



ASMFC

FISHERIES *focus*

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Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission • 1050 N. Highland Street • Suite 200A-N • Arlington, VA

Working towards healthy, self-sustaining populations for all Atlantic coast fish species or successful restoration well in progress by the year 2015

Robert E. Beal Named ASMFC Executive Director

Paul Diodati, Chair of the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission, has announced the selection of Robert E. Beal as the Commission's new Executive Director. Mr. Beal has been with the Commission for more than 15 years and has served as the Director for the Interstate Fishery Management Program for the past 10 years. The announcement was made on October 23rd at the Commission's 71st Annual Meeting in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.



"After a thorough search and interview process, Bob clearly demonstrated he possesses the leadership skills, expertise and management qualities required to lead the Commission as it enters into a new phase of strategic planning and cooperative partnerships among the states, interstate commissions, and federal agencies," stated Mr. Diodati. "Bob will be an outstanding representative of the states to the Congress and to the commercial, recreational and environmental stakeholders that depend on our effective stewardship of Atlantic coastal fishery resources."

In accepting the position, Mr. Beal stated, "I am honored and privileged to serve as the Commission's Executive Director and work for people I admire and for a cause I feel so strongly about. It's been nearly 20 years since passage of the Atlantic Coastal Fisheries Cooperative Management Act and the states, through the Commission, have achieved many impressive accomplishments from species rebuilding, improved data collection, to sound stock assessments for data poor species such as American eel and shad and river herring. I am excited about the opportunity to work with the states, in concert with our federal partners, to build upon these successes and address the challenges that are ahead."

The Commission was formed over 70 years ago by the 15 Atlantic coast states to assist in managing and conserving their shared coastal fishery resources. With the recognition that fish do not adhere to political boundaries, the states formed an Interstate Compact, which was approved by the U.S. Congress in 1942. The states have found that their mutual interest in sustaining healthy coastal fishery resources is best promoted by working together cooperatively, in collaboration with the federal government. With this approach, the states uphold their collective fisheries management responsibilities in a cost-effective, timely, and responsive fashion.

Inside This Issue

Species Profile: Summer Flounder
Page 4

Study Explores Alternative Measures to Manage Summer Flounder Recreational Fishery
Page 5

ASMFC Presents George Lapointe Prestigious Captain David H. Hart Award
Page 6

Spiny Dogfish Board Sets Quotas for 2013 - 2015
Page 7

Horseshoe Crab Board Sets Annual Specifications in Adaptive Multispecies Management
Page 7

Winter Flounder Board Adopts Addendum II and Approves Draft Addendum III for Public Comment
Page 8

Science Highlight: A Cool Method for Biological Sample Collection
Page 9

ACCSP Contributes Data to Film on Atlantic Coast Conservation
Page 10

ASMFC Comings & Goings Page 10

ASMFC Employee of the Quarter Named Page 11

Dr. Wilson Laney Receives 1st Melissa Laser Fish Habitat Conservation Award Page 11

The Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission was formed by the 15 Atlantic coastal states in 1942 for the promotion and protection of coastal fishery resources. The Commission serves as a deliberative body of the Atlantic coastal states, coordinating the conservation and management of nearshore fishery resources, including marine, shell and diadromous species. The fifteen member states of the Commission are: Maine, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, and Florida.

Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

Paul J. Diodati (MA), Chair
Dr. Louis B. Daniel, III (NC), Vice-Chair

Robert E. Beal, Executive Director
Patrick A. Campfield, Science Director
Toni Kerns, Acting ISFMP Director
Laura C. Leach, Director of Finance & Administration

Tina L. Berger, Editor
tberger@asmfc.org

703.842.0740 Phone • 703.842.0741 Fax
www.asmfc.org

Upcoming Meetings

12/3 - 7:

South Atlantic Fishery Management Council, Sheraton Atlantic Beach, 2717 W. Fort Macon Road, Atlantic Beach, North Carolina.

12/4 & 5:

The 13th Flatfish Biology Conference, Water's Edge Resort, Westbrook Connecticut.

12/10 (begins at 1 PM) - 13 (ends at Noon):

ASMFC Atlantic Striped Bass Stock Assessment Committee, Hotel at Arundel Preserve, 7795 Arundel Mills Boulevard, Hanover, Maryland; 410.796.9830.

12/11 - 13:

Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council, The Pier 5 Hotel, 711 Eastern Avenue, Baltimore, Maryland.

12/12 (10AM):

ACCSP Data Warehouse Webinar. To register for the webinar please visit <https://www3.gotomeeting.com/register/468061758>.

12/14 (8:30 AM - 5:00 PM):

ASMFC Atlantic Menhaden Management Board, Best Western Plus Hotel and Conference Center, Chesapeake Room, 5625 O'Donnell Street, Baltimore, Maryland; 410.633.9500.

1/8 - 10:

ASMFC American Lobster Stock Assessment Data Workshop, Massachusetts Division of Marine Fisheries, 1213 Purchase Street, Third Floor, New Bedford, Massachusetts.

1/28 (begins at 1 PM) - 2/1 (ends at 1 PM):

ASMFC Introduction to Stock Assessment Workshop, The Hotel at Arundel Preserve, 7795 Arundel Mills Boulevard Hanover, Maryland.

1/29 - 31:

New England Fishery Management Council, Sheraton Harborside, Portsmouth, New Hampshire.

2/12 - 14:

Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council, Embassy Suites Hampton Roads, 1700 Coliseum Drive, Hampton, Virginia.

2/18 - 21:

ASMFC Winter Meeting, Crowne Plaza Old Town Alexandria, 901 N. Fairfax Street, Alexandria, Virginia; 703.683.6000.

3/12 - 14:

ASMFC American Lobster Stock Assessment Modeling Workshop, location to be determined.

4/1 - 5:

ASMFC Technical Committee Meeting Week, location to be determined.

ASMFC Fisheries Focus, Vol. 21, Issue 7, October/November 2012

Challenges and Opportunities Ahead

I am excited and humbled to have been given the incredible opportunity to be the Commission's Executive Director. I have inherited a number of great things to make this transition much easier: an amazing professional and talented staff, energetic and dedicated Commissioners, and a financially sound organization. I am also fortunate to have worked for and learned from two strong leaders, Jack Dunnigan and Vince O'Shea, during my 15 years at the Commission. Collectively, this provides me with a solid foundation to work with the Commissioners to meet their goal of responsible stewardship of Atlantic coast marine resources.

The Commission and its member states have an impressive track record of fishery management successes; however significant obstacles and challenges lie ahead with the consideration of uncertain fiscal resources, competing ocean uses, predator/prey interactions, and habitat, in addition to the more traditional fishery considerations of stock assessment, rebuilding, and the allocation of finite resources. I look forward to capitalizing on the Commissioners' passion and dedication, the power of state cooperation, and the partnerships with our federal colleagues to address these challenges.

The most pressing challenge is that of limited fiscal resources. Chronic budget decreases have hampered fisheries management agencies for many years. However, state budgets and federal support for state activities have recently reached a tipping point. The data streams from many important fishery surveys and monitoring programs have been halted or greatly reduced. This lack of data will be felt almost immediately in increased uncertainty in estimates of stock status. Uncertainty is translated into risk, and managers often respond to risk with reduced fishing opportunities.

Currently, the state and federal resources available to support fisheries science and management are not sufficient to meet the legal mandates and stakeholder desires. The Commission will need to expand its efforts to prioritize tasks, seek innovative funding sources, and foster partnerships to increase efficiency and share workloads. This Commission is also committed to working with the Gulf and Pacific States Commissions to highlight the importance of our work, the states' ability to leverage resources, and the need for restored appropriations to legislation such as the Interjurisdictional Fisheries Act. The combined voices of 23 coastal states can form a powerful and effective coalition to ensure adequate resources are available to manage our nation's coastal marine resources.

The Commission will also have to consider factors beyond the Commission's authority, such as climate change, habitat degradation, and water quality. These issues each will impact

the productivity and distribution of fish stocks. While striving to create partnerships to address environmental issues, the Commission will need to consider adjusting management programs to account for these changes.

Despite the enormity of the challenges that lie before us, I am confident in the ability of the states, working with our federal partners and stakeholders, to address these challenges head on. I firmly believe that the states can achieve more collectively than they can individually and I am committed to supporting a process that facilitates the achievement of their shared goals.

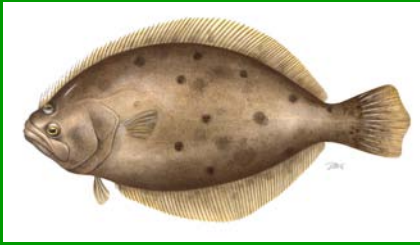
State and federal fisheries legislation, such as state shark finning bills and efforts to open portions of the EEZ to striped bass fishing remove fisheries management decisions from the established transparent and inclusive process. Fisheries decisions made through legislation often result in piecemeal regulations with limited consideration for available science or stakeholder input. Competing ocean uses, marine spatial planning, and Endangered Species Act decisions will also likely impact the management landscape in the coming years. The Commission will need to be aware of these activities and engage as needed to ensure fisheries issues and impacts are fully considered.

Despite the enormity of the challenges that lie before us, I am confident in the ability of the states, working with our federal partners and stakeholders, to address these challenges head on. I firmly believe that the states can achieve more collectively than they can individually and I am committed to supporting a process that facilitates the achievement of their shared goals.

In closing, it is important for me to give thanks as I transition into my new position. I am grateful to the Commissioners for entrusting me with the responsibility of serving as the next Executive Director. Also, I need to thank the staff. During times of transition there is always uncertainty. Every member of the staff has remained professional and continued their commitment to helping the Commissioners continue their important work.

Most importantly, I want to extend my sympathies and well wishes to our Commissioners, friends, fishermen, and coastal residents in New Jersey and New York impacted by Superstorm Sandy. We are all pulling for you to stay safe and quickly rebuild to restore your important coastal communities.

Summer Flounder
Paralichthys dentatus



ASMFC Management Area:
MA - NC

Interesting Facts:

- * **Left-eyed flatfish (both eyes on left side of its body when viewed from above with the top fin facing up).**
- * **They begin with eyes on both sides of its body; the right eye migrates to the left side in 20-32 days.**
- * **Summer flounder are called chameleons of the sea because of their ability to match the bottom on which they are found.**

Age at Maturity: 50% mature by age 1 (9.8") for males and age 1.5 (11") for females.

Largest Recorded: 24.2 pounds, 38.5" (Bradley, NJ, 2007).

Stock Status: rebuilt (not overfished and overfishing not occurring).

Species Profile: Summer Flounder

Successful Joint Management Results in Rebuilt Stock

Introduction

Highly valued by both recreational and commercial fishermen, summer flounder have been jointly managed by the Commission and Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council (MAFMC) for more than two decades. The population is now fully rebuilt in response to the joint management program, with current spawning stock biomass estimated at 125 million pounds, slightly below the plan target of 132.4 million pounds. Summer flounder is not overfished and overfishing is not occurring. The Commission and MAFMC established a 21.9 million pound total allowable landings for the 2012 fishing season, with the recreational harvest limit set at 8.76 million pounds and the commercial harvest set at 13.1 million pounds.

Life History

Summer flounder are found in inshore and offshore waters from Nova Scotia, Canada to the east coast of Florida. In the U.S., they are most abundant in the Mid-Atlantic region from Cape Cod, Massachusetts to Cape Fear, North Carolina. Summer flounder usually begin to spawn at age two or three, at lengths of about 10 inches. Spawning occurs in the fall while the fish are moving offshore. Spawning migration is linked to sexual maturity, with the oldest and largest fish migrating first. As in their seasonal migrations, spawning summer flounder in the northern portion of the geographic range spawn and move offshore (depths of 120 to 600 feet) earlier than those in the southern part of the range. Larvae migrate to inshore coastal and estuarine areas from October to May. The larvae, or fry, move to bottom waters upon reaching the coast and spend their first year in bays and other inshore areas. At the end of their first year, some juveniles join the adult offshore migration.

Adults spend most of their life on or near the sea bottom burrowing in the sandy substrate. Flounder lie in ambush and wait for their prey. They are quick and efficient predators with well-developed teeth allowing them to capture small fish, squid, sea worms, shrimp, and other crustaceans. A great fishing technique to take advantage of their ambush behavior is to fish close to bottom with moving bait.

Commercial & Recreational Fisheries

Summer flounder are one of the most sought after commercial and recreational fish along the Atlantic coast, with landings at approximately 22.4 million pounds in 2011. Using baseline data from 1980 to 1989, the current plan allocates the summer flounder quota on a 60/40 percent basis to commercial and recreational fisheries, respectively.

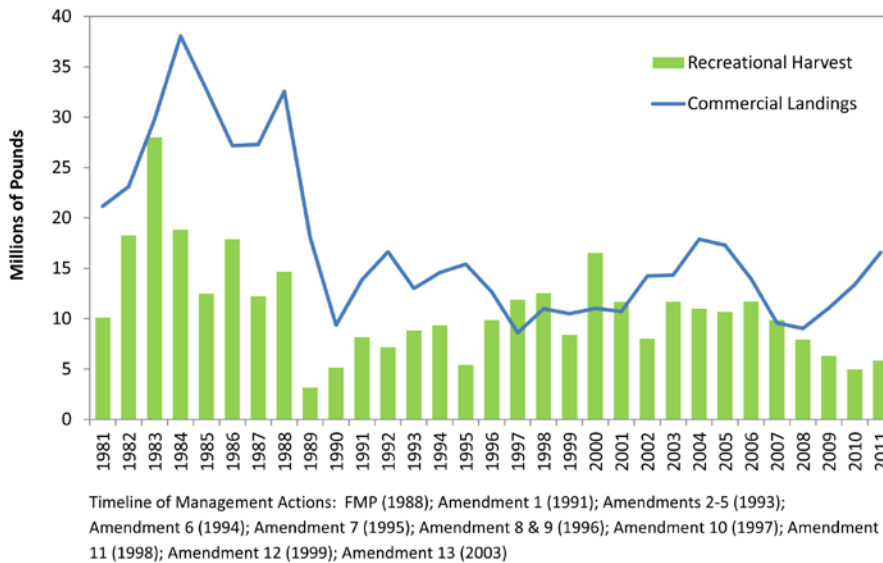
Two major commercial trawl fisheries exist — a winter offshore and a summer inshore. Summer flounder are also taken by pound nets and gillnets in estuarine waters. Throughout the 1980s, commercial landings ranged from 21 to 38 million pounds. By 1990, landings reached a low of nine million pounds and have since fluctuated between nine and 17 million pounds. In 1993, the coastwide quota was implemented for the first time, setting a commercial landings limit of 12.35 million pounds. Commercial quotas have since ranged from 9.46 to 18.18 million pounds. Commercial landings (which are limited by the quota) have ranged from 8.81 million pounds to 18.17 million pounds since 1993. 2011 commercial landings were estimated at 16.6 million pounds.



MA DMF biologist, Kelley Dumas, with summer flounder captured as part of a survival study.

Figure 1. Summer Flounder Commercial Landings and Recreational Harvest

Source: Personal communication NMFS Fisheries Statistics Division, Silver Spring, MD, 2012



Summer flounder are also highly prized in the recreational fishery. Anglers catch summer flounder from the shore, piers, and boats with hook and line. From 1980 through 2004, recreational landings varied widely from a high of 38 million pounds in 1980 to a low of three million pounds in 1989. Starting in 1993, quotas were implemented for the recreational fishery. From 1993 to 2011, landings ranged from 5.1 to 16.5 million pounds. 2011 recreational harvest was estimated at 5.9 million pounds.

Stock Status

The 2012 stock assessment update indicates the stock was not overfished and overfishing was not occurring in 2011 relative to the current biological reference points. The fishing mortality rate was estimated to be 0.241 in 2011, well below the threshold fishing mortality reference point of 0.31. SSB was estimated to be 125.7 million pounds in 2011, just below the biomass target reference point of 132.4 million pounds). The stock was

determined to be rebuilt in 2010 based on the 2011 assessment update.

Since 1982 average recruitment (the number of juvenile fish that will be able to reproduce that year) has been 42 million fish. This largest class was in 1983 at 81 million fish and the lowest was in 1988 at 13 million fish. The 2009 year class is estimated to be 47 million fish. Both the 2010 and 2011 year classes are estimated to be smaller than average.

Atlantic Coastal Management

The Commission approved the first Fishery Management Plan (FMP) for Summer Flounder in 1982, followed by a similar FMP approved by the Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council in 1988. Since then, both agencies have made significant revisions to the plan, increasing the protection of juvenile fish and ensuring the maintenance of an adequate spawning population. This increased protection was achieved through the implementation of larger minimum size limits across all sectors, increased mesh sizes, and decreased recreational possession limits. Cumulatively, these changes have contributed to

continued on page 8

Study Explores Alternative Measures to Manage Summer Flounder Recreational Fishery

The Partnership for Mid-Atlantic Fisheries Science has funded a study to compare different ways of managing the recreational fishery for summer flounder. Currently, states modify their bag limits, minimum size limits, and length of the fishing season each year to achieve their target harvest in the summer flounder recreational fishery. This strategy has had varying levels of success in achieving the management program's goals of staying within the harvest limit and minimizing discards.

The objectives for this study are to evaluate how well alternative sets of management options are expected to achieve fishery goals. A computer model has been developed to compare how well several approaches for setting size limits and bag limits allow high levels of harvest, but avoid over-

ages and population declines. Minimum size limits, slot size limits, and bag limits are being evaluated in this study. Several additional metrics for performance are also considered, such as the frequency and severity of overages, effect on the spawning stock, portion of the catch that is discarded, and frequency of regulation change.

Results for this study will be reviewed by the Commission's Summer Flounder Technical Committee at its November meeting. This research has been conducted in close consultation with the scientific and management community for summer flounder. The research group includes scientists from University of Maryland, Rutgers University, North Carolina State University, and University of Massachusetts – Dartmouth.

ASMFC Presents George Lapointe Prestigious Captain David H. Hart Award

The Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission presented George Lapointe, long-time ASMFC Commissioner and former Maine Commissioner of Marine Resources, the Captain David H. Hart Award, its highest annual award, at the Commission's 71st Annual Meeting in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

"George Lapointe is without a doubt a true embodiment of Captain Dave. For more than 30 years he has provided consistent fisheries management leadership at the state, interstate, and federal levels; all the while passionately supporting the Commission and its vision of stock rebuilding and sustainable resource management," stated Jack Travelstead, Chair of ASMFC's Award Committee. "He possesses the unique ability to temper the most heated debate with humor and a common sense approach transforming conflict into workable solutions."

Serving as both an employee at the Commission and as a Commissioner from Maine, Mr. Lapointe has shown an unwavering commitment and dedication to the success of marine fisheries management. In his first Commission position as Council Liaison, he fostered knowledge between the Commission and the Regional Councils. In 1994, Mr. Lapointe returned to the Commission as the ISFMP Director where he served for nearly four years. During that time, he was instrumental in the development of the Interstate Fisheries Management Program Charter and worked with state members, federal partners, and a broad constituency to promote efficiency, and foster outreach and public participation in the Commission's fisheries management process.

Despite being considered an "outsider," Mr. Lapointe was appointed as the

Commissioner of Maine Department of Marine Resources in 1998. He served as Commissioner for 12 years, directing a critical marine resource agency at one of its most difficult times with a conscience for all those involved. He was so well respected for his understanding of fisheries management and his commitment to his state's fishing industries, he served at the pleasure of two Governors and was supported by a very active and challenging constituency.

with. When veteran Commissioners with over 100 combined years of service retired, he personally oversaw a critical transition in Commission leadership, readying the next generation to take up the charge of pursuing the states' collective mission of sustainable resource management. He also guided states' efforts to conserve and rebuild diadromous species, completing the long-awaited American shad benchmark stock assessment and the development and adoption of a new amendment for river herring,



From left: Dr. Louis Daniel, ASMFC Vice-Chair, Jack Travelstead, ASMFC Award Committee Chair, Award Recipient George Lapointe, Paul Diodati, ASMFC Chair and Robert Beal, ASMFC Executive Director

Mr. Lapointe was elected Commission Vice-Chair in 2004 and Chair in 2006, serving three years as Chair. Under his guidance, the Commission embarked on an extensive strategic planning effort, culminating in the development of the 2009-2013 Strategic Plan. The Plan formalized, for the first time, Commissioner values in pursuit of the Commission's vision and mission, and reaffirmed the Commission's commitment to transparency and accountability in its decision making process.

Mr. Lapointe recognizes his success in natural resource management is due to the accumulated knowledge and experience of those he has had the honor of serving

Throughout his career, Mr. Lapointe has strived to be fully informed of the issues (from all perspectives – science, management and user groups) and share that knowledge with next generation of fisheries managers and scientists. He truly embodies the spirit and character of the Captain David H. Hart Award. The Commission instituted the Award in 1991 to recognize individuals who have made outstanding efforts to improve Atlantic coast marine fisheries. The award is named for one of the Commission's longest serving members, who dedicated himself to the advancement and protection of marine fishery resources.

Spiny Dogfish Board Sets Quotas for 2013 - 2015

The Commission's Spiny Dogfish and Coastal Sharks Management Board approved spiny dogfish quotas for the 2013/14, 2014/15, and 2015/16 fishing seasons (May 1 – April 30), with a maximum possession limit of 4,000 pounds per day for the northern region states (Maine through Connecticut). The approved quotas represent an approximately five million pound increase in quota over the 2012/13 season. State-specific shares for the northern region and southern states (New York through North Carolina) are provided in the accompanying table. Any overages from the previous fishing seasons will be paid back by the region or state in the following season, as has been done in years past. The Mid-Atlantic and New England Fishery Management Councils (MAFMC) forwarded the same recommendation to the National Marine Fisheries Service Northeast Regional Administrator for final action prior to the start of the 2013/14 fishing season.

The Board's action responds to the findings of the 2012 Northeast Fisheries Science Center (NEFSC) Update on the Status of Spiny Dogfish, which estimates that spiny dogfish are not overfished and not

experiencing overfishing. Spawning stock biomass (SSB) was estimated at 474.97 million pounds in 2012, and has exceeded the target (351.23 million pounds) for the past five years. Fishing mortality is estimated to be 0.114 in 2011, well below the plan's threshold (0.2439). The recommendation from the MAFMC Science and Statistical Committee (SSC) took into account the projected record low recruitment from 1997 to 2003, and the recommended quotas are not expected to cause SSB to decline below the biomass threshold.

pounds in 2009; 13,230 pounds in 2010; 273,000 pounds in 2011). It is anticipated the Canadian dogfish harvest will not increase in the near future given the lack of demand for the product and the subsequent closure of Canadian spiny dogfish processors.

Additionally, based on the recommendation of its Coastal Sharks Technical Committee, the Board approved a 36 fish possession limit for sharks in the large coastal sharks (LCS) species group (silky,

**ASMFC regional/state quotas and possession limits for the 2013 to 2015 fishing seasons (in pounds).
Quotas will be adjusted for any over/under harvests in the previous fishing season.**

	Northern Region (ME - CT)	NY	NJ	DE	MD	VA	NC
Possession Limit	4,000	To be specified by the individual southern region states					
% Allocation	58%	2.707%	7.644%	0.896%	5.920%	10.795%	14.036%
2013/14	23,688,360	1,105,593	3,121,962	365,944	2,417,846	4,408,894	5,732,583
2014/15	24,234,720	1,131,093	3,193,969	374,385	2,473,613	4,510,583	5,864,802
2015/16	24,115,240	1,125,516	3,178,222	372,539	2,461,418	4,488,345	5,835,888

Discards have remained relatively stable around 11 million pounds over the past decade and are expected to remain near that level in the future fishing seasons. Canadian landings have also decreased significantly in recent years (249,000

tiger, blacktip, spinner, bull, lemon, nurse, scalloped hammerhead, great hammerhead, and smooth hammerhead sharks) for 2013. The Board increased the LCS possession limit, consistent with the proposed federal shark specifications.

Horseshoe Crab Board Sets Annual Specifications in Adaptive Multispecies Management

The Commission's Horseshoe Crab Management Board has approved the harvest specifications for horseshoe crabs of Delaware Bay origin. Under the Adaptive Resource Management (ARM) Framework, the Board set a harvest limit of 500,000 Delaware Bay male horseshoe crabs and zero female horseshoe crabs for the 2013 season. Based on the allocation mechanism established in Addendum VII, the accompanying quotas were set for the states of New Jersey, Delaware, Maryland and Virginia, which harvest horseshoe crabs of Delaware Bay origin.

The ARM Framework, established through Addendum VII, incorporates both shorebird and horseshoe crab abundance levels to set optimized harvest levels for horseshoe crabs of Delaware Bay origin. It was developed in recognition of the relationship between horseshoe crab eggs and shorebirds in the Delaware Bay Region. The optimized harvest level will be reevaluated annually, allowing for management to adapt to the changes in the population levels of horseshoe crabs and shorebirds as a result of the regulations. For more information, please contact Marin Hawk, FMP Coordinator, at mhawk@asmfc.org.

	Delaware Bay Origin Horseshoe Crab Quota (no. of crabs)	Total Quota
State	Male Only	Male Only
Delaware	162,136	162,136
New Jersey	162,136	162,136
Maryland	141,112	255,980
Virginia*	34,615	81,331

*Virginia harvest refers to harvest east of the COLREGS line only

Summer Flounder Species Profile (continued from page 5)

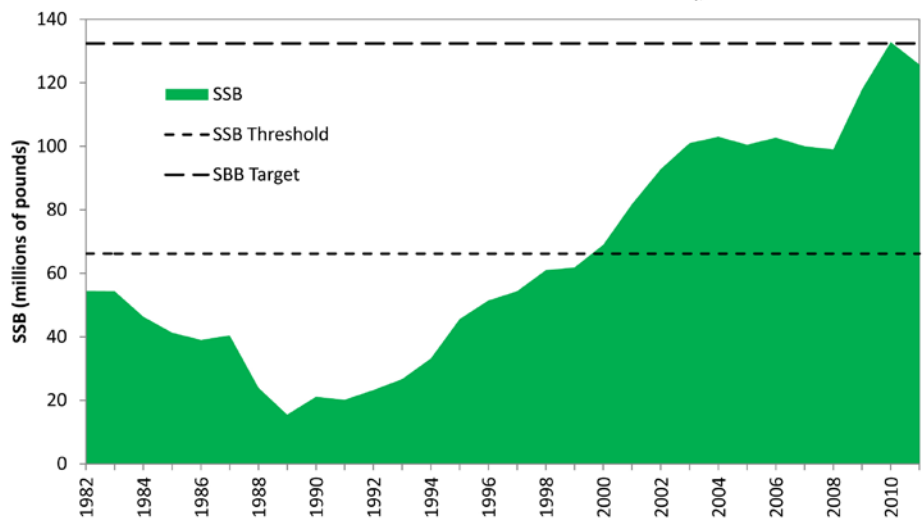
rebuilding the resource. This is not to say that challenges in managing this species do not still exist. Issues related to sector allocation and annual harvest levels persist. While states have adopted management measures to stay within their commercial and recreational quotas, overages continue to occur, particularly in the recreational sector. Additionally, managers and scientists continually strive to improve the data and science used to manage this species.

Managers are currently considering additional potential tools for summer flounder recreational management. These tools include maximum size limits, which would allow for slot limits, and mandatory regions that would group specific states together to set like regulations.

For more information, please contact Toni Kerns, Acting ISFMP Director, at tkerns@asmfc.org or 703.842.0740.

Figure 2. Summer Flounder Spawning Stock Biomass (SSB)

Source: NMFS NEFSC Stock Assessment Summary, 2012



Timeline of Management Actions: FMP (1988); Amendment 1 (1991); Amendments 2-5 (1993); Amendment 6 (1994); Amendment 7 (1995); Amendment 8 & 9 (1996); Amendment 10 (1997); Amendment 11 (1998); Amendment 12 (1999); Amendment 13 (2003)

Winter Flounder Board Finalizes Addendum II & Approves Draft Addendum III for Public Comment

The Commission's Winter Flounder Management Board approved Addendum II to Amendment 1 to the Interstate Fishery Management Plan for the Inshore Stocks of Winter Flounder. The Addendum modifies the commercial and recreational management requirements for the Gulf of Maine (GOM) stock in response to updated stock status information and recent federal action to increase the GOM winter flounder

state waters' estimated harvest level. Specifically, the commercial trip limit has been increased to 500 pounds per trip and the recreational season has been expanded to year round. These measures apply only to GOM state waters' fisheries until June 1, 2013.

A peer reviewed stock assessment (SAW/SARC 52) of GOM winter flounder was completed in 2011, which changed the stock's status to not experiencing overfishing, although the overfished status could not be determined. NOAA Fisheries responded to this finding by more than doubling the ACL for the remainder of 2011 fishing year. The ACL was nearly doubled again for the 2012 fishing year. The state waters estimated harvest limit for the 2012 fishing year was increased to 272 mt, a 450% increase from 60 mt in 2010.

The Board also approved Draft Addendum III for public comment. The Draft Addendum proposes to establish output controls for GOM state waters for both recreational and commercial fisheries in order to stay within the annually established state waters harvest limit. The proposed controls include trip limits, size limits, area closures, seasons, and possession limits to be determined by the Board on an annual basis. The Draft Addendum also proposes a trigger to reduce commercial trip limits when a percentage of the state water harvest (established by NOAA Fisheries) has been reached.

Addendum II will be available on the Commission website (www.asmfc.org) under *Breaking News*. Draft Addendum III will be released over the next month. It is anticipated that New England states will be conducting public hearings on Draft Addendum III; information on the Draft Addendum's availability and the details of state hearings will be released once they are finalized.



Juvenile winter flounder.

Science Highlight: A Cool Method for Biological Sample Collection from Recreational Fisheries

Fishery scientists and managers in Virginia, South Carolina, and Georgia have developed and implemented innovative and cost-effective programs to obtain informative biological samples from fish carcasses that would have otherwise been tossed in the dumpster or left for the scavengers. State agencies have teamed with bait and tackle shops, marinas, and public boat landings

to install and maintain chest freezers where recreational anglers can donate filleted fish carcasses with tails and heads intact. Identification charts are posted on the freezers to assist anglers with identifying and donating target species. Target species are those caught primarily in recreational fisheries, such as red drum, and other economically important species that are collected infrequently in commercial fisheries and fishery-independent research surveys (Figure 1). These species are often caught in habitats not accessible to other methods of data collection, such as trawl surveys, which demonstrates the significance of freezer donation programs.

There have been 3,144 carcasses donated between 2007 and 2011 in Virginia, 10,010 carcasses donated between 1995 and 2012 in South Carolina, and 44,853 carcasses donated between 1997 and 2011 in Georgia (Figure 2).

Anglers complete a form with details on location, time, gear, and other information relevant to the catch. The forms and legal sized carcasses are placed in plastic

bags and stored in the freezers until they are collected by agency representatives for processing. The previously discarded carcasses can provide life history information including length, age, sex, and maturity data essential for stock assessments. Bony structures, including opercula and otoliths, are extracted from the carcasses and the rings formed by calcium accumulation

negative impacts of fishing, such as growth overfishing. Growth overfishing occurs when fish are harvested before they grow to a size that produces the greatest yield in catch. Data from these freezer donation programs have been incorporated in past stock assessments including the SouthEast Data, Assessment, and Review (SEDAR) of cobia, Spanish mackerel, and red drum.

Figure 1. Total carcasses processed by species in 2011 in the Georgia DNR Marine Sportfish Recovery Project.

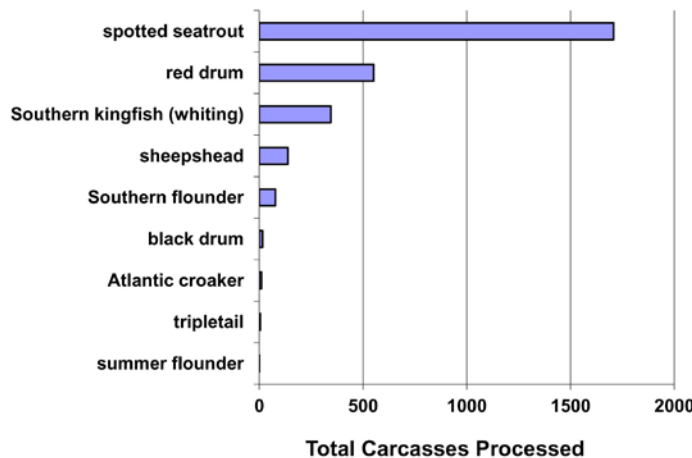
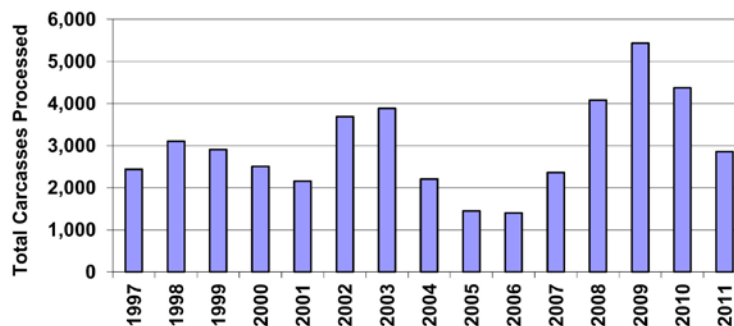


Figure 2. Total carcasses processed by year from 1997-2011 in the Georgia DNR Marine Sportfish Recovery Project.



during growth are counted to determine the age of the fish, similar to counting the rings of a tree trunk. Trends in the length-at-age and length frequencies are recorded over time. Reproductive information can help determine sex ratios and maturity schedules (percentage of fish mature-at-age). These stock structure characteristics can provide insight into the productivity of the stock and shifts in stock structure can alert managers and scientists to

In appreciation of angler's participation, rewards are presented to participating anglers including customized t-shirts, hats, or tape measurers. Additionally, some programs will mail updated information on donated fish to participating anglers. So the next time you are fortunate enough to catch your dinner, be sure to consider donating the carcasses to support sustainable fisheries. The number and location of freezers can vary depending on funding and participation. For more information on freezer locations and details, please contact the relevant state representatives listed below.

VMRC Marine Sportfish Collection Project - Joe Cimino at Joe.Cimino@mrc.virginia.gov

SC DNR Freezer Fish Program - Chris McDonough at McDonoughC@dnr.sc.gov

GA DNR Marine Sportfish Recovery Project - Kirby Wolfe at Kirby.Wolfe@dnr.state.ga.us

For information on coordinating coast-wide biological sample collection, please contact Jeff Kipp, Stock Assessment Scientist, at JKipp@asmfc.org.

ACCSP Contributes Data to Film on Atlantic Coast Conservation

Almost a decade ago a creative and inspiring couple in Minnesota, Nancy Goetzinger and Tom Ramsay, both professional photographers and environmental advocates, began sharing their love of the Atlantic coast and travel with their local community using images and anecdotes. After a move to Leesburg, Virginia and some advancement on their presentation, the husband and wife team have produced a video, "Life on the Edge: America's Atlantic Coast," released to DVD on October 3, 2012. The goal of the film is to raise awareness of and appreciation for the natural world using images coupled with science and storytelling. A great variety of life forms are presented, from nesting gannets in Newfoundland, to blue crabs in the Chesapeake Bay, to clams in the tidal flats of the Carolinas.



Image (c) 2012 by Tom Ramsay, The Image Center.

The Atlantic Coastal Cooperative Statistics Program was sought after by the filmmakers to provide up-to-date fisheries-dependent data on the Chesapeake Bay. The Chesapeake Bay is featured as both a remarkable wildlife habitat and a vital commercial resource in the 56-minute production. Goetzinger's previous research had figures on the volume and dockside value of seafood from the Chesapeake that dated back to the mid-90s. Knowing that many species had been diminished since that time, Goetzinger worked with the ACCSP Data Team to understand what type of commercial fishing information would be relevant, therefore, forming her custom data request. Staff took it from there to combine the most recent Maryland and Virginia fisheries reports (culled down to include just the Chesapeake Bay) and shared the results within two days. The updated information includes numbers from 2010 and is reflected in the narration of the film. For more information on Nancy Goetzinger and Tom Ramsay, please visit <http://www.momentwithnature.com>.

Do You Have a Specific Question for the ACCSP Data Team or Want to Submit a Custom Data Request?

If you have a unique question or cannot retrieve the data you desire from the Data Warehouse, you should contact us at support@accsp.org. A staff member from the Data Team will work with you to create a custom data request. Know what species, geographical span, temporal span, gears, etc. are relevant to your query. You should also be able to define your fishery. The term 'fishery' can refer to harvest of a particular species with a specific gear or be defined by a precise geographic area.

The Data Team will respond to your request within two weeks. However, issues with confidentiality and partner clearance can extend this turn-around time. Please allow for this lead time when you are submitting a custom data request.

ASMFC Comings & Goings

Commissioners

Senator Stan White - Senator Stan White has been appointed to serve as North Carolina's Legislative Commissioner to the ASMFC. Senator White was appointed to the North Carolina Senate by Governor Bev Perdue on January 25, 2011 to fill the unexpired term of former Senator Basnight. He is a member of Senate Committees on Agriculture/Environment/Natural Resources; Commerce; Education/Higher Education; Finance; Insurance; Program Evaluation; State and Local Government; and Transportation. He was recently reelected to his seat.



For 36 years, Senator White has been general contractor, owner/operator of Stan White Realty & Construction, Inc. He is a former teacher and assistant principal in the Dare County School System.

continued on page 12

Mike Waine Receives ASMFC Employee of the Quarter

During his year and a half with the Commission, Mike Waine has helped to significantly improve several high profile fishery management plans (FMP), contributing to the Commission's Vision of "healthy, self-sustaining populations for all Atlantic coast fish species or successful restoration well in progress by the year 2015." In recognition of his accomplishments, Mike was named Employee of the Quarter for the fourth quarter of 2012.

A vast majority of Mike's workload over the last year has been focused on the development of Amendment 2 to the Interstate FMP for Atlantic Menhaden. Throughout the process, he has successfully communicated complex management issues to diverse groups of managers and stakeholders, attending dozens of public hearings up and down the coast. The controversy and political sensitivity of proposed menhaden management measures has demanded his tireless dedication, critical thinking, and commitment to this task. His efforts will enable our Commissioners to make difficult decisions regarding menhaden management. Concurrently, Mike coordinated the development of a new management program for northern shrimp through the development of Amendment 2 to the Northern Shrimp FMP, as well as Addendum I to the amendment which refines the northern shrimp annual specification process.



Mike's commitment to effective teamwork, excellence in performing his tasks, and his positive attitude make Mike a great co-worker and an invaluable asset to the Commission's fisheries management program. Mike has a Master's in Fisheries and Wildlife Sciences from North Carolina State University and a Bachelor of Science degree in Marine Biology from the University of North Carolina at Wilmington. As an Employee of the Quarter, he received a \$500 cash award, a small gift, and a letter of appreciation to be placed in his personnel record. In addition, his name is on the Employee of the Quarter plaque displayed in the Commission's lobby. Congratulations, Mike!

ACFHP Bestows First Melissa Laser Fish Habitat Conservation Award Upon Dr. R. Wilson Laney

At the welcome reception of the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission's 71st Annual Meeting, the Atlantic Coastal Fish Habitat Partnership (ACFHP) bestowed the first Melissa Laser Fish Habitat Conservation Award upon Dr. Wilson Laney of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for his exemplary work in furthering the conservation, protection, restoration, and enhancement of habitat for native Atlantic coastal, estuarine-dependent, and diadromous fishes.

Dr. Laney has served on the Commission's Habitat Committee for nearly two decades, and has served as its Chair. He was instrumental in the creation of the ACFHP and serves on its Steering Committee. He has been a key contributor to a range of important Commission and Partnership products and has played a vital role in bringing together management initiatives at the federal,

state, inter-state, and local levels. Dr. Laney possesses a deep commitment to conservation, a keen attention to sound science as the basis for resource management, and a friendly and engaging personality, qualities that embody Dr. Laser's own dedicated approach towards fish habitat conservation.

The award is established in memory of Dr. Melissa Laser, who was a biologist with the Maine Department of Marine Resources, where she worked tirelessly to protect, improve and restore aquatic ecosystems in Maine and along the entire Atlantic Coast. Dr. Laser brought her smiling dedication and enthusiasm to the Commission's Habitat



ACFHP Steering Committee Vice-Chair Chris Powell, Award Recipient Dr. Wilson Laney, and Jake Kritzer with Environmental Defense

Committee and ACFHP Steering Committee, catalyzed by the Commission in 2006. Her contributions to these committees and to her home state were tremendous. For more information, please contact Emily Greene, ACFHP Coordinator, at egreene@asmfc.org.

Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission
1050 N. Highland Street, Suite 200A-N
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ASMFC Comings & Goings (continued from page 10)

Senator White is a graduate of Manteo High School and East Carolina University. A native of Dare County, Senator White resides with wife, Susie, in Nags Head, North Carolina. Welcome aboard Senator White!

Staff

Danielle Chesky - For almost two 2 years, Danielle Chesky served as the Commission's Fishery Management Plan (FMP) Coordinator for horseshoe crab and several South Atlantic species. Over that time, she worked with the Delaware Bay Ecosystem Committee and Horseshoe Crab Board to use the Adaptive Resource Management Framework to set optimized harvest limits for horseshoe crabs of Delaware Bay origin for the 2013 season. She also oversaw the development of the first Interstate FMP for Black Drum. In addition, Danielle worked closely with the Executive Director as well as Legislative and Governor Appointed Commissioners on a number of legislative initiatives. In October, she accepted a position with the Northeast-Midwest Institute where she will be the Great Lakes Washington Program Director. We wish Danielle the very best!

Marin Hawk - In October, Marin Hawk joined the Commission staff as its newest Fishery Management Plan Coordinator. She will be coordinating the fishery management programs for horseshoe crab, spiny dogfish and coastal sharks. Marin comes to us from the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources (DNR) where she worked on a project between the DNR and National Marine Fisheries Service to update South Carolina's registry for recreational anglers. Marin has a Master's in Environmental Studies from the College of Charleston and a Bachelor of Arts (biology and environmental studies) from Washington University in St. Louis. Welcome aboard Marin!

