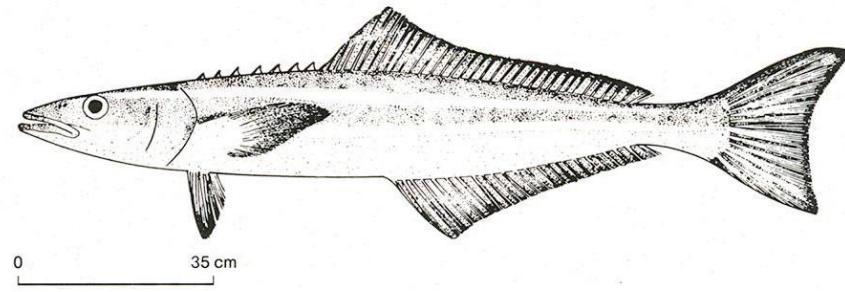


# Cobia

*Rachycentron canadum*  
Cobie



## Description

**Range:** The cobia, a bony fish of the family Rachycentridae, is found in the western Atlantic from Massachusetts to Argentina and throughout the coastal waters of the Gulf of Mexico.

**Habitat:** The cobia is a large, pelagic and epibenthic species that can be found near floating objects, wrecks, reefs, pilings, and buoys and occasionally in estuaries. Cobia are most abundant in coastal areas to 20 meters in the eastern Gulf, 40 meters in the northern and western Gulf, and to 100 meters in the southern Gulf.

**Feeding and Behavior:** The cobia prey on molluscs, crabs, shrimps, and fish found throughout its range. Essentially a solitary fish, the cobia may gather in small groups or schools. This species may be found in the company of sharks and rays.

**Reproduction:** The only known spawning areas occur in the northern Gulf, where the spawning season occurs during the spring and summer. Nursery areas include river mouths, bays, and coastal areas.

**Movement:** The cobia appears in Texas waters in March and April and in Gulf waters off Florida from April through August. In the winter, this species migrates to the temperate waters of the Yucatan and southern Florida.

**Fisheries:** This species is the target of a small commercial fishery throughout its range. Catches are marketed mostly fresh. The cobia is also a favorite game fish throughout its U.S. range.

**References:** Benson, N.G., ed., 1982; Dawson, C.E., 1971; Joseph, E.G., J.J. Norcross, and W.H. Massman, 1964; McClane, A.J., ed., 1974; Richards, C.E., 1967; US DOI, FWS, Office of Biological Services, 1978.

- Adult Area (Year-round)
- Adult Area (Spring, Summer, Fall)
- Adult Area (Summer)
- Major Adult Area (Winter) and Adult Area (Year-round)
- Nursery Area (Seasonal Distribution)

Adults known to occur year-round throughout Gulf. Seasonality of nursery area is same as adult areas. In the northern Gulf, spawning (spring, summer) occurs throughout adult areas, except in bays and estuaries. Spawning seasonality in southern Gulf is unknown.

## References

Fischer, W., ed., 1978; Rivas, L.R., pers. comm.

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