

An overview of adult and juvenile Atlantic sturgeon research in the James River, VA

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New findings show that the two separate Atlantic sturgeon groups (spring and fall) utilizing the James River, VA, vary in more ways than just spawning season. The spawning groups have disparate river residency lengths and spawning areas, making each group susceptible to threats in differing degrees, i.e., ship strikes, dredge interactions. While over 500 different adults have been captured since 2009, three early-stage juveniles (0-2y) have been captured. While targeting early stage juveniles, over 180K non target fish have been captured. Of particular concern is the high number of invasive predators caught where early-stage juvenile Atlantic sturgeon should likely inhabit. The lack of early-stage juveniles continues to be a big concern in regards to restoration. While the numbers of adult fish currently appear to be stable, the apparent lack of spawning success and recruitment may require a more proactive approach to restoration practices in the James River.