

2018 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 (<https://web.archive.org/web/20180525192403/http://www.njfishandwildlife.com/>) or call the marine fish "listen-only" information line at (609) 292-2083. Regulations in red are new this year. See [Finfish Regulations](https://web.archive.org/web/20180525192403/http://www.eregulations.com/newjersey/fishing/saltwater/finfish-regulations/) (<https://web.archive.org/web/20180525192403/http://www.eregulations.com/newjersey/fishing/saltwater/finfish-regulations/>) for how to measure fish.

Species	Open Season	Minimum Length	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	Season closed until 2018 regulations are finalized, anticipated May-June. See Finfish Regulations. (https://web.archive.org/web/20180525192403/http://www.eregulations.com/newjersey/fishing/saltwater/finfish-regulations/)		
Bluefish (Snapper)	No Closed Season	None	15
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"	1 not greater than 27"
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	54" fork length	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 bonnethead shark per person per trip (no minimum size).
Hammerhead group [†]		78" fork length	
Non-blacknose small coastal group [†] Blacknose group [†]	No Closed Season	None	
Pelagic group [†]	No Closed Season	54" fork length	
Shortfin Mako [†]	No Closed Season	83" fork length	
Smooth Dogfish	No Closed Season	None	No Limit
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 < 43" and one ≥ 43"	2
Delaware River & tributaries** (upstream of Calhoun St. bridge)	March 1–Dec. 31		
Atlantic Ocean ^d (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 ^f	May 25–Sept. 22	17"	3
Island Beach State Park, shore fishing	May 25–Sept. 22	16"	2
All water except as above	May 25–Sept. 22	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

Note: No species of fish with a minimum size limit listed above may be filleted or cleaned at sea. Party boats licensed to carry 15 or more passengers may apply for a permit to fillet the above species. See *Summer Flounder, Finfish Regulations* (<https://web.archive.org/web/20180525192403/http://www.eregulations.com/newjersey/fishing/saltwater/finfish-regulations/>).

Blue Crab

peeler or shedder	No Closed Season ^e	3"	1 bushel
soft	No Closed Season ^e	3½"	
hard	No Closed Season ^e	4½"	
Lobster (carapace length)	See closed seasons on Mollusks & Crustaceans (https://web.archive.org/web/20180525192403/http://www.eregulations.com/newjersey/fishing/saltwater/mollusks-crustaceans/)	338"	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 **Finfish Regulations** (<https://web.archive.org/web/20180525192403/http://www.eregulations.com/newjersey/fishing/saltwater/finfish-regulations/>) under *Sharks*.

c See **Finfish Regulations** (<https://web.archive.org/web/20180525192403/http://www.eregulations.com/newjersey/fishing/saltwater/finfish-regulations/>) for a list of *Prohibited Species*.

d Atlantic Ocean greater than three miles from shore: harvest and possession prohibited.

e Unless using non-collapsible, Chesapeake-style crab pots, trot lines or crab dredges. See *Mollusks & Crustaceans* (<https://web.archive.org/web/20180525192403/http://www.eregulations.com/newjersey/fishing/saltwater/mollusks-crustaceans/>) and *Shellfish & Crab Information* (<https://web.archive.org/web/20180525192403/http://www.eregulations.com/newjersey/fishing/saltwater/shellfish-crab-information/>).

f 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.

* Excluding tail filaments. (See illustration, **Finfish Regulations** (<https://web.archive.org/web/20180525192403/http://www.eregulations.com/newjersey/fishing/saltwater/finfish-regulations/>).

** See *Closed Seasons* (**Finfish Regulations** (<https://web.archive.org/web/20180525192403/http://www.eregulations.com/newjersey/fishing/saltwater/finfish-regulations/>)) for specifics of springtime non-offset circle hook requirements.

† See *Federal Recreational Regulations* (<https://web.archive.org/web/20180525192403/http://www.eregulations.com/newjersey/fishing/saltwater/federal-size-possession-limits/>).

‡ Non-resident license valid only June – Sept. See water classification chart information on *Shellfish & Crab Information* (<https://web.archive.org/web/20180525192403/http://www.eregulations.com/newjersey/fishing/saltwater/shellfish-crab-information/>).

