



Northern Puffer

Sphoeroides maculatus



Description:

- ◆ dark olive to gray above with tiny dark spots on back, sides and cheeks
- ◆ yellowish white belly
- ◆ dark vertical bands on sides
- ◆ black bar between eyes
- ◆ squared caudal fin
- ◆ beak like mouth
- ◆ small spines/prickles cover the body
- ◆ small dorsal fin set back just before caudal fin

Size:

- ◆ up to 14 inches; more commonly 8-10 inches

Range:

- ◆ Newfoundland to northeast Florida

Facts:

- ◆ prefer bays, estuaries and protected coastal waters
- ◆ most puffers are poisonous, but these are not
- ◆ sold at fish markets in the north as “sea squab”
- ◆ feed on small crustaceans and other invertebrates
- ◆ bottom dwellers
- ◆ inflate by swallowing water or air as defense mechanism
- ◆ spawn May through August
- ◆ females release sticky eggs over sand or mud bottoms
- ◆ males fertilize and guard eggs

NORTHERN PUFFER CATCH TOTALS

Year	Total
1991	13
Grand Total	13

*northern puffers were only caught during the year shown