



MARINE FISHERIES PROGRAM QUARTERLY REPORT

December 2018



FISHERIES MANAGEMENT, MONITORING & RESEARCH:

ASMFC / MAFMC Management.

Commission and Council Updates

◆ Commercial Black Sea Bass Working Group

A black sea bass commercial working group has been established consisting of representatives from both northern and southern Atlantic states, including Connecticut. The **goal of the working group is to identify potential issues and strategies for the ASMFC Board to consider within the commercial fishery management framework that relate to changes in black sea bass abundance and distribution.**

Commercial black sea bass allocations to the states were first implemented in 2003 as part of Amendment 13, loosely based on historical landings from 1980-2001. The state shares in Amendment 13 allocated 67% of the coast-wide commercial quota between the states of Delaware through North Carolina and 33% between the states of New York through Maine, with **Connecticut having only 1% of the total coast-wide allocation.** These state commercial allocations have been unchanged for 15 years, meanwhile the fishery and resource have/are experiencing shifts in distribution, abundance, behavior, effort, etc.

The **group has identified Long Island Sound as a unique case with extreme disparity between current allocations and resource availability.** This will be taken into consideration when developing strategies moving forward. Action can be expected in 2020.

◆ Atlantic Coastal Cooperative Statistics Program (ACCSP) is evaluating the future of for-hire data collection

The **ACCSP recreational technical committee is generating a document to provide a description of current and possible future methodologies to develop a comprehensive for-hire data collection and validation program.** The intent is to fulfill the action item in the Atlantic Implementation Plan, to develop a comprehensive integrated for-hire data collection program for peer review and certification by 2022. The document will be ready for submission by 2020.



Youth, Evan Kamoen with his 24" C&R Black Sea Bass.



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◆ 2018 Long Island Sound Trawl Survey (LISTS)

- The 40 tows for the September 2018 cruise were conducted Sept 4 – Sept 26 in 11 days. 40 tows for the October cruise were completed Oct 9 – Nov 1 in 10 days underway. Five (5) days were lost to poor weather and one (1) day was lost to boat issues.
- With the conclusion of the October survey, all survey data collected throughout 2018 was done using the new electronic data acquisition system. The system underwent many modifications and software updates throughout the year and by October it was performing very well.
- Currently staff are working to create 2018 data sets consistent with those of the whole time series.

The fall data are not currently available for analysis therefore the following trend discussions are anecdotal.

- Overall, catches this fall were moderate. The weather may have been a factor in October, since the majority of sampling occurred after a series of small craft advisory weather days.
- **Scup and Butterfish adult and juvenile abundance seemed to be about average** when compared to the fall time series.
- **Bluefish adult and juvenile abundance seemed below average** when compared to the fall time series.
- Weakfish juvenile abundance seemed below average when compared to the fall time series.
- Blue Runner abundance seemed to be above average when compared to the fall time series.
- **Smooth dogfish abundance was above average** this fall.
- Some **important species were at record low levels of abundance** this fall based on LISTS sampling: including **winter flounder, lobster and little skate**.
- Summer Flounder were seen through October in moderate abundance which is somewhat unique.
- Young of year river herring (Alewife and Blueback Herring) were sampled for the first time in the history of the fall survey.

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- Staff attended the 16th annual Flatfish Biology Conference.
 - Staff are currently spending time processing data requests including considerable contributions to the LIS Blue Plan.

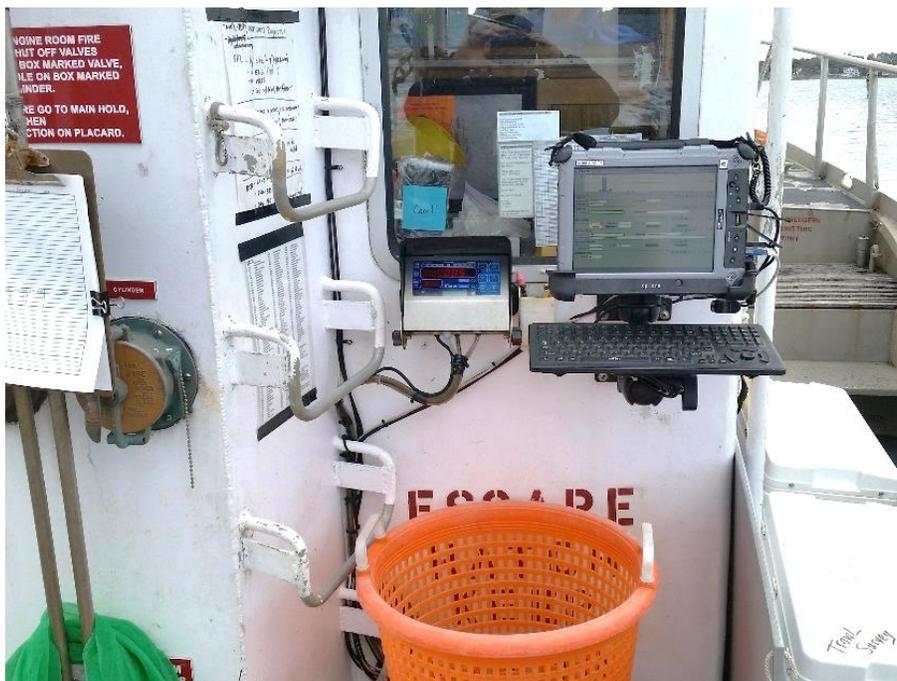


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Staff using the electronic data acquisition equipment to capture Scup measurements



The weight station including the electronic data acquisition equipment



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➤ MARINE RECREATIONAL FISHING:

Marine Recreational Information Program (MRIP)

◆ CT MRIP APAIS TOTALS - 2016-2018

Year	Wave	Sum of CH Intercepts	Sum of PR Intercepts	Sum of SH Intercepts	Sum of All Intercepts	Total # of Assignments	Num Asn Zero Intercepts	% Zero Intercepts
2016	2	0	14	60	74	47	28	
2016	3	26	451	135	612	97	33	
2016	4	62	1,110	138	1,310	106	21	
2016	5	24	446	136	606	89	29	
2016	6	9	80	45	134	81	44	
Total		121	2101	514	2736	420	155	37%
2017*	2	0	10	18	28	64	53	
2017*	3	71	513	96	680	97	43	
2017*	4	52	1,231	229	1,512	106	13	
2017*	5	80	446	76	602	89	30	
2017*	6	0	125	73	198	81	44	
Total		203	2325	492	3020	437	183	42%
2018	2	3	177	128	308	61	28	
2018	3	36	436	307	779	95	33	
2018	4	99	953	179	1,231	117	27	
2018	5	152	581	123	856	110	31	
2018	6	0	85	64	149	86	27	
Total		290	2232	801	3323	469	146	31%
2018		9%	67%	24%				
*2017 SEAS FORM		as of 12132018		Wave 2 = Mar./April	Wave 3 = May/June	Wave 4 = July/August	Wave 5 = Sept./Oct.	Wave 6 = Nov./Dec.





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CT MRIP SUMMARY INFO CONTINUED...

			CT MRIP HEADBOAT	SUMMARY	2016-2018		
Year	Wave	Month	Intercepts	Completed	Productivity	One Int.	Two Int.
2016	3	5	36	6	18	1	5
2016	3	6	114	6	19	0	6
2016	4	7	80	7	16	1	6
2016	4	8	63	7	12.6	1	6
2016	5	9	64	6	16	1	5
2016	5	10	31	6	10.33	2	4
2016	6	11	36	6	18	1	5
			424	44			
<hr/>							
Year	Wave	Month	Intercepts	Completed	Productivity	One Int.	Two Int.
2017	3	5	55	5	11	0	5
2017	3	6	77	6	12.83	2	4
2017	4	7	124	7	17.71	5	2
2017	4	8	143	5	28.6	0	5
2017	5	9	65	6	16.25	0	6
2017	5	10	65	6	16.25	4	2
2017	6	11	61	4	15.25	1	3
			590	39			
<hr/>							
Year	Wave	Month	Intercepts	Completed	Productivity	One Int.	Two Int.
2018	3	5	91	6	15.17	6	0
2018	3	6	126	6	21	2	4
2018	4	7	119	7	17	1	6
2018	4	8	144	7	20.57	4	3
2018	5	9	135	6	22.5	1	5
2018	5	10	65	4	16.25	4	2
2018	6	11	20	2	10	2	0
			700	38			





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Type 2 Catch - # of Fish Harvested - Wave 2-5 (May - Oct)

Common Name	Fish Observed	Fish Weight (kg)		Fish Length (mm)		
		#	Avg	#	MIN	MAX
Black Sea Bass	764	262	1.06	573	234	651
Bluefish	393	145	3.62	219	119	794
Scup	6,183	697	0.41	4,072	184	439
Summer Flounder	209	142	1.82	172	342	780
Striped Searobin	152	36	0.625	110	223	460
Striped Bass	75	41	5.96	54	631	1165
Tautog	59	39	1.94	52	321	589
Little Tunny	3	2	2.5	3	520	602
Total	7838	1364	17%	5255	67%	



Rec. Important Species Discarded / Measured - Wave 2-5 Headboat

Common Name	Fish		Fish Length (mm)			
	Observed	#	AVG	MIN	MAX	
Black Sea Bass	388	363	301	182	467	
Bluefish						
Scup	274	255	214	112	300	
Summer Flounder	14	14	387	267	460	
Striped Searobin	61	60	308	220	406	
Striped Bass	18	17	584	493	628	
Tautog	30	30	319	245	400	



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◆ Enhanced Shore Fishing Survey

Anglers fishing from designated enhanced opportunity shore fishing sites in 2018 were allowed to harvest scup at 9 inches minimum length (vs. 10 inches in other private and party/charter fishing modes) and summer flounder at 17 inches (vs 19 inches for other modes). The **smaller minimum sizes were adopted out of concern that shore anglers were taking a disproportional share of the conservation burden associated with the increased minimum sizes adopted in response to the harvest limits established** under the joint ASMFC/MAFMC fishery management plans for these species. In order to ensure that these less restrictive regulations meet the required conservation of the fishery management plan, The Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC) Summer Flounder, Scup and Black Sea Bass Management Board requested that DEEP monitor the enhanced shore fishing sites to provide additional catch information.

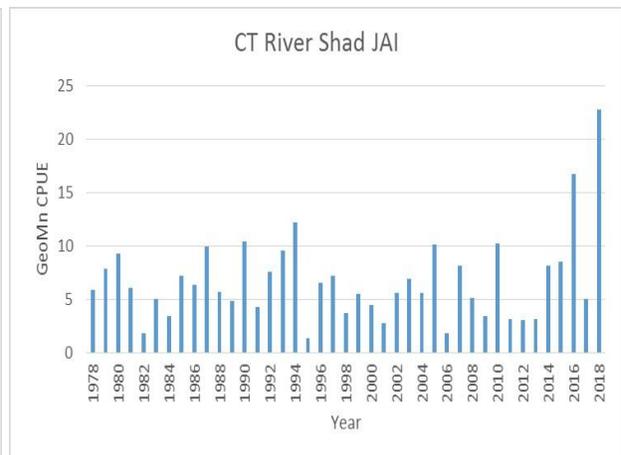
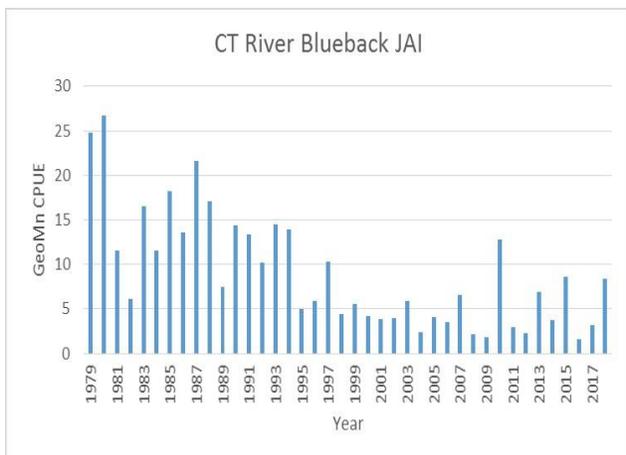
Monitoring of these sites has concluded for the 2018 fishing season. **Field staff conducted 968 angler surveys at 39 of the 45 Enhanced Shore Fishing Sites from Stonington to Norwalk.**

◆ American Shad & River Herring Survey

CT DEEP Marine Fisheries Program completed its **41st year of the CT River juvenile alosine seine survey for American shad and blueback herring**. Seven sites were sampled on a weekly basis from mid-July to mid-October, spanning the river from Holyoke, MA to Essex, CT. All species collected in the seine were documented and American shad and blueback herring were quantified and measured.

The **2018 blueback herring juvenile abundance index (JAI) indicates a relatively strong year class**. Over 15,600 juvenile blueback herring were collected in 105 seine hauls and the JAI value was the **18th highest of the time series**.

The **2018 American shad JAI value is the highest in the 41 year time series, surpassing the previous high value in 2016 by 36%**. Nearly 10,000 American shad were collected in 94% of the seine hauls, which is the second highest positive catch rate in the time series.





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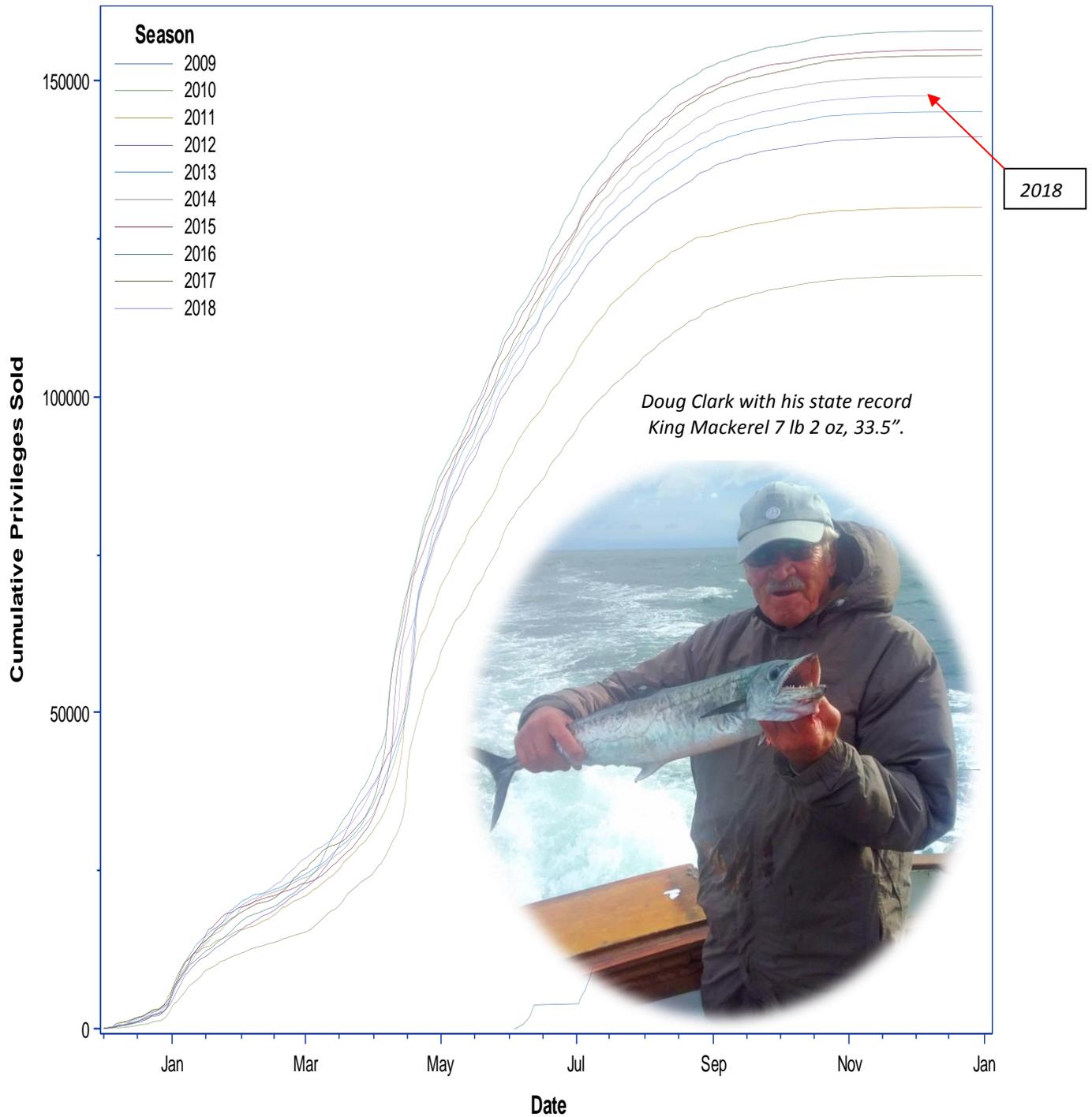
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➤ MARINE RECREATIONAL FISHING LICENSES:

◆ Marine fishing license sales in 2010 - 2018.

2018 Marine Licenses issued through December 13, 2018.





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Marine Waters Fishing Licenses, 2014 – 2018. Licenses by Type

Privilege Type	Season				
	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
10195 - Marine Waters Fishing Lic, Free Annual - Code 9 (Intellect Disabled)	378	427	445	406	415
10196 - Marine Waters Fishing Lic, Free Annual - Code 5 (Blind)	80	83	82	80	73
10197 - Marine Waters Fishing Lic, Free Annual - Type 17 (Handicapped)	505	511	505	467	460
1296 - Marine Waters Fishing Lic	18,777	18,301	18,752	18,745	18,684
1297 - Marine Waters Fishing Lic (Non-Res)	2,692	2,870	2,996	3,008	3,002
1337 - Marine Waters Fishing Lic, Free Annual - Age 65 Plus	29,350	31,248	33,014	33,251	33,832
1345 - Marine Waters Fishing Lic, 1-day	690	802	733	805	598
1346 - All Waters Fishing Lic	66,304	65,988	67,254	64,909	60,789
1347 - Marine Waters Fishing Lic / Firearms Hunting Lic	459	448	440	507	534
1348 - All Waters Fishing Lic / Firearms Hunting Lic	21,072	17,185	16,043	18,048	16,676
1349 - All Waters Fishing Lic / Arch Deer / Small Game Lic	1,663	1,813	1,948	3,844	3,684
1350 - AW Fish Lic / Fa SS (Fa Hunt; S/R PL Deer; PL Sp Trky)	.	1,114	1,243	.	.
1351 - AW Fish Lic / Archery SS (Arch Deer / Sm Gm; PL Sp Trky)	1,080	1,001	1,050	.	.
1352 - Marine Waters Fishing Lic, 3-day (Non-Res)	1,367	1,377	1,491	1,460	1,438
1353 - All Waters Fishing Lic (Non-Res)	1,426	1,519	1,702	1,804	1,755
1354 - All Waters Fishing Lic / Firearms Hunting Lic (Non-Res)	137	138	142	133	155
1355 - Marine Waters Fishing Lic / Firearms Hunting Lic (Non-Res)	23	25	21	15	14
1475 - AW Fish Lic / Fa SS Lic (Fa Hunt; S/R/Mz PL Deer; PL Sp Trky)	2,700	2,059	1,938	.	.
1476 - AW Fish Lic / Fs SS (Fa Hunt; Mig Duck Stmp; Hip Pmt)	.	1,288	1,095	.	.
1922 - Connecticut Bonus Striped Bass Voucher	1,903	1,927	2,214	2,229	1,908
1953 - All Waters Fishing Lic / Firearms Hunting Lic (16-17)	.	376	334	365	313
1954 - AW Fish Lic / Fa SS (Fa Hunt; S/R PL Deer; PL Sp Trky, 16-17)	.	49	53	.	.
1955 - AW Fish Lic / Fa SS (Fa Hunt; Mig Duck Stmp; Hip Pmt, 16-17)	.	61	43	.	.
1957 - Marine Waters Fishing Lic (16-17)	.	368	355	368	381
1958 - All Waters Fishing Lic (16-17)	.	2,778	2,783	2,585	2,298
1959 - Marine Waters Fishing Lic, 1-day (16-17)	.	20	24	21	13
1960 - Marine Waters Fishing Lic / Firearms Hunting Lic (16-17)	.	9	6	11	11
1962 - All Waters Fishing Lic / Arch Deer / Small Game Lic (16-17)	.	52	9	89	77
1964 - AW Fish Lic / Archery SS (Arch Deer / Sm Gm; PL Sp Trky, 16-17)	.	28	48	.	.
1965 - AW Fish Lic / Fa SS Lic (Fa Hunt; S/R/Mz PL Deer; PL Sp Trky, 16-17))	.	46	39	.	.
2023 - Free One-Day Sport Fishing License - 1st	.	500	578	451	235
2024 - Free One-Day Sport Fishing License - 2nd	.	533	543	380	280
Total	150,606	154,944	157,923	153,981	147,625



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➤ NOTICES TO FISHERMEN:

- 12/7/2018 **Commercial Fishery Possession Limits**
Effective 0001 hours Sunday, December 9, 2018, the commercial black sea bass fishery possession will be 300 pounds per week (0001 hours on Sunday through 2359 hours on Saturday). Effective 0001 hours, Sunday, December 9, 2018, the commercial landing limit for the harvest of summer flounder will be 1,500 pounds per week (0001 hours on Sunday through 2359 hours on Saturday). (N18-23)
- 11/21/2018 **Quota Managed Species Meeting Notice**
A meeting of seafood dealers and commercial fishermen that harvest quota-managed species has been scheduled. (N18-21)
Meeting to be held Monday, December 3, 2018
- 10/26/2018 **Notice of ASMFC Public Hearing on Summer Flounder, Scup and Black Sea Bass Management**
The DEEP Fisheries Division is hosting a Public Hearing of the Atlantic State Marine Fisheries Commission to gather input on Draft Addenda XXXI and XXXII to the Summer Flounder, Scup and Black Sea Bass Plan. (N18-20)
Public Hearing to be held November 5, 2018
Public comment accepted until November 29, 2018
- 9/27/2018 **Commercial Fishery Possession Limits**
Effective 0001 hours Monday, October 1, 2018, the scup commercial fishery possession limit will be 28,500 pounds. (N18-19)



Sara Roman with her 8 lb 12 oz, 24 “ Tautog (Catch & Release).



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PUBLIC OUTREACH:

2018 MARINE FISHERIES TROPHY FISH AWARD PROGRAM SUMMARY

Total Trophy Fish Awards	52
Number of Different Species	18
Male Participants	21
Female Participants	5
Youth Participants	8



NEW STATE RECORDS

Male	4
Female	1
Youth	0

2018 STATE RECORDS

Banded Rudderfish
King Mackerel
Spiny Dogfish
Oyster Toadfish

NEW TROPHY FISH RECORDS

Male	1
Female	2
Youth	7

Species	Adult Male	Adult Female	Youth	Total
Summer Flounder	19	4	2	25
Black Sea Bass	4	0	2	6
Blue Crab	3	0	0	3
Scup	0	0	2	2
Tautog	1	1	0	2
Oyster Toadfish	2	0	0	2
Striped Bass	0	0	1	1
Winter Flounder	1	0	0	1
Conger Eel	1	0	0	1
Clearnose Skate	0	0	1	1
Longfin Squid	0	0	1	1
Smooth Dogfish	0	0	1	1
Spiny Dogfish	0	1	0	1
Inshore Lizardfish	1	0	0	1
Smooth Puffer	1	0	0	1
King Mackerel	1	0	0	1
Banded Rudderfish	1	0	0	1
Cobia	1	0	0	1
18 Species	36	6	10	52