

Coastal Rivers Fisheries Reports – Cape Fear River

BASIC INFO:

River sampled:

Cape Fear River

Fisheries Biologists conducting sampling:

Kyle Rachels, Clint Morgeson, Madison Polera

Date of sample:

4/4/2017

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

East Arcadia, Elizabethtown, Tar Heel

Boat ramp(s) used to access river:

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

Species (spp) information:

- Spp. captured:
American Shad
Striped Bass
- Numbers by spp:
American Shad 169
Striped Bass 4
- Size range by spp:
American Shad 15–22 in
Striped Bass 8–28 in
- Max size for spp:
American Shad 22 in, 4.5lbs
Striped Bass 28 in, 12lbs
- Sex ratio by spp:
American Shad 117 Males, 52 Females
Striped Bass 3 Females, 1 Juvenile
- Were the fish tagged?
Striped Bass were tagged with red or yellow external tags.

ADDITIONAL OBSERVATIONS:

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

The Cape Fear River was 67°F and slightly turbid. Streamflow was 3,180 cfs at Lock & Dam 1. This is approximately 50% of normal streamflow, however recent rains and releases from Jordan Lake will provide increasing streamflow.

Weather conditions on sampling date?

75°F and sunny.

Your observations of other people fishing on the river:

Anglers were catching American Shad at each of the Locks & Dams, with boat anglers reporting double-digit catches at Lock & Dam 2.

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

Large aggregates of American Shad were present at Lock & Dam 2 and Lock & Dam 3. Shad anglers should be successful at any of the Locks & Dams. Striped Bass are just beginning their spawning migration and will probably peak in the next several weeks.

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.

March 29–April 4

Lock and Dam #3 saw limited shad caught over the past week, a few males were landed. Lock and Dam #1 and #2 saw consistent action with good catches of American shad.