

Marine Fisheries Minimum Sizes & Possession Limits

Minimum sizes are measured for Total Length (TL) [TL is from tip of snout to tip of tail]

2013 COMMERCIAL	2012 RECREATIONAL	LOBSTERS, BLUE CRABS & HORSESHOE CRABS	SHELLFISH
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2013 COMMERCIAL FISHERIES

"Restricted finfish" indicated in Red

Trip limits and open fisheries are subject to change. To participate in commercial fisheries a Rhode Island commercial fishing license and appropriate endorsements are required.

For current COMMERCIAL TRIP LIMITS call 423-1923

SPECIES	MINIMUM SIZE	SEASON	CURRENT COMMERCIAL TRIP LIMIT	ANNUAL QUOTA
American eel	6"	No closed season	No limit	None
American plaice (dab)	14"	No closed season	No limit	None
American shad	None	1/1 - 12/31	Prohibited in state waters	None
Black sea bass	11"	Sub-Periods 1/1 - 4/30 - 25% 5/1 - 6/30 - 25% 7/1 - 10/31 - 39% CLOSED 8/1 - 8/31 11/1 - 12/31 - 11%	750 lbs/vsl/day	Yes
Bluefish	No minimum	January 1 - June 30 July 1 - Dec. 31	Unlimited	Yes
Cod	22"	May 1 - April 30	1,000 lbs/day	Yes
Spiny Dogfish	None	Sub-Periods May 1 - April 30	3,000 lbs/vsl/day	Yes
Summer flounder (fluke)	14"	Sub-Periods 1/1 - 4/30 - 54% 5/1 - 10/31 - 35% 11/1 - 12/31 - 11%	300 lbs/vsl/day	Yes

Menhaden	No Minimum	Sub-Periods 1/1 - 12/31	CLOSED	Yes
Monkfish	17" whole/ 11" tail	1/1-12/31	550 lbs/vsl/day tails or 1,826 lbs/vsl/day whole fish	Yes
Haddock	19"	No closed season	No limit	None
Pollock	19"	No closed season	No limit	None
Scup	9"	Sub-Periods Jan - Apr (fed quota) May - Jun Jul - Sept 15 Sept 16 - Oct 31 Nov - Dec (fed quota)	50,000 lbs/vsl/day	Yes
	Floating traps 9"	Jan - Apr (fed quota) May 1 - Oct 31 Nov - Dec (fed quota)	50,000 lbs/vsl/day	Yes
Striped bass	34"	Sub-Periods June 6 - August 31 Sept. 11 - Dec. 31 CLOSED Fri/Sat thru-out	CLOSED	Yes
	Floating traps 26"	Jan 1 - December 31	No Limit	Yes
Tautog	16"	Sub-Periods 4/15 - 5/31 8/1 - 9/15 10/15 - 12/31	CLOSED	Yes
Weakfish (Squeteague)	16"	Open Season 6/1 - 6/30; and 8/7 - 11/8 All other times call RIDFW for details	CLOSED Bycatch Only Call RIDFW for Details	None
The harvesting or possession of winter flounder is PROHIBITED in Narragansett Bay north of the Colregs Line of Demarcation as well as in Potter and Point Judith Ponds				
Winter flounder	12"	No closed season	50 lbs/vsl/day	None

Yellowtail flounder	13"	No closed season	No limit	None
Atlantic herring	No minimum size	Closed annually Oct 1-Oct 21	2,000 lbs/day or Unlimited w/ permit	Yes

2012 RECREATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES

Species	Minimum size	Season	Possession Limit
American eel	6"	No closed season	50 fish/person/day
American plaice (dab)	14"	No closed season	No limit
Black sea bass	13"	June 15 - Dec 31	15 fish/person/day
Bluefish	No minimum size	No closed season	15 fish/person/day
Cod	22"	No closed season	10 fish/person/day
Summer flounder (fluke)	18.5"	May 1 - December 31	8 fish/person/day
Monkfish (Goosefish)	17" whole 11" tail	No closed season	50 lbs tails/day
Haddock	19"	No closed season	No limit
Pollock	19"	No closed season	No limit
Scup (Shore and Private)	10.5"	May 1 - December 31	20 fish/person/day
Scup (Party and Charter)	11"	May 1-August 31 September 1-October 31 November 1-December 31	20 fish/person/day 40 fish/person/day 20 fish/person/day
Striped bass	28"	No closed season	2 fish/person/day
Tautog	16"	April 15-May 31 June 1-July 31 August 1-Oct. 19 Oct. 20-Dec. 15	3 fish/person/day CLOSED 3 fish/person/day 6 fish/person/day Max of 10 fish/vsl during all periods
Tautog (Party and Charter)	16"	April 15-May 31 June 1-July 31 August 1-Oct. 14 Oct. 15-Dec. 15	3 fish/person/day CLOSED 3 fish/person/day 6 fish/person/day
Weakfish (Squeteague)	16"	No closed season	1 fish/person/day

Winter flounder (blackback)	12"	April 28 - May 27 Sept. 29 - Oct. 28	2 fish/person/day
The harvesting or possession of winter flounder is PROHIBITED in Narragansett Bay north of the lines from So. Ferry Rd. in Narragansett to Ft. Getty; Ft. Wetherill to Ft. Adams; and Sandy Pt. to High Hill Pt. as well as in Potter and Point Judith Ponds			
Witch flounder (gray sole)	14"	No closed season	No limit
Yellowtail flounder	13"	No closed season	No limit

LOBSTERS, BLUE CRABS, and HORSESHOE CRABS

Minimum Sizes and Possession Limits

**THE POSSESSION OF EGG-BEARING LOBSTERS AND BLUE CRABS IS PROHIBITED.
ALL LEGAL SIZED EGG-BEARING LOBSTERS MUST BE V-NOTCHED.**

[For more detailed lobster, blue crab, or horseshoe crab regulations click here](#)

Lobsters: Harvesting by licensed residents only, all lobsters must be measured IMMEDIATELY.

All lobsters measuring less than the legal minimum size of 3-3/8" carapace length must be returned immediately to the water from which taken. Measuring: The carapace length is measured from the rear of the eye socket along a line parallel to the centerline of the body shell to the rear end of the body shell.

Blue Crabs: Harvesting by residents only, by crab net, dip net, scoop net, handline and trot line only. It is illegal to harvest crabs from sunset to sunrise. All blue crabs measuring less than the legal minimum size of five inches (5") from spike-end to spike-end must be returned immediately to the water from which taken. No person shall possess, take, or attempt to take more than twenty-five (25) blue crabs from any of the waters of Rhode Island except when taken by a scoop or crab net, trot, or hand line. Measuring: A direct line measured from the end of one spike across the body shell to the end of the opposite spike must be no less than five inches (5").

Horseshoe Crabs: No person shall harvest horseshoe crabs from waters or shoreline of the state during the 48-hour period preceding and the 48-hour period following the new and full moons during the months of May, June, and July annually. No person shall harvest horseshoe crabs for commercial or recreational purposes on or within 100 feet seaward of Patience and Prudence Islands in Narragansett Bay. Commercial: It is illegal for any person to harvest horseshoe crabs in Rhode Island for commercial purposes without a Multi-Purpose Commercial Marine license and a Horseshoe Crab Harvest Permit. There is an annual commercial harvest quota allocated to the State of Rhode Island by the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC). Recreational: It is illegal for any person to harvest horseshoe crabs in Rhode Island for recreational purposes without a Horseshoe Crab Harvest Permit. Any resident with a Horseshoe Crab Harvest Permit may possess not more than five (5) horseshoe crabs in any calendar day. Horseshoe Crab Harvest Permits are obtainable at the Division of Fish and Wildlife, Marine Fisheries Section.

SHELLFISH

Minimum Sizes

Shellfishing is prohibited statewide between sunset and sunrise

Species	Minimum size
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Channeled and Knobbed Whelk (Conch) <i>Busycon sp.</i>	2.75" diameter and/or 4.75" length
Bay Quahaug <i>Mercenaria mercenaria</i>	1" hinge width
Soft-shelled clam <i>Mya arenaris</i>	2" longest axis
Oyster <i>Crassostrea virginica</i>	3" longest axis
Scallop <i>Argopecten irradians</i>	No seed possession
Surf Clam <i>Spisula solidissima</i>	5" longest axis

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