

## Blue Claws: Crabbing in New Jersey

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Of the wide variety of marine animals on the Atlantic coast, none is more well-known by people, young and old, than the blue crab. The crab's abundance, beautiful coloration, pugnacious temperament and delicious flavor make it a favorite of recreational anglers in New Jersey. Crabbing is a family sport that can be enjoyed by everyone and when compared to other forms of recreation, it is relatively inexpensive. In addition to its recreational value, the blue crab also supports an important commercial fishery.

The blue crab is known to scientists as *Callinectes sapidus* (kal i nek' tes sap' i dus). The literal translation of this Latin name is the beautiful (calli) swimmer (nectes) that is savory (sapidus). The blue crab certainly lives up to its name with brilliant blends of olive-green, blue and red, the ability to dart swiftly through the water and a body of delicate, white meat.

Of all New Jersey's marine fish and shellfish, more effort is expended in catching the blue crab than any other single species. Surveys indicate that three-quarters of the State's saltwater fishermen go crabbing and that crabbing accounts for roughly 30 percent of all marine fishing activity. Recreational crabbing is particularly important in the upper portion of Barnegat Bay, Little Egg Harbor and the Maurice River estuary, comprising 65 to 86 percent of the total recreational harvest in these areas.

Unfortunately, very little is known about the effort expended, the total harvest and the overall economic value of the recreational crab fishery. Such information is extremely valuable in managing the blue crab resource and in upholding the interests of the State's crabbers, yet the information is difficult and expensive to collect.

Blue crabs are abundant all along the Jersey coast, in tidal creeks and rivers and in shallow, saltwater bays, from the Hudson River to Delaware Bay.

Although most small boats are ideal for reaching crabbing areas, almost any bank, bulkhead, bridge or pier bordering tidal waters can provide excellent crabbing.

One of the most popular harvest methods is to use baited lines or traps from the bank or a boat. The most common baits are menhaden (bunker) and chicken necks, but any fresh fish will work well. Many fishermen save the racks from filleted fish for crab bait. A very inexpensive bait line can be made by tying a 6 ounce sinker and a large hook (8/0) to one end of a 15 to 20 foot cord. A short stick is tied to the other end and used to secure the bait line on the bank and to store the cord.

Most crabbers operate between 5 and 10 bait lines, checking them every few minutes. When a crab is felt tugging on the bait, retrieve the line slowly and steadily until the feeding crab is close enough to be scooped up with a long-handled dip net. Don't try to lift the crab out of the water with the line - it's nearly sure to drop off back into the water.

There are also a variety of wire and net traps that are used to catch crabs. They are particularly effective when used from a bridge.

When crabbing from a boat it is a good idea to use both hand lines and traps, for sometimes one will work better than the other. Also effective is anchoring your boat at the bow and stern to prevent unnecessary movement of the baits and traps. Always use fresh bait. After several hours of dunking, bait will lose much of its attractant odor and should be replaced with a fresh piece.

Another technique, especially effective for soft or shedder crabs, is to wade in shallow waters with a scoop net. This method works only when the water is clear and calm. Crabs can also be scooped from marsh banks and around bridge pilings and bulkheads.

One of the best and easiest methods for holding your catch is a bushel basket with a lid. Keep the basket in the coolest place possible. Your catch will keep at least a day in this manner. Avoid leaving crabs in direct sunlight, especially during the summer months. Do not put crabs in a bucket of water for they will soon use all of the available dissolved oxygen and drown. Closed containers and plastic bags will also kill

your catch. To transport crabs long distances, put them in a cooler on top of ice.

Before cooking, rinse crabs in freshwater, making sure they are all alive. If a crab's legs and claws hang limp and show no signs of movement it is probably dead and **should be discarded**. Crabs may be steamed or boiled, depending on your preference.

Drop the live crabs into a large pot of boiling water and cook for 8 to 10 minutes. The shells will turn a bright red when fully cooked. Many people add "seafood boil" or "Old Bay" seasoning to the water, giving the crab meat a spicy flavor. After cooking, remove the crabs from the water and allow them to cool before picking out the meat.

To clean a hard crab, remove the carapace shell by lifting the apron and pulling forward. Rinse out the internal organs and finger-like gills. Then snap off the mouthparts, legs and claws. The edible meat is contained within the claws and the two thin-shelled compartments on either side of the body. Remove the meat from the body by breaking open the compartments or by cutting across them laterally with a knife. Crack the claws open with a knife or a nutcracker.

Crab meat spoils rapidly and must be refrigerated as soon as possible. Do not rinse the picked meat for this will remove much of its delicate flavor. Crab meat can also be frozen and stored. It should be packed tightly in freezer containers and frozen as soon as possible after picking. To prevent freezer burn during long period of storage, pour a brine solution of one teaspoon of salt dissolved in a quart of water over the packed meat.

With soft crabs, very little preparation is needed. They should be cleaned while still alive. Cut away the mouthparts and eye-stalks, lift the carapace and remove the feather-like gills. The rest is edible. To store, wrap in plastic and freeze. Crabbers in New Jersey should refer to "A Guide to Health Advisories for Eating Fish and Crabs Caught in New Jersey" found on page 28. Anyone intending to harvest blue crabs must be aware of the regulations governing crabbing which are found on page 13 of this issue of the Fish and Wildlife Digest.

**NEW JERSEY WILDLIFE VIEWING GUIDE**

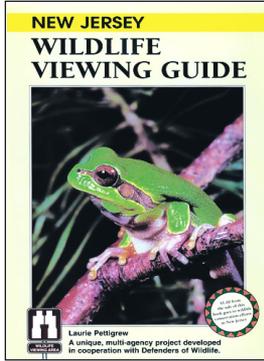
The NJ Division of Fish and Wildlife is proud to announce the publication of the New Jersey Wildlife Viewing Guide. The publication of the Guide is the culmination of a two year project coordinated by the Division's Endangered and Nongame Species Program to establish a network of viewing sites throughout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

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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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**P.O. Box 418**  
**Port Republic, NJ 08241**

\*Required for processing application

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# 2001 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.

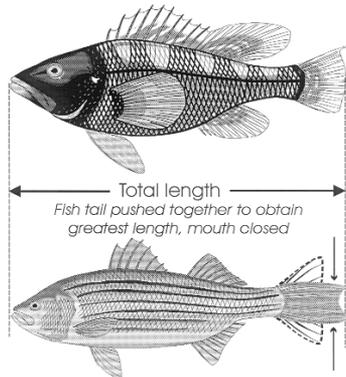
## Fish Releasing

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

## FINFISH



length marked out on a flat surface for quick access.

## 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 drum

*\*The minimum size limit for black drum is 16 inches in total length and the daily possession limit is 3 fish. There is no closed season for black drum.\**

## Black Sea Bass

The minimum size limit for black sea bass is 11 inches measured along the midline from the snout to the end of the central portion of the tail, **not to include the tail filaments**. The daily possession limit is 25 fish and the open season extends from May 10 through February 29.

## 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 for his or her vessel by the National Marine Fisheries Service (978/281-9370). Any harvester in possession of a valid commercial bluefish permit may possess more than 15 bluefish per day but **only** during the commercial season of June 16 through August 7.

## Shark

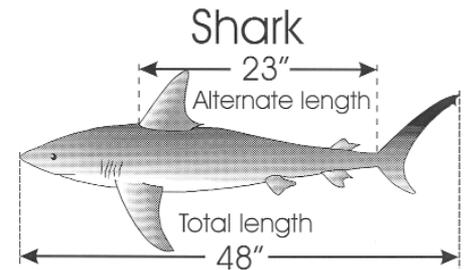
The minimum size limit for any species of shark, except dogfish (see note below) is 48 inches total length.

## 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 and tail 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 possession limit for striped bass / hybrid striped bass is two fish. One fish may be greater than or equal to 24 inches to less than 28" (slot fish) while the other fish must be 28 inches or greater. It does not matter which fish is harvested first. Anglers participating in the Striped Bass Program Bonus Program (see below) may possess an additional striped bass at 28 inches or greater. Anglers do not need to harvest a slot fish prior to taking a Bonus fish.

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.

\*...\* These items contained within asterisks are anticipated to be adopted in the spring of 2001.

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## 2001 Summary of Marine Fish and Shellfish Regulations

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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:

1. The fisherman must apply for and receive a fish possession card (See application, page 8) 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 tan card is only good for the 2001 season.**

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 63 designated check stations or by mailing the completed card to the Division. For more information regarding this program call 609-748-2020.

### Summer Flounder (Fluke)

The possession and minimum size limit for summer flounder is 8 fish at 16 inches and an open season from May 12 to September 11.

### 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 (Gray & Spotted Seatrout)

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 11. For winter flounder the open season is March 1 - May 31 and September 15 - December 31. There is no possession limit.

## 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.

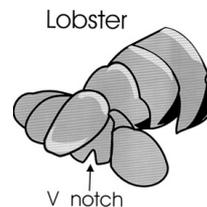
No person shall take or attempt to take fish by any means from the Deal Lake flume, Lake Takanasse spillway or Wreck Pond spillway on any Monday, Wednesday or Friday during the months of April and May.

## 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

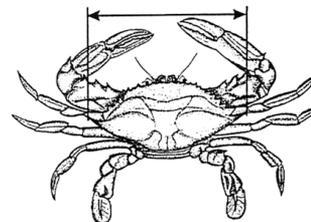


v-notched tail, as illustrated above.

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

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## 2001 Summary of Marine Fish and Shellfish Regulations

continued from page 12

- 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 fisherman 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 and Shrewbury Rivers 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:

**609-748-2031**

### 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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# New Jersey's Reef Program



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## A Guide to Fishing and Diving New Jersey Reefs



Complete directory of New Jersey's 14 ocean reef sites, encompassing over 1200 reefs

- Features LORAN and DGPS charts for all 14 New Jersey reef sites.
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- Available at many bait and tackle shops & mail order
- A must for every angler & diver; find the sunken treasure (fish & lobster) on New Jersey's 14 reef sites
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Order Form

"A Guide to Fishing and Diving New Jersey Reefs"

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Each book is \$17.95 plus \$2.05 for postage & handling. Enclose a check, payable to "Artificial Reef Association" in the amount of \$20 per book and send to:

ARA  
P.O. Box 16  
Oceanville, NJ 08231

## ADOPT-A-REEF HABITAT

A great gift or memoriam for a fisherman or diver



### Create An Undersea Condo For New Jersey Marine Life

New Jersey's marine life – sea bass, blackfish, lobsters, crabs and others – need a place to live. You can help by sponsoring the placement of a concrete reef habitat on a New Jersey ocean reef. Not only will your habitat create a home for marine life, it will also provide anglers and divers a new place to fish and explore. A tax-deductible donation will help pay for the fabrication and transportation of your habitat(s) to a New Jersey ocean reef site.

#### Adopt-A-Reef Habitat Application

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone No. \_\_\_\_\_ # of Habitats sponsored \_\_\_\_\_

Your Habitat Name " \_\_\_\_\_ "

Send check, payable to "Sportfish Fund" (tax-deductible donation)

Adopt-A-Reef Habitat  
Artificial Reef Association  
P.O. Box 16  
Oceanville, NJ 08231

For information on the Reef Program, call 609-748-2020.

#### How much does it cost and what will you receive for sponsoring ocean habitats?

Number of habitats sponsored	Donation	A color chart depicting location of your habitat(s)	Listing as a sponsor in next addition of Reef News	A plaque commemorating your habitat(s)	Your reef name published on NJ reef charts
1	\$125	yes	yes	no	no
3	\$300	yes	yes	no	no
7	\$500	yes	yes	yes	no
12	\$750	yes	yes	yes	no
20	\$1000	yes	yes	yes	yes

## Recreational Anglers Can Make a Difference (A Striper Story)

By Russ Allen, Principal Fisheries Biologist  
With Thomas Baum, Principal Fisheries Biologist

Last June while fishing with my sons Dan (8) and Matt (5) on Great Bay, Dan hooked up with his very first striped bass. After a challenging fight we netted the fish, which measured just less than 28 inches. Although we managed to catch a few other stripers that day, including a feisty 23-inch striper by Matt along with some nice sized fluke, Dan's fish was our only keeper bass. When we returned to Captain Mike's Marina, Dan was the toast of the town, and was nothing but smiles as he proudly displayed his catch to the rest of the neighborhood. My personal thanks to all the Striped Bass Bonus Program participants who made those moments possible. *Did I lose you here?*

Let me back up a bit. *New Jersey's Striped Bass Bonus Program is one of the best sources of recreational fishing activity along the east coast.* The division received more than 2,500 fishing logs form participants for the 2000 calendar year, representing over 10,000 striped bass directed fishing trips. The data from this program are used for various striped bass management measures, most notably the regulations that produces the 24" to < 28" fish referred to as "slot fish" for New Jersey's anglers (and therefore Dan's keeper) during 2000 and 2001. (See page 11 for the 2001 striper regulations.) I'll present you with the short version of how the data were utilized. Then you can decide if fisheries resource managers actually *hear* what the recreational fishing community has to say.

By the fall of 1999 it became apparent that new striped bass regulations would be necessary for 2000. A projected overharvest of age 8 and older stripers made it necessary to reduce the harvest on these older fish by 14% - or face a moratorium. The majority of east coast states were forced to use data from the 1998 National Marine Fisheries Service's Marine Recreational Fisheries Statistics Survey (MRFSS), while New Jersey was able to find a pot of gold lying in its 1998 Striped Bass Bonus Program data. We examined the MRFSS database, noting it contained only 88 individual harvest lengths for New Jersey. Yet data provided by anglers for the division's Striped Bass Bonus Fish Program contained 1,826 harvest lengths. Which database would you use?

The Division of Fish and Wildlife, in conjunction with recreational representatives, New Jersey's Commissioners to the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC), and the New Jersey Marine Fisheries Council, decided that the 1998 bonus data represented a true picture of the New Jersey recreational striped bass fishery. The most critical elements we utilized included the length data provided by Bonus Program participants combined with age data from our Delaware Bay tagging project. These data - and some innovative mathematical analysis - allowed us to develop management options that not only met the ASMFC criteria, but were also acceptable to our recreational anglers.

The next step was to go public. We took those options approved by ASMFC to public hearing held in Rochelle Park, Toms River and Cape May. Those attending these hearing witnessed an overwhelming majority of anglers in favor of the option that resulted in our current regulations. More than anything else, it was evident that anglers, especially surf fisherman, were given the opportunity to take fish home for the table that had not been available for many years. It has also proven to be beneficial to the party and charter boat industry as illustrated by more than 100 boats participating in the Bonus Program. There may have been times when it seemed resource managers were not listening to the voice of the recreational anglers, yet striped bass management demonstrated your voice is loud and clear. The Bureau of Marine Fisheries will continue to monitor the striped bass resource through our current programs which include:

- Tagging in Delaware Bay (February - May)
- Juvenile Recruitment in the Delaware River (July - October)
- Coastal Fishery Characterization (October - December)
- Bonus Program (year round)
- Striped Bass Age Analysis (all projects)

Our newest project involves collecting striped bass data from recreationally caught fish that weigh over 40 pounds. This project is necessary since there is not enough age data from older striped bass to properly manage the species. We are once again asking for your assistance. Anglers who wish to help out can contact me at 609-748-2020. I will forward additional information on the data collection requirements and proper procedures for obtaining the information.

As for Dan and Matt, the thrill of their catch lives on. They helped me persuade their mother, an avid outdoorswoman, to agreeing on the purchase of a new boat ensuring there may be many more days like that special one last June. See you on the water, and thanks again.



## Don't Miss The 10th Annual Governor's Surf Fishing Tournament

**October 7, 2001**  
**Island Beach State Park**

Over 1,000 adults and children registered in 2000! The tournament generated more than \$10,000 in registration fees to be used for conservation projects such as construction of beach access ramps, mobilized fishing education carts and specialized wheelchairs for the disabled and elderly. Tournament goal: to foster a life-long commitment to marine conservation and the sport of surf fishing.

*Joe Earley of Toms River, New Jersey - 32 5/8" striped bass, 2000 Grand Prize winner received the Governor's Trophy along with a Penn rod and reel combo, gift certificates and other prizes.*

**Registration: \$10 - adults 18 and older; \$5 - teens 13-17; children 12 and under Free, but must be accompanied by an adult.**

For more information, visit our website:

**[www.njfishandwildlife.com](http://www.njfishandwildlife.com)**

For registration forms and more information, send a SASE to:

NJ Division of Fish and Wildlife, 605  
Pequest Rd., Oxford, NJ 07863  
or call 908-637-4125

Participants may also register at the tournament beginning at 5 a.m. Free park entry to those registering for the tournament. A \$25 beach buggy weekend permit is required to drive on the beach - available at the park entrance.

## Did You Know?



New Jersey ranks 11th in the country in terms of the overall economic impact created by sport fishing (saltwater and freshwater) in the state, yet receives less Federal Aid in Sportfish Restoration funds than either Nevada or New Mexico, and only receives a larger apportionment than Guam, Virgin Islands, American Samoa, the Northern Mariana Islands and the District of Columbia.