New Jersey Fish & Wildlife Digest

2008 Marine Fishing Issue
A summary of Rules & Management Information
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New Jersey Reefs p. 6

Size and Possession Limits p. 12

Striped Bass Tagging Project p. 20

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V8 DOUBLE CAB 4WD FEATURES:

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This DIGEST is available in enlarged format for the visually impaired. Write to: New Jersey Division of Fish and Wildlife, Large Format Marine Digest, P.O. Box 400, Trenton, NJ 08625-0400.
**Commissioner’s Message**

**By Lisa P. Jackson**

With this Marine Issue of the Fish & Wildlife Digest, New Jersey welcomes a special season of top-quality recreation close to home on our beautiful beaches and bountiful bays and waterways.

Whether you’re alone on a beach or on the bay or joining with family and friends for a deep-sea excursion, fishing in New Jersey is time and money well spent. Just ask any one of the half-million saltwater anglers who every year collectively devote upward of 5.5 million days reeling in bluefish, weakfish, striped bass, flounder, tautog, tuna and much more. Along with the thrill of the catch and fresh seafood for the table, anglers prize the countless moments of relaxation and camaraderie that often linger in memories for a lifetime.

In addition to its recreational benefits, sport fishing plays a powerful role in the Garden State’s economy. The economic impact of all sport fishing in New Jersey is $1.45 billion, and more than $1 billion comes from saltwater angling alone. What's more, saltwater angling in New Jersey generates about 10,000 jobs, according to the latest national sport fishing survey.

All of us at the Department of Environmental Protection, and especially the professionals in our Division of Fish and Wildlife’s Marine Fisheries Administration, are dedicated to providing a healthy, diverse and abundant marine resource and the opportunity to enjoy it today and in the future.

Here on State Street, we care about the ways policies and programs affect you and the families on your street. As we’re all aware, New Jersey is in the midst of some difficult fiscal times, and that reality calls upon us to embrace new ways of thinking and innovative solutions on a wide range of challenging issues — including the one Director Chanda discusses in his column in this edition. Most recently, we have been working to avert the need to close several state parks this year because of operating budget shortfalls. To avoid a similar scenario in the future, we must — and we will — explore funding alternatives that would enable us to continue offering the first-rate recreational opportunities that New Jerseyans so richly deserve.

On behalf of Governor Jon S. Corzine and all of us at the DEP, I offer my thanks to the sportsmen and sportswomen who choose to spend their valuable leisure time fishing in New Jersey. With your help and continued passion, we can build an even stronger foundation for sport fishing in New Jersey both for today’s residents and visitors and for generations to come.

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

**Director’s Message**

**By Dave Chanda**

The majority of anglers who follow marine fisheries management are familiar with the Marine Recreational Fisheries Statistics Survey (MRFSS). The National Marine Fisheries Service has conducted this survey for more than twenty years. It has been used to estimate recreational catch, harvest and effort for most marine recreational fisheries. The information collected from MRFSS plays an integral role in the management plans and ultimately the regulations, for virtually every important recreational fishery in New Jersey.

There has been growing concern over the years that fishery managers are utilizing the information provided by this survey in ways never intended. As a result, in 2006 the federal government commissioned a review of the survey by the National Research Council. This review confirmed the inappropriate use of MRFSS data.

In an effort to address this concern, the U.S. Congress mandated an improved marine recreational fishery data collection system as part of reauthorization of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (Magnuson Act). The Magnuson Act, signed by President Bush in 2007, mandated revising the MRFSS survey, which requires a National Saltwater Angler Registry Program to be established by January 1, 2009. The purpose of the registry is to identify all saltwater anglers that can be contacted to obtain more accurate recreational fishery information to improve fisheries management. Although there will be no fee associated with this registry for 2009, it is our understanding that beginning in 2011 the federal government is planning to charge a fee of approximately $25-$30 per angler.

(Continued on page 4)
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The National Saltwater Angler Registry will exempt anglers from the federal registry if their state has its own registration or licensing system. However, since New Jersey does not have a saltwater licensing or registration program, our anglers will be required to register with the federal government if there is no state program in place by 2009.

We do have some concerns with the National Registry Program and potential shortcomings, which may not provide better data for all of our recreational marine species. There is also concern about the impending fee our anglers may have to pay for the National Registry Program, the majority of which will not directly benefit New Jersey anglers or our state marine resource.

The realization that we face a potentially historic turning point in marine fisheries management will undoubtedly initiate a dialogue with our angling community on the best options to pursue for New Jersey anglers and our state marine resource.

Division of Fish and Wildlife staff are available to begin that dialogue with New Jersey recreational saltwater anglers. If your club/organization would like a staff member to provide additional information on the National Registry Program requirements and potential implications for New Jersey anglers, please contact the Marine Fisheries Administration at 609-292-7794.

Dave Chanda is Director of the New Jersey Division of Fish and Wildlife
New Jersey’s seafloor consists of sandy plains with mud and clay interrupted by submarine ridges. Within this nearly featureless and barren seafloor are 15 reef sites encompassing more than 25 square miles. These reefs range in size from ½ to four square miles and are placed strategically along New Jersey’s 120-mile coastline near navigable inlets. Contained within these reefs are more than 4,000 "patch reefs" which serve as premier underwater real estate for more than 150 species of fish and marine life. Recognized nationally as having some of the best artificial reefs in the nation, New Jersey’s reef network is an experience unparalleled along the Atlantic coast.
How Reefs Work

New Jersey’s reefs are only artificial in that hard structures are placed into the marine environment intentionally. Natural processes take place after structure deployment, leading to formation of a community of encrusting organisms.

These encrusting organisms attached permanently to hard surfaces using strong threads or cement. The bond is strong enough to remain firm during northeast storms, tropical depressions and hurricanes.

Ocean water contains a living “soup” of larval filter feeders such as mussels, barnacles, hydroids, sponges and corals that actively seek hard substrate on which to attach, grow and mature. These filter feeders sustain themselves by filtering from the waste–then consuming–plankton and detritus drifting by.

Some encrusters resemble plants, like the seaweed found on jetties and bulkheads, but these organisms are animals and do not photosynthesize. Sunlight must be able to penetrate through the water column to facilitate photosynthesis, but the average depth for a New Jersey reef is greater than 50 feet, effectively blocking the plant-nourishing rays of the sun.

Larval encrusting organisms cannot attach to loose sand grains as they quickly wash away or become covered by sediment. But deployed hard reef materials such as rock, concrete or steel quickly becomes encrusted and a living reef matrix soon envelops the structure. This matrix can be several layers thick as different types of encrusters compete for an available toehold, often growing atop one another. At this stage of reef development, a multitude of minute crustaceans, amphipods, isopods, crabs, shrimp and snails take up residence in this protective matrix and in turn form an important component of the food chain.

In terms of numbers and weights, fish represent a small portion of the marine life found on reefs. A nine-year study on marine life colonization conducted by New Jersey Division of Fish and Wildlife showed that fish only account for 4.5 percent of the reef’s biomass. Young-of-the-year demersal (bottom-dwelling) fish such as tautog and black sea bass represent 1.2 percent of the total biomass; adult fish represent 3.3 percent of the total.

In a healthy ecosystem, forage animals are much more abundant than the food chain’s apex predator – fish, which feed on both mobile and attached invertebrates. The most abundant group forming the base of the food chain is the sessile invertebrates (those permanently attached to a substrate) such as the blue mussel, barnacle, anemone, bryozoan, hydroid, tube worm and coral. These organisms account for 84.5 percent of the total reef biomass. The multitude of minute crustaceans found on reefs form 11 percent of the total biomass. These findings demonstrate that New Jersey reefs provide a productive habitat for use by marine fish species.

Deployed reef structure dissipates underwater currents which may reduce the energy fish expend. The structure acts as a baffle, reducing current along the bottom, allowing fish to utilize more energy for growth rather than exertion. Additionally, as water flows over and around reef structure, eddies form and carry food to waiting fish.
**Reef Materials:**

**Rocks**
More than 90 percent of the reef material deployed by New Jersey’s Reef Program is rock obtained from dredging operations. Rocks range in size from chips to cobblestones to boulders as large as cars. The rock is dropped on predetermined locations via hopper scows. Various type of rock – including sandstone, granite and igneous rock – are utilized to create rock piles, underwater rock mountains and ridges. Rock piles may be up to 300 feet long by 75 feet wide and rise four to six feet from the seafloor. Rock mountains are created by dropping dozens of hopper-scow loads of dredge rock in a single location resulting in a mountain rising 50 to 60 feet from the seafloor. Rock ridges are lower in profile than mountains and form an area of continuous relief along the bottom.

**Vessels**
Various vessels have been sunk on New Jersey reefs including lightships, ferry boats, tugboats, trawlers, tankers and more. These vessels range from the 32-foot U.S. Coast Guard crew boats to the 460-foot attack cargo transport the USS Agol. To date, 164 vessels have been deployed on New Jersey reefs.

**Demolition Concrete**
The reef program routinely deploys concrete obtained from the demolition of bridges, sea walls and piers. This material can vary in size from boulder-sized pieces to monoliths as long as 10 feet. Concrete is deployed from a massive, 200-foot deck barge and is pushed off piece-by-piece using heavy machinery. Typically, a marker buoy is set at the deployment location. A tugboat pulling the deck barge circles the buoy, broadcasting the concrete over a wide area. Multiple loads are dropped atop each other to provide higher vertical relief.

**Concrete Castings**
Concrete castings include culverts, junction boxes and other types of pre-fabricated concrete structure. Usually this material has a slight defect, such as a crack or chip, rendering them unfit for sale by the manufacture. These hollow cavities offer much surface area for attachment of encrusting organisms, making concrete castings an effective reef material where fish, crabs and lobsters dwell.

**Reef Balls**
Reef balls are a hollow, designed habitat resembling small igloos with numerous holes. In 1998, Fish and Wildlife purchased seven fiberglass molds to fabricate these concrete habitats. The following year, reef ball construction was launched at Southern State Correctional Facility using inmate laborers. Annually, 500 habitats are fabricated and transported to reef sites. Fish count studies performed by scuba divers have found an average of more than 19 fish near a reef ball habitat at a given time.

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**Demersal (Bottom) Fish**
Reef structure does not directly benefit all marine fish. Only a few species actually depend upon reef habitat for survival, although reefs also enrich non-dependent species.

Reef-associated fish are bottom dwellers such as black sea bass and tautog. The matrix formed within the reef structure provides refuge from larger predatory fish. Black sea bass and tautog typically cluster under an overhang, cavity or crevice found on the reef. These areas harbor a diverse menu of food including rock crabs and shrimp. Tautog and cunner graze here on these foods plus nip away at blue mussels and barnacles.

Although reefs are abundant with food, reef fish also make excursions to feed on infauna such as worms and clams found on the open sandy bottom. Soon after feeding, these fish return to the safety and refuge the reef affords.

**Schooling Baitfish**
For unknown reasons, certain schools of baitfish such as menhaden, round herring and anchovies, school around high-profile reef structure such as sunken ships. Some theorize these species use the high-profile structure as either a point of reference or find that the structure’s shadow conceals them from roving predatory fish. Schooling baitfish stay near the reefs temporarily then eventually move on.

**Pelagic Fish**
Pelagic (open water) species such as bluefish, amberjack, cobia and sharks are at the top of the reef food chain and use the reef as nothing more than a fast-food restaurant. These fish are attracted to the teeming bait and other swarming fish found around a reef. Pelagic predators are only transient here, as reefs are not essential for their life cycle.
Locate and Anchor on a Sunken Ship

1. Enter the lat/long or time differences into a GPS or LORAN unit, then hit “Go To.”
2. Steer resulting course to the wreck; pay attention to the distance to go
3. When the GPS or LORAN unit “zeros out” watch your depth recorder for the wreck
4. When the wreck is not immediately below the boat, begin a slow-speed search pattern such as an east-west or north-south path. Once wreck is located, immediately drop a marker buoy
5. Determine set and drift, then position your boat to drift over the wreck with a grappling anchor deployed.

An inexpensive wreck anchor can be constructed of two, 4-foot sections of 3/8 rebar rods and a 1-foot length of PVC pipe.

Army Tanks

A 1994 joint military-civilian training program among the U.S. Navy, Coast Guard, Army and Navy Special Forces, Air Force and the New Jersey National Guard, donated obsolete military vehicles for reef construction activities. Obsolete army vehicles such as M-60 and M-551 tanks, M-331 armored personnel carriers and M-578 crane vehicles were cleaned and prepared at Fort Dix by the New Jersey Army National Guard. During the six-year program, a total of 397 obsolete army vehicles were placed on 11 reef sites.

Subway Cars

Subway cars are structurally complex and have proven to be a fully-functioning, safe habitat, offering a valuable food base for fish by supporting invertebrate communities.

Acknowledgments and References:
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Sightings of the non-native and invasive Chinese mitten crab continue in waters surrounding New Jersey. The mitten crab has already invaded other areas of the United States causing significant ecological and economical losses in those areas, and has the potential to establish itself in New Jersey bays and estuaries. Both commercial and recreational crabbers plus the general public are asked to be watchful and assist scientists to document sightings of mitten crabs. Your support is important to effectively determine this invader’s current distribution and possible establishment in our waters.

Mitten crabs are native to East Asia but have invaded portions of northern Europe and also California. The crabs have the potential to increase erosion along stream banks, compromise levees and impact aquatic vegetation and wildlife. Therefore, the crabs are listed as “Injurious Wildlife” under the Federal Lacey Act which makes it illegal to import or transport this species across state boundaries without a permit. Mitten crabs spend most of their life cycle in freshwater. Around age three or four years, they migrate to higher-salinity areas to mate.

To date, thirteen confirmed mitten crabs have been caught predominately by commercial crab pots in the mid-Atlantic region, ranging from the Chesapeake Bay to the Hudson River. These sightings first appeared in the Chesapeake Bay when one adult male crab was caught in the summer of 2005. Sightings have since expanded with confirmed specimens in the Chesapeake Bay (five), upper Delaware Bay (five) and the Hudson River (three). There have been no confirmed sightings in any New Jersey waters.

Nine of the thirteen mitten crabs captured were males, with four mitten crab sightings turning up females. It is unknown if a self-sustaining population of mitten crabs exists in the mid-Atlantic region, however, two of the female crabs had mated and eggs were present on the abdomen. Two mitten crabs, one female and one male, found in the Hudson River in October 2007 and January 2008, respectively, were juveniles. No larvae have been found. Scientists are also still unsure of the potential impact should the mitten crab become established in the mid-Atlantic.

New Jersey Division of Fish and Wildlife along with the Smithsonian Environmental Research Center (SERC), the lead investigator in documenting mitten crab sightings, are continuing to collect information to determine the current status, abundance and distribution of mitten crabs along the eastern United States. Recreational crabbers are asked to stay alert for mitten crabs you may catch in New Jersey’s bays and coastal estuaries.

If you catch a mitten crab:

- Note the date and specific location of capture
- Photograph and/or retain the crab – do not throw it back alive!
- Contact either: Nacote Creek Marine Fisheries Office at (609) 748-2020 or Mitten Crab Hotline (SERC) at (443) 482-2222

Mitten Crab Identification
Mitten crabs are easy to confuse with several other crabs. Look for these key characteristics:

- Claws: equal in size with white tips and covered in hair
- Color: light brown to olive green
- Carapace: up to four inches wide with notch between the eyes
- Legs: eight sharp-tipped walking legs – no swimming legs

Thank you for helping New Jersey Division of Fish and Wildlife by staying watchful for the Chinese mitten crab. For more information on mitten crab sightings, current research and life history, visit the SERC Marine Invasions Research Lab Web site at: http://www.serc.si.edu/labs/marine_invasions/index.jsp.
FIN FISH

MARINE REGULATIONS

This is not the full law. Consult the Division of Fish and Wildlife for further details.

All persons are reminded that the statutes, code and regulations are the legal authorities.

Red text in regulations indicates a change for this year.

- Change in Rules for Recreational Harvest of Summer Flounder and Tautog.
- Striped Bass Bonus Program Applications Only Online

The Department of Environmental Protection's Division of Fish and Wildlife informs anglers that rules for the recreational harvest of summer flounder (fluke) have changed. The summer flounder recreational season is now May 24 through September 7. The recreational minimum size is 18 inches and the possession limit remains at eight fish.

The new minimum size limit for tautog is 14 inches. The possession limit changes throughout the year. See Tautog, page 13.

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

Applications for the Striped Bass Bonus Program are now available only online.

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

Resource Information

Anyone who takes fisheries resources may be required to provide information on the species, number, weight or other information pertinent to management of resources.

Methods of Recreational Fishing

No person shall take, catch, kill or attempt to take, catch or kill any fish within the marine waters of the state by any means except in the manner commonly known as angling with hand line or rod and line unless specifically provided for by statute or regulation.

Wanton Waste Prohibited

Fish of any species which are purposely killed shall become part of the angler's daily possession limit and shall not be returned to the water from which they were taken. This does not apply to fish which are released alive and subsequently die.

Spear Fishing

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

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

Prohibited Species

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

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

Sea Turtles & Marine Mammals

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

Finfish

Filletting

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 Fish and Wildlife’s Bureau of Marine Fisheries. See Summer Flounder, page 13.

Black Sea Bass

The minimum size limit for black sea bass is 12 inches measured along the midline from the snout to the end of the central portion of the tail, not to include the tail filaments. (See illustration above.) The possession limit is 25 fish with an open season of Jan. 1 through Dec. 31.

Bluefish

The possession limit for bluefish is 15 fish. Bluefish taken with hook and line may be sold only from June 16 through Aug. 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 Aug. 7.

Black Drum

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

Red Drum

The red drum possession and size limits are one fish no less than 18 inches and no greater than 27 inches.

Striped Bass (includes Hybrid Striped Bass)

The possession limit for striped bass/hybrid striped bass is two fish with a minimum size limit of 28 inches for each fish. Anglers participating in the Striped Bass Bonus Program (see next page) may possess an additional striped bass at least 28 inches in length.

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

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

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

Sale of striped bass in New Jersey is prohibited.

Striped Bass Closed Seasons

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

Jan. 1–Feb. 28 — All waters closed except the Atlantic Ocean from zero to three miles offshore. All inlets and bays are delineated from ocean waters by a COLREGS Demarcation line.
April 1–May 31 — Delaware River and Bay and their tributaries closed from the upstream side of the Calhoun St. bridge downstream to and including the Salem River and its tributaries.

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

Striped Bass Bonus Program
The Striped Bass Bonus Program will continue in 2008, where anglers possessing a bonus permit may keep a third striker at 28 inches or greater. The current allocation from the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission is 321,750 pounds to be distributed between individual anglers and party/charter boats. Should New Jersey exceed this quota in 2008, any overage would be subtracted from the 2009 quota.

Application Process
The 2008 Striped Bass Bonus Program permits are only available online. Go to www.WildlifeLicense.com/nj/, complete the application and immediately print one Bonus Permit; application fee, $2. The permit is non-transferable and valid for the 2008 calendar year. Only one permit can be used per day. Harvest reporting also must be online.

The party/charter boat segment of the program remains the same as 2007, with the applications available only by contacting Fish and Wildlife at (609)748-2020. The party/charter boat bonus program is not online.

Striped Bass Bonus Permit Harvest Reporting
All information on the Bonus Permit must be completed immediately after harvest and prior to transportation. After reporting harvest information at www.WildlifeLicense.com/nj/, anglers are then eligible to receive another bonus permit for the $2 application fee. Harvest information must be reported online.

Striped Bass Fishing Log
All participants receive a log with their Bonus Permit and are encouraged to report all striped bass fishing activity for the 2008 calendar year. Anglers now have the option to enter their striped bass fishing log online instead of mailing their paper fishing log. Go to www.NJFishandWildlife.com/bonusbas_log.htm.

Shark

The minimum size limit for any species of shark, except dogfish (see note below) is 48 inches total length. The minimum size and possession limit for shark is likely to change in 2008. For updates, visit our Web site at www.NJFishandWildlife.com/saltwater.htm or call the 24-hour marine fish information number at (609) 292-2083.

Sharks – Prohibited Species
- basking shark
- sand tiger shark
- white shark
- bigeye sand tiger 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 two 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 fins. Neither are present in sharks.

Summer Flounder (Fluke)
The possession and minimum size limit for summer flounder is eight fish at 18 inches with an open season from May 24 to Sept. 7.

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

Tautog (Blackfish)
Tautog regulations are new for 2008. The minimum size limit for Tautog is 14 inches. There is a four fish possession limit from Jan. 1 through April 30, a zero fish possession limit from May 1 through July 15 (the season is closed), a one fish possession limit from July 16 through Nov. 15 and a six fish possession limit from Nov. 16 through Dec. 31.

Weakfish (Gray & Spotted Seatrout)
The current possession and minimum size limit for weakfish is six fish at least 13 inches in length.

Winter Flounder
The minimum possession and size limit for winter flounder is 10 fish at 12 inches. For winter flounder the open season is March 23–May 21.

Additional Marine Fishing Regulations
See pages 15 - 18 for the regulation charts and fish ID pages.

Delaware Fishing License Requirement
A Delaware fishing license is now required for anglers aged 16 and over fishing the Delaware River and Delaware Bay between the upstream tip of Artificial Island and the Delaware-Pennsylvania state line. In that section of the river, the Delaware state boundary extends to the New Jersey shoreline. When fishing from shore in New Jersey along that section of the river, a Delaware fishing license is not required. Delaware fishing license information can be found at http://www.dw.delaware.gov/Fisheries/Pages/NewFishingLicense.aspx

Bait Fish
No license is required for the taking of baitfish for personal use with the following gear:
1. Dip nets 24 inches diameter or less for the taking of herring for live bait.
2. Bait seines 50 feet long or less.
3. Cast nets 20 feet in diameter or less.
4. Lift or umbrella nets four feet square or less.
5. Not more than five killipots.
6. Not more than two miniature fykes or pots for the taking of eels for bait.

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 by hook and line or the above listed gear.

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 3½ inches nor greater than 5 ¾ inches. Lobster parts may not be possessed at sea or landed.

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

The use of spears, gigs, gaffs or other penetrating devices as a method of capture for lobsters is prohibited. A recreational lobster pot permit and fish pot license is required to use pots or traps to capture lobsters. For details call (609) 748-2020.

Lobsters taken recreationally may not be sold or offered for sale.

**Crabs**

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 non-collapsible Chesapeake-style crab pots (see illustration on page 19) or two trot lines to harvest crabs. See page 19 for the non-commercial crab pot license information.

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 crabling license.

3. Minimum size for 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 ½ inch
   c) Hard crab—4 ½ inches (for sale)
   d) Hard crab—4 ½ 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 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. For more information, see Health Advisory on page 22.

13. Crab Pot/Trot Line seasons:
   Delaware Bay and tributaries — April 6 to Dec. 4; all other waters — March 15 to Nov. 30. The following waters are closed to the use of crab pots and trot lines: Cumberland Co.: Cohansey 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 Management Area enclosed by a line drawn from the northern bank of Fishing Creek on Island Beach State Park to the northern tip of the Sedge Islands (Hensler Island), then south from point to point along the western side of the Sedge Islands WMA and terminating on the most southwestern point of Island Beach State Park.

14. Fish and Wildlife will issue a non-commercial crab dredge license for the harvest of not more than one bushel of crabs per day during the crab dredge season. Crabs so taken may not be sold or offered for barter. There is a fee of $15 for this non-commercial crab dredge license. See page 19 for details on purchasing a non-commercial crab dredge license.

**Horseshoe Crabs**

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

**Mollusks**

1. All persons must be licensed to harvest any shellfish. See page 18. Shellfish means any species of benthic mollusks (except conch) including hard and soft clams, oysters, surf clams, bay scallops and mussels.

2. It is illegal to harvest shellfish from condemned waters, even for bait purposes. It is also illegal to harvest shellfish including surf clams from beaches adjacent to water classified as condemned. Shellfish water classification charts are available from license agents, any state shellfish office or Marine Police Station. See page 18 for more information. Charts are updated annually.

3. Shellfish harvesting is prohibited before sunrise, after sunset and on Sunday.

4. Harvesting shellfish 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 Fish and Wildlife’s Nacote Creek or Delaware Bay shellfish offices during regular business hours.

**Recreational Shellfish License**

1. No holder of any recreational shellfish license may take more than a total of 150 shellfish (in aggregate) per day. See page 18.

2. A non-resident recreational shellfish license is valid only during the months of June, July, August and September.

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

4. It is illegal to dredge shellfish. Hand implements are the only legal harvest methods.

5. The minimum size of hard clams that may be harvested is 1½ inches
in length. Clams less than 1½ inches in length must immediately be returned to the bottom from which they were taken. Specific seasons, regulations and size limits exist for oyster beds in Great Bay, Delaware Bay, plus the Mullica, Great Egg Harbor and Tuckahoe rivers. Check with the nearest shellfish office (Nacote Creek or Delaware Bay) for these detailed regulations.

6. It is illegal to harvest shellfish on Sunday except in the seasonal waters of the Navesink and Shrewsbury rivers between Nov. 1 and April 30.

7. Shells taken in the process of harvesting oysters must be culled from the live oysters and returned immediately to the area from where they were taken.

Commercial Shellfish License
1. Shellfish may be sold only to certified dealers. All persons selling shellfish commercially must tag each container listing date of harvest, name and address of the harvester and the waters from which the shellfish were harvested.

2. It is illegal to dredge shellfish 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 immediately returned to the area from where they were taken.

4. The minimum size of hard clams that may be harvested is 1½ inches in length. Clams less than 1½ inches must immediately be returned to the bottom from which they were taken. Specific seasons, regulations and size limits exist for oyster beds in Great Bay, Delaware Bay, plus the Mullica, Great Egg Harbor, and Tuckahoe rivers. Check with the nearest shellfish office (Nacote Creek or Delaware Bay) for these detailed regulations.

5. It is illegal to harvest shellfish on Sunday except in the seasonal waters of the Navesink and Shrewsbury rivers between Nov. 1 and April 30 when it is legal.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Species</th>
<th>Open Season</th>
<th>Minimum Length</th>
<th>Harvest &amp; Possession Limit (per person unless noted)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>American Eel</td>
<td>No Closed Season</td>
<td>6&quot;</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black Drum</td>
<td>No Closed Season</td>
<td>16&quot;</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black Sea Bass</td>
<td>Jan. 1–Dec. 31</td>
<td>12&quot;</td>
<td>25 Excluding tail filaments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cobia</td>
<td>No Closed Season</td>
<td>No Minimum</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cod</td>
<td>No Closed Season</td>
<td>21&quot;</td>
<td>No Limit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Haddock</td>
<td>No Closed Season</td>
<td>21&quot;</td>
<td>No Limit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>King Mackerel</td>
<td>No Closed Season</td>
<td>23&quot;</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pollock</td>
<td>No Closed Season</td>
<td>19&quot;</td>
<td>No Limit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Porgy (Scup)</td>
<td>Jan. 1–Feb. 28</td>
<td>9&quot;</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Red Drum</td>
<td>No Closed Season</td>
<td>18&quot;</td>
<td>1 not greater than 27&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>River Herring</td>
<td>No Closed Season</td>
<td>No Limit</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shad</td>
<td>No Closed Season</td>
<td>No minimum</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shark except prohibited species</td>
<td>No Closed Season</td>
<td>48&quot;</td>
<td>2 per vessel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spanish Mackerel</td>
<td>No Closed Season</td>
<td>14&quot;</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Striped bass or hybrid striped bass**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>March 1–March 31</th>
<th>March 1–Dec. 31</th>
<th>June 1–Dec. 31</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Del. River &amp; tributaries**</td>
<td></td>
<td>28&quot;</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>March 1–Dec. 31</th>
<th>No Closed Season</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Atlantic Ocean * 0-3 miles from shore</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rivers, bay and estuaries</td>
<td>March 1–Dec. 31</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 - 200 miles (federal waters)</td>
<td>Prohibited</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Summer Flounder**

| May 24–September 7 | 18" | 8 |

**Tautog**

| Jan. 1–April 30 | 14" | 4 |
| May 1–July 15  |    | 0 |
| July 16–Nov. 15 | 14" | 1 |
| Nov. 16–Dec. 31 | 14" | 6 |

**Weakfish**

| No Closed Season | 13" | 6 |

**Winter Flounder**

| March 23–May 21 | 12" | 10 |

No species of fish with a minimum size limit listed above may be filleted or cleaned at sea (except striped bass if fillet is at least 28" long). Party boats licensed to carry 15 or more passengers may apply for a permit to fillet the above species, except striped bass, at sea.

**Blue Crab**

| Carapace length | No Closed Season¹ | 3" | 1 bushel |

| Nº of Clams | 150 clams |

* Regulations change throughout the season. See Tautog, page 13.
** See Closed Seasons page 13 for specifics of springtime non-offset circle hook requirements.

- ¹ Not including dogfish; see description on page 13 under Shark
- ² Prohibited shark species: basking shark, whale shark, white shark, sand tiger shark, bigeye tiger shark
- ³ Atlantic Ocean greater than three miles from shore: harvest and possession prohibited
- ⁴ Unless using non-collapsible, Chesapeake-style crab pots. See sections on crab pots, pages 14, 18 and 19.
- ⁵ Regulations change throughout the season. See Tautog, page 13.
- ⁶ See Closed Seasons page 13 for specifics of springtime non-offset circle hook requirements.
ATTENTION ANGLERS
2008 New Jersey Minimum Size, Possession Limits & Seasons

Fish are measured from tip of snout to tip of tail (except Black Sea Bass; see p.12). Cleaning or filleting of fish with a minimum size limit while at sea is prohibited. Red text indicates a change this year.

PROHIBITED SPECIES
It is illegal to take, possess or land any of the following species:
BIGEYE SAND TIGER SHARK
SHORTNOSE STURGEON
ATLANTIC STURGEON
SAND TIGER SHARK
BASKING SHARK
WHALE SHARK
WHITE SHARK

OTHER SPECIES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fish</th>
<th>Possession Limit</th>
<th>Total Length</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>American Eel</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>6”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cobia</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>37”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cod</td>
<td>No Limit</td>
<td>21”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Haddock</td>
<td>No Limit</td>
<td>21”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>King Mackerel</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>23”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pollock</td>
<td>No Limit</td>
<td>19”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>River Herring</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>No Limit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lobster</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3½/4” min – 5¼” max (carapace length)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Summer Flounder (Fluke) 8 fish at 18”
Open Season: 5/24–9/7
See Summer Flounder regulations for filleting to use as bait, page 13

Tautog 14”
4 fish, 1/1–4/30 • 0 fish, 5/1–7/15
1 fish, 7/16–11/15 • 6 fish, 11/16–12/31

Weakfish 6 fish at 13”

Bluefish 15 fish — no minimum size

Shark 2 fish per vessel

Possession and size limits likely to change in 2008; see page 13.

Del. River & trib. (Calhoun St. bridge); Trenton, to Salem River & trib. Open 3/1–3/31 & 6/1–12/31
Atlantic Ocean: (0–3 miles from shore), no closed season; (greater than 3 miles from shore) closed year round
All other marine waters, open 3/1–12/31

Hard Clam recreational limit—150 clams
No harvest on Sunday. (See p. 15 for exceptions)

Blue Crab (point to point) Peeler or Shedder—3” Soft—3 ½” • Hard—4 ½” recreational limit—one bushel

Black Sea Bass
Open Season: 1/1–12/31
Alternate Length 23”
Total Length—48”

White Clam
1 ½”
recreational limit—150 clams
No harvest on Sunday. (See p. 15 for exceptions)
Marine Species Identification

SEASONS, SIZE AND POSSESSION LIMITS

Black Drum
3 Fish at 16”

Scup (Porgy)
50 Fish at 9”
Open Season: 1/1–2/28 and 7/1–12/31

Red Drum
1 Fish at least 18” but not greater than 27”

American Shad
6 Fish Limit

Spanish Mackerel
10 Fish at 14”

Atlantic Cod
21” Size Limit

Atlantic Bonito

Northern Kingfish

White Perch

Northern Searobin

Atlantic Mackerel

Spiny Dogfish

Smooth Dogfish

Oyster Toadfish

Sand Tiger Shark
possession prohibited

Atlantic Croaker

Sandbar Shark
2008 Federal Recreational Regulations for Minimum Size, Possession Limits and Seasons

See New Jersey Recreational Fishing Seasons Minimum Size and Possession Limits chart for species not included in these federal regulations, page 15.

For federal regulation questions, contact the National Marine Fisheries Service at (978) 281-9260, or go to www.nmfs.noaa.gov.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Species</th>
<th>Season</th>
<th>Minimum Size</th>
<th>Possession Limit</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Striped Bass</td>
<td>Possession prohibited in federal waters (3-200 nm)</td>
<td>Possession prohibited in federal waters (3-200 nm)</td>
<td>Possession prohibited in federal waters (3-200 nm)</td>
<td>Possession prohibited in federal waters (3-200 nm). See pages 12 and 15 for NJ Waters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dolphin (Mahi mahi)</td>
<td>year-round</td>
<td>none</td>
<td>10, not to exceed 60 per vessel. which ever is less, except on a charter or headboat, 10 per paying passenger</td>
<td>For current regulations refer to <a href="http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/hms/">www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/hms/</a> or call (978) 281-9260</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marlin, White</td>
<td>year-round</td>
<td>66 inches lower jaw-fork length</td>
<td>none</td>
<td>During any sanctioned billfish tournaments offering prize money, non offset circle hooks are required for lures with natural bait or natural/artificial bait combos. Refer to <a href="http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/hms/">www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/hms/</a> or call (978) 281-9260</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marlin, Blue</td>
<td>year-round</td>
<td>99 inches lower jaw-fork length</td>
<td>none</td>
<td>For current regulations refer to <a href="http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/hms/">www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/hms/</a> or call (978) 281-9260</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sailfish</td>
<td>year-round</td>
<td>63 inches lower jaw-fork length</td>
<td>none, longbill spearfish prohibited</td>
<td>For current regulations refer to <a href="http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/hms/">www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/hms/</a> or call (978) 281-9260</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Golden Tilefish</td>
<td>year-round</td>
<td>none</td>
<td>none</td>
<td>For current regulations refer to <a href="http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/hms/">www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/hms/</a> or call (978) 281-9260</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swordfish</td>
<td>year-round</td>
<td>47 inches lower jaw-fork length</td>
<td>1 per person, no more than 3 per vessel per trip</td>
<td>For current regulations refer to <a href="http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/hms/">www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/hms/</a> or call (978) 281-9260</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuna, Albacore (Longfin)</td>
<td>year-round</td>
<td>none</td>
<td>none</td>
<td>For permits refer to <a href="http://www.hmspermits.gov">www.hmspermits.gov</a> or call (888) 872-8862. For current regulations refer to <a href="http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/hms/">www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/hms/</a> or call (978) 281-9260</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuna, Bigeye</td>
<td>year-round</td>
<td>27 inches curved fork length</td>
<td>none</td>
<td>* Swordfish, tuna and sharks require a highly migratory species (HMS) permit when fishing in federal waters (3-200 nm). For current regulations refer to <a href="http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/hms/">www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/hms/</a> or call (978) 281-9260</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuna, Bluefin</td>
<td>January 1, 2008 to December 31, 2008 or until season is closed.</td>
<td>See note at right</td>
<td>See note at right</td>
<td>For current regulations refer to <a href="http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/hms/">www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/hms/</a> or call (978) 281-9260</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuna, Skipjack</td>
<td>year-round</td>
<td>none</td>
<td>none</td>
<td>For current regulations refer to <a href="http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/hms/">www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/hms/</a> or call (978) 281-9260</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuna, Yellowfin</td>
<td>year-round</td>
<td>27 inches curved fork length</td>
<td>3 per person per trip</td>
<td>For current regulations refer to <a href="http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/hms/">www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/hms/</a> or call (978) 281-9260</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Regulations concerning highly migratory species are subject to change. Refer to www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/hms/ for a list of complete federal regulations for highly migratory species.

Shellfish License Information

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

Prior to harvesting any shellfish, be certain to consult the Shellfish Growing Water Classification Charts published by DEP’s Bureau of Marine Water Monitoring, available at any shellfish license agent, state shellfish offices, marine police station, online at http://www.nj.gov/dep/bmw/waterclass.htm or call the Bureau of Marine Water Monitoring at (609) 748-2000. This summer, shellfish licenses will be available for purchase online at www.WildlifeLicense.com/NJ/.

A statutory update changed the name, fee and scope of several shellfish licenses.

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

(For over-the-counter sales only)

**CUMBERLAND COUNTY**
Shellfish Information and Crab Pot License Information
Bivalve Shellfish Office, 6959 Miller Ave., Port Norris
(856) 785-0730
Shire Products, 389 S. Lincoln Ave., Vineland
(856) 692-3646

**ATLANTIC COUNTY**
Fish Finder Marina, 3645 Atlantic-Brigantine Blvd., Brigantine
(609) 457-5384
NJ Div. Fish and Wildlife, 360 Rt. 9N (milepost 51)
(609) 748-2021
(609) 646-4888

**CAPE MAY COUNTY**
Avalon Hodge Podge, 2389 Ocean Dr., Avalon
(609) 967-3274
Budd’s Bait & Tackle, 109 Fullingmill Rd., Villas
(609) 886-6035
Capt. Tate’s Tackle Box, 450 No. Route 47, Cape May CH
(609) 861-4001
City of Ocean City, 861 Asbury Ave., Ocean City
(609) 525-9332
Just Sports, 21 W. Mechanic St., Cape May CH
(609) 465-6171
Upper Township, 2100 Tuckahoe Rd., Tuckahoe
(609) 628-2805
Wat’Marn, 3159 Rt. 9S, Rio Grande
(609) 465-7760

**MIDDLESEX COUNTY**
Auto Parts of Woodbridge, 108 Main St., Woodbridge
(732) 634-6284
Sayreville Sportsman Shop, 52 Washington Ave., Sayreville
(732) 238-1600

**MONMOUTH COUNTY**
Brie & Tackle, 800 Ashley Ave., Brielle
(732) 528-5720
L & H Woods and Water, 2045 Rt. 35, Wall
(732) 282-1812
T & A Bait and Tackle, 369 Rt. 36, Port Monmouth
(732) 787-3853

**OCEAN COUNTY**
American Sportsman, 857 Mill Creek Rd., Manahawkin
(609) 597-4104
Bob Kislin’s, 1214 Rt. 37 East, Toms River
(732) 929-3000
Downes Bait & Tackle, 287 Brennan Concourse, Bayville
(732) 269-0137
Grizz’s Forked River B & T, 232 N. Main St., Forked River
(609) 693-9236
Lacey Marine, 308 Rt. 9 So., Forked River
(609) 693-0151
L & H Woods and Water, 403 Rt. 9, Waretown
(609) 242-1812
Pell’s Fish & Sport Shop, 335 Mantoloking Rd., Bricktown
(732) 477-2121
Tip’s Hardware, 218 Main St., West Creek
(609) 296-3192

**SOMERSET COUNTY**
Elfinger Sporting Goods, 513 W. Union Ave., Bound Brook
(732) 356-0604

Crab Licenses Now Available at All Agent Locations

Recreational Crab Pot/Trot Line Licenses and Non-Commercial Crab Dredge Licenses are now available for purchase online at www.WildlifeLicense.com/nj/ or at any Fish and Wildlife-certified license agent including those license agents listed above. For a current list of Fish and Wildlife-certified license agents, look in future hunting issues of the New Jersey Fish & Wildlife Digest or go to www.NJFishandWildlife.com/agentlst.htm.

- **Recreational crab pot/trot line license:** $2 application fee. Harvest limit of one bushel per day. Refer to the shellfish regulations on page 14 for all recreational crabbing regulations.
- **Non-commercial crab dredge license:** $15 harvest limit of one bushel per day during the crab dredge season. Refer to the crab regulations on page 14 for all recreational crabbing regulations.

Terrapin Excluders and Biodegradable Panels Are Required on Chesapeake-Style Crab Pots

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

These crab pot modifications will help reduce the unintentional drowning of terrapins and allow for escapement of these and other species in the event that pots are lost or abandoned. Terrapin excluder devices must be no larger than 2 inches high by 6 inches wide and securely fastened inside each funnel entrance. Biodegradable panels must measure at least 6½ inches wide by 5 inches high and be located in the upper section of the crab pot. The panel must be constructed of, or fastened to the pot with wood lath, cotton, hemp, sisal or jute twine not greater than 3/16” diameter, or non-stainless steel, uncoated ferrous metal not greater than 1/8” diameter. The door or a side of the pot may serve as the biodegradable panel ONLY if it is fastened to the pot with any of the material specified above. Crabbers should be aware that ALL non-collapsible, Chesapeake-style crab pots MUST be licensed and marked with the gear identification number of the owner. For crab pot license information and regulations, see the regulations on page 14 and license agents above.
How many fish have you tagged?

The Coastwide Cooperative Striped Bass Tagging Program is coordinated by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and involves several state and federal agencies from North Carolina to Massachusetts. Each agency is responsible for submitting their tagging information annually to the USFWS, which handles tag distribution, recapture reporting and management of the coastwide database for all releases and recaptures. Since 1987, 473,942 striped bass were tagged and released coastwide with 84,964 recaptures reported to date.

Division of Fish and Wildlife personnel began tagging Delaware Bay striped bass in 1989, marking 34,689 fish from various New Jersey waters through 2007. Although the majority of these fish (26,809) were tagged during the spring on the Delaware Bay, striped bass were also tagged on the Navesink and Delaware rivers as well as along the coast during the Ocean Trawl Survey and coastal sampling of striped bass party boats.

Where do the fish go after they are tagged?

Of the fish tagged in New Jersey, 7,877 recaptures have been reported. These recaptures range from North Carolina to as far north as Nova Scotia. Although only one New Jersey-tagged fish has been recaptured in Canadian waters, it does make an interesting footnote. The striped bass was tagged during January 1992 in Barnegat Bay and was recaptured in the Sissiboo River near Weymouth, Nova Scotia in September 1993.

The majority of fish tagged by Fish and Wildlife (64 percent) are recaptured north of New Jersey, while 26 percent are caught in New Jersey and Pennsylvania. Only 11 percent of recaptures are reported from the south (Figure 1). Striped bass recaptures from fish tagged in Delaware Bay and along the coast tend to follow similar movement patterns, with most of the recaptures occurring in Massachusetts, New Jersey and New York. The majority of these tagged fish are immature females or young adult males which travel as part of the mass migration up and down the coast.

When discussing fish tagging programs, most people drift towards the same questions. How many fish have you tagged? Where do the fish go after tagging? How old are the fish? Many anglers may never have caught a tagged fish; some may think researchers are tagging too few. As you will see, that is definitely not the case with striped bass.
Fish tagged in the Navesink River from 1989 to 2000 generally followed a different pattern with over 76 percent recaptured in New Jersey waters (Figure 2). Factors which may account for this difference could be the tagging location and the type of fish. Striped bass tagged in the Navesink River were stocked by Fish and Wildlife as part of a restoration project during the 1990s. These fish were progeny of a non-migratory stock of striped bass from North Carolina and may tend not to migrate like wild stocks from the Chesapeake Bay, Hudson River and Delaware River.

estimate the age of a striped bass includes a striper dubbed “Morsax” tagged in the early days of our sampling. Morsax was 24 inches when tagged in the Delaware Bay during March 1989. It was quickly recaptured in November of the same year, in Barnegat Inlet, New Jersey then re-released. By January 2004, Morsax had grown to 43 inches when it was recaptured again off the coast of North Carolina. Morsax held the tag for nearly 15 years. A scale sample was not taken at the time of tagging, so biologists used the Delaware Bay age-length key to estimate the approximate age of the fish. When tagged, it was estimated to be five years old, so by the second recapture Morsax would be around 20 years old.

The travels of Morsax may not have occurred without proper hook and release techniques at the time of first recapture. Fish and Wildlife encourages catch and release when possible, so it is imperative to take good care of fish during handling. Approximately 54 percent of all recaptured coastal striped bass are re-released, while 66 percent of fish marked from the Delaware and Navesink rivers are re-released.

With the number of tagged striped bass swimming along our coast, anglers have a fair chance of catching one. The recapture rate coastwide is about 18 percent, while New Jersey’s recapture rate is 23 percent. If you see a pink tag protruding from the belly of a striper, record the tag number, length, date, location and capture method. If you cannot record the data, cut the tag at its base, retain the tag, then call (800) 448-8322 to report the recapture. The USFWS will send information from when your fish was tagged and will reward you with a hat. Good luck and keep looking for the pink tags.

What ages are the tagged fish?

Scale samples collected during tagging provide invaluable information for the development of age-length keys. These keys help determine the general age range of a fish if a scale sample is not available, such as with those fish you catch. (Figure 3).

Each fish is measured prior to tagging, a subsample is weighed and scales are taken from all fish for age determination. (See sidebar on aging scales.) During the 2006 Delaware Bay tagging survey, fish ranged in total length from 16 to 40 inches, with a mean size of 25 inches. The majority of the fish collected were ages five through seven years old, with the 2000 year-class accounting for 36 percent of the fish sampled.

An example of using an age-length key to

Striped Bass Scale Aging

- Most commonly used aging structure
- Advantages: ease of collection and non lethal sampling technique
- Disadvantage: difficult to determine age with older fish
- Taken from midway between the head and tail in the upper half of the body
- Heated press used to burn impression onto acetate slide (above, bottom)
- Slide viewed with microfiche reader to count annuli (growth rings) like rings on a tree (above, top)
- One annuli per year
- In 2006, New Jersey Division of Fish and Wildlife aged over 1,500 striped bass scales
Health Advisory

For Eating Fish And Crabs Caught In New Jersey Waters

Fish Smart — Eat Smart

Fishing provides enjoyable and relaxing recreation. Fish are an excellent source of protein and other nutrients and play a role in maintaining a healthy, well-balanced diet. Many anglers enjoy cooking and eating their own catch. However, elevated levels of potentially harmful chemical contaminants, such as dioxin, polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), pesticides and mercury have been found in certain fish and crabs in some New Jersey waters. Fish consumption advisories have been adopted to guide citizens on safe consumption practices.

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

Check online for fish consumption advisories on the local water body in which you fish!

Go to FishSmartEatSmartNJ.org

The new FishSmartEatSmartNJ.org is a user-friendly site designed to help you decide what fish are best for you to consume. The Fish Smart-Eat Smart Fish Advisory Web site includes a Geographic Information System (GIS) map linked to current fish consumption advisories statewide. For example, to see the latest mercury or PCB advisories for your area, just select the county by clicking on the map. The page shows the water body location, fish species and any advisories that apply. This feature makes it easy to find current fish consumption advisories for the specific waterbody in which you fish.

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

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

The fish consumption advisories, Fish Smart-Eat Smart Web site and Advisory Guide are each updated periodically and are available in print or online through these agencies:

The Fish Advisory Guide is available by contacting the following:

New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection
Public Access Center (609) 777-DEP4 or www.state.nj.us/dep

Division of Science, Research and Technology
(609) 984-6070 or www.state.nj.us/dep/dsrt

Division of Fish and Wildlife
(609) 748-2020 or www.NJFishandWildlife.com

New Jersey Department of Health and Senior Services
Consumer and Environmental Health
(609) 588-3123 or (609) 777-3373
www.state.nj.us/health/eho/foodweb/fishguid.htm

Get on the Lists

The Marine Fisheries and Shellfish e-mail lists that is. This free service will provide you with the latest information about Fish and Wildlife events, public hearings and other matters related to marine resources. And there are six other lists to help you get the most out of New Jersey’s fish and wildlife resources. Sign up today. Visit Fish and Wildlife’s Web site at: www.NJFishandWildlife.com/lstsub.htm

New Jersey’s Accessible Fishing Sites for People With Disabilities

Visit www.NJFishandWildlife.com/sites.htm

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

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

Reader Survey

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www.regsurvey.com
Clean Vessel Act Program Continues To Expand

By Al Ivany, Principal Biologist

Vessel-generated sewage discharges can degrade water quality, impact people and wildlife and cause the closure of shellfish beds and swimming beaches. To address this, Congress passed the Clean Vessel Act Program (CVA) in 1992 to help keep our waters clean by providing funds for the construction and operation of sewage pumpout stations and dump stations for recreational boats. Funds are also provided for information and education programs to make boaters aware of the program, and to encourage them to use pumpouts.

New Jersey began implemented the Clean Vessel Act Program in 1994, with ongoing success. In fact, applications are increasing to request funding for installation of pumpout stations, along with requests for additional pumpout boats. Pumpout projects have also grown in size as many marinas have expanded their facilities, as well as their need for additional pumpout systems. Although the program is generating a positive response, the increased interest is forcing the Clean Vessel Act Steering Committee to make tough decisions on the allocation of the program’s limited funding.

One hundred eighty pumpout stations are currently in operation at marinas, providing service to the recreational boating community. In addition, four pumpout boats patrol coastal waterways in the summer assisting boaters on the open water. Seventeen marinas currently have applications pending, plus two applications for pumpout boats.

Pumpout stations are easy to use and CVA-participating marinas may not charge more than a $5 fee for their use. Boaters in New Jersey have responded overwhelmingly to the Clean Vessel Act Program. Millions of gallons of sewage from boats have been removed and safely treated since the inception of the program.

Marina owners and municipal governments are encouraged to continue applying to the CVA program for pumpout facilities, as well as pumpout boats. Owners must maintain the pumpout for five years. After that, owners may reapply for funding of a new pumpout should it become necessary.

Interested parties can request an application for pumpout installation through the CVA Program by contacting the New Jersey Marine Trades Association at (732) 292-1051.

Fish Scraps

Marinas located in sheltered areas protect boats from storms. These areas have reduced water exchange, or flushing, so waste discharged here may accumulate and decay. Fish cleaning scraps can be a problem when discarded in a poorly-flushed marina basin. Fish waste is smelly and unsightly. Life-sustaining oxygen becomes depleted from these waters as bacteria decompose any meat scraps.

But you can help.

Keep marinas clean by following these tips:

• Do not discard fish waste in poorly flushed waters.
• Ask about the marina’s cleaning and disposal policy.
• Bag waste and discard at home or in a Dumpster.

From CleanMarina.org
New Jersey Skillful Angler Application

Name __________________________ Age ________
Address ____________________________________________________________
City ______________ State ___________ Zip ______________
Daytime Telephone Number (_________ ) ________________________

Entry Category (check only one):
☐ Adult       ☐ Junior (16 years and under)
☐ Catch and Release (qualification based on length)

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

Weight ________ lb (s), ______ oz. Length ________ in.
Girth ________ in. Date Caught* ________/______/_______
Time Caught: ______________________________
Location: Caught from (check only one):
☐ Boat    ☐ Shore    ☐ Surf    ☐ Jetty
☐ Other (specify) ______________________________

Line Test Used______________ Reel Type __________
Rod Type______________ Lure/Bait ______________

Certification for Adult and Junior Categories

Name of establishment where fish was measured and weighed

______________________________________________________________

Telephone Number __________________

Weighmaster’s Name ________________________
Weighmaster’s Signature ________________________

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

______________________________________________________________ Date ______________

Applicant’s Signature ________________________

* Application and photo must be submitted within 30 days of catching the fish.

Applications for fish caught in December will be accepted only until January 31.

Mail to:
NJ Division of Fish and Wildlife - Pequest
Skillful Angler Award Program
605 Pequest Rd.
Oxford, NJ 07863

Skillful Angler Awards Program

T he Skillful Angler Awards Program is designed to supplement the New Jersey Record Fish Program. It comprises three categories: Adult (for anglers age 16 and older), Junior (under age 16) and Catch and Release (based on length). A clear, side-view photo that allows accurate species identification must be included with each application. All photo entries become property of the Division of Fish and Wildlife and will not be returned.

The Skillful Angler Awards Program acknowledges that many anglers catch freshwater and marine fish that are not record size but are still worthy of recognition because the size and weight of the fish sufficiently tested the angler’s skill. The program is open to resident and non-resident anglers. All fish must be caught in New Jersey waters using a hook and line during legally open seasons.

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

At the end of the year, special recognition is given to anglers who catch the largest fish in each species category. The winner of each category receives a special commemorative gift recognizing his or her accomplishment as the best of New Jersey’s Skillful Anglers.

Fish must be measured from the tip of the nose (with mouth closed) to the tip of the tail. For Adult/Junior categories, fish must be weighed and measured by fishing license agents, tackle shops or an authorized Fish and Wildlife fisheries biologist.

See online at www.NJFishandWildlife.com/skflang.htm.

Minimum Entry Requirements

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

Note: The New Jersey State Record Fish Program requires a separate application and is based on weight alone. See facing page. Scale certification documentation and a weighmaster’s signature are necessary. Other rules apply. Visit Fish and Wildlife’s Web site at www.NJFishandWildlife.com/recfish.htm for a complete list of current state records.
New Jersey State Record Marine Sport Fish

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Species</th>
<th>Lbs.</th>
<th>Oz.</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Angler</th>
<th>Where Caught</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Amberjack, greater</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1993</td>
<td>Edwin Metzner</td>
<td>Off Cape May</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bass, black sea</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1992</td>
<td>Tony Gunia</td>
<td>Inshore Wreck</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bluefish</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1994</td>
<td>John Geddes</td>
<td>Off Pt. Pleasant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bonito, Atlantic</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1945</td>
<td>Frank Lykes, Jr.</td>
<td>Off Sandy Hook</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cobia</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1999</td>
<td>John Shanchuk</td>
<td>Off Sea Bright</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cod</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1967</td>
<td>Joseph Chesa</td>
<td>Off Brielle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crab, blue</td>
<td>8 1/2 pt. to pt.</td>
<td>1995</td>
<td>William Deol</td>
<td>Marahawk Wreck</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Croaker, Atlantic</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1981</td>
<td>Frederick Brown</td>
<td>Delaware Bay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cuttle</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2006</td>
<td>Nick Honackelisky</td>
<td>Mud Hole</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dogfish, smooth</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2000</td>
<td>Michael LaTorre</td>
<td>Pleasantville</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dogfish, spiny</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>1980</td>
<td>Jeff Pannick</td>
<td>Off Cape May</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dolphin</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1974</td>
<td>Scott Smith, Jr.</td>
<td>Baltimore Canyon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drum, black</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2006</td>
<td>William Kinzy</td>
<td>Delaware Bay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drum, red</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1985</td>
<td>Daniel Yanino</td>
<td>Great Bay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eel, American</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>1988</td>
<td>Warren Campbell</td>
<td>Atlantic City</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fluke</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>1953</td>
<td>Walter Lubin</td>
<td>Off Cape May</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flounder, winter</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>1993</td>
<td>Jimmy Swanson</td>
<td>Off Barnegat Light</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hake, white</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1989</td>
<td>Wayne Eble</td>
<td>Off Barnegat Light</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kingfish, Northern</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2004</td>
<td>Chester Urbanski</td>
<td>Barnegat Bay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ling (red hake)</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2002</td>
<td>Natalie Jones</td>
<td>Off Brielle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lobster, American</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2003</td>
<td>William Sharp</td>
<td>Almirante Wreck</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mackeral, Atlantic</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1983</td>
<td>Abe Elkin</td>
<td>Manasquan Ridge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mackeral, king</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1998</td>
<td>Fernando Aliaate</td>
<td>Off Cape May</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mackeral, Spanish</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>1990</td>
<td>Donald Kohler</td>
<td>Off Cape May</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Martin, blue</td>
<td>1,046</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1986</td>
<td>Phil Infantino</td>
<td>Hudson Canyon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Martin, white</td>
<td>137</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1980</td>
<td>Mike Marcheli</td>
<td>Hudson Canyon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perch, white</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>1998</td>
<td>Michael King</td>
<td>Little Beach Creek</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pollock</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1975</td>
<td>John Holton</td>
<td>Off Brielle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Porgy</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>1976</td>
<td>Victor Rone</td>
<td>Delaware Bay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sailfish</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2006</td>
<td>Dr. John Taila</td>
<td>Linden Kohl Canyon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seabream, spotted</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1974</td>
<td>Bert Harper</td>
<td>Holgate Surf</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shad, American</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1967</td>
<td>Rodger West</td>
<td>Great Bay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shad, hickory</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Vacant (Minimum Weight 2 lbs.)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shark, blue</td>
<td>366</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1996</td>
<td>Albert Jewett</td>
<td>Mud Hole</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shark, bull</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Vacant (Minimum Weight 150 lbs.)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shark, dusky</td>
<td>530</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1987</td>
<td>Brian Dunlevy</td>
<td>Off Great Egg Inlet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shark, hammerhead</td>
<td>365</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1985</td>
<td>Walter Thacara</td>
<td>Mud Hole</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shark, porbeagle</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Vacant (Minimum Weight 100 lbs.)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shark, sandbar</td>
<td>168</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1987</td>
<td>John Norton</td>
<td>Little Egg Inlet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shark, s-finn makoo</td>
<td>856</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1994</td>
<td>Christopher Palmer</td>
<td>Wilmington Canyon</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shark, thresher</td>
<td>617</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2004</td>
<td>Chris Chalmers</td>
<td>Off Cape May</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shark, tiger</td>
<td>880</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1988</td>
<td>Billy DeJohn</td>
<td>Off Cape May</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sheephead</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2003</td>
<td>Paul Lowe</td>
<td>Manasquan Bay</td>
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<tr>
<td>Spadefish</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1998</td>
<td>Cliff Low</td>
<td>Delaware Bay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spearfish, longbill</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1989</td>
<td>George Algard</td>
<td>Poor Man’s Canyon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spotted Porgy</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1997</td>
<td>Joseph Natoli</td>
<td>Hudson Canyon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spot</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>2003</td>
<td>Robert Bellis, Jr.</td>
<td>Little Sheephead Creek</td>
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<tr>
<td>Striped Bass</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1982</td>
<td>Al McReynolds</td>
<td>Atlantic City</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swordfish</td>
<td>530</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1984</td>
<td>Frederick Brown</td>
<td>Delaware Bay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tautog</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1998</td>
<td>Anthony Monica</td>
<td>Off South End</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tilefish, golden</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2006</td>
<td>Keith Karl</td>
<td>Tom’s Canyon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tilefish, gray</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2007</td>
<td>Joseph Sanzone</td>
<td>Tom’s Canyon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Triggerfish, gray</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>2005</td>
<td>Lois Schuler</td>
<td>Cape May Reef</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tuna, albacore</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>1984</td>
<td>Dr. S. Scannapiepo</td>
<td>Spencer Canyon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuna, big-eye</td>
<td>364</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>1948</td>
<td>John Krenk</td>
<td>Hudson Canyon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuna, bluefin</td>
<td>1,030</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1981</td>
<td>Royal Parsons</td>
<td>Off Pt. Pleasant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuna, skipjack</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1999</td>
<td>Craig Sibbach</td>
<td>Wilmington Canyon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuna, yellowfin</td>
<td>290</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2000</td>
<td>Wayne Brinkerhoff</td>
<td>Hudson Canyon</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tunny, little</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>1977</td>
<td>Mark Niemcyz</td>
<td>Off Sea Bright</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wahoo</td>
<td>123</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>1992</td>
<td>Robert Cunliffe</td>
<td>28-Mile Wreck</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weakfish</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1986</td>
<td>Karl Jones</td>
<td>Delaware Bay</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Warning:**

**Wildlife Hazard!**

Properly dispose of your fishing line. Plastic debris can endanger marine life and snare propellers.

- Fish was previously certified by the IGFA as a world record.
- For information concerning the New Jersey State Record Fish or Skillful Angler programs, visit the New Jersey Division of Fish and Wildlife’s website at www.NJFishandWildlife.com

For a complete list of state record fish or to print an application with complete program rules, visit the Division of Fish and Wildlife’s website at www.NJFishandWildlife.com/fishing.htm.
The 17th Annual Governor’s Surf Fishing Tournament will be held Sunday, Oct. 5, 2008. Once again anglers will line the beaches of Island Beach State Park in hopes of catching the largest fish of the day. Popular with families from New Jersey and neighboring states, the tournament aims to encourage youngsters and adults to learn more about surf fishing and raises much-needed funds for marine resource conservation and education.

In 2007, the warm waters and summer-like weather made for an enjoyable Tournament day. Contestants caught bluefish, kingfish, striped bass and blackfish, with a total of 21 prizes awarded in categories for children, teens and adults. However, the grand prize went to Martin Mosen of Collingswood, with a 37 3/8-inch striped bass. DEP Commissioner Lisa P. Jackson and Jersey Coast Anglers Association President, John Toth congratulated Mr. Mosen with a plaque and two rod-and-reel combinations. Mr. Mosen’s name has been engraved on the Governor’s Cup, which is on permanent display at Island Beach State Park.

Since its inception, the tournament has generated more than $100,000 for various marine education and restoration efforts, construction of access ramps for disabled saltwater anglers, surf fishing instruction programs and equipment and specialized wheel chairs that provide beach access to the disabled and elderly, among other purposes.

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

New Jersey Division of Fish and Wildlife and the Division of Parks and Forestry
(along with our co-sponsors: NJ State Federation of Sportsmen’s Clubs, Jersey Coast Anglers Association and NJ Beach Buggy Association) would like to thank the following organizations for contributing to the success of the 16th Annual Governor’s Surf Fishing Tournament in 2007:

- Zebco for donating 32 Quantum rods and reels
- Cape May-Lewes Ferry
- Eagle Claw Fishing Tackle Company
- Fisherman Eyewear
- Grumpy’s Bait and Tackle
- Jenkinson’s Aquarium
- L & H Woods And Water
- Manns Bait Company
- O Mustad & Son, Inc.
- Silver Horde
- Sportsman’s Center
- Legal Limits Company
- Mans Bait Company
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- Silver Horde
- Sportsman’s Center
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- TTI-Blakemore Fishing Group
- Trenton Devil’s
- Wetlands Institute

If you care about:
- Wise management of fish and wildlife populations
- Protection and enhancement of natural lands and waters
- Preservation of traditional outdoor sports

Then get involved!
- Stay informed on issues affecting NJ sportsmen and sportswomen
- Make an impact on outdoor issues
- Meet others who share similar sporting interests
- Have fun and participate in Federation-sponsored activities: jamborees, clay target shoots, tournaments, dinners, conventions, and more!

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- $35 Includes monthly newspaper, membership decal and $1 million excess liability insurance
- $20 Monthly newspaper only

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Angler, boater purchases fuel success of sport fish restoration projects

You probably don’t have to be told what fishing means to you. You value time spent in the great outdoors, relaxing with family and friends on the water and savoring the thrill of battling a trophy. But you may not realize how much you mean to fishing. Every time you fill your boat with gasoline, buy your child a new rod or stock up on lures, you are making an important contribution toward better fishing and boating in the Garden State. Simply by purchasing the things you need for fishing, you support the Sport Fish Restoration Program, which enables states to restore fisheries, improve habitats, create fishing and boating access, provide educational opportunities and accomplish other valuable work.

The Sport Fish Restoration Program is funded by excise taxes manufacturers pay on sales of rods, reels and other fishing equipment and a portion of tax on motorboat fuel. The U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service distributes these funds annually to the states through a federal grant program. New Jersey receives more than $3.4 million each year in Sport Fish Restoration funds.

For more information on the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service’s Federal Aid in Sport Fish Restoration program, visit http://federalassf.fws.gov.
Griffin’s Gear Guide

May 2008

For more information contact New Jersey Division of Fish and Wildlife at (609) 292-2965

New Jersey Fish & Wildlife Digest 2008 Marine Fishing Issue | 27

Griffin’s Gear Guide

SPECIAL ADVERTISING SECTION

Griffin’s Gear Guide is a special product section for essential gear & new product announcements.

Now You Can Reach From The Beach, With The Surf Rocket!

Cast your bait over 500ft with the Surf Rocket, a specially designed compressed air casting cannon. This gives you the upper hand by allowing you to cast your bait into deep water, past the sandbar, without a boat, right from the beach. With our system you can chum any area before you fish, drawing fish to you. No more chasing tides looking for deep water, or watching birds work on bait out of reach. Now you can effectively reach your fishing area from shore with the Surf Rocket system. Use any bait, clams, bunker, chum, bunker snags, and even lures. The Surf Rocket is light weight, and compact. Comes with 12volt compressor, ramrod, angle stand, and 6 bait molds. This is the smartest way of fishing on the beach.


Evinrude E-TEC Outboard Engines

Evinrude E-TEC engines are sophisticated and simple, requiring no scheduled dealer maintenance for three years or 300 hours of normal recreational use. There are no belts or valves to adjust or replace; not even an oil change is needed.

Two-stroke direct injection engines have less weight and more torque than four-stroke outboards, giving them faster acceleration and higher speeds.

The entire Evinrude E-TEC line produces lower exhaust emissions including lower carbon monoxide emissions than four-stroke engines and meets stringent 2006 EPA, European Union (EU), and 2008 California Air Resources Board (CARB) 3-Star ultra-low emissions standards.

Find more at Evinrude.com

Wild Water Fly Fishing HX Series Saltwater Rods

These rods are very fast action with tip flex for throwing large flies over long distances in windy conditions.

Available in five sizes: 7, 8, 9, 10 and 12, each rod comes with a FREE rod sock and a FREE blue nylon-covered zippered case. All Wild Water Fly Fishing rods have a lifetime warranty. If you break these rods for ANY reason Wild Water Fly Fishing will replace the rod.

At less than $150 each, these rods offer a lot of bang for the buck. So if you always wanted to fly fish in saltwater or if you want to expand your tackle arsenal Wild Water is the best way to go.

These rods are also perfect for pulling double duty for going after salmon and steelhead. It’s like getting two rods in one package! The Wild Water Fly Fishing HX Series Saltwater rods can become your favorite all around big game rod.

For more information visit wildwaterflyfishing.com

Okuma 2008 – Salina Bait Feeder

Okuma Fishing Tackle is pleased to announce the release of the ALL NEW Salina Bait Feeder line of spinning reels. Based on Okuma’s top selling Salina saltwater spinning series, the Salina Bait Feeder incorporates our patented bait feeding system with our time tested and proven “ALC” AlumiLite construction, patented “EOS” Elliptical Oscillation system and our legendary Dual Force Drag System to make the ultimate bait feeding saltwater spinning reel. All of these features and more are now encompassed within the revolutionary Okuma Blade Body Design which narrows the reel’s frame, reducing the weight and overall mass, thereby giving the reel a great look and more balanced “feel”.

For more information visit www.okumafishing.com
Species Profile:

**Tautog**

**Common Name:** Tautog. Also known as blackfish, white chin, chinner, chub, black porgy, slippery bass and tog.

**Scientific Name:** *Tautoga onitis*

**Characteristics:** Coloration varies by habitat and sex, but tautog are generally drab-colored, with light and dark irregularly-blotched sides with a slightly lighter belly. Large males have a characteristically white chin. During the spawning season, males are commonly grayish, often with a white midline saddle mark. Juveniles and female tautog show a mottled, brown-toned appearance. Besides these color variations, a mature tautog’s gender can often be determined from external characteristics. Males have a pronounced lower jaw and more steeply-sloping forehead. The female’s mouth position is more midline, and her body is an ovoid shape. Other distinguishing characteristics include large fleshy lips and large canine teeth that often protrude from the mouth. Like other members of the wrasse family, tautog possess a second set of jaws, called pharyngeal (far-IN-gee-all) jaws, located at the opening to the throat.

**Range:** Tautog are distributed along the northeast Atlantic coast of North America from the outer coast of Nova Scotia to Georgia. Greatest abundances are found from Cape Cod to Chesapeake Bay. North of Cape Cod, tautog are usually found close to shore (within four miles) in water less than 60 feet deep. South of Cape Cod, these fish can be found up to 40 miles offshore and at depths up to 120 feet.

**Habitat:** Throughout their lives, tautog are structure-dependant fish. Juvenile tautog occur in bays, in submerged aquatic vegetation beds and around pilings or other hard structures. Adults inhabit rough bottom which includes rock outcroppings, shipwrecks and reefs, in nearshore ocean waters. North of Long Island, New York, rocks and boulders can be found in abundance along the coastline as a result of glacial deposition, providing habitat for larger tautog. South of Long Island there are few natural rocky habitats in coastal waters, so tautog commonly inhabit shellfish beds, coastal jetties, pilings, shipwrecks, and reefs. Significant outcroppings along the New Jersey coast do occur along the mouth of Delaware Bay and the area north of Manasquan Inlet. Reef locations occur along the entire New Jersey coastline.

**Food and Feeding:** Juvenile tautog feed primarily on small, bottom and water-column invertebrates. Their diet changes as juveniles mature and increase in size. Adults feed primarily on the blue mussel and other shellfish. Adult tautog grasp mussels using their large canine teeth, tearing mussels from their attachment surface by shaking them loose. Small mussels are swallowed whole, while large, hard-shelled ones are crushed by the pharyngeal teeth prior to swallowing. Adult tautog also consume barnacles, crabs, hermit crabs, sand dollars, scallops and other invertebrates.

**Size:** The tautog is a slow-growing, long-lived species with reports of individuals over 30 years of age. Larval growth rates are estimated at 0.01 to 0.03 inches per day. Young-of-the-year juveniles grow during the summer at a rate of 0.02 inches per day. Juvenile growth rates have been observed to be higher in vegetated than non-vegetated habitats. Average length after the first summer of growth is 2.9 inches; 6.1 inches after the second summer. Adult growth is relatively slow and varies with the season.

**Migration:** Tautog are not highly migratory along the Atlantic coast but rather demonstrate an

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Length</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3.0</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>22.0</td>
<td>20</td>
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The ideal boat rod for tautog is 7 feet long with a sturdy butt section and slow action. The mean weight of tautog harvested in New Jersey’s recreational fishery ranges from 1.8 – 2.3 pounds. The New Jersey State Record tautog is 25 pounds and is recognized by the IGFA as the current world record.

The overwhelming majority of tautog harvested in New Jersey is from the recreational fishery, which averaged approximately 1.3 million pounds per year from 1981 to 1995. Because of fishery regulations, landings varied from 40,000 pounds to 1.8 million pounds per year during the 1996 to 2002 period. New regulations implemented in 2003 have stabilized landings at a much lower level, averaging about 167,000 pounds per year from 2003-2005.

From 1981 to 1995, the commercial tautog fishery in New Jersey averaged about 110,000 pounds per year. With the implementation of a fishery management plan in 1996, harvest has decreased substantially. Over the last five years (2002-2006), the commercial fishery has averaged approximately 55,000 pounds per year.

Recreational and Commercial Importance: The primary tautog fishing grounds extend from the beach out to about the 12-fathom contour. Recreational fishing modes include bottom fishing, particularly the directed trips of party and charter boats, jetty fishing and spearfishing.

The ideal boat rod for tautog is 7 feet long with a sturdy butt section and slow action. Live green crabs or fiddlers are the best bait to use. Conventional reels are preferable over spinning tackle for bottom fishing and a fishing rod with muscle power will help keep those hooked tautog from getting back into reef structure where the line may get hung up or cut on sharp edges of blue mussels or barnacles.

Tautog normally reach sexual maturity at three to four years of age (7-12 inches). Spawning usually occurs within estuaries or in nearshore marine waters. Tagging studies show that adults return to the same spawning locations over a period of several years. Discrete spawning groups may exist in Narragansett Bay as evidence by tagging studies and fishing observations. Optimum size for female egg production has been estimated at 16 inches. Tautog between 8 and 27 inches long were observed to contain 5,000 to 637,000 mature eggs. Eggs are buoyant without oil globules, 0.9 - 1.0 mm in diameter. Spawning occurs in heterosexual pairs or in groups of a single female with several males.

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Listening to our Readers - Results from the 2007 Marine Digest Readers’ Survey

By Lindy Barry, Marine Fisheries Technician

Thank you! to all our readers who participated in the Readers’ Survey for the 2007 Marine Issue of the New Jersey Fish & Wildlife Digest. Most respondents identified themselves as a recreational fisherman, predominantly from Burlington, Ocean or Camden counties. Among our articles, the species profile on black drum garnered the most favorable reactions.

Of most interest to our readers were topics on fishing techniques plus places to fish, as well as regulation changes and enforcement efforts. Over half of you contributed further comments requesting coverage of species such as striped bass, fluke, weakfish, winter flounder, black sea bass and tautog, as well as expressing interests ranging from artificial reefs, surf and offshore fishing techniques to the habitats within our bays and estuaries.

The results and the comments you submitted figured prominently in our discussions as we planned the content for this year’s marine issue of the New Jersey Fish & Wildlife Digest. For complete results from the 2007 Readers’ Survey or to contribute further comments, visit our Web site at www.NJFishandWildlife.com/artdelstudy08.htm.

PUBLICATIONS AVAILABLE

The following publications are available by writing:

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

Shellfish Growing Waters Classification Charts.
This publication is available free at any shellfish license agent and online at http://www.nj.gov/dep/bmw/waterclass.htm

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

* * *

New Jersey Pumpout Directory – free waterproof map.
Write to:
CVA Program, New Jersey Division of Fish & Wildlife, Nacote Creek Research Station, Box 418, Port Republic, New Jersey, 08241

* * *

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

• Guide to New Jersey Saltwater Fishing, available online only
• NJ Reef News
• Party and Charter Boat Directory, available online only
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