

Essential Fish Habitat Descriptions Little skate (*Leucoraja erinacea*)

The EFH designations for clearnose, little, and winter skates in bays and estuaries were based on the NOAA Estuarine Living Marine Resource (ELMR) program (Jury et al. 1994; Stone et al. 1994). Unfortunately, the information presented in the ELMR reports does not differentiate among the species of skates in the complex. So, EFH was identified for these three species if the complex was identified in the ELMR reports and the species was known to occur in proximity bays and estuaries where skates were identified in general.

Estuaries and embayments designated as EFH for C=clearnose, L=little, and W=winter skates.

Estuaries and Embayments	Eggs	Juveniles	Mating	Adults
Waquoit Bay				
Buzzards Bay	L,W	L,W	L,W	L,W
Narragansett Bay	L,W	L,W	L,W	L,W
Long Island Sound	L,W	L,W	L,W	L,W
Connecticut River		L,W		L,W
Gardiners Bay		L,W		L,W
Great South Bay		L,W		L,W
Hudson River/Raritan Bay	C,L,W	C,L,W	C,L,W	C,L,W
Barneget Bay				C,L,W
New Jersey Inland Bays				C,L,W
Delaware Bay				C,L,W
Delaware Inland Bays				C,L,W
Chesapeake Bay Mainstem	C,L,W	C,L,W		C,L,W

For little skate, no action essential fish habitat is described as those areas of coastal and offshore waters (out to the offshore U.S. boundary of the exclusive economic zone) that are designated on the map below and in the following table and meet the following conditions:

Eggs: Bottom habitats with a sandy substrate from Georges Bank through to Southern New England to the Middle Atlantic Bight. Generally, the following conditions exist where little skate eggs are found: *Depths:* Less than 27 meters. *Temperature:* Greater than 7 °C.

Larvae: No larval life stage exists for this species. Upon hatching, they are fully developed juveniles (ELMR Report Number 12, March 1994).

Juveniles: Bottom habitats with a sandy or gravelly substrate or mud, ranging from Georges Bank through the Mid-Atlantic Bight to Cape Hatteras, North Carolina as depicted on the map below. Generally, the following conditions exist where little skate juveniles are found: *Depth:* Full range is from the shore to 137 meters, with the highest abundance from 73-91 meters. *Temperature:* Most found between 4-15°C.

Adults: Bottom habitats with a sandy or gravelly substrate or mud, ranging from Georges Bank through the Mid-Atlantic Bight to Cape Hatteras, North Carolina as depicted on the map below. Generally, the following conditions exist where little skate adults are found: *Depth:* Full range is

from the shore to 137 meters, with the highest abundance from 73-91 meters. *Temperature:*
Most found between 2-15°C.

EFH designations for little skate

