

Hybrid Striped Bass (a.k.a. Palmetto Bass) Fact Sheet

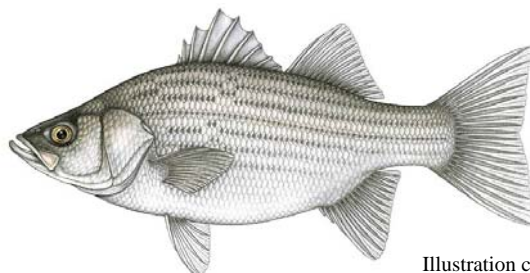


Illustration courtesy of Ohio Division of Wildlife

Common name: Hybrid striped bass or Palmetto Bass

Latin name: *Morone saxatilis* x *Morone chrysops*

Characteristics:

- The hybrid striped bass is a cross between a striped bass and a white bass. The hybrid is larger than the white bass but quicker growing than the striped bass and can tolerate warmer temperatures.
- This hybrid cross is known as the Palmetto Bass and the first successful hybridization and culture techniques were done by the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources at Lake Marion, SC.
- Hybrid striped bass grow quickly during their first two years of life, reaching lengths of 18-22 inches and weights of 2-3 pounds in the second year. Typical life span of a hybrid striped bass is 5 to 6 years.
- Hybrid striped bass are a prized gamefish and high quality food fish with a mild sweet taste and firm flaky texture, very similar to wild striped bass. Wild striped bass were widely marketed in restaurants before the population crashed. Once a successful hybrid was created, it was readily accepted as a substitute for the original highly desirable wild bass. Cultured hybrid striped bass continue to provide the food markets with exceptional-quality fish grown in environmentally-sensitive ways at very reasonable prices, at quantities that exceed the historic harvest of the wild striped bass. Cultured fish are particularly well suited to the restaurant trade because of consistency in size, yield and quality.

Distribution:

- Hybrid striped bass are cultured through the southeast with most production in Mississippi, North Carolina, Texas, Florida, Louisiana and South Carolina. This region accounts for 50% of U.S. production.

Aquaculture:

- Hybrid striped bass can be successfully grown in fresh, brackish, and even salt water.
- Juvenile fish are reared in hatcheries and sold to foodfish aquaculturists. These aquaculturists stock juveniles of similar sizes to avoid cannibalism and decrease size variation at harvest.
- Juveniles complete their first year of growth (reaching approximately 0.5 lb) in a nursery pond. The fish are then moved to a grow-out pond, tank or raceway for the second year. They are fed a commercial salmon or trout feed and exhibit food conversion ratios of 2 to 1 or less (*highly* efficient in comparison to most livestock.)
- Hybrid striped bass are harvested at 18 to 24 months of age and at weights between 1.5 and 2.5 pounds.
- To harvest, the pond is seined and fish are herded into a holding net. They are weighed and put on ice for transport immediately after being removed from the water, yielding an extremely fresh product.

Sources: Ohio Division of Wildlife – www.ohiodnr.com

South Carolina Department of Natural Resources – www.dnr.sc.gov

Hodson and Hayes. 1989. Hybrid Striped Bass Pond Production of Foodfish. Southern Regional Aquaculture Center Publication No. 303.

Hodson. 1989. Hybrid Striped Bass Biology and Life History. Southern Regional Aquaculture Center Publication No. 300.