13º Reunión Anual

American Fisheries Society
Early Life History Section

El Programa y la Memoria
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E. gula is a coastal species dominant in the southern Gulf of Mexico with wide distribution and high levels of numerical and biomass abundance (0.67 ton/km² prom. annual in Laguna de Términos LT; 0.78 ton/km² in Sonda de Campeche SC). They reproduce in SC during the dry season (Feb.-May) in the area adjacent to LT. Young fish penetrate LT with the tidal currents at the end of the dry season and during the rainy season (May-Sept.); the young fish inhabit habitats of Thalassia testudinum/Rhizophora mangle and average 4.5 cm length. They follow a complex recruitment, sequentially utilizing distinct estuarial habitats, correlated with salinity, temperature, transparency, food habits and shelter. They complete part of their growth and maturation at the end of the rainy season with an average length of 10.5 cm. In accordance with the ELEFAN analysis, this population contains $L_\infty = 20.1$ cm, $K = 0.504$ and $Z = 2.187$. The juvenile fish migrate to SC, mature and reproduce in the ocean. Average length is 14.5 cm. Marked differences in population structure are observed in the different habitats. The life-cycle reflects clear biological adaptations to the environmental variability of the estuarial-ocean system.