

# Sport fishing

16 July 2020 | 13 h 43

# Table des matières

<b>Sport fishing</b> .....	3
<b>Latest news on regulation</b> .....	7
<b>Limits, possession and identification</b> .....	15
<b>Licence</b> .....	21
<b>Types of fishing and bait</b> .....	28
<b>Salmon fishing</b> .....	29
<b>Specific methods for certain species</b> .....	32
<b>Line fishing and fly fishing</b> .....	35
<b>Other types of fishing</b> .....	39
<b>Use of bait</b> .....	40
<b>Good practices and prohibited practices</b> .....	43
<b>Special areas</b> .....	48
<b>Glossary</b> .....	52

# Sport fishing

Despite the situation with the COVID-19, the fishing season is maintained. However, the [instructions](#) of the Direction nationale de la santé publique must be observed.

Fishing is an exciting and relaxing activity that everyone can enjoy. Whether you fish alone, as part of a group or with your family, in a lake or a river, in a natural setting or in a city, there are many different fish species waiting to be discovered. Although Québec's diverse range of fish is a renewable natural resource, its balance is nevertheless fragile. As a result, there are a number of rules that you must follow before fishing, to ensure the sustainability of this collective wealth.

The regulation presented covers the period from April 1st, 2020 to March 31, 2022. A new regulation is published every two years, on April 1st, but the periods, limits and exceptions are, for their part, updated annually, from April 1st.

## Zone-based regulations

Québec's territory is divided into [29 fishing zones](#) that take species distribution into account.

The regulations may therefore differ from one zone to the next, and also depending on the species and period of the year. Rules may also differ if you are in [certain areas](#).

To fish in Québec, you must:

- hold a valid [fishing licence](#) (unless otherwise stated)
- know your [fishing zone](#);
- comply with the [quotas and fishing periods](#) in this zone;
- comply with the [catch and length limits](#) for the species fished and the fishing zone (this requirement also applies to anyone to whom fish are given);
- use [gear \(lures, hooks, bait\)](#) that complies with the regulations governing your type of fishing;
- know the source of and be able to [identify the species](#) of any fish that you transport or have in your possession.

You must also comply with the [other rules and good practices](#) applicable to the area in which you have chosen to fish.

If you fail to comply with any of the rules governing fishing, you may be liable to a fine that will vary according to the type of offence you commit.

Fish caught during sport fishing are not intended to be sold.

## Access to bodies of water

Most bodies of water in Québec are public, regardless of whether they are in towns, semi-urban areas or rural areas. However, the land bordering the bodies of water may be privately owned. Make sure you have the landowner's permission if you must cross privately-owned land to access the site at which you would like to fish.

Land that is not privately-owned belongs to the domain of the State. You may access it freely, except for [certain places](#) where access fees and special rules may apply.

## Main species fished

Some freshwater fish species are of more interest to anglers, because of their combativeness or tasty flesh.

See our [fact sheets on the main species fished in Québec](#) for details of their principal characteristics, and to learn how to recognize them.

Unless otherwise indicated, the major species categories include several subspecies. For more information, see the [glossary](#).

## Particular species

Particular rules, in addition to quotas, apply to the following species.

**Rainbow smelt:** You may fish for rainbow smelt [at night](#) using [authorized fishing gear](#), from December 1<sup>st</sup>, 2019 to April 23, 2020, from December 1<sup>st</sup>, 2020 to April 22, 2021 and from December 1<sup>st</sup>, 2021 to April 21, 2022 in a portion of a salmon river in which rainbow smelt fishing is authorized. To learn more on [fishing for rainbow smelt](#).

**Whitefish, rainbow smelt, burbot, mollusks and crustaceans:** [Particular types of fishing](#) are authorized for these species, in very specific situations.

**Atlantic salmon:** [Atlantic salmon fishing](#) is highly sought-after as an activity and is governed by special rules.

**Striped bass, lake sturgeon, muskellunge, lake trout:** Like the walleye and Atlantic salmon, these species are also be subject to length limits.

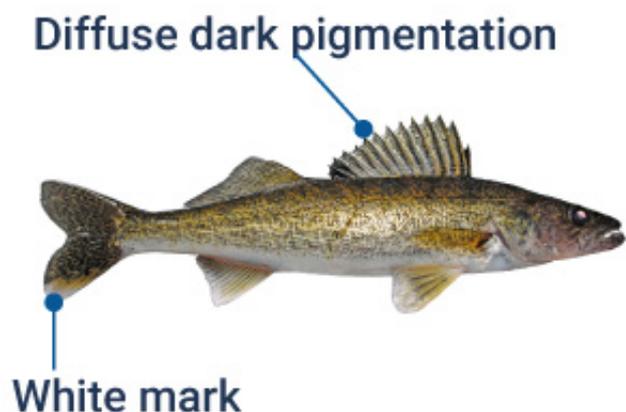
**Char:** Catch weight limits apply if you fish for char in certain northern zones.

**Yellow walleye and sauger:** Yellow walleye and sauger are both found in Québec. An initial management plan was tabled in 2011, and since then length limits have been introduced to protect the yellow walleye from overfishing. Since the limits apply only to yellow walleye, it is vital that you are able to differentiate this species from the sauger.

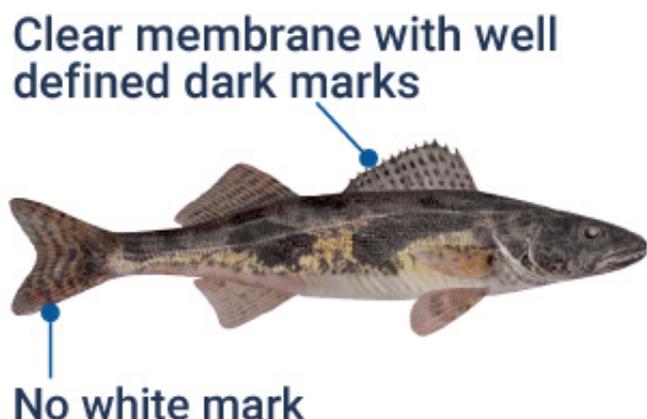
Walleye and sauger must be transported whole or in wallet fillets when length limits are in force for the walleye at the fishing site.

## Main differences

### Walleye



### Sauger



## Understanding the regulatory information

The [Québec Fishing Regulation](#) is based on the federal Fisheries Act and allows the Government to amend some of the conditions applicable to sport fishing for freshwater fish in Québec's waters. Recreational fishing for saltwater species such as capelin, cod and so on, is managed by [Fisheries and Oceans Canada](#).

The new regulation is published on April 1<sup>st</sup> of each year, but the Ministère des Forêts, de la Faune et des Parcs (MFFP) may amend it during the year, among other things to:

- close a body of water in order to avoid overfishing of a particular species;
- change catch limits based on a salmon run;

- open local water bodies to winter fishing;
- change fishing practices in a given sector following an agreement with an Aboriginal nation or band council.

Before planning your fishing activity, we invite you to consult our [Latest News page](#) for information on these changes.

## **Introduction to fishing**

If you are new to fishing, we have worked with our partners to create a unique Web platform containing a host of information that will guide you through the discovery of your new hobby.

If you would like to discover fishing, learn the basics or try it out, visit the campaign website [La pêche, c'est simple, c'est pas compliqué](#) (French only).

## **Questions about fishing rules**

Free phone line : [1 844 523-6738](tel:18445236738)

[services.clientele@mffp.gouv.qc.ca](mailto:services.clientele@mffp.gouv.qc.ca)

## **Special areas**

Rules may also differ from those of the zone in certain specific territories (ZECs, outfitters, wildlife reserves, etc.). [Learn more about these rules](#).

## Latest news on regulation

Despite the situation with the COVID-19, the fishing season is maintained. However, the [instructions](#) of the Direction nationale de la santé publique must be observed.

The general sport fishing rules are published every two years on April 1<sup>st</sup>. You will find here all the novelties in force since the last publication of these rules.

### Brook trout and lake trout management plans

Enforcement of the lake trout and brook trout management plan's new rules. For further information, see the department's [management plans](#).

#### Zone 1

The new rules regarding this fishing zone are as follows:

- Modification of fishing periods for many species in the zone.
- Reduced catch and possession limit for char: 10 in total.
- Modification to the catch and possession limit for char in a sector of rivière Petite Cascapédia and in rivières Petite Cascapédia Est and Ouest: 1 in total, measuring less than 36 cm.
- Modification to the catch and possession limit for Atlantic salmon in rivières Petite Cascapédia, Petite Cascapédia Est and Ouest: 1 small fish caught and retained or 3 caught and released, according to the quota caught first.

See all the [particular rules for zone 1](#).

#### Zone 2

The new rules regarding this fishing zone are as follows:

- Modification of fishing period for many species in the zone.
- Reduction of the catch and possession limit for char in the zone: 10 in total.
- Modification of fishing period for whitefish in rivière Touladi.
- Modification of rivière Patapédia's prohibited fishing sector.
- Modification of the winter fishing period in lacs Beau, Témiscouata, Jerry, de l'Est, Grand lac Squatec, Humqui and Pohénégamook - Winter fishing strictly allowed in waters with a maximum depth of 3 metres.

See all the [particular rules for zone 2](#).

## **Zone 3**

The new rules regarding this fishing zone are as follows:

- Modification of fishing period for lake trout in the zone.
- Reduced catch and possession limit for char in the zone: 10 in total.
- Modification of fishing period in ZEC Jaro.

See all the [particular rules for zone 3](#).

## **Zone 4**

Modification of fishing period for lake trout in the zone.

See all the [particular rules for zone 4](#).

## **Zone 5**

Modification of fishing period for lake trout in the zone.

See all the [particular rules for zone 5](#).

## **Zone 6**

Modification of fishing period for lake trout in the zone.

See all the [particular rules for zone 6](#).

## **Zone 7**

The new rules regarding bait fish are as follows:

- Modification of fishing periods for lake trout in the zone.
- Modification of fishing periods for many species in one sector of rivière Bécancour.

See all the [particular rules for zone 7](#).

## **Zone 9**

The new rules regarding this fishing zone are as follows:

- Introduction of a new length limit for lake trout in the zone: 55 cm or more.
- Maintaining the former length limit for lake trout in lacs Louisa and des Îles: 45 cm or more.

See all the [particular rules for zone 9](#).

## Zone 10

The new rules regarding this fishing zone are as follows:

- Prohibition of fishing from April 1<sup>st</sup> to July 15 in one sector of rivière Gatineau.
- Modification of fishing periods for lake trout and bass in lac Marie-Louise (municipality of La Minerve).
- Closure of winter fishing in lacs Moreno and Veillot (municipality of Nominingue), à la Loutre (municipality of Huberdeau), de la Sucrierie (municipality of Amherst), Cameron (municipality of Low), Creux (municipality of Lac-Nigault) and several other lakes in the area.
- Introduction of a new length limit for lake trout in lacs Labelle (municipality of Labelle), Grandes Baies (municipality of Nominingue) and several other lakes in the area: 55 cm or more.
- Modification of fishing periods in lac Rognon (municipality of Amherst).
- Opening of winter fishing for char and trout in lac Ambroise (municipality of Déléage).

See all the [particular rules for zone 10](#).

## Zone 11

The new rules regarding this fishing zone are as follows:

- Introduction of a new length limit for lake trout in the area: 55 cm or more.
- Maintaining the old length limit for lake trout in lacs Pérodeau, Des Cornes and Major: 45 cm or more.
- Opening of fishing for some species in lac Tapani on the first weekend of March.
- Reduction of catch and possession limit for lake trout in lac Borcoman (municipality of Ferme-Neuve): 0 retained.

See all the [particular rules for zone 11](#).

## Zone 12

The new rules regarding this fishing zone are as follows:

- Closure of winter fishing on many lakes in the zone.
- Introduction of a new length limit for lake trout in lac Duval: 55 cm or more.

See all the [particular rules for zone 12](#).

## Zone 13 East

The new rules regarding this fishing zone are as follows:

- The lacs Cuillère 1 and 2 become the lac Cuillère.
- Modification of fishing periods in lacs Roger, Namego, Wetetnagami, Charrett and Jalobert: same as the zone fishing periods.
- Modification of the daily catch limit for lake trout in lac Wetetnagami: 2 in total (same as the zone limit).

See all the [particular rules for zone 13](#).

## Zone 13 West

The new rules regarding this fishing zone are as follows:

- Opening of fishing in lacs Florentien and Ab-Rono and surrounding lacs Sans nom for 3 days in August with a daily catch limit of 3 char in total.
- Opening of lacs Laniel 1 and 2 with a daily catch limit of 3 char in total.
- Modification of fishing periods in one sector of rivière La Sarre: no fishing for all species from April 1<sup>st</sup> to June 14 inclusively.
- Closure of winter fishing in lacs Plasez, Moulin and Black as part of the lake trout management plan.
- Name change: lac Galt becomes lac du Grand Couteau.
- Introduction of a new length limit for lake trout in lacs Aldor, À l'Eau Claire, Guay and Saint-Amand: 55 cm or more.

See all the [particular rules for zone 13](#).

## Zone 14

The new rules regarding this fishing zone are as follows:

- Modification of fishing periods for char, landlocked salmon, trout and lake trout in the zone.
- Reduction of catch and possession limit for char in the zone: 10 in total.
- Introduction of a new length limit for lake trout in lac Vaillant: 55 cm or more.
- Modification of fishing periods in lac du Tabac (municipality of Baie-Obaoca).

See all the [particular rules for zone 14](#).

## Zone 15

The new rules regarding this fishing zone are as follows:

- Modification to the fishing periods for char, trout, lake trout and landlocked salmon in the zone.
- Reduced catch and possession limit for char in the zone: 10 in total.
- Introduction of a new length limit for lake trout in the zone: 55 cm or more.

See all the [particular rules for zone 15](#).

## Zone 16

Harmonization with zone 13 of the length limit for walleye in lacs Turgeon and aux Loutres: 32 cm up to and including 47 cm.

See all the [particular rules for zone 16](#).

## Zone 17

The new rules regarding this fishing zone are as follows:

- Modification of fishing periods in some sectors of rivières de l'Aigle, Opawica and Saint-Cyr as well as in lacs Chevrier and Doda and in ruisseau Germain.
- Reduced catch and possession limit for char in the zone: 15 in total or 4 kg + 1 char.
- Closing of winter fishing in some sectors of lac Chibougamau.
- Modification to the fishing period in rivière Énard of lac Chibougamau.
- Harmonization of fishing periods of many species in several bodies of water.

See all the [particular rules for zone 17](#).

## Zone 18

The new rules regarding this fishing zone are as follows:

- Closing of winter fishing for all species in rivière Boucher, lacs du Grand Portage, de la Montagne, McKinley and Betsiamites (Bersimis-2) and in réservoirs Outardes-2, Outardes-3 et Outardes-4.
- Introduction of a new length limit for lake trout in lacs Dubuc, Kakuskanus, des Caribous, du Sault-aux-Cochons and Sédillot and in réservoirs Betsiamites (Bersimis-2), Pipmuacan (Bersimis-1), Outardes-2, Outardes-3, Manic-1 et Manic-2: 55 cm or more.
- Introduction of a new length limit for lake trout in lac Fléché: less than 60 cm.
- Harmonization of the fishing period for trout with the fishing period for char in the zone.

See all the [particular rules of zone 18](#).

## Zone 19 South, Part A

The new rules regarding this fishing zone are as follows:

- Closure of winter fishing for all species in reservoirs Outardes-4 and Manic-3.
- Harmonization with the zone's catch and possession limit for lake trout in reservoir Manic-5: less than 60 cm.
- Introduction of a new length limit for lake trout in reservoirs Manic-3 and Outardes-4: 45 cm or more.

See all the [particular rules for zone 19](#).

## Zone 19 South, Part B

Reduction of catch and possession limit for Atlantic salmon in one sector of rivière Saint-Jean: 0 retained.

See all the [particular rules for zone 19](#).

## Zone 21

The new rules regarding this fishing zone are as follows:

- Reduction of catch and possession limit for char in the zone: 5 in total (except in bodies of water of zone 21 located eastside of the western tip of île de Kegaska.
- Modification of fishing periods for char in rivière Saguenay, baie des Chaleurs and îles-de-la-Madeleine waters.
- Modification of fishing periods for many species in some sectors of rivière Saguenay.

See all the [particular rules for zone 21](#).

## Zone 22

Modification to the fishing periods for all species in the zone.

See all the [particular rules for zone 22](#).

## Zone 23

The new rules regarding bait fish are as follows:

- Modification of the fishing period for all species in the zone and maintenance of an additional mandatory catch and release period for outfitters until September 30.
- Introduction of a new daily catch limit and length limit for char in rivière Caniapiscau,

from its confluence with rivière Koksoak to chute du Calcaire, 27 km upstream.

See all the [particular rules for zone 23](#).

## **Zone 23**

The new rules regarding bait fish are as follows:

- Modification of the fishing period for all species in the zone and maintenance of an additional mandatory catch and release period for outfitters until September 30.
- Introduction of a new daily catch limit and length limit for char in rivière Caniapiscou, from its confluence with rivière Koksoak to chute du Calcaire, 27 km upstream.

See all the [particular rules for zone 23](#).

## **Zone 24**

Modification of fishing period for all species in the zone.

See all the [particular rules for zone 24](#).

## **Zone 26**

The new rules regarding bait fish are as follows:

- Modification of the fishing periods for lake trout in the zone.
- Harmonization of the fishing periods for muskellunge in rivière Saint-Maurice and lac Mékinac with the fishing periods of the zone.
- Closure of winter fishing and prohibition of fishing for Arctic char at all times in the sector Grande Baie of lac Édouard.
- Introduction of a new length limit for lake trout in lacs à l'Eau Claire, aux Sables and du Missionnaire: 55 cm or more.
- Reduced catch and possession limit for lake trout in Grand lac Long: 0 retained.
- Modification of the fishing periods for some species in lac des Pins Rouges.

See all the [particular rules for zone 26](#).

## **Zone 27**

The new rules regarding bait fish are as follows:

- Introduction of a new length limit for lake trout in lacs Long and Montauban: 55 cm or more.
- Modification of the fishing period for bass and muskellunge in the zone.

- Modification of the fishing periods in Portneuf wildlife reserve, in the ZEC de la Rivière-Blanche and in the ZEC des Martres.
- Closure of fishing for the Atlantic tomcod in the zone, except in rivière Sainte-Anne, between the downstream side of route 138 bridge and the upstream side of highway 40.
- Introduction of winter fishing in lac de la Mine at Notre-Dame-de-Montauban: from December 20 to March 31.

See all the [particular rules for zone 27](#).

## Zone 28

The new rules regarding bait fish are as follows:

- Establishment of a maximum length limit of 47 cm for walleye and sauger in the lac Saint-Jean Community Wildlife Area, excluding lac à Jim and rivière Micosas.
- Modification of the fishing period for all species in lacs des Îles, Ménicanane, Neault, Providence, Quémandeur, à la Truite, Yarbo and Petit lac Monikanan Ouest.
- Modification of the fishing period in rivières Saguenay, Chicoutimi, Shipshaw, Descente des Femmes and aux Vases.
- Introducing a new length limit for walleye in Ashuapmushuan Wildlife Reserve: 32 cm up to and including 47 cm.
- Introducing a new length limit for lake trout in several bodies of water in the zone: 55 cm or more.
- Reduced catch and possession limit for lake trout in lac Chaumonot: 0 retained.

See all the [particular rules for zone 28](#).

## Zone 29

Closure of winter fishing for lake trout in lacs à la Croix and Manouane.

See all the [particular rules for zone 29](#).

# Limits, possession and identification

## What are the applicable quotas in your zone?

For details of the maximum number of fish that may be caught daily, including in provincial parks, wildlife reserves and ZECs, please see the [Fishing periods, limits and exceptions page](#).

You do not know your fishing zone? [Use the interactive map](#) to locate it.

## Definition of limits

When you fish in Québec, you must comply with four different types of limits or quotas, depending on the species of interest and the location of your fishing site.

### Daily catch limit

The daily catch limit is the maximum number of fish of the same species caught and kept in a given day by you and by all the other people fishing under your licence. It also includes fish caught and consumed on that day. Fish that are released are not included in the catch limit, except in the case of salmon, which are also subject to a catch-and-release limit.

You must stop fishing once you have reached the daily catch limit applicable to the body of water and species concerned. However, you may continue to fish for the same species for the rest of the day, provided you move to another body of water where the catch limit is higher.

**Example:** In the lake where you are fishing, the daily catch limit is 15 trout. You catch 8 trout in the morning and eat 5 for lunch. Although you now have only 3 trout in your possession, you cannot catch and keep more than 7 additional trout on that day. However, you may continue to fish for another species for which you have not yet reached the daily catch limit.

Daily catch limits are not cumulative.

For details of the maximum number of fish that may be caught daily, including in provincial parks, wildlife reserves and ZECs, please see the [Fishing periods, limits and exceptions page](#).

You do not know your fishing zone? Use the [interactive map](#) to locate it.

### Catch weight limit – Char

The catch limit for char in zones 17 and 22 to 24, located in the Nord-du-Québec region, is expressed by weight.

For fish that are not whole, the weight limit is calculated as shown below :

- Gutted fish weight × 1.25

- Gutted and headed fish weight × 1.66
- Filleted fish weight × 3.5

The product must not exceed the authorized weight limit.

### **Possession limit**

The possession limit is the number of fish of the same species that you may have in your possession **at any time** and **at any place**, whether it be at the fishing site, on the road or at your home. The possession limit is usually the same as the daily catch limit.

You may have, in your possession, a number of fish caught while sport fishing that exceeds the quantity stipulated for the zone, provided the surplus fish:

- come from other zones;
- were caught in compliance with the catch limits for those zones.

In no case may you exceed the highest catch limit established in Québec for a given species.

**Example:** The daily catch limit for a given species in a particular zone is 15 fish. The possession limit for that species, at that site, is therefore also 15 fish. If you fish in more than one zone, the authorized possession limit for the species in question is equivalent to the highest zone limit.

Daily catch limits are not cumulative.

Notwithstanding the above, if you are in a national park, a wildlife reserve, a communal wildlife area, a controlled harvesting zone (ZEC) or on a body of water, you cannot possess, at any time, an amount of fish greater than the catch limit set for this park, wildlife reserve, wildlife area, controlled harvesting zone or body of water.

However, since there are some bodies of water where the catch limit set for these species is greater than the limit set for the zone, you may possess the fish from one of those bodies of water even if this limit exceeds the one set for the zone. These rules apply to rainbow smelt as well.

### **Possession of fish without a licence**

A licence is not required to have fish in your possession. You may therefore share your fish with someone who does not have a fishing licence. However, you must still comply with the daily catch limit, and the person to whom you give the fish must also comply with the authorized possession limit. Upon request of a wildlife protection officer or assistant, you must indicate where your fish has been caught.

## Limits applicable to Atlantic salmon only

On top of the [size notion](#) applicable to Atlantic salmon catch limits, this species is regulated with other particular limits.

### Catch-and-release limit

This quota, when it exists, applies only to Atlantic salmon, and corresponds to the number of salmon that you may catch and release in any given day, on the body of water concerned.

### Annual possession limit

You cannot keep more than four salmon during a given season (full details are available in the section on [Salmon fishing](#)).

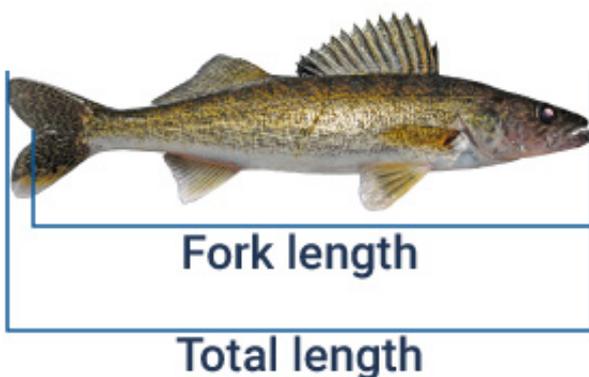
### Length limit

In addition to catch and possession limits, length limits may also apply to certain species and certain places.

To check whether the species of interest to you is subject to a length limit in your fishing zone, see the section entitled [Particular rules for each zone](#).

### Fish measure and fillet

The length of a fish is measured in "total" length, from the tip of the mouth to the tip of the tail. However, in the case of Atlantic salmon, the length is measured in "fork length", from the tip of the mouth to the fork of the tail.



About [118 freshwater fish species](#) are found in Québec's lakes and rivers, among which more than thirty being coveted by fishermen. Although this diverse range of fish is a renewable natural resource, its balance is nevertheless fragile, hence the need to apply some rules.

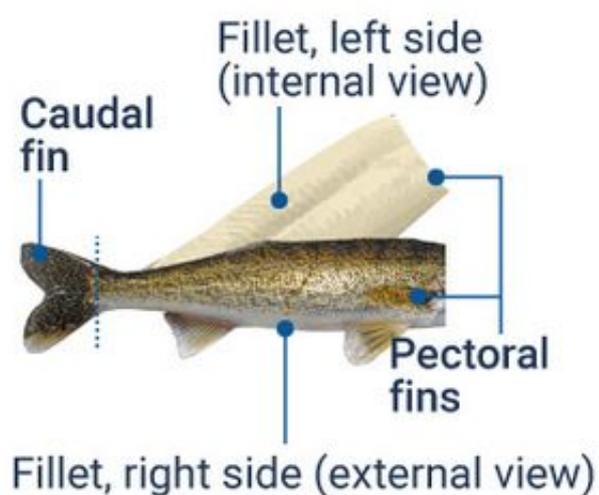
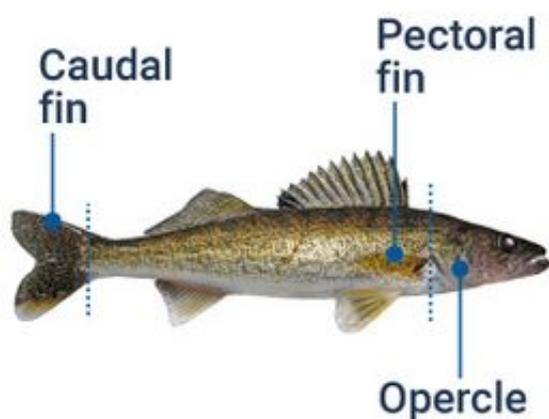
## Wallet fillets

To comply with the length limit applicable to walleye, the fish must be transported whole or in “wallet fillets” if filleted.

### How to wallet fillet

You must make sure the skin is left on the flesh, and cut the fish as shown below:

- Make an incision at the front of the pectoral fin (at the opercle).
- Run the knife along the spine towards the tail.
- Stop the cut just before the caudal fin.
- Repeat the operation the other side.
- Cut the spine keeping the two fillets attached to the caudal fin.



To learn more about this technique, have a look at our video [Comment couper le doré en filets portefeuille](#) (french only).

## **Length of the fillets**

Wallet fillets are compulsory, so that the species can be identified and the length determined where necessary. The accepted length of the fillets depends on the authorized length range (see how to measure fish).

### **For walleye between 32 cm and 47 cm inclusively**

The 2 fillets must measure between 24 cm and 35 cm, measured from the tip of the caudal fin to the rear point at which the pectoral fin attaches to the fillet. These fins must remain attached to the fillets.

### **For walleye between 37 cm and 53 cm inclusively**

The 2 fillets must measure between 28 cm and 40 cm inclusively, measured from the tip of the caudal fin to the rear point at which the pectoral fin attaches to the fillet. These fins must remain attached to the fillets.

### **For walleye of a maximal length of 47 cm inclusively**

The two fillets must measure 35 cm maximum, measured from the tip of the caudal fin to the rear point at which the pectoral fin attaches to the fillet. These fins must remain attached to the fillets.

Note that it is prohibited to transport or possess elsewhere than the permanent residence filleted walleye from [zone 25](#).

To check whether the species of interest to you is subject to a length limit in your fishing zone, see the section entitled [Particular rules for each zone](#).

## **Possession and identification of fish**

When you transport fish caught during sport fishing, or have them in your possession elsewhere than at your permanent place of residence, the fish must be in a state that allows you to determine:

- the source;
- the species (for example, by leaving enough skin on the flesh to be able to identify the species);
- the length (when a length limit applies);
- the number.

A wildlife protection officer or an assistant may stop you and check these elements.

### **Live fish**

Provided you respect the quotas and limits applicable to your fishing site, you may have the fish you have caught in your possession, at the fishing site, while you are fishing.

This does not apply to salmon; in this case, you must comply with the [tagging and registration conditions for the species](#).

### **Leaving Québec with fish caught here**

You cannot send fish caught here to a destination outside Québec, because the sale of fish caught by anglers is prohibited.

However, you can carry with you the number of fish caught by you or given to you (up to the authorized possession limit for each species) and any tagged salmon caught by you or another angler, or given to you.

## Licence

To fish in Québec's waters, you must have a valid fishing licence (with [some exceptions](#)). You must carry the licence with you when you fish, and be able to show it immediately when asked to do so by a wildlife protection officer or assistant.

### Categories of licences and prices

There are different categories of licences, depending on where you live. The fees may therefore differ, depending on whether you are a [resident](#) or [non-resident](#) of Québec.

Please also note that:

- Annual licences are valid from April 1 to March 31 of the following year.
- One-day, three-day and seven-day licences are valid for the dates entered on them at the time they are purchased.
- The fees include all taxes and a contribution to the Fondation de la Faune du Québec.

### Sport fishing (except for Atlantic salmon)

Categories	Residents	Non-residents
Annual, person under 65 years of age	\$23.24	\$83.17
Annual, person 65 years of age or over	\$18.43	Not available
7 consecutive days	Not available	\$50.12
3 consecutive days	\$13.29	\$33.33
1 day	Not available	\$19.42
Mandatory release*	\$13.29	\$32.60

\*Valid in an outfitting establishment only

## Other fishing licences

Categories	Residents	Non-residents
Fishing for burbot in lac Saint-Jean *	\$23.25	\$74.89
Replacement licence	\$6.21	\$6.21

\*Licence sold only in the Saguenay–Lac-Saint-Jean

## Salmon fishing licence

To [fish for Atlantic salmon](#), you must hold an Atlantic salmon sport fishing licence. This licence is mandatory to fish salmon anywhere in Quebec and to fish for any species of fish during a salmon fishing season in a salmon river.

A resident holding and carrying a "Pêche en herbe" or a "Relève de la pêche" licence may fish for salmon, but with mandatory release.

Restrictions apply to the use of an Atlantic salmon fishing licence. You may combine more than one licence, but only on the conditions shown on the licences. Whatever combination you use, **you cannot catch and keep more than four Atlantic salmon during a given year** (from April 1 to the following March 31).

## Sport fishing for Atlantic salmon

Categories	Residents	Non-residents
Annual	\$51.93	\$166.66
3 consecutive days*	\$22.64	\$44.39
Mandatory release	\$22.64	\$44.39

\*small salmon only

## **Annual licence**

This licence is issued with four tags. [All salmon caught and kept must be tagged.](#)

You cannot purchase or hold more than one Atlantic salmon annual licence.

You may purchase this licence even if you have already purchased an Atlantic salmon fishing licence with mandatory release or one or more three-day licences, provided your annual catch and keep limit of four salmon has not been reached. For example, if you have already caught one salmon on a three-day licence, you can only use three of the four tags issued with your annual licence.

## **Three consecutive day licence**

This licence is issued with one tag for small salmon only. It is only valid during the period indicated on the licence.

You may not purchase or hold:

- more than one three-day licence for overlapping periods;
- a three-day licence if you have already purchased or already hold an annual licence;
- a three-day licence if you have already caught and kept four salmon during a given year (from April 1<sup>st</sup> to the following March 31).

However, you may purchase a new three-day licence if your annual catch and keep limit of four salmon has not been reached and you can relate to one of the following situations:

- You have placed the tag from your three-day licence on a small salmon, but your annual catch and keep limit of four salmon has not been reached;
- The period indicated on your licence has expired, but your annual catch and keep limit of four salmon has not been reached.

## **Mandatory release licence**

This licence can be purchased at any time, even if you already have a three-day licence or an annual licence.

It is valid throughout Québec to fish for salmon and to fish for and keep any other authorized species in a salmon river only.

It does not allow you to fish in a body of water for which you have already reached the daily release limit.

## **Additional information**

To fish in a salmon river, you must comply to the following rules:

**If salmon fishing is open**, you must possess an Atlantic salmon sport fishing licence to fish for any species. Under exceptional cases you may use the general sport fishing licence during a salmon fishing period on the western portion of rivière aux Rochers, downstream of the boulevard des Îles bridge in Port-Cartier, to the mouth of the river (Petit Quai sector, part A of zone 19 south).

**Outside salmon fishing periods**, you may use a general sport fishing licence to fish for other species than salmon in certain salmon rivers (see the rules for zones 1, 2, 3, 18 to 21, 23, 27 and 28 on the [map of fishing zones and fishing periods](#)).

Other species of salmon can be fished in Quebec with the general sport fishing licence.

## **Purchasing and replacing a licence**

To purchase a fishing licence, you must visit one of [our sales outlets](#) (please note that the online purchase is not available).

When purchasing the licence, you must:

- Present your hunter's or trapper's certificate or **complete an identification card** if you do not have one. You will then be given a client card with your licence;
- **Pay the required fees;**
- **Sign the back of the licence**, to confirm its validity. If your first name, surname, address or date of birth is not shown on the back of the licence, or if the information shown is inaccurate, you must add or correct it by hand.

### **Buying a licence for someone else**

The sport fishing licence is not transferable. However, it is possible to buy it for someone else. In this case, this person, the owner, must sign it upon receipt from the buyer and ensure that the information on the back is accurate for this permit to be valid.

### **Replacing a licence**

If a fishing licence is lost, stolen or damaged to the point that it is unusable, you must obtain a replacement licence if you wish to continue to fish.

To be entitled to the [replacement fee](#), you must:

- present the hunter's or trapper's certificate that you used to purchase the original licence;
- or provide the client number of the lost, stolen or damaged licence. This is the number shown in the upper right-hand corner of the client card given to you when you purchased your licence.

You do not need to go back to the place at which you purchased your original licence.

## Tip

The client card not only entitles you to pay the replacement fee, it also avoids the need for you to complete an identification card every time you buy a fishing licence. You can simply use the client number shown on the card.



## Conditions for use

Before taking advantage of your licence, please note the following conditions:

- Your licence is not transferable.
- Your licence is not valid until it has been signed by both you and the sales agent who sold it to you.
- The information shown on the front of the licence must be accurate, otherwise it must be updated on the back of the licence.

## Who can fish under my licence?

If you are 18 years of age or older, certain other people may be able to fish under your licence.

Except in certain particular situations, each person benefiting from your licence is entitled to his or her own line. For exceptions, refer to the [Number of lines](#) section.

In all cases, the total number of fish caught and kept per day must not exceed the number authorized for the licence holder.

Anglers wishing to take advantage of the licence

Sport fishing licence (for species other than Atlantic salmon) and burbot fishing

Atlantic salmon sport fishing licence

licence

Your <a href="#">spouse</a>	Yes, if he or she is in your presence or in possession of your licence	No
Your children (and those of your spouse) who are under 18 years of age	Yes, if they are in your presence or in possession of your licence	Yes, if they are fishing under your supervision or under your spouse's, who is in possession of your licence
Your children (and those of your spouse) who are between 18 and 24 years of age and who have a valid student card in their possession	Yes, if they are in possession of your licence AND a valid student card	Yes, if they are in possession of your licence AND a valid student card
Any person under 18 years of age	Yes, if they are fishing under the supervision of the licence holder or his or her spouse	Yes, if they are fishing under the supervision of the licence holder or his or her spouse
Any student between 18 and 24 years of age who has a valid student card in his or her possession	Yes, if they are fishing under the supervision of the licence holder or his or her spouse	Yes, if they are fishing under the supervision of the licence holder or his or her spouse

### Is it possible to fish without a licence?

If you are a [resident](#) of Québec, you do not need a licence:

- During the [Fête de la pêche](#). However, you must still respect the fishing periods and authorized quotas for the chosen body of water. Besides, all salmon caught without a licence during the Fête de la pêche must be released where it was caught. Fees may also apply if you fish in a wildlife territory (ZEC, provincial park or wildlife reserve), a communal wildlife area or an outfitting operation with exclusive rights.
- If you are under 18 years of age and have in your possession a [Pêche en herbe](#) or Relève à la pêche certificate issued after an introduction to fishing activity. However, you must release any salmon you catch.
- If you fish for any species other than salmon in [zone 21](#) (St. Lawrence River) and in the river portion of [zone 1](#) located downstream from route 132, except for the section between Sainte-Flavie and Matapédia.
- If you fish for rainbow smelt and Atlantic tomcod in the St. Lawrence River and its

tributaries downstream from the Laviolette bridge (Trois-Rivières).

- To fish for [freshwater crustaceans](#).
- To fish in a [fish pond](#) or in the waters of a national park of Canada (also valid for non-residents).

## Non-resident's licence

A non-resident may also hold a Québec sport fishing licence ([non-resident category](#)) even when fishing for species targeted by Québec's sport fishing rules in zone 21.

### Anglers from Ontario

The holder of an Ontario sport fishing licence is considered to be the holder of a Québec sport fishing licence for the purpose of fishing:

- in [zone 25](#);
- in lac Clarice, lac Labyrinthe and lac Raven in [zone 13](#);
- in a portion of lac Saint François ([zone 8](#)) located west of a line drawn from Beaudette point on the north shore to Saint-Louis point on the south shore.

### Anglers from New Brunswick

The holder of a New Brunswick sport fishing licence is considered to be the holder of a Québec sport fishing licence when line fishing in the Patapédia ([zone 2](#)) and Ristigouche ([zones 1 and 2](#)) salmon rivers. Fish caught in these waters and kept are considered to have been caught and kept in Québec. They must therefore be counted when calculating the catch and possession limits.

### Requirement to use the services of an outfitting establishment

A non-resident who wishes to fish north of the 52<sup>nd</sup> parallel (zones [19 south](#), [22 north](#), [23](#), [24](#) and [29](#)) or east of rivière Saint-Augustin ([zone 19 south](#)) must use the services of an outfitter. For additional information, please [contact the Nord-du-Québec or Côte-Nord regional offices](#).

### Exporting sturgeon

To export lake sturgeon or Atlantic sturgeon outside Canada, you must first obtain a CITES export permit by contacting Fisheries and Oceans Canada at [1 855 869-8670](#).

## **Types of fishing and bait**

Sport fishing usually involves line fishing or fly fishing. However, fishing with bows, crossbows or harpoons is permitted at certain sites and to fish for certain species. The use of [lift nets](#), [bait traps](#), harpoons and [landing nets](#) is also permitted on certain conditions. Specific rules apply, depending on the gear used.

# Salmon fishing

Québec has roughly one hundred salmon rivers containing very large fish, and offers an outstanding fishing experience for enthusiasts from home and abroad. To ensure the conservation of this much sought-after species, populations are monitored rigorously and stringent rules apply to salmon fishing.

## Tagging of salmon

If you want to fish for salmon in Québec, you must hold one of the [Atlantic salmon fishing licences](#). The licences that allow you to fish for and keep salmon are issued with tags for registration purposes.

- **Validity of the tag:** Only during the period shown on the licence, provided the annual limit of four salmon has not been reached.
- **When to attach the tag:** As soon as you catch and keep a salmon, you must detach the tag from your licence and attach it to the fish (the three consecutive day licence only tags a small salmon).
- **Tagging order:** (annual licence only) You cannot keep more than four salmon in any given season. For the first three small salmon, the tags must be used in the order in which they are attached to the licence. If a fourth small salmon is kept, or when one big salmon is kept (where the rules so allow), you must use the tag located at the top of the licence, marked "Grand saumon" (63 cm or longer) or "Petit saumon" (at least 30 cm and less than 63 cm).
- **When to remove the tag:** It is prohibited to have a salmon caught by sport fishing in your possession if it has not been tagged. You must not remove the tag from the fish until you prepare the salmon for consumption.
- **Origin of the tag:** Anywhere in Québec where salmon can be caught and kept, the tag must be taken from the licence of the angler who struck the fish, even if someone else handled the fishing rod when the fish was recovered.
- **Where to place the tag:** Below are some examples of where the tag may be placed.

### Salmon tagged correctly



## Mandatory registration of catches

You must personally register any salmon you catch and keep within 48 hours of leaving the fishing site. A wildlife protection officer may also ask you to register your catch immediately.

### How to register your catch

The following options are available to you:

#### Authorized partner

- Take your licence and your tagged salmon (whole or gutted) to an individual or association authorized by the Department, i.e. an outfitting operation offering salmon fishing, or a wildlife reserve or a salmon fishing controlled harvesting zone (ZEC). In the case of a wildlife reserve, the salmon must be presented whole.
- The tag from your licence is punched.
- Your fish is weighed and measured, and samples or other scientific specimens may be taken.

#### Self-registration at a control point

If this option is available at your fishing site, simply follow the procedure indicated to register your salmon.

#### By telephone

This option is available for some salmon rivers or river systems. If there is no provision to register your salmon, you must contact the [regional office](#).

### Salmon registration logbook

We recommend that you use the [Angler's Logbook](#) if you fish for salmon in zones 23 and 24, located in the Nord-du-Québec region.

The logbook can be used to register your catch, and also:

- to register with an outfitter;
- to obtain instructions for taking part in the collection of information used to manage the species in the zones in question.

Please note that other special rules may apply if you fish in the [Nord-du-Québec region](#).

## Fishing for salmon in a salmon river

Because salmon rivers are usually managed by an organization of some kind, different sectors of the same river may have status as a ZEC, a wildlife reserve, a provincial park, an outfitter with exclusive rights or a private property. Special conditions may therefore apply, depending on the specific location of the watercourse. In addition to the general rules (fishing periods, quotas and limits, authorized gear), you must therefore make sure you comply with the requirements of the fishing territory concerned.

You have free access to salmon rivers or sectors of salmon rivers that are not managed by an organization or located on private property.

In a salmon river, you are not allowed to fish:

- for salmon using a harpoon, bow or crossbow;
- from a bridge crossing a salmon river or its estuary;
- during the period beginning one hour after sunset and ending one hour before sunrise (see the [Sunrise/Sunset Calculator of the National Research Council Canada](#));
- other than with a fishing rod less than 500 m downstream of any point of the mouth in zones 18, 19, 20 and 27 and on the north shore of the St. Lawrence River in zone 21.

## Fishing for salmon elsewhere than in salmon rivers

You may fish for salmon by means of angling or fly fishing elsewhere than in a salmon river. You will still need a [salmon fishing licence](#) and must also comply with the tagging and registration requirements.

For information on the maximum number of salmon that may be caught daily, see the [Fishing periods and quotas](#).

## Catch size limit

The catch limit for salmon is expressed in size (“large” or “small” salmon).

**Large salmon:** salmon measuring 63 cm or longer

**Small salmon:** salmon measuring at least 30 cm and less than 63 cm

To learn about other limits applicable to Atlantic salmon, [select your fishing zone](#).

# Specific methods for certain species

## Fishing for rainbow smelt

Special conditions apply to rainbow smelt fishing at certain sites. You may use a [lift net](#) and [landing net](#) in the following situations:

### In zone 21 (St. Lawrence River)

[Residents](#) with no licence and non-residents with a valid sport fishing licence may fish up to **120 rainbow smelt** per day, using a [lift net](#) or [landing net](#), **from April 1<sup>st</sup> to May 31**.

These methods are prohibited at the following locations:

- In the **waters of the îles de la Madeleine** and in the rivière Ouelle, between the downstream side of the route 132 bridge and a straight line linking the point of rivière Ouelle and the mouth of ruisseau Gagnon;
- In **ruisseau de l'Église**, in the municipality of Beaumont;
- In the **waters of zone 21** where the daily catch limit is 60 rainbow smelt and which are described among the exceptions for [zone 21](#);
- In **rivière Saguenay**, between a line perpendicular to the current running from the upstream side of the split (48° 26' 23" N., 70° 54' 08" W.) located near the municipality of Saint-Fulgence, and the downstream side of the Dubuc bridge in Saguenay.

### In some bodies of water in zones 1, 4, 5, 6, 9 and 15

A sport fishing licence holder may use a [lift net](#) or [landing net](#) to catch up to **120 rainbow smelt per day**:

- **from May 1<sup>st</sup> to May 31**, in rivière **Bonaventure**, between the downstream side of the former route 132 bridges and the rapide Malin;
- **from April 1<sup>st</sup> to May 31**, in [zones 9](#) and [15](#), except for the waters of lac Archambault, including bays and tributaries, and lac Tire ([zone 9](#));
- **from April 1<sup>st</sup> to May 15**, in the waters of **zones 4, 5 and 6**. These methods are prohibited at the following sites:
  - [Zone 4](#) – rivière Ashberham (Noire), from Petit lac Saint-François to Grand lac Saint-François; rivière Coulombe, from the route 161 bridge to its mouth in lac Aylmer, including the small bay facing its mouth; rivière aux Bluets, rivière aux Indiens, rivière de l'Or and rivière aux Rats Musqués, from Grand lac Saint-François to the second bridge upstream from the lake; rivière Saint-François, from Grand lac Saint-François to lac Aylmer; rivière Victoria and its tributaries; lac Mégantic and lac Elgin and their tributaries;
  - [Zone 5](#) – ruisseaux Castle and Perkins, from their source to lac Memphrémagog;

- [Zone 6](#) – rivière Magog, from the Dominion Textile dam in Magog to the highway 55 bridge; rivière Massawippi, the part between the dam located 1.6 km from lac Massawippi and the first curve downstream; rivière Niger, from its mouth to route 143; ruisseau Taylor (tributary of lac Memphrémagog); lac Memphrémagog, lac Massawippi and its tributaries; and ruisseau Castle.

## In some bodies of water in zones 10, 11 and 28

A sport fishing licence holder may use a [lift net](#) or [landing net](#) to catch up to **500 rainbow smelt per day**:

- **from May 1<sup>st</sup> to May 31**, in lac des **Écorces** ([zone 10](#)) and lac **Chaud** ([zone 11](#)) and in their tributaries;
- **from April 15 to May 20**, in rivière aux **Rats**, between lac aux Rats and latitude 49° 30' N. ([zone 28](#));
- in a portion of a salmon river where smelt fishing is authorized, this species may be fished **at night**:
  - **from December 1<sup>st</sup>, 2019 to April 23, 2020**;
  - **from December 1<sup>st</sup>, 2020 to April 22, 2021**;
  - **from December 1<sup>st</sup>, 2021 to April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2022**.

The possession limit for rainbow smelt may not be the same as the zone's daily quota. Where this is the case, the relevant information will appear on the [interactive map](#).

## Fishing for whitefish

If you have a valid sport fishing licence, you may use a [lift net](#) or [landing net](#) to fish for whitefish in certain places and on certain conditions as indicated below:

### Rivière Touladi (zone 2)

The sector located between the downstream side of ruisseau à Mac and lac Témiscouata.

**Periods:** October 15 to October 28

**Quota:** 50 whitefish per day

### Rivière Saint-François (zone 4)

The sector located between lac Aylmer and the second bridge upstream.

**Period:** October 25 to November 7

**Quotas:** 10 whitefish per day

## Fishing for burbot in Lac Saint-Jean

Specific conditions apply to burbot fishing in the waters of lac Saint-Jean encircled by routes 169, 170 and 373, excluding the portions of La Grande Décharge (downstream of the Maligne dam and the lac Saint-Jean water retention structures) and rivière Petite Décharge (the portion situated between its mouth in the Saguenay and the lac Saint-Jean water retention structures).

At this specific location, you may, if you have a [burbot fishing licence](#), fish:

- from December 20 to March 31, with no catch limit;
- using two night lines with no more than 10 fishhooks each, lying continuously on the bottom. In addition, each [night line](#) must be identified with one of the tags issued with your licence, affixed to the identification marker.

## Fishing for striped bass

In waters where permitted, anglers may fish for striped bass with a single hook only, without natural bait, for a maximum of 3 hooks on the line.

## Fishing for American eel

The use of spears or harpoons while not swimming is permitted year-round to fish for American eel in the waters of the îles de la Madeleine.

## Mollusks and crustaceans

Fishing for freshwater mollusks, except for zebra mussels and quagga mussels, is prohibited. Fishing for freshwater crustaceans is permitted by hand, using a landing net, a [baittrap](#), a [lift net](#) or other common means, with no catch limit, during the fishing periods stipulated for “Other Species”, except in zones 17 and 22 to 24, where only line fishing (angling) is permitted for all species.

## Line fishing and fly fishing

For these types of fishing, your line may be equipped with [artificial lures](#), hooks or flies, and may be baited or unbaited. A hook may be single or multiple. An artificial lure or a fly counts as a hook.

### Maximum number of hooks and points

Generally, in all bodies of water, where all kinds of line fishing (angling) is permitted (including fly fishing), your line must not have more than three fish hooks. However, the number of points for a hook or combination of hooks is unlimited.

Special conditions may apply as shown in the table below.

#### Maximum number of hooks and points (when all types of line fishing are allowed)

Place or fishing period	Hooks	Points
In <a href="#">zone 25</a> and the portion of lac Saint-François located west of a line drawn from Beaudette point on the north shore to Saint-Louis point on the south shore ( <a href="#">zone 8</a> )	4	Unlimited
In <a href="#">zone 21</a> , for rainbow smelt fishing	Unlimited	Unlimited
In zones <a href="#">1</a> , <a href="#">18</a> , <a href="#">19</a> and <a href="#">21</a> for striped bass fishing	3	1 per hook
In salmon rivers, where salmon fishing is permitted	1	2
In salmon rivers, where salmon fishing is prohibited	3	3 in total

### Number of lines

You must use only one line at a time ([except in winter](#)) and you must monitor it constantly. You must not use a rod and line and a fly fishing rod at the same time.

As a general rule, if one or more people [fish under the same licence](#), everyone is entitled to his or her own line. However, in the case of [winter fishing](#), [baitfish fishing](#) or [burbot fishing in Lac Saint-Jean](#), the total number of lines used for the group must not exceed the number authorized for a licence.

You cannot have a fishing gear in your possession on or within 100 m of a body of water on which the use of this gear is prohibited. Special conditions may apply if you are fishing on a body of water reserved for fly fishing.

## Sites reserved for fly fishing

Most salmon rivers and some bodies of water, usually located in controlled harvesting zones (ZECs), are reserved for fly fishing and are posted as such at the information centre or near the fishing site.

When fishing in these reserved areas, the number of authorized hooks and points may vary according to the place and the fishing period, as indicated in the table below.

### Maximum number of hooks and points (when only fly fishing is permitted)

Place or fishing period	Artificial flies	Points*
In bodies of water reserved for fly fishing (elsewhere that salmon rivers) In salmon rivers, where salmon fishing is permitted	2	3
In salmon rivers, where salmon fishing is permitted	1	2
In salmon rivers, where salmon fishing is prohibited	3	3

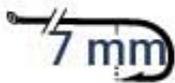
\*Valid for a hook or a combination of hooks

## Maximum authorized hook size

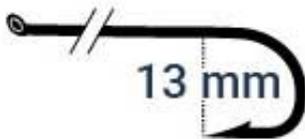
An artificial fly may comprise a combination of fish hooks and must comply with the maximum authorized hook size as shown in the figure below. It must never have more than three points (two points maximum when fishing in a salmon river during the salmon fishing period). There is no restriction on shank length.

The figure above shows the maximum distance (distance between the tip and hook) of the artificial flies based on the number of points.

Note: There is no restriction on the length of the hamp.



3 points



2 points



1 point

## Additional information

You cannot have, in your possession, any fishing gear other than that required for fly fishing, on or within 100 metres of a body of water reserved for fly fishing, except:

- When the gear is in a vehicle (other than a boat) or a building.
- You are only crossing or travelling along waters reserved for fly fishing in order to fish in other waters where the use of the gear in question is permitted.

In this case, when you are in the area reserved for fly fishing, you must take the hook (other than

an artificial fly) off the line, render your rod unusable by taking it apart into sections, removing the reel or storing it in a closed case.

If you fish at a reserved site, you must also comply with the following rules:

- The fly line (silk) must be unweighted and mounted on a fishing rod designed for that purpose.
- A maximum of 2 flies can be attached to this line, which must not be a metal-core line.
- Unless otherwise indicated, the fly must not be baited.

## **Composition of the fly**

The composition of the fly is very specific as indicated below:

- It may be dressed with silk, tinsel, wool, fabric, fur, feathers or other similar materials.
- Metal (brass, copper or aluminium) and plastic tubing may form part of the fly, along with the straight pin.
- Waddington shafts are authorized but metal heads and eyes are prohibited.
- The fly must not have spinning or undulating parts or be equipped with weights that cause it to sink.

## Other types of fishing

### Winter fishing

Depending on the zone, you may use up to 5 or 10 lines for winter fishing. You must monitor the lines continuously.

For information on the number of lines to which you are entitled, [please select your fishing zone](#).

### Night fishing

Fishing at night is permitted except in a salmon river, where fishing from one hour after sunset to one hour before sunrise is prohibited. See the special conditions to [fish for rainbow smelt with a lift net or a landing net](#).

### Fishing with bows or crossbows or spearfishing while swimming

This type of fishing is permitted in most fishing zones. You may spearfish while snorkelling or diving (with or without diving apparatus).

However, these methods are prohibited when fishing for:

- salmon;
- striped bass;
- landlocked salmon;
- muskellunge;
- lake trout;
- sturgeon;
- walleye in zones 3 to 16 and 26 to 28 (with some exceptions).

These methods are also prohibited when fishing for all fish species:

- in zones 17 and 22 to 24;
- in [bodies of water reserved for fly fishing](#);
- in [salmon rivers](#);
- within 500 m downstream from any point at the mouth of a salmon river in zones 18 to 20, 27 and 28, or from a salmon river in zone 21 located on the north shore of the St. Lawrence River.

### Spear and harpoon fishing

The use of a spear or a harpoon is allowed to fish for American eel (without swimming) in the waters of îles de la Madeleine all year long.

## Use of bait

In Québec, different types of bait can be placed on a hook and used to attempt to catch fish. However, there are some restrictions on the use and possession of certain types of bait.

### Earthworms, leeches and frogs as bait

Earthworms, leeches and frogs are not considered to be bait fish, and their use as bait is therefore permitted unless otherwise indicated.

When capturing frogs, you must comply with the applicable [rules governing frog hunting](#).  
Mainly:

- You must hold a frog hunting licence that allows the holder to hunt Northern leopard frogs, green frogs and bullfrogs from July 15 to November 15, with no bag limit.
- Frog hunting is prohibited in zones 17, 19 north and 22 to 24, as well as in wildlife reserves and territories in which all hunting is prohibited.
- Special rules apply to the keeping of frogs in captivity.

### Prohibited bait fish

The term “bait fish” includes fish, mollusks, crustaceans (e.g. shrimp, crayfish), marine animals and the parts (eggs, sperm, roe, spawn, larvae, spat or offspring) of these animals intended for use as fishing bait.

Since April 1, 2017, the use and possession of **live bait fish**, regardless of species, is **prohibited** throughout Québec, including during [winter fishing periods](#).

The possession and use of other freshwater fish species from Québec as (**dead**) bait fish is permitted where fishing is authorized. **However, the species listed below cannot be used as dead bait fish.**

- Bass
- Blueback herring
- Bowfin
- Brown bullhead
- Burbot
- Channel catfish
- Char
- Chinese mitten crab
- Crucian carp
- Freshwater drum
- Goldeye
- Lake trout
- Lamprey

- Longnose gar
- Malachigan
- Mooneye
  
- Muskellunge
- Sunfish
- Pike
- Redhorse
- Round goby
- Rudd
- Rusty crayfish
- Salmon
- Sturgeon
- Stone moroko
- Tench
- Trout
- Walleye
- White perch
- Yabby
- Yellow perch

Use of the following **as bait fish is also prohibited:**

- all saltwater species EXCEPT capelin, herring, mackerel, mollusks and crustaceans;
- all fish species designated by the [Species at Risk Act](#) or the [Act respecting threatened or vulnerable species](#).

## Possession and use of dead bait fish

The possession and use of dead bait fish (including shrimp) is permitted, but only in certain zones during winter fishing periods.

See the section entitled [Fishing zones](#) to see, in your zone:

- whether or not you may possess or use dead bait fish;
- which species are authorized for use as dead bait fish;
- the periods during which this practice is permitted.

## Fishing for bait fish

If you wish to fish for bait fish, you must:

- have a valid sport fishing licence;
- fish in the zones and during the periods in which the use of bait fish is permitted;
- use a [lift net](#) or no more than 3 [bait traps](#), except in zones 17 and 22 to 24 as well as in

bodies of water reserved for fly fishing;

- write your name, address and licence number on bait traps left without immediate supervision;
- comply with the special possession rules applicable to bait fish.

If one or more other people fish under your licence, the number of lift nets and bait traps used by your group must not exceed the authorized limit for your licence.

## **Importing bait fish**

Importing of live or dead bait fish is prohibited.

## Good practices and prohibited practices

Fishing is a wonderful outdoor activity. It allows you to discover different fish species while enjoying a connection with nature. Regardless of where you fish, however, you should always use good practices to help preserve the fish and their environment.

### Releasing fish

You must immediately return any fish to the water where it was caught, making sure you do not injure it needlessly if it is still alive:

- if it does not fall within the length limit (where one exists);
- if it is caught during a period or at a site where fishing for the species is prohibited (it is prohibited to fish intentionally in order to catch a species during a period when fishing for that species is prohibited);
- if it is caught after you have reached the catch limit;
- if it is caught using a prohibited fishing method or fishing gear;
- if it is caught under a sport fishing licence with mandatory catch-and-release rules.

### Redhorse and sucker

In some bodies of water, it is prohibited to catch and keep [redhorse](#) and [sucker](#), so you must release them if you catch them. However, you may catch and keep carp, which is often confused with these two species. To help avoid confusion, see the [fish identification documentation on the Department's website](#).

### Voluntary release of fish

You may also release, alive, a fish that you have just caught and are entitled to keep. If you do this, you must do everything you can to avoid injuring the fish.

### Atlantic salmon

For the sake of preservation of the species and sportsmanship, a daily limit of 3 released salmon is applicable in salmon rivers, with the exception of the Nord-du-Québec rivers and rivers eastside from Natashquan.

In all cases, to make sure your actions count and ensure that the fish have the best possible chances of survival, please follow the method described in [Saines pratiques de la remise à l'eau](#) (in French only).

## Sharing space

Although fishing is your legal right, you do not, as an angler, have exclusivity or priority [for the use of public land](#) over other outdoor enthusiasts, nor can you access private land without permission from the landowner.

As a user of public land, you are expected to share the space and behave ethically towards other users.

## Waste management

Sport fishing is an excellent way of enjoying nature, but if nature is to maintain its charm, it must be kept clean and intact. Please therefore make sure you do not leave litter behind.

If you clean and gut your catch directly at the fishing site, please be aware that you may throw the guts into the water, provided you do not do so with the specific aim of attracting other fish.

You must not:

- leave or deposit fish or marine animal waste on the shore, beach or banks of a body of water, or on the beach between the low and high water marks;
- leave spoiled or rotting fish in a net or other fishing gear.

## Protection of wildlife habitats

Wildlife habitats are protected by legislation that prohibits all activities likely to modify a biological, physical or chemical element specific to the habitat of an animal or fish. As an angler, you are therefore responsible for leaving your fishing site in exactly the same condition as you found it.

In real terms, this means that, for all bodies of water (including marshland, flood plains and swamps), you must not:

- dump oil, gasoline or other waste or toxic substance;
- drive through shallow water with a motor vehicle (also applies along shores and coastlines);
- build a dam that, in addition to preventing the free circulation of fish, may alter its habitat;
- remove or deposit gravel or rocks on the watercourse bed.

If you witness any of these actions, you must report them to a wildlife protection officer by contacting [SOS Poaching](#).

## Travelling through fragile environments

Québec has many lakes, rivers and watercourses, but they are not always easily accessible. It is important to remember that fragile environments are also protected, and that circulation around the body of water in which you want to fish may also be regulated. When travelling to your fishing site, make sure you do not drive a motor vehicle (other than a snowmobile):

- on sand dunes, beaches or barrier beaches;
- in peatlands on lands in the domain of the State, south of the St. Lawrence River, the estuary and the St. Lawrence gulf;
- in marshlands and swamps located on the flats of the St. Lawrence River downstream from the Laviolette bridge, the St. Lawrence estuary and gulf, the Baie des Chaleurs and the islands located in it (except to access private property or on trails designed and developed for vacation activities).

## Cleaning of boats

If you use your own boat to fish, please be aware that simply cleaning it properly can prevent the introduction and propagation of invasive aquatic species.

To learn how to do this, see the [Guide to best practices in aquatic environments to prevent the introduction and propagation of invasive aquatic species](#).

## Boating safety

When you are on the water, safety must be a priority. In addition to wearing a lifejacket (which is compulsory), you may also need a pleasure craft licence.

For additional information, see the website of [Transports Canada](#).

## Prohibited practices

When you fish in Québec, you must comply with the general rules (licences, fishing periods, quotas, etc.); if not, you may have to pay a fine that will vary according to the nature of your offence.

In addition to the rules set out in the Sport Fishing section, the following practices are prohibited:

- Angling and fly fishing at the same time: you may use only one line at once.
- Fishing or attempting to catch a fish when fishing is prohibited, even if you plan to release the fish afterwards.
- Accepting, from a beneficiary of the right to harvest provided for in the [Act respecting hunting and fishing rights in the James Bay and New Québec territories \(CQLR, chapter D-13.1\)](#), any fish caught as a result of that right, for personal or communal use,

unless it was caught during an authorized commercial fishing activity (or unless you are also a beneficiary of the right to harvest).

- Fishing using fish hooks or other hooks handled intentionally to catch or pierce any part of the fish, except in cases where the fish takes the hook in its mouth. It is also forbidden to keep any fish caught in this way.
- Fishing from a bridge that crosses a salmon river or its estuary.
- Fishing in a salmon river from one hour after sundown to one hour before sunrise;
- Using the following to remove a fish caught while sport fishing from the water: a net other than a landing net, a [tailer](#) more than 2 metres in length, a spring gaff or a gaff of any kind for salmon.
- Fishing less than 23 metres downstream from the lower entrance of a fish ladder, an operating fishway, an obstacle or a leaping space designed to facilitate the movement of fish;
- Catching and keeping a fish fit for human consumption and then allowing it to spoil.

### **Fish caught during sport fishing are not intended to be sold**

It is strictly prohibited to sell, buy or possess fish harvested illegally.

It is also prohibited to sell, buy, trade or offer to buy the following fish, when they are caught by means of sport fishing in Québec or elsewhere under a sport fishing licence.

- Bass
  - Allis shad
  - American eel
  - Striped bass
  - White bass
  - Brown bullhead
  - Channel catfish
  - Carp
  - Copper redhorse
  - River redhorse
  - Sunfish
  - Sturgeon
  - Northern pike
  - Chain pickerel
  - Walleye
- 
- Rainbow smelt
  - Burbot
  - Black crappie
  - Muskellunge
  - Yellow perch
  - Char
  - Landlocked salmon
  - Atlantic salmon

- Tench
- Lake trout
- Rainbow trout
- Brown trout
- Bait fish caught in sport fishing
- Atlantic salmon from a natural environment

## Special areas

Special rules may apply, or the general zone rules may differ in certain fishing areas. When you visit one of these areas, it is up to you to obtain the necessary information from the staff at the information office.

## Controlled harvesting zones (ZECs)

To fish in one of these areas, which are managed by non-profit organizations, you must:

- register at the information office;
- pay the access and fishing fees and abide by the dates, times and sites indicated;
- register your catch when you leave.

You must carry the registration document with you or place it in view on your vehicle dashboard, so that it is readable from outside. A wildlife protection officer, a wildlife officer assistant or a warden may ask to see it.

To find a ZEC, click on [Network of ZECs](#).

## Outfitting operations

Outfitting operations are businesses that offer accommodation and a variety of services and equipment for anglers. Some outfitting operations have exclusive fishing rights in specific areas, and in this case they may be subject to different rules than the rest of the zone (e.g. fishing periods, catch limits for salmonids, length limits). Particular rules also apply to outfitting operations in [Northern Québec](#). Regardless of the area in which your chosen outfitter is located, the applicable rules will be explained to you at the beginning of your stay.

To find an outfitter, visit the website of the [Fédération des pourvoiries du Québec](#).

## Québec provincial parks and wildlife reserves

These areas are for the majority managed by the Société des établissements de plein air du Québec (SEPAQ). To fish in one of these, you must:

- pay the access fees and abide by the dates, times and sites indicated;
- report your daily catches at the end of your stay (any salmon you catch must be presented whole, so that they can be measured and recorded).

We recommend that you make a reservation.

Please note that the rules for these areas may differ from those applicable to the zone. For information on the rules, or to identify a park or reserve, visit the [SEPAQ](#) website or the websites

of the following wildlife reserves: [Duchénier](#), [Dunière](#) and [Lacs-Albanel-Mistassini-et-Waconichi](#).

## Communal wildlife areas (CWAs)

A communal wildlife area (CWA) is a public body of water (river or lake) on which a non-profit organization is responsible for developing fishing. To fish there, you must obtain both a provincial licence AND a permission from the organization responsible for the CWA you wish to visit:

[Baskatong Reservoir communal wildlife area](#)

[Gouin Reservoir communal wildlife area](#)

[Lac Saint-Jean communal wildlife area](#)

[Lac Saint-Pierre communal wildlife area](#)

## Wildlife sanctuaries

The purpose of a wildlife sanctuary is to preserve wildlife habitats, and special conditions respecting access to and travel within the sanctuary may apply. Contact the [local or regional wildlife protection office](#) of the sanctuary you wish to visit to make sure you understand and comply with the rules.

In the Pierre-Étienne-Fortin wildlife sanctuary, fishing is prohibited between June 20 and July 20 in sectors B and C of the sanctuary ([zone 8](#)).

Learn more about [Québec's nine wildlife sanctuaries](#).

## Ecological reserves

Ecological reserves are protected areas devoted to conservation, education and research. Fishing is prohibited in all ecological reserves. [Discover Québec's ecological reserves](#).

## Fish ponds

A fish pond is a body of water covering an area of 20 ha maximum, containing only farmed fish. Fishing is allowed year-round, with no catch limit and without the need to obtain a licence. However, the owner of the fish pond must have a fish pond operating licence in order to sell you the fish you catch. To check whether or not the sale of fish is authorized, contact the [Ministère de l'Agriculture, des Pêcheries et de l'Alimentation du Québec](#).

## Salmon rivers

Québec has 111 salmon rivers that are managed by a variety of different organizations. Special conditions apply to them, including daily quotas (catch or catch-and-release), fishing periods and authorized gear. These conditions may vary from one river to the next, and sometimes between sectors of the same river. For detailed information, please see the page on [Salmon Fishing](#).

## Sites reserved for fly fishing

On some salmon rivers or bodies of water, usually located in ZECS, only fly fishing is allowed. These areas are identified by signs posted at the information office or near the fishing site. In these locations, special rules apply to this particular [type of fishing](#).

## Nord-du-Québec

To fish in zones 17 and 22 to 24, you must comply with the [Act respecting hunting and fishing rights in the James Bay and New Québec territories \(CQLR, chapter D-13.1\)](#).

Land in this vast territory is subdivided into three categories, and the rules may vary according to the site or species fished. Category III lands are public areas located north of the 55th parallel. To fish on category I or category II lands, you must first obtain authorization from the Cree, Inuit or Naskapi authorities concerned, and must abide by their conditions.

In all the zones in Nord-du-Québec, you may only fish with a line or a rod equipped with a line. Fishing with bows, crossbows or harpoons is prohibited.

You must use the services of an [active outfitter \(PDF 1.01 Mb\)](#) (French only) to fish for:

- lake trout in zone 23, from September 8 to September 30;
- salmon in zones 23 and 24 (we recommend that you use the [Angler's Logbook](#) to register with an outfitter).

Please note that some fish species are reserved for exclusive use of the Aboriginal people in zones 22 to 24:

- Sucker
- Non-anadromous whitefish
- Sturgeon
- Mooneye
- Goldeye
- Burbot

For additional information on this area, please contact the [local or regional Nord-du-Québec wildlife protection office](#).

## Tshitassinu-La Romaine Sector

To fish in the Tshitassinu-La Romaine sector, you must hold a valid fishing licence and

- obtain a right of access and a catch register (free of charge from information offices);
- abide by the dates, times and locations indicated on your right of access;
- hand in a fishing report at the end of your day or stay.

If no-one is on duty at the information office, you must complete the forms and leave them at the registration booth identified for this purpose. For additional information, [contact the Société Tshitassinu](#).

# Glossary

## **Artificial lure:**

a spoon, minnow lure, artificial fly or any other device made up of feathers, fibres, rubber, wood, metal, plastic or other similar materials and equipped with one or more fish hooks.

## **Bait trap:**

a small hoop-net, without wing or leader, made of plastic or wire mesh, fastened to hoops or frames, measuring no more than 60 cm in length and 25 cm in diameter, equipped with funnel-shaped openings, the smallest diameter of which does not exceed 2.5 cm.

## **Freshwater fish:**

this fish category includes anadromous species, living at sea and spawning in freshwater, as well as catadromous species, living in freshwater and spawning at sea.

## **Landing net:**

a pocket-shaped net whose biggest dimension does not exceed 90 cm mounted on a frame.

## **Lift net (square net):**

a net made of netting or plastic or wire mesh whose stretched does not exceed 2.5 cm, mounted usually on a squareshaped frame whose biggest dimension is not more than 1.3 m in its fully extended length and is suspended with a rope.

## **Metal core fishing line:**

fly fishing line which, when it is firmly folded and released, remains folded.

## **Unweighted line:**

a fly fishing line to which no external weight is attached.

## **Resident:**

a person domiciled in Québec who has lived there at least 183 days during the year preceding fishing activity or an application for a licence.

## **Spouse:**

refers to the de facto spouse who has lived in a marriage relationship for at least one year, and the spouse.

**Tailer:**

a device that closes a metal loop around the tail of a fish and is used in landing it.

**Night line:**

line to which hooks spaced apart from one another are attached. This definition does not include a line used for angling.

## **Fish**

**Allis shad:**

includes American shad and gizzard shad, unless indicated otherwise in the text.

**Bass:**

includes small-mouthed bass and largemouth bass.

**Catfish:**

includes brown bullhead, yellow bullhead and stonecat.

**Char:**

includes brook trout and Arctic char, unless otherwise indicated in the text.

**Lake trout:**

includes lake trout and splake.

**Landlocked salmon**

freshwater Atlantic salmon.

**Muskellunge:**

includes muskellunge and tiger muskellunge.

**Panfish:**

includes longear sunfish, bluegill, rock bass and pumpkinseed sunfish.

**Pike:**

includes redfin pickerel, chain pickerel, grass pickerel and northern pike.

**Redhorse (new name for suckers):**

includes river redhorse, silver redhorse, copper redhorse, the greater redhorse and the shorthead redhorse, unless otherwise indicated in the text.

**Salmon:**

anadromous Atlantic salmon, unless otherwise indicated in the text:

- big salmon: salmon 63 cm or more in length;
- Sturgeon:** ◦ small salmon: salmon of at least 30 cm in length, but less than 63 cm.

includes lake sturgeon and Atlantic sturgeon.

**Sucker:**

includes the northern sucker and the white sucker.

**Trout:**

includes rainbow trout, brown trout and cutthroat trout.

**Walleyes:**

includes yellow walleye and sauger, unless otherwise indicated in the text.

**Whitefish:**

includes lake herring, lake whitefish and round whitefish, unless otherwise indicated in the text.

**Sea trout:**

refers to anadromous brook trout.