Bosses of the Bass

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Register. You make a difference! It’s free, easy and required.

Before heading out to catch your favorite marine fish this year, be sure to join the hundreds of thousands of anglers who have already registered with the New Jersey Saltwater Recreational Registry Program (NJSRRP).

For more information on the NJ Saltwater Recreational Registry Program and to register, visit www.saltwaterregistry.nj.gov

After registering, become part of the fishery management process!

Submit fishing reports after each saltwater trip to the NJ Volunteer Angler Survey. Your fishing reports can help improve saltwater fishing opportunities in New Jersey.

Submit online reports at www.NJFishandWildlife.com/marinesurvey.htm
A true workhorse, the Shimano SLX Casting Reel utilizes key Shimano technologies to provide competitive anglers with a dependable, performance-oriented reel that won’t break the bank. Providing a smaller profile without sacrificing line capacity, the Shimano SLX Casting Reel is over 20% more compact than the Shimano Caenon, while maintaining the same line capacity.

With the updated Sedona Spinning Reels, Shimano has significantly improved upon the old Sedona models. Highly durable cold-forged Hagane® gear teams with a higher gear ratio to deliver the smoothness you want cast after cast.

Increased drag on all models except the 1000, offers incredible stopping power. Lightweight G-Free Body and upgraded Magnumlite® rotor improve weight balance and reduce fatigue, so you can spend all day on the water in comfort.

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**20th ANNUAL Cast & Blast Cabin Fever Day**
February 23rd - 10am - 4pm at our Succasunna location!

**POWERPRO SUPER SLICK 8 V2**
SuperSlick has been re-engineered for a whole new level of toughness. Combining a new 8-end, dense weave construction with the proven EBT coating process, SSV2 now delivers all of the smooth, silent benefits of original SuperSlick, plus added abrasion toughness that provides the power to rip through the heaviest cover with the same force as traditional 4-end braids. Available in traditional Blue, the popular Moss Green and now introducing Hi-Vis Aqua Green for the visibility minded angler, and Onyx for those looking to catch the monster bass!
While reading this year’s Digest you may notice that there are no changes to fishing regulations—except for the muskie size limit increase to 44 inches on Greenwood Lake that takes effect April 1, 2019. Major changes adopted last year were designed to protect our native brook trout and to maximize the recreational opportunity for streams containing reproducing browns and rainbows. I encourage you to test your skills by taking the opportunity to fish for New Jersey’s wild trout. I think you will enjoy the challenge.

Are you among the anglers who fish some of the notable waters of south, central or north Jersey? Take a look at Popular Waterbodies (page 6) for information to help you enjoy our diverse fishery with excellent places to target gamefish such as largemouth and smallmouth bass, various panfish and huge carp.

Helpful hints for fishing from a kayak (page 34, Kickin’ Bass from a Kayak!) features a terrific way to economically explore our smaller waterbodies. Although the author concentrates on fishing for bass in lakes and ponds, kayaks and canoes are also excellent ways to explore and fish some of our rivers and streams that meander through public land. On these waters, a bit more coordination with friends is required by leaving vehicles at both the access and exit locations. If your experience is like mine, you will be amazed at how many stocked trout actually do stray from their stocking site, remaining available to those willing to paddle to find them.

Fisheries management projects of interest to anglers around the state are featured in Freshwater Fisheries Project Highlights, page 10, where you can follow our staff’s management efforts, including electro-fishing survey results that confirm the abundance of fish in New Jersey waterbodies. The radio telemetry study of trout stocked in the Big Flat Brook solved the mystery of disappearing trout, revealing that anglers have significant competition from both mammalian and avian predators!

It is also exciting to read that the efforts of our agency and partners to remove dams is having a positive effect on fish passage. American shad and freshwater eels are moving upstream in the Millstone, Raritan and Musconetcong rivers and have staged at the Paulins Kill just below the Columbia Lake Dam, as if ready for the dam to come down. In many of these cases, the rivers have not been accessible to migrating fish since the colonial days when grist mills and associated dams dotted the landscape. The DEP’s Office of Natural Resource Restoration has been exceedingly supportive of projects that restore migratory fish passage. Natural Resource Restoration funding from settlements paid by polluters for harming natural resources has been, and will continue to be, critical to the success of these efforts.

I have not fished for shad in over twenty years, letting work and family obligations keep me away. But seeing the pods of shad on the Paulins Kill has rekindled my memory of hooking these fierce fighting fish. A winter’s project is to repaint and sharpen my old shad darts in preparation for the spring. See you on the water!

Larry Herrighty is the Director of the Division of Fish and Wildlife.
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