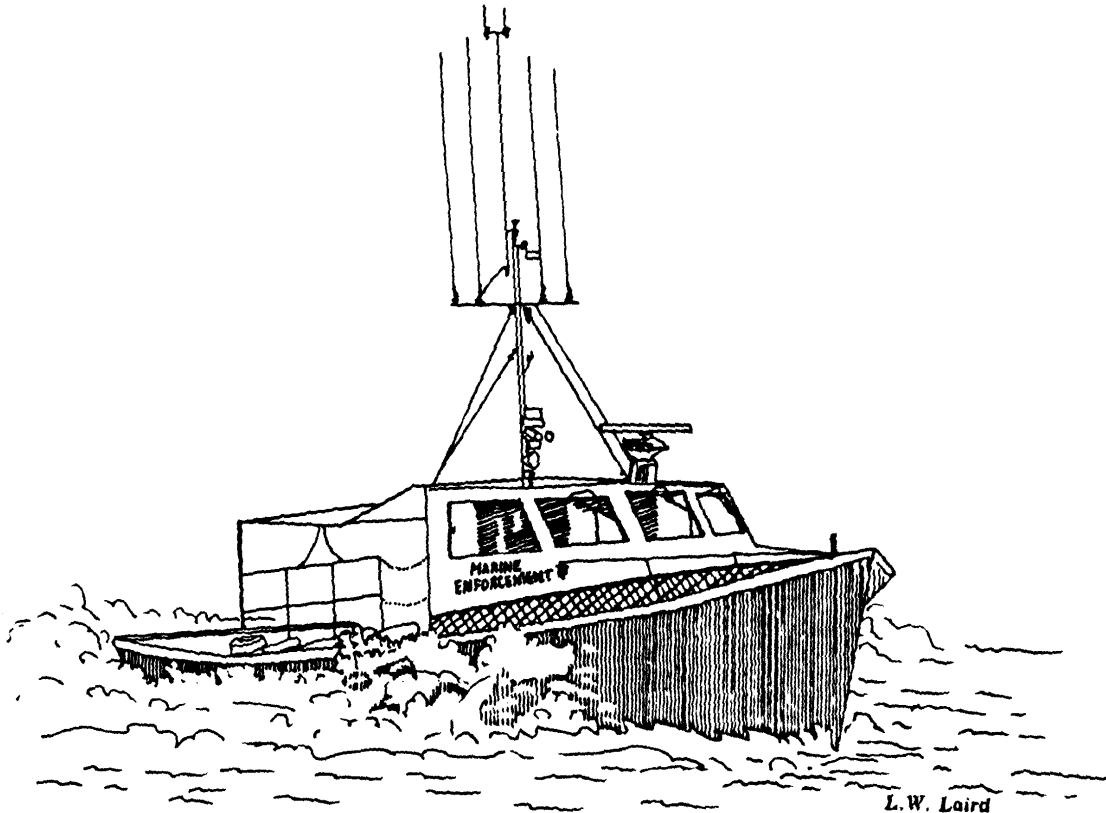


GULF STATES MARINE FISHERIES COMMISSION

# Law Summary 2007



A Summary of Marine Fishing Laws & Regulations for the Gulf States

May 2008

GSMFC No. 155

*This publication is an unofficial compilation of marine fishing laws and regulations developed for the use and convenience of enforcement personnel. For definitive regulations, contact your local agency.*

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The following is an unofficial compilation of marine laws and regulations for the Gulf States. Enforcement personnel of the Gulf States compiled it specifically for their use and convenience. The information is current as of September 30, 2007; however, changes may occur in each state at any time. For definitive enforcement regulations in your area, contact state or federal agencies directly.

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## ALABAMA

The following is an unofficial compilation of marine laws and regulations for Alabama. The information is current as of September 30, 2007, but changes may occur at any time. For definitive enforcement regulations, please contact the Alabama Marine Resources Division (AMRD), P.O. Box 189, Dauphin Island, Alabama 36528 (251) 861-2882, or visit our web page at [www.outdooralabama.com](http://www.outdooralabama.com).

### Residency Requirements

#### Annual Resident Freshwater or Saltwater Fishing License

Any person who has been a bona fide resident of this state for a period of, not less than 90 days, next preceding (the application) and who is between the ages of 16 and 65.

#### Use of Commercial Fishing Gear

A resident of the state of Alabama, as applicable to this article, shall be a person who has resided continuously in this state for 12 months, next preceding the application for said license. Wholesale and retail licenses, as prescribed in this section, shall be issued in the same manner and under the same provisions as provided under other licenses.

#### Proof of Residency

A current valid Alabama's driver's license or two of the following:

- Certificate of employment if containing proof of permanent residency.
- Copy of home property tax.
- Copy of previous year's tax return (mailing address only).
- Health insurance forms with address.
- The last three months of a utility bill with mailing address.
- Student identification plus copy of residence agreement or any other proof of residence listed.
- Military personnel with an out-of-state driver's license must have a copy of order of assignment to Alabama for a minimum of 30 days, or have Alabama as home of record.
- Health insurance card with address.
- Telephone calling card with address.
- Copy of school registration for non-driving students.
- Voter registration.
- Other legal documents that may establish residency after approval by the conservation department.

A non-driver identification card issued by the department of public safety is not acceptable proof of residency.

### SHRIMP

#### Commercial License

Commercial Shrimp Boats

- Under 30' - \$51.00
- 30' - 45' - \$76.00
- Over 45' - \$101.00

(Nonresidents pay the same fee as that charged Alabama residents in the applicant's state of residence, except for the reciprocal state of Mississippi. Nonresident licenses are sold only by AMRD offices.)

#### Recreational License

- Boat License - \$16.00

(Nonresidents pay the same fee as that charged Alabama residents in the applicant's state of residence, except for the reciprocal state of Mississippi.)

#### Commercial Season

Set by regulation/prohibited in permanently closed areas and designated exclusive bait areas.

**Recreational Season**

Prohibited in areas closed to commercial shrimping and permanently closed areas. Shrimping is allowed throughout the year in designated exclusive bait areas from 4:00 a.m. until 10:00 p.m.

**Commercial Gear Limitation**

There are no restrictions on mesh size. In inside waters (bay, sounds, etc.), a trawl or trawls used together cannot exceed 50' as measured along the main top line. No more than two trawls may be used at the same time (not including a try trawl, which cannot exceed ten feet (10') on the main top line). No restrictions on trawl size offshore (Gulf of Mexico) – other commercial specifications apply. Trawl wings shall be cut and tied to the wing line only on points, and it shall be illegal to use a trawl or trawls on which the length of the top leg line exceeds the length of the bottom leg line (the length of the leg line being defined as the distance from the rear of the trawl door to the beginning of the wing). Webbing or netting shall not be hung, tied, or otherwise connected between the rear of the trawl board or door and the adjacent wing line or between the top leg line and bottom leg line of any trawl so as to extend the width of any trawl or trawls over the legal width (50').

**Recreational Gear Limitations**

One trawl, size not to exceed sixteen feet (16') as measured along the main top line. There are no restrictions on mesh size.

**Commercial Legal Size**

Shrimp smaller in size than 68 count (68 shrimp or less per pound) are not to be taken in Alabama waters.

**Recreational Legal Size**

No restrictions in areas open to commercial shrimping and designated exclusive bait areas.

**Commercial Pounds Allowed**

No limit.

**Recreational Pounds Allowed**

In areas open to commercial shrimping, five (5) gallons per person per day. In designated

exclusive bait areas, one (1) gallon per boat per day.

**LIVE BAIT****License**

- Sell live shrimp for bait and operate one boat and one truck - \$51.00
- Sell live shrimp for bait and operate two boats and two trucks - \$101.00  
(Limit – two boats or trucks per dealer)

**Place of Business****Shore Facility**

A permanently erected building from which fishing bait and fishing supplies and tackle are routinely sold to the public; or

**Vessel Place of Business Excluding Shrimp**

A vessel that sells live or dead saltwater bait (excluding shrimp) to the public. Such vessel shall meet the requirements for a boat facility, shall provide a physical address where vessel will be docked or stored, shall not possess or attempt to possess or attempt to use a trawl, and shall make vessel immediately available for inspection. Such vessel shall have the words “Live Bait – No Shrimp” in letters at least six (6) inches high on both sides of the vessel; or

**Vessel Place of Business Including Shrimp**

A vessel that sells live or dead saltwater bait (including shrimp) from a designated location to the public. Marine Resources Division shall be notified of the GPS position of the designated location ten (10) working days prior to utilizing or moving such location. The vessel shall meet all the requirements of a shore facility and a boat facility, shall provide a physical address where vessel will be docked or stored, shall not possess or attempt to possess or attempt to use a trawl, shall make a vessel immediately available for inspection. Such vessel shall have the words “Live Bait – For Sale” in letters at least six (6) inches high on both sides of the vessel.

**Season**

No closed season, but areas may be closed by regulation. Prohibited in permanently closed areas. Designated exclusive bait areas are open to live bait dealers year around from 4:00 a.m. until 10:00 p.m.

## **Gear**

One trawl per boat. Trawl shall not exceed sixteen feet (16') as measured across main top line. No mesh restrictions. Boats shall display the words "**LIVE BAIT**" in letters no smaller than six inches (6") high on each side of the boat and shall have a tank with a spray system operated by a pump or commercial fish aerator or a live well with forced water exchange. Trucks must have a wooden or fabricated transport tank with water recirculation or commercial fish aerator and shall display the words "**LIVE BAIT**" no smaller than six inches (6") high on each side of the truck. Boats and Trucks licensed under a Vessel Place of Business Excluding Shrimp shall not possess or transport live or dead shrimp. These boats and trucks shall meet the same requirements as listed above except the words in six (6) inch high letters on each side of the boat or truck shall be "Live Bait – No Shrimp"

## **Legal Size**

No restrictions.

## **Pounds Allowed**

Possession of no more than one standard shrimp basket of shrimp (live or dead) per boat or truck. Possession of no more than three standard shrimp baskets of shrimp (live or dead) per place of business.

## **Restrictions**

Drags shall not exceed 20 consecutive minutes before retrieving trawl and sorting boat shrimp into the live tank. Shrimp can be sold alive or dead. Dead shrimp must have heads attached and be packaged and sold in lots no greater than one pound.

## **SHELLFISH – OYSTERS**

### **License Requirements**

All licenses expire September 30 of each year. Persons are allowed to take up to 100 oysters for personal consumption without a Catcher's License.

- Commercial Oyster Catcher - \$26.00 (Required by all persons, must be in possession, taking oysters for commercial purposes.)

- Oyster Dredge - \$26.00 (Required before an oyster dredge can be used along with evidence that a \$1,000.00 bond has been secured.)

## **Seasons**

The Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (ADCNR) and the Alabama Department of Public Health are authorized to open and close areas during all or parts of the year. Taking oysters from a closed area for any reason is a misdemeanor. Taking oysters from open areas before or after time as set by regulation is prohibited. Transporting oysters at night through closed areas is prohibited.

## **Gear**

Oysters may be taken from public reefs and water bottoms by hand or oyster tongs. Oyster dredges may be used by owners or lessees of private oyster reefs only after purchasing an oyster dredge license, posting a \$1,000.00 bond, and receiving written authorization from the ADCNR. Oyster dredges may be used in special dredge areas as set by regulation.

## **Size Limits**

Oysters taken for either commercial or personal consumption must be at least three inches (3") in length (5% undersize tolerance). Oysters must be culled on the reef where they are taken.

## **Possession Limits**

Unlawful to take or have in possession more than the number of sacks of oysters per boat per day as set by regulation.

## **Leases**

Persons, firms, or corporations desiring to lease oyster bottoms shall make application in writing to the Commissioner of Conservation and Natural Resources accompanied by such fee as may be prescribed. It is the duty of each lessee to have established an accurate survey by a registered surveyor of the bottoms, beds, or reefs under his control; each corner shall be clearly marked and defined with the lessee's name clearly attached. Intermediate markers shall be placed and plat of the area filed with the MRD together with a list of any persons using said lease area (list must be updated every 30 days).

### **Restrictions**

It is unlawful to drag any seines over the public reefs or private oyster grounds. Oysters taken commercially must be sacked (not more than ¼ Alabama barrel per sack) and each sack tagged before landing. Tags may be purchased for \$0.25/each at MRD offices or authorized agents. No oysters shall be culled or sacked on board a boat in waters closed to the harvesting of oysters. No oysters taken from a public reef shall be culled upon a private reef. It shall be unlawful to possess oysters taken from a private lease and oysters taken from a public reef on board a boat at the same time.

### **SHELLFISH – CRABS**

#### **Licenses**

- Commercial - \$51.00
- Recreational – Saltwater Fishing License Required (five traps maximum)

Nonresidents pay the same fee as that charged Alabama residents to conduct the same activity in the applicant's state of residence, or not less than twice the amount of resident location.

#### **Restrictions**

No person, firm, or corporation shall take, catch, sell, transport, or possess blue crabs that measure less than five inches (5") carapace width as measured from the tip of one lateral spine to the tip of the opposite lateral spine. Provided, however, this limitation does not apply to soft-shelled crabs or to pre-molt crabs if the pre-molt crabs are taken solely for the purposes of shedding and held in compliance with applicable laws and regulations. Exempted pre-molt crabs shall exhibit, at a minimum, a pink or red line on the back paddle fin, which is recognized by the crab industry as a preliminary pre-molt stage.

Soft-shell or pre-molt crabs must be held in a separate container, marked "peelers" or "busters," from those crabs of legal size while in the possession of fishermen.

Pre-molt crabs in the possession of, or held by, a dealer for sale or processing as soft-shell crabs are exempted from the minimum prescribed size limit, if identified as premolt crabs and held in

separate containers marked "peelers" or "busters."

Crabs in a workbox shall not be subject to the minimum prescribed size limit while aboard the vessel. Commercial crab fishermen shall be allowed to have in possession aboard the vessel two workboxes. Crab boxes which are sealed or covered, other than by a grader, shall not be considered a workbox.

Commercial crab fishermen shall tag or mark any containers of Alabama crabs in possession, or that are sold, in a manner which will ensure that such commercial crab fisherman can be identified as the person who harvested the crabs. Such identification required shall be the full name of the crab fisherman and the number issued to the commercial crab fisherman by the MRD and the date on which the crabs were harvested. All containers of Alabama crabs in the possession of a dealer shall be tagged, marked, or otherwise identified in this manner. The identification number shall be assigned by the MRD when the fisherman purchases his or her commercial crab "catcher's" license. For subsequent years, the same identification number shall be assigned to the same commercial crab fisherman.

Crabs taken by a licensed live bait dealer for sale as bait shall not be subject to the minimum prescribed size limit.

Crabs taken for bait by licensed recreational shrimp boats shall not be subject to the minimum prescribed size limit, but such boats are limited to no more than the number of crabs held by a one (1) gallon container per boat per day.

Crabs taken by licensed commercial or recreational shrimp boats in waters open to commercial shrimping area limited to no more than one five-gallon container of legal size crabs in possession per boat unless the operator possesses a valid commercial "crab catcher's" license.

Persons, firms, or corporations may import crabs for commercial purposes from a licensed dealer

or fisherman residing outside the state of Alabama, provided such crabs were taken and shipped pursuant to the state's laws and regulations. Containers of crabs shall be marked, tagged, or otherwise identified as required by the laws and regulations in that state.

A bill of sale or other proof of purchase showing the nonresident dealer's or fisherman's name and address, pounds or numbers of containers purchased, and date of purchase shall be maintained at the place of business for a period of one year and shall be available for inspection and presented without delay upon request by a conservation enforcement officer or other authorized agent.

Persons who have caught crabs from the waters of another state may import those crabs into the state of Alabama for commercial purposes, provided said crabs were legally taken, licensed, and transported pursuant to that state's laws and regulations. Containers of crabs shall be marked or tagged with the fisherman's name, commercial crab fisherman's license number issued by the state, and the date of harvest.

Traps used to take crabs or other seafood shall not exceed twenty-seven (27) cubic feet in volume.

Each commercial crab trap shall be marked with at least one (1) buoy no smaller than six inches (6") in diameter. At least one-half (1/2) of the buoy shall be white; each buoy shall be marked with the fisherman's identification number (assigned by the Marine Resources Division and remains the same for subsequent years). Buoys shall be attached to the traps by the use of weighted line to prevent the line from floating. Plastic bottles are prohibited for use as a commercial crab trap buoy. Owners trap identification number must be painted or affixed to each side of the vessel used to harvest crabs from said traps.

It shall be unlawful to set or place in the waters of this state any commercial crab trap, which does not have attached a float marked with the identification number of the owner of the trap. Such number shall be at least one inch (1") in

height, colored to be a definite contrast with the color of the float, of block character, and readable from left to right.

It shall be unlawful to remove crab traps from the water or remove crabs from crab traps during the hours from sunset from one (1) hour before sunrise the following day.

It shall be unlawful to set or place any commercial or recreational trap used for the taking of crabs or other seafood in the access canals of Heron Bay (west of and adjacent to State Highway 193) or within three hundred feet (300') of any navigational channel marked by a lawfully established system of waterway markers or any public boat launching ramp, Heron Bay Cutoff, or the mouth of the West Fowl River, Weeks Bay, Fish River, Magnolia River, any man-made canal, or in any manner so as to prevent ingress or egress to or from any pier, wharf, dock, marina, or boat launching ramp.

Plastic bottles are prohibited for use as a commercial crab trap buoy. It shall be unlawful to set or place any commercial trap used for the taking of crabs or other seafood in Mobile River, Dog River, Theodore Industrial Canal, Fowl River, the northwest arm of Heron Bay, Heron Bayou (off northwest arm of Heron Bay), Bayou Coden, Bayou La Batre, or their tributaries, in Mobile County, or Blakely River North of the charted position of Blakely River Marker 18, Magnolia River, Bon Secour River north of Channel Markers 7 and 8, Wolf Creek, Sandy Creek, Mifflin Creek, Hammock Creek, Roberts Bayou, Soldier Creek, Palmetto Creek, Old River (between Ono Island and Perdido Key), or their tributaries, in Baldwin County, or in any man-made canal [including but not limited to the following on Dauphin Island: Quivera Bay, Polaris Lagoon, Port Royal Lagoon, Lafitte Bay, Indian Bay, Indian Canal, Buchanan Bay, Columbia Bay, Colony Cove, Spanish Bay, Barcelona Bay, Confederate Bay, Salt Creek (Heron Bayou), Government Cut, and Billy Goat Hole].

It shall be unlawful to set or place any recreational trap used for the taking of crabs or

other seafood in any area named in the above paragraph of this regulation, unless such trap shall be physically attached to a line to a pier, dock, piling, bulkhead, boathouse, or other structure, on or attached to the shore. Such line shall allow the crab trap to be placed no farther than a distance of ten feet (10') from the pier, dock, boathouse, or shoreline. No more than five (5) traps shall be allowed per property.

Recreational crab traps shall be marked with an orange floating, visible buoy not less than six inches (6") in diameter or width. The buoy shall have a legible letter "R" at least two inches (2") high, permanently affixed to it.

Crab traps which are no longer serviceable or in use shall be removed from the water by the owner thereof. No person shall intentionally damage or destroy crab traps or the floats or lines attached thereto.

Any unidentified, improperly marked, or illegally placed crab trap shall be considered a nuisance and may be confiscated by a conservation enforcement officer or other authorized agent of the ADCNR.

Any person, firm, or corporation taking, catching, selling, transporting, or possessing crabs shall have in their possession a valid license, if applicable, for such activity.

Such license shall be immediately available for inspection, upon request, by a conservation enforcement officer or other authorized agent.

## **FINFISH**

### **Saltwater Rod and Reel License**

Annual licenses expire one year from the date of issue.

Resident - \$21.00 annual

- 7-day trip - \$9.00

Nonresident – 7 Day

- Louisiana - \$60.00
- All other states - \$25.00

Nonresident – Annual

- Louisiana - \$90.00
- All other states - \$45.00

### **Pier License**

- Piers located in inside waters of the state - \$1,001.00

(Residents may fish without an additional license.)

### **Commercial Party Boat - Certified**

- Up to 6 people - \$201.00
- 7-25 people - \$301.00
- Over 25 people - \$501.00

(Persons onboard may fish without an additional license.)

### **Commercial Hook and Line License**

- Resident - \$101.00 + annual saltwater rod and reel license
- Nonresident - \$201.00 + annual saltwater rod and reel license

It is unlawful to possess in Alabama any species of saltwater fish or seafood product taken in Federal waters or the waters of another state unlawfully in violation of any applicable Federal or other state creel, possession, or size limit.

It is unlawful to sell speckled trout, red drum, and tarpon caught in state waters. Season closes for red snapper, king mackerel, and shark upon closure of Federal waters. No allowance for undersize fish. Saltwater fishing license requirements shall be applicable to such activities as provided within §9-11-53.1, 53.5, and 55.2 (Code of Alabama 1975) which occur south of the following line: beginning at the Mississippi state line – a meandering line following U.S. Highway 90 eastwardly to its junction with State Highway 188; State Highway 188 eastwardly to its junction with State Highway 193; State Highway 193 northwardly to its junction with State Highway 163; State Highway 163 northwardly to its intersection with Interstate Highway 10 (except the Theodore Industrial Canal); Interstate Highway 10 eastbound lane [except that portion of Interstate Highway 10 which lies north of state Highway 90 (Battleship Parkway) in which

case the line follows the Parkway] to the Interstate Highway 10 intersection with U.S. Highway 98; U.S. Highway 98 southwardly and eastwardly to its intersection with State Highway 59; State Highway 59 southwardly to its intersection with Baldwin County Highway 20; Baldwin County Highway 20 eastwardly to its intersection with Baldwin County Highway 95; Baldwin Highway 95 northwardly to its intersection with U.S. Highway 98; U.S. Highway 98 eastwardly to its intersection with the western shore of Perdido Bay northwardly to the intersection of the Florida state line and the mouth of the Perdido River.

All commercial fishing operations, as well as recreational netting operations, and all gear used in any of such operations, and all gear used in any of such operations, in state jurisdictional waters south of Interstate 10 eastbound lane [except that portion of Interstate 10 which lies north of State Highway 90 (Battleship Parkway) in which case the line follows the Parkway] shall be subject to those laws, rules, and regulations of the ADCNR/MRD.

**Closed Season and Creel/Possession Limit on King Mackerel for Commercial Purposes**

During such period of time that the Federal waters (adjoining Alabama waters) are closed to the commercial harvest of king mackerel, it shall be unlawful to take, harvest, or possess, for commercial purposes, king mackerel, from the waters of the state of Alabama.

**Recreational Size and Possession Limits**

<b>SPECIES</b>	<b>DAILY BAG</b>	<b>POSSESSION</b>	<b>MINIMUM LENGTH IN INCHES</b>	<b>MAXIMUM LENGTH IN INCHES</b>
Cobia	2	2	33 FL	
Spotted seatrout	10	10	14 TL	
Red drum	3	3	16 TL <sup>1</sup>	26 TL
Red snapper	Note <sup>7</sup>	Note <sup>7</sup>	16 TL	
Snapper				
Gray	10	10	12 TL	
Vermilion	Note <sup>2</sup>	Note <sup>2</sup>	10 TL	
Lane	Note <sup>2</sup>	Note <sup>2</sup>	8 TL	
Spanish mackerel	15	15		
King mackerel	2	2	24 FL	
Greater amberjack	1	1	28 FL	
Striped bass	2 <sup>3</sup>	2 <sup>3</sup>	16 TL	
Gray triggerfish	Note <sup>2</sup>	Note <sup>2</sup>	12 TL	
Gag grouper	All groupers 5/person in aggregate	All groupers 5/person in aggregate	22 TL	
Black grouper	All groupers 5/person in aggregate	All groupers 5/person in aggregate	22 TL	
Red grouper	1/person in 5 grouper aggregate	1/person in 5 grouper aggregate	20 TL	
Yellowfin grouper	All groupers 5/person in aggregate	All groupers 5/person in aggregate	20 TL	
Scamp	All groupers 5/person in aggregate	All groupers 5/person in aggregate	16 TL	
Tarpon	Tag required	Tag required	60 TL	
Florida pompano	3	3	12 TL	
Mullet	Note <sup>4,5,6</sup>	Note <sup>4,5,6</sup>		
Atlantic sharpnose shark	2/person	2/person	None	
Other sharks <sup>8</sup>	1/person	1/person	54 FL	
Tripletail	3	3	16 TL	
Flounder	No limit	No limit	12 TL	
Lesser amberjack	No limit	No limit	14 FL	22 FL
Banded rudderfish	No limit	No limit	14 FL	22 FL
Yellowfin tuna	No limit	No limit	27 CFL	
Bigeye tuna	No limit	No limit	27 CFL	

<sup>1</sup>No allowance for undersized fish except: redfish – no undersized fish allowed, one (1) may exceed the maximum size. No undersize tolerance for speckled trout.

<sup>2</sup>There is a 20-fish aggregate bag limit for reef fish species for which there is no other bag limit (including banded rudderfish and lesser amberjack) (only 10 fish of this 20 fish aggregate may be Vermilion snapper).

<sup>3</sup>When caught in areas designated as salt water.



<sup>4</sup>October 24 through December 31 – Possession limit on mullet caught by cast net or snagging is 25 fish per boat per day or 25 fish per person per day from shore.

<sup>5</sup>Unlawful to possess onboard a boat more than 25 mullet while cast netting or snagging in waters close to the use of gill nets.

<sup>6</sup>October 24 through December 31 – Unlawful to take mullet by cast netting or snagging in Theodore Industrial Canal, Dog River, or the tributaries thereof.

<sup>7</sup>Four (4) per person in Alabama waters or two (2) per person in Federal waters.

<sup>8</sup>Recreational and commercial harvest of the following sharks is prohibited: Atlantic angel, longfin mako, small tail, bigeye thresher, bignose, sevengill, white dusky, sitgill, nurse, sand tiger, and whale.

### Commercial Size and Possession Limits

SPECIES	DAILY BAG	POSSESSION	MINIMUM LENGTH IN INCHES	MAXIMUM LENGTH IN INCHES
Red snapper <sup>1</sup>			13 TL	
Cobia		2	33 FL	
Gag grouper			24 TL	
Black grouper			22 TL	
Red grouper			20 TL	
Yellowfin grouper			20 TL	
Scamp			16 TL	
Florida pompano		3	12 TL	
Vermilion snapper			10 TL	
Lane snapper			8 TL	
Gray snapper			12 TL	
Tripletail		3	16 TL	
King mackerel			24 TL	
Greater amberjack			36 FL	
Mullet <sup>2</sup>		25/ person or vessel		
Flounder			12 TL	
Gray triggerfish			12 TL	
Atlantic sharpnose shark			No size limit	
All other sharks <sup>3</sup>			54 FL (30" dressed length)	

<sup>1</sup>Commercial vessels which hold a valid Federal red snapper license and a Federal reef fish commercial vessel permit may land in Alabama up to their (IFQ) Individual Fishing Quota issued to them by NOAA. They are required to follow all pertinent Federal regulations.

<sup>2</sup>October 24 through December 31 – taken by cast net or snagging.

<sup>3</sup>Recreational and commercial harvest of the following sharks is prohibited: Atlantic angel, longfin mako, small tail, bigeye thresher, bignose, sevengill, white dusky, sitgill, nurse, sand tiger, and whale.

### Season on Sharks for Commercial Purposes

During such period of time that the Federal waters adjacent to Alabama waters are open to commercial harvest of small coastal sharks (SCS) or large coastal sharks (LCS) as defined

by Federal law or regulation, the Alabama waters of Mobile Bay, Bon Secour Bay, Mississippi Sound, and the Gulf of Mexico south of the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway and west of Little Lagoon Pass (87°44'24"W

longitude) shall be open to the harvest of such sharks for commercial purposes from 12:01 a.m. each Monday through 11:59 p.m. each Friday (no weekends), except for commercial harvesting of sharks shall be prohibited from 12:01 a.m. through 11:59 p.m. on each of the following holidays: Memorial Day, Independence Day, and Labor Day. When Federal waters adjacent to Alabama are closed to the commercial harvest of either shark management unit (SCS or LCS), it shall be unlawful to take, harvest, or possess, or attempt to take, harvest, or possess, for commercial purposes, sharks of such closed management unit from the waters of the state of Alabama.

#### **Closed Season and Zero Possession Limit on Certain Species for Commercial Purposes**

No person shall take, possess, or attempt to take or possess from the waters of the state of Alabama, for commercial purposes, any of the following species:

- Basking shark, *Cetorhinus maximus*
- White shark, *Carcharodon carcharias*
- Bigeye sand tiger, *Odontaspis noronhai*
- Sand tiger, *Odontaspis taurus*
- White shark, *Rhincodon typus*
- Dusky shark, *Carcharhinus obscurus*
- Smalltooth sawfish, *Pristis pectinata*
- Largetooth sawfish, *Pristis pristis*
- Nassau grouper, *Epinephelus striatus*
- Goliath grouper (Jewfish), *Epinephelus itajara*

#### **Bycatch Provisions on Sharks for Commercial Purposes**

Regardless of the open or closed status of Federal and Alabama waters regarding the directed harvest of sharks, gill net fishermen targeting other fish shall be allowed to keep, for commercial purposes, an incidental bycatch of dressed weight of sharks (carcasses and fins) – except those species listed above – totaling no more than ten percent (10%) by weight of other fish taken.

#### **SALTWATER NETS**

##### **Purse Seine Licenses**

- Resident - \$1,501.00

- Nonresident - \$3,001.00

##### **Permits**

Permits expire September 30 of each year. Recreational nets shall not exceed 300' in length; commercial nets shall not exceed 2,400' in length (main top line).

##### **Resident**

- Recreational - \$51.00
- Commercial - \$301.00 + additional \$501.00 for roe mullet and Spanish mackerel permit

##### **Nonresident**

- Recreational – pays the same fee as that charged an Alabama resident to conduct the same activity in applicant's state of residence provided nonresidents pay no less than twice the cost for license that Alabama residents pay.
- Commercial - \$1,501.00 + additional \$2,501.00 for roe mullet and Spanish mackerel permit.

Permits for commercial net and seine permits shall only be issued to persons who purchased such licenses in two of five years from 1989 through 1993 and who have proof of 50% of their gross income from fishing or persons who purchased such a license in all five years and have filed annual income tax returns in all years. All nets and seines must be licensed except seines used for taking bait. Bait seines shall not exceed twenty-five feet (25') in length or four feet (4') in depth. A license made out to an individual is not transferable; licensee must be present when net is in use. A seafood dealer's license is also required if fish are sold to other than an Alabama seafood dealer. A saltwater fishing license is required for cast nets when used recreationally by Alabama residents.

##### **Restrictions**

It shall be unlawful to use purse seines for the taking or attempting to take fishes of other than those of the families Clupeidae (menhaden and herrings) and Engraulidae (anchovies). The starting date for the commercial menhaden season in the territorial waters of Alabama shall be the third Monday in April, and the closing

date shall be November 1 of each year (both dates inclusive). The taking of menhaden by purse seine shall be permitted only in those waters of Mississippi Sound and the Gulf of Mexico as described: "Mississippi Sound and the Gulf of Mexico west of a line extending from the southernmost tip of Point aux Pines to Bayou La Batre Channel Marker 17, then to the southernmost point of the Isle aux Herbes (Coffee Island), thence eastward to the easternmost point of Marsh Island, then southward to Gulf Intracoastal Waterway Range Beacon "C," thence southward into the Gulf of Mexico for a distance of three (3) miles, except those waters lying within a radius of one (1) mile from the western point of Dauphin Island."

Gill nets must be marked every 100' with a color-contrasting float and every 300' with the fisherman's permit number. Recreational nets must be marked with the licensee's name and license number. The allowable depth commercial gill nets, trammel nets, and other entangling nets may vary by area.

Except as otherwise noted, gill nets, trammel nets, and other entangling nets used to catch any fish in Gulf waters in Alabama's territorial jurisdiction must have a minimum mesh size of  $1\frac{9}{16}$ " bar (knot to knot). A minimum mesh size of  $1\frac{3}{4}$ " bar is required for nets used to take Spanish mackerel. A minimum mesh size of 2" bar is required for such nets used to take mullet during the period from the day after Labor Day through December 31 of each year for all Alabama coastal waters under the jurisdiction of the MRD, and only strike nets may be used in certain waters of Bon Secour Bay during this period. Any person using a 2" or larger bar mesh during the period October 24 through December 31 of each year shall be considered a roe mullet permit. The minimum mesh for nets used in these excepted areas shall be generally the same as previously described by season for other coastal waters.

The use of purse seines to catch mullet is prohibited. Commercial and recreational gill net fishermen may use only one net at any time; however, commercial fishermen may possess more than one such net. No hook and line

device may contain more than five (5) hooks when used in Alabama waters under the jurisdiction of the MRD except from January 1 through April 30, when trotlines may be used to take legal species other than saltwater game fish east of Mobile Ship Channel and north of the line from MS#78 to Blakely R. Ch. #2 and due east to the shoreline. These trotlines cannot exceed 300' and 50 hooks.

Gill nets, trammel nets, seines, purse seines, and other entangling nets are prohibited in any marked navigational channel, Theodore Industrial Canal, Little Lagoon Pass, or any man-made canal; within 300' of any man-made canal or the mouth of any river, stream, bayou, or creek; and within 300' of any pier, marina, dock, boat launching ramp, or certain "relic" piers. Recreational gill nets may not be used beyond 300' of the shoreline. It is unlawful to use any seine or net in any manner so as to block ingress or egress from any of the aforementioned structures. It is illegal to use recreational gill nets in Gulf waters and Pelican Bay.

It shall be unlawful to use or possess a gill net, trammel net, or other entangling net or seine in the Gulf of Mexico, including Pelican Bay, from March 15 through the day after Labor Day each year from 12:00 noon each Friday through 7:00 p.m. each Sunday.

Year round, gill nets, trammel nets, seines, haul seines, and other entangling nets are prohibited in Gulf waters within  $\frac{1}{4}$  mile of shore, except (and subject to other provisions) waters east of longitude  $87^{\circ}47'826''$  which will be open from 6:00 p.m. to 6:00 a.m. each day from March 15 through May 7. From October 2 through December 31, the waters east of Old Little Lagoon Pass to the Florida line are open 24 hours a day. From the day after Labor Day through March 14, Gulf waters within  $\frac{1}{4}$  mile of shore will be open to netting west of Old Little Lagoon Pass in Mobile and Baldwin Counties, and the minimum mesh size for nets shall be  $1\frac{9}{16}$ " bar, except from March 15 through the Friday before Labor Day in waters west of Old Little Lagoon Pass. In Mobile and Baldwin Counties, waters shall be open from 6:00 p.m. to 6:00 a.m. each day. From March 15 through the

Friday before Labor Day, waters west of longitude 88°11'500" are open 24 hours a day. From May 8 through Labor Day, all waters in the Gulf of Mexico east of Old Little Lagoon Pass to the Florida line are closed to gill nets, trammel nets, seines, haul seines, and other entangling nets. All waters of the Gulf of Mexico are closed during the Memorial Day, July 4<sup>th</sup>, and Labor Day holidays. From January 1 through the day after Labor Day of each year, entangling nets are prohibited in certain waters in and around Dauphin Island.

It is illegal to remove the roe or otherwise process roe mullet aboard any boat or vessel in Alabama. All nets must be constantly attended by the licensee, and no dead fish or other dead seafood may be discarded within three (3) miles of Gulf beaches, 500' of any shoreline, or into any river, stream, bayou, or creek.

It is illegal to use or possess a gill net, trammel, or other entangling net that do not have a two inch (2") cork every five feet (5') or a six inch (6") buoy every fifty feet (50') on the top line.

#### **FINFISH TAKEN AS BAIT BY BAIT PURSE SEINE**

##### **Bait Fishery Defined – Fishery Restrictions**

An experimental offshore bait purse seine fishery in Alabama's territorial waters of the Gulf of Mexico for schooling, pelagic fish species (listed below) to be marketed exclusively as bait is herein authorized. It shall be unlawful for any person, firm, or corporation to use a bait purse seine in Alabama's territorial waters of the Gulf of Mexico, except as follows.

##### **Gear Specifications**

Purse seines utilized in taking or attempting to take bait fish species in the offshore territorial waters of the state of Alabama must be constructed entirely of one-half inch (½") knot to knot mesh webbing. This gear will be referred to in this rule as a "bait purse seine." The use of any purse seine in this bait fishery constructed of webbing sized other than as provided herein is illegal and the possession onboard a boat in the waters of Alabama of a bait purse seine in which the webbing is sized other than as specified in this rule is prohibited.

##### **Waters Open to the Fishery**

The taking of finfish species as bait by bait purse seine shall be permitted in all of Alabama territorial waters of the Gulf of Mexico south of a line one-fourth (¼) mile from the shoreline, including Pelican/Sand Island, seaward to a distance of three (3) miles from shore. These waters shall be open Monday through Friday except on state or national holidays. It shall be unlawful to take or attempt to take bait species using a bait purse seine in any inside waters of the state of Alabama as defined by Rule 220-3-04(1) or in Pelican Bay [described as those waters encompassed by a line running south from Mobile Point Light at Fort Morgan to Sand Island Tower (Lighthouse)], then northwesterly along the contour of Sand/Pelican Island, and then from the west end of Pelican Island and to the Dauphin Island Park and Beach Park Pier, then east along the shoreline of Dauphin Island to the most southernmost tip of Dauphin Island and from this point southeastwardly across the mouth of Mobile Bay to Mobile Point Light at Fort Morgan.

##### **Species Restrictions**

A bait purse seine may lawfully be used for taking or attempting to take only the following fishes to be marketed expressly as bait:

- Round scad, *Decapterus punctatus*
- Rough scad, *Trachurus lathamii*
- Bigeye scad, *Selar crumenophthalmus*
- Chub mackerel, *Scomber japonicus*
- Ladyfish, *Elops saurus*
- Blue runner, *Caranx crysos*

##### **License Requirement**

The operator of any vessel upon which a bait purse is possessed must hold a valid Alabama purse seine license.

##### **Observer Requirement**

Any vessel which a bait purse seine is possessed must have a bona fide fishery observer on board or comply with reporting requirements as determined by criteria established by the ADCNR/MRD Director when such vessel is away from port and on the fishing grounds.

### **Landing Requirement**

All fish taken as bait by bait purse seine in Alabama waters by a duly licensed bait purse seine vessel must be landed in the state of Alabama.

### **Reporting Protocol**

Each bait purse seine vessel operator must submit reports in standardized form detailing catch, fishing conditions, and fishing equipment by individual fishing trip to the ADCNR/MRD at weekly intervals. Reports will be submitted each Tuesday, detailing fishing activities for the previous Monday through Friday fishing week.

The bait purse seining activities conducted pursuant to this rule shall not be construed as purse seining for the purposes of §9-12-115.1, Code of Alabama 1975.

### **Bycatch Restrictions**

It shall be unlawful in the territorial waters of Alabama to retain or possess any duly designated "game fish" onboard any vessel upon which a bait purse seine is concurrently possessed. Bycatch allowances for species other than game fish expressed as a percentage of targeted catch will be deferred until such time as representative biological and catch data can be compiled. Data regarding allowable bycatch (non-game fish) will be compiled on a per trip basis.

### **Closure Provisions**

Due to the novelty of this fishery and a subsequent lack of data regarding its prosecution in the territorial waters of Alabama, this bait fishery shall be subject to immediate closure and/or reopening upon order of the ADCNR/MRD Director. Entry into the fishery may be limited or annual species-specific quotas may be developed as fishery data becomes available.

Any person, firm, or corporation violating any of the provisions of this regulation shall be punished as provided by law.

### **SEAFOOD DEALER LICENSE**

Required of any person, firm, or corporation selling, brokering, trading, bartering, or

processing any fresh or frozen seafood. To obtain a seafood dealer license, tax identification, proof of business license, and appropriate health permit are required (if applicable). License required for each place of business ("place of business" means a permanent structure on land or a vehicle from which seafood is sold or purchased if owner/operator does not have a licensed permanent structure.)

- Resident seafood dealer - \$201.00
- Nonresident seafood dealer - \$401.00 or the same fee that is charged an Alabama resident in their state if Alabama residents are charged more than \$401.00

### **SEAFOOD DEALER VEHICLE LICENSE**

Only holders of a valid Alabama seafood dealer license may purchase a seafood dealer vehicle license.

- Resident and nonresident - \$101.00 per vehicle

### **SEAFOOD REPORTING AND LANDING REGULATION**

Alabama Code requires that each and every person, firm, or corporation holding a seafood dealer's license issued by the Commissioner of Conservation and Natural Resources or his or her authorized agent shall under oath make a monthly report to the MRD Director, on blanks provided for that purpose.

All saltwater finfish commercially harvested in the state of Alabama, except those lawfully taken by purse seine, shall be landed in this state and reported through a properly licensed Alabama seafood dealer. Persons who are transporting commercially harvested saltwater finfish out of the state of Alabama must have in their possession proof that said finfish were first landed and reported to a licensed Alabama seafood dealer.

Commercially harvested living marine products other than saltwater finfish taken from Alabama waters including, but not limited to oysters, crabs, shrimp, other marine invertebrates and live rock may be landed outside the state of

Alabama provided the dealer to which products are sold provides to the MRD Director at monthly intervals the fisherman's name; license or permit number; species purchased; volume and price paid for the product; date and area of harvest; trip and fishing time; proper vessel identification; type, quality, and size of gear used; applicable mesh size of gear used; and date of purchase – provided that if the dealer outside the state of Alabama to which produce was sold fails to report as required, it will be the responsibility of the fisherman who sold the product to provide to the MRD Director at monthly intervals the above required information.

All motor vehicles, trailers, or semi-trailers transporting aquatic products for commercial purposes are required to exhibit the inscription **"FISH"** on the rear of the vehicle. The inscription shall read from left to right, be attached or painted on the vehicle in block Arabic letters of good proportion in contrasting color, and be at least six inches (6") in height.

# *Commercial Saltwater Regulations*

Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission  
**July 2007**

**New Blue Crab  
Regulations Page 12**

**Natures Hidden Coral Treasure Page 4**



Florida Fish & Wildlife Conservation Commission  
Division of Marine Fisheries Management

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Photo by Kyle Miller, Division of Marine Fisheries Management

### Dear Friends,

We are currently on issue five. Feedback offered by one fisherman or dealer can make a difference. Please keep the suggestions and photos coming, one of your photos could make the cover next year. If you have e-mail, please send a message to [daniel.ellinor@MyFWC.com](mailto:daniel.ellinor@MyFWC.com) asking to be added to the commercial fisheries information email list. As always, do not hesitate to call me if you have any questions about commercial fisheries issues.

Sincerely,

Dan Ellinor

Commercial Outreach Coordinator  
 FWC Division of Marine Fisheries  
 2590 Executive Center Circle, East, Suite 203  
 Tallahassee, Florida 32301  
 Telephone 850-922-4340, Extension 204

### 2007 Commission Meetings

September 12-14 Hilton Hotel  
 333 First Street, South  
 St. Petersburg, FL 33701  
 Phone: 727-894-5000

December 5-6 Marriott Key Largo  
 103800 Overseas Hwy.  
 Key Largo, FL 33037  
 Phone: 305-453-0582

### Workshops / Advisory Boards

August 21 Lobster Advisory Board  
 Hawks Cay Resort  
 61 Hawk's Cay Boulevard  
 Duck Key, FL 33050  
 Phone: 305-743-7000

For more information about workgroup and advisory board meeting dates, times and locations, and agendas visit our website at [MyFWC.com](http://MyFWC.com).

**Photo Credits:** Rich Abrams and Kyle Miller, Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, Division of Marine Fisheries Management

**Disclaimer:** This unofficial summary has no legal effect and is provided for informational purposes only. For the official regulatory language, please refer to Chapter 370, Florida Statutes, and Chapters 68B and 68E, Florida Administrative Code. Fishery regulations are subject to change. This summary does not include regulatory changes that may have occurred after June 2007. Visit [MyFWC.com/Marine](http://MyFWC.com/Marine) to view official rule language.

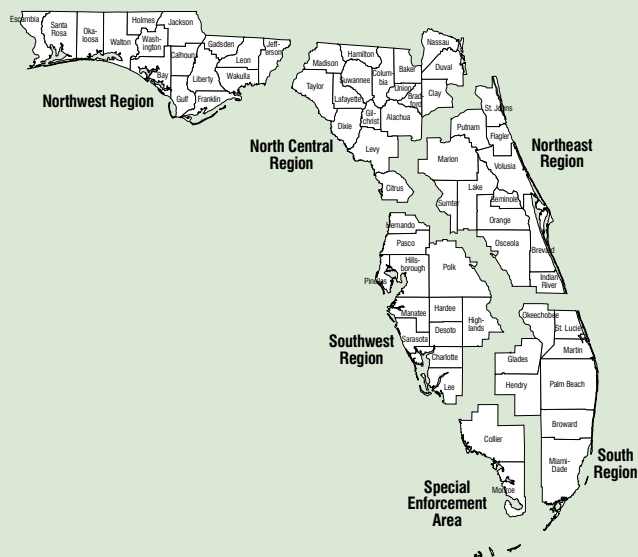


## The Division of Law Enforcement (DLE)

The Division of Law Enforcement patrols Florida's coastal waters to provide assistance to boaters and fishermen as well as to enforce Florida's saltwater fishing and boating laws. FWC officers assist boaters who are in distress, provide advice and direction to those who are traveling Florida's coastline and waterways, and may issue citations for violations of state and federal fishing, wildlife, and boating laws.

In emergencies or violation of state fisheries, wildlife, or boating laws, call the Wildlife Alert Reward Program at 1-888-404-FWCC (3922) or for cellular phone users throughout the state, dial #FWC or \*FWC depending on your location, or hailed on VHF Channel 16.

### Division of Law Enforcement Regions



### For Saltwater Fishing and Boating Questions, Contact the Nearest Regional Field Office

#### Northeast Region

Ocala .....352-732-1225  
Titusville.....321-383-2740

#### South Region

Miami .....305-956-2500  
West Palm Beach.....561-625-5122  
Jupiter.....561-624-6935

#### Special Enforcement Area

Marathon .....305-289-2320

#### Southwest Region

Tampa .....813-272-2516  
Lakeland .....863-648-3200  
Fort Myers .....239-332-6971

#### North Central Region

Jacksonville.....904-270-2500  
Lake City .....386-758-0529  
Crystal River.....352-447-1633

**Northwest Region** .....850-265-3676

#### Tallahassee Headquarters

Bureau of Field Operations.....850-488-9924

## Commercial saltwater fishing Regulations

These rules apply in state waters extending nine nautical miles off the Gulf coast and three nautical miles off the Atlantic coast. Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission rules may also include federal waters. The FWC is charged with establishing marine fisheries rules in Chapters 68B and 68E, Florida Administrative Code. License fees and penalties for fisheries violations rules and regulations in Chapter 370, Florida Statutes, are enacted by the Legislature. The official FWC marine fisheries regulations can be found at: myfwc.com. The FWC Division of Law Enforcement enforces fisheries laws in both state and federal waters.

### Additional Regulations

Other federal and state regulations and permit requirements, local laws, and gear restrictions may apply when harvesting in state waters of Florida and the adjacent federal waters. Please contact the regional FWC Law Enforcement office before fishing. State and federal park regulations and permit requirements apply within park boundaries. Contact park personnel before harvesting in waters of a park or state recreation area.

For official federal regulations, please refer to Title 50, Part 600, Code of Federal Regulations, found online at <http://www.gpoaccess.gov/cfr/index.html> or contact the:

#### Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council

2203 N. Lois Avenue, Suite 1100  
Tampa, FL 33607  
(Toll Free) 888-833-1844  
813-348-1711  
[www.gulfcouncil.org](http://www.gulfcouncil.org)  
Email: [gulfcouncil@gulfcouncil.org](mailto:gulfcouncil@gulfcouncil.org)

#### South Atlantic Fishery Management Council

4055 Faber Place Drive Suite 201  
North Charleston, SC 29405  
843-571-4366 or Toll Free 866/SAFMC-10  
[www.safmc.net](http://www.safmc.net)

### RESOURCE HOTLINES

To Report Fish Kills: 800-636-0511  
To Report Fish Tags: 800-367-4461

### For federal contact information:

#### NOAA Fisheries Service Southeast Regional Office

263 13th Ave South  
St. Petersburg, Fl. 33702  
Toll free information: 866-570-5301  
<http://sero.nmfs.noaa.gov>

#### Highly Migratory Species Management Division

727-824-5399  
HMS Automated toll free: 800-894-5528  
<http://nmfs.noaa.gov/sta/hms>

#### NMFS-Permit Department

728-824-5326  
Toll Free: 888-872-TUNA (8862)  
<http://nmfs.noaa.gov/sf/permits.htm>

#### Sustainable Fisheries

727-824-5305  
<http://sero.nmfs.noaa.gov/sf/sustainablef.htm>

## The Oculina Bank: Nature's Hidden Coral Treasure

by Kim Iverson, South Atlantic Fishery Management Council

Florida is well known for its shallow coral reefs, but is also home to the lesser-known but equally spectacular deepwater coral reefs of the Oculina Bank. Restrictions are in place along Florida's east coast from Cape Canaveral to Ft. Pierce to help protect the coral and associated fish in the area.

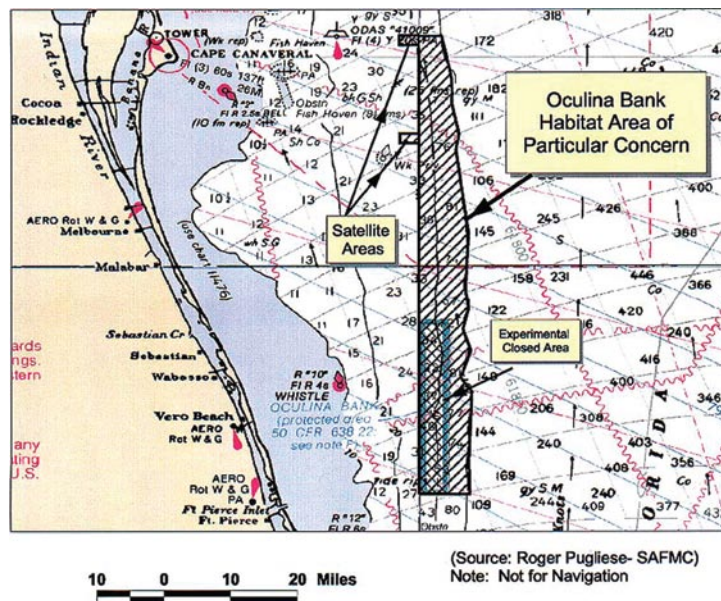
The Oculina Bank, a 90-mile strip of reefs approximately 15 miles off the central east coast of Florida in federal waters, is unique among coral reefs and is believed to exist nowhere else on Earth! The area is named after the slow-growing ivory tree coral, *Oculina varicosa*, which forms massive thickets at depths ranging from 300 to 350 feet, supporting diverse communities of finfish and invertebrates. The coral provides essential habitat for many species of fish, including those managed by the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council (SAFMC). The SAFMC, headquartered in Charleston, South Carolina, is one of eight regional fishery management councils in the United States. The South Atlantic Council is responsible for the conservation and management of fish stocks within the federal 200-mile limit off the coasts of North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, and east Florida to Key West.

In 1984, the SAFMC established the 92-square mile Oculina Bank Habitat Area of Particular Concern (HAPC) in order to protect the fragile coral from damage by bottom-tending fishing gear, including bottom trawls, bottom longlines, dredges, and fish traps. Subsequent management measures provided further protection by prohibiting anchoring, trawling for rock shrimp, and by requiring vessel monitoring systems (VMS) on rock shrimp vessels.

In 1994, the 92-square mile Oculina Bank HAPC was declared the Oculina Experimental Closed Area, and possession of or fishing for snapper/grouper species was prohibited for a period of 10 years to allow for scientific studies. Having an area where deepwater species such as snowy grouper and speckled hind can grow and reproduce without fishing pressure provides a unique opportunity for study. The SAFMC has extended the closure indefinitely with periodic review for further protection and research. The former Oculina Bank HAPC was expanded in 2000 to include an additional 300 square miles.

Through a Joint Law Enforcement Agreement, federal and state law enforcement personnel work together to patrol and enforce regulations in the Oculina Bank. In 2004, the \$1.5 million law enforcement vessel, C.T. Randall was commissioned as part of the agreement between the FWC, NOAA Fisheries Office for Law Enforcement, and the U.S. Coast Guard and stationed in Port Canaveral. "Our primary mission is patrolling the 300-square mile Oculina Bank to enforce fishing regulations that protect the coral and the snapper/grouper species,"

said FWC's Lt. Jeff Sidor, Captain of the C.T. Randall. Working cooperatively, officers regularly check commercial, charter, and recreational fishermen for fishing violations and safety compliance. Officers also routinely check rock shrimp trawlers fishing the deep water area surrounding the Oculina HAPC for proper operation of their VMS. "Required since 2003, the use of VMS has been a tremendous asset in enforcing the closed area," explained NOAA Office for Law Enforcement Special Agent Richard Chesler.



For additional information, including area coordinates, visit the SAFMC's web site at [www.safmc.net](http://www.safmc.net) or contact their office at 843/571-4366 or toll free 866/SAFMC-10. Additional information about Oculina coral research can also be found through Harbor Branch Oceanographic Institution at [www.at-sea.org](http://www.at-sea.org).

## Interim Measures Finalized For Gulf Red Snapper and Shrimp Fisheries

A final rule by NOAA Fisheries Service implementing interim measures in the Gulf of Mexico red snapper fishery was published, April 2, 2007. The measures are intended to temporarily address overfishing of red snapper in 2007, while the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council develops additional, long-term measures to end overfishing and rebuild the red snapper stock.



### The interim measures will:

- reduce the commercial red snapper minimum size limit to 13” total length
- reduce the daily recreational bag limit to two fish
- prohibit captain and crew of for-hire vessels from retaining a recreational bag limit
- reduce total allowable catch (TAC) to 6.5 million pounds (mp) – 3.315 mp commercial and 3.185 mp recreational
- establish in the shrimp fishery a red snapper bycatch mortality reduction goal of 50% of the 2001-2003 average

NOAA Fisheries Service will adjust the 2007 commercial red snapper quota after the 2007 TAC becomes effective July 1, 2007. The Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council is one of eight regional fishery management councils established by the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act of 1976. The Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council prepares fishery management plans designed to manage fishery resources in the U.S. Gulf of Mexico.

### Changes In Commercial State Regulations 68b-14, Florida Administrative Code

#### Atlantic Ocean

Species	Present Regulations		Regulation Change as of July 1, 2007 In State Waters
	State	Federal	
Vermilion Snapper	Size 12” TL		
Red Pogy	Size 14” TL; Bag 1-fish 50-lb Per Vessel Per Day; 3-fish /trip (Jan-apr)	Size 14” TL; 120-fish /trip (May-dec); 3-fish /trip, No Sale (Jan-apr)	
Black Sea Bass	Size 10” TL;	Size 10” TL	
Golden Tilefish	No Regulations	300-lb /trip (5/17/07), 4000-lb/trip Until 75% Of Quota If By Sep 1	Federal Trip Limits Apply
Snowy Grouper		175-lb /trip	Federal Trip Limits Apply

#### Gulf Of Mexico

Vermilion Snapper	11” TL; Closure - April 22-may 31	Proposing To Change Size To 10” TL and remove closure	Size 10” TL; No Closure; Maintain 10-fish Bag Limit
Red Snapper	Size 15” TL; Class I & II Permits Required For Commercial	Zero Bag Capt/crew; Size 13” TL; Under IFQ, No Class I & II Permits Required	Class I & II Permits Eliminated
Grouper (All)	Capt & Crew Of For-hire Vessels Can Retain Rec Bag Limit For Gag, Red & Black Groupers	Zero Bag Limit For Capt/crew of For-hire Vessels	Zero Rec Bag for Capt & Crew of for-hire Vessels for Gag, Red, & Black Groupers

#### Statewide

Vermilion Snapper	Import Minimum Size 11 Inches	Import Minimum Size 10 Inches TL
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**Note: As Of July 1, 2007, 68b-14.0045(3)(E) - No Person Harvesting For Commercial Purposes Shall, On The Same Trip, Harvest Or Possess Species Pursuant To The Bag Limit Specified In Subsection 68b-14.0036, F.A.C.**

## Baitfish Regulations

Basic size and bag limits, closed seasons, license requirements, and gear allowances are listed on pages 8 and 9. All license requirements and general commercial fishing limitations apply to species harvested as baitfish. Local limitations also apply to the use of nets to harvest baitfish, such as herring, menhaden, or sardines, in waters off the coasts of Citrus, Hernando, Pasco, Pinellas, Hillsborough, Manatee, Charlotte, Collier, Lee and Sarasota counties. Contact the regional FWC Law Enforcement Office before using nets to commercially harvest baitfish. See: FWC Law Enforcement Regional Offices on page 3.

A National Marine Sanctuary Permit is required to harvest ballyhoo or herring in the Newfound Harbor Key, Cheeca Rocks, Eastern Dry Rocks, Hens and Chickens, Rock Key and Sand Key sanctuary preservation areas (SPAs). All bycatch other than ballyhoo, balao, halfbeaks, or herring must be returned to the water alive. Lampara nets are prohibited in the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary (FKNMS) Newfound Harbor Key SPA, and cast nets used in Newfound Harbor Key SPA can be no greater than 500 square feet in area (12’7” radius). Cast nets and/or modified lampara nets that are no greater than 500 square feet in area may be used in the Sand Key, Rock Key, Eastern Dry Rocks, Hens and Chickens, and Cheeca Rocks SPAs. Contact with or disturbance of the seabed is prohibited in the SPAs. Harvest of baitfish by hook and line in the Newfound Harbor Key, Cheeca Rocks, Eastern Dry Rocks, Hens and Chickens, Rock Key and Sand Key SPAs is prohibited.

## Commercial Saltwater Fishing License Requirements

A Saltwater Products License (SPL) is required to commercially harvest or sell all saltwater products. An SPL may be issued in the name of an individual or a valid boat registration number issued in the name of the license applicant. Any vessel used to harvest commercial quantities of saltwater products must have a commercial vessel registration. Such license is not transferable if the vessel is sold.

A saltwater product is any marine fish, marine invertebrate or marine plant, except non-living shells and salted, cured, canned, or smoked seafood. Harvest over the recreational bag limit, use of certain gear as required by law, or possession of more than 100 lbs. per person per day of species with no established bag limit is considered commercial harvest. Possession of two or fewer fish with no established bag limit is not considered commercial harvest.

A Restricted Species Endorsement (RS) is required to commercially harvest and sell the following species: Spanish Mackerel, King Mackerel, Black Drum, Spotted Sea Trout, Grouper, Snapper, Red Porgy, Gray Triggerfish, Amberjack, Sea Bass, Tropical/Ornamental "Marine Life", Black Mullet, Silver Mullet, Bluefish, Hogfish, Blue Crab, Stone Crab, Crawfish/Spiny Lobster, African Pompano, Florida Pompano, Permit, Sheepshead, Tripletail, Clams (Brevard County only), Shrimp, Flounder, Cobia, Wahoo and Dolphin. Additional species may be designated as restricted by the Commission at any time. Licensed commercial fishermen must show proof of income in the form of trip tickets or out-of-state landings reported under their license (along with a copy of the out of state license) to qualify for the RS. Sales reported under a retail dealer's license cannot be used to qualify for the RS. Additional qualification criteria or exemptions to the income requirements may apply for first-time applicants.

Additional licenses, endorsements, permits or certificates are required: to commercially harvest and/or sell blue crab (VH#, VS#, VN#, VI#), marine life (MLD#, MLN#, MLB#), crawfish/spiny lobster (C# or CD#), stone crab (X# or I#), sponges (Q#); to harvest shrimp (LS#, DS# and TB#) and clams (KL#) in designated areas; to use a purse seine (PS#); to use a lampara net for the directed harvest of ballyhoo (L#); and to simultaneously possess a gillnet and pompano harvested from federal waters in the Cape Sable/Hurricane Pass area (P#). Federal permits may also be required. Please contact the Federal Permitting office at 727-824-5326 prior to obtaining an SPL in order to determine if required Federal Permits are available for purchase. The "Basic Commercial Saltwater Fishing Regulations" chart on pages 16-22 lists additional license requirements for regulated species. These

requirements apply even if a species is harvested as allowable incidental bycatch.

A wholesale dealer's license is required to purchase saltwater products from a producer and sell products to retail dealers or other wholesale dealers. A retail dealer's license is required to purchase saltwater products from a wholesale dealer and sell to the consumer unless licensed by the Division of Hotels and Restaurants. A wholesale dealer's license is not required for products entering the state through interstate or international commerce as long as the products are continuously bonded during transit through the state. Wholesale dealers are responsible for reporting all purchases from a producer to the commission.

Some licenses, endorsements or permits may not be available at this time. Contact the licensing office to determine license requirements for new applicants. Additional information and applications are available on-line at [myfwc.com](http://myfwc.com) or by contacting the Commercial Saltwater Licensing program at (850) 487-3122 or [SPLMAIL@myfwc.com](mailto:SPLMAIL@myfwc.com).



### Sale and Reporting Requirements for Saltwater Products

It is unlawful for any unlicensed person to purchase or sell saltwater products. Penalties for unlicensed sale include criminal and civil fines of up to \$5,000, permanent revocation of license privileges, and imprisonment in addition to penalties levied by the court. Additional penalties for unlicensed sale by a person whose fishing privileges have been revoked or suspended include forfeiture of property involved in the offense.

Dealers are required to confirm that potential sellers hold all of the required licenses prior to purchasing any saltwater product. All dealers

must report products when landed for the first time to the FWC Fish and Wildlife Research Institute (FWRI) Trip Ticket Reporting Office. Wholesale and retail dealers who harvest their own products under an SPL must also submit trip tickets.

Commercial fishermen can only sell their catch to a licensed wholesale dealer. Fishermen are strongly advised to always obtain and retain copies of their trip tickets and to compare them with their landings summaries produced by the FWRI on an annual basis. For reporting or landings information contact the FWC FWRI Trip Ticket Office at (727) 896-8626.

### Commercial Possession and Transport of Saltwater Products

Florida law requires that a valid SPL be aboard vessels during commercial harvest of any saltwater products and during transport for sale by the harvester. All vessels used for commercial harvest must be commercially registered. Secondary vessels transported on, towed by, or connected to a primary vessel and

used to deploy or retrieve seines or harvest fish in commercial quantities must be at least eight feet long and commercially registered.

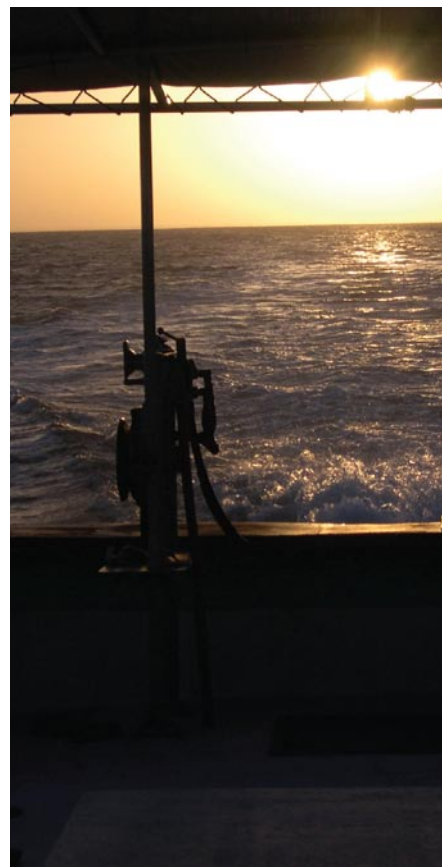
Persons transporting saltwater products (other than a properly licensed commercial fisherman or other person transporting ordinarily-packaged retail products) must also have in their possession all related invoices, bills of lading or other documentation showing the number of containers and pounds of each species and the name, physical address, and dealer number of the wholesale dealer of origin/destination. A FWC wholesale dealers license number is not required for transport of saltwater products that remain continuously

under bond during transit from another state or country through Florida to a destination outside Florida.

Where marine fisheries regulations do not otherwise prohibit possession or sale of saltwater products legally harvested outside waters of a closed area or imported from another country or state, the burden of proof of the place of harvest and initial point of sale of such products rests on the person or firm in possession. Invoices, receipts, original bills of sale, bills of lading, or other documentation are acceptable proof of lawful harvest or importation.

### DID YOU KNOW...

- Food fish may not be taken for the purpose of making oil, fertilizer or compost.
- Hook and line gear must be tended at all times. Possession of longline gear (a line or a series of connected lines with more than 10 hooks) is prohibited in state waters except for persons in continuous transit across state waters to or from federal waters.
- Spearfishing is prohibited within 100 yards of public bathing beaches, commercial or public fishing piers, and bridges where public fishing is permitted, or within 100 feet of a jetty, except for the last 500 feet of a jetty that extends beyond 1,500 yards of the shoreline. The use and possession of spear guns (other than spear guns that are unloaded, properly stored, and in continuous transit across such waters) is prohibited in state parks or recreation areas. Spearfishing is prohibited from Long Key to the Dade/Monroe County line. Check with the nearest FWC Law Enforcement office to find out if other local spearfishing restrictions apply.
- Use of firearms or explosives for harvest is prohibited. Harvest with or possession of fish harvested with a powerhead or bangstick is prohibited in state waters. Powerheads may be used for personal protection only. Use of a rebreather to harvest any marine species is prohibited. Use of a rebreather is allowed for nonconsumptive purposes only. Simultaneous possession of a rebreather and fish is prohibited, except for persons in continuous transit from federal waters.



## Commercial Saltwater Fishing Gear Limitations

The chart on pages 16-22 lists the allowable gear for each regulated species. Statewide and regional limitations also apply to possession and use of nets, trawls, and traps and may not be included in the chart. A summary of basic gear limitations for the use of nets, trawls, and traps is provided below. Contact your regional Law Enforcement Office for local regulations (see page 3).

### Net Limitations

Food fish caught in any net and not kept due to bag, size, or other reason must be immediately returned to the water alive.

The use of gill and entangling nets is prohibited in all state waters (nine nautical miles from the Gulf coast and three nautical miles from the Atlantic coast). Any net (other than a hand thrown cast net) with a stretched mesh size larger than two inches is considered an entangling net. Any net (other than a hand thrown cast net or handheld landing or dip net) constructed wholly or partially of monofilament or multistrand monofilament material is also considered an entangling net.

The use of a cast net with a stretched length (the distance from the horn to the lead line with the net pulled tight) of more than 14 feet and fishing with more than two cast nets per vessel are also prohibited in state waters.

Use of more than four seines is prohibited

in state waters. This limitation applies to primary vessels and secondary vessels aboard or connected to the primary vessel. No more than two lawful nets may be fished per vessel in nearshore and inshore waters (all waters landward of a line three nautical miles from the Gulf coast and one nautical mile from the Atlantic coast). A person not on a vessel may fish no more than one such net.

The use of any net with a mesh area exceeding 500 square feet is prohibited in nearshore and inshore waters. Check new rule number 68B-4.0081(3)(e) for how to measure a net. Tying, connecting, or fastening two or more nets together in any way so as to exceed 500 square feet of mesh area is prohibited.

No net may have more meshes attached per foot of corkline or leadline than 14 divided by the bar measurement of the mesh in the net. The use of trawls with a net or bag containing more than 500 square feet of mesh area is prohibited in nearshore and inshore waters.

Any vessel in state waters with gill or entangling nets aboard or more than four seines aboard and vessels in nearshore or inshore waters with any net with a mesh area larger than 500 square feet aboard (the trawl door or frame may not be deployed) must proceed as directly, continuously and expeditiously as possible from the place where the vessel is regularly moored to waters where

use of such nets is lawful and back or to the licensed wholesale dealer where the catch is to be sold. This requirement does not apply to vessels containing or otherwise transporting dry nets that are rolled, folded, or otherwise properly stowed in “lock boxes” so as to make their immediate use impracticable.

In all waters of the state, the possession of gill or entangling nets or seines with a mesh area larger than 500 square feet is prohibited on any airboat, on any vessel with a forward-mounted primary power source that is less than 25 feet in length, and on any vessel less than 22 feet in length.

Violations of these net gear regulations are considered major violations. Civil penalties and license suspensions may be assessed in addition to court assessed criminal penalties

Gill nets used in the federal gill net fishery must be marked at each end with the SPL number of the vessel operator or vessel from which it is deployed. Seines must be tended and marked with the SPL number at each end.

Beach or haul seines, with the exception of nets used in the specified area of the the Southwest region, may not be soaked for more than one hour from the time the mesh first enters the water until the mesh is first retrieved. In the Southwest region (Manatee, Sarasota, Charlotte, Lee, and Collier counties, except

## Commercial Saltwater Fishing Gear Limitations (continued)

inside waters) nets may be fished from one hour after sunset to one hour before sunrise. Such nets may not be soaked for more than 12 hours from the time the first mesh is set until the first mesh is retrieved. In this area a seine net with one unattached wing is allowed; however, one end of the main net must be anchored on the shore, and a vessel with a white light visible from 360° and at least one mile must be anchored at the seaward end of the nets.

Purse seines or similar devices may not be used to take food fish other than tuna and menhaden. Lawfully used seines may have a pocket bunt on the middle of the seine with a mesh size less than two inches.

Use of trawls for the directed harvest of species other than shrimp and calico scallops is prohibited. When allowed by rule, other species harvested as bycatch may be retained. Refer to the official gear, shrimp and calico scallop regulations for specific trawling limitations and gear specifications.

### Trap Limitations

Unless otherwise prohibited, finfish may be harvested in a lawful black sea bass or pinfish trap, or as bycatch in a lawful crab or crawfish trap (licensing requirements apply to bycatch). A lawful black sea bass trap may not exceed two feet in any dimension and must have a biodegradable panel and a throat not more than

five inches high by two inches wide. Black sea bass traps are prohibited south of Latitude 27° N (a line extending east and west through the Sarasota area on the west coast and Martin County on the east coast). A lawful pinfish trap may not exceed two feet in any dimension and must have a throat or entrance not more than 3 inches high and ¾ inches wide. Possession of fish traps not otherwise allowed by rule is prohibited in state waters except for persons in continuous transit across state waters to or from federal waters.

Each black sea bass trap must have the trap owner's saltwater products license number permanently attached to the trap. Each buoy attached to such trap shall have the letter "B" and the owner's saltwater products license number affixed to it in legible figures at least 1.5 inches high.

Trap tagging requirements apply to stone crab and spiny lobster traps only. Stone crab, blue crab, and spiny lobster trap construction and trap/buoy/vessel marking specifications are summarized on pages 11-12. Refer to the official rules before building or buying traps.

The use of any trap is prohibited in designated areas off of Citrus, Hernando, and Pasco counties during the following closed seasons.

**Zone II** - closed season Oct. 5 - May 20

**Zone IV** - closed season Oct. 5 - Dec. 1 & April 2 - May 20

**Zone V** - closed season Oct. 5 - Nov. 30 & Mar. 16 - May 20

The boundaries for these zones are defined by longitude and latitude in rule 68B-38(2), F.A.C.

Trap theft or molestation is a felony crime; penalties include permanent loss of license and trap certificates in addition to court assessed penalties.

A trap puller is prohibited on vessels other than a commercial vessel operated pursuant to a saltwater products license with a crawfish, stone crab or blue crab endorsement or other FWC authorization or a federal fish trap endorsement.

**In the Gulf Seasonal Closure Region, no blue crab trap, including a trap used to harvest peeler crabs, may be placed in the water, fished, or soaked during the period beginning September 20 and continuing through October 4 each year.**

## "Reef Fish" Regulations

Species designated as "Reef Fish" are also designated as Restricted Species. An SPL with a Restricted Species (RS) endorsement is required to sell any species designated as "Reef Fish". A Federal Permit is also required to harvest in commercial quantities and sell "Reef Fish" species other than bank, black, or rock sea bass and red porgy harvested in the Gulf. No "Reef Fish" may be sold by or purchased from persons who do not hold the required state and federal permits.

Size and bag limits and closed seasons are listed in the chart on page 9. Allowable gear for the harvest of "Reef Fish" is limited to hook and line gear, black sea bass traps, and spearing. Possession of "Reef Fish" harvested as incidental bycatch while targeting other species or with gear not allowed for the harvest of "Reef Fish" is limited to the recreational bag limit. Incidental bycatch of red porgy harvested in the Atlantic during the closed season is limited to one fish and may not be sold. Possession of a recreational and a commercial bag limit of greater amberjack on the same trip is prohibited.

If at any time adjacent federal waters are closed to commercial harvest of a "Reef Fish" species, corresponding state waters are also closed to the harvest of that species. During any such closure, the purchase and sale of that species harvested from the closed area is prohibited.

### Species designated as "Reef Fish":

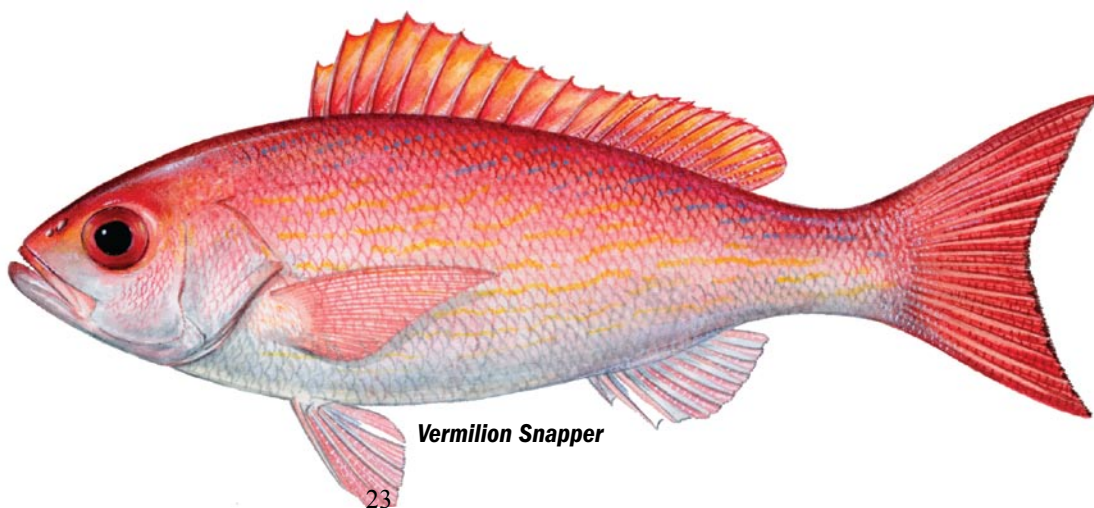
Groupers	Jacks	Snappers	Other
Black Grouper	Greater Amberjack	Black Snapper	Queen Snapper
Coney Grouper	Banded Rudderfish	Blackfin Snapper	Red Snapper
Gag	Lesser Amberjack	Cubera Snapper	Schoolmaster
Graysby	Almaco Jack	Dog Snapper	Silk Snapper
Misty Grouper		Gray (Mangrove) Snapper	Vermilion Snapper
Red Grouper		Lane Snapper	Wenchman Snapper
Red Hind		Mahogany Snapper	Yellowtail Snapper
Rock Hind		Mutton Snapper	
Scamp			
			Hogfish
			Red Porgy
			Gray Triggerfish

\*Harvest of bank, black, and rock sea bass is prohibited in John Pennekamp Coral Reef State Park

## Commercial "Reef Fish" Size and Bag Limits and Closed Seasons

Species*	Minimum Size Limit	Vessel/possession Limit	Closed Season	Other Regulations
<b>Groupers</b>				
<b>Black and Gag</b>	24" TL	None	Atlantic & Monroe Co.: Mar. 1 - April 30 Gulf: Feb. 15 - Mar. 14	Size limit applies to imported fish.
<b>Red</b>	20" TL	None	Gulf except Monroe Co.: Feb. 15 - March 14	Size limit applies to imported fish.
<b>Scamp - Gulf</b> <b>Scamp - Atlantic &amp; Monroe Co.</b>	16" TL 20" TL	None	None	16" size limit applies to imported fish.
<b>Yellowfin</b>	20" TL	None	None	Size limit applies to imported fish.
<b>Yellowmouth</b>	20" TL	None	None	See: "Reef Fish" Regulations.
<b>Jacks</b>				
<b>Almaco jack</b>	None	None	March, April, and May	See: "Reef Fish" Regulations.
<b>Banded rudderfish</b>	14" - 22" FL	None	March, April, and May	See: "Reef Fish" Regulations.
<b>Greater amberjack</b>	36" FL	Atlantic - 1,000 lbs. per vessel per day.	March, April, and May	Size limit applies to imported fish.
<b>Lesser amberjack</b>	14" - 22" FL	None	March, April, and May	See: "Reef Fish" Regulations.
<b>Sea Bass - Black</b>	10" TL	None	None	Size limit applies to imported fish.
<b>Snappers</b>				
<b>Blackfin</b>	12" TL	None	None	See: "Reef Fish" Regulations.
<b>Cubera</b>	12" TL	None, except that possession of more than 2 fish 30" or longer per vessel per day is prohibited.	None	Size limit applies to imported fish.
<b>Dog</b>	12" TL	None	None	Size limit applies to imported fish.
<b>Gray (Mangrove)</b>	12" TL	None	None	Size limit applies to imported fish.
<b>Lane</b>	8" TL	None	None	Size limit applies to imported fish.
<b>Mahogany</b>	12" TL	None	None	Size limit applies to imported fish.
<b>Mutton</b>	16" TL	May - June: 10 per person per day or 10 per trip, whichever is more restrictive.	None	Size limit applies to imported fish.
<b>Queen</b>	12" TL	None	None	See: "Reef Fish" Regulations.
<b>Red - Gulf</b>	15" TL	4 per person per day 2 per person per day	Federal closure applies.	See: "Reef Fish" Regulations.
<b>Red - Atlantic</b>	20" TL		None	15" size limit applies to imports.
<b>Schoolmaster</b>	10" TL	None	None	Size limit applies to imported fish.
<b>Silk</b>	12" TL	None	None	See: "Reef Fish" Regulations.
<b>Vermilion - Gulf</b>	<b>10" TL</b>	None	<b>None</b>	See: "Reef Fish" Regulations.
<b>Vermilion - Atlantic</b>	12" TL			<b>10" size limit applies to imports.</b>
<b>Yellowtail</b>	12" TL	None	None	Size limit applies to imported fish.
<b>Hogfish</b>	12" FL	None	None	Size limit applies to imported fish.
<b>Red porgy - Atlantic</b>	14" TL	50 lbs. daily vessel limit.	Jan. 1 - April 30	See: "Reef Fish" Regulations.
<b>Triggerfish - Gray</b>	12" FL	None	None	Size limit applies to imported fish.

\* All "Reef Fish" species must remain in whole condition (head & tails intact) until landed ashore FL = Fork Length TL = Total Length



**Vermilion Snapper**

## Mackerel Regulations

The basic size limits and license requirements for kingfish and Spanish mackerel are listed in the chart on pages 16-22.

### King Mackerel (Kingfish)

King mackerel are divided into two separate fisheries: the Atlantic fishery and the Gulf-Atlantic fishery. The groups are treated differently for management purposes. Bag limits vary by fishery, region, and season.

The boundaries between the Atlantic and Gulf-Atlantic fisheries shift between the summer and winter seasons. During the summer season (April 1 - Oct. 31), the Atlantic Fishery includes all Atlantic and Monroe County waters and the Gulf-Atlantic fishery includes all Gulf waters north of the Collier/Monroe County line.

During the winter season (Nov. 1 - March 31), the Atlantic fishery includes only Atlantic waters north of the Volusia/Flagler County line and the Gulf-Atlantic Fishery includes all Atlantic waters south of the Volusia/Flagler County line and all Gulf waters east of the Alabama/Florida border.

In both the Atlantic and Gulf-Atlantic fisheries, the trip limit for the commercial harvest of king mackerel in state waters is reduced or closed in response to federal trip limit reductions and closures.

### Spanish Mackerel

The commercial Spanish mackerel fishery is divided into Eastern and Western regions. The boundary separating the regions is 25°20.4' N. Latitude, (a line directly east from the Dade/Monroe County border to the outer limit of the EEZ). All Atlantic waters north of the boundary line comprise the Eastern Region. All Atlantic waters south of the boundary line and all state waters and adjacent federal waters in the Gulf comprise the Western Region. Although the trip limit for the commercial harvest of Spanish mackerel is reduced in response to federal trip limit reductions and closures, there is no closed season for the commercial harvest of Spanish mackerel in state waters. Transfer of fish between vessels is prohibited in the Eastern Region.

### King Mackerel Vessel/Trip Limits:

#### Nassau, Duval, St. Johns, and Flagler counties

From April 1 until the EEZ closes:	3,500 lbs. daily vessel limit applies
From the date of the EEZ closure thru March 31:	Recreational limit

#### Volusia County

From April 1 until the EEZ closes:	3,500 lbs. daily vessel limit
From the date of the EEZ closure thru Oct. 31:	Recreational limit
From Nov. 1 until the EEZ closes:	50 fish daily vessel limit
From date of the EEZ closure thru March 31:	Commercial harvest prohibited

#### Brevard, Indian River, St. Lucie, Martin, Palm Beach, Broward, and Dade counties

From April 1 until the EEZ closes:	75 fish daily vessel limit
From the date of the EEZ closure thru Oct. 31:	Recreational limit
From Nov. 1, until the EEZ closes:	50 fish daily vessel limit
From the date of the EEZ closure thru March 31:	Commercial harvest prohibited

#### Monroe County

From April 1 until the EEZ closes:	1,250 lbs. daily vessel limit
From the date of the EEZ closure thru Oct. 31:	Recreational limit
From Nov. 1 until the EEZ bag limit is reduced:	1,250 lbs. daily vessel limit
From the date of the bag limit reduction until EEZ closes:	500 lbs. daily vessel limit
From EEZ closure thru March 31:	Commercial harvest prohibited

#### All Gulf coast counties except Monroe County

From July 1 until the vessel limit is reduced to 500 lbs.:	1,250 lbs. daily vessel limit
From the date of the vessel limit reduction until the EEZ closes:	500 lb. daily vessel limit
From the date of the EEZ closure thru June 30:	Commercial harvest prohibited

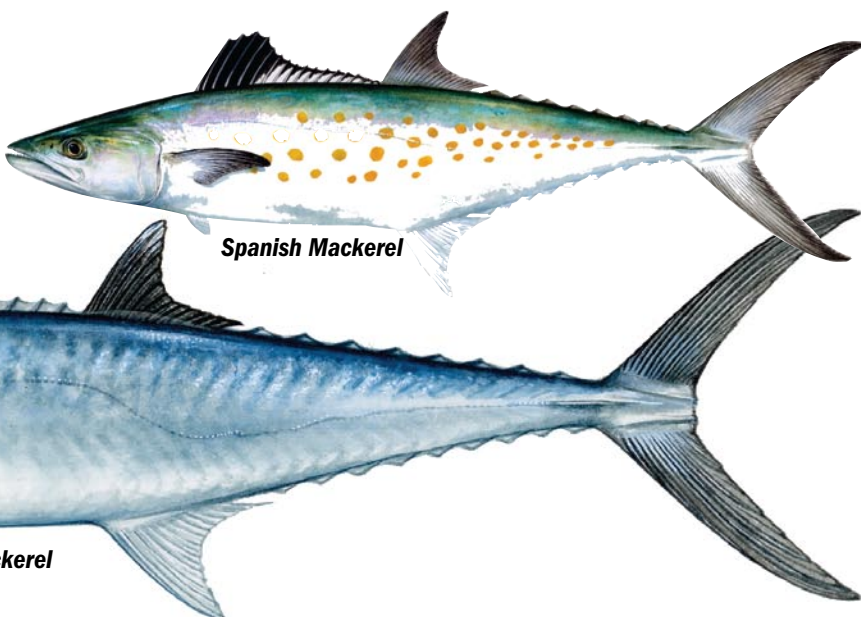
### Spanish Mackerel Vessel/Trip Limits:

#### Eastern

From April 1 to Nov. 30:	3,500 lbs. daily vessel limit
From Dec. 1 until the EEZ closes to unlimited harvest - Mon. - Fri.:	3,500 lbs. daily vessel limit
Sat. and Sun.:	1,500 lbs. daily vessel limit
From date closure to unlimited harvest until EEZ closes:	1,500 lbs. daily vessel limit
From the date of closure until March 31:	500 lbs.

#### Western

From April 1 until the EEZ closes:	Unlimited harvest
From the date the EEZ closes until Mar. 31	500 lbs. daily vessel limit



Spanish Mackerel

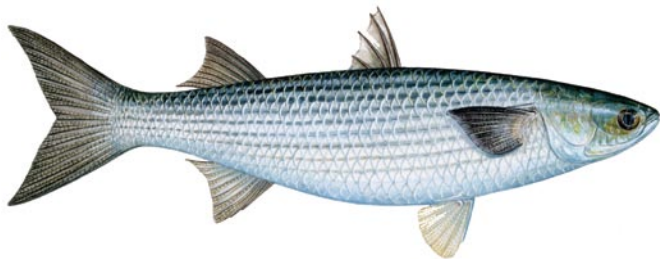
King Mackerel



## Mullet Regulations

Striped (black) and silver (white, fantail, or redeye) mullet are designated as “Restricted Species”.

The minimum size limit for striped mullet is 11 inches (fork length), with an allowance for a quantity of undersized mullet not to exceed 10



percent of the total weight of all striped mullet possessed. Fork length is measured from the tip of the snout to the fork of the tail.

The use of any gear other than cast nets (no more than 14 feet long, and no more than two per vessel), beach or haul seines (no larger than 500 square feet, and no more than two may be fished per vessel), hook and line gear; and by spearing is prohibited. Spearing is prohibited in fresh water. Simultaneous possession of any mullet species in excess of the recreational bag limit and any gill or entangling net is prohibited. This prohibition applies to mullet and gill nets in separate vessels or vehicles that are operated in coordination with one another, including towed vessels. Sale of mullet harvested with illegal gear is prohibited.

### Mullet Bag Limits & Closures

#### Striped and Silver Mullet

##### Area Regional Bag Limits and Closures

Statewide Harvest is prohibited seaward of the 3-mile line (Gulf and Atlantic) and seaward of the Everglades National Park line in Florida Bay.

Statewide Weekend Closure - July 1 - Jan. 31 commercial harvest prohibited 12:01 a.m. Sat. morning to 12:01 a.m. Mon. morning. Mullet harvested under the recreational bag limit during the weekend closure may not be sold or purchased.

#### Striped Mullet Only

##### Area\*

##### Regional Bag Limits and Closures

Pinellas County (Tampa Bay) - Riveria Bay and Bayou Grande (Papy's Bayou), Placido Bayou (Smack's Bayou), Snell Isle Harbour, and Coffee Pot Bayou, and certain connecting areas of Tampa Bay, and areas of Tampa Bay between the municipal pier head to just north of the southern tip of Weedon Island.

Oct 1 - Jan. 31 - 5 mullet per person or per vessel per day, whichever is more restrictive.

Manatee County - Manatee River upstream of a line from the eastern side of the mouth of Warner's Bayou northeasterly to the eastern side of the mouth of Tierra Ciega Cutoff.

Nov. 1 - Jan. 31 - 50 mullet per person per day or per vessel, whichever is more restrictive.

Charlotte County - Peace River upstream of a line from Mangrove Point running northwesterly through the northeastern most point of Locust Point to the shoreline in the body of water known as Myakka Cutoff. Coral Creek upstream of its mouth on Gasparilla Sound.

Nov. 1 - Jan. 31 - 50 mullet per person or per vessel per day, whichever is more restrictive.

Charlotte County - Punta Gorda area.

Nov. 1 thru the end of February, closed nightly 6 p.m. to 6 a.m. Possession is prohibited during the nightly closure.

\* Refer to official area descriptions in the Mullet Rule.

#### Silver Mullet Only

##### Area\*

##### Regional Bag Limits and Closures

All Atlantic waters north of the Dade/Monroe County line.

During February, commercial harvest prohibited.

\* Refer to official area descriptions in the Mullet Rule.

## Pompano regulations

The basic size and bag limits and license requirements for the harvest of pompano are listed in the chart on pages 16-22. The use of any gear other than a beach or haul seine, cast net and hook and line gear is prohibited in state waters.

### STATE AND FEDERAL WATERS DAILY COMMERCIAL HARVEST LIMITS.

Persons harvesting pompano in state and federal waters pursuant to a saltwater products license with a restricted species endorsement, but do not possess a pompano endorsement, shall be subject to a daily harvest and landing limit of 250 individual pompano. However, no more than 250 pompano harvested shall be possessed aboard any vessel at any time. Simultaneous possession of pompano and gill or entangling nets is prohibited in state waters except for persons aboard vessels in continuous non-stop transit across state waters who meet the criteria established above for exceeding the established bag limit, or who possess an SPL and RS and no more than 100 pompano harvested as in

incidental bycatch in gill or entangling nets fished for other species in federal waters only.

A gill net used for the direct harvest of pompano in federal waters must be at least 400 yards long, at least 70 meshes deep at its shallowest point, and have a stretched mesh size of at least 4 ½ inches throughout. The mesh size requirement does not apply to nets used to harvest other targeted species where pompano is retained as an incidental bycatch.



## Commercial Blue Crab Effort Management Program begins in 2007/2008 license year.

The proposed endorsement and trap tag fees were approved by the 2007 Florida Legislature. FWC approved a management plan for the commercial blue crab fishery which limits both the number of fishermen and traps in the blue crab fishery. This rule was recommended by the Ad - Hoc Blue Crab Advisory Board which is composed of blue crab fishers and established a hard crab endorsement and a soft crab endorsement, which can be associated with either an individual or vessel SPL. The proposed cost of a blue crab endorsement fee is \$125 for a hard shell endorsement and \$250 for a soft shell endorsement. From these endorsement fees, \$25 is dedicated to the trap retrieval program with the retrieval fee waived for up to 5 traps retrieved during the closed season. Traps retrieved during closed season will be assessed a retrieval fee of \$10 per trap. Commission issued blue crab trap tags will be required on blue crab traps at annual fee of .50 cents per trap tag, **although no fees for the endorsements or tags will be assessed for the 2007/2008 license year.** Leasing or renting of endorsements, tags or traps is prohibited. Blue crab endorsements will be transferable, but the buyer must purchase the endorsement and trap tags. The buyer must also work no fewer than 14 days fishing blue crab on the buyer's/endorsement holder's vessel and document this activity at the time of transfer.

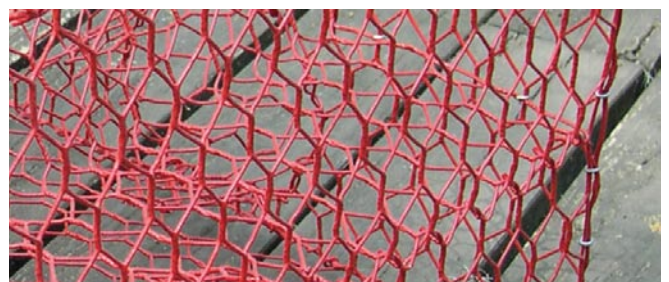
To qualify for a limited entry blue crab endorsement, you must have documented landings thru Commission trip tickets, on one SPL during one of three qualifying license years (2000-01, 2001-02, 2002-03).

A **hard crab (V-H) endorsement** will be issued on one SPL to an individual that has documented harvest of a minimum of 500 pounds of blue crab. An additional SPL may be endorsed with a minimum of 7,500 pounds in additional blue crab landings. A V-H endorsement entitles the owner to fish up to 600 blue crab traps, and an additional 400 traps offshore in the Gulf of Mexico, per endorsed SPL. A total of 150 peeler crabs per endorsed SPL may be landed daily as bycatch. Fishermen can maintain as many as three shedding tanks without possessing a soft crab endorsement.

A **soft crab (V-S) endorsement** will be issued on one SPL to an individual that has documented harvest of a minimum of 750 soft shell (also called peeler) crabs and may endorse one additional SPL; however, the additional SPL requires a minimum of 2,500 soft shell crabs to have been reported in order to qualify. The soft crab endorsement allows up to 400 peeler traps to be fished and allows the holder to operate a blue crab shedding facility with greater than 3 shedding tanks. Entities with more than one qualifying SPL are entitled to receive up to 250 additional traps per additional endorsed SPL.

A **nontransferable hard crab (V-N) endorsement** will be issued on the SPL to an individual. A nontransferable Blue Crab Endorsement will allow certain net fishers, who qualified for a nontransferable Blue Crab Limited Entry Endorsement, to purchase up to 100 hard shell blue crab trap tags that will allow them to deploy 100 hard shell blue crab traps in any state waters. The stone crab endorsement holders, who obtained a nontransferable Blue Crab Limited Entry Endorsement, can harvest and sell up to 200 pounds of blue crabs as bycatch per trip per vessel. Fisherman, who can demonstrated through documented landings the harvest of blue crabs as bycatch using legal shrimping gear, to harvest and sell up to 200 pounds of blue crabs as bycatch per trip per vessel and require that nontransferable Blue Crab Limited Entry Endorsement holders, who use traps, be required to follow the same trap requirements as other blue crab trap endorsement holders

A **incidental take (V-I) endorsement** can be issued to persons holding a valid stone crab endorsement or persons who can demonstrate landings of blue crabs caught as bycatch by shrimp gears that were used to lawfully harvest shrimp pursuant to commission trip tickets. The holder of a V-I number shall be entitled to harvest and sell blue crab as bycatch, provided the amount does not exceed 200 pounds of blue crabs per vessel per trip.



## Stone Crab Regulations

Size and bag limits, closed seasons and license requirements are found in the chart on pages 16-22. Only legal sized claws may be possessed, transported, or sold. Crabs must be kept alive and damp in containers that do not compress them until the claws can be removed. Transport of intact stone crabs or bodies is prohibited. Spears, grains, grabs, or hooks that can puncture or crush crabs are prohibited. Removal of claws from egg-bearing females is prohibited.

Trap certificates and tags are required for all stone crab traps. A valid tag must be securely attached to each trap. Stone crab trap specifications and trap, buoy, and vessel marking requirements apply. Traps, buoys, and vessels must display the X#. Traps must be constructed of wood, plastic, or wire and be no larger than two feet by two feet by two feet or a volume of 8 cubic feet with the entrance (throat) located on a horizontal side of wire traps and on the top of wood and plastic traps. Each plastic trap must have a degradable panel. Each wire trap must have at least three unobstructed escape rings (2 3/8" inside diameter) located on a vertical side of the trap as specified in rule. Refer to the official rules before building or buying traps. Traps may be worked during daylight hours only. Traps may be baited and placed in the water 10 days before the season begins. Stone crab traps are prohibited in all navigation channels of Inland Coastal Waterways or channels marked by the U.S. Army Corp of Engineers, USCG, state, county or local governments. Pulling another person's trap without express consent of the owner and FWC Law Enforcement is prohibited. Traps must be removed from the water within 5 days after the end of the season.

## Spiny Lobster (Crawfish) Regulations

Size limits and closed seasons are found in the "Basic Commercial Saltwater Fishing Regulations" chart on pages 16-22.

An SPL with a Restricted Species (RS) and Crawfish (C#) or (CD#) endorsement is required to commercially harvest and sell any spiny lobster.

Additional requirements apply to harvest by diving and with traps.

Spiny lobster retained as an incidental bycatch in a net or trawl other than a hand-held net may not exceed five percent of the total whole weight of all species possessed (all license requirements apply). Spiny lobster may only be sold by or purchased from persons who hold the required licenses and endorsements. A federal permit is required to possess "wrung" tails in or on state waters. Tails must be at least 5 1/2 inches in length (not including muscle tissue). Possession of undersized lobster is prohibited, except as provided for in the Spiny Lobster Trap Fishery section below. Undersized lobster may not be sold. Possession of egg-bearing spiny lobster is prohibited. Use of any device that could puncture or crush the lobster is prohibited.

The vessel limit for harvest with a bullynet is 250 lobster per vessel per day statewide.

### Spiny Lobster Trap Fishery

Trap certificates and tags are required for all traps. A valid tag must be securely attached to

each trap. Spiny lobster trap specifications and trap, buoy, and vessel marking requirements apply. Traps, buoys, and vessels must display the C#. Traps must be constructed of wood or plastic and be no larger than three feet by two feet by two feet or the volumetric equivalent (12 cubic feet) with the entrance (throat) located on top of the trap. Each plastic trap must have a degradable panel. Refer to the official rules before building or buying traps. Traps may be baited and placed in the water beginning Aug. 1. Traps may be worked during daylight hours only. Traps may not be placed within 100 feet of the intercoastal waterway or any bridge or seawall. Pulling another person's trap without the express written consent of the owner and FWC Law Enforcement is prohibited. Traps must be removed from the water by April 5 each year. Harvest is prohibited in designated areas of John Pennkamp Coral Reef State Park.

A person aboard a vessel with a C# and trap certificates may harvest and possess while on the water 50 undersized spiny lobster (shorts) and one short per trap aboard the boat. Shorts must be released alive and unharmed upon leaving trap lines (livewell specifications apply). The allowance for shorts applies to the trap fishery only and sale is prohibited.

### Spiny Lobster Dive Fishery

All vessels used by persons commercially harvesting lobster by diving, scuba or snorkel must display the Commercial Dive Permit

(CD#) on the vessel SPL. A dive permit will only be issued to divers with trip ticket landings between July 1, 2000 and June 30, 2003. Trap certificates cannot be held by a person with a CD#. After Jan. 1, 2005, no dive permits will be issued, renewed or replaced except those that were active in 2004-05. Dive permits not renewed by September 30, of each year will be forfeited.

A 250 lobster per day vessel limit applies in Broward, Dade, Monroe, Collier and Lee counties and adjoining federal waters. Divers must permanently and conspicuously display a "divers down flag" placard on the vessel and affix the CD# to the diagonal stripe with 10" numbers visible from the air and 4" numbers visible from the water. Harvest from artificial habitat is prohibited. Divers must possess a carapace measuring device and measure lobster in the water. The use of bleach or chemical solutions or simultaneous possession of spiny lobster and any plastic container capable of ejecting liquid is prohibited. The recreational bag limit applies when diving at night.



## Shellfish (Oysters, Clams & Mussels) Regulations

Shellfish may only be harvested from waters certified by the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (DACS) as open for harvest. The DACS is authorized to describe, open and temporarily close any shellfish harvesting area. Vessels used to harvest shellfish must have a portable or U.S. Coast Guard approved marine sanitation device with a holding tank and any through valve shut and fixed in a closed position. All vessels must have false bottoms and bulkheads fore and aft to prevent contact with bilge water. The presence of dogs or other animals on vessels is prohibited. Additional shellfish handling and area water quality requirements apply. Refer to Chapter 5-L, F.A.C.

Unauthorized harvest is prohibited within a distance of 25 feet from the lawfully marked lease boundaries or within the setback and access corridors within specifically designated high-density aquaculture lease areas and aquaculture lease areas and aquaculture use zones.

### Oyster Regulations

Unless otherwise stated below the basic statewide bag limit and closed seasons and gear restrictions are listed in the chart on pages 8 and 9.

A bag equals two five-gallon buckets, one ten-gallon bucket, or 60 lbs. of culled oysters in the shell. Undersized oysters must be culled immediately upon harvest and returned to the water alive and unharmed. Undersized oysters may number no more than five percent (by count) of unattached oysters per bag and no more than 15 percent (by count) attached (such that separation would destroy either oyster) per bag. Vessels connected together, such as towing, may only claim one bag limit all together. Commercial and recreational harvest by any person during the same day is prohibited. Bycatch from trawling or dragging any gear over a public oyster bar should be returned to the water as closely as possible to the beds where taken. Transport and sale of bycatch or oysters taken internationally is

prohibited. Wholesale and retail dealers may not sell oysters unless they are labeled and traceable to the point of harvest.

Upon leaving an area, harvesters must pass through a monitoring station when in operation. Harvest on leased parcels is subject to the established rules unless otherwise exempted by the approved lease provisions.

Harvest from public reefs is prohibited from July 1 – Sept. 30, except as provided below.

In Wakulla, Dixie, and Levy Counties, harvest is prohibited from June 1 – Aug. 31.

In Indian River County, harvest is prohibited within 75 feet of the shoreline of the Indian River, any canal bank, or any privately owned submerged lands, or dock without written permission of the owner. In Volusia County, oysters harvested from an approved public bar may not be stockpiled onto a lease.

### Oyster Harvesting in Apalachicola Bay\* the following seasonal bag limits and closures apply:

Season	Bag Limit	Closed Days/Areas
June 1 - Aug. 31	20 bags per person or vessel per day, whichever is less.	Harvest is prohibited on Fridays and Saturdays. Harvest is allowed only in areas referenced in paragraph 5L-1.003(1) Table 2 of the DACS Comprehensive Shellfish Control Code.
Sept. 1 - Nov. 15	20 bags per person per day.	Harvest is prohibited on Saturdays and Sundays.
Nov. 16 - June 30	20 bags per person per day.	Harvest is allowed any day of the week, except that upon notice of DACS, harvest will be prohibited on Saturdays and Sundays until June 30.

\*Apalachicola Bay includes St. George Sound, East Bay, Apalachicola Bay, and St. Vincent Sound and their canals, channels, rivers, and creeks; and Indian Lagoon and its canals, channels, rivers, and creeks.



### Hard Clam Regulations

Unless otherwise stated below, the basic statewide clam size and bag limits, closed season and gear restrictions are listed in the chart on page 16. Clams may only be harvested from waters certified by DACS as open for harvest.

There is a three percent (by count) per bag allowance for undersized clams. The possession of unsorted clams aboard vessels underway is prohibited. Harvest is prohibited between one-half hour after sunset and one-half hour before sunrise (this restriction does not apply to properly permitted dredge operations).

Vessel engines must be turned off during manual use of gear. Use of rakes, dredges, or mechanical devices is prohibited in grass beds and pulling such gear under power is prohibited except under a Special Activity License. Vessels must be equipped with shades to shield clams from the sun and cull boards or racks with unobstructed clear space to allow undersized clams to fall through. Undersized clams must be immediately returned alive to the place where taken.

In Apalachicola Bay, clams may only be harvested by hand, diving, swimming, or leaning from vessels, wading, and by tongs. The use of a dredge is prohibited. In Brevard County, divers must be certified. Harvest is prohibited within 75 feet of the Indian River or Banana River shoreline abutting property that is used for residential purposes or within 75 feet of any canal bank.

## “Marine Life” Regulations (Tropical/Ornamentals)

FWC has developed a rule to control fishing effort in the commercial marine life fishery. Florida’s commercial marine life fishery involves harvest of live saltwater finfish, invertebrates and plants, primarily for the aquarium trade. These organisms are landed and sold alive to wholesalers, retailers and aquarium owners. An SPL with a Restricted Species (RS) and Marine Life tiered endorsement is required for harvest of marine life species listed in rule 68B-42, F.A.C.

### Marine Life Transferable Dive (MLD)

Required to harvest commercial quantities of listed marine life species using allowable

gears, including harvest by diving. Initially issued to applicants with a reported income of at least \$5000 from landings of marine life species or live rock during one of the license years between July 1, 1999 and June 30, 2003. The MLD is transferable to another person with an SPL & RS. Requalification for this endorsement begins in 2010/2011, based on prior years landings.

### Marine Life Bycatch Endorsement (MLB)

Required to harvest commercial quantities of marine life as bycatch which does not include harvest by diving. For persons who collected marine life primarily as bycatch in other

fisheries, with gear other than diving gear, and with reported sales of less than \$5000 during one of the qualifying years. The bycatch endorsement is also transferable.

### Marine Life Non-Transferable Dive (MLN)

Required to harvest commercial quantities of marine life by diving using dive gear for persons who had less than \$5000 in marine life landings or held a state live rock lease or federal live rock permit during one of the qualifying years and wish to harvest by diving. This endorsement is only transferable to immediate family members in the event of death or disability.

## Species designated as “Marine Life”: Marine Life tiered endorsement required.

Fish		
Angelfish - Gray*	Damselfish*	Sea basses except Rock, Bank, Black, Twospot †
Angelfish - French*	Filefish *	Seahorses*
Angelfish - Blue*	Frogfish (Sargassumfishes)*	Sharpnose Puffer
Angelfish - Queen*	Gobies*	Sleepers
Angelfish - Rock Beauty*	Hamlet †	Snake Eels*
Balloonfish	Hawkfish*	Spotted Drum*
Basslets*	High-hat	Striped Burrfish
Batfish	Hogfish - Cuban (Spotfin), Spanish	Surgeonfish*
Blennies	Jackknife-fish	Sweepers*
Butterflyfish*	Jawfish*	Tangs
Cardinalfish*	Moray Eels*	Toadfish*
Clingfish*	Parrotfish*	Triggerfish (except Gray and Ocean) *
Combtooth Blenny*	Pipefish *	Trumpetfish*
Cornetfish*	Porkfish	Trunkfish/cowfish*
Cubbyu	Reef Croakers	Wrasse/Razorfish*
Invertebrates		
Brittlestars	Crabs - Yellowline Arrow	Shrimp (Cleaner, Peppermint, Coral, and Snapping)
Calcareous Tubeworms	Featherduster Worms	Siphonophores/ Hydroids
Crabs - Blue-legged	Fileclams	Octocorals except Common, Venus Seafans
Crabs - Decorator	Nudibranchs	Sponges except Sheepswool, Yellow, Grass, Glove, Finger, Wire, Reef, and Velvet Sponges
Crabs - False Arrow	Octopods except Common Octopus	Starfish except Bahama
Crabs - Furcate spider	Sea Anemones (Giant Caribbean or “Pink-Tipped”)	Starsnails
Crabs - Nimble Spray	Sea Cucumbers	Upside-down jellyfish
Crabs - Polkadotted Hermit	Sea Fans except Common, Venus	Plants
Crabs - Spotted Porcelain	Sea Lilies	Caulerpa
Crabs - Thinstripe Hermit	Sea Slugs	Coralline Red Algae
Crabs - Tricolor Hermit	Sea Urchins except Longspine, Sand Dollars, Sea Biscuits	Halimeda/Mermaid's Fan/ Mermaid's Shaving Brush








\*Harvest prohibited in John Pennekamp Coral Reef State Park. † Any species of the Family Serranidae, except groupers of the genera Epinephelus and Mycteroperca, and seabass of the genus Centropristis. Chapter 68B-5 also prohibits harvest of otherwise unregulated species such as bigeye, bonnetmouths, clinid, conger, dragonets, false morays, goatfish, high-hat, muraenesocids, pike, blennies, porcupinefishes, puffers, sand stargazers, scorpionfishes, sea basses, sea chubs, soapfishes, soles, spaghetti eels, squirrelfishes, stargazers, threadfins, tonguefishes and some “Marine Life” species within the boundaries of John Pennekamp Coral Reef State Park.










## FWC extends sponge diving to northern Gulf









Sponges can now be legally harvested by diving in all state waters north of the southernmost point of Egmont Key, northward and westward to the 84 degrees west longitude line. They also may be harvested by diving in all state waters beyond 3 nautical miles from the shoreline south of Egmont Key to the Monroe and Collier county line.

Legally harvestable commercial sponges must also be at least five inches in diameter, and be cut rather than removed with a hook. There are areas specified where sponges may not be taken by diving. A daily recreational bag limit of 10 commercial sponges per day also applies, and sponging in Biscayne National Park is prohibited.









## Basic Commercial Fishes Regulation Chart




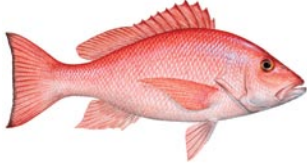



Species & Area	Size Limit	Trip Limit/ Bag Limit	Closed Season	Other Regulations
<b>Baitfish</b> 	None	None	None	Local baitfish restrictions apply. See: Baitfish Regulations. p. 5
<b>Ballyhoo</b> (halfbeaks, balao, and silver stripe halfbeaks) 	None			*Lampara Net Endorsement (L) and/or Purse Seine (PS) endorsement may be required. Allowable gear: Cast net, hook and line gear, landing or dip net, lampara net. Use of a lampara net prohibited Aug. 1 - Aug. 3. Prohibition applies to state and federal waters. License requirements and bag limits are determined by the method of harvest and gear used. p. 22
<b>Black Drum</b> ▲ † 	14" - 24" TL	500 lbs. per person or per vessel per day, whichever is less.	None	*RS required. Prohibition on multiple or snatch hook applies to state and federal waters. Maximum size limit applies to sale. Bag limit applies regardless of the possession or use of additional vessels. Harvest prohibited in John Pennekamp Coral Reef State Park.
<b>Blue Crab</b> 	5"	<b>See: Blue Crab Regulations p. 12.</b>	See: pg.8	*RS required. Gear and harvest specifications and size and bag limits differ for the various fishery segments (bycatch, peeler crabs, or live bait). <b>See: Blue Crab Regulations on p. 12.</b>
<b>Bluefish</b> ▲ 	12" FL	Atlantic north of Monroe County - 7,500 lbs. per vessel per day. Other state and federal waters - None.	None	*RS required. Limits and gear restrictions apply in state and federal waters of the Atlantic north of Monroe Co. Nets must be tended. May set no more than 1 net per vessel. No more than 2 nets may be on a vessel, unless nets differ by 1/4" mesh size and 25 meshes in depth. Nets may not be soaked more than 1 hr. Specific gear restrictions and net marking requirements apply to nets other than purse seines. In Atlantic waters, nets must be no more than 600 yards long (connected or unconnected) with stretched mesh size no less than 3 inches. Size limit applies to sale of fish.
<b>Blue Land Crab</b> 	None	20 crabs per person possession limit.	July 1 - Oct. 31	Allowable gear: by hand or landing or dip net Use of bleach or other chemical solutions prohibited. Harvest from road or right-of-way or state park prohibited. Prohibitions do not apply to imported crabs. Possession, stripping, purchase, and sale of eggbearing crabs prohibited.
<b>Clams, Hard</b> 	1" thickness across hinge	Sorted - None. Unsorted - 1 bushel per vessel.	None	Allowable gear: use of feet, hands, rakes, tongs. Rakes and tongs with more than 7/8" space between teeth or bars or dividers in basket prohibited. Wire or net may not be used in basket of manual rakes and tongs. A Brevard County Clam License is required to harvest hard clams in Brevard County. See: Hard Clam Regulations on p. 14.



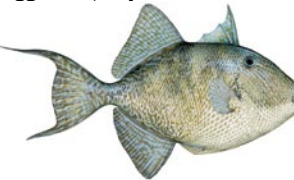
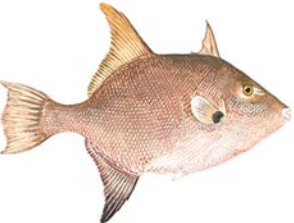


Species & Area	Size Limit	Trip Limit/ Bag Limit	Closed Season	Other Regulations
<b>Cobia (Ling) ▲</b> 	33" FL	2 fish per person per day, maximum of 6 per vessel.	None	*RS required. May not possess a recreational bag limit and a commercial bag limit at the same time. Size limit applies to sale.
<b>Dolphin ▲</b> 	20" FL	Directed harvest - None. Incidental bycatch - 10 fish per person.	None	*FP & RS required. FP for Atlantic. Allowable gear: hook and line gear, longline gear (federal waters only), and spearing. Size limit applies to purchase and sale of fish.
<b>Eels other than moray and snake eels</b> 	None	None	None	"Marine Life" regulations apply to moray and snake eels. See: "Marine Life" Regulations on p. 15. Harvest of spaghetti eels is prohibited in John Pennekamp Coral Reef State Park.
<b>Flounder - Gulf, southern, summer, fringed ▲ †</b> 	12" TL	Incidental bycatch - 50 lbs.	None	*RS required. Allowable gear: beach or haul seine, cast net, hook and line gear, and spearing. In Volusia County, spearing with barbed spear having more than 3 prongs prohibited. Size limit applies to sale of fish.
<b>Groupers ▲</b> 	See: "Reef Fish" Regulations.	See: Updated "Reef Fish" Regulations. pgs. 5, 8 & 9		See: Updated "Reef Fish" Regulations. pgs. 5, 8 & 9
<b>Herring (blueback and river herring)</b> 	None	None	None	Allowable gear: hook and line gear only. Spearing prohibited.
<b>Hogfish ▲</b> 		See: "Reef Fish" Regulations. p. 8		See: "Reef Fish" Regulations on p. 8.
<b>Horseshoe Crab</b> 	None	25 crab per person per day or 100 per person per day w/ ML# or eel permit.	None	Allowable gear: by hand or gig. Limits extend to docks, piers, bridges, beaches and adjacent fishing sites. A biomedical collection permit is required for collecting blood (crabs must be released alive in the area where collected).
<b>Jacks (Amberjacks) ▲</b> 		See: "Reef Fish" Regulations. p. 8		See: "Reef Fish" Regulations on p. 8.




Species & Area	Size Limit	Trip Limit/ Bag Limit	Closed Season	Other Regulations
<b>Jellyfish</b> 	None	None	None	Harvest with gear other than a cast net with a radius of no more than 12.5', a beach or haul seine, a paired trawl with a stretched mesh size no less than 3 1/2" in the wing and 1 1/2" in the bag, no more than 2 wing nets with a perimeter no greater than 40 feet and a mesh size no less than 3 1/2", or more than 2 dip nets is prohibited.
<b>Lobster, Slipper</b> 	None	None	None	Possession of eggbearing lobster prohibited. Possession prohibited in designated area of John Pennekamp Coral Reef State Park.
<b>Lobster, Spiny</b> 	3" carapace (head) 5 1/2" tail	Trap fishery - None Bully Net- 250 lobster vessel limit. Dive Fishery - Regional See: Spiny Lobster Regulations pg. 13	April 1 - Aug. 5	*RS, C# required. CD# required for divers. Allowable gear: by diving, traps, hand-held net, hoop net (diameter no longer than 10'), or bully net (diameter no larger than 3'). Specific restrictions and requirements depend on the method of harvest. See: Spiny Lobster Regulations on pg. 13
<b>Mackerel, King ▲</b> 	24" FL	See: King Mackerel Regulations. p. 10	Regional	*RS, FP required for commercial harvest in federal waters and to exceed the recreational bag limit in state waters. Allowable Gear: Atlantic fishery - hook and line gear and spearing.
<b>Mackerel, Spanish ▲</b> 	12" FL	See: Spanish Mackerel Regulations. p. 10	Regional	*RS required. Allowable Gear: beach or haul seine, cast net, hook and line gear, or by spearing.
<b>Mullet, Silver</b> (white, fantail, or redeye) ▲ 	None	See: Mullet Regulations. p. 10	Regional	*RS required. See Mullet Regulations on p. 11.
<b>Mullet, Striped</b> (black) ▲ 	11" FL w/ a 10% allowance by weight for undersize fish	See: Mullet Regulations. p. 10	Regional	*RS required. See Mullet Regulations on p. 11.
<b>Oysters</b> 	3" in greatest dimension.	20 bags per person or vessel per day, whichever is less. Additional regional limits apply. See: Oyster Regulations. p. 14	Regional	*AP required in Apalachicola Bay. Allowable gear: by hand, diving, swimming, or leaning from vessels, wading, and by tongs. Use and possession dredges or other mechanical devices is prohibited over beds. Harvest is prohibited between sunset or the posted daily closing time and sunrise. Local and regional restrictions and bag limits apply. See: Oyster Regulations on p. 14.



Species & Area	Size Limit	Trip Limit/ Bag Limit	Closed Season	Other Regulations
<b>Permit ▲ †</b> 	11" - 20" FL	2 fish per person or per vessel per day, whichever is less.	None	*RS required. Allowable gear: hook and line gear. Spearing prohibited. Size limit applies to sale and purchase of fish.
<b>Pompano ▲ †</b> 	11" - 20" FL	250 fish per person or per vessel per day except for persons holding a *P#. See: "Pompano Regulations" p. 11	None	*RS, P# required. Size limit applies to purchase and sale of fish. Use of gear other than a beach or haul seine, cast net, and hook and line gear is prohibited in state waters. Gill nets may be used in designated federal waters. Additional gear limitations and exceptions to the bag limit apply to harvest in federal waters. See: "Pompano Regulations" on p. 11.
<b>Pompano, African · †</b> 	24" FL	2 fish per person or per vessel per day, whichever is less.	None	*RS required. Allowable gear: hook and line gear. Spearing prohibited.
<b>Red Porgy ▲</b> 	14" TL	Updated "Reef Fish" Regulations. pgs. 5, 8 & 9		Updated "Reef Fish" Regulations. pgs. 5, 8 & 9
<b>Scallops, Calico</b> 	None	250 individual meats per 1lb. sample.	None	Bycatch of other species prohibited. Gear and harvest specifications apply.
<b>Shad</b> (Alabama, American, hickory) 	None	10 fish per person	None	Allowable gear: hook and line gear only. Spearing prohibited.
<b>Sharks</b> 	None	1 shark per person per day or 2 sharks per vessel, whichever is less.	Federal closure applies in state waters.	*FP required. Spearing and filleting prohibited. Finning prohibited in state waters. State waters close when adjacent federal waters close. Purchase and sale of sharks landed after the closure date is prohibited. A federal permit is required for sale. Federal regulations apply regardless of where sharks are harvested (use of traps prohibited). Gear and license requirements apply when retained as bycatch. Harvest and landing of some species prohibited. See: Prohibited Species on p. 24.
<b>Sheepshead ▲ †</b> 	12" TL	Incidental bycatch - 50 lbs.	None	*RS required. Allowable gear: beach or haul seine, cast net, hook and line gear, and spearing.

Species & Area	Size Limit	Trip Limit/ Bag Limit	Closed Season	Other Regulations
<b>Seashells</b> (Live Shellfish) 	None	Manatee County - 2 shellfish of any single species per day. Lee County - Harvest Prohibited.	None	ML# required for the harvest of some species. See: "Marine Life" Regulations on p. 15. The term "Live Shellfish" includes mollusks and echinoderms such as clams, snails, starfish, brittle stars, urchins, sanddollars, etc. Manatee and Lee county prohibitions on harvest do not apply to shells that are empty when collected or to live oysters, hard clams, sunray venus clams, and coquinas.
<b>Shrimp</b> (Brown, Pinkspotted, Pink, White, Roughneck, Roughback, Seabob) 	None	Food Shrimp - Regional. Live Shrimp - 5 gallons dead shrimp, heads on, except in NE Region, 1 gallon.	Regional	*RS required; other licenses required in Tampa Bay and St. Johns River (TB#, DS#, LS#). Regional harvest and gear restrictions, size and bag limits, closed seasons, license requirements, and fishing gear limitations apply. Shrimp may not be harvested as live bait and food shrimp on the same trip. Turtle Excluder Device (TED) required on all otter and skimmer trawls, except single try net or roller from trawl. Otter and skimmer trawls must have bycatch reduction device (BRD) installed. See: Commercial Shrimp Regulations brochure.
<b>Shrimp, Other</b> 		See: "Marine Life" Regulations. p. 15		See: "Marine Life" Regulations on p. 15.
<b>Snappers ▲</b> 		See: Updated "Reef Fish" Regulations. pgs. 5, 8 & 9		See: Updated "Reef Fish" Regulations. pgs. 5, 8 & 9
<b>Sponges, Commercial</b> 	5", wet, across the top.	None	None	*Q# required. Commercial sponges = sheepswool, yellow, grass, finger, wire, reef, and velvet sponges. Size limit = measurement in greatest dimension across the top of the sponge and applies to possession and sale within the state. Hooks must be 5" wide. Diving prohibited, except in the Big Bend & Southwest Florida areas. See: Sponge Regulations on p. 15.
<b>Sponges, Others</b> 		See: "Marine Life" Regulations. p. 15		See: "Marine Life" Regulations on p. 15.
<b>Spotted Seatrout ▲ †</b> 	15" - 24" TL	75 fish per person per day or per vessel, whichever is less.	Sept. 1 - May 31	*RS required. Allowable gear: cast net or hook and line. Spearing prohibited. Simultaneous possession of gill nets and seatrout is prohibited. Towing extra vessel to exceed bag limit is prohibited. Purchase and sale prohibited after Sept. 5 (does not apply to imported fish). Size limit applies to sale of fish.

Species & Area	Size Limit	Trip Limit/ Bag Limit	Closed Season	Other Regulations
<b>Stone Crab</b> 	2 3/4" claw	None Incidental bycatch - 5 gallons	May 16 - Oct. 14	*RS, X# or I# required. Landings limited to legal size claws measured by a straight line from the elbow to the tip of the lower immovable finger. Transport and sale of intact crabs prohibited. License, trap and harvest specifications apply. See: Stone Crab Regulations on p. 13.
<b>Swordfish</b> 	47" lower jaw FL, 29" cleithrum to keel length, or 33 lbs. dressed	None	None	*FP required for harvest and sale. Spearing prohibited. Size limits apply to fish damaged by shark bites. "Lower jaw FL" = a straight-line measurement from the tip of the lower jaw to the fork of the caudal fin. "Cleithrum to keel length" = a curved measurement from the point of the cleithrum that provides the measurement along the body contour to the anterior portion of the caudal keel. The cleithrum is the semicircular bony structure at the posterior edge of the gill opening. A dressed fish may have its head, viscera, and fins removed, but its backbone and remaining carcass must remain intact and not be halved, quartered or otherwise further reduced.
<b>Triggerfish, Gray ▲</b> 	12" FL	See: "Reef Fish" Regulations. p. 8		See: "Reef Fish" Regulations on p. 8.
<b>Triggerfish, Ocean</b> 	None	None	None	Harvest prohibited in John Pennekamp Coral Reef State Park.
<b>Triggerfish, Other</b> 		See: "Marine Life" Regulations. p. 15		See: "Marine Life" Regulations on p. 15.
<b>Tripletail ▲ †</b> 	15" TL	10 per person per day or per vessel, whichever is less. Incidental bycatch - 2 per person per day or per vessel, whichever is less.	None	*RS required. Allowable gear: hook and line. Spearing prohibited. Size limit applies to sale of fish.

Species & Area	Size Limit	Trip Limit/ Bag Limit	Closed Season	Other Regulations
<b>Tropical Ornamentals</b> 		See: "Marine Life" Regulations. p. 15		See: "Marine Life" Regulations on p. 15.
<b>Wahoo ▲</b> 	None	500 lb. Commercial Daily Limit	None	*RS & FP required on the Atlantic coast.
<b>Weakfish</b> (gray seatrout or yellow-mouth trout) ▲ 	12" TL	None	None	Spearing is prohibited. Size limit applies to sale of fish.

### Chart Key

▲ Must remain in whole condition until landed ashore (head & tail intact)	<b>C#</b> = crawfish endorsement required.	<b>MLD#, MLB#, MLN#</b> = marine life endorsement required to species designated as "Marine Life" including "Live Shellfish" species such as urchins, starfish, starsnails, sanddollars.
† Harvest prohibited by or with the use of any multiple hook in conjunction with live or dead natural bait or any snatch hook.	<b>CD#</b> = commercial dive permit required to harvest spiny lobster for commercial purposes by diving.	<b>P#</b> = pompano endorsement applies to Cape Sable-Hurricane Pass area federal gill net fishery only. See "Pompano Regulations".
<b>TL</b> = total length measure; Tip of snout to tip of tail.	<b>DS#/LS#</b> = in St. Johns River, food shrimp or live shrimp production license required (moratorium in place for DS).	<b>Q#</b> = sponge endorsement.
<b>FL</b> = fork length measure; Tip of snout to fork of tail.	<b>FP</b> = federal permit.	<b>RS</b> = restricted species endorsement.
* A Saltwater Products License (SPL) is required for commercial harvest and sale of all saltwater products. Additional Licenses, Permits, and Endorsements may also be required. See: Commercial Saltwater Fishing License Requirements	<b>I#</b> = incidental catch endorsement required to sell up to 5 gallons of stone crab claws harvested in lawful commercial blue crab and spiny lobster traps by persons who hold a C# and/or V# and no X#.	<b>TB#</b> = in Tampa Bay, food shrimp production license required (moratorium in place).
<b>AP</b> = Dept. of Agriculture and Consumer Services Apalachicola Bay Oyster harvesting license.	<b>L#</b> = lampara net endorsement required to harvest more than 10 gallons of Ballyhoo per vessel per day.	<b>VH#, VS#, VN#, VI#</b> = blue crab endorsements required to sell or harvest blue crab, harvest in commercial quantities, or harvest with more than 5 traps.
		<b>X#</b> = stone crab endorsement.

## Ballyhoo Regulations

### Ballyhoo (halfbeaks, balao, and silver stripe halfbeaks) License Requirements and Bag Limits by Method of Harvest and Gear Used:

Harvest Method	Gear Used	License Requirements	Bag Limit
Directed harvest	Cast net, hook and line gear, landing or dip net.	Saltwater Products License (SPL)	5 gallons fish per person per day or per vessel.
Directed harvest	Lampara net.	SPL, with both Purse Seine (PS) and Lampara Net (L) endorsements.	10 boxes of fish per vessel (limit one trip per day). ‡
Incidental bycatch	Purse seine or lampara net.	SPL, PS	10 gallons per person per day or per vessel.
Incidental bycatch	All other gear.	SPL	5 gallons fish per person or per vessel per day.

‡ Boxes must have rectangular or square sides, a base and lid with a dimension no larger than 4.25 feet by 2 feet by 2 feet (the volume equivalent of 17 feet<sup>3</sup>).

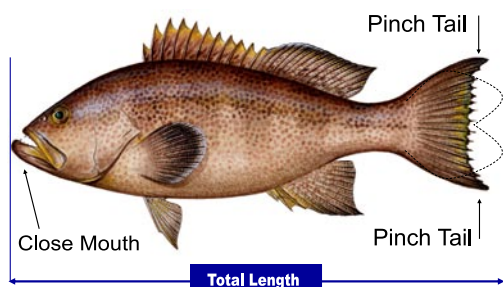
## Total Length Measurement

Prior to the Commission approving a new definition for Total Length, FWC rules did not consistently state how to obtain total length, leaving this measurement open to interpretation by commercial fisherman and law enforcement officers.

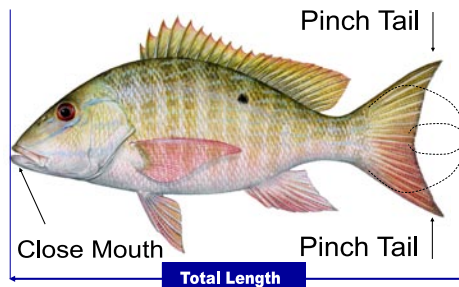
Modifying the definition of total length will eliminate confusion for commercial fisherman and provide a consistent, well defined measurement technique. This method should encourage commercial fisherman compliance with fishery management regulations.

### Total Length Measurement

Total Length is now measured from the most forward point of the head, with the mouth closed, to the farthest tip of the tail with the tail compressed or squeezed, while the fish is lying on its side.



**Yellowmouth Grouper**



**Mutton Snapper**

**Snapper Family**

**Tripletail**

**Grouper Family**

**Sheepshead**

**Black Drum**

**Several ornamentals**

**Spotted Seatrout**

**Angelfish, etc.**

**Weakfish**

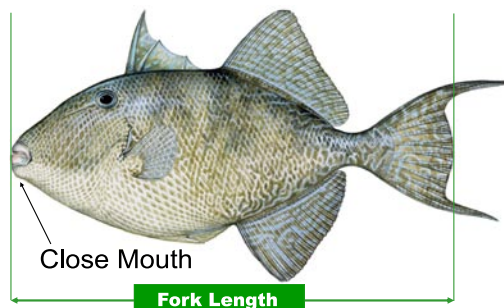
**Flounder**

### Fork Length Measurement

Fish regulated by fork length are measured from the tip of the jaw or tip of the snout with closed mouth to the center of the fork in the tail.



**Spanish Mackerel**



**Gray Triggerfish**

**Amberjacks**

**Bluefish**

**Dolphin**

**Permit**

**Rudderfish**

**King Mackerel**

**Cobia**

**Pompano**

**Hogfish**

**Spanish Mackerel**

**Mullet**

**Gray Triggerfish**

## The following species may not be commercially harvested and/or sold in Florida.

Fish		Invertebrates
Bonefish	Snook	Coral - Black, Fire, Hard, Stony
Grouper - Goliath, Nassau, Warsaw, Speckled Hind	Spearfish	Crab - Mitten
Marlin - Blue, White	Sturgeon (Gulf or Atlantic)	Live Rock - unless from lease
Ray - Manta, Spotted Eagle	Tarpon	Queen Conch
Red Drum (Red fish)		Scallops - Bay
Sailfish		Seafans - Common, Venus
Sawfishes		Starfish - Bahama
Shark - Basking, Bigeye Sand Tiger, Sand Tiger, Spiny Dogfish, Whale, White, Atlantic Angel Shark, Bigeye Sixgill Shark, Bigeye Thresher Shark, Bignose Shark, Caribbean Reef Shark, Dusky Shark, Galapagos Shark, Longfin Mako Shark, Narrowtooth Shark, Night Shark, Sevengill Shark, Sixgill Shark, and Smalltail Shark		Urchin - Longspine

### Commercially Prohibited Species

The prohibition on the sale of warsaw grouper and speckled hind does not apply to legally imported fish or fish harvested from federal waters.

Possession, harvest, destruction, and sale of fresh, uncleaned, or uncured sea fan, hard or stony coral or fire coral is prohibited (does not apply to such species harvested outside state waters or adjacent federal waters and lawfully entering the state through interstate or international commerce and with acceptable proof of origin documenting the initial place of harvest and original sales transaction).

The prohibitions on the harvest and possession of queen conch apply to Florida registered vessels in adjacent federal waters, but not to queen conch shells that are empty when collected. Licensed wholesale or retail

dealers may possess conch meat when documentation is present to show that such meat was legally imported from a foreign country. Possession of shells with an off-center hole larger than 1/16 inch in diameter through the spire is prohibited in or on the waters of Florida.

Simultaneous possession of bay scallops and any trawl, drag, dredge or net other than a landing dip net is prohibited. Documentation on scallops harvested out-of-state and entering the state in interstate commerce must be maintained and presented upon request.

### Industry Input is Key to Fishery Management

Feedback offered by one fisherman or dealer can make a difference. Fishermen who cannot attend Commission meetings are encouraged to send comments to the Commission and to respond to questionnaires. The Division of Marine Fisheries Management Commercial Outreach Program can be reached by phone at 850-922-4340 Extension 204 or by e-mail at [SPLmail@myfwc.com](mailto:SPLmail@myfwc.com) or look for updates on the web at [MyFWC.com/marine/Commercial\\_Fisheries\\_Information.htm](http://MyFWC.com/marine/Commercial_Fisheries_Information.htm).

### Planning a Move?

Don't forget to let the office of licensing and permitting know your new mailing address!  
850-487-3122

For Additional Information Please Contact:  
Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission  
Division of Marine Fisheries Management  
2590 Executive Center Circle East Suite 203  
Berkley Building  
Tallahassee, Florida 32301  
[MyFWC.com](http://MyFWC.com)



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# Basic Recreational Saltwater Fishing Regulations

This brief summary of regulations governs the taking of saltwater species in Florida for personal use. It is not applicable to the commercial harvesting of these species. The absence of complete laws, rules and regulations in this summary does not relieve persons from compliance with those laws, rules or regulations. State waters extend to 3 nautical miles on the Atlantic and 9 nautical miles on the Gulf. Federal rules apply beyond state waters. For species that do not have an established bag limit, more than 100 pounds or 2 fish per harvester per day (whichever is greater), is considered commercial quantities. A saltwater products license and commercial vessel registration is required to harvest commercial quantities of unregulated species. It is illegal to sell recreationally harvested fish without commercial license requirements. **Issue Thirty One, July 2007**

Species	Minimum Size Limits	Closed Season	Daily Rec. Bag Limit	Remarks
Amberjack - Greater ▲	28" fork		1. per harvester per day	
Amberjack - Lesser & Banded Rudderfish ▲	Not less than 14" or more than 22" fork		5 aggregate of lesser amberjack and banded rudderfish	
Billfish ▲	Sailfish 63" Blue Marlin 99" White Marlin 66"		1 per harvester per day aggregate bag limit	Measured tip of lower jaw to fork. All landed fish must be reported to NOAA within 24 hours 800-894-5528. HMS permit required in federal waters.
Black Drum ▲ ♦ T	Not less than 14" or more than 24"		5 per harvester per day	May possess one over 24".
Bluefish ▲	12" fork		10 per harvester per day	
Bonefish ♦	18"		1. per harvester per day	
Clams-Hard	1" thick across hinge	May not harvest half hour after official sunset until half hour before official sunrise	One 5 gal. bucket per harvester or 2 per vessel, whichever is less per day (whole in shell)	Illegal to harvest from closed areas. Go to <a href="http://www.floridaaquaculture.com">www.floridaaquaculture.com</a> for allowable harvesting areas.
Cobia (Ling) ▲	33" fork		1 per harvester or 6 per vessel per day whichever is less	To sell or exceed the daily bag limit follow commercial regulations.
Crab-Blue		Sept 20 - Oct 4 Gulf state waters beyond 3 miles closed to traps; federal waters closed to traps	10 gallons whole per harvester per day	5 traps maximum. Trap requirements apply. Harvest of egg-bearing crabs prohibited.
Crab-Blue Land		July 1–Oct 31	20 per harvester per day	Trapping prohibited, harvest of egg-bearing females prohibited, harvest prohibited in state parks and from the right-of-way of federal, state or county maintained roads.
Crab-Stone	2 3/4" claw	May 16–Oct 14	1 gal. Stone Crab claws per harvester or 2 gal. per vessel, whichever is less	5 traps maximum. Trap requirements apply. Illegal to possess whole crab. Harvest of egg-bearing crabs prohibited.
Crawfish (Spiny Lobster) ▲	Larger than 3" carapace measured in the water	April 1–Aug 5 Exception: Sport Season - last consecutive Wed & Thurs of July each year	Regular season: 6 per harvester per day	Recreational trapping prohibited. Crawfish permit required when license required. Special bag limit for 2-day Sport Season. Contact FWC regional office for current information on Sport season.
Dolphin ▲	20" fork Atlantic		10 per harvester per day, not to exceed 60 per vessel per day	To sell or exceed the daily bag limit follow commercial regulations.
Flounder ▲ ♦ T	12"		10 per harvester per day	May be harvested by spearing. Snatching prohibited.
Grouper-Black & Gag ▲ ♦	24" Atlantic & Monroe County, 22" Gulf (excluding Monroe County)		2 per harvester per day Atlantic & Monroe County; 5 per harvester per day Gulf (excluding Monroe County)	Included within 5 per harvester per day Grouper aggregate bag limit. Gulf—zero daily bag and possession limit for captain & crew on for-hire vessels.
Grouper-Red ▲ ♦	20"		1 per harvester per day Gulf	Included within 5 per harvester per day Grouper aggregate bag limit. Gulf—zero daily bag and possession limit for captain & crew on for-hire vessels.
Grouper-Snowy ▲ ♦			1. per harvester per day Atlantic	Included within 5 per harvester per day Grouper aggregate bag limit.
Grouper- Yellowfin & Yellowmouth ▲ ♦	20"			Included within 5 per harvester per day Grouper aggregate bag limit
Grouper-Scamp ▲ ♦	20" Atlantic & Monroe County, 16" Gulf (excluding Monroe County)			Included within 5 per harvester per day Grouper aggregate bag limit
Grouper-Warsaw ▲			1 per vessel per day of each species	Included within 5 per harvester per day Grouper aggregate bag limit
Grouper-all others ▲				Includes: Conej, Graysby, Misty, Red Hind, Rock Hind, Tiger & Yellowedge. Included within 5 per harvester per day Grouper aggregate bag limit
Hogfish ▲	12" fork		5 per harvester per day	Bag limit in Gulf-Atlantic fishery reduced to 1 when federal waters are closed to all harvest. Call SW Regional Office for details.
Mackerel-King ▲	24" fork		2 per harvester per day	Transfer of Spanish Mackerel to other vessels at sea is prohibited.
Mackerel-Spanish ▲	12" fork		15 per harvester per day	Sept 1 - Jan 31, 50 aggregate per harvester or per vessel. Call DMFM for additional restrictions in Pinellas, Charlotte & Pasco-Lee counties.
Mullet-Striped (Black) & Silver			Feb 1-Aug 31, 50 per harvester per day, aggregate of striped & silver mullet maximum 100 aggregate per vessel	Apalachicola Bay has summer & winter seasons/areas. Harvest from approved shellfish areas only. Go to <a href="http://www.floridaaquaculture.com">www.floridaaquaculture.com</a> for allowable harvesting areas.
Oysters	3"	June, July, Aug. in Dixie, Wakulla, Levy counties. July, Aug., Sept. in all other areas	2 bags per harvester or vessel, whichever is less per day. 1 Bag = 60 lbs. or two 5 gal. buckets (whole in shell)	May possess one over 20" of either Permit or Pompano. Vessel restriction: no more than 2 permit and pompano over 20" fork length at any time in any combination. Giggling, spearing, snatching prohibited.
Permit & Pompano ▲ T	Not less than 11" or more than 20" fork		6 per harvester per day aggregate of Permit and Pompano	Hook & line gear only.
Pompano-African ▲ T	Not less than 24" fork		2 fish per harvester or per vessel per day whichever is less	
Red Drum (Redfish) ▲ ♦ T	Not less than 18" or more than 27"		1. per harvester per day	Giggling, spearing, snatching prohibited.
Red Porgy ▲ ♦	14" Atlantic		3 per harvester per day Atlantic	
Scallops-Bay		Sept 11–June 30	2 gallons whole or 1 pint meat per harvester per day, no more than 10 gallons whole, or 1/2 gallon meat per vessel anytime	Harvest allowed only in state waters of the Gulf of Mexico from the Pasco-Hernando county line near Aripeka-latitude 28 degrees, 26.016 minutes North), to the west bank of the Mexico Beach Canal in Bay County (longitude 85 degrees, 25.84 minutes West). Any bay scallops harvested and possessed must be landed within the allowable harvesting area.

Sea Bass-Black ▲ ◆	1.1" Atlantic; 10" Gulf		15 per harvester per day Atlantic	Size limit changes to 12" Atlantic 01/01/08
Shad			10 aggregate per harvester per day	American, Alabama & Hickory are part of aggregate limit. Hook & line gear only.
Shark			1 per harvester or 2 per vessel per day, whichever is less	Practice of finning and filleting at sea prohibited. See list below for prohibited species.
Sheepshead ▲ ◆ T	12"		15 per harvester per day	Snatching prohibited.
Shrimp		April & May closed to Nassau, Duval, St. Johns, Putnam, Flagler & Clay counties	5 gallons heads on per harvester or vessel per day, whichever is less	Must be landed in a whole condition. Contact FWC Regional Office for closed areas.
Snapper-Black & Wenchman ▲			Included within 10 per harvester per day Snapper aggregate bag limit	
Snapper-Cubera ▲ ◆	Not less than 12" or more than 30" (see remarks)		Included within 10 per harvester per day snapper aggregate bag limit if under 30"	Allowed 2 Cubera Snapper over 30" per harvester or vessel per day which ever is less. 30" or larger not included within the Snapper aggregate bag limit.
Snapper-Gray (Mangrove) ▲ ◆	10"		5 per harvester per day	Included within 10 per harvester per day Snapper aggregate bag limit.
Snapper-Lane ▲ ◆	8"		Included within 10 per harvester per day Snapper aggregate bag limit Atlantic	Not included within the Snapper aggregate bag limit Gulf.
Snapper-Mutton ▲ ◆	16"		Included within 10 per harvester per day Snapper aggregate bag limit	
Snapper-Red ▲ ◆	20" Atlantic; 16" Gulf	Nov 1-April 14 Gulf Only	2 per harvester per day Atlantic; 4 per harvester per day Gulf	Included within 10 per harvester per day Snapper aggregate bag limit.
Snapper-Schoolmaster ▲ ◆	10"		Included within 10 per harvester per day Snapper aggregate bag limit	
Snapper-Vermilion ▲ ◆	12" Atlantic; 10" Gulf		10 per harvester per day	Vermilion Snapper not included within the Snapper aggregate bag limit.
Snapper-all other ▲ ◆	12"		Included within 10 per harvester per day Snapper aggregate bag limit	Includes: Blackfin, Dog, Mahogany, Queen, Silk & Yellowtail.
Snook ▲ ◆ T (All species)	Not less than 28" or more than 32" Atlantic; Not less than 28" or more than 33" Gulf; Monroe County, Everglades Nat. Park	Dec. 15-Jan. 31, June-Aug. Atlantic; Dec.-Feb., May-Aug. Gulf; Monroe County Everglades Nat. Park	1 per harvester per day	Snook permit required when saltwater license required. State regulations apply in federal waters. Illegal to buy or sell snook. Snatch hooks and spearing prohibited.
Sponge- Commercial	Greater than 5" in greatest dimension measured across the top of the sponge		10 per harvester per day	Includes: Sheepswool, Yellow, Grass, Glove, Finger, Wire, Reef & Velvet sponge.
Spotted Seatrout ▲ ◆ T	Not less than 15" or more than 20" (statewide) except one fish over 20" per person	Nov & Dec S. Region; Feb N.E. and N.W. Regions (See regional definitions below)	4 per harvester per day South Region; 5 per harvester per day N.E. and N.W. Regions	(See regional definitions below)
Swordfish ▲	47" lower jaw fork length		1 per harvester or 3 per vessel whichever is less	Measured tip of lower jaw to the fork. All landed fish must be reported to NOAA within 24 hours 800-894-5528. HMS permit required in federal waters.
Tarpon			2 fish possession limit	Requires \$50 tarpon tag to possess or harvest. Snatching prohibited. Boca Grande Pass has seasonal regulations. Contact DMFM for current information.
Tilefish—Golden			1 per harvester per day Atlantic	Included within the 5 per harvester per day Grouper aggregate bag limit.
Triggerfish (Gray) ▲	12" fork		2 per harvester per day	Hook & line gear only. No snatch hooks.
Tripletail ▲ ◆ T	15"		2 per harvester per day	To sell or exceed the daily bag limit follow commercial regulations.
Wahoo ▲			4 per harvester per day	
Weakfish ▲ ◆ T	12"			

**IF WE SHOWED YOU THE FISH, WE'D NEED A BIGGER AD.**  
**CHEVY FLORIDA FISHING REPORT, THURSDAYS AT 7 pm ON SUN SPORTS**



**ORNMAMENTAL TROPICAL FISH AND PLANTS**  
**MINIMUM SIZE LIMIT (Total length)** Spanish Hogfish 2" Spottin Hogfish 3" Porkfish 11/2"  
**MAXIMUM SIZE LIMIT (Total length)** Angelfish (except Rock Beauty) 8" Butterflyfish, Jawfish 4" Rock Beauty 5" Gobies 2" Spanish Hogfish 8"  
**BAG LIMIT Fishes / Invertebrates:** 20 per person per day. No more than 5 Angelfish and no more than 6 Octocoral colonies  
**PLANTS:** 1 gallon per person per day  
 Live landing and live well requirements. Harvest in Biscayne National Park & John Pennekamp State Park prohibited.

**PROHIBITED SPECIES**  
 It is unlawful to harvest, possess, land, purchase, sell, or exchange the following species:  
 Nassau Grouper, Goliath Grouper (Jewfish), Sawfish, Atlantic Angel Shark, Bigeye Sixgill Shark, Bigeye Thresher Shark, Bigeye Sand Tiger Shark, White Shark, Sand Tiger Shark, Spiny Dogfish, Longspine Urchin, Stony, Hard and Fire Corals, Sea Fans, Florida Queen Conch and Bahama Starfish. Harvest of live rock in state waters is prohibited.

**FWC REGIONAL OFFICES**  
 Northwest Region Panama City (850) 265-3676 - North Central Region Lake City (386) 758-0525 - Northeast Region Ocala (352) 732-1225 - Southwest Region Lakeland (863) 648-3200 - South Region West Palm Beach (561) 625-5122

**SEATROUT REGIONS**  
 "Northeast Region" means all state waters lying north of the Flagler-Volusia County Line to the Florida-Georgia border, and adjacent federal Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) waters.  
 "Northwest Region" means all state waters north and west of a line running due west from the westernmost point of Fred Howard Park Causeway (28E9.350N 82E48.398 W), which is approximately 1.17 nautical miles south of the Pasco-Pinellas County Line to the Florida-Alabama border, and adjacent federal EEZ waters.  
 "South Region" means state waters lying between the Flagler-Volusia County Line on the Atlantic Ocean and the southern boundary of the Northwest Region on the Gulf of Mexico in Pinellas County and adjacent federal EEZ waters.

**Harvester**—Regardless of what species you are fishing for, bag limits are only for properly licensed individuals and those people exempt from licensing requirements who are actively harvesting, and those people harvesting may not exceed the individual bag limit and take someone else's bag limit. That is, people (including children) who are not properly licensed (if license is required) may NOT be counted for the purpose of bag limits.



## LOUISIANA

The following is an unofficial compilation of marine fishery laws and regulations for Louisiana. The information is current as of September 30, 2007, but changes may occur at any time. For definitive enforcement regulations, please contact the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries (LDWF), P.O. Box 98000, Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70898-9000 (225) 765-2980 or visit the web site at [www.wlf.louisiana.gov](http://www.wlf.louisiana.gov).

### Residency Requirements

A “bona fide resident” means any person who has resided in this state continuously during the twelve months immediately prior to the date on which he applies for any license and who has manifested his intention to remain in the state by establishing Louisiana as his legal domicile, as demonstrated by compliance with all of the following, as applicable:

- If registered to vote, he is registered to vote in Louisiana.
- If licensed to drive a motor vehicle, he is in possession of a Louisiana driver’s license, or, if over the age of fifteen years and not licensed to drive, he is in possession of a special identification card issued by the Louisiana Department of Public Safety and Corrections under the provisions of LA R.S. 40:1321.
- If owning a motor vehicle located within Louisiana, he is in possession of a Louisiana registration for that vehicle.
- If earning an income, he has filed a Louisiana state income tax return and has complied with state income tax laws and regulations.
- As a corporation or other legal entity, a resident shall be any which is incorporated or otherwise organized under and subject to the laws of Louisiana, and which is domiciled in Louisiana and has a permanent physical location of business in Louisiana where records are held in compliance with R.S. 56:306.5.
- Any person, corporation, or other legal entity, which possesses a resident license from any other state or country, shall not qualify for a resident license in Louisiana.

### SHRIMP

#### Commercial Licenses

Commercial licenses are valid for one year beginning January 1 of each calendar year, or from the date of issue and expire on December 31 of the same calendar year.

All commercial shrimp fishermen must possess the following licenses:

#### Commercial Fisherman

- Resident - \$55.00
- Nonresident - \$460.00

#### Vessel

- Resident - \$15.00
- Nonresident - \$60.00

#### Gear

- Resident Shrimp Trawl - \$25.00/rawl
- Nonresident Shrimp Trawl \$100.00/rawl
- Resident Butterfly - \$25.00/net

- Nonresident Butterfly - \$100.00/net
- Resident Skimmer Net -\$25.00/net
- Nonresident Skimmer Net - \$100.00/net
- Resident Shrimp Gear Fee (Annual) - \$25.00. Fee decreases to \$10.00 beginning in 2007 license year
- Nonresident Shrimp Gear Fee (Annual) - \$100.00. Fee decreases to \$40.00 beginning in 2007 license year

#### Recreational Licenses

Recreational licenses are valid for one year (July 1-June 30 of the following year) or from the date of issue. No fee is required for use of a test trawl when used with another trawl for which the gear fee has been paid; maximum test trawl length is 16’ cork line, 20’ lead line.

Shrimp trawls 25’ in length or less may be licensed recreationally. Recreational shrimpers

using trawls measuring 16' in length or less are limited to no more than 100 lbs. (heads on) of shrimp per boat per day.

Recreational shrimpers using trawls measuring no greater than 25' in length are limited to 250 lbs. (heads on) of shrimp per boat per day. Shrimp trawls in excess of 25' must be licensed commercially. Recreational shrimpers may not sell their catch.

### **Gear Types and Fees**

#### **Shrimp Trawls**

- Resident - \$25.00/trawl (not to exceed 16' in length)
- Nonresident - \$100.00/trawl (not to exceed 16' in length)
- Resident - \$80.00/trawl (not to exceed 25' in length)
- Nonresident - \$320.00/trawl (not to exceed 25' in length)

Recreational fishermen must possess a basic and saltwater sports fishing license to use a recreational gear license unless exempt by age. Recreational fishermen with a basic sport fishing license may use a cast net up to 8½' in radius and take up to 100 lbs. of shrimp per day per boat or vehicle during open shrimp season and 50 lbs. of shrimp per day per boat or vehicle during closed shrimp season for bait or home consumption purposes only. Depending on season, daily limits of 10 lbs. (closed season) and 25 lbs. (open season) apply to LDWF Wildlife Management Areas and Refuges.

### **Inside/Outside Waters**

The state divided shrimping waters into two classes, inside and outside waters. The lines of demarcation between these two classes extending from the coastal boundary between Texas and Louisiana and terminating at the coastal boundary between Mississippi and Louisiana are described in LA R.S. 56:495.

### **Commercial Season**

Inside waters – the Commission shall fix no less than two open seasons each year, based upon biological and technical data. The spring inshore shrimp season in that that portion of

Louisiana's inshore waters from the eastern shore of South Pass of the Mississippi River westward to the western shore of Vermilion Bay and Southwest Pass at Marsh Island shall begin on or before the third Monday in May; no season shall begin on a Sunday.

Outside waters – the Commission will set seasons based upon biological and technical data.

### **Recreational Season**

Same as commercial season.

### **Commercial Gear Limits**

By definition, a trawl means any net (generally funnel-shaped) pulled through the water or along the bottom with otter boards to spread the mouth open while being fished. The term "trawl" also means and includes plumb staff beam boards that do not exceed 16' that do not use otter boards, but are held open laterally by a horizontal beam and vertically by two vertical beams (plumb staffs) and that are used while the vessel is underway.

No vessel may pull more than the following trawl rigging in inside waters:

- One trawl, which shall not exceed 50' in length along the cork line and 66' along the lead line and in addition, one test trawl.
- Two trawls of each which shall not exceed 25' along the cork line, 33' along the lead line, and have trawl doors no larger than 6' in length and 34" in height and in addition, one test trawl.
- Two trawls which shall not exceed 25' along the cork line, 33' along the lead line and have no more than two outer trawl doors no larger than 8' in length and 40" in height and no more than two inner sled doors, and in addition, one test trawl.

It shall be legal for a vessel in Breton and Chandeleur Sounds as described in LA R.S. 56:495.1, to pull no more than one or two trawls, either or both of which cannot exceed 65' along the cork line and 82' along the lead line in length, plus one test trawl.

Saltwater shrimp may be taken by means of trawls, butterfly nets, skimmer nets, or cast nets and by no other means, except as provided in LA R.S. 56:499. No person shall take saltwater shrimp with any trawl, skimmer net, or butterfly net with a mesh size less than  $\frac{5}{8}$ " square or  $1\frac{1}{4}$ " stretched.

Within that portion of state inside waters from the Atchafalaya River westward to the western shore of Vermilion Bay and Southwest Pass at Marsh Island, mesh size must not be less than  $\frac{3}{4}$ " bar or  $1\frac{1}{2}$ " stretched mesh during the fall inshore shrimp season.

No trawl, skimmer net, or butterfly net may be used in closed waters. No person shall use a double butterfly net having an individual net frame more than 12' measured horizontally or vertically, whichever distance is greater, each or a single stationary butterfly net having an individual net frame greater than 22' measured horizontally or vertically, whichever distance is greater. Except persons on a vessel may use a double butterfly net having individual net frames no more than 16' measured horizontally or 12' measured vertically, each.

No person on a vessel shall use a double skimmer net having an individual net frame more than 16' measured horizontally, 12' measured vertically, or 20' diagonally or with a lead line measuring more than 28' for each net. No person shall tie individual skimmer nets together to exceed the herein stated specifications. Operation of butterfly and skimmer nets shall in no way impede or restrict normal navigation. No person shall use sweeper devices, leads, extensions, wings, or other attachments in conjunction with or attached to butterfly nets. Skimmer nets and butterfly nets may be mounted no more than 24" from side of vessel. In state offshore territorial waters, each trawling vessel may only use nets that do not exceed a total maximum per vessel of 130' of cork line and 165' of lead line. In inside waters, trawl doors shall not exceed 6' in length and 34" in height when pulling twin trawls no larger than 25' as measured along the corkline or outer trawl doors which exceed 8' in length and 40" in height with no more than two inner sled doors

when pulling twin trawls no larger than 25' as measured along the corkline.

### **Recreational and Commercial Gear Limitations**

Recreational trawls must be 25' or less in length measured along the cork line. Trawls, skimmer nets, and wing nets cannot have a mesh size less than  $\frac{5}{8}$ " or  $1\frac{1}{4}$ " stretched, except for that portion of state inside waters from the Atchafalaya River westward to the western shore of Vermilion Bay and Southwest Pass at Marsh Island where mesh size shall be a minimum of  $\frac{3}{4}$ " bar by  $1\frac{1}{2}$ " stretched. Butterfly nets and skimmer nets must be commercially licensed.

### **Commercial Legal Size**

Fishermen may not catch or possess aboard a vessel, saltwater white shrimp, that average smaller in size than 100 per pound, unless having legal documentation that they were taken in another state or country. From October 15 through the third Monday in December of each year, there shall be no count on saltwater white shrimp taken or possessed. There is no count restriction on any shrimp during the spring open season. There is no count restriction on sea bob taken in state outside waters during any season. There is no count restriction on bait shrimp taken in the manner as prescribed in LA R.S.56:497(B).

### **Recreational Legal Size**

All commercial shrimp rules and regulations apply.

### **Crab Trap Capture**

Recreational and commercial shrimp fishermen are required to return unserviceable crab traps captured incidentally to the shore, for proper disposal. Shrimp fishermen who capture serviceable crab traps without a float shall return the trap to the water with a common float attached. A common float is defined as an all-white, plastic, one-gallon or larger bleach bottle. The owner of the crab trap shall return the common float to any shrimper for reuse. Serviceable crab traps are defined as any crab trap of legal construction and condition maintained in such a manner with the potential to harvest crabs. Maintained condition shall

include being legally tagged, legally marked with a float and float line attached, and a minimum of two escape rings affixed whether obstructed or not.

### **Commercial Pounds Allowed**

No limit.

### **Recreational Pounds Allowed**

- 100 lbs per day per vessel or vehicle with use of a shrimp trawl not exceeding 16'
- 100 lbs per day per vessel or vehicle during open shrimp season and 50 lbs per day per vessel or vehicle during closed season with use of cast nets not exceeding 8½' radius
- LDWF Wildlife Management Areas and Refuges have special restrictions on the taking of shrimp; refer to local enforcement for regulations.

### **LIVE BAIT**

- Special Bait Dealers Permit - \$100 + \$1,000 cash bond to LDWF

The Commission adopted rules and regulations for a "special bait dealer's permit" to allow the taking of live bait shrimp by qualified permit holders during the closed season between the spring and fall inshore shrimp seasons. Persons allowed to take live shrimp and live croaker for sale during closed season between the spring and fall seasons as bait must possess a special bait dealer's permit. Permit applications are accepted from January 1 through April 30 each year. Permitted dealers are allowed to take live shrimp and croaker with certain size trawls or skimmer nets during daylight hours only. Mail all applications to the department via certified mail. Persons desiring to catch their own bait may catch shrimp in cast nets (up to 8½' in radius), bait traps, dip nets (up to 3' diameter and hand operated), or seines (less than 30' and foot operated). A basic and saltwater sports fishing license is required to take bait with a cast net.

### **Season**

During the closed season, bait shrimp may be taken in state inside waters, but only with cast nets up to 8½' in radius, bait traps, dip nets (up

to 3' diameter and hand operated), or seines less than 30' in length with no mechanical devices and a mesh size of ¼" square bar and ½" stretched mesh.

## **SHELLFISH**

### **Blue Crabs**

#### **Recreational Licenses**

- Resident Crab Trap - \$15.00 (10 trap maximum)
- Nonresident Crab Trap - \$60.00 (10 trap maximum)

A basic and saltwater sports fishing license is required to use a recreational gear license, unless exempt for age. Recreational harvest of crabs using a dip net and/or baited lines (without hooks or traps), does not require a license.

#### **Commercial Licenses**

- Resident Crab Trap - \$25.00
- Nonresident Crab Trap - \$100.00
- Resident Crab Trap Gear Fee - \$10.00
- Nonresident Crab Trap Gear Fee - \$40.00
- Resident Commercial Fisherman License - \$55.00
- Nonresident Commercial Fisherman License - \$460.00
- Resident Vessel License - \$15.00
- Nonresident Vessel License - \$60.00

An operator of a soft-shell shedding facility is required to obtain a wholesale/retail seafood dealer license. An owner or operator of soft-shell crab shedding facility who sheds soft shell crabs or operates soft shell crab shedding facilities shall, on or before the tenth of each month, submit to the department, on forms specified by the department, information relative to the amount of soft shell crabs produced.

#### **Gear Restrictions**

Crabs may be taken with any legal crab trap, trawl, trotline, handline, bushline, dip net or cast net. Dredges cannot be used for the intentional taking of crabs. A crab trap is defined as cube-shaped, constructed of wire, no larger than 30" on any side and with either a bait box or materials providing cover or shelter for peeler

crabs. The entrance funnels must extend no further than 7" into the inside of the trap with the openings to the entrance funnels on the vertical wall of the trap such that the horizontal diameter of each opening is at least 1½ times the vertical diameter of the opening. A legal crab trap must have a solid float (6" minimum diameter), a non-floating buoy line (¼" minimum diameter), be marked, and have escape rings. A crab trap shall be marked with a 1½" stainless steel self-locking tag attached to the center of the trap ceiling or a plastic bait box cover, containing the commercial fisherman's license number or the recreational fisherman's trap license number legibly engraved or embossed. Each trap shall have a minimum of two 2<sup>5</sup>/<sub>16</sub>" diameter escape rings, one in each chamber. Escape rings shall be rigid and attached to the vertical, outside walls flush with the floor or baffle. Rings may be blocked from March 1-June 30 and from September 1-October 31. Fishermen in Lake Pontchartrain shall be exempt from escape ring mandates.

Crabbers must return unserviceable traps to shore for proper disposal. Serviceable crab traps are defined as any crab trap of legal construction and condition maintained in such a manner with the potential to harvest crabs. Maintained condition shall include being legally tagged, legally marked with a float and float line attached, and two escape rings affixed whether obstructed or not. A fisherman with a crab trap license may raise and check any trap with a common float (an all-white, plastic, one-gallon or larger bleach bottle) to determine ownership. Shrimp fishermen who catch an otherwise serviceable crab trap without a float may return the trap to the water with a common float.

#### **Size/Possession Restrictions**

Commercial fishermen may take blue crabs of legal size in unlimited quantities. The minimum commercial size limit is 5" carapace width. Any blue crab under 5" must be returned immediately to the water without avoidable injury. A 10% tolerance of undersized crabs is allowed. Crabs in a workbox are not subject to the minimum commercial size limits while held aboard the vessel. If not using a grader, each fisherman may have one workbox; if using a grader, each

fisherman may have two workboxes under the grader. Premolt, "buster," or peeler crabs less than 5" are exempt from commercial size limits. Recreational crabbers have a 144-crab possession limit. There is no minimum size limit for recreational crabbers.

#### **Time Restrictions**

The baiting, tending, checking, or removing of crab traps, the contents of serviceable crab traps or their lines, buoys, or markers is prohibited in public waters from ½ hour after sunset until ½ hour before sunrise. Crab traps that are no longer serviceable or in use must be removed from the water and properly disposed of or stored.

#### **Area Restrictions**

Crab traps cannot be set in navigable channels or entrances to streams. Crab traps must be placed so vessels can safely navigate. Metal tackle or metal crab traps shall not be used in any of the public waters north of the Intracoastal Canal in the Calcasieu River or in any body of water comprising the Calcasieu River System north of the Intracoastal Canal, or in the waters of Vermilion Bay from Cypremont Point one mile offshore to Blue Point. Traps are prohibited in Tchefuncte River.

Commercial gear (trawl, trotline, traps) or commercial fishing is not allowed from the Grand Isle shoreline out to the one fathom curve.

#### **Other Restrictions**

All crabs in the egg or berry stage taken by any means must be immediately returned to the water. A legally licensed commercial crab fisherman may have in his workbox an incidental take of crabs in the berry stage in an amount equal to not more than 2% of the total number of crabs in his possession.

No person may intentionally damage or destroy serviceable crab traps, floats or lines, or remove the contents thereof, other than the licensee or his agent.

Commercial fishermen must tag or mark any crabs sold with their commercial fisherman's license number, name, and date harvested.

### **Stone Crabs**

Landing whole stone crabs is prohibited. Live stone crabs may be held aboard a vessel while on the water until the claws are removed. After claw removal, the crabs shall be returned to the waters in which taken. Minimum claw size is 2¾" (propodus length). There is no minimum recreational size limit on stone crabs.

### **Oyster Licenses**

- Resident Commercial Oyster Harvester - \$100.00
- Nonresident Commercial Oyster Harvester - \$400.00
- Resident Recreational Oyster Tong - \$5.00 per tong
- Nonresident Recreational Oyster Tong - \$20.00 per tong
- Resident Commercial Oyster Tong - \$30.00 per tong
- Nonresident Commercial Oyster Tong - \$240.00 per tong
- Resident Commercial Oyster Dredge - \$25.00 per dredge
- Nonresident Commercial Oyster Dredge - \$200.00 per dredge
- Resident Commercial Fisherman - \$55.00
- Nonresident Commercial Fisherman - \$460.00
- Resident Vessel License - \$15.00
- Nonresident Vessel License - \$60.00
- Out-of-State Oyster Landing Permit - \$100.00

A basic and saltwater sports fishing license is required to use a recreational gear license, unless exempt for age.

The licensed commercial fisherman harvesting or possessing oysters in state waters must purchase an oyster harvester license, in addition to any and all licenses otherwise required.

The Commission designates when natural reefs are open for fishing. Generally, designated public oyster areas (natural reefs) may be fished from the first Wednesday after Labor Day through April 1 of the next year; however, the Commission has authority to extend the season beyond April 1 of each year. Areas are subject

to closure by the Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals for health reasons. It is illegal to take oysters at night.

### **Size/Possession Limits**

All oysters taken from the designated public oyster areas (natural reefs) must be 3" or greater in length from hinge to mouth. A lessee of private oyster grounds may be permitted to take undersized oysters from the natural reefs for bedding purposes only (under special regulations).

No more than fifteen 1½-bushel sacks per boat per day may be taken from Calcasieu and Sabine Lakes. Unlimited take elsewhere for commercial purposes, although daily take limits may be set by the Louisiana Wildlife and Fisheries Commission. When taken for personal consumption, recreational fishermen may take two sacks per person from the natural reefs during open season.

Oysters may be taken from public oyster areas by dredges, scrapers, and tongs. Dredges and scrapers shall be no larger than 6' in width measured along the tooth bar. The dredge teeth shall be no longer than 5" in length. There shall be no more than seven dredges in use on any one vessel. Dredges used in Calcasieu Lake shall be no larger than 36" in width.

Any person who qualifies and desired to lease a part of the bottom of any state waters shall present to the Secretary of the LDWF, a written application and cash deposit as determined by the Department. Lessees, under the supervision of the Department, shall stake off and mark the leased water bottoms in order to locate accurately and fix the limits of the water bottoms embraced by each lease. Areas shall also be prominently marked with signs which state the lease number and name or initials of the lessee.

### **RECREATIONAL LICENSES**

Residents and nonresidents under 16 years of age and residents 60 years of age or older prior to June 1, 2000, who have resided within the state for two years prior to application, shall not be required to obtain licenses, permits, or pay

fees to fish recreationally. A resident Senior Hunt/Fish License is required for persons who turn 60 years of age after June 1, 2000. Proof of age must be carried on person. A recreational gear license is required for all persons using recreational gear except persons under the age of 16.

### **Military**

Any United States citizen who is not a bona fide resident of Louisiana, who is on active duty military status and who is issued a military identification card from the armed forces of the United States is eligible to purchase annual Nonresident Hunting and Fishing licenses at a fee equal to the fee charged a Louisiana resident.

Any Louisiana resident, active military member on whose status is ACTIVE, his/her spouse or dependent who is issued a military identification card from the armed forces of the United States, is eligible to purchase Resident Active Military Hunt/Fish license, or Resident Active Military Spouse/Dependent license for a fee of \$5.00. Applicants for resident military licenses must provide an **original letter from the commanding officer** which includes the following information:

- Full Name of Active Member and any dependant requesting licenses
- Complete Address
- Social Security Number
- Date of Birth
- Driver's License Number and State of Issue
- Beginning and ending date of "Active" status
- Must be signed by the commanding officer
- Must include a contact number for the commanding officer
- This \$5.00 license includes basic hunting, big game, bow, muzzleloader, LA duck, turkey stamp, WMA hunting permit, and basic and saltwater fishing privileges.

This license shall be in lieu of basic and big game hunting, bow, muzzleloader, state duck, turkey, WMA hunting permit, and basic and saltwater fishing licenses.

Active Military licenses are valid only during the time when the qualifying military member is on active duty in the armed forces of the United States. Licensee must have Military ID card, Active Military hunting and/or fishing license and driver's license in his possession when engaging in hunting or fishing activities.

Active Military license can only be purchased at certain LDWF locations in person. Applicant must have resided in Louisiana for the immediate prior 12 months, if registered to vote, he must be registered to vote in Louisiana, if he has a vehicle, it must be registered in Louisiana, he must file Louisiana state income taxes, and he must present Active Military ID, Louisiana driver's license and letter from commanding officer, at the time of purchase.

Veterans having a permanent service connected disability classification of 50% or more and who are Louisiana residents or resident persons who are blind, paraplegic, or multiple amputees shall, upon identification and proof of disability satisfactory to the Department, be issued sports licenses without the payment of any fees thereof. Any resident who is a single amputee shall be issued a basic and saltwater fishing license without the payment of any fees thereof, upon identification and proof of disability satisfactory to the Department.

All other resident recreational fishermen shall purchase an annual Basic and Saltwater Fishing License for \$15.00. Licenses are available on June 1 and expire June 30 the following year. All other nonresidents must purchase a Basic Fishing License for \$60.00 for June 1-June 30, or a basic 4-day license for \$15.00, or a basic 1-day license for \$5.00.

### **Additional Licenses**

- Resident Hook and Line - \$2.50
- Resident Saltwater - \$5.50
- Nonresident Saltwater - \$30.00
- Nonresident Saltwater Trip (4 Day) - \$45.00
- Nonresident Saltwater Trip (1 Day) - \$15.00
- Recreational Gear Licenses (required in addition to the basic fishing license)
- Resident Slat Traps (Up to 5) - \$20.00
- Nonresident Slat Traps (Up to 5) - \$80.00

- Lifetime Licenses (proof of residency required)
- Resident Basic and Saltwater - \$300.00
- Resident Basic and Saltwater (5-13 years old) - \$200.00
- Resident Combination Fishing and Hunting - \$500.00
- Resident Combination Fishing and Hunting (Birth to 4 years old) - \$200.00
- Resident Combination Fishing and Hunting (5-13 years old) - \$300.00
- Resident Senior Lifetime Combination Fishing and Hunting (60 years and older) - \$50.00
- Nonresident Combination Fishing and Hunting - \$3,000.00

## **OTHER WILDLIFE FISHING**

### **Wildlife Management Areas**

Commercial operations are not allowed on WMAs unless specified. Check with local enforcement for specific areas.

### **Commercial Fishermen**

A commercial fisherman with a Fresh Product License may sell their own catch to a consumer in state but is required to keep trip ticket records and comply with record submissions. Commercial fishermen who sell their catch to anyone other than a Louisiana licensed Wholesale/Retail Seafood Dealer are required to purchase and possess a Wholesale/Retail Seafood Dealers License and are required to comply with all regulations governing wholesale/retail seafood dealers.

### **Licenses**

A commercial fisherman taking fish, including bait species, from state waters or possessing fish in the state must purchase a commercial fisherman's license. It is unlawful for the owner of a licensed, commercial fishing vessel to permit any person not holding a valid, original commercial fisherman's license to operate such licensed vessel while the vessel is engaged in commercial fishing or while in possession of fish for sale in the waters of the state. Violation subjects the vessel owner to revocation of license and seizure of the vessel and all fish and equipment aboard. Helpers or persons assisting,

or engaged in, operations while aboard commercial fishing vessels need not have a commercial fisherman's license in his name as long as the captain or owner of the vessel while aboard the vessel has in his name a valid and original commercial fisherman's license. A commercial fisherman may only sell to a Louisiana wholesale/retail dealer. Only one commercial fisherman's license is required for each menhaden seine being used to take menhaden or other herring-like fish.

A commercial fisherman must possess a valid and original commercial gear license whenever using or possessing such gear on the fishing grounds. In the event that more than one gear type is in possession on the fishing grounds, a gear license for each gear type must be in possession. A gear license is required for each piece of gear or each type of gear in use or in possession whichever is applicable. It is unlawful for a commercial gear licensee to permit a person not holding a valid, original commercial fisherman's license to use gear under privilege of the commercial gear license. Violation subjects the commercial gear licensee to revocation of the commercial gear license and seizure of gear.

A vessel must be licensed whenever engaged in commercial fishing or whenever possessing fish for sale in the saltwater areas of the state. Vessel licenses are issued in the name of the owner (person having legal ownership of the vessel; includes association, corporation, partnership, or other legal entity) of the vessel and shall list the owner's name and address, the vessel name and registration or documentation number, and any other information required by the Department.

## **SEAFOOD BUSINESS LICENSES**

- Resident Reptile & Amphibian Wholesale/Retail Dealer - \$105.00
- Nonresident Reptile & Amphibian Wholesale/Retail Dealer - \$405.00
- Nonresident Reptile & Amphibian Wholesale/retail Dealer 3-Day \$75.00
- Resident Reptile & Amphibian Transport - \$30.00



- Nonresident Reptile & Amphibian Transport - \$120.00
- Resident Wholesale/Retail Seafood Dealer Vehicle or Business - \$250.00
- Nonresident Wholesale/Retail Seafood Dealer Vehicle or Business - \$1,105.00
- Alien Wholesale/Retail Seafood Dealer Vehicle or Business - \$2,210.00
- Resident Seafood Retail Dealer - \$105.00
- Nonresident Seafood Retail Dealer - \$405.00
- Alien Seafood Retail Dealer - \$810.00
- Transport License - \$30.00
- Alien Transport License - \$60.00
- Resident Charter Boat Fishing Guide (Up to 6 Passengers) - \$250.00
- Resident Charter Boat Fishing Guide (Over 6 Passengers) - \$500.00
- Nonresident Charter Boat Fishing Guide (Up to 6 Passengers) - \$1,000.00
- Nonresident Charter Boat Fishing Guide (Over 6 Passengers) - \$2,000.00

The reptile and amphibian transport license can only be purchased by and in the name of a person holding a valid Louisiana reptile and amphibian collector's license or a reptile and amphibian wholesale/retail dealer's license. Transport licenses can only be purchased by and in the name of a person holding a valid Louisiana commercial fisherman's license, wholesale/retail dealer's seafood license, or retail seafood license. Persons operating under a transport license are prohibited from buying and selling (by any means whatsoever) any species of fish, except when a person transporting fish under the privilege of a Louisiana transport license purchased in connection with a Louisiana wholesale/retail dealer's license buys fish for or on behalf of the wholesale/retail dealer to whom such transport license was issued and only transports such fish to that wholesale/retail dealer. Transport licenses are freely transferable between vehicles.

**WHOLESALE/RETAIL SEAFOOD DEALERS AND RETAIL SEAFOOD DEALERS LICENSES**

“Fish” (in quotation marks) in this section means all finfish, shellfish, and crustaceans.

**License Requirements**

Wholesale/Retail Seafood Dealers are any individual, person, firm, association, corporation, partnership, or any legal entity recognized by law that buys, handles by any means whatsoever any species of “fish”/seafood whether fresh, frozen, processed, or unprocessed in Louisiana for sale or resale, including bait species, whether on a commission basis or otherwise. Wholesale/retail seafood dealers include, but are not limited to, any person who makes sales of seafood on a wholesale basis including any dock, distributor, broker, fish factory, platform, processing plant, or anyone shipping fish out of or into the state for resale.

A wholesale/retail seafood dealer is the only licensee who can legally purchase “fish” from a commercial fisherman and resell such fish. Wholesale/retail seafood dealers are not required to obtain a soft-shell crab shedder's license or a reptile and amphibian dealer's license. They are required, however, to abide by regulations of those particular activities. If a wholesale/retail dealer license is in the name of an individual, the license is only valid for that individual.

Retail Seafood Dealers are any individual person, firm, association, corporation, partnership, or any legal entity recognized by law that only buys, acquires, or handles by any means whatsoever any species of “fish”/seafood whether fresh, frozen, processed, or unprocessed in Louisiana for sale. Retail seafood dealers may only purchase fish from a licensed wholesale/retail seafood dealer. Retail seafood dealers may only sell “fish”/seafood directly to the consumer for personal or household use. Retail seafood dealers are not authorized to make wholesale transactions (sales intended to be resold). Restaurants or grocers that sell raw “fish” such as oysters or sushi are required to obtain a retail seafood dealer license if purchasing such fish from a licensed wholesale/retail seafood dealer. If a retail seafood dealer license is in the name of an individual, the license is only valid for that individual. Retail seafood dealers are not authorized to purchase fish from a commercial fisherman.

Restaurants and Retail Grocers who only purchase “fish”/seafood whether fresh, frozen, processed, or unprocessed from a licensed Louisiana wholesale/retail seafood dealer and only sell such “fish” fully prepared by cooking for immediate consumption by the consumers are exempt from these license requirements.

Restaurants and retail grocers who pick up “fish”/seafood directly from wholesale/retail seafood dealers themselves and transport such “fish”/seafood are required to purchase a retail seafood dealers license and applicable transport license(s). Persons exempt from license requirements are required to maintain records as provided below.

### **Purchases Sales**

Wholesale/Retail Seafood Dealers shall only purchase from a validly licensed commercial fisherman or another licensed wholesale/retail seafood dealer. When purchasing species of “fish”/seafood from commercial fishermen for which a permit is required, they may only purchase “fish”/seafood from those commercial fishermen who possess the required permit. Permits include, but are not limited to: mullet, reef fish, shark, spotted seatrout, tuna, etc. (permits include both state and federal). When purchasing “fish”/seafood from out-of-state sellers and bringing the “fish”/seafood into Louisiana, “fish”/seafood shall only be purchased from those persons legally licensed to sell “fish”/seafood in that state. When out-of-state sellers bring “fish”/seafood in Louisiana for resale regardless of the type of transportation used must possess a Louisiana wholesale/retail seafood dealer license. Out-of-state buyers purchasing “fish”/seafood from a Louisiana licensed wholesale/retail seafood dealer are not required to be licensed when receiving the shipment by that licensed wholesale/retail seafood dealer.

Retail Seafood Dealers shall only purchase “fish”/seafood from a licensed Louisiana wholesale/retail seafood dealer. When purchasing “fish”/seafood from out-of-state sellers and bringing the fish into Louisiana, “fish”/seafood shall only be purchased from those persons legally licensed to sell fish in that

state. When out-of-state sellers bring fish into Louisiana they must be legally licensed in Louisiana. Retail seafood dealers may only sell “fish”/seafood directly to consumers.

Non-Licensed Restaurants and Retail Grocers shall only purchase “fish”/seafood from licensed Louisiana wholesale/retail seafood dealers (see exemptions). If a restaurant or retail grocer purchases “fish”/seafood from out of state they shall possess a wholesale/retail seafood dealer license or a retail seafood dealer license. Restaurants or retail grocers who pick up “fish”/seafood directly from wholesale/retail seafood dealers themselves and transport such “fish”/seafood are required to purchase a retail seafood dealer license and applicable transport license.

### **Records**

Wholesale/retail seafood dealers, retail seafood dealers, restaurants, and retail grocers shall keep and maintain in the English language:

- Records of the quantity and species of “fish”/seafood (fresh, frozen, processed, or unprocessed) acquired; records of fish/seafood acquired from commercial fishermen are required to be documented on department-issued trip tickets.
- The date the “fish”/seafood was acquired and the full name and license number of the commercial fisherman, wholesale/retail dealer, or the out-of-state sellers from whom the “fish”/seafood was acquired.
- Records of the quantity and species of “fish”/seafood sold and the name and license number of the person to whom the “fish”/seafood was sold.

When sold to the consumer, the records shall indicate the quantity, species, and date the “fish”/seafood was sold to the consumer. Records shall be maintained for three years and shall be available and open to inspection by the LDWF. Purchases made from fishermen for which a permit is required, shall document the commercial fisherman’s permit number on the records. When creel limits apply to commercial species, records shall also indicate the number or head count of such species.

## **Reporting**

Monthly Returns to the LDWF. Any wholesale/retail seafood dealer buying “fish” or seafood from anyone other than a licensed wholesale/retail seafood dealer shall complete trip tickets documenting each transaction. On or before the tenth of each month, the dealer shall submit all the previous month’s trip tickets and a submission sheet. For more information on monthly dealer reports call (225) 765-2973.

Oyster Severance Tax. Wholesale/retail seafood dealers purchasing oysters from persons harvesting oysters in Louisiana are responsible for and shall pay an oyster severance tax on or before the tenth day of the month.

Shrimp Excise Tax. Louisiana R.S. 56:506 enacted in the 2002 Regular Session of the Legislature requires an excise tax on all saltwater shrimp taken from state waters and on all shrimp imported into the state. Tax is assessed at the rate of .15¢ per barrel of 210 lbs. or 210 lb. equivalence. With heads removed, shrimp is computed at 125 lbs. per barrel or its equivalence. Imported peeled shrimp is computed at 75 lbs. per barrel. The first wholesale/retail dealer to whom the shrimp is first delivered makes payment of the excise tax. On imported shrimp brought to cold storage, the dealer storing, brokering, or distributing the shrimp pays the tax. The taxes and reports required must be filed no later than the tenth day of the succeeding month.

Promotion and Protection of Wild Caught Shrimp Fee. For license years 2005 and 2006, any wholesale/retail seafood dealer who is required to pay excise tax on shrimp pursuant to R.S. 56:506 shall also pay an annual fee of \$150 (resident) or \$600 (nonresident). Any wholesale/retail seafood dealer who bought, sold, acquired, handled, or purchased in excess of 250,000 lbs. (head on weight) during the previous license year shall pay an additional fee of \$1,000. Fees paid pursuant to this section (506.1) shall be indicated on the original valid wholesale/retail seafood dealer license. Any person who fails to comply with the provisions of this section shall be guilty of a class three violation.

For more information on oyster severance tax, shrimp excise tax, and wild shrimp fees, call (225) 765-5193.

## **Shipping Requirements**

All vehicles used for the commercial transportation of “fish”/seafood must be marked with the name and address of the company. Shipments containing fish shall be plainly marked; records, tags, or certificates to show the names of the consignor and the consignee, with an itemized statement of the number of pounds of fish or seafood and the names of each kind of species contained therein, must accompany all shipments of “fish”/seafood. All operators and drivers of any form of commercial transport who are in the act of loading, unloading, or transporting “fish”/seafood shall have in their possession one of the following licenses.

Commercial Fisherman’s License – only valid for a commercial fisherman transporting his own catch to a wholesale/retail seafood dealer.

Transport License – if purchased in connection with a wholesale/retail seafood dealer license, authorizes to deliver “fish”/seafood to another wholesale dealer; if purchased in connection with a retail seafood dealer license, only valid to pick up “fish”/seafood from a licensed wholesale/retail seafood dealer and transport product to the place of business of the retail seafood dealer; if purchased in connection with a commercial fisherman’s license, only valid to transport that fisherman’s catch to a wholesale/retail seafood dealer to be sold for that commercial fisherman. Dealers are responsible for all activities which take place under the authority of a transport license issued in the name of that dealer.

Wholesale/Retail Seafood Dealer License – good for all activities of wholesale/retail seafood dealers. Vehicles shipping seafood out of state commercially must have a wholesale/retail seafood dealer license or a transport license purchased in connection

with a wholesale/retail seafood dealer license.

### **Exemptions**

Persons who produce and harvest catfish or crawfish in private ponds, are not required to possess a license in order to sell their catfish or crawfish. Any person may purchase catfish or crawfish from persons who harvest catfish or crawfish in private ponds. A seafood wholesale/retail dealer license is required to resell. Persons who harvest catfish or crawfish in private ponds are not required to possess a license to transport their own catfish or crawfish from private ponds to the first point of sale.

### **FINFISH**

#### **Restrictions**

It is illegal to possess any gill net, trammel net or seine on the saltwater areas of the state except during mullet fishing season, special pompano strike nets, or while traversing to the EEZ. There are special requirements in place for persons traversing to the EEZ with illegal gear.

Requirements exist to enter the commercial net fishery for mullet. There are gear restrictions, special permits, seasons, times, and methods of taking commercial mullet. For information about the commercial finfish fisheries, contact the LDWF Enforcement Division.

Fishermen must possess a commercial Gulf of Mexico Reef Fish Permit to commercially harvest/sell reef fish.

No commercial gear shall be issued to any nonresident whose domiciliary state prohibits the use of those nets in commercial fishing. It is illegal to use or employ any aircraft including fixed wing aircraft, dirigibles, balloons, helicopters, or any other form of aerial surveillance in the airspace of this state to assist

in the taking of finfish, except in herring-like and menhaden fisheries.

Mesh size of hoop or wire nets must be at least 1" square or 2" stretched after treating with tar or copper. The use of monofilament for any type net is prohibited in saltwater areas of the state. The use of purse seines is prohibited in inside waters. The use of purse seines is prohibited, except in herring-like and menhaden species. It is illegal to enter state waters with purse seine and speckled trout or red drum on the same vessel.

### **SHARK**

All Louisiana state waters out to the seaward boundary of the Louisiana Territorial Sea, shall be closed to recreational and commercial harvest of all sharks between April 1-June 30 each year. A person subject to a bag limit shall not possess at any time, regardless of the number of trips or the duration of a trip, any shark in excess of the bag limits. The practice of "finning," (i.e., removing only the fins and returning the remainder of the shark to the sea) is prohibited within and without Louisiana waters.

**Recreational Size and Possession Limits**

Species	Size Limit	Bag & Possession Limit
<b>BILLFISH</b>		
All persons conducting a tournament involving score keeping for awards for Atlantic billfish, must register with the NMFS Southeast Fisheries Science Center. All owners/operators of vessels recreationally fishing for and/or retaining regulated Atlantic Highly Migratory Species (Atlantic tuna, shark, swordfish and billfish) in or from the EEZ, must obtain and possess a Federal Atlantic Highly Migratory Species Angling Permit. <a href="http://www.nmfspermits.com/tournamentinstructions.asp">www.nmfspermits.com/tournamentinstructions.asp</a>		
Marlin, Blue	99" min LJFL	
Marlin, White	66" min LJFL	
Sailfish	63" min LJFL	
Swordfish	29" carcass length or 33 lbs dressed weight	5/vessel/trip
Cobia (Ling or Lemonfish)	33" min FL	2/person/day
Drum, Black	16" min TL with only 1 over 27" TL	5/person bag and possession
Drum, Red* (Redfish)	16" min TL with only 1 over 27" TL	5/person bag
Flounder, Southern		10/person/day for each consecutive day on the water
Mackerel, King**	24" min FL	2/person/day
Mackerel, Spanish**	12" min FL	15/person/day
Mullet, Striped		100 lbs/person/day
Seabass, Black	8" min TL	
Seatrout, Spotted* (Speckled Trout)	12" min TL (no more than 2 fish over 25" TL in possession in specified waters of Cameron and Calcasieu Parishes in SW LA)	25/person bag (15 fish/person in specified waters of Cameron and Calcasieu Parishes in SW LA)
<b>REEF FISH**</b>		
Amberjack, Greater	28" min FL	1/person/day
Amberjack, Lesser Rudderfish, Banded	14" min FL and 22" max FL	5/person/day in aggregate
Hogfish	12" min FL	5/person/day
Gag, Black Grouper  Red, Yellowfin Grouper  Scamp  Red Hind, Rock Hind, Speckled Hind, Misty Grouper, Snowy Grouper, Yellowedge Grouper, Yellowmouth Grouper, Warsaw Grouper	22" min TL  20" min TL  16" min TL	5/person/day in aggregate (all groupers, excluding Jewfish and Nassau) with not more than one Speckled Hind and one Warsaw Grouper per vessel and with not more than one red grouper per person included in the bag limit (***)  Closed season for recreational harvest of gag, black and red grouper from Feb. 15 through March 14.
Goliath Grouper, Nassau Grouper	Take Prohibited	Take Prohibited
Red Snapper	16" min TL	2/person/day (emergency rule) (***)

<b>Species</b>	<b>Size Limit</b>	<b>Bag &amp; Possession Limit</b>
Schoolmaster, Cubera, Mahogany, Dog, Yellowtail, Gray Snappers	12" min TL	10/person/day in aggregate (all snapper except Red, Vermilion, and Lane)
Mutton Snapper	16" min TL	Included in 10 fish aggregate
Queen Snapper, Blackfin Snapper, Silk Snapper, Wenchman		Included in 10 fish aggregate
Vermilion Snapper	11 " min TL	10 /person/day within the 20 fish aggregate limit Included in 20 fish aggregate
Lane Snapper	8" min TL	
Gray Triggerfish	12" min TL	
Almaco Jack, Goldface Tilefish, Tilefish, Blackline Tilefish, Anchor Tilefish, Blueline Tilefish		Included in 20 fish aggregate
<b>SHARK<sup>1</sup></b>		
Atlantic Sharpnose and Bonnethead	None	1/person/day (each species)
Sharks other than Atlantic Sharpnose and not in Prohibited Species Group	54 min FL	Aggregate 1/vessel/trip and in possession
Prohibited Species <sup>2</sup>	No Take Allowed	No Take Allowed
<b>TUNA<sup>3</sup></b>		
Tuna, Yellowfin	27" CFL	3/person
Tuna, Bigeye	27" CFL	
Tuna, Bluefin	27" CFL	
Atlantic Bluefin, Yellowfin, Bigeye, Skipjack, Albacore		

LJFL – straight-line length from tip of the lower jaw to the fork of the tail.

TL – total length (measure in a straight line from the tip of the snout to the extreme tip of the tail fin).

FL – fork length (measure in a straight line from the tip of the snout to the fork of the tail).

Carcass Length – curved measure from back edge of gill opening to anterior portion of caudal keel.

CFL – curved fork length (measure from the tip of the upper jaw to fork of tail measured along the contour of the middle of the body).

Dressed Weight – weight of the carcass after gutted, headed, and finned.

Harvest of Jewfish, Nassau Grouper, Basking Shark, White Shark, Bigeye Sand Tiger Shark, Sand Tiger Shark, Whale Shark, Smalltooth and Largetooth Sawfish is prohibited.

\* Two-day bag limits allowed in possession off the water (not while fishing or in a boat).

\*\* Two-day possession limit on multi-day trips on charter or head boats.

(\*\*\*)Captain and crew members shall not harvest or possess red snapper or grouper of any species while operating as charter vessels and headboats as defined in Federal Regulations 50 CFR Part 622.2— their bag limit is zero for all of these species.

<sup>1</sup>All Louisiana state waters shall be closed to the recreational and commercial harvest of all sharks between April 1-June 30 each year.

<sup>2</sup>See Shark Species Group Definitions.

<sup>3</sup>Requires a federal permit to harvest or transport in state waters.

**Commercial Size and Possession Limits**

Species	Size Limit	Possession Limits/Quota	Season
<p>Sailfish, blue marlin, black marlin, striped marlin, hatchet marlin, white marlin, and red drum are game fish in Louisiana and may not be commercially harvested, sold, bartered, traded, or exchanged. Contact the LDWF Enforcement Division for specific requirements governing commercialization of these species.</p> <p>Recreational and commercial fishermen must keep tuna, which have size requirements, heads and tails intact unless carcass length is in excess of the minimum total length. Recreational fishermen are required to maintain sharks fully intact.</p> <p>Bowfin eggs (roe) that are not naturally connected to the whole fish cannot be possessed by fishermen while on the water.</p>			
Swordfish <sup>1</sup>	29" carcass length or 33 lbs dressed weight		
Cobia (Ling or Lemonfish)	33" min FL	2/person	
Drum, Black	16" min TL	Quota: 16"-27" – 3,250,000 lbs. >27" – 300,000 fish	September-August 31 or when respective quota is filled
Flounder, Southern*	None	10/licensed fisherman/day	
Mackerel, King	24" min FL	3,000 lb/trip Federal quota	Opens July 1 until Federal quota filled
Mackerel, Spanish	12" min FL	Federal quota	Open until Federal quota filled
Mullet, Striped <sup>2</sup>			3 <sup>rd</sup> Monday in October until 3 <sup>rd</sup> Monday in January
Pompano <sup>1</sup>			August 1 – October 31
Seabass, Black	8" min TL		
Seatrout, Spotted <sup>2</sup> (Speckled Trout)	14" min TL	Quota: 1 mil lbs.	January 2 through July 31 or when quota filled
Sheepshead	10" min TL		
<b>REEF FISH<sup>1</sup></b>			
Amberjack, Greater	36" min TL		Closed March 1 – May 31
Amberjack, Lesser Banded Rudderfish	14" min FL and 22" max FL		
Hogfish	12" min FL		
Triggerfish, Grey	12" min TL		
Queen Snapper, Blackfin Snapper, Silk Snapper, Wenchman, Almaco Jack, Goldface Tilefish, Tilefish, Blackline Tilefish, Anchor Tilefish, Blueline Tilefish, Dwarf Sandperch, Sandperch			

Species	Size Limit	Possession Limits/Quota	Season
<b>SHALLOW-WATER GROUPERS</b>		Federal quota for Shallow-Water Grouper species group	January 1 until Federal quota is filled
Gag, Black	24" min TL		Black, Gag, and Red closed February 15-March 14
Red, Yellowfin	20" min TL		
Scamp	16" min TL		
Yellowmouth, Rock Hind, Red Hind	None		
<b>Deep Water Groupers</b>			
Misty, Snowy, Yellowedge, Warsaw, Speckled Hind	None	Federal quota	January 1 until Federal quota filled
Red Snapper	13" min TL	In order to commercially harvest/sell red snapper, a fisherman must possess a federal red snapper Individual Fishing Quota (IFQ) vessel endorsement, and must hold or be assigned federal IFQ allocation at least equal to the pounds of red snapper landed /docked at a shore side location or off loaded.	
Schoolmaster, Cubera, Mahogany, Dog, Yellowtail, Gray Snappers	12" min TL		
Mutton Snapper	16" min TL		
Vermilion Snapper	11" min TL		Closed: April 22 through May 31
Lane Snapper	8" min TL		
<b>TUNAS<sup>1</sup></b>			
Yellowfin, Bigeye, Bluefin	27 CFL		
Atlantic, Skipjack, Albacore			
<b>SHARKS<sup>1</sup></b>			
Large Coastal		4,000 lbs/trip dressed weight, Federal quota	All shark harvest is prohibited from April 1 to June 30
Small Coastal, Pelagic		Federal quota	



LJFL = Straight line length from the tip of the lower jaw to the fork of the tail.

TL = Total length measure in a straight line from the tip of the snout to the extreme tip of the tail fin.

FL = Fork length measure in a straight line from the tip of the snout to the fork of the tail.

Carcass length = curve measure from back edge of gill opening to anterior portion of the caudal keel.

CFL = Curved fork length measure from the tip of the upper jaw to fork of tail measured along the contour of the middle of the body.

Dressed weight = weight of the carcass after it has been gutted, headed, and finned.

Sailfish, blue marlin, black marlin, striped marlin, hatchet marlin, white marlin, and red drum are game fish in Louisiana and may not be commercially harvested. Harvest of Jewfish and Grouper is prohibited.

\*All southern flounder caught as bycatch on a shrimping vessel may be retained and sold.

<sup>1</sup>Requires a Federal permit to harvest or transport in state waters.

<sup>2</sup>Requires a state permit.

Note: Some of the species listed here may have seasons, quotas, trip, or possession limits, etc. established before or during the year that are not part of the permanent state rules listed here. For updated information about the commercial finfish fisheries, contact the LDWF Enforcement Division.

### **Shark Species Group Definitions**

- **Small Coastal Sharks**
- Bonnethead shark
- Atlantic sharpnose shark
- Blacknose shark
- Finetooth shark

- **Large Coastal Sharks**
- Great hammerhead
- Scalloped hammerhead
- Smooth hammerhead
- Nurse shark
- Blacktip shark
- Bull shark
- Lemon shark
- Sandbar shark
- Silky shark
- Spinner shark
- Tiger shark

- **Pelagic Sharks**
- Porbeagle shark
- Shortfin mako
- Blue shark

- Ocean whitetip shark
- Thresher shark

### **Prohibited Species**

No person shall take, possess, purchase, sell, barter, exchange, or attempt to possess, purchase, sell, barter, or exchange any of the following species or parts thereof: basking shark, white shark, bigeye sand tiger, sand tiger, whale shark, smalltooth sawfish, largetooth sawfish, bignose shark, Caribbean reef shark, dusky shark, Galapagos shark, narrowtooth shark, night shark, Atlantic angel shark, Caribbean sharpnose shark, smalltail shark, bigeye sixgill shark, bigeye thresher shark, longfin mako, sevengill shark, sixgill shark. Notwithstanding other provisions of this part, a person may fish for, but not retain white shark (*Carcharodon carcharias*) with rod and reel only under a catch and release program, provided the person releases and returns such fish to the sea immediately with a minimum of injury.

**Louisiana – Other Commercial License Fees**

<b>COMMERCIAL LICENSES</b>	<b>RESIDENT</b>	<b>NONRESIDENT</b>
All commercial licenses expire on December 31 each year, unless otherwise noted.		
Commercial Fisherman’s License	\$55.00	\$460.00
Senior Commercial Fisherman’s License*	20.00	N/A
Apprentice	27.00	230.00
Vessel License (required south of saltwater line)	15.00	60.00
Mullet Permit (captain only) <sup>1,2</sup>	100.00	400.00
Mussel Harvester Permit (captain only) <sup>1</sup>	100.00	1,000.00
Pompano Permit (captain only) <sup>1,3</sup>	No fee	No fee
Oyster Harvester (captain only) <sup>1</sup>	100.00	400.00
Oyster Tong (per tong)	30.00	240.00
Oyster Dredge	25.00	200.00
Out-of-state Oyster Landing Permit	100.00	N/A
Shrimp Trawl (per trawl)	25.00	100.00
Butterfly Net (per net)	25.00	100.00
Skimmer Net (per net)	25.00	100.00
Shrimp Gear Fee (one-time annually)	10.00	40.00
Hoop Net (any legal number)	25.00	100.00
Freshwater Fish Seine (any legal number)	25.00	100.00
Freshwater Trammel Net (any legal number)	25.00	100.00
Freshwater Gill Net (any legal number)	25.00	100.00
Purse/Menhaden Seine (per seine)	505.00	2,020.00
Dip Nets (per net)	25.00	100.00
Crab Trap (any legal number)	25.00	100.00
Cast Net (per net)	25.00	100.00
Crab Trap Trot Line (per trap, maximum of 25)	1.00	4.00
Slat Trap (any legal number)	25.00	100.00
Minnow Trap (any legal number)	25.00	100.00
Eel Pot (any legal number)	25.00	100.00
Cans, Buckets, Pipes, Drums (any legal number)	25.00	100.00
Set Lines (Trot, Bush, etc., any legal number)	25.00	100.00
Flounder Gigs (per gig)	25.00	100.00
Spear Gun (per spear gun)	25.00	100.00
Mullet Strike Net (per net)	250.00	1,000.00
Pompano Strike Net (per net)	250.00	1,000.00
Saltwater Rod & Reel (any legal number) <sup>2,3</sup>	250.00	1,000.00
Spotted Seatrout Permit <sup>2</sup>	100.00	400.00
Traversing Permit	No fee	No fee
Crawfish Traps (any legal number)	25.00	100.00
Wire Net (any legal number)	25.00	100.00
Shark Permit	No fee	No fee
Freshwater Shad Seine	25.00	N/A
Shad Gill Net (Lakes Verret & Palourde or Lac des Allemands)	25.00	N/A
Freshwater Shrimp Net	25.00	N/A

\*Must be a Louisiana resident 70 years or older when making application.

<sup>1</sup>Commercial fisherman’s license required.

<sup>2</sup>Must meet qualifying criteria. For more information, call (225) 765-2898.

<sup>3</sup>Each person onboard must have a commercial fisherman’s license.

<b>DEALER LICENSES</b>	<b>RESIDENT</b>	<b>NONRESIDENT</b>
Seafood Wholesale/Retail Dealer – Business	\$250.00	\$1,105.00
Seafood Wholesale/Retail Dealer – Vehicle	250.00	1,105.00
Seafood Retail Dealer – Business	105.00	405.00
Seafood Retail Dealer – Vehicle	105.00	405.00
Seafood Transport – Wholesale/Retail Dealer	30.00	30.00
Seafood Transport – Retail Dealer	30.00	30.00
Four Year Wholesale/Retail – Vehicle/Bus	1,000.00	4,420.00
Four Year Retail – Vehicle/Business	420.00	1,620.00
Four Year Transport	120.00	120.00
Seafood Transport – Commercial Fisherman	30.00	30.00
Fresh Products (Commercial Fisherman’s License required)	20.00	120.00
Fresh Products – spouse	5.00	N/A
Fish Farmer	15.00	N/A
Mussel Buyer’s Permit*	150.00	600.00
Charter Boat Fishing Guide (up to 6 passengers)	250.00	1,000.00
Charter Boat Fishing Guide (more than 6 passengers)	500.00	2,000.00
Bow & Arrow Gear	25.00	100.00
Garfish Gig (per gig)	25.00	100.00

\*Seafood wholesale/retail dealer license required.



## MISSISSIPPI

The following is an unofficial compilation of marine laws and regulations for Mississippi. The information is current as of June 1, 2007, but changes may occur at any time. For definitive enforcement regulations, please contact the Mississippi Department of Marine Resources (MDMR), Office of Marine Patrol, 1141 Bayview Avenue, Biloxi, Mississippi 39530 (228) 523-4134, or visit our web site at [www.dmr.state.ms.us](http://www.dmr.state.ms.us).

### Residency Requirements

A “resident” means a person, firm, or corporation that is domiciled in this state. A “domicile” means a person’s principal or primary place of abode in which a person’s habitation is fixed and to which the person, whenever absent, has the present intention of returning after departure of absence there from, regardless of the duration of the absence. The burden of proving domicile in the state shall be on the person claiming the status. A person holding a current driver’s license shall be deemed to be domiciled within the state issuing the license. If a person does not hold a current driver’s license, the following evidence may be considered for establishing, but is not necessarily determinative of domicile: residence for income or other tax purposes, homestead exemption receipt or other means prescribed by the Mississippi Commission of Marine Resources (MCMR). In the case of minors, domicile of the parents shall be used as evidence of the minor’s domicile.

### SHRIMP

Each freight boat, ice boat, and catching boat used in catching or transporting saltwater shrimp taken from the waters of the state of Mississippi for sale in their fresh state, or for canning, packing, freezing or drying, shall first obtain from the MCMR an annual privilege license and pay a license fee at the following rates:

#### Commercial License

Shrimp Boat under 30’

- Resident - \$50.00
- Nonresident - \$100.00

Shrimp Boat 30’-45’

- Resident - \$75.00
- Nonresident - \$100.00

Shrimp Boat over 45’

- Resident - \$100.00
- Nonresident - \$200.00

The captain shall purchase a license entitled “Captain’s License.” This license shall be purchased at the same time the vessel license is purchased. The fee for a captain’s license shall be a minimum of ten dollars (\$10.00). The individual registered as the captain of the vessel may be substituted after notification and the approval of the Deputy Director or authorized designee.

### Recreational License

Each recreational vessel engaging in shrimping with a net having a cork line length of sixteen feet (16’) or less shall pay an annual resident license fee of fifteen dollars (\$15.00) or an annual nonresident license fee of thirty dollars (\$30.00).

### Commercial Season

Trawling is prohibited north of the Intracoastal Waterway (tugboat channel) after sunset of December 31, except by license live bait dealers. Shrimp season is officially opened by public notice, at such a time that the MDMR has determined that the shrimp have reached legal size, (statistically probable in the second week of June). Additionally, the area south of the Intracoastal Waterway will be closed after April 30 of each year and prior to the opening of the season for shrimp.

### Recreational Season

All rules and regulations of commercial shrimp apply.

### Commercial Gear Limitations

Shrimp may be taken in any manner south of a line formed by the barrier islands of Cat, Ship, Horn, and Petit Bois. North of this line (within Mississippi Sound), shrimp may only be taken with a single net measuring no larger than fifty

feet (50') along the head rope and sixty feet (60') along the foot rope, or not more than two nets, each measuring no more than twenty-five feet (25') on the head rope and thirty-two feet (32') on the foot rope. Trawl boards on double rig, commercial shrimp vessels are limited to a 6'x34" maximum door size. Single rig nets are not affected. A test (or try) trawl no larger than twelve feet (12') along the head rope and fifteen feet (15') along the foot rope used with boards not more than thirty feet (30') in length is permitted.

In addition, the wings of push-nets (chopsticks) may not be attached to the rigid supports or poles for a distance greater than twenty-four feet (24') on each side.

No saltboxes may be used for either recreational or commercial shrimpers. "Saltbox" shall mean any container or similar device in which the salinity is greater than one hundred parts per thousand (100 ppt) and is used to aid in separating the shrimp from the bycatch.

No nonresident shall be issued a commercial fishing license for the taking of saltwater shrimp using any type of net if that nonresident's state of domicile prohibits the issuing of commercial fishing licenses to residents of this state to engage in like activity.

During open seasons and in open areas, saltwater shrimp may be taken only with shrimp trawls, trawls, butterfly nets, skimmer nets, push trawls, beach seines, and cast nets.

### **Recreational Gear Limitations**

Holders of a recreational shrimping license are limited to the use of a single net measuring no larger than sixteen feet (16') on the cork line. Persons catching shrimp with cast or brail nets shall not remove the heads of shrimp on site. Cast or brail nets cannot exceed twelve feet (12') maximum radius or length.

### **Commercial Legal Size**

Shrimp smaller than 68 count (68 shrimp or less per pound) are not to be taken.

### **Recreational Legal Size**

All rules and regulations of commercial shrimp apply.

### **Commercial Pounds Allowed**

No limit.

### **Recreational Pounds Allowed**

No limit. Limit of 50 lbs (with heads on) per person, per day when caught by cast or brail nets.

### **LIVE BAIT**

#### **Licenses**

- Live Bait Dealer - \$50.00
  - Live Bait Boat - \$100.00
  - Captain's License - \$10.00
- (Required for a live bait license holder)

Written application for live bait licenses must be made to the MCMR between January 1 and April 30 preceding the license year.

#### **Season**

Live bait trawling is permitted only during the hours between 30 minutes before sunrise and ending at sunset; areas are not opened to live bait shrimp until shrimp average at least 100 count per pound.

#### **Gear**

Trawls cannot be larger than sixteen feet (16') on the head rope and twenty-two feet (22') on the footrope, except areas west of Bayou Caddy, where trawls may be twenty-five feet (25') on the head rope and thirty-two feet (32') on the footrope.

#### **Legal Size**

Shrimp of 100 count per pound are the minimum legal size for licensed live bait dealers.

#### **Pounds Allowed**

No more than thirty pounds (30 lbs.) of dead shrimp are allowed onboard at any time.

#### **Restrictions**

Live bait dealers must mark their boats with the words "**LIVE BAIT**" in letters no smaller than six inches (6") high on both the port and starboard sides of the boat. The name of the bait

camp must be similarly displayed on the boat and transport vehicle. Fish caught coincidental to the live bait operation may be retained and sold for chum; however, if crabs are to be kept, the dealer is also required to hold a valid Mississippi crab license. Fish retained must be of legal size. Live bait camps must meet the following special requirements.

Each camp must have adequate holding and aerating systems which must be cleaned of dead shrimp at least every twelve hours (12 hrs). No bulk sales of dead shrimp are permitted; dead shrimp may be sold only with heads on and in sixteen-ounce (16 oz.) containers. No more than five 16 oz. containers may be sold to an individual in one day. Someone must be readily available to serve customers during appropriate hours, and each live bait dealer application must include these hours, which must be at least eight per twenty-four hour period.

#### **Fish Retained for Consumption**

Licensed vessels may keep in whole, for personal consumption only, the following types of fish which are caught in the shrimp nets or trawls of the vessel: white trout, croaker, black drum, ground mullet, sheepshead, gaftopsail catfish, and flounder. The cumulative total of fish shall not exceed twenty-five pounds (25 lbs.). In addition, a vessel may keep three-dozen (36) blue crabs. This exemption for personal consumption does not apply to fish or crabs that are otherwise illegal to possess or catch.

### **SHELLFISH – OYSTERS AND CLAMS**

#### **License Requirements**

Each vessel used to catch, take, carry, or transport oysters from the reefs of the state of Mississippi, or engaged in transporting any oysters in any of the waters within the territorial jurisdiction of the state of Mississippi, for commercial use, shall annually, before beginning operations, be licensed by the MCMR and pay the following license fees:

#### **Tonging**

- Resident - \$50.00
- Nonresident - \$100.00

#### **Dredging**

- Resident - \$100.00
- Nonresident - \$200.00

Each person catching or taking oysters from the waters of the state of Mississippi for personal use shall obtain a permit from the MCMR and pay an annual recreational oyster permit fee of ten dollars (\$10.00). Oysters caught under a recreational permit shall not be offered for sale. The limit on allowable catch of oysters for recreational purposes shall be three (3) sacks per week. The MDMR shall issue tags of a distinguishing color to designate recreationally harvested oysters, which shall be tagged on the same day of harvest in the manner prescribed below.

#### **Season**

Season is regulated by legal notice from the MCMR, and notice thereof will be duly published in local newspapers and released to both radio and television media. During open season, oysters may be taken only during daylight hours.

#### **Gear**

Oysters may be taken by any of the traditional methods of oystering in the state of Mississippi, that is, by hands (cooning), with tongs, or by using a dredge. Dredges for oystering may not exceed one hundred forty pounds (140 lbs.) in weight nor may they have in excess of sixteen (16) teeth. Teeth on the dredge must be five inches (5") or less. Restrictions on the maximum number of dredges carried will be established by the MCMR.

It is unlawful for any person to catch or take oysters, by means of dredging, in any of the waters designated as tonging reefs by the MCMR.

The MCMR shall designate certain areas as tonging reefs. The MCMR shall mark the boundaries of the areas designated by appropriate poles, stakes, or buoys of material that will not injure watercraft. The MCMR may authorize the taking of oysters on reefs designated as tonging reefs by dredge, drag, or scoop if the MCMR finds that the dredging, dragging, or scooping is necessary to manage the resource properly. Any dredging, dragging, or scooping authorized under this section shall

be for a specific time period as provided by the MCMR.

Unless otherwise authorized under this section, any boat or vessel which catches or takes oysters by means of dredges, drags, or scoops (other than hand tongs) from any of the areas described in this section or with a dredge or dredges in the water shall have all oysters onboard the boat or vessel declared to be contraband. The oysters shall be taken and confiscated by the MDMR or marine law enforcement officer without court procedure. The captain and crew of the boat or vessel, promptly upon being ordered to do so, shall transport the oysters to a point on the public reefs of the state where the boat or vessel is found and there scatter the oysters according to the instructions of the enforcement officers. Any person who violates this section shall be punished as provided in §49-15-63.

#### **Size Limits**

Oysters taken in state waters must be at least three inches (3") long from hinge to bill. At times, however, the MDMR may adjust this limit upon public notice to that effect.

#### **Limits**

Recreational and commercial catch limits are set annually (set by Mississippi State Statute 97-15-29).

#### **Leases**

The MCMR conducts a program of oyster leasing. Any resident of the state may lease state water bottoms for the purpose of oyster culture. Oysters taken from private lease areas must be so designated by tags indicating the official leased number issued by the MDMR.

#### **Shell Retention Fee**

The MCMR shall assess and collect a shell retention fee for the shells taken from waters within the territorial jurisdiction of the state of Mississippi as follows.

Commercial and recreational harvesters – fifteen cents (.15¢) per sack paid to the MDMR on the day of harvest;

Initial oyster processor, dealer, or factory first purchasing the oysters – fifteen cents (.15¢) per sack paid to the MDMR no later than the tenth day of the month following the purchase on forms submitted by the MDMR;

Commercial harvesters transporting their catch out of state – fifty cents (.50¢) per sack paid to the MDMR on the day of harvest.

Funds received from the shell retention fee shall be paid into a special fund in the state treasury to be appointed by the Legislature for use by the MCMR to further oyster production in this state, which includes “planting” oysters and/or cultch materials.

#### **Restrictions**

Both recreational and commercial harvesters must purchase a license from the MDMR. Oysters may be taken only from those waters approved for shellfish harvest by the MDMR. The harvesting, shucking, processing, and sale of oysters must also conform to all regulations specified by the MDMR.

Following heavy rains, natural reefs and leased areas may be temporarily closed. Closures are published in local newspapers and released to local television and radio media.

Oysters taken from state waters must be tagged. These tags are issued by the MDMR at officially designated check-in/check-out stations. These stations will be identified in the opening order for oyster season. Both commercial and recreational oystermen must check-in at the designated check station before going to reefs and must check-out at the same station. Station hours are from 7:00 a.m. until 4:00 p.m. during harvest. Tags are issued at the time of inspection. Each tag must be completed with the catcher’s name, date caught, area caught, and shell-stock dealer’s name and identification number if the oysters are to be sold. The MDMR shall number all tags issued and shall maintain a record of those tags. The MCMR, at its discretion, may adopt any regulations regarding the tagging of oysters and other shellfish. Oysters taken from other than state waters must be accompanied by a bill of lading indicating the



point of origin. Oysters taken for personal consumption must also be inspected, and a tag will be issued for each sack. Such tags will identify that the contents are not to be sold.

## **SHELLFISH – CRABS**

### **Licenses**

- Commercial Crabbing - \$75.00
- Recreational Crabbing - \$5.00  
(Six pots or traps only)

### **Restrictions**

Crabs may also be taken by trawl; however, the trawls must not exceed the maximum allowable dimensions specified for shrimp and must comply with all other regulations governing the use of a trawl. All crabs incidentally caught in trawls must be immediately returned to the water unless the boat operator holds a valid state crab fishing license. Commercial shrimp vessels are allowed to have in their possession three-dozen (36) crabs for personal consumption.

Crab pots or traps must be visibly marked with the license number (MI #) of the owner or registered color code on the buoy. A crab trap weighted line must be of material easily cut with a knife. It shall be unlawful to have any sponge (egg-bearing) crabs at any time in the state of Mississippi regardless of where harvested. All sponge crabs shall immediately be returned to the water alive. It is illegal to remove crabs from traps for which one is not specifically licensed. A valid crabbing license must be obtained when using in excess of six (6) crab traps or whenever caught crabs are to be offered for sale. All areas north of the CSX Railroad bridges in the three coastal counties are closed to commercial crabbing.

Beginning January 1, 2004, all crab traps placed in or on the marine waters of the state of Mississippi shall utilize the following materials to permanently mark the crab trap for ownership: a stainless steel, aluminum, or plastic tag must be attached to the trap. The tag used to mark the traps must be legibly and permanently stamped with letters containing the applicable licensed crab fisherman's full name. The minimum height of the letters must be at

least  $\frac{3}{16}$  of an inch. The tag shall be supplied by the crab fisherman.

All crab traps or pots placed in the marine waters of the state of Mississippi must be marked with a float of at least six inches in height, six inches in length, and six inches in width (6" x 6" x 6"). The float must have a highly-visible color. Buoys shall be attached to crab traps by use of a weighted or non-floating line.

All resident and nonresident recreational crab fishermen utilizing traps or pots must possess a valid recreational crab trap license for a fee of five dollars (\$5.00). This requirement applies to individuals between the ages of 16 and 65. Any resident citizen who is blind, or paraplegic, or a multiple amputee, or adjudged by the Veterans' Administration as having a total service-connected disability, or adjudged totally disabled by the Social Security Administration shall not be required to purchase or have in his possession a recreational crab license while engaged in such activities. Any resident exempt under this section shall have on his person, while fishing, proof of residency and age or disability.

### **Legal Size**

All crabs (except for peeler crabs and soft-shell crabs) must be larger than five inches (5") measured from the tip of one lateral spine across the back of the shell to the tip of the opposite lateral spine.

### **Season**

The MCMR may establish a closed season or seasons for the use of crab traps in the public waters of this state. The MCMR may designate the closed season as not less than ten (10) days nor more than thirty (30) days per year. Any crab trap remaining in the public waters after the expiration to the seventh day of a closed season shall be considered abandoned and can be removed for proper disposal. The first seven days of the closed season shall be a period of time for crab fishermen to remove traps from the water; however, harvest of crabs caught in traps is prohibited during this time. The MCMR shall publish the season closure dates and areas in a closing order to the general public.

**FINFISH**

**Licenses**

Any resident between the ages of 16 and 65, fishing in the marine waters of the state shall obtain a saltwater sports fishing license for a fee of four dollars (\$4.00). This license shall be valid in any waters south of Interstate 10. Any resident citizen who is blind, or paraplegic, or a multiple amputee, or adjudged by the Veterans' Administration as having a total service-connected disability, or adjudged totally disabled by the Social Security Administration shall not be required to purchase or have in his possession a saltwater sports fishing license while engaged in such activities. Any resident exempt under this section shall have on his person, while fishing, proof of residency and age or disability.

The MCMR shall prescribe the forms, types, and fees for nonresident saltwater sports fishing licenses except that the fee for a nonresident saltwater sports fishing license shall not be less than thirty dollars (\$30.00). The MCMR shall require a nonresident to purchase a nonresident freshwater fishing license and a nonresident saltwater sports fishing license if the nonresident's state requires both licenses for a nonresident to fish in its marine waters.

All residents engaged in charter boat fishing, party boat fishing, head boat and guide boat

fishing shall be issued a separate annual license by the MCMR at a fee of two hundred dollars (\$200.00). All nonresident vessels engaged in charter boat fishing, party boat fishing, head boat and guide boat fishing shall be issued a separate annual license by the MCMR. The MCMR shall set the fees for nonresident vessel licenses. Crewmembers and customers of the licensed vessels shall not be required to purchase an individual resident or nonresident saltwater fishing license while sponsored by the licensed vessels. An operator of a licensed vessel shall be required to report the number of customers to the MDMR as required by the MCMR, and the information shall be kept confidential and shall not be released, except to other fisheries management agencies or as statistical data. All nonresident vessels engaged in saltwater sport fishing tournaments, not to exceed an aggregate of twenty (20) days per calendar year, shall not be required to purchase an annual license as provided under this subsection.

The saltwater sports fishing license is required for all recreational methods of finfish harvest. Any resident who purchases a lifetime sportsman's license shall be entitled to fish in the marine salt waters of the state and shall be exempt from the purchase of a saltwater sports fishing license.

**Commercial Size and Possession Limits**

SPECIES	DAILY BAG	POSSESSION	MINIMUM LENGTH IN INCHES	MAXIMUM LENGTH IN INCHES
Red drum	Quota <sup>1</sup>	Quota <sup>1</sup>	18 TL	1 over 30 TL
Spotted seatrout	Quota <sup>2</sup>	Quota <sup>2</sup>	14 TL	
Mullet	No Limit	No Limit	10 TL	
Cobia <sup>3</sup>	2	2	33 FL	
Spanish mackerel	No Limit	No Limit	14 FL	
Red snapper	Quota	Quota	16 TL	
Flounder	Quota <sup>4</sup>	Quota <sup>4</sup>	12 TL	

<sup>1</sup>There is a 35,000 lb. annual commercial quota.

<sup>2</sup>There is a 40,000 lb. limit.

<sup>3</sup>No commercial sale of cobia is allowed.

<sup>4</sup>There is a 74,000 lb. annual commercial quota.

### Recreational Size and Possession Limits

*It is illegal for recreational anglers to sell, offer for sale, barter, or trade any of his/her catch.*

SPECIES	DAILY BAG	POSSESSION	MINIMUM LENGTH IN INCHES	MAXIMUM LENGTH IN INCHES
Red drum	3	3	18 TL	1 over 30 TL
Spotted seatrout	15	15	14 TL	No Limit
Cobia	2	2	33 FL	No Limit
King mackerel	2	2	24 FL	No Limit
Red snapper	4	4	16 TL	
Flounder	15	15	12 TL	No Limit

Any person authorized to issue a license may collect and retain, for each saltwater fishing license issued, the additional authorized fee. The fees collected from the sale of resident and nonresident saltwater sports fishing licenses shall be deposited into the Seafood Fund and shall be used solely for the management of marine resources.

Participants in the *Very Special Fishing Olympics* are exempt from this section. July 4<sup>th</sup> of each year is designated as “Free Saltwater Sports Fishing Day.” Any person may saltwater fish without a license on this day.

An annual total allowable catch (TAC) for commercial landing of flounders will be set at 74,000 lbs beginning March 1, 2002 and ending September 30, 2002. Thereafter, the commercial fishing season will begin October 1, 2002, ending September 30 of each following year.

It shall be unlawful for any person, firm, or corporation to sell, offer for sale, barter, trade, or purchase any red drum smaller than the minimum legal length established in Mississippi for red drum or red drum taken from the waters of the state of Mississippi during a closed commercial season for red drum.

Saltwater fishermen can use multiple-point hooks (i.e., treble hooks) when fishing with live, dead, or cut bait.

### SHARK

It shall be unlawful for recreational fishermen to possess more than four (4) of the following shark species in aggregate per person per day; with a minimum size limit of 25 inches total length:

#### Small Coastal Sharks

- Atlantic sharpnose, *Rhizoprionodon terraenovae*
- Finetooth, *Carcharhinus isodon*
- Blacknose, *Carcharhinus acronotus*
- Bonnethead, *Sphyrna tiburo*

It shall be unlawful for recreational fishermen to possess more than one (1) of the following shark species per person per day and no more than three (3) of the following shark species in aggregate per vessel per day; the minimum size limit is 37 inches total length.

#### Large Coastal Sharks

- Sandbar, *Carcharhinus plumbeus*
- Blacktip, *Carcharhinus limbatus*
- Spinner, *Carcharhinus brevipinna*
- Silky, *Carcharhinus falciformis*
- Bull, *Carcharhinus leucas*
- Tiger, *Galeocerdo cuvieri*
- Lemon, *Negaprion brevirostris*
- Nurse, *Ginglymostoma cirratum*
- Scalloped hammerhead, *Sphyrna lewini*
- Great hammerhead, *Sphyrna mokarran*
- Smooth hammerhead, *Sphyrna zygaena*

### **Pelagic Sharks**

- Shortfin mako, *Isurus oxyrinchus*
- Porbeagle, *Lamna nasus*
- Thresher, *Alopias vulpinus*
- Blue, *Prionace glauca*
- Oceanic whitetip, *Carcharhinus longimanus*

It shall be unlawful for recreational fishermen to possess any of the following species of sharks:

- Sand tiger, *Odontaspis taurus*
- Bigeye and tiger, *Odontaspis noronhai*
- Whale, *Rhincodon typus*
- Basking, *Cetorhinus maximus*
- White, *Carcharodon carcharias*
- Dusky, *Carcharhinus obscurus*
- Bignose, *Carcharhinus altimus*
- Galapagos, *Carcharhinus galapagensis*
- Night, *Carcharhinus signatus*
- Caribbean reef, *Carcharhinus perezi*
- Narrowtooth, *Carcharhinus brachyurus*
- Caribbean sharpnose, *Rhizorionodon porosus*
- Smalltail, *Carcharhinus porosus*
- Atlantic angel, *Squatina dumerili*
- Longfin mako, *Isurus paucus*
- Bigeye thresher, *Alopias superciliosus*
- Sevengill, *Heptranchias perlo*
- Sixgill, *Hexanchus griseus*
- Bigeye sixgill, *Hexanchus vitulus*

### **LEGAL SIZES**

It shall be unlawful for recreational fishermen to possess any of the following name species of fish under the lengths prescribed:

- Spotted seatrout – 14” TL
- Red drum – 18” TL
- Cobia – 33” FL
- Greater amberjack – 28” FL
- Red snapper – 16” TL
- Vermilion snapper – 10” TL
- Lane snapper – 8” TL
- Gray, mutton, and yellowtail snapper – 12” TL
- Nassau and yellowfin – 20” TL
- Gag, red and black grouper – 22” TL
- Scamp – 16” TL
- Gray triggerfish – 12” TL
- King mackerel – 24” TL

- Small coastal sharks – 25” TL
- Large coastal sharks – 37” TL
- Flounder – 12” TL

Saltwater sports fishermen not fishing in the waters of the state of Mississippi may transport and land spotted seatrout and red drum with size and creel limits less than those above, provided such fish were legally taken in the waters under the jurisdiction of the state adjoining Mississippi and meet that state’s minimum size and creel requirements. Said saltwater sports fishermen must possess a valid saltwater sports fishing license as may be required in the state where the fish were caught. In the absence of minimum size requirements in an adjoining jurisdiction, Mississippi law will prevail.

### **SALTWATER NETS**

#### **Licenses**

- Resident Recreational (Hook and Line) - \$4.00. Valid for recreational hook and line fishing south of Interstate 10. *Saltwater sport fishermen are not permitted to sell, offer for sale, barter, or trade any saltwater fish caught or landed in Mississippi.*
- Resident Gill and Trammel Net - \$100.00
- Resident Charter, Party - \$200.00
- Commercial Hook and Line - \$100.00 (+ \$100.00 for each person onboard). The hook and line license fisherman is required to purchase an additional license which costs an additional \$100.00. This license is a Commercial Fisherman’s License. It is also required that each person onboard the vessel actively engaged in fishing must also purchase a Commercial Fisherman’s License.
- Resident Menhaden Boat/Net - \$150.00

#### **Restrictions**

Saltwater finfish may be taken from Mississippi waters by any of the following methods:

- hook and line
- trotline
- throw line
- spear
- gig
- bow and arrow

- cast net and brail nets (less than 12' maximum radius; no freshwater species may be in possession while using cast or brail net)
- small-mesh beach seine (under 100' in length with a maximum ¼" bar)
- brill net
- shrimp trawl
- trammel net
- gill net
- wing net
- beach and purse seines (all must be under 1,200' in total length with a minimum 1½" square stretched mesh size and 1¾" square mesh October 15-December 15)
- fish traps (smaller than 1½" mesh size)

Multiple or single point hooks may be used while fishing with live, dead, or cut bait (artificial lures/baits excluded).

Nets, seines, or traps used for catching fish other than mullet are not permitted within 1,200' of any pier or harbor. Mullet fishing is defined as any net fishing activity in which 90% or more of the total catch by weight consists of mullet. Mullet fishing using fish traps, seines, or nets other than cast or brail nets is not permitted within 1,200' of any public or hotel/motel pier nor within 300' of any private pier, provided that such piers are in usable condition and extend 75' or more from the shoreline. Nets must not exceed 1,200' in length. King mackerel fishing is defined as fishing activity in which the sole purpose is to catch king mackerel; catching in excess of 10% by weight of species other than king mackerel while net fishing for king mackerel is prohibited. All nets except purse seines and trawls used for mullet fishing must be of a mesh size 1½" square (3" stretched) or larger. Between October 15 through December 15 of each year, gill and trammel nets must be of a mesh size 1¾" square (3½" stretched) or larger. It shall be unlawful for any boat to use more than one (1) such net. On and after January 1, 1997, all gill and trammel nets must be constructed of an approved degradable material. An approved degradable material list will be on file with the MDMR Executive Director or his designee.

Purse seines may not exceed 1,500' in length, except those expressly to catch menhaden and must have a mesh size no smaller than ½" square (1" stretched). Nets or seines must be attended at all times from a distance no greater than the length of the boat in use. All nets, regardless of type, must be clearly marked with the owner's name or license number on floats or buoys placed at intervals of 100' or less. All fish traps or pots and eel traps or pots must be clearly marked with the owner's full name, permit, or license number. All fish traps or pots and eel traps or pots must be checked and emptied at least once every 48 hours.

Nets, seines, or fish traps are not permitted in any of the following areas: 1) within any river, bayou, creek, canal, stream, tributary, lake, bay, inlet, or other water source entering into salt waters except: Point aux Chenes Bay, Middle Bay, Jose Bay, L'Isle Chaude Bay, Heron Bay, South Rigolets, Biloxi Bay, south of a line between Marsh Point and Grand Bayou, parts of Pascagoula Bay; 2) within 1,200' of the shoreline of Deer Island; 3) within one mile of the shorelines of Cat or Round Islands or from the shoals of Telegraph Keys or Telegraph Reef during the period from May 15 through September 15 of each year and within one (1) mile of Horn, Ship, and Petit Bois Islands year round; 4) within 1,500' from the shoreline between the U.S. Highway 90 bridge and the north shore of Bayou Caddy in Hancock County.

Nets, seines, or fish traps are not permitted within 100' of the mouth of any bay, bayou, creek, canal, stream, lake, inlet, channel, or tributary or within any areas that would block the mouth of any such water body. Boats are permitted to use only one approved net as specified.

When landing reports, as required by law, indicate that the 35,000 lb catch limit for red drum and the TAC for commercial spotted seatrout landings (beginning October 1 through September 30 each year) have been reached, the DMR will, with adequate notice, issue a news release and public notice closing state waters to the commercial net fishing for red drum and spotted seatrout for the remainder of that year.

Purse seines may not be used to catch in excess of 5% by weight in any set of the net any of the following: spotted seatrout, bluefish, Spanish mackerel, king mackerel, dolphin, pompano, cobia, or jack crevalle. It is illegal for any vessel carrying a purse seine to have onboard in excess of 10% by weight of the total catch, any of the aforementioned species. It is illegal for any vessel carrying a purse seine to have onboard any quantity of red drum. Commercial fishermen are not permitted to have in their possession any Atlantic bluefin tuna.

It is unlawful for a person to use a gill net, trammel net, entanglement net, or like contrivances for the taking of fish in marine waters within one half (½) mile of the shoreline of the state of Mississippi between the boundaries of Louisiana to the west and Alabama to the east.

It shall be unlawful for any person, firm, or corporation to possess fish in, or in contact with, any gill or trammel net in a boat in the marine waters of Mississippi in the St. Louis Bay north of the CSX Railroad Bridge; in Biloxi Bay north of a line drawn between Marsh Point and Grand Bayou; in Pascagoula Bay north of the CSX Railroad Bridge.

It shall be unlawful for any person, firm, or corporation to set or otherwise use a gill or trammel net in the marine waters of Mississippi or to possess fish in, or in contact with, a gill or trammel net in a boat in the marine waters of Mississippi between 6:00 a.m. on Saturday mornings and 6:00 p.m. on Sunday evenings.

It shall be unlawful for any person, firm, or corporation to set or otherwise use a gill or trammel net in the marine waters of Mississippi or to possess fish in, or in contact with, a gill or trammel net in a boat in the marine waters of Mississippi between 6:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. on legal holidays established by the Mississippi Legislature and as set forth in Mississippi Code Annotated §3-3-7.

No gill or trammel nets shall be set within one quarter (¼) nautical mile of another gill or trammel net.

Gill and trammel nets must be attended at all times from a distance of no greater than the length of the boat in use.

## **GILL NET ORDINANCE**

### **Section 1 – Definitions**

*Mullet fishing* shall be defined as a fishing activity where the sole purpose is to catch mullet (*Mugil* sp.). It shall be unlawful for any person, firm, or corporation, while engaged in any mullet fishing activity or “set” to catch in excess of ten percent (10%) of weight of species other than mullet.

*King mackerel fishing* shall be defined as fishing activity where the sole purpose is to catch king mackerel (*Scomberomorus cavalla*). It shall be unlawful for any person, firm, or corporation, while engaged in any net fishing activity or “set” to catch in excess of ten percent (10%) by weight of species other than king mackerel while king mackerel fishing.

*Commercial eel fishing* shall be defined as a fishing activity using traps or pots where the sole purpose is to catch American eel (*Anguilla rostrata*). It shall be unlawful for any person, firm, or corporation to retain any fish or shellfish other than adult eels while engaged in commercial eel fishing. An adult eel shall be defined as an eel at least six inches (6”) in length.

*Approved degradable material* shall be defined as a material after which one year of immersion in water loses at least 50% of its tensile strength and for which a field test must be available to analyze the material for authenticity or the net must have a placard issued by the DMR which will be permanently attached to the net certifying that the net is made of an approved degradable material. Any material approved by the CMR under Ordinance 5.012 shall be deemed an “approved degradable material” for the purposes of this ordinance, regardless of whether the material meets the 50% loss in tensile strength after one year of immersion in water.

The possession of a gill net, trammel net, or like contrivance, or any other equipment prohibited

for use in the taking or harvesting of seafood under this chapter on a vessel on the marine waters of this state where the use of the net, contrivance or equipment is prohibited, shall constitute *prima facie* evidence that an offense has been committed to take or harvest seafood with nets, contrivances or equipment prohibited by this chapter, unless the vessel is: a) anchored or moored at a permanent facility intended for the mooring of vessels; b) traveling directly between a marina, harbor, or public boat launching facility and a U.S. Coast Guard marked and maintained navigational channel; or c) traveling within a U.S. Coast Guard marked and maintained navigational channel.

### **Section 2**

It shall be unlawful for any person, firm, or corporation to catch, take, or carry away any saltwater fish by or with any gill nets, trammel nets, purse seines, seines, fish traps (except permitted eel traps), or any other like contrivances, in the territorial waters of the state of Mississippi within 1,200' of any public pier owned and operated by hotels or motels for the use of their patrons and guests for swimming and fishing or any harbor or within 1,200' of the shoreline of Deer Island.

### **Section 3**

It shall be unlawful for any person, firm, or corporation to catch, take, or carry away any saltwater fish by or with any gill nets, trammel nets, purse seines, seines, fish traps, and other like contrivances except permitted eel traps in the following areas of the state of Mississippi:

- A) Within any river, bayou, creek, canal, stream, tributary, lake, bay, inlet, or other water sources entering into areas defined as salt waters under the jurisdiction of the CMR, except Point aux Chenes Bay, Middle Bay, Jose Bay, L'Isle Chaude, Heron Bay, Pascagoula Bay, south of a line beginning at a point on the shoreline at the southern terminus of range lines R7W and R6W near Camp Lamotte; thence southeasterly along the most direct line to the southernmost point of Twin Islands; thence easterly along the most direct line to the southern point of Rabbit Island; thence

easterly along the most direct line to the Beacon "Occ R 4 sec 100 ft" on the eastern side of Litton Shipbuilding [Northrop Grumman]; thence southeasterly following the shoreline to the southeastern most point of land adjoining the entrance to Yazoo Lake and South Rigolets and Biloxi Bay south of a line drawn between Marsh Point and Grand Bayou. These restrictions in Subsection A shall not apply to mullet fishing in Pascagoula Bay south of the CSX Railroad Bridge.

- B) Within fifteen hundred feet (1,500') from the shoreline between U.S. Highway 90 Bridge and the north shore of Bayou Caddy in Hancock County.
- C) Within any area that could block the mouth of any river, bayou, creek, canal, stream, tributary, lake, bay, inlet, channel, or other water source entering into areas defined as salt waters under the jurisdiction of the CMR. Areas defined as salt waters under the jurisdiction of the CMR are specified by the Mississippi Commission on Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks Public Notice 2276 in accordance with §49-15-23 of the Mississippi Code of 1972, Annotated.
- D) Within an area formed by a line running one (1) mile from the shoreline of Cat, Ship, Horn, Petit Bois, and Round Islands, or from the shoals of Telegraph Keys and Telegraph Reef (Merrill Coquille), during the period from May 15 to September 15 of each year.
- E) Within twelve hundred feet (1,200') of any private piers, which extend a distance of 75' or more from the shoreline, except when mullet fishing.
- F) Within three hundred feet (300') of any private piers which extend a distance of 75' or more from the shoreline when mullet fishing.
- G) All of the aforementioned piers must be in usable condition with boards spaced in such a way that persons can walk the entire distance of the pier.

### **Section 4**

Notwithstanding the provisions of Sections 2 and 3, above, it shall be unlawful for any person, firm, or corporation to set, use, or possess a gill

or trammel net in the marine waters of the state of Mississippi contrary to the following restrictions:

- A) From 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., no gill and trammel nets shall be set or otherwise used for the taking of aquatic life within one half (½) nautical mile of the shoreline or any manmade structure attached to the shoreline from Bayou Caddy in Hancock County to Marsh Point in Ocean Springs, Jackson County.
- B) From 6:00 p.m. to 6:00 a.m., no gill and trammel nets shall be set or otherwise used for the taking of aquatic life within one quarter (¼) nautical mile of the shoreline or any manmade structure attached to the shoreline from Bayou Caddy in Jackson County to Marsh Point in Ocean Springs, Jackson County.
- C) It shall be unlawful for any person, firm, or corporation to possess fish in, or in contact with, any gill or trammel net in a boat in the marine waters of Mississippi in the St. Louis Bay north of the CSX Railroad Bridge; in Biloxi Bay north of a line drawn between Marsh Point and Grand Bayou; in Pascagoula Bay north of the CSX Railroad Bridge.
- D) It shall be unlawful for any person, firm, or corporation to set or otherwise use a gill or trammel net in the marine waters of Mississippi or to possess fish in, or contact with, a gill or trammel net in a boat in the marine waters of Mississippi between 6:00 a.m. on Saturday mornings and 6:00 p.m. on Sunday evenings.
- E) It shall be unlawful for any person, firm, or corporation to set or otherwise use a gill or trammel net in the marine waters of Mississippi or to possess fish in, or in contact with, a gill or trammel net in a boat in the marine waters of Mississippi between 6:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. on legal holidays established by the Mississippi Legislature and as set forth in Mississippi Code Annotated §3-3-7.

- F) No gill or trammel net shall be set within one quarter (¼) mile of another gill or trammel net.
- G) Gill and trammel nets must be attended at all times from a distance of no greater than the length of the boat in use.
- H) On and after January 1, 1997, all gill and trammel nets must be constructed of an approved degradable material. An approved degradable material list will be on file with the DMR Executive Director or his designee. Any material that has not been approved by the CMR by the October 15, 1996, CMR meeting must meet the requirements of the approved degradable materials definition.

### **Section 5**

It shall be unlawful for any person, firm, or corporation to engage in commercial eel fishing activities by trap or pot in all areas defined as salt waters under the jurisdiction of the CMR by Public Notice 2276 in accordance with §49-15-23 of Mississippi Code of 1972, Annotated, without first obtaining a commercial eel permit from the DMR.

### **Section 6**

It shall be unlawful for any person, firm, or corporation to use at any time trammel nets, gill nets, seines, or any other like contrivances in excess of twelve hundred feet (1,200') in length. Except when fishing gill and trammel nets between October 15 through December 15 of each year, nets must be of a mesh size of 1½" square, 3" stretch or larger, and it shall be unlawful for any boat to use more than one such net. Between October 15 through December 15 of each year, gill and trammel nets must be a mesh size of 1¾" square, 3½" stretch or larger, and it shall be unlawful for any boat to use more than one such net.

### **Section 7**

It shall be unlawful for any person, firm, or corporation other than licensed menhaden vessels engaged in menhaden fishing to use or have in possession purse seines in excess of fifteen hundred feet (1,500') in length. Said nets must be of a mesh size of ½" square, 1" stretch mesh or larger.



### **Section 8**

It shall be unlawful for any person, firm, or corporation to engage in commercial eel fishing as defined herein using:

- A) Traps with a diameter in excess of two feet (2') or a length in excess of four feet (4') or a muzzle or throat with an opening in excess of two inches (2") maximum measurement.
- B) Traps with a mesh size smaller than ½" x 1".
- C) Pots larger than 24"x24"x15" or having a throat in excess of two inches (2"), maximum measurement.

### **Section 9**

It shall be unlawful for any person, firm, or corporation to leave a gill net, trammel net, purse seine, seine, or any other net like contrivance governed by the restrictions set forth in this Ordinance unattended in the waters of this state, and at least one person shall be required to stand by, within one boat length of the boat using said net, at all times the net is in the water. It shall be further unlawful for any person, firm, or corporation to use or have in their possession a gill net, trammel net, seine, or like contrivance on the waters of this state without a visible buoy attached every one hundred feet (100') clearly marked with the license number or owner's full name thereon.

### **Section 10**

It shall be unlawful for any person, firm, or corporation to use or have in their possession in or on the waters of this state any fish traps, fish pots, eel traps, eel pots, or like contrivances that are not clearly marked with the owner's full name, permit, or license number. It shall further be unlawful for said person, firm, or corporation to fail to check and empty each trap, pot, or like contrivance at least once every 48 hours.

### **Section 11**

The CMR, in accordance with the provisions of a duly adopted Commission management plan published and filed with the Secretary of State, or in accordance with a management plan developed by the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council and approved by the U.S. Secretary of Commerce, may establish TAC

rates for commercial and recreational fishermen. Said catch rates, may apply to red drum, spotted seatrout, mullet, brown shrimp, white shrimp, blue crabs, or any other species of fish or shellfish which the Commission deems necessary to advisable. Furthermore, the Commission may close a fishery or disallow the taking of any particular species of fish or shellfish by commercial fishermen, recreational fishermen, or both commercial and recreational fishermen in response to catches meeting or exceeding a TAC established by order of the Commission. It shall be unlawful for any person, firm, or corporation to violate any of the provisions of such management plans as approved by the Commission or to exceed the TAC levels which may be established annually for any species of fish or shellfish.

### **Section 12**

An annual TAC for commercial landings of red drum (*Sciaenops ocellatus*) has been set a thirty-five thousand pounds (35,000 lbs) beginning October 1, 1990 and ending September 30 of each following year.

### **Section 13**

An annual TAC for commercial landings of spotted seatrout (*Cynoscion nebulosus*) has been set at forty thousand pounds (40,000 lbs) beginning October 1, 1995 and ending September 30 of each following year.

### **Section 14**

It shall further be unlawful for any person, firm, or corporation to sell, offer for sale, barter, trade or purchase cobia landed in Mississippi. Cobia and any species of finfish that have an established annual quota and are landed legally elsewhere and/or transported into or within Mississippi for sale must be accompanied by an affidavit or certificate from a foreign country. Cobia and any species of finfish that have an established annual quota and are raised on permitted aquaculture facilities must be accompanied by a bill of lading with the permit number attached and may be sold below the prescribed minimum lengths.

**Section 15**

The restrictions, with the exception of Section 11, outlined in this ordinance do not apply to brill nets, cast nets, drop nets for crabs, small mesh beach seines not exceeding 100 feet (100') in length and having a mesh size not to exceed ¼" bar (½" stretch), trawls for the catching of shrimp, purse seines for the catching of menhaden, or nets, traps, or pots for experimental purposes approved and duly permitted by the CMR.

**Section 16**

Any person, firm, or corporation convicted by violating any of the provisions of this ordinance shall be guilty of a misdemeanor and penalized in accordance with §49-15-63 of the Mississippi Code of 1972, Annotated. Violations of more than one section or subsection of this ordinance, or part thereof, shall be considered separate offenses and punished as such.

**Section 17**

Each section and subsection of this ordinance shall be declared separable, and if any section or subsection or part thereof shall be held invalid or unconstitutional, the balance of said ordinance shall remain in full force and effect.

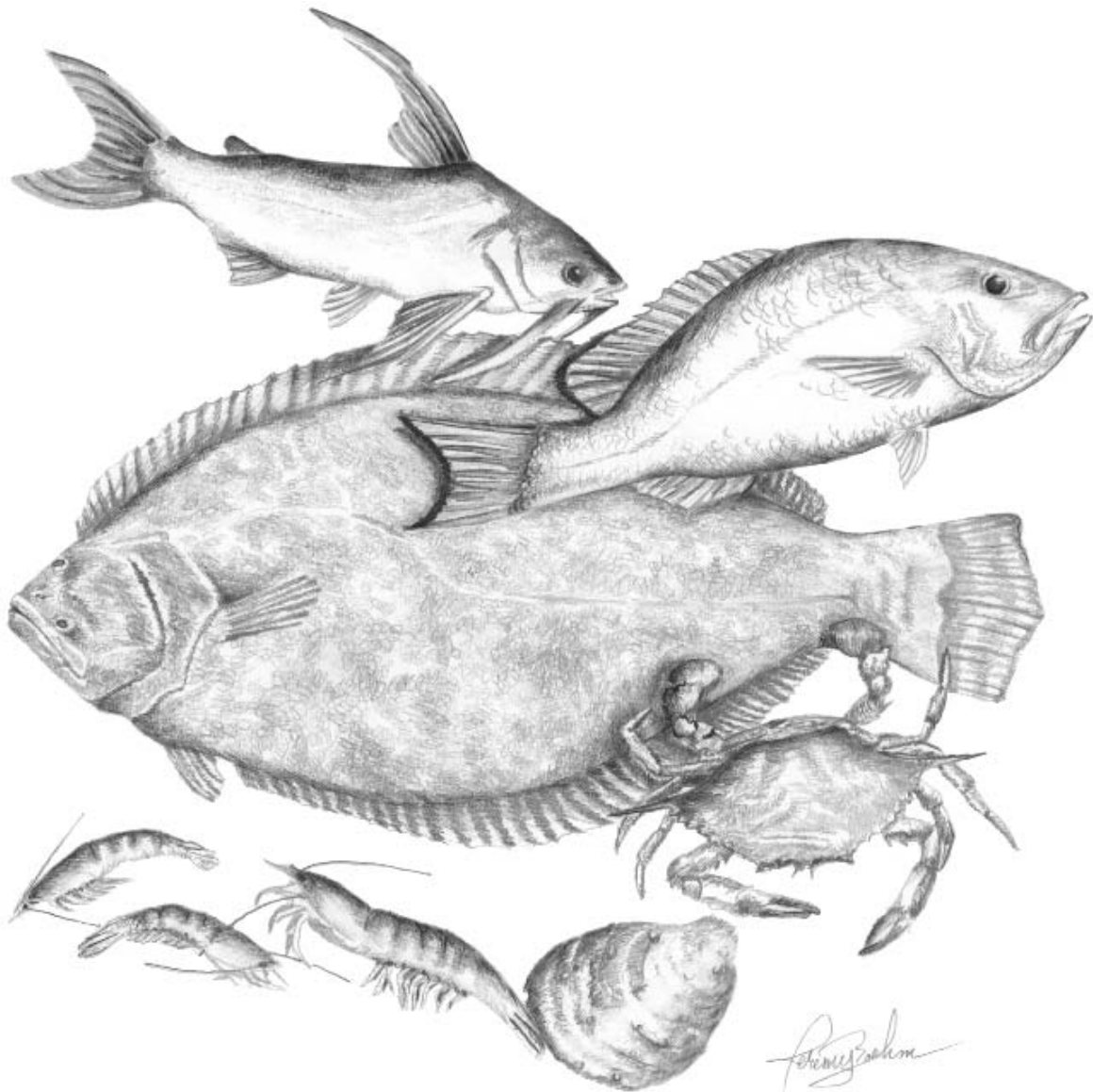
**SEAFOOD BUSINESS LICENSE**

- Interstate Commerce - \$20.00
- Resident Seafood Dealer - \$100.00
- Resident Seafood Processor - \$200.00
- Resident Menhaden Processor - \$500.00
- Transport Permit - \$100.00

A nonresident will pay the same fee for a license that a Mississippi resident is charged as a nonresident if the fee is more than that listed. For a detailed listing of license fees contact the Mississippi Department of Marine Resources at (228) 374-5000.

# 2007-2008 TEXAS COMMERCIAL FISHING GUIDE

Effective Sept. 1, 2007 • Expires Aug. 31, 2008



Information in this guide may change due to Legislative or Commission action.

• IMPORTANT: See Special Notices, Page 2 •

# A GUIDE TO TEXAS COMMERCIAL FISHING INDUSTRY REGULATIONS

Commercial fishing is any activity involving taking or handling fresh or saltwater aquatic products for pay or for the purpose of barter, sale or exchange.

This publication is a summary of regulations for the commercial fishing industry in Texas and is designed as a guide only. Regulations concerning sport fishing are contained in the *Texas Parks and Wildlife Outdoor Annual*

which is available free of charge from Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) offices and from bait, tackle and sporting goods dealers where fishing licenses are sold.

**More detailed information concerning commercial fishing industry regulations can be obtained from TPWD game wardens or any law enforcement office of TPWD.**

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# SPECIAL NOTICES

1. **All commercial shipments of aquatic products** must be accompanied by an invoice and containers must be labeled. (See **SHIPPING REGULATIONS** page 11.)
2. **The Shipper and Receiver** of commercial shipments of aquatic products must keep the shipping invoices on file as a record for one year from the date of shipment. (See **RECORDS** page 12.)
3. **Consumption of Clams, Mussels, and Other Molluscan Shellfish** taken from public **fresh waters** is prohibited by the Texas Department of State Health Services.
4. **Clams, Mussels, Oysters, and Other Molluscan Shellfish** taken from public **salt waters** may be taken only from waters approved by the Texas Department of State Health Services. (Maps identifying approved areas may be obtained from the Texas Department of State Health Services, Seafood Safety Division (512) 834-6757. Additional information concerning **area closures** may be obtained 24 hours a day, 7 days a week by calling **(800) 685-0361**.)
5. **By Order of the Texas Department of State Health Services** the area of **Lavaca Bay** inshore of a line beginning at the last point of land at the northeastern approach of the Lavaca Bay Causeway, then in a southwest direction to Aquatic Life Marker A to Aquatic Life Marker B to Channel Marker #12, then in a southeastern direction to Aquatic Life Marker C to Aquatic Life Marker D to Aquatic Life Marker E to Channel Marker #74, then in a northeastern direction to Aquatic Life Marker F to the southernmost point of land on the spoil island east of the ship channel, is **closed** to the **retention of finfish and crabs**. (Catch and release of finfish and crabs is lawful. This closure is due to **mercury** contamination.)
6. **By Order of the Texas Department of State Health Services** the area of the **Trinity River** from the 7th Street Bridge in Fort Worth downstream to the Texas State Highway 36 Bridge in Kaufman and Ellis counties southeast of Dallas, Lake Como, Echo Lake and Fosdic Lake (also known as Oakland Lake) in Tarrant County, and Mountain Creek Lake in Dallas County are **closed** to the **retention of finfish**. Catch and release of finfish is lawful. This closure is due to **chlordane** contamination and toxic organic compounds in fish.
7. **By order of the Texas Department of State Health Services** the **Donna Irrigation System** located in **Hidalgo County** is declared a prohibited area for the taking of all species of aquatic life. This closure is due to elevated levels of **polychlorinated biphenyls (PCB's)** found in fish samples.
8. Commercial Bay, Bait, and Gulf Shrimp boat licenses, Commercial Crab Fisherman's licenses, Commercial Finfish Fisherman's licenses, and Commercial Oyster boat licenses, are subject to limited issuance. For detailed information see pages 20, 22, 35 and 36.
9. Texas Department of State Health Services recommends limiting consumption of certain fish in these areas as follows:
  - (a) **GULF OF MEXICO: All Texas Coastal Waters.**
    - **Chemical of Concern:** Mercury
      - **King mackerel** greater than 43 inches in total length should not be consumed.
      - For **king mackerel** 37 to 43 inches in total length:
        - Adults should limit consumption to no more than one, 8-ounce meal per week.
        - Women of child-bearing age and children should limit consumption to not more than one, 8-ounce meal per month.
      - **King mackerel** less than 37 inches in total length are safe for unrestricted consumption.
    - (b) **Arroyo Colorado, Llano Grande Lake, and the Main Floodway** upstream of the Port of Harlingen in Cameron and Hidalgo counties.
      - **Chemicals of Concern:** Organochlorine pesticides
        - For **smallmouth buffalo**, adults should limit consumption to no more than two, 8-ounce meals per month, and children should limit consumption to no more than two, 4-ounce meals per month.
    - (c) **B.A. Steinhagen Lake** in Jasper and Tyler counties; **Big Cypress Creek** in Marion County; **Caddo Lake** in Harrison and Marion counties; **Sam Rayburn Reservoir** in Angelina, Jasper, Nacogdoches, Sabine and San Augustine counties; and **Toledo Bend Reservoir** in Newton, Panola, Sabine and Shelby counties.
      - **Chemical of Concern:** Mercury
        - **All Locations:** For **largemouth bass and freshwater drum**, adults should limit consumption to no more than two, 8-ounce meals per month, and children should

limit consumption to no more than two, 4-ounce meals per month. Women who are pregnant or nursing should not consume any largemouth bass or freshwater drum from these lakes.

- **For B.A. Steinhagen Reservoir:** For **white bass or hybrid striped bass**, adults should limit consumption to no more than one, 8-ounce meal per month, and children should limit consumption to no more than one, 4-ounce meal per month. Women who are pregnant or nursing should not consume white bass or hybrid striped bass from this lake.
- (d) **Houston Ship Channel** upstream and downstream of the Lynchburg Ferry crossing and all contiguous water including the **San Jacinto River** below U.S. Highway 90 bridge, and **Upper Galveston Bay** and all contiguous waters north of a line drawn from Red Bluff Point to Five Mile cut Marker to Houston Point in Harris and Chambers counties.
  - **Chemicals of Concern:** Dioxin (all waters), and Polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) and Organochlorine pesticides (upstream of the Lynchburg Ferry crossing)
    - For **all species of fish and blue crabs**, adults should limit consumption to no more than one, 8-ounce meal per month, and women of child-bearing age and children should not consume any fish or blue crabs from this area.
- (e) **Houston Ship Channel and Upper Galveston Bay**, downstream of the Lynchburg Ferry crossing to a line from Red Bluff Point to Five Mile Cut marker to Houston Point.
  - **Chemicals of Concern:** Polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs)  
For **spotted seatrout**, adults should limit consumption to no more than one, 8-ounce meal per month, and women of child-bearing age and children should not consume any spotted seatrout from this area.
- (f) **Lake Daingerfield** in Morris County and **Lake Ratcliff** in Houston County.
  - **Chemical of Concern:** Mercury
    - For **largemouth bass**, adults should limit consumption to no more than two, 8-ounce meals per month, and children should limit consumption to no more than two, 4-ounce meals per month. Women who are pregnant or nursing
- should not consume largemouth bass from these lakes.
- (g) **Lake Kimball** in Hardin and Tyler counties and **Lake Pruitt (Black Cypress Creek)** in Cass County.
  - **Chemical of Concern:** Mercury
    - For all species of fish, adults should limit consumption to no more than two, 8-ounce meals per month, and children under 12 years of age should limit consumption to no more than two, 4-ounce meals per month. Women who are pregnant or nursing should not consume any fish from this lake.
- (h) **Lake Meredith** in Hutchinson, Moore and Potter counties.
  - **Chemical of Concern:** Mercury
    - For **walleye**, adults should limit consumption to no more than two, 8-ounce meals per month, and children should limit consumption to no more than two, 4-ounce meals per month. Women who are pregnant or nursing should not consume walleye from this lake.
- (i) **Lake Worth** in Tarrant County.
  - **Chemicals of Concern:** Polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs)
    - Persons should not consume any species of fish from these waters.
- (j) **Lower Leon Creek** from the Texas Highway 90 bridge downstream to Military Drive in San Antonio, Bexar County and Lone Star Lake (a.k.a. Ellison Creek Reservoir) in Morris County.
  - **Chemical of Concern:** Polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs)
    - Persons should not consume any species of fish from these waters.
- (k) **Trinity River** from Texas 34 to Cedar Creek Reservoir discharge in Kaufman, Ellis, Henderson and Navarro counties.
  - **Chemicals of Concern:** Polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), Chlordane, DDE
    - Persons should not consume any species of **gar** from these waters.
- (l) **Canyon Lake** in Comal County
  - **Chemical of Concern:** Mercury
    - For **striped bass and longnose gar**, adults and children 12 and older are advised to eat no more than two, 8-ounce servings per month. Children under 12 should eat no more than two, 4-ounce servings per month. Pregnant women, women who could become pregnant and mothers who are nursing are advised not to

eat any **striped bass or longnose gar** from the lake.

**(m) Clear Lake and Hills Lakes** in Panola County

- **Chemical of Concern:** Mercury
- For **largemouth bass and freshwater drum in both locations, and for bowfin in Clear Lake**, adults should limit consumption to no more than two, 8-ounce meals per month, and children under 12 years of age should limit consumption

to no more than two, 4-ounce meals per month. Women of child-bearing age who are or might become pregnant, or who are nursing should not consume the indicated species from these lakes.

**Note:** Additional information concerning Texas Department of State Health Services closures or advisories may be obtained by calling (800) 685-0361 (shellfish) or (512) 834-6757 (other advisories) or visiting: [www.dshs.state.tx.us/seafood](http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/seafood)

## OFFSHORE AQUACULTURE REGULATIONS

The Texas Parks and Wildlife Department recently adopted new rules that prescribe the procedures and conditions for operating an offshore aquaculture facility in Texas waters, and implement the department's responsibilities under Agriculture Code, Chapter 134 by providing protection for marine resources in the wild, including endangered species. TPWD's responsibility is to protect the health and viability of native populations of fish, shellfish, and aquatic life in state waters, including endangered species. In general, the new rules prescribe the conditions under which marine species may be introduced into an offshore aquaculture facility without damaging surrounding water and marine resources.

The regulation of offshore aquaculture involves both state and federal jurisdictions. With respect to state agencies, the Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA) is the primary agency responsible for regulating aquaculture, the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) has primary responsibility for establishing and enforcing water quality standards, the Texas

General Land Office (GLO) is responsible for managing state-owned submerged lands, the Texas Animal Health Commission (TAHC) is responsible for management of animal disease necessary to protect agriculture, and the Texas Department of State Health Services (TDSHS) is the primary agency for protecting human health and safety, including seafood safety. The United States Army Corps of Engineers (COE) and the United States Coast Guard (USCG) are responsible for establishing maritime navigation standards and the identification, marking, and mitigation of navigational hazards.

The intent of this rulemaking is that individuals applying to the various agencies for their necessary permissions be able to do so simultaneously so that the many needed reviews, inspections and other activities can be accomplished in the minimum amount of time. However, the rule also specifies that all of these other permissions be obtained before the permit is approved by TPWD. For more information, call Robert Adami at (361) 939-7784.

## GENERAL REGULATIONS

These rules also apply to fish, shrimp, crabs or other aquatic life caught in the Exclusive Economic Zone and landed in Texas.

### CIVIL RESTITUTION

When a Texas Game Warden encounters a violation of hunting and fishing regulations, there will be a criminal complaint filed in either a justice court or a county court. Fines for such violations are assessed by the presiding judge hearing the case. In addition to assessed fines that may be associated with a criminal complaint, violators are also liable to civil restitution for the loss of or damage to wildlife resources that have resulted from the violation. Civil restitution will be assessed following each conviction and each violator will

receive an invoice for this restitution from the department. Failure to pay the civil recovery value will result in the department's refusal to issue any license, tag or permit in the violator's name until restitution is made. An individual who hunts or fishes after such a refusal commits a Class A misdemeanor which is punishable by a fine not less than \$500 or more than \$4,000; punishment in jail not to exceed one year; or both fine and confinement. **For questions concerning civil restitution call (512) 389-4630.**

**Texas residents** 17 years of age or older while fishing, hunting or trapping **MUST** have on their person a driver's license or personal identification certificate issued by the Department of Public Safety. **Non-residents** must have similar documents issued by the agency of the

state or country of which the person is a resident that is authorized to issue driver's licenses or personal identification certificates.

## POSSESSION OF PROHIBITED FISHING DEVICES

It is unlawful to possess a device designed to catch fish or other aquatic life in or on the public water of this state where the use of the device is prohibited.

In coastal waters, a prohibited device may be possessed on board a vessel if the vessel is in port or in a marked channel going directly to or from an area in this state where the use of the device is permitted.

Gill nets, trammel nets, strike nets and seines (other than minnow seines) may not be possessed within 500 yards of any public coastal waters.

## DEFINITIONS

**Aquaculture:** The business of producing and selling cultured species raised in private facilities.

**Aquatic Product:** Any live or dead uncooked, fresh or frozen aquatic animal life.

**Artificial Lure:** Any lure (including flies) with hook or hooks attached that is man-made and is used as a bait while fishing.

**Bait:** Something used to lure any wildlife resource. It is unlawful to use gamefish or any part thereof as bait.

**Bycatch Reduction Device (BRD):** A device installed in the cod end (tail bag) of a shrimp trawl for the purpose of excluding finfish from the net.

**NOTE: BRDs are required in certain trawls.**

**Cast Net:** A net which can be thrown or cast to drop over an area.

**Charter Vessel:** A vessel less than 100 gross tons that meets the requirements of the U.S. Coast Guard to carry six or fewer passengers for hire and that carries a passenger for hire at any time during the calendar year. A charter vessel with a commercial permit is considered to be operating as a charter vessel when it carries a passenger who pays a fee or when there are more than three persons aboard, including operator and crew.

**Community Fishing Lake:** All public impoundments 75 acres or smaller located totally within an incorporated city limits or a public park, and all impoundments of any size lying totally within the boundaries of a state park. For a list of community fishing lakes in your area, call (800) 792-1112.

**Crab Line:** A baited line with no hook or pole attached.

**Crab Measurement:** Blue crabs are measured across the widest point of the body from tip of

spine to tip of spine. Stone crab claws are measured by the propodus length which is that distance from the tip of the immovable claw finger to the first joint behind the claw.

**Daily Bag Limit:** The quantity of a species that may be taken in one day.

**Day:** A 24-hour period of time that begins at midnight and ends the following midnight.

**Fishing:** Taking or trying to take fish, shrimp, crabs, oysters, clams, mussels or any other aquatic life by any means.

**Fishing Guide:** A person who, for compensation, accompanies, assists, or transports a person or persons engaged in fishing in the waters of this state.

**Fishing Guide Deck Hand:** A person in the employ of a fishing guide who assists in operating a boat for compensation to accompany or to transport a person or persons engaged in fishing in the water of this state.

**Gaff:** Any hand-held pole with a hook attached.

**Game Fish** (includes hybrids or subspecies of fish on this list):

- |                     |                        |
|---------------------|------------------------|
| • Bass, Guadalupe   | • Marlin, blue         |
| • Bass, largemouth  | • Marlin, white        |
| • Bass, smallmouth  | • Pickerel             |
| • Bass, spotted     | • Sailfish             |
| • Bass, striped     | • Sauger               |
| • Bass, white       | • Seatrout, spotted    |
| • Bass, yellow      | • Sharks               |
| • Catfish, blue     | • Snook                |
| • Catfish, channel  | • Spearfish, longbill  |
| • Catfish, flathead | • Swordfish, broadbill |
| • Cobia             | • Tarpon               |
| • Crappie, black    | • Tripletail           |
| • Crappie, white    | • Trout, brown         |
| • Drum, red         | • Trout, rainbow       |
| • Mackerel, king    | • Wahoo                |
| • Mackerel, Spanish | • Walleye              |

**Gear Tag:** A tag constructed of material as durable as the device to which it is attached. The gear tag must be clearly legible and show the name and address of the person using the device and except for saltwater trotlines and crab traps, the date the device is set out.

**Gig:** Any hand-held shaft with single or multiple points, barbed or barbless.

**Headboat:** A vessel that holds a valid Certificate of Inspection issued by the U.S. Coast Guard to carry passengers for hire. A headboat with a commercial vessel permit is considered to be operating as a headboat when it carries a passenger who pays a fee or, in the case of persons aboard fishing for or possessing coastal migratory fish or Gulf reef fish, when there are more than three persons aboard, including operator and crew.



**Individual Fishing Quota (IFQ):** A form of limited access that assigns a fixed share of the total allowable catch to each user of the resource.

**Jug Line (fresh water):** A fishing line with five or less hooks tied to a free-floating device.

**Lawful Archery Equipment:** Longbow, recurved bow, compound bow and crossbow.

**Mussels and Clams:** Includes all freshwater and marine bivalve mollusks except oysters.

- Freshwater mussels – bivalve mollusks of the family Unionidae.

**Natural Bait:** A whole or cut-up portion of a fish or shellfish or a whole or cut-up portion of plant material in its natural state, provided that none of these may be altered beyond cutting into portions.

**Non-game Fish:** All species not listed as game fish except endangered or threatened fish which are defined and regulated under separate rules.

**Non-resident:** A person who does not meet the resident requirements.

**Offshore Aquaculture Facility:** All enclosures and associated infrastructure used to produce, hold, propagate, transport, or sell stock under authority of an offshore aquaculture permit.

**Permanent Residence:** One's principal or ordinary home or dwelling place. This does not include a temporary abode or dwelling such as a hunting/fishing club, or any club house, cabin, tent or trailer house used as a hunting/fishing club, or any hotel, motel or rooming house used during a hunting, fishing, pleasure or business trip.

**Permanent Structure:** A building designed, planned and constructed so as to remain at one location.

**Pole and Line:** A line with hook, attached to a pole. This gear includes rod and reel.

**Possession Limit:** The maximum number of a species of game, fish or other animals that may be possessed at one time.

**Purse Seine:** A net with flotation on the corkline adequate to support the net in open water without touching bottom with a rope or wire cable strung through rings attached along the bottom edge to close the bottom of the net.

**Resident:** A person who has lived in Texas continuously for more than six months immediately before applying for a license. (This includes residents and their spouses or unmarried children living at home who enter the United States Armed Forces and continue to list Texas as their state of residency with the armed forces.)

**Sack:** 110 pounds of oysters including the weight of the sack.

**Seine:** A section of non-metallic mesh webbing. The top edge buoyed upwards by a floatline and the bottom edge weighted.

**Spear:** Any shaft with single or multiple points, barbed or barbless, which may be propelled by any means, but does not include arrows.

**Spear Gun:** Any hand operated device designed and used for propelling a spear, but does not include the crossbow.

**Stock:** Native species of fish, shellfish, or aquatic plants intended for use in, being transported to, or contained within an offshore aquaculture facility under the terms of an offshore aquaculture permit.

**Throwline (fresh water):** A fishing line with five or less hooks and with one end attached to a permanent fixture. Components of a throwline may also include swivels, snaps, rubber and rigid support structures.

**Trap:** A rigid device of various designs and dimensions used to entrap aquatic organisms.

**Trawl:** A beam trawl or otter trawl with a bag-shaped net which is used to catch shrimp.

- Beam Trawl – A trawl, without wings, the mouth of which is held open by a rigid beam of wood or metal.
- Otter Trawl – A funnel-shaped trawl, with wings, the mouth of which is held open by floats and weights and spread by trawl doors fastened to the wings.

**Trotline:** A non-metallic main fishing line with more than five hooks attached and with each end attached to a fixture.

**Turtle Excluder Device (TED):** A device installed in a shrimp trawl forward of the cod end (tail bag) for the purpose of excluding sea turtles from the net. **NOTE: TEDs are required in certain trawls.**

**Umbrella Net:** A non-metallic mesh net that is suspended horizontally in the water by multiple lines attached to a rigid frame.

## **POTENTIALLY HARMFUL EXOTIC FISH, SHELLFISH AND AQUATIC PLANTS**

The importation, sale, transportation and release of exotic fish, shellfish, or aquatic plants designated harmful or potentially harmful by the Texas Parks and Wildlife Commission are prohibited except by special permit from the department. The list of potentially harmful species may be obtained by calling (800) 792-1112.

# LICENSE REQUIREMENTS

*License requirements and fees are subject to change. (License fees are not refundable.)*

## SPORTFISHING LICENSE REQUIREMENTS FOR COMMERCIAL FISHERMEN

Residents who possess a Resident General Commercial Fisherman's License must purchase a Resident Sport Fishing License or a Resident One-Day All-Water Fishing License to fish for recreational purposes.

Non-resident commercial fishermen must obtain a Non-Resident Fishing License or a Non-Resident One-Day All-Water Fishing License to fish for recreational purposes.

In addition to the above, a Saltwater Sportfishing Stamp is required to fish for recreational purposes in coastal waters of this state and a Freshwater Fishing Stamp is required to fish for recreational purposes in fresh waters of this state.

## GENERAL LICENSES

### General Commercial Fisherman's

<b>Resident</b> (Type 372).....	<b>\$24</b>
<b>Non-resident</b> (Type 340) .....	<b>\$180</b>

Required for any person who:

- catches aquatic products from the waters of this state for pay or for the purpose of sale, barter or exchange or any other commercial purpose; or
- unloads in this state aquatic products that were taken from water outside this state and have not been previously unloaded in another state or a foreign country, for pay or for the purpose of sale, barter or exchange or any other commercial purpose.
- a non-resident who is residing in a state that denies the privilege of commercial fishing in that state to a Texas resident because of residency status is not eligible for a non-resident general commercial fisherman's license.

#### Exceptions:

- a person who holds a commercial shrimp boat captain's license, commercial oyster boat captain's license, a bait dealer's license and catching bait only, commercial crab fisherman's license, commercial finfish fisherman's license, Class A and Class B Menhaden boat license, or the crew of a licensed commercial shrimp boat or oyster boat **is not required** to obtain a general commercial fisherman's license.

### Commercial Finfish Fisherman's

<b>Resident</b> (Type 371).....	<b>\$360</b>
<b>Non-resident</b> (Type 361).....	<b>\$1,440</b>

Required for any person who takes finfish for commercial purposes from the coastal waters of this state.

- **Finfish Fisherman:** defined as a person who catches finfish from the coastal waters of this state for the purpose of sale, barter, exchange or any other commercial purpose.

- **Finfish:** defined as those living resources having either cartilaginous or bony skeletons (Chondrichthyes and Osteichthyes).

#### Exceptions:

- A person who is licensed as a bait dealer and who takes finfish for bait only is not required to obtain a commercial finfish fisherman's license.
- A person who is in a vessel licensed as a menhaden boat and who takes menhaden is not required to obtain a Commercial Finfish Fisherman's License.
- A person who holds a Commercial Shrimp Boat Captain's License or the crew of a licensed commercial shrimp boat is not required to obtain a Commercial Finfish Fisherman's License when catching finfish incidental to legal shrimp trawling operations.
- A person may operate a boat bearing a commercial finfish fisherman's license plate **ONLY** if that person possesses on board the following documentation:
  - a commercial finfish fisherman's license OR
  - a general commercial fisherman's license, AND a copy of an affidavit permitting the boat operator to fish the commercial finfish fishing devices owned by the person to whom the commercial finfish fisherman's license was issued. The affidavit must contain the date, original signature of the licensee, and commercial finfish license number which matches the commercial finfish license plate number on the boat.
- A person operating a boat for the purpose of commercial finfish fishing is not required to possess a commercial fishing boat license.

#### Note:

- A person purchasing this license will receive two (2) license plates bearing a number unique to that person.
- A boat operated for the purposes of commercial finfish fishing is required to have a commercial finfish fisherman's license plate prominently displayed as to be clearly visible from both sides of the boat.
- **No more than one set of commercial finfish fisherman's license plates may be on board a commercial finfish fishing boat at any one time.**

### Commercial Shrimp Boat Captain's

<b>Resident</b> (Type 333).....	<b>\$30</b>
<b>Non-resident</b> (Type 433) .....	<b>\$120</b>

Required of any person who operates a commercial shrimp boat catching or attempting to catch shrimp and other aquatic products from the public waters of this state or unloading or attempting to unload in this state shrimp and other aquatic products taken from waters outside this state.

### Commercial Oyster Boat Captain's

**Resident** (Type 309).....\$30  
**Non-resident** (Type 409) .....\$120

Required of any person who operates a commercial oyster boat while taking oysters from the public waters of this state.

### Commercial Oyster Fisherman's

**Resident** (Type 370).....\$120  
**Non-resident** (Type 470) .....\$300

Required of any person who takes oysters from the public waters of this state for pay or for the purpose of sale, barter or exchange or any other commercial purpose. (Not required of the captain and crew of licensed commercial oyster boats.)

### Commercial Crab Fisherman's

**Resident** (Type 338).....\$600  
**Non-resident** (Type 438).....\$2,400

Required for any person who takes crabs for commercial purposes from the coastal waters of the state.

**NOTE:** No person may hold more than three commercial crab fisherman's licenses.

#### Exceptions:

- A person may operate a boat bearing a commercial crab fisherman's license plate ONLY if that person possesses on board the following documentation:
  - a commercial crab fisherman's license OR
  - a general commercial fisherman's license, AND a copy of an affidavit permitting the boat operator to fish the commercial crab fishing devices owned by the person to whom the commercial crab fisherman's license was issued. The affidavit must contain the date, original signature of the licensee, and commercial crab license number which matches the commercial crab license plate number on the boat.
- A person operating a boat for the purpose of commercial crab fishing is not required to possess a commercial fishing boat license.

#### Note:

- A person purchasing this license will receive two (2) license plates bearing a number unique to that person.
- A boat operated for the purposes of commercial crab fishing is required to have a commercial crab fisherman's license plate prominently displayed as to be clearly visible from both sides of the boat.
- No more than one set of commercial crab fisherman's license plates may be on board a commercial crab fishing boat at any one time.

### Commercial Mussel and Clam Fisherman's

**Resident** (Type 320).....\$36  
**Non-resident** (Type 420) .....\$960

Required of any person taking mussels, clams or their shells from the public waters of this state for commercial purposes.

### Fishing Guide

**Freshwater Fishing Guide** (available at any location where licenses are sold)  
(Type 600) .....\$125

Required for any person who for compensation, accompanies, assists or transports any person engaged in fishing in the fresh waters of the state.

**All Water Fishing Guide** (available only at TPWD Law Enforcement Offices)

**Resident** (Type 610).....\$200  
**Non-resident** (Type 710) .....\$1,000

Required for any person who for compensation, accompanies, assists or transports any person engaged in fishing in the salt waters or both salt and fresh waters of the state.

A vessel license is required from the U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) to carry passengers for hire on waters designated as navigable by the USCG. It is the operator's responsibility to assure compliance with USCG regulations. For additional information, contact the USCG Regional Examination Center in Houston at (713) 948-3350.

**NOTE: NO PERSON operating a vessel or boat as a fishing guide on or in the salt waters of this state may be issued a Fishing Guide license unless the person presents documentation to the license agent that the applicant possesses a valid and appropriate U.S. Coast Guard Operator's License.**

## BAIT DEALERS' LICENSES

All Bait Dealers who purchase aquatic product(s) from anyone except other Dealers, and all Bait Dealers who harvest aquatic product(s) themselves are required to report these landings under the Trip Ticket Program. See page 12, **COMMERCIAL HARVEST REPORTS.**

### Bait Dealer – Individual

(Type 312).....\$36

Required for any person who catches, transports or sells his own catch of minnows, fish or other aquatic products (except shrimp) for bait.

**Note:** In addition to this license, a permit to sell non-game fish taken from public fresh water is required. The fee for this license is \$60 and can be obtained by calling (512) 389-4647.

### Bait Dealer – Place of Business/Building

(Type 515).....\$36

Required for any person who buys for the purpose of sale, minnows, fish, shrimp in non-coastal counties or other aquatic products for bait.

**Bait Dealer – Place of Business/Motor Vehicle**  
(Type 516).....\$36

Required for any person operating a place of business and buying, for the purpose of sale from a motor vehicle, minnows, fish, shrimp in non-coastal counties or other aquatic products for bait.

**Bait-Shrimp Dealer (coastal counties)**  
(Type 335).....\$204

Required for any person who operates an established place of business engaged in selling shrimp for fish bait. Minnows, non-game fish or other aquatic products may also be sold for fish bait under this license. Only the place of business/building bait dealer's license is required for grocery stores which do not unload or purchase shrimp directly from commercial bait-shrimp boats.

**OTHER BUSINESS LICENSES**

**“Place of business”** means a **permanent structure** on land or a **motor vehicle** where aquatic products or orders for aquatic products are received or where aquatic products are sold or purchased, but does not include a boat or any type of floating device, a public cold-storage vault, the portion of a structure that is used as a residence, or a vehicle from which no orders are taken or no shipments or deliveries are made other than to the place of business of a licensee in this state.

Aquatic products lawfully taken from the waters of another state or country may be sold within this state by licensed dealers without regard to size limitations imposed on such products taken within this state. A record of the source and disposition of such undersized or oversized products shall be maintained by the dealer for as long as the undersized or oversized products are retained and for at least 30 days thereafter.

All Fish Dealers who purchase aquatic product(s) from anyone except other Dealers, and all Fish Dealers who harvest aquatic product(s) themselves are required to report these landings under the Trip Ticket Program. See page 12, **COMMERCIAL HARVEST REPORTS.**

**\*Wholesale Fish Dealer**  
**(each place of business**  
**except trucks)** (Type 314) ..... \$825

**\*Wholesale Fish Truck Dealer**  
**(for each truck used as a**  
**place of business)** (Type 315) .....\$561

Required for any person who operates a place of business for the purpose of selling, offering

for sale, canning, preserving, processing, or handling for shipments or sale aquatic products to retail or wholesale fish dealers, hotels, restaurants, cafes, or consumers.

**\*Note:** HB 2470 of the 78th Legislature mandated a 10% surcharge on fees for these licenses. The funds generated by these increases will be dedicated to a shrimp marketing and promotion program administered by the Texas Department of Agriculture.

**\*Retail Fish Dealer (each place**  
**of business except trucks)**  
(Type 302) .....\$92.40

**\*Retail Fish Truck Dealer (each**  
**truck used as a place of**  
**business)** (Type 316).....\$171.60

Required for any person who operates a place of business and sells aquatic products to **consumers.**

**\*Note:** HB 2470 of the 78th Legislature mandated a 10% surcharge on fees for these licenses. The funds generated by these increases will be dedicated to a shrimp marketing and promotion program administered by the Texas Department of Agriculture.

**Menhaden Fish Plant** (Type 326) .....\$180

Required for any person who operates, at a fixed location on land, any installation where fish and fish by-products are processed by pressure, heat or chemical means into fish oil, fish solubles, fish scraps or other products.

**Texas Finfish Import License**  
(Type 380).....\$90

Required of any person in this state receiving bass of the genus *Micropterus*, blue marlin, crappie, flathead catfish, goliath grouper (formerly called jewfish), longbill spearfish, muskellunge, northern pike, red drum, sailfish, sauger, snook, spotted seatrout, striped bass, tarpon, walleye, white bass, white marlin, yellow bass or hybrids of any of these fish directly from another state or country; or importing, transporting, or selling these fishes in this state. (This license is not required for licensed Texas fish farmers raising these fishes, or persons transporting these fish by common carrier from outside this state to a point of delivery outside this state providing the fish are not unloaded in Texas and are accompanied by a bill of lading.)

**Shell Buyer**  
**Resident** (Type 324).....\$120  
**Non-resident** (Type 424).....\$1,800

Required to purchase for commercial use mussel and clam shells that have been taken from the public waters.

## BOAT LICENSES

Current boat registration or documentation papers must be presented when purchasing a boat license.

A **non-resident boat** is defined as a boat that does not have a Texas Certificate of Number or a boat that does not have a United States Coast Guard Certificate of Documentation that lists the owner's address in Texas.

### Commercial Fishing Boat (Type 304).....\$25

Required of each boat that must be registered under federal or state laws and is used in taking aquatic products except menhaden, oysters and shrimp from the public waters of the state or for boats unloading within the state such products taken outside the state's waters for pay, barter, sale, exchange or any commercial purpose.

### Class A Menhaden Boat (Type 325) .....\$4,200

Required for each boat used in the coastal waters of this state for the purpose of catching, storing and transporting menhaden for pay, barter, sale or exchange. Persons aboard a menhaden boat for the purpose of taking menhaden are not required to possess a general commercial fisherman's license or commercial finfish fisherman's license.

### Class B Menhaden Boat (Type 329).....\$50

Required for each boat used for the purpose of assisting a Class A Menhaden boat in catching menhaden. Persons aboard a Class B Menhaden boat for the purpose of catching menhaden are not required to possess a general commercial fisherman's license or commercial finfish fisherman's license.

### Bait-Shrimp Boat Resident (Type 337).....\$348 Non-resident (Type 437) .....\$750

Required for each boat that must be registered under federal or state laws and is used in the inside waters of the state for taking **bait** shrimp for pay, barter, sale or exchange. A boat licensed as a commercial bait shrimp boat may also be used to take

edible aquatic products, other than shrimp, for pay, barter, sale or exchange from inside waters.

### Bay-Shrimp Boat Resident (Type 336) .....\$382.80 Non-resident (Type 436) .....\$825

Required for each boat that must be registered under federal or state laws and is used in the inside major bay waters of the state for taking shrimp for pay, barter, sale or exchange. A boat licensed as a commercial bay shrimp boat may also be used to take other edible aquatic products for pay, barter, sale or exchange from inside waters.

### Gulf-Shrimp Boat Resident (Type 330).....\$495 Non-resident (Type 430).....\$1,485

Required for each boat that must be registered under federal or state laws and is used in the Gulf of Mexico or "outside" waters of the state for taking shrimp and other edible aquatic products for pay, barter, sale or exchange or for boats unloading within the state such products taken outside the state's waters.

### Commercial Oyster Boat License Resident (Type 306).....\$420 Non-resident (Type 406).....\$1,680

Required for each boat used to transport or for taking oysters for pay or for the purpose of sale, barter, or exchange or any other commercial purpose from the public waters of this state by utilizing a dredge, tongs, or other mechanical means.

## PERMIT TO SELL NON-GAME FISH TAKEN FROM PUBLIC FRESH WATER

In addition to a General Commercial Fisherman's License, Bait Dealer's License, and/or a Commercial Fishing Boat License (if using a boat to catch non-game fish), no person may sell a non-game fish taken from the public fresh waters of this state unless that person first obtains a permit to sell non-game fish. (See the section entitled **SALE OF FISH — FRESH WATER**, page 15 of this guide.) The fee for the PERMIT TO SELL NON-GAME FISH is \$60, and can be obtained by calling (512) 389-8037.

## PURCHASE OF AQUATIC PRODUCTS FOR RESALE

**Wholesale Fish Dealers** may purchase for resale, or receive for sale, barter, exchange, or any other commercial purpose aquatic products **only** from persons or entities in this state who hold a valid:

- general commercial fisherman's license;
- commercial oyster fisherman's license;
- commercial oyster boat license;
- wholesale fish dealer's license;
- fish farmer's license;
- commercial oyster boat captain's license;

- commercial shrimp boat license;
- commercial shrimp boat captain's license;
- commercial crab fisherman's license; or
- commercial finfish fisherman's license.

All Wholesale Fish Dealers who purchase aquatic product(s) from anyone except other Dealers, and all Wholesale Fish Dealers who harvest aquatic product(s) themselves are required to report these landings under the Trip Ticket Program. See page 12, **COMMERCIAL HARVEST REPORTS**.

**Retail Fish Dealers** may purchase for resale, or receive for sale, barter, exchange, or any other commercial purpose aquatic products **only** from persons or entities in this state who hold a valid:

- wholesale fish dealer's license;
- fish farmer's license;
- general commercial fisherman's license;
- commercial shrimp boat captain's license;
- commercial shrimp boat license when the retail fish dealer has given written notification to the department of the dealer's intent to purchase aquatic products from the holder of a general commercial fisherman's license or a commercial shrimp boat license;
- commercial crab fisherman's license; or
- commercial finfish fisherman's license.

All Retail Fish Dealers who purchase aquatic product(s) from anyone except other Dealers, and all Retail Fish Dealers who harvest aquatic product(s) themselves are required to report these landings under the Trip Ticket Program. See page 12, **COMMERCIAL HARVEST REPORTS**.

**Restaurant owners, operators or employees** may purchase aquatic products (**only** for consumption by the restaurant's patrons on the restaurant premises) **only** from persons or entities in this state who hold a valid:

- general commercial fisherman's license;
- wholesale fish dealer's license;
- fish farmer's license;
- commercial shrimp boat license;
- commercial shrimp boat captain's license;
- commercial crab fisherman's license; or
- commercial finfish fisherman's license.

## SHIPPING REGULATIONS

### AQUATIC PRODUCT TRANSPORTATION INVOICES

All aquatic products (uncooked, fresh or frozen fish, shrimp, oysters, crabs, etc.) shipped for commercial purposes must be accompanied by an invoice prepared by the shipper containing the following information:

- Invoice Number
- Date of Shipment
- Name and Physical Address of Shipper (Fish Dealer)
- Name and Physical Address of Receiver
- Dealer Number of Shipper
- Quantity of Aquatic Products contained in the shipment; finfish by species, number or weight; oysters by volume; and all other aquatic products by weight.

Shippers shall sequentially number invoices during each license year. No number may be used twice during any one license period.

Shipper and receiver shall maintain a copy of invoice for a period of one year from date of shipment.

### INTERSTATE TRANSPORTATION

No person may bring into this state and deliver aquatic products for commercial purposes unless the person has obtained a wholesale fish dealer's license, a retail fish dealer's license, or a bait dealer's license, as applicable, issued by the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department.

Aquatic products lawfully taken from the waters of another state may be sold within this state by licensed dealers without regard to size limitations imposed on such products taken within this state. A record of the source and disposition of such undersize or oversize products shall be maintained by the dealer for as long as the undersize or oversize products are retained and for at least 30 days thereafter.

No person may transport aquatic products out of this state for commercial purposes unless the trans-

porter first obtains a wholesale fish dealer's license or a retail fish dealer's license. A person who delivers aquatic products for a licensed wholesale fish dealer or retail fish dealer must possess a copy of the dealer's license while making deliveries.

### CONTAINERS

All containers of aquatic products shipped for commercial purposes must have a label attached to the outside listing the following information:

- Aquatic Products Transportation Invoice number of the shipment of which the container is a part
- Kind of aquatic product contained
- Weight of aquatic product in the container

Finfish may not be shipped in individual packages that contain more than one species.

A commercial fisherman licensed to take aquatic products from Texas waters transporting **his own catch** within this state is not required to invoice the shipment or label containers.

### LICENSES

Any person transporting aquatic products for commercial purposes must have in his possession the license authorizing the shipment.

- Commercial Finfish Fisherman's License OR
- General Commercial Fisherman's License and an affidavit from the holder of the Commercial Finfish Fisherman's License authorizing the person to operate their fishing devices for shipments of the fisherman's own catch.
- Commercial Shrimp Boat License (or copy of Commercial Shrimp Boat License) and Commercial Shrimp Boat Captain's License for shipments of shrimp and/or other aquatic products taken on a commercial shrimp boat.
- Commercial Oyster Boat Captain's License and Commercial Oyster Boat License (or copy of Commercial Oyster Boat License), for shipments of oysters taken on a commercial oyster boat.

- Commercial Oyster Fisherman’s License for shipments of the fisherman’s own catch of oysters.
- Wholesale or Retail Fish Dealer’s Truck Licenses (original license) or a **copy** of the Wholesale or Retail Fish Dealer’s business license for shipments going to or from the place of business of fish dealer.

No person may transport aquatic products **out** of this state for commercial purposes unless the shipper first obtains a Wholesale Fish Dealer’s License, Retail Fish Dealer’s License or a Bait Dealer’s License, whichever is applicable.

No person may bring into this state and **deliver** aquatic products for any commercial purpose unless he has obtained a Wholesale Fish Dealer’s License or a Retail Fish Dealer’s License, whichever is applicable.

A motor carrier providing contract carriage of aquatic products for a fish dealer is not responsible for invoicing or labeling the shipment or obtaining a Wholesale or Retail Fish Dealer’s License. The shipper (seller of the aquatic product) is responsible for invoicing and labeling the shipment and obtaining the proper dealer’s license.

## RECORDS

### COMMERCIAL HARVEST REPORTS

#### Trip Tickets

**NOTE:** Since Sept. 1, 2006, Monthly Aquatic Product Reports were replaced by Trip Tickets. Transactions will be recorded by individual trip regardless of the species involved in the transaction, and each trip’s landings will be linked to information about the fisherman and his equipment. These transactions may be recorded electronically [using software provided by TPWD at the address below] or on paper using forms provided by TPWD [at the same address].

All dealers who purchase or receive aquatic product(s) from anyone other than another dealer **MUST** file a monthly report with the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department on or before the 10th day of each month following the month in which the reportable activity occurred. The report must be filed every month, whether or not reportable activity occurs. The filing of an incorrect or false report is unlawful. This report must include the forms for all transactions conducted during the period covered by the report. All commercial fishermen who sell their catch to individuals other than wholesale fish dealer, retail fish dealer, wholesale truck dealer, retail truck dealer, bait dealer, bait-shrimp dealer are responsible for reporting these sales.

#### A trip ticket must include:

- the name of the seller;
- the **commercial license** number of the seller;
- commercial license type of seller;
- Texas driver’s license;
- the date of sale;
- the number of pounds sold by species;
- unit and condition codes
- count and/or market size
- the water body or bay system from which the aquatic products were taken;
- price paid per pound per species;
- gear used to harvest the aquatic product;
- trip time;
- fishing time;
- commercial fishing vessel name;
- commercial fishing vessel registration number;
- dealer name; and
- the **commercial license** number of the dealer.

Trip tickets are required for all **aquatic** products and must be completed at the time the products are delivered from the fisherman to the dealer.

#### Source of Forms

Dealer report forms for saltwater and freshwater products are available by writing: Commercial Harvest Program, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, Dickinson Marine Laboratory, 1502 F.M. 517 E, Dickinson, TX 77539 or calling (281) 534-0109.

## MARKING OF VEHICLES

All motor vehicles, trailers or semi-trailers transporting aquatic products for commercial purposes are required to exhibit the inscription “FISH” on the rear of the vehicle. The inscription shall read from left to right, be attached or painted on the vehicle in block letters of good proportion in contrasting color to the background and be at least 6 inches in height, or be marked in the lower left portion, on the rear of the vehicle with a decal (see illustration – right) as prescribed by the Texas Parks and Wildlife Commission. For information call (512) 389-4628. **Each individual dealer or company is responsible for generating their own decal according to provided guidelines.**

A motor carrier providing contract carriage of aquatic products for a fish dealer is not required to mark his vehicle providing the motor carrier does not own or have part ownership of the aquatic products.



(Reduced version of truck decal. Must be at least six inches by six inches in size and in contrasting color to the truck.)

# IMPORTATION REGULATIONS

No person may import into this state or possess a wildlife resource taken outside this state, unless the person possessing the wildlife resource produces on demand by a game warden a valid hunting, fishing or other applicable license, stamp, tag, permit or document for the state or country in which the wildlife resource was legally taken.

A person importing or possessing a wildlife resource from another state or country must produce upon demand by a game warden a valid driver's license or personal identification certificate.

Fish imported into Texas and landed by boat, must comply with Texas bag and size limits. This does not apply to fish caught under the authority of an approved Federal Fishery Management Plan.

## IMPORTATION OF COMMERCIALY PROTECTED FISH

All shipments of commercially protected finfish must be accompanied by a "Commercially Protected Finfish Shipping Invoice." A copy of the invoice must accompany all commercially protected finfish shipments through their place of final sale to the consumer.

### Commercially Protected Finfish

- Bass of the genus *Micropterus*\*
- Bass, striped\*
- Bass, white\*
- Bass, yellow
- Catfish, flathead\*
- Crappie, black\*
- Crappie, white\*
- Drum, red\*
- Grouper, goliath (formerly called jewfish)
- Marlin, blue
- Marlin, white
- Muskellunge
- Pike, northern
- Sailfish
- Sauger
- Seatrout, spotted
- Snook
- Spearfish, longbill
- Tarpon
- Walleye
- Hybrids of any of these fish\*

**\*NOTICE:** To be lawfully imported, sold or purchased in Texas, **bass of the genus *Micropterus*, crappie, flathead catfish, red drum, striped bass, white bass or a hybrid** of any of these fish must be farm raised and fed a prepared feed containing 20% or more of plant protein or grain by-products as a primary food source.

### Commercially Protected Finfish Invoice

1. Shall accompany all shipments of commercially protected finfish imported, exported or shipped within the state.

2. Shall contain all of the following information, correctly stated and legibly written:

- (a) Commercially Protected Finfish Shipping Invoice number;
- (b) Date of shipment;
- (c) Name and physical address of shipper;
- (d) Name and physical address of receiver;
- (e) Shipper's and receiver's Texas Finfish Import Dealer number when required;
- (f) Number and weight of whole fish or fillets by species contained in the shipment; and
- (g) State (or country, if outside the United States) of origin.

3. Shall be in the form prescribed by the Texas Parks and Wildlife Commission and 8<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> x 11 inches in size.

4. Be sequentially numbered during the license period.

5. The **shipper** and **receiver** is responsible for submitting a copy of each invoice for shipments made during each month to the **Texas Parks and Wildlife Department Regional Law Enforcement office** on or before the **10th day of the following month**, except a retail dealer or restaurant selling only to the consumer is not required to submit a copy of the invoice.

6. One copy of each invoice must be **retained** by the shipper and receiver, including retail dealers and restaurants, for a period of at least one year from the date of shipment.

### Package Requirements

Commercial shipments of commercially protected finfish must be shipped in containers whose volume is no greater than six cubic feet or in containers that do not contain more than three individual fish each.

### Package Labels

Each package of commercially protected finfish shall be labeled as to its contents. Labels shall be placed on the outside of each package and contain the following information:

1. The commercially protected finfish invoice number of the shipment of which the package is a part.

2. The number and weight of whole fish or fillets by species contained in the package.

### Importation of Commercially Protected Finfish from the EEZ by Commercial Fishermen

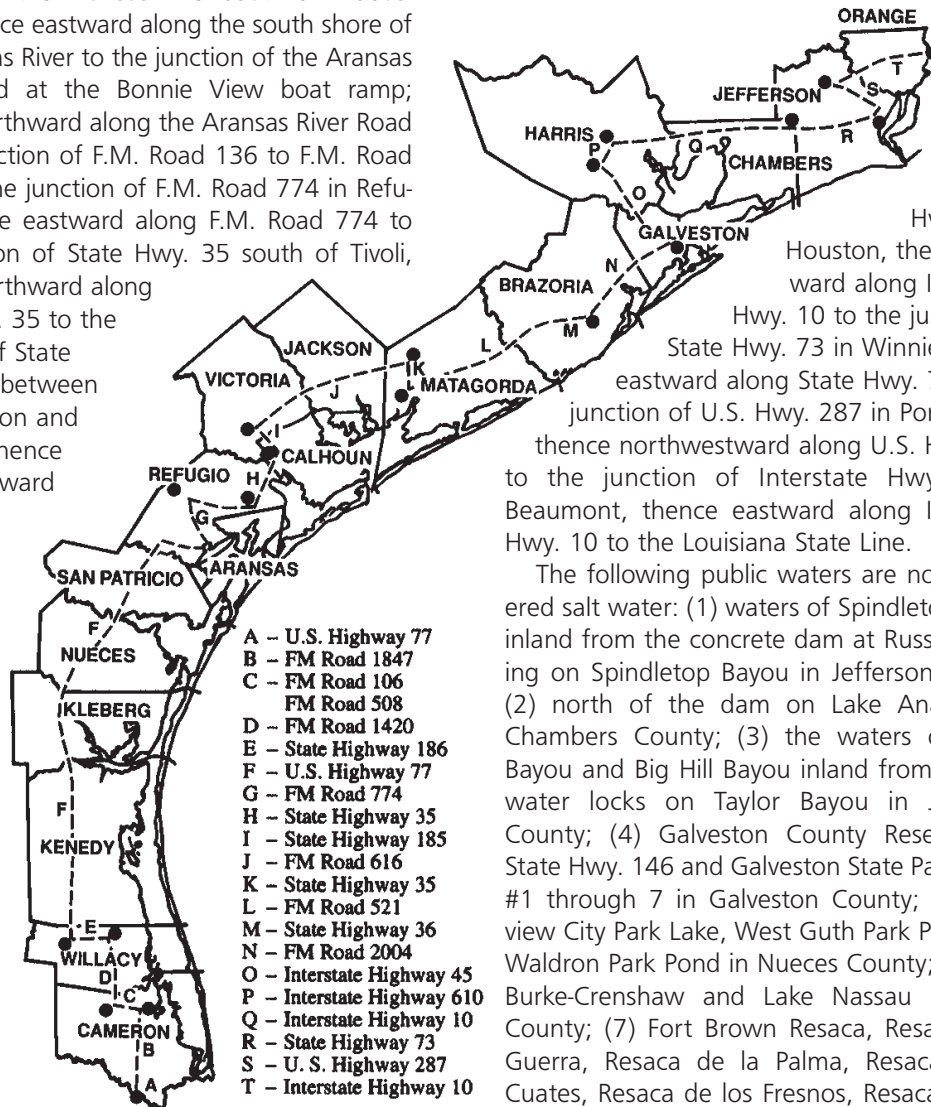
A commercially protected finfish lawfully taken or raised for commercial purposes in the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) under the authority of a Federal Fishery Management Plan or Federal Permit may be transported into this state by the harvesting vessel. These commercially protected finfish may only be unloaded to the holder of a Texas Finfish Import License.



# FRESHWATER/SALTWATER BOUNDARY

All public waters east and south of the following boundary are considered salt waters: beginning at the International Toll Bridge in Brownsville, northward along U.S. Hwy. 77 to the junction of Paredes Lines Road (F.M. Road 1847) in Brownsville, thence northward along F.M. Road 1847 to the junction of F.M. Road 106 east of Rio Hondo, thence westward along F.M. Road 106 to the junction of F.M. Road 508 in Rio Hondo, thence northward along F.M. Road 508 to the junction of F.M. Road 1420, thence northward along F.M. Road 1420 to the junction of State Hwy. 186 east of Raymondville, thence westward along State Hwy. 186 to the junction of U.S. Hwy. 77 near Raymondville, thence northward along U.S. Hwy. 77 to the junction of the Aransas River south of Woodsboro, thence eastward along the south shore of the Aransas River to the junction of the Aransas River Road at the Bonnie View boat ramp; thence northward along the Aransas River Road to the junction of F.M. Road 136 to F.M. Road 2678 to the junction of F.M. Road 774 in Refugio, thence eastward along F.M. Road 774 to the junction of State Hwy. 35 south of Tivoli, thence northward along State Hwy. 35 to the junction of State Hwy. 185 between Bloomington and Seadrift, thence northwestward

along State Hwy. 185 to the junction of F.M. Road 616 in Bloomington, thence northeastward along F.M. Road 616 to the junction of State Hwy. 35 east of Blessing, thence southward along State Hwy. 35 to the junction of F.M. Road 521 north of Palacios, thence northeastward along F.M. Road 521 to the junction of State Hwy. 36 south of Brazoria, thence southward along State Hwy. 36 to the junction of F.M. Road 2004, thence northward along F.M. Road 2004 to the junction of Interstate Hwy. 45 between Dickinson and La Marque, thence northwestward along Interstate Hwy. 45 to the junction of Interstate Hwy. 610 in Houston, thence east and northward along Interstate Hwy. 610 to the junction of Interstate



Hwy. 10 in Houston, thence eastward along Interstate Hwy. 10 to the junction of State Hwy. 73 in Winnie, thence eastward along State Hwy. 73 to the junction of U.S. Hwy. 287 in Port Arthur, thence northwestward along U.S. Hwy. 287 to the junction of Interstate Hwy. 10 in Beaumont, thence eastward along Interstate Hwy. 10 to the Louisiana State Line.

The following public waters are not considered salt water: (1) waters of Spindletop Bayou inland from the concrete dam at Russels Landing on Spindletop Bayou in Jefferson County; (2) north of the dam on Lake Anahuac in Chambers County; (3) the waters of Taylor Bayou and Big Hill Bayou inland from the saltwater locks on Taylor Bayou in Jefferson County; (4) Galveston County Reservoir on State Hwy. 146 and Galveston State Park Ponds #1 through 7 in Galveston County; (5) Lakeview City Park Lake, West Guth Park Pond, and Waldron Park Pond in Nueces County; (6) Lake Burke-Crenshaw and Lake Nassau in Harris County; (7) Fort Brown Resaca, Resaca de la Guerra, Resaca de la Palma, Resaca de los Cuates, Resaca de los Fresnos, Resaca Rancho Viejo, and Town Resaca in Cameron County; and (8) Little Chocolate Bayou Park Ponds #1 and #2 in Port Lavaca in Calhoun County.

# FISH

## GENERAL REGULATIONS

It is unlawful to take, attempt to take, possess, sell or purchase fish within a protected length limit, in greater numbers, by other means, or at any time or place other than as provided in this guide.

It is unlawful to transport by boat or person any fish within a protected length limit, or in excess of the daily bag limit or possession limit established for those fish.

No person on board a licensed commercial fishing boat (a commercial fishing boat, commercial shrimp boat, menhaden boat, commercial oyster boat) may possess any fish species whose sale is prohibited. To legally sport fish from a licensed commercial fishing boat the commercial plates must be removed from the boat. While no commercial plates are on board all sport fishing regulations apply including size, bag and possession limits. While the commercial plates are on board, all commercial regulations apply, including size, bag and possession limits.

No person may possess a finfish of any species, except broadbill swordfish, shark or king mackerel, taken from public water that has the head or tail removed until such person finally lands the catch on the mainland, a peninsula or barrier island, not including jetties, piers and does not transport the catch by boat.

**Leaving fish to die.** A person commits an offense if the person leaves **edible fish** or **bait fish** taken from the public waters of this state to die without the intent to retain the fish for consumption or bait.

## PROHIBITED ACTS IN ALL PUBLIC WATERS

It is unlawful to fail to immediately remove the intestines from **grass carp, tilapia, or any other harmful exotic species** when caught or possessed. (For a complete listing contact TPWD at (800) 792-1112.)

It is **unlawful** for any person to use a gaff except to aid in the landing of fish caught by other legal devices, means, or methods. Fish landed with a gaff may not be below the minimum, above the maximum, or within a protected length limit.

It is **unlawful** for any person to release into the public waters of this state a fish with a device or substance implanted or attached that is designed, constructed or adapted to produce an audible, visual or electronic signal used to monitor, track, follow or in any manner aid in the location of the released fish.

It is **unlawful** to catch, possess, use, transport, purchase or sell any game fish or any part thereof as bait.

Billfish, except swordfish, may not be landed or possessed by the captain or crew of a commercial fishing vessel.

## SALE OF FISH – FRESH WATER

It is unlawful to sell any fish taken from the public fresh water of Texas except for the following:

(1) **Channel and Blue catfish** over **14** inches in length taken in the following:

- Angelina County
- Bowie County
- Camp County
- Cass County
- Chambers County
- Franklin County
- Freestone County
- Gregg County
- Hardin County
- Harris County
- Harrison County
- Jasper County
- Jefferson County
- Lamar County
- Leon County
- Liberty County
- Madison County
- Marion County
- Montgomery County
- Morris County
- Nacogdoches County
- Navarro County
- Newton County
- Orange County
- Panola County
- Polk County
- Red River County
- Sabine County
- San Augustine County
- San Jacinto County
- Shelby County
- Titus County
- Trinity County
- Tyler County
- Upshur County
- Walker County
- the Neches and Trinity rivers in Houston County
- the Colorado River in Bastrop, Colorado, Fayette, Matagorda or Wharton counties

(2) A **PERMIT TO SELL NON-GAME FISH** is required to sell alligator gar, shortnose gar, spotted gar, longnose gar, bowfin, gizzard shad, threadfin shad, common carp, goldfish, grass carp, bighead carp, bigmouth buffalo, black buffalo, smallmouth buffalo, river carpsucker, black bullhead, yellow bullhead, freshwater drum (gaspergou), Mozambique tilapia, blue tilapia, redbelly tilapia, Rio Grande perch, silversides, mullet, shiners, minnows and hybrids of these species taken from the public fresh waters of this state. Other non-game fish may not be sold. For permit information call (512) 389-8037.

## SALE OF FISH – SALT WATER

All fish listed below taken from the public salt water of Texas may **NOT** be sold for any purpose. All other fish taken from public salt water may be sold provided all commercial fishing reg-

ulations including licensing, and size, possession and bag limits are met.

- |  |                                |
|--|--------------------------------|
| • Bass of the genus Micropterus              | • Muskellunge                  |
| • Bass, striped                              | • Pike, northern               |
| • Bass, white                                | • Sailfish                     |
| • Bass, yellow                               | • Sauger                       |
| • Catfish, flathead                          | • Seatrout, spotted            |
| • Crappie, black                             | • Snook                        |
| • Crappie, white                             | • Spearfish, longbill          |
| • Drum, red                                  | • Tarpon                       |
| • Grouper, goliath (formerly called jewfish) | • Walleye                      |
| • Marlin, blue                               | • Hybrids of any of these fish |
| • Marlin, white                              |                                |

### Commercial Fishing Seasons

The commercial fishing seasons for red snapper, sharks and king mackerel caught in Texas waters shall run concurrently with commercial seasons established for these species in federal waters of the Exclusive Economic Zone (more than 9nm off shore).

### FINFISH LICENSE BUYBACK PROGRAM

At least once each year, TPWD provides an opportunity for holders of commercial finfish fisherman's licenses to apply to have their licenses purchased by the department. For further information on any limited entry requirements and restrictions, contact Mr. Art Morris, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, Coastal Fisheries Division, Natural Resources Building, 6300 Ocean Drive, Suite 2500, Corpus Christi, TX 78412, (361) 825-3356.

### TEXAS STATE WATERS — FEDERAL WATERS

Texas recreational and commercial fishermen fishing more than nine (9) nautical miles off the coast of Texas are in federal waters and are subject to rules and regulations that may differ from those in state waters. To insure you are in compliance with federal regulations, you should contact the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council at (888) 833-1844 (toll-free) or visit their web site at <http://gsmfc.org> and click on REGULATIONS.

### INDIVIDUAL FISHING QUOTA (IFQ) FOR RED SNAPPER

No person aboard any vessel shall sell, barter, trade, or exchange red snapper; land or attempt to land red snapper for the purpose of sale, barter, trade, or exchange; or possess red snapper for the purpose of sale, barter, trade, or exchange unless the person possesses a valid federal permit for the harvest of Gulf of Mexico

Reef Fish and a valid federal red snapper Individual Fishing Quota (IFQ) vessel endorsement.

### PADRE ISLAND NATIONAL SEASHORE — SPECIAL REGULATIONS

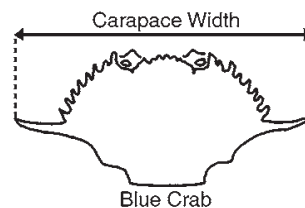
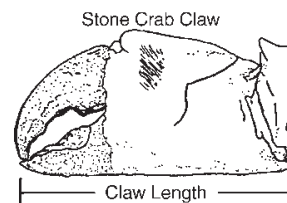
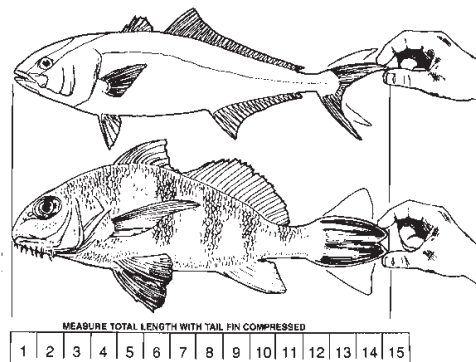
Until further notice, after Nov. 15, 2000, the National Park Service will prohibit commercial fishing within the park boundary of the Padre Island National Seashore in the Laguna Madre and 1/8 mile east of the shoreline into the Gulf of Mexico to the two-fathom depth.

Commercial fishing guides are required to have an Incidental Business Permit in order to operate within the park boundaries.

For more information contact the National Park Service at (361) 949-8173.

### HOW TO MEASURE FISH AND CRABS

The length to be measured is that straight line distance from the tip of the snout to the extreme tip of the tail or caudal fin. All measurements are to be made as that straight line distance (not over the curve of the body) with the fish lying on its side and with the jaw closed in a normal position, not extended in any way. The tail should be squeezed or rotated to produce the maximum overall length.



## COMMERCIAL BAG, POSSESSION AND LENGTH LIMITS

Species	Bag Limit	Possession Limit	Minimum Length (Inches)	Maximum Length (Inches)
Amberjack, greater	1	2	32	No limit
Drum, black*	No limit	No limit	14	30
Catfish: blue & channel	25*** (In any combination)	50 (In any combination)	14	No limit
Catfish, gafftopsail	No limit	No limit	14	No limit
Cobia	2	4	37	No limit
Flounder°	60	60	14	No limit
Mackerel, king	2	4	27	No limit
Mackerel, Spanish	15	30	14	No limit
Mullet: all species their hybrids & subspecies**	No limit	No limit	No limit	12 during Oct., Nov., Dec. & Jan.
Snapper, lane	No limit	No limit	8	No limit
Snapper, red****	4	8	15	No limit
Snapper, vermilion	No limit	No limit	10	No limit
Shark: All species, their hybrids & subspecies	1	2	24	No limit
Sheepshead*	No limit	No limit	13	No limit
Tripletail	3	6	17	No limit

°**Special Regulation:** The daily bag and possession limit for the holder of a valid commercial finfish fisherman's license is 60 flounder, except on board a licensed commercial shrimp boat the limit is 10 per person and is subject to the 50% bycatch rule (see page 21).

\*Only the holder of a commercial finfish fisherman's license is exempt from recreational bag and possession limits while commercial fishing for black drum or sheepshead. **Special Regulation:** Beginning on Sept. 1, 2008, the length limit will be 14 inches. Beginning on Sept. 1, 2009, the length limit will be 15 inches.

\*\*May not take from public waters or possess on board a boat mullet over 12 inches during October, November, December and January. No limits apply during other months.

\*\*\*Exceptions to daily bag limit:

- 1) in Lake Livingston (Polk, San Jacinto, Trinity and Walker counties) the daily bag limit for channel and blue catfish is 50 in any combination;
- 2) in lakes lying totally within a state park and community fishing lakes (see the *Texas Parks and Wildlife Outdoor Annual*), the daily bag limit for channel and blue catfish is five in any combination and fish may be taken by pole and line only.

\*\*\*\***Special Regulation:** Red snapper may be taken using pole and line, but it is unlawful to use any kind of hook other than a circle hook.

The possession limit does not apply to fish in the possession of:

(1) **a person who has an invoice or sales ticket** showing the name and address of the seller, number of fish by species, date of the sale, and other information required on a sales ticket or an invoice.

(2) for all wildlife resources (including fish) taken for personal consumption and for which

there is a possession limit, the possession limit shall not apply after the wildlife resource has reached its final destination.

It is unlawful for any person while fishing on or in public waters to have in possession fish in excess of the daily bag limit or fish within a protected length limit as established for those waters.

## FRESHWATER DEVICES, MEANS AND METHODS

This section describes what fishing devices may be lawfully used to take fish from public freshwater and in what areas the devices may be used. Areas of the state where fish may be taken commercially from public fresh water are described in the **SALE OF FISH — FRESH WATER** section on page 15 of this guide.

It is **unlawful** for any person to fish with more than 100 hooks on all devices combined or for any person to take, attempt to take, or possess fish caught by any device, means, or method other than as listed in this guide.

**In community fishing lakes** and in sections of rivers lying totally within the boundaries of state parks, game and non-game fish may be taken by pole and line only.

**Channel and blue catfish** may be taken only by pole and line (includes rod and reel), trotline, jugline or throwline.

**Non-game fish** may be taken by pole and line (includes rod and reel), trotline, jugline, throwline, shad trawl, minnow seine, dip net, cast net, minnow trap, gig, umbrella net, speargun and spear or bow and arrow.

**Cast Net:** It is **unlawful** for any person to use a cast net exceeding 14 feet in diameter. Non-game fish only may be taken.

**Dip Net:** It is **unlawful** for any person to take **game fish** with a dip net except a dip net may be used to aid in the landing of fish caught on other legal devices.

**Jugline:** It is unlawful for any person to use a jugline with more than five hooks attached. Gear tags must be attached within six inches of the free floating device, are valid for 30 days after the date set out, and must include the number of the permit to sell non-game fish taken from public fresh water, if applicable. For commercial purposes, a jugline must be marked with an orange free floating device; for non-commercial purposes, a jugline must be marked with a white free floating device. The use of a jugline is prohibited in Lake Bastrop, Bellwood Lake, Boerne City Park Lake, Lake Bryan, Lakes Coffee Mill and Davy Crockett in Fannin County, Dixieland Reservoir, Gibbons Creek Reservoir, Lake Pflugerville in Travis County, Tankersley Reservoir in Titus County, community fishing lakes and in sections of rivers lying totally within the boundaries of a state park.

**Lawful Archery Equipment:** Only non-game fish, channel catfish and blue catfish may be taken for commercial purposes.

**Minnow Seine:** It is **unlawful** for any person to use a minnow seine: which exceeds 20 feet in length; with mesh exceeding 1/2-inch square; or which is not manually operated. **Non-game fish only** may be taken.

**Minnow Trap:** It is **unlawful** for any person to use a minnow trap exceeding 24 inches in length or with a throat larger than one inch by three inches. Non-game fish only may be taken.

**Shad Trawl:** It is **unlawful** for any person to use a shad trawl longer than six feet or with a mouth larger than 36 inches in diameter. A shad trawl may be equipped with a funnel or throat and must be towed by a boat or by hand. Non-game fish only may be taken.

**Speargun and Spear:** Non-game fish only may be taken.

**Throwline:** It is unlawful for any person to use a throwline with more than five hooks attached. The use of a throwline is prohibited in Lake Bastrop, Bellwood Lake, Boerne City Park Lake, Lake Bryan, Lakes Coffee Mill and Davy Crockett in Fannin County, Dixieland Reservoir, Gibbons Creek Reservoir, Lake Pflugerville in Travis County, Tankersley Reservoir in Titus County, community fishing lakes and in sections of rivers lying totally within the boundaries of a state park.

**Trotline:** It is **unlawful** for any person to use a **trotline:** with a mainline length exceeding 600 feet; without valid gear tags (gear tags must be attached within three feet of each end of the trotline and are valid only for 30 days after the date set out); with hook intervals of less than three horizontal feet; with metallic stakes; with the main fishing line and attached hooks and stagings above the water's surface; or with more than 50 hooks.

The use of trotlines is prohibited in Pinkston Reservoir, Lake Bastrop, Gibbons Creek Reservoir, Fayette County Reservoir, Bellwood Lake, Boerne City Park Lake, Lakes Coffee Mill and Davy Crockett in Fannin County, Dixieland Reservoir, Lake Pflugerville in Travis County, Tankersley Reservoir in Titus County, community fishing lakes and in reservoirs or sections of rivers lying totally within the boundaries of a state park.

**Umbrella Net:** It is **unlawful** for any person to use an umbrella net with the area within the frame exceeding 16 square feet. Non-game fish only may be taken.

## SALTWATER DEVICES, MEANS AND METHODS

It is **unlawful** to take gamefish on any device except pole and line (includes rod and reel). Non-game fish may be taken with lawful archery equipment, cast net (for bait only), gig, minnow seine (for bait only), perch trap (for bait only), pole and line (includes rod and reel), spear gun and spear, or trotline. Purse seines may be used for taking menhaden only.

In salt water, it is unlawful to fish with any device that is marked with a buoy made of a plastic bottle(s) of any color or size.

**Cast Net:** It is **unlawful** for any person to use a cast net exceeding 14 feet in diameter. Non-game fish only, to be used for bait only, may be taken.

**Circle Hook:** It is **unlawful** to fish for red snapper using any kind of hook other than a circle hook.

**Minnow Seine:** It is **unlawful** for any person to use a minnow seine which exceeds 20 feet in length. Non-game fish only, to be used for bait only, may be taken.

**Perch Traps:** For use in SALT WATER only.

- May be used to take NONGAME fish only.
- May not exceed 18 cubic feet.
- Must be marked with a floating visible orange buoy not less than 6 inches in height and 6 inches in width. The buoy must have a GEAR TAG (see page 5) valid only for 30 days attached.
- Must be equipped with a degradable panel sewn or tied with untreated jute twine or untreated steel wire less than 20 ga. in the sidewall of the trap.
- Buoys or floats may not be made of plastic bottle(s) of any color or size.
- It is unlawful to place any type of trap within the area in Cedar Bayou between a department sign erected where Mesquite Bay flows into Cedar Bayou and the department sign erected near the point where the pass empties into the Gulf of Mexico.

**Purse Seine:** Purse seines with not less than 1-1/2 inch stretched mesh, not including the bag, may be used only for taking menhaden from the third Monday in April through the first day in November. Purse seines for taking menhaden may not be used in any bay, river, pass or tributary, nor within one mile of any barrier, jetty, island or pass, nor within 1/2 mile offshore in the Gulf of Mexico. When using a purse seine to take menhaden, edible aquatic products may not exceed five percent by volume of the menhaden in possession.

**Trotline:** A non-metallic main fishing line with more than five hooks attached and with each end attached to a fixture.

- May be used to take non-game fish, channel catfish, blue catfish and flathead catfish.
- Red drum, spotted seatrout and sharks caught on a trotline may not be retained or possessed.
- Maximum Number of Trotlines Allowed:
  - It is unlawful to fish for commercial purposes with more than 20 trotlines at one time.
  - It is unlawful to fish for non-commercial purposes with more than one trotline at one time.
- Tag Requirements:
  - Must be used with a valid GEAR TAG (see page 5) attached and attached within three feet of the first hook at each end of the trotline.
- Construction and Design Restrictions:
  - The mainline length may not exceed 600 feet.
  - May not use metallic stakes.
  - May not place the main fishing line and attached hooks and stagings above the water's surface.
  - Must be marked with yellow flagging attached to stakes or with a yellow floating buoy not less than six inches in height and six inches in width, attached to end fixtures.
  - Floats must be yellow.
  - Buoys or floats may not be made of plastic bottle(s) of any color or size.
  - May not be baited with other than natural bait (EXCEPT Sail Lines). **Natural bait** is whole or cut-up portion of a fish or shellfish or a whole or cut-up portion of plant material in its natural state, provided that none of these may be altered beyond cutting into portions.
  - Hooks must be three feet apart.
  - May not be used with hooks other than circle-type hook (comparable to Mustad 11/0 circle hook Model #39960ST) with point curved in and having a gap (distance from point to shank) of no more than one-half inch, and with the diameter of the circle not less than five-eighths inch (EXCEPT Sail Lines).
- Placement and Location Restrictions:
  - May not be used in or on the waters of the Gulf of Mexico within the jurisdiction of this state;
  - May not be placed closer than 50 feet from any other trotline, or set within 200 feet of the edge of the Intracoastal Waterway or its tributary channels.

- May not be used in Aransas County in Little Bay and the water area of Aransas Bay within one-half mile of a line from Hail Point on the Lamar Peninsula, then direct to the eastern end of Goose Island, then along the southern shore of Goose Island, then along the causeway between Lamar Peninsula and Live Oak Peninsula, then along the eastern shoreline of the Live Oak Peninsula past the town of Fulton, past Nine-Mile Point, past the town of Rockport to a point at the east end of Talley Island, including that part of Copano Bay within 1,000 feet of the causeway between Lamar Peninsula and Live Oak Peninsula.
- No trotline or trotline components (EXCEPT Sail Lines), including lines and hooks, but excluding poles, may be left in or on coastal waters between the hours of 1 p.m. on Friday through 1 p.m. on Sunday of each week, except that attended sail lines are excluded from the restrictions imposed by this clause. Under the authority of the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department

Code, §66.206(b), in the event small craft advisories or higher marine weather advisories issued by the National Weather Service are in place at 8 a.m. on Friday, trotlines may remain in the water until 6 p.m. on Friday. If small craft advisories are in place at 1 p.m. on Friday, trotlines may remain in the water until Saturday. When small craft advisories are lifted by 8 a.m. on Saturday, trotlines must be removed by 1 p.m. on Saturday. When small craft advisories or higher marine weather advisories are still in place at 1 p.m. on Saturday, trotlines may remain in the water through 1 p.m. on Sunday. It is a violation to tend, bait or harvest fish or any other aquatic life from trotlines during the period that trotline removal requirements are suspended under this provision for adverse weather conditions. For purposes of enforcement, the geographic area customarily covered by marine weather advisories will be delineated by department policy.

## **GULF SHRIMP AND OYSTER LICENSE MANAGEMENT**

A moratorium on the sale of licenses or a license management program (limited entry) has been in effect for the Texas bay and bait shrimp fishery since 1996, the crab fishery since 1998, and the finfish fishery since 2000. Beginning 2005, both the gulf shrimp and oyster fisheries may only be purchased by fishermen who held those licenses at the end of the previous license year.

For further information regarding any limited entry requirements or other provisions of the program contact: Mr. Art Morris, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, Coastal Fisheries Division, Natural Resources Building, 6300 Ocean Drive, Suite 2500, Corpus Christi, TX 78412, (361) 825-3356.

### **SHRIMP**

#### **GENERAL REGULATIONS**

##### **LICENSE REQUIRED**

- Commercial Shrimp Boat Captain's License
  - Commercial Shrimp Boat License (Bay, Bait or Gulf)
- (see pages 7 and 10)

To legally sport fish from a licensed commercial shrimp boat and to legally catch and retain fish species prohibited from sale, the commercial plates must be removed from the boat. While no commercial plates are on board, all

sport fishing regulations apply including licenses, size, bag and possession limits. All commercial regulations apply when the commercial plates are on board.

It is **unlawful** to:

- take or attempt to take shrimp within the boundaries of any natural or man-made pass leading from the inside waters to the outside waters (Gulf of Mexico) of the state.
- use a trawl or fail to have the spreading devices on deck and the trawl bag untied at a time when shrimping is prohibited.

- possess a trawl that is too wide or has small mesh in an area where the trawl is prohibited. Such trawls may be possessed on vessels in port or in a marked channel going directly to or from an area in this state where the use of the trawl is permitted.
- head shrimp aboard a boat in inside waters.
- possess a device designed to catch fish or other aquatic life, including a shrimp trawl, in or on the public waters of the state where the use of the device is prohibited.
- catch and retain fish species prohibited from sale on a licensed commercial shrimp boat while the commercial plates are on board.
- retain a red drum, spotted seatrout or lightning whelk on board a licensed commercial shrimp boat if there is a trawl on board the boat.

It is **unlawful** for any person:

- aboard a vessel licensed as a commercial **bay** shrimp boat to off-load, transfer, sell, or barter any amount of live or dead shrimp to a person aboard another vessel;
- aboard a vessel to off-load, transfer, purchase, or barter from a person aboard a vessel licensed as a commercial **bay** shrimp boat any amount of live or dead shrimp;
- aboard a vessel licensed as a commercial **bait** shrimp boat to off-load, transfer, sell, or barter any amount of live or dead shrimp, except an amount of live or dead shrimp not to exceed two quarts per sport fisherman or one gallon (by volume) for two or more sport fishermen may be off-loaded, transferred, sold, or bartered to a person aboard a sport fishing vessel; or
- aboard a vessel to off-load, transfer, purchase, or barter from a person aboard a vessel licensed as a commercial **bait** shrimp boat any amount of live or dead shrimp, except a person aboard a sport fishing vessel may off-load, transfer, purchase, or barter an amount of shrimp not to exceed two quarts per sport fisherman or one gallon (by volume) for two or more sport fishermen.

A commercial shrimp boat license must be prominently displayed as to be clearly visible from both sides of the boat.

Fresh shrimp may be held in possession only through open seasons and five days thereafter, **except** that bait dealers and sport fishermen may possess bait shrimp throughout the year.

**The captain of a licensed commercial shrimp boat is required to hold a Commercial Shrimp Boat Captain's license.**

Non-game fish and other aquatic products taken incidental to legal shrimp trawling operations may be retained provided:

- the total weight of aquatic products retained, in any combination, do not exceed 50% by weight of shrimp on a shrimping vessel; or
- from May 1 to Sept. 30 up to 1,500 live non-game fish not regulated by bag or size limit and/or 300 dozen ribbonfish may be retained daily **for bait purposes only** on board a vessel licensed for commercial bait shrimp fishing.

The taking of aquatic products of **illegal size** on board a licensed commercial shrimp boat engaged in the lawful taking of shrimp is not a violation if the aquatic products of unlawful size are returned to the waters from which taken in a manner to ensure their **best chance of survival**.

## DISPLAY BOAT NUMBERS

All commercial shrimp boats are required to exhibit the vessel's documentation or registration number on the **port** and **starboard** sides of the deckhouse or hull and on an **appropriate weather deck**. The number in block Arabic numerals in contrasting color to the background must be at least 18 inches in height on vessels over 65 feet and 10 inches in height for all other vessels and be permanently attached.

## METHOD OF NET MEASUREMENT

All total widths specified for commercial otter trawls, including try nets, are measured along the uninterrupted corkline from leading tip of door to leading tip of door, including any and all add-on devices or attachments to the corkline. All beam trawl widths are measured along the beam in its fully extended position.

Mesh sizes specified for commercial trawls apply to the trawl, bag and trawl liner and are measured in inches of length between the two most widely separated knots in any consecutive series of five stretched meshes after the trawl has been placed in use.

## SPECIAL REGULATIONS (Bay and Bait Shrimping)

A boat having on board or displaying a bait shrimp boat license must operate **only** under commercial bait shrimp regulations, including: 1) 200 pound daily limit; 2) maintaining 50% of the shrimp alive; 3) places authorized for bait shrimping; and 4) sale or unload to a bait shrimp dealer or sportsman. See page 20, **GENERAL REGULATIONS**.



A shrimp boat licensed both as a bay shrimp boat and a bait shrimp boat may not shrimp in both a major bay and any other water on the same calendar day during the period May 15 through July 15 (Spring Open Season).

A shrimp boat licensed both as a bay shrimp boat and a bait shrimp boat may not take more than 600 pounds of heads on shrimp per calendar day during the period May 15 through July 15 (Spring Open Season).

## SHRIMP LICENSE BUYBACK PROGRAM

At least once each year, the TPWD provides an opportunity for holders of commercial bay-shrimp boat licenses and/or commercial bait-shrimp boat licenses to apply to have their licenses purchased by the department. For further information on any limited entry requirements and restrictions, contact Mr. Art Morris, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, Coastal Fisheries Division, Natural Resources Building, 6300 Ocean Drive, Suite 2500, Corpus Christi, TX 78412, (361) 825-3356.

## WATERS DEFINED

**Outside Waters**—That part of the Gulf of Mexico extending from the shoreline seaward to nine nautical miles.

**Inside Waters**—All bays, passes, rivers or other bodies of water landward from the Gulf of Mexico. In these waters, the tide rises and falls and saltwater shrimp are found or migrate.

**Major Bays** (arranged geographically north to south)

- Sabine Lake (*north of Cameron Causeway to the south of a line marked by the GIWW [Sabine Neches Canal/Sabine River] between the eastern most tip of Goat Island to the western most tip of Stewts Island*)
- Trinity Bay (*southward from a line extending from the mouth of Double Bayou in Chambers County to Double Bayou Channel Marker 14, to Separator C-2, to Point Barrow in Chambers County*)
- Galveston Bay
- East Bay (*westward from a line extending from Frozen Point to the GIWW Marker 12*)
- Matagorda Bay (*westward of a line extending from a location on the mainland where a line running immediately northwest [bearing 330 degrees] from Shellfish Marker A intersects the mainland; thence southeasterly to Shellfish Marker A located near the*

*mainland, thence to Shellfish Marker B located near the end of Shell Island Reef, thence to the tide gauge located near the Matagorda Peninsula, and thence southeasterly [bearing 153 degrees] to the Matagorda Peninsula*)

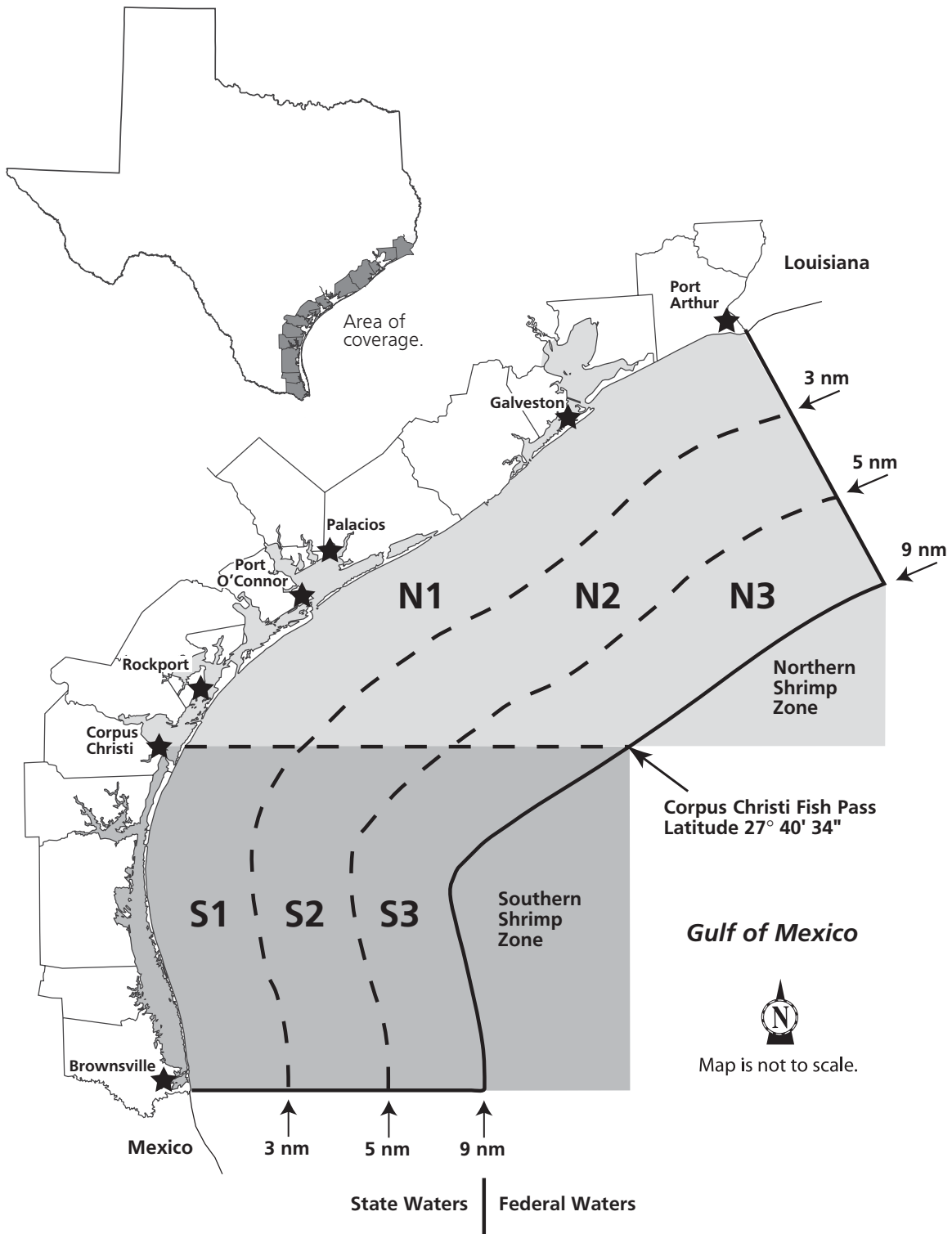
- East Matagorda Bay
- Tres Palacios Bay (*south of a line from Grasse Point to the mouth of Pilkington Bayou*)
- Espiritu Santo Bay
- Lavaca Bay (*seaward of State Hwy. 35*)
- San Antonio Bay (*seaward of a line from McDowell Point to Mosquito Point*)
- Aransas Bay
- Corpus Christi Bay (*exclusive of the area bounded by a line extending from the GIWW at the southwest point of Dagger Island chain, along Dagger Island to the southeast tip of Ransom Island, then southeast to the westernmost point of land north of Marker 14 in the Corpus Christi Ship Channel*)
- All exclusive of tributary bays, bayous and inlets, lakes and rivers.

**Bait Bays include major bays** and the following (arranged geographically north to south)

- Gulf Intracoastal Waterway (GIWW) exclusive of all tributaries
- Chocolate Bay
- West Bay (*south and west of Interstate Hwy. 45 Causeway Bridge and the GIWW inclusive of the area south of a line extending westward from the Interstate Hwy. 45 Causeway Bridge at Virginia Point, along the southern edge of Tiki Island to the northeastern tip of North Deer Island at Channel Marker 48*)
- Trinity Bay (*northward from a line extending from the mouth of Double Bayou in Chambers County to Double Bayou Channel Marker 14, to Separator C-2, to Point Barrow in Chambers County*)
- The Old Brazos River (*lying north of the GIWW in Brazoria County*)
- Barroom Bay
- Upper Laguna Madre
- Alazan Bay
- Baffin Bay, and
- Lower Laguna Madre including the Brownsville Ship Channel

**Nursery Areas** (Those coastal waters not specifically named above as Major Bays or Bait Bays are considered Nursery Areas)—Includes tributary bays, bayous, inlets, lakes and rivers that provide growth and development environments for postlarval and juvenile shrimp. Does not include outside waters, major bays or bait bays.

# MAP OF GULF SHRIMP FISHERY MANAGEMENT ZONES



## OUTSIDE WATERS

### Commercial Gulf-Shrimp Boats — Closed Seasons, Limits and Gear Restrictions

#### Closed Seasons:

- **Federal Waters** (from 9 miles to 200 miles from the Texas Coast), shrimping is closed:
    - from May 15\*\* – July 15\*\*
- IMPORTANT NOTICE:** The rules regarding the Summer Closed Season for Federal Waters off Texas may have changed prior to publication of this guide. For current rules, please call the National Marine Fisheries Service at (727) 570-5305 or contact your nearest TPWD Law Enforcement office.
- **Within 5 miles of the Texas coast** (Zones N1, N2, S1, S2), shrimping is closed:
    - at night (30 minutes after sunset to 30 minutes before sunrise)
    - from Dec. 1 – Feb. 15
  - **Within 5 miles of the Texas coast in the South Zone** (Zones S1, S2), shrimping is closed:
    - from Feb. 16 – May 15\*\*
  - **Within 9 miles of the Texas coast** (Zones N1, N2, N3, S1, S2, S3), shrimping is closed:
    - from 30 minutes after sunset May 15\*\* to 30 minutes after sunset July 15\*\*

**\*\*SPECIAL NOTICE:** These dates may be changed by the department providing 72 hours public notice on new closing dates and 24 hours notice on new opening dates.

#### Net Limitations:

##### • Net Type I:

- **Trawl Size:** Otter trawls must have doors at least 3 feet long as measured along the door centerline from leading tip of door to trailing edge of door; and each net cannot exceed any of the following dimensions as measured along an uninterrupted corkline from leading tip of door to leading tip of door including any and all add-on devices or attachments to the corkline.
- **Net Dimensions:**

<u>Door Length (ft.)</u>	<u>Total Width (ft.)</u>
3' or more but less than 4'	71'
4' or more but less than 5'	73'
5' or more but less than 6'	75'
6' or more but less than 7'	77'
7' or more but less than 8'	79'
8' or more but less than 9'	81'
9' or more but less than 10'	83'
10' or more but less than 11'	85'
11' or more but less than 12'	87'
12' or more	89'

##### • Net Type II:

- **Trawl Size:** Otter trawls must have doors at least 3 feet long as measured along the door centerline from leading tip of door to trailing edge of door; and each net cannot exceed any of the following dimensions as measured along an uninterrupted corkline from leading tip of door to leading tip of door including any and all add-on devices or attachments to the corkline.

##### • Net Dimensions:

<u>Door Length (ft.)</u>	<u>Total Width (ft.)</u>
3' or more but less than 4'	40'
4' or more but less than 5'	42'
5' or more but less than 6'	44'
6' or more but less than 7'	46'
7' or more but less than 8'	48'
8' or more but less than 9'	50'
9' or more but less than 10'	52'
10' or more	54'

##### • Seabob Net:

- **Trawl Size:** Otter trawls must have doors at least 3 feet long as measured along the door centerline from leading tip of door to trailing edge of door; and each net cannot exceed any of the following dimensions as measured along an uninterrupted corkline from leading tip of door to leading tip of door including any and all add-on devices or attachments to the corkline.

##### • Net Dimensions:

<u>Door Length (ft.)</u>	<u>Total Width (ft.)</u>
3' or more but less than 4'	48'
4' or more but less than 5'	50'
5' or more but less than 6'	52'
6' or more but less than 7'	54'
7' or more but less than 8'	56'
8' or more but less than 9'	58'
9' or more but less than 10'	60'
10' or more	62'

##### • Try Nets (Gulf and Inshore – Bay Shrimping):

###### • Otter Trawls:

- Total width: 21 feet
- Doors: 450 square inches

- **Beam Trawls:** May not exceed 10 feet in width

##### • Try Nets (Inshore – Bait Shrimping):

###### • Otter Trawls:

- Total width: 12 feet
- Doors: 450 square inches

- **Beam Trawls:** May not exceed 5 feet in width

See tables on pages 25-26 for open seasons, limits and requirements for the Southern and Northern Zones for Commercial Gulf-Shrimp Boats.

**SOUTHERN SHRIMP ZONE** (South of a line from the Corpus Christi Fish Pass [Latitude 27° 40' 34""] to the Mexican Border)

The State Outside Waters of the Southern Shrimp Zone are **OPEN TO SHRIMPING** as follows:

Map Segments (see pg. 23)	Location	Season (Dates)	Hours	Limits	Trawl Requirements
<b>S3</b>	<b>5-9 nautical miles</b>	July 16** – Nov. 30 Dec. 1 – May. 15**	Day and Night	Bag: No Limit Size: No Limit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Number of trawls:</b> No Limit</li> <li>• <b>Mesh Size:</b> Not less than 8-3/4 inches over 5 stretched meshes</li> <li>• <b>Trawl Size:</b> No Limit</li> <li>• Approved <b>BRDs</b>† are required</li> <li>• Approved <b>TEDs</b>‡ are required</li> </ul>
<b>S2</b>	<b>3-5 nautical miles</b>	July 16** – Nov. 30	30 min. before sunrise to 30 min. after sunset		
<b>S1</b>	<b>Inside 3 nautical miles</b>	July 16** – Nov. 30	30 min. before sunrise to 30 min. after sunset	Bag: No Limit Size: No Limit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Number of trawls:</b> No more than 2</li> <li>• <b>Mesh Size:</b> Not less than 8-3/4 inches over 5 stretched meshes</li> <li>• <b>Trawl Size:</b> Net Type I (see pg. 24)</li> <li>• Approved <b>BRDs</b>† are required</li> <li>• Approved <b>TEDs</b>‡ are required</li> </ul>

**\*\*SPECIAL NOTICE:** These dates may be changed by the department providing 72 hours public notice on new closing dates and 24 hours notice on new opening dates.  
† **BRD** means Bycatch Reduction Device      ‡ **TED** means Turtle Excluder Device

**NORTHERN SHRIMP ZONE** (North of a line from the Corpus Christi Fish Pass [Latitude 27° 40' 34"] to the Louisiana Border)

The State Outside Waters of the Northern Shrimp Zone are **OPEN TO SHRIMPING** as follows:

Map Segments (see pg. 23)	Location	Season (Dates)	Hours	Limits	Trawl Requirements
<b>N3</b>	<b>5-9 nautical miles</b>	July 16** – Nov. 30 Dec. 1 – May 15**	Day and Night	Bag: No Limit Size: No Limit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Number of trawls:</b> No Limit</li> <li>• <b>Mesh Size:</b> Not less than 8-3/4 inches over 5 stretched meshes</li> <li>• <b>Trawl Size:</b> No Limit</li> <li>• Approved <b>BRDs</b>† are required</li> <li>• Approved <b>TEDs</b>‡ are required</li> </ul>
<b>N2</b>	<b>3-5 nautical miles</b>	Feb. 16 – May 15** July 16** – Nov. 30	30 min. before sunrise to 30 min. after sunset		
<b>N1</b>	<b>Inside 3 nautical miles</b>	Feb. 16 – May 15** July 16** – Nov. 30	30 min. before sunrise to 30 min. after sunset	Bag: No Limit Size: No Limit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Number of trawls:</b> No more than 2</li> <li>• <b>Mesh Size:</b> Not less than 8-3/4 inches over 5 stretched meshes</li> <li>• <b>Trawl Size:</b> Net Type I (see pg. 24)</li> <li>• Approved <b>BRDs</b>† are required</li> <li>• Approved <b>TEDs</b>‡ are required</li> </ul>
<b>N1, N2 &amp; N3</b>	<b>Seabobs</b>	Dec. 1 – May 15** July 16** – Nov. 30	30 min. before sunrise to 30 min. after sunset	No person catching seabobs may catch or have on board a boat any other species of shrimp which exceed 10% in weight or number of the entire catch.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Number of trawls:</b> No more than 1</li> <li>• <b>Mesh Size:</b> 6-1/2 inches over 5 stretched meshes</li> <li>• <b>Trawl Size:</b> Seabob Net (see pg. 24)</li> <li>• Approved <b>BRDs</b>† are required</li> <li>• Approved <b>TEDs</b>‡ are required</li> </ul>

**\*\*SPECIAL NOTICE:** These dates may be changed by the department providing 72 hours public notice on new closing dates and 24 hours notice on new opening dates.  
† **BRD** means Bycatch Reduction Device ‡ **TED** means Turtle Excluder Device

**INSIDE WATERS**

**Commercial Bay-Shrimp Boats – Seasons, Limits and Gear Restrictions (Major Bays Only)**

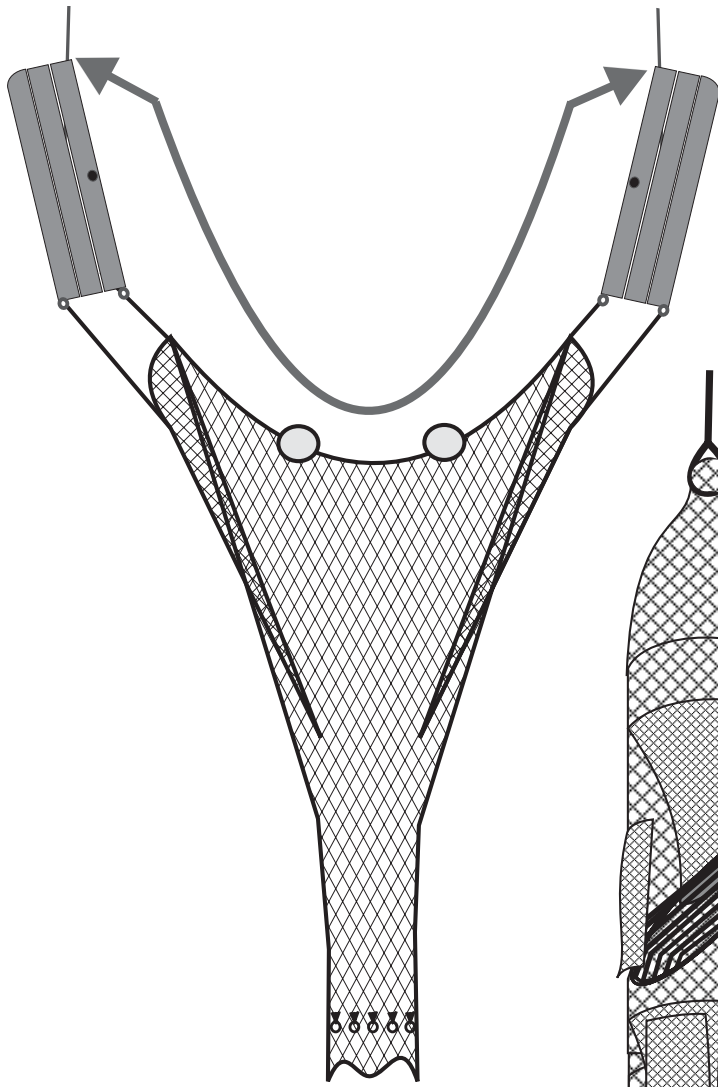
Location	Season (Dates)	Hours	Limits	Trawl Requirements
<b>Major Bays</b>	<b>Spring Open Season</b> May 15 – July 15	30 min. before sunrise to 2 p.m.	Bag: 600 pounds Size: No Limit	<p><b>Main Net:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No more than 1 net may be used at any one time as a main net.</li> <li><b>Mesh Size:</b> 6-1/2 inches over 5 stretched meshes</li> <li><b>Trawl Size:</b> Net Type II (see pg. 24) (Beam trawls used as the main trawl cannot exceed 25 feet in width.)</li> <li>Approved <b>BRDs</b><sup>†</sup> are required.</li> <li>Approved <b>TEDs</b><sup>‡</sup> are required (<b>FEDERAL REGULATION</b>).</li> </ul>
<b>Major Bays</b>	<b>Fall Open Season</b> Aug. 15 – Nov. 30	30 min. before sunrise to 30 min. after sunset	Bag: No Limit Size: <u>Aug. 15 – Oct. 31:</u> 50 h-o/lb* <u>Nov. 1 – Nov. 30:</u> No Limit	<p><b>Main Net:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No more than 1 net may be used at any one time as a main net.</li> <li><u>Aug. 15 – Oct. 31:</u></li> <li><b>Mesh Size:</b> Not less than 8-3/4 inches over 5 stretched meshes</li> <li><u>Nov. 1 – Nov. 30:</u></li> <li><b>Mesh Size:</b> 6-1/2 inches over 5 stretched meshes</li> <li>Approved <b>BRDs</b><sup>†</sup> are required</li> <li>Approved <b>TEDs</b><sup>‡</sup> are required (<b>FEDERAL REGULATION</b>).</li> <li>Trawl may not exceed 95 ft. in total width.</li> </ul>
<b>Major Bays – Only south of the Colorado River</b>	<b>Winter Open Season</b> Feb. 1 – April 15	30 min. after sunset to 30 min. before sunrise	Bag: No Limit Size: No Limit	<p><b>Main Net:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No more than 1 net may be used at any one time as a main net.</li> <li><b>Mesh Size:</b> 6-1/2 inches over 5 stretched meshes</li> <li><b>Trawl Size:</b> Net Type II (see pg. 24) (Beam trawls used as the main trawl cannot exceed 25 feet in width.)</li> <li>Approved <b>BRDs</b><sup>†</sup> are required.</li> <li>Approved <b>TEDs</b><sup>‡</sup> are required (<b>FEDERAL REGULATION</b>).</li> </ul>

† **BRD** means Bycatch Reduction Device

‡ **TED** means Turtle Excluder Device

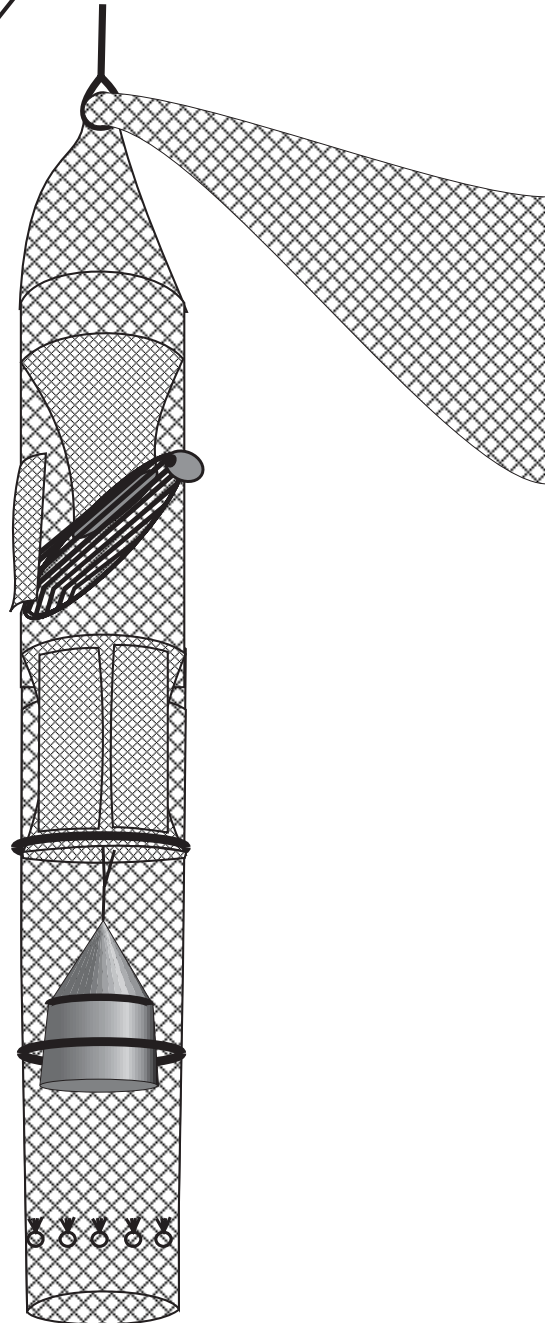
\* h-o means heads on





**OTTER TRAWL MEASUREMENTS**

Shrimp trawls in Texas are measured from leading tip of one door along the uninterrupted cork line to the leading tip of the other door.



**BRD MEASUREMENTS**

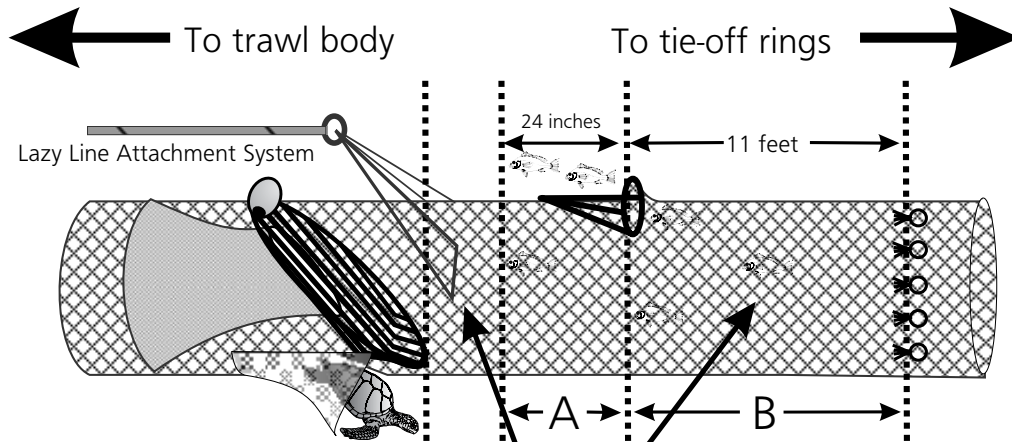
All measurements must be taken with gear in a hanging position.

For additional information on specifications for trawls, BRDs and TEDs, call the nearest Coastal Law Enforcement office (see back cover).

Diagrams are derived from images provided by the National Marine Fisheries Service.



## FISHEYE AND SEA EAGLE BRDs

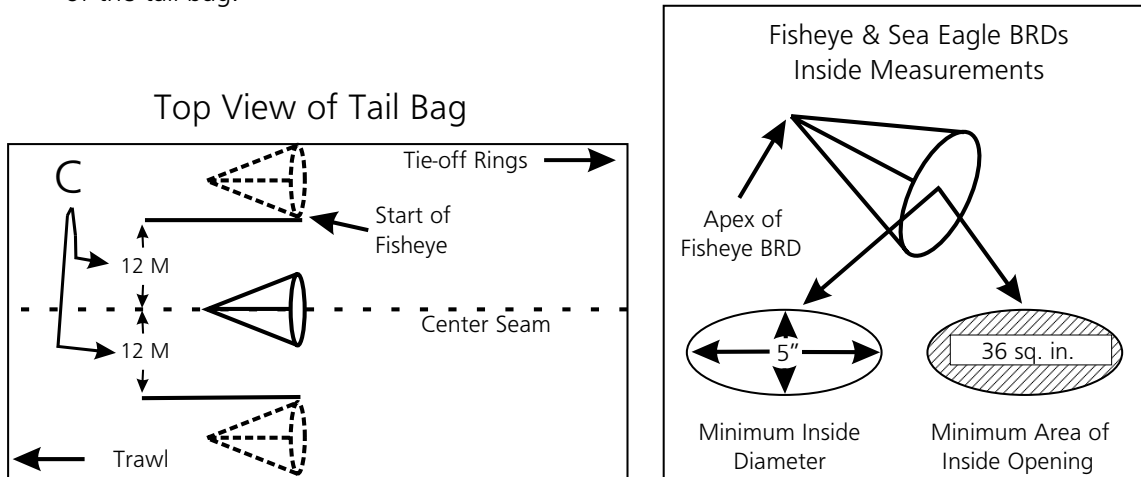


### Key Measurements

- A. Fisheye opening may not be placed less than 24 inches behind lazy line attachment system.
- B. Fisheye opening must be less than 11 ft. from the cod end tie-off rings.
- C. Fisheye may not be placed more than 12 meshes either side of the center seam of the tail bag.

### Lazy Line Placement

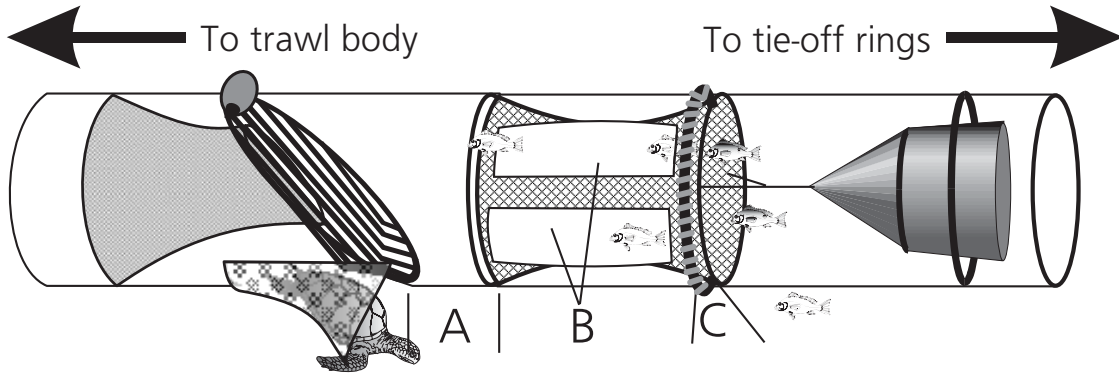
- Lazy lines, choker straps, elephant ears, rings and other lines may be placed in these areas.
- Fisheye opening may not be obstructed by any ropes, rings, elephant ears or straps.



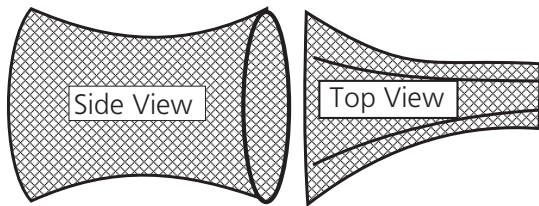
For additional information on specifications for trawls, BRDs and TEDs, call the nearest Coastal Law Enforcement office (see back cover).

Diagrams are derived from images provided by the National Marine Fisheries Service.

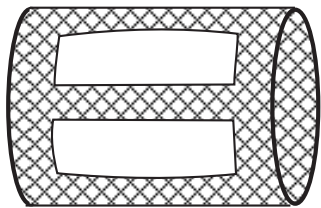
## JONES-DAVIS BRD



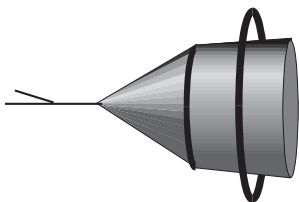
### Components



Funnel Section



Escape Openings  
(Openings are cutouts in the  
body of the trawl tail bag)



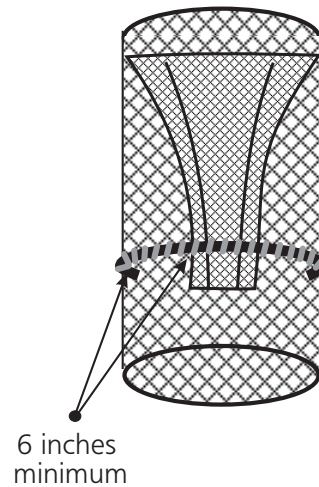
Jones-Davis Cone  
Stimulator



Semi-rigid Hoop

### Key Measurements

- A. Leading edge of the Escape Opening must be within 18 inches of the posterior edge of the TED grid.
- B. BRD escape opening should total a minimum of 864 sq. in.
- C. Clearance between the 28-inch hoop and the side of the funnel, when hanging, should be at least 6 inches.

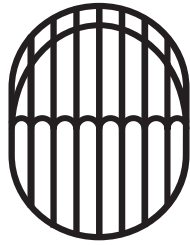


For additional information on specifications for trawls, BRDs and TEDs, call the nearest Coastal Law Enforcement office (see back cover).

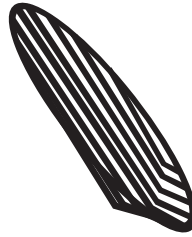
Diagrams are derived from images provided by the National Marine Fisheries Service.



## APPROVED TED DESIGNS



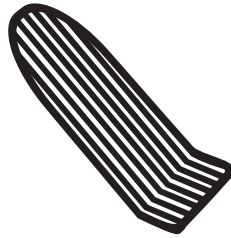
Standard Grid



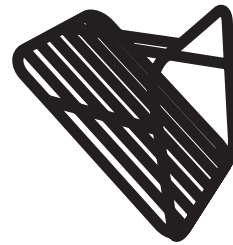
Bent Rod



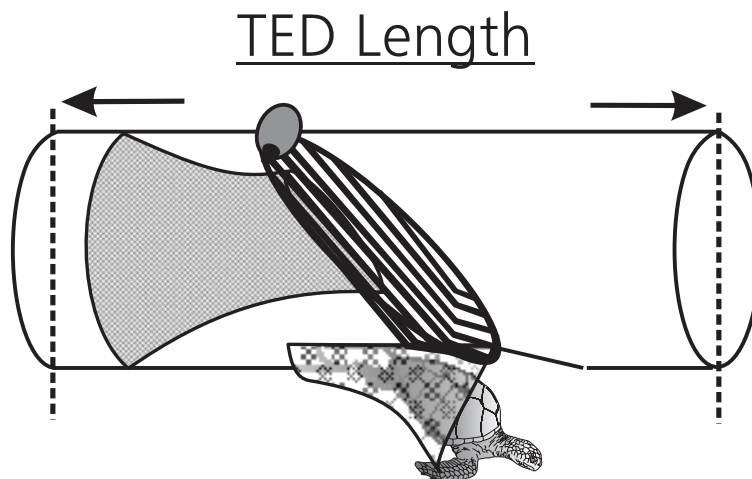
Anthony



Bent Pipe



Fixed Angle



If webbing immediately around TED has a mesh size smaller than allowed for the trawl, such webbing may not be greater than 60 total stretched meshes in length.

For additional information on specifications for trawls, BRDs and TEDs, call the nearest Coastal Law Enforcement office (see back cover).

Diagrams are derived from images provided by the National Marine Fisheries Service.

# CRABS

**NOTE:** It is unlawful to place, fish or leave a crab trap component in the coastal waters of the state from Feb. 15-24, 2008.

- There are no public salt waters, seasons or times closed to the taking and retaining of crabs and ghost shrimp, EXCEPT as provided in this guide.
- It is lawful to take, attempt to take or possess crabs and ghost shrimp by means, in numbers, and of sizes ONLY as described below.

## Bag, Possession and Length Limits

### Blue crab

- Daily Bag: No limit
- Possession: No limit
  - Except that not more than 5% by number, of undersized blue crabs may be possessed for **ba<sup>it</sup> purposes only** and must be placed in a separate container.
  - May not possess egg-bearing (sponge) crabs.
  - May not possess a female crab that has its abdominal apron detached.
- Minimum Length: five inches
  - Measured across the widest point of the body from tip of spine to tip of spine (see page 16).

### Stone crab (right claw only)

- Daily Bag: No limit
- Possession: No limit
  - Only the right claw may be retained or possessed.
  - The body of the stone crab must be returned immediately to the water from which it was taken.
- Minimum Length: 2-1/2 inches claw measurement
  - Measured from the tip of the immovable claw to the first joint behind the claw (see page 16).

## Devices and Restrictions

**Crab Line:** A baited line with no hook attached.

- Must be marked with a white floating buoy not less than six inches in height, 6 inches in length and 6 inches in width.
- Buoys must be marked with a commercial crab fisherman's license plate number in letters of a contrasting color at least 2 inches high attached to the trap.
- Buoys or floats may not be made of plastic bottle(s) of any color or size.

### Crab Traps:

- May only remove crab traps from the water or remove crabs from crab traps during the period from 30 minutes before sunrise to 30 minutes after sunset.

- Maximum Number of Traps Allowed:
  - Only 200 crab traps at a time may be used while fishing under the authority of a commercial crab fisherman's license.
  - Only 20 crab traps at a time may be used while fishing under the authority of a commercial finfish fisherman's license.
- Tag Requirements: Must be used with a valid GEAR TAG (see page 5) attached within six inches of the buoy.
- Construction and Design Restrictions:
  - May not exceed 18 cubic feet.
  - Must be equipped with at least two escape vents in each crab-retaining chamber and located on the outside trap walls.
  - Escape vents must be at least 2-3/8" in diameter.
  - Must be marked with a white floating buoy not less than 6 inches in height, six inches in length and 6 inches width.
  - Crab traps fished under the authority of a **commercial crab fisherman's license** must have buoys marked with a commercial crab fisherman's license plate number in letters of a contrasting color at least two inches high attached to the trap.
  - Crab traps fished under the authority of a **commercial finfish fisherman's license** must have buoys marked with a commercial finfish fisherman's license plate number preceded with the letter "F" in letters of a contrasting color at least two inches high attached to the trap.
  - Buoys or floats may not be made of plastic bottle(s) of any color or size.
  - Must be equipped with a degradable panel. A trap is considered to have a degradable panel if one of the following methods is used in construction of the trap:
    - the trap lid tie-down strap is secured to the trap at one end by a simple loop of untreated jute twine (comparable to Lehigh brand #530), sisal twine (comparable to Lehigh brand #390) or untreated steel wire with a diameter of 20 gauge or smaller. The trap lid must be secured so that when the twine or wire degrades, the lid will no longer be securely closed; or
    - the trap contains at least one sidewall, not including the bottom panel, with a rectangular opening no smaller in either dimension than three inches by 6 inches. Any obstruction placed in this opening may not be secured in any manner EXCEPT it may be laced, sewn, or otherwise obstructed by a single length of untreated jute twine (comparable to Lehigh brand #530), sisal twine (comparable to Lehigh brand #390), or untreated steel wire with a diameter of 20 gauge or smaller.

- rable to Lehigh brand #390) or untreated steel wire with a diameter of 20 gauge or smaller knotted only at each end and not tied or looped more than once around a single mesh bar. When the twine or wire degrades, the opening in the sidewall of the trap will no longer be obstructed; or
- the obstruction may be loosely hinged at the bottom of the opening by no more than two untreated steel hog rings and secured at the top of the obstruction in no more than one place by a single length of untreated jute twine (comparable to Lehigh brand #530), sisal twine (comparable to Lehigh brand #390) or untreated steel wire with a diameter of 20 gauge or smaller. When the twine or wire degrades, the obstruction will hinge downward and the opening in the sidewall of the trap will no longer be obstructed.
- Placement and Location Restrictions:
  - May not place a crab trap or portion thereof closer than 100 feet from any other crab trap, EXCEPT when traps are secured to a pier or dock.
  - May not fish a crab trap in public fresh waters.
  - May not fish a crab trap within 200 feet of a marked navigable channel in Aransas County; and in the water area of Aransas Bay within one-half mile of a line from Hail Point on the Lamar Peninsula, then direct to the eastern end of Goose Island, then along the southern shore of Goose Island, then along the eastern shoreline of the Live Oak Peninsula past the town of Fulton, past Nine Mile Point, past the town of Rockport to a point at the east end of Talley Island including that part of Copano Bay within 1,000 feet of the causeway between Lamar Peninsula and Live Oak Peninsula.
  - May not possess, use or place more than three crab traps in waters north and west

of Highway 146 where it crosses the Houston Ship Channel in Harris County.

- May not use or place more than three crab traps in public waters of the San Bernard River north of a line marked by the boat access channel at Bernard Acres.

#### **Other Devices:**

- Devices legally used for taking of fresh or saltwater fish or shrimp may be used to take crab if operated in places and at times authorized by a proclamation of the Texas Parks and Wildlife Commission or the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department Code.
- See applicable pages in this guide to determine authorized uses, places and times for other legal devices.

### **CRAB LICENSE MANAGEMENT**

A license management program (limited entry) has been in effect for the Texas commercial crab fishery since 1998.

For further information on any limited entry requirements and restrictions, contact Mr. Art Morris, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, Coastal Fisheries Division, Natural Resources Building, 6300 Ocean Drive, Suite 2500, Corpus Christi, TX 78412, (361) 825-3356.

### **CRAB LICENSE BUYBACK PROGRAM**

At least once each year, the TPWD provides an opportunity for holders of commercial crab fisherman's license to apply to have their licenses purchased by the department. If you are interested in more information about participating in this voluntary program contact the Coastal Fisheries Division, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, 4200 Smith School Road, Austin, Texas 78744; (800) 792-1112, ext. 4645 or (512) 389-4645.

## **OYSTERS**

**Commercial Oystering Seasons**—Nov. 1 through Apr. 30 except in all private leases with permits from the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department where there is no closed season. During open season, oysters may be taken only from sunrise to sunset.

**Commercial Oyster Limits**—No oyster boat may take more than 90 sacks of oysters per boat per day, and may possess no more than 6 sacks (equivalent of 2 barrels) of uncultured oysters. A

sack is defined as 110 pounds of oysters (including the sack).

**Legal Size Limits**—Three (3) inches (greatest length of shell) or larger. Oysters 3/4 inch to three inches are to be culled and returned to reef from which taken; provided, however, that each cargo may contain not more than 15 percent of oysters of this size. Not more than six (6) sacks of uncultured oysters are permitted on board while on a reef.

**Legal Means and Methods**—It is unlawful while taking or attempting to take oysters for pay or the purpose of sale, barter or exchange or any other commercial purpose to use more than one dredge, use a dredge which exceeds 48 inches in width and a two-barrel capacity, have more than one dredge connected in any manner to a winch, chain or other lifting device during the open public season; or have any additional dredge(s) on board unless secured below deck, to the wheelhouse or to the deck in such a manner as to be lashed, tied, shackled or chained as to prevent its immediate use. Commercial oyster boats limited to not more than 90 sacks of legal size oysters.

**Special Provisions**—Oysters may be taken only from waters approved by the State Commissioner of Health.

The harvesting, shucking, processing and sale of oysters must conform to all regulations

specified by the Texas Department of State Health Services.

## **OYSTER LICENSE MANAGEMENT**

A moratorium on the sale of new licenses or a license management program (limited entry) went into effect for the Texas commercial oyster fishery 2005. Only fishermen who held a Commercial Oyster Boat License during the 2005-2006 license year, or who had a license transferred into their name, will be eligible to buy a license for the current license year.

For further information on any limited entry requirements and restrictions, contact Mr. Art Morris, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, Coastal Fisheries Division, Natural Resources Building, 6300 Ocean Drive, Suite 2500, Corpus Christi, TX 78412, (361) 825-3356.

## **MUSSELS AND CLAMS**

A moratorium on the sale of new licenses is in effect for the Texas commercial freshwater mussel fishery. A commercial mussel or clam fisherman's license can only be obtained by a person who held a resident or non-resident commercial mussel or clam

fisherman's license valid for the 2003-2004 or 2004-2005 license year or who obtained a commercial mussel or clam fisherman's license between Sept. 1, 2005 and May 1, 2006. For additional information, please call (512) 389-4444.

## **SEA TURTLES AND OTHER AQUATIC LIFE**

It is unlawful for any person to knowingly take, kill or disturb any **sea turtle** or **sea turtle eggs** in the State of Texas. To report stranded sea turtles or nests, please call 1-866-TURTLE5.

There is no open season in any county for ALL MARINE MAMMALS INCLUDING PORPOISES, DOLPHINS AND WHALES.

Any other aquatic life (except threatened and endangered species) not addressed in this guide may be taken only by hand or with the devices defined as lawful for taking fish, shrimp, oysters or crabs in places and at times as provided in this guide.

## CRIMINAL PENALTIES AND CIVIL VALUE RECOVERY

If you violate fish and wildlife laws, in addition to civil restitution you may:

- be fined (Class C – \$25–\$500; Class B – \$200–\$2000; Class A – \$500–\$4000; State Jail Felony, \$1500–\$10,000);
- be jailed (Class B and higher offenses);
- face automatic suspension or revocation of licenses for up to 5 years;
- forfeit hunting gear, including firearms, used to commit a violation.

**CIVIL RESTITUTION:** In addition to the **criminal** penalty for hunting and fishing violations, the department will seek the **civil recovery value** for the loss or damage to wildlife resources. The civil restitution cost is payable to Texas Parks and Wildlife Department and is in addition to the fine assessed by the court. Failure to pay the civil recovery value will result in the department's refusal to issue a license, tag or permit. An individual who hunts or fishes after the refusal commits a class A misdemeanor which is punishable by a fine not less than \$500 or more than \$4,000; punishment in jail not to exceed one year; or both fine and confinement. **For questions concerning civil restitution call (512) 389-4630.**

### Operation Game Thief Texas' Wildlife Crime-Stoppers Program

#### You can make a difference by reporting

poaching, pollution and dumping, arson in state parks, and intoxicated boaters! Up to \$1,000 may be paid for information leading to arrest and conviction of a person for a violation of our state's wildlife and fisheries laws, as well as for certain laws related to environmental crime, arson, and intoxicated boaters.



#### Reward Hotline (800) 792-GAME

Support anti-poaching efforts by becoming a member of the Operation Game Thief Program (call (512) 389-4381 for membership information) or by sending your tax deductible donation to Operation Game Thief, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, 4200 Smith School Road, Austin, Texas 78744.



# WHERE TO GET INFORMATION AND LICENSES

Texas Parks and Wildlife Department **Regional** and Field Law Enforcement Offices

ABILENE, 281 North Willis (79603) (325) 673-3333  
AMARILLO, 203 West 8th, Suite #200, LB14006  
(79101) (806) 379-8900  
BEAUMONT, 5550-K Eastex Freeway (77708)  
(409) 892-8666  
BROWNSVILLE, 5460 Paredes Line Road, Suite 201  
(78526) (956) 546-1952  
**BROWNWOOD**, 301 Main, Suite D (76801)  
(325) 646-0440  
BRYAN, 3608 East 29th Street, Suite 220 (77802)  
(979) 260-1372  
**CORPUS CHRISTI**, 5541 Bear Lane, Suite 232  
(78405) (361) 289-5566  
EL PASO, 401 East Franklin, Suite 520 (79901)  
(915) 834-7050  
**FORT WORTH**, 5400 Airport Freeway, Suite E  
(76117) (817) 831-3128  
FREEPORT, 210 W. First Street, Suite C (77541)  
(979) 233-7968 - hours 9:00 AM to 1:00 PM  
(boat registration not available at Freeport office)  
GARLAND, 346 Oaks Trail, Suite 100 (75043)  
(972) 226-9966  
**HOUSTON (NORTH)**, 350 North Sam Houston  
Pkwy E., Suite 100 (77060) (281) 931-6471  
HOUSTON (SOUTH), 10101 Southwest Frwy, #206  
(77074) (713) 779-8977  
KERRVILLE, 309 Sidney Baker South (78028)  
(830) 257-7611  
LAMARQUE, 14037 Delany Road (77568)  
(409) 933-1947  
**LUBBOCK**, 1702 Landmark Lane, Suite 1 (79415)  
(806) 761-4930  
LUFKIN, 4100 S. Medford Drive, Suite 204B  
(75901) (936) 632-1311  
MIDLAND, 4500 West Illinois, Suite 307 (79703)  
(432) 520-4649  
**MT. PLEASANT**, 212 South Johnson (75455)  
(903) 572-7966  
ROCKPORT, 715 South Highway 35 (78382)  
(361) 790-0312  
**RUSK**, 580 West 6th Street (75785)  
(903) 683-2511  
**SAN ANGELO**, 3407 South Chadbourne (76903)  
(325) 651-4844  
**SAN ANTONIO**, 858 West Rhapsody (78216)  
(210) 348-7375  
**TEMPLE**, 3615 So. General Bruce Drive (76504)  
(254) 778-2851  
TYLER, 3330 South Southwest Loop 323 (75701)  
(903) 534-0388  
VICTORIA, 2805 N. Navarro, Suite 600A (77901)  
(361) 575-6306  
WACO, 1601 East Crest Drive (76705)  
(254) 867-7951  
WICHITA FALLS, 100 Fremar Valley (76301)  
(940) 723-7327

## COMMERCIAL FISHING LICENSE LIMITED ENTRY AND BUYBACK PROGRAMS

For further information regarding any commercial license management program or license buyback program contact: Mr. Art Morris, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, Coastal Fisheries Division, Natural Resources Building, 6300 Ocean Drive, Suite 2500, Corpus Christi, TX 78412, (361) 825-3356.

Texas Parks and Wildlife Department Internet Web site: <http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us>

### Operation Game Thief

Texas Parks and Wildlife Department • 4200 Smith School Road • Austin, Texas 78744

**STOP POACHING! FOR 24-HOUR REPORTING OF VIOLATIONS, you may call:**

**(800) 792-GAME; AUSTIN — (512) 389-4848; HOUSTON — (281) 842-8100**

## TOLL FREE INFORMATION (Mon. - Fri., 8 a.m. - 5 p.m.)

For information concerning fishing regulations or other subjects related to TPWD.

(800) 792-1112 (general information) OR (512) 389- + extension #

#4820 Hunting & Fishing Licenses	#4828 Boat Registration	#4726 Resource Protection
#4854 Law Enforcement - Hunting	#2011 Coastal Fisheries	#4481 Scientific Permit
#4630 Law Enforcement - Fishing	#4444 Inland Fisheries	#4628 Commercial Licenses

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This digest will be revised as new regulations become effective. Note the date on the front cover and make sure you have the latest issue. For further information, please contact your local game warden or Texas Parks and Wildlife Department.

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# Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council

Protecting our marine resources

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## Recreational Fishing Regulations for Gulf of Mexico Federal Waters

November, 2005

For Species Managed by the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council

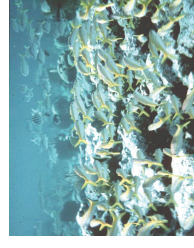
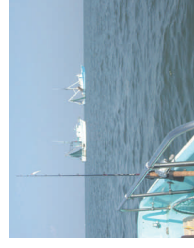
This publication was prepared for general informational purposes in November, 2005, and has no legal force or effect. Fishing regulations are subject to change. A separate summary of commercial fishing regulations is available from the Gulf Council.

A publication of the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council Pursuant to National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Award No. NAO5NMF4410003



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### Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council

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Web site: [www.gulfcouncil.org](http://www.gulfcouncil.org)

## About the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council

The Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council is one of eight regional Fishery Management Councils established by the Fishery Conservation and Management Act of 1976. The Council prepares fishery plans, which are designed to manage fishery resources within the 200-mile limit of the Gulf of Mexico.

The Council consists of 17 voting members: the Southeast Regional Administrator of the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) (or his designee), the directors of the five Gulf state marine resource management agencies (or their designees), and 11 members who are nominated by the state governors and appointed by the Secretary of Commerce. Appointments are three year terms with a maximum of three consecutive terms. In addition, there are four nonvoting members representing the U.S. Coast Guard, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of State, and the Gulf States Marine Fisheries Commission.

The Council meets five times a year at various locations around the Gulf coast. Prior to taking final action on any proposed rule change public hearings are held throughout the Gulf. Public testimony is also heard during the meeting at which final action is scheduled. Proposed rule changes are then submitted to NMFS for further review and approval before implementation.

When reviewing potential rule changes, the Council draws upon the services of knowledgeable people from other state and federal agencies, universities, and the public, who serve on panels and committees.

### State Agencies:

Alabama Department of Conservation and Marine Resources Information or to report state fishing violations 24hour voice mail to report state fishing violations	251-861-2882 251-968-7576 251-476-1256
Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission information To report state fishing violations Cellular phone	850-488-4676 850-488-9924 888-404-3922 *FWC
Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries information To report state fishing violations	225-765-2800 800-442-2511
Mississippi Department of Marine Resources Information and to report state fishing violations	228-374-5000
Texas Parks and Wildlife Department Information To report state fishing violations	800-792-1112 512-389-4848 281-842-8100 800-792-game

### Errata and Update Sheet

A supplemental "errata and update sheet" will be periodically published to indicate changes in fishing regulations since this pamphlet was published. Contact the Gulf Council to obtain the most recent supplement.

## Important Phone Numbers

- NMFS Operations Branch  
 NMFS Permits and Regulations Branch  
 (see below for tuna permit applications)  
 727-824-5305  
 727-824-5326
- To apply for permits online: [www.nmfspermits.com](http://www.nmfspermits.com)
- NMFS nationwide federal fishing violations hotline  
 NMFS 24-hour tuna information line  
 (also for tuna permit applications)  
 800-853-1964  
 888-872-8862  
 978-281-9260
- NMFS Highly Migratory Species Division  
 NMFS Swordfish/Billfish Recreational Reporting  
 301-713-2347  
 800-894-5528
- South Atlantic Fishery Management Council  
 843-571-4366
- Gulf States Marine Fisheries Commission  
 228-875-5912
- CCA fishing violation hotline  
 866-933-6367
- U.S. Coast Guard, 7th District  
 (Florida east of St. Marks)  
 305-415-6778
- U.S. Coast Guard, 8th District  
 (St. Marks, Florida to Texas)  
 504-589-6237
- Regional NMFS Office for Law Enforcement  
 727-824-5344
- NMFS Enforcement Field Offices:  
 Marathon, FL  
 Niceville, FL  
 Stennis Space Center, MS  
 Baton Rouge, LA  
 Austin, TX  
 Galveston, TX  
 Harlingen, TX  
 305-743-3110  
 850-729-8628  
 228-688-2920  
 225-769-5477  
 512-916-5401  
 409-770-0812  
 956-423-3450

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## Recreational Fishing Regulations

Reef Fish Species	Size Limit	Closed Season	Daily Bag Limit
<b>Snappers</b>			
Red Snapper	16" total length	Opens 12:01 am April 21 - closes 12:01 am Nov. 1	4 per person
Vermilion	11" total length	None	10 per person included in the 20 reef fish aggregate
Lane	8" total length	None	Included in 20 reef fish aggregate
Gray Mutton Yellowtail Schoolmaster Cubera Dog Mahogany Queen Blackfin Silk Wenchman	12" total length 16" total length 12" total length 12" total length 12" total length 12" total length None None None None	None None None None None None None None None None	10 per person in aggregate bag limit Includes all Snappers except red, vermilion, and lane

### Aggregate Reef Fish Bag Limit Species

Vermilion Snapper Lane Snapper Blackline Tilefish Anchor Tilefish Tilefish	Goldface Tilefish Almaco Jack Gray Triggerfish Blueline Tilefish	20/per person of all listed species in aggregate
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## State Authority in Federal Waters

A state may regulate vessels that are registered in that state and are fishing in federal waters for species for which there are no federal fishery management plans or applicable federal regulations, or for which the appropriate fishery management plan has delegated management of the state and the state rules are consistent with federal regulations.

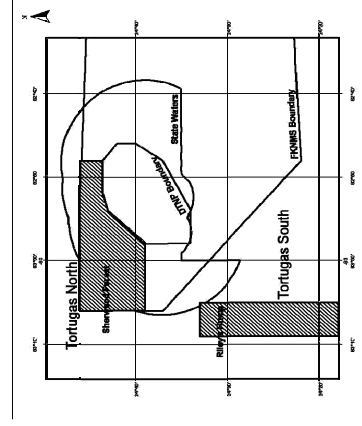
The following locations off the south coast of Florida are closed to all fishing. Anchoring of fishing vessels is also not allowed in the Tortugas sites. The boundaries of the areas are as follows:

### Tortugas North Ecological Reserve

NW corner 24° 40' N. lat., 83° 06' W. long.  
NE corner 24° 46' N. lat., 83° 06' W. long.  
SW corner 24° 46' N. lat., 83° 00' W. long.  
thence along the seaward limit of Florida's waters to SE corner 24° 06' N. lat., 85° 38' W. long.

### Tortugas South Ecological Reserve

NW corner 24° 33' N. lat., 83° 09' W. long.  
NE corner 24° 33' N. lat., 83° 05' W. long.  
SW corner 24° 18' N. lat., 83° 05' W. long.  
SE corner 24° 18' N. lat., 83° 09' W. long.



## Area Closures

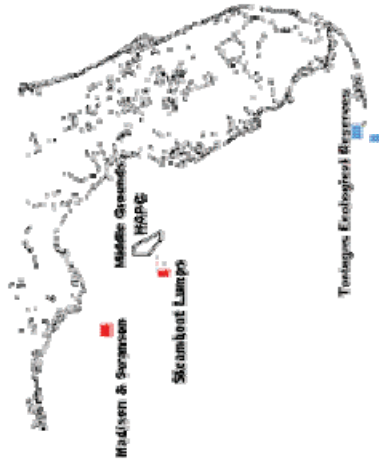
The following locations off the west-central coast of Florida are closed to all fishing from November 1 to April 30.  
Surface trolling for species other than reef fish is allowed May 1 to October 31.

- **Madison/Swanson Marine Reserve**

NW corner 29° 17' N. lat., 85° 50' W. long.  
NE corner 29° 17' N. lat., 85° 38' W. long.  
SW corner 29° 06' N. lat., 85° 50' W. long.  
SE corner 29° 06' N. lat., 85° 38' W. long.

- **Steamboat Lumps Marine Reserve**

NW corner 28° 14' N. lat., 84° 48' W. long.  
NE corner 28° 14' N. lat., 84° 37' W. long.  
SW corner 28° 03' N. lat., 84° 48' W. long. SE  
corner 28° 03' N. lat., 84° 37' W. long.



## Head and Fins Attached Rule

All fish except for bait and oceanic migratory species taken from federal waters must have heads and fins intact through landing. Up to 1½ pounds of finfish per person is exempt from the head and fins intact rule for personal consumption provided the vessel is equipped to cook such finfish.

## Recreational Fishing Regulations continued

- Reef fish taken under the recreational bag limit may not be sold.
- Stressed areas for reef fish begin at the shoreward boundary of federal waters and generally following the 10 fathom contour from the Dry Tortugas to Sanibel Island; the 20 fathom contour to Tarpon Springs; the 10 fathom contour to Cape San Blas; the 25 fathom contour to south of Mobile Bay; the 13 fathom contour to Ship Island, Mississippi; the 10 fathom contour off Louisiana; and the 30 fathom contour off Texas. Use of fish traps, roller trawls, and power heads is prohibited in designated "stressed areas."
- Reef fish gear is limited to no more than 3 hooks in a special management zone off Alabama. Nonconforming gear is restricted to bag limit, or for reef fish without a bag limit to 5% by weight of all fish aboard.
- Circle hooks are encouraged when angling for reef fish because they reduce mortality on released fish.

Species	Size Limit	Closed Season	Daily Bag Limit
<b>Groupers</b>			
Black	22" total length	Proposed Feb. 15– March 15 closed season anticipated in 2007.	5 per person in aggregate of all groupers except goliath grouper and Nassau grou- per. No more than 1 red grouper per person (counts as part of the 5 grou- per aggregate bag limit).
Gag	22" total length		
Red	20" total length		
Yellowfin	20" total length	None	1 per vessel 1 per vessel
Scamp	16" total length	None	
Yellowmouth	None	None	
Rock Hind	None	None	
Yellowedge	None	None	
Misty	None	None	
Snowy	None	None	
Speckled Hind	None	None	
Warsaw	None	None	

## Protected Groupers

Goliath (Jewfish) Nassau	HARVEST PROHIBITED
--------------------------------	--------------------

**Recreational Fishing Regulations continued**

**Other Reef fish**

Species	Size Limit	Closed Season	Daily Bag Limit
Hogfish	12" fork length	None	5 per person
Gray Triggerfish	12" total length	None	Included in 20 reef fish aggregate limit
Greater Amberjack	28" fork length	None	1 per person
Lesser Amberjack	14" - 22" fork length slot limit	None	5 fish aggregate limit for lesser amberjack and banded rudderfish, excluded from 20 reef fish aggregate limit
Banded Rudderfish	14" - 22" fork length slot limit	None	
<b>Shellfish</b>			
Stone Crab	Minimum 2 3/4" claw	5/16 - 10/14	See additional rules on page 8
Spiny Lobster	More than 3" carapace. Divers must measure in water.	4/1 - 8/5 There is a special 2 day non-trap recreational season, to be the last consecutive Wednesday and Thursday in July	6 per person, and no transfer at sea between boats (During the 2 day special recreational season, 12 per person off Florida except Monroe County, Florida Keys.)

**Measurement Guidelines**

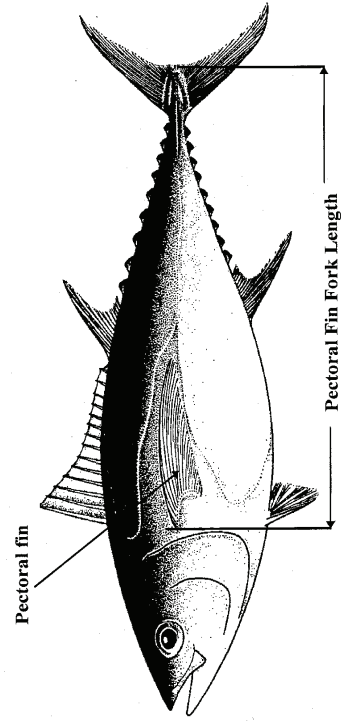
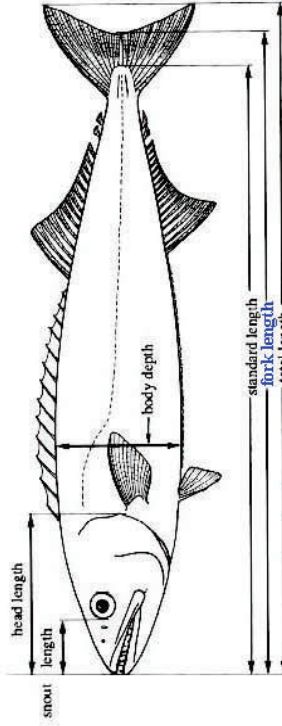
**Fork length:** the straight-line distance from the tip of the head (snout) to the rear center edge of the tail (caudal fin).

**Total length:** the straight-line distance from the tip of the snout to the tip of the tail (caudal fin), excluding any caudal filament, while the fish is lying on its side. The mouth of the fish may be closed and/or the tail may be squeezed together to give the greatest overall measurement.

**Dressed weight:** fish has been gutted and the head and fins removed, but is otherwise in whole condition.

**Curved fork length:** the tip of the upper jaw to fork of tail measured along the contour of the middle of the body.

**Carcass length:** the curved measure from posterior edge of gill opening to anterior portion of caudal keel.





## Recreational Permit Requirements

### Recreational Requirements

Permit	Required for:
Charter vessel/headboat coastal pelagics permit	Charter vessel and headboats fishing for mackerels, cobia, little tunny, cero, dolphin, bluefish. NOTE: Issuance of new permits is under a moratorium effective June 16, 2003.
Charter vessel/headboat reef fish permit	Charter vessels and headboats require a reef fish permit when fishing for snappers, groupers, amberjack, tilefish, hogfish, and gray triggerfish. A coastal migratory pelagics permit is required when fishing for bluefish, cero, cobia, dolphin, little tunny, king mackerel, and Spanish mackerel.
Charter vessel/headboat coastal migratory pelagic permit	
Allowable octocoral permit	Harvest or possession of allowable octocoral, other than allowable octocoral that is landed in Florida. Appropriate Florida state permits are required to land allowable octocoral in Florida.
Highly migratory species (HMS) Charter/headboat permit	HMS Charter/headboat permit is required for all charter or headboats that fish for or possess an HMS.
HMS Recreational Angling Permit	Owners of vessels used to fish recreationally for Atlantic HMS Atlantic tunas (other than blackfin), billfish, sharks and swordfish.

Applications for permits other than HMS permits may be obtained from National Marine Fisheries Service, Southeast Regional Office, 263 13th Avenue S., St. Petersburg, FL 33702 (telephone 727-551-5326). HMS permits can be purchased online at [www.nmfspermits.com](http://www.nmfspermits.com) or by calling 888-872-8862.

## Recreational Fishing Regulations continued

### Coastal Migratory Pelagics

Cobia (ling)	33" fork length	None	2 per person
King Mackerel	24" fork length	None	2 per person including captain and crew of for-hire vessels.
Spanish Mackerel	12" fork length	None	15 per person

## Coral and Other Species

Species	Sex Limit	Closed Season	Daily Bag Limit
<b>Coral and Coral Reefs</b>			
Allowable Octocorals	Attached substrate within 1 inch of octocoral is allowed.	Fishery season regulated by state of Florida rules.	6 colonies per day
Live Rock	Harvest and possession of live rock is prohibited (except for permitted aquaculture operations).		
Other Marine Life Organisms	Marine life organisms from the EEZ harvested or possessed by Florida residents or landed in Florida are subject to Florida's Marine Life Rule. Contact the Florida Fish and Wildlife Commission for more information at 850 487-3122.		
<b>Other Species</b>			
Red Drum	Illegal to harvest or possess in federal waters.		

## Other Federal Regulations

### Highly Migratory Species

All HMS species (except blackfin tuna) require an HMS Angling Category permit from NOAA Fisheries. Permits are available by calling 888-872-8862 or visiting [www.nmfspermits.com](http://www.nmfspermits.com). No sale permitted for HMS species caught under an angling permit. Additional recreational reporting requirements apply for swordfish, billfish, and Atlantic bluefin tuna. For complete HMS regulations, contact the NOAA Fisheries HMS Management Division at 301-713-2347 or visit the web site at [www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/hms/](http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/hms/).

For updates on tuna quota monitoring and tuna retention limit adjustments, anglers may call the Atlantic Tunas Information Line at 888-872-8862 or 978-281-9305, or visit [www.nmfspermits.com](http://www.nmfspermits.com). For further information on tunas, contact the HMS Management Division located in Gloucester, Massachusetts at 978-281-9260. Recreational swordfish and billfish landings should be reported at 800-894-5528.

### Tuna

Bluefin	27" curved fork length	Bag limits are subject to sub-quotas by size and permit categories, change seasonally, and are reduced to zero when sub-quotas are filled.
Bigeye	27" curved	None
Yellowfin	27" fork length	3 per person
Albacore	None	None
Skipjack	None	None
Blackfin	None	None
<b>Billfish</b>	Minimum size lower jaw to fork	
Blue Marlin	99" lower jaw	None
White Marlin	66" fork	None
Sailfish	63" length	None
Longbill spearfish	HARVEST PROHIBITED	
Swordfish	Whole fish: 47" lower jaw to tail fork, or 29" carcass length or 33 lbs. dressed weight.	1 per person up to a maximum of 3 per vessel.

## Other Federal Regulations continued

### Sharks

Atlantic sharpnose	None	None	1 per person
Bonnethead	None	None	1 per person
Other sharks	54" fork length	None	1 per vessel in aggregate

### Prohibited Sharks-Recreational Harvest

Atlantic angel	Basking	Bigeye sand tiger	Caribbean Reef	Caribbean sharpnose
Bigeye sixgill	Bigeye thresher	Bignose	Dusky	Sand tiger
Galapagos Sevengill	Longfin mako	Narrowtooth	Night	White
	Sixgill	Smalltail	Whale	

## Additional Rules

Charter vessels/headboat two-day bag limit allowance	Persons on qualified charter vessels or headboats with two captains for trips in excess of 24 hours may possess 2 days' bag limits of reef fish species, king mackerel and Spanish mackerel. One-day bag limits apply on all other species and trips regardless of length.			
Stone Crab	Claws may not be removed from egg-bearing females. Illegal to land whole crab. Florida daily limit of claws is 1 gallon per person, 2 gallons per vessel.			
Spiny Lobster	Removal of tail prohibited at sea. See commercial regulations for trap use. No spears, hooks, or piercing devices. No taking of spiny or slipper lobsters that are berried (egg-bearing).			
Cobia (ling)	The 2-day bag limit allowance for charter vessels and headboats <b>does not</b> apply to cobia.			
Allowable Octocorals	Allowable octocoral means an erect, nonencrusting species of the subclass Octocorallia, except the seafans <i>Gorgonia flabellum</i> and <i>G. ventalina</i> , plus the attached substrate within 1" of an allowable octocoral. <b>NOTE:</b> An octocoral with attached substrate exceeding 1" is considered to be live rock and not allowable octocoral.			



# Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council

Protecting our marine resources

## Commercial Fishing Regulations for Gulf of Mexico Federal Waters

November, 2005

### For Species Managed by the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council



This publication was prepared for general informational purposes in November, 2005, and has no legal force or effect. Fishing regulations are subject to change. A separate summary of recreational fishing regulations is available from the Gulf Council.

A publication of the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council Pursuant to National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Award No. NAO5NMF4410003



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## About the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council

The Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council is one of eight regional Fishery Management Councils established by the Fishery Conservation and Management Act of 1976. The Council prepares fishery management plans which are designed to manage fishery resources within the 200-mile limit of the Gulf of Mexico.

The Council consists of 17 voting members: the Southeast Regional Administrator of NMFS (or his designee), the directors of the five Gulf state marine resource management agencies (or their designees), and 11 members who are nominated by the state governors and appointed by the Secretary of Commerce. Appointments are three-year terms with a maximum of three consecutive terms. In addition, there are four nonvoting members representing the U.S. Coast Guard, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of State, and the Gulf States Marine Fisheries Commission.

The Council meets five times a year at various locations around the Gulf coast. Prior to taking final action on any proposed rule change public hearings are held throughout the Gulf. Public testimony is also heard during the meeting at which final action is scheduled. Proposed rule changes are then submitted to NMFS for further review and approval before implementation.

When reviewing potential rule changes, the Council draws upon the services of knowledgeable people from other state and federal agencies, universities, and the public, who serve on panels and committees.

### State Agencies:

Alabama Department of Conservation  
and Marine Resources  
Information or to report state fishing  
violations 251-861-2882  
24hour voice mail to report state fishing  
violations 251-968-7576  
251-476-1256

Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation  
Commission information 850-488-4676  
To report state fishing violations 850-488-9924  
Cellular phone 888-404-3922  
\*FWC

Louisiana Department of Wildlife and  
Fisheries information 225-765-2800  
To report state fishing violations 800-442-2511

Mississippi Department of Marine Resources  
Information and to report state fishing  
violations 228-374-5000

Texas Parks and Wildlife Department  
Information 800-792-1112  
To report state fishing violations 512-389-4848  
281-842-8100  
800-792-game



### Errata and Update Sheet

A supplemental "errata and update sheet" will be periodically published to indicate changes in fishing regulations since this pamphlet was published. Contact the Gulf Council to obtain the most recent supplement.

## Important Phone Numbers

NMFS Operations Branch 727-824-5305  
 NMFS Permits and Regulations Branch 727-824-5326  
 (see below for tuna permit applications)

To apply for permits online: [www.nmfspermits.com](http://www.nmfspermits.com)

NMFS nationwide federal fishing violations hotline 800-853-1964  
 NMFS 24-hour tuna information line 888-872-8862  
 (also for tuna permit applications) 978-281-9260  
 NMFS Highly Migratory Species Division 301-713-2347  
 NMFS Swordfish/Billfish Recreational Reporting 800-894-5528

South Atlantic Fishery Management Council 843-571-4366

Gulf States Marine Fisheries Commission 228-875-5912

CCA fishing violation hotline 866-933-6367

U.S. Coast Guard, 7th District (Florida east of St. Marks) 305-415-6778

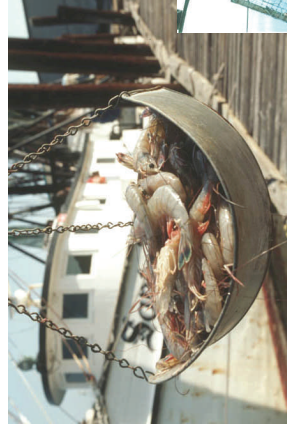
U.S. Coast Guard, 8th District (St. Marks, Florida to Texas) 504-589-6237

Regional NMFS Office for Law Enforcement 727-824-5344

NMFS Enforcement Field Offices:  
 Marathon, FL 305-743-3110  
 Niceville, FL 850-729-8628  
 Stennis Space Center, MS 228-688-2920  
 Baton Rouge, LA 225-769-5477  
 Austin, TX 512-916-5401  
 Galveston, TX 409-770-0812  
 Harlingen, TX 956-423-3450

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## Commercial Fishing Regulations—CMPs

Species	Minimum Size Limit	Trip Limit	Quotas/Closed Seasons
<b>Coastal Migratory Pelagics</b>			
Cobia (ling)	33" fork length	Daily bag and possession limit of 2 per person	
King Mackerel	Minimum 24" fork length Maximum of 5% by weight may be undersized	<b>Eastern Zone:</b> <b>FL east coast subzone</b> 1.1/1 to 3/31—50 fish per trip until quota filled. 4/1 to 10/31—South Atlantic regulations apply, refer to South Atlantic Council regulation pamphlet. <b>FL west coast subzone:</b> Gillnets 6:00 a.m. day after the Martin Luther King Jr. Federal holiday until gear quota reached—25,000 lbs/trip <b>FL west coast subzone:</b> <b>Hook-and-line</b> 7/1 until 75% gear quota—1,250 lbs/trip then 500 lbs/trip until gear quota filled <b>Western Zone:</b> Opens 7/1 - 3,000 lbs/trip until quota filled	Quota (subdivided as shown): 3,264,000 lbs Gulf group <b>Eastern Zone:</b> 2,252,160 lbs FL-east subzone 1,040,625 lbs FL-west subzone 1,209,374 lbs Northern Hook- and-line 168,750 lbs Southern Gillnets 520,312 lbs Southern Hook-and-line 520,312 lbs <b>Western Zone:</b> 1,010,000 lbs

## Additional Remarks

Stone Crab	Stone crab traps must have a biodegradable panel, and must be permanently marked with their Florida stone crab permit number and color or their federal number and color. Traps must meet Florida construction guidelines.
Spiny Lobster	Only diving, bully nets, hoop nets, and traps not to exceed 2'x2'x3' allowed. Bycatch of 5% allowed with trawls. Removal of spiny lobster tail allowed only when fishing exclusively in the EEZ on a trip of 48 hours or more, and requires a tailing permit.
Shrimp	Bycatch reduction devices required; prohibited areas include the Tortugas Shrimp Sanctuary, Texas Flower Gardens, and the Florida Middle Grounds; traps are prohibited for the harvest of royal red shrimp.
Cobia (ling)	Drift gill nets are prohibited.
Allowable Octocorals	Allowable octocoral—an erect, nonencrusting, species of the subclass Octocorallia, except the seafans <i>Gorgonia flabellus</i> and <i>G. ventalina</i> , plus the attached substrate within .1 inch of allowable octocoral. Note: An octocoral with attached substrate exceeding "1" is considered to be live rock and is not allowable octocoral.
Billfish	Retention prohibited on longline vessels; must be released in the water in a manner maximizing survival.
Swordfish	Allowable gear: longline, handline, harpoon, rod-and-reel, bandit. Incidental catch allowed with squid trawl.
Reef Fish	Sea basses, grunts, and porgies have been removed from federal management, and may be subject to state regulations even if caught in federal waters.
Sharks	Large Coastals: Ridgeback Species: Sandbar Silky Tiger Non-Ridgeback Species: Blacktip Spinner Lemon Bull Nurse Great hammerhead Scalloped hammerhead Smooth hammerhead Atlantic sharpnose Blacknose Bonnethead Shortfin mako Blue Oceanic whitetip Porbeagle Thresher
	Small Coastals: Pelagics:

## Other Requirements

- Buoy and trap identification required. Traps (or the ends of a string of traps) must be buoyed and may not be tended at night. Pop up buoys are prohibited. Fish traps will be phased out after 2007.
- A state may regulate vessels that are registered in that state and that are fishing in federal waters for species for which there are no federal fishery management plans or applicable federal regulations.
- All fish except for bait and oceanic migratory species taken from federal waters must have heads and fins intact through landing. Legal size fish within a bag limit may be consumed at sea.
- Closed areas: EEZ portion of Tortugas North—fishing and anchoring of fishing vessels prohibited. Coordinates are 24° 40' N. lat., 83° 06' W. long./24° 46' N. lat., 83° 06' W. long./24° 46' N. lat., 83° 00' W. long./thence along the seaward limit of Florida's waters to 24° 40' N. lat., 83° 06' W. long.
- Tortugas South—fishing and anchoring of vessels prohibited. Coordinates are 24° 33' N. lat., 83° 09' W. long./24° 33' N. lat., 83° 05' W. long./24° 18' N. lat., 83° 05' W. long./24° 18' N. lat., 83° 09' W. long.
- The Madison/Swanson site and Steamboat Lumps site of the west central coast of Florida are closed to all fishing except for highly migratory species. Coordinates are 29° 17' N. lat., 85° 50' W. long./29° 17' N. lat., 85° 38' W. long./29° 06' N. lat., 85° 50' W. long./29° 06' N. lat., 85° 38' W. long. for the Madison/Swanson site and 28° 14' N. lat., 84° 48' W. long./28° 14' N. lat., 84° 37' W. long./28° 03' N. lat., 84° 48' W. long./28° 03' N. lat., 84° 37' W. long. for the Steamboat Lumps site.
- Pelagic longlining for highly migratory pelagic is prohibited from the DeSoto Canyon area. Contact the National Marine Fisheries Service at 301-713-2347 for detailed coordinates.

## Commercial Fishing Regulations—Reef Fish

The gillnet fishery for Gulf group king mackerel in or from the Gulf EEZ is closed each fishing year from July 1 until 6:00 a.m. on the day after the Martin Luther King Jr. Federal holiday. The gillnet fishery also is closed during all subsequent weekends and observed Federal holidays, except for the first weekend following the Martin Luther King Jr. holiday, which will remain open to the gillnet fishery provided a notification of closure of that fishery has not been filed. Weekend closures are effective from 6:00 a.m. Saturday to 6:00 a.m. Monday. Holiday closures are effective from 6:00 a.m. on the observed Federal holiday to 6:00 a.m. the following day.

Species	Minimum Size Limit	Trip Limit	Quotas/Closed Seasons
Spanish Mackerel	12" fork length	None	Quota: 5,187 million lbs Gulf group. Season opens 4/1 and closes when quota is filled.
<b>Reef Fish</b>			
Red Snapper	15" total length	2,000 lbs/trip with Class 1 red snapper license.  200 lbs/trip with Class 2 red snapper license	Red snapper fishery closed during January. Quota = 4.65 million lbs—3.06 million lbs on a Feb. 1 opening (open noon on the 1st until noon on the 10th of each month until sub-quota filled), remainder on an Oct. 1 opening (open noon on the 1st until noon on the 10th of each month until sub-quota is reached, or Dec 31).
Vermilion Lane Gray (Mangrove) Mutton Yellowtail Mahogany Schoolmaster Dog Cubera Blackfin Queen Silk Wenchman	11" total length 8" total length 12" total length 16" total length 12" total length 12" total length 12" total length 12" total length 12" total length None None None None	None None None None None None None None None None None None None None None	Commercial closure April 22—May 31 for Vermilion
Tilefish	None	None	440,000 lbs gutted weight

## Reef Fish continued

Species	Size Limit	Trip Limit	Quotas/Closed Seasons
<b>Deep-Water Groupers</b>			
Misty	None	6,000 lbs gutted weight	Quota: 1.02 million
Snowy	None	trip limit for all groupers, deepwater and shallow-water, combined	lbs gutted weight
Yellowedge	None		Includes scamp after
Warsaw	None		shallow-water
Speckled Hind	None		grouper quota is filled.
<b>Shallow-Water Groupers</b>			
Black	24" total length	Quota: 8.80 million lbs gutted weight for all shallow-water groupers in aggregate.	
Gag	24" total length		
Red	20" total length		
Yellowfin	20" total length	A red grouper quota of 5.31 mp gutted weight is included in the shallow-water grouper quota.	
Scamp	16" total length		
Yellowmouth	None	Shallow-water grouper quota closure occurs when either the shallow-water grouper or red grouper quota is reached, whichever occurs first.	
Rock Hind	None		
Red Hind	None	Seasonal closure on commercial harvest and a prohibition on sale of gag, black, and red grouper from 2/15–3/15.	

## Protected Groupers

Goliath (Jewfish) Nassau	Harvest Prohibited		
<b>Species</b>	<b>Size Limit</b>	<b>Trip Limit</b>	<b>Quota/Closed Seasons</b>
Gray Triggerfish	12" total length	None	None
Hogfish	12" fork length	None	None
Greater Amberjack	36" fork length	None	Commercial closure March, April and May
Lesser Amberjack	14" - 22" fork length slot limit	None	None
Banded Rudderfish	14" - 22" fork length slot limit	None	None

## Other Requirements

- Reef fish taken under the recreational bag limit may not be sold.
- The use of longlines and buoy gear for reef fish is prohibited inside of lines approximating 50 fathoms west and 20 fathoms east and south of Cape San Blas, Florida. Vessels fishing within this zone and possessing longlines or buoy gear may not exceed the recreational bag limits, and for reef fish without a bag limit, 5% by weight of all fish aboard.
- Stressed areas for reef fish begin at the shoreward boundary of federal waters and generally follow the 10 fathom contour from the Dry Tortugas to Sanibel Island; the 20 fathom contour to Tarpon Springs; the 10 fathom contour to Cape San Blas; the 25 fathom contour to south of Mobile Bay; the 13 fathom contour to Ship Island, Mississippi; the 10 fathom contour off Louisiana; and the 30 fathom contour off Texas. In designated "stressed areas" use of fish traps, roller trawls, and power heads is prohibited.
- Reef fish gear is limited to no more than 3 hooks in a special management zone off Alabama. Nonconforming gear is restricted to bag limits, or for reef fish without a bag limit to 5% by weight of all fish aboard.
- Entangling nets may not be used for directed harvest of reef fish.
- Vessels with shrimp trawls or entangling net gear aboard may not exceed the recreational reef fish bag limits.
- Vessels fishing traps other than fish traps, stone crab traps, or spiny lobster traps may not exceed the recreational reef fish bag limits.
- A reef fish trap endorsement is required for using traps, and vessels are limited to 100 traps. Traps must be returned to shore at the end of each trip and must have degradable panels, mesh no smaller than 1" x 2", 1.5" hexagon, or 1.5" by 1.5" inside 300' contour. Traps may not exceed 33 cu. ft. Two 2" x 2" escape windows are required on two sides excluding the bottom (4 openings). Hinges and fasteners of degradable panel or access door must be constructed of either untreated jute string of no more than 3/16" diameter or magnesium alloy.



## Commercial Permit Requirements continued

Red snapper Class 1 or 2 license*	A Class 1 red snapper license is required in addition to a reef fish permit to harvest red snapper at the 2,000 pound trip limit. A Class 2 red snapper license is required in addition to a reef fish permit to harvest red snapper at the 200 pound trip limit. Other reef fish permitted vessels are prohibited from commercial harvest. No new red snapper licenses are being issued, but existing red snapper licenses are transferable.
Fish trap endorsement	Required in addition to a reef fish permit to harvest reef fish using fish traps. No new fish trap endorsements are being issued. Endorsements are non-transferable except to another vessel owned by the endorsement holder, immediate family members or in case of death or disability of the endorsement holder. After February 7, 2007, all fish trap endorsements become invalid and the use of fish traps to harvest reef fish will be prohibited.
Aquacultured live rock permit	Possession or harvest of cultivated live rock. Appropriate Florida state permits are also required to land live rock in Florida. Wild live rock possession or harvest is prohibited.
Allowable octocoral permit	Harvest or possession of allowable octocoral, other than allowable octocoral that is landed in Florida. Appropriate Florida state permits are required to land allowable octocoral in Florida
Commercial tuna categories: General, Longline, Purse seine, Harpoon, Charter/headboat	Vessels must have one of these permits to sell Atlantic bluefin tuna, albacore, Atlantic bonito, bigeye tuna, skipjack tuna, or yellowfin tuna. Separate Atlantic bluefin quota and gear restrictions apply to each category. For further information contact the Atlantic tunas information line (888-872-8862) or NMFS HMS Management Division at 978-281-9260.
Swordfish vessel permit	Vessels must have a directed or incidental limited access permit for commercial harvest and sale of swordfish under quota.
Shark vessel permit	Vessels must have a directed or incidental limited access permit for harvest and sale of sharks listed in the management unit of the Atlantic Sharks Fishery management Plan under quota and in excess of bag limits.

\* May be replaced with and IFQ during 2006

## Coral/Shellfish/Other

### Corals and Coral Reefs

Allowable Octocorals	Quota: 50,000 colonies (Gulf and Atlantic)
Live Rock	Harvest or possession of wild live rock is prohibited. Harvest and possession of aquacultured live rock by permitted individuals.
Other Marine Life Organisms	Marine life organisms from the EEZ harvested or possessed by Florida residents or landed in Florida are subject to Florida's Marine Life Rule. Contact Florida Fish and Wildlife Commission for more information 850-488-4676.

Species	Size Limit	Trip Limit	Quotas/Closed Seasons
<b>Shellfish</b>			
Stone Crab	Minimum 2 3/4" claw	None	Season closed 5/16-10/14
Spiny Lobster	Carapace more than 3" or tail more than 5 1/2". Divers must measure in water	None	Season closed 4/1-8/5
Shrimp	None, but white shrimp taken in the EEZ and transported to Louisiana must comply with the minimum size limit of that state.	None	Royal red shrimp- 392,000 lbs tail weight. Royal red shrimp season opens 1/1 and closes when quota is filled.

### Other Species

Red Drum	Illegal to harvest or possess in federal waters.
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## Measurement Guidelines

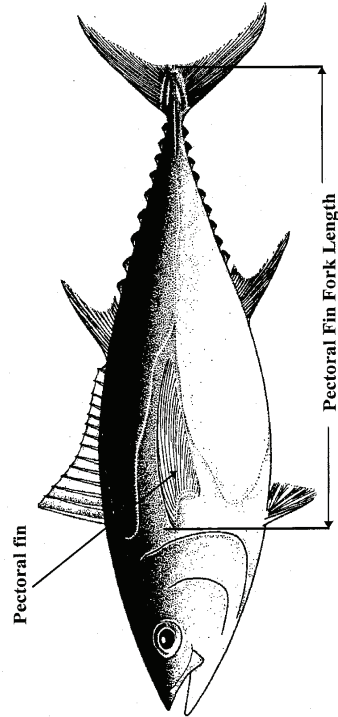
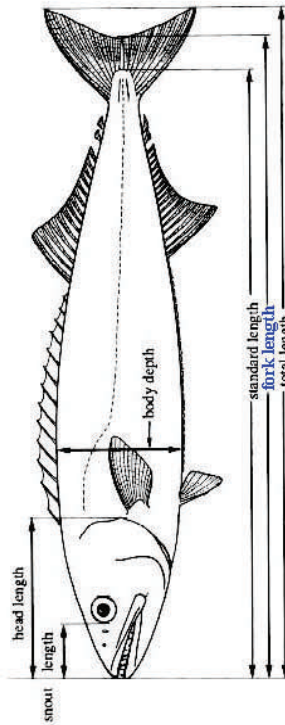
**Fork length:** the straight-line distance from the tip of the head (snout) to the rear center edge of the tail (caudal fin).

**Total length:** the straight-line distance from the tip of the snout to the tip of the tail (caudal fin), excluding any caudal filament, while the fish is lying on its side. The mouth of the fish may be closed and/or the tail may be squeezed together to give the greatest overall measurement.

**Dressed weight:** fish has been gutted and the head and fins removed, but is otherwise in whole condition.

**Curved fork length:** the tip of the upper jaw to fork of tail measured along the contour of the middle of the body.

**Carcass length:** the curved measure from posterior edge of gill opening to anterior portion of caudal keel.



## Commercial Permit Requirements

Commercial Permit Requirements: (Earned income qualification criteria apply to mackerel, reef fish, and shark permits.) Applications for permits may be obtained from National Marine Fisheries Service, Southeast Regional Office, 263 13th Avenue S., St. Petersburg, FL 33701, (telephone 727-551-5326), except for tuna permits, which may be obtained by calling 888-872-8862 or 978-281-9260.

Permit	Required for:
Spiny lobster federal vessel permit or Florida commercial harvester license and certificates	Florida commercial harvester license and certificates required for harvest or possession in excess of the bag limits in the EEZ off Florida or to land or sell in Florida. Federal vessel permit required for harvest or possession in excess of the bag limits in the EEZ other than off Florida or sale other than Florida.
Stone crab federal vessel permit or Florida commercial harvester license and certificates	Florida commercial harvester license and certificates required for harvest or possession in excess of the bag limits in the EEZ off Florida or to land or sell in Florida. Federal vessel permit required for harvest or possession in excess of the bag limits in the EEZ other than off Florida or sale other than Florida.
Spiny lobster tail separation permit	Possession of a separated spiny lobster tail in or from the EEZ aboard a vessel. Also requires a spiny lobster federal vessel permit or Florida state license and certificates.
Shrimp	Permit required for all vessels that intend to fish for shrimp in EEZ waters of the Gulf of Mexico.
Mackerel vessel permit	Harvest of king or Spanish mackerel under quota and in excess of the bag limits. Issuance of new king mackerel permits is under a moratorium, but existing permits are transferable. There is no moratorium on issuance of Spanish mackerel permits, but these permits are not transferable.
King mackerel gillnet endorsement	Harvest of king mackerel in the Florida west coast subzone using a gillnet. Also requires a mackerel vessel permit.
Reef fish vessel permit	Harvest and sale of all reef fish listed in the Reef Fish Fishery Management Plan under quota (where applicable) and in excess of the bag limits (where applicable), except goliath grouper and Nassau grouper (for which all harvest is prohibited). Issuance of new reef fish permits is under a moratorium. Existing permits are transferable.



# Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council

Protecting our marine resources

## Habitat Areas of Particular Concern

Point	North Latitude.	West Long
A	24°58'18"	83°38'33"
B	24°58'18"	83°37'00"
C	24°41'11"	83°37'00"
D	24°40'00"	83°41'22"
E	24°43'55"	83°47'15"
A	24°58'18"	83°38'33"

Point	North Latitude	West Long
A	28°10'38.3"	94°18'36.5"
B	28°10'38.3"	94°17'06.3"
C	28°09'18.6"	94°17'06.3"
D	28°09'18.6"	94°18'36.5"
A	28°10'38.3"	94°18'36.5"

Point	North Latitude	West Long
A	27°59'06.0"	92°37'19.2"
B	27°59'06.0"	92°32'17.4"
C	27°55'55.5"	92°32'17.4"
D	27°55'55.5"	92°37'19.2"
A	27°59'06.0"	92°37'19.2"

Point	North Latitude	West Long
A	27° 55'22.8"	93°53'09.6"
B	27° 55'22.8"	93°46'46.0"
C	27° 49'03.0"	93°46'46.0"
D	27° 49'03.0"	93°53'09.6"
A	27° 55'22.8"	93°53'09.6"

Point	North Latitude	West Long
A	27° 59'14.4"	93°38'58.2"
B	27° 59'14.4"	93°34'03.5"
C	27° 52'36.5"	93°34'03.5"
D	27° 52'36.5"	93°38'58.2"
A	27° 59'14.4"	93°38'58.2"

This publication is a supplement to the November 2005 commercial and recreational fishing regulations and should be used in conjunctions with those regulations. This document was prepared for general informational purposes in January 2007 and has no legal force or effect. Fishing regulations are subject to change.

# April 2007 Errata and Updates to the November, 2005 Fishing Regulations

For Species Managed by the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council



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## Recreational Regulations

Reef fish			
Species	Size Limit (no change)	Closed Season	Bag Limit (no change)
Black Grouper Gag Red Grouper	22" total 22" length 20"	<b>February 15 – March 15 closed season</b>	5 per person in aggregate of all groupers except goliath grouper and Nassau grouper. No more than 1 red grouper per person (counts as part of the 5 grouper aggregate bag limit).
<b>Note: For-hire captains and crews are prohibited from retaining bag limits of any grouper while under charter</b>			
Red Snapper			
A NMFS interim rule for the 2007 recreational fishing season sets TAC at 6.5 million pounds, reduces the recreational bag limit from four fish to two and prohibits for-hire captain and crew from retaining a bag limit. This rule is effective May 2, and will be replaced by Joint Reef Fish Amendment 27/Shrimp Amendment 14 in 2008.			
Vermillion Snapper			
The Council is proposing to reduce the minimum size limit from 11" to 10" total length, eliminate the 10 fish recreational bag limit (20 fish aggregate bag limit will apply), and eliminate the April 22 – May 31 commercial closed season for vermilion snapper.			

### Reef Fish as Bait

Reef fish as bait, except sand perch or dwarf sand perch, is prohibited.

NOTE: A complete updated [Unofficial compilation of Federal Regulations prepared by the Southeast Regional Office/NMFS](#) is available in the [Fishing Regulations](#) section of our web site - [www.gulfcouncil.org](http://www.gulfcouncil.org).

## Commercial Regulations

Reef fish	
<b>6,000 lbs gutted weight trip limit</b> for all groupers, deep-water and shallow-water, combined.	
Red Snapper	A NMFS interim rule sets TAC at 6.5 million pounds and reduces the commercial size limit to 13 inches (effective April 2). This rule will be replaced by Joint Reef Fish Amendment 27/Shrimp Amendment 14 in 2008.  Commercial red snapper is now managed under an Individual Fishing Quota (IFQ) system. Anyone commercially fishing for red snapper must possess IFQ allocation and follow the established reporting protocol.

### VMS

Vessel Monitoring Systems are required onboard all vessels with federal commercial permits for Gulf reef fish, including charter vessels/headboats that also have a commercial reef fish permit. (Effective March 7, 2007).

### Essential Fish Habitat – Gear Restrictions

Bottom anchoring, trawling gear, bottom longlines, buoy gear, and all traps/pots are prohibited in East and West Flower Garden Banks, McGrail Bank, Pulley Ridge, Steison Bank, and North and South Tortugas Ecological Reserves. Additionally, a weak link in the tickler chain of bottom trawls on all habitats throughout the Gulf of Mexico exclusive economic zone is required.

### Fish Traps

Endorsements for fish traps in the Gulf of Mexico EEZ are no longer valid as of February 7, 2007. The use of fish traps is prohibited in the EEZ.

### Sea Turtle and Smalltooth Sawfish Release Protocols

Operators of vessels with Gulf of Mexico reef fish commercial or charter vessel/headboat permits must possess on board specific gear to ensure proper release of such species and comply with guidelines for proper care and release of incidentally caught smalltooth sawfish and sea turtles.

### Recreational Catch Quantities While Commercial Fishing

Commercial vessels are prohibited from retaining reef fish caught under the recreational size and bag/possession limits when commercial quantities of Gulf reef fish are onboard.

### Reef Fish as Bait

Reef fish as bait, except sand perch or dwarf sand perch, is prohibited.





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