BLUE CRAB
(06/98 ARCHIVE - NCDMF)

Stock Status----- Unknown

Average Commercial Landings and Value 1987-1997-- 45,058,444 lbs, $21,181,573

1997 Commercial Landings and Value--56,208,764 lb, $37,756,644

Average Recreational Landings 1987-1997 and 1997-- Unknown

Average Number of Award Citations (?) 1987-1997 and 1997-- N/A

Status of Fisheries Management Plan-- Currently, being developed. Must be approved by the MFC on or before Jan. 1, 1999, as mandated by the Fisheries Reform Act of 1997.

Research and Data Needs--Stock size may be influenced by a number of factors including habitat, natural events and cycles, harvest pressure, changes in stream flows, and water quality. Detailed analyses of the available databases are currently underway, and results will be included in the FMP. This analyses should provide some insight into the biological status of the blue crab in North Carolina.

Current Minimum Size Limit-- 5 inches from tip of spike to tip of spike except mature females, soft and peeler crabs. A tolerance of not more than 10 percent by number in any container shall be allowed.

Harvest Season-- Open year round

Size and Age at Maturity-- Most are mature at 5 inches, 12 to 18 months

Historical Maximum Age-- 5 to 8 years old, Current Maximum Age---- 2 to 3 years old

Juvenile Abundance Indices Average (JAI)-- Unknown

Habits/ Habitats-- Migration and movement among various habitats are seasonal, depending on life age, sex, maturity, and associated salinity preferences. Many different habitats are used during migrations from high-salinity ocean waters to the lower-salinity and freshwaters of the coastal sounds, rivers and creeks.

For more information, see DMF Species Leads page