

Sportfish Angler Data Collection Team



BLACK SEA BASS, FLUKE, SCUP, STRIPED BASS

SCALE SAMPLING PROCEDURE

Please read all instructions and study the diagrams on the backside of this sheet.

Try to complete the following procedure as rapidly as possible to avoid injuring the fish that will be released and to minimize mortality due to handling.

1. Keep your hands and any surface that comes in contact with the fish wet at all times. This will preserve the fish's protective slime coat.
2. To help calm the fish, place a wet rag over its eyes. Avoid letting the fish thrash against hard surfaces.
3. Measure the **TOTAL LENGTH** of the fish, which is defined as the length from the tip of the lower jaw when the mouth is closed to the end of the tail. Measure fish to the nearest inch. **See diagram A.**
4. **Write the length measurement on the envelope provided** in pencil.
5. Next, remove **at least 6 scales** on one side of the fish the **SAMPLING LOCATION IS VERY IMPORTANT!**

Black sea bass: lift the pectoral fin and remove from the area under the fin

Fluke: on the caudal peduncle, right before the tail begins

Scup: lift the pectoral fin and remove from the area under the fin

Striped bass: from the area between the two dorsal fins just **above** the lateral line

See diagram A.

Note: *Multiple scales are needed to provide an adequate sample for us to age the fish effectively.*

6. There are two methods for removing scales. Use the method that works best for you. **VERY IMPORTANT! Clean the knife blade or tweezers after every fish to avoid mixing scales.**

Method 1

Using a clean blunt edged knife, loosen the scales with a quick firm scraping motion in the direction of the head and remove the scales on the blade of the blunt knife. Insert knife blade into the paper insert and pull down to retain scales in envelope.

Method 2

Using a pair of tweezers remove scales one at a time and place scales into the paper insert.

7. **Put scales inside paper insert in the scale envelopes**, and complete remaining information on the envelope. Please include the general location where the fish was caught (e.g., Boston Harbor, Plum Island, etc.). You don't need to reveal your secret fishing spot! **See diagram B.**
8. Beware: the ink printed on these envelopes is not fully waterproof and may run slightly when wet.
9. Note: Scales do not need special treatment (i.e., refrigeration, cleaning, etc.). Allowing them to dry in the envelope is adequate.

IMPORTANT! IMPORTANT!! Remember that for the data to be used, we MUST HAVE FISH LENGTH, DATE, AND SCALES. Scales alone will not help.

10. Please send scale samples to:
Kimberly Fine
30 Emerson Ave
Gloucester, MA 01930

IF YOU SHOULD HAVE ANY FURTHER QUESTIONS ON HOW TO SAMPLE PLEASE GO TO:

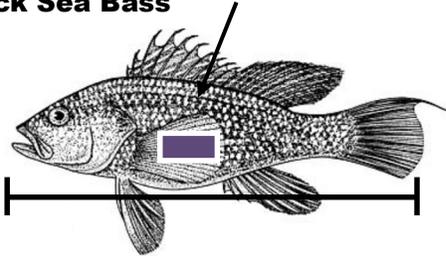
YouTube and search for MA Marine Fisheries. There you should find instructional videos on how to obtain samples from Striped bass, Black sea bass, and Fluke.

DIAGRAMS

A. Definition of fish total length and scale removal location.

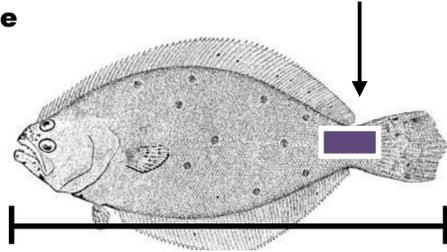
Remove at least 8 scales from the area in the rectangle.

Black Sea Bass



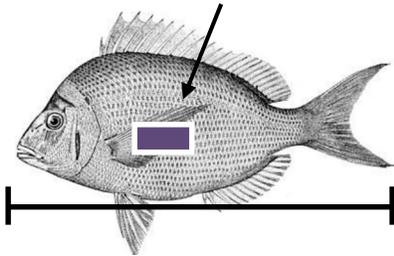
Total length

Fluke



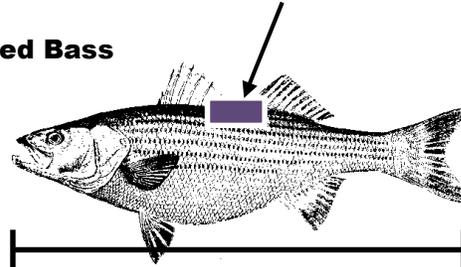
Total length

Scup



Total length

Striped Bass



Total length

B. Example scale envelope

Massachusetts Division of Marine Fisheries
(978) 282-0308

Collector Name Kristen Ferry Date 5/26/13

Species Striped Bass Length 27 "

Location Boston Harbor Shore Boat

Kept _____ Released X

Circle one