

## **REEF FISH**

(06/98 ARCHIVE - NCDMF)

**Stock status**--Stressed-Declining. Of the 73 species (including black sea bass) in the South Atlantic Fisheries Management Council (SAFMC) management unit, 17 species are considered by SAFMC to be overfished, 5 are not overfished, and the status of the other 51 is unknown. The 17 overfished species include vermilion snapper, red snapper, red porgy, gag, scamp, snowy grouper, golden tilefish, and gray triggerfish.

**Average Commercial Landings and Value 1987-1997**--2,432,793 lb, \$3,574,666  
(Excluding black sea bass)

**1997 Commercial Landings and Value**--2,523,296 lb,\$3,999,711

**Average Recreational Landings 1987-1997 and 1997**--630,189 lb, 230,057 lb

**Average Number of Citations 1987-1997 and 1997**--Amberjack (178;346), Grouper (22;25), Jack Crevalle (52;106), Porgy (18;6), Sheepshead (24;33), Red snapper (18;9), and Triggerfish (33;9).

**Status of Fisheries Management Plan**--Managed under Amendments 1-8 by the SAFMC. Amendment 9, which should be in effect Fall 1998, will increase size and bag limits, set spawning closures, trip limits and quotas, and further restrict longline catches.

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

**Current Minimum Size Limits**--State and Federal: greater amberjack-28 inches FL; black, gag, red, scamp, yellowfin, and yellowmouth groupers-20 inches TL; red porgy, silk and blackfin snappers-12 inches TL; red snapper-20 inches TL; and vermilion snapper-10 inches TL (recreational) and 12 inches TL (commercial). Federal only: hogfish-12 inches FL; dog, gray, cubera, mahogany, queen, schoolmaster, and yellowtail snappers-12 inches TL; and mutton snapper-16"TL. Amendment 9 (effective Fall 1998) will increase minimum size limits on the following: gag and black grouper to 24 inches TL; red porgy to 14 inches TL; and vermilion snapper (recreational) to 11 inches TL.

**Harvest Season**--Currently open year round except for wreckfish which has a spawning closure from Jan 15-Apr 15. Amendment 9 will have a March and April closure (no sale) for red porgy and gag grouper and an April closure for greater amberjack (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 Average 1987-1997 and 1997**--None available.

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

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