

BAY SCALLOP

(06/06 ARCHIVE - NCDMF)

Stock Status – *Concern* - Landings and fishery independent sampling showed low abundance in Core and Bogue sounds. Low abundance indices from 2005 indicate a poor fishing year for 2006. The main harvest season was not opened in January 2006, due to limited availability of scallops.

Average Commercial Landings and Value 1996-2005 - 27,133 lbs. of meat/\$88,717

2005 Commercial Landings and Value - 0 lbs. of meat/\$ 0

Average Recreational Landings 1996-2005 – Unknown, 2005 - Unknown

Status of Fisheries Management Plan (FMP) - The bay scallop FMP was initiated a year earlier (July 2005) than originally planned because landings have decreased significantly over the past several years. The FMP is currently in development and scheduled for completion by June 2007.

Data/Research Needs - Stock identification, recreational landings, recruitment and population abundance data. Enhancement and cownose ray predation research studies.

Current Regulations (2006) - None

Harvest Season - Twenty standard U.S. bushels per person per day, not to exceed a total of 40 standard U.S. bushels per day in any combined fishing operation is allowed during the regular January through May commercial season. When the limited season from August 1 through September 15 is open, no more than 10 standard U.S. bushels per person per day not to exceed a total of 20 standard U.S. bushels per day is allowed. Proclamation authority has issued lower trip limits in recent years. Recreational harvest limits are one-half bushel per day, not to exceed one bushel per vessel per day.

Size and Age at Maturity - 1.5 inches (shell height)/6 months

Historical and Current Maximum Age - 2 years/1.5 years

Abundance Indices 2005

Core Sound- 4.5 (July), 1.5 (Nov.) per two-minute tow

Bogue Sound- 4.4 (July), 1.5 (Nov.) per two-minute tow

Habits/Habitats - Bay scallops are estuarine dependent mollusks found in grass beds. Bay scallops are a hermaphroditic (contain both sex cells) bivalve, which mature and spawn in a year. Their lifespan is only 12-26 months. In North Carolina, bay scallops spawn predominantly from August through October and again in March through May. The larvae go through several swimming stages before attaching to a suitable substrate such as seagrass. Upon reaching a size of approximately 1-inch (20-30 mm), bay scallops drop to the bottom. Although other benthic structures can be utilized for attachment, bay scallops utilize seagrass beds almost exclusively, and are therefore highly dependent on this habitat for successful recruitment. Bay scallops are filter feeders and feed on benthic diatoms. Predators of the bay scallop include cownose rays, blue crabs, starfish, whelks, and herring gulls.

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