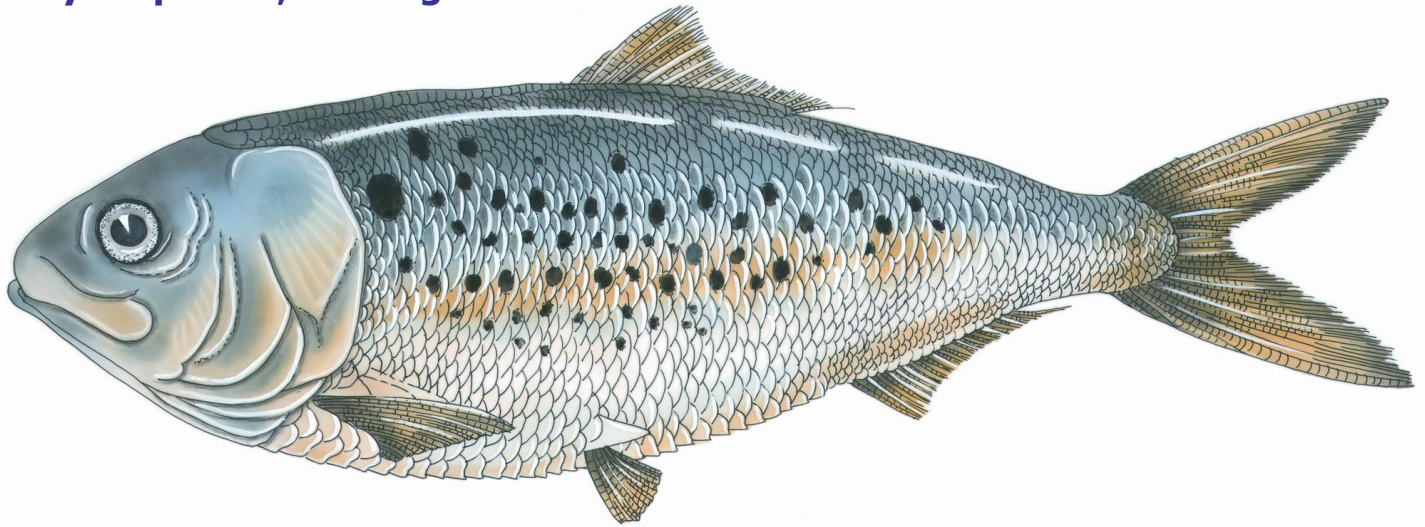


Atlantic Menhaden (Brevoortia tyrannus)

Family Clupeidae, Herrings



Common names: pogey, bunker, mossbunker

Description: Atlantic menhaden are blue to green above with silver sides and underbelly. A distinct dusky spot is located behind their upper gill cover, followed by a varying number of smaller spots arranged in irregular rows. Atlantic menhaden have a laterally compressed body. Their large head has a mouth that gapes as far back as the rear edge of their eyes. These fish have a deeply forked tail fin and, like other members of the herring family, have only one dorsal and one anal fin. Overall body length is about three times their depth. Adult Atlantic menhaden average from 12 to 15 inches in length and 2/3 to one pound in weight.

Where found: inshore and offshore

Similar Gulf of Maine species: Atlantic herring, alewife, blueback herring, American shad

Remarks: Atlantic menhaden travel in large schools of equal size fish. They tend to swim near the surface and often congregate in locales with extensive estuarine systems. These fish are extremely efficient plankton eaters. They, in turn, are preyed upon by a vast number of saltwater fish, birds and marine mammals, as well as by man. Atlantic menhaden will not bite a baited hook. When available, menhaden are often used as bait for catching a variety of saltwater sportfish.

Records: MSSAR:

handline: vacant

rod and reel: vacant

fly rod: vacant

junior male: vacant

junior female: vacant

IGFA All-Tackle World Record: vacant

Fish Illustrations by: Roz Davis Designs, Damariscotta, ME (207) 563-2286

With permission, the use of these pictures must state the following: Drawings provided courtesy of the Maine Department of Marine Resources Recreational Fisheries program and the Maine Outdoor Heritage Fund.