



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

Division of Marine Fisheries

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Marine Fisheries Advisory

Expected 2024 Recreational Measures for Summer Flounder, Scup, and Black Sea Bass

On March 19, the Division of Marine Fisheries and the Marine Fisheries Advisory Commission reviewed potential recreational fishing limits for summer flounder, scup, and black sea bass for 2024. It was determined that the Division would move forward with the following anticipated limits for Massachusetts:

	Fishing Mode	Open Season	Possession Limit	Minimum Size
Summer Flounder	Shore	May 24–September 23	5 fish	16.5"
	Private Vessel & For-hire Vessel	May 24–September 23	5 fish	17.5"
Scup	Shore	May 1–December 31	30 fish	9.5"
	Private Vessel	May 1–December 31	30 fish (150 fish/vessel maximum)	11"
	For-hire Vessel	May 1–June 30 July 1–December 31	40 fish 30 fish	11"
Black Sea Bass	Shore, Private Vessel & For-hire Vessel	May 18–September 3	4 fish	16.5"

Overview: Summer flounder (fluke), scup, and black sea bass are managed under the interstate fishery management plan of the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission and federal fishery management plan of the Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council. Recreational measures along the Atlantic coast are set to achieve but not exceed each species' established harvest target. To stay within these limits in 2024, there is a 28% coastwide recreational harvest reduction required for summer flounder, a 10% coastwide recreational harvest reduction required for scup, and a status quo coastwide harvest requirement for black sea bass. The rule changes described herein for Massachusetts reflect the state's mandatory contribution to sustainably managing these resources at their target harvest levels.

Summer Flounder: To achieve a state-specific 28% harvest reduction, Massachusetts' summer flounder recreational minimum size limit for anglers fishing aboard any type of vessel will increase 1" (from 16.5" to 17.5"), and the open season for all anglers will be shorted by nine days (from May 21–September 29 to May 24–September 23).

Scup: To achieve a regional 10% harvest reduction, the states of Massachusetts through New York agreed to increase the scup minimum size limit for anglers fishing aboard any type of vessel by ½" (from 10.5" to 11").

Black Sea Bass: To open the season on a Saturday without increasing projected harvest, Massachusetts' recreational black sea bass season will shift from May 20–September 7 to May 18–September 3.

Refer to the DMF website for a full list of 2024 recreational saltwater fishing regulations:
<https://www.mass.gov/service-details/recreational-saltwater-fishing-regulations>