



Sheepshead

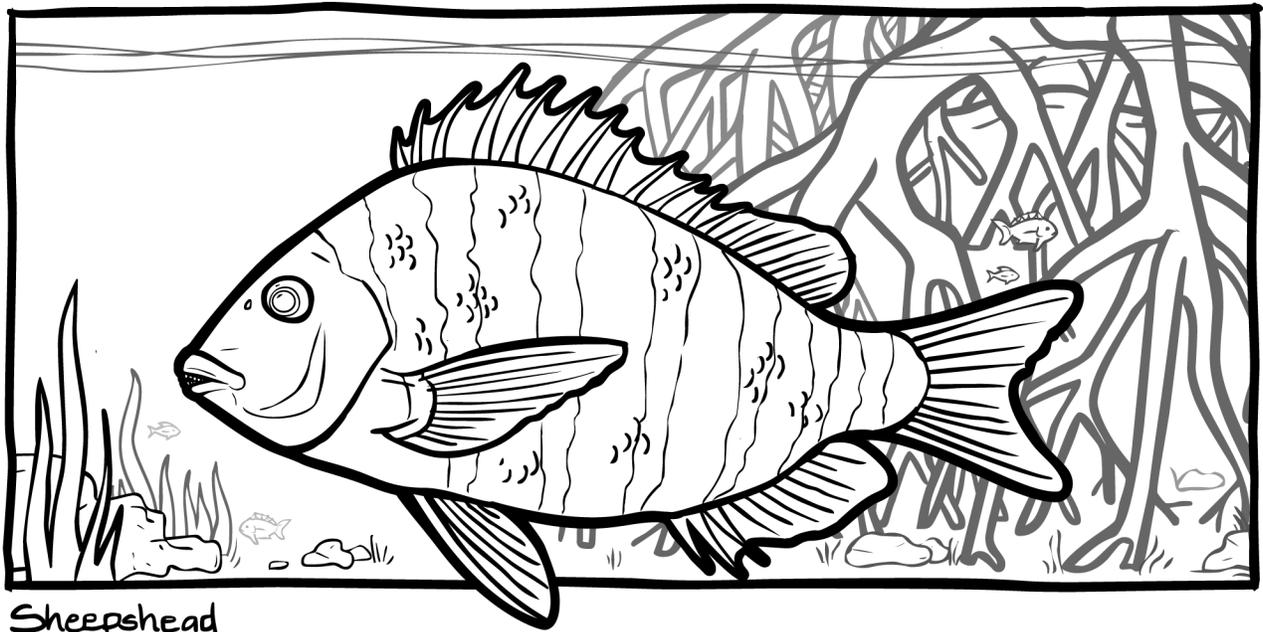
Sheepshead *(Archosargus probatocephalus)*

Instant ID

- Thin, saltwater fish in the sea bream family
- Grows up to 30 inches long
- Oval-shaped body is light gray with five or six darker, vertical bars
- Tail (caudal) fin is slightly forked
- Human-like teeth fill its small mouth

Native Niches

- Prefers brackish (mixed salt and fresh) waters
- Seeks warmer spots near spring outlets in winter
- Found in coastal waters of the western Atlantic Ocean and Caribbean Sea



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Favorite Foods

- Blue crab, oysters, clams, crustaceans and small fish
- Omnivore (eats both plants and animals)
- Uses teeth to crush shells and scrape barnacles

Critter Characteristics

- Other names include convict fish and sheepshead seabream
- Lives up to 20 years
- Can enter freshwater during winter
- Can lay as many as 250,000 eggs at a time

Population Protection

- Majority of sheepshead are accidentally caught in shrimp trawlers and tossed back into the water
- Fishery management can prevent over-harvesting

