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FISHING REPORTS

Fishing News

RHODE ISLAND UPDATES 2018 MARINE FISHING REGS

Rhody's recreational marine anglers will be fishing with different regulations on black sea bass, blackfish, fluke and porgy in 2018.

By Toby Lapinski | April 9, 2018

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Connecticut

recently made its 2018 marine fishing regulations official

(<http://www.thefisherman.com/index.cfm?>)



Fluke fishermen will be happy to know that the 2018 bag limit was increased to 6 fish per angler. (Photo courtesy of the Frances Fleet)

fuseaction=feature.display&feature_ID=2019&ParentCat=19), and now Rhode Island has followed suit. Massachusetts is expected to announce its regulations any day now and we'll be sure to update you once that is official.

If you take issue with any of the changes this year keep in mind that public comment is always taken into consideration when changes are considered each year and every state in New England (and beyond) have public hearings and written comment periods for you to voice your concerns and provide input. Further, if you'd like to assist in contributing to more accurate catch data, you can help by **completing trip reports in your state** (http://www.thefisherman.com/index.cfm?fuseaction=feature.display&feature_ID=2014&ParentCat=19).

Please note that the black sea bass regulations may very well change due to the **filing of an appeal** (http://www.thefisherman.com/images/PDFs/Northern_Region_Appeal_BSB_Add30_16Mar18.pdf) by the norther region states of Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut and New York over the disparity in coastwide black sea bass regulations with New Jersey, Delaware, Maryland, Virginia and North Carolina. The following regulations remain in effect for now, but changes are expected/anticipated to be announced in early May.

The 2018 regulations governing recreational fishing within state waters of Rhode Island are as follows. Regulations noted in BLACK below remain consistent with 2017 regulations, while those noted in RED indicate changes for 2018.

AMERICAN EEL: No closed season, 9-inch minimum length, 25-fish maximum possession.

BLACK SEA BASS: 15-inch minimum (not including the tendril located on the caudal (tail) fin.) July 3 – August 31, 3-fish bag limit. September 1 – December 31, 5-fish bag limit.

BLACKFISH/TAUTOG: April 1 – May 31, 3-fish bag limit; August 1 – October 14, 3-fish bag limit; October 15 – December 31, 5-fish bag limit; 16-inch minimum length. Maximum per vessel possession limit is 10 fish regardless of number of anglers onboard.

BLUEFISH: No closed season, no minimum length, 15 fish per person.

COD: No closed season, 22-inch minimum, 10 fish per person.

FLUKE: 19-inch minimum, May 1 – December 31, 6-fish bag limit.

POLLOCK: No closed season, 19-inch minimum, no bag limit.

PORGY/SCUP: 9-inch minimum length. May 1 - December 31, 30-fish bag limit. Party boat/for-hire bonus: September 1 -October 31, 45-fish bag limit.

**** Special Area Provisions:** While fishing from shore at India Point Park in Providence; Conimicut Park in Warwick; Rocky Point, Warwick; Stone Bridge in Tiverton; East and West Walls (Harbor of Refuge), Narragansett; Fort Wetherill, Jamestown; and Fort Adams, Newport; anglers may possess up to 30 scup 8 inches or greater in length from May 1, through December 31.

STRIPED BASS: No closed season, 28-inch minimum, 1 fish per person.

**** Striped Bass Fin Clipping:** All striped bass 34 inches or larger harvested recreationally must have the entire right pectoral fin removed at the time of harvest.

WEAKFISH: March 1 – December 31, 16-inch minimum, 1 fish per person.

WINTER FLOUNDER: No closed season, 12-inch minimum, 2 fish per person. (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.)

Please note that these regulations are subject to change and you should always consult **the RI DEM for the most current regulations** (<http://www.dem.ri.gov/programs/fish-wildlife/marine-fisheries/mfsizes.php>).

YOU MIGHT ALSO LIKE...

BLACK SEA BASS – THE NEW “WAR BETWEEN THE STATES” ([index.cfm?fuseaction=feature.display&feature_ID=2033&ParentCat=2](#))

Atlantic coastal states are set to battle it out over scraps from a fishery that is 240% of the target biomass, sparking yet another fisheries war that can only end badly for all anglers from north to south.

BUDGET CUTS TO ELIMINATE STRIPED BASS ENFORCEMENT ([index.cfm?fuseaction=feature.display&feature_ID=1997&ParentCat=19](#))

The 2018 Federal budget prohibits the enforcement of the prohibition of targeting striped bass in Federal waters around Block Island, RI by NOAA Fisheries and the Coast Guard.

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