

NEW JERSEY Fish & Wildlife Digest



NOTICE

Striped Bass Provisions

Included herein

WILL NOT BE IN EFFECT

Until the legislature votes and the provisions become law

Check newspapers for announcements, or see NJ Division of Fish and Wildlife's website at www.state.nj.us/dep/fgw for updates. For those without Internet access, the Marine Fisheries Trenton telephone menu will be updated regarding striped bass regulations. Call 609-292-2083. Select Option 1 for the Bureau of Marine Fisheries (both times) to access the recreational finfish regulations. The process takes just over one minute to reach the striped bass update.

Until that time, the 1999 law stating a 2 fish daily limit, and 28" minimum size shall remain in effect.



A SUMMARY OF RULES AND MANAGEMENT INFORMATION

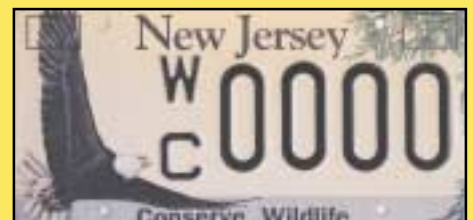
New Jersey Department Of Environmental Protection - Division of Fish & Wildlife

Vol. 13 No. 3 May 2000

Visit our website at:
www.state.nj.us/dep/fgw

Conserve Wildlife License Plates

Support Endangered and
Nongame Species
See page 16



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DEP ACTION LINE - 24 HOURS	609-292-7172
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Wildlife Education 856-629-7214

Seeking the Best Marine Fisheries Information



Bob McDowell, Director

In December 1999, legislation was approved and signed into law granting the Division a much-needed increase in hunting and fishing license fees. This increase will finally allow the Division to restore programs that had been curtailed due to budgetary shortfalls as well as to implement new programs. However, this funding is restricted to programs related to inland fish and wildlife.

The Division's Marine Fisheries Administration (Bureaus of Marine Fisheries and Shellfisheries) is funded through an annual appropriation from the State's general Treasury (New Jersey tax dollars) and from the Federal Aid in Sportfish Restoration Program. The federal funds received are a result of excise taxes charged on fishing equipment and motorboat fuel, and are distributed to the states based upon a formula which includes land area of a state and the number of licensed anglers. Since New Jersey has only a freshwater fishing license, our estimated one million saltwater anglers are not counted in the funding formula.

The result has New Jersey considered a minimum state for receiving these federal dollars. Most of the Sportfish Restoration funding goes to other states. It is ironic that the states of Nevada and New Mexico both receive more Sportfish Restoration funding for fisheries management than does New Jersey.

New Jersey's marine recreational and commercial fishing industries are valued between \$1.5 and \$2.5 billion, annually. The Marine Fisheries Administration is responsible for management programs that protect, conserve

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Where to Write Us

New Jersey Division of Fish & Wildlife
P.O. Box 400 • Trenton, NJ 08625-0400
Internet: www.state.nj.us/dep/fgw

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The *Digest* is available at coastal license agents and division offices. Articles and information may be reprinted with permission. Subscriptions are not available.

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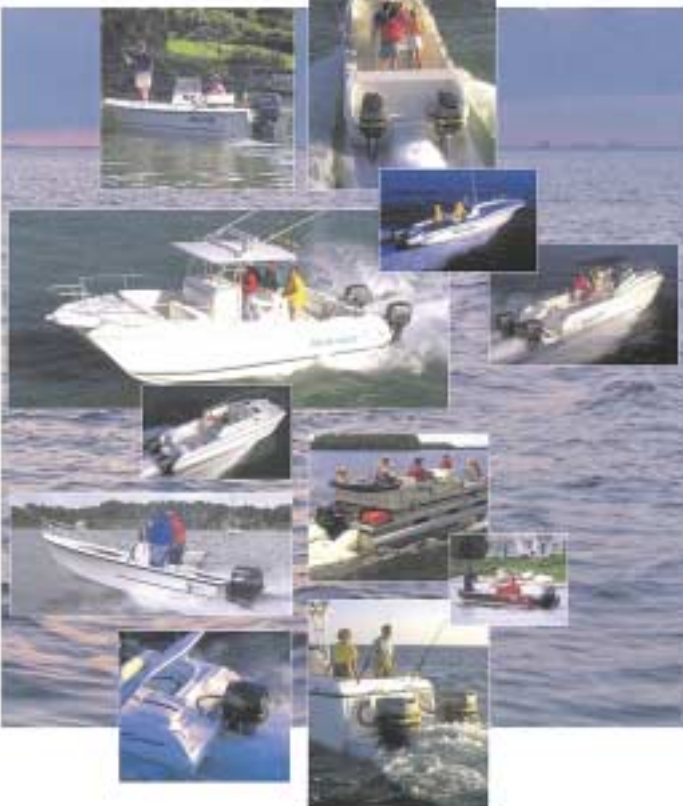


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and enhance the resources that support these fish. The Administration plays an active role in the development, implementation and enforcement of coastwide fishery management plans of the Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council and the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission.

The Administration has a fine list of accomplishments (including marine habitat protection and enhancement; fish and shellfish resource surveys) despite a relatively low level of funding. Yet we recognize there is a lot that remains to be done.

Consider that for the development of sound management strategies, data collection and analysis requirements can be enormous projects. One only needs to attend a public hearing to realize there is a demand for more thorough information to justify the numerous fishery management programs. The Division completely supports the philosophy of improving the quantity and quality of marine fisheries information. Unfortunately, the only way to get better scientific information upon which to base fishery management decisions is to substantially increase the level of funding. Marine fisheries funding has remained essentially unchanged since 1995 while the number of fishery management plans and requirements has increased exponentially.

If we are to provide the best information possible to make management decisions, we must acquire a level of funding for marine fisheries management proportional to the value of our marine fisheries resources. As the new millennium begins, the challenge to us all is how best to accomplish this initiative.

Motor Boat Regulations

for information write:

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State Police after their inspection.

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Monmouth Cty. Det.	732-842-5171
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Newark Bay	973-578-8173

REGULATORY UPDATE

by **Bruce Halgren**
Supervising Biologist

Regulatory changes for the 2000 fishing season include important recreational species such as striped bass, summer flounder, winter flounder and scup.

STRIPED BASS: Throughout the 1999 fishing season, the daily catch or possession limit for recreational anglers was two fish of at least 28 inches in length. Addendum IV to Amendment 5 of the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC) Interstate Fishery Management Plan (FMP) for Striped Bass, which was adopted in October 1999, called for a 14% reduction in the harvest of striped bass age 8 or older. A number of management options were developed in order to comply with the requirements of the FMP. Following several public hearings, the management option supported by the State's recreational fishermen were one striped bass greater than or equal to 24 inches yet less than 28 inches in addition to one striped bass 28 inches or greater as the daily possession limit for New Jersey marine waters. This management option was approved by the ASMFC and later introduced in the State Legislature. The Division of Fish and Wildlife anticipates the approval of this management option for the 2000 recreational fishing season. At press time, statutory changes had not been finalized. Until that time, the 1999 rules remain in effect. See the striped bass NOTICE on the cover for more details and how to learn about the updated regulation when it is in effect.

The New Jersey striped bass bonus fish program which allows participants one additional striped bass 28 inches or greater per day, with an annual quota of 225,000 pounds will likely remain unchanged for 2000. Existing striped bass seasonal closures will remain the same for 2000.

For an in-depth explanation of New Jersey's striped bass management over the past 15 years, see the article, "Striped Bass Management: "Looking Back - Looking Ahead", on page 6 in this Digest.

SUMMER FLOUNDER (FLUKE): Recreational anglers will be pleased to know that the open recreational summer flounder fishing season has been extended in 2000 from May 15 through October 11 (1999 season) to May 6 through October 20. The minimum legal size limit in 2000 will remain at 15^{1/2}", with a possession limit of eight summer flounder.

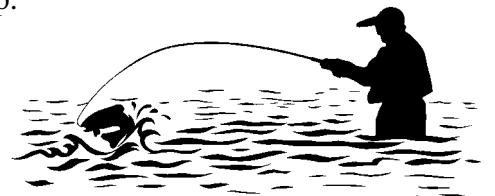
Each winter the ASMFC and the Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council (MAFMC) meet to review the previous year's summer flounder coastal landings and the updated stock assessment to develop management measures for the coming year. In 2000, a 41 percent reduction, by number, from 1998 landings is required. The ASMFC has determined that a liberalized recreational summer flounder season together with a 15^{1/2}" minimum legal size limit and a possession limit of eight fish will maintain New Jersey's compliance

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2 FREE FRESH WATER FISHING DAYS Saturday and Sunday, June 3 & 4, 2000

On these two days, anyone may fish New Jersey's public fresh waters without a license or a trout stamp.

However, all other regulations, including size and daily catch limits, remain in effect.



Regulatory Update
continued from page 5

with the ASMFC summer flounder fishery management plan while allowing New Jersey's fishermen to enjoy increased recreational fishing days.

WINTER FLOUNDER: For 2000, the recreational minimum size limit for winter flounder has increased from 10" to 10½". A further increase from 10½" to 11" will become effective January 1, 2001. This step-wise increase in the winter flounder size limit will lessen the immediate impact of an anticipated ASMFC required size limit increase and at the same time maintains New Jersey's compliance with the ASMFC fishery management plan for winter flounder. New Jersey anglers can continue to enjoy a season that extends from March 1 through May 31 and September 15 through December 31 with no winter flounder possession limit.

SCUP (PORGY): Although the legal minimum size for scup will remain at 7" in 2000, recreational anglers should take notice that there will be a daily possession limit of 50 scup per angler. Previously, there had been no daily possession limit on scup for recreational anglers.

During the winter meeting of the ASMFC and the MAFMC, it was determined that the 1999 coastwide scup recreational quota was slightly exceeded. The 50 fish per day possession limit for recreational scup fishermen is designed to prevent an overage of the 2000 coastwide scup recreational quota.

Additional commercial regulations have been implemented for the blue crab, summer flounder, Atlantic menhaden, American shad, scup and other commercial fisheries, and are summarized in the Division's 2000 Commercial Regulations publication, found at the Division's Website:

www.state.nj.us/dep/fgw.



**Striped Bass Management:
Looking Back - Looking Ahead**

By Tom Baum, Principal Fisheries Biologist

The Atlantic striped bass (*Morone saxatilis*) has been for centuries one of the most important coastal species from Maine to North Carolina, supporting historically valuable commercial and recreational fisheries. The popularity of this species to fishermen, the complex nature of its seasonal distribution, and decline in harvest with poor recruitment during the 1970's stimulated interest in the development of a cooperative interstate fisheries management plan. In 1981, the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC) developed and adopted the Interstate Fisheries Management Plan (Plan) for Striped Bass of the Atlantic Coast from Maine to North Carolina. Since then there have been five amendments to the Plan, with nine addenda to the most recent two amendments, totaling 14 changes to the Plan over 18 years.

Management strategies for the coastal striped bass population during the past fifteen years had to adapt first to regulating a depleted, overfished stock during the mid 1980's; next to a recovering population during the early 1990's; then to a stock declared restored in 1995. Amendment #3 called for size regulations to protect the 1982 year class, which was the first modest size group since the previous decade. The objective was to increase size limits to allow the majority of the females from the 1982 year class an opportunity to spawn at least once. This would remain in effect until there were three consecutive successful spawns of the Chesapeake Bay stock.

In 1989, a very successful spawn of the Chesapeake stock occurred, which prompted the Management Board to adopt Amendment #4. This amendment was designed to control the reopening of the fishery, which was in the initial stages of stock recovery. This adaptive management strategy allowed the ASMFC to make revisions to the management program in response to changing circumstances.

There were five addenda to Amendment #4 that were adopted by ASMFC from 1991 through 1994. By the mid 1990's, management under Amendment #4 became cumbersome due to the vagueness of many of its principal points.

The ASMFC declared that the Chesapeake Bay stocks of Atlantic striped bass, which supports the greatest portion of the coastal

stock, was recovered as of January 1995. Amendment #5, adopted in March 1995, was designed to regulate the 1995 – 1996 fisheries for striped bass. Since then, each October, the ASMFC's Striped Bass Management Board has passed an addendum to this Amendment, setting guidelines for the following year's fishery.

Amendment #5 completely replaced the original Plan and all subsequent amendments and addenda. The goal of Amendment #5 is to perpetuate, through cooperative interstate fishery management, migratory stocks of Atlantic striped bass so as to allow a harvest consistent with the long-term maintenance of their essential habitat. The basic pattern of Amendment #5 is to adopt a target fishing mortality rate, and then to establish regulatory programs for the various fisheries that will meet this target.

The preferred alternative regime under this amendment is a minimum size limit of 20 inches in producer areas and 28 inches along the coast; a creel limit of one fish per day in producer areas and two fish per day in coastal fisheries. Fishing seasons are variable between producer areas and 365 days in coastal areas.

Since 1995, coastal striped bass regulations have remained at "status quo" (or two fish ≥ 28 inches). In October 1999, the ASMFC Striped Bass Management Board approved Addendum IV to Amendment #5. This addendum called for a 14% reduction in the harvest of striped bass age 8 and older.

The benchmark for measuring the required reductions is a two-fish daily limit and 28" minimum size. The reason for this measure was the fishing mortality rate from the 1998 fisheries exceeded the target rate set by the guidelines in Amendment #5. It also instructs the Board to proceed with the preparation of a new amendment to the Plan and if the amendment is not approved for 2001, states will be required in 2001 to implement additional reductions of the harvest on age 8 and older striped bass.

On February 7, 2000 representatives from New Jersey presented three management options to the ASMFC Striped Bass Management Board, of which two were approved. During the third week of February 2000, three public meetings were held in New Jersey (Rochelle Park, Toms River and Cape May Court House) in order to gather



NJ Fish and Wildlife personnel tagging striped bass during January survey of New Jersey's ocean trawl survey.

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Winter Flounder - A Profile

by Paul G. Scarlett, Principal Fisheries Biologist,
Bureau of Marine Fisheries

Common Name: Winter Flounder, also called Flounder, Blackback, Black Flounder, Georges Bank Flounder, Lemon Sole, Sole, Flatfish, Rough Flounder and Mud Dab.

Scientific Name: *Pleuronectes americanus*

Range: Winter flounder live in estuarine and coastal waters from Labrador to Georgia. They are most common between Nova Scotia and New Jersey. Locally, winter flounder are most abundant in New Jersey's northern and central estuarine and nearshore coastal areas with numbers diminishing south of Barnegat Bay. Good populations of winter flounder can be found in Raritan Bay, Sandy Hook Bay, Navesink River, Shark River, Manasquan River and parts of the Barnegat Bay estuarine system.

Size: Winter flounder can grow to sizes of more than 25 inches and weigh more than 8 pounds. The New Jersey sport fish state record was landed in 1992 and weighed 5 pounds, 11 ounces. Females grow faster than males and juvenile winter flounder can reach a length of about 6 inches during their first year. Twelve inch winter flounder are generally 3 years old and may weigh slightly more than a pound. In New Jersey, few winter flounder live past the age of 10.

Predators, Food and Feeding: Natural predators of winter flounder include sharks, oyster toadfish, summer flounder, striped bass, monkfish and spiny dogfish. When feeding, a winter flounder will lie motionless, partly concealed on the bottom, with its head raised off the bottom, braced by

the dorsal fin. When prey is sighted, the fish remains motionless, pointing toward the prey, then lunges forward and downward to capture it. This semi-hidden feeding behavior enables the fish to effectively capture prey while at the same time providing a hiding mechanism to protect the winter flounder from its predators. Winter flounder are sight feeders and feed during daylight. Throughout their range, winter flounder eat polychaete worms, amphipod and isopod crustaceans, clam siphon tips and plant material. They are omnivorous and opportunistic, eating whatever is available.

Migration: In New Jersey, adult winter flounder usually inhabit nearshore coastal and estuarine waters from October through May. During the summer, they migrate just off the beach to several miles offshore. In the fall, most winter flounder return to the same estuary they inhabited the previous winter. Juveniles spend their first year in estuaries where they were spawned, after which they join the adult migration.

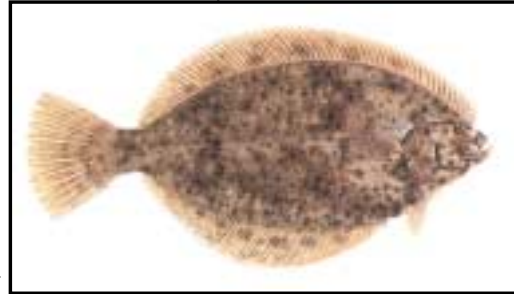
Habitat: Estuaries and nearshore oceanic water habitats are critically important to the life cycle of winter flounder. These areas are used as wintering, summering and spawning grounds by adults and as nursery areas by juveniles. Winter flounder prefer sand or mud-sand mixture bottoms, but can be found in creeks and sea grass beds with muddy or silty substrates.

Spawning: In New Jersey, winter flounder spawn in estuaries from February to April at temperatures of 1°C to 10°C and salinities ranging from 10 to 35 parts per

thousand. Almost all winter flounder are sexually mature by 3 years of age. Females can release as many as three million eggs, with egg numbers directly related to fish size. When hatched, winter flounder larvae are about one-tenth of an inch long. Larvae are structurally similar to those of other fish species, with one eye on each side of the head. By the time the larvae reach a size of about one-half inch, the left eye has migrated to the right side of the body and the fish assume a true flatfish, bottom-associated existence.

Importance: Winter flounder are a highly prized food fish sought by both commercial and recreational anglers. The majority of landings from commercial fisheries are

taken by otter trawl in the spring and fall. Commercial fishermen usually land between 200,000 and 300,000 pounds of winter flounder in New Jersey per year.



These fish are also a mainstay of the inshore spring and fall sport fishery along the Atlantic coast. During the last 10 years, New Jersey's sport fishermen have harvested over 550,000 winter flounder per year. In terms of numbers, New Jersey annually ranks at or near the top of per state winter flounder harvest among all East coast states.

Fishing Techniques: Winter flounder sport fishing occurs mainly within estuarine bays and rivers, usually from an anchored boat or the bank. A common fishing outfit would include a six foot light to medium action rod and a conventional or spinning reel filled with 6 to 10 pound test. Most freshwater fishing outfits also work well for winter flounder. Winter flounder can be taken on small (#10) long shanked hooks baited with clams, mussels or bloodworms. Whole kernel canned corn works well as bait and can also be used as chum, along with rice and crushed mussels. Stirring up the bottom under an anchored boat with heavy weights, an oar, or even a plunger fastened to a long pole will attract fish. Hooks can be fished singly, in a multiple hook rig or with spreaders, with sinkers heavy enough to hold bottom. Winter flounder can provide lively action, especially on light tackle. Recreational harvest in New Jersey is controlled by a season and size limit. During 2000, the winter flounder fishing season is March 1 through

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PORTIONS OF THIS DIGEST ARE
AVAILABLE IN ENLARGED FORMAT FOR
THE VISUALLY IMPAIRED.

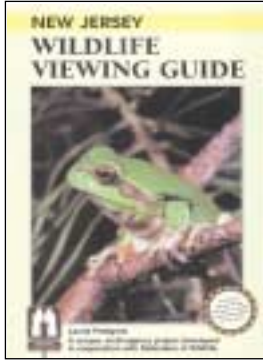
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NEW JERSEY WILDLIFE VIEWING GUIDE

The NJ Division of Fish and Wildlife is proud to announce the publication of the New Jersey Wildlife Viewing Guide. The publication of the Guide is the culmination of a two year project coordinated by the Division's Endangered and Nongame Species Program to establish a network of viewing sites throughout the state.

The Guide beautifully illustrates the rich natural treasures that few people realize exist in the state. Experience the amazing diversity of New Jersey's wildlife and habitats at 87 of the state's best Wildlife Viewing Areas. The 165 page Guide is full of color photos and illustrations and provides directions to each site and information on site facilities, best viewing seasons and which animals and habitats can be seen.



Unique to the New Jersey Guide is the addition of Wildlife Diversity Tours. In four regions, expanded information is provided on five sites in each region that when experienced through a 2-3 day trip provide a deeper understanding and appreciation of the ecosystems and wildlife found in the region.

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The creation of the Wildlife Viewing Guide and the development of a Watchable Wildlife Program for New Jersey was made possible in part through grants from the EPA, US Fish and Wildlife Service, National Park Service and Department of Defense. Major funding has been provided through proceeds from the sale of 'Conserve Wildlife' license plates.

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2000 Summary of Marine Fish & Shellfish Regulations

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

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 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.

Spear Fishing

Spear fishing can 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.

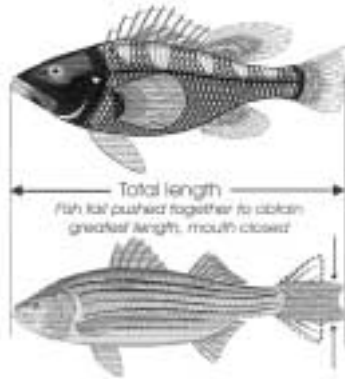
Fish Releasing

All fish which are undersize, not intended for eating or not to be kept for mounting, educational or scientific purposes should be released immediately to the wild. This should be done GENTLY and QUICKLY.

Here are some specific suggestions:

- * For small fish, grasp it with wet hands around the "neck" from below, closing the gill covers. Do NOT get fingers under the gill covers into the gill area. Grasp the hook at its bend, either with fingers or pliers, and gently shake it loose. If unsuccessful cut the hook or leader as short as possible with pliers. It is best to do this in or over the water. If not possible, do not let fish flop on the deck.
- * For large fish, do not attempt to handle it. Reach out over the water and cut hook or leader as short as possible.
- * Use only plain hooks, not stainless, so they will rust away quickly in the fish's mouth.
- * To measure fish for legal size, have a measuring device or template of that length marked out on a flat surface for quick access.

FINFISH



Filleting

The filleting at sea of all fish with a size limit is prohibited. Party boats may fillet fish at sea if they obtain a Special Fillet Permit. Applications may be obtained from the Marine Fisheries Administration.

Black Sea Bass

The minimum size limit for black sea bass is 10 inches measured along the midline from the snout to the end of the central portion of the tail, **not to include the tail filaments**. There is no possession limit and there is no closed season.

Bluefish

Bluefish taken with hook and line may be sold **only** from June 16 through August 7 **and only** if the harvester is in possession of a valid commercial bluefish permit issued in his or her name by the National Marine Fisheries Service (978/281-9370). Any harvester in possession of a valid commercial bluefish permit may possess more than 10 bluefish per day but **only** during the commercial season of June 16 through August 7.

Shark

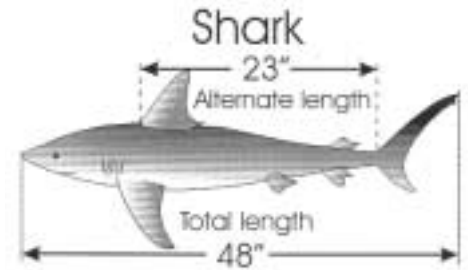
The minimum size limit for any species of shark, except dogfish (see note below) is 48 inches total length.

Sharks - Prohibited Species

basking shark sand tiger shark
whale shark bigeye sand tiger shark
white shark

The fins may not be removed from a shark, except after fishing has ceased and such shark has been landed. A shark may be eviscerated and the head removed prior to landing, provided that the alternate length as measured from the origin of the first dorsal fin to the pre-caudal pit (located just forward

of the origin of the upper lobe of the tail fin) is not less than 23 inches in length. The possession limit is 2 shark per vessel.



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 fin. Neither is present in sharks.

Striped Bass

(includes Hybrid Striped Bass)

The minimum size limits for striped bass and hybrid striped bass in all marine waters of the state is 28 inches. The possession limit in all marine waters is two fish, either striped bass or hybrid striped bass, NOT of each.

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, or parts of a striped bass from which the head and / or tail has been removed (other than while in preparation or being served as food), which is less than the legal minimum size.

Harvest and possession of striped bass from federal waters (outside 3 miles) is prohibited.

Sale of striped bass in N.J. is prohibited.

Closed seasons:

Jan. 1 - Feb. 28 - All waters except the Atlantic Ocean from 0-3 miles offshore.
April 1 - May 31 - Delaware River & Bay and their tributaries from the upstream side of the U.S. Route 1 bridge downstream to and including the Salem River and its tributaries.
Striped Bass Bonus Fish Program
Fishermen may possess one (1) additional striped bass per day under the Striped Bass Bonus Fish Program subject to the following:

continued on page 12

1999 Summary of Marine Fish and Shellfish Regulations

continued from page 11

1. The fisherman must apply for and receive a fish possession card in advance of attempting to take a bonus fish.
2. The minimum size limit for a striped bass taken under the bonus program is 28 inches.
3. Fisherman must comply with all aspects of the regulations. A guide to these regulations is provided with the fish possession cards.
4. Two fish possession cards are issued to each applicant. Only one card is good per day. Cards are valid only during the year issued. The pink card is good for the 2000 season only.
5. Participants wishing to continue in the program in future years can do so by mailing the fishing logs enclosed with their cards.

Additional cards will be provided upon checking fish at one of the 56 designated check stations or by mailing the completed card to the Division. For a list of Striped Bass Bonus Program Check Stations, call 609-748-2020.

Summer Flounder (Fluke)

The possession and minimum size limit for summer flounder is 8 fish at 15 1/2 inches and an open season from May 6 to October 20.

Tautog (BlackFish)

The minimum size limit for tautog is 14 inches. There is a 1 fish possession limit during the period of June 1 through October 9 and a 10 fish possession limit during the period of October 10 through May 31.

Weakfish

The possession and minimum size limit for weakfish is 14 fish, at least 14 inches in length.

Winter Flounder

The minimum size limit for winter flounder is 10 1/2", increasing to 11" as of January 1, 2001. For winter flounder the open season is March 1 - May 31 and September 15 - December 31.

Additional Marine Fishing Seasons

See pages 17 and 18 for the clip out reference charts applicable to both New Jersey State and Federal waters.

Prohibited Species

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

- Atlantic Sturgeon
- Basking Shark
- Bigeye Sand Tiger Shark
- Sand Tiger Shark
- Shortnosed Sturgeon
- Whale Shark
- White Shark

SEA TURTLES & MARINE MAMMALS

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

BAIT FISH

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

1. Dip nets 24" in diameter or less for the taking of 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 (5) killipots for taking killifish for bait.
6. Not more than two miniature fykes or pots for the taking of killifish or eels for bait.

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

No person shall take more than 35 alewife or blueback herring in aggregate per day.

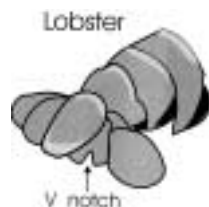
No person shall take or attempt to take fish by any means from the Deal Lake flume, Lake Takanasse spillway or Wreck Pond spillway on any Monday, Wednesday or Friday during the months of April and May.

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 1/4 inches. Lobster parts may not be possessed at sea or landed.

The possession limit is 6 lobsters per person. No person shall possess any lobster with eggs attached or from which eggs have been removed or any female lobster with a



v-notched tail, as illustrated above.

The use of spears, gigs, gaffs or other

penetrating devices as a method of capture for lobsters is prohibited. A license is required for the use of pots or traps for the capture of lobsters.

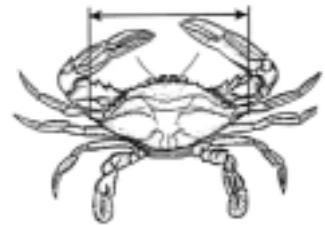
Crabs

1. 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 (2) non-collapsible Chesapeake-style crab pots (see illustration on page 23) or two (2) trot lines to harvest crabs. See page 23 for the non-commercial crab pot license application or stop by coastal bait and tackle shops. The possession limit of one (1) bushel per person per day and the prohibition of sale applies under this license.

2. 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.

3. Minimum size of crabs that may be harvested (measured from point to point of shell) are as follows:

- a. Peeler or shedder crab - 3 inches
- b. Soft crab - 3 1/2 inch
- c. Hard crab - 4 3/4 inches (for sale)
- d. Hard crab - 4 1/2 inches (possession)



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

5. Recreational trot lines shall not exceed 150 feet in length with a maximum of 25 baits.

6. All pots and trot lines shall be marked with the identification number of the owner.

7. All crab pots must be tended at least once every 72 hours.

8. No floating line may be used on any crab pot or crab pot buoy.

9. No crab pot shall be placed in any area that would obstruct or impede navigation or in any creek less than 50 feet wide.

10. Only the owner, his agent or a law enforcement officer may raise or remove contents of a legally set fishing device.

11. Crabs taken with a bait seine may be retained for personal use only if the fisher-

continued on page 13

1999 Summary of Marine Fish and Shellfish Regulations

continued from page 12

man possesses a bait net license, and may not be bartered or sold unless the fisherman possesses a commercial crab license.

12. No crabs may be harvested from the Newark Bay Complex as described under the section on Health Advisories, page 28.

13. Crab Pot/Trot Line seasons:

Delaware Bay and tributaries - April 16 to Dec. 14; all other waters - Mar 15 to Nov 30. The following waters are closed to the use of crab pots and trot lines: Cumberland Co: Cohansy River and creeks named Back, Cedar, Nantuxent, Fortesque, 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 WMA enclosed by a line drawn from the northern bank of Fishing Creek on Island Beach State Park to the northern tip of the Sedge Island (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.

14. The Division will issue a non-commercial crab dredge license for the harvest of not more than one bushel of crabs during the crab dredge season. Crabs so taken may not be sold or offered for barter. There is a fee of \$15.00 for this non-commercial crab dredge license. Call the Marine Fisheries Administration at 609/748-2040.

NOTICE: All non-collapsible Chesapeake-style crab pots (see illustration on page 23) 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 man-made 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 without a permit. Applications are available from the Marine Fisheries Administration.

MOLLUSKS (SHELLFISH)

1. All persons must be licensed to participate in the harvest of hard clams, soft clams, surf clams and oysters.
2. It is illegal to harvest clams, oysters and mussels from condemned waters, even for bait purposes. It is also illegal to harvest surf clams from beaches adjacent to water classified as condemned. Water classification charts are available from license agents, any state shellfish office or Marine Police Station. Charts are updated annually.
3. Shellfish harvesting is prohibited before sunrise, after sunset and on Sundays.
4. Harvesting of clams, oysters and mussels on public grounds is restricted to the use of hand implements.
5. It is illegal to harvest shellfish from leased grounds. These grounds are delineated by stakes or buoys set by the lease holder. Charts of the leases may be examined at the Nacote Creek or Bivalve Shellfish Offices during regular business hours.

Hard Clams

1. No person shall harvest more than 150 clams per day unless such person is a holder of a commercial clam license. Only certified shellfish dealers may purchase clams from commercial harvesters. All persons selling clams commercially must tag each container listing date of harvest, name and address of the harvester and the waters from which the shellfish were harvested.
 2. A non-resident recreational license is valid only during the months of June, July, August and September.
 3. Anyone engaged in any clamming activity with someone holding a commercial clam license must also possess their own commercial clam license.
 4. It is illegal to dredge clams. Hand implements are the only legal harvest methods.
 5. 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 be immediately returned to the bottom from which they were taken.
 6. It is illegal to harvest shellfish on Sunday except on the seasonal waters of the Navesink River between November 1 and April 30.
- ### Oysters
1. Oysters may be sold only to certified dealers.
 2. It is illegal to dredge oysters on public grounds. All harvesting on public grounds

- is restricted to the use of hand implements.
3. 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.
 4. Specific seasons and regulations exist for oyster beds in Great Bay, Delaware Bay, the Mullica, Great Egg Harbor and Tuckahoe rivers. Check with appropriate shellfish offices for detailed regulations.
 5. One license covers recreational and commercial oystering.



Coastal Workshop For Teachers

NJ Division of Fish and Wildlife hosts a weekend coastal workshop annually in May at the Wetlands Institute in Stone Harbor.

Openings for this year may still be available. Or call to be placed on the mailing list for future workshops:

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New Jersey Division of Fish & Wildlife

- Mission -

To protect and manage the state's fish and wildlife to maximize their long-term biological, recreational and economic values for all New Jerseyans.

- Goals -

1. 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.
2. To educate New Jerseyans on the values and needs of our fish and wildlife and to foster a positive human/wildlife co-existence.
3. To maximize the recreational and commercial use of New Jersey's fish and wildlife for both present and future generations.

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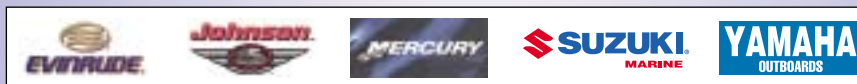
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Know Your Sharks

by John McClain, Principal Fisheries Biologist
Barry Preim, Fisheries Technician

Recreational regulations were adopted for sharks for the first time in 1999. These regulations include a 48 inch total length limit on all sharks; a two shark per vessel possession limit and a prohibition on the taking, possession, landing or sale of any basking shark, whale shark, white shark or sand tiger shark. These regulations do not apply to smooth or spiny dogfish.

The N.J. Marine Fisheries Council and the Department of Environmental Protection approved these regulations to be compatible with the previously adopted federal management plan for Atlantic sharks to protect and enhance shark populations. Because sharks and dogfish are frequently taken incidentally while fishing for other species, anglers don't always know what shark species they may have on the end of their line.

The following key to protected sharks and other commonly caught sharks has been taken, with the kind and appreciated permission, from the "Anglers" Guide to Sharks of the Northwestern United States' published by the United States Department of Interior, Fish and Wildlife Service, Circular 179.

It is very important that anglers properly identify their shark catch for multiple reasons. One, of course, is so the angler doesn't risk a significant fine for a mistake. Another is to recognize that protected species are listed based on concerns about the apparent decline in population levels, and care must be taken not to harm the animal as you bring it to the boat for release.

Finally, all sharks, with the exception of the two species of dogfish, can inflict very serious bite injuries. Some sharks, such as the sandbar shark and sand tiger shark, come into our bays to give birth to their young. The young "pups" may be about the same size as the commonly caught dogfish, but have sharp teeth and can inflict a nasty bite. One additional word of warning for anglers: the spines of a spiny dogfish, located just in front of both dorsal fins, can also inflict a wound which must be cleaned thoroughly to prevent infection.

Striped Bass Management

continued from page 6

public input as to which option seemed agreeable. The options are designed to: 1) reduce the harvest of age 8 and older striped bass by 14% or more in the year 2000 and 2) better utilize NJ's striped bass resource in both its coastal and producer waters while complying with the mandatory 14% reduction.

The two options were very similar: Option 1 proposes one fish per day greater than or equal to 24 inches but less than 28 inches in addition to one fish 28 inches or greater for NJ marine waters, with the Bonus Fish Program having one fish 28 inches or greater per day and a 225,000 pound quota. Option 2 proposes one fish greater than or equal to 24 inches but less than 30 inches in addition to one fish 30 inches or greater for NJ marine waters, with the bonus fish program having one fish 30 inches or greater per day and a 225,000 pound quota.

According to Amendment #5, if a state wished to lower its coastal size limit, a specified reduction is required. These reductions (lower size limit and the 14% reduction required by Addendum IV) are satisfied by having one fish 28 inches or greater in length. There are pluses and minuses of the adaptive management strategies of plans like those for striped bass and summer flounder. On the negative side, management measures are often complex and are modified frequently, making it difficult for anglers to maintain current knowledge of the regulations.

On the positive side, however, these management plans have been very successful in allowing optimum utilization of the resource while still achieving the goal of stock restoration.

Future amendments to the Plan will look into the feasibility of a uniform size limit; rather than the current dual size limit of producer areas (20 inches) and coastal areas (28 inches).

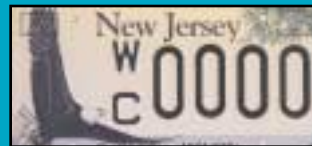
Don't Miss The Ninth Annual Governor's Surf Fishing Tournament

This year's tournament will be held Sunday, October 1st at Island Beach State Park. Last year, more than 1,300 adults and children registered for the event. The tournament generated more than \$10,000 in registration fees which will be used for a variety of conservation projects such as the construction of a beach access ramp, mobile fishing education carts and specialized wheelchairs for the disabled and elderly. The goal of the tournament is to foster a life-long commitment to marine conservation and the sport of surf fishing. The winner of the 1999 Governor's Cup was Dorothy Harrison of Wayne, New Jersey with a 29 inch Red Drum. The Division would like to thank the following organizations for their contribution to the Eighth Annual Governor's Surf Fishing Tournament: Acme Tackle Company, Airlite Plastics, Ande Inc., BASS Inc., Bill Lewis Lures, Bry's Marine, CK Co., Cabela's, Coleman Company, Cortland Line Company Inc., Crowe Rope Industries LLC, DOA Fishing Lures Inc., DeLorme, Dows Boat Rental, Dubro Products, F.J. Neil, Fin-Nor International, Fishing Tackle Co. Inc., Frank's Boats, Fulcrum Publishing, G. Loomis Inc., GBS Distribution LLC, H.D. Wood Advertising, Hopkins Fishing Lures Co. Inc., Hoppe's A Brunswick Company, Lamiglas Inc., Leatherman Tool Group Inc., Legal Limits, Mister Twister Inc., Morrison's, Ocean County Library, Ocean Fresh Seafood, Orvis (Paramus), Penn Fishing Tackle Mfg. Company, Ramsey Outdoors (Ledgewood), Ramsey Outdoors (Paramus), Rays Sport Shop Inc. (N. Plainfield), SCS Limited, SPRO Corporation, Scott's Bait & Tackle, Shakespeare, Sportsman's Outpost, Springfield Marine & Aluminum, TTI Companies, Techsonic Industries Inc., The Fisherman Magazine, Ultimix Lures, Water Gremlin Co., and Wright & McGill Co.

For more information and registration forms contact: Division of Fish and Wildlife, 605 Pequest Rd., Oxford, NJ 07863 or call 908-637-4125.

Conserve Wildlife License Plates Support Nongame and Endangered Species

Since 1972 the Endangered and Nongame species Program (ENSP) has worked to protect and restore New Jersey's endangered and threatened wildlife. You can help the program through the Income Tax Check-off and/or through the Conserve Wildlife license plate.



These attractive \$50 license plates let everyone know you believe in conservation, and 80% of your tax deductible payment goes directly to the ENSP. Personalized Wildlife Plates are also available for \$100.

Previously available by mail only, motorist may now purchase the plates in person at DMV offices regardless of their current expiration date. Plates can also be purchased from car dealers when buying or leasing a new car.