



REEF RESPONSIBLE  
... see food sustainably

USVI Fish Fact Cards

# OVERVIEW

## What is Reef Responsible?

Reef Responsible describes the use of coral reefs and other marine natural resources in a way that does not deplete stocks or otherwise cause harm or degradation to those natural resources. We hope you will make “reefponsible” decisions for the health of our coral reefs!

## What do we hope to achieve?

Our goal is to increase your understanding of how catching, purchasing, serving, and consuming locally harvested seafood can positively influence the future of the commercial fishery and coral reefs in the U.S. Virgin Islands.

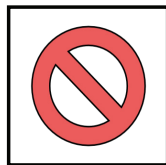


@REEFRESPONSIBLEVI



REEFRESPONSIBLEVI@GMAIL.COM

# PURPOSE






The Good Choice, Use Caution and Don't Eat fish list for the U.S. Virgin Islands is based on current USVI territorial and U.S. federal fisheries regulations. More detailed regulations can be found in the USVI Fisher Handbook.

Reef Responsible encourages fishers and restaurants to promote seafood found in the Good Choice category due to their healthy populations. The Use Caution category contains good alternatives, but reminds consumers to check size or seasonal restrictions and consume these species in moderation. The species in the Don't Eat category are endangered or threatened and protected by international, U.S. federal, and/or USVI local law and should never be harvested.

We hope this guide will be used to make informed decisions about the seafood that you catch, purchase or order from local restaurants.

# REEF RESPONSIBLE FISH LIST

<p><b>GOOD CHOICE</b></p> 	<p><b>USE CAUTION</b></p> 	<p><b>DON'T EAT</b></p> 
<p><b>LIONFISH</b></p> <p><b>DOLPHINFISH/MAHI MAHI</b></p> <p><b>WAHOO</b></p> <p><b>TUNA</b> (Yellowfin, Skipjack, Little Tunny, Albacore)</p> <p><b>BONITO</b></p> <p><b>MACKEREL</b> (Cero, Spanish, King /Kingfish)</p> <p><b>GRUNTS</b></p> <p><b>SQUIRRELFISHES</b></p> <p><b>SNAPPERS</b> (Schoolmaster, Queen, Gray/Mangrove)</p>	<p><b>SNAPPERS</b> (Yellowtail, Black Vermilion, Blackfin, Mutton, Silk, Lane)</p> <p><b>GROUPERS</b> (Red Hind/Cabrilla, Tiger, Black, Yellowfin, Yellowedge/Grammanik)</p> <p><b>POTFISH</b> (Porgies, Angelfish, Triggerfish)</p> <p><b>PARROTFISH</b> (Redband, Princess, Queen, Striped, Redtail, Stoplight, Redfin/Yellowtail)</p> <p><b>TUNA</b> (Bluefin, Bigeye)</p>	<p><b>JACKS</b></p> <p><b>SWORDFISH</b></p> <p><b>SURGEONFISH</b> (Ocean Surgeonfish, Blue Tang, Doctorfish)</p> <p><b>SHARKS</b></p> <p><b>QUEEN CONCH</b></p> <p><b>WHELK</b></p> <p><b>SPINY LOBSTER</b></p> <p><b>SEA TURTLES (&amp; eggs)</b></p> <p><b>GROUPE</b> (Nassau, Goliath)</p> <p><b>PARROTFISH</b> (Midnight, Rainbow, Blue)</p>
<p>These species are considered good choices because they mature quickly, reproduce rapidly, their populations are in a good state, or are sustainable alternatives to important reef species.</p>	<p>These species have restrictions based on size and/or season. Certain species are also included due to their ecological role or risk for environmental toxins. Be familiar with restrictions, risks, and consume these seafood options in moderation.</p>	<p>These species are endangered or threatened, are protected by international, U.S. federal, and/or USVI local law, and should never be harvested.</p>

#SEEFOODSUSTAINABLY

# REEF RESPONSIBLE CALENDAR

SPECIES	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEPT	OCT	NOV	DEC
<b>FEDERAL WATERS ONLY</b>												
RED HIND												
<b>FEDERAL AND TERRITORIAL WATERS</b>												
BLACK GROUPEr												
RED GROUPEr												
TIGER GROUPEr												
YELLOWFIN GROUPEr												
YELLOWEDGE GROUPEr												
MUTTON SNAPPER												
LANE SNAPPER												
BLACK SNAPPER*												
BLACKFIN SNAPPER*												
SILK SNAPPER*												
VERMILION SNAPPER*												
QUEEN CONCH												
<b>TERRITORIAL WATERS ONLY</b>												
WHELK												



NO HARVEST



HARVEST OKAY

Based on federal and USVI regulations as of July 2020 – subject to change. Detailed regulations can be found in the USVI Fisher Handbook.

\* Exempt in St. Croix

# REEF RESPONSIBLE SIZES

**ENSURE YOU CATCH OR BUY SEAFOOD THAT ABIDES BY THE FOLLOWING TERRITORIAL AND/OR FEDERAL LIMITS.**

SPECIES	REEF LIMITS	MINIMUM SIZE LIMIT
<b>PARROTFISH<sup>+</sup></b> (PRINCESS, QUEEN, STRIPED, REDTAIL, STOPLIGHT, REDFIN/YELLOWTAIL)	<b>F</b>	<b>9-INCHES (FORK LENGTH)</b>
<b>QUEEN CONCH</b>	<b>FT</b>	<b>9-IN SHELL TIP TO END, 3/8 INCH (LIP WIDTH)</b>
<b>REDBAND PARROTFISH<sup>+</sup></b>	<b>F</b>	<b>8-INCHES (FORK LENGTH)</b>
<b>SPINY LOBSTER</b>	<b>FT</b>	<b>3.5-INCHES (CARAPACE LENGTH)</b>
<b>SWORDFISH</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>47-INCHES (LOWER JAW FORK LENGTH)</b>
<b>TUNA</b> (YELLOWFIN, BIGEYE, BLUEFIN)	<b>FT</b>	<b>27-INCHES (FORK LENGTH)</b>
<b>YELLOWTAIL SNAPPER</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>12-INCHES (TOTAL LENGTH)</b>
<b>WHELK</b>	<b>T</b>	<b>2 7/16-INCHES (SHELL WIDTH)</b>

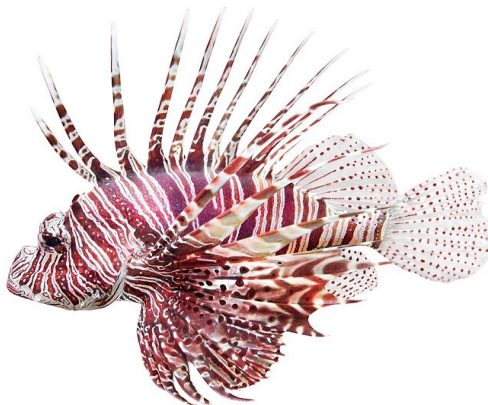
**FT** FEDERAL & TERRITORIAL WATERS

**F** FEDERAL WATERS ONLY

**T** TERRITORIAL WATERS ONLY

<sup>+</sup>ST. CROIX EEZ ONLY

# LIONFISH



## SPECIES INFO

### Common Names:

Zebrafish, Firefish

### Fish List Category:

**GOOD CHOICE**

## CHARACTERISTICS

Red and white zebra stripes, long, showy pectoral fins, long spines on dorsal fins.

## BIOLOGY

### Max Length:

17 in (45.7 cm)

### Avg. Length:

8-16 in (20.3 - 40.6 cm)

- Feed on fish, crustaceans, and plankton.
- Reproduce rapidly and produce a lot of eggs.
- Native to the Pacific and Indian oceans but have invaded the Atlantic Ocean and Caribbean sea.

## KEY INFO

**Linked to ciguatera in certain locations.**

- Non-native and invasive species that can cause destruction to local reefs. No concern for overfishing.
- Have 18 venomous spines on dorsal, pelvic and anal fins. Spines can be removed for safe handling.

# DOLPHINFISH



## SPECIES INFO

### Common Names:

Mahi Mahi, Dorado

### Fish List Category:

**GOOD CHOICE**

## CHARACTERISTICS

Large continuous dorsal fin from above the eye to base of tail, blunt head, coloration includes neon yellow, blue, and green.

## BIOLOGY

### Max Length:

84 in (213.36 cm)

### Avg. Length:

24 - 48 in (60.96 - 191.2 cm)

- Found in small schools of a few males and many females.
- Feed on fish and zooplankton.
- Fast growing, pelagic (open ocean), and highly migratory.

## KEY INFO

- Popular with recreational anglers and very important to commercial fisheries.
- Mature early and produce a lot of eggs, supporting healthy populations.
- Fast swimmers and are curious of divers



# WAHOO



## SPECIES INFO

### Common Names:

Wahoo

### Fish List Category:

**GOOD CHOICE**

## CHARACTERISTICS

Long, cigar shaped body, pointed snout, and vertical bars along body.

## BIOLOGY

### Max Length:

96 in (243.84 cm)

### Avg. Length:

39.6 - 66 in (100.5 - 167.6 cm)

- Reproduce at 1 year, but have a generally short life span of 5-6 years.
- Feed on squid and fish, competing with tuna, but can also feed on larger fish due to their sharp teeth.

## KEY INFO

- Found in tropical waters globally.
- Fast growing and highly migratory species.
- Sustainable in the Caribbean.

# GRUNTS

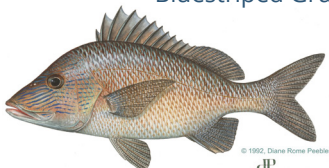


DrawnByDawn

Bluestriped Grunt



French Grunt



© 1992, Diane Rome Peabody

dp

White Grunt



Jeffrey T. Williams

Cottonwick Grunt

## SPECIES INFO

### Included Species:

Smallmouth, Caesar, Tomtate, Sailor's Choice, Spanish

### Fish List Category:

**GOOD CHOICE**

## CHARACTERISTICS

Emit a "grunt-like" sound, sloping head and tapered body. Variety of coloration.

## BIOLOGY

**Max Length:** 15 in (38.1 cm)

**Avg. Length:** 8 in (20.3 cm)

- Nocturnal scavengers on sand flats and seagrass beds, eating crustaceans.
- Named for pig-like grunts produced by rubbing together the pharyngeal (throat) jaws and amplified by swim bladder.
- Closely related to snappers.

## KEY INFO

**Linked to ciguatera in certain locations.**

- May gather in small to large schools (often in the hundreds) on coral reefs. Very commonly seen species.
- Healthy populations, grow quickly. Good alternative to other reef fish.

# SQUIRRELFISH



floridamuseum.ufl.edu

Common Squirrelfish



Joel Sartore 2020

Blackbar Soldierfish

## SPECIES INFO

### Included Species:

Common, Longspine,  
Longjaw, Blackbar  
Soldierfish

### Fish List Category:

**GOOD CHOICE**

## CHARACTERISTICS

Small, reddish species with large "squirrel-like" eyes, and long tail.

## BIOLOGY

**Max Length:** 24 in (61.0 cm)

**Avg. Length:** 9.8 in (25.0 cm)

- Makes sounds with the swim bladder to communicate.
- Nocturnal species that hide in crevices by day, and hunt meroplankton at night.

## KEY INFO

**Linked to ciguatera in certain locations.**

- Spawn year-round in tropical climates.
- Resilient species, lasting for several days in traps and in polluted waters.
- Low importance commercially. Good alternative to other reef fish.

# BONITO



## SPECIES INFO

### Common Names:

True Bonito, Northern Bonito

### Fish List Category:

**GOOD CHOICE**

## CHARACTERISTICS

Mackerel-like with a mostly straight body, diagonal stripes on back and no stripes on belly. Dark coloration on upper half of body.

## BIOLOGY

### Max Length:

36 in (91.4 cm)

### Avg. Length:

9.8 in (25.0 cm)

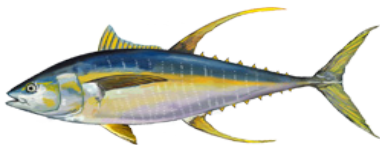
- Feed on invertebrates and small fishes. Common in shallow waters.
- In the same scientific family (Scombridae) as tuna and mackerel.
- Form large schools in the open ocean; jump out of the water while chasing prey.

## KEY INFO

**Linked to ciguatera in certain locations.**

- Juveniles may gather in small to large schools (often in the hundreds) on coral reefs.
- Known to be cannibalistic.
- Known by anglers for their strength and endurance.

# TUNA



Yellowfin Tuna



Skipjack Tuna



Little Tunny



Albacore Tuna

## SPECIES INFO

### Included Species:

Yellowfin, Skipjack, Little Tunny, Albacore

### Fish List Category:

**GOOD CHOICE**

## CHARACTERISTICS

Large open-water species. Robust, elongated, and streamlined bodies. Dark coloration on top, light on bottom, and two distinct dorsal fins.

## BIOLOGY

**Max Length:** 94.9 in (243.8 cm)

**Avg. Length:** 47.9 in (121.9 cm)

- Travel in schools with other species of similar size and sometimes school with dolphin to protect juveniles from predation.
- Move constantly to search for food and keep water passing over gills.

## KEY INFO

**HMS permit required to fish and retain commercially and recreationally in federal and territorial waters.**

**Yellowfin Tuna size limit: Minimum curved fork length of 27 in (68.6 cm);**

**Little Tunny recommended size limit 15 in (38.0 cm)**

Fast growing, highly migratory, open ocean dwellers.

# MACKEREL



King Mackerel



Spanish Mackerel



Cero Mackerel

## SPECIES INFO

### Included Species:

King, Spanish, Cero

### Fish List Category:

**GOOD CHOICE**

## CHARACTERISTICS

Elongated, streamlined bodies with separate spiny and soft dorsal fins. Anal fin directly below soft dorsal. Finlets are present behind dorsal and anal fins.

## BIOLOGY

### Max Length:

71.9 in (182.8 cm)

### Avg. Length:

23.9 - 35.9 in (60.9- 91.4 cm)

- Grow rapidly, reproduce at 2 years; can live more than 10 years.
- Prey for dolphins, sharks, and other large pelagic species.

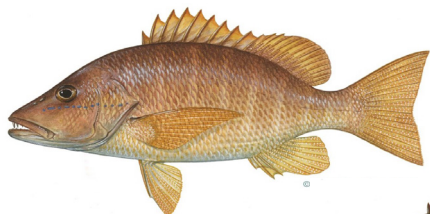
## KEY INFO

**Linked to ciguatera in certain locations.**

Reefspannable recommended minimum size for Spanish Mackerel: 12in (30.5 cm) fork length

Reefspannable recommended minimum size for King Mackerel: 24in (61cm) fork length

# SNAPPER



Schoolmaster Snapper



Queen Snapper



Gray/Mangrove Snapper

## SPECIES INFO

### Included Species:

Schoolmaster, Queen,  
Gray/Mangrove

### Fish List Category:

**GOOD CHOICE**

## CHARACTERISTICS

Snap jaws when hooked.  
Triangular head, oblong  
body, one continuous  
dorsal fin, higher in front.

## BIOLOGY

### Max Length:

30 in (76.2cm)

### Avg. Length:

12 - 24 in (30.5 - 60.9 cm)

- Some species form large schools, others are more solitary.
- Nocturnal predators, feeding on small fishes and crustaceans.

## KEY INFO

**Linked to ciguatera in  
certain locations.**

Fast growing, early  
maturation, and healthy  
populations.

# SNAPPER



Lane Snapper



Mutton Snapper



Yellowtail Snapper



Silk Snapper

## SPECIES INFO

### Included Species:

Lane, Mutton, Yellowtail, Silk, Vermilion, Black, Blackfin

### Fish List Category:

**USE CAUTION**

## CHARACTERISTICS

Snap jaws when hooked.  
Triangular head, oblong body, one continuous dorsal fin higher, in front.

## BIOLOGY

### Max Length:

30 in (76.2 cm)

### Avg. Length:

12 - 24 in (30.5 - 60.9 cm)

- Some species form large schools, others are more solitary.
- Nocturnal predators, feeding on small fishes and crustaceans.
- Deep-sea snappers like the Vermilion have a red tint and are not often encountered.

## KEY INFO

**Linked to ciguatera in certain locations.**

### Annual closed seasons:

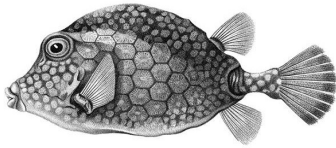
**Lane, Mutton:** Apr 1 – Jun 30  
**Silk, Blackfin, Vermilion, Black:** Oct 1- Dec 31

**Yellowtail Snapper federal size limit:** Min. size of 12 in (30.5 cm)

Slow growth, late maturation, and historical overfishing at spawning aggregations has led to a decline in local populations.



# POTFISHES



Smooth Trunkfish



Red Porgy



Queen Triggerfish



French Angelfish

## SPECIES INFO

### Included Species:

Boxfish (trunkfish, cowfish), Angelfish, Triggerfish, Porgies

### Fish List Category:

**USE CAUTION**

## CHARACTERISTICS

Medium-sized, oblong bodies. Each species included has a different shape and coloration.

## BIOLOGY

### Max Length:

15 in (38.1 cm)

### Avg. Length:

5 - 10 in (12.7-24.4 cm)

- Some juveniles clean dead skin and parasites from sea turtles.
- Abundant in a range of habitats from shallow water to reefs to shipwrecks.

## KEY INFO

Potfishes can be a variety of different species. They are referred to as Potfish because they are regularly caught using fish traps. Could include additional species like parrotfish.

These species are all important grazers that keep reefs healthy.

Historically high fishing pressure has decreased local populations.

# SURGEONFISH



Blue Tang



Ocean Surgeonfish



Doctorfish

## SPECIES INFO

### Included Species:

Blue Tang, Ocean Surgeonfish, Doctorfish

### Fish List Category:

**USE CAUTION**

## CHARACTERISTICS

Known as Doctorfish, oval shaped and flattened like pancakes; coloration ranges from light grey to blue.

## BIOLOGY

### Max Length:

15 in (38.1 cm)

### Avg. Length:

6 - 12 in (14.6 - 30.5 cm)

- Blue Tang have horizontal bars along body, and blue trim on dorsal and anal fins.
- Ocean surgeonfish are solid in color.
- Doctorfish have vertical bars along body.

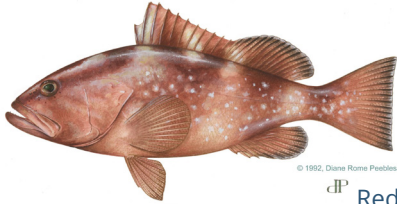
## KEY INFO

**Linked to ciguatera in certain locations.**

These fishes have a sharp, scalpel-like spine at the base of the tail. Handle with care.

Perform the very important role of eating the algae that threatens to overgrow and kill coral.

# GROUPE



© 1992, Diane Rome Peebles

dP

Red Grouper



Red Hind



gulfcouncil.org

Yellowedge Grouper



© 1992, Diane Rome Peebles

dP

Yellowfin Grouper

## SPECIES INFO

### Included Species:

Red Hind, Red, Tiger, Yellowfin, Yellowedge, Black

### Fish List Category:

**USE CAUTION**

## CHARACTERISTICS

Solitary reef dwellers with strong, stout, bass-like bodies and large mouths. Have ability to change colors and markings.

## BIOLOGY

### Max Length:

60 in (152.4 cm)

### Avg. Length:

24 - 48 in (61.0 - 121.9 cm)

- Feed on a wide variety of fish and invertebrates, swallowing prey whole.

- Protogynous Hermaphrodites: start life as females and later as they become more mature, they change to males.

## KEY INFO

**Linked to ciguatera in certain locations.**

### Closed season:

**Red Hind:** Dec 1- Feb 28

**Red, Black, Tiger, Yellowfin,**

**Yellowedge:** Feb 1- Apr 30

Important top predators; closed seasons for spawning aggregations; historically heavily fished causing some species to be listed as Threatened or Vulnerable.

# PARROTFISH



Queen Parrotfish



Stoplight Parrotfish



Princess Parrotfish

## SPECIES INFO

### Included Species:

Queen, Stoplight, Princess, Redband, Striped, Yellowtail/Redfin, Redtail

### Fish List Category:

**USE CAUTION**

## CHARACTERISTICS

Bird-like beak for a mouth. Males can be brightly colored. Large, noticeable scales.

## BIOLOGY

### Max Length:

48 in (121.9 cm)

### Avg. Length:

6 - 16 in (15.2 - 40.6 cm)

- Primary algae grazers on coral reefs. Important bio-eroders.
- Some of the most common, large fishes seen on reefs.
- Most species have 3 life stages-juvenile, initial and terminal-all of which can have dramatically different color patterns.

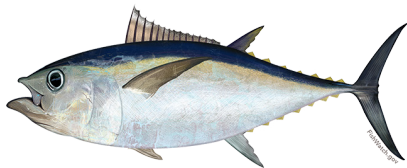
## KEY INFO

Redband Parrotfish federal size limit (STX only): 8in (20.3 cm) fork length.

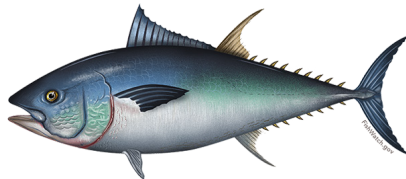
All other parrotfish federal size limit (STX only): 9in (22.9 cm) fork length.

Spend all day grazing on macroalgae, which helps to maintain healthy Caribbean reefs.

# TUNA



Bigeye Tuna



Bluefin Tuna

## SPECIES INFO

### Included Species:

Bigeye, Bluefin

### Fish List Category:

**USE CAUTION**

## CHARACTERISTICS

Large open-water fish. Robust, elongated, and streamlined bodies. Dark coloration on top, light on bottom, and two distinct dorsal fins.

## BIOLOGY

### Max Length:

96 in (243.8 cm)

### Avg. Length:

48 - 72 in (121.9 - 182.8 cm)

- Travel in schools with other species of similar size and sometimes school with dolphin, to protect juveniles from predation.
- Bluefin tuna grow more slowly than other tuna.

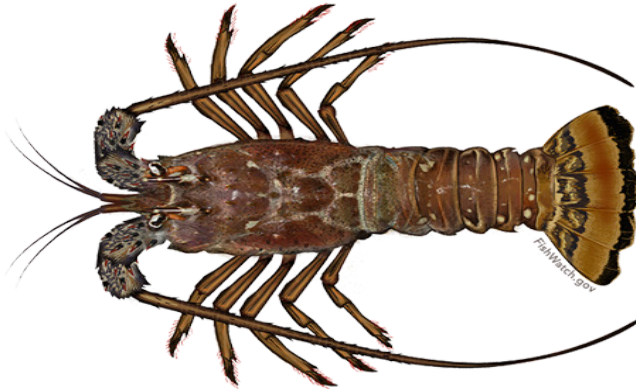
## KEY INFO

**HMS permit required to fish and retain commercially and recreationally in federal and territorial waters.**

**Federal and territorial size limit: Min. curved fork length of 27 in. (68.6 cm)**

Historical fishing pressure has decreased populations of these species.

# SPINY LOBSTER



## SPECIES INFO

### Common Names:

Rock lobster, Florida lobster

### Fish List Category:

**USE CAUTION**

## CHARACTERISTICS

Lacks large front claws.  
Forward pointing spines on body. Long, horn-like antennae.

## BIOLOGY

### Max Length:

24 in (61.0 cm)

### Avg. Length:

7.9 in (20.0 cm)

- Nocturnal, carnivorous predators, feeding on snails, crabs, and clams.
- Takes about 2 years to grow to legal carapace size limits; may live for 10 years or more.

## KEY INFO

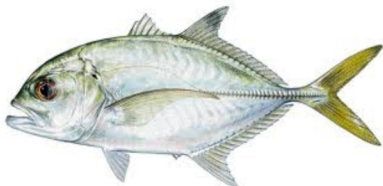
Min. harvest size: 3.5-inch (8.9 cm) carapace length.

**No harvest of females with eggs.**

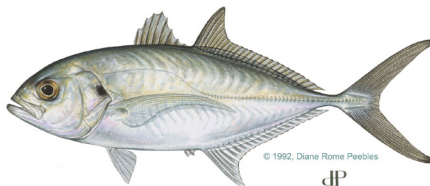
**Illegal to spearfish lobster in territorial and federal waters.**

Commercially important species in the USVI.

# JACKS



Horse-eye Jack



Blue Runner



Crevalle Jack



Bar Jack

## SPECIES INFO

### Included Species:

Horse-Eye, Blue Runner, Bar, Crevalle, Yellow, Rainbow Runner, Greater Amberjack

### Fish List Category:

**USE CAUTION**

## CHARACTERISTICS

Most are thin with silvery sides, dark backs, and large eyes. All have deeply forked tails.

## BIOLOGY

### Max Length:

60 in (152.4 cm)

### Avg. Length:

36 in (91.4 cm)

- Piscivorous, feeding on smaller fish, squid, crabs, and shrimp.
- Spawn at sea where young stay under floating refuges like *Sargassum*.

## KEY INFO

### High risk of ciguatera toxin.

Included in Use Caution due to the high risk of ciguatera.

Most species can be found in small groups or massive schools.

Only a few species are seen near reefs on a regular basis.

# WHELK



## SPECIES INFO

### Common Names:

Wilk, West Indian Top Shell,  
Magpie Shell, Bulgao,  
Caracoles

### Fish List Category:

**USE CAUTION**

## CHARACTERISTICS

Shell has heavy black on a white background. Juvenile shells are black spotted.

## BIOLOGY

### Max Diameter:

6 in (15.2 cm)

### Avg. Diameter:

4 in (10.2 cm)

- Found in shallow rocky habitats.
- Feed on filamentous algae which is why they are restricted to the intertidal zone.
- Slow growers, taking up to 5 years to reach reproductive size.

## KEY INFO

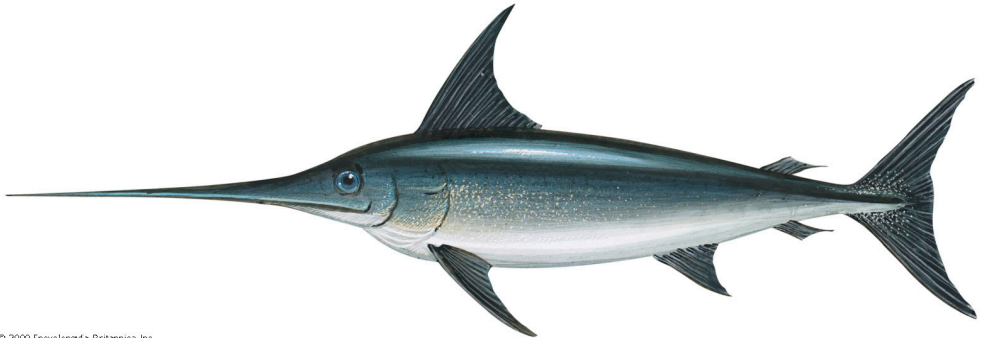
**Minimum harvest size:**  
shell width 2 7/16 inches  
(6.2 cm)

**Closed season:**  
**Apr 1 - Sept 30.**

Third most economically important species in the Caribbean; second most important marine snail in the USVI.



# SWORDFISH



© 2009 Encyclopædia Britannica, Inc.

## SPECIES INFO

### Common Names:

Broadbill, Espada,  
Emperado

### Fish List Category:

**USE CAUTION**

## CHARACTERISTICS

Long, flattened bill that looks like a sword. Two dorsal fins with the first one large and crescent shaped. Crescent-shaped tail.

## BIOLOGY

### Max Length:

180 in (457.2 cm)

### Avg. Length:

72 in (182.9 cm)

- One of the fastest predators and feeds at the top of the food chain.
- Feed on a variety of fish and invertebrates, like squid.
- Spawn multiple times throughout the year in warm waters.

## KEY INFO

**HMS permit is required to fish and retain commercially and recreationally in federal waters.**

**Federal Size limit:  
Minimum 47 in (119.4 cm)  
lower jaw fork length**

# SHARKS



Nurse Shark

© 2010, Diane Rome Peebles



Blacktip Shark

©1992, Diane Rome Peebles



Lemon Shark

© 2010, Diane Rome Peebles



Caribbean Reef Shark

© 2013, Diane Rome Peebles

## SPECIES INFO

### Included Species:

Nurse, Blacktip, Lemon,  
Caribbean Reef, Grey Reef

### Fish List Category:

**USE CAUTION**

## CHARACTERISTICS

Large pelagic species.  
Coloration varies from dark  
grey to light brown.

## BIOLOGY

### Max Length:

240 in (609.6 cm)

### Avg. Length:

36 - 96 in (91.4 - 243.8 cm)

- Sharks are needed to keep fish stocks healthy and genetically diverse in the ecosystem.
- Top-level predators that feed on fish, squid, octopus, and crustaceans. Some species travel inshore for food.

## KEY INFO

**HMS permit is required to fish and retain shark commercially and recreationally in federal waters.**

Sharks are slow growers and have low reproduction rates; can be overfished very quickly. Avoid sharks whenever possible.

**Reefspensible recommended minimum size: 54 in (137.2 cm) fork length**

# QUEEN CONCH



## SPECIES INFO

### Common Names:

Pink Conch

### Fish List Category:

**USE CAUTION**

## CHARACTERISTICS

Large spiral shell with blunt spikes and a wide, flared lip which is pink in color.

## BIOLOGY

### Max Length:

12 in (30.5 cm)

### Avg. Length:

6 - 9 in (15.2 - 22.8 cm)

- Found on sandy and hard-bottom lagoons, coral rubble fields, and occasional seagrass beds, at depths ranging from 3 to 250 ft.

- Once the shell is at max length, thickness will continue to grow, which shows age of conch.

## KEY INFO

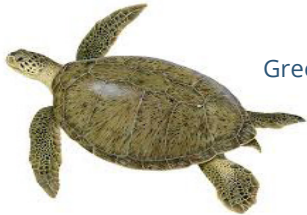
**Harvest prohibited in federal waters except Lang Bank, St. Croix during open season.**

Minimum harvest size: 9in (22.9 cm) shell tip to end; 3/8 in lip width

**Closed season:  
Jun 1 - Oct 31.**

Commercially important species in USVI Territory.

# SEA TURTLES



Green



Hawksbill



Leatherback



Loggerhead

## SPECIES INFO

### Included Species:

Green, Hawksbill,  
Leatherback, Loggerhead

### Fish List Category:

**DON'T EAT**

## CHARACTERISTICS

Streamlined bodies with large flippers. Coloration and size varies with species.

## BIOLOGY

### Max Length:

120 in (304.8 cm)

### Avg. Length:

48 - 72 in (121.9 - 182.8 cm)

- Reptiles which breathe air and are well adapted to life in tropical and subtropical waters.
- Spend most of their life in the open ocean but females return to beaches to lay eggs.
- Shell grows with turtle and is not shed like crabs or lobster.

## KEY INFO

**All species listed as endangered on the Endangered Species List.**

**Harvest, possession, and harassment of any part of sea turtles or their eggs are strictly prohibited in all areas and waters.**

Local/global populations decimated by overharvest of females and their eggs.

Threatened by habitat loss, pollution, climate change, human behaviors, and poaching.

# NASSAU GROUPE



## SPECIES INFO

**Common Name:**  
Nassau Grouper

**Fish List Category:**  
**DON'T EAT**

## CHARACTERISTICS

Coloration varies but typically beige with 5 dark brown vertical bars, black saddle spot on base of tail, a dark band on top of head that looks like a tuning fork.

## BIOLOGY

**Max Length:**

48 in (121.9 cm)

**Avg. Length:**

12 - 24 in (30.4 - 60.9 cm)

- Top-level predator on coral reefs that ambush prey. They are not selective and can swallow prey whole.
- Often rest on bottom of substrate, blending in with surroundings.

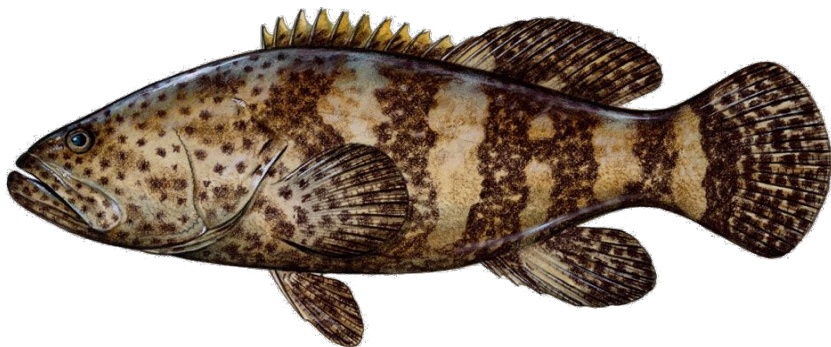
## KEY INFO

**Prohibited year-round:  
Illegal to harvest this  
species in federal and  
territorial waters.**

**Listed as Endangered on  
the Endangered Species  
List.**

Overharvesting at spawning aggregations has severely reduced their numbers.

# GOLIATH GROUPEL



## SPECIES INFO

### Common Name:

Jewfish

### Fish List Category:

**DON'T EAT**

## CHARACTERISTICS

Very large, thick-bodied species. Yellow-brown to grey with small dark spots on body and fins. Round snout, small eyes, fan-like tail.

## BIOLOGY

### Max Length:

96 in (243.8 cm)

### Avg. Length:

48 - 72 in (121.9 - 182.8 cm)

- Largest grouper species in the Atlantic ocean, weighing up to 800 lbs.
- Solitary, territorial, shallow water top-level predator.
- Feed on fish, octopus, turtles, and crustaceans like spiny lobster.

## KEY INFO

**Prohibited year-round:  
Illegal to harvest this  
species in federal and  
territorial waters.**

**Listed as Critically  
Endangered on the  
Endangered Species List.**

Historical overharvesting severely reduced their numbers.

Threatened by overfishing, harmful algal blooms, and habitat loss.

# MIDNIGHT PARROTFISH



## SPECIES INFO

### Common Name:

Nightowl

### Fish List Category:

**DON'T EAT**

## CHARACTERISTICS

Navy blue body with variation of blue hues and bright blue band above mouth and between eyes.

## BIOLOGY

### Max Length:

36 in (91.4 cm)

### Avg. Length:

12 - 24 in (30.5 - 61.0 cm)

- Scrape algae from rocks and coral. Important algae grazers and sand distributors to keep coral ecosystems balanced.
- Often feed during the day in schools (groups).

## KEY INFO

**Prohibited year-round:  
Illegal to harvest this  
species in federal and  
territorial waters.**

Habitat loss and overfishing have contributed to near-extinction on local reefs and current low population numbers.

# RAINBOW PARROTFISH



J. E. Randall

## SPECIES INFO

**Common Name:**  
Rainbow Parrotfish

**Fish List Category:**  
**DON'T EAT**

## CHARACTERISTICS

Coloration varies with phase, but adults are bi-colored with green on rear of body and bronze and green patterns in front.

## BIOLOGY

**Max Length:**  
48 in (121.9 cm)

**Avg. Length:**  
24 in (61.0 cm)

- One of the largest grazers on the Caribbean reef.
- Adults forage on shallow water reefs; juveniles are found in mangrove communities.
- Important algae grazers and sand distributors to keep coral ecosystems balanced.

## KEY INFO

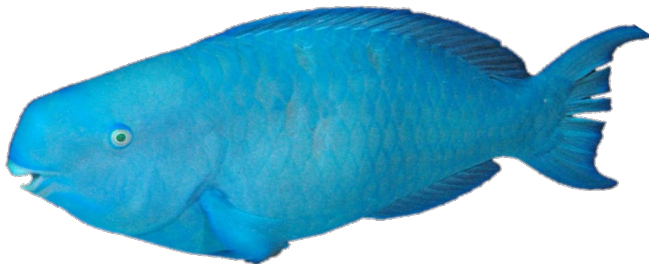
**Prohibited year-round:**  
**Illegal to harvest this species in federal and territorial waters.**

**Listed as Near Threatened on the Endangered Species List.**

Habitat loss and overfishing have contributed to near-extinction on local reefs and current low population numbers.



# BLUE PARROT FISH



## SPECIES INFO

### Common Name:

Blue Parrotfish

### Fish List Category:

**DON'T EAT**

## CHARACTERISTICS

Coloration varies slightly with phase, but adults are a uniform blue color with a squared-off head. Younger individuals have yellow area on top of conical head reaching along dorsal fin.

## BIOLOGY

### Max Length:

48 in (121.9 cm)

### Avg. Length:

12 - 36 in (30.5 - 91.4 cm)

- Adults are found in coral communities; juveniles spend time in seagrass beds.
- Important algae grazers and sand distributors to keep coral ecosystems balanced.

## KEY INFO

**Prohibited year-round:  
Illegal to harvest this species  
in federal and territorial  
waters.**

Habitat loss and overfishing have contributed to near-extinction on local reefs and current low population numbers.

# IMPORTANT LINKS AND RESOURCES

## **Reef Responsible Program**

[www.facebook.com/reefresponsiblevi](https://www.facebook.com/reefresponsiblevi)

[reefresponsiblevi@gmail.com](mailto:reefresponsiblevi@gmail.com)

## **USVI Division of Fish and Wildlife**

**(340) 773-1082 (STX) | (340) 775-6762 (STT)**

<http://dpnr.vi.gov/fish-and-wildlife>

## **Caribbean Fishery Management Council**

<http://caribbeanfmc.com/>

## **NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service**

<http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/>

## **USVI Fisher Handbook**

<https://dpnr.vi.gov/fish-and-wildlife/fish/fishing-regulations/>

# SUPPORT PROVIDED BY



**The Reef Responsible program is a collaborative effort among and supported by the following groups and agencies:**

USVI DPNR Division of Fish and Wildlife  
The Nature Conservancy US Virgin Islands  
Reef Responsible Advisory Council  
NOAA Coral Reef Conservation Program  
NOAA fisheries staff  
Caribbean Fisheries Management Council  
USVI Fishery Advisory Panels

