



# Florida Recreational Saltwater Fishing Regulations

Issued: January 2015

New regulations are highlighted in red  
Regulations apply to state waters of the Gulf and Atlantic  
(please visit: [MyFWC.com/Fishing/Saltwater/Recreational](http://MyFWC.com/Fishing/Saltwater/Recreational)  
for the most current regulations)

All art: © Diane Rome Peebles, except snowy grouper (Duane Raver)

## Reef Fish

### Snappers

#### General Snappers Regulations:

- Within state waters of the Atlantic and Gulf, the snapper aggregate bag limit is 10 fish per harvester unless the species rule specifies that it is not included in the aggregate. This means that a harvester can retain a total of 10 snappers in any combination of species. Exceptions are noted below.
- If no season information is included, the species is open year-round.

#### All Other Snapper ▲◆●

##### Minimum Size Limits:

- Atlantic and Gulf - 12"

##### Daily Recreational Bag Limit:

- Atlantic and Gulf - 10 per harvester

##### Remarks

- Includes: Blackfin, Dog, Mahogany, Queen, Silk and Yellowtail



#### Snapper, Cubera ▲◆●

##### Minimum Size Limits:

- Atlantic and Gulf - 12" (see remarks)

##### Daily Recreational Bag Limit:

- Atlantic and Gulf - 10 per harvester

##### Remarks

- May possess no more than 2 over 30" per harvester or vessel per day, whichever is less. 30" or larger not included within the snapper aggregate bag limit.



#### Snapper, Red ▲◆●

##### Minimum Size Limits:

- Atlantic - 20"
- Gulf - 16"

##### Season:

- Atlantic - Open year-round
- Gulf - Check MyFWC.com for 2015 season

##### Daily Recreational Bag Limit:

- Atlantic and Gulf - 2 per harvester

##### Remarks

- Gulf - Zero daily bag and possession limit for captain and crew on for-hire vessels.



#### Snapper, Vermilion ▲◆●

##### Minimum Size Limits:

- Atlantic - 12"
- Gulf - 10"

##### Daily Recreational Bag Limit:

- Atlantic - 5 per harvester
- Gulf - 10 per harvester

##### Remarks

- **Not** included within the snapper aggregate bag limit.



#### Snapper, Lane ▲◆●

##### Minimum Size Limits:

- Atlantic and Gulf - 8"

##### Daily Recreational Bag Limit:

- Atlantic - 10 per harvester
- Gulf - 100 pounds (see remarks)

##### Remarks

- Gulf not included within the snapper aggregate bag limit.



#### Snapper, Gray (Mangrove) ▲◆●

##### Minimum Size Limits:

- Atlantic and Gulf - 10"

##### Daily Recreational Bag Limit:

- Atlantic and Gulf - 5 per harvester



#### Snapper, Mutton ▲◆●

##### Minimum Size Limits:

- Atlantic and Gulf - 16"

##### Daily Recreational Bag Limit:

- Atlantic and Gulf - 10 per harvester



#### Snapper, Schoolmaster ▲◆●

##### Minimum Size Limits:

- Atlantic and Gulf - 10"

##### Daily Recreational Bag Limit:

- Atlantic and Gulf - 10 per harvester



#### Snapper, Black & Wenchman ▲◆●

##### Minimum Size Limits:

- Atlantic and Gulf - None

##### Daily Recreational Bag Limit:

- Atlantic and Gulf - 10 per harvester

### Grouper

#### Atlantic Grouper

##### General Regulations:

- Atlantic grouper regulations apply to all state waters of the Atlantic and all state waters off Monroe County (Gulf and Atlantic sides).
- Atlantic grouper aggregate bag limit is 3 fish, which means that no harvester shall retain more than 3 Atlantic groupers in any combination of species.

#### Gulf Grouper

##### General Regulations:

- Gulf grouper regulations apply to all state waters of the Gulf except off Monroe County (where Atlantic rules apply).
- Gulf grouper aggregate bag limit is 4 fish which means that no harvester can retain more than 4 Gulf grouper in any combination of species.
- Zero bag limit for captain and crew of for-hire vessels applies to gag, black, and red grouper only.

##### Season Information:

- If no season information is provided, the species is open year-round.



#### Grouper, Black ▲◆●

##### Minimum Size Limits:

- Atlantic - 24"
- Gulf - 22"

##### Season:

- Atlantic - Closed Jan. 1-April 30
- Gulf - Open year-round

##### Daily Recreational Bag Limit:

- Atlantic - 1 per harvester. Only 1 fish can be gag or black
- Gulf - 4 per harvester



#### Grouper, Scamp ▲◆●

##### Minimum Size Limits:

- Atlantic - 20"
- Gulf - 16"

##### Season:

- Atlantic - Closed Jan. 1-April 30
- Gulf - Open year-round

##### Daily Recreational Bag Limit:

- Atlantic - 3 per harvester
- Gulf - 4 per harvester



#### Grouper, Snowy ▲●

##### Minimum Size Limit:

- Atlantic and Gulf - None

##### Daily Recreational Bag Limit:

- Atlantic - 1 per harvester
- Gulf - 4 per harvester



#### Gag ▲◆●

##### Minimum Size Limits:

- Atlantic - 24"
- Gulf - 22"

##### Seasons:

- Atlantic - Closed: Jan. 1-April 30
- Gulf - State waters off Franklin, Wakulla, Jefferson and Taylor counties: Open April 1-June 30
- Gulf - State waters off all other counties: Open July 1-Dec. 31

##### Daily Recreational Bag Limit:

- Atlantic - 1 per harvester. Only 1 fish can be gag or black
- Gulf - 2 per harvester



#### Grouper, Red ▲◆●

##### Minimum Size Limits:

- Atlantic and Gulf - 20"

##### Season:

- Atlantic - Closed Jan. 1-April 30
- Gulf - Open year-round

##### Daily Recreational Bag Limit:

- Atlantic - 3 per harvester
- **Gulf - 4 per harvester**  
**Check MyFWC.com for updates**

#### Other Grouper ▲●

##### Other Grouper includes:

- Tiger, Rock Hind, Red Hind, Coney and Graysby

##### Minimum Size Limit:

- Atlantic and Gulf - None

##### Season:

- Atlantic - Closed Jan. 1-April 30
- Gulf - Open year-round

##### Daily Recreational Bag Limit:

- Atlantic - 3 per harvester
- Gulf - 4 per harvester



#### Grouper, Warsaw & Speckled Hind ▲●

##### Minimum Size Limits:

- Atlantic and Gulf - None

##### Daily Recreational Bag Limit:

- Atlantic and Gulf - 1 per vessel per day of each species



#### Grouper, Yellowfin & Yellowmouth ▲◆●

##### Minimum Size Limits:

- Atlantic and Gulf - 20"

##### Season:

- Atlantic - Closed Jan. 1-April 30
- Gulf - Open year-round

##### Daily Recreational Bag Limit:

- Atlantic - 3 per harvester
- Gulf - 4 per harvester

## Reef Fish

### Other Reef Fish (If no season information is provided, the species is open year-round)



#### Amberjack, Greater ▲●

**Minimum Size Limits:**

- Atlantic - 28" fork
- Gulf - 30" fork

**Season:**

- Atlantic - Open year-round
- Gulf - Closed June 1-July 31

**Daily Recreational Bag Limit:**

- Atlantic and Gulf - 1 per harvester



#### Amberjack, Lesser & Banded Rudderfish ▲●

**Minimum Size Limits:**

- Atlantic and Gulf - Cannot be less than 14" or greater than 22" fork

**Daily Recreational Bag Limit:**

- Atlantic and Gulf - 5 per person aggregate of the two species



#### Black Sea Bass ▲◆●

**Minimum Size Limits:**

- Atlantic - 13"
- Gulf - 10"

**Daily Recreational Bag Limit:**

- Atlantic - 5 per harvester
- Gulf - 100 pounds per harvester



#### Triggerfish (Gray) ▲●

**Minimum Size Limits:**

- Atlantic - 12" fork
- Gulf - 14" fork

**Season:**

- Atlantic - Open year-round
- Gulf - Closed June 1-July 31

**Daily Recreational Bag Limit:**

- Atlantic - 100 pounds
- Gulf - 2 per harvester



#### Red Porgy ▲◆●

**Minimum Size Limits:**

- Atlantic - 14"
- Gulf - None

**Daily Recreational Bag Limit:**

- Atlantic - 3 per harvester
- Gulf - 100 pounds



#### Tilefish, Golden ▲●

**Daily Recreational Bag Limit:**

- Atlantic - 1 per harvester
- Gulf - 4 per harvester

**Remarks**

- Golden tilefish included within Atlantic and Gulf Grouper aggregate bag limits



#### Lionfish

**Minimum Size Limits:**

- Atlantic and Gulf - None

**Daily Recreational Bag Limit:**

- Atlantic and Gulf - unlimited

**Remarks**

- No license required to harvest by dip net, pole spear, Hawaiian sling.
- Divers are encouraged to safely remove lionfish whenever they are found.



#### Hogfish ▲●

**Minimum Size Limits:**

- Atlantic and Gulf - 12" fork

**Daily Recreational Bag Limit:**

- Atlantic and Gulf - 5 per harvester

## Pelagics



#### Billfish ▲

**Minimum Size Limits:**

- Sailfish 63";
- Blue Marlin 99";
- White Marlin 66";
- Roundscale Spearfish 66"

**Daily Recreational Bag Limit:**

- 1 per harvester per day aggregate bag limit

**Remarks**

- Measured tip of lower jaw to fork. All landed fish must be reported to NOAA within 24 hours 800-894-5528 or hmspermits.noaa.gov.
- HMS permit required in federal waters.



#### Wahoo ▲

**Minimum Size Limits:**

- None

**Daily Recreational Bag Limit:**

- 2 per harvester per day



#### Swordfish

**Minimum Size Limits:**

- 47" lower jaw fork length with head attached or 25" cleithrum to keel length if head removed

**Daily Recreational Bag Limit:**

- 1 per harvester per day, not to exceed a maximum of 4 per recreational (not for-hire) vessel or 15 per for-hire vessel per day

**Remarks**

- All landed fish must be reported to NOAA within 24 hours 800-894-5528. HMS permit required in federal waters. Zero daily bag and possession limit for captain and crew of for-hire vessels.



#### Cobia (Ling) ▲

**Minimum Size Limits:**

- 33" fork

**Daily Recreational Bag Limit:**

- 1 per harvester per day, not to exceed 6 per vessel per day



#### Mackerel, King ▲

**Minimum Size Limits:**

- 24" fork

**Daily Recreational Bag Limit:**

- 2 per harvester per day

**Remarks**

- Bag limit reduced to 1 in some state waters when federal waters are closed to all harvest.



#### Tripletail ▲◆†

**Minimum Size Limits:**

- 15"

**Daily Recreational Bag Limit:**

- 2 per harvester per day

**Remarks**

- Hook and line only. No snatch hooks.



#### Mackerel, Spanish ▲

**Minimum Size Limits:**

- 12" fork

**Daily Recreational Bag Limit:**

- 15 per harvester per day



#### Dolphin ▲

**Minimum Size Limits:**

- Atlantic - 20" fork
- Gulf - None

**Daily Recreational Bag Limit:**

- 10 per harvester per day, not to exceed 60 per vessel per day. Vessel limit does not apply to for-hire vessels.



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Report fish and wildlife law violations toll free at: 1-888-404-3922

# Coastal Species



## Bluefish ▲ ■

**Minimum Size Limits:**  
• 12" fork

**Daily Recreational Bag Limit:**  
• 10 per harvester per day



## Weakfish ▲ ◆

**Minimum Size Limits:**  
• Weakfish Management Area (WMA) in Nassau County - 12"  
• All other areas - no minimum

**Daily Recreational Bag Limit:**  
• WMA - 1 per harvester  
• All other areas - 100 pounds per day

### Remarks

- Regulations apply in parts of Nassau County only.
- See map at: [MyFWC.com/Fishing/Saltwater/Recreational/Weakfish](http://MyFWC.com/Fishing/Saltwater/Recreational/Weakfish)



## Black Drum ▲ ◆ ▽ ■

**Minimum Size Limits:**  
• Not less than 14" or more than 24"

**Daily Recreational Bag Limit:**  
• 5 per harvester per day

### Remarks

- May possess one over 24". Snatching prohibited.



## Blue Runner ■

**Minimum Size Limits:**  
• No minimum

**Daily Recreational Bag Limit:**  
• 100 fish per harvester per day



## Snook (All species) ▲ ◆ ▽ ■

**Minimum Size Limits:**  
• Not less than 28" or more than 32" Atlantic excluding Monroe  
• Not less than 28" or more than 33" Gulf and Monroe County

### Closed Season:

- Atlantic (excluding Monroe) closed Dec. 15-Jan. 31 and June 1-Aug. 31.
- Gulf including Monroe County, Dec. 1-end of February, and May 1-Aug. 31.

**Daily Recreational Bag Limit:**  
• 1 per harvester per day

### Remarks

- Snook permit required for harvest when saltwater license required. See [MyFWC.com](http://MyFWC.com) for snook permit details. Snatch hooks and spearing prohibited.



## Flounder ▲ ◆ ▽ ■

**Minimum Size Limits:**  
• 12"

**Daily Recreational Bag Limit:**  
• 10 per harvester per day

### Remarks

- May be harvested by spearing. Snatching prohibited.



## Bonefish ■

**Daily Recreational Bag Limit:**  
• 0 per harvester per day

### Remarks

- Catch and release only
- Hook and line only



## Spotted Seatrout ● ▲ ◆ ▽ ■

**Minimum Size Limits:**  
• Not less than 15" or more than 20" (See remarks)

**Daily Recreational Bag Limit:**  
• 5 per harvester per day N.W. Zone  
• 4 per harvester per day S.W. Zone  
• 4 per harvester per day S.E. Zone  
• 6 per harvester per day N.E. Zone

### Remarks

- May possess no more than 1 over 20"; included in the regional bag limit. See management zone map at [MyFWC.com](http://MyFWC.com).



## Mullet, Striped (Black) & Silver

**Minimum Size Limits:**  
• No minimum size

**Daily Recreational Bag Limit:**  
• 50 aggregate per harvester per day;  
• **Aggregate vessel limits**  
Feb. 1-Aug. 31: 100 per vessel;  
Sept. 1-Jan. 31: 50 per vessel



## Pompano, African ● ▲ ▽ ■

**Minimum Size Limits:**  
• 24" fork

**Daily Recreational Bag Limit:**  
• 2 per harvester per day, not to exceed 2 per vessel per day



## Permit ● ▲ ▽ ■

**Minimum Size Limits:**  
• 22" fork Special Permit Zone (SPZ);  
• Not less than 11" or more than 22" fork all other areas

### Closed Season:

- May 1-July 31 SPZ Only

### Daily Recreational Bag Limit:

- 1 per harvester per day, not to exceed 2 per vessel per day SPZ;
- 2 per harvester per day all other state waters

### Remarks

- May possess 1 over 22" fork length outside the SPZ, not to exceed 2 over 22" fork per vessel per day. For map of SPZ, please see: [MyFWC.com](http://MyFWC.com).



## Pompano, Florida ▲ ▽ ■

**Minimum Size Limits:**  
• 11" fork

**Daily Recreational Bag Limit:**  
• 6 per harvester per day

### Remarks

- Hook and line, cast net and beach or haul seine ONLY.



## Sheepshead ● ▲ ◆ ▽ ■

**Minimum Size Limits:**  
• 12"

**Daily Recreational Bag Limit:**  
• 15 per harvester per day

### Remarks

- Snatching prohibited



## Tarpon ● ▽ ■

### Recreational Bag Limit:

- 1 per harvester per year. \$50 harvest tag required. Vessel limit of one fish. Harvest tag can only be used when fish is retained for potential IGFA record.

### Remarks

- Tarpon over 40 inches must remain in the water during release. Spearing and snatch hooking prohibited. Bottom weighted jigs prohibited in Boca Grande Pass. See: [MyFWC.com/Fishing/Saltwater/Recreational/Tarpon](http://MyFWC.com/Fishing/Saltwater/Recreational/Tarpon) for additional information.



## Red Drum (Redfish) ▲ ◆ ▽ ■

**Minimum Size Limits:**  
• Not less than 18" or more than 27"

### Daily Recreational Bag Limit:

- 2 per harvester per day in NE and NW zones, 1 per harvester per day in S zone. See map at [MyFWC.com](http://MyFWC.com).
- Vessel limit of 8 fish, on-shore possession limit during transport 6 fish

### Remarks

- Giggling, spearing, snatching prohibited. Harvest in Federal waters prohibited.

## Can't find your fish in the regulations?

Florida's coastal waters are home to thousands of marine species, and the majority of these species have no specific regulations with regard to bag limits, size limits, gear restrictions or closed seasons. These species are often referred to as "unregulated species," although the name can be a bit misleading. State law provides that for any marine species that does not have specific regulations, harvesting more than 100 pounds or two fish (whichever is the greater amount) constitutes a commercial quantity and requires a commercial license. This means the recreational harvest limit for any unregulated species is 100 pounds or two organisms if the combined weight of the two organisms exceeds 100 pounds.



### Examples of "unregulated species" include:

Ladyfish, bonito, great barracuda, white grunt, southern stingray, gulf kingfish (whiting), pinfish, Atlantic croaker, jack crevalle, cero mackerel, hardhead catfish, gafftopsail catfish and blackfin tuna.

- ▲ Must remain in whole condition (removal of gills and guts allowed).
- ◆ Measured as total length. Total length is the straight line distance from the most forward part of the head with the mouth closed to the farthest tip of the tail with the tail compressed or squeezed together while the fish is lying on its side.

- State regulations apply in federal waters.
- Additional gear rules apply, please see: [MyFWC.com](http://MyFWC.com)
- ▽ Harvest prohibited by or with the use of any multiple hook (any hook with two or more points and a common shaft) in conjunction with live or dead natural bait.

## Crustaceans and Mollusks



### Shrimp

#### Closed Season:

- April & May closed in Nassau, Duval, St. Johns, Putnam, Flagler & Clay counties

#### Daily Recreational Bag Limit:

- 5 gallons heads on per harvester or vessel per day, whichever is less

#### Remarks

- Visit: MyFWC.com/Fishing and select "Saltwater", "Regulations" and "Shrimp" for additional regulations specific to Dade, Nassau and Duval



### Bay Scallops

#### Season:

- Open June 27–Sept. 24, 2015

#### Daily Recreational Bag Limit:

- 2 gallons whole or 1 pint meat per harvester per day; no more than 10 gallons whole, or ½ gallon meat per vessel anytime

#### Remarks

- Harvest allowed only in state waters of the Gulf of Mexico from the Pasco-Hernando county line, to the west bank of the Mexico Beach Canal in Bay County. It is illegal to harvest, possess and land bay scallops on waters outside open harvest area.



### Crab, Blue

#### Closed Season:

- Regional trap closures apply. See MyFWC.com for 2015 trap closure dates and locations.

#### Daily Recreational Bag Limit:

- 10 gallons whole per harvester per day

#### Remarks

- 5 traps maximum. Trap requirements apply. Harvest of egg-bearing crabs prohibited.



### Spiny Lobster

#### Minimum Size Limit:

- Carapace must be greater than 3" measured in the water

#### Seasons:

- Regular Season Opens August 6, 2015
- Sport Season Open July 29–30, 2015

#### Daily Recreational Bag Limit:

- Sport Season: 6 per harvester per day in Monroe County and Biscayne National Park, 12 per day in all other harvest areas.
- Regular Season: 6 per harvester in all areas

#### Remarks

- Recreational trapping prohibited. Spiny lobster permit required when license required. Harvest of egg-bearing females prohibited.



### Crab, Stone

#### Minimum Size Limits:

- 2¾" claw

#### Closed Season:

- May 16–Oct. 14

#### Daily Recreational Bag Limit:

- 1 gal. claws per harvester or 2 gal. per vessel, whichever is less

#### Remarks

- 5 traps maximum. Trap requirements apply. Illegal to possess whole crab. Harvest of egg-bearing crabs prohibited.



### Clams (Hard)

#### Minimum Size Limits:

- 1" thick across hinge

#### Daily Recreational Bag Limit:

- One 5 gal. bucket per harvester or 2 per vessel (whole in shell)

#### Remarks

- Illegal to harvest from closed areas.
- Go to [www.FloridaAquaculture.com](http://www.FloridaAquaculture.com) for allowable harvesting areas.
- May not harvest half hour after official sunset until half hour before official sunrise.



### Oysters

#### Minimum Size Limit:

- 3"

#### Closed Season:

- June, July, Aug. in Dixie, Wakulla, Levy counties.
- July, Aug., Sept. in all other areas except Apalachicola Bay which has open areas year-round.

#### Daily Recreational Bag Limit:

- 2 bags per harvester or vessel except Apalachicola Bay

#### Remarks

- **Apalachicola Bay: Effective until May 31, 2015: East Hole (area 1671) closed to harvest; bag limit of 5 gallons per person or vessel in all other areas; harvest prohibited on Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays.**
- Apalachicola Bay has summer & winter seasons/areas.
- Harvest from approved shellfish areas during daylight hours only.
- Go to [FloridaAquaculture.com](http://FloridaAquaculture.com) to determine the Open or Closed status of shellfish harvesting areas.
- May not harvest half hour after official sunset until half hour before official sunrise.
- 1 Bag = 60 lbs. or two 5 gal. buckets (whole in shell)
- Harvest prohibited in any harvest area that is in the Closed status as determined by the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services.

## Sharks

#### Daily Recreational Bag Limit:

- 1 per harvester or 2 per vessel per day, whichever is less.

#### Remarks

- The retainable sharks are managed as a group for bag limit purposes. In other words, you can only harvest one shark per day and the shark that you harvest must be one of the retainable species.
- Hook-and-line gear only.
- See list of prohibited species below.

### Examples of Retainable Sharks (With a 54" fork length minimum) ▲ T



Bull



Common Thresher



Nurse



Spinner

### Complete List of Retainable Sharks (With no minimum size limit) ▲ T



Atlantic Sharpnose



Blacknose



Blacktip



Bonnethead



Finetooth



Smooth Dogfish

## Prohibited Species

#### It is unlawful to harvest, possess, land, purchase, sell or exchange the following species:

Goliath Grouper (Jewfish), Nassau Grouper, Sawfish, Atlantic Angel Shark, Basking Shark, Bigeye Sand Tiger Shark, Bigeye Sixgill Shark, Bigeye Thresher Shark, Bignose Shark, Caribbean Reef Shark, Caribbean Sharpnose Shark, Dusky Shark, Galapagos Shark, Lemon Shark, Longfin Mako Shark, Narrowtooth Shark, Night Shark, Silky Shark, Sand Tiger Shark, Sandbar Shark, Sevengill Shark, Sixgill Shark, Smalltail Shark, Spiny Dogfish, Whale Shark, White Shark, Tiger Shark, Great Hammerhead Shark, Scalloped and Smooth Hammerhead Shark, Manta Ray, Devil Ray, Spotted Eagle Ray, Longbill Spearfish, Mediterranean Spearfish, Sturgeon, Queen Conch, Stony, Hard and Fire Corals, Sea Fans, Bahama Starfish, and Longspine Urchin. Harvest of live rock in state waters is prohibited. Puffer fish harvest is prohibited in Volusia, Brevard, Indian River, St. Lucie and Martin counties.