

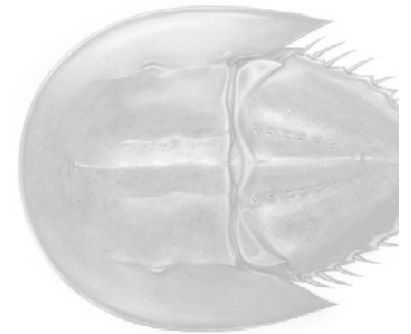


Working towards healthy, self-sustaining populations  
for all Atlantic coast fish species or successful  
restoration well in progress by 2015

# Horseshoe Crab Technical Committee Report

## 5 February 2013

### Penny Howell, Chair



Horseshoe Crab Management Board  
February 20, 2013



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# **Technical Committee Meeting Overview**

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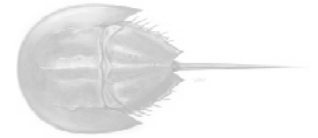
- **The proceedings focused on the importation of Asian horseshoe crabs into the US**
- **Agreed that addressing this issue is necessary to reduce the risk of harm to *L. polyphemus* population**



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## Status of Each State

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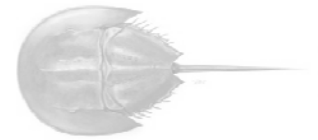
- ***Massachusetts***: no bait shortages and no known importation
- ***New York***: ~2,000 *Tachypleus gigas* imported in 2011 to address bait shortages; 7,400 kgs some imported in 2012
- ***Connecticut***: fluctuating landings and apparent increased demand; no imports yet



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## Status of Each State Continued

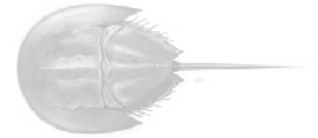
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- ***Rhode Island:*** fishery is exhausted within 2-3 weeks of opening; demand for bait remains high; unaware of anyone importing Asian horseshoe crabs
- ***Delaware:*** ban on harvest of females could lead to bait shortages; no known importation
- ***Maryland:*** same as Delaware
- ***Virginia:*** same as Delaware



## Concerns with Importation



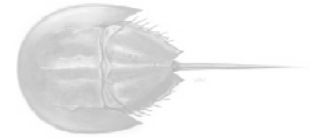
- **The horseshoe crabs that are imported may not be completely frozen or freezing may not sterilize the horseshoe crabs**
- **One species of Asian horseshoe crab, *Carcinoscorpius rotundicauda*, is known to carry tetrodotoxin (TTX) which is harmful to humans if eaten**
- **Developing a US market for these species may foster unsustainable fisheries in their native waters**



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## Possible Solutions

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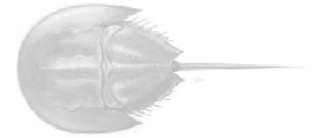
- **Asian horseshoe crabs are under review for likely IUCN red listing**
- **US Fish & Wildlife has been reviewing their authority under the Lacey Act to add Asian horseshoe crabs to the list of Injurious Wildlife**
- **Some states have regulations concerning importation or use of non-native species**



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# TC Recommendations

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- **TC recommends that the Board initiate state bans of imports or use if possible**
- **TC recommends that the Horseshoe Crab Management Board write a letter of support to the Committee on Environment and Public Works which is reviewing "The Invasive Fish and Wildlife Prevention Act of 2012"**