

Delaware River Striped Bass Spawning Stock Survey



ATTENTION ANGLERS!

Look for reward tags on striped bass you catch! Remember to write down the tag number and call the phone number printed on tag. Tag returns provide important information on migration, growth, and survival.

What does a reward tag look like?



Where should you look for tags?



REPORT REWARD TAGS:

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
177 Admiral Cochrane Dr.
Annapolis, MD 21401
1-800-448-8322

**For more information on the
Delaware River striped bass
survey contact:**

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Striped Bass Survey...

The striped bass, locally known as rockfish, is one of the most important fish species along the Atlantic Coast, supporting valuable commercial and recreational fisheries. Striped bass are native to coastal rivers and waters along the Atlantic Coast from the St. Lawrence River, Canada to the St. John's River, FL and in the Gulf of Mexico from western Florida to Louisiana. They have also been introduced along the Pacific Coast and in many rivers, lakes, and reservoirs throughout the U.S. and Europe. Striped bass are anadromous, meaning they use freshwater rivers for spawning and marine environments for growth and migration. Along with the Chesapeake Bay and Hudson River, the Delaware River is one of the main producer areas for striped bass along the Atlantic Coast. Spawning is triggered by increasing water temperatures during spring (57-68°F), which cause striped bass to ascend the freshwater portion of tidal rivers for spawning. In the Delaware River, the main spawning grounds are located between Wilmington, DE and Marcus Hook, PA. Spawning also occurs above Marcus Hook and in the C&D Canal. These areas are restricted to catch and release fishing from April 1 to May 31 and anglers using natural baits must use non-offset circle hooks.

To monitor the Delaware River striped bass population, the Division of Fish & Wildlife conducts an electrofishing survey on the main spawning grounds during spring. Striped bass are sampled using an electrofishing boat. All sexually mature fish captured are measured for length and females are also weighed. Several scales are removed from each fish for age and growth estimates and all fish ≥ 16 inches are tagged prior to release. Since 1991, more than 9,500 striped bass have been sampled, ranging in size and age from 7 to 48 inches and 2 to 19 years. On average, spawning males are typically much smaller in size and younger in age than females. Twenty percent of the fish tagged have been recaptured with 79% of tag returns reported by recreational anglers. Delaware River fish have been recaptured from North Carolina to Maine with most fish caught in waters of New Jersey (34%), Maryland (21%), Delaware (14%), and Massachusetts (8%). Results of this survey continue to provide important information on the Delaware River striped bass population.

