

Snook

The common snook, Centropomus undecimalis, is one of Florida's most popular inshore game fish because of its spectacular fighting ability and merit as table fare.

Like many fish species, larval and juvenile snook require low-salinity habitats in rivers, creeks and estuaries, but altered drainage basins have dramatically changed that habitat. “Snook can handle varying salinities but drastic changes that occur quickly – like what happens in areas where drainage basins for creeks have been altered – causes physiological stress in fish,” said Aaron Adams, staff scientist at Mote Marine Laboratory.

“We need to be making smarter decisions on land use,” he said. “If you look at the economic value of the west coast fisheries – snook, tarpon and redfish are worth hundreds of millions of dollars.



*Juvenile Snook from resident population in Cherry Creek.
(he was released alive)*

The main difference is habitat — the Gulf coast has nine times the habitat and three times the fish. That habitat, however, is shrinking rapidly.

The creek habitats are the factories that allow the fishery to continue.”

Florida's fisheries are among the most prolific – and by far the most profitable – in the nation. Recreational fishing alone generated an economic impact of nearly \$7.5 billion. Like many fish, squeezed between the continued loss of habitat and the ever-increasing number of fishermen, snook populations are declining far more quickly than scientists had hoped.

Snook are invariably tied to Mangrove habitat, and snook represent one of Florida's premier recreational fishing species.