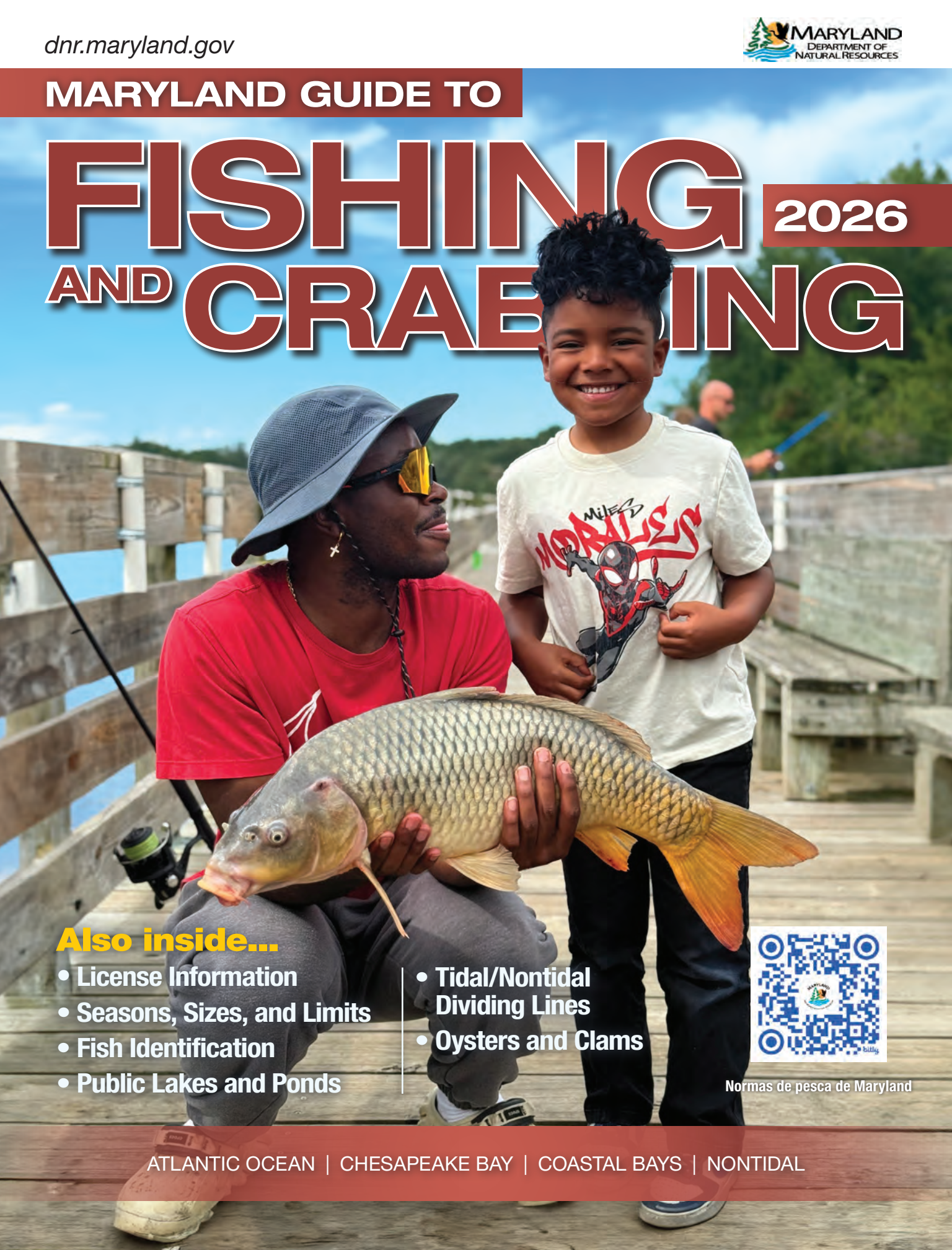


MARYLAND GUIDE TO

# FISHING AND CRAEING 2026



## Also inside...

- License Information
- Seasons, Sizes, and Limits
- Fish Identification
- Public Lakes and Ponds
- Tidal/Nontidal Dividing Lines
- Oysters and Clams



Normas de pesca de Maryland

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**On the Cover**  
 Anglers Chris White III, 6 years and Chris White, Jr. caught a good bit of fish on the Patuxent River at Kings Landing Park. They caught 8 channel catfish, 2 blue catfish, and 2 carp (36" and 28").  
 Photo by Taylor Jenkins

**LICENSE FREE FISHING DAYS!**

In Maryland, anyone may fish without a recreational fishing license on June 6, June 13 and July 4, 2026.  
 All other fishing regulations apply.

Angler Colden Conaway

Photo by John Conaway II



# Maryland

**MARYLAND**  
DEPARTMENT OF  
NATURAL RESOURCES

Wes Moore, *Governor*  
Josh Kurtz, *Secretary*

**Maryland Department of  
Natural Resources**  
**Fishing and Boating Services**  
Tawes State Office Building  
580 Taylor Avenue, B-2  
Annapolis, MD 21401-2352  
410-260-8300  
800-688-3467  
[dnr.maryland.gov/fisheries](http://dnr.maryland.gov/fisheries)  
[customerservice.dnr@maryland.gov](mailto:customerservice.dnr@maryland.gov)

**SUBSCRIBE  
TO THE  
DEPARTMENT'S  
EMAIL LIST**



This publication is intended as a guide only. Rules are subject to change. It is the angler's responsibility to know and abide by all rules. For statutes see the Natural Resources Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland. For regulations see the Code of Maryland Regulations, Title 08. Maryland statutes and regulations can be found at the following web sites:

- **Statutes:**  
[mgaleg.maryland.gov/2024RS/Statute/Web/gnr/gnr.pdf](http://mgaleg.maryland.gov/2024RS/Statute/Web/gnr/gnr.pdf)
- **Regulations:**  
[dsd.maryland.gov/regulations/Pages/default.aspx](http://dsd.maryland.gov/regulations/Pages/default.aspx)
- **Public Notices:**  
[dnr.state.md.us/fisheries/pages/pub\\_notices.aspx](http://dnr.state.md.us/fisheries/pages/pub_notices.aspx)

### STAY CONNECTED!

- **Follow Fishing and Boating Services:**
  - **X (twitter)** – @mddnrfish
  - **Facebook** – @marylanddnrfisheries
  - **FishBrain** – @maryland-department-of-natural-resources
- **Share your fishing story on the Angler's Log** – [fishingreports.dnr@maryland.gov](mailto:fishingreports.dnr@maryland.gov)

### Sport Fisheries Advisory Commission

This commission is comprised of individuals from across the state who represent the interests of various recreational fishing constituencies. Information related to the commission is found on the department website under [dnr.maryland.gov/fisheries](http://dnr.maryland.gov/fisheries).

### Commissioners

**Jason Andrick**  
*Vice-Chairperson*  
Trout Unlimited,  
Coldwater Fisheries

**Steve Bursleson**  
Tidal, Marine Fisheries

**Gary Dembo**  
Nontidal, Tidal,  
Marine Fisheries

**Beverly Fleming**  
Marine and Ocean  
Surf Fisheries,  
Assateague Mobile  
Sportsfishermen's  
Association

**Sewell Frey**  
Aquaculture Industry

**Edward Green**  
Tidal Fisheries,  
Charter Boat Captain

**Letha Grimes**  
Nontidal / Coldwater  
Fisheries

**Sonny Gwin**  
Tidal Fisheries Advisory  
Commission Liaison

**Jesse Howe**  
Tidal Fisheries

**Roger Krone**  
Tidal Fisheries

**Scott Lenox** –  
*Chairperson*  
Marine Fisheries

**Eric Packard**  
Nontidal, Tidal  
Fisheries

**David M. Sutherland**  
Marine Conservation  
and Economics

**Chad Tokowicz**  
Tidal, Nontidal,  
Coldwater Fisheries

**Roger Trageser**  
Nontidal, Tidal  
Largemouth &  
Smallmouth Bass  
Fisheries, Maryland  
Bass Nation

**Dan Walsh**  
Tidal Fisheries, Heroes  
on the Water

**James Wommack**  
Tidal, Marine Fisheries

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If you believe that you have been discriminated against in any program, activity, or facility, or if you need more information, please write to:

Office of Fair Practice  
Department of Natural Resources  
580 Taylor Ave., C-3 - Annapolis MD 21401  
Telephone: (410)260-8058 Email: [ndc.dnr@maryland.gov](mailto:ndc.dnr@maryland.gov)

Office of Civil Rights  
Dept. of Interior  
1849 C Street, NW  
Washington, D.C., 20240



## About This Guide

This high-quality guide is brought to you by the Maryland Department of Natural Resources through a partnership with Kalkomey, a trusted leader in outdoor safety education since 1995. In addition to producing this guide, Kalkomey also offers a suite of educational courses to help people enjoy the outdoors safely.

The revenue generated through ad sales in this publication significantly lowers production costs and generates savings. These savings translate into additional funds for other important agency programs and we thank the advertisers for their support.



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The fishing regulations in this guide are online at:



Ensuring the health and conservation of our marine resources and anglers' access to them

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A grass-roots, membership-based fishing focused organization, CCA Maryland connects people to fishing and conservation through hands-on habitat restoration, hosting youth and family friendly events, and by advocating for the wise and sustainable use of our region's fishery resources. Thank you to the members of our local chapters, sponsors, and partners in helping CCA Maryland to make a positive impact for 30 years

Join us, and become part of the CCA story....Visit [CCAMD.org](http://CCAMD.org) today!

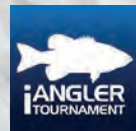
## BLUE CATFISH N. SNAKEHEAD FLATHEAD CATFISH



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**REGISTER FOR FREE @ [CCAMD.ORG/COUNT](http://CCAMD.ORG/COUNT)**

# SECRETARY'S MESSAGE



Secretary Josh Kurtz

## A Letter from the Secretary

In Maryland, fishing is a year-round affair, even as individual seasons come and go. From the Appalachians to the Atlantic and throughout our Chesapeake Bay Watershed, the Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR) works to manage our diverse fisheries sustainably. Our state's sportsmen and sports-women are important partners in the process, advocating for clean water and healthy fish populations.

This support begins with purchasing a Maryland fishing license, which is how we fund management activities like stocking fish, managing invasive species, operating several fish hatcheries, and improving fishing infrastructure.

To streamline and simplify the process of renewing licenses and permits, DNR has introduced a new online licensing system—MD Outdoors. Along with improvements in the user experience, we introduced the availability of hard-card licenses, offer auto-renewal, and make it easier to give the gift of a fishing license.

Maryland fishing license holders also have a direct impact on how their dollars are spent. DNR routinely provides opportunities for comment and suggestion when we make regulations or propose new ideas. The information in this guide is based on regulations and laws developed with your input.

Above all, we must pass down our knowledge and experience to the next generation who will take to Maryland's waters. When you go out fishing this year, be sure to introduce this beloved pastime to someone new.

Have fun and good luck out there!

**Josh Kurtz**  
Secretary  
Maryland Department of Natural Resources



## WHAT'S NEW

2025 STATE RECORDS				
INVASIVE				
1	<b>Northern Snakehead</b>	21.8 lbs.	Matt Foreman	Susquehanna River 6/7/2025
ATLANTIC COAST				
2	<b>False Albacore</b>	26.0 lbs.	Jack Dorman	Jackspot and 20 Fathom Line 7/20/2025
3	<b>Blueline Tilefish</b>	21.3 lbs.	Dominic Vuotto	Washington Canyon 7/26/2025
4	<b>Longfin Albacore Tuna</b>	78.0 lbs.	Marc Spagnola	Hudson Canyon 9/21/2025
5	<b>Pompano Dolphinfish</b>	7.1 lbs.	Jim Frazetti	Near Offshore Canyons 10/3/2025
CHESAPEAKE				
6	<b>Yellow Perch</b>	2.3 lbs.	Thomas Dembeck, Jr.	Lower Susquehanna River 2/7/2025
7	<b>Longnose Gar</b>	20.5 lbs.	David Confair	Marshyhope Creek 2/08/2025



Photo by Lee Haile

## WHAT'S NEW

- Effective December 22, 2025, anglers and charter captains in Maryland possessing Atlantic Highly Migratory Species (HMS) permits from the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) will be required to report recreationally landed bluefin tuna and dead discards, plus non-tournament landings of billfishes and swordfish electronically, using either the HMS Catch Reporting smartphone app, HMS permits website, or through alternate reporting programs specified below. HMS catch reports must be submitted to NMFS within 24 hours of completing the fishing trip. See page 44 for more details.
- Recreational shark reporting was eliminated.
- The yellow perch catch limit in all tidal waters and nontidal rivers and streams has been decreased to 5 per person per day.
- Hook rules when livelining have changed — see page 17 for more details

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[safewaters.com/public-safety](https://safewaters.com/public-safety)



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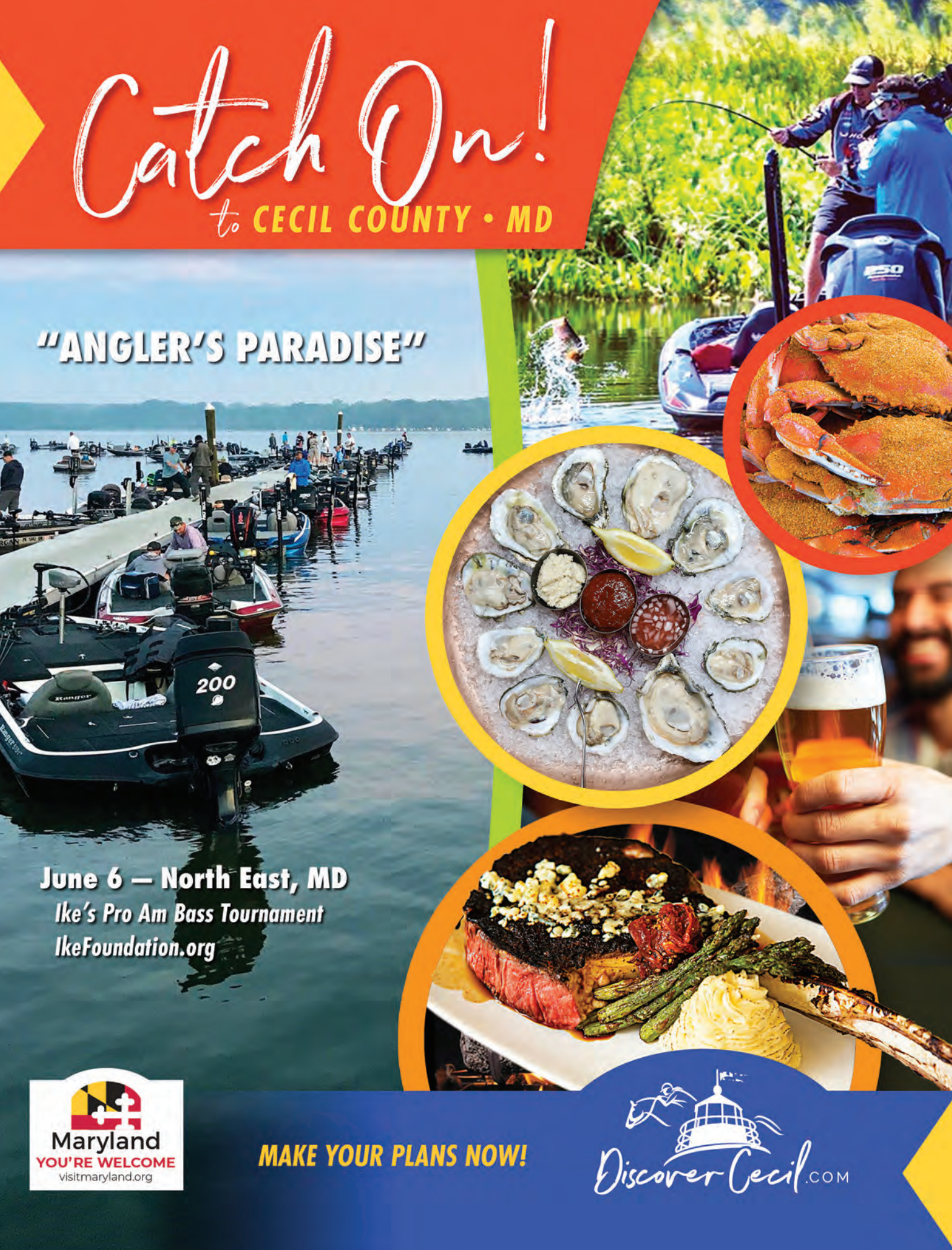
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# ADDRESSES AND PHONE NUMBERS

## Licensing and Registration Service Centers

- **Licensing and Registration Service Centers** are open by appointment only. For more information, please visit [dnr.maryland.gov/Pages/licensing.aspx](http://dnr.maryland.gov/Pages/licensing.aspx) or call 866-344-8889.
- **Annapolis Service Center**  
160 Harry S. Truman Pkwy.  
Mailing address: P O Box 1869  
Annapolis, MD 21404  
410-260-3220 / 410-260-3281 (fax)  
[Annapolisrsc.dnr@maryland.gov](mailto:Annapolisrsc.dnr@maryland.gov)
- **Bel Air Service Center**  
501 West MacPhail Rd. #2  
Bel Air, MD 21014  
410-836-4550 / 410-836-4562 (fax)  
[Belairrsc.dnr@maryland.gov](mailto:Belairrsc.dnr@maryland.gov)
- **Centreville Service Center**  
120 Broadway Ave. Ste. 5  
Centreville, MD 21617  
410-819-4100 / 410-819-4110 (fax)  
[Centrevillersc.dnr@maryland.gov](mailto:Centrevillersc.dnr@maryland.gov)
- **Cumberland Service Center**  
13300 Winchester Rd. SW  
Cumberland, MD 21502  
301-777-2134 / 301-777-5865 (fax)  
Tuesday & Thursday  
no mail-in applications  
[Cumberlandrsc.dnr@maryland.gov](mailto:Cumberlandrsc.dnr@maryland.gov)
- **Frederick Service Center**  
1601-A Bowmans Farm Rd.  
Frederick, MD 21701  
240-236-9950 / 240-236-9953 (fax)  
[Frederickrsc.dnr@maryland.gov](mailto:Frederickrsc.dnr@maryland.gov)
- **Salisbury Service Center**  
251 Tilghman Rd., Room #2  
Salisbury, MD 21804  
410-713-3840 / 410-713-3849 (fax)  
[Salisburyrsc.dnr@maryland.gov](mailto:Salisburyrsc.dnr@maryland.gov)
- **Solomons Service Center**  
14175 Solomons Island Rd. S  
Mailing address: P O Box 1309  
Solomons, MD 20688  
410-535-3382 / 410-535-4737 (fax)  
[Solomonsrsc.dnr@maryland.gov](mailto:Solomonsrsc.dnr@maryland.gov)



Your purchase of fishing equipment and motorboat fuel supports boating access and Sport Fish Restoration.



**BECOME A CHARTER BOAT GUIDE**

## Natural Resources Police Offices

- 24 Hour Assistance:**  
**800-628-9944 or 410-260-8888**
- Use these phone numbers for emergencies, to report natural resources violations or ask questions on fisheries regulations.
- All offices are open Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.
- **Somerset, Wicomico and Worcester counties**  
32144 Mt. Olive Road  
Salisbury, MD 21804
  - **Caroline, Dorchester, Kent, Talbot and Queen Anne's counties**  
3001 Starr Road  
Queen Anne, MD 21657
  - **Anne Arundel and Prince George's counties**  
1070 East College Parkway  
Annapolis, MD 21409
  - **Calvert, Charles and St. Mary's counties**  
18723 Prince Frederick Road  
Hughesville, MD 20637
  - **Baltimore, Carroll, Cecil, Harford, Howard and Montgomery counties**  
3738 Gwynnbrook Avenue  
Owings Mills, MD 21117
  - **Frederick and Washington counties**  
2011 Monument Road  
Myersville, MD 21773
  - **Allegany and Garrett counties**  
11701 Mountain Road N.E.  
Flintstone, MD 21530

**Law Enforcement Division of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service**  
410-573-4514

**Chesapeake Bay and Coastal Safety and Environmental 24-Hour Hotline**  
877-224-7229 (toll free in Maryland)

**Emergencies on Boats**  
VHF-CH 16

**Marine Mammal and Sea Turtle Stranding Hotline**  
800-628-9944

Good fishing and good habitat go hand-in-hand. Report situations that you think may threaten the environment, such as aquatic pollution, to [mde.webmaster@maryland.gov](mailto:mde.webmaster@maryland.gov). For emergency situations when a toxin has been released or there is a threat to human safety, please call **1-866-633-4686**.

## Fisheries

- Fisheries Information**  
410-260-8300 or 800-688-3467
- Trout Stocking Information**  
800-688-3467, press 1 (updated weekly during stocking season), or daily during stocking season at [dnr.maryland.gov/fisheries/pages/trout/stocking.aspx](http://dnr.maryland.gov/fisheries/pages/trout/stocking.aspx)
- **Albert Powell State Trout Hatchery**  
Hagerstown, 301-791-4736
  - **Bear Creek State Trout Hatchery**  
Accident, 301-746-8148
- Fisheries Work Centers**
- **Cooperative Oxford Lab**  
Oxford, 410-226-0078
  - **Matapeake Work Center**  
Stevensville, 410-643-6776
  - **Ocean City Work Center**  
Ocean City, 410-213-1531
- Freshwater Fisheries Regional Offices**
- **Caroline, Cecil, Dorchester, Kent, Queen Anne's, Somerset, Talbot, Wicomico and Worcester counties**  
Millington, 410-928-3604
  - **Anne Arundel, Calvert, Charles, Prince George's and St. Mary's counties**  
Brandywine, 301-888-2423
  - **Baltimore, Carroll, Harford, Howard and Montgomery counties**  
Woodbine, 410-442-2080
  - **Frederick and Washington counties**  
Thurmont, 301-898-5443 or 9724
  - **Allegany and Garrett counties**  
Oakland, 301-334-8218

## MARYLAND WILDLIFE CRIME STOPPERS

You can call or text Maryland Wildlife Crime Stoppers at 1-443-433-4112 or email [mwc.dnr@maryland.gov](mailto:mwc.dnr@maryland.gov). You can also report violations from your phone using the Maryland DNR App! The Maryland Natural Resources Police has partnered with Maryland Wildlife Crime Stoppers to prevent poaching of our fish and wildlife resources. You can report poaching and wildlife crime while remaining anonymous and be eligible for a cash reward.

**TO REPORT A FISH KILL**

800-285-8195 or 866-633-4686

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## GET YOUR FISHING LICENSE TODAY!

Your Maryland fishing license and trout stamp fee support fisheries operations such as stocking, monitoring, and management.



### Who Needs a Trout Stamp?

A trout stamp is required for anyone 16 years of age or older to catch, attempt to catch or possess trout in nontidal waters.

### How Do I Know Whether I Need a Tidal or Nontidal Maryland Fishing License?

To see whether the area you are fishing requires a tidal or nontidal fishing license, please see Tidal/Nontidal Dividing Lines section on page 34.

### Maryland Saltwater Angler Registration Exemptions

Anglers fishing in the Atlantic Ocean, coastal bays, Chesapeake Bay or tidal tributaries must be registered with the state unless one of the following applies:

- You are under 16 years of age.
- You are fishing with a licensed fishing guide or from a licensed commercial fishing pier.
- You are fishing on a free fishing day—the first two Saturdays in June and July 4.
- You possess a valid commercial tidal fish license.
- You possess a Potomac River Fisheries Commission recreational fishing license.
- You possess a Chesapeake Bay and Coastal Sport Fishing License.

### To Obtain a License or Saltwater Angler Registration:

Go to <http://mdoutdoors.maryland.gov>, visit a Licensing and Registration Service Center or visit a license agent (select tackle shop or outdoor outfitter).

### Purple Heart Recipient Discount

Any Maryland veteran who has received a Purple Heart for injuries sustained defending our nation qualifies for a 50 percent discount on Maryland hunting and fishing licenses.

### Complimentary Licenses

Complimentary fishing and oystering licenses are available to Maryland residents who are 100 percent service-connected disabled veterans, former prisoners of war, and veterans who are determined to be unemployable by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

These licenses must be obtained at a Department of Natural Resources Service Center and cannot be obtained at independent retail locations. Locate your nearest Service Center on page 8.

Complimentary licenses are also available to blind individuals (residency requirements vary).

## Fishing Licenses and Fees†

**Fishing licenses, stamps and registrations are valid for 365 days from the date of purchase, unless otherwise specified. Prices and terms are subject to change.**

<b>Resident Nontidal Sport Fishing License</b> .....	\$32.00
<b>Resident 7-Day Nontidal Sport Fishing License</b> .....	\$16
<b>Resident Trout Stamp</b> .....	\$20
<b>Resident Chesapeake Bay and Coastal Sport Fishing License</b> .....	\$15
<b>Resident 7-Day Chesapeake Bay and Coastal Sport Fishing License</b> .....	\$6
<b>Resident Senior Consolidated Sport Fishing License</b> .....	\$12
(65 years or older. License includes tidal and nontidal. License does not include trout stamp. It may be purchased at any time in the calendar year in which you attain the age of 65)	
<b>Non-Resident Nontidal Sport Fishing License</b> .....	\$55*
<b>Non-Resident 7-Day Nontidal Sport Fishing License</b> .....	\$45*
<b>Non-Resident 3-Day Nontidal Sport Fishing License</b> .....	\$35*
*Or the same fee charged to visiting Maryland anglers by a non-resident's home state, whichever is higher— <a href="http://dnr.maryland.gov/pages/service_fishing_license.aspx">dnr.maryland.gov/pages/service_fishing_license.aspx</a>	
<b>Non-Resident Trout Stamp</b> .....	\$30
<b>Non-Resident Chesapeake Bay and Coastal Sport Fishing License</b> .....	\$22.50
<b>Non-Resident 7-Day Chesapeake Bay and Coastal Sport Fishing License</b> ...	\$12
<b>Chesapeake Bay and Coastal Sport Boat License</b> .....	\$50
<b>Non-Resident Chesapeake Bay and Coastal Sport Boat License</b> .....	\$100

1. **Passengers onboard licensed boats do not need a license. However, they must have a free Maryland Saltwater Angler Registration (see below).**
2. An individual Chesapeake Bay and Coastal Sport Fishing License and a complimentary individual crabbing license are included for the person who purchases this license.

**Maryland Saltwater Angler Registration** .....

Free  
Unless individually licensed, an annual registration is required for:

1. Passengers on boats with Chesapeake Bay and Coastal Sport Boat Licenses.
2. Anglers fishing in designated License Free Fishing Areas.
3. Waterfront property owners and family fishing on private property.
4. Anglers in possession of a Virginia saltwater recreational fishing license or on a Virginia-licensed boat.

## Penalties

The department may suspend an individual's fishing license or privilege if that individual is convicted of, or pays a fine for, violating certain fishing rules. A full copy of suspendable fishing violations can be found in the Code of Maryland Regulations 08.02.13.05. To view this regulation, visit [dsd.maryland.gov/regulations/Pages/default.aspx](http://dsd.maryland.gov/regulations/Pages/default.aspx). Individuals who are suspended for violating fishing rules in Maryland may also be suspended in other states under the Interstate Wildlife Violator Compact.

## License Exemptions

### Statewide Sport Fishing License Exemptions

You may fish for finfish without a license if:

- You are under 16 years of age.
- You are a resident of Maryland, on active duty with Armed Forces, on leave with official orders.
- You fish on a free fishing day—the first two Saturdays in June and July 4.
- You fish in an area designated by Department of Natural Resources as a license free fishing area, and you have obtained a Maryland Saltwater Angler Registration (if required in that area). A list of license free fishing areas is available on page 13.

### Nontidal Sport Fishing License Exemptions

You may fish for finfish without a license in Maryland's nontidal waters if you are an owner or tenant, their spouse, child or the spouse of their child residing on the property and fishing from the property's riparian shoreline. Anglers should confirm riparian ownership before fishing, as some impoundments and waterways are surrounded by

buffers. In these areas, there are no riparian shoreline owners and fishing licenses are required. Anglers with riparian shorelines must comply with all fishing rules.

### Trout Stamp Exemptions

A trout stamp is not required for possession of trout taken from privately owned lakes and ponds or licensed fee fishing lakes and ponds.

### Tidal Sport Fishing License Exemptions

You may fish for finfish without a license in Maryland's tidal waters if:

- You possess a valid commercial fishing license.

- You are fishing from a licensed charter boat or licensed commercial fishing pier.
- You are fishing from a boat displaying a Chesapeake Bay and Coastal Sport Fishing Boat License and you have a Maryland Saltwater Angler Registration, unless otherwise exempt.
- You are an owner or tenant, their spouse, child or the spouse of their child residing on the property and fishing from the property's shoreline.
- Anglers should confirm riparian ownership before fishing. Anglers with riparian shorelines must comply with all fishing rules.

**Contact Fishing and Boating Services at [customerservice.dnr@maryland.gov](mailto:customerservice.dnr@maryland.gov) or 1-877-620-8DNR (8367) for license exemption information concerning:**

- An individual who attends, resides, or is under treatment by a state approved mental health facility
- A nonprofit organization that works with individuals with physical or mental disabilities
- A governmental entity or nonprofit organization that works with individuals with physical or mental disabilities who are serving or have served in the armed forces; special needs individuals; or residents who are underserved with respect to fishing opportunities
- The primary caregiver or the representative for any of the above categories

# 11th Kids Catch-All

Every Angler Receives an Award

## June 27 - 28, 2026



**Indian River Marina  
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# RECIPROCAL LICENSES

## Virginia

- A resident of Virginia possessing a valid Virginia nontidal fishing license issued in that resident's name may fish in nontidal waters of the mainstem of the Potomac River opposite the shore of Virginia.
- A resident of Maryland possessing a valid Maryland Nontidal Sport Fishing License issued in that person's name can fish from the Virginia banks of the Potomac River opposite the shore of Maryland without a Virginia fishing license.
- Any holder of a valid Virginia saltwater fishing license may fish in Maryland tidal waters, regardless of residency, so long as they have obtained a Maryland Saltwater Angler Registration.
- Any holder of a valid Maryland Chesapeake Bay and Coastal Sport Fishing License may fish in Virginia tidal saltwater, regardless of residency, so long as they have obtained a Virginia Saltwater Angler Registration.

## West Virginia

- A resident of West Virginia possessing a valid West Virginia fishing license

issued in that resident's name may fish in nontidal waters of the Potomac River (mainstem only) opposite the shore of West Virginia, either from a boat or either shore, including the North Branch of the Potomac River and the Jennings Randolph Reservoir (opposite the shore of West Virginia).

- A resident of Maryland possessing a valid Maryland Nontidal Sport Fishing License issued in that resident's name may fish the West Virginia banks of the Potomac River, including the North Branch of the Potomac River and the Jennings Randolph Reservoir, without a West Virginia fishing license.

## Pennsylvania

- A resident of Pennsylvania possessing a valid Pennsylvania fishing license issued in that resident's name may fish in the portions of the Conowingo and Youghiogeny reservoirs lying within the boundaries of Maryland without a Maryland fishing license.
- A resident of Maryland possessing a valid Maryland Nontidal Sport Fishing License

issued in that resident's name may fish on the portions of the Conowingo and Youghiogeny reservoirs lying within the boundaries of Pennsylvania without a Pennsylvania fishing license.

- Reciprocal fishing privileges extend from waters' edge to waters' edge. It does not include tributaries or fishing from shore.
- The Conowingo Reservoir extends from the Conowingo Dam in Maryland to Holtwood Dam in Pennsylvania. The Youghiogeny Reservoir extends from the red posts on the Youghiogeny River in Maryland downstream to Youghiogeny Dam in Pennsylvania.

## Potomac River

- A Potomac River Fisheries Commission recreational fishing license holder may fish any portion of the tidal waters of Maryland.
- A valid Maryland Chesapeake Bay and Coastal Sport Fishing License holder may fish any portion of the Potomac River mainstem downstream of the I-95 /I-495 Woodrow Wilson Bridge.

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# RECREATIONAL CRABBING LICENSES AND CRAB POT REGISTRATION

## Licenses and Fees

**Crabbing licenses and registrations are valid for 365 days from the date of purchase/registration.**

Maryland Resident.....	\$5
Non-Resident.....	\$10
Maryland Resident who possesses a Chesapeake Bay and Coastal Sport Fishing License or a Resident Senior Consolidated Sport Fishing License .....	\$2
Recreational Crabbing Boat License*.....	\$15
Waterfront Property Crab Pot Registration .....	Free

## \*Recreational Crabbing Boat License

A person that purchases a recreational crabbing boat license receives a decal that must be attached to their boat. When the decal is attached to the boat the individuals on the boat do not need to be licensed to catch crabs. The decal allows the use of gear (trotlines and collapsible traps or net rings) that would otherwise require a separate recreational crabbing license. The decal is equivalent to one recreational crabbing license. See the licensed boat limits on page 40.

The person who purchases the boat license is issued an individual crabbing license that can be used when the individual is not on their boat.

## Who Needs A Maryland Recreational Crabbing License?

Anyone who uses the following gear:

- Eel pots for bait
- Seines
- Trotline

Anyone age 16 and older who uses the following gear:

- Collapsible crab traps
- Net rings

Additionally, anyone who uses legal gear to catch more than the following quantity of crabs:

- More than 24 with a limit of one bushel of male hard crabs
- More than 12 with a limit of 24 soft crabs or male peelers

## Crabbing License Exemptions

You do not need a license if you are using the following gear:

- Handlines
- Dip nets
- Collapsible crab traps (if under the age of 16)
- Net rings (if under the age of 16)

If you are crabbing without a license using license-exempt gear, you are still limited to the unlicensed crabber limits of no more than 24 male hard crabs and no more than 12 soft crabs or male peeler crabs.

You also do not need a license if you are:

- Assisting another individual who has a recreational crabbing license
- Crabbing from a boat that is displaying a recreational crabbing boat decal

## Waterfront Property Crab Pot Registration - Annual

An owner, lessee, or tenant of a private shoreline property may use a maximum of two crab pots, regardless of the number of owners or lessees of the property, and must annually register with the department. The registration is free and it does NOT count as a recreational crabbing license.

A license is not needed to use properly registered crab pots; however, you are limited to the unlicensed crabber limits. See pages 40 and 42 for details.

Private property crab pots set in the Atlantic Ocean, coastal bays and their tributaries do NOT need to be registered, but must be marked with the owner's name and address.

See page 40 and 42 for crab catch limits.

A recreational crabbing license is not required to catch crabs in the Atlantic Ocean, coastal bays, and their tributaries.

## LICENSE FREE FISHING AREAS

Maryland features many areas where recreational anglers can fish year-round without a fishing license. When fishing in these areas you are exempt from all license and stamp fees and requirements. You are required to observe all other fishing rules. A free MD/PRFC angler registration is also required for anglers fishing without a license in designated license free fishing areas located in tidal water. You may register online through the Maryland licensing system.

<b>ANNE ARUNDEL COUNTY</b>	• Annapolis—MD Route 450 old bridge at the Severn River.
<b>BALTIMORE CITY</b>	• Canton Recreational Pier at Boston Street • Middle Branch Park from fishing pier south of the Hanover-Pottee Street Bridges, to Hanover Street Bridge over Middle Branch. Directions: Route 2 to Middle Branch Park • Canton Waterfront Park
<b>BALTIMORE COUNTY</b>	• Cox's Point on Back River and Deep Creek. Directions: Eastern Blvd. (Rt. 150) to Riverside Drive south.
<b>CAROLINE COUNTY</b>	• Denton—Pier associated with G. Daniel Crouse Memorial Park on the east side of Choptank River north of MD Route 404 Bridge. • Federalsburg Municipal Park • Greensboro Waterfront Park — Upstream of the Sunset Avenue bridge within park boundaries on the Choptank River.
<b>CECIL COUNTY</b>	• Charlestown—Town-owned stone wharf on the Northeast River near the corner of Conestoga and Water Streets and the historic site of Charlestown Wharf. • North East—North East Community Park at mouth of North East Creek. • Perryville Ice House Park—Within the park boundaries of Ice House Park downstream of the Route 40 bridge on the Susquehanna River.

## LICENSE FREE FISHING AREAS

<b>CHARLES COUNTY</b>	• Friendship Landing—County-owned pier and property adjacent to the pier off Friendship Landing Road southeast of Ironsides Riverside Road (Rt. 425) on Nanjemoy Creek.
<b>DORCHESTER COUNTY</b>	• Cambridge—Long Wharf from south end of city-owned bulkhead associated with the Municipal Yacht Basin within Cambridge Creek to the end of east breakwater at mouth of the Municipal Yacht Basin.
<b>FREDERICK COUNTY</b>	• Gambrill State Park—Banks of the one acre pond located within Gambrill State Park boundaries, near the Park's campground. (Angler registration not required at this location.)
<b>HARFORD COUNTY</b>	• Havre de Grace—Tydings Memorial Park within designated area, and pier at the end of Congress Street.
<b>KENT COUNTY</b>	• Chestertown—MD Route 213 Bridge over Chester River.
<b>SOMERSET COUNTY</b>	• Crisfield City Dock—City dock/depot area at the end of West Main Street. • Janes Island State Park—Bulkhead area on Daugherty Creek within the boundaries of Janes Island State Park.
<b>WICOMICO COUNTY</b>	• Sharptown—Pier and town dock off Ferry Street on the Nanticoke River. • Salisbury—Designated city-owned bulkhead on the Wicomico River between Mill Street and Division Street. • Tyaskin Park—County-owned park on Wetipquin Creek west of Rt. 349 at Tyaskin.
<b>WORCESTER COUNTY</b>	• Pocomoke City—City docks from Laurel Street boat ramp to US Route 13 overpass and Winter Quarter dock on Pocomoke River. • Snow Hill—All city-owned riverfront property which includes Byrd Park, Sturgis Park, and city bulkheading adjacent to the municipal parking lot near the Route 12 bridge over the Pocomoke River. • Ocean City—Northside Park—Town-owned pier and park at 125th Street. • Ocean City—Chicago Avenue—Bulkhead between 2nd and 4th Streets.

## General Definitions and Abbreviations



### ARTIFICIAL FLY

A lure constructed by winding natural or synthetic material such as feathers, fur, hair, tinsel, thread, fiber, wire, plastic, cork, or rubber on or around the hook, and designed to be cast by means of a fly rod.



### ARTIFICIAL LURE

The following are considered artificial lures: spinners, spoons, plugs and molded facsimiles of worms, insects and fish. For the purposes of these regulations, artificial flies and streamers are considered to be artificial lures.

### BAIT

Any item that emits an odor or scent such as worms, minnows, crayfish, insects, and food items. The addition of any scent to an artificial lure or fly to make it smell like bait, makes it bait.

### BLACK BASS

Refers to both largemouth and smallmouth bass.

### CATCH

To take, kill, trap, gather, harvest or in any manner reduce any fish to personal possession.

### CHUMMING (INCLUDES CHUNKING)

Placing fish, parts of fish, or other natural or manmade attractants upon which fish might feed, in the water, not attached to a hook, for the purpose of attracting fish to a particular area so that they might be caught.

### CIRCLE HOOK

A non-offset hook with the point turned perpendicularly back to the shank. Circle hooks used in bait fisheries should be non-offset. That is, if the hook is laid on a flat surface, all parts of the hook lie flat on the surface.

### CULL

After being in possession of a fish, to discard or exchange that fish to possess another fish of the same species.

### DAILY CREEL

The number of fish that an angler can keep after a single day of fishing.

### EEZ

The U.S. Exclusive Economic Zone is where the U.S. federal government has jurisdiction over natural resources. It begins at 3 nautical miles and extends to 200 nautical miles from the Maryland coast.

### IN AGGREGATE

A catch of related fish species counted together.

### LIVE-LINING

Using a live finfish on a hook for the purpose of catching other fish with hook and line, rod and reel, or handlines.

### POSSESSION

Any condition where a fish is controlled with the angler's intent of ownership. Possession limit is the maximum number of fish that an angler may have in their possession after two or more days of fishing.

### STINGER HOOK

A hook which trails another hook or hook unit, either by direct physical attachment to the lead hook or hook unit, or by a connective device such as a line, swivel or chain, and is part of the same bait or lure.

### TROLLING

The method of angling during which fish are attracted to a lure or bait being trailed from a boat which is moving forward or backward by mechanical, manual or wind power.

Illustrations by Kevin Ensor, MD DNR

Scan here for more definitions and images of various fishing rigs and types of lures.



## Basic Catch and Release Fish Handling Tips

### HANDLING

- Don't hold the fish out of the water for more than 30 seconds
- Wet hands and hold fish by lip with one hand and support its body with the other hand
- Hold fish over water in case it is dropped
- For videos about safe handling, care and proper catch and release techniques visit [dnr.maryland.gov/fisheries/pages/bass/videos.aspx](http://dnr.maryland.gov/fisheries/pages/bass/videos.aspx)

### DE-HOOKING

- When removing the hook, use a soft rubber or small-mesh nylon landing net to hold fish, or firmly hold the fish with a wet rag or glove.
- Use a non-offset circle hook when live-lining or chumming to reduce the potential for deep-hooking the fish

- Use barbless hooks with artificial bait. Barbs can be pinched down with pliers or filed off
- Always have pliers, a dehooker or hemostats handy for deeply hooked fish
- If the hook cannot be removed from a deep or gut hooked fish without causing bleeding to the fish, then leave the hook in and cut the line as close to the mouth as possible

### RESUSCITATION

- Try reviving a fish that is not lively by opening its mouth and pulling it forward to force water over the gills
- **Additional information is available by scanning the QR Code.**

See page 45 for shark release recommendations.



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# SPORT FISHING REGULATIONS

## RECREATIONAL GEAR—NONTIDAL

These are the **ONLY** types of gear you may use in nontidal waters

GEAR	RULES AND EXCEPTIONS
<b>BAIT TRAPS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Must be marked with the individual's name and address or DNRid number</li> <li>• Must be checked daily</li> <li>• Unless attached to a boat that is not docked, must be set within 100 feet of the shore and either be attached to the property/private pier/dock or marked by a buoy or pole with a sign</li> <li>• If set on public property, must be set within 100 feet of the owner</li> <li>• If set on private property, must have permission of the landowner</li> <li>• May not be used in any trout management area</li> <li>• Only one may be used by each individual</li> </ul>
<b>HOOK AND LINE, ROD AND REEL AND HANDLINES</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individual must be actively in control of the gear</li> <li>• Snagging is not legal</li> <li>• May use up to 3 active lines at a time</li> <li>• May not use more than 2 hook units per line</li> <li>• When ice fishing, 5 tip ups or rods may be used</li> </ul>
<b>NETS</b> (general rules that apply to seines, dip nets and landing nets)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• May not bait nets</li> <li>• Except for landing nets, nets may not be used in any Trout Management Area</li> <li>• A non-resident may only use landing nets</li> </ul>
<b>SEINES</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Must have mesh no greater than ¼ inch</li> <li>• Must not exceed 6 feet in width and 4 feet in height</li> <li>• Must only be used to catch minnows and bait fish</li> <li>• May not be used within 50 feet of a dam or the mouth of any river or tributary</li> <li>• Must be emptied on shore</li> </ul>
<b>DIP NETS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• May only be used in areas of the Potomac River, Monocacy River and Conococheague Creek that lie within Allegany, Carroll, Frederick and Washington counties</li> <li>• May only be used to catch carp, catfish, Northern snakehead, or suckers</li> <li>• May not be used in any other area or to catch any other species</li> </ul>
<b>LANDING NETS</b>	May only be used to land a fish caught by other means
<b>BOW, GIG, SPEAR AND SPEAR GUN</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Must have a retrieval line attached except for gigs.</li> <li>• A gig must be propelled by hand and have only three prongs</li> <li>• May not use projectile gear in any trout management area, or state-controlled community ponds or lakes</li> <li>• May not be used within 100 yards of any human being, private or public swimming area, international diving flag, occupied duck blind, or vessel other than the vessel occupied by the individual using the projectile gear</li> <li>• The distance restrictions will not apply if the individual receives permission from the affected parties prior to using the projectile gear</li> <li>• May not be used to fish for any trout species, walleye, striped bass, striped bass hybrids, northern pike, muskellunge, or muskellunge hybrids including tiger musky, largemouth and smallmouth bass, snapping turtles and any threatened or endangered species</li> <li>• May not be used in any Fishery Management Area</li> </ul>
<b>HAND AND NOODLING</b>	No special rules

## Nontidal Sport Fishing

### It Is Illegal

1. To cut a hole through the ice measuring more than 10 inches in any direction for the purpose of ice fishing.
2. To take bait fish from Put-and-Take Fishing Areas or Special Trout Fisheries Management Areas.
3. In Deer and Swan creeks in Harford County:
  - For a person to catch or attempt to catch fish other than by hook and line, with line held in hand, attached to a pole or rod held in hand, or attended in a manner that the fish voluntarily takes bait or lure in its mouth.
  - For a person to possess or use minnows for bait while fishing.
  - For anyone to use a dip net baited by attaching an attractant to the net material or frame.
4. To remove the head and tail of trout or any fish that has a size limit while at the fishing location.
5. For a person to catch snapping turtles from nontidal waters of the state by hook and line, trotline, bow and arrow, net, seine, trap, fish pot, or other fishing rig, spear, gig or iron or any device capable of piercing any part of the turtle.
6. To operate any vehicle on any lands owned or controlled by the Maryland Department of Natural Resources without written permission from the department except on those roads, lanes or areas which are open to automobile traffic or which are specifically marked by the department.
7. To camp on lands owned and controlled by the department except on designated sites or with written permission.
8. To swim in any State-controlled lake except in designated areas.
9. In the Battie Mixon Fishing Hole:
  - To fish between one hour after sunset and one hour before sunrise.
  - To use boats propelled by gasoline or diesel power.
10. To fish any streams or nontidal waters that contain trout between the hours of 10 p.m. and 5:30 a.m. (This does not apply to nontidal impoundments of five acres or more.)
11. To cull trout.
12. Regarding crayfish in the Susquehanna River, Middle Potomac River, Monocacy River and Upper Potomac River basins, it is illegal to:
  - Catch or process any species of crayfish unless the head is immediately removed behind the eyes upon capture.
  - Use any species of crayfish as bait unless the head is removed behind the eyes.
  - Catch and possess a female crayfish with eggs attached to the underside of the abdomen.
13. To introduce/stock any aquatic species into any Maryland waterbody, except baitfish on a hook for the purpose of fishing, without first obtaining a pond stocking permit through the department.
14. To have in possession while fishing more than 1 quart of cut bait.

## RULES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE

Please check the Maryland Department of Natural Resources Fishing and Boating Services regulations page for possible changes at [dnr.maryland.gov/fisheries/pages/regulations/changes.aspx](https://dnr.maryland.gov/fisheries/pages/regulations/changes.aspx)



## RECREATIONAL GEAR—TIDAL

These are the **ONLY** types of gear you may use in tidal waters

GEAR	RULES AND EXCEPTIONS
<b>BAIT TRAPS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Must be marked with the individual's name and address or DNRid number</li> <li>• Must be checked daily</li> <li>• Unless attached to a boat that is not docked, must be set within 100 feet of the shore and either be attached to the property/private pier/dock or marked by a buoy or pole with a sign</li> <li>• If set on public property, must be set within 100 feet of the owner</li> <li>• If set on private property, must have permission of the landowner</li> <li>• Only one may be used by each individual</li> </ul>
<b>HOOK AND LINE, ROD AND REEL AND HANDLINES</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individual must be actively in control of the gear</li> <li>• Snagging is not legal</li> <li>• May not use more than two hook units per line</li> <li>• When chumming, anglers in the Chesapeake Bay or its tributaries must use a non-offset circle hook.</li> <li>• When live-lining, anglers in the Chesapeake Bay or its tributaries must use a non-offset circle hook unless they are using a minnow, or any other type of fish less than 4" in length, other than a spot or white perch, in which case they may use a non-offset circle hook or a J-hook.</li> <li>• March 1–December 31: Anglers in the Chesapeake Bay or its tidal tributaries must use non-offset circle hooks or J hooks when using fish, crabs or worms as bait or when using processed baits</li> <li>• When fishing for striped bass in any tidal waters and using fish, crabs, or worms as bait, or processed bait, anglers use a non-offset circle hook.</li> <li>• March 1–May 15: Anglers in the Chesapeake Bay or its tidal tributaries 1) must use barbless hooks while trolling and 2) may not use stinger hooks</li> </ul>
<b>JUGS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• May only be used in tidal tributaries of the Chesapeake Bay</li> <li>• May only be used from July 1–February 28</li> <li>• Must be attended between sunset and sunrise</li> <li>• May use up to 10 jugs with no more than 2 hooks per line and no more than one line per jug</li> <li>• Must be marked with the individual's DNRid number</li> <li>• May not be used to take largemouth bass, smallmouth bass, striped bass, all shark species, snapping turtles and any threatened or endangered species</li> </ul>
<b>NETS (general rules for allowable nets, including dip nets)</b>	May not bait nets Nets are prohibited in certain county waters at certain times of year. Call 410-260-8300 or 800-688-3467 for more information.
<b>CAST NETS</b>	Radius may not exceed 10 feet
<b>SEINES</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Must have mesh no greater than ¼ inch</li> <li>• Must not exceed 50 feet in width and 5 feet in height</li> <li>• Must only be used to catch minnows and bait fish</li> <li>• May not be used within 50 feet of a dam or the mouth of any river or tributary</li> <li>• May not be emptied from a boat or on the shore or in water less than 12 inches deep</li> </ul>
<b>LANDING NETS</b>	May only be used to land fish caught by other means
<b>BOW, GIG, SPEAR AND SPEAR GUN</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Must have a retrieval line attached, except for gigs</li> <li>• A gig must be propelled by hand and have only three prongs</li> <li>• May not be used within 100 yards of any human being, private or public swimming area, international diving flag, occupied duck blind, or vessel other than the vessel occupied by the individual using the projectile gear</li> <li>• The distance restrictions will not apply if the individual receives permission from the affected parties prior to using the projectile gear</li> <li>• May not be used to fish for any trout species, walleye, striped bass, striped bass hybrids, northern pike, muskellunge, or muskellunge hybrids including tiger musky, largemouth and smallmouth bass, snapping turtles, all shark species, lobster and any threatened or endangered species</li> </ul>
<b>HAND AND NOODLING</b>	No special rules

## Tidal Sport Fishing

### Chesapeake Bay and tributaries and Atlantic Ocean, coastal bays and tributaries

#### It is Legal

1. To keep any size white perch if caught by hook and line.
2. To use an umbrella rig that has no more than two hooks or two sets of hooks.
3. To catch and release alewife herring, American shad, blueback herring, hickory shad, and sharks.

#### It is Illegal

1. To have in one's possession aboard any boat on the tidal waters of Maryland any striped bass cut up or filleted at any time. Striped bass must be landed whole.
2. To have in one's possession aboard any boat on the tidal waters of Maryland more than 15 pounds of any fish for which a size or weight limit is prescribed by law or regulation in a condition that the size or weight of the fish cannot be determined.
3. To use Sabiki rigs or mackerel trees in Maryland. (Multiple hook rigs including Sabiki rigs and mackerel trees are allowed in the Exclusive Economic Zone of the Atlantic Ocean.)
4. To operate a boat within the area 400 yards below or 400 yards above the Conowingo Dam.
5. To use eels as bait while fishing with hook and line in the Chesapeake Bay and its tidal tributaries from Dec. 6–May 15 and Aug. 1–Aug. 31, inclusive.

Towns such as Ocean City may have special fishing ordinances. Be sure to check local jurisdictions' websites for restrictions.

## INFORMACIÓN IMPORTANTE EN ESPAÑOL



## STATEWIDE RESTRICTIONS

### IT IS ILLEGAL

- To buy, sell, or offer to buy any fish or crab harvested under a recreational license.
- To use waders or boots soled with felt or any natural or synthetic porous material capable of absorbing liquid.
- To disturb, take, destroy or possess the nest or eggs of a terrapin or snapping turtle.
- To use largemouth bass, smallmouth bass, striped bass (or hybrids), muskellunge, tiger muskellunge, walleye, northern pike, pickerel, brown trout, or brook trout as bait

## RULES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE

Please check the Maryland Department of Natural Resources Fishing and Boating Services regulations page for possible changes and for opportunities to provide comments at [dnr.maryland.gov/fisheries/pages/regulations/changes.aspx](http://dnr.maryland.gov/fisheries/pages/regulations/changes.aspx)



# SEASONS, MINIMUM SIZES, DAILY CREEL AND POSSESSION LIMITS

The following tables summarize rules governing the harvest and possession of fish species that anglers commonly catch in Maryland. This summary does not include all regulated species. Full information and updates are available at [dsd.maryland.gov/Pages/COMARHome.aspx](http://dsd.maryland.gov/Pages/COMARHome.aspx)

NONTIDAL

NONTIDAL					
SPECIES	MINIMUM SIZE LIMITS		OPEN SEASON	CREEL LIMIT	REMARKS
AMERICAN EEL	9 inches		Open Year Round	Daily—25 Possession—25	
BAITFISH (Including Madtoms)	None		Open Year Round	Daily—35 in aggregate Possession—35 in aggregate	
BASS (Largemouth and Smallmouth)	12 inches or as provided for by special regulations.		June 16—Last Day of February	Daily—5 in aggregate Possession—10 in aggregate	Catch and Release is permitted at all times. Cannot be used as bait.
CARP	None		Open Year Round	Daily—15 Possession—30	
CHAIN PICKEREL	14 inches		Open Year Round	Daily—5 Possession—10	Cannot be used as bait.
CHANNEL CATFISH	None		Open Year Round	Daily—5 Possession—10	
CRAPPIE	None		Open Year Round	Daily—15 Possession—30	
HERRING (Alewife and Blueback)			CLOSED		Catch and Release is permitted at all times.
MUSKELLUNGE AND TIGER MUSKIE	36 inches		Open Year Round	Daily—1 Possession—2	Cannot be used as bait.
NORTHERN PIKE	30 inches		Open Year Round	Daily—2 Possession—4	Cannot be used as bait.
SAUGEYE	15 inches		Open Year Round	Daily—5 Possession—10	
SHAD (American/White and Hickory)			CLOSED		Catch and Release is permitted at all times.
STRIPED BASS and HYBRID STRIPED BASS (lakes and ponds)	18 inches		Open Year Round	2 striped bass/hybrid striped bass per day, only one of which may be over 30 inches. Possession—4, only one of which may be over 30 inches	It is illegal to keep striped bass and hybrid striped bass caught in nontidal streams and rivers. Cannot be used as bait.
SUCKERS	None		Open Year Round	Daily—30 Possession—60	
SUNFISH, including Bluegills and Rock Bass (commonly known as Red Eye or Goggle-Eye)	None		Open Year Round	Daily—15 in aggregate Possession—30 in aggregate	
TROUT—statewide (all species of trout)	None		Open Year Round	Daily—2 in aggregate Possession—4 in aggregate	Different rules apply for Put-and-Take Areas and Special Trout Management Areas. See pages 22–26. Brown and Brook Trout cannot be used as bait.
WALLEYE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 15 inches year round, except in Potomac River and Deep Creek Lake</li> <li>• Potomac River minimum size is 15 inches year round, with a 20 inch maximum size from January 1–April 15 in the mainstem approximately 0.5 miles upriver from Chain Bridge to the spillway in Cumberland</li> <li>• Deep Creek Lake has a minimum size of 15 inches year round, with a protected slot between 18 inches and 21 inches. All fish in the slot must be released.</li> </ul>		Open year round— Except on Deep Creek Lake and the Youghiogheny River downstream of Route 42 bridge where it is closed from March 1 through April 15.	Daily—5 Possession—10	Cannot be used as bait.
WHITE PERCH	None		Open Year Round	None	
YELLOW PERCH	Nontidal rivers and streams	9 inches	Open Year Round	Daily—5 / Possession—10	The possession of yellow perch eggs requires prior authorization from the department.
	Nontidal lakes and ponds	None		Daily—10 / Possession—20	
ATLANTIC STURGEON, SHORTNOSE STURGEON, AND BIVALVES/SHELLFISH	CLOSED				

**Special Closures:**

1. Magothy River from the base of Lake Waterford Dam downstream for 3,300 feet is closed to all fishing during February, March and April.
2. Severn River and Severn Run from the Route 3 Bridge downstream for 2,400 feet during February, March and April.

Contact Information for Restricted Areas: **Baltimore City Reservoirs**—for Prettyboy and Liberty (boat permits required) information, rules, and regulations, call 410-795-6150. For Loch Raven call 410-887-7692. **Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission Lakes**—Triadelphia and Rocky Gorge fishing by permit only. For permits, rules and regulations call the information center at Brighton Dam 301-774-9124.

# SEASONS, MINIMUM SIZES, DAILY CREEL AND POSSESSION LIMITS

YOUGHIOGHENY RIVER LAKE (RESERVOIR)

## YOUGHIOGHENY RIVER LAKE (RESERVOIR)

SPECIES	MINIMUM SIZE LIMITS	SEASON	CREEL LIMIT	REMARKS
AMERICAN EEL	9 inches	Open Year Round	Daily—25	
AMERICAN SHAD	None	Open Year Round	Daily—3	
BAITFISH, FISH BAIT	None	Open Year Round	Daily—50 in aggregate	
BASS – Largemouth, Smallmouth and Spotted	15 inches	Jan. 1–April 10 and Nov. 1–Dec. 31	Daily—4 in aggregate	No Harvest (Catch and Release) all other dates; No tournaments during closure. Cannot be used as bait.
	12 inches	June 13–Oct. 31	Daily—6 in aggregate	
CRAYFISH	None	Open Year Round	Daily—50	Head must be immediately removed behind the eyes upon capture unless used as bait in the water from which taken.
GIZZARD SHAD	None	Open Year Round	Daily—50	
MUD BUGS (dragonfly nymphs)	None	Open Year Round	None	
MUSKELLUNGE AND TIGER MUSKIE	40 inches	Open Year Round	Daily—1 in aggregate	Cannot be used as bait.
NORTHERN PIKE	24 inches	Open Year Round	Daily—2	Cannot be used as bait.
PICKEREL	18 inches	Open Year Round	Daily—4	Cannot be used as bait.
RIVER HERRING	None	Open Year Round	Daily—50 in aggregate	
SAUGER	12 inches	Jan. 1–March 14 and May 2–Dec. 31	Daily—6	
STRIPED BASS AND HYBRID STRIPED BASS	20 inches	Open Year Round	Daily—2 in aggregate	Cannot be used as bait.
SUNFISH, YELLOW PERCH, WHITE PERCH, CRAPPIES, CATFISH, ROCK BASS, SUCKERS, CARP AND WHITE BASS	None	Open Year Round	Daily—50 in aggregate	
TROUT AND SALMON (all species)	7 inches	8 a.m. April 18–Sept. 7	Daily—5 in aggregate	No Harvest (Catch and Release) all other dates. Brown and Brook Trout cannot be used as bait.
		Jan. 1–Feb. 28 and Sept. 8–Dec. 31	Daily—3 in aggregate	
WALLEYE AND HYBRIDS	15 inches	Jan. 1–March 14 and May 2–Dec. 31	Daily—6 in aggregate	Cannot be used as bait.
PADDLEFISH, MUSSELS, CLAMS, AND THREATENED AND ENDANGERED SPECIES	CLOSED			

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# SEASONS, MINIMUM SIZES, DAILY CREEL AND POSSESSION LIMITS

## CHESAPEAKE BAY AND ITS TIDAL TRIBUTARIES

SPECIES	MINIMUM SIZE LIMITS	OPEN SEASON	CREEL LIMIT	REMARKS
AMERICAN EEL	9 inches	Jan. 1–Aug. 31, except open year round for spears and baited traps or pots	Daily—25	
ATLANTIC MENHADEN	None	Open Year Round	None	
BASS (Largemouth and Smallmouth)	15 inches March 1–June 15	Open Year Round	Daily—5 in aggregate	Cannot be used as bait.
	12 inches June 16 through last day in February			
BLACK DRUM	16 inches	Open Year Round	Daily—1, Boat Limit—6	
BLACK SEA BASS	13 inches (excluding tail filament)	May 15–Sept. 30 and Oct. 10–Dec. 31	Daily—15	
BLUEFISH	8 inches	Open Year Round	Shore or Private Boat: 5 per person, For-Hire Boat: 7 per person	
CATFISH	None	Open Year Round	None	
CHAIN PICKEREL (Pike)	14 inches	May 1–March 14	Daily—10	Cannot be used as bait.
COBIA	43 inches (total length)	June 15–Sept. 20	1 cobia per person per day; or up to 2 cobia per vessel per day if there are 2 or more individuals on the vessel	May catch-and-release Sept. 21–June 14
CROAKER (Hardhead)	9 inches	Open Year Round	Daily—25	
LONGNOSE GAR	None	Open Year Round	April 15–June 30: Daily—1 July 1–April 14: Daily—5	
CHESAPEAKE CHANNA (Northern Snakehead)	None	Open Year Round	None	Illegal to possess live.
RED DRUM (Channel Bass or Puppy Drum)	18–27 inches	Open Year Round	Daily—1	
<b>SHARKS</b>	<b>See Highly Migratory Species Section, page 44</b>			
SHEEPSHEAD	12 inches	Open Year Round	Daily—4	
SHRIMP (brown, white)	None	Open Year Round	None	Must use authorized gear.
SNAPPER SPECIES (includes many species, please see list)	None	Open Year Round	Daily—20 of any combination of species (No more than 10 of any single species)	Snapper species— <a href="http://dsd.maryland.gov/regulations/Pages/08.02.05.29.aspx">dsd.maryland.gov/regulations/Pages/08.02.05.29.aspx</a>
SPANISH MACKEREL	14 inches	Open Year Round	Daily—15	Must be landed with head and fins intact.
SPOT	None	Open Year Round	Daily—50	
SPOTTED SEATROUT	14 inches	Open Year Round	Daily—4	Cannot be used as bait.
STRIPED BASS	<b>See Chesapeake Bay Striped Bass Section, page 38</b>			
SUMMER FLOUNDER (Fluke)	Jan. 1–May 31: 16 inches	Open Year Round	Daily—4	
	June 1–Dec. 31: 17-1/2 inches			
TAUTOG	16 inches	July 1–May 15	January 1–May 15: Daily—4 July 1–October 31: Daily—2 November 1–December 31: Daily—4	May catch-and-release May 16–June 30
WALLEYE	15 inches	Open Year Round	Daily—5	Cannot be used as bait.
WEAKFISH	13 inches	Open Year Round	Daily—1	
WHITE PERCH	None if caught with hook and line; 8 inch minimum if caught with other gear	Open Year Round	None	
YELLOW PERCH	9 inches	Open Year Round	Daily—5	
ALEWIFE HERRING, AMERICAN SHAD, ATLANTIC STURGEON, BLUEBACK HERRING, HICKORY SHAD AND SHORTNOSE STURGEON	CLOSED			

### Areas Closed to Fishing—Feb, March and April:

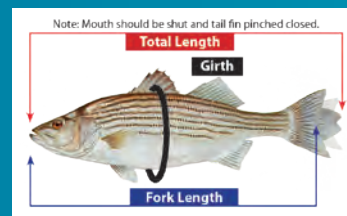
1. Magothy River from Lake Waterford dam downstream for 3,300 feet.
2. Severn River and Severn Run from the Route 3 Bridge downstream for 2,400 feet.

## HOW TO MEASURE A FISH

Size limits are generally based on the total length of a fish. The total length of a fish is the maximum length with the mouth closed and the tail pinched together measured from the snout to the tip of the tail. The best way to obtain this straight line measurement is to push the fish's snout against a vertical surface with the mouth closed and with the fish lying along a tape measure and then pinch the tail fin closed to determine the total length.

Fork length refers to the length from the snout of a fish to the end of the middle caudal fin rays. This is the measurement for determining the legal size of a shark.

The girth of a fish is best measured with a fabric ruler. Measuring the girth is helpful in trying to determine if you have a possible record fish, which is determined by total weight. By using the total length and girth of a fish in inches you can get a rough estimate of the weight in pounds with this formula:  $((\text{Girth in inches} \times \text{Girth in inches}) \times \text{Length in inches}) / 800 = \text{Approximate weight in pounds}$



Illustrations by Duane Raver

# SEASONS, MINIMUM SIZES, DAILY CREEL AND POSSESSION LIMITS

## ATLANTIC OCEAN, COASTAL BAYS AND TRIBUTARIES

SPECIES	MINIMUM SIZE LIMITS	OPEN SEASON	CREEL LIMIT	REMARKS
AMERICAN EEL	9 inches	January 1–August 31, except open year round for spears and baited traps or pots	Daily—25	
BLACK DRUM	16 inches	Open Year Round	Daily—1, Boat limit—6	
BLACK SEA BASS	13 inches (excluding tail filament)	May 15–Sept. 30 and Oct. 10–Dec. 31	Daily—15	
BLUEFISH	8 inches	Open Year Round	Shore or Private Boat: 5 per person, For-Hire Boat: 7 per person	
COBIA	43 inches (total length)	June 15–Sept. 20	1 cobia per person per day; or up to 2 cobia per vessel per day if there are 2 or more individuals on the vessel	May catch-and-release Sept. 21–June 14
CROAKER (Hardhead)	9 inches	Open Year Round	Daily—25	
DOLPHINFISH (Mahi-Mahi)*	None	Open Year Round	Daily—10, Boat limit—54	Only applies to federal waters.
GROUPER SPECIES	None	Open Year Round	Daily—1	Groupers species— <a href="http://dsd.maryland.gov/regulations/Pages/08.02.05.29.aspx">dsd.maryland.gov/regulations/Pages/08.02.05.29.aspx</a>
LOBSTER	3¾–5¼ inches carapace length	April 1–January 31	100/person/24 hour period or 500 for a 5-day or longer trip when using gear other than lobster traps	Must be landed whole. Spearing is prohibited. No egg-bearing females.
RED DRUM (Channel Bass or Puppy Drum)	18–27 inches	Open Year Round	Daily—1	
SCUP (Porgy)	9 inches	Open Year Round	Daily—30	
SHARKS	See Highly Migratory Species Section, page 44			
SHEEPSHEAD	12 inches	Open Year Round	Daily—4	
SHRIMP (brown, white)	None	Open Year Round	None	Must use authorized gear.
SNAPPER SPECIES (includes many species, please see list)	None	Open Year Round	Daily—20 of any combination of species (No more than 10 of any single species)	Snapper species— <a href="http://dsd.maryland.gov/regulations/Pages/08.02.05.29.aspx">dsd.maryland.gov/regulations/Pages/08.02.05.29.aspx</a>
SPANISH MACKEREL*	14 inches	Open Year Round	Daily—15	
SPOT	None	Open Year Round	Daily—50	
SPOTTED SEATROUT	14 inches	Open Year Round	Daily—4	
STRIPED BASS	See Atlantic Striped Bass Section—Page 39			
SUMMER FLOUNDER (Fluke)	Jan. 1–May 31: 16 inches	Open Year Round	Daily—4	
	June 1–Dec. 31: 17-1/2 inches			
TAUTOG	16 inches	July 1–May 15	January 1–May 15: Daily—4 July 1–October 31: Daily—2 November 1–December 31: Daily—4	May catch-and-release May 16–June 30
TILEFISH (Blueline, Golden, Sand)	Must follow federal limits and season, permit and reporting requirements— <a href="http://ecfr.gov/current/title-50/chapter-VI/part-648/subpart-N/section-648.296">ecfr.gov/current/title-50/chapter-VI/part-648/subpart-N/section-648.296</a>			
WAHOO*	None	Open Year Round	Daily—2	Only applies to federal waters.
WEAKFISH	13 inches	Open Year Round	Daily—1	
ALEWIFE HERRING, AMERICAN SHAD, ATLANTIC STURGEON, BLUEBACK HERRING, HICKORY SHAD AND SHORTNOSE STURGEON	CLOSED			

\* Atlantic Coastal Migratory Pelagic and Charter/Headboat Permits for Spanish and king mackerel as well as the Atlantic Charter/Headboat Dolphin/Wahoo For Hire Fishing Permit are available through the National Marine Fisheries Service, Southeast Regional Office, Permits Office.

## BETTER DATA, BETTER FISHING

When you share information about your saltwater fishing trip with a Maryland Department of Natural Resources field interviewer, you're playing a key role in supporting healthy and productive fisheries. Stationed at publicly accessible fishing sites, these specially trained DNR staff collect information used by NOAA Fisheries to estimate total recreational catch. As part of the survey, field interviewers measure and weigh harvested fish and ask about releases. A typical interview takes only about 5 minutes. Field interviewers play no role in enforcement, and have nothing to do with catch limits, rules, or regulations. Participating in the survey is one of the most important things anglers can do to help ensure sustainable fisheries today—and for generations to come.

### LEARN MORE. GO FISH.

[dnr.maryland.gov/fisheries/pages/apais/apais.aspx](http://dnr.maryland.gov/fisheries/pages/apais/apais.aspx)  
E-mail: [apais.dnr@maryland.gov](mailto:apais.dnr@maryland.gov)



Photo courtesy of Jo Knight

# PUT-AND-TAKE TROUT FISHING AREAS

The following restrictions apply to the areas listed:

- a) Creel limit (brook) – 0 Daily/0 Possession – all brook trout must be immediately released.
- b) Creel Limit (all other species of trout) combined 5 Daily/10 Possession.
- c) Minimum Size—no minimum size.
- d) Season—areas are closed to all fishing from 10 p.m. of the first date, to 6:30 a.m. of the second date, except as provided

for by special regulation or where more restrictive fishing hours are posted.

- e) On March 28, 2026, the start time in all Closure 1 areas is 6:30 a.m.

## 2026 Closure Schedule

- Closure 0 — No Closure.
- Closure 1 — March 8–March 28, 2026

**Youth Trout Fishing Day** (see page 26)

Angler Brooke Tomcho caught her first fish on 3/22/2025, the second inaugural Maryland Youth Fishing Day, in the Little Gunpowder River, a Golden Trout, while fishing with Dad

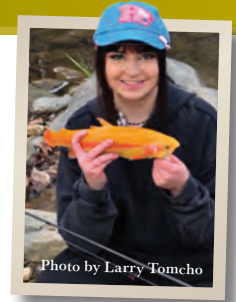


Photo by Larry Tomcho



Your purchase of fishing equipment and motorboat fuel supports boating access and Sport Fish Restoration.

## Areas Subject to Provisions of this Section:

### Allegany County

Battie Mixon Ponds.....	0
Cotton Cove Pond in Glendening Recreational Complex at Frostburg.....	1
Dans Mountain Pond.....	1
Evitts Creek—mainstem upstream of Interstate Route 68.....	1
Evitts Creek Ponds .....	0
Fifteen Mile Creek Watershed.....	1
Flintstone Creek Watershed .....	0
Georges Creek—mainstem from the upper boundary of Town Park in Westernport upstream to Neff Run .....	0
Jennings Run—mainstem downstream of the confluence of North Jennings Run.....	1
Lake Habeeb (Rocky Gap Lake).....	0
Lions Park Pond, Frostburg (area subject to user restrictions by the City of Frostburg)...	0
North Branch Potomac River mainstem— from Allegany County line downstream to the upper Potomac River Commission Wastewater Treatment Plant discharge in Westernport...	0
North Jennings Run Watershed.....	1
Orchard Pond .....	0
Sideling Hill Creek Watershed.....	0
White Sulfur Pond .....	0
Wills Creek—mainstem upstream of the US Army Corps of Engineers Flood Control Project at The Narrows above Cumberland ...	1

### Anne Arundel County

Severn Run—mainstem upstream of MD Route 3.....	1
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### Baltimore County and Baltimore City

Gunpowder Falls—mainstem from the red post located 1.6 miles downstream of Corbett Road downstream to the hiker/biker bridge located approximately one mile downstream of Phoenix Road; and from Cromwell Bridge downstream to the Interstate Rt. 95 bridge..	1
Gwynn Oak Park Pond.....	0
Gwynns Falls—mainstem below MD Route 140.....	0

Little Falls—mainstem from Wiseburg Road upstream to Valley Mill Road.....	1
Little Gunpowder Falls—mainstem from Jericho Road upstream to Route 165.....	1
Lost Lake .....	0
Patapsco River—mainstem from the B&O Viaduct upstream to Ilchester Road .....	1
Stansbury Park Pond .....	0

### Calvert County

Calvert Cliffs Pond.....	1
Hutchins Pond.....	1

### Caroline County

Tuckahoe Creek & Lake .....	0
-----------------------------	---

### Carroll County

Farm Museum Pond .....	1
Little Pipe Creek .....	0
South Branch Patapsco River—mainstem from West Friendship Road (Howard County side) and Main Street (Carroll County side) at Sykesville downstream to its confluence with the North Branch Patapsco River .....	1
Piney Run—mainstem downstream from Arrington Road.....	1
Piney Run Reservoir .....	0
Robert’s Mill Pond.....	0
Westminster Pond .....	0

### Cecil County

Big Elk Creek—mainstem from the bridge at MD Route 277 upstream to the Pennsylvania state line.....	1
Howards Pond.....	0
Principio Creek—mainstem upstream of MD Route 7.....	1

### Charles County

Hughesville Pond .....	1
Myrtle Grove Wildlife Management area— all ponds.....	0
Wheatley Lake .....	0

### Frederick County

Cunningham Falls Lake .....	0
Fishing Creek—mainstem upstream of Fishing Creek Reservoir including Steep Creek.....	1
Frank Bentz Pond.....	0
Friends Creek Watershed.....	1
Hamburg Pond.....	1
Middle Creek—mainstem from the MD Route 17 bridge near the junction of Bittle Road upstream to the confluence of Spruce Run..	1
Middletown Pond.....	0
Owens Creek—mainstem from Buck Lantz Road downstream to Roddy Road (catch and return only from June 1 through last day of February) .....	1
Rainbow Lake .....	1
Urbana Lake .....	0
Whiskey Springs Pond.....	1
Woodsboro Community Pond .....	0

### Garrett County

Accident Pond .....	1
Bear Creek—mainstem from the corner of Fish Hatchery Road and Rabbit Hollow Road downstream to the confluence with the Youghiogheny River at Friendsville....	1
Broadford Lake .....	0
Deep Creek Lake .....	0
Herrington Creek—mainstem.....	0
Herrington Lake .....	0
Jennings Randolph Lake .....	0
Little Youghiogheny River—mainstem from MD Route 219 downstream to the Youghiogheny River .....	0
Mill Run—mainstem downstream of uppermost bridge on Mill Run Road .....	1
Muddy Creek—mainstem.....	0
New Germany Lake.....	0
North Branch Potomac River mainstem— from Jennings Randolph Lake upstream approximately 6 miles to the lower boundary of Potomac State Forest; from the uppermost boundary of Potomac State Forest at	

## TROUT STOCKING LOCATIONS AND MAPS:

During the stocking season, updates are posted daily on the trout stocking web page, social media, and through the department's email subscription service. Anglers may also call 800-688-3467 to get a recorded update.



Photo by Ryan Cooper

## BROOK TROUT

Eastern brook trout are Maryland's only native trout and are a management and conservation priority for the department. Brook trout have strict habitat requirements and have been declining throughout the state primarily due to changing land use practices.



Wallman upstream approximately 8.5 miles to the bridge at Old Wilson Road; from the red post located approximately 100 yards above the upstream concrete abutments at Barnum, West Virginia, downstream to the red post located below a pool known as Blue Hole, approximately 1/3 mile upstream of Bench Mark 1110 on the Westernport United States Geological Survey Quadrangle, and from Piney Swamp Run downstream to the Allegany County line ..... 0  
 Piney Reservoir ..... 0  
 Savage Reservoir ..... 0  
 Savage River—mainstem from Savage Reservoir upstream to Poplar Lick ..... 1  
 Snowy Creek mainstem ..... 0  
 Youghiogheny River—mainstem upstream of the junction of Muddy Creek and from the upstream side of the MD Route 42 bridge downstream 0.4 miles to the confluence of Minnow Run, 50 yards downstream from Maple Street ..... 0

### Harford County

Deer Creek—mainstem from 1 mile south of Rocks State Park upstream to the bridge at MD Route 23 ..... 1  
 Bynum Pond ..... 0  
 Little Gunpowder Falls—mainstem from Jericho Road upstream to MD Route 165 ..... 1

### Howard County

Centennial Lake ..... 0  
 Lake Elkhorn ..... 0  
 Patuxent River—mainstem from base of Rocky Gorge Reservoir Dam in Laurel downstream to the Railroad crossing ..... 1  
 South Branch Patapsco River—mainstem from West Friendship Road (Howard County side) and Main Street (Carroll County side) at Sykesville downstream to its confluence with the North Branch Patapsco River ..... 1  
 Warfield Park Pond ..... 1

### Montgomery County

Great Seneca Creek—from MD Route 28 upstream to MD Route 355 ..... 1  
 Izaak Walton Pond ..... 0

Lake Needwood ..... 0  
 Martin Luther King, Jr. Park Pond ..... 1  
 Northwest Branch Watershed—upstream of MD Route 410 to Norwood Road ..... 0  
 Pine Lake ..... 1

### Prince George's County

Allen's Pond ..... 0  
 Cosca Lake ..... 0  
 Greenbelt Lake ..... 0  
 Lake Artemesia ..... 0  
 Laurel Lakes ..... 0  
 Melwood Pond ..... 0  
 Schoolhouse Pond ..... 0  
 Tucker Pond ..... 0

### Washington County

Antietam Creek—mainstem from upstream boundary of Devil's Backbone Park to the mouth of Beaver Creek ..... 0  
 Beaver Creek—from the upstream side of the bridge at the I-70 West on-ramp downstream to Black Rock Creek; and from the downstream side of the bridge at U.S. Route 40 downstream to the confluence with Antietam Creek ..... 1  
 Blairs Valley Lake ..... 0  
 Greenbrier Lake ..... 0  
 Indian Springs Pond ..... 0  
 Israel Creek ..... 0  
 Licking Creek Mainstem ..... 1  
 Sharpsburg Community Pond ..... 0

### Wicomico County

Beaverdam Creek—in Salisbury from Schumaker Dam downstream to the bridge crossing at Memorial Plaza Road ..... 0

### Worcester County

Shad Landing Pond ..... 0

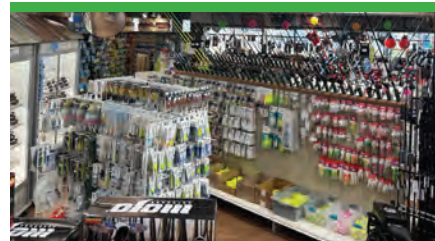
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# SPECIAL MANAGEMENT AREAS—TROUT

## Catch-and-Return Trout Fishing Areas—Limited to Artificial Fly Fishing

### Areas:

- Big Hunting Creek, Frederick County—all waters of Big Hunting Creek and its tributaries within Cunningham Falls State Park and Catoctin Mountain Park except Owens Creek, Little Hunting Creek, Cunningham Falls Lake and Frank Bentz Pond.
- Beaver Creek, Washington County—from the confluence with Black Rock Creek downstream to the downstream side of the U.S. Route 40 bridge.
- Patuxent River, Montgomery and Howard Counties—from red bank posts located on both sides of the river, approximately 400 yards below Brighton Dam downstream to Mink Hollow Road.

### Restrictions:

- You may not possess trout while fishing in these areas.
- All trout must be immediately released.
- You may only fish with artificial flies and streamers constructed in a normal fashion using natural and/or synthetic materials, which may include feathers, fur, hair, tinsel, thread, fiber, plastic, cork, wire and rubber on a single hook with the components wound on or around the hook. Specifically prohibited are the use of molded replicas of insects, earthworms, fish eggs, fish or any invertebrate or vertebrate either singly or in combination with other materials, or other lures commonly described as spinners, spoons, or plugs made of metal, plastic, wood, rubber or similar substance or a combination of these.
- You may only fish with conventional fly fishing tackle, fly rods, fly reels, and fly line. Any method of angling when the fly is cast directly from the reel is prohibited. The use of spinning, spincast, and casting reels is prohibited.
- You may not possess or use any natural bait, or live bait, or any device enhanced with a scent capable of catching fish.
- You may not fish with a barbed hook in these areas.

## Catch-and-Return Trout Fishing Areas—Limited to the Use of Artificial Lures

### Areas:

- Patuxent River, Howard and Montgomery counties—the mainstem of the Patuxent River from the crossing of MD Route 97 upstream to the crossing of MD Route 27 and Cabin Branch from its confluence with the Patuxent River upstream to Hipsley Mill Road.
- Morgan Run, Carroll County—from bridge on London Bridges Road upstream to bridge on MD Route 97.
- Paint Branch and tributaries, Montgomery County—upstream of Fairland Road.
- Gunpowder Falls, Baltimore County—mainstem from Prettyboy Reservoir Dam downstream to Bluemount Road.
- North Branch Potomac River—from an overhead cable and red bank post located approximately 345 yards below the Jennings Randolph Reservoir spillway downstream approximately one mile to a red post, located approximately 100 yards above the upstream concrete abutments at Barnum, West Virginia, and from a red post located below a pool known as Blue Hole, approximately 1/3 mile upstream of Bench Mark 1110 on the Westernport United States Geological Survey Quadrangle, downstream approximately 4 miles to the confluence of Piney Swamp Run.
- Youghiogheny River, Garrett County—mainstem beginning at the red post approximately 100 yards upstream of the Deep Creek Lake tailrace and extending downstream 4 miles to the Sang Run Bridge.
- Little Hunting Creek, Frederick County—mainstem from the red post located approximately 0.25 mile downstream of Route 806, upstream to include all waters of Little Hunting Creek within the boundaries of Cunningham Falls State Park.

### Restrictions:

- You may not possess trout while fishing in these areas.
- All trout must be immediately released.

- You may only fish with artificial lures, including artificial flies.
- You may not possess or use any natural bait, live bait or any device enhanced with scent capable of catching fish.
- You may not fish with a barbed hook in these areas.

## Catch-and-Return Trout Fishing Area—North Branch Potomac River

### Area:

- North Branch of the Potomac River from the Upper Potomac River Commission Wastewater Treatment Plant discharge at Westernport downstream to the Route 956 bridge at Pinto.

### Restrictions:

- You must immediately release any trout.
- You may not fish with a barbed hook in these areas.

## Catch-and-Return Trout Fishing Area—Savage River

### Area:

- Savage River mainstem and tributaries upstream of the Savage River Reservoir dam, excluding the put-and-take-areas

### Restrictions:

- You may not possess brook trout in this area.
- You must immediately release any brook trout.
- Creel Limit: All other trout species combined—2 Daily / 4 Possession.
- You may only fish with artificial flies and artificial lures.
- You may not possess or use natural or live bait, or any device enhanced with a scent capable of catching fish.
- You may not fish with a barbed hook in these areas.

## Catch-and-Return Trout Fishing Area—Waters East of Interstate 81

### Area:

- All nontidal waters east of Interstate 81.

### Restrictions:

- You may not possess brook trout in this area.
- You must immediately release any brook trout.

## PRIVATE PROPERTY RIGHTS

We urge anglers to respect property rights and seek permission before attempting to park, fish or enter private property. The privilege of fishing and right of entry to private property is at the owner's discretion. Respect for landowners and their property helps to ensure continued fishing access. Poor behavior encourages landowners to post their property to prevent access. Remember that every angler pays for the improper actions of a few. Always be courteous and respectful.

## Trophy Trout Fishing Areas—Limited to the Use of Artificial Lures and Flies

### Area:

- Savage River mainstem from the downstream side of the Rt. 135 Bridge upstream for a distance of approximately 2.7 miles to the lower suspension bridge (Allegheny Bridge).

### Restrictions:

- Creel Limit: All trout species combined—2 Daily / 4 Possession.
- Minimum Sizes:
  - Brook trout—12 inches
  - Brown trout—18 inches
  - All other trout species—no minimum size
- You may not possess any trout smaller than the minimum size limit.
- You may only fish with artificial lures, including artificial flies.
- Treble hooks are prohibited.
- Each artificial lure is restricted to a single hook with a single hook point.
- You may not possess or use any natural bait, live bait or any device enhanced with a scent capable of catching fish.

## Trophy Trout Fishing Areas—Limited to Use of Artificial Flies

### Area:

- Savage River mainstem from the Savage River Reservoir Dam downstream to the lower suspension bridge (Allegheny Bridge).

### Restrictions:

- Creel Limit: All trout species combined—2 Daily / 4 Possession.
- Minimum Sizes:
  - Brook trout—12 inches
  - Brown trout—18 inches
  - All other trout species—no minimum size
- You may not possess any trout smaller than the minimum size limit.
- You may only fish with artificial flies and streamers.
- You may only fish with conventional fly fishing tackle (fly rods, fly reels, and fly line. Any method of angling when the fly is cast directly from the reel is prohibited.
- The use of spinning, spincast, and casting reels is prohibited.
- You may not possess or use any natural bait, live bait, or any device enhanced with a scent capable of catching fish.

## Delayed Harvest Trout Fishing Areas

### Group I Areas:

- Catoclin and Little Catoclin Creek, Frederick County—from US Route 40 near its intersection with MD Route 17 within Doubs Meadow Park downstream to the lower park boundary near Myersville.
- Catoclin Creek, Frederick County—from the southernmost boundary of Catoclin Creek Park upstream to 200 feet north of the Sumantown Road Bridge.
- Middle Patuxent River, Howard County—from US Route 29 downstream to Murray Hill Road.
- Town Creek mainstem, Allegany County—within Green Ridge State Forest, from a red post located approximately  $\frac{3}{4}$  mile downstream of the upper ford on Lower Town Creek Road, just south of the Wagner Road intersection, downstream to the red post located just upstream of the lower ford on Lower Town Creek Road (Mallory Place), and from a red post located approximately  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile downstream of Manifold Road to a red post located approximately  $\frac{1}{4}$  miles downstream (Bull Ring Ranch).
- South Branch Patapsco River from West Friendship Rd (Howard County) and Main Street (Carroll County) upstream approximately 1.1 mile to the upper boundary of the Hugg Thomas Wildlife Management Area.

### Restrictions:

- From June 1–Sept. 30, Creel Limit (all species) combined—5 Daily / 10 Possession, with no tackle restrictions.
- From Oct. 1–May 31, you:
  - May not possess trout in these areas.
  - Must immediately release any trout to the water from which the trout was taken.
  - May not possess or use any natural bait, live bait, or any device enhanced with a scent capable of catching fish.
  - May not fish with a barbed hook in these areas.

### Group II Areas:

- Casselman River mainstem, Garrett County — from a boundary marked by two red posts on both stream banks located on the south side of the Interstate 68 eastbound bridge downstream to the Pennsylvania state line.
- North Branch Potomac River mainstem, Garrett County—from the lowermost boundary of the Potomac State Forest

near Lostland Run to the uppermost boundary of the Potomac State Forest at Wallman.

- Youghiogheny River mainstem, Garrett County—below Friendsville from a site located 50 yards downstream of Maple Street (at the confluence of Minnow Run) downstream 1.8 miles to the powerline crossing upstream of the Youghiogheny Reservoir.

### Restrictions:

- From June 16–Sept. 30, Creel Limit (all species) combined—5 Daily / 10 Possession, with no tackle restrictions.
- From Oct. 1–June 15, you:
  - May not possess trout in these areas.
  - Must immediately release any trout.
  - May not possess or use any natural bait, live bait, or any device enhanced with a scent capable of catching fish.
  - May not fish with a barbed hook in these areas.

## Put-and-Take/Catch-and-Return Trout Fishing Area

### Area:

- Owens Creek, Frederick County—mainstem from Buck Lantz Road downstream to Roddy Road.

### Restrictions:

- From March 1–May 31:
  - No bait, lure or tackle restrictions are in effect.
  - Put-and-Take Trout Area regulations apply.
- From June 1—the last day of February, you:
  - May not possess trout in these areas.
  - Must immediately release any trout.
  - May not possess or use any natural bait, live bait, or any device enhanced with a scent capable of catching fish.
  - May not fish with a barbed hook in these areas.

## Beaver Creek

### Area:

- Beaver Creek from Albert Powell State Fish Hatchery downstream to confluence with Antietam Creek.

### Restriction:

- You may not possess brown trout in this area.
- You must immediately release any brown trout.

# SPECIAL MANAGEMENT AREAS—ALL SPECIES

## Youth, Senior and Blind Angler Fishing Areas

### Areas:

- Laurel Run (Moscow), Allegany County.
- Pangborn Pond, Washington County.
- Rising Sun Pond, Cecil County—restrictions in effect from March 1 through May 15. On May 16, the area has no age restriction.
- Boonsboro Pond, Washington County—behind Boonsboro Free Library.

### Restrictions:

- Fishing is limited to anglers who are under 16 years old, 65 years and older, or blind.
- Put-and-Take Trout Fishing Area regulations apply in these areas.

## Youth and Blind Fishing Areas

### Areas:

- Carroll Creek, Frederick County—from the red post located 300 yards upstream of Baughmans Lane, downstream to the dam at College Avenue.
- George’s Creek, Allegany County—within Town Park in Westernport.
- Glades Park Pond, Garrett County—on Liberty Street in Oakland.
- Little Tonoloway Creek, Washington County—within Weidmeyer Park in Hancock.
- Little Antietam Creek, Washington County—at Keedysville, from Coffman Farms Road downstream to MD Route 34.
- Parkview Pond, Garrett County—off Hersberger Lane in Grantsville.

### Restrictions:

- Limited to anglers who are under 16 years old or blind.
- Put-and-Take Trout Fishing Area regulations apply in these areas.

## Impoundments Limited to Catch-and-Return Fishing

You may not possess any fish in these areas:

- Lake Hashawa, Carroll County.
- Upper John Owings Pond, Carroll County.
- Waterworks Park, Anne Arundel County—City of Annapolis.

## Fishing events near you!

Come enjoy Maryland's beautiful natural resources with friends and family at a fishing event near you! Check out our fishing event calendar!

### Hosting a fishing event?

Check out our fishing events webpage to apply for staff assistance!

**YOUR MARYLAND FISHING LICENSE HELPS PROTECT OUR NATURAL RESOURCES.**

**Get your license HERE**

**Fishing topics HERE**

*Angler Beatrix Lund | Photo by Lydia Cardwe*

A Maryland Fishing License is required for anyone age 16 or over.

## YOUTH-ONLY TROUT FISHING DAY

March 21, 2026 in all Closure 1 Areas  
**Times:** 6:30 a.m.–10 p.m.  
**Creel limit:** 2 trout per child younger than 16 years of age (no brook trout allowed)  
 Individuals 16 years of age or older may not fish in these areas on this day.

## TAKE A CHILD FISHING!

Angler Vivian Hall participated in our loaner rod program at the Patapsco Trailfest event on 9/14/2025. She caught two bluegills with her dad and couldn't wait to show DNR staff!

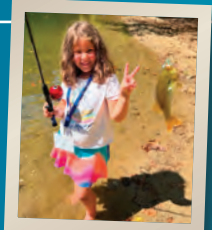


Photo by Ian Hall

- **My First Fish Certificate:** Recognize a child with a certificate for their first fish.
- **Youth Fishing Rodeos:** Events which enable and encourage kids to catch a fish.
- **Youth Angler's Log:** Share Your Catch!
- **Youth Fishing Club:** Membership is free and open to ages from 5 to 15. All members receive a newsletter and gifts for joining.

Learn more about these and other youth fishing programs at: [dnr.maryland.gov/fisheries/pages/youth/index.aspx](http://dnr.maryland.gov/fisheries/pages/youth/index.aspx).

## Find Maryland Fishing Spots

- Interactive
- Mobile
- Searchable
- Species Info
- Parking Info
- Boating Info
- Special Regulations
- Accessibility
- Amenities
- Tidal/Nontidal Dividing Lines

[mddnr.info/4b4AbXs](http://mddnr.info/4b4AbXs)

**More than 500 locations...and counting!**



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## Maryland Department of Natural Resources

Certificate Number  
**9786543**      Certification Date  
**08/31/11**

Birth Date  
**08/22/89**

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# LARGEMOUTH AND SMALLMOUTH BASS

## Largemouth Bass and Smallmouth Bass Slot Length Limit Areas

### Areas:

- Johnson Pond, Wicomico County.
- Leonard Mill Pond, Wicomico County.
- Little Seneca Lake, Montgomery County.
- St. Mary's Lake, St. Mary's County—located on MD Route 5.

### Restrictions:

- You may not possess more than five bass (largemouth and smallmouth bass combined) per day while fishing in these areas.
- No bass in possession can measure between 11 and 15 inches long.
- Only one bass in possession may be 15 inches or longer.

## Catch-and-Release Bass Fishing Areas

### Areas:

- Monocacy River—from the Potomac River upstream to Buckeystown Dam.
- Patapsco River—from Interstate 70 downstream to MD Route 144 (Frederick Road).
- Potomac River—from Dam No. 2 (Seneca Breaks) upstream to the mouth of the Monocacy River.

### Restrictions:

- You may not possess largemouth or smallmouth bass in these areas.
- You must immediately release any largemouth or smallmouth bass into the water where it was caught.

## Black Bass Conservation Fund

Maryland now allows anyone to donate any amount to support black bass conservation through MD OUTDOORS. All money will be used to support black bass conservation in Maryland.



## LARGEMOUTH AND SMALLMOUTH BASS TOURNAMENT PERMITS

A black bass tournament permit is required if all of the following conditions apply:

- The tournament has 10 or more boats participating.
- The tournament has a specific location where fish are weighed, measured, counted or otherwise entered.
- The tournament provides anglers an offer, reward or incentive for catching black bass.
- For a list of permitted tournaments and additional permit information, go to [dnr.maryland.gov/fisheries/pages/bass/ta.aspx](http://dnr.maryland.gov/fisheries/pages/bass/ta.aspx)
- The application deadline is either 15 days prior to the tournament if the contest will have 10–50 boats, or 30 days prior for tournaments with 50 or more boats.
- Directors are issued permits electronically within two weeks of their application.
- In 2025 there were several prominent boating accidents during bass tournaments; directors are encouraged to share local regulations and safety info found at the bottom of this page.

## TIPS FOR LIVE RELEASE TOURNAMENTS

- Use a big enough live well; one pound fish per gallon of water.
- Use a minimum 750 gal/hour pump.
- Use ice and water exchanges, and keep the live well water temperatures 5–7 degrees F below the river water temperature.
- Take extra care when fishing summer tournaments. Extreme heat can be a killer.
- Use continuous circulation and frequent water exchanges, and periodically lift the lids of live wells to expel carbon dioxide. This may require more of your attention during periods of rough water when bass experience increased stress.
- Act quickly if the live well stops working! Bucket in fresh water every 10 minutes, use a spare pump, move your fish to a working live well, or release them.
- Use an effective culling strategy that prevents tearing the lips or tissue of bass.
- Remove dead bass from live wells; do not discard harvested species at boat ramps or near parking lots. In many cases, harvested fish can be consumed or donated for consumption.
- Clean and remove algae or plant material from live well and intake systems.



Scan the QR code for info on how you can apply for conservation supplies from the department



Visit the Tidal Bass Program for information on bass fishing, permitting, and our survey results.

**Boating Safety and Vessel Requirements**  
**410-643-8502**






**BOATING INFORMATION**



**Boating Outreach**  
**410-260-8272**



## Regulations

A person aboard a vessel, raft or tube must wear a U.S. Coast Guard Approved Type I, II, III or V life jacket at all times while on the upper Potomac River and its tributaries, between November 15 and the following May 15. This regulation is in addition to class III, IV, V, and VI White Water Stream segment regulations, which require life jackets to be worn at all times.

## Class III rapids (hazardous)

Dam #3 to Knoxville Falls.

## Class IV rapids (significant hazard to life)

Great Falls (foot of falls) to Chain Bridge.

## Class VI rapids (extreme risk to life)

Great Falls area from the base of the aqueduct dam to a line from the foot of the main falls on the Virginia shoreline to the Maryland shoreline below Olmstead Island.

## Safety Tips

ALWAYS wear an approved life jacket while on the Potomac. Leave a float plan with someone at home describing where you are going, who

you're with and when you expect to return. Know the weather predictions for the area. REMEMBER the river currents are strong and unpredictable, especially after heavy rains. Wading should NOT be attempted when the river levels exceed the normal level.

## River Flow Information

- Conowingo Dam spill hotline—877-457-2525.
- Jennings Randolph Lake (North Branch Potomac) and Savage River Dam projected releases—410-962-7687 or [nab-wc.usace.army.mil/mapserver/index.html](mailto:nab-wc.usace.army.mil/mapserver/index.html).
- Potomac River flow at Hagerstown—301-223-6377.
- Susquehanna riverflow at Conowingo—888-457-4076.
- U.S. Geological Survey flow information for all Maryland waters—[md.water.usgs.gov](http://md.water.usgs.gov).
- Youghiogheny River white water release schedule—315-413-2823 or [deepcreekyhydro.com](http://deepcreekyhydro.com).
- C&O Canal—[nps.gov/choh/planyourvisit/conditions.htm](http://nps.gov/choh/planyourvisit/conditions.htm)
- Boating Speed Zones Map [experience.arcgis.com/experience/bad303cdcccf46fc9d4d7accbaa07e47](http://experience.arcgis.com/experience/bad303cdcccf46fc9d4d7accbaa07e47)

## Make Hunting & Fishing Dreams Come True!

*Hunt of a Lifetime* is a nonprofit organization that grants hunting and fishing dreams to children, age 21 and under, who have been diagnosed with life threatening illnesses.



If you are interested in helping a child live their dream, please contact us for more information.

Toll Free 814.572.4387 [HuntofaLifetime.org](http://HuntofaLifetime.org)

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# FISH IDENTIFICATION

For the most up-to-date Maryland Fishing Information—[dnr.maryland.gov/fisheries](http://dnr.maryland.gov/fisheries)

● Atlantic Coast ● Nontidal ● Chesapeake Bay

For information on more species of fish go to: [dnr.maryland.gov/fisheries/pages/fishfacts-index.aspx](http://dnr.maryland.gov/fisheries/pages/fishfacts-index.aspx)  
To learn more about some of Maryland's species of sharks go to page 45 of this guide. For Invasive Species identification go to page 36.



**American Eel** ● ● ●  
9" minimum, creel limit 25



**Brook Trout** ●  
No minimum size\*, creel limit 2\* (combined)  
FishMaryland Award Size 12"



**Fallfish** ●  
No minimum size or creel limit



**Atlantic Spadefish** ● ●  
See Snapper Species in table on page 20–21  
FishMaryland Award Size 24"



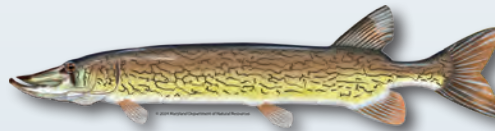
**Brown Trout** ●  
No minimum size\*, creel limit 2\* (combined)  
FishMaryland Award Size 21"



**Largemouth Bass** ● ●  
See tables pages 18–20  
FishMaryland Award Size 21"



**Black Crappie** ● ●  
No minimum size, nontidal creel limit 15  
FishMaryland Award Size 15"



**Chain Pickerel** ● ●  
14" minimum, creel limit 5 (nontidal); 10 (tidal)  
FishMaryland Award Size 24"



**Muskellunge** ●  
36" minimum, creel limit 1  
FishMaryland Award Size 40"



**Black Drum** ● ●  
16" minimum, creel limit 1  
FishMaryland Award Size 48"



**Channel Catfish** ● ●  
No size limits, nontidal creel limit—5; no tidal creel limit  
FishMaryland Award Size 30"



**Northern Pike** ●  
30" minimum, creel limit 2  
FishMaryland Award Size 38"



**Black Sea Bass** ● ●  
13" minimum (excluding tail filament),  
creel limit 15/person/day  
FishMaryland Award Size 20"



**Cobia** ● ●  
43 inches (total length) minimum,  
see tables on pages 20–21 for creel limit  
FishMaryland Award Size 44"



**Rainbow Trout** ●  
No minimum size\*, creel limit 2\* (combined)  
FishMaryland Award Size 20"



**Bluefish** ● ●  
8" minimum, Shore or Private Boat: Daily—5,  
For-Hire Boat: Daily—7, FishMaryland Award Size 34"



**Croaker (hardhead)** ● ●  
9" minimum, creel limit 25  
FishMaryland Award Size 18"



**Red Drum** ● ●  
**(channel bass, puppy drum)**  
18" minimum & 27" max slot limit, creel limit 1  
FishMaryland Award Size 36", Catch & Release Only

# FISH IDENTIFICATION

The "Species Award" is part of FishMaryland. To find out more go to page 46 or go to [dnr.maryland.gov/fisheries/Pages/FishMaryland/index.aspx](http://dnr.maryland.gov/fisheries/Pages/FishMaryland/index.aspx)



## Sheepshead ● ●

12" minimum, creel limit 4  
FishMaryland Award Size 24" in Chesapeake, 20" in Atlantic



## Summer Flounder (Fluke) ● ●

See tables pages 20–21  
FishMaryland Award Size 24"



## Smallmouth Bass ● ●

See tables pages 18–20  
FishMaryland Tidal & Nontidal Award Size 20"



## Tautog ● ●

See tables pages 20–21  
FishMaryland Award Size 24"



## Spanish Mackerel ● ●

14" minimum, creel limit 15  
FishMaryland Award Size 22"



## Walleye ● ●

See pages 18 and 20 for season and limits  
FishMaryland Award Size 26"



## Spot ● ●

No minimum size limit, creel limit 50  
FishMaryland Award Size 12"



## Weakfish ● ●

13" minimum, creel limit 1  
FishMaryland Award Size 24"



## Spotted Seatrout ● ●

14" minimum, creel limit 4  
FishMaryland Award Size 24"



## White Perch ● ● ●

No minimum size or creel limit if caught hook & line;  
8" minimum if caught with any other gear  
FishMaryland Award Size 13"



## Striped Bass (rockfish) ● ● ●

See striped bass section for season and limits.  
FishMaryland Award Size 40", Catch & Release Only



## Yellow Perch ● ●

See pages 18 and 20 for season and limits.  
FishMaryland Award Size 14"

\* except where otherwise indicated in nontidal limits

Fish illustrations by Duane Raver and Kevin Ensor, MD DNR

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# PUBLIC LAKES & PONDS

The use of boats or motors on ponds and lakes is subject to local restrictions. Consult with local authorities before making your trip.  
 \* Designates locations with boat ramp facilities.

ALLEGANY COUNTY		
PROPERTY	LOCATION	ACREAGE
BATTIE MIXON FISHING HOLE	MD Route 51 at Oldtown	33
COTTON COVE POND	Lion's Park Glendening Recreational Complex in Frostburg	1
DAN'S MOUNTAIN POND	MD Route 36 two miles east of Lonaconing	1
EVITTS CREEK COMMUNITY PONDS	I-68, Exit 46 four miles east of Cumberland	4
LIONS PARK POND	Frostburg (subject to user restrictions by the city of Frostburg)	1
ORCHARD POND	MD Route 51 Green Ridge State Forest	2
* ROCKY GAP LAKE (LAKE HABEEB)	I-68, Exit 50 five miles northwest of Flintstone	243
WHITE SULPHUR COMMUNITY POND	I-68, Exit 62 Green Ridge State Forest, 12 miles east of Flintstone	1

ANNE ARUNDEL COUNTY		
FRIENDSHIP PARK POND	Route 778, Friendship	1
FRIENDSHIP POND	MD Route 176	1
LAKE WATERFORD	Route 648 near Severna Park	11
PATUXENT PONDS	Patuxent Road near Conoways	3.2
WATERWORKS PARK	by permit only	1.5

BALTIMORE COUNTY		
AVALON POND (LOST LAKE) GLEN ARTNEY AREA	within Patapsco Valley State Park, entrance on South St. off MD Rt.1	1
GWYNBROOK COMMUNITY POND	off US Route 140 near Owings Mills	1.3
HILLCREST POND	MD Route 144 at Lansdowne	4
LAKE ROLAND	MD Route 139 Baltimore	98.2
* LIBERTY RESERVOIR	MD Route 26 near Ward's Chapel	3100
* LOCH RAVEN RESERVOIR	MD Route 146; Dulaney Valley Road	2400
* PRETTYBOY RESERVOIR	off MD Route 25 and US Route 111, Beckleysville Road	1500

CALVERT COUNTY		
PROPERTY	LOCATION	ACREAGE
CALVERT CLIFFS PARK POND	Route 4, near Lusby	1
HUTCHINS POND	off Mt. Harmony Road, off Route 2, near Sunderland	2.3

CAROLINE COUNTY		
CHAMBERS LAKE	MD Route 306 in Federalsburg	6
* SMITHVILLE LAKE	US Route 404 east to Noble Road	40

CARROLL COUNTY		
BENNETT CERF POND	off MD Route 27 within Random House Industrial Park	1
FARM MUSEUM POND	west of MD Route 32 near Westminster	4.7
LAKE HASHAWHA	off Rinehart Road	1
* LIBERTY RESERVOIR	Route 26 near Wards Chapel	3100
NORTH CARROLL COMMUNITY POND	MD Route 30 at Manchester	1.2
* PINEY RUN RESERVOIR	MD Route 32 near Eldersburg	300
ROBERT'S MILL POND	east of Taneytown north of Route 140	2
UPPER JOHN OWINGS	John Owings Road	0.5
WESTMINSTER COMMUNITY POND	US Route 140 at Westminster	1.3

CECIL COUNTY		
* CONOWINGO RESERVOIR	US Route 1 at Conowingo	4000
ELKTON COMMUNITY POND	MD Route 281 east of MD Route 213	1.3
RISING SUN COMMUNITY POND	MD Route 273 in Rising Sun	1

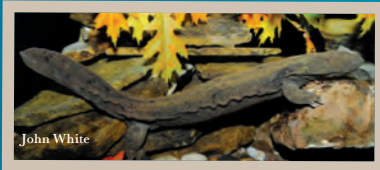
CHARLES COUNTY		
* GILBERT RUN PARK (WHEATLEY LAKE)	MD Route 6; east of Oliver's Shop	75
HUGHESVILLE COMMUNITY POND	MD Route 5 at Hughesville	1
* MYRTLE GROVE LAKE	MD Route 225 near Ripley	23

DORCHESTER COUNTY		
GALESTOWN LAKE	Galestown Road east of MD Route 313	15

FREDERICK COUNTY		
BRUNSWICK COMMUNITY POND	US Route 79 at Brunswick House Industrial Park	1
* CUNNINGHAM FALLS LAKE	MD Route 77 west of Thurmont	42
EMMITSBURG RESERVOIR (RAINBOW LAKE)	Hampton Valley Road near Emmitsburg—Town Permit Required	8
FRANK BENTZ MEMORIAL POND	MD Route 77 west of Thurmont	2
GAMBRILL COMMUNITY POND	US Route 40 near Frederick	1
LIBERTYTOWN COMMUNITY POND	MD Route 75 at Libertytown	1
URBANA COMMUNITY POND	Dixon Road off Route 80 at Urbana	5

## HELP SAVE MARYLAND'S ENDANGERED HELLBENDERS— PLEASE DO NOT KILL

The hellbender is a large, dark, aquatic salamander that can live for more than 30 years and grow to over two feet long. Hellbenders can bite, and their protective coating of slime makes them difficult to handle. If you catch a hellbender on your fishing line, cut the line as close to the hook as possible and let the animal go.



If you have seen or caught a hellbender, we would like to hear from you. Please call the department's Wildlife and Heritage Service at 410-260-8540.



The Maryland Lakes and Ponds Map gives you access to survey data for gamefish species across the state.

## GARRETT COUNTY

PROPERTY	LOCATION	ACREAGE
ACCIDENT COMMUNITY POND	US Route 219 Accident	1
* BROADFORD LAKE	MD Route 135 at Mt. Lake Park	230
* DEEP CREEK LAKE	US Route 219, McHenry	3900
* HERRINGTON MANOR LAKE	US Route 219 five miles north of Oakland	44
* NEW GERMANY LAKE	I-68, Exit 22 six miles south of Grantsville	10
PINEY RESERVOIR	US Route 40 Alt. north on Piney Run Road east of Grantsville	120
PLEASANT VALLEY LAKE	MD Route 495 twelve miles south of Grantsville	18
* JENNINGS RANDOLPH LAKE	MD Route 135 south on Mt. Zion Road five miles from Kitzmiller on West Virginia Route 46	952
* SAVAGE RESERVOIR	MD Route 135 on Savage River Road	350
* YOUGHIOGHENY RESERVOIR	MD Route 42 two miles north of Friendsville	800

## HARFORD COUNTY

BYNUM RUN COMMUNITY POND	MD Route 22 at Bel Air	1.1
* CONOWINGO RESERVOIR	Broad Creek Landing and Glen Cove Marina—Darlington, MD	4000
DUBLIN DELL COMMUNITY POND	MD Route 136 in Dublin	1
FOREST BRANCH PARK	Joppatowne, Foster Branch Road	1
FOREST HILL COMMUNITY POND	MD Route 23 at Forest Hill	1.3

## HOWARD COUNTY

* CENTENNIAL LAKE	Columbia	50
LAKE ELKHORN	Columbia	37
GUILFORD PARK POND	MD Route 32 off Interstate 95	0.5
LAKE KITTAMAQUINDI	Columbia	31
WILDE LAKE	Columbia	22

## KENT COUNTY

MILLINGTON WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT PONDS (4)	Massey Delaware Line Road, east of Massey—telephone 410-928-3650 for permission	3.7
SASSAFRAS NRMA POND	Kennedyville	2
* URIEVILLE COMMUNITY LAKE	MD Route 213 north of Chestertown	35

## MONTGOMERY COUNTY

CLOPPER LAKE	within Seneca State Park	90
* DUCKETT RESERVOIR	MD Route 198 and US Route 29 Burtonsville	800
KINGS COMMUNITY POND	US Route 355 and MD Route 121 Clarksburg	1
LAKE FRANK	MD Route 115 near Norbeck	54
LAKE NEEDWOOD	MD Route 115 near Norbeck	74
* LITTLE SENECA LAKE	near Boyds	505
MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. PARK POND	1120 Jackson Road, Silver Spring	5
PINE LAKE	MD Route 97 near Wheaton	5
* TRIADELPHIA RESERVOIR	off MD Route 650 near Brighton	800

## PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY

PROPERTY	LOCATION	ACREAGE
ALLENS POND	MD Route 197 near Bowie	10
BOWIE TOWN CENTER POND	off Mitchellville Road, Bowie	8
CEDARVILLE POND	off Cedarville Road in Cedarville State Forest	4
COSCA LAKE	Thrift Road south of Clinton	11
DUCK POND	US Route 193 and Adelphi Road in University Hills Park	1
GOVERNOR BRIDGE NATURAL AREA POND	Governor Bridge Rd, Bowie	8
GREENBELT LAKE	off Crescent Road in Greenbelt Park	21
LAKE ARTEMESIA	Branchville Road, Berwyn Heights	38
LAUREL LAKE	Route 1 and Cherry Lane, Laurel	11
MELWOOD COMMUNITY POND	MD Route 223, Woodyard Road between MD Routes 4 and 5	1.3
MERKLE PONDS	Merkle Wildlife Sanctuary, off Fenno Road	2
MILLTOWN LANDING POND	Patuxent River Park, off Milltown Landing Road	1
SCHOOLHOUSE POND	across from County Administration Building in Upper Marlboro	4
TUCKER POND	Tucker Road near Oxon Hill	1.4

## QUEEN ANNE'S COUNTY

EWING POND PARK	MD 18 Grasonville	3
TERRAPIN POND	MD 8 and Bateau Dr. Stevensville	4
* TUCKAHOE LAKE	Rt.404 east to Rt. 480 to Eveland Rd to Crouse Mill Rd.	43
* UNICORN LAKE	MD Route 313 south of Millington	45
WHITEMARSH PARK POND	MD 213 Centreville	3
* WYE MILLS COMMUNITY LAKE	MD Route 662 south of US Route 50	50

## ST. MARY'S COUNTY

* ST. MARY'S LAKE	MD Route 5, Calloway	250
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## WASHINGTON COUNTY

* BIG POOL	I-70, exit 12 MD Route 56 east of Fort Frederick State Park	88
* BLAIRS VALLEY LAKE	Blairs Valley Road north of Clear Spring	35
BROWNSVILLE COMMUNITY POND	MD Route 67 at Brownsville	1.2
* GREENBRIER LAKE	Greenbrier State Park, US Route 40 near Hagerstown	42
INDIAN SPRINGS COMMUNITY POND	Mooresville Road eight miles west of Clear Spring	1.3
LITTLE POOL	off MD Route 615 east of Hancock	18

## WICOMICO COUNTY

ALLEN POND	Allen Rd. Allen	10
COLBURN MILL POND	S. Division St. Salisbury	10
* JOHNSONS LAKE	Isabella Street at US Route 50 to Lake Street	108
* LEONARDS MILL LAKE	U.S Route 13 north of Salisbury	30
POWELLVILLE POND	MD Route 354 in Powellville	4
SHUMAKER LAKE	MD Route 12 in Salisbury	35

## WORCESTER COUNTY

NEWTOWN PARK POND	US 13 and US 113 Pocomoke City	7
SHAD LANDING STATE PARK POND	Within Shad Landing Area US 113. Snow Hill	1

Photo by Rob Purdy

# TIDAL / NONTIDAL DIVIDING LINES

The following boundaries are designated as dividing lines for tidal and nontidal waters. These boundary lines identify whether a nontidal fishing license or Chesapeake Bay and Coastal Sport Fishing license is required. If you are fishing upstream of the location listed, nontidal fishing regulations apply. If you are fishing downstream of the location listed, tidal regulations apply. An interactive map of these divisions is located on the "Maps" page at [dnr.maryland.gov/fisheries/pages/maps.aspx](http://dnr.maryland.gov/fisheries/pages/maps.aspx)

## Anne Arundel and Prince George's counties

- Anacostia River:
  - a) Northeast Branch Bridge at north-bound lane of Alternate Route 1 Bladensburg Road.
  - b) Northwest Branch Bridge at south-bound lane of Rhode Island Avenue.
- Furnace Branch—MD Route 2.
- Patuxent River:
  - a) Mainstem: bridge on MD Route 214.
  - b) Lyons Creek: MD Route 4.
  - c) Stocketts Run: confluence with the river.
  - d) Rock Run: confluence with the river.
  - e) Ferry Branch: confluence with the river.
- Magothy River—Catherine Avenue.
- Marley Creek—MD Route 10.
- Severn River—bridge on MD Route 3.
- South River and its tributaries:
  - a) North River: Rutland Road.
  - b) Bacon Ridge Branch: Chesterfield Road.
  - c) Beards Creek: MD Route 214.
  - d) Broad Creek: Harry S. Truman Parkway.

## Baltimore County

- Big Gunpowder Falls—three-fourths of a mile south of MD Route 7, the Old Philadelphia Road at the B&O Railroad Bridge.
- Little Gunpowder Falls—three-fourths of a mile south of MD Route 7, the Old Philadelphia Road at the B&O Railroad Bridge.
- Stansbury Park Pond—base of dam.
- Stemmers Run—Golden Ring Road Bridge.

## Baltimore and Howard counties

- Patapsco River—B&O viaduct at Relay.

## Calvert County

- Battle Creek—bridge about two miles east of Bowens (Sixes Road).
- Fishing Creek—one and one-half miles upstream from the mouth of the creek at Chesapeake Beach.
- Hall's Creek—bridge on MD Route 4.
- Hellen Creek—Mill Branch Road, near Solomons.
- Hunting Creek—bridge on MD Route 263 about 100 yards west of MD Route 4.
- Island Creek—Ross Road, near Brooms Island.

- Lyon's Creek—bridge on MD Route 4.
- Mills Creek—MD Route 760.
- Parkers Creek—MD Route 765.
- Plum Point Creek—bridge on MD Route 263.
- Quaker Swamp—MD Routes 2/4.
- St. Johns Creek—MD Route 4.
- St. Leonard's Creek—Parran Road.

## Caroline County

- Chapel Branch—MD Route 313 near Piney Grove Church.
- Choptank River—bypass on MD Route 313 on the outskirts of Greensboro.
- Fowling Creek—wooden bridge on Stratum Road about one mile below MD Route 16.
- Hunting Creek—MD Route 331.
- Marshyhope Creek—at its confluence with Faulkner Branch.
- Mill Creek—MD Route 16.
- Tuckahoe Creek—abandoned stone railroad bridge upstream of MD Route 404.
- Watt's Creek—bridge on American Legion Road.

## Cecil County

- Big Elk Creek—MD Route 213.
- Bohemia River—Telegraph Road.
- Happy Valley Branch—confluence with Susquehanna River.
- Little Elk Creek—US Route 40.
- Mill Creek—Old Elk Neck Road.
- North East River—MD Route 7.
- Octoraro Creek—bridge on US Route 222.
- Principio Creek—Amtrak crossing below MD Route 7.
- Rock Run—confluence with the Susquehanna River.

## Charles, Montgomery and Prince George's counties

- Henson Run—bridge on Old Broad Creek Road.
- Hoghole Run—MD Route 6.
- Mattawoman Creek—bridge on MD Route 225.
- Nanjemoy Creek and its tributaries:
  - a) Mainstem: MD Route 6.
  - b) Mill Run (Burgess Creek): MD Route 6.
  - c) Hill Top Fork: MD Route 6.
  - d) Wards Run: MD Route 6.
- Oxon Creek (Run)—MD Route 210.

- Patuxent River and its tributaries:
  - a) Swanson Creek: MD Route 381.
  - b) Mataponi Creek: St. Thomas Church Road.
  - c) Spice Creek: MD Route 382, Croom Road.
  - d) Full Mill Branch: MD Route 382, Croom Road.
  - e) Black Swamp Creek: MD Route 382, Croom Road.
- Piscataway Creek—bridge on MD Route 224 (Livingston Road).
- Pomonkey Creek—Fenwick Road.
- Port Tobacco Creek—bridge on MD Route 6.
- Potomac River—Little Falls at man-made dam.
- Western Branch—bridge on MD Route 4.
- Wicomico River—Allens Fresh, bridge on MD Route 234.

## Dorchester County

- Chicamicomico River—US Route 50.
- Transquaking River—dam at Higgins Mill Pond.

## Harford County

- Bynum Run—Old Philadelphia Road Bridge on MD Route 7.
- Deer Creek—railroad bridge located at the mouth of Deer Creek.
- Gray's Run—CSX Railroad crossing upstream of US Route 40.
- James Run—Old Philadelphia Road Bridge on MD Route 7.
- Swan Creek—bridge on Old Post Road.
- Winter's Run—dam located one half mile south of MD Route 7, the Old Philadelphia Road.

## Kent and Queen Anne's counties

- Chester River—500 yards upstream from the Pennsylvania Railroad Bridge at Millington at the point where the Cypress Branch empties into the Chester River.
- Herring Branch—MD Route 299.
- Morgan Creek—Wallis Road.
- Red Lion Branch—at its confluence with the Chester River.
- Sassafras River—MD Route 299.
- Unicorn Branch—U.S. Geological Survey weir just east of MD Route 313.
- Wye East River—Wye Mills Lake dam.

**St. Mary's County**

- Budds Creek—MD Route 234.
- Chaptico Run—Chaptico Bridge on MD Route 234.
- Dynard Run—MD Route 242.
- Eastern Branch—MD Route 5.
- Gilbert Swamp Run—MD Route 234.
- Great Mills Run—bridge on MD Route 5.
- McIntosh Run—MD Route 5.
- Park Hall Run—MD Route 5.
- St. Clements Creek—MD Route 234 bridge at town of Clements.
- Tomakokin Creek—MD Route 470.
- Town Run—bridge on MD Route 5.

**Susquehanna River**

- Conowingo Dam—at US Route 1.

**Wicomico and Worcester counties**

- Barren Creek—US Route 50 Bridge.
- Beaverdam Creek—dam just upstream of US Route 13 (Business).
- Nassawango Creek—Furnace Road.
- Pocomoke River—bridge on Whiton Crossing, three miles south of Powellville.
- Wicomico River—Isabella Street in Salisbury.

# MARYLAND

## VOLUNTEER ANGLER SURVEYS

**Surveys Include:**

- Striped Bass Survey
- Artificial Reef Program Survey
- Freshwater Multi-Species Survey
- Shad Survey
- Muskellunge Survey
- Blue Crab Survey
- Horseshoe Crab Spawning Survey



Photo courtesy of Charles Vinson

Angler "Spanky" Vinson



Here is your chance to directly help in fisheries management. Participation is easy, visit our website: [dnr.maryland.gov/Fisheries/Pages/survey/index.aspx](http://dnr.maryland.gov/Fisheries/Pages/survey/index.aspx)

# There's a Map for that!



Angler Asher Krampf  
Photo by Rebecca Krampf

- Striped bass regulations by season
- Public angler access
- Tidal/nontidal dividing lines
- Boat ramp access
- Trout stocking locations
- Charter boat locations
- Boating speed zones
- Survey catches for snakeheads and largemouth bass
- and many more!



[mddnr.info/4h2uPjK](http://mddnr.info/4h2uPjK)

## A Guide to Skin Wounds and Water Contact

*Vibrio* are bacteria that occur naturally in brackish and salt waters of the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries, especially when the water is warm. If *Vibrio* or other bacteria come into contact with an open wound they can cause serious infections, particularly for people with liver disease or a weakened immune system.

**Protect Yourself**

- If you have any cuts or scrapes, avoid warm Chesapeake Bay and tidal tributary waters.
- If water contact cannot be avoided, cover wounds with waterproof bandages.
- Clean any cut or a scrape immediately with soap and clean water or hand sanitizer then wash as soon as possible.
- Wear shoes and gloves to avoid cuts and scrapes.



**If you develop a wound with unusual redness, swelling or drainage, SEEK MEDICAL ATTENTION IMMEDIATELY and let your health care provider know whether you came in contact with brackish or salt water.**

**Check the Status of Your Favorite Beaches**



To always stay informed, download our new smartphone app or sign up for one of our text or email alerts. Data is available during Maryland's beach season, which runs from Memorial Day to Labor Day.

Be sure to avoid swimming near storm drains along the beach and within 48 hrs of a heavy rain event, or until the water clears.



410-537-3906  
toll-free 800-633-6101 ext. 3906



# INVASIVE SPECIES

The introduction of invasive and non-native species can cause irreversible changes in the food web. Several invasive species of concern are listed below. For information on other invasive and non-native species, and to see a list of species prohibited from transport, visit [dnr.maryland.gov/invasives](http://dnr.maryland.gov/invasives). To report the illegal transport or unauthorized introduction of invasive species, contact the Natural Resources Police—800-628-9944.

## Chesapeake Channa (Northern Snakehead)

It is against Maryland, Virginia, and federal laws to possess, import, or transport live northern snakehead (or Chesapeake Channa in Maryland).

If you catch a Chesapeake Channa and want to eat it, you must immediately kill the fish. Anglers are encouraged to catch and keep Chesapeake Channa year round. There is no minimum size or creel limit for Chesapeake Channa.

It is illegal to possess live Chesapeake Channa. This illegal act is punishable by a fine of up to \$2,500 per fish, up to \$25,000 per incident.

If you catch a Chesapeake Channa with a tag, please report the tag number and the location, date and time of day when the fish was caught to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service at 800-448-8322.



Illustration by Kevin Ensor, MD DNR  
© 2024 Maryland Department of Natural Resources



## Blue and Flathead Catfish

The Department of Natural Resources asks anglers to report blue catfish or flathead catfish with a picture using Maryland's Invasive Fish Tracker at [arcg.is/1KPjG90](http://arcg.is/1KPjG90)

Blue catfish and flathead catfish are invasive species that have spread rapidly throughout the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries. These catfish have few natural predators, eat a wide variety of native fish and shellfish, and may cause ecological harm.

It is illegal to release live catfish into a waterbody different than where it was caught. This illegal act is punishable by a fine of up to \$2,500 per fish, up to \$25,000 per incident. Anglers are encouraged to keep for food or other beneficial uses year round. There is no minimum size or creel limit for these catfish.

## FISH CONSUMPTION GUIDELINES

The information included in Maryland Department of the Environment consumption advisories is of particular importance for children and pregnant women because of the potential harmful effect of these contaminants on developing brains.

Fish are recommended as part of a healthy and balanced diet. Most fish are safe to eat, but some have levels of contaminants which may be harmful for regular subsistence fishers, pregnant women, and children.

The Maryland Department of the Environment monitors wild-caught fish and provides consumption advisories with recommended limits about how often certain fish should be eaten to minimize health risks. These advisories are intended for people who eat Maryland fish on a regular basis.

The Maryland Department of the Environment analyzes fish for two contaminants which can pose health risks and are known to accumulate in fish: PCBs and methylmercury.

To see fish consumption advisories and other information which will help you make the best choices about what fish you eat and how often to eat them, visit [mde.maryland.gov/programs/marylander/fishandshellfish/pages/fishconsumptionadvisory.aspx](http://mde.maryland.gov/programs/marylander/fishandshellfish/pages/fishconsumptionadvisory.aspx).



## HELP PROTECT OUR RESOURCES AND HARVEST AN INVASIVE SPECIES

If you are interested in selling the Chesapeake Channa, blue catfish, or flathead catfish you catch, there may be a license that will let you do that. There are licenses that allow you to use hook and line or archery equipment to harvest and sell Chesapeake Channa and finfish trotlines to harvest and sell blue and flathead catfish caught from tidal waters. For more information about these licenses, contact our Licensing and Registration Service at 410-260-3220.

## INVASIVE CATFISH IDENTIFICATION

Illustrations by Kevin Ensor, MD DNR



**Blue Catfish**

Anal fin squared with 30 to 36 fin rays



**Flathead Catfish**

Projecting lower jaw and a slightly notched tail

## NON-INVASIVE CATFISH IDENTIFICATION



**Channel Catfish**

Anal fin with rounded margin and deeply forked tail



**White Catfish**

Stocky body with large head, anal fin with rounded margin and moderately forked tail, white chin barbels.

## STATE RECORDS FOR INVASIVE SPECIES

- Catfish, Blue — 84.0 lbs., Ed Jones, 8/13/2012, Near Fort Washington, Potomac River
- Catfish, Flathead — 57.0 lbs., Joshua Dixon, 12/27/2020, Lapidum Boat Ramp, Susquehanna River
- Chesapeake Channa — 21.8 lbs., Matt Foreman, 6/07/2025, Susquehanna River



To view more state records visit [dnr.maryland.gov/fisheries/pages/state-records.aspx](http://dnr.maryland.gov/fisheries/pages/state-records.aspx) or go to page 47.



## Maryland's MOST UNWANTED

### PREVENT THE SPREAD OF HARMFUL SPECIES:

**REMOVE** and dispose of aquatic plants, mud, and debris from your boat, motor, trailer and gear before launching and after haul out.

**DRAIN** all water from live wells, bilge, bait buckets, coolers, and motor immediately after use.

**DISPOSE** of all unused bait far away from the water. Immediately remove the heads of crayfish in the Upper and Middle Potomac, Monocacy River and Susquehanna River Basin.

**RINSE** boat, motor, trailer, tackle and gear, including SCUBA gear with hot or high pressure water.

**DON'T STOCK** fish in any waters. The importation, introduction and transport of aquatic species without a permit is prohibited by law.

**DON'T TRANSFER** live fish from one area to another.

**DON'T RELEASE** aquarium fish into the wild.

### INVASIVE SPECIES TRACKER

You can help Maryland's Department of Natural Resources to track the invasive species in our waterways. Use this form to report and help prevent their spread.

<https://arcc.is/1KPjG90>



## BOWFISHING

### BOWFISHING AT NIGHT?

Please remember...

- Do not shine lights into homes
- Ask permission to shoot when within 100 yards of another person or vessel
- Obey noise ordinances

### LEGAL EQUIPMENT

- Compound Bow
- Recurve Bow
- Crossbow
- 3-pronged Gig

### DON'T SHOOT

- Largemouth Bass
- Smallmouth Bass
- Striped Bass
- Trout
- Walleye
- Northern Pike
- Muskellunge
- Snapping Turtles
- Sturgeon
- Hickory or American Shad
- River Herring
- Sharks

### LEGALLY HUNTED FISH INCLUDE

- Blue Catfish
- Channel Catfish
- Chesapeake Channa
- Common Carp
- Flathead Catfish
- Gizzard Shad
- Goldfish
- Longnose Gar\*
- Sunfish

### WITHOUT PERMISSION IT'S ILLEGAL TO SHOOT WITHIN 100 YARDS OF

- a human being
- an international diving flag
- an occupied duck blind
- another vessel
- a private or public swimming area

### MAKE SURE YOUR GEAR

#### HAS A RETRIEVAL LINE

(except a gig propelled by hand)



Photo by Jim Thompson, MD DNR

Angler: Nikki Harrison

\* 5 per person creel (July 1 - April 14); 1 per person creel (April 15 - June 30)

# STRIPED BASS

## It is Illegal:

- To possess any cut up or filleted striped bass at any time aboard any boat on the tidal waters of Maryland. Striped bass must be landed whole.
- To use more than two hooks or two sets of hooks for each rod or line. Artificial lures or plugs with multiple hooks are considered 1 set of hooks.
- To cull striped bass.
- To possess striped bass while fishing in the Chesapeake Bay or its tidal tributaries from midnight to 5 a.m.
- To remove a striped bass from the water with a gaff or a cast net.
- To take or shoot striped bass with a spear gun and spear in the tidal waters of the state.
- To fish for striped bass by any means or practice catch-and-release of striped bass in designated spawning areas from March 1–May 31.
- To intentionally snag a striped bass.
- To use striped bass as bait.

Striped bass may not be caught, harassed or possessed in the Exclusive Economic Zone, which stretches from 3–200 miles off the coast.

**STRIPED BASS REGULATIONS**



## CHESAPEAKE BAY AND TIDAL TRIBUTARIES (excluding the Susquehanna Flats, Lower Susquehanna River and Northeast River)

SEASON	FISHING LOCATIONS ALLOWED	CREEL AND SIZE LIMITS	RESTRICTIONS AND REMARKS
JAN. 1– FEB. 28	All areas open to catch and release fishing only.	No harvest.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Catch and release only.</li> <li>• Circle hook rules remain the same.</li> <li>• Eels may not be used as bait.</li> </ul>
MAR. 1–APR. 30	Chesapeake Bay downstream from a line between Abbey Point and Worton Point to the Virginia line including Tangier and Pocomoke Sounds.	No harvest.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Catch and release only.</li> <li>• Stinger (trailing) hooks are prohibited.</li> <li>• Barbless hooks are required when trolling.</li> <li>• No more than 6 lines may be employed while trolling.</li> <li>• Circle hook rules remain the same.</li> <li>• Spawning rivers and the Upper Bay spawning area are off limits.</li> <li>• Eels may not be used as bait.</li> <li>• See maps in Section V</li> </ul>
MAY 1–MAY 15	Chesapeake Bay from the Brewerton Channel to the Virginia line, excluding all bays, sounds, tributaries, creeks and rivers, except Tangier and Pocomoke Sounds and all Potomac River tributaries downstream of the Nice Memorial Bridge (U.S. 301).	1 fish per person per day. Must be at least 19" and cannot exceed 24".	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stinger (trailing) hooks are prohibited.</li> <li>• Barbless hooks are required when trolling.</li> <li>• No more than 6 lines may be employed while trolling.</li> <li>• Circle hook rules remain the same.</li> <li>• Spawning rivers and the Upper Bay spawning area are off limits.</li> <li>• Eels may not be used as bait.</li> <li>• See maps in Section V</li> </ul>
MAY 16–MAY 31	Chesapeake Bay downstream from a line drawn from the south corner of Hart-Miller Island Dike to the end of MD Route 21 at Tolchester and south to the MD/VA line, excluding all bays, sounds, tributaries, creeks and rivers. EXCEPT: Tangier Sound and Pocomoke Sound; Chester River and its tributaries downstream of a line drawn from Hail Point to Long Point to Ferry Point; Patuxent River and its tributaries downstream of a line drawn from Point Patience to the west point of land at the entrance of Little Kingston Creek; Choptank River and its tributaries downstream of a line drawn from Holland Point to a point of land at the west entrance of Chapel Creek; and all Potomac River tributaries downstream of the Nice Memorial Bridge (U.S. 301) are open.	1 fish per person per day. Must be at least 19" and cannot exceed 24".	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Circle hook rules remain the same.</li> <li>• Spawning rivers and the Upper Bay spawning area are off limits.</li> <li>• See maps in Section V</li> </ul>
JUNE 1–JULY 31	All areas open.	1 fish per person per day. Must be at least 19" and cannot exceed 24".	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Circle hook rules remain the same.</li> </ul>
AUG. 1–AUG. 31	All areas closed to striped bass fishing.	CLOSED	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No targeting.</li> <li>• Attempting to catch striped bass is illegal during this time period.</li> </ul>
SEPT. 1–DEC. 5	All areas open.	1 fish per person per day. Must be at least 19" and cannot exceed 24".	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Circle hook rules remain the same.</li> </ul>
DEC. 6–DEC. 31	All areas open to catch and release fishing only.	No harvest.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Catch and release only.</li> <li>• Circle hook rules remain the same.</li> <li>• Eels may not be used as bait.</li> </ul>

## SUSQUEHANNA FLATS, LOWER SUSQUEHANNA RIVER, AND NORTHEAST RIVER

SEASON	FISHING LOCATIONS ALLOWED	CREEL AND SIZE LIMITS	RESTRICTIONS AND REMARKS
JAN. 1–FEB. 28	All areas open to catch and release fishing only.	No harvest.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Catch and release only.</li> <li>• Circle hook rules remain the same.</li> <li>• Eels may not be used as bait.</li> </ul>
MAR. 1–MAR. 31	Susquehanna Flats, upstream of a line from Sandy Point to Turkey Point and the Susquehanna River downstream from a line connecting the Susquehanna State Park boat ramp at Lapidum (defined by Lat. 39°35.86' N and Long. 76°07.67' W) to Twin Rocks (defined by Lat. 39°36.17' N and Long. 76°07.56' W) to Tomes Wharf in Port Deposit (defined by Lat. 39°36.23' N and Long. 76°06.99' W); and the Northeast River. Note: The "Tomes Wharf" coordinate is closest to Lee's Landing Dock Bar.	No harvest.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Catch and release only.</li> <li>• Stinger (trailing) hooks are prohibited.</li> <li>• Barbless hooks are required when trolling.</li> <li>• No more than 6 lines may be employed while trolling.</li> <li>• Circle hook rules remain the same.</li> <li>• Eels may not be used as bait.</li> <li>• See maps in Section V.</li> </ul>
APR. 1–MAY 31	All waters upstream of a line from Abbey Point to Worton Point closed to striped bass fishing.	CLOSED	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No targeting.</li> <li>• Attempting to catch striped bass is illegal during this time period.</li> </ul>
JUNE 1–JULY 31	All areas open.	1 fish per person per day. Must be at least 19" and cannot exceed 24".	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Circle hook rules remain the same.</li> </ul>
AUG. 1–AUG. 31	All areas closed to striped bass fishing.	CLOSED	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No targeting.</li> <li>• Attempting to catch striped bass is illegal during this time period.</li> </ul>
SEPT. 1–DEC. 5	All areas open.	1 fish per person per day. Must be at least 19" and cannot exceed 24".	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Circle hook rules remain the same.</li> </ul>
DEC. 6–DEC. 31	All areas open to catch and release fishing only.	No harvest	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Catch and release only.</li> <li>• Circle hook rules remain the same.</li> <li>• Eels may not be used as bait.</li> </ul>

## ATLANTIC OCEAN, COASTAL BAYS AND THEIR TRIBUTARIES

SEASON	FISHING LOCATIONS ALLOWED	CREEL AND SIZE LIMITS	REGULATIONS	RESTRICTIONS AND REMARKS
JAN. 1–DEC. 31	No area restrictions in state waters	1 fish per person per day, 28–31 inches	Striped bass may not be caught, harassed or possessed in the Exclusive Economic Zone, which stretches from 3–200 miles off the coast.	Must always use non-offset circle hooks when using fish, crabs or worms as bait or processed baits (treble hooks are prohibited) when targeting striped bass.

## NONTIDAL

SEASON	FISHING LOCATIONS ALLOWED	CREEL AND SIZE LIMITS	REGULATIONS	RESTRICTIONS AND REMARKS
RESERVOIRS	All nontidal reservoirs, lakes, and ponds.	18 inch minimum size; 2 fish per person per day—only one of those fish may be larger than 30 inches		Open Year Round
NONTIDAL RIVERS AND STREAMS	Closed at all times			

## Artificial Reefs Create Habitat and Fishing Opportunities

Maryland has artificial reef sites in both the Bay and ocean waters. These projects are built and supported by the Maryland Department of Natural Resources, Maryland Artificial Reef Initiative partner organizations, and Ocean City Reef Foundation.

Anglers can find a map of reef locations and more information at [dnr.maryland.gov/fisheries/Pages/reefs/index.aspx](http://dnr.maryland.gov/fisheries/Pages/reefs/index.aspx)

Photo by Michael Eversmier



# BLUE CRABS—CHESAPEAKE BAY AND ITS TIDAL TRIBUTARIES

## Crabbing License/Registration

See page 13.

### Season

April 1–Dec. 15.

### Time of Day

Setting gear and catching crabs is allowed during the following time periods:

Rivers, creeks and tributaries:

- April and Oct. through Dec. 15—one half hour after sunrise to sunset.
- May through Sept.—one half hour before sunrise to sunset.

Chesapeake Bay mainstem:

- April and Oct. through Dec. 15—one half hour after sunrise to 5 p.m.
- May through Sept.—one half hour before sunrise to 5 p.m.

Using handlines and dip nets is permitted 24 hours a day, as well as annually registered crab pots on private property.

### Day of Week Restrictions

No recreational crabbing is allowed on Wednesdays except:

- When using crab pots from private property;
- When using handlines or dip nets;
- During a week when a state or federal holiday falls on a Wednesday or Thursday.

### Minimum Size Limits

#### (measured from tip to tip of spikes)

Male hard crab:

- April 1–July 14—5 inches.
- July 15–Dec. 15—5¼ inches.

Male peeler crab:

- April 1–July 14—3¼ inches.
- July 15–Dec. 15—3½ inches.

Soft crab:

- April 1–Dec. 15—3½ inches.

## Daily Creel/Possession Limits

LICENSE		DAILY CREEL / POSSESSION LIMIT	
		MALE HARD CRABS	MALE PEELERS, SOFT CRABS OR COMBINATION
UNLICENSED INDIVIDUAL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• From shore</li> <li>• From unlicensed boat</li> <li>• From waterfront crab pots</li> </ul>	2 dozen	1 dozen
LICENSED INDIVIDUAL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• From shore</li> <li>• From unlicensed boat</li> <li>• From waterfront crab pots</li> </ul>	1 bushel or 6 dozen if using a container other than a bushel basket	2 dozen
BOAT LIMITS			
UNLICENSED BOAT	With 1 unlicensed individual	2 dozen male crabs	
	With 2 or more unlicensed individuals	4 dozen male crabs	
	With 1 or more licensees and any number of unlicensed individuals	April 1–June 30: 1 bushel or 6 dozen if using a container other than a bushel basket. July 1–Dec. 15: see online guide: <a href="http://www.eregulations.com/maryland/fishing/blue-crabs-chesapeake-bay">www.eregulations.com/maryland/fishing/blue-crabs-chesapeake-bay</a>	
LICENSED BOAT	With any number of licensed or unlicensed individuals	April 1–June 30: 1 bushel or 6 dozen if using a container other than a bushel basket.	
		July 1–Dec. 15: see online guide: <a href="http://www.eregulations.com/maryland/fishing/blue-crabs-chesapeake-bay">www.eregulations.com/maryland/fishing/blue-crabs-chesapeake-bay</a>	

### It is Illegal for a Recreational Crabber:

- To sell crabs.
- To possess an egg-bearing (sponge) crab or any female hard or peeler crab.
- To set or fish a trotline, collapsible trap or crab net ring within 100 feet of another individual's set gear.
- To fish crab gear which belongs to another person.
- To harvest crabs while SCUBA diving.
- To use gear other than the gear listed in the table below.

### Additional Crab Pot Rules

- Crab pots must have two cull rings, one measuring at least 2¾ inches and one at least 2½ inches located in the exterior side panel or the top panels of the pot.
- Crab pots must have a turtle reduction device attached to each entrance or funnel in the lower chamber constructed of wire or plastic, rectangular in shape not larger than 1¾ inches high by 4¾ inches long.
- Annual registration required.

## The Amount of Gear Allowed for Unlicensed and Licensed Recreational Crabbing

LICENSE STATUS	HANDLINES AND DIP NETS	CRAB POTS ON PRIVATE PROPERTY	TROTLINE	COLLAPSIBLE TRAPS AND NET RINGS	SEINE	EEL POTS
UNLICENSED	Unlimited	A maximum of 2 annually registered crab pots per property regardless of the number of owners or lessees. These pots must be: • Marked with your DNRid • Set in front of private property within 100 yards of shore • Attached by a line to the property or marked by a buoy or pole and sign • Registered annually • Equipped with a turtle reduction device	Not Allowed	Not Allowed	Not Allowed	Not Allowed
LICENSED	Unlimited		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Up to 1200 ft*</li> <li>• Must have floats of the same color, size, shape on each end</li> <li>• Floats must be marked with your DNRid</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Up to 30 traps, rings or combination of both*</li> <li>• Must be marked with a buoy bearing your DNRid unless attached to a pier, wharf or boat</li> <li>• License not needed if under the age of 16</li> <li>• Traps must have a flat bottom measuring no more than 20 inches by 15 inches and have no more than four articulated sides</li> <li>• Net rings must have a diameter less than or equal to 30 inches</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mesh cannot be greater than ¼"</li> <li>• Cannot exceed 50' in width and 5' in height</li> <li>• Must be emptied from shore</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Up to 10 eel pots for catching your own bait</li> <li>• Must be labeled with your DNRid and may not be set in a buoy-free channel</li> <li>• May not be used to harvest crabs</li> </ul>

\*The amount of gear is per boat regardless of the number of licensees or individuals on board.

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**BOAT TERMS**  
Click on the term that correctly identifies the part shown below.

Right side of a vessel

POP  
STARB

Maryland Department of Natural Resources

Certificate Number 9786543	Certification Date 08/31/11
Birth Date 08/22/89	

JAMIE O. BOATER  
1234 ANY STREET  
ANYTOWN, ST 12345-0000

BOATER EDUCATION CARD

# OPERATING A BOAT WHILE FISHING?

If you were born after July 1, 1972, you need a Certificate of Boating Safety to operate a boat in Maryland. Learn through the interactive course and open more places to fish.

Get certified at [ilearntoboat.com](http://ilearntoboat.com)



# BLUE CRABS—ATLANTIC OCEAN, COASTAL BAYS AND TRIBUTARIES

## Season

April 1–Dec. 31.

## Harvest Restrictions

- There are no license or registration requirements, but gear must be marked with owners name and address.
- There are no time of day restrictions.
- The taking of sponge crabs is prohibited.

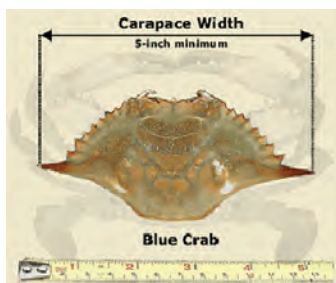
## Minimum Size Limits (measured from tip to tip of spikes)

- Hard crabs—5 inches.
- Soft crabs—3½ inches.
- Peeler crabs
  - April 1–July 14—3¼ inches.
  - July 15–Dec. 31—3½ inches.
- Mature female crabs—no minimum size.

## Recreational Crabbing Daily Catch Limits

The daily catch limit in the waters of the coastal bays of the Atlantic Ocean and their tidal tributaries is:

- One bushel per person if using a bushel basket, 6 dozen if using a container other than a bushel basket.
- Two bushels per boat if using a bushel basket or 12 dozen if using a container other than a bushel basket.



## It is Legal

To crab in the coastal bays of Maryland's Atlantic Ocean and coastal tributaries using:

- No more than 600 feet of baited trotline, with floats of the same color, size and shape attached to each end; or
- No more than two 600-foot trotlines if two or more persons are in the boat; or
- Dip nets and any number of handlines; or
- Seines with mesh no greater than 1/4" that do not exceed 50' in width and 5' in height that is emptied from shore, or
- No more than 10 or a combination of 10 collapsible crab traps or crab net rings per person from docks, piers, bridges, boats or shoreline; or
- No more than 25, or a combination of 25, collapsible crab traps or crab net rings, if two or more persons are in a boat.

For waterfront property owners to set a maximum of two crab pots at their property, provided that:

- Pots are marked with the owner's name and address or DNRid; and
- Crab pots must have two cull rings, one measuring at least 2<sup>3</sup>/<sub>16</sub> inches and one at least 2<sup>5</sup>/<sub>16</sub> inches, located in the exterior side panel or the top panels of the pot.
- Crab pots must have a turtle reduction device attached to each entrance or funnel in the lower chamber constructed of wire or plastic, rectangular in shape not larger than 1¾ inches high by 4¾ inches long.

## TURTLE REDUCTION DEVICES ARE REQUIRED BY LAW

Turtle reduction devices are required in recreational crab pots in Maryland. These devices reduce the number of terrapins entering a crab pot without hindering blue crab entry. Without turtle reduction devices, terrapins can enter crab pots and drown. To get instructions for making or attaching a turtle reduction device, visit [dnr.maryland.gov/fisheries/pages/regulations/crabpot.aspx](http://dnr.maryland.gov/fisheries/pages/regulations/crabpot.aspx)

### Installing a Turtle Reduction Device (TRD) on a crab pot.

**STEP 1:** Obtain a 1 ¾" x 4 ¾" TRD (metal or plastic) for each funnel opening in the crab pot, along with heavy plastic cable ties. Hog rings or cable ties can be used to attach metal TRDs.



**STEP 2:** Position the TRD at the narrow bank end of each entrance funnel.



**STEP 3:** Use heavy zip ties (cables) to loop around funnel wire and the corner of the TRD. Pull tightly and trim excess cable. Use a minimum of four cable ties or hog rings to firmly attach each reduction device.

## BLUE CRAB IDENTIFICATION



### SALLY

An immature (adolescent) female blue crab is easily identified as having an inverted "V" or triangular shaped apron and red-tipped claws.



### SOOK

A mature (adult) female blue crab identified as having an inverted "U" or bell-shaped apron and red-tipped claws.



### JIMMY

A mature male blue crab with a long, narrow, inverted "T" shaped apron and blue-tipped claws.

Steven C. Zinski ([www.bluecrab.info](http://www.bluecrab.info)) (3)

**Maryland residents may harvest oysters and clams for recreational purposes. A license is now required to harvest oysters.**

You may also call the Maryland Department of the Environment hotline 800-541-1210 to obtain information on conditional closures due to water quality or other environmental issues.



Recreational shellfish regulations for the Potomac River can be found at [prfc.us](http://prfc.us).

**It is Illegal**

- To take oysters or clams for recreational purposes while aboard a vessel where any person is engaged in commercial oystering or clamming.
- To recreationally harvest oysters or clams within a leased area, harvest reserve area, sanctuary or any other area closed by the state.
- To harvest oysters or clams if you are not a resident of Maryland.\*

\* However, a nonresident may harvest clams in Worcester County.

**Oysters**

**Season, Creel Limit, Times and Days**

Season: October 1, 2025–March 31, 2026  
 Catch Limit: 100 oysters/person/day  
 Days Allowed: Monday through Saturday  
 Catch Times: Sunrise–Noon

**Gear Restrictions**

A person may catch oysters ONLY by:

- Rakes
- Diving (includes SCUBA)
- Hand
- Shaft tongs

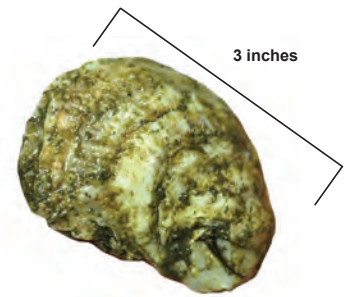
**Minimum Size Limits**

Three inches measured from hinge to bill along the longest part of the shell. You must determine the size of the oysters prior to leaving the location from which they were caught. Any shell and under-sized oysters must be returned to the water before you leave the area.

**Resident Oyster License - \$10**

- Valid 365 days from date of purchase
- Required of all Maryland residents prior to harvesting oysters recreationally, unless otherwise registered or exempt

**HOW TO MEASURE OYSTERS**



**Waterfront Property Landowner Oyster Registration - Free**

- Available to all waterfront property landowners, allows registrants to recreationally harvest oysters in all open State waters

**Exemptions:**

- Under age 16
- Former prisoner of war\*
- American veteran who is determined to be unemployable by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs\*
- 100% service-connected disabled American veteran\*
- Blind\*

\* For these exemptions, please email [customerservice.dnr@maryland.gov](mailto:customerservice.dnr@maryland.gov) to complete the proper paperwork

**RECYCLE OYSTER SHELLS**

Please recycle your oyster shells. You can find information about recycling at: [oysterrecovery.org](http://oysterrecovery.org)

**Hard Clams**

**Daily Harvest Restrictions**

250 clams/person/day

**Gear Restrictions**

Limited to hand-operated gear only, including hand rakes. Mechanical harvesting is not allowed.

**Minimum Size Limits**

One inch transverse measurement.

**HOW TO MEASURE CLAMS**



No license required for recreational clam harvest.

**Win a \$100 Gift Card!**

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**And be entered to win a \$100 gift certificate to your sporting good retailer of choice.**

Your anonymous participation advances fish and wildlife conservation, helps protect your right to hunt, fish and shoot, and guides companies in developing better outdoor products.

**RANGIA CLAMS**

The Rangia clam is often found in Maryland in low salinity water. Many of these areas, especially those within 200 feet of shore, have not been tested or approved by the Maryland Department of the Environment for shellfish harvest, and the consumption of these clams is not recommended.

Rangia clams should not be confused with the better-known hard clam found primarily in the coastal bays.



# HIGHLY MIGRATORY SPECIES (HMS)

## Highly Migratory Species Permit Holder

Effective December 22, 2025, anglers and charter captains in Maryland possessing Atlantic Highly Migratory Species (HMS) permits from the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) will be required to report recreationally landed bluefin tuna and dead discards, plus non-tournament landings of billfishes and swordfish electronically, using either the HMS Catch Reporting smartphone app, HMS permits website, or through alternate reporting programs specified below. HMS catch reports must be submitted to NMFS within 24 hours of completing the fishing trip.

A valid Atlantic HMS permit is required to fish for or keep Atlantic tunas, billfishes, swordfish, and sharks in federal waters.

### HMS reporting options provided by NMFS include:

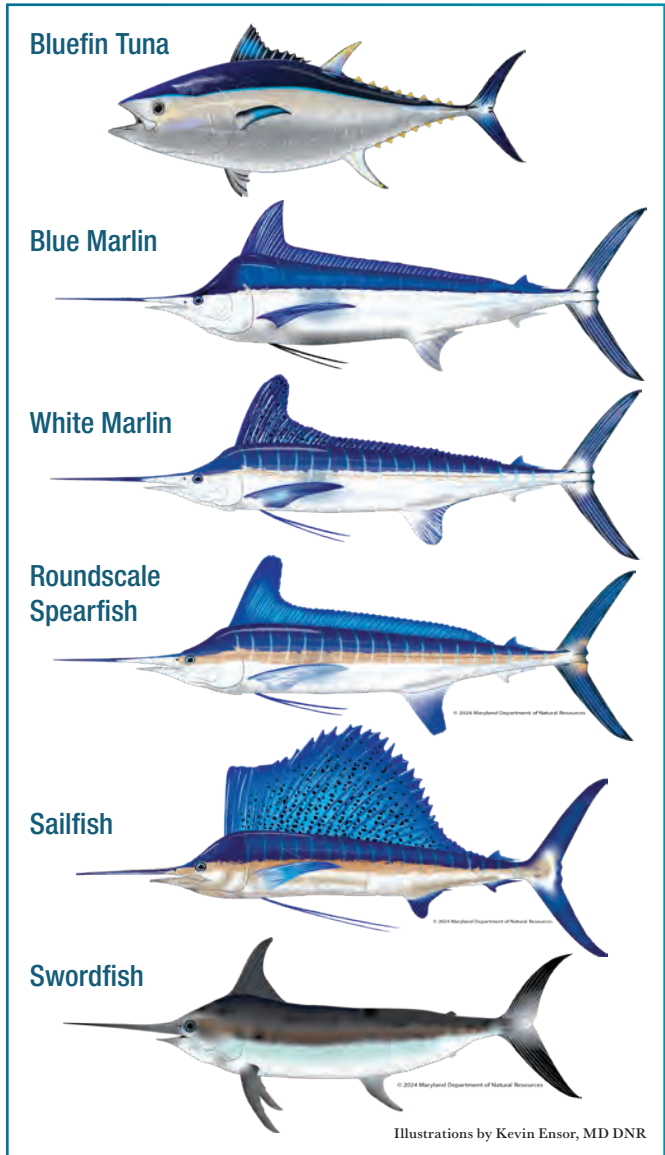
1. Online at the HMS Permit Shop: [hmspermits.noaa.gov/loginPub](https://hmspermits.noaa.gov/loginPub),
2. Via the HMS Catch Reporting smartphone app,
3. By calling the HMS Permit Shop Customer Service Line at (888) 872-8862.

Additionally, for-hire captains, or other fishermen, that submit vessel trip or logbook reports via SAFIS eTrips (Mobile or Online), or Bluefin Data LLC's VESL program, will not be required to submit separate HMS catch reports, as long as their trip reports are submitted within 24 hours of completing the trip. Captains reporting bluefin tuna, billfish, and swordfish landings via eTrips and the VESL program must report each landed fish separately, including the length and weight (actual or estimated) of each fish. Captains are responsible for making sure they are using a reporting platform that meets the requirements of their various federal permits.

More information on HMS reporting requirements can be found online at [www.fisheries.noaa.gov/atlantic-highly-migratory-species/atlantic-highly-migratory-species-reporting](https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/atlantic-highly-migratory-species/atlantic-highly-migratory-species-reporting) or [hmspermits.noaa.gov](https://hmspermits.noaa.gov).

### It is Illegal

- To sell, barter, or trade sharks or shark parts.
- To engage in shark finning.
- To fillet sharks at sea. All sharks caught by an angler must have heads, tails, and fins attached naturally to the carcass through landing.



## PRIVATE RECREATIONAL TILEFISH PERMITTING AND REPORTING

All private recreational vessels targeting or retaining golden or blueline tilefish from Virginia to Maine are subject to certain permitting and reporting requirements.

### PERMITTING

Any recreational vessel that intends to fish for blueline or golden tilefish north of the North Carolina/Virginia border must have a Federal private recreational tilefish vessel permit before taking a trip. Apply for a permit on the Greater Atlantic Regional Fisheries Office Fish Online website, [apps-garfo.fisheries.noaa.gov/fishtank/login/](https://apps-garfo.fisheries.noaa.gov/fishtank/login/)



### REPORTING

Recreational vessel operators must report all trips that either targeted or retained tilefish within 24 hours of returning to port using an approved electronic vessel trip reporting (eVTR) system. Learn more about eVTR options here [www.mafmc.org/rec-tilefish-evtr](https://www.mafmc.org/rec-tilefish-evtr).



### Blueline Tilefish

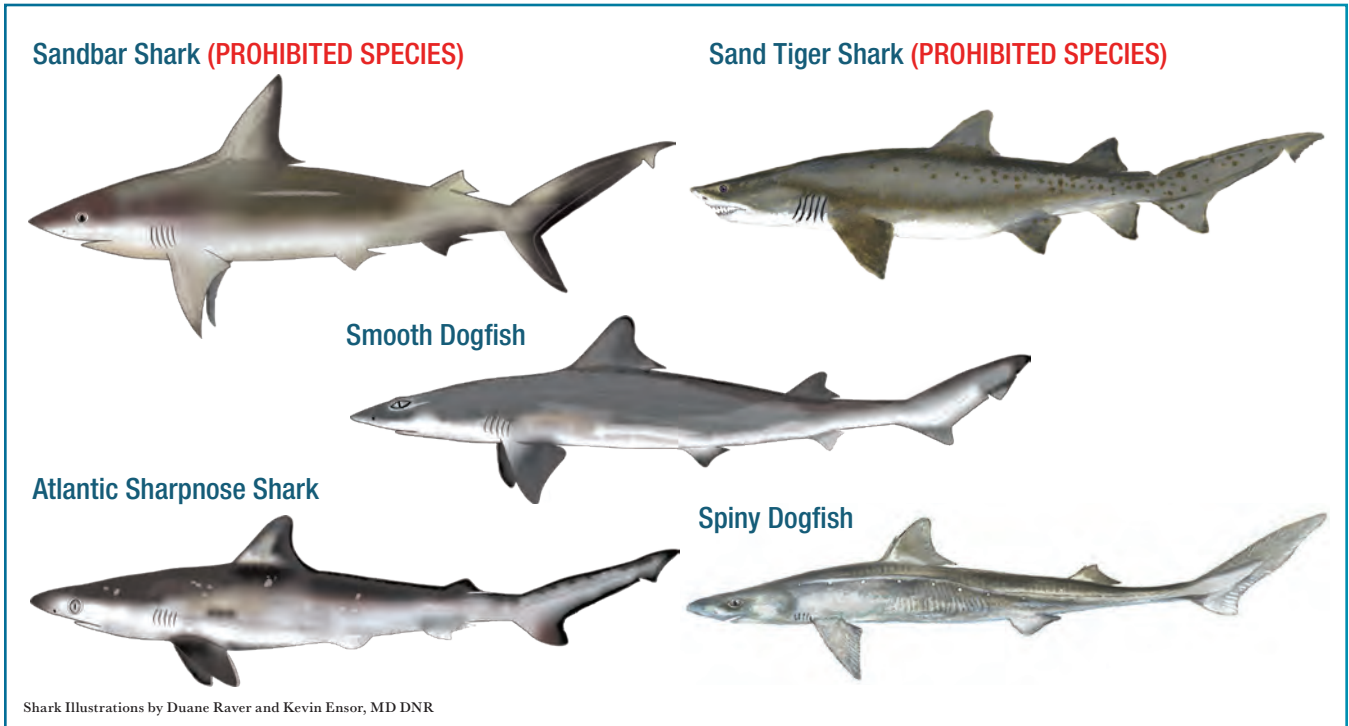


### Golden Tilefish



Illustrations by Kevin Ensor, MD DNR

## Shark Identification “IF YOU DON’T KNOW, LET IT GO”



### Shark Gear Restrictions

Anglers may use only handlines or rod and reel and must use corrodible, non-stainless circle hooks except when fishing with artificial flies/lures. You must have a device with you that is capable of quickly cutting either the leader or the hook.

Learn to identify sharks with this placard by scanning this QR code.



SEASON, HARVEST RESTRICTIONS, MINIMUM SIZE AND DAILY CREEL/POSSESSION LIMITS				
SHARK SPECIES APPROVED FOR RECREATIONAL HARVEST*	SEASON	MINIMUM FORK LENGTH	DAILY CREEL SHORE* (PER ANGLER)	DAILY CREEL VESSEL* (PER TRIP)
ATLANTIC SHARPNOSE SHARK, BONNETHEAD SHARK	Open Year Round	None	Each recreational shore angler is allowed a maximum of 1 shark per calendar day from this list of approved species.  In addition, each recreational shore angler may harvest 1 of each of the following species per calendar day: 1. Bonnethead 2. Atlantic Sharpnose shark	Each recreational vessel is allowed a maximum of 1 shark per trip from this list of approved species.  In addition, each recreational angler may harvest 1 of each of the following species per trip: 1. Bonnethead 2. Atlantic Sharpnose shark
BLACKNOSE SHARK, BLUE SHARK, COMMON THRESHER SHARK, FINETOOTH SHARK, PORBEAGLE SHARK	Open Year Round	54 inches		
BLACKTIP SHARK, BULL SHARK, LEMON SHARK, NURSE SHARK, SPINNER SHARK, TIGER SHARK	Open Year Round Except May 15–July 15	54 inches		
GREAT, SCALLOPED, AND SMOOTH HAMMERHEAD SHARKS	Open Year Round Except May 15–July 15	78 inches		
SMOOTH DOGFISH	Open Year Round	None	None	None
SPINY DOGFISH	Open Year Round	None	None	None

\* Sharks that are transported by vessel are considered boat assisted, and regulated under the more restrictive vessel-fishing possession limits regardless of where they were caught. All species not listed in the above table, including sandbar, dusky, sand tiger, oceanic white tip, and shortfin mako sharks, may not be retained and must be released. As of January 1, 2026, recreational anglers are no longer required to report and tag landed sharks.

### SHARK RULES

**IF YOU CAN'T OR AREN'T GOING TO KEEP A SHARK YOU MUST IMMEDIATELY RELEASE IT IN THE WATER**

**IF YOU CAN'T OR AREN'T GOING TO KEEP A SHARK YOU MAY NOT:**

- Sit on it
- Hold its mouth open
- Put it on dry sand
- Put it on a boat deck
- Use a gaff

**MAXIMIZE THEIR CHANCE FOR SURVIVAL:**

- Don't place hands in the gills
- Minimize fight times by using the appropriate gear
- Know how to identify them, “If you don't know let it go”
- Have a release plan and make sure everyone knows their role
- Cut the line, minimize trailing gear or use a dehooker



Recreational fishing offers opportunities for families and friends to spend quality time together, enjoying the abundant natural resources Maryland has to offer. FishMaryland is Maryland's recreational fishing award program and is a fun way to explore year-round recreational fishing and enjoy Maryland's affordable, accessible, diverse and high quality fishing opportunities.



## Components:

- **Species Award (includes catch and release)**—Any angler fishing legally in Maryland may catch and report a trophy sized fish by landing any of more than 60 eligible species in three categories at or above a certain minimum size. *If you catch a fish that meets or exceeds the official award size, simply lay the fish on a tape measure and photograph so that the species and size can be verified (HMS species cannot be removed from the water unless being kept.* A photograph in the water is acceptable as long as the species can be identified). Submit your catch through our online registration process. Once your catch is verified, you will receive your award certificate within 45 days.
- **Invasive Species Award**—Recognizes anglers for reporting their harvest of certain eligible invasive fish species. “Invasive” describes a species that,

when introduced into an ecosystem, aggressively establishes itself and has the potential to negatively impact native plants, animals, or habitat. Currently there are three invasive fish species which naturally reproduce or migrate into Maryland waters and are eligible for the Invasive Species Award: blue catfish, northern snakehead and flathead catfish. Fish must be kept or harvested to qualify.

- **Milestone Award**—Milestone awards (Angler Award, Expert Angler Award and Master Angler Award) recognize those skillful anglers who catch multiple species, each milestone is marked with a certificate and a corresponding sticker. To qualify, anglers can only submit eligible catches caught from 2019 to present.



FISHMARYLAND MINIMUM SIZES	
CATCH AND RELEASE ONLY*	
American Shad	24 inches
Blue Marlin	any size
Blue Shark	any size
Hammerhead Shark	any size
Hickory Shad	18 inches
Red Drum	36 inches
Sailfish	any size
Sand Tiger Shark	any size
Striped Bass	40 inches
Swordfish	any size
Thresher Shark	any size
Tiger Shark	any size
White Marlin	any size

FISHMARYLAND MINIMUM SIZES	
CHESAPEAKE BAY DIVISION	
Black Drum	48 inches
Blue Crab	8 inches
Bluefish	34 inches
Carp	36 inches
Chain Pickerel	24 inches
Channel Catfish	30 inches
Cobia	44 inches
Crappie, Black	15 inches
Croaker (Hardhead)	18 inches
Florida Pompano	17 inches
Longnose Gar	36 inches
Largemouth Bass	21 inches
Northern Whiting (Kingfish)	14 inches
Pumpkinseed	10 inches
Rock Bass	10 inches
Sheepshead	24 inches
Smallmouth Bass	20 inches
Spanish Mackerel	22 inches
Spot	12 inches
Spotted Seatrout	24 inches
Summer Flounder	24 inches
Tautog	24 inches
Walleye	26 inches
Weakfish	24 inches
White Catfish	20 inches
White Perch	13 inches
Yellow Perch	14 inches

FISHMARYLAND MINIMUM SIZES	
ATLANTIC COAST DIVISION	
Amberjack <sup>1</sup>	45 inches
Atlantic Cod	36 inches
Atlantic Spadefish	24 inches
Black Drum	48 inches
Black Sea Bass	20 inches
Bluefish	34 inches
Blueline Tilefish	25 inches
Cobia <sup>1</sup>	44 inches
Croaker (Hardhead)	18 inches
Dolphin Fish (Mahi-Mahi) <sup>1</sup>	45 inches
False Albacore <sup>1</sup>	24 inches
Florida Pompano <sup>1</sup>	17 inches
Golden Tilefish	35 inches
Grey Triggerfish	18 inches
King Mackerel <sup>1</sup>	40 inches
Northern Whiting (Kingfish)	14 inches
Pollock	32 inches
Sheepshead	20 inches
Snowy Grouper	31 inches
Spanish Mackerel	22 inches
Spot	12 inches
Spotted Seatrout	24 inches
Summer Flounder	24 inches
Swordfish <sup>2</sup>	47 inches
Tautog	24 inches
Tuna, Albacore (Longfin) <sup>3</sup>	36 inches
Tuna, Bigeye <sup>3</sup>	60 inches
Tuna, Blackfin <sup>3</sup>	30 inches
Tuna, Bluefin <sup>3</sup>	55 inches
Tuna, Yellowfin <sup>3</sup>	50 inches
Wahoo <sup>1</sup>	60 inches
Weakfish	24 inches
Winter Flounder	17 inches

\* These species are only eligible for the Catch and Release Award

\*\* Invasive species division—only harvested fish are eligible

1 Use fork length measurement.

2 Use lower jaw fork length measurement.

3 Use curved fork length measurement.

INVASIVE SPECIES DIVISION **	
Blue Catfish	40 inches
Flathead Catfish	34 inches
Chesapeake Channa	30 inches

## STATE RECORDS

### ATLANTIC COAST DIVISION

Albacore (longfin)	77.0 lbs.	Thomas "Tad" Bodmer	9/23/2022
Atlantic Cod	24.0 lbs.	Fred Brungart	5/31/2013
Atlantic Spadefish	11.4 lbs.	Noel Lohr	9/2/2004
Atlantic Tripletail	11.0 lbs.	Don Whittington	10/19/2019
Black Seabass	8.0 lbs.	Hayward Madison	6/1/1978
Bluefish	23.5 lbs.	Lillian Morris	10/30/1974
Cobia	94.6 lbs.	Emma Zajdel	6/30/2016
Dolphinfish	74.5 lbs.	Kristy Frashure	8/16/2019
Drum, Black	79.0 lbs.	Stanley Ilyes	9/7/1985
Drum, Red*	70.0 lbs.	Robert Light	9/24/1977
False Albacore	26.0 lbs.	Jack Dorman	7/20/2025
Florida Pompano	3.0 lbs.	Vacant	
Flounder, Summer	17.0 lbs.	Anthony Vacari	10/3/1974
Flounder, Winter	5.1 lbs.	Kevin Twilley	6/23/2015
Gray Triggerfish	6.0 lbs.	Logan Liddick	9/25/2020
Great Barracuda	13.0 lbs.	Stephen Humphrey	10/06/2023
Grouper, Snowy	66.0 lbs.	Gregory Benn	7/30/2012
Grouper, Yellowedge	38.0 lbs.	Jian Feng Li	8/27/2024
King Mackerel	47.0 lbs.	Gerald Kauffman	10/18/1985
Kingfish	2.5 lbs.	Grace Walker	10/1/1975
Marlin, Blue	1,135.0 lbs.	Billy Gerlach	8/24/2021
Marlin, White	135.0 lbs.	George Pierson	8/29/1980
Pompano Dolphinfish	7.1 lbs.	Jim Frazetti	10/3/2025
Scup (Porgy)	6.2 lbs.	Pearl Hoppole	7/4/1966
Shark, Black Tip	193.0 lbs.	Brian Zysk	8/4/1991
Shark, Blue	280.0 lbs.	Martin Waitman	9/13/1997
Shark, Dogfish, Smooth	18.0 lbs.	Fay Ganster	10/26/2022
Shark, Dogfish, Spiny	11.5 lbs.	Mevels Sampson	5/17/1993
Shark, Dusky*	469.0 lbs.	Jim Liberto	7/1/1982
Shark, Great White*	467.0 lbs.	Jack Holmes	6/11/1992
Shark, Hammerhead, Scalloped	266.5 lbs.	Scott Cusick	8/8/2012
Shark, Hammerhead, Smooth	375.0 lbs.	George Wilson Ford V	6/17/2004
Shark, Shortfin Mako*	876.0 lbs.	Jim Hughes	6/20/2009
Shark, Sand Tiger*	334.0 lbs.	Billy Leidner	9/8/1983
Shark, Sandbar*	235.0 lbs.	Mark Sampson	7/8/1983
Shark, Thresher	642.0 lbs.	Brent Applegit	6/19/2009
Shark, Tiger	1,210.0 lbs.	Grace Czerniak	7/9/1983
Sheepshead	18.0 lbs.	Robert Martin	9/22/2017
Spotted Seatrout	13.0 lbs.	Jack Miller	8/21/1973
Striped Bass	57.2 lbs.	Gary Smith	5/6/2006
Swordfish	393 lbs.	Jeff Jacobs	9/23/2022
Tautog	28.8 lbs.	Kenneth Westerfeld	1/2/2015
Tilefish, Blue/line	21.3 lbs.	Dominic Vuotto	7/26/2025
Tilefish, Golden	62.0 lbs.	Steve Doctor	10/22/2009
Tuna, Bigeye	375.5 lbs.	Cecil Browne	8/26/1977
Tuna, Blackfin	32.0 lbs.	Bob Zang	9/20/1998
Tuna, Bluefin	625.0 lbs.	James Daniels, IV	8/3/1975
Tuna, Longfin Albacore	78.0 lbs.	Marc Spagnola	9/21/2025
Tuna, Yellowfin	236.5 lbs.	Mark Bennett	9/22/2002
Wahoo	131.0 lbs.	John Schaar	6/30/2014
Weakfish	16.0 lbs.	Donald Cannon	9/11/1976
White Hake	16.7 lbs.	Brian Gay	5/16/2019
White Perch	1.9 lbs.	Robert "Bob" Hudson	4/28/2022

### CHESAPEAKE BAY DIVISION

Atlantic Spadefish	10.0 lbs.	Charlie Barron	7/15/2007
Bluefish	22.0 lbs.	Thomas R. Talbott	5/8/1991
Bluefish	22.0 lbs.	Ronald Rafo	5/31/1986
Bluefish	22.0 lbs.	John Davidson	10/18/1979
Carp	49.0 lbs.	Logan Kuhrman	6/4/2022
Catfish, Channel	29.6 lbs.	Kevin Kern	4/26/1997
Catfish, White	9.6 lbs.	Brian Dvorak	6/3/2018
Chain Pickerel	6.5 lbs.	James Grant	5/19/1965
Cobia	97.8 lbs.	John Scheifele	9/12/1969
Crappie	4.0 lbs.	Sid Stollings	3/30/2007
Croaker	6.5 lbs.	Russell Knapp	9/4/2006
Drum, Black	103.5 lbs.	Robert Messik Jr.	9/23/1973
Drum, Red*	74.4 lbs.	Earnest Hutchinson	5/15/1977
Florida Pompano	6.44 lbs.	Bobby Graves	9/17/2023
Flounder, Summer	15.0 lbs.	Kenneth Grimes	10/14/1978
Hickory Shad*	4.0 lbs.	John Schaeffer Jr.	7/23/1971
Largemouth Bass	11.2 lbs.	Justin Riley	1/26/2008
Longnose Gar	20.5 lbs.	David Confair	2/08/2025
Norfolk Spot	2.0 lbs.	Parlett Moore	9/5/1978
Rock Bass	1.0 lb.	Timothy A. Adams	5/4/1997
	1.0 lb.	Thomas Over, Jr.	1/6/2024
Sheepshead	16.6 lbs.	Brian Summerlin	9/17/2023
Smallmouth Bass	6.0 lbs.	Charles Janes	7/23/1979
Spanish Mackerel	12.4 lbs.	Dean Mitchell	10/6/2007
Spotted Seatrout	16.4 lbs.	John Phillips	5/15/1977
Striped Bass	67.5 lbs.	Devin Nolan	5/13/1995
Tautog	9.0 lbs.	Gary Halbeisen	10/29/2005
Weakfish	16.5 lbs.	Wayne Lappe	5/8/1979
White (American) Shad*	8.1 lbs.	Vance Carter	5/3/1975
White Perch	2.6 lbs.	Sid Stollings	5/18/1979
Yellow Perch	2.3 lbs.	Thomas Dembeck, Jr.	2/07/2025

\*Not currently accepting new state records for this species due to regulations

## STATE RECORDS

### NONTIDAL DIVISION

Bluegill	3.4 lbs.	Sarah Brenneman	8/9/1998
Carp	47.5 lbs.	Wayne Longenecker	6/11/1997
Catfish, Bullhead	4.9 lbs.	Nick Palese	5/18/2019
Catfish, Channel	27.9 lbs.	Steven Trent Abell	7/5/2004
Catfish, White	7.0 lbs.	Vacant	
Chain Pickerel	8.0 lbs.	Lee Haile III	1/2/2015
Crappie, Black	4.4 lbs.	Jason D. Morrison	5/30/2004
Fallfish	3.2 lbs.	Blake Cronk	4/1/2024
Largemouth Bass	11.4 lbs.	Colton Lambert	7/31/2013
Muskellunge	33.0 lbs.	Kyle Mullenix	3/2/2022
Northern Pike	24.8 lbs.	Shawn Jacobson	10/16/1999
Redbreast Sunfish	0.8 lbs.	Vacant	
Redear Sunfish	2.3 lbs.	Vittie Alkocius	6/4/1985
Rock Bass	1.5 lbs.	Earl Jenkins IV	3/22/2010
Smallmouth Bass	8.3 lbs.	Gary Peters	10/4/1974
Striped Bass	47.1 lbs.	Robert Bruce	9/14/2000
Tiger Muskellunge	29.3 lbs.	Kevin Conner	2/14/1997
Trout, Brook	6.1 lbs.	Mike Fiorita, Jr.	4/10/1999
Trout, Brown	18.2 lbs.	Gary Kuhn	8/3/2001
Trout, Cutthroat	7.6 lbs.	David G. Martin	5/20/2000
Trout, Rainbow	17.4 lbs.	Jean-Philippe Lartigue	2/10/2024
Walleye	14.3 lbs.	John McCarley	5/16/1998
Warmouth	0.7 lbs.	Dezi Collins	6/11/2018
White Perch	1.9 lbs.	George Venker	4/7/2017
Yellow Perch	3.3 lbs.	Philip Deere IV	3/12/2006

See Page 37 for Invasive Species State Records.

## SPORT FISH STATE RECORDS

### STATE RECORDS

All potential state record fish will be reviewed under the official rules. For state records rules and procedures, go to: [dnr.maryland.gov/fisheries/Pages/state\\_records/sr\\_main.aspx](http://dnr.maryland.gov/fisheries/Pages/state_records/sr_main.aspx)

The department maintains sport fishing records and awards plaques to anglers whose catches exceed the current state record or establish a new record. All rules and procedures must be followed in order to qualify, in person inspection by a department fisheries biologist or a department-authorized individual. See the full set of all rules including a link to the application on our website.

In addition to completing the application we encourage applicants to call 443-258-6077 or 410-260-8300 to report potential state record catches. You must submit a state record application within two weeks of the date you catch the fish.

State record fish are determined by weight. Most fishing

tackle shops do not have certified scales, so call ahead. Other establishments that sell products by weight such as a grocery, deli or shipping store may have a certified scale and be willing to help.

Fish designated as eligible for the Invasive Division (currently northern snakehead, blue catfish and flathead catfish) can be caught and kept. All legal recreational fishing gear including rod and reel, bow and spear is eligible in the Invasive Division.



## MARYLAND'S MARINE MAMMAL AND SEA TURTLE STRANDING 24-HOUR HOTLINE: 800-628-9944

- In Maryland call 800-628-9944 to report all (live or dead) stranded sea turtles or marine mammals (including manatees, dolphins, whales, porpoise and seals).
- If calling from **outside Maryland**, please use:
  - **Live animals:** 410-373-0083 (National Aquarium Animal Program)
  - **Dead animals:** Call or text location and description to 443-758-6607 (Department of Natural Resources Marine Mammal and Sea Turtle Program)
- Do not touch, harass, feed or handle live or dead marine animals. Marine mammals and sea turtles are protected by federal and state laws that specify fines of up to \$50,000, imprisonment, and/or vessel confiscation.
- Record your location using latitude/longitude, and a detailed description of your location including landmarks.
- Estimate and note the length, size, color, noticeable body parts, and any movement of the animal.
- Take photos of the animal.



Department biologists conduct necropsy examinations when feasible to determine cause of death, and notification of fresh carcasses is important.

Sea turtles and marine mammals: manatees, seals, dolphins and whales are included in our stranding response protocols.



Sea turtles in Maryland include: Kemp's Ridley, Loggerhead, Leatherback and Green



Department biologists collecting carcass of sperm whale in Ocean City, MD.

## BOATERS

PROTECT WHALES, SEA TURTLES, SEALS, STURGEON AND YOURSELF FROM FROM PREVENTABLE BOAT COLLISIONS.

### Know before you go



- **Give Space**  
Safe distances reduce risks of illegal disturbance and dangerous collisions.



- **Go Slow**  
Slower boat speeds give animals time to get out of your way.



- **Report**  
Report entanglements to 800-628-9944. Call Stranding Responders immediately at 410-373-0083 or 443-758-6607 or US Coast Guard on CH-16 on your VHF radio.



- **Clean up**  
ALWAYS clean up your trash! Sea turtles can confuse garbage, especially plastic, floating in water for food. If sea turtles eat garbage they can die.

[dnr.maryland.gov/fisheries/pages/oxford/stranding.aspx](http://dnr.maryland.gov/fisheries/pages/oxford/stranding.aspx)

## FISH PASSAGE PROGRAM

The Maryland DNR's Fish Passage Program works to support fishing by helping aquatic organisms move across barriers, like dams. The program works to improve water quality and resolve dam safety issues. We are currently partnering with American Rivers to obtain a feasibility study to determine the future of Daniel's Dam on the Patapsco River. Other recent projects include an eel ladder at Eden Mill and a dam removal in Cypress Branch State Park. For more information on the Fish Passage Program, please check out our website!



The Cypress Branch Dam Removal Project was completed in April of 2025 reopening over 35 miles for herring, hickory shad, and more.

# Your Ripple Effect.

Manufacturer-paid federal excise taxes on fishing equipment and the portion of fuel taxes attributed to motorboat use and small engines — combined with state fishing licenses — help amplify vital fisheries conservation efforts and expand public access opportunities. Through the Sport Fish Restoration program, your participation generates powerful waves of benefits for fish, habitat, public access, and future generations of anglers and boaters.

Each year, nationally, these benefits include:

*Reinforced  
conservation  
heritage*

**1 Billion+**  
Sport fish raised and stocked

*Increased connection  
and access to  
wild places*

**200+**  
Species of sport  
fish studied and  
managed

**748+**  
Clean vessel  
facilities  
constructed  
(2020-2024)

**925+**  
Transient  
boat slips  
constructed  
(2020-2024)

**9,000+**  
Public boating and  
fishing areas  
operated and  
maintained

*Strengthened  
community bonds  
through collaboration*

**850,000+**  
Students received  
aquatic and angler  
education

*Raised conservation  
and stewardship  
awareness*



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and federal partners  
make conservation  
happen. Scan the code  
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