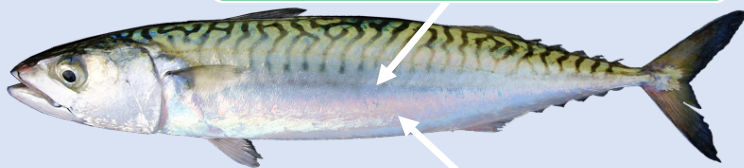


Commonly Confused Mackerel & Tuna Species

Atlantic mackerel, *Scomber scombrus*

- Other common names: tinker mackerel, Boston mackerel, common mackerel
- Up to 2 feet

Usually has a broken faint to dark stripe along sides below wavy bars on upper body



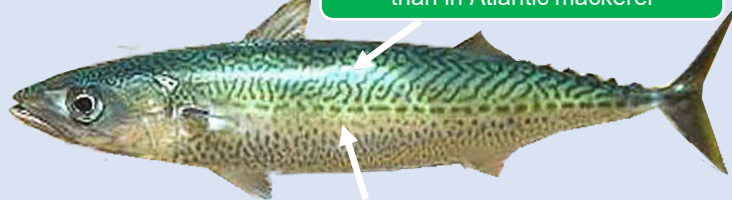
VTR CODE: MACK

No spots on lower sides

Chub mackerel, *Scomber colias*

- Other common names: tinker mackerel, hardhead, bullseye
- Up to 22 inches

Stripes on upper body less defined than in Atlantic mackerel



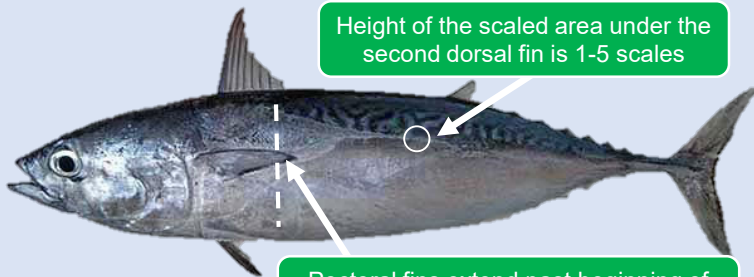
VTR CODE: MACC

Dusky spots on lower sides

Frigate mackerel/tuna, *Auxis thazard*

- Up to 2 feet

Height of the scaled area under the second dorsal fin is 1-5 scales



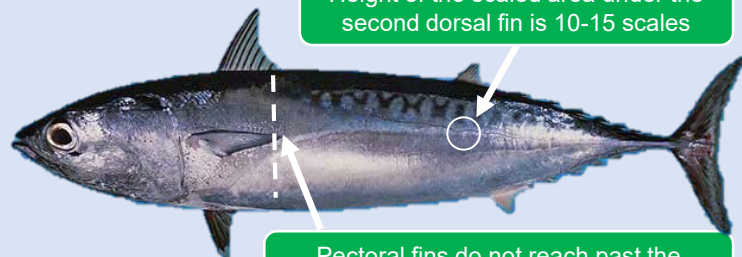
VTR CODE: MACF

Pectoral fins extend past beginning of scaleless, striped area on upper body

Bullet mackerel/tuna, *Auxis rochei*

- Up to 20 inches

Height of the scaled area under the second dorsal fin is 10-15 scales

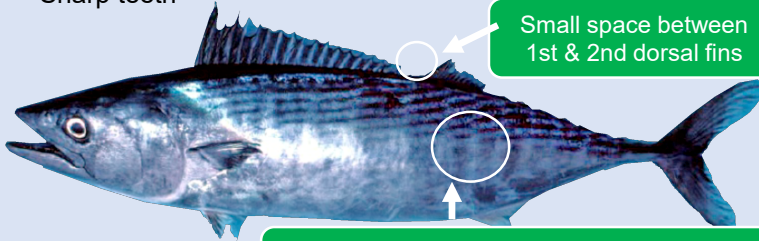


VTR CODE: MACB

Pectoral fins do not reach past the scaleless, striped area on upper body

Atlantic bonito, *Sarda sarda*

- Up to 3.2 feet
- Body covered in scales; larger scales below striped area
- Sharp teeth



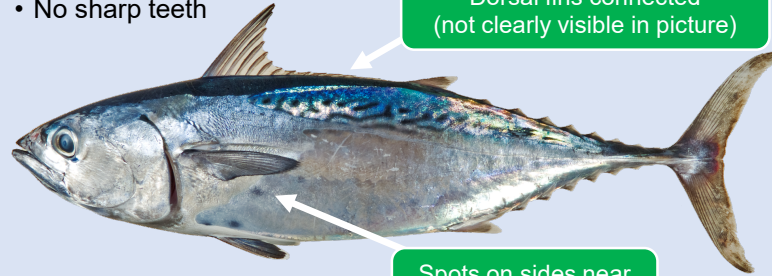
Small space between
1st & 2nd dorsal fins

Straight, oblique stripes on upper body
sometimes underlain with lighter vertical bars

VTR CODE:
BON

Little tunny, *Euthynnus alletteratus*

- Other common names: false albacore, vaquita, bonito
- Up to 3.5 feet
- No sharp teeth



Dorsal fins connected
(not clearly visible in picture)

Spots on sides near
pectoral fins

VTR CODE: LTA

Skipjack tuna, *Katsuwonus pelamis*

- Up to 3.8 feet
- No scales on upper striped area



Small space between
1st & 2nd dorsal fins

4 – 6 horizontal stripes on lower
sides, may be broken or solid

VTR CODE: SKJ

For more information, contact:

**NOAA Fisheries Greater Atlantic Region
Sustainable Fisheries Division**
55 Great Republic Drive
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Photos Atl. mackerel: Hans Hillewaert. Chub mackerel: Alessandro Duci.
Bullet mackerel: Jack Randall. Frigate mackerel: Robertson & Van Tassell.
Bonito: MBL/Flesher Collection. Little tunny: J. T. Williams. Skipjack: R.
Freitas.