



# **Recreational Shellfishing in Falmouth**

**A Helpful Guide**



## Know Before You Go

- The shellfishing week runs Sunday to Saturday.
- Open shellfishing area maps are online at [www.falmouthma.gov](http://www.falmouthma.gov)
- Be on the lookout for shellfishing area closures following an extended period of rain.
- A shellfish permit is not required to take any shellfish that have washed up on the beach following a storm (e.g. Surf Drive).
- Report shellfishing violations during business hours to Falmouth MES, 508-457-2550. During non-business hours to Falmouth Police, 508-457-2526 x0.

## Gear Restrictions

- Jerk rakes, Bull rakes and “T” handled rakes are prohibited in Bourne’s Pond.
- Scallop dredging is prohibited in West Falmouth Harbor and all *Family/Recreational Areas*.
- A comprehensive list of all current shellfishing regulations is available at the Clerk’s Office at Town Hall and on the Town website.

## While Out Shellfishing

- You must have a Falmouth shellfish permit and gauge on hand.
- Shellfish permit must be prominently displayed at all times.
- As you are shellfishing, make sure to cull through the entire catch for undersized shellfish or “seed”.
- When shellfish seed is returned to the water, seed should be evenly dispersed.
- Softshell clam seed should be replaced within a hole in the sand or mud, with the neck oriented upwards.

## Storage & Safe Handling of Shellfish

- Always keep shellfish cool or on ice. Refrigerate at 40°F. A wet paper towel placed over shellfish will keep a fresh catch alive. **Do not wet store shellfish.** Refrigerate oysters with the cup facing upwards.
- Live shellfish close their shells when handled. Discard broken or gaping shells that do not close when tapped firmly a few times. Discard shellfish that do not open when cooked.
- When opening shellfish, always use a sterilized knife.

## Sizes & Catch Limits



### Oysters (*Crassostrea virginica*)

Min. size: 3 in. total shell length

Recreational limit: 1/4 bushel (1 peck) per week

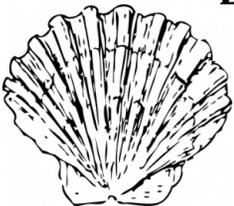
*\*Oyster shells must be returned to the growing area. **It's the law.***



### Quahogs (*Mercenaria mercenaria*)

Min. size: 1 in. shell thickness

Recreational limit: 10 quarts/1 peck per day but not more than 20 quarts/2 pecks in any one week.



### Bay Scallops (*Argopecten irradians*)

Min. size: well-defined raised growth ring

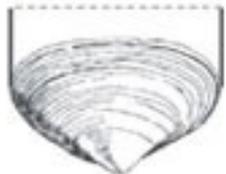
Recreational limit: 1 bushel per week



### Softshell clams (*Mya arenaria*)

Min. size: 2 in. total shell length

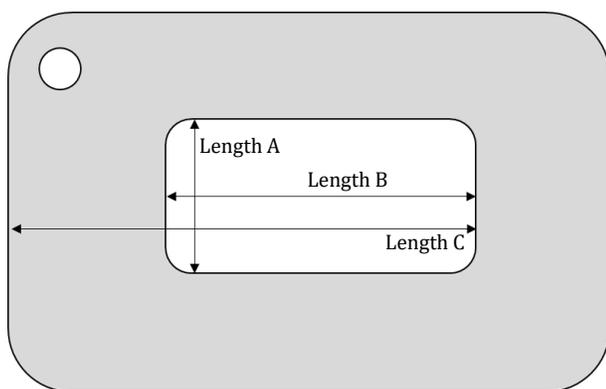
Recreational limit: 1/4 bushel (1 peck) per week



# Where to Go Shellfishing

- Open shellfishing areas in Falmouth are generally categorized by season, with summer shellfishing areas opening in May, and winter shellfishing areas opening in October. For the most up-to-date list of open shellfishing areas, please visit the Town of Falmouth website.
  - *Family/Recreational Areas* are designated for recreational shellfishing, and are open Saturday and Sunday only.
  - Summer Family/Recreational Areas
    - **Bourne's Pond:** South of a line from pole #290/7 Moonpenny Lane (Moonpenny Homeowners Interest Parcel 45-17-029-015) to #103 Bourne's Pond Road.
    - **Megansett Harbor:** Located in front of the public beach from the northern harbor jetty to the town property line out to 100' offshore.
  - Winter Family/Recreational Areas
    - **Great Pond:** From Priscilla St. to the end of Bourne St. (A line at the end of Priscilla St. easterly 300 ft, then southerly 1400 ft., then westerly 350 ft to the edge of Bourne St.)
    - **West Falmouth Harbor:** South of a line that runs east-west from the eastern bridge abutment of the Chapaquoit Bridge to a fixed sign located due west of that eastern bridge abutment.
- Recreational harvest is not limited to *Family/Recreational Areas*.

## Using a Shellfish Gauge



Length A: Min. 1 in. width of quahog;

Quahog should not fit through the opening

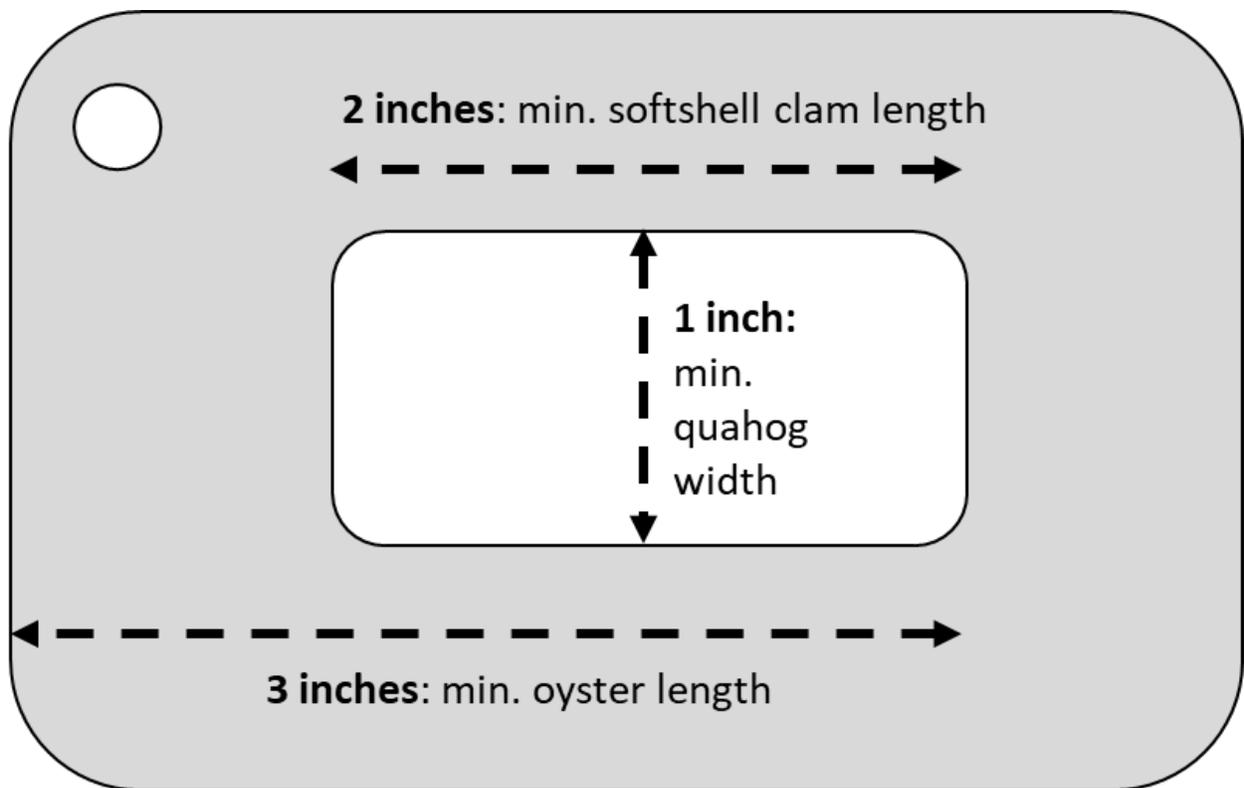
Length B: Min. 2 in. length of softshell clam

Length C: Min. 3 in. length of oyster

## Get Involved!

- Falmouth's shellfish propagation efforts would not be possible without the continued support of many volunteers! If you are interested in volunteering with Falmouth's shellfish projects, please fill out the form at [www.falmouthma.gov/778/Get-Involved](http://www.falmouthma.gov/778/Get-Involved)

# Using a Shellfish Gauge



## **Need More Information?**

For more information about shellfishing in Falmouth, MA contact

**Marine & Environmental Services,**

Shellfish Division at

508-457-2550