**Spanish Mackerel**
*Scomberomorus Maculatus*

Where:
- Offshore in open waters around structure
- Nearshore around open water, including the flats and oyster bars
- Onshore in the surf and near piers, especially during the warmer weather

When:
- From March to September
- As the water warms, they will come closer to shore

Gear:
- Light to medium spinning or baitcasting tackle preferred
- Medium to stout 7 to 8-foot rod
- 12-20 lb. braided line
- 30-40 lb. fluorocarbon leader; steel leader if losing gear
- 1/0-2/0 circle hook to match bait size
- Bobber, especially one that attracts upon intermittent retrieval.

Bait:
- Minnows, mullet, greenbacks
- Cut bait such as squid
- Live or dead shrimp threaded on hook

Lures:
- Shiny spoons, heavy metal lures
- Plastics with jig heads—anything flashy or colorful that can be reeled in quickly

Tactics:
- Look for diving terns and pelicans or bait being driven to the surface
- Drift into the area so as not to spook the mackerel
- Retrieve shiny lures quickly
- Try varying depth and retrieval speed
- Use steel leader if the fish are cutting the line too often
- If fly fishing, use colorful flies that mimic minnows
- Sight fishing is one of the best ways to find these fish

Trends:
- Spanish mackerel begin moving from the deeper offshore waters to inshore in March.
- As the water begins to warm above 70 degrees, they move onshore where anglers can catch them from piers and from the beach.
- They usually travel in large schools and move constantly in search of prey
Community:

- Just about anyone, from marina personnel to anglers, will tell you where the Spanish mackerel can be found.
- Boats will often follow schools and congregate where the fish are being caught. Be sure to leave plenty of room for the other boats as a courtesy.
- Check the fishing section in the local newspapers and magazines. Scan online fishing reports such as those produced by Fishin’ Franks in Southwest Florida.

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### Spanish Mackerel Catch Card

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<tr>
<th>Tactics</th>
<th>Trends</th>
<th>Tips</th>
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<tr>
<td>Open water, diving birds, boiling water, bait driven to the surface</td>
<td>Beginning offshore in March. Inshore and onshore in warm weather</td>
<td>Retrieve quickly, vary depth and speed, keep steel leader on hand.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shiny, colorful lures retrieved quickly. Spoons and bright heavy metal lures.</td>
<td>Will often be found with King Mackerel, Ladyfish, redfish and speckled trout</td>
<td>Drift into the area and cast into the center of the boiling bait. Bring the whole family for great fun!</td>
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