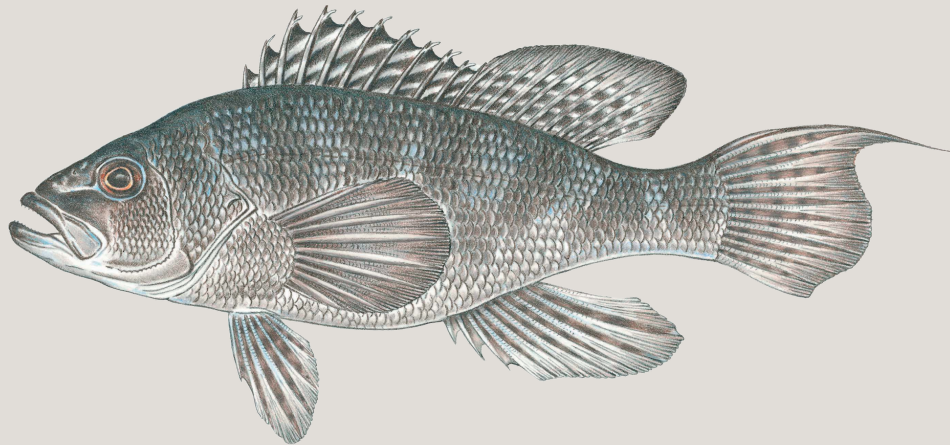




Seasonal Seafood of Martha's Vineyard



A CHEF'S GUIDE

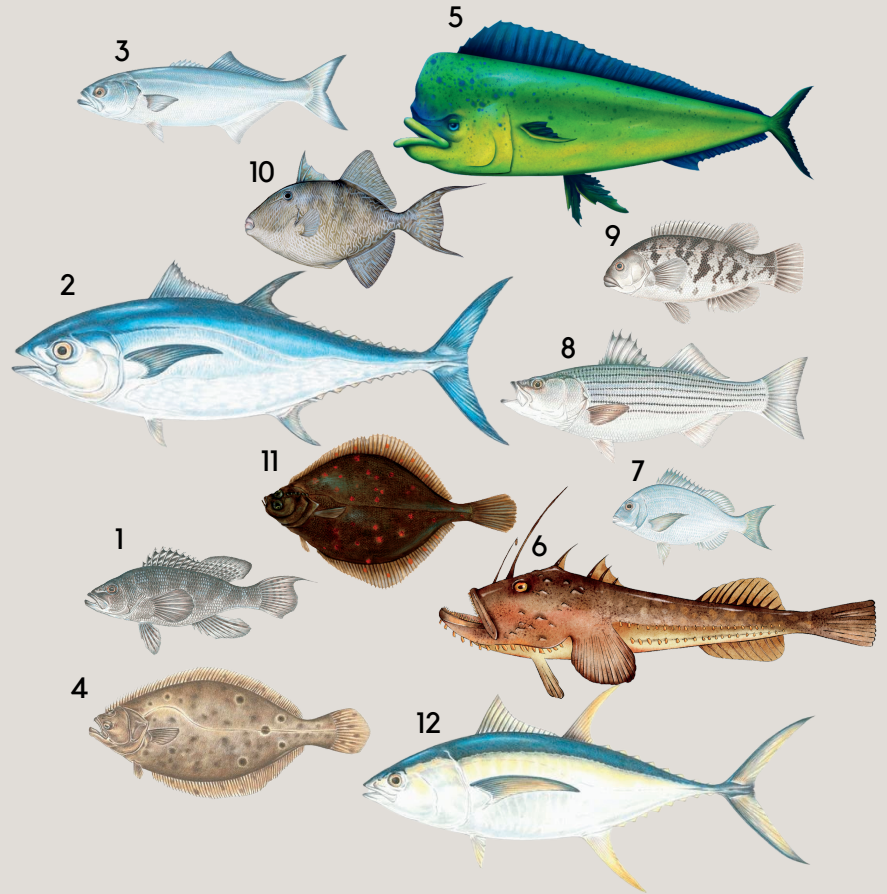
MV Seafood Collaborative • (508) 689-5599 • ahoy@vineyardseafood.org
• A program of the Martha's Vineyard Fishermen's Preservation Trust •

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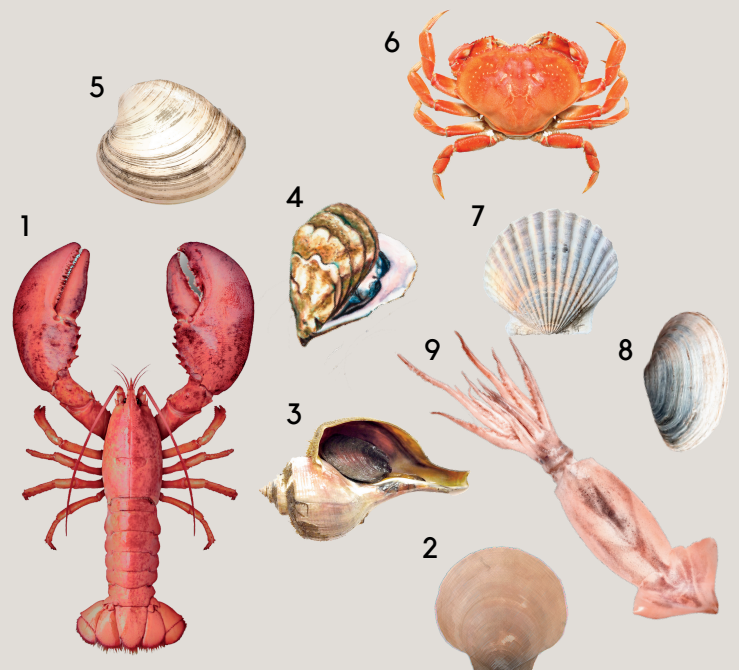
FINFISH

1. Black Sea Bass
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5. Mahi Mahi
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9. Tautog
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SHELLFISH and CRUSTACEANS

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BLACK SEA BASS

CENTROPRISTIS STRIATA

ALSO KNOWN AS: BLACK BASS, BLACK FISH, ROCK BASS, AND TALLYWAG

SPECIES INFO

- Grow up to 25" in length and over 8 lbs in weight, though most weigh less than 4 lbs.
- Black sea bass are protogynous hermaphrodites, meaning they begin life as females, then change into males (generally after reaching 7"–13").
- Females can live up to 8 years, males up to 12.
- During spawning season, dominant males turn bright blue and have large humps on their heads.
- Adult black sea bass are aggressive feeders, favoring crabs, shrimp, worms, small fish, clams, and squid, which they eat whole.
- Adult sea bass live over rocky bottoms or anywhere structure is found, in depths of less than 150'. They winter in deep water off the mid-Atlantic states and travel northward and inshore in spring. They arrive in large schools to Massachusetts waters in May. They remain until October, with their largest concentrations in Buzzards Bay and Nantucket and Vineyard Sounds.
- Harvested via pots and traps, and rod & reel.

LOCAL HARVEST July–October/November

CUTS Whole (round, or scaled & gutted); Filet

CHARACTERISTICS

Black sea bass has a mild, fresh, somewhat delicate flavor and a tender but firm texture. It can be sold whole or as filets. Uncooked flesh should be sparkling white and translucent, not opaque. Its firm, lean meat cooks up snow white. Be careful handling whole fish; a jab from the dorsal-fin spines can be very painful. Black sea bass is notably hardy and holds up well as a live product. It offers excellent shelf life fresh and can be frozen when demand is low or the market glutted. Hooked fish offer the best quality, followed by trapped. Black sea bass can be substituted for dogfish, grouper and rockfish.

PREPARATION Bake, Broil, Grill, Poach, Sauté, Steam

Black sea bass is one of the best small fish to bake or grill whole, due to its relatively simple bone structure; its attractive skin can be displayed when serving whole. It's frequently used in Asian cooking—try with a ginger-and-soy-sauce dip. Its flesh holds together well for use in chowders and soups.

NUTRITION

Low in calories and fat. A good source of selenium and omega-3s.

Calories: 97

Fat Calories: 18

Total Fat: 2 g

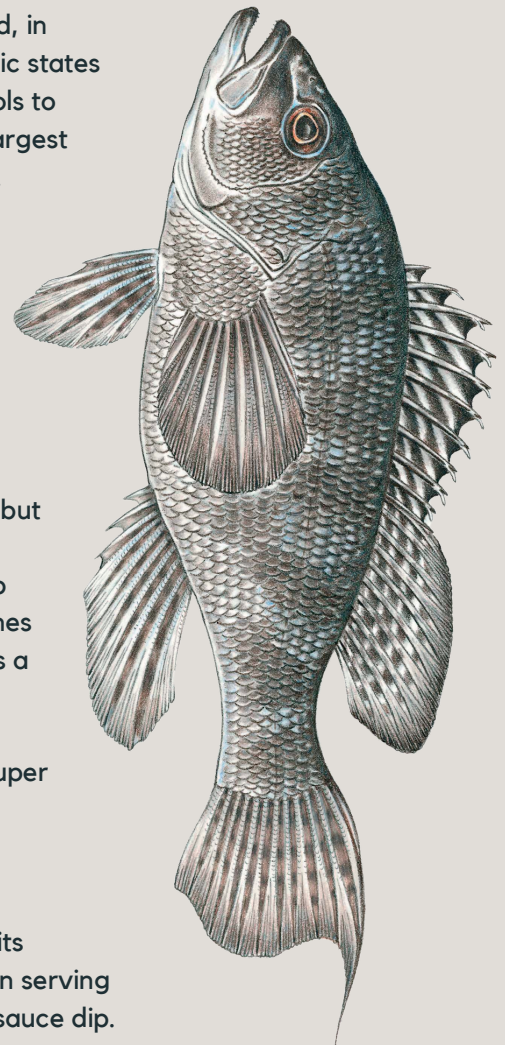
Saturated Fat: 0.5 g

Cholesterol: 41 mg

Sodium: 68 mg

Protein: 18.4 g

Omega-3: 0.7 g



BLUEFIN TUNA

THUNNUS THYNNUS

ALSO KNOWN AS: GIANT BLUEFIN AND NORTHERN BLUEFIN

SPECIES INFO

- Not to be confused with yellowfin tuna.
- Are high-jumping and fast-swimming, one of the largest fish species off the coast of Massachusetts.
- As sight hunters, have the sharpest eyes of any bony fish.
- Are ram ventilators, so must keep moving to stay alive.
- Typically 6'–8' and 500 lbs, but can reach 10' and 1,000 lbs, rivaling the marlin and swordfish.
- Record weight for a bluefin is just over 2,000 lbs and 12'.
- Reach maturity at 6 years and can live to 15.
- Migrate across the open Atlantic between spawning and feeding areas, in schools based on size, and can cross the ocean in fewer than 60 days.
- Feed mainly on smaller fish like herring and mackerel.
- Found from Labrador to northern Brazil.
- Frequently dive to 1,500 feet, but have been spotted at depths of 3,000 feet.
- Caught via purse seine, harpoon, longline, troll, handline, and rod & reel.

LOCAL HARVEST June–September

CUTS Loins; Whole (headed & gutted)

CHARACTERISTICS

Known for its meaty texture and deep-red coloring, bluefin has the darkest and fattiest flesh of all tuna varieties. Avoid meat with strong discoloration or dull, brownish cast or spots. Its flesh should be firm and smell fresh, not "fishy."

Its flesh has the firmness of beef steak; its flavor is distinctive. Can substitute for yellowfin tuna.

Because of high fat content, bluefin is prized as a raw product and marketed in four grades. No. 1 is "sashimi-grade," the freshest and fattiest. No. 2 is "grill grade." Nos. 3 and 4 are lower quality.

PREPARATION Bake, Broil, Grill, Sauté, Smoke

Raw meat can be brined overnight to mellow flavor. Grilled or broiled, bluefin turns off-white or ivory; its meat is firm and flavor intense. Treat as you would sirloin: it's best rare. Overcooked tuna is tough and tasteless.

NUTRITION

Low in fat. High in protein. Good source of vitamin A, vitamin B12, and selenium. High in omega-3 fatty acids.

Calories: 144
Fat Calories: 44
Total Fat: 4.9 g

Saturated Fat: 1.3 g
Cholesterol: 38 mg
Sodium: 39 mg

Protein: 23.3 g
Omega-3: 1.3 g



BLUEFISH

POMATOMUS SALTATRIX

ALSO KNOWN AS: TAILOR ELF AND SNAPPER

SPECIES INFO

- Nicknamed "chopper" for their voracious feeding and fighting habits.
- Usually grow to be 20"—25" long, but can grow to 42" and can weigh up to 30 lbs.
- Fish bigger than 10 lbs are called "horses," while youngsters of 1–2 lbs are known as "snappers."
- Migratory, ranging throughout the Atlantic Ocean from Nova Scotia to Argentina and from Spain to Southern Africa.
- Caught via gillnets, trawls, or rod & reel.

LOCAL HARVEST July–October

CUTS Whole (round, or scaled & gutted); Filet

CHARACTERISTICS

Has a rich, full flavor and coarse, moist meat with edible skin. The larger the fish, the more pronounced the taste. Younger bluefish have sweeter and milder flesh. Its delicate flavor can be more "fishy" than other types of seafood. The meat of uncooked bluefish ranges from light tan color to blue-gray with a brownish tinge, and becomes lighter when cooked. The strong-flavored, dark strip of meat on the filet may be removed before cooking.

Best eaten as fresh as possible; deteriorates rapidly if not immediately iced and tends to degrade over time. It does not keep or freeze well.

PREPARATION Bake, Broil, Fry, Grill, Smoke

Its rich flavor can be nicely complemented by acidic ingredients like lime and lemon juice or tomato. Marinate bluefish or cook in acidic liquids to minimize fishiness. For an easy entree, brush a filet with mustard or mayonnaise and broil it. Bluefish can also be grilled, roasted or baked. Grilling allows some of the fat to drip away. Only small bluefish (snappers) can be fried, since larger fish are too oily. Snappers do well breaded, fried, and served whole. Large fish can be baked whole.

NUTRITION

Excellent source of selenium, niacin, vitamin B12, and omega-3s. Good source of magnesium and potassium.

Calories: 124

Fat Calories: 38

Total Fat: 4.2 g

Saturated Fat: 0.9 g

Cholesterol: 59 mg

Sodium: 60 mg

Protein: 20 g

Omega-3: 0.83 g



FLUKE

PARALICHTHYS DENTATUS

ALSO KNOWN AS: SUMMER FLOUNDER AND VINEYARD SOLE

SPECIES INFO

- Flatfish noted for their fighting ability (and flavor).
- Turn gray, blue, green, orange, and black to camouflage with the ocean bottom; undersides are white.
- Average weight is 1–5 lbs and length is 15"–20", though may grow as large as 15 lbs.
- Lie on the ocean floor in ambush, concealed by sand and coloration, waiting for prey.
- When threatened, bury themselves or swim away at surprising speeds.
- Can live up to 17 years, with females usually larger and older.
- Have a varied diet: winter flounder, menhaden, sand lance, red hake, silversides, blue crabs, squid, sand shrimp, and mollusks.
- Live inshore in Massachusetts during warmer months, preferring eelgrass beds and wharf pilings for protection. Larger fish stay in deeper water. In fall, they migrate farther offshore.
- Caught by net or rod & reel. Well-known for battling when hooked.

LOCAL HARVEST June–October/November

CUTS Whole (round, or scaled & gutted); Filet

CHARACTERISTICS

Fluke's texture is firm and meaty. Raw fluke ranges from tan to pinkish to white. Cooked meat is pure white, lean, boneless, and flaky, with a mild flavor that ranges from bland to sweet. Can substitute for other thin, white fish filets.

PREPARATION Bake, Broil, Fry, Sauté

Use wine, sauce, other liquids, or moist vegetables to keep thin fluke filets from drying out. Avoid sauces and herbs that overpower its delicate taste. Thicker filets are great for broiling, served with lightly herbed butter. Fluke is also good for rolling and stuffing.

NUTRITION

Calories: 91

Fat Calories: 10.8

Total Fat: 1.2 g

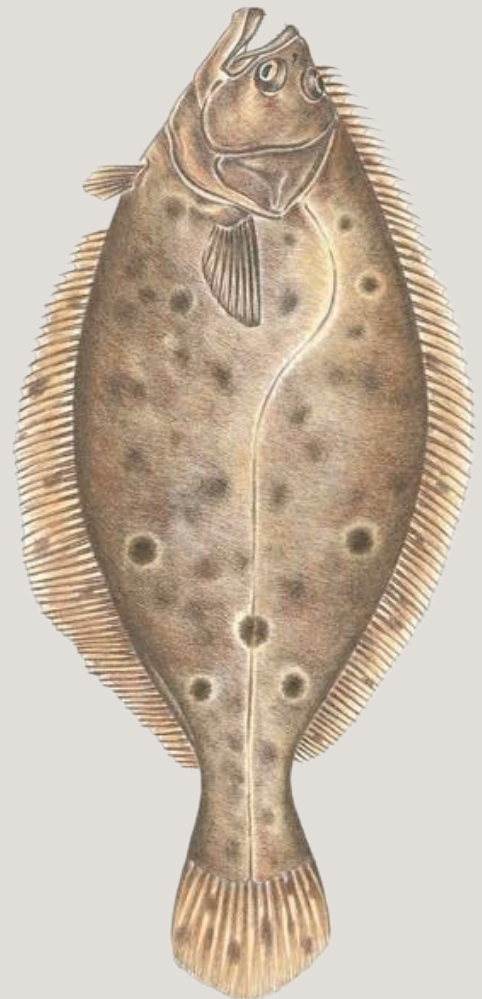
Saturated Fat: 0.3 g

Cholesterol: 48 mg

Sodium: 81 mg

Protein: 18.8 g

Omega-3: 0.2 g



MAHI MAHI

CORYPHAENA HIPPURUS

ALSO KNOWN AS: DOLPHIN FISH AND DORADO

SPECIES INFO

- *Mahi mahi* is Hawaiian and means "very strong."
- Among the most beautiful fish in the ocean: backs are electric green-blue, lower bodies gold or silver.
- Mature males have foreheads that protrude; the heads of females are rounded.
- Out of water, change through several hues before fading to a muted yellow-gray upon death.
- Weight ranges from 15–29 lbs; mahi mahi over 33 lbs are rare.
- Tend to be a yard in length.
- Feed on flying fish, crabs, squid, mackerel, and other forage fish.
- Surface-dwelling; found offshore in temperate, tropical, and subtropical waters worldwide.
- Often congregate near floating debris like seaweed or palm fronds where their prey hides.
- Caught by nets or rod & reel.

LOCAL HARVEST July–August

CUTS Whole (round, or scaled & gutted); Filet

CHARACTERISTICS

Mahi mahi has a sweet, mildly pronounced flavor similar to swordfish. Its lean meat is fairly firm—though not steak-like—with large, moist flakes. Its raw flesh is pinkish to grayish-white, though dark along the lateral line. Darker portions can be trimmed away for milder flavor. Cooked, the meat is off-white.

PREPARATION Bake, Broil, Grill, Fry, Sauté

Mahi mahi's thick skin should be removed before cooking. It performs well on the grill. Though not oily, it remains nicely moist and holds up even to blackening.

NUTRITION

Excellent source of vitamins B3, B5, B6, B12, and selenium. Good source of potassium and omega-3 fatty acids.

Calories: 100

Fat Calories: 10

Total Fat: 1 g

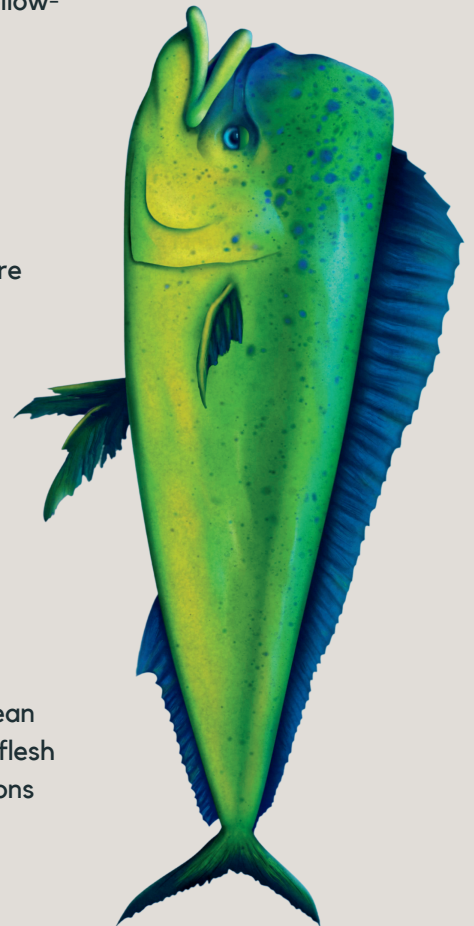
Saturated Fat: 0 g

Cholesterol: 80 mg

Sodium: 100 mg

Protein: 22 g

Omega-3: 0.11 g



MONKFISH

LOPHIUS AMERICANUS

**ALSO KNOWN AS: GOOSEFISH, FISHING-FROG, FROG-FISH, SEA-DEVIL,
AND BELLYFISH**

SPECIES INFO

- Ugly, but resourceful.
- Jaws are armed with bands of long, pointed teeth that incline inwards and temporarily depress to allow objects to glide toward its stomach but then prevent escape from its mouth.
- Pectoral and ventral fins can function as feet to walk along the sea bottom.
- Stomach stretches to swallow prey as large as its body.
- Can grow to a length of 5' and weigh 50 lbs.
- Lacking scales, it is slippery and hard to grab.
- Found worldwide. Local species live from Newfoundland to North Carolina; can be spotted close to shore in shallows on the bottom of the western North Atlantic, in muddy areas where it buries itself for ambush.
- Feeds on anything that crosses its path: zooplankton, small fish, shrimp, squid, other monkfish, crabs, lobsters, squid, octopus, and even seabirds.
- Caught via gillnet, trawl, drag. Often taken as bycatch from scallop draggers.



LOCAL HARVEST June–October

CUTS Tails; Loins

CHARACTERISTICS

Monkfish has a mild, slightly sweet taste. Its tail meat, the only part used, is firm, dense, and boneless like scallop or lobster meat. It doesn't flake readily. Its raw flesh ranges from off-white to pale gray and is covered with a blue-gray membrane; cooked meat is white. Monkfish is sold headless; blood at the point of cutting is a sign it was recently caught. Dried or brown-colored blood indicates it has started to age. Can be substituted for halibut, lobster meat, and scallops.

PREPARATION Bake, Fry, Grill, Poach, Sauté

Monkfish is often called "the poor man's lobster," since its mild, firm meat is highly versatile. It benefits from marinades, seasonings, and sauces. Its meat won't fall apart on the grill or in chowders. It should be bought in larger filets than other fish since its meat loses moisture and shrinks when cooked. It can be used to stretch a lobster salad.

NUTRITION

Low in fat. Low in calories. A good source of selenium.

Calories: 76

Fat Calories: 14

Total Fat: 1.5 g

Saturated Fat: 0.3 g

Cholesterol: 25 mg

Sodium: 180 mg

Protein: 14.5 g

SCUP

STENOTOMUS CHRYSOPS

ALSO KNOWN AS PORGY

SPECIES INFO

- Front teeth are narrow, almost conical, backed by two rows of molars in their upper jaws. Scup grasp food with incisors and crush hard-shelled animals with strong molars.
- Can live 20 years, weigh 4 lbs, and grow to 20". Most in Massachusetts are less than 6 years old, 3 lbs in weight, and 14".
- Feed on bottom invertebrates like crabs, annelid worms, clams, mussels, jellyfish, and sand dollars.
- 80 percent of all juvenile scup are eaten by larger predators like striped bass, bluefish, and black sea bass.
- Migratory: Southern Massachusetts is their northernmost habitat, where they stay inshore from April through October.
- Form schools in areas with smooth or rocky bottoms, particularly around piers, rocks, offshore ledges, jetties, and mussel beds. They move into harbors and along sandy beaches during high tides, then return to deeper channels as the tide drops.
- Caught via trawls, or rod & reel.

LOCAL HARVEST June–September

CUTS Whole (round)

CHARACTERISTICS

Scup has white, tender meat with a large flake and a mild, sweet flavor. It's been compared to snapper. Its many small bones make it difficult to filet. It also has tough, hard-to-scale skin; having it scaled before buying is easiest. Scup doesn't spoil as quickly as some fish, but icing and cleaning quickly is recommended for sweetest flavor. Can substitute for snapper, croaker, and grouper.

PREPARATION Bake, Fry, Grill, Poach, Sauté, Steam

Scup is versatile and mild. Simple recipes are rewarding: frying, grilling, or poaching and served with melted butter and a slice of lemon or lime. Scup is excellent scaled and gutted and cooked whole. Whole fish are good on the grill or oven-roasted, since these methods soften bones and allow meat to slide off bones more easily. Dressed whole fish and steaks can also be stuffed and baked.

NUTRITION

Low in fat and calories. Excellent source of vitamin B12. Good source of iron and selenium.

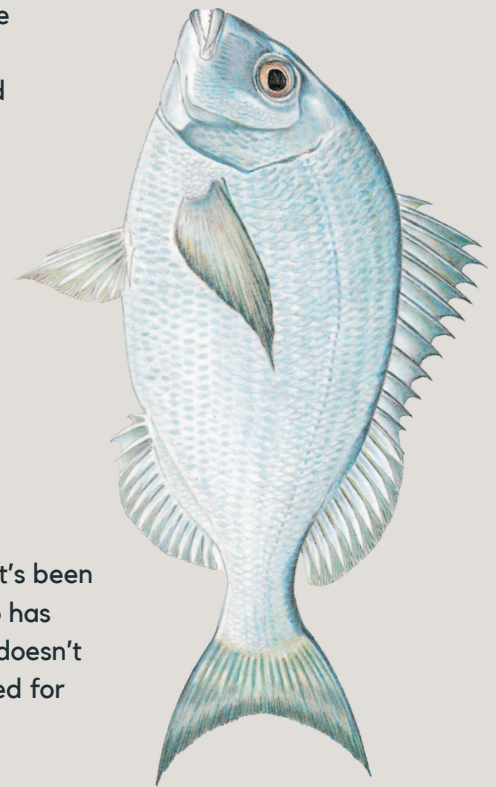
Calories: 124

Protein: 19.6 g

Fat Calories: 46

Omega-3: 0.8 g

Total Fat: 5.1 g



STRIPED BASS

MORONE SAXATILIS

ALSO KNOWN AS STRIPER

SPECIES INFO

- Average striped bass is from 10–20 lbs and several feet in length, but some have reached greater than 70 lbs.
- Females grow larger than males; most stripers over 30 lbs are female.
- Can live up to 40 years.
- Because striped bass are abundant in Massachusetts waters during summer, their feeding can impact populations of prey important to other fish species.
- Migratory, ranging along the east coast from Canada to Florida.
- Are a schooling species.
- Found in river mouths, small shallow bays, estuaries, and along rocky shorelines and sandy beaches. Rarely found more than several miles from the shoreline.
- Largest striped bass ever caught in Massachusetts was a 73lb fish caught at Nauset Beach in 1981.
- Caught via rod & reel.

LOCAL HARVEST Late June–September

CUTS Whole (round, or scaled & gutted); Filet

CHARACTERISTICS

Striped bass is mild with a delicate, slightly sweet flavor that appeals to many. Its raw meat is translucent white with a pinkish cast that turns opaque white when cooked. It's moderately firm but flaky, and its oil content keeps it moist during cooking.

Can be substituted for black sea bass.

PREPARATION Bake, Broil, Grill, Sauté

Striped bass can be stuffed and baked whole (headed and gutted). When grilling, leave skin on; this retains its delicate flavor and turns crispy while the flesh remains moist.

NUTRITION

Low in calories and fat. Good source of selenium and omega-3 fatty acids.

Calories: 97

Fat Calories: 21

Total Fat: 2.3 g

Saturated Fat: 0.5 g

Cholesterol: 80 mg

Sodium: 69 mg

Protein: 17.7 g

Omega-3: 0.8 g



TAUTOG

TAUTOGA ONITIS

ALSO KNOWN AS BLACKFISH

SPECIES INFO

- Mature at 3 to 4 years old, but are slow-growing and can live up to 40 years.
- Generally 7"–12" in length and 2–3 lbs.
- Feed on crustaceans and some shellfish such as mussels or clams.
- Gather around structure: vegetation, rocks, natural and artificial reefs, pilings, jetties, mussel and oyster beds, shipwrecks, submerged trees, and similarly complex habitats.
- Range from Nova Scotia to Georgia, but are most commonly found between Cape Cod and the Chesapeake Bay. Their migration is triggered by warming water temperature. In cooler waters north of Cape Cod, tautog stick to shallower areas of less than 60'. South of the Cape, they can live up to 40 miles offshore in waters up to 120' deep.
- Caught via rod & reel. The largest tautog ever caught in Massachusetts weighed nearly 23 lbs.

LOCAL HARVEST September

CUTS Whole (round); Filet

CHARACTERISTICS

Though most consider tautog an "ugly" fish, it has a sweet flavor that yields firm, off-white filets that can have fatty flesh. Its taste is mild but distinctly earthy. It can substitute for grouper, monkfish, red snapper, sheepshead, and rockfish.

PREPARATION Bake, Fry, Grill, Sauté

Versatile, tautog can be prepared many ways—baked, broiled, or grilled. It's also ideal for blackening. Try marinating 15 minutes in a ginger teriyaki sauce and then broiling for 10 minutes per inch of thickness.

Whole tautog should be packed in flaked ice. Whole fish and filets should be stored in a drain pan in the coldest part of the walk-in or refrigerator. Filets should be covered in ice but with a barrier so the ice never touches the flesh.

NUTRITION

Good source of calcium, vitamin A, riboflavin, and iron.

Calories: 190

Fat Calories: 15.8

Total Fat: 9.5 g

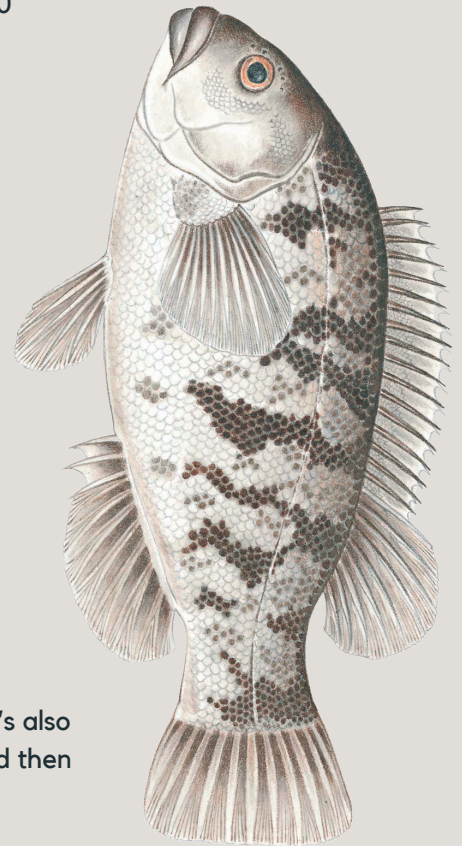
Saturated Fat: 0.3 g

Cholesterol: 50 mg

Sodium: 65 mg

Protein: 18.48 g

Omega-3: 5.7 g



TRIGGER FISH

BALISTES CAPRISCUS

ALSO KNOWN AS: GRAY TRIGGERFISH, LEATHERJACKET, LEATHERNECK, AND TALY

SPECIES INFO

- Named for spines on its dorsal fin used for predator defense and anchoring.
- When threatened, dives into a crevice and anchors in place by locking its erect spines, making it very hard to dislodge.
- Body can change color, especially during spawning: Males turn dark charcoal gray; nesting females are a black-and-white pattern.
- Small mouths, strong jaws, and specialized teeth crush and chisel holes in hard-shelled prey.
- Average is 5 lbs and 10"–18". Males are larger than females.
- Can live to 16 years old.
- Adults eat invertebrates: crabs, sea urchins, shrimp, sand dollars, lobsters, and mollusks. They often direct a stream of water over the ocean bottom to expose sand dollars.
- Lives mainly in shallow waters in the western Atlantic from Nova Scotia to Argentina, including Bermuda and the Gulf of Mexico.
- Prefers structured environments like reefs.
- Caught via rod & reel.

LOCAL HARVEST July–August

CUTS Whole (round)

CHARACTERISTICS

Triggerfish has white, sweet flesh that is similar to crab. Its flavor offers the chance to experiment with different flavor combinations. Filets are light and thin, and work well with any standard fish recipe. Can be substituted for pompano and mahi mahi.

PREPARATION Bake, Grill, Sauté

With a meaty texture, it goes well with capers, white wine, and lemon. It is excellent for people who generally dislike fish and "fishy tasting" seafood.

NUTRITION

Calories: 93

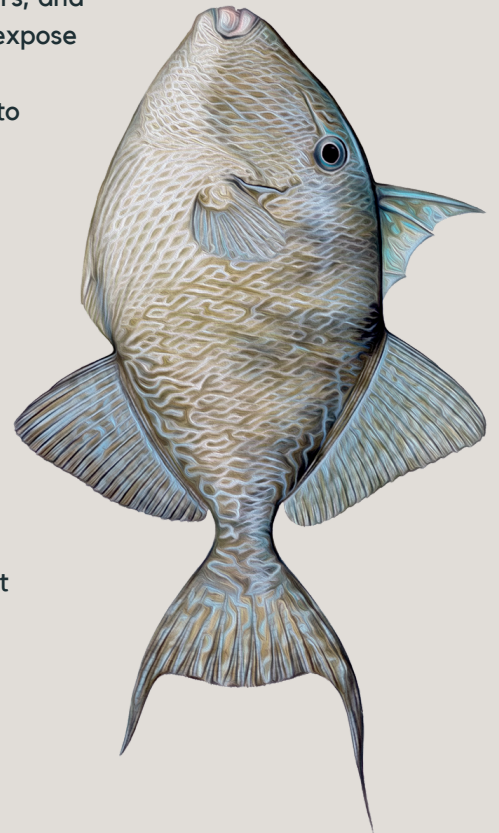
Total Fat: 1 g

Saturated Fat: 0 g

Cholesterol: 49 mg

Sodium: 67 mg

Protein: 21 g



WINTER FLOUNDER

PSEUDOPLEURONECTES AMERICANUS

ALSO KNOWN AS: FLOUNDER, SOLE, LEMON SOLE, GEORGES BANK FLOUNDER, AND BLACKBACK FLOUNDER

SPECIES INFO

- Generally much darker than other flatfish.
- Are right-sided flatfish (unlike fluke), which means their two eyes are on the right.
- Their left eye migrates to the right when they are juveniles, so they can lie flat.
- Their small mouth limits what they can eat.
- Live 15–18 years and can grow to more than 2' in length.
- Depend on sight to locate their prey and therefore feed only during the day.
- Prey on small invertebrates, shrimp, clams, and worms.
- Prefer sandy or muddy bottoms, sometimes near eelgrass beds, but are also found on other sea bed types.
- Enter shallow estuaries in late fall and early spring to spawn; return to deeper parts of the estuary or offshore waters when the temperature warms.
- Found in estuaries and on the continental shelf of the Northwest Atlantic, from Canada to North Carolina.
- Caught via otter trawl.

LOCAL HARVEST May–June

CUTS Whole (round, or scaled & gutted)

CHARACTERISTICS

Raw flounder ranges from tan to pinkish to white, but cooked it is white, lean, boneless, and flaky, with a mild flavor that can be bland to sweet. This makes winter flounder versatile and easy-to-prepare. Can be substituted for other white filet fish.

PREPARATION Bake, Broil, Fry, Sauté

Winter flounder can be baked, sautéed, stuffed, and poached. For recipe-free preparation, cook winter flounder simply with oil, salt, and pepper. It also goes well with most seasoning blends. When fully cooked, the filet will begin to flake and break open, changing in color from translucent to opaque.

Filets should be firm to the touch. Avoid any with an oily sheen, excessive gapping in the flesh, or any that lie in standing water. Unless you plan to cook it on day of purchase, keep on ice, even in the refrigerator.

NUTRITION

Calories: 91

Fat Calories: 10.8

Total Fat: 1.2 g

Saturated Fat: 0.3 g

Cholesterol: 48 mg

Sodium: 81 mg

Protein: 18.8 g

Omega-3: 0.2 g



YELLOWFIN TUNA

THUNNUS ALBACARES

ALSO KNOWN AS: YELLOWFIN TUNA, PACIFIC YELLOWFIN, AHI (HAWAIIAN), AND LIGHT-MEAT TUNA

SPECIES INFO

- As name implies, differ from other tuna by their yellow fins.
- Ancient Hawaiian nickname "ahi" means "fire": a hooked yellowfin made handlines whizz over the edge of wooden longboats so fast that the lines smoked and left burn marks.
- Grow up to 400 lbs with a length of up to 7'.
- Typically live 7 years.
- Prey on sand lance, squid, mackerel, and butterfish.
- Migrate north when water temperatures rise.
- Mainly live far offshore, but can be found just off coast of Cape Cod in summer.
- Have been known to follow vessels and floating objects.
- Caught via purse seine and rod & reel.

LOCAL HARVEST July–September

CUTS Loins; Whole (headed & gutted)

CHARACTERISTICS

Yellowfin is a much leaner meat than its cousin the bluefin and has a milder and lighter flavor, similar to swordfish. It lacks the fat content of bluefin and has much firmer meat. Raw, it's a bright, translucent red, turning brownish when cooked and staying firm and moist with large flakes. Fat is desirable, since it means more flavor. Meat with strong discoloration, a dull, brownish cast, or brown spots should be avoided. Look for a glistening, wet look. It should be firm and smell fresh, not "fishy." Can be substituted for swordfish, mako shark, and other tunas.

PREPARATION Bake, Broil, Grill, Sauté, Smoke

Yellowfin is excellent raw, but for grilling and broiling, cut steaks 1.5" thick. It needs little enhancement—brush with olive oil and sprinkle with seasoning. For milder taste, remove the dark lateral line from the meat. Yellowfin can also marinate for several hours without becoming "cooked"; try a marinade of white wine, oil, and brown sugar for 1-2 hours before grilling.

NUTRITION

Low in fat. Low in calories. A good source of selenium.

Calories: 108

Fat Calories: 8.1

Total Fat: 0.9 g

Saturated Fat: 0.2 g

Cholesterol: 45 mg

Sodium: 37 mg

Protein: 23.4 g

Omega-3: 0.2 g



AMERICAN LOBSTER

HOMARUS AMERICANUS

ALSO KNOWN AS: ATLANTIC LOBSTER, CANADIAN LOBSTER, TRUE LOBSTER, NORTHERN LOBSTER, CANADIAN REDS, AND MAINE LOBSTER

SPECIES INFO

- Their bodies, excluding claws, range from 8"–24", and including claws, weigh between 1–4 lbs.
- Lobsters have long lifespans, sometimes reaching up to 100 years old.
- American lobsters are bottom-dwelling and thrive in cold, shallow waters from Labrador to North Carolina.
- Massachusetts is the second largest producer of lobsters, after Maine.
- Harvested in rectangular, stationary, wire-mesh traps or pots, mainly near shore.

LOCAL HARVEST Year-round

CUTS Chickens (1.1–1.24 lbs), Quarters (1.25–1.44 lbs), Halves (1.45–1.99 lbs), 2+ lbs, Culls (Imperfections/Missing Claws), Shell Diseased (Ugly shells)

CHARACTERISTICS

Market sizes range from "chickens" (1 to 1.24 lbs) to jumbos (over 3.5 lbs). Lobster meat is mild and sweet; its texture is firm and somewhat fibrous. The meatiest part of the lobster is the tail, though claws, knuckles, body, and small legs offer meat, too. Tail meat is firmest. A pound of meat can be extracted from four to six lobsters weighing 1 to 1.25 pounds each. Lobster can be substituted for crawfish or crab.

PREPARATION Bake, Boil, Grill, Steam

Live lobsters should be cooked as soon as possible after purchase, but can be stored in the refrigerator for 24–36 hours. While live, its two powerful claws should be kept banded to prevent injury to other lobsters. Keep upright on their legs, tails tucked underneath, in a bowl or other container draped with seaweed, a towel, or newspaper soaked in cold, salted water. Do not pack in ice, as freshwater kills them. Live lobsters should be active and with tails that curl beneath them, not dangle. Weakened lobsters should be cooked immediately; dead ones discarded. Cooked meat can be stored fresh or frozen. Consumers are advised not to eat the tomalley, the light-green substance in the lobster body, which is the liver and pancreas and can accumulate contaminants from the lobster's environment.

Opinions vary on how best to cook lobster. Some prefer steaming because the gentle heat does not toughen the meat. Others say boiling seals in flavor. Baking is another option, but quickly boil or steam the lobster beforehand. For 1.25lb lobsters, cook for 12 to 15 minutes; for larger lobsters, cook for 17 minutes. Lobsters are delicious grilled, as well.

NUTRITION

Low in fat and calories. Excellent source of selenium. Good source of zinc. Lower source of omega-3 fatty acids.

Calories: 90

Fat Calories: 8.1

Total Fat: 0.9 g

Saturated Fat: 0.2 g

Cholesterol: 95 mg

Sodium: 296 mg

Protein: 19 g

Omega-3: 0 g



ATLANTIC SEA SCALLOP

PLACOPECTEN MAGELLANICUS

ALSO KNOWN AS: SEA SCALLOP AND GIANT SCALLOP

SPECIES INFO

- Bivalve (two-shelled) like a clam or an oyster.
- Usually has an upper shell that is red-pink or brown and a lower shell that is cream-colored. However, 5–10% of scallops have albino, white shells.
- Holds shells together by a muscle (the part eaten) that snaps open and shut to propel through water and avoid predators.
- Like all scallops, has light-sensing eyes along its shells' edge.
- Can live 20 years.
- Feeds by filtering phytoplankton or other small organisms out of the water.
- Native to the North Atlantic and found from Labrador to the Outer Banks of North Carolina.
- Groups in beds lasting from a few years to permanent, and is found at depths from 60'–350' on firm sand, gravel, shells, or rock.
- Caught via mechanical drag and shucked at sea.

LOCAL HARVEST Year-round

CUTS Meats (adductor muscle) by the pound

CHARACTERISTICS

Sea scallops have a sweet, rich taste ranging from mild to briny. Raw, the meat is a shiny, creamy white, sometimes with pink or brown spots. Top-quality scallops have an ivory translucence and springiness that allows them to keep shape; their smell is fresh. Avoid "wet" scallops that have soaked too long in chemical additives to maintain texture and taste. These are flabby and opaque and shed water and weight rapidly. Cooked meat is firm and opaque. Can substitute for bay scallops.



PREPARATION Bake, Boil, Fry, Grill, Sauté, Steam

Refrigerated, fresh scallops keep for several days and freeze well.

Though large, they cook quickly. They can be cut in half across the grain before cooking; kept large, they grill well. Don't microwave—they explode at higher settings.

NUTRITION

Low-fat and low-calorie. Good source of selenium.

Calories: 87

Fat Calories: 7

Total Fat: 0.8 g

Saturated Fat: 0.8 g

Cholesterol: 33 mg

Sodium: 161 mg

Protein: 16.8 g

Omega-3: 0.2 g

CHANNELED WHELK

BUSYCOTYPUS CANALICULATUS

KNOWN LOCALLY AS CONCH

SPECIES INFO

- Large, heavy, carnivorous snails inhabiting shallow environments near shore.
- Shell has large body whorls and siphonal canal that draws in water to breathe.
- A hard plate called an operculum acts as a trap door when the snails retract.
- Bodies are divided into head, abdomen, and foot, with two tentacles on the head to sense prey, and black eye spots at the base of the tentacles.
- Female whelks mature between 9–10 years of age at a shell width of 3"–4". Male whelks reach sexual maturity at 7 years at a width slightly less than 3".
- Eat clams, oysters, mussels, and other bivalves. To feed, they use their foot to hold their prey steady, while the lip of their shell wedges and pries open the bivalve.
- Range along East Coast waters from Florida to Cape Cod.
- Live below the tideline and are often found in and on lobster traps.
- As shellfish predators, were considered a nuisance species until emergence of a consumer market. Fishermen then began landing whelks as bycatch in lobster traps, otter trawls, and shellfish dredges.
- Harvested via "conch pots."

LOCAL HARVEST April–December

CUTS Live (by the pound)

CHARACTERISTICS

Whelk has a briny and sweet flavor, not dissimilar to clams. It has a pleasantly chewy texture when not overcooked—it can become tough when cooked too long. Our local variety of whelk can have a meatier texture than smaller varieties. It pairs nicely with butter and a touch of acid from vinegar or fresh lemon. Whelk can substitute for Caribbean queen conch, abalone, and clam.

PREPARATION Boil, Fry, Grill, Sauté, Steam

Whelk are typically sold live in shells by the pound. Buy the freshest possible and cook soon after for best results. They should be scrubbed and rinsed in cool water before cooking, and are typically boiled in salted water for a few minutes, depending on size. Quick cooking keeps meat tender; overcooking makes it rubbery and tough. Store whelks in the fridge for up to 24 hours.

Whelks can be served with a butter sauce, quickly grilled, deep-fried, or incorporated into pasta or salads.

NUTRITION

Low in fat and calories. Excellent source of vitamin B12. Good source of iron and selenium.

Calories: 116

Fat Calories: unknown

Total Fat: 0.3 g

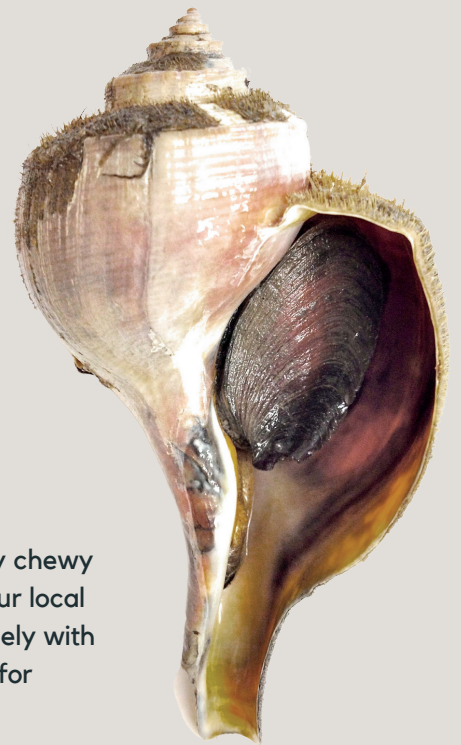
Saturated Fat: 0 g

Cholesterol: 55 mg

Sodium: 175 mg

Protein: 20 g

Omega-3: 0 g



EASTERN OYSTER

CRASSOSTREA VIRGINICA

ALSO KNOWN AS: AMERICAN OYSTER AND AMERICAN CUPPED OYSTER

SPECIES INFO

- Bivalve native to eastern coast of North America.
- Shell's "cupped" shape is basis for the name "American cupped oyster."
- Three inches at maturity.
- Like all oysters, can make pearls to surround particles that enter its shells, but these are insignificant in size and of no monetary value.
- Helps improve water quality: sucks in water, filters plankton, then spits water out, cleaning it. One oyster can filter 50 gallons of water in 24 hours.
- As adults, stay in one place in intertidal and subtidal areas—brackish and salty waters from 8'–35'.
- Attaches to bottom areas and to other eastern oysters, creating reefs that form habitats for fish, crabs, invertebrates, macrofauna, and birds.
- Most eastern oysters are now cultured in tidal rivers and bays from hatchery-raised juveniles, or "seed," in "floating nurseries"—mesh cages that float on the water's surface. Once grown to the size of a quarter, oysters are placed in new cages or spread on the bottom to "grow out" to harvestable size, 2" or more; this takes 3 years.



LOCAL HARVEST Year-round, most plentiful in spring and fall

CUTS Petites (2.5"–2.99"), Market (3"–3.99"), Jumbos (>4")

CHARACTERISTICS

The eastern oyster is known for its distinctive, salty flavor, and meaty texture. Because of different conditions in each grow-out region—nutrients in the water, salinity levels, temperature, etc.—they vary in taste and are named for each region in order to distinguish individual flavor attributes.

Oyster meats are fatty and should be smooth, with adequate liquor (natural juice inside that keeps them alive out of water). Store them cup-side down to retain liquor. To test if alive, tap the shell; it should close. A sulfur odor indicates a dead oyster. The liquid in which fresh, shucked oysters is packed should be clear.

PREPARATION Bake, Broil, Fry, Grill, Raw, Sauté, Smoke, Steam

Oysters are delicate and should never be heated too quickly or too long. As soon as their mantles start to curl, they're done. For a classic presentation, try Oysters Rockefeller—broiled in the shell on pans of salt, topped with bacon, breadcrumbs, butter, and scallions.

NUTRITION

Excellent source of zinc, iron, and selenium.

Calories: 81

Fat Calories: 44.1

Total Fat: 2.3 g

Saturated Fat: 0.5 g

Cholesterol: 50 mg

Sodium: 106 mg

Protein: 9.45 g

Omega-3: 1.2 g

HARDSHELL CLAM

MERCENARIA MERCENARIA

ALSO KNOWN AS: QUAHOG, LITTLENECK, CHERRYSTONE, AND CHOWDER

SPECIES INFO

- Littlenecks are 2–3 years old, cherrystones 5–6 years, and chowders up to 30 years.
- Begin life as males, then may change sex to produce eggs.
- They are found in sand and mud in the intertidal and subtidal areas of bays and estuaries.
- Are filter feeders: One siphon draws in water from above the substrate to filter plankton; the other expels unused water and particles.
- Empty clam shells with a hole the size of a pencil point shows the clam has been eaten by moon snails, the New England dog whelk, or oyster drills.
- Harvested locally via hand rake.
- Native American groups on the Atlantic seaboard made beads called wampum from hardshell clam shells—especially those colored purple—to use as money or jewelry. Because of this, the species name is *mercenaria*, the Latin word for commerce.

LOCAL HARVEST Year-round

CUTS Littlenecks (1"–2.5", by count), Cherrystones (2.5"–3.5" by count), Chowders (>3.5", by pound)

CHARACTERISTICS

Hardshell clams are the connoisseur's choice for raw, half-shell clams. They are mild-flavored, sweet and briny. For this presentation, littlenecks are the most tender, expensive, and sought-after. Raw meat should be tender and plump, and range in color from ivory to golden yellow, with some dark areas. Cooked hardshell clams are soft, juicy, and mild, with meat that is pinkish-white. Can be substituted for softshell clams and surf clams (chopped).



PREPARATION Bake, Broil, Fry, Poach, Raw, Sauté, Steam

Hardshells are sold live in bags. Discard clams with open or broken shells. They can close their shells completely and "live on their own juices" for a time, giving them a longer life out of water than softshell clams. If a clam's shell is ajar before cooking, squeeze it together. If the shell remains closed, the clam is fine. If the shell springs apart when pressure is released, don't eat. After steaming or cooking, throw away clams that have not opened.

Enjoy littlenecks raw on the half shell, fried, or steamed. Cherrystones are sometimes eaten raw but more often are broiled, chopped for chowder, or baked in dishes like Clams Casino. Large hardshells are stuffed or used in chowders, clam cakes, and similar dishes. In soup, add minced clams at the simmer stage, steep five minutes, and serve.

NUTRITION

Low in fat and calories. Excellent source of selenium, iron, and vitamin B12. Good source of zinc.

Calories: 74

Fat Calories: 8

Total Fat: 0.9 g

Saturated Fat: 0.2 g

Cholesterol: 95 mg

Sodium: 56 mg

Protein: 12.7 g

Omega-3: 0.2 g

NORTHERN BAY SCALLOP

ARGOPECTEN IRRADIANS IRRADIANS

KNOWN LOCALLY AS BAY SCALLOP

SPECIES INFO

- A smaller cousin to sea scallops.
- Has 30–40 blue eyes at its shells' edge (mantle) that allow it to see movement and detect predators.
- Mantle also has tentacles sensitive to chemicals in water for reaction to its environment.
- When sensing a predator, it swims away by clapping and expelling water, moving across the sea floor.
- Can travel a distance of 10' in a single swim.
- One of few filter-feeding bivalves that doesn't live buried in sand or attached to rocks. Eats phytoplankton by beating its gills to move water through its body cavity.
- Found along the East Coast from Massachusetts through Long Island in protected coastal bays, sounds, and estuaries.
- Most fisheries are located near Martha's Vineyard and Nantucket due to protective habitats of eelgrass.
- Primarily harvested by dragging with a scallop dredge, or raked.



LOCAL HARVEST January–April

CUTS Meats (adductor muscle, by the pound)

CHARACTERISTICS

The bay scallop is mild and sweet. We cook part of it; its guts are removed and discarded, leaving the adductor muscle as edible meat. When raw, meat is translucent and ranges from white to pink. Its texture should be firm and moist rather than slippery and spongy. Top-quality scallops have a translucence and springiness that keeps their shape. They should not be sold sitting in water. When fresh, bay scallops smell like seaweed. Reject sour-smelling scallops—especially those with overtones of iodine. Over-soaked scallops look artificially shiny, opaque, and flabby, and have a soapy feel and aftertaste. They also release more liquid and shrink when cooked. Bay scallops average 70 to 100 meats per pound. Can substitute for sea scallops or calico scallops.

PREPARATION Bake, Grill, Poach, Raw, Sauté, Steam

Bay scallops cook quickly. Don't overcook; they toughen and lose flavor. They're done when their outside turns opaque and firm. Steam gently for use in salads, or pan-sear. Depending on size and freshness, they can be eaten raw. For scallop ceviche, use lemon or lime juice to "cook."

NUTRITION

Low in saturated fat. Good source of vitamin B12, calcium, iron, magnesium, potassium, and zinc.

Calories: 87

Fat Calories: 7

Total Fat: 0.8 g

Saturated Fat: 0.8 g

Cholesterol: 33 mg

Sodium: 161 mg

Protein: 16.8 g

Omega-3: 0.2 g

SOFTSHELL CLAM

MYA ARENARIA

ALSO KNOWN AS: STEAMER AND LONGNECK

SPECIES INFO

- "Soft shell" is a misnomer; their oval-shaped shells are actually thin and brittle.
- Cannot close shells completely due to siphons encased in a thick black membrane—their "neck"—which protrudes several inches.
- When disrupted, spurt water through neck and withdraw to a safer depth in the sediment.
- Filter feeders: One siphon draws in organic material, phytoplankton, and zooplankton. The other expels filtered water. Softshells can filter a gallon of water per hour.
- Burrow 8"—14" into substrates of sandy mud and gravel where salinity is reduced by freshwater runoff and seepage.
- Found from Newfoundland to North Carolina.
- While small, can re-emerge from a burrow and search for other locations. Once grown, spend their life in the same location with minimum mobility; adults can only move vertically and can't rebury if removed.

LOCAL HARVEST Year-round

CUTS Live (by the pound)

CHARACTERISTICS

The softshell's delicate meat is sweet and slightly salty, with a large belly that is tender. Meat color ranges from ivory to gold with some dark areas. Its shells should be whole and clean and its neck firm and plump, not flaccid and dry. The neck's dark membrane is removed before the cooked clam is eaten. Can be substituted for hardshell clams.

PREPARATION Fry, Steam

Since their shells gape, they can be gritty. To purge their stomachs of sand and debris, soak clams in salted water (use 1/3 cup of salt per gallon of water); some put cornmeal or vinegar in with the soak. Softshells have relatively fragile shells, and broken or open clams should be discarded; after cooking, reject clams that don't open.

Softshells are not eaten raw, but are the clam of choice for steaming in the shell or frying in crumbs or batter. To steam, place soft shells in a large kettle with an inch of water (or beer) for an hour. Then, cover and bring water to a boil; clams will steam open in about 5 minutes. Cook just until shells open; overcooking makes them tough.

Because of their protruding necks, softshells have a shorter shelf life than their closed, hardshell cousins. Never keep softshells in fresh water—this kills them. Keep covered in the refrigerator.

NUTRITION

Low in fat and calories. Excellent source of vitamin B12, magnesium, and selenium. Good source of zinc, iron, omega-3 fatty acids, and B and C vitamins.

Calories: 74

Fat Calories: 8

Total Fat: 0.9 g

Saturated Fat: 0.2 g

Cholesterol: 34 mg

Sodium: 56 mg

Protein: 12.7 g

Omega-3: 0.2 g



SQUID

LOLIGO PEALEI

ALSO KNOWN AS: LONGFIN SQUID, WINTER SQUID, AND BOSTON SQUID

SPECIES INFO

- The squid is a cephalopod, meaning "head foot."
- An invertebrate mollusk, it is a relative of octopus, cuttlefish, and nautilus, and a distant relative of bivalve mollusks.
- Its large eyes allow for sharp vision in light and darkness.
- Often a reddish hue, but like many squid can manipulate its color, from deep red to soft pink.
- It can grow to 2'.
- It crushes and eats prey with a bird-like beak.
- When threatened, it squirts a cloud of black ink to confuse predators, and can blend with its surroundings.
- Feeds on crustaceans and small fish, according to season. In spring, its diet is crustaceans and fish; in summer, fish exclusively.
- Squid longer than 2" may be cannibals.
- There are 300 squid species in the world's oceans. In spring, longfin squid move into shallow waters around Cape Cod with schools of butterfish, scup, and whiting. In fall, squid move offshore.
- Some have been spotted as deep as 1,300'.
- Caught via small-mesh bottom trawls, coastal pound nets, and fish traps.

LOCAL HARVEST Year-round

CUTS Whole (dirty)

CHARACTERISTICS

Squid has a mild, subtle sweetness with firm yet tender meat. Raw squid is ivory beneath a naturally speckled membrane. Fresh squid bodies should be moist, shiny, and ivory colored—pink, yellow, or purple flesh indicates deterioration. Edible parts of the squid include its arms (tentacles), mantle (tube), and fins (wings). Its thin skin may be removed before cooking. Cooked squid is opaque, white, and firm. Squid ink can be used to make black pasta. Can be substituted for monkfish, bay scallops, and halibut cheek.

PREPARATION Bake, Fry, Sauté

For tender squid, cook for a couple minutes; overcooked squid turns tough. If over-cooked, go 20 minutes longer so it becomes tender again. (Braised or baked squid should be cooked this long.) Rings can be battered and fried; mantles can be stuffed and baked in sauce.

NUTRITION

Low-fat and low-calorie. Excellent source of selenium and vitamin B12. Moderate amount of omega-3 fatty acids.

Calories: 92

Fat Calories: 13

Total Fat: 1.4 g

Saturated Fat: 0.4 g

Cholesterol: 233 mg

Sodium: 44 mg

Protein: 16 g

Omega-3: 0.49 g

