

BAY SCALLOP

(06/07 ARCHIVE - NCDMF)

Stock Status – *Depleted* - In recent years, harvest has decreased to essentially no landings because of recruitment failure resulting from a red tide event in 1987, several hurricanes in the 1990's, fishing effort, and cownose ray predation. Fishery independent sampling showed low abundance in Core and Bogue sounds. The main harvest season was not opened in 2006 due to limited availability of scallops.

Average Commercial Landings and Value 1997-2006 - 24,394 lbs. of meat/ \$78,145

2006 Commercial Landings and Value – No open harvest season

Average Recreational Landings 1997-2006 - Unknown, **2006** – No open harvest season

Status of Fisheries Management Plan (FMP) - The bay scallop FMP was initiated a year earlier (July 2005) than originally planned because landings decreased significantly over the past several years. The FMP is scheduled for completion by June 2007. The draft FMP is proposing to implement an indefinite prohibited take period until an independent sampling indicator can determine re-opening with further measures in place before re-opening to ensure spawning is complete and the economic yield is at an optimum for fishermen.

Research and Data Needs - Stock identification, recreational landings, recruitment, population abundance, and socioeconomic data. Enhancement, cownose ray predation, habitat alterations and water quality impacts to bay scallop survival are recommended research items.

Current Regulations (2007) - None

Harvest Season – No open harvest season until an independent sampling indicator can determine re-opening.

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

Historical and Current Maximum Age - 2 years/1.5 years

Abundance Index 2006 –

Core Sound - 0.42 (July), 0.33 (Oct.) per two-minute tow

Bogue Sound - 3.08 (July), 1.00 (Oct.) per two-minute tow

Habits and Habitats - Bay scallops are estuarine dependent mollusks found in grass beds. Bay scallops are hermaphroditic (contain both sex cells) bivalve and mature and spawn in a year. Their lifespan is only 12-26 months. In North Carolina, bay scallops spawn predominantly from August through January 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](#)