



# New Jersey



# Fish & Wildlife

## DIGEST

### 2011 Marine Issue

A Summary of Rules and  
Management Information  
[NJFishandWildlife.com](http://NJFishandWildlife.com)

May 2011

**Free**

**Partnerships in  
Fish Sampling**

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**Can You Dig This?  
Shellfishing In New Jersey**

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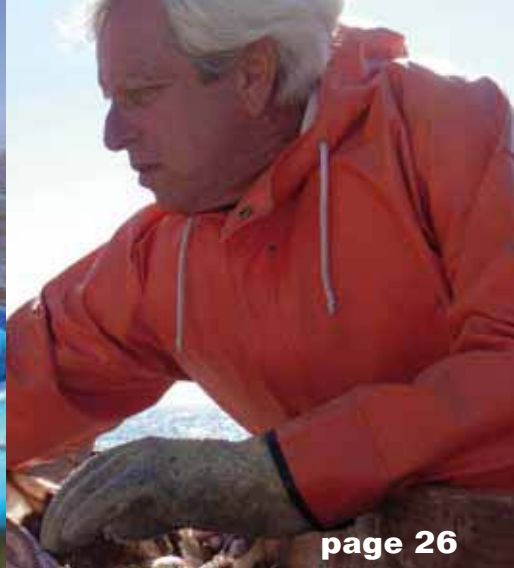
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Large Format Marine Digest  
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# Director's Message



BY DAVE CHANDA

After an exceptionally long and cold winter, the warmer days and waters of spring usher in another annual cycle of marine fish and shellfish activity along our coast and in our bays and estuaries. Spring also signals the beginning of another annual cycle of marine fishing for many of New Jersey's more than 500,000 recreational saltwater anglers and over 3,300 licensed commercial fishermen.

New Jersey may be small in size but it is unquestionably mighty in terms of marine resources and the economic impact of recreational and commercial uses of those resources. Our wealth of marine resources stems from our fortunate geography, which graces us with more than 349 square nautical miles of oceanic waters within 3 miles from shore and more than 500 square nautical miles of estuarine waters.

Not only vast, but productive waters support some of the largest and most successful recreational and commercial fisheries on the Atlantic Coast and in the entire country. New Jersey consistently ranks in the top three Atlantic Coast states in numbers of fish harvested by recreational anglers for all the major recreational species. New Jersey's commercial fisheries ranks third in the country in terms of pounds landed and value of the landings—only behind Alaska and Massachusetts.

Our vibrant recreational and commercial fisheries fuel a powerful economic engine that annually contributes more than 2 billion dollars to the New Jersey economy. Over and above this is an economic contribution to New Jersey's tourism industry. Our abundant marine fishing opportunity is an important factor for both non-residents and residents in choosing New Jersey as a vacation destination. The additional economic benefit to tourism from marine anglers is substantial and critical to our coastal economy.

With great wealth comes great responsibility. The future of our marine resource and its sustainable use hinges on responsible management. The magnitude of management responsibility and the way marine fish stocks are managed have changed dramatically over the last 25 years. In the mid-1980s the striped bass was the only New Jersey species whose management was controlled by a federally mandated Atlantic Coast marine fisheries management plan. Today, more than 30 of our most sought after marine species are managed on a coastwide basis through these plans. Each of these plans have research, monitoring and management requirements states must satisfy to allow their anglers to keep fishing for each of those species.

There is growing competition between Atlantic Coast states for harvest shares of marine fish stocks. Our marine staff currently represents New Jersey's interests on over 25 interstate/federal management boards and nearly 60 different interstate technical/monitoring committees. Now more than ever, the fishing opportunities for marine fish in each Atlantic Coast state is shaped by the quantity and the quality of data collected by each state.

Angler harvest statistics are an important component of Atlantic Coast data that ultimately shape fishing regulations and species harvest in each state. New Jersey anglers now have the ability to contribute valuable data to help maintain and improve their marine fish seasons, length and bag limits.

This issue of the Marine Digest highlights a number of areas where New Jersey anglers can influence fisheries management. One example can be found in the article Partnerships: Work in Fish Sampling Efforts where Fish and Wildlife staff have been working cooperatively with for-hire vessels and fishing tournaments to collect valuable biological samples for striped bass and bluefish. Another article on page 29 discusses the Marine Recreational Information Program and how this will improve the quality of data used to manage marine fish. Lastly, the New Jersey Recreational Saltwater Angler Survey is an online fishing reporting method anglers should submit every time they fish (<http://www.NJFishandWildlife.com/marinesurvey.htm>). This new survey allows for greater management flexibility than otherwise provided by using the older federal survey system. For example, the discard data provided by New Jersey anglers allowed New Jersey to evaluate smaller/dual size limits options for the 2011 fishing season.

Please help us to help you by completing a fishing report for every trip and by registering each year in the Saltwater Angler Registry Program. 

Dave Chanda is the Director of the Division of Fish and Wildlife.



## About this Guide

This high-quality regulation guide is offered to you by the New Jersey Division of Fish and Wildlife through its unique partnership with J.F. Griffin Publishing, LLC.

J.F. Griffin is an award-winning publishing house that specializes in producing state fish and wildlife regulation guides. J.F. Griffin supports the Fish and Wildlife staff in the design, layout and editing of the *New Jersey Fish and Wildlife Digest*. We also manage the marketing and sales of Digest advertising to appropriate businesses.

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### SALTWATER ANGLER REGISTRY

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**New Jersey Division of Fish and Wildlife is a professional, environmental organization dedicated to the protection, management and wise use of the state's fish and wildlife resources.**

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**Cover photo:** Striped Bass (Don Cianciolo)

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**Our Mission**

To protect and manage the state's fish and wildlife to maximize their long-term biological, recreational and economic value for all New Jerseyans.

**Our Goals**

- To maintain New Jersey's rich variety of fish and wildlife species at stable, healthy levels and to protect and enhance the many habitats on which they depend.
- To educate New Jerseyans on the values and needs of our fish and wildlife and to foster a positive human/wildlife co-existence.
- To maximize the recreational and commercial use of New Jersey's fish and wildlife for both present and future generations.



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# Partnerships

## Work in Fish Sampling Efforts

By Heather Corbett, Senior Fisheries Biologist and Michael Celestino, Principal Fisheries Biologist

Scientific fisheries data collection is not easy. With ever-increasing federal mandates, dwindling budgets and staff reductions, New Jersey Division of Fish and Wildlife is forced to find innovative ways to collect new, essential data for fisheries stock assessments—and we have. Our agency is cultivating a solution to one aspect of data collection through the generous cooperation with party boats and fishing tournaments.

Biological samples—such as fish otoliths (ear bones), scales and total fish lengths—are a key component to many fisheries stock assessment methods. The use of biological samples and measurements provide us with information essential to create an age/length key for reference when only a fish's length is known. For two common New Jersey species—striped bass and bluefish—considerable data on age structure are required for stock assessment.

The success of the two fish sampling strategies described below—initiated in association with federally mandated striped bass management programs—led Fish and Wildlife's marine fisheries staff to theorize that the same strategies could assist New Jersey with assessing the feasibility of collecting biological information from bluefish in advance of any bluefish-related federal mandates. Read on to learn how these programs developed and have proven to be invaluable.

### Party Boat Sampling on the Queen Mary

The majority of Fish and Wildlife's biological samples are collected from striped bass. These fish are primarily caught during Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC)-mandated field surveys but additional data are needed. Over the years, Fish and Wildlife has periodically sampled fish on several party or charter boats. Since 1999, Captain John Brackett (JB) has hospitably welcomed Fish and Wildlife staff to sample the striped bass catch on the F/V Queen Mary, a vessel based in Point Pleasant, New Jersey. The Queen Mary's staff and regular customers have made sampling easy and efficient and as a result, the Queen Mary has become our "go-to" vessel when sampling opportunities arise. Sampling from party boats is an excellent way to supplement survey data with much-needed samples from both kept and released fish.



Captain John Brackett (L) and deck hand Eric Olsen.

**Striped Bass** During our time sampling on the Queen Mary, Fish and Wildlife measured 753 fish averaging 25 inches in total length and collected scale samples from 663 fish for age determination, ultimately yielding data from fish ranging between two and 13 years old.

**Bluefish** Previously, all age-related information for bluefish came from Virginia. Comprehensive age information is critical for bluefish stock assessment. The ASMFC Bluefish Management Board is considering whether to impose a requirement for some states (including New Jersey) to collect age-related information. Recognizing our current staff and funding limitations, we know that initiating a new sampling program is not practical, but Fish and Wildlife is determined to collect this valuable information for this significant fishery.

In 2010, this goal motivated Fish and Wildlife to once again approach Captain JB, requesting his help to initiate a sampling program focused on collecting recreationally caught bluefish for otolith extraction. Biologists would attempt to discern differences in fish lengths obtained from using fish racks (fish with both fillets removed) versus those measured from whole fish. These data will allow New Jersey to assess the feasibility of this program, and will likely influence future coast-wide sampling programs (i.e., if rack length significantly differs from whole fish length, collection programs and assessments must take this into account).

In 2010, Fish and Wildlife extracted otoliths from 85 bluefish collected on the Queen Mary, ranging in total length from 12.25 to 34.0 inches. In addition, results from our whole versus rack-length comparison preliminarily suggests that fish between 10 and 23 inches are likely to be between  $\frac{1}{16}$  to  $\frac{3}{8}$  inches smaller when filleted compared to those measured whole. For fish larger than 23 inches, filleted fish can be up to  $\frac{7}{8}$  of an inch smaller than their whole counterparts.

### Tournaments

**Striped Bass** Fish and Wildlife has established another source for collecting valuable striped bass data through New Jersey fishing tournaments. This endeavor began in 1997 when our agency was invited to attend the Sea Shell's 1<sup>st</sup> Annual Striped Bass Derby in Beach Haven. The information collected was especially useful in supplementing field survey data with samples from large fish, data that is currently lacking but is critical information for stock assessments. After the data-gathering success at the Derby<sup>1</sup>, a conscious effort was made to attend more of these events. In 2009, Fish and

<sup>1</sup>In 2009, the Derby raised \$20,000 for the John F. Hughes III Scholarship Fund for Southern Regional High School athletes.



## Age Length Keys

### Goal:

To create an age-length key (ALK) which will accurately reflect the age structure of a fish species.

### Project to achieve goal:

Fish age and length data collection through biological sampling techniques.

### Q. What is an age-length key?

**A.** An ALK is a table or plot that displays the age of a fish based on its size.

### Q. What information is needed to develop an ALK?

**A.** Methods vary depending on the species. Fish scales are the most common body structure used to age striped bass, primarily due to ease of collection without harming the fish. Scales are not effective for aging bluefish. Using otoliths (fish ear bones) is preferred for bluefish but otoliths are also proven to be more accurate for striped bass, especially in older fish. The aging technique is similar when using either an otolith or a scale; the process involves counting growth rings to determine age, analogous to counting the growth rings from the cross-section of a tree.

Otoliths (fish ear bones). Bluefish (left) and striped bass.



Photos by Heather Corbett/NJ Div. Fish and Wildlife





Another fine striper caught while fishing the Queen Mary.

Wildlife also collected samples from the South Jersey Big Bass Open at South Jersey Marina in Cape May and Bay Point Marina's Striped Bass Tournament in Cedarville.

During fall 2009, Fish and Wildlife collected lengths and weights from 120 harvested striped bass, averaging nearly 38 inches and 21.5 pounds. Using scales and otoliths, biologists determined that fish sampled in 2009 ranged from five to 15 years old; the majority were age 13. Interestingly, the age 13 fish were from the 1996 year class, an above average index year for New Jersey's Striped Bass Recruitment Survey in the Delaware River and the highest index for Maryland's similar survey in Chesapeake Bay.

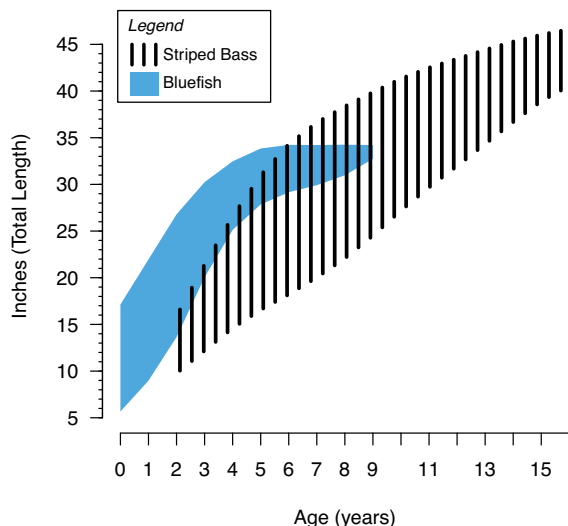
**Bluefish** Our success sampling striped bass from tournaments prompted us to consider the same avenue to supplement our bluefish data collection. In our inaugural year, Edward Goldman (New Jersey Marine Fisheries Councilman) and the Absecon Saltwater Sportsman's Club graciously permitted us to collect samples from the Nuncio Bruno Kids Under 16 Bluefish Tournament held

at Chestnut Neck Marina. We extracted otoliths collected from 23 fish ranging in total length from 17.5 to 29 inches.

### Conclusion

Fish and Wildlife's successful collaboration with the Queen Mary and the Sea Shell Striped Bass Derby has resulted in significant data collection for striped bass and bluefish and provides the template for future programs. Fish and Wildlife values any occasion to collect additional data at different fishing tournaments or on additional fishing vessels. Future sampling effort goals may include additional species such as weakfish. If you are—or know of—an interested tournament coordinator or vessel operator who might allow Fish and Wildlife to attend your striped bass, bluefish or weakfish event, contact Heather Corbett or Michael Celestino at (609) 748-2020.

Age length keys for striped bass and bluefish



### For additional information

- [www.njfishandwildlife.com/artstrpbass10.htm](http://www.njfishandwildlife.com/artstrpbass10.htm)
- [www.njfishandwildlife.com/pdf/2010/artdel\\_fishtraveled.pdf](http://www.njfishandwildlife.com/pdf/2010/artdel_fishtraveled.pdf)
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# Can You Dig This?

## SHELLFISHING IN NEW JERSEY

By Jeffrey C. Normant, Principal Fisheries Biologist

**New Jersey's coastal bays and rivers** offer many recreational opportunities, such as fishing, boating and kayaking. However, one activity that is often overlooked is recreational shellfishing for hard clams or "clamming." Many locals and visitors to the New Jersey coastal region enjoy eating these succulent treats, but may not realize that great clamming opportunities exist from the Navesink River south to the small bays and sounds of Cape May County. As with fishing, there is always a great sense of accomplishment that comes with "catching your own," especially while enjoying a day on the water with family.

**New Jersey has a storied history** for harvesting shellfish that dates back centuries, with Native Americans harvesting shellfish for sustenance, later evolving into a commercial industry around colonial times. Recreationally, catching clams and oysters was a popular pastime that has, over the decades, seen a decline in the number of participants.

Contributing to this decline in participation are various factors such as loss of shellfish harvest areas closed due to poor water quality, overharvest and shellfish habitat loss from coastal development. Over the last several decades, improvements in water quality have expanded areas available to harvest, while tougher coastal development regulations have preserved existing shellfish habitat. Although shellfish populations have not yet returned to the numbers seen during the "glory days" of the past, there are still many good places to harvest shellfish.

**By far, the majority of shellfish harvesters** in New Jersey target hard clams (*Mercenaria mercenaria*). Clamming can be a relatively inexpensive activity; all that's needed to get started is a recreational shellfish license and a pair of old shoes or booties. Since clams are predominantly found in sand/mud bottoms and are buried just below the surface, the easiest way to start clamming is with the technique commonly known as treading. The harvester wades on a shallow water flat and probes the bottom with their feet or hands. Once a clam is found, you simply pull it out of the bottom.

Be sure to check your tides though; low tide is the ideal time to harvest. This is critical to the success of your trip as treading in head-high water will only make you a better swimmer!

Another popular method is using a scratch rake; a gardener's hand rake will also work fine. Simply pull the rake along the bottom until you hear and feel a clink, indicating a clam has been located. Use the rake to pull the clam out of the bottom.

Most shellfish harvesters utilize boats or kayaks to find areas to shellfish. However, there are many public

access areas along the coast, such as Island Beach State Park, for those without access to a boat. A great way to find clamming areas is to visit a local bait and tackle shop.

**Hard clams** can be found in a wide range of substrates and depths. For those who wish to expand their opportunities, a long handled shinnecock rake or tongs can be used off a boat in deeper waters inaccessible to treading. As you gain more experience, you will start to fine-tune your harvesting technique and become more efficient.

**Other species of shellfish** such as oysters (*Crassostrea virginica*), soft clams (*Mya arenaria*), blue mussels (*Mytilus edulis*), bay scallops (*Aequipectin irradians*), surf clams (*Spisula solidissima*) and other bivalve mollusks can also be harvested under the recreational shellfish license. Periodic oyster tonging seasons are set dependent upon current oyster bed conditions. New Jersey's tonging areas are the Maurice River Cove in Delaware Bay and in Great Bay near the mouth of the Mullica River in Atlantic County.

A recreational shellfish license costs \$10 for residents, \$20 for non-residents and \$2 for a juvenile under 14 years of age. Seniors over 62 years old that are New Jersey residents may obtain a free lifetime recreational shellfish license (initial \$2 application fee). Licenses may be purchased at a shellfish license agent (see page 21) or online at New Jersey Division of Fish and Wildlife's Web site at [WildlifeLicense.com/NJ](http://WildlifeLicense.com/NJ).

The recreational license allows for the harvest of 150 shellfish (in aggregate for all shellfish species) per day. Hard clams have a minimum size limit of 1½ inches in length. Shellfish harvest is permissible between sunrise and sunset. Shellfishing is not permitted on Sunday (except for in the Navesink and Shrewsbury rivers). For more detailed information, see shellfish regulations on page 18 in this *Digest* or visit our Web site.

**All shellfish must be harvested** in waters classified as "Approved" for shellfish harvest or within the open harvest period of "Seasonally Approved" waters (usually between Nov. 1 to April 30 of each year). Shellfish Growing Water Classification Charts may be obtained at shellfish license agents or viewed online at the NJDEP's Bureau of Marine Water Monitoring Web site at [nj.gov/dep/bmw/waterclass.htm](http://nj.gov/dep/bmw/waterclass.htm). Shellfish harvesters must avoid shellfish aquaculture lease



Clammers Jennifer Samuels (L) and Kim Schneider show their catch.

Joe Golden

grounds. These grounds are used privately for the cultivation of shellfish and are typically delineated with cedar or PVC poles.

**In an effort to provide more shellfish harvest opportunities in New Jersey**, both recreationally and commercially, Fish and Wildlife has made significant efforts to enhance and restore New Jersey's natural shellfish beds. Popular programs such as the hard clam seeding behind Island Beach State Park and on the flats in Great Bay near Seven Islands have been successful, as they have provided excellent recreational harvest opportunities. Partnering with Rutgers University, various federal agencies, local municipalities and organizations such as ReClam the Bay, Fish and Wildlife's Bureau of Shellfisheries has initiated numerous programs designed either to enhance existing shellfish beds or to restore extant or remnant beds.

These programs have included the purchase and planting of clam and oyster "seed" (young shellfish raised beyond the larval stage) from hatcheries plus the purchase and planting of clean clam and oyster shell to provide excellent cultch material (growing substrate) for the setting of oyster larvae. These programs have been successful, providing excellent harvest opportunities in addition to the ecological benefits.

The enjoyment of exploring New Jersey's coastal waters while finding your own "clamming hotspot" and feasting on your bounty at the end of the day are the best rewards of all. With tens of thousands of acres in New Jersey's back bays and tidal rivers available to harvest shellfish, why not give it a try?

*To stay up to date on important news and events related to shellfish, sign up for our shellfish and marine fisheries e-mail Listserv. Visit Fish and Wildlife's Web site at [NJFishandWildlife.com/lstsub.htm](http://NJFishandWildlife.com/lstsub.htm).*



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# GOVERNOR'S SURF FISHING TOURNAMENT

By Karen Leskie, Wildlife Technician **Get Outside and Enjoy One of New Jersey's Natural Resources**

The 20<sup>th</sup> Annual Governor's Surf Fishing Tournament will be held Sunday, Oct. 2, 2011. Once again anglers from New Jersey and neighboring states will descend upon the beaches of Island Beach State Park in hopes of catching the longest fish of the day. The tournament aims to encourage youngsters and adults to learn more about surf fishing while taking advantage of a great family activity. Funds raised by the tournament go toward marine resource conservation and education.

A strong northeast wind blew hard all day at the 19th annual tournament, but that didn't discourage the nearly 800 anglers. Contestants caught blackfish, bluefish, kingfish and striped bass. A total of twenty prizes were awarded in categories for children, teens and adults. However, the grand prize went to Gary Grimm of Flanders, with a 30½-inch striped bass. Lieutenant Governor Kim Guadagno along with DEP Division of Fish and Wildlife Director, Dave Chanda

congratulated Mr. Grimm with a plaque and two rod-and-reel combinations. Also, Mr. Grimm's name has been engraved on the Governor's Cup, which is on permanent display at Island Beach State Park.

Since its inception in 1991, the tournament has generated more than \$120,000 for various marine education and restoration efforts, construction of access ramps for disabled saltwater anglers, surf fishing instruction programs and equipment, specialized wheel chairs that provide beach access to the disabled and elderly, plus the purchase of the first mobile automatic heart defibrillator for use at Island Beach State Park.

For more information about the Governor's Surf Fishing Tournament or to receive a registration form, visit [NJFishandWildlife.com/gsft.htm](http://NJFishandWildlife.com/gsft.htm) or call (609) 748-4347. 



Left to right: Lt. Governor Kim Guadagno; Paul Harris, President, NJ Beach Buggy Association; Gary Grimm, 19<sup>th</sup> Annual Governor's Surf Tournament winner; Frank Dara, President, Governor's Surf Tournament Committee and Mark Taylor, President, Jersey Coast Anglers Association.

**New Jersey Division of Fish and Wildlife** (along with our co-sponsors: New Jersey Division of Parks and Forestry, New Jersey State Federation of Sportsmen's Clubs, Jersey Coast Anglers Association and New Jersey Beach Buggy Association) would like to thank the following organizations for contributing to the success of the 19th Annual Governor's Surf Fishing Tournament in 2010:

- Canyon Gear
- Eagle Claw Fishing Tackle Company
- Grumpy's Bait & Tackle
- Legal Limits Company
- Manns Bait Company
- O Mustad & Son, Inc.
- Sportsman's Center
- Stanley Jigs, Inc.
- Surf Rocket
- Tru-Turn, Inc.
- TTI-Blakemore Fishing Group
- Wright & McGill Company

Photo: Daniel E. Beards



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**SEA TOW**

This is not the full law. Consult the Division of Fish and Wildlife for further details. All persons are reminded that the statutes, code and regulations are the legal authorities.

**Red text** in regulations indicates a change for this year.

**Green text** denotes proposed regulation changes anticipated to be in effect later in 2011.

**Purple text** indicates an important note.

The Department of Environmental Protection's Division of Fish and Wildlife informs anglers that rules for the recreational harvest of **summer flounder (fluke)** and **black sea bass** have changed.

- The **summer flounder** recreational season is now **May 7–Sept. 25**. The recreational possession limit has increased to **eight** fish while the minimum size remains at 18 inches.
- Also, the **black sea bass** recreational season has changed in 2011 and is now **June 4–Oct. 11; Nov. 1–Dec. 31**. **Note:** The black sea bass season will likely change again during 2011. Visit our Web site at NJFishandWildlife.com or call the 24-hour marine fish “listen-only” line at (609) 292-2083 for the latest regulation updates.
- At the time of publication, new recreational measures for **black drum** had not been adopted but could become effective during 2011. For the latest information on black drum visit our Web site at NJFishandWildlife.com or call the 24-hour marine fish “listen-only” line at (609) 292-2083.

These changes were implemented for New Jersey to remain in compliance with the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission's management plans for summer flounder and black sea bass. The new rules are aimed at providing adequate protection to these fish stocks while allowing New Jersey's saltwater recreational anglers to participate to the fullest extent possible in these various fisheries.

New Jersey recreational marine regulations apply to all fish species when they are possessed in state waters or landed in New Jersey regardless of where they are caught.

### Resource Information

Anyone who takes fisheries resources may be required to provide information on the species, number, weight or other information pertinent to management of resources.

### Methods of Recreational Fishing

No person shall take, catch, kill or attempt to take, catch or kill any fish within the marine waters of the state by any means except in the manner commonly known as angling with hand line or rod and line unless specifically provided for by statute or regulation.

### Wanton Waste Prohibited

Fish of any species which are purposely killed shall become part of the angler's daily possession limit and shall not be returned to the water from which they were taken. This does not apply to fish which are released alive and subsequently die, but does apply even to species without size/possession limits.

### Spear Fishing

Spear fishing may be conducted by means of a spear, harpoon or other missile while completely submerged in the marine waters of the state for any species, except lobster.

Persons who fish with a spear for species with size limits are reminded that it is their responsibility to ensure the fish meets the minimum size limits before being killed or injured.

### Prohibited Species

It is illegal to take, possess, land, purchase, or sell any of the following species:

- Atlantic sturgeon
- basking shark
- big eye sand tiger shark
- sand tiger shark
- shortnose sturgeon
- whale shark
- white shark
- See *Sharks* (page 13) for the full list of prohibited shark species

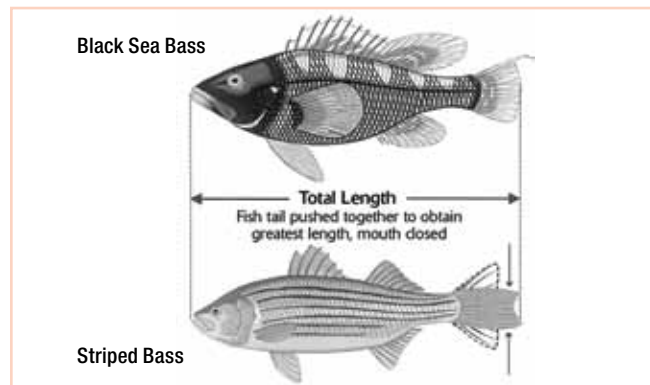
### Sea Turtles & Marine Mammals

It is illegal to intentionally molest, kill or possess sea turtles or marine mammals, or to possess any part thereof.

### Finfish

#### Filleting

The filleting at sea of all fish with a size limit is prohibited. No parts of any fish caught on a previous fishing trip shall be in possession. Party boats may fillet fish at sea if they obtain a Special Fillet Permit. Applications may be obtained from Fish and Wildlife's Bureau of Marine Fisheries. See *Summer Flounder*, page 14.



#### Black Sea Bass

The minimum size limit for black sea bass is 12.5 inches measured along the midline from the snout to the end of the central portion of the tail, not to include the tail filaments. (See illustration above.) The possession limit is 25 fish with an open season of **June 4–Oct. 11 and Nov. 1–Dec. 31**. **The black sea bass season will likely change during 2011.** Visit our Web site at NJFishandWildlife.com or call the 24-hour marine fish “listen-only” line at (609) 292-2083 for the latest regulation updates.

#### Bluefish

The possession limit for bluefish is 15 fish.

#### Black Drum

The minimum size limit for black drum is 16 inches in total length and the daily possession limit is three fish. There is no closed season for black drum.

**Proposed changes for black drum include a minimum size limit of 32 inches (total length) with a daily possession limit of two fish.** The “no closed season” for black drum would continue. Visit our Web site at NJFishandWildlife.com or call the 24-hour marine fish “listen-only” line at (609) 292-2083 for the latest regulation updates.

#### Red Drum

The red drum possession and size limits are one fish no less than 18 inches and not greater than 27 inches.

#### Striped Bass (includes Hybrid Striped Bass)

The possession limit for striped bass/hybrid striped bass is two fish with a minimum size limit of 28 inches for each fish. Anglers participating in the Striped Bass Bonus Program may possess an additional striped bass at least 28 inches in length.

It is illegal to take, catch or kill any striped bass from or in any marine waters of this state, by means of a net of any description, or by any methods other than angling with a hook and line or by spear fishing.

It is illegal to possess any striped bass which is less than the legal minimum size of 28 inches. A person shall not fillet, or remove the head or tail, or parts thereof, of any striped bass at sea.

Harvest and possession of striped bass from federal waters (outside three miles) is prohibited.

Sale of striped bass in New Jersey is prohibited.



**Striped Bass Closed Seasons**

No person may take, attempt to take, or have in possession any striped bass from the following closed waters:

**Jan. 1–Feb. 28:** All waters closed except the Atlantic Ocean from zero to three miles offshore. All inlets and bays are delineated from ocean waters by a Colregs Demarcation line.

**April 1–May 31:** Delaware River and Bay and their tributaries closed from the upstream side of the Calhoun St. bridge downstream to and including the Salem River and its tributaries.

**Note:** Non-offset circle hooks are required to reduce striped bass bycatch mortality while fishing with natural bait during the striped bass springtime spawning area closure within the Delaware River and its tributaries. This restriction does not apply to hook sizes smaller than size 2.

**Striped Bass Bonus Program**

The Striped Bass Bonus Program will continue this year, where anglers possessing a bonus permit may keep a third striper at 28 inches or greater.

The current allocation from the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission is 321,750 pounds to be distributed between individual anglers and party/charter boats. Should New Jersey exceed this quota, any overage would be subtracted from the following year's quota.

**Application Process:** Striped Bass Bonus Program permits are only available online. Go to [WildlifeLicense.com/nj/](http://WildlifeLicense.com/nj/), complete the application and immediately print one Bonus Permit (application fee, \$2). The permit is non-transferable and valid for the current calendar year. Only one permit can be used per day. Harvest reporting also must be online.

The party/charter boat segment of the program remains the same, with the applications available only by contacting Fish and Wildlife at (609) 748-2020. The party/charter boat bonus program is not online.

**Striped Bass Bonus Permit Harvest Reporting:** All information on the Bonus Permit must be completed immediately after harvest and prior to transportation. After reporting harvest information at [WildlifeLicense.com/nj/](http://WildlifeLicense.com/nj/), anglers are then eligible to receive another bonus permit for the \$2 application fee. **Note:** Harvest information must be reported online.

**Striped Bass Fishing Log:** All participants receive a log with their Bonus Permit and are encouraged to report all striped bass fishing activity for the calendar year. Anglers now have the option to enter their striped bass fishing log online instead of mailing their paper fishing log. Go to [NJFishandWildlife.com/bonusbas\\_log.htm](http://NJFishandWildlife.com/bonusbas_log.htm).

**Sharks**

The minimum size limit for any species of shark, except small coastal group and dogfish is 54 inches fork length. See dogfish *Note* and measuring illustration for fork length, page 14.

The 2011 shark regulations complement existing federal shark regulations (see *2011 Federal Recreational Regulations* table, page 20). However, the following additional measures are required for state waters:

- In state waters, there is no minimum size limit for small coastal sharks\* in the recreational fishery, but federal regulations include a 54-inch minimum size limit for blacknose and finetooth small coastal sharks.
- All sharks within the large coastal group\* will have a closed season within state waters from May 15 through July 15 to protect spawning female sharks during the pupping season.

\* See page 20 footnote for species list defining small coastal, large coastal and pelagic sharks.

All sharks harvested by recreational fishermen must have heads, tails and fins attached naturally to the carcass until landed. Anglers may still gut and bleed the carcass as long as the tail is not removed. Filleting sharks at sea is prohibited. >

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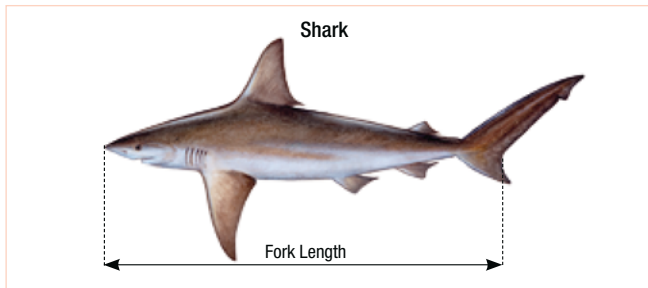
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Recreational anglers should access the following National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Web site, [http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/hms/sharks/2008/Rec\\_shark\\_ID\\_placard.pdf](http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/hms/sharks/2008/Rec_shark_ID_placard.pdf) to view the publication *Sharks That Can Be Legally Retained By Recreational Anglers In The Atlantic Ocean, Caribbean Sea And Gulf Of Mexico*, an excellent pictorial guide to identifying sharks that are legal to harvest.

These are the shark species that are prohibited from possession: Atlantic angel, basking, bigeye sixgill, bigeye thresher, bigeye tiger, bignose, Caribbean reef, Caribbean sharpnose, dusky, Galapagos, longfin mako, narrowtooth, night, sandbar, sandtiger, sevengill, silky, sixgill, smalltail, whale and white sharks.

**Note:** To differentiate sharks from dogfish—the smooth dogfish has flat, tiny teeth; the spiny dogfish has strong, dorsal spines, shorter than, and in front of, the dorsal fins. Neither are present in sharks.

### Summer Flounder (Fluke)

The possession and minimum size limit for summer flounder is **eight** fish at 18 inches with an open season from **May 7–Sept. 25**.

Anglers may fillet one legal-sized summer flounder from their daily possession limit catch for use as bait. This carcass, commonly known as the rack, shall be kept intact so it can be measured for compliance with the minimum size limit. No parts of any summer flounder caught on a previous fishing trip shall be in possession; only fish just caught on this outing.

### Tautog (Blackfish)

The minimum size limit for tautog is 14 inches. There is a four fish possession limit from Jan. 1–April 30, a zero fish possession limit from May 1–July 15 (the season is closed), a one fish possession limit from July 16 through Nov. 15 and a six fish possession limit from Nov. 16–Dec. 31.

### Weakfish (Gray & Spotted Seatrout)

The current possession and minimum size limit for weakfish is one fish at least 13 inches in length.

### Winter Flounder

The minimum possession and size limit for winter flounder is two fish at 12 inches. For winter flounder the open season is March 23–May 21.

### Additional Marine Fishing Regulations

See pages 19–20 for the regulation charts and fish ID pages.

### National and New Jersey Saltwater Angler Registry Programs

On February 22, 2011, Governor Christie signed legislation that requires the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) to establish a free saltwater registry program for all anglers and for-hire vessels to exempt New Jersey anglers from registering with the federal registry program. In order to exempt New Jersey anglers, the completed registry program must be approved by the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) and a subsequent agreement established with NMFS.

At the time this *Digest* was published, the New Jersey Saltwater Recreational Registry Program (NJSRRP) had not yet been completed and approved by NMFS. The NJDEP is working to have the free NJSRRP available for

individuals and for-hire vessels to register sometime in May. Anglers and for-hire vessels will register through the NJDEP Web site.

Please visit the Division of Fish and Wildlife's Web site frequently to get the latest information and sign up for the Marine listserv to get e-mail announcements pertaining to the NJSRRP and all marine fisheries related issues.

### National Saltwater Angler Registry Program

Until the NJSRRP is approved and available for individuals and for-hire boats to register, the federal government's National Saltwater Angler Registry Program requires most New Jersey saltwater anglers to register prior to fishing in 2011.

You must register if you...

- Fish for or catch anadromous species (striped bass, shad, river herring) in state tidal waters
- Fish in Federal waters (more than 3 miles from shore)

You do not have to register if you...

- Are under 16 years of age
- Only fish on federally licensed party or charter boats
- Hold a Highly Migratory Species Angling Permit
- See our Web site for additional exemptions:  
[NJFishandWildlife.com/registryinfo.htm](http://NJFishandWildlife.com/registryinfo.htm)

Register online at [www.countmyfish.noaa.gov](http://www.countmyfish.noaa.gov) or call toll free (888) 674-7411. Until New Jersey's registry program is in place and approved by the NMFS, anglers who register through the federal program would pay the \$15 fee to cover the administrative costs of the federal registry program.

**Note:** Registering with the Federal Registry Program does NOT exempt anglers from obtaining any state marine fishing license required when fishing another state's waters.

### Delaware Fishing License Requirement

A Delaware fishing license is now required for all non-resident anglers aged 16 and over fishing either fresh or tidal waters. Delaware fishing license information can be found at <http://www.fw.delaware.gov/Fisheries/Pages/NewFishingLicense.aspx>.

### New York License Requirement

New York's marine fishing license has been suspended. New York is offering a free registry to all marine anglers. Visit <http://www.dec.ny.gov/permits/54950.html>.

### Bait Fish

No license is required for the taking of baitfish for personal use with the following gear:

1. Dip nets 24 inches diameter or less for the taking of herring for live bait.
2. Bait seines 50 feet long or less.
3. Cast nets 20 feet in diameter or less.
4. Lift or umbrella nets four feet square or less.
5. Not more than five killipots.
6. Not more than two miniature fykes or pots for the taking of eels for bait.

Fish taken in this manner may not be sold or used for barter unless a commercial bait net license is in possession.

No person shall take more than 35 alewife or blueback herring in aggregate per day by hook and line or with the above listed gear.

No person shall take or attempt to take fish by any means from the Deal Lake flume, Lake Takanasse spillway or Wreck Pond spillway on any Monday, Wednesday or Friday during the months of April and May.

**Red text** in regulations indicates a change for this year.

**Green text** denotes proposed regulation changes anticipated to be in effect later in 2011.

**Purple text** indicates an important note.



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MOTOR BOAT REGISTRATION & TITLE REQUIREMENTS

### Motor Boat Registration and Title Requirements

NJ Motor Vehicle Commission (MVC)

#### Registration

Most boats must be registered to operate on New Jersey waterways.

- All titled boats must be registered also.
- **Any boat (including jet skis and non-titled watercraft), mechanically propelled (incl. electric motors), regardless of length, must be registered.**
- Boats greater than 12 feet in length, regardless of propulsion means, must be titled and registered at an MVC office.

Boats and marine equipment which **need not be** registered:

- Those not based in New Jersey or operating here less than 180 consecutive days that are operating under a federally approved numbering system from another state
- Ship's lifeboats
- Non-motorized vessels used exclusively on small lakes and ponds on private property
- Racing vessels with New Jersey State Marine Police permit
- Non-motorized inflatable device, surfboard, racing shell, dinghy, canoe or kayak
- Non-motorized vessel less than 12 feet in length

#### Title

For use on New Jersey waterways, all boats more than 12 feet in length must be titled, with the exception of ship's lifeboat, canoe, kayak, inflatable, surfboard, rowing scull, racing shell, tender/dinghy used for direct transportation between a vessel and shore for no other purposes.

#### Boat Operator License (MVC)

An operator license is required to operate power vessels on fresh, non-tidal waters such as lakes, creeks and rivers. (Minimum age 16 years; with certain exceptions.)

**For More Information:**  
**New Jersey Motor Vehicle Commission**  
 (888) 486-3339 toll free in NJ or  
 (609) 292-6500 from out-of-state  
[www.nj.gov/mvc/](http://www.nj.gov/mvc/)

#### Boat Safety Certificate (NJSP)

A boat safety certificate (from an **approved** boat safety course; see NJSP Web site, below) is required to operate a personal watercraft or power vessel, including electric motors, in NJ waters (tidal and non-tidal).

**New Jersey State Police (NJSP)**  
 (609) 882-2000  
[www.njsp.org/maritime](http://www.njsp.org/maritime)

# Marine Species Identification



**Striped Bass**



**Weakfish**



**Black Sea Bass**



**Bluefish**



**Northern Puffer**



**Tautog**



**Winter Flounder**



**Atlantic Croaker**



**Summer Flounder  
(Fluke)**



**Black Drum**



**Hard Clam**



**Red Drum**

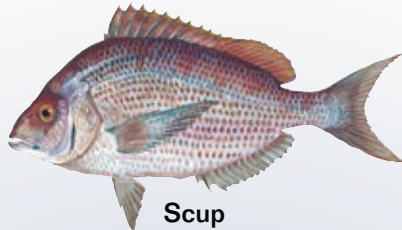


**Blue Crab**





**Spot**



**Scup  
(Porgy)**



**White Perch**



**Northern Seabroin**



**Northern  
Kingfish**



**Atlantic Bonito**



**Oyster Toadfish**



**Spanish  
Mackerel**



**American  
Shad**



**Atlantic Mackerel**



**Atlantic Cod**



**Smooth Dogfish**



**Spiny Dogfish**



**Sand Tiger Shark**



**Sandbar Shark**

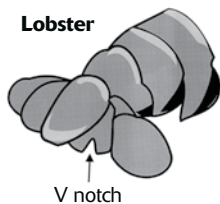
### Crustaceans

#### American Lobster

The legal possession size of whole lobsters, measured from the rear of the eye socket along a line parallel to the center line of the body shell to the rear of the body shell, shall be not less than 3 $\frac{3}{8}$  inches nor greater than 5 $\frac{1}{4}$  inches. Lobster parts may not be possessed at sea or landed.

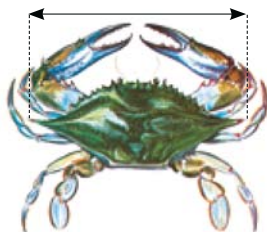
The possession limit is six lobsters per person. No person shall possess any lobster with eggs attached or from which eggs have been removed or any female lobster with a v-notched tail, as illustrated above.

The use of spears, gigs, gaffs or other penetrating devices as a method of capture for lobsters is prohibited. A recreational lobster pot permit and fish pot license is required to use pots or traps to capture lobsters. For details call (609) 748-2020. Lobsters taken recreationally may not be sold or offered for sale.



#### Crabs

- Crabs may be taken recreationally with hand lines, manually operated collapsible traps or scoop nets without a license. A non-commercial crab pot license is required for the use of not more than two non-collapsible Chesapeake-style crab pots (see illustration on page 21) or two trot lines to harvest crabs. See page 21 for the non-commercial crab pot license information.
- It is illegal to harvest or possess more than one bushel of crabs per day per person or offer for sale any crabs without having in your possession a valid commercial crabbing license.
- Minimum size for crabs that may be harvested (measured from point to point of shell) are as follows:
  - Peeler or shedder crab: 3 inches
  - Soft crab: 3 $\frac{1}{2}$  inches
  - Hard crab: 4 $\frac{1}{2}$  inches (possession)
- All female crabs with eggs attached and all undersized crabs shall be returned to the water immediately.
- Recreational trot lines shall not exceed 150 feet in length with a maximum of 25 baits.
- All pots and trot lines shall be marked with the identification number of the owner.
- All crab pots must be tended at least once every 72 hours.
- No floating line may be used on any crab pot or crab pot buoy.
- No crab pot shall be placed in any area that would obstruct or impede navigation or in any creek less than 50 feet wide.
- Only the owner, his agent or a law enforcement officer may raise or remove contents of a legally set fishing device.
- Crabs taken with a bait seine may be retained for personal use only if the fisherman possesses a bait net license, and may not be bartered or sold unless the fisherman possesses a commercial crab license.



Measure crabs point to point.

**Red text** in regulations indicates a change for this year.

**Green text** denotes proposed regulation changes anticipated to be in effect later in 2011.

**Purple text** indicates an important note.

#### Get On The Lists!

The Marine Fisheries and Shellfish e-mail lists, that is. This free service provides the latest information about Fish and Wildlife events, public hearings and other matters related to marine resources. And there are six other lists to help you get the most out of New Jersey's fish and wildlife resources. Sign up today.

Visit Fish and Wildlife's Web site: [NJFishandWildlife.com/lstsub.htm](http://NJFishandWildlife.com/lstsub.htm)

12. No crabs may be harvested from the Newark Bay Complex. For more information, see *Health Advisory* on page 28.

13. Crab Pot/Trot Line seasons:

Delaware Bay and tributaries: April 6–Dec. 4

All other waters: March 15–Nov. 30

The following waters are closed to the use of crab pots and trot lines: Cumberland Co.: Cohansey River and creeks named Back, Cedar, Nantuxent, Fortescue, Oranoken and Dividing; Cape May Co.: West and Bidwell Creeks and the Cape May Canal; Atlantic Co.: Hammock Cove (Dry Bay); Ocean Co.: on east shore of Barnegat Bay, that area of Sedge Islands Wildlife Management Area enclosed by a line drawn from the northern bank of Fishing Creek on Island Beach State Park to the northern tip of the Sedge Islands (Hensler Island), then south from point to point along the western side of the Sedge Islands WMA and terminating on the most southwestern point of Island Beach State Park.

14. Fish and Wildlife will issue a non-commercial crab dredge license for the harvest of not more than one bushel of crabs per day during the crab dredge season. Crabs so taken may not be sold or offered for barter. There is a fee of \$15 for this non-commercial crab dredge license. See page 21 for details on purchasing a non-commercial crab dredge license.

**Notice:** All non-collapsible Chesapeake-style crab pots (see illustration on page 21) must be constructed to include a biodegradable panel designed to create an opening to allow crabs and other organisms to escape if the pot is lost or abandoned. All non-collapsible Chesapeake-style crab pots set in any manmade lagoon or any water body less than 150 feet wide must also include a turtle excluder device inside all pot entrance funnels.

#### Horseshoe Crabs

The harvest of horseshoe crabs is prohibited. Possession of horseshoe crabs is also prohibited except for those individuals holding a scientific collecting permit for research and education and those fishermen that can provide suitable documentation that the horseshoe crabs in their possession were harvested outside of New Jersey.

#### Mollusks

- All persons must be licensed to harvest any shellfish. See license information, page 21. Shellfish means any species of benthic mollusks (except conch) including hard and soft clams, oysters, surf clams, bay scallops and mussels.
- It is illegal to harvest shellfish from condemned waters, even for bait purposes. It is also illegal to harvest shellfish including surf clams from beaches adjacent to water classified as condemned. Shellfish water classification charts are available from license agents or any state shellfish office. See page 21 for shellfish license information. Charts are updated annually.
- Shellfish harvesting is prohibited before sunrise, after sunset and on Sunday, except in the seasonally approved areas of the Navesink and Shrewsbury rivers.
- Harvesting shellfish on public grounds is restricted to the use of hand implements.
- It is illegal to harvest shellfish from leased grounds. These grounds are delineated by stakes or buoys set by the lease holder. Charts of the leases may be examined at Fish and Wildlife's Nacote Creek or Delaware Bay shellfish offices during regular business hours. Invasion onto leased grounds is punishable by penalties up to \$3,000 and loss of all equipment.

#### Recreational Shellfishing

- No holder of any recreational shellfish license may take more than a total of 150 shellfish (in aggregate) per day. See *Shellfish License Information*, page 21.
- It is illegal to dredge shellfish on public grounds. Here, hand implements are the only legal harvest methods. >





- The minimum size of hard clams that may be harvested is 1½ inches in length. Clams less than 1½ inches in length must immediately be returned to the bottom from which they were taken. Specific seasons, regulations and size limits exist for oyster beds in Great Bay, Delaware Bay, plus the Mullica, Great Egg Harbor and Tuckahoe rivers. Check with the nearest shellfish office (Nacote Creek or Delaware Bay) for these detailed regulations.
- It is illegal to harvest shellfish on Sunday except in the seasonal waters of the Navesink and Shrewsbury rivers between Nov. 1 and April 30.
- Shells taken in the process of harvesting oysters must be culled from the live oysters and returned immediately to the area from where they were taken.



### Commercial Shellfishing

- Shellfish may be sold only to certified dealers. All persons selling shellfish commercially must tag each container listing date of harvest, name and address of the harvester and the waters from which the shellfish were harvested.
- It is illegal to dredge shellfish on public grounds. All harvesting on public grounds is restricted to the use of hand implements.
- Shells taken in the process of harvesting oysters must be culled from the live oysters and immediately returned to the area from where they were taken.
- The minimum size of hard clams that may be harvested is 1½ inches in length. Clams less than 1½ inches must immediately be returned to the bottom from which they were taken. Specific seasons, regulations and size limits exist for oyster beds in Great Bay, Delaware Bay, plus the Mullica, Great Egg Harbor, and Tuckahoe rivers. Check with the nearest shellfish office (Nacote Creek or Delaware Bay) for these detailed regulations.
- It is illegal to harvest shellfish on Sunday except in the seasonal waters of the Navesink and Shrewsbury rivers between Nov. 1 and April 30 when it is legal.



## 2011 New Jersey Recreational Fishing Seasons, Minimum Size and Possession Limits (Regulations in red are new this year.)

Species	Open Season	Minimum Length	Harvest & Possession Limit (per person unless noted)
American Eel	No Closed Season	6"	50
Black Drum <sup>a</sup>	No Closed Season	16"	3
Black Sea Bass <sup>a</sup>	June 4–Oct. 11 Nov. 1–Dec. 31	12.5"*	25
Bluefish	No Closed Season	None	15
Cobia	No Closed Season	37"	2
Cod	No Closed Season	21"	No Limit
Haddock	No Closed Season	21"	No Limit
King Mackerel	No Closed Season	23"	3
Pollock	No Closed Season	19"	No Limit
Red Drum	No Closed Season	18"	1 not greater than 27"
River Herring	No Closed Season	None	35
Scup (Porgy)	Jan. 1–Feb. 28 July 1–Dec. 31	9"	50
Shad	No Closed Season	None	6
Shark <sup>b,c</sup>			
Large coastal group <sup>†</sup>	Jan. 1–May 14 July 16–Dec. 31	54" fork length	One Shark (of any species, except prohibited species) per vessel per trip; plus one Atlantic sharpnose shark per person per trip (no minimum size); plus one bonnethead shark per person per trip (no minimum size).
Small coastal group <sup>†</sup>	No closed season	None	
Pelagic group <sup>†</sup>	No closed season	54" fork length	
Smooth Dogfish	No Closed Season	None	No Limit
Spanish Mackerel	No Closed Season	14"	10
<b>Striped Bass or Hybrid Striped Bass</b>			
Delaware River & tributaries <sup>**</sup> (Calhoun St. bridge to Salem River & tributaries)	March 1–March 31 and June 1–Dec. 31		
Delaware River & tributaries <sup>**</sup> (upstream of Calhoun St. bridge)	March 1–Dec. 31	28"	2
Atlantic Ocean <sup>d</sup> (0–3 nautical miles from shore)	No Closed Season		
Rivers, bay and estuaries	March 1–Dec. 31		
3–200 nautical miles (federal waters)	Prohibited	–	0
Summer Flounder	May 7–Sept. 25	18"	8
Tautog	Jan. 1–April 30	14"	4
	May 1–July 15	–	0
	July 16–Nov. 15	14"	1
	Nov. 16–Dec. 31	14"	6
Weakfish	No Closed Season	13"	1
Winter Flounder	March 23–May 21	12"	2
<b>Note:</b> No species of fish with a minimum size limit listed above may be filleted or cleaned at sea (except striped bass if fillet is at least 28" long). Party boats licensed to carry 15 or more passengers may apply for a permit to fillet the above species, except striped bass, at sea. See <i>Summer Flounder</i> , page 14.			
<b>Blue Crab</b>			
peeler or shedder	No Closed Season <sup>e</sup>	3"	1 bushel
soft	No Closed Season <sup>e</sup>	3½"	
hard	No Closed Season <sup>e</sup>	4½"	
Lobster (carapace length)	No Closed Season	3 3/8"	6
Hard Clam (license required)	No Closed Season	1½"	150 clams

a Regulation changes possible during 2011.

b Not including dogfish; see description on page 13 under *Sharks*.

c See page 12 for a list of *Prohibited Species*.

d Atlantic Ocean greater than three miles from shore: harvest and possession prohibited.

e Unless using non-collapsible, Chesapeake-style crab pots. See sections on crab pots, pages 18 and 21.

\* Excluding tail filaments. (See illustration, page 12.)

\*\* See *Closed Seasons* (page 13) for specifics of springtime non-offset circle hook requirements.

† See page 20 for *Federal Recreational Regulations*.



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Policies subject to limits and exclusions.

### 2011 Federal Recreational Regulations for Minimum Size, Possession Limits and Seasons

See *New Jersey Division of Fish and Wildlife Recreational Fishing Seasons Minimum Size and Possession Limits* (page 19) for state waters listings of species not included in these federal waters regulations (from 3–200nm). For federal regulation questions, please contact the National Marine Fisheries Service at (978) 281-9260, or go to [www.nmfs.noaa.gov](http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov).

Species	Season	Minimum Size	Possession Limit (number per angler per day unless otherwise specified)	Notes
Striped Bass	NA	28" total length	2, plus bonus fish with card, no possession allowed in EEZ	Possession prohibited in federal waters (3–200 nm). See pages 12 and 19 for NJ waters.
Dolphin (Mahi mahi)	Year round	None	10, not to exceed 60 per vessel, which ever is less — except on a charter or headboat, then 10 per paying passenger.	For current federal waters regulations (3–200nm), refer to <a href="http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/hms/">www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/hms/</a> or call (727) 824-5399.
Marlin, White	Year round	66" lower jaw–fork length	None*	Billfish require Highly Migratory Species (HMS) permit when fishing in federal waters (3–200 nm). For permits refer to <a href="http://www.hmspermits.gov">www.hmspermits.gov</a> or call (888) 872-8862.
Marlin, Blue	Year round	99" lower jaw–fork length	None*	During any sanctioned billfish tournaments offering prize money, non-offset circle hooks are required for lures with natural bait or natural/artificial bait combos. Refer to <a href="http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/hms/">www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/hms/</a> or call (727) 824-5399.
Roundscale Spearfish	Year round	66" lower jaw–fork length	None	
Sailfish	Year round	63" lower jaw–fork length	None	All non-tournament billfish landings must be reported to NMFS within 24 hours, either online at <a href="http://www.hmspermits.gov">www.hmspermits.gov</a> or by calling (800) 894-5528.
Spearfish, Longbill	None	None	Prohibited	For current regulations refer to <a href="http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/hms/">www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/hms/</a> or call (727) 824-5399.
Golden Tilefish	Year round	None	None	For current federal waters regulations (3–200nm), refer to <a href="http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/hms/">www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/hms/</a> or call (978) 281-9260.
Swordfish	Year round	47" lower jaw–fork length if the head is naturally attached or 29" cleithrum to caudal keel if the head has been removed.	<b>For anglers:</b> 1 per person, no more than 4 per vessel per trip. <b>For charter vessels:</b> 1 per paying passenger, no more than 6 per vessel per trip. <b>For headboat vessels:</b> 1 per paying passenger, no more than 15 per vessel per trip.	Swordfish, tuna and sharks require an HMS permit when fishing in federal waters (3–200 nm). For permits, refer to <a href="http://www.hmspermits.gov">www.hmspermits.gov</a> or call (888) 872-8862.
Tuna, Albacore (Longfin)	Year round	None	None	All non-tournament swordfish landings must be reported to NMFS within 24 hours either online at <a href="http://www.hmspermits.gov">www.hmspermits.gov</a> or by calling (800) 894-5528.
Tuna, Bigeye	Year round	27" curved fork length 27 to <59" curved fork length	None Recreational Angling Category; 1 per vessel per trip in both the Northern and Southern Regions	† Bluefin tuna are managed in two regions; Northern, extending north from the Great Egg Inlet and Southern extending south from Great Egg Inlet. Fishing for bluefin tuna in the Gulf of Mexico is prohibited. Bluefin tuna retention limits may change throughout the season. Visit <a href="http://www.hmspermits.gov">www.hmspermits.gov</a> or call (888) 872-8862 or (978) 281-9260 for current information.
Tuna, Bluefin†	January 1, 2011 to December 31, 2011 or until season is closed.	≥73 curved fork length 27 to <47" curved fork length 47 to <59" curved fork length	Recreational Angling Category and Charter Headboat; 1 per vessel per year in the Northern Region. Prohibited in the Southern Region Charter Headboat; 1 per vessel per trip Charter Headboat; 1 per vessel per trip	
Tuna, Skipjack	Year round	None	None	All recreational bluefin tuna landings must be reported to NMFS within 24 hours either online at <a href="http://www.hmspermits.gov">www.hmspermits.gov</a> or by calling (888) 872-8862.
Tuna, Yellowfin	Year round	27" curved fork length	3 per person per trip	For current federal waters regulations (3–200nm), refer to <a href="http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/hms/">www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/hms/</a> or call (301) 713-2347 for swordfish/sharks or (978) 281-9260 for tunas.
Shark, Large Coastal*	Year round	>54", 4.5 ft. or 1.37m fork length	<b>One</b> Shark (of any species, except prohibited species) per vessel per trip; plus <b>one</b> Atlantic sharpnose shark per person per trip (no minimum size); plus <b>one</b> bonnethead shark per person per trip (no minimum size).	See below for list of shark groups which MAY be kept or MUST be released. Swordfish, tuna and sharks require an HMS permit when fishing in federal waters (3–200 nm). For permits, refer to <a href="http://www.hmspermits.gov">www.hmspermits.gov</a> or call (888) 872-8862. Recreational fishermen (those that do not have a limited access commercial shark permit) can not sell, barter or trade any Atlantic shark or shark pieces.
Shark, Small Coastal*				
Shark, Pelagic*				

\***Shark Species That May Be Kept:** Large Coastal Shark—blacktip, bull, lemon, nurse, tiger, spinner, scalloped hammerhead, smooth hammerhead, great hammerhead; Small Coastal Shark—Atlantic sharpnose, bonnethead, blacknose, finetooth; Pelagic Shark—Shortfin mako, blue, porbeagle, oceanic whitetip and common thresher. **Shark Species That MUST Be Released:** Atlantic angel, basking, bigeye sand tiger, bigeye sixgill, bigeye thresher, bignose, Caribbean reef, Caribbean sharpnose, dusky, Galapagos, longfin mako, narrowtooth, night, sandbar, sand tiger, sevengill, silky, sixgill, smalltail, whale and white.

Regulations concerning highly migratory species (HMS) such as tuna, swordfish, shark and billfish, are subject to change. Refer to [www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/hms/](http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/hms/) for a list of complete federal regulations for highly migratory species. For questions/clarification of the federal highly migratory species regulations, contact the National Marine Fisheries Service at (301) 713-2347 or go to [www.nmfs.noaa.gov](http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov).



### SHELLFISH LICENSE INFORMATION

A clamming license is now called a shellfish license and is required for harvesting of all species of benthic mollusks (with the exception of conchs, addressed in the commercial marine fisheries regulations), including, but not limited to, hard and soft clams, surf clams, oysters, bay scallops and mussels. Other specific commercial shellfish licenses exist such as surf clam dredge, Delaware Bay oyster dredge boat, and Delaware Bay licenses to harvest in Areas 1, 2 and 3.

Anyone engaged in any shellfish harvesting activity with someone holding a commercial shellfish license must also possess their own commercial shellfish license.

The senior shellfish license is a lifetime license.

For shellfishing regulations, see pages 18–19. Prior to harvesting any shellfish, be certain to consult the Shellfish Growing Water Classification Charts published by DEP's Bureau of Marine Water Monitoring, available at any shellfish license agent, state shellfish offices, online at <http://www.nj.gov/dep/bmw/waterclass.htm> or call the Bureau of Marine Water Monitoring at (609) 748-2000. Shellfish licenses are available for purchase online at [WildlifeLicense.com/NJ/](http://WildlifeLicense.com/NJ/).

### Shellfish License Fees

- **Resident recreational shellfish:** \$10  
Harvest limit of 150 shellfish (in aggregate) per day. Sale of catch prohibited.
- **Non-resident recreational shellfish:** \$20  
Harvest limit of 150 shellfish (in aggregate) per day. Sale of catch prohibited. License valid only during the months of June, July, August and September.
- **Juvenile recreational shellfish:** \$2  
For persons under 14 years of age. Subject to same restrictions as resident or nonresident adult recreational license holders.
- **Resident commercial shellfish:** \$50  
Unlimited harvest. Shellfish may be sold only to certified dealers.
- **Non-resident Commercial Shellfish:** \$250  
Unlimited harvest. Shellfish may be sold to certified dealers only.
- **Senior citizen recreational shellfish license:** FREE (\$2 application fee)  
NJ residents age 62 years or older. Harvest limit, 150 shellfish (in aggregate) per day. Sale of shellfish prohibited.
- **Disabled veterans:** Fish and Wildlife-certified disabled veterans are eligible for free shellfish license at any shellfish license agent location. For more information on how to become certified, call (908) 637-4125.

### Crab Pot License Information

**Crab Pot licenses are available at all agent locations:**

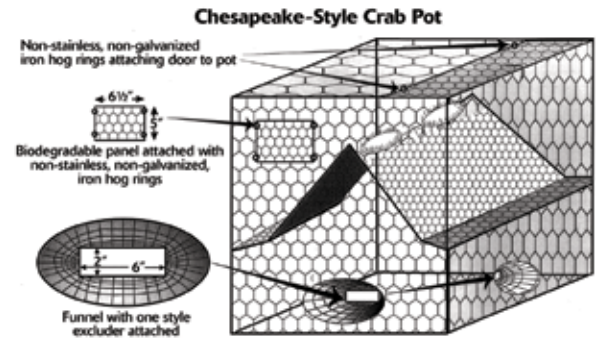
Recreational Crab Pot/Trot Line Licenses and Non-Commercial Crab Dredge Licenses are available for purchase online at: [WildlifeLicense.com/NJ/](http://WildlifeLicense.com/NJ/) or at any Fish and Wildlife-certified license agent including those license agents listed at right. For the most current list of Fish and Wildlife-certified license agents, go to [NJFishandWildlife.com/agentlst.htm](http://NJFishandWildlife.com/agentlst.htm).


- **Recreational crab pot/trot line license:** \$2  
Harvest limit of one bushel per day. Refer to the shellfish regulations on page 18 for all recreational crabbing regulations.
- **Non-commercial crab dredge license:** \$15  
Harvest limit of one bushel per day during the crab dredge season. Refer to the crab regulations on page 18 for all recreational crabbing regulations.

### TERRAPIN EXCLUDERS AND BIODEGRADABLE PANELS ARE REQUIRED ON CHESAPEAKE-STYLE CRAB POTS

Users of non-collapsible, Chesapeake-style crab pots should be aware that all pots set in any body of water less than 150-feet wide at mean low tide or in any manmade lagoon MUST include diamondback terrapin excluder devices. In addition, all non-collapsible, Chesapeake-style crab pots set in any body of water MUST include biodegradable panels.

These crab pot modifications will help reduce the unintentional drowning of terrapins and allow for escapement of these and other species in the event that pots are lost or abandoned. Terrapin excluder devices must be no larger than 2-inch high by 6-inch wide and securely fastened inside each funnel



entrance. Biodegradable panels must measure at least 6½-inch wide by 5-inch high and be located in the upper section of the crab pot. The panel must be constructed of, or fastened to the pot with wood lath, cotton, hemp, sisal or jute twine not greater than 3/16" diameter, or non-stainless steel, uncoated ferrous metal not greater than 3/32" diameter. The door or a side of the pot may serve as the biodegradable panel ONLY if it is fastened to the pot with any of the material specified above. Crabbers should be aware that ALL non-collapsible, Chesapeake-style crab pots MUST be licensed and marked with the gear identification number of the owner. For crab pot license information and regulations, see the regulations on page 18 and license agents below. 

### SHELLFISH AND NON-COMMERCIAL CRAB POT LICENSE AGENTS (For over-the-counter sales only)

#### ATLANTIC COUNTY

Egg Harbor True Value, 208 N. Philadelphia Ave., Egg Harbor City.. (609) 965-0815  
Fish Finder Marina, 3645 Atlantic-Brigantine Blvd., Brigantine ..... (609) 457-5384  
Main Street Hardware, 6016 Main St., Mays Landing..... (609) 625-4941  
NJ Div. Fish and Wildlife, 360 Rt. 9 N (milepost 51), Port Republic.. (609) 748-2021  
Zeus Sporting Goods, 6679 Black Horse Pike, Egg Harbor Twp..... (609) 646-1668

#### CAMDEN COUNTY

Towne News, 81 So. Whitehorse Pike, Berlin ..... (856) 768-9132

#### CAPE MAY COUNTY

Avalon Hodge Podge, 2389 Ocean Dr., Avalon ..... (609) 967-3274  
Belleplains Supply, 346 Handsmill Rd., Belleplains ..... (609) 861-2345  
Budd's Bait & Tackle, 109 Fullingmill Rd., Villas ..... (609) 886-6935  
Capt. Tate's Tackle Box, 450 No. Route 47, Cape May CH..... (609) 861-4001  
City of Ocean City, 861 Asbury Ave., Ocean City..... (609) 525-9328  
Just Sports, 21 Mechanic St., Cape May Court House..... (609) 465-6171  
Smuggler's Cove, 370 83rd St., Stone Harbor ..... (609) 368-1700  
Upper Township, 2100 Tuckahoe Rd., Tuckahoe ..... (609) 628-2805  
Wal\*Mart, 3159 Rt. 9S, Rio Grande ..... (609) 465-7760

#### CUMBERLAND COUNTY

AlR Bait & Tackle, 222 Bridgeton Fairton Rd., Bridgeton..... (856) 451-1800  
Beaver Dam Boat Rentals, 514 Old Beaver Dam Rd., Newport ..... (856) 447-3633  
Big Daddy's Sport Haven, 595 Sherman Ave., Millville ..... (856) 453-9009  
Delaware Bay Office, 1672 E. Buckshutem Rd., Millville ..... (856) 785-0730  
Shire Products, 389 S. Lincoln Ave., Vineland ..... (856) 692-3646

#### GLOUCESTER COUNTY

Sportsman's Outpost, 2517 Fries Mill Rd., Williamstown ..... (856) 881-3244

#### HUDSON COUNTY

Caso's Gun-A-Rama, 176 Danforth Ave., Jersey City ..... (201) 435-5099

#### MIDDLESEX COUNTY

Auto Parts of Woodbridge, 108 Main St., Woodbridge..... (732) 634-6264  
Sayreville Sportsman Shop, 52 Washington Ave., Sayreville..... (732) 238-2060

#### MONMOUTH COUNTY

Brielle Tackle, 800 Ashley Ave., Brielle ..... (732) 528-5720  
L & H Woods and Water, 2045 Rt. 35, Wall ..... (732) 282-1812

#### OCEAN COUNTY

American Sportsman, 857 Mill Creek Rd., Manahawkin ..... (609) 597-4104  
The Bait Shop, 57 Main St., Bradley Beach ..... (732) 361-8500  
Bob Kislín's, 1214 Rt. 37 East, Toms River ..... (732) 929-9300  
Chumbucket, 381 Rt. 9, West Creek ..... (609) 294-2500  
Downes Bait & Tackle, 287 Brennan Concourse, Bayville..... (732) 269-0137  
Fish Bonz Bait & Tackle, 103 Lacey Rd., Forked River ..... (609) 971-2928  
Grizz's Forked River B & T, 232 N. Main St., Forked River..... (609) 693-9298  
Lacey Marine, 308 Rt. 9, So., Forked River ..... (609) 693-0151  
L & H Woods and Water, 403 Rt. 9, Waretown ..... (609) 242-1812  
Pell's Fish & Sport Shop, 335 Mantoloking Rd., Bricktown ..... (732) 477-2121  
Surf City Bait & Tackle, 317 Long Beach Blvd., Surf City..... (609) 494-2333  
Tip's Hardware, 218 Main St., West Creek ..... (609) 296-3192

#### SOMERSET COUNTY

Efinger Sporting Goods, 513 W. Union Ave., Bound Brook..... (732) 356-0604

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# Last Call for River Herring

By Peter Himchak, Supervising Fisheries Biologist

Recreational anglers have long enjoyed the accessibility and privilege of catching their own bait in pursuit of their fishing activity. Whether it is mullet, eel, silversides, killifish, grass and sand shrimp or river herring, an angler in New Jersey has been afforded the opportunity to gather his or her own bait by using a dip net, beach seine, cast net, lift or umbrella net, shrimp trawl, killipot and even angling. There are gear and seasonal restrictions and harvest limits on some bait fisheries, but an ample supply of the desired bait was usually available—until now. Recreational anglers will no longer be allowed to catch their own river herring bait, nor will commercial fisheries be permitted, when a moratorium is placed on taking river herring in New Jersey, effective January 1, 2012.

**How did this come about?** River herring, including both blueback herring and alewives, are anadromous fish which live most of their adult lives in the ocean and return in the springtime to natal rivers and streams to spawn. Recreational anglers await this annual spring migration when sufficient herring numbers are concentrated migrating toward spawning areas. Here they are readily available to be taken as prized bait, usually destined to become live bait in the striped bass recreational fishery.

River herring have endured a barrage of abuses over time, including habitat loss either due to dam construction and insufficient (or a total lack of) fish passage opportunities to their spawning grounds; habitat and water quality degradation in critical spawning and nursery habitat; overfishing; significant by-catch/discard mortality in other commercial fisheries and also predation. The river herring resource along the Atlantic coast has been in precipitous decline since the 1950s. Very few of the vibrant, sustained spawning runs from years ago remain today.

### **How do we restore river herring stocks?**

While preemptive management actions were taken by several states including Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut and North Carolina—as well as those shared waters along the common border of Virginia and North Carolina—to implement moratoriums on river herring fisheries in recent years, continued declines in river herring stocks were still observed. More aggressive action was necessary.

Thus, the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC), a compact of all 15 Atlantic coastal states, implemented Amendment 2 to the Interstate Fishery Management Plan for Shad and River Herring in May 2009. The plan requires states to submit for approval sustainable fishery plans demonstrating the sustainability of

river herring runs in order for direct or by-catch fisheries on river herring to continue in state waters or else a moratorium on the harvest of all river herring fisheries in state waters will be imposed effective January 1, 2012. New Jersey does not have sufficient data to develop and submit a sustainable fishery plan for any run of river herring and hence must implement such a moratorium.

**Two major actions are being taken** by the National Marine Fisheries Service to monitor and mitigate for losses of river herring in commercial fisheries in the Exclusive Economic Zone, the federally managed marine waters from 3–200 nautical miles offshore. Through the New England Fishery Management Council, Amendment 5 to Fishery Management Plan for Atlantic Herring is being developed to document levels of harvest and to mitigate by-catch losses through area or seasonal closures. This high degree of monitoring by-catch/discard mortality will require extensive at-sea observer coverage and portside sampling to assess fishing mortality impacts on river herring stocks.

Additionally, the Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council is developing Amendment 14 to the Fishery Management Plan for the Atlantic Mackerel, Squid and Butterfish Fisheries, to monitor by-catch/discard mortality of river

herring in these offshore fisheries and to develop mitigating strategies to minimize fishing-related mortality for river herring.

The demise of most river herring stocks did not occur overnight, just as their recovery to a restored status will be no quick fix. In addition to the moratoriums, other issues such as monitoring and mitigation of fishery management strategies, critical spawning and nursery habitat issues also must be addressed. River herring habitat improvement projects are needed.

**Dam removal programs are essential** to restore river herring spawning habitat. Where dams cannot be removed, the installation of fish ladders or passageways must be considered to “lift” river herring over these physical impediments, allowing the fish access to historical spawning habitat.

Unfortunately, river herring have not been a high priority fishery to receive dedicated research and management funds. To restore this fishery, that approach must change. Regrettably, when January 1, 2012 arrives and the river herring harvest moratorium goes into effect, anglers will no longer have access to these formerly abundant baitfish. The ramifications of their decline reaches far beyond a day fishing with family or friends.



### **Completed Fish Ladder, Great Egg Harbor, Lenape Lake—**

Water flows from the lake into the modified former ice passage behind the power house whose foundation is seen on the far side of the ladder structure. The fish ladder makes several turns before exiting parallel to the river's flow. Internal wood baffles provide resting areas for fish that must work upstream against both gravity and the river's flow.

Photo credit: Fred Akers, Great Egg Harbor River Council

# Skillful Angler Awards Program



**James Laco can be proud of this substantial fluke.**

The Skillful Angler Awards Program is designed to supplement the New Jersey Record Fish Program. It is comprised of three categories: Adult (for anglers age 16 and older), Junior (under age 16) and Catch and Release (based on length). A clear, side-view photo that allows accurate species identification must be included with each application. All photo entries become property of the Division of Fish and Wildlife and will not be returned. Well-composed, high resolution photos may be selected for printing in future *Digests*.

The Skillful Angler Awards program acknowledges that many anglers catch freshwater and marine fish that are not record size, but are still worthy of recognition because the size and weight of the fish sufficiently tested the angler's skill. The program is open to resident and non-resident anglers. All fish must be caught in New Jersey waters using a hook and line during legally open seasons.

Anglers qualifying for a Skillful Angler award receive a certificate and a bronze pin to adorn their fishing hat or jacket. Only one pin and certificate per species—regardless of category—will be awarded annually to each participant, but an angler may submit applications for larger fish caught even after receiving a pin.

At the end of the year, special recognition is given to anglers who catch the largest fish in each species category. The winner of each category receives a special commemorative gift recognizing his or her accomplishment as the best of New Jersey's Skillful Anglers.

Fish must be measured from the tip of the nose (with mouth closed) to the tip of the tail. For Adult/Junior categories, fish must be weighed and measured by fishing license agents, tackle shops or authorized Fish and Wildlife fisheries biologists.

Learn more online at [NJFishandWildlife.com/skflang.htm](http://NJFishandWildlife.com/skflang.htm).

## Minimum Entry Requirements:

Species	Adult Weight (lbs., oz.)	Junior Weight (lbs., oz.)	Catch & Release (inches)
Black Sea Bass	4	3	20
Striped Bass	40	36	42
Black Drum	70	63	46
Bluefish	18	16	33
Cod	30	27	42
Dolphin	30	27	n/a
Winter Flounder	2	1 lb., 8 oz.	16
Fluke	8	7	27
Kingfish	1	8 oz.	13
Mako Shark	250	225	n/a
Blue Marlin	400	360	n/a
White Marlin	60	54	n/a
Pollock	25	22 lbs., 8 oz.	41
Tautog	8	7	22
Albacore Tuna	50	45	n/a
Big Eye Tuna	200	180	n/a
Bluefin Tuna	500	450	n/a
Yellowfin Tuna	120	108	n/a
Tuna (other)	250	225	n/a
Weakfish	10	9	30

The New Jersey State Record Fish Program requires a separate application and is based on weight alone. Scale certification documentation and a weighmaster's signature are necessary. Other rules apply. Visit Fish and Wildlife's Web site at [NJFishandWildlife.com](http://NJFishandWildlife.com) for a complete list of current state records. See also page 25.

## New Jersey Skillful Angler Application

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Daytime Telephone Number (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

**Entry Category** (check only one):

Adult  Junior (16 years and under)

Catch and Release (qualification based on length)

**Fish Species** (Angler must complete. Subject to verification by a state biologist.)

Weight \_\_\_\_\_ lb(s), \_\_\_\_\_ oz. Length \_\_\_\_\_ in. Girth \_\_\_\_\_ in.

Date Caught\* \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ Time \_\_\_\_\_

Location \_\_\_\_\_

**Caught from** (check only one):

Boat  Shore  Surf  Jetty

Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

Line Test Used \_\_\_\_\_ Reel Type \_\_\_\_\_

Rod Type \_\_\_\_\_ Lure/Bait \_\_\_\_\_

### Certification for Adult and Junior Categories

Name of Establishment \_\_\_\_\_  
(where fish was measured and weighed)

Telephone Number \_\_\_\_\_

Weighmaster's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Weighmaster's Signature \_\_\_\_\_

**I certify:** 1) this fish was caught in New Jersey waters in accordance with state laws and regulations; 2) the entry was weighed on a certified scale (for Adult and Junior categories only).

I have enclosed a clear, side-view photo.

Applicant's Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

\* Application and photo must be submitted **within 30 days** of catching the fish. Applications for fish caught in December will be accepted only until January 31.

### Mail to:

NJ Division of Fish and Wildlife  
Skillful Angler Awards Program  
Pequest Natural Resource Education Center  
605 Pequest Rd.  
Oxford, NJ 07863



# New Jersey State Record Marine Sport Fish

New Jersey Division of Fish and Wildlife's Record Fish Program honors anglers who catch the largest of select species of freshwater and saltwater fish. Record size is based on weight alone; there are no line classes. Currently there are 61 marine species eligible for entry into the program.

Anglers are reminded that the objective of the Record Fish Program is to increase awareness of fishing opportunities for species that are regularly sought and routinely found on or off the coast of New Jersey. The original list of 72 species was pared down with that objective in mind.

Eleven species are now retired from the list of program-eligible fish, but remain on a separate list posted on Fish and Wildlife's Web site. One historical catch is also retired and posted on the list.

Anglers should be aware of the procedure in effect for entering the Record Fish Program. First, separate applications are required for freshwater and saltwater species. Second, for saltwater entries, it is now mandatory that a marine biologist inspect any potential record fish, as identification solely by photo is not always accurate. Anglers must call Fish and Wildlife's Nacote Creek Research Station at (609) 748-2020 to make arrangements for inspection. In most instances, the fish must be transported to this office in Port Republic. However, in the case of extremely large fish (i.e., shark and tuna), a biologist should be available to travel for dockside inspection. Note that all scale certification requirements still apply, including a valid Certificate of Inspection/Test Report and current Registration Certificate issued by the County Office of Weights and Measures.

The entry deadline is now no later than one month after the date of catch. Note that the triggerfish category is now defined as gray triggerfish.

For a complete list of state record fish or to print an application with complete program rules, visit the Division of Fish and Wildlife's Web site at [NJFishandWildlife.com/fishing.htm](http://NJFishandWildlife.com/fishing.htm).



**Fishing off of Cape May, this new state record black sea bass taken by Andrew Merendino weighed 8 lbs., 4.5 oz.**

## New Jersey State Record Marine Fish

Species	Lbs.	Oz.	Year	Angler	Where Caught
Amberjack, greater	85	0	1993	Edwin Metzner	Off Cape May
Bass, black sea	8	4.5	2010	Andrew A. Merendino	Off Cape May
Bluefish	27	1	1997	Roger Kastorsky	5 Fathom Bank
Bonito, Atlantic	13	8	1945	Frank Lykes, Jr.	Off Sandy Hook
Cobia	87	0	1999	John Shanchuk	Off Sea Bright
Cod	81	0	1967	Joseph Chesla	Off Brielle
Crab, blue	8 <sup>3/4</sup> " pt. to pt.		2009	Raymond Ponik	Bayonne
Croaker, Atlantic	5	8	1981	Frederick Brown	Delaware Bay
*Cunner	2	9	2006	Nick Honachefsky	Mud Hole
Dogfish, smooth	19	9	2010	Richard A. Proot, III	Mantoloking
Dogfish, spiny	15	12	1990	Jeff Pennick	Off Cape May
Dolphin	63	3	1974	Scott Smith, Jr.	Baltimore Canyon
Drum, black	109	0	2008	Nick Henry	Delaware Bay
Drum, red	55	0	1985	Daniel Yanino	Great Bay
Eel, American	9	13	1988	Warren Campbell	Atlantic City
Fluke	19	12	1953	Walter Lubin	Off Cape May
Flounder, winter	5	11	1993	Jimmy Swanson	Off Barnegat Light
Hake, white	41	7	1989	Wayne Eble	Off Barnegat Light

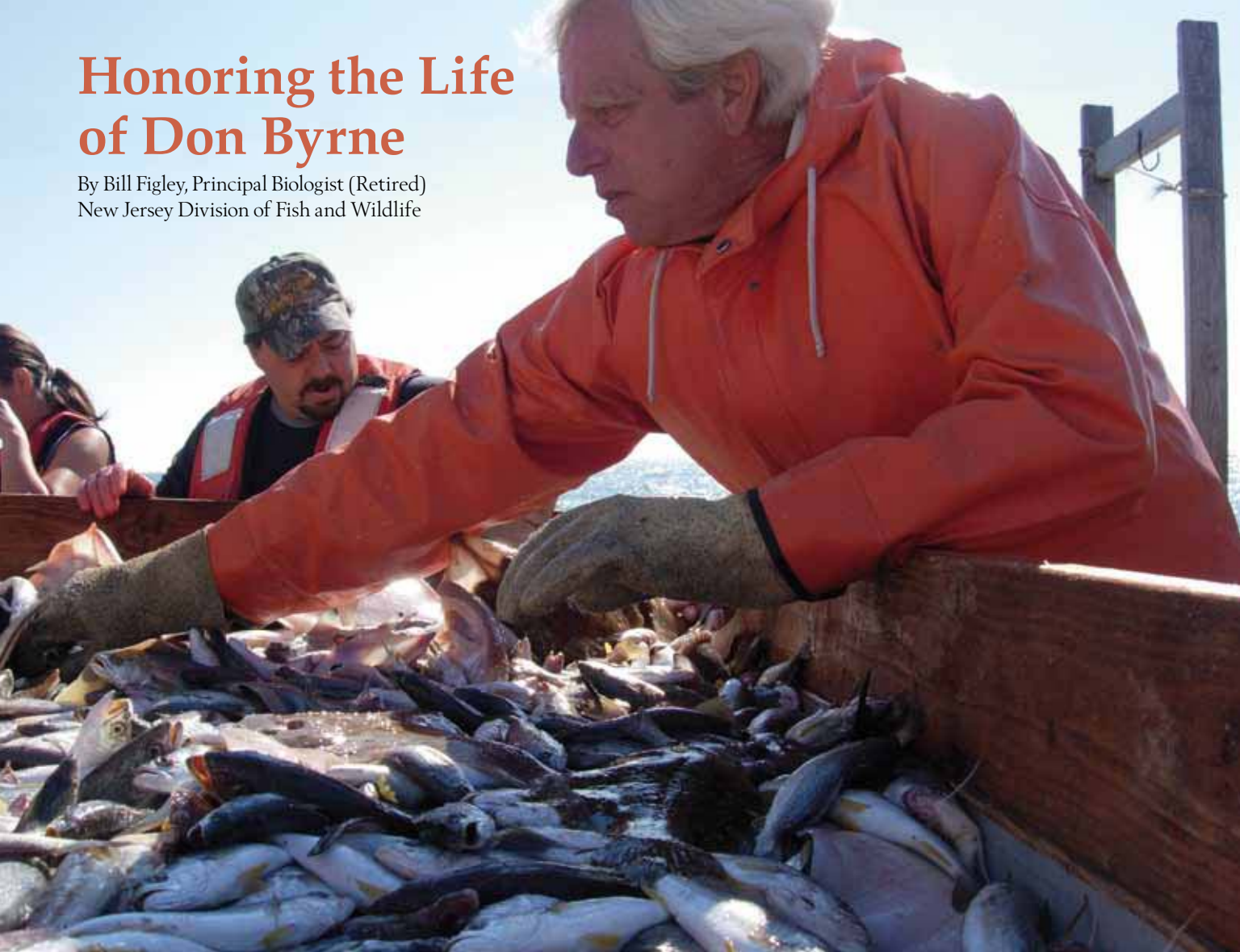
Species	Lbs.	Oz.	Year	Angler	Where Caught
Kingfish, Northern	2	8	2004	Chester Urbanski	Barnegat Bay
Ling (red hake)	12	13	2010	Billy Watson	Off Manasquan
Mackerel, Atlantic	4	1	1983	Abe Elkin	Manasquan Ridge
Mackerel, king	54	0	1998	Fernando Alfaiate	Off Cape May
*Mackerel, Spanish	9	12	1990	Donald Kohler	Off Cape May
Marlin, blue	1,046	0	1986	Phil Infantolino	Hudson Canyon
Marlin, white	137	8	1980	Mike Marchell	Hudson Canyon
Perch, white	2	12	1998	Michael King	Little Beach Creek
*Pollock	46	7	1975	John Holton	Off Brielle
Porgy	5	14	1976	Victor Rone	Delaware Bay
Sailfish	43	4	2006	Dr. John Tallia	Linden Kohl Canyon
Seatrout, spotted	11	2	1974	Bert Harper	Holgate Surf
Shad, American	7	0	1967	Rodger West	Great Bay
Shad, hickory	Vacant (Minimum Weight 2 lbs.)				
Shark, blue	366	0	1996	William Young, Jr.	Mud Hole
Shark, bull	Vacant (Minimum Weight 150 lbs.)				
Shark, dusky	530	0	1987	Brian Dunlevy	Off Great Egg Inlet
Shark, hammer-head	365	0	1985	Walter Thacara	Mud Hole
Shark, porbeagle	Vacant (Minimum Weight 100 lbs.)				
Shark, sandbar	168	8	1987	John Norton	Little Egg Inlet
Shark, s-fin mako	856	0	1994	Christopher Palmer	Wilmington Canyon
Shark, thresher	683	0	2009	Bennett Fogelberg	Fingers
Shark, tiger	880	0	1988	Billy DeJohn	Off Cape May
Sheepshead	17	3	2003	Paul Lowe	Manahawkin Bay
Spadefish	11	6	1998	Cliff Low	Delaware Bay
Spearfish, longbill	42	0	1989	George Algard	Poor Man's Canyon
	42	0	1997	Joseph Natoli	Hudson Canyon
Spot	0	13	2003	Robert Belsky, Jr.	Little Sheepshead Creek
*Striped Bass	78	8	1982	Al McReynolds	Atlantic City
Swordfish	530	0	1964	Edmund Levitt	Wilmington Canyon
*Tautog	25	0	1998	Anthony Monica	Off Ocean City
Tilefish, golden	63	8	2009	Dennis Muhlenforth	Linden Kohl Canyon
Tilefish, gray	18	7	2007	Joseph Sanzone	Tom's Canyon
Triggerfish, gray	5	12	2008	Ronald Pires	High Bar Harbor
Tuna, albacore	77	15	1984	Dr. S. Scannapiego	Spencer Canyon
Tuna, big-eye	364	14	1984	George Krenick	Hudson Canyon
Tuna, bluefin	1,030	6	1981	Royal Parsons	Off Pt. Pleasant
Tuna, skipjack	13	4	1999	Craig Eberbach	Wilmington Canyon
Tuna, yellowfin	290	0	1980	Wayne Brinkerhoff	Hudson Canyon
Tunny, little	24	15	1977	Mark Niemczyk	Off Sea Bright
Wahoo	123	12	1992	Robert Carr	28-Mile Wreck
Weakfish	18	8	1986	Karl Jones	Delaware Bay
Whiting (silver hake)	Vacant (Minimum Weight 2.5 lbs.)				

\* Fish was previously certified by the IGFA as a world record.

For information concerning the New Jersey State Record Fish or Skillful Angler programs, visit the New Jersey Division of Fish and Wildlife's Web site at [NJFishandWildlife.com](http://NJFishandWildlife.com).

# Honoring the Life of Don Byrne

By Bill Figley, Principal Biologist (Retired)  
New Jersey Division of Fish and Wildlife



New Jersey Division of Fish and Wildlife mourns the loss of an outstanding fisheries biologist. Don Byrne, born October 26, 1949 in Teaneck, New Jersey died suddenly of a heart attack on June 28, 2010 at his home in Port Republic.

**Don loved the outdoors. Most of his life was spent enjoying nature, in general, and studying marine fish, in particular.**

He graduated from the University of Virginia with a B.A. degree in biology, then attained an M.S. degree in Marine Science from the Virginia Institute of Marine Science. His professional career began in 1976 with Ichthyological Associates, an environmental consulting firm. In 1980, he came to work for the New Jersey Division of Fish and Wildlife where he spent the next 30 years as a marine fisheries biologist based at the Nacote Creek Research Station, located near the mouth of the Mullica River.

Don's primary job with the Bureau of Marine Fisheries was, as he put it, "to count the fishes in the sea" which he accomplished through the Ocean Stock Assessment Program. This survey employed a commercial trawler to drag a large net across the sea floor at numerous predetermined locations collecting samples of most of the fish species found

along the Jersey coast. This intensive survey was conducted five times each year. By analyzing each catch, Don could determine population trends in our local fish stocks. Such information is essential to manage fisheries important to both recreational and commercial fishermen.





Running the trawl survey involved more than just knowing how to handle nets and identify fish; it also required one of Don's greatest skills—the ability to get along well with people.

With a limited professional staff, he had to rely upon dozens of volunteers to get the job done. Workers and volunteers often described his work ethic and excellent relationship with the crew as both serious and humorous, exacting, demanding yet forgiving, precise but practical, hard working and caring. Many volunteers returned for trawl survey, cruise after cruise—proof of Don's engaging spirit.

Don's other Fish and Wildlife responsibilities included reviewing environmental impacts of coastal development projects, documenting state streams that support herring spawning runs and representing New Jersey in the coastal management of lobster.

His passion for marine science was also evident in the volunteer hours he spent with local area students who shared his enthusiasm. Whether being a mentor to science fair students or exciting them through hands-on interactions using local fish species, Don was never too busy to help a possible future marine biologist.

Outdoor pursuits extended beyond his professional career. Don loved flower and vegetable gardening, preferring a shovel over faster methods. Family vacations included kayaking, hiking and camping in national parks and beachcombing the Outer Banks of North Carolina. He regularly played league volleyball and rode his bike to work daily.

Don was married to his wife Becky, a grade school teacher, for 39 years. His two daughters inherited their father's love of nature and both currently work for Fish and Wildlife. Daughter Karen Leskie is the Aquatic Education Coordinator with the Office of Information and Education whose husband, Joe Leskie, is the Bureau of Wildlife Management's southern region Deer Research Project biologist. Daughter Nancy Byrne is a clerical worker with the Bureau of Marine Fisheries and is studying for her master's degree in library science.

The Division of Fish and Wildlife and the many volunteers, friends and family will surely miss this beloved fisheries biologist.



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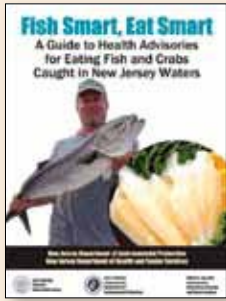
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# Fish Smart, Eat Smart

## Eating Fish And Crabs Caught In New Jersey Waters

Fishing provides enjoyable and relaxing recreation. Fish are an excellent source of protein and other nutrients and play a role in maintaining a healthy, well-balanced diet. Many anglers enjoy cooking and eating their own catch. However,

elevated levels of potentially harmful chemical contaminants such as dioxin, polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), pesticides and mercury have been found in certain fish and crabs in some New Jersey waters. Fish consumption advisories have been adopted to guide citizens on safe consumption practices.

The current list of fish consumption advisories consists of state-wide, regional and water body-specific warnings for a variety of fish species and fish consumers. The New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) and the Department of Health and Senior Services have prepared literature and a new Web site to help you make informed choices about which fish to eat and how to reduce your exposure to these harmful chemicals.

**Check online for fish consumption advisories on the local water body in which you fish!  
Go to [FishSmartEatSmartNJ.org](http://FishSmartEatSmartNJ.org)**

To reduce exposure to harmful chemical contaminants when preparing and eating the fish species taken from the identified waters, it is essential to follow the guidelines provided. The DEP encourages you to consult the Fish Smart-Eat Smart Fish Advisory Guide or [www.FishSmartEatSmartNJ.org](http://www.FishSmartEatSmartNJ.org) when making decisions about eating recreationally caught fish and crabs.

The Fish Smart-Eat Smart Advisory Guide includes contaminant information, advisory charts, plus preparation and cooking methods to reduce contaminant levels, as well as specific guidelines, advice and prohibitions for people at high risk, such as children, pregnant women and women of child-bearing age. The Guide also includes Web site links to Pennsylvania, Delaware and New York for information about fish consumption advisories for shared waters.

For a complete list of state and federal marine fish consumption advisories visit: [FishSmartEatSmartNJ.org](http://FishSmartEatSmartNJ.org).

The fish consumption advisories and Fish Smart-Eat Smart Web site are updated periodically and are available online or from the Office of Science at (609) 984-6070 and through the Department of Health and Senior Services at (609) 826-4935.

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- Circle of Life – Serving central Barnegat Bay/Tices Shoal
- Bay Sweeper – Serving southern Barnegat Bay/Little Egg Harbor Bay
- Waste Watcher – Serving Little Egg Harbor area



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For more information visit [NJFishandWildlife.com/cvahome.htm](http://NJFishandWildlife.com/cvahome.htm)

To report a malfunctioning pumpout station or other problems, contact the Marine Trades Association of New Jersey at (732) 292-1051 or [info@mtnj.org](mailto:info@mtnj.org)



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# » Making Your Catch Count...

MRIP is changing the way managers, scientists and anglers are working together to ensure the sustainability of saltwater fishing.



## What is MRIP?

The Marine Recreational Information Program, or MRIP, is the new way the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA Fisheries) is counting and reporting key aspects of recreational fishing activity: it factors in the catch—or the tally of the number, size and species of fish being caught, plus the effort—another way of saying how many people are fishing, when and how often. Launched in 2008, MRIP has been designed from the ground up as a comprehensive overhaul of NOAA Fisheries' previous estimation methods.

It will not only produce better estimates of fishing activity—and ultimately, the health of fish stocks—but will accomplish this through a process grounded in the principles of transparency, accountability and engagement.

MRIP is designed to meet two critical needs. The first is to provide the detailed, timely and scientifically sound estimates upon which fisheries managers, stock assessors and marine scientists can rely to ensure the sustainability of ocean resources.

Equally important, MRIP will address head-on stakeholder concerns

MRIP will not be a fisheries management “silver bullet”; it is the commitment to a process in which end users' needs are a top consideration.

about the reliability and credibility of recreational fishing catch and effort estimates.

MRIP explicitly recognizes that the numbers we produce do not exist in a vacuum; they have real impacts on the lives and livelihoods of millions of Americans.

## How will MRIP benefit anglers?

MRIP will benefit anyone concerned about the sustainability of our ocean resources. It will provide better data by addressing potential biases in past methods, and by adapting to meet emerging science and management needs.

It's very important to understand that MRIP may not have a significant impact on current estimates of fishing regulations. But it will be the basis for a collaborative process for evaluating what the numbers tell us and how we should respond.

In the end, the better the information we have, the better the decisions we can make about how best to conserve our oceans and ensure their sustainable use.

## Where can I learn more?

To learn more about MRIP at the national level, visit [www.countmyfish.noaa.gov](http://www.countmyfish.noaa.gov). To learn more about what it means to you as an angler, get involved! Go to council meetings, become active with your fishing club, and check back with the New Jersey Division of Fish and Wildlife throughout the fishing season.

## MRIP Quick Facts

2011 marks the second year of the National Saltwater Angler Registry. Find out if **YOU** need to register for the federal program. (At the time this *Digest* was published, the New Jersey Saltwater Recreational Registry Program (NJSRRP) had not yet been completed and approved by NMFS; see page 14 for details. The NJDEP is working to have the free NJSRRP available for individuals and for-hire vessels to register sometime in May. Anglers and for-hire vessels will register through the NJDEP Web site.)

### You **MUST** register if you:

- » Fish in federal waters, or
- » Target or catch anadromous species (saltwater fish that spawn in freshwater like river herring, shad or striped bass) in any tidal waters, and
- » Do not meet any of the exemptions under the law.

### You are **EXEMPT** if you:

- » Are under 16, or
- » Only fish on federally permitted charter, party or guide boats, or
- » Hold a Highly Migratory Species Angling permit, or
- » Are fishing commercially under a valid license, or
- » Are already registered through an exempted state.

## Register and Fish the Same Day!

Visit [www.countmyfish.noaa.gov](http://www.countmyfish.noaa.gov) or call toll-free **888-MRIP-411 (888-674-7411)**.

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Marine Fisheries.....	(609) 292-7794
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<b>Nacote Creek Research Station</b>	
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Marine Fisheries "Listen Only" regulation line.....	(609) 292-2083
Shellfisheries.....	(609) 748-2040
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<b>Delaware Bay Office</b>	
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<b>Shellfish Dealership Information</b>	
NJ Consumer Health Service, Dept. of Health P.O. Box 369, Trenton, NJ 08625.....	(609) 588-3123
<b>Shellfish Water Classification</b>	
DEP, Water Monitoring and Standards P.O. Box 405, Stoney Hill Road, Leeds Point, NJ 08220.....	(609) 748-2000
<b>Lebanon Field Office</b>	
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<b>Southern Region Office</b>	
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Freshwater Fisheries.....	(856) 629-4950
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Wildlife Control.....	(856) 629-7224
Law Enforcement ( <i>Atlantic, Camden, Cape May, Cumberland, Gloucester, and Salem counties</i> ).....	(856) 629-0555

■ PUBLICATIONS AVAILABLE

The following publications are available by writing:

Nacote Creek, Research Station Publications  
P.O. Box 418  
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Shellfish Growing Waters Classification Charts

This publication is available free at any shellfish license agent and online at <http://www.nj.gov/dep/bmw/waterclass.htm>.

New Jersey Boaters Guide

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New Jersey Pumpout Directory

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Write to the Nacote Creek address above.

The following publications are also available online at [NJfishandWildlife.com](http://NJfishandWildlife.com):

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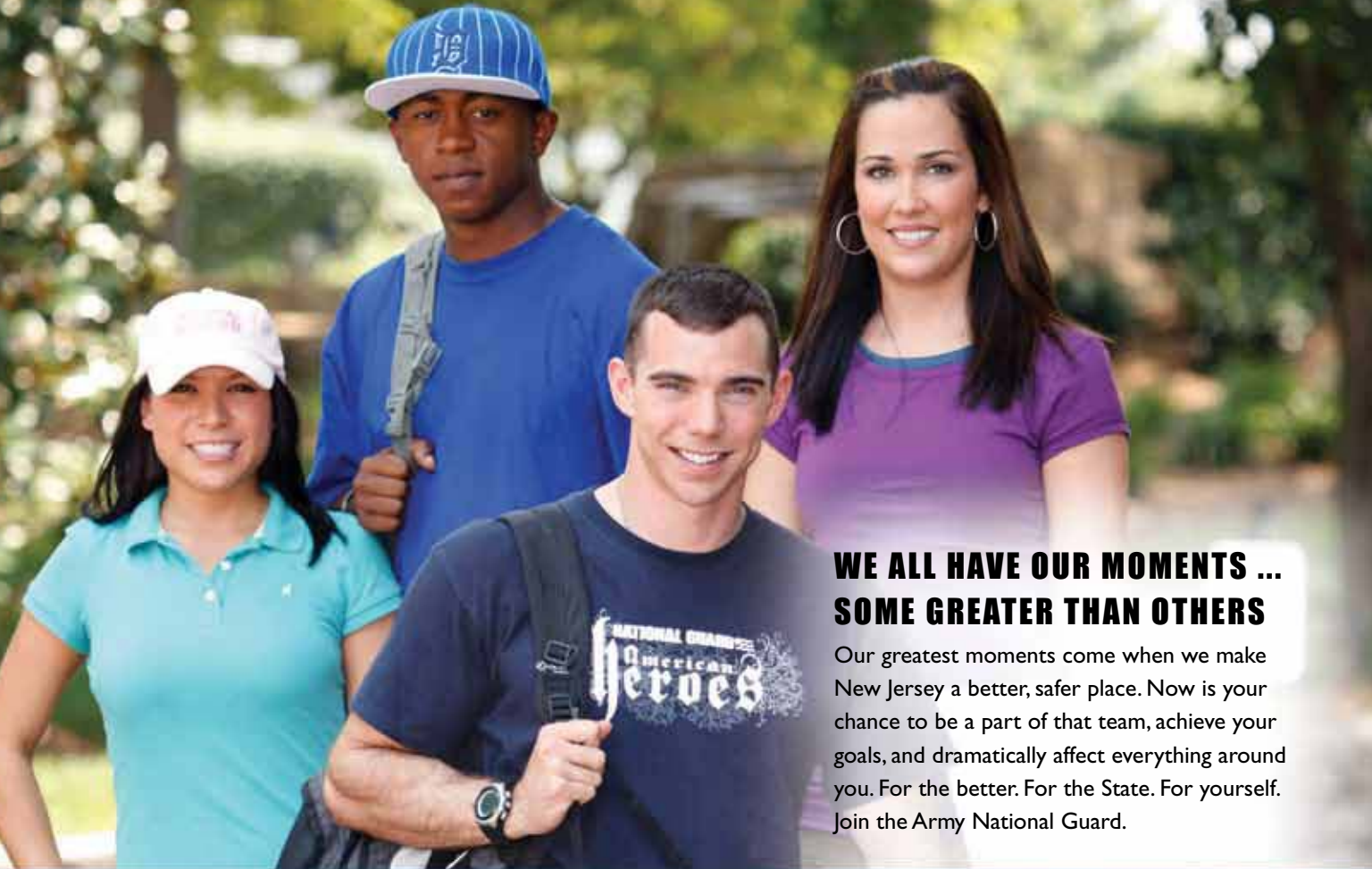
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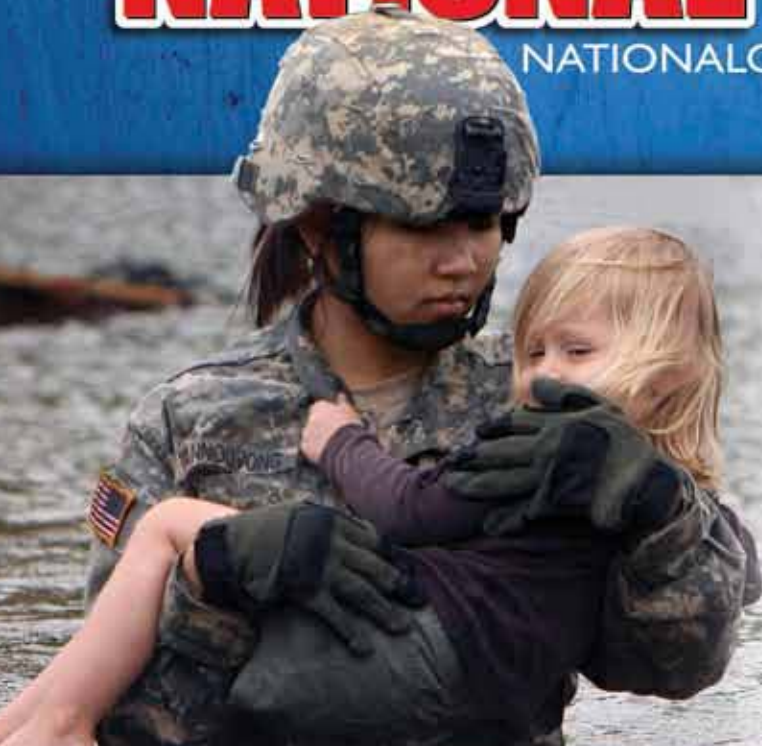


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