

MASSACHUSETTS
FISH & WILDLIFE
 2015 HUNTING, FISHING, AND TRAPPING SEASONS



For more information on sporting laws and regulations, please refer to the *2015 Massachusetts Fish and Wildlife Guide to Hunting, Fishing, and Trapping* online at www.mass.gov/masswildlife or pick up a copy at sporting license vendor locations across the state.



Fishing

	OPEN SEASON (All Dates Inclusive)	DAILY CREEL	MINIMUM LENGTH ¹
TROUT²			
Lakes, ponds, major rivers ^{3,5,6}	Jan. 1 – Dec. 31	3	–
Housatonic River ⁴	Jan. 1 – Dec. 31	1	20"
All other rivers and brooks	Apr. 1 – Sept. 10 Sept. 11 – Mar. 31, 2016	8 3	–
LAKE TROUT			
Wachusett Reservoir ⁶	(see note 6)	3	–
Quabbin ⁶	(see note 6)	2	18"
SALMON (Landlocked)	Jan. 1 – Dec. 31	2	15"
AMERICAN SHAD⁷ (Connecticut and Merrimack rivers and their tributaries)	Jan. 1 – Dec. 31	3	–
AMERICAN SHAD⁷ (All other waters, catch and release only)	Jan. 1 – Dec. 31	0	–
CHAIN PICKEREL	Jan. 1 – Dec. 31	5	15"
BLACK BASS (Largemouth and Smallmouth, singly or combined):	Jan. 1 – Dec. 31	5	12"
NORTHERN PIKE	Jan. 1 – Dec. 31	1	28"
TIGER MUSKIE (Muskellunge)	Jan. 1 – Dec. 31	1	28"
WALLEYE	Jan. 1 – Dec. 31	5	14"
SMELT⁸	Jan. 1 – Feb. 28 May 16 – Dec. 31	–	–
ALL OTHER FRESHWATER SPECIES	Jan. 1 – Dec. 31	–	–
SNAPPING TURTLE	Jan. 1 – April 31, July 17 – Dec. 30	2	12" shell length

STRIPED BASS and HERRING: For season, size, and possession limits call the **Division of Marine Fisheries** at (617) 626-1520, or visit their website at www.mass.gov/marinefisheries.

POSSESSION OF: Sturgeon (all species), American Brook Lamprey, Atlantic (sea-run) Salmon, Bridle Shiner, Burbot, Eastern Silvery Minnow, Lake Chub, Longnose Sucker, and Northern Redbelly Dace is illegal! **If caught, release immediately.** This means remove hook or cut line and return fish to water **immediately** – do not pose for photographs, place on a stringer, hold in a net, or delay in any way the immediate return and release of these rare fish to the water!

- Minimum length** is measured as the straight line (not curved over the body) from the tip of the snout to the tip of the tail. The tips of any forked tail may be squeezed together for the final measurement.
- Trout** applies to Brook, Brown, Rainbow, and Tiger Trout (a cross between a female Brown and a male Brook Trout). From Apr. 1 to Sept. 10, no more than 8 trout (as defined) may be taken daily, and only 3 of those trout may be from lakes, ponds, or major rivers³. From Sept. 11 to Mar. 31, no more than 3 trout (as defined) may be taken daily.
- Major Rivers:** Childs, Coonamessett, Deerfield, Farmington, Green (Colrain), Green (Great Barrington), Ipswich, Jones, Mashpee, Millers, Nissitissit, North (Colrain), North (West Branch), Parker, Quaboag, Quinapoxet, Quinebaug, Seven Mile, Santuit, Scorton Creek, Shawsheen, Squannacook, Stillwater (Sterling, Princeton), Swift (East Branch), Swift (Winsor Dam to Ware River, except as posted), Tully (East and West Branches), Ware, Ware (East Branch), Westfield (all branches).
- Mainstem Housatonic only**, from the confluence of the East and West Branches to the MA-CT line, exclusive of the catch-and-release areas where no trout may be kept.
- Special Brown Trout water:** South Pond (Quacumquasit), Brookfield. Total daily creel is 3 trout but only 1 may be a Brown Trout and it must be at least 15".
- Quabbin and Wachusett Reservoirs:** Opening and closing dates are set by the Department of Conservation and Recreation. For Quabbin Reservoir visit www.mass.gov/eea/agencies/dcr/massparks/region-central/quabbin-reservoir.html or call (413) 323-7221. For Wachusett/Sudbury Reservoirs visit www.mass.gov/eea/agencies/dcr/water-res-protection/watershed-mgmt/wachusett-and-sudbury-reservoir-fishing-guide.html or call (508) 792-7806. Quabbin Reservoir and its tributary streams within the Quabbin Reservation are **closed to all fishing** except during the open season as set by the Department of Conservation and Recreation. The Wachusett/Sudbury/West Waushacum fishing season normally opens the first Saturday in April and closes Nov. 30, but the DCR/DWSP may alter those dates depending on ice conditions. At Wachusett Reservoir, shoreline fishing only is allowed from Gate 6 on Route 70 to Gate 36 on Route 110.
- American Shad are Catch-and-Release **ONLY** on all waters **except** the Connecticut and Merrimack rivers and their tributaries.
- Smelt** may be taken by hook and line only.

FREE FISHING WEEKEND

June 6 & 7, 2015 —
 No license needed!

Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife | 1 Rabbit Hill Road, Westborough, MA 01581 | 508-389-6300

Visit us at: www.mass.gov/masswildlife Facebook: www.facebook.com/masswildlife Questions?: Contact us at mass.wildlife@state.ma.us

Hunting Seasons & Bag Limits

>> NO HUNTING ON SUNDAY <<

		OPEN SEASON (All Dates Inclusive)	DAILY BAG LIMIT	POSSESSION LIMIT	SEASON LIMIT
BLACK BEAR					
Black Bear	Zones 1-9	Sept. 8 – Sept. 26 Nov. 2 – Nov. 21	See complete <i>2015 Massachusetts Guide to Hunting, Fishing & Trapping</i> .		1
Bear hunting closed during shotgun deer season.					
UPLAND GAME BIRDS*					
Wild Turkey	Spring: Zones 1-13	April 27 – May 23	See complete <i>2015 Massachusetts Guide to Hunting, Fishing & Trapping</i> .		
	Fall: Zones 1-13	Oct. 19 – Oct. 31			
	Youth Hunt: Zones 1-13	April 25 (special restrictions apply**)			
Crow		Jan. 1 – April 10 July 1 – April 9, 2016	–	–	–
Pheasant		Oct. 17 – Nov. 28	2	4	6
	Youth Hunt	See complete <i>2015 Massachusetts Guide to Hunting, Fishing & Trapping</i> .			
Quail	Zones 11-14 only	Oct. 17 – Nov. 28	4	8	20
Ruffed Grouse		Oct. 17 – Nov. 28	3	6	15

Upland game bird hunting is closed during shotgun deer season.

* Migratory game birds (includes waterfowl, woodcock, snipe, rails): Seasons set annually. see *Migratory Game Bird Abstract* posted in late August.

** Must have completed the youth turkey hunt program (See complete *2015 Massachusetts Guide to Hunting, Fishing & Trapping*).

DEER					
Deer	Archery	Oct. 19 – Nov. 28	See complete <i>2015 Massachusetts Guide to Hunting, Fishing & Trapping</i> .		2 Antlered deer + antlerless deer by permit
	Shotgun	Nov. 30 – Dec. 12			
	Primitive Firearms	Dec. 14 – Dec. 31			

RABBITS & SQUIRRELS					
Cottontail Rabbit	Zones 1-12	Jan. 1 – Feb. 28 Oct. 17 – Feb. 29, 2016	5	10	–
	Zones 13 and 14	Jan. 1 – Feb. 28 Nov. 16 – Feb. 29, 2016	5	10	–
Snowshoe Hare	Zones 1-4	Jan. 1 – Feb. 28 Oct. 17 – Feb. 29, 2016	2	4	–
	Zones 5-12	Jan. 1 – Feb. 5 Oct. 17 – Feb. 5, 2016	2	4	–
	Zones 13 and 14	Jan. 1 – Feb. 5 Nov. 16 – Feb. 5, 2016	2	4	–
Jackrabbit	Zone 14	Nov. 16 – Dec. 31	1	2	–
Gray Squirrel	Zones 1-9	Sept. 14 – Jan. 2, 2016	5	10	–
	Zones 10-14	Oct. 17 – Jan. 2, 2016	5	10	–

Rabbit, jackrabbit, hare, and squirrel hunting are closed during shotgun deer season.

FURBEARERS					
Bobcat	Zones 1-8	Jan. 1 – Mar. 7 Dec. 21 – Mar. 8, 2016	–	–	–
Coyote		Jan. 1 – Mar. 7 Oct. 17 – Mar. 8, 2016	–	–	–
Fox (red or gray)		Jan. 1 – Feb. 28 Nov. 2 – Feb. 29, 2016	–	–	–
Raccoon		Jan. 1 – Jan. 31 Oct. 1 – Jan. 30, 2016	3	–	–
Opossum		Jan. 1 – Jan. 31 Oct. 1 – Jan. 30, 2016	–	–	–

Trapping Seasons

TRAPPING SPECIES	OPEN SEASON (All Dates Inclusive)
Bobcat, Coyote, Fox, Weasel	Nov. 1 – Nov. 30
Fisher	Nov. 1 – Nov. 22
Mink, River Otter	Nov. 1 – Dec. 15
Beaver	Jan. 1 – April 15 Nov. 1 – April 15, 2016
Muskrat, Opossum, Raccoon, Skunk	Jan. 1 – Feb. 28 Nov. 1 – Feb. 29, 2016



TO REPORT VIOLATIONS
(800) 632-8075
www.mass.gov/ole