

Summary of Maryland Tidal Recreational Fisheries Regulations

FISH HEALTH HOTLINE:1-888-584-3110

This is an abridged version of the regulations and does not include all regulated species. May not include Emergency Amendments, Quota Closures/Modifications or Proposed Amendments. Under State Govt. Article, Section 7-217, Annotated Code of Maryland, the printed version of COMAR is the official and enforceable text. Only the official text may be judicially noticed under Courts and Judicial Proceedings, Section 10-203, Annotated Code of Maryland. Consult the Maryland Register, Code of Maryland Regulations and Natural Resources Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland for full legal text. Maryland regulates the following finfish and shellfish species as listed below. This is not a comprehensive list of all finfish or shellfish species in Maryland, only the finfish or shellfish species regulated by Maryland. For additional information call DNR Fisheries Service, 410 260-8260 or 1-800-688-FINS or e-mail Dianne Samuels at dsamuels@dnr.state.md.us.

The EEZ (Exclusive Economic Zone) All waters from the seaward boundary of coastal states (3 miles from shore) out to 200 nautical miles. Maryland waters is from the shore to 3 miles. [Click here for more Rules.](#)

[Potomac River Fisheries Commission Regulations](#)

Species	Minimum Size	Season, Days, Times, Creel Limits	Special Conditions/Comments
Bass, Black Sea	12"	Jan 1 thru Nov 30 25/person/day	Closed month of December
Bass, Black Bass, Largemouth Bass, Smallmouth	12" 15" = Mar 1 - Jun 15	Open Year Round 5/person/day	Pocomoke and its tributaries Closure Jul 15 - Aug 31
Bass, Striped CATCH AND RELEASE ONLY		Mar 15, 2004 - May 3, 2004 Please use Circle Hooks	Susquehanna Flats, upstream of a line from Sandy Point to Turkey Point and downstream from the lower Railroad Bridge near Perry Point, excluding the area of Susquehanna River from the Railroad Bridge near Perry Point upstream to the base of the Conowingo Dam; and Northeast River. No eels.
Bass, Striped (Bay)	28"	Spring Trophy Season Apr 17, 04 - May 15, 04 1/person/day Captain/mate not eligible May not possess striped bass while fishing between 12:00 midnight and 5:00 a.m.	No Eels. Restricted to the mainstem Chesapeake Bay from Brewerton Channel to the Maryland/ Virginia Line, Tangier & Pocomoke Sounds (no Tributaries) Proposed Maximum two charterboat trips/day
	18"-28"	May 16, 2004 - Dec. 15, 2004 2 @ 18" - 28" OR 1 @ 18" - 28" and 1 larger than 28"/person/day. May not possess striped bass while fishing between 12:00 midnight and 5:00 a.m.	May 16 - 31, 2004: No Eels. Restricted to the mainstem Chesapeake Bay from Brewerton Channel to the Maryland/ Virginia Line, Tangier & Pocomoke Sounds (no Tributaries). Charter boat captain or mate = 1/fish/boat/day Maximum two charterboat trips/day Proposed Captain or mate = 1/fish/trip June 1 - Dec. 15, 2004: Maryland's Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries. Charter boat captain or mate = 1/fish/boat/day Maximum two charterboat trips/day Proposed Captain or mate = 1/fish/trip
Bass, Striped Potomac River	28"	Apr 17, 2004 - May 15, 2004 1/person/day	Downstream of the Harry W. Nice Bridge (US 301), including the Maryland and Virginia tributaries downstream of the bridge

and Md Tribs Call the Potomac River Fisheries Commission at 800-266-3904	18"-28"	May 16, 2004 - Dec 31, 2004 2 @ 18" - 28" OR 1 @ 18" - 28" and 1 larger than 28"/person/day	Downstream of the Woodrow Wilson Bridge (I-95), including the Maryland and Virginia tributaries downstream of the bridge.
Bass, Striped (Ocean)	28"	Open year round 2/person/day	Prohibited in EEZ beyond MD waters (3 miles -200 miles from shore)
Bluefish	8"	Open year round 10/person/day	
Catfish: Blue, Channel, White	10"	Open year round	(Except bullheads)
Pickerel, Chain	14"	10/person/day	CLOSED Mar 15 - Apr 30
Pike, Walleyed (Walleye)	14"	Open year round 5/person/day	By rod, hook and line only
Clam, Hard	7/8"	Open year round 250/person/day	Season for Worcester County-Jun 1 thru Sept 15
Crab, Blue	All season 3 1/2" Soft Crab No Min. size for Mature Females 4/1-7/14 5" Male Hard 3 1/4" Peeler 7/15 - 12/15 5 1/4" Male Hard 3 1/2" Peeler	Apr 1 - Dec 15 Closed Wednesdays Except handlines, dip nets and pots at private piers Apr, Oct, Nov and Dec 1/2 hour after sunrise-5:00 PM main Bay 1/2 hour after sunrise - sunset in tributaries May, Jun, Jul, Aug and Sep 1/2 hour before sunrise-5:00 PM main Bay 1/2 hour before sunrise-sunset in tributaries	Click here to get a more detailed description of the 2003 crab regulations Click here to get a more detailed description of the 2003 crab regulations for the Potomac River Click here to get a more detailed description of the Crab Regulations in Ocean City and seaside Bays.
Croaker	9"	Open year round 25/person/day	
Drum, Black	16"	1/person/day & not more than 6/boat/day	
Drum, Red	18" - 27"	Open year round 1/person/day	
Eel, American	6"	If pot mesh less than 1/2" x 1/2" escape panel required	With a non-commercial crab license-10 pots for bait. (License is required to set pots)
Flounder, Summer	17"	8 fish/person/day Open Year Round	Proposed 16" 3 fish/person/day
Herring	NONE	CLOSED Jun 6 - Dec 31	
Lobster	3 1/4" carapace	Open year round	Proposed 3 3/8" and Max 5 1/2" Female
Mackerel, Spanish	14"	Open year round 15/fish/person/day	
Oysters	3"	Oct 1-Mar 31-1 Bushel/day Mon-Fri sunrise-3 PM Sat sunrise to noon	CLOSED AREAS shaft tongs, rakes, hand and diving
Perch, White	None for hook and line 8" Dipnet		
Perch, Yellow	9"	Single, barbless hooks required Feb 1 - Mar 15 5/person/day	CLOSED Watersheds: Magothy, Nanticoke, Patapsco, Severn, South and West Rivers

Scup	8"	50/person/day Jan 1-Feb 28 and Jul 1-Oct 31	Closed Mar 1 - Jun 30 and Nov 1 - Dec 31 in EEZ
Sea Trout, Spotted	14"	Open year round 10 fish/person/day	
Shad, American & Hickory		CLOSED	CLOSED
Snapping Turtles	NONE	OPEN YEAR ROUND	May not use hook and line, trotline, bow and arrow, spear, gig or gig iron or any device that would pierce any part of a turtle. May not catch or attempt to catch in tributary waters of Charles Co. from 4/15 - 5/31
Sturgeon, Atlantic & Shortnose		CLOSED	CLOSED
Tautog	14"	Jan 1 thru Nov 30 5 fish/person/day	Closed month of December
Terrapin	6"	Aug 1 thru April 30	Measured along bottom shell. May not possess, destroy or disturb diamond-back terrapin eggs. Provisions relating to size do not apply to anyone who owns not more than 3 diamond-back terrapins kept as pets.
Weakfish	13"	Open year round 8 fish/person/day	

Note: A Tidal Sport Fishing License Required for all individuals 16 yrs and older to fish for finfish in the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries.

THE TAKING OF AMERICAN AND HICKORY SHAD AND ATLANTIC AND SHORTRNOSE STURGEON IS PROHIBITED.

Shark and Tuna are Federally Managed Species. Call the National Marine Fisheries Service for more information.