

RHODE ISLAND Freshwater Fishing

2021-2022 REGULATION GUIDE



NEW
Trout Regulations Inside
see page 5 for details



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State of Rhode Island
Department of Environmental Management • Division of Fish & Wildlife



Welcome Letter



On behalf of Governor Gina Raimondo, I am happy to introduce the 2021 Freshwater Fishing Regulation Guide.

This guide is for those who are new to the sport as well as seasoned anglers and boaters. It provides current freshwater fishing and recreational boating regulations and highlights the research and survey initiatives, fishing access improvements and fishing opportunities provided by the Division of Fish & Wildlife biologists, development and hatchery staff to support excellent recreational opportunities in Rhode Island. It even has information on how youngsters can get a First Fish Award for their first catch!

Fishing is a popular outdoor activity for Rhode Islanders and tourists alike. Rhode Island is known for its excellent and varied angling and boating opportunities. In the pursuit of largemouth and smallmouth bass, trout, northern pike (our largest freshwater game fish), or a variety of warm-water species and pan fish such as black crappie, yellow perch, sunfish and pickerel, freshwater fishing in Rhode Island is a year-round activity. The excitement of fishing for trout on Opening Day and throughout the year, including fall trout fishing and winter ice fishing, ensures a great family activity for people of all ages.

DEM's hatchery program stocks over 100 fishing areas with brook, rainbow, golden rainbow, brown, and tiger trout several times a year to accommodate the growing demand by resident and non-resident anglers. Lucky anglers may even catch a Sebago salmon during one of our special fish-stocking programs. Throughout the year, our dedicated hatchery personnel are busy with initiatives to provide varied and plentiful fishing opportunities for recreational anglers.

For those who would like to try the sport, we encourage you to participate during Free Fishing Days on May 1 and May 2, when you can fish without the purchase of a fishing license or trout stamp. New or experienced anglers may also participate in one of our adult or children's Aquatic Resource Education (ARE) programs to hone their fishing skills or learn new ones like spin-casting or fly-fishing with our friendly and experienced instructors.

As we embark on the upcoming freshwater fishing season, I'd like to take this opportunity to reflect on some of the changes we made in 2020 so that anglers could safely fish for trout during the Covid 19 public health emergency. To reduce the number of people fishing at any given time and mitigate crowds, DEM staggered the days when licensed anglers could fish, asked anglers to fish alone or with just their household members and maintain a distance from others, and wear a mask. Rhode Islanders took solace in being able to get out and fish during a difficult time and allowed us to keep trout season open by respecting the rules. Rhode Island has beautiful fishing and boating access areas that are part of a healthy outdoors and that help raise our collective moral, particularly in these challenging times.

Recreational fishing is important to Rhode Island's economy, contributing more than \$130 million annually. There are an estimated 175,000 recreational anglers (age 16+) in Rhode Island, according to the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service National Survey of Fishing, Hunting, and Wildlife-Associated Recreation.

We appreciate Rhode Island's angling and boating community. This publication is made possible with your support and belongs to you. Recreational freshwater fishing and boating programs are funded by the USFWS Federal Aid in Sportfish Restoration Act (Wallop-Breaux Amendment) through contributions from anglers and boaters on the sales of equipment, motorboat fuels, license sales and Trout Stamps. As Director, I sincerely thank all the sportsmen and sportswomen who have contributed to this valuable conservation program.

We hope this guide enhances your fishing and boating experiences and that you feel encouraged to get out there and enjoy Rhode Island's picturesque fishing areas and the tranquility and connection to nature that fishing and boating provide. Whether you have been fishing all your life, getting back into the sport, or trying it for the first time, we guarantee you won't be disappointed.

Tight lines, everyone!

Janet Coit, Director

"It is the policy of the Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management to offer its services and accommodations to all orderly persons, and, as required, to all properly licensed persons, without regard to race, religion, color, national origin, ancestry, sex, age, or disability."

If you believe that you have been discriminated against in any program, activity, facility, or if you desire further information, please write to the Office for Equal Opportunity, U.S. Department of the Interior.

Office of the Secretary, Washington, D.C. 20240

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RHODE ISLAND Freshwater Fishing

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Photo by Vincent C.

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On the cover: Nora proudly poses for her picture with a beautiful largemouth bass. Photo credit: Scott Y.

Our Mission

Our mission is to ensure that the Freshwater, Marine, and Wildlife resources of the State of Rhode Island will be conserved and managed for equitable and sustainable use.

This guide contains a partial compilation of state laws and regulations pertaining to freshwater fishing and other related information. For more detailed information, refer to Title 20 of the General Laws of the State of Rhode Island or visit www.dem.ri.gov

License INFORMATION

Fishing License Information

1. A fishing license is required of any person 15 years of age or older wishing to catch or take fish in any freshwater stream or pond in the state (except as noted below).
2. A fishing license can be obtained on-line at dem.ri.gov/huntfish, from authorized agents such as bait and tackle shops, retail department stores, as well as some city and town clerk offices.
3. RI fishing licenses are reciprocal with Connecticut only for Beach Pond, Killingly Pond, Hazard Pond, and Peck Pond, and with Massachusetts for Wallum Lake.
4. The fishing license must be available and shown upon request.
5. The fishing license expires on the last day of February annually.
6. The fishing license will be revoked for violation of fishing laws.
7. A fishing license is not required of minors younger than fifteen (15) years of age.
8. A fishing license is not required of any blind person.
9. A fishing license is not required of landowners or for members of their families when fishing from property on which they are domiciled.
10. A free, special, permanent license may be obtained by any veteran of the armed forces who currently has a 100% disability rating or by any individual who is 100% permanently disabled.
11. A free, special, permanent license may be obtained by any resident over 65 years of age.

License Type	Fee (online)	Fee (vendor)
Resident (or current member of the armed forces)	\$18.00	\$20.00
Combination (Hunting & Fishing)	\$33.00	\$35.00
Non-resident	\$35.00	\$38.00
Non-resident tourist (three (3) consecutive days)	\$16.00	\$19.00
Resident Trout Conservation Stamp	\$5.50	\$6.00
Nonresident Trout Conservation Stamp	\$5.50	\$6.50

Trout Conservation Stamp

1. A Trout Conservation Stamp is required of any person wishing to keep or possess a trout, salmon, or charr caught in Rhode Island waters or to fish in a "catch & release" or in a "fly fishing only" area.
2. A Trout Conservation Stamp can be obtained on-line at dem.ri.gov/huntfish, from authorized agents such as bait and tackle shops, retail department stores, as well as some city and town clerk offices. Collector Trout Conservation Stamps can be purchased at DEM Office of Boating Registration and Licenses.
3. A Trout Conservation Stamp proof of purchase must be available and shown upon request.

FREE Fishing Days
May 1st and 2nd, 2021

Neither a Freshwater Fishing License nor a Trout Conservation Stamp will be required by residents or non-residents on the 1st and 2nd of May 2021.

4. The Trout Conservation Stamp expires on the last day of February annually.
5. A Trout Conservation Stamp is NOT required of the following:
 - a. Minors younger than fifteen (15) years of age.
 - b. Any resident or non-resident over 65 years of age.
 - c. Any person with a 100% disability.
 - d. Landowners or members of their families when fishing from property on which they are actually domiciled.
 - e. Any person possessing trout taken from a lake or pond which shares a border with a neighboring state.
 - f. Any person possessing privately-owned trout caught in privately-owned ponds.

Methods of Fishing

1. Unless otherwise specified, only a rod and reel or other hand-held and hand-operated device shall be used to catch fish in the fresh waters of the state. At no time shall a person place, operate, or superintend more than two (2) of these devices for the purpose of catching fish, except as noted below, and no more than three (3) hooks may be attached to each device.
2. Suckers, fallfish, and carp may be taken by snares, spears, or bow and arrow.
3. For the purpose of fishing through the ice, up to five (5) lines with a single hook on each, personally attended, and held by any device designed for that purpose (tip-up), may be used. See Exception #13 for Beach Pond, and Exception #14 for Killingly and Hazard Pond, page 5.
4. Freshwater minnows may be taken for bait with minnow traps, dip nets, and seines not greater than four feet (4 ft.) deep by eight feet (8 ft.) long and having a square mesh size not larger than one-fourth inch (1/4 in.) unless otherwise licensed by the DEM. This regulation does not supersede minimum size limits of the fish listed in regulations or current alewife/blueback herring regulations as detailed in the Diadromous Fisheries section found on page 11.

Find your next adventure with your Rhode Island hunting and fishing license!

DEM is proud to offer convenient access to hunting and fishing licenses directly through our expanded online system or in-person at your local vendors. It's now easier than ever to purchase Rhode Island hunting and fishing licenses, permits, tags and stamps, so you can get outdoors and enjoy the many recreational opportunities made possible through conservation and management of Rhode Island's natural resources. Visit DEM.RI.GOV/HUNTFISH to access frequently asked questions and purchase your license today.

DEM.RI.GOV/HUNTFISH



BIG BEAR

NORTHERN RI'S NEWLY RENOVATED ANGLERS HAVEN

Whats New?

- Fly Fishing Department
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 - Healthy Bait
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Big Bear, located in Northern Rhode Island, specializes in everything fresh water. Being so close to some of RI's best fishing holes, we carry a wide assortment of fresh bait and fishing gear for the weekend enthusiast-all the way to the anglers who fish the trail. Our staff can help outfit your needs as well as put you on the fish with our understanding of the areas lakes, ponds and streams.



BigBearRI.com

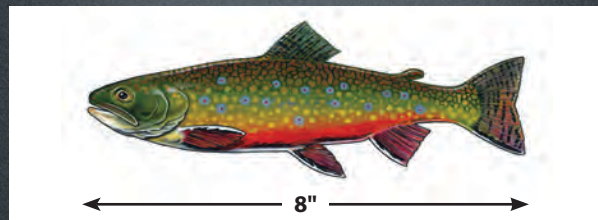
401 Putnam Pike - Glocester - RI 02814 - 401-949-0339

General INFORMATION

Prohibited Activities:

1. Fishing in any freshwater stream or pond within this state without a valid fishing license (except as noted on page 2).
2. Fishing in any stream, designated trout stream or designated trout pond of the state, unless otherwise regulated, between 11:59PM on last day of February to 6AM on the second Saturday of April, annually.
3. Possessing trout, salmon, or charr during the seasonal closure.
4. Using corn for bait in any designated trout waters.
5. Chumming in any designated trout waters.
6. Snagging fish in any fresh waters.
7. Using any substance injurious to fish life in any stream or freshwater pond within the state except by permit issued by the DEM.
8. Detonating any explosive within any stream or freshwater pond within the state.
9. Selling of any freshwater fish including, but not limited to, trout, largemouth or smallmouth bass, pickerel, northern pike, Atlantic salmon, American shad, or yellow perch taken from any freshwater stream, river, or pond within the state.
10. Stocking any freshwater stream or pond, public or private, within the state with ANY species of fish without having first obtained a permit from the DEM. For more information, call (401) 789-0281.
11. Releasing any live bait into the freshwaters of the state.
12. The use as bait of any variety of gold fish (*Carassius auratus*) in the fresh waters of the State.
13. The importation, sale, or possession of any variety of non-native fish, including, but not limited to goldfish (*Carassius auratus*), green sunfish (*Lepomis cyanellus*), or fathead minnows (*Pimephales promelas*) for use as bait in the fresh waters in the State.
14. Selling any live freshwater minnows for bait or possessing more than one hundred (100) live freshwater minnows without first having procured the appropriate license from the DEM.
15. Tagging, branding, marking, or otherwise willfully mutilating any fish which is to be released alive into any freshwaters of the state except by special permit issued by the Division of Fish and Wildlife.
16. It is prohibited that any person use foot gear with external felt soles or other natural or synthetic porous material capable of absorbing liquid that is attached to the soles of wading foot gear in any freshwaters of the state. This shall include any waters shared with adjacent states in which any RI Fishing regulations apply.
17. **AMENDED:** The taking of any fish in the freshwaters of the state by net, seine, trawl, or similar device, except for a dip net, for the landing of a fish caught by hook and line and the taking of baitfish, is prohibited. Cast nets and gill nets shall be prohibited.
18. The taking of any fish in the freshwaters of the state by any means other than angling, utilizing a hook(s) and fishing line, except for carp, suckers, and fallfish, which may be taken by snares, spears or bow and arrow.
19. **NEW:** Transport of any plant or plant part into or out of any Rhode Island waterbody on boats, vessels, other water conveyances, vehicles, trailers, fishing supplies, or any other equipment, with the exception of authorized research activities, species identification and other management activities.

NEW Regulation



The minimum size all trout or charr species taken from the waters of the state shall be eight inches (8"), measured from the tip of the snout to the tip of the tail.

GO FOR THE GOLD and Get a Golden Pin!

Are you up for the challenge?

The golden rainbow trout will be stocked on opening day this year and will be stocked in ponds across Rhode Island! And, like last year, our golden trout pin contest will be limited to the first two weeks after opening day!

From April 10, 2021 - May 3, 2021, if you catch a golden rainbow trout, you will be eligible to receive the coveted golden trout pin. Simply take a picture and send it to dem.fishri@dem.ri.gov. Remember, submissions need to be received no later than May 3rd to be eligible for the pin.



Benjamin E.

Seasons, Creel Limits, and Minimum Size Limits

Fish	Exceptions*	Season	Creel Limit**	Minimum Size
Trout	1-5, 10-15	Apr. 10 - Nov. 30	5	8"
	3-5, 10-15	Dec. 1 - Feb. 28	2	8"
Atlantic Salmon (migratory)	CLOSED see page 11			
Domestic (landlocked) Atlantic Salmon	1-3, 5, 8, 10-13	Apr. 10 - Feb. 28	2	11"
Northern Pike	1, 6, 13-15	No Closed Season	2	24"
Chain Pickerel	1, 6, 13-15	No Closed Season	5	14"
Largemouth & Smallmouth Bass (Black Bass)	1, 7, 13-15	No Closed Season	5	12"
American Eel	1, 9, 13-15	No Closed Season	25	9"
River Herring (Alewives, Blueback herring), Shad & Smelt	CLOSED see page 11			
All Other Freshwater Fish	1, 13-15	No Closed Season	None	None
Striped Bass	16	No Closed Season	1	28" - <35" ***

*** Striped Bass Fin Clipping: All striped bass 34" or larger harvested recreationally must have the entire right pectoral fin removed at the time of harvest.

** Creel Limit: Number of fish per person per day

* Exceptions as listed below:

Exceptions

- All lengths are measured from the tip of the snout to the tip of the tail.
- The open season on all species of trout, salmon, charr shall close annually on the last day of February at midnight and shall commence at 6:00 AM on the second Saturday of April, annually.
- From the second Saturday in April through November 30th annually, the daily creel and possession limits for trout shall be five (5) fish. From December 1st through the last day of February, annually, the daily creel and possession limits for trout shall be two (2) fish.
- NEW REGULATION:** The minimum size of all trout or charr species taken from the waters of the state shall be eight inches (8"). This applies to both wild and stocked trout.
- A **Trout Conservation Stamp** is required of an angler who wishes to (a) keep or possess a trout, domestic (landlocked) salmon, or charr or (b) fish in a designated 'catch and release' area or in a 'fly fishing only' area. See page 10 for more information.
- The daily creel and possession limits for northern pike shall be two (2) fish and the minimum size shall be twenty-four inches (24"). The daily creel and possession limits for chain pickerel shall be five (5) fish and the minimum size shall be fourteen inches (14").
- The daily creel and possession limits for black bass (largemouth and smallmouth bass) shall be five (5), either singularly or in aggregate and the minimum size shall be twelve (12) inches. No person shall possess any black bass less than twelve (12) inches in length.
- AMENDED:** The daily creel and possession limit for domestic (landlocked) Atlantic salmon (*Salmo Salar*) in the fresh waters of Rhode Island shall be two (2) fish per day and shall be included in the daily limit for trout, salmon, or charr. The minimum size limit for domestic or land-locked Atlantic Salmon is eleven inches (11"). No person shall take any Atlantic salmon from the Pawcatuck River downstream of the Potter Hill Dam.
- The recreational creel or possession limits for American eel (*Anguilla rostrata*) shall be twenty-five (25) fish per day, per person and the minimum size shall be nine inches (9"). No person shall take an eel from the freshwaters of the state unless in possession of a valid RI Freshwater Fishing License. There will be no closed season. No American eel may be commercially harvested from the freshwaters of the state and offered for sale without a valid commercial fishing license per RI Marine Fisheries (RIMF) regulations. If harvesting commercially with a valid commercial license from the freshwaters of the state, fishermen must adhere to regulations as set forth in RIMF regulations 250-RICR-90-00-3.
- The creel and possession limit for trout or charr taken in the Wood River between Route 165 and Barbersville Dam at Arcadia Road shall be limited to two (2) fish from the second Saturday in May through the last day of February (taken singularly or in aggregate).
- With the exception of designated 'catch and release' areas, any legally caught trout, salmon, or charr taken from the fresh waters of Rhode Island shall be immediately released alive into the waters from which they were taken or shall be killed at once and become part of the daily creel limit.
- That portion of the Falls River, Exeter, from the bridge at Austin Farm road downstream approximately 2 miles to the bridge off Brook Trail is designated a 'no kill' or 'catch and release' area. Fishing is permitted only with artificial lures equipped with a single barbless hook or a single barbed hook which has been crimped. All fish caught must be returned to the water immediately. The possession of any trout while fishing in this section of the river shall be prima facie evidence that said trout, salmon or charr were taken in violation of this regulation.
- Beach Pond, Exeter—Trout season will open on the second Saturday of April at 6:00AM and close at midnight on the last day of February, annually. Rhode Island regulations apply for trout, charr, black bass, and chain pickerel. The daily possession and creel limits for Atlantic salmon shall be one (1) per Connecticut regulations. Also in accordance with CT regulations, six (6) lines with a single hook each may be used while ice fishing.
- Killingly Pond, Glocester and Hazard Pond, West Greenwich, Rhode Island regulations apply for trout, charr, black bass, and chain pickerel. Six (6) lines with a single hook each may be used while ice fishing in accordance with CT regulations.
- Wallum Lake, Burrillville—Rhode Island Regulations apply.
- Striped bass, although a regulated marine species, are often caught in some freshwater rivers of the state recreationally. In these instances, please note that marine regulations will apply, please refer to RI Marine Fisheries Regulations 250-RICR-90-00-7.

Fishing Highlights of 2020

While 2020 was a challenging year, there were some great memories out on the water! Thank you to everyone who submitted pictures for the 2021-2022 Rhode Island Freshwater Fishing Guide.



Joe R. claimed the new State Record for rainbow trout this year! The fish weighed in at 12 lbs., 9.12 oz. and measured 29.75"!



Photo submitted by Chris X.

There is always a reason to smile when you catch a rainbow trout as big as you are!



Photo submitted by Colin R.

Benjamin shows off his early morning catch.

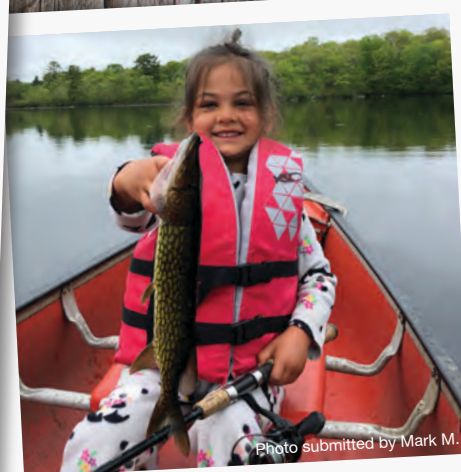


Photo submitted by Mark M.

This chain pickerel was no match for Claire!



Photo submitted by Kevin M.

There is no such thing as a bad day when you are bass fishing!



Danarith proudly displays his Game Fish Award worthy Rainbow Trout.

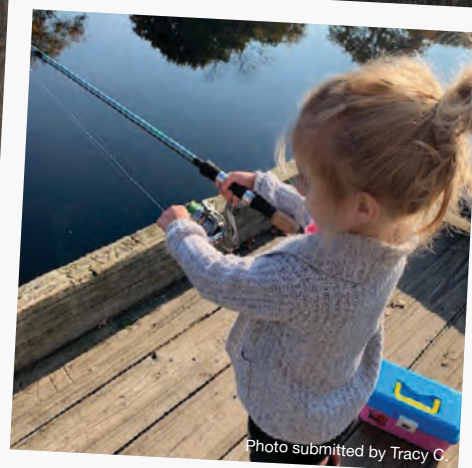


Photo submitted by Tracy C.

Hoping for that first trout bite.

Is that algal bloom on my favorite pond harmful?

RIDEM and RI Department of Health are working together to keep your fishing experience safe. During late summer through early winter, when the water levels are low and temperatures are high, scientists sample bodies of water for blue-green algae (also known as Cyanobacteria) toxins. If toxin levels are too high, warnings are issued and signs are posted to refrain from recreational activities on that particular body of water. Here is a little more information about Cyanobacteria:

What is Cyanobacteria?

Cyanobacteria is a blue-green algae that occurs naturally in freshwater systems. High temperatures and excess sunlight can lead to algal 'blooms' which have the potential to produce harmful toxins that are harmful to both human and animals. The toxins are released when the algae begin to die off or are ingested.

How do you identify a blue-green algal bloom?

Blooms generally occur in late summer or early fall when the water level is low and water temperature is high. There are no visual signs that a blue-green algae bloom is producing the harmful toxins; however, identifying an algae bloom may help you avoid the chance of exposure. Blue-green algae blooms are normally bright green or blue green in color, but can also be brown, red or purple. Water may appear cloudy and may produce an odor. The color of the algal bloom is a clue; however, confirmation of blue-green algae can only be identified using a microscope. Water samples should be tested for toxin presence.

What are the health risks?

Humans who come in contact with the blue-green algae toxins can develop rashes, blisters, hives, and nose and eye irritation. If swallowed, humans may experience diarrhea, vomiting, or neurotoxicity (numb lips, tingling fingers and toes, dizziness). Pets

or livestock that ingest the Cyanobacteria toxins can experience sickness, paralysis and even death. Neurotoxicity in animals is characterized by salivation, weakness, staggering, difficulty breathing, and convulsions.

What can you do to avoid Cyanobacteria toxins?

Adhere to all posted signs. Do not drink, swim, or fish in affected water bodies. Avoid contact with water that is discolored or has scum on the surface. Do not drink untreated water, whether algae blooms are present or not.

What does the state do to reduce human/pet exposure to the cyanobacteria toxins?

Not all species of blue-green algae produce toxins and the blue-green algae that can produce the toxins may not. Toxins can be detected through laboratory tests. Water testing is conducted throughout the summer and results are reported to RI Department of Health and RIDEM. **IF TOXINS ARE FOUND, A PRESS RELEASE AND ADVISORY IS ISSUED AND SIGNAGE IS POSTED AT THE POND. RIDEM WILL NOT STOCK AFFECTED PONDS WITH TROUT.**

Where can I get more information?

For more information, visit <http://www.health.state.ri.us/healthrisks/harmfulalgaeblooms/>.

Largemouth Bass Virus

RIDEM, in collaboration with the US Environmental Protection Agency and the US Fish and Wildlife Service, first began testing bass from Rhode Island lakes and ponds in 2006 for Largemouth Bass Virus (LMBV). To date, only three sites in Rhode Island have tested positive for LMBV: Olney Pond in Lincoln Woods State Park (2011), Echo Lake in Pascoag (2014), and Watchaug in Charlestown Pond (2016).

While LMBV has only proven fatal to largemouth bass, the virus has been found in some sunfish species such as bluegill and pumpkinseed. Common symptoms of the virus include hyper-buoyancy, spiral swimming and lethargy, which are attributed to damage to the swim bladder. Infected fish may not exhibit any signs of the virus until it is activated by stressful environmental conditions such as high water temperatures, low oxygen levels, droughts, secondary injuries, or bacterial infections. These are conditions that could trigger LMBV and potentially cause fish kills. While fish health biologists have indicated that LMBV is a naturally-occurring fish virus that does not pose a human health risk for people who eat or handle infected fish, all freshwater fish should be thoroughly cooked before being consumed.

DEM's Division of Fish and Wildlife advises anglers to minimize the spread of LMBV by not transplanting any fish from one water body to another; draining, cleaning and drying boats, motors and fishing gear between each use; not releasing bait fish into any water body; minimizing the stress to bass caught and released as much as possible during periods of high water temperatures; and reporting all fish kills to the Department at (401) 222-3070.



Photo submitted by Dan S.

///Rhode Island's Freshwater Mussels

By Branton Elleman, Seasonal Researcher, RI Division of Fish & Wildlife — Freshwater Fisheries

Ask a Rhode Islander what they know about mussels and you're likely to get a recipe containing tomato, chorizo, and wine for our saltwater variety. But further inland, in the rivers, streams, and ponds throughout the state, are a whole assortment of freshwater mussel species. Not nearly as tasty to humans, they none the less serve as a key food source for local wildlife and important part of the underwater ecosystem.

Once the egg is fertilized, a freshwater mussel begins its life as a mere speck, being cast into the water column to drift in a larval form called glochidia. If these larvae come into contact with a suitable fish host, such as a salmonid, they attach themselves to gills or fins and ride along as an essentially harmless parasite. Once they reach a certain size, the now miniature-mussel will release itself from the fish and settle into the substrate to grow further. The conditions that a young mussel can

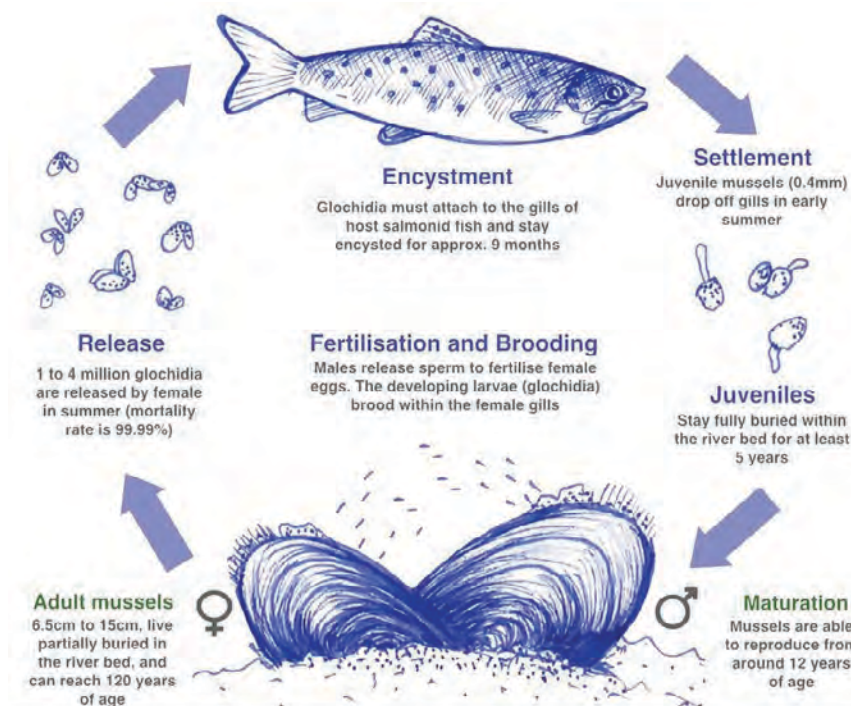
tolerate depend on the species. Some need to find themselves in pristine flowing waters with loose sand or gravel to survive, while others can survive in still water with a silty bottom.

Each species has subtle differences in morphology, including shape, color, patterning, and thickness. Their shells are generally dark, but older specimens often show heavy abrasion on the buried side that reveals lighter shades of brown or even white. A mussel has a left and right valve (the term for the shell

halves), connected by a hinge and flanked by its "beak," or umbo. Often the hinge is aided by two types of "teeth." These teeth help align the valves together when closed. Lateral teeth appear as long ridges parallel to the hinge and pseudocardinal teeth resemble little knuckles near the beak. Both usually come in odd-even arrangements that nest together when closed. But their exact number, placement, or even absence is a vital clue to determining the species of mussel. Therefore, outward appearance may not be enough to make a positive identification.

Once mature, a mussel may move about to find a more favorable spot. We have seen mussels crawl along the streambed during surveys, pushing and pulling themselves along with the help of a muscular foot they can slip out of their shell. You'd never call them fast, but at roughly a snail's pace they'll leave enough of a trail in the sand to notice. After settling on a location, either isolated or in large colonies, most mussels tend to burrow into the bottom and orient themselves vertically. They will then crack open their valves and expose their gills to the flowing water to filter feed.

Here they demonstrate perhaps their most valuable ecological service: filtration. As a mussel pulls water through its gills and internal organs, it absorbs nutrients to feed off of. Many pollutants or harmful organisms will also be filtered out from the water, either being stored in the mussel body tissue or expelled out in a harmless state. This feeding trait means freshwater mussels serve as an important indicator species. Their presence, or absence, can be a valuable clue as to the local water quality. Certain RI species, such as the Eastern Pearlshell, are especially sensitive to water quality and have seen significant decline as their cold water habitats degrade. This species among others, are listed as a species of greatest conservation need (SGCN) in Rhode Island. This classification further highlights



Life cycle of Eastern Pearlshell. (Source: PearlMusselProject.ie)



Photos: Corey Pelletier

their importance to watersheds and a need for targeted recovery efforts.

Rhode Island has eight (8) total documented species, but populations have seen a decline

throughout the 20th century. Historically rich and diverse populations have dwindled due to the combined effects of pollution, habitat degradation, invasive species, and host species decline (such as river herring and trout). To better assess current population health and diversity, the Rhode Island Division of Fish and Wildlife has begun conducting mussel surveys. A small team of 2-3 researchers will wade sections of rivers and streams, visually searching the bottom for mussels with viewing boxes (called bathyscopes). When mussels are encountered, they are identified by species, measured for length and counted. With this data, biologists can track populations and species distribution in order to monitor for population decline and identify potential restoration opportunities.

So the next time you're wading or swimming in one of the state's rivers or ponds, keep an eye out for freshwater mussels. You may find a lone mollusk hidden amongst the rocks or come across beds thick enough to coat entire sections of the bottom. Try to tread lightly to protect living mussel colonies but feel free to examine empty shells left behind by predators. The Connecticut DEEP website even has a handy guide to freshwater mussels that conveniently includes all of our species.

Children Only Ponds

Children Only (14 years of age and younger):

- Frosty Hollow Pond - Exeter
- Lapham Pond - Burrillville
- *Scott Evans Memorial Pond (Biscuit City) - S. Kingstown
- Seidel's Pond - Cranston
- Silvy's Pond - Cumberland

Children only ponds for the first two days of the trout season (April 10th & 11th):

- Cass Pond - Woonsocket
- Ponderosa Park Pond - Little Compton
- Slater Park Pond - Pawtucket

Children Only Pond from April 10th through Memorial Day, May 31st:

- Lloyd Kenney Pond - Hopkinton

*Wheelchair accessible.

Fishing Activities Requiring a Permit

1.17 Permits are required for organized fishing tournaments for state fishing and boating access areas and for the following private access areas: Johnson's Pond (Flat River Reservoir) in Coventry, and Waterman Reservoir, Glocester. Permits are required for six (6) or more persons and/or three (3) or more boats. Applications for the issuance of a permit must be submitted to the Division a minimum of three (3) weeks prior to the tournament. An organization may cancel a permitted fishing activity without penalty as long as written notice of cancellation is received at least three (3) weeks prior to the event. Failure to provide timely written notice shall result in a one (1) year revocation of an organization's eligibility to receive a permit for any organized fishing activity. Exceptions for unforeseen occurrences (e.g. weather, natural disaster) will apply at the discretion of the Division. The decision of revocation shall rest entirely with the Division. Permit applications may be obtained by contacting RIDEM Division of Fish and Wildlife, 277 Great Neck Road, West Kingston, RI 02892, Tel: (401) 789-7481. Applicants must complete all required information. The Division

reserves the right to limit the number of activities per location, per day, time period, or deny a permit for reasons of overuse or conflict with other activities.

a. The applicant must indicate on the application whether the fishing activity is a 'closed' or an 'open' activity. *A closed fishing activity is an event having a fixed or restricted number of participants. An open fishing activity is an event having an unrestricted number of participants.*

1. If the tournament is closed, the number of boats, vehicles, and participants must be entered on the application. The permit must be retained on site by the sponsor along with the list of participants and boat registration numbers.

2. If the tournament is open, the names of all participants and registration numbers of each boat on the day of the tournament must be made available to RIDEM Division of Law Enforcement. An estimated count of all participants, vehicles and boats shall be forwarded to the Division at least five (5) days prior to the start of the tournament.

3. Regardless if a fishing tournament is 'closed' or 'open', the organization must provide a report to the Division within five (5) days of the termination of the tournament which includes: the number of hours fished, the number of boats, numbers of participants, and, as applica-

ble, the total number of largemouth bass and smallmouth bass caught as well as the total weight of all largemouth bass and all smallmouth bass processed at weigh-in. This report may be sent as a letter to RIDEM Division of Fish and Wildlife or by completing the Bass Tournament Count Form. Failure to complete and submit the required information within five (5) days shall render the organization ineligible to conduct further organized fishing events for one year from the said event. Such revocation shall include any events for which a permit was previously issued.

b. Applicants requesting a permit for a municipal or private ramp shall be responsible to obtain additional permits for these areas, if necessary.

c. These regulations shall not be interpreted as superseding any special boat ramp or state management area regulations.

d. Permits along with lists of participants and boat registrations, if applicable, shall be available during the tournament for law enforcement purposes and must be clearly displayed in the windshield of the contact's vehicle.

For more information, contact Alan Libby at alan.libby@dem.ri.gov or 401-789-0281

General INFORMATION

Fish Consumption Advisory

Since 1986, the FDA has issued warnings about mercury levels in various fish including freshwater species. The RIDEM and Department of Health wants our anglers to be familiar with the following information:

Fish is Good

- Fish is a good source of protein.
- Fish has many vitamins and minerals.
- Fish is low in fat.
- Fish can be part of a healthy diet. A healthy diet helps children grow and develop properly.

Mercury is Bad

- Mercury is a type of metal found in nature. It is used in thermometers, batteries, lamps, and other products. Sometimes mercury gets into ponds, lakes, rivers, soil, and air through pollution.
- When mercury pollutes the water, it can get into the fish where they live. If you eat fish with mercury, it can harm your baby when you are pregnant or breast feeding.
- Babies born to mothers who have a lot of mercury in their bodies may develop more slowly and have problems learning. Young Children can also be harmed by mercury.
- High levels of mercury in the body can cause harm to an adult's kidneys and brain.
- You cannot see, taste, or smell mercury in fish. Mercury cannot be cut away, cleaned

or cooked out of fish. The best way to avoid mercury is to know which fish to choose and how much to eat.

Advice for those who fish:

- Choose stocked trout to eat. See page 12 for trout stocking locations.
- Vary where and what types of fish you eat.
- Eat smaller fish (in accordance with RIDEM size limits).
- Avoid fish with the most mercury: bass, pike, and pickerel.
- Limit meals of black crappie and eel to one meal per month.
- Do not fish in private ponds, with no public access and those that are not stocked by the state.
- Trout from private vendors stocked into private ponds may be eaten.
- Do not eat any fish from the following ponds (with the exception of trout): Yawgoog Pond, Windcheck Pond, Meadowbrook Pond, Quidnick Reservoir, and the lower Woonasquatucket.
- Catch and release fishing is recommended in Mashapaug Pond and the Woonasquatucket River along with other urban ponds and rivers.
- Pregnant women and young children should limit their fish intake to include those fish that have tested low in mercury: stocked trout in freshwater, salmon, light tuna, shrimp, Pollock and catfish in marine waters.

For more information:

Visit <https://health.ri.gov/healthrisks/poisoning/mercury/about/fish/> or call the Health Hotline at 1-800-942-7434.

Freshwater Fishing Area Restrictions

1. **FLY FISHING ONLY:** The following waters are restricted to the use of artificial flies, a conventional fly rod, and a single action reel: Deep Pond (Arcadia), Exeter; A.L. Mowry Pond, Smithfield; Upper Rochambeau Pond, Lincoln.
2. **CHILDREN ONLY:** The following waters are restricted to fishing by persons fourteen (14) years of age or younger: Frosty Hollow Pond, Exeter; Lapham Pond, Burrillville; Scott Evans Memorial Pond (Biscuit City), S. Kingstown; Seidel's Pond, Cranston; Silvy's Pond, Cumberland; Lloyd Keeney Pond, Hopkinton, from the 2nd Saturday in April through Memorial Day only. For the first two (2) days of the season (April 10th & 11th): Cass Pond in Woonsocket, Slater Park Pond in Pawtucket and Ponderosa Park Pond in Little Compton are restricted to children only.

The most up-to-date regulations online.



eRegulations.com

The Ethical Angler:

1. Keeps only the fish he needs.
2. Does not pollute; properly disposes of trash or packs it back.
3. Hones angling and boating skills.
4. Observes angling and boating safety regulations.
5. Respects other anglers' rights.
6. Respects property owners' rights.
7. Passes on knowledge and angling skills to friends and family.
8. Supports local conservation efforts.
9. Does not release live bait, non-native plants, fish or invertebrates, into RI waters. It's against the law.
10. Does not leave offal from cleaning fish at fishing sites, on land or in the water; instead, packs it back or buries it out of sight.
11. Promotes the sport of angling.
12. Does not transport any plant, fish, amphibian, reptile or invertebrate from one water body to another.

Wheelchair Accessible Fishing Areas in Rhode Island



Carbuncle Pond - Coventry

Gorton Pond - Warwick

Hope Valley Grange Fishing Dock - Hope Valley

Lower Shannock Brook - Richmond

Silver Spring Lake - North Kingstown

Upper Melville Pond (Thurston Gray Pond) - Portsmouth

Upper Roaring Brook - Exeter

Westerly Boat Ramp - Westerly

Olney Pond - Lincoln

CHILDREN ONLY:

Scott Evans Memorial Pond (Biscuit City) - South Kingstown

Diadromous Fish Regulations

1. No person shall land, catch, take or attempt to catch or take any alewives (*Alosa pseudoharengus*) or blueback herring (*Alosa aestivalis*) from any fresh waters or marine waters of the State of Rhode Island. Possession of any alewives or blueback herring, at any time, is prohibited and shall be evidence, *prima facie*, that said herring was taken in violation of this regulation.
2. No person shall erect any artificial obstruction to fish passage in any stream or in any way alter the natural stream bottom to hinder the passage of fish.

Shad:

No person shall take any American shad (*Alosa sapidissima*) from the fresh waters of the state.

Salmon:

No person shall take any Atlantic salmon (*Salmo salar*) from the Pawcatuck River downstream of the Potter Hill Dam.

Smelt:

No person shall take any smelt (*Osmerus mordax*) by any means from any stream or river system in the state.

American Eel:

The recreational creel or possession limit for American eel (*Anguilla rostrata*) shall be twenty-five (25) fish per day, per person, either singular or in aggregate, and the minimum size shall be nine (9) inches from tip of snout to tip of tail. No person shall possess any American eel less

than nine (9) inches in total length. No person shall take an eel from the freshwaters of the state unless in possession of a valid RI Freshwater Fishing License. There will be no closed season. No American eel may be commercially harvested from the freshwaters of the state and offered for sale without a valid commercial license per RI Marine Fisheries (RIMF) regulations. If harvesting commercially with a valid commercial fishing license from the freshwater of the state, fishermen must adhere to regulations as set forth in RIMF regulations Part VII (Minimum Sizes of Fish/Shellfish), section 7.16.1.

Fish Ladders:

1. Trespass within or any obstruction of the entrance or exit of any fish ladder in the state is prohibited.
2. For the purpose of regulating diadromous fishes, all fish ladders owned and operated by the state will be set aside as fish cultivation facilities pursuant to Rhode Island General Laws Chapters 20-12-1 and 20-12-5.
3. The areas below each fish ladder, where fishing will be permitted, shall be designated with an official boundary marker or informational sign.

Rhode Island Environmental Police

The mission of the Environmental Police is to protect our natural resources and ensure compliance with all environmental conservation laws through law enforcement and education.

The history of the Environmental Police dates back to 1842 when the first game wardens were appointed to the Commission of Shellfisheries.

Today, Rhode Island's Environmental Police Officers are sworn law enforcement officers who are responsible for patrolling and enforcing all laws, rules and regulations pertaining to the state's fish, wildlife, boating safety and marine resources as well as all criminal and motor vehicle laws within the state parks and management areas. Officers patrol over 60,000 acres of state land, 92 salt and freshwater boat launching and fishing areas, 300 miles of rivers and streams, and 417 miles of coastline. They are also cross-deputized with the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service and the National Marine Fisheries Service. During their patrols, they educate the public on the protection of our natural resources and provide safety for the public while enjoying Rhode Island's outdoors.

To report emergencies or violations, call (401) 222-3070, 24hr line.



Jameson fishing at the Mechanic Street Fishing Area in Hope Valley.

Protect Our Native Species from Disease and Invasives

IT IS AGAINST THE LAW TO TAKE FISH OF ANY SPECIES FROM ANY BODY OF WATER AND STOCK IT IN RHODE ISLAND WATERS!

By taking fish from either in-state or out-of-state water bodies and placing it in another body of water in RI, you risk introducing disease and parasites to native fish. You also risk introducing invasive species to that waterway. Invasive species overtake the native species and significantly alter stream ecology. For more information or for stocking permits, please call (401) 789-0281.

Designated Trout Waters

Name	Location
Abbots Run Brook	Cumberland
Adamsville Brook & Pond	Tiverton & Little Compton
Alton Pond	Richmond & Hopkinton
Ashaway River	Hopkinton
Ashville Pond	Hopkinton
Barber Pond	South Kingstown
Beach Pond	Exeter
Beaver River	Richmond
Big River	West Greenwich
Blackstone River	Cumberland & Lincoln
Branch River	Burrillville
Brandy Brook	Glocester
Breakheart Brook	Exeter
Breakheart Pond	Exeter & West Greenwich
Brickyard Pond	Barrington
Browning Mill Pond	Exeter
Brushy Brook	Hopkinton
Bucks Horn Brook	Coventry
California Jim's	South Kingstown
Carbuncle Pond ³	Coventry
Carolina Trout Pond	Richmond
Cass Pond ²	Woonsocket
Chepachet River	Glocester & Burrillville
Chickasheen Brook	South Kingstown
Clear River	Burrillville
Deep Pond (Arcadia) ¹	Exeter
Dexter Pond - Rt 6 (private owner), open to public	Scituate
Dolly Cole Brook	Foster
Dundery Brook (including Wigwam Pond)	Little Compton
Eight Rod Farm Pond	Tiverton
Falls River	Exeter & West Greenwich
Flat River	Exeter
Foster Green Acres Pond	Foster
Frenchtown Park Pond	East Greenwich
Frosty Hollow Pond ²	Exeter
Geneva Brook & Pond	North Providence
Harris River	Woonsocket
Hopkins Mill Pond	Foster
Hunt River	E. Greenwich & N. Kingstown
J.L. Curran Reservoir	Cranston
Lapham Pond ²	Burrillville
Lloyd Kenney Pond ²	Hopkinton
Log House Brook	Hopkinton
Meadow Brook	Richmond
Meadow Brook Pond	Richmond
Upper Melville Pond (Thurston Gray Pond) ³	Portsmouth

Name	Location
Lower Melville Pond	Portsmouth
Memorial Park Pond	Lincoln
Meshanticut Pond	Cranston
Moosup River	Coventry
Mowry, A.L. Pond ¹	Smithfield
Olney Pond ³	Lincoln Woods Park, Lincoln
Parris Brook	Exeter
Pawcatuck River ³	Hopkinton, Richmond, Charlestown, Westerly
Pawtuxet River (north branch)	Scituate & Cranston
Pawtuxet River (south branch)	Coventry & West Warwick
Peck Pond	Burrillville
Ponaganset River	Foster
Ponderosa Park Pond ²	Little Compton
Roaring Brook & Ponds ³	Exeter
Round Top Brook	Burrillville
Round Top Ponds	Burrillville
Saugatucket River	South Kingstown
Scott Evans Mem. Pond (Biscuit City) ²	South Kingstown
Seidel's Pond ²	Cranston
Shippee Saw Mill Pond	Foster
Silver Spring Lake ³	North Kingstown
Silvy's Brook Diamond Hill Park	Cumberland
Silvy's Pond Diamond Hill Park ²	Cumberland
Simmons Mill Pond	Little Compton
Slater Park Pond ²	Pawtucket
Spring Grove Pond	Glocester
Stafford Pond	Tiverton
Sylvester's Pond	Woonsocket
Tarbox Pond	West Greenwich
Tarkiln Pond	Burrillville & North Smithfield
Ten Mile River	East Providence
Tiogue Lake	Coventry
Tiverton Trout Pond	Tiverton
Tucker Pond	South Kingstown
Upper Rochambeau Pond ¹	Lincoln
Wallum Lake	Burrillville
Watchaug Pond	Charlestown
Willett Pond	East Providence
Winsor Brook	Foster
Wood River	Exeter, Hopkinton & Richmond
Woonasquatucket River	Smithfield
Wyoming Pond	Hopkinton & Richmond

All designated trout waters are stocked prior to the opening day of trout season. Numbers following area names refer to the following:

¹ Fly fishing only.

² Minors fourteen (14) years of age and younger, only. For more detailed information, please refer to page 10 under *Freshwater Fishing Area Restrictions*.

³ Wheelchair accessible. See page 4 for more information.

Commonly Caught Fish Species



AMERICAN EEL
Anguilla rostrata



BROWN BULLHEAD
Ameiurus nebulosus



BLACK CRAPPIE
Pomoxis nigromaculatus



BLUEGILL
Lepomis macrochirus



BROOK TROUT
Salvelinus fontinalis



BROWN TROUT
Salmo trutta



CHAIN PICKEREL
Esox niger



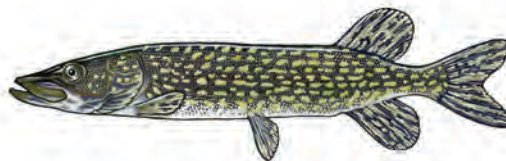
COMMON CARP
Cyprinus carpio



GOLDEN SHINER
Notemigonus crysoleucas



LARGEMOUTH BASS
Micropterus salmoides



NORTHERN PIKE
Esox lucius



PUMPKINSEED
Lepomis gibbosus



RAINBOW TROUT
Oncorhynchus mykiss



REDBREAST SUNFISH
Lepomis auritus



SMALLMOUTH BASS
Micropterus dolomieu



WHITE CATFISH
Ameiurus catus



WHITE PERCH
Morone americana



YELLOW PERCH
Perca flavescens

Sign up for our improved 'Wild Rhode Island' newsletter



Wild Rhode Island is now sporting a new look. With more diverse articles, brighter photos and more pages, you can be kept up-to-date with RIDEM Division of Fish and Wildlife. The full color quarterly publication is written by the biologists and is replete with useful information about on-going biological studies, native Rhode Island species, Division events and much more. The newsletter is available online or delivered to your mailbox. For more information or to be added to our mailing list, please contact Sarah Riley at 401-789-0281 or sarah.riley@dem.ri.gov.

Now available for younger audiences: 'Wild Rhode Island Explorer'

Calling all kids, parents, and educators! RI DEM Division of Fish and Wildlife now has a full color quarterly newsletter designed just for kids! Available in both a magazine format and an online publication, 'Wild Rhode Island Explorer' features interviews with biologists, information about native species, kids' activities and so much more! For more information or sign up for the newsletter, please contact Mary Gannon at 401-782-3700 or mary.gannon@dem.ri.gov.

Other ways to stay informed:

- Monthly Fish and Wildlife Outreach email: Receive free, up-to-date information about fishing, hunting, and wildlife outreach events as well as Division volunteer opportunities. To sign up, please contact kimberly.sullivan@dem.ri.gov or mary.gannon@dem.ri.gov.

- Follow us on Facebook: Rhode Island Fish and Wildlife Outdoor Education @RIfishwildlife or www.facebook.com/RIfishwildlife. Get event updates, up-to-date stocking information, learn about RI species, and more.
- Follow us on Instagram.

REDUCED PRICE: Inland Fishes of Rhode Island

RIDEM Division of Fish and Wildlife published Rhode Island's first freshwater fish guide, 'Inland Fishes of Rhode Island' written by Alan D. Libby and illustrated by Robert Jon Golder. This publication identifies more than 70 fishes found in over 377 pond and stream locations throughout Rhode Island! With gorgeous color images as well as black and white scientific illustrations, each fish is addressed with a detailed description and color location map. Originally \$26.75, this publication has been reduced to \$18.75! This is the perfect gift for any angler!

Where to Purchase:

- DEM Division of Boating and Licensing located at 235 Promenade Street, Providence. Cash, check or credit (with \$1.50 convenience fee).
- Great Swamp Fish and Wildlife Headquarters located at 277 Great Neck Road, West Kingston, office hours 8:30am-4pm, check or money order only.
- On-line, mail-in order form: Print, complete and send along with check or money order only <http://www.dem.ri.gov/programs/bnatres/fishwild/pdf/fishorder.pdf>.
- Also available at select bookstores throughout Rhode Island.

About the author: Alan D. Libby is a Principal Freshwater Biologist and has worked for the Division of Fish and Wildlife for over 30 years documenting the status and distribution of the fish species found in Rhode Island's streams and ponds.

Tips for Releasing Live Fish

If fish are to be taken as part of the daily creel limit, they should be killed immediately and kept cool until they can be prepared for the table. If an angler wishes to release a live fish, either because it is undersized or because they are practicing catch and release fishing, the following procedures are recommended:

1. Land the fish as quickly as possible to minimize stress to the fish. Playing a fish to the point of exhaustion will lessen its chance for survival.
2. Wet your hands before handling the fish; dry hands will remove the fish's protective slime layer and leave the fish open to bacterial and fungal infections.
3. Handle the fish carefully. Do not use excessive force when grasping the fish. Do not put fingers into the gill cavities or eye sockets. A wet glove can be a useful aid in grasping the fish because it reduces the amount of pressure needed to hold the fish securely.
4. Gently remove the hook to minimize damage. A pair of long-nose pliers will make the job easier.
5. If you are intentionally practicing catch and release fishing, use artificial lures with single, barbless hooks, or circle hooks to minimize damage to the fish.
6. Do not attempt to remove a hook that is deeply embedded in the gullet. Instead, cut the line off as close to the hook as possible and release. The fish will have a better chance of survival if the hook is left in place; the hook will eventually disintegrate.
7. Return the fish to the water as quickly as possible. Lower it back into the water in an upright position and move it back and forth in the water to force water across its gills. Once the fish revives, allow it to swim away.



Saltwater/Freshwater Boundaries

River	Town	Interface
Pawcatuck River	Westerly	The downstream side of the bridge crossing US Route 1
Mastuxet Brook	Westerly	Point at which the brook empties into Mastuxet Cove
King Tom / Ninigret Ponds	Charlestown	Spillway at the South end of King Tom Pond
Factory Pond Outlet	South Kingstown	Seaward opening of culvert under Teal Road
Mill Pond Outlet to Cards Pond	South Kingstown	Bridge on Moonstone Beach Road crossing west neck of Cards Pond
Smelt Brook	South Kingstown	Bridge closest to the outlet into Point Judith Pond
Saugatucket River	South Kingstown	Downstream side of the Main Street Bridge in Wakefield
Gilbert Stuart Brook	North Kingstown	Point at which the river empties into the Pettaquamscutt (Narrow) River
Wesquage Pond	Narragansett	Culvert at the outlet to Bonnet Shores Beach
Annaquatucket River	North Kingstown	Point at which river empties into Bissel Cove
Cocumcussoc Brook	North Kingstown	Bottom of the first riffle upstream of Wickford Cove
Potowomut River	North Kingstown/ East Greenwich	Forge Road spillway
Maskerchugg River	East Greenwich	Boston Post Road (US Route 1) spillway
Gorton Pond Outlet	Warwick	West of the Amtrak Railroad Bridge
Tuscatucket Brook	Warwick	Downstream side of the West Shore Road Bridge
Old Mill Creek	Warwick	Entirely tidal
Warner Brook	Warwick	Draper Avenue Bridge
Buckeye Brook	Warwick	Point at which the stream empties into Narragansett Bay
Lockwood Brook	Warwick	Downstream side of West Shore Road Bridge
Spring Green Pond Outlet	Warwick	Downstream side of the Warwick Avenue (RI Route 117A) Bridge
Pawtuxet River	Warwick/ Providence	Narragansett Parkway spillway
Woonasquatucket River	Providence	Downstream side of US Route 1N Bridge
Moshassuck River	Providence	Point of confluence with the Woonasquatucket River
Blackstone/Seekonk River	Pawtucket	Main Street spillway
Ten Mile River	East Providence	Omega Pond spillway
Annawomscutt Brook	Barrington	Pilling Chain Company spillway on Bay Spring Avenue
Mussachuck Creek	Barrington	Downstream side of the Washington Road Bridge
Runnins River	East Providence/ Seekonk, MA	Downstream side of Mink Street (RI 114A) Bridge
Kickamuit River	Warren	Warren Reservoir spillway
Sin and Flesh Brook	Tiverton	Downstream side of the Highland Avenue Bridge
Nonquit Pond	Tiverton	Bridge at Pond Bridge Road
Pachet Brook	Tiverton	Downstream side of the West Main Road (RI Route 77) Bridge
Dundery Brook	Little Compton	Downstream side of Swamp Road Bridge
Cold Brook	Little Compton	Point at which the brook empties into Quicksand Pond
Maidford River	Middletown	Downstream side of Paradise Avenue Bridge
Goose Neck Cove	Newport	Entirely tidal
Lily Pond	Newport	Outlet
Almy Pond	Newport	Outlet
Prince Pond (Tiffany Pond)	Barrington	Point at which the stream enters the Barrington River.

Trees for Trout

By Corey Pelletier, Freshwater Fisheries Biologist

When standing on a riverbank admiring the tranquility of the flowing water, many see it for just that. Anglers stand streamside contemplating where to make the next cast. A good angler reads the water, looking for habitat that is most likely to produce a trout. Seasoned anglers know and remember the spots they have caught fish in the past, down to the rock or bank where the fish hid. However, to most, the change in a river over generations goes unnoticed.

Rivers are dynamic and constantly changing, but unfortunately, many of the changes we see today are a result of human influence. These changes are most often negative and caused by poor land use practices. Dams create barriers and discharge warm water to the otherwise cold stream below. Cattle trample stream banks causing instability, sedimentation and high nutrient run off. Clearcutting removes trees and brush which otherwise filter water before reaching a stream. And the list goes on.

Streams and rivers in Rhode Island have suffered from such practices, leaving impacted and reduced habitat for the inhabiting fish. Human influences on river habitat and water quality in Rhode Island has negatively impacted wild brook trout (*Salvelinus fontinalis*) among other native fish species. We owe it to ourselves and

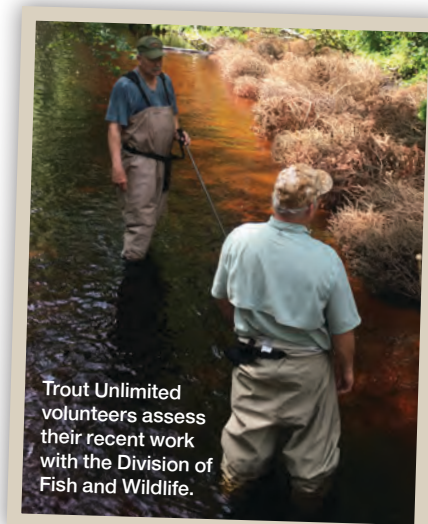
the freshwater ecosystems that surround us to improve and mitigate these negative influences before it is too late.

That is exactly what the RIDEM Division of Fish and Wildlife (DFW) and the Rhode Island Chapter of Trout Unlimited (TU) are doing. Trees for Trout is a program started by TU in 2018, in order to restore fish habitat in the flowing freshwaters of Rhode Island. This program asks volunteers in the community to simply drop off their holiday tree after the new year. The trees are stored outside until the following summer where they are strategically used to build "conifer revetments."

A conifer revetment is built using several Christmas trees or conifers, to protect and armor stream banks. Grouping several trees together (typically 30-80 trees), they are held in

place using wooden stakes and biodegradable twine. These revetments are installed along the banks of rivers and streams extending out into the channel. The group of trees acts to slow the flow of water along the bank which causes sediment to be deposited within the revetment structure. Over time, the trees will fill in with sands and organic materials until they become filled, forming a new section of riverbank.

You may ask how this is supposed to help. In impaired stretches of river, channels often become wider than they should be and are absent of necessary habitat to support aquatic life. In these areas, banks are often eroded which further widens river channels. When banks erode, sediment is carried away by flows which fill in pools downstream. Conifer revetments act to stabilize eroding banks by slowing the flow of



Trout Unlimited volunteers assess their recent work with the Division of Fish and Wildlife.

DEM staff observing the completion of a new conifer revetment on the Wood River.

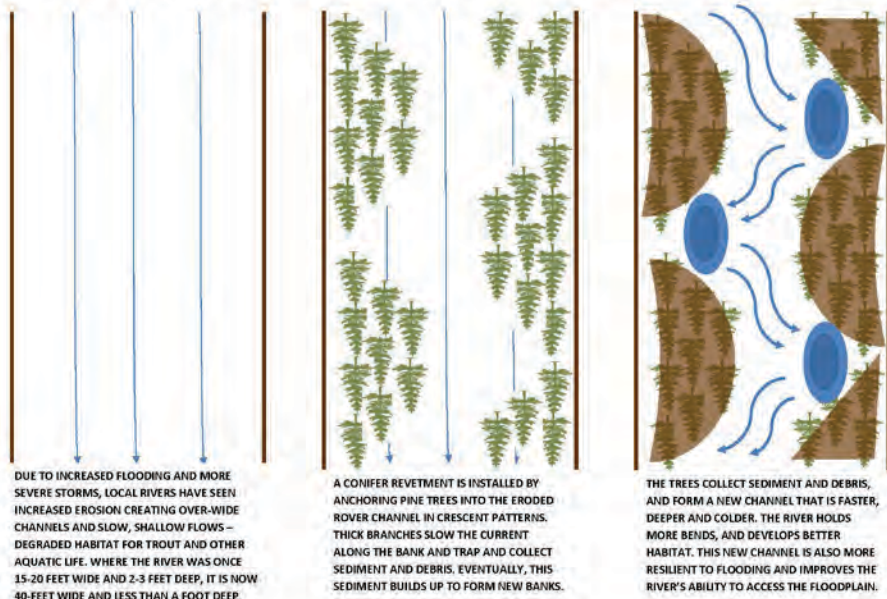


water and accumulating sediments. In excessively wide stream channels, during periods of low water, depth is usually shallow and consistent across a river channel, which leaves little habitat for fish. Modification is often needed to restore the natural processes of a river that has been impaired. Conifer revetments help to narrow the river channel and confine the flow so that during low flows, there is deeper water, therefore more habitat for fish.

Conifer revetments mimic natural habitat features in a river. In Rhode Island, much of the physical habitat that provides cover for fish is from trees falling into the river channel. In some cases, trees are removed or trimmed to provide passage for paddle sports. By constructing these features with conifers, we can restore habitat and re-engage the natural processes of the river. One of the most beneficial aspects of Trees for Trout is that all the work can be completed with manual labor and without the use of machinery. Many river and habitat restoration projects require extensive engineering plans and restoration to fix the impacts from construction. This project focuses on a minimally invasive procedure that can provide numerous benefits to the health of the river and local fish species.

Trees for Trout provides a great opportunity for the public to learn about river health, water quality and habitat for aquatic species. If you have a Christmas tree that you are willing to drop off after the holidays, I welcome you to

HOW A CONIFER REVETMENT IMPROVES THE HEALTH OF A RIVER



contribute and come learn more about the project. Please keep in mind that habitat improvement work must be left to the professionals. A considerable amount of work goes into deciding where and how to construct these features, and should not be done by individuals. Also, a

permit is required to make modifications to any waterway under the Freshwater Wetlands Act. Follow the Rhode Island Division of Fish and Wildlife Outdoor Education page on Facebook to keep informed with project updates and how you can contribute.

A revetment structure just months after installation already begins to accumulate sediment and debris, which will help to fill in the structure over time and concentrate the rivers flow into a narrower channel.



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///Adapting Amidst a Pandemic

By Kimberly Sullivan, Aquatic Resource Education Coordinator

The beginning of 2020 was a typical year for the Aquatic Resource Education Program. Schools across Rhode Island were in the process of receiving their Atlantic salmon eggs to raise throughout the spring; scout and youth groups were booking their annual 'learn to fish' trip at the ARE Training Pond; partners from the Urban Wildlife Refuge Partnership to host their annual Providence Teachers Academy field trips; Rhode Island Saltwater Anglers Association and the ARE program were beginning to advertise for their annual summer Youth Fishing Camp; and the Providence Parks Partnership had just received the Recreational Boating Fishing Foundation's *Vamos a Pescar* grant to work with the State to increase fishing among our urban communities. Then, an unknown flu-like virus caused everything to come to an abrupt halt. Atlantic salmon fry were quickly picked up from the schools that closed therefore, ending in-person programming and large events. People were directed to avoid large gatherings and stay home. But, amidst the health crisis and the cancellations, Rhode Island's Aquatic Resource Education Program forged ahead working on Fish and Wildlife social media campaigns to help people safely continue fishing Rhode Island waters, creating virtual programs and adapting in-person programming to reflect the RI Department of Health Directives.

Like other educators across Rhode Island, ARE staff soon became acquainted with ZOOM, video editing programs and other forums such as Google Classroom to help reach the public. Using ZOOM, staff were able to virtually meet with students who participated in the state's Envirothon and created a virtual field day complete with a trip to the side of the stream to conduct macro-invertebrate sampling. Staff also created a virtual Project WET teacher training so that teachers could become acquainted with and receive the Project WET 2.0 Guide to use with their students in the midst of the pandemic. Since fly tying in person was not an option, Dana Kopec, the ARE Technical Assistant, developed a 'Fast Fly' video series to post on the website to keep our fly fishing constituents engaged. As the staff becomes more familiar with virtual training and video editing, 2021 will allow DEM to offer a virtual fly tying series, 'Come Fly Tie with Me,' which will include beginner videos on how to fish and much more.

While the ARE Staff focused on developing new skills to reach the public, we were able to get a few in-person programs off the ground following a COVID19 protocol within the parameters of the RI Department of Health. Each program had to ensure that all participants and staff conducted a health screening before participating. In addition, all participants and staff had to wear masks and

Come Clam with Me instructor, Jody King, poses with two attendees from one of the summer sessions that took place at Rocky Point State Park.

keep at least six feet between family groups. Attendance numbers were severely restricted as well. Even with the restrictions, the 'Come Clam with Me' classes were maxed out at 15 participants, the boy scout fly tying programs were very popular, and Newport Police Department's Youth Camp surf fishing events were well attended.

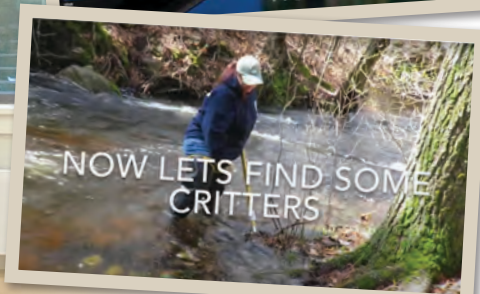
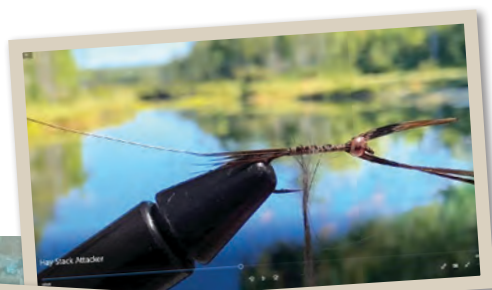
2020 was a challenging year, but many new skills for public outreach have been acquired and the ARE Staff looks forward to incorporating them into its program to serve even more Rhode Islanders in 2021. For more information about Rhode Island's Aquatic Resource Education program, please contact Kimberly Sullivan at kimberly.sullivan@dem.ri.gov.



Photo by Alycia P.



Socially distanced community fly tying at the Burrillville Library.



The ARE program creates videos to connect with the public during the pandemic. Above: an example of the FastFly feature now available. Below: Video of macroinvertebrate sampling created for the RI Envirothon teams.

Why Do You Fish?

This year we had an overwhelming response to our annual question, "Why Do you Fish?" Instead of ferreting out the 'best' one, we thought we would try to include as many of the responses that we could. Thank you for your participation and we look forward to hearing about 'Why do YOU fish?' in 2021.

"I fish to get away from the real world. Nothing like being on the water without cellphones or anyone asking you for something. Just peace and quiet and mother nature!"

– Steve O.

"Because fish live where I cannot and it haunts me in my dreams. When I release one I want to follow it."

– Phil S.

"Because it allows me to hang out with this young man and put a smile on his face!"

– Colin R.

"You get to see more than the water you're fishing, the wildlife that shows up when you're fishing unexpectedly."

– Norman B.

"Fishing has allowed me to form a bond with my son that would not have otherwise been possible."

– Bill P.

"Fishing has been a great way for my son and I to spend time together. We try to get out at least once a week. We have an annual year long tournament with a trophy awarded on Thanksgiving Day each year."

– Ron B.

"I fish because it was a learning experience to me and still is...now my non-profit, keeping kids fishing, donates fishing gear to local youth and teach them to fish so they can share that same experience."

– John V. G.

"I love fishing because it a Great way to spend time with my children and make memories that will last a lifetime."

– Arthur B.



"Quality time spent with friends and family both sharing common interests. Individually, it's more like my church. When I fish solo I can reflect on all that's good and ask a higher power help when in need. I also love the challenge of figuring out how to catch a new species of fish. That's why I'm addicted to fishing."

"My dad is an amputee and this was a picture of a striped I hooked and he landed on Father's Day. The joy on his face was as good as it gets for me. He doesn't get out fishing much anymore so giving back to him makes me feel good."

– Kevin L.



Fluorescent Orange Requirement

All users, including anglers, of State Management Areas are required to wear 200 square inches of solid daylight fluorescent orange, worn above the waist and visible in all directions from the second Saturday in September to the last day of February and the third Saturday in April to the last day of May annually, and during established mourning dove season and wild turkey season. 500 square inches is required by all users of management areas and undeveloped state parks during all portions of shotgun deer seasons. Fluorescent camouflage does not meet these requirements. The hunter orange must be worn above the waist and be visible in all directions. Examples are a hat that covers 200 square inches or a combination of a hat and vest covering 500 square inches.

General Boating Regulation Guidelines

The following is a brief summary of Rhode Island's boating regulations. For detailed information, please refer to Division of Enforcement's *The Handbook of RI Boating Laws and Regulations*, Title 46 of the General Laws of the State of Rhode Island or contact the Division of Enforcement.

1. DEM Conservation and Boating Safety Officers, harbormasters, and police officers have authority to enforce state laws and regulations on all state tidal and non-tidal waters.
2. It shall be a misdemeanor for any person operating a vessel on Rhode Island waters to refuse to stop or move on the oral command of a DEM Conservation or Boating Safety Officer, a harbormaster, or a police officer.
3. Every motorboat operating on the waters of the state must be numbered in accordance with the laws and regulations of this state, with applicable federal law, or with an approved numbering system of another state. The number must be prominently displayed on each side of the bow of the boat.
4. Required Safety Equipment:
 - a. Personal Flotation Devices (PFD's) - All vessels must have at least one approved type I,II,III, or V PFD for each person on board. For vessels 16 feet long or longer, one additional, throw able type IV PFD is required.
 - b. Fire Extinguishers -All mechanically-propelled vessels except those that are less than 26 feet long and powered by outboard motors, must carry one B-I USCG-approved fire extinguisher. Motorboats 26 feet to 40 feet in length and longer must carry either two (2) B-I USCG-approved fire extinguishers or one B-II extinguisher. Vessels 40 feet to 65 feet must carry three B-I or one B-I and one B-II.
 - c. Visual Distress Signals (VSD) - Vessels used on RI waters must be equipped with proper visual distress signals that are USCG approved, in serviceable condition, and readily accessible. Vessels under 26 ft. require 3 night VSDs while those 26 feet or longer require both 3 day and 3 night VSDs.
 - d. Whistle (horn) and Bell - All vessels must carry an efficient sound-producing device (whistle or horn). Vessels 12 meters (36 feet) in length or longer must also carry a bell.
5. All motorboats must carry and display the proper navigation lights for their size class when operating between sunset and sunrise and during daylight periods of reduced visibility.
6. All vessels equipped with an engine must have a factory-type muffler or exhaust water manifold installed on the engine or another effective muffling system for noise reduction purposes.
7. No person shall operate any motorboat or vessel or manipulate any water skis, surfboard, or similar device in a reckless manner so as to endanger the life, limb, or property of another.
8. Any person transporting a child under thirteen (13) years of age in a recreational vessel less than 65 ft. in length on the waters of this state, shall require that the child wear a personal flotation device approved by the USCG when underway unless below deck or in a closed cabin.
9. No person shall operate any motorboat or vessel in any harbor or inlet or any pond or other confined body of water in this state in excess of forty-five (45) miles per hour during the hours from sunrise to sunset and twenty-five (25) miles per hour during periods of darkness or other periods of restricted visibility.
10. RI law prohibits anyone from boating while intoxicated (BWI). This includes the operation of any powerboat, sailboat, personal watercraft, water skis, sailboard, or similar device. Intoxicated means a person is under the influence of alcohol, a controlled substance or



THE SPREAD OF AQUATIC INVASIVE SPECIES



BOATERS: INSPECT VESSEL CAREFULLY BEFORE & AFTER USE!



- Remove ALL weeds and plant fragments from boat and trailer
- Drain boat & motor far from water; allow to dry before next use
- Do not release bait or aquarium fish, shellfish or plants



For more information:

RI DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT

Division of Fish & Wildlife Office of Water Resources

www.dem.ri.gov



drugs such that his/her thought or actions are impaired causing danger to others. RI law sets blood alcohol limit for boating while intoxicated at 0.08% or greater.

11. Any person SCUBA diving, skin diving, or snorkeling in any area where power or motorboats are operated shall place a diver's warning flag on a buoy at a place of his or her submergence. No person shall operated a motorboat within fifty (50) feet of a displayed diver's flag.
12. **NEW REGULATION:** Prohibited is the transport of any plant or plant part into or out of any Rhode Island waterbody on boats, vessels, other water conveyances, vehicles, trailers, fishing supplies, or any other equipment, with the exception of authorized research activities, species identification and other management activities.

Management Area BOATING REGULATIONS

Management Area Boating Regulations

Pond	Town	Regulation
A.L. Mowry Pond	Smithfield	1, 3
Alton Pond	Hopkinton	5, 13-16
Asa Pond	South Kingstown	4, 13-16
Ashville Pond	Hopkinton	6, 13-16
Barbers Pond	South Kingstown	5, 13-16
Blue Pond	Hopkinton	5, 13-16
Bowdish Reservoir	Glocester	6, 13-16, 17
Breakheart Pond	Exeter	12, 13-16
Browning Mill Pond	Richmond	5, 13-16
Carbuncle Pond	Coventry	5, 13-16
Carolina Trout Pond	Richmond	1, 3
Carr Pond	North Kingstown	5, 13-16
Chapman Pond	Westerly	6, 13-16
Clarkville Pond	Glocester	5, 13-16
Deep Pond (Arcadia)	Exeter	3
Frosty Hollow Pond	Exeter	1, 3
Great Swamp Dike	West Kingston	2, 13-16
Gristmill Pond	Glocester	3
Indian Lake	South Kingstown	6, 13-16
John L. Curran Reservoir	Cranston	12, 13-16
Keech Pond	Glocester	6, 13-16
Lake Washington	Glocester	5, 13-16
Little Round Top Pond	Burrillville	1, 3
Locustville Pond	Hopkinton	6, 13-16
Lower Roaring Brook Pond	Exeter	3
Olney Pond	Lincoln	10, 11, 13-16
Pascoag Reservoir (Echo Lake)	Glocester	9, 13-16
Pawtuxet River (Hope)	Scituate	5, 13-16
Peck Pond	Burrillville	3
Round Top Pond	Burrillville	3
Shippee Saw Mill Pond	Foster	5, 13-16
Silver Spring Lake	North Kingstown	5, 13-16
Simmons Mill Pond	Little Compton	5, 13-16
Smith and Sayles Reservoir	Glocester	6, 13-16
Spring Lake	Burrillville	5, 13-16
Stafford Pond	Tiverton	7, 13-16
Tucker Pond	South Kingstown	6, 13-16
Union Pond	Burrillville	5, 13-16
Upper Roaring Brook Pond	Exeter	4, 13-16
Wakefield Pond	Burrillville	8, 13-16
Wilson Reservoir	Burrillville	6, 7, 13-16
Woonasquatucket Reservoir (Stump Pond)	Smithfield	6, 13-16

1. Definition: Float Tube — any device manufactured and sold for use as a fishing float tube. Float tubes are prohibited on the following ponds: Little Round Top Pond, Burrillville; A.L. Mowry Pond, Smithfield; Frosty Hollow Pond, Exeter; and Carolina Trout Pond, Richmond.
2. Boating is prohibited within the impoundment created by the Great Swamp dike, within the Great Swamp Management Area during the period September 1st through March 31st annually except by licensed migratory bird hunters. All motors are prohibited at all times.
3. Boats are prohibited on the following ponds: Round Top and Little Round Top Ponds, Burrillville; Peck Pond, Burrillville; Deep Pond — Arcadia, Exeter; Frosty Hollow Pond, Exeter; Gristmill Pond, Glocester; Carolina Trout Pond, Richmond; Lower Roaring Brook, Richmond; A.L. Mowry Pond, Smithfield.
4. The launching, hauling, or operation of boats with motors of any kind is prohibited from state-owned and/or operated ramps on the following ponds: Asa Pond, South Kingstown; and Upper Roaring Brook Ponds, Exeter.
5. The launching, hauling, and operation of boats with motors of any kind, except electric trolling motors, is prohibited from state-owned and/or operated ramps on the following bodies of water: Spring Lake & Union Pond, Burrillville; Carbuncle Pond, Coventry; Shippee Mill Pond, Foster; Clarkville Pond and Lake Washington, Glocester; Alton Pond and Blue Pond (no ramp), Hopkinton; Carr Pond and Silver Spring Lake, North Kingstown; Simmons Mill Pond, Little

Compton; Browning Mill Pond, Richmond; Pawtuxet River (Hope), Scituate; and Barbers Pond, South Kingstown.

6. The use of motors in excess of ten (10) horsepower on boats launched, hauled, or operated from state-owned and/or operated ramps is prohibited on the following bodies of water: Wilson Reservoir, Burrillville; Keech Pond, Smith & Sayles Reservoir (Sand Dam), and Bowdish Reservoir, Glocester; Woonsocket Reservoir (Stump Pond), Smithfield; Indian Lake and Tucker Pond, South Kingstown; Ashville and Locustville Ponds, Hopkinton; Chapman Pond, Westerly.
7. No person shall use any motor in excess of ten (10) horsepower from state-owned and/or operated ramps on Stafford Pond, Tiverton, and Wilson Reservoir, Burrillville, with the exception that the use of motors in excess of ten (10) horsepower on boats launched, hauled, or operated from state-owned and/or operated ramps on Stafford Pond, Tiverton, and Wilson Reservoir, Burrillville, is permitted for organized fishing activities possessing a valid permit from RIDEM-Fish & Wildlife, as described in Section 1.17, Freshwater and Diadromous Fishing Regulations and on page 9 of this 2021-2022 Freshwater Fishing Guide.
8. The use of motors in excess of ten (10) horsepower on boats launched, hauled, or operated from the state-owned ramp on Wakefield Pond, Burrillville, is prohibited at all times. The use of any motor on a boat from this state-owned ramp, except electric trolling motors, is prohibited from June 20th to September 20th of any year, inclusive.
9. No person shall use any motor in excess of ten (10) horsepower from state-owned and/or operated ramps on Pascoag Reservoir at the state-owned launching ramp on Schoolhouse Road, Glocester, with the exception that permitted organized fishing activities, i.e. tournaments, shall be allowed to use motors in excess of ten (10) horsepower on the waters of Pascoag Reservoir at the state-owned launching ramp on Schoolhouse Road, Glocester, between the Saturday before Memorial Day and Labor Day of each year, inclusive.
10. The operation of boats with motors of any kind, except electric trolling motors, is prohibited on the waters of Olney Pond in Lincoln Woods State Park on Saturdays, Sundays, and holidays between the Saturday before Memorial Day and Labor Day of each year, inclusive.
11. The operation of boats with motors of any kind, except electric trolling motors, owned by persons other than the State of Rhode Island with motors in excess of ten (10) horsepower are prohibited upon Olney Pond in Lincoln Woods State Park except with official written permission from the RIDEM Division of Fish and Wildlife.
12. The use of motors in excess of ten (10) horsepower on boats launched, hauled, or operated on the waters of Breakheart Pond in Exeter and John L. Curran State Park is prohibited.
13. Only vehicles launching or landing a boat will be permitted to park in designated boat trailer areas, unless otherwise designated.
14. The mooring of boats, the parking of vehicles, or engaging in any other activity on land or water so as to obstruct the use of a boat launching ramp by others, is prohibited.
15. Boats shall be launched only at designated areas.
16. Boats shall be tied up at state boat ramps for no longer than 30 minutes.
17. Gated access to the boat ramp located within the George Washington Management Area Campground (Bowdish Reservoir) is limited daily between 7:30 AM to 10:00 PM from Memorial Day to October 31st. Persons using the reservoir or boat ramp prior to 10:00 PM for authorized uses may exit the area unrestricted by gate access times.
18. **NEW REGULATION:** Fishermen utilizing State Management Areas and designated undeveloped State Parks are required to wear fluorescent orange during hunting seasons as referenced in the Park and Management Area Rules and Regulations. See page 19 for more information.
19. **NEW REGULATION:** Transport of any plant or plant part into or out of any Rhode Island waterbody on boats, vessels, other water conveyances, vehicles, trailers, fishing supplies, or any other equipment, with the exception of authorized research activities, species identification and other management activities.

// #ResponsibleRecreation

Outdoor recreation including hunting, fishing, and hiking is a great way to relieve stress and spend time with loved ones during this difficult time.

It is up to all Rhode Islanders to be responsible while participating in these activities, now more than ever. There are a few things to keep in mind to make sure you are being safe while fishing in the Ocean State this year.

If you need to purchase freshwater or saltwater fishing licenses for you and your family, visit dem.ri.gov/huntfish to do so safely at home. When you head out to the lake, stream, or ocean, only travel and fish with members of your household. If others are fishing at the same spot, maintain a distance of at least 6 feet, or about the length of a fishing rod. If the area is too crowded to keep your distance, try fishing somewhere else or coming back another day.

Make sure to pick up any litter you produce, including fishing line. Recycling containers for monofilament and fluorocarbon line can be found at bait and tackle shops, boat ramps, piers, and other fishing access points. Remember to cut it into pieces less than a foot long before placing it in a designated receptacle.

As always, make sure to follow all of Rhode Island's fishing rules and guidelines to ensure that everyone can have a fun, safe time fishing this season and in the future!



Natural Shorelines are Good for Fishing



By keeping shorelines natural, you can help protect water quality and improve fish habitat. A shoreline without trees and shrubs can get washed away, making the water muddy and unsuitable for fish. If you live near a lake or a river, plant a buffer strip along the water's edge using trees, shrubs, wildflowers or other native plants. Trees and other vegetation filter pollution and provide shade, shelter, habitat, and food critical for bass, trout, and other fish to thrive and reproduce. Keep your favorite fishing spots well vegetated! For more tips and information, visit <http://water.epa.gov/type/lakes/index.cfm>

Anglers: you can help us combat turtle poaching!

Your passion for the outdoors brings you to some of the most important places for our native wildlife. You are advocates for the conservation of wildlife and the habitats upon which they depend. The native turtle species of the Northeast are facing a new threat – poaching. Removing even individual turtles can have permanent consequences for populations already under tremendous pressure. It is against Rhode Island law to possess or remove from the wild, any native amphibian or reptile. Here's how you can help:

What to look for:

- Individuals with bags poking around in fields, wetlands, or along streams, or flipping over logs and rocks.
- Unmarked traps set in wetlands. A trap set for research purposes will be clearly labeled.
- Cars parked near forested areas with collection equipment — like nets, containers, and pillowcases — visible inside.
- Unattended backpacks or bags left in the woods, along a trail, or near roads.

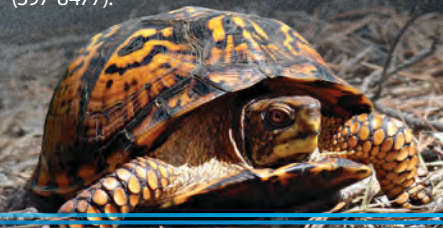
What to do if you see something suspicious:

- Maintain a safe distance and protect yourself.
- Note your exact location, and call the 24-hr RIDEM Law Enforcement hotline (401-222-3070) when it's safe to do so.
- If you are safe, try to take photographs that can corroborate your report. For example, the license plate of a car, or the serial number on a turtle trap.

What not to do:

- Do not confront suspicious persons, or try to stop a crime yourself. Leave that to law-enforcement professionals.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service also has an anonymous tip line — 1-844-FWS-TIPS (397-8477).



Rhode Island Game Fish Award Program

Each year, RIDEM-Division of Fish & Wildlife recognizes anglers who have caught freshwater and saltwater game fish of notable size with our Game Fish Award program. To be eligible, an angler must catch a qualifying fish by rod and reel, tie-up or handline by legal means in Rhode Island waters. To accommodate both 'catch and release' and harvest fishing, the angler can either take a photo of the fish using a hand-scale and ruler or bring the catch to an official weigh station. The angler must then complete the Game Fish / State Record Award Application, available at www.dem.ri.gov/programs/fish-wildlife/records/index.php. One award per person per year is issued for each species of game fish caught that meet the minimum size requirements listed to the right. Game Fish Awards are mailed out in the spring of the following year the fish was caught.

RI State Record Award

The Division of Fish and Wildlife maintains state records on each species of game fish caught in Rhode Island waters. To apply for an RI State Record, the angler must bring his or her legally-caught fish to an official weigh-in station. The fish must be identified, measured, and weighed on a Rhode Island certified, digital scale. The station operator must fill out a Game Fish/State Record Award Application and sign it. State Record Game Fish Awards are mailed out in the spring of the following year the fish was caught. For a list of official fish weigh-in locations and applications please visit www.dem.ri.gov/programs/fish-wildlife/records/index.php.

First Fish Award Program

First Fish Awards are available for children who catch their first fish in Rhode Island. To qualify, an angler must have caught a fish by rod and reel, tie-up or handline by legal means. Applications can be processed without the need for an official weigh-in. Below is the First Fish Award application. It can also be downloaded using the following link: www.dem.ri.gov/topics/fwttopics.htm. First Fish Awards are processed twice a year: once in the fall and prior to the opening day of the following year.

Gamefish Award Qualifying Weights/Lengths (Except First Fish Awards)

Qualifying Freshwater Weights or Lengths			
Smallmouth Bass	4 lbs.	Chain Pickerel	4 lbs.
Largemouth Bass	6 lbs.	Northern Pike	10 lbs.
Bluegill	9 in.	Brook Trout	2 lbs.
Pumpkinseed	8 in.	Brown Trout	3 lbs.
Black Crappie	12 in.	Rainbow Trout	3 lbs.
Yellow Perch	12 in.	Golden Rainbow Trout	3 lbs.
White Perch	15 in.	Brown Bullhead	13 in.
White Catfish	4 lbs.		

Qualifying Saltwater Weights			
Striped Bass	50 lbs.	Pollock	15 lbs.
Sea Bass	3 lbs.	Scup	2½ lbs.
Bluefish	18 lbs.	Hickory Shad	5 lbs.
Bonito	10 lbs.	Blue Shark	80 lbs.
Cod	20 lbs.	Mako Shark	150 lbs.
Winter Flounder	2 lbs.	Swordfish	200 lbs.
Summer Flounder	8 lbs.	Squeteague	8 lbs.
King Mackerel	3 lbs.	Tautog	10 lbs.
Mackerel	1 lbs.	Bluefin Tuna	450 lbs.
Yellowfin Tuna	125 lbs.	White Marlin	70 lbs.

Completed Applications

Please send all completed applications to: RIDEM- Fish & Wildlife, 1B Camp E-Hun-Tee Place, Exeter, RI 02822, for verification and processing. For questions about any of these award programs, email kimberly.sullivan@dem.ri.gov or call (401) 539-0037.



First Fish Award

APPLICATION



DID YOU CATCH YOUR FIRST FISH? PLEASE CUT OUT, COMPLETE, AND SEND THIS FORM TO RECEIVE A SPECIAL CERTIFICATE AND GIFT FROM THE RHODE ISLAND DIVISION OF FISH AND WILDLIFE!

You can also visit <http://www.dem.ri.gov/programs/fish-wildlife/freshwater-fisheries/first-fish.php> to print out a copy.

NAME: _____ DATE YOU CAUGHT THE FISH: _____

ADDRESS: _____ TOWN _____ ST _____ ZIP _____

EMAIL (optional): _____ FISH SPECIES: _____

WHERE YOU CAUGHT THE FISH: _____

WEIGHT OF FISH: _____ LENGTH OF FISH (tip of snout to tip of tail): _____

SIGNATURE OF WITNESS (parent, grandparent, or other responsible adult): _____

RETURN TO: RI Division of Fish and Wildlife / Aquatic Resource Education Program
1B Camp E-Hun-Tee Place / Exeter, RI 02822

Sportfishing RECORDS

RI Sportfishing Records 2020 - Freshwater

Species	Weight	Length	Date	Location	Angler
Smallmouth Bass	5 lbs. 15 oz.	22.5"	9/77	Wash Pond	B. Ferris - Wakefield, RI
Largemouth Bass	11 lbs. 3.2 oz.	25"	4/16	Johnson's Pond	B. Migliore - Sterling, CT
Bluegill	2 lbs. 1 oz.	12"	8/87	—	C. Rizzo - Pascoag, RI
Pumpkinseed	13.6 oz.	10.5"	8/20	Block Island	J. Agosta - Rye, NY
Black Crappie	3 lbs.	15"	7/76	Watchaug Pond	R. Sevegny - Pawtucket, RI
Yellow Perch	2 lbs. 4 oz.	13.5"	2/87	Pascoag Reservoir	D. LaRoche - Glendale, RI
White Perch	2lbs 7.28 oz.	16.25"	11/18	Narrow River	P. Warner - Narragansett, RI
Carp	32 lbs. 8 oz.	37"	6/01	Tiogogue Lake	S. Wasilewski - Hope Valley, RI
Brown Bullhead	4lbs. 9.44 oz.	18.5"	8/98	—	H. Laramie - Cumberland, RI
White Catfish	16 lbs. 12 oz.	33"	8/94	Tiogogue Lake	L. Angell - Coventry, RI
Chain Pickerel	6 lbs. 14 oz.	27.75"	8/05	Beach Pond	T. Egan - Hope Valley, RI
Northern Pike	35 lbs.	47.5"	10/87	Hundred Acre Pond	D. LaRose - Coventry, RI
Brook Trout	3 lbs. 12 oz.	21"	10/84	Wyoming Pond	R. Boucher, Jr. - Warwick, RI
Brown Trout	7 lbs. 9 oz.	26"	4/00	Wallum Lake	R. Groleau - Blackstone, MA
Rainbow Trout	12 lbs. 9.12 oz.	29.75"	12/20	Barber Pond	J. Rogers - North Kingstown, RI
Golden Rainbow Trout	11 lbs. 0.360 oz.	27.5"	4/19	Olney Pond	J. Lopez, Jr. - Central Falls, RI
Atlantic Salmon Domestic, stocked (landlocked)	21 lbs. 9 oz.	41"	1/04	Barber Pond	R. Maldonis - Arlington, MA

Hypothermia

Hypothermia is a condition in which the body loses heat faster than it can be produced. This causes a dangerous reduction of the body's inner temperature. Hypothermia results from exposure to wind and wetness. A victim of hypothermia may become blue-gray in color. Violent shivering develops which may give way to muscle spasms and even loss of the use of arms and legs. Confusion and drunken-like behavior also indicate that a person may be hypothermic.

To protect yourself, avoid the conditions that cause hypothermia. Dress warm and stay dry. Know the effects the wind has on cold weather. It may be 40 F (7 C) outside with the sun shining, but a 10 mph wind lowers the wind-chill temperature to 28 F (-2 C). Refer to the Hypothermia Table to see the general effects cold water temperatures have on the body.

When a person falls into cold water, there are ways to increase the chances of survival. Don't discard clothing; it helps trap the body's heat. Minimize movement; thrashing around in cold water only leads to exhaustion, and swirling water takes heat from the body more rapidly than still water. Wear a personal flotation device (PFD) which will help for two reasons: it lessens the need to move around in the water and it helps to insulate against heat loss. When wearing a PFD, a person should draw their knees into a position known as HELP (Heat Escape Lessening Posture). If there are several people in the water, huddling together with arms around each other's shoulders is the best survival technique.

Treatment for hypothermia involves getting heat back into the body and raising the inner temperature. Skin-to-skin contact and mouth-to-mouth resuscitation (even when the victim is conscious) are excellent ways to transfer heat. Do not give alcohol or massage a person vigorously to treat hypothermia; a hot bath is fine for mild cases but never if the victim is unconscious. For further information, contact your local Red Cross Chapter.

If the water temperature (F) is...	Exhaustion or unconsciousness occurs within...	Expected survival time is...
less than 32.5	less than 15 minutes	less than 45 minutes
32.5-40.0	15-40 minutes	30-90 minutes
40-50	30-60 minutes	1-3 hours
50-60	1-2 hours	1-6 hours
60-70	2-7 hours	2-40 hours
70-80	3-12 hours	3-indefinitely
over 80	indefinitely	indefinitely

RI Sportfishing Records 2020 - Saltwater

Species	Weight	Length	Date	Location	Angler
Sea Bass	8 lbs. 7.25 oz.	26"	10/81	Block Island	K. McDuffie - Pascoag, RI
Striped Bass	77 lbs. 6.4 oz	52"	6/11	Block Island	P. Vican - E. Greenwich, RI
Bluefish	26 lbs.	39"	8/81	—	D. Deziel - Woonsocket, RI
Bonito	13 lbs.	—	10/95	Westerly	R. Gliottone - Exeter, RI
Cod	71 lbs.	—	6/65	—	M. Deciantis - Warwick, RI
Summer Flounder	17 lbs. 8 oz.	—	1962	Narrow River	G. Farmer - Warwick, RI
Winter Flounder	6 lbs. 7 oz.	23"	8/90	Galilee	A. Pearson - Cranston, RI
King Mackerel	12 lbs. 3 oz.	40"	8/00	Point Judith	A. Camilleri - Chester, CT
Atlantic Mackerel	1lb 1.6 oz.	14"	11/18		T. Rovinelli - Providence, RI
Pollock	28 lbs. 8 oz.	—	5/95	—	A. Jacobs - Lincoln, RI
Scup	5 lbs.	20.25"	10/90	—	J. Yurwitz - Block Island, RI
American Shad (Closed)	6 lbs. 8 oz.	25"	4/85	Runnins River	W. Socha - Warren, RI
Hickory Shad	2 lbs. 11 oz.	20"	11/89	Narrow River	M. Pickering - Lincoln, RI
Blue Shark	431 lbs. 2 oz.	12'6"	11/06	Cox Ledge	G. Gross - Fairfield, NJ
Mako Shark	718 lbs.	10'6"	6/93	S. Block Island	W. Alessi - Boston, MA
Swordfish	588 lbs.	—	8/18	Atlantic	L. Banfield - Saunderstown, RI
Squeteague	16 lbs. 8.72 oz.	36"	5/07	Greenwich Bay	R. Moeller - N. Kingstown, RI
Tautog	21 lbs. 4 oz.	—	11/54	Jamestown	C.W. Sunquist
Bluefin Tuna	1142 lbs. 12 oz.	—	9/71	Block Island	J. Dempsey
Yellowfin Tuna	265 lbs.	6'	10/97	The Dip	R. Hughes - Arlington, MA
White Marlin	125 lbs.	8' 0.5"	8/87	S. Block Island	J. Luty, Sr. - Preston, CT



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