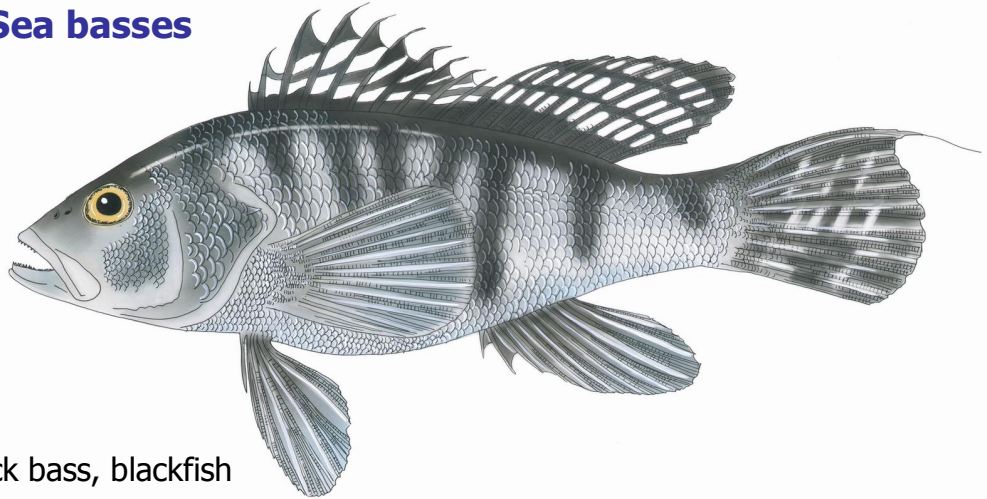


Black Sea Bass (*Centropristis striata*)

Family Serranidae, Sea basses



Common names: black bass, blackfish

Description: Black sea bass are smoky gray to dusky brown to blue black above, with a belly that is only slightly paler than their sides. These colors may be more or less mottled. Several distinct whitish spots or bands mark their dorsal fin. These fish have a moderately stout body that is three times as long as it is wide. Their head is large and includes a mouth with a lower jaw that sticks out beyond their upper lip. A continuous, high dorsal fin is located on top of their body. Their tail fin is rounded and larger fish may possess an elongated filament that extends beyond their tail. Black sea bass can grow to 8 pounds in weight and measure more than 24 inches in length, although the average size is closer to 1 1/2 pounds.

Where found: inshore and offshore

Similar Gulf of Maine species: white perch, striped bass

Remarks: Throughout the coastal mid-Atlantic states black sea bass are prized as a valuable food and sportfish. Occasionally, they are known to enter into Maine's coastal waters. Their inshore/offshore range extends from depths of only a few feet out to waters as deep as 420 feet. These fish prefer a rocky bottom and especially like to congregate around piers, jetties and wrecks. Being bottom feeders, they are known to eat both crustaceans and mollusks as well as several kinds of small fish. Good baits include marine worms, shrimp, crabs, clams and cut fish. Mackerel jigs are also effective. When hooked black sea bass are determined fighters, making them a delight to catch on light tackle. Their meat is especially good to eat.

Records: MSSAR
IGFA All-Tackle World Record

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