



Greater Amberjack

(Seriola dumerili)

Greater amberjack have a bluish-brown back with a wide amber stripe running the length of each side. A dark bar extends diagonally from the dorsal fin through each eye.



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Spawning Season

Spawning aggregations of greater amberjack generally number from 100 to 150 fish and occur near reef-edge dropoffs in offshore waters. Greater amberjack typically spawn after a full moon with peak activity occurring during March and April. During spawning, male and female greater amberjack will pair off shortly before sunset. The male will follow the female while constantly nuzzling her vent. During courtship, male greater amberjack develop scrawled patterns on their sides and turn a vivid electric blue; the heads and upper bodies of female greater amberjack turn black.

Habitat

Although greater amberjack typically reside in the nearshore waters of the Gulf of Mexico, out to 300 feet deep, they will occasionally occur in deeper waters. Greater amberjack usually occur near natural reefs, wrecks and artificial reefs, as well as offshore oil and gas platforms. Young greater amberjack utilize floating objects such as seaweed mats for nursery habitat. At approximately eight inches in length, young greater amberjack become more predatory and move away from their nursery habitats into open water.

Diet

Despite spending much of their time in the upper water column, greater amberjack are aggressive predators that will prowl from the bottom to the surface near obstructions, structures, and reefs. Greater amberjack can be found swimming alone or in groups while feeding on a variety of fish including herring, scad, blue runners, grunts, porgies, triggerfish, little tunny, and other jacks. Crab and squid also make up a portion of the greater amberjack's diet, especially juveniles.

Age and Growth

Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries use "earstones", called otoliths, to calculate the age of fish. Biologists remove these hard structures from the skull of bony fish and cut them into small sections. In a process similar to ageing trees, biologists count the rings that are visible in the thinner otolith slices. Finfish age, length, and weight data are used by fishery managers to estimate growth rates, mortality rates, and population size. The chart shows that fish grow rapidly during the first few years of life and then growth begins to stabilize as they get older. Once fish reach maturity, energy is invested in reproduction rather than growth.



Your purchase of fishing equipment and motor boat fuels supports Sport Fish Restoration and boating access facilities.

Louisiana Department of
Wildlife and Fisheries
Office of Fisheries
2000 Quail Drive
Baton Rouge, LA 70808
225-765-2800
www.wlf.louisiana.gov

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AGE (YEARS)	APPROX. AVERAGE LENGTH	APPROX. FORK LENGTH RANGE
1	25.75"	24" - 29"
2	31.75"	30" - 32"
3	36"	34" - 38"
4	40"	38" - 40"
5	41.75"	40.5" - 43"
6	43"	41" - 45"
7	43.25"	41" - 46"
8	45"	43" - 47"
9	46"	44" - 48"
10+	47.5"	46" - 49"

Harris, Patrick, et al. "Age, growth, and reproduction of greater amberjack, *Seriola dumerili*, off the Atlantic coast of the southeastern United States." Southeast Fisheries Science Center : NOAA : National Marine Fisheries Service. Ed. Palmer, Sandra. 2008. Southeast Fisheries Science Center. 7 Jul. 2012. <<http://www.sefsc.noaa.gov/sedar/download/SEDAR%2015-RD01.pdf?id=DOCUMENT>>.

Greater Amberjack Quick Facts

Louisiana's state record greater amberjack weighed in at 139 pounds and was caught offshore in South Timbalier, block 300, in May of 2009.

Greater amberjack can live to be 15 years of age.

Greater amberjack can reach up to five feet in length in the Gulf of Mexico.

Female greater amberjack are typically a few inches larger than males of the same age.

LDWF Contact Information

Recreational Fishing License
225-765-2887

Commercial License
225-765-2898

Boating Registration
225-765-2898

Lifetime License
225-765-2887

Enforcement
225-765-2989

Fish Tagging Program
225-763-5415