New Deer Island Pier Open This Season!

SCUP! Catch em up!

- Recreational Saltwater Fishing Regulations
- Commonly Caught Species
- Massachusetts Saltwater Fishing Derby
- Massachusetts Saltwater Fishing Calendar
- Lobstering and Crabbing
- Bait & Tackle Shops
- Charter & Head Boats

Division of Marine Fisheries
Department of Fish and Game
Shhhhh. No wake zone.

Protect your baby (and their toys) with coverage for fishing gear and personal property too.

1-800-PROGRESSIVE / PROGRESSIVE.COM
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On the Cover:
Charter Captain Mel True of Fishnet Charters shows off a scup caught by a customer.
Photo courtesy Capt. Mel True

Image courtesy Brian O'Connor
Getting Back to Normal

Fishing has always been a popular pastime, but in 2020 we saw a surge in interest because of the pandemic. DMF saw an increase in resident saltwater fishing permit sales of about 20%. Many anglers rediscovered great local fishing. Fishing is a lot of fun, can produce amazing fresh nutrition, and is by nature a “socially distanced” form of recreation. Tackle shops saw many product lines sold out, and boat dealers saw unprecedented sales. More people stayed close to home and rediscovered the pursuit of our prized species such as striped bass, bluefish, sea bass, scup, and more. However for-hire fishing businesses, including party and charter boats, who often accommodate tourist anglers, suffered greatly this past year due to the pandemic’s travel and vessel capacity limitations. Those captains are ready in 2021 to take their customers once again to productive fishing grounds for some excellent fishing.

On the resource side, striped bass anglers all along the east coast are now using circle hooks to minimize the inadvertent mortality to released stripers. The response to this new rule has been very positive as so many anglers want to see their sport fishing sustained. Another encouraging sign is the abundance of menhaden (AKA “pogies”) that have been seen in large and recurring schools throughout state waters, especially north of Cape Cod. These filter-feeding fish, rich in oil and calories, are the preferred prey of so many predator fish. Follow the bait and you will find the fish…and the sea birds, the ospreys, and marine mammals such as humpback whales. Speaking of whales, DMF and the MA Environmental Police can use your help to report any sightings of any entangled or stranded marine mammals or turtles. You can find the list of contacts in this guide.

On shore, DMF is proud to open its newest fishing pier at Deer Island in Boston this year. This amazing fishing structure was erected on MA Water Resources Authority property and was a cooperative project with the Authority. This is another in the growing list of DMF-funded access projects that are supported with the dedicated saltwater fishing permit revenues. DMF is working diligently with its partners including the Office of Fishing and Boating Access to improve the ability of anglers to reach the water.

Don’t forget to enter the Saltwater Derby for 2021. We are hoping to be able to reconvene next winter with all the 2021 winners for an in-person trophy ceremony. We are all looking forward to more in-person meetings and gatherings with the fishing public soon. Getting back to normal will eventually mean gathering in larger groups again for the things we all love to do: the backyard cookout, Red Sox games, the 4th of July and enjoying one another’s company. This past year has reminded us how rewarding fishing can be with friends and family, so go fishing! Fish from shore, fish from one of the DMF piers, or fish on a charter or party boat where the captains’ skill and knowledge can practically guarantee success.

Daniel J. McKiernan, Director
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The Division of Marine Fisheries

The Department of Fish and Game's Division of Marine Fisheries is responsible for the management of the Commonwealth's living marine resources. The Division promotes and develops commercial and recreational fisheries through research, technical assistance, and the collection of statistics. Biologists are assigned to regions of the state and interact with many federal, interstate, state, and local management agencies as well as local fishing groups. For further information, contact your local Recreational Fisheries Biologist.

Recreational Fisheries Program Biologists

**South Shore Office:**
836 South Rodney
French Boulevard
New Bedford, MA 02744
(508) 990-2860

John Boardman
South Shore/South Coast
john.boardman@mass.gov

**Annisquam River Marine Fisheries Station:**
30 Emerson Avenue
Gloucester, MA 01930
(978) 282-0308

Matt Ayer
North Shore/Metro Boston
matt.ayer@mass.gov

**Boston Office:**
251 Causeway St.,
Suite 400
Boston, MA 02114
(617) 626-1520

Office of Law Enforcement

Environmental Police Officers are responsible for enforcing Massachusetts fish and game laws including the commercial and recreational harvest of living marine resources. In addition, they also enforce the Commonwealth's boating and recreational vehicle laws and regulations. Fishing violations can be reported to the following number:

**Toll-Free Number:**
1-800-632-8075

Visit our Home Page at www.mass.gov/marinefisheries

We’ve implemented a new email subscription service to make it easier for you to get timely updates on the topics which interest you. Stay connected with the latest DMF recreational, commercial, and event updates by signing up. Go to mass.gov/marinefisheries and click “subscribe to DMF email updates”

About This Guide

This high-quality guide is offered to you by the Massachusetts Division of Marine Fisheries through its unique partnership with J.F. Griffin Publishing, LLC.

The revenue generated through ad sales significantly lowers production costs and generates savings. These savings translate into additional funds for other important agency programs.

If you have any feedback or are interested in advertising, please contact us at 413.884.1001 or at www.JFGriffin.com

Graphic Design:
Jon Gulley, Dane Fay, John Corey, Evelyn Haddad, Chris Sobolowski

Saltwater: This guide is also available online at eRegulations.com
DMF is conducting multiple tagging studies to investigate the movements of striped bass, Atlantic cod, and winter flounder. Fish have been both internally and externally tagged with acoustic transmitters.

If you recapture a tagged fish (with DMF on the tag):
Record the:
date caught, location, length, weight, and tag number.

If the fish is being harvested, retain the internal tag.

To claim your reward contact:
MA Division of Marine Fisheries
Bill Hoffman
(978) 282-0308 ext. 106
bill.hoffman@mass.gov
Common Rigs Used for Bait Fishing

Three-Way Rig: Gets its name from using a three-way swivel and is useful for catching striped bass, tautog, winter flounder, and just about any other bottom-dwelling species. Various lengths (6-24 inches) can be used for the weighed leader which carries the bait down in the water column. The baited leader (12-36 inches) presents live or dead bait when stationary or drifting and can be used to slow-troll plugs or other lures.

Fish-Finder Rig: A simple rig to set up and tie that can be used when fishing for multiple species from shore. This rig allows for large pieces of bait to be presented and allows for the fish to ingest the bait before setting the hook. The weight on the slide swivel holds the line down but allows for the bait to be dropped back to fish such as striped bass, fluke, and many others.

Improved Clinch Knot

The improved clinch knot has become one of the most popular knots for tying terminal tackle connections. It is quick and easy to tie and is strong and reliable. The knot can be difficult to tie in lines in excess of 30 lb test. Five+ turns around the standing line is generally recommended, four can be used in heavy line. This knot is not recommended with braided lines.

1. Thread end of the line through the eye of the hook, swivel or lure. Double back and make five or more turns around the standing line. Bring the end of the line through the first loop formed behind the eye, then through the big loop.

2. Wet knot and pull slightly on the tag end to draw up coils. Pull on the standing line to form knot with coils pressed neatly together.

3. Slide tight against eye and clip tag end.

Blood Knot

Use this knot to join sections of leader or line together. It works best with line of approximately equal diameter.

1. Overlap ends of lines to be joined. Twist one around the other making 5 turns. Bring tag end back between the two lines. Repeat with other end, wrapping in opposite direction the same number of turns.

2. Slowly pull lines or leaders in opposite directions. Turns will wrap and gather.

3. Pull tight and clip ends closely.

These and more fishing knots are available on waterproof plastic cards at [www.proknot.com](http://www.proknot.com)
Who Needs a Permit?
All anglers age 16 or older that wish to engage in the recreational activity of finfishing, with the following exceptions:

- Anglers who regardless of their age otherwise meet the definition of a disabled person in M.G.L. c. 19C
- Anglers fishing on permitted for-hire vessels (charter/head boat)

Reciprocity
All permitted MA residents may fish in the three neighboring coastal states (NH, RI, CT)
Permitted anglers from these three neighboring coastal states may also fish in MA waters

Permit Fee
The fee for an individual angler (resident or non-resident) is $10
No charge for anglers age 60 or over

How Will the Permit Fee Money be Used?
All money from permit fees are deposited into a dedicated account and can only be used for implementing projects that will enhance recreational saltwater fishing including:

- Improvement of public access for recreational saltwater anglers
- Development and implementation of education materials for the public
- Other marine recreational fishing programs approved by the recreational fishing development panel

To Obtain a 2021 Massachusetts Recreational Saltwater Fishing Permit:
Visit our website at:
www.mass.gov/marinefisheries

Call toll-free from 5am-5pm:
1-866-703-1925
For a list of permit vendor locations and to view frequently asked questions, please visit our website at:
www.mass.gov/marinefisheries

For questions, please email:
marine.fish@mass.gov
or call:
Boston – (617) 626-1520
Gloucester – (978) 282-0308 x150
New Bedford – (508) 990-2860

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Have You Fished Today?
Here’s What You Could Be Catching!

Bluefish

Bonito

Striped Bass

Summer Flounder

Tautog

Black Sea Bass

Sandbar shark
(harvest prohibited, catch and release only)

Longfin squid

Bluefin Tuna
Know How To Handle Your Fish — Both On The Line and Off

Use circle hooks. Circle hooks, along with barbless hooks, greatly reduce the chance of lethally wounding a fish. Make sure that the point is in line with the shank and not offset (often sold as octopus circle hooks); this is especially important in catch and release.

Have a fair fight. Use appropriate tackle for the size and species of fish you're trying to catch. Stay focused when reeling in fish as higher stress levels and often higher mortality rates are associated with longer fight times.

Stay wet. When the fish gets close, be sure to handle it with wet hands. Using a dry cloth or gloves can remove both slime and scales, both needed for the fish's health.

Keep it in the water. If you aren't going to keep or measure the fish, try to remove the hook with the fish in the water. This will keep the fish happier and both you and your boat cleaner!

Support the fish. When removing a fish from the water, be sure to support the full body weight. Place your hand under the belly of the fish as you lift it out of the water. Don't ever grab the fish by the gills or eyes and never hold the fish up by only its jaw.

Get that hook out. Hopefully you’re using a circle hook, but whatever hook it is, get it out quickly. Use a dehooker if you don’t need to pull the fish out of the water or pliers if necessary to remove a stubborn hook. If the hook is deep in the mouth or gut, simply cut the line as close to the hook as possible before releasing the fish.

Reduce time out of the water. The longer the fish stays out of the water, the greater the chance of mortality. Get a quick photo or measurement and get it back into the water. Be sure to know the regulations before you start fishing so there is no question as to what the size limit is.

Don’t just toss it back. Remember, a fish out of water is holding its breath! Help it take a “deep breath” by releasing it head-first. If necessary, hold onto the fish and move it back and forth in the water to increase flow of oxygen-rich water over its gills before letting it go.

DMF strongly recommends the use of circle hooks for their proven ability to reduce mortality of released fish.
Circle Hooks Save Fish!

Did you know...

- Recreational anglers in Massachusetts catch and release millions of fish each year!
- Sometimes fish die from their hook wounds after they are released back into the ocean.
- Circle hooks can help lower the number of these deaths by 50%!

Using Circle Hooks

1. **When using live bait**, turn the hook through soft flesh or bridle the bait to the hook.
2. **For cut-bait**, rotate the piece completely onto the hook to ensure it doesn’t fall off.
3. **When the fish takes the bait**, be patient and don’t set the hook.
4. Calmly reel the line tight and the hook will do all the work.

What species benefit from Circle Hooks?

Fish that eat by inhaling their food are good candidates for circle hooks. Examples include:

- **Striped Bass**
  hook size: 7/0, 8/0, 9/0, 10/0

- **Black Sea Bass**
  hook size: 4/0, 5/0, 6/0

- **Tuna Species**
  be sure the gap on the hook you select is large enough to fit around the lip of your target fish

**New Coastwide Rule for 2021**

- Striped bass anglers must use in-line circle hooks when targeting striped bass if using bait: any marine or aquatic organism, live or dead, whole or parts thereof.
- Visit [www.mass.gov/marinefisheries](http://www.mass.gov/marinefisheries) for more information.

**Why don’t circle hooks snag?**

Circle hooks are designed so that the point is turned back towards the shank at a 90° angle. This causes the hook to catch on the lip or mouth instead of the gut or gills.

**Avoid offset hooks**

Offset hooks are NOT true circle hooks! The offset shape makes it easy to “foul-hook” a fish.
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visit us online at www.crocodilebay.com CST# 2049694-10
New Deer Island Pier Open This Season!

Recreational saltwater anglers value access to high quality fishing locations along our coastline. Access can mean a boat ramp, sandy beach, rocky jetty, fishing pier, and even artificial reefs. In keeping with the mission of continuing to provide and protect that access, DMF, along with the Department of Fish and Game’s Office of Fishing and Boating Access (FBA) have constructed a brand-new fishing pier in Boston Harbor. The Deer Island Pier is open and ready for anglers of all skill levels to enjoy the phenomenal sights and target a variety of species, including striped bass, mackerel, and winter flounder!

A fishing pier providing access to Boston Harbor was first conceived by the Marine Recreational Fisheries Development Panel back in 2012. This appointed panel provides advice to the DMF director on recreational permit revenue fund spending. At the time, with several successful pier projects on Cape Cod and the Islands either completed or in the pipeline, panel members stressed to DMF that seeking out an urban opportunity for a future large-scale fishing access project would benefit a wide range of anglers.

At first sight, the Deer Island location was promising on many levels. Further evaluation by staff biologists and local fishing experts supported the site as a suitable location to provide much-needed public access to Boston Harbor. In 2015, the panel endorsed the development of a recreational fishing pier at Deer Island.

Over the next few years, DMF worked with other state and local agencies, stakeholders, and engineers to take the Deer Island Fishing Pier from a concept to construction. In late July, 2019, construction began with the dissembling of a portion of the rocky shoreline, the first sign of the stunning pier to come.

Getting to this point required DMF’s close cooperation with two other entities: the Massachusetts Water Resources Authority (MWRA) and the FBA. The MWRA owns and operates the Deer Island Wastewater Treatment Plant, a massive facility that was part of a $3.8 billion program that had successfully cleaned up Boston Harbor. The plant handles and treats wastewater from 43 greater Boston communities. The MWRA also manages the public access areas of Deer Island, which includes sixty acres of open space and 2.6 miles of accessible walking paths. The land provides unmatchable views of the skyline, Boston Harbor and the Harbor Islands, Broad Sound, and Logan Airport. The FBA works closely with DMF and provides support, including site selection and engineering, throughout this and other public access projects. The collaboration is essential to the continued improvement and construction of new and old access sites.

Construction continued in 2019 with the pouring of the seawall and driving of steel pilings, with continued assembling of the structure into the winter. As 2020 began, the decking and railings were cut and began being added. After the last plank and railing were attached there was little left to do but install the lights that would lead the way out onto the newly finished pier. The final step of the project was having a new parking lot built adjacent to the pier. The additional parking and existing bus service make this an exceptional site for the fishing public who want to travel to this newest access point on the Massachusetts coastline!

During construction, schools of striped bass were seen blitzing within casting distance from the end of the pier. Local anglers have told tales of winter flounder being caught in the footprint of this location. Bluefish and tautog are no stranger to these waters either. There is little doubt that many fish will be caught form this steel and timber structure and the memories of time spent fishing with family and friends will last for many years to come.

This project is funded by the Marine Recreational Fisheries Development Fund which is financed through the sale of recreational saltwater fishing permits. One third of the fund is dedicated to providing anglers with public access to saltwater fishing opportunities.
We need your help!
Become a citizen scientist!

We’re looking for volunteer anglers to report their groundfish catch, fishing time, and locations. The first 100 participants will get a free pair of fishing pliers, and each reported fishing trip will enter your name in a drawing for a YETI cooler.

Go to www.mass.gov/haddock to sign up.
Species Profile: Scup

If you’re looking for something new to catch and eat, try scup! This seafood recommendation may come as a surprise to the many anglers who have caught and released these plentiful and voracious feeders without realizing that scup are quite tasty and easy to prepare.

With a shiny, silvery color and tall disc-like body, the scup is a commonly caught species in areas like Nantucket Sound, Vineyard Sound, and Buzzards Bay.

Large schools of scup can be found starting in early May, when Massachusetts coastal waters reach 45 degrees. Scup are a lot of fun to catch, and if you come upon a large school the action can be fast and furious as you drop and reel to your heart’s content. Take caution when handling scup during hook removal, as they have very sharp dorsal spines.

In Southern New England, scup spawn from May to August, peaking in June. By age 2–3 (when they are roughly 6 inches), most scup are sexually mature. Females release an average of 7,000 eggs per annual spawn, which often takes place over sandy or weedy areas. Fertilized eggs float for about 40 hours before they hatch, and larvae begin feeding

Massachusetts Sportsmen’s Council

Serving Massachusetts' Sportsmen Since 1929
www.masportsmen.org

Please Immediately Report Sightings of Entangled Marine Animals

Call 1-800-900-3622 (Provincetown Center for Coastal Studies in MA, NH, and RI) or 1-877-775-6622 (NOAA).

Sightings can also be reported to the Coast Guard on Channel 16.
on copepods and other plankton within several days. As larvae mature, they settle to the sea floor and develop into juveniles. These juveniles will remain in shallow water estuaries through the summer and early fall. Each year, as many as 80% of all juvenile scup are eaten by larger predators such as striped bass, bluefish, and black sea bass. Adult scup feed on bottom invertebrates like crabs, annelid worms, clams, mussels, jellyfish, and sand dollars. Scup can live up to at least 14 years, weigh up to 5 pounds, and grow up to 18 inches, although most of the catch in Massachusetts consists of fish less than 6 years old, 3 pounds in weight, and 14 inches in length. The current state record scup is 5 pounds 14 ounces!

Scup are targeted by both commercial and recreational fishermen, and they are regulated by both interstate and federal fishery management plans. Overall, the management plans allocate 78% of the annual allowed harvest to the commercial fishery, and 22% to the recreational fishery. The commercial fishery is managed by a quota system, minimum fish size, and gear restrictions. The recreational fishery is managed by regional possession limits, minimum sizes, and season lengths designed to achieve the harvest limit. There are also special regulations for the charter and party boat fisheries.

The scup stock is managed by the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission and is in great shape with the estimate of spawning stock biomass being almost double the target value. This is good news for this important species that is targeted not only by anglers but also by other predatory fish that feed on the smaller scup as prey.

So go on, get out there on the water and catch up this tasty species. You can catch them from shore, private boat, charterboat, or headboat. As with any species, be familiar with the regulations and have a measuring device ready to quickly check if you have keepers, should you wish to take some home.

Filing a scup takes some practice, but once you get the hang of it the meat is a cinch to cook. A very sharp filet knife and a sturdy cutting surface are a must, and watching a few video tutorials of filleting a scup will help ensure you get as much meat as possible from your catch. Baked, broiled, grilled, or pan fried, scup is a light and sweet fish that cooks quickly and is a delicious addition to your weekly meal plan!
Approximately one-half of all saltwater recreational fishing trips take place from shore. Unfortunately, this highly popular method of fishing is being threatened by the rapidly accelerating loss of public access to coastal waters. Much of this loss is the direct result of acquisition and development of coastal properties by private parties who then post their holdings against public access. In Massachusetts, colonial law granted private ownership to the intertidal zone (the wet sand), but reserved the public rights of fishing, fowling, and navigation. Although the public rights were reserved for certain uses of the intertidal zone, it is often not possible to enjoy those rights because access across private property to the intertidal zone was never reserved.

To guarantee that the public has access to shore-based fishing opportunities, the Massachusetts Division of Marine Fisheries and the Department’s Office of Fishing and Boating Access (FBA) with help from federal aid in Sport Fish Restoration funds and funds generated from the sale of recreational fishing permits, have made it a priority to find, acquire, and provide access by way of land acquisition of easements and/or tidal property. Currently there are fourteen Marine Fisheries properties and/or FBA properties or facilities providing anglers with access to shore fishing locations:

- Wareham River Fish Pier, Wareham
- Craven’s Landing at Scorton’s Creek, Sandwich
- Popponesset Beach Shorefishing Area, Mashpee
- Parker River Fishing Pier, Yarmouth
- Bass River Fishing Pier, Yarmouth (South Street)
- Bass River Fishing Pier, Yarmouth (High Bank Rd)
- Dogfish Bar, Aquinnah
- Great Rock Bight Shorefishing Area, Chilmark
- Leland Beach, Edgartown
- Fore River Shorefishing Area, Quincy
- Broad Cove Shorefishing Area, Somerset
- Cashman Park Fishing Pier, Newburyport
- Oak Bluffs Fishing Pier, Martha’s Vineyard
- Deer Island Fishing Pier, Boston

For a full listing of access sites, see pages 27-30.
This summer, children from age 7 to 15 and their families can join us for one of our Angler Education programs.

FREE clinics covering:
• Knot tying
• How to cast
• Catch and release fishing tips
• Educational activities
• AND MUCH MORE!

Clinic dates and registration are available on our website:
www.mass.gov/service-details/saltwater-angler-education-program
Regulations listed below are subject to change during the 2021 season.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SPECIES</th>
<th>NOTE</th>
<th>MIN. SIZE</th>
<th>OPEN PERIODS</th>
<th>POSSESSION LIMITS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>American Eel</td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>9&quot;</td>
<td>All Year</td>
<td>25 fish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Shad</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>Catch and release only, with exceptions.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black Sea Bass</td>
<td>(3,7)</td>
<td>15&quot;</td>
<td>May 18 – Sep 8</td>
<td>5 fish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blue Marlin</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bluefish, Private Vessel &amp; Shore</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black Sea Bass</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bluefish, For-Hire Vessels</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cod (North of Cape Cod)</td>
<td>(4,5)</td>
<td>21&quot;</td>
<td>Sep 15 - Sep 30 &amp; Apr 1 - Apr 14</td>
<td>1 fish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cod (South &amp; East of Cape Cod)</td>
<td>(4,5)</td>
<td>21&quot;</td>
<td>All Year</td>
<td>10 fish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dab (Plaice)</td>
<td>(4,5)</td>
<td>14&quot;</td>
<td>All Year</td>
<td>No limit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fluke (Summer Flounder)</td>
<td>(7)</td>
<td>17&quot;</td>
<td>May 23 – Oct 9</td>
<td>5 fish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gray Sole (Witch)</td>
<td>(4,5)</td>
<td>14&quot;</td>
<td>All Year</td>
<td>No limit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Haddock (Witch)</td>
<td>(4,5)</td>
<td>17&quot;</td>
<td>Apr 1 - Dec 31</td>
<td>15 fish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Halibut</td>
<td>(4,5)</td>
<td>41&quot;</td>
<td>All Year</td>
<td>1 fish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monkfish</td>
<td>(4,5)</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>All Year</td>
<td>No limit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pollock</td>
<td>(4,5)</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>All Year</td>
<td>No limit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Redfish</td>
<td>(4,5)</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>All Year</td>
<td>No limit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>River Herring</td>
<td></td>
<td>Harvest, possession, sale and use are prohibited.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sailfish</td>
<td></td>
<td>Federal rules apply. Consult NOAA Fisheries.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scup, Private Vessel &amp; Shore</td>
<td>(7)</td>
<td>9&quot;</td>
<td>All Year</td>
<td>30 fish (150 fish/vessel maximum)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scup, For-Hire Vessels</td>
<td></td>
<td>9&quot;</td>
<td>Jan 1 – Apr 30</td>
<td>30 fish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sharks</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Smelt</td>
<td></td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Jun 16 – Mar 14</td>
<td>50 fish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spiny Dogfish</td>
<td></td>
<td>None</td>
<td>All year</td>
<td>No limit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Striped Bass</td>
<td>(6)</td>
<td>28&quot; – less than 35&quot;</td>
<td>All Year</td>
<td>1 fish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tautog</td>
<td>(8)</td>
<td>16&quot;</td>
<td>Apr 1 – May 31</td>
<td>3 fish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tunas</td>
<td></td>
<td>Federal rules apply. Consult NOAA Fisheries.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weakfish</td>
<td></td>
<td>16&quot;</td>
<td>All year</td>
<td>1 fish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White Marlin</td>
<td></td>
<td>Federal rules apply. Consult NOAA Fisheries.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White Perch</td>
<td></td>
<td>8&quot;</td>
<td>All year</td>
<td>25 fish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Windowpane Flounder</td>
<td>(4,5)</td>
<td>Prohibited</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Winter Flounder (North of Cape Cod)</td>
<td>(4,5)</td>
<td>12&quot;</td>
<td>All year</td>
<td>8 fish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Winter Flounder (South &amp; East of Cape Cod)</td>
<td>(4,5)</td>
<td>12&quot;</td>
<td>Mar 1 – Dec 31</td>
<td>2 fish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wolffish</td>
<td>(4,5)</td>
<td>Prohibited</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yellowtail Flounder</td>
<td>(4,5)</td>
<td>13&quot;</td>
<td>All year</td>
<td>No limit</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Prohibitions**

Snagging, snatching of anadromous fish: including shad, smelt, white perch, striped bass, trout, and salmon, but excluding alewives or blueback herring.

The taking of striped bass by any means other than hook-and-line.

To "high-grade" striped bass, i.e. the discard of dead, legal size striped bass.

To retain live striped bass in the water by attaching to a stringer or placing in a live well or holding car.

The taking of billfish using gear other than a rod and reel.

The taking of Atlantic salmon, sturgeon, all marine mammals, all sea turtles, and the diamond back terrapin from Massachusetts waters.

For anyone, except the owner, to handle, destroy, or molest any lobster or crab pot or other fishing gear, including any gear swept up on the shore, beaches or flats whether public or private, or to take fish there from.

To sell, barter, or exchange fish or shellfish without a commercial permit.

For any recreational fisherman to use any type of hook other than a circle hook when fishing for striped bass with bait: any marine or aquatic organism, live or dead, whole or parts thereof. This shall not apply to any artificial lure.

**Notes:**

1) Subject to regulation by the Division and the municipality. Please consult municipal regulations.

2) American shad is a catch and release fishery, except for on the Merrimack and Connecticut Rivers where anglers may retain up to 3 fish per day, with no minimum size limit.

3) Black sea bass are measured from the tip of the snout or jaw (mouth closed) to the farthest extremity of the tail, not including the tail filament.

4) Federal rules apply beyond state waters. Consult NOAA Fisheries for permitting requirements and regulations.

5) It is unlawful to fish with hook and line gear in the Winter Cod Conservation Closure from November 15 through January 31. It is unlawful to take cod from the Spring Cod Conservation Closure from April 16 through July 21.

6) Striped bass must be kept whole, meaning the head, tail, and body remain intact. Only evisceration is allowed. Permitted for-hire vessels may fillet striped bass for their customers.

7) Black sea bass and scup may be filleted but not skinned while at sea. No more than two fillets per allowed fish may be possessed.

8) When the tautog fishery is open, private anglers are subject to 10-fish maximum tautog limit for the vessel. The most restrictive limit of the per angler bag limit or per vessel maximum limit applies.

* Possession limits are per person per day unless otherwise noted.
# Massachusetts Saltwater Fish Records

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SPECIES</th>
<th>WEIGHT</th>
<th>LOCATION</th>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>ANGLER</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Albacore*</td>
<td>65 lb. 6 oz.</td>
<td>Atlantis Canyon</td>
<td>10/4/20</td>
<td>Sean Ready</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bigeye Tuna</td>
<td>319 lb. 5 oz.</td>
<td>Welker Canyon</td>
<td>8/11/18</td>
<td>Daniel Bliss</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black Sea Bass</td>
<td>8 lb. 15 oz.</td>
<td>Buzzards Bay</td>
<td>5/12/07</td>
<td>Aaron Costa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bluefish</td>
<td>27 lb. 4 oz.</td>
<td>Graves Light</td>
<td>9/11/82</td>
<td>Louis Gordon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bluefin Tuna</td>
<td>1228 lb.</td>
<td>Cape Cod Bay</td>
<td>9/23/84</td>
<td>Marlene Goldstein</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blue Marlin</td>
<td>873 lb.</td>
<td>Canyons</td>
<td>8/21/15</td>
<td>Dr. Ralph DeLaTorre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blue Shark</td>
<td>458 lb. 2 oz.</td>
<td>Jeffrey's Ledge</td>
<td>8/9/11</td>
<td>Ethan Lynch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bonito</td>
<td>13 lb. 8 oz.</td>
<td>New Bedford Dike</td>
<td>9/23/02</td>
<td>Eddie Gomez</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cod</td>
<td>92 lb.</td>
<td>Jeffrey's Ledge</td>
<td>7/5/87</td>
<td>Robert Radzik</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coho Salmon</td>
<td>18 lb. 8 oz.</td>
<td>North River</td>
<td>1/21/86</td>
<td>James Lewis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cusk</td>
<td>34 lb. 4 oz.</td>
<td>Stellwagen Bank</td>
<td>7/15/90</td>
<td>Gabe Silvestrone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dolphinfish</td>
<td>61 lb. 3 oz.</td>
<td>Veatch Canyon</td>
<td>8/8/09</td>
<td>Ty Warren</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>False Albacore</td>
<td>19 lb. 5 oz.</td>
<td>Edgartown</td>
<td>9/27/90</td>
<td>Donald MacGillivray</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fluke</td>
<td>21 lb. 8 oz.</td>
<td>Nomans Island</td>
<td>9/25/80</td>
<td>Joseph Czapiga</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Haddock</td>
<td>20 lb.</td>
<td>Stellwagen Bank</td>
<td>1972</td>
<td>Don Rehnstrom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Haddock</td>
<td>20 lb.</td>
<td>Boston Lightship</td>
<td>8/3/74</td>
<td>Joseph Gelsomini</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Halibut</td>
<td>321 lb.</td>
<td>Massachusetts Bay</td>
<td>7/21/65</td>
<td>Norman Cournoyer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>King Mackerel</td>
<td>9 lb. 9 oz.</td>
<td>Hedge Fence</td>
<td>10/13/18</td>
<td>Zak Potter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mackerel</td>
<td>3 lb. 8 oz.</td>
<td>Hampton Shoal</td>
<td>10/9/94</td>
<td>Steve Ostrander</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mako Shark</td>
<td>1324 lb.</td>
<td>Massachusetts Bay</td>
<td>7/7/99</td>
<td>Kevin Scola</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pollock</td>
<td>48 lb. 2 oz.</td>
<td>Cashes Ledge</td>
<td>9/14/92</td>
<td>Sal Moyerino</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Porbeagle</td>
<td>495 lb.</td>
<td>Offshore</td>
<td>7/22/11</td>
<td>Jesse Siegel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scup</td>
<td>5 lb. 14 oz.</td>
<td>Nomans Island</td>
<td>10/17/83</td>
<td>Robert Pimental</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spanish Mackerel</td>
<td>8 lb.</td>
<td>Vineyard Sound</td>
<td>10/8/11</td>
<td>Joe Canha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Striped Bass</td>
<td>73 lb.</td>
<td>Quicks Hole</td>
<td>1913</td>
<td>Charles Church</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tautog</td>
<td>22 lb. 9 oz.</td>
<td>Gay Head</td>
<td>6/29/78</td>
<td>Michael Horsely</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thresher</td>
<td>630 lb.</td>
<td>Offshore</td>
<td>7/23/11</td>
<td>Timothy Delude</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wahoo</td>
<td>182 lb. 12 oz.</td>
<td>Offshore</td>
<td>2016</td>
<td>Derek Wittkamper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weakfish</td>
<td>18 lb. 12 oz.</td>
<td>Buzzards Bay</td>
<td>8/19/84</td>
<td>George Mahoney</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White Marlin</td>
<td>131 lb.</td>
<td>Nantucket</td>
<td>7/30/82</td>
<td>Ted Nfatzger</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Winter Flounder</td>
<td>8 lb. 2 oz.</td>
<td>Georges Bank</td>
<td>7/12/96</td>
<td>Tom Hillebrand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wolfish</td>
<td>55 lb.</td>
<td>Cape Cod Bay</td>
<td>6/19/00</td>
<td>Andrew Glovsky</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yellowfin Tuna</td>
<td>187 lb.</td>
<td>Nantucket</td>
<td>8/5/90</td>
<td>Mark Boujoukos</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Indicates a new state record

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### How to Measure Your Catch

For Massachusetts marine waters, minimum fish sizes are measured as total length. This is the greatest straight line length (not curved over the body) in inches as measured on a fish with its mouth closed from the anterior tip of the jaw or snout to the farthest extremity of the tail. Fish should be firmly grasped with both hands for proper measuring. Care should be taken so that the head of the fish firmly contacts the zero mark on rulers and tapes simultaneously with the tail extremity.

#### Exceptions:

- **Tunas** are measured using curved fork length. This is in a line, tracing the contour of the body from the tip of the upper jaw to the fork of the tail.
- **Sharks** are measured from the tip of the snout to the fork of the tail.
- **Swordfish,** sailfish and marlin are measured from the tip of the lower jaw to the tail fork.

Black sea bass are measured from the tip of the snout or jaw (mouth closed) to the farthest extremity of the tail, not including the tail filament.
Divisions: The saltwater fishing derby is divided into three major divisions—Inshore, Groundfish, and Pelagic.

Each division features:
- A Weigh-In category and a Catch and Release category (unless otherwise noted),
- Adult Awards given to the top Male and Female for each species in the Weigh-In category,
- Junior Awards given to anglers age 15 and under, and
- Pins given to ALL eligible entries collected during the Derby. (Anglers may submit multiple entries, but will receive only one pin per species per year for their qualifying catch.)

Weigh-In Derby: fish being entered in the weigh-in portion of the Derby should be brought to one of our many certified weigh stations scattered along the coast for verification.

Catch and Release Derby: fish being entered in the catch and release portion should be measured to the nearest half inch; a clear photo taken of both the measuring device and the fish, indicating total or fork length, is needed for verification.

Entry forms and photos: Derby entry forms are available on our website and at most bait and tackle shops. Derby entry forms and photos should be sent to the address provided below, attn. John Boardman. Photos can also be shared with the Massachusetts Division of Marine Fisheries using Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram by tagging: #MAsaltwaterderby

Website: full derby rules, downloadable entry forms, official Derby weigh station locations, and leader boards can be found on our website: www.mass.gov/saltwater-fishing-derby

Time Frame: The Derby runs January 1 through November 30.

Mailing Address: Massachusetts Division of Marine Fisheries 836 S. Rodney French Blvd. New Bedford, MA 02744 john.boardman@mass.gov

Inshore Derby

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SPECIES</th>
<th>WEIGH-IN (LB.)</th>
<th>CATCH AND RELEASE (IN.)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ADULT</td>
<td>JUNIOR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Atlantic Bonito</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Atlantic Mackerel</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black Sea Bass</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bluefish</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dolphinfish</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>False Albacore</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fluke</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>King Mackerel</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scup</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spanish Mackerel</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Striped Bass</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tautog</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weakfish</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Winter Flounder</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Groundfish Derby*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SPECIES</th>
<th>WEIGH-IN (LB.)</th>
<th>CATCH AND RELEASE (IN.)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Atlantic Cod</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Atlantic Halibut</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cusk</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Haddock</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pollock</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Large Pelagic Derby*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SPECIES</th>
<th>WEIGH-IN (LB.)</th>
<th>CATCH AND RELEASE (IN.)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Albacore</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Atlantic Sailfish</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bigeye Tuna</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blue Marlin</td>
<td>350</td>
<td>99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blue Shark</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bluefin Tuna</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Porbeagle Shark</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shortfin Mako</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swordfish</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thresher Shark</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wahoo</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White Marlin</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yellowfin Tuna</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Junior entries in this category must meet the listed criteria
Prizes and Recognition

In addition to the pin, winners will receive a plaque and certificate commemorating their catch at our annual awards celebration.

- Ceremony takes place during the New England Boat and RV Show
- FREE entry to the New England Boat and RV Show for the winning angler and their guest(s)
- Entry to a private Mass DMF, family-friendly reception directly following the ceremony

Special awards are also given out to the two anglers (adult and junior) who have the most Derby-winning fish: weigh-in and Catch and Release, or combined. Awards for “Top Shop” (the tackle shop that weighs in the most derby eligible fish) and “Skillful Skipper” will receive free advertising in our 2022 saltwater sportfish guide.

### 2020 Catch and Release Derby Winners

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SPECIES</th>
<th>DIVISION</th>
<th>LENGTH (INCHES)</th>
<th>ANGLER</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Black Sea Bass</td>
<td>Adult</td>
<td>22.5&quot;</td>
<td>Dave DeiCicchi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Junior</td>
<td>19&quot;</td>
<td>Luke Hamel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bluefish</td>
<td>Adult</td>
<td>35&quot;</td>
<td>Richard Trifone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Junior</td>
<td>100&quot;</td>
<td>Ethan Swenson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bluefin Tuna</td>
<td>Adult</td>
<td>60&quot;</td>
<td>Andrew Jacobs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bonito</td>
<td>Adult</td>
<td>26&quot;</td>
<td>Anna Jacobs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Adult</td>
<td>31&quot;</td>
<td>Chad Nikel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>False Albacore</td>
<td>Adult</td>
<td>28.5&quot;</td>
<td>Rafael Osona</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fluke</td>
<td>Adult</td>
<td>27&quot;</td>
<td>Paula Silva</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Junior</td>
<td>20&quot;</td>
<td>Eve Skomal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Haddock</td>
<td>Adult</td>
<td>22&quot;</td>
<td>Patrick Connaughton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mackerel</td>
<td>Adult</td>
<td>16&quot;</td>
<td>Can Tiryaki</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scup</td>
<td>Adult</td>
<td>16&quot;</td>
<td>Anna Jacobs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Junior</td>
<td>16&quot;</td>
<td>James Oldershaw</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Striped Bass</td>
<td>Adult</td>
<td>47.5&quot;</td>
<td>Mark Remlinger</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Junior</td>
<td>35&quot;</td>
<td>John Clark</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SPECIES</th>
<th>DIVISION</th>
<th>WEIGHT</th>
<th>ANGLER</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Albacore</td>
<td>Men's</td>
<td>*65 lbs 6 oz</td>
<td>Sean Ready</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Women's</td>
<td>60 lbs 8 oz</td>
<td>Amanda Moretti</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black Sea Bass</td>
<td>Men's</td>
<td>4 lbs 8 oz</td>
<td>Joseph Amorim</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Women's</td>
<td>4 lbs 4 oz</td>
<td>Lesley Callahan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Junior's</td>
<td>5 lbs 5 oz</td>
<td>Isaac Grace</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bluefin Tuna</td>
<td>Junior's</td>
<td>154 lbs 2 oz</td>
<td>John Clark</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bluefish</td>
<td>Men's</td>
<td>14 lbs 10 oz</td>
<td>Andrew Jacobs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Women's</td>
<td>9 lbs 6 oz</td>
<td>Anna Jacobs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Junior's</td>
<td>11 lbs 2 oz</td>
<td>Lucas Bergman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bonito</td>
<td>Men's</td>
<td>12 lbs 0 oz</td>
<td>Aidan Gates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Women's</td>
<td>8 lbs 8 oz</td>
<td>Anna Jacobs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Junior's</td>
<td>12 lbs 0 oz</td>
<td>Elizabeth Thompson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dolphin Fish</td>
<td>Junior's</td>
<td>5 lbs 4 oz</td>
<td>John Clark</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>False Albacore</td>
<td>Men's</td>
<td>12 lbs 8 oz</td>
<td>Rafael Osona</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Women's</td>
<td>8 lbs 0 oz</td>
<td>Anna Jacobs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Junior's</td>
<td>14 lbs 14 oz</td>
<td>Gunnar Graham</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fluke</td>
<td>Men's</td>
<td>11 lbs 1 oz</td>
<td>Frank Torbey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Women's</td>
<td>10 lbs 1 oz</td>
<td>Joanne Churchhill</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Junior's</td>
<td>6 lbs 9 oz</td>
<td>Bella Sargeant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scup</td>
<td>Men's</td>
<td>2 lbs 8 oz</td>
<td>Joseph Pearle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Women's</td>
<td>2 lbs 11 oz</td>
<td>Elizabeth Soares</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Junior's</td>
<td>1 lb 6 oz</td>
<td>Emerson Medeiros</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tautog</td>
<td>Men's</td>
<td>10 lbs 3 oz</td>
<td>Tom Moynihan</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Junior's</td>
<td>9 lbs 2 oz</td>
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<td>Thresher Shark</td>
<td>Men's</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wahoo</td>
<td>Junior's</td>
<td>72 lbs 0 oz</td>
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<tr>
<td>Winter Flounder</td>
<td>Women's</td>
<td>3 lbs 4 oz</td>
<td>Jaqueline Scott</td>
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<tr>
<td>Yellowfin Tuna</td>
<td>Junior's</td>
<td>52 lbs 4 oz</td>
<td>Brady Johnson</td>
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* New state record

### 2020 Anglers of the Year

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<tr>
<td>Adult</td>
<td>Anna Jacobs</td>
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<tr>
<td>Junior</td>
<td>John Clark</td>
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Use this saltwater fishing calendar as a general reference to the availability of the commonly targeted recreational finfish of Massachusetts. Please consult current regulations to ensure species are in season.

**2020 Top Shop Award**

At the conclusion of the fishing derby each year, a Top Shop award is given to the bait and tackle shop that weighs in the most derby eligible fish. The Skillful Skipper award is also given to those captains that have entered three or more winning fish caught from his or her boat.
Striped Bass
Striped bass is our most sought-after species, providing great sport through catch and release fishing and great eating when you catch a “keeper”. Striped bass is one of the largest fish available to the nearshore angler. Fish range from 1 pound to over 60 pounds.

Location: Whole coast surf, inshore bars, reefs, tide-rips, bays, and estuaries.
Season: Mid April-October
Baits and Lures: Seaworms, eels, squid, herring; jigs, plugs, spinners, spoons.
Methods and Tackle: Casting from shore, boat-trolling; light to heavy tackle.

Black Sea Bass
The migratory black sea bass is a tasty fish arriving in our near shore waters in the late spring. These fish also have a peculiar life cycle—the majority begin life as females and then change to males at around three years of age.

Location: South side of Cape Cod, Buzzards Bay to Rhode Island border and a few are found in Cape Cod Bay. Fish for them around bottom structure such as reefs, rocks, and wrecks.
Season: May-September
Baits and Lures: Cut squid, clams, green crabs.
Methods and Tackle: Bottom fish from a boat.

Scup
A party boat staple, scup are easy and fun to catch. Scup are very good eating though be careful of the many bones.

Location: South side of Cape Cod and along coast to Rhode Island
Season: May-October
Baits and Lures: Clams, strips of squid, seaworms.
Methods and Tackle: Light- to medium-weight tackle, drift-fishing, jetties, piers, bridges.

Tautog
“Tog”, “white chin” and “black fish” are all common nicknames for this fish. Tautog are very slow growing compared to most fish and do not migrate far from where they originate but move inshore in the spring and offshore in the winter.

Location: Whole coast, rocky bottoms inshore, bays, harbors, jetties, breakwaters.
Season: April-November
Baits and Lures: Crabs, clams, all shellfish.
Methods and Tackle: Still-fishing from boat or shore, medium action spinning or conventional rod, 20-30 lb test line.

Bluefish
Bluefish are usually ravenous and will strike at just about anything you give them. Watch out for those teeth! They average around 3-7 pounds along the coast and tend to be larger just offshore in the rips. The juveniles, referred to as “snappers,” can be found in the estuaries and are fun to catch with light tackle. In all cases, they put up an excellent fight all the way to your boat or shore.

Location: Whole coast surf, inshore bars, tide rips, bays, and estuaries.
Season: June-mid October
Baits and Lures: All small bait fish, jigs, spoons, plugs, spinners, flies.
Methods and Tackle: Casting from shore or boat (you may want to use a wire leader) with spin and fly fishing gear, trolling.

Weakfish (Squateague)
The weakfish looks like a large trout and is found in Massachusetts waters during the summer months. Often found feeding alongside striped bass.

Location: Southern Massachusetts sandbars, deep water drop offs, channels, bays and estuaries
Season: Late June-September
Baits and Lures: Shrimp, seaworms, tinker mackerel, eels, strips of squid; artificial lures (bright plastic shrimp, worms, bucktails, tubes, jigs, sand eel imitations)
Methods and Tackle: Still-fishing, drifting, chumming, casting from shore or boat, trolling; light to medium tackle.
**Winter Flounder**
The winter flounder (black back) provides good fishing during the cold weather months. They are very accessible and provide the angler with thick fillets to take home.

**Location:** Whole coast, tidal streams, shallow bays, estuaries.

**Season:** May-February

**Baits and Lures:** Sandworms, bloodworms, clams, strips of squid.

**Methods and Tackle:** Chum pot (crushed clams), still-fishing from boats, piers, jetties, bridges, breakwaters; light tackle

**Mass. Saltwater Fishing Derby Minimum Weight:**
- Adult 3 lb.
- Junior 2 lb.

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**Summer Flounder (Fluke)**

Fighting ability and fine flavor highlight this flatfish. The upper surface of the summer flounder head faces left. They also have prominent teeth to assist with their aggressive predatory behavior. Larger fluke are referred to as “doormats”. Target sandy or muddy bottom along with fast moving rips that contain debris and bait fish.

**Location:** South side of Cape Cod, Islands, Cape Cod Bay, Buzzards Bay.

**Season:** May-September

**Baits and Lures:** Minnows, squid strips, clams, shrimp; spinners, jigs.

**Methods and Tackle:** Drift-fishing, troll, chum, still fish, casting.

**Mass. Saltwater Fishing Derby Minimum Weight:**
- Adult 7 lb.
- Junior 3 lb.

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**Mackerel**

Mackerel are fast swimmers and voracious feeders, which offers the angler many options for catching them. They are also an important food fish for many other species of fish and marine mammals.

**Location:** Whole coast, deep water to shallow bays, beaches, jetties, canal, bridges.

**Season:** May-September

**Baits and Lures:** Small bait fish, crab, clams, seaworms, squid strips, jigs, spoons, flies.

**Methods and Tackle:** Trolling, jigging, casting from shore or boat; light tackle.

**Mass. Saltwater Fishing Derby Minimum Weight:**
- Adult 2 lb.
- Junior 1 lb.

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**Tunas: Bluefin (top) and Yellowfin (below)**

All the tunas are very swift swimmers, provide a thrilling and sometimes backbreaking fight and are literally hot blooded. The giant bluefin tuna is the biggest and most lucrative of the tunas in our waters and thus creates much competition amongst fishermen. Yellowfin are commonly caught in near offshore waters as are albacore.

**Location:** Offshore east of North Shore, Cape Cod Bay, East of Cape Cod, South of Islands, offshore in Canyons

**Season:** Late June-October

**Baits and Lures:** Bait fish used with chum slick; plastic squids, multi-squid rigs, daisy chains, jigs, artificial lures

**Methods and Tackle:** Trolling, chunk baits with chum; medium to heavy tackle.

**Mass. Saltwater Fishing Derby Minimum Weight:**
- Yellowfin tuna 50 lb.
- Bluefin tuna 100 lb.

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**Bonito**

Sharpen your reflexes because these small tunas are fast and fun to catch. Watch for feeding schools where there will be jumpers. For a quick identification, look for dark bands running the length of the fish above the lateral line and a silvery belly.

**Location:** Southern Cape Cod and the Islands, rarely north of Cape Cod.

**Season:** Late July-October

**Baits and Lures:** Strip baits, squid, small jigs, spoons, plugs, flies.

**Methods and Tackle:** Spinning gear, bait casting, light boat rods, trolling, fly fishing.

**Mass. Saltwater Fishing Derby Minimum Weight:**
- Adult 5 lb.
- Junior 4 lb.

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**False Albacore (Little Tunny)**

False albacore are very similar to bonito - fast, fun and sometimes a bit tricky to catch. However, unlike bonito, they make poor table fare.

**Location:** Mostly warmer waters of the south side of Cape Cod and the Islands.

**Season:** Late July-October

**Baits and Lures:** Same as for bonito

**Methods and Tackle:** Same as for bonito

**Mass. Saltwater Fishing Derby Minimum Weight:**
- Adult 10 lb.
- Junior 7 lb.
Pollock
The pollock is more available to the angler than its codfish relative. These aggressive fighters offer the thrills of a bluefish and the flesh of a cod.
Location: Whole coast with more north of Plymouth. Inshore (breakwaters and other structures) and offshore depending on the water temperatures. Inshore, pollock tend to be smaller than those offshore.
Season: May-October with the best runs in May, October
Baits and Lures: Same as cod, plus metal lures with a strip of squid.
Methods and Tackle: Bait-fishing from shore and boats, fishing from boats using medium to stiff boat rod, conventional reel and at least 50 lb. test line.
Mass. Saltwater Fishing Derby Minimum Weight: 30 lb.

Haddock
Haddock is a member of the cod family and is a delicious fish for the dinner table. The black lateral line distinguishes it from the cod and pollock.
Location: Whole coast, cool waters, prefer depths of 140-450 ft., also prefers shell/sand, smooth rock, or gravel bottom.
Season: May-November
Baits and Lures: Seaworms, clams
Methods and Tackle: Still-fishing from a boat, medium action rod

Cod
Cod are the deepwater treasures of Massachusetts.
Location: Whole coast, deepwater, inshore while water is cold.
Season: Year round.
Baits and Lures: Sea worms, clams, mackerel, strips of all fish, crabs, jigs.
Methods and Tackle: Bait-fishing from shore and boats, fishing from boats using medium to stiff boat rod, conventional reel and at least 50 lb. test line.
Mass. Saltwater Fishing Derby Minimum Weight: 30 lb.

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Rainbow Smelt
This small anadromous fish is a seasonal favorite along the coast. They’re accessible prior to the spawning runs up coastal streams during the late winter and early spring.

Location: Whole coast, estuaries, the mouths of coastal rivers, and within coastal rivers.
Season: September-February
Baits and Lures: Blood worms, sand worms, grass shrimp, small local bait fish
Methods and tackle: Ice fishing, shore fishing—keep bait moving slowly up and down within the school; light tackle, hand line.

Sharks: Shortfin Mako (top) and Blue (bottom)
Blue and mako sharks are common to our offshore waters and are sought after by recreational anglers. Makos are the more aggressive of the two fish and will put up an exciting fight. Venture with an experienced shark angler to prevent unexpected surprises and make sure you bleed and ice the shark flesh immediately. Anglers are encouraged to release sharks not intended for consumption.

Location: South of the Islands, East of Cape Cod, off North shore including Cape Cod Bay.
Season: June-October
Baits and Lures: Chumming and baited hooks (preferably oily fish)
Methods and Tackle: Trolling, drifting; medium to heavy tackle, wire leader.

Herring of Massachusetts
A variety of herring frequent MA coastal and estuarine waters and can be confusing to identify. River herring (alewife and blueback herring) and American shad are generally seen during spring spawning runs. Menhaden and Atlantic herring may appear in our estuaries during coastal migration in the summer or early fall.

Alewife
- Eye diameter greater than snout length
- No teeth on roof of mouth
- Dorsal fin forward of midlength

American shad
- May have a line of spots
- Upper jaw close to rear edge of eye
- Largest in the herring family

Atlantic herring
- Dorsal fin at midlength
- Teeth on roof of mouth
- Large mouth

Blueback herring
- Eye diameter less than snout length
- No teeth on roof of mouth
- Dorsal fin forward of midlength

Atlantic menhaden
- Scaleless head = ⅛ of body length
- Series of random, smaller dark spots

Note: The harvest and possession of river herring (alewife and blueback) is prohibited in Massachusetts.
**Access Sites**

*Note:* Use of some ramps requires a fee or a parking sticker that may be purchased in advance. Some town parking facilities are limited to town residents only (RO) and noted where applicable. Fish and Game Office of Fishing and Boating Access (FBA) current or future facilities are italicized. * indicates a shore fishing area. For more information visit the FBA website at: [http://www.mass.gov/eea/agencies/dfg/fba/](http://www.mass.gov/eea/agencies/dfg/fba/)

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## Access Sites

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<th>TIDE TIDE</th>
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**Access Sites**

28 Massachusetts Recreational Saltwater Guide
Massachusetts Coastal Water Access
Salisbury to Marshfield

Access Map
Courtesy of Google Maps

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**Do you want to know where to go fishing or boating?**

Public Access to the Waters of Massachusetts is now available. This 146 page map booklet will show and tell you information about current public sites. Send $8.00, payable by check to:

**Office of Fishing & Boating Access**
Department of Fish and Game
1 Rabbit Hill Road
Westborough, MA 01581

**For more information call: (508) 389-7810**
Massachusetts Coastal Water Access

Marshfield to Seekonk

Access Map Courtesy of Google Maps
Recreational Lobster and Crabbing Permit

What does a recreational lobster and crabbing permit allow me to do?
The permit allows you to fish, retain and land lobsters in Massachusetts. This may be done with traps or by diving. The permit also allows you to fish for, retain and land edible crabs (excluding blue crabs) by any six-sided trap or other contrivance that is not actively fished. The permit is not needed to fish for, retain or land edible crabs (including blue crabs) by hand, handline or dipnet, or by any star trap, open collapsible trap or open top trap that is being actively tended to.

Who can get a permit?
Any Massachusetts resident can obtain a permit. Non-residents may also obtain a permit, but they must temporarily reside in any coastal Massachusetts municipality and own more than $5,000 in real estate in the Commonwealth as determined by tax records. Non-US citizens, whether resident or non-resident, must provide their alien registration card as issued by the US Dept. of Justice Immigration and Naturalization Service.

What does a permit cost and where can I get one?
The permit fees are $55 for residents and $75 for non-residents. Permits are available at all DMF offices. Additionally, residents may purchase/renew their permit online at http://www.mass.gov/eea/agencies/dfg/dmf/recreational-fishing/recreational-saltwater-permits.html.

What is my permit number?
Each permit has a unique identification number that is located on the upper right hand corner of the permit. You are required to mark your traps and dive gear with this permit number (pages 37 and 38).

May I sell, barter or trade the lobsters and edible crabs that I take under my permit?
No, you may only take lobsters and edible crabs for personal use. You are not allowed to sell, barter or trade any of your recreational lobster and edible crab catch. In order to engage in these activities, you are required, by law, to have a commercial lobster permit.

Does this permit allow me to take lobsters and crabs with traps and lobsters by diving?
Yes, when applying for or renewing your permit you must specify if you wish to fish with traps, diving or both. There are no additional costs for each endorsement.

Do I have to fish in a certain geographical area?
When you apply for your permit, we do ask that you check off a geographical area where you intend to fish. However, you are not limited by this selection and may fish throughout Massachusetts. Note that you may not set buoyed traps in the Cape Cod Canal and the taking of lobsters is prohibited in New Bedford Harbor north of an imaginary line drawn from Ricketson’s Point (Dartmouth) to Wilbur Point (Fairhaven). Also, different recreational lobster areas may have different recreational lobster management regulations (page 35).

Who can use this permit?
This depends on whether you are fishing traps or diving. A permit with a trap endorsement allows the permit holder, as well as members of the permit holder’s immediate family, to haul your traps. Immediate family includes the spouse, parents, children, grandparents, brothers and sisters. No more than one permit endorsed for trap fishing is allowed per household. A permit with dive endorsement is for the permit holder only and does not cover other persons. Additional permits endorsed for diving must be purchased to cover each diver.

Is reporting required?
Yes, annual catch reports are required of all permit holders. These forms are provided by DMF at the time of renewal. License renewals will not be issued until a catch report has been filed.

Do I need the permit for green crabs?
The permit is not needed to take, retain or land green crabs as they are an inedible invasive species. However, state law requires individuals hold an authorization from DMF in order to harvest green crabs. To obtain this free authorization, please contact Kerry Allard for an LOA or more information at (617) 626-1633 or kerry.allard@mass.gov.

Working to maintain a sustainable resource in the marine ecosystem

Individuals can help with this cause by joining today as an Associate Member.
For more information visit lobstermen.com
8 Otis Place, Scituate, MA 02066
781.545.6984
Recreational Regulations

RECREATIONAL LOBSTER REGULATIONS

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<th>ALL AREAS</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Season Open</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Trap Limit</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Bag Limit</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Night fishing</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Egg Bearing Females</strong></td>
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<td><strong>V-Notch</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Prohibited Gears</strong></td>
</tr>
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GULF OF MAINE RECREATIONAL LOBSTER AREA

| Minimum Size | 3 3⁄4” |
| Maximum Size | 5” |
| Escape Vent | One rectangular vent 1¾” x 5¾” or two circular vents of 2 ¾” in diameter |

OUTER CAPE COD RECREATIONAL LOBSTER AREA

| Minimum Size | 3 3⁄8” |
| Maximum Size | — |
| Escape Vent | One rectangular vent 2” x 5¾” or two circular vents of 2 ⅞” in diameter |

SOUTHERN NEW ENGLAND RECREATIONAL LOBSTER AREA

| Minimum Size | 3 3⁄8” |
| Maximum Size | 5 ¼” |
| Escape Vent | One rectangular vent 2” x 5¾” or two circular vents of 2 ⅞” in diameter |

RECREATIONAL CRAB REGULATIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SPECIES</th>
<th>MINIMUM SIZE</th>
<th>POSSESSION LIMIT</th>
<th>CLOSED SEASON</th>
<th>EGG BEARING</th>
<th>NIGHT FISHING</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Blue Crabs</td>
<td>5” shell width</td>
<td>25 crabs</td>
<td>January 1 – April 30</td>
<td>Prohibited</td>
<td>Fishing for blue crabs with trap gear or retaining blue crabs taken by traps is prohibited</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other Edible Crabs (not including green crabs)</td>
<td>No size requirement</td>
<td>50 edible crabs combined and not to exceed 25 blue crabs.</td>
<td>January 1 – April 30</td>
<td>Prohibited</td>
<td>No tending or hauling traps ½ hour after sunset to ½ hour before sunrise. Use of non-trap gears is allowed at night.</td>
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</table>

Crab Identification

Blue Crab  Rock Crab  Jonah Crab  Green Crab
How to Measure a Lobster

The Rules
Lobsters must be measured with a special gauge to make sure that they are keepers. Carapace length is measured from the rear of the eye socket to the rear of the carapace on a line parallel to the center line of the body shell. Make sure the gauge is at the extreme rear of the eye socket below the rostrum or horn. A common error is to measure from the horn located forward of the eye socket, which results in an improper measurement.

All lobsters measuring less than the minimum legal carapace length, or larger than the maximum legal carapace length, must be immediately returned to the waters from which taken.

All lobsters must be measured immediately.

Mutilation
It shall be unlawful to possess any lobster, or part thereof, which is mutilated in a manner which makes accurate measurement impossible.

Is it Male or Female?
In order to determine the sex of a lobster, you must look at the first pair of appendages under the tail, called swimmerets. They are positioned near the base of the last pair of walking legs. The first pair of swimmerets are hard in the male, and soft and feathery in the female.

All About Lobster

What are they?
Lobsters are ten-legged (decapod) crustaceans. The American lobster is the only species of clawed lobster in the Northwestern Atlantic region.

Where are they?
The American lobster is distributed throughout the Northwest Atlantic from the Straights of Bell Isle, Newfoundland to Cape Hatteras, North Carolina. They are most abundant in coastal zones at depths of less than 150 ft. (~50 m). The greatest abundance of lobster occurs within the Gulf of Maine — from mid-coast Maine to southwest Nova Scotia.

Growth
American lobster is a long-lived species known to reach more than 40 lb. (18 kg).

Age is unknown because all hard parts are shed and replaced at molting (shedding), leaving no accreting material for age determination. In Massachusetts, shedding typically occurs between June and October.

Lobsters at minimum legal size are generally considered to be between 5 and 7 years of age based on hatchery observations. Maximum age is generally considered to be between 30 and 40 years.

Biology
Fertilized eggs are carried on the female abdomen for a 9 to 12 month period of development prior to hatching.

Female lobsters carry between 1,000 and >100,000 eggs depending on the size of the female.

Hatching typically occurs over a 4 month period from May through September. In Massachusetts we typically see peak hatching from late-June through early-July.

Egg-bearing Females
It is unlawful for any fisherman to take or possess any egg-bearing female lobster or female lobster with the egg mass forcibly removed, at any time.

When eggs are extruded they are dark green and the female is called a green egger.

As eggs develop and approach hatching time they turn brown to reddish brown and the female is called a brown egger.
SCUBA Regulations for Recreational Lobster and Edible Crabbing

Permitting
To recreationally dive for lobsters in Massachusetts, all divers must hold a Recreational Lobster/Crabbing Permit endorsed for diving. A permit endorsed for diving only covers the individual and does not cover the immediate family. Each individual diver must hold their own permit endorsed for diving. This permit must be carried on the vessel at all times when fishing for lobsters. No permit is required for the taking of edible crabs by diving. The taking of edible crabs is subject to recreational crab regulations (page 35).

Gear and Marking Requirements
Dive Flag – MA law requires each diver or group of divers, while swimming or below the surface, to display a dive flag. The dive flag must be at least 12” x 15” in area with a red background and white diagonal stripe. The flag must be displayed on the vessel or on a surface float and must extend at least 3 feet from the surface of the water. Divers are required to stay within 100 feet of the displayed flag while at or near the surface. Divers may display their permit numbers on their dive flag.

Dive Marker – If the permit number for all divers is not displayed on the dive flag, a dive marker must be used. The dive marker must be a 12” x 12” floating panel with a white background. The permit number for each diver must be displayed on each side of the marker in numerals measuring 3” in height by ½” in width.

Dive Tank – The permit number must be marked on your dive tank in numerals that measure 3” in height by ½” in width.

Methods of Taking Lobsters
Divers may take lobsters by hand. They may also utilize a tickle stick, which is a straight or slightly bent stick used to agitate a lobster to come out of its hole. The use of spears, snares and dipnets is prohibited (page 35).

Catch Limits
There is a limit of 15 lobsters per day per permit, and all lobsters must meet the legal requirements. Divers are required to measure all lobsters in possession prior to surfacing.

Taking of blue crabs and other edible crabs is prohibited from January 1 through April 30.

There is a limit of 25 blue crabs per day.

There is a combined limit of 50 edible crabs (e.g., blue and Jonah) per day.
All About Gear

Permit Requirements
To recreationally fish for lobsters or edible crabs excluding blue crabs you must hold a Recreational Lobster/Crabbing Permit endorsed for trap fishing. This endorsement allows you to fish up to 10 traps. Any member of your immediate family may fish your traps for you. No household may hold more than one permit endorsed for traps, nor fish more than 10 traps. This permit must be carried on the vessel at all times when fishing for lobsters or edible crabs. This permit allows up to 15 lobsters to be kept per day.

Surface Identification
Buoy Colors
All traps and cars must be buoyed at the surface. Each permit holder must have a unique buoy color combination of up to three colors. This color combination is provided by the applicant on the application. Each buoy must be marked with this color scheme, typically by painting the buoys. The color scheme must also be visibly displayed on the vessel. This is commonly done by displaying a buoy on the vessel or painting the color scheme on the side of the vessel. You should look to see what combinations recreational and commercial trap fishermen are using in your area and try to pick a unique color combination.

Buoy Marking
All buoys must be permanently marked with permit holder information in a specific alphanumerical sequence. This begins with the letter “N”; then the permit number; followed by a dash (-); then a single digit from 0 to 9, indicating the sequential pot number in the series that the permit holder is fishing. Each letter and number must be 1” in height by ½” in width. Common techniques include permanent marker, painting or burning.

Single Pots vs Trawls
Most recreational fishermen prefer to fish single buoyed pots rather than trawls, which are a series of pots tied together at one or both ends. However, they may fish either. Each style of trap configuration requires a unique surface identification.

Single traps shall be marked with a single 7” x 7” or 5” x 11” buoy. The use of buoy sticks is optional, but if a stick is used a flag shall not be attached.
Trawls shall be marked on the east end with a double buoy consisting of any combination of two 7” x 7” or 5” x 11” buoys and one or more three foot sticks (so the two buoys can be side-by-side or stacked). Then the west end of the trawl shall be marked with a single 7” x 7” or 5” x 11” buoy with a 3 foot stick and flag. Trawls of two or three traps shall only be marked on one end, whereas trawls of four or more traps must be marked on both.

Gear Identification
All traps and cars must be permanently marked with permit holder information in the same alphanumerical sequence as the buoy number. This alphanumerical sequence shall be permanently secured into the inside of the trap through the use of a synthetic plate or by being burned or cut by a wooden lath.
Anatomy of a Lobster Trap

1. **Entrance Head**: Mesh opening where lobsters enter the trap.

2. **Kitchen**: This is where the bait bag is placed to attract lobsters into the trap.

3. **Parlor Head or Funnel**: Lobsters use this mesh netting as a means out of the kitchen, assuming it’s a way out of the trap.

4. **Parlor**: Area where the lobsters end up after leaving the kitchen and traveling up the funnel. Most of the catch will be found in this part of the trap.

5. **Escape Vent/Ghost Panel**: Opening of designated size that allows sub-legal lobsters to escape the trap. The biodegradable materials used to attach the escape vent panel will allow the “ghost panel” to open if the trap has been lost or abandoned. This prevents the trap from continuing to fish after it has been lost or abandoned.

### Lobster/Crab Trap Requirements

**Maximum Size**

It is unlawful for any trap to exceed a volume of 22,950 cubic inches.

**Escape Vents**

Escape vents are required in order to allow sub-legal sized lobsters and other non-targeted species to leave the trap. Escape vents must be unobstructed. Circular vents are preferred for retaining crabs.

One or more rectangular escape vent or two or more circular escape vents shall be placed on a side of the parlor section of the trap and are typically affixed with hog rings. While a particular orientation is not mandated, certain orientations enhance escapement (see Escape Vent and Ghost Panel Placement). If your trap has two parlors, both areas must be vented.

Escape vent sizes and frequency are specific to the Recreational Lobster/Crab Area (p 30) where the traps are set and hauled:

- **Gulf of Maine Recreational Lobster/Crab Area**. Rectangular escape vents must measure at least 1 15⁄16” by 5 ¾” or two circular vents must measure 2 7⁄16” diameter.
- **Outer Cape Cod or Southern New England Recreational Lobster/Crab Area**. Rectangular escape vents must measure 2” by 5 ¾” or two circular vents must measure at least 2 ½” diameter.

**Ghost Panels**

Ghost panels are designed to create an opening to allow the escapement of lobsters and incidental catch within 12 months after a trap has been lost or abandoned.

- **Panel size**: The panel must be rectangular and measure at least 3 ¾” x 3 ¾”. The panel may be your escape vent or trap door.
- **Panel location**: The panel must be located in the outer parlor section of the trap and in a position which allows unobstructed exit of lobsters. The panel should not be located on the bottom of the trap.
- **Panel fasteners**: The panel - or the trap door or escape vent if being used as a panel - must be fastened to the trap with one of the following materials: cotton; hemp; sisal or jute twine not greater than 3/16” diameter; or non-stainless, uncoated ferrous metal not greater than ½” in diameter.
- **Wooden traps**: Traps constructed entirely or partially of wood shall be considered in compliance if constructed with wooden lath to the extent that deterioration of the wooden component(s) will result in an unobstructed opening of at least 3 ¾” by 3 ¾”.

### Escape Vent and Ghost Panel Placement

**Note**: These examples are meant to be used as suggestions for escape vent and ghost panel placement in lobster traps. It is NOT required that escape vents and ghost panels be positioned in any way, except to provide an “unobstructed” means for escape by sub-legal lobsters.

**More Effective Placement In Allowing Escapement of Sublegal Lobsters**

**Less Effective Placement In Allowing Escapement of Sublegal Lobsters**

*Less effective locations for escape vent panels include the inside of a trap and the upper panel and door.*
Abandoned Gear
All traps must be hauled at least once every 30 days, or the gear is considered to be abandoned. It is unlawful to abandon gear in Massachusetts waters. If you believe your gear is lost and may become abandoned, please contact the Massachusetts Environmental Police or the Division of Marine Fisheries and inform them of when and where the gear was last hauled and set.

Trap Gear Closure
All traps must be removed from and may not be set in waters under the jurisdiction of the Commonwealth from November 1 - May 15.

Blue Crab Trap Prohibition
The use of traps to take blue crabs and the retention of blue crabs taken by traps is prohibited.

Single Traps Closure
The use of single traps is prohibited in state waters north of Cape Cod that are seaward of 3-miles from shore, with an exception for an area off Billingsgate Shoal. This area includes those waters that are shoreward of the Loran-C Line 9960-X-25360, as it runs from Barnstable to Wellfleet (see map for coordinates).
North Shore

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  - Edward Greees
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  - Michael Abowd
  - (508) 737-3367

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  - Kurt Gottschall
  - (860) 460-0153

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  - Bruce Peters
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  - Victor Lepage
  - (508) 237-2483

- No Name (23')
  - Jeffrey Bees
  - (508) 320-6923

- Reel Lucky (25')
  - Ralph Silvester
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- Ryesing Son (20')
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  - John Clother
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  - Robert Fish
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- Tunami (25')
  - James Bakanowski
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  - Victor Lepage
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