

New Jersey

Fish & Wildlife Digest

A Summary of Rules and Management Information

VOL. 17 NO. 3

Marine Issue

MAY 2004

FREE

2004 Marine Issue

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Striped Bass Regulation Changes
See NOTICE, page 7



New Jersey Department of
Environmental Protection



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The Division of Fish and Wildlife is a professional, environmental organization dedicated to the protection, management and wise use of the state's fish and wildlife resources.

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P.O. Box 400 • Trenton, NJ 08625-0400 • Internet: www.njfishandwildlife.com

Table of Contents

Summary of Marine Fish & Shellfish Regulations	4
Recreational Seasons, Size & Possession Limits	7
Marine Fish Identification with Seasons and Limits	10
Shellfish & Non-Commercial Crab Pot License Information.	14
Striped Bass Bonus Fish Program	15
Chesapeake-Style Crab Pot Requirements	15

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To protect and manage the state's fish and wildlife to maximize their long-term biological, recreational and economic value for all New Jerseyans.

OUR GOALS:

To maintain New Jersey's rich variety of fish and wildlife species at stable, healthy levels and to protect and enhance the many habitats on which they depend.

To educate New Jerseyans on the values and needs of our fish and wildlife and to foster a positive human/wildlife co-existence.

To maximize the recreational and commercial use of New Jersey's fish and wildlife for both present and future generations.

TELEPHONE DIRECTORY

Internet Address www.njfishandwildlife.com

Commercial Preserves &

Semi-Wild Preserves 609-292-2966

Deer & Turkey Permit Hotline 609-292-9192

DEP ACTION LINE - 24 HOURS 877-WARNDEP

Exotic & Nongame Captivity Permits 609-292-9591

Falconry Permit Information 908-735-8793

General Information 609-292-2965

Hunter Education 877-2HUNTJ

Hunting, Fishing, & Duplicate Licenses 609-292-2965

Operation Game Thief 800-222-0456

Outstanding Deer Program 609-292-9450

Pheasant & Quail Stocking Information 609-984-0547

Rifle Permit Information 609-984-1400

Trout Stocking Hotline 609-633-6765

Wildlife Conservation Corps Information 609-777-4193

Wildlife Control 908-735-8793

Wildlife Management Area Information 609-984-0547

Trenton Office

501 E. State St., Station Plaza 5, 3rd Floor,
PO Box 400, Trenton, NJ 08625-0400

Endangered and Nongame Species 609-292-9400

Freshwater Fisheries 609-292-9450

Land Management 609-984-0547

Law Enforcement 609-292-9430

Marine Fisheries 609-292-2083

Shellfisheries 609-984-5546

Wildlife Education 609-292-9450

Wildlife Management 609-292-6685

Nacote Creek Research Station

P.O. Box 418, 360 Rt. 9 N. (Milepost 51)

Port Republic, NJ 08241

Marine Fisheries 609-748-2020

Shellfisheries 609-748-2040

Marine Education 609-748-2031

Wildlife Management 609-748-2063

Marine Law Enforcement 609-748-2050

Bivalve Shellfish Office

P.O. Box 432, Port Norris, NJ 08349 856-785-0730

Shellfish Dealership Information

NJ Consumer Health Service, Dept. of Health

P.O. Box 369, Trenton, NJ 08625 609-588-3123

Shellfish Water Classification

NJ Div. of Watershed Mgt.

P.O. Box 405, Stoney Hill Road

Leeds Point, NJ 08220 609-748-2000

Freshwater Fisheries Lab

PO Box 394, Lebanon, NJ 08833 908-236-2118

Northern Region Office

26 Route 173 W., Hampton, NJ 08827

Wildlife Management 908-735-7040

Endangered and Nongame Species 908-735-8975

Hunter Education 877-2HUNTJ

Wildlife Control 908-735-8793

Land Management 973-383-0918

Law Enforcement (Bergen, Essex, Hudson,

Hunterdon, Morris, Passaic, Somerset,

Sussex, Union, and Warren Counties) 908-735-8240

Pequest Trout Hatchery and

Natural Resource Education Center

605 Pequest Rd., Oxford, NJ 07863 908-637-4125

Central Region Office

1 Eldridge Rd., Robbinsville, NJ 08691

Land Management 609-259-2132

Hunter Education 877-2HUNTJ

Wildlife Control 609-259-7955

Law Enforcement (Burlington, Mercer, Middlesex,

Monmouth, and Ocean Counties) 609-259-2120

Southern Region Office

220 Blue Anchor Rd., Sicklerville, NJ 08081

Information 856-629-0090

Hunter Education 877-2HUNTJ

Land Management 856-629-5006

Freshwater Fisheries 856-629-4950

Wildlife Control 856-629-7224

Law Enforcement (Atlantic, Camden,

Cape May, Cumberland, Gloucester,

and Salem Counties) 856-629-0555

2004 Summary of Marine Fish & Shellfish Regulations

This is not the full law. Consult the Division of Fish and Wildlife for further details. All persons are reminded that the statutes, code and regulations are the legal authorities. Red text in regulations indicates a change for this year.

New Jersey regulations apply to all fish species when they are possessed in state waters or landed in New Jersey regardless of where they are caught.

Resource Information

Anyone who takes fisheries resources may be required to provide information on the species, number, weight or other information pertinent to management of resources.

Methods of Fishing

No person shall take, catch, kill or attempt to take, catch or kill any fish within the marine waters of the state by any means except in the manner commonly known as angling with hand line or rod and line unless specifically provided for by statute or regulation.

Wanton Waste Prohibited

Fish of any species which are purposely killed shall become part of the angler's daily possession limit and shall not be returned to the water from which they were taken. This does not apply to fish which are released alive and subsequently die.

Spear Fishing

Spear fishing can be conducted by means of a spear, harpoon or other missile while completely submerged in the marine waters of the state for any species, except lobster.

Persons who fish with a spear for species with size limits are reminded that it is their responsibility to ensure the fish meets the minimum size limits before being killed or injured.

Prohibited Species

It is illegal to take, possess, land, purchase, or sell any of the following species:

Atlantic Sturgeon	Shortnosed Sturgeon
Basking Shark	Whale Shark
Bigeye Sand Tiger Shark	White Shark
Sand Tiger Shark	

Sea Turtles and Marine Mammals

It is illegal to intentionally molest, kill or possess sea turtles or marine mammals, or to possess any part thereof.

Finfish

Filleting

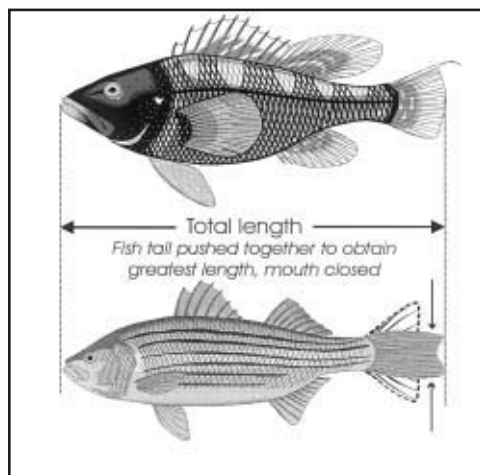
The filleting at sea of all fish with a size limit is prohibited. Party boats may fillet fish at sea if they obtain a Special Fillet Permit. Applications may be obtained from the Marine Fisheries Administration.

Black drum

The minimum size limit for black drum is 16 inches in total length and the daily possession limit is 3 fish. There is no closed season for black drum.

Red Drum

The red drum possession and size limits are one fish no less than 18 inches and not greater than 27 inches.



Black Sea Bass

The minimum size limit for black sea bass is 12 inches measured along the midline from the snout to the end of the central portion of the tail, **not to include the tail filaments**. The possession limit is 25 fish **with an open season of Jan. 1 to Sept. 7 and Sept. 22 to Nov. 30.**

Bluefish

The possession limit for bluefish is 15 fish. Bluefish taken with hook and line may be sold **only** from June 16 through August 7 **and only** if the harvester is in possession of a valid commercial bluefish permit issued for his or her vessel by the National Marine Fisheries Service (978-281-9370). Any harvester in possession of a valid commercial bluefish permit may possess more than 15 bluefish per day, but only during the commercial season of June 16 through August 7.

Shark

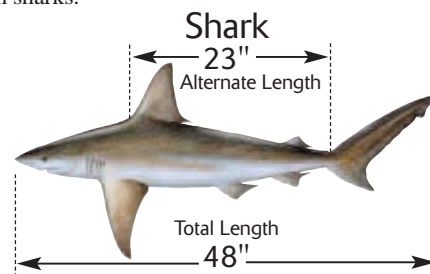
The minimum size limit for any species of shark, *except dogfish* (see note below) is 48 inches total length.

Sharks—Prohibited Species

basking shark	sand tiger shark
whale shark	bigeye sand tiger shark
white shark	

The fins may not be removed from a shark, except after fishing has ceased and such shark has been landed. A shark may be eviscerated and the head and tail removed prior to landing, provided that the alternate length as measured from the origin of the first dorsal fin to the pre-caudal pit (located just forward of the origin of the upper lobe of the tail fin) is not less than 23 inches in length. The possession limit is two shark per vessel.

Note: To differentiate sharks from dogfish—the smooth dogfish has flat, tiny teeth; the spiny dogfish has strong, dorsal spines, shorter than, and in front of, the dorsal fins. Neither is present in sharks.



Striped Bass

(includes Hybrid Striped Bass)

See Notice on page 7 anticipating striped bass regulation changes. The following regulations were current as of April 2004 and may be replaced:

The possession limit for striped bass / hybrid striped bass is two fish. One fish must be greater than or equal to 24 inches to less than 28 inches (slot fish) while the other fish must be 28 inches or greater. It does not matter which fish is harvested first. Anglers participating in the Striped Bass Program Bonus Program (see next page) may possess an additional striped bass at 28 inches or greater. **Anglers do not need to harvest a slot fish prior to taking a bonus fish.**

It is illegal to take, catch or kill any striped bass from or in any marine waters of this state, by means of a net of any description, or by any methods other than angling with a hook and line or by spear fishing.

It is illegal to possess any striped bass, or parts of a striped bass from which the head and/or tail has been removed (other than while in preparation or being served as food), which is less than the legal minimum size.

Harvest and possession of striped bass from federal waters (outside three miles) is prohibited.

Sale of striped bass in New Jersey is prohibited.

Closed seasons

No person may take, attempt to take, or have in possession any striped bass from the following closed waters:

Jan. 1–Feb. 28—All waters except the Atlantic Ocean from 0-3 miles offshore. All inlets and bays are delineated from ocean waters by a Colregs Demarcation line.

April 1–May 31—Delaware River & Bay and their tributaries from the upstream side of the U.S. Route 1 bridge downstream to and including the Salem River and its tributaries.

(continued on page 5)

2004 Summary of Marine Fish & Shellfish Regulations

(continued from page 4)

The use of non-offset circle hooks will be required to reduce striped bass bycatch mortality while fishing with natural bait during the striped bass spawning area closure within the Delaware River and its tributaries. This restriction will not apply to hook sizes smaller than size two.

Striped Bass Bonus Fish Program

Fishermen may possess one additional striped bass per day under the Striped Bass Bonus Fish Program subject to the following:

1. The fisherman must apply for and receive a fish possession card (See application, page 15) in advance of attempting to take a bonus fish.
2. The minimum size limit for a striped bass taken under the bonus program is 28 inches.
3. Fisherman must comply with all aspects of the regulations. A guide to these regulations is provided with the fish possession cards.
4. Two fish possession cards are issued to each applicant. Only one card is good per day. Cards are valid only during the year issued. **The orange card is only good for the 2004 season.**
5. Participants wishing to continue in the program in 2004 can do so by mailing the fishing logs enclosed with their cards.

Additional cards will be provided upon checking fish at one of the 55 designated check stations or by mailing the completed card to the Division. For more information, call 609-748-2020 or visit our Web site at www.njfishandwildlife.com.

Summer Flounder (Fluke)

The possession and minimum size limit for summer flounder is 8 fish at 16-1/2 inches and an open season from **May 8 to October 11**.

Tautog (Blackfish)

The minimum size limit for tautog is 14 inches. There is a four fish possession limit from January 1 through May 31, and a one fish possession limit from June 1 through November 14 and an eight fish possession limit from November 15 to December 31.

Weakfish (Gray & Spotted Seatrout)

The possession and minimum size limit for weakfish is 8 fish at least 13 inches in length.

Winter Flounder

The minimum size limit for winter flounder is 11 inches. For winter flounder the open seasons are March 1–May 31 and September 15–December 31. There is no possession limit.

Additional Marine Fishing Regulations

See pages 7, 10 and 11 for the clip out reference pages.

Bait Fish

No license is required for the taking of bait-fish for personal use with the following gear:

1. Dip nets 24" in diameter or less for the taking of herring for live bait.

2. Bait seines 50 feet long or less.
3. Cast nets 20 feet in diameter or less.
4. Lift or umbrella nets four feet square or less.
5. Not more than five killipots.
6. Not more than two miniature fykes or pots for the taking of eels for bait.

Fish taken in this manner may not be sold or used for barter unless a commercial bait net license is in possession.

No person shall take more than 35 alewife or blueback herring in aggregate per day by hook and line or the above listed gear.

No person shall take or attempt to take fish by any means from the Deal Lake flume, Lake Takanasse spillway or Wreck Pond spillway on any Monday, Wednesday or Friday during the months of April and May.

Crustaceans

American Lobster

The legal possession size of whole lobsters, measured from the rear of the eye socket along a line parallel to the center line of the body shell to the rear of the body shell, shall be not less than **3-3/8 inches**. Lobster parts may not be possessed at sea or landed.

The possession limit is 6 lobsters per person. No person shall possess any lobster with eggs attached or from which eggs have been removed or any female lobster with a v-notched tail, as illustrated above.

The use of spears, gigs, gaffs or other penetrating devices as a method of capture for lobsters is prohibited. A recreational lobster pot permit and fish pot license is required to use pots or traps to capture lobsters. For details call 609-748-2020.

Lobsters taken recreationally may not be sold or offered for sale.

Crabs

1. Crabs may be taken recreationally with hand lines, manually operated collapsible traps or scoop nets without a license. A non-commercial crab pot license is required for the use of not more than two (2) non-collapsible Chesapeake-style crab pots (see illustration on page 15) or two (2) trot lines to harvest crabs. See page 15 for the non-commercial crab pot license application or stop by coastal bait and tackle shops.
2. It is illegal to harvest or possess more than one bushel of crabs per day per person or offer for sale any crabs without having in your possession a valid commercial crabbing license.
3. Minimum size of crabs that may be harvested (measured from point to point of shell) are as follows:
 - a. Peeler or shedder crab—3 inches
 - b. Soft crab—3-1/2 inch

- c. Hard crab—4-3/4 inches (for sale)
- d. Hard crab—4-1/2 inches (possession)



4. All female crabs with eggs attached and all undersized crabs shall be returned to the water immediately.
5. Recreational trot lines shall not exceed 150 feet in length with a maximum of 25 baits.
6. All pots and trot lines shall be marked with the identification number of the owner.
7. All crab pots must be tended at least once every 72 hours.
8. No floating line may be used on any crab pot or crab pot buoy.
9. No crab pot shall be placed in any area that would obstruct or impede navigation or in any creek less than 50-feet wide.
10. Only the owner, his agent or a law enforcement officer may raise or remove contents of a legally set fishing device.
11. Crabs taken with a bait seine may be retained for personal use only if the fisherman possesses a bait net license, and may not be bartered or sold unless the fisherman possesses a commercial crab license.
12. No crabs may be harvested from the Newark Bay Complex. For more information, see Health Advisory on page 15.
13. Crab Pot/Trot Line seasons: Delaware Bay and tributaries—April 6 to Dec. 4; all other waters—March 15 to Nov. 30. The following waters are closed to the use of crab pots and trot lines: Cumberland Co: Cohansey River and creeks named Back, Cedar, Nantuxent, Fortesque, Oranoken, and Dividing; Cape May Co: West and Bidwell Creeks and the Cape May Canal; Atlantic Co: Hammock Cove (Dry Bay); Ocean Co.: on East shore of Barnegat Bay, that area of Sedge Islands Wildlife Management Area enclosed by a line drawn from the northern bank of Fishing Creek on Island Beach State Park to the northern tip of the Sedge Island (Hensler Island), then south from point to point along the western side of the Sedge Islands WMA and terminating on the most southwestern point of Island Beach State Park.
14. The Division will issue a non-commercial crab dredge license for the harvest of not more than one bushel of crabs during the crab

(continued on next page)

REGULATIONS

(continued from page 5)

dredge season. Crabs so taken may not be sold or offered for barter. There is a fee of \$15.00 for this non-commercial crab dredge license. Call the Marine Fisheries Administration at 609-748-2040.

Notice: All non-collapsible Chesapeake-style crab pots (see illustration on page 15) must be constructed to include a biodegradable panel designed to create an opening to allow crabs and other organisms to escape if the pot is lost or abandoned. All non-collapsible Chesapeake-style crab pots set in any manmade lagoon or any water body less than 150 feet wide must also include a turtle excluder device inside all pot entrance funnels.

Horseshoe Crabs

The harvest of horseshoe crabs is prohibited without a permit.

Mollusks (Shellfish)

1. All persons must be licensed to harvest *any* hard clams, soft clams, surf clams and oysters.
2. It is illegal to harvest clams, oysters and mussels from condemned waters, even for bait purposes. It is also illegal to harvest surf clams from beaches adjacent to water classified as condemned. Water classification charts are available from

license agents, any state shellfish office or Marine Police Station. Charts are updated annually.

3. Shellfish harvesting is prohibited before sunrise, after sunset and on Sundays.
4. Harvesting of clams, oysters and mussels on public grounds is restricted to the use of hand implements.
5. It is illegal to harvest shellfish from leased grounds. These grounds are delineated by stakes or buoys set by the lease holder. Charts of the leases may be examined at the Nacote Creek or Bivalve Shellfish Offices during regular business hours.

Hard Clams

1. No person shall harvest more than 150 clams per day unless such person is a holder of a commercial clam license. Only certified shellfish dealers may purchase clams from commercial harvesters. All persons selling clams commercially must tag each container listing date of harvest, name and address of the harvester and the waters from which the shellfish were harvested.
2. A non-resident recreational license is valid only during the months of June, July, August and September.
3. Anyone engaged in any clamming activity with



someone holding a commercial clam license must also possess their own commercial clam license.

4. It is illegal to dredge hard clams. Hand implements are the only legal harvest methods.
5. The minimum size of hard clams that may be harvested is 1-1/2 inches in length. Clams less than 1-1/2 inches in length must be immediately returned to the bottom from which they were taken.
6. It is illegal to harvest shellfish on Sunday except on the seasonal waters of the Navesink and Shrewsbury Rivers between November 1 and April 30.

Oysters

1. Oysters may be sold only to certified dealers.
2. It is illegal to dredge oysters on public grounds. All harvesting on public grounds is restricted to the use of hand implements.
3. Shells taken in the process of harvesting oysters must be culled from the live oysters and returned immediately to the area from where they were taken.
4. Specific seasons and regulations exist for oyster beds in Great Bay, Delaware Bay, the Mullica, Great Egg Harbor and Tuckahoe rivers. Check with appropriate shellfish offices for detailed regulations.
5. One license covers recreational and commercial oystering.

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REGULATIONS

NOTICE

Attention Striped Bass Anglers

The 2004 striped bass regulations remain under development as of April 2004. A regulation change during this year is likely. It is important for anglers to stay current with the regulations, so check frequently for striped bass regulation updates on Fish and Wildlife's 24-hour marine hotline (609-292-2083), our Web site (www.njfishandwildlife.com) and in your area newspaper.

Federal Marine Fisheries Contacts

NOAA National Marine Fisheries Service

www.nmfs.noaa.gov/index.html
Customer Service Center:
888-872-8862

Atlantic Coast

Recreational Fisheries

Coordinator: 301-713-9505 x178

Fisheries Law Enforcement Field Offices

Brielle: 732-528-3315
Marmora: 609-390-8303

**Report Marine,
Shellfish and Finfish
Violations
(609)
748-2050
or 24 hr. DEP Hotline
877-WARNDEP**

*Violators of the fillet law are subject
to \$30 per fish or \$300 to \$3,000*

New Jersey Division of Fish & Wildlife 2004 Marine Recreational Fishing Seasons, Minimum Size & Possession Limits

Regulations in red are new this year.

Species	Open Season	Minimum Length	Harvest & Possession Limit (per person unless noted)
American Eel	No Closed Season	6"	50
Black Drum	No Closed Season	16"	3
Black Sea Bass	Jan. 1–Sept. 7 Sept. 22–Nov. 30	12" Excluding tail filaments	25
Bluefish	No Closed Season	No Minimum	15
Cobia	No Closed Season	37"	2
Cod	No Closed Season	21"	No Limit
Haddock	No Closed Season	21"	No Limit
King Mackerel	No Closed Season	23"	3
Pollock	No Closed Season	19"	No Limit
Porgy (Scup)	Jan. 1–Feb. 28 July 1–Dec. 31	10"	50
Red Drum	No Closed Season	18"	1 not greater than 27"
River Herring	No Closed Season	No Limit	35
Shad	No Closed Season	No minimum	6
Shark ^a except prohibited species ^b	No Closed Season	48"	2 per vessel
Spanish Mackerel	No Closed Season	14"	10
Striped bass or hybrid striped bass [*]	<div> <div> <div>—Del. River & tributaries (Rt. 1 bridge to Salem River & tributaries)</div> <div>Mar. 1–Mar. 31 and June 1–Dec. 31</div> </div> <div> <div>—Del. River & tributaries (upstream of Rt. 1 bridge)</div> <div>Mar. 1–Dec. 31</div> </div> <div> <div>—Atlantic Ocean^c 0-3 miles from shore</div> <div>No Closed Season</div> </div> <div> <div>—All other waters</div> <div>Mar. 1–Dec. 31</div> </div> </div>	<div> <div>28"</div> <div>AND</div> <div>Greater or equal to 24" but less than 28"</div> </div>	<div> <div>1</div> <div>AND</div> <div>1</div> </div>
Summer Flounder	May 8–October 11	16 1/2"	8
Tautog	Jan. 1–May 31 June 1–Nov. 14 Nov. 15–Dec. 31	14" 14" 14"	4 1 8
Weakfish	No Closed Season	13"	8
Winter Flounder	March 1–May 31 Sept. 15–Dec. 31	11"	No Limit
No species of fish with a minimum size limit listed above may be filleted or cleaned at sea (except striped bass if fillet is at least 28" long). (Party boats licensed to carry 15 or more passengers may apply for a permit to fillet the above species, except striped bass, at sea.)			
Blue Crab			
—peeler or shedder	No Closed Season ^d	3"	1 bushel
—soft	No Closed Season ^d	3 1/2"	
—hard	No Closed Season ^d	4 1/2"	
Lobster (carapace length)	No Closed Season	3 3/8"	6
Hard Clam—license required	No Closed Season	1 1/2"	150 clams

^a Not including dogfish: see description on page 4.

^b Prohibited Sharks Species: basking shark, whale shark, white shark, sand tiger shark, bigeye tiger shark

^c **Atlantic Ocean greater than three miles from shore: harvest and possession prohibited.**

^d Unless using non-collapsible, Chesapeake-style crab pots. See section on crab pots, pages 5 and 15.

^{*}See NOTICE, this page, anticipating striped bass regulation changes.

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SOUTH JERSEY SHOOTING CLUB

The South Jersey Shooting Club is a facility dedicated to the sport of shooting. It is made up of four firing ranges: 25 yd. hand gun and small caliber rifle, 50 yards for pistol, rifle, plinking, shot-gun patterning. The 100 yd. and 300 yd. ranges are for high-power marksmen training. There is a field archery course built to the specifications of the National Field Archery Association.

The club is in the Pinelands of Winslow Township on Piney Hollow Road. The facility is a perfect place for a family to enjoy the great sports of target shooting and bow & arrow. It's a place to introduce kids to the safe handling of firearms and to gain respect for such sporting arms.

It is easy to become a part of the Club. Fill out an application, pay the annual dues, then attend an hour safety orientation. The club allows guests for a small fee.

The Club promises to be a place to spend weekends with people who share an interest in guns, hunting, and the outdoors. There will be competition shooting matches, NRA youth training and hunting safety courses.

Everyone is invited to tour the grounds. SJS is open 7 days a week from 8:00 a.m. until dusk and 9:00 a.m. on Sundays. For membership information, call 609.704.9500.



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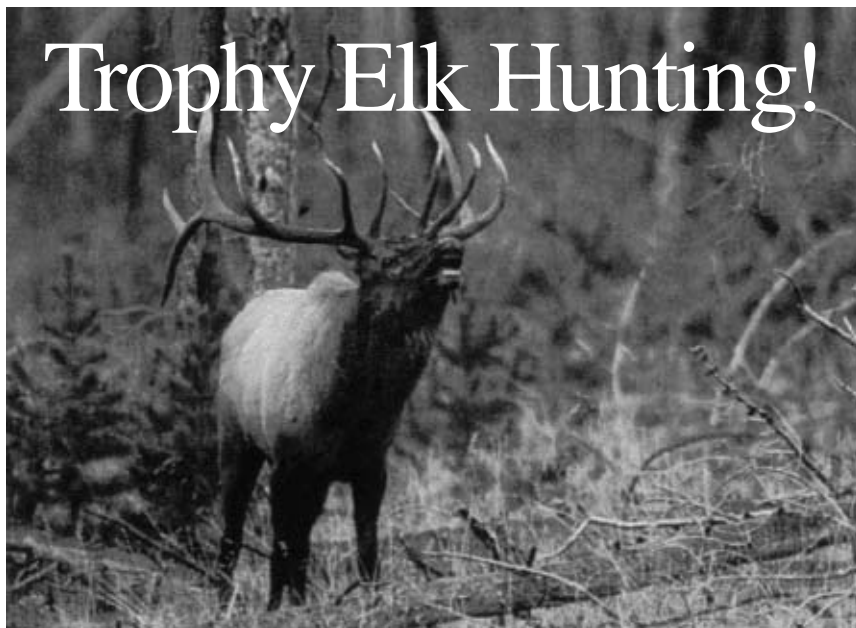
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