

CT DEEP **2018**
FISHING REPORT NUMBER 5
5/24/2018



Channel Catfish (*Ictalurus punctatus*)



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INLAND REPORT

TROUT- RIVERS & STREAMS - Conditions for trout fishing should be VERY GOOD as the forecast is for a mix of conditions, mostly favorable. River and stream flows are near perfect for fishing (*see stream flow graphic on page 5*) and there are still many stocked trout waiting for anglers as the fish have more than likely moved a bit from the stocking access point.

Reports from anglers indicated the fish were becoming more active and the spring insect activity is increasing by the day. Think CADDIS, lots of activity on our rivers and streams.

Get the latest on our Trout Stocking through

- Daily Facebook Posts (@[CTFISHANDWILDLIFE](https://www.facebook.com/CTFISHANDWILDLIFE))
- Current Stocking Report (on our [webpage](#))
- [Interactive Trout Stocking Map](#)
- See last year's [stocking numbers](#)

Thank you to the following for adding to our Fishing Report this Week: **Inland Report – Andrea Nivolo, Patrick Sullivan, James Swiatek Jr., Kenny Ludwig, Chris Eastwood, Rick N., Robert J. Montigny, Dick Gozinna, Keith Olson, Jim Vanicky, James Talamini, Bob Swanson, Jacob Baldassario, Curt Pollitt, Debbie O'Brien, Holly Renstrom, Josh Parsons, John Serdy, Bill I., Anonymous. Marine Report – Tony Agostine and Ed Bergman**

On average, these folks fished 1-5 times last week spending an average of 10-20 hours on the water. Most were fly-fishing with the remaining using lures or live bait.



INTERACTIVE TROUT STOCKING MAP

Anglers can find more information on trout stocking online. A list of the waters that were dropped from this year's stocking schedule is on our webpage at: www.ct.gov/deep/fishing, along with an interactive trout stocking map (www.ct.gov/deep/troutstockingmap) that anglers should find very useful for planning their next outing. The new application (mobile friendly) provides the number of days since the last stocking at each of our stocked waters enabling anglers to search for their favorite waterbody or by that have been recently stocked.

Notable Catches Reported: Rainbows feeding on caddis, 3 pound Brookie, 4.5 Pound Rainbow, lots of 12-14 inch Largemouth, 16 inch Brookie, 4 pound brown, Heavy Pickerel, over 10 brookies in eastern CT.

How Did They Rate the Fishing?

<i>Species</i>	<i>Excellent</i>	<i>Good</i>	<i>Average</i>	<i>Fair</i>	<i>Poor</i>
Trout	8	6	0	1	0
Bass	3	3	0	2	2
Pike	0	2	0	0	0
Walleye	0	0	0	0	0
Channel Catfish	0	0	0	0	0
Panfish	1	4	0	1	0
Common Carp	0	0	0	0	0

What was HOT! Wacky Rigged Senkos, Spinner Bait, Shakey Head, Caddis pupa and emerger, brown wooly bugger, mepps gold spinner, everything, size 14 sexy walts worm, mealworms, phoebe, hula popper.

What was NOT! Large streamers, anything silver, crank bait, rubber worms.

Good or better places to fish included: Lake Wononscopomuc, Blackberry River, Whiting River, Waurgean Reservoir, Crystal Lake, Coventy Lake, Yantic River, Prospect Town Park, Middle Bolton Lake, Fenton River.

Fair or worse places to fish included: Candlewood Lake, Housatonic River TMA, Christensen’s Pond, Stillwater Pond, Whitford Brook.

Some key hatches last week: All things CADDIS, tan and black, Blue Wing Olives, March Brown, Hendrickson.

Friendly Angler Advice (unedited):

Blue gill biting a little bit very little activity yet. All bites were close to shore.
Dozen or so browns caught with a copper super duper at about 20 feet using a downrigger, all fish were released as they were in the protected 12 to 16 inch range
Fish are still deep in pools; not much going on at the surface. I am running at least 36”-48” of 4x tippet from my tippet ring on a Euro tightline setup
In high flows look for soft water where trout can relax and enjoy a snack.
Keep changing your gear, something not working, don't waste time on it.
Most of the bass including smallmouth are in full spawn mode and some are locked on beds making it more difficult for them to be caught. The bass that were caught this week were in water 2-5 feet deep. Senkos and other finesse type bait were working well this week and on windier days, caught a few on a natural shad looking spinner bait. The bad storms that came through the state this past week created dirty, murky water with a lot of debris observed in the water.
Swinging caddis pupa through riddles and runs produced actively feeding trout
The trout are hanging low in deep pools. Five of the six that my son and I caught are still in the river; the other one decided to ingest the hook so we introduced him to the frying pan.

FROM FISHERIES

TROUT- RIVERS & STREAMS – As mentioned on page 1, conditions should be very good for trout fishing in most areas this weekend.

Farmington River - West Branch flows are moderately high but clear, currently 295 CFS at Riverton plus an additional 107 CFS from the Still River. Conditions should be very good for the upcoming long holiday weekend.

Hatches/patterns include **Blue Wing Olive, Hendrickson, Caddis**, Stonefly nymphs, Midge and Blue Quill. Nymphs (#18-22) are always a good go-to fly, try Bead Head, Midge Pupa, Brassie, Zebra Midge or Copper John patterns. Streamers are also a good option (White Zonkers & Buggers (#4-12) as well as Muddlers, Mickey Finn, Grey or Black Ghost).

Housatonic River - Conditions for the weekend will be very good. The river is running nicely at 926 CFS at Falls Village and 1,500 CFS at Gaylordsville. Morning water temperatures are currently in the low-mid 50's °F.

Hatches/patterns. Typical patterns include **March Brown (#10-12), Pheasant Tail (#12-18), Stoneflies (#6-10), CADDIS**, Pheasant Tails (#14-20), and Black Stoneflies (#18-22). Look for Hendriksons soon. Nymphing (try Bead Head, Midge Pupa or Copper Johns) and streamers (such as White/Yellow Zonkers or Woolly Buggers) are good options.

RIVERS & STREAMS- Stocking update for the week of 5/21-5/25. All of the 500,000+ trout, raised for spring 2018, have been stocked.

Note that other stockings can be found in our [current stocking report](#) or by using the [interactive trout stocking map](#).

- **In eastern Connecticut;** Quinebaug River (Plainfield, Canterbury), Natchaug River, Scantic River, Fenton River, Jeremy River, Coginchaug River, Salmon River (open section and TMA), Shetucket River, Moosup River.
- **In western Connecticut;** Farm River (lower), Pequabuck River (Rockwell Park - Blvd.), Pequonnock River (Beardsley Park), Pequonnock River, and lower Naugatuck River (Waterbury-Beacon Falls).

LAKES & PONDS – With more reasonable air temperatures, the water temperatures are slowly rising and so will fish activity. Some report that the fishing has picked up, especially in the shallows.

Lakes and ponds stocking update for the week of 5/21 -5/25:

- **In eastern Connecticut;** Black Pond (Meriden/Middlefield), Millers Pond, Quonnipaug Lake, and Crystal Lake.
- **In western Connecticut;** East Twin Lake, Highland Lake, and Scoville Reservoir.

TROUT PARKS: Pasture Pond, Chatfield Hollow Brook, and Natchaug River.

LARGEMOUTH BASS fishing has been fair to good, with fish moving onto beds or on beds, and also some reports of post-spawn behavior from some locations (southeastern lakes). **Tournament angler** reports are from Gardner Lake (slow to fair, 4.81 lb lunger), Long Pond (slow for most of one small club, 2.30 lb lunger), Mansfield Hollow Reservoir (good for some, tough for others, but some nice size with fish averaging nearly 3 lbs apiece, with 6.60, 4.90 lb, 4.75 lb and 4.50 lb lunkers for one event), Mashapaug Lake (good fishing for largemouth, with a 3.30 lb lunger), Powers Lake (fair to good, a 3.11 lb lunger but not much for size overall), Candlewood Lake (slow to fair, 5.9 lb, 5.46 lb, 5.19 lb, 5.04 lb, 5.06 lb, 4.79 lb, 4.77 lb and 4.39 lb lunkers), Colebrook River Lake (good, moist teams had 5 fish, with a 4.47 lb lunger), Lake Lillinonah (tough finding

largemouth), West Hill Pond (good action, with 7 of 10 anglers bringing 5 fish, 3.8 lb lunker) and Wononskopomuc Lake (good, 8 for 8 full bags, 5.43 lb lunker and fish averaging 2.5 lbs apiece).

SMALLMOUTH BASS. Smallmouth are being caught at Candlewood Lake, Lake Lillinonah (bass bandits, #2 mepps, and live shiners were all working) and the upper CT River. **Tournament angler** reports are from Candlewood Lake (fair to very good, with 3.74 lb and 3.52 lb lunkers), Lake Lillinonah (good, with a 4.81 lb lunker) and Mashapaug Lake (tough finding smallies, 3.2 lb lunker)..

WALLEYE & NORTHERN PIKE. Not many reports coming in as of yet. Those in the know are more than likely doing well.

CHANNEL CATFISH. Good reports from just about everywhere as our annual catfish stocking happened on Tuesday, May 22. Adult-sized (14-20 inches) were stocked into our Community Fishing Waters and yearling (8-10 inches) were stocked into our Catfish Management Lakes.

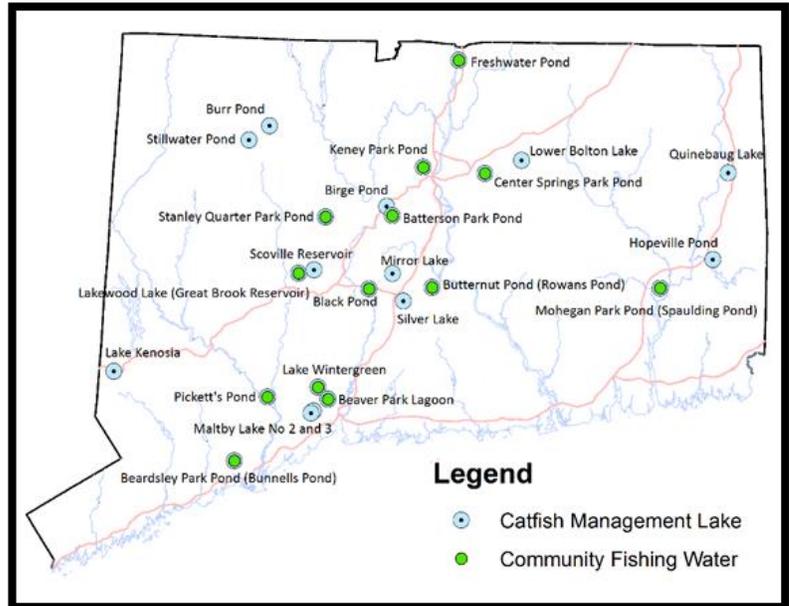
NEW HARVEST REGULATION: 3 Fish per day from waters stocked with adult fish (community fishing waters) and a 6 fish per day limit in all other waters (stocked with yearlings and places with self-sustaining populations).

CHAIN PICKEREL. Good reports from just about everywhere, fish actively feeding along the newly forming weedlines.

COMMON CARP fishing remains good.

BLACK CRAPPIE are becoming more aggressive hitting small Rapala and small jigs. Look for a “slab” at your favorite fishing hole. Some really nice crappie are reported from Candlewood Lake and Lake Lillinonah.

CONNECTICUT RIVER. Flows have dropped a ton! Current flow is 12,600 CFS and clear and cool. Water temperatures remain cool. **AMERICAN SHAD** can be found throughout the river. Willow leafs have been working. **STRIPED BASS** (schoolie-size and a few bigger fish) are being found throughout the river. **LARGEMOUTH BASS** are providing some action in the coves from just below Hartford to Haddam. **SMALLMOUTH BASS** are hitting small jigs in and around the rocky stretch in the Enfield area. **CHANNEL CATFISH** are providing some solid action.



NOTES & NOTICES:

STORM DAMAGE UPDATE. Due to storm damage, the following Connecticut State Parks are currently closed:

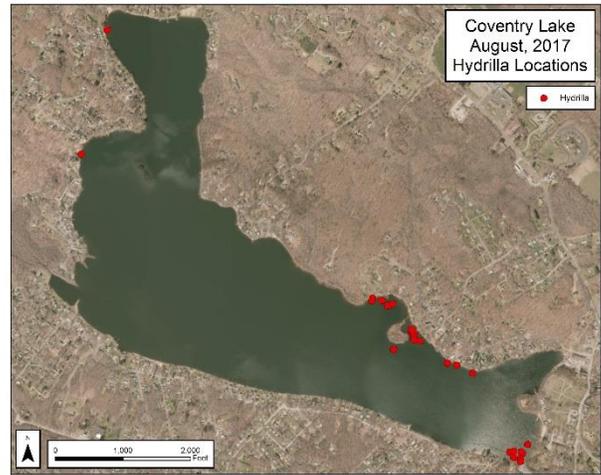
- **Sleeping Giant**, Hamden. This closure includes the Sleeping Giant TMA on the Mill River (Hamden).
- **Squantz Pond**, New Fairfield. This closure includes the Candlewood Lake State Boat Launch at Squantz Cove. The State Boat Launch at Lattins Cove on Candlewood Lake remains open for boating access.

- **Wharton Brook**, Wallingford. This closure includes the Wharton Brook Trout Park.
- **Kettletown**, Southbury (re-opening on Friday, May 25 at noon; parts of the park will remain closed however campgrounds will be open).

DRAWDOWN UPDATES. Temporary dam repairs have been completed at **Pachaug Pond** and the lake is refilling.

CONNECTICUT RIVER (invasive species alert). Last year hydrilla was found in the main stem Connecticut River in Glastonbury (near Glastonbury’s Riverfront Park & Boathouse). **There are now reports of plants found at other locations along the river including Wethersfield and Crow Point coves and at a site in Enfield.** See the Coventry Lake entry below for what river users should do to prevent spread of this invasive plant to other waterbodies.

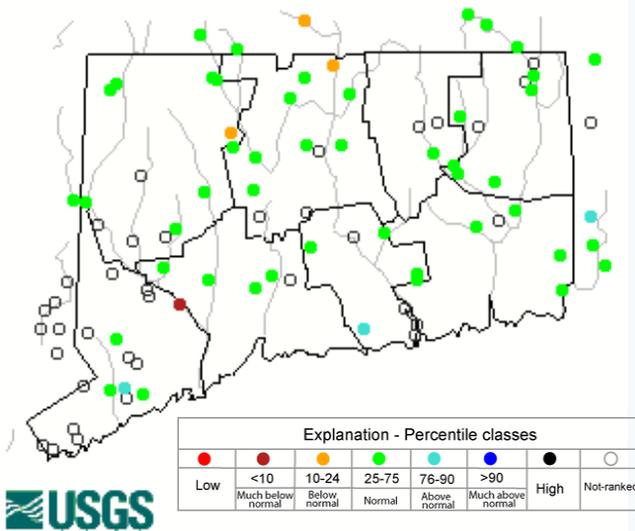
COVENTRY LAKE (invasive species alert). Hydrilla, a very highly invasive aquatic plant, has been found growing in Coventry Lake. All lake users should take extra care to check and clean their boats (including canoes, kayaks and rowing sculls), trailers, and fishing equipment before leaving the boat launch,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



Coventry Lake (Wangumbaug Lake) boaters should avoid the areas noted with red dots to avoid fragmenting and spreading hydrilla.

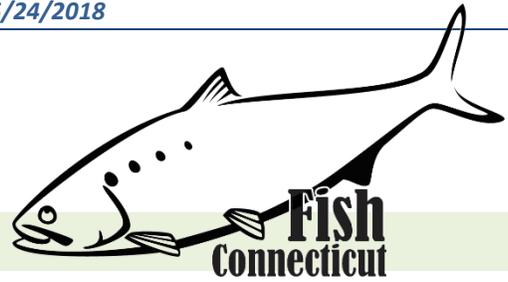
Stream flow conditions

Thursday, May 24, 2018 15:30ET



Data in the state graphic to the left are generated by the United States Geologic Survey (USGS) and are available on line at: <http://waterdata.usgs.gov/ct/nwis/rt> 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”.

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MARINE FISHING REPORT

Surface water temperatures in Long Island Sound (LIS) in the 50's °F. Check out the following web sites for more detailed water temperatures and marine boating conditions:

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

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

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

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

CONNECTICUT STATE BOUNDARY LINE IN LONG ISLAND SOUND. Anglers please note, although Connecticut has reciprocity with neighboring states (New York, Rhode Island, Maine and Massachusetts), residents of Connecticut are required to have a CT Resident Marine Waters Sport Fishing License to fish in the Marine District.

SHORE FISHING SPOTS & TIDE TABLE INFORMATION To find a saltwater shore fishing spot close to where you live, go to the following website: <http://www.lisrc.uconn.edu/coastalaccess/>.

For **ENHANCED OPPORTUNITY SHORE FISHING** sites and other fishing information including a site map go to the following website <http://www.depdata.ct.gov/maps/saltwaterfish/map.htm>.

Please see page 64 of the **2018 CT Angler's Guide** for CT tide information.

IMPORTANT NOTE to ANGLERS: there are many reports of **leaping sturgeon** in the lower CT River (Essex to the Old Saybrook). A common spring behavior for these **endangered fish species (Atlantic and shortnose)** as they attempt to gulp air for their primitive swim bladder. Anglers are incidentally snagging or catching these sturgeon while bottom fishing. Please release all sturgeon immediately without avoidable harm. They are a protected species. Thank you.

STRIPED BASS fishing is excellent...the full migration is on. Bass are still migrating slowly and chasing new bunker schools on Long Island Sounds western side — but they are headed east. Sand Eels have made their way to our shores, especially in Stratford, Milford, West Haven and New Haven. A favorite spot for stripers in May and June is the West Haven Sand Bar and specifically Sandy Point Beach and Sandy Point Audubon Society Beach. The lot has been upgraded and self-service parking meters have been added by the town - and they do enforce - so feed that meter. They are really loving soft swim baits still with lead heads. And fishers have had luck recently bouncing soft plastics with heavier bodies and led on the bottom of the water column. There was one report of a new arrival weighing 50-pounds that was caught mid-Sound in the Stamford area. Atlantic menhaden (bunker) schools are a little scarce and spread out and they are also infiltrating the western Sound. But with the recent weather temps, all of our favorite fish will be invading us via Block Island Sound on the eastern part of Long Island Sound.

Larger striped bass are still moving out of the Hudson and headed into Long Island Sound. They are especially prevalent between Mamaroneck, NY and Rye, NY to the Housatonic River. Dunking fresh Atlantic menhaden chunks (Bunker) in 50-feet of water mid-sound is producing keepers up to 50-pounds. Plugging has rapidly picked up and the Housatonic River is still on fire. Although the Connecticut River is lagging slightly behind, schoolie striper action is still hot and larger cow bass are starting to move in. Bass are being caught at the brand new Fort Nathan Hale Pier with sand worms (sand worms have been working better than night crawlers) and striped bass are also getting reeled in at Sandy Point West Haven, CT DEEP Marine Fisheries HQ Pier, Norwalk's Calf Pasture Beach Pier, Gulf Beach Pier in Milford and Branford Point. Focus on the river mouths

and surrounding beaches close to shore. It would be a good idea to start switching from small soft plastics, to larger soft plastics and swimming plugs. Small jigs and Sluggos will do the trick as well. The lower Housatonic, Connecticut River, Thames River and large bays/harbors (New Haven) are holding a lot of bunker (bait). Striper spots include Hempstead, Mamaroneck, Execution Rocks, Stepping Stone, the Weather Buoy, Can 32A, Pawcatuck River, Mystic River, Thames River, Niantic River, lower Connecticut River (DEEP Marine Headquarters fishing pier and Dock and Dine), Black Hall River, New Haven Harbor (Sandy Point), Housatonic River and Norwalk/Saugatuck Harbor including the islands. Try trolling bunker spoons on the reefs or better yet toss a chunk of bunker. Sand and blood worms have been working the best for “schoolie” bass. Casting swimming lures (SP Minnow – bone & sand eel color), small jigs (Chartreuse color) with twister tails, soft baits, and Kastmasters and other metal lures will all work. The evening/night bite is fantastic with bait, including eels. The top-water fishing continues to be fantastic...Cotton Cordell pencil poppers in bone, blue back or black color. Check out your local bait and tackle shop for bait.

Striped bass are being caught from piers along the Connecticut coast, including the new, fabulously designed, Fort Nathan Hale Pier. In fact, at Fort Nathan anglers are not just catching 38” plus stripers, they’re also catching keeper scup, in ranges of 13” - 16”. Other striper spots include the Pawcatuck River, Mystic River, Thames River, Niantic River, lower Connecticut River (DEEP Marine Headquarters fishing pier and Dock & Dine), Black Hall River, New Haven Harbor (Nathan Hale Fishing Pier, Sandy Point), the Sound School Fishing Pier, Housatonic River and Norwalk Harbor including the islands. Sand and blood worms have been working the best, especially in turbid waters around the incoming tide. Casting swimming lures, small jigs (Chartreuse color) with twister tails, soft baits, and Kastmasters and other metal lures will also work.

Please use circle hooks when fishing with bait to prevent gut hooking and practice catch & release.

SCUP (porgy) fishing is awesome south of Gardiners Island and the other north shore bays. Scup are piled up in Gardiners Bay, Cherry Point, Napeague Bay and the Peconics (**Little Peconic**) for spawning. For those who want to stay close to home...Scup are slowly inhabiting all the local Long Island Sound reefs. Try sandworms or clams. Time to plan a trip on a party/charter boat in CT. [CT Party Boat Association](#). I mean giant porgies measuring 14-18 inches (“hubcap size”) have been caught! Porgy fishing has also been reported at these shore fishing locations: Todd’s Point, Calf Pasture beach Pier, **Sherwood Island State Park**, Rocky Neck State Park, Meigs Point Hammonasset State Park and Fort Trumbull State Park. Locate your favorite [Enhanced Shore Fishing Opportunities](#) for these 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 [local bait and tackle shop](#) for updated fishing information. Scup are being caught on high-low rigs. Although they have been preferring clams this month, try to offer them some squid as well.

WINTER FLOUNDER continues to impress with good numbers of fish being caught. Fishing is good in the Poquonock River, at Bluff Point State Park, Niantic River, The Brothers, Jordan Cove, lower Saugatuck River, Calf Pasture Beach area, Norwalk Islands (Cockonoe) and the channels in Norwalk Harbor.

WHITE PERCH fishing is good in tidal rivers and coves along Connecticut’s shoreline. Perch spots include the Pawcatuck River, Mystic River, Thames River, upper Niantic River, lower Connecticut River (DEEP Marine Headquarters fishing pier), Black Hall River, Lieutenant River, North/South Cove and Hamburg Cove. Shrimp and small worms are the key to success.

SUMMER FLOUNDER (fluke) fishing is good overall and improving with the arrival of countless numbers of squid. As squid continue to enter Long Island Sound...fishing will only get better. Fishing is very good just south of Fishers Island. The largest confirmed report was a doormat, weighing 9.4 pounds. Also as usual, Two-Tree Island fluke fishing is just getting started, but anglers are cranking in some nice keepers. Mid to western LIS anglers reported fluke from 2 to 4 lbs being common. Fluke spots include the typical locations: Smithtown Bay, Buoy #26, south shore of Fishers Island (Isabella Beach, Wilderness Point), Napatree Point and along the beach, off the Stonington breakwater, mouth of the Mystic River to Groton Long Point, Thames River channel,

Two Tree Island channel, Black Point/Niantic Bay/River, Long Sand Shoal, Westbrook-Clinton area, Falkner Island area, West Haven to Woodmont, New Haven Harbor including by the breakwaters, off the mouth of the Housatonic River, and around the Norwalk Islands. Since squid are coming in, offering a live one on the bottom (10-40 feet) would be a good move for catching that big slab “doormat” fluke! Try drifting with a white or pink Spro Bucktail jig with a Berkely 3” - 4” Gulp Mullet in chartreuse, white or pink color. Fresh squid and or silversides (spearing) have also been producing. **Minimum size is 19 inches and the daily creel limit is 4 fish per person.** Time to get the boat, and fishing gear ready for some phenomenal early season fluke fishing. [CT Bait & Tackleshop List](#)

WEAKFISH fishing is good at West Haven Sand Bar, Milford and Stratford Beaches including Stratford's Long Beach and Charles Island in Milford. Try small Daiwa SP Minnows as the tide changes from slack to outflow. The weakfish have also arrived at Pennfield Reef in Fairfield and at the mouth of Blackrock Harbor. Small lures like Super Spook Lures or Talking Poppers have been effective. Look for these awesome eating fish in Guilford/New Haven Harbor over to the Milford/Stratford area along with the Peconics (NY) and South of Plum Island on sandy bottom.

BLACK SEA BASS fishing is pretty good in LIS. The early season hot spots are Falkner Island, the Middlegrounds, Buoy 32A, Green Ledge Lighthouse, Cockenoe Islands, Six Mile Reef and from New Haven to Woodmont. Fishing over any deep water structure in 30 to 100 ft around slack tide will produce some trophy-sized “humpbacks”. Fish shallower and you will catch plenty of keeper-sized sea bass. It’s important to continue to move from structure to structure to find these beautiful and awesome eating fish. Minimum size is 15 inches and the daily creel limit is 5 fish per person.

BLUEFISH the new arrival of spearing (silversides), bunker and sand eels, we are hearing our first reports of bluefish. As you know, bluefish will devour almost anything. Bluefish are around the Norwalk Islands up to 30” and they are entering Long Island Sound from Block Island Sound as well. Reports are also coming in from Seaside Park and the Milford beaches of meal sized bluefish catches. The Race, Millstone Outflow, Plum Gut and the north side of Long Island including Gardiners Bay and the Peconics are the early season hotspots.

STRIPED SEAROBIN fishing is good in LIS for this “hardhead fish with spines and large pectoral fins”. These beautiful and strange looking fish are now very common especially when bottom fishing at many of Connecticut’s shore fishing sites. With many fish measuring over 20 inches, 3 pounds and “barking up a storm” (grunting noise they make when handling them). They love sandworms, squid and any live or dead bait. Please be careful when handling them...be mindful of their spines located on top of their head and gill cover. They are also very good to eat.

HICKORY SHAD fishing is good in the lower Connecticut River by the **DEEP Marine Headquarters fishing pier**. Connecticut Tarpon (Hickory shad) can be found mixed in with schoolie striped bass and American shad. Flood or ebb tide is best and lures of choice are a willow leaf (silver), kastmaster (single hook), small plastic jigs (white or chartreuse), and or shad darts in various colors.

For Current Connecticut Recreational Fishing Regulations: Anglers should consult the 2018 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.

DEEP WEEKLY Fishing Report



Connecticut Department of
ENERGY & ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

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www.ct.gov/deep