



NORTHERN STARGAZER

Astroscopus guttatus

Description:

- ◆ dark olive-brown head and body
- ◆ evenly distributed small white spots that become larger on sides and towards the tail
- ◆ eyes on flattened upper surface of head
- ◆ mouth is almost vertical
- ◆ three dark horizontal lines on the tail
- ◆ black spinous dorsal fin
- ◆ fringed lips and nostrils

Size:

- ◆ up to 22 inches and 20 pounds, usually 8-18 inches

Range:

- ◆ New York to North Carolina

Facts:

- ◆ produces electricity using an organ located in a pouch behind the eyes
- ◆ eats small fish, crabs and other crustaceans
- ◆ uses side fins as shovels to burrow below the sand
- ◆ buries itself in the sand and waits for prey, then uses its large mouth to create a vacuum to suck prey in
- ◆ breathes through its nostrils, not its mouth like most other fish
- ◆ during juvenile stages, eyes are on the side of the head before moving to the top

NORTHERN STARGAZER CATCH TOTALS

Year	Total
1991	1
1995	5
Grand Total	6

*Northern stargazers were only caught during the years shown

NJ Department of Environmental Protection
Division of Fish and Wildlife
Bureau of Marine Fisheries
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