



David E. Pierce, Ph.D.  
Director

# Commonwealth of Massachusetts

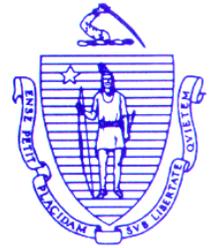
## Division of Marine Fisheries

251 Causeway Street, Suite 400

Boston, Massachusetts 02114

(617)626-1520

fax (617)626-1509



Charles D. Baker  
Governor

Karyn E. Polito

Lieutenant Governor

Matthew A. Beaton

Secretary

Ronald Amidon

Commissioner

Mary-Lee King

Deputy Commissioner

April 13, 2018

### Marine Fisheries Advisory

### **New Recreational Fishing Limits: Fluke, Black Sea Bass, Scup & Tautog**

The Division of Marine Fisheries (DMF) is enacting new recreational regulations for fluke (summer flounder), black sea bass, scup, and tautog for the 2018 fishing season. The fluke, black sea bass, and scup regulations are being implemented by emergency action; a public hearing will be held in June prior to implementing final regulations.

<b>Fishery</b>	<b>Open Season</b>	<b>Possession Limit*</b>	<b>Minimum Size</b>
Fluke	May 23–October 9	5 fish	17"
Black Sea Bass	May 19–September 1	5 fish	15"
Scup	May 1–December 31 (45 fish allowance on for-hire vessels May 1–June 30)	30 fish	9"
Tautog	April 1–May 31	3 fish	16"
	June 1–July 31	1 fish	
	August 1–October 14	3 fish	
	October 15–December 31	5 fish	
(10 fish maximum per private/rental vessel, year-round)			

\* Possession limits are per person per day, unless otherwise noted.

**Fluke:** DMF is allowed to liberalize the MA recreational fluke regulations to increase projected harvest by 17% relative to 2017. The 2018 rules increase the possession limit by 1 fish (previously 4 fish), and add 15 days to the open season (previously May 22–September 23).

**Black Sea Bass:** DMF is currently allowed to liberalize the MA recreational black sea bass regulations to increase projected harvest by 4.6% relative to 2017. The 2018 rules add four days to the open season (previously May 20–August 29). Note that Massachusetts has submitted an appeal to the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission seeking additional access to this abundant resource. If the appeal is successful, additional rule liberalizations will be announced in a subsequent Advisory in early May.

**Scup:** DMF is allowed to liberalize the MA recreational scup regulations to increase projected harvest by 27% within our region (MA–NY). The 2018 rules reduce the minimum size by 1" (previously 10").

**Tautog:** DMF is amending the MA recreational tautog regulations to better align with RI (also changing), per a new regional approach in the interstate management plan, with negligible projected effect on overall harvest. The 2018 rules establish variable bag limits on a seasonal basis (previously 3 fish year-round), and place a cap on vessel-based harvest by private anglers.

For more information, please contact DMF at 617-626-1520.

[www.mass.gov/marinefisheries](http://www.mass.gov/marinefisheries)