

## **STRIPED MULLET**

(06/99 ARCHIVE - NCDMF)

**Stock status** --*Concern*. Historically, this was a fall dominated effort fishery for roe mullet. It has expanded to a year-round effort in bays, sounds and rivers with run-around gillnets. This new, year-round activity, coupled with the historical fall gillnet and beach seine/stop net fishery for roe striped mullet creates concern.

**Average Commercial Landings and Value 1987-1998**--2,292,048 lb, \$1,061,413

**1998 Commercial Landings and Value**--2,218,068 lb, \$1,061,413

**Average Recreational Landings 1987-1998 -- 1998 only** -- Unknown

**Status of Fisheries Management Plan**--No State or Federal Plan.

**Data/Research Needs**--Life History (age, maturity, and migration information).  
Fishery independent and dependent data. Recreational catch statistics.

**Current Size Limit**--None

**Harvest Season**--Year Round

**Size and Age at Maturity**--11 inches at 3 years

**Historical /Current Maximum Age**--Eight years or older, age structure of population is likely shifted towards the younger fish in recent years.

**Juvenile Abundance Indices 1987-1998 and 1998 Index**--Juvenile Indices are unknown. Striped mullet specific index sampling has occurred for one year, data from other sources may be of use.

**Habits and Habitats**--The striped mullet is the most abundant species of mullet found in North Carolina. Striped mullet are highly fecund (produce numerous eggs) and spawn offshore in large aggregations following mass migrations in the fall. Estimated fecundity is between 4 and 5 million eggs for a large female; with the range of number of eggs per female between 0.5 and 4.0 million for fish between 12 and 22 inches fork length. Because striped mullet are schooling fish, they are easy prey for a large variety of fish, birds, and mammals. Striped mullet feed mainly on micro-crustaceans throughout their range that extends throughout the southeastern U.S. and Gulf of Mexico. Striped mullet are most common in estuaries with moderate salinities and temperatures, however, they can tolerate wide ranges of salinity (freshwater to full strength ocean seawater) and temperatures (5° to 35° Celsius).

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