

Roanoke River Striped Bass Research Projects

Roanoke River anglers who catch a striped bass with a red or yellow tag this spring can fatten their wallets and, at the same time, participate in research projects that help fisheries biologists manage North Carolina's striped bass populations.

Anglers who catch a striped bass with a red tag can collect \$100 if they return the tag. Anglers who catch a striped bass with a yellow tag and return the tag or report the tag number to the Division of Marine Fisheries can collect their choice of \$5 or a fishing hat.

N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission biologists are cooperating with researchers from N.C. State University on a project to study striped bass migration patterns and mortality rates in the Albemarle Sound and Roanoke River. The striped bass used in this project are tagged with red tags, which are printed with a unique number and contact information for the project.

In addition to the red tags, researchers are implanting striped bass with a sonic telemetry transmitter. According to Dr. Julie Harris, NCSU researcher leading the project, "The transmitter is a black cylinder about the size of a pinky finger. It emits sonic pulses that are detected by receivers, which are then used to track migration patterns of striped bass throughout the Roanoke River and Albemarle Sound."

To receive the \$100 reward, anglers who catch a striped bass with a red tag should cut the tag from the fish and call (919) 515-8836 to report the date, time and location of capture. Anglers will also be asked to report the tag number, the fish's total length (snout to end of tail) and whether they harvested or released the fish. For fish that are harvested, anglers should also indicate if they find a transmitter inside the body cavity of the fish and return it, along with the red tag, to researchers at NCSU.

Commission fisheries biologists also participate in a similar tagging study conducted by the N.C. Division of Marine Fisheries each year. Biologists insert yellow tags in striped

bass collected from the Roanoke, Tar, Neuse and Cape Fear rivers as well as Albemarle and Pamlico sounds. Over the last three decades, personnel have tagged more than 175,000 striped bass. The tags are located in the abdominal area of the fish behind the left pectoral fin.

Anglers who catch a striped bass with a yellow tag are asked to return the tag or report the tag number to the Division of Marine Fisheries. By doing so, they will receive a striped bass tagging program hat or \$5 in reward money. Contact information and more details about DMF's [Striped Bass Tagging Program](#) can be found on the agency's website, www.ncfisheries.net.

Fisheries biologists use the results from both studies to determine striped bass movement throughout North Carolina's coastal waters and to estimate mortality rates of the state's striped bass populations.

(Last updated 4/2012)