

## Striped Bass and Hybrid Striped Bass Culture

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### Description of Species

#### Introduction

The striped bass *Morone saxatilis* (Walbaum) and the three additional species within the genus *Morone*, including the white bass *M. chrysops*, white perch *M. americana*, and yellow bass *M. mississippiensis* were classified 10 years ago as belonging to the temperate bass family, Percichthyidae (Robins et al. 1991). However, Johnson et al. (1984) had earlier placed all of the moronids into their own family, Moronidae, and it was their classification and nomenclature suggestion that was most recently adopted by the American Fisheries Society (Kohler 2000). The original range of the striped bass, an important sport and commercial species native to North America, was from the St. Lawrence River in Canada to northern Florida, and along the Gulf coast from western Florida to Louisiana (Raney 1952). The striped bass, white bass, and their hybrids have a silver color in general (Figure 1), a white abdomen, and a black to olive gray back (Kohler 2000). All possess horizontal stripes running laterally along the sides of the body, usually 7–8 narrow stripes on alternate rows of scales for the striped bass. The white bass have 6–10 dusky stripes, 3–5 on the upper side, 1 along the lateral line, and 2–5 on the lower side (Clay 1975). The striped bass has an elongated body, which is laterally compressed and with the deepest part below the posterior portion of the spinous dorsal fin, which is contiguous with the soft dorsal fin (Scott and Crossman 1973). The white bass body is shorter and more strongly compressed laterally than the striped

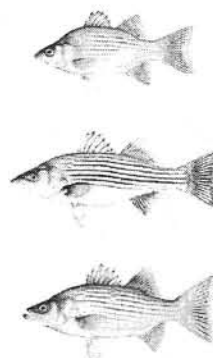


Figure 1.—White bass, top, striped bass, middle, and the hybrid sunshine bass, bottom (© Joseph Tomelleri).

bass but is more deep and robust vertically. The palmetto male *M. chrysops* × female *M. saxatilis* and sunshine bass female *M. chrysops* × male *M. saxatilis* are intermediate in appearance and in meristic characteristics to the parental species used in the cross (Table 1).

Today, due to man's movement of this prized species and interest by aquaculturists in the high table quality and price per pound, striped bass and/or its hybrids can be found

Table 1.—Some meristic characters of the striped bass and white bass.

Meristic character	Striped bass	White bass
Midlateral scales <sup>a</sup>	~ 65	52–56
Gill rakers <sup>b</sup>	20–29	23–25
Soft anal rays <sup>a</sup>	11	11–13
Soft dorsal rays <sup>a</sup>	12	13–14
Teeth on tongue <sup>b</sup>	2 patches (one on each side)	1 patch (on anterior surface)

<sup>a</sup> From Clay 1975.

<sup>b</sup> From Scott and Crossman 1973.

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