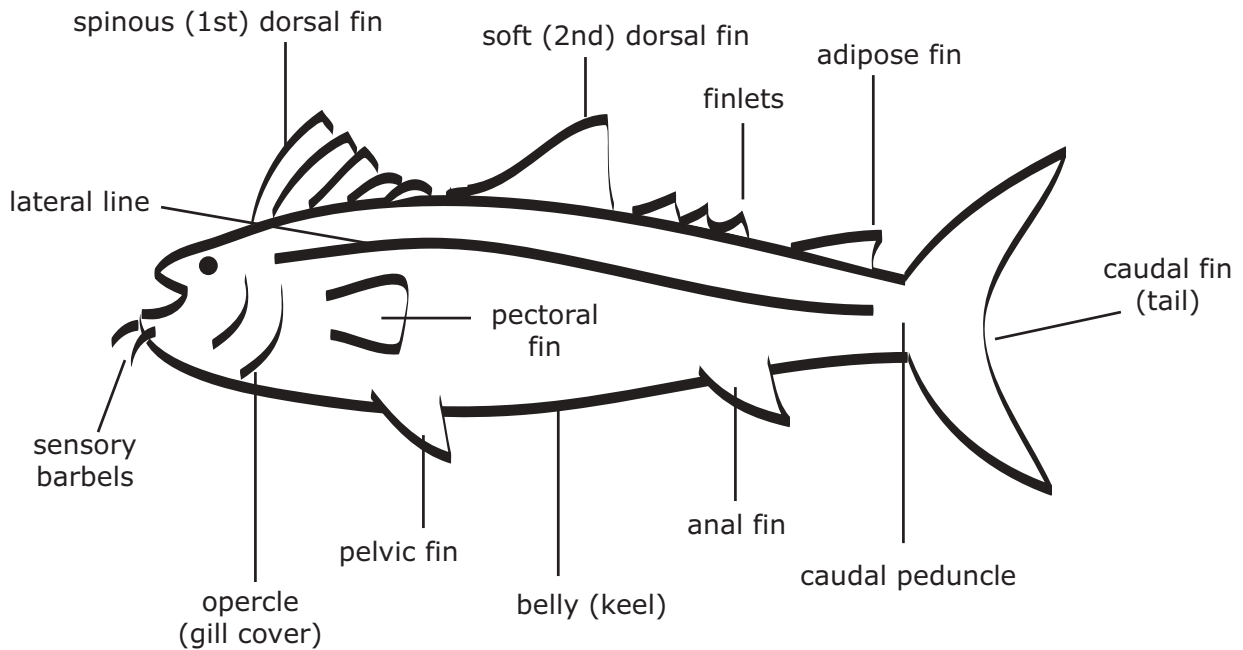


# Fish Terminology

## Parts of a Hypothetical Fish



**Adipose Fin**-A relatively small fleshy fin on the back of some fishes between the dorsal and caudal fins.

**Anadromous**-Fishes living in the sea, which enter freshwater to spawn.

**Anal Fin**-The fin on the median ventral line between the anus and the tail.

**Anal Spines**-Stiff, pointed processes located on the anterior portion of the anal fin.

**Barbels**-Slender, Tactile, whiskerlike projections extending from the head of some fishes.

**Benthic**-Bottom dwelling.

**Carnivorous**-Flesh eating.

**Catadromous**-Fish living in fresh water but spawning in the sea.

**Caudal Fin**-The tail fin.

**Caudal Peduncle**-The slender portion of a fish's body just found in front of the tail fin.

**Caudal Saddle**-A mark or blotch of color saddling the caudal peduncle of some fish.

**Circumtropical**-Encompassing the tropical regions of the world.

**Ctenoid Scale**-A bony scale with tiny spines on the exposed surface.

**Cycloid Scale**-A bony scale with a smooth surface.

**Demersal**-Bottom dwelling.

**Dentition**-The type, arrangement and number of teeth of an animal.

**Detritus**-Finely divided material suspended in the water that usually settles to the bottom.

**Dorsal Fin**-The median fin on the back of fishes. It may be divided into spiny-rayed and soft-rayed parts.

**Endemic**-Belonging or native to a particular place.

**Fecundity**-The number of eggs produced by a mature female.

**Finlets**-A series of small, usually separate fin rays situated behind the main dorsal fin.

**Fork Length**-The measurement from the tip of a fish's snout to the fork in the tail.

**Fusiform**-Shapes like a spindle; tapered at both ends.

**Ganoid Scale**-A diamond-shaped scale having an enamel-like surface and not overlapping to any extent.

**Gill Arches**-The bony supports to which the gills are attached.

**Gill Rakers**-A series of bony projections attached to the inside of the gill arches, used to strain food from the water.

**Incisors**-front teeth flattened to form a cutting edge.

**Lateral**-Pertaining to the side.

**Lateral Keel**-A ridge situated on the side.

**Lateral Line**-A longitudinal line on each side of a fish's body, composed of pores opening to sensory organs.

**Longevity**-Length or duration of life.

**Mandible**-The lower jaw.

**Maturity**-The age or size when a fish is able to reproduce.

**Molars**-Grinding teeth usually situated toward the back of the mouth.

**Nocturnal**-Active at night.

**Nonstriated**-Not marked with furrows, stripes, or streaks.

**Nuchal**-Relating to, or lying in the region of the back of the neck.

**Ocellus**-A spot of color encircled by a band of another color.

**Olivaceous**-A deep shade of green; olive.

**Omnivorous**-Eating all kinds of foods, indiscriminately.

**Opercular Flap**-A fleshy extension of the rear edge of the gill cover.

**Operculum (Opercle)**-The gill cover.

**Opportunistic**-Nonselective in feeding.

**Outcropping**-A part of a rock formation that appears at the surface of the ground, or bottom of the sea.

**Ova**-Eggs.

**Pectoral Fins**-The paired fins attached to the shoulder girdle, immediately behind the gill opening.

**Pelagic**-Living or growing in the region of free waters in the seas and inland lakes.

**Pelvic Fins**-The paired hind fins.

**Peritoneum**-The membrane lining of the body cavity.

**Plankton**-The small animals and plants that float or drift in the water, usually on the surface.

**Pod**-A small group of several fish.

**Population**-The whole number of a species inhabiting or occupying a specific geographical locality.

**Potamodrous**-Migrating in fresh water; making short spawning runs in fresh water.

**Preoperculum**-A bone before or in front of the opercle.

**Protgynous Hermaphrodite**-A fish that changes sex from female to male with age or size.

**Sargassum**-Any of several brown algae that are widely distributed in the warmer waters; the floating common gulfweed.

**Scute**-An external horny or bony plate or scale.

**Stock**-A reproductively distinct population of fish; to move from one place to another, as when introducing a species to a body of water where it does not naturally occur.

**Substrate**-The base on which organisms live.

**Terminal**-At the end or tip.

**Total Length**-The measurement from the tip of a fish's snout to the tip of the tail.

**Ventral Fins**-The pelvic fins.

Definitions provided by Charles Manooch, in his book,  
*Fishes of the Southeast United States*, 1984.