

MARYLAND GUIDE TO

# FISHING & CRABBING

2017  
2018

## WHAT'S NEW

See page 6

### Also inside...

- License Information
- Seasons, Sizes & Limits
- Fish Identification
- Public Lakes & Ponds
- Tidal/Non tidal dividing lines
- Oysters & Clams

NONTIDAL | CHESAPEAKE BAY | COASTAL BAYS | ATLANTIC OCEAN

# SEASONS, MINIMUM SIZES, DAILY CREEL & POSSESSION LIMITS

## CHESAPEAKE BAY & ITS TIDAL TRIBUTARIES

SPECIES	MINIMUM SIZE LIMITS	SEASON	CREEL LIMIT	REMARKS
AMERICAN EEL	9 inches	January 1 - August 31, except open year round for spears and baited traps or pots	Daily—25	
BASS (Largemouth & Smallmouth)	15 inches March 1–June 15	Open Year Round	Daily—5 in aggregate	
	12 inches June 16 through last day in February			
BLACK DRUM	16 inches	Open Year Round	Daily—1 Boat Limit—6	
BLACK SEA BASS	12.5 inches	CLOSED January 1 - May 14 and September 22 - October 21	Daily - 15	
BLUEFISH	8 inches	Open Year Round	Daily—10	
CATFISH	None	Open Year Round	None	
CHAIN PICKEREL (Pike)	14 inches	CLOSED March 15–April 30	Daily—10	
COBIA	None	Open year round	None	
CROAKER (Hardhead)	9 inches	Open Year Round	Daily—25	
NORTHERN SNAKEHEAD	None	Open Year Round	None	Illegal to transport live snakehead fish.
RED DRUM (Channel Bass or Puppy Drum)	18–27 inches	Open Year Round	Daily—1	
SHARKS	See Highly Migratory Species Section—page 44			
SPANISH MACKEREL	14 inches	Open Year Round	Daily—15	Must be landed with head and fins intact.
SPOTTED SEATROUT	14 inches	Open Year Round	Daily—4	
STRIPED BASS	See Chesapeake Bay Striped Bass Section - page 38			
SUMMER FLOUNDER (Fluke)	17 inches	Open Year Round	Daily - 4	
WALLEYE	15 inches	Open Year Round	Daily—5	
WEAKFISH	13 inches	Open Year Round	Daily—1	
WHITE PERCH	None if caught with hook & line; 8 inch minimum if caught with other gear	Open Year Round	None	
YELLOW PERCH	9 inches	Open Year Round	Daily—10	

The taking of American shad, hickory shad, alewife herring, blueback herring, Atlantic sturgeon and shortnose sturgeon is prohibited.

### Areas Closed to Fishing—February, March and April:

1. Magothy River from Lake Waterford dam downstream for 3,300 feet.
2. Severn River and Severn Run from the Route 3 Bridge downstream for 2,400 feet.

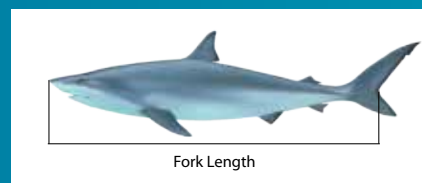
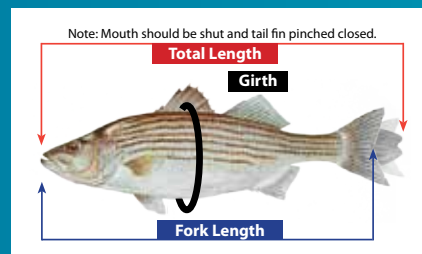
## HOW TO MEASURE A FISH

Size limits are generally based on the total length of a fish. The total length of a fish is the maximum length with the mouth closed and the tail pinched together measured from the snout to the tip of the tail. The best way to obtain this straight line measurement is to push the fish's snout against a vertical surface with the mouth closed and with the fish lying along a tape measure and then pinch the tail fin closed to determine the total length.

Fork length refers to the length from the snout of a fish to the end of the middle caudal fin rays. This is the measurement for determining the legal size of a shark.

The girth of a fish is best measured with a fabric ruler. Measuring the girth is helpful in trying to determine if you have a possible record fish, which is determined by total weight. By using the total length and girth of a fish in inches you can get a rough estimate of the weight in pounds with this formula:

$$((\text{Girth in inches} \times \text{Girth in inches}) \times \text{Length in inches}) / 800 = \text{Approximate weight in pounds}$$





# SEASONS, MINIMUM SIZES, DAILY CREEL & POSSESSION LIMITS

## ATLANTIC OCEAN, COASTAL BAYS & TRIBUTARIES

SPECIES	MINIMUM SIZE LIMITS	SEASON	CREEL LIMIT	REMARKS
AMERICAN EEL	9 inches	January 1 - August 31, except open year round for spears and baited traps or pots	Daily—25	
BLACK DRUM	16 inches	Open Year Round	Daily—1 Boat limit—6	
BLACK SEA BASS	12.5 inches	CLOSED January 1 - May 14 and September 22 - October 21	Daily - 15	
BLUEFISH	8 inches	Open Year Round	Daily—10	
COBIA	None	Open Year Round	None	
CROAKER (Hardhead)	9 inches	Open Year Round	Daily—25	
DOLPHINFISH (Mahi-Mahi)	None	Open Year Round	Daily—10 Boat limit—60	Only applies to federal waters.
GROUPER SPECIES	None	Open Year Round	Daily—1	Grouper species— <a href="http://www.dsd.state.md.us/comar/getfile.aspx?file=08.02.05.29.htm">www.dsd.state.md.us/comar/getfile.aspx?file=08.02.05.29.htm</a>
LOBSTER *Please see additional recreational lobster information below	3½–5¼ inches carapace length	Open Year Round Except Feb. 1 – March 31	100/person/24 hour period or 500 for a 5-day or longer trip when using gear other than lobster traps	Must be landed whole. Spawning is prohibited. No egg-bearing females. Refer to online regulations for details— <a href="http://www.cregulations.com/maryland/fishing/">www.cregulations.com/maryland/fishing/</a>
RED DRUM (Channel Bass or Puppy Drum)	18–27 inches	Open Year Round	Daily—1	
SCUP (Porgy)	8 inches	Open Year Round	Daily—50	
SHARKS	See Highly Migratory Species Section—page 44			
SNAPPER SPECIES	None	Open Year Round	Daily—20 in aggregate	Snapper species— <a href="http://www.dsd.state.md.us/comar/getfile.aspx?file=08.02.05.29.htm">www.dsd.state.md.us/comar/getfile.aspx?file=08.02.05.29.htm</a>
SPANISH MACKEREL	14 inches	Open Year Round	Daily—15	
SPOTTED SEATROUT	14 inches	Open Year Round	Daily—4	
STRIPED BASS	See Atlantic Striped Bass Section - Page 38			
SUMMER FLOUNDER (Fluke)	17 inches	Open Year Round	Daily - 4	
TAUTOG	16 inches	Jan. 1-Nov. 26	Jan. 1–May 15 and Nov. 1–Nov. 26, Daily—4 May 16–Oct. 31, Daily—2	
TILEFISH SPECIES	None	Open Year Round	Daily—7 in aggregate	Tilefish species— <a href="http://www.dsd.state.md.us/comar/getfile.aspx?file=08.02.05.29.htm">www.dsd.state.md.us/comar/getfile.aspx?file=08.02.05.29.htm</a>
WAHOO	None	Open Year Round	Daily—2	Only applies to federal waters.
WEAKFISH	13 inches	Open Year Round	Daily—1	

The taking of American shad, hickory shad, alewife herring, blueback herring, Atlantic sturgeon and shortnose sturgeon is prohibited.

### \*Gear: A lobster trap must have:

- A minimum of one rectangular escape vent which must be a minimum of 2 inches by 5¼ inches; or
- A minimum of two circular escape vents which must have a minimum diameter of 2½ inches

### It is unlawful to catch, land, possess, sell, offer to sell, or transport any:

- Lobster that is egg-bearing or from which eggs have been intentionally removed;
- Female lobster bearing a V-shaped notch which is:
  - A straight-sided triangular cut with or without setal hairs, at least 1/8 inch in depth and tapering to a sharp point in the flipper next to the right of the center flipper as viewed from the rear of the female lobster; or
  - Mutilated in a manner which could hide, obscure, or obliterate such a mark.

**An individual who catches an egg bearing female lobster that measures 3½ inches to 5¼ inches in length from the rear end of the eye socket along a line parallel to the center line of body shell (carapace) to the rear of the body shell (carapace) must:**

- Mark the lobster to the right of the center flipper as viewed from the rear of the female lobster when the underside of the lobster is down with a v-shaped notch that:
  - Is made by means of a sharp bladed instrument;
  - Is at least ¼ inch in length;
  - Is not greater than ½ inch in depth; and
  - Tapers to a sharp point; and
- Immediately release the lobster.

