

Basic Recreational Saltwater Fishing Regulations

This brief summary of regulations governs the taking of saltwater species in Florida State Waters for personal use. It is not applicable to the commercial harvesting of these species. The absence of complete laws, rules and regulations in this summary does not relieve persons from compliance with those laws, rules or regulations. State waters extend to 3 nautical miles on the Atlantic and 9 nautical miles on the Gulf. Federal rules apply beyond state waters. For species that do not have an established bag limit, more than 100 pounds or 2 fish per harvester per day (whichever is greater), is considered commercial quantities. A saltwater products license and commercial vessel registration is required to harvest commercial quantities of unregulated species. It is illegal to sell recreationally harvested fish without compliance with commercial license requirements. **Issue Thirty Two, Jan. 2008**

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

