



RECREATIONAL HOOK AND LINE/ANGLING LAWS

COMAR

08.02.05.01

.01 Methods of Fishing in Tidal Waters.

G. Bait. A person may not use eels as bait while fishing with hook and line in the tidal waters of the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries, except for a recreational, charter, or commercial hook and line fisherman authorized to participate in, and fish during summer and fall striped bass seasons established in COMAR 08.02.15.

F. Upstream of a line drawn from the northernmost point of the mouth of Deer Creek in Harford County in a northeasterly direction to the intersection of US Route 222 and Canal Road in Cecil County, a person may not:

- (1) Take a fish by snagging;
- (2) Fish with a dip net; or
- (3) Harass, harm, pursue, hunt, shoot, wound, or attempt to catch striped bass except during an open striped bass season as designated in COMAR 08.02.15.

08.02.05.02

.02 Definitions and General Fishing Prohibitions.

A. Definitions. In this subtitle, the following terms have the meanings indicated:

- (3) "Circle hook" means a non-offset hook with the point turned perpendicularly back to the shank.
- (13) "Hook and line" means a line attached to a pole or rod or held in hand and attended in a manner that the fish is caught by the hook.
- (15) "J hook" means a hook having a point parallel to the hook shank.
- (20) "Offset hook" means a hook with the point and barb not in the same plane with the shank.
- (23) "Stinger hook" means any hook which trails another hook, either by direct physical attachment to the lead hook or by a connective device such as a swivel or chain, and is part of the same bait or lure.

B. Prohibitions and Limitations on Fishing in General.

- (3) Within 1,200 feet of any pier that supports either span of the William Preston Lane Jr. Memorial Bay Bridge, a person may not:
 - (a) Fish with a treble hook that is not an intrinsic part of a floating fish lure
- (5) During the period March 1 through May 31, a person may not catch, harass, harm, pursue, hunt, shoot, wound, or attempt to catch striped bass or striped bass hybrids in the striped bass spawning rivers and areas listed in COMAR 08.02.15.03B. However, during the period March 1 through May 3, inclusive, a person authorized in accordance with Natural Resources Article, §4-745, Annotated Code of Maryland, to recreationally angle for finfish may hook striped bass and shall immediately release the striped bass unharmed to the water from which the striped bass was taken in the following areas:
 - (a) Susquehanna Flats, upstream of a line from a point at or near Sandy Point, defined by Lat. 39°26.96' N and Long. 76°03.63' W; then running in an easterly direction to a point at or near Turkey Point, defined by Lat. 39°27.13' N and Long. 76°00.70' W and the Susquehanna River downstream from a line connecting a point at or near the Susquehanna State Park boat ramp in Lapidum, defined by Lat. 39°35.86' N and Long. 76°07.67' W; then running in a northeasterly direction to a point at or near Twin Rocks, defined by Lat.

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39°36.17' N and Long. 76°07.56' W; then running in a northeasterly direction to a point at or near Tomes Wharf in Port Deposit, defined by Lat. 39°36.23' N and Long. 76°06.99' W; and
(b) Northeast River.

(6) When using fish, crabs, or worms as bait, or processed bait, a person recreationally angling in the Susquehanna Flats and Northeast River during the period set forth in §B(5) of this regulation shall use:

(a) Non-offset circle hooks; or

(b) "J" hooks with a gap of less than 1/2 inch between the point and the shank.

(15) General Provisions.

(a) The Secretary may close designated areas to hook and release activity by publishing notice in a daily newspaper of general circulation, at least 48 hours in advance of the closure, stating the effective hour and date.

08.02.05.04

.04 Legal Size of White Perch.

In the waters of the State, a person may not catch, sell, offer to buy or sell, expose for sale, or possess white perch less than 8 inches, if caught other than by hook or line.

08.02.05.19

.19 Black Bass—Largemouth Bass and Smallmouth Bass.

C. Gear Restrictions.

(1) An individual may not catch black bass in any manner in the tidal waters of the State except with rod or hook and line using natural or artificial baits.

08.02.05.28

.28 Walleye.

A. Recreational Fishery.

(1) Size Limit. An individual may not catch or possess, in tidal waters, walleye less than 15 inches total length.

(2) Season. Recreational fishing of walleye is permitted year round in tidal waters.

C. General.

(1) An individual may use only hook and line to catch walleye.

08.02.06.01

.01 Snapping Turtles.

C. Methods of Taking Snapping Turtles.

(1) A person may not catch a snapping turtle from the waters of the State by the use of a hook and line, trot line, bow and arrow, spear, gig or gig iron, or any other device capable of piercing any part of a turtle.

08.02.11.08

.08 Special Regulations for Deer Creek and Swan Creek.

A. Manner of Fishing. Subject to the provisions of §C of this regulation, a person may catch or attempt to catch fish in Deer Creek and Swan Creek only by hook and line, with the line held in hand, attached to a pole or rod held in hand, or attended in a manner that the fish voluntarily takes bait or lure in its mouth.

08.02.20.02

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.02 Bait Finfish.

C. Methods.

(1) An individual who is not licensed in accordance with Natural Resources Article, §4-701, Annotated Code of Maryland, may use only the following gear and methods, defined in COMAR 08.02.05, to catch bait finfish from the tidal waters of the State:

- (a) Cast net;
- (b) Dip net;
- (c) Minnow seine;
- (d) Hook and line; and
- (e) Minnow trap.

08.02.22.02

.02 Recreational Shark Fishery

E. Gear. A recreational angler may catch sharks using only:

- (1) Handlines retrieved by hand, not by mechanical means; or
- (2) Rod and reel.

F. General.

- (1) A recreational angler may not sell, barter, or trade sharks or shark pieces.
- (2) When aboard a vessel, a recreational angler is bound by the more restrictive vessel-fishing possession limits described in §D(2) of this regulation, regardless of the location where the shark was caught.
- (3) A shark that is transported by a vessel is considered "boat assisted" and is regulated under the more restrictive vessel-fishing possession limits described in §D(2) of this regulation, regardless of where it was caught.
- (4) All sharks harvested by a recreational angler shall have heads, tails, and fins attached naturally to the carcass through landing.

08.03.11.09

.09 Unlawful Methods for Taking from the Wild.

A. A person may not take any reptile or amphibian regulated by this chapter by:

- (2) The use of a hook and line, trot line, bow and arrow, spear, gig or gig iron, or any other device capable of piercing any part of the reptile or amphibian;

STATUTES

§4-601. "Angling" defined.

"Angling" means catching or attempting to catch fish by hook and line, with the line held in hand, attached to a pole or rod held in hand, or attended in a manner that the fish voluntarily takes bait or lure in its mouth.

§4-617. Restrictions on fishing in nontidal waters.

- (a) *Use of rods, lines, and hooks.* - Except when fishing through ice, a person may not angle with more than three rods and lines with two hooks to each line. Artificial lures or plugs with multiple or gang hooks are considered one unit.
- (d) *Restrictions on use of bush-bobs or bank poles.* -

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(2) Bush-bobs or bank poles not exceeding a total of 25 in all and not exceeding one hook to a pole or bob may be used only in the waters of the Potomac or Monocacy River within Carroll, Washington, and Frederick counties.

§4-704. License to catch finfish.

(a) *Required.*- A person may not catch or attempt to catch finfish in the tidal waters of the State by the use of any net or other device except hook and line, dip net operated by hand, spear gun, or bow and arrow pursuant to the provisions of this subtitle unless he possesses a valid license to catch finfish issued by the Department.

§4-714. Fishing restrictions – Anne Arundel County.

(a) Coxes' Creek, Furnace Branch Creek and Marley Creek.- A person may only fish with a rod, or hook, and line in the waters of Coxes' Creek, Furnace Branch Creek, or Marley Creek above the B. and O. Bridge.

(b) *Magothy and Little Magothy Rivers; Bodkin Creek.*-

(2) A person may fish only with rod, or hook, and line, in the waters of the Little Magothy River and its tributaries and in the Magothy River and its tributaries lying westerly of the mouth of the Magothy River and inside a line drawn 214 degrees true from extreme end of Mountain Point to Persimmon Point, referring to the last edition of the Coast and Geodetic Survey Chart No. 566.

(3) A person may fish only with rod, or hook and line, in the waters of Bodkin Creek and tributaries lying westerly and inside of a line drawn 340 degrees true from extreme end of Cedar Point to Old Landen Point, referring to the latest edition of the Coast and Geodetic Survey Chart No. 549.

(c) *Severn River and Severn Run.*-

(1) During February, March, and April, a person may not catch fish by any means in the waters of the Severn River or Severn Run from the dividing line between tidal and nontidal waters to a point 2400 feet downstream.

(2) A person may fish only with rod, or hook and line in the waters of the Severn River or any creek, cove, tributary, or inlet of the Severn River. A line drawn from the extreme projection of Greenberry Point into the Chesapeake Bay to the extreme point of Horn Point, marks the mouth of the Severn River for the purpose of the title.

§4-715. Fishing restrictions – Baltimore County.

(a) Fishing during duck season.- A person may not fish with rod or hook and line from any kind of boat or float, or fish with nets of any kind within 1500 feet of any occupied duck blind for the period beginning two days prior to the open season, as promulgated by the Department of Interior of the United States for hunting wild waterfowl, and ending the day following the closing of the season in the following waters:

(1) Back River, except in the portion lying west of a line drawn from Stansbury's Point on the south shore to Walnut Point on the north shore;

(2) Bird River and its tributaries lying within Baltimore County;

(3) Dark Head Creek, except in the portion lying north of a line drawn from Clark Point on the west shore directly across the creek to Sharp Point on Bull Neck Shore;

(4) Frog Mortar Creek, except in the portion lying northerly of a line drawn from Strawberry Point on the west shore to Weiskettle's Landing on the east shore;

(5) Gunpowder River and its tributaries lying within Baltimore County;

(6) Hogpen Creek, except in the portion lying southwest of natural headlands marking entrance into the creek;

(7) Middle River, except in the portion lying west of a line drawn from Clark Point, also known as Maryland Yacht Club Point, on the north shore to the point of shore directly south of Clark Point;

(8) Norman Creek, except in the portion lying west of a line drawn from Cape May Beach on the south shore to Barren Point on the north shore;

(9) Seneca Creek, except in the portion lying northwest of a line drawn from Gun Point on the north shore directly south to Blackberry or Flying Point on the south shore;

(10) Seneca River; Saltpeter Creek; Dundee Creek and in the waters of their tributaries;

(11) Stansbury's Creek, except in the portion lying northwest of a line drawn from Wilson Point on south shore to Strawberry Point on north shore; and

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(12) Sue Creek, except in the portion lying west of a line drawn from the northeasternmost point of Sue's Island to extremity of Rockaway Beach Road at the southern tip of Turkey Point.

(c) *Bird River*.- A person may not fish with rod, hook and line or a net in the waters of Bird River between November 1 and January 31, both dates inclusive. A person shall remove every net or stake used for taking fish before midnight on October 31.

§4-717. Fishing restrictions – Cecil County.

(c) Fishing in certain waters before and during duck season.- A person may not catch fish by means of hook and line in the tidal waters of the following tributaries of the Chesapeake Bay in Cecil County, Mill Creek, Furnace Bay, North East River, Elk River, or Bohemia River two days prior to and extending until the closing day of the regular ducking season as promulgated by the Department of Interior of the United States. This subsection does not prohibit ice fishing at any time nor catching fish by means of hook and line from the shore line, docks, or wharves, or fishing by any means on Sundays during the regular ducking season.

§ 4-719. Fishing restrictions - Dorchester County.

(e) Cabin Creek, Warwick River, Goose Creek, and Indian Creek.- A person may fish only with hook and line, eel pot, or gill net with at least a three-inch mesh in the following waters:

- (1) Cabin Creek above a line drawn from the residence of Joseph Era in a northeasterly direction to the residence on the opposite side on what is known as the Travers Farm;
- (2) Warwick River above a line drawn from the east end of a sand bar extending from the Hughlett Farm in a northerly direction across the river to the nearest point of marsh on Warwick Manor; and
- (3) Goose Creek and Indian Creek.

§4-727. Fishing restrictions – Worcester County.

(c) *Herring Creek*.- A person may only fish with a rod, or hook and line in the waters of Herring Creek which lie south of the State Road Bridge.

§ 4-731. Sale, purchase, or transportation of striped bass or rockfish.

(a) Selling and transporting.-

(2) However, a nonresident of the State who has caught striped bass from State waters by hook and line may transport across a boundary of the State not more than 100 pounds of striped bass on any day for any purpose other than sale

§ 4-735. Fishing restrictions - Black bass and chain pickerel.

(a) Chain pickerel - Creel limit.- During the open season, a person may not catch by means of rod, or hook and line, more than ten chain pickerel in any one day.

(c) Chain pickerel - Manner of catching; use of seines.- A person may not catch chain pickerel in any manner in the tidal waters of the State except with rod, or hook and line using natural or artificial baits. A person shall return uninjured immediately to the water any chain pickerel caught in any net, seine, or other device legally engaged in other fishing. However, a person may retain no more than one day's legal creel limit of ten chain pickerel for his own private use during the open season

(d) *Chain pickerel - Transportation into or out of State*.- Chain pickerel may not be transported into or out of the State during April, May, and June. Anglers, however, may possess and transport chain pickerel caught with rod, or hook and line, in accordance with the provisions of this section. This subsection does not prevent shipment in interstate commerce of live chain pickerel for propagating, breeding, or stocking purposes under [§ 4-11A-21 of this](#) title, nor prevent any person from catching or engaging in catching chain pickerel for propagating or restocking the waters of the State under the direction of the Department under [§ 4-410 of this](#) title.

§ 4-738. Fishing restrictions - Snapping turtles.

(a) Restrictions in Charles County.- A person may not catch or attempt to catch snapping turtles in the tributary waters of Charles County from April 15 to May 31, inclusive. A person may not use hook and line and trotline to catch snapping turtles in these waters.

§ 4-740. Fishing restrictions - Walleyed pike.

(a) Method of catching; season.- A person may catch walleyed pike, commonly known as Susquehanna salmon, only by rod, or hook and line at any time in the tidal waters of the State. The open season for catching walleyed pike for commercial purposes is from March 15 to November 30.

(b) Transportation and possession.- A person may not sell, purchase, offer to purchase, possess, or deliver to any private or common carrier for transportation, walleyed pike caught in the tidal waters of the State during the closed commercial season. A private or common carrier may not accept for transportation, and a person may not transport, carry, or cause to be transported, or carried by any means walleyed pike caught in the tidal waters of the State during the closed commercial season.

(c) Exception.- Any person may possess or transport walleyed pike caught by rod, or hook and line, at any time during the year.

§ 4-745. Chesapeake Bay sport fishing license.

(c) Persons not required to have license.- A person may fish for finfish in the Chesapeake Bay or its tidal tributaries without a Chesapeake Bay sport fishing license if the person:

(4) Is fishing with a hook and line from a public bridge or public pier that has been designated by the Department as a free fishing area;