



Photo Courtesy of Volusia County Reef Research Dive Team

Porkfish

Anisotremus virginicus

Range: Porkfish inhabit reefs and rocky bottoms in the Western Atlantic from Florida south to Brazil, including the Gulf of Mexico, Caribbean Sea and the Bahamas. Recently it has been introduced to the waters off of Bermuda.

Similar Species: The only Grunt in the Caribbean with two vertical black bars and yellow stripes. Sometimes confused with Snappers but Grunts lack canine and vomerine teeth found in Snappers.

Identification: *A. virginicus* is a deep-bodied grunt that has a higher dorsal profile than most other grunts, and a mouth that is small and positioned low on the head. Coloration consists of yellow and silvery-blue stripes on the body and two black bars. One black bar runs through the eye while the other runs from the operculum to the origin of the first dorsal fin. Juvenile Porkfish lack black bars and instead have a large dark spot near the base of the caudal fin. The head is a bright yellow and two black stripes run horizontally down the midbody and back.

Note: Like all grunts, Porkfish can produce grunt-like sounds by rubbing their teeth together.