



## Transcript

### Science on the St. Johns: Counting Fish with the FWC

<http://thescienceof.ju.edu/science-on-the-st-johns-counting-fish-with-the-fwc/>

**Julia Goodman:** We are the FWC Fisheries Independent Monitoring Lab, and what that means is we do an independent study of the fish populations in the St. Johns, the St. Marys, and the Nassau Rivers. We do not depend on fishermen for data. We do not depend on the fish houses for data. We, ourselves, go out and collect all the data. That's why we're considered an independent monitoring group.

**Matthew Watkins:** We use 3 different types of gear, so that we can catch the different sizes of the fish, so that we can get a look at the entire population. This is a 70 foot seine net with a small mesh size designed to catch larval fish up to the size of juveniles and adults. The reason we need to count and identify larval fish and juveniles is so that we know that there is going to be a population that will grow up into sub-adult and adult size within the coming years.

It's a spotted sea trout, and his standard length is 31 millimeters. *Achirus lineatus*, it's the lined sole. It's got both eyes are right there. Griseus, he has 49 (mm). He's in the rep.

**Ryan Ford:** 51 (mm). 61 (mm). Two mitches.

**Julia Goodman:** That data is sent on, and that is used for your sports fish, your regulations, whether it's for red drum or sea trout, flounder. Anything like that, that's what our data goes towards. That gives your catch limits, your size limits, and it also helps us figure out what fish are in the river, how big they are, is this a nursery, is this not a nursery for certain species? All of that comes into play with our data.

**Narrator:** These fish population data are integral for ensuring healthy, sustainable fisheries. However, these scientists also have another job - to bring some ambassadors from where river meets ocean back to Science on the St. Johns at JU's Marine Science Research Institute. The animals that live in coastal waters of northeast Florida, which go unseen by many of us, are truly magnificent. Getting up close to these animals and talking to scientists allows knowledge to be passed on directly to the public, and perhaps more importantly, helps form bonds to important animals from local, magnificent ecosystems.

**Girl:** Eric, I'm holding a flounder. He's slimy, yeah.

**Male:** Slimy?

**Girl:** He's cute.