

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:

4/11/2017

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 246
Striped Bass 1
- Size range by spp:
American Shad 15–23 in
Striped Bass 17 in
- Max size for spp:
American Shad 23 in, 5.3lbs
Striped Bass 17 in, 2lbs
- Sex ratio by spp:
American Shad 163 Males, 83 Females
Striped Bass 1 Male
- 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 63°F and slightly turbid. Streamflow was 4,570 cfs at Lock & Dam 1 and close to the long-term average for mid-April.

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 1 and Lock & Dam 3.

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 each of the Lock & Dam sites. Shad anglers should be successful throughout the river. A pulse of water last weekend brought water temperatures down and seem to have kept Striped Bass in a holding pattern in the lower river. Striped Bass should begin spawning migrations in the next week or two.

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.

April 5–12

Lock and Dam #3 saw a few shad over the past week. Lock and Dam #1 and #2 saw limited action with a few American shad landed.