



AFSCUS

AMERICAN
FISHERIES
SOCIETY
COMPUTER
USER
SECTION

SOFTWARE REVIEW

Reviewed By: Two Reviewers

Date: August 22, 2007

Program Title: FishBC 3.0	
Version: 3.0	Program Date: August 2007
Program Description:	It computes back-calculated lengths and age-length keys from fish bony structures.

Developers: **Company:** Ball State University
Contact/Author(s): Jason Doll, Thomas Lauer
e-mail: jcdoll@bsu.edu
Web Site: <http://fishbc.iweb.bsu.edu/>

Program Strengths: One stop shopping. This program will compute back-calculated lengths from data generated from a camera, digitizer, imported excel files, and manual inputs. Transferring data into and out of the program is easy. It has age-length key capabilities, and is Microsoft Windows friendly.

Program Weaknesses: It takes some time to learn how to use the software, but the help menu does a good job answering questions, although in some instances the help menu is unclear..

Program Technical Support: (Is someone available to help through problem; Do they return calls/emails quickly; 1-800 number?)
Yes. Emails and voice messages were promptly returned. Support is also available at <http://fishbc.iweb.bsu.edu/Support.html>

Computer OS Compatibility: Windows 98, 2000, ME, or XP. At this time, it has not been tested for compatibility with Windows Vista.

Program Requirements: None

Hardware Compatibility: (√) IBM Compatible () Macintosh () Other ____

Hardware Requirements: 256 MB RAM, 20 MB available hard drive space, 548 MHZ Processor (1 GHZ Processor preferred to efficiently utilize the image analysis capabilities), CD-ROM. Optional Equipment: Printer, Twain Compatible Image capture device Digitizing Tablet (See Digitizing section for compatible digitizers).

Configuration Used by Reviewer: Microsoft Office XP Professional, Excel 2003, Paxcam 3. The digitizing portion of the software was not tested.

Documentation: check with ✓ () Printed (pgs) () pdf (✓) On-Line

Subject Area: check with ✓	(✓) Management	(✓) Population Dynamics	() Modeling
	() Culture	(✓) Age and Growth	(✓) Education
	() Systematics	() Population Estimation	() Administration
	() Habitat	() Economics	
	() Other _____		

Availability: () Public Domain (X) Proprietary/Commercial

Accuracy of Calculations: (X) Good () Bad () Untested () Not Applicable

Review Scores:

CATEGORY	SCORE	COMMENTS
Ease of Installation	10	No Problems
Operating System Environment	9	Likely not yet compatible with MS Vista.
User Interface	8	Good, once you get the hang of it.
Help Facility	6	Good to fair. One reviewer used it to answer all his questions and guide him through the software. The other reviewer had more difficulty, especially with respect as to how to label columns.
Documentation	7	There is no manual. All the documentation is included in the help facility.
Learning Curve	8	One reviewer felt that after a few hours of use in combination with the help facility he felt he knew the software pretty good.
Ease of Use	8	See "learning curve"
Calculation Accuracy	10	
Education Value	10	
Productivity Potential	10	A big improvement from FishBC 2.0
Examples	5	Example data input and export files located in FishBC install folder.
Usefulness to Fisheries Scientists	10	It is all that is needed to do back-calculated lengths from a number of different interfaces. An excellent program that is not cost prohibitive.
OVERALL RATING	9	

* Use 1 to 10 rating scales: 1 = bad; 5 = average or acceptable; 10 = great.

Incorporate into AFSCUS Library: (✓) Yes () No

General Comments: This is a good program and a big upgrade from version 2.0. It eliminates the need for archaic programs like DisBCal89. The interface allows for easy, efficient production of fisheries age and growth data. A Vista update will be prepared (if needed once tested under Vista), and would be available from the website.

Selling Price (if applicable): \$59.99