CT DEEP 2017 FISHING REPORT NUMBER 20 8/25/2017

Redbreast Sunfish (Lepomis auritus)

EXPERIENCE

Take someone fishing

THE

18/35

INLAND REPORT

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LARGEMOUTH BASS fishing is generally reported as very good with lots of photos of nice sized largemouth coming into our <u>Facebook Page</u>. Places to try include Lake McDonough, West Hill Pond, East Twin Lake, Gardner Lake, Pickerel Lake, Beseck Lake, Amos Lake, Beach Pond, Highland Lake, Seymour Reservoir #4, Crystal Lake, Mudge Pond, West Side Pond, Tyler Lake, Mansfield Hollow Reservoir, Dog Pond, Hatch Pond, Park Pond, Lake Wononskopomuc, Lake Saltonstall, Bishop Swamp, Winchester Lake, Congamond Lakes, Quinebaug Lake, Black Pond (Meriden), Burr Pond, Griggs Pond, Anderson Pond, Billings Lake, Moodus Reservoir, Aspinook Pond, Babcock Pond, Pachaug Pond, Lake Hayward, Quonnipaug Lake, Rogers Lake and Stillwater Pond. **Tournament angler** report will be back next week.

YOU CAN FIND US DIRECTLY ON FACEBOOK. This page features a

variety of information on fishing, hunting, and wildlife watching in

Connecticut. The address is www.facebook.com/CTFishandWildlife.

SMALLMOUTH BASS. Catches reported from Candlewood Lake, Housatonic River (Upper), Naugatuck

River, Lake McDonough, Lake Zoar and Lake Lillinonah. Housatonic River smallmouth fishing has been good. **Tournament angler** reports will be back next week.

CARP fishing is good to very good in most locations. Favorites include; Batterson Park Pond, West Thompson Reservoir, Aspinook Pond, Lake Zoar, and the Connecticut River.

KOKANEE SALMON catches were reported from East Twin Lake (early morning) and West Hill Pond (early night fishing with corn, south end). Target 30-35 feet with down riggers on beads.

NORTHERN PIKE decent bite on Bantam Lake, Lake Lillinonah, and Pachaug Pond. Large Golden Shiners are worth a try.

WALLEYE few reports and fishing is slow. Look for Walleye along steep drops in Lake Saltonstall, Saugatuck Reservoir. Squantz Pond, Batterson Park Pond, Beach Pond, Cedar Lake, West Thompson Lake, Mount Tom Pond, Gardner Lake, and Mashapaug Lake.



CATFISH – fishing is good in Lake Wintergreen, Silver Lake, Black Pond (Meriden) and our Community Fishing Waters like, Butternut Park Pond, Center Springs Pond, Pickett's Pond, Mirror Lake, and Freshwater Pond.

PANFISH consistently excellent. For some great summer time fun try shore fishing in shallow areas with a popper. Check out the "panfish" map in our new application "<u>CT is Fishy</u>" to find a new place to fish close to you.

TROUT-LAKES & PONDS – Most lakes remain poor to fair. Best bets are to hit the traditional deep cold lakes like; East Twin Lake, Beach Pond, Long Pond, West Hill Pond, Crystal Lake, or Highland Lake (second bay, 25-30 feet).

TROUT- *RIVERS & STREAMS.* Conditions for trout fishing remain good, especially for late August. The upcoming forecast is for cool-dry weather. Perfect for taking a long slow walk down your favorite stream or river. Flows are high for this time of year (*see stream flow graphic on page 4*). For something different try any one of our Wild Trout Management Areas. These waters harbor incredible colorful fish year-round. Worth some time and effort. Check out the "Go Wild" map in our new application "<u>CT is Fishy</u>" to find a new place to fish close to you.

Farmington River – Fishing remains very good and forecast conditions should be really good this weekend. West Branch flows are clear, moderate and just continue to be very fishable (currently 229 CFS at Riverton, with the Still River steadily dropping from 63 CFS) and morning water temperatures ranging from the mid to upper 50's °F below the dam to the mid 60's °F through New Hartford.

Rock Snot is still "blooming". *Cymbella janischii* is a close relative of Didymo and has been introduced to the West Branch Farmington River (first noticed in 2011). *C. janischii* is native to the Pacific Northwest and not naturally found on the Eastern seaboard.

SAVE THE DATE Connecticut Hunting & Fishing Day

Saturday, September 23, 2017. 10 am-4 pm CABELA's, East Hartford Get all of the details at

www.ct.gov/deep/huntfishday



Rock snot continues to bloom. Above is *Cymbella janischii* (rock snot) as observed on June 14, 2017 in the Barkhamsted portion of the West Branch Farmington River (see Notes & Notices for more information).

Currently this type of "Rock Snot" is very abundant and should continue to grow through August. The primary area of the river is from New Hartford upstream to Riverton. Note: Didymo is still present primarily in the West Branch above the Still River in Riverton. To help prevent the spread to other rivers and streams, all anglers should take extra care to clean and dry waders that have been in contact with rock snot. We recommend having a pair just for use only in the Farmington River.

Hatches/patterns continue to be a mixed bag of a variety of patterns including Tricos (*Tricorythodes* #22-24 in the morning; started in the mid-section of the river), *Ephemerella needhami* (#22-26, early

morning), Leadwing Coachman (*Isonychia bicolor*, #12-14, fast water, afternoon/evening), Blue Wing Olives (*Drunella sps.* & *Baetis sps.*; #18, 22-24, mid-late afternoon), Caddis (tan #16-20, all day; green #22-26, evening; summer pupa #18-20 morning), Cahills/Summer (*Stenonema ithaca*, #12-14, early morning), Midges (#22-28, morning), Black Ants (#12-18, mi day in fast water), Black Beetles (#16-18, midday),Stone Hopper (#8-12, mid-day).

Housatonic River – Fishing has been very good and conditions for the weekend should be very good. Flows should rise a bit due to heavy rain mid-week but still very fishable (currently 250 CFS at Falls Village and 497 CFS at Gaylordsville), and are just perfect for wading. Morning water temperatures continue in the upper 60's to low 70's°F. Can't go wrong taking a few casts for **Smallmouth, Pike, Fallfish, and Carp**. All are on fire now hitting a variety of poppers and streamers and will not disappoint.

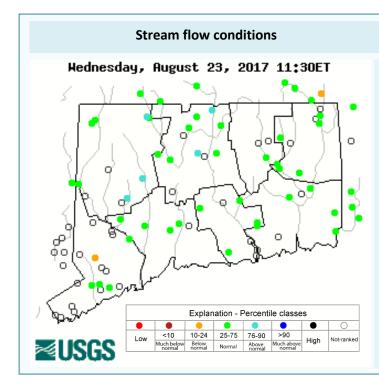
Hatches/patterns include the **White Fly hatch** with some Alder/Zebra Caddis (#8-10, Alder flies are very active during hot days), Sulphurs (#14-18, evening), Blue Wing Olive (#16-18, cloudy days, early morning; spinner fall in evening), Light Cahill (#12-14, evening), (*Isonychia bicolor*, #10-12 has been active lately, fast water, evening) and Black caddis (#14-18, early morning & evening). Streamer fishing and nymphing with big stoneflies have been very productive. Streamer patterns to try include White Zonkers, Wooly Buggers (#2-12), Muddlers, Lion Buggers, and Grey or Black Ghosts (#4-10). Light Cahill (#12-14, evening), Isonychia (#10-12), Sulfur (#16-18) and Black caddis (#14-18, early morning & evening). Don't forget poppers and streamers (morning & evening). Patterns to try include White Zonkers, Wooly Buggers, Muddlers, Grey or Black Ghosts (#4-10). Also try brown crayfish like streamers, they are effective right now.

CONNECTICUT RIVER

LARGEMOUTH BASS are being active throughout the river, especially in the coves. **SMALLMOUTH BASS** are offering some decent action in the upper river (Windsor & Enfield area). Small to medium size bait were working well. **CARP** are being caught in the upper and lower river on pre-baited 'swims'. Anglers are finding some chunky **CATFISH** by night angling in the Hartford to Middletown stretch. Try from just north of Hartford on downstream, fish the outside bends (deep holes are producing as well, try cut bait).



First Pike, A 5+ pounder from Candlewood, Sea Robin are pretty cool, and a great Lake Waramaug Largemouth. Congrats to all and Fish ON!!



Data in the state graphic to the left are generated by the United States Geologic Survey (USGS) and are available on line at: <u>http://waterdata.usgs.gov/ct/nwis/rt</u> *A percentile is a value on a scale of one hundred that indicates the percent of data in the data set equal to or below it. For example streamflow greater than the 75th percentile means only ¼ of the streamflow values were above the value and thus would be considered "above normal". Stream flow between the 25th and 50th are considered to be "normal flows" and those 25th or less are considered to be "below normal".*

NOTES & NOTICES:

PROPOSED CHANGES TO INLAND FISHERIES REGULATIONS.

DEEP's Fisheries Division is currently proposing to make changes to the Inland sport fishing regulations and to establish trout and salmon stamps.

The proposed changes to the regulations will establish trout and Atlantic salmon stamps, and amend regulations concerning methods and gear types, fishing seasons for several waterbodies, harvest regulations for certain species (common carp, catfish and bullheads), Trout Management Areas, Wild Trout Management Areas, Atlantic Salmon "Broodstock Areas," Trout Parks, and Trophy Carp Waters.

DEEP's proposed changes to Inland Fisheries Regulations (effective 2018) are currently **open for public comment until 4:30 pm on August 25, 2017 (Friday).**

For more information on proposed changes, how to comment on them and the public hearing, go to Connecticut's "eRegulations" system at <u>https://eregulations.ct.gov</u> or contact the Fisheries Division at <u>Deep.inland.fisheries@ct.gov</u> or by phone at 860-424-3474.

COVENTRY LAKE. A Waterski Exhibition will be held Sunday, August 27 from 12:00 pm to 4:00 pm in the area just to the west (in front of) the state boat launch. The launch will remain open for use by the public and a lane will available to pass by the water ski area. Boaters should use caution in this area.

CONNECTICUT RIVER (invasive species alert). Hydrilla was recently found in the main stem Connecticut River in Glastonbury (near Glastonbury's Riverfront Park & Boathouse). See the Coventry Lake entry below for what river users should do to prevent spread of this invasive plant to other waterbodies.

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

Coventry Lake (Wangumbaug Lake) boaters should avoid the area outlined in red to avoid fragmenting and spreading hydrilla. This is only area in the lake where hydrilla has been found.



WEST BRANCH FARMINGTON RIVER (invasive species alert). *Cymbella janischii* is a close relative of Didymo and has been introduced to the West Branch Farmington River (first noticed in 2011). *C. janischii* is native to the Pacific Northwest and not naturally found on the Eastern seaboard. Currently this type of "Rock Snot" is very abundant. The primary area of the river is from New Hartford upstream to Riverton. Note: Didymo is still present primarily in the West Branch above the Still River in Riverton. To help prevent the spread to other rivers and streams, all anglers should take extra care to clean and dry waders that have been in contact with rock snot. We recommend having a pair just for use only in the Farmington River.

PHOTO CONTEST: Do you have the next Angler's Guide cover shot? Email us your high quality (high resolution) photos at <u>Deep.inland.fisheries@ct.gov</u> and include <u>photo contest</u> in the subject line.

CT FISHIN' TIPS is our monthly e-newletter dedicated to providing information, tips and pointers about fishing in Connecticut. Get CT Fishin' Tips delivered automatically to your in box by subscribing at www.ct.gov/deep/newslettersubscription

NEW! Youth Fishing Passport <u>Fishing Challenge Scorecard</u>: Download the new scorecard for your Youth Fishing Passport Holder on the program web page at <u>www.ct.gov/deep/yfp</u>. Top anglers will receive a great prize pack of fishing gear.

LAKE & POND BATHYMETRIC MAPS

Bathymetric maps of many of Connecticut's public access lakes and ponds can be found online at:

www.ct.gov/deep/lib/deep/fishing/general information/lakebathymetrymaps.pdf

Both plain line maps and maps overlaying an aerial photo available.

ZEBRA MUSSELS REMINDER

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

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

For more information including precautions that should be taken to prevent the spread of zebra mussels to additional waters, visit

<u>www.ct.gov/deep/invasivespecies</u> or the Aquatic Invasive species section of the 2016 CT angler's Guide(<u>www.ct.gov/deep/anglersguide</u>).

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

SWIN

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

Announcing "Connecticut is Fishy!" a new interactive fishing resource for novice

and expert alike. The link is on our main page at <u>www.ct.gov/deep/fishing</u> or hit it directly at <u>http://ctdeep.maps.arcgis.com/apps/MapJournal/index.html</u>

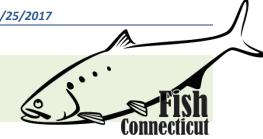
We are fortunate that within a 60 minute drive you can be fly fishing the famed Housatonic or Farmington River, catching monster pike in Bantam Lake, jumbo carp from the Connecticut River, or on the Sound fishing for tasty favorites like fluke, porgy, black sea bass, striped bass and bluefish.

This NEW interactive application has lots of great information, including maps and links, providing all you need to know about Connecticut's fisheries.

Give it a spin and let us know what you think!



MARINE FISHING REPORT



Surface water temperatures in Long Island Sound (LIS) continue in the upper 70's ^oF. Check out the following web sites for more detailed water temperatures and marine boating conditions:

http://www.mysound.uconn.edu/stationstat.html http://www.ndbc.noaa.gov/ http://marine.rutgers.edu/mrs/sat_data/?nothumbs=1 http://www.wunderground.com/MAR/AN/330.html

<u>Connecticut State Boundary Line in Long Island Sound</u>. Anglers please note: Though Connecticut has reciprocity with neighboring states (New York, Rhode Island, Maine and Massachusetts), residents of Connecticut are required to have a CT Resident Marine Waters Sport Fishing License to fish in the Marine District.

WHALES have been reported in Long Island Sound (in early July, juvenile humpback whales have been spotted on the New York side of the sound), please see check <u>WHALE WATCHING GUIDELINES</u>.

<u>Note</u>: All marine mammals are protected by the Federal Marine Mammal Protection Act. Following these recommended operational guidelines helps minimize chances of harassing or injuring whales and violating Federal law. Guidelines apply to all large whales from Maine through Virginia, except North Atlantic right whales. It is illegal to approach a right whale within 500 yards (1500 feet) unless granted specific exemption or authorization.

SEA TURTLES: <u>See a Tangled Turtle? Call the Hotline!</u> **1-860-572-5955 ext. 107.** This is the time of year when leatherback, loggerhead, green, and Kemp's ridley sea turtles return to northern waters, with many sightings around Long Island Sound.

STRIPED BASS BASS fishing has been slow to fair this week with very few discards reported. August is a tough time of year to target "linesiders" – your best bet to hook up with a big "cow" is to fish at night or in the early morning with live bait or big plugs, as most big stripers are relatively inactive during the hot "dog days" of August. Big striped bass are particularly prone to stress from hooking and handling during the warm summer months – so do your best to release these fish with as little handling as possible. We have heard reports of a fair number of smaller striped bass being taken on diamond jigs along with the abundant bluefish in the eastern Sound (see below), and reports of smaller stripers being taken by anglers casting lures on the evening ebb tide at the Watch Hill reefs. Another option is to seek out schools of adult Atlantic menhaden "bunker" in the tidal rivers and harbors and look for striped bass following these schools of their preferred prey (this is a particularly promising option for the western Sound). Look for hovering or diving ospreys, which is an indication of bunker schools.

The usual striper spots include the Watch Hill reefs, Ram Island Reef in Fishers Island Sound, lower Mystic and Thames River, the Race, Sluiceway, Plum Gut, Pigeon Rip, outer Bartlett Reef, Black Point, the "humps' south of Hatchett Reef, lower Connecticut River, Long Sand Shoal, Cornfield Point, Southwest Reef (outer), Sixmile Reef, Falkner Island area, the reefs off Branford, New Haven Harbor and the upper reaches, Charles Island area, lower Housatonic River, buoys 18 and 20 off Stratford Point, Stratford Shoal/Middle Ground, Penfield Reef, around the Norwalk Islands, and Cable and Anchor Reef.

SUMMER FLOUNDER (fluke) reports continued to be good this week with some nice size fish being caught and a few bag limits being reported. Catches were beginning to slow down as the weekend approached. This time of year, your best bet for fluke is to either "go deep", targeting areas around rock

piles and reefs in 80-120 feet of water, or "go shallow" and fish jigs or bait on light tackle along channel edges up inside coastal rivers and harbors. You might be surprised by the abundance and size of fluke you find in these inshore areas – these "doormats" will come in close to forage on the abundant baitfish available in estuaries this time of year. We also continue to hear good reports of fluke fishing from Fort Trumbull fishing pier in New London.

Other tried and true summer flounder spots include the south shore of Fishers Island (Isabella Beach, Wilderness Point), Napatree Point and along the beach, off the Stonington breakwater, mouth of the Mystic River over to Groton Long Point, Twotree Island Channel, Black Point/Niantic Bay including the Bloody Grounds, Sound View Beach, Long Sand Shoal, Falkner Island area, New Haven Harbor, off the mouth of the Housatonic River during the flood tide, and around the Norwalk Islands. **Minimum size is 19 inches and the daily creel limit is 3 fish per person.** <u>CT Bait & Tackleshop List</u>

BLACK SEA BASS fishing continues to be excellent with abundant smaller sizes. Larger fish have been elusive over the past week, staying in smaller schools and difficult to land. Fishing over almost any deep-water structure/cobble/gravel in 80 to 120 feet around slack tide will produce black sea bass. They will readily eat cut bait like squid and clams on a hi-lo rig – but if you want to weed out the smaller fish and target the trophies, try jigging small metal jigs or bucktails on a light spinning rod – you'll catch bigger fish and have a blast doing it. Black sea bass tend to school up by size – so if you are in an area where you are consistently catching undersized fish – move on to a different area to find a school of bigger fish. This will increase your chances of catching keepers, and will reduce the likelihood of incidental mortality of smaller fish that you release.

SCUP (porgy) are around in good numbers. These fish seem relatively spread out and not in very large schools overall. Sizes have varied with large "pie plates" continuing to be reported. These fish are readily caught from many shore locations and are a great option for spending an enjoyable afternoon of fishing by the shore. Try Gardner's Island, Milford (Charles Island), Montauk and Niantic (Bartlett's and Hatchett's Reef). Good porgy fishing has also been reported at these very accessible shore fishing locations: Calf Pasture beach, Jennings and Penfield beach, Seaside Park, (Milford), Bradley Point Park (West Haven), New Haven, **Harkness State Park**, Rocky Neck State Park, **Kimberley Reef (Guilford)**, Meig's Point Hammonassett State Park and **Fort Trumbull State Park**. Locate your favorite <u>Enhanced</u> <u>Shore Fishing Opportunities</u> for these hard fighting and excellent eating "Reef Slammers". These "panfish of the sea" are easily caught on sandworms/cut squid or any other small piece of bait. Contact your <u>local bait and tackleshop</u> for updated fishing information.

BLUEFISH fishing continues to be fantastic in Long Island Sound. Many anglers are having luck with diamond jigs and there are blitzes of fish along the shore at times. Bucktails and chunk baits (like bunker or mackerel) will also help you score a "gator" during the day, and casting poppers or plugs at sunrise or sunset is also a great way to hook into a big "chopper". Typical bluefish fishing spots include the reefs off Watch Hill, the Race, Thames River, Sluiceway, Plum Gut, Pigeon Rip, lower Connecticut River (CT DEEP Headquarters Fishing Pier), Long Sand Shoal, Sixmile Reef, Falkner Island area, New Haven Harbor and upper reaches, lower Housatonic River, buoys 18 and 20 off Stratford Point, Stratford Shoal/Middleground, Penfield Reef, and Cable and Anchor Reef. Reports from the eastern Sound (the Race and nearby areas) have been particularly good this last week.

SNAPPER BLUEFISH are very abundant in most of the rivers and bays throughout the state. The **DEEP Marine Headquarters fishing pier** and **Fort Trumbull fishing pier** are two great spots to catch these feisty little fish – your local tackle shop can clue you in to other great spots. Snapper fishing is a fantastic way to introduce kids to saltwater fishing – get those kids out of the house and get a rod in their hands before summer is over! **BLACKFISH (TAUTOG)** are around in good numbers in shallow rocky areas with a fair number being caught. However, these fish are not a common target species during the summer months, those in the know can enjoy some great fishing for these "Reef Bullies". Unlike during the fall, blackfish can be readily caught in very shallow water in near shore areas during the summer. One great way to target these fish is to cast blackfish jigs tipped with cut crabs in shallow reef areas using a spinning rod, slowly and carefully working the jig along the bottom. Consult your local tackle store for more info on this highly effective technique. Spearfishing is also a fun and exciting way to target "togs" during the summer. **Remember - the daily creel limit is 2 fish per person and the minimum size is 16 inches.**

STRIPED SEAROBIN can be readily caught while bottom fishing with bait in many locations, and will also surprise the occasional angler by striking a lure meant for bluefish or striped bass. They make for great action on light tackle, with fish measuring over 22 inches a possibility, and despite their unusual appearance, these fish make for delicious eating. If you've never tried this "Poor-Man's Lobster" – you're missing out! There are plenty of videos online showing how to fillet these fish. Kids also will get a kick out of these noisy creatures, as they tend to make all kinds of barking and grunting noises when caught.

BLUE CRAB fishing has been good for those using traps or chicken – we are in the peak season now for catching these feisty and delicious crustaceans. Due to limited visibility, scooping has been difficult and many smaller crabs are around. Taking kids blue crabbing is great family fun, so get down to the shoreline to get in on the action while summer is still with us. Blue crabs prefer coves and tidal creeks with mud bottoms. There are a number of great spots for crabbing on the Connecticut shoreline – contact your local bait and tackle store for tips on where to go and how to do it. **Remember, all egg bearing females must be released without avoidable injury, and the minimum carapace length is 5 inches for a hard shell crab**. Please promptly release all undersized crabs and egg bearing females so that they can ensure good crabbing in the years to come. Legal gear types include scoop (dip) net, hand line, star crab trap, circular (topless) trap not exceeding 26 inches in diameter. Maryland Style Crab traps are prohibited. **Chicken with the skin on it (along with a long handle dip net) is the preferred method to capture these tasty crabs**. <u>Blue Crab Fact Sheet</u>

CHUB MACKEREL have been around in the Sound in decent numbers and there have been reports of **Atlantic Bonito** east of Connecticut, indicating that **Bonito** and **Albies** should be arriving any time!

For **Current Connecticut Recreational Fishing Regulations:** Anglers should consult the 2017 Connecticut Anglers Guide which is now available at most Town Clerks Offices, DEEP offices and at tackle stores selling fishing licenses. Current regulations, electronic versions of the Angler's Guide and additional information can all be accessed on the DEEP website at: www.ct.gov/deep/fishing.

The Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection is an Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Employer that is committed to complying with the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act. Please contact us at (860) 418-5910 or <u>deep.accommodations@ct.gov</u> if you have a disability and need a communication aid or service; have limited proficiency in English and may need information in another language; or if you wish to file an ADA or Title VI discrimination complaint.



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