



2015 Guide to Shellfishing Along the Coast of Connecticut

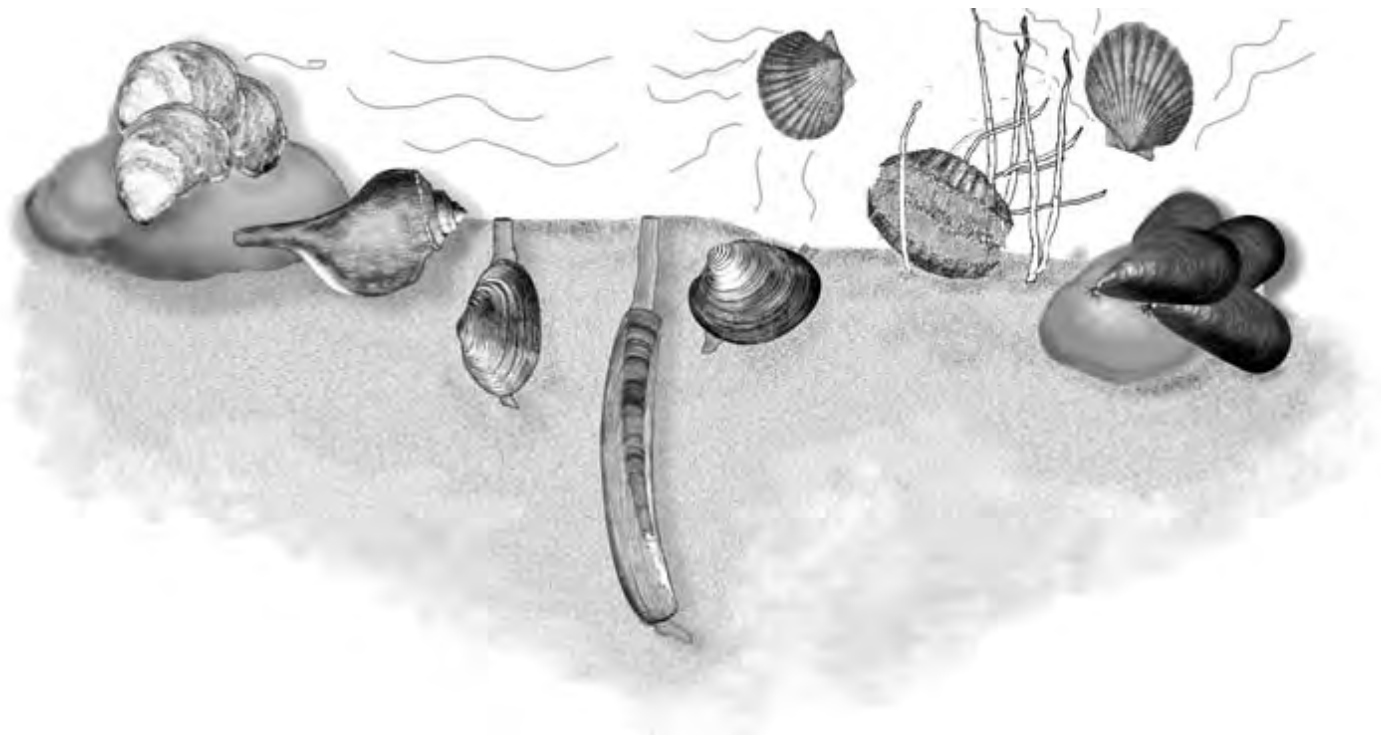
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FISHERIES FACT SHEET

Sea Grant is a unique partnership between the nation's universities and its primary ocean agency, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). Connecticut Sea Grant, based at the University of Connecticut, collaborates with maritime industries and coastal communities to identify needs, and fund research, outreach, and educational activities that have special relevance to Connecticut and Long Island Sound. Its mission is to foster the wise use and conservation of our nation's coastal and marine resources.

Contact by telephone:
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2015 Guide to Shellfishing Along the Coast of Connecticut

Rules and Regulations

Before shellfishing in Connecticut, it is important to review the local rules and regulations. Shellfishing regulations are established and enforced to protect human health and also to preserve the living marine resources and ecosystems within which they exist. Each municipality within the State sets its own shellfisheries regulations including species, size restrictions, harvest limits, closures and fees. Shellfishing is allowed between sunrise and sunset, and recreational seasons are year round with a few exceptions noted in the following pages. An individual permit is required in most towns and that permit must be carried at all times when shellfishing.

There are a variety of implements to harvest shellfish, such as rakes or tongs. These tools must have openings or spacing between the teeth or prongs of one inch (1") or greater. Individual towns may restrict specific harvesting tools and/or methods to avoid damage to shellfish or overharvesting the resource in a particular area.

Size limits are established to ensure that shellfish are given time to reproduce before they are harvested. This is critical to sustain populations over time. To measure shellfish, be sure to carry the appropriate size shellfish ring, slot or gauge. These items can usually be purchased at your local bait shop or permit sale location. Undersize shellfish must be immediately returned to the water in which they were harvested.

Public Health and Seafood Safety

Harvesting whether for personal consumption or bait is limited to "Approved" or "Conditionally Approved-Open" areas

excluding leased or franchised commercial shellfish beds. Maps of the available harvest areas are provided to permit holders and also may be viewed online at the *Connecticut Shellfisheries Mapping Atlas*: <http://clear3.uconn.edu/aquaculture/>. Shellfish harvested from recreational areas are intended to be consumed by the harvester and their family members. Shellfish taken from these areas cannot be offered for sale or barter.

Periodically, shellfishing areas may be closed due to rainfall or pollution events. The status of these areas can be obtained by calling the local shellfish information line or by checking status signs at the shellfishing area. Status signs are posted at these areas for your convenience.

It is important to follow safe practices when handling, storing and cooking shellfish. Harvesters must take care to properly handle their catch. Shellfish should be promptly refrigerated in a self-draining container. They should never be stored in water or hung overboard from a dock or boat since they are filter feeders and may concentrate contaminants from that new environment. Generally, quahogs (hard shell clams) and oysters can be stored for up to seven days. Mussels and soft shell clams are not able to completely close their shells, and therefore, the shelf life of these products may be three to four days. Bay scallop meats or other shucked shellfish should be consumed within three days. Individuals with compromised immune systems should NOT consume raw shellfish.

A Healthy Environment

In the interest of preventing growth of non-native species, shellfish disease and parasites, no shellfish taken from or originating from areas outside of Long Island Sound may be placed, planted, or disposed of in Long Island Sound or its tributaries without written approval of the Connecticut Department of Agriculture, Bureau of Aquaculture. In addition, shellfish should not be harvested from shellfish classification area

and placed in another (e.g. hung from a dock or boat). This could jeopardize the health of the end consumer and can also create the potential of transferring disease and aquatic “hitchhiking” organism to new areas. The introduction of non-native organisms can be damaging to the marine environment.

The following guide summarizes recreational shellfishing information for individual municipalities. The Connecticut Sea Grant Extension Program has made every effort to ensure the accuracy of this information. Contact your local shellfish commission to find out where to purchase shellfishing permits, and to receive notification about shellfish ground closures in your area. Enjoy the season!

Supplementary Information

For additional information on shellfisheries regulations, contact:

CT Department of Agriculture, Bureau of Aquaculture

(203) 874-0696 / fax (203) 783-9979

dept.agric@ct.gov

<http://www.ct.gov/doag>, select “Aquaculture”

For detailed information on access to shellfishing areas in Connecticut, download the Department of Environmental Protection’s Coastal Access Guide:

<http://www.lisrc.uconn.edu/coastalaccess/index.asp>

Publication Reference

Getchis, T. and K. DeRosia-Banick. 2014. A Guide to Recreational Shellfishing in Connecticut. Connecticut Sea Grant College Program. Groton, CT. CTSG-04-06R. 6pp.

<http://web2.uconn.edu/seagrant/publications/fisheries/sfguide.pdf>

COMMON SHELLFISH SPECIES



Eastern Oyster

Crassostrea virginica

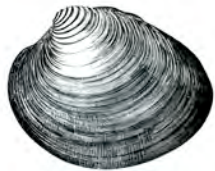
The eastern oyster grows in intertidal and subtidal waters attached to rocks, pilings and shells. Oysters can attain a length of up to six inches.



Surf Clam

Spisula solidissima

Surf clams are common in subtidal sandy areas. These clams can attain a length of up to eight inches.



Northern Quahog, Hard or Round Clam

Mercenaria mercenaria

Quahogs are very common in Long Island Sound. This clam may grow to five inches and to greater than 30 years of age.



Blue Mussel

Mytilus edulis

The edible blue mussel is found throughout Long Island Sound. It attaches to most hard surfaces with its byssal threads.



Soft-shell, or Steamer Clam

Mya arenaria

The soft-shell clam is common in sandy and muddy bottoms. This clam digs a deep burrow and extends its long siphon to the surface to feed.



Bay Scallop

Argopecten irradians

The bay scallop lives in estuaries and is commonly found in eelgrass beds. This scallop lives only two seasons, but its small meat (adductor muscle) is prized.



Razor Clam, or Jackknife Clam

Ensis directus

Razor clams commonly inhabit the same sediment types as soft-shell clams. These clams can grow up to ten inches in length.



Whelks, Conch or Scungilli

Busycon species

Several species of large edible snails are common in Long Island Sound. They are usually found on sandy bottoms. Recreational limit is $\frac{1}{2}$ bushel per day.

RECREATIONAL SHELLFISH PERMIT FEES –These fees apply to the harvest clams, mussels and oysters unless otherwise noted.

TOWN	YEARLY						MONTHLY		WEEKLY		DAILY		EXCEPTIONS
	<i>resident adult</i>	<i>resident senior</i>	<i>resident child</i>	<i>non-resident adult</i>	<i>non-resident senior</i>	<i>non-resident taxpayer</i>	<i>resident adult</i>	<i>non-resident adult</i>	<i>resident adult</i>	<i>non-resident adult</i>	<i>resident adult</i>	<i>non-resident adult</i>	
Branford	5.00	free	under age 16 free*	50.00								10.00	
Darien	20.00	free	under age 16 free*	40.00	40.00								
East Lyme	35.00	25.00	under age 12 free*	50.00	35.00						5.00	15.00	
Fairfield	15.00	10.00		25.00		20.00			5.00 biweekly	10.00 biweekly			
Greenwich	15.00	10.00	1.00 ages 5-13*										
Groton	25.00	10.00		35.00	20.00		12.00	20.00	10.00	15.00	5.00	8.00	Seasonal oyster fee
Guilford	20.00	10.00		75.00	75.00	20.00						25.00	
Madison	20.00	10.00		75.00								25.00	Daily fee only offered for Community Clam Digs
Milford	free	free	free	free	free	free							
Norwalk	12.00	5.00	1.00*	27.00	27.00								
Stamford	10.00	3.00											
Stonington	15.00	free		30.00	10.00								Active duty military \$15.00; Seasonal scallop fee
Waterford	25.00	12.00		35.00	25.00	20.00	15.00		10.00	15.00	8.00	10.00	
WELSCO (Niantic River)	35.00	25.00	under age 12 free*	50.00	35.00						5.00	15.00	Seasonal scallop fee
Westport	30.00	15.00	under age 17 free*	60.00	35.00	Age 65+ \$15.00; Others \$30.00					15.00	15.00	

- Daily harvest limits for one person apply. Child must be with permitted adult.

SHELLFISH SIZE and DAILY LIMIT RESTRICTIONS

TOWN	QUAHOG CLAM		SOFT SHELL		RAZOR CLAM		EASTERN OYSTER		BLUE MUSSEL		BAY SCALLOP	
	size restriction (variable)	harvest limit	size restriction (length)	harvest limit	size restriction (length)	harvest limit	size restriction (length)	harvest limit	size restriction (length)	harvest limit	size restriction	harvest limit
Branford	*	½ bushel	2 inches	¼ bushel	3 inches	⅛ bushel	3 inches	½ bushel	2 inches	¼ bushel		
Darien	1.5 inches	½ bushel	1.5 inches	½ bushel	4 inches	½ bushel	3 inches	½ bushel	2 inches	½ bushel		
East Lyme	*	¼ bushel	1.5 inches	¼ bushel	4 inches	¼ bushel	3 inches	¼ bushel	2 inches	NR		
Fairfield	*	½ bushel	1.5 inches	½ bushel	4 inches	½ bushel	3 inches	½ bushel	2 inches	½ bushel		
Greenwich	*	¼ bushel	1.5 inches	¼ bushel	4 inches	¼ bushel	***	3 inches	1.5 inches	¼ bushel		
Groton	2 inches	¼ bushel	2 inches	¼ bushel			3 inches	30 count	NR	¼ bushel	**	***
Guilford	*	½ bushel	1.5 inches	¼ bushel	3 inches	⅛ bushel	3 inches	½ bushel	NR	¼ bushel		
Guilford (non-resident)	*	¼ bushel	1.5 inches	¼ bushel	3 inches	⅛ bushel	3 inches	¼ bushel	NR	¼ bushel		
Madison	*	¼ bushel	2 inches	¼ bushel	3 inches	¼ bushel	***	***	2 inches	¼ bushel		
Milford	*	½ bushel	1.5 inches	½ bushel	1.5 inches	½ bushel	3 inches	½ bushel	NR	½ bushel		
Norwalk	*	½ bushel	1.5 inches			½ bushel	3 inches	½ bushel	NR	½ bushel	**	½ bushel
Stamford	*	½ bushel										
Stonington	*	½ bushel	1.5 inches	½ bushel	1.5 inches	½ bushel	3 inches	30 count	NR	½ bushel	**	***
Waterford	*	½ bushel	1.5 inches	½ bushel	4 inches	½ bushel						
WELSCO (Niantic River)	*	¼ bushel	1.5 inches	¼ bushel	4 inches	¼ bushel	3 inches	¼ bushel	2 inches	NR	***	***
Westport	*	½ bushel	1.5 inches	½ bushel	4 inches	½ bushel	3 inches	½ bushel	2 inches	½ bushel	-	-

- * May not pass through a ring of one and one-half inches internal diameter and may not be less than one inch in thickness.
- ** Must not pass through a two inch ID ring & must be an adult with a clearly defined growth ring.
- *** Seasonal harvest only, check with town for more information.
- NR** Not restricted

Conversions

- 1 bushel (U.S., dry) = 8 gallons (U.S., dry)
- 1/4 bushel = 1 peck (U.S., dry) = 2 gallons (U.S., dry)
- 1 inch = 2.5 centimeters

CONTACT INFORMATION FOR RECREATIONAL SHELLFISHING

TOWN	COMMISSION CONTACT	INFORMATION HOTLINE	PERMIT LOCATIONS
Branford	Anthony Pulcinella	(203) 315-3909	Town Clerk (Mon-Fri during business hours), shellfish commission members
Darien	David Knauf	(203) 838-9807	Darien Town Hall, Health Department Room 109
East Lyme	Steve Dinsmore/ Don Landers	(860) 739-6233	Local bait and tackle shops, East Lyme Town Hall, Shellfish Warden Office at the State Launch Ramp
Fairfield	Robert Bilek	(203) 256-3074	Conservation Department Office
Greenwich	Roger Bowgen	(203) 622-7777	Town Clerk's Office, Sportsmen's Den in Cos Cob
Groton	Ed Martin	(860) 441-6793	Town Police Station, Town Clerk's office, Ken's Tackle Shop
Guilford	T.R. Brysh	(203) 453-8088	Town Hall, Captain Morgan's Bait & Tackle, Guilford Lobster Pound
Madison	Stephen Nikituk	(203) 245-5600	Town Clerk's Office, Captain Morgan's Bait & Tackle at Beebe Marine Center
Milford	Dept. of Agriculture	(203) 874-0696	Permit is not required in State waters. No charge for shellfishing. Maps available.
Norwalk	Peter Johnson	(203) 838-9807	Norwalk Health Department, Fisherman's World (East Norwalk), Hillers Sports
Stamford	Josh Polur	(203) 977-5889, opt. #2	Town Clerk's Office. Shellfishing is for Stamford residents only.
Stonington	Don Murphy	(860) 599-7575	Don's Dock, Greenhaven Marina, Shaffer's Boat Livery
Waterford	Doug Lawson	(860) 739-6233	Local bait and tackle shops, Waterford Town Hall, Riverside Grocery on Shore Road
WELSCO (Niantic River)	Peter Harris	(860) 739-6233	Local bait and tackle shops, Town Hall, Shellfish Warden Office at the State Launch Ramp
Westport	Ron Silverman	(203) 838-9807 Office: (203) 341-1087	Conservation Department, Westport Town Hall, 100 Myrtle Avenue, Room 205. Westport Outfitters, 609 Riverside Avenue *Permits will be available primarily through a mail-in process. To download an application, visit http://www.westportct.gov , select "Conservation Department" and "Shellfish Commission."