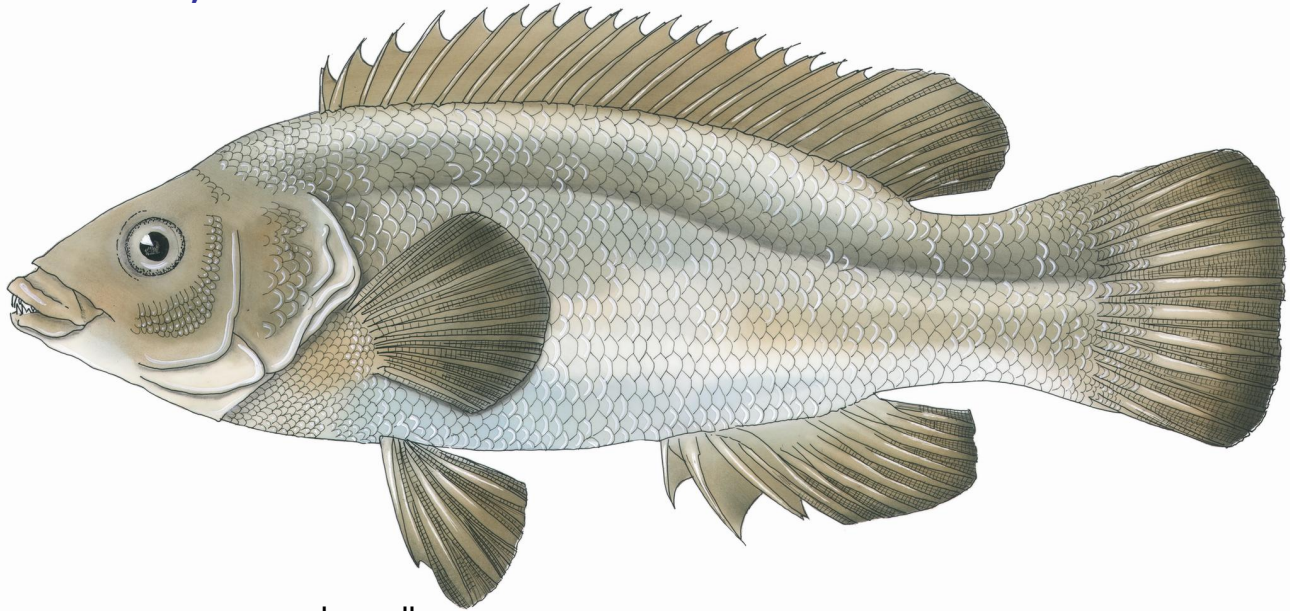


Cunner (Tautoglabrus adspersus)

Family Labridae, Wrasses



Common names: cunner, bergall

Description: Cunnners range in color from mottled reddish to bluish brown on top, fading to slightly paler hues along their sides. These fish have a pointed snout and are moderately slender and deep bodied in shape. They have a single long dorsal fin and a very deep caudal peduncle. Their small mouth is lined with several rows of uneven cone shaped teeth. Cunner rarely grow over one foot in length. Their usual size is between 6 and 10 inches in length and less than 3 pounds in weight.

Where found: inshore

Similar Gulf of Maine species: tautog

Remarks: Cunnners are considered a coastal fish with the majority of them living within 5 to 6 miles from shore. They are most often found around piers, rock jetties and eel grass beds. Being omnivores, they eat a variety of both plant and animal matter, including small lobsters, mussels, shrimp and sea urchins. Due to the small size of their mouth, the use of a very small hook is a must for anglers. Bits of clams, crabs, sea worms and even canned corn kernels work well as bait for these fish. Although cunnners have a tough skin, their meat is tasty, making them a popular pan fish.

Records: MSSAR:

handline: vacant

rod and reel: Ira Kitograd, 10/02/99, 2.53 lbs., Boothbay Harbor

fly rod: vacant

junior male: vacant

junior female: vacant

IGFA All-Tackle World Record: 2 lb. 3 oz.

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

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