

# CONNECTICUT GROWN



## Milford Recreational Shellfishing

STATE OF CONNECTICUT  
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
BUREAU OF AQUACULTURE  
AND LABORATORY



The Connecticut Department of Agriculture, Bureau of Aquaculture and Laboratory administers the following programs:

**SHELLFISH SANITATION:** This program is required to assure safe shellfishing areas for commercial and recreational harvesting, protection of public health and to maintain certification and compliance with the U.S. Food and Drug Administration's National Shellfish Sanitation Program.

The Bureau performs coastal sanitary surveys along Connecticut's 250 mile shoreline and monitors shellfish growing areas in Long Island Sound for pollutants to protect public health. Seawater and shellfish meat samples are collected and tested by the Bureau for fecal coliform and naturally occurring marine biotoxins. The Bureau, in response to sanitary survey results, posts areas closed to shellfishing, performs hydrographic dye dilution studies, performs environmental investigations, prepares memorandums of understanding for managing conditional shellfishing areas and initiates emergency closures. The Bureau also inspects and licenses all commercial shellfish harvesters and dealers in Connecticut.



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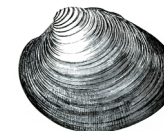
[www.portal.ct.gov/DOAG](http://www.portal.ct.gov/DOAG)

## CONNECTICUT RECREATIONAL SHELLFISH SPECIES



**Eastern or Atlantic oyster** (*Crassostrea virginica*), also known as the "Blue Point Oyster." Recreational size minimum 3"\*. The eastern oyster grows in intertidal and subtidal waters attached to rocks, pilings, and shells. Oysters can obtain a length of up to 6".

**Hard, Round, or Quahog clam** (*Mercenaria mercenaria*), recreational size minimum 1.5" long or 1" thick\*. Quahogs are very common in Long Island Sound. This clam may grow to five inches and greater than 30 years of age.



**Long, Soft-shelled, or Steamer clams** (*Mya arenaria*), recreational size minimum 1.5" long\*. The soft-shell clam is common in sandy and muddy bottoms. This clam digs a deep burrow and extends its long siphon to the surface to feed.



**Razor or Jackknife clam** (*Ensis directus*), recreational size minimum 1.5" long\*. Razor clams commonly inhabit the same sediment types as soft-shell clams. These clams can grow up to 10" in length.



**Blue Mussel** (*Mytilus edulis*), no recreational size minimum. The edible blue mussel is found throughout Long Island Sound. It attaches to most hard surfaces with its byssal threads.



**Whelks, Conch, Winkles, or Scungilli** (*Busycon species*), recreational limit of one half bushel per day\*. Several species of large edible snails are common in Long Island Sound. They are usually found on sandy bottoms.



\* Daily catch and minimum size limits may vary from town to town. Check with the local Town Clerk or Shellfish Commission for daily catch and size limits.

## DO YOU KNOW?










- That in Milford there is no license required for harvesting clams, mussels or oysters for your own consumption. Anyone who intends to sell shellfish must be licensed by the Department of Agriculture.
- There are three types of clams commonly harvested by recreational diggers: the soft shell clam *Mya arenaria*, the razor clam *Ensis directus*, and the northern quahog *Mercenaria mercenaria*.
- That quahogs, cherrystones, hard clams, little-necks, and round clams are all names for the same animal, *Mercenaria mercenaria*. Quahog, hard clam, and round clam are common names for this species. In the marketplace, *Mercenaria mercenaria* are separated into different size classes: littlenecks (width 1-2") are the smallest and most valuable, topnecks (width 2-3"), cherrystones (width 3-3.5"), and chowders (width 3.5+").
- There are a variety of implements to take shellfish, such as rakes or tongs. These tools must have openings or spacing between the teeth or prongs of one inch or greater. To measure your shellfish, be sure to carry a shellfish ring, slot or gauge.
- Each coastal town manages a recreational shellfishing program based largely on the popularity of harvesting hard clams. Certain towns require a local shellfish harvesting license or permit to shellfish in their town. Size and daily quantities vary by town. Shellfishing regulations are established and enforced to protect human health and also to preserve the living marine resources and ecosystem within

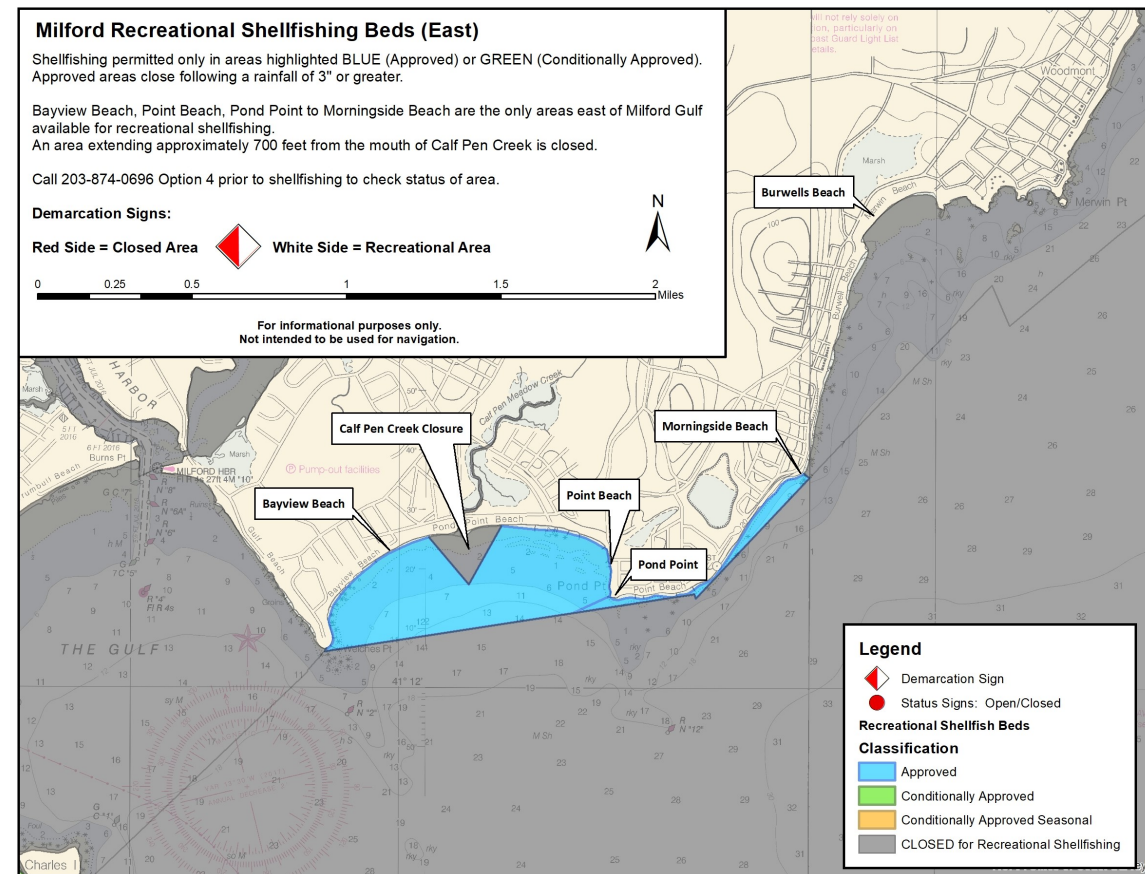
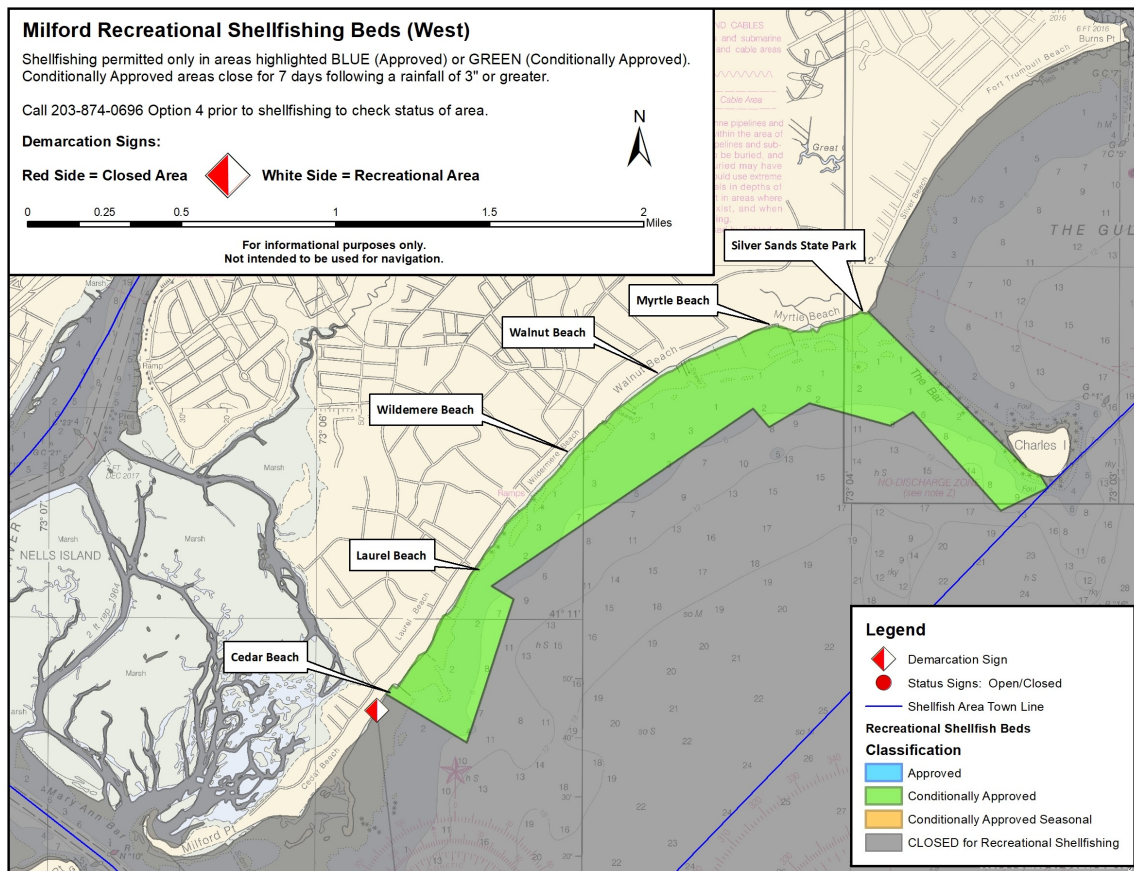
Portions of this material were excerpted from "A Guide to Recreational Shellfishing in Connecticut" Connecticut Sea Grant College Program. Groton, CT. CTSG-04-06 and Connecticut Sea Grant Publication Number: CTSG-06-07 Connecticut Sea Grant College Program.

For more information about Connecticut Sea Grant visit <http://www.seagrants.uconn.edu>





# RECREATIONAL SHELLFISHING REQUIREMENTS AND GUIDELINES

-  There is no license required for harvesting clams, mussels or oysters for your own consumption in Milford, CT.
-  Harvest is limited to 1/2 bushel of shellfish (clams, mussels, oysters) per day taken during daylight hours. (1/2 bushel is approximately one 5 gallon bucket.)
-  Implements used to collect shellfish must have openings or spacing between the teeth of 1" or greater.
-  Oysters less than 3" in length must be returned to the harvest area.
-  Hard clams less than 1" in thickness or that will pass through a ring of 1.5" internal diameter must be returned to the harvest area.
-  Soft-shell clams (steamers) less than 1.5" in length must be returned to the harvest area.
-  Recreational harvesters can not offer their shellfish for sale or barter.
-  Recreationally harvested shellfish are intended to be consumed by the harvester and family members.
-  Harvesting is limited to "Approved" and "Conditionally Approved-Open" areas, excluding franchised or leased shellfish beds. Recreational shellfishing in closed areas, ("Conditionally Approved-Closed," "Restricted," and "Prohibited" areas) whether for bait or personal consumption is illegal. Illegally shellfishing in "closed areas" subjects the harvester and his/her family to public health risks and fines.



# RECREATIONAL SHELLFISHING REQUIREMENTS AND GUIDELINES

-  Shellfish should be promptly refrigerated in a self-draining container. They should never be stored in water or hung overboard from a dock or boat since they are filter feeders and may concentrate contaminants from that new environment.
-  In the interest of preventing the growth of non-indigenous species, disease and parasites, no shellfish taken from or originating from areas outside of Connecticut's Long Island Sound may be placed, planted or disposed of in Long Island Sound and its tributaries with out the written approval of the Connecticut Department of Agriculture, Bureau of Aquaculture.

**PLEASE NOTE: APPROVED AND CONDITIONALLY APPROVED AREAS NOTED ON THE MAPS ARE SUBJECT TO CLOSURE IN THE EVENT OF A SEWAGE SPILL OR HEAVY RAINFALL EVENT.**

**YOU SHOULD CONTACT THE BUREAU OF AQUACULTURE OFFICE AT 203-874-0696 TO MAKE SURE THE AREA IS OPEN BEFORE YOU HARVEST SHELLFISH.**