

TO: Marine Resource Advisory Council
FROM: Major Timothy A. Duffy
RE: NYSDEC Marine Enforcement Report-August 2012
DATE: August 30, 2012

MARINE RESOURCES

“Too Many Sea Bass” (Kings County)

On June 27, ECO Matthew Baker responded to the Coney Island Pier in Brooklyn for a complaint of someone keeping undersized black sea bass. Following up on a tip given to him, ECO Baker located the subject described by the caller and started his routine checks as he made his way up to the subject. While checking other fisherman ECO Baker kept a close eye on the person of interest, and noticed this person beginning to quickly go through her gear and go to the edge of the pier. ECO Baker was able to stop the person and find the illegal fish before they were dumped into the water. The subject was issued a NYC summons for illegal possession of 25 undersized black sea bass.



Undersized Surprise (Suffolk County)

On the evening of July 14, ECO Alena Lawston and ECO Liza Bobseine conducted a plain clothes foot patrol of Shinnecock Inlet. The west jetty was crowded with fisherman and the officers strolled along from one end to the other performing their best tourist impressions. Bergalls and trigger fish were plentiful with some porgy mixed in. The officers and intern then sat on a bench and waited. A few people were checked after they walked back to their vehicle and some on lookers expressed that they were glad to see enforcement. The officers then walked to the end of the jetty and checked everyone on the way. Four violations were documented, including possession of undersized porgy, out-of-season blackfish, undersized black sea bass and no marine registration.



Foot Patrol (Suffolk County)

On July 28, Region 1 ECO Jeremy Eastwood and MEU Brian Farrish were on foot patrol on the North Shore beaches of the Long Island Sound. The Officers were checking all recreational fishermen for their marine fishing registries and inspecting their catch. The Officers checked one group of fishermen that claimed to have not caught anything all day. Upon further inspection of the nearby sand by ECO Farrish, a large bag was found with several small fish in it. The fishermen admitted to hiding the fish. The Officers issued the appropriate summons and moved down to the next beach, where the Officers discovered more fish hidden in the trunk of a car. The patrol produced nine tickets and several verbal and written warnings for no marine registry.

Pier Fishing Shortcomings (Suffolk County)

On several evenings in July and August at Captree and Babylon State Parks, ECO Joshua Sulkey checked fishermen along the fishing piers knowing there were many undersized fish being caught. On one of these patrols a fisherman stated to the Officer that he had caught small blackfish. When asked if they kept any of the fish, the fisherman went into silence. ECO Sulkey then observed a plastic bag in the bed of the subject's truck which he found to contain many undersized black sea bass. The fisherman was then asked if he had any more fish and he replied that he did not, however more fish were discovered in his bait box. The fisherman was in possession of 35 undersized black sea bass, with the largest measuring eight inches. ECO Sulkey found four other parties to be in possession of undersized sea bass as well. The other parties possessed 6, 12, 18 and 25 undersized sea bass, respectively. One fisherman on the Captree dock was also found to be in possession of two undersized fluke, which measured 12.5 inches, well under the legal size limit of 19.5 inches. All parties were issued summonses for possessing undersized marine fish.

Undersized Summer Flounder (Nassau County)

On August 8, MEU ECO George Scheer and Region 1 ECO Michael Unger were on boat patrol in the western Long Island Sound checking recreational fishermen. In a few short hours, the two ECOs checked a couple of boats for fishing and Navigation Law

violations. The ECOs came across more than one person who was in possession of undersized summer flounder. The ECOs issued summonses for undersized summer flounder to persons found in violation during their patrol.

Sea Bass (Nassau County)

On August 10, MEU ECO Sean Reilly responded to a complaint of two men taking undersize sea bass by the Meadowbrook Drawbridge. ECO Reilly responded to the location with USCG Jones Beach on their 24' patrol boat. ECO Reilly boarded the boat and the fishermen showed three sea bass of legal size in the cooler and said that was all the fish they had. ECO Reilly and the Coast Guard conducted a safety check and the vessel had all necessary equipment. While doing the check, ECO Reilly removed a fire extinguisher to inspect it and noticed a plastic bag stuffed behind it in the gunwale. ECO Reilly removed the bag and it contained two sea bass less than legal size and a blackfish out of season. ECO Reilly issued tickets for two violations to the fisherman responsible for taking the fish.

Next Time Use A Tape Measure (Suffolk County)

On August 12, Suffolk County Police Department Marine Bureau officers stopped a vessel entering Home Creek from Moriches Bay for reckless operation. During their inspection of the vessel, the experienced marine officers who often work with the Environmental Conservation Officers, noticed fishing gear. The officers asked if there were any fish on the vessel to which they received a shocked look followed by a half hearted, "Yes". After seeing the shark, the officers called ECO Simmons to ensure that the fishermen were able to legally possess that species. ECO Simmons explained how to properly measure the shark. The Marine Officers' measurement of the shark was less than the required 54 inch size limit. ECO Simmons then contacted ECO Fay and informed him of the situation. ECO Fay responded and identified the shark as a short fin mako. He measured the shark and confirmed that it was four inches short of the legal limit. When asked about the size of the mako, the fishermen stated they thought it looked big enough to which ECO Fay suggested they bring a tape measure on their next fishing trip. ECO Fay then asked the operator for the Federal 2012 Atlantic Highly Migratory Species Angling Permit which is required when fishing Atlantic tunas, sharks, swordfish and billfish. The operator stated he did indeed have the permit but had left it at home. ECO Fay issued the captain of the vessel an Environmental Conservation ticket for the short mako and informed the NMFS Agent of the federal permit violation.



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