

FISHING REGULATIONS



Saltwater Angler
Recognition

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Applies to Florida State Waters of the Gulf and Atlantic | Issued: January 2023



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

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Sean and Christine Kittle with a gag grouper.

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Buy your license online!

When you buy your license online, it's fast, convenient and saves time and travel.

You can obtain a license 24 hours a day at **GoOutdoorsFlorida.com** or through the Fish|Hunt Florida mobile app, and begin fishing immediately!

Licenses are also available toll-free at 1-888-FISHFLORIDA (1-888-347-4356). Processing fees apply to telephone and Internet sales.

Contact us

Go to **MyFWC.com** for up-to-date information on recreational saltwater fishing regulations, news and events as well as resources, publications and videos.

Visit the FWC's Fish and Wildlife Research Institute online at **MyFWC.com/Research**

For federal fishing regulations, please contact:

- **Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council**
888-833-1844
www.gulfcouncil.org
- **South Atlantic Fishery Management Council**
866-SAFMC-10
www.safmc.net
- **National Marine Fisheries Service (NOAA Fisheries)**
727-824-5301
www.nmfs.noaa.gov

For additional information please contact:

Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission

MyFWC.com

Division of Marine Fisheries Management
1875 Orange Ave. East
Tallahassee, Florida 32311
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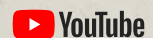
Wildlife alert reward program

Report fish and wildlife law violations by calling toll-free 1-888-404-FWCC (3922); on cell phones, dial *FWC or #FWC depending on service carrier; or click **MyFWC.com/Contact**.

On the cover

Beau R. Bradberry with a nice flounder caught in Manatee County.

Have a picture for the cover? Please send your photographs to: **Saltwater@MyFWC.com**.



Introduction

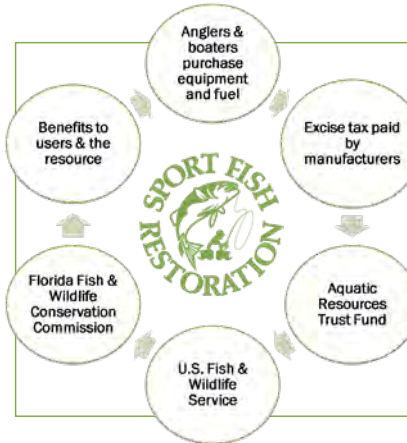
This publication is provided as a guide to Florida fishing laws and regulations. The Florida Administrative Code is the final authority on fishing laws. The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) strives to ensure information in this booklet is accurate, but assumes no liability for any errors that occur in this publication. Contact the FWC if you have any questions on issues not covered in this booklet. A continuously updated electronic version of this publication is available at MyFWC.com/Fishing by clicking on "Saltwater" and "Recreational Regulations."

About licenses and permits

The money collected from saltwater fishing licenses and permits is used to improve and restore fish habitat and for marine fisheries research, law enforcement and public education on marine resources. Recreational licenses and permits, including reprints, are available at GoOutdoorsFlorida.com, Fish|Hunt FL app, tax collectors' offices, license agents, or by calling toll-free 888-FISH-FLORIDA (347-4356). Handling fees apply to telephone and internet sales. See more information on page 22.

Thank you for contributing to conservation

Your purchases of fishing equipment, motorboat fuel and fishing licenses help improve fishing and boating opportunities in Florida through the Federal Aid in Sport Fish Restoration program (SFR). SFR is a successful cycle of federal funding that includes anglers, the fishing and boating industry, and conservation agencies with the goal to restore and better manage America's recreational fisheries. Funding is derived through an excise tax on fishing gear and motorboat fuel, paid by anglers through fishing and boating manufacturers.



Through this federal "user-pay, public-benefit" system of conservation, millions of dollars in funding each year go toward fisheries research, habitat management, stock enhancement, artificial reefs, boating access improvements, angler outreach and aquatic education. To learn more about how everyone benefits from enhanced fishing opportunities provided through the program, visit MyFWC.com/SFR.

2023 Commission meeting dates and locations

Subject to change due to availability of appropriate facilities to hold the meeting.

- February 22–23
- May 10–11
- July 19–20
- October 4–5
- December 13–14

*Dates subject to change

For more information about Commission meeting dates, times, locations and agendas, visit MyFWC.com and click on "About Us" and "Commission Meetings" on the top of the page.

Make reel memories.

Stuart, located in Martin County, is known as the Sailfish Capital of the World. Sitting on the most biodiverse estuary in the Northern Hemisphere, Martin County is home to 100 artificial reef systems and over 800 species of fish. Its climate, waterways, natural environment and opportunity for diverse catches make it a mecca for fishermen and nautical explorers year-round. An array of unique shops, fine restaurants, great golf courses and quiet beaches make a day ashore fun, too. Inshore, offshore, saltwater or fresh, head out for an adventure and reel in the memories.

Plan your trip at myfloridafishingtrip.com



Message from the FWC by Chairman Rodney Barreto

Each new year brings with it a chance to look back and look ahead. As I reflect on the past year as Chairman of the Commission that is responsible for managing and protecting fish and wildlife, I am proud of all our staff who continue to work hard every day to provide residents and visitors numerous opportunities to enjoy Florida's outdoors. I am also proud of our law enforcement officers who are dedicated to protecting fish and wildlife as well as the public.

I am always impressed by Florida's conservation-minded anglers who deeply care for our fisheries and their habitats. Anglers that care both about catching a big fish and about protecting the resource for future generations of anglers. This past year, we saw it in the way you fished, and increased your use of best fishing practices that help ensure released fish go on to live, reproduce, and fight another day. When concerns arise about a fishery, you took action and turned out for important issues at our workshops, Commission meetings, and on our online commenting portal at MyFWC.com/SaltwaterComments. We saw it in your valuable feedback and support as we developed new, adaptive management approach for the redfish fishery, which is the first of its kind in the nation. We saw it in the way you contributed to conservation efforts like Sport Fish Restoration, a national user-pay, public-benefit program that supports the creation of artificial reefs, boat ramps, educational programs, research and more through funds gathered when anglers purchase tackle, fishing licenses and motorboat fuel. We saw it when you took the time to talk to researchers at the dock and return surveys that inform fishery stock assessments and management.

We are grateful for your dedication to our fish and wildlife, and your partnership in working towards our mission of conservation. Florida's anglers are FWC's eyes and ears on the water, letting us know when and where concerns may be. We hear from anglers all the time about how important it is not only to be able to have access to fishing, but to have healthy and abundant fisheries. And for that, we thank you Florida anglers. It is because of your efforts and support that Florida is and will continue to be the Fishing Capital of the World.

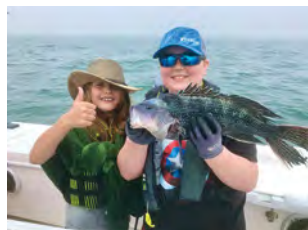


Rodney Barreto
FWC Chairman



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ONE MILLION Lionfish Harvested!

FWC's Lionfish Control Program began in 2014 with the goal of educating the public about the negative effects of invasive lionfish and increasing lionfish removal efforts. This small, grassroots effort quickly turned in to a statewide phenomenon, and interest in the foreign invader began to boom. In the eight years since this program began, lionfish have been included on restaurant menus around the United States, millions of people have been educated about the invasion, and lionfish have become one of the most widely studied marine invasives in history! The Lionfish Control Program has proved that when people work together, they can create powerful, positive change. The lionfish hunting community in Florida is made up of divers from a multitude of backgrounds, but all of its members have one thing in common: a love for Florida's underwater resources and a desire to protect them. Thanks to the thousands of people who have come together for this common goal, the FWC has tracked the removal of over one million lionfish from Florida waters through its lionfish outreach and incentive programs.



Background:

The invasive Indo-Pacific lionfish were first reported offshore Broward County, Florida in 1985 and are now well established in the western Atlantic Ocean, Caribbean Sea, and the Gulf of Mexico. Lionfish reproduce quickly, complete with native species for food and habitat, and have no natural predators in their invaded range. Because of these, and a host of other invasive characteristics, lionfish are characterized as the worst marine invader to date. The FWC was one of the lead organizations to act by initiating procedures to evaluate the extent of the invasion, developing outreach and awareness messaging, removing potential regulatory barriers to harvest, supporting control efforts, and implementing removal incentive programs.

To learn more about the FWC Lionfish Control Program and how you can get involved, visit:

MyFWC.com/Lionfish

Captain Jimmy Nelson with record lionfish in Islamorada, FL

Lionfish harvester, Christina Raber-Jehn, and others with their catch out of Palm Beach County



SHOOTERS & HUNTERS: HELP PREVENT WILDFIRES.

The target shooting and hunting community prides itself on being safe and responsible with firearms in all situations—from using them outdoors to storing them safely at home. Sometimes, however, unusual conditions such as extremely dry environments require an extra level of awareness and safety on the part of shooters.

Wildfires have many possible causes. The National Shooting Sports Foundation, the trade association for the firearms and ammunition industry, reminds all shooters that during dry and hot weather conditions their use of certain ammunition and targets could accidentally ignite a wildfire. NSSF reminds all target shooters and hunters, as well as other outdoor enthusiasts, to consider the potential consequences of their activities in fire-prone environments.

- **Make it a point to know the regulations and rules related to shooting in areas experiencing dry and hot conditions, whether on public or private land or at shooting ranges. Many national forests, for example, do not allow recreational shooting when fire restrictions are in effect.**
- **Consider the type of ammunition and targets you are using. Minimize the risk of fires by not using steel-jacketed ammunition, ammunition with steel-core components, tracer rounds or exploding targets in fire-prone areas.**
- **Remember that equipment, such as cars and ATVs, can have extremely hot exhaust systems that could ignite dry vegetation, so park only in designated areas.**
- **Extinguish and dispose of smoking materials safely.**
- **Follow guidelines to extinguish campfires.**
- **Warn others of potential dangers and behaviors for starting wildfires.**
- **Report any wildfire you see to authorities.**
- **Spread this message to other target shooters, hunters and outdoor enthusiasts.**



NSSF.ORG



Hooked a Bird? Don't Cut the Line!

Even if you take precautionary steps to avoid it, sometimes you might hook a bird by accident. That's when it's important to remember—don't cut the line and let the bird fly away with it attached. This can lead to entanglement and death of birds (and an inconvenient loss of line). Instead, follow these simple steps to unhook the bird: **Reel. Remove. Release.**

1. Wear safety glasses and enlist a partner for help.
2. **Reel** the bird in slowly and lift it from the water using a hoop net.
3. Grasp the bird by the head just behind the eyes and fold the wings against the body. For pelicans, hold the beak, keeping the mouth slightly open so it can breathe. Cover the bird's head with a cloth to keep it calm.
4. **Remove** the barb and hook from the bird using pliers or clippers. If the bird is entangled, remove all line.
5. **Release** the bird (if healthy) by placing it on the ground near the water and allowing it to take off.
6. If the bird has swallowed the hook or is severely injured, contact a local seabird rehabilitator. For help finding one, use the link to the locator app at MyFWC.com/Unhook.

How else can you keep the seabirds away from your fish and reduce entanglement?

1. Don't feed the birds, which teaches them to approach where they are more likely to interfere with fishing.
2. Dispose of filleted bones where birds can't get them — in a trash can with lid or at home.
3. Cover bait buckets and take unused bait home.
4. Dispose of fishing line in a monofilament recycling bin or cut into small pieces and place in the trash.
5. Don't leave your line unattended.
6. Cast carefully to avoid being snared on trees, bridge piles, power lines or obstacles.
7. Help others learn what to do when they accidentally hook a bird. It's pretty easy, once you know how.







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Florida manages one of the most diverse, and most active artificial reef programs in the United States. As of September 2022, the FWC Artificial Reef Program has recorded over 3,991 artificial reef deployment locations state-wide. During 2022, 51 new artificial reefs have been constructed and the locations from a subset of the most recent reefs are listed in the table below. To download a complete list of Florida's artificial reef locations in a variety of digital formats, view an interactive map, and learn more about Florida's artificial reef program, please visit MyFWC.com/ArtificialReefs.

Highlights from the 51 Artificial Reefs deployed during 2022

DeployID	County	Date	Deployment Name	Material	Tons	Relief	Depth	Lat (DM)	Long (DM)
SL0083	St. Lucie	5/15/2022	Captain Patrick Price Reef	Steel Yacht 98'	unk	20'	185'	27° 23.820' N	80° 00.550' W
SL0082	St. Lucie	5/16/2022	Daymaker Charters Reef	Steel Tourboat 85'	unk	35'	102'	27° 22.930' N	80° 03.520' W
DA0260	Miami-Dade	6/13/2022	Eternal Reef #39	Dome-shaped concrete modules (11)	6	4'	45'	25° 57.785' N	80° 05.888' W
BO0125	Broward	6/15/2022	Dr. Robin Sherman Memorial Reef	Concrete dome-shaped modules (1)	1	3'	70'	26° 09.246' N	80° 04.792' W
WL0065	Walton	6/16/2022	UMA 2022 Super Reef	Tetrahedron (1)	48	15'	55'	30° 18.754' N	86° 09.521' W
ST0216	Sarasota	6/20/2022	Silvertooth 18-2	Dome-shaped modules (11)	10	4'	30'	27° 17.171' N	82° 35.936' W
OK0375	Okaloosa	6/21/2022	Starborough Wine Reef	Tetrahedrons (25)	90	15'	68'	30° 21.048' N	86° 36.874' W
FR0074	Franklin	7/25/2022	Dr. Bart Carey Reef	Tetrahedrons (46)	217	15'	50'	29° 39.710' N	84° 30.000' W
SJ0043	St. Johns	8/02/2022	Rinker Reef	Cast concrete structures (180)	400	11'	68'	29° 52.703' N	81° 09.291' W
BE0071	Brevard	8/16/2022	Gidus Reef	Boulder modules (23)	35	6'	83'	28° 22.560' N	80° 17.550' W
VO0198	Volusia	8/20/2022	Lighthouse Point 3	Concrete culverts (120)	110	10'	60'	29° 07.284' N	80° 53.311' W
VO0199	Volusia	8/20/2022	Lighthouse Point 2	Concrete culverts (120)	110	10'	60'	29° 07.271' N	80° 53.305' W
VO0200	Volusia	8/20/2022	Lighthouse Point 1	Concrete culverts (120)	110	10'	60'	29° 07.258' N	80° 53.304' W
FR0075	Franklin	8/23/2022	RZ Sandy Safley Center	Tetrahedrons (2)	36	15'	50'	29° 39.880' N	84° 30.010' W
FR0076	Franklin	8/23/2022	RZ Sandy Safley East	Tetrahedrons (7)	36	15'	50'	29° 39.882' N	84° 29.983' W
FR0077	Franklin	8/23/2022	RZ Sandy Safley South	Tetrahedrons (7)	36	15'	50'	29° 39.854' N	84° 30.012' W
FR0078	Franklin	8/23/2022	RZ Sandy Safley West	Tetrahedrons (7)	36	15'	50'	29° 39.882' N	84° 30.042' W
FR0079	Franklin	8/23/2022	RZ Sandy Safley North	Tetrahedrons (7)	36	15'	50'	29° 39.911' N	84° 30.012' W
OK0376	Okaloosa	8/23/2022	M/V Miss Nellie	Steel Tug 63'	54	30'	116'	30° 07.910' N	86° 17.510' W
PB0142	Palm Beach	8/25/2022	ARHF Juno Beach 2	Limestone boulders (465 tons)	465	10'	74'	26° 52.710' N	80° 01.800' W
PB0143	Palm Beach	8/31/2022	ARHF Juno Beach 2 #2	Limestone boulders (465 tons)	465	10'	56'	26° 57.300' N	80° 03.220' W
ES0687	Escambia	9/01/2022	Karen's Place	Tetrahedron (1)	3	8'	50'	30° 17.200' N	87° 14.140' W
OK0377	Okaloosa	9/07/2022	S/V Cordonazo	Steel Sailboat 67'	30	11'	113'	30° 08.346' N	86° 33.882' W
PB0144	Palm Beach	9/16/2022	FWC Rock 1	Limestone boulders (400 tons)	400	15'	65'	26° 27.168' N	80° 02.952' W



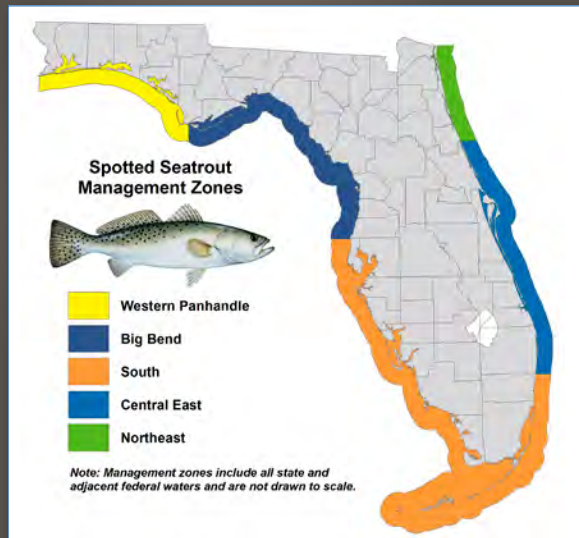
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Spotted Seatrout Management Zones

Spotted seatrout has five management zones and the recreational bag limit is three fish in the western panhandle region, five fish in the big bend region, three fish in the south region, two fish in the central east region and five fish in the northeast region.



Red Drum Management Zones

For red drum, there are nine new management zones. The daily bag limit is one fish in all of Florida state waters. Zero bag limit for captain and crew.



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Snook Regional Management

FWC is considering changes to regional management for Snook.

- FWC is adopting a holistic management approach for snook that includes an inclusive review of several environmental and human factors such as habitat, fishing effort, and stakeholder feedback to evaluate the fishery at a more local scale.
- FWC will hold public workshops on snook during the first half of 2023. Workshops will be announced here: **MyFWC.com/Workshops**
- We would like to hear from you! What has your snook fishing been like lately? Do you have thoughts on regulation changes like bag or vessel limits? Submit a comment by emailing **Marine@myfwc.com**, scanning the **QR code below**, or by visiting **MyFWC.com/SaltwaterComments**



Dan Casey holding a snook

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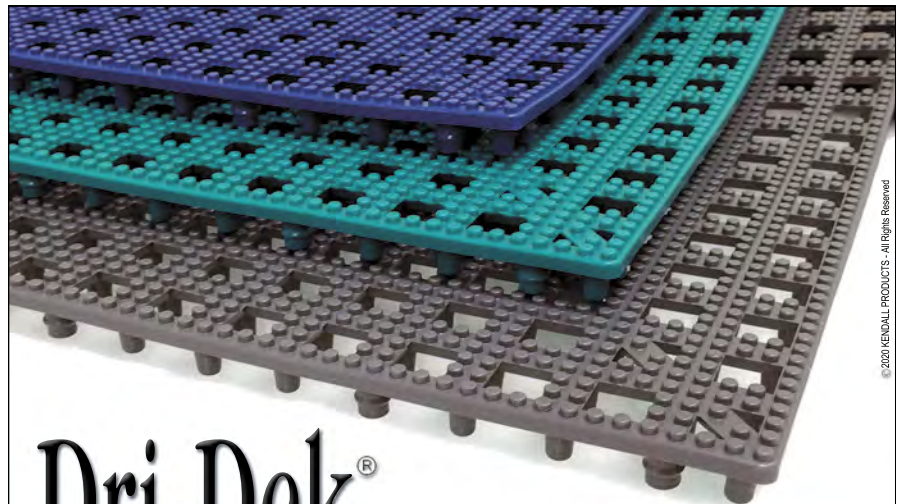
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Florida Recreational Saltwater Fishing Regulations

Regulations apply to state waters of the Gulf and Atlantic

Issued: January 2023

New regulations are highlighted in red

(please visit: MyFWC.com/Fishing/Saltwater/Recreational for the most current regulations)

All art: © Diane Rome Peebles, except blueline tilefish, golden tilefish and snowy grouper (Duane Raver); lionfish (FWC); and crustaceans and mollusks

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 below)

Daily Recreational Bag Limit:

- Atlantic and Gulf - 10 per harvester under 30", included within snapper aggregate bag limit
- May additionally harvest up to 2 over 30" per harvester or vessel, whichever is less, 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 - To Be Determined**

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:

- Dog and Mahogany: Atlantic and Gulf - 12"
- No minimum size limit for other snappers

Daily Recreational Bag Limit:

- Atlantic and Gulf - 10 per harvester

See page 18 for gear rules pertaining to reef fish.



Snapper, Gray (Mangrove) ▲◆◆●

Minimum Size Limits:

- Atlantic and Gulf - 18"

Daily Recreational Bag Limit:

- Atlantic and Gulf - 5 per harvester



Snapper, Mutton ▲◆◆●X

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, Yellowtail ▲◆◆●X

Minimum Size Limits:

- Atlantic and Gulf - 12"

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/Tilefish Aggregate Bag Limit** - includes all species of grouper plus golden and blueline tilefish included in a 3 fish per harvester per day aggregate bag limit in any combination of 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.

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



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, Snowy ▲◆◆●

Minimum Size Limit:

- Atlantic and Gulf - None

Daily Recreational Bag Limit:

- Atlantic - 1 per harvester
- Gulf - 4 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*



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, 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



Gag Grouper ▲◆◆●X

Minimum Size Limits:

- Atlantic - 24"
- Gulf - 24"

Season:

- Atlantic - Closed Jan. 1-April 30
- **Gulf - Open Sept. 1-Nov. 10**

Daily Recreational Bag Limit:

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



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

Other Groupers ▲◆◆●

Other Grouper includes:

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

Season:

- Atlantic - Rock hind, Red hind, Coney, Graysby: Closed Jan. 1-April 30
- Atlantic - All others open year-round
- 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 ▲●X

Minimum Size Limits:

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

Season:

- Atlantic - Open year-round
- Gulf - Open Aug. 1-Oct. 31. Visit MyFWC.com for updates.

Daily Recreational Bag Limit:

- Atlantic and Gulf - 1 per harvester per day



Tilefish, Blueline ▲●

Daily Recreational Bag Limit:

- Atlantic - 3 per harvester
- Gulf - 100 lbs. or 2 per harvester, whichever is greater

Season:

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

Remarks

- Blueline tilefish included within Atlantic grouper aggregate bag limits.



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" fork length

Daily Recreational Bag Limit:

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



Hogfish ▲●X

Atlantic regulations apply to Monroe county

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



Triggerfish (Gray) ▲●X

Minimum Size Limits:

- Atlantic - 12" fork length
- Gulf - 15" fork length

Season:

- Atlantic - Open year-round
- Gulf - Open March 1-May 31, Aug. 1-Dec. 31

Daily Recreational Bag Limit:

- Atlantic - 10 per harvester
- Gulf - 1 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 - 100 pounds or 2 per person, whichever is greater

Remarks

- Golden tilefish included within Atlantic Grouper aggregate bag limits



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



Black Sea Bass ▲◆●

Minimum Size Limits:

- Atlantic - 13"
- Gulf - 10"

Daily Recreational Bag Limit:

- Atlantic - 7 per harvester
- Gulf - 100 pounds per harvester



Pompano, African ●★▲↑■

Minimum Size Limits:

- 24" fork length

Daily Recreational Bag Limit:

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

Pelagics



Billfish ★▲

Minimum Size Limits:

- Sailfin 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.
- HMS permit required in federal waters.



Blackfin Tuna ▲■

Minimum Size Limits:

- No minimum size limit

Daily Recreational Bag Limit:

- 2 fish per person or 10 fish per vessel per day, whichever is greater.



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 harvest.



Mackerel, Spanish ▲

Minimum Size Limits:

- 12" fork length

Daily Recreational Bag Limit:

- 15 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.



Wahoo ▲

Minimum Size Limits:

- None

Daily Recreational Bag Limit:

- 2 per harvester



Cobia (Ling) ▲

Minimum Size Limits:

- 36" fork length

Daily Recreational Bag Limit:

- Atlantic - 1 per harvester not to exceed 2 per vessel
- Gulf - 1 per harvester, not to exceed 2 per vessel



Tripletail ★▲◆■↑

Minimum Size Limits:

- 18"

Daily Recreational Bag Limit:

- 2 per harvester

Remarks

- Hook and line only. No snatch hooks.



Dolphinfin ▲

Minimum Size Limits:

- Atlantic - 20" fork length
- Gulf - None

Daily Recreational Bag Limit:

- Atlantic - 5 per harvester per day, not to exceed 30 per vessel
- Gulf - 10 per harvester per day, not to exceed 60 per vessel
- Vessel limits does not apply for for-hire vessels.



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

Buy your license online at GoOutdoorsFlorida.com, or toll free at: 1-888-347-4356 or at FishHunt FL app

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:

- Atlantic - 3 per harvester
- Gulf - 10 per harvester (includes Monroe County)

Closed Season:

- April 1-July 31 SPZ Only



Permit



Size Limits:

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

Closed Season:

- April 1-July 31 SPZ Only

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



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.



Flounder



Minimum Size Limits:

- 14"

Daily Recreational Bag Limit:

- 5 per harvester

Closed Season:

- Oct. 15 - Nov. 30

Remarks

- May be harvested by spearing. Snatching prohibited.



Spotted Seatrout



Size Limits:

- Not less than 15" or more than 19"
- May not possess more than 1 over 19" per vessel

Daily Recreational Bag Limit:

- 3 per harvester per day W.P. Zone
- 5 per harvester per day B.B. Zone
- 3 per harvester per day S. Zone
- 2 per harvester per day C.E. Zone
- 5 per harvester per day N.E. Zone

Closed Season:

- Feb. W.P. Zone
- Nov. - Dec. C.E. Zone

Remarks

- See management zone map on pg. 8.
- Zero bag limit for captain and crew of for-hire vessels statewide



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.



Bonefish



Daily Recreational Bag Limit:

- 0 per harvester

Remarks

- Catch and release only
- Hook and line only



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



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



Atlantic Croaker and Spot



Minimum Size Limits:

- None

Daily Recreational Bag Limit:

- Atlantic - 50 per harvester per species (excludes Monroe county)
- Gulf - 100 lbs. per harvester (including Monroe county)



Snook (All species)



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 for snook permit details. Snatch hooks and spearing prohibited.
- Zero daily bag and possession limit for captain and crew on for-hire vessels



Blue Runner



Minimum Size Limits:

- No minimum

Daily Recreational Bag Limit:

- 100 fish per harvester



Sheepshead



Minimum Size Limits:

- 12"

Daily Recreational Bag Limit:

- 8 per harvester

Remarks

- Snatching prohibited
- Vessel limit of 50 fish during March and April



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 for additional information.



Red Drum (Redfish)



Size Limits:

- Not less than 18" or more than 27"

Daily Recreational Bag Limit:

- 1 fish per person per day Panhandle Zone
- 1 fish per person per day Big bend zone
- 1 fish per person per day Tampa Bay Zone
- 1 fish per person per day Sarasota Zone
- 1 fish per person per day Charlotte Harbor Zone
- 1 fish per person per day South West zone
- 1 fish per person per day South East zone
- Catch and Release only Indian River zone
- 1 fish per person per day North East zone

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.



Gulf Kingfish Jack Crevalle Lionfish

Examples of "unregulated species" include:
Ladyfish, bonito, menhaden, white grunt, southern stingray, gulf kingfish (whiting), pinfish, Atlantic croaker, jack crevalle, cero mackerel, hardhead catfish, gafftopsail catfish, lionfish.

* No license is required to harvest lionfish by dipnet, pole spear or Hawaiian sling and lionfish bag limit is unlimited for both Gulf and Atlantic state waters.

★ 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

† 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.

X State Reef Fish Angler designation required when fishing for select reef fish species from a private vessel in the Gulf of Mexico or Atlantic Ocean.

Crustaceans and Mollusks

Bay Scallops



Season:

- Gulf County: Aug. 16–Sept. 24
- Franklin–NW Taylor County: July 1–Sept. 24
- Dixie and remaining Taylor County: June 15–Labor Day
- Levy, Citrus and Hernando counties: July 1–Sept. 24
- Pasco County: 10 days starting on 3rd Friday in July

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
- Dixie and remaining Taylor County: From June 15–30, one gallon whole/one cup meat per person or five gallons whole/two pints meat per vessel, whichever is less

Remarks

- Harvest allowed only in state waters of the Gulf of Mexico from the Pinellas–Pasco county line, to the west bank of the Mexico Beach Canal in Bay County. Direct transit through closed areas permitted.

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 and select "Saltwater", "Regulations" and "Shrimp" for additional regulations specific to Dade, Nassau and Duval
- See 68B–31 F.A.C. for more information on areas closed to shrimping

Spiny Lobster



Minimum Size Limit:

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

Seasons:

- Sport Season open July 26–27, 2023
- 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 for allowable harvesting areas.
- May not harvest half hour after official sunset until half hour before official sunrise.

Crab, Stone



Minimum Size Limits:

- 2 7/8" claw

Closed Season:

- May 2–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 for state-wide 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. See how to properly de-claw on our website. New trap registration requirements, visit GoOutdoorsFlorida.com to register.

Crab, Blue



Closed Season:

- Regional trap closures apply. Visit MyFWC.com for 2023 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. New trap registration requirements, visit GoOutdoorsFlorida.com to register.

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.
- **Apalachicola Bay: Closed**

Daily Recreational Bag Limit:

- 2 bags per harvester or vessel except Apalachicola Bay

Remarks

- Harvest from approved shellfish areas during daylight hours only.
- Go to 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.
- Bay County: Harvest and possession prohibited in West Bay Estuarine Habitat Restoration Project Zone

Sharks

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

Blue, oceanic whitetip, porbeagle (not illustrated).



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.
- Shore-based Shark Fishing educational course and permit required.
- See list of prohibited species below.

Retainable Sharks with no minimum size limit ◆ ★ †

Finetooth, Smooth Dogfish, Florida and Gulf Smoothhounds (not illustrated).



Prohibited Species

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

Shortfin Mako, Goliath grouper (Jewfish, without harvest permit), 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, Greater, 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.

Marine life regulations

Requirements for marine life (aquarium species) harvest:

- Recreational saltwater fishing license
- Organisms must be landed and kept alive
- A continuously circulating live well, aeration or oxygenation system of adequate size to maintain these organisms in a healthy condition
- **Allowable Gear:** hand-held net, drop net, rod, barrier net, slurp gun (use of quinaldine is prohibited)*
- **Bag Limit:** 20 organisms per person per day; only 5 of any one species allowed within the 20-organism bag limit
- **Possession Limit:** 2-day possession limit, 40 total organisms, no more than 10 of any one species allowed
- **Allowable substrate:** see species specifications in table
- **Closed areas:** Some closed areas exist**
- Sale of recreationally caught marine life organisms is prohibited
- Regulations also apply in federal waters

* Some organisms have additional gear limitations, see chart.

** Various closed areas exist. See regulations for Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary, Everglades National Park, Biscayne National Park and Florida's State Parks before collecting in these areas.

Additional rules apply to the collection of shells containing live organisms in Lee or Manatee counties.

Marine Life — Fish

SPECIES	REMARKS ¹	SIZE LIMITS (total length unless otherwise noted)
Angelfish	No more than 5 per person per day in any combination	Gray, French Angelfish: 1½–8" slot limit Blue, Queen Angelfish: 1¾–8" slot limit Rock Beauty: 2–5" slot limit
Butterflyfish		1–4" slot limit
Filefish/Triggerfish	Except Unicorn Filefish, Gray Triggerfish and Ocean Triggerfish	
Gobies		Maximum size limit: 2"
Hamlets/Seabasses	Except reef fish ² and Longtail Bass	
Jawfish		Maximum size limit: 4"
Parrotfish		Maximum size limit: 12"
Porkfish		Minimum size limit: 1½"
Pufferfish, Burrfish, Balloonfish, Porcupinefish	Includes Sharpnose Pufferfish, Striped Burrfish, Spotted Burrfish, Balloonfish, Porcupinefish	
Tangs and Surgeonfish		Maximum size limit (fork length): 9"
Wrasse/Hogfish/Razorfish	Except Hogfish Snapper	Spanish Hogfish: 2–8" slot limit Cuban Hogfish: 3–8" slot limit

Other Marine Life fish include¹: Basslets, Batfish, Blackbar Soldierfish, Blennies, Brotulas (Black and Key), Cardinalfish, Clingfish, Cornetfish, Damselfish, Eels (Moray and Snake), Frogfish, Hawkfish, High-hat/Jackknife-fish/Spotted Drum/Cubbyu, Pipefish, Reef Croakers, Seahorses, Sleepers, Yellow Stingray, Sweepers, Toadfish, Trumpetfish and Trunkfish/Cowfish.

Marine Life — Invertebrates

SPECIES	REMARKS ¹
Anemones	Corallimorphs and Zoanthids: No more than 5 polyps of each may be landed per person per day, must be harvested with a flexible blade no wider than 2". Corallimorphs must be harvested as single polyps only. Zero bag limit on Giant Anemone (<i>Condylactis gigantea</i>).
Conch, Queen	Harvest prohibited
Corals: Hard, stony, fire & black	Harvest prohibited
Octocorals	No more than 6 octocoral colonies per person per day in any combination; harvest of attached substrate within 1" of base is permitted; harvest closes when quota met.
Crab, Hermit	Except Land Hermit Crabs
Crab, Horseshoe	Harvest prohibited
Live Rock	Harvest prohibited
Octopods ³	Except Common Octopus
Sea Fans	Harvest of Venus Sea Fan and Common (Purple) Sea Fan prohibited
Siphonophores/Hydroids	Harvest of Fire Coral prohibited
Sponges	Except Sheepswool, Yellow, Grass, Glove, Finger, Wire, Reef and Velvet Sponges; no more than 5 sponges per harvester per day in any combination; harvest of substrate within 1" of base permitted north and west of the southernmost point of Egmont Key, no substrate allowed south of Egmont Key
Starfish ³	Harvest of Bahama Starfish (Cushion Sea Star) prohibited
Urchins ³	Except Sand Dollars & Sea Biscuits; harvest of Longspine Urchin prohibited

Other Marine Life invertebrates include¹: Brittlestars³, Decorator (Furcate Spider) Crab, False Arrow Crab, Green Clinging (Emerald) Crab, Nimble Spray (Urchin) Crab, Red Mithrax Crab, Red-Ridged Clinging Crab, Spotted Porcelain Crab, Yellowline Arrow Crab, Fileclams³, Upside-down Jellyfish, Nudibranchs/Sea Slugs³, Sea Cucumbers³, Sea Lilies, Cleaner/Peppermint Shrimp, Coral Shrimp, Snapping Shrimp, Nassarius Snails³, Starsnails³, Featherduster Worms and Calcareous Tube Worms.

Marine Life — Plants

SPECIES	LIMITS
Algae, Coralline Red	
Caulerpa	One gallon of tropical ornamental marine plants per day in any combination; 2 gallon maximum possession limit
Halimeda/Mermaid's Fan/Mermaid's Shaving Brush	

1—Unless otherwise noted, combined bag limit of 20 marine life fish and invertebrates per person per day, only 5 of any one species allowed. A 2-day possession limit also applies (40 total organisms, only 10 of any one species).

2—Such as groupers, snappers, seabass and amberjacks. Must abide by regulations for these species on pages 10.

3—Bag limit of 2 live shell fish of any single species per harvester per day in Manatee County. Harvest prohibited in Lee County.

Make Hunting & Fishing Dreams Come True!

Hunt of a Lifetime is a nonprofit organization that grants hunting and fishing dreams to children, age 21 and under, who have been diagnosed with life threatening illnesses.



If you are interested in helping a child live their dream, please contact us for more information.

Toll Free 814.572.4387 HuntofaLifetime.org

Take Action to Improve Reef Fish Survival

Barotrauma is one of the leading causes of mortality in released reef fish. These injuries are caused by pressure changes, which occur when fish are rapidly brought to the surface from depths 50 feet or greater. Signs of barotrauma include the stomach coming out of the mouth, bloated belly, distended intestines, and bulging eyes. These injuries can be fatal to the fish unless intervention occurs through the use of descending devices or venting tools.

Descending devices are tools with weights that attach to a fish and help take the fish back to the appropriate depth. There are various types of descending devices but the most common are lip clamps, inverted hooks, and fish elevators.

Venting tools are sharp, *hollow* instruments that release expanded gas from the swim bladder, which enables the fish to swim back down to depth. Knives, ice picks, and hooks are not venting tools because they do not allow the gases to properly escape and can cause more harm than good.

Descending devices and venting tools range from \$10-70 and can be purchased at local bait and tackle stores, online retailers, or can be easily made at home.

A simple at-home descending device can be made with a piece of heavy wire bent into a “U” shaped inverted hook with a weight attached to the bottom. This design allows the fish to be sent straight to the bottom and released when the line is reeled back up. Picture below.

Whether you choose to purchase a descending device or make your own, you can attach the device to the end of your fishing rig with a 3-way swivel and a clip. Weights can also be attached to the rig with loops, snaps, swivels, and clips. Many offshore anglers will dedicate a single rod for descending out of season or undersized fish back to the bottom.

It is important to use the tool that works best for you and complies with the regulations of the waters you are fishing in. You should always keep these tools rigged and ready for use, and only use them when a fish is displaying signs of barotrauma. Learn more at MyFWC.com/Barotrauma.



Brice Williamson

1

HOMEMADE INVERTED HOOK DESCENDING DEVICE

Bend heavy gauge wire on one side

Use only when fish shows signs of barotrauma

Cut wire to make a sharp point

Bend wire to make tight loop

1-3 lb. weight

2

Use enough line to reach captured depth

Insert hook through hole made by circle hook or gently pierce through lower lip

3

Lower rig into water while letting out line

4

Jig line to release fish once captured depth is reached

Fish art by Diane Rome Peebles

MyFWC.com/Barotrauma

Interested in learning more about increasing survival of released reef fish and seeing if you qualify for free fishing gear? **Return 'Em Right** is an angler-driven program that provides training and free release gear to Gulf of Mexico reef fish anglers that are committed to using best release practices and helping the future of reef fish fisheries. Learn more at ReturnEmRight.org.



The Florida Friendly Angler Program












The **Florida Friendly Angler Program** is a **FREE** online course created for anyone who interacts with fisheries or aquatic habitats. This program teaches **science-based conservation** information needed when fishing in Florida. **Register today** to learn about best fishing practices, environmental ethics, and fisheries management.



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Help Prevent Injuries to Florida's Coral Reef

What is a coral reef?

Corals are animals that attach themselves to the ocean floor and form slow-growing reefs. Healthy reefs support 25% of all marine species, are vital for robust fish populations, safeguard against extreme weather and boost Florida's economy.

What are the dangers of coral anchoring?

Anchoring on coral reef is not stable and can lead to collisions with other vessels or a vessel grounding. The hard limestone framework of the reef can cause extensive damage to vessel engines and hulls or snap anchor lines.

How do anchors and chains damage coral?

Anchors can dislodge, crush and crack the corals upon direct impact, and an anchor chain swinging over a reef can scrape or scar large sections. In some instances, parts of a reef may be able to be repaired, but it can take centuries for full recovery. Often, coral is not able to naturally recover from a disturbance and is lost permanently.



In 2009, the Florida Legislature passed the [Florida Coral Reef Protection Act](#) (CRPA) to increase protection of coral reef resources off the coasts of Monroe, Miami-Dade, Broward, Palm Beach and Martin counties. The CRPA makes it illegal to anchor on or otherwise damage coral reefs in Southeast Florida.

Learn more about how you can help protect reefs.



FloridaDEP.gov | FloridasCoralReef.org



Recreational gear

Additional regional gear restrictions may apply in your county. For further clarification, contact the local regional offices listed on page 24.

Reef fish gear rules

(applies to species marked with ● on pages 10-11)

- **Gulf of Mexico:** These regulations require the use of a dehooking device when recreationally fishing for reef fish in the Gulf of Mexico. All persons aboard a vessel harvesting reef fish must possess and use non-stainless steel non-offset circle hooks when using natural baits.
- **Atlantic Ocean:** Recreational and commercial fishers are required to use dehooking devices as needed while fishing for reef fish. **(New)** When fishing for reef fish using hook-and-line with natural baits from a vessel, non-stainless steel, non-offset circle hooks are required N. of 28 degrees N. latitude and non-stainless steel hooks are required S. of 28 degrees N. latitude

These rules apply to all members of the reef fish complex including groupers, snappers, amberjacks, red porgy, gray triggerfish, black sea bass, golden tilefish, banded rudderfish, speckled hind and others. For a complete species list, please visit MyFWC.com.

Hook-and-line gear

Hook-and-line anglers must tend their gear at all times to prevent people, marine life and shore life from becoming entangled in the line or injured by the hook. Also, it is against the law to intentionally discard any monofilament netting or line into or onto state waters. Monofilament line can entangle birds, marine mammals, marine turtles and fish, often injuring or killing them. Trot lines with 10 or fewer hooks are considered hook-and-line gear and must be tended at all times while deployed. Species identified with "T" on pages 10 through 13 cannot be harvested with multi-hooks (single hook with two or more points) in conjunction with natural baits.

Nets

The following types of nets may be used for recreational purposes in Florida waters:

- Bully nets (for lobster only) no greater than 3 feet in diameter and not made of monofilament.
- Frame nets and push nets (for shrimp only) no greater than 16 feet in perimeter and not made of monofilament. Frame nets cannot be used in state waters off Dade County.
- Hand-held landing or dip nets no greater than 96 inches in perimeter.
- Cast nets measuring 14 feet or less stretched length (stretched length is defined as the

distance from the horn at the center of the net with the net gathered and pulled taut, to the lead line).

- Beach or haul seines measuring no larger than 500 square feet of mesh area, no larger than 2 inches stretched mesh size, not constructed of monofilament, and legibly marked at both ends with the harvester's name and address if a Florida resident. Non-residents using beach or haul seines for recreational purposes are required to have a commercial saltwater products license and legibly mark the seine at both ends with the harvester's saltwater products license number.
- Cast nets and seines may be used as harvesting gear for the following species only: black drum, bluefish, cobia, flounder, mullet, Florida pompano, red drum, sheepshead, shrimp, Spanish mackerel, weakfish and unregulated species (see p. 12).
- No more than two nets can be fished from any vessel and no more than one net can be fished by any person not on a vessel.

Explosives, etc.

The use of powerheads, explosives, chemicals or the discharge of firearms to kill or harvest marine life is prohibited in state waters.

Spearing

Spearing is a general term that includes bow fishing, gigging, spearfishing (underwater), or the use of any other device to capture a fish by piercing its body. Spearing does not include snagging or snatch hooking by hook and line. Marine species harvested by spearing are subject to the same recreational regulations (e.g., bag limits, size limits, and closed seasons) as those marine species that are harvested by any other type of recreationally-allowed gear. The following is a list of species or groups of species that are prohibited from harvest by all forms of spearing in state waters:

- All prohibited species (listed on p. 10-13)
- Billfish (all species)
- Bonefish
- Crab (blue, stone)
- Caribbean spiny lobster (*Panulirus argus*)
- Goliath grouper
- Manta ray
- Nassau grouper
- Permit
- Pompano (Florida and African)
- Red drum
- Sharks (all species including dogfish)
- Snook
- Spotted eagle ray
- Spotted seatrout
- Sturgeon
- Tarpon
- Tripletail
- Weakfish
- Marine life species (listed on p. 14)

* Volusia County — You may not harvest by spearing in Volusia County inland waters with the exception of flounder and sheepshead, and

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SPEARING

only by the use of a barbed spear with three or fewer prongs.

* Special Local Laws also prohibit harvest by spearing in specific areas (Visit MyFWC.com/Fishing and select "Saltwater," "Recreational Regulations," "Full Text Rule by Species" and "Local Laws.")

Spearfishing

Spearfishing is a specific form of "spearing" defined as "the catching or taking of a fish through the instrumentality of a hand or mechanically propelled, single or multi-pronged spear or lance, barbed or barbless, **operated by a person swimming at or below the surface of the water.**" In addition to the harvest species limitations above, you may not spearfish:

- For any species that cannot be harvested by spearing (see Spearing on pg. 18).
- For any species (freshwater or marine) in freshwater. Possession of spearfishing equipment in or on freshwater is also prohibited.
- Within the upper Keys no-spearfishing zone, which includes all state waters from the Miami-Dade County line down to and including Long Key.
- Within 100 yards of any designated public bathing beaches, commercial or public fishing piers, or portions of bridges where fishing is allowed.

- Within 100 feet of the unsubmerged portion of any jetty, except that spearing is allowed along the last 500 yards of any jetty that extends more than 1,500 yards from the shoreline.
- In or on any body of water under the jurisdiction of the Division of Recreation and Parks of the Department of Environmental Protection. Within these areas, the possession of spearfishing equipment is also prohibited except when such equipment is unloaded and is properly stored upon watercraft passing nonstop through the area.
- Within the no-take areas of the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary (Visit: www.floridakeys.noaa.gov)
- Within any area where spearfishing is prohibited by a Special Local Law (Visit MyFWC.com/Fishing and select "Saltwater," "Recreational Regulations," "Full Text Rule by Species" and "Local Laws.")

Powerheads, Bangsticks, Rebreathers

Harvest with the use of powerheads, bangsticks or rebreathers is prohibited in state waters, except that rebreathers are allowed for the harvest of lionfish. Within state waters, powerheads and bangsticks can be used for personal protection only, and cannot be used to harvest any species.

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CatchaFloridaMemory.com

Below: Jay Pare with his bonefish.



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Adison Silverstein with snook

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Track your progress at catching 70 species of saltwater fish.

Saltwater Reel Big Fish

Catch memorable-sized saltwater fish in 30 species categories. A photo of the entire fish on a length measuring device is required.



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New Saltwater Grand Slam Club Members

Grand Slam Tier 1 - 3 different Grand Slams:

Clayton Pinera

Bay and Estuary:

Clayton Pinera

Blue Water:

Angel Miguel Reyes

Family - Drum:

Gary Carney

Adilyn Clevenger

Douglas G. Clinger

Graci Goss

Brayden Madison

Reed A. Miller

Gaylord R. Smith

Rebel Stroh

Abigail L. Vallee

Family - Grouper:

Angelo Soyangco

Family - Grunt:

Jaci L. Pustelnik

Fred M. Wammock

Family - Jack/Pompano:

Andrew R. Vallee

Jon Wissman

Family - Porgy:

Richard Austin

Family - Snapper:

Richard Austin

Wanda L. Austin

John Barrington

Marylou Blackmer

Stefanie Boettner

Chris Calhoon

Traci R. Fallenstein

Alan George

Melinda Georgiades

Michael Golsch

Susan K. Gros

John C. Henwood

Robby L. Hood Jr

Robert E. Jackson Jr

Kaelyn A. Kinley

Thomas Linhart

Rebecca A. Mayfield

Denise Mock

Audrey Powers

Thomas W. Roskelly Jr

George F. Williams

Florida:

Maria E. Lopez

Inshore:

Aiden Anglemeyer

Alex J. Baeten

Robert W. Byrd

Sandra A. Connors

Charles T. Douglas

James H. Faulk

Brian J. Ferreira

Tim Flynn

Zane Glover

Jessica Honovic

Tyler Infinger

Ron James

Shane King

Keeton Krueger

Adam J. Macek

Logan McGrory

Vanessa E. McQueen

Mandy O'Connor

James D. Otte

Jonathan A. Rearden

Kimber L. Renberg

Tanner J. Trippel

James D. Votaw

Nearshore :

Gregg E. Lewis

Reefs and Rubble :

Traci R. Fallenstein

Gregg E. Lewis

Shoreline :

Clayton Pinera

Small Fry :

Katie Linhart

Christopher K. Perry

Clayton Pinera

Rebel Stroh

Abigail L. Vallee

Michael W. Vallee

New Saltwater Fish Life List Club Members

10 - Fish Club:

Joe Beasley

Alexander R. Bollman

Jarrett D. Cantrell

Gary Carney

Audrey G. Corvin

Martin Deghetto

Mark R. Edwards

Traci R. Fallenstein

Maggie Finch

Matthew E. Flood

Francois Fournier

James E. Garrison Jr

Hugo Gomez

Ashlie Howell

Cole R. Jones

Charles Klingler

Chris Limer

Thomas Linhart

Jaxson Madison

Rebecca A. Mayfield

Andrew J. Moline

Brian Murray

Brendan A. Okeefe

Antonio E. Ortiz

William F. Owen Jr

Rebekah R. Pierce

Irwin Ruderman

Joey Russo

Jerald Seely

A.R. Storm

Rebel Stroh

Cody J. Trippel

Tanner J. Trippel

Adam Vallee

30 - Fish Club:

Gabriel Kamal Bahra

Chris Calhoon

Susan K. Gros

Cameron E. Mein

50 - Fish Club:

Steve Limer

New Saltwater Reel Big Fish Club Members

Tier 1 - 5 Different Species:

Brent E. Harsch

Cayden Karppe

Ryder Karppe

Clayton Pinera

Black Drum:

William M. Kuersteiner

Rylan J. Larkin

Nathaniel Alan Legler

Cobia:

Samuel Korzeniewski

Colton Woodie

Crevalle Jack:

Jason Randolph

John Tirado

Catfish:

Cayden Karppe

Ryder Karppe

Reed A. Miller

Miguel Navarro

Brendan A. Okeefe

Wyatt T. Pierce

Clayton Pinera

Joshua Vidal

Florida Pompano:

Hunter Nodae

Flounder:

Connor Orlando

Gag:

Jd Malone

Gray (Mangrove) Snapper:

Joshua R. Guthrie

Thomas Linhart

Chad Unger

Gray Triggerfish:

Sarah C. Austin

Kevin R. Burkhead Sr

Kaelyn A. Kinley

Christopher K. Perry

Greater Amberjack:

Aaron C. Culpepper

King Mackerel:

Asher Johnson

Kassidy J. Miller

Luke Presley

Hunter Nodae

Ladyfish:

Allison M. Stattner

Abigail L. Vallee

Mutton Snapper:

Christopher D. Perry

Glenn Salts

Angelo Soyangco

Permit:

Maxwell Hartley

Red Drum:

Derek Ball

Chad R. Craft

Kenneth Eberman

Hayden R. Harrison

Mary Khan

Samuel Maeder

Matthew T. Price

Brent Shiver

Albert Sklarski

Cody J. Trippel

Tanner J. Trippel

Shauna L. Watson

Jonathan Williams

Sean C. Wray

Red Grouper:

John R. Morin

Red Porgy:

Wyatt Cress

Scamp:

Thomas Ruggles

Snook:

Thomas Baker

Isaac R. Beard

Jase J. Beard

Marc R. Blanton

Brett M. Brett Ramsden

Samuel C. Carrabino

Vincent Conwell

Brandon Jones

Walker P. Lea Jr

Jason Randolph

Joshua Rasnake

Asa Shiver

Amanda R. Slone

Tanner J. Trippel

Spanish Mackerel:

Reagan J. England

Spotted Seatrout:

Bridget Arnold

Michael J. Broda

Kassidy Dieter

Bryce Eckenrode

Jason Eddy

Brent E. Harsch

Casey R. Karppe

William M. Kuersteiner

Matthew Lanier

Madison N. Maness

Mike McBurnette

Reed A. Miller

Garret L. Parker

Eric J. Slaughter

Jonathan Williams

Kyle Williams

Tripletail:

Brody J. Browning

Joseph Chen

Jessica L. Selbach

Vermilion Snapper:

Steve Limer

Yellowtail Snapper:

Reagan J. England

Crystal Samuel

New Triple Threat Club Members

Have obtained a Grand Slam, Reel Big Fish AND Life List Club Recognition

Richard Austin

Audrey G. Corvin

Thomas Linhart

Reed A. Miller

Antonio E. Ortiz

John Tirado

Tanner J. Trippel

George F. Williams

New Florida Saltwater Fishing Records

All Tackle - Red Porgy

Matthew J. Marovich

All Tackle - Hogfish

Josh Summerville

All Tackle - Blueline Tilefish

Matthew J. Marovich

Florida resident saltwater licenses

Saltwater licenses cover both watercraft and shoreline fishing.

Annual Saltwater License	\$17.00
Youth Saltwater Fishing License — valid until 17th birthday	\$17.00
Five-Year Saltwater License	\$79.00
Annual Saltwater Shoreline License	\$0.00

Covers saltwater fishing only from shorelines and attached structures accessible by foot. Does not cover fishing from a watercraft, fishing from a shoreline reached by watercraft, or fishing while swimming or diving.

Non-resident saltwater licenses

Three-day Saltwater License	\$17.00
Seven-day License	\$30.00
Annual License	\$47.00

Saltwater permits – residents and non-residents

Annual Snook Permit	\$10.00
Five-Year Snook Permit (Florida residents only)	\$50.00
Annual Spiny Lobster Permit	\$5.00
Five-Year Spiny Lobster Permit (Florida residents only)	\$25.00
Tarpon Tag (available only at tax collector offices)	\$51.50

Unless exempt from license requirements, permits are necessary for the take of Snook and Spiny Lobster. Tarpon tags required to land tarpon.

Information for additional saltwater permits and designations

State Reef Fish Angler Designation – those fishing for reef fish from a private vessel in Gulf and Atlantic waters. No exemptions except youth under age 16.

Annual Shore-Based Shark Fishing Permit	\$0.00
Annual Blue Crab Trap Registration	\$0.00
Annual Stone Crab Trap Registration	\$0.00

These new no-cost permits are available online only at GoOutdoorsFlorida.com. Youth under age 16 are exempt. No other exemptions apply.

Florida resident combination licenses

Annual Saltwater and Freshwater Fishing	\$32.50
Annual Saltwater and Freshwater Fishing and Hunting	\$48.00

Gold Sportsman's Licenses

Includes Saltwater and Freshwater Fishing and Hunting licenses and Snook, Spiny Lobster, Management Area, Archery, Crossbow, Muzzleloading, Deer, Turkey and Waterfowl permits.

Annual Gold Sportsman's License	\$100.00
Five-Year Gold Sportsman's License	\$494.00
Youth Gold Sportsman's License — valid until 17th birthday	\$100.00
Annual Military Gold Sportsman's License	\$20.00

Includes the same licenses and permits as the Gold Sportsman's License. Available for Florida residents who are active duty or retired military members of the U.S. Armed Forces, Armed Forces Reserve, Florida National Guard, Coast Guard or Coast Guard Reserve at county tax collectors' offices with current military identification card or at GoOutdoorsFlorida.com through an online verification process.

Florida Resident Lifetime Saltwater Fishing licenses

Includes Saltwater Fishing license and Snook and Spiny Lobster permits

Age: 0–4	\$126.50
Age: 5–12	\$226.50
Age: 13 or older	\$301.50

Florida Resident Lifetime Gold Sportsman's licenses

Includes Saltwater and Freshwater Fishing and Hunting licenses and Snook, Spiny Lobster, Management Area, Archery, Crossbow, Muzzleloading, Deer, Turkey and Waterfowl permits.

Age: 0–4	\$401.50
Age: 5–12	\$701.50
Age: 13 or older	\$1,001.50

Saltwater fishing in Florida – what to know before you go:

Saltwater fishing licenses can be obtained online at GoOutdoorsFlorida.com, at county tax collectors' offices and license agents, or by calling toll-free 888-FISH-FLORIDA (347-4356). All sales are final. Handling fees apply for telephone and Internet sales. For more information on recreational licensing information, visit MyFWC.com/License.

For purposes of saltwater fishing in Florida, a resident is defined as:

- Any person who has declared Florida as his or her only state of residence as evidenced by a valid Florida driver license or identification card with both a Florida address and a Florida residency verified by the Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles (HSMV). A Florida voter registration card, declaration of domicile, or homestead exemption may also be used as proof of Florida residency.
- Active duty United States military personnel stationed in Florida, including spouses and dependent children residing in the household, with military orders.

Saltwater license exemptions:

- Youth under 16 years of age.
- Florida resident age 65 or older with proof of age and residency, such as a Florida driver's license or identification card.
- Florida resident fishing within his or her county of residence with live or natural bait, using poles or lines not equipped with a fishing line retrieval mechanism.
- Florida Resident Persons with Disabilities Hunting and Fishing License holder. Information at MyFWC.com/ADA.
- Florida resident accepted as a client for developmental disabilities services by the Agency for Persons with Disabilities, with agency proof thereof.
- Florida resident saltwater fishing from land or a structure fixed to land who has been determined eligible for the food stamp, temporary cash assistance, or Medicaid Program by the Department of Children and Family Services. Must have proof of identification and a benefit issuance or program identification card issued by the Agency for Persons with Disabilities or the Agency for Health Care when fishing.
- U.S. Armed Forces members who is a Florida resident not stationed in the state but home on leave with orders for 30 days or less. Does not include family members.
- Individual commercial saltwater products license holders.

- Those recreationally fishing from a pier that has a pier saltwater fishing license.
- Fishing from a for-hire vessel (including guide, charter, party boat) that has a valid charter boat or charter captain license.
- Fishing from a boat that has a recreational vessel fishing license.
- A Florida resident who is fishing for mullet in freshwater with a valid Florida freshwater fishing license.

More saltwater fishing licenses – available at Tax Collectors' office:

Charter Boat and Charter Captain licenses are available and required to carry paying customers (where a fee is paid directly or indirectly) to take, attempt to take, or possess saltwater fish or organisms. Guides must comply with U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) requirements.

- Four or fewer customers \$201.50
- Five to ten customers \$401.50
- Eleven or more customers \$801.50

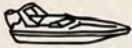
Recreational Vessel licenses are available for not-for-hire pleasure crafts that are registered recreationally for a fee of \$2,001.50.

Pier licenses are available for \$501.50 annually and exempt persons fishing from a pier fixed to land from saltwater fishing requirements.



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561-625-5122



MyFWC.com

The FWC's Division of Law Enforcement patrols Florida's coastal waters to provide assistance to boaters and anglers 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 if state fisheries, wildlife or boating laws are being violated, call 888-404-FWCC (3922) or for cell phone users

throughout the state, dial *FWC (*392) depending on your location, hail on VHF Channel 16 or report violations via text message. Most cell phones allow users to send text messages directly to an email address. You can text Tip@MyFWC.com; standard usage fees may apply.

Resource Information

Join the nation's largest conservation law enforcement agency—become an FWC law enforcement officer. For more information contact the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission at 1-866-FWC-HIRE (392-4473) or visit MyFWC.com/Law

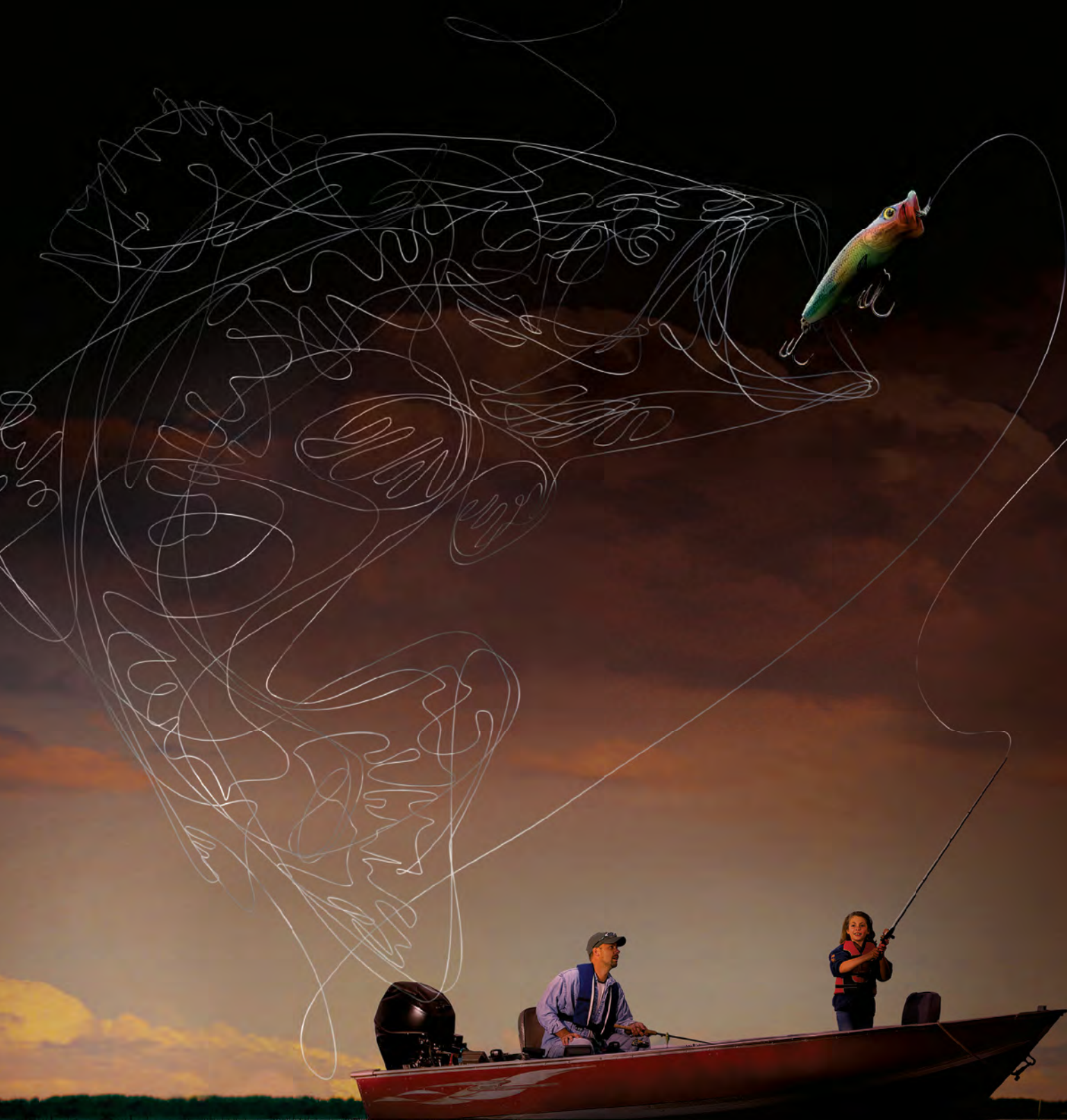
- **To purchase fishing licenses:**
888-FISH-FLORIDA (347-4356)
GoOutdoorsFlorida.com
- **FWC Division of Law Enforcement**
888-404-FWCC (3922)
- **To report fish and wildlife law violations, call the Wildlife Alert Hotline:**
888-404-FWCC (3922)
- **FWC Fish and Wildlife Research Institute**
727-896-8626
MyFWC.com/Research
- **To report fish kills:**
800-636-0511
- **To report fish tags:**
800-367-4461
TagReturn@MyFWC.com
- **To report sawfish sightings:**
941-255-7403
sawfish@MyFWC.com
- **Bird entanglement**
888-404-3922
727-391-6211 for Tampa area
- **Red tide information hotline**
866-300-9399 toll free in Florida
727-552-2488 nationwide
- **Aquatic toxins hotline:** 888-232-8635
- **Shellfish harvesting questions**
FDACS, 850-617-7600
https://www.fdacs.gov/Divisions-Offices
- **To report lionfish sightings:**
1-877-786-7267
MyFWC.com/Lionfish

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