

RHODE ISLAND Freshwater Fishing

2024-2025 REGULATION GUIDE

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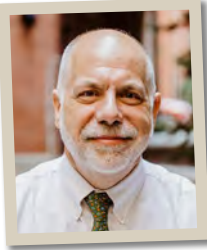


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State of Rhode Island
Department of Environmental Management • Division of Fish & Wildlife



Welcome Letter



On behalf of Governor Dan McKee, I am excited to welcome you to the **2024-25 Rhode Island Freshwater Fishing Regulation Guide**, a resource for Rhode Islanders and visitors who enjoy our great lakes, rivers, and streams. It offers current freshwater fishing and recreational boating regulations and highlights the research and survey initiatives, fishing access improvements, and fishing opportunities provided by the Department of Environmental Management (DEM) Division of Fish and Wildlife biologists, development, and hatchery staff to support freshwater recreational opportunities in the Ocean State.

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

This guide is written for both novice and seasoned anglers. I hope you will find it filled with useful information on our efforts to provide superior recreational fishing opportunities in Rhode Island as well as with helpful guidance on fishing regulations. In these pages, you will learn about our hatcheries' efforts to produce and distribute high quality fish across the state including the recently caught state record rainbow trout; how DEM is working with partners to tackle the problem of freshwater invasive plants and what you can do to help stop them from spreading to favorite fishing spot, and so much more!

DEM's hatchery program stocks over 100 fishing areas with brook, rainbow, golden rainbow, and brown trout several times a year to accommodate the growing demand by resident and non-resident anglers. Lucky anglers may even catch a Sebago salmon during one of our special fish-stocking programs. Throughout the year, our dedicated hatchery staff are busy with initiatives to provide varied and plentiful fishing opportunities for recreational anglers. For those who would like to try the sport, we encourage you to participate during Free Fishing Weekend on May 4-5, when you can fish without the purchase of a freshwater fishing license or trout stamp. New or experienced anglers also may participate in one of our adult or children's Aquatic Resource Education (ARE) programs to hone their fishing skills or learn new ones like spin-casting or fly-fishing with our friendly and experienced instructors.

Recreational fishing is important to Rhode Island's economy, contributing more than \$130 million annually. There are an estimated 175,000 recreational anglers aged 16+ in Rhode Island, according to the USFWS National Survey of Fishing, Hunting, and Wildlife-Associated Recreation. We appreciate Rhode Island's anglers and boaters, and this publication is made possible with your support and belongs to you. Recreational freshwater fishing and boating programs are funded by the USFWS Federal Aid in Sportfish Restoration Act (Wallop-Breaux Amendment) through contributions from anglers and boaters on the sales of equipment, motorboat fuels, license sales, and Trout Stamps. Serving as DEM's Director, I sincerely thank all anglers and boaters who have contributed to this valuable conservation program.

We hope this guide enhances your fishing and boating experiences and that you feel encouraged to get out there to one of Rhode Island's picturesque fishing areas and drop a line. The tranquility and connection to nature that one feels when fishing and boating can't really be measured. Whether you have been fishing all your life, are getting back into the sport, or trying it for the first time, we guarantee you won't be disappointed. Remember: whether you reel in a state record fish or get skunked, time spent outdoors is always better than being stuck inside. Start your outdoor adventures today and have fun!

Terrence Gray, PE, Director

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

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

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

EST. 2004
J.F. GRIFFIN
PUBLISHING

Williamstown, MA | Birmingham, AL

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RHODE ISLAND Freshwater Fishing

2024-2025 REGULATION GUIDE



Photo by Ashley S.

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On the cover: Brock proudly shows off his golden rainbow trout catch. Photo submitted by Len B.

Our Mission

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

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

License INFORMATION

Fishing License Information

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

License Type	Fee (online)	Fee (vendor)
Resident (or current member of the armed forces)	\$21.00	\$23.00
Combination (Hunting & Fishing)	\$38.00	\$40.00
Non-resident	\$38.00	\$41.00
Non-resident tourist (three (3) consecutive days)	\$18.00	\$21.00
Resident Trout Conservation Stamp	\$5.50	\$6.00
Non-resident Trout Conservation Stamp	\$5.50	\$6.00

Trout Conservation Stamp

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

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

Methods of Fishing

1. Unless otherwise specified, only a rod and reel or other hand-held and hand-operated device shall be used to catch fish in the fresh waters of the state. At no time shall a person place, operate, or super-intend more than two (2) of these devices for the purpose of catching fish, except as noted below, and no more than three (3) hooks may be attached to each device.
2. Suckers, fallfish, and carp may be taken by snares, spears, or bow and arrow.
3. For the purpose of fishing through the ice, up to five (5) lines with a single hook on each, personally attended, and held by any device designed for that purpose (tip-up), may be used. See Exception #14 for Beach Pond, and Exception #15 for Killingly and Hazard Pond, page 5.
4. Freshwater minnows, not including the young of any species of game fish, may be taken for bait with minnow traps, dip nets, and seines not greater than four feet (4 ft.) deep by eight feet (8 ft.) long and having a square mesh size not larger than one-fourth inch (1/4 in.) in any waters of this State. This regulation does not supersede minimum size limits of the fish listed in regulations or current alewife/blueback herring regulations as detailed in the Diadromous Fisheries section found on page 10.

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

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

[RIO.RI.GOV](https://rio.ri.gov)

FREE Fishing Days
May 4th and 5th, 2024

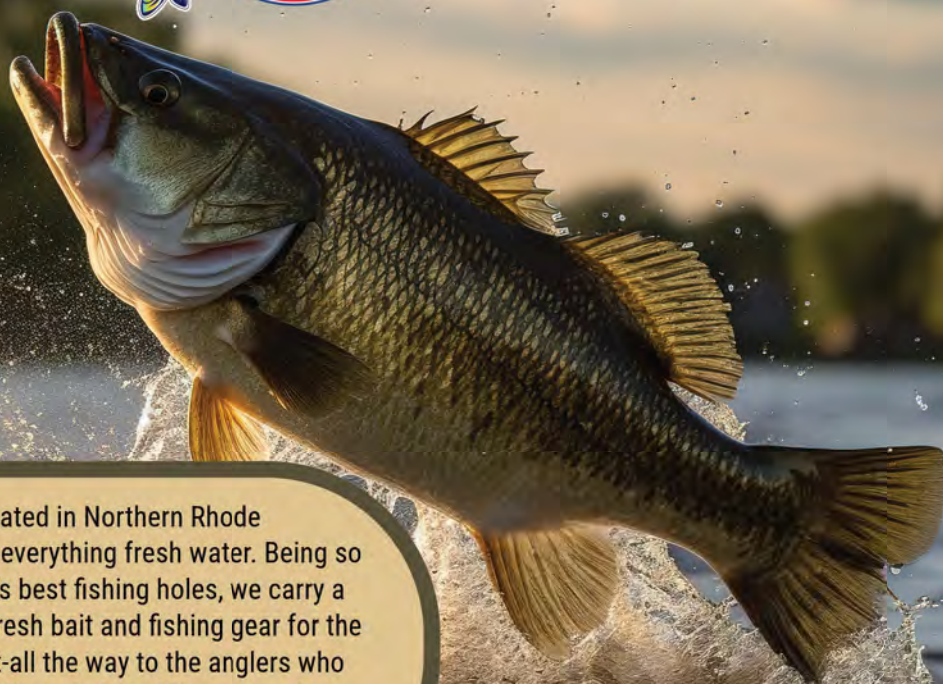
Neither a Freshwater Fishing License nor a Trout Conservation Stamp will be required by residents or non-residents on the 4th and 5th of May 2024.

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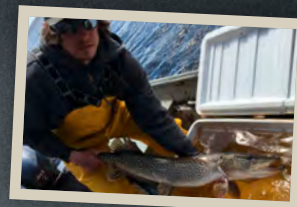
General INFORMATION

Prohibited Activities:

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

WANTED: Northern Pike Catch Data

We want to improve our Northern Pike program and need your help! Over the next year, we are asking Rhode Island anglers to send in your Northern Pike photos and catch information in order to assess our stocks. If you catch a Northern Pike, please follow the QR code to complete the form. We sincerely appreciate your time and participation! Thank you! Any questions, please contact Corey Pelletier, corey.pelletier@dem.ri.gov.



GO FOR THE GOLD and Get a Golden Pin!

Are you up for the challenge?

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

From April 13, 2024 - May 6, 2024, if you catch a golden rainbow trout, you will be eligible to receive the coveted golden trout pin. Simply take a picture and send it to dem.fishri@dem.ri.gov. Remember, submissions need to be received no later than May 6th to be eligible for the pin.



Fluorescent Orange Requirement

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



Seasons, Creel Limits, and Minimum Size Limits

Fish	Exceptions*	Season	Creel Limit**	Minimum Size
Trout	1-5, 10-16	Apr. 13 - Nov. 30	5	8"
	3-5, 10-16	Dec. 1 - Feb. 28	2	8"
Atlantic Salmon (migratory)	CLOSED see page 10			
Domestic (landlocked) Atlantic Salmon	1-3, 5, 8, 10-16	Apr. 13 - Feb. 28	2	11"
Northern Pike	1, 6, 14-16	No Closed Season	2	24"
Chain Pickerel	1, 6, 14-16	No Closed Season	5	14"
Largemouth & Smallmouth Bass (Black Bass)	1, 7, 14-16	No Closed Season	5	12"
American Eel	1, 9, 14-16	No Closed Season	25	9"
River Herring (Alewives, Blueback herring), Shad & Smelt	CLOSED see page 10			
All Other Freshwater Fish	1, 14-16	No Closed Season	None	None
Striped Bass	17	No Closed Season	1	28" - <31" ***

*** Circle hooks must be used when fishing with bait.

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

* Exceptions as listed below:

Exceptions

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

Fish Consumption Advisory

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

Fish is Good

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

Mercury is Bad

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

Advice for Those Who Fish:

- Choose stocked trout to eat. See page 7 for trout stocking locations.
- Vary where and what types of fish you eat.
- Eat smaller fish (in accordance with RIDEM size limits).
- Avoid fish with the most mercury: bass, pike, and pickerel.
- Limit meals of black crappie and eel to one meal per month.
- Do not fish in private ponds, with no public access and those that are not stocked by the state.
- Trout from private vendors stocked into private ponds may be eaten.
- Do not eat any fish from the following ponds (with the exception of trout): Yawgoog Pond, Windcheck Pond, Meadowbrook Pond, Quidnick Reservoir, and the lower Woonasquatucket.
- Catch and release fishing is recommended in Mashapaug Pond and the Woonasquatucket River along with other urban ponds and rivers.
- Pregnant women and young children should limit their fish intake to include those fish that have tested low in mercury: stocked trout in freshwater, salmon, light tuna, shrimp, Pollock and catfish in marine waters.

For more information:

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

Freshwater Fishing Area Restrictions

- 1. FLY FISHING ONLY:** The following waters are restricted to the use of artificial flies, a conventional fly rod, and a single action reel: Deep Pond (Arcadia), Exeter; A.L. Mowry Pond, Smithfield; and Upper Rochambeau Pond, Lincoln.
- 2. CHILDREN ONLY:** The following waters are restricted to fishing by persons fourteen (14) years of age or younger: Frosty Hollow Pond, Exeter; Scott Evans Memorial Pond (Biscuit City), S. Kingstown; and Seidel's Pond, Cranston. The following pond is open to children fourteen (14) years of age or younger between the second Saturday of April through Memorial Day: Silvia Memorial Children's Pond (formerly Lloyd Kenney Pond), Hopkinton. For the first two (2) days of the season April 13th & 14th the following ponds are restricted to persons fourteen (14) years of age or younger: Cass Pond in Woonsocket, Geneva Pond and Brook in North Providence, Slater Park Pond in Pawtucket, Silvy's Brook and Pond in Cumberland, Lapham Pond in Burrillville, and Ponderosa Park Pond in Little Compton.



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Wheelchair Accessible Fishing Areas in Rhode Island



Carbuncle Pond - Coventry

Gorton Pond - Warwick

Hope Valley Grange Fishing Dock - Hope Valley

Lower Shannock Brook - Richmond

Silver Spring Lake - North Kingstown

Upper Melville Pond (Thurston Gray Pond) - Portsmouth

Upper Roaring Brook - Exeter

Westerly Boat Ramp - Westerly

Olney Pond - Lincoln

CHILDREN ONLY:

Scott Evans Memorial Pond (Biscuit City) - South Kingstown

The Ethical Angler:

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

Designated Trout Waters

Name	Location
Abbots Run Brook	Cumberland
Adamsville Brook & Pond	Tiverton & Little Compton
Alton Pond	Richmond & Hopkinton
Ashaway River	Hopkinton
Ashville Pond	Hopkinton
Barber Pond	South Kingstown
Beach Pond	Exeter
Big River	West Greenwich
Blackstone River	Cumberland & Lincoln
Branch River	Burrillville
Brandy Brook	Glocester
Breakheart Brook	Exeter
Breakheart Pond	Exeter & West Greenwich
Brickyard Pond	Barrington
Browning Mill Pond	Exeter
Brushy Brook	Hopkinton
Bucks Horn Brook	Coventry
California Jim's	South Kingstown
Carbuncle Pond ⁴	Coventry
Carolina Trout Pond	Richmond
Cass Pond ³	Woonsocket
Chepachet River	Glocester & Burrillville
Chickasheen Brook	South Kingstown
Clear River	Burrillville
Deep Pond (Arcadia) ¹	Exeter
Dexter Pond - Rt 6 (private owner), open to public	Scituate
Dolly Cole Brook	Foster
Dundery Brook	Little Compton
Eight Rod Farm Pond	Tiverton
Falls River	Exeter & West Greenwich
Flat River	Exeter
Foster Green Acres Pond	Foster
Frenchtown Park Pond	East Greenwich
Frosty Hollow Pond ²	Exeter
Geneva Brook & Pond ³	North Providence
Gorton Pond ⁴	Warwick
Harris River	Woonsocket
Hopkins Mill Pond	Foster
Hunt River	E. Greenwich & N. Kingstown
J.L. Curran Reservoir (Upper and Lower)	Cranston
Lapham Pond ³	Burrillville
Meadow Brook	Richmond
Meadow Brook Pond	Richmond
Upper Melville Pond (Thurston Gray Pond) ⁴	Portsmouth
Lower Mellville Pond	Portsmouth
Memorial Park Pond	Lincoln
Meshanticut Pond	Cranston

Name	Location
Moosup River	Coventry
Moscow Brook	Hopkinton
Mowry, A.L. Pond ¹	Smithfield
Olney Pond ⁴	Lincoln Woods Park, Lincoln
Parris Brook	Exeter
Pawcatuck River ⁴	Hopkinton, Richmond, Charlestown, Westerly
Pawtuxet River (north branch)	Scituate & Cranston
Pawtuxet River (south branch)	Coventry & West Warwick
Peck Pond	Burrillville
Ponaganset River	Foster
Ponderosa Park Pond ³	Little Compton
Roaring Brook & Ponds ⁴	Exeter
Round Top Brook	Burrillville
Round Top Ponds	Burrillville
Saugatucket River	South Kingstown
Scott Evans Mem. Pond (Biscuit City) ^{2&4}	South Kingstown
Seidel's Pond ²	Cranston
Shippee Saw Mill Pond	Foster
Silver Spring Lake ⁴	North Kingstown
Silvia Memorial Children's Pond (formerly Lloyd Kenney Pond) ³	Hopkinton
Silvy's Brook Diamond Hill Park ³	Cumberland
Silvy's Pond Diamond Hill Park ³	Cumberland
Simmons Mill Pond	Little Compton
Slater Park Pond ³	Pawtucket
Spring Grove Pond	Glocester
Stafford Pond	Tiverton
Sylvester's Pond	Woonsocket
Tarbox Pond	West Greenwich
Tarkiln Pond	Burrillville & North Smithfield
Ten Mile River	East Providence
Tiogue Lake	Coventry
Tiverton Trout Pond	Tiverton
Tucker Pond	South Kingstown
Upper Rochambeau Pond ¹	Lincoln
Wallum Lake	Burrillville
Watchaug Pond	Charlestown
Willett Pond	East Providence
Winsor Brook	Foster
Wood River	Exeter, Hopkinton & Richmond
Woonasquatucket River	Smithfield
Wyoming Pond	Hopkinton & Richmond

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

¹ Fly fishing only.

² Minors fourteen (14) years of age and younger, only.

³ Minors fourteen (14) years of age or younger during specified times of the year. Please refer to page 6 for more information.

⁴ Wheelchair accessible. See page 6 for more information.

2023 Fishing HIGHLIGHTS

Fishing Highlights of the 2023-2024 Fishing Season

Thank you to everyone who submitted pictures for the 2024-2025 Rhode Island Freshwater Fishing Guide.



Zachary pulls a state record rainbow trout weighing 15 lbs. 12 oz. from Peck Pond in January 2024! The fish was raised at the Lafayette Trout Hatchery and stocked in the fall of 2023. Congratulations on a great catch!!

Photo Credit: Zachary T. state record



A nice black crappie on a beautiful fall day.

Photo Credit: Chris B.



John proudly displays his chain pickerel.

Photo Credit: John M.



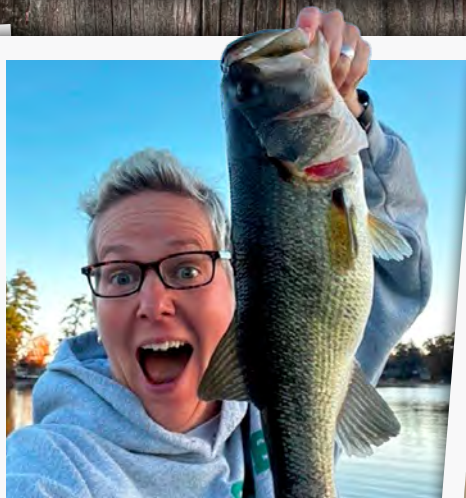
A successful family fishing trip!

Photo Credit: LeClaire Family



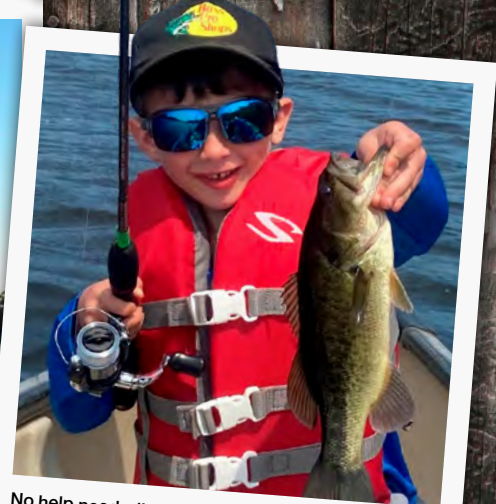
A nice rainbow trout equals a great day of fishing!

Photo Credit: Lucas V.



'Check it out!' A huge smile for catching a huge largemouth bass.

Photo Credit: Rebecca H.



No help needed!

Photo Credit: Zach C.

Commonly Caught Fish Species



AMERICAN EEL
Anguilla rostrata



BROWN BULLHEAD
Ameiurus nebulosus



BLACK CRAPPIE
Pomoxis nigromaculatus



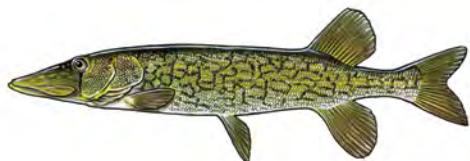
BLUEGILL
Lepomis macrochirus



BROOK TROUT
Salvelinus fontinalis



BROWN TROUT
Salmo trutta



CHAIN PICKEREL
Esox niger



COMMON CARP
Cyprinus carpio



GOLDEN SHINER
Notemigonus crysoleucas



LARGEMOUTH BASS
Micropterus salmoides



NORTHERN PIKE
Esox lucius



PUMPKINSEED
Lepomis gibbosus



RAINBOW TROUT
Oncorhynchus mykiss



REDBREAST SUNFISH
Lepomis auritus



SMALLMOUTH BASS
Micropterus dolomieu



WHITE CATFISH
Ameiurus catus



WHITE PERCH
Morone americana



YELLOW PERCH
Perca flavescens

Diadromous Fish REGULATIONS

Diadromous Fish Regulations

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

Shad:

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

Salmon:

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

Smelt:

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

American Eel:

The recreational creel or possession limit for American eel (*Anguilla rostrata*) shall be twenty-five (25) fish per day, per person, either singular or in aggregate, and the minimum size shall be nine (9) inches from tip of snout to tip of tail. No person shall possess any American eel less than nine (9) inches in total length. No person shall take an eel from the freshwaters of the state unless in possession of a valid RI Freshwater Fishing License. There will be no closed season. No American eel may be commercially harvested from the freshwaters of the state

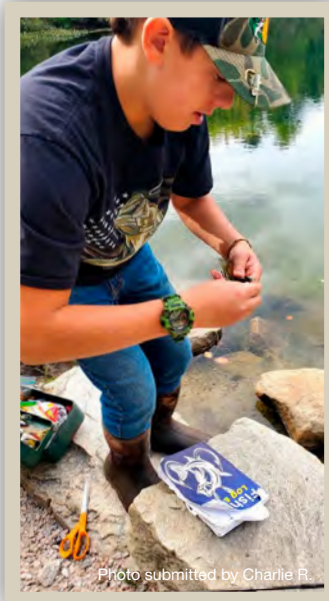


Photo submitted by Charlie R.

and offered for sale without a valid commercial license per RI Marine Fisheries (RIMF) regulations. If harvesting commercially with a valid commercial fishing license from the freshwater of the state, fishermen must adhere to regulations as set forth in RIMF regulations Part VII (Minimum Sizes of Fish/Shellfish), section 7.16.1.

Fish Ladders:

1. Trespass within or any obstruction of the entrance or exit of any fish ladder in the State is prohibited.
2. For the purpose of regulating diadromous fishes, all fish ladders owned and operated by the state will be set aside as fish cultivation facilities pursuant to Rhode Island General Laws Chapters 20-12-1 and 20-12-5.
3. Per General Laws Chapters 20-12-1, 20-12-4 and 20-12-5, fishing is prohibited within 1/2 mile of fish ladder mouth or outlet.

Rhode Island Environmental Police

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

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

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

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



Protect Our Native Species from Disease and Invasives

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

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

Saltwater/Freshwater Boundaries

River	Town	Interface
Pawcatuck River	Westerly	The downstream side of the bridge crossing US Route 1
Mastuxet Brook	Westerly	Point at which the brook empties into Mastuxet Cove
King Tom / Ninigret Ponds	Charlestown	Spillway at the South end of King Tom Pond
Factory Pond Outlet	South Kingstown	Seaward opening of culvert under Teal Road
Mill Pond Outlet to Cards Pond	South Kingstown	Bridge on Moonstone Beach Road crossing west neck of Cards Pond
Smelt Brook	South Kingstown	Bridge closest to the outlet into Point Judith Pond
Saugatucket River	South Kingstown	Downstream side of the Main Street Bridge in Wakefield
Gilbert Stuart Brook	North Kingstown	Point at which the river empties into the Pettaquamscutt (Narrow) River
Wesquage Pond	Narragansett	Culvert at the outlet to Bonnet Shores Beach
Annaquatucket River	North Kingstown	Point at which river empties into Bissel Cove
Cocumcussoc Brook	North Kingstown	Bottom of the first riffle upstream of Wickford Cove
Potowomut River	North Kingstown/ East Greenwich	Forge Road spillway
Maskerchugg River	East Greenwich	Boston Post Road (US Route 1) spillway
Gorton Pond Outlet	Warwick	West of the Amtrak Railroad Bridge
Tuscatucket Brook	Warwick	Downstream side of the West Shore Road Bridge
Old Mill Creek	Warwick	Entirely tidal
Warner Brook	Warwick	Draper Avenue Bridge
Buckeye Brook	Warwick	Point at which the stream empties into Narragansett Bay
Lockwood Brook	Warwick	Downstream side of West Shore Road Bridge
Spring Green Pond Outlet	Warwick	Downstream side of the Warwick Avenue (RI Route 117A) Bridge
Pawtuxet River	Warwick/ Providence	Narragansett Parkway spillway
Woonasquatucket River	Providence	Downstream side of US Route 1N Bridge
Moshassuck River	Providence	Point of confluence with the Woonasquatucket River
Blackstone/Seekonk River	Pawtucket	Main Street spillway
Ten Mile River	East Providence	Omega Pond spillway
Annawomscutt Brook	Barrington	Pilling Chain Company spillway on Bay Spring Avenue
Mussachuck Creek	Barrington	Downstream side of the Washington Road Bridge
Runnins River	East Providence/ Seekonk, MA	Downstream side of Mink Street (RI 114A) Bridge
Kickamuit River	Warren	The downstream side of the Rte 103 bridge.
Sin and Flesh Brook	Tiverton	Downstream side of the Highland Avenue Bridge
Nonquit Pond	Tiverton	Bridge at Pond Bridge Road
Pachet Brook	Tiverton	Downstream side of the West Main Road (RI Route 77) Bridge
Dundery Brook	Little Compton	Downstream side of Swamp Road Bridge
Cold Brook	Little Compton	Point at which the brook empties into Quicksand Pond
Maidford River	Middletown	Downstream side of Paradise Avenue Bridge
Goose Neck Cove	Newport	Entirely tidal
Lily Pond	Newport	Outlet
Almy Pond	Newport	Outlet
Prince Pond (Tiffany Pond)	Barrington	Point at which the stream enters the Barrington River.

Boating Regulation GUIDELINES

Boating Regulation and Policy Guidelines

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

1. DEM Conservation and Boating Safety Officers, harbor masters, and police officers have authority to enforce state laws and regulations on all state tidal and non-tidal waters.
2. It shall be a misdemeanor for any person operating a vessel on Rhode Island waters to refuse to stop or move on the oral command of a DEM Conservation or Boating Safety Officer, a harbor master, or a police officer.
3. Every motorboat operating on the waters of the state must be numbered in accordance with the laws and regulations of this state, with applicable federal law, or with an approved numbering system of another state. The number must be prominently displayed on each side of the bow of the boat.
4. Required Safety Equipment:
 - a. Personal Flotation Devices (PFD's) - All vessels must have at least one approved type I,II,III, or V PFD for each person on board.
NEW: For all vessels less than 16 ft. (4.9 meters) in length including canoes, kayaks, sailboats, kiteboards and paddleboards, operators and passengers shall wear a US Coast Guard approved PFD at all times while underway regardless of age. For vessels 16 feet long or longer, one additional, throw able type IV PFD is required.
 - b. Fire Extinguishers - All mechanically-propelled vessels except those that are less than 26 feet long and powered by outboard motors, must carry one B-I USCG-approved fire extinguisher. Motorboats 26 feet to 40 feet in length and longer must carry either two (2) B-I USCG-approved fire extinguishers or one B-II extinguisher. Vessels 40 feet to 65 feet must carry three B-I or one B-I and one B-II.
 - c. Visual Distress Signals (VSD) - Vessels used on RI waters must be equipped with proper visual distress signals that are USCG approved, in serviceable condition, and readily accessible. Vessels under 26 ft. require 3 night VSDs while those 26 feet or longer require both 3 day and 3 night VSDs.
 - d. Whistle (horn) and Bell - All vessels must carry an efficient sound-producing device (whistle or horn). Vessels 12 meters (36 feet) in length or longer must also carry a bell.
5. All motorboats must carry and display the proper navigation lights for their size class when operating between sunset and sunrise and during daylight periods of reduced visibility.
6. All vessels equipped with an engine must have a factory-type muffler or exhaust water manifold installed on the engine or another effective muffling system for noise reduction purposes.
7. No person shall operate any motorboat or vessel or manipulate any water skis, surfboard, or similar device in a reckless manner so as to endanger the life, limb, or property of another.
8. Any person transporting a child under thirteen (13) years of age in a recreational vessel less than 65 ft. in length on the waters of this state, shall require that the child wear a personal flotation device approved by the USCG when underway unless below deck or in a closed cabin.
9. No person shall operate any motorboat or vessel in any harbor or inlet or any pond or other confined body of water in this state in excess of forty-five (45) miles per hour during the hours from sunrise to sunset and twenty-five (25) miles per hour during periods of darkness or other periods of restricted visibility.
10. RI law prohibits anyone from boating while intoxicated (BWI). This includes the operation of any powerboat, sailboat, personal watercraft, water skis, sailboard, or similar device. Intoxicated means a person is under the influence of alcohol, a controlled substance or drugs such that his/her thought or actions are impaired causing danger to others. RI law sets blood alcohol limit for boating while intoxicated at 0.08% or greater.
11. Any person SCUBA diving, skin diving, or snorkeling in any area where power or motorboats are operated shall place a diver's warning flag on a buoy at a place of his or her submergence. No person shall operate a motorboat within fifty (50) feet of a displayed diver's flag.
12. Prohibited is the transport of any plant or plant part into or out of any Rhode Island waterbody on boats, vessels, other water conveyances, vehicles, trailers, fishing supplies, or any other equipment, with the exception of authorized research activities, species identification and other management activities.

Coming Soon!

RIDEM's Aquatic Resource Education program along with Rhode Island's USFWS National Refuge System and the Urban Wildlife Partnership have teamed up to procure a First Catch Center trailer from RBFF (Recreation Boating and Fishing Foundation). This trailer will be stocked with both freshwater and saltwater fishing gear to be used at our many partnered events throughout the state. Be on the lookout for a pop-up event near you this year!



ATTENTION!

Invasive Plants Here

Stop their spread to other lakes and ponds!

Decontaminate Your Gear:

CLEAN		Remove all debris on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Boat, Motor<input type="checkbox"/> Trailer, Gear<input type="checkbox"/> Anchors, Paddles<input type="checkbox"/> Lines, Straps
DRAIN		Pull boat plug & drain: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Motors<input type="checkbox"/> Bait Buckets<input type="checkbox"/> Live Wells<input type="checkbox"/> Canoes & Kayaks
DRY		Dry gear & equipment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Hang or leave in sun<input type="checkbox"/> Dry before traveling to another lake, pond river, or reservoir

RHODE ISLAND DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT
To report invasive animals, contact: Division of Fish and Wildlife (401) 789-0281
To report invasive plants, contact: Office of Water Resources (401) 222-4700

Management Area BOATING REGULATIONS AND POLICIES

Boating Information: Management Area Ponds & Lakes

Pond	Town	Regulation
A.L. Mowry Pond	Smithfield	1, 3
Alton Pond	Hopkinton	5, 16-21
Asa Pond	South Kingstown	4, 16-21
Ashville Pond	Hopkinton	7, 16-21
Barber's Pond	South Kingstown	5, 6, 16-21
Blue Pond	Hopkinton	5, 16-21
Bowdish Reservoir	Glocester	7, 10, 16-21
Breakheart Pond	Exeter	15, 16-21
Browning Mill Pond	Richmond	5, 16-21
Carbuncle Pond	Coventry	5, 16-21
Carolina Trout Pond	Richmond	1, 3
Carr Pond	North Kingstown	5, 16-21
Chapman Pond Westerly	Westerly	7, 16-21
Clarkville Pond Glocester	Glocester	5, 16-21
Deep Pond (Arcadia)	Exeter	3
Frosty Hollow Pond	Exeter	1,3
Great Swamp Dike	West Kingston	2, 16-21
Gristmill Pond	Glocester	3
Indian Lake	South Kingstown	7, 8, 16-21
John L. Curran Reservoir	Cranston	15, 16-21
Keech Pond	Glocester	7, 16-21
Lake Washington	Glocester	5, 16-21
Little Round Top Pond	Burrillville	1, 3
Locustville Pond	Hopkinton	7, 16-21
Lower Roaring Brook Pond	Exeter	3
Olney Pond	Lincoln	13, 14, 16-21
Pascoag Reservoir	Glocester	12, 16-21
Pawtuxet River (Hope)	Scituate	5, 16-21
Peck Pond	Burrillville	3
Round Top Pond	Burrillville	3
Shippie Saw Mill Pond	Foster	5, 16-21
Silver Spring Lake	North Kingstown	5, 16-21
Simmons Mill Pond	Little Compton	5, 16-21
Smith and Sayles Reservoir	Glocester	7, 16-21
Spring Lake	Burrillville	5, 16-21
Stafford Pond	Tiverton	9, 16-21
Tucker Pond	South Kingstown	7, 16-21
Union Pond	Burrillville	5, 16-21
Upper Roaring Brook Pond	Brook Pond Exeter	4, 16-21
Wakefield Pond	Burrillville	11, 16-21
Wilson Reservoir	Burrillville	7, 9, 16-21
Woonasquatucket Reservoir (Stump Pond)	Smithfield	7, 16-21

1. Definition: Float Tube — any device manufactured and sold for use as a fishing float tube. Float tubes are prohibited on the following ponds: Little Round Top Pond, Burrillville; A.L. Mowry Pond, Smithfield; Frosty Hollow Pond, Exeter; and Carolina Trout Pond, Richmond.
2. Boating is prohibited within the impoundment created by the Great Swamp dike, within the Great Swamp Management Area during the period September 1st through March 31st annually except by licensed migratory bird hunters. All motors are prohibited at all times.
3. Boats are prohibited on the following ponds: Round Top and Little Round Top Ponds, Burrillville; Peck Pond, Burrillville; Deep Pond — Arcadia, Exeter; Frosty Hollow Pond, Exeter; Gristmill Pond, Glocester; Carolina Trout Pond, Richmond; Lower Roaring Brook, Richmond; A.L. Mowry Pond, Smithfield.
4. The launching, hauling, or operation of boats with motors of any kind is prohibited from state-owned and/or operated ramps on the following ponds: Asa Pond, South Kingstown; and Upper Roaring Brook Ponds, Exeter.
5. The launching, hauling, and operation of boats with motors of any kind, except electric trolling motors, is prohibited from state-owned

and/or operated ramps on the following bodies of water: Spring Lake & Union Pond, Burrillville; Carbuncle Pond, Coventry; Shippie Saw Mill Pond, Foster; Clarkville Pond and Lake Washington, Glocester; Alton Pond and Blue Pond (no ramp), Hopkinton; Carr Pond and Silver Spring Lake, North Kingstown; Simmons Mill Pond, Little Compton; Browning Mill Pond, Richmond; Pawtuxet River (Hope), Scituate; and Barber's Pond, South Kingstown.

6. Per town ordinance: No person shall operate any motorboat, except a motorboat propelled by an electric motor, on the waters of Barber's Pond within the territorial limits of the Town of South Kingstown.
7. The use of motors in excess of ten (10) horsepower on boats launched, hauled, or operated from state-owned and/or operated ramps is prohibited on the following bodies of water: Wilson Reservoir, Burrillville; Keech Pond, Smith & Sayles Reservoir (Sand Dam), and Bowdish Reservoir, Glocester; Woonasquatucket Reservoir (Stump Pond), Smithfield; Indian Lake and Tucker Pond, South Kingstown; Ashville and Locustville Ponds, Hopkinton; Chapman Pond, Westerly.
8. Per town ordinance: No person shall operate any motorboat with a motor in excess of 10 horsepower on the waters of Indian Lake, within the territorial limits of the Town of South Kingstown.
9. No person shall use any motor in excess of ten (10) horsepower from state-owned and/or operated ramps on Stafford Pond, Tiverton, and Wilson Reservoir, Burrillville, with the exception that the use of motors in excess of ten (10) horsepower on boats launched, hauled, or operated from state-owned and/or operated ramps on Stafford Pond, Tiverton, and Wilson Reservoir, Burrillville, is permitted for organized fishing activities possessing a valid permit from RIDEM-Fish & Wildlife; as described in 'Fishing Activities Requiring a Permit' on page 19 of this 2024-2025 Freshwater Fishing Guide.
10. **PROPOSED REGULATION CHANGE:** No person shall use any motor in excess of ten (10) horsepower from the state-owned and/or operated boat ramp on Bowdish Reservoir in the George Washington State Campground, Glocester, with the exception that permitted organized fishing activities, i.e. tournaments shall be allowed to use motors in excess of ten (10) horsepower on the waters of Bowdish Reservoir at the state-owned launching ramp in the George Washington State Campground, Glocester, between the Saturday before Memorial Day and Labor Day of each year, inclusive. See Page 19, Fishing Activities Requiring A Parking Permit, of this 2024-2025 Freshwater Fishing Guide.
NEW POLICY: Bowdish Reservoir Boat Ramp Non-Camper Parking Reservation Policy: All non-campers launching a vessel from the Bowdish Reservoir boat ramp, in the George Washington State Campground, Glocester, between the second Friday in April through October 31, must make a parking reservation whether parking or not, by filling out a permit application at: <https://dem.ri.gov/bowdish-reservoir-boat-ramp-parking>; or refer to page 14 for permit application QR code. Three parking spaces and one handicapped parking space will be designated for non-campground users. Campground users may not reserve or use these spaces. For more information, please contact Gabriel Betty at gabriel.betty@dem.ri.gov.
11. The use of motors in excess of ten (10) horsepower on boats launched, hauled, or operated from the state-owned ramp on Wakefield Pond, Burrillville, is prohibited at all times. The use of any motor on a boat from this state-owned ramp, except electric trolling motors, is prohibited from June 20th to September 20th of any year, inclusive.
12. No person shall use any motor in excess of ten (10) horsepower from state-owned and/or operated ramps on Pascoag Reservoir at the state-owned launching ramp on Schoolhouse Road, Glocester, with the exception that permitted organized fishing activities, i.e. tournaments, shall be allowed to use motors in excess of ten (10) horsepower on the waters of Pascoag Reservoir at the state-owned launching ramp on Schoolhouse Road, Glocester, between the Saturday before Memorial Day and Labor Day of each year, inclusive.
13. The operation of boats with motors of any kind, except electric trolling motors, is prohibited on the waters of Olney Pond in Lincoln Woods

Management Area BOATING REGULATIONS AND POLICIES

State Park on Saturdays, Sundays, and holidays between the Saturday before Memorial Day and Labor Day of each year, inclusive.

14. The operation of boats with motors of any kind, except electric trolling motors, owned by persons other than the State of Rhode Island with motors in excess of ten (10) horsepower is prohibited upon Olney Pond in Lincoln Woods State Park except with official written permission from the RIDEM Division of Fish and Wildlife.
15. The use of motors in excess of ten (10) horsepower on boats launched, hauled, or operated on the waters of Breakheart Pond in Exeter and John L. Curran State Park is prohibited.
16. Only vehicles launching or landing a boat will be permitted to park in designated boat trailer areas, unless otherwise designated.
17. The mooring of boats, the parking of vehicles, or engaging in any other activity on land or water so as to obstruct the use of a boat launching ramp by others, is prohibited.
18. Boats shall be launched only at designated areas.
19. Boats shall be tied up at state boat ramps for no longer than 30 minutes.
20. Fishermen utilizing State Management Areas and designated undeveloped State Parks are required to wear fluorescent orange during hunting seasons as referenced in the Park and Management Area Rules and Regulations. See page 4 for more information.
21. Prohibited is the transport of any plant or plant part into or out of any Rhode Island waterbody on boats, vessels, other water conveyances, vehicles, trailers, fishing supplies, or any other equipment, with the exception of authorized research activities, species identification and other management activities.

Request Parking Permit for Bowdish Reservoir



A permit is required for non-camping boaters who wish to park and launch a vessel at the boat ramp located at the George Washington State Campground from the second Friday in April through October 31.

dem.ri.gov/bowdishparking

RHODE ISLAND

HUNT BOAT FISH

Outdoors

Is your boat registered in Rhode Island?

We are moving to the RIO system. Please take a few minutes to create an account to save time when your renewal becomes due.

dem.ri.gov/boatreg

Your one-stop shop for RI fishing, hunting & boating licenses & permits

Start your adventure today!
rio.ri.gov

Is That Algal Bloom On My Favorite Pond Harmful?

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

What is Cyanobacteria?

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

How do you identify a blue-green algal bloom?

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

What are the health risks?

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

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

What can you do to avoid Cyanobacteria toxins?

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

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

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

Where can I get more information?

For more information, visit <https://health.ri.gov/healthrisks/harmfulalgaeblooms/>.

Largemouth Bass Virus

The largemouth Bass Virus (LMBV) has been found to occur at three locations in Rhode Island: Olney Pond in Lincoln Woods State Park, Echo Lake in Pascoag, and Watchaug in Charlestown Pond. While LMBV has only proven fatal to largemouth bass, the virus has been found in some sunfish species such as bluegill and pumpkinseed. Common symptoms of the virus include hyper-buoyancy, spiral swimming, and lethargy, which are attributed to damage to the swim bladder. Infected fish may not exhibit any signs of the virus until it is activated by stressful environmental conditions such as high water temperatures, low oxygen levels, droughts, secondary injuries, or bacterial infections. These are conditions that could trigger LMBV and potentially cause fish kills. While fish health biologists have indicated that LMBV is a naturally occurring fish virus that does not pose a human health risk for people who eat or handle infected fish, all freshwater fish should be thoroughly cooked before being consumed. DEM's Division of Fish and Wildlife advises anglers to minimize the spread of LMBV by not transplanting any fish from one water body to another; draining, cleaning and drying boats, motors and fishing gear between each use; not releasing bait fish into any water body; minimizing the stress to bass caught and released as much as possible during periods of high water temperatures; and reporting all fish kills to the Department at (401) 222-3070.



Photo submitted by Ben C.

Keeping our Waters Clear

What We Stand to Lose When Invasive Plants Take Over

By Katie DeGoosh-DiMarzio, Environmental Scientist III, RIDEM Office of Water Resources

On a clear summer day in June, RIDEM Seasonal Field Technician Peter Gnocci cautiously leans over in the side of a canoe in Central Pond. He isn't fishing, but instead grabbing a handful of an aquatic invasive plant called water chestnut (*Trapa natans*). First found just scattered here and there among the native lilies in the East Providence pond in 2009, this notorious invasive plant has grown to cover roughly 66-acres of the water, in this 137-acre reservoir.



RIDEM Seasonal Field Technician, Peter Gnocchi, lifts a rosette of invasive water chestnut (*Trapa natans*) from Central Pond in East Providence (June 2016).

That's about 50 football fields of water chestnut coverage after just 14 summers. I think about the native lilac bush I planted in my yard ten years ago, and today it's still just a shrub in my backyard, it hasn't taken over the property. But water chestnut is sneaky and comes with a competitive advantage. It multiplies exponentially, starting off slow, and within a few short years it begins appearing in record amounts. The water chestnut population nestled in the Ten Mile Watershed is now the largest water chestnut population in the state of Rhode Island. It continues to spread downstream into Turner Reservoir (south of Newman Ave) and Omega Pond. Its distinct, thorny seeds have even washed up on shore at India Point Park after they drifted over the dam and down into the Seekonk and Providence Rivers.

The Ten Mile River Watershed Council have been longtime stewards of the Ten Mile River, working to improve recreational opportunities and extolling the importance of keeping the water and habitat healthy. For many years,

dedicated watershed volunteers worked with RIDEM and the Rhode Island Saltwater Anglers Association on the river to carefully carry migrant river herring by hand and bucket over the dams that separated them from their historic spawning grounds upstream. However, by April of 2015, with the work of multiple partners, fish ladders had been installed at three dams to improve fish passage. Removing such obstacles for the fish reconnected over 340 acres of freshwater habitat that anadromous fish had been excluded from. The successful 16-year, \$7.7 Million fish passage projects were the largest fish run restoration project in Rhode Island, and now volunteers simply need to tally the fish they see returning to the watershed from the sea. By 2020, over 20,000 fish per year were counted successfully making the trip upstream from the bay to the fresh waters of Turner Reservoir. River herring are an important keystone species in the Narragansett Bay ecosystem, serving as the base of a very large food chain. They play a pivotal role as food

source for larger fish such as striped bass and bluefish, predatory birds such as bald eagles, herons, gulls and osprey, or wildlife like otters and eager snapping turtles. Pictures of such charismatic animals are often the featured subject matter of nature photographers that take to the waters of Central Pond, who later post their snapshots on social media to the delight of the Ten Mile Watershed Group.

In May, the shining waters are a calming oasis away from bustling urban sprawl, well buffered by lush, green conservation woodlands along the shoreline. The open water is a destination among paddlers who bring canoes and kayaks for an afternoon trip. The bridges on Newman Ave that bisect the reservoir are popular with local anglers casting off in pursuit of their next big catch, and statewide, the warm-water habitat is known as an important bass fishery. There is a winding greenway and trails along the shoreline, great for bikers, runners, and walkers to peek through the trees for a scenic view of the water.



Aerial view of Central Pond, north of Turner Reservoir in East Providence. The water is covered with invasive water chestnut (*Trapa natans*) making fishing and paddling impossible (August 2022). Scan the QR code above to learn how to ID the plant.

But by August, the invasive water chestnut has emerged at the surface and grown to cover half of the reservoir under a gnarly mat of vegetation floating at the surface. Pictures posted of the pond look more like pictures of an open field as the water is no longer visible, now buried in shiny green leaves. Naïve paddlers who attempt to cut through the thick mass of leaves and stems quickly find their momentum blocked and as they struggle in the clogged waterway. Fishermen don't even bother. One can only imagine what it's like for the fish underwater. Where native lilies emerge in May and a few stems develop one leaf that only grows 4-8 inches across, one water chestnut plant tosses out up to 15 stems with a rosette of leaves that can each cover 4 square feet, shading 60 square feet of the water below. For a fish, it must be like someone closed the curtains and dimmed the sunlight. Predatory fish must swim farther to hunt down their meals in the darkness under the shade of chestnut leaves. The birds of prey soaring above the water in search of their next victim are flying blind. For smaller forage fish, their habitat structure has been physically altered with the addition of all these new fast-growing stems—as if someone dropped a forest into its living room, redirecting its patterns of movement. This rearrangement of things changes their foraging behavior, similar to people who wonder aimlessly around their favorite grocery store after corporate decides to switch the layout. Shopping trips take longer and patrons are not always

successful at finding the item they were looking for. It's the same for all the fish and wildlife that call Central Pond home, and these changes can affect an animal's survival. Invasive water chestnut has not only ruined recreational pursuits, it also threatens a healthy balance of native flora and fauna, (central to a thriving ecosystem.) and is extremely difficult to get under control.

These things all add up to have economic consequences, when anglers aren't stopping in for bait at their bait shop, local businesses serving the pond visitors lose income when they decide to travel to another lake, shoreline homeowners see a demonstrated drop in their property values which in turn leads to reduced tax revenues, and then the costs of restoration can be extremely high.

There is Hope

Luckily, the odds of controlling an invasive plant increase significantly if a newly established plant can be found early and weeded out before it begins taking over. RIDEM has had great success keeping water chestnut in check when found early, before plants claim an acre of surface water. Olney and Barney Pond in Lincoln, RI are great examples. While out on the water doing a survey, RIDEM staff found a handful of water chestnut plants in Barney Pond in 2019, so they decided to check upstream at Olney Pond in Lincoln Woods State Park. Sure enough, both ponds had the invasive plant, but in very small amounts. Plants from Barney Pond were enough to fit inside two laundry baskets.



EM Seasonal Technicians spend time harvesting invasive water chestnut at Olney Pond (2019).

Article: KEEPING OUR WATERS CLEAR

There were slightly more water chestnut plants in Olney Pond. However, a strike team of 5 or 6 summer interns ventured out in canoes and kayaks to take out the water chestnut rosettes one mid-July day. The plants removed from a small 20 x 20 ft. area of Olney Pond all fit into the back of a one-ton dump truck on shore. Since then, RIDEM only spends about 2 days each summer removing plants from those locations. Every year, there are less and less plants to find, and by 2022 there were only a dozen floating rosettes to remove. Water chestnut is one of the few invasive plants that is an annual plant, germinating in early May, growing flowers, and starting to produce seeds in July, releasing those seeds in August, and then dying off in the Fall, all in the same year. It does not survive the winter, nor does it have an extensive root system. So, the trick to

eradicating water chestnut is to get to the plants in June or early July and remove them from the water before they produce seeds. Removing the plant prevents it from multiplying next year, so every plant pulled this summer prevents more hard work next year. Unfortunately, those hardy, pointy seeds can hang out in the sediment for up to 12 years before they decide to germinate. So, for example, back in 2018 before the plants were discovered in Olney and Barney Ponds, the water chestnut plants were growing and giving off seeds that could be viable until 2030. Therefore, RIDEM will need to monitor those ponds for water chestnut each year, and pull whatever plants are found, but it is much easier to stay on top of the problem and manage it before it gets out of control. Similar monitoring and pulling efforts are underway in Belleville Pond in South Kingstown, Reynolds

Pond in West Greenwich, Sylvestre Pond in Woonsocket, as well as Omega Pond in East Providence. Larger efforts are needed in the Blackstone River and Carl's Pond with the Friends of the Blackstone/Watershed Council as well as at Turner Reservoir with the Ten Mile River Watershed Council. More water chestnut there necessitates recruiting some help from community volunteers for a muddy morning of water chestnut pulling.

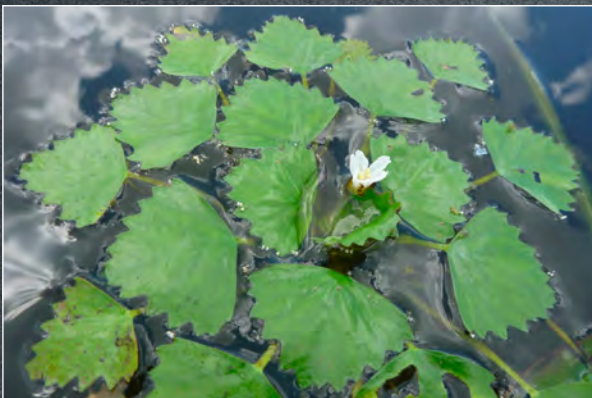
Stay tuned for new announcements of any events planned for June and July, it makes for a very rewarding paddle. But even more important is to learn what water chestnut looks like! Being able to spot it early is our best chance at keeping it under control. Find resources online, and if you see a floating rosette while out on the water, take a picture and report it to RIDEM Office of Water Resources.

Watch out for the worst weeds!

Learn to recognize the top two nastiest aquatic invasive weeds in Rhode Island and report plants to RIDEM.

Email pictures of the plant to Katie.degoosh@dem.ri.gov to report a new siting.

Invasive Water Chestnut



Look at the Leaves:

- float like water lilies
- triangle shaped
- toothed edges (not smooth)
- shiny, waxy finish
- Leaves are arranged in a circular rosette and radiate from the central stem
- Additional feather like leaves are underwater on the stem

Flowers in July

- Tiny, size of a pencil eraser
- Colored white
- 4 petals
- Found in the center of the rosettes

Invasive Hydrilla



Look at the Leaves:

- Leaves are submersed under water
- Blade shaped leaves
- Jagged, toothed edges (not smooth)
- Five leaves will attach to the stem together at one place (a whorl of 5)
- Each whorl may be centimeters apart along the stem in brand new growth, but they become more densely packed together one on top of each other, especially at the tip top of the stem



Fishing Activities Requiring a Permit

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

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

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

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

3. Regardless if a fishing tournament is 'closed' or 'open', the organization must provide a report to the Division within five (5) days of the termination of the tournament which includes: the number of hours fished, the number of boats, numbers of participants, and, as applicable, the total number of largemouth bass and smallmouth bass caught as well as the total weight of all largemouth bass and all smallmouth bass processed at weigh-in. This report may be sent as a letter to RIDEM Division of Fish and Wildlife or by completing the Bass Tournament Count Form. Failure to complete and submit the required information within five (5) days shall render the organization ineligible to conduct further organized fishing events for one year from the said event. Such revocation shall include any events for which a permit was previously issued.

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

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

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

For more information, contact Gabriel Betty at gabriel.betty@dem.ri.gov or 401-789-0281

With you wherever you go.

The most up-to-date
fishing regulations online!



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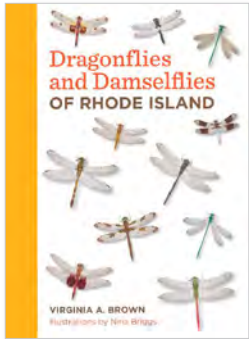
519 Crescent St, Brockton, MA

www.JJBait.com

RIDEM Division of Fish and Wildlife's Publications:

Dragonflies and Damselflies of Rhode Island

By: Virginia Brown, Illustrated by Nina Briggs



Dragonflies and Damselflies of Rhode Island, a compilation of three decades of inventorying and monitoring dragonflies and damselflies inhabiting the state. This is the first time these species have been comprehensively compiled and identified in a publication specific to Rhode Island.

Price: \$20.00 purchase by mail (check or money order only).

Order form available by emailing DEM. DFW@dem.ri.gov or from:

<http://www.dem.ri.gov/programs/fish-wildlife/publications/index.php>

Inland Fishes of Rhode Island

By: Alan D. Libby, Illustrated by Robert Jon Golder

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

Amphibians of Rhode Island

By: Christopher J. Raithel

Amphibians of Rhode Island provides meticulous accounts of the state's 18 native frogs, toads, and salamanders and their respective habitats accompanied by beautiful photographs depicting multiple life stages. Far more than a field guide, the author combines an exhaustive search of the historical record and four decades of intense personal study to provide comprehensive information on the state-wide distribution, demography,

seasonal movement, reproduction and development, research needs, and conservation status of each species.

Price: \$20.00

Purchase Options for Inland Fishes in Rhode Island and Amphibians of Rhode Island:

- DEM Division of Boating and Licensing located at 235 Promenade Street, Providence. Cash, check or credit (with \$1.50 convenience fee).
- Great Swamp Fish and Wildlife Headquarters located at 277 Great Neck Road, West Kingston, office hours 8:30am–4pm, check or money order only.
- On-line, mail-in order form: Print, complete and send along with check or money order only <https://dem.ri.gov/natural-resources-bureau/fish-wildlife/reports-publications>.

Ways to stay informed:

- Sign up for our 'Wild Rhode Island' Newsletter to keep up-to-date with RI DEM Division of Fish and Wildlife. The full-color quarterly newsletter is available online only. For more information or to be added to our email list, please contact Sarah Riley at 401-789-0281 or sarah.riley@dem.ri.gov.
- Kids can sign up for the 'Wild Rhode Island Explorer', a quarterly magazine just for kids, available on-line or in full-color print. This publication features interviews with biologists, information about native species, and so much more! For more information or to sign up, email mary.gannon@dem.ri.gov.
- Monthly Fish and Wildlife Outreach email: Receive free, up-to-date information about fishing, hunting, and wildlife outreach events as well as Division volunteer opportunities. To sign up, please contact kimberly.sullivan@dem.ri.gov or mary.gannon@dem.ri.gov.
- Follow us on Facebook: Rhode Island Fish and Wildlife Outdoor Education @RIFishwildlife or www.facebook.com/RIFishwildlife. Get event updates, up-to-date stocking information, learn about RI species, and more.
- Follow us on Instagram @ri.fishandwildlife.

Tips for Releasing Live Fish

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

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

// #ResponsibleRecreation

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

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

If you need to purchase freshwater or saltwater fishing licenses for you and your family, visit RIO.RI.GOV to purchase at home. Be sure that all anglers 15 and older have a fishing license. If you plan to fish for or possess trout, fish in a 'catch and release' area, or fish in a 'flyfishing only' area, be sure to add the Trout Conservation Stamp to your license. If others are fishing at the same spot, maintain a distance of at least 6 feet, or about the length of a fishing rod. If the area is too crowded to keep your distance, try fishing somewhere else or coming back another day.

RI has a "Carry in-Carry out" policy. Please take your litter with you. Recycling containers for used monofilament and fluorocarbon line can be found at some bait and tackle shops and at some boat ramps, piers and other fishing access points. Please use these only for used line, not hooks, lures, cans, bait containers, or other trash.

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

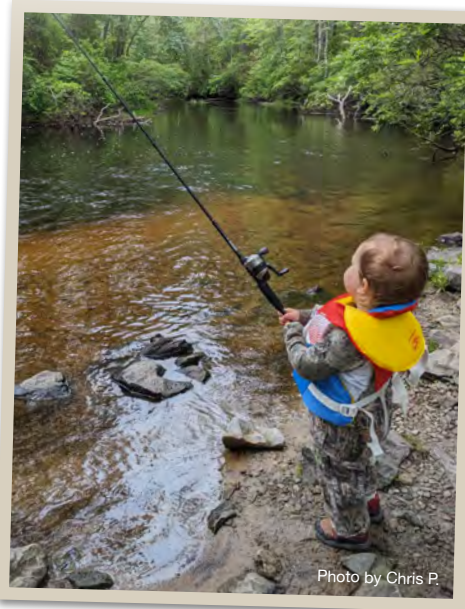


Photo by Chris P.

Natural Shorelines are Good for Fishing



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

Anglers: You Can Help Us Combat Turtle Poaching!

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

What to look for:

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

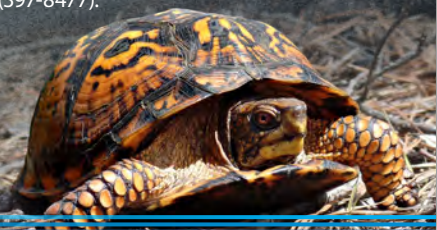
What to do if you see something suspicious:

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

What not to do:

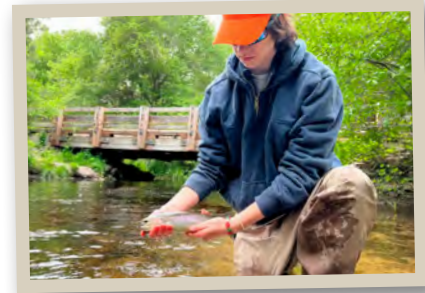
- Do not confront suspicious persons, or try to stop a crime yourself. Leave that to law-enforcement professionals.

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



Why Do You Fish?

Thank you to those of you who shared your 2023 'Why Do You Fish?' stories. This year we had an overwhelming response; here are some of our favorites. We hope you will continue to enjoy fishing in RI and making more memories in 2024.



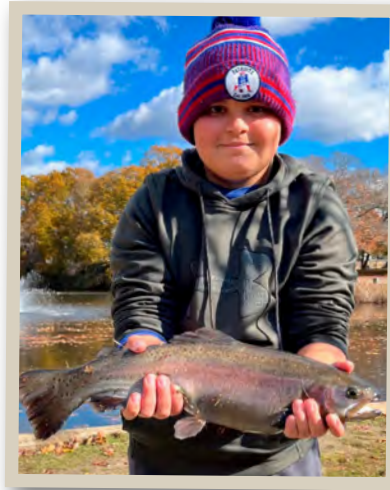
I find that fishing, to me, is infinite. I've been enamored in the aquatic world ever since I was little, pursuing fishing as an action to admire a world foreign to me, but I find in myself that it is more than the fish that I am after, it is much more to me. I crave the challenge, the artistic mastery of perfection. I yearn for the awe-inspiring destinations, finding my soul drifting back in days of yore. I respect the fish, for it's more than itself to me, it creates aptitude for life changing experiences.

- Harper Nelson



My son Jaylen is 5 years old and loves fishing as much as me. It's all he talks about, and he would be so excited to see himself in the guidebook.

- Kyle Lyons



I love to fish with my son (Benjamin)... we get to spend time together in the outdoors.

- Colin Remington



Hello, my name is Andrew (Scott) Hafner and this picture sums it all up. Nature heals. I hope it finds its way into your publication.



First Fish Award



APPLICATION

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

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

NAME: _____ DATE YOU CAUGHT THE FISH: _____

ADDRESS: _____ TOWN _____ ST _____ ZIP _____

EMAIL (optional): _____ FISH SPECIES: _____

WHERE YOU CAUGHT THE FISH: _____

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

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

RETURN TO: RI Division of Fish and Wildlife / Aquatic Resource Education Program
1B Camp E-Hun-Tee Place / Exeter, RI 02882

Rhode Island Game Fish Award Program

Each year, RIDEM-Division of Fish & Wildlife recognizes anglers who have caught freshwater and saltwater game fish of notable size with our Game Fish Award program. To be eligible, an angler must catch a qualifying fish by rod and reel, tie-up or handline by legal means in Rhode Island waters. Fish must be caught in Rhode Island waters open to the public without charge, fee, special permission or membership (private pond restricted to use by club members or their guests are not considered open to the public, even if no fee is charged). To accommodate both 'catch and release' and harvest fishing, the angler can either take a photo of the fish using a hand-scale and ruler or bring the catch to an official weigh station. The angler must then complete the Game Fish / State Record Award Application, available at www.dem.ri.gov/programs/fish-wildlife/records/index.php. One award per person per year is issued for each species of game fish caught that meet the minimum size requirements listed. Game Fish Awards are mailed out in the spring of the following year the fish was caught.

RI State Record Award

The Division of Fish and Wildlife maintains state records on each species of game fish caught in Rhode Island waters. To be eligible, an angler must catch a qualifying fish by rod and reel, tie-up or handline by legal means in Rhode Island waters. Fish also must be caught in Rhode Island waters open to the public without charge, fee, special permission or membership (private pond restricted to use by club members or their guests are not considered open to the public, even if no fee is charged). To apply for an RI State Record, the angler must bring their legally-caught fish to an official weigh-in station. The fish must be identified, measured, and weighed on a Rhode Island certified, digital scale. The station operator must fill out a Game Fish/State Record Award Application and sign it. State Record Game Fish Awards are mailed out in the spring of the following year the fish was caught. For a list of official fish weigh-in locations and applications please visit www.dem.ri.gov/programs/fish-wildlife/records/index.php.

First Fish Award Program

First Fish Awards are available for children who catch their first fish in Rhode Island. To qualify, an angler must have caught a fish by rod and reel, tie-up or handline by legal means. Applications can be processed without the need for an official weigh-in. The First Fish Award application can be found on page 22 or it can be downloaded: <https://dem.ri.gov/sites/g/files/xkqbur861/files/programs/bnatres/fishwild/pdf/kidsapp.pdf>. First Fish Awards are processed twice a year: once in the fall and prior to the opening day of the following year.

Completed Applications

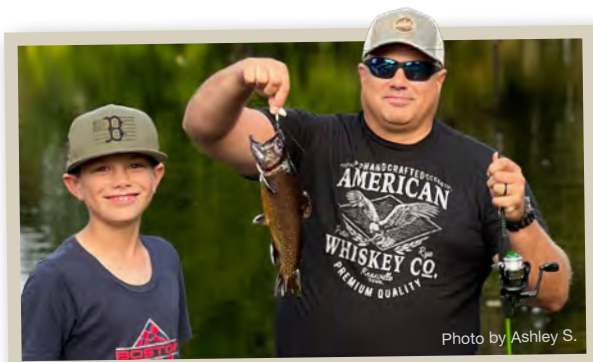
Please send all completed applications to: RIDEM- Fish & Wildlife, 1B Camp E-Hun-Tee Place, Exeter, RI 02822, for verification and processing. For questions about any of these award programs, email kimberly.sullivan@dem.ri.gov or call (401) 539-0019.

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

Qualifying Freshwater Lengths and Weights		
Species	Length (in)	Weight (lbs)
Black Crappie	12 in.	0.9 lbs.
Bluegill	9 in.	0.5 lbs.
Brown Bullhead	13 in.	0.99 lbs.
Carp	32 in.	29 lbs.
Chain Pickerel	25 in.	4 lbs.
Landlocked Atlantic Salmon	16 in.	2 lbs.
Largemouth Bass	22 in.	6 lbs.
Northern Pike	34 in.	10 lbs.
Pumpkinseed	8 in.	0.3 lbs.
Smallmouth Bass	19 in.	4 lbs.
Trout: Brook Trout	16 in.	2 lbs.
Trout: Brown Trout	19 in.	3 lbs.
Trout: Golden Rainbow Trout	20 in.	3 lbs.
Trout: Rainbow Trout	20 in.	3 lbs.
White Catfish	20 in.	4 lbs.
White Perch	15 in.	1.6 lbs.
Yellow Perch	12 in.	0.85 lbs.

Qualifying Saltwater Lengths and Weights		
Species	Length (in)	Weight (lbs)
Black Sea Bass	20 in.	4 lbs.
Blue Shark	72 in.	80 lbs.
Bluefin Tuna	90 in.	450 lbs.
Bluefish	32 in.	14 lbs.
Bonito	25 in.	8 lbs.
Chub Mackerel	14 in.	1 lb.
Cobia	48 in.	50 lbs.
Cod	38 in.	20 lbs.
False Albacore	24 in.	5 lbs.
Gray Triggerfish	17 in.	3 lbs.
Haddock	30 in.	10 lbs.
Hickory Shad	18 in.	2 lbs.
King Mackerel	19 in.	3 lbs.
Mackerel	15 in.	1 lb.
Mahi Mahi (common dolphinfish)	30 in.	8lbs.
Mako Shark	90 in.	300 lbs.
Pollock	36 in.	15 lbs.
Scup	13 in.	2.5 lbs.
Spanish Mackerel	24 in.	4.5 lbs.
Squeteague (Weakfish)	24 in.	4.5 lbs.
Striped Bass	Currently ineligible for Gamefish Award*	
Summer Flounder	25 in.	6 lbs.
Swordfish	70 in.	170 lbs.
Tautog	23 in.	10 lbs.
Wahoo	50 in.	4 lbs.
White Marlin	72 in.	70 lbs.
Winter Flounder	16 in.	3 lbs.
Yellowfin Tuna	56 in.	125 lbs.

* Please note: Striped bass is ineligible for the Gamefish Award Program since the qualifying length threshold is not within the slot limit regulations of 28"-31". If regulations permit, the species will be returned to the award list.



Sportfishing RECORDS

RI Sportfishing Records 2023 - Freshwater

Species	Weight	Length	Date	Location	Angler
Atlantic Salmon Domestic, stocked (landlocked)	21 lbs. 9 oz.	41 in.	01/2004	Barber Pond	R. Maldonis - Arlington, MA
Black Crappie	3 lbs.	15 in.	07/1976	Watchaug Pond	R. Sevegny - Pawtucket, RI
Bluegill	2 lbs. 1 oz.	12 in.	08/1987		C. Rizzo - Pascoag, RI
Brown Bullhead	4 lbs. 9.44 oz.	18.5 in.	08/1998		H. Laramee - Cumberland, RI
Carp	32 lbs. 8 oz.	37 in.	06/2001	Tiogue Lake	S. Wasilewski - Hope Valley, RI
Chain Pickerel	6 lbs. 14 oz.	27.75 in.	08/2005	Beach Pond	T. Egan - Hope Valley, RI
Largemouth Bass	11 lbs. 3.2 oz.	25 in.	04/2016	Johnson's Pond	B. Migliore - Sterling, CT
Northern Pike	35 lbs.	47.5 in.	10/1987	Hundred Acre	D. LaRose - Coventry, RI
Pumpkinseed	13.6 oz.	10.5 in.	08/2020	Block Island	J. Agosta - Rye, NY
Smallmouth Bass	5 lbs. 15 oz.	22.5 in.	09/1977	Wash Pond	B. Ferris - Wakefield, RI
Trout: Brook Trout	3 lbs. 12 oz.	21 in.	10/1984	Wyoming Pond	R. Boucher, Jr. - Warwick, RI
Trout: Brown Trout	7 lbs. 9 oz.	26 in.	04/2000	Wallum Lake	R. Groleau - Blackstone, MA
Trout: Golden Rainbow Trout	12 lbs. 9.12 oz.	29.75 in.	04/2019	Olney Pond	J. Lopez, Jr. - Central Falls, RI
Trout: Rainbow Trout	12 lbs. 9.12 oz.	29.75 in.	12/2020	Barber Pond	J. Rogers - North Kingstown, RI
White Catfish	16 lbs. 12 oz.	33 in.	08/1994	Tiogue Lake	L. Angell - Coventry, RI
White Perch	2 lbs. 7.28 oz.	16.25 in.	11/2018	Narrow River	P. Warner - Narragansett, RI
Yellow Perch	2 lbs. 4 oz.	13.5 in.	02/1987	Pascoag Reservoir	D. LaRochelle - Glendale, RI

Hypothermia

Hypothermia is a condition in which the body loses heat faster than it can produce it. This causes a dangerous reduction of the body's core temperature. Hypothermia results from exposure to wind and wetness and can develop in temperatures as warm as 50 F (10 C).

Prevention: Pay attention to the weather forecast and dress appropriately. Layer clothing and have a wind resistant and water-resistant layer available. Bring a change of clothes especially if spending time on or near the water. Limit your exposure to the cold environment and avoid sitting on cold surfaces. Keep hydrated and eat foods high in fat and protein.

Signs and Symptoms: Early onset signs may include shivering and reddish skin. As it progresses signs and symptoms may include slurred speech or mumbling, the absence of shivering, weak pulse, clumsiness, drowsiness, confusion, loss of consciousness, and if left untreated, death.

What to do if you fall in the water: Refer to the Hypothermia Table to see the general effects cold water temperatures have on the body. If a person falls in the water, safely try to get them out of the water ASAP. If unable to SAFELY get them out, here are a few things to remember while waiting for help.

- When a person falls into cold water, there are ways to increase the chances of survival. Don't discard clothing; it helps trap the body's heat, even if wet.

- Minimize movement; thrashing around in cold water only leads to loss of energy which will further drop your core body temperature.
- Wear a personal flotation device (PFD) which will help for two reasons: it lessens the need to move around in the water and it helps to insulate against heat loss.
- When wearing a PFD, a person should draw their knees into a position known as HELP (Heat Escape Lessening Posture).
- If there are several people in the water, huddling together with arms around each other's shoulders is the best survival technique.

Treatment: Individuals who are suffering from hypothermia are more susceptible to cardiac arrest. For this reason, they should be treated gently and warmed **gradually**. The body, if exposed to rapid re-warming, may go into shock. Do not give alcohol as this will work to expand blood vessels and cause more rapid heat loss. Warm liquids should be given with caution for individuals who are not alert as this could cause a choking hazard.

DISCLAIMER: Always call 911 in an emergency situation.

RI Sportfishing Records 2023 - Saltwater

Species	Weight	Length	Date	Location	Angler
American Shad (Closed)	6 lbs. 8 oz.	25 in.	04/1985	Runnins River	W. Socha - Warren, RI
Atlantic Mackerel	1 lb. 1.6 oz.	14 in.	11/1981	—	T. Rovinelli - Providence, RI
Blue Shark	431 lbs.	—	11/2006	Cox Ledge	G. Gross - Fairfield, NJ
Bluefin Tuna	1142 lbs. 12 oz.	—	09/1971	Block Island	J. Dempsey
Bluefish	26 lbs.	—	08/1981	—	D. Deziel - Woonsocket, RI
Bonito	13 lbs.	—	10/1995	Westerly	R. Gliottone - Exeter, RI
Chub Mackerel	1.86 lbs.	16.25 in.	09/2023	Quonny Breachway	D. Fromson - Sunnyside, NY
Cod	71 lbs.	—	06/1965	—	M. Deciantis - Warwick, RI
False Albacore	19.56 lbs.	35 in.	08/2023	Block Island	C. Simonds - Manchester, MA
Gray Triggerfish	4 lbs. 8 oz.	22 in.	10/2021	—	G. Castonguay - Berkley, MA
Hickory Shad	2 lbs. 11 oz.	20 in.	11/1989	Narrow River	M. Pickering - Lincoln, RI
King Mackerel	12 lbs. 3 oz.	40 in.	08/2000	Point Judith	A. Camilleri - Chester, CT
Mako Shark	718 lbs.	12 ft. 6 in.	06/1993	S. Block Island	W. Alessi - Boston, MA
Pollock	28 lbs. 8 oz.	—	05/1995	—	A. Jacobs - Lincoln, RI
Scup	5 lbs.	20.25 in.	10/1990	—	J. Yurwitz - Block Island, RI
Sea Bass	8 lbs. 7.25 oz.	26 in.	10/1981	Block Island	K. McDuffie - Pascoag, RI
Squeteague	16 lbs. 8.72 oz.	36 in.	05/2007	Greenwich Bay	R. Moeller - N. Kingstown, RI
Striped Bass	77 lbs. 6.4 oz. 52"	52 in.	06/2011	Block Island	P. Vican - E. Greenwich, RI
Summer Flounder	17 lbs. 8 oz.	—	1962	Narrow River	G. Farmer - Warwick, RI
Swordfish	588 lbs.	—	08/2018	Atlantic	L. Banfield - Saunderstown, RI
Tautog	21 lbs. 9 oz.	33 in.	11/2021	Newport	P. Newman - New Milford, NJ
Tiger Shark	597 lbs.	11 ft. 6 in.	07/1990	S. Block Island	M.P. Strout - Auburn, MA
White Marlin	125 lbs.	8 ft. 0.5 in.	08/1987	S. Block Island	J. Luty, Sr. - Preston, CT
Winter Flounder	6 lbs. 7 oz.	23 in.	08/1990	Galilee	A. Pearson - Cranston, RI
Yellowfin Tuna	265 lbs.	6 ft.	10/1997	The Dip	R. Hughes - Arlington, MA



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