

Coastal Rivers Fisheries Reports – Cape Fear River

BASIC INFO:

River sampled:

Cape Fear River

Fisheries Biologists conducting sampling:

Kyle Rachels, Clint Morgeson, and Madison Polera

Date of sample:

3/7/2017

Area(s) of river sampled, and water temps:

Lock & Dam 1, Lock & Dam 2, Lock & Dam 3

Boat ramp(s) used to access river:

Lock & Dam 1, Lock & Dam 2, Lock & Dam 3

Species (spp) information:

- Spp. captured:
American Shad
Hickory Shad

- Numbers by spp:
American Shad 12
Hickory Shad 5

- Size range by spp:
American Shad 16–21 inches
Hickory Shad 14–15 inches

- Max size for spp:
American Shad 21 inches, 3.6lbs
Hickory Shad 15 inches, 1lb

- Sex ratio by spp:
M:F 1:0 Hickory Shad

M:F 2:1 American Shad

- Were the fish tagged?
No fish were tagged.

ADDITIONAL OBSERVATIONS:

River level and other water quality observations (turbidity, etc.):

The Cape Fear River was 57°F, slightly turbid, and experiencing low streamflow. Streamflow was 1,920 cfs at Lock & Dam 3. This is approximately 25% of the normal streamflow for early March.

Weather conditions on sampling date:

70°F, sunny and clear

Your observations of other people fishing on the river:

There were a considerable number of bank and boat anglers at Lock & Dam 2 in Elizabethtown. Fewer anglers were also present at Lock & Dam 1 and Lock & Dam 3. Most anglers were targeting American Shad.

Comments to anglers about your sampling results, and fishing-related conclusions that can be drawn from your data:

Although we observed approximately the same number of American Shad at Lock & Dam 1 and Lock & Dam 2, all of the Hickory Shad were at Lock & Dam 1. More Hickory Shad have been collected this year than in previous years. No shad have been collected at Lock & Dam 3 yet. The occasional Striped Bass has been seen in previous weeks. Peak migrations of American Shad and Striped Bass are still several weeks away.

2017 Cape Fear Creel Survey Information:

Dr. Drew Cathey of the N.C. Division of Marine Fisheries (DMF) shared some creel survey information collected from different stretches along the Cape Fear River. The creel surveys are conducted during March, April, and May in the upper portions of the Tar, Neuse, and Cape Fear rivers. The surveys are administered by the Division of Marine Fisheries through Coastal Recreational Fishing License funding, and the N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission assists with survey design and data interpretation in the upper portions of each river.

The Cape Fear River is still reporting American shad being consistently caught out of lock and dam #1, with a few being landed out of lock #2. Still no shad seen from lock and dam #3.

Shad and Striped Bass Regulations for Cape Fear River

The daily bag limit is 10 shad per angler, of which five (5) may be an American (white) shad on the Cape Fear River and its tributaries.

Striped Bass may not be possessed in the Cape Fear River or its tributaries.