

# FISHING REGULATIONS



- ▶ **Catch a Florida Memory with Saltwater Angler Recognition Programs**  
Page 20-21
- ▶ **2017 Lionfish Challenge Results**  
Page 8

**Applies to Florida State Waters of the Gulf and Atlantic | Issued: January 1, 2018**

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**Florida Fish and Wildlife  
Conservation Commission**



Please visit **[MyFWC.com/Fishing/Saltwater/Recreational](http://MyFWC.com/Fishing/Saltwater/Recreational)** for the most current regulations





# Florida Recreational Saltwater Fishing Regulations

Issued: January 2018

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

### Snapper

#### General Snapper Regulations:

- **Snapper Aggregate Bag Limit** - Within state waters of the Atlantic and Gulf, all species of snapper are included in a 10 fish per harvester per day aggregate bag limit in any combination of snapper species, unless stated otherwise.
- **Seasons** - If no seasonal information is provided, the species is open year-round.



#### Snapper, Cubera ▲◆◆

##### Minimum Size Limits:

- Atlantic and Gulf - 12" (see remarks)

##### Daily Recreational Bag Limit:

- Atlantic and Gulf - 10 per harvester under 30", included within snapper aggregate bag limit
- May additionally harvest up to 2 per harvester or vessel-whichever is less-over 30", and these 2 fish over 30" are **not** included within snapper aggregate bag limit



#### Snapper, Red ▲◆●X

##### Minimum Size Limits:

- Atlantic - 20"
- Gulf - 16"

##### Season:

- Atlantic - Open year-round
- **Gulf - Visit MyFWC.com for 2018 season.**

##### Daily Recreational Bag Limit:

- Atlantic and Gulf - 2 per harvester
- Gulf - Zero daily bag and possession limit for captain and crew on for-hire vessels.



#### Snapper, Vermilion▲◆●X

##### Minimum Size Limits:

- Atlantic - 12"
- Gulf - 10"

##### Daily Recreational Bag Limit:

- Atlantic - 5 per harvester **not** included within snapper aggregate bag limit
- Gulf - 10 per harvester **not** included within snapper aggregate bag limit



#### Snapper, Lane ▲◆◆

##### Minimum Size Limits:

- Atlantic and Gulf - 8"

##### Daily Recreational Bag Limit:

- Atlantic - 10 per harvester
- Gulf - 100 pounds per harvester, **not** included within snapper aggregate bag limit

### 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, 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 - 18"

##### Daily Recreational Bag Limit:

- Atlantic and Gulf - 5 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** - all species of grouper plus golden tilefish in the Atlantic are included in a 3 fish per harvester per day aggregate bag limit in any combination of grouper/golden tilefish species.
- **Seasons** - If no seasonal information is provided, the species is open year-round.

#### 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** - all species of grouper in the Gulf are included in a 4 fish per harvester per day aggregate bag limit in any combination of grouper species.
- **Seasons** - If no seasonal information is provided, the species is open year-round.



#### Grouper, Black ▲◆◆X

##### Minimum Size Limits:

- Atlantic - 24"
- Gulf - 24"

##### 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 Grouper ▲◆◆X

##### Minimum Size Limits:

- Atlantic - 24"
- Gulf - 24"

##### Season:

- Atlantic - Closed: Jan. 1-April 30
- Gulf - State waters off Franklin, Wakulla, Jefferson and Taylor counties: Open April 1-June 30, & **Sept 1 - Dec. 31.**
- Gulf - State waters off all other counties: Open June 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 ▲◆◆X

##### 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 - 2 per Harvester\*

#### Other Grouper ▲◆◆

##### Other Grouper includes:

- Rock Hind, Red Hind, Coney and Graysby, Misty, and Yellowedge

##### 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

\* Zero bag limit for captain and crew of for-hire vessels applies to gag, black, and red grouper only.

## Reef Fish

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



#### Amberjack, Greater ▲●X

##### Minimum Size Limits:

- Atlantic - 28" fork length
- Gulf - 34" fork length

##### Season:

- Atlantic - Open year-round
- Gulf - Visit [MyFWC.com](http://MyFWC.com) for 2018 season.

##### Daily Recreational Bag Limit:

- Atlantic and Gulf - 1 per harvester



#### Red Porgy ▲◆●

##### Minimum Size Limits:

- Atlantic - 14"
- Gulf - None

##### Daily Recreational Bag Limit:

- Atlantic - 3 per harvester
- Gulf - 100 pounds



#### Great Barracuda ▲◆■

Regulations only apply in Collier, Monroe, Miami-Dade, Broward, Palm Beach, and Martin counties.

##### Minimum Size Limits:

- Not less than 15" or more than 36"

##### Daily Recreational Bag Limit:

- 2 per person or 6 per vessel
- May possess one over 36" per vessel.
- Unregulated in all other areas.

##### Remarks

- Unregulated in all other areas see pg. 15



#### 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



#### Hogfish ▲●

New management boundary - visit [MyFWC.com](http://MyFWC.com) for more

##### Minimum Size Limits:

- Atlantic - 16" fork length
- Gulf - 14" fork length

##### Season:

- Atlantic - Open May 1 - Oct. 31
- Gulf - Open year round

##### Daily Recreational Bag Limit:

- Atlantic - 1 per harvester
- Gulf - 5 per harvester



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

##### Minimum Size Limits:

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

##### Daily Recreational Bag Limit:

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



#### Triggerfish (Gray) ▲●X

##### Minimum Size Limits:

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

Changes pending see [MyFWC.com](http://MyFWC.com) for updates

##### Season:

- Atlantic - Open year-round
- Gulf - Visit [MyFWC.com](http://MyFWC.com) for 2018 season.

##### Daily Recreational Bag Limit:

- Atlantic - 10 per harvester
  - Gulf - 2 per harvester
- Changes pending see [MyFWC.com](http://MyFWC.com) for updates



#### Black Sea Bass ▲◆●

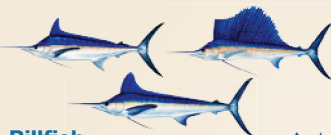
##### Minimum Size Limits:

- Atlantic - 13"
- Gulf - 10"

##### Daily Recreational Bag Limit:

- Atlantic - 7 per harvester
- Gulf - 100 pounds 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 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](http://hmspermits.noaa.gov).
- HMS permit required in federal waters.



#### Wahoo ▲

##### Minimum Size Limits:

- None

##### Daily Recreational Bag Limit:

- 2 per harvester



#### 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

##### 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 length

##### Daily Recreational Bag Limit:

- 1 per harvester, not to exceed 6 per vessel
- Changes possible visit [MyFWC.com](http://MyFWC.com) for more information



#### Mackerel, King ▲

##### Minimum Size Limits:

- 24" fork length

##### Daily Recreational Bag Limit:

- Atlantic (excluding Monroe) - 2 per harvester
- Gulf (including Monroe) - 3 per harvester

##### Remarks

- Bag limit reduced to 1 in some state waters if federal waters are closed to recreational fishing.



#### Tripletail ▲★◆†

##### Minimum Size Limits:

- 15"

##### Daily Recreational Bag Limit:

- 2 per harvester

##### Remarks

- Hook and line only. No snatch hooks.



#### Mackerel, Spanish ▲

##### Minimum Size Limits:

- 12" fork length

##### Daily Recreational Bag Limit:

- 15 per harvester



#### Dolphinfin ▲

##### Minimum Size Limits:

- Atlantic - 20" fork length
- 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.



Scan this code with your mobile device to view the regulations online.

Buy your license online at [GoOutdoorsFlorida.com](http://GoOutdoorsFlorida.com) or toll free at: 1-888-347-4356

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



## Coastal Species



### Bluefish



#### Minimum Size Limits:

- 12" fork length

#### Daily Recreational Bag Limit:

- 10 per harvester



### 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 harvester

#### 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



#### Size Limits:

- Not less than 14" or more than 24"

#### Daily Recreational Bag Limit:

- 5 per harvester

#### Remarks

- May possess one over 24". Snatching prohibited.



### Blue Runner



#### Minimum Size Limits:

- No minimum

#### Daily Recreational Bag Limit:

- 100 fish per harvester



### 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

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



### Flounder



#### Minimum Size Limits:

- 12"

#### Daily Recreational Bag Limit:

- 10 per harvester

#### Remarks

- May be harvested by spearing. Snatching prohibited.



### Bonefish



#### Daily Recreational Bag Limit:

- 0 per harvester

#### Remarks

- Catch and release only
- Hook and line only



### Spotted Seatrout



#### 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;
- **Aggregate vessel limits**  
Feb. 1-Aug. 31: 100 per vessel;  
Sept. 1-Jan. 31: 50 per vessel



### Pompano, African



#### Minimum Size Limits:

- 24" fork length

#### Daily Recreational Bag Limit:

- 2 per harvester per day, not to exceed 2 per vessel



### Permit



#### Minimum Size Limits:

- 22" fork Special Permit Zone (SPZ);  
Not less than 11" or more than 22" fork length all other areas

#### Closed Season:

- May 1-July 31 SPZ Only
- **Changes possible visit [MyFWC.com](http://MyFWC.com) for more information**

#### Daily Recreational Bag Limit:

- 1 per harvester, not to exceed 2 per vessel SPZ;
- 2 per harvester 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).
- Zero daily bag and possession limit for captain and crew on for-hire vessels



### Pompano, Florida



#### Minimum Size Limits:

- 11" fork length

#### Daily Recreational Bag Limit:

- 6 per harvester

#### Remarks

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



### Sheepshead



#### Minimum Size Limits:

- 12"

#### Daily Recreational Bag Limit:

- 15 per harvester

#### 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)



#### Size Limits:

- Not less than 18" or more than 27"

#### Daily Recreational Bag Limit:

- 2 per harvester per day in the NE zone, and 1 per harvester in the NW and S zone. See map on p. 6
- Off the water possession limit of 6 fish

#### Remarks

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

★ Spearing Prohibited

▲ 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.

✗ Gulf reef fish survey required when fishing for selected reef species from a private vessel in the Gulf of Mexico.

## Crustaceans and Mollusks

### Bay Scallops



#### Season:

Visit [MyFWC.com](http://MyFWC.com) for 2018 season.

#### Daily Recreational Bag Limit:

- 2 gallons whole or 1 pint meat per harvester; 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.

### 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, whichever is less

#### Remarks

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

### Spiny Lobster



#### Minimum Size Limit:

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

#### Seasons:

- Sport Season open 25-26, 2018
- Regular Season opens Aug. 6 through March 31

#### Daily Recreational Bag Limit:

- Sport Season: 6 per harvester per day in Monroe County and Biscayne National Park, 12 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.

### 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.

### 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. Visit [MyFWC.com](http://MyFWC.com) for statewide trap construction requirements and specific requirements that apply in Miami-Dade, Monroe and Collier. Illegal to possess whole crab. Harvest of egg-bearing crabs prohibited.

### Crab, Blue



#### Closed Season:

- Regional trap closures apply. See map on page 6 or visit [MyFWC.com](http://MyFWC.com) for 2018 trap closure dates and locations.

#### Daily Recreational Bag Limit:

- 10 gallons whole per harvester

#### Remarks

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

### 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: special bag limits and other harvest restrictions apply. See [MyFWC.com](http://MyFWC.com) for detailed information.**
- 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.

### Retainable Sharks with a 54" fork length minimum ▲★†

Blue, oceanic whitetip, porbeagle, shortfin mako (not illustrated).



Bull



Nurse



Common Thresher



Spinner

### Retainable Sharks with no minimum size limit ▲†



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, Scalloped and Smooth Hammerhead Shark, Manta Ray, Devil Ray, Spotted Eagle Ray, Longbill Spearfish, Mediterranean Spearfish, Sturgeon, Queen Conch, Calico Scallop, Stony, Hard, Black 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.