

GOLDEN TILEFISH

LOPHOLATILUS CHAMAEONTICEPS



MID-ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL (MAFMC) - ESSENTIAL FISH HABITAT (EFH) PROFILE

1. Management Unit

The management unit is all golden tilefish (*Lopholatilus chamaelonticeps*) under United States jurisdiction in the Atlantic Ocean north of the Virginia/North Carolina border.

2. Stock Status

The stock is not overfished and overfishing is not occurring based on the most recent stock assessment (2021). For current stock status: <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/national/status-stocks-reports>

3. Current Text Designations

Source: MAFMC. 2008. Amendment 1 to the Tilefish Fishery Management Plan. Vols. I and II. Dover, DE. Available at: www.mafmc.org

Eggs and Larvae: EFH for tilefish eggs and larvae is the water column on the outer continental shelf and slope from the U.S./Canadian boundary to the Virginia/North Carolina boundary in mean water column temperatures between 7.5°C and 17.5°C (45.5°F to 63.5°F).

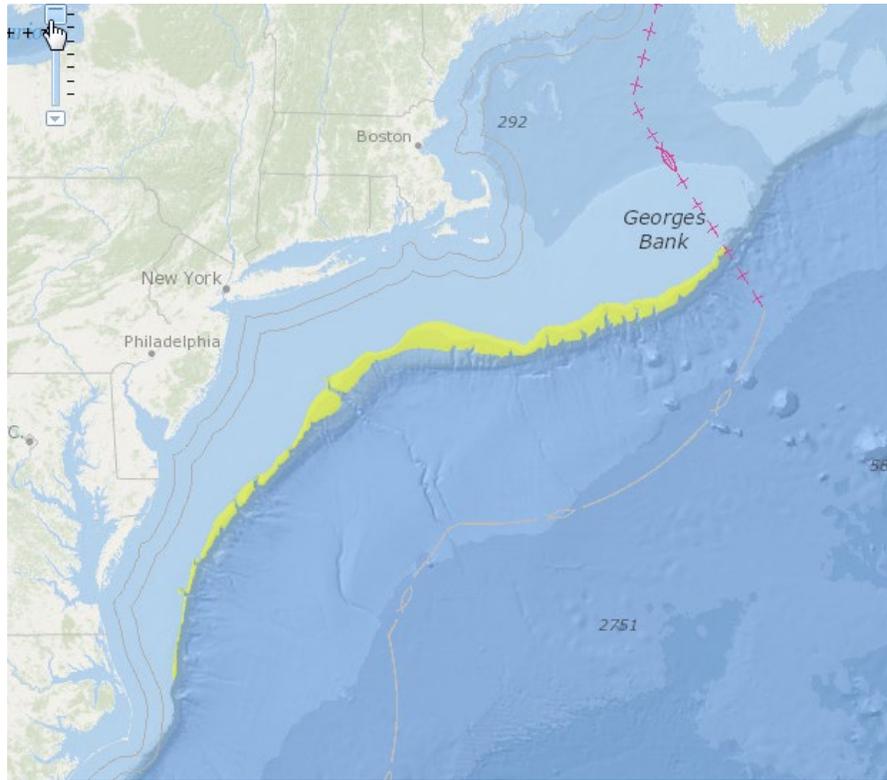
Juveniles and Adults: EFH for tilefish juveniles and adults is semi-lithified clay substrate on the outer continental shelf and slope from the U.S./Canadian boundary to the Virginia/North Carolina boundary in bottom water temperatures which range from 9°C to 14°C (48.2°F to 57.2°F), which generally occur in depths between 100 and 300 meters (328 to 984 ft). Tilefish create horizontal or vertical burrows in semi-lithified clay sediments, a substrate type with cohesive properties that allow the burrows to maintain their shape. Tilefish may also utilize rocks, boulders, scour depressions beneath boulders, and exposed rock ledges as shelter.

Habitat areas of particular concern (HAPCs) for juvenile and adult tilefish are clay outcrop/pueblo habitats in Norfolk, Veatch, Lydonia, and Oceanographer canyons between 100 and 300 meters (328 to 984 ft).

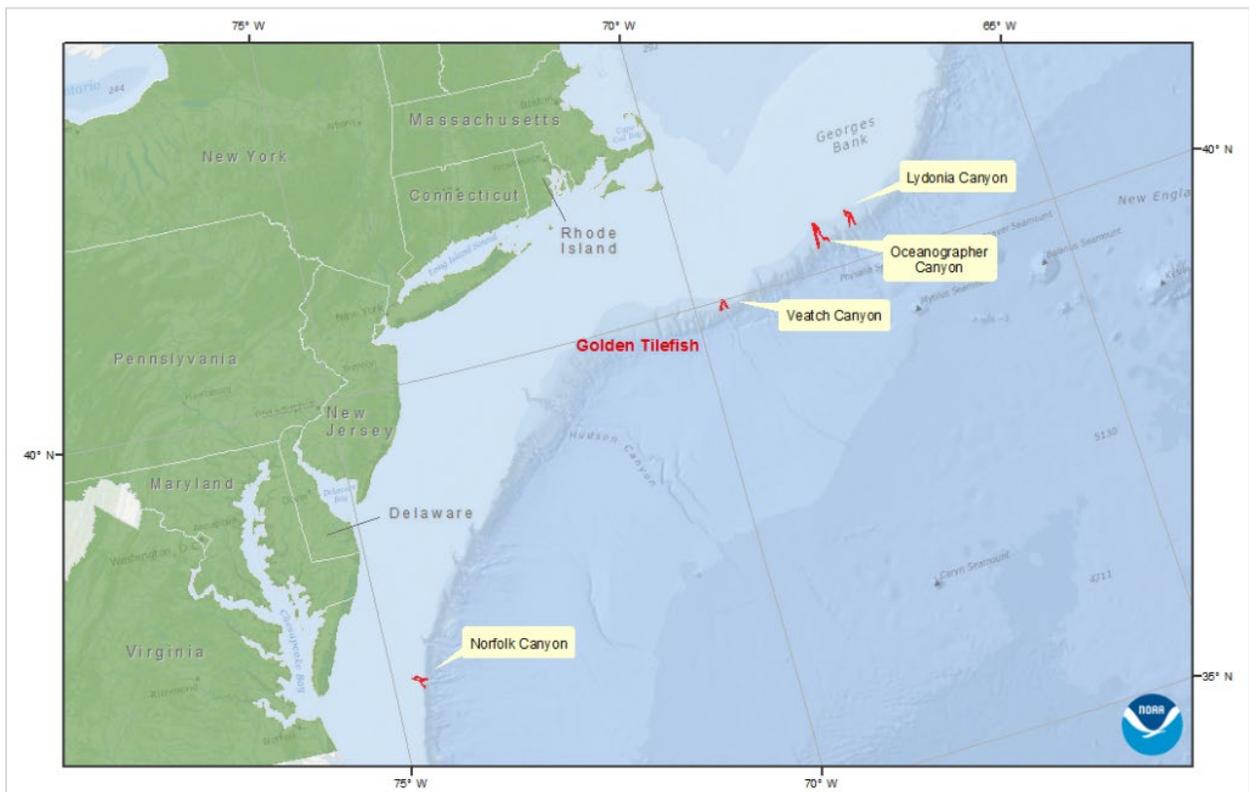
4. Current Map Designations

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Eggs, larvae, juvenile and adults mapped based on depths from 100 and 300 meters:



HAPCs for juvenile and adult tilefish mapped as four canyons between 100 and 300 meters:



5. Designation and Mapping Methods

The Council has generally identified EFH using level 1 and/or level 2 data (see EFH regulations; section 7). The Tilefish FMP (2001) identified EFH for golden tilefish by life history stage and considered data on the distribution of commercial landings. EFH was identified based on temperature and depth regimes, instead of a distributional percentage of TMSQ, since the trawl survey data was biased low because tilefish can avoid trawls in their burrows. The FMP also identified HAPC for tilefish, but no habitat protections were adopted at the time. EFH was identified as:

“...all offshore waters over the Continental Shelf and Slope with water depths from 250 to 1200 feet, from the United States/Canadian boundary to the Virginia/North Carolina boundary.”

Amendment 1 (2009) revised EFH descriptions and maps to include a more refined depth range and descriptions of the types of benthic substrate used on the outer continental shelf and slope. The updates were based on scientific information about preferred temperature and depth ranges. Amendment 1 designated HAPC between 100 and 300 meters within four canyons where outcrops of semi-lithified clay are known to be present (because tilefish live in burrows made with clay).

6. EFH Source Documents

Information on tilefish habitat requirements can be found in:

Steimle, F.W, C. A. Zetlin, P. L. Berrien, D. L. Johnson, S. Chang. 1999. Essential Fish Habitat Source Document: Tilefish, *Lopholatilus chamaeleonticeps*, Life History and Habitat Characteristics. NOAA Technical Memorandum NMFS-NE-152. Available at: <http://www.nefsc.noaa.gov/nefsc/habitat/efh/>.

7. Other Information

EFH Legal Authorities

EFH from Magnuson Stevens Act:

<http://www.fisheriesforum.org/HigherLogic/System/DownloadDocumentFile.ashx?DocumentFileKey=014976d6-5bc1-f0c4-be6b-ade7c99fc932&forceDialog=0>

EFH Contents of Fishery Management Plans under CFR §600.815:

<https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/CFR-2013-title50-vol12/pdf/CFR-2013-title50-vol12-sec600-815.pdf>

Federal agency consultation with the Secretary under CFR §600.920:

<https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/CFR-2014-title50-vol12/pdf/CFR-2014-title50-vol12-sec600-920.pdf>

NMFS 2006 EFH Guidance:

<http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/op/pds/documents/03/201/03-201-15.pdf>

Management and Stock Assessments

MAFMC: <http://www.mafmc.org>

ASMFC: <http://www.asmfc.org>

NEFSC Stock Assessments: <http://www.nefsc.noaa.gov/saw/>