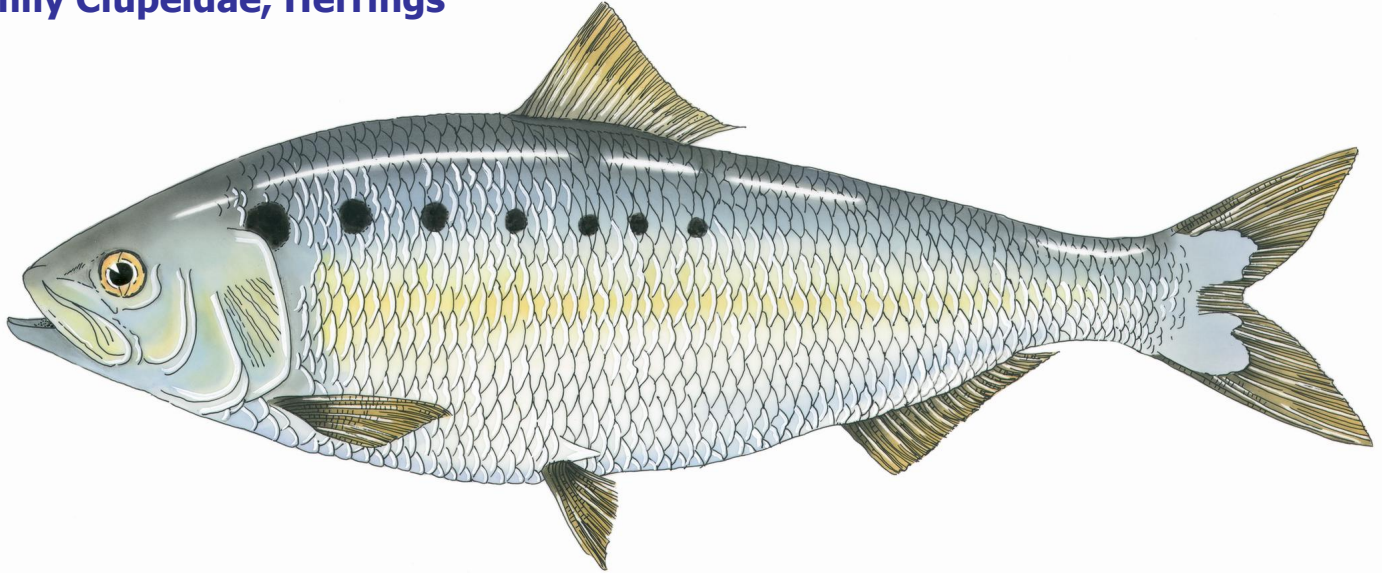


American Shad (*Alosa sapidissima*)

Family Clupeidae, Herrings



Common names: shad, Atlantic shad, white shad

Description: American shad are dark blue to green above with paler sides and a silver underbelly. Behind the upper edge of their gill cover is a large dusky spot that is usually followed by several small, less distinct, dusky spots. These fish have a laterally compressed body and a deeply forked tail fin. The midline of their belly is saw edged and sharp and their scales are large. They have only one dorsal fin and one anal fin. American shad are the largest members of the true herring family and can grow to 30 inches in length and weigh over 9 pounds.

Where found: inshore

Similar Gulf of Maine species: Atlantic herring, alewife, blueback herring, Atlantic menhaden

Remarks: American shad are anadromous fish. Commonly known as 'the poor man's tarpon,' shad are highly sought after as a sportfish because of their feisty nature and their ability to leap. The most popular time of year to go shad fishing is in the spring when these fish are returning to their coastal streams and rivers to spawn. Although shad are primarily plankton feeders, they will take a variety of baits, lures and flies. Either light spinning or fly fishing gear is recommended.

Records: MSSAR
IGFA All-Tackle World Record

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