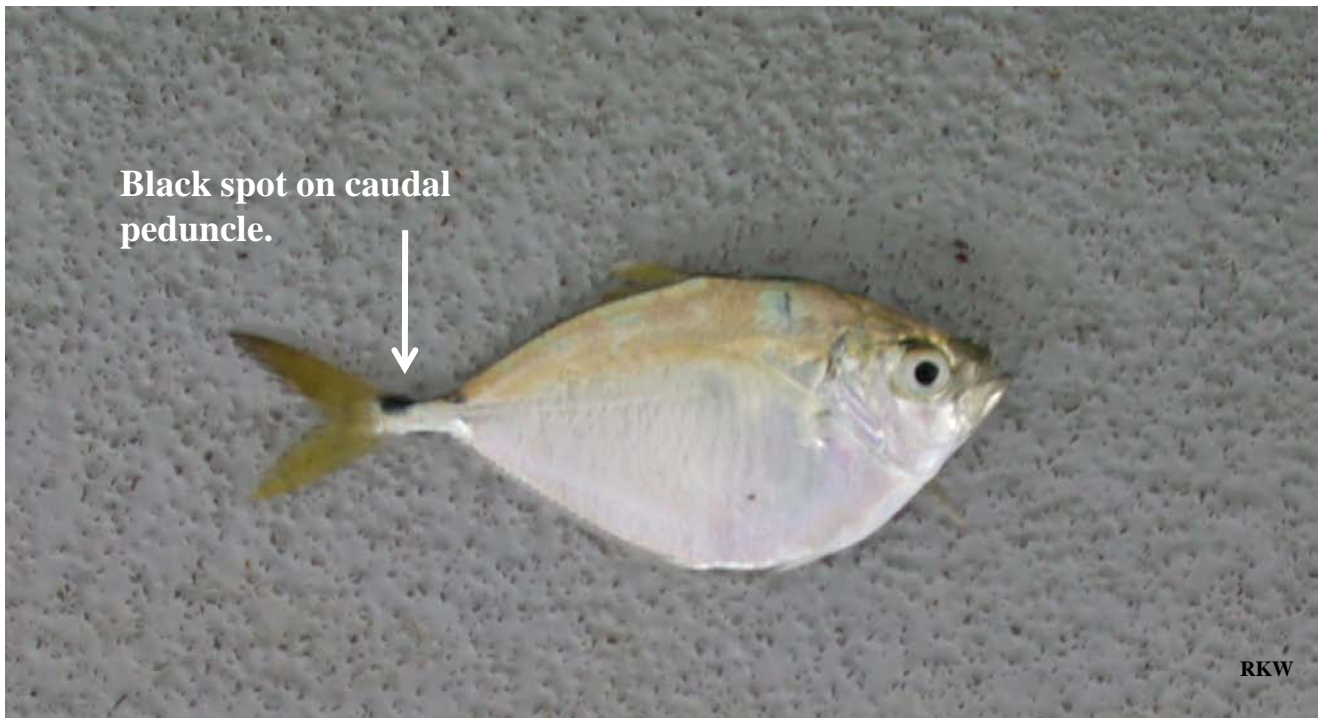
Fat Sleeper
Dormitator maculatus



Bay Anchovy
Anchoa mitchilli



Atlantic Bumper
Chloroscombrus chrysurus



Leatherjacket
Oligoplites saurus



Dorsal spines can cause serious skin irritation if stuck into skin.

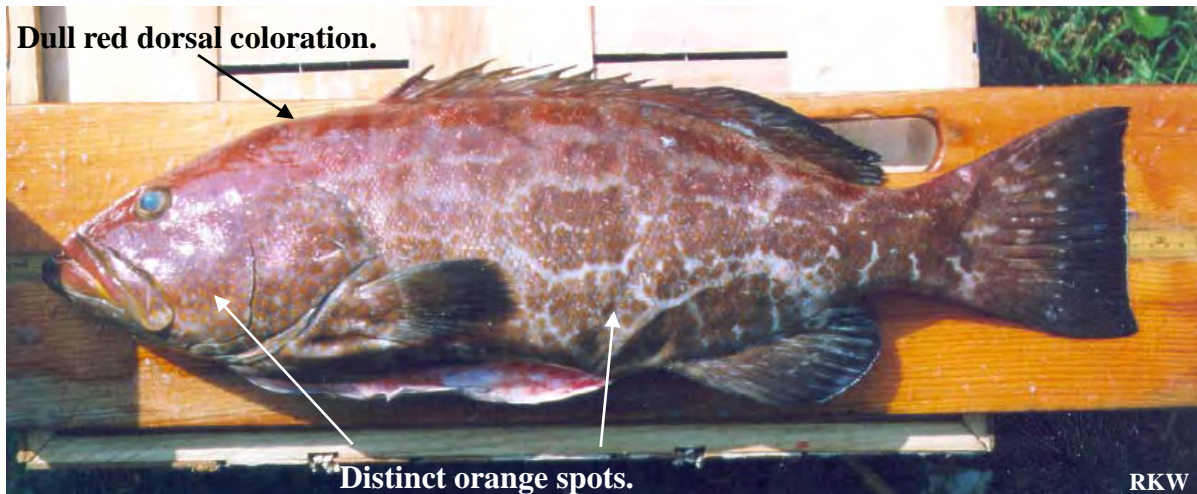


Offshore Fishes

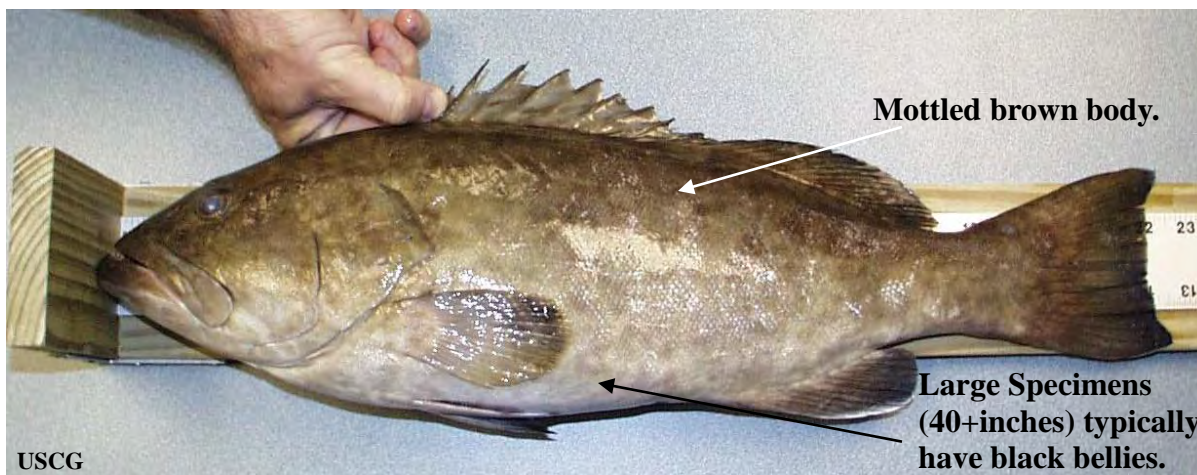


Groupier

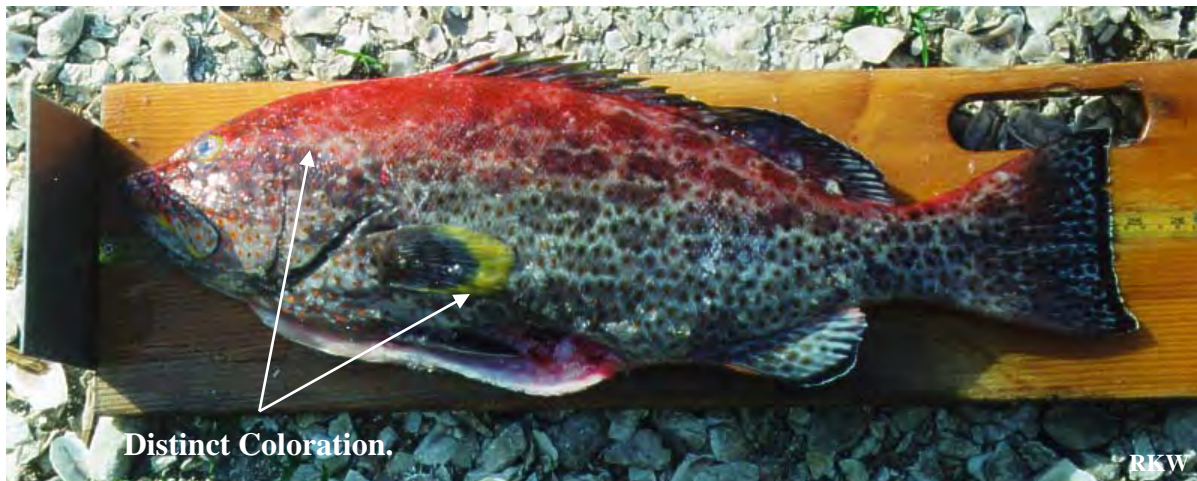
Black Grouper (Carberita)
Mycteroperca bonaci



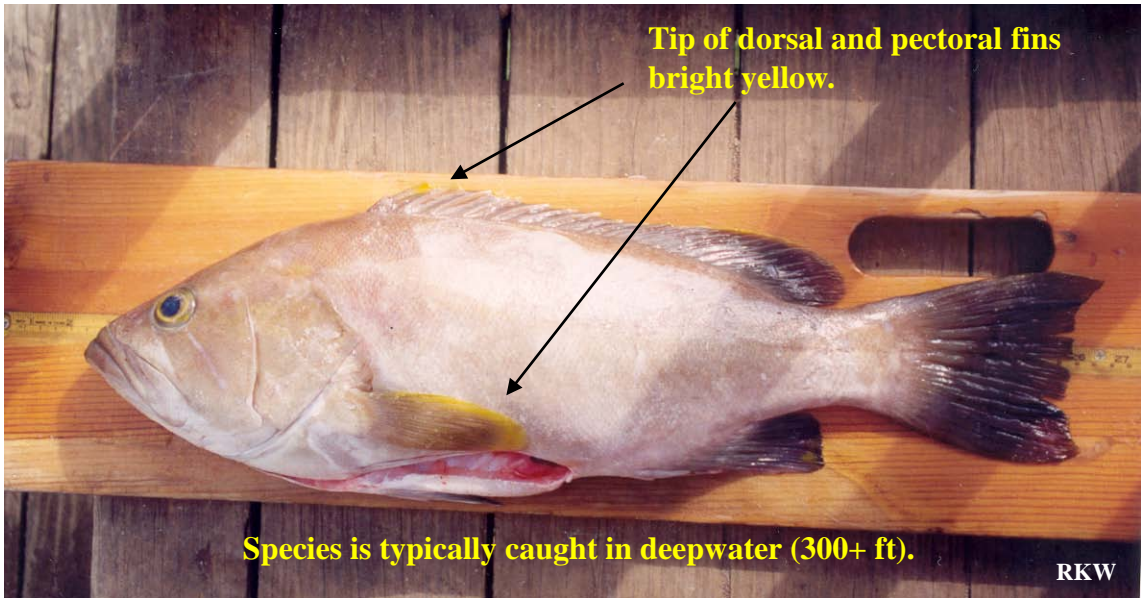
Gag Grouper (Grey, Black Grouper)
Mycteroperca microlepis



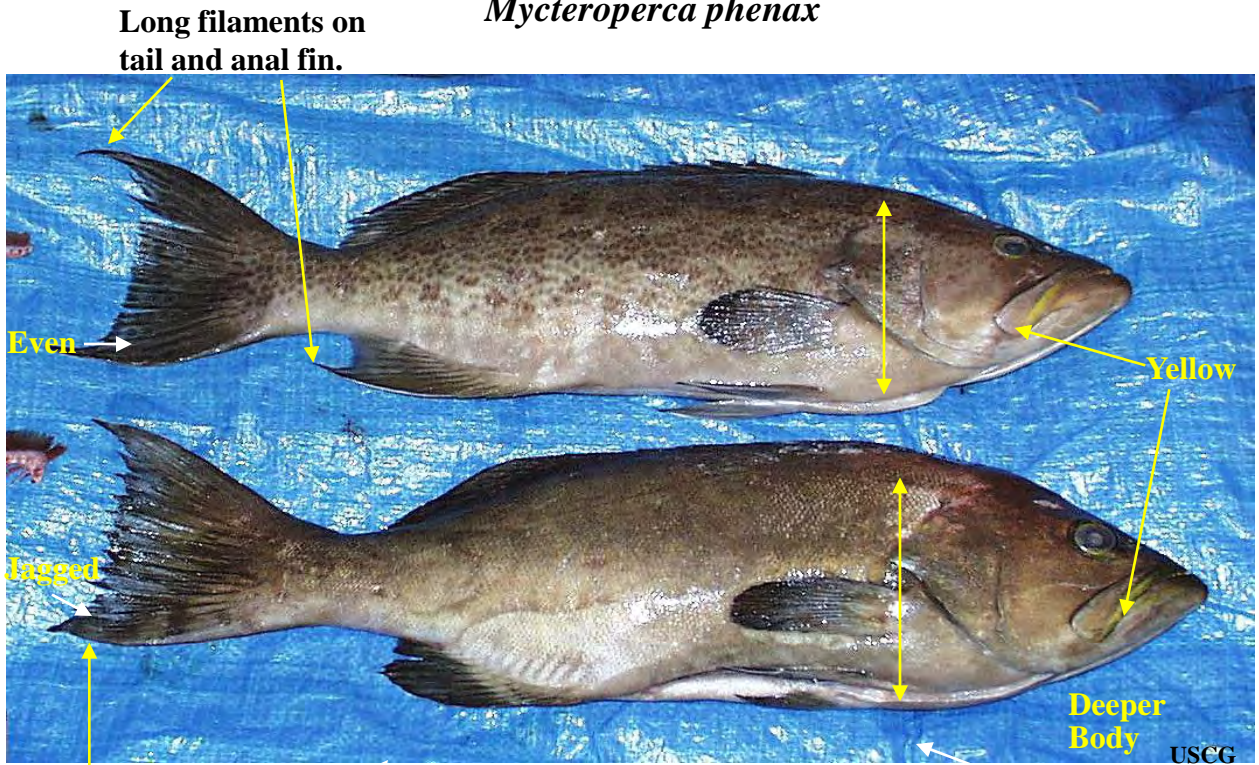
Yellowfin Grouper (Fireback)
Mycteroperca venenosa



Yellowedge Grouper
Epinephelus flavolimbatus



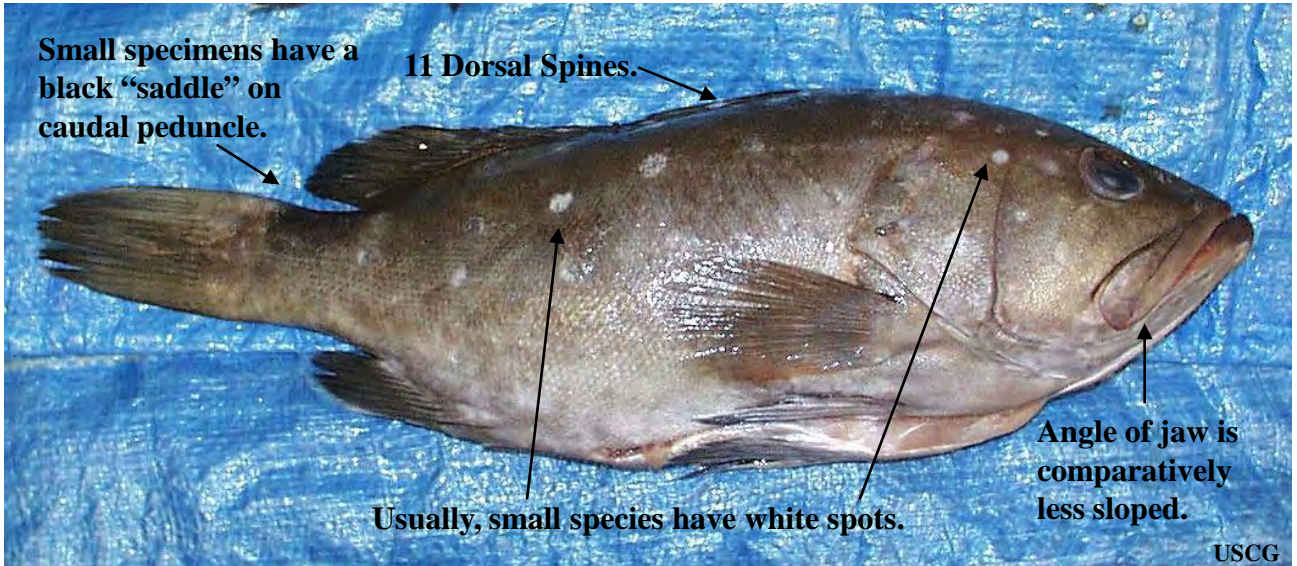
Scamp (Broomtail)
Mycteroperca phenax



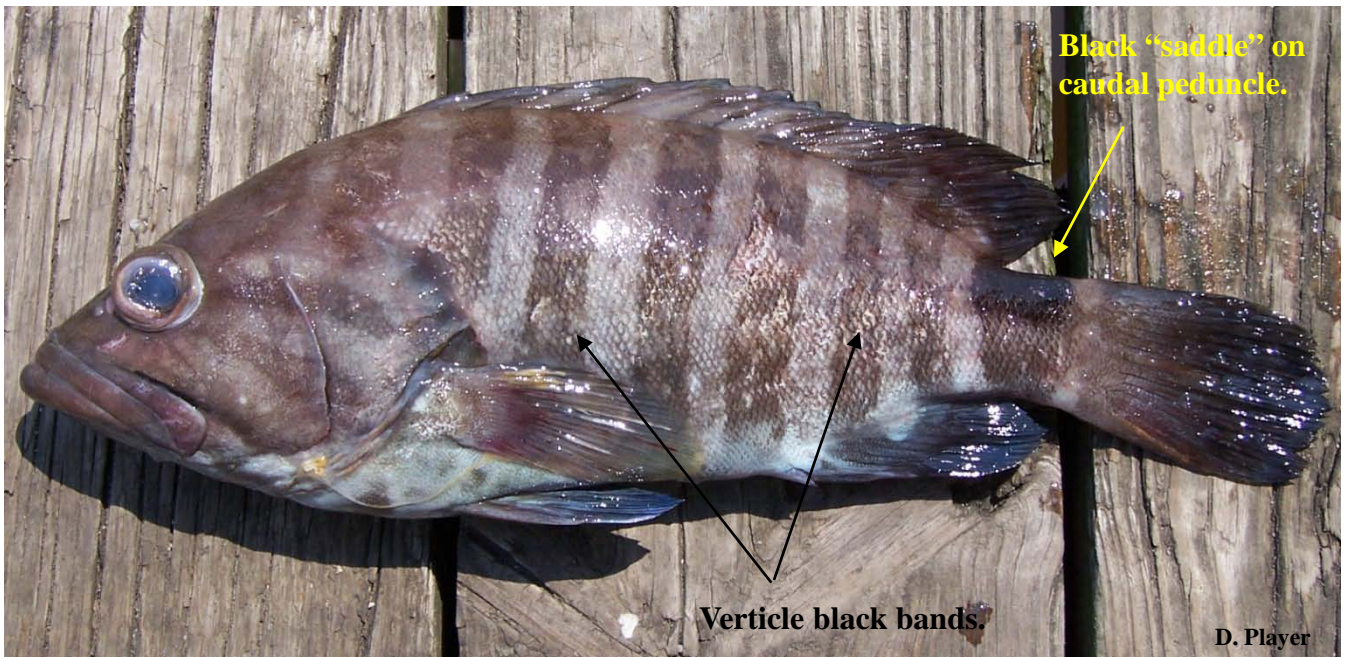
Tail and anal fin lack long filaments.

Yellowmouth Grouper
Mycteroperca interstitialis

Snowy Grouper
Epinephelus niveatus



Misty Grouper
Epinephelus mystacinus



Warsaw Grouper
Epinephelus nigritus



With mouth closed jaw is at a steep angle and extends to posterior part of eye but not beyond.

Goliath Grouper (Jewfish)
Juvenile
Epinephelus itajara



Membrane between dorsal spines even with the tips of the spines.

Red Grouper
Epinephelus morio



Nassau Grouper
Epinephelus striatus

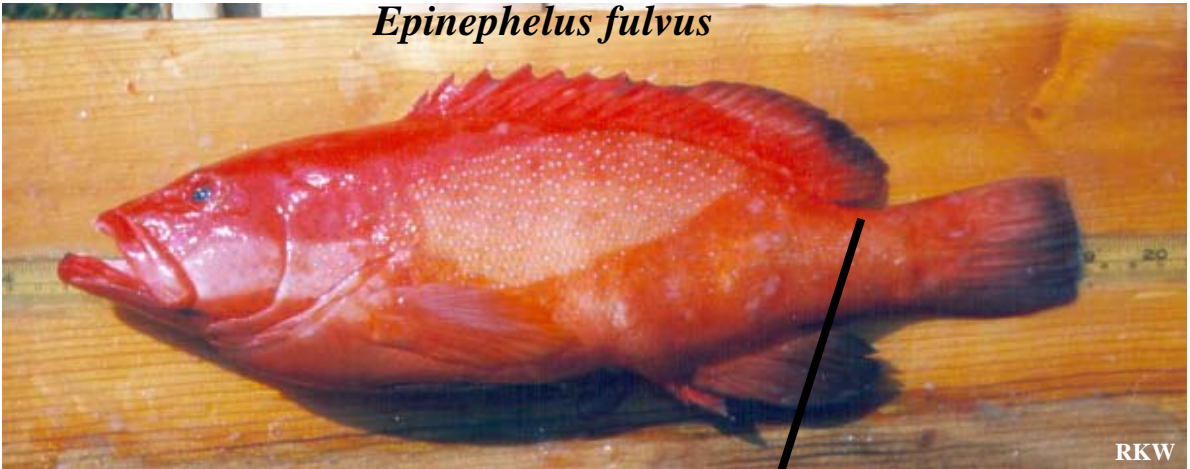


Speckled Hind (Kitty Mitchell, Strawberry)
Epinephelus drummondhayi

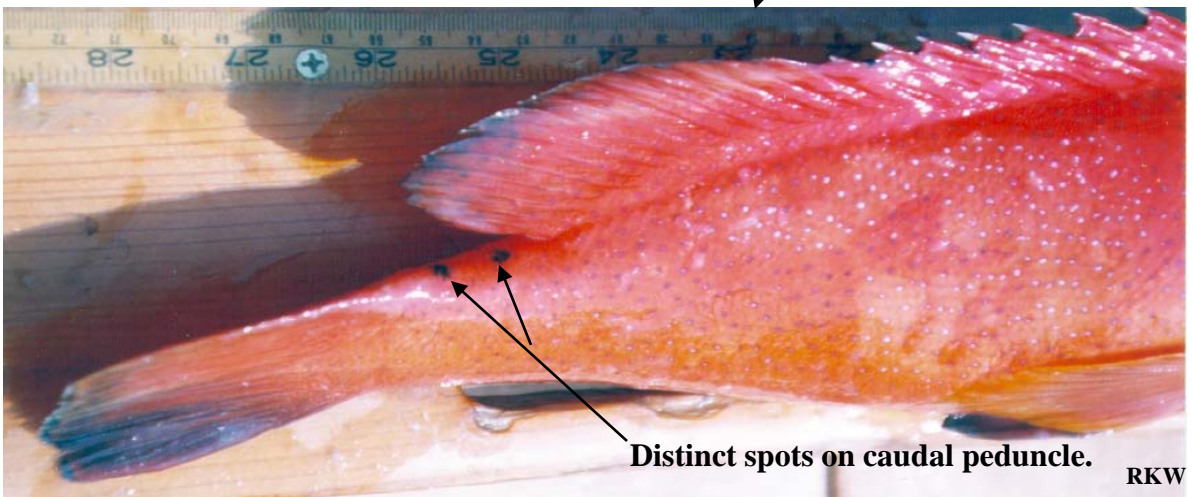
Most common color pattern is a dark purple with white specks.



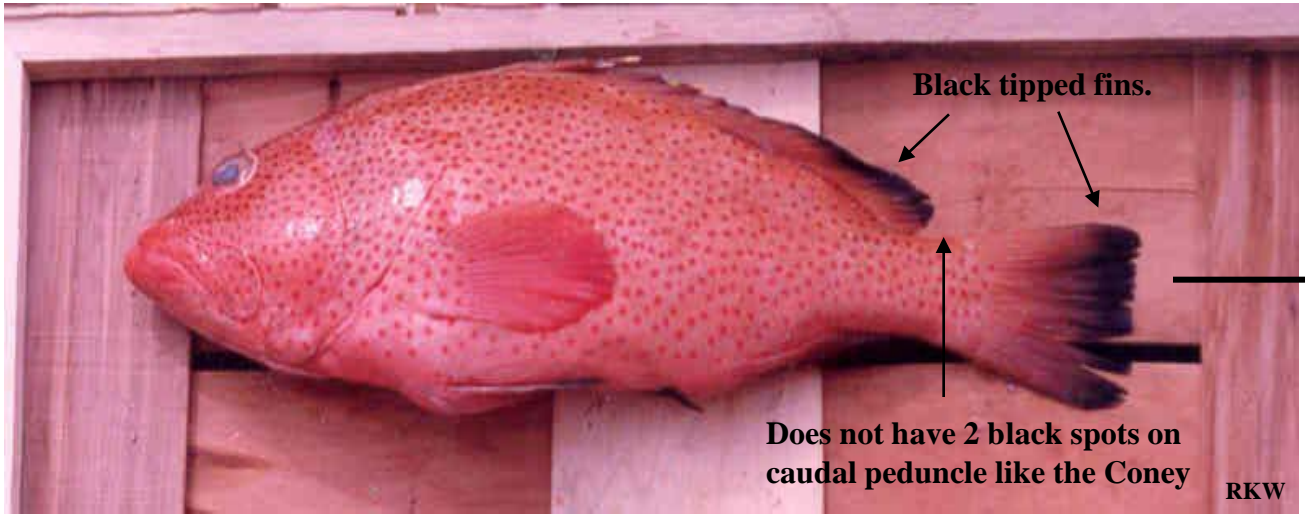
Coney (Red Phase)
Epinephelus fulvus



Coney

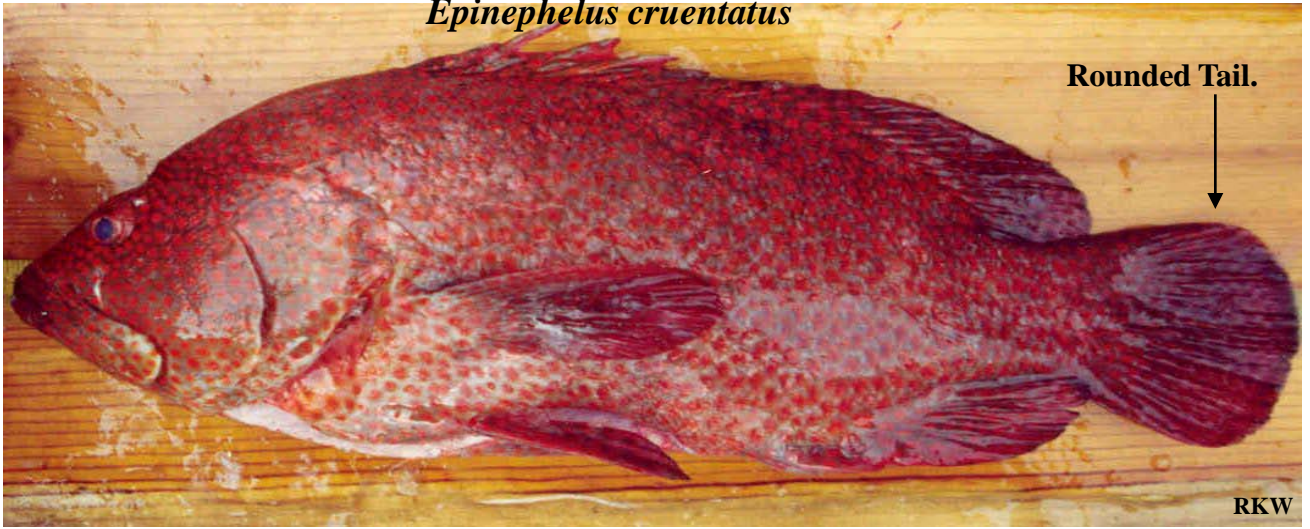


Red Hind
Epinephelus guttatus



Graysby

Epinephelus cruentatus



Rock Hind (Strawberry Grouper)

Epinephelus adscensionis

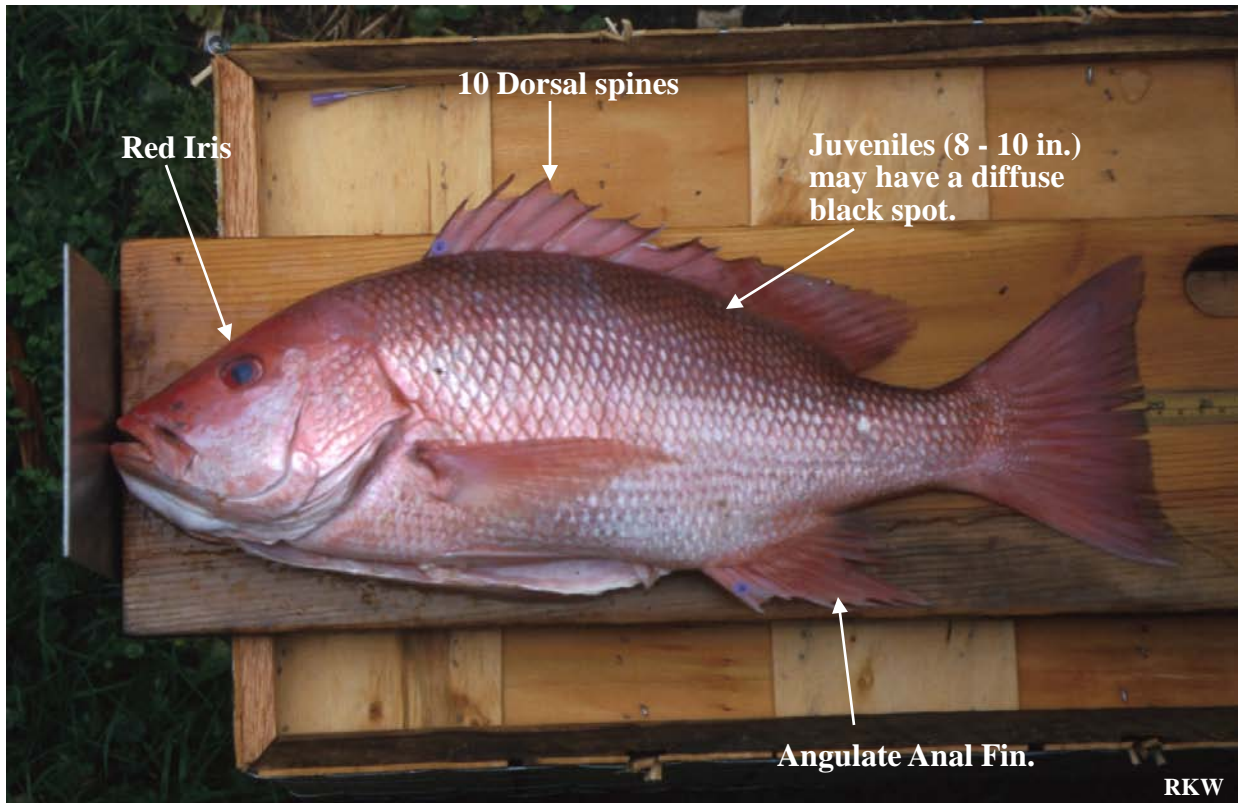


16''

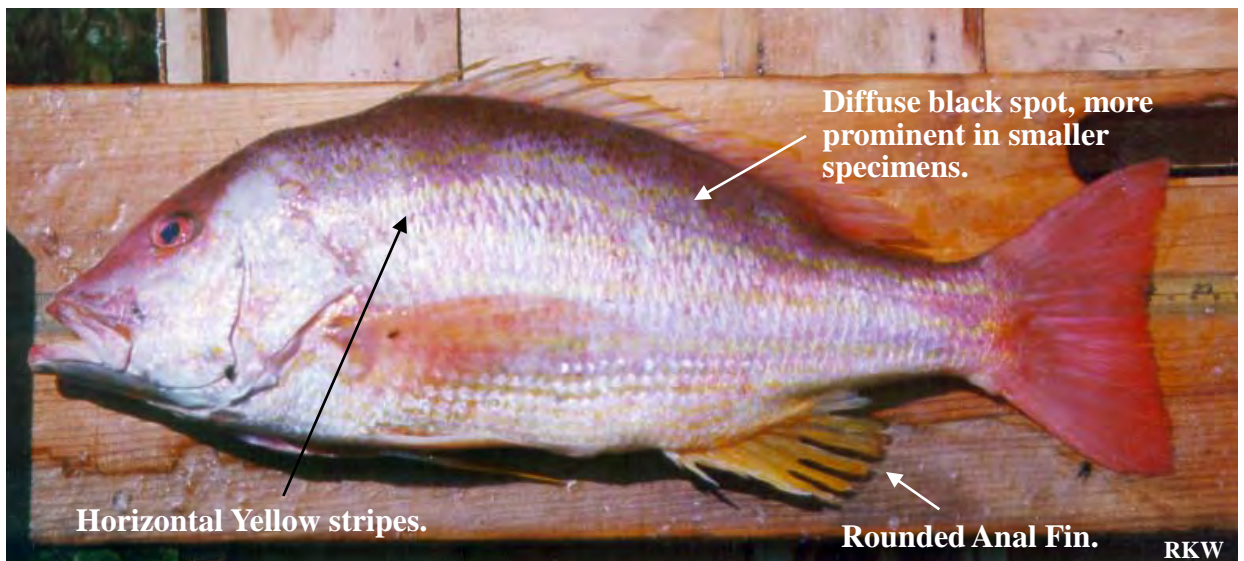


Snapper

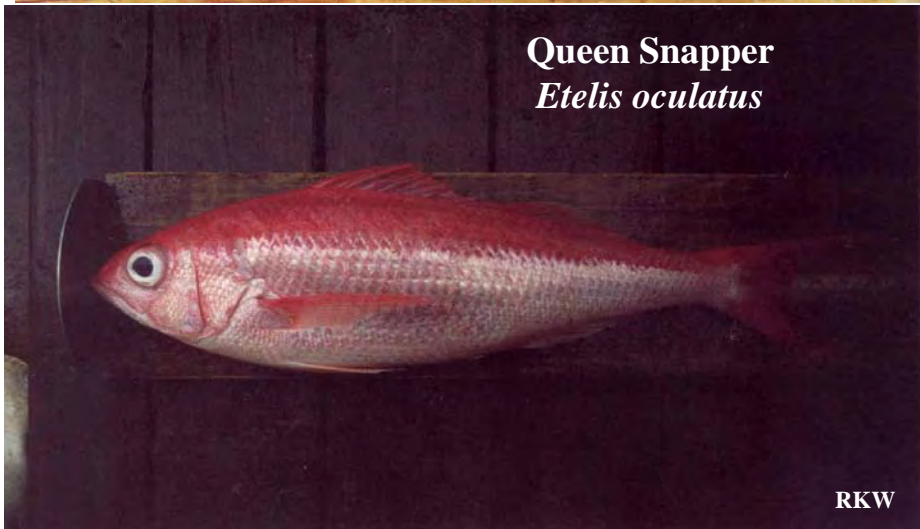
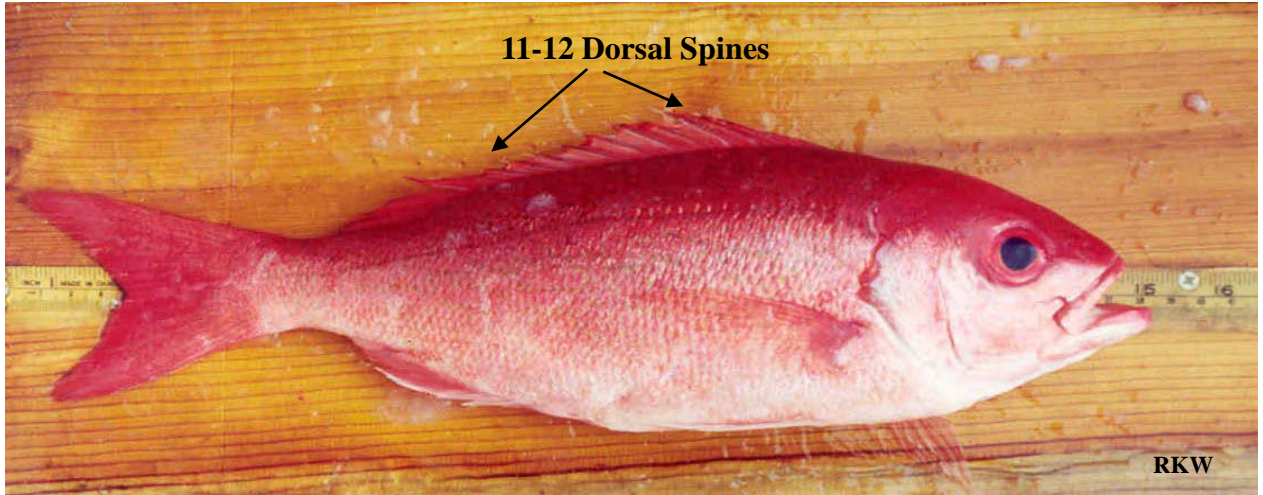
Red Snapper (AM Red, Genuine)
Lutjanus campechanus



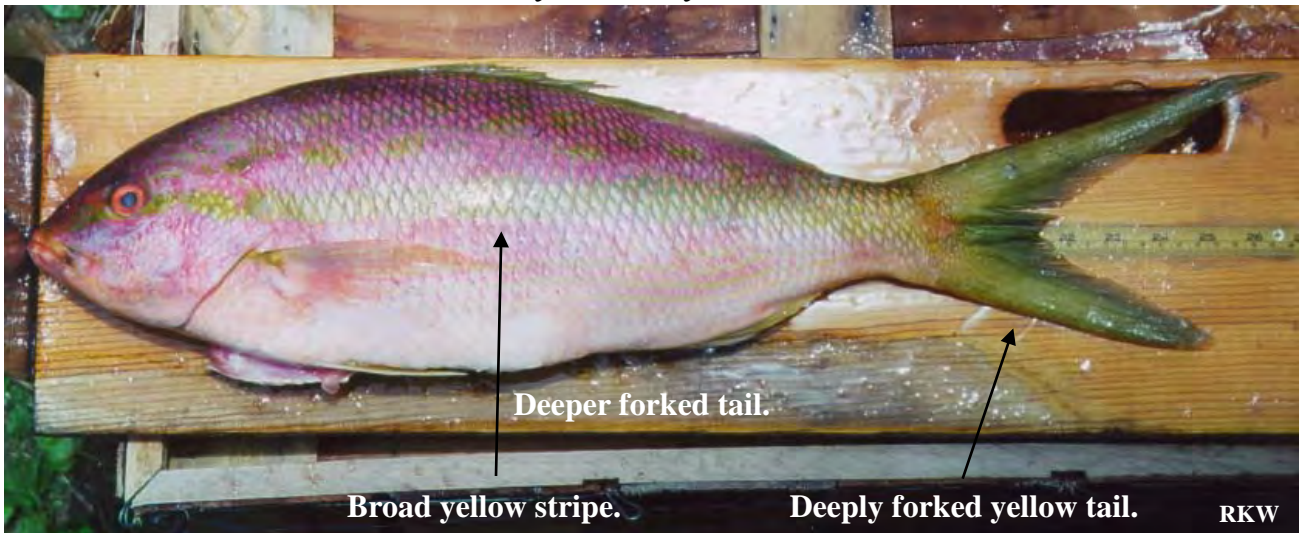
Lane Snapper (Candy Snapper)
Lutjanis synagris



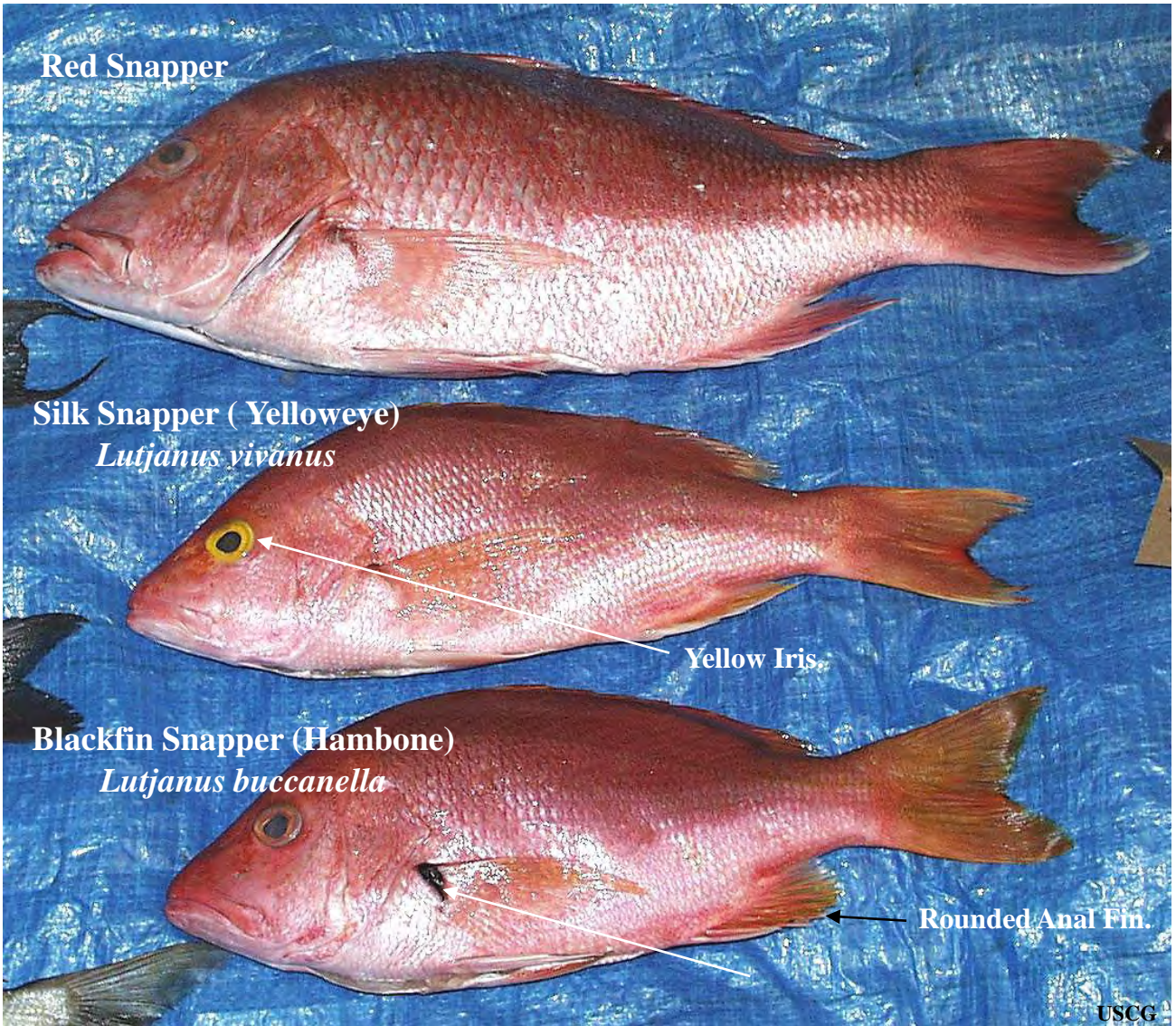
Vermilion Snapper (B-liner)
Rhomboplites aurorubens



Yellowtail Snapper
Ocyurus chrysurus



Snapper Comparison



Red Snapper

Silk Snapper (Yelloweye)
Lutjanus vivanus

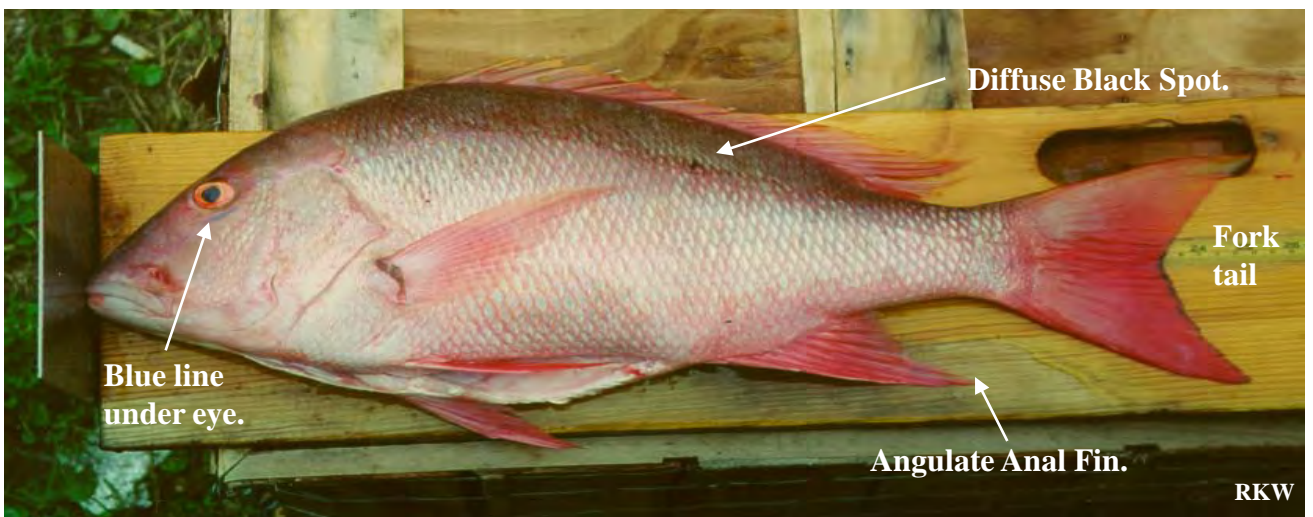
Yellow Iris.

Blackfin Snapper (Hambone)
Lutjanus buccanella

Rounded Anal Fin.

USCG

Mutton Snapper
Lutjanus analis



Diffuse Black Spot.

Blue line
under eye.

Fork
tail

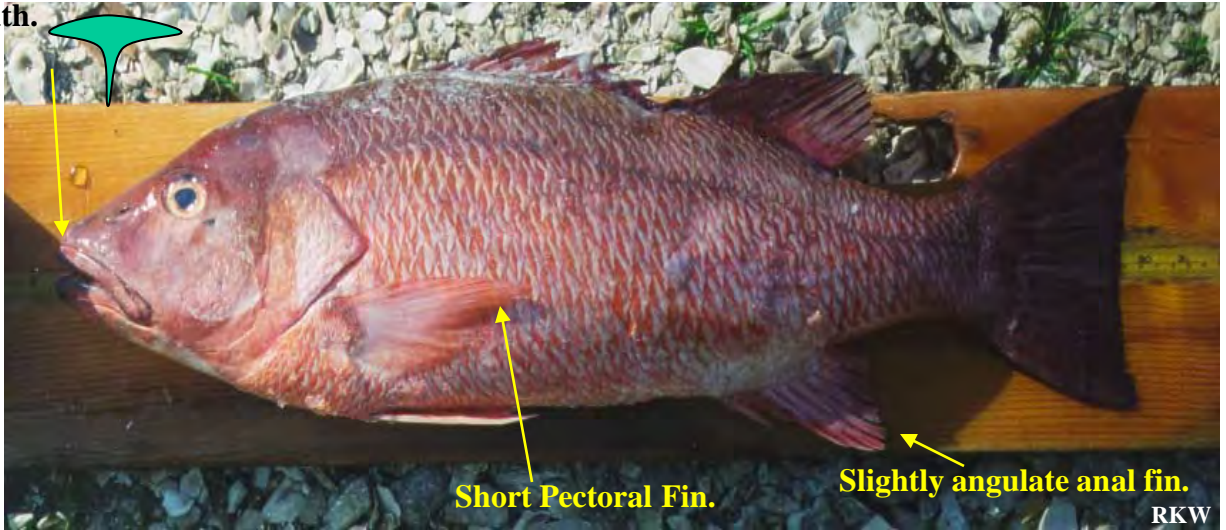
Angulate Anal Fin.

RKW

Gray Snapper (Mangrove Snapper)

Lutjanus griseus

Anchor-shaped tooth patch on roof of mouth.



Cubera Snapper

Lutjanus cyanopterus

Chevron-shaped tooth patch on roof of mouth.



Dog Snapper

Lutjanus jocu

Anchor-shaped tooth patch on roof of mouth.

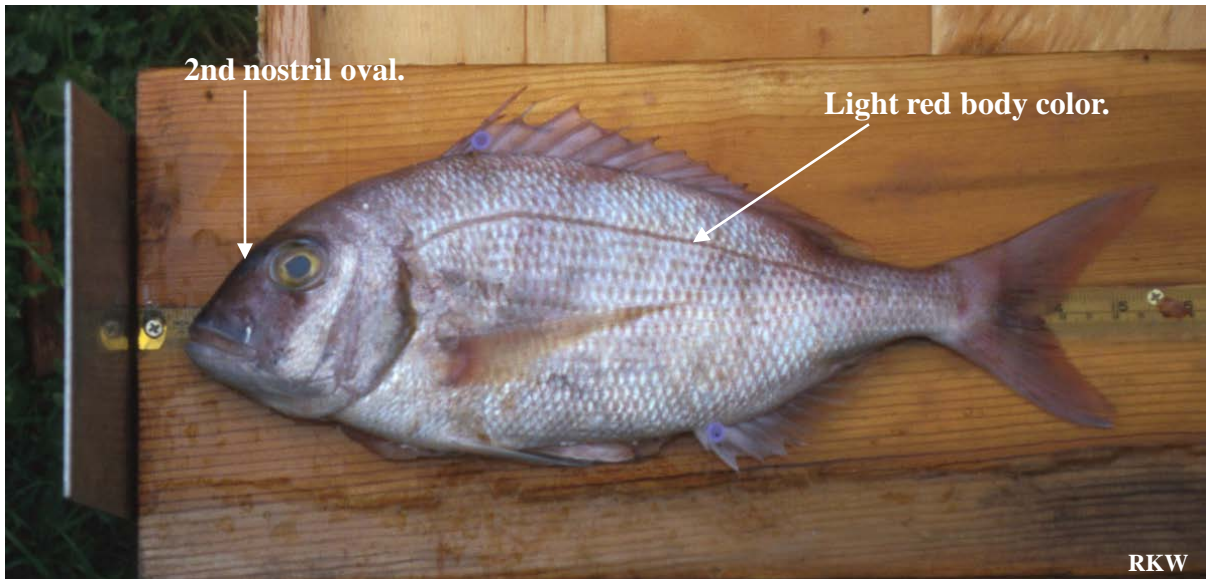


White triangular spot under eye.

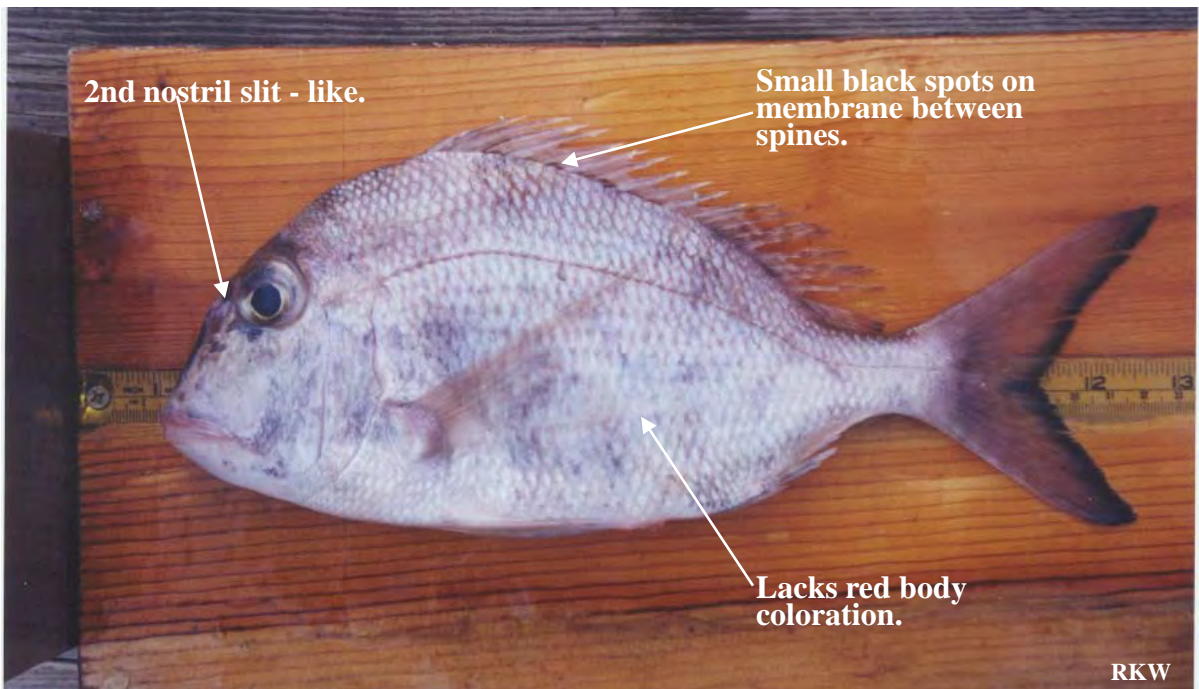


Porgy

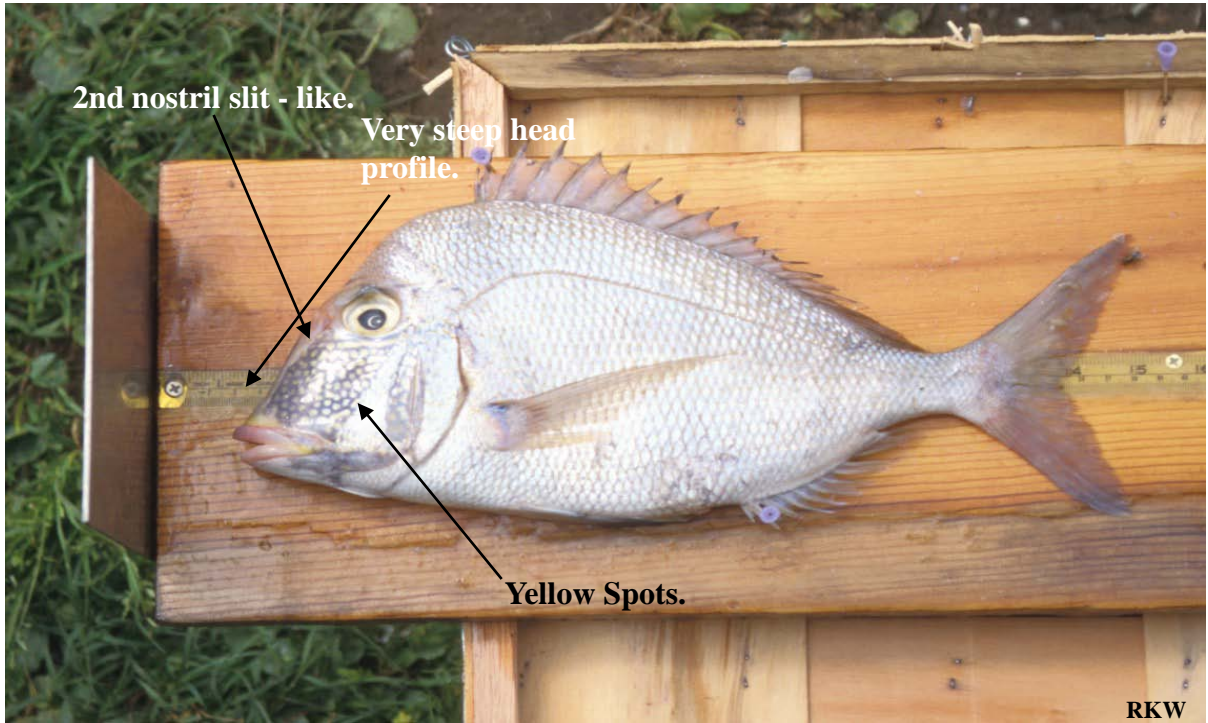
Red Porgy
(Silver Snapper, Pinky, Pink Snapper)
Pagrus pagrus



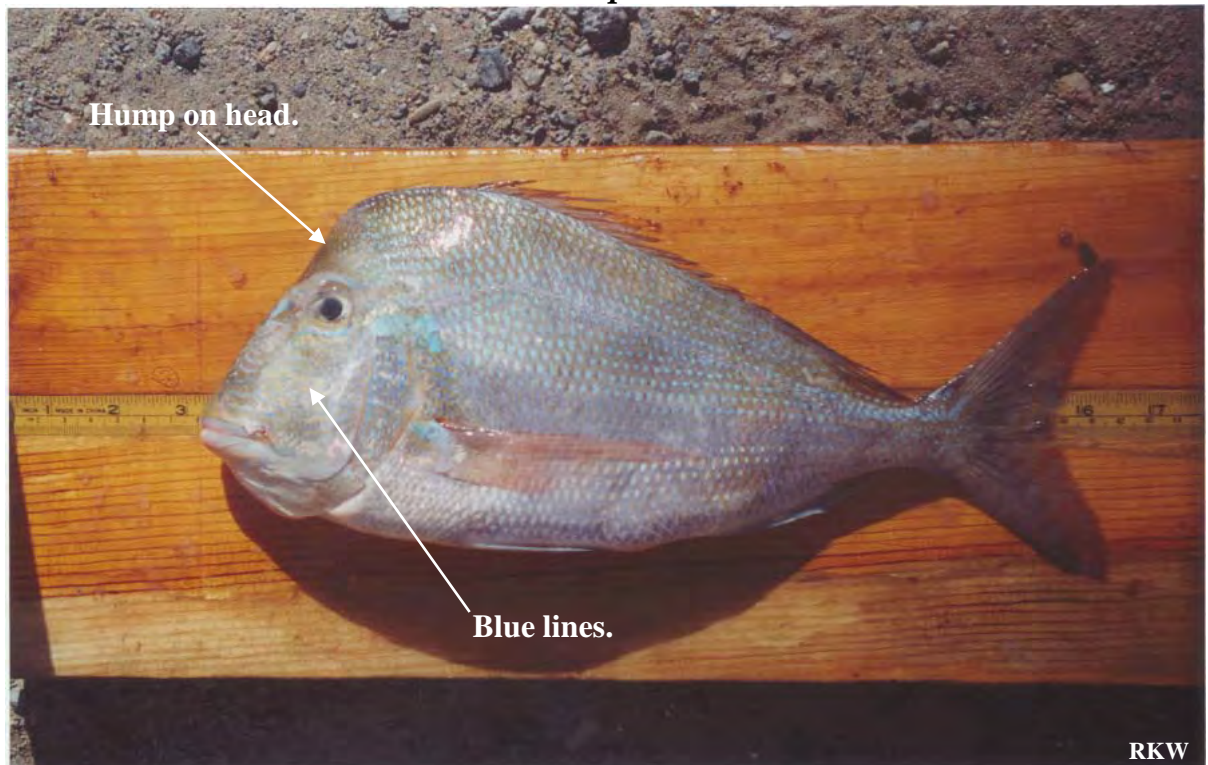
Whitebone Porgy (Chocolate Porgy)
Calamus leucosteus



Knobbed Porgy (Jolthead)
Calamus nodosus



Littlehead Porgy
Calamus proridens

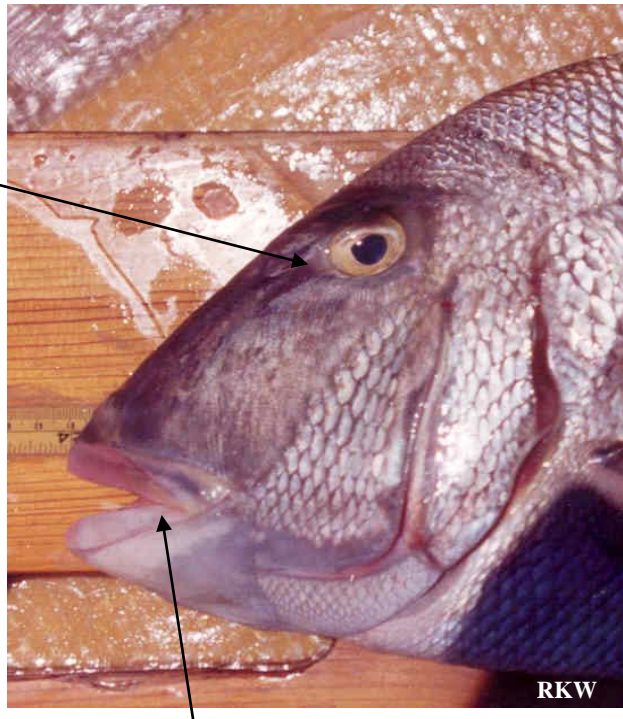


Jolthead Porgy
Calamus bajonado



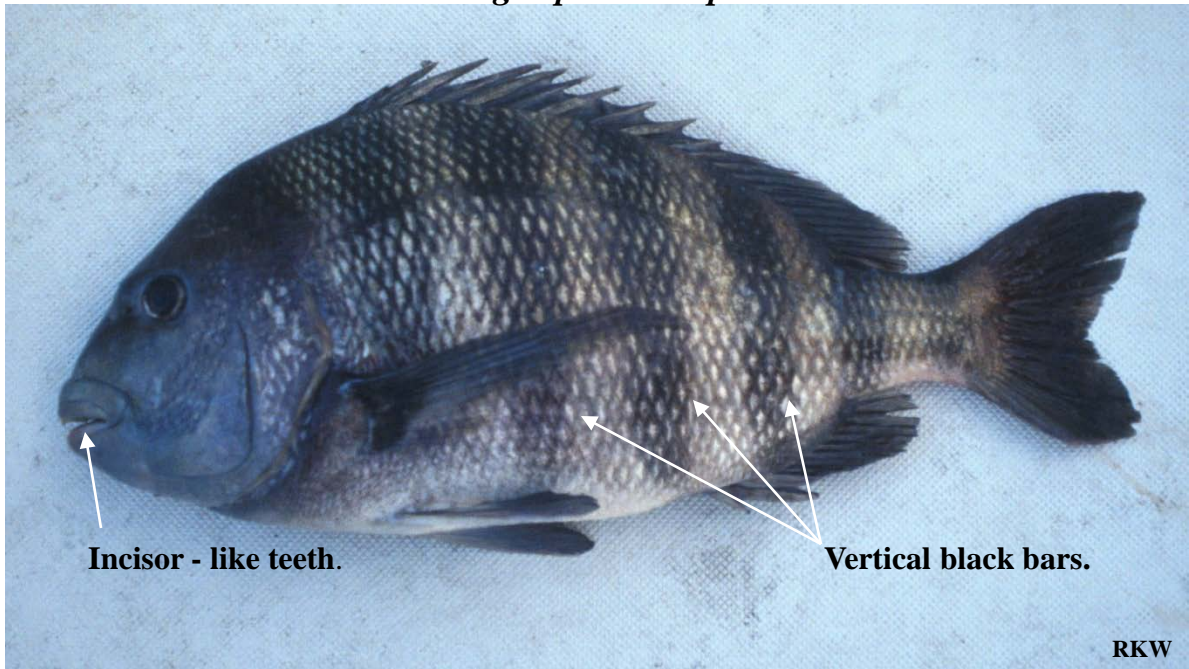
Jolthead Porgy (Anterior)

Distinct blue line under eye.

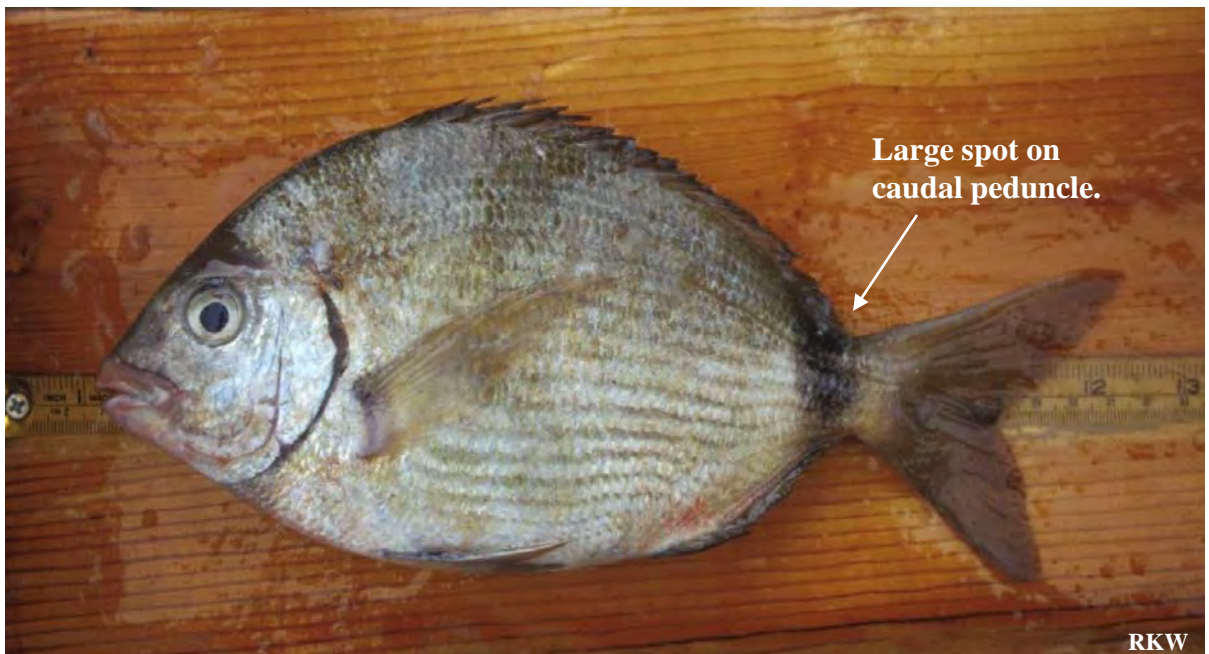


Orange on inside corner of mouth.

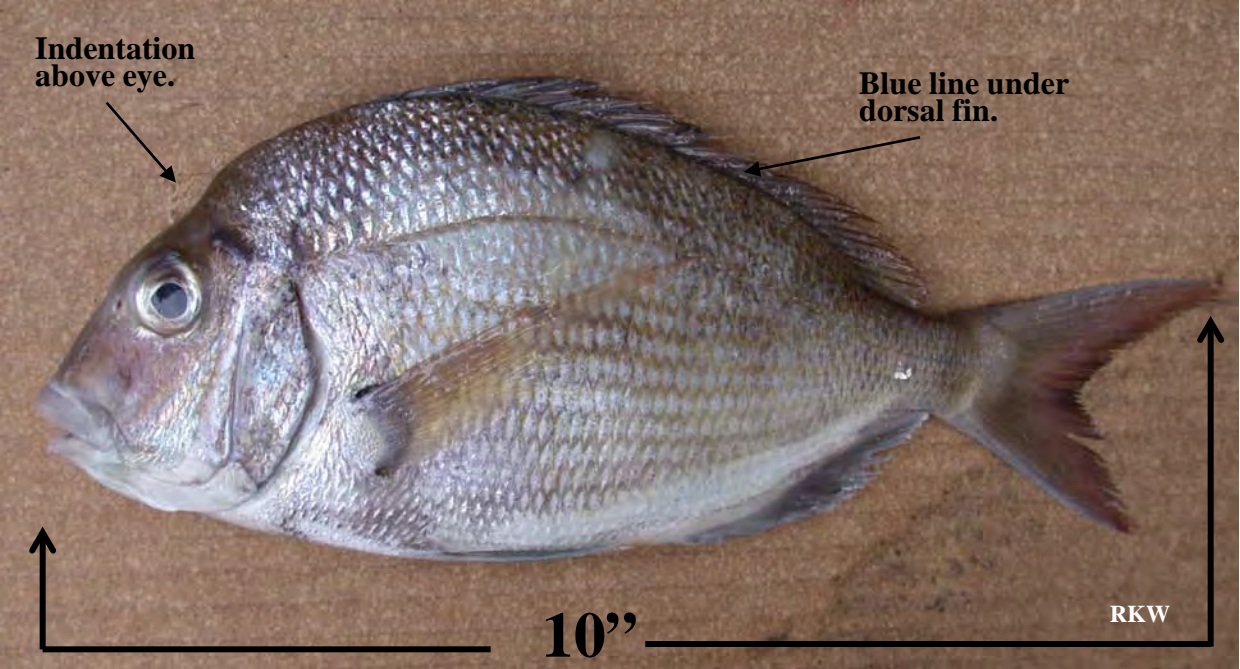
Sheepshead
Archosargus probatocephalus



Spottail Pinfish (Ringtail)
Diplodus holbrooki



Scup
Stenotomus chrysops





Seabass

Black Sea Bass (Blackfish)
Centropristis striata

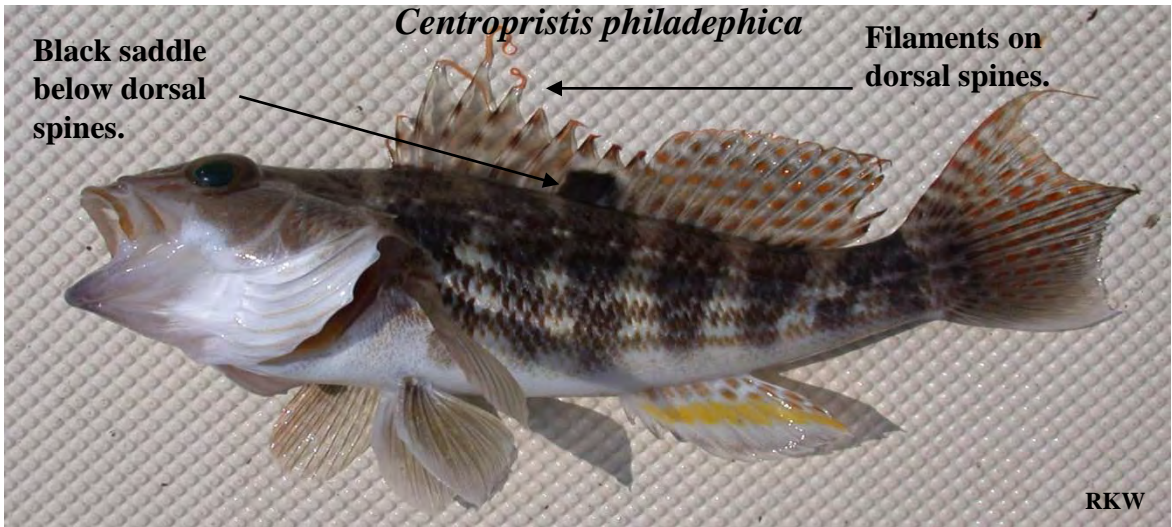


Rock Sea Bass

Centropristis philadephica

Black saddle
below dorsal
spines.

Filaments on
dorsal spines.

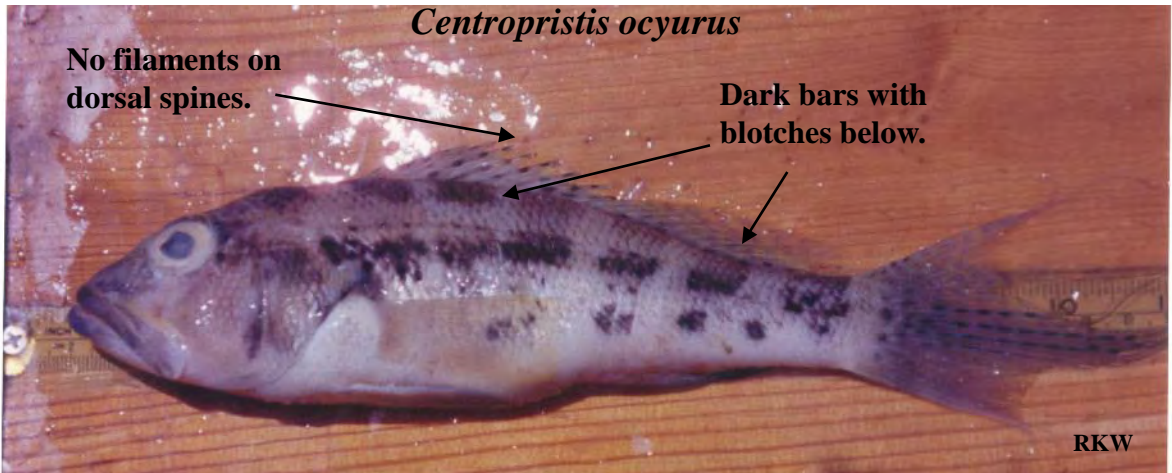


Bank Sea Bass

Centropristis ocyurus

No filaments on
dorsal spines.

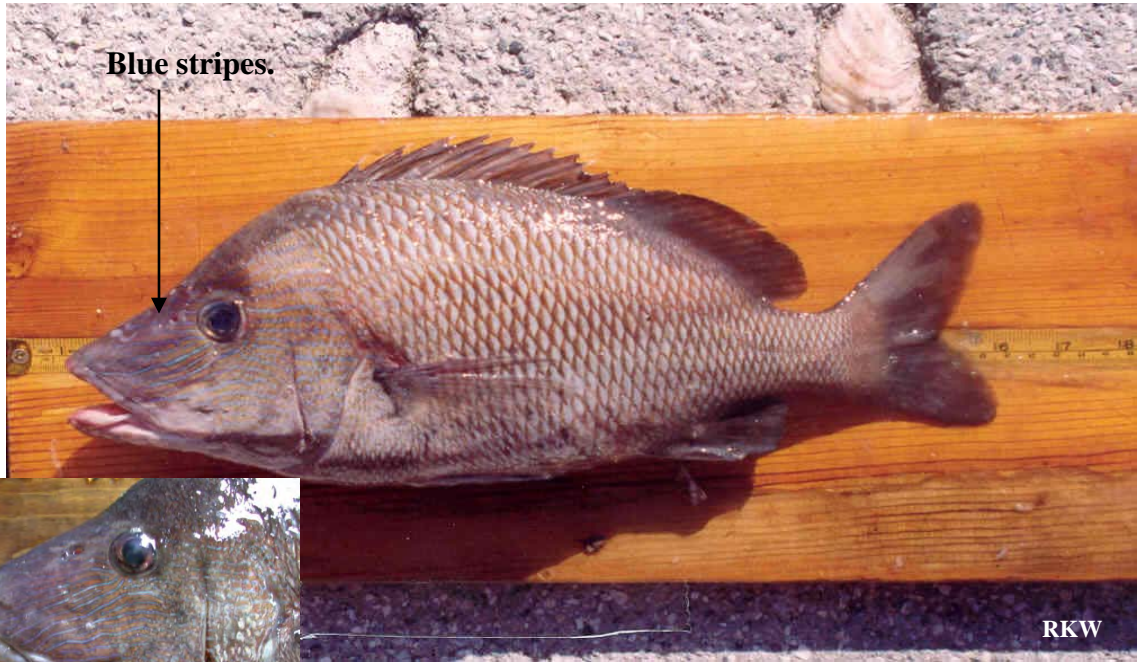
Dark bars with
blotches below.





Grunts

White Grunt
Haemulon plumieri

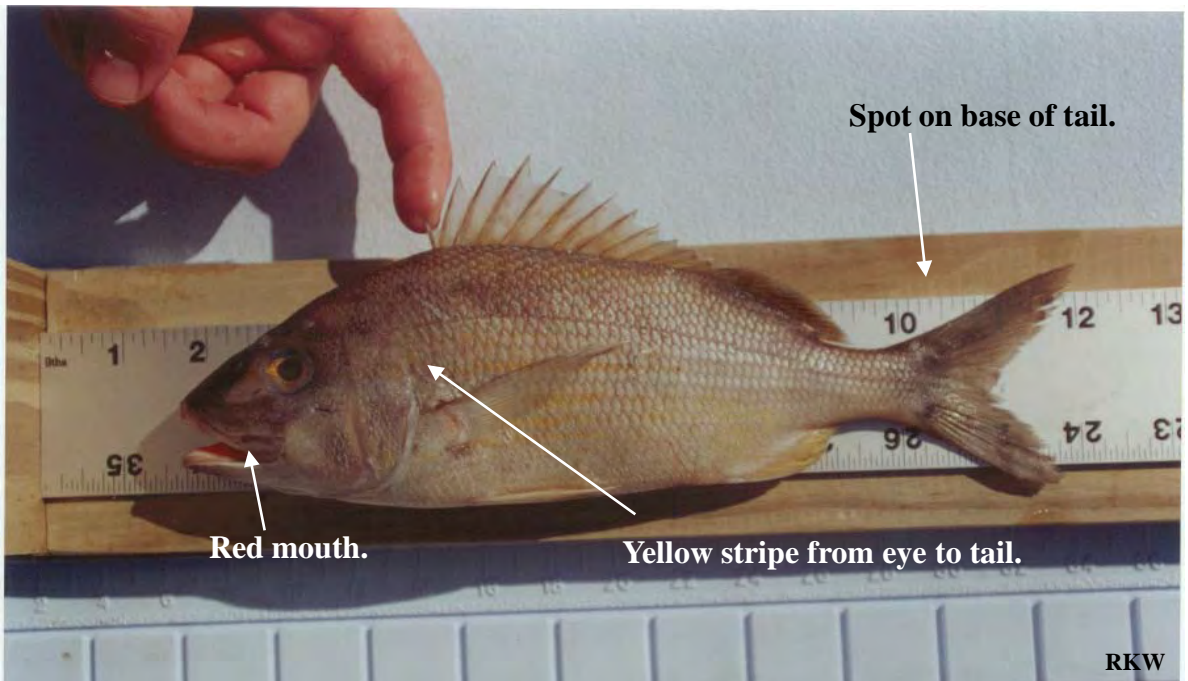


Blue stripes.



All species of Western Atlantic grunts have red on inside of the mouth.

Tomtate
Haemulon aurolineatum



Spot on base of tail.

Red mouth.

Yellow stripe from eye to tail.

RKW

Bluestriped Grunt
Haemulon sciurus



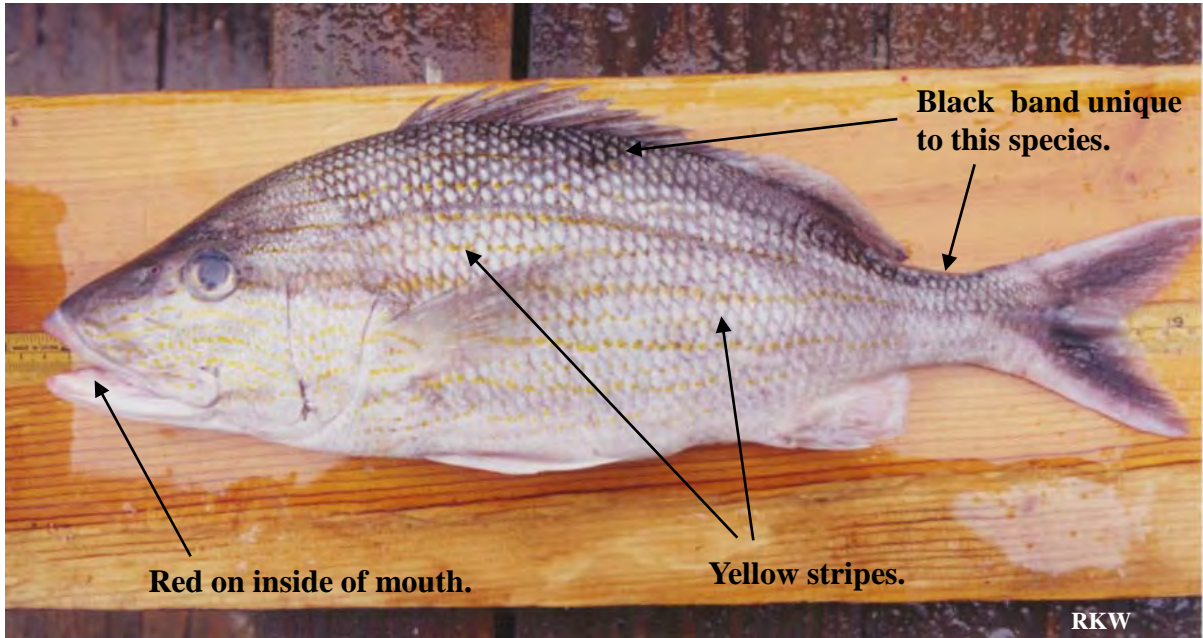
RKW

When compared to the white grunt, the bluestriped grunt has a more golden appearance.



RKW

Cottonwick
Haemulon melanurum

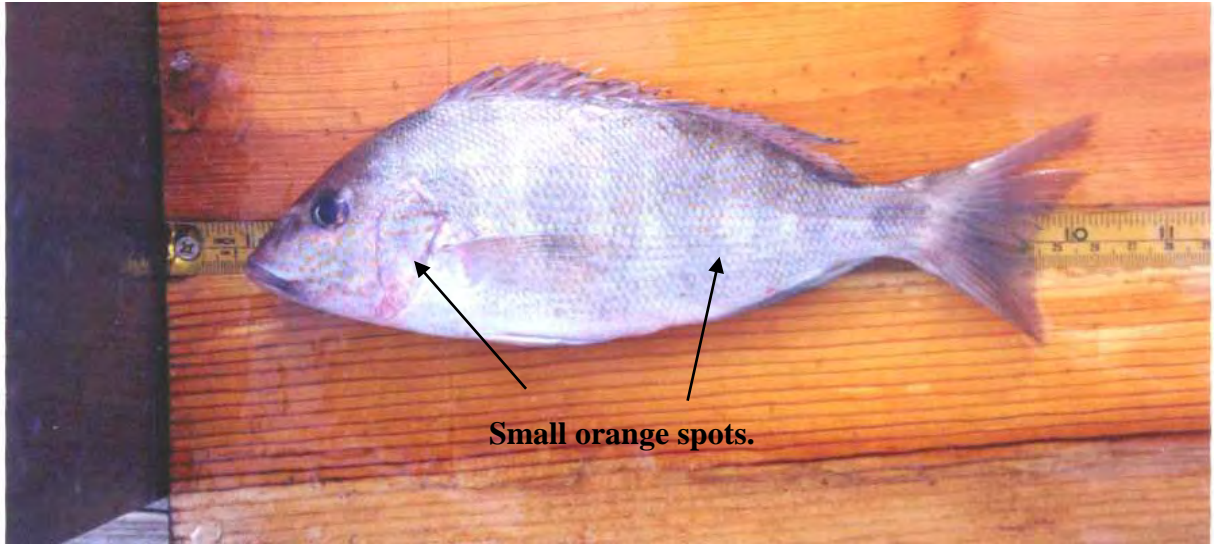


Margate
Haemulon album



The Margate is the largest of the Western Atlantic grunts.

Pigfish
Orthopristis chryoptera





Jacks



Banded Rudderfish

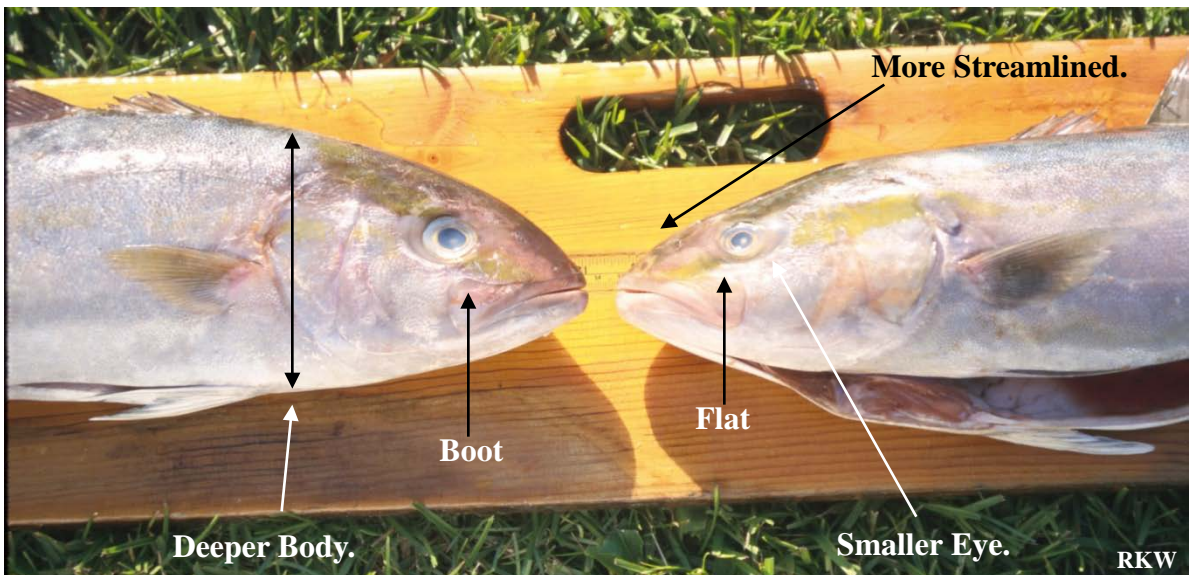
Lesser Amberjack

Greater Amberjack

RKW

Greater Amberjack
Seriola dumerili

Banded Rudderfish (Amberine)
Seriola zonata



Deeper Body.

Boot

Flat

Smaller Eye.

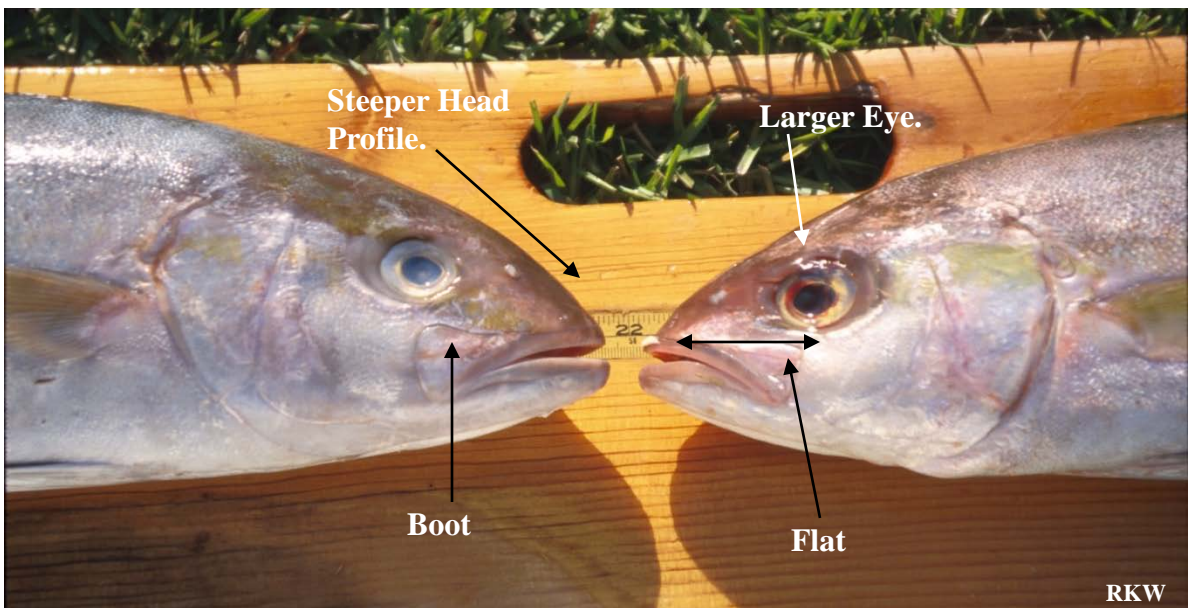
RKW

Juvenile Greater Amberjack



Juvenile Greater Amberjack

Lesser Amberjack *Seriola fasciata*



NOTE: Lesser Amberjack are typically caught in deeper water than the other jacks. Fishing vessels having snowy grouper or tilefish will often have lesser amberjacks not banded rudderfish.

Lesser Amberjack
Seriola fasciata

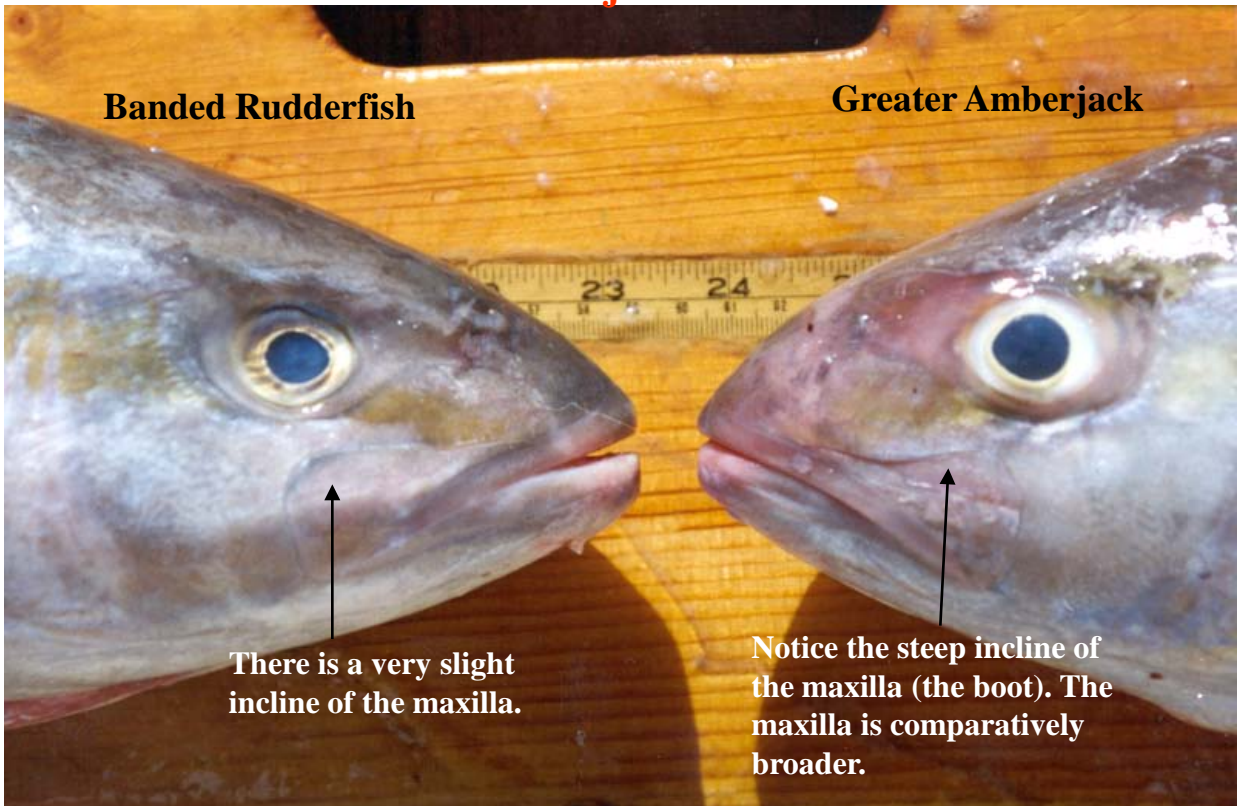


Banded Rudderfish (Amberine)
Seriola zonata



The "Boot"

The posterior part of the maxilla is much more broad on a greater amberjack.



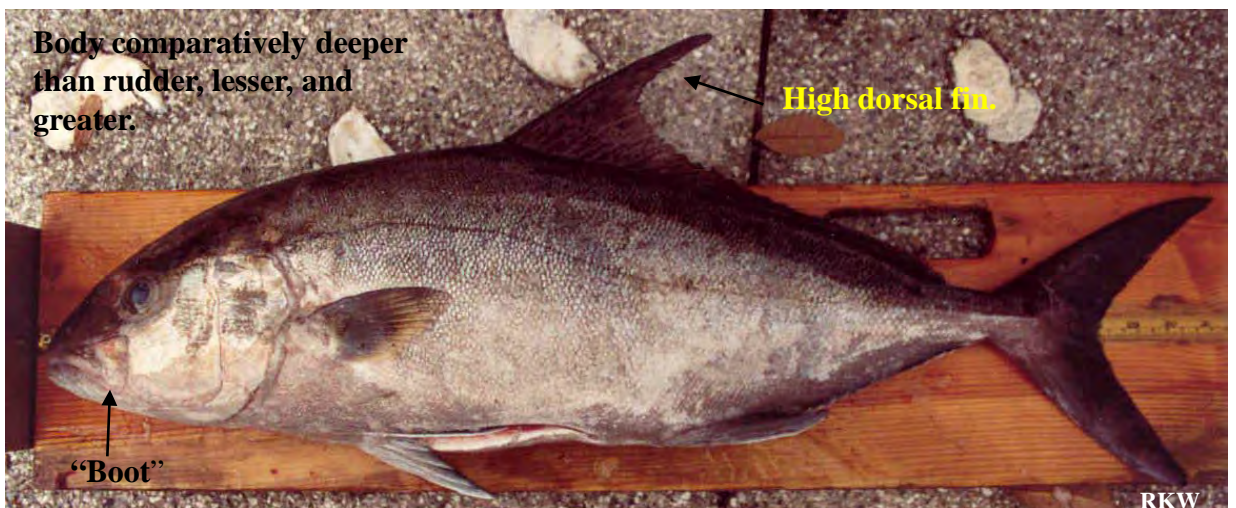
Black Jack
Caranx lugubris



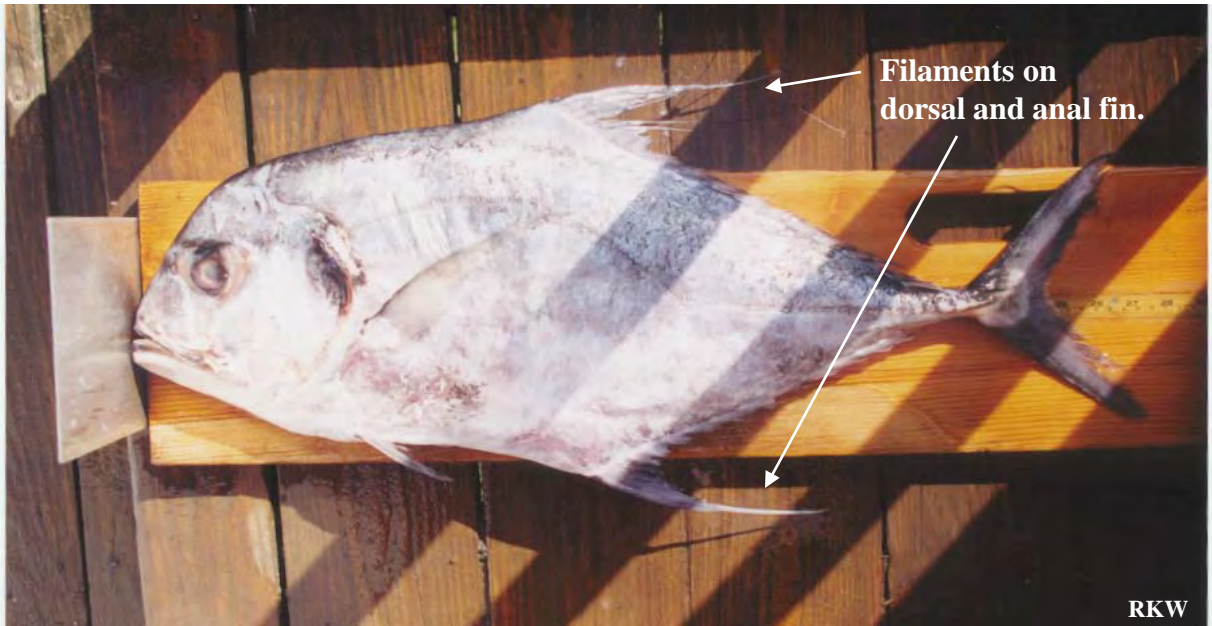
Yellow Jack
Caranx bartholomaei



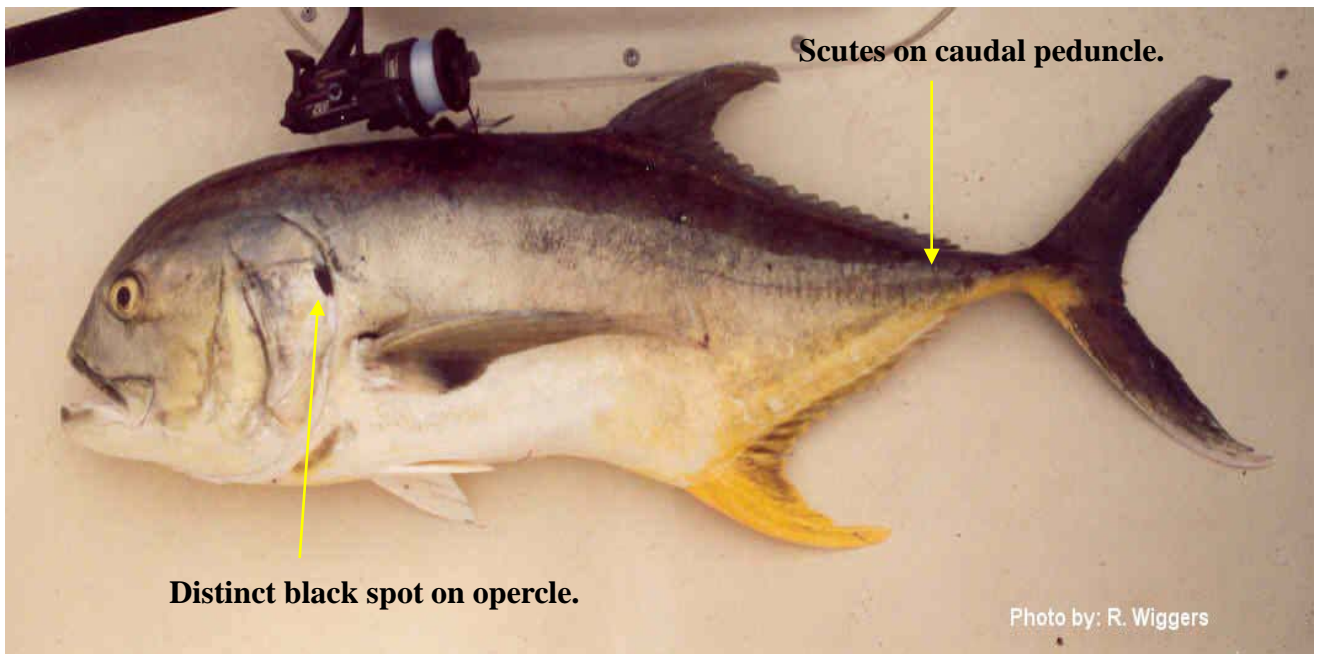
Almaco Jack
Seriola rivoliana



African Pompano
Alectis ciliaris



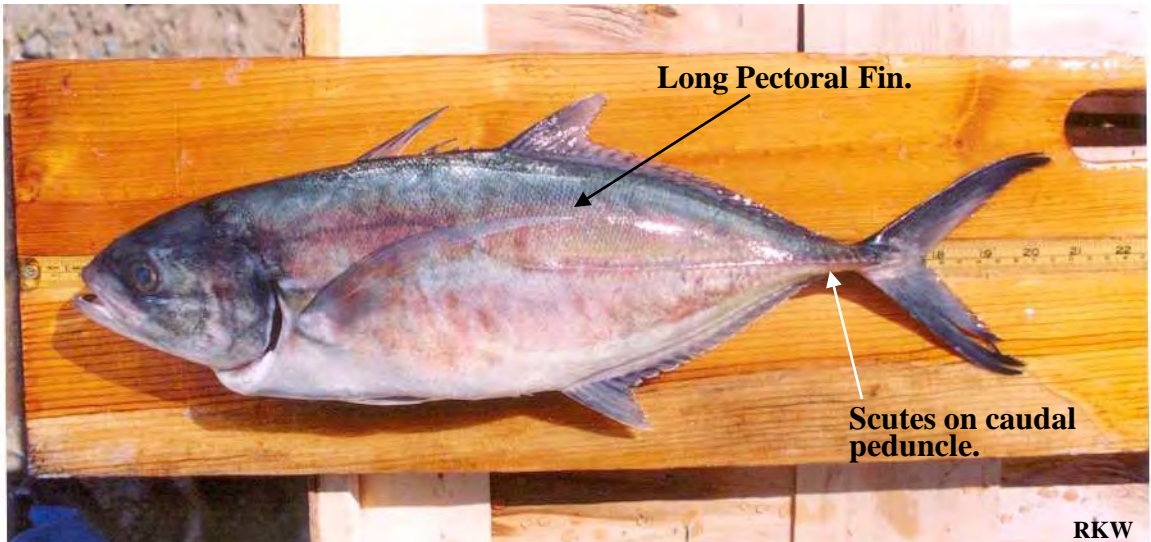
Crevalle Jack
Caranx hippos



Rainbow Runner
Elagatis bipinnulata



Blue Runner
Caranx crysos



Cottonmouth Jack

Uraspis secunda

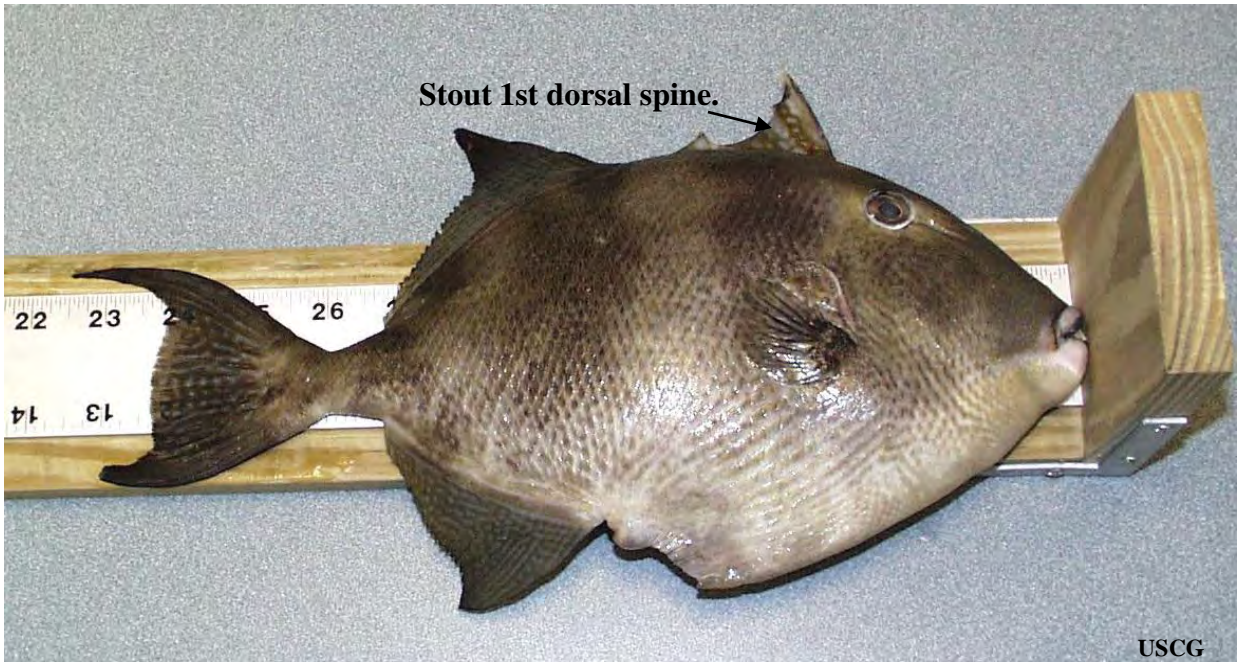




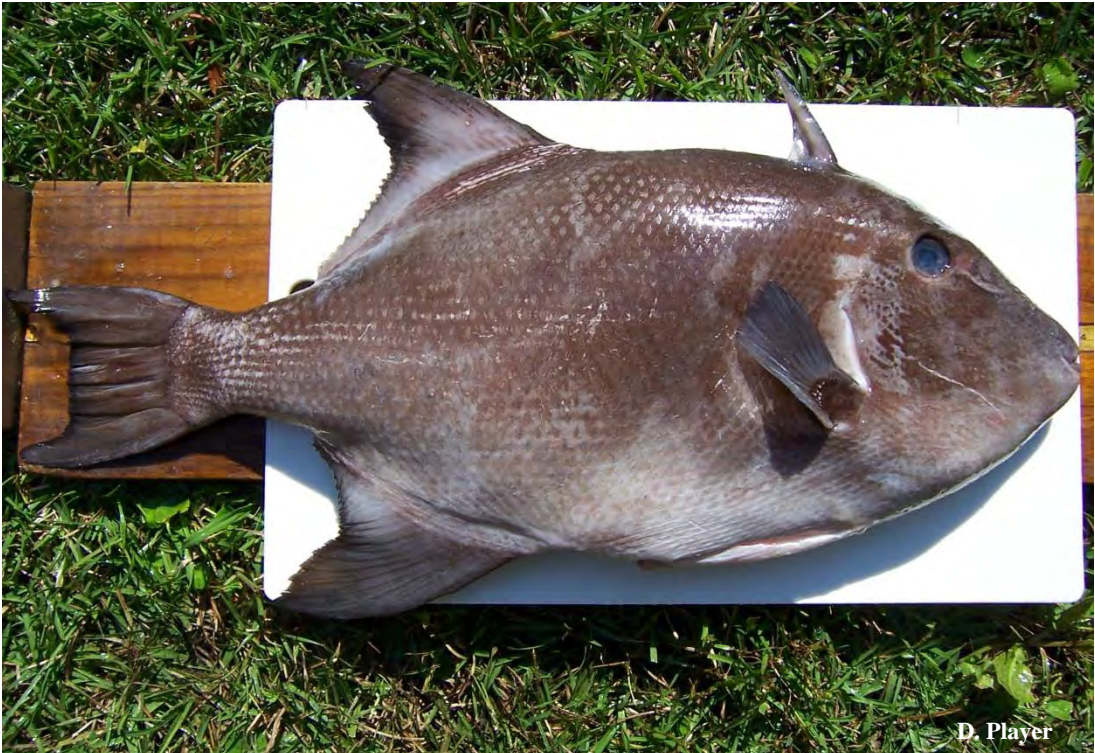
Triggerfish

Filefish

Gray Triggerfish (Leatherjacket)
Balistes capriscus



Ocean Triggerfish
Canthidermis sufflamen



Queen Triggerfish
Balistes vetula



RKW

Unicorn Filefish
Aluterus monoceros

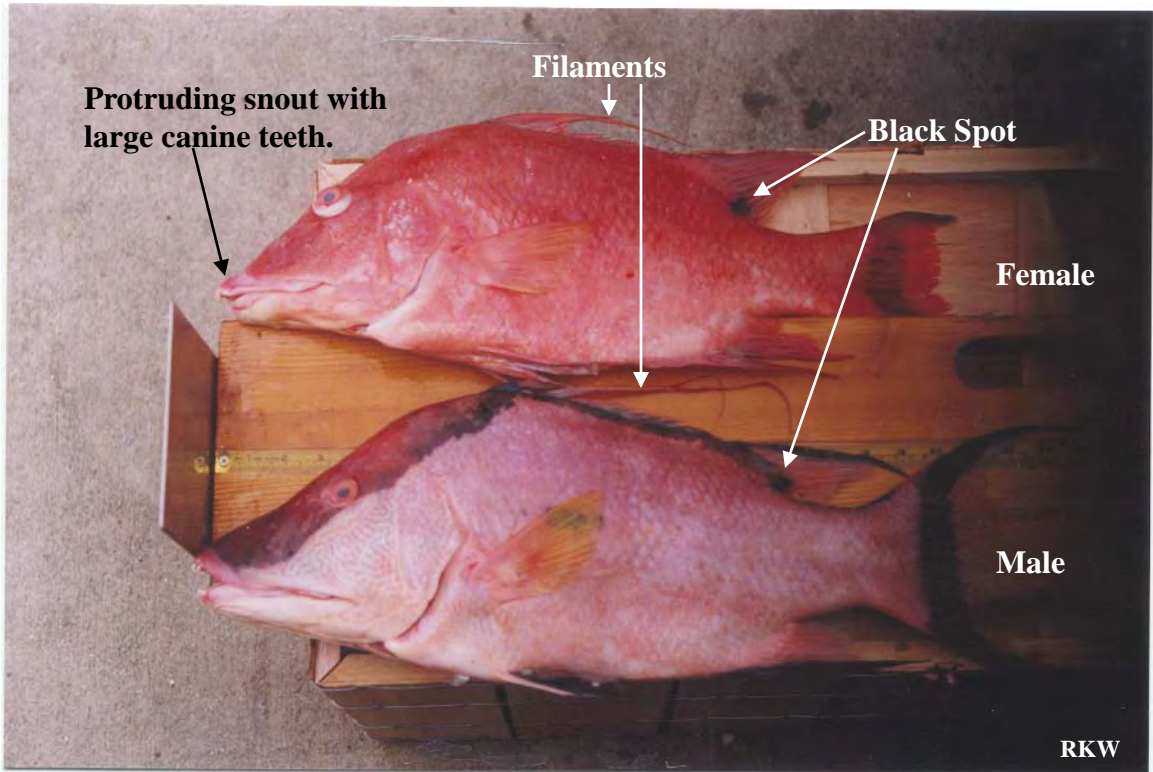


RKW

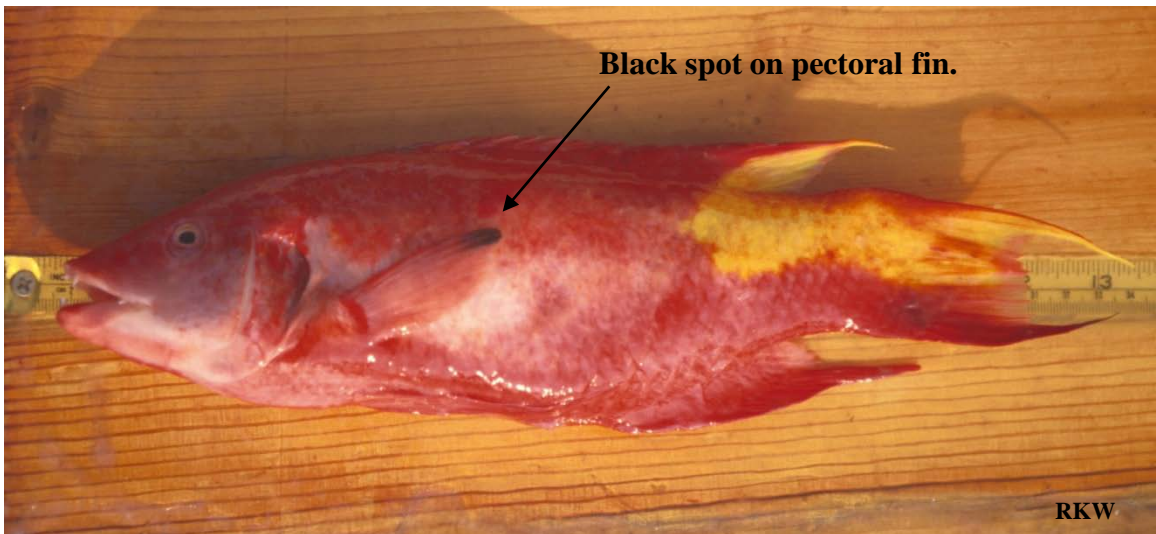


Wrasses

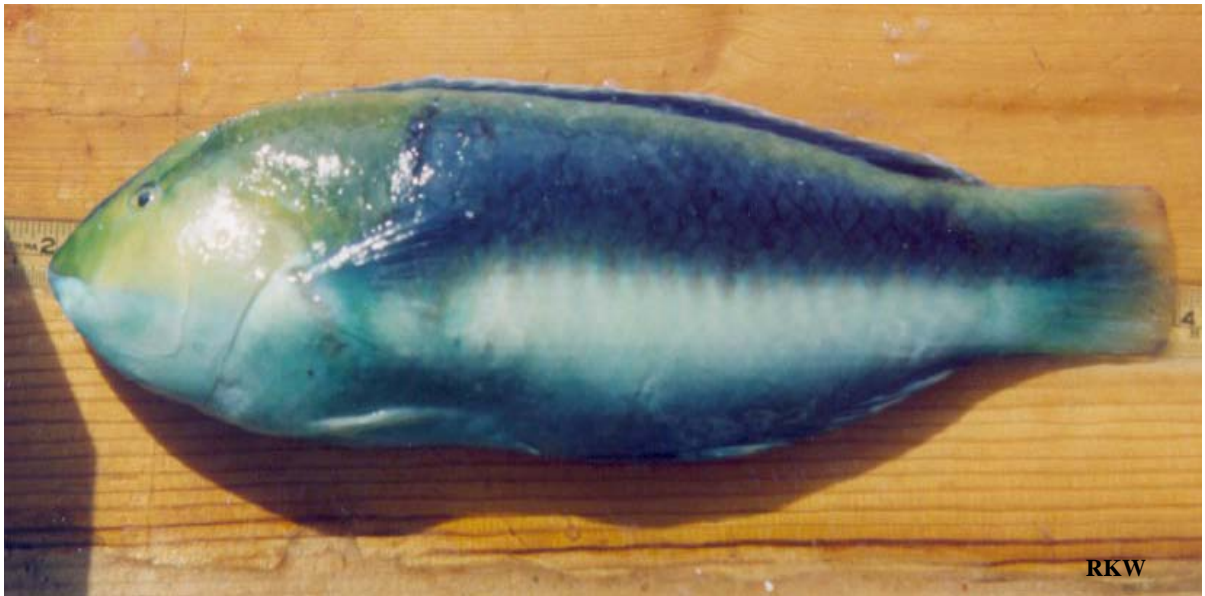
Hogfish (Hog Snapper)
Lachnolaimus maximus



Spotfin Hogfish
Bodianus pulchellus



Yellowcheek Wrasse
Halichoeres cyanocephalus



Slippery Dick
Halichoeres bivittatus



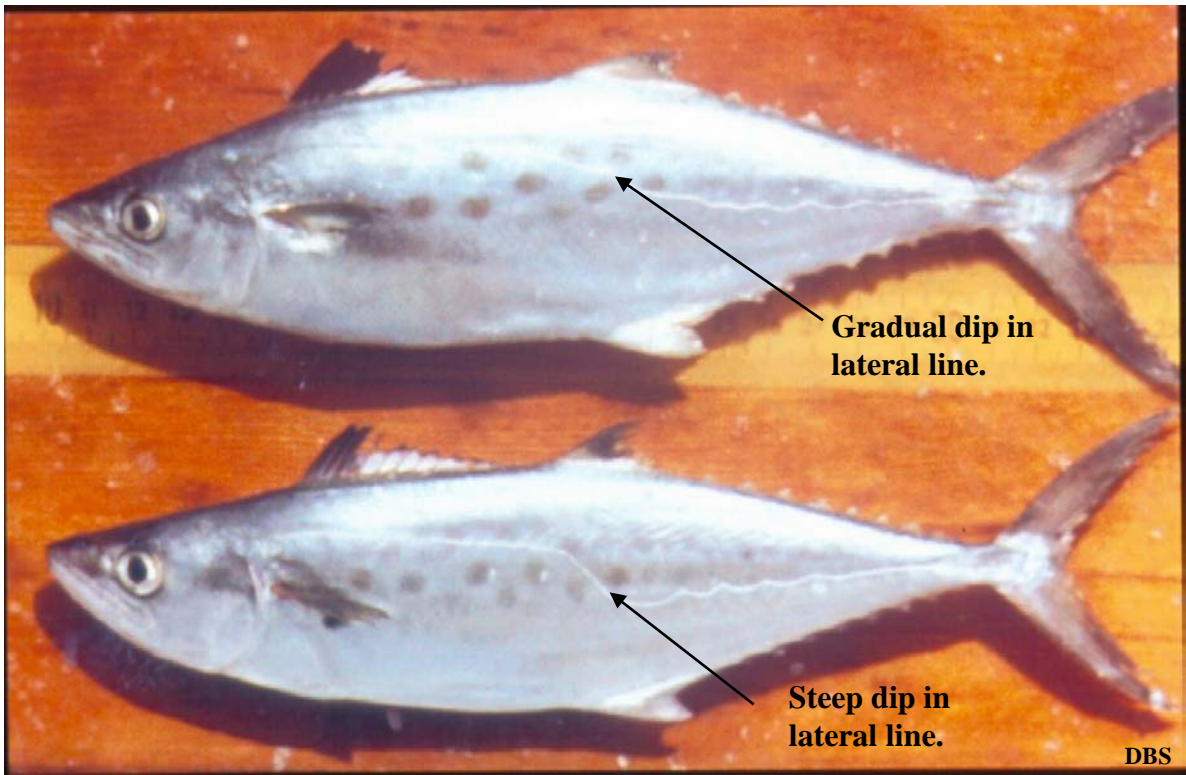
Tautog
Tautoga onitis



The background of the image is a dense, repeating pattern of small, realistic water droplets. Each droplet is rendered with a gradient of light blue and white, giving them a three-dimensional, glistening appearance. They are scattered across the entire frame, creating a textured, wet surface effect.

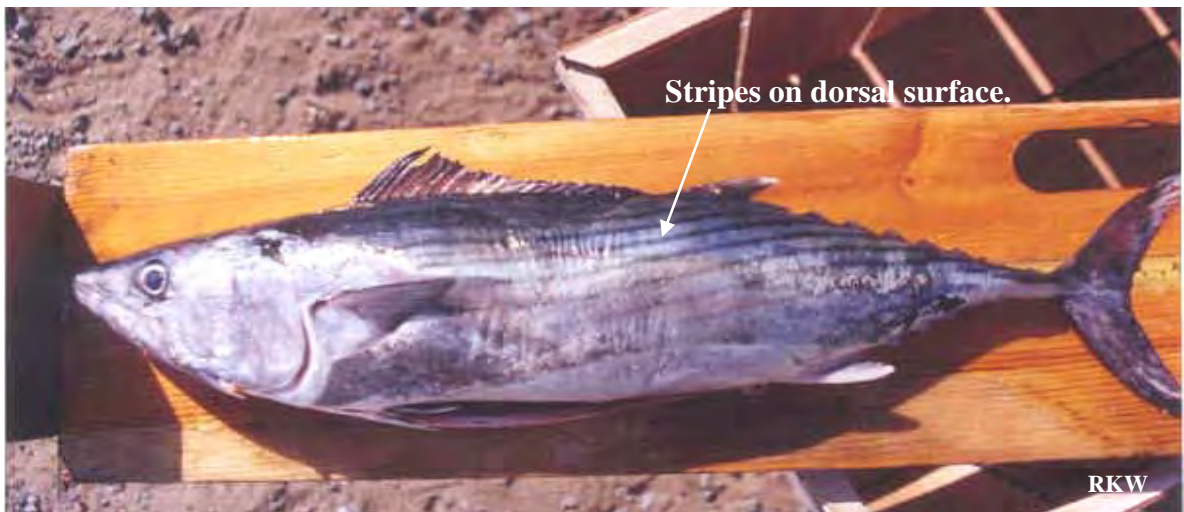
Mackerel

Spanish Mackerel
Scomberomorus maculatus



King Mackerel
Scomberomorus cavalla

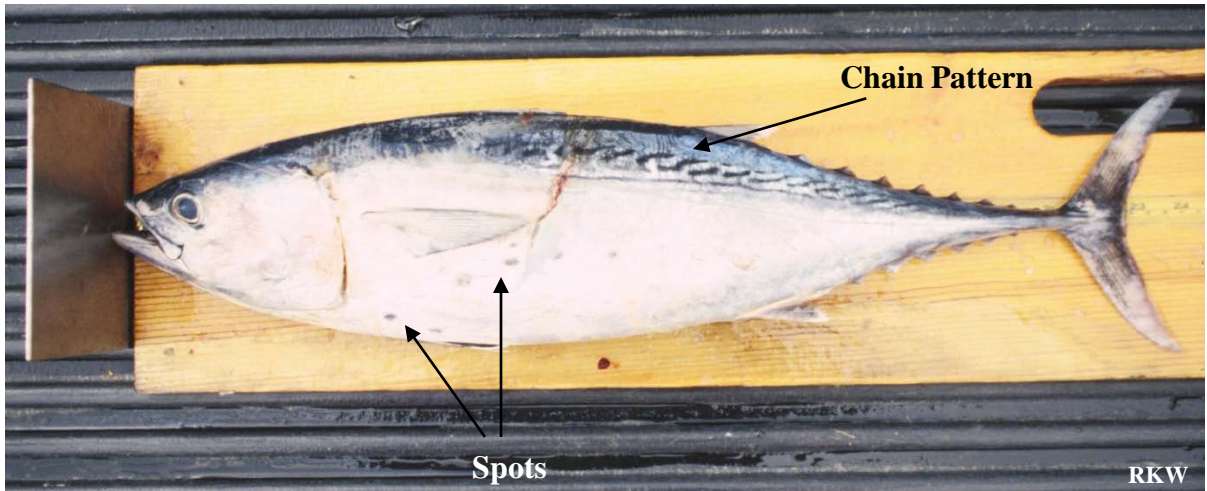
Atlantic Bonito
Sarda sarda





Tuna

Little Tunny (Bonita, False Albacore)
Euthynnus alletteratus



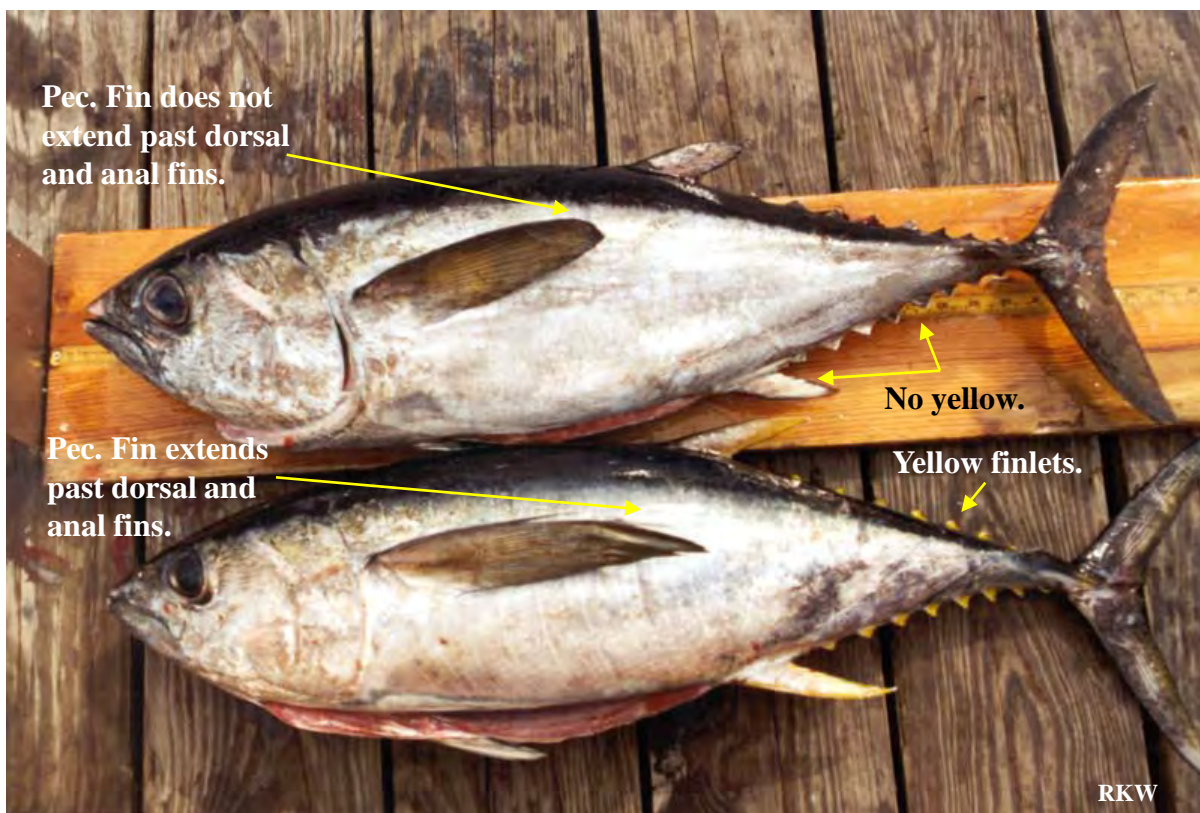
Skipjack Tuna
Katsuwonus pelamis



Albacore
Thunnus alalunga



Blackfin Tuna
Thunnus atlanticus



Yellowfin Tuna
Thunnus albacares

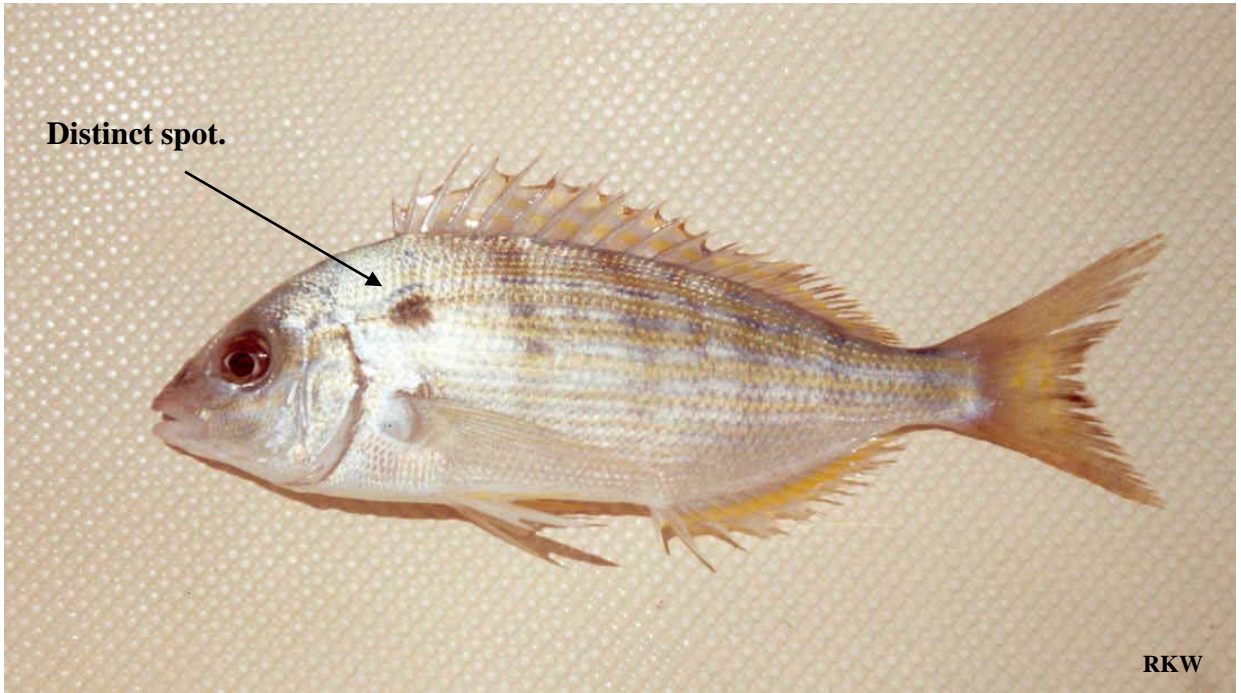
Juvenile Bluefin Tuna
Thunnus thynnus



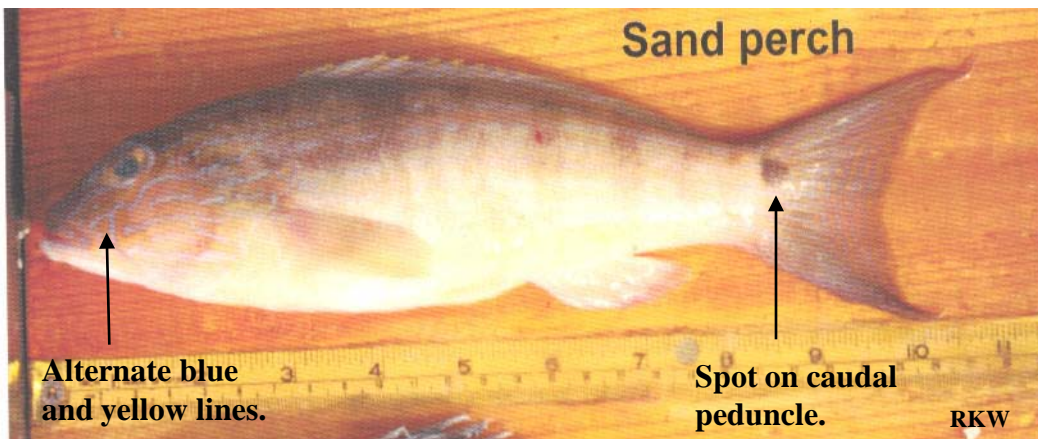


**Other
Offshore
Fishes**

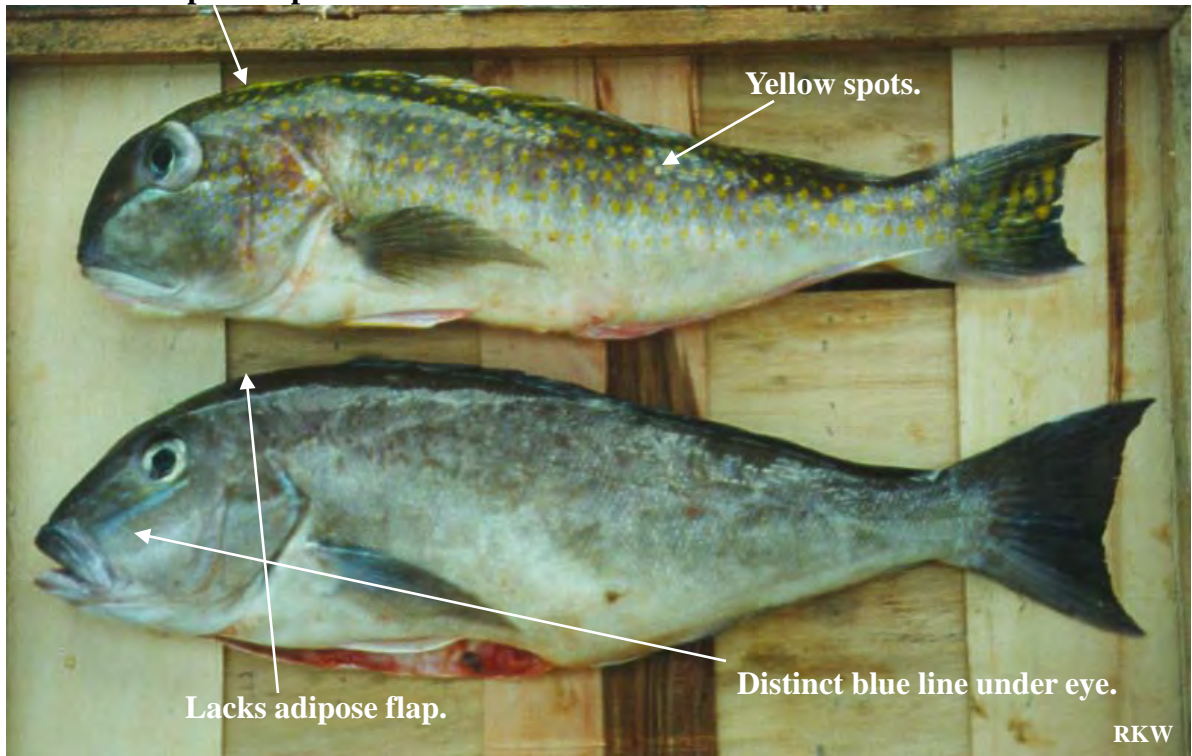
Pinfish (Sailors Choice)
Lagodon rhomboides



Sand Perch
Diplectrum formosum



Tilefish (Golden Tile)
Lopholatilus chamaeleonticeps



Blueline Tilefish (Grey Tile)
Caulolatilus microps



Sand Tilefish (Slippery Dick)
Malacanthus plumieri



Bearded Brotula
Brotula barbata



Southern Hake
Urophycis floridana



Scorpionfish (Sp. unknown)

Scorpaena sp.?



Blackbelly Rosefish

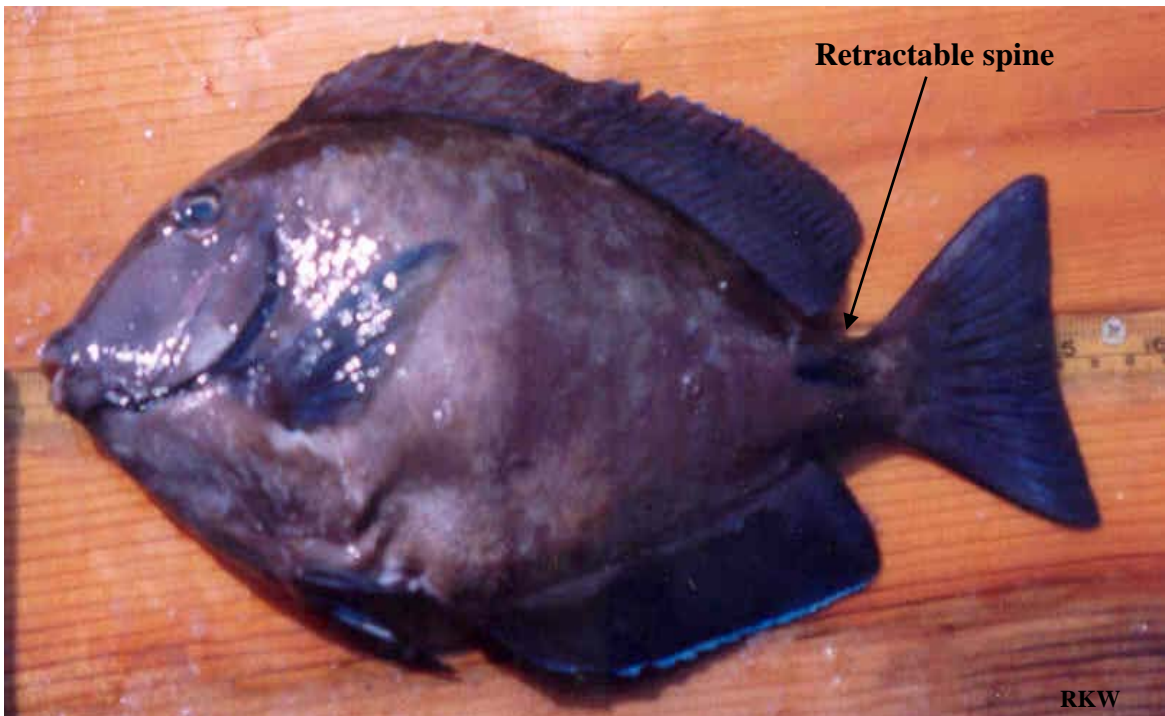
Helicolenus dactylopterus



Bermuda Chub
Kyphosus sectatrix



Blue Tang
Acanthurus coeruleus



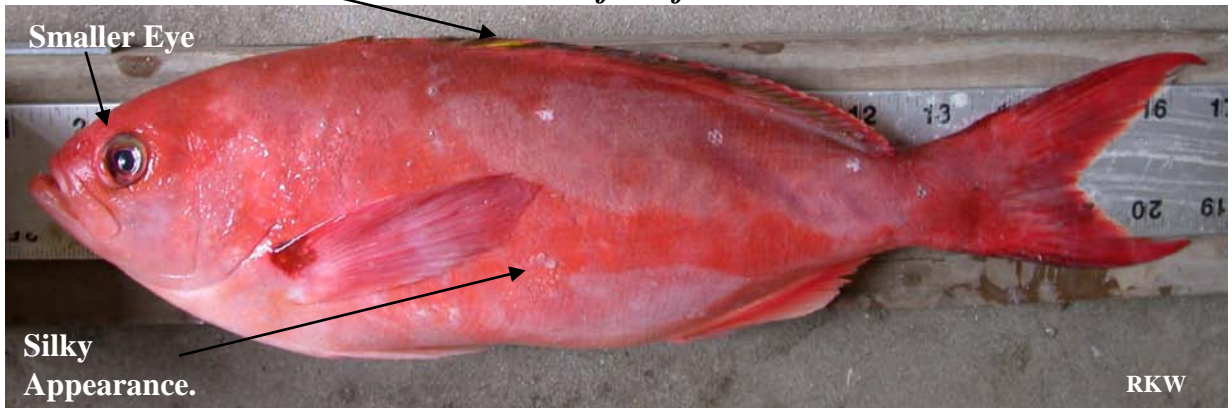
Longtail Bass
Hemanthias leptus



Creole Fish

Yellowish tinge on dorsal fin.

Paranthias furcifer



Spanish Flag

Gonioplectrus hispanus

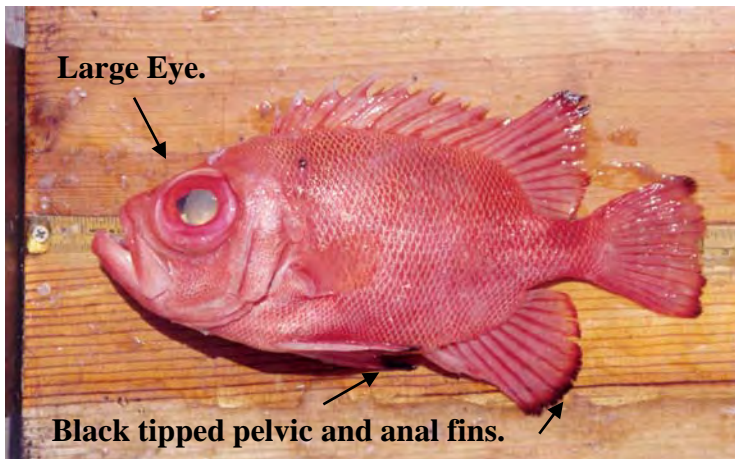


Soldierfish (Sp. Unknown)



Squirrelfish

Holocentrus adscensionis



Short Bigeye (Toro)

Priacanthus alta

Cubbyu
Equetus umbrosus



Red Lionfish
Pterois volitans



Mutton Hamlet
Epinephelus afer

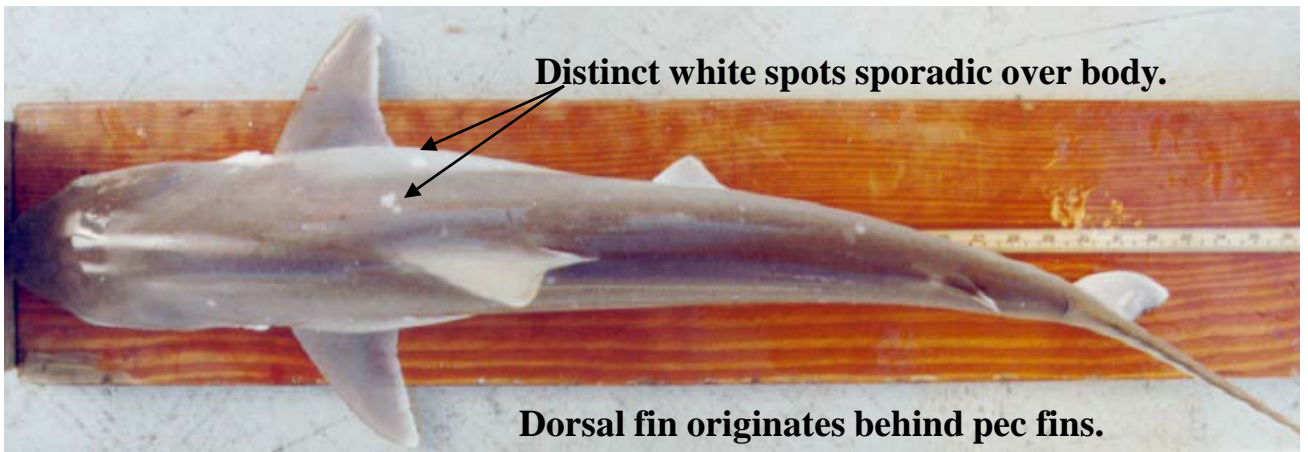




Sharks

Atlantic Sharpnose Shark (Small Coastal)

Rhizoprionodon terraenovae



2nd dorsal is black tipped.



No interdorsal ridge.

Bonnethead (Small Coastal)

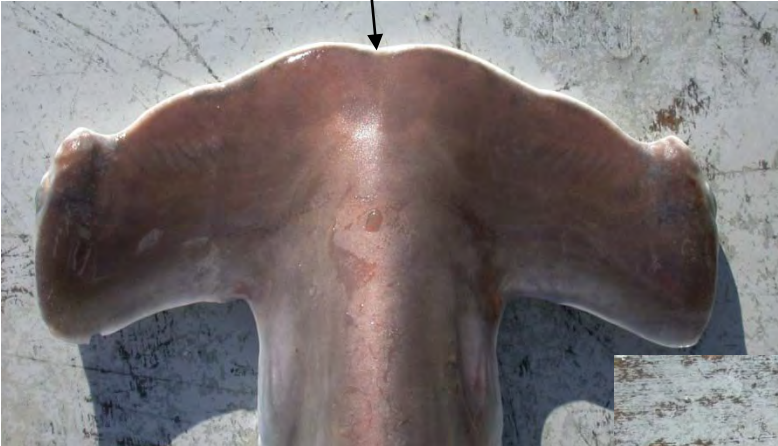
Sphyrna tiburo



Scalloped Hammerhead (Large coastal)

Sphyrna lewini

Indentation on central part of head



Lacks interdorsal ridge →



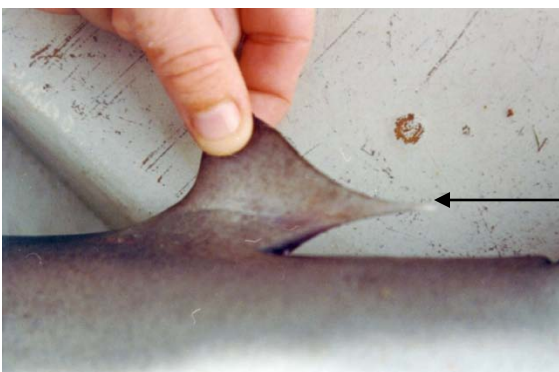
Sandbar Shark (Large Coastal)
Carcharhinus plumbeus



Interdorsal Ridge



Large dorsal fin originating over the midpoint of the pec fins.



Unlike the silky, short rear tip of 2nd dorsal fin.

Blacknose Shark (Small Coastal)

Carcharhinus acronotus



Dorsal originates behind pectoral fins. 2nd dorsal and anal fin have no markings.



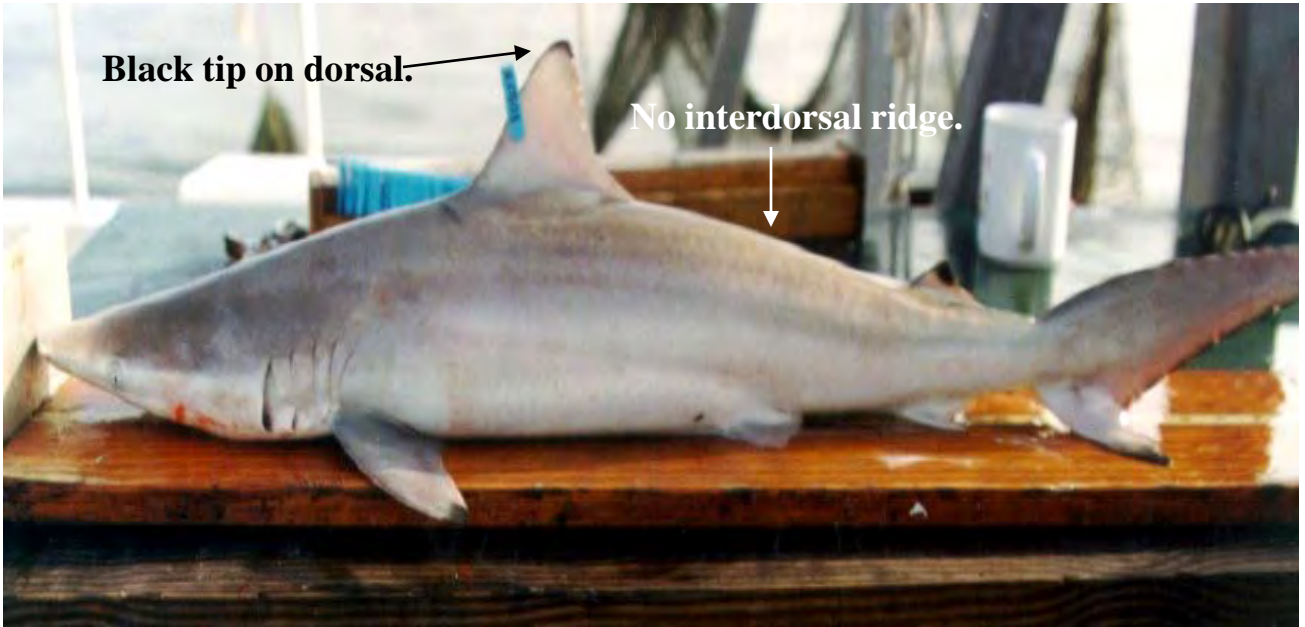
Lacks interdorsal ridge.



Dusky blotch at tip of snout more prominent in juveniles.

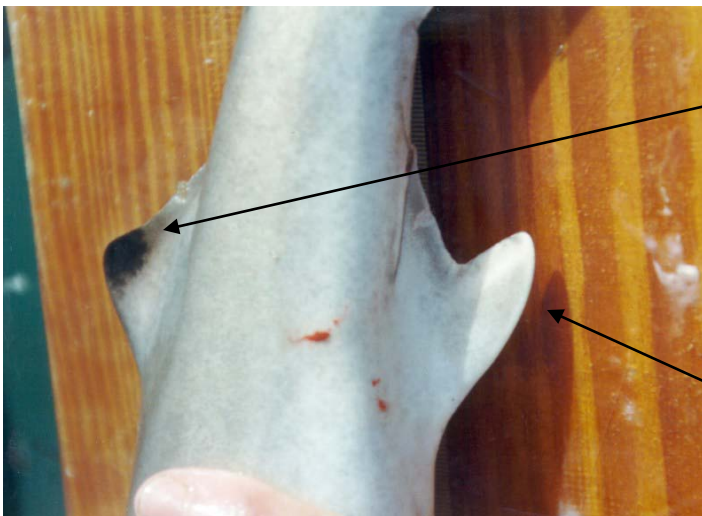
Blacktip Shark (Large Coastal)

Carcharhinus limbatus



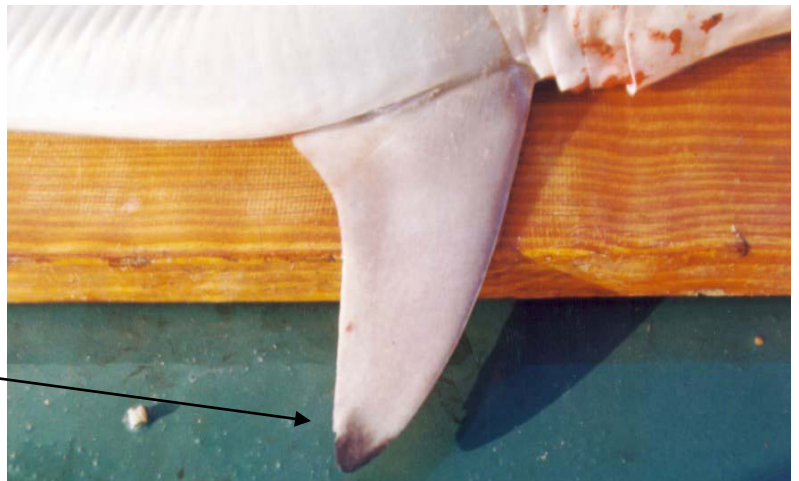
Black tip on dorsal.

No interdorsal ridge.



2nd dorsal is black tipped.

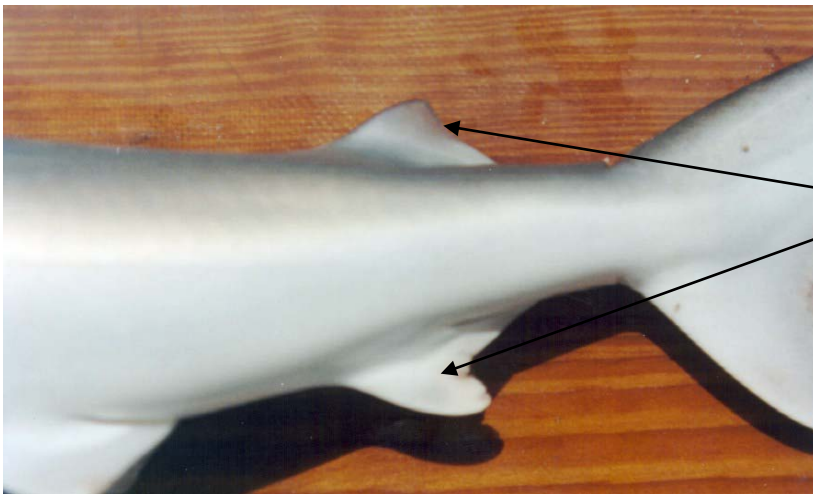
Anal fin is white.



Pectoral fin is black tipped.

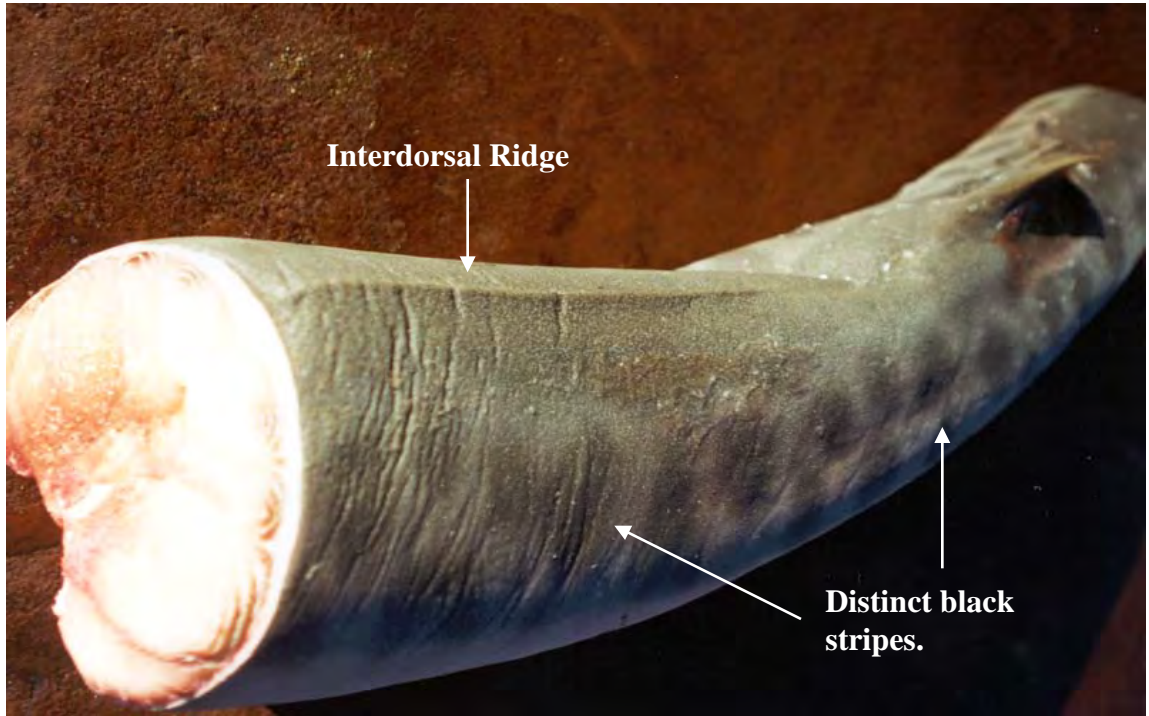
Finetooth Shark (Small Coastal)

Carcharhinus isodon



Tiger Shark (Large Coastal)

Galeocerdo cuvieri



Sand Tiger (Large Coastal)

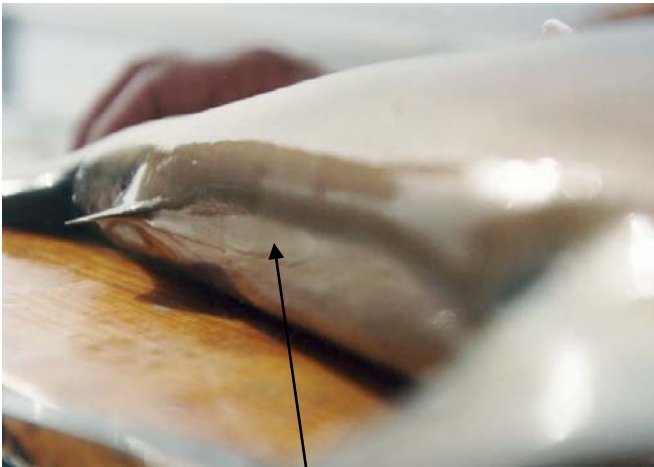
Odontaspis taurus

**View shows
underside of head.**



Spinner Shark (Large Coastal)

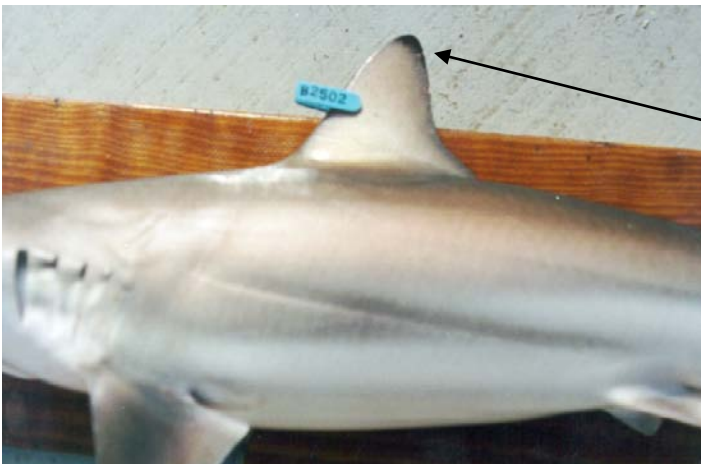
Carcharhinus brevipinna



No interdorsal ridge.

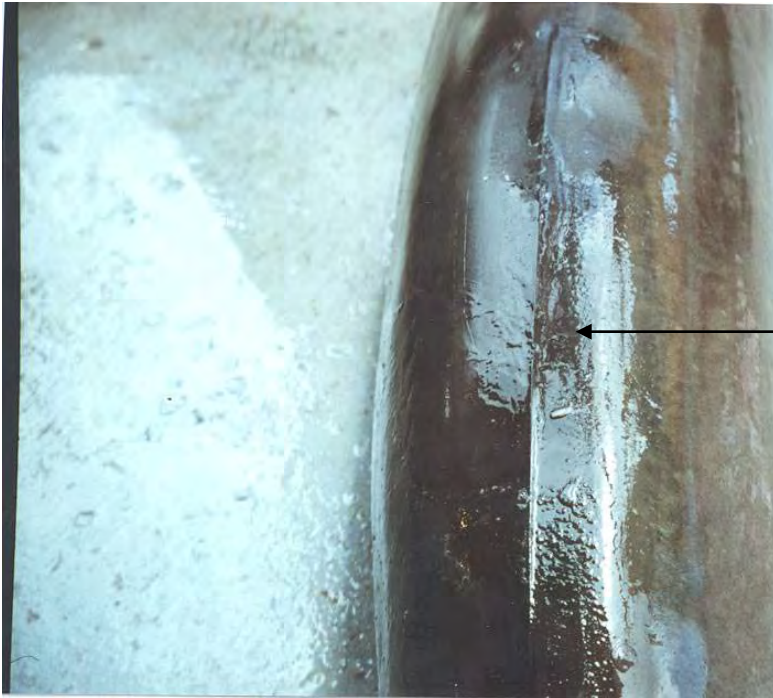


2nd dorsal and anal fin black tipped.

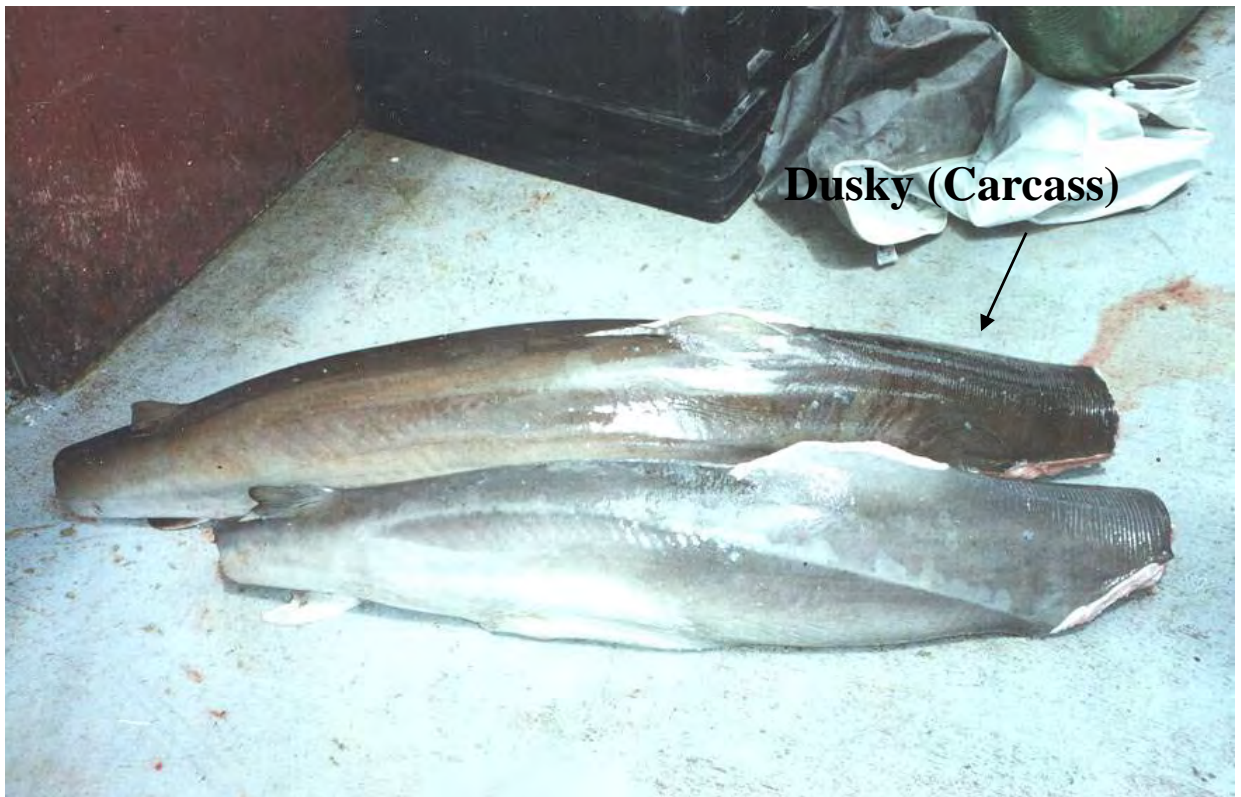


Dorsal fin is black tipped.

Dusky Shark (Large Coastal)
Carcharhinus obscurus

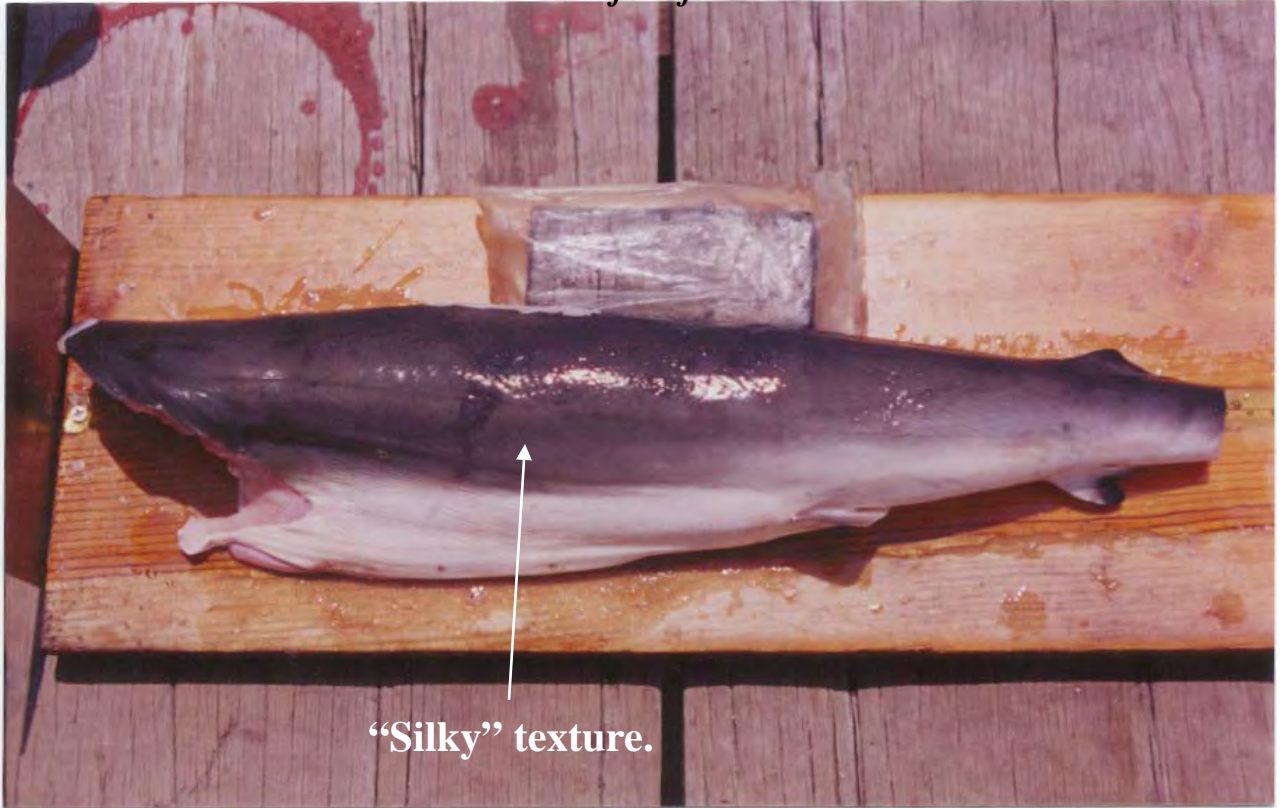


Interdorsal Ridge.

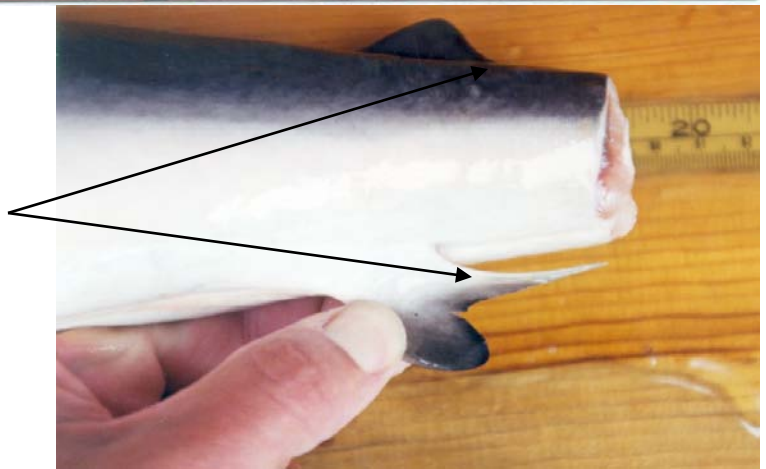


Dusky (Carcass)

Silky Shark (Large Coastal)
Carcharhinus falciformis



Long posterior tip on both 2nd dorsal and anal fin. Anal fin is black tipped.



Interdorsal ridge.