



# The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

## Division of Marine Fisheries

(617) 626-1520 | [www.mass.gov/marinefisheries](http://www.mass.gov/marinefisheries)



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August 4, 2023

### Marine Fisheries Advisory

#### **2023 COMMERCIAL HORSESHOE CRAB BAIT FISHERY TO CLOSE EFFECTIVE AUGUST 7**

Massachusetts' 2023 commercial horseshoe crab bait quota of 140,000 horseshoe crabs is projected to be taken on Sunday, August 6, 2023. Accordingly, the Massachusetts commercial horseshoe crab bait fishery will be closed effective Monday, August 7, 2023 ([Closure Notice](#)). The fishery will remain closed until it reopens in 2024.

During the closed period, it is unlawful for commercial fishers to retain, possess, land, or sell horseshoe crabs and for seafood dealers or bait dealers to purchase or receive horseshoe crabs directly from fishermen. Exempt from this are biomedical harvesters, biomedical dealers, and biomedical processing firms lawfully participating in the biomedical horseshoe crab fishery. Additionally, pot fishers may possess dead horseshoe crabs as bait, provided they have documentation that the source of the horse crabs is a wholesale dealer or a bait dealer.

Commercial fishers are to submit monthly trip-level reports by the fifteenth of the following month, even if their permit as not fished. Reports should be sent to: DMF Statistics Project, 30 Emerson Avenue, Gloucester, MA 01930. Failure to submit these reports for all months of the year in a timely manner may result in the non-renewal of a commercial permit and its endorsements in 2024. Blank forms and instructions were mailed out prior to the beginning of the 2023 fishing season; additional copies can be obtained on the [Trip Level Reporting website](#).

Please visit our website at [www.mass.gov/marinefisheries](http://www.mass.gov/marinefisheries).