

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](http://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)**, **black sea bass**, **striped bass** and **lobster** have changed.

- ♦ The recreational summer flounder open season has been modified to include May 22 to September 26.
- ♦ The black sea bass recreational minimum size remains at 12.5 inches. However, the recreational seasons and possession limits have changed. There is a 15 fish possession limit for May 27 to June 30, a two fish possession limit for July 1 to July 31, and a 15 fish possession limit for Oct. 22 to Dec. 31.
- ♦ The recreational striped bass size limit has changed to one fish at 28 inches to less than 43 inches and one fish at greater than or equal to 43 inches. The Striped Bass Bonus Program has been modified to one fish at 24 inches to less than 28 inches with a season of September 1 to December 31. See page 12 for additional program information.
- ♦ The lobster season has changed; there is no harvest or possession allowed from April 30 to May 31.
- ♦ Notice: New Federal regulations for the taking of blueline tilefish will likely be implemented in 2015. Visit our website at [NJFishandWildlife.com](http://NJFishandWildlife.com) or call the 24-hour marine fish "listen-only" information line at (609) 292-2083 for the latest regulation updates.

These changes were implemented for New Jersey to remain in compliance with the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission's management plans for summer flounder, black sea bass, striped bass and coastal sharks. 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 13.

### 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](http://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 killipots.
6. Not more than two miniature fykes or pots for the taking of eels for bait.

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

No person shall take 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 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.

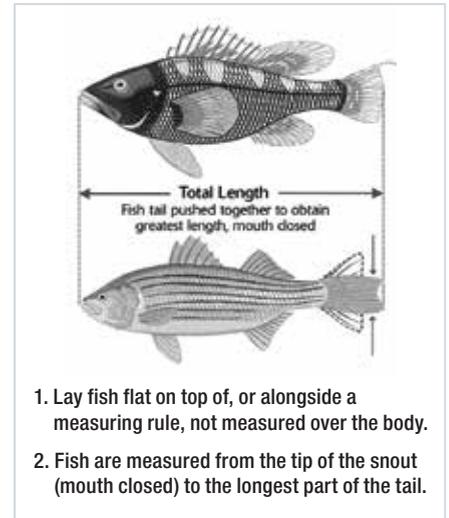
### Spearfishing

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. (See article, *A Spearfishing Primer*, on page 20.)

## Fish Measurement



## 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
- ♦ white shark
- ♦ river herring (alewife and blueback herring; see herring illustrations, page 14)
- ♦ See *Sharks* (page 11) 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.

## Accessible Fishing Sites



For people with disabilities, visit: [www.NJFishandWildlife.com/sites.htm](http://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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- 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 12. 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 10.) The black sea bass recreational minimum size remains at 12.5 inches. **The 2015 recreational seasons and possession limits have changed. See details on the Marine Regulations chart, page 17.** Visit our Web site at NJFishandWildlife.com or call the 24-hour marine fish "listen-only" information line at (609) 292-2083 for the latest regulation updates.

### Bluefish

The possession limit for bluefish is 15 fish.

### Red Drum

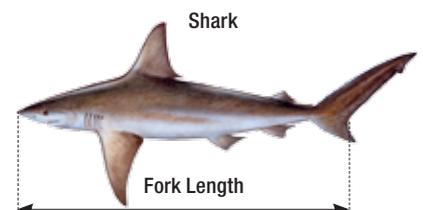
The red drum possession and size limits are one fish no less than 18 inches and not greater than 27 inches.

### 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 14 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.



Regulations in **red** are new this year.

The 2015 shark regulations complement existing federal shark regulations (see 2015 Federal Recreational Regulations table, page 18). 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 18 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](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.

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.** **For 2015, 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 average would be subtracted from the following year's quota.

**Application Process:** Striped Bass Bonus Program permits are only available online. Go to [www.NJ.WildlifeLicense.com](http://www.NJ.WildlifeLicense.com) to complete the application and immediately print one Bonus Permit (application fee, \$2). The permit is non-transferable and valid for the current calendar year. Only one permit can be used per day. Harvest reporting also must be online. **Note that the Striped Bass Bonus Program application process may change later in 2015.** For regulation or program updates, visit us at [www.NJFishandWildlife.com/bonusbas.htm](http://www.NJFishandWildlife.com/bonusbas.htm) or check the marine fish "listen only" information line (609) 292-2083.

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

### Summer Flounder (Fluke)

The summer flounder recreational minimum size limit remains at 18 inches and the possession limit remains five fish. **The 2015 summer flounder recreational season will be open from May 22 to September 26.**

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. See the article on page 27.**

### 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 14–15 for the fish ID pages and pages 17–18 for the regulation charts. 

## 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 Web site:  
**[NJFishandWildlife.com/1stsub.htm](http://NJFishandWildlife.com/1stsub.htm)**



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## New Jersey Saltwater Recreational Registry Program (NJSRRP)

### ATTENTION: New Jersey Saltwater Anglers

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

Intercept Surveys (AP AIS) are conducted at public marine fishing access points (boat ramps, piers, beaches, jetties, bridges, marinas and more) to collect individual angler catch data, including species identification, total number of each species, length and weight measurements of individual fishes as well as some angler-specific information about the fishing trip and the angler's fishing behavior.

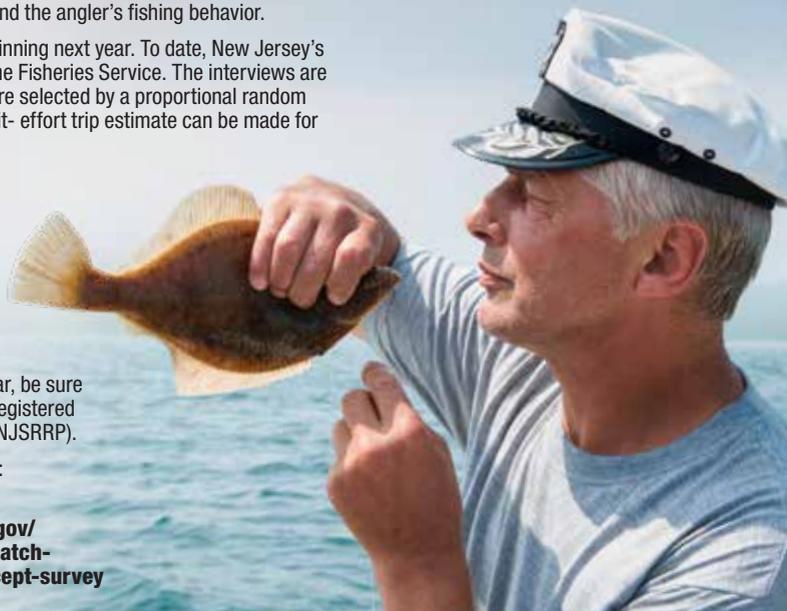
These angler surveys will be conducted by individual states beginning next year. To date, New Jersey's AP AIS has been conducted by a contractor of the National Marine Fisheries Service. The interviews are conducted in person by trained field staff. The sites and dates are selected by a proportional random selection process. From these angler interviews a catch-per-unit- effort trip estimate can be made for each type of fish encountered, either observed or reported. These estimates are combined with the effort estimates— such as those collected through telephone interviews— to produce the catch and harvest estimates.

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](http://www.saltwaterregistry.nj.gov)

For more information on the AP AIS, visit [www.st.nmfs.noaa.gov/recreational-fisheries/in-depth/our-surveys-counting-catch-and-effort/survey-materials/access-point-angler-intercept-survey](http://www.st.nmfs.noaa.gov/recreational-fisheries/in-depth/our-surveys-counting-catch-and-effort/survey-materials/access-point-angler-intercept-survey)



## 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/](http://www.nj.gov/mvc/)

#### Boat Safety Certificate (NJSP)

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

#### New Jersey State Police (NJSP)

(609) 882-2000  
[www.njsp.org/maritime](http://www.njsp.org/maritime)

# Mollusks & Crustaceans

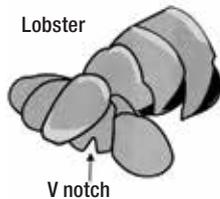
## MARINE REGULATIONS

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 3 3/8 inches nor greater than 5 1/4 inches. Lobster parts may not be possessed at sea or landed. There is no harvest or possession of lobster from **April 30–May 31**.



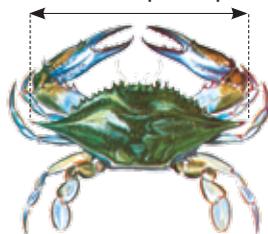
The possession limit is six lobsters per person. No person shall possess any lobster with eggs attached or from which eggs have been removed or any female lobster with a v-notched tail, as illustrated above.

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

- 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 19) or two trot lines to harvest crabs. See page 19 for the non-commercial crab pot license information.
- It is illegal to harvest or possess more than one bushel of crabs per day per person or offer for sale any crabs without having in your possession a valid commercial crabbing license.
- Minimum size for crabs that may be harvested (measured from point to point of shell) are as follows:
  - Peeler or shedder crab: 3 inches
  - Soft crab: 3 1/2 inches
  - Hard crab: 4 1/2 inches

Measure crabs point to point.



- All female crabs with eggs attached and all undersized crabs shall be returned to the water immediately.



#### 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

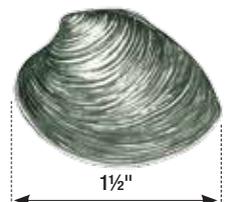
- Recreational trot lines shall not exceed 150 feet in length with a maximum of 25 baits.
- All pots and trot lines shall be marked with the identification number of the owner.
- All crab pots must be tended at least once every 72 hours.
- No floating line may be used on any crab pot or crab pot buoy.
- No crab pot shall be placed in any area that would obstruct or impede navigation or in any creek less than 50 feet wide.
- Only the owner, his agent or a law enforcement officer may raise or remove contents of a legally set fishing device.
- Crabs taken with a bait seine may be retained for personal use only if the fisherman possesses a bait net license, and may not be bartered or sold unless the fisherman possesses a commercial crab license.
- No crabs may be harvested from the Newark Bay Complex. For more information, see *Health Advisory* on page 26.
- 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.: Cohansey River and creeks named Back, Cedar, Nantuxent, Fortescue, Oranoken and Dividing; Cape May Co.: West and Bidwell Creeks and the Cape May Canal; Atlantic Co.: Hammock Cove (Dry Bay); Ocean Co.: on east shore of Barnegat Bay, that area of Sedge Islands Wildlife Management Area enclosed by a line drawn from the northern bank of Fishing Creek on Island Beach State Park to the northern tip of the Sedge Islands (Hensler Island), then south from point to point along the western side of the Sedge Islands WMA and terminating on the most southwestern point of Island Beach State Park.
- 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 19 for details on purchasing a non-commercial crab dredge license.

**Notice:** All non-collapsible Chesapeake-style crab pots (see illustration on page 19) 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.

- All persons must be licensed to harvest any shellfish. See license information, page 19. Shellfish means any species of benthic mollusks (except conch) including hard and soft clams, oysters, surf clams, bay scallops and mussels.
- It is illegal to harvest shellfish from condemned waters, even for bait purposes. It is also illegal to harvest shellfish including surf clams from beaches adjacent to water classified as condemned. Shellfish water classification charts are available from license agents or any state shellfish office. See page 19 for shellfish license information. Charts are updated annually.
- 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.
- Harvesting shellfish on public grounds is restricted to the use of hand implements.
- It is illegal to harvest shellfish from leased grounds. These grounds are delineated by stakes or buoys set by the lease holder. Charts of the leases may be examined at Fish and Wildlife's Nacote Creek or Delaware Bay shellfish offices during regular business hours. Invasion onto leased grounds is punishable by penalties up to \$3,000 and loss of all equipment.

#### Recreational Shellfishing

- No holder of any recreational shellfish license may take more than a total of 150 shellfish (in aggregate) per day. See *Shellfish License Information*, page 19.
- It is illegal to dredge shellfish on public grounds. Use of hand implements are the only legal harvest methods.
- The minimum size of hard clams that may be harvested is 1 1/2 inches in length. Clams less than 1 1/2 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.

- Shells taken in the process of harvesting oysters must be culled from the live oysters and returned immediately to the area from where they were taken.

### Commercial Shellfishing

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

### 2015 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 10 for how to measure fish.

Species	Open Season	Minimum Length	Harvest & Possession Limit (per person unless noted)
American Eel <sup>a</sup>	No Closed Season	9"	25
Black Drum	No Closed Season	16"	3
Black Sea Bass	May 27–June 30	12.5"	15
	July 1–July 31	12.5"	2
	Oct. 22–Dec. 31	12.5"	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 (Pogy)	Jan. 1–Feb. 28 July 1–Dec. 31	9"	50
<b>Shad</b>			
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)
<b>Shark<sup>b, c, †</sup></b>			
Aggregate large coastal group <sup>†</sup>	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 <sup>†</sup>		78" fork length	
Non-blacknose small coastal group <sup>†</sup>	No Closed Season	None	
Blacknose group <sup>†</sup>			
Pelagic group <sup>†</sup>	No Closed Season	54" fork length	
Smooth Dogfish	No Closed Season	None	No Limit
Spanish Mackerel	No Closed Season	14"	10
<b>Striped Bass or Hybrid Striped Bass</b>			
Delaware River & tributaries** (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 <sup>d</sup> (0–3 nautical miles from shore)	No Closed Season		
Rivers, bay and estuaries	March 1–Dec. 31		
3–200 nautical miles (federal waters)	Prohibited	–	0
Summer Flounder (Fluke)	May 22–Sept. 26	18"	5
	Jan. 1–Feb. 28	15"	4
	April 1–April 30	15"	4
	July 17–Nov. 15	15"	1
Tautog (Blackfish)	Nov. 16–Dec. 31	15"	6
	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 12.

#### Blue Crab

peeler or shedder	No Closed Season <sup>e</sup>	3"	1 bushel
soft	No Closed Season <sup>e</sup>	3½"	
hard	No Closed Season <sup>e</sup>	4½"	
Lobster (carapace length)	Jan. 1–April 29; June 1–Dec 31	3¾"	6
Hard Clam (license required)	No Closed Season <sup>‡</sup>	1½"	150 clams

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

b Not including dogfish; see description on page 11 under **Sharks**.

c See page 10 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 16 and 19.

\* Excluding tail filaments. (See illustration, page 10.)

\*\* See **Closed Seasons** (page 12) for specifics of springtime non-offset circle hook requirements.

† See page 18 for **Federal Recreational Regulations**.

‡ See water classification chart information on page 19.

## 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)
- Marine Region — (609) 748-2050**  
(coastal and bay areas)
- To report violations anonymously call Operation Game Thief — (855) OGT-TIPS**

Regulations in *red* are new this year.

### 2015 Federal Recreational Fishing Regulations for Minimum Size, Possession Limits and Seasons

See page 10 for how to measure fish. See *Recreational Minimum Size, Possession Limits and Seasons* (page 17) for state waters listings of species not included in these federal waters regulations (from 3–200nm). For federal regulation questions, please contact the National Marine Fisheries Service at (978) 281-9260, or go to [www.nmfs.noaa.gov](http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov).

Species	Season	Minimum Size	Possession Limit (number per angler per day unless otherwise specified)	Notes
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 12 and 17 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 <a href="http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/hms/">www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/hms/</a> 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 <a href="https://hmspermits.noaa.gov">https://hmspermits.noaa.gov</a> or call (888) 872-8862.
Marlin, Blue	Year round	99" lower jaw–fork length	None	During any sanctioned billfish tournaments offering prize money, non-offset circle hooks are required for lures with natural bait or natural/artificial bait combos.
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 <a href="https://hmspermits.noaa.gov">https://hmspermits.noaa.gov</a> 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 <a href="http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/hms/">www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/hms/</a> or call (727) 824-5399.
<b>Tilefish, Blueline</b>	<b>Year round</b>	<b>None</b>	<b>7 per angler per trip</b>	
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.	<b>For anglers:</b> 1 per person, no more than 4 per vessel per trip. <b>For charter vessels:</b> 1 per paying passenger, no more than 6 per vessel per trip. <b>For headboat vessels:</b> 1 per paying passenger, no more than 15 per vessel per trip.	Swordfish, tuna and sharks require an HMS permit when fishing in federal waters (3–200 nm). For permits, refer to <a href="https://hmspermits.noaa.gov">https://hmspermits.noaa.gov</a> or call (888) 872-8862. All non-tournament swordfish landings must be reported to NMFS within 24 hours either online at <a href="https://hmspermits.noaa.gov">https://hmspermits.noaa.gov</a> or by calling (800) 894-5528.
Tuna, Albacore (Longfin)	Year round	None	None	† <b>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 <a href="https://hmspermits.noaa.gov">https://hmspermits.noaa.gov</a> or call (888) 872-8862 or (978) 281-9260 for current information.</b>
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 <b>one trophy fish ≥ 73" curved fork length</b> per vessel per year	Limits can change during the season. Prior to departure, check <a href="https://hmspermits.noaa.gov">https://hmspermits.noaa.gov</a> 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 <a href="https://hmspermits.noaa.gov">https://hmspermits.noaa.gov</a> 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 <a href="http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/hms/">www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/hms/</a> or call (301) 713-2347 for swordfish/sharks or (978) 281-9260 for tunas.
<b>Sharks*</b>				
<b>Aggregate Large Coastal Group</b>	The Aggregate Large Coastal and Hammerhead group seasons are July 1 to Dec. 31. All others are year round.	Aggregate Large Coastal and Pelagic: 54" fork length	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 <a href="https://hmspermits.noaa.gov">https://hmspermits.noaa.gov</a> or call (888) 872-8862. Recreational fishermen (those that do not have a limited access commercial shark permit) can not sell, barter or trade any Atlantic shark or shark pieces.
<b>Hammerhead Group</b>		Hammerheads: 78" fork length		
<b>Non-blacknose Small Coastal Group</b>		Other listed sharks: None		
<b>Blacknose Group Pelagic Group</b>		None		
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/](http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/hms/) for a list of complete federal regulations for highly migratory species. For questions/clarification of the federal highly migratory species regulations, contact the National Marine Fisheries Service at (301) 713-2347 or go to [www.nmfs.noaa.gov](http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov).

### Shellfish License Information

A shellfish license (formerly called clamming) 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.

The resident senior citizen shellfish license is a lifetime license.

For shellfishing regulations, see pages 16–17. 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/water-class.htm> or call the Bureau of Marine Water Monitoring at (609) 748-2000. Shellfish licenses are available for purchase online at [www.NJ.WildlifeLicense.com](http://www.NJ.WildlifeLicense.com).

### Shellfish License Fees

- **Resident recreational shellfish:** \$10 Harvest limit of 150 shellfish (in aggregate) per day. Sale of catch prohibited.
- **Non-resident recreational shellfish:** \$20 Harvest limit of 150 shellfish (in aggregate) per day. Sale of catch prohibited. License valid only during the months of June, July, August and September.
- **Juvenile recreational shellfish:** \$2 For persons under 14 years of age. Subject to same restrictions as resident or nonresident adult recreational license holders.
- **Resident commercial shellfish:** \$50 Unlimited harvest. Shellfish may be sold only to certified dealers.
- **Non-resident Commercial Shellfish:** \$250 Unlimited harvest. Shellfish may be sold to certified dealers only.
- **Resident senior citizen recreational shellfish license:** FREE (\$2 application fee). NJ residents age 62 years or older. Harvest limit, 150 shellfish (in aggregate) per day. Sale of shellfish prohibited.
- **Disabled veterans:** Fish and Wildlife-certified disabled veterans are eligible for free shellfish license at any shellfish license agent location. To become certified, call (609) 984-6213.

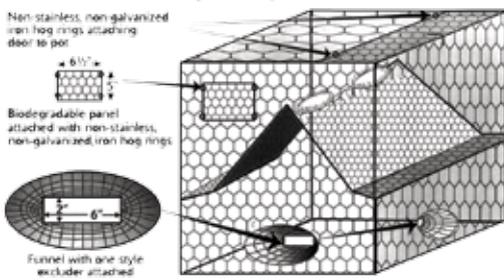
- **Recreational crab pot/trot line license:** \$2 Harvest limit of one bushel per day. Refer to the shellfish regulations on page 16 for all recreational crabbing regulations.
- **Non-commercial crab dredge license:** \$15 Harvest limit of one bushel per day during the crab dredge season. See page 16 for all recreational crab regulations.

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

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

These crab pot modifications will help reduce the unintentional drowning of terrapins and allow for escapement of these and other species in the event that pots are lost or abandoned. Terrapin excluder devices must be no larger than 2-inch high by 6-inch wide and securely fastened inside each funnel entrance. Biodegradable panels must measure at least 6½-inch wide by 5-inch high and be located in the upper section of the crab pot. The panel must be constructed of, or fastened to the pot with wood lath, cotton, hemp, sisal or jute twine not greater than 3/16" diameter, or non-stainless steel, uncoated ferrous metal not greater than 3/32" diameter. The door or a side of the pot may serve as the biodegradable panel ONLY if it is fastened to the pot with any of the material specified above. Crabbers should be aware that ALL non-collapsible, Chesapeake-style crab pots MUST be licensed and marked with the gear identification number of the owner. For crab pot license information and regulations, see the regulations on page 16 and license agents below. 

Chesapeake-Style Crab Pot



### Crab Pot License Information

Crab Pot licenses are available at all agent locations: Recreational Crab Pot/Trot Line Licenses and Non-Commercial Crab Dredge Licenses are available for purchase online at: [www.NJ.WildlifeLicense.com](http://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/agentlst.htm](http://NJFishandWildlife.com/agentlst.htm).

### Shellfish and Non-Commercial Crab Pot License Agents (For over-the-counter sales only.)

#### ATLANTIC COUNTY

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

#### CAMDEN COUNTY

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

#### CAPE MAY COUNTY

Avalon Hodge Podge, 2389 Ocean Dr., Avalon .....(609) 967-3274  
 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  
 Just Sports, 21 Mechanic St., Cape May Court House.....(609) 465-6171  
 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

Beaver Dam Boat Rentals, 514 Old Beaver Dam Rd, Newport .....(856) 447-3633  
 NJ Div. Fish and Wildlife, 1672 E. Buckshutem Rd., Millville.....(856) 785-0730  
 Shire Products, 389 S. Lincoln Ave., Vineland .....(856) 692-3646

#### GLOUCESTER COUNTY

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

#### HUDSON COUNTY

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

#### MIDDLESEX COUNTY

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

#### MONMOUTH COUNTY

Brielle Bait & Tackle, 800 Ashley Ave., Brielle.....(732) 528-5720  
 L & H Woods and Water, 2045 Rt. 35, Wall.....(732) 282-1812  
 The Bait Shop, 57 Main St., Bradley Beach .....(732) 361-8500

#### OCEAN COUNTY

American Sportsman, 857 Mill Creek Rd., Manahawkin .....(609) 597-4104  
 Bob Kislín's, 1214 Rt. 37 East, Toms River .....(732) 929-9300  
 Creekside Outfitters, 403 Rt. 9, Waretown .....(609) 242-1812  
 Downes Marina, 287 Brennan Concourse, Bayville.....(732) 269-0137  
 Fish Bonz Bait & Tackle, 103 Lacey Rd., Forked River.....(609) 971-2928  
 Grizz's Forked River B & T, 232 N. Main St., Forked River.....(609) 693-9298  
 Pell's Fish & Sport Shop, 335 Mantoloking Rd., Bricktown.....(732) 477-2121  
 Pineland Sporting Goods, 959 W. Veterans Hwy., Jackson .....(732) 961-7248  
 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