**STRIPED MULLET**  
(06/03 ARCHIVE - NCDMF)

**Stock status** — *Concern*. Historically, the primary effort for this species had been relegated to the fall fishery for roe mullet. Over recent years an increasing effort for non-roe striped mullet has led to an expanded year-round fishery. This year-round activity, coupled with the large fall harvest of spawning striped mullet, has created concern for this economically important species.

**Average Commercial Landings and Value 1993-2002** — 2,270,834 lb, $1,375,013.

**2002 Commercial Landings and Value** — 2,595,974 lb, $1,181,833.

**Average Recreational Landings** — Unknown.

**Status of Fisheries Management Plan (FMP)** — Draft preparations of the NC FMP began July 2002.

**Data/Research Needs** — Continued life-history information (age structure of the NC population, maturity, and migratory patterns), and long-term fishery-independent surveys. Recreational harvest statistics.

**Current Size Limit** — No restrictions.

**Harvest Season** — No restrictions.

**Size and Age at Maturity** — 11.2 inches (males), 13.2 inches (females); 2 years old.

**Current Maximum Age** — 11 years old.

**Juvenile Abundance Index** — None Available.

**Habitats and Habits**— Striped mullet are found in a wide range of depths and habitats primarily in freshwater to estuarine environments, until a spawning migration into marine waters occurs during the fall. Aside from its considerable economic importance, striped mullet also serve as a vital ecological link between the lowest and highest trophic levels. Mullet feed on microorganisms, microalgae, and decaying plant material. In turn, striped mullet are prey to top predators such as birds, fish, sharks, and porpoises. Striped mullet are highly fecund (upwards of 4 million eggs for a large female) and spawn in large aggregations near inlets to offshore areas. Spawning individuals have been reported from September to February, however peak spawning activity occurs in October to early December.

For more information, see [DMF Species Leads page](#)