HOUSE DOCKET, NO. 2926 FILED ON: 1/16/2025

HOUSE . . . . . No. 898

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

Michelle L. Badger

To the Honorable Senate and House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts in General Court assembled:

The undersigned legislators and/or citizens respectfully petition for the adoption of the accompanying bill:

An Act to end the taking of horseshoe crabs for bait.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:	DATE ADDED:
Michelle L. Badger	*1st Plymouth*	*1/16/2025*
Patrick M. O'Connor	*First Plymouth and Norfolk*	*3/22/2025*
Jay D. Livingstone	*8th Suffolk*	*3/22/2025*
David T. Vieira	*3rd Barnstable*	*4/17/2025*
Margaret R. Scarsdale	*1st Middlesex*	*5/9/2025*
Tram T. Nguyen	*18th Essex*	*6/3/2025*
Joanne M. Comerford	*Hampshire, Franklin and Worcester*	*6/23/2025*
Vanna Howard	*17th Middlesex*	*6/23/2025*
John Francis Moran	*9th Suffolk*	*6/23/2025*
Kristin E. Kassner	*2nd Essex*	*7/3/2025*
James C. Arena-DeRosa	*8th Middlesex*	*2/4/2026*
Carmine Lawrence Gentile	*13th Middlesex*	*2/6/2026*
Jessica Ann Giannino	*16th Suffolk*	*2/8/2026*
Lindsay N. Sabadosa	*1st Hampshire*	*2/25/2026*
Marjorie C. Decker	*25th Middlesex*	*3/5/2026*

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By Representative Badger of Plymouth, a petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 898) of Michelle L. Badger relative to the use of horseshoe crabs for bait. Environment and Natural Resources.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

In the One Hundred and Ninety-Fourth General Court
(2025-2026)

An Act to end the taking of horseshoe crabs for bait.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:

Chapter 130 of the General Laws is hereby amended by adding the following section:-

Section 107. (a) As used in this section, the following term shall, unless the context clearly requires otherwise, have the following meaning:

"Horseshoe crab," the species known as Limulus polyphemus.

(b) No person shall engage in the harvesting of horseshoe crabs or the eggs of horseshoe crabs from coastal waters to be used as bait.

(b) The director may authorize the taking of horseshoe crabs by permit for educational or scientific purposes; provided that, the director determines that such harvesting will not cause harm to the horseshoe crab population of coastal waters.

(c) The taking of horseshoe crabs incidentally during legal fishing operations shall not violate this section if the horseshoe crabs are returned immediately to coastal waters unharmed.

(d) Any person who violates the provisions of this section shall be fined $25 for each horseshoe crab taken from coastal waters. No penalty shall result in possessing a cast off or molted shell also known as an exoskeleton of a horseshoe crab.

(e) Pursuant to chapter 30A, the division shall promulgate rules and regulations to enforce the provisions of this section.