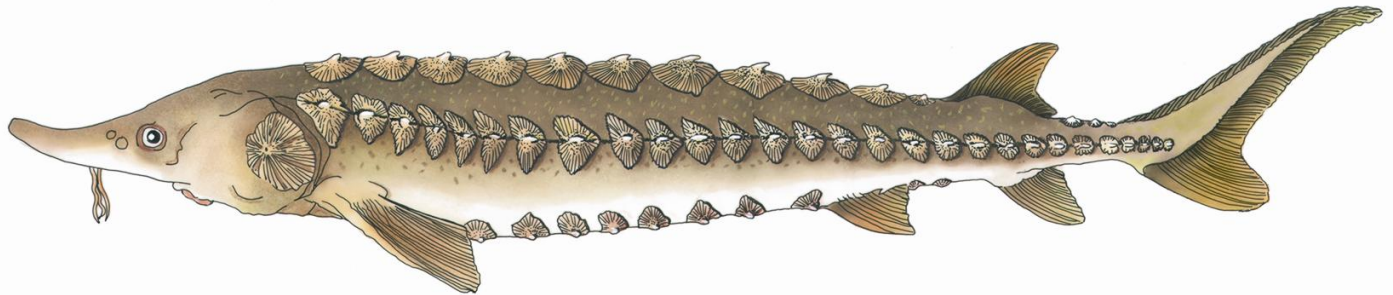


Atlantic sturgeon (Acipenser oxyrinchus)

Family Acipenseridae, Sturgeons



Common name: sea sturgeon

Description: Atlantic sturgeon are olive green or blue gray above, gradually fading on the sides to a white underbelly. These are large, slow-to-mature fish that can grow to 18 feet in length. Their body is covered with five rows of large bony shields known as scutes. Atlantic sturgeon are designed to be effective bottom feeders. Their toothless mouth, which is located beneath their long snout, is capable of being thrust outward, allowing them to suck food off the bottom like a vacuum cleaner. Four barbels in front of their mouth help them to sense food. Their tail fin resembles the tail fin of some sharks in that their upper lobe measures much longer than their lower lobe.

Where found: inshore and offshore

Similar Gulf of Maine species: shortnose sturgeon

Remarks: Atlantic sturgeon are primitive looking fish that are best known for the caviar (fish eggs) they produce. Being anadromous in nature, they return to their natal rivers to spawn. Most of their growth is believed to occur out at sea where they feed on various invertebrates and small fish. In Maine waters, law protects both the Atlantic sturgeon and the shortnose sturgeon.

Records: MSSAR: CLOSED
IGFA All -Tackle World Record: vacant

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