FISHING

IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE LAW - PUBLIC FISHERIES REGULATIONS 2026

I FISH LEADFREE! √



ATTENTION!

Consult the website of the 'Agentschap voor Natuur en Bos' (Agency for Nature and Forests) for the full legislation and most recent information. natuurenbos.be/visserij



AGENTSCHAP
NATUUR & BOS

When and how can you fish?



				April						er		e.	J.
	January	February	March	1 > 15	16 > 30	Мау	June	July	August	September	October	November	December
Trout	х	х	4	1	4	√	1	1	~	1	х	х	х
All other species	√	1	√	1	√	✓	1	1	1	1	1	1	√
Night fishing	√	√	√	4	1	√	1	4	1	4	√	√	√
Fishing with bait fish (or parts of fish as bait)	√	√	x	x	x	x	√	√	1	1	√	√	1
Bobber fishing with 1 bobber	√	√	√	1	1	√	1	1	1	1	1	√	1
Wading fishing	x	x	√	1	x	x	1	1	1	1	√	√	х
Fly fishing	√	√	√	√	1	√	4	4	1	√	4	4	1

√ Permitted

x Prohibited

Fishing in the spawning period, from 16 April to 31 May inclusive, and night fishing are only permitted in the indicated waters on p. 6-11

Any fish that you happen to catch at the time when fishing is prohibited according to the table above must be immediately and carefully put back in the water where it was caught. In the spawning period from 16 April to 31 May inclusive, and during night fishing, you must put back each fish caught immediately and carefully into the water of origin. The use of fish (or parts thereof as bait) is prohibited from 1 March to 31 May inclusive.

Attention: the owner or water manager can impose local access rules so that fishing at certain points in time or fishing at certain places is not possible. In some waters you might also need an explicit permission from the owner to fish there.

Catch limitation, transport and keeping of fish

The use of a keepnet is prohibited in the interests of efficient enforcement of the rules on taking fish with you, transporting them and keeping them in your possession!

Fish > 15 cm: An angler may transport up to 5 dead fish larger than 15 cm, keep them in possession during angling or use them as bait fish. Only eel can be kept alive. For eel and pikeperch, the number is in addition limited to a maximum of 3. For example: if you already have 3 pikeperch and 1 roach, you may only keep 1 eel in your possession.

Bait fish ≤ 15 cm: An angler may use up to 20 bait fish smaller than or equal to 15 cm, transport them or keep them in possession during angling. A maximum of 5 live bait fish is permitted; the remaining bait fish must be dead.

PERMITTED FISH SPECIES

Only the fish species shown alongside may be transported, kept in possession during angling or used as bait fish. You must immediately and carefully put back any other fish species you catch into the water of origin.

- Live bait fish and live eel may only be stored and transported in a bucket or container filled with water.
- · Keep in mind the sizes for fish species.
- From 16 April to 31 May inclusive, and during night fishing, you may not transport fish, keep them in your possession during angling, or use them as bait.





perch

brown trout minimum size 30 cm





roach

common bream





silver or white bream

eel minimum size 30 cm





rudd

gudgeon





pikeperch or zander minimum size 45 cm maximum size 70 cm

ide or orfe

ATTENTION: only if you have a large fishing permit, you can take fish with you!

SIZES FOR FISH SPECIES

You must immediately and carefully put back any fish smaller than the minimum size or larger than the maximum size into the water of origin. The length is measured from the tip of the snout to the end of the tail fin. You should keep a measuring rod with you.

- Brown trout and eel: minimum size 30 cm.
- Pikeperch: minimum size 45 cm and maximum size 70 cm.

BOBBER FISHING

Eel fishing with one bobber is permitted at all times and in all waters. During bobber fishing no other rod may be used. Anglers may keep up to 3 eels in their net or bin during bobber fishing.

FLY FISHING

However, fly fishing from the banks is permitted from 16 April to 31 May inclusive in all waters. In this period, you must immediately and carefully put back every fish you catch into the water of origin.

PROTECTED SPECIES

19 fish species and the indigenous crayfish are very rare in our waters. In order to protect these species, fishing for them is no longer permitted. If you happen to catch one of them, make sure you immediately and carefully put it back into the water of origin. These species are:

Atlantic salmon, brook lamprey, stone loach, bitterling, allis shad, twaite shad, schneider or spirlin, gwyniad or powan, wheaterfish or wheater loach, houting, European crayfish, spined loach, burbot, bullhead, river lamprey, common sturgeon, belica or motherless minnow, grayling, sea trout and sea lamprey.

SPECIAL STIPULATIONS MARINE FISH SPECIES

Sea bass

- Minimum size 42 cm
- Closed season and catch limitation: natuurenbos.vlaanderen.be/zeevissen

Remaining marine fish species

For marine fish species caught in inland waters the following minimum sizes apply: https://linear.ncbe/visserij/beroepsvisserij/minimum-instandhoudingsreferentiegroottes-beroepsvisserij

By way of derogation from the rules on p. 3 you may transport and keep in your possession during angling an unlimited number of dead marine fish species, both by day and by night. The use of marine fish species as bait fish is prohibited in the period from 1 March to 31 May inclusive and during night fishing.





Fishing in the spawning period from 16 April to 31 May inclusive

In the spawning period, from 16 April to 31 May inclusive, you may only fish in the indicated waters in the table on p. 6-11. If the water is not indicated in the table, fishing in the spawning period is prohibited!

Special conditions

- The use of bait fish (or parts of fish as bait) is prohibited.
- Always put each fish you have caught immediately and carefully back into the water of origin.

Night fishing

During night fishing, from two hours after sunset until two hours before sunrise, you may only fish in the indicated waters in the table on p. 6-11. A **large fishing permit** is obligatory. If the water is not indicated in the table, night fishing is prohibited!

Special conditions

- The use of bait fish (or parts of fish as bait) is prohibited.
- The use of artificial bait with a total length of more than 2 cm is prohibited.
- Always put each fish you have caught immediately and carefully back into the water of origin.
- You may not keep any fish in your possession, not even if you caught that fish outside the night fishing period.

Map of Flanders with the public angling waters and indication where fishing in the spawning period from 16 April to 31 May inclusive and night fishing are permitted: natuurenbos.be/hengelkaart

Release obligation in Zwalm and IJse

For the protection of the populations of rare fish species a release obligation is applicable in the watercourses Zwalm and IJse and their tributaries. Also the possession and use of bait fish are not allowed in these waters

Table: fishing in the spawning period, night fishing and local access rules



You may only **fish in the spawning period, from 16 April to 31 May inclusive**, if the water is indicated in the table underneath!

Also **night fishing** is only permitted if the water is indicated in the table!

Attention: the owner or water manager can further restrict access to a water by imposing local access rules. In some waters you might also need an explicit permission from the owner to fish there. Also in waters not mentioned in this table access can be restricted. So always respect access rules of a water and inquire on the spot all the time.

-√	Permitted	X Prohibited

STILLWATERS	Fishing in the spaw- ning period	Night fishing	Local access rules
WEST FLANDERS			
De Gavers in Harelbeke	√	x	Fishing in the indicated angling zones. Not accessible from sunset to sunrise.
Waggelwater in Bruges	✓	x	Fishing in the indicated angling zones. Not accessible from two hours after sunset to two hours before sunrise.
Grote Keignaert and Kleine Keignaert in Ostend	√	√	
EAST FLANDERS			
De Gavers in Geraardsber- gen: Poelaertplas	√	x	Not accessible from 23:00 to 7:00.

	,	,	
Creeks in Sint-Laureins: Boerekreek, Roeselarekreek, Oostpolderkreek, Mesure- kreek, Bentillekreek, Hollan- dergatkreek, Blokkreek	√	√	Boerekreek: fishing from boats not allowed; fishing in the indicated angling zones.
Bazelse Kreek and Rupel- mondse Kreek in Kruibeke	√	x	Not accessible from sunset to sunrise.
Groot Molsbroek- Hamputten	√	√	Fishing in the indicated angling zones and in the permitted periods.
Rode Sluis in Moerbeke	√	✓	
Pilleput at the Rijksweg-N41 in Grembergen	√	x	
Extensive pond Kortbroek in Kruibeke	√	x	
Donkmeer in Berlare	√	√	Fishing in the indicated angling zones and in the permitted periods.
FLEMISH BRABANT			
Fishing pond of Weerde	√	x	Not accessible from one hour after sunset to one hour before sunrise.
Southern pond Groene Beemd in Sint-Pieters- Leeuw	√	x	Not accessible from sunset to sunrise.
Krommevijver (western pond) in Castle park Gaasbeek	√	x	From 1 April to 30 September inclusive, not accessible from 20:00 to 08:00. From 1 October to 31 March inclusive, not accessible from 17:00 to 08:00. Fishing not allowed on the other ponds.
Big pond in Domain Ter Rijst in Pepingen	√	x	Not accessible from sunset to sunrise. From 1 June to 31 August inclusive the latest opening time is moreover limited to 21:00. From 1 September to 31 May inclusive the latest opening time is moreover limited to 20:00. Fishing not allowed on the small pond.
Canal pond in Domain Colo- ma in Sint-Pieters-Leeuw	√	x	Not accessible from sunset to sunrise. The latest opening time is moreover limited to 20:00. Fishing not allowed on the other ponds.
Geevaert pond in Sint-Genesius-Rode	√	x	
ANTWERP			
Breeven in Bornem	x	√	Fishing from landing stages in the indicated angling zone.
Galgenweel in Antwerpen	√	√	Fishing in the indicated angling zones.

Burchtse Weel in Antwerp	√	✓	Fishing allowed in the buffer basin. Fishing not allowed in the tidal area in connection with the river Scheldt.
Hazewinkel in Heindonk	1	x	Fishing in the indicated angling zones. Not accessible from sunset to sunrise.
De Bocht in Heindonk	√	x	Fishing in the indicated angling zone. Not accessible from one hour after sunset to one hour before sunrise.
Small pond Muisbroek in Ekeren	1	√	Fishing in the large pond is not permitted.
Fortress of Walem	√	√	Fishing from the outer bank of the fortress canal.
Schranshoeve in Vorselaar	√	x	Not accessible from sunset to 08:00
Rivierenhof in Deurne	√	x	Not accessible from 22:30 to 06:30.
Spildoornvijver in Walem	√	√	
Domain Walenhoek in Niel	x	√	Fishing in the indicated ponds.
Den Aerd in Minderhout	√	√	
Communal pond Zandhoven (Put van Viersel)	√	√	
LIMBURG			
Gravel pits Spaanjerd (Meuse pools Kinrooi)	√	√	
Gravel pits: Mynekomplas and Heerenlaak in Aldeneik	4	x	Not accessible from two hours after sunset to two hours before sunrise.
Old Meuse in Dilsen	√	√	
Paalse Plas in Beringen	1	√	Fishing in the indicated angling zones. Not accessible from 00:00 to 05:00.

CANALS AND RIVERS	Fis- hing in the spaw- ning period	Night fishing
WEST FLANDERS		
Port of Zeebrugge and Boudewijn Canal (in the fishing zones designated by the harbour management)	√	√
Port of Ostend (in the fishing zones designated by the harbour management)	√	√
Bruges-Sluis Canal (Damse Vaart): from the Ghent-Ostend Canal in Bruges to the bridge of the N49 in Hoeke	√	√
Plassendale-Nieuwpoort Canal	√	√
Nieuwpoort-Duinkerke Canal	√	√
Bergenvaart (or Canal from Veurne to Sint-Winoxbergen)	√	√
Lovaart (or Lo Canal)	√	√
Yser included the reservoir in Nieuwpoort	√	√
leper-Yser Canal	√	√
Roeselare-Leie Canal	√	√
Bossuit-Kortrijk Canal	√	√
Spiere Canal	√	√
WEST FLANDERS AND EAST FLANDERS		
Leopold Canal	√	√
Deriviation Canal of the Leie (or Schipdonk Canal)	√	√
Ghent-Ostend Canal: from the confluence with the Ringvaart around Ghent and with the Brugse Vaart at the Westbeke lock to the Sas Slijkens in Ostend. Included: Ringvaart around Bruges (Ghent-Ostend Canal), the outer moats of the city of Bruges and the derivation canal of these moats. Not included: the waters within the inner moat of Bruges: inner arms, canals of Bruges and Coupure in Bruges. Not included: the Miseriebocht in Sint-Joris and the Gevaertsarm in Beernem.	√	√
Upper-Scheldt (from the border with Wallonia to the confluence with the Ringvaart around Ghent at the R4) Not included: all old Scheldt arms	1	✓



Leie (from the border with France to the branch with the Toeristische Leie and with the Derivation Canal of the Leie in Deinze). Included: the branch 'De Balokken' in Wervik, the branch at the Leiekaai in Wervik, the branch in Busbeke (Bousbecque), the branch in Menen south of the old locks at the Sluizenkaai, both branches of the Leie of the passage in Kortrijk and the branch of Zulte around the lock complex of Sint-Baafs-Vijve. Included: the old Leie arm Sisput in Sint-Eloois-Vijve and the old Leie arm in Machelen. Not included: the other old Leie arms.	√	✓
EAST FLANDERS		
Toeristische Leie (from Deinze to the Ringvaart around Ghent) Not included: the old Leie arms.	√	√
Canal of Eeklo (or Vaart of Eeklo)	√	√
Ghent-Terneuzen Canal en Ghent Seaport (in the fishing zones designated by the harbour management)	√	√
Rivers and canals in Ghent (in the area enclosed by the R4 and the R40): Details: natuurenbos.be/waters-ghent	√	√
Moervaart (from the conflucence with the Zuidlede in Daknam to the confluence with the Ghent-Terneuzen Canal). Included: Oude Moervaart in Mendonk.	√	✓
Moervaart-Durme in Lokeren (from the pumping station at the Oeverstraat in Lokeren to the conflucence with the Zuidlede in Daknam)	√	√
Tidal Durme (from the pumping station at the Oeverstraat in Lokeren to the mouth in the Sea Scheldt)	√	√
Tidal Arm (from the confluence with the Upper Scheldt in Zwijnaarde to the confluence with the Ringvaart around Ghent at the lock in Merelbeke).	√	√
EAST FLANDERS AND ANTWERP		
Sea Scheldt (from the Gentbrugge lock at the Bassijnstraat, past the confluence in Melle with the Ringvaart around Ghent and further to the border with the Netherlands).	√	√
EAST FLANDERS AND FLEMISH BRABANT		
Dender Included: the branches around the locks of Geraardsbergen, Idegem, Denderleeuw and the Old Dender or Traverse in Dendermonde Not included: the other old Dender arms.	√	√
FLEMISH BRABANT		
Brussels-Charleroi Canal	√	√

✓	√
✓	√
√	√
✓	√
√	√
√	√
✓	√
√	√
√	√
√	√
√	√
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√	√
√	√
√	√
√	√

The fishing right

Rivers, canals and streams, as well as still or flowing waters that are not completely closed off from the public waterway network are all governed by the law of 1 July 1954 on river fishing and the decision of the Government of Flanders of 1 February 2013. With a Flemish fishing permit, everyone has the right to fish in the navigable waterways whose maintenance is paid for by the Flemish Region.

An additional permission is required for fishing in:

- The unnavigable waters where the fishing right belongs to the owner of the shore.
- The creeks and artificial waterways of which the maintenance is at the expense of Polders and Wateringen.
- The fishing waters to which the fisheries legislation applies, but which are on private land.

An additional permit or permission is required for fishing in:

- Bentillekreek in Sint-Laureins: openbare-waters.vbk.be/vergunning-bentillekreek
- Blaarmeersen in Ghent: stad.gent/nl/blaarmeersen/watersport-de-blaarmeersen/hengelen-de-blaarmeersen
- Boudewijnkanaal and Achterhaven: Harbour management of Zeebrugge: portofantwerpbruges.com/onze-haven/bezoeken/haven-met-zonder-gids/vissen
- Domain Puyenbroeck: Klaverbladvijver and Bosdamvijver: <u>oost-vlaanderen.be/ontspannen/recreatiedomeinen/puyenbroeck/sporten/vissen.html</u>
- Dilsen-Stokkem: De Broeken, Negenoord Oost, Negenoord West, Oude Maas Dilsen, Oude Maas Stokkem, Bichterweerd: dilsen-stokkem.be/hengelsport
- Fort van Oelegem: fortoelegem.be/contact.html
- Groot Molsbroek-Hamputten: vzwdurme.be/site22/natuurgebieden/het-groot-molsbroek
- Paalse Plas in Beringen: visitberingen.be/paalseplas
- Rode Sluis in Moerbeke: vlaamskarpercollectief.be/rode-sluis
- De Ster in Sint-Niklaas: <u>oost-vlaanderen.be/ontspannen/recreatiedomeinen/de-ster/sporten/vissen.html</u>
- De Gavers in Geraardsbergen: <u>oost-vlaanderen.be/ontspannen/recreatiedomeinen/degavers/sporten/vissen.html</u>
- Donkmeer in Berlare: beleefberlare.be/vissen

THE ORGANIZED FISHERIES

In public waters in Flanders there are numerous fishing clubs, fishing associations and fishing federations. For more information, contact the umbrella organization:

- Sportvisserij Vlaanderen: sportvisserijvlaanderen.be
- Stewards in public fisheries: sportvisserijvlaanderen.be/stewards
 Show your fishing permit spontaneously to a steward!



Anyone who wants to fish in the public waters must be in possession of a valid fishing permit. You must purchase a new fishing permit every year. All fishing permits are valid up to and including 31 December of the year for which they are issued. On **visverlof.be** you can apply for a fishing permit for yourself or for someone else.

Exemption from fishing permit for young people up to and including the age of 17

- one rod; exclusively from two hours before sunrise until two hours after sunset.
- only from the bank or from a platform or landing stage which is anchored or connected to the bank
- · use of bait fish not permitted
- · use of artificial bait allowed
- · all fish caught should be released immediately
- · transporting and keeping fish in possession during angling is not permitted

Youth fishing permit € 5 for young people up to and including the age of 17

- · a maximum of two rods; both during the day and at night
- from the bank and other than from the bank
- · use of bait fish not permitted
- · use of artificial bait allowed
- · all fish caught should be released immediately
- · transporting and keeping fish in possession during angling is not permitted

Normal fishing permit € 13

- a maximum of 2 rods; exclusively from two hours before sunrise until two hours after sunset
- only from the bank or from a platform or landing stage which is anchored or connected to the bank
- · use of bait fish not allowed
- use of artificial bait allowed
- · all fish caught should be released immediately
- · transporting and keeping fish in possession during angling is not permitted

Large fishing permit € 48

- a maximum of 2 rods; both during the day and at night
- from the bank and other than from the bank
- use of bait fish and artificial bait allowed
- transporting and keeping fish in possession during angling is permitted (maximum 20 bait fish ≤ 15 cm and maximum 5 fish > 15 cm: conditions p.3)

ATTENTION: only if you have a large fishing permit, you can take fish with you!

How are you not allowed to fish?

- The use of a keepnet or a retention sack is prohibited.
- It is forbidden to consume the fish you have caught on site.
- You may only use the landing net to take the fish you caught with the fishing rod out
 of the water.
- The fishing rod and the bobber are the only fishing tools allowed. All tools other than
 the fishing rod or the bobber are prohibited.
- It is prohibited to fish under ice.
- The use of coloured maggots is prohibited. These contain colouring substances which
 may be toxic to the fish and the angler.
- It is prohibited to use more than two fishing rods to fish with.
- It is prohibited to attach more than three single or more than three multiple hooks to one and the same fishing rod.
- It is prohibited to leave fishing rods unattended.

WHERE SHOULD YOU NEVER FISH?

- In locks
- · In fish passages
- From bridges over navigable waterways.
- In any other locations, whether from the shore or on the water where the Agency for Nature and Forests has imposed a temporary or permanent fishing ban indicated on placards erected on site.





Consumption advice

Because of the possible presence of polluting substances, the Government of Flanders strongly advises against eating fish you have caught yourself in public waters. Eating the fish could be a hazard to your health.

Code for lead use

Lead is a toxic metal and has no place in our environment. Lead is harmful for human and animal health. The government calls on all anglers to make as much use as possible of lead alternatives. Learn more about lead alternatives, practical tips and information for anglers:

sportvisserijvlaanderen.be/loodalternatieven

Invasive alien species



Invasive alien species are non-native species that do not naturally occur here. They have arrived in our environment through human activities, spread rapidly, and cause damage and nuisance. Invasive alien species prey on native species, eat their food, invade their habitat, and spread diseases. They pose a major threat to our biodiversity.

This is how you, as an angler, can help to prevent the spread of alien species:

- **Check** immediately after angling, your fishing gear, boots, clothing and (belly) boat and remove plant material, aquatic animals and mud.
- Clean everything thoroughly with water, preferably on-site, otherwise at home.
- **Dry** your fishing gear and clothing completely before using them elsewhere.
- Do not use alien species as bait fish or as bait.
- Release all alien species in the water of origin after catching them. This prevents the
 propagation to other waters. Killing alien species you caught yourself is rarely an effective eradication method and has no effect on the population.
- **Register** your observations of alien species at <u>waarnemingen.be/exoten</u>, <u>inaturalist.org</u> of via the <u>Obsidentify</u> app.

The European Union has listed 114 invasive alien species of concern. In addition, there are other alien species that cause nuisance. Below are some examples.



Chinese mitten crab

More info:

black bullhead

- www.iasregulation.be/nl/checkcleandry
- Recognizing alien species you might encounter as an angler: natuurenbos.be/exoten-visserij

water-primrose

CONTACT AND INFORMATION

PUBLIC FISHERIES INFO OFFICE: PROVINCIAL FISHERIES COMMISSIONS

Do you have a question about public fishing? Contact the Fisheries Commission in your province: natuurenbos.be/visseriicommissie

WEST-FLANDERS Tel +32 (0)50-40 58 04 / visserijcommissiewvl@gmail.com

EAST-FLANDERS Tel +32 (0)9 267 70 00 / pvc@oost-vlaanderen.be

ANTWERP Tel +32 (0)3-204 03 35 / visserijcommissieantwerpen@gmail.com

LIMBURG Tel +32 (0)2-553 24 32 / pvc.limburg@vlaanderen.be

FLEMISH-BRABANT Tel +32 (0)16-66 63 17 / Tel +32 (0)471-56 48 25 patricia.leenaerts@vlaanderen.be

Fisheries regulation: natuurenbos.be/visserij

Digital angling map of Flanders: natuurenbos.be/hengelkaart

Ordering your fishing permit online, duplicate of your fishing permit, questions? All information on visverlof.be



COLOPHON

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Chinese mitten crab: © Pascale Golinvaux @ RBINS marbled crayfish and white river crayfish: © Kevin Scheers water-primrose: © ANB black bullhead: © Sportvisserij Nederland cover and other species: © vildaphoto.net

INFO ON CYANOBACTERIA blauwalgen.be

SEEN A LARGE NUMBER OF DEAD FISH? Contact the local police or the environment department of your local council as soon as possible.