

# New Jersey Marine Digest

May 2012

## Trawling the Delaware Bay

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

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 Large Format Marine Digest  
 MC501-03, P.O. Box 420 • Trenton, NJ 08625-0420

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# Director's Message



BY DAVE CHANDA

New Jersey's 210 miles of bayshore and beaches and seemingly endless inshore and offshore waters offer spectacular recreational fishing opportunities that annually attract a half million anglers. Those anglers spend more than 5.5 million days pursuing marine fish and shellfish in our bountiful waters. Each year, marine angler expenditures contribute nearly 1.5 billion dollars to the state economy. Public access to our marine waters is critical both to meet the public demand for saltwater fishing and for sustaining its critical role in the health of New Jersey's economy.

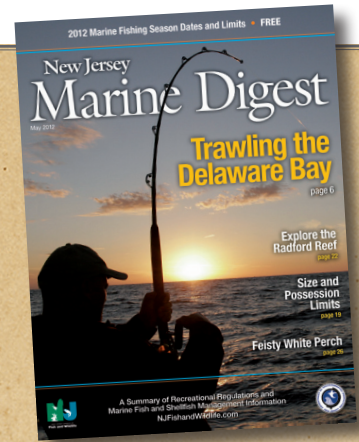
Marine anglers should be aware that this spring, the Department of Environmental Protection proposed rules that will provide enhanced public access for recreational fishermen by ensuring that municipal public access plans include defined and guaranteed points of access for day and night fishing. The rules also provide greater transparency and public involvement in the development of municipal public access plans by requiring municipalities to notify the DEP two weeks in advance of the dates and times of any scheduled public meetings on Department-approved Municipal Public Access Plans. The Department will post the meeting information on its website at [nj.gov/dep/bulletin/](http://nj.gov/dep/bulletin/) and will also send the information by email to individuals who have requested notice of Municipal Public Access Plan applications. Individuals can subscribe to the DEP's Municipal Public Access Plan email list at [nj.gov/dep/cmp/access/subscribe.htm](http://nj.gov/dep/cmp/access/subscribe.htm).

The DEP has also launched a fabulous website at [nj.gov/dep/cmp/access/](http://nj.gov/dep/cmp/access/) that has a wealth of information about marine public access points, including public restroom and parking facilities, amenities such as restaurants, boat and kayak launches, marinas, water quality, handicapped facilities, and places to fish. The site features an interactive state map that anglers will find extremely useful for finding marine access points anywhere along the Atlantic and bayshore coasts.

This year, marine anglers have added incentive to find their favorite access points due to an expansion of recreational fishing opportunities for two of New Jersey's most sought after fish, summer flounder (fluke) and black sea bass. For the first time in over 10 years the minimum size limit for fluke was decreased and for 2012 the minimum size is 17½ inches. The 2012 fluke season is also longer than it was in 2011 and runs from May 5 through September 28 this year. The black sea bass season will also be longer than it was in 2011 while maintaining the same 12½ inch minimum size and 25 fish possession limits. Anglers should visit [NJFishandWildlife.com](http://NJFishandWildlife.com) for the most current black sea bass regulations.

The improved information resources for locating public access points for marine fishing and expanded fishing opportunities for fluke and sea bass make 2012 a great year to get on the water and enjoy the tremendous saltwater fishing New Jersey has to offer. 

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



## About this Guide

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J.F. Griffin is an award-winning publishing house that specializes in producing state fish and wildlife regulation guides. J.F. Griffin supports the Fish and Wildlife staff in the design, layout and editing of the *New Jersey Marine Digest*. We also manage the marketing and sales of *Digest* advertising to appropriate businesses.

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

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REPORTING VIOLATORS ■

### Report Wildlife Violators

Support the responsible use of New Jersey's marine resources.

To report violators to the NJ Division of Fish and Wildlife's Marine Law Enforcement office at all times, contact DEP's Trenton Dispatch at (877) WARNDP.



### SALTWATER ANGLER REGISTRY

The Saltwater Angler Registry Program requires most New Jersey saltwater anglers to register prior to fishing in 2012. See page 15 for details.





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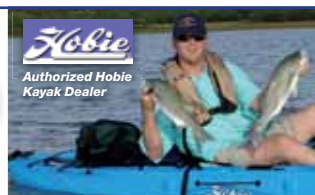


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An Accessible Fishing Sites list is available to assist anglers whose mobility is impaired.

All sites are wheelchair-accessible except for the Musconetcong River in Morris County, where vehicle access is to the shoreline.

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New Jersey Division of Fish and 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 Fish and Wildlife offices. Information may be reprinted with permission. Subscriptions are not available.

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#### New Jersey Division of Fish and 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.
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# TRAWLING The Delaware Bay

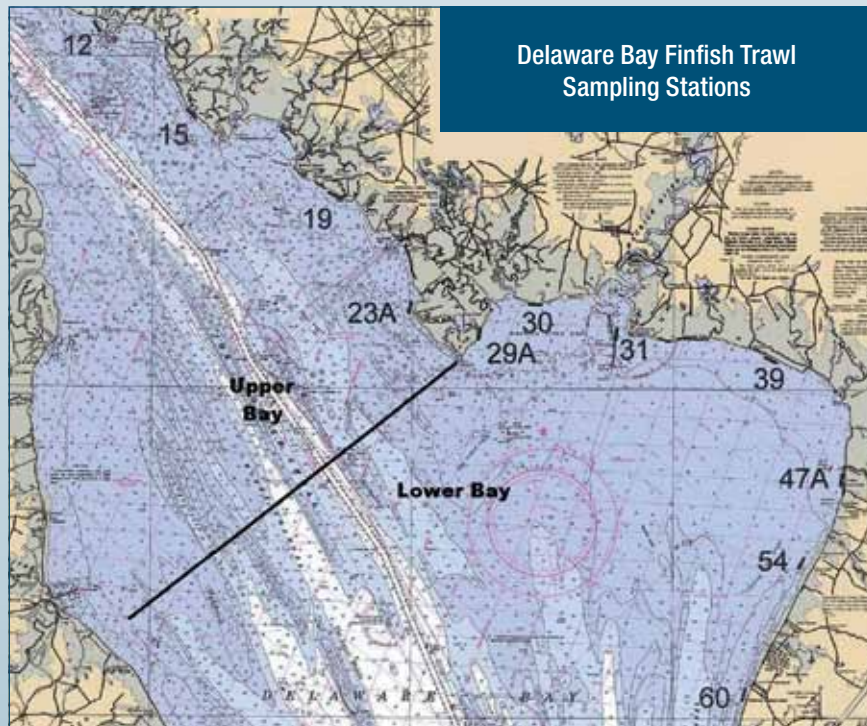
By Jennifer Pyle, Assistant Fisheries Biologist

**The Delaware Estuary is New Jersey's largest estuary system.** This semi-enclosed body of water mixes freshwater from the Delaware River with salt water from the Delaware Bay. It serves as a nursery area, spawning and feeding grounds and a migratory route for many recreational and commercial fish.

Each year New Jersey Division of Fish and Wildlife's Bureau of Shellfisheries biologists conduct several fisheries surveys to study the status of species populations within the estuary. One of these surveys is the Delaware Bay Juvenile Finfish Trawl Survey.

In 1991, Fish and Wildlife began a Delaware Bay trawl survey of juvenile finfish species to develop indices for comparing the relative annual abundance of selected stocks. The survey was designed to complement a similar effort being conducted on the western side of Delaware Bay by the State of Delaware's Division of Fish and Wildlife. Data collected allows biologists to develop relative abundance estimates and length frequencies of estuarine-dependent finfish, information necessary for predicting future fishery trends and harvest potential.

**Survey sampling stations** and their locations have varied over the years. Currently, there are 11 sampling stations located on shoals near the shoreline, extending from Villas in Cape May to the Cohansey River of Cumberland County. These near-shore stations have typically provided greater fish yields and more species diversity than sampling efforts in deeper waters.





### Sampling is conducted

with a 42-foot research vessel, the R/V Zephyrus. The sampling months have also varied. Presently, samples are collected at each location once a month from April to October. Single, ten-minute tows are conducted against the tide at each station.

### All species collected

are identified, counted and measured. If counts are high, 50 individual lengths are randomly selected and recorded. For finfish, fork lengths (tip of nose to inside fork of tail) are recorded for all species with a forked tail. For species without a forked tail, such as Atlantic croaker, a total length is measured.

**Water quality levels** are recorded at each sampling station. These parameters include salinity, water temperature and dissolved oxygen. Measurements are taken at the bottom of the water column at each station.

**Since 1991**, Fish and Wildlife has hauled 1,476 tows and caught 377,641 fish for an average of 255 fish per tow. A total of 83 species have been identified, the five most abundant being bay anchovy, Atlantic croaker, weakfish, blue crab and Atlantic herring.



Fish and Wildlife's Marine Fisheries staff deploy the 16-foot otter trawl net.

| Common Name      | Total Number Caught |
|------------------|---------------------|
| Bay Anchovy      | 196,341             |
| Atlantic Croaker | 89,178              |
| Weakfish         | 32,328              |
| Blue Crab        | 23,067              |
| Atlantic Herring | 5,192               |

### Bay anchovy numbers

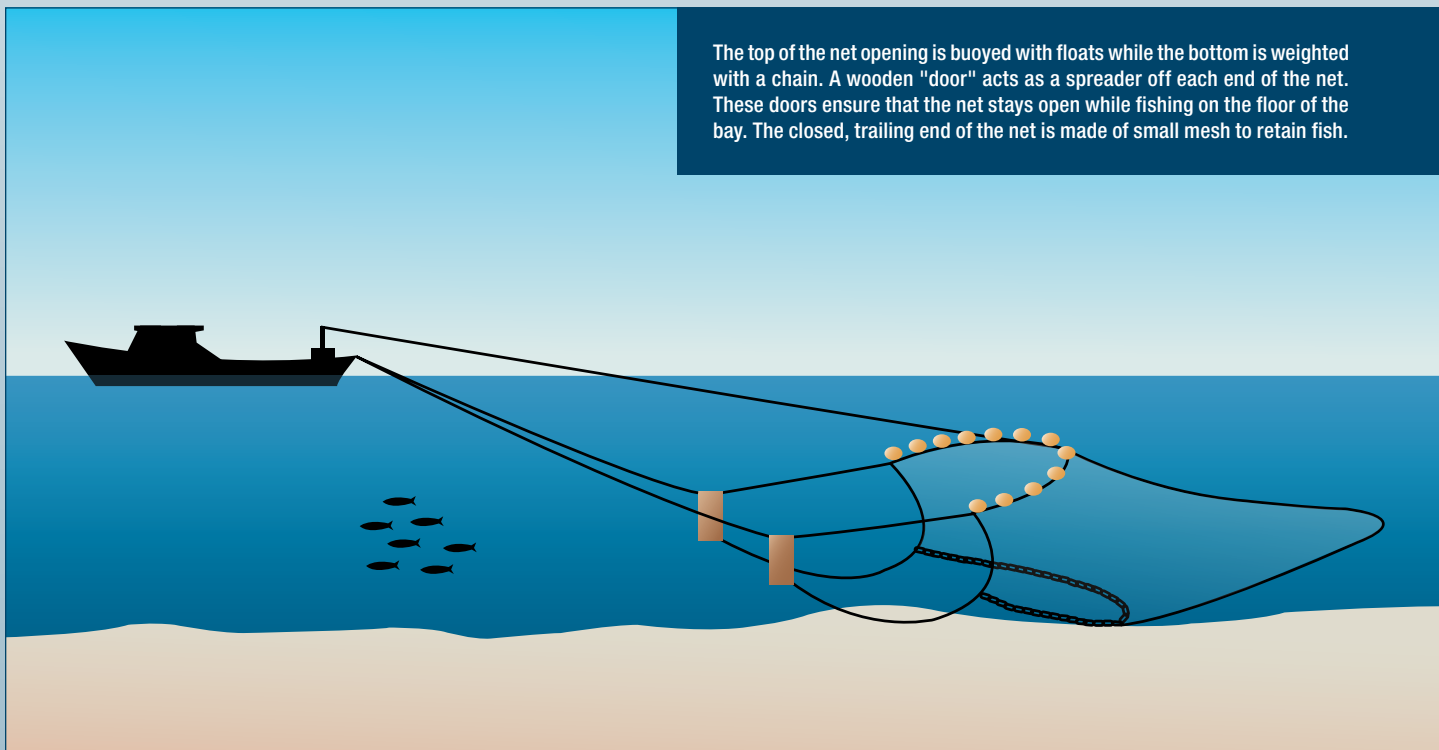
are decreasing at an alarming rate. Typically one of the most abundant species in the Delaware estuary, bay anchovy are a primary food source for many fish, including weakfish, bluefish and striped bass. The numbers caught in this survey peaked in 1998, with an average of 254 fish per tow. Anchovy numbers have been decreasing ever since. The lowest numbers were recorded in 2006, with catches averaging 48 fish per haul. The potential impact from this decrease has yet to be recognized, but

a recent decline in the Delaware Bay's weakfish population may be an indication of a food chain imbalance within this estuary. The average number of weakfish per haul in 2010 was 138 fish, which is the largest average since 2004.

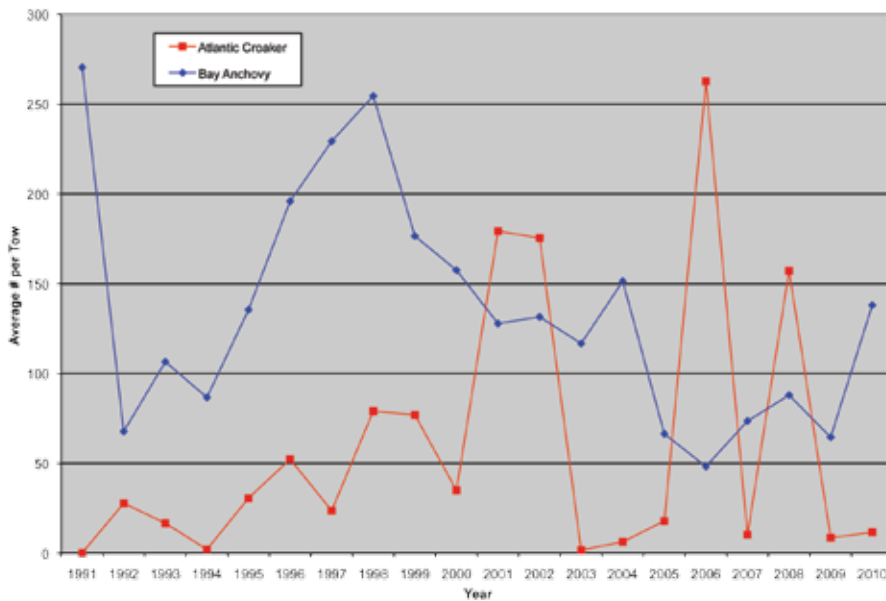
### Atlantic croaker numbers

increased until 2001, when averages reached 179 fish per tow. Since that time there have been many fluctuations within the croaker population. Averages bottomed out in 2003 with only one fish per tow. Croaker reached the survey's peak in 2006, with an average of 262 fish per tow, yet dropped again the next year to an average of 10 fish per tow in 2007. Similar fluctuations are also seen in data collected from Fish and Wildlife's Ocean Trawl Survey. >

The top of the net opening is buoyed with floats while the bottom is weighted with a chain. A wooden "door" acts as a spreader off each end of the net. These doors ensure that the net stays open while fishing on the floor of the bay. The closed, trailing end of the net is made of small mesh to retain fish.



## Population Trends for Atlantic Croaker and Bay Anchovy



The overall number of weakfish caught during the trawl survey has been decreasing since 1999, when the average number per tow was 54 fish. The lowest average was in 1993, with three fish per tow. The drop to an average of 22 fish per tow during 2006 could have been due to severe flooding that year. Because of an above-average influx of freshwater into the bay, the weakfish most likely moved into regions with higher salinities. Despite a decreasing long-term trend, the average number of weakfish caught per haul has been increasing for the past three years.

While the trawl survey primarily catches finfish, 6.11 percent of the total catch for all years has been blue crabs. Over the years, the average number of blue crabs caught increased until 1997, when the average peaked at 35 crabs per tow. Since then, the averages have fluctuated.



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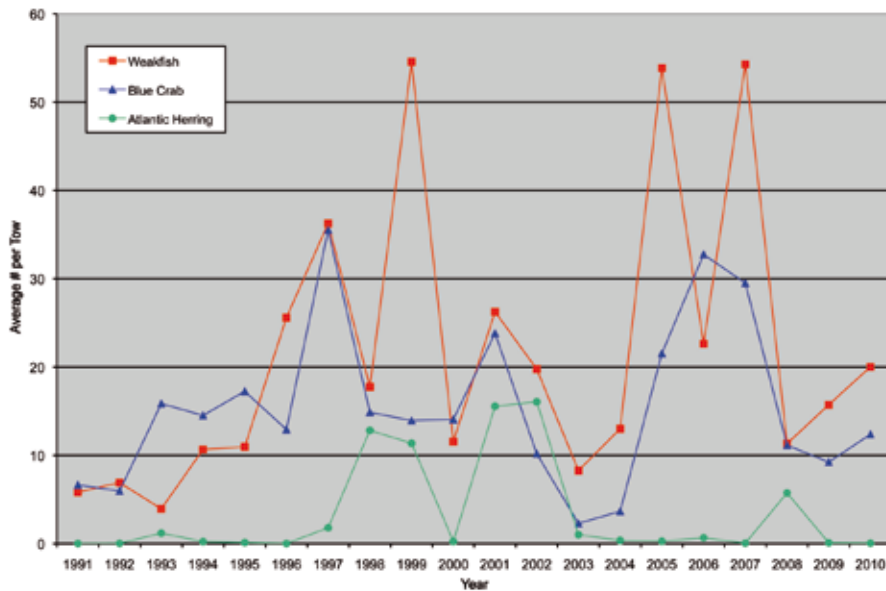
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## Population Trends for Weakfish, Blue Crab and Atlantic Herring



**Surveys** like this are just the beginning of the stock assessment process for many species. Data collected from this survey shows fluctuations among all species across the years. The size of fish populations changes constantly due to many environmental factors. Fish and Wildlife is planning future research to examine species population variations.

**Fishery surveys** such as the Delaware Bay Juvenile Finfish Trawl are important for ecosystem management. Surveys provide biologists with data on annual abundance and population trends of many species and are essential to predict future fishery management needs. Awareness of population fluctuations is crucial when creating recreational and commercial fishing regulations. 

*\* Information for this article was provided by principal biologists Jeffrey Normant, lead investigator and Jason Heron, co-investigator of New Jersey Division of Fish and Wildlife's Delaware Bay Juvenile Finfish Trawl Survey program.*



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# GOVERNOR'S SURF FISHING TOURNAMENT

By Karen Leskie, Wildlife Technician

**Get Outside and Enjoy a Day of Fishing with Family and Friends**

The 21<sup>st</sup> Annual Governor's Surf Fishing Tournament will be held Sunday, Oct. 7, 2012. Once again anglers from New Jersey and neighboring states will descend upon the beaches of Island Beach State Park in hopes of catching the longest fish of the day. The tournament aims to encourage youngsters and adults to learn more about surf fishing while taking advantage of a great family activity. Funds raised by the tournament go toward marine resource conservation and education.

A beautiful fall day was enjoyed by 20<sup>th</sup> Annual Tournament anglers with 67 eligible fish entered in blackfish, bluefish, kingfish and striped bass categories. A total of 22 prizes were awarded in categories for children, teens and adults. However, the grand prize went to Michael Nightingale of East Windsor, with a 33 $\frac{3}{4}$ -inch striped bass. DEP Commissioner, Bob Martin, along with Division of Fish and Wildlife Director Dave Chanda, congratulated Mr. Nightingale with a

plaque and two rod-and-reel combinations. Also, Mr. Nightingale's name has been engraved on the Governor's Cup, which is on permanent display at Island Beach State Park.

Since its inception in 1991, the tournament has generated more than \$120,000 for various marine education and restoration efforts, construction of access ramps for disabled saltwater anglers, surf fishing instruction programs and equipment, specialized wheel chairs that provide beach access to the disabled and elderly, plus the purchase of the first mobile automatic heart defibrillator for use at Island Beach State Park.

For more information about the Governor's Surf Fishing Tournament or to receive a registration form, visit [NJFishandWildlife.com/gsft.htm](http://NJFishandWildlife.com/gsft.htm) or call (609) 748-4347. 

**New Jersey Division of Fish and Wildlife** (along with our co-sponsors: New Jersey Division of Parks and Forestry, New Jersey State Federation of Sportsmen's Clubs, Jersey Coast Anglers Association and New Jersey Beach Buggy Association) would like to thank the following organizations for contributing to the success of the 20<sup>th</sup> Annual Governor's Surf Fishing Tournament in 2011:

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Photo: Daniel E. Beards



Left to right: Eileen Smith, President, Jersey Coast Anglers Association; Paul Harris, President, NJ Beach Buggy Association; Bob Martin, DEP Commissioner; Michael Nightingale, 20<sup>th</sup> Annual Governor's Surf Fishing Tournament winner; and Frank Dara, President, Governor's Surf Tournament Committee.

Jamie Derrrow

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This is not the full law. Consult the Division of Fish and Wildlife for further details. All persons are reminded that the statutes, code and regulations are the legal authorities.

**Red text** in regulations indicates a change for this year.

**Green text** denotes proposed regulation changes anticipated to be in effect later in 2012.

**Purple text** indicates an important note.

The Department of Environmental Protection's Division of Fish and Wildlife informs anglers that rules for the recreational harvest of **summer flounder (fluke)**, **black sea bass**, **tautog** and **river herring** have changed.

- The **summer flounder** recreational season is now **May 5–Sept. 28**. The recreational possession limit has decreased to **five** fish while the minimum size was reduced to **17.5 inches**.
- Also, the **black sea bass** recreational season has changed and is now **May 19–Oct. 14; Nov. 1–Dec. 31**. **Note:** The black sea bass season will likely change again during 2012. Visit our Web site at NJFishandWildlife.com or call the 24-hour marine fish “listen-only” line at (609) 292-2083 for the latest regulation updates.
- In an effort to encourage stock rebuilding of the coastwide tautog resource, new **tautog** regulations were put into place for 2012. The new minimum size for tautog is now **15 inches** with the following possession limits and open seasons: **four** fish possession from **Jan. 1–Feb. 28**; **four** fish possession from **Apr. 1–Apr. 30**; **one** fish possession from **July 27–Aug 31**; **one** fish possession from **Oct. 18–Nov. 15**; **four** fish possession from **Nov. 16–Dec. 31**. **Note:** The tautog season will likely change again during 2012.
- Due to concern regarding the decline of river herring (alewife and blueback herring) stocks, **the taking or possession of any river herring in New Jersey's marine, tidal and freshwaters is prohibited.** (See *Last Call for River Herring* in the 2011 *Marine Digest* for more information)
- At the time of publication, new recreational measures for **black drum** had not been adopted but could become effective during 2012. For the latest information on black drum visit our Web site at NJFishandWildlife.com or call the 24-hour marine fish “listen-only” line at (609) 292-2083.

These changes were implemented for New Jersey to remain in compliance with the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission's management plans for summer flounder and black sea bass. The new rules are aimed at providing adequate protection to these fish stocks while allowing New Jersey's saltwater recreational anglers to participate to the fullest extent possible in these various fisheries.

New Jersey recreational marine regulations apply to all fish species when they are possessed in state waters or landed in New Jersey regardless of where they are caught.

### 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.

### 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.

### 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.

### Spear Fishing

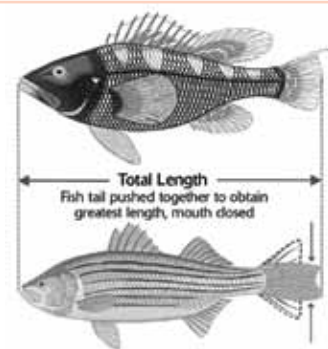
Spear fishing may be conducted by means of a spear, harpoon or other missile while completely submerged in the marine waters of the state for any species, except lobster.

Persons who fish with a spear for species with size limits are reminded that it is their responsibility to ensure the fish meets the minimum size limits before being killed or injured.

### Fish Measurement

1. Lay fish flat on top of, or alongside a measuring rule, not measured over the body.

2. Fish are measured from the tip of the snout (mouth closed) to the longest part of the tail.



### Prohibited Species

It is illegal to take, possess, land, purchase, or sell any of the following species:

- Atlantic sturgeon
- basking shark
- big eye sand tiger shark
- sand tiger shark
- shortnose sturgeon
- whale shark
- white shark
- **river herring (alewife and blueback herring; see herring illustrations, page 16)**
- See *Sharks* (page 14) for the full list of prohibited shark species

### Sea Turtles & Marine Mammals

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

### Finfish

#### How to Release Hooked Fish

Proper handling and releasing techniques reduce fish mortality.

- Land fish as quickly as possible, except when retrieving from depths of 40-feet or more. Fighting a fish to exhaustion increases mortality as does rapidly bringing up a fish through the changing water pressure and temperature gradients.
- Keep fish to be released in the water as much as possible. Plan ahead with tools and camera.
- Minimize physical injury. Do not touch gills or allow fish to flop around on deck.
- Carefully remove hooks using a dehooker or needle-nose pliers.
- Use plain hooks, not stainless, to rust away quickly if one must be left in a gut-hooked fish. Be prepared with long-handled dykes. Cut this line close to the hook's eyelet.
- To bring a fish out of the water momentarily, use a neoprene net or one of knotless nylon. Handle the fish carefully using **wet** hands, wet cotton gloves or similar material to minimize loss of the fish's protective slime layer.
- To revive lethargic fish hold in a normal, upright position. Move the fish forward in an “S” or figure-8 pattern so that water flows over the gills only from front to back.
- Use circle hooks (not offset) for species that bite and flee, such as striped bass, weakfish or sea bass. Consider pinching hook barbs.

#### Filleting

The filleting at sea of all fish with a size limit is prohibited. No parts of any fish caught on a previous fishing trip shall be in possession. Party boats may fillet fish at sea if they obtain a Special Fillet Permit. Applications may be obtained from Fish and Wildlife's Bureau of Marine Fisheries. See *Summer Flounder*, page 14.

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#### Black Sea Bass

The minimum size limit for black sea bass is 12.5 inches measured along the midline from the snout to the end of the central portion of the tail, not to include the tail filaments. (See fish measuring example above.) The possession limit is 25 fish with an open season of **May 19–Oct. 14 and Nov. 1–Dec. 31**. The black sea bass season will likely change during 2012. Visit our Web site at NJFishandWildlife.com or call the 24-hour marine fish “listen-only” line at (609) 292-2083 for the latest regulation updates.

#### Bluefish

The possession limit for bluefish is 15 fish.

#### Black Drum

The minimum size limit for black drum is 16 inches in total length and the daily possession limit is three fish. There is no closed season for black drum.

Proposed changes for black drum include a minimum size limit of 32 inches (total length) with a daily possession limit of two fish. The “no closed season” for black drum would continue. Visit our Web site at NJFishandWildlife.com or call the 24-hour marine fish “listen-only” line at (609) 292-2083 for the latest regulation updates.

#### Red Drum

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

#### Striped Bass (includes Hybrid Striped Bass)

The possession limit for striped bass/hybrid striped bass is two fish with a minimum size limit of 28 inches for each fish. Anglers participating in the

Striped Bass Bonus Program may possess an additional striped bass at least 28 inches in length.

It is illegal to take, catch or kill any striped bass from or in any marine waters of this state, by means of a net of any description, or by any methods other than angling with a hook and line or by spear fishing.

It is illegal to possess any striped bass which is less than the legal minimum size of 28 inches. A person shall not fillet, or remove the head or tail, or parts thereof, of any striped bass at sea.

Harvest and possession of striped bass from federal waters (outside three miles) is prohibited.

Sale of striped bass in New Jersey is prohibited.

#### Striped Bass Closed Seasons

No person may take, attempt to take, or have in possession any striped bass from the following closed waters:

**Jan. 1–Feb. 28:** All waters closed except the Atlantic Ocean from zero to three miles offshore. All inlets and bays are delineated from ocean waters by a Colregs Demarcation line.

**April 1–May 31:** Delaware River and Bay and their tributaries closed from the upstream side of the Calhoun St. bridge downstream to and including the Salem River and its tributaries.

**Note:** Non-offset circle hooks are required to reduce striped bass bycatch mortality while fishing with natural bait during the striped bass springtime spawning area closure within the Delaware River and its tributaries. This restriction does not apply to hook sizes smaller than size 2. >

**Red text** in regulations indicates a change for this year.  
**Green text** denotes proposed regulation changes anticipated to be in effect later in 2012.  
**Purple text** indicates an important note.

### Striped Bass Bonus Program

The Striped Bass Bonus Program will continue this year, where anglers possessing a bonus permit may keep a third striper at 28 inches or greater.

The current allocation from the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission is 321,750 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 only available online. Go to [www.NJWildlifeLicense.com](http://www.NJWildlifeLicense.com) complete the application and immediately print one Bonus Permit (application fee, \$2). The permit is non-transferable and valid for the current calendar year. Only one permit can be used per day. Harvest reporting also must be online.

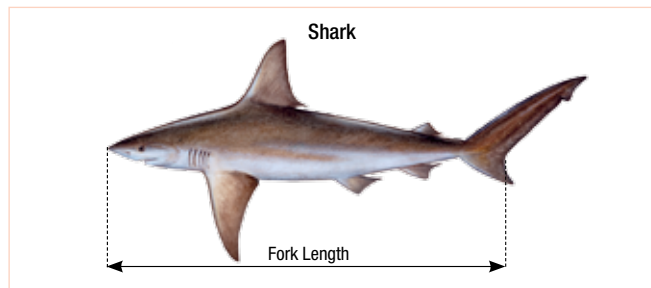
**Striped Bass Bonus Permit Harvest Reporting:** All information on the Bonus Permit must be completed immediately after harvest and prior to transportation. After reporting harvest information at [www.NJWildlifeLicense.com](http://www.NJWildlifeLicense.com) anglers are then eligible to receive another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

**Note:** Harvest information must be reported online.

Striped bass anglers are encouraged to report *all* fishing activity after each trip. Visit Fish and Wildlife's Volunteer Angler Survey at [NJFishandWildlife.com/marinesurvey.htm](http://NJFishandWildlife.com/marinesurvey.htm).

### Sharks

The minimum size limit for any species of shark, except small coastal group and dogfish is 54 inches fork length. See dogfish *Note* and measuring illustration for fork length below.



The 2012 shark regulations complement existing federal shark regulations (see 2012 *Federal Recreational Regulations* table, page 20). However, the following additional measures are required for state waters:

- In state waters, there is no minimum size limit for small coastal 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 large coastal group\* will have a closed season within state waters from May 15 through July 15 to protect spawning female sharks during the pupping season.

\* See page 20 footnote for species list defining small coastal, large coastal and pelagic sharks.

All sharks harvested by recreational fishermen must have heads, tails and fins attached naturally to the carcass until landed. Anglers may still gut and bleed the carcass as long as the tail is not removed. Filleting sharks at sea is prohibited.

Recreational anglers should access the following National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Web site, [http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/hms/sharks/2008/Rec\\_shark\\_ID\\_placard.pdf](http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/hms/sharks/2008/Rec_shark_ID_placard.pdf) to view the publication *Sharks That Can Be Legally Retained By Recreational Anglers In The Atlantic Ocean, Caribbean Sea And Gulf Of Mexico*, an excellent pictorial guide to identifying sharks that are legal to harvest.

These are the shark species that are prohibited from possession: Atlantic angel, basking, bigeye sixgill, bigeye thresher, bigeye tiger, bignose, Caribbean reef, Caribbean sharpnose, dusky, Galapagos, longfin mako, narrowtooth, night, sandbar, sandtiger, sevengill, silky, sixgill, smalltail, whale and white sharks.

**Note:** To differentiate sharks from dogfish—the smooth dogfish has flat, tiny teeth; the spiny dogfish has strong, dorsal spines, shorter than, and in front of, the dorsal fins. Neither are present in sharks.

### Summer Flounder (Fluke)

The possession and minimum size limit for summer flounder is **five** fish at **17.5 inches** with an open season from **May 5–Sept. 28**.

Anglers may fillet one legal-sized summer flounder from their daily possession limit catch for use as bait. This carcass, commonly known as the rack, shall be kept intact so it can be measured for compliance with the minimum size limit. No parts of any summer flounder caught on a previous fishing trip shall be in possession; only fish just caught on this outing.

### Tautog (Blackfish)

The minimum size limit for tautog is **15 inches**. There is a four fish possession limit from **Jan. 1–Feb. 28**, a zero fish possession limit from **March 1–March 31**, a four fish possession limit from **April 1–April 30**, a zero fish possession limit from **May 1–July 26 (season closed)**, a one fish possession limit from **July 27–Aug. 31**, a zero fish possession limit from **Sept. 1–Oct. 17 (season closed)**, a one fish possession limit from **Oct. 18–Nov. 15** and a four fish possession limit from **Nov. 16–Dec. 31**.

**Note:** The tautog season will likely change again during 2012.

### Weakfish (Gray & Spotted Seatrout)

The current possession and minimum size limit for weakfish is one fish at least 13 inches in length.

### Winter Flounder

The minimum possession and size limit for winter flounder is two fish at 12 inches. For winter flounder the open season is March 23–May 21.

### Additional Marine Fishing Regulations

See pages 16–17 for the fish ID pages and pages 19–20 for the regulation charts.

#### Delaware Fishing License Requirement

A Delaware fishing license is now required for all non-resident anglers aged 16 and over fishing either fresh or tidal waters. Delaware fishing license information can be found at <http://www.fw.delaware.gov/Fisheries/Pages/NewFishingLicense.aspx>.

#### New York License Requirement

New York's marine fishing license requirement has been suspended. New York is offering a free registry to all marine anglers. Visit <http://www.dec.ny.gov/permits/54950.html>.

#### Bait Fish

No license is required for the taking of baitfish for personal use with the following gear:

1. Dip nets 24 inches diameter or less for the taking of herring (excluding river herring) for live bait.
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.

**The taking or possession of river herring is prohibited.**

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

No person shall take or attempt to take fish by any means from the Deal Lake flume, Lake Takanasse spillway or Wreck Pond spillway on any Monday, Wednesday or Friday during the months of April and May.



## ▶▶ NEW JERSEY SALTWATER RECREATIONAL REGISTRY PROGRAM

The New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) established the New Jersey Saltwater Recreational Registry Program (NJSRRP), effective May 4, 2011, to exempt saltwater recreational anglers fishing in New Jersey's marine and tidal waters from the federal registry and the \$15 federal registration fee imposed in 2011.

The goal of the registry is to provide the National Marine Fisheries Service with the most accurate information possible that can be used to determine the health of fish stocks. Reliable, universally trusted data will aid anglers, fisheries managers and other stakeholders in their combined efforts so that rules are set to effectively and fairly ensure the long-term sustainability of recreational fishing.

**Registering with the NJSRRP is quick, easy and FREE.**

**Who needs to register?** NOTE: Anglers with either a valid registration from the National Saltwater Angler Registry, a valid fishing license from another exempted state or a New Jersey freshwater fishing license are required to register (for free) with the NJSRRP. *Registration with New Jersey will exempt you from having to register with the National Saltwater Angler Registry. New Jersey registered anglers must still comply with saltwater license requirements in other states.*

**Individual saltwater anglers age 16 and older MUST register if ANY of the following criteria are met:**

- Recreational fishing with a hand line or rod and line, spearfish or fish by hand
- Recreational fishing in the marine and fresh tidal waters of the State of New Jersey
- Recreational fishing in marine waters outside the State of New Jersey but landing the catch in New Jersey

**The only means to register is online at [SaltwaterRegistry.nj.gov](http://SaltwaterRegistry.nj.gov)**

**Individual saltwater anglers are EXEMPT from registering if either of the following apply:**

- Under the age of 16
- Solely fish on for-hire (party and charter) vessels that are registered with the NJSRRP

**For-hire vessel owners/operators MUST register if they:**

- Carry individuals who engage in recreational fishing in the marine and fresh tidal waters of the State of New Jersey **OR**
- Carry individuals who engage in recreational fishing in the marine waters outside the State of New Jersey but land their catch in New Jersey

Anglers who registered in 2011 are reminded that registrations expire at the end of each calendar year and must be renewed annually.

For more information on New Jersey's registry program, visit the New Jersey Saltwater Recreational Registry Program website at [SaltwaterRegistry.nj.gov](http://SaltwaterRegistry.nj.gov).

For more information about the national overhaul of the recreational data collection survey, and how registry database information will be used, visit the website [CountMyFish.noaa.gov](http://CountMyFish.noaa.gov).



Ray Ringen

### Motor Boat Registration and Title Requirements NJ Motor Vehicle Commission (MVC)

#### Registration

Most boats must be registered to operate on New Jersey waterways.

- All titled boats must be registered also.
- **Any boat (including jet skis and non-titled watercraft), mechanically propelled (incl. electric motors), regardless of length, must be registered.**
- Boats greater than 12 feet in length, regardless of propulsion means, must be titled and registered at an MVC office.

Boats and marine equipment which **need not be** registered:

- Those not based in New Jersey or operating here less than 180 consecutive days that are operating under a federally approved numbering system from another state
- Ship's lifeboats
- Non-motorized vessels used exclusively on small lakes and ponds on private property
- Racing vessels with New Jersey State Marine Police permit
- Non-motorized inflatable device, surfboard, racing shell, dinghy, canoe or kayak
- Non-motorized vessel less than 12 feet in length

#### Title

For use on New Jersey waterways, all boats more than 12 feet in length must be titled, with the exception of ship's lifeboat, canoe, kayak, inflatable, surfboard, rowing scull, racing shell, tender/dinghy used for direct transportation between a vessel and shore for no other purposes.

#### Boat Operator License (MVC)

An operator license is required to operate power vessels on fresh, non-tidal waters such as lakes, creeks and rivers. (Minimum age 16 years; with certain exceptions.)

#### For More Information:

**New Jersey Motor Vehicle Commission**  
(888) 486-3339 toll free in NJ or  
(609) 292-6500 from out-of-state  
[www.nj.gov/mvc/](http://www.nj.gov/mvc/)

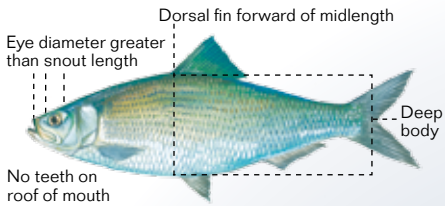
#### Boat Safety Certificate (NJSP)

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

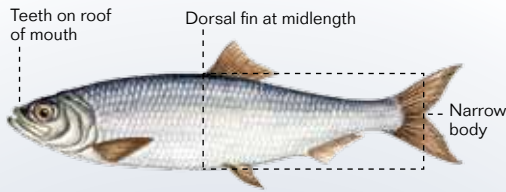
#### New Jersey State Police (NJSP)

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

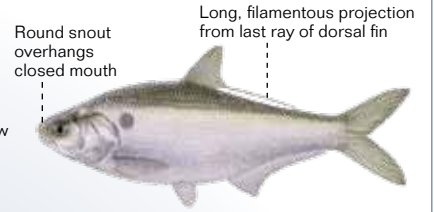
## Herring



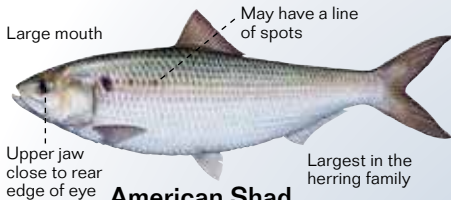
**Alewife**



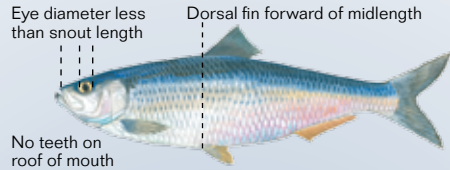
**Atlantic Herring**



**Gizzard Shad**



**American Shad**



**Blueback 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.



**Striped Bass**



**Weakfish**



**Bluefish**



**Black Sea Bass**



**Atlantic Croaker**



**Winter Flounder**



**Tautog**



**Black Drum**



**Summer Flounder (Fluke)**



**Red Drum**



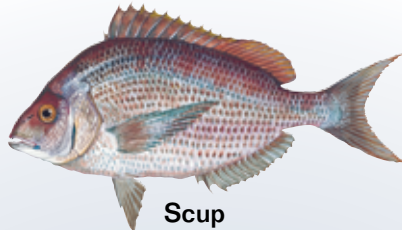
**Blue Crab**



**Hard Clam**



**Spot**



**Scup  
(Porgy)**



**White Perch**



**Northern Searobin**



**Northern  
Kingfish**



**Atlantic Bonito**



**Northern Puffer**



**Spanish  
Mackerel**



**Oyster Toadfish**



**Atlantic Mackerel**



**Atlantic Cod**



**Smooth Dogfish**



**Spiny Dogfish**



**Sand Tiger Shark**



**Sandbar Shark**

**Red text** in regulations indicates a change for this year.  
**Green text** denotes proposed regulation changes anticipated to be in effect later in 2012.  
**Purple text** indicates an important note.

### Crustaceans

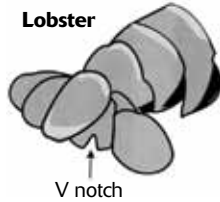
#### American Lobster

The legal possession size 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.

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

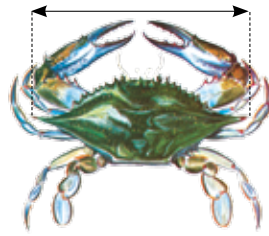
**Note:** The lobster season will likely change again during 2012.

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



#### Crabs

- Crabs may be taken recreationally with hand lines, manually operated collapsible traps or scoop nets without a license. A non-commercial crab pot license is required for the use of not more than two non-collapsible Chesapeake-style crab pots (see illustration on page 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 (possession)
- 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 identification number of the owner.
- All crab pots must be tended at least once every 72 hours.
- No floating line may be used on any crab pot or crab pot buoy.
- No crab pot shall be placed in any area that would obstruct or impede navigation or in any creek less than 50 feet wide.
- Only the owner, his agent or a law enforcement officer may raise or remove contents of a legally set fishing device.
- Crabs taken with a bait seine may be retained for personal use only if the fisherman possesses a bait net license, and may not be bartered or sold unless the fisherman possesses a commercial crab license.
- No crabs may be harvested from the Newark Bay Complex. For more information, see *Health Advisory* on page 28.



Measure crabs point to point.

#### 13. Crab Pot/Trot Line seasons:

Delaware Bay and tributaries: April 6–Dec. 4  
 All other waters: March 15–Nov. 30

The following waters, and their tributaries, are closed to the use of crab pots and trot lines: Cumberland Co.: Cohansy 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.

- 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.

### Horseshoe Crabs

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

### Mollusks

- All persons must be licensed to harvest any shellfish. See license information, page 21. Shellfish means any species of benthic mollusks (except conch) including hard and soft clams, oysters, surf clams, bay scallops and mussels.
- It is illegal to harvest shellfish from condemned waters, even for bait purposes. It is also illegal to harvest shellfish including surf clams from beaches adjacent to water classified as condemned. Shellfish water classification charts are available from license agents or any state shellfish office. See page 21 for shellfish license information. Charts are updated annually.
- Shellfish harvesting is prohibited before sunrise, after sunset and on Sunday, except in the seasonally approved areas of the Navesink and Shrewsbury rivers.
- Harvesting shellfish on public grounds is restricted to the use of hand implements.
- It is illegal to harvest shellfish from leased grounds. These grounds are delineated by stakes or buoys set by the lease holder. Charts of the leases may be examined at Fish and Wildlife's Nacote Creek or Delaware Bay shellfish offices during regular business hours. Invasion onto leased grounds is punishable by penalties up to \$3,000 and loss of all equipment.

#### Recreational Shellfishing

- No holder of any recreational shellfish license may take more than a total of 150 shellfish (in aggregate) per day. See *Shellfish License Information*, page 21.
- It is illegal to dredge shellfish on public grounds. Here, hand implements are the only legal harvest methods.
- The minimum size of hard clams that may be harvested is 1 1/2 inches in length. Clams less than 1 1/2 inches in length must immediately be returned to the bottom from which they were taken. >



Specific seasons, regulations and size limits exist for oyster beds in Great Bay, Delaware Bay, plus the Mullica, Great Egg Harbor and Tuckahoe rivers. Check with the nearest shellfish office (Nacote Creek or Delaware Bay) for these detailed regulations.

- It is illegal to harvest shellfish on Sunday except in the seasonal waters of the Navesink and Shrewsbury rivers between Nov. 1 and April 30.
- Shells taken in the process of harvesting oysters must be culled from the live oysters and returned immediately to the area from where they were taken.



### Commercial Shellfishing

- Shellfish may be sold only to certified dealers. All persons selling shellfish commercially must tag each container listing date of harvest, name and address of the harvester and the waters from which the shellfish were harvested.
- It is illegal to dredge shellfish on public grounds. All harvesting on public grounds is restricted to the use of hand implements.
- Shells taken in the process of harvesting oysters must be culled from the live oysters and immediately returned to the area from where they were taken.
- The minimum size of hard clams that may be harvested is 1½ inches in length. Clams less than ½ inches must immediately be returned to the bottom from which they were taken. Specific seasons, regulations and size limits exist for oyster beds in Great Bay, Delaware Bay, plus the Mullica, Great Egg Harbor, and Tuckahoe rivers. Check with the nearest shellfish office (Nacote Creek or Delaware Bay) for these detailed regulations.
- It is illegal to harvest shellfish on Sunday except in the seasonal waters of the Navesink and Shrewsbury rivers between Nov. 1 and April 30 when it is legal.



## 2012 New Jersey Recreational Fishing Seasons, Minimum Size and Possession Limits

Regulations in red are new this year. See page 12 for how to measure fish.

| Species   | Open Season                            | Minimum Length                  | Harvest & Possession Limit (per person unless noted)   |
|---|--|---------------------------------|--|
| American Eel  | No Closed Season                       | 6"                              | 50   |
| Black Drum <sup>a</sup>   | No Closed Season                       | 16"                             | 3  |
| Black Sea Bass <sup>a</sup>   | May 19–Oct. 14<br>Nov. 1–Dec. 31       | 12.5"*                          | 25   |
| Bluefish  | No Closed Season                       | None                            | 15   |
| Cobia   | No Closed Season                       | 37"                             | 2  |
| Cod   | No Closed Season                       | 21"                             | No Limit   |
| Haddock   | No Closed Season                       | 21"                             | No Limit   |
| King Mackerel   | No Closed Season                       | 23"                             | 3  |
| Pollock   | No Closed Season                       | 19"                             | No Limit   |
| Red Drum  | No Closed Season                       | 18"                             | 1 not greater than 27"   |
| River Herring   | No Open Season                         | None                            | 0  |
| Scup (Porgy)  | Jan. 1–Feb. 28<br>July 1–Dec. 31       | 9"                              | 50   |
| Shad  | No Closed Season                       | None                            | 6  |
| Shark <sup>b,c</sup>  |  |                                 |  |
| Large coastal group <sup>†</sup>  | Jan. 1–May 14<br>July 16–Dec. 31       | 54" fork length                 | One Shark (of any species, except prohibited species) per vessel per trip; plus one Atlantic sharpnose shark per person per trip (no minimum size); plus one bonnethead shark per person per trip (no minimum size). |
| Small coastal group <sup>†</sup>  | No closed season                       | None                            |  |
| Pelagic group <sup>†</sup>  | No closed season                       | 54" fork length                 |  |
| Smooth Dogfish  | No Closed Season                       | None                            | No Limit   |
| Spanish Mackerel  | No Closed Season                       | 14"                             | 10   |
| <b>Striped Bass or Hybrid Striped Bass</b>  |  |                                 |  |
| Delaware River & tributaries <sup>**</sup> (Calhoun St. bridge to Salem River & tributaries)  | March 1–March 31 and<br>June 1–Dec. 31 | 28"                             | 2  |
| Delaware River & tributaries <sup>**</sup> (upstream of Calhoun St. bridge)   | March 1–Dec. 31                        |                                 |  |
| Atlantic Ocean <sup>d</sup> (0–3 nautical miles from shore)   | No Closed Season                       |                                 |  |
| Rivers, bay and estuaries   | March 1–Dec. 31                        |                                 |  |
| 3–200 nautical miles (federal waters)   | Prohibited                             | –                               | 0  |
| Summer Flounder   | May 5–Sept. 28                         | 17.5"                           | 5  |
| Tautog <sup>a</sup>   | Jan. 1–Feb. 28                         | 15"                             | 4  |
|   | March 1–March 30                       | –                               | 0  |
|   | April 1–April 30                       | 15"                             | 4  |
|   | May 1–July 26                          | –                               | 0  |
|   | July 27–Aug. 31                        | 15"                             | 1  |
|   | Sept. 1–Oct. 17                        | –                               | 0  |
|   | Oct. 18–Nov. 15                        | 15"                             | 1  |
|   | Nov. 16–Dec. 31                        | 15"                             | 4  |
| Weakfish  | No Closed Season                       | 13"                             | 1  |
| Winter Flounder   | March 23–May 21                        | 12"                             | 2  |
| <b>Note:</b> No species of fish with a minimum size limit listed above may be filleted or cleaned at sea. Party boats licensed to carry 15 or more passengers may apply for a permit to fillet the above species. See <i>Summer Flounder</i> , page 14. |  |                                 |  |
| <b>Blue Crab</b>  |  |                                 |  |
| peeler or shedder   | No Closed Season <sup>e</sup>          | 3"                              | 1 bushel   |
| soft  | No Closed Season <sup>e</sup>          | 3½"                             |  |
| hard  | No Closed Season <sup>e</sup>          | 4½"                             |  |
| Lobster <sup>a</sup> (carapace length)  | No Closed Season                       | 3 <sup>3</sup> / <sub>8</sub> " | 6  |
| Hard Clam (license required)  | No Closed Season                       | 1½"                             | 150 clams  |

<sup>a</sup> Regulation changes possible during 2012.

<sup>b</sup> Not including dogfish; see description on page 14 under *Sharks*.

<sup>c</sup> See page 12 for a list of *Prohibited Species*.

<sup>d</sup> Atlantic Ocean greater than three miles from shore: harvest and possession prohibited.

<sup>e</sup> Unless using non-collapsible, Chesapeake-style crab pots. See sections on crab pots, pages 18 and 21.

\* Excluding tail filaments. (See illustration, page 12.)

\*\* See *Closed Seasons* (page 13) for specifics of springtime non-offset circle hook requirements.

<sup>†</sup> See page 20 for *Federal Recreational Regulations*.

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Policies subject to limits and exclusions.

**Red text** in regulations indicates a change for this year.  
**Green text** denotes proposed regulation changes anticipated to be in effect later in 2012.  
**Purple text** indicates an important note.

### 2012 Federal Recreational Regulations for Minimum Size, Possession Limits and Seasons

See page 12 for how to measure fish. See *Recreational Minimum Size, Possession Limits and Seasons* (page 19) for state waters listings of species not included in these federal waters regulations (from 3–200nm). For federal regulation questions, please contact the National Marine Fisheries Service at (978) 281-9260, or go to [www.nmfs.noaa.gov](http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov).

| Species  | Season  | Minimum Size  | Possession Limit<br>(number per angler per day unless otherwise specified)  | Notes   |
|--|---|---|---|---|
| <b>Cod</b>   | Year round  | 22"   | 10 per person per day   | For more information go to <a href="http://www.nero.noaa.gov/nero/regs/">www.nero.noaa.gov/nero/regs/</a>   |
| <b>Striped Bass</b>                                | NA  | 28" total length  | 2, plus bonus fish with card, no possession allowed in EEZ  | Possession prohibited in federal waters (3–200 nm). See pages 13 and 19 for NJ waters.  |
| <b>Dolphin (Mahi mahi)</b>                         | Year round  | None  | 10 per day, not to exceed 60 per vessel, which ever is less — except on a charter or headboat, then 10 per paying passenger.  | For current federal waters regulations (3–200nm), refer to <a href="http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/hms/">www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/hms/</a> or call (727) 824-5399.   |
| <b>Marlin, White</b>                               | Year round  | 66" lower jaw–fork length   | None  | Billfish require Highly Migratory Species (HMS) permit when fishing in federal waters (3–200 nm). For permits refer to <a href="http://www.hmspermits.gov">www.hmspermits.gov</a> or call (888) 872-8862.   |
| <b>Marlin, Blue</b>                                | Year round  | 99" lower jaw–fork length   | None  | During any sanctioned billfish tournaments offering prize money, non-offset circle hooks are required for lures with natural bait or natural/artificial bait combos.  |
| <b>Roundscale Spearfish</b>                        | Year round  | 66" lower jaw–fork length   | None  |   |
| <b>Sailfish</b>                                    | Year round  | 63" lower jaw–fork length   | None  | All non-tournament billfish landings must be reported to NMFS within 24 hours, either online at <a href="http://www.hmspermits.gov">www.hmspermits.gov</a> or by calling (800) 894-5528.  |
| <b>Spearfish, Longbill</b>                         | None  | None  | Prohibited  | For current regulations refer to <a href="http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/hms/">www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/hms/</a> or call (727) 824-5399.   |
| <b>Golden Tilefish</b>                             | Year round  | None  | None  | For current federal waters regulations (3–200nm), refer to <a href="http://www.safmc.net">www.safmc.net</a> or call toll free (866) SAFMC-10.   |
| <b>Swordfish</b>                                   | Year round  | 47" lower jaw–fork length if the head is naturally attached or 29" cleithrum to caudal keel if the head has been removed. | <b>For anglers:</b> 1 per person, no more than 4 per vessel per trip.<br><b>For charter vessels:</b> 1 per paying passenger, no more than 6 per vessel per trip.<br><b>For headboat vessels:</b> 1 per paying passenger, no more than 15 per vessel per trip. | Swordfish, tuna and sharks require an HMS permit when fishing in federal waters (3–200 nm). For permits, refer to <a href="http://www.hmspermits.gov">www.hmspermits.gov</a> or call (888) 872-8862.<br>All non-tournament swordfish landings must be reported to NMFS within 24 hours either online at <a href="http://www.hmspermits.gov">www.hmspermits.gov</a> or by calling (800) 894-5528.  |
| <b>Tuna, Albacore (Longfin)</b>                    | Year round  | None  | None  | † Bluefin tuna are managed in two regions; Northern, extending north from the Great Egg Inlet and Southern extending south from Great Egg Inlet. Fishing for bluefin tuna in the Gulf of Mexico is prohibited. Bluefin tuna retention limits may change throughout the season. Visit <a href="http://www.hmspermits.gov">www.hmspermits.gov</a> or call (888) 872-8862 or (978) 281-9260 for current information.                         |
| <b>Tuna, Bigeye</b>                                | Year round  | 27" curved fork length  | None  |   |
| <b>Tuna, Bluefin†</b>                              | January 1, 2012 to December 31, 2012 or until season is closed. | <27" curved fork length   | Prohibited  | All recreational bluefin tuna landings must be reported to NMFS within 24 hours either online at <a href="http://www.hmspermits.gov">www.hmspermits.gov</a> or by calling (888) 872-8862.   |
|  |   | >27" to <73" curved fork length   | BFT limits can change during the season. Charter/headboat regs changed in April 2012. Prior to departure, check <a href="http://www.hmspermits.gov">www.hmspermits.gov</a> or 888-USA-TUNA for up-to-date limits.   |   |
| <b>Tuna, Skipjack</b>                              | Year round  | None  | None  | For current federal waters regulations (3–200nm), refer to <a href="http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/hms/">www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/hms/</a> or call (301) 713-2347 for swordfish/sharks or (978) 281-9260 for tunas.  |
| <b>Tuna, Yellowfin</b>                             | Year round  | 27" curved fork length  | 3 per person per trip   |   |
| <b>Sharks*, other than spiny or smooth dogfish</b> | Year round  | 54" fork length for authorized species* except no minimum size for Atlantic sharpnose or bonnethead sharks                | 1 authorized* shark/vessel/trip plus 1 Atlantic sharpnose and 1 bonnethead shark/person/trip  | See below for list of shark groups which MAY be kept or MUST be released. Swordfish, tuna and sharks require an HMS permit when fishing in federal waters (3–200 nm). For permits, refer to <a href="http://www.hmspermits.gov">www.hmspermits.gov</a> or call (888) 872-8862. Recreational fishermen (those that do not have a limited access commercial shark permit) can not sell, barter or trade any Atlantic shark or shark pieces. |
| <b>Wahoo</b>                                       | Year round  | None  | 2 per person per day  | For more information, contact the South Atlantic Fisheries Management Council at (727) 824-5326.  |
| <b>Wreckfish</b>                                   | None  | None  | Prohibited  |   |

**\*Shark Species That May Be Kept (Authorized Species):** Large Coastal Shark—blacktip, bull, lemon, nurse, tiger, spinner, scalloped hammerhead, smooth hammerhead, great hammerhead; Small Coastal Shark—Atlantic sharpnose, bonnethead, blacknose, finetooth; Pelagic Shark—Shortfin mako, blue, porbeagle, oceanic whitetip and common thresher. **Shark Species That MUST Be Released (Prohibited Species):** Atlantic angel, basking, bigeye sand tiger, bigeye sixgill, bigeye thresher, bignose, Caribbean reef, Caribbean sharpnose, dusky, Galapagos, longfin mako, narrowtooth, night, sandbar, sand tiger, sevengill, silky, sixgill, smalltail, whale and white.

Regulations concerning highly migratory species (HMS) such as tuna, swordfish, shark and billfish, are subject to change. Refer to [www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/hms/](http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/hms/) for a list of complete federal regulations for highly migratory species. For questions/clarification of the federal highly migratory species regulations, contact the National Marine Fisheries Service at (301) 713-2347 or go to [www.nmfs.noaa.gov](http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov).

### SHELLFISH LICENSE INFORMATION

A clamming license is now called a shellfish license and is required for harvesting of all species of benthic mollusks (with the exception of conchs, addressed in the commercial marine fisheries regulations), including, but not limited to, hard and soft clams, surf clams, oysters, bay scallops and mussels. Other specific commercial shellfish licenses exist such as surf clam dredge, Delaware Bay oyster dredge boat, and Delaware Bay licenses to harvest in Areas 1, 2 and 3.

Anyone engaged in any shellfish harvesting activity with someone holding a commercial shellfish license must also possess their own commercial shellfish license.

The senior shellfish license is a lifetime license.

For shellfishing regulations, see pages 18–19. Prior to harvesting any shellfish, be certain to consult the Shellfish Growing Water Classification Charts published by DEP's Bureau of Marine Water Monitoring, available at any shellfish license agent, state shellfish offices, online at <http://www.nj.gov/dep/bmw/waterclass.htm> or call the Bureau of Marine Water Monitoring at (609) 748-2000. Shellfish licenses are available for purchase online at [www.NJ.WildlifeLicense.com](http://www.NJ.WildlifeLicense.com).

### Shellfish License Fees

- **Resident recreational shellfish:** \$10  
Harvest limit of 150 shellfish (in aggregate) per day. Sale of catch prohibited.
- **Non-resident recreational shellfish:** \$20  
Harvest limit of 150 shellfish (in aggregate) per day. Sale of catch prohibited. License valid only during the months of June, July, August and September.
- **Juvenile recreational shellfish:** \$2  
For persons under 14 years of age. Subject to same restrictions as resident or nonresident adult recreational license holders.
- **Resident commercial shellfish:** \$50  
Unlimited harvest. Shellfish may be sold only to certified dealers.
- **Non-resident Commercial Shellfish:** \$250  
Unlimited harvest. Shellfish may be sold to certified dealers only.
- **Senior citizen recreational shellfish license:** FREE (\$2 application fee)  
NJ residents age 62 years or older. Harvest limit, 150 shellfish (in aggregate) per day. Sale of shellfish prohibited.
- **Disabled veterans:** Fish and Wildlife-certified disabled veterans are eligible for free shellfish license at any shellfish license agent location. For more information on how to become certified, call (908) 637-4125.

### Crab Pot License Information

**Crab Pot licenses are available at all agent locations:**

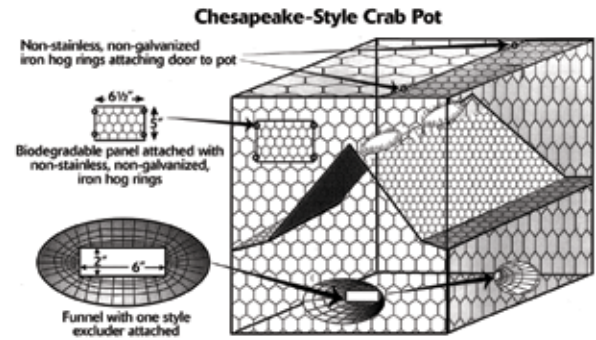
Recreational Crab Pot/Trot Line Licenses and Non-Commercial Crab Dredge Licenses are available for purchase online at: [www.NJ.WildlifeLicense.com](http://www.NJ.WildlifeLicense.com) or at any Fish and Wildlife-certified license agent including those license agents listed at right. For the most current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


- **Recreational crab pot/trot line license:** \$2  
Harvest limit of one bushel per day. Refer to the shellfish regulations on page 18 for all recreational crabbing regulations.
- **Non-commercial crab dredge license:** \$15  
Harvest limit of one bushel per day during the crab dredge season. Refer to the crab regulations on page 18 for all recreational crabbing regulations.

### TERRAPIN EXCLUDERS AND BIODEGRADABLE PANELS ARE REQUIRED ON CHESAPEAKE-STYLE CRAB POTS

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

These crab pot modifications will help reduce the unintentional drowning of terrapins and allow for escapement of these and other species in the event that pots are lost or abandoned. Terrapin excluder devices must be no larger than 2-inch high by 6-inch wide and securely fastened inside each funnel



entrance. Biodegradable panels must measure at least 6½-inch wide by 5-inch high and be located in the upper section of the crab pot. The panel must be constructed of, or fastened to the pot with wood lath, cotton, hemp, sisal or jute twine not greater than 3/16" diameter, or non-stainless steel, uncoated ferrous metal not greater than 3/32" diameter. The door or a side of the pot may serve as the biodegradable panel ONLY if it is fastened to the pot with any of the material specified above. Crabbers should be aware that ALL non-collapsible, Chesapeake-style crab pots MUST be licensed and marked with the gear identification number of the owner. For crab pot license information and regulations, see the regulations on page 18 and license agents below. 

### SHELLFISH AND NON-COMMERCIAL CRAB POT LICENSE AGENTS (For over-the-counter sales only)

#### ATLANTIC COUNTY

Egg Harbor True Value, 208 N. Philadelphia Ave., Egg Harbor City.. (609) 965-0815  
Fish Finder Marina, 3645 Atlantic-Brigantine Blvd., Brigantine ..... (609) 457-5384  
Main Street Hardware, 6016 Main St., Mays Landing..... (609) 625-4941  
NJ Div. Fish and Wildlife, 360 Rt. 9 N (milepost 51), Port Republic.. (609) 748-2021  
Zeus Sporting Goods, 6679 Black Horse Pike, Egg Harbor Twp..... (609) 646-1668

#### CAMDEN COUNTY

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

#### CAPE MAY COUNTY

Avalon Hodge Podge, 2389 Ocean Dr., Avalon ..... (609) 967-3274  
Belleplaine Supply, 346 Handsmill Rd., Belleplaine ..... (609) 861-2345  
Budd's Bait & Tackle, 109 Fullingmill Rd., Villas ..... (609) 886-6935  
Capt. Tate's Tackle Box, 450 No. Route 47, Cape May CH..... (609) 861-4001  
City of Ocean City, 861 Asbury Ave., Ocean City..... (609) 525-9328  
Just Sports, 21 Mechanic St., Cape May Court House..... (609) 465-6171  
Smuggler's Cove, 370 83rd St., Stone Harbor ..... (609) 368-1700  
Upper Township, 2100 Tuckahoe Rd., Tuckahoe ..... (609) 628-2805  
Wal\*Mart, 3159 Rt. 9S, Rio Grande ..... (609) 465-7760

#### CUMBERLAND COUNTY

AlR Bait & Tackle, 222 Bridgeton Fairton Rd., Bridgeton..... (856) 451-1800  
Beaver Dam Boat Rentals, 514 Old Beaver Dam Rd., Newport ..... (856) 447-3633  
Big Daddy's Sport Haven, 595 Sherman Ave., Millville ..... (856) 453-9009  
Delaware Bay Office, 1672 E. Buckshutem Rd., Millville ..... (856) 785-0730  
Shire Products, 389 S. Lincoln Ave., Vineland ..... (856) 692-3646

#### GLOUCESTER COUNTY

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

#### HUDSON COUNTY

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

#### MIDDLESEX COUNTY

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

#### MONMOUTH COUNTY

Brielle Tackle, 800 Ashley Ave., Brielle ..... (732) 528-5720  
L & H Woods and Water, 2045 Rt. 35, Wall ..... (732) 282-1812

#### OCEAN COUNTY

American Sportsman, 857 Mill Creek Rd., Manahawkin ..... (609) 597-4104  
The Bait Shop, 57 Main St., Bradley Beach ..... (732) 361-8500  
Bob Kislín's, 1214 Rt. 37 East, Toms River ..... (732) 929-9300  
Chumbucket, 381 Rt. 9, West Creek ..... (609) 294-2500  
Downes Bait & Tackle, 287 Brennan Concourse, Bayville..... (732) 269-0137  
Fish Bonz Bait & Tackle, 103 Lacey Rd., Forked River ..... (609) 971-2928  
Grizz's Forked River B & T, 232 N. Main St., Forked River..... (609) 693-9298  
Lacey Marine, 308 Rt. 9, So., Forked River ..... (609) 693-0151  
L & H Woods and Water, 403 Rt. 9, Waretown ..... (609) 242-1812  
Pell's Fish & Sport Shop, 335 Mantoloking Rd., Bricktown ..... (732) 477-2121  
Surf City Bait & Tackle, 317 Long Beach Blvd., Surf City..... (609) 494-2333  
Tip's Hardware, 218 Main St., West Creek ..... (609) 296-3192

#### SOMERSET COUNTY

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



# RADFORD REEF

By Hugh M. Carberry, Reef Coordinator

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Following 16 months of rigorous preparatory work, the 563-foot former U.S. Navy warship Arthur W. Radford was sunk on August 10, 2011 on the Del-Jersey-Land Reef to become one of the largest artificial reefs in the world.

As planned, the vessel sank at a slow, controlled rate and remained oriented in an upright position on the ocean floor. This successful conclusion was a direct result of the collaborative work between reef coordinators from Delaware, New Jersey and Maryland plus the expertise of the Norfolk, Virginia-based American Marine Group (AMG) who prepared the vessel for reefing.

The reefing team faced many challenges along the way but achieved their goal: to create a safe and extremely clean ship that would provide maximum benefits as an artificial reef for anglers and scuba divers.

“ *The Division of Fish and Wildlife expects the Arthur W. Radford reef to evolve into a world-class angling and scuba diving destination.* ”

The vessel's high profile, numerous compartments and tens of thousands of nooks and crannies will provide essential habitat for open and bottom water fish species. It's orientation on the ocean floor, numerous access points throughout—in addition to its colossal size—will offer scuba divers from all skill levels hundreds of areas to explore.

Our reef team for this project consists of the U.S. Navy, the New Jersey, Delaware, Maryland fish and wildlife agencies plus American Marine Group all boasting with pride that the Arthur W.

Radford is the cleanest vessel in the world ever reefed. Working with officials from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency during the cleanup and preparatory phases, miles of coated copper wire and numerous felt gaskets that could potentially contained PCBs were completely removed.

The Arthur W. Radford was a relatively new vessel having been constructed in 1974. Although the likelihood of those contaminants being onboard was extremely remote, the reef team elected to remove these items anyway. In addition, testing was also performed on paint at randomly selected locations throughout the vessel to ensure no PCBs were present. All samples tested came back negative for contaminant. Removal of these potential contaminants and such rigorous paint testing has never before been performed on any warship reefed off the United States. The Arthur W. Radford is a one-of-a-kind clean, green reef.

Measured from the keel to the top of the super-structure, the Radford is 70 feet in height and was sunk at a depth of 130 feet. This means that about half of the water column (from the ocean floor to the surface) contains structure from the Arthur W. Radford. Bottom currents running along the ocean floor will be directed upwards by the ship's hull, carrying nutrient rich water to the surface. These nutrients will create beneficial blooms of plankton creating new feeding areas. Baitfish such as sand lance, round herring, anchovies and butterfish will be found in abundance nearby, feeding on zooplankton.

In addition, for reasons unknown, baitfishes have a tendency to school around high profile structure. Some theorize that these species are either using the high profile structure as a point of reference or find that the structure's shadow conceals them from roving large pelagic fishes. The end result is that large pelagic fishes such as bluefin tuna, cobia and wahoo will discover these

schools and utilize the Arthur W. Radford as a prime feeding area.

“ *Shark anglers will be able to drift across the reef and have the opportunity to catch blue and mako sharks; trolling vessels will have the possibility of catching bluefin tuna and wahoo.* ”

Reef-associated species such as black sea bass, tautog and hake will also be found in great abundance at the Arthur W. Radford site.

Once the vessel's tens of thousands of nooks and crannies are fully colonized by hydroids, anemones and blue mussels, which usually takes about two years, this lush growth will

## Arthur W. Radford Facts

**Deployed at:**  
N 38 30.850'  
W 074 30.656'

**Destroyer type:** Spruance class  
**Constructed:** 1974  
**Decommissioned:** 2003  
**Length:** 563 feet  
**Beam:** 55 feet  
**Displacement:** 9,200 tons



attract and provide refuge for shrimp, lobsters and stone crabs, providing an eclectic menu for fish. Early reports from scuba divers who dove the Radford reef between August and October 2011 documented droves of black seabass and even a wahoo. This vessel will last more than 100 years on the ocean floor offering recreational opportunities for generations to come.

Scuba divers from New Jersey who have traveled to Florida to dive the 904-foot aircraft carrier Oriskany or the 522-foot missile range instrumentation ship Vandenberg now have a 563-foot warship in their own backyard. The Del-Jersey-Land Reef is located only 28.5 nautical miles south of Cape May Point. The vessel's high vertical profile makes it the perfect scuba dive for beginner, novice and expert wreck divers.

Beginners can descend to the upper level of the ship (60–65 feet below the surface) and explore the Radford's wheel house and structures that held antisubmarine weapons. Novice divers can swim along the upper deck and peer down into the silos that held tomahawk cruise missiles or penetrate into the chain locker room that held hundreds of shots of chain for the vessel's massive anchors. (Each shot of anchor chain is 15 fathoms, or 90-feet long.) Experienced wreck divers and technical divers can penetrate into the deeper sections of the ship and explore the engine rooms or descend down an elevator shaft to the deepest portions of the ship.


Wreck divers will be pleased to find that the Arthur W. Radford is an extremely "diver friendly" reef. All steel doors and hatches that could potentially close behind scuba divers have been removed, overhanging wires that could ensnare dive gear were taken down and numerous access panels were cut on the sides of the hull for penetrating inside. In addition to the side holes, the upper deck was also cut at strategic locations to increase the ambient light entering the vessel.

The increased visibility within the ships interior resulting from hull and deck modifications along with the cavernous areas inside all provide a target-rich environment for spear gun hunters. In particular, from the helipad deck near the stern to the end of the superstructure near the bow lies a 300-foot alleyway that is wide and high enough to allow three tractor trailers to drive through side-by-side.

“ *This area will become a spear gun hunters dream for shooting trigger fish, tautog and black sea bass.* ”

The tri-state reef team and American Marine Group did everything possible to make the reef diver-friendly and to sink the Radford upright and intact, but Mother Nature had something else in store. Just 17 days following the ship's

deployment, Hurricane Irene made a direct hit over the Del-Jersey-Land Reef. Scuba divers from Ocean City, Maryland who dove shortly thereafter documented that the Radford had broken into three pieces. This news came as a shock to all of the reef partners. Evidently, the energy released from Hurricane Irene was no match for even a former U.S. Navy destroyer. While this unexpected change is unfortunate, ultimately the reef's productivity will increase.

Scuba divers will now have easier and complete access to all compartments and additional ambient light will enter the vessel. Fishing charters and dive boats can dive and fish on each portion separately, eliminating the need to jockey for position while anchoring. The hull breakage also created a measurable increase in the surface area which will increase the reef's fish drawing power. The hull separation will also allow lobsters to enter the interior of the vessel instead of just burrowing beneath the hull at the ocean floor. 



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### The Division of Fish and Wildlife wants to hear about your excursions to the Arthur W. Radford.

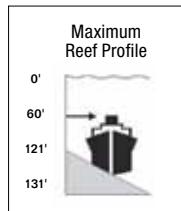
Contact us at (609) 748-2022 to share your fishing reports and diving observations. We value your feedback, whether complimentary or critical. Your suggestions, comments and observations ultimately make us better reef managers.

**Go and enjoy the Arthur W. Radford!**

## Del-Jersey-Land Inshore DGPS

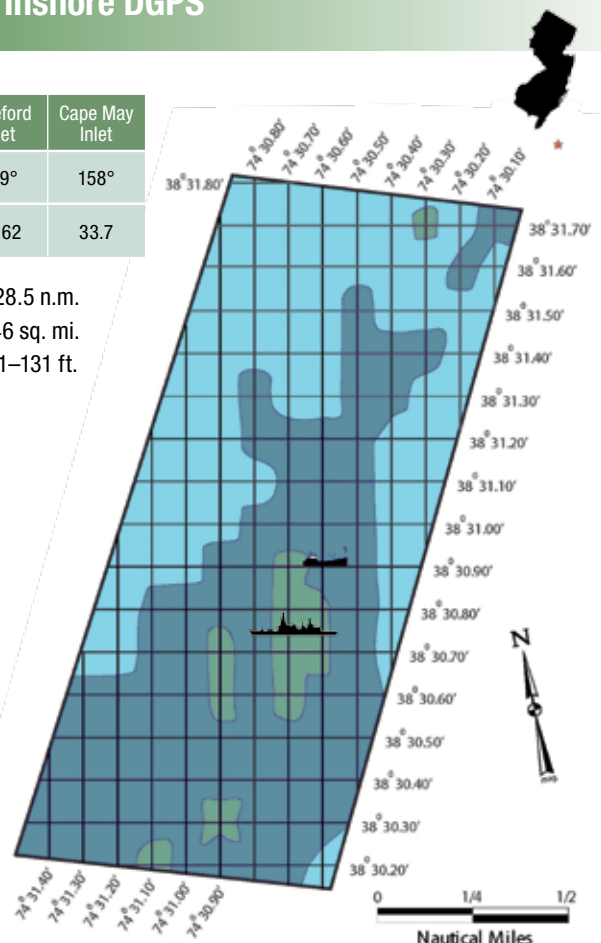
| FROM            | Townsend's Inlet | Hereford Inlet | Cape May Inlet |
|-----------------|------------------|----------------|----------------|
| Compass Bearing | 179°             | 169°           | 158°           |
| Distance (n.m.) | 41.7             | 35.62          | 33.7           |

Distance Offshore.....28.5 n.m.  
 Reef Area.....1.46 sq. mi.  
 Depth Range.....121–131 ft.



### Depth Contours

- 120–125 ft.
- 125–130 ft.
- 130–135 ft.



# Skillful Angler Awards Program



Fishing the Barnegat Light Reef, John Howell caught this 4.24-pound black sea bass.

The Skillful Angler Awards Program is designed to supplement the New Jersey Record Fish Program. It is comprised of three categories: 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. All photo entries become property of the Division of Fish and Wildlife and will not be returned. Well-composed, high resolution photos may be selected for printing in future *Digests*.

The Skillful Angler Awards program acknowledges 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. The program is 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.

Anglers qualifying for a Skillful Angler award receive a certificate and a bronze pin to adorn their fishing hat or jacket. Only one pin and certificate per species—regardless of category—will be awarded annually to each participant, but an angler may submit applications for larger fish caught even after receiving a pin.

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 or her accomplishment as the best of New Jersey's Skillful Anglers.

Fish must be measured from the tip of the nose (with mouth closed) to the tip of the tail (see *Measuring Fish* page 12). For Catch and Release categories, fish must be photographed alongside a ruler. For Adult/Junior categories, fish must be weighed and measured by fishing license agents, tackle shops or authorized Fish and Wildlife fisheries biologists.

Learn more online at [NJFishandWildlife.com/skflang.htm](http://NJFishandWildlife.com/skflang.htm).

## Minimum Entry Requirements:

| Species         | Adult Weight (lbs., oz.) | Junior Weight (lbs., oz.) | Catch & Release (inches) |
|-----------------|--------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------|
| Black Sea Bass  | 4                        | 3                         | 20                       |
| Striped Bass    | 40                       | 36                        | 42                       |
| Black Drum      | 70                       | 63                        | 46                       |
| Bluefish        | 18                       | 16                        | 33                       |
| Cod             | 30                       | 27                        | 42                       |
| Dolphin         | 30                       | 27                        | n/a                      |
| Winter Flounder | 2                        | 1 lb., 8 oz.              | 16                       |
| Fluke           | 8                        | 7                         | 27                       |
| Kingfish        | 1                        | 8 oz.                     | 13                       |
| Mako Shark      | 250                      | 225                       | n/a                      |
| Blue Marlin     | 400                      | 360                       | n/a                      |
| White Marlin    | 60                       | 54                        | n/a                      |
| Pollock         | 25                       | 22 lbs., 8 oz.            | 41                       |
| Tautog          | 8                        | 7                         | 22                       |
| Albacore Tuna   | 50                       | 45                        | n/a                      |
| Big Eye Tuna    | 200                      | 180                       | n/a                      |
| Bluefin Tuna    | 500                      | 450                       | n/a                      |
| Yellowfin Tuna  | 120                      | 108                       | n/a                      |
| Tuna (other)    | 250                      | 225                       | n/a                      |
| Weakfish        | 10                       | 9                         | 30                       |

The New Jersey State Record Fish Program requires a separate application and is based on weight alone. Scale certification documentation and a weighmaster's signature are necessary. Other rules apply. Visit Fish and Wildlife's Web site at [NJFishandWildlife.com](http://NJFishandWildlife.com) for a complete list of current state records. See also page 25.

## New Jersey Skillful Angler Application

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

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

Daytime Telephone Number (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

**Entry Category** (check only one):

Adult  Junior (16 years and under)

Catch and Release (qualification based on length)

**Fish Species** (Angler must complete. Subject to verification by a state biologist.)

Weight \_\_\_\_\_ lb(s), \_\_\_\_\_ oz. Length \_\_\_\_\_ in. Girth \_\_\_\_\_ in.

Date Caught\* \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ Time \_\_\_\_\_

Location \_\_\_\_\_

**Caught from** (check only one):

Boat  Shore  Surf  Jetty

Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

Line Test Used \_\_\_\_\_ Reel Type \_\_\_\_\_

Rod Type \_\_\_\_\_ Lure/Bait \_\_\_\_\_

### Certification for Adult and Junior Categories

Name of Establishment \_\_\_\_\_  
(where fish was measured and weighed)

Telephone Number \_\_\_\_\_

Weighmaster's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Weighmaster's Signature \_\_\_\_\_

**I certify:** 1) this fish was caught in New Jersey waters in accordance with state laws and regulations; 2) the entry was weighed on a certified scale (for Adult and Junior categories only).

I have enclosed a clear, side-view photo.

Applicant's Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

\* Application and photo must be submitted **within 30 days** of catching the fish. Applications for fish caught in December will be accepted only until January 31.

### Mail to:

NJ Division of Fish and Wildlife  
Skillful Angler Awards Program  
Pequest Natural Resource Education Center  
605 Pequest Rd.  
Oxford, NJ 07863

# New Jersey State Record Marine Sport Fish

New Jersey Division of Fish and Wildlife's Record Fish Program honors anglers who catch the largest of select species of freshwater and saltwater fish. Record size is based on weight alone; there are no line classes. Currently there are 61 marine species eligible for entry into the program.

Anglers are reminded that the objective of the Record Fish Program is to increase awareness of fishing opportunities for species that are regularly sought and routinely found on or off the coast of New Jersey. The original list of 72 species was pared down with that objective in mind.

Eleven species are now retired from the list of program-eligible fish, but remain on a separate list posted on Fish and Wildlife's Web site. One historical catch is also retired and posted on the list.

Anglers should be aware of the procedure in effect for entering the Record Fish Program. First, separate applications are required for freshwater and saltwater species. Second, for saltwater entries, it is now mandatory that a marine biologist inspect any potential record fish, as identification solely by photo is not always accurate. Anglers must call Fish and Wildlife's Nacote Creek Research Station at (609) 748-2020 to make arrangements for inspection. In most instances, the fish must be transported to this office in Port Republic. However, in the case of extremely large fish (i.e., shark and tuna), a biologist should be available to travel for dockside inspection. Note that all scale certification requirements still apply, including a valid Certificate of Inspection/Test Report and current Registration Certificate issued by the County Office of Weights and Measures.

The entry deadline is now no later than one month after the date of catch. Note that the triggerfish category is now defined as gray triggerfish.

For a complete list of state record fish or to print an application with complete program rules, visit the Division of Fish and Wildlife's Web site at [NJFishandWildlife.com/fishing.htm](http://NJFishandWildlife.com/fishing.htm).



**Fishing off of Cape May, this new state record black sea bass taken by Andrew Merendino weighed 8 lbs., 4.5 oz.**

## New Jersey State Record Marine Fish

| Species            | Lbs.                          | Oz. | Year | Angler                | Where Caught       |
|--------------------|-------------------------------|-----|------|-----------------------|--------------------|
| Amberjack, greater | 85                            | 0   | 1993 | Edwin Metzner         | Off Cape May       |
| Bass, black sea    | 8                             | 4.5 | 2010 | Andrew A. Merendino   | Off Cape May       |
| Bluefish           | 27                            | 1   | 1997 | Roger Kastorsky       | 5 Fathom Bank      |
| Bonito, Atlantic   | 13                            | 8   | 1945 | Frank Lykes, Jr.      | Off Sandy Hook     |
| Cobia              | 87                            | 0   | 1999 | John Shanchuk         | Off Sea Bright     |
| Cod                | 81                            | 0   | 1967 | Joseph Chesla         | Off Brielle        |
| Crab, blue         | 8 <sup>3/4</sup> " pt. to pt. |     | 2009 | Raymond Ponik         | Bayonne            |
| Croaker, Atlantic  | 5                             | 8   | 1981 | Frederick Brown       | Delaware Bay       |
| *Cunner            | 2                             | 9   | 2006 | Nick Honachefsky      | Mud Hole           |
| Dogfish, smooth    | 19                            | 9   | 2010 | Richard A. Proot, III | Mantoloking        |
| Dogfish, spiny     | 15                            | 12  | 1990 | Jeff Pennick          | Off Cape May       |
| Dolphin            | 63                            | 3   | 1974 | Scott Smith, Jr.      | Baltimore Canyon   |
| Drum, black        | 109                           | 0   | 2008 | Nick Henry            | Delaware Bay       |
| Drum, red          | 55                            | 0   | 1985 | Daniel Yanino         | Great Bay          |
| Eel, American      | 9                             | 13  | 1988 | Warren Campbell       | Atlantic City      |
| Fluke              | 19                            | 12  | 1953 | Walter Lubin          | Off Cape May       |
| Flounder, winter   | 5                             | 11  | 1993 | Jimmy Swanson         | Off Barnegat Light |
| Hake, white        | 41                            | 7   | 1989 | Wayne Eble            | Off Barnegat Light |

| Species               | Lbs.                             | Oz. | Year | Angler             | Where Caught            |
|-----------------------|----------------------------------|-----|------|--------------------|-------------------------|
| Kingfish, Northern    | 2                                | 8   | 2004 | Chester Urbanski   | Barnegat Bay            |
| Ling (red hake)       | 12                               | 13  | 2010 | Billy Watson       | Off Manasquan           |
| Mackerel, Atlantic    | 4                                | 1   | 1983 | Abe Elkin          | Manasquan Ridge         |
| Mackerel, king        | 54                               | 0   | 1998 | Fernando Alfaiate  | Off Cape May            |
| *Mackerel, Spanish    | 9                                | 12  | 1990 | Donald Kohler      | Off Cape May            |
| Marlin, blue          | 1,046                            | 0   | 1986 | Phil Infantolino   | Hudson Canyon           |
| Marlin, white         | 137                              | 8   | 1980 | Mike Marchell      | Hudson Canyon           |
| Perch, white          | 2                                | 12  | 1998 | Michael King       | Little Beach Creek      |
| *Pollock              | 46                               | 7   | 1975 | John Holton        | Off Brielle             |
| Porgy                 | 5                                | 14  | 1976 | Victor Rone        | Delaware Bay            |
| Sailfish              | 43                               | 4   | 2006 | Dr. John Tallia    | Linden Kohl Canyon      |
| Seatrout, spotted     | 11                               | 2   | 1974 | Bert Harper        | Holgate Surf            |
| Shad, American        | 7                                | 0   | 1967 | Rodger West        | Great Bay               |
| Shad, hickory         | Vacant (Minimum Weight 2 lbs.)   |     |      |                    |                         |
| 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, hammer-head    | 365                              | 0   | 1985 | Walter Thacara     | Mud Hole                |
| Shark, porbeagle      | Vacant (Minimum Weight 100 lbs.) |     |      |                    |                         |
| Shark, sandbar        | 168                              | 8   | 1987 | John Norton        | Little Egg Inlet        |
| Shark, s-fin mako     | 856                              | 0   | 1994 | Christopher Palmer | Wilmington Canyon       |
| Shark, thresher       | 683                              | 0   | 2009 | Bennett Fogelberg  | Fingers                 |
| Shark, tiger          | 880                              | 0   | 1988 | Billy DeJohn       | Off Cape May            |
| Sheepshead            | 17                               | 3   | 2003 | Paul Lowe          | Manahawkin Bay          |
| Spadefish             | 11                               | 6   | 1998 | Cliff Low          | Delaware Bay            |
| Spearfish, longbill   | 42                               | 0   | 1989 | George Algard      | Poor Man's Canyon       |
|                       | 42                               | 0   | 1997 | Joseph Natoli      | Hudson Canyon           |
| Spot                  | 0                                | 13  | 2003 | Robert Belsky, Jr. | Little Sheepshead Creek |
| *Striped Bass         | 78                               | 8   | 1982 | Al McReynolds      | Atlantic City           |
| Swordfish             | 530                              | 0   | 1964 | Edmund Levitt      | Wilmington Canyon       |
| *Tautog               | 25                               | 0   | 1998 | Anthony Monica     | Off Ocean City          |
| Tilefish, golden      | 63                               | 8   | 2009 | Dennis Muhlenforth | Linden Kohl Canyon      |
| Tilefish, gray        | 18                               | 7   | 2007 | Joseph Sanzone     | Tom's Canyon            |
| Triggerfish, gray     | 5                                | 12  | 2008 | Ronald Pires       | High Bar Harbor         |
| Tuna, albacore        | 77                               | 15  | 1984 | Dr. S. Scannapiego | Spencer Canyon          |
| Tuna, big-eye         | 364                              | 14  | 1984 | George Krenick     | Hudson Canyon           |
| Tuna, bluefin         | 1,030                            | 6   | 1981 | Royal Parsons      | Off Pt. Pleasant        |
| Tuna, skipjack        | 13                               | 4   | 1999 | Craig Eberbach     | Wilmington Canyon       |
| Tuna, yellowfin       | 290                              | 0   | 1980 | Wayne Brinkerhoff  | Hudson Canyon           |
| Tunny, little         | 24                               | 15  | 1977 | Mark Niemczyk      | Off Sea Bright          |
| Wahoo                 | 123                              | 12  | 1992 | Robert Carr        | 28-Mile Wreck           |
| Weakfish              | 18                               | 8   | 1986 | Karl Jones         | Delaware Bay            |
| Whiting (silver hake) | Vacant (Minimum Weight 2.5 lbs.) |     |      |                    |                         |

\* Fish was previously certified by the IGFA as a world record. For information concerning the New Jersey State Record Fish or Skillful Angler programs, visit the New Jersey Division of Fish and Wildlife's Web site at [NJFishandWildlife.com](http://NJFishandWildlife.com).

# Feisty

## White Perch

### Fine Fish in a Small Package

By Maryellen Gordon, Assistant Fisheries Biologist



Tom Pagliaroli

Collins Cove in the Mullica River provided some good white perch fishing for Chris Fitzsimmons.

The white perch, *Morone americana*, is a member of the temperate bass family and not a true perch. These fish resemble their much larger relative, the striped bass; however they are shorter, deeper-bodied and lack stripes. They are deepest under the first dorsal fin, creating the appearance of a hump. White perch have two dorsal fins, which are barely connected. The first dorsal fin has 8 to 10 strong spines and the second is completely soft rayed.

As water temperatures rise in the spring, adult perch begin their spawning run and move upstream into brackish and fresh waters. Females will release 50,000 to 150,000 eggs over a period of 10 to 21 days. A single female is surrounded by several males, then eggs and sperm are spread at will over sand or gravel bottoms.

After fertilization takes place, eggs hatch in one to six days. Juveniles remain close to their hatching grounds through much of the summer and fall. During winter months, they tend to move into deeper waters of the bays. White perch spend most of their lives in close proximity to the area where they were hatched.

White perch are schooling fish, from their youth through adulthood. They prefer open water, steering clear of cover and structures, but can be found near bridges and submerged logs. Lake populations of perch feed both during day and night, but are generally more active in low light. Both freshwater and saltwater white perch populations spend the day in deeper waters then move to the shallows and inshore waters at night. As young, they feed primarily on aquatic insect larvae, but as juveniles and adults, they consume a variety of small fishes, crabs and shrimp.

**For several reasons**, white perch are one of the most sought after fishing targets. Found in both fresh and brackish waters, these perch are plentiful when located, making them an easy target for anglers. They can be caught at any hour of the day, but are most active during changing light conditions. For their size, they are a bit feisty and can put up quite the fight. Perhaps an even greater selling point is how delectable they are to the palate. Some say that white perch are one of the tastiest fish in New Jersey's waters.

Knowing where to find these fish is one of the keys to successfully fishing for them; the other is figuring out how to attract them. Good places to try are creek and ditch mouths, drop offs to deep water and eddys. Talking with local anglers may be the best way to learn about white perch hot spots. If the locals won't give up their secret fishing sites, ask around at area bait shops.

While perch can be fished any time of the year, ice fishing in late winter/early spring might be the most productive. Perch spend more time in dense schools on the prowl for food during early spring, which can make for a very busy day of fishing once you locate the school. During summer months, perch are more spread out requiring more time to look for your prize.

When temperatures grow cooler in late fall and early winter, perch will gather in shallow weeds. As mid-winter



NJ Div. Fish and Wildlife

approaches, perch will migrate to the nearest deep pool or basin. They welcome the spring ice thaw by moving towards their spawning grounds. Keep in mind that perch are small predators and will follow their food source.

When trying your luck at ice fishing remember that ice should be a minimum of 4 inches thick for a single angler, 5 inches or more to support several anglers single file. Drill several holes for a more efficient way to locate the fish. The most effective method of ice fishing is jigging where you raise just the rod tip about a foot and drop it back to where it was, repeating every five to 10 seconds.

Live bait should be your choice when searching for a school. Perch tend to congregate at about 15 to 25 feet. Once you locate fish, continue fishing around that depth with live or artificial bait. Whether fishing in the colder or warmer months, suggested live baits include minnows, worms and grass shrimp.



Tom Pagliaroli

### Useful artificial baits

include vertical spoons or flash spoons, horizontal jigs and swimming lures. A sure-fire combination is to put a minnow head on one hook of a vertical spoon.

New Jersey has many good places for white perch fishing. Head north to Lake Hopatcong for a little ice fishing. If you're

in the south, try Collins Cove on the Mullica River or Amasa Hole on the Bass River—the newly constructed pier seen from Exit 50 on the Garden State Parkway. Other productive white perch fishing locations are the Raritan River, Manasquan River, Toms River, Great Egg Harbor River, Tuckahoe River, Maurice River and Cohansey River.

No matter where or when you try to catch these lively fish, you are sure to have a fulfilling day out on the water!

For information on white perch by marine fisheries biologist Hugh Carberry, visit our Website at [NJFishandWildlife.com/artwhtperch.htm](http://NJFishandWildlife.com/artwhtperch.htm).

Thanks to Marc Resciniti (Bureau of Marine Water Monitoring) and Hugh Carberry (Bureau of Marine Fisheries), contributors.

## A simple recipe worth trying!

### Beer Battered White Perch

- |                              |                    |
|------------------------------|--------------------|
| 8 whole white perch, dressed | 1 cup flour        |
| 1/2 cup butter, melted       | 1/2 cup cornstarch |
| 1/2 cup beer                 | vegetable oil      |
| 2 eggs                       |                    |

Beat eggs and mix with butter and beer. Stir in flour and cornstarch. In a deep fryer or pan, heat oil on high. Dip each white perch in batter and then fry until golden brown. Drain on paper towels and serve. Serves 3 to 4.

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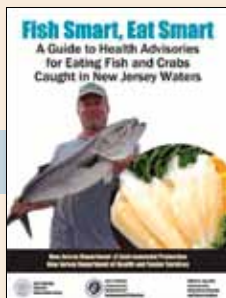
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## Fish Smart, Eat Smart Eating Fish And Crabs Caught In New Jersey Waters

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

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.

The current list of fish consumption advisories consists of state-wide, regional and water body-specific warnings for a variety of fish species and fish consumers. The New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) and the Department of Health and Senior Services have prepared literature and a new Web site to help you make informed choices about which fish to eat and how to reduce your exposure to these harmful chemicals.

**Check online for fish consumption advisories on the local water body in which you fish!  
Go to [FishSmartEatSmartNJ.org](http://FishSmartEatSmartNJ.org)**

To reduce exposure to harmful chemical contaminants when preparing and eating the fish species taken from the identified waters, it is essential to follow the guidelines provided. The DEP encourages you to consult the Fish Smart-Eat Smart Fish Advisory Guide or [www.FishSmartEatSmartNJ.org](http://www.FishSmartEatSmartNJ.org) when making decisions about eating recreationally caught fish and crabs.

The Fish Smart-Eat Smart Advisory Guide includes contaminant information, advisory charts, plus preparation and cooking methods to reduce contaminant levels, as well as specific guidelines, advice and prohibitions for people at high risk, such as children, pregnant women and women of child-bearing age. The Guide also includes Web site links to Pennsylvania, Delaware and New York for information about fish consumption advisories for shared waters.

For a complete list of state and federal marine fish consumption advisories visit: [FishSmartEatSmartNJ.org](http://FishSmartEatSmartNJ.org).

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

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- Water Warrior – Serving the Silver Bay Area
- Circle of Life – Serving central Barnegat Bay/Tices Shoal
- Bay Sweeper – Serving southern Barnegat Bay/Little Egg Harbor Bay
- Waste Watcher – Serving Little Egg Harbor area



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For more information visit [NJBoating.org](http://NJBoating.org)

To report a malfunctioning pumpout station or other problems, contact the Marine Trades Association of New Jersey at (732) 292-1051 or [info@mtanj.org](mailto:info@mtanj.org)



**Keep Our  
Water Clean -  
Use Pumpouts**  
May 2012



Tom Pagliaroli

Nearly 14 miles out of Little Egg Inlet, Denise Theiler hooked a nice tautog.

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is now available online  
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Shyam Menon



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| Shellfisheries.....   | (609) 748-2040            |
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| <b>Delaware Bay Office</b>  |                           |
| 1672 E. Buckshutem Rd., Millville, NJ 08332..... (856) 785-0730   |                           |
| <b>Shellfish Dealership Information</b>   |                           |
| NJ Consumer Health Service, Dept. of Health   |                           |
| P.O. Box 369, Trenton, NJ 08625..... (609) 588-3123   |                           |
| <b>Shellfish Water Classification</b>   |                           |
| DEP, Water Monitoring and Standards   |                           |
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| <b>Northern Region Office</b>   |                           |
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| Endangered and Nongame Species (1 Van Syckel's Rd.).....  | (908) 638-4127            |
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| Law Enforcement (see Law Enf. contact at top) (Bergen, Essex, Hudson, Hunterdon, Morris, Passaic, Somerset, Sussex, Union, and Warren counties)..... (908) 735-8240 |                           |
| Pequest Trout Hatchery..... (908) 637-4173  |                           |
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| Law Enforcement (see Law Enf. contact at top) (Burlington, Mercer, Middlesex, Monmouth, and Ocean counties)..... (609) 259-2120                                     |                           |
| <b>Southern Region Office</b>   |                           |
| 220 Blue Anchor Rd., Sicklerville, NJ 08081   |                           |
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| Freshwater Fisheries.....   | (856) 629-4950            |
| Hunter Education.....   | (877) 2HUNTJNJ            |
| Land Management.....  | (856) 629-5006            |
| Wildlife Control.....   | (856) 629-7224            |
| Law Enforcement (see Law Enf. contact at top) (Atlantic, Camden, Cape May, Cumberland, Gloucester, and Salem counties)..... (856) 629-0555                          |                           |

■ PUBLICATIONS AVAILABLE

The following publications are available by writing:

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

**Shellfish Growing Waters Classification Charts**

This publication is available free at any shellfish license agent and online at <http://www.nj.gov/dep/bmw/waterclass.htm>.

**New Jersey Boaters Guide**

Send a self-addressed stamped, #10 envelope (2 oz. postage).

**New Jersey Pumpout Directory (free waterproof map)**

Write to the Nacote Creek address above.

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

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

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