CT DEEP 2018 FISHING REPORT NUMBER 12 7/12/2018



Smallmouth Bass (Micropterus dolomieu)



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INLAND REPORT

Providers of some of the information below included **Bob's Place** (Dayville), **Candlewood Lake Bait & Tackle**, **Captain Morgan's Bait & Tackle**, **JT's Fly shop**, and **CTFisherman.com**, and a number of bass fishing clubs & organizations.

LARGEMOUTH BASS fishing has been picking up, with the best action found fishing evenings, go for topwater lures such as jitterbugs, hitting along weedlines. Places to try include Glasgo Pond, Quaddick Lake, Mansfield Hollow Reservoir, Mashapaug Lake, Killingly Pond (some 3-5 lb catches reported), Congamond Lakes, Winchester Lake, Lake Saltonstall, Silver Lake (blue & black swim baits in the evening), Lake Wononskopomuc, Bantam Lake, Lake Lillinonah, East Twin Lake, Babcock Pond, Wood Creek Pond, Pattagansett Lake, Rogers Lake, Pickerel Lake, Red Cedar Lake, Bishop Pond, Lake McDonough, Candlewood Lake (flipping weedbeds), Silver Lake, Black Pond (Meriden), Mudge Pond, and Amos Lake.

Tournament angler reports are from Beach Pond (fair to good action, but not much size, with a 2.22 lb lunker), Gardner Lake (fair to good, 4.7 lb lunker), Gorton Pond (fair to good results, with a 4.97 lb lunker), Long Pond (slow for most), Quaddick Lake (good fishing with some nice size, 4.5 lb and 4.33 lb lunkers and an average weight of 2.1 lbs per fish for one club and 2.0 lbs for a second club), East Twin Lake (slow to fair, with only a 2.22 lb lunker), Lake Lillinonah (slow to fair), Lake McDonough (fair to good, 3.1 lb lunker) and the Connecticut River (fair to good, 3.86 lb lunker).

SMALLMOUTH BASS. Fishing is slow in many lakes and ponds, but there are some brighter spots including Lake Lillinonah, Lake McDonough and Candlewood Lake (try swimbaits in 15 feet of water around rocks). Fishing for river smallmouth is good in the Housatonic River, also try other rivers such as the Naugatuck River, Shetucket River and Quinebaug River. **Tournament angler** reports are Beach Pond (none), Gardner Lake (none), Lake Lillinonah (fair to good, 4.11 lb lunker), Lake McDonough (slow to fair), and the Connecticut River (some caught).

TROUT- *RIVERS & STREAMS* – Conditions for trout fishing remain fair. Water levels are dropping well below typical early July levels (see stream flow graphic on page 6) in the west but are somewhat better in the east. Many of the rivers are entering the summer doldrums - too warm for trout. Best bets are to seek out smaller streams and our Wild Trout Management Areas (tend to have good cold flow year round).

Very good reports from the Farmington River (West Branch and mainstem) – especially in faster riffles. Other areas, such as the Yantic, Natchaug, Hammonasset and Shetucket rivers have slowed, but are still giving up a few fish at times.

Farmington River – Reminder -The upper section of the Farmington River TMA from Hogback Dam (Goodwin Dam) to the old bridge abutments (upper boundary for the year-round catch-and-release area) was stocked with 1,800 Brown Trout (12+ inch fish) on July 3. The upcoming weekend looks great for the West Branch and main stem Farmington with moderate flows, currently 319 CFS at Riverton plus 15 CFS from the Still River, and

a variety of insect life in and on the river. Water temperatures range from the upper 50's °F to the mid-60's °F as you move further downstream.

Rock Snot is "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.

Currently this type of "Rock Snot" is very abundant and should continue to grow through July. 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. More comfortable conditions this week. Once of the largest hatches was the "floaters – on tubes and rafts". To avoid some potential disruption in your fishing try early am or late pm. The river is multiuse and as such, we encourage all to share the resource and hope everyone will be respectful and courteous.

As far as insects go there was a tremendous diversity of mayflys seen sitting around lights in the early



morning (although not in large numbers)– try black, cinnamon and flying ant patterns (especially in afternoons). Others for this time of year include include Isonychia (#10-12), Vitreus (#16-18, from 5:00 pm to dark, Riverton area), Tan Caddis (#16-18, good all day), Sulfurs, (Invaria #16-18, hatches mid-day and Dorothea #16-18) Light Cahill (#10-14), March Brown nymphs (#10-12), Gray Fox (#14, afternoon), Blue Wing Olives (#18-24, mid-late afternoon), Caddis (tan #14-18, all day; green #22-26, evening), Midges (#20-32), Blue Quill (#16-18) and Pale Evening Duns (Epeorus vitreus #16-18, afternoon and early evenings). Muddler minnow are a good bet to bounce along the bottom.

Housatonic River – Flows are great for comfortable fishing. They are 242 CFS at Falls Village and 363 CFS at Gaylordsville. Morning water temperatures are currently in the mid 60's °F. Smallmouth and Fallfish are great options now that many trout have moved into the thermal refuges. Both types of fish are plentiful in the river and super fun on light gear. We suggest diversifying a bit and going for Pike and Common Carp – both are very active and are patrolling the shallows. Super large fish that you will never forget.

Hatches/patterns. Just about all patterns working – with Alder Flies (Actually a type of Caddisfly) are the go to fly with good results all along the river, Sulphurs (#14-18, evening), Blue Wing Olive (#16-18, cloudy days, early morning; spinner fall in evening), Isonychia (#10-12 late afternoon & evening, just starting), Light Cahill (#12-14, evenings), Adams (#12-16, evening), March Brown (#10-12, afternoon) and Gray Foxes (#14-16). Black Caddis, and Green caddis (#16-18, early morning & evening). Streamers (such as White/Yellow Zonkers or Wooly Buggers) are good options when the fish are not taking from the surface.

Anglers are reminded that the thermal refuge areas on the Housatonic, Naugatuck and Shetucket Rivers are now closed to fishing (as of June 15). These areas will reopen on September 15. There is no fishing within 100 feet of signs indicating such closure at or near the mouths of tributaries to these rivers. **TROUT-***LAKES & PONDS* – Unlike most rivers and streams, our deeper cooler lakes will produce with some time and effort. Places to go include Squantz Pond &Candlewood Lake (trollers are finding a few), East Twin Lake (some trolling acting mornings), Saugatuck Reservoir, West Branch Reservoir, Crystal Lake, Long Pond, Highland Lake and Mount Tom Pond. It's been slow at Mashapaug Lake, Cedar Lake and Lake Quonnipaug.

KOKANEE. Some steady action in the morning trolling for kokes at East Twin Lake.

CATFISH (CHANNEL AND WHITE). Fair to good fishing reported from a number of waters. The more productive areas including the CT River in the evening, Stillwater Pond, Birges Pond, Mohegan Park Pond, Butternut Park Pond, and Lower Bolton Lake . "Chicken Liver" is a good offering.

CHAIN PICKEREL. Still active (and aggressive) in many of the coves and weedlines of our ponds.

COMMON CARP. Good action in all locations. Lake Zoar, the upper Housatonic River, Batterson Park Pond, Aspinook Pond and West Thompson Reservoir are good carp waters.

WALLEYE. Fishing has been generally so-so, but anglers are finding some fish (try late evening with alewives). Some 3-5 lb walleyes are being found at Lake Saltonstall. Nighttime is the right time at Mount Tom Pond and Coventry Lake. Mashapaug Lake has been slow.

NORTHERN PIKE. Some action in Hopeville Pond, Mansfield Hollow Lake and Lake Lillinonah. Also try for pike in the upper Housatonic River near the small impoundments (Bulls Bridge through Falls Village).

PANFISH. Perfect time of year to go to your favorite pond and load up on bluegill and perch. While you are at it, bring the family.

CONNECTICUT RIVER Flows are now at normal levels (5,900 CFS) and getting your boat around should be better. **LARGEMOUTH BASS** are providing action in the coves from

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 2018 CT angler's Guide(<u>www.ct.gov/deep/anglersguide</u>).

just below Hartford to Haddam. **SMALLMOUTH BASS** continue to keep anglers interested in the Windsor-Enfield area (small grey grubs). **CHANNEL CATFISH/WHITE CATFISH** are picking up and providing some 4-6 pound fish throughout the Connecticut River from below Hartford to Haddam (chunk bait). **COMMON CARP** are still providing some good action from Middletown (around the Mattabessett River) downstream to Salmon River Cove. **STRIPED BASS** some here and there. **BOWFIN** (not snakeheads) catches are consistent in the murky backwaters and along the weedlines.

INLAND REPORT (Reported by You).

Thank you to the following for adding to our Fishing Report this Week. INLAND REPORT: Chuck Salvatore, Andrea Nivolo, Kenny Ludwig, Patrick Sullivan, Peter Anderson, Anita D., Dave Vosgien, James B., Victor Howell, Jay Pernaselci, Jason Punty, Markus, Ken Lowell, Dylan Napoleone, Ed Torres, Mark, Anonymous.

MARINE REPORT: Paul Hyatt, Bob Swanson, Anonymous.

Notable Catches Reported: 8 pound largemouth, 24 inch/3.75 pound trout, 13.5 inch holdover rainbow, 13 " brown, 2 big bowfin, 4.5 pound largemouth, Golden trout, lots of small ones.



Species	Excellent	Good	Average	Fair	Poor
Trout	2	2	3	0	0
Bass	2	10	2	4	0
Pike	0	1	1	0	0
Walleye	0	0	0	0	0
Channel Catfish	1	0	0	0	0
Panfish	4	4	0	0	0
Common Carp	0	0	0	0	0

How Did They Rate the Fishing?

What was HOT! Caddis, White grubs, streams, poppers, Rappala jerkbaits, Berkley Pit Boss, Chatterbait, Super spook, Yellow mop, big hoppers (size 4), Isonyichia, leadwing coachman, crayfish imitations, live shiners, chicken livers, tandem spinner bait, Senko 10 inch, top water frogs.

What was NOT! Big green worms, most lures, spinning lures, large swim bait, top water, nymphs.

Good or better places to fish included: Candlewood Lake, Farmington River, Housatonic River (outside of the TMA), Crystal Lake, Birges Pond, Fall Mountain Lake, Bantam River, Winchester Lake, Shenipsit Lake, CT River outside of tributaries

Fair or worse places to fish included: Farmington River, Willimantic River, Housatonic River

Some key hatches last week: None seen, Blue Winged Olives, Sulfurs

Friendly Angler Advice (unedited):

Smallmouth are starting to get deep. Caught some decent smallies this week in 15+ FOW. Largemouth are hanging tight to weed edges. Evening/night topwater bite has been great with worse fishing experienced on bright sunny days.

It's smallmouth season. Low flows allow the wading angler to get into the parts of the Housatonic normally accessible only by boat, not to mention the sections above and below the TMA. Suggestion -- Use a sturdy rod, six to eight weight, to throw big poppers and streamers, and tuck a Tenkara rod in your pack for drifting dries and soft hackle wets to smallies.

Water temp was 76* and action seemed to start around 20'.

Farmington River very cold. Suggest going deep with nymphs.

Fishing in the evening with top water Lures.

It was a hot week. With the week long heat wave, water temps spiked. Find current/moving water and structure, you find willing fish.

TROPHY FISH AWARD PROGRAM:

DEEP's <u>Trophy Fish Award Program</u> recognizes angler skill by awarding a bronze pin for your first trophy fish, a silver pin for your fifth trophy fish, and a gold pin for your tenth trophy fish. Angler of the year is awarded at our annual Trophy Fish Award Ceremony.

To see if your fish qualifies check out the criteria on page 13 of the <u>Angler's Guide</u>. If you have caught a trophy fish be sure to fill out the <u>affidavit</u> (or print page 12 of the Angler's Guide) and submit the required photo(s) and form to us. Good luck!

FACEBOOK FISH OF THE WEEK:



Angler's Guide Cover Contest We are fishing for your great Angler's Guide cover shot. If you have a high-resolution picture that represents fishing in Connecticut, email your entry <u>deep.inland.fisheries@ct.gov</u> ATTN: cover shot. All details about the contest, including the entry form are <u>online</u>.

NOTES & NOTICES:

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

- Sleeping Giant, Hamden. This closure includes the Sleeping Giant TMA on the Mill River (Hamden).
- Wharton Brook, Wallingford. This closure includes the Wharton Brook Trout Park.

CANDLEWOOD LAKE (New Fairfield -boat parade). A boat Parade will be held on **Friday, July 13** from **8:00 pm to 10:30 pm**. Boat route will be Spear Point-Knollcrest-Squantz Cove boat launch-New Fairfield town Park-Candlewood Isles.

CENTER SPRING POND (Manchester - dredging). A dredging project is ongoing at Center Spring Pond. Hydraulic dredging will be used so there'll be no drawdown but access to a portion of the park may be limited.

CONNECTICUT RIVER, Hartford area (fireworks). The 2018 "Riverfest" is scheduled for this Saturday, July 14 with a fireworks display scheduled for 9 pm. The river in the Hartford area can be expected to be congested, with restrictions on navigational access to the area of the fireworks barges. The Great River Park and Charter Oak Landing boat launches will be closed to boating activities on July 14. The Riverside Park launch will be open for boat launches until 8:00 pm, and will open again for boating use 30 minutes after the end of the fireworks.

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.

CONNECTICUT RIVER (invasive species alert). In 2016 hydrilla was found in the main stem Connecticut River in Glastonbury (near Glastonbury's Riverfront Park & Boathouse). Last year hydrilla was 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.

HIGHLAND LAKE. The annual Highland Lake boat Parade will be held on Saturday, July 14 from 7:30 pm to 10:00 pm. Beginning and ending at Holland Beach, boats will complete a clockwise circuit along the shoreline.

WEST BRANCH FARMINGTON RIVER (invasive species

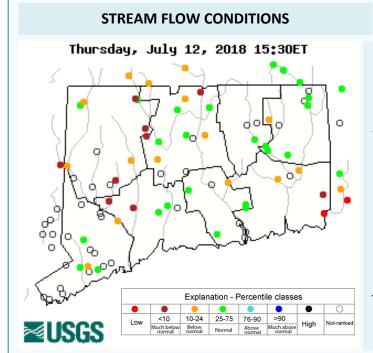
alert). Cymbella janischii is a close relative of Didymo and has been introduced to the West Branch Farmington River (first noticed in 2011). *C. janischii* is native to the Pacific

Legend Current Hydrils verificilize locations whin Coverify Lake Beach (rown of Coverify) Licke Beach (rown of Coverify) Coverify Coverify

Known Hydrilla Infestations (Spring 2018)

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

Northwest and not naturally found on the Eastern seaboard. Currently this type of "Rock Snot" is very abundant and should continue to grow through July. 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.



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".*





Surface water temperatures in Long Island Sound (LIS) are in the upper 60's ^o*F to 70* ^o*F. 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 or All 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: <u>http://www.lisrc.uconn.edu/coastalaccess/</u>.

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

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

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

From the Anglers:

Paul Hyatt, Bob Swanson, and Anonymous.

- Good reviews this week with folks getting onto some great fish and Blue Crab. Some of the best catches included a 10 pound fluke, several 30+ inch Striped Bass, some 20 inch Taug, and 16 Blue Crab.
- Things that were working included traditional natural baits, bucktails tipped with "gulp", fresh bunker, Clams on a teaser, jigs, and chicken legs.

STRIPED BASS fishing is still good with many schoolie bass being caught close inshore, and some large bass (40" +) being caught in the CT river and out in deeper water on rips and structure near the **Race and Plum Gut**. The ticket for landing some of these large bass seems to be live bait such as eels or bunker, and working structure with bucktail jigs with some a gulp or tail on it to give it some live action. The best striper fishing has been occurring at both the early dawn and late night. There have been plenty of schoolie bass caught from shore and they consistently smash soft plastic lures in skinny water. When targeting large striped bass be sure

to fish good structure such as reefs (rip areas) and lower coastal tidal rivers with live bait for the best results. If you don't have access to a boat and are fishing from shore, there has been plenty of success at some of the Enhanced Shore Fishing Sites. Specifically, **Calf Pasture Beach Pier and sandbar, Seaside Park, Bond's Dock, Silver Sands Beach, Gulf Beach Pier and Gulf Beach jetty, New Haven's Fort Nathan Hale Pier and Sandy Point (West Haven Sandbar) and Old Saybrook Point** have been productive. **Please use circle hooks when fishing with bait (prevent gut hooking) and practice catch & release.**

BLACK SEA BASS fishing has remained excellent this past week with many large fish being taken, and plenty of anglers are quickly limiting out on sea bass out in deeper water (60'-100"). Fishing with high – low rigs with squid strips, gulp, or clams has proved to be the best way to land lots of keeper sized sea bass. Sea bass ction to the East of the Connecticut River has picked significantly over the last few weeks. Some of the recent hot spots in the Central and Western sound include **Six Mile reef, Stratford Shoals, and Middlegrounds**. Fishing deep structure at slack tide has produced some trophy sized black sea bass, scup, and the occasional summer flounder. Remember to move from structure to structure when targeting these "sea biscuits" to find some hot action.

SCUP (PORGY) fishing has been incredible this past week with lots of monster scup (~14") being caught in deeper waters with fishable structure such as rock piles, reefs, and wrecks. Some of the hot spots for scup by boat are **Middleground**, **Six-Mile Reef**, **and Greens Ledge Lighthouse**. Enhanced shore fishing sites such as **Fort Nathan Hale**, **Branford Point**, **and Calf Pasture Beach** Pier have been housing a surprisingly large amount of scup. The ticket to catching these hub cap sized scup is using high-low rigs with squid strips, sand worms, and clams. Make sure to use small pieces of bait on your hooks when targeting scup as they will strip your bait easily if you leave too much hanging off. Contact your local bait and tackleshop for updated fishing information. Time to plan a trip on a party/charter boat in CT. <u>CT Party Boat Association</u>.

SUMMER FLOUNDER (FLUKE) fishing in Long Island Sound remains fair at best but there has been some successful anglers during the past week with some keeper sized fluke being caught both from shore and by boat. There are plenty of short fluke being caught in the 14" range but currently keeper sized fluke 19"+ are few and far between. The big ones are being caught on bucktail jigs with gulp mullet, and fresh squid have also produced some doormats. Some of the hot spots for fluke fishing from shore include **Cini Park and Mago Point** on the Niantic River and **Saybrook Point** in Old Saybrook. When fishing from a boat remember to get out into deeper water and jig bucktails and fluke rigs along the bottom with fresh squid or gulp while drifting. When targeting fluke from shore remember that enhanced shore fishing sites allow you to harvest smaller fluke (minimum 17") which gives anglers a better shot at hooking into a fish that is legal size to keep, so be sure to be on the lookout for these enhanced sites to take advantage of the opportunity.

BLUEFISH fishing has picked up and there are plenty of harbor blues to be caught close to shore and there are some gator sized blues being taken amongst the schools of harbor blues. There have been sightings of snapper blues in shallow water estuaries and at the mouths of tidal rivers. The mouth of the Connecticut River on popper rigs and small kastmasters, will likely provide results, many of the fish are in the 4" range at this point in the season.

BLACKFISH (TAUTOG) fishing remains slow as anglers try to target these delicious fish with green, Asian, and hermit crabs amongst the rock walls and jetties. The minimum size to keep tog is 16" with a daily creel limit of 2 per angler.

STRIPED SEAROBIN fishing is always good in Long Island sound, and there seems to be an abundance of very large sea robins being caught while anglers are targeting other species such as scup, sea bass, and fluke. They are aggressive feeders and will eat just about anything you drop down, but they especially love squid, sandworms, and bunker strips. Contrary to popular belief that they are a "trash fish" that people generally do not eat, they are actually very tasty to eat with mild, white meat in the tails and are referred to as "poor mans"

lobster" by anglers who harvest these fish. Keep some of these "birds" in your cooler on your next trip and try them out, you may be surprised.

BLUE CRAB are becoming more prevalent in tidal rivers as the water warms up, and we can expect to see plenty keeper sized crabs (5" tip to tip) by the end of July. These crabs are super fun to catch with a hand line and a scoop net, and is a great activity to get the whole family out on the water. Catching and harvesting blue crabs does not require a fishing license, but remember **that all egg bearing females must be released without avoidable injury, and the minimum carapace length is 5 inches for a hard shell crab**. Please contact your local bait and tackle shop for most updated information (local hot spots) 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.

Need a fishing spot you've never been to? Want to know details about the site, like coordinates? Are there nearby restaurants, is there an adequate amount of parking spaces and more? Just visit the site below, click guest and then on the next screen select the state of Connecticut: https://www.st.nmfs.noaa.gov/msd/html/siteRegister.jsp

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.

PLEASE CALL 1.800.842.4357 TO REPORT FISHING VIOLATIONS.

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DEEP WEEKLY Fishing Report



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