

New Jersey Marine Digest

May 2020

Artificial Reefs of New Jersey

page 6

Size and Possession Limits

page 17



A Summary of Recreational Regulations and
Marine Fish and Shellfish Management Information

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Director's Message

DAVE GOLDEN



The primary mission of the New Jersey Division of Fish and Wildlife is to maintain stable populations of fish and wildlife throughout the state.

Good species management always begins with good habitat management. Our hardworking staff knows this better than anyone, taking an integrated approach to species management, one that includes protecting and enhancing habitat. Packed with important information on species identification and fishing regulations, this issue of the New Jersey Marine Digest also highlights the importance of enhancing habitats in the state's marine ecosystem.

Improving habitat for marine species has many benefits. Those who have fished over any of the 17 artificial reef sites established by Fish and Wildlife knows that great fishing is one of a reef's main benefits. The

article on page 6 describes the history and objectives of the Artificial Reef Program which has been creating hard-substrate habitat off the coast of New Jersey for more than 30 years. This program is a great example of how strong partnerships between state agencies, industry and non-profit organizations can benefit natural resources. Anglers in New Jersey can expect the Artificial Reef Program to remain strong, with more reef fishing opportunities in the years to come.

New Jersey's coastal ecosystems are energetic and dynamic, with changes that sometimes result in habitat loss. Such has been the trend with many tidal marsh habitats in New Jersey. Wave energy from storm surge, boat wake and sea-level rise has accelerated the rate at which marsh edges are eroding along the Delaware Bayshore and within the back bays. Working with conservation partners, Fish and Wildlife staff are working to reverse this trend along an important marsh edge at our Sedge Island Natural Resource Center (page 24). This novel form of marsh edge stabilization uses natural materials to absorb wave energy while creating habitat for fish and other marine species. The Horseshoe Crab profile (page 12) also illustrates how a species can be impacted by habitat loss and reinforces the need for management agencies to stay involved in protecting species and the habitats upon which they depend.

Some actions taken this year to reduce size limits, bag limits and seasons are in direct response to reductions in certain fish populations. Working with other Atlantic states and the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission, recreational harvest limits are set to regulate harvest and maintain robust marine fish populations. Managing species in the complex marine environment becomes even more challenging when multiple states must coordinate their marine fishing regulations. Reductions in coastwide recreational harvest limits have led to significant changes in both striped bass and blue fish regulations. The new size limits, bag limits, and season dates can be found for these and other species beginning on page 16.

Whether you agree with the new recreational harvest and size limits or you think they are too conservative, one thing we can all agree on is that great fishing in New Jersey begins with getting outside and dropping a line in the water. Anglers fishing offshore, inshore, back bays, or from the beach, a jetty or pier all share a common bond of loving the outdoors and the excitement of fishing. The therapeutic value of being outside was reinforced for many New Jerseyans this spring as the state came together in its response to the threat of COVID-19. Remember how nature helped us through a challenging period. Respect nature by obeying all published fishing regulations along with managing your trash and waste while on the water and in our marshes. Wildlife — and our access to it — is not something we should take for granted. Wildlife is something for which we must work together to maintain. Enjoy your time outdoors in this great state! 

Dave Golden is the Director of the Division of Fish and Wildlife.

Fish and Wildlife shares an obligation with the rest of the state to protect our public health against COVID-19. I encourage you to check the state's COVID-19 information hub at covid19.nj.gov for the most up to date guidance on social distancing and other measures necessary to stop the spread of the virus in New Jersey.

After all, the sooner we can get back to normal, the sooner we can go out in larger groups to enjoy New Jersey's wildlife and fishing.

Island Beach State Park, Patty Teixeira/NJ Div. Fish and Wildlife



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October 25, 2020

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Congratulations John Kolacy of Flanders, NJ who took the grand prize and NJ Governor's Cup by catching a 37 1/2-inch striped bass at the 28th Annual Tournament. Also, congratulations to Toms River High School South for winning first place in the High School Team Category with a 26 1/4-inch bluefish.



New Jersey Marine Digest

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Cover photo: Tug brings a caisson door to the reef location. Photo: Paul Bechtel/NJ Fish and Wildlife.

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New Jersey Division of Fish and Wildlife

Our Mission

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

Our Goals

- To maintain New Jersey's rich variety of fish and wildlife species at stable, healthy levels and to protect and enhance the many habitats on which they depend.
- To educate New Jerseyans on the values and needs of our fish and wildlife and to foster a positive human/wildlife co-existence.
- To maximize the recreational and commercial use of New Jersey's fish and wildlife for both present and future generations.

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Traditionally, structures such as bulkheads and revetments are used to protect coastlines from erosion. Living shorelines are an innovative alternative for stabilizing eroding shorelines in lower-energy environments while also improving natural habitats. A living shoreline was recently installed at the Sedge Island Natural Resource Education Center just west of Island Beach State Park. Catch the full story at www.NJFishandWildlife.com/artsedge_shoreline20.htm

Sedge Island Living Shoreline

By **Kira Dacanay**, Principal Fisheries Biologist and **Scott Stueber**, Assistant Fisheries Biologist

Marine Fisheries: Recreational Surveys

Be Counted

The Access Point Angler Intercept Survey (APAIS) has been conducted by New Jersey Division of Fish and Wildlife's Marine Fisheries staff since 2016. You may see our interviewers at marine public access fishing sites throughout New Jersey. The survey targets marine recreational anglers to obtain information about fishing effort, catch and participation. The more interviews conducted, the more successful this survey becomes for estimating overall catch, which is an integral factor for managing fisheries.



Charles Karr

Along with increased outreach at public events, our Marine Fisheries staff are interested in talking with fishing clubs/groups about the importance of the APAIS. We rely heavily on our valued anglers, creating a joint venture to preserve New Jersey's natural resources. Contact Maryellen Gordon at (609) 748-2020 for us to come to your meeting or event. We look forward to meeting you!

If you're not "intercepted" for an interview while fishing or contacted through the Saltwater Registry, you can still participate by submitting a fishing report after each saltwater trip to the New Jersey Volunteer Angler Survey. Your reports have a *real* impact on how New Jersey's ocean resources are managed. Submit online reports at www.NJFishandWildlife.com/marinesurvey.htm.

New Jersey: Stock Status & Management Updates

Species	Status	Next Action
American Lobster	Depleted; Not overfishing	Research stock assessment 2020
American Shad	Depleted; Moratorium since 2013	Research stock assessment to be completed 2020
Atlantic Menhaden	Not overfished; Not overfishing	Research stock assessment completed 2019
Atlantic Sea Herring	Not overfished; Not overfishing	Management stock assessment 2020
Atlantic Striped Bass	Overfished; Overfishing	Management action for ASMFC; Mandated 18% reduction in removals effective April 1, 2020
Black Sea Bass	Not overfished; Not overfishing	Operational stock assessment completed 2019; use of conservation equivalency for recreational management starting 2020
Bluefish	Overfished; Not overfishing	Operational stock assessment completed 2019; mandated 29% reduction in harvest effective April 1, 2020
Coastal Sharks	Varies by species	Assessments: blacktip shark and scalloped hammerhead 2020 blue shark 2021
Cobia	Not overfished; Not overfishing	SEDAR 58 stock assessment completed 2020
Horseshoe Crab	Status unknown; Moratorium since 2008	Research stock assessment completed 2019
Weakfish	Depleted; Not overfishing	Operational stock assessment completed 2019
Winter Flounder	Overfished; Not overfishing	Management stock assessment 2020

For updates or more information, please visit www.asmfc.org

The Artificial Reefs of New Jersey

By Peter Clarke, Senior Fisheries Biologist

New Jersey has a rich history in recreational sportfishing. Since the 1840s, recreational anglers have pursued a variety of sport fish including big game species like giant bluefin tuna, marlin or sharks off the Jersey coast along with catches of nearshore coastal species such as ling, pollock, cod, black sea bass, summer flounder, tautog and of course, striped bass.

A Structured Environment

Fish have three essential environmental requirements: suitable water temperature, available food and suitable habitat for reproduction. Habitat requirements vary considerably between species and life stages. Many species depend on some type of *structured* habitat that serves either as a refuge from predators or as source of prey organisms that live in, on or around the structure, becoming potential food for the predators. Various fish species find structure in seagrass beds or sand ridges and troughs; other species are attracted to hard structures for the abundance of encrusting organisms (prey) and interstitial space for refuge.

Where's the Reef?

Nautical charts reveal that natural hard bottom is a habitat type New Jersey generally lacks. States to our north have nearshore topography dominated by rock outcroppings, boulder fields and smaller rubble deposited millennia ago by receding glaciers. These areas provide great vertical structure for fish to live, but generally do not extend south of Long Island. To our south, natural coral and live rock bottoms are common, providing comparable vertical structure for fish habitat. In contrast, coastal waters off New Jersey are generally flat, sandy and featureless.

New Jersey's Artificial Reef History

By the 1960s, local fishermen and fishing clubs recognized that placing "artificial" structure in nearshore areas could simulate natural hard bottom habitat and provide increased opportunities for recreational anglers. Although successful, the early days of reef building were more like the wild

west than a scientific pursuit, with neither planning oversight from state agencies nor a grasp on the best environmental and scientific practices.

In 1984, the New Jersey Division of Fish and Wildlife officially began its Artificial Reef Program with permitting through the United States Army Corp of Engineers to develop an artificial reef system with oversight and environmental standards. Fish and Wildlife began with four reef locations: Sea Girt Reef off Monmouth County, Garden State North and Garden State South reefs off Long Beach Island in Ocean County and Atlantic City Reef off Atlantic County. Within the first decade, the reef matrix increased to include a total of 14 permitted reef sites ranging from Sandy Hook to Cape May. Another reef was added in 2005 and two more in 2017, bringing the total to 17 reef sites managed by Fish and Wildlife. Four of these are inside the 3-mile state waters territory, while the remaining 13 sites are in federal waters beyond three miles.

Fooling Mother Nature

Artificial reefs provide habitat through successional development, providing attachment surfaces for native species of marine plant and animal life that depend upon such structure. Prey species of fish and crustaceans that take residence on these reefs attract predatory fish species using the reefs as a place to feed, reproduce, find shelter and live. Simply put, big fish eat little fish. Artificial reefs provide the building blocks for that process.

Fishing Opportunities

When fish congregate in focused areas, anglers have an enhanced opportunity to harvest the resource. New Jersey reefs provide angling opportunities ranging between 1 mile from the shoreline to 24 miles offshore in depths from 40 feet to 160 feet. Additionally, the New Jersey Artificial Reef Program offers boundless opportunities for scuba divers, providing over 180 sunken ships or barges to explore within the reef system.

Tugboat positions barge with a load of concrete being added to a reef site.



All photos: Artificial Reef Program/NJ Div. Fish and Wildlife

Economic Benefits

Studies conducted by Fish and Wildlife's Bureau of Marine Fisheries over the past 35 years have determined that over 150 species of fish and other marine life utilize the New Jersey reef sites. The benefited species are endemic to New Jersey waters but are limited in extent and abundance by the lack of hard substrate. The artificial reef system supports recreational fisheries for several important species, contributing to the \$2.5 billion economic benefit of New Jersey's fisheries industry.

Reef Materials

Historically, artificial reefs have been constructed out of a wide range of materials, but recently they have been limited to three general material types: steel, rock and concrete. Steel is generally acquired in the form of ex-fishing vessels, barges, tugboats, army tanks, and subway cars that are no longer considered suitable for their intended service. Rock is often provided through many river and port deepening projects and consists of the largest material encountered during the project period—preferably larger than a basketball and frequently bigger than a car. Concrete typically originates from bridge decommissioning projects, old piers and pilings plus road culverts or other pre-cast materials.

Before any material is deployed, its suitability is evaluated. Those determined fit for deployment are cleaned and prepared using best environmental practices. For steel and metal ships or barges, cleaning often includes removing machinery, fuel, oil and electrical components from vessels. Once cleaned, a bare steel hull and superstructure are ready to sink in the ocean. These artificial reef materials have a typical lifespan on the ocean floor of 75 to 110 years depending on the metal's quality and thickness at the time of deployment.

Concrete material goes through a similar process and must be prepared in accordance with the New Jersey Artificial Reef Management Plan which disallows any floatable material including wood or plastic waste. Concrete is a desirable material as it withstands the marine environment, often lasting hundreds of years while *gaining* strength over time. Deployed rock undergoes the same inspection process, ensuring it is free of debris including most fine sediment resulting from the dredging process. The underlying goal of material selection is to identify the largest material available for the selected site that provides large interstitial space for habitation by a variety of marine organisms.

Donations are the Key

New Jersey's reef program has no budget for material acquisition and deployment. The program relies entirely on donations from private industry in the way of direct material donations and from non-profit organizations that have environmental enhancement goals such as the Ann E. Clark's "sportfishingfund.org" and a myriad of private fishing clubs along the coast.

Vessels measuring 90 feet in length typically cost an average of \$80,000 which includes acquisition, preparation and removal of contaminants plus the final

towing and deployment onto the reef site. Concrete loads weighing 3,000 tons cost an average of \$110,000, whereas rock is usually donated by the dredging companies.

Special Management Zone Protections

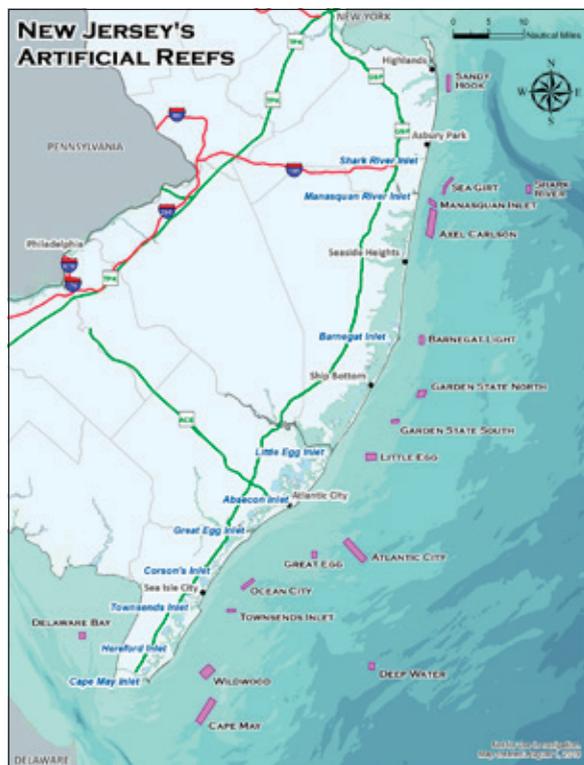
Currently the reef program has made over 4,400 deployments with considerable investment from the recreational fishing community. In 2017, through a regulation passed by the National Marine Fisheries Service, New Jersey received Special Management Zone status for all federal waters reefs, with the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection applying the same rules to the state waters reefs. While fishing is still permitted, this bans all fixed gear from being set and fished on the seventeen New Jersey permitted reef sites. Fish and Wildlife requested Special Management Zone designation to allow reef use to be focused on the recreational harvest of fish while still allowing the sites to be used as essential fish habitat.

Primary Objectives of the New Jersey Artificial Reef Program

- Continue to construct hard-substrate reef habitat for marine fish and invertebrates;
- Provide spawning, nursery, refuge and feeding areas for marine life;
- Create fishing grounds for hook-and-line anglers;
- Provide underwater structures for scuba divers;
- Provide economic benefits to recreational fishing and diving industries.

Where Are We Now?

Our two newest reefs — Delaware Bay Reef and Manasquan Inlet Reef — are both under construction currently but open to recreational diving and fishing. To date, the Manasquan Inlet Reef has



received 3,000 tons of precast concrete material plus an 85-foot ex-fishing vessel, with plans to deploy additional material soon. The Delaware Bay Reef, New Jersey's first estuarine reef site, has received 2,000 tons of dredge rock with plans to continue low profile deployments as opportunity allows.

Fish and Wildlife believes that the *actual* benefits of the Artificial Reef Program transcend these objectives, ranging well beyond the local New Jersey system by providing benefit to species in the greater Mid-Atlantic Bight region that utilize the coastal waters of New Jersey as part of their geographical range. Quality, structured habitat as a network or matrix benefits the entire region by adding biomass and enhancing overall population health.

The intent of the reef program is not to change our marine environment but to enhance a small portion of our sea floor to benefit marine species and the stakeholders of New Jersey. For those interested in becoming an active sponsor of the New Jersey Artificial Reef Program, contact the Division of Fish and Wildlife's Reef Coordinator at (609) 748-2020. 



The 170-foot Navy tanker *Helix* sunk May 2005 on the Garden State North Reef.

Horseshoe Crab:

A PROFILE

By Samantha MacQuesten, Assistant Fisheries Biologist



Horseshoe crab with barnacles attached to shell, Fortescue Beach.

Matt Hencheck/NJ Div. Fish and Wildlife

Scientific Name: *Limulus polyphemus*

The Atlantic horseshoe crab, *Limulus polyphemus*, sometimes referred to as the “American horseshoe crab,” is one of four worldwide horseshoe crab species that have roamed the earth for more than 445 million years, even before the dinosaurs. While “crab” is in the name, horseshoe crabs are more closely related to spiders.

Range: Atlantic coast from Maine to Gulf of Mexico; most abundant from New Jersey south to Virginia. Delaware Bay has the largest spawning population of horseshoe crabs worldwide.

Size, Maturity and Age: Size varies greatly. Females are larger than males and can reach lengths of up to 33.5 inches (including tail). Males are around half to three-quarters of a female’s size. Horseshoe crabs reach sexual maturity around 10 years of age with a life expectancy of twenty years, on average. During the years before maturity, they will molt an average of 18-20 times before reaching their maximum size.

Biological Characteristics: The body has three parts: front shell/head (prosoma), back shell (opisthosoma) and a tail (telson) with small “spikes.” The tail is used to flip over their body when turned upside down in the tide. Contrary to popular belief, the tail is not a defense mechanism against predators. Horseshoe crabs have several pairs of eyes, each with different degrees of light sensitivity. These crabs have no teeth; instead, they use bristles at the base of their legs to pass food to their mouth.

Food: Primarily mollusks, crustaceans and various types of worms but also algae and small animals on the ocean floor. Few predators can prey on horseshoe crabs because of their exoskeletal structure. Some species of sharks and sea turtles, as well as humans, are among these predators. While horseshoe crabs do not have many predators as adults, horseshoe crab eggs and larvae are a vital component in numerous biological food chains. These eggs and larvae provide a crucial food source for migrating shore birds, as well as for sea turtles.

Habitat: During spawning season (spring), adult horseshoe crabs congregate on sandy beaches that are not disrupted by wave action in order to mate. Females lay many egg clusters for a seasonal total that may reach

100,000 eggs. After spawning season, adults migrate to nearby estuaries or to the continental shelf. Juvenile horseshoe crabs will spend roughly the first two years of their life in nearshore areas.



A cluster of mating horseshoe crabs during peak spawning season at Fortescue Beach.

Matt Hencheck/NJ Div. Fish and Wildlife

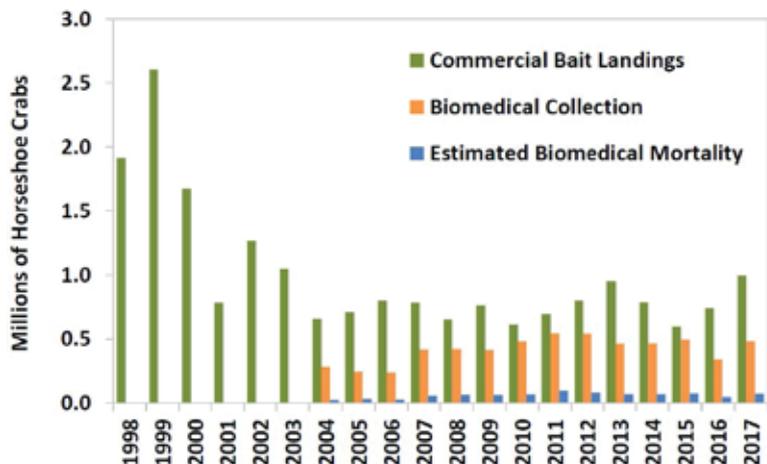
Habitat Importance: Beach development and shoreline erosion, both natural and man-made, are growing threats to future populations of horseshoe crabs. The limited number of suitable beaches for spawning make horseshoe crabs a vulnerable

species. Without adequate beaches for egg-laying, both the horseshoe crab — and the shorebirds that rely on the eggs to fuel their long migration flight — are at an extreme risk.

History and Management: Historically, horseshoe crabs were very popular in the bait industry for American eel and whelk fishermen. In the 1990s, a severe decline in the horseshoe crab population resulted from consistent high harvests by the commercial fishing industry. To curtail the rapid population decline, New Jersey implemented a moratorium prohibiting horseshoe crab bait harvest in New Jersey waters. While some states along the Atlantic coast still have a limited bait fishery, there are widespread efforts to reduce horseshoe crab losses because of their ecological importance.

Medicinal Purpose: Horseshoe crabs are highly important to the biomedical industry for a blood extract known as *Limulus* amoebocyte lysate (LAL), used to detect endotoxins such as *E. Coli* and *Salmonella* in medicines and medical devices. Although a synthetic alternative is commercially available, the

Horseshoe Crab Bait Landings & Biomedical Collection



Biomedical Graph Source Document: http://www.asmf.org/uploads/file/5ccae597HSC_StockAssessmentOverview2019.pdf

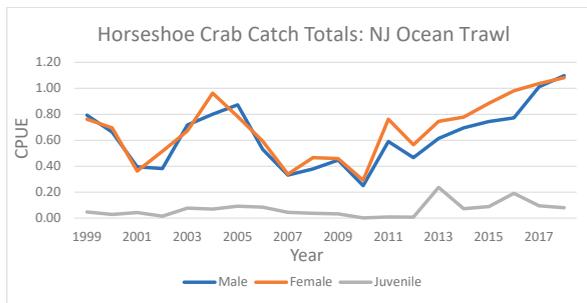
pharmaceutical and medical device industries have been reluctant to make that switch given the serious health risks posed by a potential error in identifying the endotoxin contamination. Bleeding horseshoe crabs is a highly specialized practice requiring a scientific collecting permit in New Jersey. While there is some mortality associated with extracting blood from crabs, the effect on horseshoe crab populations is negligible. A mortality rate of 15% of all bled crabs was used in the most recent coastwide stock assessment conducted by the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission.

Current Research:

- Several companies are attempting to create a synthetic bait product as effective as horseshoe crabs. If a lower cost product is successful, harvesting crabs would be unnecessary, positively impacting the commercial bait industry and horseshoe crab conservation efforts.
- To estimate the spawning population in the Delaware Bay, a survey was created in 1990. Each year in May and June, different entities from New Jersey and Delaware volunteer to survey the spawning beaches in each state. Due to the ever-changing landscape of the spawning beaches and their accessibility by both crabs and humans, the number of surveyed beaches changes each year. The 2019 survey covered 29 beaches. To perform the survey, volunteers use quadrats that measure one square meter with randomized sampling numbers and walk the beach counting the number of female and male horseshoe crabs that fall into each sampled quadrat. The same beaches are surveyed during the full and new moon cycles of the peak spawning period (May and June) at high tide. These data give scientists a representative number of spawning crabs for the entire season.
- Additional data to estimate the horseshoe crab population in the Delaware Bay region comes from the New Jersey Division of Fish and Wildlife's Ocean Trawl Survey. (See graph below.) While variability exists among the survey years, common trends are evident. The survey indicates varying trends in population fluctuations. Of interest is that populations of both males and females appear to be continuously increasing over the last five years.



Author Samantha MacQuesten counts the number of male and female horseshoe crabs within a quadrat at Fortescue Beach.



Horseshoe crabs have been around for millions of years, yet humans are the biggest contemporary obstacle they have faced. It is highly important that we continue to protect this vital species by preventing overfishing and by protecting the beaches essential to their reproduction. 

Sources:

- <http://www.asafc.org/species/horseshoe-crab>
- <https://myfwc.com/research/saltwater/crustaceans/horseshoe-crabs/facts/>
- https://www.vims.edu/research/departments/fisheries/programs/multispecies_fisheries_research/species_data/horseshoe_crab/index.php
- <https://www.fws.gov/northeast/pdf/horseshoe.fs.pdf>
- <https://www.nwf.org/Educational-Resources/Wildlife-Guide/Invertebrates/Horseshoe-Crab>

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Regulations in *red* are new this year.

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

Highlights of Regulation Changes:

Rules for the recreational harvest of bluefish, striped bass and summer flounder have changed.

- ♦ **The possession limit for striped bass/hybrid striped bass is one fish with a size limit of 28 inches to less than 38 inches in total length. The Striped Bass Bonus Program open season is May 15 to December 31. However, opening of this program may be delayed due to the unprecedented circumstances regarding COVID-19.** There are no changes to the *Striped Bass Closed Season*. See striped bass regulations, page 12.
- ♦ **The recreational summer flounder open season is May 22 to Sept. 19.** See *Summer Flounder (Fluke)*, page 12, for full regulations.
- ♦ **Bluefish regulations are: 5 fish while fishing from a party/charter vessel with a valid federal party/charter vessel permit; 3 fish for all other anglers.** See *Bluefish*, page 11, for full regulations.

New Jersey recreational marine regulations apply to all fish species when they are possessed in state waters or landed in New Jersey regardless of where they are caught. Saltwater anglers must comply with the requirements of the New Jersey Saltwater Recreational Registry Program. See page 13.

Resource Information

Anyone who takes fisheries resources may be required to provide information on the species, number, weight or other information pertinent to management of resources. **Anglers are encouraged to report all fishing activity after each trip.** Visit *Fish and Wildlife's Volunteer Angler Survey* at NJFishandWildlife.com/marinesurvey.htm.

Methods of Recreational Fishing

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

Delaware Fishing License Requirement

A Delaware fishing license is required for all non-resident anglers aged 16 and over fishing either fresh or tidal waters of Delaware. Delaware fishing license information can be found at <http://www.fw.delaware.gov/Fisheries/Pages/NewFishingLicense.aspx>.

New York Fishing Registry Requirement

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

Bait Fish

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

1. Dip nets 24 inches diameter or less for taking *Atlantic herring* only for live bait. **The taking or possession of river herring (alewife and blueback herring) is prohibited.**
2. Bait seines 50 feet long or less.
3. Cast nets 20 feet in diameter or less.
4. Lift or umbrella nets four feet square or less.
5. Not more than five killipots.
6. Not more than two miniature fykes or pots for the taking of eels for bait.

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

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

Wanton Waste Prohibited

Fish of any species which are purposely killed shall become part of the angler's daily possession limit and shall not be returned to the water from which they were taken. This does not apply to fish which are released alive and subsequently die, but does apply even to species without size/possession limits.

Spearfishing

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

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

Sea Turtles & Marine Mammals

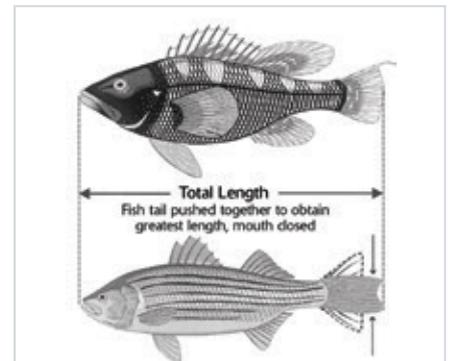
It is illegal to intentionally molest, kill or possess sea turtles, including terrapins, or marine mammals, or to possess any part thereof.

Be the First to Know! Get on the List

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

NJFishandWildlife.com/lstsub.htm

Fish Measurement



1. Lay fish flat on top of, or alongside a measuring rule, not measured over the body.
2. Fish are measured from the tip of the snout (mouth closed) to the longest part of the tail.

Prohibited Species

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

- ♦ Atlantic sturgeon
- ♦ Basking shark
- ♦ Big eye sand tiger shark
- ♦ Diamondback terrapin
- ♦ Sand tiger shark
- ♦ Sandbar shark
- ♦ Shortnose sturgeon
- ♦ Whale shark
- ♦ White shark
- ♦ River herring (alewife and blueback herring; see herring illustrations, page 14)
- ♦ See *Sharks* (page 12) for the full list of prohibited shark species

Accessible Fishing Sites



Enjoy more than 50 accessible New Jersey fishing sites for those with mobility disabilities. All sites are wheelchair-accessible except the Musconetcong River in Morris County, where vehicle access is to the shoreline. Visit www.NJFishandWildlife.com/sites.htm.

SHIMANO

Built to provide high end performance and dependability in a compact lightweight frame, the Shimano SpeedMaster II Lever Drag Reel is an absolute fish fighting machine. These two-speed lever drag reels feature the same sleek and functional design coupled with unrelenting power that blue water anglers have come to expect from Shimano conventional reels, but now at a price that everyone can appreciate.

Available in 4 sizes, 12II, 16II, 20II and 25II

Starting at **\$249⁹⁹**

SpeedMaster II



IGFA
Corporate Member



Shop Online: TackleDirect.com Order Toll-Free: 888.354.7335 Retail Location: 6825 Tilton Road, Bldg C, Egg Harbor Twp, NJ 08234-4426

Finfish

Regulations for most finfish are listed in the table on page 17.

Filleting

The filleting at sea of all fish with a size limit, or any species of flatfish, is prohibited except for summer flounder; see *Summer Flounder*, page 12. Anglers shall possess no parts of any fish caught on a previous fishing trip. Party boats may fillet fish at sea if they obtain a Special Fillet Permit available from Fish and Wildlife's Bureau of Marine Fisheries.

Black Sea Bass

Black sea bass are measured along the midline from the snout to the end of the central portion of the tail, not to include the tail filaments. (See image, page 10.) The recreational regulations for black sea bass are: open May 15–June 22 with limits of 10 fish possession and 12.5-inch minimum size; open July 1–Aug. 31 with limits of 2 fish possession and a 12.5-inch minimum size; open Oct. 8–Oct. 31 with limits of 10 fish possession and 12.5-inch minimum size; and open Nov. 1–Dec. 31 with limits of 15 fish possession and a 13-inch minimum size.

Bluefish

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

bluefish4hire.pdf); 3 fish (no size limit, open season all year) for all other anglers.

River Herring

The taking or possession of any river herring (alewife and blueback herring) in New Jersey is prohibited. See the fish ID illustrations on page 14 for herring species identification.

Top 8 Tips for Releasing Fish Unharmred

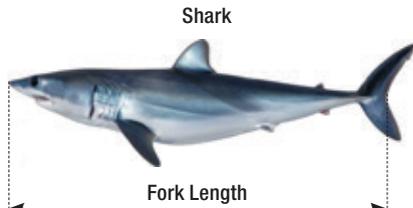
Proper handling and releasing techniques reduce fish mortality.

- Land fish quickly, except when retrieving from depths of 40-feet or more. Fighting a fish to exhaustion increases mortality as does rapidly bringing fish up through the changing water pressure and temperature gradients.
- Keep fish to be released in the water as much as possible. Plan ahead with tools and camera.
- Minimize physical injury. Do not touch gills or allow fish to flop around on deck.
- Carefully remove hooks using a dehooker or needle-nose pliers.
- Use plain hooks, not stainless, which rust away quickly if one must be left in a gut-hooked fish.
- Be prepared with a long-reach tool to cut the leader at the hook, close to the hook's eyelet.
- To bring a fish out of the water momentarily, use a neoprene net or one of knotless nylon. Handle the fish carefully using wet hands, wet cotton gloves or similar material to minimize loss of the fish's protective slime layer.
- To revive lethargic fish, hold in a normal, upright position. Move the fish forward in an "S" or figure-8 pattern so that water flows over the gills only from front to back.
- Use circle hooks (not offset) for species that bite and flee, such as striped bass, weakfish or sea bass. Consider pinching hook barbs with pliers.

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

Sharks

Recreational size limits for shark are specified in the state and federal regulation charts on pages 21 and 22. Refer to the illustration, below, for the fork length.



Dr. William Driggers, III/NMFS

The 2020 shark regulations complement existing federal shark regulations (see *2020 Federal Recreational Regulations* table, page 18). However, the following additional measures are required for state waters:

- In state waters, there is no minimum size limit for non-blacknose small coastal sharks and blacknose sharks* in the recreational fishery, but federal regulations include a 54-inch minimum size limit for blacknose and finetooth small coastal sharks.
- All sharks within the Aggregate Large Coastal and Hammerhead groups* will have a closed season within state waters from May 15 through July 15 to protect spawning female sharks during the pupping season.

* See page 18 footnote for species list defining shark groupings.

All sharks harvested by recreational fishermen must have heads, tails and fins attached naturally to the carcass until landed. Anglers may still gut and bleed the carcass as long as the tail is not removed. Filleting sharks at sea is prohibited.

Recreational anglers should access the following National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration website, <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/resource/outreach-and-education/shark-identification-placard> to download the NOAA Fisheries *Shark Identification Placard*, an excellent pictorial guide to identify sharks that are legal to harvest.

These shark species are prohibited from possession: Atlantic angel, basking, bigeye sixgill, bigeye thresher, bigeye tiger, bignose, Caribbean reef, Caribbean sharpnose, dusky, Galapagos, longfin mako, narrowtooth, night, sandbar, sandtiger, sevengill, silky, sixgill, smalltail, whale and white sharks.

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 along the topline of the shark's back. Neither are present in sharks.

Striped Bass (includes Hybrid Striped Bass)

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

striped bass at 24 inches to less than 28 inches in length. Fish may be harvested in any order.

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

It is illegal to possess any striped bass which is less than the legal minimum size of 28 inches unless in possession of a Striped Bass Bonus Permit. **It is illegal to possess any striped bass 38 inches or greater.**

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

Sale of striped bass in New Jersey is prohibited.

Striped Bass Closed Seasons

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

Jan. 1–Feb. 28: All waters closed except the Atlantic Ocean from zero to three miles offshore. All inlets and bays are delineated from ocean waters by a Colregs Demarcation line.

April 1–May 31: Delaware River and its tributaries closed from the upstream side of the Calhoun St. bridge downstream to and including the Salem River and its tributaries.

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

Summer Flounder (Fluke)

The recreational summer flounder open season is **May 22 to September 19**. For Delaware Bay and tributaries, west of the COLREGS line, which delineates Delaware Bay from the Atlantic Ocean, the size limit is 17 inches and the possession limit is three fish. The 17 inch minimum size limit applicable to Delaware Bay does not include the waters of the Cape May Canal east of the Cape May Ferry Terminal. Transport of summer flounder caught in Delaware Bay, greater than or equal to 17 inches but less than the 18 inches may occur in waters east of the Cape May Ferry Terminal to the George Redding Bridge (Route 47) located at the entrance of Wildwood provided all fishing gear aboard the vessel is stowed with rigs removed and the vessel may not stop to fish for any species. Shore-based anglers fishing at Island Beach State Park (IBSP) may retain 2 fish greater than or equal to 16 inches (total length) only at IBSP during the current open summer flounder fishing season. Shore-based fishing is defined as fishing from a pier, jetty, beach, bank or marsh. **In all other waters, the size limit is 18 inches**, the possession limit is three fish and transportation of summer flounder less than 18 inches is prohibited.

Anglers may fillet one legal-sized summer flounder from their daily possession limit catch for use as bait. This carcass, commonly known as the rack, shall be kept intact so it can be measured for compliance with the minimum size limit. Anglers shall not be in possession of any parts of any summer flounder caught on a previous fishing trip; only fish just caught on the current outing.

Additional Marine Fishing Regulations

See pages 14–15 for the fish ID pages and pages 17–18 for the regulation charts. 

Striped Bass Bonus Program

The Striped Bass Bonus Program will continue in 2020, where anglers possessing a bonus permit may keep a striper at 24 inches to less than 28 inches. The open season for this program is May 15 through December 31. **The program opening may be delayed due to the unprecedented circumstances regarding COVID-19.** Check website for updates at <https://www.NJFishandWildlife.com/bonusbas.htm>.

The current allocation from the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission is 215,912 pounds. Should New Jersey exceed this quota, any overage would be subtracted from the following year's quota.

Application Process: Striped Bass Bonus Program permits are issued via mail only. Go to [NJFishandWildlife.com/bonusbas.htm](https://www.NJFishandWildlife.com/bonusbas.htm) to download the application and for regulation or program updates. The permit is non-transferable and valid for the current calendar year. Only one permit can be used per day. Fishing logs must be kept and harvest reporting is mandatory.

Striped Bass Bonus Permit Harvest Reporting:

The Striped Bass Bonus Permit must be securely attached to the fish through the mouth and gill immediately upon capture and prior to transportation. **Harvest reporting is mandatory and must be reported online or by leaving a message at (609) 748-2074.**



Striper caught from the Queen Mary off Point Pleasant.

New Jersey Saltwater Recreational Registry Program (NJSRRP)

ATTENTION: New Jersey Saltwater Anglers

REGISTER. You make a difference! It's still free, still easy and still required.

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

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

In 2019, the NJSRRP had 154,827 individual registrants and 728 for-hire vessels. The graph below shows the total number of individual registrants broken down by age range.

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



All proceeds from the **Jersey Shore Boat Sale & Expo** and the **New Jersey Boat Sale & Expo** support efforts to *promote, advance* and *protect* the recreational boating industry in New Jersey.

Visit JerseyBoatExpo.com for future dates and to learn more.



Motor Boat Registration & Title Requirements NJ Motor Vehicle Commission (MVC)

Registration

Most boats must be registered to operate on New Jersey waterways.

- All titled boats must be registered also.
- **Any boat (including jet skis and non-titled watercraft), mechanically propelled (incl. electric motors), regardless of length, must be registered.**
- Boats greater than 12 feet in length, regardless of propulsion means, must be titled and registered at an MVC office.

Boats and marine equipment which need not be registered:

- Those not based in New Jersey or operating here less than 180 consecutive days that are operating under a federally approved numbering system from another state
- Ship's lifeboats
- Non-motorized vessels used exclusively on small lakes and ponds on private property
- Racing vessels with New Jersey State Marine Police permit
- Non-motorized inflatable device, surfboard, racing shell, dinghy, canoe or kayak
- Non-motorized vessel less than 12 feet in length

Title

For use on New Jersey waterways, all boats more than 12 feet in length must be titled, with the exception of ship's lifeboat, canoe, kayak, inflatable, surfboard, rowing scull, racing shell, tender/dinghy used for direct transportation between a vessel and shore for no other purposes.

Boat Safety Certificate (NJSP)

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

Boat Operator License (MVC)

An operator license is required to operate power vessels on fresh, non-tidal waters such as lakes, creeks and rivers. (Minimum age 16 years; with certain exceptions.)

For More Information:

New Jersey Motor Vehicle Commission

(888) 486-3339 toll free in NJ or (609) 292-6500 from out-of-state
www.nj.gov/mvc/vehicles/boating.htm

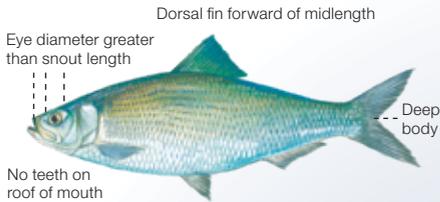
New Jersey State Police (NJSP)

(609) 882-2000
<http://www.njsp.org/marine-services>

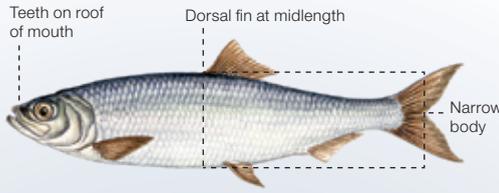
Marine Species Identification

MARINE REGULATIONS

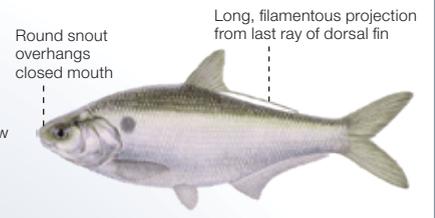
Herring



Alewife (a river herring)



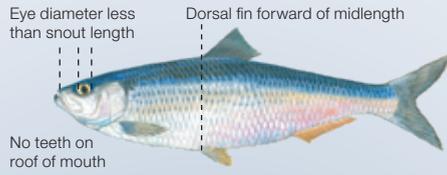
Atlantic Herring



Gizzard Shad



American Shad



Blueback Herring (a river herring)



Hickory Shad

Alewife, American Shad, Blueback Herring and Hickory Shad illustrations ©Duane Raver; Atlantic Herring illustration ©Victor Young/NH. Fish and Game Department; Gizzard Shad illustration courtesy of Texas Parks and Wildlife Department ©2012.



Striped Bass



Weakfish



Bluefish (Snapper)



Black Sea Bass



Atlantic Croaker



Winter Flounder



Tautog (Blackfish)



Black Drum



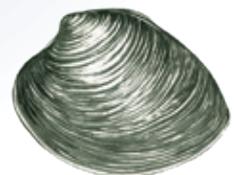
Summer Flounder (Fluke)



Red Drum



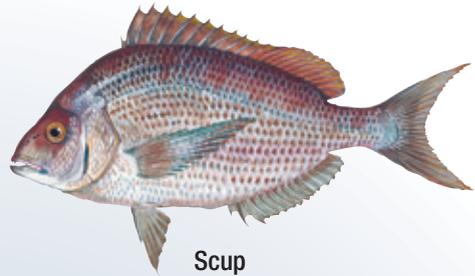
Blue Crab



Hard Clam



Spot



**Scup
(Porgy)**



White Perch



Northern Kingfish



Northern Seabrook



Northern Puffer



Atlantic Bonito



Cobia



Spanish Mackerel



Oyster Toadfish



Atlantic Mackerel



Atlantic Cod

For a complete list of shark species, visit NOAA's Shark Identification and Federal Regulations for the Recreational Fishery of the U.S. Atlantic Coast at: <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/resource/educational-materials/shark-identification-placard>.

Regulations in red are new this year.

Crustaceans

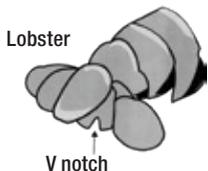
American Lobster

The legal possession size limit of whole lobsters, measured from the rear of the eye socket along a line parallel to the center line of the body shell to the rear of the body shell, shall be not less than 3 ¼ inches nor greater than 5 ¼ inches. Lobster parts may not be possessed at sea or landed. There is no harvest or possession of lobster in Lobster Management Area 4 from April 30 – May 31 and Lobster Management Area 5 from February 1 – March 31.

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 below.

Special Lobster Restrictions: No person shall use, leave, deploy, or tend any lobster, fish or conch pot within an artificial reef located in state waters except in areas designated as a full access zones. Within these designated full access zones lobster, fish and conch pots shall be used, left, deployed or tended only between sunrise and sunset.

For information about lobster pot deployment and New Jersey Reef Full Access Zone Locations, go to NJFishandWildlife.com/pdf/2016/marlet-reefag02-11-16.pdf.



The use of spears, gigs, gaffs or other penetrating devices as a method of capture for lobsters is prohibited. A recreational lobster 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.

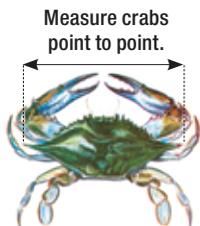
Crabs

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 crabbing license.

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

- Peeler or shedder crab: 3 inches
- Soft crab: 3 ½ inches
- Hard crab: 4 ½ inches



- All female crabs with eggs attached and all undersized crabs shall be returned to the water immediately.
- Recreational trot lines shall not exceed 150 feet in length with a maximum of 25 baits.
- All pots and trot lines shall be marked with the identification number of the owner.
- All crab pots must be tended at least once every 72 hours.
- No floating line may be used on any crab pot or crab pot buoy.
- No crab pot shall be placed in any area that would obstruct or impede navigation or in any creek less than 50 feet wide.
- Only the owner or a law enforcement officer may raise or remove contents of a legally set fishing device.
- Crabs taken with a bait seine may be retained for personal use only if the angler possesses a bait net license, and may not be bartered or sold unless the fisherman possesses a commercial crab license.
- No crabs may be harvested from the Newark Bay Complex. For more information, see *Health Advisory* on page 26.
- Crab Pot/Trot Line seasons:** Delaware Bay and tributaries: April 6 – Dec. 4. All other waters: March 15 – Nov. 30. The following waters, **and their tributaries**, are closed to the use of crab pots and trot lines: Cumberland Co.: Cohansy River and creeks named Back, Cedar, Nantuxent, Fortescue, 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 Wildlife 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.
- Crab Dredge Seasons:** Delaware Bay and tributaries: Jan. 1 through April 15 and Nov. 15 through Dec. 31. All other waters: Jan. 1 through March 31, Dec. 1 through Dec. 31. 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.

Notice: All non-collapsible Chesapeake-style crab pots (see illustration on page 19) must be constructed to include a biodegradable panel designed to create an opening to allow crabs and other organisms to escape if the pot is lost or abandoned. All non-collapsible Chesapeake-style crab pots set in any manmade lagoon or any water body less than 150 feet wide must also include a turtle excluder device inside all pot entrance funnels.

Horseshoe Crabs

The harvest of horseshoe crabs is prohibited. 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 of New Jersey.

Mollusks

- All persons must be licensed to harvest any shellfish. See license information, page 19. Shellfish means any species of benthic mollusks (except conch) including hard and soft clams, oysters, surf clams, bay scallops and mussels.
- 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 or any state shellfish office. See page 19 for shellfish license information. Charts are updated annually.
- Shellfish harvesting is prohibited before sunrise and after sunset. Shellfish harvest is also prohibited on Sundays except in the seasonally approved areas of the Navesink and Shrewsbury rivers, when harvesting is permitted between Nov. 1 and April 30.
- Harvesting shellfish on public grounds is restricted to the use of hand implements.
- 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. Invasion onto leased grounds is punishable by penalties up to \$3,000 and loss of all equipment.

Recreational Shellfishing

- No holder of any recreational shellfish license may take more than a total of 150 shellfish (in aggregate) per day. See *Shellfish License Information*, page 19.
- It is illegal to dredge shellfish on public grounds. Use of hand implements are the only legal harvest methods.

3. The minimum size of hard clams that may be harvested is 1 ½ inches in length. Clams less than 1 ½ 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.

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

2020 New Jersey Recreational Fishing Seasons, Minimum Size and Possession Limits

Regulations remain in effect until changed. For the most current regulations, go to NJFishandWildlife.com or call the marine fish "listen-only" information line at (609) 292-2083. Regulations in **red** are new this year. **See page 10 for how to measure fish.** **Note:** No species of fish with a minimum size limit listed below may be filleted or cleaned at sea. Party boats licensed to carry 15 or more passengers may apply for a permit to fillet the these species. See also **Summer Flounder**, page 12.

Species	Open Season	Minimum Length (total length except sharks)	Harvest & Possession Limit (per person unless noted)
American Eel ^a	No Closed Season	9"	25
Black Drum	No Closed Season	16"	3
Black Sea Bass (Min. length excludes tail filament; see page 10.)	May 15 - June 22	12.5"	10
	July 1 - Aug. 31	12.5"	2
	Oct. 8 - Oct. 31	12.5"	10
	Nov. 1 - Dec. 31	13"	15
Bluefish (Snapper)	No Closed Season	None	5 fish per person while fishing from a party/charter vessel ^f 3 fish per person for all other anglers
Cobia	June 1–Sept. 30	40"	1 fish per person; no more than 3 fish per vessel
Cod	No Closed Season	21"	No Limit
Haddock	No Closed Season	18"	No Limit
Pollock	No Closed Season	19"	No Limit
Red Drum	No Closed Season	18"–27"	1
River Herring	No Open Season	None	0
Scup (Porgy)	No Closed Season	9"	50
Shad			
Delaware River & tributaries	No Closed Season	None	6 (maximum of 3 American shad)
All Other Marine Waters	No Closed Season	None	6 (no American shad may be harvested or possessed)
Shark^{b, c, †}			
Aggregate large coastal group [†]	Jan. 1–May 14 and July 16–Dec. 31	Aggregate Large Coastal and Pelagic: Shortfin Mako: Male: 71" fork length Female: 83" fork length All others 54" fork length Hammerheads: 78" fork length Other listed sharks: None	One shark (of any species, except prohibited species) per vessel per trip; plus one Atlantic sharpnose shark per person per trip (no minimum size); plus one bonnet-head shark per person per trip (no minimum size).
Hammerhead group [†]			
Non-blacknose small coastal group [†]	No Closed Season		
Blacknose group [†]			
Pelagic group [†]	No Closed Season		
Spanish Mackerel	No Closed Season	14"	10
Striped Bass or Hybrid Striped Bass			
Delaware River & tributaries** (Calhoun St. bridge to Salem River & tributaries)	March 1–March 31 and June 1–Dec. 31	one @ 28" to less than 38"	1
Delaware River & tributaries** (upstream of Calhoun St. bridge)	March 1–Dec. 31		
Atlantic Ocean (0–3 nautical miles from shore)	No Closed Season		
Rivers, bay and estuaries	March 1–Dec. 31		
3–200 nautical miles (federal waters)	Prohibited	–	0
Summer Flounder (Fluke)			
Delaware Bay and tributaries ^g	May 22–Sept. 19	17"	3
Island Beach State Park, shore fishing	May 22–Sept. 19	16"	2
All water except as above	May 22–Sept. 19	18"	3
Tautog (Blackfish)	Jan. 1–Feb. 28	15"	4
	April 1–April 30	15"	4
	Aug. 1–Nov. 15	15"	1
	Nov. 16–Dec. 31	15"	5
Weakfish	No Closed Season	13"	1
Winter Flounder	March 1–Dec. 31	12"	2
Blue Crab			
peeler or shedder	No Closed Season ^d	3"	1 bushel
soft	No Closed Season ^d	3½"	
hard	No Closed Season ^d	4½"	
Loyster (carapace length)	See closed seasons on page 16	3¾"	6
Hard Clam (license required)	No Closed Season [‡]	1½"	150 clams

a Except 50 fish harvest/possession limit for party/charter boat employees.

b Not including dogfish; see description on page 12 under **Sharks**.

c See page 10 for a list of **Prohibited Species**.

d Unless using non-collapsible, Chesapeake-style crab pots, trot lines or crab dredges. See pages 16 and 19.

e Applies to Delaware Bay and tributaries, west of COLREGS line delineating Delaware Bay from Atlantic Ocean but does not include waters of Cape May Canal east of Cape May Ferry Terminal. Transport of summer flounder caught in Delaware Bay, greater than or equal to 17 in. but less than 18 in., may occur in waters east of Cape May Ferry Terminal to George Redding Br. (Rt. 47) located at entrance of Wildwood provided all fishing gear aboard the vessel is stowed with rigs removed; vessel may not stop to fish for any species.

f See page 11 under **Bluefish** regarding **party/charter** definition and regulations.

** See **Striped Bass Closed Seasons** (page 12) for specifics of springtime non-offset circle hook requirements.

† See page 18 for **Federal Recreational Regulations**.

‡ Non-resident license valid only June – Sept. See water classification chart information at <https://www.nj.gov/dep/bmw/nssphome.html#charts>.

Regulations in *red* are new this year.

2020 Federal Recreational Fishing Regulations for Minimum Size, Possession Limits and Seasons

See page 10 for how to measure fish. See *Recreational Minimum Size, Possession Limits and Seasons* (page 17) for state waters listings of species not included in these federal waters regulations (from 3–200nm). For federal regulation questions, please contact the National Marine Fisheries Service at (978) 281-9260, or go to www.nmfs.noaa.gov.

Species	Season	Minimum Size	Possession Limit (number per angler per day unless otherwise specified)	Notes
Cod	Year round	21"	10 per person per day	
Striped Bass	NA	NA	No possession allowed in EEZ	Possession prohibited in federal waters (3–200 nm).
Dolphin (Mahi mahi)	Year round	None	10 per day, not to exceed 60 per vessel, which ever is less — except on a charter or headboat, then 10 per paying passenger.	For current federal waters regulations (3–200nm), refer to https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/topic/atlantic-highly-migratory-species or call (727) 824-5326.
Marlin, White	Year round	66" lower jaw– fork length	None	Billfish require Highly Migratory Species (HMS) permit when fishing in federal waters (3–200 nm). For permits refer to https://hmspermits.noaa.gov or call (888) 872-8862.
Marlin, Blue	Year round	99" lower jaw– fork length	None	During any sanctioned billfish tournaments offering prize money, non-offset circle hooks are required for lures with natural bait or natural/artificial bait combos.
Roundscale Spearfish	Year round	66" lower jaw– fork length	None	All non-tournament billfish landings must be reported to NMFS within 24 hours, either online at https://hmspermits.noaa.gov or by calling (800) 894-5528.
Sailfish	Year round	63" lower jaw– fork length	None	
Spearfish, Longbill	None	None	Prohibited	For current regulations refer to https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/topic/atlantic-highly-migratory-species or call (727) 824-5399.
Tilefish, Blueleine	May 1–Oct. 31	None	Private boat: 3 fish per person, per trip USCG uninspected for-hire vessel: 5 fish per person, per trip USCG inspected for-hire vessel: 7 fish per person, per trip	In effect from the Virginia/North Carolina border north.
Tilefish, Golden	Year round	None	8 per angler per trip	
Swordfish	Year round	47" lower jaw– fork length if the head is naturally attached or 25" cleithrum to caudal keel if the head has been removed.	For anglers: 1 per person, no more than 4 per vessel per trip. For charter vessels: 1 per paying pas- senger, no more than 6 per vessel per trip. For headboat vessels: 1 per paying pas- senger, no more than 15 per vessel per trip.	Swordfish, tuna and sharks require an HMS permit when fishing in federal waters (3–200 nm). For permits, refer to https://hmspermits.noaa.gov or call (888) 872-8862. All non-tournament swordfish landings must be reported to NMFS within 24 hours either online at https://hmspermits.noaa.gov or by calling (800) 894-5528.
Tuna, Albacore (Longfin)	Year round	None	None	† Bluefin tuna are managed in two regions; Northern, extending north from the Great Egg Inlet and Southern extending south from Great Egg Inlet. Bluefin tuna retention limits may change throughout the season. Visit https://hmspermits.noaa.gov or call (888) 872-8862 or (978) 281-9260 for current information.
Tuna, Bigeye	Year round	27" curved fork length	None	
Tuna, Bluefin†	Jan. 1–Dec. 31 or until season is closed.	27" to <73" curved fork length and one trophy fish ≥ 73" curved fork length per vessel per year	Limits can change during the season. Prior to departure, check https://hmspermits.noaa.gov or 888-USA-TUNA for up-to-date limits.	All recreational bluefin tuna landings must be reported to NMFS within 24 hours either online at https://hmspermits.noaa.gov or by calling (888) 872-8862.
Tuna, Skipjack	Year round	None	None	For current federal waters regulations (3–200nm), refer to https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/topic/atlantic-highly-migratory-species or call (301) 713-2347 for swordfish/sharks or (978) 281-9260 for tunas.
Tuna, Yellowfin	Year round	27" curved fork length	3 per person per trip	
Sharks*				
Aggregate Large Coastal Group Pelagic Group Non-blacknose Small Coastal Group Hammerhead Group Blacknose Group	Year round	Aggregate Large Coastal and Pelagic: Shortfin Mako: Male: 71" fork length Female: 83" fork length All others 54" fork length Hammerheads: 78" fork length Other listed sharks: None	For non prohibited species: 1 authorized* shark/vessel/trip plus 1 Atlantic sharpnose and 1 bonnethead shark/person/trip	See below for list of shark groups which MAY be kept or MUST be released. Swordfish, tuna and sharks require an HMS permit when fishing in federal waters (3–200 nm). For permits, refer to https://hmspermits.noaa.gov or call (888) 872-8862. Recreational fishermen (those that do not have a limited access commercial shark permit) can not sell, barter or trade any Atlantic shark or shark pieces.
Wahoo	Year round	None	2 per person per day	
Wreckfish	July 1–Aug. 31	None	1 per vessel per day	For more information, contact the South Atlantic Fisheries Management Council at (843) 571-4366.

*Shark Species That May Be Kept (Authorized Species): **Aggregate Large Coastal Shark**—blacktip, bull, lemon, nurse, tiger, spinner; **Hammerhead Shark**—scalloped hammerhead, smooth hammerhead, great hammerhead; **Non-Blacknose Small Coastal Shark**—Atlantic sharpnose, bonnethead, finetooth; **Blacknose Shark**—blacknose; **Pelagic Shark**—Shortfin mako, blue, porbeagle, oceanic whitetip and common thresher. **Shark Species That MUST Be Released (Prohibited Species):** Atlantic angel, basking, bigeye sand tiger, bigeye sixgill, bigeye thresher, bignose, Caribbean reef, Caribbean sharpnose, dusky, Galapagos, longfin mako, narrowtooth, night, sandbar, sand tiger, sevengill, silky, sixgill, smalltail, whale and white.

Shellfish License Information

A shellfish license (formerly called clamming license) is required for harvesting all species of benthic mollusks (except 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.

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

For shellfishing regulations, see page 16. **Prior to harvesting any shellfish, you must consult the Shellfish Growing Water Classification Charts** published by DEP's Bureau of Marine Water Monitoring, available at shellfish license agents, state shellfish offices, online at <https://www.nj.gov/dep/bmw/nssphome.html#charts> or call Marine Water Monitoring at (609) 748-2000. Purchase shellfish licenses online at www.NJ.WildlifeLicense.com.

Shellfish License Fees

- **Resident recreational shellfish:** \$10
Harvest limit: 150 shellfish (in aggregate) per day. Sale of catch prohibited.
- **Non-resident recreational shellfish:** \$20
Harvest limit: 150 shellfish (in aggregate) per day. Sale of catch prohibited. License valid only during 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 only to certified dealers.
- **Resident senior citizen recreational shellfish license:** FREE lifetime license (\$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. To become certified, call (609) 984-6213.

DEP Action Line, 24 Hrs.

The Department has a toll-free telephone hotline number you can use to report environmental incidents, abuses, and complaints in New Jersey or impacting it.

(877) WARN-DEP
(877) 927-6337

Quick Reference for Popular Fish!

For New Jersey's most popular recreational species, see the quick reference chart of open seasons and regulations: www.NJFishandWildlife.com/pdf/marine/recseasons.pdf.



Crab Pot License Information

Recreational Crab Pot/Trot Line Licenses and Non-Commercial Crab Dredge Licenses are available for purchase online at: www.NJ.WildlifeLicense.com or at any Fish and Wildlife-certified license agent including those license agents listed below. For the most current list of Fish and Wildlife-certified license agents, go to NJFishandWildlife.com/agentlst.htm.

- **Recreational crab pot/trot line license:** \$2
Harvest limit: one bushel per day. Refer to the shellfish regulations on page 16 for all recreational crabbing regulations.
- **Non-commercial crab dredge license:** \$15
Harvest limit: one bushel per day during the crab dredge season. See page 16 for recreational crab regulations.

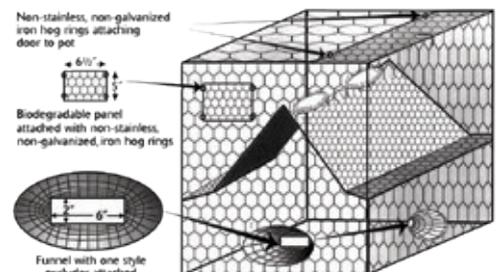
Terrapin Excluders and Biodegradable Panels Are Required on Chesapeake-Style Crab Pots

NOTE: It is illegal to catch or take diamondback terrapins in New Jersey. Users of non-collapsible, Chesapeake-style crab pots note: 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. 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 allowing these and other species to escape in the event that pots are

lost or abandoned. Terrapin excluder devices must be no larger than 2-inch high by 6-inch wide and securely fastened inside each funnel entrance. Biodegradable panels must measure at least 6½-inch wide by 5-inch 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 3/32" 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 note: **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 page 16. 

Chesapeake-Style Crab Pot



Shellfish and Non-Commercial Crab Pot License Agents

Current listing now available online at <https://www.nj.gov/dep/fgw/agentlst.htm>.

Note: All license agents statewide can now sell all license and permit privileges.

Offshore Wind

By Colleen Brust, Research Scientist 3 and Anna Belardo, Seasonal Biologist

Big things are coming to the waters off New Jersey...literally!

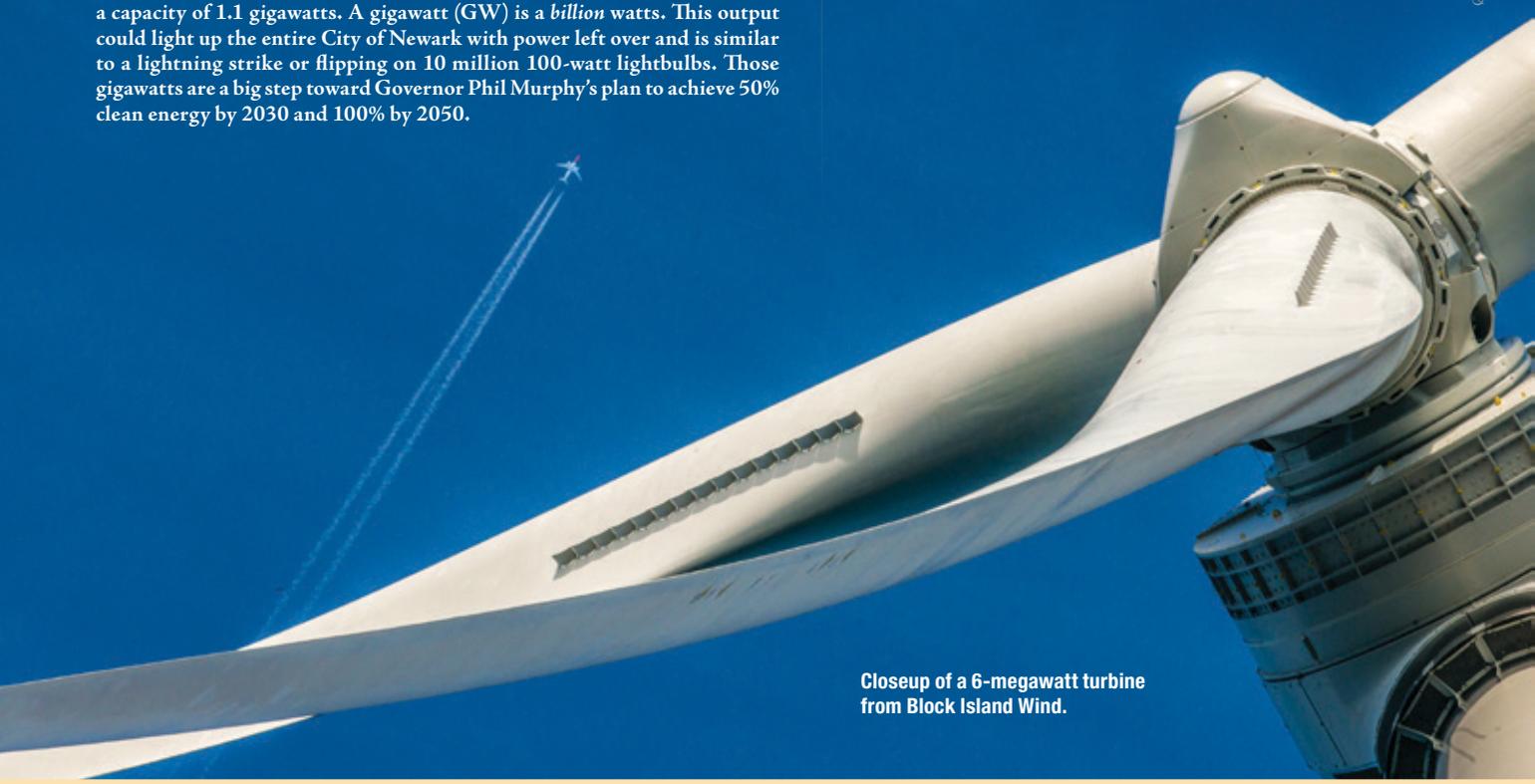
Construction could begin in the next few years on Ørsted's Ocean Wind project, one of the largest "farms" in the United States and a significant milestone toward New Jersey's clean energy goals.

The wind turbines and transmission cables will share the ocean with our valuable recreational and commercial fisheries, so the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) and the Division of Fish and Wildlife's Marine Fisheries Administration have been actively involved in every step of this project. New Jersey's fishing interests have informed state and federal decision-making throughout the process. The New Jersey DEP and Marine Fisheries Administration prioritizes communication and collaboration between developers, federal agencies and the fishing community because we recognize that the experts in how we use the ocean are the people who are out there day in and day out.

Ocean Wind is slated to be one of the largest wind farms in the world, with a capacity of 1.1 gigawatts. A gigawatt (GW) is a *billion* watts. This output could light up the entire City of Newark with power left over and is similar to a lightning strike or flipping on 10 million 100-watt lightbulbs. Those gigawatts are a big step toward Governor Phil Murphy's plan to achieve 50% clean energy by 2030 and 100% by 2050.



Three offshore wind projects are in development in federal waters off the coast of New Jersey, Ocean Wind by Ørsted, Atlantic Shores by EDF Renewables/Shell, and Boardwalk Wind by Equinor. The Bureau of Ocean Energy Management is identifying new wind energy areas in the NJ/NY Bight, with recommendations shown in green and light green.



Closeup of a 6-megawatt turbine from Block Island Wind.

Wind energy is the “cleanest” form of renewable energy. It’s not just a green choice, but a practical one. The winds blowing off our coast are some of the strongest and most consistent in the world. From the shoreline, our wide, gently sloping seafloor that makes up New Jersey’s continental shelf is ideal for wind farm construction. Our dense human population near the shore provides a ready market. Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Maryland and Virginia are all looking towards offshore wind, with a combined goal of producing more than 275 GW of power by 2035.

Ørsted will use more than 90 of the most powerful turbines available, the GE Haliade-X 12 MW. Soaring over 900 feet — taller than the Washington Monument — these are the most powerful offshore turbines available, with a generating capacity of 12 MW, vastly more than the capacity of the 1.5 MW turbines spinning over the ACUA in Atlantic City. The turbine foundations will be placed in 60 to 100 feet of water and will be connected to each other, to substations and to the mainland by cables buried 4 to 6 feet below the seafloor.

Ocean Wind may be operational by 2024. Ørsted, the developer of Ocean Wind, has stated that all fishing and vessel traffic will be permitted, but some closures during construction are unavoidable.

Ørsted is a Danish company behind more than 25% of the existing offshore wind farms, including the first, Vindeby. This 11-turbine pilot project demonstrated the viability of offshore wind power and that turbines could endure the harsh environment of the sea for more than 20 years. In 2017, Vindeby became the first offshore wind farm to be decommissioned, with much of its construction material recycled, including steel from the turbines and concrete from the foundations.

Equinor’s Boardwalk Wind and EDF/Shell’s Atlantic Shores are also in development in federal waters off New Jersey and New York. Equinor has similar start-up target dates to Ocean Wind; Atlantic Shores, a leaseholder off Atlantic City, proposes operation by the mid-2020s.

The New Jersey DEP has been looking into offshore wind since 2008 when the Ocean/Wind Power Ecological Baseline Studies were conducted to identify areas for wind development. This included a survey of whales, birds, turtles and fish. Results were used by the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management to select the existing offshore wind lease areas. Fish and Wildlife’s Marine Fisheries Administration, along with NOAA Fisheries, the U.S. Coast Guard and the U.S. Department of Defense, also reviewed the second wave of proposed wind energy areas in 2018, but they have not yet been finalized by the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management. As a follow-up to the Ocean/Wind Power Ecological Baseline Studies, the New Jersey Board of Public Utilities (BPU) modeled resources in a much larger area off New Jersey in 2019, the results of which will be included in the pending New Jersey Strategic Plan for Offshore Wind. Scientists from several universities in New Jersey, including the Rutgers Center for Ocean Observing Leadership, are also actively engaged in research.

Governor Murphy recognizes the importance of stakeholder involvement. Beginning in the summer of 2018, the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management and the Division of Fish and Wildlife’s Marine

A fishing vessel transits past a wind turbine near Block Island, Rhode Island.



Fisheries Administration held three stakeholder meetings in New Jersey on proposed areas for future offshore wind development. The first environmental and fisheries stakeholder roundtable meetings were held in March of 2019, followed by the launch of the Environmental Resources Offshore Wind Working Group. New Jersey natural resource councils are also involved, as the Marine Fisheries Council has met with the public, fishing industry representatives and various programs within the DEP that are responsible for permitting offshore wind activities.

Since fishing is a vital component of our heritage and economy, the New Jersey DEP has prioritized stewardship of our marine resources during the planning, construction, operation and decommissioning of proposed projects. For perspective, surf clams, ocean quahogs and scallops had a landings revenue of \$133 million in 2016, a value greater than all of our blueberries or tomatoes. Recreational fisheries were worth almost \$1.2 billion (2016 data) to the Garden State economy. Fish and Wildlife’s Marine Fisheries Administration has more than a dozen biologists, research scientists and managers involved in the review of offshore wind projects, with resource specialists who focus on surveys, marine fish and shellfish, habitats, recreational fisheries and commercial fisheries.

While the marine environment, resources and fisheries of New Jersey are unique, we can learn from the experiences of anglers at wind farms in Europe and off Rhode Island. Placing hard structures over sandy bottoms attracts settling invertebrates and reef-associated fish — and ultimately, anglers.

The New Jersey DEP is always looking for input from our fishing communities, including on the continued and future development of offshore wind. We encourage everyone to attend public meetings to learn more about the projects and to have their voices heard. When planning a fishing trip, stay up to date with mariner information from Ocean Wind, Atlantic Shores and Boardwalk Wind. (See links below). 

For more information, visit:

- NJ Offshore Wind from DEP: <https://www.nj.gov/dep/aqes/offshorewind.html>
- New Jersey Offshore Wind from BPU: <https://njcleanenergy.com/nj-offshore-wind>
- Ocean Wind by Ørsted: <https://oceanwind.com/About-Ocean-wind>
- Atlantic Shores by EDF/Shell: <https://www.equinor.com/en/what-we-do/boardwalk-wind.html>
- Boardwalk Wind by Equinor: <https://www.atlanticshoreswind.com/>



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Skillful Angler Program

RECOGNITION PROGRAMS

New Jersey Skillful Angler Program

Nice fish! Not quite a record-breaker but still impressive? Enter the New Jersey Skillful Angler Program for recognition and rewards. Minimum size requirements for Adult (16+), Junior (under 16), and Catch and Release divisions are shown in the table below. Full rules and application instructions are online at <https://NJFishandWildlife.com/skflang.htm>, but some important points include:

- Fish must be caught in New Jersey waters using hook and line during legally open seasons.
- Saltwater species taken from a boat must have been caught from a boat that left from, and returned to, a New Jersey port during the same trip.
- A clear, side-view photo that allows accurate species identification must be included with each application.

Is one fish monster not enough for you? Try your hand at any of the four, multi-species Slam! categories (Inshore 1, Inshore 2, Offshore Pelagics

and Marlin) or the Specialist (five of same species), Master (five of different species), or Elite (10 of different species) categories.

New since 2018: complete your entry online then submit by email. A clear, high-resolution photo (largest file size) allowing species identification must be submitted with each application. Winners will be posted at the Fish and Wildlife booth at the Garden State Outdoor Sports Show in January 2021. In addition, a leaderboard of the largest fish, by species and division, is posted online. The end-of-year leader in each category will receive a special certificate recognizing his/her accomplishment along with a winner's patch as the *Best of New Jersey's Skillful Anglers!*

For full details on the Skillful Angler Program, check out our website at NJFishandWildlife.com/skflang.htm. Best of luck! 

Minimum Entry Requirements:

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

The New Jersey State Record Fish Program requires a separate application and is based on weight alone. Scale certification documentation and a weighmaster's signature are necessary. Other rules apply. Visit Fish and Wildlife's website at NJFishandWildlife.com for a complete list of current state records. See also page 24.

Did You Know?

Email your entry and photo from any device!

<https://njfishandwildlife.com/skflang.htm>



Maryellen Gordon/NJ Div. Fish and Wildlife

New Jersey State Federation of Sportsmen's Clubs

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- Preservation of traditional outdoor sports



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State Record Marine Sport Fish

RECOGNITION PROGRAMS



Joe Cunningham of Cape May Court House was free diving off Sea Isle City when he speared a 74 pounds, 5 ounce new state record cobia — 14 pounds, 5 ounces over the previous record. The new record cobia measured 56 inches long with a 29-inch girth.

New Jersey Division of Fish and Wildlife's Record Fish Program honors anglers who catch the largest of select species of freshwater and saltwater fish. Record size is based on weight alone; there are no line classes. Currently there are 76 marine species eligible for entry into the program which includes a new spearfishing category with 17 additional species.

Anglers are reminded that the objective of the Record Fish Program is to increase awareness of fishing opportunities for species that are regularly sought and routinely found on or off the coast of New Jersey. The original list of 72 species was pared down with that objective in mind.

Twelve species are now retired from the list of program-eligible fish, but remain on a separate list posted on Fish and Wildlife's website. One historical catch is also retired and posted on the list.

Anglers should be aware of the procedure in effect for entering the Record Fish Program. First, separate applications are required for freshwater and saltwater species. Second, for saltwater entries, it

is now mandatory that a marine biologist inspect any potential record fish, as identification solely by photo is not always accurate. Anglers must call Fish and Wildlife's Nacote Creek Research Station at (609) 748-2020 to make arrangements for inspection. In most instances, the fish must be transported to this office in Port Republic. However, in the case of extremely large fish (i.e., shark and tuna), a biologist should be available to travel for dockside inspection. Note that all scale certification requirements still apply, including a valid Certificate of Inspection/Test Report and current Registration Certificate issued by the County Office of Weights and Measures.

The entry deadline is now no later than one month after the date of catch.

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 NJFishandWildlife.com/recfish.htm. 

New Jersey State Record Marine Fish

Species	Lbs.	Oz.	Year	Angler	Where Caught
Amberjack, greater	85	0	1993	Edwin Metzner	Off Cape May
Bass, black sea	9	0	2015	Steve Singler	Atlantic Ocean
Bluefish	27	1	1997	Roger Kastorsky	5 Fathom Bank
Bonito, Atlantic	13	8	1945	Frank Lykes, Jr.	Off Sandy Hook
Cobia	90	6	2019	Len Andalis	McCries Shoal
Cod	81	0	1967	Joseph Chesla	Off Brielle
Crab, blue	8¾" pt. to pt.		2008	Raymond Ponik	Bayonne
Croaker, Atlantic	5	8	1981	Frederick Brown	Delaware Bay
*Cunner	3	8.8	2019	John Zema	Atlantic Ocean
Dogfish, smooth	19	11.2	2013	Michael J. LaTorre, Jr.	Sculls Bay
Dogfish, spiny	15	12	1990	Jeff Pennick	Off Cape May
Dolphin	63	3	1974	Scott Smith, Jr.	Baltimore Canyon
Drum, black	109	0	2008	Nick Henry	Delaware Bay
Drum, red	55	0	1985	Daniel Yanino	Great Bay
Eel, American	9	13	1988	Warren Campbell	Atlantic City
Fluke	19	12	1953	Walter Lubin	Off Cape May
Flounder, winter	5	11	1993	Jimmy Swanson	Off Barnegat Light
Hake, red (Ling)	12	13	2010	Billy Watson	Off Manasquan
Hake, white	41	7	1989	Wayne Eble	Off Barnegat Light
Kingfish, Northern	2	8	2004	Chester Urbanski	Barnegat Bay
Mackerel, Atlantic	4	1	1983	Abe Elkin	Manasquan Ridge
Mackerel, king	54	0	1998	Fernando Alfaiate	Off Cape May
*Mackerel, Spanish	9	12	1990	Donald Kohler	Off Cape May
Marlin, blue	1,046	0	1986	Phil Infantolino	Hudson Canyon
Marlin, white	137	8	1980	Mike Marchell	Hudson Canyon
Perch, white	2	12	1998	Michael King	Little Beach Creek
*Pollock	46	7	1975	John Holton	Off Brielle
Porgy	5	14	1976	Victor Rone	Delaware Bay
Sailfish	43	4	2006	Dr. John Tallia	Linden Kohl Canyon
Seatrout, spotted	11	2	1974	Bert Harper	Holgate Surf
Shad, American	7	0	1967	Rodger West	Great Bay
Shad, hickory	2	13	2011	Robert Macejka	Mantoloking

Species	Lbs.	Oz.	Year	Angler	Where Caught
Shark, blue	366	0	1996	William Young, Jr.	Mud Hole
Shark, bull				Vacant (Minimum Weight 150 lbs.)	
Shark, dusky	530	0	1987	Brian Dunlevy	Off Great Egg Inlet
Shark, hammerhead	365	0	1985	Walter Thackara	Mud Hole
Shark, porbeagle				Vacant (Minimum Weight 100 lbs.)	
Shark, s-fin mako	856	0	1994	Christopher Palmer	Wilmington Canyon
Shark, thresher	683	0	2009	Bennett Fogelberg	Fingers
Shark, tiger	880	0	1988	Billy DeJohn	Off Cape May
Sheepshead	19	3	2014	William Catino	Longport
Spadefish	11	6	1998	Cliff Low	Delaware Bay
Spearfish, longbill	42	0	1989	George Algard	Poor Man's Canyon
	42	0	1997	Joseph Natoli	Hudson Canyon
Spot	0	13	2003	Robert Belsky, Jr.	Little Sheepshead Creek
*Striped bass	78	8	1982	Al McReynolds	Atlantic City
Swordfish	530	0	1964	Edmund Levitt	Wilmington Canyon
*Tautog	25	5.92	2015	Frank LaMorte	Atlantic Ocean
Tilefish, golden	63	8	2009	Dennis Muhlenforth	Linden Kohl Canyon
Tilefish, gray	23	4	2015	Mark Milici	Linden Kohl Canyon
Triggerfish, gray	6	11	2016	James Massimino	Sea Girt Reef
Tuna, albacore	77	15	1984	Dr. S. Scannapiego	Spencer Canyon
Tuna, big-eye	364	14	1984	George Krenick	Hudson Canyon
Tuna, bluefin	1,030	6	1981	Royal Parsons	Off Pt. Pleasant
Tuna, skipjack	13	4	1999	Craig Eberbach	Wilmington Canyon
Tuna, yellowfin	290	0	1980	Wayne Brinkerhoff	Hudson Canyon
Tunny, little	24	15	1977	Mark Niemczyk	Off Sea Bright
Wahoo	123	12	1992	Robert Carr	28-Mile Wreck
Weakfish	18	8	1986	Karl Jones	Delaware Bay
Whiting (silver hake)				Vacant (Minimum Weight 2.5 lbs.)	

* 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 NJFishandWildlife.com.

New Jersey State Record Marine Fish – Spearfishing Category

In 2014, the NJ Record Fish Program expanded with the addition of a Spearfishing category for saltwater. Seventeen (17) species commonly sought after by spearfishers are part of the Program. Spearfishers now have a unique opportunity to be recognized in New Jersey's Record Fish Program. Anglers are reminded that the objective of the Record Fish Program is to increase the awareness of fishing opportunities for species that are regularly sought and routinely found in or off the coast of New Jersey.

Species	Lbs.	Oz.	Year	Angler	Where Caught
Amberjack, greater	Min. Wt. 60 pounds			VACANT	
Bass, black sea	Min. Wt. 5 pounds			VACANT	
Bluefish	22	2	2017	Igor Kotov	Shark River Reef, USS Algo
Cobia	74	5	2019	Joe Cunningham	Off Sea Isle City
Cod	Min. Wt. 50 pounds			VACANT	
Dolphin	Min. Wt. 40 pounds			VACANT	
*Fluke	15	5	2014	Robert A. Davis	Off Barnegat Lighthouse
Flounder, winter	3 pounds	7	2018	Jim Oriscak	Shark River "back bay"
Hake, red (ling)	Min. Wt. 9 pounds			VACANT	
Pollock	Min. Wt. 30 pounds			VACANT	
Porgy	Min. Wt. 4 pounds			VACANT	
Sheepshead	Min. Wt. 12 pounds			VACANT	
Spadefish	Min. Wt. 9 pounds			VACANT	
Striped bass	Min. Wt. 55 pounds			VACANT	
*Tautog	23	14	2007	Luke Dylan Hickey	Off Cape May
Triggerfish, gray	5	5	2019	Kevin Cavanagh	Off Monmouth Beach
Weakfish	11.8	n/a	2009	Tai Menz	Off Cape May

* Fish was recognized by the International Underwater Spearfishing Association as a world record.



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Eating Fish and Crabs Caught In New Jersey Waters

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.

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, for a complete list of state and federal marine fish consumption advisories visit www.FishSmartEatSmartNJ.org for making decisions about eating recreationally caught fish and crabs.



Oven Roasted Sea Bass with Ginger Lime Sauce

Ingredients

- 2 tablespoons fresh lime juice
- 1½ tablespoons soy sauce
- 1 tablespoon chopped fresh cilantro
- 1 tablespoon chopped peeled fresh ginger
- 1 tablespoon minced shallot
- 5 teaspoons light or regular olive oil
- 2 6-ounce sea bass fillets (each about 3/4 inch thick)

Preparation

1. Preheat oven to 500°F. Mix first five ingredients and 3 teaspoons oil in small bowl. Season sauce with salt and pepper.
2. Brush inside of a small-medium size glass baking dish with remaining 2 teaspoons oil. Arrange fish in prepared dish; turn to coat. Sprinkle fish with salt and pepper. Spoon 1/2 tablespoon (or more) sauce over each fillet.
3. Roast fish until just opaque in center, about 12 minutes. Top fish with remaining sauce and serve.

Serving Suggestions

- Goes well with rice or couscous and a roasted vegetable.
- Use extra sauce to mix with the side dish before serving.
- Makes 2 servings; can be multiplied to meet needs.

Try the Interactive Map!

One click on the waterbody where you fish takes you to any current health advisories.

www.FishSmartEatSmartNJ.org



Report a Stranded or Injured Marine Animal (866) 755-NOAA

Give Animals Space

Remember to give animals space when on the water. How much space depends on the species you are viewing.

- **North Atlantic right whales:** 500 yards or 5 football field lengths (required by law)
- **Other whales:** 100-600 feet
- **Seals, dolphins and sea turtles:** 150 feet
- **Leaping sturgeon** also require extra space to avoid injury to you and the fish. If the animal leaves the area, or changes its behavior, it's telling you it's had enough time with you. Back away and never chase them.

Use Caution

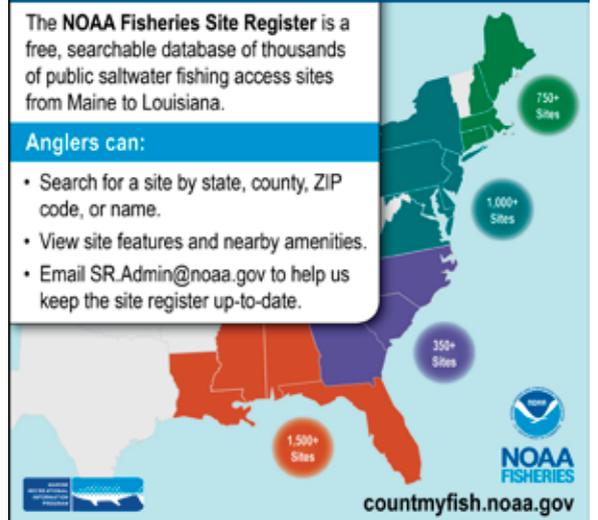
- Make sure you cast your line only when seals, turtles, dolphins, or whales are not present, and if they approach your boat, reel your gear in until they pass.
- If you accidentally hook or hit one of these animals, please call our hotline.
- Never feed wild animals. They can become sick or aggressive if fed by humans.
- Go slowly if seals, turtles, dolphins, or whales are nearby. Ten knots or less are required in certain areas for boats 65 feet greater in length between November 1-April 30 in the Mid-Atlantic in order to protect migrating North Atlantic right whales.
- Remember, boats of any size can strike and seriously injure or kill even a large whale and seriously damage your vessel —don't assume these animals will move out of your way.

Did You Know?

The NOAA Fisheries Site Register is a free, searchable database of thousands of public saltwater fishing access sites from Maine to Louisiana.

Anglers can:

- Search for a site by state, county, ZIP code, or name.
- View site features and nearby amenities.
- Email SR.Admin@noaa.gov to help us keep the site register up-to-date.



For-Hire Permitting & Reporting

Electronic vessel trip reporting is required for all vessels issued any of the following GARFO charter/party permits when carrying passengers for hire:

- summer flounder
- scup
- black sea bass
- Atlantic mackerel
- squid
- butterfish
- bluefish
- golden / blueline tilefish

Electronic reports must be submitted through a NOAA-approved software application following the completion of a fishing trip.

eVTR Reporting Questions (978) 281-9418

Search: **GARFO Going Fishing**

Sedge Island Field Experience Programs — Summer 2020

Sedge Island Natural Resource Education Center is offering a variety of overnight programs in the summer of 2020 for students, adults and families. Come spend a day/night at the Sedge House and learn about fishing, clamming, salt marsh ecology and what's edible in and around the Barnegat Bay!

Visit NJFishandWildlife.com/sedge_summer.htm for details, date and cost or contact Karen Byrne at Karen.Byrne@dep.nj.gov.



Law Enforcement and Regulation Information



Contact a New Jersey Division of Fish & Wildlife Law Enforcement office that serves the county where you hunt or fish.

- **Northern Region — (908) 735-8240** (Bergen, Essex, Hudson, Hunterdon, Morris, Passaic, Somerset, Sussex, Union and Warren counties)
- **Central Region — (609) 259-2120** (Burlington, Mercer, Middlesex, Monmouth and Ocean counties)
- **Southern Region — (856) 629-0555** (Atlantic, Camden, Cape May, Cumberland, Gloucester and Salem counties)
- **Marine Region — (609) 748-2050** (coastal and bay areas)
- **To report violations anonymously call Operation Game Thief — (855) OGT-TIPS**

Attention Boaters

Keep Our Water Clean— Use Pumpouts

Ready To Serve Boaters! Visit marina pumpout facilities or contact one of the pumpout boats. A complete listing of operational pumpout facilities at marinas and detailed information on the pumpout boats can be found at NJBoating.org.

Proper maintenance and operation of your on-board toilet and holding tank are critical to ensure they function properly.

- Always use sufficient water when flushing
- Use toilet paper designed for use in marine/RV systems
- Have your marina inspect your onboard toilet system to make sure it is operating properly



Operation Game Thief

Report Abuse of our Outdoor Heritage!

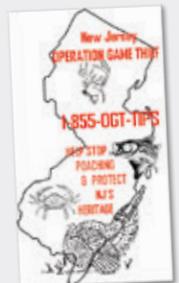
1-855-OGT-TIPS

24 Hours a Day, Seven Days a Week

The person who poaches, pollutes habitat and abuses public land tarnishes the image of sportsmen and robs us of our fish and wildlife as well as tax and license dollars. You can make a difference.

Call OGT to report:

- Negligent use of firearms
- Over the limits for game and fish
- Commercial exploitation of fish and wildlife
- Pollution of habitat, dumping on state land
- Destruction of signs and state property
- Illegal killing, taking or possession of any wildlife



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Pequest Trout Hatchery	(908) 637-4173
605 Pequest Rd., Oxford, NJ 07863	
<i>For questions concerning state stocking programs or comments call</i> (908) 236-2118	
Hackettstown Fish Hatchery (15 Warmwater/Coolwater Species)	(908) 852-3676
23 Reese Ave., Hackettstown, NJ 07840	
<i>For questions concerning state stocking programs or comments call</i> (908) 236-2118	
Nacote Creek Research Station	
P.O. Box 418, 360 Rt. 9 N. (Milepost 51) Port Republic, NJ 08241	
Marine Fisheries	(609) 748-2020
Shellfisheries	(609) 748-2040
Marine Education	(609) 748-4347
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