

## **BLUEFISH**

(06/99 ARCHIVE - NCDMF)

**Stock status**----recovering. Biomass models infer reduced fishing mortality should result in stabilization of the stock.

**Average Commercial Landings and Value 1990-1999**-- 3,182,115 lbs, \$788,451

**1999 Commercial Landings and Value**---2,758,553 lbs, \$877,231

**Average Recreational Landings 1990-1999: lbs and 1998: lbs.**

**Average Number of Citations (17 lbs) 1990-1999: 1999:**

**Status of Fisheries Management Plan**- The joint ASMFC/MFCMA bluefish plan was adopted in 1989. The bluefish FMP limits the commercial fishery to 20% of the total catch each year based on historic proportions of commercial and recreational landings. The FMP was amended in 1995 to include coastwide commercial quotas distributed to the states based on the average percentage landings from the most recent ten year period. North Carolina's commercial bluefish quota for 1998 was 2,943,296 lbs, or 30 % of the coastwide quota of 9.583 million pounds. Amendment 1 to the Bluefish Fishery Management Plan (June 1997) was to establish management measures which would improve the efficacy of the FMP, and Amendment 2 deals with the issue of stock rebuilding. The assessment addresses hypotheses that recent declines in recreational catches, landings and fishing mortality may be due to inshore/offshore displacement of a portion of the bluefish stock. Due to concerns that the current assessment included a complete reliance on NC age-length keys to characterize the stock and limited fishery independent abundance indices, the Bluefish Technical and Stock Assessment Committees recommended the status of bluefish stocks be based on a biomass model rather than age dependent models.

**Research and Data Needs**- validated age data, surf zone seine survey for indice of juvenile abundance, fishery independent data, commercial by catch and recreational mortality estimates, and reproductive ecology.

**Current Minimum Size Limit**- Ten fish bag limit per person per day taken by hook-n-line.

**Harvest Season**- Open year round.

**Size and Age at Maturity**- 13 inches FL/2 year old.

**Historical and Current Maximum Age**- 14 years/12 years old

**Juvenile Abundance Index**- unknown

**Habits/Habitats**- Bluefish is a pelagic species important to saltwater fishermen throughout the world. Bluefish school by size and make seasonal migrations north in the spring and south in winter. Large fish tend to congregate in the northern part of the range. There are two spawning groups: one that spawns at sea during the spring, and the young spend their first year in coastal bays and sounds; and the other spawns at sea in the summer, and the young remain offshore.

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