



New Jersey

Fish & Wildlife

DIGEST

2007 Marine Issue

A Summary of Rules and
Management Information
www.NJFishandWildlife.com

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Free

*Size and
Possession Limits*

Profile:
Black Drum

Delaware Bay
Dangerfields





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Large Format Marine Digest
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Commissioner's Message




BY LISA P. JACKSON

With 127 miles of Atlantic coastline and 83 miles of bayshores, opportunities to enjoy New Jersey's marine resources are abundant. Our bays, rivers, marine estuaries and ocean habitat contribute to a commercial fishing industry which harvests over 50 different species of finfish and shellfish annually, and boasts world-class recreational fishing, clamming and crabbing. Our fishery resources are both plentiful and diverse with northern species in the winter, southern species in the summer and resident species available year round. Fishing and angling are an important part of our state's culture, economy and character and proper management of these important resources is essential.

Protecting and enhancing our fisheries is challenging and complex work. Most species migrate over a wide geographic range, which requires coordination among many regulatory agencies to appropriately manage species. This coordination can be difficult. Each agency has its own set of goals and priorities. New Jersey must comply with

federal fishery management plans developed by interstate management agencies or risk federally imposed moratoriums. Between the interstate management agencies, there are 21 fishery management plans covering 28 species of importance to New Jersey fishermen. In addition, there is a broad array of groups using our marine resources. Meeting the needs of all these constituencies can be a challenge.

Appropriate management is a balancing act that often requires compromises between goals of different constituencies, such as commercial vs. recreational interests. Despite all the challenges we face in managing New Jersey's fisheries, we work hard to ensure healthy stocks to serve all our users. Regardless of disagreements over short term goals and priorities, all regulatory agencies, stake holders and interest groups share one common goal – long term sustainability of the resource for continued use and enjoyment. In the mean time, I encourage everyone to comply with regulations, and continue to promote a conservation ethic and New Jersey will maintain its status as a top recreational angling and commercial fishing state and be a positive example for other states to follow. 

Lisa P. Jackson is Commissioner of the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection.

Director's Message



BY DAVE CHANDA

Throughout the course of my career I have had the opportunity to travel to a variety of states and locations. In those travels if I were to ask people for their impressions of New Jersey, invariably I would hear — it is an urban state, nothing but cities and highways, the New Jersey Turnpike, oil refineries, and the Sopranos. Although most people recognize New Jersey for being the most densely populated state in the nation, few recognize New Jersey for its incredible wildlife diversity. There are more than 800 species of wildlife found in New Jersey. These species present many wonderful recreational opportunities, and probably just as many management challenges.

In this issue of the *Digest* I will focus on the immense marine fisheries resource that this Division protects and manages. I will also discuss the economic and recreational importance of this resource. Other states — and our own residents as well — are surprised to learn that New Jersey ranks in the highest status of all of the nation's coastal states in both recreational and commercial fisheries landed. Although this may seem to be an unbelievable statement, proudly thanks to the hard work and efforts of our marine fisheries professionals, it is true.

As documented by landings compiled by the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) for the year 2005, New Jersey marine resources support some of the largest recreational and commercial fisheries, not

only along the Atlantic coast, but also on a national level.

When considering recreational fishing effort for 2005, New Jersey ranks third in the nation with 6,718,000 recreational fishing trips, following Florida and slightly trailing North Carolina, while surpassing such noteworthy competitors as New York, Massachusetts, California, Louisiana and Virginia (Table 1, below). As far as recreational landings — the total number of all recreational fish brought to the dock — New Jersey ranks sixth in the nation (Table 1). I am confident that most citizens throughout the country would agree this is an admirable position our small state holds in terms of fisheries effort and landings.

Table 1

New Jersey Recreation Fisheries, a National Perspective in 2005			
Recreational Fishing Trips (x 1,000)		Recreational Landings, All Species, Number of Fish, (x 1,000)	
FL	27,697	FL	74,382
NC	6,823	LA	13,462
NJ	6,718	NC	13,381
NY	6,195	VA	13,031
MA	4,543	CA	10,764
CA	4,341	NJ	7,905
LA	3,936	MD	6,605
VA	3,791	NY	5,600

In the nation's realm of commercial fishing, the port of Cape May-Wildwood ranks fifth of the ninety-seven major ports in the United States, with a dockside landings value of \$68,400,000 from 74,600,000 pounds of seafood products (Table 2, page 4). Fifth is very impres-

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(Continued on page 4)

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Table 2

Commercial Fishery Landings at Major Ports (97) in the USA in 2005

Ranked by Dollar Value	Ranked by Millions of Pounds
1. New Bedford, MA	1. Dutch Harbor-Unalaska, AK
2. Dutch Harbor-Unalaska, AK	2. Intracoastal City, LA
3. Kodiak, AK	3. Reedville, VA
4. Hampton Roads Area, VA	4. Kodiak, AK
5. Cape May -Wildwood, NJ \$68,400,000 dockside value	8. New Bedford, MA
11. Gloucester, MA	10. Gloucester, MA
15. Point Judith, RI	17. Cape May-Wildwood, NJ 74,600,000 pounds
32. Long Beach-Barnegat, NJ	22. Point Judith, RI
38. Point Pleasant, NJ	26. Atlantic City, NJ
43. Atlantic City, NJ	30. Pt. Pleasant, NJ
	59. Long Beach-Barnegat, NJ

sive considering the competition from Massachusetts, Alaska and Virginia. Other New Jersey commercial fishing ports of Long Beach-Barnegat, Point Pleasant and Atlantic City all place in the top half of the ninety-seven U. S. fishing ports. Total commercial landings, all New Jersey ports combined, account for 156,961,000 pounds. New Jersey hauls in a value of \$159 million in commercial landings, eighth among all 20 U.S. coastal states.


It is clear that the NMFS landings data support the fact that New Jersey occupies a prestigious position in the nation's hierarchy of states supporting major recreational and commercial fisheries, not only for 2005 but for many previous years. We are proud of the fact that New Jersey has remarkable marine fisheries resources.

It is easy to account for our small state's significant — though undoubtedly underestimated — importance in the national perspective on marine resources. For one thing, the state's location along the mid-Atlantic coast is a key factor. Let's take a look.

The Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC) formed in 1942 with 15 member states, has 23 species-specific interstate fishery management plans covering the most important fisheries resources within each states' near-shore marine waters from Maine through Florida. New Jersey participates in the interstate fishery management programs for 20 of these species, enjoying the highest landings (number of fish) in the recreational fisheries for summer flounder, bluefish striped bass, black sea bass, tautog, weakfish and winter flounder. (Rankings based on five year average of 2000 through 2004).

Additionally, New Jersey ranks in the top five states for commercial landings (pounds) under ASMFC-managed species for black sea bass, scup, summer flounder, tautog, weakfish, American shad, Atlantic croaker, Atlantic menhaden, winter flounder and Atlantic herring as averaged over the same period. For species not covered by ASMFC interstate fishery management plans such as surf clams, ocean quahogs, hard clams, scallops, and oysters, New Jersey also ranks in the top three positions and there are several other commercial fisheries such as mackerel, squid and butterfish landed in huge quantities in New Jersey ports.

However, location alone cannot account for such excellent fishing opportunities. Accessibility and port development are essential for recreational anglers and commercial fishermen to enjoy the offshore resources. Excellent marinas, an extensive state-developed artificial reef program and well-maintained inlets are vital factors in supporting New Jersey's fisheries. New Jersey residents and non-residents from many adjacent states readily take advantage of the marine fisheries bounty available to them year 'round.

Take every opportunity to show your pride for New Jersey's high-ranking status of marine fishery landings. I feel proud knowing our marine and shellfisheries staff have a key role in the state's top billing. 

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Department of Environmental Protection

Lisa P. Jackson, Commissioner

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Cover image: Striped Bass, Courtesy of Captain Blaine Anderson

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

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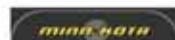
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