

# Bay Anchovy



The bay anchovy is a species whose numbers are decreasing at an alarming rate. These fish are typically one of the most abundant species in the Delaware estuary and are a primary food source for many fish inhabiting the bay, including weakfish, bluefish and striped bass. The numbers caught in this survey peaked in 1998, with an average of 254 fish per tow. The lowest average was recorded in 2006, with catches averaging 48 fish per tow. The potential impact from this decrease has yet to be recognized, but a recent decline in the Delaware Bay's weakfish population may be an indication of a food chain imbalance within this estuary. The average number per tow in 2012 was 196 fish, which is the largest average since 1999. The Division will continue to conduct research and analyze data to assess the population status.

