



STATE OF CONNECTICUT DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

Robert Klee
Commissioner

Bureau of Natural Resources
Marine Fisheries Division
www.ct.gov/deep/fishing

A STUDY OF MARINE RECREATIONAL FISHERIES IN CONNECTICUT

Find a place to fish with our *Saltwater Fishing Resource Map* !!

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Department of ENERGY & ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION
Saltwater Fishing Resource Map

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WELCOME

This map shows the locations of points of interest related to saltwater fishing within the state of Connecticut and around Long Island Sound (LIS), including:

- sporting licensing agents
- bait and tackle shops
- enhanced opportunity shore fishing sites
- car top boat launches with LIS access
- trailered boat launches with LIS access
- party and charter boat locations

View information on saltwater fishing in the state of Connecticut or on the [Enhanced Opportunity Shore Fishing Program](#). Additional links are also provided below the map.

Please send feedback about this application to: deep.marine.fisheries@ct.gov.

Select a point of interest to obtain more information about it.

Search for a point of interest by name or vicinity around a location by entering a name or address in the search bar above the map. Wildcard characters include "%" for multiple characters and "." and for a single character.

Zoom by using the zoom buttons on the map, by double-clicking, by using the scrollwheel, or by holding the 'Shift' key and drawing a rectangle on the map.

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As seen on the CT DEEP website:

<http://www.depdata.ct.gov/maps/saltwaterfish/map.htm>

Federal Aid in Sport Fish Restoration
F-54-R-33 Annual Performance Report
March 1, 2013 – February 28, 2014
Job 1: Marine Angler Survey



State of Connecticut
Department of Energy and Environmental Protection
79 Elm Street
Hartford, CT 06106-5127
www.ct.gov/deep

Federal Aid in Sport Fish Restoration
F-54-R-33
Annual Performance Report

Project Title: *A Study of Marine Recreational Fisheries in Connecticut*

Period Covered: March 1, 2013 - February 28, 2014

Job Title

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Date: August 27, 2014

Cover: "Saltwater Fishing Resource Map," an interactive GIS map on the Agency website (<http://www.depdata.ct.gov/maps/saltwaterfish/map.htm>) featuring information of interest to recreational saltwater anglers in CT (see Job 7 for more information).

JOB 1: MARINE ANGLER SURVEY

Part 1: Marine Recreational Fishery Statistics Survey

Part 2: Volunteer Angler Survey

PART 1: MARINE RECREATIONAL FISHERY STATISTICS SURVEY

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PART 1: MARINE RECREATIONAL FISHERY STATISTICS SURVEY

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**JOB 1: MARINE ANGLER SURVEY
PART 1: MARINE RECREATIONAL FISHERY STATISTICS SURVEY**

GOAL

To provide long term monitoring of marine recreational fishing activity including angler participation and catch statistics in a manner that is comparable to other Atlantic coastal states.

OBJECTIVES

Provide estimates of:

- 1) *Number of marine anglers in Connecticut each year.*
- 2) *Total effort (trips) expended by anglers in Connecticut each year.*
- 3) *Total catch (numbers of fish kept and released fish) and harvest (numbers and the weight of kept fish) of the most commonly sought species: bluefish, scup, winter flounder, summer flounder, tautog, and striped bass.*
- 4) *Length-frequency of harvested bluefish, scup, winter flounder, summer flounder, tautog, and striped bass.*

INTRODUCTION

The Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP), Bureau of Natural Resources, Marine Fisheries Division, has been collecting marine recreational fisheries information along the Connecticut coastline since 1979. However, in order to improve state-wide marine fisheries statistics and become more consistent with other states, Connecticut joined with the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) Marine Recreational Fishery Statistics Survey (MRFSS) in July, 1987. Before Connecticut's involvement in the MRFSS, data collection was conducted by NMFS's contractor just as in other states where state agencies do not participate in the program. The MRFSS has undergone a series of procedural changes over recent years as an outcome of the National Research Council (NRC) independent review and findings in regards to the MRFSS and potential bias. As a result, a new survey was developed and initiated under the Marine Recreational Information Program or MRIP. A critical procedural change in the sampling design of MRIP was the implementation of twenty-four hour per day sampling in the Access Point Angler Intercept Survey (APAIS). Prior to 2013, APAIS sampling took place during daytime peak angling activity times under MRFSS procedures. In addition, MRIP night sampling requires two persons per assignment as a safety precaution. Under these new MRIP guidelines, this meant DEEP would have to possibly double or triple its current resources in order to participate. Finally, insuring personnel safety during night time assignments was an issue of special concern. For those primary reasons, the DEEP decided to

forego MRIP participation in 2013. NMFS' contractor would be responsible for conducting the MRIP APAIS in Connecticut on an annual basis.

METHODS

In 2013, the DEEP employed a voluntary daily angler catch card program designed to collect fishing trip and catch information including length measurements on harvested and released (discards) fish from marine recreational anglers. Collecting length measurement data especially on discarded fish is extremely difficult to obtain through traditional access point angler intercept surveys (i.e. MRIP). In past years, utilizing volunteer anglers to report their fishing trip information through a volunteer logbook survey (i.e. Connecticut Volunteer Angler Survey program (VAS)) has been very successful. Using the VAS program as a template, two types of volunteer angler catch cards were developed. One type was for distribution by DEEP staff (Connecticut Fishing Quality Evaluation (Individual Fisherman Card - IFC)) and the second, Connecticut Volunteer Angler Survey (Individual Survey Card - ISC), by bait and tackle shop personnel for tracking purposes (see Appendix 1.1 – 1.2). Bait and tackle shops were enlisted to distribute catch cards to their patrons. Anglers were recruited to voluntarily report their fishing trip information and collect length measurements on fish caught including discards. Each participating angler was provided a waterproof daily catch card, pencil, and measuring tape and verbal instructions were given by DEEP staff. Anglers were encouraged to drop off the post marked catch card in the mail upon trip completion or at designated drop-off-boxes installed at these fishing sites. Questions concerning the survey could be queried by contacting the DEEP Marine Headquarters office.

All fishing modes were included in the survey (Shore, Enhanced Opportunity Shore Fishing Access Sites (EOS), Private Boat, Charter Boat, and Headboat). Special emphasis was directed toward gathering angler fishing trip information from EOS areas and the Private Boat Mode (PBM). EOS areas are unique designated fishing locations where regulations for particular species (summer flounder and scup) are less restrictive than other fishing modes. Typically, shore-based fishing sites are less productive than other fishing modes in Connecticut. Relaxing fishery regulations at EOS areas were meant to increase the chances of an angler bringing home fish for consumption purposes. In addition to EOS areas, PBM sites with high activity (primarily state boat launching facilities) were chosen in order to maximize card distribution. Vessel registrations were also collected from participating anglers in the PBM.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Survey volunteers provided important data concerning individual angler trip, catch by species, and length measurements on both kept and discarded fish. As described previously, the catch card is designed to collect catch and fish length information on fish caught for an individual angler fishing day/trip by fishing mode. Anglers were asked to fill out the following (data fields):

- Conservation identification number (fishing license number)
- Primary target species
- Secondary target species

- Total hours spent fishing
- Fishing area (Connecticut Volunteer Angler Survey (ISC))
- Date (mm/dd/yy)/start time (check box AM/PM)
- Fishing mode (Shore, EOS, Private Boat, Charter Boat and Party Boat)
- Total number of fish kept and released
- Length measurements for the first seven fish caught.

Catch Card Tracking

Both the IFC and ISC catch cards were distributed to anglers and categorized by identification number, date, site, and mode. A tally sheet was provided to field personnel for tracking purposes. However, as the survey progressed, the ISC card distributed by tackle shops also proved to be more suitable for distribution by DEEP staff encountering anglers fishing in different modes. The ISC card incorporated a fishing area map including fishing mode check off boxes where the IFC did not. During May through November, a total of 3,603 catch cards were given out to marine recreational anglers. The breakdown by mode was 2,193 cards for the PBM, 1,106 cards for ESO, 302 cards for Shore Mode, and one each for the Charter and Party Boat Mode. A total of 605 cards or about 17% were returned. In addition, a total of 834 vessel registrations were collected. Of that total, about 80% were Connecticut registered vessels and the remainder (20%) were out of state vessels.

Catch Information

An angler's total catch for the trip including common name(s) and number of fish kept and released were tallied and written in the spaces provided on the catch card (group catches were not included). If no fish were caught a check off box was provided to indicate so. A total of 4,373 fish were caught (Table 1.1). PBM anglers caught over 74% of the fish. The EOS Mode comprised about 22% and the Shore Mode 4% of the total catch. Scup were the most frequent fish anglers caught in all modes combined (33.9%) with bluefish next at 20.1% and black sea bass third at 13.1%. The percent of fish kept by anglers was the highest in the EOS Mode (34.7%). Furthermore, EOS Mode anglers kept about 53% of scup caught. EOS Mode scup and summer flounder minimum length regulations are less restrictive than other fishing modes in order to give anglers a better chance of bringing home fish for consumption purposes. The minimum length for scup was reduced from 10 ½ inches to 9 inches and summer flounder from 17 ½ to 16 inches total length at EOS fishing sites (Appendix 1.3). There were 46 shore fishing sites along the Connecticut shoreline designated as EOS Mode fishing sites.

Length Information

Each individual angler entered common name(s) of the first seven fish captured regardless of species and size on both survey catch cards. Each fish was measured to the nearest ½ inch (rounded down) and record disposition by circling either Y (yes) or N (no) in the Kept column. Anglers measured a total of 1,795 fish (Table 1.2). Anglers fishing from boats measured about 80% of the catch with EOS Mode anglers comprising near 18% of the total measured catch. Scup, summer flounder, black sea bass, bluefish, and striped bass were the most

frequently measured fish by anglers comprising 84% of the total measured catch. Length frequencies for those popular marine fish are described in Figure 1.1.

MODIFICATIONS

For 2014, the EOS Mode and the Private Boat Mode will be sampled separately. The EOS Mode will be sampled using volunteer catch cards in addition to a roving creel bus stop design in order to collect effort and estimating catch. The Private Boat Mode will be sampled using catch cards.

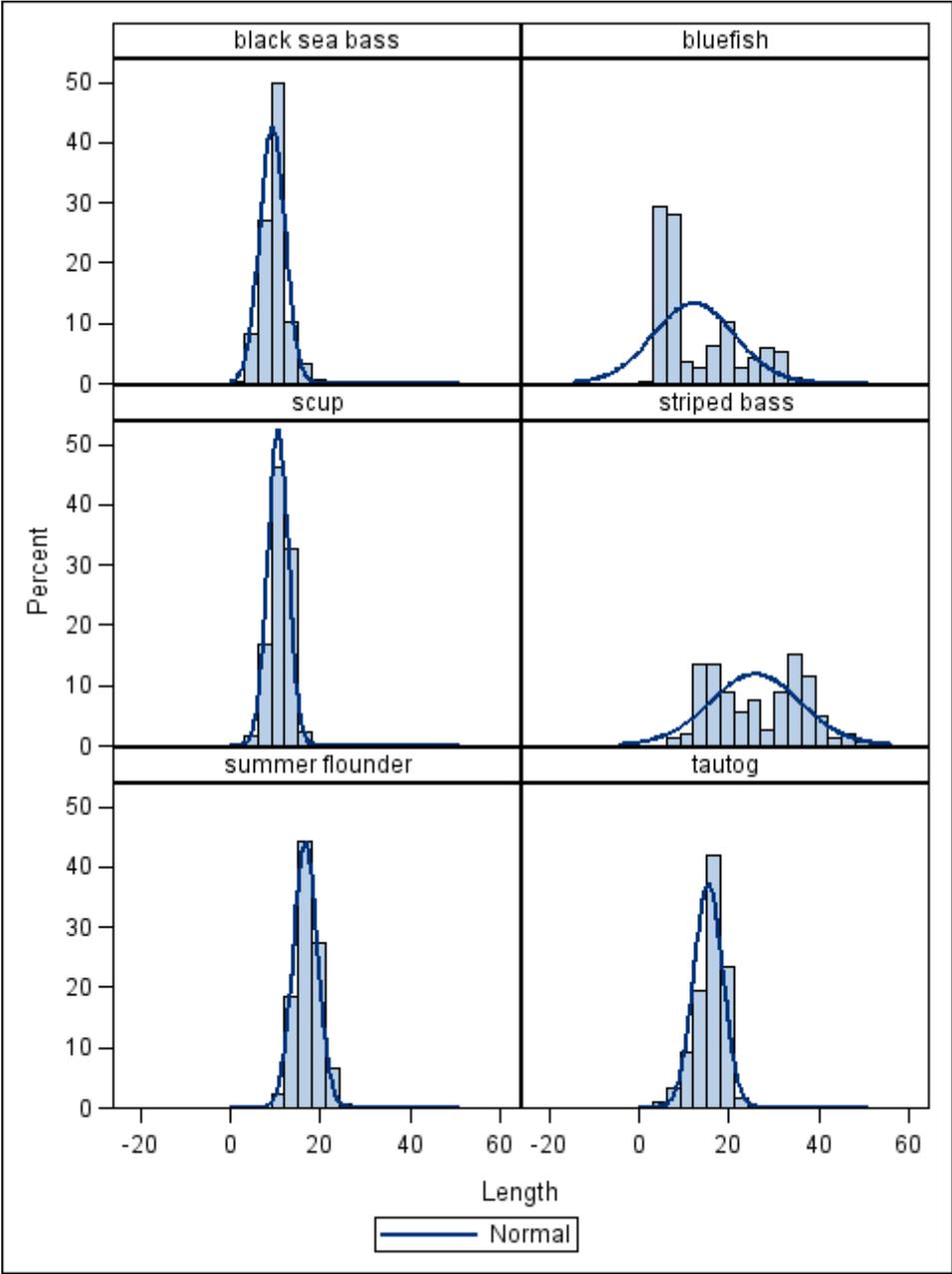
Table 1.1 Catch Disposition by Fishing Mode

Species	Private Boat Mode (PBM)			Shore Mode			Enhanced Opportunity Shore (EOS) Mode			Combined Total	% Distr.
	Kept	Released	Total	Kept	Released	Total	Kept	Released	Total		
American eel	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	1	2	0.0%
Atlantic menhaden	17	0	17	0	0	0	0	0	0	17	0.4%
Black sea bass	24	537	561	0	7	7	0	5	5	573	13.1%
Bluefish	105	116	221	14	69	83	215	362	577	881	20.1%
Catfishes	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	0.0%
Cunner	0	3	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0.1%
Dogfishes	2	38	40	0	0	0	0	0	0	40	0.9%
Hickory shad	0	114	114	0	0	0	19	55	74	188	4.3%
Jack crevalle	2	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0.0%
Little tunny	0	14	14	0	0	0	0	0	0	14	0.3%
Ladyfish	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0.0%
Northern kingfish	0	1	1	3	0	3	0	0	0	4	0.1%
Northern searobin	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0.0%
Oyster toadfish	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0.0%
Scup	588	724	1312	22	29	51	66	58	124	1,487	33.9%
Searobins	10	72	82	1	3	4	0	44	44	130	3.0%
Shark, blue	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0.0%
Skates	0	9	9	0	0	0	0	4	4	13	0.3%
Striped bass	16	115	131	0	9	9	13	38	51	191	4.4%
Striped searobin	0	8	8	0	0	0	0	0	0	8	0.2%
Summer flounder	144	328	472	0	1	1	15	49	64	537	12.2%
Tautog	70	120	190	0	0	0	0	2	2	192	4.4%
Triggerfishes	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0.0%
Unidentified sharks	0	7	7	0	0	0	0	0	0	7	0.2%
Weakfish	1	53	54	0	0	0	0	0	0	54	1.2%
White perch	1	0	1	12	6	18	1	3	4	23	0.5%
Winter flounder	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0.0%
Total	981	2,264	3,245	52	126	178	330	620	950	4,373	
%Dist. within Mode	30.2%	69.8%		29.2%	70.8%		34.7%	65.3%			

Table 1.2 Length Measurement Distribution by Fishing Mode

Species	Boat Mode # Measured	Shore Mode # Measured	EOS Mode # Measured	Combined Total	% Distr.
American eel	0	1	1	2	0.1%
Atlantic menhaden	12	0	0	12	0.7%
Black sea bass	241	1	5	247	13.8%
Bluefish	99	13	122	234	13.0%
Catfishes	0	1	0	1	0.1%
Dogfishes	22	0	0	22	1.2%
Hickory shad	2	0	41	43	2.4%
Jack crevalle	2	0	0	2	0.1%
Little tunny	6	0	0	6	0.3%
Northern kingfish	1	3	0	4	0.2%
Oyster toadfish	1	0	0	1	0.1%
Scup	441	5	63	509	28.4%
Searobins	39	1	12	52	2.9%
Skates	8	0	1	9	0.5%
Striped bass	109	8	29	146	8.1%
Summer flounder	332	1	41	374	20.8%
Tautog	117	0	2	119	6.6%
Triggerfishes	1	0	0	1	0.1%
Weakfish	2	0	0	2	0.1%
White perch	1	3	4	8	0.4%
Winter flounder	1	0	0	1	0.1%
Total	1,437	37	321	1,795	
%Distribution	80.1%	2.1%	17.9%		

Figure 1.1: Length Frequencies of Popular Marine Fish Measured by Anglers (total length rounded down to the nearest half inch)



Appendix 1.1

00001

CT Fishing Quality Evaluation (Individual Fisherman Card) 2008

00001

If you need assistance completing this form, please contact the DEEP Marine Fisheries Division (860.434.6043)

(One card per angler/trip) Please place this card in the mail after completing the trip.

Trip Date:

Site Number

Date Distributed

Time Distributed

Fishing Mode

Vessel Registration Number

Conservation ID
(Found on your Fishing License)

Primary Targeted Species

Secondary Targeted Species

I did not catch any fish today

Angler's Total Catch For The Trip
(Use Tally Marks in # Kept and # Rlsd Columns)

Species	# Kept	# Rlsd
Porgy (example)	-	-

Length of first seven fish caught
(Rounded down to the nearest half inch)

Species	Length	Kept?
Fluke (example)	16.5	Y/N
		Y/N

Appendix 1.2

Connecticut Volunteer Angler Survey (Individual Survey Card) 2008

00001

If you need assistance completing this form, please contact the DEEP Marine Fisheries Division (860.434.6043)

(One card per angler/trip) Please place this card in the mail after completing the trip.

I did not catch any fish today

Length of first eight fish caught
(Rounded down to the nearest half inch)

Conservation ID (Found on your Fishing License)	Primary Targeted Species	Secondary Targeted Species	Total hours spent fishing	Fishing Area(s) See map below	Species	Length	Kept?																												
Date / Start Time	<input type="checkbox"/> AM <input type="checkbox"/> PM	<input type="checkbox"/> Private Boat <input type="checkbox"/> Charter Boat	<input type="checkbox"/> Party Boat <input type="checkbox"/> Shore <input type="checkbox"/> Shore (Enhanced Site)																																
Angler's Total Catch For The Trip (Use Tally Marks in # Kept and # Rlsd Columns)					Length of first eight fish caught (Rounded down to the nearest half inch)	Species	Length	Kept?																											
<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Species</th> <th># Kept</th> <th># Rlsd</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td></tr> </tbody> </table>									Species	# Kept	# Rlsd																								
Species	# Kept	# Rlsd																																	



Appendix 1.3: History of Connecticut of Marine Recreational Fisheries Regulations for Selected Species from 1935-2013

Striped Bass

Effective Date	Minimum Size	Daily Possession Limit	Fishing Season	Closed Season/Area	Other Restrictions
1935	16 in. (fork length)	None.	Year round.	None.	Spearing prohibited.
1953	16 in. (fork length)	None.	Year round.	None.	No sale; spearing prohibited.
Jan 1982	16 in. (fork length)	4 fish between 16 and 24in. No limit >24in.	Year round.	None.	No sale; spearing prohibited.
Aug 1984	24 in. (fork length)	None.	Apr 1-Dec 14	Dec 15-Mar 31 in all state waters.	No sale; spearing prohibited.
Aug 1985	26 in. (fork length)	None.	Apr 1-Dec 14	Dec 15-Mar 31 in all state waters.	No sale; spearing prohibited.
Jul 1, 1986- Striped bass fishery closed in all state waters (Moratorium)					
1987	33 in. (total length)	1 fish/angler.	Apr 1-Dec 14	Dec 15-Mar 31 in all state waters.	No sale; spearing and gaffing prohibited; fish must be landed intact.
Apr 1, 1989	34 in. (total length)	1 fish/angler.	Apr 1-Dec 14	Dec 15-Mar 31 in all state waters.	No sale; spearing and gaffing prohibited; fish must be landed intact.
Jul 1, 1989	36 in. (total length)	1 fish/angler.	Apr 1-Dec 14	Dec 15-Mar 31 in all state waters.	No sale; spearing and gaffing prohibited; fish must be landed intact.
Jan 1, 1990	38 in. (total length)	1 fish/angler.	Apr 1-Dec 14	Dec 15-Mar 31 in all state waters.	No sale; spearing and gaffing prohibited; fish must be landed intact.
Sep 1990	36 in. (total length)	1 fish/angler.	Apr 1-Dec 14	Dec 15-Mar 31 in all state waters.	No sale; spearing and gaffing prohibited; fish must be landed intact.
Apr 22, 1994	34 in. (total length)	1 fish/angler.	Apr 1-Dec 14	Dec 15-Mar 31 in all state waters.	No sale; spearing and gaffing prohibited; fish must be landed intact.
1995	28 in. (total length)	2 fish/angler.	Apr 1-Dec 14	Dec 15-Mar 31 in all state waters.	No sale; spearing and gaffing prohibited; fish must be landed intact.
Jul 29, 1996	28 in. (total length)	2 fish/angler.	Year round.	None.	No sale; spearing and gaffing prohibited; fish must be landed intact.
May 10, 2000	24-30 in. and ≥ 40 in (total length) Party/Charter Only-29½ in. (total length)	1 fish/angler per length group. 2 fish/angler.	Year round.	None.	No sale; spearing and gaffing prohibited; fish must be landed intact.
Feb 27, 2001	24-32 in. and ≥ 41 in (total length) Party/Charter Only-28 in. (total length)	1 fish/angler per length group. 2 fish/angler.	Year round.	None.	No sale; spearing and gaffing prohibited; fish must be landed intact.
May 15, 2003	28 in. (total length)	2 fish/angler.	Year round.	None.	No sale; spearing and gaffing prohibited; fish must be landed intact.

Striped bass (Con't.)

Effective Date	Minimum Size	Daily Possession Limit	Fishing Season	Closed Season/Area	Other Restrictions
Mar 14, 2012- Current	28 in. (total length)	2 fish/angler.	Year round.	None.	No sale; spearing and gaffing prohibited; fish must be landed intact.
	22 in. up to but not including 28 in. (total length)	2 bonus (extra) fish/angler.	May 1-Jun 30 in all state waters.	Jul 1-Apr 30 in all state waters.	Bonus Striped Bass Voucher Program. Angler must fill out voucher upon harvest. No sale; spearing and gaffing prohibited; fish must be landed intact.

Bluefish

Effective Date	Minimum Size	Daily Possession Limit	Fishing Season	Closed Season/Area	Other Restrictions
Jan 1, 1991	None	10 fish/angler for fish > 12 in (total length).	Year round.	None.	None.
Apr 22, 1994- Current	None	10 fish/angler	Year round.	None.	None.

Summer Flounder (Fluke)

Effective Date	Minimum Size	Daily Possession Limit	Fishing Season	Closed Season/Area	Other Restrictions
Jan 1, 1982	14 in. (total length)	None.	Year round.	None.	None.
Apr 22, 1994	14 in. (total length)	6 fish/angler	May 15-Sep 30.	Oct 1-May 14 in all state waters	On the water fillets must meet minimum length or be accompanied by legal sized rack (carcass).
Jul 29, 1996	14 in. (total length)	6 fish/angler	Year round.	None.	On the water fillets must meet minimum length or be accompanied by legal sized rack (carcass).
Apr 24, 1997	14½ in. (total length)	6 fish/angler	Year round.	None.	On the water fillets must meet minimum length or be accompanied by legal sized rack (carcass).
May 5, 1998	15 in. (total length)	6 fish/angler	Year round.	None.	On the water fillets must meet minimum length or be accompanied by legal sized rack (carcass).
Mar 17, 1999	15 in. (total length)	8 fish/angler	May 29-Sep 11.	Sep 12-May 28 in all state waters.	On the water fillets must meet minimum length or be accompanied by legal sized rack (carcass).
May 10, 2000	15½ in. (total length)	8 fish/angler	May 10-Oct 2.	Oct 3-May 9 in all state waters.	On the water fillets must meet minimum length or be accompanied by legal sized rack (carcass).
May 17, 2001	17 in. (total length)	6 fish/angler	Year round.	None.	On the water fillets must meet minimum length or be accompanied by legal sized rack (carcass).
May 27, 2005	17 ½ in. (total length)	6 fish/angler	Apr 30-Dec 31.	Jan 1-Apr 29 in all state waters.	On the water fillets must meet minimum length or be accompanied by legal sized rack (carcass).
Apr 30, 2006	18 in. (total length)	6 fish/angler	Apr 30-Dec 31.	Jan 1-April 29 in all state waters.	On the water fillets must meet minimum length or be accompanied by legal sized rack (carcass).
Apr 2, 2007	18 in. (total length)	5 fish/angler	Apr 30-Sep 5.	Sep 6-Apr 29 in all state waters.	On the water fillets must meet minimum length or be accompanied by legal sized rack (carcass).
Apr 5, 2008	19 ½ in. (total length)	5 fish/angler	May 24-Sep 1.	Sep 2-May 25 in all state waters.	On the water fillets must meet minimum length or be accompanied by legal sized rack (carcass).

Summer flounder (Fluke) Con't.

Effective Date	Minimum Size	Daily Possession Limit	Fishing Season	Closed Season/Area	Other Restrictions
May 1, 2009	19 ½ in. (total length)	3 fish/angler	Jun 15-Aug 19.	Aug 20-Jun 14 in all state waters.	On the water fillets must meet minimum length or be accompanied by legal sized rack (carcass).
Apr 1, 2010	19 ½ in. (total length)	3 fish/angler	May 15-Aug 25.	Aug 26-May 14 in all state waters.	On the water fillets must meet minimum length or be accompanied by legal sized rack (carcass).
Apr 5, 2011	18 ½ in. (total length)	3 fish/angler	May 15-Sep 5.	Sep 6-May 14 in all state waters.	On the water fillets must meet minimum length or be accompanied by legal sized rack (carcass).
	17 in. (total length)	1 fish/angler			Designated Shore Based Fishing Sites only.
Mar 14, 2012	18 in. (total length)	5 fish/angler	May 15-Oct 31.	Nov 1-May 14 in all state waters.	On the water fillets must meet minimum length or be accompanied by legal sized rack (carcass).
	16 in. (total length)	5 fish/angler			Enhanced Opportunity Shore Angler Program Designated Fishing Sites only.
Mar 21, 2013-Current	17½ in. (total length)	5 fish/angler	May 15-Oct 31.	Nov 1-May 14 in all state waters.	On the water fillets must meet minimum length or be accompanied by legal sized rack (carcass).
	16 in. (total length)	5 fish/angler			Enhanced Opportunity Shore Angler Program Designated Fishing Sites only.

Winter Flounder

Effective Date	Minimum Size	Daily Possession Limit	Fishing Season	Closed Season/Area	Other Restrictions
Jan 1, 1982	8 in. (total length)	None.	Year round.	None.	None.
Jan 1, 1985	10 in. (total length)	None.	Year round.	None.	None.
Aug 19, 1986	10 in. (total length)	None.	Year round except for Niantic River.	Niantic River closed Dec 1-Mar 31	None.
Apr 22, 1994	11 in. (total length)	8 fish/angler	Apr 15-Feb 28.	Mar 1-Apr 14 in all state waters.	None.
Oct 1, 1995	12 in. (total length)	8 fish/angler	Apr 15-Feb 28.	Mar 1-Apr 14 in all state waters.	None.
Jan 1, 1996	12 in. (total length)	8 fish/angler	Year round.	None.	None.
Aug 1, 2005	12 in. (total length)	10 fish/angler	Apr 1-May 30.	Jun 1-Mar 31 in all state waters.	None.
Nov 1, 2010-Current	12 in. (total length)	2 fish/angler	Apr 1-May 30.	Jun 1-Mar 31 in all state waters.	None.

Black Sea Bass

Effective Date	Minimum Size (Excluding tendril or long filament on tail)	Daily Possession Limit	Fishing Season	Closed Season/Area	Other Restrictions
Apr 24, 1997	9 in. (total length)	None.	Year round.	None.	None.
May 5, 1998	10 in. (total length)	20 fish/angler	Year round.	None.	None.
May 17, 2001	11 in. (total length)	25 fish/angler	May 10-Feb 28.	Mar 1-May 9 in all state waters.	None.
Jun 19, 2002	11½ in. (total length)	25 fish/angler	Year round.	None.	None.
May 15, 2003	12 in. (total length)	25 fish/angler	Jan 1-Sep 1 and Sep 16-Nov 30.	Sep 2-Sep 15 and Dec 1-Dec 31 in all state waters.	None.
Aug 5, 2004	12 in. (total length)	25 fish/angler	Jan 1-Sep 7 and Sep 22-Nov 30.	Sep 8-Sep 21 and Dec 1-Dec 31 in all state waters.	None.
May 27, 2005	12 in. (total length)	25 fish/angler	Jan 1-Nov 30.	Dec 1-Dec 31.	None.
Apr 30, 2006	12 in. (total length)	25 fish/angler	Year Round.	None.	None.
May 1, 2009	12 ½ in. (total length)	25 fish/angler	Year Round.	None.	None.
Apr 1, 2010	12 ½ in. (total length)	25 fish/angler	May 22-Sep 12.	Sep 13-May 21 in all state waters.	None.
Jun 8, 2010	12 ½ in. (total length)	25 fish/angler	May 22-Oct 11 and Nov 1-Dec 31.	Jan 1-May 21 and Oct 12-Oct 31 in all state waters.	None.
Apr 5, 2011	13 in. (total length)	25 fish/angler	Jul 1-Oct 1 and Nov 1-Dec 31.	Jan 1-Jun 30 and Oct 2-Oct 31 in all state waters.	None.
Mar 14, 2012	13 in. (total length)	15 fish/angler	Jun 15-Dec 31.	Jan 1-Jun 14 in all state waters.	None.
Mar 21, 2013-Current	13 in. (total length)	3 fish/angler	Jun 15-Aug 31.	Oct 30-Jun 14 in all state waters.	None.
		8 fish/angler	Sep 1-Oct 29.		

Scup (Porgy)

Effective Date	Minimum Size	Daily Possession Limit	Fishing Season	Closed Season/Area	Other Restrictions
Jan 1, 1982	7 in. (total length)	None.	Year round.	None.	None.
Jan 1, 1985	8 in. (total length)	None.	Year round.	None.	None.
May 10, 2000	8 in. (total length)	50 fish/angler	Year round.	None.	None.
May 10, 2001	9 in. (total length)	25 fish/angler	Jun 3-Oct 23.	Oct 24-Jun 2 in all state waters.	None.
Jun 19, 2002	10 in. (total length)	50 fish/angler	Jul 13-Sep 25.	Sep 26-Jul 12 in all state waters.	None.

Scup (Porgy) Con't.

Effective Date	Minimum Size	Daily Possession Limit	Fishing Season	Closed Season/Area	Other Restrictions
May 15, 2003	10 in. (total length)	50 fish/angler	May 24-Oct 30.	Oct 31-May 23 in all state waters.	None.
May 24, 2004	10 ½ in. (total length)	20 fish/angler	Jul 23-Oct 12 and Nov 1-Dec 31.	Jan 1-Jul 22 and Oct 13-Oct 31 in all state waters.	None.
May 27, 2005	10 ½ in. (total length)	25 fish/angler Party/charter boats <i>only</i> – 60 fish/angler	Jul 1-Oct 31. Sep 1-Oct 31.	Nov 1-Jun 30 in all state waters.	None.
Apr 30, 2006	10 ½ in. (total length)	25 fish/angler Party/charter boats <i>only</i> – 60 fish/angler	Jun 1-Oct 31. Sep 1-Oct 31.	Nov 1-May 31 in all state waters.	None.
Apr 4, 2008	10 ½ in. (total length) Party/charter boats	10 fish/angler 10 fish/angler Party/charter boats – 45 fish/angler	Jun 1-Sep 26. Jun 12-Aug 31. Sep 1-Oct 15.	Sep 27-May 31 in all state waters. Oct 16-Jun 13 in all state waters.	None.
May 1, 2009	10 ½ in. (total length) Party/charter boats	10 fish/angler 10 fish/angler Party/charter boats – 45 fish/angler	May 24-Sep 26. Jun 12-Aug 31. Sep 1-Oct 15.	Sep 27-May 23 in all state waters. Oct 16-Jun 11 in all state waters.	None.
Apr 1, 2010	10 ½ in. (total length) Party/charter boats	10 fish/angler 10 fish/angler Party/charter boats – 40 fish/angler	May 24-Sep 26. Jun 8-Sep 6. Sep 7-Oct 11.	Sep 27-May 23 in all state waters. Oct 12-Jun 7 in all state waters.	None.
Sep 23, 2011	10 ½ in. (total length) Party/charter boats	10 fish/angler 10 fish/angler Party/charter boats – 40 fish/angler	May 24-Dec 31. Jun 8-Sep 6 and Oct 12 – Dec 31. Sep 7-Oct 11.	Jan 1-May 23 in all state waters. Jan 1 - Jun 7 in all state waters.	None.

Scup (Porgy) Con't.

Effective Date	Minimum Size	Daily Possession Limit	Fishing Season	Closed Season/Area	Other Restrictions
Mar 14, 2012- Current	10 ½ in. (total length)	20 fish/angler	May 1- Dec 31.		None.
Party/ charter boats	11 in. (total length)	20 fish/angler	May 1- Aug 31 and Nov 1 – Dec 31.	Jan 1- Apr 30 in all state waters.	None.
Enhanced Opportunity Shore Angler Program	9 in. (total length)	Party/charter boats – 40 fish/angler 20 fish/angler	Sep 1- Oct 31. May 1-Dec 31.		Enhanced Opportunity Shore Angler Program Designated Fishing Sites only.

Tautog (Blackfish)

Effective Date	Minimum Size	Daily Possession Limit	Fishing Season	Closed Season/Area	Other Restrictions
Sep 19, 1987	12 in. (total length)	None.	Year round.	None.	None.
May 19, 1995	14 in. (total length)	None.	Year round.	None.	None.
Jul 29, 1996	14 in. (total length)	4 fish/angler	Jun 15- Apr 30.	May 1-Jun 14 in all state waters.	None.
May 15, 2003	14 in. (total length)	4 fish/angler	Jan 1-Apr 30 and Jun 15- Nov 23.	May 1-Jun 14 and Nov 24- Dec 31 in all state waters.	None.
Feb 27, 2004	14 in. (total length)	4 fish/angler	Jan 1-Apr 30, Jun 15-Sep 7 and Sep 22 – Dec 13.	May 1-Jun 14, Sep 8 – Sep 21 and Dec 14- Dec 31 in all state waters.	None.
Jan 4, 2008	14 in. (total length)	4 fish/angler	Jan 1-Apr 30 and Oct 1- Dec 6.	May 1-Jun 30, Sep 1-Sep 30, and Dec 7-Dec 31 in all state waters.	None.
		2 fish/angler	Jul 1-Aug 31.		
Jan 31, 2012	Not applicable.	Possession prohibited	Season Closed	Feb 1-Apr 30 in all state waters.	None.
Mar 14, 2012- Current	16 in. (total length)	2 fish/angler	Apr 1-Apr 30 and Jul 1-Aug 31.	May 1-Jun 30, Sep 1-Oct 9, and Dec 7-Mar 31 in all state waters.	None.
		4 fish/angler	Oct 10-Dec 6.		

Weakfish

Effective Date	Minimum Size	Daily Possession Limit	Fishing Season	Closed Season/Area	Other Restrictions
Jan 1, 1995	16 in. (total length)	None.	Year round.	None.	None.
Apr 1, 2003	16 in. (total length)	10 fish/angler	Year round.	None.	None.
Oct 29, 2007	16 in. (total length)	6 fish/angler	Year round.	None.	None.
Apr 1, 2010-Current	16 in. (total length)	1 fish/angler	Year round.	None.	None.

American Shad

Effective Date	Minimum Size	Daily Possession Limit	Fishing Season	Closed Season/Area	Other Restrictions
Mar 21, 2013-Current	None.	6 fish/angler, or in aggregate with Hickory Shad.	Year round.	See Other Restrictions.	Only from the Connecticut River system, the southern boundary from the line extending between Griswold Pt. in Old Lyme and the outer light on the Old Saybrook breakwater.

Hickory Shad

Effective Date	Minimum Size	Daily Possession Limit	Fishing Season	Closed Season/Area	Other Restrictions
Mar 17, 1999-Current	None.	6 fish/angler, or in aggregate with American shad.	Year round.	None.	None.

White Perch

Effective Date	Minimum Size	Daily Possession Limit	Fishing Season	Closed Season/Area	Other Restrictions
Apr 1, 2003-Current	7 in. (total length)	30fish/angler.	Year round.	See Other Restrictions.	Only for Long Island Sound and Tidal Rivers and Streams.

Atlantic Menhaden

Effective Date	Minimum Size	Daily Possession Limit	Fishing Season	Closed Season/Area	Other Restrictions
Mar 21, 2013-Current	None.	50 fish or 5 gallons, which ever the greater amount.	Year round.	None.	None.

American Eel

Effective Date	Minimum Size	Daily Possession Limit	Fishing Season	Closed Season/Area	Other Restrictions
May 10, 2000-Current	6 in. (total length)	50 fish/angler	Year round.	None.	None.

Sandbar Shark (Brown Shark)

Effective Date	Minimum Size	Daily Possession Limit	Fishing Season	Closed Season/Area	Other Restrictions
Feb 2, 2010	Not applicable.	Prohibited to possess or land.	None.	Year round in all state waters.	None.

Smooth Dogfish

Effective Date	Minimum Size	Daily Possession Limit	Fishing Season	Closed Season/Area	Other Restrictions
Feb 2, 2010	Not applicable.	Prohibited to possess or land.	None.	Year round in all state waters.	None.
Apr 27, 2012-Current	None.	None.	Year round.	None.	None.

Gear Restrictions

1935-Current	Striped bass may be taken by hook and line method only (spearing is prohibited).
Apr 22, 1994-Current	Spearing is allowed as a recreational activity only and must abide all recreational fishing regulations (with the exception of striped bass where spearing is prohibited-see above).

PART 2: VOLUNTEER ANGLER SURVEY

PART 2: VOLUNTEER ANGLER SURVEY

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PART 2: VOLUNTEER ANGLER SURVEY

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JOB 1: MARINE ANGLER SURVEY
PART 2: VOLUNTEER ANGLER SURVEY

OBJECTIVES

Provide estimates of:

1) Size composition data on both kept and released bluefish, striped bass other common species.

Anglers participating in the Volunteer Angler Survey measured bluefish, striped bass and other species. Length frequencies of popular species: bluefish, striped bass, summer flounder, winter flounder, scup, tautog and black sea bass are listed in Tables 1.1A - 1.7A.

2) Catch frequency (trips catching 0,1,2,...fish) data on both kept and discarded fish.

Catch frequency data and percent distribution on both kept (harvested) and released for selected species are listed in Tables 1.8A-1.9A.

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of the Volunteer Angler Survey (VAS) is to supplement the National Marine Fisheries Service, Marine Recreational Fishery Statistics Survey/Marine Recreational Information Program by providing additional length measurement data particularly concerning fish that are released. In 1994, the VAS program was incorporated into the Marine Angler Survey (Job 1) in order to improve and expand the survey.

The survey's initial objective was to collect marine recreational fishing information concerning finfish species with special emphasis on striped bass. In 1994, the collection of bluefish length measurements was added to the survey to fully understand that fishery. In 1997, length measurement information on other marine finfish was added to the survey. This report primarily consists of data collected in 2013.

METHODS

The VAS is designed to collect trip and catch information from marine recreational (hook and line) anglers who volunteer to record their fishing activities by logbook. The logbook format consists of recording fishing effort, target species, fishing mode (boat and shore), area fished (subdivisions of Long Island Sound and adjacent waters), catch information concerning finfish kept (harvested) and released, and striped bass and bluefish length measurements. In 1997, the logbook was modified in order to collect length measurement data on other species. Instructions for volunteers were provided on the inside cover of the postage paid logbook. Each participating angler was assigned a personal numeric code for confidentiality purposes. After the logbook data were computer entered, logbooks were returned to each volunteer for their own personal record. Furthermore, to improve communications with recreational anglers and to encourage

more public input, volunteers were notified of upcoming public hearings including proposed and final changes in recreational fishing regulations.

New in 2013, the VAS program was incorporated into the Atlantic Coastal Cooperative Statistics Program (ACCSP) Standard Atlantic Fisheries Information System (SAFIS) eLogbook application. Under the ACCSP eLogbook application, the VAS database was upgraded from the previous outdated database system it was using. The VAS logbook format was slightly modified so that the information collected would be compatible with Atlantic Coast Cooperative Statistics Program (ACCSP) minimum data element standards (Appendix 1.1A).

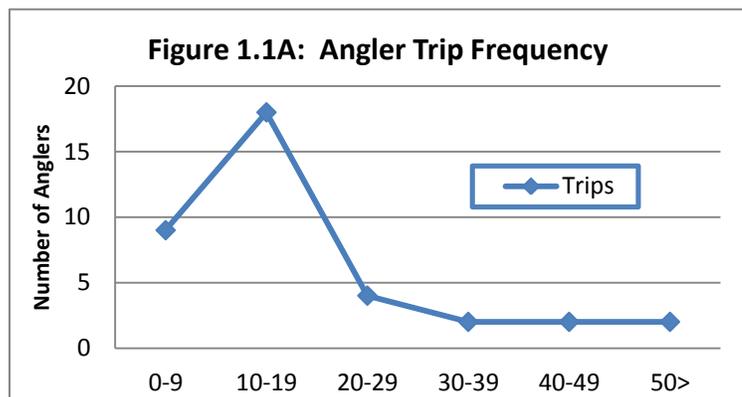
RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Over the years the number of participants in the survey ranged from as low as 18 anglers participating in 1979 to a high of 115 anglers in 1997. Advertising the VAS program through the DEEP's annually published Connecticut Angler's Guide including the state web site www.ct.gov/dep has helped increase volunteer participation. The guide is distributed to anglers purchasing Connecticut fishing licenses in addition to being circulated by bait and tackle shops and other entities.

Initially in 2012 with the VAS database being housed and updated under ACCSP SAFIS, one of the primary purposes was that anglers would be able to enter their own fishing information and compile their own statistics using eLogbook. However, a data entry problem occurred concerning the 'fishing area' field. Because of the unique geographic location of Connecticut's shoreline including Long Island Sound, marine anglers can fish over multiple areas crossing interstate and federal boundaries during a single trip. Unfortunately, eLogbook software disabled data entering of certain 'fishing area' fields outside of Connecticut's marine waters. Until this problem was to be resolved, the concept of electronic reporting by volunteer anglers was postponed until 2014. As in previous years, paper logbooks were distributed to survey volunteers and Marine Fisheries staff performed VAS data entry.

VAS 2013

In 2013, a total of 37 anglers participated in the survey and made 884 fishing trips. The average number of trips volunteers took was about 23 trips per year and the range was 3 to 143 trips (Figure 1.1A). Volunteers including additional anglers involved in a fishing party made a total of 1,642 fishing trips. Private boat mode trips comprised 67% and shore based anglers consisted 30% of the total trips taken by anglers (Figure 1.1B).



VAS anglers pursued and caught a wide range of inshore and offshore pelagic species and recorded length measurements on many species. VAS anglers caught a total of 9,243 fish.

Of that total 7,462 fish or 80.7% were released. Black sea bass, bluefish, scup, striped bass, and summer flounder accounted for 78.5% of the total catch. Scup was the most frequently caught fish followed by summer flounder, striped bass, and black sea bass (Table 1.1A). The Private Boat mode comprised 81.1% of the total catch for all modes combined. Volunteers measured 3,803 fish or about 41% of the total catch. Of the total catch, 893 (50.1%) fish kept and 2,910 (39%) fish released were measured. Summer flounder were the most frequent fish (1,042) measured by VAS anglers. Other popular species measured included black sea bass (367), bluefish (380), scup (414), striped bass (753), searobins (477), and tautog (165) (Figures 1.3A-1.8A).

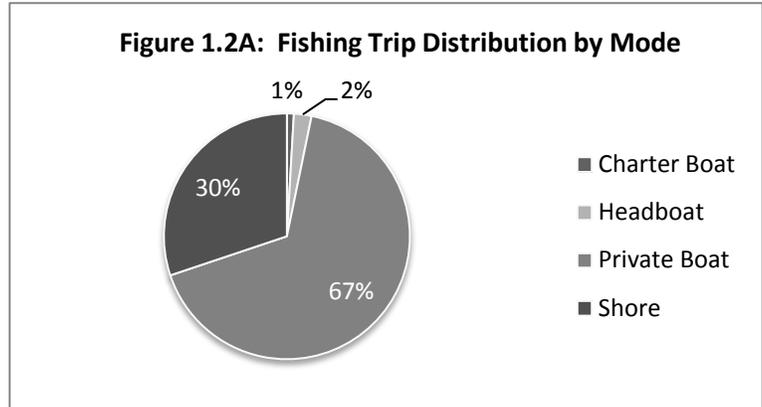


Table 1.1A: Breakdown of Fish Kept and Released including Total Catch Distribution

Species	All Modes Combined					
	Kept	% Kept	Released	% Released	Total	% Distr.
Atlantic Bonito	0	0.0%	1	100.0%	1	0.0%
Atlantic cod	14	100.0%	0	0.0%	14	0.2%
Atlantic menhaden	49	100.0%	0	0.0%	49	0.5%
Black sea bass	87	7.0%	1,160	93.0%	1,247	13.5%
Bluefish	219	24.5%	676	75.5%	895	9.7%
Dogfishes	1	0.9%	111	99.1%	112	1.2%
Eels	0	0.0%	1	100.0%	1	0.0%
Hickory shad	26	10.6%	219	89.4%	245	2.7%
Oyster toadfish	3	30.0%	7	70.0%	10	0.1%
Scup	575	29.5%	1,376	70.5%	1,951	21.1%
Searobins	46	5.5%	792	94.5%	838	9.1%
Sharks, Blue	0	0.0%	2	100.0%	2	0.0%
Sharks, Mako	0	0.0%	2	100.0%	2	0.0%
Sharks, Thresher	1	100.0%	0	0.0%	1	0.0%
Skates	0	0.0%	150	100.0%	150	1.6%
Spot	1	50.0%	1	50.0%	2	0.0%
Striped Bass	130	9.9%	1,183	90.1%	1,313	14.2%
Summer flounder	410	22.1%	1,442	77.9%	1,852	20.0%
Tautog	202	38.9%	317	61.1%	519	5.6%
Triggerfishes	0	0.0%	5	100.0%	5	0.1%
Weakfish	3	75.0%	1	25.0%	4	0.0%
Winter flounder	14	46.7%	16	53.3%	30	0.3%
Total	1,781	19.3%	7,462	80.7%	9,243	

Figure 1.3A: Black Sea Bass Length Frequency - All Modes Combined

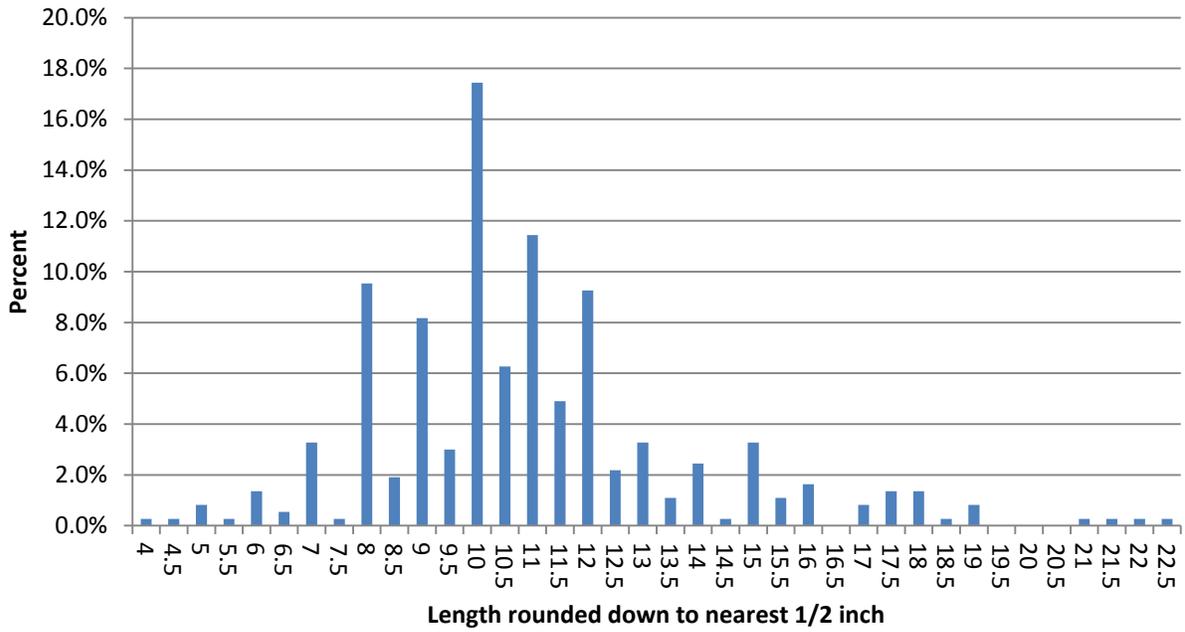


Figure 1.4A: Bluefish Length Frequency -All Modes Combined

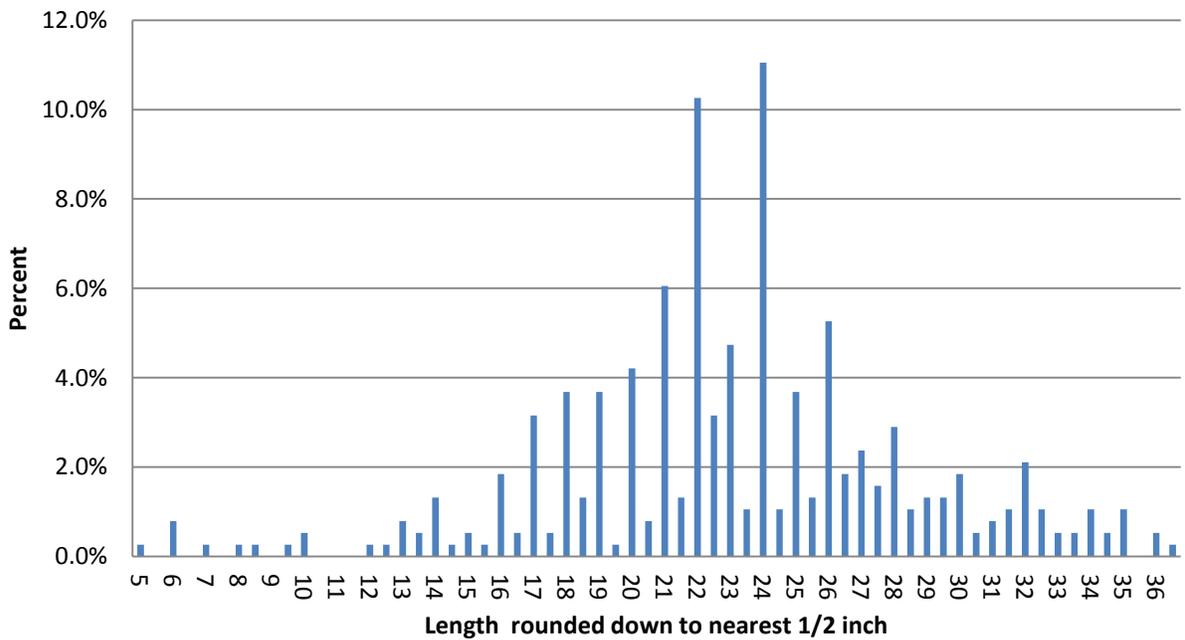


Figure 1.5A: Scup Length Frequency - All Modes Combined

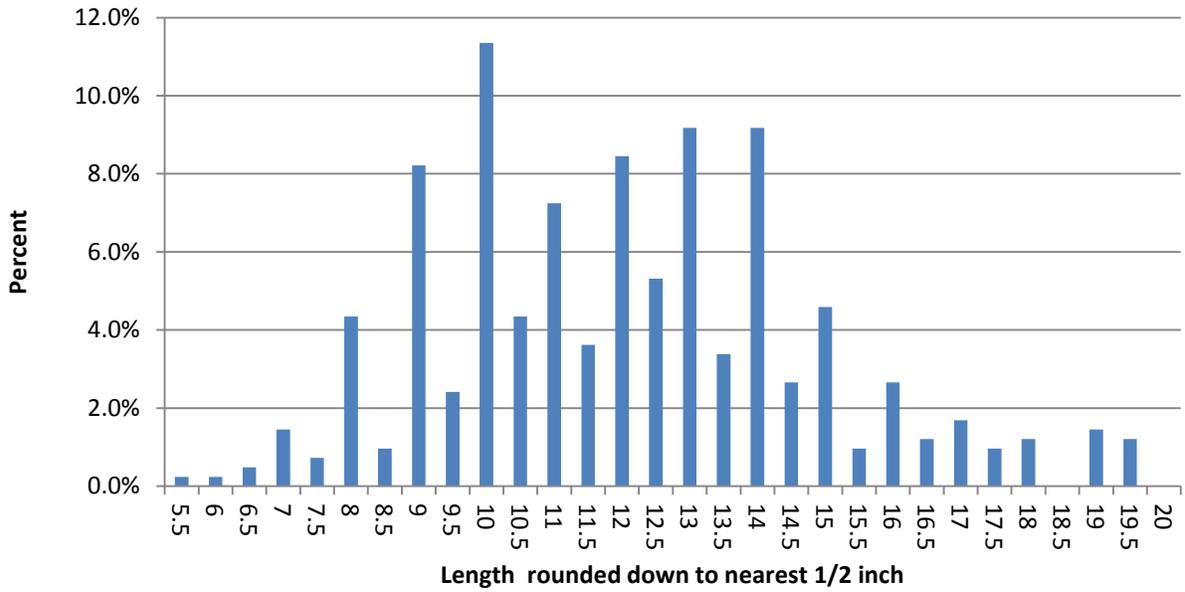


Figure 1.6A: Striped Bass Length Frequency - All Modes Combined

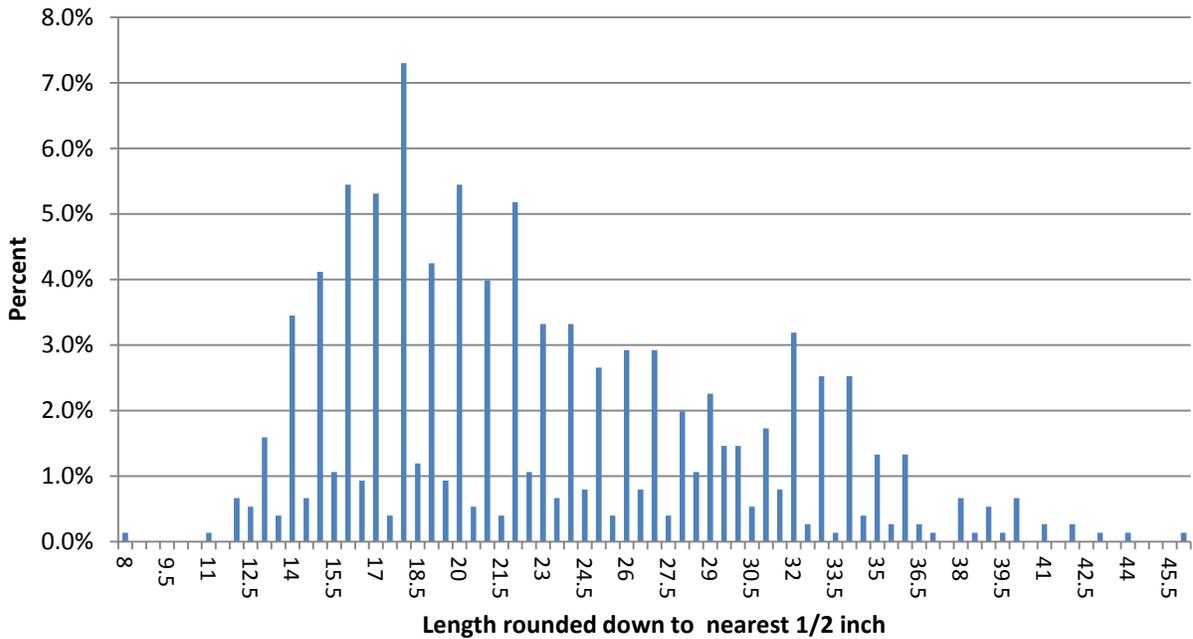


Figure 1.7A: Summer Flounder Length Frequency - All Modes Combined

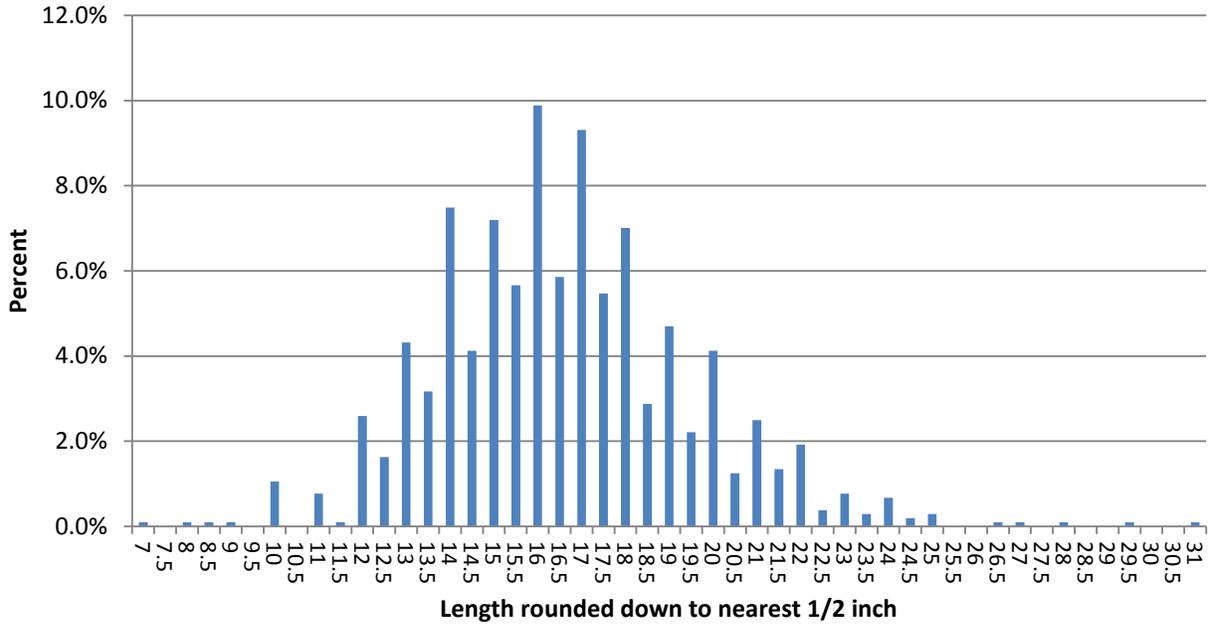
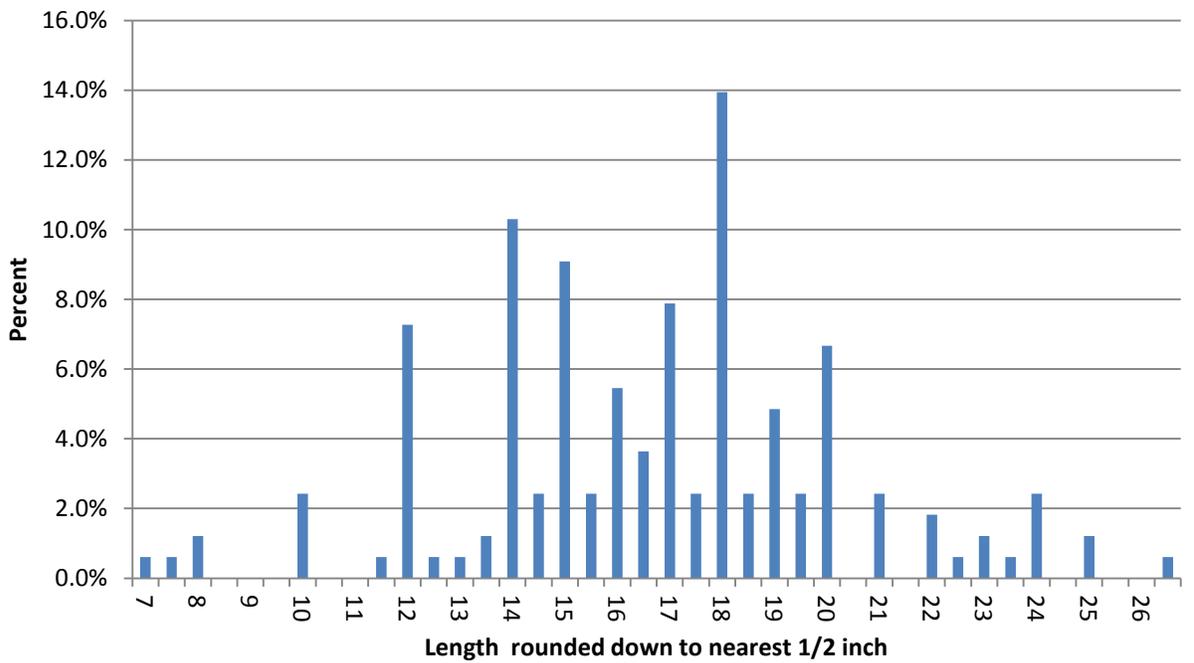


Figure 1.8A: Tautog Length Frequency - All Modes Combined



CONCLUSIONS

VAS anglers provide valuable recreational fisheries data at a relatively low cost. In addition, collecting length data on released fish is often difficult or unattainable through conventional access point angler intercept surveys. The VAS program provides this information which is essential in assessing the recreational fishery in Connecticut as required by the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission. Any anglers interested in participating in the program can contact Rod MacLeod at 860-434-6043, or e-mail address: rod.macleod@ct.gov or writing to State of Connecticut, DEEP, Marine Fisheries Office, P.O. Box 719, Old Lyme CT 06371.

MODIFICATIONS

For 2014, the VAS logbook will be made available in both electronic and paper logbook form to all participants. All reported data by VAS anglers will be stored in the central ACCSP SAFIS data warehouse.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I am very grateful to all anglers who have participated in the survey. Without their cooperation and assistance, the VAS program would not be possible.

APPENDIX 1.1A: Connecticut Volunteer Angler Logbook

VOLUNTEER ANGLER SURVEY INSTRUCTIONS

Listed below are instructions for filling out the logbook. Upon logbook completion, tape the prepaid postage logbook shut and drop it off in the mail. All information is kept confidential. Once the information is entered into the database, and error checked, the logbooks will be returned for your own records. If you are interested in online reporting please contact us.

The information provided by this report will help us in making fishery management decisions. Please help us by completing this report as accurately as possible.

If you have any questions or comments regarding the survey, please contact Rod MacLeod (rod.macleod@ct.gov) or Greg Wojcik (gregory.wojcik@ct.gov) at 860.434.6043.

Trip Header Record

The top of each page is for recording **each trip's header information**. In this section, make a new entry for each trip made. If you fill a logbook page before the trip is over, continue onto the next page. Use as many pages and books as necessary to record your fishing activity. If you have a multi-day trip, make only one entry for that trip.

Date Enter the date that your fishing trip occurred on.

Start Time Enter the time on a 24 hour clock (military time) that you started your fishing trip.

Mode Indicate the fishing mode by putting a check mark in the appropriate box. The Shore (Enhanced Site) option refers to the designated shore fishing sites along the Connecticut coast that allow for the harvest of smaller select species. See the anglers guide for more information.

Trip Effort Record

Enter the appropriate fishing effort information for the fishing area.

Fishing Area Enter the code for the area in which you made your catch. Refer to the Fishing Area Chart on page iii for the appropriate area code. If you fish in the race along the border between area 6 and 147, please use area code 6.

Total Anglers Enter the total number of anglers that are in the fishing party.

Lucky Anglers Enter the number of anglers that caught fish in the fishing party.

Hours Fished Enter the actual fishing time or 'lines wet' to the nearest half hour. Do not include travel time.

Targeted Species Enter the 1st (Primary) targeted species and 2nd (secondary) targeted species.

VOLUNTEER ANGLER SURVEY INSTRUCTIONS (CONTINUED)

Trip Catch Record

Under each trip effort record are the associated catch records. Enter a catch row for each species, disposition (Kept/Released) and length. If you caught more fish then rows provide, continue onto the next effort or page as necessary. If you do not catch or harvest any fish, complete the trip header and effort information (Date to Targeted Species 2).

Species Enter the species code from the Species Code List below. If the species is not listed, write in the species name.

K / R Indicate if the fish were kept or released by writing K (Kept) or R (Released). If you kept and released the same species indicate this by adding an additional row. If you kept and released the same species, complete two rows.

Length (in) Enter the length in inches of the fish. **ROUND DOWN TO THE NEAREST HALF INCH.** In previous years, the Volunteer Angler Survey requested rounding to the nearest half inch but rounding down helps produce more accurate data.

Quantity Enter the number of fish of that specific species, disposition (K/R), and length. If any of these fields change, create a new row. If additional rows are needed, continue onto the next page.

Species Code List	
Groundfish COD - Cod HADD - Haddock POLL - Pollock Flounders FLUK - Summer flounder / fluke FLBB - Winter flounder / blackback Other Finfish BLU - Bluefish BSB - Black sea bass CUN - Cunner EEL - Eel, American MEN - Menhaden / bunker WPRC - Perch, white SCUP - Scup / porgy SROB - Sea robins HSHD - Hickory shad STB - Striped bass	Other Finfish continued TAUG - Tautog / blackfish TRIG - Triggerfish WEAK - Weakfish / squeteague / gray sea trout Tuna / Large Pelagics ALB - Albacore tuna BET - Big eye tuna BFT - Bluefin tuna BON - Bonito LTNY - Little tunny SKJ - Skipjack YFT - Yellowfin tuna DOL - Dolphin fish / mahi-mahi WAH - Wahoo Sharks and Skates DGSP - Dogfish, spiny DGSM - Dogfish, smooth SKAT - Skate SHBL - Shark, blue
If you caught a species that does not appear in this list, write in the species name or contact the Marine Fisheries Division for the proper species code.	

