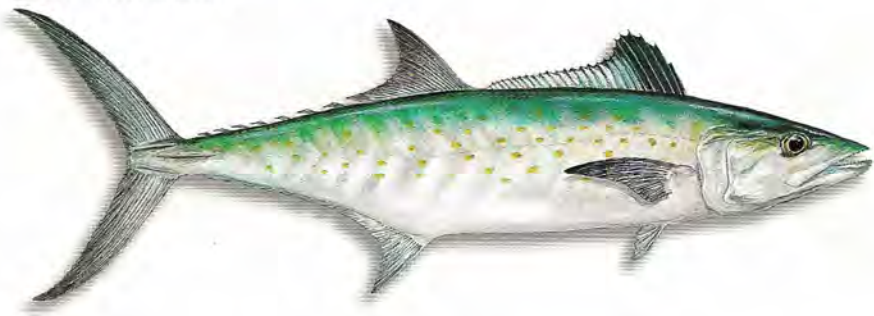


Spanish Mackerel

Scomberomorus maculatus



OTHER NAMES:

Sierra

RANGE: Entire Gulf.

HABITAT: Largely coastal, including bays and estuaries, but roams offshore at times.

DESCRIPTION: The body is dark above with silvery sides that are marked by many spots, both yellow and brown. The body is proportionately deeper than that of juvenile King Mackerel of identical size and the yellow spots of the Spanish appear rounder and brighter. If still in doubt, the only true identifier is the lateral line, which tapers rather gently from front to back. On the King Mackerel, the lateral line shows a sharp dip.

SIZE: Common at 1-3 pounds; not too unusual at 5-7 pounds; maximum potential over 10 pounds. World record 13 pounds.

FOOD VALUE: If you like rich, rather dark fillets, they are great broiled or skinned and fried. Good smoked, too.

GAME QUALITIES: Outstanding on light tackle; very fast runs.

TACKLE AND BAITS: Spinning, baitcasting and fly outfits. Spinning is often best because the faster retrieve of a spinning reel is sometimes needed to move a lure at a pace that will interest the Mackerel. Best lures are small white nylon jigs and silver spoons, but many others work, including topwaters at times. Flies should be small with lots of flash. Best baits are small silvery baitfish, live shrimp and drifted strips.

FISHING SYSTEMS: Drifting; Trolling; Still Fishing.