



# Mahimahi Fact Sheet



Image courtesy of Duane Raver

## Basic Biology

Latin name: *Coryphaena hippurus*

Range: Worldwide in tropical and subtropical waters

Habitat: Open-water

Diet: Fish, invertebrates, jellyfish

Age and growth: Mahi usually reach sexual maturity at six months of age (21-22 inches long); mahi have a short life span, averaging 5 years. Average lengths range from 3 to 4.5 feet; small females can spawn 240,000 eggs per year and large females can spawn several million.

## Sustainability

- Scientific evidence shows that fish in the Atlantic, Gulf of Mexico and Caribbean Sea are one reproductive stock and are managed accordingly.
- Mahimahi are captured with hook and line, whether by handline or longline. Some longline fisheries that target swordfish and tuna incidentally capture and harvest mahimahi.
- Mahimahi are widely accepted as a sustainable seafood product because of its fast growth rate, high reproductive capacity and method of hook and line capture.
- There is no evidence of decline in the Atlantic stock abundance or decrease in mean size of individuals; models suggest the stock size is above maximum sustainable yield. The South Atlantic Fishery Management Council has taken a precautionary approach to management.
- Mahimahi must be landed with the head and tail intact. In South Carolina there is a 150,000 pound annual commercial quota and a 4,500 pound trip limit. There is no minimum size limit in South Carolina, though Georgia and Florida both require that fish must be greater than 20-inches fork length.

## Info for Chefs

- The U.S. has a relatively small fishery (2 million pounds per year,  $\frac{2}{3}$  of which is from Hawaii). Local mahi are most available during the late spring and early summer as mahi make a northward migration as water temperatures warm.
- The largest mahimahi fishery in the world is off Ecuador and is conducted in small boats with handlines. This fishery harvests 25 million pounds per year.
- In the U.S. Atlantic there are both commercial and recreational fisheries. The commercial fishery is only permitted to take 13% of the total catch.

## Info for Servers

- Other names for mahimahi include dolphin, dolphinfish or dorado. Mahimahi means "strong strong" in Hawaiian
- Mahimahi is one of the fastest-growing fish in the sea, gaining approximately 10% of its body weight per day and growing to over three feet in the first year.