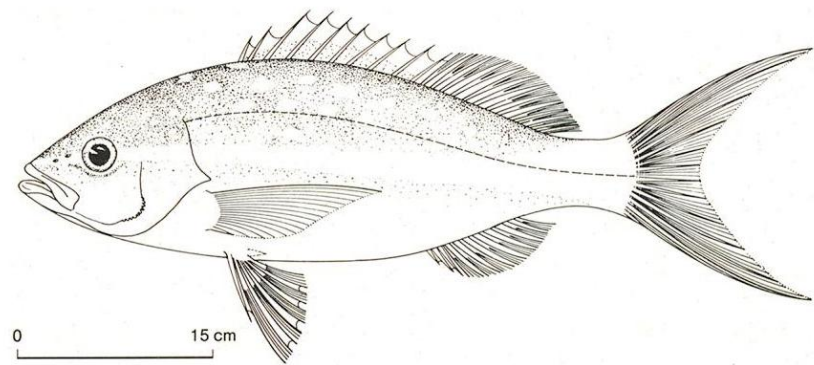


Yellowtail snapper

Ocyurus chrysurus

Rabirrubia



Description

Range: The yellowtail snapper, a bony fish of the family Lutjanidae, is found extensively throughout the western Atlantic shelf waters, from New England to Brazil. Concentrations of this species are found in Florida Gulf waters and on Campeche Banks.

Habitat: This demersal fish is found to 180-meter depths over hard irregular bottoms, such as coral reefs and near the edge of shelves and banks. Juveniles are usually found over vegetated sandy substrates.

Feeding and Behavior: Adult yellowtail snappers prey on fishes and crustaceans found near the ocean bottom, especially around reefs. Juveniles are primarily zooplankton feeders. This snapper is known to school in open waters.

Reproduction: Spawning occurs in waters over banks and shelves during the spring and summer in the eastern Gulf and probably year-round in the southern Gulf. Nursery areas are found along the shore in grass beds and muddy shallows of bays.

Movement: Little movement is shown by the limited tagging studies that have been undertaken.

Fisheries: An important component of the commercial snapper fishery, the yellowtail snapper is harvested in the Florida Keys and off the northern Yucatan peninsula. As with the other snappers, the flesh, which is highly esteemed, is marketed both fresh and frozen. Recreational fisheries are located in the Florida Keys and along the east coast of Florida.

References: Bullis, H.R., and A.C. Jones, eds., 1976; Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council, 1980b; Thompson, R., and J.L. Munro, 1974; US DOI, FWS, Office of Biological Services, 1978.

- Adult Area (Year-round)
- Major Adult Area (Year-round)
- Nursery Area (Year-round)
- Occurrence (Spring, Summer, Fall)
- Commercial Fishing Ground (Year-round)
- Major Commercial Fishing Ground (Year-round)
- Recreational Fishing Ground (Year-round)

Spawning occurs year-round in adult areas in southern Gulf and predominantly in spring and summer in adult areas in eastern Gulf.

References

Hildebrand, H.H., pers. comm.; Rivas, L.R., pers. comm.

Strategic Assessment Branch
Ocean Assessments Division
Office of Oceanography and Marine Assessment
National Ocean Service/NOAA
and the
Southeast Fisheries Center
National Marine Fisheries Service/NOAA