

## REEF FISHES

(06/06 ARCHIVE - NCDMF)

**Stock status - *Concern*** - Of the 73 species in the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council (SAFMC) management unit, 17 species are overfished, 16 are not overfished, and the status of the other 40 is unknown. The 17 overfished species include vermilion snapper, red snapper, red porgy, black sea bass, red grouper, snowy grouper, golden tilefish, and gray triggerfish.

**Average Commercial Landings and Value 1996-2005** - 2,709,206 lbs./\$4,341,867 (Including black sea bass)

**2005 Commercial Landings and Value** – 2,631,184 lbs./\$4,560,638

**Average Recreational Landings 1996-2005** – 768,832 lbs., **2005** – 956,611 lbs.

**Average Number of Award Citations 1996-2005/ 2005 only** –**Amberjack (50 lbs.)** (428/143), **Grouper (20 lbs.)** (34/42), **Jack Crevalle (20 lbs.)** (60/17), **Porgy (4 lbs.)** (9/12), **Sheepshead (10 lbs.)** (31/42), **Red snapper (10 lbs.)** (27/73), and **Triggerfish (7 lbs.)** (6/2).

**Status of Fisheries Management Plan (FMP)** - In North Carolina, reef fish are currently included in the Interjurisdictional FMP, which defers to SAFMC FMP compliance requirements. Managed under Amendments 1-13C by the SAFMC. Amendment 13C was approved by SAFMC in December 2005 and will become effective sometime in late 2006. This amendment established an annual quota for commercial black sea bass and vermilion snapper and reduced the commercial quota and recreational bag limits for snowy grouper and golden tilefish. The commercial trip limit and recreational bag limit for red porgy will be increased. The recreational size limits on black sea bass and vermilion snapper will be increased.

**Data and Research Needs** - Develop representative juvenile and adult indices, assess survival rates, conduct population assessment, expand age and growth studies, determine migration patterns.

**Current Regulations (2006)** -State and federal: greater amberjack-28 inches Fork Length (FL) (recreational) and 36 inches FL (commercial); black and gag groupers-24 inches Total Length (TL); red, scamp, yellowfin, and yellowmouth groupers-20 inches TL; red porgy-14 inches TL; silk and blackfin snappers-12 inches TL; red snapper-20 inches TL; and vermilion snapper-11 inches TL (recreational) and 12 inches TL (commercial). Federal only: hogfish (not pigfish) -12 inches FL; dog, gray, cubera, mahogany, queen, schoolmaster, and yellowtail snappers-12 inches TL; and mutton snapper-16 inches TL.

**Harvest Season** - Currently open year round except for the following species: Wreckfish has a spawning closure from January 15-April 15, gag and black grouper have a March and April closure (no sale, bag limit only), red porgy closure is January-April, and greater amberjack has an April closure (no sale) with a season and quota beginning May 1.

**Size and Age at Maturity** - Variable

**Historical and Current Maximum Age** - Variable

**Juvenile Abundance Indices** - None available

**Habits/Habitats** - Occur on hard or "live" bottom on the outer continental shelf

For more information, see [DMF Species Leads page](#)