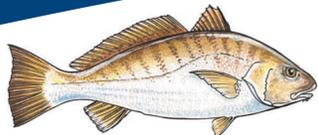
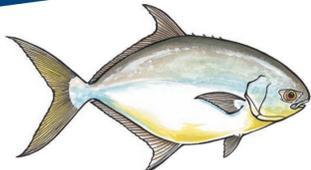


Saltwater Fish Common to Mississippi



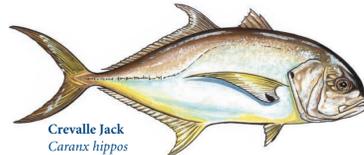
Atlantic Croaker
Micropogonias undulatus
Peak Season: Summer through Fall
Habitat: Bays and estuarine systems
Average Size: under 1 lb.
Characteristics: Light silvery to brassy yellow with short irregular brown streaks on sides.



Florida Pompano
Trachinotus carolinus
Peak Season: Summer
Habitat: Surf zone of barrier islands and beaches
Average Size: 1 lb.
Characteristics: Bluish silver on back with silver sides and yellow underside. Body flattened with rounded snout.



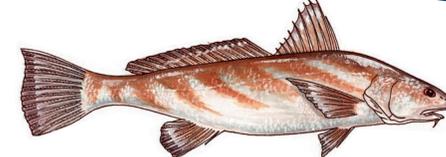
Red Snapper
Lutjanus campechanus
Peak Season: Spring through Fall
Habitat: Offshore structures, including oil rigs and artificial reefs
Average Size: 4 lbs.
Characteristics: Pinkish red with white underside, red iris, anal fin pointed.
Remarks: Charcoal-broiled, grilled, fried or blackened, red snapper is one of the tastiest of all fishes common to the Mississippi Gulf Coast. Fortunately, this species is also one of the most abundant inhabitants of offshore fishing reefs.



Crevalle Jack
Caranx hippos
Peak Season: Summer
Habitat: Bays through offshore waters, often found near anchored shrimp boats
Average Size: 15 lbs.
Characteristics: Yellowish green, deep bodied, with spot on edge of gill cover.
Remarks: One of the most powerful of all the fish common to nearshore waters, the jack crevalle is a challenge on light tackle. This fast-moving species is attracted to fast-moving, shiny baits; and a silver spoon is one of the most effective lures for catching a jack.



Dolphin (Mahi-Mahi, Dorado)
Coryphaena hippurus
Peak Season: Summer through Fall
Habitat: Offshore waters, frequently found around floating debris or sargassum
Average Size: 2 lbs.
Characteristics: Color varies from blue, yellow and green. Body laterally compressed.
Remarks: This fish is not to be confused with the bottlenose dolphin, which is a marine mammal.



Southern Kingfish (Ground Mullet)
Menticirrhus americanus
Peak Season: Summer
Habitat: Bay systems and estuaries
Average Size: under 1 lb.
Characteristics: Silvery gray to coppery with irregular blotches on sides. Single barbel under chin.



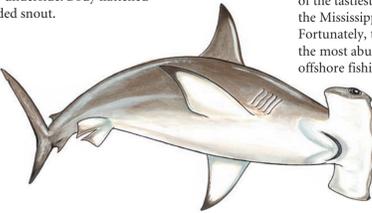
Southern Flounder
Paralichthys lethostigma
Peak Season: Spring through Fall
Habitat: Silty bottoms of bays and estuaries
Average Size: 1 lb.
Characteristics: Flat fish. Brown, often with numerous spots.
Remarks: Probably as many folks catch flounder using a lantern and gig as do those who fish hook and line for them. Either way, this flatfish is a culinary delight that's often served stuffed with crabmeat dressing.



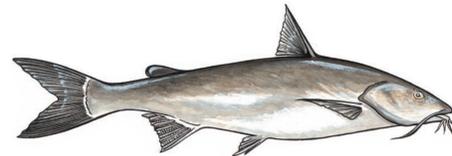
Atlantic Spadefish
Chaetodipterus faber
Peak Season: Year-round
Habitat: Offshore oil rigs and other hard structures
Average Size: 2 lbs.
Characteristics: Deep bodied with grayish silver background and numerous dark vertical bars.



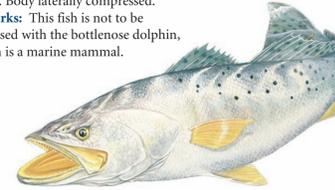
Bonnethead
Sphyrna tiburo
Peak Season: Summer
Habitat: Bays, estuaries and artificial reefs
Average Size: 10 lbs.
Characteristics: Head spade-shaped.



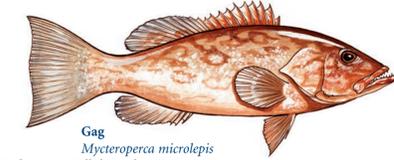
Scalloped Hammerhead
Sphyrna lewini
Peak Season: Spring through Fall
Habitat: Open waters, bays, estuaries and island passes
Average Size: 100 lbs.
Characteristics: Head flattened and expanded with middle indentation.



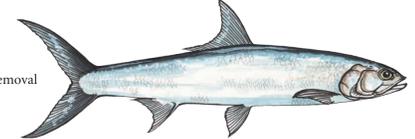
Hardhead Catfish
Arius felis
Peak Season: Year-round
Habitat: All coastal waters
Average Size: 1 lb.
Characteristics: Grayish with flattened head and six whiskers.
Remarks: Anglers need to take care when handling these fish as an encounter with a hardhead's dorsal and pectoral spines can leave a nasty, painful wound.



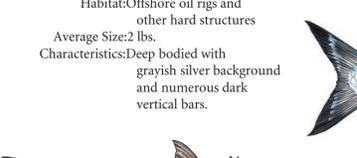
Spotted Seatrout (Speckled Trout, Speck)
Cynoscion nebulosus
Peak Season: Spring
Habitat: Bays and estuaries
Average Size: 1 lb.
Characteristics: Bluish gray on back with silvery white underside. Many black spots on upper side.
Remarks: This species has earned its popularity among nearshore sportfishermen by its eagerness to strike a live shrimp or artificial bait with equal abandon. Silver spoons, soft plastic jigs and hard plastic plugs are all effective in taking trout along the Mississippi Gulf Coast. The early morning and late afternoon hours on strong tides provide the best fishing conditions.



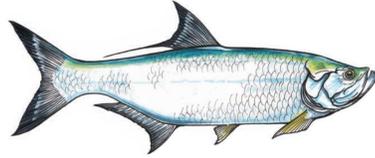
Gag
Mycteroperca microlepis
Peak Season: Fall through Winter
Habitat: Offshore structures, including oil rigs and artificial reefs
Average Size: 5 lbs.
Characteristics: Pale to dark gray with worm-like marks. Color may deepen to dark brown after removal from water.



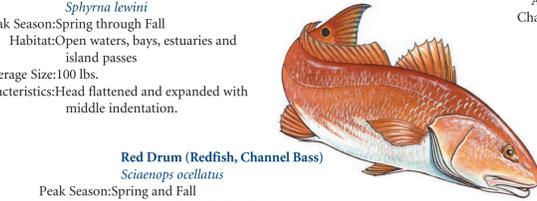
Ladyfish (Ten-Pounder)
Elops saurus
Peak Season: Spring through Summer
Habitat: Coastal waters
Average Size: 1 lb.
Characteristics: Long, slender, silvery body.
Remarks: Though not considered edible, the ladyfish has saved many a fishing trip with its aerobatics and eagerness to strike an artificial bait.



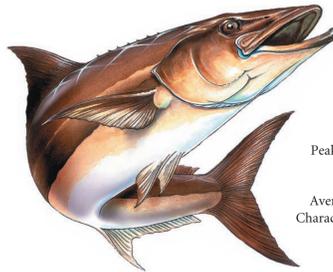
Greater Amberjack
Seriola dumerili
Peak Season: Summer
Habitat: Offshore structures, including oil rigs and artificial reefs
Average Size: 15 lbs.
Characteristics: Darker on back, whitish underside with broad yellow strip along mid-side. Dark stripe through the eye.



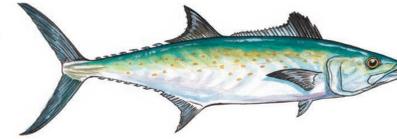
Tarpon
Megalops atlanticus
Peak Season: Summer
Habitat: Sound through offshore waters
Average Size: 75 lbs.
Characteristics: Silvery with dark greenish back. Last ray of dorsal fin elongated. Very large upturned mouth.
Remarks: Where once these magnificent fish were exceedingly rare in sportfishing catches, the silver ghost seems to be making a comeback along the Mississippi Gulf Coast. Drift fishing a live mullet is one popular way to hook up with one of these challenging fish, but catching one on the fly is more exciting.



Red Drum (Redfish, Channel Bass)
Sciaenops ocellatus
Peak Season: Spring and Fall
Habitat: Bays, estuaries and island passes
Average Size: 5 lbs.
Characteristics: Coppery brown or reddish. Large spots common at base of tail.
Remarks: Red drum have become one of the glamour species of nearshore waters as they are superb fighters when hooked on light tackle. Reds up to 30 pounds and more are caught each year in the fall months when spawning schools of these fish first move into the western Sound. Gold spoons are a favorite among fishermen for sight-casting and trolling for reds.



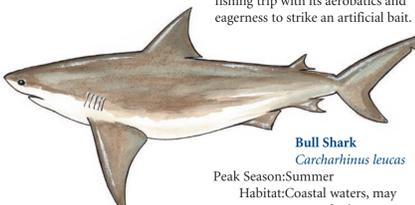
Cobia (Lemonfish, Ling)
Rachycentron canadum
Peak Season: Spring through Fall
Habitat: Coastal bays, sandbars and offshore structures
Average Size: 20 lbs.
Characteristics: Dark brown on top to white on bottom. Head flattened.
Remarks: These bona fide heavyweights can weigh upwards of 100 pounds and call for some stout tackle.



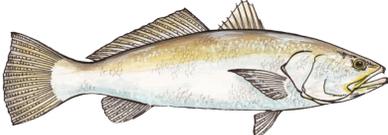
Spanish Mackerel
Scomberomorus maculatus
Peak Season: Summer through Fall
Habitat: Surf zones through offshore waters
Average Size: 2 lbs.
Characteristics: Silvery with distinct yellow spots. Front portion of dorsal fin black. Lateral line slopes evenly downward.
Remarks: Spanish Mackerels provide dependable fishing action in the barrier island surf and in the passes from early spring on into summer when they will move into the waters of the Sound. Fishing a silver spoon with a fast-paced retrieve is almost certain to get a hookup with any hungry mackerel. This fish's sharp teeth make steel leaders a necessity.



Striped Mullet (Popeye Mullet)
Mugil cephalus
Peak Season: Fall
Habitat: All coastal waters
Average Size: under 1 lb.
Characteristics: Dark on back, silvery sides are striped.
Remarks: Known as Biloxi Bacon, mullet are a staple among locals who catch them in cast nets all along the Coast. Excellent table fare when freshly caught, mullet are readily available throughout the year.



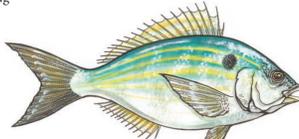
Bull Shark
Carcharhinus leucas
Peak Season: Summer
Habitat: Coastal waters, may enter freshwater
Average Size: 20 lbs.
Characteristics: Heavy-bodied, snout short, very broad.
Remarks: Implicated in many shark attacks, this aggressive coastal predator oftentimes takes top honors in fishing rodeos and tournaments in the unclassified shark category.



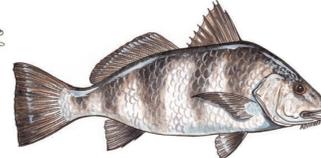
Sand Seatrout (White Trout)
Cynoscion arenarius
Peak Season: Summer
Habitat: Bays, estuaries and inshore artificial reefs
Average Size: under 1 lb.
Characteristics: Generally pale, yellowish brown on back with silvery underside.



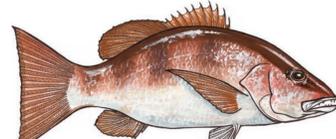
Gray Triggerfish
Balistes caprisicus
Peak Season: Year-round
Habitat: Offshore structures, including oil rigs and artificial reefs
Average Size: 1 lb.
Characteristics: Body grayish with irregular dark markings.



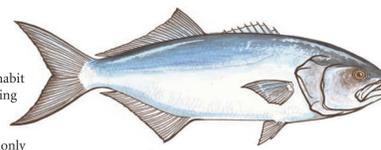
Pinfish
Lagodon rhomboides
Peak Season: Year-round
Habitat: Man-made and natural structures
Average Size: under 1 lb.
Characteristics: Bluish silver with many narrow bronze stripes, dark shoulder spot.



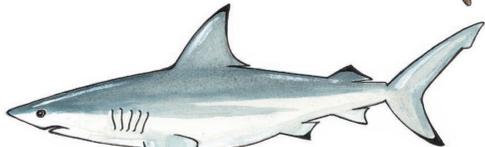
Black Drum
Pogonias cromis
Peak Season: Fall
Habitat: Bays and estuarine systems
Average Size: 5 lbs.
Characteristics: 4-5 dark vertical bars over silvery background. Numerous barbels on chin.
Remarks: These big fish love oysters and can frequently be found feeding wherever the mollusks are known to occur.



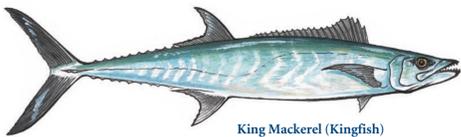
Gray Snapper
Lutjanus griseus
Peak Season: Summer through Fall
Habitat: Juveniles inhabit inshore structures, while adults inhabit offshore structures, including oil rigs and artificial reefs
Average Size: 2 lbs.
Characteristics: Dark red or maroon. Commonly has dark stripe through eye.



Bluefish
Pomatomus saltatrix
Peak Season: Summer
Habitat: Bays, Sound and offshore waters
Average Size: 3 lbs.
Characteristics: Greenish blue on top, silvery below. Pronounced teeth.



Blacktip Shark
Carcharhinus limbatus
Peak Season: Summer
Habitat: Bays, estuaries and coastal waters
Average Size: 20 lbs.
Characteristics: Gray with fins tipped in black, except anal fin.



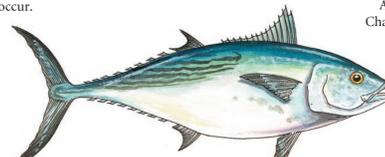
King Mackerel (Kingfish)
Scomberomorus cavalla
Peak Season: Spring through Fall
Habitat: Oil rigs, offshore wrecks and shoal waters
Average Size: 15 lbs.
Characteristics: Sides silvery with greenish on back, lateral line drops rapidly after second dorsal fin. Juveniles resemble Spanish Mackerel.



Gafftopsail Catfish
Bagre marinus
Peak Season: Spring through Fall
Habitat: Bays and shallow Gulf waters
Average Size: 2 lbs.
Characteristics: Bluish gray with very long fin rays and four whiskers.



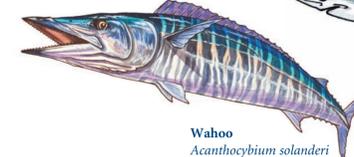
Tripletail (Blackfish)
Lobotes surinamensis
Peak Season: Summer
Habitat: Flotsam in open waters; Channel markers and buoys inshore
Average Size: 8 lbs.
Characteristics: Yellow to coppery brown; often blotched with anal, dorsal and tailfin close to same length.
Remarks: These shade-loving fish are commonly found along the many navigational aids along the Intracoastal Waterway during the summer months. A big tripletail is a formidable foe that can put a strain on both light tackle and nerves.



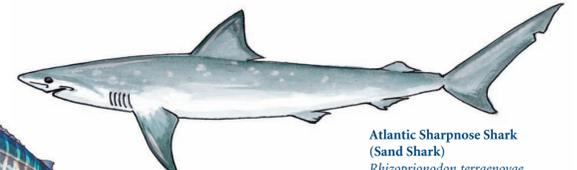
Little Tunny (Bonita)
Euthynnus alletteratus
Peak Season: None
Habitat: Offshore waters
Average Size: 5 lbs.
Characteristics: 4-5 dark spots below pectoral fin. Wavy black lines on dorsal surface.



Sheepshead
Archosargus probatocephalus
Peak Season: Fall through Spring
Habitat: Man-made and natural structures
Average Size: 2 lbs.
Characteristics: 6-7 black vertical bars on side, noticeable "sheep-like" teeth.
Remarks: Consummate bait-stealers, sheepshead are most easily caught using sharp hooks and a lightning fast hookset. Contrary to its name and appearance, the sheepshead with its firm, white flesh is actually superb table fare.



Wahoo
Acanthocybium solanderi
Peak Season: Summer
Habitat: Offshore pelagic waters
Average Size: 30 lbs.
Characteristics: Body long and slender, boldly barred. Jaws elongated.



Atlantic Sharpnose Shark (Sand Shark)
Rhizoprionodon terraenovae
Peak Season: Spring through Fall
Habitat: Bays, estuaries and nearshore artificial reefs
Average Size: 8 lbs.
Characteristics: Grayish top to white underneath with small white spots on sides. Origin of second dorsal fin over midpoint of anal fin.

