

(/web/20200429121343/https://portal.ct.gov/DEEP).

Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection

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Marine Recreational Fisheries
Regulations for 2020

NEW Regulations Are in Red

Marine Recreational Fishing: Regulatory Terms and Additional Restrictions



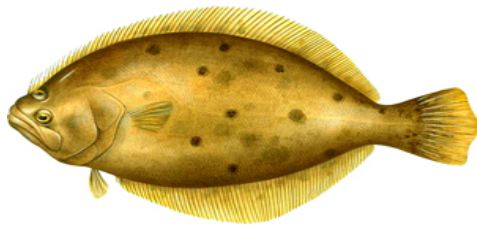
Striped Bass: No person shall possess any striped bass less than 28 inches or greater than or equal to 35 inches measured from the tip of the snout to the end of the tail. Any striped bass less than 28" or greater than or equal to 35" shall, without avoidable injury, be returned immediately to the water from which taken.

Daily creel limit: 1 fish per angler

Open Season: Open Year Round

[Bonus Striped Bass Fishing Program](#)

[\(/web/20200429121343/https://portal.ct.gov/DEEP/Fishing/Saltwater/Bonus-Striped-Bass-Program\)](#) has been discontinued for 2020



Summer Flounder (Fluke)

Minimum length: 19 inches

Daily creel limit: 4 fish per angler

Open Season: May 4 - September 30

[Enhanced Opportunity Shore Fishing Sites](#)

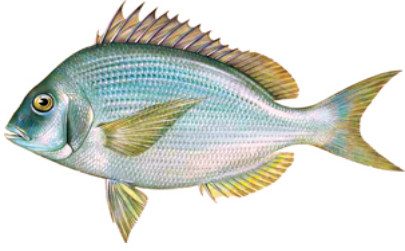
[\(/web/20200429121343/https://portal.ct.gov/DEEP/Fishing/Saltwater/Enhanced-Opportunity-Shore-Fishing-Program\)](#)[\(/web/20200429121343/https://portal.ct.gov/DEEP/Fishing/Saltwater/Enhanced-Opportunity-Shore-Fishing-Program\)](#) the Minimum Length is **17** inches



Tautog (Blackfish)

Minimum length: 16 inches

Open Season: April 1 - April 30, 2 fish per angler
Open Season: July 1 - August 31, 2 fish per angler
Open Season: October 10 - Nov. 28, 3 fish per angler



Scup (Porgy)

Minimum length: 9 inches
Daily creel limit: 30 fish per angler
Open Season: **Open Year Round**

Party/Charter Vessel Bonus Season:

For paying passengers only: **50** fish per angler from Sept. 1 - Oct. 31

Enhanced Opportunity Shore Fishing Sites

([/web/20200429121343/https://portal.ct.gov/DEEP/Fishing/Saltwater/Enhanced-Opportunity-Shore-Fishing-Program](https://portal.ct.gov/DEEP/Fishing/Saltwater/Enhanced-Opportunity-Shore-Fishing-Program))([/web/20200429121343/https://portal.ct.gov/DEEP/Fishing/Saltwater/Enhanced-Opportunity-Shore-Fishing-Program](https://portal.ct.gov/DEEP/Fishing/Saltwater/Enhanced-Opportunity-Shore-Fishing-Program)) the Minimum Length is **8** inches



Bluefish

Minimum length: None
Daily creel limit: 3 fish per angler (including "snappers")
Open Season: Open Year Round



Black Sea Bass

Minimum length: 15 inches**
Daily creel limit: 5 fish per angler

Open Season: May 19 - December 31

**Excluding tail fin filament (tendrill)

Party/Charter Vessel Bonus Season:

For paying passengers only:

Daily creel limit: 7 fish per angler

Open Season: September 1 - December 31

Daily Logbook Catch Reporting required on trips taking Black Sea Bass



Weakfish (Sea Trout)

Minimum length: 16 inches

Daily creel limit: 1 fish

Open Season: Open Year Round



Winter Flounder Minimum length: 12 inches

Daily creel limit: 2 fish per angler

Open Season: Open April 1 - December 31



Hickory Shad

Minimum length: None

Daily creel limit: 6 fish per angler (American and Hickory Shad in aggregate)

Open Season: Open Year Round



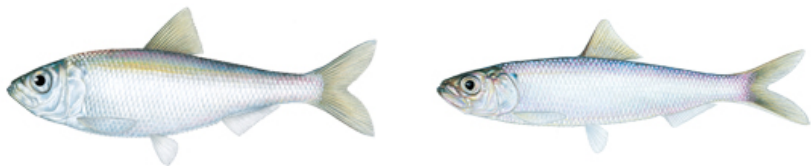
American Shad***

Minimum length: None

Daily creel limit: 6 fish per angler (American Hickory Shad in aggregate)

Open Season: Open Year Round

***American Shad: all state waters closed,
except the Connecticut River System



River Herring: Alewife / Blueback Herring

The taking of anadromous alewife and blueback herring is prohibited from all Connecticut waters, including Long Island Sound.



White Perch

Minimum length: 7 inches

Daily creel limit: 30 fish per angler

Open Season: Open Year Round



American Eel

Minimum length: 9 inches

Daily creel limit: 25 fish per angler

Open Season: Open Year Round



Atlantic Menhaden (Bunker)

Minimum length: None

Daily creel limit: 50 fish per angler or 5 gallons (whichever is the greater amount)

Open Season: Open Year Round



Atlantic Cod: Updated federal regulations

(<https://web.archive.org/web/20200429121343/https://www.greateratlantic.fisheries.noaa.gov/susta>



Haddock: Updated federal regulations

(<https://web.archive.org/web/20200429121343/https://www.greateratlantic.fisheries.noaa.gov/susta>



Pollock: Updated federal regulations

(<https://web.archive.org/web/20200429121343/https://www.greateratlantic.fisheries.noaa.gov/susta>



Blue Crab No License Required

Minimum shell width (spike tip to spike tip)

5 inches - Hard shell

3 1/2 inches - Soft shell

Daily creel limit: None

Open Season: May 1 - November 30

Prohibition on egg-bearing females



Jonah Crab No License Required

Daily creel limit: 50 Crabs per Day

Prohibition on egg-bearing females



Squid No License Required

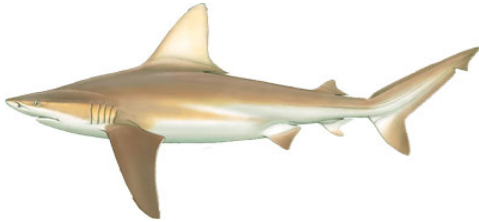


Smooth and Spiny Dogfish

Minimum length: None

Daily creel limit: None

Open Season: Open Year



Coastal Shark Species

An Atlantic Highly Migratory Species (HMS) permit is required to take, possess, or land any shark species, other than smooth or spiny dogfish, in this state in either the sport or commercial fisheries.

To obtain an HMS permit, visit: <http://www.greateratlantic.fisheries.noaa.gov/aps/permits/> (<https://web.archive.org/web/20200429121343/https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/region/new-england-mid-atlantic>) or call NMFS Customer Service Center at [1-888-872-8862 \(tel:18888728862\)](tel:18888728862).



Red Drum (Redfish)

Maximum length: 27 inches

Daily creel limit: 1 fish per angler

Open Season: Open Year Round

Applicability of Marine Recreational Fishing Regulations

Marine recreational fishing regulations apply “while on the waters of this state or on any parcel of land, structure, or portion of a roadway abutting tidal waters of this state.” **Consistent with this regulation, regardless where you caught your fish, (federal waters, another states’ waters) any fish in your possession must meet Connecticut regulations (size, season, possession limits) when you are in Connecticut waters.**

Definition of “Land” and “Possess”

For sport fishing purposes, to “land” means to fail to immediately return any finfish, lobster, or crab, without avoidable injury, to the waters from which such species were taken. Any landed fish counts toward the daily creel limit. The term “possess” has the same practical meaning as “land” – failing to immediately return to the water from which such species were taken.

Fish taken contrary to the minimum length, creel limit or open season regulations to be released.

Any fish taken contrary to the minimum length, creel limit or open season regulations must, without avoidable injury, be returned immediately to the water from which taken.

Daily Creel Limit

The daily creel limit is the maximum number of fish an individual engaged in sport fishing may possess or land while on the waters of this state or on any parcel of land, structure, or portion of a roadway abutting tidal waters of this state. This limit applies to each 24 hour daily period regardless how many trips a person may make in a day. Note this is an individual limit. Pooling landings among a group of fishermen in a party is not permitted. In other words three anglers in a party fishing under a 3 fish limit do not get a total of 9 fish. Rather, each individual angler in the party is limited to 3 fish.

This (creel limit) section shall not be construed to restrict the number of legally acquired fish that may be kept in storage in the home or other storage facilities, or in a commercial storage facility where seafood is handled, stored, processed or marketed.

Minimum Length

The minimum length is measured from the tip of the snout to the end of the tail. The tail may be pinched to achieve the longest length when measuring, but the minimum length does not include the tendril (dorsal tail filament) found on black sea bass. Fish measuring less than the identified minimum length must be released immediately, with avoidable injury.

Open Season

The calendar period during which a species may be possessed or landed. Fish taken outside the open season must be released immediately, without avoidable injury.

Culling or high-grading is prohibited.

“Culling” or “high-grading” means discarding or returning a previously retained fish to the water in order to retain a more desirable fish. Any fish placed on a stringer, in a container, cooler, live well or similar device, or otherwise not immediately released to the water shall count against the daily creel limit.

Note:

1. This rule is not meant to prevent tagging and release of fish, other than striped bass, under a tagging program consistent with the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission’s standards for scientific tagging programs.
2. Fishing tournaments that meet certain criteria may be granted an exemption from the culling restriction by the Commissioner of Energy and Environmental Protection. See section 26-159a-26 of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies.

Striped bass spearing or gaffing is prohibited.

Striped bass may only be taken by angling (spearing is prohibited) and the use of a gaff in the taking of striped bass is prohibited. However, striped bass legally taken by spearing in another state may be landed in Connecticut.

(g) No person shall land or possess on the waters of this state or on any parcel of land, structure, or portion of a roadway abutting tidal waters of this state any striped bass from which the head or tail has been removed or which has otherwise been rendered unidentifiable as a striped bass or unable to be measured.

Summer flounder filleting.

If summer flounder are filleted onboard either: 1. each fillet is required to meet the minimum fish length, or 2. the carcass (rack) of the fish from which the fillet was removed has to be retained and the carcass has to meet the minimum length. This rule shall not be construed to prevent filleting of fish on shore or dockside.

Mixed commercial and sport fishing trips.

No person engaged in sport fishing shall also, during the same trip for which the creel limit applies, possess any fish taken under commercial fishery trip limits. Note that commercial fishery possession limits apply to the aggregate of all persons onboard, meaning if one person on a vessel is commercial fishing the entire vessel is limited to the commercial trip limit even if the other anglers on that vessel are sport fishing.

Content last updated March 2020.