

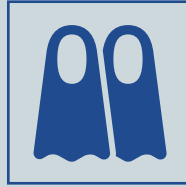


Citizen Science

Citizen Science Program Update

Snapper Grouper AP
Fall 2025

Program Activities



SMILE



FISHstory



SAFMC Release



SMILE Project

- Partner with divers to collect length info on data limited species
- Laser-mounted Olympus underwater cameras
- Data processing & analysis underway
- Survey conducted to better understand demographics, motivations, and barriers of recreational divers
- Presented methodology to SSC at April 2025 meeting
- [SMILE presentation](#) – SAFMC Oct Seminar Series





PC: Rusty Hudson



PC: Chuck Griffin



FISHstory



Project Findings To Date



Over 2,300 photos have been digitized & archived from the South Atlantic from the 1940s-1980s
Looking for more photos from the Carolinas



Over 4,000 volunteers analyzed 1,950 photos
Validation Team reviewed 250 photos
Data can show trend for key species



All King Mackerel & Red Snapper measured in current photo archive
Red Snapper length compositions were recommended for use by SEDAR 90 (South Atlantic Red Snapper) Data Workshop Panel
King Mackerel length compositions are being updated & will be presented at next SEDAR South Atlantic King Mackerel assessment



Volunteer classification in Zooniverse completed for currently archived photos



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 Dolphinfish, Cobia, Gray Triggerfish & Little Tunny

Retirement limit: 20

Images retired: 1,054 / 1,054

ETC* 0 days

100% Complete



FISHstory Validation Team



5 training sessions
23 members



PC: Rusty Hudson

Team members actively
validating photos

FISHstory Validation Team
Photo Batch 2 - Update
September 22, 2025

Reel Classifiers
4 team members have validated this week
91% done with Photo Batch 2!
Target Deadline: Sept 24

Species Sleuths
4 team members have validated this week
99% done with Photo Batch 2!

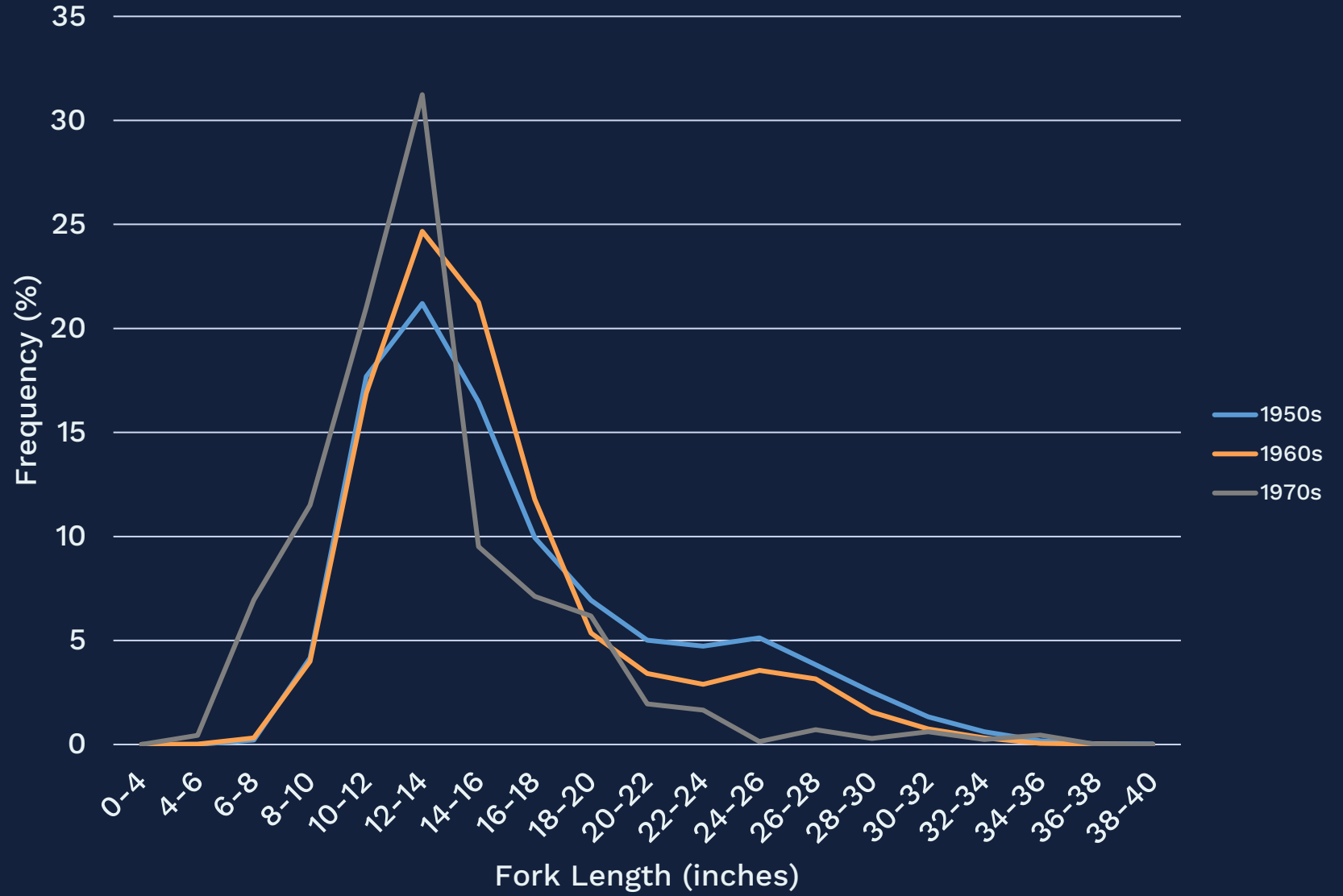
Special shoutout to
Reel Classifiers: Julie Vecchio, Kevin Spanik, Dave Moss, and Erin Burge
Species Sleuths: Jimmy Hull, Richie Gomez, Alex Rocco, and George Sedberry
who have been validating like crazy over the past week!

Thank you for sharing your time & fish identification expertise with FISHstory!

Weekly updates when
team is active



Red Snapper
FISHstory
length
compositions
by decade





SAFMC Release



Updates



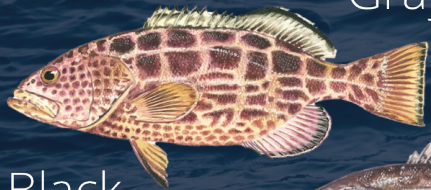
Red Snapper



Scamp



Graysby



Black



Yellowmouth



Gag



Rock Hind



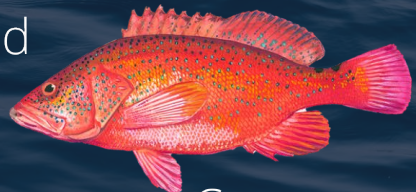
Yellowfin



Red Hind



Red



Coney

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

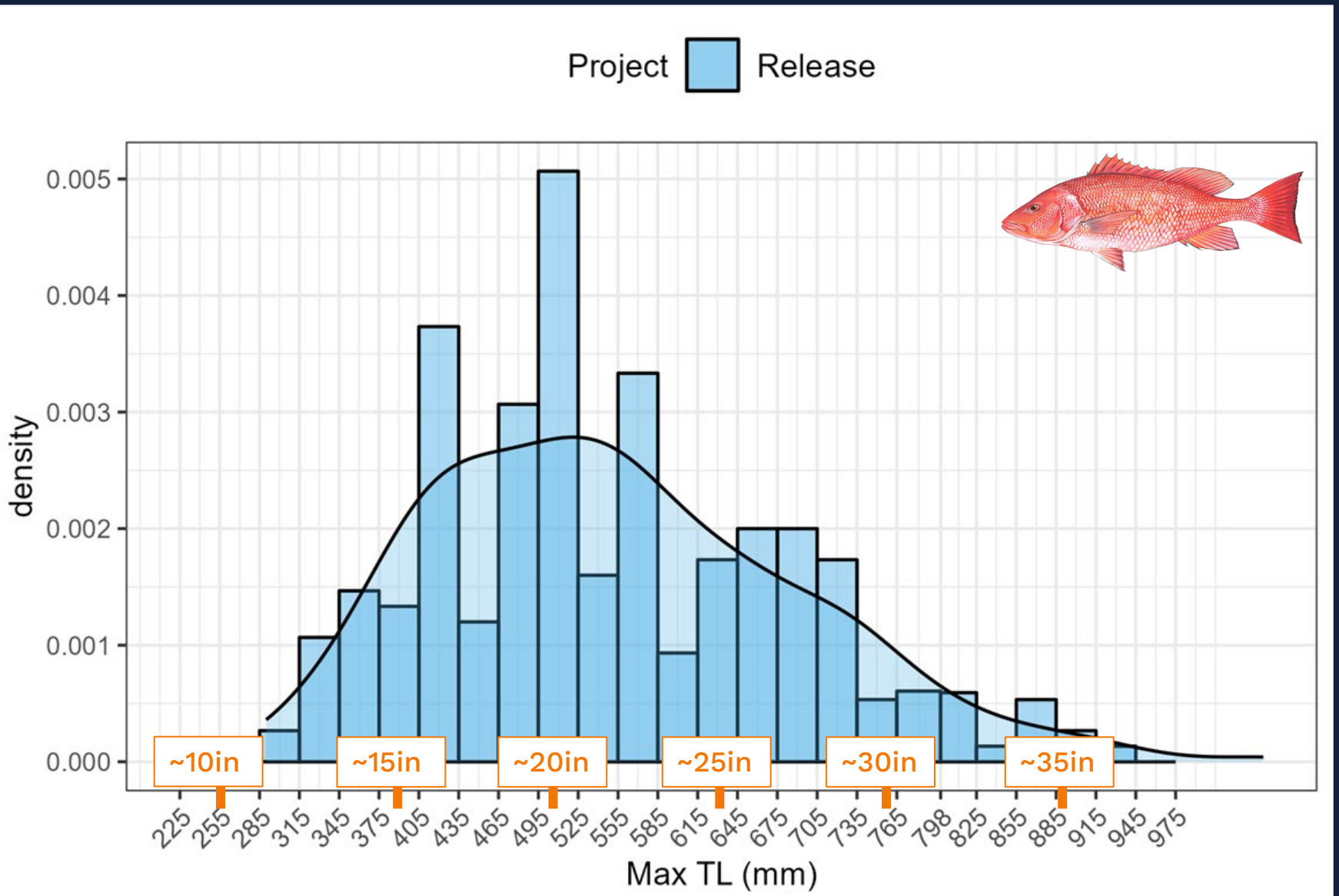
Continued outreach, including collaboration with Best Fishing Practices initiative

SEDAR 90 Data Workshop Update

Sea Grant South Atlantic Release Rodeo & Participant Recognition Program

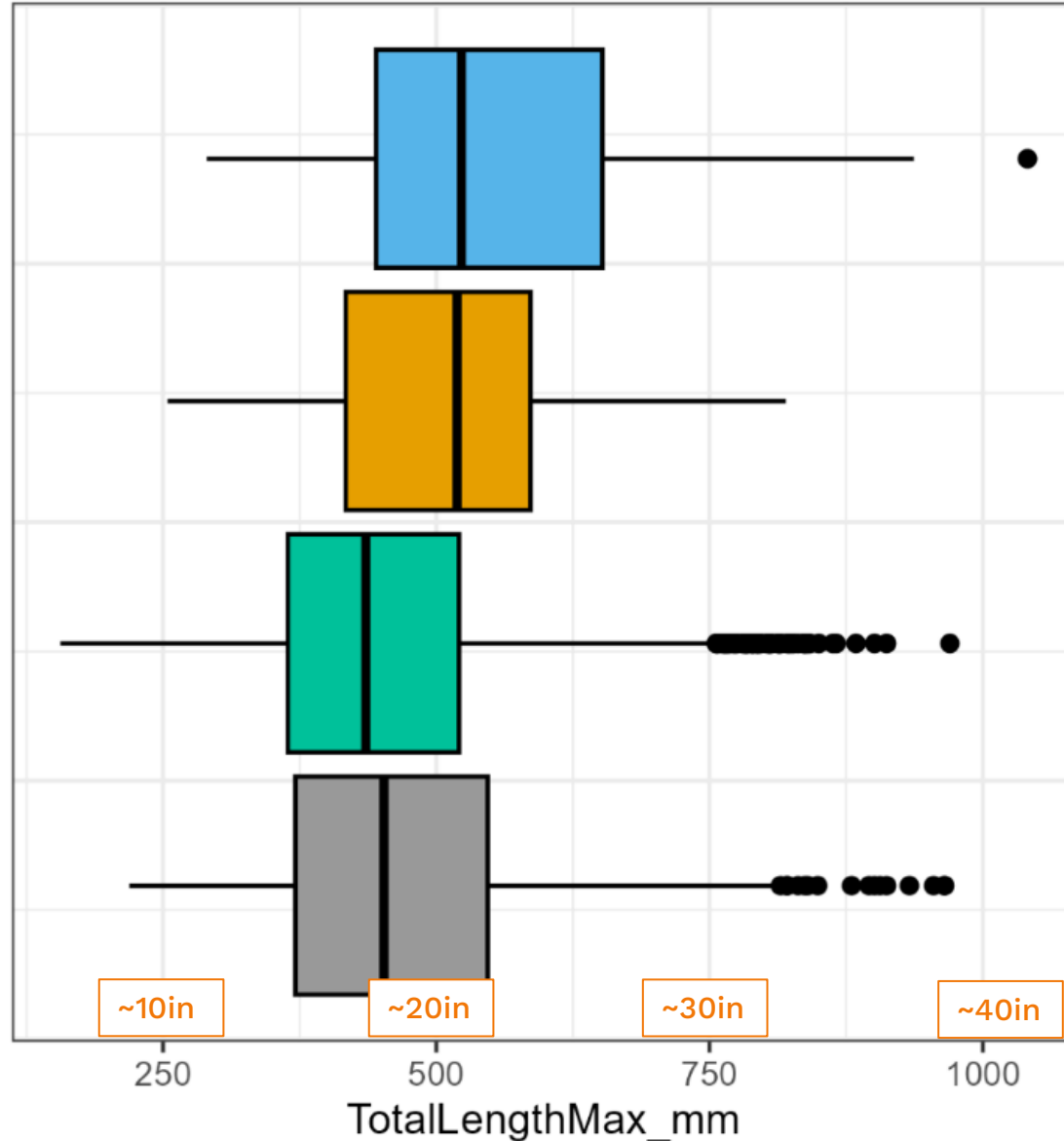


SEDAR90-DW17: Red Snapper Release Length Composition, 2022-2024





SEDAR90-DW17: Red Snapper Release Length Composition Comparisons, 2022-2024



Proj_Sect

- Release
- MRIP HBAtSeaObserver
- Headboat FWC_ForHireAtSea
- Charter FWC_ForHireAtSea

~10in

~20in

~30in

~40in

TotalLengthMax_mm



Sea Grant South Atlantic Release Rodeo



Sea Grant wants best fishing practices gear in fishermen's hands



SAFMC Release wants more entries that can be used for validation

Rodeo Structure



May - July



4 entries/month



8 entries/month if include ruler



2 names drawn by Sea Grant/month!



Sea Grant South Atlantic Release Rodeo: Outcomes



When comparing SAFMC Release submissions to challenge months during an average of previous years (2023 & 2024)



28% increase in submissions



Number of submissions with photos doubled



Number of submissions with photos that can be used for length validation almost tripled



Sea Grant South Atlantic Release Rodeo: Outcomes



Best fishing practices gear distributed by Sea Grant to randomly select participating fishermen



Positive feedback from fishermen on challenge & Sea grant giveaways



Built meaningful relationships with fishing community members



Participant Recognition Program

Current Milestones



Quantity of submissions

(15, 30, 45 submissions & most submissions in year)



Smallest and largest of each species



Around the Reef: submitting all species in project



Sea Grant photo categories



Participant Recognition Program



We're excited to add new milestones to the PRP in 2026!

Goals

- Thank participants for their contributions
- Support project recruitment
- Encourage submissions throughout the year by increasing recognition opportunities (instead of recognition mainly happening at end of year)
- Encourage submissions with as much detail as participants comfortable with (e.g., inclusion of photos)



Participant Recognition Program

New Milestone Examples



Referral program – recognition for referring people to the project



Quarterly recognition of top submitters in addition to recognizing Release Champion at end of year



Quarterly feature of photo from submission in SAFMC Release newsletter



Species spotlight – recognize submission of one of our less-commonly recorded species



Participant Recognition Program

Discussion Questions

- What new milestones do you think would help the PRP meet its goals?
- What kinds of milestones would you find exciting? What milestones would bring you back to the project throughout the year?
- How can we engage both frequent and occasional submitters?
- Should we implement more submission challenges like the South Atlantic Release Rodeo?



Keep up with projects & the Program!
safmc.net/citizen-science-program/



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