

This tank is home to a variety of fish that we can find right off of the New Jersey Coast. The Mid-Atlantic Ocean is considered from Virginia to New York. Some of the fish in this tank can be found year round, and others can only be found during the summer months.

**- Loggerhead Sea Turtle, *Caretta caretta*:**

-The loggerhead sea turtle in this tank is one of the aquarium's largest and most beloved animals.

- His name is Groman. Currently Groman is 200lbs and is 19 years old (Feb. 2014).

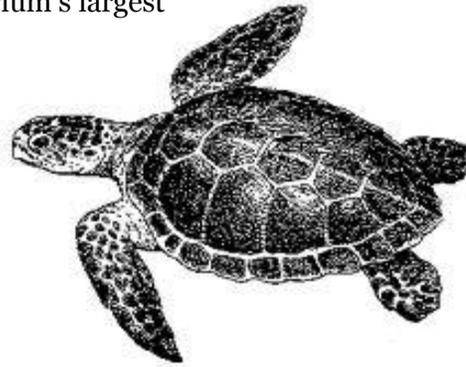
- Loggerheads, on average, reach a weight of 200-500 lbs. However much larger specimens have been found weighing in at over 1,000lbs. Adult males can reach a length of 3 feet.

- Loggerheads have a life span of more than 50 years in the wild.

- Loggerheads are omnivorous. In the wild they will feed mainly on benthic invertebrates. Benthic invertebrates are animals that live at the bottom of the water and do not have backbones. Examples are whelks, conches, clams, shrimp, corals, starfish, urchins, sponges, and lobsters. They can also feed on fish, cephalopods, jellyfish, and various seagrasses. In the aquarium Groman will feed on squid, clams, occasionally mackerel, shrimp, crabs (as a treat), and a homemade jello. The jello gives Groman the vitamins and minerals he needs.

- Predators of the loggerhead turtle mostly attack the turtles' nests or the young. As an adult the logger head has few predators due to its size however sharks, seals, and killer whales have been known to attack them.

-A loggerhead had a very broad habitat range. They can be found hundreds of miles out to sea as well as inshore areas. They frequently feed around rocky places, ship wrecks and coral reefs. Females come onto open beaches or narrow bays to lay eggs in suitable sand.



**Cownose Stingray, *Rhinoptera bonasus*:**

- The Cownose ray can be found throughout a large part of the Atlantic Ocean, normally ranging from New England to Brazil. They are most commonly seen in New Jersey during our summer months.

-Cownose rays on average can reach widths of 45 inches, and can weigh over 50 pounds. However larger ones have been caught and spotted in the wild.

-Cownose rays tend to have a darker color on the top with a light color on the bottom, occasionally they can change colors, as seen in our touch tank.

-The Cownose ray will feed clams, oysters, and other shelled invertebrates. They can use their modified fins on the front of their bodies to dig and suck in sand. Rays will also flap their wings to move and stir up the bottom exposing its prey. In the aquarium the rays are fed mackerel, squid, and occasionally clams.

-Stingrays have specialized mouths called dental or grinding plates instead of teeth. This allows the ray to crush up its food (clams and hard shelled animals) as opposed to chewing it up.

-Cownose rays lifespan is on the shorter side for a stingray, the lifespan is 13-18 years.

**Black Drum, *Pogonias cromis*:**

-Black drum can be found normally near brackish water, with the larger drums found in areas of higher salinity (closer to the ocean). They can be found from Nova Scotia to Florida in the Atlantic Ocean, the Gulf of Mexico, and also in parts of South America. Most commonly they are found between the Chesapeake Bay and the Florida Coasts.

-The black drum gets its name based on the noise it can produce. It will make a loud drum sound. The drum will do this during mating and also when feeding.

-Black drum can get large. They are normally found in the 5-30 pound range, however the world record is 113lbs. Black drum have also been seen in lengths of over 6 feet.

-One of the most asked about features of the Black drum is its beard, however they do not have a beard it is just the drums' barbels. The barbels allow the drum to search the sand for its food. In the wild the black drum will commonly feed on crabs and various mollusks. Large drum have been known to eat 40 oysters a day.



**Atlantic Croaker, *Micropogonias undulatus***



-The Atlantic Croaker, one of the most abundant inshore fish species is found along the Atlantic coast from Cape Cod, Massachusetts to Mexico, though they are considered uncommon north of New Jersey.

-Commonly known as a Hardhead, this species is part of the same family as the Black Drum. They both produce drumming sounds by vibrating their swim bladders with special muscles.

-It is a silvery, greenish, or grayish fish with brassy spots on its sides and faint stripes across its back. It has three to five pairs of barbels on its chin, and its tail is slightly pointed.

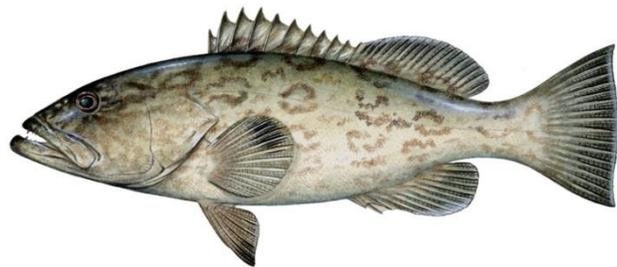
-Atlantic Croakers are bottom-dwelling fish that can grow to nearly two feet in length. They feed on marine worms, mollusk, crustaceans, and occasionally fish, including Striped Bass, Flounder, Sharks, Weakfish, Spotted Sea Trout and Bluefish.

**Gag Grouper, *Mycteroperca microlepis*:**

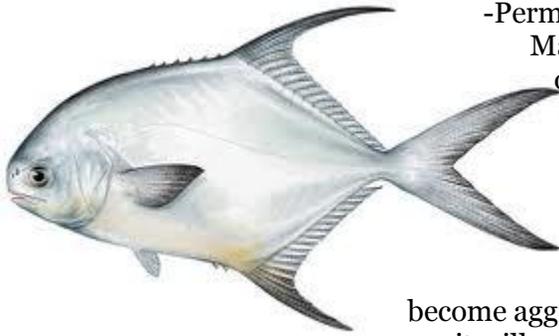
-This grouper is found in the Atlantic Ocean, commonly from North Carolina to the Yucatan Peninsula. In New Jersey we normally see juvenile gag groupers from August to October (when the ocean is the warmest). Juvenile gag groupers have been found as far north as Massachusetts and as far south as Brazil.

-This species of grouper have been known to reach a maximum size of almost 5 feet, and can reach a weight of 80 pounds. Its lifespan is believed to be around 15 years.

-The gag grouper will feed a variety of different foods. It can eat fish, crabs, shrimp, and cephalopods. In the aquarium, we generally feed it squid and mackerel.



**Permit, *Trachinotus falcatus*:**



-Permits are found in the Atlantic Ocean, from Massachusetts to Brazil. Normally they are found offshore, but occasionally they can be seen inshore, even in brackish water areas as well as the open ocean.

-Permits can reach a length of around 50 inches, and weigh around 80 pounds.

-They can be found individually or in small schools, if approach while the fish is schooling they can become aggressive, however if approach while out of a school the permit will use its speed to flee.

- Adult Permits will feed small fish, crabs, and shrimp. In the aquarium the permits are feed mackerel.

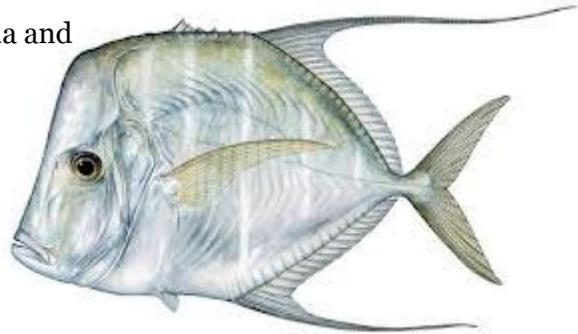
**Lookdown, *Selene vomer*:**

-The lookdown can be found as far north as Canada and as far south as Uruguay.

-The largest look down ever found was almost 20 inches long.

-The look down gets its name because of the slant in its face gives it the appearance that it is always looking down.

-Their diet consists of small crabs, shrimp, fishes and worms.



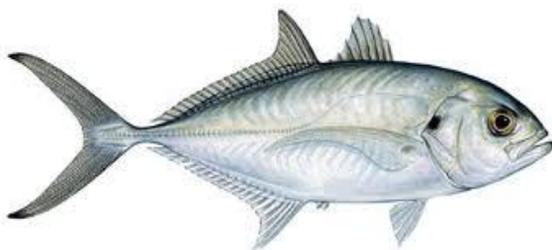
**Blue Runner, *Caranx crysos*:**

-The blue runner is distributed throughout the Atlantic Ocean ranging from Canada to Brazil.

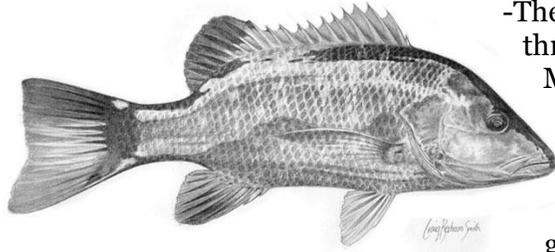
-The maximum length of the blue runner can be around 28 inches, and its weight normally tops out at around 11 pounds.

-This fish is known to inhabit both inshore and offshore reefs, however it has been found around large man-made structures.

-The blue runner is a schooling fish that feeds on smaller fish and crustaceans while it's inshore, and will feed only on zooplankton while offshore.



**Grey Snapper, *Lutjanus griseus*:**



-The grey snapper or mangrove snapper is distributed throughout the western Atlantic Ocean from Massachusetts to Brazil. It can be found in fresh, brackish, and marine environments.

-The maximum length of this snapper can be around 35 inches; however most do not exceed 16 inches. The maximum weight for a grey snapper is 44 pounds; however most do not

reach this weight.

-The grey snapper likes a lot of structure in the wild (reefs, wrecks, etc.).

-They are called opportunist predators meaning they will kill and eat almost anything within reason. They mainly feed on crustaceans, fish, worms, and mollusks.

**Tautog, *Tautoga onitis*:**

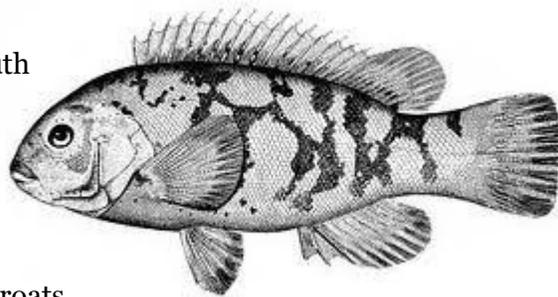
-Tautogs are native to the Northwestern Atlantic Ocean, inhabiting waters from Nova Scotia to South Carolina.

-This species likes structure and is commonly found around ship wrecks, and other man made items (bridges, docks, etc.).

-The tog has very sharp and strong teeth that allow them to eat and crush a wide variety of mollusks and crustaceans. In the backs of their throats they even have a set of teeth that resembles molars.

-Tautogs have a specialized skin that allows them to leave in rock and hard environment. The skin has a rubbery feel to it and is covered with slime which helps protects them while swimming around rocks.

-Common New Jersey game fish.



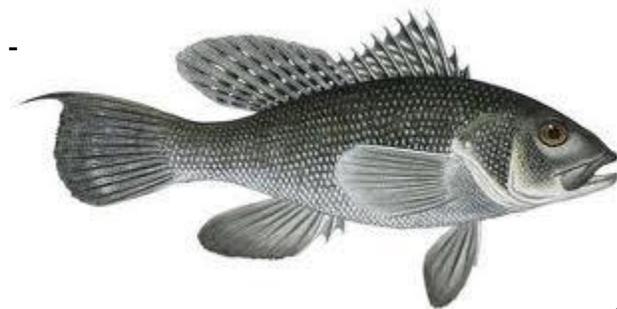
**Black Sea bass, *Centropristis striata*:**

The black sea bass is commonly found throughout the north east ranging from Maine to South Carolina, however it is mainly found in the Mid-Atlantic States.

-Like the tautog this fish also is normally found around hard structures such as rocks, man-made reefs, wrecks, docks, and jetties.

-Black sea bass can reach a length of about 20 inches, and a weight of 9.5 pounds.

Fish such as mackerel, whitefish and sand bass and crabs make up this fish's diet.



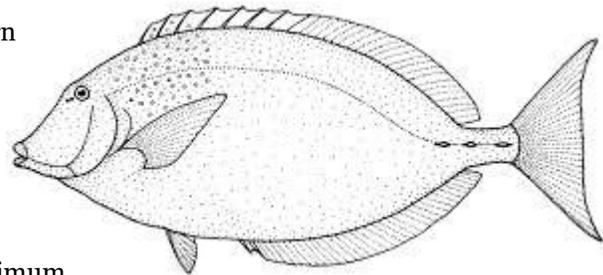
**Porkfish, *Anisotremus virginicus*:**

- The pork fish is found from Florida to Brazil, commonly, however it is rarely seen north of Florida on occasion.
- In the wild this fish is nocturnal and likes to live in coral reefs.
- The pork fish will feed various mollusks, echinoderm, annelids, and crustaceans.
- The pork fish is a smaller fish maxing out at a length of 16 inches.
- Their diet consists of worms, crustaceans, mollusks, sea stars and sea urchins.

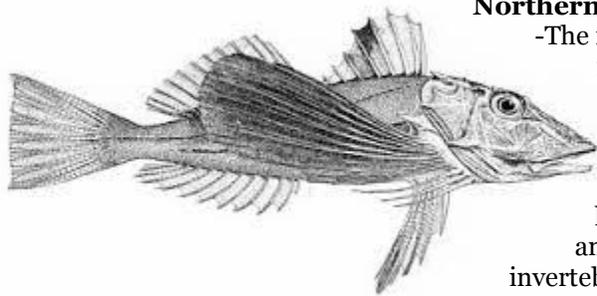


**Ocean Surgeon, :**

- The ocean surgeon can be found along the western shores of the Atlantic Ocean ranging from Massachusetts to the Gulf of Mexico.
- This type of fish feeds mostly on algae, but in the aquarium it will feed on small bits of clam and mackerel, as well as algae.
- In the wild the ocean surgeon is normally seen in medium to large schools.
- This fish is also on the smaller side reaching a maximum length of 15 inches.



**Northern Sea Robin, *Prionotus carolinus*:**



- The northern sea robin inhabits shallow coastal waters ranging from Southern New England down to North Carolina. They can be found from estuaries to the edge of the continental shelf, where they prefer sandy bottoms.
- Sea robins feed by using their “legs”, the three lower rays of the sea robin’s pelvic fins, to walk along and stir up the bottom. The sea robin will eat various invertebrates including shrimp, small crabs, amphipods, squid, and segmented worms.
- The sea robin gets its name from its wing like pectoral fins, when the fins are spread out they resemble a birds wings.
- The northern sea robin can reach a maximum average length of 17 inches.

**Summer Flounder, *Paralichthys dentatus*:**

-Commonly found in the Atlantic Ocean off of the East Coast of the United States. The summer flounder is most abundant from Massachusetts to North Carolina.

-Also called Fluke. Summer flounder are “left-eyed” flounder.

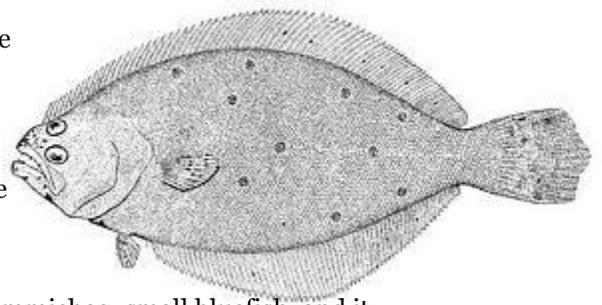
-Fluke have a large mouth and very sharp teeth.

-These flounders can change the color and pattern of their top side to better camouflage themselves with the bottom.

-Fluke, an ambush predators and will normal bury and conceal everything but their mouths and then rapidly attack its prey. It

will feed on various small fish including menhaden, silverside, mummichog, small bluefish, and it will also feed on some invertebrates (shrimp, crabs).

-Flukes normally will get around 15-20 inches long, and weigh 103 pounds, but they may get as large as 26 pounds.

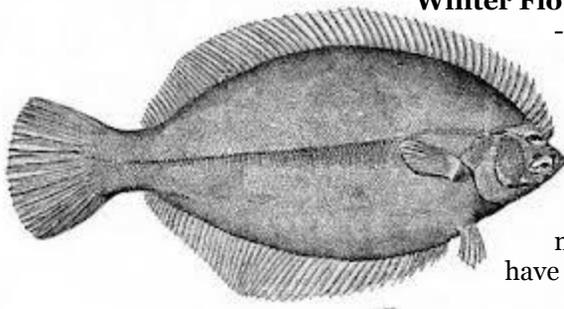


**Winter Flounder, *Pseudopleuronectes americanus*:**

-Found in the coastal waters of the western Atlantic Ocean. It ranges from Canada to as far south as Georgia. It will spend its summers in off shore waters, and then come in shore during the winter months.

-The winter flounder can reach lengths of 25 inches, and can weigh around 8 pounds.

-Winter Flounder are right eyed flounder, and also do not have the ragged teeth like the summer flounder but have a similar diet.



**Northern Puffer, *Sphoerides maculatus*:**

-Located normally in bays and estuaries of the mid-Atlantic Ocean, but have been seen as far south as Florida.

-The northern puffer will feed on different types of mollusks, crustaceans, and occasionally small fish. In the aquarium the puffers will feed on mackerel and squid.

-The northern puffer will reach a average length of 14 inches.

-In the Chesapeake Bay area they are considered a delicacy; many of the people in that area call them sugar toads.



**Blue striped Grunts, *Haemulon sciurus*:**

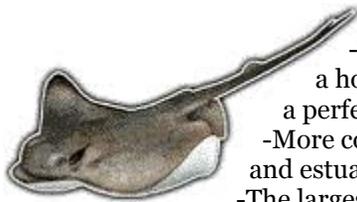
-This species of grunt is native to the western Atlantic Ocean, ranging from the mid-Atlantic Ocean to Brazil. It is commonly seen throughout the Gulf of Mexico and the Caribbean.

-Gets its name because of the vibrant blue striped markings, and also the grunting noise it makes by grinding its pharyngeal teeth together.

-The blue striped grunt is on the smaller side, reaching an average of 8-10 inches. The longest recorded blue striped grunt was measured at 18 inches.

-The blue striped grunt is a schooling fish and it will occasionally school with French grunts, a close relative.

-They will feed on a diet of mostly shrimp, but will also eat annelids, bivalves, and crustaceans.



**Bat Ray, *Myliobatis californica*:**

-The bat ray is not found in the Mid-Atlantic Ocean, he was lost and needed a home, Tank 1 was a perfect fit for him.

-More commonly found on shorelines of the Pacific Ocean, where it stays in bays and estuaries, and kelp beds.

-The largest bat ray seen was almost 6 feet across and weighed over 200 pounds.

However they normally weigh around 20 -30 pounds.

-Bat rays can tolerate a wide range of salinities (euryhaline).

-Similar to the cow nose ray, bat rays feed on mollusks and crustaceans, along with small fish. They will use their wing like fins to move sand and expose their prey.