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State announces May and June horseshoe crab closures



A horseshoe crab glides along the sand on Pleasant Bay in Harwich. Photo by John Fitts.

Last month, the [Massachusetts Division of Marine Fisheries](#) released a calendar of horseshoe crab closures. During the four periods listed below, the harvesting of horseshoe crabs is illegal. The closure was put in place last year by the department to protect spawning horseshoe crabs. In 2011, there are four five-day lunar closures which begin two days before a new or full moon at 12:01 a.m. and end two days after a new or full moon at 11:59 p.m.

Horseshoe crab harvesting is illegal during the following periods:

- Sunday, May 1 through Thursday, May 5
- Sunday, May 15 through Thursday, May 19
- Monday, May 30 through Friday, June 3

- Monday June 13 through Friday, June 17

Horseshoe crab management is governed by the MA Division of Marine Fisheries under [322 CMR 6.34](#) (regulation of catches) to maintain the horseshoe crab population. Horseshoe crabs are harvested commercially for bait and biomedical purposes.