

# New Jersey Marine Digest

May 2023



**Fishery  
Management 101**

**page 6**

**Blue Crab:  
A Profile**

**page 9**



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

**NJFishandWildlife.com**





# **GS OUTDOORS**

Garden State Yacht Sales & Marine Store



101 Route 35 S. Point Pleasant Beach, NJ \* 732-892-4222 \*

**Come shop with us for all of your boating, fishing,  
hunting and outdoor needs!**



**Fishing Tackle - Fishing Gear- Boating Supplies - Every  
Day Outdoor Essentials - Boat Sales & Service -  
Hunting Gear - Archery Tuning Shop**



Lee Tackle  
Spro  
Rupp Marine  
Gulp  
Mustad  
Yamaha  
Mercury  
Garmin  
Seahawk  
Interlux  
Yo-Zuri  
Gamakatsu  
SeaSucker  
Toadfish  
Maui Jim  
Costa Del Mar  
Yeti  
Xtratuf  
Grundens

Sitka  
TenPoint  
Hoyt  
Barnett  
PSE  
Banded  
Under Armour  
Muck  
Avery  
Easton  
Nomad  
Millennium  
Tactacam  
Rhino  
Mojo  
Lucky Duck  
XOP



[www.gardenstateyachtsales.com](http://www.gardenstateyachtsales.com)

Check us out on Instagram @gsoutdoorsnj

Facebook— Garden State Yacht Sales





# Contents

- 4 Governor's Surf Fishing Tournament
- 14 Marine Regulations — Finfish
- 15 Marine Species Identification
- 16 State Seasons, Minimum Size and Possession Limits Chart
- 19 Federal Recreational Fishing Regulations
- 20 Marine Regulations — Mollusks and Crustaceans
- 21 Shellfish and Non-Commercial Crab Pot License Information
- 25 Online Map Services
- 26 Skillful Angler Recognition Program
- 28 New Jersey State Record Marine Sport Fish
- 30 Health Advisories
- 30 Gills to Grills Recipe Corner

## Hotlines

### New Jersey DEP Fish & Wildlife

#### Report Marine, Shellfish and Finfish Violations

(609) 748-2050 or call the 24-hour DEP Hotline: 877-WARNDEP

Violators of the Marine Fisheries laws are subject to a \$30–\$100 per fish or \$300 to \$3,000 fine.

### Federal Marine Fisheries Contacts

#### NOAA Fisheries

##### Enforcement Hotline

24-hour non-emergency tipline  
(800) 853-1964

#### NOAA Fisheries Office of Law

##### Enforcement — Northeast Enforcement Division HQ

(978) 281-9249

#### Federal Fisheries Law

##### Enforcement Field Offices

Wall: (732) 280-6490  
Northfield: (609) 415-2941

On the cover: Cover photo © Photographer Tim Brennan. Emma Brennan, holding a blue crab.



Scan this QR code with your mobile device for instant access to New Jersey Fish & Wildlife's website: [NJFishandWildlife.com](http://NJFishandWildlife.com).



Follow us on Facebook & Instagram

[Facebook.com/NewJerseyFishandWildlife/](https://Facebook.com/NewJerseyFishandWildlife/)  
[Instagram.com/NewJerseyFishandWildlife/](https://Instagram.com/NewJerseyFishandWildlife/)

This is not the full law. Consult NJDEP Fish & Wildlife for further details. All persons are reminded that the statutes, code and regulations are the legal authorities. NJDEP Fish & Wildlife receives federal assistance from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and thus prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, disability, age and sex pursuant to Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, the Age Discrimination Act of 1975 and Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972. If you believe that you have been discriminated against in any program, activity or service, contact NJDEP Fish & Wildlife, MC501-03, P.O. Box 420, Trenton, NJ 08626-0420. The telephone number is (609) 292-9410. You may also write to the Office of Civil Rights, Department of the Interior, 1849 C Street, NW Washington, DC 20240.

## Feature Articles

### 6 Fishery Management 101



### 9 Blue Crab: A Profile



### 28 Record Fish Program



# Assistant Commissioner's Message

DAVE GOLDEN




New Jersey's marine waters and coastal estuaries are teeming with life and attract eager anglers from around the world. Each year, as millions of visitors flock to our coast, some are naturally drawn to these waters to pursue outdoor recreation in the form of fishing, crabbing and clamming. Experienced anglers, parents fishing with children, and newcomers to the sport all find their way to the water with the same goal — to have fun and enjoy the outdoors. Two primary things make all this possible — access and stable fisheries.

Decades of land preservation across the New Jersey Atlantic Coast and Delaware Bayshore, now offers the shore-based and back bay angler almost limitless opportunities to fish, clam, and crab. While many anglers venture offshore in their boats, New Jersey's enthusiastic shore-based and small-boat anglers find a world of fun and adventure in the coastal bays and back bay areas. Much of the public is not aware that many of the bay back islands and much of Delaware Bayshore bay front properties are managed by NJDEP Fish & Wildlife. These properties offer free open access and were purchased to protect habitat and provide public hunting and fishing opportunities. Similarly, many rock jetties along the coast are also open to the public and offer excellent fishing access along inlets of the state. Public boat ramps also speckle the coast, providing boat launch opportunities.

If you are in the Point Pleasant area, please visit our recently renovated boat ramp at the Point Pleasant Fishing Access Wildlife Management Area. It's now bigger and better, but still free to the public. If you're still looking for access to fishing, boat launching, or even a marina and a seasonal boat slip, use NJDEP Fish & Wildlife's new Saltwater Fishing Opportunities app as your guide to find what you need along the coast: [NJFishandWildlife.com/primessaltwaterfishing](http://NJFishandWildlife.com/primessaltwaterfishing). This app also provides information on offshore and nearshore fishing locations and details on NJ's 17 artificial reefs.

Properly managing the state's fish and wildlife populations is at the foundation of what we do at NJDEP Fish & Wildlife. This work is complex, especially in a marine setting, and depends on the cooperation of Federal and State agencies, regional and state councils/commissions, and input from the public. The staff within our Marine Resources Administration contribute to this process by serving on numerous boards, committees, and commissions and by bringing valuable data to these discussions. Fishery management plans help guide this work and help influence the regulations of many of our most targeted species. Details of this complex management process, including key laws leading to significant recovery in many fish populations, are described in the "Fisheries Management 101" article on page 6.

Enforcement is another critical component of fisheries management. NJDEP Fish & Wildlife Conservation Police Officers patrol the state and federal waters along the coast, playing a key role in resource protection through the enforcement of marine regulations. Recognizing the importance of this work comes from an understanding that enforcing our regulations today results in a more sustainable fishery for tomorrow.

When done right, fisheries management and public access come together as a wonderful combination of wildlife and wildlife-related recreation. New Jersey does it right! Opportunities await. Now get outside and go catch something! 

Dave Golden is the Assistant Commissioner of New Jersey DEP Fish & Wildlife.



Williamstown, MA | Birmingham, AL

## About This Guide

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

The revenue generated through ad sales significantly lowers production costs and generates savings. These savings translate into additional funds for other important agency programs.

If you have any feedback or are interested in advertising, please contact us at 413.884.1001 or at [www.JFGriffin.com](http://www.JFGriffin.com)

### Graphic Design:

Jon Gulley, Dane Fay, Evelyn Haddad, Chris Sobolowski



This guide is also available online at  
**eRegulations.com**





## THE SIMPLE ACT OF FISHING, PRESERVES FISHING.

Every time you purchase a fishing license or register your boat, a portion of the proceeds go toward preserving our nation's coastlines, lakes, rivers and streams. Protecting our memories on the water for generations to come.

Learn more at [TakeMeFishing.org/Conservation](https://TakeMeFishing.org/Conservation)



**TAKEMEFISHING.org**





## Mark Your Calendar for the Governor's Surf Fishing Tournament!

**May 21, 2023**

### Island Beach State Park, Seaside Park, NJ

Enjoy a great day of surf fishing with family and friends at the Governor's Surf Fishing Tournament.

The individual who catches the overall largest fish wins the "Governor's Award" and will have their name engraved on the Governor's Cup, which is permanently displayed at Island Beach State Park. Prizes are awarded to winners in a variety of age group and fish species categories.

All funds raised by the tournament go toward improving beach access, surf fishing instruction programs and equipment, plus marine education and restoration projects.

The tournament is sponsored by NJDEP's Fish & Wildlife and Division of Parks, Forestry and Historic Places, New Jersey State Federation of Sportsmen's Clubs, Jersey Coast Anglers Association and New Jersey Beach Buggy Association.

**For more information visit:** [dep.nj.gov/njfw/fishing/marine/governors-surf-fishing-tournament/](http://dep.nj.gov/njfw/fishing/marine/governors-surf-fishing-tournament/) or email [Karen.Byrne@dep.nj.gov](mailto:Karen.Byrne@dep.nj.gov).



**Congratulations to Pam McGee, the 2022 Governor's Cup Winner with a 37 3/8" Striped Bass!**

Jonathan Carlucci/NJDEP Fish & Wildlife

## Operation Game Thief

### Report Abuse of our Outdoor Heritage!

**1-855-OGT-TIPS**

**24 Hours a Day, Seven Days a Week**

The person who poaches, pollutes habitat and abuses public land tarnishes the image of sportsmen and robs us of our fish and wildlife as well as tax and license dollars. You can make a difference.

### Call OGT to report:

- Negligent use of firearms
- Over the limits for game and fish
- Commercial exploitation of fish and wildlife
- Pollution of habitat, dumping on state land
- Destruction of signs and state property
- Illegal killing, taking or possession of any wildlife



**It's Free. It's Confidential.**

**You May Be Eligible for a Reward.**

Funded by the New Jersey State Federation of Sportsmen's Clubs.

Designed to encourage sportsmen to report poaching and wildlife crimes.

# New Jersey Marine Digest

## State of New Jersey

Philip D. Murphy, Governor

Sheila Y. Oliver, Lieutenant Governor

## Department of Environmental Protection

Shawn LaTourette, Commissioner

## New Jersey DEP Fish & Wildlife

Dave Golden, Assistant Commissioner

Lisa Barno, Administrator, Species and Habitat Conservation

Joe Cimino, Administrator, Marine Resources Administration

Ginger Kopkash, Administrator, Communications and Business Administration

Russ Babb, Chief, Marine Habitat and Shellfisheries

Jeff Brust, Chief, Marine Fisheries

Shawn Crouse, Chief, Freshwater Fisheries

Jason Hearon, Chief, Land Management

Al Ivany, Chief, Information and Education

Frank Panico, Chief, Conservation Police

Carole Stanko, Chief, Wildlife Management

Kathy Clark, Acting Chief, Endangered and Nongame Species

Kim Springer, Chief, Business Administration

Linda DiPiano & Alanna Newmark, Co-Editors

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

The *Digest* is available at coastal license agents, bait and tackle shops and NJ Fish & Wildlife offices. Information may be reprinted with permission. Subscriptions are not available.

This *Digest* is designed and produced by J.F. Griffin Publishing, LLC; [www.jfgriffin.com](http://www.jfgriffin.com).

Partial funding for the *Digest* is provided by the Federal Aid in Sport Fish Restoration Program.

**Cover photo:** Six-year-old Emma Brennan, showing her passion for crabbing on Beaver Dam Creek in Brick, NJ. Photographer Tim Brennan, Brick School District HOFNOD Team Leader.

## New Jersey Fish and Wildlife Councils

### Marine Fisheries Council

Richard N. Herb, Acting Chair

Dr. Eleanor Ann Bochenek

Dr. Patrick Donnelly

Warren (Barney) Hollinger

Walter L. Johnson III

Jeff Kaelin

Joe Rizzo

Robert R. Rush, Jr.

Kevin Wark

### Atlantic Coast Shellfish Council

Walter L. Johnson, III, Chair

George Mathis, Jr., Vice Chair

Paul Felder

### Delaware Bay Shellfish Council

Warren (Barney) Hollinger, Chair

Stephen J. Fleetwood, Vice Chair

Richard Malinowski

Scott Sheppard

To contact any member of the Marine Fisheries Council, please email [MarineFisheriesCouncil@dep.nj.gov](mailto:MarineFisheriesCouncil@dep.nj.gov)

## Where to Write Us

New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, Fish & Wildlife

MC 501-03 • P.O. Box 420 • Trenton, NJ 08625-0420 • [NJFishandWildlife.com](http://NJFishandWildlife.com)

## New Jersey DEP Fish & Wildlife 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.



## Striped Bass Bonus Program

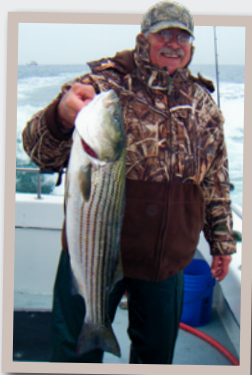
The Striped Bass Bonus Program will continue in 2023, where anglers possessing a Bonus permit may keep a striper at 24 inches to less than 28 inches. The open season for this program is May 15 through December 31. Check website for updates at [dep.nj.gov/njfw/fishing/marine/striped-bass-bonus-program/](http://dep.nj.gov/njfw/fishing/marine/striped-bass-bonus-program/)

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 [dep.nj.gov/njfw/fishing/marine/striped-bass-bonus-program/](http://dep.nj.gov/njfw/fishing/marine/striped-bass-bonus-program/) to apply and for regulation or program updates. The permit is non-transferable and valid for the current calendar year. Only one fish can be harvested per permit. Fishing logs must be kept and harvest reporting is mandatory.

**Striped Bass Bonus Permit Harvest Reporting:** The Striped Bass Bonus Permit must be securely attached to the 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.**

**Fishing Logs:** A log of striped bass fishing activity must be kept and submitted by January 15, 2024 in order to remain eligible for 2024.



Striper caught from the Susan Hudson off Barnegat Light.

## Striped Bass Bonus Program Harvest 1996–2022

| Harvest Year | # Fish Harvested | Weight Harvested (lbs) | Mean Length (inches) | Mean Weight (lbs) | % of Quota |
|--------------|------------------|------------------------|----------------------|-------------------|------------|
| 1996         | 233              | 4,050                  | 35.7                 | 17.4              | 1.8        |
| 1997         | 344              | 7,678                  | 36.8                 | 22.3              | 3.4        |
| 1998         | 473              | 11,149                 | 37.2                 | 23.6              | 5.0        |
| 1999         | 574              | 13,174                 | 36.2                 | 23.1              | 5.9        |
| 2000         | 2,488            | 42,794                 | 33.7                 | 17.2              | 19.0       |
| 2001         | 4,583            | 79,774                 | 33.5                 | 17.4              | 35.5       |
| 2002         | 4,855            | 82,050                 | 33.0                 | 16.9              | 36.5       |
| 2003         | 6,101            | 121,410                | 35.0                 | 20.0              | 37.7       |
| 2004         | 4,602            | 81,870                 | 32.8                 | 17.8              | 25.4       |
| 2005         | 2,047            | 29,866                 | 31.7                 | 14.6              | 9.3        |
| 2006         | 1,127            | 23,656                 | 34.9                 | 21.0              | 7.4        |
| 2007*        | 708              | 13,615                 | 34.0                 | 19.2              | 4.2        |
| 2008         | 367              | 7,345                  | 34.3                 | 20.0              | 2.3        |
| 2009         | 526              | 10,330                 | 34.2                 | 19.3              | 3.2        |
| 2010         | 728              | 12,833                 | 34.5                 | 17.6              | 4.0        |
| 2011         | 916              | 16,332                 | 34.0                 | 17.8              | 5.1        |
| 2012*        | 325              | 6,285                  | 34.3                 | 19.3              | 2.0        |
| 2013         | 404              | 6,096                  | 33.4                 | 15.1              | 1.9        |
| 2014         | 178              | 3,653                  | 35.0                 | 20.5              | 1.1        |
| 2015*        | 3,301            | 21,479                 | 25.8                 | 6.5               | 9.9        |
| 2016         | 3,686            | 24,963                 | 25.9                 | 6.8               | 11.6       |
| 2017         | 2,161            | 14,602                 | 25.9                 | 6.8               | 6.8        |
| 2018         | 1,101            | 6,786                  | 25.3                 | 6.2               | 3.1        |
| 2019         | 5,558            | 32,000                 | 26.0                 | 5.8               | 14.9       |
| 2020*        | 5,746            | 36,865                 | 25.5                 | 6.4               | 17.1       |
| 2021         | 6,457            | 41,867                 | 25.7                 | 6.5               | 19.4       |
| 2022         | 5,742            | 36,807                 | 25.8                 | 6.4               | 17.0       |

\* Significant administrative or regulatory changes to the SBBP took place.

# Using Circle Hooks

## When Fishing with Bait for Striped Bass

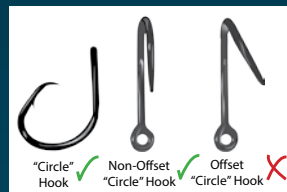
Striped bass caught on the Susan Hudson of Barnegat Light, NJ.

**R**egulations require using inline (non-offset) circle hooks when fishing for striped bass with bait. Bait is defined as any marine or aquatic organism live or dead, whole or parts thereof. This does not apply to artificial lures with bait attached. Striped bass caught using an unapproved method of take must be returned to the water immediately, without unnecessary injury. (See striped bass regulations, page 17.)

Using non-offset circle hooks significantly increases survival of released fish. In 2021, more striped bass were estimated to have died from catch and release than were harvested — 2.6 million fish and 1.82 million fish, respectively.

## What is a Circle Hook?

A circle hook is defined as a non-offset hook where the point curves back perpendicularly towards the shank. The term *non-offset* means the point and barb are in the same plane as the shank. When the hook is laying on a flat surface, the entire hook and barb should lay flat.



Non-offset (inline) circle hooks must be used when fishing for striped bass with bait.

## How Do Circle Hooks Increase Survival of Released Striped Bass?

Using circle hooks reduce occurrences of gut-hooking which can cause injuries to internal organs of the fish. If a striped bass swallows the bait, the circle hook is designed to slide out from its throat and catch on the corner of its jaw. When a fish is hooked in the corner of its jaw, this also leads to shorter de-hooking times and less overall stress on the fish.

## Tips for Using Circle Hooks

When a fish takes your bait, do not sweep the rod upward to set the hook. The circle hook sets itself when the fish tries to swim away. Simply let the line come tight, then fight the fish.

## Added Tips for the Survival of Released Fish

### Tackle Recommendations

- Use barbless hooks or bend barbs down.
- Use non-stainless steel hooks. If gut-hooked, leave the hook in the fish and cut the line as close to the hook as possible. The hook will rust away.
- Replace treble hooks on artificial lures with single hooks.
- Use appropriate tackle suited to the size of the fish; don't fight the fish to exhaustion.

- If you must take the fish out of the water, use a rubber or soft-mesh landing net.
- Avoid handling fish with dry hands.
- Avoid dragging fish across dry sand or rocks.
- Hold fish horizontal with support.
- Avoid touching the fish's gills or eyes.
- Return the fish to the water as soon as possible.
- When reviving fish, hold fish headfirst into the current so water flows through the mouth and over the gills.

### Fish Handling Best Practices

- Keep the fish in the water when de-hooking.



# Fishery Management 101

**Until the 1970s**, there were no guiding federal fishery management plans, and fishing outside of state waters was often described as a free-for-all. Foreign fishing fleets regularly and aggressively exploited US fish stocks threatening to deplete them.



Marine Resources' Tim Daniels, Pat Barker and Ricky DiVaccaro show off striped bass caught during the Delaware Bay Tagging Survey.



## Introduction to Marine Fisheries Management: Federal/Coastwide Level

To stop overfishing, the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (MSA) was signed in 1976, where the US established an exclusive economic zone (US EEZ). The MSA limited foreign access to US fish stocks within the US EEZ which extended 200 nautical miles off the coast. The goal of the MSA was the prevention of overfishing and to enable the recovery of overfished stocks. The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) implements these goals through conservation and management of fishery resources. Eight regional fishery management councils were also established to monitor and implement fishery management plans (FMPs) designed to restore depleted fish stocks. These councils would manage the fisheries within their respective region's federal waters, which extended from the 3 nautical mile boundary of state waters to the 200 nautical mile border of the US EEZ. Each of the FMPs were required to comply with 10 national standards:

1. Prevention of overfishing while still producing sustainable optimum yields
2. Basis on the best available scientific information
3. Management of stocks as distinctive units, when practicable
4. No discrimination between residents of different states or individual anglers
5. Efficient use of fishery resources
6. Consideration of variations in fisheries, resources and catches
7. Economic efficiency to minimize cost and duplication
8. Use of economic and social data to sustain participation in the fishing industry & minimize adverse effects on coastal communities

9. Minimization of bycatch
10. Measures that promote safety of human life at sea

Though the MSA eliminated foreign participation in the US EEZ, limiting access to only American fishing fleets still resulted in the overfishing of many fish stocks, so an amendment, the Sustainable Fisheries Act, was passed in 1996. It established 3 key requirements designed to stop overfishing and bring recovery to vulnerable stocks by 1) defining "overfishing" and "overfished" with species-specific criteria for their determination in stock status; 2) identifying essential fish habitat; and 3) assessing the amount of bycatch within the fishery. Additional safeguards against overfishing were established in 2006 with the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Reauthorization Act (MSRA) with the implementation of Annual Catch Limits (ACL) for stocks under each regional council which could not exceed scientific recommendations or allow overfishing; and accountability measures established by each regional council to enforce the ACLs such as fishery closures, electronic monitoring, and observer coverage.

Federally managed species commonly found off New Jersey's coast mainly fall under the auspices of two Regional Councils: the Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council (MAFMC) and the New England Fishery Management Council (NEFMC) (see graphic on right). Some of the species managed by these Councils also have state waters fishery components which are overseen by the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC).



Marine Fisheries' Brielle Colledge enters data while working on the Ocean Trawl Survey.

### MAFMC regulates:

Atlantic Mackerel  
Black Sea Bass  
Bluefish  
Butterfish  
Chub Mackerel  
Golden and Blueline Tilefish  
Illex Squid  
Longfin Squid  
Ocean Quahog  
Scup  
Summer Flounder  
Surf Clam

### MAFMC & NEFMC jointly regulates:

Monkfish  
Spiny Dogfish

### NEFMC regulates:

Atlantic Cod  
Haddock  
Pollock  
Yellowtail Flounder  
Windowpane Flounder  
Winter Flounder  
Ocean Pout  
Sea Scallop  
Atlantic Herring  
Winter Skate  
Little Skate  
Clearnose Skate  
Silver Hake  
Red Hake

## Marine Fisheries Management: State and Local Level

While the federal fisheries management system handles species and fisheries that operate in federal waters (greater than 3 miles from shore–200 miles offshore), the state systems have jurisdiction within 3 miles from shore. New Jersey manages species that pass through our state waters with cooperation from other states — the ASMFC facilitates this cooperation among the states. A typical management scenario begins with staff reporting results after conducting coastwide stock assessments and analyzing data which is presented to a Management Board (Board). The Board determines, based on the peer reviewed stock assessments, whether any management action is necessary, and if so, will develop those proposed actions (for example, an "Amendment" or an "Addendum" to an FMP) that will then get reviewed through public hearings. After public hearings have taken place, the Board reviews all input on the various management options and votes to select the most appropriate option for all involved parties.

Once a management option is selected, it must be implemented by the state. This occurs through the

New Jersey Marine Fisheries Council (NJMFC) which assists in final decision making and implementation. If NJ does not implement the action, that specific fishery could be closed by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). For example, we might be instructed by ASMFC to ensure our harvest is reduced or increased by 10% in the coming year. NJ staff will develop specific alternative size, season, and possession limit options that are presented to NJMFC advisors; that input is then brought to the full NJMFC, and the NJMFC makes a final decision. As long as that decision is consistent with ASMFC mandates, NJDEP Fish & Wildlife will implement the Council's decision as a regulation.

Management authority for species that generally do not wander across state boundaries (non-migratory species such as blue crabs and hard clams) rests with NJ only. We work with our Marine and Shellfisheries Councils to establish priorities and develop management plans (see page 4 for a list of Council members).



Marine Fisheries' Samantha MacQuisten with an American Lobster caught on the Artificial Reef Survey.



## State-Level Fishery Management Plans in New Jersey

NJDEP Fish & Wildlife's Bureau of Marine Fisheries (Bureau) has been involved in joint management, either on a coastwide or regional basis, of many important commercial and recreational fish species. Most of these species have wide ranging seasonal and spawning migrations crossing multiple state borders, being encountered in different fisheries at different times of the year. While this joint management system works for long ranging species, the Bureau decided to take a closer look at species that don't fall under the umbrella of any regional and/or coastwide management agencies. Our goal is to develop Fisheries Management Plans (FMPs) for local species to monitor the health of their populations and/or implement management strategies that allow for the sustainable harvest of these local favorites.

How does the Bureau plan on developing these FMPs? Staff use other interstate management agencies stock assessment and FMP development processes as a model for our own in-house procedures. The first step is choosing a species that the Bureau feels is popular and harvested in great enough quantities that population monitoring would benefit both the fish and the angler. Species will be chosen based on data from the Bureau's commercial and recreational fishery monitoring



Marine Fisheries Biologists Brendan Harrison and Greg Hinks collect data from the Yellow Eel Pot Survey.

programs, Bureau surveys, and input from the public received at New Jersey Marine Fisheries Council (NJMFC) meetings.

Once a species is selected for evaluation, staff biologists and stock assessment scientists hold a "data workshop" where the quantity and quality of data available from surveys that routinely encounter the selected species is evaluated. The data analyzed falls into two groups: fishery-dependent and fishery-independent. Fishery-dependent data is collected from recreational and commercial fisheries and includes commercial harvest reports, biological samples collected from the commercial fishery, recreational data from the Marine Recreational Information Program (MRIP), and volunteer angler surveys. Fishery-independent data comes from sources not directly associated with recreational or commercial fisheries and includes information collected from the multitude of in-house surveys including gill net, trawl, pot, fyke, and seine net surveys conducted throughout the state.

Bureau staff then analyze the data and look for trends in population size, distribution, biological characteristics, and commercial and recreational harvest characteristics. The analysis is then summarized and presented to the NJMFC for further guidance in the development of statewide management strategies that are protective of both the resources and the fisheries.

The first species chosen for the Bureau's statewide FMP program was blue crab. The lessons learned from developing a statewide FMP for this commercially, recreationally, and ecologically important species will serve as a template for future statewide FMPs. If there is a species you feel should be a candidate for a future FMP, please do not hesitate to contact the Bureau or attend a NJMFC meeting to voice your opinion!



Marine Resources' Matt Heyl and Lloyd Lomelino collect and record data on the River Herring Survey.

A catch is sorted and fish are counted during the Delaware River Seine Survey.





## Development of New Jersey's Blue Crab Management Plan

The Bureau of Marine Fisheries is currently developing a statewide FMP for blue crab. Data was gathered and analyzed from historical state collections, as well as reliable commercial, recreational, and fishery-independent data sources. Fishery-independent data came from long term ichthyoplankton and otter trawl surveys conducted by Rutgers University, a seine survey from the Barnegat Bay Partnership, in addition to New Jersey's long term Ocean Trawl Survey, Delaware Bay Trawl Survey, Delaware River Seine Survey and the River Herring Seine Survey. Commercial data was gathered from New Jersey's mandatory blue crab harvest reporting survey dating back to 1977. Recreational data was gathered from historical volunteer surveys conducted by New Jersey staff and Marine Academy of Technology and Environmental Science (MATES) students, in addition to New Jersey's Voluntary Recreational Crab Pot Report. Other information was also gathered, including economic impacts to stakeholders, current regulations, and life history. Once everything was consolidated, it was reviewed as a whole for a better understanding of the blue crab fishery in New Jersey.

Through this process, it was discovered that certain areas lacked specific information, offering opportunities for future surveys and studies. New Jersey has already developed and produced another volunteer survey to gather additional data about female blue crabs bearing eggs, called the New Jersey Sponge Crab Sighting Survey. This input will help staff better understand the spawning behavior of blue crabs and over time, monitor trends and track changes.

Development of the New Jersey Blue Crab Fishery Management Plan provided insight into species interactions that could be addressed in the process. For example, current regulations mandating terrapin excluders on all traps (within waters less than 150' wide or man-made lagoons) reduce the mortality of terrapins in the blue crab fishery. The fishery management process allows New Jersey to discover how our blue crab fisheries impacts other species and allows staff to develop ways to reduce those impacts.

### Blue Crab: A Profile

**Scientific Name:** *Callinectes sapidus* — Meaning: "beautiful savory swimmer"

**Color:** olive-green and vivid blue (mature females have red tips on their claws)

**Size:** Up to 9 inches in length (point to point of the shell)

**Age:** 3 to 4 years

**Diet:** clams, oysters, mussels, smaller crustaceans, dead fish, and animal debris

Blue crabs mature by molting, where a crab's hard shell is shed, and a new soft shell is grown. They are known by an assortment of names which often classifies a stage in their life cycle and/or gender when caught.

**Hard-shell crab** = non-molting with a shell that is hard to the touch

**Peelers** = hard-shell crabs showing signs of molting with the new soft shell starting to show beneath the hard outer shell

**Busters** = crabs that have started to molt, and a transition can be seen where the soft and hard shell meet up

**Soft shell crabs** = recently molted and have a shell that is soft to the touch

**Jimmies** = adult males

**Sooks** = adult females

**She-crabs or Sallies** = immature females

**Sponge crabs** = females carrying eggs



Female blue crab bearing eggs, also called a sponge crab



Blue Crab

## FISHING-CRABBING-BOAT RIDES



**MISS AVALON**  
OCEAN FISHING  
4 - 6 - 8 HOUR TRIPS  
PRIVATE FISHING CHARTERS  
SUNSET CRUISES

**AVALON LADY**  
FISHING  
CRABBING  
SUMMER CAMPS

**FISHING APRIL - DECEMBER**  
**FULL SCHEDULE MISSAVALON.COM**

**AVALON FISHING CENTER**  
14 St. & Ocean Dr., Avalon, NJ  
609 967 7455  
email [info@missavalon.com](mailto:info@missavalon.com)  
FACEBOOK: [missavalonfishing](https://www.facebook.com/missavalonfishing)



**FISHNET CHARTERS**  
CAPE COD - BUZZARDS BAY

Targeting all species of gamefish • Sea Bass - Strippers - Tautog



508-951-9991 • [capt.meltrue@gmail.com](mailto:capt.meltrue@gmail.com)  
[www.captainmeltrue.com](http://www.captainmeltrue.com)



## Have input? Be heard!

With almost everything available in a digital format in today's society, information is at your fingertips. However, fisheries management still requires a hands-on, boots on the ground approach; and being able to share information in a timely fashion has invaluable benefits. It is difficult for fisheries staff to be in enough places to assess what is happening across the state and this is where you can make the most impact! While there are many ways to get involved, we encourage anglers to participate in a variety of fishery surveys to help provide important information that can be used to manage our fisheries. Let your voice be heard. Submit comments/concerns when topics are open to public comment or attend a New Jersey Marine Fisheries Council (NJMFC) meeting to be involved in the conversation.

NJDEP Fish & Wildlife conducts several surveys, both fishery-dependent and -independent of our commercial and recreational fisheries. The fishery-dependent fishery surveys are where you can get involved. A few of these surveys include the following:


- The Access Point Angler Intercept Survey (AP AIS) collects catch-per-trip data from shore, private boat, and for-hire anglers. Data are collected via survey interviews in the field and are used to estimate total recreational catch.
- The For-Hire Telephone Survey (FHTS) is conducted with a sample of state and federally

permitted for-hire vessel representatives. Each phone interview requires state samplers to ask vessel operators to report vessel-fishing activity for one-week reference periods and to document details from each trip. Collected data are used to estimate for-hire fishing effort, which is the number of angler trips taken on charter vessels and headboats.

- The NJ Saltwater Recreational Registry Program (NJSRRP) is an active contact book of the state's recreational saltwater anglers, as well as for-hire vessels. Registrations must be renewed annually. While the registry itself is mandatory, the addresses are used to help compile a recipient list for the voluntary For-Hire Effort Survey (FES). The FES is sent to a sample of coastal residential households. Resulting data are used to estimate private angler effort from both shore and private boats.
- The Volunteer Angler Survey (VAS) is a voluntary survey focused on collecting information on catch and effort from recreational fishing trips in marine and estuarine waters of NJ and surrounding areas, supplementing MRIP survey data. Information collected provides data which may support alternative management strategies that increase fishing opportunities for the public.

- The Striped Bass Bonus Program's (SBBP) goal is to allow anglers to participate in the management process while enjoying their favorite recreational pastime. It provides valuable data for assessing stock status and fishing trends, making it an integral part of New Jersey's striped bass management. Participating in the program is voluntary for both individual recreational anglers and for-hire vessels; however, there are mandatory reporting components.

The NJMFC is one of several councils and committees involved in managing our fish and wildlife resources. They advise the New Jersey Commissioner of the Department of Environmental Protection on various issues and management programs related to marine fishery resources. NJMFC Advisory Committees were assembled to discuss issues for a particular species, group of species, gear type, or other fishery management topic. Each committee advises the NJMFC on matters pertaining to its area of expertise. There are many ways to be involved in the decision-making process: be present at meetings (in person or virtually), and make sure to comment before decisions are finalized, or by being an advisor to the NJMFC! You can always email the NJMFC at [MarineFisheriesCouncil@dep.nj.gov](mailto:MarineFisheriesCouncil@dep.nj.gov).

**Fishery Management 101 Contributors:** Peter Clarke (Principal Biologist), Linda Barry (Research Scientist), Michael Celestino (Research Scientist), Brian Neilan (Principal Biologist), Jamie Darrow (Senior Biologist), Shana Fehring (Senior Wildlife Worker) and Maryellen Gordon (Principal Biologist). 

Marine Fisheries'  
Jonathan Klotz conducts  
an AP AIS interview.





## Marine Fisheries Management 101 Common Terms & Acronyms

Managing marine fish that move freely in and out of political boundaries is no small task, which is why there are so many cooperative organizations that are involved in the management of this shared resource. Use the table below as a summary of the many different organizations that are involved with marine fisheries management. Below and on the next page are tables of common terms that are often used and abbreviated when discussing marine fisheries management.

### Organizations

| Acronym | What Does It Stand For?                         | Relationship to Fisheries Management  |
|---------|---|---|
| ACCSP   | Atlantic Coastal Cooperative Statistics Program | Principal source of fisheries-dependent information on the Atlantic coast. Produces dependable and timely statistics for fisheries that are collected, processed and disseminated according to common standards agreed upon by all partners, including the ASMFC.   |
| ASMFC   | Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission     | Consists of the 15 Atlantic coastal states plus 2 districts and 2 federal agencies. Coordinates conservation and management in state waters of 27 nearshore fish species from 0–3 nautical miles offshore. Each state is represented by three Commissioners. Receives species specific input for fisheries management from public comment, advisory panels, a technical committee, and a species management board.  |
| MAFMC   | Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council         | One of 8 regional fishery management councils established by the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act in 1976 to manage fisheries within US federal waters. Authority extends from three to 200 miles off the coasts of New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, and North Carolina. Receives species specific information from public comment, advisory panel, monitoring committee, and species committee. All decisions approved by the MAMFC must be approved by NMFS. |
| NJMFC   | New Jersey Marine Fisheries Council             | NJ specific management body consisting of 11 members including recreational, commercial, public, and shellfish representatives which establish rules and regulations for NJ fisheries. Recommends management actions and strategies requiring a vote for approval. Guidelines for management are provided through the ASMFC, MAFMC, and NMFS. NJMFC decisions are implemented by NJDEP as new regulations.  |
| NMFS    | National Marine Fisheries Service               | Federal agency within the US Department of Commerce's NOAA. Responsible for the stewardship of US national marine resources in the Federal EEZ. Uses the Magnuson-Stevens Act as its guide while assessing and predicting the status of fish stocks, setting catch limits, ensuring compliance with fisheries regulations, and reducing bycatch.  |
| NOAA    | National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration | Scientific and regulatory agency within the US Department of Commerce. Serves many functions including managing fishing and protection of marine mammals and endangered species in the US EEZ.  |
| USFWS   | United States Fish and Wildlife Service         | Federal agency whose primary responsibility is to manage fish and wildlife resources in the public trust for current and future generations. Partners with NJ and other agencies to protect marine/estuarine species. Provides funding to State agencies for use in the management of marine species related to recreational fisheries.   |

With you  
wherever  
you go.

The most up-to-date  
fishing regulations online!



eRegulations.com



**JERSEY  
SHORE  
BOAT SALE  
& EXPO**

Returns each September to  
ShoreTown Ballpark, Lakewood

**New Jersey  
BOAT SALE  
& EXPO**

Returns each February to  
NJ Convention & Expo Center, Edison

Support recreational boating in  
our state by shopping for boats  
and products at these shows  
produced by the **Marine Trades  
Association of NJ (MTA/NJ)**.

Visit **JerseyBoatExpo.com** for  
upcoming dates and the latest  
details!





## Fishery Management Terms

| Acronym | What Does It Stand For?                           | How Is It Involved in Fisheries Management?  |
|---------|---|--|
| CPUE    | Catch Per Unit Effort                             | An index which measures the relative abundance of a species. Fluctuations signify changes to the species' true abundance.  |
| EEZ     | Exclusive Economic Zone                           | The Federal (US) EEZ extends from 3–200 nautical miles offshore.   |
| eTRIPS  | Electronic Trip Reporting                         | Computer system that allows fisheries harvesters to report their catch in a timely and accurate format. Data are used directly for fisheries management.   |
| FMP     | Fishery Management Plan                           | A plan developed by a state or regional fishery management council to manage a fishery resource.   |
| GIS     | Geographical Information System                   | Computer system that analyzes and displays geographically referenced information.  |
| ISFMP   | Interstate Fisheries Management Program           | ASMFC and MAFMC fisheries decision-making occurs through Interstate Management Programs, where species management boards determine strategies that develop into plans. Multiple states implement the ISFMPs through fishing regulations. |
| MRIP    | Marine Recreational Fisheries Information Program | The state-regional-federal partnership that develops and implements a national network of recreational fishing surveys to estimate total recreational catch.   |



**Saltwater Fishing Regulations:**  
[dep.nj.gov/njfw/fishing/marine/seasons-and-regulations/](http://dep.nj.gov/njfw/fishing/marine/seasons-and-regulations/)



**Access Point Angler Intercept Survey (APAIS):**  
[fisheries.noaa.gov/recreational-fishing-data/recreational-fishing-surveys#access-point-angler-intercept-survey](http://fisheries.noaa.gov/recreational-fishing-data/recreational-fishing-surveys#access-point-angler-intercept-survey)



**NOAA Fisheries' Marine Recreational Information Program Surveys:**  
[fisheries.noaa.gov/recreational-fishing-data/recreational-fishing-surveys#for-hire-survey](http://fisheries.noaa.gov/recreational-fishing-data/recreational-fishing-surveys#for-hire-survey)



**NJ Sponge Crab Information:**  
[dep.nj.gov/njfw/fishing/marine/assist-marine-fisheries-biologist-by-reporting-your-sponge-blue-crab-sightings/](http://dep.nj.gov/njfw/fishing/marine/assist-marine-fisheries-biologist-by-reporting-your-sponge-blue-crab-sightings/)



**NJ Saltwater Recreational Registry Program:**  
[saltwaterregistry.nj.gov](http://saltwaterregistry.nj.gov)



**NJ Recreational Saltwater Volunteer Angler Survey:**  
[dep.nj.gov/njfw/fishing/marine/volunteer-angler-survey/](http://dep.nj.gov/njfw/fishing/marine/volunteer-angler-survey/)



**Striped Bass Bonus Program:**  
[dep.nj.gov/njfw/fishing/marine/striped-bass-bonus-program/](http://dep.nj.gov/njfw/fishing/marine/striped-bass-bonus-program/)



**Marine Fisheries Council:**  
[dep.nj.gov/njfw/fishing/marine/marine-fisheries-council/](http://dep.nj.gov/njfw/fishing/marine/marine-fisheries-council/)



**Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission:**  
[asmfc.org/](http://asmfc.org/)



**ASMFC Public Input:**  
[asmfc.org/about-us/public-input](http://asmfc.org/about-us/public-input)



**Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council:**  
[mafmc.org/](http://mafmc.org/)



**New England Fishery Management Council:**  
[nefmc.org/](http://nefmc.org/)



**Magnuson-Stevens Act:**  
[fisheries.noaa.gov/topic/laws-policies](http://fisheries.noaa.gov/topic/laws-policies)



**Flipping the Switch on Ecosystem Management:**  
[nj.gov/dep/fgw/artmarine\\_ebfm20.htm](http://nj.gov/dep/fgw/artmarine_ebfm20.htm)



# HOW WILDLIFE IS THRIVING BECAUSE OF GUNS & HUNTING

## HOW IT WORKS

- 1 Hunters and target shooters purchase guns and ammunition.
- 2 Manufacturers pay federal excise taxes on guns and ammunition.
- 3 Revenue from these excise taxes is distributed to state wildlife agencies.
- 4 State wildlife agencies use these funds to purchase land for wildlife habitat and to manage wildlife populations.
- 5 In turn, millions of acres of important habitat have been set aside to help ensure future wildlife abundance.

This System Has Provided

**MORE THAN \$12.5 Billion**

For Conservation So Far

## Where the Money Goes

Buy, develop, maintain and operate wildlife management areas

Research projects focused on wildlife conservation

Hunter safety and education programs

Construction and maintenance of public target shooting ranges

## Quick History

- Early 1900s  
As many wildlife species are dwindling in numbers or disappearing, firearms industry steps forward and asks Congress to redirect excise tax on sale of guns and ammo to help fund wildlife conservation.
- 1937  
Congress passes and President Franklin D. Roosevelt signs the Pittman-Robertson Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration Act into law.
- 1938 to today:  
Revenue from this act has purchased millions of acres of prime habitat that is maintained by state wildlife agencies. These lands, where game and non-game species flourish, are purchased with sportsmen's dollars but used by all Americans.

Since the late 1930s, hunters, target shooters and the firearms industry have been the nation's **LARGEST** contributors to **conservation**, paying for programs that benefit America's wildlife and all who love the outdoors.

## THEN & NOW

White Tailed Deer Population

1900 **500,000** → **32,000,000** TODAY

Ducks / Waterfowl Population

1901 **FEW** → **44,000,000** TODAY

Rocky Mountain Elk

1907 **41,000** → **1,000,000** TODAY

Wild Turkeys

1900 **100,000** → **7,000,000** TODAY

Pronghorn Antelope

50 YEARS AGO **12,000** → **1,100,000** TODAY

## OTHER WAYS SPORTSMEN CONTRIBUTE

Excise taxes combined with revenue from hunting and fishing license sales fund the majority of state wildlife agency budgets.



**\$81 Million**  
CONTRIBUTED ANNUALLY

Duck stamp proceeds are used by the government to buy or lease wetland habitat for ducks, geese and hundreds of non-game birds and animals.



## SOME HEROES OF THE MOST SUCCESSFUL CONSERVATION MODEL IN THE WORLD ARE:



Theodore Roosevelt



Aldo Leopold



Key Pittman



Willis Robertson



THE FIREARMS INDUSTRY TRADE ASSOCIATION

| NSSF.ORG





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

Regulations remain in effect until changed. For the most current regulations, go to [dep.nj.gov/njfw/fishing/marine/seasons-and-regulations/](http://dep.nj.gov/njfw/fishing/marine/seasons-and-regulations/).

### Highlights of Regulation Changes:

- A new regulation makes it unlawful for any person to gaff or attempt to gaff any striped bass at any time.
- The recreational black sea bass regulations have been modified to include an open season May 17–June 19 with a ten fish possession limit; an open season July 1–Aug. 31 with a one fish possession limit; an open season Oct. 1–Oct. 31 with a ten fish possession limit; and an open season Nov. 1–Dec. 31 with a 15 fish possession limit. The minimum size limit for all seasons is 12.5 inches.
- The recreational American shad possession limit within the Delaware River and its tributaries has been reduced from three fish down to two. The combined possession limit of shad remains at 6 fish total.
- It is required to use non-offset, corrodible, non-stainless steel circle hooks, except when fishing with flies or artificial lures, when fishing for sharks recreationally.
- The recreational scup regulations have been modified to include an open season Aug. 1–Dec. 31 with a thirty-fish possession limit. The minimum size limit remains 10 inches.

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 22.

### 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 NJ Fish & Wildlife's Volunteer Angler Survey at [dep.nj.gov/njfw/fishing/marine/volunteer-angler-survey/](http://dep.nj.gov/njfw/fishing/marine/volunteer-angler-survey/).

## Interstate Wildlife Violator Compact

### Beware!

New Jersey participates in the Interstate Wildlife Violator Compact which means that a violator with repeat convictions of New Jersey marine fishing laws may face license suspensions in participating states.

### 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 of Delaware. Delaware fishing license information can be found at <https://dnrec.alpha.delaware.gov/fish-wildlife/licenses/>.

### New York Fishing Registry Requirement

New York offers a free registry to all marine anglers fishing in New York. Visit [dec.ny.gov/permits/54950.html](http://dec.ny.gov/permits/54950.html).

### Bait Fish

No license is required to take bait fish for personal use with the following gear:

1. Dip nets 24 inches diameter or less for taking *Atlantic herring* only for live bait. **The taking or possession of river herring (alewife and blueback 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 the angler is in possession of a commercial bait net license.

No person shall take or attempt to take fish by any means from the Deal Lake flume, Lake Takanassee 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.

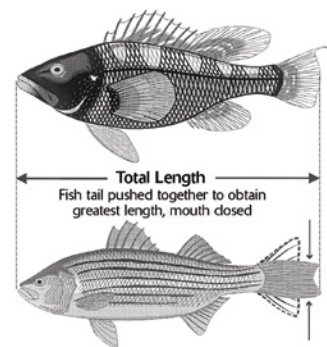
### Filleting

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 18. Anglers shall possess no parts of any fish caught on a previous fishing trip. Party boats may fillet fish at sea if they obtain a Special Fillet Permit available from Fish and Wildlife's Marine Resources Administration.

## Be the First to Know! Get on the List

**The Marine Fisheries and Shellfish e-mail list, that is. Get the latest information on NJ Fish & Wildlife events, public hearings and other marine resource issues. Our six other lists help you get the most out of New Jersey's fish and wildlife resources. Sign up today at:**  
**[dep.nj.gov/njfw/education/email-lists/](http://dep.nj.gov/njfw/education/email-lists/)**

## 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
- Diamondback terrapin
- Shortnose sturgeon
- River herring (alewife and blueback herring; see herring illustrations, page 15)
- Various shark species (See Sharks on page 19)

## Horseshoe Crabs

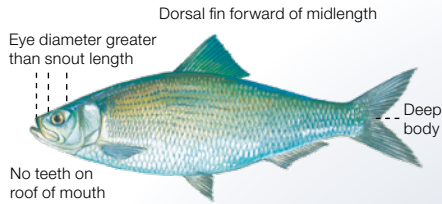
The harvest of horseshoe crabs is prohibited. Possession of horseshoe crabs is also prohibited except for those individuals holding a scientific collecting permit for research and education and those fishermen that can provide suitable documentation that the horseshoe crabs in their possession were harvested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

## Sea Turtles & Marine Mammals

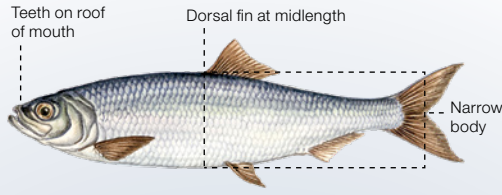
It is illegal to intentionally molest, kill or possess sea turtles, including terrapins, or marine mammals, or to possess any part thereof.



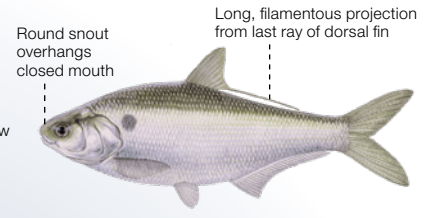
### Herring



**Alewife (a river herring)**



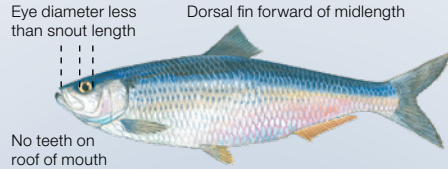
**Atlantic Herring**



**Gizzard Shad**



**American Shad**



**Blueback Herring (a river herring)**



**Hickory Shad**

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.



**Atlantic Bonito**



**Atlantic Croaker**



**Atlantic Mackerel**



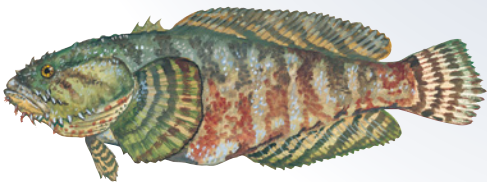
**Northern Kingfish**



**Northern Puffer**



**Northern Seabroin**



**Oyster Toadfish**



**Spot**



**White Perch**



# State Size and Possession Limits

## FINFISH

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

### 2023 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](https://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.** **Note:** No species of fish with a minimum size limit listed below may be filleted or cleaned at sea. Party boats licensed to carry 15 or more passengers may apply for a permit to fillet these species. See also **Summer Flounder**, page 18.

|  |  | Open Season                              | Minimum Length<br>(total length except<br>sharks) | Harvest &<br>Possession Limit<br>(per person unless<br>noted)   | Remarks   |
|--|--|--|---|---|---|
| AMERICAN EEL   |  |  |   |   |   |
|   |  | No Closed Season                         | 9"  | 25 <sup>a</sup>   | a: Except 50 fish harvest/possession limit for party/<br>charter boat employees.  |
| BLACK DRUM   |  |  |   |   |   |
|    |  | No Closed Season                         | 16"   | 3   |   |
| BLACK SEA BASS   |  |  |   |   |   |
|   |  | May 17–June 19                           | 12.5"   | 10  | Black sea bass are measured along the midline from the<br>snout to the end of the central portion of the tail, not to<br>include the tail filament.   |
|  |  | July 1–Aug 31                            | 12.5"   | 1   |   |
|  |  | Oct 1–Oct 31                             | 12.5"   | 10  |   |
|  |  | Nov 1–Dec 31                             | 12.5"   | 15  |   |
| BLUEFISH   |  |  |   |   |   |
|  |  | No Closed Season                         | None  | 5 fish per person<br>while fishing from<br>a party/charter<br>vessel <sup>b</sup><br>3 fish per person for<br>all other anglers | b: vessel must have a valid federal party/charter permit<br>and be captained by a properly credentialed operator with<br>a valid US Coast Guard endorsement. More information at<br><a href="https://dep.nj.gov/wp-content/uploads/njfw/bluefish4hire.pdf">dep.nj.gov/wp-content/uploads/njfw/bluefish4hire.pdf</a> |
| COBIA  |  |  |   |   |   |
|  |  | No Closed Season                         | 37"   | 1 fish per vessel   |   |
| COD, ATLANTIC  |  |  |   |   |   |
|  |  | Jan 1 - May 31<br>and<br>Sept 1 - Dec 31 | 23"   | 5 Fish  |   |
| HADDOCK  |  |  |   |   |   |
|  |  | No Closed Season                         | 18"   | No Limit  |   |
| POLLOCK  |  |  |   |   |   |
|  |  | No Closed Season                         | 19"   | No Limit  |   |



|  | Open Season | Minimum Length<br>(total length except<br>sharks) | Harvest &<br>Possession Limit<br>(per person unless<br>noted) | Remarks |
|--|-------------|---|---|---------|
|--|-------------|---|---|---------|

#### RED DRUM



No Closed Season

18" to less than 27"

1

#### RIVER HERRING



Blueback Herring



Alewife

No Open Season

None

0

The taking or possession of any river herring in New Jersey is prohibited.

#### SCUP (PORGY)



Aug 1–Dec 31

10"

30

#### SHAD



American Shad



Hickory Shad

Delaware River &  
tributaries

No Closed Season

None

6 (maximum of 2  
American shad)

All other marine  
waters

No Closed Season

None

6 (no American  
shad may be  
harvested or pos-  
sessed)

#### 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

28" to 31"

1

Delaware River &  
tributaries  
(upstream of Calhoun  
St. Bridge)

March 1–Dec 31

28" to 31"

1

Atlantic Ocean  
(0–3 nautical miles  
from shore)

No Closed Season

28" to 31"

1

All other marine  
waters

March 1–Dec 31

28" to 31"

1

3–200 nautical  
miles  
(Federal waters)

Prohibited

X

0

No person may take, attempt to take, or have in possession any striped bass from closed waters. Anglers participating in the Striped Bass Bonus Program may harvest one striped bass per permit at 24" to less than 28" in length from May 15 to December 31. It is illegal to take, attempt 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. Sale of striped bass in New Jersey is prohibited.

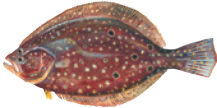



Note: It is illegal to gaff or attempt to gaff, any striped bass at any time. Non-offset circle hooks are required when fishing with bait. See page 5 for more information.



# State Size and Possession Limits

## FINFISH

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

|   |   | Open Season      | Minimum Length<br>(total length except<br>sharks) | Harvest &<br>Possession Limit<br>(per person unless<br>noted) | Remarks   |
|---|---|------------------|---|---|---|
| SUMMER FLOUNDER (FLUKE)   |   |                  |   |   |   |
|    | Delaware Bay & tributaries <sup>c</sup>             | May 2–Sept 27    | 17"   | 3   | c: 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" but less than 18", may occur in waters east of Cape May Ferry Terminal to George Redding Bridge (Route 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.<br><br>d: Shore-based fishing is defined as fishing from a pier, jetty, beach, bank or marsh.<br><br><b>Note:</b> 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. Anglers shall not be in possession of any parts of any summer flounder caught on a previous fishing trip; only fish just caught on the current outing. |
|   | Island Beach State Park, shore fishing <sup>d</sup> | May 2–Sept 27    | 16"   | 2   |   |
|   | All waters except as above                          | May 2–Sept 27    | 2 @ 17" to less than 18" and 1 @ 18" or greater   | 3   |   |
| TAUTOG (BLACKFISH)  |   |                  |   |   |   |
|    |   | Jan 1–Feb 28     | 15"   | 4   |   |
|   |   | April 1–April 30 | 15"   | 4   |   |
|   |   | Aug 1–Nov 15     | 15"   | 1   |   |
|   |   | Nov 16–Dec 31    | 15"   | 5   |   |
| WEAKFISH  |   |                  |   |   |   |
|   |   | No Closed Season | 13"   | 1   |   |
| WINTER FLOUNDER   |   |                  |   |   |   |
|  |   | March 1–Dec 31   | 12"   | 2   |   |

### Quick Reference for Popular Fish!



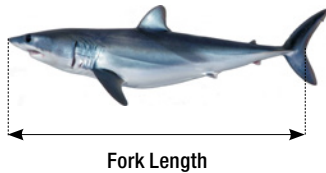
### DEP Action Line, 24 Hrs.

The Department has a toll-free telephone hotline number you can use to report environmental incidents, abuses, and complaints in New Jersey.

**(877) WARN-DEP**  
**(877) 927-6337**



### SHARKS



Shark image courtesy of Dr. William Driggers, III/NMFS

|  | Open Season                     | Minimum Length (fork length)  | Harvest & Possession Limit (per person unless noted)   | Remarks   |
|--|---------------------------------|---|--|---|
| <b>Aggregated large coastal group</b><br><b>Hammerhead group</b> | Jan 1–May 14 and July 16–Dec 31 | <b>Atlantic sharpnose, bonnethead, and smoothhound:</b> None<br><b>Hammerheads</b> 78"<br><b>All other retainable sharks:</b> 54" | <b>Prohibited sharks:</b> zero allowed possession<br><b>Shortfin mako:</b> zero allowed possession<br><b>Smoothhound:</b> No limit<br><b>All others:</b> one per person per trip | Use of non-offset, corrodible, non-stainless steel circle hooks is required, except when fishing with flies or artificial lures.<br><br>Does not include dogfish. See below for a list of prohibited species. |
| <b>Non-blacknose small coastal group</b>                         | No Closed Season                |   |  |   |
| <b>Blacknose group</b>   | No Closed Season                |   |  |   |
| <b>Pelagic group</b>   | No Closed Season                |   |  |   |

## Sharks

Some species of sharks may be harvested by recreational fishermen from the shore or from a boat only by hand line or rod and reel. If a shark is caught but not kept, it must be released immediately. Anglers should access the following National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration website, [fisheries.noaa.gov/resources/outreach-materials](https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/resources/outreach-materials), to download helpful materials such as the NOAA Fisheries *Shark Identification Placard* and the *Careful Catch and Release Brochure*, which provide a pictorial guide to identifying sharks and tips on handling and releasing large saltwater pelagic fish.

All sharks harvested must have heads, tails and fins attached naturally to the carcass until landed, although anglers may still gut and bleed the carcass. Filleting sharks at sea is prohibited. Refer to the illustration, above, for the proper measurement of fork length.

**Shark Species That May Be Kept (Authorized Species):** **Aggregated Large Coastal Shark**—blacktip, bull, lemon, nurse, tiger, spinner; **Hammerhead Shark**—scalped hammerhead, smooth hammerhead, great hammerhead; **Non-Blacknose Small Coastal Shark**—Atlantic sharpnose, bonnethead, finetooth; **Blacknose Shark**—blacknose; **Pelagic Shark**—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.

The 2023 shark regulations complement existing federal shark regulations. 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 Aggregated 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.

**It is required to use non-offset, corrodible, non-stainless steel circle hooks, except when fishing with flies or artificial lures, when fishing for sharks recreationally.**

**Note:** To differentiate sharks from dogfish—dogfish have flat, tiny teeth; spiny dogfish have dorsal spines in front of the dorsal fins. Neither are present in other sharks.

## Federal Recreational Fishing Regulations

For current federal waters regulations (3–200 nautical miles), refer to the following agencies:

- NOAA Atlantic Highly Migratory Species (HMS) Information: [fisheries.noaa.gov/topic/atlantic-highly-migratory-species](https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/topic/atlantic-highly-migratory-species)
- NOAA Atlantic Highly Migratory Species (HMS) Permit Shop: [hmspermits.noaa.gov/](https://hmspermits.noaa.gov/)
- Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council: [mafmcc.org/regulations](https://mafmcc.org/regulations)
- South Atlantic Fishery Management Council: [safmc.net/regulations/](https://safmc.net/regulations/)

# GRUMPYS

## BAIT & TACKLE

**Catering to both Surf and Boat Fisherman, Clammers, and Crabbers!**  
**Huge Selection of Today's Hottest Fishing Gear!**

**Open Everyday!**  
 906 NE Central Ave, Seaside Park, NJ 08752  
 2 Miles from IBSPI

**732.830.1900**  
 Daily Fishing Reports & Online Shopping at  
[www.grumpystackle.com](http://www.grumpystackle.com)

# Hunt Of A Lifetime

**Making Hunting & Fishing Dreams Come True**  
 for YOUNGSTERS, 21 & UNDER, with  
 LIFE-THREATENING ILLNESSES


**Toll Free: 814-572-4387**  
[www.HuntOfALifetime.org](http://www.HuntOfALifetime.org)



# State Size and Possession Limits

## CRUSTACEANS & MOLLUSKS

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

|   |                   | Open Season                   | Minimum Length<br>(total length except sharks) | Harvest & Possession Limit<br>(per person unless noted) | Remarks  |
|---|-------------------|-------------------------------|--|---|--|
| LOBSTER, AMERICAN   |                   |                               |  |   |  |
|  |                   | See below for closed seasons  | 3 3/8"   | 6   | A person shall not use any spear, gig, gaff or other penetrating device as a method of capture of lobsters.  |
| BLUE CRAB   |                   |                               |  |   |  |
|  | peeler or shedder | No Closed Season <sup>e</sup> | 3"   | 1 Bushel  | Unless using non-collapsible, Cheasapeake-style crab pots, trot lines or crab dredges — see below.   |
|   | soft              | No Closed Season <sup>e</sup> | 3 1/2"   |   |  |
|   | hard              | No Closed Season <sup>e</sup> | 4 1/2"   |   |  |
| HARD CLAM   |                   |                               |  |   |  |
|  |                   | No Closed Season <sup>f</sup> | 1 1/2"   | 150 clams   | Non-resident license valid only June–Sept. See water classification chart information at <a href="https://www.state.nj.us/dep/wms/bmw/nss-phome.html">https://www.state.nj.us/dep/wms/bmw/nss-phome.html</a> |

## 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 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, go to [dep.nj.gov/wp-content/uploads/njfw/marine-letter-lobster.pdf](https://dep.nj.gov/wp-content/uploads/njfw/marine-letter-lobster.pdf)

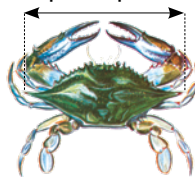
The use of spears, gigs, gaffs or other penetrating devices as a method of capture for lobsters is prohibited. A recreational lobster pot license is required to use pots or traps to capture lobsters. For details call (609) 748-2020. Lobsters taken recreationally may not be sold or offered for sale.



### Blue Crabs

- Crabs may be taken recreationally with hand lines, manually operated collapsible traps or scoop nets without a license. A non-commercial crab pot license is required for the use of not more than two non-collapsible Chesapeake-style crab pots (see illustration on page 21) or two trot lines to harvest crabs. See page 21 for the non-commercial crab pot license information.
- It is illegal to harvest or possess more than one bushel of crabs per day per person or offer for sale any crabs without having in your possession a valid commercial crabbing license.
- Minimum size for crabs that may be harvested (measured from point to point of shell) are as follows:
  - Peeler or shedder crab: 3 inches
  - Soft crab: 3 1/2 inches
  - Hard crab: 4 1/2 inches
- All female crabs with eggs attached and all undersized crabs shall be returned to the water immediately.
- Recreational trot lines shall not exceed 150 feet in length with a maximum of 25 baits.
- All pots and trot lines shall be marked with the 9-digit identification number (CID) 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 or a law enforcement officer may raise or remove contents of a legally set fishing device.

Measure crabs point to point.



- Crabs taken with a bait seine may be retained for personal use only if the angler 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 30.
- 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 21 for details on purchasing a non-commercial crab dredge license.

**Notice:** All non-collapsible Chesapeake-style crab pots (see illustration on page 21) must be constructed to include a biodegradable panel designed to create an opening to allow crabs and

other organisms to escape if the pot is lost or abandoned. All non-collapsible Chesapeake-style crab pots set in any manmade lagoon or any water body less than 150 feet wide must also include a turtle excluder device inside all pot entrance funnels.

## Crab Pot License Information

Recreational Crab Pot/Trot Line Licenses and Non-Commercial Crab Dredge Licenses are available for purchase online at: <https://nj.aspirafocus.com/internetsales> or at any NJ Fish & Wildlife-certified license agent including those license agents listed below. For the most current list of NJ Fish & Wildlife-certified license agents, go to [dep.nj.gov/njfw/licenses-and-permits/license-agents/](http://dep.nj.gov/njfw/licenses-and-permits/license-agents/)

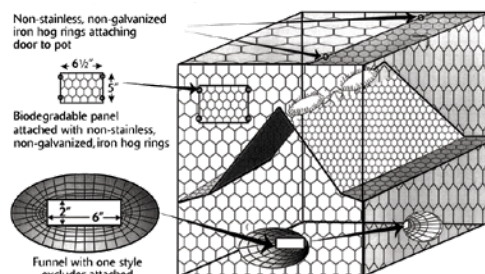
- **Recreational crab pot/trot line license:** \$2  
Harvest limit: one bushel per day. Refer to the shellfish regulations on page 20 for all recreational crabbing regulations.
- **Non-commercial crab dredge license:** \$15  
Harvest limit: one bushel per day during the crab dredge season. See page 20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

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

**NOTE: It is illegal to catch or take diamondback terrapins in New Jersey.** 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 manmade 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 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 note: **ALL** non-collapsible, Chesapeake-style crab pots **MUST** be licensed and marked with the 9-digit identification number (CID) of the owner.

Chesapeake-Style Crab Pot

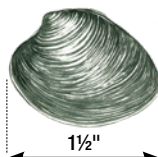


## Mollusks

1. All persons must be licensed to harvest any shellfish. See *Shellfish License Information*. 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. 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 NJ Fish & 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*.
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.




## Shellfish License Information

A shellfish license (formerly called clamming license) 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 [nj.gov/dep/bmw/nssp/home.html#charts](http://nj.gov/dep/bmw/nssp/home.html#charts) or call Marine Water Monitoring at (609) 748-2000. Purchase shellfish licenses online at [nj.aspirafocus.com/internetsales](http://nj.aspirafocus.com/internetsales).

## 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. 

## Shellfish and Non-Commercial Crab Pot License Agents

Current listing now available online at [dep.nj.gov/njfw/licenses-and-permits/license-agents/](http://dep.nj.gov/njfw/licenses-and-permits/license-agents/)

**Note:** All license agents statewide can now sell all license and permit privileges.



### Tips for Releasing Fish Unharmed

#### Proper handling and releasing techniques reduce fish mortality.

- Land fish quickly, except when retrieving from depths of 40-feet or more. Fighting a fish to exhaustion increases mortality as does rapidly bringing fish up through the changing water pressure and temperature gradients.
- Minimize the effect of barotrauma, which occurs when gases expand faster than they can diffuse due to decreasing pressure during ascent through the water column. For more information about barotrauma and how to release fish safely visit: [fisheries.noaa.gov/national/resources-fishing/catch-and-release-best-practices](https://fisheries.noaa.gov/national/resources-fishing/catch-and-release-best-practices).
- 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 eyes. Support the weight of the fish along the length of its body. Do not allow fish to flop around on deck.
- Carefully remove hooks using a dehooker or needle-nose pliers.
- Use plain hooks, not stainless, which rust away quickly if one must be left in a gut-hooked fish. Be prepared with a long-reach tool to cut the leader at the hook, 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 (non-offset) for species that bite and flee, such as striped bass, weakfish or sea bass. Consider pinching hook barbs with pliers.

### New Jersey Saltwater Recreational Registry Program (NJSRRP)

#### ATTENTION: Recreational Saltwater Anglers

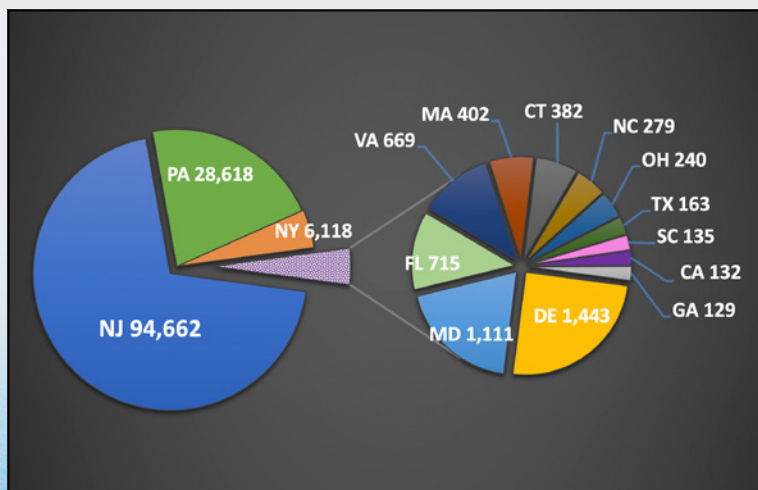
**Register because you make a difference! FREE. EASY. REQUIRED.**

The saltwater registry acts as a current contact list for mail and telephone surveys. Participation in the New Jersey Saltwater Recreational Registry Program (NJSRRP) is vital in achieving accurate recreational fishing estimates, helping to ensure healthy fisheries for future generations.

Do your part to help maintain sustainable fisheries and join the thousands of other anglers who have already registered with the New Jersey Saltwater Recreational Registry Program.

In 2022, the NJSRRP had 138,607 individual registrants, with just over 68% (94,662) being NJ residents. Individuals registered from all 50 US states, 2 US territories and 42 other countries. The pie chart shows the 15 states with the greatest number of participants (totaling 135,198 individuals) in the NJSRRP.

\* Anglers are reminded that registrations expire at the end of each calendar year and must be renewed annually. For more information on the **NJ Saltwater Recreational Registry Program** and to register, visit [saltwaterregistry.nj.gov](https://saltwaterregistry.nj.gov).



## Marine Fisheries: Recreational Surveys

### Be Counted...

You may see NJDEP Fish & Wildlife interviewers at marine public access fishing sites conducting the Access Point Angler Intercept Survey (APAIS). The survey targets marine recreational anglers to obtain information about their fishing effort and catch. The more data collected, the more successful the survey becomes for estimating overall catch, which is an integral factor for managing fisheries. 2022 marked the first full year to include a 40% increase in our total individual assignments.

Marine Fisheries staff are eager to speak with fishing clubs/groups about the importance of the APAIS. We rely heavily on our valued anglers, creating a joint effort to preserve the state's natural resources. Invite us to a group meeting or event. Contact Maryellen Gordon at [Maryellen.Gordon@dep.nj.gov](mailto:Maryellen.Gordon@dep.nj.gov). We look forward to meeting you!

NJ Fish & Wildlife staff continue to conduct the For-Hire Telephone Survey annually from March through December. Weekly calls are made to vessel operators regarding the previous week's trips. This data is used to estimate fishing effort in the for-hire sector and is combined with APAIS data. In 2022, 2,211 vessels were contacted averaging approximately 50 vessels per week with just over a 53% response rate.

If you're not contacted directly, you can submit an easy, online fishing report after each saltwater trip to the New Jersey Volunteer Angler Survey at [dep.nj.gov/njfw/fishing/marine/volunteer-angler-survey/](https://dep.nj.gov/njfw/fishing/marine/volunteer-angler-survey/). Your reports have a real impact on how our oceans are managed.

### APAIS Totals 2022

| Month     | Site Assignments | Charter Intercepts | Private/Rental Intercepts | Shore Intercepts | Total Intercepts |
|-----------|------------------|--------------------|---------------------------|------------------|------------------|
| March     | 60               | 0                  | 5                         | 19               | 24               |
| April     | 91               | 20                 | 157                       | 52               | 229              |
| May       | 177              | 87                 | 300                       | 294              | 681              |
| June      | 176              | 151                | 470                       | 194              | 815              |
| July      | 182              | 184                | 512                       | 310              | 1,006            |
| August    | 182              | 150                | 535                       | 270              | 955              |
| September | 167              | 64                 | 345                       | 197              | 606              |
| October   | 166              | 15                 | 307                       | 215              | 537              |
| November  | 152              | 64                 | 339                       | 216              | 619              |
| December  | 141              | 18                 | 72                        | 122              | 212              |
|           | 1,494            | 753                | 3,042                     | 1,889            | 5,684            |

### New Jersey: Stock Status & Management Updates

| Species               | Status   | Recent/Next Action  |
|-----------------------|--|---|
| American Lobster      | SNE stock depleted; Not overfishing            | Peer review assessment 2025   |
| American Shad         | Depleted coastwide; Overfishing status unknown | Peer review assessment 2020   |
| Atlantic Croaker      | Overfished and overfishing status unknown      | Peer review assessment 2024   |
| Atlantic Striped Bass | Overfished; Not overfishing                    | Update stock assessment 2024  |
| Black Drum            | Not overfished; Not overfishing                | Peer review assessment 2022   |
| Black Sea Bass        | Not overfished; Not overfishing                | Research track assessment 2023  |
| Bluefish              | Overfished; Not overfishing                    | Management track assessment 2023  |
| Coastal Sharks        | Varies by species                              | <a href="https://asmfc.org/species/coastal-sharks">asmfc.org/species/coastal-sharks</a> |
| Cobia                 | Not overfished; Not overfishing                | Research track assessment 2025  |
| Horseshoe Crab        | Status unknown; Moratorium since 2008          | Update stock assessment 2024  |
| Scup                  | Not overfished; Not overfishing                | Update stock assessment 2023  |
| Spanish Mackerel      | Not overfished; Not overfishing                | Update stock assessment 2022  |
| Spiny Dogfish         | Not overfished; Not overfishing                | Management track assessment 2023  |
| Summer Flounder       | Not overfished; Not overfishing                | Management track assessment 2023  |
| Tautog                | NJ-NY Bight stock overfished; Not overfishing  | Potential update stock assessment 2024  |
| Weakfish              | Depleted; Not overfishing                      | Potential update stock assessment 2025  |
| Winter Flounder       | Not overfished; Not overfishing                | Update stock assessment 2022  |

For updates or more information, please visit [asmfc.org](https://asmfc.org).



APAIS interviewer Ryan Alianell waits for anglers to return from their fishing trips in Cape May.



### 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.
- **Any boat (including jet skis and non-titled watercraft), mechanically propelled (including 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 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).

#### 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  
[nj.gov/mvc/vehicles/boating.htm](http://nj.gov/mvc/vehicles/boating.htm)

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

### NEW NJDEP Fish & Wildlife Website

Visit the NJ Fish & Wildlife Website to access saltwater fishing regulations, management updates, public hearing information, data collected from field surveys and more:

[dep.nj.gov/njfw/fishing/marine](http://dep.nj.gov/njfw/fishing/marine)



### YOUR DOLLARS MAKE A DIFFERENCE!

State and Federal partnership improves NJ's fishing opportunities



Your fees and Sport Fish Restoration dollars produce the following benefits:

- Management of public waters
- Artificial reef development
- Marine sport fish research
- Development and management of public fishing areas
- Creation of aquatic education programs
- Development and maintenance of boating-associated access facilities throughout the state



When you purchase fishing equipment, motors, sonar and motorboat fuel in New Jersey, excise tax dollars – paid by manufacturers of that equipment – come back to New Jersey to support marine fisheries!

This is the federal **Sport Fish Restoration Program!**

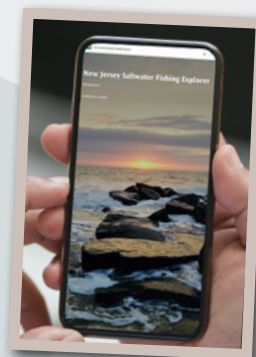


## Interactive Map Tools

NJDEP Fish & Wildlife's **Office of Fish and Wildlife Information Systems** develops and maintains geographic information systems (GIS) data, produces web mapping applications and provides GIS/IT assistance to support fish and wildlife management throughout New Jersey. Below is a listing of the online interactive mapping tools that allow access to spatial information, and in some cases, the ability to submit data or observations directly to NJDEP Fish & Wildlife.

### Saltwater Fishing Explorer Application

Provides interactive maps and more information on artificial reef sites and other saltwater fishing opportunities in New Jersey:  
[njfishandwildlife.com/saltwaterfishing](http://njfishandwildlife.com/saltwaterfishing)



### Artificial Reef Deployments Application

Allows users to identify artificial reefs and individual deployments present on reef sites providing excellent fishing and diving opportunities. This application includes nearly 4,000 publicly accessible artificial reef deployments ranging from ships, barges and military vehicles to concrete habitats and dredge rock. These deployments provide areas for the public to engage in reef fishing and diving. Information includes type of deployment, the material it was made from, who sponsored the deployment, the date it was deployed, along with the location and volume of the deployment.  
[NJFishandWildlife.com/reefdeployments](http://NJFishandWildlife.com/reefdeployments)

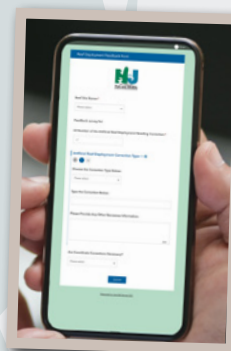


### Reef Deployment Feedback Form

Allows users to submit single or multiple corrections to deployments. Each advised correction will be reviewed by staff and included in the next revision.



Reef Deployment Feedback Form  
[NJFishandWildlife.com/reefeedback](http://NJFishandWildlife.com/reefeedback)



### Saltwater Fishing Opportunities Application

Provides the public with key information of areas to fish throughout New Jersey for saltwater species like striped bass, bluefish, and summer flounder. Includes both ocean prime fishing grounds and shore-based fishing access sites.

[NJFishandWildlife.com/primesaltwaterfishing](http://NJFishandWildlife.com/primesaltwaterfishing)



973-575-1972

[WWW.FAIRFIELDFISHING.COM](http://WWW.FAIRFIELDFISHING.COM)

We specialize in matching rods, reels, line, leader and lures to catch your favorite fish, whether your passion is for saltwater or freshwater fishing.

We are a DAIWA warranty center and have an extensive stock of Daiwa rods and reels. Brands are too numerous to name all. Here are some of our hottest sellers:

DAIWA - ST. CROIX - TSUNAMI - PENN  
SHIMANO - AVET - ACCURATE

GAMAKATSU - MUSTAD - EAGLE CLAW - VMC

BLUE WATER CANDY MOJOS  
SHADS - GULP - SPRO - MAJA SPOONS  
NICHOLS BEN PARKER FLUTTER SPOONS  
We have Do-it molds and jig hooks in stock  
Check website for hours

101 ROUTE 46 EAST  
PINE BROOK, NJ 07058  
973-575-1972  
[tackle@fairfieldfishing.com](mailto:tackle@fairfieldfishing.com)



Live, Fresh and Frozen Bait  
Launching Ramp on Shark River

Open 7 days a Week



1301 Hwy 35 South  
Neptune N.J. 07753  
1-732-774-4360



# Skillful Angler Program

## RECOGNITION PROGRAMS

### New Jersey Skillful Angler Program

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.

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. Anglers can now submit their application and photo(s) electronically! Program rules and steps to enter are found here [dep.nj.gov/njfw/fishing/freshwater/skillful-angler-program/](http://dep.nj.gov/njfw/fishing/freshwater/skillful-angler-program/). Anglers qualifying for a Skillful Angler award receive a certificate along with a **Skillful Angler patch** as a testament to their achievement.

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.** Additional good quality (and high resolution) photos with the angler are welcome and appreciated.

The Skillful Angler Program 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 fish within the year, and the angler will earn an Elite Angler Certificate.

For new anglers, the Program also recognizes your first fish caught no matter the age of the angler.

### 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 (see page 28) requires a different application and is based on weight alone. Scale certification documentation and a weighmaster's signature are required for State Record Fish entries. Other rules apply. Visit Fish and Wildlife's website at [dep.nj.gov/njfw/fishing/freshwater/new-jersey-state-record-fish-program/](http://dep.nj.gov/njfw/fishing/freshwater/new-jersey-state-record-fish-program/) for a complete list of current state records.

Qualified anglers will receive a First Fish certificate. Four additional categories may bring out your competitive nature. Personalized certificates are also awarded for the Slam Series which includes:


- **Inshore Slam I** — catch one each qualifying Striped Bass, Bluefish and Fluke
- **Inshore Slam II** — catch one each qualifying Black Sea Bass, Tautog and Weakfish
- **Offshore Pelagic Slam** — catch one each qualifying Bluefin Tuna, Bigeye Tuna, Yellowfin Tuna and Dolphin
- **Marlin Slam** — catch one each qualifying White and Blue Marlin

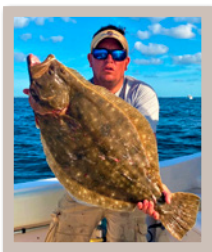
Each month, the leaders of each category and species will be posted on our Skillful Angler Leader Board webpage — [dep.nj.gov/njfw/fishing/freshwater/skillful-angler-leaderboards/](http://dep.nj.gov/njfw/fishing/freshwater/skillful-angler-leaderboards/). At the end of the year, special recognition is 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 along with a **winner's patch** 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 a fishing license agent, tackle shop or authorized Fish and Wildlife fisheries biologist.

**Anglers must submit a photograph of the fish caught, alongside a ruler, for clear identification and measurement verification. Be sure the ruler markings are legible.** Please also include an attractive, well-composed, high-resolution (large file size) photo to be considered for printing in this Digest. **Smile!** All photos become the property of NJ Fish & Wildlife and may be used for promotional purposes.

To apply, go to: [dep.nj.gov/njfw/fishing/freshwater/skillful-angler-program/](http://dep.nj.gov/njfw/fishing/freshwater/skillful-angler-program/) 



**Skillful angler**  
Ed Braunsdorf hooked this 10 lbs., 14 oz. fluke measuring 29 inches with a 25-inch girth. He was using a Spro jig with Gulp and Spearing as bait while fishing the Sea Girt Reef.

Trevor Sherwood

### Did You Know?

**Email your entry and photo from any device!**

**NJSkillfulAngler@dep.nj.gov**

## Operation Game Thief — Undersized Blue Crabs

In August 2022, the Operation Game Thief tip line received a report of a person keeping undersized blue crabs on the Fair Haven Municipal Dock. Conservation Police Officer Dane Bahrle located the crabber, who matched the description, given by the caller. An inspection of their cooler found 42 blue crabs under the 4 ½ inch legal size limit. The infraction cost the violator \$30 per crab plus court fees.

Calls to (855) OGT-TIPS can be about any violation of NJ's laws protecting wildlife. Through the Operation Game Thief program, you can help NJ's Conservation Police Officers defend our living natural resources, and if the information you provide results in a conviction, you may earn a reward too.

### Operation Game Thief: (855) OGT-TIPS



## New Jersey State Federation of Sportsmen's Clubs

### If you care about...

- Wise management of fish and wildlife populations
- Protection and enhancement of natural lands and waters
- Preservation of traditional outdoor sports



### Then get involved!

- Stay informed on issues affecting NJ sportsmen and sportswomen
- Make an impact on outdoor issues
- Meet others who share similar sporting interests
- Have fun and participate in Federation-sponsored activities: jamborees, clay target shoots, tournaments, dinners, conventions, and more!

### Membership

\_\_\_ \$40 Includes monthly newspaper and \$1 million excess liability insurance covering your sporting activities throughout the U.S. and Canada

Name \_\_\_\_\_

County \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

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

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

**Send with your check or money order to:**

NJSFSC  
PO Box 884  
Eatontown, NJ 07724



**Join online at  
njsfsc.org**

## Accessible Fishing Sites



For people with disabilities, visit: [dep.nj.gov/njfw/wp-content/uploads/njfw/wcaccesslist.pdf](http://dep.nj.gov/njfw/wp-content/uploads/njfw/wcaccesslist.pdf)

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.



## FLY RIGHT CHARTERS



## The Lowcountry Awaits

PROFESSIONAL FISHING GUIDE  
FLY AND CONVENTIONAL

INSHORE × NEARSHORE × OFFSHORE

Charleston, SC

(843)860-4231 × [john@flyrightcharters.com](mailto:john@flyrightcharters.com)

[www.flyrightcharters.com](http://www.flyrightcharters.com)

EST. 2004

J.F. GRIFFIN  
PUBLISHING

## Showcase your business!



For advertising inquiries, please call  
**(413) 884-1001**

**Missed the printed edition?**

Ask about year-round digital opportunities.





# State Record Marine Sport Fish

## RECOGNITION PROGRAMS



Matthew Florio broke a New Jersey State Saltwater Fish Record by landing a 78 lb., 2.4 oz. Albacore Tuna in October 2022, breaking the previous 1984 record by 3.4 ounces. Matthew was chunking off the *Luna Sea* at the east elbow of Hudson Canyon when he reeled in the record fish. This new state record measured 48 3/8 inches in length and had a girth of 37 inches.

NJDEP Fish & 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 75 marine species eligible for entry into the program, which includes a new spearfishing category with 16 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.

Fourteen species are now retired from the list of program-eligible fish, but remain on a separate list posted on NJ Fish & 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 NJ Fish & 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. Please include an attractive, well-composed, high-resolution (large file size) photo to be considered for printing in this *Digest*. **Smile!**

For a complete list of state record fish, including retired species, or to print an application with complete program rules, visit New Jersey Fish and Wildlife's website at [dep.nj.gov/njfw/fishing/freshwater/new-jersey-state-record-fish-program/](http://dep.nj.gov/njfw/fishing/freshwater/new-jersey-state-record-fish-program/) 

## New Jersey State Record Marine Fish

New records shown in red. \* Fish was certified by the IGFA as a world record.

| Species            | Lbs.   | Oz. | Year | Angler            | Where Caught       |
|--------------------|--|-----|------|-------------------|--------------------|
| Amberjack, greater | 85   | 0   | 1993 | Edwin Metzner     | Off Cape May       |
| Bass, black sea    | 9  | 0   | 2015 | Steve Singler     | Atlantic Ocean     |
| Bass, striped      | See retired species list: <a href="http://NJFishandWildlife.com/recfish-salt.htm">NJFishandWildlife.com/recfish-salt.htm</a> |     |      |                   |                    |
| Bluefish           | 27   | 1   | 1997 | Roger Kastorsky   | 5 Fathom Bank      |
| Bonito, Atlantic   | 13   | 8   | 1945 | Frank Lykes, Jr.  | Off Sandy Hook     |
| Cobia              | 90   | 6   | 2019 | Len Andalis       | McCries Shoal      |
| Cod                | 81   | 0   | 1967 | Joseph Chesla     | Off Brielle        |
| Crab, blue         | 8¾" pt. to pt.   |     | 2008 | Raymond Ponik     | Bayonne            |
| Croaker, Atlantic  | 5  | 8   | 1981 | Frederick Brown   | Delaware Bay       |
| *Cunner            | 3  | 8.8 | 2019 | John Zema         | Atlantic Ocean     |
| Dogfish, smooth    | 22   | 0   | 2020 | Ed DiMarcantonio  | Strathmere (Beach) |
| 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, red (Ling)   | 12   | 13  | 2010 | Billy Watson      | Off Manasquan      |
| Hake, white        | 41   | 7   | 1989 | Wayne Eble        | Off Barnegat Light |
| Kingfish, Northern | 2  | 8   | 2004 | Chester Urbanski  | Barnegat Bay       |
| 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       |

| Species                   | Lbs.                             | Oz. | Year | Angler             | Where Caught            |
|---------------------------|----------------------------------|-----|------|--------------------|-------------------------|
| Shad, American            | 7                                | 0   | 1967 | Rodger West        | Great Bay               |
| Shad, hickory             | 2                                | 13  | 2011 | Robert Macejka     | Mantoloking             |
| 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 Thackara    | Mud Hole                |
| Shark, porbeagle          | Vacant (Minimum Weight 100 lbs.) |     |      |                    |                         |
| Shark, shortfin 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                               | 3   | 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 |
| Swordfish                 | 530                              | 0   | 1964 | Edmund Levitt      | Wilmington Canyon       |
| Tautog                    | 25                               | 13  | 2020 | Chris Sullivan     | Atlantic Ocean          |
| Tilefish, golden          | 63                               | 8   | 2009 | Dennis Muhlenforth | Linden Kohl Canyon      |
| Tilefish, blueline (gray) | 23                               | 8   | 2021 | George Hanakis     | Wilmington Canyon       |
| Triggerfish, gray         | 6                                | 11  | 2016 | James Massimino    | Sea Girt Reef           |
| Tuna, albacore            | 78                               | 2.4 | 2022 | Matthew Florio     | Hudson 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.) |     |      |                    |                         |

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

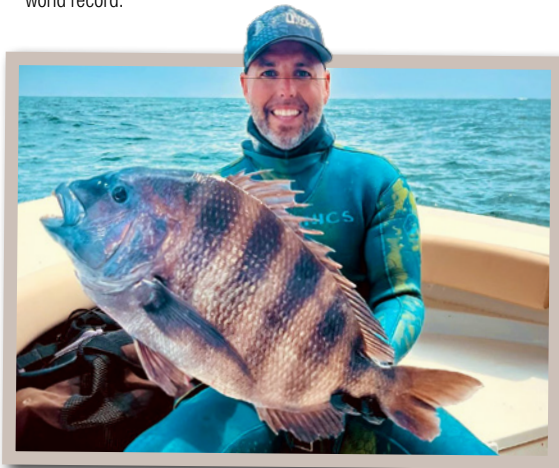
## New Jersey State Record Marine Fish — Spearfishing Category

In 2014, the NJ Record Fish Program expanded with the addition of a Spearfishing category for saltwater. Sixteen 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 and routinely found in or off the coast of New Jersey.

New records shown in **red**.

| Species            | Lbs.               | Oz.          | Year        | Angler            | Where Caught                |
|--------------------|--------------------|--------------|-------------|-------------------|-----------------------------|
| Amberjack, greater | Min. Wt. 60 pounds |              |             | VACANT            |                             |
| Bass, black sea    | Min. Wt. 5 pounds  |              |             | VACANT            |                             |
| Bluefish           | 22                 | 2            | 2017        | Igor Kotov        | Shark River Reef, USS Algol |
| Cobia              | 74                 | 5            | 2019        | Joe Cunningham    | Off Sea Isle City           |
| Cod                | Min. Wt. 50 pounds |              |             | VACANT            |                             |
| Dolphin            | Min. Wt. 40 pounds |              |             | VACANT            |                             |
| *Fluke             | 15                 | 5            | 2014        | Robert A. Davis   | Off Barnegat Lighthouse     |
| Flounder, winter   | 3 pounds           | 7            | 2018        | Jim Oriscak       | Shark River "back bay"      |
| Hake, red (ling)   | Min. Wt. 9 pounds  |              |             | VACANT            |                             |
| Pollock            | Min. Wt. 30 pounds |              |             | VACANT            |                             |
| Porgy              | Min. Wt. 4 pounds  |              |             | VACANT            |                             |
| <b>Sheepshead</b>  | <b>13 pounds</b>   | <b>3 oz.</b> | <b>2022</b> | <b>Dan Street</b> | <b>Atlantic Ocean</b>       |
| Spadefish          | Min. Wt. 9 pounds  |              |             | VACANT            |                             |
| *Tautog            | 23                 | 14           | 2007        | Luke Dylan Hickey | Off Cape May                |
| Triggerfish, gray  | 5                  | 5            | 2019        | Kevin Cavanagh    | Off Monmouth Beach          |
| Weakfish           | 11.8               | n/a          | 2009        | Tai Menz          | Off Cape May                |

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



Dan Street of Hainesport made his way to the top of the state spearfishing record list by landing a new state record Sheepshead on July 15, while free diving in the Atlantic Ocean. The fish weighed 13 pounds, 3 ounces, beating the old record by 11 ounces. It measured 26 inches in length and had a girth of 23 7/8 inches.



**AT MARINEMAX  
WE DON'T JUST BOAT,  
WE FISH TOO!**

MarineMax Ship Bottom  
(888) 579-3249 | [marinemax.com/shipbottom](http://marinemax.com/shipbottom)


Scout

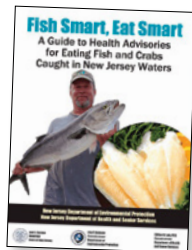
SAILFISH



### Eating Fish and Crabs Caught In New Jersey Waters

Fishing provides enjoyable and relaxing recreation. Fish are an excellent source of protein and other nutrients and play a role in maintaining a healthy, well-balanced diet. Many anglers enjoy cooking and eating their own catch. However, elevated levels of potentially harmful chemical contaminants such as dioxin, polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), pesticides and mercury have been found in certain fish and crabs in some New Jersey waters. Fish consumption advisories have been adopted to guide citizens on safe consumption practices.

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, for a complete list of state and federal marine fish consumption advisories visit [FishSmartEatSmartNJ.org](http://FishSmartEatSmartNJ.org) for making decisions about eating recreationally caught fish and crabs. 



### Try the Interactive Map!

One click on the waterbody where you fish takes you to any current health advisories.

[FishSmartEatSmartNJ.org](http://FishSmartEatSmartNJ.org)



### Attention Boaters

### Keep Our Water Clean—Use Pumpouts

**Ready To Serve Boaters! Visit marina pumpout facilities or contact one of the pumpout boats.** A complete listing of operational pumpout facilities at marinas and detailed information on the pumpout boats can be found at [NJBoating.org](http://NJBoating.org).

**Proper maintenance and operation of your on-board toilet and holding tank are critical to ensure they function properly.**

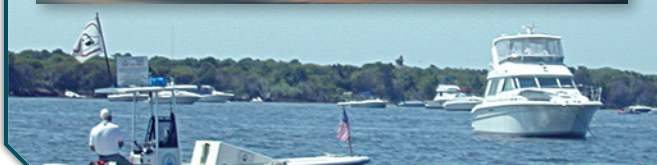
- Always use sufficient water when flushing.
- Use toilet paper designed for use in marine/RV systems
- Have your marina inspect your onboard toilet system to make sure it is operating properly

**NJBoating.org**

New Jersey pumpouts, boat ramps and more!



This project is funded in part by the New Jersey Clean Water Act program



### Bev's Striper Cakes

#### Ingredients

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 2 pounds striped bass, cut into ½" square pieces | 1 cup coarsely chopped onions                               |
| 2 heaping tablespoons mayonnaise                 | 1 cup coarsely chopped green pepper                         |
| 2 tablespoons Dijon mustard                      | 1 cup chopped celery  |
| 1 teaspoon Old Bay seasoning                     | 2 cups Italian breadcrumbs                                  |
| 2 eggs   | 2 tablespoons hot red pepper flakes (more or less to taste) |

#### Directions

1. Mix all ingredients in a large bowl.
2. Form into patties about an inch thick.
3. Add olive oil to a large skillet over medium heat.
4. Place patties into skillet and cook 4 minutes per side or until golden brown.

\*Enjoy hot or cold. Makes around 10 cakes.

## 2023 Sedge Island Summer Programs

Sedge Island Natural Resource Education Center is offering a variety of programs in the summer of 2023 for students, adults and families. Come connect with the beauty of Barnegat Bay while learning about salt marsh ecology through fishing, clamming, and discovering what's edible in the bay!

Visit [dep.nj.gov/njfw/education/sedge-island-natural-resource-education-center](https://dep.nj.gov/njfw/education/sedge-island-natural-resource-education-center) for details, date and cost or contact Karen Byrne at [Karen.Byrne@dep.nj.gov](mailto:Karen.Byrne@dep.nj.gov).



## Conservation Police and Regulation Information



Contact a NJDEP Fish & Wildlife Conservation Police 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**

# Become a Wildlife Habitat Supporter!

Did you know that NJ Fish & Wildlife manages more than 360,000 acres in 122 wildlife management areas throughout the state?

These spaces protect and conserve fish and wildlife habitat while providing opportunities for outdoor recreation such as fishing, hunting, birding, wildlife viewing, hiking and more! You can help to ensure the conservation of these natural treasures for the enjoyment of generations to come by becoming a Wildlife Habitat Supporter and making a donation. Donations will be used to:

- Manage and restore fish and wildlife habitat.
- Enforce fish and wildlife regulations.
- Restore and protect endangered and nongame species.
- Fund fish and wildlife educational programs and more.
- Improve public access to recreational facilities on WMAs.



## Get Your Collectible Decal Today!

Supporters who donate \$25 or more receive a beautiful, first-edition collectible car decal.

Visit [dep.nj.gov/njfw/conservation/wildlife-habitat-supporter-program](https://dep.nj.gov/njfw/conservation/wildlife-habitat-supporter-program)



# New Jersey Marine Digest

|   |                                  |
|---|----------------------------------|
| Internet Address .....  | NJFishandWildlife.com            |
| <b>General Information</b> .....  | (609) 292-2965                   |
| <b>DEP ACTION LINE—24 HOURS</b> .....   | (877) 927-6337 — (877) WARN-DEP  |
| <b>Marine Fisheries Regulations “Listen Only” information line</b> .....  | (609) 292-2083                   |
| <b>Marine Conservation Police</b> .....   | (609) 748-2050                   |
| <b>Automated Harvest Report System</b> .....  | (855) 448-6865 — (855) I-HUNT-NJ |
| <b>Commercial Preserves and Semi-Wild Preserves</b> .....   | (609) 984-6213                   |
| <b>Exotic &amp; Nongame Captivity Permits</b> .....   | (609) 984-6213                   |
| <b>Falconry Permits</b> .....   | (908) 735-8793                   |
| <b>Field Trial Permits</b> .....  | (609) 259-2132                   |
| <b>Freshwater Fisheries</b>   |                                  |
| Lebanon Field Office (North)  |                                  |
| P.O. Box 394, 1255 County Rt. 629, Lebanon, NJ 08833 .....  | (908) 236-2118                   |
| Central Region Office   |                                  |
| 1 Eldridge Rd., Robbinsville, NJ 08691 .....  | (609) 223-6076                   |
| Southern Region Office  |                                  |
| 220 Blue Anchor Rd., Sicklerville, NJ 08081 .....   | (856) 629-4950                   |
| <b>Horseback Riding Group Permits</b> .....   | (609) 259-2132                   |
| <b>Hunter Education</b> .....   | (856) 629-0552                   |
| <b>Hunting, Fishing and Duplicate Licenses</b> .....  | (609) 292-2965                   |
| <b>Hunting and Trapping Permit Hotline</b> .....  | (609) 292-9192                   |
| <b>License Sales</b> .....  | (888) 773-8450                   |
| <b>Operation Game Thief</b> .....   | (855) OGT-TIPS                   |
| <b>Outstanding Deer Program</b> .....   | NJDeerClassic@dep.nj.gov         |
| <b>Pheasant and Quail Stocking</b> .....  | (609) 984-0547                   |
| <b>Trout Stocking Hotline</b> .....   | (609) 322-9524                   |
| <b>Wildlife Conservation Corps</b> .....  | (908) 735-7040                   |
| <b>Wildlife Control</b> .....   | (908) 735-4513                   |
| <b>Wildlife Education</b> .....   | (908) 637-4125                   |
| <b>Wildlife Management Areas</b> .....  | (609) 984-0547                   |
| <b>Trenton Office</b>   |                                  |
| Mail Code 501-03, P.O. Box 420, Trenton, NJ 08625-0420  |                                  |
| Endangered and Nongame Species .....  | (609) 292-9400                   |
| Land Management .....   | (609) 984-0547                   |
| Marine Fisheries .....  | (609) 748-2020                   |
| Marine Habitat and Shellfisheries .....   | (609) 748-2040                   |
| Wildlife Management .....   | (609) 292-6685                   |
| <b>Northern Region Office</b>   |                                  |
| 26 Route 173 W., Hampton, NJ 08827  |                                  |
| Wildlife Management .....   | (908) 735-7040                   |
| Endangered and Nongame Species .....  | (908) 638-4127                   |
| Hunter Education .....  | (908) 637-4125 x 123             |
| Wildlife Control .....  | (908) 735-8793                   |
| Land Management .....   | (973) 383-0918                   |
| Conservation Police (Bergen, Essex, Hudson, Hunterdon, Morris, Passaic, Somerset, Sussex, Union, and Warren counties) ..... | (908) 735-8240                   |
| <b>Central Region Office</b>  |                                  |
| 1 Eldridge Rd., Robbinsville, NJ 08691  |                                  |
| Freshwater Fisheries .....  | (609) 223-6076                   |
| Land Management .....   | (609) 259-2132                   |
| Wildlife Control .....  | (908) 735-8793                   |
| Conservation Police (Burlington, Mercer, Middlesex, Monmouth, and Ocean counties) .....                                     | (609) 259-2120                   |
| <b>Southern Region Office</b>   |                                  |
| 220 Blue Anchor Rd., Sicklerville, NJ 08081   |                                  |
| Freshwater Fisheries .....  | (856) 629-4950                   |
| Hunter Education .....  | (856) 629-0552                   |
| Land Management .....   | (856) 629-5006                   |
| Conservation Police (Atlantic, Camden, Cape May, Cumberland, Gloucester, and Salem counties) .....                          | (856) 629-0555                   |
| Wildlife Control .....  | (908) 735-8793                   |
| <b>Pequest Natural Resource Education Center</b> .....  | (908) 637-4125                   |
| <b>Pequest Trout Hatchery</b> .....   | (908) 637-4173                   |
| 605 Pequest Rd., Oxford, NJ 07863   |                                  |
| For questions concerning state stocking programs or comments call (908) 236-2118  |                                  |
| <b>Nacote Creek Research Station</b>  |                                  |
| P.O. Box 418, 360 Rt. 9 N. (Milepost 51) Port Republic, NJ 08241  |                                  |
| Marine Fisheries .....  | (609) 748-2020                   |
| Marine Habitat and Shellfisheries .....   | (609) 748-2040                   |
| Marine Education .....  | (609) 748-4347                   |
| <b>Delaware Bay Office (Marine Habitat and Shellfisheries)</b>  |                                  |
| 1672 E. Buckshutem Rd. Millville, NJ 08332 .....  | (856) 785-0730                   |

## Take a friend fishing!

*The memories will last a lifetime.*



### FREE Freshwater Fishing Days

— June 3 and Oct. 21, 2023 —

On these two days, residents may fish New Jersey's public fresh waters without a license or trout stamp. All other regulations, including size and daily catch limits, remain in effect.

## The most up-to-date regulations online.



 **eRegulations.com**

Shhhhh. No wake zone.



Protect your baby (and their toys) with coverage for fishing gear and personal property too.

1-800-PROGRESSIVE / [PROGRESSIVE.COM](https://www.progressive.com)


**PROGRESSIVE**

Progressive Casualty Insurance Co. & affiliates. Additional charge may apply. Prices vary based on how you buy.





# 600+ RED BOATS ON CALL 24/7



The biggest and best fleet of towboats are on your waterways, ready to jump into action when you need help on the water. For a year of worry-free boating, be sure to get Unlimited Towing from TowBoatU.S.

**Get Towing and Get Going!**

**BoatUS.com/Towing**  
**800-395-2628**



Details of services provided can be found online at [BoatUS.com/Agree](http://BoatUS.com/Agree). TowBoatU.S. is not a rescue service. In an emergency situation, you must contact the Coast Guard or a government agency immediately.