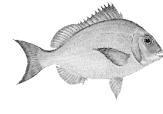
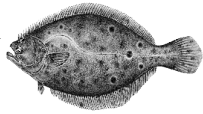
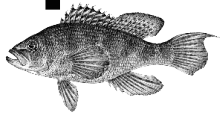


Sportfish Angler Data Collection Team

Marine Fisheries



As part of the Atlantic coastwide effort to manage and conserve striped bass, each year the Massachusetts Division of Marine Fisheries (*Marine Fisheries*) provides the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC) with size, age, and catch data. In 2002 to increase the information provided to ASMFC, *Marine Fisheries* initiated the Sportfish Angler Data Collection Team (SADCT) program, in which anglers collect biological samples from striped bass. Due to the success of the program, in 2013 *Marine Fisheries* expanded the program to include black sea bass, summer flounder (fluke), and scup.

Anglers who join the SADCT program are asked to follow simple sampling protocols to collect biological data. Anglers record length measurements, date of catch, general location of catch, and collect scale samples. *Marine Fisheries* requests that participants obtain **random** samples from the targeted species on both **kept** and **released** fish of **all sizes** throughout the sampling season (May-October).

Scale collection is very important, because much like trees, scales lay down rings (annuli) that can be used in age determination. Age determination along with length data collected by SADCT anglers can be used in stock assessment models. Information from these models can help determine which age classes are experiencing the highest fishing mortality, track growth of the overall stock, and facilitate proper management of that species in the state of Massachusetts.

To date over 26,000 samples have been collected thanks to the efforts of dedicated SADCT volunteers. Members of the Plum Island Surfcasters as a whole have provided the SADCT program with well over a thousand samples. Many members of the Plum Island Surfcasters have been with the program since 2002, and have provided hundreds of samples personally. Without the cooperation and dedication of volunteer recreational anglers such as you this program would not be as successful as it is today!

The Sportfish Angler Data Collection Team provides a means for interested and dedicated anglers to help study the resource they enjoy. Anglers who are interested in the preservation and management of recreationally important finfish species can join the SADCT team by contacting Kimberly Trull at the Massachusetts Division of Marine Fisheries 978.282.0308 x130 or by emailing kimberly.trull@state.ma.us. Anglers who participate receive a hat after their first year of sampling along with an individual report summarizing what they caught, and a chance to enter into a raffle. Winners of the raffle will be drawn in April after all of the samples have been processed and sent out with the reports and other freebies I have on hand!