

VIMS Juvenile Fish Survey
Net Notes
October 2007

During October, while conducting scientific sampling in Chesapeake Bay and its Virginia tributaries, the VIMS Juvenile Fish Survey team made some noteworthy observations. Survey scientists identified and counted specimens of two species infrequently seen in Chesapeake Bay, gray snapper and star drum. Star drum are a lesser known member of the family Sciaenidae to which red drum, black drum and Atlantic croaker also belong while the gray snapper is a member of the snapper complex more commonly associated with tropical or sub-tropical waters to our south. Juvenile Atlantic spadefish were seen throughout the survey area in fairly high numbers: at a single station on the Rappahannock River approximately 75 individuals were measured. This ranks as the highest total number of spadefish from a single station ever sampled in the 52 year history of the survey. Spot in the 9 to 10" range were present in most areas sampled with the largest fish coming from the York and Rappahannock rivers. Legal weakfish (>12 inches) were present throughout the York and Rappahannock rivers whereas the lower York River (east of the Coleman Bridge) was the only area where survey personnel noted large (approaching 14 inches) Atlantic croaker. Samples from the Hampton Bar area still contained summer flounder to 20 inches as did samples from the lower York River and Cherrystone reef area near the Eastern Shore.

For more information about this monthly survey please visit our website at <http://www.fisheries.vims.edu/trawlseine/mainpage.htm>