

Baitfish Regulations

BAITFISH SPECIES

Baitfish species: American Eel, Banded Killifish, Creek Chub, Fallfish, Fathead Minnow, Gizzard Shad, Golden Shiner, Margined Madtom, Mummichog, and Tadpole Madtom. For Herring, Alewife and Blueback—see below.

| Season | Location | Minimum Size | Daily Limit |
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| Open year round Exception: In trout stocked waters baitfish may be taken only with hook and line: from April 6 to June 15, or in waters open to fishing during the pre-season closure, from March 18 to June 15. | Statewide (fresh waters) | No minimum size Exception American eel: 9 inches | 35 per day, species combined |
| Herring, Alewife and Blueback | All freshwater streams, rivers and marine waters | CLOSED | Possession, take or attempt to take herring PROHIBITED |
| | Freshwater lakes in Morris, Passaic, Sussex, and Warren counties and Spruce Run Reservoir (Hunterdon) | 6 inches maximum | 35 Any unused herring must be returned to the water upon conclusion of the angler's fishing trip. Herring may not be transported away from the shoreline of these lakes by any mechanism. They may not be sold. |
| | All other freshwater lakes (regardless of ownership) | CLOSED | Only purchased herring, no greater than 6 inches, may be possessed. Receipt of purchase, dated within 7 days, must be in possession. |

Notes: Any person with a valid fishing license (or those under 16 and residents 70 years or older) may take baitfish in fresh waters. Possession limit is one day's limit, regardless of the intent to use these fish. Baitfish may be taken from the fresh waters of the state in numbers greater than 35 per day, in lakes over 250 acres, under a special permit issued by Fish and Wildlife at its discretion. Contact (908) 236-2118 for application information.

| GEAR | GEAR DESCRIPTION |
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| Seine | Not over 50 feet long in ponds and lakes over 100 acres; in all other waters not over 30 feet in length. Exception: In trout-stocked waters and special regulation trout areas a seine may not be more than 10 feet in length and 4 feet in depth. |
| Minnow Trap | Not larger than 24 inches in length with a funnel mouth no greater than 2 inches in diameter. |
| Umbrella Net | No greater than 3.5 feet square. |
| Dip Net | Not more than 24 inches in diameter; may be used only for alewife or blueback herring. |
| Cast Net | No greater than 8 feet in diameter; may be used only in streams that are not trout-stocked or special regulation trout areas (may not be used in lakes). |
| Hook and Line | Maximum of nine single hooks or three hooks with three burrs per contrivance on all waters except the Delaware River where only three single hooks are permitted. |