

Shellfish Division
2023-2024
Annual Shellfish
Resource Management
Regulations
March 13, 2023

**TOWN OF FALMOUTH
OYSTER REGULATIONS
2023-2024 SEASON**

Family/Recreational: Between **October 1, 2023 and March 31, 2024**, both dates inclusive, not more than (10) quarts of oysters per week may be taken from areas open to the taking of shellfish. Seed oysters (less than 3" in length) must be culled from the shells of adult oysters at the harvest site. After shucking, oyster shells must be returned to the harvest site or to the shell collection site located at the Falmouth DPW (416 Gifford Street), on the right leading up the hill. *Recreational harvesters are not required to have completed Vibrio training to harvest from areas between October 1, 2023 and October 19, 2023.*

Commercial: Between **October 20, 2023 and March 31, 2024**, both dates inclusive, commercial harvest of oysters shall be limited to no more than (2) level town-approved containers per day. Commercial fishing is allowed on **Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays only**. Culling of seed oysters from the shells of adult oysters must take place at the harvest site.

**TOWN OF FALMOUTH
2023-2024 FAMILY PERMIT SCALLOP REGULATIONS**

Pursuant to MGL Chapter 130, Section 52, the following regulations for the taking of scallops by Falmouth Permit Holders effective **OCTOBER 1, 2023 through MARCH 31, 2024** are hereby adopted:

1. Scallop season will open for all FAMILY shellfish permit holders on **October 1, 2023** throughout the town including areas “Closed to Shellfishing” for quahogs, clams, oysters and mussels.
2. Skin diving using mask, snorkel and fins may be used in any area.
3. Scuba diving with air tanks is allowed in Megansett Harbor, with the exception of the “Family Shellfishing Area, Buzzards Bay, Great Harbor Woods Hole and Vineyard Sound from shore only.
4. Skin and Scuba divers shall display a diver’s flag.
5. Scallop boats shall not position themselves between the shoreline and any diver’s flag. While towing scallop dredges, all boats shall remain outside a 100-foot radius of any dive flag.
6. Dredging is prohibited in West Falmouth harbor and all family shellfish areas.
7. Beginning on **November 1, 2023 until November 30, 2023**, dredging will be permitted in marked navigational channels except on the Atlantic Oyster grant in Seapit River and West Falmouth Harbor. Great Harbor and Little Harbor Woods hole will open for dredging on November 1, 2018.
8. FAMILY CATCH LIMIT: (1) bushel per week of bay scallops.
9. Dredges are limited to 3-foot width and two dredges per boat. Dredges must have two-inch or larger rings in the construction of the bag. Boats shall be limited to two permit holders per boat.
10. All bay scallops taken from Falmouth waters shall be landed in Falmouth. Scallops may not be shucked prior to landing.
11. The use of dredges shall be prohibited in any Family Shellfish Area.

**TOWN OF FALMOUTH
2023-2024 COMMERCIAL SCALLOP REGULATIONS**

Pursuant to MGL Chapter 130, Section 52, the following regulations for the taking of scallops by Falmouth Permit Holders effective **OCTOBER 1, 2023 through MARCH 31, 2024** are hereby adopted:

1. No Commercial Scallop Fishing on Sundays.
2. Skin diving using mask, snorkel and fins may be used in any area.
3. Scuba diving with air tanks is allowed in Buzzard Bay, Megansett Harbor, Vineyard Sound and Great Harbor Woods Hole from shore only.
4. Skin and Scuba divers shall display diver's flag and commercial divers shall display their permit numbers in 3" numbers on their dive flag.
5. Scallop boats shall not position themselves between the shore and diver's flags. While towing scallop dredges, all boats shall remain outside a 100-foot radius of any dive flag.
6. Commercial season opens on **October 1, 2023** in Buzzards Bay, Vineyard Sound and Great Harbor Woods Hole. All other areas to include Waquoit Bay and West Falmouth Harbor shall open on Monday, **October 4, 2023** to commercial scalloping. Commercial permit holders may take (1) bushel per week in coastal ponds from **October 1, 2023 until October 8, 2023**. NOTE: Family shellfish areas are not open to commercial shellfishing of any species.
7. Beginning on **November 1, 2023 until November 30, 2023** dredging will be permitted in marked navigational channels, except in the Seapit River on the Atlantic Oyster Shellfish grant and in West Falmouth Harbor. Dredging of scallops in Great Harbor and Little Harbor Woods Hole shall be permitted from **November 1, 2023 to March 31, 2024**.
8. COMMERCIAL CATCH LIMIT: **October 1 through October 31st**, (1) bushel per week. Beginning on **November 1st**, five (5) bushels per open days in coastal ponds. Beginning **October 1st**, the limit is ten (10) bushels per open day in the waters of Vineyard Sound, Megansett harbor and Buzzards Bay.
9. Dredges are limited to 3-foot width and two dredges per boat except in the waters of Vineyard Sound, Megansett Harbor and Buzzards Bay where 1 dredge not exceeding 5 feet in width is permitted in place of the 2 three foot dredges. Dredges must have two inch or larger rings in the construction of the bag. Boats shall be limited to two permit holders per boat.
10. All bay scallops taken in Falmouth waters shall be landed in Falmouth. Scallops may not be shucked prior to landing.
11. Scallop shells may not be discarded in the water at any town landing.

TOWN OF FALMOUTH

Openings and Closings of Areas for Shellfish Resource Management

SOUTHERN BOURNES POND SC-13

The waters of Southern Bournes Pond (Family Area) shall open **May 1, 2023** and shall be closed for restocking on **November 7, 2023**.

WEST FALMOUTH HARBOR FAMILY AREA BB-54

The waters of the West Falmouth Harbor Family Area shall be closed for shellfish stocking from sunset on **March 20, 2023** until sunrise on **October 1, 2023** or until the MA DMF deems water quality is acceptable, whichever date is later.