

CT DEEP **2019**
FISHING REPORT NUMBER 12
7/3/2019



Blackfish or Tautog (*Tautoga onitis*)



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INLAND REPORT

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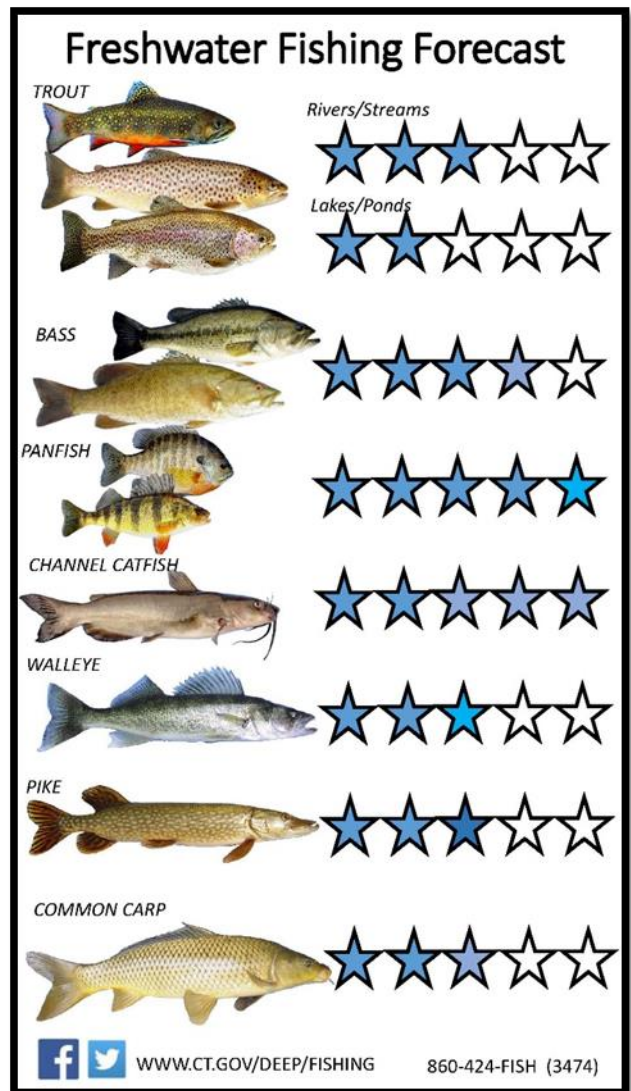
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Providers of some of the information in this report included **Bob's Place, Candlewood Bait & Tackle, Captain Morgan's Bait & Tackle, JT's Fly Shop, Yankee Outdoors, CTFisherman.com**, and a number of bass fishing clubs & organizations.

TROUT- RIVERS & STREAMS. Moving into the Fourth of July weekend, trout fishing has been good (especially for the first week of July). Anglers are having to work harder for their fish but they are bringing them in. Conditions for the weekend should be fairly good. Water temperatures are still a bit below stressful levels (but may rise quickly with the forecast of heat and humidity) and flows remain good for fishing in many areas (see stream flow graphic on page 4) and the weather forecast is mostly good (although hot for anglers). While not currently an issue anywhere, you can check stream flows anytime (**real time stream flow data from 68 USGS gauging stations can be found at the [USGS web site](#)**).

Anglers should remember to try a number of tactics and methods. Insect hatches are mixed and variable. Dry flies are on, also look for large stoneflies, all sizes of mayflies, and caddis (black and brown). With the warmer weather definitely here, mornings and evenings are the best times. Nymphs, and also streamers, are still working well, and with the lush streamside vegetation, keep beetles, ants, and grasshopper patterns nearby for some mid-day action. Worms, live minnows, powerbait, and a variety of small lures are also productive.

Places reporting the best action include the West Branch (**the upper portion just stocked today, 7/3 with 2,250 Brown trout**) and mainstem Farmington River,



the Housatonic River, Hammonasset River (BWO's, ants), Salmon River, West River, Mount Hope River, and Natchaug River. The Willimantic River TMA was slow and better action found downstream of the TMA.

Farmington River – Fishing has been good to very good and **the upper section of the West Branch from the Goodwin Dam to the old bridge abutments was stocked just stocked on Wednesday with 2,250 Brown Trout (fish averaging at least 12 inches in length)**. Flows are clear and low to moderate, and great for fishing, currently 262 CFS at Riverton plus another 22 cfs and dropping from the Still River.

Hatches/patterns. Insect activity remains active to very active. The more “summer-like” temperatures have moved most of the hatch activity to later in the afternoon and well into the evening. Insects that should be popular with the trout include Isonychia (decent hatches going on at dusk), large common stoneflies, Blue Wing Olive, Midges and Blue Quill, and small yellow mayflies (Attenella).

Nymphing continues to be productive. Fish are falling for Bead Head, Midge Pupa, Brassie, Zebra Midge or Copper John patterns. Streamers, large and shiny, are also a good option (Hare’s ear, Pheasant Tail, White Zonkers & Buggers (#4-12) as well as Muddler minnow, Grey or Black Ghost).

Housatonic River – The river should be very wadeable and fishable this weekend. Temperatures remain good for trout to be out of the refuges (at least for a little while longer – lots of hot temperatures forecast into Sunday). Fish can be found just about everywhere in the river so take the opportunity to explore some new areas. Flows are clear and very fishable, currently at 391 CFS at Falls Village and 619 CFS at Gaylordsville. Anglers are reminded that they can call the **FirstLight Power Resources flow line at 1-888-417-4837 for updated river information or check the [USGS website](#)** for up to date real time streamflow data from a number of USGS gauging stations including two on the upper Housatonic River.

Now is the time to hit up some of the other fish species in the river- Smallmouth and Fallfish can be very rewarding when caught on light tackle. Crayfish and Hellgramites, both readily available from within the river, are perfect bait. Carp and Pike are other solid bets especially in the section above “Great Falls”.

Hatches/patterns. Alder flies (actually a caddis), while cahills and Isonichia are making an appearance, March Browns (#10-12), Pheasant Tail (#12-18), Stoneflies (#6-10), Pheasant Tails (#14-20), and Black Stoneflies (#18-22). Nymphing (try Bead Head, Midge Pupa or Copper Johns) and streamers (such as White/Yellow Zonkers or Woolly Buggers) are good options. Terrestrials like black and red ants, beetles, and crickets fished near undercuts may just be the ticket to trick the fish of a lifetime.

Anglers are reminded that the thermal refuge areas on the Housatonic, Naugatuck and Shetucket Rivers are now closed to fishing (as of June 15). These areas will reopen on September 15. There is no fishing within 100 feet of signs indicating such closure at or near the mouths of tributaries to these rivers. [Please call our dispatch to report any illegal fishing 860-424-3333.](#)



TROUT- LAKES & PONDS – Limited reports again this week but fishing is generally fair with the best reports from Crystal Lake, Mashapaug Lake (fish are being caught deep here, at about 27 feet for one angler) and East Twin Lake.



LARGEMOUTH BASS Bass fishing continues to be fair to good in most places, and very good at some, but the best times are definitely early mornings and evenings (and later for some) with some tougher fishing found midday. Look for the cooler water. Some good topwater action being found (early and late). Highland Lake, Wonoskopomuc Lake, Lake Lillinonah and Congamond Lakes have been productive, Mansfield Hollow Reservoir continues to be really good, and Bigelow Pond (good action on smaller bass), Mashapaug Lake and Gardner Lake are picking up.

Tournament angler reports are from Coventry Lake (tough for most, 2.57 lb lunker), Gardner Lake (fair to good for most, 2.35 lb lunker), Long Pond (slow, 3.0 lb lunker), Pachaug Pond (slow to fair, 3.82 lb lunker), Mansfield Hollow Reservoir (very good, with some “Incredible weights” with a 2.25 lb average weight per fish and a 5.8 lb lunker for a recent club), Quaddick Lake (fair, fish averaged over 2 lbs apiece with a 3.70 lb lunker), Wonoskopomuc Lake (good, with a 2.4 lb per fish average weight and a 4.31 lb lunker), and the Connecticut River (tough for an evening club out of Salmon River (five out of ten bags were empty, 3.15 lb lunker).

SMALLMOUTH BASS. Action is slow in many areas, fish are being found at Candlewood Lake (starting to move deeper) and Colebrook River Lake. The warm (hot?) weather is here now and river smallie action has really picked up in the Housatonic River. Other rivers for smallmouth include the Naugatuck River, Shetucket River and Quinebaug River. **Tournament angler** reports are from Coventry Lake (few), Gardner Lake (a couple) and Pachaug Pond (a couple).

CHANNEL CATFISH. The Fisheries Division stocked 10,600 “cats” into 19 lakes and ponds (combination of Community Fishing Waters and Catfish Management Lakes) in late May so there’s plenty of cats roaming the waters and anglers should be finding them in a number of areas. Not just bottom feeders, Channel Cats will hit lures, soft plastics, and live minnows. Check out Bitternut Park Pond, Crescent Lake (Southington), Lake Wintergreen, Lakewood Lake and Silver Lake.

BLACK CRAPPIE are providing some nice action statewide. No whoppers but some nice size fish have been found at Candlewood Lake and in the CT River.

KOKANEE SALMON. Anglers are finding some fish at East twin Lake (some 11-11.5 inch fish around 30 feet, pink bead lures).

NORTHERN PIKE. Pike activity is increasing along the weedlines. A few reports of nice size pike from Bantam

ZEBRA MUSSELS REMINDER

Zebra mussels are now found in a number of locations scattered throughout the Housatonic River and its impoundments including Lake Lillinonah (since 2010), Lake Zoar (since 2010) and Lake Housatonic (since 2011).

Prior to their discovery in Lakes Lillinonah and Zoar in 2010, zebra mussels had been found (1998) in CT only in East Twin Lake and West Twin Lake (Salisbury). Anglers fishing in any of these waters and western Connecticut in general **should use extra care to avoid transporting water, aquatic vegetation, and possibly zebra mussels to new locations.** Information

For more information including precautions that should be taken to prevent the spread of zebra mussels to additional waters, visit www.ct.gov/deep/invasivespecies or the Aquatic Invasive species section of the 2018 CT angler’s Guide(www.ct.gov/deep/anglersguide).



Bonnie lands a beautiful calico. Way to go!

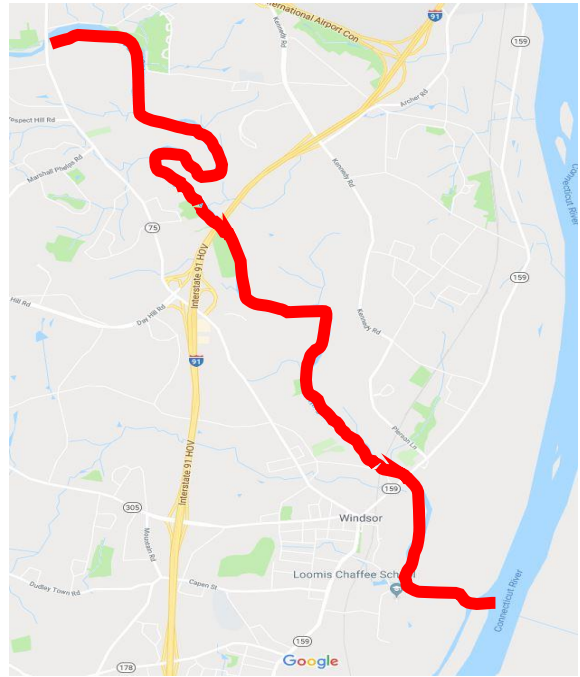
Lake, Winchester Lake, Mansfield Hollow Reservoir, Pachaug Pond and Hopeville Pond.

CHAIN PICKEREL continue to be aggressive in many areas throughout the state and on the move.

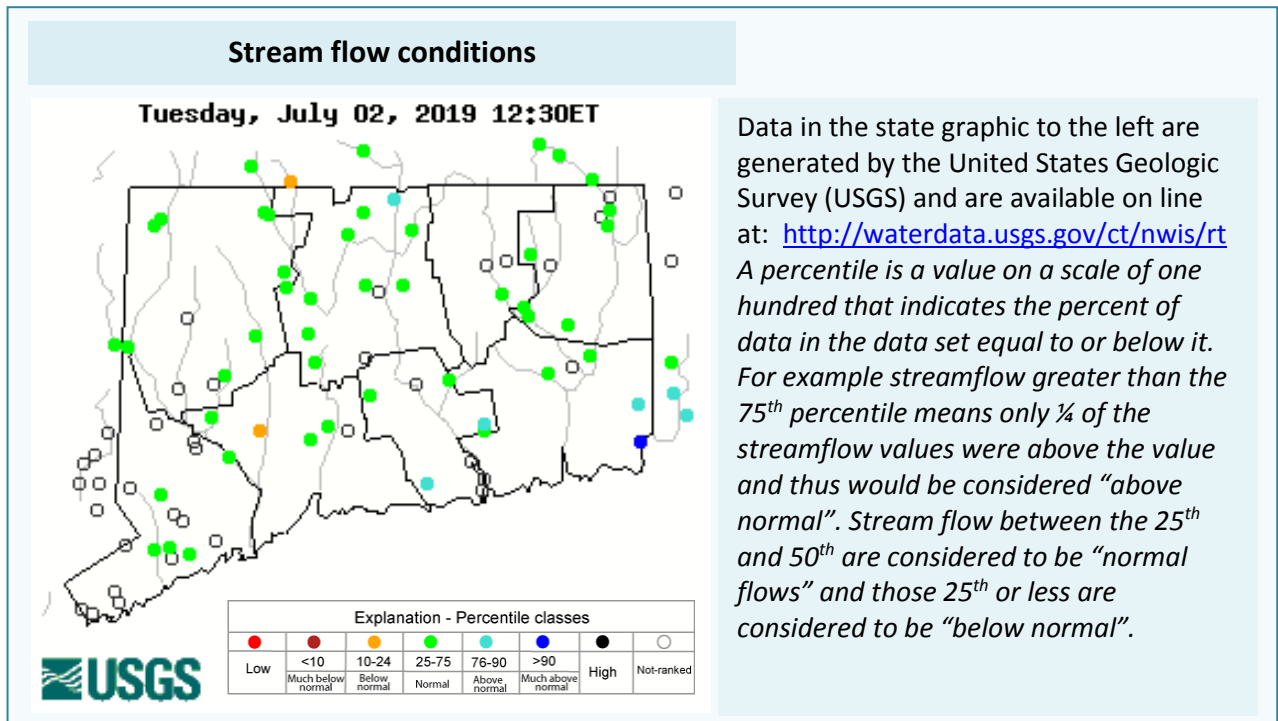
WALLEYE. Walleye are active in the CT River (Enfield area) with a few catches from Coventry Lake, Mount Tom, Batterson Park Pond, and Squantz Pond.

CONNECTICUT RIVER. Flows in the river are very comfortable for fishing/boating, currently 12,600 CFS at Thompsonville. Bowfin fishing remains very good. Good action for catfish (Whites and Channels), fish the deep holes by day and the adjacent shallow flats by night. Fishing for Largemouth Bass was only fair in the Salmon River Cove/Haddam Meadows area. Smallmouth Bass were providing some good action in the Windsor/Enfield area. With the river clearing and warming, Pike, Common Carp and Black Crappie fishing are all good.

IMPORTANT NOTICE - Please note that an accidental release of fire-fighting foam from a hangar at Bradley International Airport on June 9. DEEP and the Department of Public Health have lifted the advisory concerning boating and swimming in this section of the lower Farmington river. **The advisory to not take fish from this area remains in place until further testing is completed.**



Section of the lower Farmington River possibly affected by the recent firefighting foam release under the cautionary advisory.



NOTES & NOTICES:

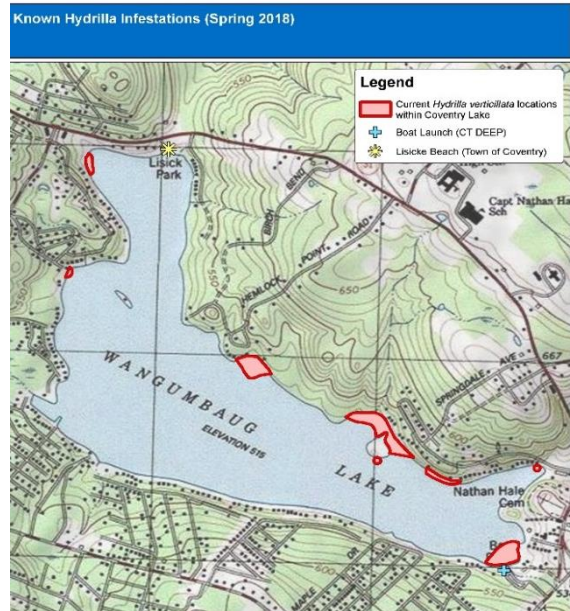
STORM DAMAGE UPDATE. The Sleeping Giant State Park (including the Sleeping Giant TMA) has reopened. Remember that the TMA was not stocked with trout this spring due to damage from last spring’s storms.

CONNECTICUT RIVER (invasive species alert). In 2016 hydrilla was found in the main stem Connecticut River in Glastonbury (near Glastonbury’s Riverfront Park & Boathouse). **Hydrilla has now spread throughout the river and can be found in numerous areas.** See the Coventry Lake entry on the next page for what river users should do to prevent spread of this invasive plant to other waterbodies.

COVENTRY LAKE (invasive species alert). Hydrilla, a very highly invasive aquatic plant, has been found growing in Coventry Lake. All lake users should take extra care to check and clean their boats (including canoes, kayaks and rowing sculls), trailers, and fishing equipment before leaving the launch.

LAKE HOUSATONIC (fireworks display). A fireworks display is scheduled for Sunday evening, July 8, in the vicinity of 32 Birchbank Road, Shelton.

THAMES RIVER – NORWICH HARBOR (fireworks). The annual fireworks display is scheduled for Wednesday evening, July 3 in Norwich harbor below Howard Brown Park. Boaters should expect additional congestion in this area of the Thames River.



Known locations of hydrilla at Coventry Lake (Wangumbaug Lake). Boaters should avoid these areas noted with red to avoid fragmenting and spreading hydrilla.

**REMINDER TO ANGLERS-
FISHING IN OR CASTING INTO
PERMITTED SWIM AREAS IS
PROHIBITED.**

State regulations prohibit fishing in or into a swim area that has been permitted by DEEP. Additionally, vessels cannot be operated within a permitted swim area, and there’s a 100 foot “no-wake” zone around the perimeter. Swim areas that have been permitted by DEEP will be marked by white buoys with orange markings, and there should be a permit number posted on the buoys. They may or may not have small orange barrier floats to further demarcate the area. Should questions arise concerning the validity of the swim area (*no permit numbers or the area appears to have been changed/enlarged or keeps moving*), please contact DEEP’s Boating Division at 860-434-8638.





MARINE FISHING REPORT

Surface water temperatures in Long Island Sound (LIS) are in the mid 60's °F. Check out the following web sites for more detailed water temperatures and marine boating conditions:

<http://www.mysound.uconn.edu/stationstat.html>

http://marine.rutgers.edu/mrs/sat_data/?nothumbs=1

<http://www.ndbc.noaa.gov/>

<http://www.wunderground.com/MAR/AN/330.html>

IMPORTANT REMINDERS for ANGLERS:

- **NORTHERN DIAMONDBACK TERRAPIN TURTLE** – Many shore anglers fishing in the lower Connecticut and Housatonic Rivers and other estuaries are encountering these beautiful brackish water turtles while fishing. They will frequently feed on fishermen's live or dead bait when bottom fishing. They are a protected species with very low abundance. Please take great care (use needle nose pliers) when removing the hook and release the turtle without avoidable harm. Terrapins have a long lifespan of about 25 to 40 years. Thank you for supporting conservation!
- **STURGEON** – We've had a few reports of anglers inadvertently catching sturgeon while bottom fishing. Please, do not remove the fish from the water. Release all sturgeon without avoidable harm as their populations are slowly recovering and are at VERY low levels. They are a federally protected species. Thanks!

STRIPED BASS FISHING REGULATIONS ARE GOING TO CHANGE IN 2020, and DEEP is looking for your opinions and comments on this issue. Please consider clicking the link below to take a brief (2-3 min) survey to share your thoughts on striped bass regulations:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/CTStripedBass2019> This survey will close on July 15, 2019

Also stay tuned for announcement of a public hearing on striped bass regulations, to be held in August or September.

STRIPED BASS fishing has slowed down in CT. Hopefully, the NEW moon will turn the bite back on. But once the sun sets and darkness arrives – you will find striped bass on the prowl in shallow water. Try shore fishing (cast an eel or eel imitating lure) at your local [coastal state park](#) (see page 58 in the CT Fishing Guide) during the morning or evening. They are also catching some real nice keeper bass at the **Weather Buoy in front of Oyster Bay**. There are a lot more bunker in New York waters, from Oyster Bay to Kings Point. These cow bass are gulping fresh bunker and bunker spoons with some 50 pound bass and larger being caught. Penfield Reef, Middleground, BH Buoy and Sunken Island have been producing. As they say try "bunker dunkin at Sunkin." These bass have been gulping up FRESH bunker and live eels. Six inch Tsunamis, Talking Poppers and Heddon Superspooks have also been outstanding performers for striped bass. The Morningside area of Milford, Walnut Beach, Gulf Beach Pier and the Milford Audubon Society have been excellent locations for catching that trophy-sized striped bass. Dawn and dusk is prime time for large stripers on the reefs, rip areas and lower

coastal tidal rivers. Other good striped bass areas include the Watch Hill reefs, lower Thames River, the **Race, Montauk Point**, Plum Gut, Pigeon Rip, outer Bartlett Reef, Black Point, Hatchett Reef, lower Connecticut River (Great Island), Long Sand Shoal, Cornfield Point, Southwest Reef (outer), Westbrook, Six Mile Reef, Falkner Island area, the reefs off Branford, New Haven Harbor (including Sandy Point), Charles Island area, Housatonic River, buoys 18 and 20 off Stratford Point, Stratford Shoal/Middle Ground, Bridgeport Harbor, Penfield Reef, around the Norwalk Islands, and Cable and Anchor Reef. Shore locations include...Connecticut River by Dock and Dine and the DEEP Marine Headquarters fishing pier at night. ***Please use circle hooks when fishing with bait to prevent gut hooking and practice catch & release.***

SUMMER FLOUNDER (fluke) fishing is fair in Long Island Sound. The Milford, Woodmont, Gulf and Walnut beach areas have been productive. Although this past week fluke fishing has been slow on both sides of the Sound (NY & CT). Still, there have been some impressive reports coming in of doormat-sized fluke (10lbs) being caught using Gulp Alive, spearing, squid attached to a bucktail, using a high-low rig in very deep water. Another winning spot this week for fluke has been buoy 20 off the Housatonic River. Mid to western LIS anglers are still reporting good numbers of sub-legal sized fish and a few keepers mixed in, up to 7 pounds. (Norwalk/Stratford/New Haven/Woodmont area). **Fish deeper this time of the year (60-120')**. Fluke spots include south shore of Fishers Island (Isabella Beach, Wilderness Point), Watch Hill to Napatree Point, off the Stonington breakwater, mouth of the Mystic River to Groton Long Point, lower Thames River channel, Gardiners Bay over to Greenport, NY, Twotree Channel, Black Point/Niantic Bay/River, Long Sand Shoal, Westbrook-Clinton area, Falkner Island area, New Haven Harbor to West Haven, off the mouth of the Housatonic River, Norwalk Islands, and across over to Port Jefferson, NY. **Minimum size is 19 inches and the daily creel limit is 4 fish per person.** Time to get the boat, and fishing gear ready for some phenomenal fluke fishing. [CT Bait & Tackleshop List](#)

BLACK SEA BASS fishing is good. The Middleground and Six Mile Reef are still producing some trophy-sized fish. The green can "C" off of Stratford Shoal Lighthouse in 35'-45' of water can land you several 20" fish when using a high-low rig with heavy clam chum on the bottom. Squid and spearing also attracting these delicious eating beautiful sea bass. Fishing has also been very good this past week off of Buds Reef and buoy 28-C, buoy 32-A and buoy 38 off of Rye, NY's Playland Amusement Park. Black Sea Bass prefer FRESH clams. Remember, **CT black sea bass regulations are as follows...15 inch min. length, 5 fish daily limit.** Berkely Gulp (swimming mullet) on a jig along with squid and a spinner works great for these "Bucketmouths". They are still in deep water, spawning over the sand dunes and slowly migrating east to Block Island Sound. Sea Bass will locate and set up over any structure or wreck.

SCUP (porgy) fishing is very good in Long Island Sound. Nice sized scup have been caught at **Penfield Reef, Jennings Beach, Sunken Island, Buds Reef, buoy 32-A, Buoy 38 (off Playland), Saint Marys by the Sea, Pleasure Beach Family Pier, Sherwood Island State Park and South Benson in Fairfield.** Parking at South Benson is free if you park adjacent to the gate guard house. Seriously, try fishing for some "reef slammers" and enjoy some great fishing...there are lots of scup around for all. **Scup have been the prime target of shore anglers in the Milford area this week, and with great success.** Scup have been preferring sand worms but squid and clams are working as well. **Scup fishing has also been exceptional when using a high-low rig, and they are eating up clams in deep water.** Porgy fishing has also been reported at these shore fishing locations: Mystic River Park, UCONN Avery Point, Rocky Neck State Park, **Harkness Memorial State Park**, Meigs Point Hammonasset State Park and **Fort Trumbull State Park.** Locate your favorite [Enhanced Shore Fishing Opportunities](#) for these hard fighting and excellent eating "Reef Slammers". Contact your [local bait and tackleshop](#) for updated fishing information. Time to plan a trip on a party/charter boat in CT. [CT Party Boat Association.](#)

STRIPED SEAROBIN fishing is awesome in LIS. These beautiful and strange looking fish are now very common, especially when bottom fishing at many of Connecticut's shore fishing sites. **Searobins are in**

abundance almost everywhere, and more and more anglers are realizing that filleting them is well worth it - they are quite tasty. They love sandworms, squid and any live or dead bait. Please be careful when handling them...be mindful of their spines located on top of their head and gill cover.

BLACKFISH (TAUTOG) fishing season is open in Connecticut waters. **The daily creel limit is 2 fish per person and the minimum size is 16 inches.** Tautog love eating crabs...try green, Asian and hermit crabs for bait. Look for tautog in shallow water as they begin spawning over shellfish beds. Other prime locations include: pilings with mussel beds and rock (reef) piles (5 to 30 ft).

WEAKFISH fishing continues to impress with good numbers of 18-28 inch size fish being caught in the central and eastern Sound (Milford, West Haven beaches). Central and western Sound catches are improving as the population rebounds. Good fishing in Niantic, New Haven Harbor by the breakwaters over to Woodmont/Milford Point and along Stratford shoals. They've also been reeling them in at West Haven Sandy Point and the Sandy Point Audubon Society. **Weakfish prefer sand worms and clams at low light and dusk.** One of the best eating saltwater fish you will ever catch.

SAND SHARKS (SMOOTH DOGFISH) fishing is very good in Long Island Sound. They are very abundant and fun to catch when bottom fishing from shore or boat. The name "dogfish" stems from their habit of feeding in packs—sometimes numbering in the hundreds. A really cool looking cartilaginous fish is slender, with elongated cat-like eyes, triangular fins, and an asymmetrical, notched caudal (tail) fin. Unlike most sharks, this **dogfish** has rows of flat grinding teeth rather than sharp blades, which are ideal for crushing and chewing the crustaceans and mollusks that it hunts. They will bite on any bait fished on the bottom. Often found mixed in with scup, summer flounder and sea robins.

BLUE CRAB. With water temps warming up, crabs are molting faster and more frequently. There appears to be a lot of smaller crabs out there...a good sign for a good year of crabbing. By the end of the month...there should be good numbers of legal-sized blue crabs to catch. Please release all sub-legal crabs with care. Also, please remember it's mating season for the crabs and release all egg-bearing females (sooks or lemon bellies). **Remember...all egg bearing females must be released without avoidable harm. Minimum carapace length is 5 inches for a hard shell crab.** Please contact your local bait and tackle shop for most updated information (local hot spots), legal crab traps and bait to use for your fun-filled crabbing. Legal gear types include: scoop (dip) net, hand line, star crab trap, circular (topless) trap not exceeding 26 inches in diameter. Maryland Style Crab traps are prohibited. **Chicken with the skin on it (along with a long handle net) is the preferred method to capture these tasty crabs.** [Blue Crab Fact Sheet](#)

NOTABLE CATCHES

Species	Length (in.)	Weight (lbs)	Angler
Black Sea Bass	20.5"	3 lbs 4 ozs.	Tyler Katz
Pinfish	13.5"	C&R	Evan Kamoen
Sand Shark (Dogfish)	47"	C&R.	Joselin B.
Blue Crab	8"	1 lb 1 oz	Mason D.

- **CONNECTICUT STATE BOUNDARY LINE IN LONG ISLAND SOUND.** Anglers please note, although Connecticut has reciprocity with neighboring states (New York, Rhode Island, Maine and Massachusetts), residents of Connecticut are required to have a CT Resident Marine Waters Sport Fishing License to fish in the Marine District.
 - **CT TIDE INFORMATION** can be found on page 64 of the [2019 CT Fishing Guide](#).
 - **FISH RULES APP** Fish Rules is a totally new and innovative way to understand recreational saltwater fishing regulations for state and federal waters from Maine to Texas.
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REPORTING YOUR RECREATIONAL FISHING ACTIVITY – CT’S MARINE ANGLER SURVEY

CTDEEP Marine Fisheries Program is responsible for conducting the Access Point Angler Intercept Survey (APAIS) in CT to collect saltwater recreational fishing catch data. This data is part of [NOAA’s Marine Recreational Information Program \(MRIP\)](#) an extremely important survey used to manage our marine fisheries. You can find CTDEEP marine fisheries staff aboard party boats, visiting marinas, boat launch ramps, canvassing local beaches, piers, and at other fishing access points to gather accurate catch information.

When you’re out fishing, please keep an eye out for marine angler survey field staff! The survey takes 5 minutes to complete. Any information you can provide them will remain confidential and is greatly appreciated. For more opportunities to report your recreational catch, please visit Marine [Volunteer Angler Survey](#).

CAUGHT A TROPHY FISH - MARINE TROPHY FISH AWARD PROGRAM AFFIDAVIT

For Current Connecticut Recreational Fishing Regulations: Anglers should consult the 2019 Connecticut Fishing Guide which is now available at most Town Clerks Offices, DEEP offices and at tackle stores selling fishing licenses. Current regulations, electronic versions of the Fishing Guide and additional information can all be accessed on the DEEP website at: www.ct.gov/deep/fishing.

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DEEP WEEKLY Fishing Report



**Connecticut Department of
ENERGY & ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION**

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