

Description:

Gray snapper, also called mangrove snapper or “mangoes,” are found throughout the Gulf of Mexico. They can vary in coloration, but are generally dark gray and brown on the upper half, with pink and orange coloration on the lower half of the fish. Their tail is broad and slightly forked. Males and females are largely indistinguishable from one another. Two stocks exist in the southeastern US: the Gulf of Mexico stock, and the Atlantic stock. The Gulf stock occupies the Gulf of Mexico east to approximately Biscayne Bay, near the Miami-Dade/Monroe County line in south Florida.

**Gulf Stock Characteristics**¹: (SEDAR 51, 2017)

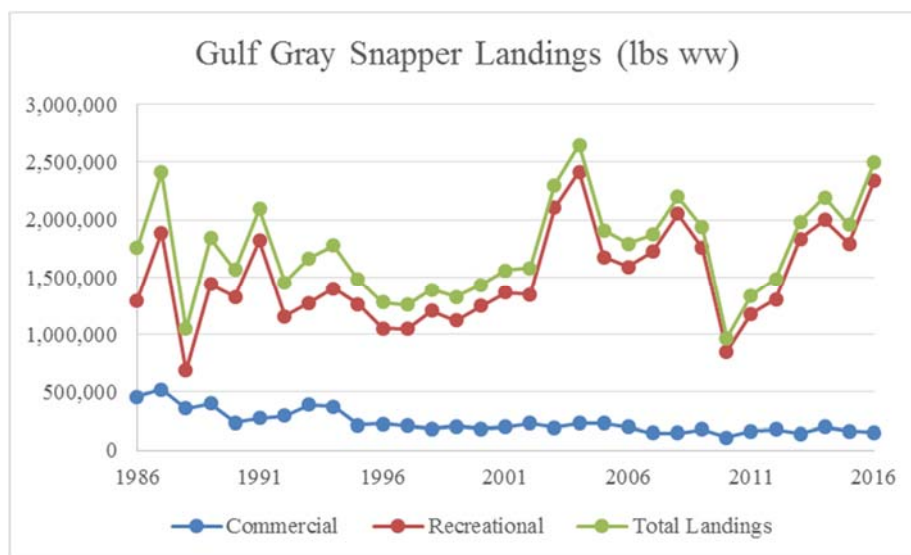
Natural mortality rate (M):	0.15/year
Female sexual maturity:	50% at 2.3 years or 10 inches (253 mm) FL; 90% at 5.2 years or 14.2 inches (362 mm) FL; no meaningful contribution until 11.8 inches (300 mm) FL
Maximum observed age:	32 years; 28 years used in SEDAR 51
Maximum weight:	48.83 lbs (22.15 kg) whole weight (West Florida/Alabama)
Maximum length:	~35 inches (89 cm) FL
Discard mortality:	6.9% recreational; 14% commercial handline; 66% commercial longline;

Life History and Distribution: (SEDAR 51, 2017)

Gray snapper occur in tropical, subtropical and warm temperate waters from Brazil to Bermuda, and throughout the Gulf of Mexico and Caribbean Sea. Spawning occurs primarily in the summer months, between May and September. Gray snapper spend their first month of life in a larval phase, floating as plankton. As juveniles, gray snapper settle nearshore in estuaries, seagrass beds or shallow reefs, and gradually move offshore as they grow larger. Adults are often reef- or structure-associated.

Current Gulf Council Regulations:

The federal minimum size limit is 12 inches TL. Size-limit gray snapper weigh about one pound (0.45 kg), and are about four years old. The fishing season is year-round, and there are no sector allocations. Recreational anglers can keep 10 fish per person, within the 20 fish per person reef fish aggregate bag limit. Gray snapper are primarily harvested by hook-and-line gear by the recreational sector, with some spearfishing. There are no commercial trip limits for Gulf gray snapper.



¹ SEDAR 51. 2017. Stock Assessment of Gulf of Mexico Gray Snapper. Southeast Data, Assessment, and Review. North Charleston, South Carolina.