

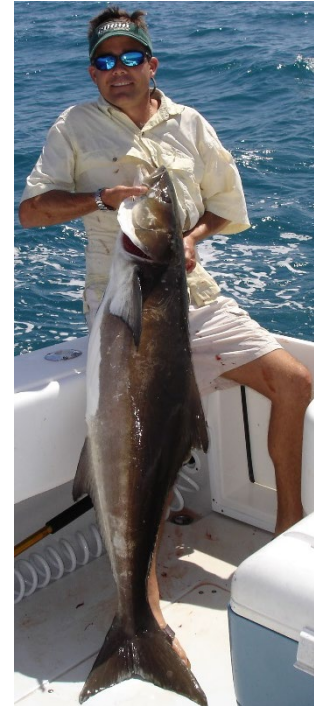
## *Cobia (Rachycentron canadum)*

### **Description:**

Cobia are the only member of their genus. Cobia are long and slim with a broad, flat head. The dorsal side of the fish is dark brown in color, while the ventral side is milky white. The lateral line is dark and obvious, and runs through the eye to the forked tail. Cobia have many small teeth in their mouths, and approximately eight short, unconnected spines between the head and dorsal fin. They can reach lengths of over two meters (6 ft), and weigh over 45 kg (100 lbs).

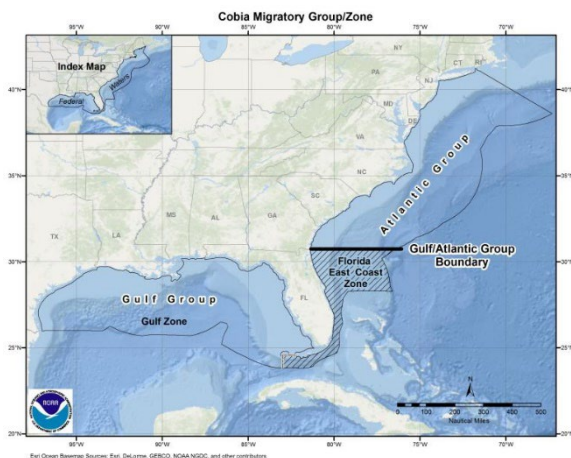
### **Gulf of Mexico Stock Characteristics:** (SEDAR 28 2013; fishbase.org)

Natural mortality rate (M):	0.38/year (based on max age of 11 years)
Age at 50% maturity:	~Two years; 33-inches fork length (FL)
Maximum age:	~11 years
Maximum weight:	~68 kg (150 lbs) whole weight
Maximum length:	~200 cm (78 in) total length



### **Distribution:**

Cobia migrate seasonally, and can be found in the northern Gulf from March to October and in the southern Gulf and south Florida from November to March. In the Gulf, spawning occurs in coastal waters from April to September at temperatures ranging from 23-28°C (73-82°F). Cobia, when ready to spawn, display a white horizontal stripe down each side of the body. Eggs are found in the top meter (3 ft) of the water column, drifting with the currents, and are estimated to hatch within 36 hours. Larvae transition to coastal and offshore waters as juveniles after approximately 25 days, often guided by currents, feeding on small fishes, squid, and shrimp. Mahi are a common predator of juvenile cobia. Adult cobia are found in coastal and offshore waters in depths up to 70 m (230 ft). Adults feed on fishes and crustaceans, including crabs.



### **Current Gulf Council Regulations:**

One fish may be kept, per person, regardless of the length of the fishing trip or number of people on board a vessel. The minimum size limit is 36 inches FL. The fishing season is year-round, and there are no sector allocations for the Gulf of Mexico migratory group of cobia. The ACL for Gulf Cobia is set at 2,760,000 lb landed weight (MRIP-FES), with 37% being apportioned to cobia from the East coast of Florida and managed by the South Atlantic Council.