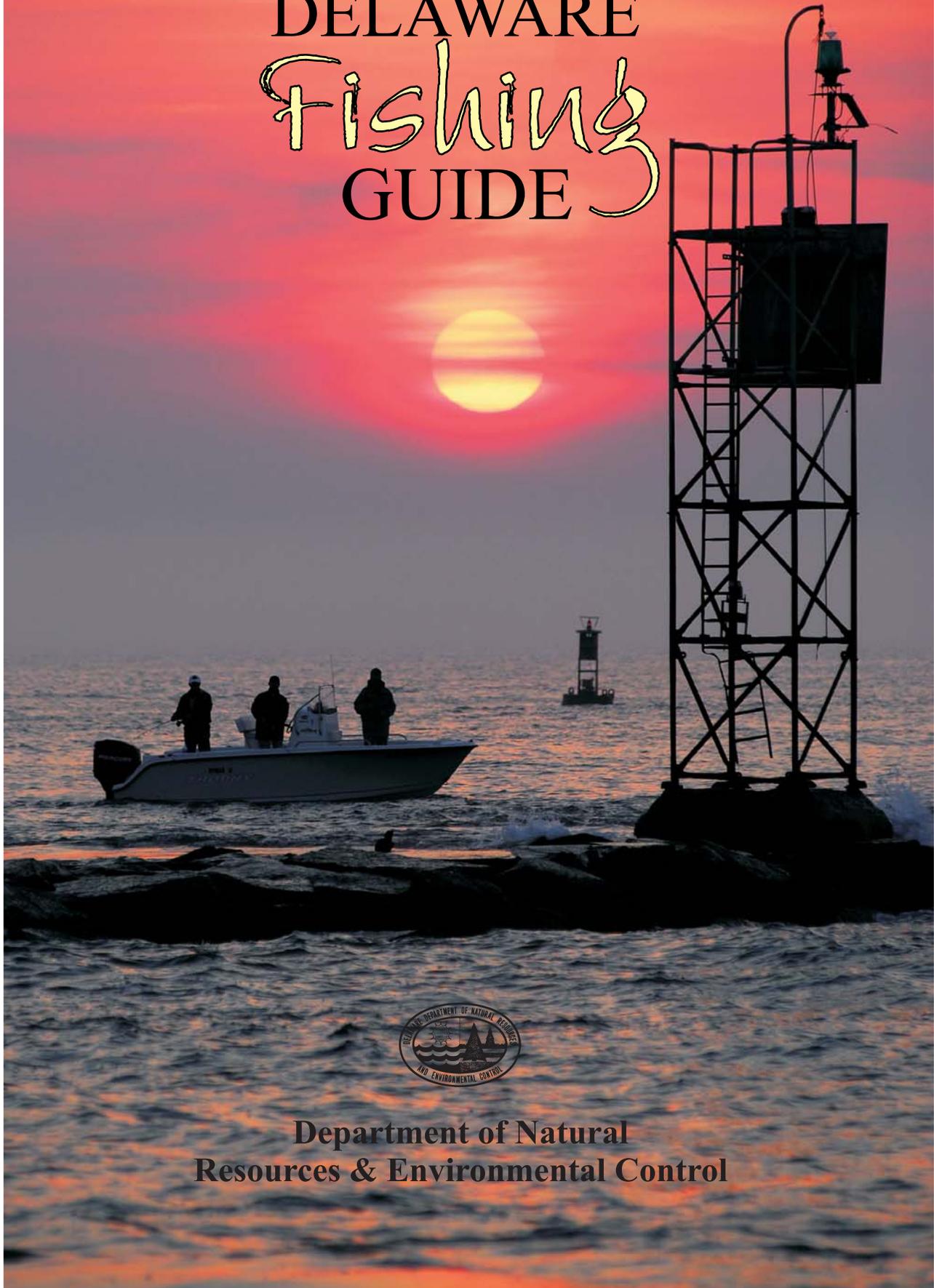


2009 DELAWARE Fishing GUIDE



**Department of Natural
Resources & Environmental Control**

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From the Director of the Division of Fish and Wildlife

The DNREC Division of Fish and Wildlife is happy to make available the 2009 Delaware Fishing Guide. We try to include as much information that anglers should be aware of in order to enjoy the many fishing opportunities that the State of Delaware has to offer. The general fishing license which includes both fresh and salt water is over a year old now so most fishermen should be familiar with it. The proceeds from the fishing license is a critical source of funding for the Division which allows us to match federal funds for a wide variety of projects that directly benefit you whether you are fishing, crabbing, or clamming. The new multi-million dollar boat launching facility in Lewes is a prime example of your license dollars at work. We hope to build some additional much-needed access areas across the state and refurbish or repair our existing facilities as well. We can't do everything all at once so bear with us.



JoAnna Wilson

There is a new requirement for 2009 however; it is the Fisherman Information Network number or F.I.N. for short. This is a step that we took to come into compliance with a new federal law which will save money for everyone fishing in Delaware by eliminating the need for purchasing a federal permit. The information that you provide will go directly into a federal registry of all those who engage in fishing along the U.S. coastline. This registry will greatly improve the ability of the National Marine Fisheries Service to estimate landings of important fish stocks. You may be contacted from time to time and asked about your recent fishing trips. These phone surveys are painless, they only take a few minutes of your time, and they will vastly improve our ability to manage fish now and into the future. For more information on how to get your F.I.N. number look on pages 6 and 8.

Maps for this publication were created by the Office of the Secretary's GIS section. Fish illustrations were drawn by Duane Raver, and the shark illustrations by Bob Jones. The cover photo was contributed by Jay Fleming. A special thanks to the Delaware fishermen and DNREC staff who donated pictures throughout this guide.

All of the information in this guide, and much more, may also be found on the Division's website www.fw.delaware.gov.

Doc. No. 40-05-03/09/02/01



"F.I.N." number

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Name _____

Contact Information



Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control
www.dnrec.delaware.gov

Division of Fish and Wildlife – www.fw.delaware.gov

F.I.N. number	1-800-432-9228
Fisheries Section, Dover	(302)-739-9914
Little Creek Fisheries Field Office	(302) 739-4782
Aquatic Resources Education Center	(302) 653-2887
Fish and Wildlife Enforcement Section	
Main Office (Dover)	(302) 739-9913
New Castle County (Delaware City)	(302) 836-4682
Kent County (Little Creek)	(302) 739-6139
Sussex County (Georgetown)	(302) 855-1901
24-hour hotline (KENTCOM)	(800) 523-3336
Boating Safety	(302) 739-9915
Ramp Certificates	(302) 739-9916
Boat Licenses/Registration	(302) 739-9916
General Information	
Freshwater Trout Program	(302) 739-9914
Non-tidal Fishing	(302) 739-9914 / (302) 653-2887
Tidal Fishing	(302) 739-9914/ (302) 739-4782
Fish Consumption Advisories	
Fish Consumption Advisories	(302)-739-9914
Division Public Health	(302)-744-4546
Artificial Reef Program	(302) 739-4782
Fishing / Boating Access Areas	(302)-739-9914
Clamming	(302) 739-4782
Shellfish Health & Safety, Closures	(302) 739-9939
Crabbing	(302) 739-4782

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Fishing License Requirements and F.I.N. Number

A general fishing license is required for fishing, crabbing, or clamming in all waters of the State of Delaware including both tidal and non-tidal areas. Additionally, all anglers (resident and non-resident alike) age 16 or older must obtain a free Fisherman Information Network (F.I.N.) number on an annual basis before fishing in Delaware waters. The new (F.I.N.) regulation went into effect January 1, 2009. A fishing license may be obtained from the Dover office, on-line (www.fw.delaware.gov), or from over 100 license agents (most bait and tackle, sporting goods, and hardware stores), throughout the State. The FIN number can be obtained at this web address (<http://www.delaware-fin.com/>); or by automated telephone (1-800-432-9228); or for live operator/customer service: 1-866-447-4626. See page 8 for more information about the new F.I.N. number requirement.

A fishing license is valid through December 31 for the calendar year in which it is issued. All funds derived from the issuance of fishing licenses are dedicated to a special account for the purpose of matching and securing federal money allotted to Delaware under the provisions of the Federal Aid in Sportfish Restoration Act and cannot be diverted to other causes. Together, these funds support projects having as their purpose the restoration, conservation, management and enhancement of sportfish and the provision for public use and benefits from these resources.

To order or purchase a fishing license online, go to: www.fw.delaware.gov. Select "Licenses – Hunting, fishing, boating."

2009 License Fees		
License Category	Resident	Non-resident
General Fishing License	\$8.50	\$20.00
7-day Tourist	NA	\$12.50
*Boat License 20 ft or less (optional)	\$40.00	\$40.00
* Boat License more than 20 ft (optional)	\$50.00	\$50.00
Head Boat License	\$300.00	\$600.00
Charter Boat License	\$150.00	\$300.00

***Boat License** - The optional boat license for recreational fishermen covers the holder of the license, and all occupants in that boat, as do the charter boat and head boat licenses. A resident who purchases a Delaware boat-fishing license also will be given a single Delaware fishing license for their own use on those occasions that he or she may not be on the boat.

Non-residents - Any non-resident who is 16 years of age or older except persons covered by one of the exemptions is required to have a license to fish, clam, or crab in the waters of the State of Delaware. Non-residents may purchase a 7-consecutive day fishing license.

continued on page 7

continued from page 6

Exemptions – The following are exemptions to the license provisions:

Surf Fishing Permit - Residents and non-residents are exempt from fishing license requirements if they are the operator of a vehicle with a valid Delaware surf fishing vehicle permit when that vehicle is located on a designated Delaware State Park beach. Other occupants of that vehicle are required to have a fishing license if they are fishing.

Seniors - Residents of the State of Delaware 65 years and older are exempt from fishing license requirements but must have proof of age and residency. A Permanent Exempt License can be requested free of charge by contacting the Division of Fish and Wildlife (302-739-9911). Non-resident seniors are not exempt.

Children - Children under the age of 16 are exempt.

Other Exemptions - Any resident who owns or lives on a farm in this state containing 20 or more acres and the members of his or her immediate family who **reside** on the farm may fish on that farm without a license.

Any member of the armed forces who is a patient in a military hospital and submits a written statement signed by the patient's commanding officer certifying the nature of the disability and place of station.

Persons who are patients in any Veterans Administration facility in this State, or in any public hospital or sanitarium for the treatment of tuberculosis, or a patient in a rehabilitation hospital under the State Department of Health, provided such person carries identification which verifies his or her status as such a patient, shall not be required to purchase a fishing license. Forms shall be supplied to such persons when they apply for their licenses to be used for the identification purposes.

Residents living in this State for at least 1 year immediately prior to the date of application for a license who have been honorably discharged from the armed forces of the United States and certified by the Veterans Administration as having at least a 60% service-connected disability.

Any patient in a rehabilitation hospital under the Department of Health and Social Services.

Any person who is legally blind.

Any person who fishes in a fee-fishing facility, registered as such with the Department of Agriculture.

Any resident who has served honorably for 90 or more consecutive days on active duty in the Armed Forces of the United States, including service as member of the Delaware National Guard, in military actions in Southwest Asia associated with Operation Iraqi Freedom or Operation Enduring Freedom may, for the first 12 months following the date the resident was honorably discharged or removed from active status, be issued a license to fish in this State without charge.

New for 2009 - Mandatory F.I.N. Number

All Delaware Anglers Fisherman Information Network (F.I.N.)

What is a F.I.N. number?

A F.I.N. number is a unique fisherman identification network number that you are required to obtain free of charge. The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) will use the data obtained from the F.I.N. program to identify anglers for survey purposes. The program allows for better estimates of recreational landings, an important component of fisheries management.

Who must obtain a F.I.N. number?

All residents and non-residents who are age 16 or older (including 7-day non-resident licensed anglers) wishing to recreationally fish in Delaware waters. This includes even those anglers not required to obtain a general fishing license, such as residents 65 or older, those fishing from a vessel licensed for fishing, those fishing under a surf vehicle permit, and those otherwise exempted under 7 Del. Code , § 502. If you only fish from a charter or a head boat you do not need a F.I.N. number.



Jay Fleming

Why do I need a F.I.N. number?

The F.I.N. number allows Delaware to meet new federal requirements without additional cost to the angler. The number is mandatory and failure to provide a valid F.I.N. number to an enforcement agent will be treated the same as a failure to have a valid fishing license.

Where do I record my F.I.N. number?

Record your F.I.N. number in the spaces provided on your Delaware Fishing License. If you are exempt from the license requirement, be sure to record and carry your F.I.N. number with you when you are fishing.

To obtain your free F.I.N. number online go to <http://www.delaware-fin.com/> or call (800) 432-9228. For live operator customer service call: (866) 447-4626.

For additional License Requirements see page 6.

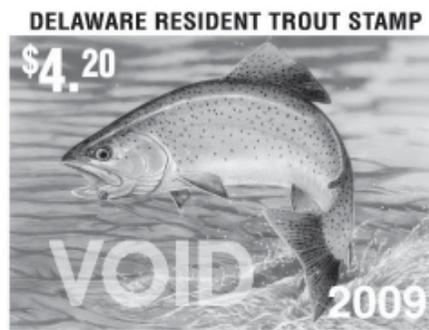
Freshwater Trout Fishing

Season

The 2009 freshwater trout season in New Castle County opens at 7:30 a.m. Saturday April 4.

Trout Stamps

Delaware's freshwater trout program is a self-supporting put-and-take fishery in selected streams in northern New Castle County. The fees paid for trout stamps are used to purchase trout from commercial hatcheries. Rainbow, brown and/or brook trout are stocked in selected streams within one week of the spring opening date and for an additional period of time into the season. Since Delaware stream temperatures are marginal at best for trout survival in the summer and no reproduction has been noted, stocked fish are meant to be taken but may be released at the angler's discretion.



If you are interested in collecting Trout or Duck stamps, please contact the Division at 302-739-9911 or visit our website at www.fw.

The following are designated trout streams in northern New Castle County. See online trout stocking maps for more exact locations of stocking sites.

1. **Christina Creek**
2. **White Clay Creek** Pennsylvania line to the downstream side of Paper Mill Road. White Clay Creek from a point 25 yards above Thompson Bridge at Chambers Rock Road to the Pennsylvania state line is designated as a restricted trout stream for fly fishing only.
3. **Pike Creek** Route 72 to Henderson Road
4. **Mill Creek** Brackenville Road to Route 7
5. **Wilson Run** Route 92 through Brandywine Creek State Park
6. **Beaver Run** Pennsylvania line to Brandywine River

Most access to these streams is through and on private property or state park land. Each fisherman should respect the privilege of using private property.

continued on page 10

License and Stamp Requirements for Trout Fishing

Resident/ Age	Young Angler trout stamp	Fishing license	Trout Stamp
Under 12	No	No	No
12 thru 15	Yes	No	No
16 thru 64	No	Yes	Yes
65 and over	No	No	No
Non-resident/Age			
Under 12	No	No	No
12 thru 15	No	No	Yes
16 and over	No	Yes	Yes

Trout stamp requirements apply when fishing in a designated trout stream on or between the first Saturday in April and June 30 and on or between the first Saturday in October and November 30 of the same year.

Fees:

Resident Fishing License	\$ 8.50
Resident Trout Stamp	\$ 4.20
Young Angler Trout Stamp	\$ 2.10
Non-resident Fishing License	\$20.00
Non-resident 7-day	\$12.50
Non-resident Trout Stamp	\$ 6.20

Trout Pond Stocking - Open to fishing Saturday March 7 beginning 7 a.m.

In an effort to provide a diversity of fishing experiences, the Division of Fish and Wildlife has been stocking trout into two ponds during a cold time of the year when trout can be expected to survive. Trout generally require temperatures below 75° F. Tidbury Pond in Kent County will be stocked in March as will Newton Pond near Greenwood in Sussex. Kent County Parks and Recreation, the owner of Tidbury Pond, urges anglers to be respectful of the vegetative plantings and the fences erected to protect this vegetation. Trout Stamp provisions that apply in designated trout streams will also apply to any pond so stocked with trout, except that trout stamp requirements will not be enforced from April 1 through February 28. Ponds will be open to fishing Saturday March 7 beginning 7 a.m. The daily limit is six trout per day. Once a person takes and possesses six trout in any day, he or she is prohibited from fishing in that pond during the remainder of that day. Tidbury and Newton Ponds will be stocked prior to March 7 and again on March 19.

Trout Fishing Regulations

Anyone who wants to fish for trout shall purchase a trout fishing stamp and sign one's name in ink across the face of the stamp. Any person exempt from purchasing a Delaware fishing license is also exempt from purchasing a Delaware trout stamp.

Designated Trout Streams

It shall be unlawful to fish in a designated trout stream within two weeks (14 days) of a scheduled opening of the trout season.

Restricted Trout Streams

It shall be unlawful to fish in a restricted trout stream with more than two (2) flies on a line at any one time.

It shall be unlawful to use any metallic, wooden, plastic or rubber spinners, spoons, lures, plugs and/or natural bait on any restricted trout stream.

It shall be unlawful to have in his or her possession more than four (4) trout within 50 feet of any restricted trout stream. On the restricted trout stream only, trout may be caught and released as long as the four (4) trout possession limit is not exceeded. All trout released must be returned to the water as quickly as possible with the least possible injury.

Hours of Fishing for Trout

It shall be unlawful for any person to fish for rainbow, brown and/or brook trout in designated trout streams on the opening day of the trout season before 7:30 a.m. and thereafter for the remainder of the trout season between one-half hour after sunset and one-half hour before sunrise.

Possession Limit of Trout

It shall be unlawful for any person to catch and/or have in his or her possession in any one day more than six (6) rainbow, brown and/or brook trout. On any day, after a person takes his or her legal limit of trout, said person shall be prohibited from fishing in a designated trout stream on the same day, unless otherwise authorized by law or this regulation.

Trout Stamp

It shall be unlawful for any person to fish in a designated trout stream on or before the first Saturday in April and June 30, of the same year, and on or before the first Saturday in October and November 30, of the same year, unless said person has in his or her possession a valid trout stamp, or, unless said person is exempted by law from having a trout stamp.

2009 TENTATIVE TROUT STOCKING SCHEDULE

TROUT SEASON OPENS 7:30 A.M., APRIL 4, 2009

STREAM	Prior to season	April 6	April 9	April 13	April 16**	April 23	April 30**	Fall#
White Clay	8,750	2,000	2,000	1,200	2,000	3,500	2,000	2,000
Wilson Run	1,845	700		200	200	713*		
Christina Creek	2,570		800	400	200	500		
Beaver Run	715		200	200				
Mill Creek	210			150				
Pike Creek	150		150					

Trout stocked in these streams will be rainbows averaging 11 inches unless otherwise noted.

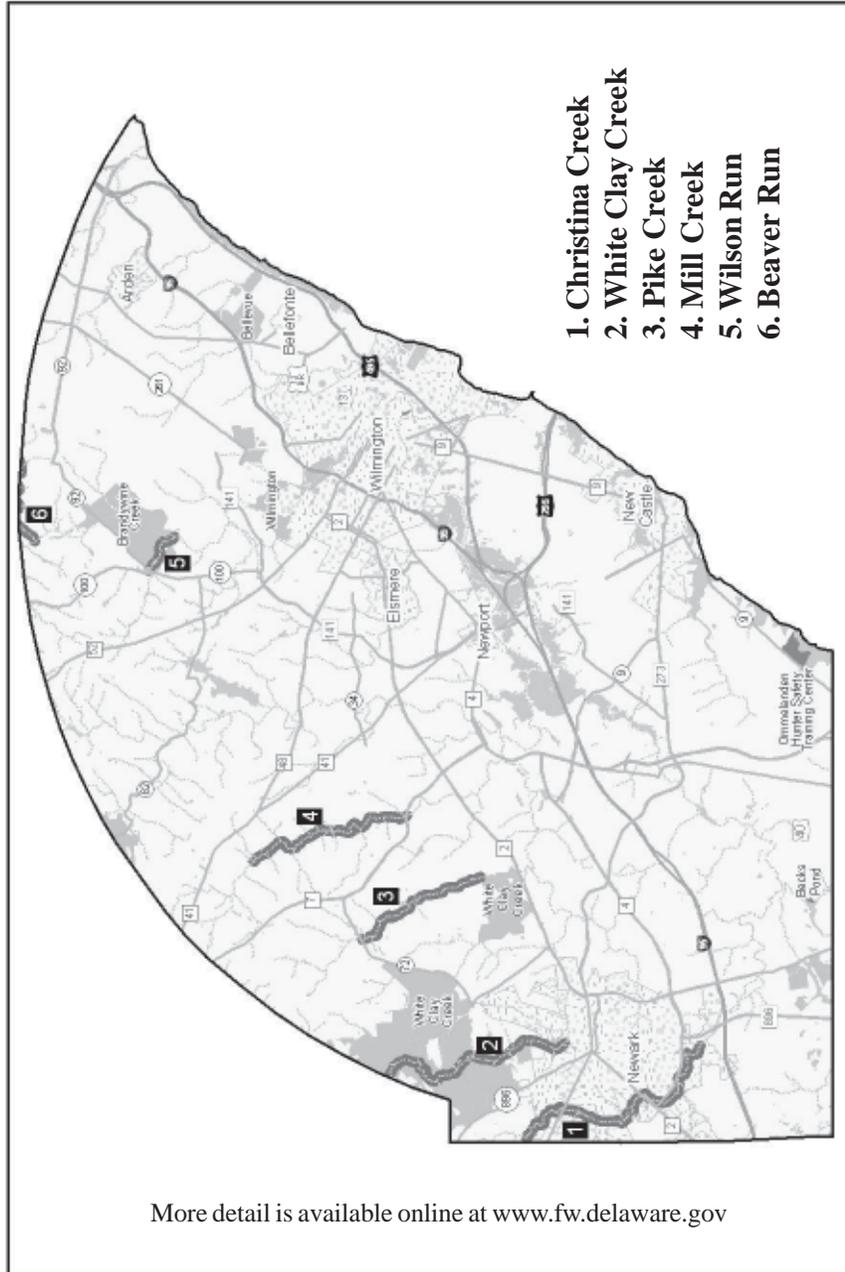
** - On April 16 and April 30, brown trout averaging 11 inches will be stocked

Trophy-size rainbow trout (14 inches or greater) will be stocked prior to the season opener

* - A special stocking of 11-inch rainbows and trophy-size rainbows for handicapped anglers will be conducted on April 23 in Wilson Run located at Brandywine Creek State Park – for details contact the Park office (302-577-3534)

- A fall stocking of 1,000 pounds of rainbows will be conducted in mid-October (this date will be unannounced)

Designated Trout Streams



General Non-tidal Fishing Regulations

These are some of the regulations and state statutes that all fishermen should be familiar with. Most have been edited to make them easier to read and understand. This is not a complete list and it is up to the angler to be familiar with all of the laws and regulations currently existing or newly adopted. For a complete listing refer to the Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control – Division of Fish and Wildlife web-site or request a copy from the Directors Office.

Unless otherwise authorized, it shall be illegal for any person to fish for any freshwater fish in the non-tidal waters of this State with any fishing equipment or by any method, unless it is provided for in the following subdivisions:

A hook and line may be used, and each hook and line shall have no more than 3 hooks or 3 separate lures with hooks.

Except for a person fishing for freshwater finfish with a hook and line through ice, the number of hooks and lines any 1 person shall be permitted to use to fish for any freshwater finfish in the non-tidal or fresh waters of the State shall be no more than 2.

A person may use a dip net to aid in landing any freshwater finfish taken or caught by hook and line in the non-tidal or fresh waters of the State.

No owner or tenant of any pond, lake or impoundment located in this State shall use or attempt to use any chemical, poison and/or electrical equipment or device to fish for freshwater finfish.

Upon the request of the owner of any privately owned pond located in the State, employees of the Division may be authorized by the Director to use any chemical, poison and/or electrical equipment or device to fish in said owner's pond for the purpose of fish management practices.

Carp may be taken and/or fished for by using a bow and arrow and/or spear, unless said equipment or method is otherwise restricted by any regulation promulgated by the Department.

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It is illegal to sell, trade, or barter any finfish taken from the non-tidal waters of this State, unless authorized to do so in a permit issued by the Director.

It is illegal to take shad, except by hook and line, and no more than two (2) lures attached. Each lure may have no more than one (1) single pointed hook.

It is illegal to knowingly snag fish in non-tidal waters with any hook (single, double or treble) or otherwise catch or attempt to snag or catch any game fish by hooking the fish in any part of the body other than in the mouth.

It shall be unlawful for any person to fish within ten (10) feet of an entrance or exit of a fish ladder or to remove fish from any fish ladder between March 15 and May 30

Closure of Department Ponds During Draw-downs

It shall be unlawful for any person to fish in any pond or lake administered by the Department when the water level is lowered for the purpose of aiding in the control of aquatic vegetation, the conservation of fishes or the repair of water control facilities, provided it is duly posted with signs by the Division that state it is closed to fishing.

Speed and Wake of Motorboats on Division Ponds

It shall be unlawful for any person to operate a motorized vessel, except at a slow-no-wake speed, on any pond or lake administered by the Division.

Fish Stocking Practices

It shall be unlawful for any person to stock any species of fish into the non-tidal public waters of this State without the written permission of the Director. This regulation does not prohibit the stocking of private impoundments.

Possession, Transportation and Sale of Illegal species

It shall be unlawful for any person to transport, purchase, possess, or sell walking catfish (*Clarius batrachus*) or the white amur or grass carp (*Ctenopharyngodon idella*) or live northern snakehead fish (*Channa argus*) or blotched snakehead fish (*Channa maculata*) without the written permission of the Director.



continued on page 16

Special largemouth bass management regulations

Becks Pond

It shall be unlawful for any person to have in possession while fishing on Becks Pond more than two (2) largemouth bass. It shall be unlawful for any person to have in possession while fishing on Becks Pond any largemouth bass less than fifteen (15) inches in total length. Any largemouth bass less than fifteen (15) inches in total length shall be immediately returned to Becks Pond with the least possible injury.

Andrews Lake

It shall be unlawful for any person to have in possession while fishing on Andrews Lake more than one (1) largemouth bass of the six (6) allowed in possession to be larger than fifteen (15) inches in total length. Largemouth bass measuring less than twelve (12) inches may be taken and possessed within the six (6) allowed in possession while fishing on Andrews Lake. It shall be unlawful for any person to have in possession while fishing on Andrews Lake any largemouth bass measuring from twelve (12) inches to and including fifteen (15) inches in total length.



Jordan
Zimmerman

Derby Pond and Hearn's Pond

It shall be unlawful for any person to have in possession while fishing on Derby Pond or Hearn's Pond more than one (1) largemouth bass of the six (6) allowed in possession to be larger than eighteen (18) inches. Largemouth bass measuring less than fifteen (15) inches may be taken and retained up to the legal possession limit while fishing on Derby Pond or Hearn's Pond. It shall be unlawful for any person to have in possession while fishing on Derby Pond or Hearn's Pond any largemouth bass measuring from fifteen (15) inches to and including eighteen (18) inches in total length.

Non-Tidal Length and Possession Limits

Species	Minimum Length	Daily Possession Limit
◆ Trout	No Minimum	6 (4 in restricted streams)
◆ Largemouth bass	12 inches	6
Becks Pond	15 inches	2
Andrews Lake	*none between 12" – 15" 6 (no more than one > 15")	
Derby Pond	*none between 15" – 18" 6 (no more than one > 18")	
Hearns Pond	*none between 15" – 18" 6 (no more than one > 18")	
*Largemouth bass less than 12" in Andrews and less than 15" in Derby and Hearns may be kept as part of the daily possession limit.		
◆ Smallmouth Bass	none between 12" – 17"	6 (no more than one > 17")
◆ Panfish**	none	50 (no more than 25 of one species)
**Panfish include bluegill, pumpkinseed, redear sunfish, black crappie, white crappie, white perch, and yellow perch.		
◆ Striped bass hybrid (only occur in Lums Pond)	15 inches	2

Non-tidal Fishing Access Areas

Division of Fish and Wildlife

Area Location	Acres	Boat Ramp	Shore Fishing
1 Becks Pond (No gas motors)	25	Yes	Yes
2 Garrisons Lake	86	Yes	Yes
3 Masseys Mill Pond	30	unimproved	Limited
4 Moores Lake	27	Yes	Yes
5 Derby Pond	23	Yes	Yes
6 Logan Lane Pond	2	No	Handicapped only
7 Mud Mill Pond	60	Yes	Yes
8 McGinnis Pond	31	Yes	Yes
9 Andrews Lake	18	Yes	Yes
10 Coursey Pond	58	Yes	Yes
11 McColley Pond	49	No	Limited
12 Tubmill Pond	5	Yes	Limited
13 Silver Lake (Milford)	29	No	Limited
14 Haven Lake	82	Yes	Limited
15 Griffith Lake	32	Yes	Yes
16 Blairs Pond	29	Yes	Yes
17 Abbotts Pond	17	Yes	Yes
18 Newton Pond (No gas motors)	10	Yes	Yes
19 Waples Pond	51	unimproved	Limited
20 Wagamons Pond	41	Yes	Yes
21 Hearn's Pond	53	Yes	Yes
22 Concord Pond	77	Yes	Limited
23 Craigs Pond	12	Yes	Yes
24 Millsboro Pond	101	Yes	Limited
25 Ingrams Pond	24	Yes	Yes
26 Portsville Pond	15	Yes	Limited
27 Records Pond	92	Yes	Pier
28 Chipman Pond	52	Yes	Yes
29 Horsey Pond	46	Yes	Yes
30 Tussock Pond	9	Yes	Limited
39 Fleetwood Pond	43	No	Limited

Parks and Recreation Access Areas

31 Lums Pond	189	Yes	Yes
32 Killens Pond	75	unimproved	Yes
36 Trap Pond	107	Yes	Yes
37 Trussum Pond	73	Car top only	No
38 Raccoon Pond	14	Car top only	Yes

“Area” number refers to the numbered red or brown boxes on the Fishing Areas map (see fold-out).

Tidal Waters

Minimum Size, Creel Limits & Seasons

Species	Open Season	Min. Total Length (pg 20) (Inches)	Daily Limit
◆ Striped bass (<i>See pg 20</i>)	all year	28	2
<i>Del. Ri, DeBay & tribs</i>	July 1- Aug. 31	20 to 26 slot	2
Atlantic croaker	all year	8	no limit
Summer flounder	all year	18 1/2	4
Bluefish	all year	none	10
Tautog	April 1 - May 11	15	3
	July 1 - Aug. 31	14	10
	Sept. 29 - March 31	14	10
Weakfish	all year	13	6
Black sea bass	all year	12 1/2	25
◆◆ Sharks	(<i>See pgs 33&34</i>)	54 (fork length)	1 per boat
Smooth dogfish	all year	none	see pg 34
Spiny dogfish	all year	none	no limit
Black drum	all year	none	no limit
American eel	all year	6	50
Catfish	all year	none	no limit
River herring	all year	none	10
Spotted sea trout	all year	12	no limit
Spanish mackerel	all year	14	10
Red drum	all year	20-27 max	5
White perch	all year	8	no limit
Winter flounder <i>Subject to change</i>	Feb. 11 - April 10	12	10
Scup (porgy)	all year	8	50
◆◆◆ Shad	Closed in Nanticoke River and its tributaries (<i>See pg 21 & 23</i>)		
American	other locations - all year	none	10
and Hickory	other locations - all year	none	combined
Atlantic sturgeon	CLOSED		no limit
Blue crab (pots)	March 1 - Nov.30		1 bushel/crabber
(fishing license required)	Peeler	3.0	
	Soft-shell	3.5	
	Hard shell	5.0	
Hard Clams	all year	1.5	100 resident
(fishing license required)	all year	1.5	50 non-resident
Lobster	all year	3 3/8" to 5 1/4" max	2 per diver

continued on page 20

Measurements for size requirements – Finfish are measured from tip of snout to tip of tail (*see pg 50*). Blue crabs are measured tip to tip on the back. Female crabs with eggs are protected. Female crabs without eggs but with U-shaped aprons have no size limit (*see pg 52*). Lobsters are measured from rear of eye socket to rear of body shell.

TBA Regulations for several species were undecided at the time of printing. Check the Division website or call for the latest on these species. Fill in the correct size and daily limits in the boxes provided.

◆ **Striped Bass spawning grounds**

Striped bass season is closed April 1 – May 31 on spawning grounds which include the Nanticoke River, C&D Canal, Delaware River north of the C&D Canal including the south jetty of the Canal. No harvest, catch and release only; note circle-hook requirement (*see pg 22*).

New for 2009!

The Division adopted a new slot-limit for July and August for striped bass fishermen in Delaware waters of the Delaware River, Delaware Bay and their tributaries. The existing 28-inch minimum size would remain in effect in coastal areas.

◆ **Slot Limit Season for striped bass**

Area – *Delaware waters only* of the Delaware River and Bay and their tributaries.

Season – July 1 through August 31

Size Limit – 20-inches to 26-inches (total length)

Limit – two per angler

Special Conditions –

- Recreational hook and line fishermen only;
- Slot-limit applies only to the area specified above;
- Any striped bass less than or greater than the slot-size must be released during this special season within the specified area. 28-inch minimum size during all other months;
- Slot-limit does NOT apply to Atlantic coastal areas, Inland Bays, Nanticoke River and their tributaries.

Delaware Waters Only! Familiarize yourself with the jurisdictional boundaries of the Delaware Estuary. The striped bass slot limit season does not apply to adjacent waters of Pennsylvania and New Jersey, nor does it apply to coastal waters, Indian River Inlet or the Inland Bays.

◆◆ **Sharks** – Many species of sharks have been overfished and overfishing is still occurring. A new state/federal shark management plan has been adopted to reduce fishing mortality on many species. Delaware Bay and the mid-Atlantic region are an important ‘pupping’ and nursery grounds for some of the species. Fisheries for sandbar sharks, one of our more popular species, were recently closed by the NMFS. See pages 33&34 for more detail on these new shark regulations.

◆◆◆ **Shad** – includes American and Hickory and the limit of 10 refers to the two species in combination.

What’s New for 2009?

F.I.N. – Fisherman Information Network. All fishermen are required to obtain a F.I.N. number if they intend on fishing in Delaware during 2009. See page 8 for more details on the F.I.N.

River Herring – Stocks of river herring continue to decline and are of concern to fisheries management agencies throughout the coast.

- The 25-fish limit has been reduced to 10 per person daily limit (see pg 23).
- Also, it is now unlawful for any person to fish with any type of net within 300-feet of a dam or spillway. (See page 23).

Striped Bass Slot-limit – The Division adopted a new slot limit for July and August for striped bass fishermen in the Delaware River, Delaware Bay, and their tributaries. Existing size and creel limits remain in effect in coastal areas. (See page 20).

Black Sea bass – New restrictions for black sea bass were being considered. Consult the Division’s web site for updates (www.fw.Delaware.gov) or for more information.

Summer Flounder – The size limit and/or creel limit for summer flounder was expected to change for 2009. Consult the Division’s web site for more information. 2008 regulations remain in effect until officially changed. The size and creel limit for 2008 was 19 ½” and 4-fish.

General Tidal Fishing Regulations

These are some of the regulations that all fishermen should be familiar with. For a complete listing refer to the Division's web site or request a copy from the Director's Office. **See page 6 for New License Requirements.**

Striped bass

Spawning season

The spawning season for striped bass (*Morone saxatilis*) in Delaware is considered to begin at 12:01 A.M. on April 1 and continue through midnight on May 31 of each calendar year.

Spawning areas

It shall be unlawful for any person to take and retain any striped bass during the striped bass spawning season from the Nanticoke River or its tributaries, the Delaware River and its tributaries to the north of a line extending due east beginning at and including the south jetty at the mouth of the C & D Canal, or the C & D Canal or its tributaries.



Floyd T. Morton III

Circle-hooks

It shall be unlawful for any person to fish during the striped bass spawning season on any striped bass spawning ground with natural bait using any hook other than a non-offset circle hook when said hook measures greater than three-eighths (3/8s) inches as measured from the point of the hook to the shank of the hook.



Striped bass possession limits

It shall be unlawful for any recreational fisherman to take and reduce to possession more than two (2) striped bass per day (a day being 24 hours) from the tidal waters of this State. Any striped bass taken from the tidal waters of this State that is not immediately returned, without unnecessary injury, to the same waters from which it was taken, is deemed taken and reduced to possession.

Black sea bass

It shall be unlawful for any recreational person to have in possession any black sea bass that measures less than twelve (12 1/2) inches total length excluding any caudal filament.

continued on page 23

Summer flounder

It shall be unlawful for any person while on board a vessel, to have in possession any part of a summer flounder that measures less than the current minimum size limit between said part's two most distant points unless said person also has in possession the head, backbone and tail intact from which said part was removed.

Sharks

It shall be unlawful for any person to possess the fins from any shark prior to landing it unless the fins are naturally attached to the body of the shark. It shall be unlawful for any person to fillet a shark prior to landing it. A shark may be eviscerated prior to landing.

River Herring

Unless otherwise authorized, it shall be unlawful for any person to have in possession except a person with a valid Delaware commercial food fishing license, more than ten (10) blueback herring and/or alewife (*Alosa aestivalis* and/or *Alosa pseudoharengus*), collectively known as river herring, unless said person has a valid bill-of-sale or receipt for said river herring that indicates the date said river herring were received, the number of said river herring received and the name, address and signature of the commercial food fisherman who legally caught said river herring; or a bill-of-sale or receipt from a person who is a licensed retailer and legally obtained said river herring for resale.

New!

No person shall fish with any type of net, within 300 feet of any constructed dam or spillway on a tidal water river, stream, canal, ditch or tributary located in this State.

American shad and hickory shad

It shall be unlawful for any person who does not have a valid commercial food fishing license to have in possession more than an aggregate of ten (10) American shad and hickory shad.

It shall be unlawful for any person to take and reduce to possession any American shad or hickory shad from the Nanticoke River or its tributaries.

Electric lights

"Lights used for illumination for visual purposes" shall mean any light that is fixed in position anywhere directly above the hull or deck of the vessel, dock or shore area or any electric flood light less than 500 watts and fixed in position no less than ten (10) feet directly above the surface of the water. An electric flood light is any electric light that does not have a focused beam.

It shall be legal for any person to fish in the tidal waters of this State with the aid of "lights used for illumination for visual purposes".

Boating Safety

Education

Anyone born on or after Jan. 1, 1978 must successfully complete an approved boating safety course before operating a motorboat and/or Personal Watercraft in Delaware. Approved courses are a State of Delaware sponsored course, a U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary course, a U.S. Power Squadron course, Delaware Safety Council or any other state course which is approved by the National Association of State Boating Law Administrators and DNREC.

Four Leading Causes of Boating Fatalities in Delaware Waters are:

1. Not wearing a PFD or wearing it unzipped
2. Collision (including PWC accidents)
3. Capsizing
4. Alcohol

Alcohol

Just as drinking and driving don't mix, drinking and boating are a dangerous combination. Sun, glare from the water, constant boat motion and boat vibration all contribute to boater fatigue. Add alcohol consumption and those problems are compounded. Additionally, alcohol affects balance and muscle coordination, causes tunnel vision and slows reaction time. It also affects reasoning and increases the tendency to take risks.

Operating a boat under the influence of alcohol or drugs is against the law and could result in fines up to \$1,000 for first offense and/or up to 60 days in jail. A blood alcohol content of .08 or greater constitutes being under the influence.

Registration, Numbering and Marking of Undocumented Vessels

Vessels equipped with any type of motor must be registered in Delaware if principally used (a period of more than 60 days) in this State. The registration card or valid temporary registration card must be on board when the boat is in use. For further information on boating registration call: (302) 739-9916.

Personal Flotation Devices (PFDs)

In addition to the carriage requirements listed, a PFD must be worn by a child 12 years old or under while aboard a boat which is underway and all PWC riders. Current regulations require all vessels to carry a wearable Type I, II, III, or V PFD for each person on board and a throw cushion type IV for the boat, excluding boats less than 16'. The Boating Education Office suggests all vessels carry a type IV, throwable with a line attached for casting, and that you wear your life jacket zipped.

Negligent Operation

Skippers on Delaware waters are legally responsible for damages to life, limb or property caused by his/her vessel. And, of course, negligent operation is illegal.

Safe Boating Speed

The speed of all vessels on Delaware waters must be slow enough to prevent any wake of appreciable height when the vessels are within 100 feet of: "Slow-No-Wake" speed areas, docks, launching ramps, marked swimming areas, swimmers, anchored, moored, or drifting vessels.

Boating Safety

Every year people are killed or seriously injured in boating accidents in Delaware's waters. All of these accidents were avoidable if the 'rules of the road' had been followed and safe boating practices had been adhered to. The Handbook of Delaware Boating Laws and Responsibilities is available at no cost by contacting the Enforcement Section of the Division of Fish and Wildlife (1-302-739-9915) or through our website www.fw.delaware.gov

The Enforcement Section of the Delaware Division of Fish and Wildlife is responsible for enforcing all of the safe boating laws as well as making sure that fish and shellfish size and creel limits are being followed. Some of the waters of the State are also patrolled by other authorities such as police officers and the U.S. Coast Guard. Boaters approached by a patrol boat with its blue light flashing should reduce speed, yield the right of way to the patrol boat, or if necessary stop your vessel. The operator must stop when requested to do so by a law enforcement officer.

The safety equipment and requirements for Delaware boaters vary depending on the type and length of the vessel. Here is an example of what is required of a typical fishing boat from 16 to 26 feet in length. For a complete list of all requirements for all size vessels contact the Enforcement Section.

- ◆ Boater Safety Education Card (for all operators born after January 1, 1978). For information contact 739-9915 or go on-line.
- ◆ Valid Boat Registration Card
- ◆ Valid Boat Registration decal (displayed)
- ◆ Personal Floatation Device(s) – one of the appropriate size for each person on-board
- ◆ Type IV throwable PFD
- ◆ Type B-I Fire Extinguisher
- ◆ Flame Arrestor
- ◆ Ventilation System for fuel vapors
- ◆ Horn, Whistle, or Bell
- ◆ Visual Distress System (day and night)
- ◆ Navigational Lights

It is the responsibility of each vessel operator to observe the rules of the road and the carriage requirements. The Division recommends boaters wear their life jacket at all times while on the boat. Six out of ten boating fatalities could be prevented by boaters wearing their lifejackets. The consistent use of lifejackets will save more lives.

Surf Fishing

The Division of Parks and Recreation surf fishing beaches are Beach Plum Island, Cape Henlopen State Park, Delaware Seashore State Park, and Fenwick Island State Park. Special restrictions and regulations apply to these areas. For more information contact the Division of Parks and Recreation (302) 739-9220.



In order to drive a vehicle on a designated State Park beach, a SURF FISHING VEHICLE PERMIT is required. Only four-wheel drive vehicles with a minimum ground clearance of

seven inches that are licensed to operate on public roadways are eligible for Surf Fishing Vehicle Permits. Permit holders must be

actively engaged in surf fishing while on the beach. Permits are available at State Park offices, various license agents, and at the DNREC main office in Dover. Purchasers of Surf Fishing Vehicle Permits will receive additional rules and safety requirements. The revenue collected from these permits supports the management of seashore State Parks and beaches. None of the proceeds go towards fisheries management programs or fishing access projects conducted by the Division of Fish and Wildlife.



Jay Fleming

Division of Fish and Wildlife

Tidal Fishing Access Areas

Area	Location / Water Body	Boat Ramps	Fishing Piers	Parking
1	7th Street Park / Christina, Brandywine and DE Rivers	Closed	1	20
2	Newport Boat Ramp / Christina River	2	none	51
3	Churchmans Road / Christina River	1	none	20
4	Fort DuPont State Park / DE River	3	none	100
5	Canal Wildlife Area / C&D Canal	none	8 .. along road	
6	Augustine Beach / DE River	2	1	100
7	Odessa / Appoquinimink River	1	none	2
8	Collins Beach / DE Bay	3	1	120
9	Woodland Beach / DE Bay	1	1	50
10	Woodland Bch. / Duck Creek / DE Bay	2	none	30
11	Port Mahon / DE Bay	3	1	75
12	Water Street (Dover) / St. Jones River	car top	none	as available
13	Lebanon Landing / St. Jones River	1	1	7
14	Scotton Landing / St. Jones River	1	1	10
15	Bowers Beach / DE Bay	5	none	200
16	Cedar Creek / DE Bay	8	none	150
17	Front St., Milford / Mispillion River	1	1	10
18	Milton / Broadkill River	1	2	20
19	Lewes / DE Bay	6	none	128
20	Masseys Landing / Indian River & Rehoboth Bay	4	1	100
21	Rosedale Bch. / Indian River	2	1	30
22	Seaford / Nanticoke River	4	1	93
23	Phillips Landing / Broad Creek / Nanticoke River	3	none	50
24	Edward R. Koch / Broad Creek (<i>shoreline fishing only</i>)	none	none	10
25	Laurel below Records Pond / Broad Creek	none	1	17
26	Assawoman Wildlife Area / Little Assawoman Bay	2	2	20
Parks & Recreation Areas				
33	Cape Henlopen Fishing Pier	none	1	75
34	Indian River Marina Indian River Inlet	2 none	No along inlet	40 200
35	Holts Landing / Indian River Bay	1	Yes	25

“Area” number refers to the numbered yellow or brown boxes on the Fishing Area map.

Note – All motor boats launched from tidal access areas administered by the Division of Fish and Wildlife must be registered in Delaware or have a valid ramp certificate. Ramp certificates cost \$35 and are available from the Division of Fish and Wildlife or authorized agents (see page 28). A daily or seasonal fee may be required at areas administered by the Division of Parks and Recreation.

Boat Ramp Certificates

Requirements:

All motor boats launched from tidal access areas administered by the Division of Fish and Wildlife must be registered in Delaware or have a valid ramp certificate. Ramp certificates cost \$35.00 and are available from the Division of Fish and Wildlife or its authorized agents.

Authorized Sales Outlets of Boat Ramp Certificates

All phone numbers listed have a (302) Area Code

New Castle County

Eastern Marine, Newark 737-6603
Rudy's Outboard Service, Wilm. 999-8735

Kent County

Carlisle's Marine, Smyrna 389-0100
Smith's B&T, Leipsic 744-9140
Fish and Wildlife Office, Dover 739-9916
Sonny's B&T, Bowers Beach 335-2990
Donovan's Dock Bait & Tackle, Bowers Beh 335-3500

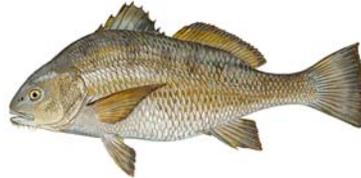
Sussex County

Beach Marine, Lewes 645-7066
Bill's Sport Shop, Lewes 645-7654
Henlopen B& T, Lewes 645-8106
Lewes Harbor Marina, Lewes 645-6227
Shorts Marine, Long Neck 945-1200
Cedar Crk B& T, Milford 422-4227
Cedar Crk Marina, Milford 422-2040
Cedar Crk Outdoorsmen, Milford 422-1175
Taylor Marine, Milford 422-9177
Duke's Boat Sales, Millsboro 945-1111
Bob's Marine Service, Ocean View 539-3711
C.H. McKinney's, Rehoboth 277-8800
Sturgis Marine, Seaford 629-3581
Walker's Marine, Seaford 629-8666
Rt. 113 Boat Sales, Selbyville 436-1737
Hook'em & Cook'em, Dewey 226-8220
Indian River Marina 277-3071

Saltwater Fishes



Red Drum



Black Drum



Striped Bass



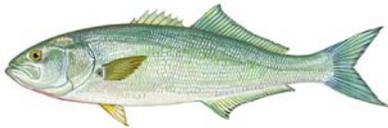
Tautog



Atlantic mackerel



Kingfish



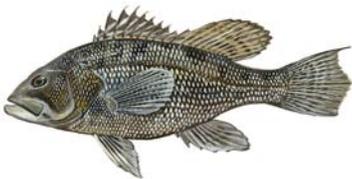
Bluefish



Sheepshead



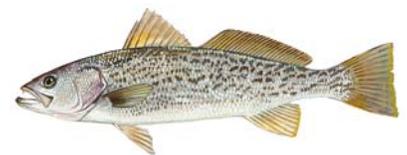
Summer flounder



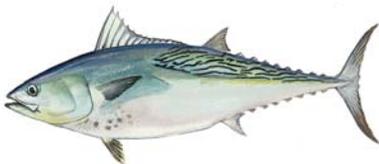
Black sea bass



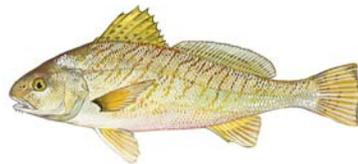
Triggerfish



Weakfish



False albacore



Atlantic croaker



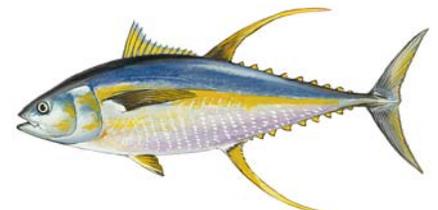
White marlin



Scup



Dolphin fish

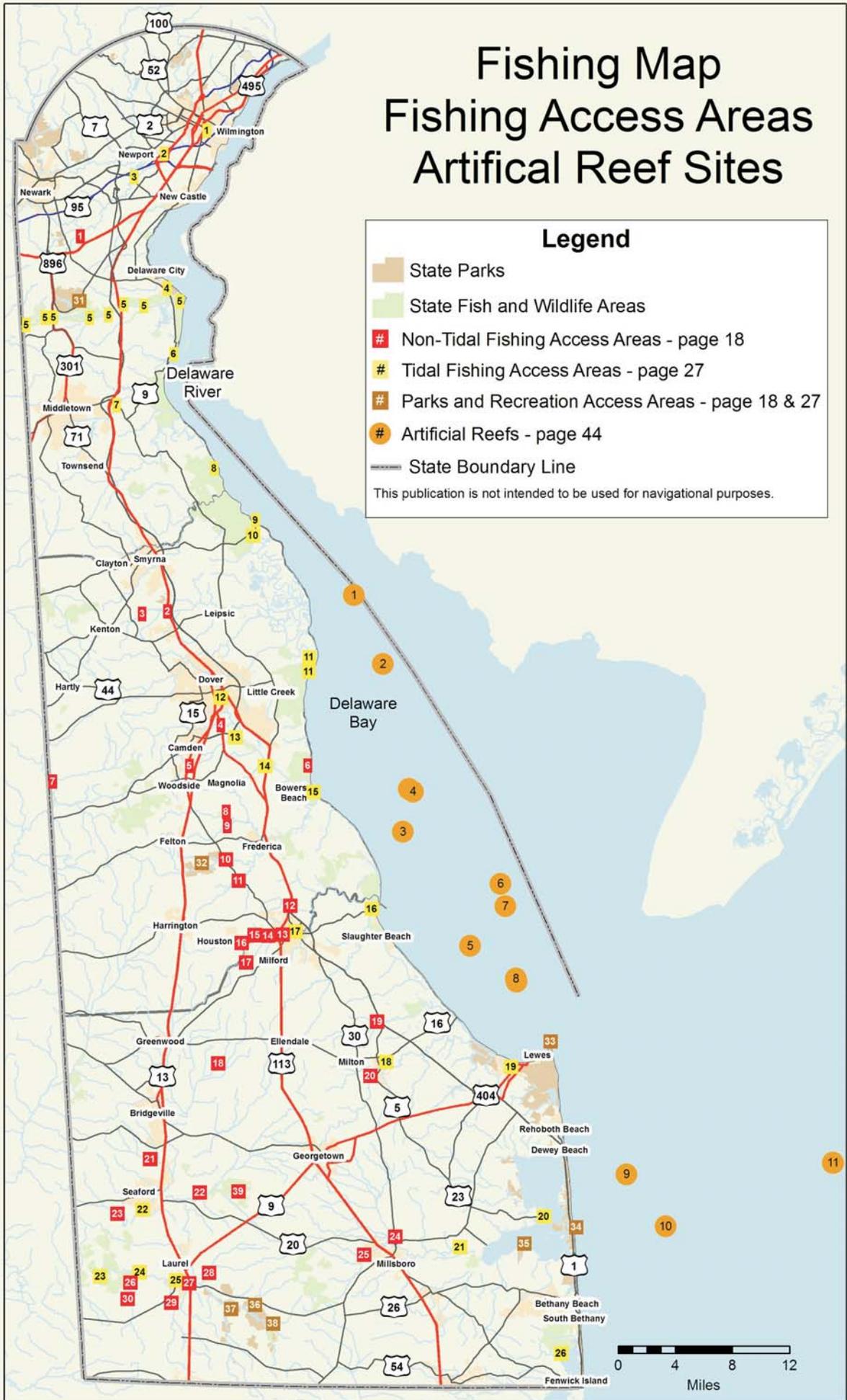


Tuna

Fishing Map

Fishing Access Areas

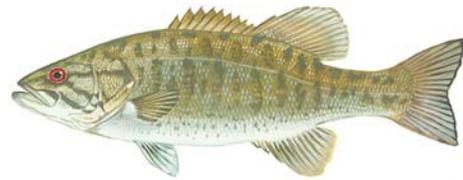
Artificial Reef Sites



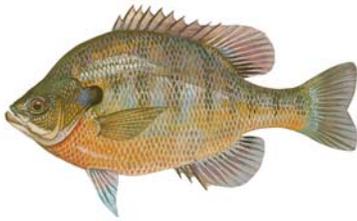
Freshwater Fishes



Largemouth bass



Smallmouth bass



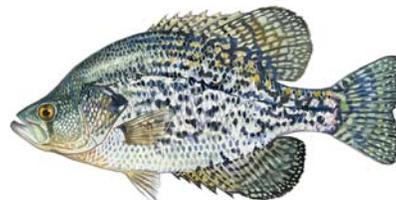
Bluegill



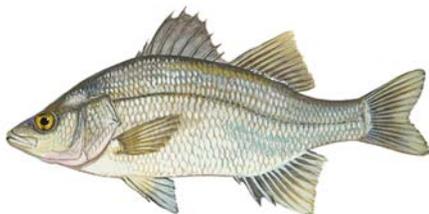
Carp



Channel catfish



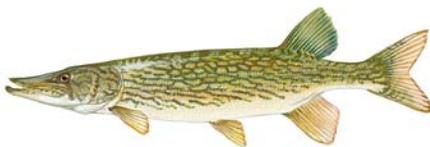
Black crappie



White perch



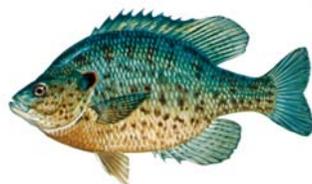
Yellow perch



Chain pickerel



Rainbow trout

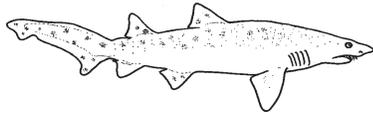


Redear sunfish



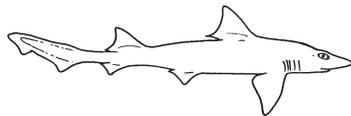
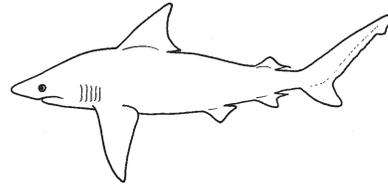
American shad

Common Sharks of Delaware Bay



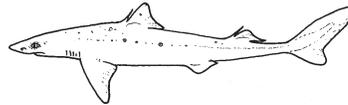
Sand Tiger - *Odontaspis taurus* - Gray-brown to tan with dark spots. Length to 10.5 feet. First and second dorsal fins nearly equal in size. Teeth long, curved and not serrated. Protected species, none may be retained.

Sandbar Shark - *Carcharhinus plumbeus* - Also known as the brown shark. Color dark gray to brown on back, fading almost to white on belly. A heavy-bodied shark with a large first dorsal fin that begins at a point located at the middle of the pectoral fin. **None may be retained.**



Smooth Dogfish - *Mustelus canis* - Known locally as the sand shark, this harmless species is common in the Delaware Bay. Gray to gray-brown and ranging up to 5 feet in length. Large first and second dorsal fins, with “sandpaper-like” teeth.

Spiny Dogfish - *Squalus acanthias* - Easily identified by a sharp spine located at the leading edge of both the first and second dorsal fins. Commonly caught in cold water by anglers targeting mackerel or striped bass.



Shark Regulations for Delaware

Several species of sharks commonly occur in Delaware waters and are hooked by recreational fishermen either targeting sharks or incidentally while fishing for other species. In near-shore areas these include the smooth and spiny dogfish, sandbar shark (sometimes called brown shark), and the sand tiger shark. In coastal waters and typically further off-shore in federal waters, some of the large coastal sharks caught include but are not limited to shortfin mako, blue shark, common thresher, and hammerheads. Sharks are managed by the National Marine Fisheries Service and the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission and the regulations are complex. For more detailed information on the shark management plan, contact the NMFS or visit their web site. For a waterproof shark identification color placard contact NOAA at: (301) 713-2347 or Karyl.Brewster-geisz@NOAA.gov.

For most fishermen in Delaware, the following outline should be sufficient to comply with the new shark regulations. Of the many species of sharks that could occur in Delaware’s waters, only the species listed below can be retained; all other shark species must be immediately released. Species that can be retained and seasonal closures are listed in the table on page 34.

Species of Sharks That Can Be Retained Effective in federal waters; slated for state waters	
No Closed Season	Season closed May 15 – July 15
Shortfin mako	*Tiger shark
Porbeagle	*Nurse shark
Blue shark	*Lemon shark
Oceanic white-tip shark	*Blacktip shark
Thresher shark	*Spinner shark
Finetooth shark	*Bull shark
Blacknose shark	*Great hammerhead
Atlantic sharpnose shark	*Scalloped hammerhead
Bonnethead	*Smooth hammerhead
Smooth dogfish	*Silky shark
Spiny dogfish	

Those species indicated with an asterisk () may not be retained in New Jersey, Delaware, Maryland, and Virginia from May 15 through July 15.*

Size Limits - The minimum size for the sharks listed that can be harvested is 54-inches FORK LENGTH (excluding smooth and spiny dogfish). There is no minimum size limit for smooth and spiny dogfish.

Possession Limits – (not including dogfish)

Boat Anglers - one per vessel

Shore Anglers – one per angler

Sandbar and Sand Tiger Sharks - Of special significance to Delaware anglers is the sandbar shark, sometimes referred to as the ‘brown’ shark, and the sand tiger shark. Both species are very long-lived, have low reproductive rates, and are overfished. Delaware Bay is an important “pupping area” and nursery for adult and juvenile sandbar and sand tiger sharks, and they are commonly hooked. Sandbar sharks and sand tiger sharks cannot be retained at any time regardless of size.

Smooth and Spiny Dogfish - These two species are the most common sharks found in Delaware. Smooth dogfish are typically caught during the warmer seasons with spiny dogfish most abundant during the fall and winter months. The harvest limit for a vessel is one shark from the above list plus one smooth dogfish per angler. For example, four (4) anglers fishing from a private boat could keep five (5) smooth dogfish or, 4 smooth dogfish plus a shark from the table above. Shore-based anglers may keep two (2) smooth dogfish or one smooth dogfish plus a shark from the table above if in season. There is no size limit for smooth dogfish.

Spiny dogfish are not currently overfished and have liberal landing quotas. There is no closed season, no size limit, and no creel limit for spiny dogfish taken by recreational boat or shore anglers in Delaware.

State Record Holders

Freshwater			
Species	Weight	Angler	Year
Largemouth bass	10 lbs. 5 ozs.	Tony Kaczmarczyk	1980
Smallmouth bass	4 lbs. 15.5 ozs.	Jerry Proffitt	1989
Striped bass hyb.	13 lbs. 13 ozs.	Earl Blevins	1990
Bluegill	2 lbs. 10 ozs.	Arnold Harmon	1998
Carp	45 lbs.	Ronald Burnett	1976
Catfish	23 lbs. 6 ozs.	William Ridgley	1992
Crappie	4 lbs. 9 ozs.	Marvin Billips	1976
Tiger musky	15 lbs. 2 ozs.	Richard Harris	1991
White perch	2 lbs. 9 ozs.	Wayne Hastings	1997
Yellow perch	2 lbs. 11ozs.	Marvin Kessinger	1976
Chain pickerel	7 lbs. 3 ozs.	Earl Messick	1972
American shad	6 lbs. 12 ozs.	Bayard Conaway	1972
Trout	11 lbs. 10 ozs.	Edwin Wallace	1997
Walleye	6 lbs. 14 ozs.	Nesbit Copenhaver	1995
Redear sunfish	3 lbs. 1 ozs.	Marty Messick	1998
Saltwater			
False albacore	20 lbs.	Christian Anderson	2008
True albacore	80 lbs.	David Francella	1987
Black seabass	7 lbs. 6 ozs.	Steve Samluk	1988
Striped bass	51 lbs. 8 ozs.	Betty Rosen	1978
Bluefish	21 lbs. 15 ozs.	Bill Thoroughgood	1980
Cod	44 lbs.	John Osborne	1975
Atlantic croaker	5 lbs. 3 ozs.	Catherine Simpson	1980
Dolphinfish	52 lbs. 15 ozs.	Charles Ciociola	2003
Black drum	115 lbs.	Kenneth Smith	1978
Red drum	75 lbs.	James Vandetti	1976
Flounder	17 lbs. 15 ozs.	William Kendall	1974
Kingfish	4 lbs.	Billy Hastings	1973
Atlantic mackerel	3 lbs. 5 ozs.	Ricky Yakimowicz	1985
King mackerel	48 lbs. 9 ozs.	Gordon Harris	1992
Spanish mackerel	6 lbs. 4 ozs.	Eric Ludwig	2000
Blue marlin	820 lbs.	Bruce King	1986
White marlin	120 lbs.	William Garner Jr.	1972
Scup	5 lbs. 5 ozs.	Herman Schmidt	1979
Shark	825 lbs.	Brent Thomas	1981
Mako shark	975 lbs.	Thomas Barnes	2000
Sheepshead	14 lbs. 4 ozs.	Fallyn Smith	2008
Swordfish	276 lbs. 12 ozs.	Albert Scott	1978
Tautog	21 lbs. 4 ozs.	Glenn Cave	2005
Gray triggerfish	5 lbs. 12 ozs.	Brent Stewart	2005
Tuna	873 lbs.	Dan Dillon	2005
Wahoo	98 lbs.	Jeff Murtoff	2003
Weakfish	19 lbs. 2 ozs.	William Thomas	1989

See Pages 36 and 37 for more information on the Delaware Sport Fishing Tournament

Rules for Delaware Sport Fishing Tournament

Call (302) 739-4782 for tournament information.

1. The Sport Fishing Tournament is open to the public. There is no entry fee. Charter boat captains are eligible. Weighmasters are eligible to enter, provided their fish are weighed in at a weighing station other than their own.
2. All fish entered in the tournament must be caught within the boundaries of the State of Delaware except those caught beyond the three-mile limit in the Atlantic Ocean. Any fish caught outside the three-mile territorial sea must be landed in a vessel leaving from a Delaware port and returning to a Delaware port.
3. All fish entered in the tournament must be caught in a sporting manner with hook and line. No other person may touch the rod or line until the fish is brought within the grasp of the mate.
4. All fish entered in the tournament must be weighed at an official Delaware Sport Fishing Tournament Weigh Station.
5. All fish entered in the tournament must meet the minimum weight requirement as set up for this year's tournament.
6. All scales used to weigh in fish must be certified yearly by the Delaware Division of Weights and Measures (Department of Agriculture).
7. No smallmouth bass will be recognized from Kent or Sussex Counties unless Division of Fish and Wildlife qualified personnel examine and approve the catch.
8. A fish will not be recognized as a state record unless qualified personnel from the Division of Fish and Wildlife approve the catch. In case no Division personnel are available at the time of the weigh-in, the angler must save the entire fish for examination and approval at the earliest convenient time for the Division.
9. In the case of a tie for the largest fish of the year or a new state record, both fish will be recognized.
10. To replace a record for a fish weighing less than 25 pounds, the replacement must weigh at least 2 ounces more than the existing record. To replace a record for a fish weighing 25 pounds or more, the replacement must weigh at least one-half of 1 percent more than the existing record. Example: at 100 pounds the additional weight required would be 8 ounces. Any catch that exceeds the existing record by less than the amount required to defeat the record will be considered a tie.

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11. The Tournament Director reserves the right to disqualify any entry.
12. All entry forms must be filled out completely and in a legible manner by the weighmaster. **The signed forms should be mailed in by the angler.**
13. The tournament runs from Jan. 1-Dec. 31. No entry forms for the previous tournament year will be accepted after 4:30 p.m. January 31.
14. Only one citation per species of fish will be issued to any individual during the tournament year. In the event an individual catches a larger fish than the one for which he originally was issued a citation, a new citation will be issued for the larger fish if the individual returns the original citation.
15. Only one saltwater award and one freshwater award will be issued to any one individual during the tournament year.
16. Special citations will be issued upon approval of the tournament director in the case of unusual catches or extenuating circumstances (young children, disabled, etc.). If the weigh station feels the catch is rare or unusual, an entry form should be submitted for approval. All decisions by the Director on unusual species will be final.
17. Citations will be awarded for released white or blue marlin. Fill out the standard entry form except for length, weight, and girth and include a signature and telephone number of a witness to the catch other than the angler and captain. Any marlin kept for mounting also will be eligible for Tournament entry provided a taxidermist receipt is enclosed with the entry form. Marlin retained for any purpose other than mounting will not be eligible for entry in the Tournament.
18. The Tournament Director reserves the right to disqualify any weigh station if the Tournament rules are not observed.
19. Hybrid striped bass will only be recognized for entry when caught in Lums Pond.
20. The State of Delaware assumes no responsibility in the certification of a catch for consideration by the International Game Fish Association or any record keeping body other than the Delaware Sportfishing Tournament. If the angler wishes to qualify his catch for consideration in some other tournament, it is the responsibility of the angler to insure that his catch and weigh-in meets the appropriate criteria. The Delaware Sportfishing Tournament makes no distinction based on line classes or sex of the angler or fly versus conventional fishing gear.

Sport Fishing Tournament Official Weigh Stations

Station	City	Phone – (302)
Capt. Mac’s Lighthouse Bait & Tackle	Bethany	436-2445
Vines Creek Marina	Dagsboro	732-6043
Pepper Creek Outfitters	Dagsboro	732-3210
Rehoboth Bay Marina	Dewey Beach	226-2012
Smith’s Bait Shop	Leipsic	744-9140
Fenwick Tackle	Fenwick	539-7766
Sonny’s Bait & Tackle	Bowers Beach	335-2990
Donovans Dock Bait & Tackle	Bowers Beach	335-3500
Sam’s Fishing Tackle	Greenwood	424-0197
Williamsville Country Store	Houston	424-2277
A&K Bait & Tackle	Laurel	875-3589
Trap Pond State Park	Laurel	875-5153
A&R Bait & Tackle	Lewes	645-6111
Bayroad Discount Bait & Tackle	Lewes	945-1995
Bill’s Sport Shop	Lewes	645-7654
Fisherman’s Wharf	Lewes	645-8862
Henlopen Bait & Tackle	Lewes	645-8106
Lewes Harbour Marina	Lewes	645-6227
Steamboat Landing	Lewes	645-6500
Cedar Creek General Store	Milford	383-9227
Joseph Janvier	Middletown	836-9545
Adams Wharf	Milford	422-8940
Cedar Creek Bait & Tackle	Milford	422-4227
Cedar Creek Marina	Milford	422-2040
Hi-way Bait & Tackle	Milford	335-5087
Hook’em & Cook’em	Dewey	226-8220
Bayside Marina	Millsboro	945-3440
Massey’s Landing	Millsboro	945-2544
Potnet Seaside Bait & Tackle	Millsboro	945-7798
Rick’s Bait & Tackle	Longneck	945-9245
Shooters Supply	New Castle	328-6242
Delaware Bass Stalkers	Newark	737-2691
Eastern Marine	Newark	737-6603
Capt. Bones Bait, Tackle & Seafood	Odessa	378-4200
Indian River Marina	Rehoboth	227-3071
Old Inlet Bait & Tackle, Inc.	Rehoboth	227-7974
Taylor Tackle Shop	Seaford	629-9017
Ocean Pro Shop	Smyrna	653-2577
Slicer’s Sporting Goods	Wilmington	994-9537

Sport Fishing Tournament Minimum Weights

Freshwater Fishes

Species	Lbs.
1. Largemouth bass	5
2. Smallmouth bass**	2
3. Striped bass	20
4. Striped bass hybrid*	5
5. Bluegill	1
6. Carp	15
7. Catfish	6
8. Crappie	1
9. Tiger musky	10
10. White perch	1
11. Yellow perch	1
12. Chain pickerel	4
13. American shad	5
14. Trout	2
15. Walleye	5
16. Redear sunfish	1

* Must be taken from Lums Pond ** Must be at least 17 inches

Saltwater Fishes

Species	Lbs.
1. False albacore	12
2. True albacore	30
3. Black sea bass	3
4. Striped bass	20
5. Bluefish	14
6. Cod	20
7. Atlantic croaker	3
8. Dolphinfish	15
9. Black drum	50
10. Red drum	**
11. Flounder	7
12. Kingfish	1
13. Atlantic mackerel	2
14. King mackerel	10
15. Spanish mackerel	5
16. Blue marlin	Any*
17. White marlin	Any*
18. Scup (porgy)	2
19. Shark (excl. Mako)	100
20. Mako shark	100
21. Sheepshead	8
22. Swordfish	Any
23. Tautog	7
24. Gray triggerfish	5
25. Tuna	75
26. Wahoo	20
27. Weakfish (Sea trout)	9

*Citations for marlin are awarded only for releases or for those landed for taxidermy.

**Red drum were deleted in 2003 because no red drum in excess of 27 inches may be retained according to the Red Drum Management Plan. Red drum are still eligible for Live Release Awards.

Live Release Awards

In order to promote conservation ethics among Delaware anglers, the Division of Fish and Wildlife is providing recognition patches to anglers who catch and release live eligible species that exceed the minimum lengths specified. To qualify, an angler must make the catch in Delaware waters or off Delaware's Atlantic coast line. The eligible species must be measured from the tip of the jaw to the tip of the tail (straight line measurement with mouth closed) and this measurement must be verified by a witness who signs the entry form. The fish so measured must be released immediately. Fish kept either alive or dead and brought to a weigh station will be weighed for entry in the Sport Fishing Tournament using certified scales and will not be eligible for a Live Release Award. Only those fish released alive immediately shall be eligible for a Live Release Award. Billfish released alive are eligible for either the Live Release Award or the Sport Fishing Tournament Award, whichever one the angler chooses.

No angler will be issued more than one live release freshwater award and one live release saltwater award per year, although he or she may apply for and receive one of the live release citations for each eligible species.

Applications for Live Release Awards are available on-line or may be picked up at any Sport Fishing Tournament Weigh Station and must be mailed to the Division of Fish and Wildlife within 30 days after the catch. The entry form for live releases must include both the angler's signature and the signature of a witness to the actual measurement and live release of the fish. No fish entered for a Live Release Award will be eligible for consideration as a State record fish. All potential State record fish must be weighed at a certified Weigh Station.

Minimum Qualifying Lengths for Freshwater Live Release Awards

Species	Length (Inches)	Species	Length (Inches)
1. Largemouth bass	20	9. Tiger Musky	30
2. Smallmouth bass	17	10. White perch	12
3. Striped bass	37	11. Yellow perch	12
4. Striped bass hybrid*	22	12. Pickerel	24
5. Bluegill	10	13. American shad	23
6. Carp	29	14. Trout	16
7. Catfish	25	15. Walleye	22
8. Crappie	12	16. Redear sunfish	10

* Only hybrids from Lums Pond qualify

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**Minimum Qualifying Lengths for
Saltwater Live Release Awards**

Species	Length (Inches)	Species	Length (Inches)
1. False albacore	26	15. Spanish mackerel	22
2. True albacore	32	16. Blue marlin	Any
3. Black sea bass	17	17. White marlin	Any
4. Striped bass	37	18. Scup (porgy)	14
5. Bluefish	33	19. Shark (excl. mako)	66
6. Cod	36	20. Mako shark	66
7. Atlantic croaker	19	21. Sheepshead	22
8. Dolphinfish	41	22. Swordfish	Any
9. Black drum	45	23. Tautog	25
10. Red drum	45	24. Gray triggerfish	20
11. Flounder	25	25. Tuna	52
12. Kingfish	13	26. Wahoo	50
13. Atlantic mackerel	17	27. Weakfish	31
14. King mackerel	36		

23rd Annual Youth Fishing Tournament

As part of its activities for National Fishing Week, June 1-8, the Delaware Division of Fish and Wildlife will hold its 23rd annual Youth Fishing Tournament from 10 a.m.-1 p.m., Saturday June 6. The event will take place at Ingrams Pond in Millsboro, Wyoming Pond in Town Park, Wyoming, and at the Lums Pond State Park dog training area.



JoAnna Wilson

This fishing event is for youths ages 4 to 15. An adult must accompany youths under age 12 and contestants should bring their own fishing equipment. The tournament is free to the public and prizes will be awarded in three age groups: 4-7; 8-11; and 12-15.

The tournament was established to introduce youth to the sport of fishing and to teach the catch and release approach to conservation. There is no pre-registration nor entrance fee required and the tournament is held rain or shine.

In addition to the fishing tournament celebrating National Fishing Week, the Division has designated June 6 and 7 as free fishing days when anyone may fish in Delaware's waters without a fishing license.

Handling and Releasing Fish

Catch-and-release fishing can be an effective way to conserve fish if certain precautions are observed. Bringing fish up from more than 30 feet down can reduce chances for survival.

Whether fishermen choose to release fish or are required to do so by law, all released fish must be handled carefully to have a good chance for survival. The angler controls several factors that affect a fish's chance of survival:

- ◆ **Circle Hooks and Striped Bass** - Only non-offset circle-hooks must be used when fishing with natural bait in designated striped bass spawning area during the designated striped bass spawning season if you are using any hook having a gap greater than 3/8 inches as measured from the hook point to the shank of the hook. Striped bass spawning areas are defined as the Delaware River and its tributaries from the southernmost jetty at the mouth of the C&D Canal upstream to the PA/DE line, the C&D Canal, and the Nanticoke River and its tributaries. The spawning season is April 1 through May 31. Scientific studies have shown that the use of circle hooks reduces mortalities for hooking and releasing, therefore the Division recommends their use in other areas as well when fishermen are using natural baits.
- ◆ **Exhaustion**- The fight is tough on the fish. It can upset the fish's chemical balance if it lasts too long.
- ◆ **Loss of Slime**- Fish have a slime coating, which seals out infection. Rough handling can destroy this protective layer.
- ◆ **Time out of the water**- As long as it is out of the water, a fish can't breathe or restore its chemical balance.
- ◆ **Wounds**- Anglers can do a lot to minimize the damage of hook wounds both before and after the fish is hooked.
- ◆ **Use barbless hooks.** They are much easier to remove from a fish than barbed hooks, meaning less *wounding* and *time* out of water. Barbs can easily be bent or filed down on bait hooks or artificial lures. You can leave a bump instead of a barb to prevent the hook from penetrating too far or coming out too soon. Some barbless hooks are made with a bend to serve this purpose.
- ◆ **Reduce the use of treble hooks** to minimize *wounding* and *time* out of water. Often, single hooks can replace treble or tines can be clipped without ruining the lure. Experiment!

If you must remove the fish from the water:

- ◆ **Remove the fish carefully by supporting its weight** in an upright position with your hands and lifting straight up; or
- ◆ **Use a shallow landing net**, preferably of rubber or knotless nylon. These nets will remove less *slime* and will reduce *wounding* and *time* out of water.
- ◆ **Keep control of the fish** so that it cannot flop around and cause further *wounds* or loss of *slime*.

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Handling and releasing fish:

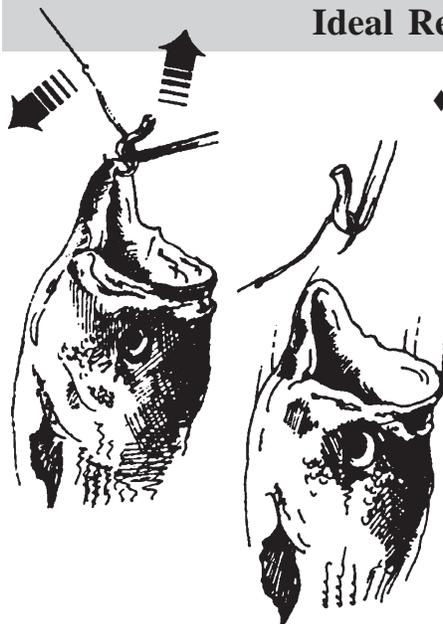
- ◆ **Handle fish carefully using wet cotton or rubber gloves or a wet towel** to minimize *slime* loss. If you must use your hands, be sure to wet them first.
- ◆ **Cradle the fish on its back and cover its eyes.** This will calm the fish, reducing *wounding* and *slime loss*.
- ◆ **Always avoid touching the gills.** This is where the fish takes in oxygen and or salts from the water when recovering from the *exhaustion* of the fight. Gills are very delicate.
- ◆ **Carefully return the fish to the water after removing the hook.** Hold it in or close to the water and release it upright and head first.
- ◆ **Revive an unresponsive fish** by moving it gently back and forth in the water to relieve its *exhaustion*.

Difficult hooks:

- ◆ **Carefully remove hooks inside the fish's mouth, gill or gullet with tools** like hook extractors that can grasp and turn a hook or with disgorger or deep throat-type tools. Fish experience high mortality rates when hooks are left in the gills or gullet.
- ◆ **When the hook is in the stomach, cut the line and leave the hook.** Studies have shown that some fish are able to pass hooks if a short piece of leader is left attached.

For further information contact: Chesapeake Bay Foundation (410) 268-8816

Ideal Release:



- ◆ **Use a dehooker or extractor to remove a hook quickly,** keeping the fish in or over the water. There will be little or no *slime* loss or *time* out of water. You can make or buy a dehooker.

To use a dehooker, pull down on the line with your hand and up on the dehooker as shown.

Artificial Reef Program

Delaware has eleven permitted artificial reef sites in Delaware Bay and along the Atlantic Coast. Development of these sites began in 1995 and will continue in the future. The Delaware Reef Program is one part of a comprehensive fisheries management effort and is designed to enhance fisheries habitat, benefit structure-oriented fish, and provide fishing opportunities for anglers.

Reef construction is especially important in the Mid-Atlantic Region, where near shore bottom is usually featureless sand or mud. We have neither the natural rocky

outcrops common in New England nor the coral reefs of our Southeastern Atlantic Coast. Durable, stable, non-toxic reef materials can develop an invertebrate community which is hundreds of times richer than adjacent bottom, providing food

and physical protection for reef fish such as tautog, sea bass, scup, spadefish and triggerfish. In addition, gamefish such as bluefish, striped bass and weakfish are attracted to baitfish, which congregate around reef structure.

Recycled materials have supported reef development efforts to date. Donated concrete culvert pipe and other concrete products are the primary material used at the eight Delaware Bay sites. Ballasted tire units have been deployed at the three ocean sites. The tugboat "Golden Eagle" has been sunk in the lower bay. To date, 74,000 tons of concrete products, 9,000 tons of ballasted tire units and 86 decommissioned military vehicles have been deployed on our sites. During 1999 two small vessels ("P3" and "Dolphin") were deployed on site #7 and the commercial tug "Delilah" was sunk on site #11 as were several



Decommissioned armored vehicles such as this one are among the recycled materials used to create an artificial reef for marine habitat off Delaware's Atlantic coast.

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other vessels and 714 subway cars. A 175-foot minesweeper was sunk offshore at the Del-Jersey-Land site in 2007.

The reef program uses DGPS (Differential Global Positioning System) to accurately place materials on site. The site charts in the reef guide show where reef materials have been deployed since 1995. Locations (latitude - longitude) noted for each site indicate the position of deployments of reef material from an anchored barge. In the case of large, concentrated reef deployments, a latitude or longitude range, may be given such as: N 39 15.377' -402'. This indicates material occurs between 39 degrees, 15.377 to 15.402 minutes north latitude. Due to variability between DGPS receivers, slight variations in readings may occur. It is suggested you use your GPS and a good fathometer to locate reef structure, then note the coordinates on your own GPS. You can view the reef guide on-line or contact the Fisheries Little Creek field office for a copy (302) 739-4782.

How to Fish the Reefs

Anchoring or grappling immediately above reef structure is essential to catch reef-fish. At Bay sites, this is best done around slack tide. In order to find specific patch reefs to fish, a Global Positioning System (GPS) unit and a fathometer are necessary accessories on your vessel. As the tide begins to slack, proceed to the patch reef coordinates (motoring slowly into the tide) checking the fathometer as you pass over the area. Once you've located structure, put the motor in neutral and track the direction of your drift. This will indicate which way the wind and tide are pushing you. Run the

vessel back towards the structure. If you are grappling directly into structure, pass over the structure and throw the grapple. It should hook into structure. Adjust the amount of line to position the boat directly above structure. Use an anchor that will give or bend when retrieved. The procedure is similar using a sand anchor except anchoring occurs well upstream of the structure, paying out enough line to position the boat over the reef. Good Luck Fishing Delaware's Reefs!



Jay Little

Circle Hooks

Scientific studies have shown that the use of circle hooks reduces mortalities for hooking and releasing a variety of fish species, therefore the Division of Fish and Wildlife recommends their use when fishermen are using natural baits. Due to their unusual design, circle hooks invariably hook the fish in the corner of the mouth or elsewhere on the jaw allowing for much easier and quicker hook removal. Unlike standard “J”-style hooks however, the angler does not ‘set’ the hook, rather the line is tightened with the reel and the hook sets itself when the fish turns and runs. The significant reduction in hook and release mortality rates experienced for striped bass in all studies prompted the Division to develop a strict “Circle-Hook Only” regulation during the spawning season on the spawning grounds as stated below.



“Only non-offset circle hooks must be used when fishing with natural bait in designated striped bass spawning areas during the designated striped bass spawning season if you are using any hook having a gap greater than 3/8 inches as measured from the hook point to the shank of the hook.”

Fish Consumption Advisories

Fishing is an important activity in Delaware’s inland and coastal waters. Among the benefits provided by fishing are quality recreational opportunities, direct and indirect input to the local economy, food for recreational anglers, and food for the commercial marketplace. Fish are a good source of readily digestible protein, they are low in fat and sodium, and the unique types of fats found in fish are believed to provide cardiovascular benefits.

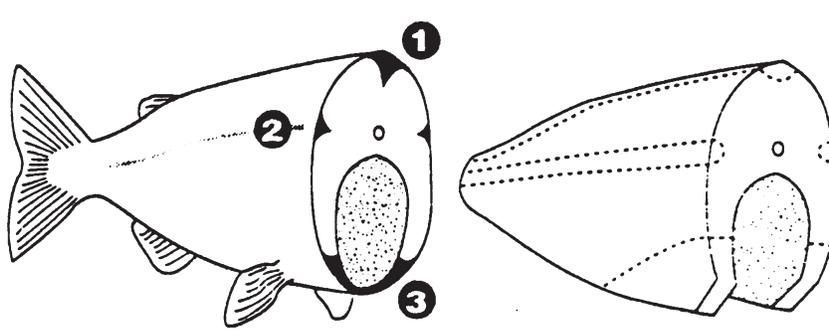
Despite the general benefits of fishing and fish consumption, there has been a growing concern regarding the presence of chemical toxins in the flesh of finfish and shellfish taken from Delaware waters and the associated health risk to anglers and their families who consume their catch. The existence of chemicals in the edible portion of some fish has resulted in the public advisories. These advisories are as a result of joint action taken by the Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control and the Department of Health and Social Service’s Division of Public Health. The advisories were deemed necessary because of the nature of pollutants such as polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs).

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Even when present in the water in extremely small amounts, some chemicals tend to build up over time in fish tissue because fish can absorb and concentrate contaminants from food they eat, or to a lesser extent, directly from the water. The amount of contaminants fish accumulate depends on the species, size, age, sex, and feeding area of the fish. Generally speaking, older, larger individual fish accumulate the most contaminants, although in some cases contaminants are shed each time the fish spawn. Since fish accumulate many contaminants in their fatty tissues, certain species with higher oil content can pose more risk than others when both inhabit polluted areas.

For more information concerning health advisories for Delaware waters, go on-line or contact the Division of Public Health at (302) 744-4546.

Cutting the Fat



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Toxic chemicals tend to concentrate in the fatty tissue, shown in black above, found in the:

- 1) dorsal area.
- 2) lateral line.
- 3) belly flaps.

When cleaning fish, always skin it and trim away fatty areas, as shown above.

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Delaware Fish Consumption Advisories

Waterbody	Species	Contaminant of concern	Geographical Extent	Meals/yr 8 -ounce serving
All Waters not listed below Delaware River	All Species not listed below All Finfish	All A, B, C, D	All Areas not listed Delaware State Line to the C&D Canal	52 0
Lower Delaware River	Weakfish-all sizes;	A	Chesapeake & Delaware Canal to	12
-and Delaware Bay	Bluefish-14 inches or less	A	the Mouth of the Delaware Bay	12
	Striped Bass, White Perch American Eel, White Catfish, Channel Catfish, Bluefish-greater than 14 inches	A, C	Chesapeake & Delaware Canal to the Mouth of the Delaware Bay	1 ♦
Delaware Atlantic Coastal Waters including Delaware Inland Bays	Bluefish-14 inches or less	A	Coastal Delaware from Mouth of the Delaware Bay Southward to MD/DE Line	12
	Bluefish-greater than 14 inches	A, C	Coastal Delaware from Mouth of the Delaware Bay Southward to MD/DE Line	1 ♦
Shellpot Creek	All Finfish	A	Governor Printz Blvd. to the Delaware River	0
Army Creek and Pond	All Finfish	A, B, G	Entire Creek and Pond	2
Red Lion Creek	All Finfish	A, B	Route 13 to the Delaware River	1
Chesapeake & Delaware Canal	All Finfish	A, F, E, H	Entire Canal in Delaware	0
Appoquinimink River	All Finfish	A, B	Tidal Portions	1
Drawyers Creek	All Finfish	A, F	Tidal Portions	1
Silver Lake Middletown	All Finfish	A, E, F, B	Entire Lake	1
Waples Pond	All Finfish	C	Entire Pond	12

Prime Hook Creek	All Finfish	C	Entire Creek	12
Slaughter Creek	All Finfish	A, G	Entire Creek	6
Saint Jones River	All Finfish	A, B, C	River Mouth to Silver Lake Dam	2
Moore's Lake	All Finfish	A, F	Entire Pond	2
Silver Lake Dover	All Finfish	A, B, C	Entire Pond	2
Wyoming Mill Pond	All Finfish	A, B, F	Entire Pond	2
Tidal Brandywine River	All Finfish	A	River Mouth to Baynard Blvd.	0
Non-tidal Brandywine River	All Finfish	A, B	Baynard Blvd. To Pennsylvania Line	6
Tidal Christina River	All Finfish	A, E	River Mouth to Smalley's Dam	0
Non-tidal Christina River	All Finfish	A, E, H	Smalley's Dam to DE/MD Line.	6
Tidal White Clay Creek	All Finfish	A	River Mouth to Route 4	0
Non-tidal White Clay Creek	All Finfish	A	Route 4 to DE/PA Line	12
Red Clay Creek	All Finfish	A, B, D	State Line to Stanton	6
Little Mill Creek	All Finfish	A	Creek Mouth to Kirkwood Highway	0
Christina Creek	Stocked Trout	A, E	Rittenhouse Park to DE/MD Line	6
Designated Trout Streams & Ponds other than Christina Creek	Stocked Trout	A	Designated Trout Streams are listed on pg. 12	12

Notes: ♦ Women of childbearing age and children should not consume any amount of these fish.

For more information on the specific contaminant(s) of concern for each waterbody listed, consult the Division's website (www.fw.delaware.gov) or contact DNREC at (302) 739-9902, or the Division of Public Health at (302) 744-4546.

Contaminants of concern: A) PCBs, B) Dioxin, C) Mercury, D) Chlorinated pesticides, E) Dieldrin, F) DDT, G) Furan, and H) Chlordane. For more information consult the Division's website or contact DNREC at (302) 739-9902, or the Division of Public Health at (302) 744-4546.

Measuring Finfish

Many of the popular recreational species of fish in Delaware are subject to minimum size limits as part of comprehensive fisheries management plans established on a coast-wide or regional basis, to maintain or rebuild fish stocks. All of the coastal states utilize “Total Length” as the standard measurement to determine if a fish is of legal size. The only exception is the federal requirement for sharks which is a “Fork Length” measurement.

Measuring Boards.

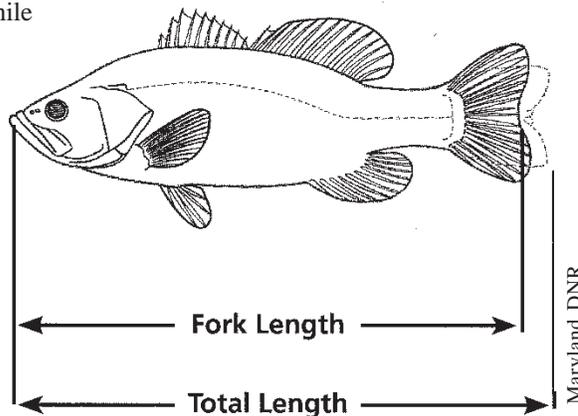
The correct and most accurate method to measure your catch is to use a “measuring board”. Measuring boards are easy to make and stow as part of your everyday fishing equipment. Use a 1” x 8” as long as the largest minimum size limit for the species that you will be fishing for. This will form the base of your measuring board. Take an additional 6-inch piece of the same material and attach it to the end such that it would form the letter “L”. Attach a yardstick or measuring tape to the center of the base with the end butted against the short upright piece.



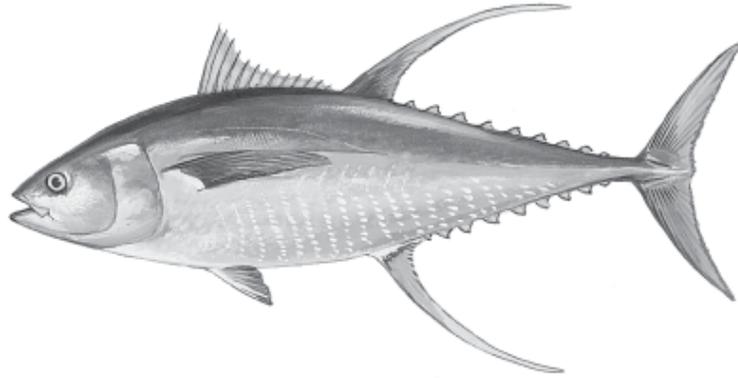
Measuring Your Catch

Place the fish on the measuring board with the tip of the jaw or snout against the upright with the mouth closed. Hold the head down with one hand to keep the fish in place, pinch the upper and lower lobes of the tail together while swiping the tail back and forth across the board. Note the measurement of the longest part of the tail*; that is the “total length”. Keep in mind that fish which barely make the minimum length may shrink after being on ice for an hour or more. Sometimes it is possible to get an accurate measurement while the fish is still in the landing net.

* - When measuring black sea bass do not include the long caudal fin filament in your measurement of total length.



Tuna Regulations



Tuna regulations and permits are available from the National Marine Fisheries Service phone: (888) USA-TUNA Federal web site: <http://www.nmfspermits.com>

Have you seen a sturgeon recently?



If you find a dead sturgeon please report it immediately : 302-653-2887 ext. 112. Don't forget to include an exact location and contact information in your message.

Blue Crabs

Effective January 1, 2008 a fishing license is required to crab in all waters of the State of Delaware. See page 6

The blue crab is common in all the tidal waters of Delaware. It is a popular recreational resource and tops the list of the State's economically important marine fish and shellfish.

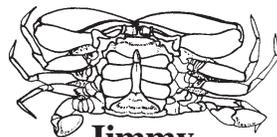
Blue crabs grow very quickly and reach maturity in 12 to 18 months. Most do not live beyond two years under current exploitation levels.

In order to grow, a blue crab must shed its shell and form a new shell. This process is repeated up to 18 times to attain maximum length. It is legal to take crabs at three stages, but to get the most yield in weight out of a crab, they should reach a minimum length before being harvested. This is measured from tip to tip of the back shell.

Mature females (sooks) are identified by the rounded apron on their under side. Once this stage of development is achieved, females stop growing. Because a portion of the female population does not reach five inches before achieving maturity, the minimum size requirement has been dropped. Females bearing eggs, commonly known as sponge crabs, may not be taken and should be returned to the water immediately.

Recreational crabbers may use two pots, however the person claiming to own the pots must tend them. These pots must be marked with all white buoys with the owner's full name and permanent mailing address inscribed either on the buoy or on a waterproof tag attached to the buoy. All crab pots must be tended at least once every 72 hours. All crab pots must be removed from the water between December 1 and February 28. Recreational crabbers may use a trot line (no length limit) and any number of hand lines or traps. The recreational daily limit is one bushel per person.

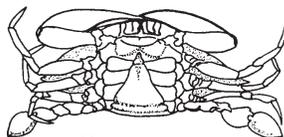
A **by-catch reduction device** is required to be attached in each funnel entrance of a recreational crab pot to reduce the possibility of diamondback terrapins entering and drowning. A by-catch reduction device is a rigid rectangular frame of plastic or metal that measures 1.75 inches x 4.75 inches and is available at local tackle shops, or can be hand-made from heavy wire or other suitable material.



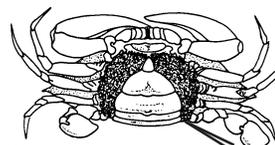
Jimmy
Mature Male



Sook
Mature Female



She-crab
Immature Female



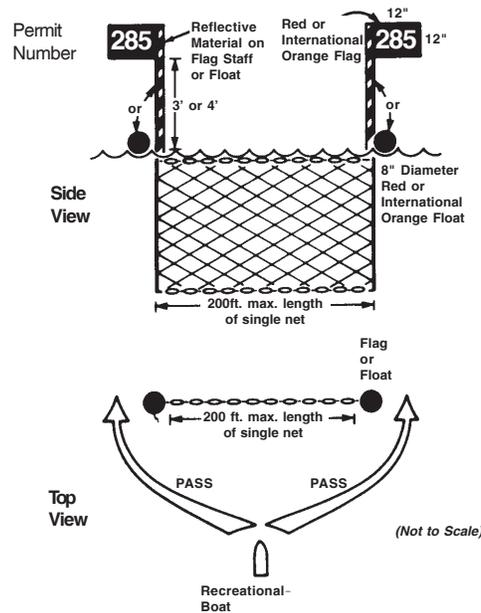
Orange eggs under the apron
Sponge Crab
Female with eggs

Recreational Gill Nets

A recreational fisherman, with a \$5.00 permit for residents and \$50.00 for non-residents obtained from the Department, may fish a staked or anchored gill net, no longer than 200 feet in certain areas and times. The net must have floats or flags at both ends of the net with the netter's permit number on the floats or flags. Between May 11 and September 30, a recreational gill net may only be fished in the Delaware River and Bay to the north of Route 16 in Broadkill Beach within one-half nautical mile of the shoreline and in the Inland Bays within 1,000 feet of the shoreline. Between May 1 and November 30, the net shall not be fished to the south of Route 16 in the Delaware Bay or Ocean.

Other restrictions apply to recreational gill nets and anyone obtaining a permit will be informed of these restrictions. During 2009 all gill nets must be removed from the Delaware Bay and Ocean on the following dates: May 1-10; May 15-17; May 22-25; May 29-31; June 5-7 June 12-14; June 19-21; June 26-30 in order to reduce weakfish mortality rates as required by the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission's Weakfish Management Plan. Each closure period begins at 12:01 AM on the first day and ends at midnight on the last day. No striped bass caught in recreational gill nets may be retained at any time.

Nets Must Have Floats or Flags



Fishing Advisory Councils

By Delaware law there are four citizen advisory councils with members appointed by the Governor to provide guidance to the Division of Fish and Wildlife on issues associated with fishing and fishery resources. All members serve without compensation. The Council on Game and Fish consists of 9 members and they provide advice on wildlife and freshwater fisheries matters. The Council on Shell Fisheries consists of seven members, at least four of whom represent commercial shellfishing interests, one recreational shellfisherman, and one person knowledgeable in marine fisheries. These two advisory councils have been in existence since the early 1970s. The Advisory Council on Tidal Finfisheries consists of seven members, three of whom represent recreational fisheries interests and three represent commercial fisheries. This council was formed in 1984. Legislation that passed late in 2007 authorized the creation of the newest advisory council, the Council on Recreational Fishing Funding. This seven member council of citizens with an interest in recreational fisheries also includes two ex-officio members of the General Assembly and a non-voting representative of the Division of Fish and Wildlife. This newest council is charged with advising the Division on construction related priorities for expenditure of funds generated from the sale of recreational fishing licenses.

The length of appointments to these councils varies, but in general is for three years at a time. The various councils meet monthly in the case of Game and Fish and Tidal Finfisheries (except that Tidal Finfisheries does not meet in July, August, and December), quarterly for Shell Fisheries, and once or twice per year for the new Council on Recreational Fishing Funding. The council meetings are held in the Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control's auditorium on weekday evenings, and the public is encouraged to attend and participate. For more details on meeting schedules of the various advisory councils, check the Division's website (www.fw.Delaware.gov) and follow the links for advisory councils.

Invasive Species

Northern snakeheads, zebra mussels, hydrilla, Japanese green crabs, Asian shore crabs... Every week it seems that a new alien species has invaded our waters, often with detrimental effects on our native species.

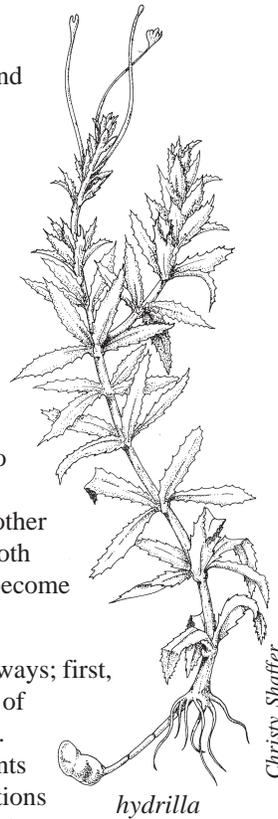
Habitat destruction and invasive species are the two biggest reasons for declines in native plants and animals. Plants are especially important in altering habitat and affecting those species that depend on that habitat. For example, the use of non-native ornamental plants in water gardens would not seem to be a

continued on page 55

problem. However, many of these (purple loosestrife or creeping water primrose) have escaped or have been “released” and begun to dominate the natural landscape where it occurs. The native insects that normally feed on the native plants have less food, and don’t adapt to the new plants as a food source. Birds and other animals that feed on those insects will also be affected. Changes at the base of the food web (plants) affect all parts of the web.

Sometimes, the problem is not the original alien species but a parasite or disease ‘hitch-hiker’ that is brought with it. A prime example of this would be VHS (viral hemorrhagic septicemia) which can affect most of our gamefish species, both fresh and brackish water. Currently there is a federal order preventing the transport of untested live fish from any of the Great Lakes States without a certified inspection in an effort to stop the spread of this disease. This strictly limits the purchase of any fish for stocking from PA, NY, Ohio or other states in the region. Since Delaware often purchases both bass and trout from Pennsylvania hatcheries, this may become a problem for us.

Anglers can help with the invasive problem in two ways; first, by serving as extra eyes on the water. Always be aware of unusual fish, plants, or even invertebrates in our waters. Most anglers are knowledgeable about the types of plants and animals that they commonly see or catch. Observations of something unknown or completely out of place could be a signal that something may be wrong. If you see something that you feel is very unusual, please contact us at: 302-739-9914. There are three invasive species that could potentially show up in Delaware waters that should be on your radar; the northern snakehead, zebra mussel and flathead catfish. All three species have been documented in neighboring states and could pose a real threat to our fish communities if they were to become established here. To date, we are unaware of any angler encounters with them in Delaware, but we have had numerous ‘false alarms’. Snakeheads have been confused with anything from eastern mudminnows to chain pickerel to eels. If you catch a snakehead or a flathead catfish – do not return it to the water – kill it and contact one of the Division’s field offices or a Fish and Wildlife enforcement office nearest you. Document the catch by either freezing the fish or taking a good photo before disposing of it.



hydrilla

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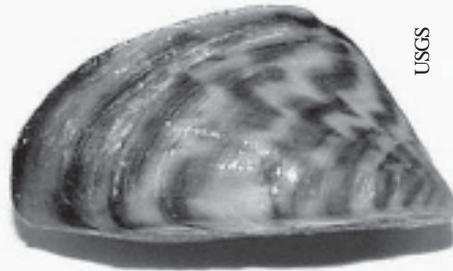
continued from page 55

Secondly, some well-meaning anglers “stock” species that they feel will be good sport fish such as redear sunfish. However, non-natives may also impact our resident fishes in ways not yet known. Keep in mind that it was only a century ago that fisheries agencies and the federal government stocked common carp in most waters to provide another food fish. Too late, it was found that this fish greatly impacts our gamefish through sheer numbers and muddies the water affecting spawning of nest builders such as the sunfish. So please, don’t stock fish, no matter the species, in any public waters.

If you see something that you feel is very unusual, please contact the Division of Fish & Wildlife at: 302-739-9914.

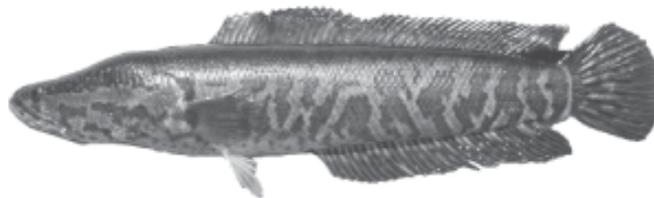
Zebra & Quagga Mussels

These closely related freshwater mussels can survive out of water for almost 5 days and are easily transported from one waterway to another as adults or larvae by humans; found in several quarries in PA, often those used by divers, and the lower Susquehanna River. The mussels attach to anything in the water in large clumps impeding water flow. Both have light and dark bands.



Northern Snakehead Fish

Native to Asia, this widely-known fish was found in MD and caused a media frenzy. It has become established in the Potomac with unknown impacts on native fishes. The snakehead is a long cylindrical fish, with long dorsal & anal fins, and a large mouth with sharp teeth. Markings are dark irregular blotches on the sides. They prefer heavily vegetated ponds and streams.



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Flathead Catfish



PA Fish & Boat
Comm.

Present in some Chesapeake drainages, the flathead was reported from the Schuylkill River and subsequently the main stem of the Delaware River. They are most easily recognized by their flat head profile, highly mottled black and brown coloration, and lower jaw which sticks out well beyond the upper jaw. They grow quite large and prey on a variety of native fish species. Sharp declines in other fishes were noted where flathead catfish became well established. These predators could hinder restoration of other important species such as striped bass and American shad.

Chinese Mitten Crab



Smithsonian Environmental Research Center

First found in the Chesapeake bay in 2006 by a commercial crabber, 5 crabs were also reported from DE waters in 2007. They are most easily identified by their fuzzy claws and a notch between the eyes. The shell grows up to 4 inches across. This crab could be found in non-tidal freshwater as well as saltwater.

Clamming

Methods Of Take And Limits

A fishing license is required to harvest clams in waters of the State of Delaware. See Page 6 for details.

It shall be unlawful for any person to attempt to take, catch, kill or reduce to possession any hard clams with a device other than a hand-held rake with a head no wider than fourteen (14) inches measured perpendicular to the tines and a straight handle not in excess of seven (7) feet in length.

It is unlawful to harvest hard clams from one-half hour after sunset through one-half hour before sunrise.

It is unlawful for any resident to harvest more than one hundred (100) clams per day unless otherwise permitted to do so by license or permit.

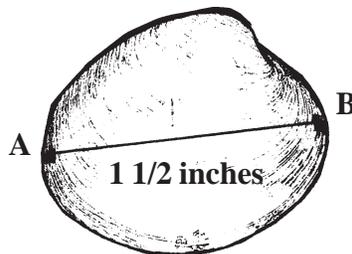
It is unlawful for any non-resident to harvest more than fifty (50) hard clams per day unless otherwise permitted to do so by license or permit.

No shellfish harvesting (excluding crabs) is allowed in the **Prohibited Areas** marked on the adjacent map or any tidal river, stream, or impoundment of the state. This includes all non-tidal and impounded water as well. Shellfish harvesting is allowed from December 1 through April 15 in the **Seasonally Approved Areas**. This is your protection against contracting shellfish-borne diseases. This is also the law. All boundaries may be marked with signs and or buoys saying "No Shellfish Harvesting" or "Prohibited Shellfish Area". Questions regarding these closures should be directed to the Watershed Assessment Section Shellfish and Recreational Waters Programs 302-739-9939. Clamming is prohibited in eel grass beds marked with white PVC pipes and signs.



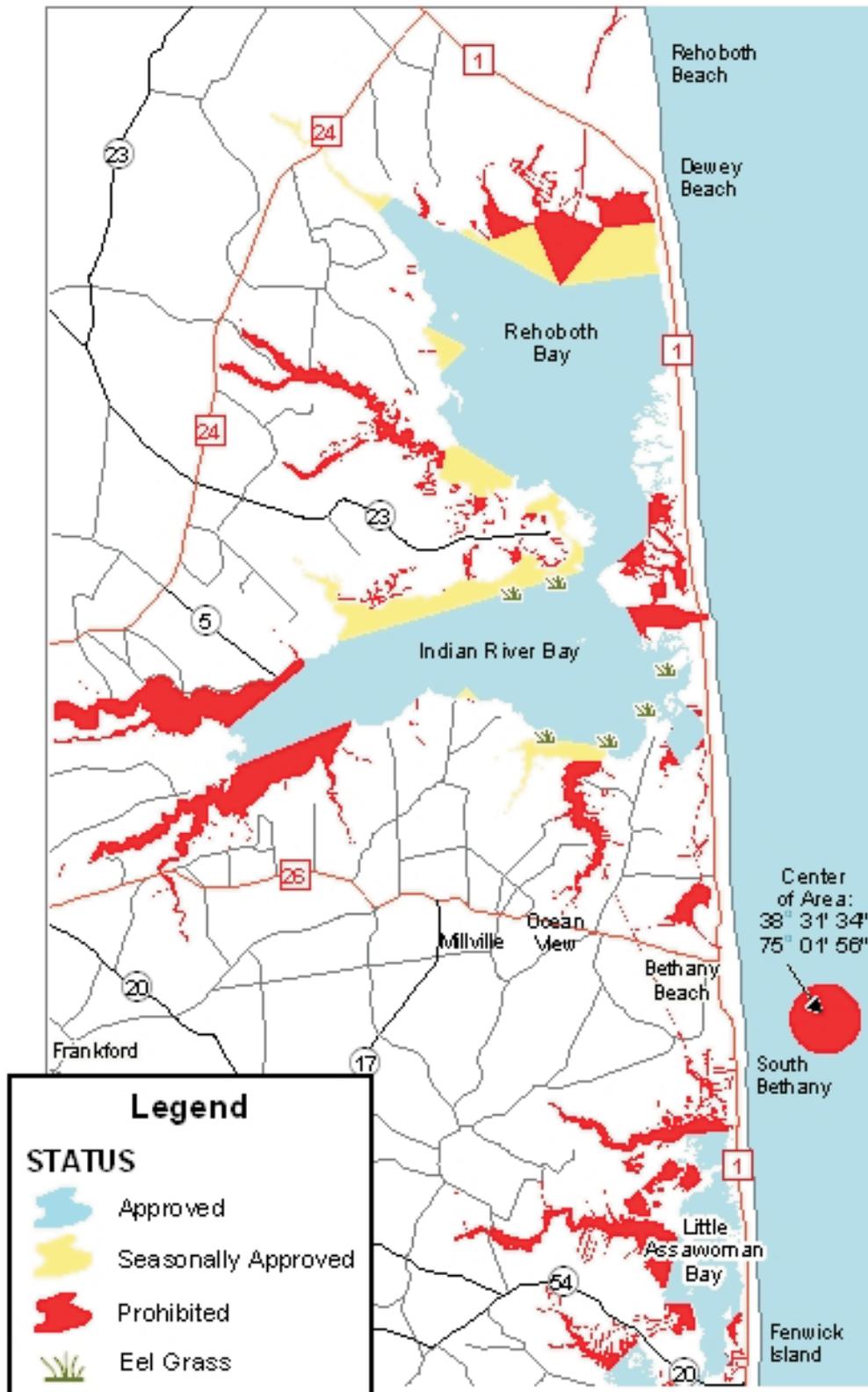
Dave Shirey

Minimum Hard Clam Size



The minimum size for a hard clam is 1 1/2 inches from point A to point B.

Clamming Map



Clamming is prohibited in eel grass beds marked with signs and white PVC pipe.

Discover Fishing at Delaware State Parks



Seasoned anglers or beginners; freshwater, saltwater or fly fishing; your boat or one of ours; whatever your fishing needs, Delaware State Parks has a special place for you.

- Boat Ramps
- Fishing and Crabbing Piers
- Boat Rentals
- Bait and Tackle Shops
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