

SALT WATER FISHING REGULATIONS 1997

by Gary Caputi

(from Jersey Coast Anglers Association - [June 1997 Newspaper](#))

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The state recently released these regulations that will be in effect for the 1997 fishing year. There are wide-ranging regulations, both state and federal, on an ever increasing number of popular species, so it's a good idea to read this column and familiarize yourself with any changes made since last year so you can remain within the letter of the law.

➡ Summer Flounder

No closed season, with a 14-1/2 inch size limit and a ten fish daily bag limit. These changes are the result of annual specification and regulatory changes made jointly by the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC) and the Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council (MAFMC).

➡ Blackfish (Tautog)

No closed season with a size limit of 13 inches (14 inches commercial) with no daily bag limit. These regulations are the result of state compliance with the ASMFC Tautog Plan. The state has also implemented a limited entry permit system for the commercial harvest of blackfish with an annual quota of 103,000 pounds.

➡ Striped Bass

There are no changes in recreational measures for striped bass for 1997. The size limit remains at 28 inches with a two fish per angler daily bag limit. It is illegal to retain any caught beyond state waters, 3-miles out, in the EEZ. You may not possess striped bass parts or a fish from which the head and/or tail has been removed which is less than the minimum size.

There is a closed season between January 1 and February 28 for all waters except the Atlantic Ocean from beach to three miles out.

The Delaware River and Bay, and their tributaries from Trenton Falls downstream to and including the Salem River and its tributaries are closed from April 1 through May 31. This is an effort to protect spawning striped bass.

The Striped Bass "Trophy Fish Program" was changed to a "Bonus Fish Program" that permits the retention of a third fish with a minimum size of 28 inches for anglers pre-registered in the program. If you are not registered and would like to be, information is available from the Division's Nacote Creek office at 609-748-2020.

An application for fisherman to participate in the Striped Bass Bonus Fish Program has been included in this issue of JCAA News.

➡ **Scup (porgy)**

No closed season with a seven inch size limit for recreational fishermen (9 inches for commercial) and no daily bag limit, per regulations from ASMFC.

➡ **Black Sea Bass**

A recently adopted regulatory proposal establishes a size limit of nine inches for both recreational and commercial fishermen. For this species, due to the long filaments off the tail fish, length measurement is from the tip of the nose to the center of the fork in the tail, not the end of the longest tail filament. There are no recreational bag limits or seasons.

➡ **Weakfish**

There is a 14 inch size limit and a possession limit of 14 with no closed seasons.

➡ **American Eels**

A six inch size limit is in effect, except from February 15 through April 20 for commercial harvesters taking glass eels.

➡ **King Mackerel**

The daily bag limit was dropped from five to day to three as a result of regulatory changes made by the South Atlantic Fishery Council, which manages this infrequent visitor to our waters.

River Herring: As of December 1996, regulations no include a closure of the Deal Lake flume, Lake Takanasee spillway and Wreck Pond spillway to all fishing for river herring on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays during the months of April and May to reduce pressure on the spawning population. There is also a daily procession limit for the same two month period of 35 per person.

A compendium of all regulations regarding saltwater fishing and crabbing can be obtained in the New Jersey Fish & Wildlife Digest— 1997 Marine Issue. It can be found at most tackle shops and is free for the asking. If you have questions about regulations, see violations you want to report or want to comment about regulations, here are the phone numbers for all the pertinent offices.

**NEW JERSEY DIVISION OF FISH, GAME & WILDLIFE
CN 400 (501 E. State St.,
Station Plaza 5, 3rd Floor)
Trenton, NJ 08625-0400**

General Information 609-292-2965
Law Enforcement HQ 609-292-9430
Marine Fisheries 609-292-2083
Shellfisheries 609-984-5546

Fish, Game & Wildlife— Nacote Creek Offices
P. O. Box 418 (Rt. 9, Mile 51)
Port Republic, NJ 08241

MARINE ENFORCEMENT 609-748-2040

Marine Fisheries 609-748-2020
Shellfish 609-748-2040
Marine & Coastal Education 609-748-2031

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