

SPOT

(06/09 ARCHIVE - NCDMF)

Stock Status – Concern– Commercial landings and effort have generally been decreasing in the major fisheries. This decrease accelerated in 2006, 2007, and 2008. Commercial catches in 2008 were at a historical low, down 16% from 2007. Catch per unit effort in the long haul, inshore gill net, and offshore gillnet fisheries decreased in 2008 relative to 2007, with all three at historical lows. In contrast to the commercial data, the juvenile abundance index increased in 2008. Recreational landings decreased 40% from the 2007 level and mean catch per angler trip also decreased. Spot is the primary coastal catch, by number, for recreational fishermen in North Carolina.

Average Commercial Landings and Value 1999-2008 – 1,942,595 lbs./\$933,269

2008 Commercial Landings and Value – 737,218 lbs./\$454,569

Average Recreational Landings 1999-2008 - 1,215,573 lbs. **2008** – 834,811 lbs.

Average Number of Award Citations (1 lb.) 1999-2008 – 75, **2008** - 0

Average Recreational Commercial Gear License (RCGL) Landings 2002-2008 – 203,535, **2008** – 105,392

Status of Fishery Management Plan (FMP) - In North Carolina, spot is currently included in the Interjurisdictional Fisheries Management Plan, which defers to Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC) FMP compliance requirements. An ASMFC Spot FMP was approved in 1987. Management measures were reviewed in 2007 by the ASMFC scientific and statistical committee. In the review, the committee prioritized research and management recommendations and directed the Plan Review Team to evaluate trends in the major commercial fisheries.

Research and Data Needs - coastwide stock assessment analysis, migration studies (tagging), and maturity and fecundity studies

Current Regulations - none

Harvest Season - year round

Size and Age at Maturity - 7-8 inches total length (TL)/1–2 years

Historical and Current Maximum Age - 6 years

Juvenile Abundance Index 1999-2008 – 358, **2008** - 960 (validated)

Habits and Habitats - Spot are short-lived estuarine dependent members of the drum family, that include Atlantic croaker, red drum, black drum, spotted seatrout and weakfish. Spot spawn in the ocean from late fall to early spring. Wind and currents carry the young into the upper reaches of the estuaries, where they remain throughout the spring. Adult spot migrate seasonally between estuarine and near-shore ocean waters, but are rarely found in the upper reaches of the estuary. Spot are most susceptible to commercial and recreational fishing activity during the fall when schools migrate from estuarine to oceanic waters.

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