



www.ct.gov/deep

Declaration of Regulation Change (16-03)

Under authority of Section 26-25 of the Connecticut General Statutes the commissioner may, when he finds that the harvest level for a species exceeds or fails to meet the harvest level for efficient management of such species, declare a closed season or extend the open season for the sport fishing of such species. Under the authority of CGS Section 26-102 the commissioner may establish fish spawning areas and refuges on any waters. In addition, under the authority of 26-159a of the Connecticut General Statutes and Section 26-159a-22 of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies, the Commissioner of Energy and Environmental Protection is authorized to establish or adjust, by declaration, closed seasons, length limits, creel limits, trip limits and trip limit adjustment values in order to comply with interstate fishery management plans adopted by the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission or the U.S. Department of Commerce.

RECREATIONAL FISHERY MEASURES FOR 2016

In accordance with the aforementioned authority the following sections of departmental regulations are amended as specified on pages 2 through 6 of this declaration:

- 26-159a-1. Sport and commercial restrictions for marine and anadromous species;
- 26-159a-2. Striped bass (*Morone saxatilis*);
- 26-159a-4. Minimum lengths;
- 26-159a-7. Creel limits, and;
- 26-159a-20. Closed recreational fishing seasons.



Robert J. Klee 3/28/16
Commissioner **Date**

Under the authority of RCSA Sec. 26-159a-22 the sport fishing minimum length and creel (possession) limits are modified as follows:

26-159a-2. Striped bass (*Morone saxatilis*)

(a) Except as provided in subsection (h) of this section, the minimum legal length and daily creel limit for striped bass shall be as specified in sections 26-159a-4 and 26-159a-7, respectively, of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies.

(h) Bonus Striper Fishing Program. In addition to the creel limit specified in Section 26-159a-7, one striped bass at least 22 inches but less than 28 inches total length may be possessed daily between May 1 and December 31, both dates inclusive, provided the person harvesting such fish has a valid Connecticut resident or non-resident fishing license and such fish is affixed with a valid 2016 bonus striped bass tag issued by the department.

(1) The tag shall be permanently affixed to the lower jaw of the fish immediately upon harvest. The tag shall remain affixed to the fish until such fish is taken to the home or other location where the fish is to be consumed.

(2) The person taking such bonus striped bass shall immediately upon harvesting such fish, record the date of harvest, the total length of the fish harvested, and their conservation identification number on the 2016 bonus striped bass catch report card issued with the tag by the department. The person harvesting such fish shall mail or otherwise return such report card to the department within forty-eight hours of harvesting such fish.

26-159a-4. Minimum lengths

(a) No person, while on the waters of this state or on any parcel of land, structure, or portion of a roadway abutting tidal waters of this state shall possess or land any fish of the following species taken by sport fishing methods, regardless of where taken, if it is less than the identified length as measured from the tip of the snout to the end of the tail:

(1) Scup (porgy) (*Stenotomus chrysops*): ~~[10.5]~~ **10** inches, except that no person ~~[on a vessel operating under the authority of a party/charter vessel registration issued under section 26-142a of the Connecticut General Statutes shall possess or land fish less than 11 inches;]~~ **at an enhanced opportunity shore fishing site defined in subsection (d) of this section shall possess or land fish less than 9 inches;**

(3) Summer flounder (fluke) (*Paralichthys dentatus*): ~~[19.5]~~ **18** inches, **except that no person at an enhanced opportunity shore fishing site defined in subsection (d) of this section shall possess or land fish less than 16 inches;**

(7) Tautog (blackfish) (*Tautoga onitis*): ~~[14]~~ **16** inches;

(10) Black sea bass (*Centropristis striata*): ~~[12]~~ **15** inches;

(11) American eel (*Anguilla rostrata*): ~~[6]~~ **9** inches;

(d) Enhanced opportunity shore fishing site means any public access fishing site listed in Appendix A.

26-159a-7. Creel limits

(a) Unless otherwise specified in section 26-112-45 of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies, the daily creel limit for species taken by sport fishing methods, including spears of any kind, shall be as set forth in this subsection. No person, other than a person authorized to take finfish under a license or registration issued pursuant to section 26-142a of the Connecticut General Statutes, while on the waters of this state or on any parcel of land, structure, or portion of a roadway abutting tidal waters of this state shall possess or land any of the following species, regardless of where taken, in excess of the identified number.

(2) Black sea bass (*Centropristis striata*): ~~[25]~~ **5**, **except that paying passengers on a vessel operating under the authority of a party or charter fishing vessel registration issued under section 26-142a of the Connecticut General Statutes may possess not more than 8 fish;**

(3) Summer flounder (fluke) (*Paralichthys dentatus*): 5 fish;

(4) American shad (*Alosa sapidissima*) and hickory shad (*Alosa mediocris*): 6 fish of both species in the aggregate;

(5) Scup (porgy) (*Stenotomus chrysops*): ~~[10]~~ **30** fish, except that paying passengers on a vessel operating under the authority of a party/charter vessel registration issued under section 26-142a of the Connecticut General Statutes may possess 45 fish per angler from September 1 to October ~~[15]~~ **31**, inclusive;

(6) American eel (*Anguilla rostrata*): ~~[50]~~ **25 fish;**

(7) Winter flounder (*Pseudopleuronectes americanus*): ~~[10]~~ **2** fish;

(10) Tautog (blackfish) (*Tautoga onitis*): ~~[4]~~ **2** fish from ~~[January]~~ **April 1 to April 30**, 2 fish from July 1 to August 31, and 4 fish from October ~~[1]~~ **10 to December 6**, all dates inclusive;

(12) Weakfish (*Cynoscion regalis*): ~~[6]~~ **1** fish; ~~[and]~~

(13) Striped bass (*Morone saxatilis*): ~~[2]~~ **1** fish; ~~[and]~~

(14) Menhaden (*Brevoortia tyrannus*): 50 fish or 5 gallons, whichever is the greater amount.

Under the authority of CGS Section 26-25, the following closed recreational fishing seasons will be effective upon publication in the Connecticut Law Journal.

26-159a-20. Closed recreational fishing seasons

(a) No person, while on the waters of this state or on any parcel of land, structure, or portion of a roadway abutting tidal waters of this state shall take, possess or land any of the following species taken by sport fishing methods, regardless of where taken, **except** during the following periods.

(1) Scup (porgy) (*Stenotomus chrysops*): ~~[For persons on a vessel operating under the authority of a party/charter vessel registration issued under section 26-142a of the Connecticut General Statutes, October 16 to June 11, inclusive; for all other persons, September 27 to May 23, inclusive;]~~ **May 1 to December 31, both dates inclusive;**

(2) Tautog (*Tautoga onitis*): ~~[May 1 to June 30, September 1 to September 30, and December 7 to December 31;]~~ **April 1 to April 30, July 1 to August 31, October 10 to December 6, all dates inclusive;**

(3) Summer flounder (fluke) (*Paralichthys dentatus*): ~~[September 2 to May 23],~~ **May 17 to September 21, both dates inclusive; [and;]**

(4) Winter flounder (*Pseudopleuronectes americanus*): ~~[May 31 to March 31]~~ **April 1 to December 31, both dates inclusive; and**

(5) Black sea bass (*Centropristis striata*): May 1 to December 31, both dates inclusive.

Under the authority of CGS Section 26-102, the waters open to American shad harvest are restricted to the Connecticut River and its tributaries.

26-159a-1. Sport and commercial restrictions for marine and anadromous species

(f) Between January 1 and December 31, 2016, both dates inclusive, no person shall possess American shad taken from the waters of this state except from the waters of the Connecticut River and its tributaries. For the purposes of this subsection the seaward limit of the Connecticut River exception area is a line extending between the eastern extremity of Griswold Point at latitude 41 degrees 16.69 minutes north, longitude 72 degrees 18.84 minutes west, and the Saybrook Breakwater light at latitude 41 degrees 15.79 minutes north, longitude 72 degrees 20.56 minutes west. All American shad caught outside of the Connecticut River exception area as described in this subsection shall be immediately returned, without avoidable injury, to the waters from which taken.

**Appendix A. Section 26-159a(d) Enhanced Opportunity Shore Fishing Sites at which summer flounder and scup may be taken as small as 16 and 9 inches, respectively.
Cont.**

County	City	Owner	Site (w/ Link)
Fairfield	Bridgeport	City	Pleasure Beach Fishing Pier
Fairfield	Bridgeport	City	Saint Mary's by the Sea
Fairfield	Bridgeport	City	Seaside Park
Fairfield	Fairfield	City	Ash Creek Open Space
Fairfield	Fairfield	City	Jennings Beach
Fairfield	Fairfield	City	Penfield Beach
Fairfield	Fairfield	City	Penfield Reef
Fairfield	Norwalk	City	Calf Pasture Beach
Fairfield	Norwalk	City	Maritime Aquarium Park
Fairfield	Stratford	City	Bond's Dock
Fairfield	Stratford	City	Long Beach
Fairfield	Stratford	City	Point-No-Point
Fairfield	Stratford	City	Russian Beach
Fairfield	Stratford	City	Short Beach Park
Fairfield	Westport	State	Sherwood Island State Park
Middlesex	Old Saybrook	State	South Cove Causeway
Middlesex	Old Saybrook	City	Saybrook Point
New Haven	Branford	City	Branford Point
New Haven	Guilford	City	Chaffinch Island Park
New Haven	Madison	State	Hammonasset Beach State Park
New Haven	Milford	Audubon	Connecticut Audubon Coastal Center
New Haven	Milford	City	Gulf Beach
New Haven	Milford	State	Silver Sands State Park
New Haven	New Haven	City	Crisuolo Park
New Haven	New Haven	State	Tomlinson Bridge Fishing Pier
New Haven	New Haven	State	Fort Nathan Hale Park
New Haven	West Haven	City	Bradley Point Park
New Haven	West Haven	City	Sandy Point
New Haven	West Haven	City	Sandy Point Bird Sanctuary

Appendix A. Section 26-159a(d) Enhanced Opportunity Shore Fishing Sites at which summer flounder and scup may be taken as small as 16 and 9 inches, respectively.

County	City	Owner	Site (w/ Link)
New London	East Lyme	City	Cini Memorial Park
New London	East Lyme	City	Hole-in-the-Wall Beach
New London	East Lyme	City	McCook Park
New London	East Lyme	State	Rocky Neck State Park
New London	Groton	State	Bluff Point State Park and Reserve
New London	Groton	State	UCONN-Avery Point
New London	Groton	City of Groton	Eastern Point Beach
New London	New London	City	City Pier and Waterfront Park
New London	New London	State	Fort Trumbull State Park
New London	Old Lyme	State	DEEP Marine Headquarters-Ferry Landing Park
New London	Stonington	City	Mystic River Park
New London	Stonington	State	Stonington Point
New London	Stonington	City	Stonington Town Dock Fishing Pier and Memorial
New London	Waterford	State	Harkness Memorial State Park
New London	Waterford	City	Mago Point Park
New London	Waterford	City	Waterford Beach Park