

Neuse River Fisheries Report – March 29, 2018

SAMPLING INFORMATION

Sample Date	Area Sampled	Water Temp (°F)	Boat Ramp Used
3/28/18	Above Goldsboro	50	Cox Ferry BAA

SPECIES INFORMATION

Species	Striped Bass	American Shad	Hickory Shad
Number Collected Weekly	2	5	15
Min. Size (in)	23	15	12
Max. Size (in)	24	22	17
Max. Weight (lb)	4	3	1
Sex Ratio Weekly (M:F)	1:1	4:1	3:1

BIOLOGISTS' OBSERVATIONS & RIVER CONDITIONS

Fisheries Biologists conducting sampling:

Courtney Buckley and Ben Ricks

Biologists' Observations:

Hickory Shad are prevalent in the Neuse River up to Goldsboro, but numbers are decreasing and spawning activity is beginning to wane. American Shad are beginning to show up on the spawning grounds in Goldsboro. The best American Shad fishing in the Neuse River should begin soon. Striped Bass are staging in the lower Neuse River but have yet to start moving up river in large schools. Recent cooler weather and rains have cooled the water significantly and have limited fish activity and migrations. Striped Bass activity should increase in the coming weeks as water temperatures warm.

River level and other water quality observations:

The water level has risen, is quite turbid, and water temperatures have cooled off significantly.

Weather conditions on sampling date:

Windy, Overcast, 30 to 60°F

Observations of people fishing on the river:

Shad anglers have been observed in the area from Goldsboro to Maple Cyprus. There have been a few anglers looking for Striped Bass mostly in the lower Neuse River.

2018 NEUSE RIVER CREEL SURVEY INFORMATION

March 19–25

Upper Region (Raleigh to Goldsboro)

Overall fishing effort and success were very low this past week and weekend. Most anglers were targeting shad and catfish with little to no success. A few Hickory Shad were reportedly caught near Raleigh over the weekend. Despite low fishing success, anglers have reported that the shad run is currently occurring in the upper Neuse.

Central Region (Core Creek to Seven Springs, Goldsboro Area)

Lower Hickory Shad catches from previous weeks, however the catch was still good. The best catches of shad were in the Maple Cypress area. Rising water levels from Kinston to Seven Springs slowed down the fishing between those areas.

Lower Region (Spring Garden to New Bern)

Best Catch this last week was at Lee's Landing. Anglers were catching Striped Bass (some slot sized), Red Drum, and several legal sized Spotted Seatrout. Unfavorable weather resulted in low fishing effort and success for the rest of the week.

Shad and Striped Bass Regulations for the Neuse River

The daily bag limit per angler is 10 Hickory Shad and American Shad in combination, only one of which can be an American Shad.

The daily creel limit for Striped Bass is two fish per angler, and the minimum size limit is 18 inches. In the inland and joint waters of the Neuse River, no Striped Bass between 22 inches and 27 inches in total length shall be retained in the daily creel limit. Striped Bass may only be harvested October 1–April 30.

Dr. Drew Cathey of the N.C. Division of Marine Fisheries (DMF) shared creel survey information collected from different stretches along the Neuse 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 DMF 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.