

# Roanoke River Fisheries Report – May 11, 2018

## SAMPLING INFORMATION

Sample Date	Area Sampled	Water Temp (°F)	Boat Ramp Used
5/7/2018	Weldon, The Gap to Big Rock	66	Weldon BAA
5/9/2018	Hwy 48 bridge to powerlines	65	Gaston BAA

## SPECIES INFORMATION

Species	Striped Bass	American Shad	Hickory Shad
Number Collected	436	25	
Min. Size (in)	11	16	
Max. Size (in)	32	21	
Max. Weight (lb)	16	3.3	
Sex Ratio (M:F)	20:1	3:1	

## BIOLOGISTS' OBSERVATIONS & RIVER CONDITIONS

### **Fisheries Biologists conducting sampling:**

Katy Potoka, Chris Smith, and Jeremy McCargo

### **Biologists' Observations:**

Striped Bass abundance increased at Weldon this week. A few Striped Bass were still present around the Hwy 48 bridge near Gaston, but the highest concentrations of stripers were near Weldon. Water temperatures have increased to the preferred spawning range. We expect that spawning has begun and should be peaking soon. Water levels should fall a bit more this weekend because discharge from Roanoke Rapids Dam is scheduled to be around 6,000 cfs. Be sure to check links on this website for current water level conditions. American Shad numbers are starting to decrease on the spawning grounds near Gaston. A few female American Shad still contained eggs, but most were spent indicating their spawning run is nearing completion.

### **River level and other water quality observations:**

Weldon – water was relatively high with discharge from Roanoke Rapids dam of 15,000 cfs.  
Gaston – flows dropped to around 9,000 cfs on Wednesday morning.  
Water temperatures were around 66°F.

**Weather conditions on sampling date:**

Warm and sunny

**Observations of people fishing on the river:**

Weldon – Anglers were fishing upstream and downstream of the boat ramp. All seemed to be catching good numbers of fish on Monday.

Gaston- a couple of boat anglers were out on the river, and several anglers were fishing from the bank around the boat ramp.

**2018 ROANOKE RIVER CREEL SURVEY INFORMATION**

**May 5-11**

**Upper River** (Roanoke Rapids Dam to Scotland Neck)

The Striped Bass harvest season on the Roanoke River ended at midnight Sunday, May 6. During the last two days of the harvest season and the first week of catch-and-release season, striped bass fishing has been excellent at Weldon. Many boats are reporting catches of 100 or more fish in a day. Anglers using live bait have been catching the most fish, but artificial lures can be successful as well. **We would like to remind anglers that single, barbless hooks are required on the upper Roanoke River through June 30. Barbless hooks, along with other practices such as using dehookers and keeping fish in the water while removing the hook, can reduce injury and stress-induced mortality of released stripers especially during warm weather like we are currently experiencing. Download a catch-and-release pamphlet here.** ([http://www.ncwildlife.org/Portals/0/Fishing/documents/Striper\\_Info%20\\_Card.pdf](http://www.ncwildlife.org/Portals/0/Fishing/documents/Striper_Info%20_Card.pdf))

**Lower Region** (Scotland Neck to Plymouth)

Fishing was very slow in the lower river during the last week of harvest season. It appears the high flows and warming water temperatures caused most fish to migrate upriver to the spawning grounds. Some catch-and-release opportunities exist in the lower river as stripers complete their spawning run and move back downriver to Albemarle Sound.

**Shad and Striped Bass Regulations for the Roanoke 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. No Striped Bass between 22 inches and 27 inches in total length may be possessed at any time, and only one fish greater than 27 inches may be included in the daily creel limit of two fish. Striped Bass may only be harvested March 1–April 30 unless the season is extended or closed early by proclamation. The harvest season CLOSED by proclamation at 11:59 PM on May 6, 2018.

*Jeremy McCargo, Anadromous Research Coordinator of the N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission (NCWRC), shared creel survey information collected from different stretches along the Roanoke River. The Roanoke River Creel Survey is designed and administered by the NCWRC through Federal Aid in Sport Fish Restoration funding to estimate angler effort, catch, and harvest of Striped Bass in the Roanoke River Management Area.*