

Ji'kaw

Striped BASS in the Bras d'Or Lakes

In 2012 UINR held three workshops to collect Mi'kmaq ecological knowledge on striped bass. Participants included a balance of Elders, current harvesters, and Mi'kmaq fishery guardians.

Some things learned were:

- Harvesting striped bass was less common in the past due to its limited presence in the Bras d'Or Lakes.
- Most anglers caught one striped bass annually, but this depended on local availability of the species.
- Striped bass is best fished during the evening or night in late summer and fall.
- They are found in fast-moving waters and in areas where gaspereau are known to spawn such as the barachois in Bras d'Or Lakes.
- Gaspereau are an important food source at this time.
- Barachois ponds serve as nursery areas to all sizes of striped bass.
- The Canadian record for striped bass was landed at 59 lbs in East Bay.
- Seals, otters, porpoises, eagles and bears are believed to be the primary predators of striped bass.
- Striped bass that is larger than 24 inches (61 cm) is generally kept for food but if the fish is smaller than 20 inches (51 cm) then it is carefully returned to the water.
- Most of the harvesters target medium to large fish but prefer the taste of the medium sized fish.
- Traditional harvesters rotate harvesting areas as a method to prevent overharvesting.
- The population of the striped bass appears to be increasing in the Bras d'Or Lakes.
- Some of the Mi'kmaq concerns on the striped bass are waste. People who do not plan to eat striped bass should not be fishing. Also, certain areas should be given special consideration to preserve the habitat due to limited areas the striped bass uses.
- Some of the concerns brought up by the anglers are evidence of small holes in the sides of the striped bass.



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