

2015

GEORGIA  
**SPORT  
FISHING**  
REGULATIONS



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SEE PAGE 6.

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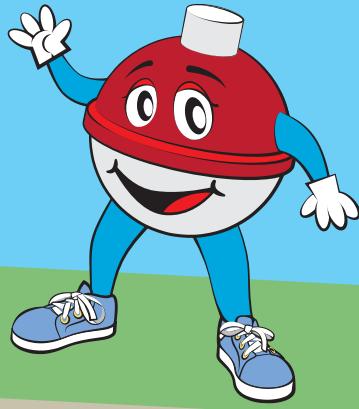
GEORGIA  
**SPORT**  
**FISHING**  
REGULATIONS

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**Go Fish Education Center!**  
See page 30.

## 2015 FRESHWATER AND SALTWATER SPORT FISHING REGULATIONS

Nathan Deal, Governor

Mark Williams, Commissioner, Department of Natural Resources

Dan Forster, Director, Wildlife Resources Division

Spud Woodward, Director, Coastal Resources Division

Eddie Henderson, Colonel, Law Enforcement Division

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\* List of Board Members was current as of press time. To see a current list of Board Members please go to [www.GADNR.org](http://www.GADNR.org).

**Note:** The Wildlife Resources & Coastal Resources Divisions designed this guide to help you quickly find and understand regulations for fishing in Georgia. The Game & Fish Code and rules of the Department of Natural Resources are the final authority on questions on law. This publication was partially paid for by the sale of advertising. The Georgia Department of Natural Resources does not necessarily endorse products or services listed.

**Editor:** Keith Weaver (GADNR)

**Advertising:** J.F. Griffin Publishing (413) 884-1001

## On The Cover

Justin Bythwood caught this "rooster" redbreast from the Satilla River. South Georgia rivers are great panfish destinations all year long, but they are peak during spring.  
(Photo taken by Bert Deener)





### Working With Wildlife For You

Over the past year, we have made great strides in listening to you—our customer—to find ways to make it easier for you to support wildlife and get outdoors. We have done this while fulfilling our mission to conserve, enhance and promote Georgia's fish and wildlife resources and outdoor heritage through science-driven research, management, regulation and education.

Let me tell you about a few things we've done in the past year:

- **Wildlife License Plate Changes:** The license plates sporting an eagle, quail, trout or hummingbird provide vital funds for conserving rare species and other wildlife to programs that receive no state appropriations. House Bill 881 rolls back the cost of buying or renewing a wildlife plate to \$25 and dedicates more than 75 percent of fees to the programs that depend on them.
- **Georgia Outdoor Map ([www.georgiaoutdoormap.com](http://www.georgiaoutdoormap.com)):** This is an interactive map that identifies DNR-managed lands and outdoor recreation opportunities. It includes state parks, WMAs, PFAs, boat ramps, and historic sites. You can search by category to find locations where you can camp, hunt, hike, fish or explore history.
- **License Changes:** House Bill 786 simplifies the proof of residency requirement for purchasing a lifetime license and also eliminates the residency requirement for purchasing an infant (<2 years old) lifetime license. This is a great opportunity for grandparents or parents to purchase a Georgia lifetime license for their child at a cost of only \$200—no matter where they live! Recognizing the sacrifice made by those in the military, House Bill 740 allows all active duty military personnel, no matter the state they come from or where they are stationed, to purchase a resident short term or yearly hunting and fishing license. It's the support of anglers like you that help make this work possible. If you're an avid outdoorsman, like me, then know that when you buy or renew a wildlife plate your investment in our natural resources is a small way to give back to nature, and ensure it will be there for your enjoyment and for future generations.

This year, I expect fishing in Georgia to be one of the best we have ever seen. Through the increased amount of boat ramps, along with the fish restoration we have completed in many areas across the state, anglers have a lot to look forward to. I want to thank the Georgia General Assembly and Governor Deal for working with DNR in all that we have accomplished.

Thank you for your support and I hope you have an exciting and successful fishing season.

#### **Mark Williams**

Commissioner, Georgia Department of Natural Resources

For more information:

[www.georgiawildlife.com/conservation/support#License\\_Plate](http://www.georgiawildlife.com/conservation/support#License_Plate)



### Show Your Support!

Upgrade to a new wildlife plate for \$25 and show your support for Georgia wildlife!

The cost of buying or renewing a wildlife plate is only \$25 more than a standard license plate. Also, \$19 of each purchase and \$20 of each renewal goes directly to the Wildlife Resources Division programs that depend on the plates.

Check out these wild tags at your county tag office or online, and make a bold statement for wildlife conservation by outfitting your vehicle with one of these eye-catching designs.



## About this Guide

This high-quality regulation guide is offered to you by the Georgia Department of Natural Resources through its unique partnership with J.F. Griffin Publishing, LLC.

J.F. Griffin is an award winning publishing house that specializes in producing state fish & wildlife regulation books. J.F. Griffin supports the Georgia Department of Natural Resources' staff in the design, layout and editing of the guides. They also manage the marketing and sales of advertising to appropriate businesses within the book.

The revenue generated through ad sales significantly lowers production costs and generates savings. These savings translate into additional funds for other important fisheries and habitat programs!

If you have any feedback or are interested in advertising, please contact us at 413.884.1001 or online at [www.JFGriffin.com](http://www.JFGriffin.com)

**Designers:** Jon Gulley, Dane Fay, Evelyn Haddad, Erin Murphy, Chris Sobolowski

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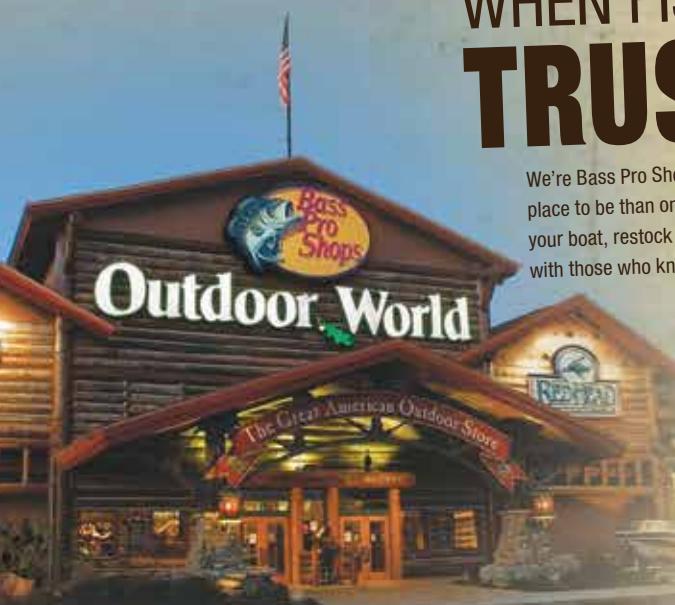
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(478) 757-7600

# **SPORTFISHING**

## **CONTACT INFORMATION & OFFICES**

### **STATEWIDE OR GENERAL OFFICES**

#### **1 Wildlife Resources Division State Headquarters**

2070 US Highway 278 SE, Social Circle, GA 30025  
Main Number ..... 770-918-6400  
Fisheries Management ..... 770-918-6406  
Law Enforcement ..... 770-918-6408  
Game Management ..... 770-918-6404  
Nongame Conservation ..... 770-761-3035

#### **Wildlife Resources Conservation Center**

2065 US Highway 278 SE, Social Circle, GA 30025  
Boating Registration ..... 800-366-2661  
License Unit ..... 800-366-2661  
Hunter Education ..... 770-761-3010

#### **2 Coastal Resources Division Headquarters**

One Conservation Way, Brunswick, GA 31520  
Main Number ..... 912-264-7218  
Coastal Law Enforcement ..... 912-264-7237  
Report a Fish Kill ..... 800-241-4113  
Ranger Hotline ..... 800-241-4113

### **WRD FISHERIES REGIONAL OFFICES AND FACILITIES**

#### **3 Northeast Office**

2150 Dawsonville Hwy, Gainesville, GA 30501  
Gainesville ..... 770-535-5498  
Law Enforcement (Gainesville) ..... 770-535-5499

#### **Buford Trout Hatchery**

#### **Burton Hatchery**

#### **4 Northwest Office**

312 North River St. NW, PO Box 519, Calhoun, GA 30703  
Calhoun ..... 706-624-1161  
Atlanta number ..... 770-387-4821  
Law Enforcement (Calhoun) ..... 706-624-1367  
Law Enforcement (Atlanta) ..... 770-769-9680

#### **Rocky Mountain Recreation & Public Fishing Area**

#### **Summerville Hatchery**

#### **5 West Central Office**

1014 MLK Blvd., Fort Valley, GA 31030  
Fort Valley ..... 478-825-6151  
Macon Law Enforcement ..... 478-751-6415

#### **Charlie Elliot Wildlife Center/ Marben PFA** ..... 478-825-6151 or 770-784-3063

#### **Big Lazer Creek Public Fishing Area**

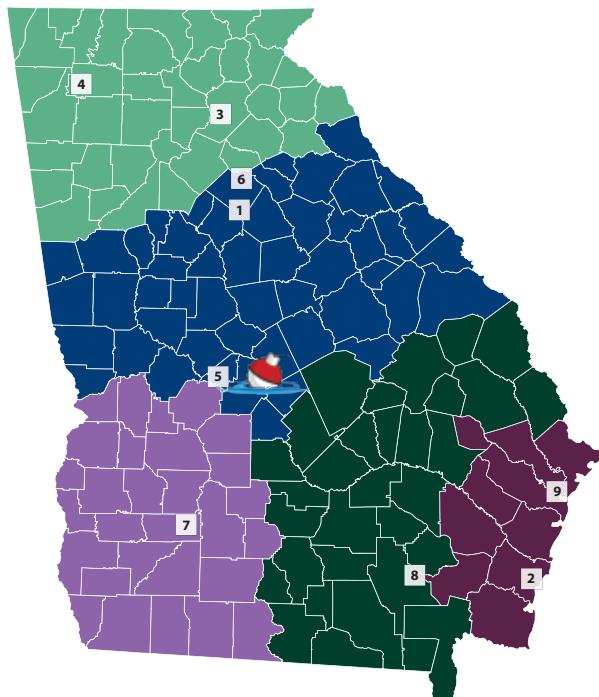
#### **West Point District Office**

#### **Flat Creek PFA**

#### **6 East Central Office**

2123 US Highway 278, SE Social Circle, GA 30025  
Atlanta number ..... 770-918-6418

#### **Walton Fish Hatchery**



#### **Thomson District Office**

District Office ..... 706-595-1619  
Law Enforcement Office ..... 706-595-4211  
Augusta Number ..... 706-737-1480

#### **McDuffie PFA & Hatchery**

 **Go Fish Education Center** ..... 478-988-6701  
1255 Perry Pkwy., Perry, GA 31069

#### **7 Southwest Office**

2024 Newton Road, Albany, GA 31701  
Albany ..... 229-430-4256  
Albany Law Enforcement ..... 229-430-4252

#### **Steve Cocke Hatchery**

#### **Cordele Hatchery**

#### **8 South Central Office**

108 Darling Ave., PO Box 2089, Waycross, GA 31502  
Waycross ..... 912-285-6094  
Metter Law Enforcement ..... 912-685-2145

#### **Ocmulgee PFA**

#### **Hugh M. Gillis PFA**

#### **Dodge County PFA**

#### **Paradise PFA**

#### **9 Coastal Office**

22814 Highway 144, Richmond Hill, GA 31324  
Richmond Hill ..... 912-727-2112  
Coastal Law Enforcement ..... 912-264-7237

#### **Evans County PFA**

#### **Richmond Hill Fish Hatchery**

>> See page 19 for a map of Public Fishing Areas.

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## **SPORTFISHING 2015 CHANGES**

### **Freshwater Regulation Changes**

Anglers please note changes to length limits. See page 12 for details.

- 14 inch minimum length limit for largemouth bass from Lake Oconee.
- 12 inch minimum length limit for largemouth bass from the Ocmulgee River (Macon's Spring Street bridge crossing to confluence with Oconee River).
- 15 inch minimum length limit for shoal bass from the Flint River and its tributaries upstream of Warwick Dam.

### **Saltwater Regulation Changes**

No changes this year.

## **Discover Fishing on Georgia's Free Fishing Days!**

**June 6, 2015; June 13, 2015; Sept. 26, 2015**

- No fishing or trout license required
- All waters of the state
- Must be a Georgia resident
- Does not include fees at private lakes
- No WMA license required to fish on a Public Fishing Area or Waters Creek trophy trout stream
- All other Fishing Regulations apply

## **National Hunting & Fishing Day!**

**Saturday  
Sept. 26, 2015**

The U.S. Congress and President Nixon established National Hunting & Fishing (NHF) Day 38 years ago to recognize hunters and anglers for the time and money—more than \$1 billion each year—they donate to wildlife conservation programs.

NHF Day events provide **FREE** opportunities for everyone to learn more about outdoor skills and activities.

To learn more, visit [www.gofishgeorgia.com](http://www.gofishgeorgia.com)



## **INJURED or HURT?**

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# **SPORTFISHING 2015 DEFINITIONS**

## **Artificial Lure**

Any lure which is made completely of natural or colored wood, cork, feathers, hair, rubber, metal, plastic, tinsel, styrofoam, sponge, string, or any combination of such materials, in imitation of or as a substitute for natural bait. This does not include any item sprayed with or containing scented or chemical attractants.

## **Daily Limit**

The number of fish that may be taken, caught, or killed during any one day.

## **Fishing**

Catching, capturing, taking, or killing fish, mussels and all seafood and includes all lesser acts such as attempting to catch, capture, or kill by any device or method and directly assisting any person in catching or attempting to catch fish or seafood.

## **Game Fish**

Fish that are listed under Daily Limits (see pages 13 and 43).

## **Immediate Family**

All persons living in one household under one head of household and bearing a blood or dependent relationship to the head of household.

## **Non-game Fish**

Any fish not designated as game fish under Daily Limits (see pages 13 and 43).

## **Public Fishing Area**

Designated areas owned and/or operated by the Department of Natural Resources, Wildlife Resources Division, Fisheries Section for the primary purpose of fishing and are open to the public. These are listed on pages 19–21.

## **Resident**

Resident means any person who has been domiciled within the state of Georgia for a period of at least three (3) months (declared Georgia their state of legal residence as shown by a GA driver's license or GA ID with a Georgia address). Residents include full-time military personnel on active duty and the dependents of such military personnel for other than Lifetime and Honorary Licenses. Residents also include out-of-state college students living in Georgia. Students may use a current Georgia student ID as documentation.

## **Protected Species May Be Encountered While Fishing**

Many rare and protected species live in or near water and may be encountered while fishing. There are 57 fish, eight salamanders, one frog, 28 snails and mussels, 20 crayfish and 13 turtles on Georgia's protected species list. It is unlawful to capture, kill, or harm any protected species. However, any crayfish can be used for fishing bait as long as they are not collected from crayfish burrows or exported from the state of Georgia.

If you accidentally capture a protected species while fishing release it unharmed immediately.

For more information contact DNR's Nongame Conservation Section at **770-918-6411** or visit [www.georgiawildlife.com](http://www.georgiawildlife.com).



**MAP TURTLE**

Aquatic turtle with prominent spiny keel on midline of shell. Found in large streams, rivers in northwest and southwest portions of state.



**ALLIGATOR SNAPPING TURTLE**

Huge aquatic turtle that may weigh more than 100 lbs. Occurs in large streams, rivers, reservoirs in the southwest corner of the state. Jaws are powerful—keep a safe distance!

Up to 29" in length,  
11–20" typical



**EASTERN HELLBENDER**

Large, harmless salamander found in clear, rocky mountain streams such as trout streams.

## **Help Stop the Spread of Aquatic Nuisance Species**

### **Don't release live bait fish, or move live fish, aquatic plants, or mussels!**

- It is unlawful to stock or release fish into waters within the state without a permit from DNR, except for lawfully obtained fish of legal species stocked in private ponds.
- Never release live bait fish, aquarium fish, or aquatic plants into our waters.
- Dispose of bait fish after fishing so that they cannot enter a lake, river, or stream.
- Remove all plant fragments and mussels from your boat, motor, trailer, live well, and nets before leaving the launch site and clean your boat and equipment thoroughly before launching into new waters.
- Learn more about Aquatic Nuisance Species at [www.gofishgeorgia.com](http://www.gofishgeorgia.com)



### **STOP AQUATIC HITCHHIKERS!™**

Prevent the transport of nuisance species.  
Clean all recreational equipment.

[www.ProtectYourWaters.net](http://www.ProtectYourWaters.net)

# FRESHWATER & SALTWATER LICENSE REQUIREMENTS

## Buying Licenses

You can purchase a Georgia fishing license:

- Online 24 hours a day, 7 days a week at [www.gofishgeorgia.com](http://www.gofishgeorgia.com) or [www.gooutdoorsgeorgia.com](http://www.gooutdoorsgeorgia.com).
- In person at license dealers statewide including most WRD/CRD regional offices; state parks; marinas; major retailers; and sporting goods, bait and tackle, and hardware stores. A complete list of license agents can be found at [gofishgeorgia.com](http://gofishgeorgia.com).
- By telephone at 800-366-2661, 8 a.m. – 8 p.m. M-F, 9 a.m. – 5 p.m. S-S.

**Notes:** Social Security Number is required for the purchase of all licenses to meet requirements for Georgia Code 19-11-9.1(a).

## Who Needs a Fishing License

Anglers age 16 and older must have a current Georgia fishing license in their possession while fishing in fresh or salt water in Georgia. Additionally, a free SIP is required to fish in saltwater. A temporary authorization number obtained by telephone or internet sale may be used for seven days until the paper copy is received or printed. Conservation Rangers may require photo identification when checking fishing licenses. **Exception:** A fishing license is not required to fish in private ponds (does not include ponds owned by governments—city, county, state, or federal) nor by a resident and their immediate family when fishing on their land. See definition of *immediate family* on page 7.

## RESIDENTS

- Proof of residence, such as a Georgia driver's license, is required to purchase a resident fishing license.
- For purposes of buying a fishing license, residents are persons domiciled in Georgia (declared Georgia only state of legal residence) for a least three months and includes out-of-state college students living in Georgia. Students may use a current Georgia student I.D. as documentation. Residents also include full-time, active duty military personnel and their dependents for purposes other than lifetime licenses.
- A free hunting and fishing license may be issued once for Georgia resident military veterans discharged from active duty on or after July 1, 2005 who were on ordered Federal duty for a period of 90 days or longer. Valid for 12 months from date of issue. More details may be found under **Freshwater**

## Multi-Year License

Offers anglers an opportunity to fish longer and save money.  
2-year Fishing License—\$16  
(An annual fishing license is \$9)

**and Trout License Requirements** at [www.gofishgeorgia.com](http://www.gofishgeorgia.com).

- **Residents 65 years of age or older** may fish with the Senior (65+) Lifetime License. This license can be obtained free online at [gofishgeorgia.com](http://gofishgeorgia.com) or from license dealers by furnishing proof of age (driver's lic., birth certificate, etc.) and residency (driver's license).
- **Permanently and totally disabled:** Residents may obtain a Disability Honorary Combination Hunting and Fishing License by applying to the License Unit (800-366-2661). Proof of disability must accompany the application. Proof of disability may come from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, Social Security Admin., Railroad Retirement System or other government agency. Applications are online at [www.gofishgeorgia.com](http://www.gofishgeorgia.com).
- **Any resident who is totally blind** may apply for a Lifetime Honorary Fishing License and must provide a Physician's Certification of Blindness with the application.

## NONRESIDENTS

- Nonresidents 16 or older, regardless of physical condition, must have a valid nonresident Georgia fishing license to fish in Georgia freshwater and saltwater, except in private ponds. See also **Agreements for Bordering States** on pages 16–17.
- Nonresidents under 16 do not require a fishing license or trout license.

## Georgia Outdoor Recreational Pass (GORP)

Any person, age 16–64, entering any designated fee area on state-managed WMAs and PFAs must possess a valid GORP. **Persons who possess a valid 3-day hunting & fishing, WMA, Lifetime, Sportsman's, or Honorary license are exempt from this requirement.** Designated fee areas are marked with the posting of a sign at the site or area entrance.

## Reciprocal Agreements for Bordering States

Georgia DNR has Agreements with Alabama, Florida, North Carolina, and South Carolina

## Early Renewal Discount

An easy way to save! The majority of hunting and fishing licenses offer sportsmen an early renewal option with a savings of \$2.75 when a same privilege license is purchased before expiration of the old license. \*

\* Enter your email address when buying a license to receive a renewal reminder. Renew early and save \$2.75!

allowing holders of Georgia fishing licenses to fish in the waters covered without obtaining a fishing license from the bordering state. See **Agreements with Bordering States** on pages 16–17.

## Mountain Trout Licenses

- All resident anglers ages 16 and older must have a trout license and Georgia fishing license to fish in designated trout waters and to fish for or to possess trout. A WMA or GORP License is required to fish for trout in Dawson Forest (North of GA Hwy 53), & Rich Mountain (Cartecay Tract). See page 23 for Waters Creek special regulations. For a full list of properties requiring a GORP please visit [www.gofishgeorgia.com](http://www.gofishgeorgia.com).
- Resident Senior (65+) Lifetime, Lifetime Sportman's, Sportman's and honorary license holders include the trout fishing privilege.
- Landowners and their immediate families may fish on their premises without a trout license.
- All nonresident anglers, 16 or older, regardless of physical condition, must possess a nonresident fishing license and nonresident trout license to fish for or possess trout or to fish in designated trout waters.
- **State park visitors** are not required to have a trout license to fish in the impounded waters of the Park. However, those visitors wishing to harvest trout will need to have a trout license in their possession.
- See **Public Fishing Areas** on pages 19–21.

## Combo Licenses

Convenient, new 2-year and 3-day Hunting & Fishing Combo Licenses save money.

- 2-year Hunting & Fishing Combo License—\$31  
(An annual combo license is \$17.)
- Resident 3-day Hunting & Fishing Combo License—\$3.50  
(3-day combo includes fishing privileges on WMAs and PFAs.)

## Stacking Licenses

Anglers can purchase multiple annual or multi-year licenses and "stack" them into one transaction which will save money and eliminate multiple service charges. Note: Not all licenses can be stacked, if you have questions, visit [www.gofishgeorgia.com](http://www.gofishgeorgia.com) or call 1-800-366-2661.



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**2015 RECREATIONAL FISHING LICENSE FEES**

Annual licenses are valid for one full year from date of purchase.			
LICENSE	TERM	RESIDENT	NON-RESIDENT
Fishing license	Annual	\$9.00	\$45.00
	Two-year	\$16.00	n/a
Trout license	Annual	\$5.00	\$20.00
	Two-year	\$10.00	n/a
	Three-day	\$3.50	\$10.00
Wildlife Management Area	Annual	\$19.00	\$73.00
	Two-year	\$38.00	n/a
Hunting & Fishing Combination	Annual	\$17.00	\$100.00
	Two-year	\$31.00	n/a
	Three-day*	\$3.50	\$20.00
Sportsman	Annual	\$55.00	n/a
	Two-year	\$105.00	n/a
One-Day Saltwater Shore-Based Fishing	One-day	\$5.00	\$5.00
SIP Permit (requirement for fishing in salt water)	Annual**	FREE	FREE
TRANSACTION FEES			
Internet Transactions			\$2.50
Telephone Transactions			\$5.00
Walk-In Transactions			\$3.00
<b>GEORGIA OUTDOOR RECREATIONAL PASS (GORP)</b> (See pages 8, 19.)			
Individual	Annual	\$19.00	
	Three-day	\$3.50	
Small Group (less than 8 people)	Annual	\$35.00	
	Three-day	\$10.00	
GORP Plus (Includes fish/hunt license)	Three-day	\$3.50	\$20.00

\* Residents and non-residents may purchase the 3-day Combination License, Apprentice 3-day License or a GORP Plus License.

\*\* Expires at the end of February each year.

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- Under 2 years old (available to Residents and Nonresidents): **\$200**
- Ages 2–15: **\$350**
- Ages 16–59: **\$500**
- Ages 60–64: **\$95**
- Ages 65 and older: **\$0\***
- Veterans: **\$400**
- Shooting Preserve: **\$75**



- Under 16 years old non-resident grandchild of resident lifetime license holder: **\$1000**
- \* \$10 for a durable, plastic card. Also available online.

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## Georgia Outdoor Recreational Pass (GORP)

The Georgia Outdoor Recreational Pass (GORP) is required to use on any of the 32 designated properties owned by Georgia Wildlife Resources Division. This includes all Public Fishing Areas except for Rocky Mountain PFA. If you are ages 16 to 64, you must have a GORP or one of the following to access the PFA's for non-fishing purposes:

- 3-Day Fishing/Hunting License
- Sportsmen's License
- Lifetime or Honorary License
- Wildlife Management Area License

Traditionally, these properties—Wildlife Management Areas and Public Fishing Areas—have been supported financially by revenue from hunting and fishing licenses as well as federal funds from the Sport Fish and Wildlife Restoration Program. While WMAs and PFAs are managed primarily for wildlife habitat, uses such as hiking, horseback riding and other activities are also allowed. The GORP offers these users a way to contribute to the upkeep of the properties.

- GORP 3-Day: \$3.50, GORP Annual: \$19
- GORP Plus Fishing 3-Day (residents only): \$3.50, non-residents: \$20.00
- Small Group 3-Day: \$10, Small Group, Annual: \$35

For a complete list of GORP User Fee Areas, visit [georgiawildlife.com](http://georgiawildlife.com). Transaction fees apply.

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# FRESHWATER GENERAL REGULATIONS

## Freshwater Game Species Daily Limits

- It is unlawful to take in one day or to possess at any one time, except at a residence or commercial storage facility, more than the daily limit for each species. It is unlawful to possess more than a total of 50 individuals of all the game fish listed in this section, except channel and flathead catfish.
- Once the daily limit for a particular species is taken, it is unlawful to continue to fish for that species.

Now in Effect  
For Flint River  
Above Warwick  
(Blackshear) Dam

**NEW Minimum length limit for shoal bass is 15 inches**



**Shoal bass**  
Length limit 15 in. (**NEW**)



**Largemouth bass**  
Length limit 12 in.



**Spotted bass**  
No length limit

### Important

- Anglers encouraged to keep all spotted bass
- Identify spotted bass by tooth patch not found on shoal bass and largemouth
  - Distinguish shoal bass from largemouth by vertical bars and jaw that does not extend behind eye
- Possession limit is 10 black bass of all species combined



**Exception:** Daily limits differ on certain waters shared by Georgia and South Carolina. See **Agreements with Bordering States** (pages 16–17).

## Seasons

There is no closed season for fishing in freshwater in Georgia except for the following:

- Trout Season:** Trout streams that are designated as seasonal trout streams are **OPEN** to fishing for any species from **March 28 - October 31, 2015 and from March 26 - October 31, 2016**. Seasonal trout streams are **CLOSED** to fishing for all fish species at all other times. See pages 23–25 for trout stream designations.
- Flint, Chattahoochee and Spring Creeks:** The Flint River and its tributaries from the Georgia Power Co. dams at Albany to the US Hwy 84 bridge; the Chattahoochee River and its tributaries from the Columbia Lock and Dam to the GA Hwy 91 bridge; and Spring Creek and its tributaries downstream to GA Hwy 253 are **CLOSED** to striped bass fishing and spear fishing from May 1–October 31 each year.
- Lakes Seminole:** All fishing, including spear fishing, for any species in the marked areas around five fish refuges in Lake Seminole is prohibited from May 1–October 31 each year.
- Coosa River:** The season for taking lake sturgeon from the Coosa River and its tributaries is **CLOSED**. See [www.gofishgeorgia.com](http://www.gofishgeorgia.com) for more information on this closure and how to identify this fish.
- Noodling or Grabbling:** The season is open March 1–July 15 statewide in freshwater.

## Length Limits

Note: There are no minimum length limits on freshwater game fish unless they are listed below. All lengths are Total Length (see "How to Measure Fish," page 43). You must release all fish shorter than the minimum length indicated for that species.

### LARGEMOUTH BASS

12 inches statewide **except:**

- Lake Blackshear: 14 inches
- Lake Blue Ridge: no minimum (0 inches)
- Lake Burton: no minimum (0 inches)
- Lake Juliette: no minimum (0 inches)
- Lake Lanier: 14 inches

#### **Lake Oconee: 14 inches**

- Lake Lindsey Grace: bass between 15 and 22 inches must be released immediately. All others may be kept. In addition, only one bass may be greater than 22 inches.
- Lake Walter F. George: 14 inches
- West Point Reservoir: 14 inches
- Public Fishing Area lakes operated by the Department of Natural Resources: 14 inches. This limit will not apply to lakes which have been posted as having a different length limit for largemouth bass.

### SHOAL BASS

- Lake Lanier: 14 inches
- Flint River and its tributaries (below Warwick Dam): 12 inches**

- Flint River and its tributaries (above Warwick Dam): 15 inches**

## SPOTTED BASS

- Lake Lanier: 14 inches

## STRIPED BASS, WHITE BASS, & HYBRID WHITE-STRIPED BASS

You may only keep two fish of the total limit that are 22 inches or longer, **except:**

- See agreement with South Carolina (page 16)**
- The minimum length for all fish is 22 inches on the North Newport River, Medway River including Mount Hope Creek, Little Ogeechee River, Ogeechee River; Oconee River downstream of GA Hwy 22 in Milledgeville; Ocmulgee River downstream of GA Hwy 96 bridge between Houston and Twiggs counties; Altamaha River, Saint Mary's River, Satilla River, and the tributaries to these river sections; and from saltwater.
- The minimum length is 27 inches on the Savannah River and its tributaries downstream of J. Strom Thurmond Dam (2 fish limit).
- See table on page 13 for full details

## TROUT

No minimum length limit for trout **except:**

- Waters Creek:
  - Brown and rainbow trout: 22 inches
  - Brook trout: 18 inches
- Noontoola Creek and its tributaries on Blue Ridge WMA
  - All trout: 16 inches

## Fishing Gear Must Be Regularly Checked

- Attend to gear such as limb lines. (Anglers are encouraged to check all gear within 24 hours)
- Make every reasonable effort to retrieve lost gear (including hooks, line and lead sinkers).
- Recycle used fishing line.
- For more information, contact:  
Fisheries Section — (770) 918-6406

## Creel and Possession Note to Anglers

Creel and possession limits are per person. For Conservation Rangers to correctly determine compliance with these limits, each individual should keep trout or other fish on separate stringers or in separate creels. It is unlawful for one individual to possess more than the legal limit of any fish species.

## FRESHWATER TURTLES

- No more than 10 freshwater turtles (any combination of species) may be possessed without a commercial turtle permit (contact the Special Permit Unit — 770-761-3044). There is no closed season for the harvest of freshwater turtles, however, taking of species protected by federal or state law is prohibited (for a list of species access: [www.georgiawildlife.com/node/2626#Common\\_Name](http://www.georgiawildlife.com/node/2626#Common_Name)). For more information [www.georgiawildlife.com/turtling](http://www.georgiawildlife.com/turtling).

**FRESHWATER****GAME SPECIES DAILY LIMITS**

(See page 19 for special limits on Public Fishing Areas.)

SPECIES		DAILY LIMIT	EXCEPTIONS
Bass	Largemouth, Redeye (Coosa), Shoal, Smallmouth, Spotted, and/or Suwannee bass	10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lake Grace (Wayne Co.) — Only one bass may be greater than 22 inches.</li> <li>• 14 inch minimum length limit for largemouth bass from Lake Oconee.</li> <li>• 12 inch minimum length limit for largemouth bass from the Ocmulgee River (Macon's Spring Street bridge crossing to confluence with Oconee River).</li> <li>• 15 inch minimum length limit for shoal bass from the Flint River and its tributaries upstream of Warwick Dam.</li> </ul>
Catfish	Channel and/or Flathead	No limit	—
Crappie	Black and/or White	30	—
Pickerel	Chain, Grass and/or Redfin	15	—
Shad	American and/or Hickory	8	—
Striped Bass, White Bass and/or Hybrid White-Striped Bass	—	15, only two of which can be 22 inches or longer.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Limit taken from the North Newport River, Medway River including Mount Hope Creek, Little Ogeechee River, Ogeechee River, Oconee River downstream of GA Hwy 22 in Milledgeville, Ocmulgee River downstream of the GA Hwy 96 bridge between Houston and Twiggs counties, Altamaha River, St. Mary's River, Satilla River, and the tributaries to these river sections; and from saltwater is a two fish limit, both of which must be 22 inches in length or longer.</li> <li>• Limit taken from the Savannah River and its tributaries downstream of J. Strom Thurmond Dam is a two fish limit, both of which must be 27 inches in length or longer.</li> <li>• Limit taken from Lake Richard B. Russell from the Russell Dam to Lake Hartwell Dam and Lake Secession Dam, all tributaries to Lake Richard B. Russell is two (2) striped bass per day, only one (1) of which can exceed 34 inches in length.</li> <li>• See the Fishing Regulations for shared waters for Georgia and South Carolina on page 16.</li> </ul>
Sunfish or Bream	Bluegill, Flier, Redbreast, Redear, Rock bass, Spotted sunfish, Warmouth and/or Shadow bass	50	Bream: See South Carolina Agreement on page 16.
Trout	Brook, Rainbow, and/or Brown trout	8	See Amicalola Creek, Chattahoochee River, Chattooga River, Smithgall Woods, Smith Creek, Toccoa River, and Waters Creek on pages 23–25. See the new limits for shared waters of Georgia and South Carolina on page 16.
Walleye	—	8	Limit on Blue Ridge Reservoir is 15.

Sturgeon - May not be taken in fresh or saltwater in Georgia.

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# FRESHWATER FISHING METHODS

## Hook & Line

- There is no restriction on the number of poles and lines used to fish for game fish **except:**
  - Fishing for trout in designated trout waters: 1 pole
  - Fishing on Public Fishing Areas: 2 poles
  - Sport shad fishing: 2 poles
- Anglers using more than two poles and lines to fish for shad must abide by commercial shad regulations.
- Landing nets may be used to land fish legally caught.
- Game fish may be used as live bait (where live bait is legal) if they are taken legally and you do not exceed daily creel and possession limits.

## Sport Trotlines & Jugs

- A sport trotline is one line or a combination of lines using less than 51 hooks. Sport trotlines must be:
  1. Marked with the owner's name and address and with visible buoys
  2. Submerged at least three feet below the surface of the water
  3. Attended regularly and removed after the completed fishing trip.
- Unmarked or unattended trotlines will be confiscated by DNR. It is unlawful to use any sport trotline within one-half mile below any lock or dam.
- Only catfish and nongame fish (year-round) and American and Hickory shad during shad season may be taken with trotlines and jugs.
- Trotlines and jugs are not permitted on Lake Tobeofkee or any State Park Lake.

- Use of 51 or more hooks is considered Commercial Fishing (see page 29).

## Spear Fishing

- "Spearing" is the use of a handheld spear or similar device and the use of a weapon, other than a firearm, which propels the spear to which a wire, rope, line, etc. is attached and secured to the weapon or the person using the weapon.
- Only nongame fish, and catfish as described below, may be speared in freshwater and are not to be sold or used for commercial purposes.
- The taking of flathead and channel catfish by spear may be done any time day or at night by light in the Savannah River and its tributaries and impoundments in the Savannah River Basin only.
- All spears must have barbs or other devices to recover fish and must be attached to a line secured to the person using the weapon.
- A sport fishing license is required to spear fish in Georgia.
- The person spearing fish must be completely submerged.

**Note:** See **Seasons** on page 12.

## Seines, Cast Nets, Bow Nets

- Only nongame fish less than 5 inches in length may be taken using a minnow seine and are not to be sold or used for commercial purposes.
- All other fish and eels taken in minnow seines must be released immediately unharmed into the water.

- A minnow seine must be less than 20 feet in length and have a  $\frac{1}{8}$  inch or less mesh (square or diameter).
- Minnow seines may not be used in designated trout waters.
- Minnow traps are illegal in freshwater.
- Dip nets and cast nets may be used to take threadfin shad, gizzard shad, and blueback herring for bait except cast nets may not be used in State Park Lakes.
- Bow nets are considered sport shad fishing gear and shall have a minimum legal size of 3 $\frac{1}{2}$  inches stretched mesh.

## Bow Fishing

Nongame fish (does **not** include channel or flathead catfish, see note below) may be taken by bow and arrow from freshwater under the following conditions:

- Possession of a sport fishing license is required to bow fish in Georgia.
- Arrows must be equipped with barbs or similar devices for recovering fish and must be attached to the person or bow by a line sufficient for recovering the arrow and fish.
- Poisonous or exploding arrowheads are illegal.
- Arrows cannot be discharged into the water closer than 150 feet to anyone engaged in any other means of recreation.
- Legal hours for fishing with bow and arrow are from sunrise to sunset, except that fish (nongame) may be taken at night while using a light in reservoirs over 500 acres in size.
- Any game fish with an open wound possessed by a person bow fishing will be considered evidence of taking fish illegally.
- **Note:** Channel and flathead catfish are game fish, and may not be taken by bow and arrow, except in the Savannah River and its tributaries and impoundments in the Savannah River basin by bow and arrow any time during the day or at night by the use of a light.

## In Georgia It Is Unlawful To:

- Possess or use live blueback herring for bait in all fresh waters except the following: Lakes Bartlett's Ferry, Blue Ridge, Chatuge, Goat Rock, Juliette, Lanier, Nottely, Oliver, and West Point; and the Altamaha River watershed downstream of the following: Juliette dam on the Ocmulgee River, Lake Juliette dam on Rum Creek, Lake Tobeofkee dam on Tobeofkee Creek, Lake Sinclair dam on the Oconee River; and watersheds of all other streams that flow directly into the Atlantic Ocean (this drainage includes Lakes Hartwell, Russell, Clarks Hill, Burton, Tugaloo, and Raburn). For maps of restricted waters go to [www.gofishgeorgia.com](http://www.gofishgeorgia.com) and see "Freshwater Regulations" section.
- It is unlawful to possess and fish with live blueback herring in Alabama waters.
- Fish for game fish, except American shad, hickory shad, channel catfish, blue catfish, or flathead catfish, by any means other than pole and line.
- Take any fish from public freshwater by any method other than the methods listed on this page. Snagging fish is illegal.
- Use electronic devices, explosives, poisons, or firearms to take fish.
- Stock or release fish or bait into any public waters except the water from which it was taken.
- Discard fish caught in public waters.

## Noodling

- Flathead, channel and blue catfish may be taken by hand, **without** the aid of any device, hook, snare, net or other artificial element and without the use of any scuba equipment, air hose or other artificial breathing apparatus.
- **Noodling** is legal in the fresh waters of the state from March 1–July 15 each year.
- A sport fishing license is required to noodle in Georgia.
- It is illegal to take game fish (other than the catfish species listed above) or any other species of fish by hand.
- It is not legal to alter any natural or man-made features in order to attract or capture fish by hand. It is not legal to raise any part of a natural or artificial device out of the water to aid in the hand capture of enclosed fish.

## BOAT REGISTRATION

- All boats that carry any means of mechanical propulsion (electric trolling motor and/or gas motor) and all sailboats 12 feet and longer must be registered.
- A Boat Registration Application can be downloaded from [www.gobootgeorgia.com](http://www.gobootgeorgia.com)
- You may register or renew online at [www.gobootgeorgia.com](http://www.gobootgeorgia.com)
- Register or renew by phone at **800-366-2661**.
- Georgia honors all other states' registrations, provided the boat is not used in excess of 60 consecutive days in Georgia.

## PERSONAL FLOTATION DEVICES

- A wearable personal flotation device (PFD) is required for each person aboard a vessel. PFDs must be readily accessible to all occupants, in good and serviceable condition, legibly marked with the US Coast Guard approved number, and of appropriate size for the occupants. One Type IV throwable device must also be on board all vessels except Class A vessels (boats less than 15' 11" which also includes personal-watercraft, canoes and kayaks).
- Children under age 13 must wear a PFD when the vessel is under way, unless the child is within a fully enclosed cabin.
- PFDs must be worn by each person aboard a vessel in an area marked as "hazardous area."

## OUTBOARD MOTOR RESTRICTIONS

- No motor in excess of 9.9 hp may be operated on the Ogeechee River upstream of State Hwy 119.
- No motor in excess of 25 hp may be operated on Lake Juliette or Lake Tugalo.
- Georgia State Park lakes often have boat and motor restrictions. Check with the Park Office at each park for details.

## BOATING SAFETY

- No vessel may be operated over idle speed within 100 feet of any moored or anchored vessel, vessel adrift, or any wharf, pier, piling, or persons in the water, or shoreline next to a full-time or part-time residence, public park, public beach, public swimming area, marina, restaurant, or other public use area.
- Recreation boaters in coastal waters please note: Tybee, Sea Island, St. Simons, and Jekyll Islands have temporal (May 1 – Sept. 30) 1,000 ft. safety zones.
- Booze and boats do not mix! It is unlawful to operate a boat while under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
- To learn requirements for operating your boat, obtain the *Handbook of Georgia Boating Laws* from any DNR Law Enforcement Office.
- To learn about a boating safety course contact the Boating Education Coordinator at 770-918-6414 or any DNR Law Enforcement Office (see page 4).

See [www.gobootgeorgia.com](http://www.gobootgeorgia.com) for complete boating regulations.

## New Georgia Boating Law!

Residents who have a boat registered with the state can fish for free on their birthday and for two days after as part of their boat registration fee.

It's a three-day bonus for boat owners. This offer also covers use of some DNR shooting ranges, plus other sporting privileges. To take advantage of it, simply get outdoors and enjoy.

The license is good for the primary boat owner's birthday during the three years the boat registration is valid. Find out more at [www.georgiawildlife.com/licenses-permits-passes](http://www.georgiawildlife.com/licenses-permits-passes)



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# AGREEMENTS WITH BORDERING STATES

Agreements with bordering states allow holders of Georgia fishing licenses to fish in the waters covered without obtaining a fishing license from the bordering state. **Note:** Regulations under these agreements may differ from Georgia's general laws and regulations. If this is the case, the laws and regulations of the agreement explained in this section are to be followed.

## Alabama

### WATERS COVERED

The banks and waters of only that portion of the Chattahoochee River forming the boundary between Georgia and Alabama and Lakes Bartletts Ferry (Harding), George W. Andrews, Goat Rock, Oliver, Seminole, Walter F. George (Eufaula) and West Point; however, this agreement does not include that portion of West Point Reservoir lying upstream (north) of Georgia Hwy 109 bridge on the Chattahoochee River arm of the reservoir. The waters covered by this agreement do not include other streams or tributaries which flow into the Chattahoochee River or its impoundments or the portion of Lake Seminole covered by the agreement with Florida or Lake Weiss.

### LICENSES

All persons meeting the sport fishing requirements of Georgia or Alabama may fish from the banks and in the waters covered without having to obtain any other license.

### MINIMUM LENGTH LIMITS

- Largemouth bass:**

- Lake West Point: 14 inches
- Lake Walter F. George: 14 inches

- All other fishing laws and regulations of the State of Georgia apply in Georgia waters covered by this agreement.

### CREEL AND POSSESSION LIMITS

- All creel and possession limits on waters covered by this agreement are the same as Georgia's statewide limits.

- Note:** Anglers fishing in waters covered by reciprocal agreement may fish for and possess shoal bass for tournament weigh-in purposes in Alabama, however the harvest of shoal bass is prohibited in Alabama.

- Note: It is illegal to possess and fish with live blueback herring in Alabama waters covered by this agreement.**

## Georgia - South Carolina Border Waters Reciprocal Agreement

SPECIES	WATER BODY	POSSESSION LIMIT	SIZE LIMIT
Striped bass or hybrid bass or combination	Lakes Hartwell and Clarks Hill	10	only 3 may be over 26 inches
Striped bass or hybrid bass or combination	Lake Russell	2	only 1 may be over 34 inches
Striped bass, hybrid bass, white bass or combination	Savannah River downstream of Clarks Hill dam	2	27-inch minimum length limit
White bass	All border waters covered except for Savannah River downstream of Clarks Hill dam (see above for size limit).	10	no size limit
Trout	All border waters covered	5	no size limit
Bass (largemouth, spotted, redeye, smallmouth or combination)	All border waters covered	10	12-inch minimum length for largemouth bass
Walleye or Sauger or combination	All border waters covered	8	no size limit
aggregate of all game fish (does not include catfish)	All border waters covered	40	

All other laws and regulations of Georgia apply in the Georgia portion of waters covered by this agreement.

Note: South Carolina regulations differ for crappie and bream.

## South Carolina

### WATERS COVERED

On the banks and in the waters of all channels of the Savannah River from its mouth to the junction of the Tugaloo (Toogaloo) and Seneca Rivers; the Tugaloo River from its mouth to the junction of the Tugaloo and Chattooga Rivers; and the Chattooga River to the North Carolina state line (35th parallel of North latitude at Ellicott's Rock). This agreement also applies to all the waters and banks of Clarks Hill Reservoir (Strom Thurmond), Richard B. Russell Reservoir, Hartwell Reservoir, Yonah Lake, Tugaloo (Toogaloo) Lake, the New Savannah Bluff Lock and Dam, and Stevens Creek Lake (except that portion on the Stevens Creek arm upstream of South Carolina Hwy 53). The agreement does not apply to any flowing portions of tributary streams to these impoundments nor to tributary streams of the Savannah, Tugaloo and Chattooga Rivers.

### LICENSES

- All persons meeting the freshwater license requirements of Georgia or South Carolina may fish from the banks and in the waters covered without having to obtain any other license.
- This agreement does not apply to commercial fishing or saltwater sport fishing.
- A South Carolina saltwater fishing license is required when fishing from a boat on the SC side of the Savannah River downstream of where the CSX Railroad trestle crosses the Back River.

### LENGTH, CREEL AND POSSESSION LIMITS

See GA-SC chart above for the length, creel and possession limits for the border waters covered by this agreement.

### GENERAL NOTES

- Any person using baskets, jugs, minnow seines, or trot lines in the waters covered must comply with the laws, rules and regulations of the state in which the baskets, jugs, minnow seines, or trot lines are fished, regardless of their residence.
- No person may carry to either state or possess in such state more fish than the laws of that state or those of this agreement permit, even though the fish were caught in the waters of the other state.

## Florida

### WATERS COVERED

- The waters and the banks of the St. Mary's River, not including its tributaries.
- The waters and banks of Lake Seminole, bounded on the west by Florida State Road

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[GeorgiaWildlife.wordpress.com](http://GeorgiaWildlife.wordpress.com)

[Public.GovDelivery.com/accounts/GADNR/subscriber](http://Public.GovDelivery.com/accounts/GADNR/subscriber)



No. 271; on the south by the Jim Woodruff Dam; on the east by the line immediately east of the Chattahoochee Marina (also known as the Booster Club) running northwest across the reservoir to the tip of land at the junction of the Flint and Chattahoochee Rivers, west of Spring Creek; and on the north by the Herman Talmadge Bridge across the Chattahoochee River (please see map at [www.gofishgeorgia.com](http://www.gofishgeorgia.com)).

## LICENSES

- Any person who has a valid fishing license and properly issued permits or licenses, or both, required by Georgia or Florida in their possession may sport fish for freshwater fish in the waters covered.
- Georgia Honorary Disability License is not recognized by Florida under this agreement.
- A nonresident fishing license is required to fish, castnet, seine, crab, gig, sport bait trawl, or harvest shell fish in saltwater in Georgia.
- A Florida saltwater fishing license is required to fish for or to possess saltwater fish on the Florida side of the St. Mary's River.

## CREEL AND POSSESSION LIMITS

- The limit for striped bass, white bass, and hybrid white-striped bass on the St. Mary's River is two fish which must be 22 inches or longer.

- For all other species in the waters covered, Georgia's statewide creel and possession limits (page 12) apply.
- All other fishing regulations of the State of Georgia apply on the Georgia side of the St. Mary's River and the Georgia portion of Lake Seminole. Florida laws and regulations apply on the Florida side of the St. Mary's River and the Florida portion of Lake Seminole.

## North Carolina

### WATERS COVERED

Lake Chatuge and all tributary branches lying in Georgia or North Carolina which are accessible by boat from the main body of the reservoir.

## LICENSES

- Holders of a valid Georgia or North Carolina fishing license may fish with hook and line in Lake Chatuge only from boats. Boats may not be anchored to the shore or to a pier or boat dock connecting to the shore.
- Senior citizen and youth license exemptions authorized by either state are honored by both states on Lake Chatuge.
- All other laws and regulations of Georgia apply to the Georgia portion of Lake Chatuge. All other laws and regulations of North Carolina apply to the North Carolina portion of Lake Chatuge.

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**U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service** allocates funds to state fish & wildlife agencies.



To learn more about Sport Fish Restoration in Georgia, visit [www.fws.gov](http://www.fws.gov) and [www.gofishgeorgia.com](http://www.gofishgeorgia.com)

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# FRESHWATER PUBLIC FISHING AREAS

Public Fishing Areas (PFAs) are great places for family outings! You can fish from the bank or a boat, picnic, hike, watch wildlife, and enjoy the outdoors. Good bank fishing opportunities are available at all PFAs and many of them have special kids fishing areas for young anglers.

## Please Read Before Fishing a PFA

### LICENSES:

- Anglers 16 years of age and older must possess a valid fishing license and a valid Wildlife Management Area (WMA) license to fish, **except** a WMA license is not required to fish at Rocky Mountain Recreation and Public Fishing Area.
- If you have a Sportsman's, Lifetime license, 3-Day Hunting/Fishing License, 3-Day GORP Plus, Senior Lifetime license or Honorary license you are NOT required to have a WMA license to fish on a PFA.
- To access a PFA for non-fishing activities, visitors age 16–64 must have one of the following; Georgia Outdoor Recreational Pass (**GORP**), 3-day hunting/fishing license, WMA license, and Sportsman's, Honorary (resident disability license or resident one-time veteran's license) or Lifetime license. Please see box on page 10 for full details on (**GORP**).

- Not all PFAs have the ability to sell licenses on site. Please call each PFA for details. Licenses can also be obtained online or by phone.

### LENGTH AND DAILY LIMITS:

Unless a pond or lake has been posted as having a different length limit or daily limit, the following apply:

### LENGTH LIMIT:

Largemouth bass: 14 inches minimum

### DAILY LIMITS:

Largemouth bass (unless otherwise posted) ....	5
Bream or sunfish (of any one species or a combination) .....	15
Channel catfish.....	5
All other species .....	see page 13

### Grass carp must be released immediately.

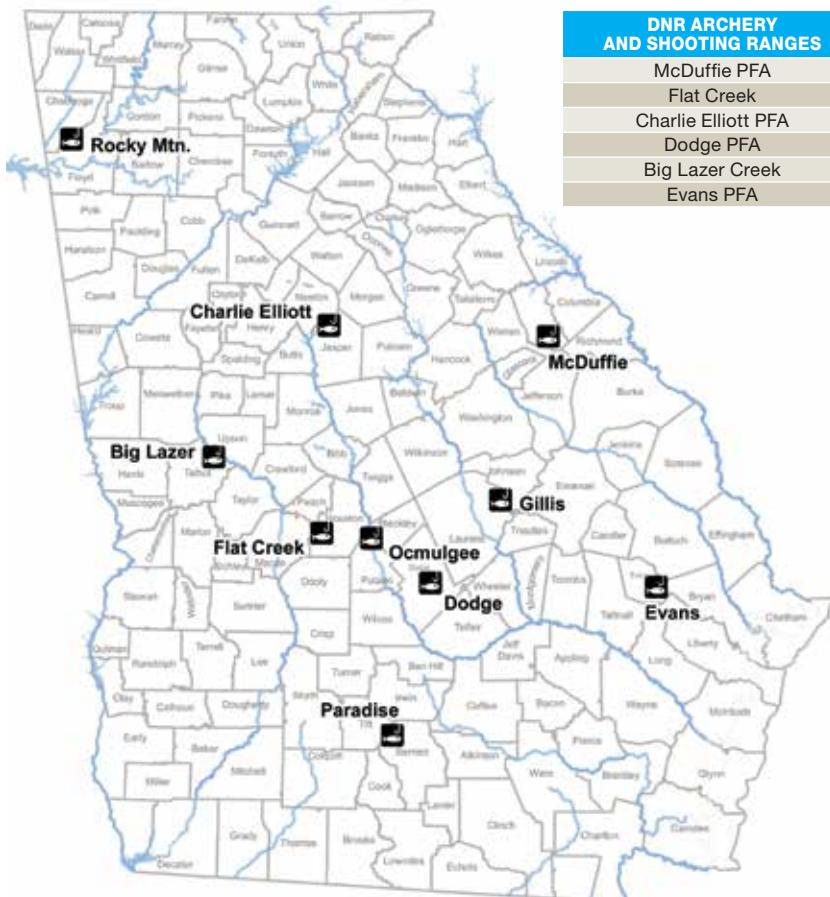
### HOURS OF OPERATION

Public Fishing Areas hours of operation are Wednesday through Sunday, sunrise to sunset.

## Hunting on Public Fishing Areas

There are hunting opportunities available at several PFAs located around the state. Refer to the Hunting Regulations Guide for a complete list of PFA hunting opportunities and regulations or visit [www.gohuntgeorgia.com](http://www.gohuntgeorgia.com).

## PUBLIC FISHING AREAS



## Fishing on Wildlife Management Areas

Unless otherwise posted, fishing is allowed on WMAs according to statewide regulations. Alcohol use is prohibited on WMAs except in designated camping areas. Refer to the Hunting Regulations Guide for a complete list of WMA regulations. A GORP Pass may be required on some areas.

## Fishing Without Permission

It is unlawful to fish on someone else's property without permission. Conservation Rangers and other law enforcement officers are charged with enforcing this law. Always ask permission before entering private land.

Permission is not required to fish in the Chattahoochee or Oconee National Forests, on Wildlife Resources Division Public Fishing Areas (PFAs) or Wildlife Management Areas (WMAs), or in Georgia State Parks ([gastateparks.org](http://gastateparks.org)) as long as all applicable state regulations are followed.

To find a PFA location refer to the map on this page.

### BIG LAZER CREEK

**Talbot County, 478-825-6151**

**Fish Species:** Largemouth bass, Bluegill and Redear sunfish, Channel catfish, Crappie. Live fish (minnows) are allowed for bait.

**Water:** 195 acre lake.

**Facilities:** Concrete two-lane boat ramp, fishing pier, fish cleaning station, shooting range, restrooms, picnic tables, primitive camping, some facilities accessible to persons with disabilities.

**Directions from Talbotton:** East on US Hwy 80 for 4 mi.; left on Po Biddy Road for 6.4 mi.; left on Bunkham Road; left into area.

### CHARLIE ELLIOTT WILDLIFE CENTER/MARBEN PFA

**Jasper/Newton Counties,  
478-825-6151 or 770-784-3063**

**Fish Species:** Largemouth bass, Bluegill, Redear sunfish, Crappie, Channel catfish. Live fish (minnows) are allowed for bait.

**Water:** 20 ponds, totaling 293 acres, ranging in size from 1 to 95 acres.

**Facilities:** Kids only ponds, concrete boat ramps (6 lakes), boat docks, restrooms, fishing piers, fish cleaning station, picnic areas, primitive camping, shooting and archery ranges, and some fishing areas accessible to persons with disabilities.

**Note:** Check information board for lakes that are open for fishing when you visit.

**Directions From Mansfield:** South on GA Hwy 11 for 2.7 mi.; left on Marben Farm Rd. Follow signs.

*Continued on page 20...*

Downloadable PFA  
Guides available at:  
[www.gofishgeorgia.com](http://www.gofishgeorgia.com)

# FRESHWATER PUBLIC FISHING AREAS

## DODGE COUNTY

**478-374-6765 or 912-285-6094**

**Fish Species:** Largemouth bass, Bluegill, Redear sunfish, Channel catfish, Crappie. Live fish (minnows) are allowed for bait.

**Water:** 104 acre lake.

**Facilities:** Concrete boat ramps, fishing pier, fish cleaning station, 3-D archery range, restrooms, picnic tables, nature trail, some facilities accessible to persons with disabilities.

**Directions From Eastman:** South on US Hwy 23/341 for 3 mi.; left on County Rd. 49 for 0.6 mi. to lake.

## EVANS COUNTY

**Evans County PFA has reopened:**

**912-739-1139 or 912-727-2112**

**Fish Species:** Largemouth bass, Bluegill, Redear sunfish, Channel catfish, Crappie, Brown bullhead. Live fish (minnows) are allowed for bait.

**Water:** Three ponds encompassing 122 acres (8, 30, 84 acres).

**Facilities:** Concrete boat ramps, fishing piers, fish cleaning station, restrooms, picnic tables, primitive camping, some facilities accessible to persons with disabilities.

**Directions From Claxton:** East on US Hwy 280 for 8.5 miles; right on Old Reidsville-Savannah

Road for 1 mile; left on Old Sunbury Road (dirt), PFA 0.3 miles on right marked by Wildlife Resources sign.

## FLAT CREEK (HOUSTON COUNTY STATE PARK)

**Houston County, 478-825-6151**

**Fish species:** Largemouth Bass, Bluegill, Redear sunfish, Channel catfish. Live fish (minnows) are allowed for bait.

**Water:** 102 acre lake and one special event pond.

**Facilities:** Concrete two-lane boat ramp, fish cleaning station, restroom, picnic tables, bank fishing, archery range and some facilities accessible to persons with disabilities.

**Directions from I-75:** Take I-75 to exit 134 (South Perry Parkway). Turn west onto South Perry Parkway, Travel approx. 0.25 miles and turn left (South) on Georgia Highway 41, Drive about 3.5 miles and turn left into Flat Creek Public Fishing Area.

## HUGH M. GILLIS

**Laurens County,**

**478-296-6192 or 912-285-6094**

**Fish species:** Largemouth bass, Bluegill, Redear sunfish, Channel catfish, Crappie. Water: 109 acre lake and two 1 acre KFE ponds. Live fish (minnows) are allowed for bait.

**Facilities:** Concrete boat ramps, fishing pier, fish cleaning station, restrooms, picnic tables, some facilities accessible to persons with disabilities.

**Directions From East Dublin:** East on US Hwy 80 for 10 mi.; left on Keens Crossing Rd. for 1.4 mi., PFA entrance on right.

## MCDUFFIE

**McDuffle County, 706-595-1619**

**Fish Species:** Largemouth bass, Bluegill, Redear sunfish, Channel catfish.

**Water:** 7 ponds varying in size from 5 to 37 acres. Rodbender Lake is open the 1st through the 15th of each month.

**Facilities:** Concrete boat ramps, courtesy docks, restrooms, picnic tables, tent and RV camping in designated areas (fee is \$15–25 per site per night), archery range, and some facilities accessible to persons with disabilities.

**Directions From Thomson:** South on Hwy 17 to US Hwy 278; left (east) for 5.6 mi.; right on Ellington Airline Road for 2.8 mi.; right on Fish Hatchery Road for 0.8 mi.

## OCMULGEE

**Area temporarily closed for repairs.**

For more, visit

[georgiawildlife.com/PFA/Ocmulgee](http://georgiawildlife.com/PFA/Ocmulgee)

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# On Public Fishing Areas It Is Unlawful To:

- Operate boats on ponds or lakes posted as closed to boats.
- Operate gas outboard motors unless lake is posted as being open to the use of outboard motors.  
NOTE: Gas motors, if allowed, must be operated at idle speed only.
- Fish in a pond or lake that has been posted "closed."
- Fish with any gear other than pole and line.
- Fish with more than two poles and lines.
- Use or possess live fish (minnows) for bait, unless otherwise posted.
- Consume alcoholic beverages except at campsites on the area. No alcoholic beverages are allowed anywhere on Rocky Mountain PFA.
- Operate personal watercraft (jet skis), sailboats, or sailboards.
- Allow children under 14 years of age to be on PFA without adult supervision.
- Fish at night, unless otherwise posted.
- Drive on any closed road or block any gate.
- Camp any place other than designated camping areas. NOTE: Contact the PFA before visiting for regulations regarding camping.
- Swim, except at Rocky Mountain Recreation and PFA beach.
- Ride horses in restricted areas or areas not designated as open to equestrian use.

## PARADISE

Berrien County,  
**229-533-4792 or 912-285-6094**

**Fish Species:** Largemouth bass, Bluegill, Redear sunfish, Channel catfish, Crappie, Brown bullhead. Live fish (minnows) are allowed for bait.

**Water:** 68 lakes encompassing 525 acres of water.

**Facilities:** Restrooms, fish cleaning station, picnic area, concrete boat ramps, tent camping (\$10 per site per night; pay a drop box; no reservation needed; first come first serve), group camp (\$20 per night; 20 person minimum; call for reservations), fishing pier, boat dock, some facilities accessible to persons with disabilities.

**Directions From Tifton:** East on US Hwy 82 for 8 mi. to Whitley Road near Brookfield; follow signs from US Hwy 82 to the area.

## ROCKY MOUNTAIN RECREATION & PUBLIC FISHING AREA

**Floyd County, 706-802-5087**

**Fish Species:** Largemouth bass, Bluegill, Redear sunfish, Channel catfish, Black crappie, Walleye. Live fish (minnows) are allowed for bait.

**Water:** Two lakes (202 and 357 acres). Heath Lake is open the 1<sup>st</sup>-10<sup>th</sup> of each month **only**.

**Facilities:** Concrete boat ramps, fishing jetties, restrooms, picnic shelters, scenic overlooks,

hiking trails, tent and RV camping, group primitive camping, group picnic area, biking trails, swimming beach, some facilities accessible to persons with disabilities.

**Fee:** Daily or annual Rocky Mtn. PFA parking permit required (one per vehicle) WMA license not required.

## Restrictions:

- It is illegal to possess alcoholic beverages.
- No one may rappel, rock climb or hang glide.

**Directions From Rome:** North on US Hwy 27 for 10.4 mi.; left on Sike Storey Road 0.4 mi.; left on Big Texas Valley Road 5.4 mi. to entrance.

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# FRESHWATER TROUT FISHING

WRD uses special regulations (see below) and stocking to provide quality trout fishing in Georgia. More than one million rainbow trout and brown trout are stocked each year from March through mid-September. The number of trout stocked and the stocking frequency depend on a stream's fishing pressure, public access, and water conditions. Streams with greater public access are stocked more often with more trout. General information about trout stocking and the Trout Streams of Georgia Map are available from WRD offices and at [www.gofishgeorgia.com](http://www.gofishgeorgia.com). The map includes Georgia's trout streams, roads, and a list of recommended streams.

TROUT need clean, cold water to survive. Georgians can be good trout managers by using proper land use practices. Trees and other vegetation left along stream banks provide shade to keep water cold and help prevent soil from washing into the stream.

Many trout streams are bounded by private property. It is your responsibility to know when you cross a property line. Obtain permission from the landowner before fishing on private property.

**Note: While fishing any specially regulated waters with a minimum size limit, it is unlawful to possess a trout which is less than the specified minimum size regardless of where the fish was caught.**



The advertisement features the Bubba Blade logo with the tagline "THE ULTIMATE SPORTSMAN'S KNIFE". Below the logo, the slogan "One cut and you're through." is displayed. Five different knife models are shown with their respective blade lengths: 12-INCH FLEX BLADE FILLET KNIFE, 9-INCH STIFFIE BLADE FILLET KNIFE, 9-INCH FLEX BLADE FILLET KNIFE, 9-INCH TAPERED BLADE FLEX FILLET KNIFE, and 7-INCH TAPERED BLADE FLEX FILLET KNIFE. Each knife is shown with its red handle and black blade. At the bottom, the text "Learn more at [WWW.BUBBALBLADE.COM](http://WWW.BUBBALBLADE.COM) and see our online specials!" is displayed.

## Trout Season

Trout season on seasonal streams is from **March 28 – October 31, 2015** and from **March 26 – October 31, 2016**. Many trout streams are open to fishing year-round (see pages 24–25 for stream listings).

## Trout Fishing Hours

- Fishing hours on seasonal trout streams, except Waters Creek (page 23), are 30 minutes before sunrise to 30 minutes after sunset. Night fishing is not allowed.
- Fishing 24 hours a day is allowed on year-round trout streams, **except** those in next paragraph, and on all impoundments on trout streams, except Dockery and Rock Creek lakes.
- Fishing hours on the Chattahoochee River from Buford Dam to Peachtree Creek, the Conasauga River watershed upstream of the Georgia-Tennessee state line and Smith Creek downstream of Unicoi dam are 30 minutes before sunrise until 30 minutes after sunset. Night fishing is not allowed.

**Amicalola Creek** from County Road 192 (Steele Bridge Road) downstream to GA Hwy 53.

**Chattahoochee River** from Sope Creek (off Columns Drive) downstream to US Hwy 41 (Cobb Parkway).

**Chattooga River** from GA Hwy 28 bridge upstream to the mouth of Reed Creek.

**Smith Creek** on Unicoi State Park from Unicoi Dam downstream to the Unicoi State Park property boundary.

**Toccoa River** on U.S. Forest Service land from 0.4 miles above the Shallowford Bridge upstream to a point 450 feet upstream of the Sandy Bottom Canoe Access.

Visit [www.gofishgeorgia.com](http://www.gofishgeorgia.com) to see maps of Delayed Harvest Streams and learn more about this program.

## Artificial Lures Only

In streams listed here only artificial lures may be used. It is unlawful to possess any other type bait on an "artificial lures only" stream (see definitions on page 7).

**Chattahoochee River** from GA Hwy 20 to the boat ramp at the National Park Service Medlock Bridge Park immediately upstream of GA Hwy 141.

**Coleman River** and its tributaries from its junction with the Tallulah River upstream to Forest Service Bridge No. 54.

**Conasauga River** and its tributaries (except Jacks River watershed) upstream of the Georgia-Tennessee state line are restricted to using only artificial lures from Nov. 1 through the last Saturday in March of each year. Natural baits may be used during trout season.

**Hoods Creek** and its tributaries on the Warwoman WMA.

**Jones Creek** and its tributaries on US Forest Service property.

**Mountaintown Creek** and its tributaries upstream of Mountaintown Creek Watershed Structure No. 2 (Hills Lake).

**Noontootla Creek** and its tributaries on Blue Ridge WMA. **Note:** All trout less than 16 inches in length caught from this section of Noontootla Creek must be released immediately.

**Stanley Creek** and its tributaries on the Rich Mountain WMA.

**Walnut Fork Creek** and its tributaries on the Warwoman WMA.

## Trout Fishing Rules

- Trout anglers are restricted to the use of one pole and line which must be hand held. No other type of gear may be used in trout streams.
- It is unlawful to use live fish for bait in trout streams. Seining bait-fish is not allowed in any trout stream.
- It is unlawful to fish for any fish species in a seasonal trout stream when the season is closed.

## Impoundments On Trout Streams

### ANGLERS CAN:

- Fish for fish species other than trout without a trout license, **except** on Dockery and Rock Creek lakes.
- Fish year-round, **except** on Dockery Lake.
- Fish at night, **except** on Dockery and Rock Creek lakes.

### IMPOUNDMENT NOTES:

- If you fish for or possess trout, you must possess a trout license. If you catch a trout and do not possess a trout license you must release the trout immediately.
- State park visitors** are not required to have a trout license to fish in the impounded waters of the Park. However, those visitors wishing to harvest trout will need to have a trout license in their possession.

## Delayed Harvest Streams

Anglers fishing delayed harvest streams must release all trout immediately and use and possess only artificial lures with one single hook per lure from Nov. 1–May 14 annually. The use of additional "dropper" lures on one line is permitted as long as each lure contains one single hook. These restrictions do not apply from May 15–Oct. 31 of each year. The following streams are delayed harvest streams:

## Available Online

Trout stocking lists, county stream maps, easily accessible sites, and NE and NW Georgia Fishing Guides are available at [GoFishGeorgia.com](http://GoFishGeorgia.com).

## Other Trout Stream Regulations

### MOCASSIN CREEK

That portion of Moccasin Creek between Lake Burton Hatchery water intake and a sign marking the approximate normal pool level of Lake Burton is restricted to anglers under 12 years of age and holders of Honorary Licenses.

### SMITHGALL WOODS-DUKES CREEK CONSERVATION AREA

Dukes Creek and its tributaries within the Dukes Creek Conservation Area are open to fishing year round by reservation only. For reservations call 706-878-3087.

- Only artificial lures with barbless hooks may be used or possessed on the portion of Dukes Creek and its tributaries in White County on the Conservation Area, including the GA Hwy 75 Alternate right-of-way. Possession of any bait, lure, or gear not legal for use on the stream is unlawful.
- All fish caught from Dukes Creek and its tributaries in White County on the Conservation Area, including the GA Hwy 75 Alternate right-of-way, must be immediately released where caught.
- No trout may be possessed while fishing on any stream on the Conservation Area or the GA Hwy 75 Alternate right-of-way.



### WATERS CREEK

Waters Creek, located on the Chestatee WMA, is managed for trophy trout. Waters Creek and its tributaries are open during the trout season on Wednesdays, Saturdays, and Sundays only between 6:30 a.m. and 6:30 p.m. Eastern Standard Time (7:30 p.m. Eastern Daylight Saving Time) with the following restrictions:

- Artificial lures with a single barbless hook no larger than a #6 must be used. Only one lure can be used at a time. You cannot possess lures that do not meet these criteria while on the area.
- Landing nets may not exceed two (2) feet in length.
- Possession of any bait, lure, landing nets or gear not legal for use on the stream is unlawful.
- No night fishing.

#### License requirements for Waters Creek:

- **Residents:** Must have a Georgia resident fishing license, trout license, and WMA license. Lifetime, Senior (65+) Lifetime, Honorary and Sportsman's license holders do not need a WMA license.
- **Nonresidents:** Nonresident Georgia fishing license, nonresident trout license and nonresident WMA license.

#### Size and possession limits:

- **Size limits:** 22 inches for brown and rainbow trout and 18 inches for brook trout. It is a violation to possess a trout smaller than these limits while fishing on Waters creek.
- **Possession limit:** One (1) trout may be possessed daily. No person may take more than three (3) trout per season.

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# TROUT STREAMS BY COUNTY

**Seasonal Trout Streams (S)** are open March 28–October 31, 2015 and from March 26–October 31, 2016.

**Year-round Streams (YR)** are open to fishing throughout the year and are designated in **blue type**.

**Watershed:** the stream and all its tributaries (streams flowing into that stream).

Abbreviations used throughout this section:

**Cr. = Creek and R. = River**

**NOTE:** The following trout streams have special regulations (see pages 22–23 before fishing): Amicalola Cr., Chattahoochee R., Chattooga R., Coleman R., Conasauga R., Hoods Cr., Jones Cr., Moccasin Cr., Mountaintown Cr., Noontootla Cr., Smithgall Woods-Dukes Cr., Smith Cr., Stanley Cr., Toccoa R., Walnut Fork Cr., and Waters Cr.

## BARTOW COUNTY

(S) Boston Cr. watershed upstream from GA Hwy 20.

(YR) Connesena Cr. watershed; Dykes Cr. watershed; PineLog Cr. watershed; Pyle Cr. watershed; Salacoa Cr. watershed; Spring Cr. watershed; Stamp Cr. watershed upstream from Bartow Co. Rd. 269; Toms Cr. watershed upstream from Bartow Co. Rd. 82; Two Run Cr. watershed; Ward Cr. watershed.

## CARROLL COUNTY

(YR) Tallapoosa R. watershed north of I-20, not including Little Tallapoosa R. watershed.

## CATOOSA COUNTY

(S) Hurricane Cr. watershed upstream from Peters Branch.

(YR) Dry Cr. watershed (part of East Chickamauga Cr. watershed) upstream of Catoosa Co. Rd. 257; Little Chickamauga Cr. watershed upstream from Catoosa Co. Rd. 387; Tiger Cr. watershed upstream from GA Hwy 2.

## CHATTOOGA COUNTY

(YR) Allgood Branch watershed; Chappel Cr. watershed; Chelsea Cr. watershed; East Fork Little R. watershed including Gilreath Cr.; Hinton Cr. watershed; Kings Cr. watershed; Little Armuchee Cr. watershed upstream from Co Rd. 326; Mt. Hope Cr. (Coon Cr.) watershed; Perennial Spring watershed; Raccoon Cr. watershed upstream from GA Hwy 48; Ruff Creek watershed; Storey Mill Cr. watershed; Taliaferro Cr. watershed.

## CHEROKEE COUNTY

(S) Boston Cr. watershed.

(YR) Bluff Cr. watershed upstream of Cherokee Co Rd. 114; Pine Log Cr. watershed; Salacoa Cr. watershed; Soap Cr. watershed upstream of Cherokee Co Rd. 116; Stamp Cr. watershed; Wiley Cr. watershed.

## COBB COUNTY

(YR) Chattahoochee R. downstream to the mouth of Peachtree Cr.

## DADE COUNTY

(S) Rock Cr. watershed.

(YR) Allison Cr. watershed; East Fork Little R. watershed Lookout Cr. watershed upstream from Dade Co Rd. 197.

## DAWSON COUNTY

(S) Amicalola Cr. watershed upstream from Dawson Co Rd. 192 (Steele Bridge Rd) which is first bridge upstream from GA Hwy 53; Amicalola Cr. tributaries from GA Hwy 53 upstream to Dawson Co Rd. 192 (Steele Bridge Rd); Nimblewill Cr. watershed; Shoal Cr. watershed upstream from the mouth of Burt Cr.; Sweetwater Cr. watershed.

(YR) Amicalola Cr. from Dawson Co Rd. 192 (Steele Bridge Rd) downstream to GA Hwy 53; Anderson Cr. watershed, Long Swamp Cr. watershed.

## FANNIN COUNTY

(S) Charlie Cr. watershed; Etowah R. watershed; Jacks R. watershed; Owenby Cr. watershed; Persimmon Cr. watershed; South Fork Rapier Mill Cr. watershed; Star Cr. watershed; Toccoa R. tributary watersheds entering the river downstream from Blue Ridge Reservoir to the GA-Tennessee state line and upstream from the mouth of Stanley Cr. except those listed as year-round; Tumbling Cr. watershed; Wilscot Cr. watershed.

(YR) Conasauga R. watershed (except Jacks R. watershed); Ellijay R. watershed; Fightingtown Cr. watershed; Mountaintown Cr. watershed; Noontootla Cr. watershed; Rock Cr. watershed; Rock Cr. Lake; Toccoa R. downstream from Lake Blue Ridge to the GA-Tennessee state line and upstream from the mouth of Stanley Cr. (does not include tributaries unless listed).

## FLOYD COUNTY

(S) Johns Cr. watershed upstream from Floyd Co Rd. 212.

(YR) Dykes Cr. watershed; Kings Cr. watershed; Lavender Cr. watershed upstream from Floyd Co Rd. 893; Little Cedar Cr. watershed; Mt. Hope Cr. watershed; Silver Cr. watershed upstream of GA Hwy 1E (Floyd Co Rd. 631); Spring Cr. watershed (flows into Etowah R.) Toms Cr. watershed.

## FORSYTH COUNTY

(YR) Chattahoochee R.

## FULTON COUNTY

(YR) Chattahoochee R. downstream to the mouth of Peachtree Cr.

## GILMER COUNTY

(S) Harris Cr. watershed; Johnson Cr. watershed; Tails Cr. watershed; and all other streams or parts of streams not listed as year-round except: Coosawattee R. downstream from Old GA Hwy 5 (Gilmer Co Rd. 239); Talking Rock Cr.; and tributaries to Carters Reservoir not listed as year-round (these may be fished year-round without a trout license).

(YR) Ball Cr. watershed; Cartecay R. watershed; Conasauga R. watershed (except Jacks R. watershed); Coosawattee R. from confluence of Cartecay and Ellijay rive. downstream to old GA Hwy 5 bridge (Gilmer Co Rd. 239); Ellijay R. watershed; Fightingtown Cr. watershed; Mountaintown Cr. water shed; Noontootla Cr. watershed; Sevenmile Cr. watershed; Town Cr. watershed; Wildcat Cr. watershed.

## GORDON COUNTY

(S) Johns Cr. watershed; Pin Hook Cr. watershed upstream from Gordon Co Rd. 275.

(YR) Pine Log Cr. watershed upstream from GA Hwy 53; Rocky Cr. watershed upstream from Gordon Co Rd. 210; Salacoa Cr. watershed upstream from US Hwy 411; Snake Cr. watershed.

## GWINNETT COUNTY

(YR) Chattahoochee R.

## HABERSHAM COUNTY

(S) Amy's Cr. watershed upstream from GA Hwy 17; Chattahoochee R. tributaries downstream to GA Hwy 255 (except Amy's Cr. downstream from GA Hwy 17 and Sautee Cr. downstream from GA Hwy 255 Alternate bridge); Left Fork Soque R. upstream of GA Hwy 356 and all tributaries to the entire Left Fork Soque R.; Nancytown Cr. watershed upstream from Nancytown Lake; Right Fork Soque R. upstream of Wilson Falls and tributaries to the entire Right Fork Soque R.; Soque R. tributaries that enter the river from the confluence of the Left Fork and Right Fork Soque rive. downstream to the mouth of Deep Cr.

(YR) Chattahoochee R. downstream to GA Hwy 255; Left Fork Soque R. downstream of GA Hwy 356 except tributaries; Liberty Cr. watershed; Middle Fork Broad R. watershed; North Fork Broad R. watershed; Panther Cr. watershed; Right Fork Soque R. downstream of Wilson Falls except tributaries; Roberts Branch watershed; Sautee Cr. downstream from GA Hwy 255 Alternate bridge; Soque R., except tributaries downstream from the confluence of Left Fork and Right Fork Soque rive., to the mouth of Deep Cr.; Toccoa Cr. watershed.

## HARALSON COUNTY

(YR) Flatwood Cr. watershed; Lassetter Cr. watershed; Mann Cr. watershed upstream from Haralson Co Rd. 162; Tallapoosa Cr. watershed; Tallapoosa R. watershed upstream from Co Rd. 222.

## HART COUNTY

(YR) Savannah R. from Hartwell Dam downstream to Richard B. Russell Reservoir.

## LUMPKIN COUNTY

(S) Amicalola Cr. watershed; Bryant Cr. watershed; Cane Cr. watershed upstream from GA Hwy 9-52 bridge; Cavender Cr. watershed; Chestatee R. tributaries upstream from the mouth of Tesnatee Cr., except for the Frogtown Cr. watershed; Dockery Lake; Etowah R. watershed upstream

from Hightower Church Road (County Road 72) Bridge; Etowah R. tributaries from Castleberry Bridge upstream to Hightower Church Road (County Road 72) Bridge; Shoal Creek watershed; Yahoola Creek watershed upstream from the mouth of Bryant Cr.

(YR) Chestatee R. upstream from the mouth of Tesnatee Cr.; Etowah R. from Castleberry Bridge upstream to Hightower Church Road (County Road 72); Frogtown Cr. watershed; Yahoola Cr. watershed from the mouth of Bryant Cr. downstream to GA Hwy 52.

## MURRAY COUNTY

(S) Jacks R. watershed upstream from Georgia-Tennessee state line; North Prong Sumac Cr. watershed; Rock Cr. watershed upstream from Murray Co Rd. 4 (most southern of two Rock Crks. which are in the Holly Cr. watershed); Sugar Cr. watershed upstream from Murray Co Rd. 4; Sumac Cr. watershed upstream from Coffey Lake.

(YR) Conasauga R. watershed upstream from the GA-Tennessee state line (except Jacks R. watershed); Dill Cr. watershed; Holly Cr. watershed upstream from Dill Cr.; Mill Cr. watershed upstream from Murray Co Rd. 27; Mill Cr. (Hasslers Mill Cr.) watershed that is in the Holly Cr. watershed; Rock Cr. watershed (most northern of two Rock Crks. within Holly Cr. watershed) upstream from Murray Co Rd. 301.

## PAULDING COUNTY

(S) Pumpkinvine Cr. watershed upstream from Paulding Co Rd. 231; Raccoon Cr. watershed upstream from SR 2299 (Paulding Co Rd. 471). (YR) Possum Cr. watershed upstream from Paulding Co Rd. 64; Powder Cr. watershed; Tallapoosa River; Thompson Cr. watershed; Ward Cr. watershed.

## PICKENS COUNTY

(S) Amicalola Cr. watershed upstream from Dawson Co Rd. 192; Cove Cr. watershed upstream from Pickens Co Rd. 294; Fisher Cr. watershed; Pin Hook Cr. watershed.

(YR) Ball Cr. watershed; Bluff Cr. watershed; Cartecay R. watershed; Darnell Cr. watershed; Hobson Cr. watershed; Little Scarecorn Cr. watershed; Long Swamp Cr. watershed upstream from Cove Cr.; Mud Cr. watershed; Rock Cr. watershed; Salacoa Cr. watershed; Scarecorn Cr. watershed upstream from GA Hwy 53; Sevenmile Cr. watershed; Sharp Mountain Cr. watershed; Soap Cr. watershed; Talking Rock Cr. watershed upstream from S1011 (GA Hwy 136); Town Cr. watershed; Wildcat Cr. watershed.

## POLK COUNTY

(YR) Cedar Cr. watershed upstream from Polk Co Rd. 121; Lassetter Cr. watershed; Little Cedar Cr. watershed; Pumpkinpile Cr. watershed upstream from Polk Co Rd. 437; Silver Cr. watershed; Spring Cr. watershed; Swinney Cr. watershed; Thomasson Cr. watershed; Thompson Cr. watershed upstream of Polk Co Rd. 441.

## RABUN COUNTY

(S) Bad Branch watershed (flows into Lake Seed); Bad Cr. watershed (flows into Tugaloo); Bridge Cr. watershed; Crow Cr. watershed (flows into Seed); Dickenson Branch (flows into Burton); Dicks Cr. watershed (flows into Burton); Falls Branch watershed (flows into Rabun); Flat Cr. watershed; Joe Cr. watershed (flows into Rabun); LaCounts Cr. watershed (flows into Seed); Moccasin Cr. watershed, except Moccasin Cr. from the Lake Burton hatchery water intake downstream to the sign marking the approximate normal pool level of Lake Burton; Popcorn Cr. watershed; Seals Cr. watershed (flows into Seed); Slick Shoal Cr. (flows into Seed); Timpson Cr. watershed; Wildcat Cr. watershed; Worse Cr. watershed (flows into Tugaloo); and all other streams or parts of streams not listed as year-round except: Tallulah R. downstream from Lake Burton Dam and tributaries to Burton, Seed, Rabun, Tallulah Falls, Tugaloo and Yonah lakes not listed as year-round (may be fished year-round without a trout license).

(YR) Chattooga R. upstream from the mouth of Warwoman Cr.; Little Tennessee R. downstream from US Hwy 23-441 bridge; Moccasin Cr. from the Lake Burton hatchery water intake downstream to the sign marking the approximate normal pool level of Lake Burton; Overflow Cr. watershed; Stekoia Cr. watershed; Tallulah R. downstream to Lake Burton; Warwoman Cr.; West Fork Chattooga R.

## STEPHENS COUNTY

(YR) Little Toccoa Cr. watershed; North Fork Broad R. watershed upstream from NRCS flood control structure No. 1; Middle Fork Broad R. watershed upstream from NRCS flood control structure No. 44; Panther Cr. watershed; Toccoa Cr. watershed upstream from Toccoa Falls.

## TOWNS COUNTY

(S) Bearmeat Cr. watershed; Bell Cr. watershed; Bugshuffle Branch watershed (Allen Mill Cr.); Burch Branch watershed; Fodder Cr. watershed; Hog Cr. watershed; Shake Rag Branch watershed; and all other streams or parts of streams not listed as year-round except: Hightower Cr. downstream from Towns Co Rd. 88; Hiwassee R. downstream from Towns Co Rd. 87; and tributaries to Chatuge Reservoir not listed below as year-round (may be fished year-round without a trout license).

(YR) Brasstown Cr. watershed downstream from US Hwy 76 bridge; Charlies Cr. watershed; Hightower Cr. downstream from US Hwy 76 bridge to Towns Co Rd. 88; Hiwassee R. downstream to Towns Co Rd. 87; Tallulah R.

## UNION COUNTY

(S) Arkqua Cr. watershed; Bracket Cr. watershed; Butler Cr. watershed; Camp Cr. watershed; Conley Cr. watershed; Kiutuestia Cr. watershed; Low Cr. watershed; and all other streams or parts of streams not listed below as year-round except: Butternut Cr. watershed; Nottely R. downstream from Nottely Dam and tributaries to Nottely Reservoir not listed as

year-round (these may be fished year-round without a trout license).

(YR) Brasstown Cr. watershed downstream from US Hwy 76 bridge; Coosa Cr. watershed; Ivylog Cr. watershed; Noontootla Cr. watershed; Nottely R. from US Hwy 129-19 bridge downstream to Nottely Reservoir; Rock Cr. watershed; Toccoa R. (does not include tributaries unless listed); Youngcane Cr. watershed.

## WALKER COUNTY

(S) Furnace Cr. watershed; Johns Cr. watershed; Rock Cr. watershed upstream from Sawmill Branch; Sawmill Branch;

(YR) Allen Cr. watershed; Chappel Cr. watershed; Chattanooga Cr. watershed upstream from Walker Co Rd. 235; Concord Cr. watershed; Dougherty Cr. watershed; Dry Cr. watershed (tributary to East Armuchee Cr.); Duck Cr. watershed; East Fork Little R. watershed (flows into Dade County); East Fork Little R. watershed (flows into Chattooga County); Gilreath Cr.; Gulf Cr. watershed; Harrisburg Cr. watershed upstream from Dougherty Cr.; Left Fork Coulter Branch watershed; Little Chickamauga Cr. watershed; Ruff Cr. watershed; Snake Cr. watershed; West Armuchee Cr. watershed; West Chickamauga Cr. watershed upstream from Walker Co Rd. 107.

## WHITE COUNTY

(S) Chattahoochee R. watershed upstream from GA Hwy 75 Alternate bridge; Chattahoochee R. tributaries from GA Hwy 75 Alternate bridge downstream to GA Hwy 255 bridge except Dukes Cr. watershed downstream from the US Forest Service property boundary, Sautee Cr., and Smith Cr. watershed upstream to Unicoi dam; Town Cr. watershed upstream from the mouth of Jenny Cr.

(YR) Chattahoochee R. downstream from the GA Hwy 75 Alternate bridge to the GA Hwy 255 bridge; Dukes Cr. watershed downstream from the US Forest Service property boundary; Little Tesnatee Cr. watershed upstream from the mouth of Turner Cr.; Sautee Cr.; Smith Cr. downstream of Unicoi dam; Turner Cr. watershed (one nearest to Cleveland City limits).

## WHITFIELD COUNTY

(YR) Coahulla Cr. watershed upstream from Whitfield Co Rd. 183; Dry Cr. watershed (part of East Chickamauga Cr. watershed); Spring Cr. (Deep Spring Cr.) watershed; Swamp Cr. watershed upstream from Whitfield Co Rd. 9; Tiger Cr. watershed.

## SHOW YOUR SUPPORT



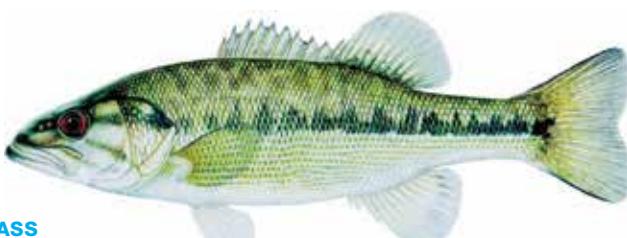
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**GEORGIA FRESHWATER FISH****LARGEMOUTH BASS**

- Upper jaw extends beyond eye
- Spiny and soft dorsal fin separate or nearly so
- Tongue normally smooth, tooth patch rare
- **World Record 22 lb. 4 oz.**

**SMALLMOUTH BASS**

- Upper jaw extends to about middle of eye
- Usually has vertical stripes along body
- 3 short spines on anal fin
- State Record 7 lb. 2 oz.

**SPOTTED BASS**

- Upper jaw not past rear of eye
- Spiny and soft dorsal fin clearly connected
- Tooth patch on tongue
- State Record 8 lb. 2 oz.

**SHOAL BASS**

- Found in Chattahoochee, Flint, and Ocmulgee Rivers
- Vertical bars on fish of all sizes
- No tooth patch on tongue
- Light golden color
- **World Record 8 lb. 3 oz.**

**CHAIN PICKEREL (JACKFISH)**

- Elongated body with chain-like markings
- Sharp needle-like teeth
- **World Record 9 lb. 6 oz.**

**WHITE BASS**

- Seldom exceeds 3 pounds
- Tongue with one tooth patch
- Stripes often faint
- 2nd anal spine  $\frac{1}{2}$  or more the length of 3rd anal spine
- State Record 5 lb. 1 oz.

**HYBRID WHITE-STRIPED BASS**

- Back arched, body deep
- Stripes distinct and usually broken
- Tongue with two tooth patches
- 2nd anal spine  $\frac{1}{2}$  or more the length of 3rd anal spine
- State Record 25 lb. 8 oz.

**STRIPED BASS**

- Body slender
- Stripes distinct, occasionally broken
- Tongue with two tooth patches
- 2nd anal spine  $\frac{1}{2}$  or less the length of 3rd anal spine
- State Record 63 lb.

**REDEYE BASS**

- Small tooth patch found on tongue
- Sides olive to brown in coloring; dark vertical bars; prominent dark spot on the gill cover
- White margin on tail
- State Record 3 lb. 7 oz.

**FLATHEAD CATFISH**

- Head wide and flat
- Body dark in color
- Tail not forked
- State Record 83 lb.

**WALLEYE**

- Sharp teeth
- No spots on dorsal fin
- Dark area at base of dorsal fin
- White spot at bottom of tail
- State Record 11 lb. 6 oz.

**BLACK CRAPPIE**

- 7–8 dorsal spines
- Body color pattern irregular arranged spots
- State Record 4 lb. 4 oz.

**REDEAR SUNFISH  
(SHELLCRACKER)**

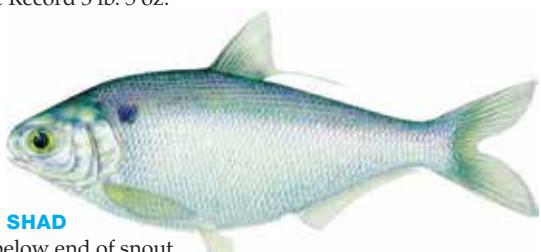
- Red edge on operculum ear flap
- Spotted body
- State Record 4 lb. 2 oz.

**REDBREAST SUNFISH**

- Long, dark ear flap
- Blue lines on head
- Ear flap (operculum) not wider than eye
- State Record 1 lb. 11 oz.

**BLUEGILL**

- Black spot on soft dorsal fin
- Vertical bars on body
- State Record 3 lb. 5 oz.

**GIZZARD SHAD**

- Mouth below end of snout
- Elongated dorsal fin ray
- Deep body
- Blunt snout

**RAINBOW TROUT**

- Small black dots throughout the body that extend into the tail
- Red stripe along side on silvery body
- State Record 17 lb. 8 oz.

**BROWN TROUT**

- Black and red-orange spots inside light circles on brown body
- Caudal fin (tail) square
- State Record 18 lb. 6 oz.

**BROOK TROUT**

- Light, wormlike markings on dark upper body
- White leading edge on lower fins (pectoral, pelvic and anal)
- State Record 5 lb. 10 oz.

**CHANNEL CATFISH**

- Numerous small, black spots present
- Deeply forked tail fin
- State Record 44 lb. 12 oz.

**BLUEBACK HERRING**

- Pointed snout
- Small dorsal fin
- Lower jaw sloped upward
- Body not as deep as gizzard shad

**THREADFIN SHAD**

- Mouth at end of snout
- Elongated dorsal fin ray
- Pointed snout
- Yellow tail fin



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SPECIES	WEIGHT	ANGLER	LOCATION	DATE
Bass, Hybrid	25 lb. 8 oz.	David Hobby	Lake Chatuge	May 1995
<b>Bass, Largemouth</b>	<b>22 lb. 4 oz</b>	<b>George Perry</b>	<b>Montgomery Lake</b>	<b>June 1932</b>
Bass, Redeye	3 lb. 7 oz.	Steve Williams	Lake Hartwell	April 2004
<b>Bass, Shoal</b>	<b>8 lb. 3 oz.</b>	<b>David Hubbard</b>	<b>Flint River</b>	<b>Oct 1977</b>
Bass, Smallmouth	7 lb. 2 oz.	Jack Hall	Lake Chatuge	March 1973
Bass, Spotted	8 lb. 2 oz.	Wayne Holland	Lake Burton	Feb 2005
		Kelly Ward	Oconee River	May 1967
Bass, Striped (tie)	63 lb.	Terry McConnell	Lake Richard B. Russell	April 2009
<b>Bass, Suwanee</b>	<b>3 lb. 9 oz.</b>	<b>Laverne Norton</b>	<b>Ochlocknee River</b>	<b>Oct 1984</b>
Bass, White	5 lb. 1 oz.	J.M. Hobbins	Lake Lanier	June 1971
<b>Bowfin</b>	<b>16 lb. 3 oz.</b>	<b>Jimmy Tucker</b>	<b>Suwannee River</b>	<b>June 2014</b>
Bullhead, Brown	5 lb. 8 oz.	James Andrews	O.F. Veal Pond	May 1978
Bullhead, Yellow	4 lb. 15 oz.	Glenn Settles	Ogeechee River	Oct 2003
Carp, Common	35 lb. 12 oz.	Rev. Donald Clark	Lake Jackson	1972
Catfish, Blue	80 lb. 4 oz.	Earnest Timpson	Lake Walter F. George	Feb 2010
Catfish, Channel	44 lb. 12 oz.	Bobby Smithwick	Altamaha River	May 1972
Catfish, Flathead	83 lb.	Carl Sawyer	Altamaha River	June 2006
Catfish, White	8 lb. 10 oz.	Jim Diveney	Altamaha River	July 2010
Carp, White	8 lb. 10 oz.	James Sanders	Savannah River	June 1996
Crappie, Black (tie)	4 lb. 4 oz.	Shirley Lavender	Acree's Lake	June 1971
		Steve Cheek	Lake Spivey	March 1975
Crappie, White	5 lb.	Theresa Kemp	Bibb Co. Pond	April 1984
Gar, Longnose	30 lb. 13 oz.	Gerald Kennedy	Lake Lanier	Sept 2013
Muskellunge	38 lb.	Rube Golden	Blue Ridge Lake	June 1957
Perch, Yellow	2 lb. 9 oz.	Thomas Lewis	Savannah River	Feb 2013
<b>Pickerel, Chain</b>	<b>9 lb. 6 oz.</b>	<b>Baxley McQuaig Jr.</b>	<b>Homerville</b>	<b>Feb 1961</b>
<b>Pickerel, Redfin</b>	<b>2 lb. 10 oz.</b>	<b>Gene Brantley</b>	<b>Lewis' Pond</b>	<b>July 1982</b>
Pike, Northern	18 lb. 2 oz.	Keith Gragg	Lake Rabun	June 1982
Sauger	4 lb. 3 oz.	Stuart Bowers	Clarks Hill Reservoir	April 1986
Shad, American	8 lb. 3 oz.	Henry Baxley	Savannah River	April 1986
Shad, Hickory	1 lb. 15 oz.	Mark Bowers	Ogeechee River	April 1995
Sunfish, Bluegill	3 lb. 5 oz.	P.F. Gumm	Shamrock Lake	July 1977
<b>Sunfish, Flier</b>	<b>1 lb. 4 oz.</b>	<b>Curt Brooks</b>	<b>Lowndes Co. Pond</b>	<b>Feb 1996</b>
Sunfish, Green	1 lb. 7 oz.	Jeff Sumner	Private Pond	Feb 2006
Sunfish, Redbreast	1 lb. 11 oz.	Emory Walden	Coweta Co. Pond	April 1998
Sunfish, Redear	4 lb. 2 oz.	Pat Lawrence	Richmond Co. Pond	June 1995
	10 oz.	Mike Markovicic	Brier Creek	Sept 2003
Sunfish, Spotted	10 oz.	Ryan Kersey	Satilla River	June 2014
Sunfish, Warmouth	2 lb.	Carlton Robbins	Private Pond	May 1974
Trout, Brook	5 lb. 10 oz.	Russell Braden	Waters Creek	March 1986
<b>Trout, Brown</b>	<b>20 lb. 14 oz.</b>	<b>Chad Doughty</b>	<b>Chattahoochee River</b>	<b>July 2014</b>
Trout, Rainbow	17 lb. 8 oz.	Mark Cochran	Soque River	May 2004
Walleye	11 lb. 6 oz.	Neal Watson	Richard B. Russell Lake	Sept 1995

RED indicates new record!

Blue type denotes a World Record Fish (either IGFA or NFFFH)

### Someone's Stealing Georgia's Wildlife

- Poaching is the illegal taking of wildlife.
- Poachers rob you of hunting opportunities.
- Poachers steal everyone's wildlife.
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# FRESHWATER COMMERCIAL FISHING & SALE OF FISH

## Commercial Fishing

- It is unlawful to fish commercially except in waters opened for commercial fishing by regulation of the DNR Board.
- It shall be unlawful to engage in commercial freshwater fishing without having a valid commercial fishing license.
- It is unlawful for any person to sell or purchase any game fish, however American shad, hickory shad, channel catfish, and flat-head catfish taken while commercial fishing may be sold as described in the Game and Fish Code.
- For information on fish baskets, including usage, construction, and licensing contact the nearest Fisheries Section office or visit our website at [www.gofishgeorgia.com](http://www.gofishgeorgia.com)
- For a complete copy of the freshwater commercial fishing regulations contact the nearest Fisheries Section office or visit [www.gofishgeorgia.com](http://www.gofishgeorgia.com)
- For saltwater commercial fishing information contact the Coastal Resources Division or visit [www.CoastalGADNR.org](http://www.CoastalGADNR.org)

## Sale of Fish & Aquaculture

### GAME FISH

It is unlawful for any person to sell or purchase any game fish **except** under the following conditions:

- See **Commercial Fishing** above.
- Game fish may also be sold by properly licensed commercial fish hatcheries, wholesale and retail fish dealers, and pond owners (see following paragraph) who conform to the Game and Fish Code.
- Game fish may be sold from a pond when the owner has obtained a valid permit from DNR Law Enforcement Section (2 weeks required to process). **Note:** The permit must be displayed at the pond and the fish must be packaged and labeled for transport from the pond with the permit number and the number and pounds of each species contained in the package. Fish must remain so packaged until processed or released into another pond. **Note:** A permit will be issued only once annually and limits the time for taking fish from the pond to 15 days.
- Game fish shipped into Georgia may be lawfully transported, sold, and resold provided each person in possession of said

game fish has an authentic bill of sale or lading which details the source of the fish and the species, number and pounds of the fish.

### DOMESTIC FISH

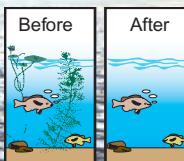
- Aquaculturists (fish farmers) must register with the Department of Natural Resources in order to sell domestic fish.
- Registration applications are available from any Fisheries Section office, at [www.gofishgeorgia.com](http://www.gofishgeorgia.com), or by calling 770-761-3044. Find Aquaculture information under the **Fishing Regulation** section of the WRD website.
- Domestic fish are lawfully obtained farmed fish which are held in confinement in private ponds, but only if they are fish species which are either indigenous to Georgia or have been recognized prior to 1992 as having an established population in public waters in Georgia. White perch is not recognized as a domestic fish. Persons in possession of domestic fish from registered aquaculturists must have an authentic bill of sale or lading which identifies the seller, the date of transaction and at least two of the following for each fish species: number, weight, or average length.

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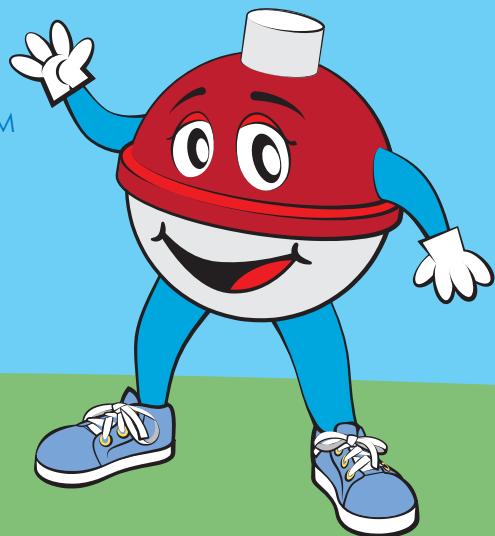

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# Get Kids Hooked!

## KIDS FISHING EVENTS

An easy way to get kids hooked is by going to a kids fishing event. Georgia events are offered during the spring and summer throughout the state. It's a great way for kids to have a fun experience and takes the pressure off of parents and grandparents to ensure they hook a fish.

These events are often staffed by experienced volunteers and held at ponds and other spots that are stocked for kids. Georgia Wildlife Resources Division supports most events by providing channel catfish and trout to improve their chances and educational materials.

To find an event, visit [www.georgiawildlife.com/fishing/kids-fishing](http://www.georgiawildlife.com/fishing/kids-fishing)

## EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

Ask about field trips at your child's school. Wildlife Resources Division has seven regional wildlife educational centers throughout the state. The Go Fish Education Center in Perry offers programs for all grade levels on fishing and conservation.

The Go Fish center offers educational programs that include on-site classroom programs, public workshops and seminars. Classroom programs are interactive, hands-on lessons that align to the Georgia Performance Standards. Live fish and wildlife exhibits, fishing simulators, educational displays and a theater offer several options for teaching conservation. For more information, visit [gofishgeorgia.com/fishing/kids-fishing](http://gofishgeorgia.com/fishing/kids-fishing).

## SUMMER CAMPS

Charlie Elliott Wildlife Center (hour east of Atlanta) offers numerous day and overnight summer camps on conservation and outdoor recreation for ages 6-15. Activities include fishing, canoeing, hiking, pond studies, orienteering and more. Visit [gofishgeorgia.com/CharlieElliott/Camps](http://gofishgeorgia.com/CharlieElliott/Camps).

## MORE INFO ONLINE

Visit [www.gofishgeorgia.com/fishing/kids-fishing](http://www.gofishgeorgia.com/fishing/kids-fishing) for links to:

- Find a Kids' Fishing Event
- Places to Take Kids Fishing
- Tips for Fishing with Kids
- "My First Fish" Certificate - download

## BEST GIFT FOR A YOUNG ANGLER

It's never too early! Buy a lifetime license for a child and save hundreds.

Lifetime licenses are full privilege sportsman's licenses (\$55 annually), and include all state paid recreational hunting and fishing privileges. Lifetime licenses include hunting, big game, Wildlife Management Area (WMA), alligator, Georgia waterfowl conservation, salt and freshwater fishing and mountain trout licenses.

### Consider the savings:

Age	Lifetime License Cost
Under 2 years old	\$200
Ages 2-15	\$350
16 and older	\$500



# BRAGGING BOARD



## Angler Awards Program

Catching a big fish is always a thrill and usually requires exceptional fishing skill. Each year DNR recognizes the achievement of anglers who catch "trophy" fish by presenting them with an Angler Award. Fish do not have to be a new state record to qualify. Applications, minimum weights/lengths for species, and full program details are available at any Fisheries office and at [www.gofishgeorgia.com](http://www.gofishgeorgia.com). To qualify you must:

- Catch your fish on legal sport fishing tackle in Georgia (see page 14).
- Meet the minimum weight or length requirements for that species.
- Take the fish to a DNR Fisheries Office and have it positively identified. A clear side view photo of the fish can now be used for identification in the case of "catch-and-release." Please call before coming to an office to make sure that someone will be available to identify your fish (list on page 4).
- Complete application and submit it with a clear side view photo of the whole fish to the address listed on the form.

If you think you, or someone you know, caught a new **state freshwater record**, follow these steps:

- Do not clean or freeze the fish.
- Keep the fish cool, preferably on ice.
- Weigh the fish to the nearest ounce as soon as possible on scales certified accurate by the Georgia Department of Agriculture (at Fisheries Section offices and businesses that sell products by weight) in the presence of two witnesses over the age of 18. Witnesses cannot be members of the immediate family. Estimated weights are not accepted.
- Take the fish to a DNR Fisheries Office as soon as possible and have it positively identified by a DNR fisheries biologist or technician. Please call the office before you come (list on page 4).
- Complete an application and submit with a clear side view photo of the whole fish within 90 days of the catch.
- **Freshwater Records see page 28**
- **Saltwater Records see page 42**

## THE HEALTH BENEFITS OF EATING FISH

Sport fish caught in Georgia are generally good quality and safe to eat. Fish provide a high protein, low fat diet which is low in saturated fats. Fish may have substantial health benefits when they replace a high fat source of protein in the diet.

## WHAT ARE THE GUIDELINES?

Georgia DNR samples fish from water bodies each year to test for contaminants such as PCBs, chlordane, and mercury. Many of the fish tested have few or no contaminants and are safe to eat.

### Waters where fish have been tested and found to be clean are listed to the right.

Fish from waters listed in the tables had some level of contaminants so you should restrict the amount of fish you eat from these waters. Recommendations are made to limit how often you eat a meal of fish from these sources to either once per week or month. A meal of fish is about 4 to 8 ounces. These guidelines are based on eating fish from a listed area for at least 30 years. That is because it would take months or years of regularly eating contaminated food to accumulate levels in your body that would affect your health.

**"One meal per week" means that eating a 4- to 8-ounce serving no more than once per week should cause no significant health risks.**

## SPECIAL NOTICE FOR PREGNANT WOMEN, NURSING MOTHERS AND CHILDREN

If you are pregnant or a nursing mother, or plan to become pregnant soon, you and also children under 6 years of age are sensitive to the effects of some contaminants. Women and children in these categories may wish to eat fish less often than recommended in the tables.

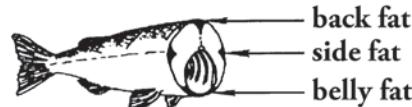
## HOW TO REDUCE YOUR HEALTH RISK

**Eat smaller fish and vary the kind of fish you eat.** Contaminants build up in top predators (bass), bottom feeders (catfish), and older (larger) fish to a greater extent than panfish, such as bream and crappie.

**Clean and cook fish properly.** Some chemicals have a tendency to concentrate in the fatty tissues of fish. By removing the fish's skin and trimming the fat, you can substantially reduce contaminants.

**Cook fish so fat drips away.** Broil, bake, or grill fish and do not use the drippings. Deep-fat frying removes some contaminants, but discard the oil once you have cooked the fish. Pan frying removes few contaminants.

## TRIM AWAY THESE FATTY AREAS.



## GUIDELINES FOR GEORGIA

The following tables list the current guidelines for eating fish for lakes and rivers in Georgia.

**Please note:** Lakes and rivers listed on this page (above) have been tested and the fish found to contain little or no contamination. If the lake or stream where you fish is listed in the following tables (on pages 34–37), it is safe to eat the amount listed for a given species from that body of water. Water bodies are listed alphabetically.

These guidelines are non-binding recommendations EPD determines based on the body of water a fish comes from, the species of fish and the amount of fish a person consumes. The purpose of these guidelines is to provide detailed information in an understandable format for people who eat fish. Waters listed in the fish consumption guidelines are not necessarily assessed as impaired using USEPA guidelines for Section 303(d) of the Clean Water Act."

More details on fish contaminant testing are available in the publication "Guidelines for Eating Fish from Georgia Waters" available at: [www.gaepd.org](http://www.gaepd.org)

### Call for a copy or more information:

Environmental Protection Division: 404-656-4713 | Coastal Resources Division: 912-264-7218 | Wildlife Resources Division: 770-918-6406

## FISH CONSUMPTION GUIDELINES: RIVERS &amp; CREEKS

	Bass, Largemouth	Bass, Other	Bass, Shoal	Bass, Spotted	Bass, Striped	Bass, White	Bluegill	Bowfin	Buffalo	Bullhead	Carp	Catfish, Blue	Catfish, Channel	Catfish, Flathead	Catfish, White	Crappie	Mullet, Striped	Pickeral, Chain	Redbreast	Redhorse	Rearbar	Sucker	Sunfish, Other
	NO RESTRICTIONS	ONE MEAL PER WEEK	ONE MEAL PER MONTH	DO NOT EAT	NO DATA																		
Alapaha River	Orange																						
Alapahoochee River																							
Allatoona Creek (Cobb Co.)			Blue																				Blue
Altamaha River	Blue																		Blue				
Altamaha River (below US Route 25)																							
Apalachee River	Blue																						
Beaver Creek (Taylor Co.)																							
Brier Creek (Burke Co.)	Orange																						Blue
Canoochee River (Hwy 192 to Lotts Cr.)	Orange																						
Ogeechee River Basin																							
Casey Canal	Green																						
Chattooga River (NE Ga., Rabun Co.)																							
Chattahoochee River (Helen to Lk. Lanier)	Orange	Blue			Green																		
Chattahoochee River (Buford Dam to Morgan Falls Dam)	Blue																						
Chattahoochee River (Morgan Falls Dam to Peachtree Crk.)	Green																						
Chattahoochee River (Peachtree Crk. to Pea Crk.)		Blue																					
Chattahoochee River (Pea Crk. to West Point Lk., below Franklin)	Blue																						
Chattahoochee River (Morgan Falls Dam to West Pt. Lk.)																							
Chattahoochee River (West Point dam to I-85)	Green																						
Chattahoochee River (Oliver Dam to Upatoi Crk.)	Orange																						
Chestatee River (below Tesnatee Riv.)																							
Chickamauga Creek (West)																							
Cohulla Creek (Whitfield Co.)																							
Conasauga River (below Stateline)																							
Coosa River (River Mile Zero to Hwy 100, Floyd Co.)	Orange																						
Coosa River (Hwy 100 to Stateline, Floyd Co.)	Blue																						
Coosa River (Coosa, Etowah below Thompson-Weinman dam, Oostanaula)																							
Coosawattee River (below Carters)																							
Etowah River (Dawson Co.)																							
Etowah River (above Lake Allatoona)																							
Etowah River (below Lake Allatoona dam)	Blue																						
Flint River (Spalding/Fayette Cos.)																							
Flint River (Meriwether/Upson/Pike Cos.)																							
Flint River (Taylor Co.)																							
Flint River (Macow/Dooly/Worth/Lee Cos.)																							
Flint River (Doughterty/Baker Mitchell Cos.)																							
Gum Creek (Crisp Co.)	Blue																						

	Bass, Largemouth	Bass, Other	Bass, Shoal	Bass, Spotted	Bass, Striped	Bass, White	Bluegill	Bowfin	Buffalo	Bullhead	Carp	Catfish, Blue	Catfish, Channel	Catfish, Flathead	Catfish, White	Crappie	Mullet, Striped	Pickeral, Chain	Redbreast	Redhorse	Redear	Sucker	Sunfish, Other
NO RESTRICTIONS																							
ONE MEAL PER WEEK																							
ONE MEAL PER MONTH																							
DO NOT EAT																							
NO DATA																							
Holly Creek (Murray Co.)																							
Ichawaynochaway Creek																							
Kinchafoonee Creek (above Albany)																							
Little River (above Clarks Hill Lake)																							
Little River (above Ga. Hwy 133, Valdosta)																							
Mill Creek (Murray Co.)																							
Muckalee Creek (above Albany)																							
Ochlockonee River (near Thomasville)																							
Ocmulgee River (below Macon, Bibb Co.)																							
Ocmulgee River (Telfair/Wheeler Cos.)																							
Oconee River (above Barnett Shoals)																							
Oconee River (at I-16)																							
Ogeechee River (all to Ft. McAllister)																							
Ohoopee River (Emanuel/Toombs Cos.)																							
Okefenokee Swamp (Billy's Lake)																							
Oostanaula River (Floyd/Gordon Counties)																							
Patsiliga Creek (Taylor Co.)																							
Pipemaker Canal																							
Satilla River (Waycross, Ware/Pierce Cos.)																							
Satilla River (near Folkston, Camden Co.)																							
Savannah River (above & below New Sav. Bluff Lock & Dam)																							
Savannah River (Chatham/Screven Cos.)																							
Savannah River (Effingham Co.)																							
Savannah River (Tidal Gate)																							
Savannah River (New Savannah Bluff Lock & Dam to Savannah Estuary)																							
Short Creek (Warren Co.)																							
South River (Panola Shoals, Rockdale Co.)																							
South River (Henry Co., Snapping Shoals)																							
Spring Creek (Seminole/Decatur/Miller Cos.)																							
St. Mary's River (Camden Co.)																							
St. Mary's River (Charlton Co.)																							
Sugar Creek (Murray Co.)																							
Sumac Creek (Murray Co.)																							
Suwannee River																							
Swamp Creek (Redwine Cove Road)																							
Talking Rock Creek																							
Tallapoosa River																							
Trib. To Hudson River (Alto, Banks Co.)																							
Withlacoochee River (Berrien/Lowndes Cos.)																							

\* This striped bass population migrates annually between West Point Lake and Morgan Falls Dam.

†† Women who are pregnant or nursing and young children may wish to further restrict their consumption due to the variable mercury levels in these fish.

**FISH CONSUMPTION GUIDELINES: LAKES**

<b>NO RESTRICTIONS</b>	Bass, Hybrid	Bass, Largemouth	Bass, Spotted	Bass, Striped	Bass, Other	Bluegill	Carp	Crappie	Catfish, Blue	Catfish, Channel	Catfish, Flathead	Catfish, Other	Suckers	Sunfish, Redear	Walleye
<b>ONE MEAL PER WEEK</b>															
<b>ONE MEAL PER MONTH</b>															
<b>DO NOT EAT</b>															
<b>NO DATA</b>															
Albany By-Pass Pond															
Acworth		>16"													
Allatoona	>16"	>16"	>16"												
Andrews		>12"													
Banks		12-16"													
Bartlett's Ferry	>16"	>16"	>12"	>16"				>12"							
Bear Cr. Reservoir		<16"								>12"					
Bennett CEWC PFA		>12"													
Black Shoals (Randy Poynter)		12-16"								>12"					
Blackshear		>12"						>12"		>12"					
Big Lazer PFA		>16"													
Blue Ridge		12-16"			12-16"					>16"					
Burton		>16"	12-16"												>16"
Pond N. Bush Field (Augusta)		12-16"													
Carters Lake		>16"	>16"												
Chatuge			12-16"												
Clarks Hill		>16"													
Evans County PFA		>16"													
Goat Rock	<12"	>16"									12-16"				
Hamburg		12-16"									>16"				
Hartwell (Tugaloo Arm)	12-16"	>16"		12-16"				>16"			>16"				>16"
Hartwell (main body of lake)	>16"	>16"			>16"										
Hugh M. Gillis PFA		12-16"													
Jackson															
Ken Gardens		>12"													
Kolomoki Mounds S.P. – Kolomoki L.		>12"													
Kolomoki Mounds S.P. – Yohola L.		>12"													
Lanier				>16"				>16"			>16"				
Little Ocmulgee S. P.		>16"										12-16"			
McDuffie PFA, West															
Nottely		>12"		>16"											
Oliver		>12"									>16"				
Rabun		>16"													
Reed Bingham S.P.		>12"													
Richard B. Russell		>12"													
Seminole		>12"													
So. Slappy Blvd. Off-ramp (Albany)		12-16"													
Stone Mountain		>16"													
Tobesofkee		>12"													
Tugalo		>12"													>16"
Tribble Mill Pk. Pond (Gwinnett Co.)		12-16"													
Varner		>12"													
West Point	>16"														
Worth (Chehaw Reservoir)		12-16"													
Worth (Flint Reservoir)		>12"													
Yonah		12-16"													

# SALTWATER FISH CONSUMPTION GUIDELINES: COASTAL RIVERS & CREEKS

NO RESTRICTIONS	Atlantic Croaker	Bass, Striped	Bivalves*	Blue Crab	Drum, Black	Drum, Red	Flounder	Sheepshead	Southern Kingfish (Whiting)	Spot	Spotted Seatrout	Striped Mullet	Shrimp	Shrimp, White	Yellowtail (Silver Perch)
ONE MEAL PER WEEK															
ONE MEAL PER MONTH															
DO NOT EAT															
NO DATA															
Turtle River System (Purvis, Gibson Crks.)	Red	Grey	Red	Orange	Blue	Blue	Blue	Orange	Orange	Orange	Blue	Red	Orange	Grey	Blue
Turtle & Buffalo Rivers (upriver Hwy 303)	Orange	Grey	Red	Blue	Orange	Blue	Blue	Orange	Orange	Orange	Blue	Red	Grey	Green	Blue
Turtle River (Hwy 303 to Channel Marker 9)	Orange	Grey	Red	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Orange	Orange	Orange	Blue	Red	Grey	Green	Blue
Turtle River (C. Marker 9 & So. Brunswick River to Dubignons & Parsons Creeks)	Orange	Blue	Red	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Orange	Orange	Blue	Orange	Grey	Grey	Blue
Terry Creek (South of Torras Causeway to Lanier Basin)	Green	Grey	Red	Green	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Green	Blue	Blue
Terry & Dupree Creeks (North of Torras Causeway to Confluence w/ Back River)	Orange	Grey	Red	Green	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Orange	Orange	Blue	Orange	Green	Blue	Grey
Back River (1 mi. above Terry Creek to Confluence with Torras Causeway)	Green	Grey	Red	Green	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Green	Blue	Blue
Back River (South of Torras Cswy. to St. Simons Sound)	Blue	Grey	Red	Green	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Green	Green	Blue
Floyd Creek	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue
Academy Creek	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue
Altamaha Estuary	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue
Hayner's Creek (Savannah)	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue
North Newport (Upper), incl. Cay/Peacock	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue
Savannah Estuary	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue

\* Bivalves are all clams, mussels and oysters; Shellfish ban under National Shellfish Sanitation Program.

## KING MACKEREL SPECIAL JOINT STATE CONSUMPTION GUIDANCE ISSUED BY GEORGIA, NORTH CAROLINA, SOUTH CAROLINA AND FLORIDA FOR SOUTH ATLANTIC OCEAN

SIZE RANGE (FORK LENGTH, INCHES)	RECOMMENDATIONS FOR MEAL CONSUMPTION OF KING MACKEREL CAUGHT OFFSHORE GEORGIA COAST
24 to less than 33 inches	No Restrictions
33 to 39 inches	1 meal per month for pregnant women, nursing mothers and children age 12 and younger 1 meal per week for other adults
Over 39 inches	Do Not Eat

## Saltwater Advisory

Harmful toxins called PCBs are stored in the hepato-pancreas ("the green gland" also known as the mustard, tomalley, or liver) found in the body section of blue crabs.

Recent studies have shown that crabs in the Middle Turtle River and Purvis and Gibson Creeks contain high levels of PCBs. While the crab meat may still be eaten in recommended amounts, the hepatopancreas should not be eaten because of the high PCB levels.

If crabs are cooked whole, the juice should not be consumed. Because PCBs are transferred to cooking liquid, crab cooking liquid should also be discarded.

Cleaning crabs before you cook them ("backing" the crabs and rinsing out the guts and the gills) reduces the risk of consuming PCBs.



## Good Fishing Depends on Clean Water

Many of our rivers, lakes, and coastal areas are experiencing algae blooms that cover our favorite fishing spots with green slime and cause fish kills and "dead zones" where no aquatic life can survive. The cause is usually nitrogen and phosphorus pollution that comes from farm and lawn fertilizers, septic systems, animal waste, and sewage treatment plants. Here's what you can do to keep the water clean:

- Take care not to over fertilize
- Pick up pet waste and properly manage waste from livestock
- Use green practices: rain barrels, rain gardens, and permeable pavements
- Maintain septic systems
- Encourage your community to invest

Supporting water quality protection supports great fishing!

Learn more at:  
[www.epa.gov/nutrientpollution/](http://www.epa.gov/nutrientpollution/)



# Close to home & your budget!



Georgia State Parks offer many options for anglers:

- Beautiful lakes and clean rivers and streams
- Coastal fishing trips
- Boat ramps and boat rentals
- Fully-stocked, lake-front cottages
- Scenic tent and RV campsites

Come for the solitude or an adventure with family and friends. Enjoy Georgia's natural resources while casting a line in the water. You'll have a great time whether you catch a fish or catch a nap!

**For overnight reservations call 800-864-7275.**



**[GeorgiaStateParks.org](http://GeorgiaStateParks.org)**

# Georgia Bass Trail

These tournament-style ramp facilities include multiple boat ramp lanes, extra capacity parking lots and weigh-in areas for tournaments. All 15 mega boat ramps improve access for local anglers and help communities attract major bass fishing tournaments. One more ramp is in the permitting or construction stages.

Local communities aid in the planning and development and then assume responsibility for the maintenance.

Communities market the ramps to local, regional and national fishing groups for tournaments and other events. It's a win-win for the community as locals have full access for recreational boating and fishing year-round.

## Go Fish Georgia Initiative

The Go Fish Georgia Initiative seeks to promote and enhance boating and fishing tourism and boost economic development. Leveraging public and private support, the initiative is improving access, quality and awareness of fishing in Georgia through:

- Interactive education about Georgia's diverse aquatic life, their natural habitats and the wise stewardship of these resources through the Go Fish Education Center in Perry
- Quality fisheries supported by state-of-the-art indoor/outdoor warm water fish hatcheries
- The Georgia Bass Trail tournament ramps



## Did you know?

- 954,000 people fish in Georgia every year, many of those are from out of the state
- Anglers generate almost 16,000 jobs
- Fishing has a 2.1 billion dollar economic effect



SOURCES: Georgia Department of Natural Resources, American Sportfishing Association

# SALTWATER FISHING IN GEORGIA

**From the deep waters of the Gulf Stream across a wide expanse of open Atlantic Ocean through winding tidal rivers to remote marshes, coastal Georgia offers a diversity of inviting places for the saltwater angler. Whether you fish from the surf, a fishing pier, or a boat, there is always something ready to tug on your line.**



Yearlong residents like spotted seatrout, redfish, spot, Atlantic croaker, flounder, black sea bass, sheepshead and whiting top the list of popular species. Seasonal visitors like tarpon, tripletail, king and Spanish mackerel, and a variety of sharks make the warmer months the peak time for near shore and offshore fishing. There are numerous public boat ramps and fishing piers, as well as several private marinas and boat launch facilities providing access for anglers of all ages and skill levels. Over 100 licensed fishing guides are available to help introduce you to fishing along the Georgia coast.

Fourteen barrier islands dot the Georgia coastline, only four of which—Tybee, Sea, St. Simons, and Jekyll—are accessible by road. Separating these barrier islands from the mainland are vast expanses of marshlands through which wind miles of tidal rivers and creeks. It is estimated that Georgia's estuaries have over 3,400 miles of shoreline.

Twice a day, these rivers, creeks, and marshlands are flooded and drained by the tides. Because of Georgia's location along the Atlantic Coast, the tidal amplitude varies from 6 to 9 feet, depending on moon phase, wind direction and speed, and location. So, on average, the water is either rising or falling about an inch every 5 minutes. Not surprising, these tides have a pronounced effect on the location and behavior of marine life, especially fish. Fortunately, tides can be predicted with reasonable accuracy so anglers can plan their day on the water by using a tide prediction table such as the one available on the Georgia DNR Coastal Resources Division website ([www.CoastalGADNR.org](http://www.CoastalGADNR.org)).

Another useful source of information about saltwater fishing in Georgia is the Georgia Outdoor Map ([www.georgiaoutdoormap.com](http://www.georgiaoutdoormap.com)). This online, interactive map provides information about fishing and boating access, inshore and offshore manmade reefs, and public shellfish and bait shrimp harvest areas. Other valuable sources of information for both novice and veteran anglers are the Guides to Coastal Fishing available free for pickup from the Georgia DNR Coastal Resources Division (912) 264-7218. Guides are available for Chatham, Bryan/Liberty, McIntosh, Glynn and Camden counties. These maps are an overlay of productive fishing spots onto a navigation chart. They include a variety of useful information about the coastal Georgia environment, conservation of wildlife and habitats, fish identification, fishing methods and locations of public access.

If you would like to share your big catch photos with us, visit [Facebook.com/CoastalGADNR](https://www.facebook.com/CoastalGADNR). Good Luck and Tight Lines!

Oh! And don't forget your SIP!

## Attention Anglers: Be Counted, Be Heard

During 2014, almost a quarter million anglers acquired a Saltwater Information Program (SIP) permit helping Georgia DNR to better manage saltwater fishing in our state. The no-cost SIP permit is an effective way to document who is fishing in saltwater so scientific surveys of saltwater fishing catch and effort can be most accurate.

**Do your part: Be Counted, Be Heard!**

In addition to a Georgia fishing license, a **FREE SIP** permit, valid from March 1 to February 28, is required for anyone age 16 and over who fishes in saltwater in Georgia.

SIP Permits are available from:

- Your local license vendor. To locate a vendor, visit [www.CoastalGADNR.org/SIP](http://www.CoastalGADNR.org/SIP);
- By calling 800-366-2661 (Mon-Fri 8a-8p and Sat-Sun 9a-5p)
- Online at [www.CoastalGADNR.org/SIP](http://www.CoastalGADNR.org/SIP)

**IMPORTANT:** Permit renewal begins March 1, 2015, just in time for the kickoff of saltwater fishing season!

For more information go to [www.CoastalGADNR.org/SIP](http://www.CoastalGADNR.org/SIP) or call 800-366-2661.



# SALTWATER RECREATIONAL FISHING

**Fishing Licenses:** See page 8 for information on license requirements.

- Licenses are required for hook and line fishing, castnetting, seining, crabbing, gigging, sport bait trawling, and harvesting shellfish.
- A Georgia Fishing license is required for anglers returning to Georgia ports or transiting Georgia waters with recreational catches from federal waters beyond the state's 3-mile territorial sea.
- Reciprocal agreements with Alabama, South Carolina, and Florida currently do not apply to saltwaters.
- Georgia saltwater fishing guides have the option of purchasing a blanket fishing license to cover their customers. Anglers booking a trip with a Georgia saltwater fishing guide should inquire if they will need a Georgia fishing license or whether they will be covered by the guide's license. Persons interested in purchasing a Saltwater Guide's License should call the DNR Coastal Regional License Office at 912-264-7237.

## Saltwater Fishing Information

### GEORGIA SALTWATER FISHING REGULATIONS

For information and updates on licenses, regulations, and fishing in Georgia's inshore and offshore saltwaters contact:

#### Georgia DNR Coastal

Law Enforcement  
One Conservation Way, Suite 201  
Brunswick, GA 31520-8687  
912-264-7237 or fax 912-262-3166

#### Coastal Resources Division

Marine Fisheries Section  
One Conservation Way,  
Brunswick, GA 31520-8687  
912-264-7218 or fax 912-262-2318  
[www.CoastalGADNR.org](http://www.CoastalGADNR.org)

### FEDERAL SALTWATER FISHING REGULATIONS

For information and updates on recreational fishing regulations in federal waters (3–200 miles offshore), contact:

#### South Atlantic Fishery Management Council

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

For information and updates on federal regulations and required permitting for tunas, billfish, and sharks, contact:

#### National Marine Fisheries Service

HMS Management Division  
1315 East-West Hwy  
Silver Spring, MD 20910  
301-713-2347  
[www.nmfpermits.com](http://www.nmfpermits.com)

For information on the Gray's Reef National Marine Sanctuary contact:

**Gray's Reef Sanctuary Program**  
10 Ocean Science Circle  
Savannah, GA 31411  
912-598-2345  
[www.graysreef.nos.noaa.gov](http://www.graysreef.nos.noaa.gov)

### WANTON WASTE

Sort or cull your catch on the water. Return undersized or unwanted wildlife to the water alive. When you throw away wildlife, you are not only wasting valuable resources, but you are also breaking the law!

### ARTIFICIAL REEFS

Georgia maintains 15 inshore and 22 offshore artificial reefs located from inside the estuary to 80 miles offshore. The 19 reefs beyond 3 miles offshore are designated as federal Special Management Zones and as such, only allow hand-held hook-n-line and spear fishing gear. For more information, coordinates and updates go to [georgiaoutdoormap.com](http://georgiaoutdoormap.com).



### SHALLOW WATER BLACKOUT PREVENTION

For more information about shallow water blackout go to [shallowwaterblackoutprevention.org](http://shallowwaterblackoutprevention.org)

### BOATING SAFETY ZONES

Boating safety zones have been established off Jekyll, Tybee, St. Simons, and Sea islands. These zones extend from the northernmost point to the southernmost point of each of these islands and from the highwater mark to a distance 1,000 feet seaward. From May 1 through September 30, power boats, jet skis, and other motorized craft are prohibited in these zones.

### Saltwater Finfish

#### LANDING REQUIREMENTS/ TRANSFER PROHIBITION

All saltwater finfish (including sharks) under state or federal regulation must be landed with head and fins intact. Anglers must make catches available for inspection by government officials. Saltwater finfish subject to size and bag limits cannot be transferred to another person or vessel on the water. Commercial licenses are required to sell recreationally caught finfish.

### GEAR

A **seine** may not be used as a gill net (a net constructed of single webbing attached to a float line and lead line and fished in a stationary manner to ensnare or entangle fish in the meshes).

Only flounder may be taken with a **gig** (any handheld shaft with single or multiple points, barbed or barbless).

**All seasons, hours, creel limits, minimum size limits, and other regulations applicable to saltwater finfish apply regardless of the gear used.**

**Sharks:** Recreational harvest of sharks is limited to hook and line gear only.

### RELATED DEFINITIONS

**Maximum Size:** the specific size in length above which it is unlawful to take that finfish species.

**Minimum Size:** the specific size in length below which it is unlawful to take that finfish species.

**Open Season:** that specified period of time during which one may take certain finfish species from any waters of the state.

**Daily Creel Limit:** the lawful amount of a species of finfish that a person may take in one day.

**Possession Limit:** the lawful amount of a species of finfish that a person can legally have at any one time.

**Bushel:** 9.3 gallons or approximately 37 quarts.

### Saltwater Demarcation Line

This line is established in this state as the separation point between saltwaters and freshwaters for commercial fishing and sport fishing. The saltwater demarcation line is defined below:

- The point at which U.S. Highway 17 crosses the following bodies of water and their tributaries shall be the line of demarcation for them: St. Mary's River, Satilla River, South Altamaha River, Champney River, Butler River, Darien River, Little Ogeechee System (except Salt Creek), North Newport River, Medway River, Big Ogeechee River, and the point at which Georgia Highway 25/South Carolina 170 crosses the Savannah River and its tributaries. All water seaward of these points shall be considered saltwater.
- The following streams and their tributaries are designated as salt water for their entire length: Crooked River, Little Satilla River, South Brunswick River, Turtle River, Sapelo River, South Newport River, Salt Creek (Little Ogeechee System), and all other rivers, streams, and tributaries in the six coastal counties which are not enumerated in this subsection.
- For purposes of crabbing, that portion of the St. Mary's River and the Satilla River System (including the Satilla River and White Oak Creek) which is seaward of the points at which the Seaboard Coastline Railroad crosses such streams and that portion of the Altamaha River System which is seaward of the points at which I-95 crosses the streams of that system shall be considered salt water. It shall be unlawful to place any crab trap in the waters of this state other than that described as salt water in Code Section 27-4-1 or by this subsection.

## GEORGIA'S SALTWATER GAMEFISH RECORDS

SPECIES	MEN'S RECORD		WOMEN'S RECORD	
	WEIGHT	MALE ANGLER (year)	WEIGHT	FEMALE ANGLER (year)
Amberjack, Greater	92 lb. 1 oz.	Ben W. Key, Jr. (1975)	72 lb. 8 oz.	Tricia L. Nicosia (1986)
Barracuda, Great	54 lb. 8 oz.	Wayne Hall (1999)	47 lb. 8 oz.	Marie Franklin (1999)
Bass, Black Sea (tie)	5 lb. 11 oz. 5 lb. 12 oz.	J.C. Hadden, Jr. (1994) Willie J. Oakman (1998)	4 lb. 8 oz.	Evelyn B. Carter (1983)
Bluefish*	17 lb. 12 oz.	Gary Q. Altman (1980)	14 lb. 4 oz.	Kathy Sikes (1986)
Cobia	88 lb. 12 oz.	Jeffrey Clark (1985)	68 lb. 5 oz.	Wanda Carroll (1999)
<b>Croaker, Atlantic</b>	<b>5 lb. 12 oz.</b>	<b>David Flynt (1977)</b>	<b>2 lb. 11 oz.</b>	<b>Caroline Hicks (2014)</b>
Dolphin	67 lb. 6 oz.	Michael Sheppard (1997)	54 lb. 8 oz.	Romona Arsenault (1977)
Drum, Black	92 lb. 0 oz.	John H. Thomas Jr. (2010)	80 lb. 0 oz.	Jennifer Swenson (2009)
Drum, Red (Channel Bass)*	47 lb. 7 oz.	Richard Price (1986)	38 lb. 13 oz.	Sandra Price (1986)
Flounder (Composite)	15 lb. 8 oz.	Walter C. Hewitt (1982)	15 lb. 10 oz.	Janice Youmans (1990)
Grouper, Gag	38 lb. 0 oz.	David Sapp (2002)	20 lb. 0 oz.	Joyce L. Richards (1984)
Grouper, Goliath*	124 lb. 0 oz.	James Chumley (1976)	Harvest prohibited, therefore record no longer allowed.	
Grouper, Red	19 lb. 8 oz.	John Wren (2012)		
<b>Grouper, Scamp</b>	<b>27 lb. 2 oz.</b>	<b>Jakob Hallstrom (2014)</b>	<b>23 lb. 6 oz.</b>	<b>Kathy Wash (1987)</b>
Grouper, Warsaw	252 lb. 0 oz.	Gene Whitehurst (1981)	Harvest prohibited, therefore record no longer allowed.	
Jack, Crevalle	38 lb. 8 oz.	Lex Bazemore (2001)	30 lb. 6 oz.	Ann Allen (1981)
Kingfish (Whiting)	2 lb. 12 oz.	Harold Guinn (1975)	2 lb. 4 oz.	Lois E. Guinn (1975)
Ladyfish	3 lb. 12 oz.	Dwight Thornton (1977)	5 lb. 0 oz.	Marjorie Nighbert (1978)
Mackerel, King	75 lb. 12 oz.	Joe H. Bell (2004)	42 lb. 0 oz.	Joyce Richards (1982)
Mackerel, Spanish	8 lb. 4 oz.	James I. Geiger (1991)	7 lb. 14 oz.	Ida Knight (1988)
Marlin, Blue*	491 lb. 8 oz.	John C. Howard, Jr. (1985)	178 lb. 0 oz.	Susan D. Meek (1985)
Marlin, White*	49 lb. 12 oz.	Thomas Hester (1986)	Harvest prohibited, therefore record no longer allowed.	
Mullet, Striped	9 lb. 3 oz.	Steve Middleton (1994)	Minimum weight: 4 lbs.	
Pinfish	1 lb. 9 oz.	Will Ricks (2012)		
Pompano, Florida	5 lb. 4 oz.	Bill Knightbuford (2002)	1 lb. 7 oz.	Laura A. Cheek (1982)
Porgy (Composite)	15 lb. 14 oz.	Louis F. Jiran (1988)	Minimum weight: 3 lbs.	
Porgy, Red	5 lb. 6 oz.	Jimmy Ginn (1980)	Minimum weight: 4 lbs.	
Runner, Rainbow	17 lb. 12 oz.	Tyler Bond (1984)	Minimum weight: 5 lbs.	
Sailfish*	65 lb. 0 oz.	Vann Downs (1981)	38 lb. 5 oz.	Laura Hammond (1992)
Seatrout, Spotted	9 lb. 7 oz.	Tommy Hall (1976)	7 lb. 8 oz.	Amanda Wooten (1990)
Shark, Blacktip	131 lb. 0 oz.	Albert Lee Boyd (1978)	148 lb. 0 oz.	Allison Gerber (2008)
Shark, Bonnethead	22 lb. 8 oz.	Zachery Gross (2009)	22 lb. 11.5 oz.	Amanda Page (2012)
Shark, Bull	455 lb. 0 oz.	Mark D. Noble (1978)	121 lb. 9 oz.	Jennifer Swenson (2011)
Shark, Dusky*	272 lb. 8 oz.	Bill Hunter (1978)	6 lb. 2 oz.	Wendy Mead (1982)
Shark, Hammerhead	770 lb. 0 oz.	Charlie Marshall (1973)	10 lb. 0 oz.	Katherine Bullis (1985)
Shark, Lemon	375 lb. 0 oz.	Thomas Winslow (1974)	322 lb. 0 oz.	Deborah Carpenter (2011)
Shark, Mako	228 lb. 8 oz.	Harry Wooley (1975)	No minimum weight	
Shark, Nurse	244 lb. 0 oz.	Bill Watson (1981)	Minimum weight: 50 lbs.	
Shark, Sandbar (Brown)*	158 lb. 8 oz.	Chet Lee Kirby (1979)	124 lb. 0 oz.	Dorothea Bays (1985)
Shark, Sand Tiger*	290 lb. 0 oz.	Billy Castle (1977)	212 lb. 6 oz.	Clara Adams (1984)
Shark, Spinner	145 lb. 6 oz.	Edward J. Hawie (2009)	Minimum weight: 50 lbs.	
Shark, Thresher	116 lb. 0 oz.	Mark D. Noble (1976)	Minimum weight: 50 lbs.	
Shark, Tiger	794 lb. 0 oz.	Chuck Hall (1975)	190 lb. 0 oz.	Pam Page (2012)
Sheepshead	14 lb. 14 oz.	Ralph V. White (2002)	12 lb. 9 oz.	Linda Carroll (2003)
Snapper, Cubera	10 lb. 0 oz.	Chris Gray (2012)		
Snapper, Gray	12 lb. 9 oz.	David Blackshear (2011)	Minimum weight: 5 lbs.	
Snapper, Red	37 lb. 8 oz.	Bill Shearin, Jr. (1988)	29 lb. 8 oz.	Phyllis Thompson (1989)
<b>Snapper, Yellowtail</b>	<b>5 lb. 0 oz.</b>	<b>Eddie N. Vanmeter II (2014)</b>	—	
Snook	10 lb. 2 oz.	Lester Rooks (1990)	10 lb. 6 oz.	Marlene Patton (2008)
Spadefish, Atlantic	13 lb. 2 oz.	Shahram Zare (2004)	11 lb. 5 oz.	Deidra H. Jeffcoat (2003)
<b>Swordfish</b>	<b>205 lb. 8 oz.</b>	<b>Brendin A. Page (2014)</b>	No minimum weight	
Tarpon	161 lb. 0 oz.	C. Edwards (1995)	139 lb. 0 oz.	Wendy A. Mead (1986)
Triggerfish, Gray	11 lb. 3 oz.	Dean Williams (1989)	11 lb. 5 oz.	Elizabeth Zeagler (1987)
Tripletail	38 lb. 14 oz.	Kyle Thigpen (2005)	22 lb. 7 oz.	Joan Thigpen (1994)
Tuna, Blackfin	38 lb. 10 oz.	Teddy Elrod (2005)	30 lb. 8 oz.	Penny Morgan-Turner (1999)
Tuna, Yellowfin	249 lb. 2 oz.	Ken Cooper (1980)	165 lb. 4 oz.	Anne Smith (1973)
Tunny, Little	19 lb. 4 oz.	John Smits (2010)	20 lb. 0 oz.	Str. Mary Clarice (1973)
Wahoo	123 lb. 3 oz.	Michael Stefanick (2000)	77 lb. 0 oz.	Linda Li-Chao Yang (1988)
Weakfish (Summer Trout)	6 lb. 8 oz.	Frank Taylor (1976)	Minimum weight: 3 lb.	

For more information on Saltwater records, go to Coastal Resources Division at 912-264-7218

RED indicates new record!

\* Current regulations require the immediate release of these fish and therefore are not eligible for state records. Due to the maximum 23 inch size limit on Red Drum, a state record cannot be submitted.

## SEASONS, LIMITS, SIZES

All limits per person unless specified. FL = fork length, TL = total length  
(see "How to Measure a Fish," page 43)

SPECIES	OPEN SEASON	DAILY LIMIT AND POSSESSION LIMIT	MINIMUM SIZE (inches)
Amberjack*	All year	1	28 FL
American Eel	All year	25	9 TL
Atlantic croaker	All year	25	
Atlantic sturgeon		No Harvest	
Billfish (Blue marlin, White marlin, Sailfish)*		Catch and Release Only	
Black drum	All year	15	14 TL
Black sea bass*	All year	15	12 TL
Bluefish	All year	15	12 FL
Cobia*	All year	2	33 FL
Dolphin*	All year	10 (Not to exceed 60 per boat, except for headboats which are allowed 10 per paying customer.)	20 FL
Flounder	All year	15	12 TL
Gag grouper*	All year	2	24 TL
King mackerel*	All year	3	24 FL
Red drum (Channel bass, Spottail bass, Redfish)	All year	5	14 TL (23 TL maximum)
Red porgy*	All year	3	14 TL
Red snapper*	All year	2	20 TL
Sharks (other than Hammerheads, SSC and Prohibited Sharks)*	All Year	1 per angler or boat, whichever is less	54 FL
Sharks: Hammerheads (Great, Scalloped, and Smooth)	All Year	1 per angler or boat, whichever is less	78 FL
Small shark composite (SSC)* (Atlantic sharpnose, Bonnethead, Spiny dogfish)	All Year	1 per angler or boat, whichever is less	30 FL
Prohibited Sharks (NO HARVEST)		Sand tiger, Sandbar, Silky, Bigeye sand tiger, Whale, Basking, White, Dusky, Bignose, Galapagos, Night, Reef, Narrowtooth, Caribbean sharpnose, Smalltail, Atlantic angel, Longfin mako, Bigeye thresher, Sharpnose sevengill, Bluntnose sixgill, and Bigeye sixgill	
Sheepshead	All year	15	10 FL
Spanish mackerel*	All year	15	12 FL
Spot	All year	25	
Spotted seatrout	All year	15	13 TL
Striped bass (Saltwater)	All year	2	22 TL
Striped bass (Savannah River)	All year	2	27 TL
Tarpon	All year	1	68 FL
Tripletail	All year	2	18 TL
Weakfish	All year	1	13 TL

\* These species are also federally managed from 3 to 200 miles offshore. Go to [www.safmc.net](http://www.safmc.net) for federal regulations.

## Tagged Fish

Coastal Resources Division (CRD) biologists are conducting long-term studies on the growth, migration and fishing exploitation rates of red drum, tarpon, and tripletail. If you catch a tagged fish, please record and report the following information: 1) your name, address, and phone number, 2) fish species, 3) date caught, 4) tag number, 5) total length and location, and 6) whether the fish was kept or released. To report a tagged fish call (912) 264-7218. If released, please do not remove the tag.

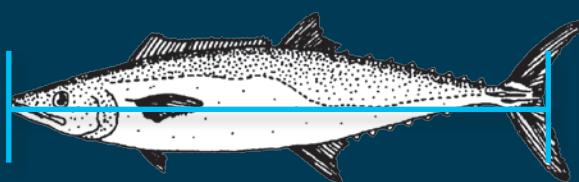
If kept, please return the tag to GADNR/CRD, One Conservation Way, Brunswick, GA 31520. If the tag number is not legible lightly scrape the tag with your fingernail or similar flat object.

Tripletail with tag ID beginning with the prefix "TT" contain surgically implanted acoustic transmitters. Anglers who catch these tagged fish are encouraged to release them with the tag intact, then call and report the catch.

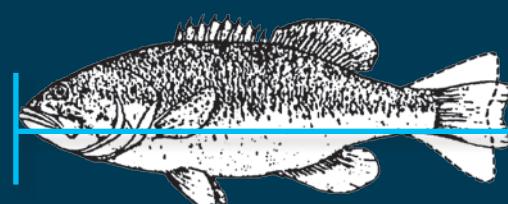
If you are an angler who practices catch and release and would like to become a cooperative angler please contact the Cooperative Angler Tagging Program at 912-264-7218.

## How to Measure a Fish

Freshwater fish are measured as Total Length (TL). Minimum sizes for saltwater finfish are measured in two ways: Total Length (TL) and Fork Length (FL). Methods for measuring fish are described below:



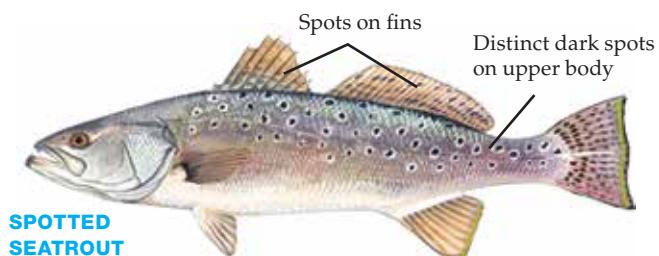
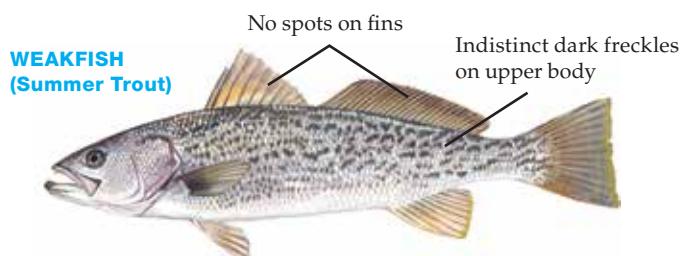
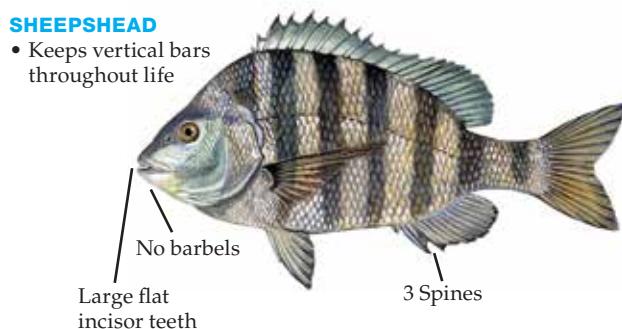
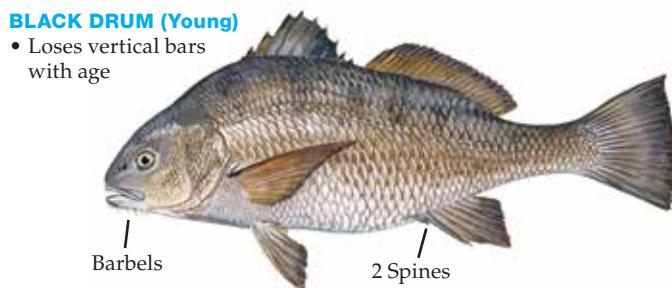
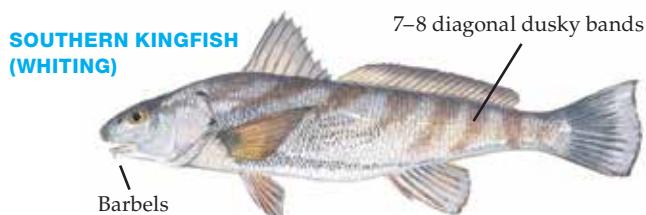
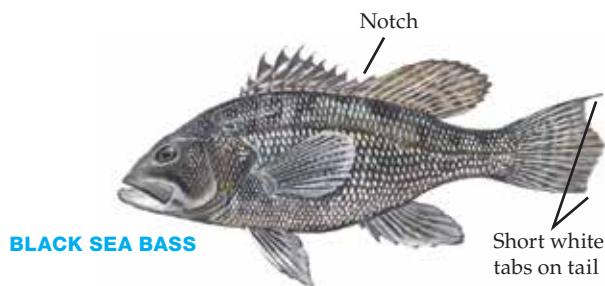
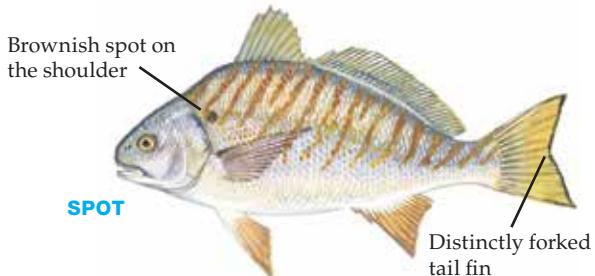
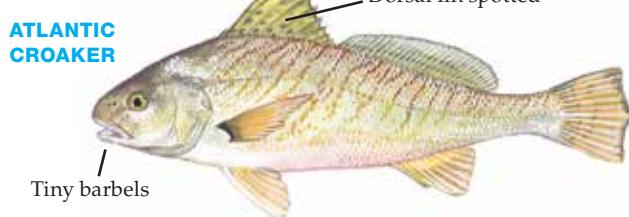
**Fork Length**



**Total Length**

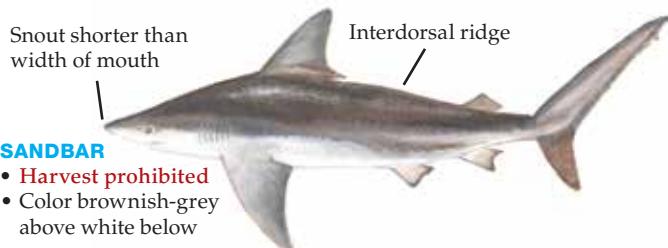
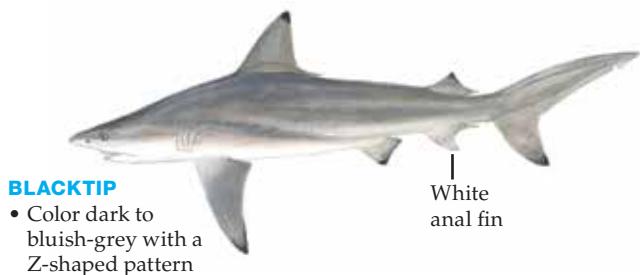
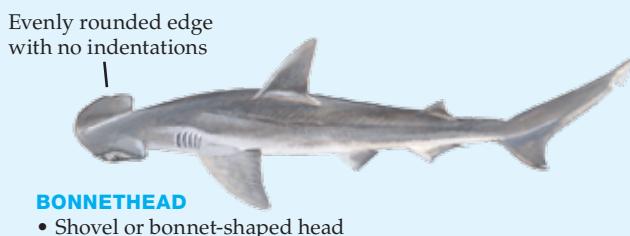
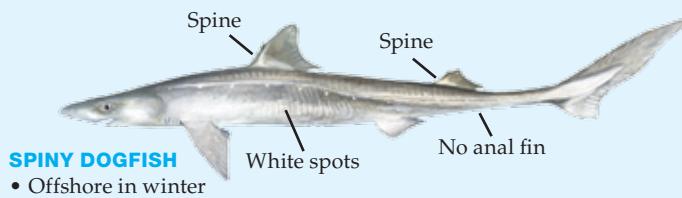
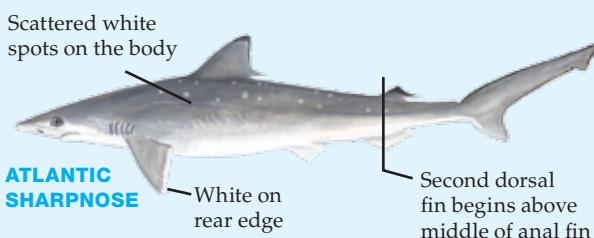
# SALTWATER

## GEORGIA SALTWATER FISH

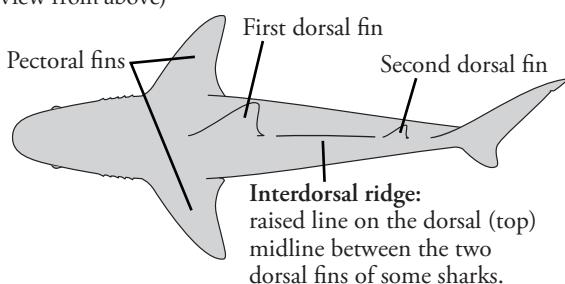




## SMALL SHARK COMPOSITE



### SHARK ANATOMY (view from above)



### SHARKS FOUND IN GEORGIA WATERS THAT CAN BE HARVESTED (not including small shark composite above)

Blacknose	Blacktip
Bull	Finetooth
Lemon	Nurse
Scalloped Hammerhead	Smooth Hammerhead
Thresher	Tiger (has interdorsal ridge)

Most sharks with an interdorsal ridge caught in Georgia waters will be included in the "prohibited" or "no harvest" categories.

If you are not sure of the species and whether you may keep it, release it.

See the complete Seasons, Limits, Sizes list on page 43.

Fish identification pictures by: Duane Raver

# SALTWATER

## SHRIMP, CRAB, SHELLFISH & BAIT MINNOWS

A Georgia Fishing license is required to recreationally fish for any seafood, whether for personal consumption or bait. **It is illegal to sell any seafood or bait harvested with a recreational license!**

### Shrimp

It is unlawful for any person to sell or otherwise dispose of, for human consumption, any shrimp taken as bait.

### SHRIMP "BAITING" PROHIBITED

It is unlawful to place, deposit, distribute, or scatter any bait of any kind in, on, or over any waters so as to lure, attract, or entice shrimp toward the bait or to cause shrimp to congregate in the area where bait is placed. It is illegal to knowingly fish for shrimp in baited waters.

### SHRIMPING SEASON

Unless otherwise designated, there is no closed season for the harvest of bait shrimp, regardless of the approved gear used. The season for the recreational harvest of food shrimp is the same as that established for commercial shrimping. The Commissioner of DNR may open the season from May 15 through the end of February; however, it is generally opened mid-June through mid-January. The opening and closing of the food shrimping season is announced via coastal media outlets, posted at marinas, and at [www.CoastalGADNR.org](http://www.CoastalGADNR.org).

### TRAWL NETS (Sport Bait Shrimping)

**Gear:** Power-drawn trawl nets 10 feet or smaller may be used in saltwaters to harvest shrimp for bait. Information on the specific net dimensions for bait trawls is available from DNR offices in Brunswick.

**Areas:** Unless designated otherwise, a 10-foot sport bait trawl may be used at any season to take shrimp only in rivers and creeks or portions thereof that have been opened to bait shrimping by DNR. Charts of established "Bait Zones" are also available at [georgiaoutdoormap.com](http://georgiaoutdoormap.com).

**Hours:** Trawling for bait shrimp is legal only between the hours of  $\frac{1}{2}$  hour before official sunrise to  $\frac{1}{2}$  hour after official sunset.

**Harvest Limit:** A sport bait shrimper may not possess at any time more than two (2) quarts of shrimp, no more than  $\frac{1}{2}$  pint of which may be dead, and may not take more than four (4) quarts of shrimp within a 24-hour period. When two or more persons occupy the same boat, there may be no more than four (4) quarts of shrimp on board the boat at any time; no more than one pint of which may be dead, and no more than

eight (8) quarts of shrimp may be taken within a 24-hour period.

**Commercial licenses are required to use trawl nets (power-drawn or hand-retrieved) to harvest shrimp for food. Trawling for food shrimp may only be conducted in the waters seaward of the sound boundary when those waters are open to the harvest of food shrimp.**

### SEINES

**Gear and Areas:** Seines equal to or smaller than 12 feet long, with a maximum depth of four feet, and a maximum stretch mesh of one (1) inch may be used throughout Georgia's saltwaters. The use of seines over 12 feet long in any inlet or tidal slough is prohibited. Seines less than 100 feet long and with a minimum stretch mesh of  $1\frac{1}{4}$  inches may be used on sand beaches of any barrier island in Georgia. Seines from 100 to 300 feet long and with a minimum mesh size of  $2\frac{1}{2}$  inches may be used only on the oceanfront sides of beaches. Seines over 300 feet long are also prohibited. It is unlawful to use any seine in saltwaters such that it blocks more than  $\frac{1}{2}$  of the entrance of any tidal river, creek, slough, or inlet to the ocean.

**Hours:** Unless otherwise designated, seines may be used any time of day during the open season for bait shrimp and food shrimp.

**Harvest Limits:** Recreational seiners collecting bait shrimp are limited to two quarts per person at any time and no more than four quarts per person per day, or a maximum of four quarts per group at any time or eight quarts per day. No one person taking food shrimp solely by means of a seine, whether such person is acting alone or in a group of persons, may possess more than 24 quarts of shrimp with heads on or 15 quarts of tails taken by such seine in any 24-hour period. If any person or group of persons occupying the same boat is in possession of a cast net and a seine, such person or persons shall be subject to the limits imposed for shrimp taken by cast net.

### CAST NETS

**Gear:** A cast net is a cone shaped net with a weighted circumference thrown and retrieved by hand without mechanical assistance. Two types of cast nets are defined: a "Bait shrimp cast net" having a minimum bar mesh of  $\frac{3}{8}$  inch and a "Food shrimp cast net" having a minimum bar mesh of  $\frac{5}{8}$  inch. Bait shrimp cast nets cannot be used to take shrimp for personal consumption; however, food shrimp cast nets may be used to take bait. There are no length restrictions on either net and cast nets can be

modified with the addition of duct tape or other materials to enhance performance.

**Areas and Hours:** During the open season and unless designated otherwise, cast nets may be used to harvest bait or food shrimp at any time of day in all of Georgia's saltwaters.

**Harvest Limits:** Recreational cast netters collecting bait shrimp are limited to two quarts per person at any time, provided that person may take a maximum of four quarts of bait shrimp per day. When two or more persons occupy the same boat, there may be no more than four quarts of bait onboard the boat at any time, and the persons occupying the boat may take no more than eight quarts of bait shrimp per day. Bait shrimp may be alive or dead when caught with a cast. No person taking food shrimp with a cast net may possess more than 48 quarts of heads-on shrimp or 30 quarts of shrimp tails in any day. When one or more persons occupy the same boat, there may be no more than 48 quarts of heads-on shrimp or 30 quarts of shrimp tails on board at any time. No vessel owner shall allow the vessel to be used to take more than the allowable catch limits in any day.

### Stone Crabs

Georgia does not regulate the harvest of stone crab; however, the harvest of the whole crab is discouraged. It is recommended that only one claw measuring at least  $2\frac{3}{4}$  inches from the elbow to the tip of the lower, immovable finger be removed. A properly removed claw should not have meat from the body attached.

### Blue Crabs

#### AREAS, SEASONS, HOURS

Unless otherwise designated, the saltwaters of Georgia are open year-round for recreational crabbing at any time of the day.

#### GEAR

**Traps:** Up to six standard size crab traps ( $2 \times 2$  feet or smaller) may be used recreationally. Two unobstructed escapement rings ( $2\frac{3}{8}$  inch inside diameter) must be installed on an outside vertical wall. Each trap must be marked with a fluorescent green or lime green float bearing the owner's name and address in one-inch letters. Traps should be sufficiently weighted to prevent loss in strong tidal currents. It is unlawful to place or set crab traps in the channel of any stream with a lawfully established system of waterway markers. Disposal of crab traps in public waters is a violation of State and Federal laws.

**Other Gear:** Subject to other restrictions outlined in these regulations, legal crabs may be taken with other legal fishing gear such as seines, cast nets, hand-lines, and lift rings.

#### SIZE AND HARVEST LIMITS

It is unlawful to take or possess any crab less than 5 inches from spike to spike across the back (other than a "peeler" or a "mature adult female" crab). Peelers must measure at least 3 inches from spike to spike across the back. **No sponge (egg-bearing) crabs are allowed.** Recreational crabbers may take no more than one bushel of crabs during any 24-hour period. No more than two bushels may be taken recreationally or possessed during a 24-hour period.



on a boat with more than one person aboard.

**Terrapins in Crab Traps:** Recent studies have investigated the effectiveness of excluder devices for preventing the capture of diamond-back terrapins in commercial-style crab traps. Terrapins that enter crab traps cannot escape and often drown. To learn how to build your own terrapin excluder visit [www.terrapinconservation.org](http://www.terrapinconservation.org).

## Shellfish

### SEASON AND HOURS

Saltwaters may be opened for taking shellfish between January 1 and December 31. Prior to harvesting any shellfish, check with the DNR-Coastal Resources Division ([www.CoastalGADNR.org](http://www.CoastalGADNR.org)) for any seasonal closures that may be in effect during the calendar year. Shellfish must be harvested between the hours of ½ hour before official sunrise and ½ hour after official sunset.

### GEAR

Shellfish may only be taken with handheld implements.

### AREAS

Updated charts of approved public picking areas for shellfish should be obtained from Coastal Resources Division's Ecological Services Section or at [georgiaoutdoormap.com](http://georgiaoutdoormap.com). It is illegal to recreationally harvest shellfish except in designated public picking areas, unless authorized in writing by a private property owner with legal harvest rights to an area. Private property owners wishing to harvest recreational quantities of shellfish or to issue permission to others must notify and provide DNR with specific information. It is unlawful to give permission to take shellfish from a closed area. Harvesters taking shellfish from private property must have on their person proof of ownership or permission.

### SIZE AND HARVEST LIMITS

Oysters must measure no less than three inches from hinge to mouth, unless the oyster cannot be removed from a legal-sized oyster without destroying it. For clams, the maximum depth from one shell half to the other must be at least ¾ inch thick. Recreational quantity limits are up to two bushels of oysters and one bushel of clams per person per day, with a maximum limit of six bushels of oysters and one bushel of clams per boat per day.

### Whelk (conch)

Recreational harvest of whelk is limited to 1 bushel/person. There is no minimum size, closed season or closed area. A recreational fishing license is required, including hand harvest from the beach.

### Bait Minnows

#### SEASON, HOURS AND AREAS

Bait minnows may be harvested year-round. **Bait minnows may not be trapped in freshwater.**

### GEAR

No more than two traps may be used recreationally, except that a licensed saltwater fishing guide may use a maximum of four traps. Maximum dimensions for rectangular traps may not exceed 24 x 8 x 9 inches. Cylindrical traps may not exceed 24 inches in length and 30 inches in circumference. Recreational bait minnow traps shall have a mesh size of no smaller than ¼ inch bar mesh. The throat opening of the funnel shall not exceed ¾ inch in diameter. Each trap must have attached a tag or float bearing the name and address of the person using the trap. Subject to specific gear design criteria, sizes, time of day, and area restrictions outlined in these regulations, bait minnows may also be taken recreationally year-round in seines and cast nets.

## Guidelines for Sea Turtle Protection

If you hook or entangle a sea turtle while fishing, contact Georgia DNR Hotline: 1-800-2-SaveMe.

- Keep hands away from turtle's mouth and flippers.
- Do not lift the turtle by the hook or by pulling on the line.
- Safely land the turtle using a net or by walking it to shore.
- Leave the hook in place as removing it can cause more damage.
- Keep the turtle out of direct sunlight and cover with damp towel.
- Use non-stainless, barbless hooks when possible.

If you cannot reach Georgia DNR, cut the line as short as possible and release the turtle.

### POSSESSION LIMITS

No individual recreationally harvesting bait minnows may possess more than two quarts of bait minnows at any given time. A licensed saltwater fishing guide may possess not more than 10 quarts at any given time.

Office of National Marine Sanctuaries  
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

## GRAY'S REEF NATIONAL MARINE SANCTUARY



To promote safe diving & boating practices, Gray's Reef now allows weighted marker buoys

#### GUIDE FOR RECREATION IN THE SANCTUARY

Regulations are in place throughout the entire area of the Sanctuary. Additional regulations apply within the Research Area.  
For full text of sanctuary regulations, see 15 CFR 922 Subpart 1

[graysreef.noaa.gov](http://graysreef.noaa.gov)



## HANDLING & RELEASING FISH GENERAL GUIDELINES

Many marine fish have gas-filled organs called swim bladders. These organs control buoyancy and allow the fish to maintain depth. When some fish are brought quickly to the surface, the gas in the swim bladder can over-expand and rupture the bladder, a condition known as "**barotrauma**." Escaping gas fills the gut cavity which can lead to everted stomachs or intestines. If released in this condition, the fish cannot descend and may float away and die. Generally, fish caught deeper than 30 feet will suffer some effects of barotrauma.

- **Recompression.** The **best and first choice** for release should be to return fish to the depth from which they are caught, a technique known as recompression. A variety of recompression tools are on the market, including descender devices, release weights, and release baskets (see [www.fishsmart.org](http://www.fishsmart.org)). Fish should be returned to the depth of capture when practical. If catching fish at great depth, returning them to at least 60 to 100 feet will dramatically improve survival.
- **Venting.** If recompression is not possible, venting is a second option. Venting helps the gas escape and allows the fish to descend. A simple venting tool can be made by mounting a sharpened football needle in a 1" x 3" dowel rod with a hole drilled lengthwise through the rod to allow gas to pass. Hold the fish gently on its side. Insert a needle through the thin lower body wall below the rear end of the pectoral fin. Insert the needle only as far as needed to allow the gas to escape. Squeeze gently to help push the gas out.

- **Do not puncture a protruding stomach or try to push the stomach back into the throat. Remember a knife is not a proper venting tool!**

By developing a few simple habits, anglers can greatly increase the chances that the fish they release will survive. Try these tips the next time you go fishing.

- **Plan Ahead.** Before you go, decide whether you might release fish on your trip and prepare the equipment necessary to do so.
- **Avoid Encounter.** If catching fish that you don't want or cannot keep due to regulation, change your fishing depth, move to a different area, or use different bait.
- **Use Appropriate Gear.** Use non-stainless steel hooks that dissolve quickly. Use non-offset circle hooks when fishing with natural bait to avoid gut-hooking. Flatten barbs so they can be removed with less damage to a fish.
- **Don't Exhaust the Fish.** Use gear and line strength to minimize playing time, landing fish as quickly as possible. If possible, leave fish in the water rather than bringing them on board. If you must handle, use knotless rubberized landing nets, rubberized gloves, or wet towels or wet hands to avoid removing the slime layer. Make sure to wet your measuring board or boat deck. Don't put your fingers in the gills.
- **Support the Body When Lifting Large Fish.** The lower jaw is not meant to support the full weight of any fish.

## Ranger Hotline

### TO REPORT VIOLATIONS

Please refer to call out box on page 28.

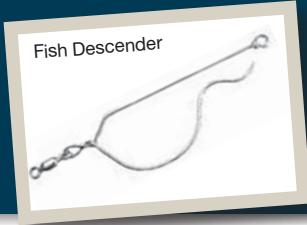
### TO REPORT VIOLATIONS IN FEDERAL WATERS

- U.S. Coast Guard stations in Brunswick 912-267-7999 and Tybee Island 912-786-5440
- NOAA's toll-free, 24-hour Fisheries Enforcement hotline 800-853-1964
- DNR LE 800-241-4113

- **Time is of the Essence!** Release fish as soon as practical and do not keep them out of the water longer than necessary. Have your camera always on the ready.

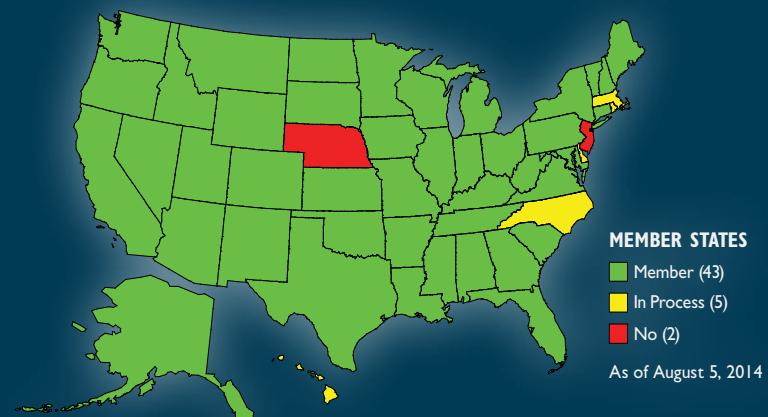
- **Some Fish May Need a Little Assistance.** If the fish does not immediately swim away, support the fish horizontally in the water and gently move it back and forth so that water runs over the gills. Release the fish when it is able to swim away on its own.

## Recompression Tools



## Wildlife Violator Compact

Georgia, along with 43 other states, is a member of the Wildlife Violator Compact (WVC). This allows Wildlife Officers to treat non-residents hunting in WVC member states (shown below in green) as if they were a resident of that state in regards to wildlife violations. All wildlife law violators will be held more responsible due to the fact that their illegal activities in one state can affect their hunting privileges in all WVC member states.



For more information visit [georgiawildlife.com](http://georgiawildlife.com)



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