



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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## New England and Mid-Atlantic Councils and Partners Launch Habitat Data Explorer; One-Stop Tool Ready for Use

What began five years ago as a commitment to improve fish habitat science has resulted in the creation of a revolutionary tool that allows users to explore information on fish distribution and survey abundance, species life history, essential fish habitat (EFH), fish vulnerability to climate change, and much more – all on one website. Welcome to the [Northeast Regional Habitat Assessment Data Explorer](#).

The Data Explorer was developed as part of the Northeast Regional Marine Fish Habitat Assessment (NRHA), a collaborative, multi-disciplinary effort to describe and characterize estuarine, coastal, and offshore fish habitat distribution, abundance, and quality in the Northeast. Based on a plan approved by [NRHA’s Steering Committee](#), a work team spent three years collecting and analyzing data and populating the Data Explorer with information for more than 65 finfish and shellfish species through 2019. New data will be added over time.

### Who Should Use the Data Explorer? Everyone!

While stock assessment scientists, researchers, and fishery managers will be the primary users of this comprehensive collection of information, commercial and recreational fishermen will be able to call up maps showing key information about the species they catch. Other stakeholder groups interested in habitat issues, seasonal ocean conditions such as salinity, and fish survey information also should find the site helpful. For example, offshore wind and aquaculture developers can use the tool to identify habitat types and fish distribution within areas being considered for development.

Welcome to the Northeast Regional Habitat Assessment Data Explorer

**Survey View**

Northeast regional and inshore bay/estuary view of fishery independent survey data including top 20 species abundance and biomass, similarity clusters, and survey temperature and salinity data.

**Species View**

Species view of fishery independent survey data, including distributions, relative abundance, and reports on habitat use and vulnerability to climate change.

**Model View**

Outputs from spatiotemporal models that describe species distributions as a function of dynamic environmental factors, species interactions and predicted change in habitat use under various climate scenarios.

**Habitat Crosswalk**

Habitat species vulnerability matrix and species narratives for 66 managed and forage species in the region.

*The data-heavy portal takes 15 to 20 seconds to load on the first launch. Subsequent data searches go quickly. Use a desktop computer, laptop, or tablet. The Data Explorer tool, which runs on a [R-Shiny](#) application, is not intended for cell phone use. Visit the NRHA Data Explorer [website](#) to learn more about the available products and reports.*



## Survey, Species, and Model Views Plus a Habitat Crosswalk

Below is a quick rundown of the four major categories of products available on the Data Explorer and a few tips for how to navigate the pages to access the information you want. Specific examples of NRHA's products are shown in the winter flounder map below and in two other data runs on the following page.

**Survey View:** This tab summarizes fishery independent survey data at both a Northeast regionwide scale and in inshore waters at a bay/estuary scale. Specific surveys and year ranges can be selected to display: (1) species abundance and biomass; (2) species that are caught together, which is called a cluster analysis; and (3) salinity and temperature data from selected surveys.

**Species View:** This view provides a deeper dive into species-specific fishery independent survey data.

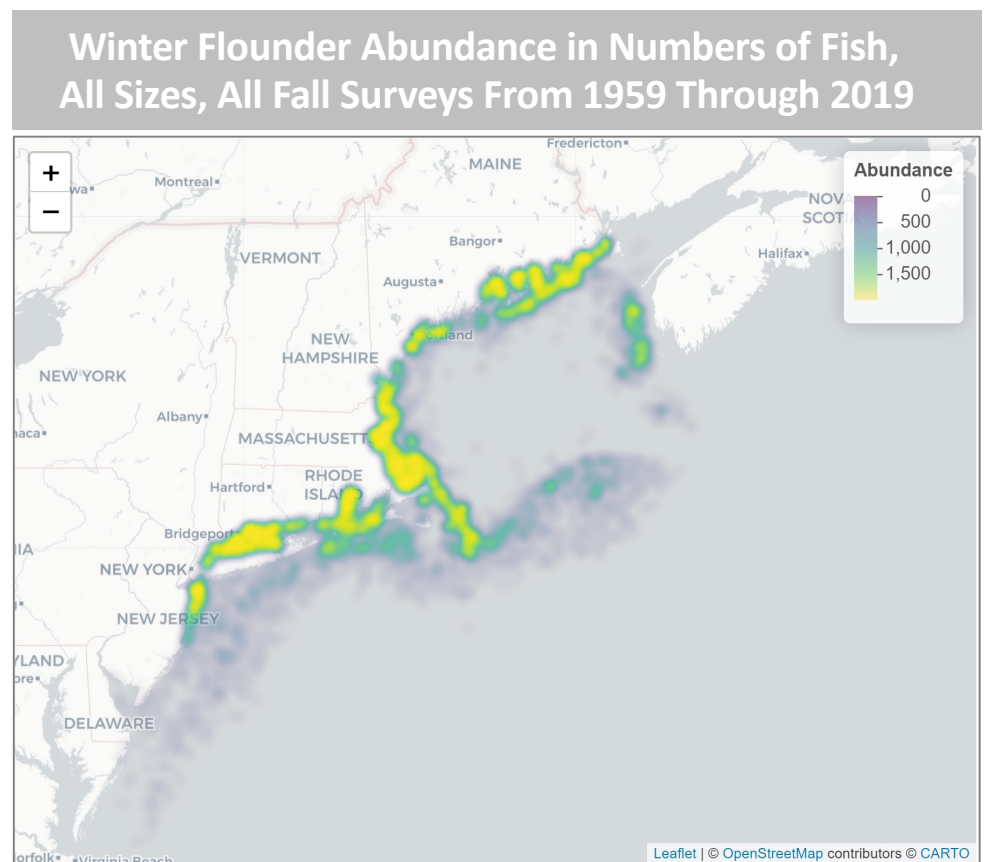
Click on the tabs to view a species distribution map, abundance and biomass by year, relative abundance by month and salinity zone, and species reports with life history info, vulnerability to climate change, and EFH designations.

Select your desired location, surveys, and species, and then hit "Run Analysis." Your results will pop up.

**Model View:** This tab is under development but will include habitat distribution model results when completed.

**Habitat Crosswalk:** This work integrates the outputs from the Northeast Habitat Climate Vulnerability Assessment (HCVA), the Northeast Fish and Shellfish Climate Vulnerability Assessment (FSCVA), and the Atlantic Coastal Fish Habitat Partnership (ACFHP) habitat-species matrix for use in fisheries management. The major objectives were to create a habitat-species vulnerability matrix and develop species narratives for 66 managed and forage species in the region.

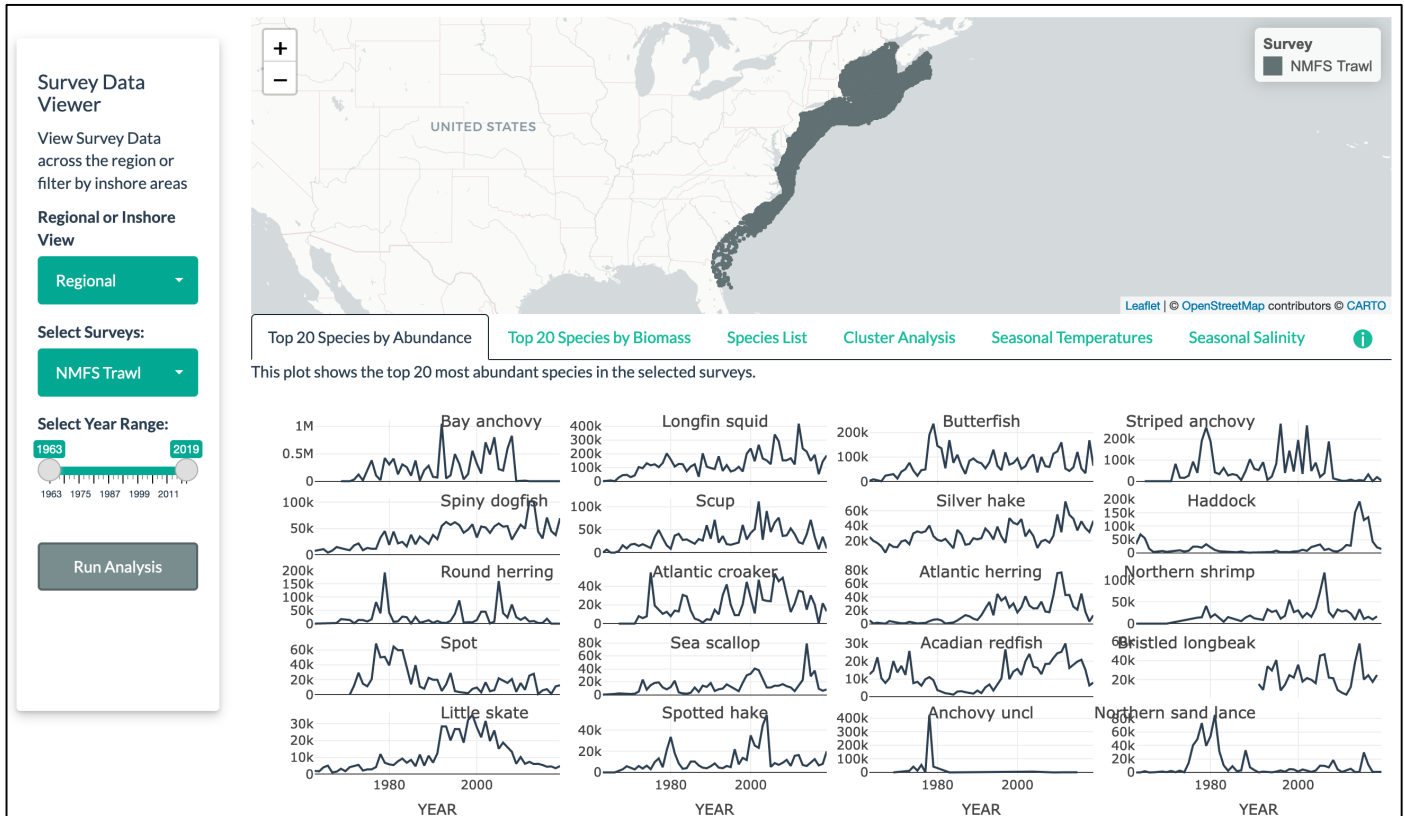
**Reports:** Be sure to check out the Reports tab, which gives users the ability to download survey metadata. The Reports tab is located on the toolbar at the top of [NRHA homepage](#).



An example of winter flounder information retrieved under "Species View" on the NRHA Data Explorer.



NRHA Data Explorer Survey View of National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS)  
Trawl Survey Data From 1963-2019 for Top 20 Species of Abundance



Maine/New Hampshire  
Trawl Survey 2000-2019  
Seasonal Temperatures

*The information at right was generated by clicking on the Survey View tab on the NHRA Data Explorer homepage and then selecting: (1) Inshore View in the left column; (2) Maine-New Hampshire Coast under location; (3) ME/NH Inshore Trawl under "Select Surveys"; and (4) 2000-2019 for the year range. After that, click on "Run Analysis."*

