

## **SPINY DOGFISH**

(06/04 ARCHIVE - NCDMF)

**Stock Status** –*Overfished*-- The 2003 Northeast Regional Stock Assessment Workshop (SAW-37) determined the mature female spawning stock biomass remains well below the rebuilding target of 200,000 mt. Historically low estimates of pup production since 1997 indicates recruitment failure.

**Average Commercial Landings 1995-2003 and Value\***-- 4,469,373 lbs. , \$667,780

**2003 Commercial Landings and Value** – < 100 lbs. (landings and value are confidential)

**Average Recreational Landings 1994-2003**— N/A **2003**—N/A (no landings reported since 1998)

**Status of Fisheries Management Plan** –Currently managed under the joint MAFMC and NEFMC Fishery Management Plan (FMP) in federal waters (3-200 miles) and the ASMFC Spiny Dogfish Interstate FMP in state waters (0-3 miles). Both FMPs establish a 4,000,000 lb. coastwide quota for the May 2004–April 2005 fishing year that is divided into two six month seasons (May–October: 2,316,000 lb.; November–April: 1,684,000 lb.). A 600 lb. trip limit is in effect from May 1–October 31, 2004 and a 300 lb. trip limit is in effect from November 1, 2004–April 30, 2005. Directed fishery eliminated while spawning stock is being rebuilt.

**Research and Data Needs**—Discard mortality estimates, at-sea observer data, commercial fishery sampling, aging, genetic studies.

**Current Size Limit**—No size restrictions

**Harvest Season** –The North Carolina commercial fishery occurs in the winter (December – April). The directed fishery did not occurred in 2003 because the quota was met.

**Size and Age at Maturity**—Median size and age at maturity is 23 inches and 8 years for males and 31 inches and 12 years or females. Age at maturity estimates vary due to different aging techniques.

**Historical Maximum Age** —35 years old for males and 40 years old for females. Some estimates from age and growth studies for fish from the Pacific Ocean suggest a maximum age of 95 years. Historical ages variable due to different aging techniques used. Annual formation of rings on the second dorsal spine not directly validated for Northwest Atlantic fish.

**Juvenile Abundance Indices Average 1994-2003**—Unknown **2003** – Unknown

**Habits/Habitats**—Spiny dogfish are distributed on both sides of the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans in temperate and subarctic latitudes. In the Northwest Atlantic, they range from Labrador to Florida, but are most abundant from Nova Scotia to Cape Hatteras. They migrate seasonally, moving into North Carolina waters in the winter and north in the spring. The preferred water temperature is 45° to 55° F. The spiny dogfish is a relatively long-lived, slow growing animal reaching a maximum size of approximately four feet. The spiny dogfish gives birth to live pups. The gestation period is approximately 22 months with 2 to 15 pups produced (average 6). Fecundity increases with fish length.

Spiny dogfish landings were grouped together with smooth dogfish landings prior to 1995.

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