**From:** mike justhitsllc.com <[mike@justhitsllc.com](mailto:mike@justhitsllc.com)>   
**Sent:** Thursday, September 26, 2024 9:55 AM  
**To:** Bilinski, Joseph [DEP] <[Joseph.Bilinski@dep.nj.gov](mailto:Joseph.Bilinski@dep.nj.gov)>  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Blue crabs status in NJ

Joe,

It’s a pleasure to write to you Joe. I had written an article that was recently published in The Sandpaper to bring awareness to the pregnancy cycle of the female blue crab species. I’m concerned about the declining numbers of blue crabs in NJ but I have a few solutions for us. When we compare us to Maryland, we’re way behind their laws. Granted Maryland is a larger blue crab fishery however our numbers are still declining just in the small sample size of the Manahwkin Bay from what I’ve seen.

Is there anyway we can consider bringing the size limit of a male crab up from 4.5” to 5”? Male crabs rarely have the chance to mate with females at 4.5”. But their next molt comes 1-2 months later to a 5.5”-6” crab (depending upon protein consumption during that 1-2 month period.) At this size they can have the chance to mate with a female prior to getting caught. Maryland has their minimum at 5” April 1-July 14 and 5 1/4” July 15-Dec 15 to allow the late summer breeding of 5” males to take place.

When we think about how many inches we have raised the fluke numbers over the last 15 years, we haven’t touched the crab numbers but the crabs are too declining.

Can we also look at following Maryland’s laws regarding female crabs? Making it illegal to keep female crabs with sponges or without sponges because based on my research, all females who reach the mature sook stage have courted with a male prior to that final mature molt. This is what led Maryland to change their law back in June of 2008 making it illegal to keep any females crabs at a recreational level.

If you are the person to head up this task, I respectfully ask you to consider these changes. If you’re not, please forward me to the person of whom best to discuss this with. My Grandfather, Anthony Just, was the Mayor of Secaucus for many years back in the 90s. He was a huge advocate of wildlife and open space in the Meadowlands. They have a duck pond named after him in Secaucus. It’s in my blood to defend our wildlife and protect it for future generations.

I have attached the article here for your convenience. Thank you so much for your time.

Mike Just

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| |  | | --- | | [Do the Right Thing: Let Female Blue Crabs Live](https://urldefense.com/v3/__https:/www.thesandpaper.net/articles/do-the-right-thing-let-female-blue-crabs-live/__;!!J30X0ZrnC1oQtbA!INTYBzHiakEWBj26QJ29DRGpXI5o-H0Z42P36RuYivNbpRuNuskp6jCHQig8LfCtnQsuDLSzXXB1fG_eTpxpfuH57w$)  [thesandpaper.net](https://urldefense.com/v3/__https:/www.thesandpaper.net/articles/do-the-right-thing-let-female-blue-crabs-live/__;!!J30X0ZrnC1oQtbA!INTYBzHiakEWBj26QJ29DRGpXI5o-H0Z42P36RuYivNbpRuNuskp6jCHQig8LfCtnQsuDLSzXXB1fG_eTpxpfuH57w$) | |

Sent from my iPhone

**From:** Ronald Covey <[coveyr61@aol.com](mailto:coveyr61@aol.com)>   
**Sent:** Friday, October 4, 2024 1:29 PM  
**To:** DEP njmarinefisheries [DEP] <[njmarinefisheries@dep.nj.gov](mailto:njmarinefisheries@dep.nj.gov)>  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Nj weakfish limit

As it is now, you are allowed 1 Weakfish at 13 inches.

There are too many negatives to this law.

1.  What in the world are you going to do with 1 13 in fish.

2.  Does not help charter boats.

3.  Not worth spending the money for a day's fishing.

4.  This law makes good people do dumb things.(keeping more fish)

I am retired and fish Del. Bay 2x per week.  This summer was an amazing year with the many varieties of fish.(king fish, cobra, croakers,  porgy, weakfish ect.

While I am no expert I would like to see weakfish limit changed to 3 fish at 13 in.  It would help the charter boats and all the economy  because you would have more people fishing.

Ronald Covey

856 575 2288

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