

MARINE REGULATIONS

Regulations in **red** are new this year.

Regulations remain in effect until changed. For the most current regulations, go to NJFishandWildlife.com/njregs.htm#marine.

Highlights of Regulation Changes:

Rules for the recreational harvest of striped bass have changed.

- A new regulation requires using inline (non-offset) circle hooks when fishing for striped bass with bait. See page 5 for more information.
- The recreational black sea bass regulations have been modified to include an open season May 17–June 19 with a ten fish possession limit; an open season July 1–Aug. 31 with a two fish possession limit; an open season Oct. 7–Oct. 26 with a ten fish possession limit; and an open season Nov. 1–Dec. 31 with a 15 fish possession limit. The minimum size limit for all seasons is 13 inches.
- The recreational summer flounder regulations for Delaware Bay and tributaries and Island Beach State Park remain unchanged. For all other waters, open season has been modified to May 2–Sept. 27 with a possession limit of two fish at 17 inches to less than 18 inches and one fish at 18 inches or greater.
- The recreational scup minimum size limit has increased to 10 inches. Season and possession limits remain unchanged.

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. Saltwater anglers must comply with the requirements of the New Jersey Saltwater Recreational Registry Program. See page 16.

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. 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://FishandWildlife'sVolunteerAnglerSurveyatNJFishandWildlife.com/marinesurvey.htm).

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.

Delaware Fishing License Requirement

A Delaware fishing license is required for all non-resident anglers aged 16 and over fishing either fresh or tidal waters of Delaware. Delaware fishing license information can be found at <https://dnrec.alpha.delaware.gov/fish-wildlife/licenses/>.

New York Fishing Registry Requirement

New York offers a free registry to all marine anglers fishing in New York. Visit www.dec.ny.gov/permits/54950.html.

Bait Fish

No license is required to take bait fish for personal use with the following gear:

1. Dip nets 24 inches diameter or less for taking Atlantic herring only for live bait. **The taking or possession of river herring (alewife and blueback herring) is prohibited.**
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.

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

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.

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.

Spearfishing

Spearfishing 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.

Sea Turtles & Marine Mammals

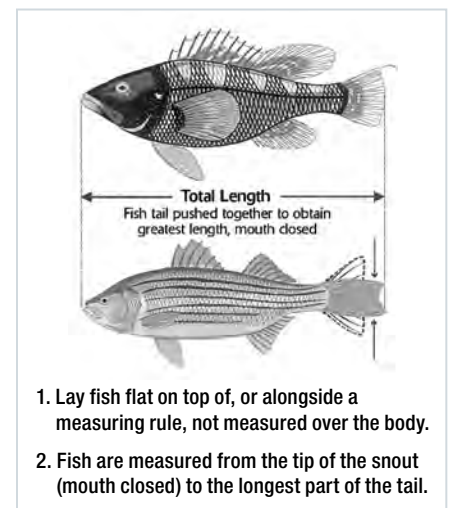
It is illegal to intentionally molest, kill or possess sea turtles, including terrapins, or marine mammals, or to possess any part thereof.

Be the First to Know! Get on the List

The Marine Fisheries and Shellfish e-mail list, that is. Get the latest information on Fish and Wildlife events, public hearings and other marine resource issues. Our six other lists help you get the most out of New Jersey's fish and wildlife resources. **Sign up today at:**

NJFishandWildlife.com/lstsub.htm

Fish Measurement



Prohibited Species

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

- Atlantic sturgeon
- Diamondback terrapin
- Shortnose sturgeon
- River herring (alewife and blueback herring; see herring illustrations, page 18)
- Various shark species (See page 22 footnote for the species list prohibited from harvest.)
- Horseshoe crabs

Finfish

Regulations for most finfish are listed in the table on page 21.

Filleting

The filleting at sea of all fish with a size limit, or any species of flatfish, is prohibited except for summer flounder; see *Summer Flounder*, page 17. Anglers shall possess no parts of any fish caught on a previous fishing trip. Party boats may fillet fish at sea if they obtain a Special Fillet Permit available from Fish and Wildlife's Marine Resources Administration.

Interstate Wildlife Violator Compact

Beware!

New Jersey participates in the Interstate Wildlife Violator Compact which means that a violator with repeat convictions of New Jersey marine fishing laws may face license suspensions in participating states.

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Black Sea Bass

Black sea bass are measured along the midline from the snout to the end of the central portion of the tail, not to include the tail filaments. (See image, page 14.) The recreational regulations for black sea bass are: **open season May 17–June 19 with a ten fish possession limit; an open season July 1–Aug. 31 with a two fish possession limit; an open season Oct. 7–Oct. 26 with a ten fish possession limit; and an open season Nov. 1–Dec. 31 with a 15 fish possession limit. The minimum size limit for all seasons is 13 inches.**

Bluefish

Bluefish recreational regulations: 5 fish (no size limit, open season all year) while fishing from a party/charter vessel with a valid federal party/charter vessel permit and captained by a properly credentialed operator with a valid U.S. Coast Guard endorsement (see important additional information regarding for-hire trips at: NJFishandWildlife.com/pdf/marine/bluefish4hire.pdf); 3 fish (no size limit, open season all year) for all other anglers.

River Herring

The taking or possession of any river herring (alewife and blueback herring) in New Jersey is prohibited. See the fish ID illustrations on page 18 for herring species identification.

Tips for Releasing Fish Unharmed

Proper handling and releasing techniques reduce fish mortality.

- Land fish quickly, except when retrieving from depths of 40-feet or more. Fighting a fish to exhaustion increases mortality as does rapidly bringing fish up through the changing water pressure and temperature gradients.
- Minimize the effect of barotrauma, which occurs when gases expand faster than they can diffuse due to decreasing pressure during ascent through the water column. For more information about barotrauma and how to release fish safely visit: <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/national/resources-fishing/catch-and-release-best-practices>.
- 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 eyes. Support the weight of the fish along the length of its body. Do not allow fish to flop around on deck.
- Carefully remove hooks using a dehooker or needle-nose pliers.
- Use plain hooks, not stainless, which rust away quickly if one must be left in a gut-hooked fish. Be prepared with a long-reach tool to cut the leader at the hook, 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 with pliers.

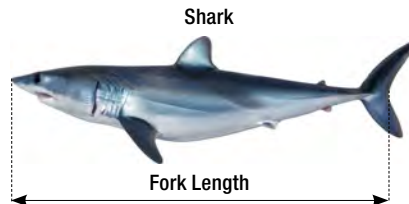
Regulations in red are new this year.

Sharks

Some species of sharks may be harvested by recreational fishermen from the shore or from a boat only by hand line or rod and reel. If a shark is caught but not kept, it must be released immediately. Anglers should access the following National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration website, www.fisheries.noaa.gov/resources/educational-materials, to download helpful materials such as the NOAA Fisheries *Shark Identification Placard* and the *Careful Catch and Release Brochure*, which provide a pictorial guide to identifying sharks and tips on handling and releasing large saltwater pelagic fish.

All sharks harvested must have heads, tails and fins attached naturally to the carcass until landed, although anglers may still gut and bleed the carcass. Filleting sharks at sea is prohibited. Recreational size limits for sharks are specified in the state and federal regulation charts on pages 21 and 22. Refer

to the illustration, below, for the proper measurement of fork length.



Dr. William Driggers, III/NMFS

The 2022 shark regulations complement existing federal shark regulations (see 2022 *Federal Recreational Regulations* table, page 22). However, the following additional measures are required for state waters:

- In state waters, there is no minimum size limit for non-blacknose small coastal sharks and blacknose 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 Aggregated Large Coastal and Hammerhead groups* 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 22 footnote for the species list defining shark groupings, including species prohibited from harvest.

Note: To differentiate sharks from dogfish—dogfish have flat, tiny teeth; spiny dogfish have dorsal spines in front of the dorsal fins. Neither are present in other sharks.

Striped Bass (includes Hybrid Striped Bass)

The possession limit for striped bass/hybrid striped bass is one fish with a size limit of 28 inches to less than 38 inches total length. Anglers participating in the Striped Bass Bonus Program may possess a striped bass at 24 inches to less than 28 inches in length. Fish may be harvested in any order.

New Jersey Saltwater Recreational Registry Program (NJSRRP)

ATTENTION: Recreational Saltwater Anglers

Register because you make a difference! FREE. EASY. REQUIRED.

The saltwater registry acts as a current contact list for mail and telephone surveys. Participation in the New Jersey Saltwater Recreational Registry Program (NJSRRP) is vital in achieving accurate recreational fishing estimates, helping to ensure healthy fisheries for future generations.

Do your part to help maintain sustainable fisheries and join the thousands of other anglers who have already registered with the New Jersey Saltwater Recreational Registry Program.

In 2021, the NJSRRP had 143,704 individual registrants and 745 for-hire vessels. The total number of individuals registered was at an all time low.

* Anglers are reminded that registrations expire at the end of each calendar year and must be renewed annually. For more information on the **NJ Saltwater Recreational Registry Program** and to register, visit www.saltwaterregistry.nj.gov.

If you're not contacted through the Saltwater Registry or intercepted by an APAIS interviewer while fishing, you can still participate by submitting a fishing report after each saltwater trip to the NJ Volunteer Angler Survey. Your reports impact how our oceans are managed. Submit online reports at NJFishandWildlife.com/marinesurvey.htm.

Wanted: Increased Participation!



Since the NJSRRP was implemented in May of 2011, there has been a fairly steady decline in the annual number of individual participants. Total number of individuals ranges from 270,437 in 2012 to 143,704 in 2021.



It is illegal to take, **attempt 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 unless in possession of a Striped Bass Bonus Permit. It is illegal to possess any striped bass 38 inches or greater.

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

Sale of striped bass in New Jersey is prohibited.

Note: Non-offset circle hooks are required to reduce striped bass release mortality while fishing with bait. See page 5 for more information.

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 its tributaries closed from the upstream side of the Calhoun St. bridge downstream to and including the Salem River and its tributaries.


Summer Flounder (Fluke)

The recreational summer flounder open season is **May 2 to September 27**. For Delaware Bay and tributaries, west of the COLREGS line, which delineates Delaware Bay from the Atlantic Ocean,

the size limit is 17 inches and the possession limit is three fish. The 17 inch minimum size limit applicable to Delaware Bay does not include the waters of the Cape May Canal east of the Cape May Ferry Terminal. Transport of summer flounder caught in Delaware Bay, greater than or equal to 17 inches but less than the 18 inches may occur in waters east of the Cape May Ferry Terminal to the George Redding Bridge (Route 47) located at the entrance of Wildwood provided all fishing gear aboard the vessel is stowed with rigs removed and the vessel may not stop to fish for any species. Shore-based anglers fishing at Island Beach State Park (IBSP) may retain 2 fish greater than or equal to 16 inches (total length) only at IBSP during the current open summer flounder fishing season. Shore-based fishing is defined as fishing from a pier, jetty, beach, bank or marsh. **In all other waters, open season is May 2 to September 27 and the size limit is two fish at 17 inches to less than 18 inches and one fish at 18 inches or greater. Fish can be caught in any order. Transportation of summer flounder less than 17 inches is prohibited.**

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. Anglers shall not be in possession of any parts of any summer flounder caught on a previous fishing trip; only fish just caught on the current outing.

Additional Marine Fishing Regulations

See pages 18–19 for the fish ID pages and pages 21–22 for the regulation charts. 



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Motor Boat Registration & 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.
- **Any boat (including jet skis and non-titled watercraft), mechanically propelled (including 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 Safety Certificate (NJSP)

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

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/vehicles/boating.htm.

New Jersey State Police (NJSP)
(609) 882-2000
www.njsp.org/marine-services