

New Jersey Freshwater Fishing Digest

January 2024

Opening Day
of Trout Season
April 6, 2024



A Summary of Regulations and
Freshwater Fisheries Management Information
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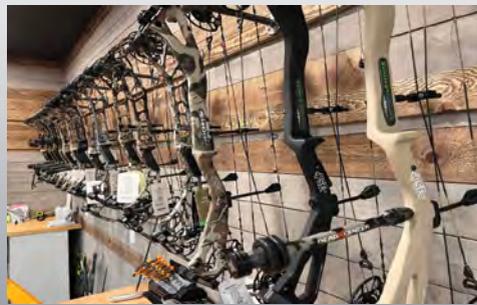
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License Information & Fees 2024

Licenses and fishing-related permits are valid from date of purchase to Dec. 31 of each year.

LICENSES

Resident Fishing	
Ages 16–64 yrs.....	\$22.50
	(Buddy License* \$11.75)
Senior Resident Fishing	
Ages 65–69 yrs.....	\$12.50
70 & over	Free
Resident Trout Stamp	
Ages 16–69 yrs.....	\$10.50
Non-resident Fishing	
Age 16 yrs. and older.....	\$34
	(Buddy License* \$17.50)
Non-resident Trout Stamp	\$20
Non-resident 2-Day Vacation Fishing.....	\$9
Non-resident 7-Day Vacation Fishing.....	\$19.50
All-Around Sportsman	
(includes resident fishing, firearm hunting	
and bow/arrow hunting licenses)	\$72.25
	(Buddy License* \$62.50)

* See page 10 for more information on the Buddy License.

PERMITS

WMA Boat Ramp Permit	\$15
Available online or through license agents	
Water Lowering, Fish Stocking,	
Baitfish Collecting, Fish Tagging Permits	\$2
Scientific Collecting Permits.....	\$22
Available through the Bureau of Freshwater Fisheries	
908-236-2118	
Commercial Snapping Turtles and Frog Permits	
Applications available on NJDEP Fish & Wildlife's	
website. Questions pertaining to these two permits	
can be answered at (856) 629-4950.	



2024 Trout Stocking Page
Scan this QR code with your mobile device to view New Jersey's trout stocking information or go to <https://dep.nj.gov/njfw/fishing/freshwater/trout-fishing-information>



Scan this QR code with your mobile device for a direct link to NJDEP Fish & Wildlife's website or visit: NJFishandWildlife.com



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This is not the full law. Consult NJDEP Fish & Wildlife for further details. All persons are reminded that the statutes, code and regulations are the legal authorities. NJDEP Fish & Wildlife receives federal assistance from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and thus prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, disability, age and sex pursuant to Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, the Age Discrimination Act of 1975 and Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972. If you believe that you have been discriminated against in any program, activity or service, contact NJDEP Fish & Wildlife, MC501-03, P.O. Box 420, Trenton, NJ 08626-0420. The telephone number is 609-292-9410. You may also write to the Office of Civil Rights, Department of the Interior, 1849 C Street, NW Washington, DC 20240.

Assistant Commissioner's Message

DAVE GOLDEN



Are you ready for another season of great fishing action in New Jersey? The streams, rivers, ponds, and lakes of the Garden State are teeming with fish and your next adventure on the water could be just moments away. Many people say that variety is the spice of life, so if you subscribe to this view, then you've come to the right place! In this edition of the New Jersey Freshwater Fishing Digest you will become acquainted with the diverse assemblage of fish species and fishing opportunities that all of New Jersey has to offer. Species identification, regulations, fishing techniques and tips on where and when to fish, can all be found right here.

Every experienced angler remembers that moment in time when they became hooked on fishing. Those early fishing experiences can be very memorable and often started with a friend or relative inviting you along to go fishing. This year, take some time and share the fun of fishing with someone who has not yet had the opportunity to go out on their own. New Jersey offers many programs that make it easier for new anglers to get involved. Youth under the age of 16 are not required to get a fishing license in New Jersey, so encourage them to come along. If you don't take them, who will? New Jersey residents over the age of 70 are also exempt from needing a license. Our Free Fishing Days (June 1 & October 19, 2024), when a fishing license or trout stamp is not required to fish, gives every New Jersey resident, regardless of age, the opportunity to try fishing before buying a license. Those new to fishing, who are required to get a license, can take advantage of our Buddy License Program, which gives two new anglers an almost 50% discount when they purchase their licenses together (see the advertisement on page 10 for more information). This is a great deal, and the program is available through our electronic licensing system.

Once you've decided you're going to go fishing (don't forget to take a new angler along with you), the next decision you need to make is where to go. We can help with this! Our Wildlife Management Areas are full of fabulous fishing opportunities. Coupled with other state-owned open spaces like State Parks and Forests, New Jersey boasts more than 800,000 acres of permanently preserved open space with access open to the public. That is a lot of public land for a small state. Our "Freshwater Fishing Explorer" app holds the "Great Fishing Close to Home" interactive map and the "Trout Stocked Waters" interactive map and both can help you find your perfect fishing spot in any region of the state. I find exploring new locations adds to the outdoor adventure. Try it for yourself this year and use our apps to help you find the exact fish species and water type you're looking to pursue. These and other Fish & Wildlife apps can be found on the "Destinations - Maps Page" on our website - dep.nj.gov/njfw/destinations/maps/.

In New Jersey, the fun doesn't stop once you've landed your fish. Let's celebrate that catch! NJDEP's Fish & Wildlife's Skillful Angler Program recognizes great catches in the Garden State and serves as proof of the abilities of our anglers. This year our Skillful Angler Program's award ceremony will occur in conjunction with the New Jersey State Federation of Sportsmen's Clubs annual convention (see page 21 for more details). I hope to see you all there. Even if your fish falls short of the requirements for the Skillful Angler Program, we still share your excitement for fishing and want to celebrate your experience. Every week our "Go Fish Friday" social media post provides highlights of successful anglers and the great fishing opportunities in the Garden State. Share your experiences by sending us your photos and see what's being caught in New Jersey at #GoFishFriday.

Getting outside is enjoyable for so many reasons. When coupled with freshwater fishing, your outdoor experience can be raised to a new level. NJDEP Fish & Wildlife takes great pride and pleasure in providing you with opportunities to experience the joy of fishing safely and successfully. I hope you have a great 2024 fishing season and remember that you are a partner in conservation in New Jersey. Let's get outside! 

Dave Golden is the Assistant Commissioner of New Jersey DEP Fish & Wildlife.



Williamstown, MA | Birmingham, AL

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This guide is also available online at

eRegulations.com

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The Freshwater Fisheries e-mail lists, that is. This free service provides the latest information about NJDEP Fish & Wildlife events, public hearings and other matters related to our freshwater fishing resources. We also have several other lists so you can maximize your enjoyment of New Jersey's fish and wildlife resources.

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Attention: Saltwater Anglers

Register. It's free, easy and required!

New for 2024: Saltwater Registrations can now be obtained online at NJFishandWildlife.com/licensesalesite.htm, where all other Fish and Wildlife licenses and permits are available.

Before heading out to catch your favorite marine fish this year, be sure to join the hundreds of thousands of anglers who have already registered with the New Jersey Saltwater Recreational Registry Program (NJSRRP). Freshwater anglers fishing in tidal freshwater are also required to register with the NJSRRP.

For more information on the NJ Saltwater Recreational Registry Program and to register, visit dep.nj.gov/njfw/fishing/marine/saltwater-registry/

After registering, become part of the fishery management process!

Submit fishing reports after each saltwater trip to the NJ Volunteer Angler Survey. Your fishing reports can help improve saltwater fishing opportunities in New Jersey.

Submit online reports at dep.nj.gov/njfw/fishing/marine/volunteer-angler-survey

NJDEP Fish & Wildlife 2024 Calendar of Events

- **Trout Meeting — Virtual**
Thursday March 7, 2024;
7 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.
- **Fisheries Forums — Virtual**
 - » Thursday, May 2, 2024;
7 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.
 - » Thursday, May 16, 2024;
7 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.
- **Opening Day of Trout Season**
April 6; page 16
- **FREE Fishing Days**
June 1, Oct. 19; page 37
- **Fall Trout Stocking**
begins Oct. 8
- **Winter Trout Stocking**
November 25 and 26

Due to significant increase in participation during previous virtual meetings, the Fisheries Forums and Trout Meeting will be held virtually on Thursday evenings in 2024. Come and share your views and recommendations for the future of freshwater fisheries in New Jersey and learn about current research, management and fish culture activities! Please look for additional in-person public meetings at a later date. Presented by NJDEP Fish & Wildlife. Go to dep.nj.gov/njfw/fishing/freshwater/freshwater-fisheries-forums for updates.

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New Jersey Freshwater Fishing Digest

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New Jersey DEP Fish & Wildlife

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NJDEP Fish & Wildlife is a professional, environmental organization dedicated to the protection, management and wise use of the state's fish and wildlife resources.

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Cover photo © Photographer Jeremy Westerkamp. Sarah Westerkamp with daughter Cassidy in tow flyfishing the Flatbrook.

New Jersey Fish and Game Council

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Where to Write Us

New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, Fish & Wildlife
MC 501-03 • P.O. Box 420 • Trenton, NJ 08625-0420 • NJFishandWildlife.com

New Jersey DEP Fish & Wildlife

Our Mission

To protect and manage the state's fish and wildlife to maximize their long-term biological, recreational and economic value for all New Jerseyans.

Our Goals

- To maintain New Jersey's rich variety of fish and wildlife species at stable, healthy levels and to protect and enhance the many habitats on which they depend.
- To educate New Jerseyans on the values and needs of our fish and wildlife and to foster a positive human/wildlife co-existence.
- To maximize the recreational and commercial use of New Jersey's fish and wildlife for both present and future generations.

Law Enforcement Offices

- **Northern Region — 908-735-8240**
(Bergen, Essex, Hudson, Hunterdon, Morris, Passaic, Somerset, Sussex, Union and Warren counties)
- **Central Region — 609-259-2120**
(Burlington, Mercer, Middlesex, Monmouth and Ocean counties)
- **Southern Region — 856-629-0555**
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(coastal and bay areas)

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Fisheries Biologist Justin Rozema displaying a colorful catch from the *Wild Brown Trout Enhancement* section of the Pequannock River.

Maria Berezin-Dowling/NJDEP Fish & Wildlife

Wild Browns ABOUND

By Shawn Crouse, Freshwater Fisheries Chief

Unfortunately, many NJ anglers believe that trout measuring 10 to 12 inches in length are only obtainable when delivered by stocking truck and caught within feet of a stocking point. Anglers may not be aware that New Jersey has the water quality, habitat, and forage to support wild trout, and even those that do, may not realize they grow beyond the expected 7 or 8 inches. In fact, wild Browns, greater than 10 inches, can be found in over 60 individual streams across 7 counties, throughout the northwestern hills of New Jersey!

For many anglers, trout fishing revolves around a stocking schedule and weekly replenishments, but for those who have done their homework, angling for wild Brown Trout can be extremely rewarding. Although NJDEP Fish & Wildlife has been exclusively raising Rainbow Trout in recent years, the number of opportunities to catch Brown Trout in New Jersey may surprise you, but they can be trickier to find and catch than their stocked counterparts. Keep in mind some of our most exhilarating fishing experiences are further off the beaten path, waiting to be discovered. Although the wild Brown Trout angling community tends to keep their secret fishing spots close to the vest, we hear (from anglers) and see (through electrofishing surveys) enough places that produce and hold quality fish, and it becomes obvious that the opportunities are out there. We would like to update you on the current management of wild Brown Trout, to point anglers towards the extensive number of waters in which they are found, and to dispel the myth that wild trout are too small to be of interest. It's time to get the word out about wild Brown Trout in New Jersey!

First Introductions:

First introduced to New Jersey in 1908, Brown Trout (originally from Europe) were experimentally stocked into the South Branch of the Raritan River and the Millstone River from fish obtained from Seth Greene's hatchery in Caledonia, NY. Due to the success of these early stockings and much interest from anglers, the State's first Fish Hatchery was built in Hackettstown in 1912, and production of fingerling Brook Trout began. One year later, Rainbow and Brown Trout were added to hatchery production. In 1914, the hatchery began rearing catchable size of all three species for liberation statewide. By 1932, production had risen to a little over half a million trout, similar to the baseline allocation of 570,000 stocked trout of today. The business of raising trout was shifted to the Pequest Trout Hatchery, completed in 1982, with its first trout stocked in 1983. New Jersey's 2023 Freshwater Fishing Digest featured an extensive article titled, "Pequest Trout Hatchery Celebrates 40 Years." It chronicled the achievements of the program as well as the challenges faced that led to the difficult decision to discontinue the raising and stocking of Brown and Brook Trout since 2015.

Today:

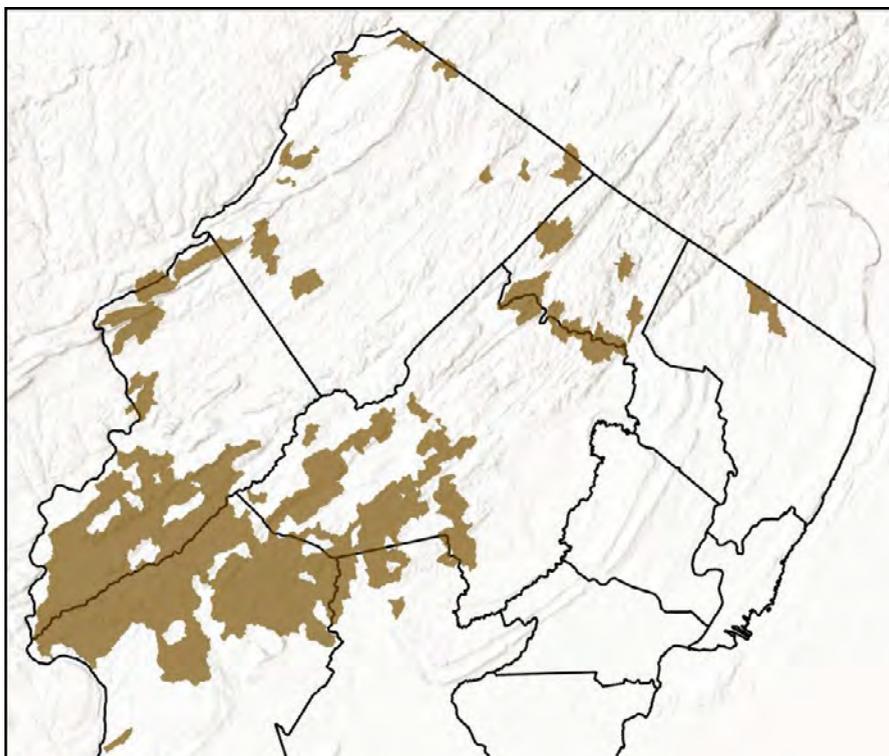
We are aware that much of the angling public would like to see Brown Trout reintroduced into NJDEP Fish & Wildlife's stocking program. The decision to produce Rainbow Trout only has not been an easy one, but it was done to maintain the consistency of 570,000 trout produced each spring, in addition to the 25,000 annually stocked during our strong fall and winter programs.

The legacy of Brown Trout stocking remains, as over the last century, select stocked trout naturally spawned in the wild. Their offspring reproduced and the population became self-sustainable. Over generations they have become naturalized in the majority of rivers and streams throughout the northern portion of the state that have suitable

habitat and water temperature (see map). In fact, high-quality waters that support reproducing trout are classified as *Trout Production*. These waters are incorporated into the NJ Department of Environmental Protection's Surface Water Quality Standards, providing regulatory protection to our most valuable waterways.

In Relation to Brook Trout:

New Jersey DEP Fish & Wildlife's mission is to protect and manage the State's wildlife resources to maximize their long-term biological, recreational, and economic values for all New Jerseyans. Responsible fisheries management requires not only defining clear management strategies, but also conveying them to the angling public. The management of



Current distribution map of watersheds containing wild Brown Trout in New Jersey.



Large wild Brown from the South Branch of the Raritan River in Long Valley.

Brown Trout in New Jersey is complicated. Wild Brown Trout are widely valued by many anglers, as they are beautiful, strong, and difficult to fool. They also are of great importance as biological indicators of stream health. At the same time, wild Brown Trout pose a significant threat to native Brook Trout when found together. In one concise statement that we have come to use when discussing wild Brown Trout... "We like them, just not everywhere." *Everywhere*, refers to being found in the same waters as wild Brook Trout.

A difficult dilemma arises when choosing to manage one species over another. Wild trout anglers generally value ALL trout species and typically practice strict catch-and-release. As anglers, we are taught to go to great lengths to minimize handling. Although mandatory release of all Brook Trout within the *Brook Trout Conservation Zone* (all waters west of Routes 202 and 287) is the law of the land, this is not true for other wild trout species. Wild Brown and Rainbow Trout may be legally harvested in all waters except our state's two *Catch and Release Areas*: a 4.2-mile section of the Big Flat/Flat Brook (from Route 206 bridge downstream to the Roy Bridge

on Mountain Road) and the 2.2-mile stretch of the South Branch of the Raritan River through the Ken Lockwood Gorge WMA.

From a conservation of native species perspective, Brown Trout are a threat to Brook Trout and in some waters, their release can be detrimental. In *Wild Trout Streams managed as Native Brook Trout Streams*, anglers are allowed to harvest up to two Brown and/or Rainbow Trout per day, with no minimum size. This management strategy allows anglers to contribute towards NJDEP Fish & Wildlife's Brook Trout conservation goals by reducing wild Brown and/or Rainbow Trout in select Brook Trout waters. In the absence of Brook Trout, Browns are often the recreational species most valued by fisheries managers and for good reason.

Size and Growth Potential:

Unfortunately, many NJ anglers believe that trout measuring 10 to 12 inches in length are only obtainable when delivered by stocking truck and caught within feet of a stocking point. Anglers may not be aware that New Jersey has the water quality, habitat, and forage to support wild trout, and even those that do, may not realize they grow beyond the expected 7 or 8 inches. In fact, wild Browns, greater than 10 inches, can be found in over 60 individual streams across 7 counties, throughout the northwestern hills of New Jersey! In fact, when NJDEP Fish & Wildlife biologists conduct electrofishing surveys, we are not surprised to encounter quality wild Browns. Surveys typically consist of a standard 150-meter (164 yards) section, used to represent each stream. When developing the latest set of regulations, we found that 20 of the 30 wild Brown Trout streams managed under the *Wild Trout Streams* regulations, had multiple Browns over 12.5 inches, and 8 of these streams had individuals over 16 inches! Exceptional individuals can surpass the 20-inch mark, making for an unforgettable day on the water. Many of these waters offer solitude and a chance to connect with nature. Keep in mind that many of the streams mentioned here are what most anglers would consider to be on the small side, but they still hold good-sized fish. Now imagine the growth potential in some of the larger streams and rivers mentioned below.

Prime Fishing Destinations:

New Jersey boasts several scenic locations offering fantastic wild Brown Trout fishing opportunities. The South Branch of the Raritan River is probably the state's best Brown Trout fishery. Nearly every tributary from Mount Olive to High Bridge produces wild Browns. Due to its excellent trout habitat, it's important to be aware that the South Branch has several different regulation sets. The section from the Budd Lake dam downstream to the dam just above Flanders-Drakestown Road is managed as a *Native Brook Trout Stream* and Browns should be kept out of this area. The next section is ripe with big wild Browns from Flanders-Drakestown Road downstream to the small dam above Schooley's Mountain Road (Route 517) in Long Valley and is managed as a *Wild Trout Stream with multiple trout species present*. Moving downstream, the South Branch is regulated as a *Trout Stocked Stream AND Wild Brown Trout Managed water*, with its own regulations that include the use of bait. This section continues quite a long way, down to the Lake Solitude Dam in High Bridge (excluding the Ken Lockwood Gorge *Catch and Release Area*, which is one of the most picturesque places to fish in the state). The bottom line is that the South Branch is loaded with wild Brown Trout from Flanders-Drakestown Road down through the Ken Lockwood Gorge and has distinct regulations for all types of anglers.

Farther north, the Pequannock River between Oak Ridge Reservoir and Charlottesburg Reservoir (managed by Newark Watershed) provides a fantastic opportunity for consistent action throughout the summer months due to coldwater releases from Oak Ridge Reservoir. If you're looking for some of the biggest Brown Trout in the state, you might want to explore the lower section of the Wanaque River, below Wanaque Reservoir. Although low in number, the Wanaque often produces wild Brown Trout over 20 inches.

One of the most scenic locations, with its large waterfalls and deep plunge pools, Van Campens Brook within the Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area is another great option. Dunnfield Creek in Worthington State Forest can be a bit treacherous and has an adjacent hiking path that is heavily used but is a neat place to fish if you haven't tried it. The overlapping Brook and Brown Trout populations also give you a chance to catch a hybrid Tiger Trout.

The Musconetcong River and many of its tributaries, located in Warren, Hunterdon, and Morris Counties, is a renowned trout fishery, with stretches of water that provide excellent habitat. While the



Wild Young-of-the-Year (YOY) Brook Trout (top) and wild YOY Brown Trout (bottom).

staple of “The Musky” may be its Rainbow Trout fishery, as it is the longest stocked river in the state receiving almost 54,000 each spring and over 2,800 each fall, many of its tributaries produce beautiful wild Browns. It is no surprise to catch one in the mainstem river.

Additional streams that are often overlooked for their wild Brown Trout potential include: Warren County’s Lopatcong and Pohatcong Creeks, Hunterdon County’s Capoolong, Mulhockaway, and Spruce Run Creeks, and Morris/Somerset County’s Black/Lamington River. These waters offer wild Browns alongside stocked Rainbows. They are also a little bit larger than most *Wild Trout Streams* and are more fishable.

Best Times to Fish:

Timing is crucial when it comes to targeting wild Brown Trout in New Jersey. The spring and fall seasons are particularly productive, with cooler water temperatures and the presence of aquatic insect hatches that Brown Trout eagerly feed on. During the spring, wild trout become more active and aggressive, providing exciting angling opportunities. Late summer months, with the warmest water temperatures, are a time that many wild trout anglers give trout a break, as warm waters are stressful for trout. As foliage changes color in the fall, trout become more territorial and feed voraciously to prepare for the winter months.

Wild Brown Trout are typically very skittish in crystal clear water, so anglers may want to try just after a slight rain when the water is higher and slightly off-color. Stealthy approaches, accurate casting, and reading the water are skills that can greatly enhance your success rate. Some key aspects of reading the water include: recognizing areas with suitable cover like rocks, fallen trees, or overhanging vegetation where trout can hide; understanding water flow patterns; and identifying seams and eddies that trap food. Deeper pools are known to hold larger wild Browns over 20 inches, however, these fish are wearier than their hatchery-raised counterparts.

Effective Techniques:

Successful wild Brown Trout fishing in New Jersey often involves either light spinning tackle, fly fishing, or a combination of both.

Spin anglers can utilize small spoons and spinners (less than ¼ ounce), plugs (less than 4 inches), or soft plastic baits to entice these fish. Try casting these upstream at a 45-degree angle and allowing them to travel across the current back to you. If you enjoy fishing with bait, there are multiple Brown Trout streams in which fishing with bait is permitted. Five of the waters managed as *Trout-Stocked Streams — Wild Brown Trout Managed*, include Hakhohake Creek, Lopatcong Creek, Pophandusing Creek, Raritan River S/Br., and the Saddle River. Drifting with a nightcrawler can produce many large Browns in a surprisingly short period of time when allowed to bounce naturally along the bottom.



Two beautiful wild Brown Trout collected by hourly Biologist Luke Diglio Ph.D. (left) and Freshwater Fisheries Chief Shawn Crouse (right) during field research.

Fly anglers can use a variety of nymphs, dry flies, and streamers that imitate the local aquatic insects and small fish. Popular fly patterns such as Pheasant Tails, Woolly Buggers, and Elk Hair Caddis are effective in enticing Brown Trout to strike. One effective technique is to ‘swing’ a streamer through the deepest pools by casting upstream, letting the fly sink, and letting the current drag it across the pool. Fishing with a “dry-dropper” setup, consisting of a small nymph tied about 6–18” below a larger dry fly, is a popular rig for anglers seeking Brown Trout in smaller, shallower tributaries and locations where they are more likely to spook. Also, try standing downstream and casting upstream into pools to keep fish from being able to see you.

Wild Trout Regulations:

New Jersey’s statewide general trout fishing regulations incorporate a minimum legal size of 9 inches, therefore affording protection to all wild trout species under 9 inches. The Fish and Game Council adopted revised *Wild Trout Stream* regulations in 2018, defined as either 1) *Native Brook Trout Streams*, 2) *Multiple wild trout species present* (Brook, Brown and/or Rainbow Trout), and 3) *Wild Brown Trout Enhancement Streams*, in part to help anglers better recognize the different kinds of wild trout stream fishing opportunities available in specific waters and to help Fish and Wildlife achieve appropriate stream-specific management goals. In other words, Brown Trout management strategies differ from one stream or river to the next - in some waters they are favored and in others they are not. Trout fishing regulations can be found on pages 16–21 of this publication.

Proper Handling:

Handling and releasing a trout properly is essential for the fish’s survival. When fishing waters regulated as *Wild Trout Streams* and *Catch and Release Areas*, barbless hooks, with no more than a total of 3 hook points must be used. Wet your hands before

handling the fish to protect its delicate mucus layer. Hold the trout gently but firmly, supporting its body horizontally to avoid injury. Avoid squeezing or touching its gills. If the fish is deeply hooked, don’t force the hook out - instead, cut the line as close to the hook as possible. To release the trout, gently place it back into the water, allowing it to swim away at its own pace. Ensure it has fully recovered before letting go and avoid dropping it from a height or dragging it across rocks. By following these guidelines, you’ll help conserve trout populations and maintain healthy aquatic ecosystems.

In Closing:

We are anglers. We understand that for many, variety is king — different species, habitats, and techniques. Some days we want to fish with bait, some days we prefer lures. At times we want to show family and friends a good time putting *them* on fish and some days we just need to sneak away and fish in solitude. We can be marveled by the latest and greatest technology to get the edge, or we can be happy to sit on the bank with a nightcrawler. The beauty of fishing is that it is whatever you want it to be; fast paced action or peace and quiet; reliable stockings or wild discoveries.

Wild Brown Trout provide a different experience than fishing for stocked trout. Some anglers perceive it as more challenging and more rewarding. We wanted to provide information for those wanting to try something new and to make you aware of the many opportunities to fish for Brown Trout in New Jersey. Brown Trout waters span a large geographic area and Browns larger than stocking size (>10.5 inches) are not uncommon. Wild Browns can be very skittish and finicky. You will have to modify your techniques. You might not have as much action. In many cases you will have to venture a little deeper into the woods to find these hidden treasures.

So, gear up, cast your line, and immerse yourself in the wonders of wild trout fishing in New Jersey, where *Wild Browns Abound!*

Become a Wildlife Habitat Supporter!

Did you know that NJDEP Fish & Wildlife manages more than 360,000 acres in 122 wildlife management areas throughout the state?

These spaces protect and conserve fish and wildlife habitat while providing opportunities for outdoor recreation such as fishing, hunting, birding, wildlife viewing, hiking and more! You can help to ensure the conservation of these natural treasures for the enjoyment of generations to come by becoming a Wildlife Habitat Supporter and making a donation. Donations will be used to:

- Manage and restore fish and wildlife habitat.
- Enforce fish and wildlife regulations.
- Restore and protect endangered and nongame species.
- Fund fish and wildlife educational programs and more.
- Improve public access to recreational facilities on WMAs.

Visit dep.nj.gov/njfw/conservation/wildlife-habitat-supporter-program



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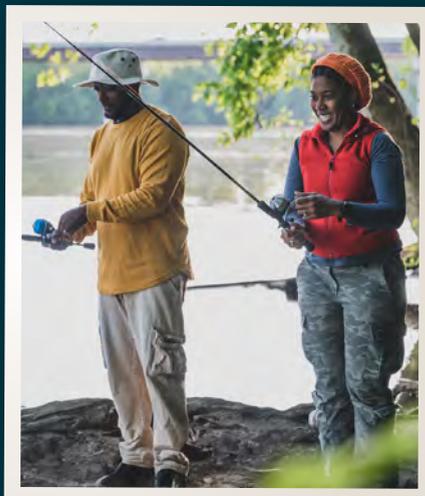
FISH with a BUDDY and Save Almost 50% Off Your Fishing License!

Introduce a friend or family member to fishing and you BOTH save nearly 50% on your fishing licenses!

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- Buddy fishing licenses are available online or in person at any license agent.

Pass on the tradition and we will pass on the Savings!

For more information, visit dep.nj.gov/njfw/fishing/freshwater/fishing-buddy-licenses. Persons who already receive special discount pricing or free licenses, senior license buyers (65 and over), disabled vets, National Guard personnel are not eligible for a "Buddy" fishing license.



NJ's Freshwater Fishing Explorer App

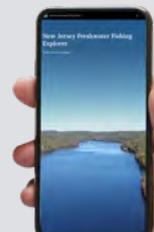
New Jersey DEP Fish & Wildlife's new Freshwater Fishing Explorer App combines the Great Fishing Close to Home App and the new Trout Water Map all in one place!

The Trout Stocked Waters tab provides the stocking dates and number of trout stocked for all trout stocked waters in our spring trout stocking program. Clicking on a water feature within the map will pull up the stocking schedule, the number of fish to be stocked and closures.

The Great Fishing Close to Home tab allows users to explore the great diversity of fishing opportunities New Jersey has to offer.

This application includes over 290 publicly accessible lakes, ponds and reservoirs picked by NJDEP Fish & Wildlife staff as good places to fish in the state.

Find it at NJFishandWildlife.com/freshwaterfishing/



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Regulations in red are new this year.

Licenses

- A valid New Jersey fishing license is required for residents at least 16 years and less than 70 years of age (plus all non-residents 16 years and older) to fish the fresh waters of New Jersey, including privately owned waters. **See page 10 for the money-saving Buddy Fishing License.**
- For fishing-related license and permit fees, see page 1. See below for *Purchasing a License*.
- Resident anglers age 70 and over do not require a fishing license. A driver license or other acceptable proof of age containing date of birth and physical description will serve as the actual fishing license. Non-residents 70 and over must purchase a license.
- License must be visibly displayed on outer clothing.
- License and trout stamp are both valid from date of purchase through Dec. 31.
- A person must have an established domicile (principle residence) in New Jersey for at least the previous six months to obtain a resident fishing license.
- Farmers and immediate family members who live on the farm do not need a license to fish on their own farm, but must obey all fishing regulations.
- Anyone convicted of a second fish or wildlife violation in this or another state within a period of five years will have his or her New Jersey sporting licenses revoked for a minimum of two years.
- New Jersey is a member of the **Interstate Wildlife Violator Compact**. Under the Compact, information about suspension of sporting license privileges for people convicted of wildlife violations in New Jersey will be shared with participating member states. It is an individual's responsibility to first contact the licensing authority in the state where they intend to fish, hunt or otherwise take wildlife to determine their eligibility before making a purchase or engaging in those activities. Individuals with wildlife violation convictions or license suspensions received outside of New Jersey may call the Compact Administrator at 609-259-3347 to determine his or her license eligibility in New Jersey.

Trout Stamps

A valid fishing license and trout stamp are both required to fish for or possess trout and salmon for all anglers (residents and non-residents) 16 and over, and residents under the age of 70. No trout stamp is required for **residents** age 70 years and over.

Purchasing a License

Licenses may be purchased online at NJFishandWildlife.com/licensesalesite.htm or at license agents such as sporting goods or bait and tackle stores. Call first to confirm agent's system is active. Visit NJFishandWildlife.com for details, or call 609-292-2965.

Replacement — Lost License or Stamp

Replace a license, permit or stamp at any license agent or online at NJDEP Fish & Wildlife's internet license sales site, NJFishandWildlife.com/licensesalesite.htm also linked through our regular website at NJFishandWildlife.com. For fishing licenses or trout stamps originally purchased online, a reprint can be made free of charge on plain paper. Durable stock duplicates can be ordered online for \$2 per item.

Special Licenses

Servicemen and Servicewomen

A person on active duty in the United States armed services, regardless of their current residency, may buy a New Jersey resident fishing license. Active duty military ID must be shown to the license agent as proof of entitlement.

New Jersey National Guard

Only New Jersey National Guard personnel in good standing are entitled to free sporting licenses, permits and stamps. These privileges are not available using NJDEP Fish & Wildlife's website. However, the NJ Dept. of Military and Veterans Affairs can issue fishing licenses through their DMAVA website at www.nj.gov/military/veterans/benefits-resources/hunting-fishing-license.shtml. For all other free sporting licenses, call 609-530-6866, email robert.greco@dmava.nj.gov, or write to: NJ Dept of Military and Veterans Affairs, Attn: MSG (Ret.) Robert Greco (RSB-RALV), PO Box 340, Trenton, NJ 08625-0340.

Veterans Licenses, Stamps and Permits

Free hunting and fishing licenses, stamps and permits are available for resident veterans with a service-connected disability.

For the purposes of this program, legislation defines disabled veterans as "...any resident of New Jersey who has been honorably discharged or released under honorable circumstances from active service from any branch of the Armed Forces of the United States and who has been declared by the United States Department of Veteran Affairs, or its successor, to have a service-connected disability of any degree..."

Newly applying disabled veterans can obtain their hunting and fishing licenses and stamps by mailing the application and all required documentation to: NJDEP Fish & Wildlife, Attn: Disabled Veteran Licensing, MC 501-03, PO Box 420 Trenton, NJ 08625-0420.

NJDEP Fish & Wildlife offices no longer accept Disabled Veteran Certifications in person. For information and updates, go to dep.nj.gov/njfw/licenses-and-permits/disabled-veteran-license-information.

All licenses, stamps and permits for which the veteran is eligible will be free of charge. This does not give preferential treatment in any lottery. For questions call 609-292-2965.

Disabled Veteran Applicants:

1. Documentation of current benefits for a service-connected disability and proof of honorable discharge (copy of your DD-214, VA card or monthly check stub) must be presented to obtain a disabled veteran certification.
2. Applicant must provide a hunter education course certificate applicable to the license for which they are applying or a previously issued resident archery or firearm license or rifle permit. Resident licenses from other states are accepted if the license indicates the sporting arm for which it was valid. Non-resident licenses from other states are not acceptable.
3. To obtain the free disabled veteran deer/turkey permits one must *first* have a free disabled veteran hunting license.

For the Blind

Residents with total blindness may obtain a free license. Call 609-292-2965 for an application.

Regulation Changes

In order to comply with the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC) and to maintain consistency with NJ's Marine Fishing Regulations, the following regulation changes went into effect during 2023.

American Shad Recreation Possession Limit

The daily bag limit for American Shad has been reduced from 3 to 2 for the Delaware River. The American Shad fishery remains closed in all other freshwaters.

Modification of Striped Bass Size Limits

The statewide daily creel and possession limit for Striped Bass is one fish, a minimum length of 28 inches and a maximum length of 31 inches. This daily limit and slot limit also applies to Hybrid Striped Bass on the Raritan River downstream of the Duke Island Park dam. The Striped Bass and Hybrid Striped Bass regulations on the Delaware River remain a one fish daily limit, however there is now a minimum length of 28 inches and a maximum length of 31 inches. An administrative change was also made for Striped Bass and Hybrid Striped Bass regulations on the Delaware River downstream of the Calhoun St. Bridge, extending the open season from March 30 to March 31.

DEP Action Line, 24 Hrs.

The Department has a toll-free telephone hotline number you can use to report environmental incidents, abuses, and complaints in New Jersey or impacting it.

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Summary of Fishing Regulations

2024 REGULATIONS

Regulations in red are new this year.

Summary of General Fishing Regulations

The season, size and creel limits for freshwater species apply to all waters of the state, including tidal waters.

- Fish may be taken only in the manner known as angling with handline or with rod and line, or as otherwise allowed by law.
- When fishing from the *shoreline*, no more than three fishing rods, handlines or combination thereof may be used (except on the Delaware River. There is no rod limit when fishing from a *boat* except for the Delaware River.) **For the Delaware River the three rod limit applies both to boat and shoreline anglers** (see page 27).
- Only one daily creel of any fish species may be in possession. Additional fish may be caught once the creel is reached if immediately returned to the water unharmed.
- Separate stringers or buckets must be used for each angler's catch.
- Boats may contain only the combined daily creel limit for each legal angler on board.
- A fishing license does not authorize trespassing on private property. Permission must first be obtained from the landowner.

It Is Unlawful To:

- Fish within 100 feet (or as posted) of any fish ladder entrance or exit from March 1 through June 30.
- Spear fish in fresh waters except as specified for Delaware River, page 27.
- Possess a fishing device with more than nine hooks in total, or more than three treble hooks, except for the Delaware River; see page 27.
- Use set lines.
- Use cast nets in freshwater lakes or trout stocked waters. See *Baitfish Regulations*, page 29 for other exclusions.
- Foul hook or snag any species of fish. This does not apply to fish taken through the ice.

Bow and Arrow Fishing

Carp (including bighead, common, grass), eels, flathead catfish, American shad (Delaware River only), gizzard shad, snakeheads and suckers or hybrids of these species—may be taken at any time by use of a bow and arrow (with a line attached to the arrow) when in possession of a valid fishing license. Crossbows may be used when bowfishing except for Greenwood Lake. Crossbows must have a stock length of at least 25 inches, a minimum draw weight of 75 pounds and a working safety. Crossbows must be uncocked during transport or when not actively fishing. They may not be permanently mounted. **NOTE: some municipalities have banned the discharge of bow and arrow, tethered arrow or not. As such, anglers are strongly urged to check with the waterbody owner and/or municipality prior to engaging in bowfishing.** See regulations for the Delaware River and Greenwood Lake, pages 26–28.

Water Supply Reservoirs Open To Fishing By Permit Only

Permits must be obtained from the specific reservoir owner listed below. A valid fishing license is also required.

Waterbody	County	Type of Fishing	Fee	Permit Source	
Newark-Pequanock Watershed Reservoirs	Echo Lake	Boat & Shoreline	Yes	Newark Watershed reservoir permits available in person at: City of Newark 223 Echo Lake Road, Newfoundland, NJ 07435 973-697-1724 or online at: www.newarknj.gov/card/recreational-permit	
	Clinton Reservoir				Passaic
	Oak Ridge Reservoir				Morris
	Canistear Reservoir				Sussex
Oradell Reservoir	Bergen	Shoreline only	Yes	Veolia reservoir permits available online only at: Veolia Watershed Recreation Program https://mywater.veolia.us/new-york/water-in-my-area/watershed-recreation-program	
Woodcliff Lake					
Lake Tappan Reservoir Lake Deforest					

Emergency Closures

It is illegal to fish or attempt to catch or kill fish by any manner or means in any waters for which the Assistant Commissioner of NJDEP Fish & Wildlife, upon approval by the Fish and Game Council, issues an emergency closure notice. Such notification is effective and/or rescinded immediately upon public notification. Emergency closures shall be based upon imminent threat to the well-being of the fishery resources, and/or its users, and may include any exceptions to the total ban of fishing that the Assistant Commissioner deems practical.

Ice Fishing

No more than five devices per person may be used when fishing through the ice. Legal devices include:

1. Ice supported tip-ups or lines with one single pointed hook attached, or one burr of three hooks that measure not more than 1/2-inch from point to shaft.
2. An artificial jigging lure with not more than one burr of three hooks that measure not more than 1/2-inch from point to point.
3. An artificial jigging lure with not more than three single hooks measuring not more than 1/2-inch from point to shaft.
4. An artificial jigging lure with a combination of the hook limitations described in 2 and 3 above.

Natural bait may be used on the hooks of the artificial jigging lures. All devices that are not hand-held must bear the name and address of the user and cannot be left unattended.

See separate regulations for trout-stocked waters and Greenwood Lake.

Potentially Dangerous Fish

The possession or release of live, potentially dangerous fish is prohibited. These species include Asian Swamp Eel, Bighead, Grass (diploid) and Silver Carp, Blue and Flathead Catfish, Round Goby, Brook Stickleback, Green Sunfish, Oriental Weatherfish, Snakehead and Warmouth. All black bass except for Largemouth and Smallmouth Bass are considered potentially dangerous.

Anglers MUST destroy these species if encountered while fishing and should submit specimen(s) or photos to a NJDEP Fish & Wildlife Bureau of Freshwater Fisheries biologist for verification. To reach a regional biologist, call 908-236-2118 (north), 609-223-6076 (central) or 856-629-4950 (south). These non-native species are likely to cause environmental harm to the state's fisheries resources by outcompeting preferred game fish species. Common Carp are an invasive species but are NOT classified as a potentially dangerous fish and do not have to be destroyed.

Sale of Fish

It is illegal to sell any freshwater fish species except under commercial permits as prescribed in the Fish Code. Artificially-propagated trout, if properly tagged, may be sold for food purposes.

Stocking Fish

A permit is required to stock fish or fish eggs into any waters of the state, public or private, at any time. Applications are available online at dep.nj.gov/njfw/fishing/freshwater/regulations-and-permits or by contacting the Bureau of Freshwater Fisheries 908-236-2118. **It is ILLEGAL to stock carp or koi into any waters. No trout may be used as bait or stocked within the PEQUEST RIVER DRAINAGE except by the Pequest Trout Hatchery.**

Tagging Fish

No person may tag or mark and then release a fish without first obtaining a fish stocking permit or by special permit issued by NJDEP Fish & Wildlife. Contact the Bureau of Freshwater Fisheries 908-236-2118 for application information.

Waste of Fish

Fish of any species which are purposely killed become part of the angler's daily limit and must be removed from the waters from which they were taken, then either used or otherwise disposed of properly. 

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Regulations in red are new this year.

2024 General Trout Fishing Information

- Opening day of trout season: Saturday, April 6, 2024 at 8 a.m.
- To fish for trout or salmon, a valid New Jersey fishing license and trout stamp are both required for residents at least 16 years and less than 70 years of age plus all non-residents 16 years and older.
- **All Brook Trout caught within the "Brook Trout Conservation Zone" must be immediately released unharmed.** The zone consists of all waters within the northwest region of the state, where most remaining wild Brook Trout populations occur. The Conservation Zone includes all waters west of I-287 and north of Rt. 202, extending to, but not including the Delaware River. See map on page 21.
- Waters stocked with trout in the spring are listed below (those with no in-season closures) AND on page 18 (those with in-season closures). **Note:** Special regulations may apply on some of these waters, or sections thereof.
- During the three weeks prior to opening day, all ponds, lakes or sections of streams listed are stocked with trout, except Trophy Trout Lakes. These waters are closed to fishing for all species from March 18 to April 6 at 8 a.m. Exceptions: Lake Hopatcong, Mountain Lake, Lake Shenandoah, Lawrence Brook (section from Davidson's Mill Rd. to Farrington Lake dam), Prospertown Lake and Swartwood Lake are open year round to fishing. However, all trout caught during this period (above) must be released immediately. Seasonal and Year-round Trout Conservation Areas and designated Holdover Trout Lakes (see pages 19–21) are also open to fishing but are catch-and-release only for trout. Fishing is not permitted on Seasonal Trout Conservation Areas from 12:01 a.m. to 8 a.m. on April 6, 2024. Round Valley and Merrill Creek Reservoirs (Trophy Trout Lakes) are open to year-round fishing; trout may be harvested within the regulations as shown on page 21.
- **After opening day, trout stocked waters are open to fishing, including the days they are stocked, unless specifically listed with in-season closures (page 18). In-season closures also apply to designated Seasonal Trout Conservation Areas (page 19).**
- Only one daily creel limit of trout may be in possession. Once the creel limit is reached, an angler may continue to fish provided any additional trout caught are immediately returned to the water unharmed.
- **When fishing from the shoreline, no more than three fishing rods, hand lines or combination thereof may be used. Separate stringers or buckets must be used for each angler's catch.**
- Containers in boats may hold only the combined daily creel limit for each legal angler on board.
- NJDEP Fish & Wildlife reserves the right to suspend stocking when emergency conditions prevail.

Spring Trout Stocked Waters With No In-Season Fishing Closures

After opening day, these waters may be fished on the day they are stocked.

Note: All waters listed are stocked with trout pre-season (three-week period preceding opening day) except Round Valley and Merrill Creek Reservoirs. The number in parentheses shows the anticipated number of in-season stockings (April 8 through May 24). A zero indicates the water will be stocked only during pre-season. For weekly updates on stocking details, call the **Trout Hotline's recorded message at 609-322-9524.** (Select waters are also stocked in the Fall (October) indicated by a "🍁" and Winter (November) indicated by a "❄️".) Or visit NJFishandWildlife.com where you will also find directions to public-access portions of trout-stocked waters.

Atlantic County

- Birch Grove Park Ponds—Northfield (3) 🍁
- Hammonton Lake—Town of Hammonton (3) 🍁
- Heritage Pond—Absecon (3)

Bergen County

- Dahnert's Lake—Garfield (4)
- Hackensack River—Lake Tappan to Harriot Ave., Harrington Park Borough (4)
- Hohokus Brook—Parsons Pond Rd., Franklin Lakes Borough to Saddle River (4)
- Indian Lake—Little Ferry Borough (4)
- Mill Pond (aka Silver Lake)—SUSPENDED
- Pascack Brook—Woodcliff Lake dam to Emerson Rd., Harrington Park Borough (4)
- Potash Lake—Oakland (3)

- Saddle River—Lake St. Upper Saddle River to West Century Rd., Fair Lawn (5)
- Tenakill Brook—Closter Borough, entire length (3)
- Whites Pond—Waldwick Borough (4)

Burlington County

- Crystal Lake—Willingboro Twp. (4) 🍁
- Laurel Pond—Mt. Laurel Twp. (3)
- Pemberton Lake—Pemberton Twp. (3)
- Rancocas Creek, Southwest Br.—Mill St. Park to Rt. 70, Medford Twp. (4)
- Sylvan Lake—Burlington Twp. (3) 🍁

Camden County

- Gloucester City Pond—Gloucester (4)
- Grenloch Lake (see Gloucester County)
- Haddon Lake—Audubon Borough (0) 🍁
- Oak Pond—Sicklerville, Winslow Twp. (3) 🍁
- Rowands Lake—Clementon Borough (3) 🍁

Cape May County

- Ponderlodge Pond—Villas, Lower Twp. (4) 🍁
- Tuckahoe Lake—Tuckahoe, Upper Twp. (4)

Cumberland County

- Cohansey River—Dam at Seeleys Pond to powerline above Sunset Lake, Upper Deerfield Twp. (4)
- Giampietro Park Lake—Vineland (0) 🍁
- Mary Elmer Lake—Bridgeton (3) 🍁
- Maurice River—Willow Grove Lake dam to Sherman Ave., Vineland (4) 🍁
- Shaws Mill Pond—Down/Lawrence Twps. (3) 🍁
- South Vineland Park Pond—Vineland (3) 🍁

Essex County

- Branch Brook Park Lake—Newark (4)
- Diamond Mill Pond—Millburn Twp. (3)
- Rahway River, W/Br.—Campbells Pond to Essex St., Millburn Twp. (3)
- Verona Lake—Verona Twp. (4) 🍁

Gloucester County

- Greenwich Lake—Greenwich Twp. (3) 🍁
- Grenloch Lake—Washington Twp. (3) 🍁
- Harrisonville Lake—Pilesgrove/South Harrison Twps. (3)
- Iona Lake—Franklin Twp. (3) 🍁
- Swedesboro Lake (aka Narraticon Lake)—Borough of Swedesboro (3) 🍁
- Westville Lake—Westville (0)

Hudson County

- North Hudson Park Lake—(aka JJ Braddock Park Lake), North Bergen Twp. (4) 🍁
- West Hudson County Park Pond—Harrison (4)

Hunterdon County

- Alexauken Creek—West Amwell Twp., entire length (2)
- Amwell Lake—East Amwell Twp. (3) 🍁
- Capoolong Creek (aka Cakepoulin Creek)—Franklin Twp., entire length (5)
- Delaware-Raritan Feeder Canal—source to Wilburtha Rd., Ewing Twp. (Mercer) (6)
- Hakihokake Creek—Little York-Mount Pleasant Rd, Little York, Alexandria Twp. to Delaware River (2)
- Lokatong Creek—Route 12, Kingwood Twp. to Delaware-Raritan Feeder Canal (5)
- Mannys Pond—Union Twp. (3)
- Mountain Farm Pond—Lebanon Twp. (3)
- Mulhockaway Creek—Pattensburg, source to Spruce Run Reservoir, Clinton/Union Twps. (5)
- Neshanic River—confluence of First and Second Neshanic Rivers to Rt. 514, Raritan Twp. (2)
- Nishisakawick Creek—Frenchtown Alexandria Twp., entire length (2)
- Rockaway Creek—Readington Twp., entire length (4)
- Round Valley Reservoir—Clinton Twp. (1)
- Sidney Brook—Franklin/Union Twps., entire length (1)
- Spruce Run—Glen Gardner Borough/Lebanon Twp., entire length (5)

**OPENING DAY
of TROUT SEASON**

▶ April 6, 2024 April 5, 2025

Stony Brook—(See Mercer Co.)
Wickechoke Creek—Covered Bridge, Rt. 604, Sergeantsville to Delaware River (2)

Mercer County

Assunpink Creek—Assunpink Site 5 dam upstream of Rt. 130 to Carnegie Rd., Hamilton Twp. (4)
Colonial Lake—Lawrence Twp. (3) 🦟
Delaware-Raritan Canal—Mulberry St., Trenton to Alexander St., Princeton (4)
Delaware-Raritan Feeder Canal—(See Hunterdon Co.) (6)
Rosedale Lake—Hopewell Twp. (3) 🦟
Stony Brook—Hopewell Twp., entire length (4)

Middlesex County

Ireland Brook—500 ft. upstream of Riva Ave to Farrington Lake, North Brunswick Twp. (2)
Lake Papaiani—Edison Twp. (0)
Lawrence Brook—Dam at Davidson's Mill Pond to 2nd RR bridge (Raritan Railroad) below Main St., Milltown Borough, excluding Farrington Lake from Church Lane to Farrington Dam (4)
Manalapan Lake—Monroe Twp. (3)
Roosevelt Park Pond—Edison Twp. (3) 🦟

Monmouth County

Echo Lake—Howell Twp. (3)
Englishtown Mill Pond (aka Weamaconk Lake)—Englishtown Borough (3)
Franklin Lake—West Long Branch Borough (3)
Garvey's Pond—Middletown Twp. (3)
Hockhockson Brook—Rt. 18, Colts Neck Twp. to Garden State Parkway bridge (northbound), Tinton Falls Borough (5)
Holmdel Park Pond—Holmdel Twp. (3)
Mac's Pond—Manasquan Borough (0)
Mingamahone Brook—Birdsall Rd. to Manasquan River, Howell Twp. (5)
Mohawk Pond—Red Bank Borough (4)
Shark River—Rt. 33, Wall Twp., to Remsen Mill Rd., Neptune/Wall Twp. (5)
Spring Lake—Spring Lake Borough (3) 🦟
Topanemus Lake—Freehold Twp. (3) 🦟
Yellow Brook—Heyers Mill Rd. to Muhlenbrink Rd., Colts Neck Twp. (2)

Morris County

Beaver Brook—Rockaway Twp./Borough, entire length (3)
Black River—Route 206 Chester, to the posted Black River Fish and Game club property at the lower end of Hacklebarney State Park (6) 🦟
Burnham Park Ponds (Upper and Lower)—Town of Morristown (4)
Drakes Brook—Mt. Olive/Roxbury Twps., entire length (3)
Hibernia Brook—Rockaway Twp., entire length (5)
India Brook—Mountainside Ave. to Rt. 24, Mendham Borough (5)
Lake Hopatcong—Hopatcong/Jefferson/Mt. Arlington/Roxbury (3)
Lake Musconetcong—Netcong Borough/Roxbury Twp./Stanhope Borough (3)
Mt. Hope Pond—Rockaway Twp. (3) 🦟
Passaic River—Black Brook confluence to Rt. 24, Chatham Borough (4)

Pequannock River—(see Passaic Co.)
Pompton River—(see Passaic Co.)
Russia Brook—Ridge Rd. to Lake Swannanoa, Jefferson Twp. (2)
Speedwell Lake—Town of Morristown (4) 🦟
Whippany River—Tingley Rd., Morris Twp. to Ridgedale Ave., Town of Morristown (2)

Ocean County

Lake Shenandoah—Ocean Co. Park, Lakewood Twp. (3) 🦟
Pohatcong Lake—Borough of Tuckerton (4)
Prosperstown Lake—Jackson Twp. (3)

Passaic County

Barbour Pond—Woodland Park Borough (3) 🦟
Clinton Reservoir—Newark Watershed, West Milford Twp. (3)
Green Turtle Lake—Long Pond Ironworks State Park, West Milford Twp. (3) 🦟
Oldham Pond—North Haledon Borough (3)
Pequannock River—Rt. 23, Smith Mills to Paterson-Hamburg Turnpike, Pompton Lakes/Riverdale Boroughs (6)
Pompton River—confluence with Ramapo River to NY Susquehanna R.R. bridge, Wayne Twp. (4)
Ramapo River—Pompton Lake dam to confluence with Pompton River (4) 🦟
Ringwood Brook—State line to Sally's Pond, Ringwood State Park, Ringwood Borough (5)
Sheppard Lake—Ringwood State Park, Ringwood Borough (3)

Salem County

Harrisonville Lake—Piles Grove/South Harrison Twps. (3)
Maurice River—Willow Grove Lake dam to Sherman Ave., Vineland (4)
Schadler's Sand Wash Pond—Carneys Point Twp. (3) 🦟

Somerset County

Lamington River—Rt. 523 (Lamington Rd.) Bedminster Twp. to Raritan River N. Br. (4)
Middle Brook, E/Br.—Bridgewater/Warren Twps., entire length (2)
Passaic River—(See Morris Co.)
Peapack Brook—Peapack-Gladstone Borough, entire length (5)
Raritan River—confluence of Raritan River N. Br. and S. Br. to Rt. 206, Hillsborough Twp./Somerville Borough (4)
Rock Brook—Hillsborough/Montgomery Twps., entire length (1)
Spooky Brook Park Pond—Franklin Twp. (0)

Sussex County

Alm's House Pond—Frankford Twp. (3)
Andover Junction Brook—Andover Borough, entire length (2)
Big Flat Brook, Upper—Sawmill Pond, High Point State Park, Montague Twp. to 100 ft. above Crigger Rd., Stokes State Forest, Sandyston Twp. (4)
Blue Mountain Lake—Delaware Water Gap Nat'l Recreation Area, Walpack Twp. (3)
Clove Brook—source to Clove Acres Lake, Wantage Twp. (5)
Culver's Creek—Frankford Twp., entire length (2)

Dry Brook—Branchville Borough/Frankford Twp., entire length (3)
Franklin Pond Creek—Hamburg Mtn. WMA, Hardyston Twp./Franklin Borough, entire length (5)
Glenwood Brook—Glenwood Lake dam to state line (2)
Lake Aeroflex—Andover Twp. (3) 🦟
Lake Hopatcong—Hopatcong/Mt Arlington Boroughs, Jefferson/Roxbury Twps. (3)
Lake Musconetcong—Netcong/Stanhope Boroughs/Roxbury Twp. (3)
Lake Ocquittunk—Stokes State Forest, Sandyston Twp. (3) 🦟
Little Flat Brook—Sandyston Twp., entire length (5)
Little Swartswood Lake—Hampton Twp. (3) 🦟
Lubbers Run—Byram Twp., entire length (5)
Neldon Brook—Stillwater Twp., entire length (2)
Papakating Creek—George Hill Rd., Frankford Twp. to Rt. 565, Lewisburg (2)
Papakating Creek, W/Br.—Wantage Twp., entire length (2)
Pond Brook—Stillwater Twp., entire length (5)
Sawmill Pond—High Point State Park, Montague Twp. (3)
Silver Lake—Hamburg Mountain WMA, Hardyston Twp. (0) 🦟
Stony Lake—Stokes State Forest, Sandyston Twp. (3)
Swartswood Lake—Stillwater Twp. (3)
Wallkill River—Lake Mohawk Dam to Route 23, Hardyston Twp. (4-5) 🦟
Wawayanda Creek—Vernon Twp., entire length (5)
Wawayanda Lake—Vernon Twp. (3)

Union County

Green Brook—Rt. 527, Berkeley Heights Twp. to Rt. 22, Scotch Plains Twp. (2)
Lower Echo Lake—Mountainside Borough (3) 🦟
Milton Lake—Rahway (4)
Nomahegan Park Lake—Cranford Twp. (4)
Passaic River—(See Morris Co.)
Rahway River—I-78 bridge, Springfield to Lawrence St. (Route 514), Rahway (4)
Seeleys Pond—Berkeley Heights Twp. (3)
Warinanco Park Lake—Roselle Borough (0)

Warren County

Beaver Brook—Silver Lake Dam to Pequest River, White Twp. (4)
Blair Creek—Bass Lake dam, Hardwick Twp. to Blair Lake, Blairstown Twp. (2)
Blair Lake—Blairstown Twp. (3)
Brookaloo Swamp—Hope Twp., entire length (2)
Buckhorn Creek—Harmony Twp., entire length (2)
Furnace Brook—Oxford Twp., entire length (2)
Furnace Lake—Oxford Twp. (3) 🦟
Honey Run—Knowlton-Hope township line to Beaver Brook, Hope Twp. (2)
Jacksonburg Creek—Blairstown Twp., entire length (2)
Lopatcong Creek—Rt. 519 Harmony Twp., to South Main St., Phillipsburg (5)
Merrill Creek Reservoir—Harmony Twp. (1)
Mountain Lake—Liberty Twp. (0)
Pohatcong Creek—source to Rt. 31, Washington Twp. (2)
Pophandusing Creek—White Twp., entire length (2)
White Lake—Hardwick Twp. (3)

Regulations in *red* are new this year.

General Trout Fishing Regulations

BROOK, BROWN & RAINBOW TROUT (and their hybrids and strains)

***ALL BROOK TROUT CAUGHT WITHIN THE BROOK TROUT CONSERVATION ZONE MUST BE IMMEDIATELY RELEASED UNHARMED.**

The Conservation Zone includes all waters west of I-287 and north of Rt. 202, extending to, but not including the Delaware River.

Season	Minimum Size	Daily Limit	Exceptions
January 1–March 17	9 inches	4*	1. Special regulation areas (Catch and Release Areas, Year-Round and Seasonal Trout Conservation Areas, Trophy and Holdover Trout Lakes and Wild Trout Streams). 2. On lakes Hopatcong, Mountain, Prospertown, Shenandoah, Swartswood and the section of Lawrence Brook from Davidson's Mill Road bridge to the Church Lane bridge, fishing is permitted during the period March 18–April 6 at 8 a.m. All trout caught during this period must immediately be released. 3. Greenwood Lake and Delaware River—see separate regulations for boundary waters, pages 26-28.
March 18–April 6 at 8 a.m.	Fishing prohibited on trout stocked waters. Catch and release for trout in all other waters.		
April 6 at 8 a.m.–May 31	9 inches	6*	
June 1–Dec. 31	9 inches	4*	

Trout Stocked Waters Closed to Fishing on Spring In-season Stocking Dates

After opening day, these waters are closed to fishing from 5 a.m. to 5 p.m. on their designated stocking dates. Closures apply to all tributaries for 100 feet from the main channel.

***All Brook Trout caught within the BROOK TROUT CONSERVATION ZONE must be released. There are no closures for ANY waters in the fall. These waters are also stocked in the fall.**

Trout Stocking Hotline at a NEW number: 609-322-9524.

TROUT STOCKED WATERS CLOSED TO FISHING (5 A.M. TO 5 P.M.) ON SPRING IN-SEASON STOCKING DATES

Stocking Dates	Waterbody	County	Location
MONDAYS April 8, 15, 22, 29 May 6, 13, 20	Manasquan River	Monmouth	Rt. 9 bridge, Howell Twp. downstream to Allenwood-Lakewood Rd. (Rt. 21), Wall Twp.
	Metedeconk River, N/Br.	Ocean	Aldrich Rd. to Ridge Ave., Howell/Lakewood Twps.
	Metedeconk River, S/Br.	Ocean	Bennetts Mills dam to twin wooden foot bridge, opposite Lake Park Blvd. on South Lake Dr., Lakewood Twp.
	Rockaway River**	Morris	Longwood Lake dam, Jefferson Twp. to Boonton Reservoir (aka Jersey City Res.), Boonton
TUESDAYS April 9, 16, 23, 30 May 7, 14, 21	Pohatcong Creek**	Warren	Rt. 31, Washington Twp. to Delaware River
	Raritan River, S/Br.**	Morris, Somerset, Hunterdon	Mill dam located 200 feet upstream from Schooleys Mountain Rd. (Rt. 517), Long Valley to junction with Raritan River N/Br. (Exception: the section regulated as Catch and Release.)
WEDNESDAYS April 10, 17, 24 May 1, 8, 15, 22	Raritan River, N/Br.**	Somerset	Peapack Rd. bridge in Far Hills Borough/Bedminster Twp. to junction with Raritan River S. Br.
THURSDAYS April 11, 18, 25 May 2, 9, 16, 23	Paulinskill River, and E/Br. and W/Br.**	Sussex, Warren	Limecrest RR spur bridge on E/Br., Sparta Twp., and Warbasse Jct. Rd. (Rt. 663) on W/Br., Lafayette Twp., to confluence with the Delaware River.
	Ramapo River**	Bergen	State line to Pompton Lake, Oakland (excluding Potash Lake)
FRIDAYS April 12, 19, 26 May 3, 10, 17, 24	Big Flat/Flat Brook**	Sussex	100 ft. above Crigger Rd., Stokes State Forest, Sandyston Twp. to Delaware River (Exception: the section regulated as Catch and Release.)
	Musconetcong River**	Sussex, Morris, Warren and Hunterdon	Lake Hopatcong dam to Delaware River including all main stem impoundments except for Lake Musconetcong (Exception: the section regulated as a Year Round Trout Conservation Area; see separate regulation.)
	Pequest River**	Warren and Sussex	Pequest Rd., Green Twp. to Delaware River (Exception: the section regulated as a Seasonal Trout Conservation Area; see separate regulation.)
	Wanaque River**	Passaic	Greenwood Lake dam, West Milford, Twp. to Wanaque Reservoir dam, Wanaque Borough and from Wanaque Ave., Pompton Lakes Borough to Pequannock River, excluding the Wanaque and Monkville reservoirs.

** These streams are wholly or partially located within the Brook Trout Conservation Zone.

Boundary Waters (see page 26)

Locations	Species	Season	Minimum Size	Daily Limit
Delaware River	All trout species	April 13 at 8 a.m.–Oct. 15 (Trout caught at other times must be released immediately.)	No minimum	5

Regulations in red are new this year.

Trout-Stocked Streams – Wild Brown Trout Managed

*ALL BROOK TROUT CAUGHT WITHIN BROOK TROUT CONSERVATION ZONE MUST BE IMMEDIATELY RELEASED UNHARMED.

Waterbody	Season	Species	Minimum Size	Daily Limit
Hakihohake Creek** - Little York-Mount Pleasant Rd., Little York Alexandria Twp. to Delaware R.	Jan. 1–March 17	Rainbow and Brook Trout*	9 inches	4 combined Only 2 of which may be Brown Trout
		Brown Trout	12 inches	
Lopatcong Creek** - Rt. 519, Harmony Twp., Warren to Delaware R.	March 18–April 6 at 8 a.m.	—	Fishing prohibited	
Pophandusing Creek** - White Twp., entire length				
Raritan River S/Br.** - Mill dam located 200 feet above Schooley's Mountain Rd. (Rt 517), Long Valley (Hunterdon), downstream to Lake Solitude dam, excluding Ken Lockwood Gorge (Catch and Release Only)	April 6 at 8 a.m.–May 31	Rainbow and Brook Trout*	9 inches	6 combined Only 2 of which may be Brown Trout
		Brown Trout	12 inches	
Saddle River - Lake Street, Upper Saddle River Twp., to West Century Rd., Fairlawn/Paramus Boroughs	June 1–Dec. 31	Rainbow and Brook Trout*	9 inches	4 combined Only 2 of which may be Brown Trout
		Brown Trout	12 inches	

** These streams are wholly or partially located within the Brook Trout Conservation Zone.

Trout Conservation Areas (TCAs)

*ALL BROOK TROUT CAUGHT WITHIN BROOK TROUT CONSERVATION ZONE MUST BE IMMEDIATELY RELEASED UNHARMED.

YEAR ROUND TCAs				
Season	Minimum Size	Daily Limit	Restrictions (in effect year round)	
Jan. 1–March 17	15 inches	1	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Only artificial lures and flies may be used. Possession or use of bait (live or preserved) or any substance (natural or synthetic) that contains a concentration of bait scent is prohibited. Fishing is allowed during the spring in-season closures which apply to the river. All trout caught during these periods must be released immediately. 	
March 18–April 6 at 8 a.m.	Catch and release only			
April 6 at 8 a.m.–Dec. 31	15 inches	1 (see #3 at right)		
Year Round TCA Waterbody (County)			Driving Directions *	
Musconetcong River**—Point Mountain Stretch (Hunterdon/Warren) Penwell Rd. bridge downstream to Point Mountain Rd. bridge (approx. 1.2 miles)			Rt. 31 to Rt. 57 E. Upper boundary: turn right on Penwell Rd. Lower boundary: turn right on Point Mountain Rd. Parking areas located near each bridge.	
Toms River (Ocean) End of Riverwood Park (Tom's River Twp.) downstream to Rt. 571 bridge (approx. 1 mile)			Rt. 195 (Exit 21) to Rts. 527/528 S. (Cedar Swamp Rd./ Veterans Hwy) to Rt. 527 S. (Whitesville Rd.) to Riverwood Dr. to entrance of Riverview Park.	
SEASONAL TCAs				
Season	Minimum Size	Daily Limit	Restrictions	
Jan. 1–March 17	15 inches	1	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Only artificial lures may be used. Possession or use of bait (live or preserved) or any substance (natural or synthetic) that contains a concentration of bait scent is prohibited. Pequest River — fishing is not permitted during the first six in-season stocking closure dates. (See Trout Stocked Waters Closed to Fishing on Spring Stocking Dates, page 18). Fishing is permitted during the last in-season stocking closure date (May 26), but all trout caught between 5 a.m. and 5 p.m. must be immediately released. 	
March 18–April 5	Catch and release only			
April 6 (12:01 a.m. to 8 a.m.)	Fishing prohibited			
April 6 at 8 a.m.–May 19 Gear restrictions do not apply	9 inches	6		
May 20–Dec. 31	15 inches	1		
Seasonal TCA Waterbody (County)			Driving Directions *	
Pequannock River** (Morris/Passaic) Railroad trestle below Appelt Park, Bloomingdale, downstream to Hamburg Turnpike bridge, Pompton Lakes (approx. 1.3 miles)			I-287 (Exit 53). Proceed west on (Paterson) Hamburg Turnpike 0.34 miles. Right on Brant Ln. Railroad trestle below Appelt Park is the upstream boundary.	
Pequest River** (Warren) Conrail Railroad bridge, located upstream of the Pequest Trout Hatchery Access Road, downstream to Rt. 625 (Pequest Furnace Rd.) bridge (approx. 1.4 miles)			Rt. 31 to Rt. 46 E, approx. 4 mi. to Pequest Trout Hatchery; paved parking lot.	

** These streams are wholly or partially located within the Brook Trout Conservation Zone.

Regulations in red are new this year.

Catch and Release Areas

Season	Minimum Size	Daily Limit	Restrictions
Jan. 1–Dec. 31 Fishing allowed year-round		Catch and release all trout	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> All trout must be released immediately and unharmed. A person may not have any trout in their possession. Only artificial lures and flies may be used. Barbless hooks only, with no more than a total of three hook points. Possession or use of bait (live or preserved) or any substance (natural or synthetic) that contains a concentration of bait scent is prohibited. Fishing is allowed during the spring in-season stocking closures which apply to the rivers.
Catch and Release Waterbody (County)		Driving Directions	
Big Flat / Flat Brook (Sussex) Rt. 206 bridge downstream to the Roy Bridge on Mountain Rd., a distance of 4.2 miles, including the portion known as the Blewett Tract.		Upper boundary: Rt. 206 bridge, approx. 1.6 miles north of entrance to Stokes State Forest (Coursen Road). Lower boundary: Rt. 206 north, app. 1 mile past Stokes State Forest entrance, turn left on Rt. 560. At Layton bear left on Bevans Rd. (Rt. 640) towards Walpack. Continue south 3.4 miles (NPS Rd 615), left onto Fish and Wildlife Rd. to Roy Bridge.	
Raritan S/Br.—Ken Lockwood Gorge (Hunterdon) Section of S. Br. within the Ken Lockwood Gorge Wildlife Management Area (approx. 2.2 miles).		Ken Lockwood Gorge — Road in gorge is closed to through traffic. Route 31 to Rt. 513. Upper boundary: Turn right at Hoffman's Crossing Rd., take first right after bridge. Lower boundary: Turn right onto Silverthorne-Cokesbury Rd., turn left after crossing river. Park only in designated areas.	

Wild Trout Streams

NATIVE BROOK TROUT STREAMS (Brook Trout Dominant)

Species	Minimum Size	Season	Daily Limit	Gear
Brook Trout	Catch & Release	April 6 at 8 a.m. to Sept. 15 Catch and Release at all other times, year-round	2 Brown or Rainbow Trout combined	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fishing allowed year-round Artificials only, with no more than 3 hook points in total, all barbless Possession or use of bait, or synthetic bait with bait scent prohibited
Rainbow Trout	No min. size			
Brown Trout	No min. size			

- Beatty's Brook** (Lebanon Twp.)
- Bear Swamp Brook** (Mahwah Twp.)
- Hickory Run** (Lebanon Twp.)
- Lake Ames Tributary** (Picatinny Arsenal boundary to Lake Ames, Rockaway Twp.)
- Primrose Brook** (Harding Twp.)
- Raritan River S/Br.** (Budd Lake dam to dam approx. 400 feet above Flanders-Drakestown Rd., Mt. Olive Twp.)
- Rinehart Brook** (Hacklebarney State Park, Chester Twp.)
- Rocky Run** (Lebanon Twp.)
- Stephensburg Brook** (Washington Twp.)
- Stony Brook** (Stokes State Forest, Sandyston Twp.)
- Trout Brook** (Hacklebarney State Park, Chester Twp.)

WILD TROUT STREAMS (Multiple wild trout species present)

Species	Minimum Size	Season	Daily Limit	Gear
Brook Trout	Catch & Release in Zone	April 6 at 8 a.m. to Sept. 15 Catch and Release at all other times, year-round	2 Brown or Rainbow Trout combined	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fishing allowed year-round Artificials only, with no more than 3 hook points in total, all barbless Possession or use of bait, or synthetic bait with bait scent prohibited
Rainbow Trout	9"			
Brown Trout	9"			

- Brass Castle Creek** (Washington Twp.)
- Dismal Brook** (Mendham Twp.)
- Dunfield Creek** (Worthington State Forest)
- Flanders Brook** (Mt. Olive Twp.)
- India Brook** (source to Mountainside Rd., Mendham Twp.)
- Indian Grove Brook** (Bernardsville Twp.)
- Ledgewood Brook** (Roxbury Twp.)
- Lomerson Brook** (also known as Herzog Brook) (Tewksbury Twp.)
- Merrill Creek** (Merrill Creek Reservoir Dam to Pohatcong Ck., Stewartsville)
- Raritan River S/Br.** [dam approx. 400 feet above Flanders-Drakestown Rd. to dam 200 ft above Schooleys Mtn. Rd. (Rt. 517), Long Valley]
- Stony Brook** (Washington Twp. Morris)
- Teetertown Brook** (Washington Twp./Lebanon Twp.)
- Turkey Brook** (Mt. Olive Twp.)
- Van Campens Brook** (source to upper waterfall in Van Campens Glen, Del. Water Gap Nat. Rec. Area)
- West Brook** (source downstream to Windbeam Club property, Ringwood Twp.)
- Whippany River** (source to Tingley Rd., Mendham Twp.)
- Willoughby Brook** (also known as Buffalo Hollow Bk.) (Lebanon Twp.)

WILD BROWN TROUT ENHANCEMENT STREAMS (Brown Trout dominant, other wild trout species may be present)

Species	Minimum Size	Season	Daily Limit	Gear
Brook Trout	Catch & Release in Zone*	April 6 at 8 a.m. to Sept. 15 Catch and Release at all other times, year-round	2 Brown or Rainbow Trout combined	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fishing allowed year-round Artificials only, with no more than 3 hook points in total, all barbless Possession or use of bait, or synthetic bait with bait scent prohibited
Rainbow Trout	9"			
Brown Trout	12"			

- Beaver Brook** (Town of Clinton/Clinton Twp.)
- Burnett Brook** (Chester/Mendham Twp.)
- Cold Brook** (Tewksbury Twp.)
- Hakihokake Creek** (also known as Little York Bk. — source to Little York-Mount Pleasant Rd, Little York)
- Jackson Brook** (source to Hedden Park Lake Mine Hill Twp.)
- Mill Brook** (Randolph Twp.)
- Passaic River** (source to Rt. 202, Bernardsville Twp.)
- Pequanock River** (Oak Ridge Rd. (Newark Watershed) to railroad bridge immediately upstream of Charlottesburg Res. and from Rt. 23 at Smoke Rise to Rt. 23 at Smith Mills, Kinnelon Twp.)
- Rockaway Creek N/Br.** (Tewksbury Twp.)
- Saddle River*** (state line to Lake St., Upper Saddle River Borough)
- Spring Mills Brook** (Holland Twp.)
- Van Campens Brook** (upper waterfall in Van Campens Glen, located approx. 0.8 miles upstream of Old Mine Road, to Delaware River, Del. Water Gap Nat. Rec. Area)
- Wanaque River** (Wanaque Reservoir dam downstream to Wanaque Ave., Pompton Lakes Borough)

* Saddle River is outside the Brook Trout Conservation Zone therefore a 9 inch limit for brook trout applies. and a daily limit of 2 trout in total (Brook, Brown, and Rainbow Trout combined).

Trout Lakes

TROPHY TROUT LAKES

Waterbody (County)	Species	Season	Minimum Size	Daily Limit
Merrill Creek Reservoir (Warren)	Brown & Rainbow Trout (and their hybrids) and Landlocked Atlantic Salmon	Open year round	15 inches	2 combined
		Jan. 1–Sept. 15	15 inches	2
	Lake Trout	Sept. 16–Nov. 30	Catch and release only	
		Dec. 1–Dec. 31	15 inches	2
Round Valley Reservoir (Hunterdon)	Brown & Rainbow Trout (and their hybrids)	Open year round	15 inches	2 combined
		Jan. 1–Sept. 15	15 to less than 24 inches AND greater than or equal to 24 inches	6 AND 1
	Lake Trout	Sept. 16–Nov. 30	Catch and release only	
		Dec. 1–Dec. 31	15 to less than 24 inches AND greater than or equal to 24 inches	6 AND 1

HOLDOVER TROUT LAKES

Waterbody (County)	Species	Season	Minimum Size	Daily Limit
Clinton Reservoir (Passaic)	Brown & Rainbow Trout and their hybrids	Jan. 1–March 17	9 inches	2
		March 18–April 6 at 8 a.m.	Catch and release only	
		April 6 at 8 a.m.–May 31	9 inches	4
		June 1–Dec. 31	9 inches	2
		Jan. 1–March 17	12 inches	2
Lake Aeroflex* (Sussex)	Landlocked Atlantic Salmon	March 18–April 6 at 8 a.m.	Catch and release only	
Lake Wawayanda* (Sussex)		April 6 at 8 a.m.–Dec. 31	12 inches	2
Sheppard Lake (Passaic)		March 18–April 6 at 8 a.m.	Catch and release only	
Tilcon Lake* (Morris)		April 6 at 8 a.m.–Dec. 31	12 inches	2
White Lake (Warren)				

* Stocked with salmon



NEW JERSEY STATE FEDERATION OF SPORTSMEN'S CLUBS



Annual Convention & Awards Banquet March 1–2, 2024

**Crowne Plaza Princeton Conference Center
Plainsboro, NJ**

Friday, March 1, 2024, 1 p.m. to 8 p.m.

Saturday, March 2, 2024, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Awards Ceremony Dinner on Saturday at 5 p.m.

Join us for science-based wildlife management and fishing/hunting/trapping-related presentations and interactive discussions, as well as the *2024 Skillful Angler Awards* and the *2024 Garden State Deer Classic!*

This 2-day event is co-hosted by the New Jersey State Federation of Sportsmen's Clubs, Inc., and its affiliates and the New Jersey Sportsmen's Wildlife Foundation.

Brought to you by:

- NJDEP Fish & Wildlife • NJ Sportsmen's Wildlife Foundation
- NJ State Federation of Sportsmen's Clubs
- Atlantic County Federation of Sportsmen's Clubs
- NJ Outdoor Alliance Environmental Projects

Visit www.njsfsc.org for details

Fish Identification

NEW JERSEY FRESHWATER FISHES



Brook Trout



Rainbow Trout



Brown Trout



Lake Trout



Landlocked Atlantic Salmon



Northern Pike



Muskellunge



Chain Pickerel



Redfin Pickerel



Walleye



White Perch



Yellow Perch



Striped Bass



Hybrid Striped Bass



White Sucker



Common Carp

Illustrations: Duane Raver/USFWS



Largemouth Bass



Smallmouth Bass



Redbreast Sunfish



Pumpkinseed Sunfish



Bluegill Sunfish



White Crappie



Black Crappie



Brown Bullhead

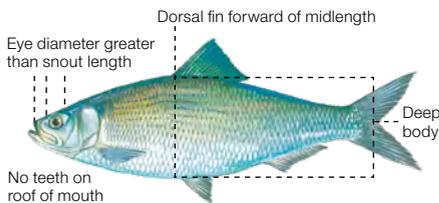


Channel Catfish

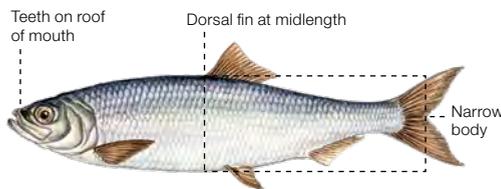


White Catfish

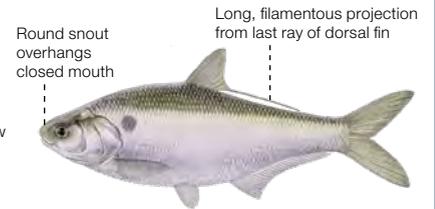
Herring



Alewife



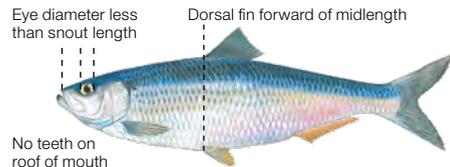
Atlantic Herring



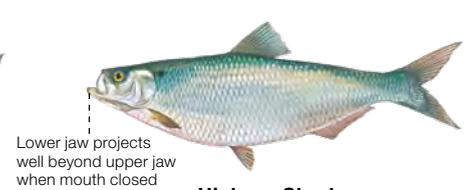
Gizzard Shad



American Shad



Blueback Herring



Hickory Shad

Alewife, American Shad, Blueback Herring and Hickory Shad illustrations ©Duane Raver; Atlantic Herring illustration ©Victor Young/NH. Fish and Game Department; Gizzard Shad illustration courtesy of Texas Parks and Wildlife Department ©2012.

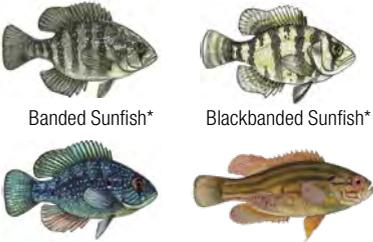
Fishing Regulations

SIZE, SEASON AND CREEL LIMITS

Certain waters are closed to fishing for all species from March 18 to April 6, 2024 at 8 a.m. because of trout stocking. Refer to pages 16–21 for complete lists and exceptions. Regulations in red are new this year. For Delaware River and Greenwood Lake, see regulations on pages 26–28.

	SEASON	LOCATION	MINIMUM SIZE	DAILY LIMIT
LARGEMOUTH & SMALLMOUTH BASS				
 Largemouth Bass	Jan. 1–April 14 April 15–June 15 Catch & Release only (all waters) June 16–Dec. 31	Statewide (exceptions below)	12 inches	5 combined
 Smallmouth Bass		Lunker Bass Lakes: Alloway, Assunpink, Parvin and Delaware lakes; Splitrock Reservoir	15 inches	3 combined
		Conservation Regulations: Ryker Lake	15 inches	2 combined
NORTHERN PIKE, TIGER MUSKY, MUSKELLUNGE*				
 Northern Pike	Open year round March 20–May 20 are Catch & Release only for Echo Lake Reservoir, Mercer Lake, Mountain Lake, Monksville Reservoir	Statewide	Northern Pike: 24 inches	2
 Muskellunge		Statewide (exceptions below)	Tiger Musky & Muskellunge: 40 inches	1 combined
		Trophy Muskie Waters: Echo Lake Reservoir, Greenwood Lake, Lake Hopatcong & Monksville Reservoir	Tiger Musky & Muskellunge: 44 inches	
*IMPORTANT: trout may not be used as bait in the Pequest River drainage.				
CHAIN PICKEREL AND REDFIN PICKEREL				
 Chain Pickerel	Open year round	Statewide	15 inches	5 combined
WALLEYE				
 Walleye	Jan. 1–Feb. 28 March 1–April 30 Catch & Release only May 1–Dec. 31	Statewide	18 inches	3
STRIPED BASS (freshwater only)				
 Striped Bass	March 1–Dec. 31	Statewide Non-offset circle hook required when fishing with bait	One @ 28" to a maximum of 31"	1
HYBRID STRIPED BASS (freshwater only)				
 Hybrid Striped Bass	Open year round	Statewide (exceptions below)	16 inches	2
	March 1–Dec. 31	Raritan River (downstream of Duke Island Park dam)	One @ 28" to a maximum of 31"	1

Regulations in red are new this year.

	SEASON	LOCATION	MINIMUM SIZE	DAILY LIMIT
AMERICAN SHAD				
 American Shad	Open Year Round Season Closed in all other fresh waters	Delaware River Mainstem (see regulations on page 26)	—	2
CHANNEL CATFISH				
 Channel Catfish	Open year round	Statewide	12 inches	5
CRAPPIE (BLACK AND WHITE)				
 Crappie	Open year round	Statewide	8 inches	10 combined
SUNFISH AND ALL OTHER SPECIES WITH NO SPECIFIED CREEL LIMITS				
 Rock Bass, White Perch, Yellow Perch, Sunfish (see below for sunfish exceptions), Bullheads, White Catfish, Suckers, Carp, Bowfin, Pumpkinseed and all other species with no specified creel limit.	Open year round	Statewide (exceptions below)	No minimum size	25 combined
		Conservation Regulation Ryker Lake	Sunfish: 7 inches	10 combined
			Yellow Perch: No minimum size	10
		Conservation Regulation Rainbow Lake (Salem Co.)	Sunfish: 7 inches	10 combined
BANDED, BLACKBANDED, BLUESPOTTED AND MUD SUNFISH				
 Banded Sunfish* Blackbanded Sunfish* Bluespotted Sunfish* Mud Sunfish	Closed	Statewide	Protected	0
* Illustrations by Ted Walke, PA Fish and Boat Commission				
FRESHWATER BAITFISH (See page 29 for complete description of gear types and restrictions)				
American Eel, Banded Killifish, Creek Chub, Fallfish, Fathead Minnow, Gizzard Shad, Golden Shiner, Margined Madtom, Mummichog, and Tadpole Madtom. For Herring, Alewife and Blueback—see <i>Baitfish Regulations</i> (page 29).	Open year round Exceptions In trout stocked waters baitfish may only be taken with hook and line: from April 6 to June 15, or in waters open to fishing during the pre-season closure, from March 18 to June 15.	Statewide	No minimum Exception American Eel: 9 inches	35 combined

Delaware River

2024 REGULATIONS

Bill Klimas

Species	Open Seasons	Minimum Length	Daily Limit
Bass, Largemouth & Smallmouth	Jan. 1–April 12	12 inches	5 combined
	April 13–June 14	Catch and release only	Catch and release only
	June 15–Dec. 31	12 inches	5 combined
Eel, American	Open year round	9 inches	25
Herring, Alewife and Blueback	Closed	—	—
Muskellunge & Hybrids	Open year round	40 inches	1
Pickrel, Chain	Open year round	12 inches	5
Pike, Northern	Open year round	24 inches	2
Shad, American*	Open year round	No minimum	2
Shad, Hickory	Closed	—	—
Striped Bass & Hybrids** (upstream of Calhoun St. Bridge)	March 1–Dec. 31	One @ 28" to a maximum of 31"	1
Striped Bass & Hybrids** (downstream of Calhoun St. Bridge)	March 1–31	One @ 28" to a maximum of 31"	1
	June 1–Dec. 31		
Sturgeon, Atlantic and Shortnose	Closed	—	—
Trout	April 13 at 8 a.m.–Oct. 15	No minimum	5
Walleye	Open year round	18 inches	3
Channel Catfish	Open year round	12 inches	5
All Other Freshwater Species	Open year round	No minimum	25
Baitfish	Open year round	No minimum	50

Regulations in red are new this year.

* Due to serious declines in American Shad numbers, the taking of American Shad, except for the Delaware River, is prohibited.

** Non-offset circle hooks required when fishing with bait. Pennsylvania allows anglers to harvest a daily limit of two Striped Bass measuring 21 to less than 24 inches for a two month period from April 1 through May 31 from the Calhoun St. Bridge in Trenton downstream to the Pennsylvania state line. New Jersey still has a closed season. Anglers fishing the Delaware River from the New Jersey shoreline, or returning to New Jersey by boat and/or car must abide by New Jersey's Striped Bass regulations. Possession of Striped Bass in New Jersey is illegal during this time period. **Anglers should be aware that there are differing size limits and seasons for Striped Bass for each of the three states bordering the Delaware River. Anglers must obey the regulations for the particular state where they land (catch) Striped Bass.**

Fishing The Delaware River

Regulation Notices

The Delaware River is a boundary water shared by Pennsylvania and New Jersey with each state's border generally following the centerline of the river. Although the majority of the fishing regulations enacted by both states are identical, there are some distinct differences. Anglers fishing this river must be aware of each state's fishing regulations.

Regardless of an angler's residency or point of boat launching, all are required to comply with the regulations of the state in which they are fishing. An angler fishing—or in possession of fish—between the centerline of the river and the New Jersey shoreline must comply with the New Jersey fishing regulations. An angler fishing—or in possession of fish—between the centerline of the river and the Pennsylvania shoreline must comply with the Pennsylvania fishing regulations.

The reciprocal agreement regarding fishing licenses remains in effect and anglers may continue to fish from shoreline to shoreline in the Delaware River between Pennsylvania and New Jersey using either state's fishing license. Information on each state's fishing regulations can be found at www.fishandboat.com and NJFishandWildlife.com. It is incumbent upon anglers to determine in which state they are currently fishing, taking into account that in areas where the river splits, such as around islands, the boundary is clearly and legally defined to one side of the island or another.

All anglers are reminded to comply with each state's marine registry requirements when angling for or catching anadromous species such as striped bass, river herring or shad in the tidal portions of the Delaware River.

• New Jersey and Pennsylvania fishing licenses are both recognized when fishing the Delaware River from a boat or either shoreline. This applies to the main stem of the river only.

- Anglers may launch a boat from either shore and on return, may have in possession any fish which may be legally taken according to the regulations of the state where the landing is made.
- No more than **three** rods, each with one line, or two hand lines—or one of each—may be used. No more than three single hooks or three treble hooks per line.
- To reduce striped bass release mortality, non-offset (inline) circle hooks must be used when fishing for striped bass with bait in all waters.
- **The use of crayfish, clams, mussels, reptiles or amphibians as bait is prohibited within the Delaware Water Gap Natural Recreation Area, unless it is a commercially produced, preserved and packaged product.**
- Spears (not mechanically propelled) and bow and arrows may be used to take carp, catfish, shad and suckers except within 825 feet of an eel weir. A valid fishing license is required.
- Baitfish may be taken and possessed for personal use and are not to be bartered or sold. **Alewife or Blueback Herring may not be taken at any time.**
- A Delaware fishing license is required for anglers aged 16 and over fishing the Delaware Bay and Delaware River between the upstream tip of Artificial Island and the Delaware-Pennsylvania state line. In that section of the river, the Delaware state boundary extends to the New Jersey shoreline. However, when fishing from shore in New Jersey along that section of the river, a Delaware fishing license is not required. Delaware fishing license information can be found at <https://dnrec.alpha.delaware.gov>.
- A listing of fishing access locations along the Delaware River is available at NJDEP Fish & Wildlife's website, NJFishandWildlife.com, under Freshwater Fishing.
- Delaware River Basin Commission recreation maps are available for \$10.70. For online ordering information visit nj.gov/drbc/basin/recreation.
- Information for the Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area is available online at www.nps.gov/dewa.

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2024 REGULATIONS

Species	Open Seasons	Minimum Length	Daily Limit
Bass, Largemouth & Smallmouth	Jan. 1–June 14	Catch and release only	
	June 15–Nov. 30	12 inches	5 combined
	Dec. 1–Dec. 31	Catch and release only	
Catfish, Channel	Open year round	12 inches	5
Crappie, Black & White	Open year round	8 inches	10 combined
Muskellunge & Hybrids	Open year round	44 inches	1
Perch, Yellow	Open year round	No minimum	50
Pickereel, Chain	Open year round	15 inches	5
Sunfish	Open year round	No minimum	50 combined
Walleye	Jan. 1–Feb. 29	18 inches	3
	March 1–April 30	Catch and release only	
	May 1–Dec. 31	18 inches	3
Herring, Alewife (landlocked) and blueback	Open year round	6 inches maximum	35 Any unused herring must be returned to Greenwood Lake upon conclusion of the angler's fishing trip. Herring may not be transported away from the lake's shoreline by any mechanism and may not be sold.
All Other Species	Open year round	No minimum	No limit

- New York and New Jersey fishing licenses are both recognized anywhere on the lake or along the shoreline.
- Fishing is permitted 24 hours a day.
- In compliance with New York regulations, only certified virus-free baitfish may be transported to, or used on, the portion of Greenwood Lake owned by the State of New York. Anglers are urged to use only certified virus-free baitfish when fishing any portion of Greenwood Lake.
- Bow and arrow fishing for all carp, sucker, herring, catfish and eel is permitted. **Crossbows are NOT allowed at Greenwood Lake.** A valid fishing license is required.
- No more than five tip-ups and two hand-held devices may be used when ice fishing. All devices that are not hand held must be plainly marked with the name and address of the angler.

2024 New Jersey Musky School

You don't want to miss the annual Musky School offered by Muskies Inc., now on Greenwood Lake!

Learn how to catch these elusive fish. This course offers informative tips and techniques to help any musky angler—beginner to experienced angler—catch more muskies.

Learn from our seasoned veteran anglers. In the morning, classroom-style sessions will orient anglers on locations to fish, forage base, lure presentations, fishing tactics and more. Later in the day, participants will be on the water in a fully-equipped boat to pursue muskies with a personal instructor. This 6-hour course includes a shore lunch. This is a catch and release event. Muskies Inc. is a non-profit organization. This is a fundraising event. All proceeds benefit the New Jersey musky fishery.



May 18, 2024 on Greenwood Lake

Fee: \$385 includes one-year membership to Muskies Inc. Contact Ralph C. via e-mail at muskyschool@gmail.com. For more information, visit www.MuskiesInc.org and www.mi22.com. Like us on Facebook at **Muskies Inc Chapter 22-New Jersey**.



Matt Teter caught this 42-inch fish at Musky School 2021.

See separate regulations for Delaware River (pages 26-27).
For marine waters, see the *New Jersey Marine Digest*. Regulations in red are new this year.

Baitfish Regulations

BAITFISH SPECIES

Baitfish species: American Eel, Banded Killifish, Creek Chub, Fallfish, Fathead Minnow, Gizzard Shad, Golden Shiner, Margined Madtom, Mummichog, and Tadpole Madtom. For Herring, Alewife and Blueback—see below.

Season	Location	Minimum Size	Daily Limit
Open year round Exception: In trout stocked waters baitfish may be taken only with hook and line: from April 6 to June 15, or in waters open to fishing during the pre-season closure, from March 18 to June 15.	Statewide (fresh waters)	No minimum size Exception American eel: 9 inches	35 per day, species combined
Herring, Alewife and Blueback	All freshwater streams, rivers and marine waters	CLOSED	Possession, take or attempt to take herring PROHIBITED
	Freshwater lakes in Morris, Passaic, Sussex, and Warren counties and Spruce Run Reservoir (Hunterdon)	6 inches maximum	35 Any unused herring must be returned to the water upon conclusion of the angler's fishing trip. Herring may not be transported away from the shoreline of these lakes by any mechanism. They may not be sold.
	All other freshwater lakes (regardless of ownership)	CLOSED	Only purchased herring, no greater than 6 inches, may be possessed. Receipt of purchase, dated within 7 days, must be in possession.

Notes: Any person with a valid fishing license (or those under 16 and residents 70 years or older) may take baitfish in fresh waters. Possession limit is one day's limit, regardless of the intent to use these fish. Baitfish may be taken from the fresh waters of the state in numbers greater than 35 per day, in lakes over 250 acres, under a special permit issued by NJDEP Fish & Wildlife at its discretion. Contact 908-236-2118 for application information.

GEAR	GEAR DESCRIPTION
Seine	Not over 50 feet long in ponds and lakes over 100 acres; in all other waters not over 30 feet in length. Exception: In trout-stocked waters and special regulation trout areas a seine may not be more than 10 feet in length and 4 feet in depth.
Minnow Trap	Not larger than 24 inches in length with a funnel mouth no greater than 2 inches in diameter.
Umbrella Net	No greater than 3.5 feet square.
Dip Net	Not more than 24 inches in diameter; may be used only for alewife or blueback herring.
Cast Net	No greater than 8 feet in diameter; may be used only in streams that are not trout-stocked or special regulation trout areas (may not be used in lakes).
Hook and Line	Maximum of nine single hooks or three hooks with three burrs per contrivance on all waters except the Delaware River where only three single hooks are permitted.

Turtle and Frog Regulations

SPECIES	SEASON	LOCATION	MINIMUM SIZE	DAILY LIMIT
Snapping Turtle	April 1–May 14 July 1–October 31	Statewide	12 inches	1 per day
Bull Frog and Green Frog	January 1–March 31 July 1–December 31	Statewide	No minimum	15 per day, combined

MEANS OF TAKE

Snapping turtles may only be taken in fresh waters of the state. **See page 30 for established fishing license boundary lines that designate between fresh and marine waters.** Any person with a valid fishing license or those entitled to fish without a license may take snapping turtles, bull frogs, and green frogs by means of spears, traps, hook and line, dip nets (not more than 24 inches in diameter), or by hand. They may NOT be sold unless taken under a Commercial Harvest Permit. Bull frogs, and green frogs may be taken in numbers greater than the daily limit under a Commercial Harvest Permit issued by NJDEP Fish & Wildlife at its discretion. The commercial harvest of snapping turtles is closed to new harvesters. Existing harvesters may contact NJFWFish@dep.nj.gov for application information.

Motor Boat Registration and Title Requirements

NJ Motor Vehicle Commission (MVC)

Registration

Most boats must be registered to operate on New Jersey waterways.

- All titled boats must be registered also.
- **Any boat (including jet skis and non-titled watercraft), mechanically propelled (incl. electric motors), regardless of length, must be registered.**
- Boats greater than 12 feet in length, regardless of propulsion means, must be titled and registered at an MVC office.

Boats and marine equipment which **need not be registered:**

- Those not based in New Jersey or operating here less than 180 consecutive days that are operating under a federally-approved numbering system from another state
- Ship's lifeboats
- Non-motorized vessels used exclusively on small lakes and ponds on private property
- Racing vessels with New Jersey State Marine Police permit
- Non-motorized inflatable device, surfboard, racing shell, dinghy, canoe or kayak
- Non-motorized vessel less than 12 feet in length

Title

For use on New Jersey waterways, all boats more than 12 feet in length must be titled, with the exception of ship's lifeboat, canoe, kayak, inflatable, surfboard, rowing scull, racing shell, tender/dinghy used for direct transportation between a vessel and shore for no other purposes.

Boat Operator License (MVC)

An operator license is required to operate power vessels on fresh, non-tidal waters such as lakes, creeks and rivers. (Minimum age 16 years; with certain exceptions.)

For More Information:

New Jersey Motor Vehicle Commission
888-486-3339 toll free in NJ or
609-292-6500 from out-of-state
nj.gov/mvc/vehicles/boating.htm

Boat Safety Certificate (NJSP)

A boat safety certificate (from an **approved** boat safety course; see NJSP website, below) is required to operate a personal watercraft or power vessel, including electric motors, in NJ waters (tidal and non-tidal).

New Jersey State Police (NJSP)

609-882-2000
www.njsp.org/marine-services/

Fishing License Boundary Lines

2024 REGULATIONS

A fishing license is required to fish the fresh waters of the state. Locations listed below mark the change from salt water (license not required) to freshwater. A fishing license is required at—and upstream of—these locations. Snapping turtles may only be taken from fresh waters of the state.

ATLANTIC COUNTY

Abecon Creek—Dam at Lower Atlantic City Reservoir
Great Egg Harbor River—Power lines at confluence of Gravelly Run
Middle River—None—all saline water
Mullica River—Line between Seventh Ave., Sweetwater, and ramp at Crowleys Landing
Nacote Creek—Port Republic dam
Patcong Creek—Bargaintown Lake dam
South River—Power lines immediately below Rt. 50
Tuckahoe River—First northerly tributary downstream of Rt. 49 bridge (McNeals Branch)

BERGEN COUNTY

Hackensack River—Cedar Lane Bridge between Hackensack and Teaneck
Hudson River—None—all saline water
Passaic River—Required whole length

BURLINGTON COUNTY

Assisunk Creek—Required whole length
Bass River State—Fir Bridge on Stage Rd. in Bass River State Forest
Batsto River—Required whole length
Blacks Creek—Required whole length
Crosswicks Creek—Required whole length
Delaware River—Required whole length
Mullica River—Line between Seventh Ave., Sweetwater, and ramp at Crowleys Landing
Pennsauken Creek—Required whole length
Pompeston Creek—Required whole length
Rancocas Creek—Required whole length
Swedes Run—Required whole length
Wading River—Charcoal Landing, Chips Folly Campground

CAMDEN COUNTY

License required on Delaware River and all other waters

CAPE MAY COUNTY

Bidwells Creek—None—all saline water
Cedar Swamp Creek—None—all saline water
Dennis Creek—None—all saline water
East Creek—100 ft. below East Creek Lake dam, Eldora
Tuckahoe River—First northerly tributary downstream of lower Rt. 49 bridge (McNeals Br.)
West Creek—100 feet below West Creek Lake dam (Pickle Factory Pond)

CUMBERLAND COUNTY

Andrews Creek—None—all saline water
Back Creek—None—all saline water
Cedar Creek—100 ft. downstream of Cedar Lake dam
Cohansey River—Rt. 49 bridge at Bridgeton
Dividing Creek—Rt. 555 bridge
Fishing Creek—None—all saline water
Fortescue Cr./Branch of Oranoken Cr.—None—all saline water
Manumuskin Creek—Required whole length
Maurice River—Mouth of Manumuskin Creek near Port Elizabeth
Menantico Creek—Required whole length
Mill Creek—Tributary of Cohansey—Rt. 553 bridge, Fairton
Muskee Creek—S. side of bridge on Weathersby Rd.
Nantuxent Creek (Pages Run)—Rt. 553 north of Frames Corner
Oranoken Creek—Whitecar Mill, North of Beaver dam
Oyster Creek—None—all saline water
Riggins Ditch—Rt. 47 bridge

Sow and Pigs Branch Nantuxent—None—all saline water
Stow Creek—Buckhorn Rd. bridge, Jericho
Straight Creek—None—all saline water
West Creek—100 ft. below West Creek Lake dam (Pickle Factory Pond)

ESSEX COUNTY

Passaic River—Erie Railroad bridge between Newark (at Verona Ave.) and Kearny
Peddie Ditch—None—all saline water

GLOUCESTER COUNTY

Big Timber Creek—Required whole length
Delaware River—Commodore Barry bridge at Bridgeport
Mantua Creek—Required whole length
Oldmans Creek—Rt. 295 bridge
Raccoon Creek—Required whole length
Woodbury Creek—Required whole length

HUDSON COUNTY

Hackensack River—None—all saline water
Hudson River—None—all saline water
Passaic River—Railroad bridge between Newark (at Verona Ave.) and Kearny

HUNTERDON COUNTY

License required on Delaware River and all other waters

MERCER COUNTY

License required on Delaware River and all other waters

MIDDLESEX COUNTY

Cheesequake Creek—Dam at Cheesequake Lake, Cheesequake State Park
Lawrence Brook—N.J. Turnpike bridge, East Brunswick
Raritan River—Landing Lane bridge, New Brunswick
South River—Rt. 527 bridge (New Brunswick Old Bridge Tpk.)
Woodbridge River—N.J. Turnpike bridge

MONMOUTH COUNTY

Black Creek—Spillway at Ocean Rd.
Branchport Creek—Mouth of Turtle Mill Brook
Deal Lake—Top of dam
Hockhockson (Pine) Brook—Garden State Parkway northbound bridge
Little Silver Creek—Little Silver Creek Brook
Manasquan River—Bennetts bridge, Manasquan Wildlife Management Area
Matawan Creek—Lefferts Lake dam
Oceanport Creek—Mouth of Husky Brook
Parkers Creek—Mouth of Parkers Creek Brook
Shark River—Remsen Mills Rd.
Swimming River—Swimming River Rd. bridge
Wreck Pond Creek—Rt. 71 bridge

MORRIS COUNTY

License required on all waters

OCEAN COUNTY

Beaver Dam Creek—Rt. 88 bridge
Cedar Creek—Rt. 9 bridge
Cedar Run—Rt. 9 bridge
Dinner Point Creek—None—all saline water
Double Creek—None—all saline water
Forked River—All branches Rt. 9
Gunning River—None—all saline water
Jakes Branch—Above Atlantic City Blvd.
Jeffreys Creek—Ocean Gate Rd. to Ocean Gate
Kettle Creek—Rt. 549 bridge

Lake of the Lilies—Entire lake
Long Swamp Creek—Washington St. bridge, Toms River
Manahawkin Creek—Dams for Manahawkin WMA impoundments bayside
Metedeconk River—Rt. 70 bridge, Laurelton
Mill Creek—Mouth of Creek at lagoons in Beach Haven West
Mill Creek—Pine Beach—Ocean Gate Road
Oyster Creek—Rt. 9 bridge
Parkers Run—None—all saline water
Potters Creek—None—all saline water
Stouts Creek—None—all saline water
Stouts Creek S. Br.—Bayside East Parkway
Toms River—Garden State Parkway, northbound bridge
Tuckerton Creek—Dam at Rt. 9 bridge
Waretown Creek—Rt. 9 bridge
West Creek—Rt. 9 bridge

PASSAIC COUNTY

License required on all waters

SALEM COUNTY

Alloway Creek—Rt. 540 bridge at Alloway
Black Ditch—None—all saline water
Delaware River—None—all saline water
Fishing Creek—None—all saline water
Hope Creek—None—all saline water
Mad Horse Creek—None—all saline water
Mill Creek—None—all saline water
Oldmans Creek—Rt. 295 southbound bridge
Salem River—Dupont dam near Cedar Crest Manor
Salem Canal—Dam at Deepwater
Stow Creek—Buckhorn Rd. bridge, Jericho
Straight Ditch—None—all saline water

SOMERSET COUNTY

License required on all waters

SUSSEX COUNTY

License required on Delaware River and all other waters

UNION COUNTY

Elizabeth River—West Grand St., Elizabeth
Great Ditch—None—all saline water
Morses Creek—Old Morses Mill Rd.
Oyster Creek—None—all saline water
Peddie Ditch—None—all saline water
Piles Creek—None—all saline water
Rahway River—Lawrence St. (Rt. 514), Rahway

WARREN COUNTY

License required on Delaware River and all other waters

Important Footnotes

1. Absence of a river, creek, brook or other waterway from this list does not make it exempt from requiring a license to fish the fresh waters.
2. Names of waters conform to those given on the United States Geological Survey 7.5 Minute Topographic Series Maps.

Regulations in red are new this year.

REGULATIONS FOR USE of wildlife management areas (WMAs) are established by NJDEP Fish & Wildlife with penalties of not less than \$50 nor more than \$1,500. **A second violation of any WMA regulation will result in a five-year loss of all sporting licenses and privileges.**

Information on these regulations and permit applications may be obtained by writing to NJDEP Fish & Wildlife, MC501-03, P.O. Box 420, Trenton, NJ 08625-0420.

NJDEP Fish & Wildlife may revoke any permit or other authorization issued for violation or due cause.

The following are prohibited: camping, swimming, picnicking, airsoft or paintball gunning, geocaching, dumping, cutting or damaging vegetation, removing timber or firewood, alcoholic beverages and fires.

Restricted Hours

Wildlife Management Areas are closed from 9 p.m. until 5 a.m. unless engaged in lawful hunting, fishing or trapping activities.

Special permission may be granted for NJDEP Fish & Wildlife approved activities.

Motor Vehicles

No person shall operate an unregistered vehicle on roads under the control of NJDEP Fish & Wildlife. All motor vehicles are restricted to established public roads and parking areas.

The use of dog sleds and dog carts, off-road vehicles, ATVs, trailbikes or snowmobiles is prohibited on all Wildlife Management Areas unless authorized by NJDEP Fish & Wildlife. E-bikes are allowed up to 750 watts. For mountain bike and paddleboard regulations, visit dep.nj.gov/njfw/wildlife/wildlife-management-area-regulations/.

Target Practice

Only archery, shotgun, muzzleloading shotgun, muzzleloading rifle, air gun (.177 and .22) and modern rifle ≤ .30 caliber rifle shooting is allowed in designated hunter training ranges according to posted regulations at the training area. Other target practice is allowed only with permission from NJDEP Fish & Wildlife. For range information, visit our website: See *Hunter Training Areas*, dep.nj.gov/njfw/hunting/nj-division-of-fish-and-wildlife-hunter-training-areas.

Field Trials

Permits for use of wildlife management areas for running of field trials may be granted by NJDEP Fish & Wildlife. Apply for a permit by calling 609-259-2132.

Dog Training and Exercising

Dogs may be exercised or trained on any WMA from Sept. 1 to April 30. All dogs must be properly licensed. Select WMAs with designated dog training areas also permit dogs to be exercised or trained from May 1 to Aug. 31. For more information, see the *New Jersey Hunting and Trapping Digest* or call 609-984-0547.

Outboard Motors

Only electric motors are allowed on freshwater lakes and ponds managed by NJDEP Fish & Wildlife with the exception of Union Lake, where outboard motors not exceeding 10 hp. may be used. On Prospertown Lake, only manually operated boats and canoes are allowed.

Horseback Riding

Horseback riding is allowed on designated WMAs only by permit from NJDEP Fish & Wildlife. Apply online at NJFishandWildlife.com/licensesalesite.htm. Horseback riding permits should be displayed on outer clothing while riding, not covered by a pack or other equipment. For more information on horseback riding permits, call 609-259-2132.

Fishing Tournament

Any club or organization that would like to use a New Jersey Wildlife Management Area for fishing tournaments must apply for and secure a permit from NJDEP Fish & Wildlife. No fee is required. Applications will be accepted in January at NJDEP Fish & Wildlife's Central Region Office, One Eldridge Rd., Robbinsville, NJ 08691 at 609-223-6076.

Boat Ramp Maintenance Permit

Any vehicle used to transport or launch a vessel or water conveyance on the following WMAs must have affixed to the lower corner of the driver's side rear window a boat ramp maintenance permit, or

a photocopy of a valid hunting, fishing or trapping license. Be sure your Conservation ID number is clearly displayed; all other personal information may be blacked out for reasons of privacy.

The boat ramp maintenance permit fee is \$15, available from a license agent or at NJDEP Fish & Wildlife's Internet sales site, NJFishandWildlife.com/licensesalesite.htm.

Residents 70 years and older are not required to obtain a boat ramp maintenance permit and need no license, but must affix to their window proof of age, such as a former license displaying your date of birth.

WMAs requiring boat ramp maintenance permits:

- | | |
|-----------------|---------------------|
| 1. Round Valley | 5. Mad Horse Creek |
| 2. Assunpink | 6. Union Lake |
| 3. Dennis Creek | 7. Menantico Ponds |
| 4. Tuckahoe | 8. Prospertown Lake |

State Police Marine Law Enforcement Stations

Bivalve	856-785-1330
North Wildwood	609-522-0393
Atlantic City.....	609-441-3586
Burlington	609-387-1221
Ocean.....	609-296-5807
Point Pleasant	732-899-5050
Monmouth Station	732-842-5171
Lake Hopatcong	973-663-3400
Newark Bay.....	973-578-8173

Fish Consumption Advisories

Fish Smart, Eat Smart

Check online for fish consumption advisories on the local water body in which you fish! Go to FishSmartEatSmartNJ.org

Harmful Algal Bloom — Status Check

Stay up to date on the status of Harmful Algal Blooms (HABs) in New Jersey waters with the NJDEP Algal Bloom Sampling Status site. The easy, interactive dashboard provides current sampling results, waterbody locations and important advisory information at your fingertips. Stay informed about the presence of potentially harmful algal blooms to protect you and your pets. Visit nj.gov/dep/hab/ for more information.

Accessible Fishing Sites



For people with disabilities, visit: dep.nj.gov/njfw/wp-content/uploads/njfw/wcaccesslist.pdf

An Accessible Fishing Sites list is available to assist anglers whose mobility is impaired.

All sites are wheelchair-accessible except for the Musconetcong River in Morris County, where vehicle access is to the shoreline.



Fishing Tournament

GOV. SURF FISHING TOURNAMENT

Fishing Volunteers Needed

NJDEP Fish & Wildlife needs volunteers to help instruct fishing classes. Teaching experience is helpful, but not required, but enthusiasm, energy and the desire to teach proper fishing techniques and ethics is a must! Applicants must become Wildlife Conservation Corps (WCC) volunteers. Download a WCC application at: dep.nj.gov/njfw/conservation/volunteering.



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Mark your calendar for the Governor's Surf Fishing Tournament!

May 19, 2024

Island Beach State Park, Seaside Park, NJ

Come celebrate the 33rd year of the Governor's Surf Fishing Tournament! Enjoy a great day of surf fishing with family and friends.

The individual who catches the overall largest fish wins the "Governor's Award" and will have their name engraved on the Governor's Cup, which is permanently displayed at Island Beach State Park. Prizes are awarded to winners in a variety of age group and fish species categories.

All funds raised by the tournament go toward improving beach access, surf fishing instruction programs and equipment plus marine education and restoration projects.

The tournament is sponsored by NJDEP's Fish & Wildlife and State Park Service, New Jersey State Federation of Sportsmen's Clubs, Jersey Coast Anglers Association and New Jersey Beach Buggy Association.

Thank you to the 2023 Donors: Charlie's Bait 'n' Tackle, Grumpy's Tackle, Reel Seat, and Celebrity Ford.

For more information visit: dep.nj.gov/njfw/fishing/marine/governors-surf-fishing-tournament/ or email karen.byrne@dep.nj.gov



David Koenigstein of Toms River won the 2023 Governor's Cup with a 37 1/8" Striped Bass!

Jonathan Carlucci/NJDEP Fish & Wildlife

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Saturday & Sunday
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Conservation Center

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Vendors or Sportsmen and Women wanting to book a table, contact Tom Glowacka at 908-692-8773 or Ron Diehl at 908-783-3090

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New Jersey's Hooked on Fishing Program

Fishing is an activity that can be started at any age by any person regardless of gender, physical size or athletic ability. The goal of New Jersey's Hooked on Fishing – Not on Drugs (HOFNOD) program is to encourage school-aged children to avoid tobacco, drug and alcohol usage by providing alternative activities that involve learning to fish, appreciating aquatic and environmental resources, and developing positive life skills. The program will provide students with access to extracurricular outlets that utilize New Jersey's incredible outdoor recreational assets. NJDEP Fish & Wildlife wants to partner with schools, community- and faith-based youth organizations willing to provide on-going and sustained engagement in HOFNOD activities throughout the year. For more information visit hofnod.nj.gov.



Trout in the Classroom (TIC)

Trout in the Classroom (TIC) is a science-based program that teaches children the importance of coldwater conservation through a hands-on learning approach. More than 40,000 New Jersey students participate in the TIC program annually.



Schools receive trout eggs in October from our Pequest Trout Hatchery. Students hatch and raise the trout, monitor water quality, learn fish biology, anatomy and much more as part of this cross-curricular, hands-on format. At the end of the school year students release their fish into approved streams.

Trout in the Classroom is an exciting, inexpensive program enlivening year-round curricula nationwide. For more information about the TIC program, visit dep.nj.gov/njfw/education/trout-in-the-classroom.

“Hook a Winner” Program

NJDEP Fish & Wildlife will be jaw-tagging more than 1,000 Rainbow Trout for release into New Jersey waters. These tagged trout will be stocked pre-season to be available for opening day fishing. For more information visit dep.nj.gov/njfw/fishing/freshwater/hook-a-winner-program. If you are a lucky angler who lands one of these fish, send your name, address, fish tag number (do **not** send the actual tag) and location of catch to:

Attn: Hook a Winner Program
Pequest Trout Hatchery
605 Pequest Road,
Oxford, NJ 07863

In recognition of your catch, a certificate and award patch will be mailed.



John Carlucci

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Aquatic Invasive Species: Threatening NJ's Waterways



By Christopher Smith, Principal Fisheries Biologist

New Jersey's picturesque rivers, lakes, and estuaries have long been a haven for native plants and animals. Yet, hidden below the surface lies the growing threat posed by numerous Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) currently inhabiting the state. These unwelcome guests threaten to disrupt the balance of our aquatic ecosystems, jeopardizing the biodiversity, habitats, and even the economy of our state.

The Northern Snakehead has attracted considerable attention due to its rapid propagation, extensive distribution, and the frequency with which anglers

encounter it. Our dedicated biologists at NJDEP Fish & Wildlife have monitored its spread since its introduction, recognizing its potential to disrupt our aquatic ecosystems.

What do all these words mean?

The terminology used to describe subtle differences in the status and impacts of various species can be confusing. First, species are either *native* or

non-native. The term *native* is a synonym for *indigenous*, both referring to a species that naturally occurs in an area without human intervention. *Non-native* is a term used for species that were intentionally or unintentionally moved beyond their native range by means of human activity. Synonyms for *non-native* include *non-indigenous*, *introduced*, *alien*, and *exotic*. *Naturalized* species are *non-native* species that have an established population beyond their native range. *Wild* does not refer to a species' historic range, but it only means that a species is born in the wild, in the case of fish it means not stocked

Principal Biologist Chris Smith with Northern Snakehead captured from the Salem Canal.



Eric Boehm/NJDEP Fish & Wildlife

and born naturally in the wild. *Invasive* species are *non-native* species that are *naturalized* and that may cause ecological or economic harm.

Potentially Dangerous Fish Regulation

In New Jersey, the term *Potentially Dangerous Fish* is used with regulatory purpose and indicates an elevated threat level of select invasive species. The possession or release of live, *Potentially Dangerous Fish* is strictly prohibited. The Northern Snakehead and Flathead Catfish are two of our commonly known species, however the following are also included: Asian Swamp Eel, Bighead, Grass (diploid), and Silver Carp, Blue Catfish, Brook Stickleback, Green Sunfish, Oriental Weatherfish, Round Goby, Warmouth and all black bass except for Largemouth and Smallmouth Bass. **Anglers MUST destroy these species regulated as *Potentially Dangerous Fish* if encountered while fishing and should submit specimen(s) or photos to a NJDEP Fish & Wildlife fisheries biologist for verification. To reach a regional biologist, call 908-236-2118 (north), 609-223-6076 (central) or 856-629-4950 (south). Photos and reports can also be submitted to Christopher.Smith@dep.nj.gov.**

Are all Non-native Fish managed as Potentially Dangerous?

No. Many non-native fish are not identified as *Potentially Dangerous Fish* for many reasons. Some of them have been naturalized within our ecosystems for 100 years or longer and some are valued as sport fish. Although an invasive species, Common Carp are NOT regulated as *Potentially Dangerous Fish* as they are already found in most waters throughout the state. As such, Common Carp do not have to be destroyed when caught by anglers. Where it gets very tricky is that some non-native species are considered invasive if found in certain habitats. Brown Trout are a prime example of a non-native species that causes ecological harm to native Brook Trout (as Brown Trout are considered invasive in some places) but are valued and managed for angling in other watersheds (not invasive in other places). For more information see *Wild Browns Abound* article on page 6.

Regardless of whether or not a fish is regulated as an invasive species, NEVER relocate or stock ANY FISH without an approved Fish Stocking Permit regardless of species. Please help us manage and protect our waters for future generations to enjoy!

Invasive Catfish



Blue Catfish

Anal fin straight (30–36 rays)
Deeply forked caudal fin



Flathead Catfish

Lower jaw extends past upper jaw
Short rounded anal fin (14–17 rays)

Non-Invasive Catfish



Channel Catfish

Rounded anal fin (25–30 rays)
Deeply forked caudal fin



White Catfish

Rounded anal fin (22–24 rays)
Moderately forked caudal fin

Catfish illustrations by Duane Raver

What Can Be Done?

The introduction of AIS poses significant and far-reaching impacts to New Jersey's waters. They often outcompete native species for resources, alter habitats at the expense of native flora and fauna, and detrimentally affect recreational activities such as fishing and boating. They even have adverse impacts on local economies tied to tourism and outdoor activities. These interconnected consequences emphasize the critical importance of addressing and mitigating the spread of Aquatic Invasive Species in New Jersey.

NJDEP Fish & Wildlife is very concerned of the threat posed by AIS and has implemented several measures to combat this issue effectively. These efforts include the development of a Statewide Aquatic Invasive Species Management Plan that will steer future monitoring and research, control and eradication, regulations, and education and outreach.

Invasive species are likely to cause environmental harm to the state's fisheries resources by outcompeting our native species AND our preferred game fish species, regardless of their origin. The battle against these invaders requires ongoing vigilance, cooperation from the public, and continued research and innovation. Protecting our aquatic habitats and native species is not just an environmental responsibility but also a necessity for all residents of the Garden State.

Angler Alert!!!!

New Jersey faces many other AIS threats in addition to fish... Over 100 species of AIS have been identified and categorized in various stages of threat level ranging from the watch list to well established. Species such as Hydrilla, New Zealand Mud Snail, and Red Swamp Crayfish are a few that anglers may encounter and can also be reported.



New Jersey's Stocking Programs

NJFISHANDWILDLIFE.COM



Bill Klimas

NEW

Trout Stocking Hotline 609-322-9524

TROUT STOCKING

Raised with pride at NJDEP Fish & Wildlife's Pequest Trout Hatchery.

Spring

- Over 180,000 released for Opening Day — April 6, 2024
- Over 570,000 Rainbow Trout (avg. 10.5 inches)
- Spring stocking begins March 18, 2024
- 6,000–7,000 breeders 15–26 inches (3–7 pounds)
- 85 streams and 87 lakes and ponds stocked statewide
- All 21 counties stocked
- Most waterbodies stocked at least 3 times
- Stocking continues for seven weeks following Opening Day!

Fall

- Fall Stocking begins October 8, 2024
- All large, two year old trout, measuring up to 16 inches
- 21,000 trout stocked
- 36 streams, lakes, and ponds
- Up to 1,000 breeders, averaging 20 inches
- Great fishing till next spring!

Winter

- November 25 and 26, 2024
- All large two year olds, measuring up to 16 inches
- Over 4,000 trout
- 18 lakes and ponds
- Great fishing all winter long!

Spring Trout Stocking Schedule — 2024

Scan this QR code with your mobile device to view New Jersey's 2024 trout stocking schedule or go to dep.nj.gov/wp-content/uploads/njfw/spring-trout-allocations-2024.pdf



HATCHERY-SUPPORTED FISHERIES

Courtesy of the Hackettstown State Fish Hatchery 2023 production highlights.

Muskellunge: 10–12" (10,095)

- Cooper River Park (250 Tiger Muskies)
- DOD Lake (250 Tiger Muskies)
- Echo Lake Reservoir (420 Pure Strain)
- Furnace Lake (10 Pure & 100 Tiger)
- Greenwood Lake (2,922 Pure & 1,500 Tiger)
- Lake Hopatcong (2,693 Tiger Muskies)
- Lake Musconetcong (660 Tiger Muskies)
- Little Swartswood Lake (150 Tiger Muskies)
- Mercer Lake (420 Pure Strain)
- Monksville Reservoir (505 Tiger Muskies)
- Mountain Lake (125 Pure Strain)

Northern Pike: 6.5" (21,448)

- Budd Lake (1,885)
- Farrington Lake (2,984)
- Passaic River (3,422)
- Pompton Lake (3,060)
- Pompton River (2,456)
- Spruce Run Reservoir (6,450)

Surplus stocked in: Cranberry and Deal Lake

Walleye: 2" (184,792); 4" (37,303)

- Canistear Reservoir (7,000)
- Greenwood Lake (38,620)
- Lake Hopatcong (52,587)
- Monksville Reservoir (10,800)
- Swartswood Lake (9,926)

Surplus stocked in: Delaware River

Hybrid Striped Bass: 4" (46,470)

- Lake Hopatcong (26,212)
- Manasquan Reservoir (7,355)
- Spruce Run Reservoir (12,903)

Landlocked Salmon: 15" (2,880)

- Lake Aeroflex (505)
- Merrill Creek Reservoir (650)
- Tilcon Lake (450)
- Wawayanda Lake (1,275)

Channel Catfish: 6" (12,695)

- ten waters

Warmwater Fish Stocking List

Scan this QR code with your mobile device to view New Jersey's warmwater fish stocking list or go to dep.nj.gov/njfw/fishing/freshwater/the-charles-o-hayford-state-fish-hatchery-in-hackettstown/#summaries



Channel Catfish: 12" (10,530)

- sixty-seven waters

Channel Catfish: 20" (383)

- five waters

Plus thousands of Largemouth and Smallmouth Bass, Black Crappie, Bluegill, Fathead Minnows, and Golden Shiners in over 100 waterbodies throughout the state!

Raised with pride at NJDEP Fish & Wildlife's Hackettstown State Fish Hatchery.

Fish Stocking Do's and Don'ts

Why should I get a Fish Stocking Permit?

It is the law! Before you consider stocking any fish in New Jersey, you must first obtain a fish stocking permit from NJDEP Fish & Wildlife. It does not matter whether the pond is public or private, connected to, or isolated from, a neighboring water, or if the waterbody is stocked by the state or a private club. **A fish stocking permit is always required.**

An application and information can be found at dep.nj.gov/njfw/fishing/freshwater/freshwater-fisheries-permits. The application fee is only \$2.

Only approved hatcheries will be authorized for stocking. Hatcheries are required to submit annual fish health information, thus minimizing the potential for the spread of disease.

Fish Stocking Do's

- **Do** establish your stocking goal, whether it is to supplement an existing population, create a unique opportunity or restore a fishery (dredging or dam repair project).
- **Do** know your waterbody. Most fish require particular conditions, so understand your waterbody's habitat and water quality. Factors to consider include waterbody size, depth and substrate, and water temperature, oxygen level, pH and flow.
- **Do** get permission from the waterbody owner, as their signature is required on the application.
- **Do** avoid delays in the processing of your application by first reviewing the nine simple guidelines listed at dep.nj.gov/wp-content/uploads/njfw/fisheries_permitapp_info.pdf

Fish Stocking Don'ts

- **Don't** purchase fish from a hatchery without obtaining a fish stocking permit.
- **Don't** transport fish from one waterbody to another.
- **Don't** assume your pond needs to be stocked, as most waters do not require stocking.
- **Don't** stock an invasive species dep.nj.gov/njfw/fishing/freshwater/aquatic-invasive-species
- **Don't** assume common game species are harmless. Even they can cause ecological harm if introduced into the wrong locations.
- **Don't** release pet aquarium fish into a local waterway.

FREE Fishing Days

— June 1 and Oct. 19, 2024 —

No License Needed!

NJDEP Fish & Wildlife has split the Free Fishing Days. The first will be held on June 1, 2024 during the summer as is traditional. This day is part of the National Fishing and Boating Week which highlights the importance of recreational boating and fishing to enhance peoples' quality of life and to preserve our country's natural beauty. The second Free Fishing Day will occur after fall trout stocking on October 19, 2024 to bring attention to this great fishing opportunity. On these two days, NJ residents may fish New Jersey's public fresh waters without a license or trout stamp. All other regulations, including size and daily catch limits, remain in effect.



New Anglers ✓ Checklist

Welcome to Fishing! To Get Started...

A fishing license is required for residents ages 16 through 69 years and for non-residents 16 years and older. Fishing for trout also requires a Trout Stamp. Purchase your license and stamp online at NJFishandWildlife.com/licensesalesite.htm or at tackle shops and sporting goods stores statewide. If you never purchased a fishing license, or have not since 2011, you are eligible to save almost 50% of the fee when you and another qualified individual purchase a "Buddy License" at the same time. Both anglers receive the discount! See page 10 for details.

New Anglers' Fishing Gear Checklist

Gather this essential gear, then consider adding the recommended accessories to complete your new angler package. Everything can be found at a local tackle shop or sporting goods store.

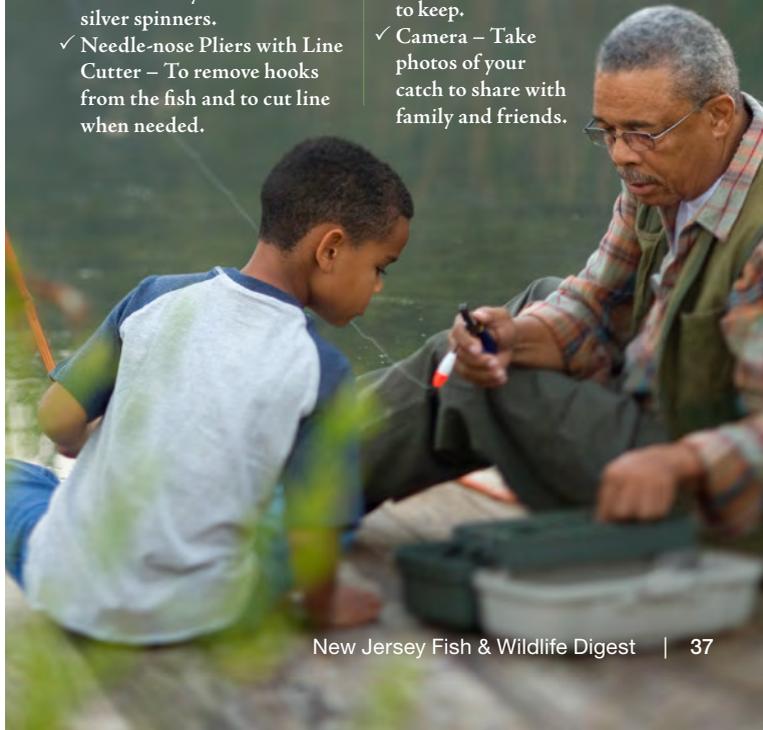
Essential Gear

- ✓ NJ Fishing License
- ✓ Rod and Reel – A 6 to 7 foot-long spinning rod and reel with 8 lb. test line (monofilament).
- ✓ Hooks, Bobbers and Split Shot – Size 6 bait holder hooks (1 pkg.), 3 or 4 bobbers and a package of split shots.
- ✓ Bait – Nightcrawlers or earthworms (great choice, readily available, catch nearly everything) or try live minnows or shiners.
- ✓ Lures – Artificial lures can replace bait and be just as effective. Try size 1 or 2 silver spinners.
- ✓ Needle-nose Pliers with Line Cutter – To remove hooks from the fish and to cut line when needed.

- ✓ NJDEP Fish & Wildlife Digest – Contains images for commonly caught fish plus fishing regulations.

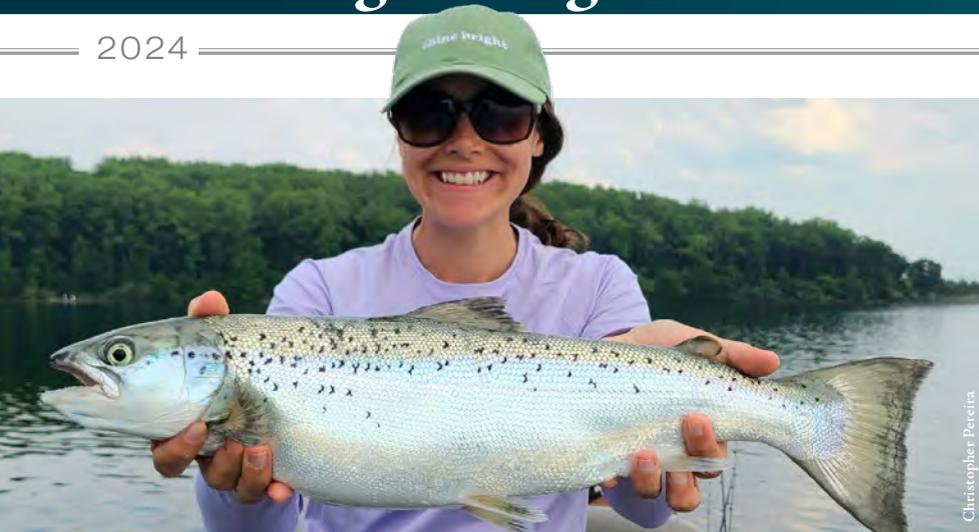
Recommended Accessories

- ✓ Polarized Sunglasses – Protect your eyes and reduce glare off the water.
- ✓ Hat and Sunscreen
- ✓ Net – Don't let the big one get away. Use a net to help land your catch and to protect fish that will be released.
- ✓ Tape Measure – To determine if your fish is large enough to keep.
- ✓ Camera – Take photos of your catch to share with family and friends.



Skillful Angler Program

2024



Christopher Pereira

Katherine McGrath with a beautiful 22.5" Atlantic Landlocked Salmon.

The Skillful Angler Program is designed both to supplement the New Jersey Record Fish Program and to acknowledge that many anglers catch freshwater and marine fish that are not record size but are still worthy of recognition because the size and weight of the fish sufficiently tested the angler's skill. Open to resident and non-resident anglers. All fish must be caught in New Jersey waters using a hook and line during legally open seasons. Please see 2024 program changes in red font.

Saltwater species taken from a boat must have been caught from a boat that left from, and returned to, a New Jersey port during the same trip.

Anglers can now submit their application and photo(s) electronically! Program rules and steps to enter are found at dep.nj.gov/njfw/fishing/freshwater/skillful-angler-program. Anglers qualifying for a Skillful Angler award receive a certificate **along with a Skillful Angler patch** as a testament to their achievement. The Program has three main divisions: **Adult** (for anglers age 16 and older), **Junior** (under age 16) and **Catch and Release** (based on length). **A clear, side-view photo alongside a ruler that allows accurate species identification and measurement verification must be included with each application.**

Additional good quality (and high resolution) photos with the angler are welcome and appreciated.

The Skillful Angler Program recognizes different levels of fishing expertise. An angler who submits five applications of qualifying size for the same species will receive a Specialist Certificate. An angler who submits five applications of qualifying fish of different species will receive a Master Certificate. Catch 10 or more qualifying fish within the year, and the angler will earn an Elite Angler Certificate. **New this year, catch 10 or more qualifying fish of different species and the angler will receive a Grandmaster Certificate!**

For new anglers, the Program also recognizes your first fish caught *no matter the age of the angler*. Qualified anglers will receive a First Fish certificate. Three additional categories may bring out your competitive nature. Personalized certificates are also awarded for the Slam Series which includes:

- **Salmonid Slam**—catch 3 qualifying fish out of the 5 listed: Rainbow Trout, Brown Trout, Brook Trout, Lake Trout, and Atlantic Landlocked Salmon
- **Bass Slam**—catch one each qualifying Smallmouth and Largemouth Bass
- **Panfish Slam**—catch one each qualifying sunfish, crappie and Yellow Perch.

Each month, the leaders of each category and species will be posted on our Skillful Angler Leader Board webpage. At the end of the year, special recognition is given to anglers who catch the largest fish in each species category. The winner of each category is sent a special certificate recognizing his/her accomplishment along with a **winner's patch** as the best of New Jersey's Skillful Anglers.

Fish must be measured from the tip of the nose (with mouth closed) to the tip of the tail. For catch and release categories, the fish must be measured and photographed alongside a ruler. For Adult/Junior Division, fish must be weighed and measured by a fishing license agent, tackle shop or authorized NJDEP Fish & Wildlife fisheries biologist.

Anglers must submit a photograph of the fish caught, alongside a ruler for clear identification and measurement verification. Be sure the ruler markings are legible. Please also include an attractive, well-composed, high-resolution (large file size) photo to be considered for printing in this Digest. **Smile!** All photos become the property of the NJDEP Fish & Wildlife and may be used for promotional purposes. 🐟

To apply, go to: dep.nj.gov/njfw/fishing/freshwater/skillful-angler-program

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS FOR EACH FRESHWATER SPECIES

Species	Adult Weight (lbs., oz.)	Junior Weight (lbs., oz.)	Catch & Release (inches)
Largemouth Bass	6	4	21
Smallmouth Bass	4	3	19
Striped Bass Hybrid	8	6	24
Striped Bass	30	25	40
Bowfin	6	4	25
Bullhead	2	1 lb., 8 oz.	14
Carp	25	20	35
Channel Catfish	10	8	29
Crappie	2	1 lb., 8 oz.	14
Muskellunge	20	15	45
Tiger Muskie	15	10	42
Yellow Perch	1 lb., 8 oz.	1	13
White Perch	1.8	1.4	14
Chain Pickerel	4	3	24
Northern Pike	10	8	34
American Shad	7	5	24
Brook Trout	3	2	11
Brown Trout	8	5	23
Lake Trout	12	8	31
Rainbow Trout	5	3 lbs., 8 oz.	23
Salmon, Atlantic Landlocked	4	3	20
Sunfish	1	12 oz.	9
Walleye	6	4 lbs., 8 oz.	24

The New Jersey State Record Fish Program requires a separate application from this Skillful Angler Program and is based on weight alone. Scale certification documentation and a weighmaster's signature are necessary. Other rules apply. Visit NJDEP Fish & Wildlife's website at NJFishandWildlife.com for a complete list of current state records.

New!

Email your Skillful Angler entry and photo from any device!

NJDEP Fish & Wildlife's Record Fish Program honors anglers who catch the largest of select species of freshwater and saltwater fish. Record size is based on weight alone; there are no line classes. Currently there are 31 freshwater species eligible for entry into the program.

Anglers are reminded that the objective of the Record Fish Program is to increase the awareness of fishing opportunities for species that are regularly sought and routinely found in the freshwaters or off the coast of New Jersey.

Anglers should also be aware that several procedural changes are now in effect for the Record Fish Program. First, there are different applications for freshwater and saltwater species. Second, for freshwater species, it is now mandatory that a

freshwater biologist confirm the identification and weight of any potential record fish within three days of it being caught. Anglers must call NJDEP Fish & Wildlife's Bureau of Freshwater Fisheries (north) 908-236-2118; (central) 609-233-6076; and (south) 856-629-4950, or the Hackettstown Hatchery at 908-852-3676 (Warren County) to make arrangements. Hours are Monday–Friday, 8:30 a.m.–4:30 p.m. These offices have a certified scale on site, so an entry can be weighed and identified. Depending on the time and location of your catch, you may elect to have the fish weighed on a local certified scale, but you must still have a freshwater biologist personally confirm the identification and weight at one of the above offices. Please note that all scale certification requirements still apply,

including a valid Certificate of Inspection/Test Report and current Registration Certificate issued by the county Office of Weights and Measures.

Please also include an attractive, well-composed, high-resolution (large file size) photo to be considered for printing in this *Digest*. **Smile!**

Entry deadline: Applications must now be submitted no later than one month after the date of catch. All other program rules still apply.

For a complete list of state record fish or to print an application with complete program rules, visit NJDEP Fish & Wildlife's website at dep.nj.gov/njfw/fishing/freshwater/new-jersey-state-record-fish-program. 

New Jersey State Record Freshwater Sport Fish

Species	lbs.	oz.	Year	Angler	Where Caught
Bass, Largemouth	10	14	1980	Robert Eisele	Menantico Sand Wash Pond
Bass, Rock	1	5	1982	Eric Avogardo	Saddle River
Bass, Smallmouth	7	2	1990	Carol Marciniak	Round Valley Reservoir
Bluegill	3	0	1990	Dom Santarelli	Farm Pond in Pennington
Bowfin	11	8.5	2017	Pierce Dopkin	Mantua Creek
Bullhead, Brown	4	8	1997	Gary Schmidt	Lake of Woods, Ft. Dix
Carp	47	0	1995	Billy Friedman	South Branch of Raritan River
Carp (Archery)	45	6	2014	Adam Faatz	Greenwood Lake
Carp, Grass	55	8	2011	Jack Demsey, Jr.	Curlis Lake
Carp, Grass (Archery)	76	11	2020	Daniel E. Sandorff	Delaware River
Catfish, Channel	33	3	1978	Howard Hudson	Lake Hopatcong
Catfish, White	14	4	2004	Timothy Jasko	Dallenbach Pond
Crappie, Black	4	8	1996	Andy Tintle	Pompton Lake
Crappie, White	3	11	2009	William Lewis	Mercer Lake
Eel, American	6	13	2005	David J. Payne	Round Valley Reservoir
Muskellunge	42	13	1997	Bob Neals	Monksville Reservoir
Muskie, Tiger	29	0	1990	Larry Migliarese	Delaware River
Perch, White**	3	1	1989	Edward Tango	Forest Hill Lake
Perch, Yellow	2	6	1989	Gene Engels	Holiday Lake
Perch, Yellow*	4	4	1865	Charles Abbott	Crosswicks Creek
Pickereel, Chain	9	3	1957	Frank McGovern	Lower Aetna Lake
Pickereel, Redfin	1	13	1982	Gerald Humphrey	Lake Assunpink
Pike, Northern	30	8.5	2009	John Viglione	Pompton Lake
Salmon (Landlocked)	8	10	2021	Joe Satkowski	Merrill Creek Reservoir
Shad, American	11	1	1984	Charles Mower	Delaware River
Striped Bass	51	0	2002	John Christian	Great Egg Harbor River
Striped Bass, Hybrid	17	12	2023	Jim Piascik	Monksville Reservoir
Sunfish, Pumpkinseed	1	8	1987	Daryl Donalson	Farm Pond in Burlington County
Trout, Brook	7	3	1995	Andrew DuJack	Rockaway River
Trout, Brown	21	6	1995	Lenny Saccente	Round Valley Reservoir
Trout, Lake	32	8	2002	Greg Young	Round Valley Reservoir
Trout, Rainbow	13	0	1988	Gene Rutkoski	Lake Hopatcong
Trout, Sea Run Brown	— Vacant — (Minimum Weight 5 lbs.)				
Walleye	13	9	1993	George Fundell	Delaware River

* Denotes historical record

** Denotes fish has been certified by the IGFA as a world record



Jim Piascik caught the new 17lb. 12oz. state record Hybrid Striped Bass from Monksville Reservoir in May 2023.



Gregory Young caught this 32lb. 8oz. Lake Trout from his boat on Round Valley Reservoir in May 2002.

New Jersey Freshwater Fishing Digest

Internet AddressNJFishandWildlife.com

General Email Address NJFishandWildlife@dep.nj.gov

**License Purchasing/
System Assistance** NJDFWLicenses@dep.nj.gov

General Information (609) 292-2965

DEP ACTION LINE
—24 HOURS.....(877) 927-6337 — (877) WARN-DEP

Marine Law Enforcement(609) 748-2050

**Automated Harvest
Report System**.....(855) 448-6865 — (855) I-HUNT-NJ

**Commercial Preserves and
Semi-Wild Preserves**..... (609) 984-6213

Deer Project..... NJDeer@dep.nj.gov

Exotic & Nongame Captivity Permits..... (609) 984-6213
or NJWildlifePermits@dep.nj.gov

Falconry Permits..... (908) 735-8793

Field Trial Permits(609) 259-2132

Freshwater FisheriesNJFWFish@dep.nj.gov

Lebanon Field Office (North)
**P.O. Box 394, 1255 County Rt. 629,
Lebanon, NJ 08833**..... (908) 236-2118
*(Central & Southern Region Fisheries Offices listed under Regional Offices
in right-hand column)*

Horseback Riding Group Permits (609) 259-2132

Hunter Education (856) 629-0552
or NJHunterEd@dep.nj.gov

Hunting, Fishing and Duplicate Licenses..... (609) 292-2965

Hunting and Trapping Permit Hotline..... (609) 292-9192

License Sales.....(888) 773-8450

Operation Game Thief..... (855) OGT-TIPS

Outstanding Deer Program..... NJDeerClassic@dep.nj.gov

Pheasant and Quail Stocking (609) 984-0547

Trout Stocking Hotline..... (609) 322-9524

Wildlife Conservation Corps..... (908) 735-7040

Wildlife Control (908) 735-8793

Wildlife Education..... (908) 637-4125

Wildlife Health(908) 735-6398

Wildlife Management Areas..... (609) 984-0547

Trenton Office
Mail Code 501-03, P.O. Box 420, Trenton, NJ 08625-0420

Endangered and Nongame Species (609) 292-9400

Land Management (609) 984-0547

Marine Fisheries (609) 292-7794

Shellfisheries (609) 292-3093

Wildlife Management..... (609) 292-6685

Northern Region Office

26 Route 173 W., Hampton, NJ 08827
*(Serving Bergen, Essex, Hudson, Hunterdon, Morris, Passaic, Somerset,
Sussex, Union, and Warren counties)*

Endangered and Nongame Species (908) 638-4127

Hunter Education (908) 637-4125 x 123

Land Management (973) 383-0918

Law Enforcement..... (908) 735-8240

Wildlife Control..... (908) 735-8793

Wildlife Management..... (908) 735-7040

Central Region Office

1 Eldridge Rd., Robbinsville, NJ 08691
(Serving Burlington, Mercer, Middlesex, Monmouth, and Ocean counties)

Freshwater Fisheries(609) 223-6076

Hunter Education(856) 629-0552

Land Management (609) 259-6969

Law Enforcement..... (609) 259-2120

Wildlife Management (609) 223-6072

Southern Region Office

220 Blue Anchor Rd., Sicklerville, NJ 08081
*(Serving Atlantic, Camden, Cape May, Cumberland, Gloucester, and
Salem counties)*

Freshwater Fisheries (856) 629-4950

Hunter Education (856) 629-0552

Land Management (856) 629-5006

Law Enforcement..... (856) 629-0555

Wildlife Management (856) 875-6418

Pequest Natural Resource Education Center..... (908) 637-4125

605 Pequest Rd., Oxford, NJ 07863
*For questions concerning state fish stocking programs or comments call
(908) 236-2118*

Nacote Creek Research Station

P.O. Box 418, 360 Rt. 9 N. (Milepost 51) Port Republic, NJ 08241

Marine Fisheries (609) 748-2020
or NJMarineFisheries@dep.nj.gov

**Marine Fisheries “Listen Only”
regulation information line** (609) 292-2083

Shellfisheries (609) 748-2040

Marine Education..... (609) 748-4347

Delaware Bay Office

1672 E. Buckshutem Rd., Millville, NJ 08332..... (856) 785-0730

Wildlife Damage/Issues

For all species except Black Bear, call USDA APHIS Wildlife Services at (908) 735-4513. If incident is an emergency or bear related, contact Trenton Dispatch at 877-WARNDEP, (877) 927-6337. Dispatch will notify appropriate NJDEP Fish & Wildlife personnel.

Getaway to a Great Experience

Fly Fishing • Lake Fishing • Ice Fishing

Some of the best fishing spots in Upstate are found in Oneida County. Oneida Lake is a bass master's dream and a special destination for walleye and perch. Fly fishing? Cast for brook and brown trout in over 100 miles of public fishing rights on 14 trout creeks and rivers. West Canada Creek is regarded as one of New York's top trout streams. See millions of trout nurtured at Rome Fish Hatchery.

Delta Lake
Photo courtesy of Lisa Curtis

Fishing Hot Spots!	Largemouth Bass	Smallmouth Bass	Brook Trout	Brown Trout	Bullhead	Carp & Suckers	Catfish	Crappies	Northern Pike	Pickeral	Rainbow Trout	Rock Bass	Tiger Muskellunge	Walleye	White Perch	Yellow Perch	Other Panfish
Black River		🐟	🐟	🐟						🐟	🐟						
Brandy Lake			🐟														
Delta Lake	🐟	🐟			🐟	🐟		🐟	🐟	🐟		🐟		🐟		🐟	🐟
Fish Creek	🐟	🐟	🐟	🐟		🐟								🐟			
Florence Creek			🐟	🐟													
Lansing Kill			🐟	🐟													
Little River			🐟	🐟													
Mad River	🐟	🐟	🐟	🐟	🐟	🐟	🐟	🐟	🐟	🐟		🐟	🐟	🐟	🐟	🐟	🐟
Mohawk River/ Erie Canal				🐟													
Nine Mile Creek				🐟													
Oneida Creek				🐟													
Oneida Lake	🐟	🐟			🐟	🐟	🐟	🐟	🐟	🐟		🐟		🐟		🐟	🐟
Oriskany Creek				🐟													
Sauquoil Creek			🐟	🐟							🐟						
Sconondoa Creek				🐟													
West Canada Creek			🐟	🐟													
Woodhull Creek			🐟	🐟													



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