

**7:25-18.16 Horseshoe crab (*Limulus polyphemus*)**

(a) An individual shall not catch, take, or attempt to catch or take, land or possess horseshoe crabs from any beach or shoreline or from the marine waters of this State unless such individual has in his or her possession a valid permit to take horseshoe crabs issued by the Commissioner of Environmental Protection. Any individual who wishes to harvest horseshoe crabs may be eligible to obtain a permit by completing an application available from the: Division of Fish, Game and Wildlife, Bureau of Marine Fisheries, PO Box 400, Trenton, N.J. 08625. The following persons, in the following circumstances, are not subject to this prohibition:

1. Property owners, tenants or agents of property owners may, at any time, remove dead horseshoe crabs from their property for purposes of disposal. No sale, trade, or barter of horseshoe crabs is permitted under this paragraph.

2. Persons collecting horseshoe crabs for strictly scientific purposes only and operating under the terms and conditions specified by a required scientific collecting permit issued pursuant to N.J.S.A. 23:4-52 by the Administrator of the Marine Fisheries Administration within the Division of Fish, Game and Wildlife.

3. Individuals in possession of a valid New Jersey miniature fyke or a valid New Jersey lobster or fish pot license and in possession of bona fide written documentation that the horseshoe crabs were obtained from a legal source.

(b) An individual is eligible for a horseshoe crab permit if the individual in each of two calendar years during the period of January 1, 1993 through May 29, 1997:

1. Possessed a valid New Jersey miniature fyke or lobster or fish pot license;

2. Possessed a valid New Jersey horseshoe crab permit; and

3. Reported landings of horseshoe crabs in New Jersey as verified by the Department on the basis of the reports submitted by the individual to the Department as required under this section since May 3, 1993.

(c) Horseshoe crab permits shall be non-transferable.

(d) The season for taking horseshoe crabs shall be May 1 through June 30.

(e) A person shall not harvest horseshoe crabs from the beaches and shoreline and the adjacent waters and uplands within 1,000 feet of the bayfront mean high water line in that portion of Delaware Bay extending from the Cape May Canal in Cape May County to Stow Creek in Cumberland County at any time.

(f) An individual shall not harvest or land horseshoe crabs that have been taken by any method other than by

hand harvest. The use of any implement (nets, rakes, spears, shovels, forks, etc.) to assist hand harvest is prohibited. Hand harvest is permitted in areas other than specified in (e) above only on Tuesdays and Thursdays during the season established under (d) above.

(g) An individual shall not possess more than the daily harvest and possession limit of 100 horseshoe crabs unless:

1. The horseshoe crabs are contained within a land based non-mobile storage facility and the individual possesses bona fide written documentation that the horseshoe crabs were obtained from a legal source. Live storage is prohibited; or

2. The individual is in simultaneous possession of miniature fykes, conch pots, lobster pots or fish pots and is engaged in the act of fishing with such gear type(s).

(h) Any person harvesting horseshoe crabs shall provide monthly reports within five working days following the end of the reported month to the Department on forms supplied to the permit holder. The monthly report shall include the number of horseshoe crabs harvested, the area of collection and any other information as the Department may deem necessary for management of the horseshoe crab resource. If no horseshoe crabs were harvested during the month, a report to that effect shall be provided. The permittee shall be personally responsible for guaranteeing the timely delivery of reports to the Division as well as the accuracy of all information contained therein. The Department may demand that a permittee provide proof of the truth of any data contained in any report submitted to the Division under this program. If the permittee fails to file a true, complete monthly report with the Division by the fifth day of any month, the Division, in its discretion, may contact the permittee by the most expeditious method available in order to secure a complete report.

(i) Any person violating the provisions of this section shall be subject to the penalties prescribed in N.J.S.A. 23:2B-14 in addition to the suspension or revocation of the permittee's horseshoe crab harvesting privileges, according to the following procedures:

1. The Division shall notify the permittee in writing of the Division's intention to revoke the permittee's horseshoe crab harvesting privilege for the reasons stipulated in the notice, effective 20 business days after the date on the written notice (excluding the date on the notice) and of the Division's suspension of the permittee's horseshoe crab harvesting privileges in the interim, effective on a date stipulated in the notice but not sooner than 10 business days after the date of the notice (excluding the date on the notice).

2. The permittee may request a hearing to contest a proposed revocation of horseshoe crab harvesting privileges in accordance with the Administrative Procedure Act, N.J.S.A. 52:14B-1 et seq., and the Uniform Administrative Procedure Rules, N.J.A.C. 1:1. The request for an

administrative hearing must be received in writing by the Department within 20 business days from the date on the Division's notice of suspension and intention to revoke, excluding the date on the notice. However, if a timely request for a hearing is not received by the Department, any allegation contained in the notice shall be deemed admitted by the permittee and horseshoe crab harvesting privileges shall be revoked as of the date stipulated in the notice, without any further action by the Division.

3. The Division Director may, in his or her sole discretion, stay the suspension of horseshoe crab harvesting privileges pending a hearing on the notice of proposed revocation of horseshoe crab harvesting privileges for any good cause set forth in a written petition from the permittee, including sworn statements from the permittee or other persons with knowledge relevant to the allegations on which the Division action is based. The petition and its supporting statements and documentation shall be made available to the court and all parties in advance of any hearing.

4. The Division shall reinstate horseshoe crab harvesting privileges suspended for late or incomplete reports, but no more than one time per permittee in any single permit year, if that permittee personally delivers any missing reports, completed, along with a credible written explanation for the delay and/or omissions to the Division within 20 business days from the date on the notice of suspension.

5. Any permittee who has had his or her horseshoe crab harvesting privilege revoked shall be disqualified from exercising any privilege associated with a horseshoe crab harvesting permit for 24 months following the effective date of an uncontested notice of proposed revocation of privileges, or whichever of the following is applicable:

i. The date of the Commissioner's Final Decision affirming revocation of horseshoe crab harvesting privileges, or

ii. The filing date of the court order affirming the Commissioner's Final Decision revoking horseshoe crab harvesting privileges.

6. The Division shall issue a horseshoe crab permit to an applicant pending resolution of a contested Division proposal to revoke that applicant's horseshoe crab harvesting privilege, but that permittee shall not exercise or enjoy any horseshoe crab harvesting privilege pending resolution of a proposed revocation until, as appropriate, one of the following occurs:

i. The Division Director lifts the suspension of that permittee's horseshoe crab harvesting privilege;

ii. The Commissioner issues a Final Decision reinstating that permittee's horseshoe crab harvesting privilege; or

iii. A court of competent jurisdiction orders reinstatement of that permittee's horseshoe crab harvesting privileges.

New Rule, R.1993 d.185, effective May 3, 1993.

See: 24 N.J.R. 2978(a), 25 N.J.R. 1876(b).

Amended by R.1996 d.218, effective May 6, 1996.

See: 28 N.J.R. 245(a), 28 N.J.R. 2375(a).

Emergency amendment R.1997 d.268, effective May 30, 1997 (expired July 29, 1997).

See: 29 N.J.R. 3084(a).

The emergency amendment substantially amended (a); rewrote (b) and (c); and deleted (d).

Emergency amendment R.1997 d.350, effective July 29, 1997 (to expire September 27, 1997).

See: 29 N.J.R. 3737(a).

In (a), substituted "land or posses horseshoe crabs" for "horseshoe crabs except by hand collection or while using other gear allowed under this chapter and/or N.J.S.A. Titles 23 and 50" and inserted "be eligible to" preceding "obtain a permit"; added (a)3; inserted new (b) and (c); added (f) and (g); recodified former (b), (b)1, (c) and (d) as (d), (e), (h) and (i), respectively; deleted former (d)2 and 3; in (e), inserted reference to uplands; and in (h), for contents of monthly report, deleted to gear utilized.

#### SUBCHAPTER 18A. FISHERIES CLOSURES AND ADVISORIES FOR STRIPED BASS, AMERICAN EEL, BLUEFISH, WHITE PERCH AND WHITE CATFISH TAKEN FROM THE NORTHEAST REGION OF THE STATE

##### Authority

Marine Fisheries Management and Commercial Fisheries Act, N.J.S.A. 23:2B-1 et seq.

##### Source and Effective Date

R.1983 d.102, effective March 17, 1983.

See: 15 N.J.R. 39(a), 15 N.J.R. 543(c).

##### Subchapter Historical Note

Subchapter 18A, Fisheries Closures and Advisories for Striped Bass, American Eel, Bluefish, White Perch and White Catfish Taken from the Northeast Region of the State, was originally adopted as emergency new rules by R.1982 d.477, effective December 15, 1982. The concurrent proposal of Subchapter 18A was readopted with changes to N.J.A.C. 7:25-18A.6.

##### 7:25-18A.1 Authority

This subchapter has been promulgated pursuant to the Marine Fisheries Management and Commercial Fisheries Act, N.J.S.A. 23:2B-1 et seq.

##### 7:25-18A.2 Scope and construction

(a) The following shall constitute the rules governing the issuance by the Department, of fisheries closures and advisories concerning PCB contaminated fish taken from the waters of the Northeast Region of the State.