

Stoney Creek Fishing and Hunting Club

July 31, 2026

meeting Fishing Report

Statewide news:

- **NEW:** Striped bass in the Chesapeake Bay and its tidal tributaries are *prohibited from August 1 through August 31*.
 - The Chesapeake Bay recreational striped bass [fishery will reopen](#) from *September 1 through December 5*, at which time anglers may keep one striped bass per person, per day, with a minimum length of 19 inches and a maximum length of 24 inches.

Bay Forecast / Fishing Report

Chesapeake Bay Forecast Summary:

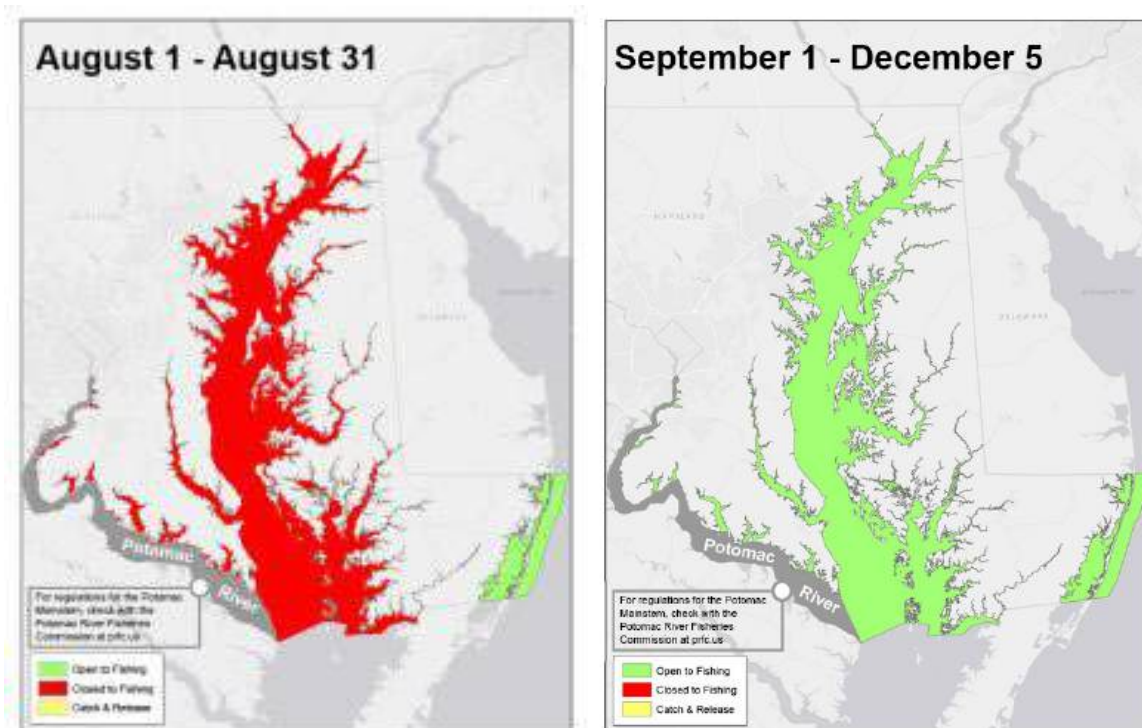
- Main Bay surface and river mouth water temperatures are holding in the low 80s and will likely continue to remain stable all week. [Temperatures in smaller rivers and streams](#) have cooled to the upper 70s.
- *Detailed & up-to-date fishing conditions in your area, refer to checking out Eyes on the Bay's*
 - <https://eyesonthebay.dnr.maryland.gov/eyesonthebay/clickbeforecast.cfm>

Upper/Middle Chesapeake Bay

Rock Fish: The 2026 striped bass *HARVEST season* closure in the Chesapeake Bay and its tidal tributaries are *prohibited from August 1 through August 31. Refer to map below.*

- The Conowingo Dam Pool and the lower Susquehanna River continue to be a draw for upper bay anglers this week. A mix of flathead and blue catfish are being caught by casting and drifting cut bait near the turbine wash area.
 - Anglers are casting a mix of [topwater lures](#), [crankbaits](#) and [paddletails](#) in the dam pool and lower Susquehanna River and catching striped bass and Chesapeake Channa.
 - The same mix is being caught along the edges of the flats during the early morning and late evening hours.

- **Chesapeake Channa**, also known as northern snakeheads, are entertaining anglers in the upper sections of the region's tidal rivers. Shallow grass beds are the most frequented areas for Chesapeake Channa.
 - Soft frogs, [chatterbaits](#), and [buzzbaits](#) cast over shallow grass is one of the best ways to target them.
 - *From spring 2025 through May 2026, more than 450 snakeheads were tagged in tributaries of the upper Bay including the Bush, Elk, Gunpowder, Sassafras, and Susquehanna rivers.*
 - **Reporting a tag comes with a cash reward;** Fish were tagged with either a blue “high reward” tag worth \$200 or yellow tags worth \$10.
 - Anglers must harvest fish and report tags to the USFWS Maryland Fish and Wildlife Conservation Office by phone at 1-800-448-8322. *Anglers may report tagged fish for rewards through December 2026.*



DNR Link to above map: https://dnr.maryland.gov/fisheries/Pages/sb_reg_maps.aspx

Rules regarding the use of Circle Hooks:

https://dnr.maryland.gov/fisheries/pages/recreational/circle_hooks.aspx

Upper/Middle Chesapeake Bay - continue

White Perch and Yellow Perch:

- **White Perch** can be found near structure such as submerged rocks, old piers, docks, bulkheads, and oyster bars near the mouths of the region's tidal rivers.
 - The Chester, Sassafras, Bush, Gunpower, and Magothy rivers are good places to look for spawning runs of white perch.
 - Small jig heads in the 1/16 to 1/8 size range tipped with a grass shrimp, lip-hooked minnow, or a piece of bloodworm.

Bluefish: Continue to be a good fishing option in the middle Bay.

- They can be caught by drifting cut bait in a chum slick, trolling [surge tube lures](#) or [Drone spoons](#), or casting into breaking fish.

Spanish Mackerel: A small number have shown up in the lower Maryland waters and may move into the middle Bay soon.

- Trolling with gold Clark spoons and various colored [Drone spoons](#) behind inline weights at about 7 knots will be the best way to target them, unless breaking fish can be encountered. Casting metal jigs with a rapid retrieve is the best option when casting to breaking Spanish mackerel. A slower retrieve will allow bluefish to chase down a lure.

Blue Catfish: Blue catfish can be found in all the region's tidal rivers and out in the Bay south to the Bay Bridge (Sandy Point).

- The largest blue cats can be found at the mouth of the Susquehanna River and Conowingo Dam pool, the lower Chester River, and out in the Bay.
- The point that locals call "the rip" at Sandy Point State Park is an excellent spot to fish for blue catfish with medium duty surf fishing gear.
 - Various cut baits, chicken pieces and especially scented baits work very well on [fish finder rigs](#) and [circle hooks](#).
 - Towards the evening hours the blue catfish have been moving to shallower shelves and flats of about 15 feet.

Snake Head/Chesapeake Channa:

- The waters in the upper sections of the tidal rivers and tidal creeks are warming, and anglers are starting to catch Chesapeake Channa (northern snakeheads) in the afternoon hours on the sunny shorelines where waters are warmer.
 - White [paddletails](#) and frogs are the most popular lure to cast.
 - Large minnows under a [popping cork or bobber](#) are also an excellent choice.

Freshwater news:

NEW - Maryland Freshwater Hot Spots link:

<https://dnr.maryland.gov/fisheries/pages/hotspots/index.aspx>

Maryland's spring [trout stocking](#) season is now complete and DNR web-link below.

- <https://dnr.maryland.gov/fisheries/Pages/trout/stocking.aspx>

Chesapeake Channa, aka snakeheads, will also be found in the grass bed areas in tidal waters, and many are beginning to spawn. Noisy and disruptive [topwater lures](#) are a good choice to attract the attention of parent fish who may be protective of eggs or fry balls.

Reservoirs:

- Piney Reservoir revealed that some of the **Saugeye** that were stocked as fingerlings a few years ago have reached sizes of 24" or more.
 - Saugeye is a hybrid (Sauger and Walleye) that are perch-like with both spined fins and sharp teeth.
- Liberty and Triadelphia reservoirs hold true strain walleyes and a wide range of desirable fish species for anglers.

Deep Creek Lake and Potomac River water temperatures are about 60 degrees this week.

- Smallmouth bass and walleye have completed their spawning activities and are active in the upper Potomac River and Deep Creek Lake. Water flows in the upper Potomac River are very low and the water clear. Long casts with light lines will often bring the best results when casting near current breaks and underwater ledges.
- Walleye season opened on April 15 with a minimum size of 15 inches and creel of five per day, with a protected slot of 18-21 inches. The upper Potomac River flows are very low this week, and smallmouth bass are spawning.
- **Link to Eyes on Deep Creek:**
<https://eyesonthebay.dnr.maryland.gov/dcl/DeepCreekLake.cfm>

2026 – Online Fishing Regulations:

https://www.eregulations.com/assets/docs/resources/MD/26MDFW_LR.pdf

- **NEW online licensing link:**
<https://news.maryland.gov/dnr/2025/06/24/new-md-outdoors-licensing-system-now-online/>
- **NEW:** The Maryland Department of Natural Resources has developed a [striped bass habitat conditions](#) mapping tool that uses our newly developed water temperature and dissolved oxygen-based thresholds for Maryland's resident striped bass. *Use Eyes on the Bay for the latest updates.*
 - **Eyes on the Bay:**
<https://eyesonthebay.dnr.maryland.gov/eyesonthebay/StripedBassHabitatConditions.cfm>

Public Access Map: Find Your Perfect Fishing Spot (NEW)

Anglers searching for a new spot should check out the [Public Angler Access Map](#), an interactive map that shows access locations, waterbodies, fish species available, amenities, as well as regulation and license

- Best viewed on desktop, filtering options can help to zero in on what you want to catch and where you can catch it.

NEW online map highlights fishing opportunities for gamefish species in reservoirs, lakes, and ponds with public access.

- <https://dnr.maryland.gov/fisheries/pages/hotspots/index.aspx>

- The traditional [Trout Fishing](#) Opening Day is this **Saturday, March 28.**
 - The [creel limit for trout](#) in these areas (except for brook trout) is a combined five daily harvest and 10 possession.
 - **Go to links for more information.**
- **2026 SPRING trout stocking program** *schedule is out and located on the DNR trout stocking website* – ATTACHED.
 - <https://dnr.maryland.gov/fisheries/pages/trout/stocking.aspx>
 - Over 26K fish have been released over the past two weeks.
 - **Recommend everyone review the latest trout regulations.**
 - **Location opening dates, catch and release and limits.**

- *DNR has introduced a two online links to show lakes and ponds locations/hot spots.*
 - **Freshwater Fisheries Fishing Lakes and Ponds webpage.**
 - *The online map highlights fishing opportunities for gamefish species in reservoirs, lakes, and ponds with public access.*
 - <https://dnr.maryland.gov/fisheries/pages/hotspots/index.aspx>
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<https://dnr.maryland.gov/fisheries/pages/hotspots/index.aspx>

Maryland DNR News and Good to Know information:

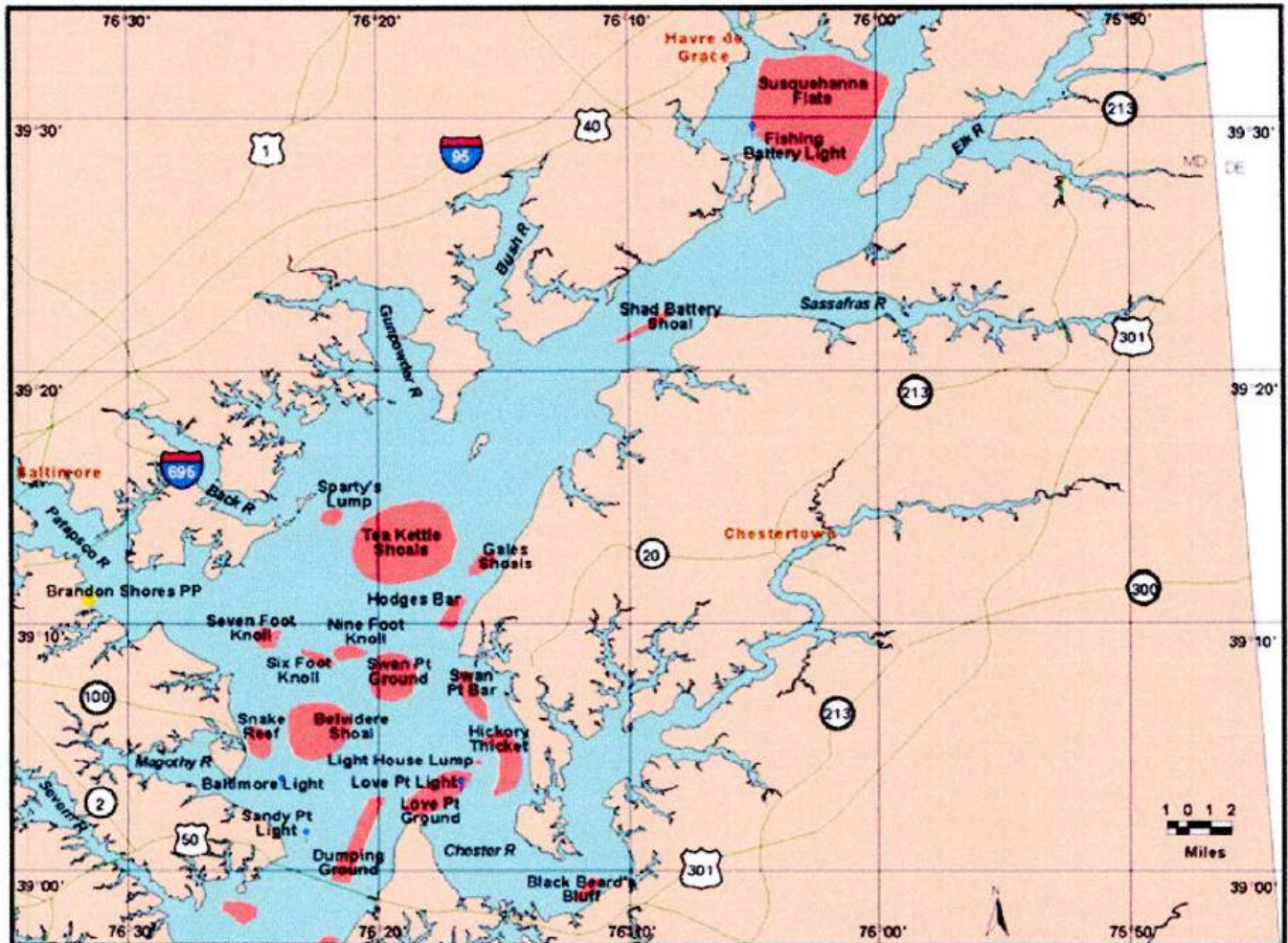
- The Secretary of the [Maryland Department of Natural Resources](#) announces the following seasons, catch limits, size limits and commercial quotas for 2026. These notices will become effective 12:01 a.m. January 1, 2026.
 - *Click each NOTICE below to view the full details, which will open the NOTICE off the DNR website.*

Summary of notice notes below

- [2026 Summer Flounder Fishery](#)
 - **2026 Summer Flounder Fishery — Effective 1/1/2026**
 - 12:01 a.m. January 1, 2026:
 - The season is open January 1, 2026 – December 31, 2026
 - **RECREATIONAL MINIMUM SIZE**
 - January 1, 2026 – May 31, 2026: 16 inches
 - June 1, 2026 – December 31, 2026: 17-1/2 inches
 - RECREATIONAL CATCH LIMIT
 - 4 fish/person/day
- [2026 Recreational Bluefish Fishery](#)
 - **2026 Recreational Bluefish Fishery — Effective 1/1/2026**
 - Effective 12:01 a.m. January 1, 2026:
 - Recreational anglers fishing from shore or private boats can keep up to 5 bluefish per

- person per day.
 - Recreational anglers fishing from for-hire boats can keep up to 7 bluefish per person per day.
 - The minimum size is 8 inches.
 - There is no closed season.
- **2026 Yellow Perch Recreational Catch Limit**
 - **2026 Yellow Perch Recreational Catch Limit – Effective 1/8/2026**
 - Effective 12:01 a.m. January 8, 2026, except for reservoirs, lakes, ponds, impoundments, and waters upstream of them, the recreational daily catch and possession limit for yellow perch is five fish per person per day. This notice supersedes any public notice affecting the yellow perch recreational catch limit issued prior to January 8, 2026.
 - WHY THIS IS NECESSARYcontinue on next page.
 - This action is necessary because yellow perch are experiencing a period of low recruitment that has occurred over the last six years. Reducing the harvest of larger females may improve the chance of spawning success. This action for the recreational fishery equitably manages the burden of reduced harvests experienced by the commercial fisheries reduction in quota
- **2026 Recreational Black Sea Bass Fishery**
 - 2026 Recreational Black Sea Bass Fishery — Effective 1/1/2026
 - ***The Secretary of the Maryland Department of Natural Resources announces the recreational season for black sea bass is closed from January 1, 2026 through May 14, 2026.***
 - A subsequent notice will establish the rules for the remainder of the season at a later date.
- **2026 Recreational Cobia Fishery**
 - **2026 Recreational Cobia Fishery — Effective 1/1/2026**
 - Effective 12:01 a.m.
 - **January 1, 2026: The season is open June 15, 2026, through September 20, 2026. It is closed all other dates.**
 - • Recreational anglers may keep:
 - 1 cobia per person per day; or

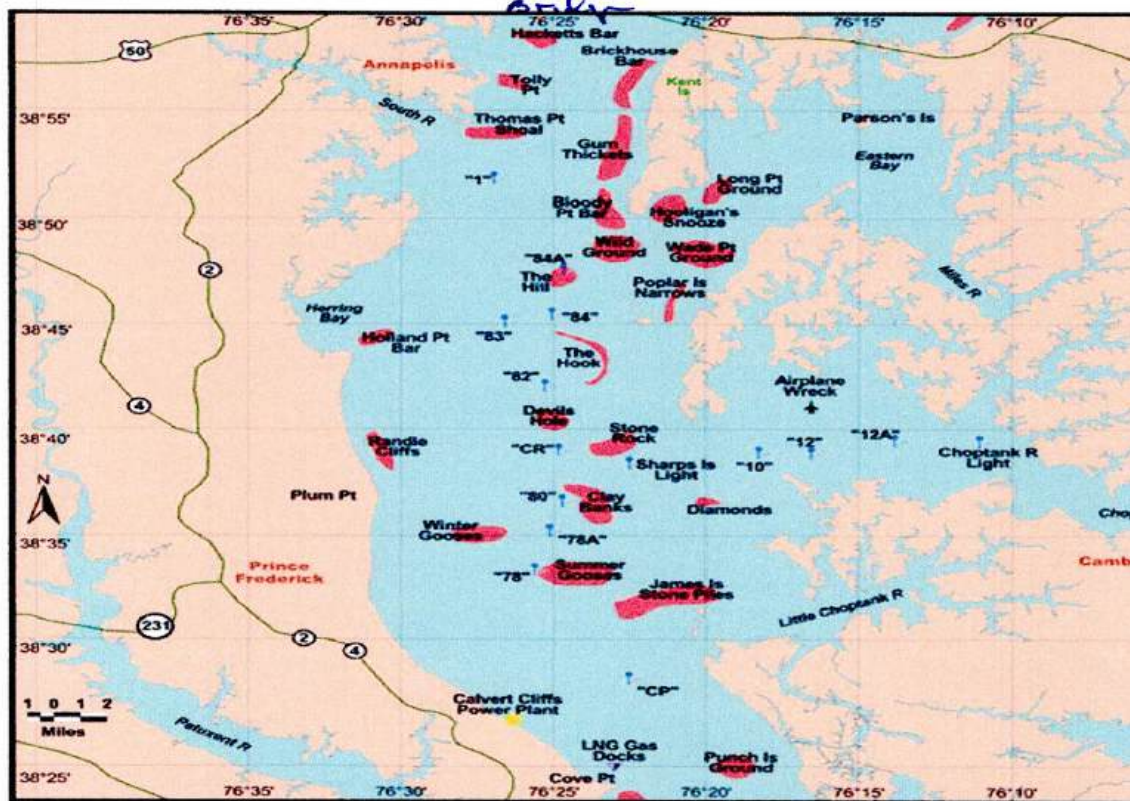
- Up to 2 cobia per vessel per day if there are 2 or more individuals on the vessel.
- The recreational minimum size for cobia is 43 inches total length.



Upper Bay

Fishing Locations

HWY 50 / Bay Bridge



Middle Bay

Fishing Locations

BAITs – Gear - Times

Rock Fish:

- *Jerkbait*s fished along the rocks and Jigging three-to-five-inch soft plastics and straight tails are working well.
- **Jigging three to five inch White and Chartreuse tandems soft plastics are working well.**
- [Live lining spot](#) or [trolling](#) are good.

White Perch:

- Fishing grass shrimp and pieces of bloodworm on a simple bottom rig fished close to a dock, or casting small spinners and soft plastic baits *during the early morning and evening hours along shorelines.*
 - When fishing off docks, a simple bottom rig with a number 2 or 4 hooks, a one-ounce sinker and grass shrimp or pieces of bloodworm for bait.
- Peeler crab has been an excellent bait, but small [spinnerbaits](#) and spin-jigs have also been effective.

Blue Catfish:

- A variety of cut baits work well; white perch, gizzard shad, menhaden, and American eel are excellent baits, but chicken parts and scented baits also work well. *A fish finder rig or sliding sinker rig with a small float in front of a 5/0 to 7/0 circle hook is the most popular rig for fishing blue catfish.*

Snakeheads:

- Casting white paddletails and chatterbaits near emerging grass and shoreline submerged brush is a good tactic. *Often the sunny side of creeks during the afternoon hours is a good place to target fish seeking slightly warmer waters.*

Walleye:

- Casting a mix of swimbaits, flukes and small crankbaits with good results.

Largemouth Bass:

- A mix of spinnerbaits, lipless crankbaits, swimbaits, flukes, and jerkbaits are all good choices to use.

Crappie:

- Rigging small minnows or marabou jigs under a slip bobber and fishing close to structure.



Step 8 - Go fishing and catch fish!

Putting it all together

The whole purpose of this process is to help you find the best places to fish.

1. First learn about where your fish live and preferred conditions.
2. Next, pull out your Chesapeake Bay charts and a marker.
3. Now visit your regional websites with current oxygen, salinity, temperature and water clarity conditions.
4. As you move through each step, continue to cross off unsuitable areas on your chart.
5. Now in the remaining areas on your chart, begin highlighting prime habitat.
6. At this point, find moving water by checking your tide charts, wind conditions and flow at these prime areas.

You have now identified the best places to find fish right now, not last week or last month, but **right now**.

The last step, and most fun, is to go fishing and catch a bunch of fish!

And when you do, don't forget to take photos and submit them to the Angler's Log!



Other great fishing resources from Maryland Department of Natural Resources:

- ↴ [Fishing Access](#)
- ↴ [Boat Ramps / Water Access](#)
- ↴ [Fishing Report](#)
- ↴ [Angler's Log](#)
- ↴ [Fishing License Information](#)
- ↴ [Fish Consumption Advisory Map](#)