

**Madison County**

Hot Springs: Spring Creek (N.C. 209 bridge at Hot Springs city limits to iron bridge at end of Andrews Avenue) [Delayed Harvest Trout Waters regulations apply]

**McDowell County**

Old Fort: Mill Creek (U.S. 70 bridge to the I-40 bridge) [Delayed Harvest Trout Waters regulations apply]

**Mitchell County**

Bakersville: Cane Creek (N.C. 226 bridge to S.R. 1189 bridge) [Delayed Harvest Trout Waters regulations apply]

Spruce Pine: North Toe River (U.S. 19E bridge to N.C. 226 bridge) [Delayed Harvest Trout Waters regulations apply]

**Yancey County**

Burnsville: South Toe River (property boundaries of the Yancey County Toe River Campground) [Hatchery Supported Trout Waters regulations apply]

**Trout Fishing on Game Lands**

- All waters on the game lands listed below are Public Mountain Trout Waters and are classified as Wild Trout Waters, except as noted:
  - Cold Mountain Game Land in Haywood Co.
  - Dupont State Forest Game Land in Henderson and Transylvania counties, except Little River from 100 yards downstream of Hooker Falls downstream to the Dupont State Forest boundary, Lake Imaging, Lake Dense, Lake Alfred, Lake Julia, and Fawn Lake.
  - Green River Game Land in Henderson and Polk counties, excluding Green River downstream of the natural gas pipeline crossing.
  - Nantahala National Forest Game Land in Cherokee, Clay, Graham, Jackson, Macon, Swain and Transylvania counties, except Cheoah River downstream of Santeetlah Reservoir and Cherokee Lake.
  - Pisgah National Forest Game Land in Avery, Buncombe, Burke, Caldwell, Haywood, Henderson, Madison, McDowell, Mitchell, Transylvania and Yancey counties, except Grogan Creek, North Fork Catawba River downstream of the mouth of Armstrong Creek, Big Laurel Creek downstream from the U.S. 25-70 bridge to the French Broad River, Mill Ridge Pond, Nolichucky River, Pigeon River downstream of Waterville Reservoir to the Tennessee state line, and Spring Creek below USFS Road 223.
  - Pond Mountain Game Land in Ashe Co.
  - **Rendezvous Mountain State Forest Game Land in Wilkes Co.**
  - South Mountains Game Land in Cleveland and Rutherford counties.
  - Three Top Mountain Game Land in Ashe Co.
  - Thurmond Chatham Game Land in Wilkes Co.
  - Toxaway Game Land in Transylvania Co.

**Trout Fishing on the Blue Ridge Parkway** Angling opportunities on the Blue Ridge Parkway are managed by the National Park Service which establishes fishing regulations for parkway waters. The Wildlife Resources Commission aides with management by stocking catchable-size trout into the following waters:

| County    | Water           |
|-----------|-----------------|
| Alleghany | Brush Creek     |
| Alleghany | Big Pine Creek  |
| Alleghany | Meadow Fork     |
| Avery     | Linville River  |
| Buncombe  | Swannanoa River |
| Watauga   | Price Lake      |

Specific fishing regulations are displayed on signs located near fishing access points, and all persons age 16 or older must possess a valid North Carolina or Virginia fishing license to fish parkway waters. In addition, the parkway provides wild and catch-and-release trout fishing, as well as, angling for bass and sunfish.

For more information on fishing in parkway waters, contact: Blue Ridge Parkway, 199 Hemphill Knob Road, Asheville, NC 28803. Telephone: 828-271-4779, or at their website: <http://www.nps.gov/blri/parkmgmt/lawsandpolicies.htm>.

**Trout Fishing on North Carolina State Parks** Fishing in waters within a state park is limited to park operating hours. Additional park information may be obtained at [ncparks.gov](http://ncparks.gov) or by contacting the following park offices:

- South Mountains State Park 828-433-4772
- Stone Mountain State Park 336-957-8185
- Gorges State Park 828-966-9099

**NONGAME FISH**

Any fish not classified as a game fish is considered a nongame fish when found in inland fishing waters and includes shellfish and crustaceans.

**Manner of Taking Nongame Fish**

- Nongame fish may be taken by hook and line or by grabbing; no fish may be taken by snagging. Special devices may be used to take nongame fish with proper licenses (see “Special Fishing Devices,” page 30) in those counties and waters with open seasons (see “Seasons and Waters” pages 31–35).
- Nongame fishes may be taken year-round with archery equipment (see page 42) under any license that authorizes basic hunting or inland fishing privileges in waterfowl impoundments located entirely on game lands and in all inland fishing waters other than the impounded waters on the Sandhills Game Land, Public Mountain Trout Waters, and reservoirs with restrictions on taking grass carp listed on page 29.
- For special rules governing trotlines, see “Trotlines, Set-hooks and Jug-hooks” (page 18).
- Crab pots may not be used in inland fishing waters or in designated waterfowl impoundments located on game lands, except that persons owning property adjacent to the inland fishing waters of coastal rivers and their tributaries may set two crab pots attached to their property and a special device license is not required.
- Blue crabs may be taken recreationally with a single line with multiple baits without hooks (see restrictions under “Taking Nongame Fish, Crustaceans, and Mollusks for Bait or Personal Consumption” below).

**Hook-and-Line Regulations for Nongame Fish**

- \* Season: Year-round
- \* Minimum size limit: None
- \* Daily creel limit: None

**The following exceptions apply:**

- The daily creel limit on channel, white and blue catfish (forked-tail catfish) is six fish in all game lands ponds and in the following waters:
 

|           |                                 |
|-----------|---------------------------------|
| Alamance  | Cedarrock Park Pond             |
| Alexander | Ellendale Community Center Pond |
| Buncombe  | Azalea Park Pond                |
|           | Charles Owen Park Pond          |
|           | Lake Julian                     |
|           | Lake Tomahawk                   |
| Cabarrus  | Frank Liske Park Pond           |
|           | TN Spencer Park Pond            |

|             |  |
|-------------|--|
| Cumberland  | Lake Rim*  |
| Edgecombe   | Etheridge Pond*<br>Indian Lake<br>Newbold Pond*  |
| Forsyth     | CG Hill Memorial Park Pond<br>Kernersville Lake<br>Village Point Lake<br>Winston Park Pond*                                      |
| Gaston      | Dallas Park Pond<br>George Poston Park Pond  |
| Granville   | Lake Devin   |
| Guilford    | Bur-Mill Park Ponds<br>Country Park Pond<br>Hagan Stone Park Ponds<br>Keeley Park Ponds<br>Oka T Hester Pond                     |
| Lee         | San-Lee Park Ponds   |
| Lenoir      | Neuseway Nature Center Pond  |
| Mecklenburg | Freedom Park Pond*<br>Hornet's Nest Park Pond<br>McAlpine Lake<br>Robbins Park Ponds<br>Squirrel Lake                            |
| Moore       | Lake Luke Marion   |
| Orange      | Anderson Community Park Pond<br>Lake Michael   |
| Pitt        | River Park North Ponds   |
| Polk        | Laughter Pond  |
| Richmond    | Ellerbe Community Lake<br>Hamlet City Lake<br>Hinson Lake  |
| Rowan       | Dan Nicholas Park Pond<br>Salisbury Community Park Lake  |
| Stanly      | Albemarle City Lake  |
| Surry       | Big Elkin Creek<br>Tumbling Rock Reservoir   |
| Union       | Dogwood Park Pond  |
| Wake        | Bass Lake<br>Bond Park Pond<br>Harris Lake County Park Pond<br>Pine Lake in Apex Community Park<br>Lake Raleigh*<br>Shelley Lake |
| Yadkin      | Simpkins Pond in Lake Wheeler Park<br>Yadkin County Park Pond  |

\*Use of gasoline engines to power boats is prohibited.

- In Lake Tillery, Lake Wylie, Mountain Island Reservoir, Lake Norman and Badin Lake the daily creel limit for blue catfish greater than 32 inches in length is one.
- There is no open season for sturgeon. Any sturgeon caught must be immediately released.
- No more than 25 American eel, none of which may be less than nine inches in length, may be taken or possessed, regardless of origin, while boating on or fishing in inland fishing waters.
- Blue crabs taken by hook and line from inland fishing waters or in designated waterfowl impoundments located on game lands must have a minimum carapace width of five inches (point to point). The daily limit is 50 crabs per person or 100 per vessel per day.
- No herring (alewife and blueback) greater than six inches in length may be taken or possessed, regardless of origin, while

boating on or fishing in inland fishing waters of coastal rivers and their tributaries up to the first impoundment of the main course on the river (listed below), the Lumber River including Drowning Creek, and in all other inland fishing waters east of Interstate 95.

- Roanoke River – Roanoke Rapids Dam
- Tar River – Rocky Mount Mill Dam
- Neuse River – Milburnie Dam
- Cape Fear River – Buckhorn Dam
- Waccamaw River – Lake Waccamaw Dam
- Pee-Dee River – Blewett Falls Dam
- Grass carp may not be possessed on Lake James, Lookout Shoals Lake, Lake Norman, Mountain Island Reservoir, Lake Wylie, and John H. Kerr Reservoir, except that one fish per day may be taken and possessed with archery equipment (see page 42).
- Grass carp may not be possessed or taken with archery equipment (see page 42) on Lake Gaston and Roanoke Rapids Reservoir except for scientific study by permit issued by the Wildlife Resources Commission (S.L. 2009-261).
- Seasons and size and creel limits for gray trout are the same as those recreational limits established by Division of Marine Fisheries in adjacent joint and coastal fishing waters. For current limits, see [portal.ncdenr.org/web/mf/recreational-fishing-size-and-bag-limits](http://portal.ncdenr.org/web/mf/recreational-fishing-size-and-bag-limits) or call 252-726-7021 or 800-682-2632.
- In Public Mountain Trout Waters, the season shall be the same as the trout-fishing season.
- Information and regulations about fishing on game lands are listed on page 22.

#### Sale of Nongame Fish

- Nongame fish caught on hook and line, grabbling and by special fishing devices may be sold, subject to the following restrictions:
  1. Bowfin may not be sold.
  2. Blueback herring and alewife taken by any method in inland waters may not be sold, except for those fish less than six inches in length that are taken from Kerr Reservoir (Granville, Vance, and Warren counties).
  3. American eel less than nine inches in length taken from inland fishing waters may not be possessed or sold.
  4. In Lake Tillery, Lake Wylie, Mountain Island Reservoir, Lake Norman and Badin Lake the daily possession limit for blue catfish greater than 32 inches in length is one.
  5. Blue crabs taken from inland fishing waters with a line containing multiple baits may not be sold.
  6. Seasons and size and creel limits for gray trout are the same as those recreational limits established by Division of Marine Fisheries in adjacent joint and coastal fishing waters. For current limits, see [portal.ncdenr.org/web/mf/recreational-fishing-size-and-bag-limits](http://portal.ncdenr.org/web/mf/recreational-fishing-size-and-bag-limits) or call 252-726-7021 or 800-682-2632.
  7. Those listed under “Miscellaneous Prohibitions” on page 35.
  8. A special fishing device license is required when taking nongame fish with special fishing devices and also subject to restrictions listed under “Special Fishing Devices,” on page 30, “Seasons and Waters” on pages 31–35, and “Fishing on Game Lands” on page 22.
- The sale of commercially raised nongame fish is regulated by the NC Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services.

#### Taking Freshwater Mussels

- Freshwater mussels, including the Asiatic clam (*Corbicula fluminea*), may only be taken from impounded waters, except mussels shall not be taken in Lake Waccamaw and in University Lake (Orange County).

- The daily possession limit for freshwater mussels is 200 in the aggregate, except there is no daily possession limit for the Asiatic clam (*Corbicula fluminea*).

#### Special Fishing Devices

- Special fishing devices, which may be licensed for the taking of nongame fishes, include the following: archery equipment (see page 42), seines, cast nets, gill nets, dip nets, bow nets, reels, gigs, spear guns, baskets, fish pots, eel pots, traps (excluding crab traps and automobile tires), and hand-crank electrofishers where authorized by local law.
- **Special fishing devices may only be used in waters having designated seasons.** See list (by county) under “Seasons and Waters” on pages 31–35.
- Hand-crank electrofishers are any manually operated device capable of generating a low-voltage electrical current, not to exceed 300 volts, for the taking of catfish.

#### Term and Use of Special Device Licenses

- The license is valid during a license year (12 months from date of purchase).
- Each user of a special device must have his own license in possession, except that a bow net or dip net may be used by another person who has the owner’s license in his possession.
- Only the principal owner or operator must be licensed when drag seines are used at inland beaches to take mullet.
- Dip nets may be used in conjunction with a licensed hand-crank electrofisher where authorized by local law to take nongame fish for bait or personal consumption in inland fishing waters with any valid license that provides basic inland fishing privileges.
- Nongame fishes may be taken with archery equipment (see page 42) under any license that authorizes basic hunting or fishing privileges.

#### Netting Restrictions

- Stationary nets must not exceed 100 yards in length and must be spaced at least 50 yards apart.
- “Attendance” requires that a fisherman be within 100 yards of his net at all times.
- Stationary nets must run parallel to the nearest shoreline.
- Anchored, fixed or drift gill nets must be marked at each end with two separate yellow buoys, which shall be of solid foam or other solid buoyant material no less than five inches in their smallest dimension. Buoys on each of the nets shall be marked (by engraving buoys or attaching engraved metal or plastic tags) with one of the following: owner’s N.C. vessel registration number, owner’s U.S. vessel documentation name or owner’s last name and initials.
- No wires or ropes associated with a special fishing device may extend across any navigable watercourse.

#### Fish-Trap Restrictions

- A fish trap may be no more than 60 inches in length and no more than 30 inches in depth or width.
- No lead nets, wing nets or other devices may be attached to the trap nor used within 25 feet of the trap.
- Such devices, when set and left unattended, shall be affixed with a card or tag furnished by the license-holder and upon which his name and address shall be legibly inscribed.

#### Eel Pot Restrictions

- It is unlawful to use eel pots with mesh sizes smaller than one-half inch by one-half inch.
- Each eel pot must be marked by attaching a floating buoy, which shall be of solid foam or other solid buoyant material and no less than five inches in diameter and no less than five inches in length. Buoys may be of any color except yellow. The owner shall always be identified on the attached buoy by using

engraved buoys or by engraved metal or plastic tags attached to the buoy. Such identification shall include one of the following: owner’s N.C. vessel registration number, owner’s U.S. vessel documentation name, or owner’s last name and initials.

#### Taking Nongame Fish, Crustaceans, and Mollusks for Bait or Personal Consumption

- Nongame fishes, crustaceans (crayfish and blue crabs), and mollusks taken for bait or personal consumption may not be sold.
- Nongame fishes, crustaceans, and mollusks may be taken for bait or personal consumption only with the equipment listed below, and any valid license that provides basic inland fishing privileges is only required. (See regulations for taking and sale of nongame fish on pages 28–29 and other nongame regulations on page 42 for more information).
  1. A dip net not greater than six feet across.
  2. A seine not greater than 12 feet in length with a bar mesh measure of not more than 1/4 inch, except in Lake Waccamaw any length seine may be used to collect bait fishes.
  3. A cast net.
  4. A bow net in those counties and waters with open seasons (see “Seasons and Waters” pages 31-35).
  5. Dip nets used in conjunction with a licensed hand-crank electrofisher where authorized by local law.
  6. Minnow traps under immediate control and attendance of the operator and not exceeding 12 inches in diameter, with funnel openings not exceeding one inch in diameter.
  7. A gig except in Public Mountain Trout Waters.
  8. Traps (no more than three) in those counties and waters with open seasons (see “Seasons and Waters” pages 31-35).
  9. Eel pots (no more than two).
  10. A spear gun in those counties and waters with open seasons (see “Seasons and Waters” page 30-34).
  11. Hand-held lines with single baits attached to each.
  12. A single, multiple bait line for taking crabs not to exceed 100 feet in length that is under the immediate control and attendance of the user and is limited to one line per person and no more than one line per vessel. The line is required to be marked on each end with a solid float no less than five inches in diameter and bearing legible and indelible identification of the user’s name and address.
  13. A collapsible crab trap with the largest opening not greater than 18 inches and which, by design, collapses at all times when in the water, except when being retrieved or lowered to the bottom.
- The daily creel limit is 200 nongame fish, crayfish, and mollusks, in combination, subject to the following restrictions:
  1. No more than 25 American eel, none of which may be less than nine inches in length, may be taken or possessed, regardless of origin, while boating on or fishing in inland fishing waters.
  2. No herring (alewife and blueback) greater than six inches in length may be taken or possessed, regardless of origin, while boating on or fishing in inland fishing waters of coastal rivers and their tributaries up to the first impoundment dam on the main course of the river, the Lumber River including Drowning Creek, and all other inland fishing waters east of Interstate 95.
  3. No more than 50 crabs per person, per day or 100 per vessel, per day with a minimum carapace width of five inches (point to point) from inland fishing waters or in designated waterfowl impoundments located on game lands.

4. In Lake Tillery, Lake Wylie, Mountain Island Reservoir, Lake Norman and Badin Lake the daily creel limit for blue catfish greater than 32 inches in length is one.
  5. Seasons and size and creel limits for gray trout are the same as those recreational limits established by Division of Marine Fisheries in adjacent joint and coastal fishing waters. For current limits, see [portal.ncdenr.org/web/mf/recreational-fishing-size-and-bag-limits](http://portal.ncdenr.org/web/mf/recreational-fishing-size-and-bag-limits) or call 252-726-7021 or 800-682-2632.
- Any fish taken for bait purposes are included in the daily possession limit for that species (where such a limit is specified).
  - Nongame fish may not be taken for bait from Bear Creek and Rocky River, Chatham County; Fork Creek, Randolph County; Deep River below Coleridge Dam, Randolph County; and those portions of Deep River in Moore, Chatham and Lee counties.
  - Game fish incidentally taken with nets or traps, while capturing bait, must not be harmed and must be released immediately.

### Seasons and Waters

- There is no open season for sturgeon. Any sturgeon caught must be immediately released.
- No river herring greater than six inches in length may be taken or possessed, regardless of origin, while boating on or fishing in inland fishing waters of coastal rivers and their tributaries, up to the first impoundment of the main course of the river (listed on page 29), the Lumber River, including Drowning Creek, and all other inland fishing waters east of Interstate 95.
- Nongame fish may be taken year-round with archery equipment (see page 42) in waterfowl impoundments located entirely on game lands and in all inland fishing waters other than the impounded waters on the Sandhills Game Land, Public Mountain Trout Waters, and reservoirs with restrictions on taking grass carp listed on page 29.
- No special fishing devices, including crab pots, may be used in designated waterfowl impoundments located on game lands. Exception: Nongame fish may be taken year-round with archery equipment (see page 42) from waterfowl impoundments located entirely on game lands other than the impounded waters on the Sandhills Game Land.
- Seasons and waters, in which use of special devices other than archery equipment (see page 42) is authorized, are indicated by the following counties:

**Alamance:** July 1 – Aug. 31 with seines in Alamance Creek below N.C. 49 bridge and Haw River. July 1 – June 30 with gigs in all public waters.

**Alexander:** July 1 – June 30 with traps and gigs in all public waters; and with spear guns in Lake Hickory and Lookout Shoals Reservoir.

**Alleghany:** July 1 – June 30 with gigs in New River, except Public Mountain Trout Waters.

**Anson:** July 1 – June 30 with traps and gigs in all public waters. March 1 – April 30 with bow nets in Pee Dee River below Blewett Falls Dam. July 1 – Aug. 31 with seines in all running public waters, except Pee Dee River from Blewett Falls Dam downstream to the Seaboard Coastline Railroad trestle.

**Ashe:** July 1 – June 30 with gigs in New River (both forks), except Public Mountain Trout Waters.

**Beaufort:** July 1 – June 30 with traps in the Pungo River and in the Tar-Pamlico River above Norfolk and Southern Railroad bridge; and with gigs in all inland public waters. March 1 – April 30 with bow nets in all inland public waters.

**Bertie:** July 1 – June 30 with traps in Broad Creek (tributary of Roanoke River). March 1 – April 30 with bow nets in all inland public waters, excluding public lakes, ponds and other impounded waters.

**Bladen:** March 1 – April 30 with bow nets in Black River; July 1 – March 1 with hand-crank electrofishers in Cape Fear River between Locks and Dams 1 and 3 and Black River (local law), except that hand-crank electrofishing is prohibited within 800 feet downstream and 400 yards upstream of Lock and Dam 1; 400 yards downstream and upstream of Lock and Dam 2; and 400 yards downstream of Lock and Dam 3.

**Brunswick:** March 1 – April 30 with bow nets in Alligator Creek, Hoods Creek, Indian Creek, Orton Creek below Orton Pond, Rices Creek, Sturgeon Creek and Town Creek.

**Buncombe:** July 1 – June 30 with gigs in all public waters, except Public Mountain Trout Waters.

**Burke:** July 1 – Aug. 31 with seines in all running public waters, except Johns River and Public Mountain Trout Waters. July 1 – June 30 with traps, gigs and spear guns in all public waters, except Public Mountain Trout Waters and Lake James. Fishing by use of an unattended float is prohibited on Lake James (local law).

**Cabarrus:** July 1 – Aug. 31 with seines in all running public waters. July 1 – June 30 with traps and gigs in all public waters.

**Caldwell:** July 1 – June 30 with traps, gigs and spear guns in all public waters, except Public Mountain Trout Waters.

**Camden:** July 1 – June 30 with traps in all inland public waters. March 1 – April 30 with bow nets in all inland public waters, excluding public lakes, ponds and other impounded waters.

**Carteret:** March 1 – April 30 with bow nets in all inland public waters, except South River and the tributaries of the White Oak River.

**Caswell:** July 1 – June 30 with gigs in all public waters. July 1 – Aug. 31 with seines in all running public waters, except Moons Creek. July 1 – June 30 with traps in Hycro Reservoir.

**Catawba:** July 1 – Aug. 31 with seines in all running public waters, except Catawba River below Lookout Dam. July 1 – June 30 with traps, spear guns and gigs in all public waters.

**Chatham:** Dec. 1 – April 15 with dip and gill nets in the Cape Fear River, Haw River, Deep River and Rocky River (local law). July 1 – Aug. 31 with seines in the Cape Fear River and Haw River. July 1 – June 30 with traps in Deep River; and with gigs in all public waters.

**Cherokee:** July 1 – June 30 with gigs in all public waters, except Public Mountain Trout Waters.

**Chowan:** March 1 – April 30 with bow nets in all inland public waters, excluding public lakes, ponds and other impounded waters. July 1 – June 30 with traps in all inland public waters, excluding public lakes, ponds and other impounded waters.

**Clay:** July 1 – June 30 with gigs in all public waters, except Public Mountain Trout Waters.

**Cleveland:** July 1 – Aug. 31 with seines in all running public waters. July 1 – June 30 with gigs, traps and spear guns in all public waters.

**Columbus:** Dec. 1 – March 1 with gigs in all inland public waters, except Lake Waccamaw and its tributaries. March 1 – April 30 with bow nets in Livingston Creek. July 1 – March 1 with hand-crank electrofishers in Waccamaw and Lumber rivers (local law).

**Craven:** July 1 – June 30 with traps in the main run of the Trent and Neuse rivers. March 1 – April 30 with bow nets in all inland public waters, except Pitch Kettle, Grindle, Slocum (downstream from the U.S. 70 bridge), Spring and Hancock creeks and their tributaries; and with seines in the Neuse River.

**Currituck:** July 1 – June 30 with traps in Tulls Creek and Northwest River. March 1 – April 30 with bow nets in all inland public waters, excluding public lakes, ponds and other impounded waters.

**Dare:** July 1 – June 30 with traps in Mashoes Creek, Milltail Creek, East Lake and South Lake. March 1 – April 30 with bow nets in all inland public waters, excluding public lakes, ponds and other impounded waters.

**Davidson:** July 1 – Aug. 31 with seines in all running public waters. July 1 – June 30 with gigs in all public waters; and with traps in all public waters except Leonard’s Creek, Abbott’s Creek below Lake Thom-A-Lex Dam and the Abbott’s Creek arm of High Rock Lake upstream from the N.C. 8 bridge.

**Dave:** July 1 – June 30 with traps and gigs in all public waters. July 1 – Aug. 31 for taking only carp and suckers with seines in Dutchman’s Creek from U.S. 601 to Yadkin River and in Hunting Creek from S.R. 1338 to South Yadkin River.

**Duplin:** Dec. 1 – June 5 with seines in the main run of the Northeast Cape Fear River downstream from a point one mile above Serecta Bridge. March 1-April 30 with bow nets in the main run of the Northeast Cape Fear River downstream from a point one mile above Serecta Bridge.

**Durham:** July 1 – Aug. 31 with seines in Neuse River. July 1 – June 30 with gigs in all public waters.

**Edgecombe:** March 1 – April 30 with bow nets in all public waters.

**Forsyth:** July 1 – June 30 with traps and gigs in all public waters, except traps may not be used in Belews Creek Reservoir.

**Franklin:** July 1 – Aug. 31 with seines in Tar River. July 1 – June 30 with gigs in all public waters, except Parrish, Laurel Mill, Jackson, Clifton, Moore’s and Perry’s ponds, and in the Franklinton city ponds.

**Gaston:** July 1 – Aug. 31 with seines in all running public waters. July 1 – June 30 with gigs, traps and spear guns in all public waters.

**Gates:** March 1 – April 30 with bow nets in all inland public waters, excluding public lakes, ponds and other impounded waters.

**Graham:** July 1 – June 30 with gigs in all public waters, except Public Mountain Trout Waters. Special devices are not permitted on Santeetlah Lake, Fontana Lake, Cheoah Reservoir and Calderwood Reservoir (local law).

**Granville:** July 1 – June 30 with gigs in all public waters, except Kerr Reservoir. July 1 – Aug. 31 with seines in the Tar River below U.S. 158 bridge. July 1 – June 30 with dip and cast nets in Kerr Reservoir.

**Greene:** March 1 – April 30 with bow nets and reels in Contentnea Creek.

**Guilford:** July 1 – Aug. 31 with seines in Haw River, Deep River below Jamestown Dam and Reedy Fork Creek below U.S. 29 bridge. July 1 – June 30 with gigs in all public waters.

**Halifax:** March 1 – April 30 with bow nets in Beech Swamp, Clarks Canal, Conoconnara Swamp, Fishing Creek below the Fishing Creek Mill Dam, Kehukee Swamp, Looking Glass Gut, Quankey Creek and White’s Mill Pond Run. April 1 – June 15 in Fishing Creek on Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays, shad and herring (not to exceed 6 inches in length) may be taken with skim or gill nets having a bar mesh of not less than 1.5 inch (local law).

**Harnett:** Jan. 1 – May 31 with gigs in Cape Fear River and tributaries. March 1 – April 30 with bow nets in Cape Fear River.

**Haywood:** July 1 – June 30 with gigs in all public waters, except Lake Junaluska and Public Mountain Trout Waters.

**Henderson:** July 1 – June 30 with gigs in all public waters, except Public Mountain Trout Waters.

**Hertford:** July 1 – June 30 with traps in Wiccacon Creek. March 1 – April 30 with bow nets in all inland public waters, excluding public lakes, ponds and other impounded waters.

**Hyde:** July 1 – June 30 with traps in all inland waters. March 1 – April 30 with bow nets in all inland public waters, excluding public lakes, ponds and other impounded waters.

**Iredell:** July 1 – June 30 with traps and gigs in all public waters; and with spear guns in Lookout Shoals Reservoir and Lake Norman.

**Jackson:** July 1 – June 30 with gigs in all public waters, except Public Mountain Trout Waters.

**Johnston:** March 1 – April 30 with bow nets in Black Creek, Little River, Middle Creek, Mill Creek, Neuse River and Swift Creek.

*(continued on page 34)*



## AQUATIC HITCHHIKERS!

### CLEAN AND DRY ANYTHING THAT COMES INTO CONTACT WITH WATER

Invasive aquatic plants, such as hydrilla and giant salvinia; exotic mussels, such as zebra and quagga mussels; and even algae, like didymo or rock snot, can hitch a ride on fishing and boating gear. Once established, they cause extensive damage to aquatic systems.

We need your help to prevent the spread of nuisance species.

#### When you leave a body of water:

- Remove any visible mud, plants, fish or animals before transporting equipment.
- Eliminate water from equipment before transporting.
- Clean and dry anything that comes into contact with water (boats, trailers, equipment, clothing, dogs, etc.).
- Never release plants, fish or animals into a body of water unless they came out of that body of water.

For more information, including recommendations for cleaning anything that comes into contact with water, visit:

[www.ProtectYourWaters.net](http://www.ProtectYourWaters.net)

## FISH CONSUMPTION ADVISORIES

Elevated levels of some pollutants may be found in certain fish caught by the public or sold commercially in the United States. For more information, contact N.C. Dept. of Health and Human Services at 919-707-5900 or see [epi.publichealth.nc.gov](http://epi.publichealth.nc.gov) and click on "Fish Consumption Advisories." The following table lists current fish consumption advisories for North Carolina inland fishing waters:

| <i>Body of Water</i>   | <i>Advisory</i>   | <i>Pollutant</i>                                |
|--|---|---|
| Statewide  | <b>Largemouth bass.</b> No consumption by women of childbearing age, pregnant women, nursing mothers and children under 15. No more than one meal per week for all other people.  | <a href="#">Mercury</a>                         |
| Statewide  | <b>Bluegill sunfish and trout.</b> No more than two meals per week for women of childbearing age, pregnant women, nursing mothers and children under 15. No more than four meals per week for all other people.   | <a href="#">Mercury</a>                         |
| South and east of Interstate 85  | <b>Blackfish (bowfin), Catfish (caught wild), Jack fish (chain pickerel), Warmouth, and Yellow perch.</b> No consumption by women of childbearing age, pregnant women, nursing mothers and children under 15. No more than one meal per week for all other people.  | <a href="#">Mercury</a>                         |
| South and east of Interstate 95  | <b>Black crappie.</b> No consumption by women of childbearing age, pregnant women, nursing mothers and children under 15. No more than one meal per week for all other people.  | <a href="#">Mercury</a>                         |
| Albemarle Sound from Bull Bay to Harvey Point west to the mouths of the Roanoke and Chowan rivers (Currituck, Camden, Pasquotank, Perquimans, Chowan, Bertie, Washington and Tyrrell counties) | <b>Carp and catfish.</b> No consumption by women of childbearing age or children. No more than one meal per month for all other people.   | <a href="#">Dioxins</a>                         |
| Roanoke River from U.S. Hwy. 17 bridge near Williamston to the mouth of Albemarle Sound (Martin, Bertie and Washington counties)   | <b>Carp and catfish.</b> No consumption by women of childbearing age or children. No more than one meal per month for all other people.   | <a href="#">Dioxins</a>                         |
| Welch Creek (Martin, Beaufort and Washington counties)   | <b>Carp and catfish.</b> No consumption by women of childbearing age or children. No more than one meal per month for all other people.   | <a href="#">Dioxins</a>                         |
| Brier Creek Reservoir (Wake County), Brier Creek –downstream of Brier Creek Reservoir, and Little Brier Creek and tributaries downstream of Brier Creek Parkway                                | All fish. No consumption.   | <a href="#">PCBs</a>                            |
| Lake Crabtree (Wake County)  | <b>Carp and catfish.</b> No consumption. All other fish. No more than one meal per month.   | <a href="#">PCBs</a>                            |
| Crabtree Creek (Wake County) above and below Lake Crabtree to Neuse River  | <b>Carp, catfish and largemouth bass.</b> No more than one meal per month.  | <a href="#">PCBs</a>                            |
| Neuse River (Wake County) downstream of Crabtree Creek to Auburn-Knightdale Road   | <b>Carp and catfish.</b> No more than one meal per month.   | <a href="#">PCBs</a>                            |
| Walnut Creek (Wake County) and Rocky Branch tributary just upstream of confluence with Neuse River   | <b>Carp and catfish.</b> No more than one meal per month. All other fish. No more than one meal per week.   | <a href="#">PCBs</a>                            |
| Santeetlah Lake (Graham County) and Fontana Lake (Graham and Swain counties)   | <b>Walleye.</b> No consumption by women of childbearing age, pregnant women or children under 15. No more than one meal per week for all other people.  | <a href="#">Mercury</a>                         |
| Badin Lake (Stanly and Montgomery counties)  | <b>Catfish and largemouth bass.</b> No consumption by women of childbearing age, pregnant women or children under 15. No more than one meal per week for all other people.  | <a href="#">PCBs</a><br><a href="#">Mercury</a> |
| Lake Gaston (Warren, Halifax, and Northampton counties)  | <b>Walleye and largemouth bass.</b> No consumption by women of childbearing age, pregnant women or children under 15. No more than one to two meals per month for all other people.   | <a href="#">Mercury</a>                         |
| Mountain Island Reservoir (Gaston and Mecklenburg counties)  | <b>Channel catfish.</b> No consumption.   | <a href="#">PCBs</a>                            |
| Mountain Island Reservoir (Gaston and Mecklenburg counties)  | <b>Largemouth bass.</b> No consumption by women of childbearing age, pregnant women, nursing women or children under 15. No more than two meals per month for all other people.   | <a href="#">PCBs</a><br><a href="#">Mercury</a> |
| Mountain Island Reservoir (Gaston and Mecklenburg counties)  | <b>Blue catfish.</b> No consumption by women of childbearing age, pregnant women, nursing women or children under 15. No more than one meal per month for all other people.   | <a href="#">PCBs</a><br><a href="#">Mercury</a> |
| Lake Wylie (Gaston and Mecklenburg counties)   | <b>Largemouth bass.</b> No consumption by women of childbearing age, pregnant women, nursing women or children under 15. No more than two meals per month for all other people.   | <a href="#">PCBs</a><br><a href="#">Mercury</a> |
| Lake Chatuge (Clay County)   | <b>White bass and largemouth bass.</b> No consumption by women of childbearing age or children under 15. No more than one meal per week for all other people.   | <a href="#">Mercury</a>                         |
| Lake Nantahala (Macon County)  | <b>Smallmouth bass, walleye, yellow perch, and largemouth bass.</b> No consumption by women of childbearing age or children under 15. No more than one meal per week for all other people.  | <a href="#">Mercury</a>                         |
| Lake Norman (Catawba, Iredell, Lincoln and Mecklenburg counties)   | <b>Striped bass.</b> No consumption by women of childbearing age, pregnant women, nursing women or children under 15. No more than one meal per week for all other people.  | <a href="#">PCBs</a>                            |
| Lake Norman (Catawba, Iredell, Lincoln and Mecklenburg counties)   | <b>Largemouth bass.</b> No consumption by women of childbearing age, pregnant women, nursing women or children under 15. No more than two meals per month for all other people.   | <a href="#">PCBs</a><br><a href="#">Mercury</a> |
| Falls Reservoir (Montgomery and Stanly counties), High Rock Lake (Davidson and Rowan counties), and Lake Tillery (Montgomery and Stanly counties)  | <b>Catfish.</b> No consumption by women of childbearing age, pregnant women, nursing women or children under 15. No more than one meal per week for all other people.   | <a href="#">PCBs</a><br><a href="#">Mercury</a> |
| Dan River in North Carolina downstream of the Duke Energy – Dan River Steam Station Spill Site (Caswell and Rockingham counties)   | All fish and shellfish. No consumption.   | <a href="#">Coal Ash</a>                        |
| Lake Glenville (Jackson County)  | <b>Smallmouth bass, walleye and largemouth bass.</b> No consumption by women of childbearing age, pregnant women, nursing women or children under 15. No more than one meal per month of smallmouth bass or walleye for all other people. No more than one meal per week of largemouth bass for all other people. | <a href="#">Mercury</a>                         |

**MANNER OF TAKING**

**Definition of Take** To take is defined as all operations during, immediately preparatory and immediately subsequent to an attempt, whether successful or not, to capture, kill, pursue, hunt or otherwise harm or reduce to possession any fisheries resource or wildlife resource.

**Season Dates** For most species, hunting seasons are set to open on the same day of the week every year and at the same general time. For example, rabbit season opens every year on the Saturday before Thanksgiving and ends on the last day of February. Changes in season dates that are a result of newly adopted regulations will appear in red ink. However, most seasonal dates that are different from last year are the result of the annual shift of days in each year's calendar.

**General Restrictions**

- Lawful seasons and bag limits for each species apply beginning with the first day of the listed season and continuing through the last day of the listed season, including Sundays for private lands, with Sunday hunting restrictions listed in the next paragraph.
- It is unlawful to hunt on Sundays on public lands, except that military installations under the exclusive jurisdiction of the federal government may allow hunting on Sundays.

On Sundays, on private lands, the following apply:

- Hunting with firearms between 9:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. is prohibited except on controlled hunting preserves;
- Hunting migratory birds is prohibited;
- The use of firearms to take deer that are run or chased by dogs is prohibited;
- Hunting with a firearm within 500 yards of a place of worship or any accessory structure thereof, or within 500 yards of a residence not owned by the landowner, is prohibited; and
- ~~Hunting in Wake and Mecklenburg counties with a firearm is prohibited.~~ [CLICK HERE FOR MORE INFORMATION](#)
- Archery equipment may be used to hunt on private lands on Sunday without the restrictions applied to hunting with firearms.
- Shooting hours. Game birds and animals may be taken only between 30 minutes before sunrise and 30 minutes after sunset with rifle, pistol, shotgun, bow and arrow, dogs or by means of falconry with the following exceptions: raccoons, feral swine and opossums may be taken at night. Coyotes may be taken at night in all counties except Beaufort, Dare, Hyde, Tyrrell and Washington. See page 60 for shooting hours for migratory birds.

**Retrieval**

- If a hunter kills or wounds a big game animal during legal shooting hours the hunter may use a portable light source and a single dog on a leash to assist the hunter in retrieving the dead or wounded big game animal and may dispatch a wounded big game animal using a .22-caliber rimfire pistol, archery equipment, or a handgun otherwise legal for that hunting season. If necessary, the hunter may also retrieve wounded big game in this manner from 30 minutes after sunset to 11:00 p.m. The hunter may not use a motorized vehicle when searching for the wounded animal.

**Taking**

- It is unlawful to use any of the following in taking wild birds or animals:
  - artificial lights (including laser sights), except for big game retrieval and taking feral swine and coyotes at night
  - electronic or recorded calls (except electronic calls are permitted for crow, coyote and feral swine hunting). Other exceptions for migratory game birds may be found under individual season descriptions.
  - fire

- motor vehicles—at no time may any wild animals or birds be taken with the aid of a motor vehicle while the passenger area is occupied or while the vehicle engine is running
- vessels: under sail, under power, or with the engine running, or while still in the motion from such propulsion, except crippled waterfowl (see page 63); or
- airplanes

- It is unlawful to take wild birds with the use or aid of bait, which includes any salt, salt lick, grain, fruit, honey, sugar-based material or substance, animal parts or animal products. Regulations for taking bear with unprocessed foods are on page 47.
- No wild turkey may be taken from an area in which bait has been placed until the expiration of 10 days after the bait has been consumed or otherwise removed.
- It is unlawful to take deer that are swimming or in water above the knees of the deer.
- Migratory game birds may be taken only during the hours and in the manner permitted by federal regulations.
- It is unlawful to shoot at or into a squirrel's nest.
- Individuals engaged in box trapping rabbits must have an appropriate hunting license to take or transport live rabbits.
- It is unlawful to accept the gift of wildlife lawfully taken unless you possess in writing the donor's name, address and hunting license number.
- It is unlawful to dump animal remains anywhere without permission.

**Archery**

- Archery hunting is limited to longbows and recurved bows having a minimum pull of 40 pounds, compound bows with a minimum pull of 35 pounds and crossbows with a minimum draw weight of 100 pounds. Only arrows with a fixed minimum broadhead width of 7/8 inch or a mechanically opening broadhead with a minimum width of 7/8 inch in the open position may be used for taking bear, deer or wild turkey. Blunt-type arrowheads may be used in taking small animals and birds, including but not limited to, rabbits, squirrels, quail, grouse, pheasants. Poisonous, drugged, barbed or explosive arrowheads may not be used for taking any game. Bolts must use broadheads as described for arrows.

**Shotguns**

- Shotguns must be no larger than 10-gauge.
- When hunting migratory game birds, shotguns must be plugged so as to limit their maximum capacity to three shells.

**Pistols**

- During the open hunting season for rabbits, squirrels, opossums, raccoons, furbearing animals and legal nongame animals and birds, these species may be taken with a pistol. There are no restrictions on caliber and barrel length.
- A hunter or trapper lawfully taking wildlife by another method may use a pistol to dispatch the animal or bird taken, except as noted below.
- Deer and bear may be taken with a handgun during the established gun hunting season. There are no restrictions on barrel length or caliber.
- It is unlawful to hunt or take wild turkeys with pistols.

**Rifles**

- Fully automatic rifles are unlawful. All other rifles are legal except:
  - Rifles are prohibited by federal law in hunting migratory game birds.
  - Local laws prohibit or restrict rifles in some counties. See the "Local Laws" section.
  - It is unlawful to hunt or take wild turkeys with rifles.

**Blackpowder**

- During the blackpowder deer season, the only lawful firearms are blackpowder shotguns, rifles and handguns. The Commission defines a blackpowder firearm as any firearm that cannot use fixed ammunition.