

KINGFISHES

(06/06 ARCHIVE - NCDMF)

Stock Status - *Unknown* – North Carolina biologists are in the process of developing a fisheries management plan (FMP) to manage these three species. The FMP is scheduled for completion in 2007.

Average Commercial Landings/Value - 1996-2005 - 558,488 lbs./\$540,500

2005 Commercial Landings and Value - 296,243 lbs./\$271,713

Average Recreational Landings 1996-2005 - 319,650 lbs., **2005** – 310,201 lbs.

Average Number of Award Citations (1.5 lbs.) 1996-2005 – 210, **2005** - 303

Status of Fishery Management Plan (FMP) - State FMP is underway and scheduled for completion in 2007.

Data/Research Needs - Studies to determine distribution and composition of the three kingfish species found in North Carolina, habitat utilization, migration studies (tagging), maturity and fecundity studies, age and growth studies (ongoing), and validate a juvenile abundance index.

Current Regulations (2006)- None

Harvest Season - year round

Size and Age at maturity – 7-9 inches/1 year

Historical and Current Maximum Age – 8 years

Juvenile Abundance Index – 1996-2005 – Southeast Area Monitoring and Assessment

Program (SEAMAP) - 4.8, **2005** – 16.6

Pamlico Sound Survey - 1.5, **2005** – 1.2

Habits/Habitats - Kingfishes are also known as sea mullet, Virginia mullet, whiting and roundhead include three species in North Carolina; southern, northern, and gulf. The southern kingfish is the most abundant of the three species and prefers mud or sand-mud bottom types like the northern kingfish. Gulf kingfish prefer the sandy bottoms of the surf zone. Kingfishes move from estuarine and nearshore ocean waters to deeper offshore waters as water temperature cools. Spawning takes place in the ocean from April-October.

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