

Sportfish Angler Data Collection Team
 ***Marine Fisheries***

2018 Report

As part of the Atlantic coastwide effort to manage and conserve the striped bass population the Massachusetts Division of Marine Fisheries initiated the Sportfish Angler Data Collection Team (SADCT) program. Striped bass, black sea bass, fluke, and scup have a tremendous economic impact both recreationally and commercially in Massachusetts (MRIP/SAFIS Dealer Database). SADCT is funded by the Sport Fish Restoration Program (SFR) a user pay, user buy benefit program. The SFR Program was created to restore and better manage America's declining fishery.

Samplers follow a simple sampling procedure which requires them to collect scale samples, and record date, total length, and location of their catch. With this data, management can generate stock assessment models and monitor the health and biomass of a specific stock to facilitate proper management of that species.

In 2018 approximately 1,900 samples were collected by SADCT volunteers. Of those 1,900 samples 1,600 samples were from striped bass. Black sea bass, fluke, and scup accounted for the remaining 300 samples.

Striped bass migrate up north in the spring and summer months and return south in the fall. Striped bass are generally long lived and can survive up to 40 years. Females do not mature until 6 years of age, whereas males can spawn as early as age 2 or 3. In 2018 the Massachusetts legal size for striped bass was 28" with a bag limit of 1 fish. There were two peaks identified in the catch abundance of striped bass. The highest abundance of fish ranged from 17"-25" representing the 2014 year class and another slightly smaller peak 28"-32" representing the 2011 year class. Fish within the 17"-25" range are comprised of 3 and 4 year olds (Fig.1&2). Striped bass spawn in estuaries where juveniles will remain for their first two years. High catch rates of small fish in May correlates with juvenile fish leaving the estuary and entering the migrating population (Fig.3). The highest instance of catch occurred in June and July when the larger fish move into state waters, and decrease towards the end of August when the fish migrate back south with the larger, older fish migrating first (Fig. 3).

Black sea bass migrate seasonally inhabiting inshore waters from late spring to fall, moving into warmer deeper waters in the winter. Warming trends of ocean temperatures have been associated with the northern expansion of black sea bass populations. In 2018 the Massachusetts legal size for black sea bass was 15" with a bag limit of 5 fish. The average age of a 15" black sea bass is 5 years old (Fig. 4). Most black sea bass sampled range between 16"-21" (Fig. 5). Overall there were few sublegal fish sampled.

Fluke migrate to inshore areas of Massachusetts during the warmer periods of the year migrating to deeper offshore waters in the winter months. In 2018 the Massachusetts legal size for fluke was 17" with a bag limit of 5 fish. The average age of a 17" fluke is 3 years old, however females can get up to 20 years old whereas males rarely exceed 7 years of age (Fig. 4). Most fluke range between 18"-20" (Fig. 5). Overall there were very few fish sampled.

Scup inhabit southern coastal areas of Massachusetts May – October when water temperatures reach 45 degrees. In 2018 the Massachusetts legal size for scup was 9" with a bag limit of 30 fish. The average age of a 9" scup is 3 years old, however they have been found to be as old as 14 years (Fig. 4). Most scup sampled range between 10"-13" (Fig. 5). Overall there were very few fish sampled.

Figure 1. Age distribution of striped bass sampled by SADCT participants in Massachusetts waters in 2018.



Figure 2. Average length at age relationship for striped bass sampled by SADCT participants in Massachusetts waters in 2018.

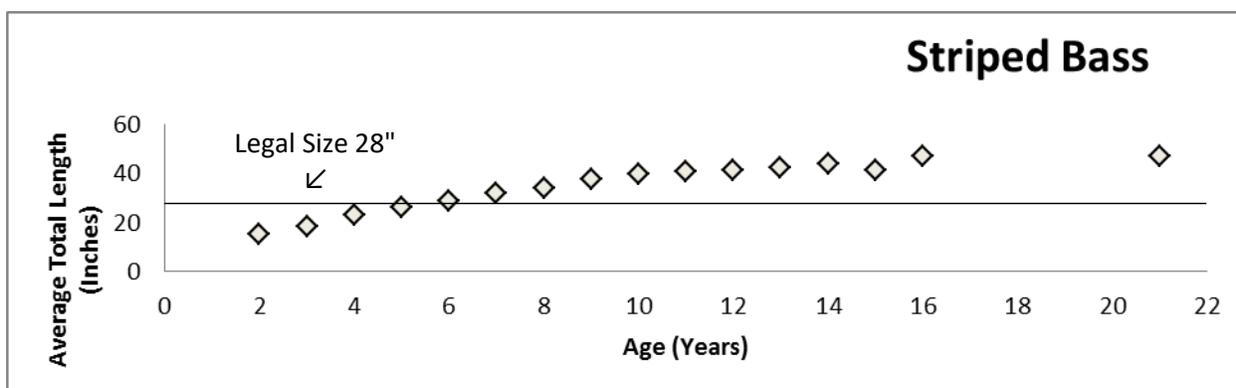


Figure 3. Monthly length distribution of striped bass sampled by SADCT participants in Massachusetts waters in 2018.

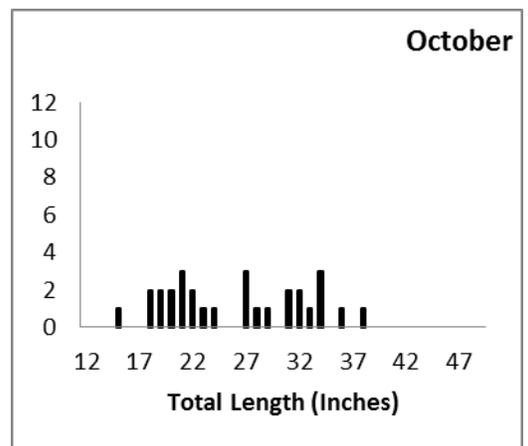
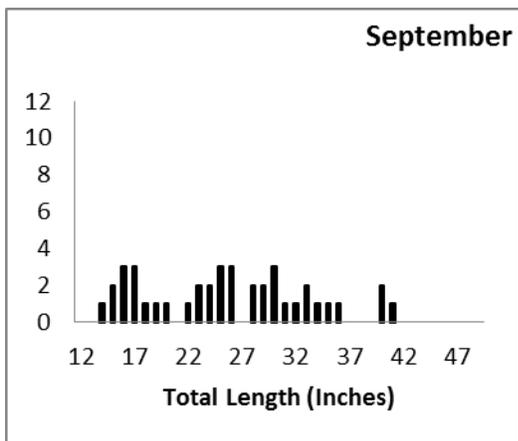
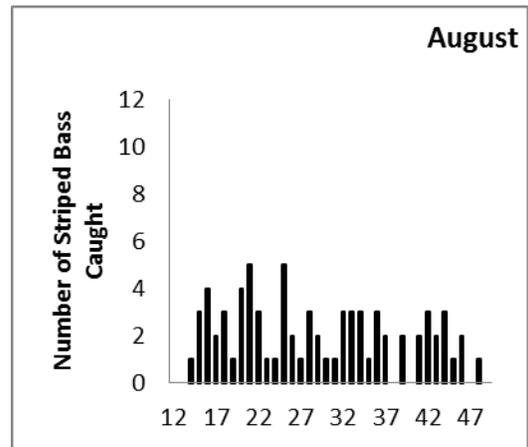
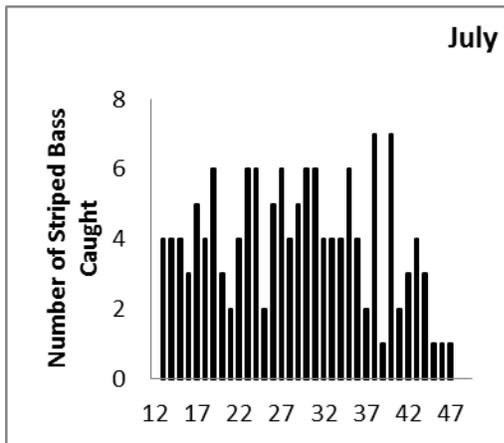
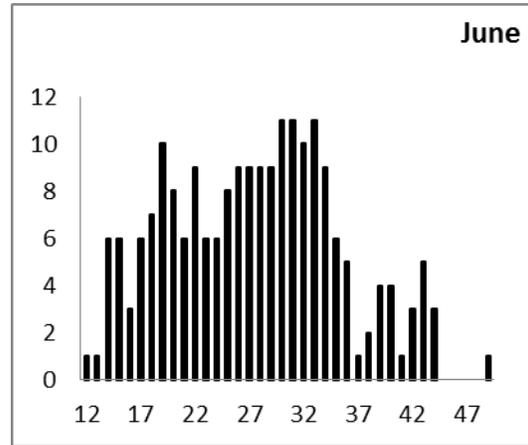
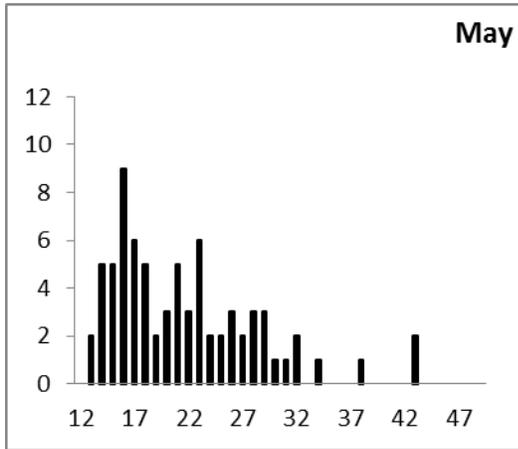


Figure 4. Average age at length relationship for black sea bass, fluke, and scup sampled by SADCT participants in Massachusetts waters in 2018.

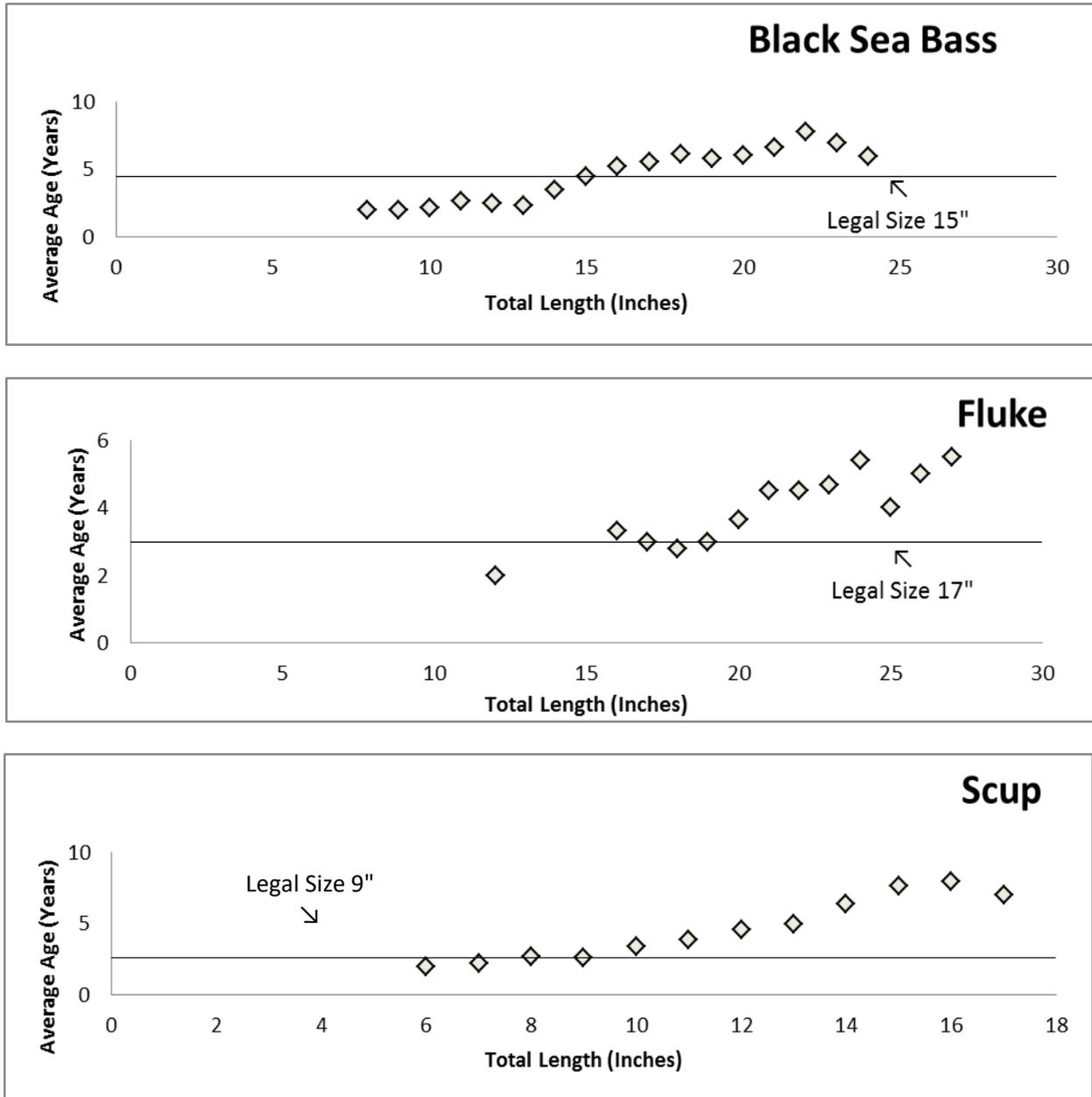
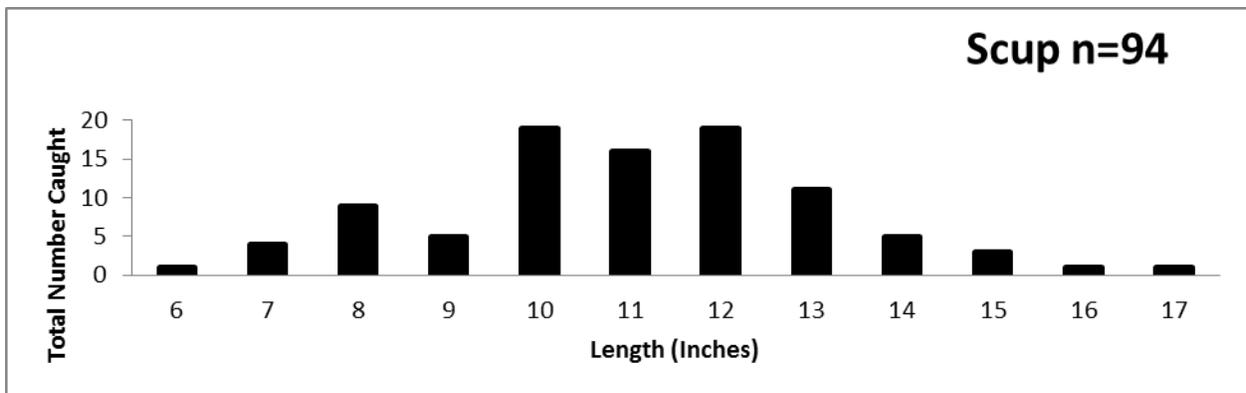
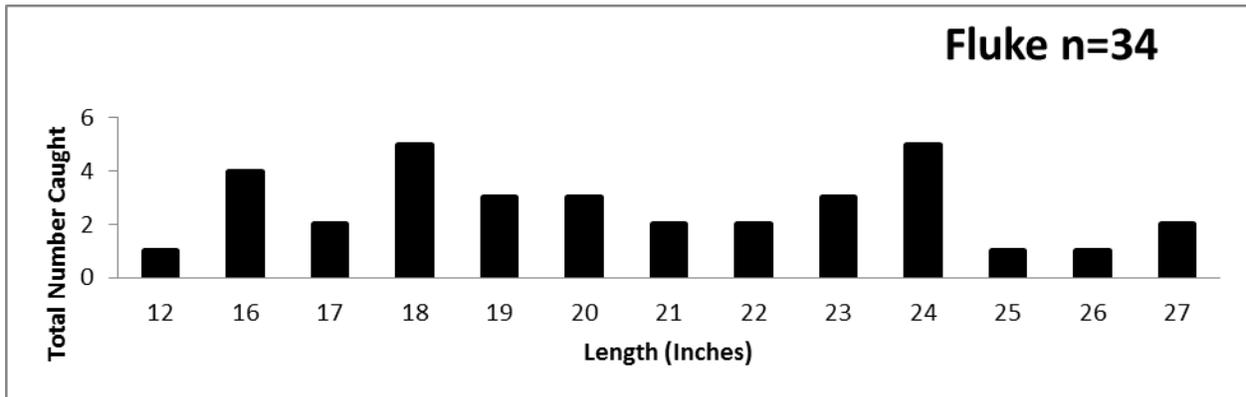
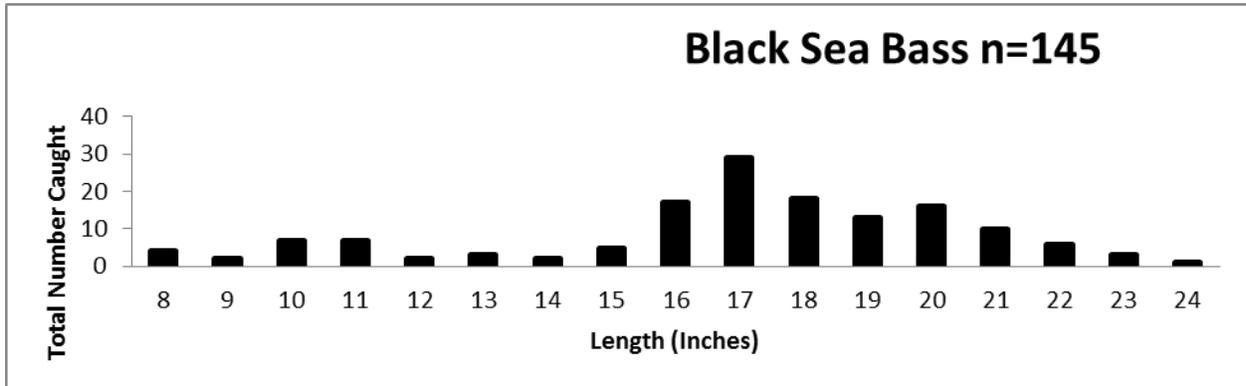
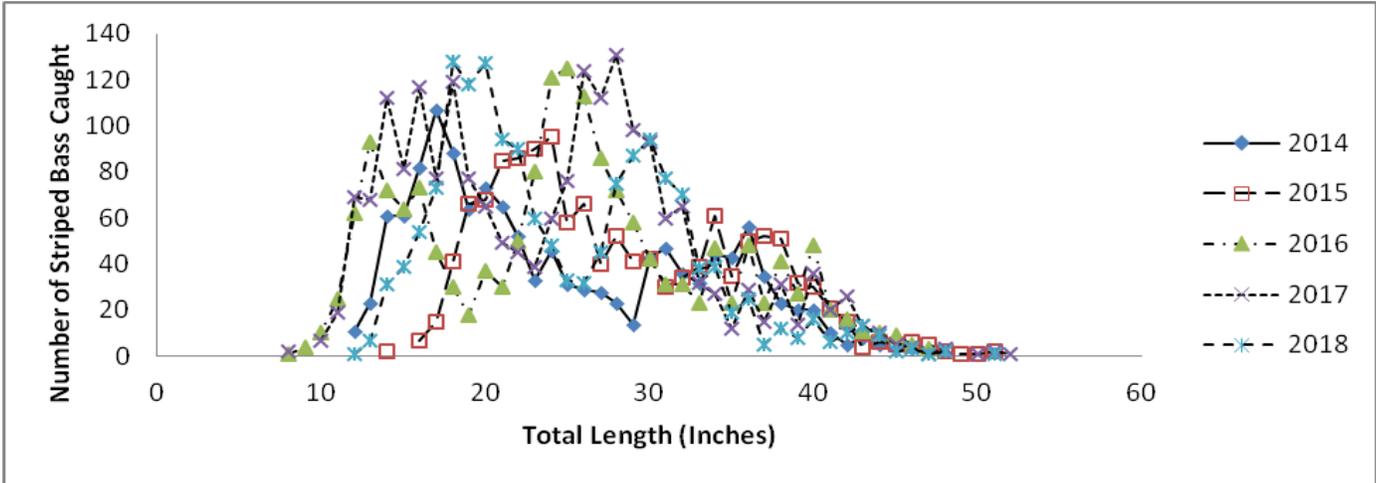


Figure 5. Length distribution of black sea bass, fluke, and scup sampled by SADCT participants in Massachusetts waters in 2018.

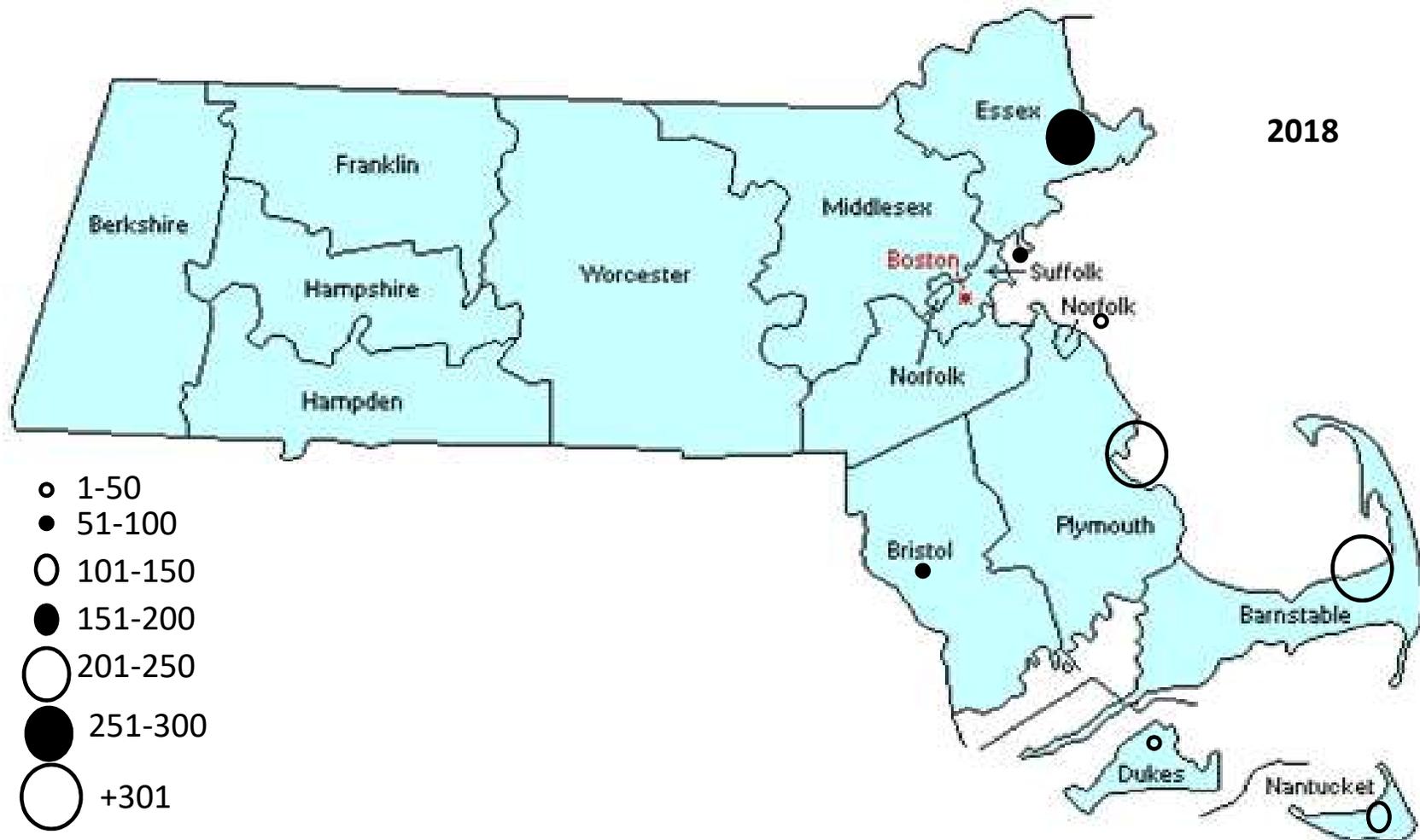


Length distribution of striped bass caught by SADCT anglers in the past five years (2014 to 2018)



Name	Date	Location	TL (in)	Species	Mode	Status	Age	# Caught
Bill Prodouz	7/16/2018	CC CANAL	38	SB	Shore	Kept	11	45
	7/31/2018	CC CANAL	34	SB	Shore	Released	7	
	7/26/2018	CC CANAL	38	SB	Shore	Released	11	
	7/26/2018	CC CANAL	36	SB	Shore	Released	9	
	7/26/2018	CC CANAL	44	SB	Shore	Released	11	
	7/25/2018	CC CANAL	40	SB	Shore	Released	9	
	7/31/2018	CC CANAL	20	SB	Shore	Released	3	
	8/2/2018	CC CANAL	42	SB	Shore	Released	12	
	5/24/2018	CC CANAL	21	SB	Shore	Released	4	
	7/25/2018	CC CANAL	35	SB	Shore	Released	8	
	6/15/2018	CC CANAL	42	SB	Shore	Released	12	
	7/14/2018	CC CANAL	36	SB	Shore	Released	9	
	7/17/2018	CC CANAL	35	SB	Shore	Released	8	
	7/18/2018	CC CANAL	34	SB	Shore	Released	7	
	7/6/2018	CC CANAL	38	SB	Shore	Released	9	
	7/6/2018	CC CANAL	40	SB	Shore	Released	10	
	6/25/2018	CC CANAL	33	SB	Shore	Released	7	
	6/18/2018	CC CANAL	40	SB	Shore	Kept	11	
	7/11/2018	CC CANAL	47	SB	Shore	Released	21	
	7/12/2018	CC CANAL	33	SB	Shore	Released	7	
	7/12/2018	CC CANAL	36	SB	Shore	Released	9	
	7/12/2018	CC CANAL	40	SB	Shore	Released	11	
	7/12/2018	CC CANAL	35	SB	Shore	Released	7	
	7/13/2018	CC CANAL	33	SB	Shore	Released	7	
	7/14/2018	CC CANAL	34	SB	Shore	Released	7	
	6/30/2018	CC CANAL	31	SB	Shore	Released	7	
	8/10/2018	CC CANAL	48	SB	Shore	Released	14	
	8/10/2018	CC CANAL	30	SB	Shore	Released	6	
	8/10/2018	CC CANAL	39	SB	Shore	Released	11	
	8/9/2018	CC CANAL	28	SB	Shore	Released	6	
	8/9/2018	CC CANAL	30	SB	Shore	Released	6	

8/9/2018	CC CANAL	32	SB	Shore	Released	6
8/9/2018	CC CANAL	32	SB	Shore	Released	7
8/11/2018	CC CANAL	34	SB	Shore	Released	7
8/11/2018	CC CANAL	31	SB	Shore	Released	7
9/8/2018	CC CANAL	31	SB	Shore	Released	7
9/15/2018	CC CANAL	33	SB	Shore	Released	7
10/12/2018	CC CANAL	34	SB	Shore	Released	5
9/7/2018	CC CANAL	41	SB	Shore	Released	14
8/16/2018	CC CANAL	30	SB	Shore	Released	6
8/15/2018	CC CANAL	33	SB	Shore	Released	7
8/15/2018	CC CANAL	34	SB	Shore	Released	7
8/15/2018	CC CANAL	46	SB	Shore	Released	16
8/15/2018	CC CANAL	31	SB	Shore	Released	7
8/15/2018	CC CANAL	44	SB	Shore	Released	12



Angling locations in MA waters by county where SADCT members caught Striped Bass. Numbers are amount of fish caught in 2018.