

Atlantic Mackerel (Scomber scombrus)

Family Scombridae, Mackerels



Common names: Mackerel, Boston mackerel, tinker

Description: Atlantic mackerel are iridescent blue green above with a silvery white underbelly. Twenty to thirty black bars run across the top half of their body, giving them a distinctive appearance. The efficient spindle shape of their body and their strong tall fin give this fish its ability to move swiftly through the water. Atlantic mackerel have two separate large dorsal fins and, like their relatives the tunas, they possess several dorsal and anal finlets. On average, Atlantic mackerel weigh less than one pound, but individuals of up to two pounds are not unusual.

Where found: Inshore and offshore

Similar Gulf of Maine species: Chub mackerel, bonito

Remarks: Atlantic mackerel are seasonal migrators that travel in dense schools. They appear in late spring in many of the state's harbors, coves and coastal rivers where they are sought by eager anglers. An ultra-light to light spinning rod outfitted with 10 to 12 pound or less test line provides anglers with the most action. Spoons, spinners, weighted bucktails, jigs and tube lures all work well. Atlantic mackerel are not only enjoyed as table fare, but are especially prized as bait for other game fish.

Records: MSSAR:

handline: vacant

rod and reel: Ian T. Bexon, 07/25/95, 2.44 lbs., Bailey Island

fly rod: vacant

junior male: vacant

junior female: vacant

IGFA All-Tackle World Record: 2 lbs. 10 oz.

Fish Illustrations by: Roz Davis Designs, Damariscotta, ME (207) 563-2286

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