



Super Duper Groupers

Fishinar 10/11/12, Jonathan Lavan - Instructor

- Groupers are Seabass but not all Seabass are Groupers.
- Other Seabass: Creolefish, Soapfish, Hamlets, Bass, even Basslets.
- Pupil of eye shaped like a watermelon seed.
- Groupers have strong well built bodies, a large mouth and lips, and a jutting lower jaw.
- Largest predators on the reef other than sharks.
- The long continuous dorsal fin is noticeably divided into two parts.
- The fore dorsal is constructed of sharp spines that can be held erect or lowered; the rear is soft and flexible.
- Most can pale or darken radically. Hinds, Graysbys
- Most species in the family have experienced dramatic declines in their population numbers due to overfishing.

1. Goliath Grouper (formally Jewfish)

- Largest fish observed on the reef, up to 8 feet and 800 lbs.
- Small dark spots over body and fins.
- Yellowish brown to olive green.
- Tail fin rounded.
- Wider/Beefier than other groupers.
- Protected in Florida and Gulf of Mexico since 1990.
- Range: Uncommon in all Caribbean and warm Atlantic waters.
- Populations in FL are increasing due to protections.

2. Nassau Grouper

- Black saddle on base of tail.
- Dorsal fin notched between forward spines.
- Five irregular olive brown bars over light background.
- Diagonal bar from snout across eye to start of dorsal fin.
- Range: Occasional in all Caribbean and warm Atlantic waters.
- Suffered from decimation of spawning aggregations and failure to bounce back despite protections.
- Nassau grouper spawning aggregations are the focus of [REEF's Grouper Moon Project](#)

3. Tiger Grouper

- Dramatic "tiger stripe" bars.
- Nine brown to black diagonal bars over light background.

- Noticeable canine teeth.
- Occasionally bright red especially in cleaning stations.
- Range: Com. to occas. in all Caribbean and warm Atlantic waters.

4. Black Grouper

- Tail has black wide margin with thin white edge.
- Squared rectangular blotches on upper body.
- Thin pale to yellow margin on peccs.
- Range: Com. to occas. in all Caribbean and warm Atlantic waters and north to Massachusetts.

5. Coney

- Two black dots on lower lip.
- Two black dots behind dorsal fin on base of tail.
- Variable in color, from white to brown to bright yellow, more so than any of the other species presented here.
- Covered in neon blue spots
- Range: Common: Caribbean, Com. to occas. in remaining warm Atlantic waters.

6. Graysby

- 3 to 5 pale or dark spots along base of dorsal fin.
- Tail more rounded than similar species.
- Juvenile: White band runs from nape, between eyes to lower lip.
- Range: Common in all Caribbean and warm Atlantic waters.

7. Red Hind

- Tail and rear fins have black margin edged in white.
- Tail squared off.
- Range: Common: Caribbean, occas. in remaining warm Atlantic waters.

8. Rock Hind

- Black saddle blotch on base of tail.
- Range: Common Florida, Bahamas, eastern Caribbean; rare balance of Caribbean; also Gulf of Mexico, N. to Mass., Bermuda and south to Brazil.

9. Yellowfin Grouper

- Outer third of pec fin is pale to bright yellow.
- Rounded rectangular blotches on upper body.
- Quite variable in color as well, can be very colorful, showing red and yellow
- Tail has thin dark irregular margin.
- Range: Occas. in all Caribbean and warm Atlantic waters.

10. Yellowmouth Grouper

- Distinct yellow around corners of mouth.
- Brown to brownish gray; color may be uniform or have pattern of close set dots and occasional blotches.
- Range: Common to occas. Bahamas, Caribbean islands; rare FL.; also gulf of Mex., Bermuda and S. to Brazil.

11. Red Grouper

- Foredorsal fin has smooth straight edge (not notched).
- No saddle at base of tail but sometimes similar body markings (Nassau).
- Usually reddish brown with small scattered white blotches.
- Range: Occas. FL. And Bahamas; rare Caribbean; also gulf of Mex. N to Mass., Bermuda and S. to Brazil.
- Hang out in Sea grass beds.

12. Scamp (Salmon Rockfish)

- Dusky tail has pale margin.
- Dark body spots tend to form broken stripes and rectangular blotches.
- Covered in puppy dog paw markings
- Range: Common to occas. FL and continental coast to northern S. America; also Gulf of Mex. and N. to Mass.
Drift above reefs.

Questions? Feel free to contact me at

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(also on facebook at Underpressure Photography)