CT DEEP 2016
FISHING REPORT NUMBER 23
9/15/2016

Smallmouth Bass (*Micropterus dolomieu*)

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INLAND REPORT

LARGEMOUTH BASS fishing is reported as fair to good. Places to try include East Twin Lake, Wononskopomuc Lake, Burr Pond, Hatch Pond, Tyler Lake, Congamond Lakes, Candlewood Lake, Lake Housatonic, Lake Lillinonah, Highland Lake, Bantam Lake, Lake Saltonstall, Winchester Lake, Billings Lake, Stateline Pond, Griggs Pond, Dog Pond, Bigelow Pond, Stillwater Lake, Halls Pond, Quaddick Reservoir, Silver Lake (Meriden), Red Cedar Lake and Mudge Pond.

Tournament angler reports are from Amos Lake (slow to fair, but with a 5.3 lb lunker), Gardner Lake (fair action, 3.8 lb lunker but not much else of any size), Mansfield Hollow Reservoir (fair at best, 2.91 lb lunker, most fish caught on plastic worms), Pachaug Pond (fair, 2.9 lb lunker), Pattagansett Lake (fair to good fishing, 4.03 lb lunker), Pickerel Lake (fair to good action, nothing big with only a 1.88 lb lunker), Quaddick Lake (good for most, 4.89 lb & 4.46 lb lunkers), Rogers Lake (fair to good, 4.2 lb lunker), Highland Lake (fair to good fishing, mostly 1 lb fish, 2.87 lb lunker), and Lake Housatonic (slow to fair, 2.9 lb & 2.7 lb lunkers)).

SMALLMOUTH BASS action reported at West Hill Pond, Bantam Lake, Candlewood Lake and Highland Lake. River smallies are providing some action on the Housatonic River (Upper), Quinebaug River and Naugatuck River. **Tournament angler** reports are from Highland Lake (just a few in the bags), Lake Housatonic (a few, including 3.25 lb and 3.06 lb lunkers), and Pachaug Pond (slow to fair, 2.8 lb lunker).

NORTHERN PIKE are showing up in Bantam Lake and Pachaug Pond.

BLACK CRAPPIE is picking up with reports of fish coming from Lake Saltonstall and Park Pond.

CARP are being caught in Batterson Park Pond and West Thompson Reservoir, Squantz Pond, and Lake Housatonic.

WALLEYE are staging up for the fall bite. Look for deep drop offs and structure. For some action try Squantz Pond, Batterson Park Pond, Beach Pond, Mashapaug Lake, Gardner Lake, Mount Tom Pond, Lake Saltonstall, Saugatuck Reservoir or Lake Zoar.

Connecticut Hunting & Fishing Day

Saturday, September 24, 2016. 10 am-4 pm

On September 24, 2016 the DEEP Bureau of Natural Resources and the sporting community will be at Sessions Woods Wildlife Management Area celebrating the many benefits of hunting and fishing (click on **Hunting & Fishing Day** for online information). Shuttle parking available.

Fun activities for all ages are planned, along with educational programs, a live raptor program by Talons, workshops about hunting and fishing, and live music. Best of all, the event is **FREE** to attend!

FALLFISH are the largest minnow native to Connecticut, and can reach over 15 inches (typically 8-12 inches). Fallfish provide excellent action on ultra-light tackle and fly rods. The fish are aggressive and will hit a variety of natural and artificial baits (use the same gear you would for trout). Fishing for Fallfish is a great way to spend time on a river (when water temperatures may be too warm for trout or if it seems to be fished out). Good Fallfish waters include the Willimantic River, Shetucket River, Natchaug River, Lower Farmington River (Avon-Windsor), Housatonic River (Cornwall to Kent), Scantic River (Somers to East Windsor), and Yantic River. The current state record Fallfish (2.25 pounds) was taken in 2012 by Chad Tessman.

PANFISH are providing excellent late summer action throughout the state. Use worms, grubs, jigs or small poppers for them. Small local ponds are often great places, for larger waters try include Dog Pond, Mohawk Pond, Miller Pond, Gorton Pond, Lake Hayward, Babcock Pond, Bishop Swamp Pond, Griggs Pond, Tyler Pond, Crescent Pond, Red Cedar Lake and Long Pond.

TROUT- FALL TROUT STOCKING UPDATE: DEEP has been getting a number of questions concerning how the current environmental conditions (low flows, warm water temperatures) would affect our typical fall stocking programs. At this time we are reviewing fall stocking options. Should environmental conditions not significantly improve, it is likely that there will be a number of stocking schedule changes including cancellations, postponements and stockings of alternative water bodies that have better conditions for the stocking of coldwater species.

RIVERS & STREAMS - Conditions should be fair to poor again this weekend. Temperatures are moderating only slowly and many streams are still at or near record low flow. The best trout fishing will be in places with abundant coldwater; the West Branch Farmington River, Mill River (Fairfield), and Salmon Brook (Granby).

Thermal Refuge update: As stream temperatures have dropped slightly, many fish are no longer seeking the cold water plumes of thermal refuges. The prohibition from fishing within 100 feet of these areas expired on 9/15/2016. ***The only exception is the refuge at the confluence of Furnace Brook and the Housatonic River, Cornwall, which has been extended by the Commissioner of DEEP until 9/29 /2016 inclusive.***

Farmington River – Fishing continues to be good and the conditions for this weekend should be good. West Branch flows are clear and moderately low, currently 76 CFS at Riverton with the Still River adding a mere 5 CFS, and water temperatures are in the mid 60's°F.

Hatches/patterns include Tricos (#20-26), *Isonychia bicolor* (#10-14, fast water, afternoon/evening), Blue Wing Olives (*Drunella* & *Baetis sps.,* #18, 20-24, mid-late afternoon), Cahill (#12-14), White Fly (#12-14; just after dark), Needhami, Caddis (tan #16-20, all day; green #20-22, evening; summer pupa #18-20 morning), Midges (#22-32, morning), Black Ants (#16-18, mid-day in fast water), Black Beetles (#16-18, mid-day), Flying Ants (#22-24, mid-day, when windy/humid), and Stone Hopper (#10-12, mid-day).

Housatonic River – fishing remains good and conditions for the weekend should remain good, especially for Smallmouth Bass, Carp, and Fallfish (Cornwall to Kent). Flows are clear, currently 94 CFS at Falls Village and 126 CFS at Gaylordsville). Morning water temperatures are currently in the low to mid 70's °F. *The fishing prohibition within 100 feet of signs posted at the mouth of Furnace Brook, Cornwall, has been extended by the Commissioner until 9/29/16 (inclusive).*

Smallmouth (and Fallfish) are plentiful throughout the entire river and will eagerly hit a variety of poppers, dry flies, nymphs, and streamers. Patterns to try include White Zonkers, Wooly Buggers (go big- larval dobsonflies can be up to 4" in length and are a favorite food item), Muddlers, Grey or Black Ghosts (#4-10). Other insects include flying ants (#14-16, mid-day, when windy/humid, September is

peak month), Fall Sulfurs (#16-18), Blue Wing Olives (#18-22), Tricos (#20-22), Leadwing Coachman (#10-12 evening, September is peak month), Sulfurs duns (#16-18, below the dam due to low temperatures, morning; afternoon to early evening for spinners), Light Cahill and Black caddis (#14-18, early morning & evening). Golden stonefly nymphs hatch at first light and adults egg-lay after dark. Try Black Ants (#14-20, mid day in fast water), Black Beetles (#14-18, mid day), Stone Hopper (#8-10, mid day). Don't forget streamers (morning & evening). Patterns to try include: White, Muddlers, Micky Finn, Woolly Buggers (olive/burned orange or tan #8-12), Grey or Black Ghosts (#4-10).

Try nymphing the pockets, deeper riffles and pool heads.

TROUT-*LAKES & PONDS* - Lakes reporting good late summer trout fishing include West Hill Pond, Highland Lake, East Twin Lake, Crystal Lake (Ellington) and Beach Pond.

CONNECTICUT RIVER

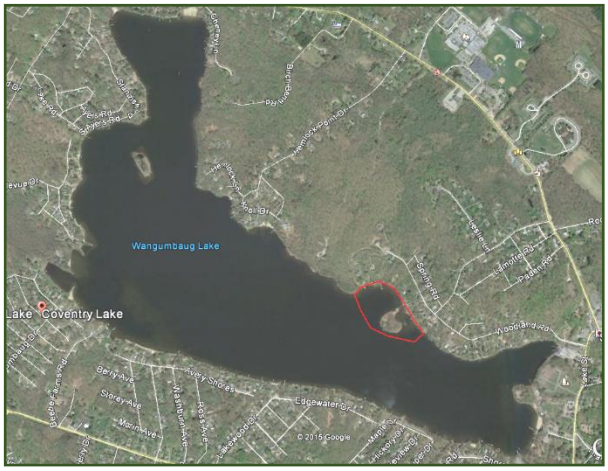
The River remains very low (making fishing in some places very difficult). **BLACK CRAPPIE** action is improving in the coves up and down the river. Target the backwaters with small shiners. **SMALLMOUTH BASS** (some fish up to 4 lbs) are providing action in the river both above Hartford and downstream, where recent catches included a 4.63 lb beauty. **NORTHERN PIKE** fishing is reported as good in the main stem and coves. Fish have been caught from the Hartford area downstream to Chapman Pond. **LARGEMOUTH BASS** are being caught (but you have to work for them) in the Hartford to Haddam area. **CARP** are providing action in coves and in the mainstem (Hartford to Middletown area).

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 currently 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 (repairs are done, but refill rate will be dependent on rainfall). 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.

HANOVER POND (drawdown). A 6-foot drawdown of Hannover Pond (Quinnipiac River, Meriden) began on September 13 for the purposes of installing a small hydropower facility. The drawdown is likely to extend through the upcoming winter months. This pond has extensive shallow areas that are now exposed.

THERMAL REFUGES: **On Thursday, September 15, the closure period at the Furnace Brook thermal refuge on the Housatonic River was extended through September 29.** Flows remain low and water temperatures have not sufficiently improved and fish continue to congregate in this area. The closures on all other thermal refuges on the Housatonic River, and also on the Naugatuck River and Salmon River will expire after September 15. Additionally, the temporary closures at eight tributaries along the Farmington River will expire on September 15. While all these areas will be open to fishing, DEEP asks anglers to consider avoiding being out during the warmest times of day and to consider fishing for other species such as Smallmouth Bass until conditions improve.

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.

¡VOMONAS A PESCAR! Información disponible en español relacionada con la pesca en Connecticut.

Los folletos de la pesca en aguas dulces y aguas saladas fuerón traducidos en español para la distribución a la comunidad hispana residentes en Connecticut. El objetivo de los folletos de pesca en español es para ayudar a fomentar, aumentar y promover la participación hispana en esta actividad que se lleva acabo en familia.

Somos afortunados en Connecticut por el gran abastecimiento de peses . La población de Connecticut tiene oportunidad de pescar a no más de 5 millas de su residencia. Si a ústed le gusta la Trucha, Lobina, Lucio Norteamericano, Panfish o especies de aguas saladas como Lobina Rayada, Summer Flounder, Porgy o Anjova, las aguas de Connecticut lo ofrecen. ¡Vamonos a Pescar!

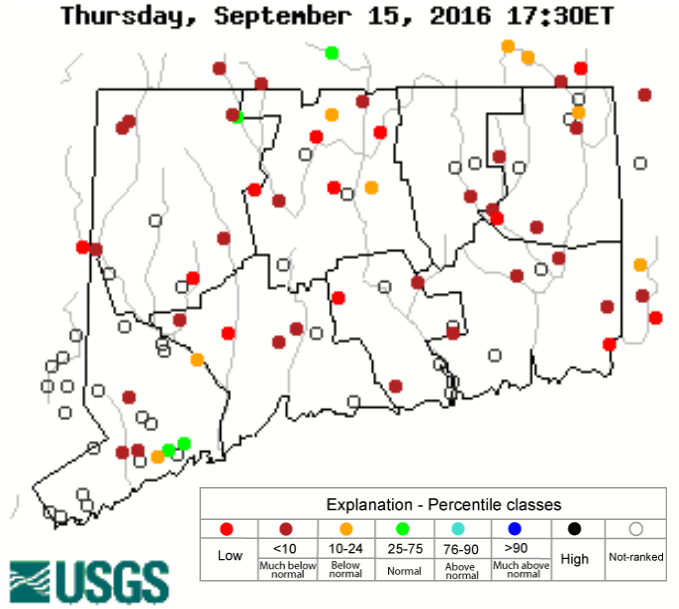
LAKE & POND BATHYMETRIC MAPS

Bathymetric maps of many of Connecticut's public access lakes and ponds can be found online at:

www.ct.gov/deep/lib/deep/fishing/general_information/lakebathymetrymaps.pdf

Both plain line maps and maps overlaying an aerial photo available.

Stream flow



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".*

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

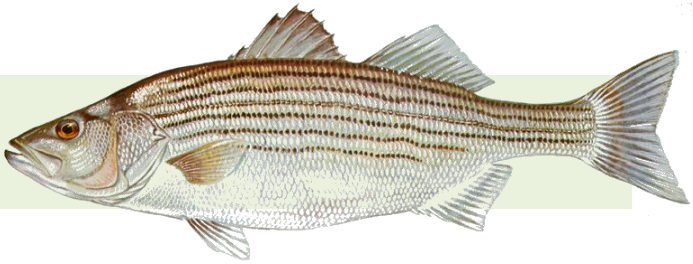
For more information including precautions that should be taken to prevent the spread of zebra mussels to additional waters, visit www.ct.gov/deep/invasivespecies or the Aquatic Invasive species section of the 2015 CT angler's Guide(www.ct.gov/deep/anglersguide).

REMINDER TO ANGLERS-

FISHING IN OR CASTING INTO PERMITTED SWIM AREAS IS PROHIBITED.

State regulations prohibit fishing in or into a swim area that's been permitted by DEEP. Additionally, vessels cannot be operated within a permitted swim area, and there's a 100 foot "no-wake" zone around the perimeter. Swim areas that have been permitted by DEEP will be marked by white buoys with orange markings, and there should be a permit number posted on the buoys. They may or may not have small orange barrier floats to further demarcate the area. Should questions arise concerning the validity of the swim area (*no permit numbers or the area appears to have been changed/enlarged or keeps moving*), please contact DEEP's Boating Division at 860-434-8638.

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:

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

***NEW SHARK REGULATIONS* – EFFECTIVE MONDAY, AUGUST 22, 2016**: **An Atlantic Highly Migratory Species (HMS) permit is required to take, possess, or land any shark species, other than smooth or spiny dogfish, in this state.**

To obtain an **HMS permit** visit: http://www.greateratlantic.fisheries.noaa.gov/aps/permits/ or call NMFS Customer Service Center at (888) 872-8862. CT Marine anglers may encounter Sand Tiger and Sandbar (Brown) Shark which are protected and prohibited species and they must be released unharmed. **IF YOU DON'T KNOW, PLEASE LET IT GO!** Coastal shark information.

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 AND SEALS - see check **WHALE WATCHING GUIDELINES**. 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.

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 will be good to excellent around the full "harvest" moon. Tis the season for catching some big bass as they feed heavily prior to their migration. Trolling jigs and live lining bunker (Atlantic menhaden) and or an eel on the reefs/shoal areas at dawn and dusk will produce some nice bass (51 inches – 48 pounds, (Long Sand Shoal). 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 (Breakwalls) and the upper reaches, **Charles Island area**, lower Housatonic River, buoys 18 and 20 off Stratford Point, **Stratford Shoal/Middle Ground**, Milford Point, 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."**

BLUEFISH fishing is very good. They can be found throughout the sound (find the birds). Large numbers of bluefish can be found in the lower estuaries, rivers and beaches feeding on menhaden/anchovies. The "Top-water" bite continues to be very good (look for the "blow-ups". Bluefish fishing spots include the reefs off Watch Hill, the Race, Thames River, Sluiceway, Plum Gut, Pigeon Rip, lower Connecticut River, Long Sand Shoal, Sixmile Reef, Falkner Island area, New Haven Harbor and upper reaches, lower Housatonic River, buoys 18 and 20 off Stratford Point, Stratford Shoal/Middleground, Penfield Reef, and Cable and Anchor Reef. **SNAPPER fishing is much better in the western sound with fish measuring 6 to 12 inches in length.**

BLACK SEA BASS fishing has been good. You may need to move around from wreck/reef/hump to find good numbers of these tasty bottom fish. The spawn is over and they are feeding heavily on small crabs and squid. Plan a trip on a party/charter boat trip to fish off of Block Island…there are many giant-sized sea bass out there. Eastern Sound (Fishers Island to Block Island and northeast of Montauk) anglers are having better success. For those willing to travel, Block Island Sound is the place to be for humpback sea bass. Closer to home, the rocky reefs from Niantic, to Branford (Falkner Island) have been consistent all season. 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.

SUMMER FLOUNDER (fluke) fishing is a tough go…however those patient anglers who put their time in fishing deep water (90-120 ft) are scoring on large doormat fluke up to 12 pounds. Live lining snapper blues and whole squid in deep water is the preferred method by fluke sharpies. The usual 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 to Darien.

SCUP (porgy) fishing is the best it has been in decades. Chumming has been very productive. Good shore fishing areas include; Morningside (Milford), Coast Guard Jetty at Southport Beach, Rick Jetty at **Calf Pasture beach**, **South Benson Fishing Pier**, **Sherwood Island**, **Pleasure Beach Fishing Pier**, **St Mary's by the Sea, Gulf Beach Pier, Bonds Dock (Stratford)** and **Stratford wall along with Long Beach** (excellent shore spots). Other shore spots include **The Sound School Fishing Pier/Dock**, **Rocky Neck State Park**, Harkness Memorial State Park, **Meigs Point, Hammonassett,** Sherwood Island State Park and Fort Trumbull State Park. Fish during the high tide at these shore locations. Locate your favorite Enhanced Shore Fishing Opportunities for these hard fighting and excellent eating "Reef Slammers".

ATLANTIC BONITO & LITTLE TUNNY fishing is great one day and puzzling the next (where did the go) …you never know with these fast swimming tunas. However, the action in CT is heating up. Big catches of these small tunas have been reported from Bluff Point to Hatchett Reef. Shore anglers are scoring at Ocean Beach, Seaside, Harkness Memorial and Rocky Neck State Park. These small tunas are also cruising around from Pt. Judith, Watch Hill to Pine Island (including Fishers Island Sound), the Race to Little Gull Island, from Bartlett Reef to Black Point. Dawn and dusk is the best time to fish for these

inshore tunas. They feeding heavily of young of the year anchovy. **Try casting metal (heavy) lures to feeding fish on the surface. A quiet approach and finding birds (gulls/terns) actively feeding is the key to a successful trip.**

WEAKFISH fishing is surprisingly good. From the Mystic River to the Thames River has been very productive. Many scup/seabass/fluke anglers are catching them while bottom fishing. Fish up to 26 inches are being reported from West Haven Beaches/Charles Island area to Norwalk. Also, look for weakfish in Guilford/Madison/New Haven Harbor areas.

HICKORY SHAD fishing is good in the **Black Hall River** and fair in the Lieutenant River, Housatonic River and the lower Connecticut River (DEEP Marine Headquarters fishing pier). Anglers are still waiting for the fall bite to happen, especially shore anglers. Fishing remains good at Fort Trumbull, Black Hall, Clinton Harbor River systems and the lower Connecticut River (DEEP Marine Headquarters fishing pier). You will also find "schoolie" bass, snappers and hickory shad can all be found schooling together at these locations.

BLUE CRAB fishing is good in all tidal creeks/bays, especially around pilings in the evening with an incoming tide. **Remember, all egg-bearing females must be released without avoidable injury. Minimum carapace length is 5 inches for a hard shell crab**. 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) is the preferred method to capture these tasty crabs**. For more information please see the Blue Crab Fact Sheet on our website.

GOT A FISHING REPORT - PLEASE EMAIL US AT deep.marine.fisheries@ct.gov

NOTABLE CATCHES:

Species	***Length (in.)***	***Weight (lb)***	***Angler***
Atlantic Chub Mackerel	14"	1 lb. 2 oz.	Brandon Collins
Black Sea Bass	23.6"	4 lb. 6 oz.	Randy Manulla Jr.
Smooth Dogfish	41"	-	Alyssa Zuppe
Atlantic Needlefish	34"	-	Zacery Martindale
Summer Flounder	25 ¾"	6 lb. 5 oz.	Garland Donadio

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 all be accessed on the DEEP website at:* www.ct.gov/deep/fishing.

The Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection is an Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Employer that is committed to complying with the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act. Please contact us at (860) 418-5910 or deep.accommodations@ct.gov if you have a disability and need a communication aid or service; have limited proficiency in English and may need information in another language; or if you wish to file an ADA or Title VI discrimination complaint.

Smallmouth Bass & Striped Bass image courtesy Duane Raver/USFWS.