



State of Maine
Department of Marine Resources

PO Box 8 • West Boothbay Harbor, ME 04575 • phone 207-633-9500

Rules and Regulations for Qualifying a Maine State Record Saltwater Game Fish

A Maine state record game fish is, by definition, the largest fish to be landed in one of four categories: harpoon, handline, rod and reel, or fly rod. In order to qualify for a Maine state record, proof of said catch has to be provided in the form of a completed **Maine State Saltwater Record Application (MSSRA)** and submitted to the **Maine Department of Marine Resources**, PO Box 8, West Boothbay Harbor, ME 04575. The MSSRA will be reviewed by the **Maine State Records Committee (MSRC)**, meeting annually, and if accepted, the represented fish will become the new Maine state record. This record can be revoked at any time if significant proof can be provided that the angler or harpooner didn't catch the fish within the rules and regulations for qualifying a Maine state record saltwater game fish.

RULES AND REGULATIONS

In order to qualify for a Maine state saltwater game fish record, the fish has to be caught within Maine state waters or off the coast of Maine and landed within the state of Maine.

CATEGORIES

Harpoon: An angler can receive the Maine state record for the largest saltwater fish caught with harpoon in only two fish species. These two species are the Atlantic bluefin tuna (*Thunnus thynnus* **Linnaeus, 1758**) and the Atlantic broadbill swordfish (*Xiphias gladius*). This category was established because historically, in the state of Maine, harpooning bluefin tuna and swordfish has been considered a sport. A harpooner is not bound by the "landing unaided" rule and boating the fish in any manner after it is harpooned is sufficient to capture a state record as long as the other Maine state rules are followed.

Handline: An angler can receive the Maine state record for the largest saltwater fish caught on rod and reel in all the registered species accepted by the state of Maine. A handliner is not bound by the "landing unaided" rule and boating the fish in any manner after it is harpooned or gaffed is sufficient to capture a state record as long as the other Maine state rules are followed. (Note: a rod and reel used as a handline qualifies the rod and reel as a handline under the rules.)

Rod and Reel: An angler can receive the Maine state record for the largest saltwater fish caught on rod and reel in all the registered species accepted by the state of Maine. There is no limit to the line strength (pound test) providing that a conventional (non-motorized) reel is used with the line. The angler has to hook, fight and bring the fish to gaff, net or hand unaided. Using a harpoon to boat a fish caught by rod and reel will disqualify the catch for a Maine state rod and reel record.

Fly Rod: An angler can receive the Maine state record for the largest saltwater fish caught on a fly rod in all the registered species accepted by the state of Maine.

1. Equipment Regulations
 - A. Rod: A fly rod shall not measure less than six feet. Extension butts are limited to six inches.
 - B. Reel: A reel must be designed expressly for fly fishing. Electric or electronically operated reels are prohibited.
 - C. Line: Any type of fly line and backing may be used.
 - D. Leaders: Leaders must be no longer than 12 feet. There are no restrictions to its breaking strength or materials.
 - E. Fly: A fly may be dressed on a single hook, double hook or two single hooks in tandem. The eye of the second hook in tandem rig must be no more than six inches from the eye of the first hook. The fly must be tied out of natural or synthetic fly tying materials. The use of more than one fly on a leader is prohibited. The use of any type of lure, hooked bait, baited fly or scented fly is prohibited.
2. Angling Regulations:
 - A. The angler must cast, retrieve, hook, fight and bring to net, gaff or tailer unaided by any other person. Any aid given, except gaffing, netting or tailing, will be grounds for disqualification. The use of a harpoon is prohibited. It is prohibited (and illegal) to use a gaff on a striped bass in the state of Maine.

- B. If a vessel is used to aid the angler while fly fishing, the said vessel can only be used as a fishing platform and use of any type of motor or propulsion system, except to arrive at the fishing location and fight the fish, is prohibited. A fish caught by the trolling method will be disqualified from a Maine state record in the fly rod category.
- C. Foul hooked fish will not be considered for a Maine state record in the fly rod category.
- D. The actual leader and fly must be submitted with the MSSRA in order for a fish to be considered for a Maine state record in the fly rod category.

Junior Male & Female Angler categories: 16 and under

- A. In order to submit an application for acceptance, the fish has to be weighed on land, on a certified and registered scale, as all regular state records have to be.
- B. There is no time limit on a claim. For instance, if you can prove that your fifteen-year-old son landed a state record fish in 1952, it can become a state record.
- C. A Junior Angler state record fish will be accepted if the fish is caught tangled in other lines as long as the tangled situation doesn't aid in the catching or landing of the fish.
- D. You can lay the rod on the rail for support in landing a state record fish as long as you hook, fight and bring the fish to gaff without anyone (helping) touching the rod or equipment.

Note: The fly rod category was designed to embrace the spirit of fly fishing. Any indication that the angler bent the rules just to capture a state record is discouraged by the MSRC.

SPECIES

The following is a list of species that are applicable for a Maine saltwater state record. Unlisted species may be submitted for state record status but a final decision of acceptance or disapproval will be determined by a reviewing committee.

COMMON NAME:

American shad
 Atlantic broadbill swordfish (swordfish)
 Atlantic cod
 Atlantic halibut
 Atlantic herring (herring, sea herring, Labrador herring, sardine)
 Atlantic mackerel
 Atlantic wolfish (ocean catfish)
 black sea bass
 blue shark
 bluefin tuna (horse mackerel)
 bluefish
 cunner
 cusk
 goosefish (monkfish)
 haddock
 mako (shortfin mako)
 ocean pout (eelpout, conger eel)
 pollock (Boston bluefish)
 porbeagle (mackerel shark)
 red hake (mud hake, cock hake, butter mullet)
 redfish (ocean perch, brim)
 shorthorn Sculpin
 silver hake (whiting)
 spiny dogfish (sand shark)
 striped bass
 thresher shark
 torpedo ray (electric ray)
 white hake (blue hake, sow hake, russet hake)
 white shark (great white)
 winter flounder (blackback)

SCIENTIFIC NAME:

Alosa sapidissima (Wilson 1811)
Xiphias gladius (Linnaeus, 1758)
Gadus morhua (Linnaeus, 1758)
Hippoglossus hippoglossus (Linnaeus, 1758)
Clupea harengus (Linnaeus 1758)
Scomber scombrus (Linnaeus, 1758)
Anarhichas lupus (Linnaeus, 1758)
Centropristis striata (Linnaeus 1758)
Prionace glauca (Linnaeus, 1758)
Thunnus thynnus thynnus (Linnaeus, 1758)
Pomatomus saltatrix (Linnaeus, 1766)
Tautoglabrus adspersus (Walbaum 1792)
Brosme brosme (Muller, 1776)
Lophius americanus (Valenciennes, 1837)
Melanogrammus aeglefinus (Linnaeus, 1758)
Isurus oxyrinchus (Rafinesque, 1810)
Macrozoarces americanus (Schneider, 1801)
Pollachius virens (Linnaeus, 1758)
Lamna nasus (Bonnaterre, 1788)
Urophycis chuss (Walbaum, 1792)
Sebastes fasciatus (Storer, 1854)
Myoxocephalus scorpius (Linnaeus 1758)
Merluccius bilinearis (Mitchill, 1814)
Squalus acanthias (Linnaeus, 1758)
Morone saxatilis (Walbaum, 1792)
Alopias vulpinus (Bonnaterre, 1788)
Torpedo nobiliana (Bonaparte, 1835)
Urophycis tenuis (Mitchill, 1814)
Carcharodon carcharias (Linnaeus, 1758)
Pleuronectes americanus (Walbaum, 1792)

SPECIES IDENTIFICATION

1. Photographs of such clarity as to easily identify the fish species being submitted for a record must be included with the **MSSRA**.
2. If in doubt about the clarity of the photograph, you may submit a signed letter from a qualified fisheries biologist or ichthyologist substantiating your claim.
3. The submitted application will not be accepted if a positive ID of the fish in question cannot be made.

WITNESS TO CATCH:

It is highly desirable to have a witness to the catch, but not entirely necessary. However, an un-witnessed catch may be disqualified for a state record if there becomes a question of authenticity.

WEIGHTS NEEDED TO DEFEAT OR TIE EXISTING RECORDS:

1. To replace a record for a fish weighing less than 25 pounds, the replacement must weigh at least two ounces more than the existing record.
2. To replace a record for a fish weighing 25 to less than 100 pounds, the replacement must weigh at least four ounces more than the existing record.
3. To replace a record for a fish weighing 100 to less than 200 pounds, the replacement must weigh at least eight ounces more than the existing record.
4. To replace a record for a fish of 200 pounds or more, the replacement must weigh at least 16 ounces (one pound) more than the existing record.
5. In the four categories listed above, if the potential replacement record fish weighs less than the required amount to beat the existing record, the potential replacement will be considered a tie with preference to first listing given to the original state record holder.

TIME LIMITS

There will be no time limit on claims. A state record will be awarded to anyone that can properly substantiate a claim according to the rules. Certain exceptions to the rules can be granted to substantiate a state record if proper proof of questioned area can be provided. State records will be accepted from past years if:

1. Acceptable photographs are submitted (see photographs section).
2. The weight of the fish can be positively identified.
3. The method of catch can be substantiated.

WEIGHING REQUIREMENTS

1. The potential state record fish must be weighed on land by a person (Weighmaster) familiar with subtracting the tare to get the existing weight of the fish alone. U.S. Post offices are excellent places to weigh a fish in they will allow it.
2. The scale used must be a sealed scale certified for accuracy by the state of Maine or by a accredited organization (All Tech Weighing, Portland, ME for example) within one year.
3. The **MSSRA** reviewing committee reserves the right to disqualify any fish where its weight can not be proven as accurate.

PHOTOGRAPHS

Three photographs should accompany the **MSSRA**:

1. One photograph should show a side view of the fish either hanging next to the angler with the equipment he or she used to catch the fish or with the angler holding the fish and equipment used.
2. One photograph should show a side view of the fish next to a rule showing measurement in inches that can be read from the photograph.
3. One photograph should show the fish as it is being weighed on the actual scale that was used to weigh the fish.
4. Any of these photos can be used for species identification.
5. All photos submitted become property of the DMR.

NOTARY:

The fishermen submitting his or her fish for state recognition must appear in person to have the **MSSRA** notarized. Any deliberate falsification of an **MSSRA** will disqualify the applicant from any past, present, or future record in the state of Maine.

Note: The **MSSRA** and preceding Maine state rules and regulations were drawn up with the direct help of the **International Game Fish Association**.

How to Fill Out a Maine State Record Application

These step-by-step instructions will make completing the record application much easier than catching the fish

I am submitting this entry for: For which record(s) do you qualify? If you have a fish that is larger than the current record for that species, check the appropriate category. Make sure to check off the appropriate gender for your record. For the junior anglers, make sure you check off the junior categories for your catch.

Angler's or harpooner's information: This is where all of your contact information is recorded. Please note to write down your name how you want it to be placed on your certificate. If the angler is applying for a Junior category state record, please fill out the birth date/age on day fish was caught if applying for a Junior state record, applications will be rejected if this is not filled in.

Species/Scientific Name: List the common name and scientific names for the fish.

Weight: Make sure the weight reported is in pounds. Please take note that there is a line to put a digital weight if you weighed your fish on a digital scale.

Date of Catch: Applicants have no deadline to send in an application. It is recommended to send in the application as soon as possible. It makes verifying the information easier.

Length/Girth: There are two length measurements - the fork length (fork of tail to tip of lower jaw) and total length (extension of tail to tip of upper jaw or bill). The girth is the measurement around the body in front of the dorsal fin. This section needs to be completely filled out to be considered for a state record fish.

Method of Catch: What method of fishing was used to catch this fish? Some popular methods are trolling, bait fishing, bottom fishing, jigging, fly-fishing, casting and spinning. List the method best describing how you caught your fish.

Lure/Bait used: Write in what kind of bait or lure was used to catch your fish.

Fighting time: The time it took to catch the fish from hook-up to landing.

Reel Make/Rod Make: What make/model of reel and rod was used to catch this fish.

Vessel Used/Captain's Information: The name of the vessel, if applicable, the fish was caught aboard. Also record the helmsman's name and address if applicable. If the captain's name is different than the helmsman's we will need all of his information along with the mates information. Please make sure this section is as complete as possible.

Scales: Please list type and model of the scales used to weigh your fish. Different types or scales are spring, platform, hanging, etc. The maximum load and weight increments must also be noted. The location where the fish was weighed, the date the scale was last certified (scales have to be certified within the prior 12 months to be considered) and the agency that certified the scale must be listed. The Weighmaster's name, signature and address must be on the application.

Witnesses: Anyone witnessing the catch and the official weighing of the fish should be asked to list their names, addresses, phone numbers and e-mail address (if applicable). Although not required, it is best that witnesses be disinterested parties. If no other witnesses to the weighing are available, list "none". List the number of witnesses to the catch where appropriate.

Affidavit: For all anglers submitting for a Non-Junior category record, your signature is required along with the signature and seal of a licensed notary and raised seal. All Junior category applicants need to have the above mentioned information as well as the signature of a parent or legal guardian.

Additional Requirements: A minimum of three clear photographs are required for each catch. A clear picture of the side view of the entire fish is mandatory for proper species identification. Photographs of the fish being weighed and measured are helpful as well.

This should cover everything you need to fill out an Maine State Record application. If you have any questions, feel free to contact Marine Recreational Fisheries Staff at (207) 633-9500.



Maine State Saltwater Record Application

Form for Recording a Largest Saltwater Game Fish Caught in the State of Maine

Before completing and signing this application, read all the Maine state saltwater fishing rules and regulations that accompany this form. Landing a saltwater fish outside these rules will disqualify you for a Maine state record. The fisherman's signature on the completed application form must be witnessed by a notary. An **International Game Fish Association (IGFA)** application may be used in lieu of an available **Maine State Saltwater Record Application (MSSRA)**. The qualifying fish must be caught in Maine state waters or off the coast of Maine and landed in the state of Maine.

I AM SUBMITTING THIS ENTRY FOR:

- ☐ Largest Maine state bluefin tuna or Atlantic broadbill swordfish caught by harpoon (male)
- ☐ Largest Maine state bluefin tuna or Atlantic broadbill swordfish caught by harpoon (female)
- ☐ Largest Maine state bluefin tuna or Atlantic broadbill swordfish caught by handline (male)
- ☐ Largest Maine state bluefin tuna or Atlantic broadbill swordfish caught by handline (female)
- ☐ Largest Maine state fish caught by rod and reel (male)
- ☐ Largest Maine state fish caught by rod and reel (female)
- ☐ Largest Maine state fish caught by fly rod (male)
- ☐ Largest Maine state fish caught by fly rod (female)
- ☐ Largest fish Junior Maine state fish male category (16 and under)
- ☐ Largest fish Junior Maine state fish female category (16 and under)

ANGLER'S OR HARPOONER'S INFORMATION:

Name: (print name as you would like it to appear on our state record certificate) _____

Permanent address: _____

Phone: () _____ E-mail: _____

Birth date /age on day of catch if applying for Junior state record: _____

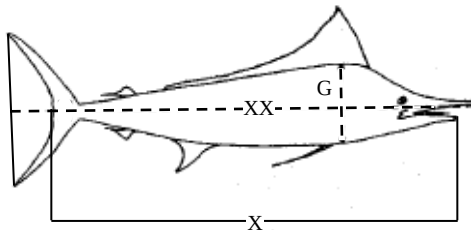
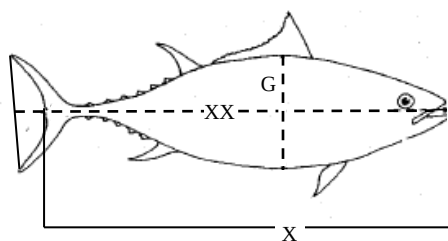
SPECIES:

Common name: _____

Scientific name (see attached rules): _____

WEIGHT: lbs.: _____ oz.: _____ and/or digital weight: _____

DATE OF CATCH: _____ **PORT LANDED:** _____



LENGTH (see measurement diagrams):

Total length (inches) XX to XX: _____ Fork length (inches) X to X: _____

GIRTH (see measurement form) (inches): _____

METHOD OF CATCH (trolling, casting, jigging, harpooning, chumming, bottom fishing w/ bait, etc.): _____

LURE OR BAIT USED: _____ **FIGHTING TIME:** _____

REEL MAKE: _____ **ROD MAKE:** _____

VESSEL NAME (if vessel was used): _____

HELMSMAN'S NAME (if harpooned): _____

Address: _____

Phone: () _____ E-mail: _____

CAPTAIN'S NAME (if different than the helmsman's): _____

Captain's signature attesting to catch: _____

Address: _____

Phone: () _____ E-mail: _____

Mate's Name: _____ Mate's Signature: _____

Address: _____

Phone: () _____ E-mail: _____

SCALES:

Location: _____ Type/Model: _____

Manufacturer: _____ Date last certified: _____

Agency that certified scale: _____

Weighmaster (print name): _____ Signature: _____

Weighmaster's address: _____

WITNESSES:

Witness to weighing (person not involved with the catch): _____

Address: _____

Phone: () _____ E-mail: _____

Witness to catch (person not involved with the catch): _____

Address: _____

Phone: () _____ E-mail: _____

Number of persons witnessing catch: _____

AFFIDAVIT:

I, the undersigned, do solemnly swear that the fish described in the above application was caught in accordance with the Maine state rules governing the landing of a state record saltwater fish; that the above information is true to the best of my ability and knowledge; that the fish described above was caught in Maine waters or off the coast of Maine; and that, unless harpooned or handlined, I hooked, fought and brought the fish to gaff, net or hand unaided.

Angler's or harpooner's signature: _____

Sworn before me this _____ day of _____, 20_____.

Notary signature and seal: _____

Send completed form with three photographs to:
Marine Recreational Fisheries Staff, Maine Department of Marine Resources, PO Box 8, West Boothbay Harbor, ME 04575

