

# CONNECTICUT FISHING REPORT

by Bob Sampson Jr.

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Groton, Jordan Cove, Niantic Bay, Point Judith Salt Pond and other similar habitats throughout their range. They spawn in shallow water during the late winter or very early spring, when water temperatures are around 35 to 40 degrees, which is just about ice out time in March.

For years, anglers in the know would begin fishing as soon as they moved in shore for the winter during December or in late February into early March, as soon as coastal embayments where they spawned were ice-free. This is now illegal, because the Connecticut season opens on April 1, in order to protect those large spawners that were at one time heavily hit by sport and commercial rod and reel anglers and in some areas hand spears as well. Then, considering the fact that draggers used to hammer them all summer long in Long and Block Island Sounds, it's a wonder there were two fish left to even begin the recovery of this beleaguered species over the past decade and a half.

This protection is necessary, but during a spring like 2006, when ice was short-lived and the flounder did their thing early in March, many

of the big breeders had already left the shallow bays by the season opener. Temperature sensitive adults leave their shallow spawning grounds once temperatures reach the mid 50's to 60 F. (According to Bigelow and Schroeder's "Fishes of the Gulf of Maine"). For this reason, there wasn't much left to catch by April 1, 2006, so early winter flounder fishing was hit or miss, mostly miss during the early half of the flatfish season when people were fishing from shore and small boats, most noticeably at Bluff Point and Jordan Cove.

However, as the spring progressed, there were consistent reports of decent catches of quality winter flounder from the Niantic Bay area and west to the lower Connecticut River until the end of the season on May 30. (These catches were made by a few hard core, expert winter flounder fishermen.) In addition, there were reports of incidental catches for another month, by fluke and porgy fishermen, until warm summer temperatures finally drove these fish out into the waters of the Sound. Research (Bigelow and Schroeder) indicates that winter flounder become pretty much inactive at temperatures above 72 F, so in this area they move to deeper cooler waters to spend the summer months.

To the north, flatfish remain longer in the shallows and have for the past few years provided improving catches in popular places such as Quincy Harbor, Boston Harbor and other areas in Massachusetts and to a lesser degree, Rhode Island.

In western Long Island Sound, particularly around the Norwalk Islands, according to Rick Mola of Fisherman's World, there was an excellent fishery for quality flatfish that ranged up to three pounds throughout the latter part of the season during both 2005 and 2006.

The spring of 2006 was the best winter flounder season (according to reports, because I didn't do much the couple times I targeted this species) in many years. However, don't go out expecting to catch flatties on every drop, like under sized fluke, they must be located and fished properly. A chum pot makes a tremendous difference in success when it comes to catching these fish. If this season improves over last, for the first time in quite a while, it may actually be worth exploring the waters along the Connecticut coast for winter flounder this spring, with reasonable expectations for some degree of success.

## High Tides For March 2007

### Fire Island Democratic Point

March 1	5:21 AM	5:50 PM	March 16	4:36 AM	5:07 PM
March 2	6:05 AM	6:32 PM	March 17	5:28 AM	5:55 PM
March 3	6:44 AM	7:10 PM	March 18	6:17 AM	6:41 PM
March 4	7:20 AM	7:47 PM	March 19	7:04 AM	7:27 PM
March 5	7:56 AM	8:22 PM	March 20	7:52 AM	8:14 PM
March 6	8:30 AM	8:56 PM	March 21	8:42 AM	9:03 PM
March 7	9:05 AM	9:30 PM	March 22	9:36 AM	9:57 PM
March 8	9:41 AM	10:05 PM	March 23	10:34 AM	10:54 PM
March 9	10:20 AM	10:42 PM	March 24	11:33 AM	11:53 PM
March 10	11:03 AM	11:26 PM	March 25	-----	12:34 PM
March 11	11:53 AM	-----	March 26	12:54 AM	1:37 PM
March 12	12:19 AM	12:52 PM	March 27	1:58 AM	2:42 PM
March 13	1:21 AM	1:59 PM	March 28	3:04 AM	3:45 PM
March 14	2:29 AM	3:09 PM	March 29	4:04 AM	4:39 PM
March 15	3:36 AM	4:12 PM	March 30	4:55 AM	5:25 PM
			March 31	5:38 AM	6:04 PM

### High Tides For Other Locations:

#### South Shore

Amityville	+ 2:59
Bay Shore	+ 2:46
E. Rockaway Inlet	+ 0:32
Freeport	+ 1:16
Jones Inlet	+ 0:19
Moriches Inlet	- 0:18
Shinnecock Inlet	- 0:12

#### North Shore

Pt. Washington	+ 3:23
Oyster Bay	+ 3:32
Pt. Jefferson	+ 3:29
Mattituck Inlet	+ 3:35
Greenport	+ 2:45
Sag Harbor	+ 2:35
Montauk Point	+ 0:29

All times are approximate • Not responsible for errors.

#### Moon Phases



## High Tides For March 2007

### Bridgeport, CT

March 1	9:32 AM	9:57 PM	March 16	8:35 AM	9:02 PM
March 2	10:16 AM	10:36 PM	March 17	9:27 AM	9:51 PM
March 3	10:55 AM	11:13 PM	March 18	10:16 AM	10:38 PM
March 4	11:32 AM	11:47 PM	March 19	11:05 AM	11:25 PM
March 5	-----	12:07 PM	March 20	11:53 AM	-----
March 6	12:21 AM	12:21 PM	March 21	12:12 AM	12:43 PM
March 7	12:55 AM	1:16 PM	March 22	1:02 AM	1:36 PM
March 8	1:30 AM	1:54 PM	March 23	1:55 AM	2:32 PM
March 9	2:09 AM	2:35 PM	March 24	2:53 AM	3:34 PM
March 10	2:51 AM	3:22 PM	March 25	3:57 AM	4:42 PM
March 11	3:40 AM	4:16 PM	March 26	5:07 AM	5:52 PM
March 12	4:37 AM	5:16 PM	March 27	6:18 AM	6:59 PM
March 13	5:39 AM	6:18 PM	March 28	7:25 AM	7:58 PM
March 14	6:41 AM	7:17 PM	March 29	8:22 AM	8:47 PM
March 15	7:40 AM	8:12 PM	March 30	9:10 AM	9:29 PM
			March 31	9:52 AM	10:07 PM

### High Tides For Other Locations:

City Island	+0:17	Stamford	+0:03	Madison	- 0:21
New Rochelle	- 0:04	S. Norwalk	+0:09	Essex	- 0:05
Mamaroneck	+0:12	Housatonic Rvr	+0:26	Saybrook Pt	- 0:31
Cos Cob	+0:05	Milford	- 0:08	New London	- 1:45

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#### Moon Phases

