



# Citizen Science

## Citizen Science Program Update

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Mackerel Cobia AP  
March 2025

# Program Activities



CitSci Program Initial Evaluation



SMILE Project Update



FISHstory



SAFMC Release



Project Idea Portal

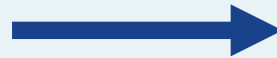
# Initial Program Evaluation

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*Gather baseline levels of knowledge about, confidence in, and trust in the citizen science process of collecting data to inform fisheries management*



Pilot Interviews



6 fishermen, 6 scientists, 6 managers



Online Survey



Gather information from a broader group of scientists & managers

79 respondents, 53% response rate



Interviews



Gather information from a broader group of commercial, for-hire, and recreational fishermen

41 interviews





# SMILE Project

- Partner with divers to collect length info on data limited species
- Laser-mounted Olympus underwater cameras
- Field testing in FL Keys
- Second field season wrapping up
- Data processing & analysis underway







# FISHstory



# Project Components

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Digitizing & archiving historic fishing photos



Estimating for-hire catch composition using the online crowdsourcing platform Zooniverse



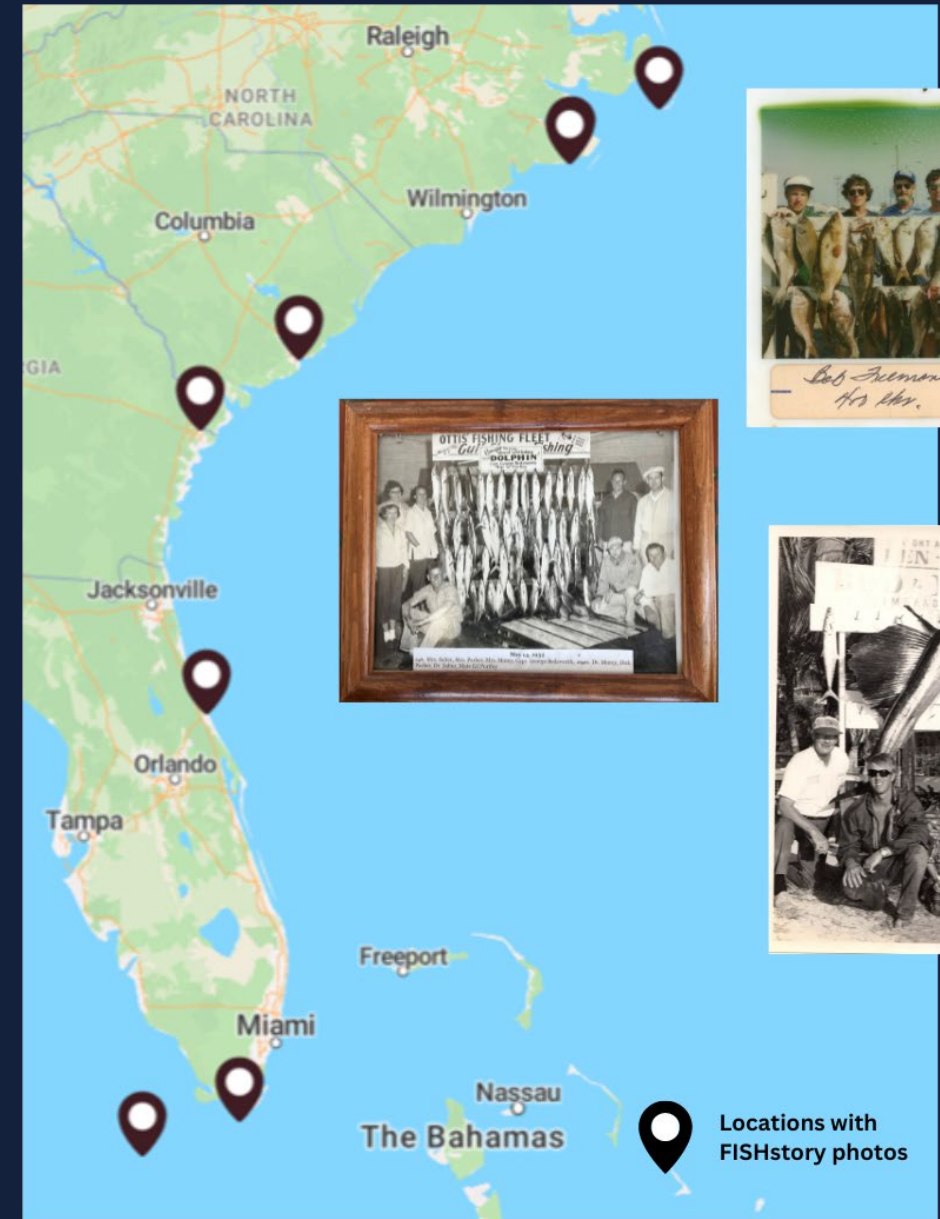
Developing method to estimate fish length in historic photos outside of Zooniverse and estimating size composition for key species





# FISHstory Photo Archive

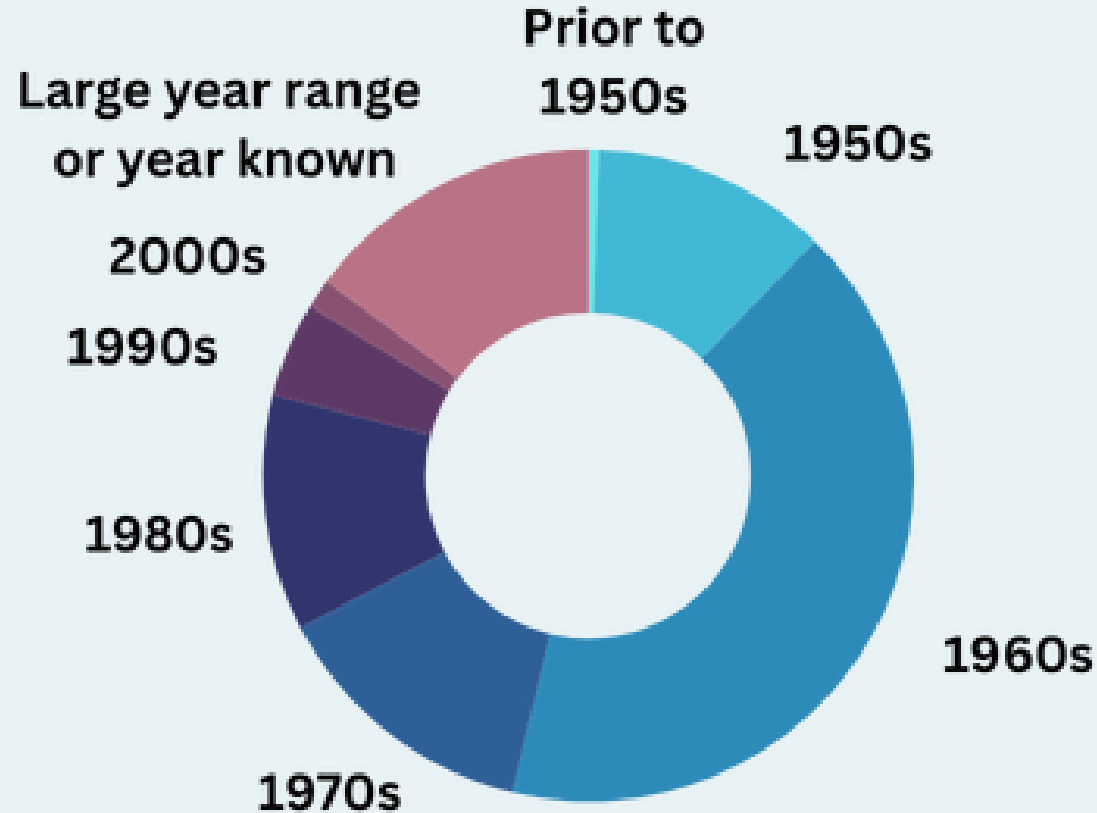
>2,300 photos contributed to  
FISHstory by 14 photo providers



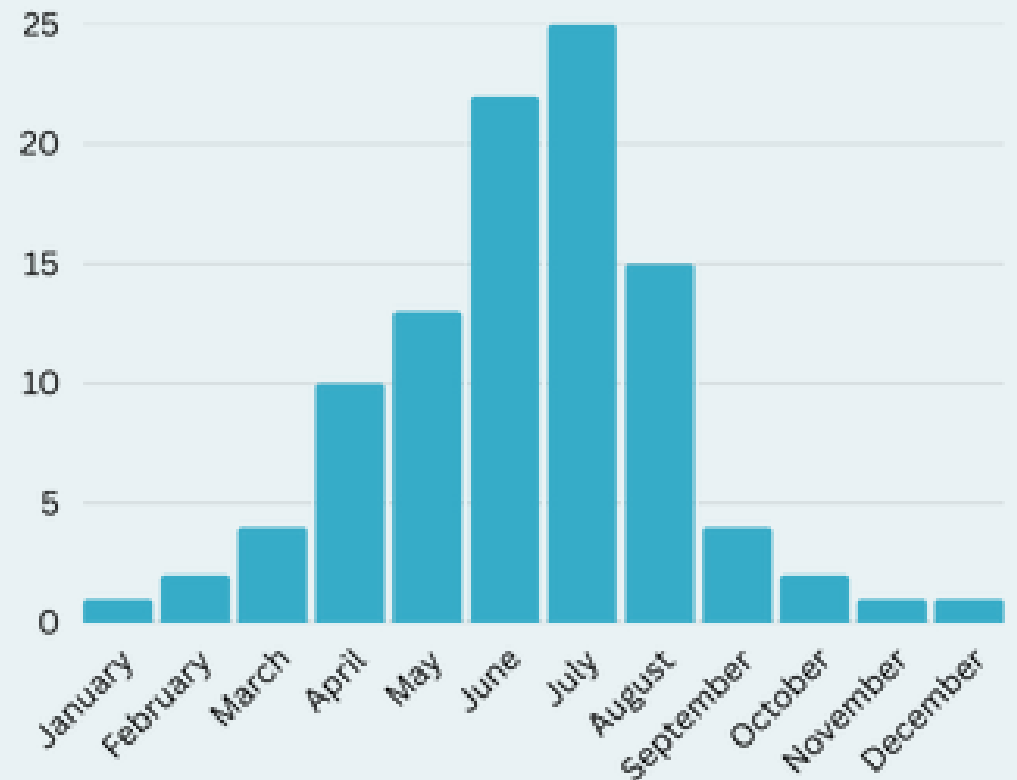


# FISHstory Photo Archive

Percentage of photos by decade



Percentage of photos by month





# FISHstory: Photos for Analyses

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Photo Description	Good	Better
Photo Type	Picture taken at the end of a trip displaying harvested catch with anglers	Fish hanging on leaderboard
Photo Date	Year	Month & Day
Photo Location	State	City & Dock
Photo Background	Photo provider name & contact	Vessel name & captain name



# FISHstory project re-launched in Zooniverse July 2024!



FISHstory

[ABOUT](#) [CLASSIFY](#) [TALK](#) [COLLECT](#) [RECENTS](#)

Level 3 is now unlocked for all volunteers - so you can keep classifying away and helping us identify and count fish within the photos. Not a fish ID expert? No worries - we have tips and tricks in our tutorials and field guide. Feel free to reach out to our research team via the Talk Boards with any fish ID questions.



## FISHSTORY

### Filling Fisheries Data Gaps with Historical Dock Photos

[LEARN MORE](#) >

#### GET STARTED!

Welcome to the FISHstory Project! We have four workflows where you can help us collect information from historic dock photos. Start with LEVEL 1 and unlock additional levels as you classify more photos. If you're not a fish ID expert, no worries! We welcome all and encourage you to use our Field Guide to help identify fish and provide your best guess. Thank you for your participation!

*The collection of SAFMC FISHstory information is authorized under the OMB Control Number included in the [Citizen Science & Crowdsourcing Information Collection page](#).*

#### UNLOCKED

5% COMPLETE

LEVEL 3: Classify Red Snapper, Amberjack & Sharks >

2% COMPLETE

LEVEL 4: Classify Dolphinfin, Cobia, Gray Triggerfish & Little Tunny >

#### LOCKED





# Good participation thus far..... but working to recruit more volunteers

As of March 15, 2025

## LEVEL 1: Count Fish and People

Retirement limit: 20

Images retired: 580 / 580

ETC\* 0 days

100% Complete

## LEVEL 2: Classify King Mackerel, Grouper & Sailfish

Retirement limit: 20

Images retired: 1,054 / 1,054

ETC\* 0 days

100% Complete

## LEVEL 3: Classify Red Snapper, Amberjack & Sharks

Retirement limit: 20

Images retired: 1,054 / 1,054

ETC\* 0 days

100% Complete

## LEVEL 4: Classify Dolphinfinh, Cobia, Gray Triggerfish & Little Tunny

Retirement limit: 20

Images retired: 675 / 1,054

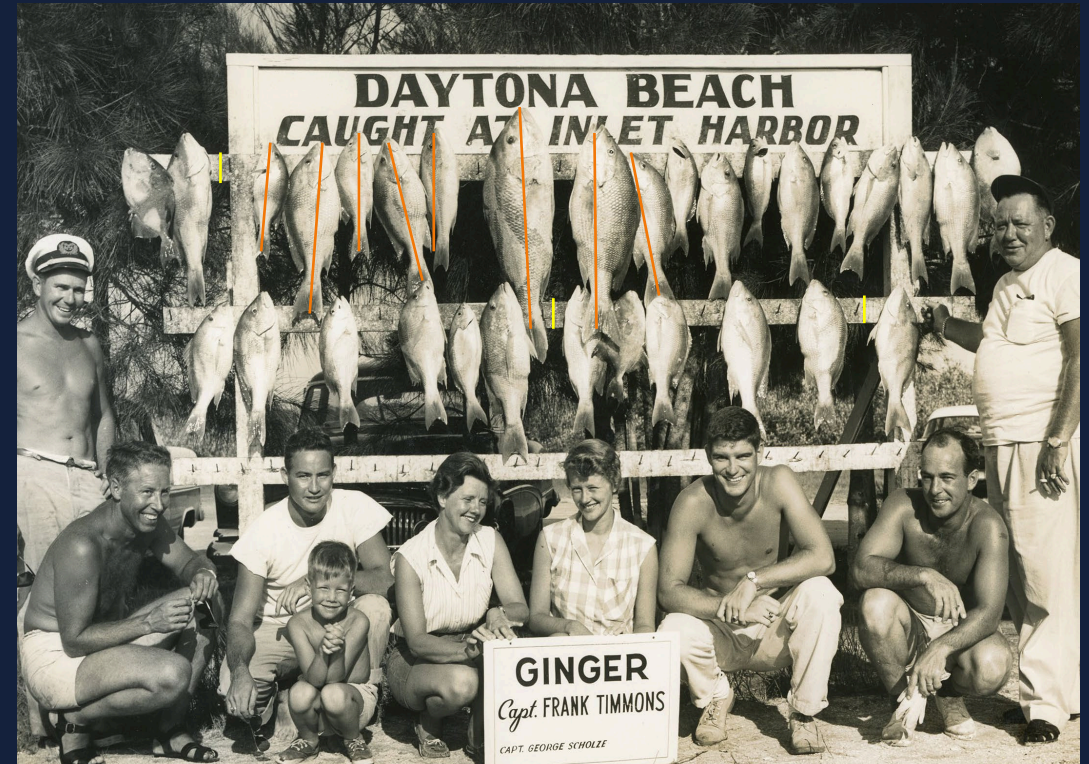
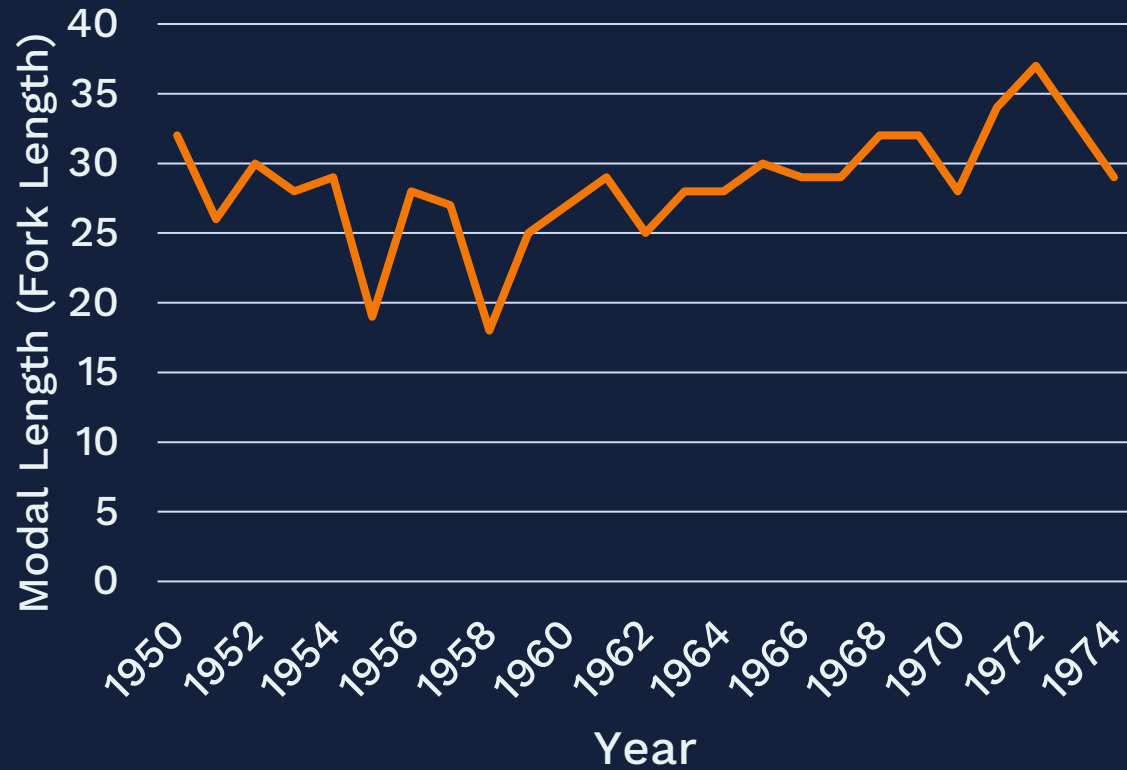
Classifications: 19,324 / 21,080

ETC\* 22 days

92% Complete



# Estimating Fish Lengths







# SAFMC Release





# Updates



Red  
Snapper



Scamp



Graysby



Black



Yellow-  
mouth



Gag



Rock  
Hind



Yellowfin



Red Hind



Red



Coney

Participants recording released shallow water grouper and Red Snapper in SciFish app

Continued outreach, including collaboration with Best Fishing Practices initiative

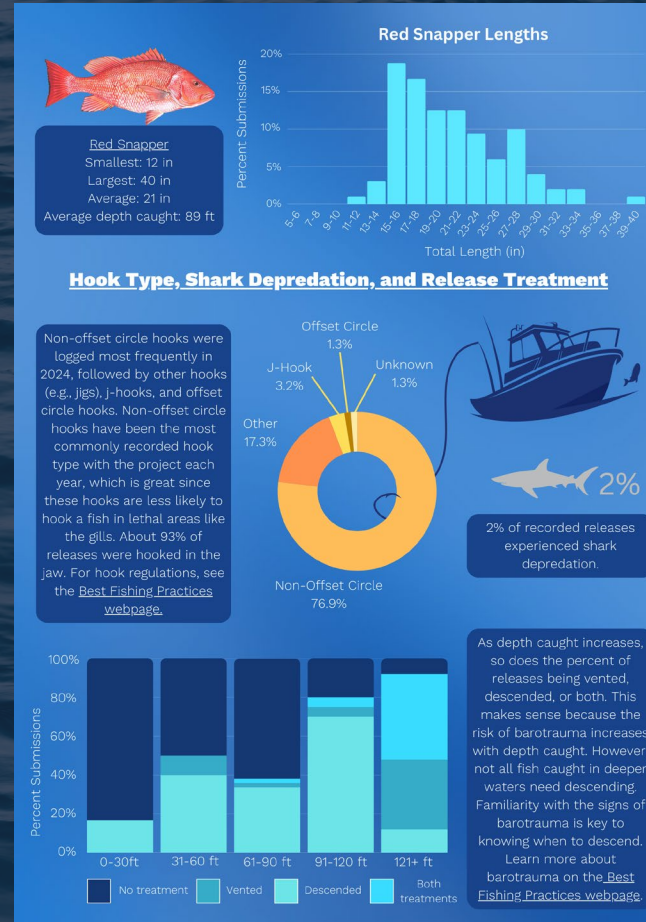
2024 Annual Data Summary

2025 Sea Grant Partnership





# 2024 Data Summary



## Summary includes:

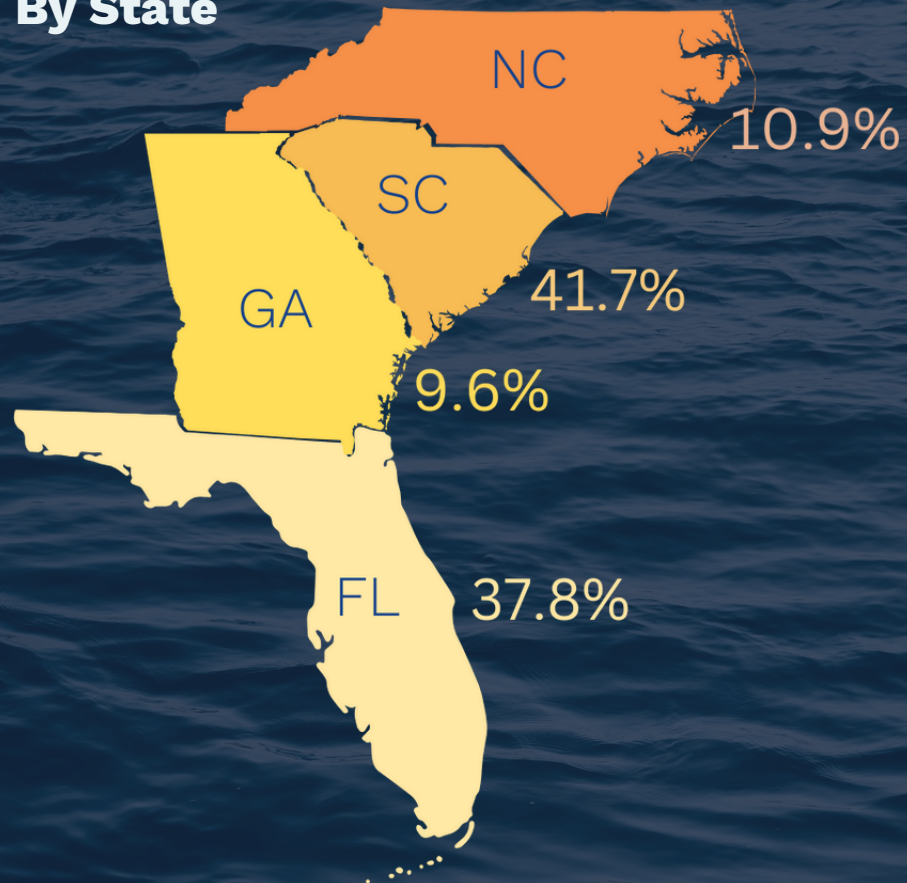
- Release submissions by state & fishing sector
- Species submitted
- Length compositions
- Release treatment by depth
- Shark depredation
- Hook type & location
- 2024 Participant Recognition Milestones



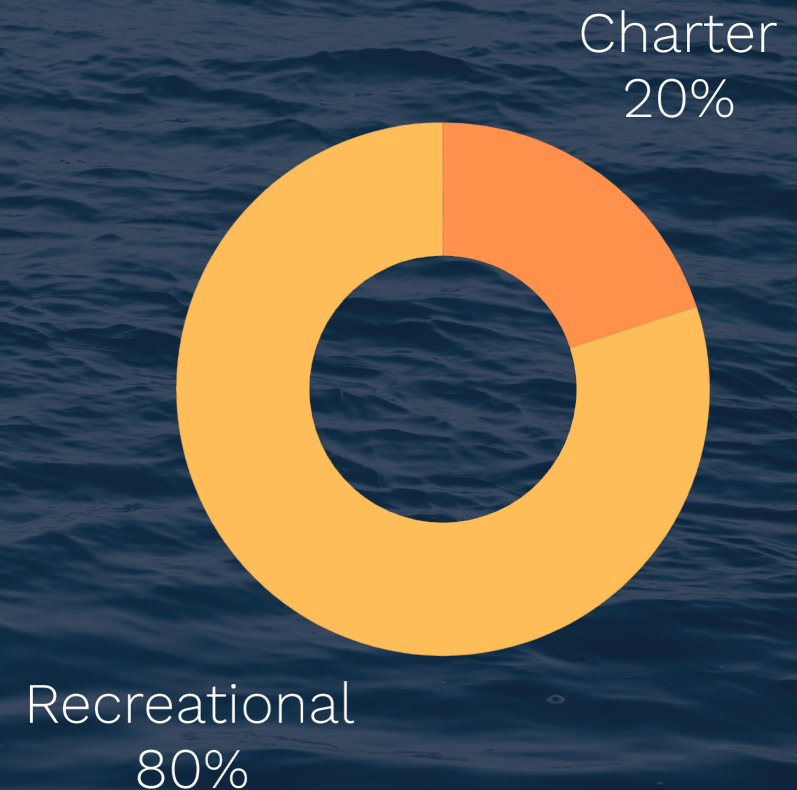


# 2024 Data Summary: Where Release Submissions Came From

**By State**



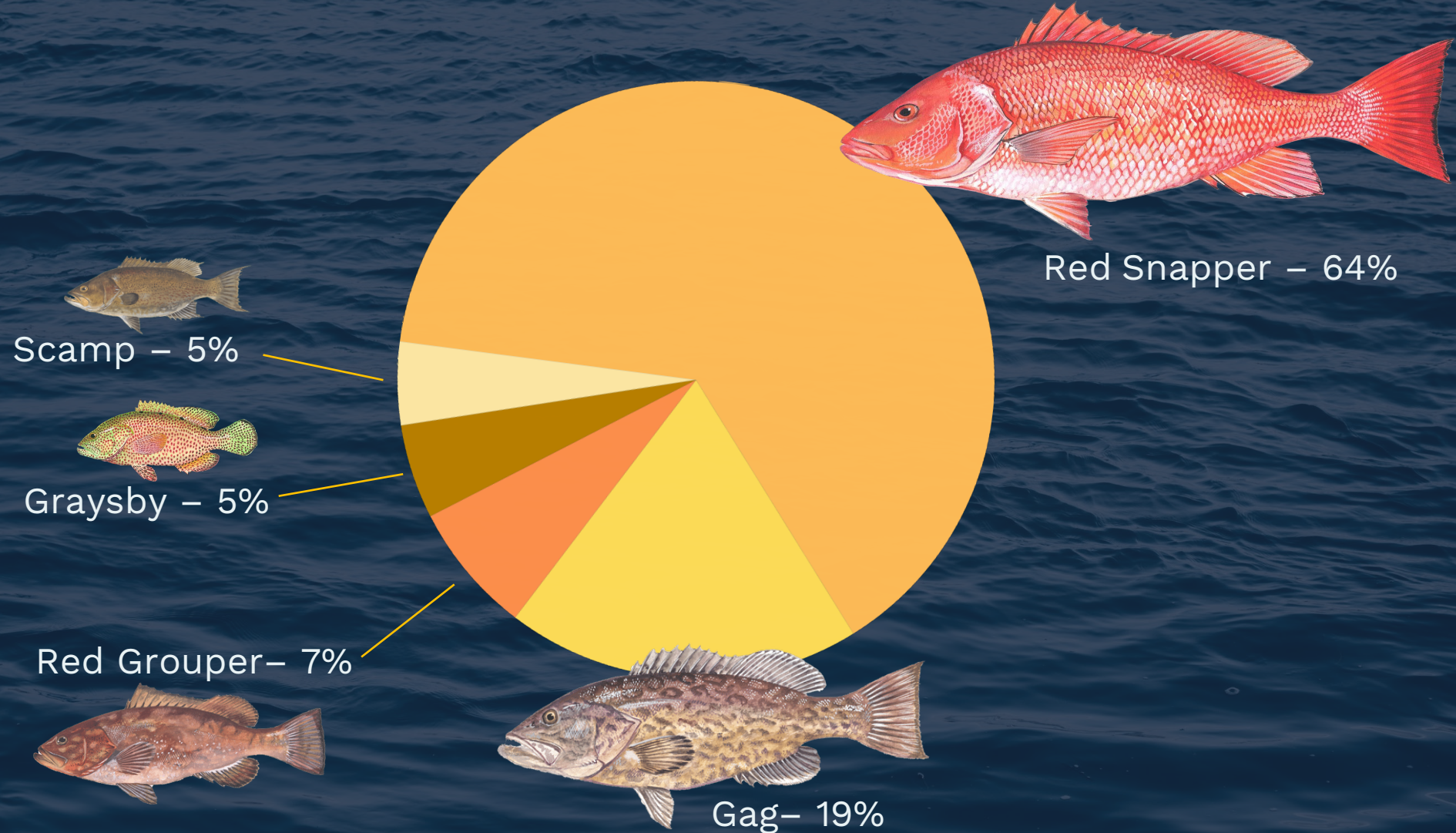
**By Sector**







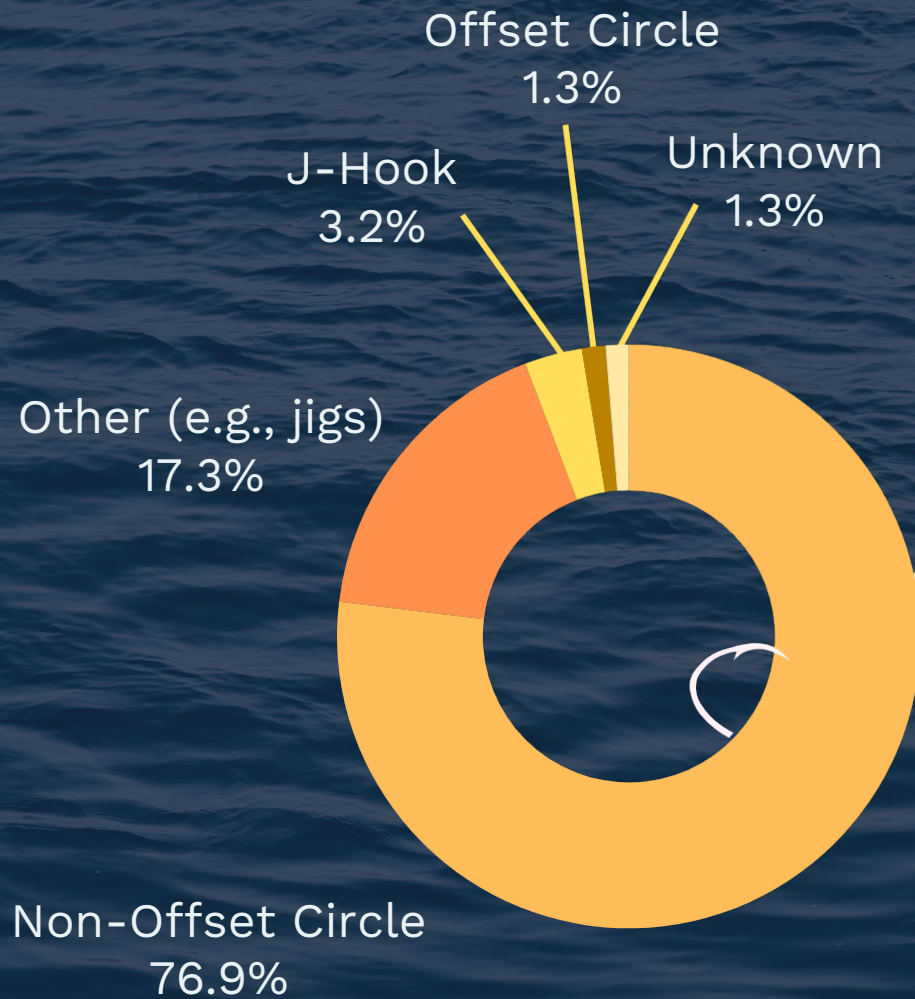
# 2024 Data Summary: Releases Logged by Species







# 2024 Data Summary: Hook Type & Hook Location



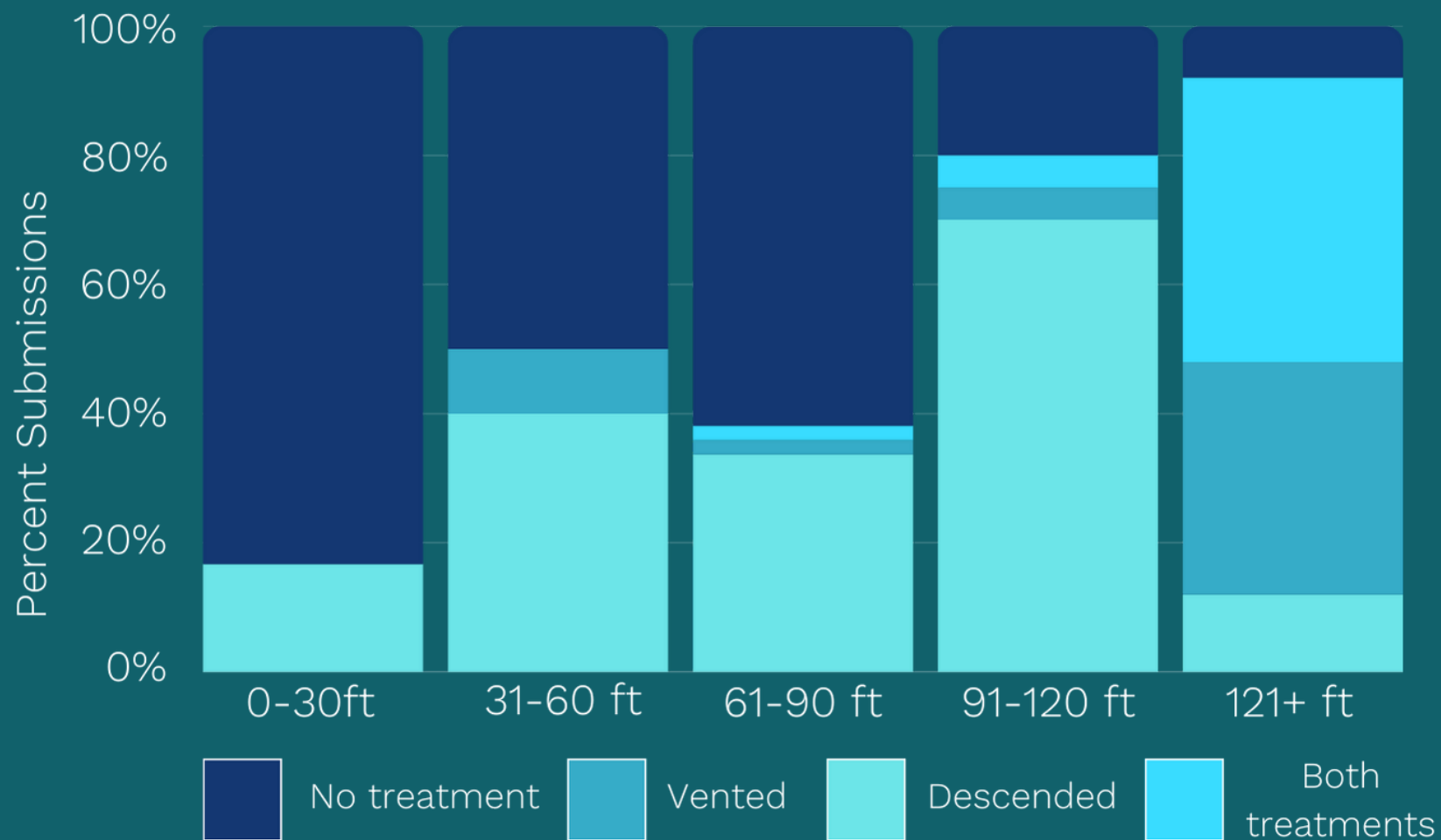
**93% of releases were  
hooked in the jaw**







# 2024 Data Summary: Release Treatment







# 2024 Data Summary: Participant Recognition



## Red Grouper

Smallest: 11 in  
Jon Reynolds

Largest: 24 in  
Jon Reynolds



## Gag

Smallest: 5 in  
Tom Roller

Largest: 32 in  
Jake Harmon



## Scamp

Smallest: 18 in  
Nigel Bowers

Largest: 34 in  
Jake Harmon



Around the Reef – Jake Harmon



Release Champion – Mark McWaters

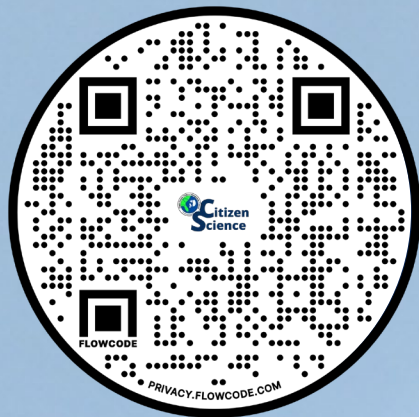
# Have a citizen science project idea?

***Share it via the online  
Project Idea Portal!***

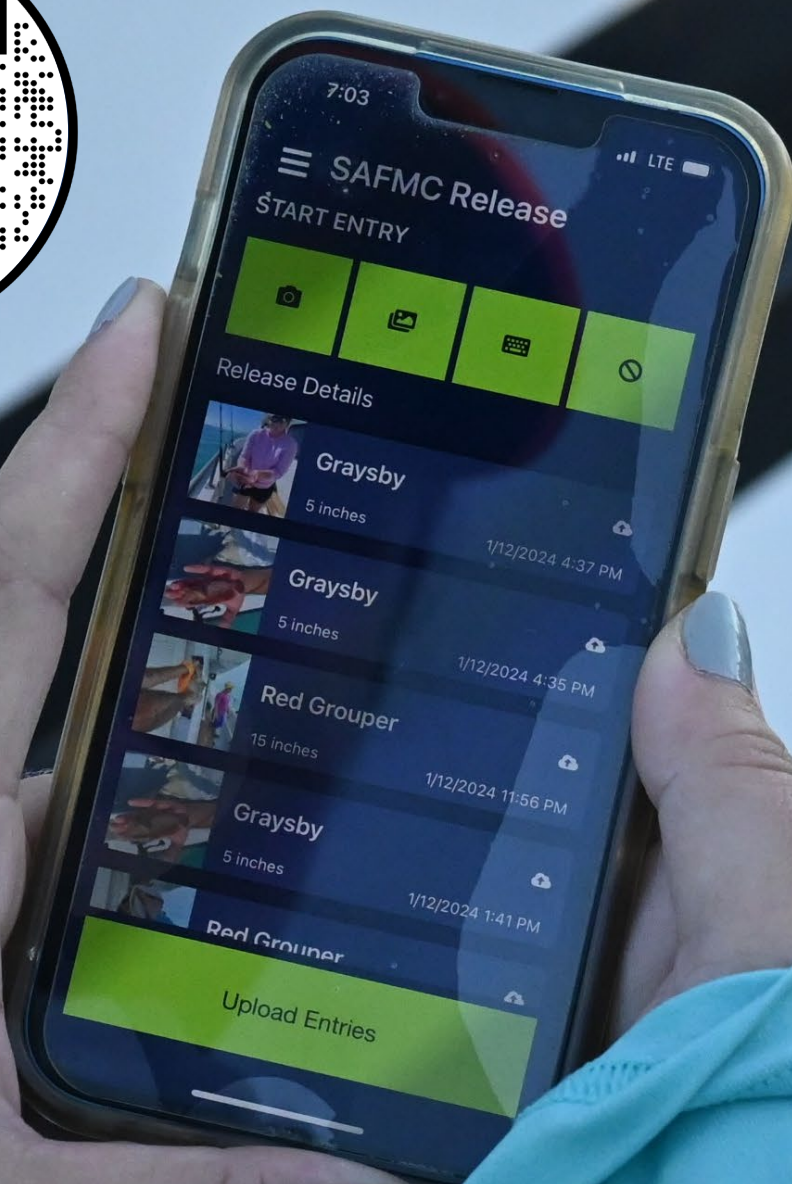


Ideas will be used to update the  
SAFMC's Citizen Science Research  
Priorities





Keep up with projects & the Program!  
[safmc.net/citizen-science-program/](https://safmc.net/citizen-science-program/)



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