

CT DEEP **2019**
FISHING REPORT NUMBER 23
9/19/2019



Spanish Mackerel (*Scomberomorus maculatus*)



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INLAND REPORT

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DEEP'S FALL STOCKINGS HAVE BEGUN! – SEE PAGE 2.

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

LARGEMOUTH BASS fishing continues to be mostly slow to fair with a few places on the good side. Plenty of signs that things should be picking up but we're not there yet in many places. Anglers at some southeastern CT lakes (Amos Lake, Beach Pond, Glasgo Pond, Hopeville Pond, Long Pond, Pachaug Pond) are finding some action but they definitely have to work hard to do so, and big fish are really hard to come by. Quaddick Lake has generally been fishing well and **catches included a 8 lb 3 oz beast** (interestingly, the crankbait bite was on, and the same angler also caught a number of 2-4 lb fish), Mashapaug Lake and Bigelow Pond have been really slow, Candlewood Lake and Lake Lillinonah have been slow while East Twin Lake has been OK. The more adventurous anglers have been finding some action at Old Killingly Pond.

Tournament angler reports are from Aspinook Pond (fair to good, 2.0 lb lunger), Mansfield Hollow Reservoir (fair for one club, with a 2.0 lb lunger; slow for another, with a 3.25 lb lunger), Mashapaug Lake (real tough, with a 2.8 lb lunger), Pachaug Pond (tough for one club), Quaddick Reservoir (fair to good for one club, with a 3.36 lb lunger; tough for another club, with a 2.5 lb lunger), Candlewood Lake (slow, 4.17 lb lunger) and East Twin Lake (fair to good, 4.99 lb lunger and a 2.15 lb average weight per fish).

SMALLMOUTH BASS. Candlewood Lake (alewives or swimbaits may work) and Lake Lillinonah remain slow. River smallmouth fishing on the upper Housatonic River has still been good, the upper CT River (Enfield area) continues to be quiet and the Shetucket River and Quinebaug River are providing some action (try poppers and

November 1 Deadline to Enter Your Family Fishing Cover Shot



Time is getting short, to enter!!
Send your best family fishing "shot" to deep.inland.fisheries@ct.gov by November 1, 2019!

night crawlers). **Tournament angler** reports are from Aspinook Pond (a couple in the bags), Pachaug Pond (a few, 2.86 lb lunker) and Candlewood Lake (slow).

TROUT-STOCKING. Our fall trout stocking continued this week with the following being stocked:

RIVERS & STREAMS. In **eastern CT**, the **Natchaug River** (1,000 12" and up Rainbow Trout), **Hammonasset River** including the TMA (300 12" and up Rainbow Trout in the TMA, 200 9-12 inch Rainbow outside the TMA), upper and lower **Scantic River** (total of 1,400 9-12 inch Rainbow, 1,000 in the upper, 400 in the lower section), **Roaring Brook** (Glastonbury, 500 9-12 inch Rainbow), the **Hockanum River TMA** (300 9-12 inch Rainbow) and the **Willimantic River TMA** (650 9-12 inch Rainbow).

In **western CT**, the **Pequonnock River** in Trumbull Basin (600 12" and up Rainbow Trout and 400 9-12 inch Rainbow), **Sleeping Giant TMA** (Mill River, Hamden; 500 9-12 inch Rainbow), the **Naugatuck River TMA** (500 12" and up Rainbow Trout) and the **lower Naugatuck River** (Beacon Falls area; 1,000 9-12 inch Rainbow). Additionally, the Metropolitan District Commission stocked the **West Branch Farmington River** with 1,700 Rainbow Trout 12+ inches from the Goodwin Dam to Riverton.

TROUT PARKS: The **Natchaug River** (400 12" and up Rainbow Trout) in eastern CT.

Throughout the next several weeks we will be stocking more of our Trout Parks, additional Trout Management Areas, Trout Management Lakes, Trophy Trout Areas, and some of the most popular waters that do not have any special trout designation. **Note however that we are continue to monitor conditions and may need to suspend stocking for a bit if water temperatures, oxygen level, and flows become problematic for trout.**

We are not allowed by state statute to release most stocking information ahead of time, however, as soon as we stock we get the word out via our [Facebook page](#) and have a list on our [web page](#). A very popular application is our [interactive trout stocking map](#), which shows the number of days since a waterbody was last stocked. A second popular use of this map is to find new places to fish.

TROUT- RIVERS & STREAMS. Flow conditions in CT remain variable with at or higher than typical early September flows east of the Connecticut River and flows at or a bit below typical levels west of the Connecticut River (see *stream flow graphic on page 5* or check stream flows anytime for 68 USGS gauging stations at the [USGS web site](#)). Warm dry days are forecast for the weekend and beyond. We are continuing

Calling All Trout & Salmon Anglers!

We will be hosting a series of town hall style meetings to discuss your preferences and desires related to trout and salmon fishing. Stay tuned for additional details, but for now *save a date*.

- ❑ **10/5 (Saturday)** DEEP's Quinebaug Valley State Trout Hatchery from 3-5 pm. [RSVP](#)
- ❑ **10/7 (Monday)** DEEP's Sessions Woods Wildlife Management Area, Burlington from 7-9 pm. [RSVP](#)
- ❑ **10/10 (Thursday)** Connecticut Forest and Park Association Headquarters, Middlefield from 7-9 pm [RSVP](#)
- ❑ **10/18 (Friday)** DEEP's Quinebaug Valley State Trout Hatchery from 7-9 pm [RSVP](#)
- ❑ **10/21 (Monday)** DEEP's Kellogg Environmental Center, Derby, from 7-9 pm [RSVP](#)
- ❑ **10/22 (Tuesday)** DEEP's Franklin Swamp Wildlife Management Area, Franklin from 7-9 pm [RSVP](#)



to monitor conditions and may need to suspend stocking for a bit if water temperatures, oxygen level, and flows become problematic for trout.

Farmington River – Fishing continues to be good to very good and conditions for the weekend and next week should be good. Flows are clear, continue to be somewhat low (currently 152 CFS at Riverton plus 13 CFS from the Still River) and remain very comfortable for fishing. Anglers should expect flows to slowly decrease from their current level as the drawing down of West Branch Reservoir to facilitate Colebrook River Lake dam maintenance continues (*see Notes section on page 5 for more information on this project*).

Hatches/patterns Evening hatches are picking up. Good offerings include Tricos (*Tricorythodes* #22-28 in the morning; best in the catch-and-release-section of the river), *Ephemerella needhami* (#22-26, early morning), Winter/Summer caddis (#18-24), Blue Wing Olives (*Drunella* sps. & *Baetis* sps.; #18, 22-24, mid-late afternoon), Caddis (tan #16-20, all day; green #22-26, evening; summer pupa #18-20 morning), Cahills/Summer (*Stenonema ithaca*, #12-14, early morning), Midges (#22-28, morning), Black Ants (#12-18, midday in fast water), Black Beetles (#16-18, midday), Flying Ants (#18-22, midday, when windy/humid), and Stone Hopper (#8-12, mid-day). Try nymphing in the early morning. Fish are falling for Bead Head, Midge Pupa, 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), Muddlers, Grey or Black Ghost).

Housatonic River – The river continues to be very wadeable and fishable, and fishing has been good. Note that the water is super clear and flows are well below typical levels, currently 156 CFS at Falls Village and 258 CFS at Gaylordsville, anglers should plan accordingly in their gear selection. Anglers 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.

Hatches/patterns. Lots of different activity on the river. Key is to have a diverse box of sizes and colors. Patterns to try include Sulfurs (#14-18, evening), Blue Wing Olive (#16-18, cloudy days, early morning; spinner fall in evening), Light Cahill (#12-14, evening), (*Isonychia bicolor*, #10-12 has been active lately, fast water, evening) and Black caddis (#14-18, early morning & evening). Streamer fishing and nymphing with big stoneflies have been very productive. Don’t forget poppers and streamers (morning & evening). Patterns to try include White Zonkers, Wooly Buggers, Muddlers, Grey or Black Ghosts (#4-10). Also try brown crayfish.

TROUT- LAKES & PONDS – No reports for trout again this week. Crystal Lake, East Twin Lake and West Hill Pond may provide some sparse and limited action. Some reports of Kokanee Salmon on East Twin beginning to change into spawning mode.

CHANNEL CATFISH. The more productive areas include the CT River (evenings/nights best but cats are being found throughout the day in the Hartford area), Batterson Park Pond, Mohegan Park Pond, Wauregan Reservoir, Crescent Lake (Southington), Lake Wintergreen, and Beardsley Park Pond. Some cats are also be found at Lake Quonnipaug. Other places to try include Stillwater Pond, Burr Pond, Silver Lake, Hopeville Pond, and Black Pond.

COMMON CARP. Try south of Middletown in the CT River and the coves for big carp. Other carp favorite water include Lake Zoar, Candlewood Lake, the upper



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).

Housatonic River, Batterson Park Pond, Aspinoak Pond and West Thompson Reservoir. Pre-Bait your area to bring in plenty of hungry carp.

NORTHERN PIKE. Some pike reported from the CT River and the Pachaug River system (Ashland Pond, Hopeville Pond, Pachaug Pond). A couple of fish have also been caught in the lower Shetucket River. Bantam Lake, Lake Lillinonah, Lake Zoar, Winchester Lake and Mansfield Hollow Reservoir are also all good places for pike. Some nice pike can also be found in the small impoundments on the Housatonic River from Bulls Bridge up to Salisbury.

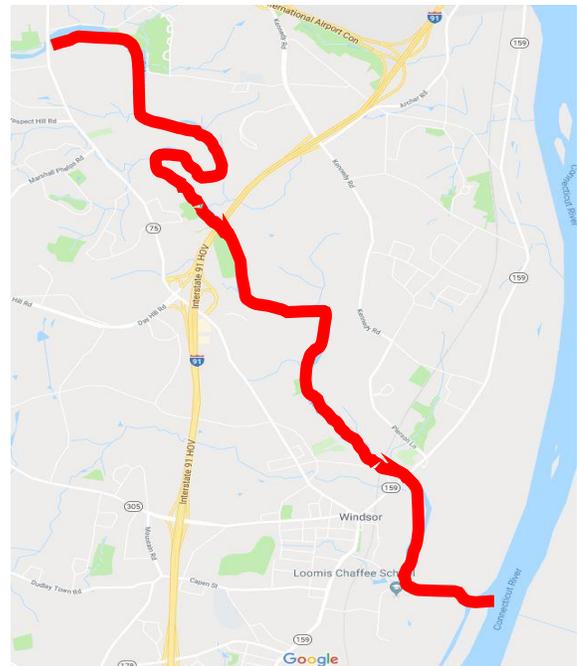
PANFISH. Good time of year to go to your favorite pond and load up on bluegill and perch. It's great for families and will get kids hooked on fishing. Fly-fishing with small poppers will provide some great catches. Some good sunnie action can be found statewide. Black Crappie are also providing some action across the state, try suspending poppers to catch a few. Looking for a new place to fish? Check out our [interactive mapping application](#).

WALLEYE. Late evening and nighttime is generally the best for Walleye fishing. Places to try include Beach Pond, Coventry Lake, Gardner Lake, Mashapaug Lake, Mount Tom Pond, Saugatuck Reservoir, Squantz Pond, Lake Saltonstall and Batterson Park Pond.

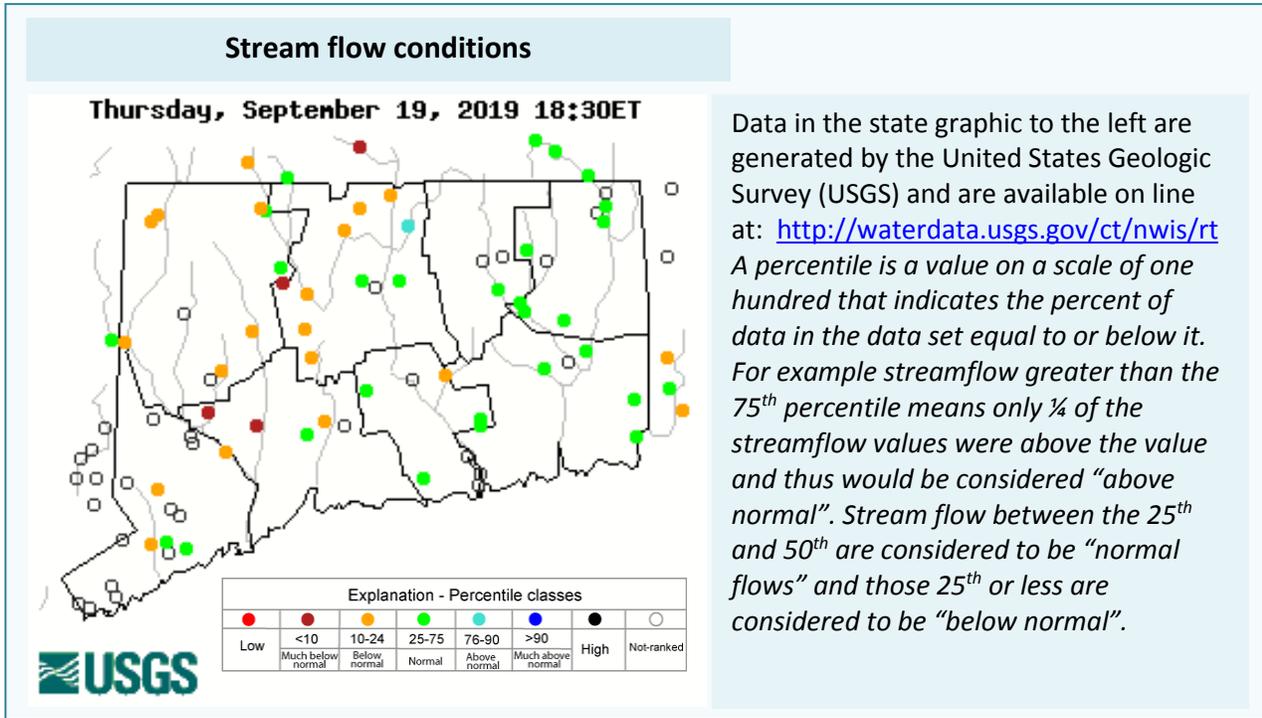
CHAIN PICKEREL. September pickerel action has been fairly good (and downright annoying for some bass anglers).

CONNECTICUT RIVER. Flows in the river continue on the low side (currently 3,750 CFS at Thompsonville), and while comfortable for fishing and boating, make getting into some areas difficult. **Bowfin** fishing remains good. Good action for **catfish** (Whites and Channels) throughout the river, especially in the Glastonbury and Middletown areas. For catfish, fish the deep holes by day and the adjacent shallow flats by night. Fishing for **Largemouth Bass** remains slow to fair in the Salmon River Cove/Haddam Meadows area. **Smallmouth Bass** were quiet in the Enfield area and some decent **Common Carp** action is being found throughout the river.

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 eat fish caught from this area remains in place until further testing is completed and results analyzed.**



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



NOTES & NOTICES:

COLEBROOK RIVER LAKE (boat launch) - UPDATE. Water levels have risen sufficiently for the regular boat launch at Colebrook River Lake to reopen and the launch is now open to use by the public. Boaters can call the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) at 860-379-8234 for updated information.

WEST BRANCH RESERVOIR, WEST BRANCH FARMINGTON RIVER & COLEBROOK RIVER LAKE. The water level in West Branch Reservoir will be lowered 70 feet from its usual elevation by MDC at a rate of no more than two feet a day. This will result in a minor increase in flows in the West Branch Farmington and Farmington rivers independent of any rain events. This increase will decrease over time as the reservoir drops. It is expected that lowering the reservoir to the necessary level will be completed in approximately 30 days.

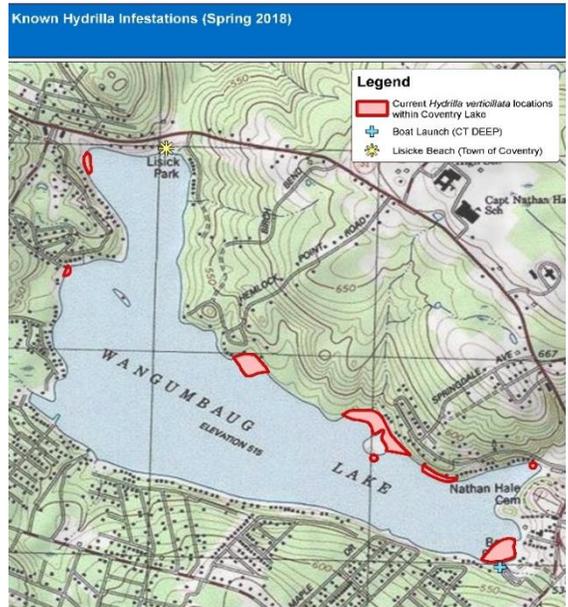
Once the desired level is reached repairs will begin and are anticipated to last two to three months. During this period flows in the West Branch Farmington River are expected to stay within typical levels dependent on precipitation amounts and water level manipulations of impoundments (especially Otis Reservoir) upstream of Colebrook River Lake and impoundments (such as Highland Lake) on tributaries. Recreational opportunities at Colebrook River Lake should be unaffected but will be severely limited at West Branch Reservoir during the repair project and drawdown.

Once the repairs to the Colebrook River Lake dam infrastructure are completed, refill of West Branch Reservoir is expected to take approximately 35 days. Downstream flows during this time are expected to stay within typical levels during refill.

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.

STANLEY QUARTER PARK POND (drawdown). A 2-3 foot drawdown for dam repairs is ongoing. Accessing the water may be limited.

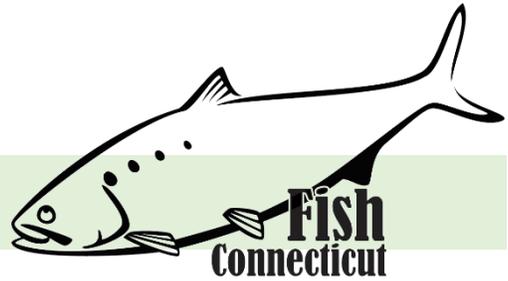


Known locations of hydrilla at Coventry Lake (Wangumbaug Lake). Boaters should avoid these areas noted with red to avoid fragmenting and spreading hydrilla.

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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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>

NOTE ON TAUTOG SURVEY: Some of you may have recently become aware of an online survey being conducted by researchers at UConn and CT Sea Grant concerning tautog recreational fishing regulations in Long Island Sound. While CT DEEP supports this research project and encourages CT anglers to participate, **we would like to assure anglers that there are no plans to change tautog regulations in the near future.** Current regulations will remain in place until the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission conducts its next tautog stock assessment (currently scheduled for 2021). If you have questions about the survey, or would like to take the survey, please contact Eric Schultz at eric.schultz@uconn.edu

Public Input Wanted regarding Striped Bass:

The DEEP Marine Fisheries Program is hosting two public hearings of the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission to gather input on Draft Addendum VI to the Interstate Fishery Management Plan for Striped Bass. Draft Addendum VI was initiated in response to the 2018 Benchmark Stock Assessment, which indicates the resource is overfished and experiencing overfishing. The Draft Addendum explores a range of management alternatives designed to end overfishing and reduce fishing mortality to the target level in 2020. Get more details [here](#).

The hearings will be held at:

7:00 PM, **Monday September 23, 2019**

DEEP Marine Headquarters Boating Education
Center (rear building)
333 Ferry Road
Old Lyme, CT 06371

AND

7:00 PM, **Wednesday September 25, 2019**

Port 5 Hall
69 Brewster Street
Bridgeport, CT 06605

If you cannot attend and would like to have formal comment- Fishermen and other stakeholders are encouraged to provide input on Draft Addendum VI either by attending one of the public hearings or providing written comment. Public comment will be accepted until 5 PM (EST) on October 7, 2019 and should be sent to Max Appelman, Fishery Management Plan Coordinator, 1050 N. Highland St, Suite A-N, Arlington, VA 22201; 703.842.0741 (FAX) or at comments@asmfc.org (Subject line: Striped Bass Draft Addendum VI). Additional details [here](#).

IMPORTANT REMINDERS for ANGLERS:

- **SEE A TANGLED TURTLE? CALL THE HOTLINE! 1-860-572-5955 ext. 107.** This is the time of year when leatherback, loggerhead, green, and Kemp's Ridley sea turtles return to northern waters, with many sightings around Long Island Sound.
- **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!

ATLANTIC BONITO & LITTLE TUNNY fishing is very good. Atlantic Bonito and Little Tunny (False Albacore, Albies) have been reported at The Race, Niantic Bay, Jordan Cove, **Sunken Island, Middleground, Norwalk Islands, South Benson Pier, Stratford Shoal and Sasco Beach**. These lightning fast fish are so quick and schools move so fast, that it's best to grab a pair of binoculars and watch for birds above feeding on leftover bait. Calm seas also help in locating them. This week little tunny have been caught on Deadly Dicks, Sluggos (4"-7"), Castmasters, **Hogy Epoxy Jig** and Albie Snacks. Although false albacore are poor for eating - just catching one will give you such a fight you will be bragging about it for weeks. There's a good chance your local party boat has run into a few schools treating customers with a great day of fishing.

STRIPED BASS fishing remains very good. It's the fall and time to fish your local coastal state park(s)...the fishing has been crazy good. Schoolie striped bass in the 5-8 pound class with some large holdovers, are still feeding in close to shore where all the bait is. Dusk and dawn has been the most successful times to fish and poppers have been the winning ticket. Reports are streaming in from the banks of the Housatonic where anglers are getting a real workout catching and releasing striped bass. Other excellent locations this week for strippers have been **Norwalk Harbor, Seaside Park, Gulf Beach break-wall and pier, Calf Pasture Beach, Walnut Beach, Todd's Point, Cummings Beach in Stamford and Charles Island** (fishing from the sandbar is strongly discouraged as it is quite dangerous due to rip tide). *Please use circle hooks when fishing with bait to prevent gut hooking and practice catch & release.*

BLACK SEA BASS and SCUP fishing is excellent in the Sound. Bottom fishing still red hot in the western Sound from New Haven to Greenwich. Try the Middleground, Norwalk Islands and Great Captains are still holding a gold mine of Black Sea Bass and Scup (Porgy). High-low rigs baited with squid and clams are your best bet. Most shore spots are housing scup although some locations more notable than others; Jennings and Sasco Beach in Fairfield, Saint Mary's by the Sea, Seaside Park, Stratford's Long and Short Beach and Sherwood Island State Park (fish from the boulders on the Western side but be safe navigating the rocks), Calf Pasture Beach and Todd's Point in Greenwich. List of some very accessible shore fishing locations are: Calf Pasture beach, Jennings and Penfield beach, Seaside Park, (Milford), Bradley Point Park (West Haven), New Haven, **Harkness State Park**, Rocky Neck State Park, **Kimberley Reef (Guilford)**, 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 tackle shop](#) for updated fishing information.

BLUEFISH schools are scattered but there are finally some real "alligators" out there (16 pounds). Mixed in with striper schools are large bluefish schools which are popping up throughout the middle-western Sound including the Middle-ground, Norwalk Islands, Sherwood Island, Compo Beach and Silver Sands State Park. They are feeding on just about any bait or artificial lure you offer them.

HICKORY SHAD fishing is good in the **Black Hall River/Lieutenant River (out-going tide)**, Housatonic River and the lower Connecticut River (DEEP Marine Headquarters fishing pier). Fishing remains good at Fort Trumbull, Black Hall, Clinton Harbor River systems and the lower Connecticut River.

WEAKFISH fishing is good in the western Sound. Weakfish have been reported from the New York state line to New Haven. The hottest spots to catch weakfish this week include **Buoy 18, Sunken Island and Execution Rock**. Weakfish is also surprisingly good in the central Sound (Falkner Island).

BLUE CRAB fishing is very good. Many of the large Jimmies (male crabs) are now available in the lower reaches of rivers (North Cove). Incoming tide has produced better crab fishing...as the crabs migrate into the shallow water to feed. **Remember...all egg bearing females must be released without avoidable injury. Minimum carapace length is 5 inches for a hard shell crab.** 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 and it's illegal to snag blue crabs. **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](#)

SHARK SPECIES YOU MAY ENCOUNTER IN COASTAL WATERS OF CONNECTICUT - : Anglers may catch Sand Tiger and Sandbar (Brown) Shark which are protected and prohibited species and must be released unharmed. **IF YOU DON'T KNOW, PLEASE LET IT GO!** [Coastal shark information.](#)

NOTABLE CATCHES

Species	Length (in.)	Weight (lbs)	Angler
Atlantic Bonito	23.5"	C&R	Jeremy M.

CAUGHT A TROPHY FISH – CLICK HERE FOR THE MARINE TROPHY FISH AWARD PROGRAM AFFIDAVIT

- **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.

DEEP WEEKLY Fishing Report



Connecticut Department of
ENERGY & ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION
79 Elm Street, Hartford, CT 06106
www.ct.gov/deep