

2016 Marine Fishing Season Dates and Limits • FREE

New Jersey Marine Digest

May 2016

Size and
Possession
Limits

page 21



A Summary of Recreational Regulations and
Marine Fish and Shellfish Management Information

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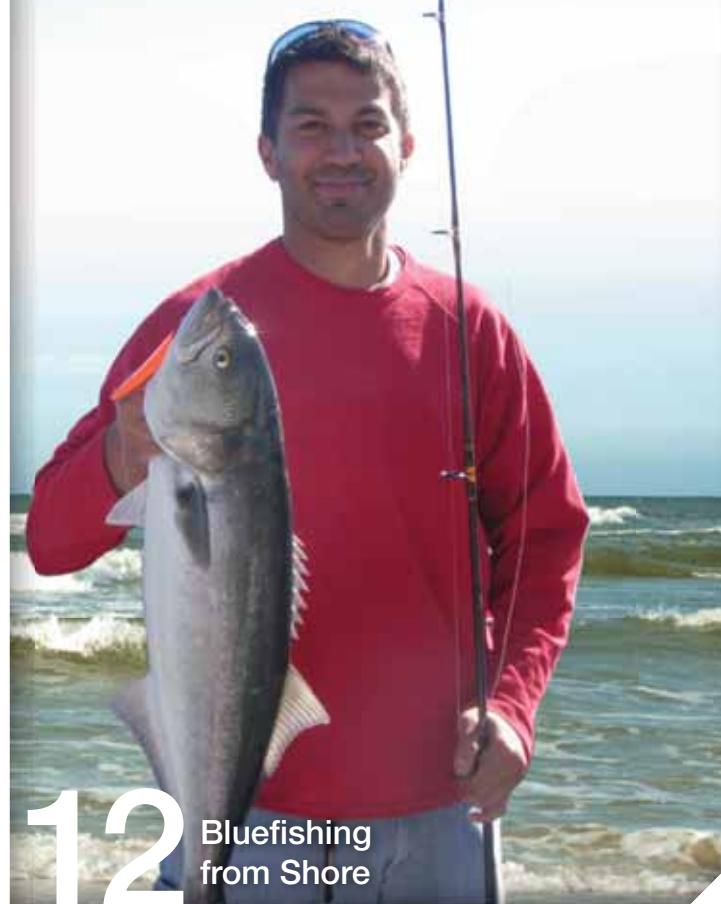
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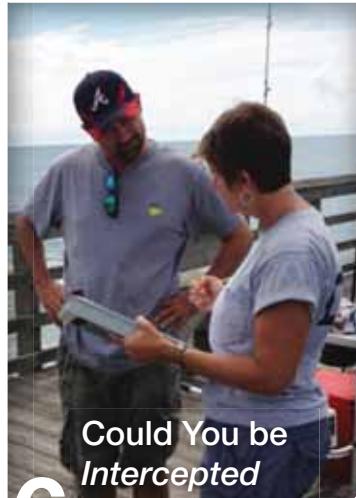


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Director's Message

DAVE CHANDA



The beginning of spring ushers in another start to New Jersey's saltwater recreational activities and as with any new season it brings changes to the way the Division of Fish and Wildlife manages these favorite pastimes along our coast. The excitement of a new fishing season, whether fluking in the back bays, chasing tuna on the high seas or clamping on the flats, always adds a little something special to our shore communities. Fish and Wildlife's Marine Fisheries Administration strives to advance our knowledge of the state's recreational fishery. This enables our agency to make accurate decisions regarding future regulatory actions.

Obtaining recreational angler effort and catch statistics are an important component to manage all fisheries. In the past this information was gathered by NOAA Fisheries and federal contractors to provide sound estimates of angler participation and fishing effort along the coast. New Jersey consistently ranks at the top of Atlantic Coast states in the number of anglers and in numbers of fish harvested for all the major recreational species. New for 2016, Fish and Wildlife has assumed responsibility for or the Access Point Angler Intercept Survey portion of the NOAA Fisheries Marine Recreational Information Program (MRIP) that will result in improved statistics and better support by our recreational community. (See related article, page 6, *Could You Be Intercepted While Fishing?*) New Jersey anglers now have the ability to contribute valuable data to help maintain and improve their marine fish seasons, size and bag limits while interacting directly with Fish and Wildlife staff.

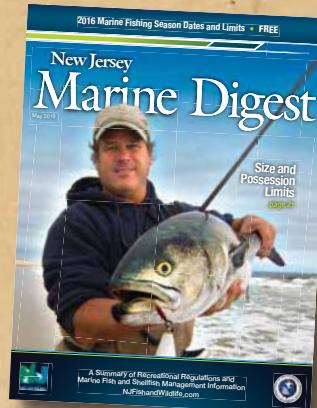
It is estimated that there are as many as one million recreational saltwater anglers fishing in New Jersey (both non-residents and residents). Unfortunately, this estimate does not reflect the number of individuals registering each year in New Jersey's free Saltwater Angler Registry Program. This program was initiated as an alternative to the federal registry that would have been imposed on New Jersey saltwater anglers. The New Jersey registry serves as the contact list for NOAA Fisheries to conduct the telephone interview and mail survey portion of MRIP which is used to estimate total fishing effort and fishing trips taken by anglers in New Jersey. This helps develop precise estimates of angler participation and harvest which is why it is crucial to ensure that all saltwater anglers register at the earliest opportunity. It's free and easy; just visit www.SaltwaterRegistry.nj.gov and see page 16 in this *Digest* for details.

Finally, the New Jersey Recreational Saltwater Angler Survey is an online fishing reporting method that anglers should utilize *every time* they fish (www.NJFishandWildlife.com/marinesurvey.htm). The goal is to obtain accurate recreational catch and effort information from New Jersey marine anglers in a way that would promote public confidence in the data being used for the management process. Because this data provides information on harvest and discards, Fish and Wildlife can utilize it in a way to maximize options for recreational anglers. This information was instrumental in developing the 2016 summer flounder regulations for Delaware Bay. Please help us to help you by visiting the survey and providing a fishing report for every trip you make.

So register, take time for an interview and provide information on your fishing trip—all quick and easy opportunities to become engaged in the fishery management process and help make a difference. We hope you will embrace these changes and help us develop sound, accurate recreational fisheries data that will enhance your fishing experience into the future.

Tight Lines! 

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



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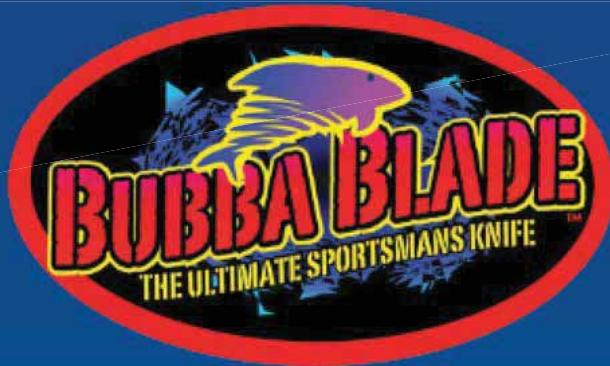
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Our Mission

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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Could You Be Intercepted While Fishing?

By Maryellen Gordon, Senior Fisheries Biologist | Amber Johnson, Assistant Fisheries Biologist

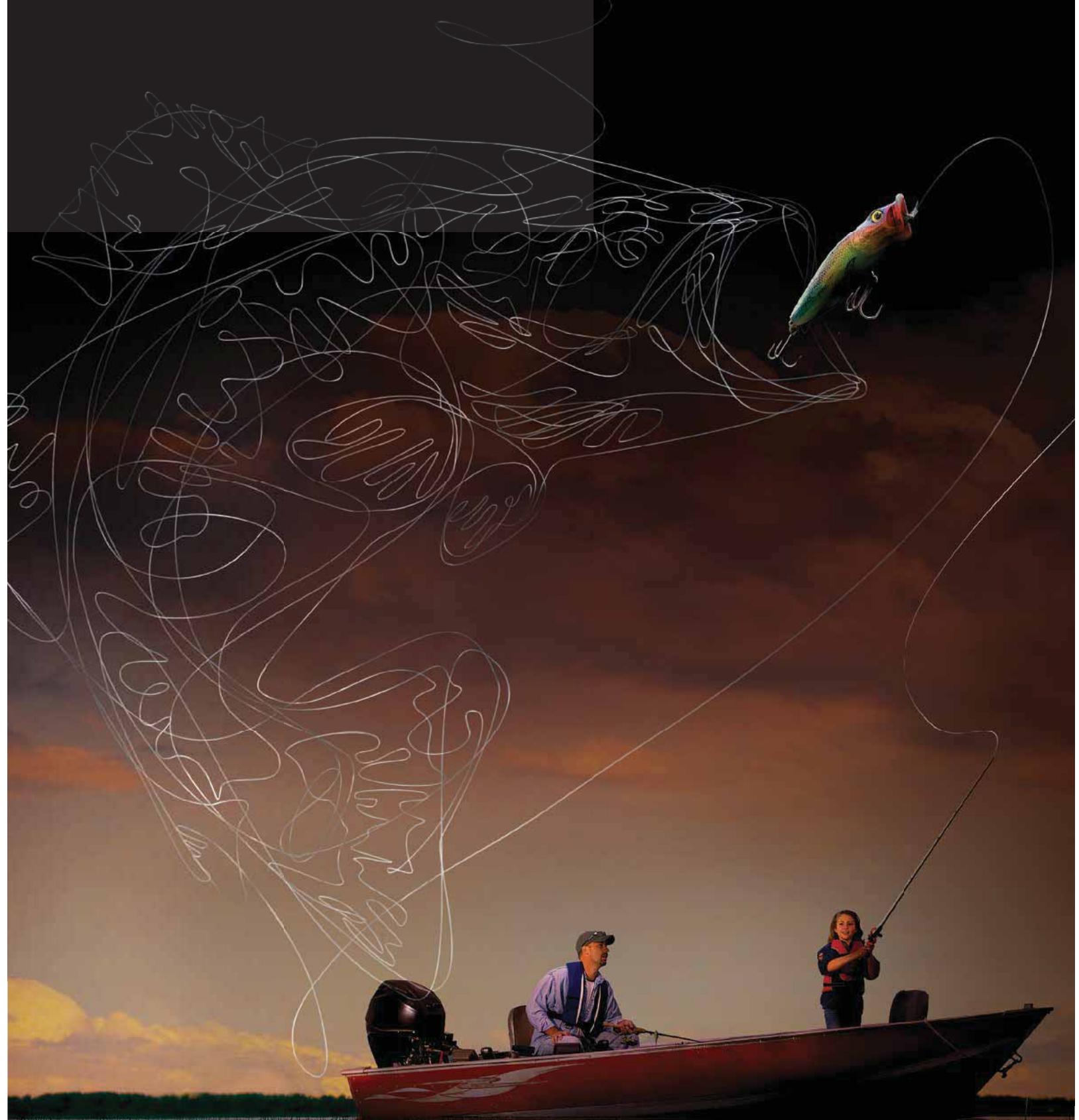
The Access Point Angler Intercept Survey (APAIS) is under way. You may see our interviewers at many marine public access fishing sites throughout New Jersey.

This recreational angler survey is now conducted "in house" by each of the 13 Atlantic states from Maine to Georgia. New Jersey Division of Fish and Wildlife is conducting this survey on behalf of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), National Marine Fisheries Service.

The survey targets marine recreational anglers to obtain information about their fishing effort, catch and participation in marine recreational fishing and about the demographic, social and economic characteristics of those who participate in saltwater recreational fishing in United States waters.

(continued on page 8)





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Hunter Jackson fishes the surf at Island Beach State Park.



Jonathan Cate/NJ Dw. Fish and Wildlife

Interviewers are assigned to public fishing sites using a random selection process proportional to the level of fishing activity.

For each predetermined public fishing access site (jetty, beach, marina, pier, boat ramp, causeway, etc.) a random computer selection assigns the date and time during which the APAIS interviewer must stay—whether or not there is fishing activity—to survey all anglers, including those with “no catch,” even in bad weather. The interviewer’s job is to politely engage with anglers, asking questions that will provide data on the health of our recreational fisheries.

These questions include, among others: how long was the angler actively fishing? What was the target fish? What species were actually being caught and how many? Do you have fish that we could sample

(measure, weigh and identify)? The interviews provide valuable information that will allow estimates of overall catch. The more data collected, the more successful the survey becomes.

No Fish Today

It is noteworthy that reporting a zero catch for the day is equally important to the survey results as when you’ve reached the possession limit. A “no catch” response is also calculated into the estimate of catch-per-unit-effort amongst all the anglers fishing in that area, providing realistic data.

Please know that the interviewers have no enforcement responsibility and are not looking for violations or to hassle anglers in any way. Interviewers—whose shirts will be emblazoned

with APAIS—are collecting valuable fishing catch-and-effort data. Your willing participation is vital to assemble a large database which will be utilized to help manage the health and future stocks of recreationally fished species.

The Access Point Angler Intercept Survey is one of the pieces that complete the Marine Recreational Information Program puzzle. Through this program, NOAA Fisheries counts and reports marine recreational catch and effort. Driven by data provided by anglers and captains, the Marine Recreational Information Program produces better information through better science and—equally important—increased transparency, accountability and engagement. These data for marine recreational fisheries had been collected through the Marine Recreational Fisheries Statistics Survey from 1979 until 2008 before being replaced by the Marine Recreational Information Program. This program was created in order to continue improving the collection, analysis and use of fishing data.

How are the Data Used?

Accurate, up-to-date angler catch, effort and participation statistics are fundamental for assessing the influence of fishing on any stock of fish. The fish quantities taken, fishing effort plus the seasonal and geographical distribution of the catch and effort are required for the development of rational management policies and plans. Continuous monitoring of

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catch, effort and participation is needed to assess trends, to evaluate the impacts of management regulations and to project what effects various management scenarios could have on a fishery.

Recreational fisheries data are crucial for the National Marine Fisheries Service, the regional fishery management councils, the interstate fisheries commissions, state conservation agencies, recreational fishing industries and others involved in the management and productivity of marine fisheries.

The Marine Recreational Information Program consists of several independent, yet complementary surveys:

- **Access Point Angler Intercept Survey**—designed to assess catch per unit effort in all fishing modes, featured in this article;
- **Coastal Household Telephone Survey**—collects information about recreational fishing effort via telephone based data collection. The effort data is used to estimate the total number of fishing trips taken by marine recreational anglers. Effort data collection is transitioning to new U.S. Postal Service-based methods over the years 2015–2018;
- **For-Hire Survey**—designed to assess for-hire charter and headboat fishing effort;
- **Large Pelagic Survey**—which collects information on pelagic species of fish; and
- **Highly Migratory Species Catch Card Census Program**— collects information about migratory fish species.

Each state's saltwater recreational registry acts as the contact list for the Coastal Household Telephone Survey and the future mail survey. Complete participation in the New Jersey Saltwater Recreational Registry Program is essential to achieve accurate recreational fishing estimates, helping to ensure healthy fisheries for the future.

New Jersey Division of Fish and Wildlife's Marine Fisheries Administration conducts a plethora of other surveys to add to these data. (See *The Fishing Experience: It's Not Just About Fish*, page 24.) Scientists, stakeholders, public officials and many others all have a hand in developing recreational fishing regulations that benefit the marine resource and those who enjoy them. If you're an angler, the process ultimately revolves around you.

What we learn from anglers is critical to understanding the health of our fisheries. If you are not "intercepted" for an interview or contacted through the New Jersey Saltwater Recreational Registry Program, you can still participate. Become part of the fishery management process: submit a fishing report after each saltwater trip to the New Jersey Volunteer Angler Survey. Your fishing reports—whether you caught zero or 50 fish—will help improve saltwater fishing opportunities in this state. Your reports will have a real impact on how our oceans are managed. Submit online reports at www.NJFishandWildlife.com/marinesurvey.htm.

Additional Resources:

New Jersey Saltwater Recreational Registry Program—and to register: www.saltwaterregistry.nj.gov

Marine Recreational Information Program—www.countmyfish.NOAA.gov

Access Point Angler Intercept Survey (featured in article)—www.st.nmfs.noaa.gov/recreational-fisheries/Surveys/survey-details

New Jersey Volunteer Angler Survey—To submit your fishing effort: www.NJFishandWildlife.com/marinesurvey.htm.

NOAA's Site Register—To learn about New Jersey's fishing access sites, peruse at www.st.nmfs.noaa.gov/siteregister 

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Governor's Surf Fishing Tournament

— GET OUTSIDE & ENJOY A DAY OF FISHING WITH FAMILY AND FRIENDS —

By Karen Byrne, Senior Biologist

Hundreds of anglers from New Jersey and neighboring states will descend upon the beaches at Island Beach State Park on May 15, 2016 to celebrate the 25th year of the Governor's Surf Fishing Tournament! Participants can expect a great day of fishing, fun, prizes and quality time with friends and family as they try to catch the longest fish of the day and win the coveted Governor's Cup.

This family-friendly tournament aims to encourage youth and adults to learn more about surf fishing while taking advantage of a great activity. Since its inception in 1991 the tournament has generated more than \$135,000 for various marine education



Tournament winner Rich Bergman of Atco took the grand prize by catching a 32-inch striped bass. L-R: JCAA President John Toth, NJDEP Commissioner Bob Martin, Lt. Governor Kim Guadagno, 2015 Governor's Surf Fishing Tournament Winner Rich Bergman, NJBBA President Tim Burden, and NJFSC President Pola Galie.

and restoration efforts, including construction of access ramps for disabled saltwater anglers, surf fishing instruction programs and equipment at Island Beach State Park, and a mobile automatic heart defibrillator for use at Island Beach State Park. Most recently fifteen specialized surf wheelchairs that provide beach access for the disabled and elderly were purchased by the Tournament Committee and from donations from Jersey Shore Surfcaster, Greater Point Pleasant Charter Boat Association, John Mangiante Foundation, Manasquan River Marlin and Tuna Club and Jersey Coast Shark Anglers. These chairs are available for use the day of the tournament.

The 24th annual tournament saw an increase in registered participants over the previous year, and everyone enjoyed beautiful weather all day. Expectations were high as there had been a bluefish blitz the week before the tournament, but fishing on tournament day ended up being slow. Despite that, participants had a great time, and two striped bass and 11 bluefish were entered.

Lieutenant Governor Kim Guadagno and DEP Commissioner Bob Martin took part in the awards ceremony and presented tournament winners with their prizes in a variety of categories. Rich Bergman of Atco, NJ took the grand prize and the New Jersey Governor's Cup by catching a 32-inch striped bass. Bergman received one rod and reel combination—which he generously donated to the Island Beach State Park surf fishing education program—a Coastline Surf System, a pair of Costa Del Mar sunglasses, a plaque and his name was engraved

Thank you!

New Jersey Division of Fish and Wildlife, along with our co-sponsors—the NJ State Park Service, NJ State Federation of Sportsmen's Clubs, Jersey Coast Anglers Association and NJ Beach Buggy Association—would like to thank the following organizations for contributing to the success of the 24th Annual Governor's Surf Fishing Tournament in 2015:

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- NJ Division of Fish and Wildlife's Hooked on Fishing - Not on Drugs Program
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- On the Water Magazine
- Silver Horde
- Sportsmen's Center
- Stanley Jigs

on the Governor's Cup, which is permanently on display at Island Beach State Park.

In addition to the grand prize, five anglers received rod and reel combinations for their prize-winning fish in the striped bass and bluefish categories. There were categories for children, teen and adult anglers, including sub-categories for male and female anglers. Early tournament registrants were also entered into an early entry raffle for a Coastline Surf System. 

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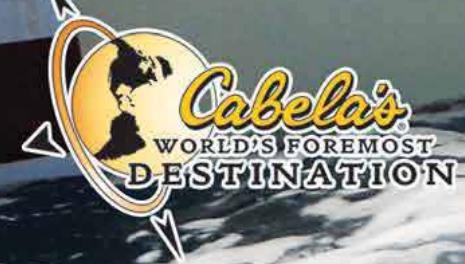
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Bluefishing from Shore

By Bryan Carter, Seasonal Technician

Bluefish (*Pomatomus saltatrix*) are one of the most common and popular sportfish in New Jersey.

Because of their wide range in sizes and abundance, bluefish are a great angling option for kids and first-timers all the way up to experienced anglers.

Bluefish are globally distributed. The largest bluefish has been recorded at 31 pounds 12 ounces, while the oldest is recorded at 12 years old. Bluefish become sexually mature at two years old, and spawn several times during the year. They come in a variety of sizes on the New Jersey coast and are easily identified by their silvery sea green color, large mouths with a single row of large sharp teeth and streamlined muscular build. They can occur in New Jersey waters generally from April to December during their migrations along the coast.

Known to be very aggressive predators, bluefish can go into blitz mode where they force baitfish to the surface and tear into anything in their path. Anglers can take advantage of situations like this, as well as the general aggressive nature of the fish to increase catch rates. While bluefish are known to take a wide range of bait and lures, matching the baitfish present at the time of fishing will improve angling success.

There's a seasonal nature to bluefish behavior linked to their migration and feeding patterns. Focusing on shore-based angling, what follows will highlight techniques for catching bluefish in New Jersey.

Spring

Springtime in New Jersey provides the best opportunity at catching large bluefish from shore. Often referred to as "gators", these large 8–20 pound bluefish are migrating north, feeding on schools of bunker. Bunker are large, oily baitfish and the primary food source for larger bluefish. Bays, inlets, jetties, and sand beaches are all productive during the springtime. A couple of techniques are applicable for targeting these larger fish in the spring.

Angling with fresh bait (for useful tips, see www.NJFishandWildlife.com/artbaitfish15.htm) is the most common method for targeting larger bluefish. Using chunks of bunker for bait to match the food source, bait fishing can be very successful on the beaches and in back bays. Heavy tackle is required, as bluefish are considered to be among the hardest fighting fish in New Jersey.

Large, sharp hooks and a wire or thick monofilament leader fished on a fish finder rig will produce the best hook-to-land ratios. Bait fishing is generally the more successful method when the water is murkier and the bluefish are not blitzing. The scent of the bait allows the bluefish to rely on senses other than sight to find your offering.

◀ This bluefish was caught in the Long Beach Island surf by Andrew Beck of Manahawkin.

Photo by Paul Presto



Lures can be productive when targeting large bluefish in the spring and are more applicable during blitzes. Popping plugs and metal spoons or jigs are the best lures to use during this time. Popping plugs are splashed along the surface, replicating a jumping bunker, a common escape method used when bunker are attacked. This method works well in calmer water along any beach or bay structure. Amazing visual strikes occur when bluefish launch out of the water to strike a popping plug.

Metal lures such as large spoons and diamond jigs also work well for larger fish. Best fished in deeper moving water such as inlets, a fast constant retrieve will cause the metal lure to wobble and flash like an injured bunker reflecting sunlight. The flashes cause bluefish to aggressively attack the lures. If a bluefish hits a metal lure but does not take the hook, continue the same retrieve and they will often continue chasing the lure and strike again. Replacing treble hooks with single hooks on lures will make unhooking these big fish a much safer process.

Summer

Large bluefish generally depart the New Jersey coast in June, but soon after, the arrival of juvenile fish occurs. Locally called "snappers," small 3- to 8-inch bluefish invade the New Jersey bays and beaches every July and August. Snappers are a great way for kids and beginners to get introduced to saltwater fishing. Aggressive and very abundant, snappers can be caught very easily to provide instant action for anyone learning to fish. Snappers fight hard for their size and are sporty on light tackle, but do not require the same size gear as the larger gators that occur in the spring.

Common around bayside docks and bulkheads, snappers can be caught using a variety of methods. Look for splashes of small baitfish jumping to escape snappers. The simplest method for targeting snappers is to use a bobber with a small hook and piece of spearing for bait. Spearing occur in New Jersey bays and inlets in giant schools each summer and are the primary food source for juvenile bluefish. Other baits such as squid, bloodworms, live minnows, or mackerel are also effective for catching snappers.

Snappers can be caught on artificial lures as well as bait. Metal spoons—similar to those used for large bluefish in the spring but smaller in size—work well for catching snappers. Using a 1/8 or 1/4 oz. metal spoon retrieved quickly, lots of snappers can be caught. The flashing created by the spoon imitates an injured silverside.

An even more popular method is the use of a snapper popper. Snapper poppers consist of a barrel shaped float with a small hook 18 to 24 inches behind, coated in flashy hair material or surgical tubing. The float is slowly retrieved and popped

along the surface making a loud splashing sound. The sound of the float attracts the snappers to the area. The flash of the hook provokes the snappers into biting. Because of their easy use and high success rates, snapper poppers are good rigs to use for anglers learning to fish with artificial lures.

Fall

During September, most of the summer species depart New Jersey waters and fall species begin to make their way down the coast. Every year, New Jersey anglers anticipate the mullet run when hundreds of thousands of striped mullet flood out from the back bays to migrate south along the beaches. The abundance of mullet provides a new and substantial food source for bluefish. The small snappers leave the back bays and larger "cocktail" bluefish, ranging from 9 to 20 inches, feast on the striped mullet saturating the surf and jetty pockets. The mullet run traditionally lasts throughout September and October.

Taking advantage of the amount of bait present, early fall can be a prime time for New Jersey anglers to catch bluefish. As before, matching the bait present will provide the best results for anglers targeting bluefish. Most tackle shops will supply fresh mullet for bait during this time of year and that is the best option when bait fishing.

The most effective way of fishing mullet is using a mullet rig, which consists of a float to keep the mullet off the bottom, a stout wire approximately the length of a mullet, and a detachable hook. Bluefish bite their prey from the tail end, so to increase hookup ratios, the wire is inserted through the mullet's body and the hook is attached to the wire near the tail. Small chunks of mullet can also be used on traditional high-low rigs, however more bluefish likely will be landed on a mullet rig.

Once again, lures work well when targeting bluefish in the fall. Swimming plugs are the best lures with which to mimic mullet. These plugs are about 6 inches long and very thin in profile. A lip on the front causes the swimming plug to wobble back and forth like an injured mullet trying to swim. Fast, straight or erratic retrieves will get the attention of bluefish.

Many New Jersey anglers prefer to use white and powder blue colored swimming plugs to even better replicate a mullet. Generally, mullet rigs work better on flat open beaches where a longer cast is required. Swimming plugs may be the better option in inlets, jetties, and steep surf banks where there is more structure to hold the bluefish, and more water deep enough to work the swimming plug.

In some years, the large "gator" bluefish return along the New Jersey coastline later in the fall. Often times these larger bluefish remain offshore on their southerly migration. However, pods of

Bluefishing — The Best Defense...

Remember to always be prepared with a pair of needle nose pliers when targeting bluefish. A bite from even a small bluefish can cause damage. It is a good idea to have extra rigs or lures ready as bluefish will bite through leaders and damage non-metal lures. While soft plastic lures are widely successful when targeting other species, avoid using them when bluefish are around. If planning to keep bluefish, the New Jersey regulations are a bag limit of 15 fish per angler per day, with no minimum size and no closed season.



(Top) Frank Strouse with a handsome bluefish.
(Bottom) A nice bluefish was hooked by Jeff Stives.

bunker and Atlantic herring can sometimes draw large bluefish in tight to the surf. Most bluefish caught from late October to early December are bycatch from anglers targeting striped bass. For those interested in targeting bluefish during these months, using methods similar to spring bluefishing is the best option. If sand eels are present, use a long narrow profile lure such as a diamond jig with surgical tubing.

References

Chesapeake Bay Program — Field Guide:
www.chesapeakebay.net/fieldguide/critter/bluefish

Loving Long Island — Catch and Cook:
www.loving-long-island.com/snapper-fishing-on-long-island.html

Regulations in red are new this year.

Regulations remain in effect until changed. For the most current regulations, go to NJFishandWildlife.com/njregs.htm#marine or call the marine fish "listen-only" information line at (609) 292-2083. 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 recreational summer flounder open season has been modified to include May 21 to Sept. 25. For Delaware Bay and tributaries, west of the COLREGS line which delineates Delaware Bay from the Atlantic Ocean, the size limit is 17 inches and the possession limit is four fish. The 17-inch minimum size limit applicable to Delaware Bay does not include the waters of the Cape May Canal east of the Cape May Ferry Terminal. Transport of summer flounder caught in Delaware Bay, greater than or equal to 17 inches but less than the 18 inches, may occur in waters east of the Cape May Ferry Terminal to the George Redding Bridge (Rt. 47) located at the entrance of Wildwood provided all fishing gear aboard the vessel is stowed with rigs removed and the vessel may not stop to fish for any species. In all other waters, the size limit is 18 inches, the possession limit is five fish and transportation of summer flounder less than 18 inches is prohibited.
- The recreational black sea bass regulations have been modified to include an open season of May 23 – June 19 with a ten fish possession limit and a 12.5-inch minimum size limit; an open season of July 1 – Aug. 31 with a two fish possession limit and 12.5-inch minimum size limit; and an open season of Oct. 22 – Dec. 31 with a 15 fish possession limit and 13-inch size limit.

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. Saltwater anglers must comply with the requirements of the New Jersey Saltwater Recreational Registry Program. See page 16.

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. Anglers are encouraged to report all fishing activity after each trip. Visit Fish and Wildlife's Volunteer Angler Survey at NJFishandWildlife.com/marinesurvey.htm.

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.

Delaware Fishing License Requirement

A Delaware fishing license is 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 Fishing Registry Requirement

New York offers 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 Atlantic herring only (does not include river herring — alewife and blueback herring) for live bait. **The taking or possession of river herring is prohibited.**
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 killifots.
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 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.

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

Be the First to Know! Get on the List

The Marine Fisheries and Shellfish e-mail list, 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 website:
NJFishandWildlife.com/lstsub.htm

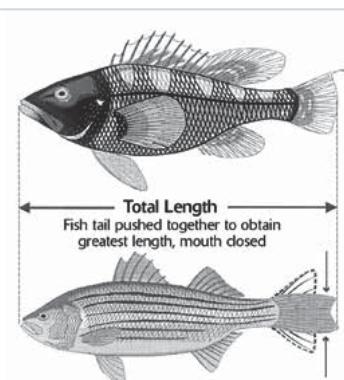
they were taken. This does not apply to fish which are released alive and subsequently die, but does apply even to species without size/possession limits.

Spearfishing

Spearfishing 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.

Fish Measurement



1. Lay fish flat on top of, or alongside a measuring rule, not measured over the body.
2. Fish are measured from the tip of the snout (mouth closed) to the longest part of the tail.

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
- sandbar shark
- shortnose sturgeon
- whale shark

Accessible Fishing Sites



For people with disabilities, visit:
www.NJFishandWildlife.com/sites.htm

An Accessible Fishing Sites list is available to assist anglers whose mobility is impaired. All sites are wheelchair-accessible except for the Musconetcong River in Morris County, where vehicle access is to the shoreline.

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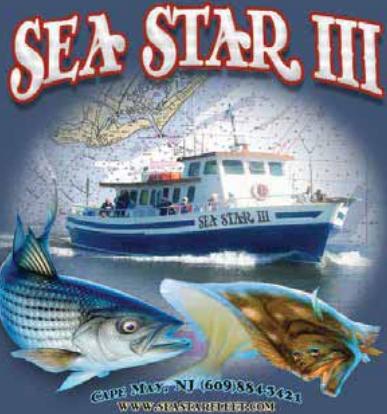
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- white shark
- river herring (alewife and blueback herring; see herring illustrations, page 18)
- See *Sharks* (page 16) for the full list of prohibited shark species

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

How to Release Hooked Fish

Proper handling and releasing techniques reduce fish mortality.

- Land fish as quickly as possible, except not when retrieving from depths of 40-feet or more. Fighting a fish to exhaustion increases mortality as does rapidly bringing up a fish through the changing water pressure and temperature gradients.
- Keep fish to be released in the water as much as possible. Plan ahead with tools and camera.
- Minimize physical injury. Do not touch gills or allow fish to flop around on deck.

- Carefully remove hooks using a dehooker or needle-nose pliers.
- Use plain hooks, not stainless, to rust away quickly if one must be left in a gut-hooked fish. Be prepared with long-handled dykes. Cut this line close to the hook's eyelet.
- To bring a fish out of the water momentarily, use a neoprene net or one of knotless nylon. Handle the fish carefully using wet hands, wet cotton gloves or similar material to minimize loss of the fish's protective slime layer.
- To revive lethargic fish, hold in a normal, upright position. Move the fish forward in an "S" or figure-8 pattern so that water flows over the gills only from front to back.
- Use circle hooks (not offset) for species that bite and flee, such as striped bass, weakfish or sea bass. Consider pinching hook barbs.

Filleting

The filleting at sea of all fish with a size limit, or any species of flatfish, is prohibited except for summer flounder; see *Summer Flounder*, page 17. 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.

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.

Black Sea Bass

Black sea bass are measured along the midline from the snout to the end of the central portion of the tail, not to include the tail filaments. (See fish measuring example on page 14.) The recreational black sea bass regulations have been modified to include an open season of May 23 – June 19 with a ten fish possession limit and a 12.5 inch minimum size limit; an open season of July 1 – August 31 with a two fish possession limit and 12.5 inch minimum size limit; and an open season of October 22 – December 31 with a 15 fish possession limit and 13 inch size limit.

Bluefish

The possession limit for bluefish is 15 fish. This includes juvenile bluefish commonly known as snappers.

Red Drum

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

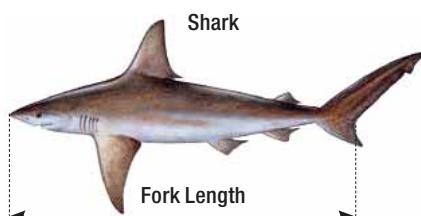
Regulations in red are new this year.

River Herring

The taking or possession of any river herring (alewife and blueback herring) in New Jersey's marine, tidal and freshwaters is prohibited. This prohibition does not include Atlantic herring which may be retained and used as bait. See the fish ID illustrations on page 18 for herring species identification.

Sharks

The hammerhead shark recreational size limit is 78 inches fork length (FL). The minimum size limit for authorized shark species of the Aggregate Large Coastal and Pelagic groups remains at 54 inches fork length while all others do not have a size limit. See dogfish Note and measuring illustration for fork length.



The 2016 shark regulations complement existing federal shark regulations (see 2016 Federal Recreational Regulations table, page 22). However,

the following additional measures are required for state waters:

- In state waters, there is no minimum size limit for non-blacknose small coastal sharks and blacknose 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 Aggregate Large Coastal and Hammerhead groups* 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 22 footnote for species list defining shark groupings.

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.

Recreational anglers should access the following National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration website, http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/stories/2012/08/docs/rec_shark_id_placard_2010.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 shark species 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.

Striped Bass (includes Hybrid Striped Bass)

The possession limit for striped bass/hybrid striped bass is two fish. The size limits are one fish at 28 inches to less than 43 inches and one fish equal to or greater than 43 inches. Anglers participating in the Striped Bass Bonus Program may possess a striped bass at 24 inches to less than 28 inches in length. Fish may be harvested in any order.

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 unless in possession of a Striped Bass Bonus Permit which allows the possession of one fish at 24 inches to less than 28 inches.

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 striper at 24 inches to less than 28 inches. The open season for this program will be September 1 through December 31.

The current allocation from the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission is 215,912 pounds. 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 issued via mail only. Go to

New Jersey Saltwater Recreational Registry Program (NJSRRP)

ATTENTION: New Jersey Saltwater Anglers

REGISTER. You make a difference! It's free, easy and required.

Each state's saltwater registry serves as the contact list for these telephone interviews. Complete participation in the New Jersey Saltwater Recreational Registry Program is crucial to achieve accurate recreational fishing estimates which help to ensure healthy fisheries for the future.

Before you head out to catch your favorite saltwater fish this year, be sure to join the hundreds of thousands of anglers who have already registered with the New Jersey Saltwater Recreational Registry Program (NJSRRP).

Register at the NJ Saltwater Recreational Registry Program site:
www.saltwaterregistry.nj.gov



NJFishandWildlife.com/bonusbas.htm to download the application. The permit is non-transferable and valid for the current calendar year. Only one permit can be used per day and harvest reporting is mandatory. For regulation or program updates, visit NJFishandWildlife.com/bonusbas.htm or check the marine fish "listen only" information line (609) 292-2083.

Striped Bass Bonus Permit Harvest Reporting: The SBBP Permit must be securely attached to fish through the mouth and gill immediately upon capture and prior to transportation. **Harvest reporting is mandatory and must be reported online or by leaving a message at (609) 748-2074.**

Summer Flounder (Fluke)

The recreational summer flounder open season has been modified to include May 21 to September 25. For Delaware Bay and tributaries, west of the COLREGS line, which delineates Delaware Bay from the Atlantic Ocean, the size limit is 17 inches and the possession limit is four fish. The 17 inch minimum size limit applicable to Delaware Bay does not include the waters of the Cape May Canal east of the Cape May Ferry Terminal. Transport of summer flounder caught in Delaware Bay, greater than or equal to 17 inches but less than the 18 inches may occur in waters east of the Cape May Ferry Terminal to the George Redding Bridge (Route 47) located at the entrance of Wildwood provided all fishing gear aboard the vessel is stowed with rigs removed and the vessel may not stop to fish for any species. In all other waters, the size limit is 18 inches, the possession limit is five fish and transportation of summer flounder less than 18 inches is prohibited.

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.

Shore-based anglers fishing at Island Beach State Park (IBSP) may retain 2 fish greater than or equal to 16 inches (total length) only at IBSP during the current open summer flounder fishing season. Shore-based fishing is defined as fishing from a pier, jetty, beach, bank, or marsh.

Tautog (Blackfish)

The minimum size limit for tautog is 15 inches. There is a four fish possession limit from Jan. 1–Feb. 28, a closed season from March 1–March 31, a four fish possession limit from April 1–April 30, a closed season from May 1–July 16, a one fish possession limit from July 17–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 possession minimum and size limit for winter flounder is two fish at 12 inches. For winter flounder the open season is March 1–Dec 31.

Additional Marine Fishing Regulations

See pages 18–19 for the fish ID pages and pages 21–22 for the regulation charts. 

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Motor Boat Registration & 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/

Boat Safety Certificate (NJSP)

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

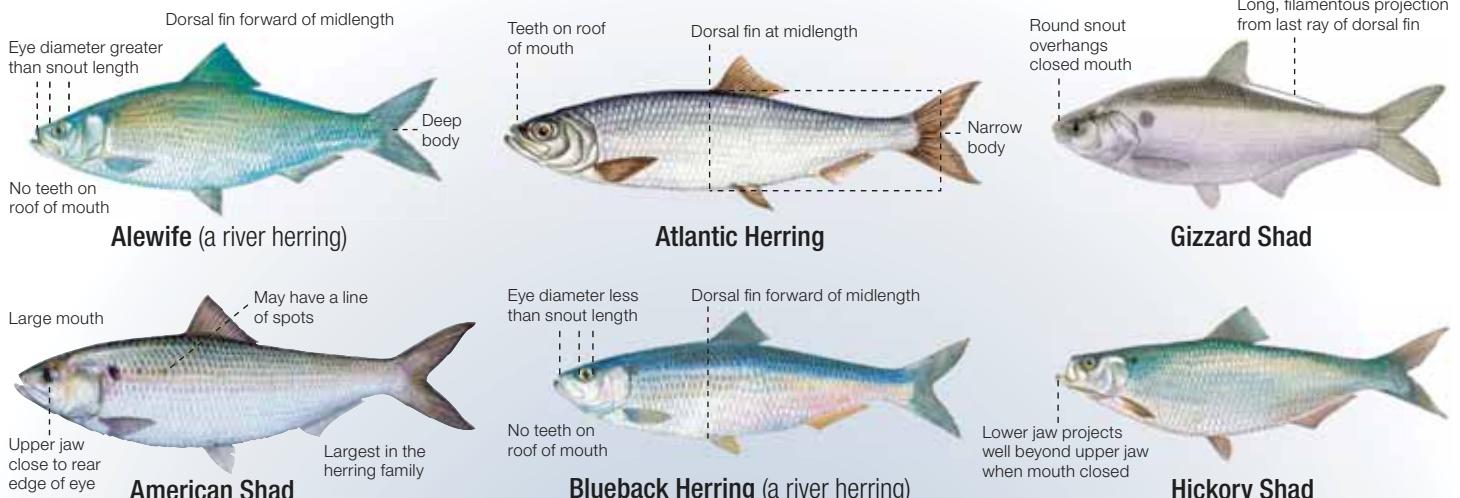
New Jersey State Police (NJSP)

(609) 882-2000
www.njsp.org/maritime

Marine Species Identification

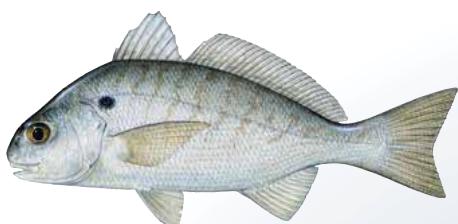
MARINE REGULATIONS

Herring



Alewife, American Shad, Blueback Herring and Hickory Shad illustrations ©Duane Raver; Atlantic Herring illustration ©Victor Young/NH. Fish and Game Department; Gizzard Shad illustration courtesy of Texas Parks and Wildlife Department ©2012.





Spot



Scup
(Porgy)



White Perch



Northern Searobin



Northern Kingfish



Atlantic Bonito



Northern Puffer



Spanish
Mackerel



Oyster Toadfish



Atlantic Mackerel



Atlantic Cod



Smooth Dogfish



Spiny Dogfish



Sand Tiger Shark



Sandbar Shark

Mollusks & Crustaceans

MARINE REGULATIONS

Regulations in red are new this year.

Crustaceans

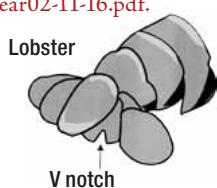
American Lobster

The legal possession size limit 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 3½ inches nor greater than 5¼ inches. Lobster parts may not be possessed at sea or landed. **There is no harvest or possession of lobster in Lobster Management Area 4 from April 30 – May 31 and Lobster Management Area 5 from February 1 – March 31.**

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 below.

Special Lobster Restrictions: No person shall use, leave, deploy, or tend any lobster, fish or conch pot within an artificial reef located in state waters except in areas designated as a full access zones. Within these designated full access zones lobster, fish and conch pots shall be used, left, deployed or tended only between sunrise and sunset.

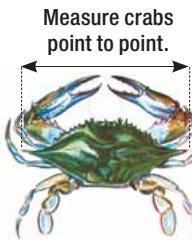
For information about lobster pot deployment and New Jersey Reef Full Access Zone Locations, scan this QR code or go to NJFishandWildlife.com/pdf/2016/marlet-reefgear02-11-16.pdf.



The use of spears, gigs, gaffs or other penetrating devices as a method of capture for lobsters is prohibited. A recreational lobster 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

1. 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 23) or two trot lines to harvest crabs. See page 23 for the non-commercial crab pot license information.
2. 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.
3. Minimum size for crabs that may be harvested (measured from point to point of shell) are as follows:
 - a) Peeler or shredder crab: 3 inches
 - b) Soft crab: 3½ inches
 - c) Hard crab: 4½ inches



4. All female crabs with eggs attached and all undersized crabs shall be returned to the water immediately.
5. Recreational trot lines shall not exceed 150 feet in length with a maximum of 25 baits.
6. All pots and trot lines shall be marked with the identification number of the owner.
7. All crab pots must be tended at least once every 72 hours.
8. No floating line may be used on any crab pot or crab pot buoy.
9. No crab pot shall be placed in any area that would obstruct or impede navigation or in any creek less than 50 feet wide.
10. Only the owner or a law enforcement officer may raise or remove contents of a legally set fishing device.
11. 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.
12. No crabs may be harvested from the Newark Bay Complex. For more information, see *Health Advisory* on page 30.
13. **Crab Pot/Trot Line seasons:** Delaware Bay and tributaries: April 6 – Dec. 4. All other waters: March 15 – Nov. 30. The following waters, and their tributaries, are closed to the use of crab pots and trot lines: Cumberland Co.: Cohansay 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. **Crab Dredge Seasons:** Delaware Bay and tributaries: Jan. 1 through April 15 and Nov. 15 through Dec. 31. All other waters: Jan. 1 through March 31, Dec. 1 through Dec. 31. 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 23 for details on purchasing a non-commercial crab dredge license.

Notice: All non-collapsible Chesapeake-style crab pots (see illustration on page 23) 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

1. All persons must be licensed to harvest any shellfish. See license information, page 23. Shellfish means any species of benthic mollusks (except conch) including hard and soft clams, oysters, surf clams, bay scallops and mussels.
2. 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 23 for shellfish license information. Charts are updated annually.
3. Shellfish harvesting is prohibited before sunrise and after sunset. Shellfish harvest is also prohibited on Sundays except in the seasonally approved areas of the Navesink and Shrewsbury rivers, when harvesting is permitted between Nov. 1 and April 30.
4. Harvesting shellfish on public grounds is restricted to the use of hand implements.
5. 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

1. 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 23.
2. It is illegal to dredge shellfish on public grounds. Use of hand implements are the only legal harvest methods.
3. 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.
4. 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.



2016 New Jersey Recreational Fishing Seasons, Minimum Size and Possession Limits

Regulations remain in effect until changed. For the most current regulations, go to NJFishandWildlife.com or call the marine fish "listen-only" information line at (609) 292-2083. Regulations in red are new this year. See page 14 for how to measure fish.

Species	Open Season	Minimum Length	Harvest & Possession Limit (per person unless noted)
American Eel ^a	No Closed Season	9"	25
Black Drum	No Closed Season	16"	3
	May 23–June 19	12.5"	10
Black Sea Bass	July 1–Aug. 31	12.5"	2
	Oct. 22–Dec. 31	13"	15
Bluefish (Snapper)	No Closed Season	None	15
Cod	No Closed Season	21"	No Limit
Haddock	No Closed Season	21"	No Limit
Pollock	No Closed Season	19"	No Limit
Red Drum	No Closed Season	18"	1 not greater than 27"
River Herring	No Open Season	None	0
Scup (Porgy)	Jan. 1–Feb. 28 July 1–Dec. 31	9"	50
Shad			
Delaware River & tributaries	No Closed Season	None	6 (maximum of 3 American shad)
All Other Marine Waters	No Closed Season	None	6 (no American shad may be harvested or possessed)
Shark ^{b,c,†}			
Aggregate large coastal group [†]	Jan. 1–May 14 and 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).
Hammerhead group [†]		78" fork length	
Non-blacknose small coastal group [†]			
Blacknose group [†]	No Closed Season	None	
Pelagic group [†]	No Closed Season	54" fork length	
Smooth Dogfish	No Closed Season	None	No Limit
Spanish Mackerel	No Closed Season	14"	10
Striped Bass or Hybrid Striped Bass			
Delaware River & tributaries** (Calhoun St. bridge to Salem River & tributaries)	March 1–March 31 and June 1–Dec. 31	one @ 28" to < 43" and one ≥ 43"	2
Delaware River & tributaries** (upstream of Calhoun St. bridge)	March 1–Dec. 31		
Atlantic Ocean ^d (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 (Fluke)			
Delaware Bay and tributaries ^f	May 21–Sept. 25	17"	4
All water except as above	May 21–Sept. 25	18"	5
	Jan. 1–Feb. 28	15"	4
Tautog (Blackfish)	April 1–April 30	15"	4
	July 17–Nov. 15	15"	1
	Nov. 16–Dec. 31	15"	6
Weakfish	No Closed Season	13"	1
Winter Flounder	March 1–Dec. 31	12"	2
Note: No species of fish with a minimum size limit listed above may be filleted or cleaned at sea. Party boats licensed to carry 15 or more passengers may apply for a permit to fillet the above species. See Summer Flounder , page 17.			
Blue Crab			
peeler or shredder	No Closed Season ^e	3"	1 bushel
soft	No Closed Season ^e	3½"	
hard	No Closed Season ^e	4½"	
Lobster (carapace length)	See closed seasons on page 20	3¾"	6
Hard Clam (license required)	No Closed Season [‡]	1½"	150 clams

a Except 50 fish harvest/possession limit for party/charter boat employees.

b Not including dogfish; see description on page 16 under **Sharks**.

c See page 14 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, trot lines or crab dredges. See pages 20 and 23.

f Applies to Delaware Bay and tributaries, west of COLREGS line delineating Delaware Bay from Atlantic Ocean but does not include waters of Cape May Canal east of Cape May Ferry Terminal. Transport of summer flounder caught in Delaware Bay, greater than or equal to 17 in. but less than 18 in., may occur in waters east of Cape May Ferry Terminal to George Redding Br. (Rt. 47) located at entrance of Wildwood provided all fishing gear aboard the vessel is stowed with rigs removed; vessel may not stop to fish for any species.

* Excluding tail filaments. (See illustration, page 14.)

** See **Closed Seasons** (page 16) for specifics of springtime non-offset circle hook requirements.

† See page 22 for **Federal Recreational Regulations**.

‡ Non-resident license valid only June – Sept. See water classification chart information on page 23.

Federal Limits

MARINE REGULATIONS

Regulations in red are new this year.

2016 Federal Recreational Fishing Regulations for Minimum Size, Possession Limits and Seasons

See page 14 for how to measure fish. See *Recreational Minimum Size, Possession Limits and Seasons* (page 21) 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.

Species	Season	Minimum Size	Possession Limit (number per angler per day unless otherwise specified)	Notes
Cod	Year round	22"	10 per person per day	
Striped Bass	NA	NA	No possession allowed in EEZ	Possession prohibited in federal waters (3–200 nm). See pages 16 and 21 for NJ waters.
Dolphin (Mahi mahi)	Year round	None	10 per day, 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 www.nmfs.noaa.gov or call (727) 824-5326.
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 https://hmpermits.noaa.gov 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.
Roundscale Spearfish	Year round	66" lower jaw–fork length	None	All non-tournament billfish landings must be reported to NMFS within 24 hours, either online at https://hmpermits.noaa.gov or by calling (800) 894-5528.
Sailfish	Year round	63" lower jaw–fork length	None	
Spearfish, Longbill	None	None	Prohibited	For current regulations refer to www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/hms/ or call (727) 824-5399.
Tilefish, Blueline	Year round	None	7 per angler per trip	
Tilefish, Golden	Year round	None	8 per angler per trip	In effect from the Virginia/North Carolina border north.
Swordfish	Year round	47" lower jaw–fork length if the head is naturally attached or 25" cleithrum to caudal keel if the head has been removed.	For anglers: 1 per person, no more than 4 per vessel per trip. For charter vessels: 1 per paying passenger, no more than 6 per vessel per trip. For headboat vessels: 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 https://hmpermits.noaa.gov or call (888) 872-8862. All non-tournament swordfish landings must be reported to NMFS within 24 hours either online at https://hmpermits.noaa.gov or by calling (800) 894-5528.
Tuna, Albacore (Longfin)	Year round	None	None	[†] Bluefin tuna are managed in two regions; Northern, extending north from the Great Egg Inlet and Southern extending south from Great Egg Inlet. Bluefin tuna retention limits may change throughout the season. Visit https://hmpermits.noaa.gov or call (888) 872-8862 or (978) 281-9260 for current information.
Tuna, Bigeye	Year round	27" curved fork length	None	
Tuna, Bluefin [†]	Jan. 1–Dec. 31 or until season is closed.	27" to <73" curved fork length and one trophy fish ≥ 73" curved fork length per vessel per year	Limits can change during the season. Prior to departure, check https://hmpermits.noaa.gov or 888-USA-TUNA for up-to-date limits.	All recreational bluefin tuna landings must be reported to NMFS within 24 hours either online at https://hmpermits.noaa.gov or by calling (888) 872-8862.
Tuna, Skipjack	Year round	None	None	
Tuna, Yellowfin	Year round	27" curved fork length	3 per person per trip	For current federal waters regulations (3–200nm), refer to www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/hms/ or call (301) 713-2347 for swordfish/sharks or (978) 281-9260 for tunas.
Sharks*	Year round	Aggregate Large Coastal and Pelagic: 54" fork length Hammerheads: 78" fork length Other listed sharks: None	For non prohibited species: 1 authorized* shark/vessel/trip plus 1 Atlantic sharpnose and 1 bonnethead shark/person/trip	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 https://hmpermits.noaa.gov 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.
Aggregate Large Coastal Group				
Hammerhead Group				
Non-blacknose Small Coastal Group				
Blacknose Group				
Pelagic Group				
Wahoo	Year round	None	2 per person per day	For more information, contact the South Atlantic Fisheries Management Council at (727) 824-5326.
Wreckfish	None	None	Prohibited	

***Shark Species That May Be Kept (Authorized Species):** Aggregate Large Coastal Shark—blacktip, bull, lemon, nurse, tiger, spinner; Hammerhead Shark—scalloped hammerhead, smooth hammerhead, great hammerhead; Non-Blacknose Small Coastal Shark—Atlantic sharpnose, bonnethead, finetooth; Blacknose Shark—blacknose; Pelagic Shark—Shortfin mako, blue, porbeagle, oceanic whitetip and common thresher. **Shark Species That MUST Be Released (Prohibited Species):** 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/ 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.

LICENSE AND AGENTS

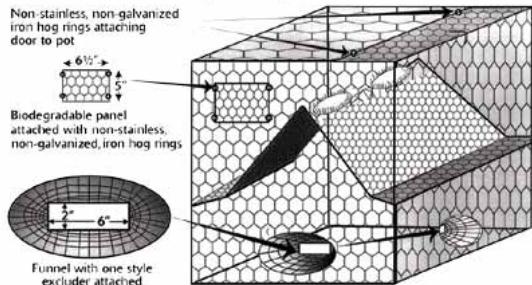
Shellfish License Information

A shellfish license (formerly called clamping) is required for harvesting all species of benthic mollusks (except 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.

For shellfishing regulations, see page 20. Prior to harvesting any shellfish, you must consult the **Shellfish Growing Water Classification Charts** published by DEP's Bureau of Marine Water Monitoring, available at shellfish license agents, state shellfish offices, online at <http://www.nj.gov/dep/bmw/waterclass.htm> or call Marine Water Monitoring at (609) 748-2000. Purchase shellfish licenses online at www.NJ.WildlifeLicense.com.

Chesapeake-Style Crab Pot



Shellfish License Fees

- **Resident recreational shellfish:** \$10
Harvest limit: 150 shellfish (in aggregate) per day. Sale of catch prohibited.
- **Non-resident recreational shellfish:** \$20
Harvest limit: 150 shellfish (in aggregate) per day. Sale of catch prohibited. License valid only during 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 only to certified dealers.
- **Resident senior citizen recreational shellfish license:** FREE lifetime license (\$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. To become certified, call (609) 984-6213.

Crab Pot License Information

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

- **Recreational crab pot/trot line license:** \$2
Harvest limit: one bushel per day. Refer to the shellfish regulations on page 20 for all recreational crabbing regulations.
- **Non-commercial crab dredge license:** \$15
Harvest limit: one bushel per day during the crab dredge season. See page 20 for recreational crab regulations.

Terrapin Excluders and Biodegradable Panels Are Required on Chesapeake-Style Crab Pots

Users of non-collapsible, Chesapeake-style crab pots note: all pots set in any body of water less than 150-feet wide at mean low tide or in any man-made lagoon MUST include diamondback terrapin excluder devices. 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 allowing these and other species to escape 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 $\frac{3}{16}$ " diameter, or non-stainless steel, uncoated ferrous metal not greater than $\frac{3}{32}$ " 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 note: 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 page 20. 

Shellfish and Non-Commercial Crab Pot License Agents

(For over-the-counter sales only.)

ATLANTIC COUNTY

Bass Pro Outdoor World, 30 N. Christopher Columbus Blvd, Atlantic City (609) 449-4500
 Buck Tails Outfitters, 6390 Harding Hwy, Mays Landing (609) 829-2229
 Butterhof's Farm & Home Supply, 5715 White Horse Pike, Egg Harbor City ... (609) 965-1198
 Egg Harbor True Value, 208 N. Philadelphia Ave., Egg Harbor City.....(609) 965-0815
 Lynkris Hometown Hardware, 208 N. Philadelphia Ave., Egg Harbor City....(609) 965-0815
 Lynkris Hometown Hardware, 127, Bellvue Ave, Hammonton (609) 561-1592
 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

CAPE MAY COUNTY

Avalon Hodge Podge, 2389 Ocean Dr., Avalon (609) 967-3274
 Belleplain Supply, 346 Handmill Rd., Belleplain (609) 861-2345
 Budd's Bait & Tackle, 109 Fulling Mill Rd., Villas (609) 886-6935
 City of Ocean City, 861 Asbury Ave., Ocean City(609) 525-9328
 Leisure Travel & Ticket Office, 1 Munroe Ave, Cape May.....(609) 898-6804
 Sea Isle Bait & Tackle, 4200 Park Rd., Sea Isle City.....(609) 263-6540
 Smuggler's Cove, 370 83rd St., Stone Harbor.....(609) 368-1700
 Sterling Harbor Bait & Tackle, 1020 W. Rio Grande Ave., Wildwood(609) 729-1425
 Two Chums Bait, Tackle and Boat, 375 – 43rd Pl., Sea Isle City.....(609) 263-2486
 Upper Township, 2100 Tuckahoe Rd., Tuckahoe(609) 628-2805
 Wal*Mart, 3159 Rt. 9S, Rio Grande(609) 465-7760

CUMBERLAND COUNTY

NJ Div. Fish and Wildlife, 1672 E. Buckshutem Rd., Millville(856) 785-0730
 uR hardware & General Store, 389 S. Lincoln Ave, Vineland.....(856) 692-3646
 Zeke's Bait, Tackle & Seafood, 138 South Pearl St, Bridgeton(856) 451-1800

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 Bait & 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
 Cream Ridge Sporting Goods, 465 Route 539, Cream Ridge(609) 758-0616
 Creekside Outfitters, 403 Rt. 9, Waretown(609) 242-1812
 Downes Marina, 287 Brennan Concourse, Bayville.....(732) 269-0137
 Garden State Yacht & Sales, 101 Route 35 South, Pt. Pleasant Beach...(732) 892-4222
 Grizz's Forked River B & T, 232 N. Main St., Forked River(609) 693-9298
 Pell's Fish & Sport Shop, 335 Mantoloking Rd., Bricktown.....(732) 477-2121
 Pineland Sporting Goods, 959 W. Veterans Hwy., Jackson(732) 961-7248
 Shooter's Sporting Center, 1535 Route 539, Little Egg Harbor.....(609) 296-4080
 Surf City Bait & Tackle, 317 Long Beach Blvd., Surf City(609) 494-2333
 Tip's Hardware, 218 Main St., West Creek(609) 296-3192
 West Creek Bait & Tackle, 387 Rt. 9, West Creek(609) 857-3516

Passaic County

Fins & Furs Bait Shop, 2727 Rt. 23, Newfoundland(973) 545-2336

Somerset County

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

The Fishing Experience:

By: Heather Corbett, Principal Fisheries Biologist

People go fishing to catch something fresh for dinner, to brag to their buddies or simply to enjoy a day outdoors experiencing nature first-hand. There is much value in the camaraderie of spending quality time fishing with friends. Find out how your fishing fun might even benefit the fishery resource.

More than Just Fish

The fishing vessels *Queen Mary*, a party boat from Point Pleasant and the charter boat *Hunter* from Barnegat Light both have a group of anglers who faithfully count on captains Dave Riback and Eddie Yates for their fishing experience. On each vessel, the group of "regulars" have become friends through their common love of fishing.

As a marine biologist with New Jersey Division of Fish and Wildlife, it's been a privilege working with these two party/charter boat crews as they assist the agency in our fish sampling efforts. It has also been a pleasure to learn how these fishing vessels became like a second "home" to several dozen anglers over the past 20-plus years.

Although the *Queen Mary*'s "Wednesday Gang" and the Hunter's "Barry's Barnegat Light Bruisers" look forward to catching dinner as well as doing some bragging, the main reason these groups go fishing is to spend time together and to share a few laughs.

Fishing Vessel *Queen Mary*

The Queen Mary's most devoted regular, Bill Holden, has been fishing on this boat since the late 1960s when Harvey Brown was captain. In spring 1995, Holden made the 1.5 hour drive to Point Pleasant planning to fish for mackerel. The boat never left the dock that day because there weren't enough customers. Holden was determined to not let this happen again. He approached then-owner, Captain John Brackett (JB), and received a list of his regular customers. Holden contacted each of them and organized a weekly Wednesday fishing trip to assure there would be enough anglers for the boat to sail. Since then the group of fishermen, known as the "Wednesday Gang," has been fishing together every week of the season.

Currently, the Wednesday Gang has 18 members who get together for more than just fishing. They have helped one another after Hurricane Sandy, have shared vacations and enjoyed dinners together. Since the spring of 2009, they gather for an annual luncheon to kick off the fishing season. At last year's annual luncheon, Rich Sloane (Stoney) had a special surprise for boat owner, Dave Riback.

Sloane, a member of the Wednesday Gang since 2012 who joined after repeated encouragement from Frank Strouse, said he had no idea he would have so much fun fishing. In addition to fishing, Sloane makes models as a hobby. His latest creation is a perfect replica of Captain Dave's Queen Mary. Minute details from the anchor winch to the helm controls look exactly like the boat of which the Wednesday Gang is so fond. Sloane's replica, which measures 31.5 inches long and 19 inches tall, took 345 hours to construct from November 2014 to March 2015. The long hours spent meticulously working on the model vessel shows Sloane's true appreciation for the Wednesday Gang and the Queen Mary staff.

Fishing Vessel *Hunter*

Captain Eddie Yate's customers are another dedicated group of camaraderie-seeking anglers no less dedicated than the Wednesday Gang. Hunter customers have come to expect entertaining banter between captain and crew as well as deckhand Marty Pley's patience in teaching even the most novice angler how to catch fish and have fun.

About ten years ago, several groups struggled to assemble enough anglers to book a fishing trip. Captain Eddie approached longtime customer, Barry Emens—who has been fishing on the Hunter for over 25 years—for his assistance. Emens contacted all 32 fishermen, merging the groups into one. Each spring Emens sends the group a list of dates. Fishing trips are booked on a first come, first serve basis



Rick Case and Rich Sloane with his bluefish on the Queen Mary.



Captain Eddie observes Walt Kaminski netting Barry Emens's catch on the Hunter.



Bob Gieson and his bluefish with Erik Olsen on the Queen Mary.



Replica of the Queen Mary made by Rich Sloane.

It's Not Just About The Fish

and most dates are booked quickly with alternate anglers listed in case someone must cancel.

In January 2015 the group was officially named by Captain Eddie at their annual luncheon when he presented each member with a "Barry's Barnegat Light Bruisers" tee shirt. *Memorable Moments* awards are bestowed at the luncheon. One of these moments recalled was when two regulars lost their rods overboard but were miraculously saved by deckhand Chris Patro and Walt Kaminski.

The Bruisers typically start each season with an "exploratory trip" where the fishing grounds are tested. This trip is full of excitement, with everyone catching up on what's happened during the winter break and filled with anticipation of what the season ahead will bring.

There are a lot of laughs and always an elaborate food spread provided by Wayne Queroli. Queroli's food selections have ranged from pepperoni to shrimp—which was successfully used one day for bait by Dave Bryan! On hot summer days everyone is refreshed with ice cold watermelon on the ride back to the dock. Another special memory was when everyone stopped fishing to gather in the cabin to share cake and sing Happy 90th Birthday to Jack Stewart.

One Bruiser, Tony Ingram, fishes so relentlessly that his favorite fishing shoes literally disintegrated all over the deck! During the offseason, many of the Bruisers spend time together shopping for fishing gear or even fishing in Florida.

Importance of Science

Why is this story different? The uniqueness is the cooperation between everyone associated with these two fishing vessels and the New Jersey Division of Fish and Wildlife. Since 1999, our agency has been collecting data, primarily on striped bass and bluefish. The Queen Mary's deckhand, Erik Olsen, has been helpful in developing protocols

for sampling to make the process simple and efficient, making it easy for Fish and Wildlife to collect length, weight and age data.

Information collected about striped bass provide data that's lacking from Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC)-mandated field surveys and has been instrumental in enabling Fish and Wildlife to use New Jersey-specific data when developing regulation options. Considerable data on age structure are required for stock assessments both for bluefish and for striped bass.

Prior to 2010, all bluefish age data came from the state of Virginia. Since that time, New Jersey has collected nearly 1,000 bluefish age samples which have significantly contributed to the coast wide bluefish stock assessment. Both of these boats are always willing to help by submitting voluntary daily log books, collecting requested samples, spreading our agency's messages and providing information when requested.

Whether your reward for a day of fishing is the bragging rights about "the big one" or it's the camaraderie of friends, consider modeling after the crews of these two boats by remembering that it's not all about the fish. Consider submitting a fishing log to Fish and Wildlife after **every** trip. Be a part of the fisheries management process. Complete your Striped Bass Bonus Program Log or the volunteer Recreational Saltwater Angler Survey (see NJFishandWildlife.com/saltwater.htm) each time you wet a line. All data is valuable. Your log from a day without harvest is just as valuable to Fish and Wildlife as a day where 10 fish are caught!

Experience the adventure of party or charter boat fishing in New Jersey. See Fish and Wildlife's Party/Charter Boat Directory at NJFishandWildlife.com/prtyboat.htm or visit a local bait and tackle shop for fishing boat recommendations. Boats from Cape May to Atlantic Highlands all have something to offer for first-time or experienced anglers alike. 

More Than Just Fishing

"It is not always about the fishing that catches my interest. It is about the outdoors, bird watching, whale watching, ship and tall ship watching plus viewing other interesting marine-related wildlife that I observe while being out on the ocean. Then there are the personalities, backgrounds and stories told by the other persons that are part of the fishing trip. Finally, over the years, it is the camaraderie and friendships that are established with the fishermen, captain and mates onboard that is very hard to replace. It all makes life—and you—a better person. Life is good!"

Bruiser Barry Emens

Photos by author.



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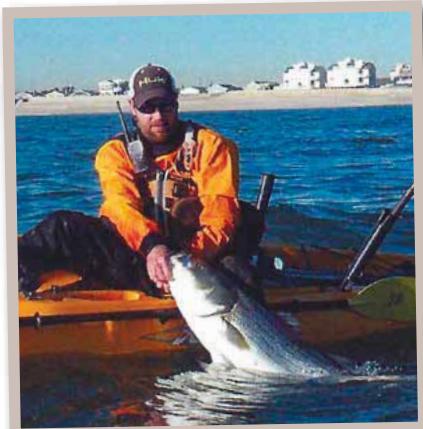


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Skillful Angler Recognition Program

RECOGNITION PROGRAMS

The Skillful Angler Program is designed both to supplement the New Jersey Record Fish Program and to acknowledge 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. 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.



Christopher Baggott landed this fish while kayak fishing in the ocean off of Lavallette. The striped bass measured 44.5 inches and was caught on November 4, 2015 at 8:30 am.

Saltwater species taken from a boat must have been caught from a boat that left from, and returned to, a New Jersey port during the same trip.

The Program has three main divisions: 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.

Anglers qualifying for a Skillful Angler award receive a certificate with an artistic rendering of the fish species they caught as a testament to their achievement.

The Skillful Angler Program now recognizes different levels of fishing expertise. An angler who submits five applications of qualifying size for the same species will receive a Specialist Certificate. An angler who submits five applications of qualifying fish of different species will receive a Master Certificate. Catch 10 or more qualifying species of fish within the year, and the angler will earn an Elite Angler Certificate. The Program also now recognizes the first fish caught no matter the age of the angler. Qualified anglers will receive a First Fish certificate.

The program now has four marine "Slam" categories — an Inshore Slam 1, Inshore Slam 2, Offshore Pelagics Slam and Marlin Slam. For the Inshore Slam 1, an angler must submit qualifying applications for a Striped Bass, Bluefish and Fluke. For the Inshore Slam 2, an angler must submit qualifying applications for Black Sea Bass, Tautog, and Weakfish. The Offshore Pelagics Slam will be obtained if

an angler submits qualifying applications for Bluefin Tuna, Bigeye Tuna, Yellowfin Tuna and Dolphin. For the Marlin Slam, an angler must submit qualifying applications for a White Marlin and a Blue Marlin.

Each month, the leaders of each category and species will be posted on our Skillful Angler Leader Board web page. 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 is sent a special certificate recognizing his/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 catch and release categories, the fish must be measured and photographed alongside a ruler. For Adult/Junior division, fish must be weighed and measured by fishing license agents, tackle shops or authorized Fish and Wildlife fisheries biologists.

Anglers must submit two photographs of the fish caught, one at the site of the catch and one with the fish alongside a ruler for clear identification and measurement verification. Take time to compose good quality (and high resolution) photos to submit with your application. The best photo may be selected for publication in this *Digest* next year! Include your e-mail address on back of the photo so we may contact you for a digital copy of your print. 

Apply online at:

NJFishandWildlife.com/pdf/skflangapp-salt.pdf

Ocean Fun Day

Never surf fished before?

Join New Jersey Division of Fish and Wildlife educators at Ocean Fun Days to learn how!

May 21, 2016 from 11:30 a.m.–1:30 p.m. at Island Beach State Park.

- Learn proper surf fishing techniques and tricks.
- All equipment and supplies will be provided. Ages 12 and up.

Participants may join in the Governor's Surf Fishing Tournament (see page 10 for Tournament details) the next day using provided equipment. Tournament registration fees will apply.

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 website at NJFishandWildlife.com for a complete list of current state records. See also page 28.



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State Record Marine Sport Fish

RECOGNITION PROGRAMS



Mark Milici of Doylestown, PA landed a new state record gray tilefish while bottom fishing in the Lindenkohl Canyon. The 23 lb., 4 oz fish eclipsed the old record by 4 ounces and measured 35.5 inches in length with a girth of 22.5 inches.

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 76 marine species eligible for entry into the program which includes a new spearfishing category with 17 additional species.

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.

Twelve species are now retired from the list of program-eligible fish, but remain on a separate list posted on Fish and Wildlife's website. 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 website at NJFishandWildlife.com/fishing.htm. 

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	9	4.5	2010	Steve Singler	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	8¾" pt. to pt.		2009	Raymond Ponik	Bayonne
Croaker, Atlantic	5	8	1981	Frederick Brown	Delaware Bay
*Cunner	3	0.5	2012	Raul de la Prida	Off Pt. Pleasant
Dogfish, smooth	19	11.2	2013	Michael J. LaTorre, Jr.	Sculls Bay
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
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	2	13	2011	Robert Macejka	Mantoloking

Species	Lbs.	Oz.	Year	Angler	Where Caught
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, hammerhead	365	0	1985	Walter Thacara	Mud Hole
Shark, porbeagle				Vacant (Minimum Weight 100 lbs.)	
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	19	1	2014	William Catino	Longport
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	23	4	2015	Mark Milici	Linden Kohl 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 website at NJFishandWildlife.com.

New Jersey State Record Marine Fish – Spearfishing Category

In 2014, the NJ Record Fish Program expanded with the addition of a Spearfishing category for saltwater. Seventeen (17) species commonly sought after by spearfishers are part of the Program. Spearfishers now have a unique opportunity to be recognized in New Jersey's Record Fish Program. Anglers are reminded that the objective of the Record Fish Program is to increase the awareness of fishing opportunities for species that are regularly sought after and routinely found in or off the coast of New Jersey.

Species	Lbs.	Oz.	Year	Angler	Where Caught
Amberjack, greater	Min. Wt. 60 pounds		VACANT		
Bass, black sea	Min. Wt. 5 pounds		VACANT		
Bluefish	Min. Wt. 18 pounds		VACANT		
Cobia	Min. Wt. 60 pounds		VACANT		
Cod	Min. Wt. 50 pounds		VACANT		
Dolphin	Min. Wt. 40 pounds		VACANT		
*Fluke	15	5	2014	Robert A. Davis	Off Barnegat Lighthouse
Flounder, winter	Min. Wt. 3 pounds		VACANT		
Hake, red (ling)	Min. Wt. 9 pounds		VACANT		
Pollock	Min. Wt. 30 pounds		VACANT		
Porgy	Min. Wt. 4 pounds		VACANT		
Sheepshead	Min. Wt. 12 pounds		VACANT		
Spadefish	Min. Wt. 9 pounds		VACANT		
Striped bass	Min. Wt. 55 pounds		VACANT		
*Tautog	23	14	2007	Luke Dylan Hickey	Off Cape May
Triggerfish, gray	Min. Wt. 3.5 pounds		VACANT		
Weakfish	Min. Wt. 14 pounds		VACANT		

* Fish was recognized by the International Underwater Spearfishing Association as a world record.

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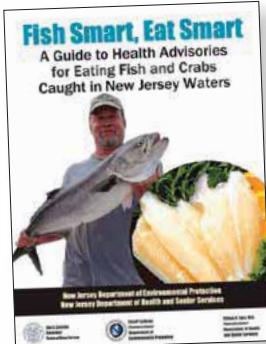


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biphenyls (PCBs), pesticides and mercury have been found in certain fish and crabs in some New Jersey waters. Fish consumption advisories have been adopted to guide citizens on safe consumption practices.

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 when making decisions about eating recreationally caught fish and crabs.

The current list of fish consumption advisories consists of statewide, 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 new "how to" electronic pamphlets on cleaning and cooking your catch to reduce your exposure to these harmful chemicals. These e-pamphlets are downloadable in multiple languages.

For a complete list of state and federal marine fish consumption advisories visit: www.FishSmartEatSmartNJ.org.

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

Check online for fish consumption advisories on the local water body in which you fish! Go to www.FishSmartEatSmartNJ.org 

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Law Enforcement and Regulation Information



Contact a New Jersey Division of Fish & Wildlife Law Enforcement office that serves the county where you hunt or fish.

- **Northern Region — (908) 735-8240**
(Bergen, Essex, Hudson, Hunterdon, Morris, Passaic, Somerset, Sussex, Union and Warren counties)
- **Central Region — (609) 259-2120**
(Burlington, Mercer, Middlesex, Monmouth and Ocean counties)
- **Southern Region — (856) 629-0555**
(Atlantic, Camden, Cape May, Cumberland, Gloucester and Salem counties)
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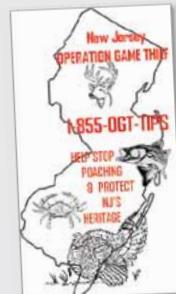
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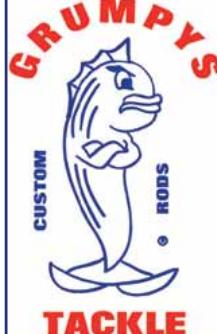
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Delaware Bay Office	
1672 E. Buckshutem Rd., Millville, NJ 08332	(856) 785-0730
Certified Shellfish Dealer Information	
NJ Consumer Health Service, Dept. of Health	
P.O. Box 369, Trenton, NJ 08625	(609) 588-3123
Shellfish Water Classification	
DEP, Water Monitoring and Standards	
P.O. Box 405, Stoney Hill Road, Leeds Point, NJ 08220	(609) 748-2000
Lebanon Field Office	
P.O. Box 394, 1255 County Rt. 629, Lebanon, NJ 08833	(908) 236-2118
Northern Region Office	
26 Route 173 W., Hampton, NJ 08827	
Wildlife Management	(908) 735-7040
Endangered and Nongame Species (1 Van Syckel's Rd.)	(908) 638-4127
Hunter Education	(877) 2HUNTNJ
Wildlife Control	(908) 735-8793
Land Management	(973) 383-0918
Law Enforcement (Bergen, Essex, Hudson, Hunterdon, Morris, Passaic, Somerset, Sussex, Union, and Warren counties)	(908) 735-8240
Pequest Trout Hatchery	(908) 637-4173
Pequest Natural Resource Education Center	
605 Pequest Rd., Oxford, NJ 07863	(908) 637-4125
Hackettstown Fish Hatchery	
23 Reese Ave, Hackettstown, NJ 07840	(908) 852-3676
Central Region Office	
1 Eldridge Rd., Robbinsville, NJ 08691	
Land Management	(609) 259-2132
Hunter Education	(877) 2HUNTNJ
Wildlife Control	(609) 259-7955
Law Enforcement (Burlington, Mercer, Middlesex, Monmouth, and Ocean counties)	(609) 259-2120
Southern Region Office	
220 Blue Anchor Rd., Sicklerville, NJ 08081	
Information	(856) 629-0090
Freshwater Fisheries	(856) 629-4950
Hunter Education	(877) 2HUNTNJ
Land Management	(856) 629-5006
Wildlife Control (Now at Nacote Creek office.)	(609) 748-2044
Law Enforcement (Atlantic, Camden, Cape May, Cumberland, Gloucester, and Salem counties)	(856) 629-0555

Publications Available

The following publications are available by writing:

Nacote Creek Research Station Publications
P.O. Box 418
Port Republic, NJ 08241

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>.

The following publications are also available online at NJFishandWildlife.com:

- **Guide to New Jersey Saltwater Fishing** (available online only)
- **New Jersey Boaters Guide**
- **Party and Charter Boat Directory** (available online only)

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