

FSO

"Gateway to Decisions"

Making decisions that affect thousands of individuals, families and businesses is serious business. Collecting data that support those decisions is FSO's business. With thousands of vessels and dealers from Maine to North Carolina, the responsibility is far reaching and highly challenging. Assembling and analyzing these data is the cornerstone of fisheries management.

That's FSO.

In the Field and In the Office helping NOAA and industry steer a steady course.

For more information visit our website:

www.nero.noaa.gov/fso



Fisheries Statistics Office

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Sea Scallops



Sampling Program



"Gateway to Decisions"

BIOLOGICAL SAMPLING PROGRAM

"Gateway to Decisions"

The **Fisheries Statistics Office (FSO)** is a key component of **NOAA Fisheries** in the northeast. One of the office's primary functions is to collect fishery data and biological samples. These data are essential to the fishery management process.

Both in the field and in the office, FSO works to provide our customers, other NOAA fisheries groups, fishing industry and other constituents with accurate, reliable and timely data. **FSO** operates 11 field offices covering states from Maine to Virginia. Each office is staffed with knowledgeable personnel who serve as the agency's front line to the fishing industry.

Under the direction of John Witzig, Ph.D., FSO's central office is located in NOAA Fisheries' Regional Office in Gloucester, Massachusetts.

For more information visit our website:

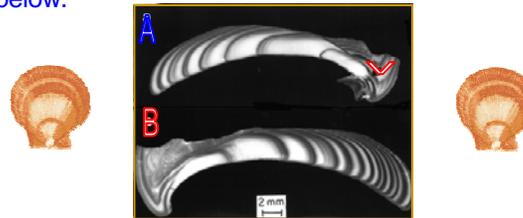
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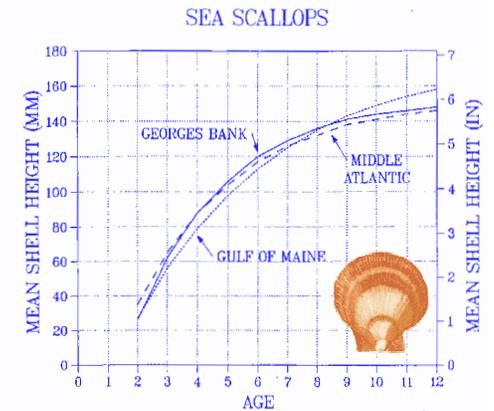
NOAA field staff, George Mattingly, measures middle Atlantic scallops. Measuring crustaceans helps scientists determine age and growth patterns

What We Do and How: The mission of the sampling program is to obtain raw data essential to understanding the ages and the size distributions of individual stocks of marine fish and shellfish. Field work provides the biological foundation for many fisheries assessments. Biological data, which is collected in the field, are used in models designed to guide management decisions and future research.

Age determinations for sea scallops are conducted under transmitted light at 50 -100x. Light is transmitted through the translucent age annuli and blocked by the opaque growth increments, producing alternate zones of white and black, respectively. The exact opposite occurs in a photographic print. See figure below.



Photographic enlargements of thin sectioned chondrophores from scallops: (a) 139 mm (shell length) age 8; and (b) 137 mm (shell length) age 13. The first annulus formed in the life of a scallop is sometimes faint (arrow indicates a bold annulus in the chondrophore of the upper shell). The most recent annulus at the marginal edge of these chondrophores was not completely formed.



Age and Growth: The graph above and the table below illustrate growth rates of Georges Bank, Middle Atlantic and the Gulf of Maine **sea scallops**. Middle Atlantic scallops grow quicker early on yet are surpassed by Georges by year 5. Gulf of Maine scallops are slow growers but reach a larger size at maturity.

Sea Scallop

	Georges Bank		Middle Atlantic		Gulf of Maine	
	<u>Shell Height</u>		<u>Shell Height</u>		<u>Shell Height</u>	
<u>Age (in) (mm)</u>	(in)	(mm)	(in)	(mm)	(in)	(mm)
2	1.0	26	1.4	35	1.1	27
3	2.4	62	2.6	65	2.2	56
4	3.5	88	3.5	88	3.1	79
5	4.2	106	4.1	104	3.9	98
6	4.7	120	4.6	117	4.4	113
7	5.1	129	5.0	126	4.9	125
8	5.4	136	5.2	132	5.3	135
9	5.6	141	5.4	138	5.6	143
10	5.7	144	5.6	141	5.9	149
11	5.7	146	5.7	144	6.1	154
12	5.8	148	5.7	146	6.2	158