

# Saltwater Harvest Regulations

## General Information

- For freshwater finfish species caught in the public salt waters of this state, statewide bag, possession and length limits [as listed](#).
- A person taking or attempting to take game and nongame fish from salt water for non-commercial purposes is required to have a valid fishing license and a saltwater fishing stamp endorsement.

## Texas State Waters - Federal Waters

Texas recreational and commercial fishermen fishing more than nine (9) nautical miles off the coast of Texas are in federal waters and are subject to rules and regulations that may differ from those in state waters. To ensure that you are in compliance with federal regulations, you should contact the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council at (888) 833-1844 (toll free) or [visit their website](#)

The limits and restrictions in this guide apply to aquatic life caught in the public waters of Texas out to nine (9) nautical miles in the Gulf of Mexico, and also apply to aquatic life caught between 9 and 200 nautical miles in the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) and landed in this state. (Federal law also regulates species between 9 and 200 nautical miles managed under a Federal Fishery Management Plan.) See [Importation of Wildlife Resources](#).

## Bag and Length Limits for Saltwater Fish

- Daily bag is the quantity of a species of a wildlife resource that may be taken in one day.
- Possession limit is twice the daily bag on game and nongame fish, except as provided in this guide.
- Possession limit does not apply to wildlife resources in the possession of or stored by a person at their [permanent residence](#).
- There are no bag, possession, or length limits on game or nongame fish, except as listed in this guide.

Statewide Bag and Length Limits for Saltwater Fish		
Species	Daily Bag	Length in Inches (Minimum-Maximum)
Amberjack, Greater	1	32 - No limit
Bass: striped, its hybrids and subspecies	5 (in any combination)	18 — No limit
Catfish: channel and blue catfish, their hybrids and subspecies	25 (in any combination)	12 — No limit
Catfish, flathead	5	18 — No limit
Catfish, gafftopsail	No limit	14 — No limit
Cobia	2	37 — No limit
Drum, black*	5	14 — 30*

Statewide Bag and Length Limits for Saltwater Fish		
Drum, red**	3	20 — 28**
Flounder: all species, their hybrids and subspecies***	10 (in any combination)	14 — No limit***
Grouper, goliath (formerly called Jewfish)	0	Catch and release only
Mackerel, king	2	27 — No limit
Mackerel, Spanish	15	14 — No limit
Marlin, blue	No limit	131 — No limit
Marlin, white	No limit	86 — No limit
Mullet: all species, their hybrids and subspecies****	No limit	No limit — 12**** (during Oct., Nov., Dec. & Jan.)
Sailfish	No limit	84 — No limit
Seatrout, spotted*****	10	15 — 25*****
Shark: all species, their hybrids and subspecies	1	24 — No limit
Sheepshead	5	12 — No limit
Snapper, lane	No limit	8 — No limit
Snapper, red	4	15 — No limit
Snapper, vermilion	No limit	10 — No limit
Snook	1	24 — 28
Tarpon	1	80 — no limit
Tripletail	3	17 — no limit

\* Black Drum: No more than one black drum over 52 inches may be retained per person per day and counts as part of the daily bag and possession limit.

\*\* Red drum special regulation: During a license year, one red drum over the stated maximum length limit may be retained when affixed with a properly completed [Red Drum Tag](#) and one red drum over the stated maximum length limit may be retained when affixed with a properly completed Bonus Red Drum Tag. Any fish retained under authority of a Red Drum Tag or a Bonus Red Drum Tag may be retained in addition to the daily bag and possession limit as stated in this section.

\*\*\*Flounder special regulation: The possession limit for flounder is 10 fish.

\*\*\*\* Mullet: May not take from public waters, or possess on board a boat, mullet over 12 inches during October, November, December, and January. No limits apply during other months.

\*\*\*\*\* Spotted Seatrout: No more than one spotted seatrout over the stated maximum length may be retained per person per day and counts as part of the daily bag and possession limit.