CT DEEP 2016
FISHING REPORT NUMBER 17
8/4/2016

Black Sea Bass (*Centropristis striata*)

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INLAND REPORT

LARGEMOUTH BASS fishing is reported as good. Places to try include Mashapaug Lake, Colebrook Reservoir, Congamond Lakes, Lake Saltonstall, Lake McDonough, Highland Lake, Winchester Lake, Bantam Lake, Candlewood Lake, Lake Wononskopomuc, Batterson Park Pond, Black Pond (Meriden), Lake Lillinonah, Breakneck Pond (great hike in location), Griggs Pond, Lake Waramaug, West Hill Pond, Park Pond, Crystal Lake (Ellington), Gardner Lake, Moodus Reservoir, Stillwater Pond, Winchester Lake, Squantz Pond, Maltby Lake 2 & 3, Wood Creek Pond, Pachaug Pond, Ball Pond, Quonnipaug Lake, Silver Lake (Meriden) and Halls Pond.

Tournament angler reports are from Aspinook Pond (fair for two clubs, 5.04 lb, 4.02 lb & 3.63 lb lunkers), Mansfield Hollow Reservoir (anglers had to really work for their fish, but teams got their 5 fish, 3.6 lb lunker), Long Pond (slow to fair, 3.82 lb & 3.00 lb lunkers), Pachaug Pond (fair, 3.13 lb lunker), Powers Lake (fair action with no size and a 1.52 lb lunker), Quaddick Lake (fair action, with a 4.41 lb lunker), Candlewood Lake (fair to good for largemouth, 4.47 lb lunker), East Twin Lake (fair to good, 5.75 lb lunker), and Lake McDonough (slow to fair).

Thermal Refuges are Critical

Thermal refuges are places where cold groundwater seeps or drains into a waterbody. These areas have much lower water temperature than the surrounding main waterbody.

Between June 15 and September 15 mainstem water temperatures can be above lethal limits for trout. Refuge area in medium to large rivers like the Naugatuck, Salmon, Housatonic, and Shetucket, are critical for trout to survive the summertime warm water temperatures.

To protect the trout, all fishing is prohibited in and around all refuges as indicated by signage (below). Please do not disturb the trout that are seeking refuge within these areas and report any violations to DEEP law enforcement immediately 860-424-3333.

SMALLMOUTH BASS fishing remains very good in the Quinebaug River and Housatonic River (flyfishing with a popper). If still water is your fancy, smallies are hitting in Mashapaug Lake, Lake McDonough, Highland Lake, Bantam Lake, Candlewood Lake, and Lake Lillinonah.

Tournament angler reports are from Aspinook Pond (a few smallies, with 2.5 lb & 2.12 lb lunkers), Candlewood Lake (fair to good for smallmouth, 5.23 lb & 4.90 lb lunkers), Connecticut River (a club launching from Riverside Park found fair to good smallie fishing, with two 3-lb lunkers), and Lake McDonough (some fish for those targeting smallies).

NORTHERN PIKE fishing is reported to be good. The CT River and the Housy were producing. Large golden shiners along weed lines have been the ticket for some good sized "Northerns". Other water to try include Lake Lillinonah, Winchester Lake, and Bantam Lake.

KOKANEE are being caught at West Hill Pond (3 colors). Beads, Mooselook Wobblers, DB Smelt, Flash King lures (blue & silver) are producing. Try fishing corn over lights at nights.

WALLEYE fishing is picking up a bit (late evening) and an occasional decent fish being caught at Batterson Park Pond, Squantz Pond, Saugatuck Reservoir, and Beach Pond.

CHANNEL CATFISH are providing solid action on live shiners, chicken livers, and chunk bait from the Connecticut River Hartford to Haddam, Lake Wintergreen, Birge Pond, Mohegan Park Pond, and Freshwater Pond. One angler sent a photo to our Facebook page of a 9 pound cat caught on the surface (using a rubber lizard!).

PANFISH are providing excellent summer time action. A simple worm and bobber will work best. Suggested locations include: Tyler Lake, Batterson Park Pond, Amos Pond, Barber Pond, Baummer Pond, Black Rock Lake, Burr Pond, Halls Pond, Lake of Isles, Lower Fulton Park Pond and McGrath Park Pond. Check out and download the FREE- CARE "Let's Go Fishing" Workbook available on the DEEP website at www.ct.gov/deep/care

TROUT-*LAKES & PONDS* – There are big trout around for anglers to catch now deep into the coldwater below the thermoclines. Some lakes to try include: East Twin Lake, Mashapaug Lake (riggers @ 20-25'), Lake McDonough (7-8 colors), Valley Falls Park Pond, West Hill Pond, Highland Lake (4 colors), Beach Pond (early @ 20-25'), Long Pond (Kobra 14), Crystal Lake (Ellington; 7-8 colors, troll @ 2mph), Mohawk Pond, Beach Pond, Black Pond (Woodstock) & Bigelow Pond.

TROUT- *RIVERS & STREAMS* – Rivers **remain at or near record low levels statewide (*see stream flow graphic on page 4*)**. Spotty heavy rain last week did little to contribute to long-term precipitation deficits and as such some streams had a quick "pulse" of water and are back to very low conditions. In general, trout fishing will be fair as water temperatures in many of our rivers and streams remain at or above lethal limits for trout. Good trout water this time of year can be found at the West Branch Farmington and the Mill River (Fairfield), West and East Branches of Salmon Brook (Granby and Glastonbury), and Salmon River.

ROCK SNOT-update

***Cymbella janischii* is in bloom.**

The West Branch Farmington River has 3 species of "Rock Snot". Two species of "Didymo" are essentially restricted to the section of river from Hogback Dam to the confluence with the Still River in Riverton. Didymo must have very cold water AND little to no phosphorous in the water (*although this summer with little input from the Still River these diatoms have been found as far downstream as the Ovation Pool in New Hartford).*

The third species, *Cymbella janischii*, (native to the Pacific Northwest and not typically found east of the Rocky Mountains) was very abundant (summer 2015) from New Hartford upstream to Peoples State Forest and is present again now. Cymbella can tolerate warmer water temperatures and higher levels of nutrients (conditions found in many of our rivers and streams) and has a high potential to be spread to other places.

When fishing the Farmington River we ask all anglers to be extra diligent about cleaning and drying their waders before fishing other trout waters.

Farmington River - Fishing continues to be very good to excellent. West Branch flows are clear and **super low** (currently 57 CFS at Riverton, with the Still River adding 11 CFS). Water temperatures remain in the low to mid 60's°F as the majority of the flow in the river is from the bottom-release from the West Branch Reservoir.

Hatches/patterns most large scale hatches have wrapped up with anglers needing to be on their "A" game to hook into some trout. In general, daytime fishing needs to downsize to the smaller flies. Old favorites include *Ephemerella needhami* (#22-26, early morning), Leadwing Coachman (*Isonychia bicolor,* #10-12, fast water, evening), Blue Wing Olives (*Drunella sps.,* #18-24, mid-late afternoon to evening), Sulphurs duns (*Epeorus vitreus,* #16-18, morning; afternoon to early evening for spinners), Rusty Spinner (#14-24), Caddis (tan #16-18, all day; green #18-22, evening), Midges (#20-32, morning), Black Ants (#14-18, midday in fast water), Black Beetles (#8-10, midday), and Flying Ants (#18-22, mid day, when windy/humid).

FREE FISHING!! Our second and final Free Fishing License day for 2016 will be Saturday, AUGUST 13.

Fish with your family or friends or join DEEP at Fort Trumbull State Park for the NCLI and CARE Saltwater fishing event. **Anyone can obtain a free one-day fishing license to fish on this day.**

The free 1-day license for fishing on August 13, 2016 is available now through our mobile friendly system at www.ct.gov/deep/sportsmenlicensing and at the same vendors (Designated vendor (tackle shop), Town Halls and DEEP offices where other licenses are available (DEEP Offices).

For something different, try "mousing"- using a mouse pattern or other large popper fished across deep pools after dark can produce a fish of a lifetime.

Housatonic River – Water temperatures have dropped a bit as daytime air temperatures are in the 80's and relatively cool nights 50's are providing an early fall feel. Trout will be seeking out the tributaries and thermal refuges while water temps are out of their comfort zone during the late afternoon and may venture out into the mainstem during the early morning hours. Water is clear with water temperatures are currently in the 70's with flows on the increase following heavy rains in the Massachusett's portion of the watershed. Flows are at the "normal" level for early August (391 CFS at Falls Village and 451 CFS at Gaylordsville and still rising). **Smallmouth Bass fishing is at its peak this time of year**.

Hatches/patterns: The latest major hatch is the "white fly". Reports are these large mayflies are very abundant creating some "white out" conditions providing excellent fly fishing, but mostly in the late evening for trout. Try poppers for Smallmouth Bass, Fallfish, or Pike during the day, they will provide non-stop action and help hone your skills. Some favored prey items of smallmouth are hellgrammites, crayfish, and juvenile fallfish. All can be mimicked with very large flies so upsize your rod, line, and fly and see what happens (go big or go home).

Other flies include: Alder/Zebra Caddis (#8-10) will produce some great fishing. Alder flies are very active during hot days. Additional bugs include the Sulphurs (#14-18, evening), Blue Wing Olive (#16-18, cloudy days, early morning; spinner fall in evening), *Isonychia* (#10-12 late afternoon & evening, just starting), Light Cahill (#12-

ZEBRA MUSSELS REMINDER

Zebra mussels are now found in a number of locations scattered throughout the Housatonic River and its impoundments including Lake Lillinonah (*since 2010*), Lake Zoar (*since 2010*) and Lake Housatonic (*since 2011*).

Prior to their discovery in Lakes Lillinonah and Zoar in 2010, zebra mussels had been found (1998) in CT only in East Twin Lake and West Twin Lake (Salisbury). Anglers fishing in any of these waters and western Connecticut in general **should use extra care to avoid transporting water, aquatic vegetation, and possibly zebra mussels to new locations**. Information

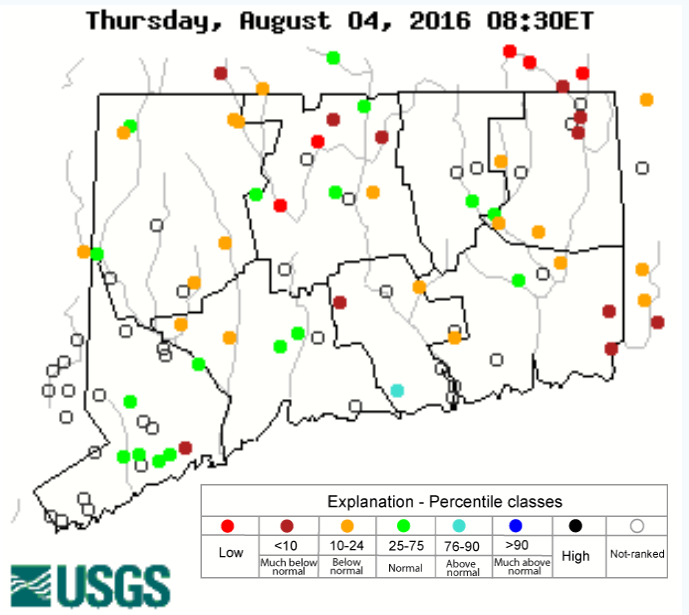
For more information including precautions that should be taken to prevent the spread of zebra mussels to additional waters, visit www.ct.gov/deep/invasivespecies or the Aquatic Invasive species section of the 2016 CT angler's Guide(www.ct.gov/deep/anglersguide).

14, evenings), Adams (#12-16, evening), March Brown (#10-12, afternoon) and Gray Foxes (#14-16). Black Caddis, Green caddis (#16-18, early morning & evening) are on the water.

CONNECTICUT RIVER

Top water catches of **STRIPED BASS** in the lower river continue on live bunker or live eels. Anglers from Hartford to Middletown continue catching some 2-4 pound **CATFISH**, mostly in the holes. **CARP** fishing around the Hartford powerplant has produced good numbers of medium-sized fish. **SMALLMOUTH BASS** and some **WALLEYE (**Enfield**)** and **NORTHERN PIKE (**Haddam**)** pleasing anglers with off and on action.

Stream flow conditions as of 8/04/2016



Data in the state graphic to the left are generated by the United States Geologic Survey (USGS) and are available on line at: http://waterdata.usgs.gov/ct/nwis/rt *A percentile is a value on a scale of one hundred that indicates the percent of data in the data set equal to or below it. For example streamflow greater than the 75th percentile means only ¼ of the streamflow values were above the value and thus would be considered "above normal". Stream flow between the 25th and 50th are considered to be "normal flows" and those 25th or less are considered to be "below normal".*

Attention:

OUTDOOR GROUPS/CLUBS/BUSINESSES.

DEEP would like to invite you to attend our 2 upcoming **Hunting and Fishing Days**, September 10, 2016 at Franklin Swamp Wildlife Management Area, Franklin and September 24, 2016. Both events are from 10 am to 4 pm.

There is no charge for the event and you can showcase your group, business, organization with a tabletop display.

If you are interested in attending, please contact Laurie Fortin at laurie.fortin@ct.gov.

For more information on the event go to: www.ct.gov/deep/huntfishday.

NOTES & NOTICES:

BASHAN LAKE (drawdown). Bashan Lake remains drawn down (slow refill continues – lake currently remains down approximately 4-5 feet – note that refill rate is dependent on rainfall amounts) following dam repairs and the state boat launch remains closed.

BRANFORD RIVER (boat launch). The Branford River state boat launch is curently closed for renovations. This closure is currently expected to last to November 14, 2016. Alternative nearby launch sites include the Guilford Town boat launch and the East River State boat launch, both in Guilford.

COVENTRY LAKE (invasive species alert). Hydrilla, a very highly invasive aquatic plant, has been found growing in Coventry Lake. All lake users should take extra care to check and clean their boats (including canoes, kayaks and rowing sculls), trailers, and fishing equipment before leaving the boat launch, or leaving the lakeshore.

Coventry Lake (Wangumbaug Lake) boaters should avoid the area outlined in red to avoid fragmenting and spreading hydrilla. This is only area in the lake where hydrilla has been found.

DOOLEY POND (drawdown). A drawdown of Dooley Pond to facilitate dam repairs is ongoing (expected to last to September 1). The state boat launch is currently closed.

GLASGO POND (drawdown). A drawdown of Glasgo Pond to facilitate dam repairs is ongoing (began September 2015). Launching of boats is difficult to impossible.

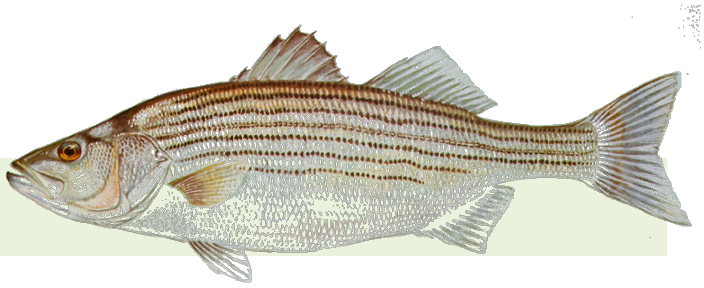
THERMAL REFUGES: Anglers are reminded that the thermal refuge areas on the Housatonic, Naugatuck and Shetucket Rivers are now closed to fishing (as of June 15). These areas will reopen on September 15. There is no fishing within 100 feet of signs indicating such closure at or near the mouths of tributaries to these rivers. Additionally, a thermal refuge has been established on the Salmon River in East Haddam, located around a spring entering the Salmon River approximately 220 feet south of the unused paved boat launch at the state-owned property formerly known as the Sunrise Resort off of Route 151. The refuge includes all water within 100 feet from the end of the pipe as posted. The Salmon River refuge will be closed to fishing and access through September 15.

PHOTO CONTEST: Do you have the next Angler's Guide cover shot? Email us your high quality (high resolution) photos at Deep.inland.fisheries@ct.gov and include photo contest in the subject line.

CT FISHIN' TIPS is our monthly e-newletter dedicated to providing information, tips and pointers about fishing in Connecticut. Get CT Fishin' Tips delivered automatically to your in box by subscribing at www.ct.gov/deep/newslettersubscription

NEW! Youth Fishing Passport Fishing Challenge Scorecard: Download the new scorecard for your Youth Fishing Passport Holder on the program web page at www.ct.gov/deep/yfp. Top anglers will receive a great prize pack of fishing gear.

MARINE FISHING REPORT



Surface water temperatures in Long Island Sound (LIS) are in the low 70's ^{0}F. Check out the following web sites for more detailed water temperatures and marine boating conditions:

www.mysound.uconn.edu/stationstat.html
www.ndbc.noaa.gov/
marine.rutgers.edu/mrs/sat_data/?nothumbs=1
www.wunderground.com/MAR/AN/330.html

IMPORTANT NOTES:

Connecticut State Boundary Line in Long Island Sound.
Anglers please note: Though Connecticut has reciprocity with neighboring states (New York, Rhode Island, Maine and Massachusetts), residents of Connecticut are required to have a CT Resident Marine Waters Sport Fishing License to fish in the Marine District.

WHALES have been reported in Long Island Sound (in early July, juvenile humpback whales have been spotted on the New York side of the sound), please see check **WHALE WATCHING GUIDELINES**.

Note: All marine mammals are protected by the Federal Marine Mammal Protection Act. Following these recommended operational guidelines helps minimize chances of harassing or injuring whales and violating Federal law. Guidelines apply to all large whales from Maine through Virginia, except North Atlantic right whales. It is illegal to approach a right whale within 500 yards (1500 feet) unless granted specific exemption or authorization.

SHARK SPECIES YOU MAY ENCOUNTER IN COASTAL WATERS OF CONNECTICUT: Anglers may catch Sand Tiger and Sandbar (Brown) Shark which are protected and prohibited species and must be released unharmed. **IF YOU DON'T KNOW, PLEASE LET IT GO!** Coastal shark information.

SEA TURTLES: **See a Tangled Turtle? Call the Hotline! 1-860-572-5955 ext. 107**
This is the time of year when leatherback, loggerhead, green, and Kemp's ridley sea turtles return to northern waters, with many sightings around Long Island Sound.

STRIPED BASS fishing is improving daily after the NEW moon, especially in the lower tidal rivers during dusk and dawn. Casting swimming lures, surface poppers, and bouncing jigs off the bottom in the shallows at low light has been productive. Also, live lining bunker (Atlantic menhaden), hickory shad or scup on the reefs has been effective on "cow" bass. The usual striper spots include the Watch Hill reefs, Ram Island Reef in Fishers Island Sound, lower Mystic and Thames River, the Race, Sluiceway, Plum Gut, Pigeon Rip, outer Bartlett Reef, Black Point, the "humps' south of Hatchett Reef, lower Connecticut River, Long Sand Shoal, Cornfield Point, Southwest Reef (outer), Sixmile Reef, Falkner Island area, the reefs off Branford, New Haven Harbor and the upper reaches, Charles Island area, lower Housatonic River, buoys 18 and 20 off Stratford Point, Stratford Shoal/Middle Ground, Penfield Reef, around the Norwalk Islands, and Cable and Anchor Reef.

STRIPED BASS ANGLERS FISHING IN RHODE ISLAND WATERS - are advised that the state of Rhode Island has adopted the following regulations pertaining to striped bass. These regulations apply to all Rhode Island state lands and waters including the waters around Block Island: **"Any person recreationally harvesting a striped bass thirty-four (34) inches or larger shall at the time of harvest have the right pectoral fin removed at a point as close to the body of the fish as possible."**

SUMMER FLOUNDER (fluke) fishing is fair with some big fish caught off Montauk measuring in the mid to high 20 inch range being reported. **Shore anglers give Fort Trumbull a try…there have been some very impressive fluke caught there.** Summer flounder spots include the south shore of Fishers Island (Isabella Beach, Wilderness Point), Napatree Point and along the beach, off the Stonington breakwater, mouth of the Mystic River over to Groton Long Point, Twotree Island Channel, Black Point/Niantic Bay including the Bloody Grounds, Sound View Beach, Long Sand Shoal, Falkner Island area, New Haven Harbor, off the mouth of the Housatonic River during the flood tide, and around the Norwalk Islands.

BLACK SEA BASS fishing has become a deep water bite. Eastern Sound (Fishers Island to Block Island) anglers are having better success. A reminder to all anglers…If you are fishing in water deeper than 100', barotrauma can cause released fish to struggle to make it back to the bottom. A descending devise such as the Shelton Fish Descender can help assist the sea bass air bladder to recompress and get safely back down to the depths. See Fishsmart.org for more information.

SCUP (porgy) fishing is very good throughout Long Island Sound. Any spot with hard bottom (structure) is worth fishing on. The mouth of the Housatonic River to Charles Island, Morningside (Milford), **St Mary's by the Sea and Stratford wall** (shore spot) is good. Fishing from shore try Stratford Seawall at high tide. **Rocky Neck State Park**, Harkness Memorial State Park, **Meigs Point Hammonassett,** Sherwood Island State Park and **Fort Trumbull State Park**. Locate your favorite Enhanced Shore Fishing Opportunities for these hard fighting and excellent eating "Reef Slammers". These "panfish of the sea" are easily caught on sandworms/cut squid or any other small piece of bait.

BLUEFISH fishing is improving daily. The time is now to plan a "deep sea" fishing trip with a party charter boat in your area and fish for those "alligator" sized blues. **The Race, Pigeon Rip, Plum Gut, many of the major rocky reefs, rips, and shoal areas in eastern LIS** are the best bets at this time. Fishing is slowly improving in the Central and Western Sound. Hopefully, in time for the "Big Bluefish Tournament" coming up in few weeks. Diamond jigs, trolling parachute jigs or umbrella rigs, and using fresh bunker or hickory shad chunks on three-way bottom rigs have all been effective. Other bluefish spots include the Sluiceway, Gardiners Bay, Peconic Bays, and the north shore of Long Island along with the **Stratford Shoal Housatonic River area**. My recommendation is to hook up with a **Party or Charter Boat** and enjoy some of the best FISHING you will ever experience. There is no harder fighting fish in the sea. "Snappers" (juvenile bluefish) along with "Harbor Blues" (16 - 22 inches) are also very common along all shore locations. These under sized bluefish provide great sport for shore anglers. Try the lower reaches of tidal rivers and estuaries…you will be glad you did.

NEW! Join us in celebrating 150 Years of Natural Resource Conservation in Connecticut! Throughout 2016, we will look back at our history and also look ahead to the future of natural resources in our state. Follow along with the celebration and participate in special events to be held year-long. Check out our historical timeline: Connecticut Bureau of Natural Resources Through the Years.

HICKORY SHAD fishing is very good once again. They are back in a big way as one angler remarked. Fishing remains good at Fort Trumbull, Black Hall, Lieutenant River and the lower Connecticut River (DEEP Marine Headquarters fishing pier). Both snappers and hickory shad can be found schooling together at these locations.

BLUE CRAB fishing is excellent on the flood tide. With some patience…you can catch a lot of blue crabs of all sizes. There are some large "jimmies" (male crabs) being captured (8.8" spike to spike) along with some impressive sooks (females up to 7.25 inches carapace width). **Remember…** remember, all egg bearing females must be released **without avoidable injury**. Minimum carapace length is 5 inches for a hard shell crab. ***Blue crab fishermen please release all diamondback terrapins' caught in your traps. The turtles must be released* without avoidable injury**.. Legal gear types include: scoop (dip) net, hand line, star crab trap, circular (topless) trap not exceeding 26 inches in diameter. Maryland Style Crab traps are prohibited. **Chicken with the skin on it (along with a long handle net) and a small circular crab trap is the preferred method to capture these tasty crabs**. **Blue Crab Fact Sheet.**

Angler's please also note: It's illegal to snag blue crabs.

NOTABLE CATCHES –

Species	*Length (in.)*	*Weight (lb)*	*Angler*
Striped Bass	49.25"	C&R	Elliot Thomas
Blue Crab	**8.8125"**	**state record**	**Thomas Buonanni**
Striped Bass	47"	40 lb, 3 oz	Craig Mergins
Bluefish	38"	C&R	Fred Spadaccini
Summer Flounder	26.5"	7 lb, 1 oz	Kim Pouliot
Bluefish	36"	13 lb, 11 oz	Jennifer Zuppe

For Current Connecticut Recreational Fishing Regulations: *Anglers should consult the 2016 Connecticut Anglers Guide which is now available at most Town Clerks Offices, DEEP offices and at tackle stores selling fishing licenses. Current regulations, electronic versions of the Angler's Guide and additional information can be accessed on the DEEP website at:* www.ct.gov/deep/fishing.

***Go online, click:* 2016 CT Marine Recreational Fishing Regulations**

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Striped Bass image courtesy Duane Raver/USFWS.

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