



# Squid (Calamari) Fact Sheet

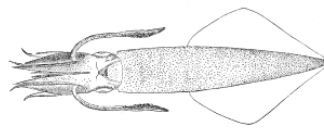


Image courtesy of the Mid Atlantic Fishery Management Council

## Basic Biology

Latin name: *Loligo pealeii*

Range: Atlantic Ocean from Newfoundland to the Gulf of Venezuela

Habitat: The water column over muddy or sandy bottom. Eggs are attached to rocks.

Diet: Plankton, crustaceans and small fish.

Age and growth: Squid have very short life spans of only 9 months. They grow rapidly, reaching maturity and spawning at young ages.

## Sustainability

- Yearly trawl surveys monitor the population abundance and it appears to be healthy. Fishing pressure is at a sustainable level.
- The population size is highly variable from year to year and very dependent on oceanographic conditions. Thus, yearly catch limits are calculated based upon the yearly trawl survey results. Adjustments can be made during the fishing season if need be.
- Management measures include annual and seasonal quotas, a cap on the number of permits, a minimum mesh size in the nets, and seasonal fishery closures.
- Squid are harvested with a small-mesh bottom trawl. Because squid live just above the bottom, not on the bottom, the nets are light and have little bottom contact. In addition, squid tend to be found more over muddy and sandy bottoms which are more resilient to fishing pressure.
- As in other trawl fisheries, bycatch can be a problem. The longfin squid fishery does have a minimum mesh size to allow small fish to escape from the nets. Federal fishery managers are working to reduce bycatch by researching gear modifications and establishing areas where specific gears must be used and observers may be required.

## Info for Chefs

- There are two species of squid harvested on the east coast of the U.S. – longfin squid and shortfin squid. Shortfin squid is a lower quality product and can be distinguished by its larger size and coarser texture; it is also less sustainable.
- The majority of the world's longfin squid is harvested in the U.S.

## Info for Servers

- Squid are very resilient to fishing pressure because they grow quickly and are short-lived.
- Squid are mollusks, just like clams and oysters. Instead of a hard outer shell they have an internal shell called a "pen".
- Squid are voracious predators and can consume fish larger than themselves. In addition, they are cannibalistic.

Sources: NOAA FishWatch – [www.nmfs.noaa.gov/fishwatch](http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/fishwatch)

Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council. 1998. Squid, Mackerel, and Butterfish Fishery Management Plan. Amendment 8 Executive Summary. Accessed at [www.mafmc.org/mid-atlantic/fmp/smb-a8.htm](http://www.mafmc.org/mid-atlantic/fmp/smb-a8.htm) on 23 July, 2007.

Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council. Press Release: "Amendment 10 Approved". Accessed at [www.mafmc.org/mid-atlantic/press/2008/pr08\\_15\\_October\\_Council\\_Summary.pdf](http://www.mafmc.org/mid-atlantic/press/2008/pr08_15_October_Council_Summary.pdf) on 23 July, 2007.