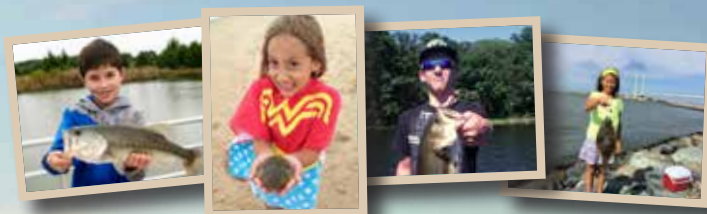


2015

# DELAWARE FISHING GUIDE

WE BRING YOU DELAWARE'S GREAT OUTDOORS THROUGH SCIENCE AND SERVICE



FISHING PHOTO

## CONTEST WINNERS

See page 28

### **NEW** for 2015

- Electric Lights in Tidal Waters
- Fish Consumption Advisories Improve for 3 Waterways
- Online Herring, Shad & Shark Identification Guides








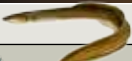


















DELAWARE DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES  
AND ENVIRONMENTAL CONTROL  
DIVISION OF FISH AND WILDLIFE



# 2015 SEASONS, SIZE AND CREEL LIMITS

## DELAWARE'S RECREATIONAL SEASONS, SIZE AND CREEL LIMITS

All seasons & limits subject to change. Please stay current by consulting: [www.fw.delaware.gov](http://www.fw.delaware.gov) or (302) 739-9914.

NON-TIDAL WATERS				
SPECIES	OPEN SEASON	MINIMUM SIZE	DAILY LIMIT	
 <b>Largemouth bass</b>	All year	12 inches; except 15 inches in Becks Pond	6; except 2 from Becks Pond	
 <b>Smallmouth bass</b>	All year	None between 12 - 17 inches	6 (no more than 1 > 17 inches)	
 <b>Striped bass hybrid</b> (Only occur in Lums Pond)	All year	15 inches	2	
 <b>Panfish</b> (white perch, yellow perch, crappie, bluegill & pumpkinseed)	All year	None	50 (no more than 25 of one species)	
 <b>Trout</b> (special rules apply, pages 8 - 10)	Streams open 1st Sat. in April Ponds open 1st Sat. in March	None	6 (4 in fly-fishing only waters)	
TIDAL WATERS (Changes expected for species listed in <b>RED</b> )				
SPECIES	OPEN SEASON	MINIMUM SIZE	DAILY LIMIT	
 <b>American eel</b>	All year	6 inches	50	
 <b>American &amp; hickory shad</b>	Closed Nanticoke R. & its tribs.; Open all year elsewhere	None	10 in any combination	
 <b>Atlantic croaker</b>	All year	8 inches	None	
 <b>Atlantic sturgeon</b>	Endangered - no harvest permitted (see page 23)			
 <b>Black drum</b>	All year	16 inches	3	
 <b>Black sea bass</b>	May 15 - Sep. 21	12.5 inches (excluding caudal filament)	15	
	Oct. 22 - Dec. 31		15	
 <b>Bluefish</b>	All year	None	10	
 <b>Catfish</b> (any species)	All year	None	None	
 <b>Red drum</b>	All year	20 - 27 inches may be retained	5	
 <b>River herring</b> (alewife & blueback)	Closed - no harvest permitted			
 <b>Scup</b>	All year	8 inches	50	
 <b>Spanish mackerel</b>	All year	14 inches	15	
 <b>Spotted seatrout</b>	All year	12 inches	None	
 <b>Striped bass</b>	All year, except catch & release only on spawning grounds Apr 1 - May 31	28 - 37 inches or 44 inches or greater; except, 20 - 25 inches <b>only</b> - Jul 1 - Aug 31 in DE Bay, River and their tributaries	2, except catch & release only on spawning grounds April 1 - May 31	
 <b>Summer flounder</b>	All year	16 inches	4	
 <b>Tautog</b>	Jan. 1 - Mar. 31	15 inches	5	
	April 1 - May 11		3	
	July 17 - Aug. 31		5	
	Sept. 29 - Dec. 31		5	
 <b>Weakfish</b>	All year	13 inches	1	
 <b>White perch</b>	All year	8 inches	None	
 <b>Winter flounder</b>	Feb. 11 - Apr. 10	12 inches	2	




# 2015 SEASONS, SIZE AND CREEL LIMITS

SPECIES		OPEN SEASON	MINIMUM SIZE	DAILY LIMIT
<b>Blue crab</b>  See page 21 for more details		Pots: Mar. 1 - Nov. 30; other gears year around	Peeler - 3 inches	1 bushel
			Soft-shell - 3.5 inches	
			Hard-shell - 5 inches	
<b>Hard clams</b> 		All year	1.5 inches	100/resident
				50/non-resident
<b>Lobster</b> 		All year	3 3/8 - 5 1/4 inches (slot)	2; V-notched prohibited
<b>Conch</b> See page 20 for details	Knobbed whelk	All year	6 inches / 3.5 inch whorl	5 bushels
	Channeled whelk	All year	6 inches / 3.125 inch whorl	5 bushels

## SHARKS AND HIGHLY MIGRATORY SPECIES (HMS) - SPECIAL PERMIT MAY BE REQUIRED FOR FEDERAL WATERS

SPECIES		OPEN SEASON	MINIMUM SIZE	DAILY LIMIT
	<b>Smoothhound and spiny dogfish</b>	All year	None	None
	<b>Blacktip shark, bull shark, lemon shark, nurse shark, silky shark, spinner shark, tiger shark</b>	Jan. 1 -May 14 July 16 - Dec. 31	54 inches FORK LENGTH	Boat anglers- only 1 shark of any species per vessel, except 1 additional bonnethead and 1 additional Atlantic sharpnose per angler onboard vessel. Shore anglers - only 1 shark of any species per angler, except 1 additional bonnethead and one additional Atlantic sharpnose per shore angler.
	<b>Great hammerhead, scalloped hammerhead, smooth hammerhead</b>	Jan. 1 -May 14 July 16 - Dec. 31	78 inches FORK LENGTH	
	<b>Blue shark, oceanic white-tip shark, porbeagle, shortfin mako, thresher shark</b>	All year	54 inches FORK LENGTH	
	<b>Atlantic sharpnose shark, blacknose shark, bonnethead, finetooth shark</b>	All year	None	


## PROHIBITED SPECIES

  	<b>Sandbar shark, sand tiger, Atlantic angel shark, basking shark, bigeye sand tiger, bigeye sixgill shark, bigeye thresher, bignose shark, Caribbean reef shark, Caribbean sharpnose shark, dusky shark, Galapagos shark, longfin mako, nar-rowtooth shark, night shark, sevengill shark, sixgill shark, smalltail shark, whale shark, white shark</b>	The sandbar & sand tiger are toothed sharks commonly taken in the nearshore waters of the state and are prohibited species. Like all prohibited species, they must be immediately released to ensure the maximum probability of survival.
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## SPECIAL RESTRICTIONS FOR SHARK

- It is unlawful to fillet a shark prior to landing. A shark may be eviscerated prior to landing, but head, tail and fins must remain attached to the carcass.
- It is unlawful to release a shark in a manner that will not ensure the sharks maximum probability of survival (i.e. no gaffs, no clubbing, careful hook removal, etc.).
- It is unlawful to possess the fins from any shark prior to landing unless they are naturally attached to the body of the shark.

## TUNAS AND HMS - SPECIAL PERMIT REQUIRED

	<b>Atlantic tunas, swordfish and billfish</b>	*Special permit required - All private vessel owners/operators recreationally fishing for and/or retaining regulated Atlantic Highly Migratory Species (Atlantic tunas, sharks, swordfish and billfish) for personal use in the Atlantic Ocean must obtain an Atlantic Highly Migratory Species (HMS) Angling Permit. Further limits and restrictions apply. Consult <a href="http://hmspermits.noaa.gov">hmspermits.noaa.gov</a> or call toll free (888) 872-8862 for specific information and permits.
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