

Research Note: Fish Records from the Saba Bank Commercial Fishery

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Recent investigations of Saba Bank, Netherlands Antilles, have sought to develop inventories of marine biodiversity from this large, submerged coral reef atoll. Previous fish species inventories were compiled from underwater visual surveys and poison-based collections (RAP Survey Report, 2006), generating a list of more than 200 taxa (J. Williams, pers. com.). In June of 2007, a six-month port sampling study was initiated to examine landings of the Saba Bank commercial fishery. Port samples of finfish catch and bycatch produced novel fish species records for Saba Bank. These observations make a much needed addition to previous species inventories because they include records for fishes of commercial significance. The purpose of this note is to give a brief written and photographic account of new fish records from the Saba Bank commercial fishery. New species records from underwater surveys and observations from experimental trap fishing of Saba Bank are included as well.

Good taxonomic practice dictates that a species record is accompanied by a voucher specimen deposited in a museum collection. This procedure is relatively easy to follow for the majority of reef fish species, which are typically small in size (i.e. far less than 500 g). A total of 18 new species collected during the study period were deposited as voucher specimens in the Smithsonian Museum (Table 1). However, the practice of depositing vouchers was not realistic for some of the commercially important species and other large-bodied fishes taken by commercial fishermen of Saba Bank. Constraints were imposed by the large size of specimens, the inherent market value of the specimens themselves, and/or the costs associated with preparing and transporting specimens from a remote location (Saba) to a central museum facility (Washington DC). For example, consider the logistics and costs associated with preparing and transporting a large tiger shark specimen. Because voucher specimens could not be deposited for each new record, a system of photographic voucher records was developed to document the new species observations from Saba Bank.

The following pages include 43 photo voucher records for fishes from Saba Bank. A species was included here if it was a new record based on the most current fish species list for Saba Bank (J. Williams, pers. com.). Thus, these records do not represent a full account of finfish species taken by the Saba Bank commercial fishery, and many of the common species in commercial landings have been excluded (see Dilrosun, 2000, Toller, in prep.). Thirty-seven of the photo voucher records were from specimens caught by commercial fishermen. Six were from direct underwater observations on Saba Bank.

Each photo voucher record consists of a photograph, common name, Saban name, species, family, name of angler, fishing method, date, depth, location, GPS coordinates, and size measurement. A brief comment is included regarding local commercial importance and related information. Each record also indicates whether a voucher specimen was obtained. Species were identified according to taxonomic keys presented in Carpenter (2002). Nomenclature follows that of the FAO (Carter, 2002) or the AFS (Froese and Pauley, 2007).

The present study makes a small contribution to development of a complete inventory of fishes from Saba Bank. As most Caribbean reef fishes tend to have broad geographic distributions, it may be assumed that fish assemblages of Saba Bank will share many of the species that occur commonly throughout the northern Caribbean Sea. This implies that a complete species inventory of the shallow water reef fishes from Saba Bank will eventually exceed 300 species (e.g. Randall, 1968). Inclusion of fishes from deeper benthic habitats (> 50 m) and from pelagic waters may further increase the total number to over 400 species (e.g. Clavijo et al., 1980). The author emphasizes that the list of documented fish species is still far from complete for commercially important fishes of Saba Bank.

References

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Table 1. New Fish Species Records from Saba Bank

Family	Species	Common Name	Voucher
Squalidae	<i>Squalus cubensis</i> Howell-Rivero, 1936	Cuban dogfish	-
Carcharhinidae	<i>Carcharhinus perezi</i> (Poey, 1876)	Caribbean reef shark	-
Carcharhinidae	<i>Galeocerdo cuvier</i> (Péron and Lesueur, 1822)	tiger shark	-
Muraenidae	<i>Gymnothorax conspersus</i> Poey, 1867	saddled moray	+
Muraenidae	<i>Gymnothorax maderensis</i> (Johnson, 1862)	sharktooth moray	+
Muraenidae	<i>Gymnothorax polygonius</i> Poey, 1876	polygon moray	+
Congridae	<i>Conger esculentus</i> Poey, 1866	grey conger	+
Synodontidae	<i>Synodus intermedius</i> (Spix, 1829)	sand diver	+
Ophidiidae	<i>Brotula barbata</i> (Bloch and Schneider, 1801)	bearded brotula	+
Caproidae	<i>Antigonia capros</i> Lowe, 1843	deepbody boarfish	+
Serranidae	<i>Alphestes afer</i> (Bloch, 1793)	mutton hamlet	-
Serranidae	<i>Epinephelus flavolimbatus</i> Poey, 1865	yellowedge grouper	-
Serranidae	<i>Epinephelus morio</i> (Valenciennes, 1828)	red grouper	-
Serranidae	<i>Epinephelus niveatus</i> Valenciennes, 1828	snowy grouper	+
Serranidae	<i>Epinephelus striatus</i> (Bloch, 1792)	Nassau grouper	-
Serranidae	<i>Mycteroperca interstitialis</i> (Poey, 1860)	yellowmouth grouper	-
Serranidae	<i>Mycteroperca venenosa</i> (Linnaeus, 1758)	yellowfin grouper	-
Serranidae	<i>Serranus notospilus</i> Longley, 1935	saddle bass	+
Branchiostegidae	<i>Caulolatilus cyanops</i> Poey, 1866	blackline tilefish	+
Coryphaenidae	<i>Coryphaena hippurus</i> Linnaeus, 1758	dolphinfish	-
Carangidae	<i>Alectis ciliaris</i> (Bloch, 1788)	African pompano	-
Carangidae	<i>Decapterus macarellus</i> (Cuvier, 1833)	mackerel scad	-
Carangidae	<i>Elagatis bipinnulata</i> (Quoy and Gaimard, 1825)	rainbow runner	-
Carangidae	<i>Selar crumenophthalmus</i> (Bloch, 1793)	bigeye scad	-
Carangidae	<i>Seriola dumerili</i> (Risso, 1810)	greater amberjack	-
Carangidae	<i>Seriola rivoliana</i> Valenciennes, 1833	almaco jack	-
Emmelichthyidae	<i>Erythrocles monodi</i> Poll and Cadenat, 1954	crimson rover*	+
Lutjanidae	<i>Apsilus dentatus</i> Guichenot, 1853	black snapper	+
Lutjanidae	<i>Lutjanus buccanella</i> (Cuvier, 1828)	blackfin snapper	+
Lutjanidae	<i>Lutjanus purpureus</i> (Poey, 1866)	Caribbean red snapper	+
Lutjanidae	<i>Lutjanus synagris</i> (Linnaeus, 1758)	lane snapper	+
Lutjanidae	<i>Lutjanus vivanus</i> (Cuvier, 1828)	silk snapper	+
Lutjanidae	<i>Pristipomoides aquilonaris</i> (Goode and Bean, 1896)	wenchman	+
Lobotidae	<i>Lobotes surinamensis</i> (Bloch, 1790)	Atlantic tripletail	-
Haemulidae	<i>Haemulon album</i> Cuvier, 1829	margate	-
Haemulidae	<i>Haemulon aurolineatum</i> Cuvier, 1830	tomtate	-
Haemulidae	<i>Haemulon carbonarium</i> Poey, 1860	Caesar grunt	-
Haemulidae	<i>Haemulon striatum</i> (Linnaeus, 1758)	striped grunt	+
Scaridae	<i>Scarus guacamaia</i> Cuvier, 1829	rainbow parrotfish	-
Scombridae	<i>Acanthocybium solandri</i> (Cuvier, 1832)	wahoo	-
Scombridae	<i>Thunnus atlanticus</i> (Lesson, 1831)	blackfin tuna	-
Monacanthidae	<i>Cantherhines macrocerus</i> (Hollard, 1853)	whitespotted filefish	-
Ostraciidae	<i>Lactophrys bicaudalis</i> (Linnaeus, 1758)	spotted trunkfish	-

* tentative species identification



Common Name: Cuban dogfish

Saban Name: (none)

Species: *Squalus cubensis* Howell-Rivero, 1936

Family: Squalidae

Angler & Method: Walter Hynds, redfish trap

Date: 7-Jul-2007

Depth: 134 fathoms

Location: SW Saba Bank

GPS Coordinates: approximately 17° 27.40' N, 63° 43.60' W

Size: 64 cm TL

Comment: The fisherman reported that this species is rarely caught in redfish traps. It is of no market value and is not retained by Saban commercial fishermen. . The pictured specimen was released alive.

Voucher Specimen: no



Common Name: Caribbean reef shark

Saban Name: reef shark

Species: *Carcharhinus perezii* (Poey, 1876)

Family: Carcharhinidae

Angler & Method: Julian Hassell, handline

Date: 8-Oct-2007

Depth: 40 fathoms

Location: northwestern slope of Saba Bank

GPS Coordinates: 17° 39.07' N, 63° 20.82' W

Size: 185, 180, 175 cm TL (three pictured specimens)

Comment: Uncommonly caught with hook & line. Fishermen report that reef sharks will follow them during trap hauls, apparently attracted to the trapped fish or gutting of fish onboard. Following a shark sighting, some fishermen will set baited hooks to catch them. Reef sharks are considered to be good eating but reportedly difficult to market. Retained and marketed locally. The commercial value of *C. perezii* is unknown, but probably minor owing to the infrequent occurrence in Saban commercial landings.

Voucher Specimen: no



Common Name: tiger shark

Saban Name: tiger shark

Species: *Galeocerdo cuvier* (Péron and Lesueur, 1822)

Family: Carcharhinidae

Angler & Method: W. Toller, U/W observation made from an ROV

Date: 6-Aug-2007

Depth: 50 feet (shark was seen near the surface)

Location: northeastern Saba Bank

GPS Coordinates: 17° 27.94' N, 63° 15.14' W

Size: not determined

Comment: Saban commercial fishermen report that tiger sharks will occasionally follow fishing vessels as traps are being hauled. Captured infrequently with hook and line. Reportedly edible but probably of little or no commercial importance to the Saba Bank fishery. Divers also occasionally observed *G. cuvier* while conducting surveys in the Overall Bank area.

Voucher Specimen: no



Common Name: saddled moray

Saban Name: Moray (none)

Species: *Gymnothorax conpersus* Poey, 1867

Family: Muraenidae

Angler & Method: Nicholas Johnson, experimental deepwater fish/shrimp trap

Date: 27-Oct-2007

Depth: 1100 feet

Location: east of Overall Bank, northeastern Saba Bank

GPS Coordinates: 17° 29.15' N, 63° 11.84' W

Size: 70 cm, 83 cm, 89 cm, 93 cm, 94 cm TL

Comment: This species was captured during experimental trap fishing in deep waters (1000-1200 feet) of Saba Bank. Five specimens of *G. conpersus* (70-94 cm TL) were taken in 12 trap-hauls (baited wire mesh traps, 1-2 day soak time). This catch rate suggests that the species is relatively common, at least within the study area. Fishermen of Saba Bank discard all moray species and therefore *G. conpersus*, like other morays, is of no commercial value.

Voucher Specimen: yes



Common Name: sharktooth moray

Saban Name: Moray (none)

Species: *Gymnothorax maderensis* (Johnson, 1862)

Family: Muraenidae

Angler & Method: Nicholas Johnson, experimental deepwater fish/shrimp trap

Date: 27-Oct-2007

Depth: 1000- 1200 feet

Location: east of Overall Bank, northeastern Saba Bank

GPS Coordinates: 17° 29.15' N, 63° 11.84' W

Size: 89 cm, 104 cm, 110 cm TL

Comment: This species was captured during experimental trap fishing in deep waters (1000-1200 feet) of Saba Bank. Six specimens of *G. maderensis* were taken in 12 trap-hauls (baited wire mesh traps, 1-2 day soak time). This catch rate suggests that the species is relatively common, at least in the study area. Coloration of freshly caught eels was bright green with mottled brown reticulations dorsally and caudally. The ground coloration seems to be derived from a bright green slime on the eel's surface, which is easily shed. Fishermen of Saba Bank discard all moray species and so *G. maderensis*, like other morays, is of no commercial value.

Voucher Specimen: yes



Common Name: polygon moray

Saban Name: Moray (none)

Species: *Gymnothorax polygonius* Poey, 1876

Family: Muraenidae

Angler & Method: Walter Hynds, Redfish Trap

Date: 7-Jul-2007

Depth: 109 fathoms

Location: southwestern slope of Saba Bank

GPS Coordinates: approximately 17° 27.40' N, 63° 43.60' W

Size: 86.5 cm TL

Comment: The fisherman reported that this species is occasionally to frequently caught in redfish traps. It is of no market value and is not retained by Saban commercial fishermen. Saban fishermen do not distinguish this species from other morays. It is known locally as “moray”.

Voucher Specimen: yes



Common Name: grey conger

Saban Name: eel (none)

Species: *Conger esculentus* Poey, 1866

Family: Congridae

Angler & Method: Walter Hynds, redfish trap

Date: 12-Aug-2007

Depth: 114 fathoms

Location: Grabbler Bank area of Saba Bank

GPS Coordinates: 17° 41.20' N, 63° 25.43' W

Size: 187 cm TL, 4.18 kg (pictured specimen)

Comment: An occasional bycatch species in redfish traps which is discarded. It is not marketed locally and is of no commercial value. *C. esculentus* was also frequently captured in during experimental trap fishing in deep waters (1000-1200 feet) off Overall Bank, eastern Saba Bank.

Voucher Specimen: yes



Common Name: sand diver

Saban Name: suntiger (Honduran name?)

Species: *Synodus intermedius* (Spix, 1829)

Family: Synodontidae

Angler & Method: Walter Hynds, lobster trap

Date: 3-Nov-2007

Depth: 12 fathoms

Location: southwestern shelf of Saba Bank

GPS Coordinates: approximately 17° 26.3' N, 63° 38.4' W

Size: 38 cm TL (pictured specimen)

Comment: Taken rarely to infrequently in lobster traps. May also be taken by hook & line. *S. intermedius* is not retained and is of no commercial value to the Saba Bank commercial fishery.

Voucher Specimen: yes



Common Name: bearded brotula

Saban Name: codfish

Species: *Brotula barbata* (Bloch and Schneider, 1801)

Family: Ophidiidae

Angler & Method: Nicholas Johnson, experimental deepwater fish/shrimp trap

Date: 27-Oct-2007

Depth: 1200 feet

Location: east of Overall Bank, northeastern Saba Bank

GPS Coordinates: 17° 29.15' N, 63° 11.84' W

Size: 56 cm, 61 cm TL

Comment: Two specimens were taken in experimental deepwater (1000-1200 feet) trap-fishing of Saba Bank (baited wire mesh traps, 1-2 day soak time). Both fish were feeding on shrimp within the traps. Color of the fresh specimens was brown. Fishermen report that *B. barbata* is occasional deepwater catch. It is not retained and is of no commercial value to the Saba Bank commercial fishery.

Voucher Specimen: yes

Common Name: deepbody boarfish

Saban Name: square nickelfish

Species: *Antigonia capros* Lowe, 1843

Family: Caproidae

Angler & Method: Nicholas Johnson,
experimental deepwater fish/shrimp trap

Date: 30-Oct-2007

Depth: 1200 feet

Location: east of Overall Bank, northeastern
Saba Bank



GPS Coordinates: 17° 29.15' N, 63° 11.84' W

Size: 4.5 cm TL (pictured juvenile specimen)

Comment: Fishermen report that *A. capros* is taken occasionally by hook & line from deep waters (> 100 fathoms). It is not retained and is of no commercial value to the Saba Bank commercial fishery.

Voucher Specimen: yes



Common Name: mutton hamlet

Saban Name: (none)

Species: *Alphestes afer* (Bloch, 1793)

Family: Serrranidae

Angler & Method: W. Toller, U/W observation

Date: 30-Aug-2007

Depth: 15 meters

Location: Overall Bank, northeastern shelf of Saba Bank

GPS Coordinates: 17° 26.47' N, 63° 13.96' W

Size: not recorded

Comment: Captured occasionally to commonly in lobster traps. *A. afer* is retained as part of the “mixed fish” catch from lobster traps. It is probably of very minor economic value due to small average size and low abundance in landings from the Saba Bank commercial fishery.

Voucher Specimen: no



Common Name: yellowedge grouper

Saban Name: yellowfin grouper, deepwater yellowfin grouper

Species: *Epinephelus flavolimbatus* Poey, 1865

Family: Serranidae

Angler & Method: Julian Hassell, redfish trap

Date: 10-Aug-2007

Depth: 110 fathoms

Location: northwestern slope of Saba Bank.

GPS Coordinates: approximately N 17° 36.7' W 63° 25.0'

Size: 71 cm TL (pictured specimen)

Comment: Rarely to infrequently taken in redfish traps. *E. flavolimbatus* is a highly esteemed food fish which is retained. It may be marketed or kept for personal consumption. The importance of this species to the Saba Bank commercial fishery is unknown. Some fishermen report that *E. flavolimbatus* was previously more common in Saba Bank catches.

Voucher Specimen: no



Common Name: red grouper

Saban Name: gray grouper, nasaw grouper (see comments)

Species: *Epinephelus morio* (Valenciennes, 1828)

Family: Serranidae

Angler & Method: Julian Hassell, redfish trap

Date: 22-Aug-2007

Depth: 35 fathoms

Location: northwestern Saba Bank

GPS Coordinates: approximately 17° 36.1' N, 63° 29.1' W

Size: 66 cm FL (pictured specimen), 63.5 cm FL, and 46 cm FL

Comment: Infrequently to occasionally taken in redfish traps. *E. morio* is an esteemed foodfish which is retained. Known locally as “gray grouper” (J. Hassell). Some Sabans use the name nasaw (nuh-SAW). Fishermen distinguish *E. morio* from *E. striatus* by the presence of a black saddle mark on the caudal peduncle in the latter species. The Saban name for the Nassau grouper, *E. striatus*, is similar (nassa) but pronounced differently (NA-suh).

Voucher Specimen: no



Common Name: snowy grouper

Saban Name: black grouper (adult fish; juvenile fish - none)

Species: *Epinephelus niveatus* Valenciennes, 1828

Family: Serranidae

Angler & Method: Julian Hassell, redfish trap

Date: 23-Jun-2007

Depth: ~ 130 fathoms

Location: northwestern slope of Saba Bank, Netherland Antilles

GPS Coordinates: approximately 17° 34.679' N, 63° 31.087' W

Size: 23.5 cm TL (pictured juvenile specimen, top photo)

Comment: Juveniles are occasionally to frequently taken in redfish traps. Adult *E. niveatus* are rarely to infrequently taken in redfish traps or by hook & line. An esteemed foodfish which is retained. The commercial importance of this species is unknown. Fishermen report that black grouper were formerly more common in catches from Saba Bank.

Voucher Specimen: yes



Common Name: Nassau grouper

Saban Name: Nassau grouper, Nassa grouper

Species: *Epinephelus striatus* (Bloch, 1792)

Family: Serranidae

Angler & Method: Walter Hynds, redfish trap

Date: 9-Nov-2007

Depth: 80 fathoms

Location: Grapplers Bank area, northwestern Saba Bank

GPS Coordinates: approximately 17° 41.2' N, 63° 26.1' W

Size: 74.5 cm TL (pictured specimen)

Comment: Longtime fishermen of Saba Bank report that *E. striatus* was formerly a common and commercially important species. Its abundance reportedly declined substantially during the late 1980s or early 1990s. Presently, the Nassau grouper is something of a rarity in commercial landings. It is taken by trap and by hook & line. A good foodfish that is retained. Of minor (present) commercial value to the Saba Bank fishery.

Voucher Specimen: no



Common Name: yellowmouth grouper

Saban Name: flagfin salmon

Species: *Mycteroperca interstitialis* (Poey, 1860)

Family: Serranidae

Angler & Method: Walter Hynds, redfish trap

Date: 9-Oct-2007

Depth: 50 fathoms

Location: Grabblers Bank area of Saba Bank

GPS Coordinates: approximately 17° 41.10' N, 63° 26.10' W

Size: 41 cm FL (pictured specimen)

Comment: Caught infrequently to occasionally in lobster traps and redfish traps. Probably also taken with hook & line. A desirable food fish which is retained. Saban commercial fishermen distinguish *M. interstitialis* from other member of the genus *Mycteroperca*, including the more commonly captured *M. venenosa*. The commercial importance of *M. interstitialis* to the Saba Bank fishery is unknown but is probably minor in terms of annual commercial landings.

Voucher Specimen: no



Common Name: yellowfin grouper

Saban Name: gromanik grouper

Species: *Mycteroperca venenosa* (Linnaeus, 1758)

Family: Serranidae

Angler & Method: Julian Hassell, redfish trap

Date: 24-Jun-2007

Depth: not recorded

Location: northwest slope of Saba Bank

GPS Coordinates: approximately 17° 36.2' N, 63° 21.0' W

Size: 66.5 cm FL, 75 cm FL (two pictured specimens)

Comment: Occasionally caught in redfish traps, rarely caught in lobster traps. Also taken by hook & line. Among large-bodied groupers, *M. venenosa* is the most common species taken in the Saba Bank commercial fishery. A highly esteemed foodfish which is retained.

Voucher Specimen: no



Common Name: saddle bass

Saban Name: (none)

Species: *Serranus notospilus* Longley, 1935

Family: Serranidae

Angler & Method: Walter Hynds, redfish trap

Date: 7-Jul-2007

Depth: 105 fathoms

Location: southwestern slope of Saba Bank

GPS Coordinates: approximately 17° 27.40' N, 63° 43.60' W

Size: 18.9 cm FL

Comment: The fisherman reported that this species is not uncommon in redfish trap hauls. *S. notospilus* is of no market value and it is not retained by Saban commercial fishers.

Voucher Specimen: yes



Common Name: blackline tilefish

Saban Name: (none)

Species: *Caulolatilus cyanops* Poey, 1866

Family: Branchiostegidae

Angler & Method: Walter Hynds, redfish trap

Date: 7-Jul-2007

Depth: 99 fathoms

Location: southwestern slope of Saba Bank

GPS Coordinates: approximately 17° 27.40' N, 63° 43.60' W

Size: 30.3 cm FL

Comment: The fisherman reported that this species is not uncommon in redfish trap hauls. It is of no market value and it is not retained by Saban commercial fishermen. The local (Colombian) name is “malmo” and the local Honduran name is “whiting.”

Voucher Specimen: yes



Common Name: common dolphinfish (FAO), dolphinfish (AFS)

Saban Name: dolphin

Species: *Coryphaena hippurus* Linnaeus, 1758

Family: Coryphaenidae

Angler & Method: Walter Hynds, baited handline

Date: 17-Oct-2007

Depth: 45 fathoms

Location: Grabblers Bank area of Saba Bank

GPS Coordinates: approximately 17° 41.1' N, 63° 26.1' W

Size: 59.5 cm FL (pictured specimen)

Comment: The economic importance of dolphin to the Saba Bank commercial fishery has not been adequately quantified but it is likely to be significant. *C. hippurus* is of great importance to the Saban recreational fishery as well. It is caught with baited handlines or by trolling artificial baits. *C. hippurus* is an esteemed foodfish which is retained. “Dolphin roe” (eggs) are also prized as a local delicacy.

Voucher Specimen: no



Common Name: African pompano

Saban Name: (unknown)

Species: *Alectis ciliaris* (Bloch, 1788)

Family: Carangidae

Angler & Method: W. Toller, U/W observation

Date: 23-Jul-2007

Depth: 30 meters

Location: western slope of Saba Bank

GPS Coordinates: 17° 26.79' N, 63° 35.50' W

Size: not recorded

Comment: *A. ciliaris* was not recorded during port sampling. Fishermen report that it is taken with hook & line. The commercial importance of this species remains unknown.

Voucher Specimen: no



Common Name: mackerel scad

Saban Name: (none)

Species: *Decapterus macarellus* (Cuvier, 1833)

Family: Carangidae

Angler & Method: W. Toller, U/W observation

Date: 21-Oct-2007

Depth: 45 feet

Location: Overall Bank area of Saba Bank

GPS Coordinates: 17° 28.61' N, 63° 14.06' W

Size: not recorded

Comment: Not harvested from the Saba Bank by Saban commercial fishers. Of no commercial value. Schools of *D. macarellus* were occasionally observed by divers working in the Overall Bank area.

Voucher Specimen: no



Common Name: rainbow runner

Saban Name: sea yellowtail

Species: *Elagatis bipinnulata* (Quoy and Gaimard, 1825)

Family: Carangidae

Angler & Method: J. Sanchez, U/W observation

Date: 22-Oct-2007

Depth: 75 feet

Location: Overall Bank, northeastern Saba Bank

GPS Coordinates: 17° 28.2' N, 63° 13.3' W

Size: not recorded

Comment: Taken with hook & line near drop-offs, in open pelagic waters, or in deep waters near FADs or drifting floating material. Fishermen of Saba Bank regard *E. bipinnulata* as a good foodfish. It retained for sale or personal consumption but generally taken infrequently in small numbers. *E. bipinnulata* is probably of minor commercial value.

Voucher Specimen: no



Common Name: bigeye scad

Saban Name: mackerel

Species: *Selar crumenophthalmus* (Bloch, 1793)

Family: Carangidae

Angler & Method: Julian Hassell, redfish trap

Date: 17-Sep-2007

Depth: 60 fathoms

Location: northwestern slope of Saba Bank

GPS Coordinates: approximately 17 36.4' N, 63 28.6' W

Size: 24 cm FL

Comment: An infrequent and incidental catch in fish traps. *S. crumenophthalmus* is reportedly of good food quality and is retained primarily for personal consumption. It is also retained for use as bait. Of unknown commercial value.

Voucher Specimen: no



Common Name: greater amberjack

Saban Name: amberjack, amberfish, kama (Montserrat)

Species: *Seriola dumerili* (Risso, 1810)

Family: Carangidae

Angler & Method: Poochie, redfish trap

Date: 29-Jun-2007

Depth: 60 fathoms

Location: southwestern slope of Saba Bank

GPS Coordinates: approximately 17° 27'N, 63° 40'W

Size: 107 cm FL (topmost pictured specimen)

Comment: Taken infrequently to occasionally in redfish traps. Also taken by hook & line. Fishermen remark that large amberjack are capable of entering fish traps through very small funnel entrances. Once inside, they reportedly gorge themselves on fishes within the trap. Reportedly a good foodfish which is usually retained and marketed as fillets. Some fishermen do not sell amberjack out of concern for ciguatera poisoning.

Voucher Specimen: no



Common Name: almaco jack

Saban Name: sailor's choice, amberjack, amberfish (if not distinguished from *S. dumerili*)

Species: *Seriola rivoliana* Valenciennes, 1833

Family: Carangidae

Angler & Method: Poochie, redfish trap

Date: 29-Jun-2007

Depth: 60 fathoms

Location: southwestern slope of Saba Bank

GPS Coordinates: approximately 17° 27'N, 63° 40'W

Size: 46 cm FL (pictured specimen)

Comment: Taken occasionally in redfish traps. Also taken by hook & line. More common in landings than *S. dumerili*. Some Saban fishermen do not distinguish between the greater amberjack and the almaco jack. Usually retained and marketed as fillets. Some fishers do not sell almaco jack out of concern for ciguatera poisoning.

Voucher Specimen: no



Common Name: crimson rover

Saban Name: (none)

Species: *Erythrocles monodi* Poll and Cadenat, 1954 [note: tentative identification]

Family: Emmelichthyidae

Angler & Method: Nicholas Johnson, experimental deepwater fish/shrimp trap

Date: 30-Oct-2007

Depth: 1200 feet

Location: East of Overall Bank, northeastern Saba Bank

GPS Coordinates: 17° 29.15' N, 63° 11.84' W

Size: 7.5 cm TL, 8.2 cm TL

Comment: Two small specimens were captured during experimental trap fishing on Saba Bank. They were tentatively identified as *Erythrocles monodi*. Fishermen of Saba Bank report occasionally catching a large (3-5 kg) unusual fish when targeting queen snapper (*Etelis oculatus*) with hook & line over seamounts (depths > 150 fathoms). Based on their description of this deep-water species (highly protrusible mouth, reddish orange color, distinct lateral keel at caudal fin base, excellent flesh), it is almost certainly *Erythrocles monodi*. The commercial importance is unknown.

Voucher Specimen: yes



Common Name: black snapper

Saban Name: gray snapper

Species: *Apsilus dentatus* Guichenot, 1853

Family: Lutjanidae

Angler & Method: Rob Hurrell, redfish trap

Date: 23-Sep-2007

Depth: 60 fathoms

Location: southern shelf edge, Saba Bank

GPS Coordinates: approximately 17° 14.0' N, 63° 27.4' W

Size: 25.2 cm FL (pictured specimen)

Comment: The black snapper is an important species to the Saba Bank commercial fishery. An esteemed foodfish, even among deepwater snappers which are generally good eating. Typically taken with hook and line from depths of 50 fathoms or more. Also rarely taken in redfish traps. Nicholas Hassell observed that *A. dentatus* caught with hook and line near the Grabblers (50 fm depth) had guts filled with jellyfish (~3 cm bell diam.). He confirmed that black snapper were actively preying on jellies by baiting a hook with one and subsequently landing a black snapper.

Voucher Specimen: yes (pictured specimen)



Common Name: blackfin snapper

Saban Name: blackfin snapper, blackfin

Species: *Lutjanus buccanella* (Cuvier, 1828)

Family: Lutjanidae

Angler & Method: Julian Hassell, redfish trap

Date: 17-Sep-2007

Depth: 60 fathoms

Location: northwestern slope of Saba Bank

GPS Coordinates: approximately 17 36.4' N, 63 28.6' W

Size: not recorded

Comment: Of tremendous economic value to the commercial fishery of Saba Bank. *L. buccanella* is second only to *L. vivanus* in terms of abundance in commercial finfish landings from Saba Bank. Caught with traps and hook & line in depths from 30 fathoms to at least 135 fathoms. An esteemed foodfish. Generally fish are gutted at sea and immediately iced to preserve the quality of flesh which will reportedly otherwise deteriorate rapidly.

Voucher Specimen: yes



Common Name: Caribbean red snapper, southern red snapper

Saban Name: red snapper (none)

Species: *Lutjanus purpureus* (Poey, 1866)

Family: Lutjanidae

Angler & Method: Julian Hassell, redfish trap

Date: 27-Aug-2007

Depth: 38 fathoms

Location: northwestern Saba Bank

GPS Coordinates: approximately 17° 34.4' N, 63° 28.2' W

Size: 30.9 cm FL

Comment: Infrequently caught in redfish traps although some Saban fishermen do not distinguish *L. purpureus* from the similar-appearing *L. vivanus* which predominates in redfish trap catches. According to Mr. Hassell, this species attains a weight of more than 10 pounds. Retained and marketed but in unknown (probably small) quantities.

Voucher Specimen: yes



Common Name: lane snapper

Saban Name: sand silk, sand silk snapper

Species: *Lutjanus synagris* (Linnaeus, 1758)

Family: Lutjanidae

Angler & Method: Julian Hassell, redfish trap

Date: 9-Nov-2007

Depth: 50 fathoms

Location: northwestern Saba Bank

GPS Coordinates: approximately 17° 32.8' N, 63° 34.2' W

Size: 25 cm TL (pictured specimen)

Comment: The lane snapper is somewhat common in redfish trap landings from shallower depths (30-60 fathoms). As the Saban name implies, fishers report that *L. synagris* is more common over sand bottom habitats. It is also taken infrequently in lobster traps and probably by hook & line as well. The lane snapper is a desirable food fish which is retained, and it is considered to be of moderate commercial value to the fishery of Saba Bank.

Voucher Specimen: yes



Common Name: silk snapper

Saban Name: yelloweye silk, yelloweye silk snapper

Species: *Lutjanus vivanus* (Cuvier, 1828)

Family: Lutjanidae

Angler & Method: Julian Hassell, redfish trap

Date: 17-Sep-2007

Depth: 60 fathoms

Location: northwestern slope of Saba Bank

GPS Coordinates: approximately 17 36.4' N, 63 28.6' W

Size: not recorded

Comment: Of tremendous economic value to the commercial fishery of Saba Bank. Presently, *L. vivanus* is the most abundantly harvested finfish species from Saba Bank. Caught with redfish traps and hook & line in depths from 30 fathoms to at least 135 fathoms. *L. vivanus* is an esteemed foodfish. Generally fish are gutted at sea and immediately iced to preserve the quality of flesh which will reportedly otherwise deteriorate rapidly.

Voucher Specimen: yes



Common Name: wenchman

Saban Name: quaker

Species: *Pristipomoides aquilonaris* (Goode and Bean, 1896)

Family: Lutjanidae

Angler & Method: Nicholas Johnson, experimental deepwater fish/shrimp trap

Date: 24-Oct-2007

Depth: 1200 feet

Location: east of Overall Bank, northeastern Saba Bank

GPS Coordinates: 17° 29.15' N, 63° 11.84' W

Size: not recorded

Comment: Generally taken with hook & line (handline or vertical set bottom longline), occasionally in traps. Apparently found only in waters deeper than about 100 fathoms and often captured together with queen snapper, *Etelis oculatus*. *P. aquilonaris* is an esteemed foodfish and commercially important species to the Saba Bank fishery.

Voucher Specimen: yes



Common Name: Atlantic tripletail

Saban Name: tripletail, sideways fish

Species: *Lobotes surinamensis* (Bloch, 1790)

Family: Lobotidae

Angler & Method: Julian Hassell, entangled in netting on FAD

Date: 5-Nov-2007

Depth: 870 fathoms

Location: deepwater off western Saba Bank

GPS Coordinates: approximately 17° 45' N, 63° 40' W

Size: 32 cm TL (pictured specimen)

Comment: Two specimens of *L. surinamensis* were brought in by fishers in one week. The first was taken with dipnet near the southern shelf edge; the second was entangled in netting attached to a deepwater FAD. It is common near FADs and other floating debris in deep water and is taken with hook & line. Reportedly a very good-eating fish which reaches 5-7 pounds. Generally retained for personal consumption. Of little or no commercial value.

Voucher Specimen: no



Common Name: margate, white margate

Saban Name: margate, margatefish, white margate

Species: *Haemulon album* Cuvier, 1829

Family: Haemulidae

Angler & Method: Michelle Peterson, lobster trap

Date: 8-Oct-2007

Depth: 10 fathoms

Location: southern Saba Bank

GPS Coordinates: approximately 17° 20.61' N, 63° 15.70' W

Size: 37 cm FL (pictured specimen)

Comment: Occasionally to commonly taken in lobster traps, although generally in small numbers. Local fishermen distinguish *H. album* from most other grunts. The margate is considered to be a good eating fish when filleted. Marketed locally, usually together with “mixed fish” from lobster trap catches. Of significant value to the Saba Bank commercial fishery.

Voucher Specimen: no



Common Name: tomtate

Saban Name: grunt (not distinguished)

Species: *Haemulon aurolineatum* Cuvier, 1830

Family: Haemulidae

Angler & Method: Kenneth Johnson, lobster trap

Date: 5-Oct-2007

Depth: 10 fathoms

Location: central shelf area of Saba Bank

GPS Coordinates: approximately 17° 23.61' N, 63° 20.28' W

Size: 19 cm FL (pictured specimen)

Comment: Taken infrequently in lobster traps in small numbers. Together with *H. flavolineatum*, *H. aurolineatum* forms only a minor component of commercial finfish landings from lobster traps. Landings of *H. plumierii* and *H. melanurum* are much larger, and for this reason *H. aurolineatum* is generally not distinguished from its more abundant congeners. Retained and marketed locally with “mixed fish” from lobster traps. Of minor importance to the Saba Bank commercial fishery.

Voucher Specimen: no



Common Name: Caesar grunt

Saban Name: grunt (none)

Species: *Haemulon carbonarium* Poey, 1860

Family: Haemulidae

Angler & Method: Julian Hassell, lobster trap

Date: 9-Oct-2007

Depth: 10 fathoms

Location: northern Saba Bank

GPS Coordinates: approximately 17° 33.5' N, 63° 19.9' W

Size: not recorded

Comment: The Caesar grunt is rarely to infrequently taken in lobster traps. Compared to some other haemulids, *H. carbonarium* appears to be generally rare in commercial landings from Saba Bank. It is retained and marketed with “mixed fish” and is of minor commercial importance. The above photo shows *H. carbonarium* at center. Also shown in the above photo (top specimen) is *H. plumierii*, the white grunt (Saban name “yellow grunt”) and (bottom specimen) the cottonwick, *H. melanurum* (Saban name “grunt”). Based on port sampling observations, *H. plumierii* is the most commonly landed haemulid in the Saba Bank fishery and ranks as a species of great commercial importance. *H. melanurum* was the second most abundant haemulid in port samples of Saba Bank commercial landings. Dilrosun (2000) reported that *H. carbonarium* was landed in significant quantities but he reported no landings of *H. melanurum*. The reason for this discrepancy is unclear.

Voucher Specimen: no



Common Name: striped grunt

Saban Name: silver, silver grunt

Species: *Haemulon striatum* (Linnaeus, 1758)

Family: Haemulidae

Angler & Method: Julian Hassell, redfish trap

Date: 2-Oct-2007

Depth: 50 fathoms

Location: northwestern slope of Saba Bank

GPS Coordinates: 17° 32.77' N, 63° 34.15' W

Size: not recorded

Comment: Caught occasionally in redfish traps. Not marketed or consumed locally and therefore generally not retained and of no commercial value. May be used to bait traps. Some fishermen consider *H. striatum* to be the primary “thief” of bait from redfish traps. They report that large numbers of *H. striatum* will sometimes be seen slipping through the trap mesh during some trap hauls.

Voucher Specimen: yes



Common Name: rainbow parrotfish

Saban Name: green knight

Species: *Scarus guacamaia* Cuvier, 1829

Family: Scaridae

Angler & Method: Walter Hynds, lobster trap

Date: 8-Aug-2007

Depth: 24 fathoms

Location: southwestern slope of Saba Bank

GPS Coordinates: approximately N 17° 26.25' W 63 38.40'

Size: 68.5 cm FL, 6.3 kg (gutted weight)

Comment: Rare or very rare in lobster trap catches. Frank “Shuggie” Hassell, a longtime commercial fisherman of Saba Bank, recalls that the “green knight” was previously common in Saba Bank catches. He says that he has not seen *S. guacamaia* in any quantities in over 15 years and had considered them to be “extinct” from Saba Bank.

Voucher Specimen: no

Common Name: wahoo

Saban Name: wahoo

Species: *Acanthocybium solandri* (Cuvier, 1832)

Family: Scombridae

Angler & Method: Walter Hynds, trolled artificial lure+bait on handline

Date: 9-Nov-2007

Depth: 80 fathoms

Location: Grapplers Bank area, northwestern Saba Bank

GPS Coordinates: ~ 17° 41.2' N, 63° 26.1' W

Size: 136 cm FL, 30 lbs (pictured specimen)

Comment: The wahoo is a seasonal migrant to waters surrounding the Saba Bank. Peak wahoo abundances are reported to occur in November, with a fishing season from October to December. *A. solandri* is taken primarily with hook & line by trolling artificial baits or artificial lures with natural baits (e.g. ballyhoo). It may also be caught with baited hook. The wahoo is caught at FADs, near dropoffs and seamounts, and in open pelagic waters. Although it is marketed by commercial fishermen of Saba Bank, the economic value of this species is likely to derive primarily from recreational fishing efforts. The wahoo is a highly desirable foodfish which is retained.

Voucher Specimen: no





Common Name: blackfin tuna

Saban Name: tuna (unknown)

Species: *Thunnus atlanticus* (Lesson, 1831)

Family: Scombridae

Angler & Method: Michelle Peterson, baited handline

Date: 17-Oct-2007

Depth: 15 fathoms

Location: northern Saba Bank

GPS Coordinates: approximately 17° 32.6' N, 63° 23.6' W

Size: 47.5 cm FL (pictured specimen)

Comment: Occasionally taken by hook & line. The commercial importance of *T. atlanticus* is unknown. It is likely to be a seasonal migrant to local waters. With the exception of wahoo and yellowfin tuna, most of the tuna species are not consistently differentiated by Saban commercial fishermen. The pictured specimen was caught in relatively shallow water near the northern drop off, and the fisherman retained it for personal consumption.

Voucher Specimen: no



Common Name: whitespotted filefish

Saban Name: bastard moonfish

Species: *Cantherhines macrocerus* (Hollard, 1853)

Family: Monacanthidae

Angler & Method: Nicholas Johnson, lobster trap

Date: 16-Oct-2007

Depth: 60 feet

Location: southeastern Saba Bank

GPS Coordinates: 17° 15.7' N, 63° 21.7' W

Size: not recorded

Comment: Taken commonly in lobster traps. *C. macrocerus* is a bycatch species which is generally not consumed nor marketed locally, and therefore of no economic importance to the Saba Bank commercial fishery. Some fishermen retain *C. macrocerus* to feed to caged lobsters in Fort Bay.

Voucher Specimen: no



Common Name: spotted trunkfish

Saban Name: shellfish

Species: *Lactophrys bicaudalis* (Linnaeus, 1758)

Family: Ostraciidae

Angler & Method: Nicholas Johnson, lobster trap

Date: 17-Sep-2007

Depth: 50 feet

Location: south-southeastern Saba Bank

GPS Coordinates: approximately 17° 24.5' N, 63° 12.8' W

Size: 36 cm (pictured specimen)

Comment: Taken commonly in lobster traps. *L. bicaudalis* and other ostraciids are edible, and highly regarded as foodfish by some people. This species may be retained or discarded. Some fishermen also retain “shellfish” (ostraciids) to feed to lobsters in holding cages. *L. bicaudalis* is of minor importance to the Saba Bank commercial fishery.

Voucher Specimen: no