

2002 RECREATIONAL FISHING REGULATIONS FOR VIRGINIA'S MARINE WATERS





« ALL REGULATIONS ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE MONTHLY »








It is the angler's responsibility to know and abide by all current regulations and laws.






New statewide 17.5 inch size limit for flounder effective June 1, 2002 (see below)
Effective July 1, 2002 a license will be required in ocean waters.

Note: click on the name of the fish to view more information on a particular fish. These links will take you to other web sites on the Internet. Some images are time consuming to browse. Some pages require that you scroll through to the actual fish you wish to see. Use your browser's <BACK> button to return to the VMRC web page. Please be aware that the images provided do not constitute a legal description of the species, if you have a question about the identification of a fish contact the Fisheries Management Division or a Marine Patrol Officer.

REVISED May 2002. Fish illustrations courtesy [Duane Raver](#) (may not be reproduced without permission).

	<p>AMBERJACK</p> <p>[Regulation 4 VAC 20-510-10 et seq.]</p> <p>Minimum Size Limit.....32 inches Possession Limit.....2 per person</p>
	<p>AMERICAN EEL</p> <p>[Regulation 4 VAC 20-500-10 et seq.]</p> <p>Minimum Size Limit.....6 inches Possession Limit.....50 per person</p>
	<p>BLACK DRUM (DRUM, DRUMFISH)</p> <p>[Regulation 4 VAC 20-320-10 et seq.]</p> <p>Minimum Size Limit.....16 inches Possession Limit.....1 per person</p>
	<p>BLACK SEA BASS (SEA BASS)</p> <p>[Regulation 4 VAC 20-950-10 et seq.]</p> <p>Minimum Size Limit.....11 1/2 inches Possession Limit..... 25 per person</p>

	<p><u>BLUEFISH</u></p> <p>[Regulation 4 VAC 20-450-10 et seq.]</p> <p>Minimum Size Limit.....none Possession Limit.....10 per person</p>
	<p><u>COBIA</u></p> <p>[Regulation 4 VAC 20-510-10 et seq.]</p> <p>Minimum Size Limit.....37 inches Possession Limit.....1 per person</p>
	<p><u>GREY TROUT</u> (WEAKFISH)</p> <p>[Regulation 4 VAC 20-380-10 et seq.]</p> <p>Minimum Size Limit: 12 inches (May 1 through August 15) Possession Limit: 4 per person (May 1 through August 15) Minimum Size Limit: 14 inches (August 16 through April 30) Possession Limit: 14 per person (August 16 through April 30)</p>
	<p><u>KING MACKEREL</u></p> <p>[Regulation 4 VAC 20-540-10 et seq.]</p> <p>Minimum Size Limit.....27 inches Possession Limit.....3 per person</p>
	<p><u>RED DRUM</u> (CHANNEL BASS, REDFISH)</p> <p>[Regulation 4 VAC 20-280-10 et seq.]</p> <p>Minimum Size Limit.....18 inches Maximum Size Limit.....27 inches * Possession Limit.....5 per person <i>*May possess only 1 fish over 27 inches per person</i></p>
	<p>SCUP (PORGY)</p> <p>[Regulation 4 VAC 20-910-10 et seq.]</p> <p>Minimum Size Limit.....8 inches Possession Limit..... 50 per person</p>
	<p><u>SHAD</u> (AMERICAN SHAD) (Chesapeake Bay and Tributaries)</p> <p>[Regulation 4 VAC 20-530-10 et seq.]</p> <p>Season.....Closed; illegal to possess</p>

	<p><u>SHARKS</u> (ALL SPECIES EXCEPT DOGFISH)</p> <p>[Regulation 4 VAC 20-490-10 et seq.]</p> <p>Minimum Size Limit.....None Possession Limit.....1 per person</p>
	<p><u>SPADEFISH</u></p> <p>[Regulation 4 VAC 20-970-10 et seq.]</p> <p>Possession Limit.....4 per person</p>
	<p><u>SPANISH MACKEREL</u></p> <p>[Regulation 4 VAC 20-540-10 et seq.]</p> <p>Minimum Size Limit.....14 inches Possession Limit.....15 per person</p>
	<p><u>SPECKLED TROUT</u> (SPOTTED SEATROUT) [Regulation 4 VAC 20-280-10 et seq.]</p> <p>Minimum Size Limit.....14 inches Possession Limit.....10 per person</p>
	<p><u>STRIPED BASS</u> (ROCKFISH, STRIPER)</p> <p>[Regulation 4 VAC 20-252-10 et seq.]</p>
<p><u>Coastal Season</u> (VA Territorial Sea out to 3 miles).....January 1, 2002 through March 31, 2002 &May 16, 2002 through December 31, 2002Minimum Size Limit..... 28 inchesPossession Limit..... 2 per person</p> <p>Coastal regulations apply in Virginia's portion of the Territorial Sea, plus all of the creeks, bays, inlets, and tributaries on the seaside of Accomack County, Northhampton County (including areas east of the causeway from Fisherman Island to the mainland) and the City of Virginia Beach (including federal areas and state parks fronting on the Atlantic Ocean and east and south of the point where the shoreward boundary of the Territorial Sea joins the mainland at Cape Henry). Click here for map of coastal boundary near the CBBT.</p> <p><u>Chesapeake Bay Season</u> (Spring).....May 16, 2002 through June 15, 2002Minimum Size Limit..... 18 inchesMaximum Size Limit * 28 inchesPossession Limit..... 2 per person</p>	

* 1 fish of the 2 fish possession limit may be larger than 32 inches ([catch report required if striped bass 32" or greater is kept](#)); No possession of 32" or greater striped bass in the [Spawning Reaches](#) 1 May through 15 June.

Chesapeake Bay Season (Fall).....October 4, 2002 through December 31, 2002
.....Minimum Size Limit..... 18 inches
.....Possession Limit..... 2 per person

Chesapeake Bay regulations apply in the main stem of the Chesapeake Bay and Virginia's Chesapeake Bay tributary rivers, **except for the tributary rivers emptying into the Potomac River (see note below for more information on Potomac River striper regulations).**

Virginia Trophy Season.....May 1, 2002 through May 15, 2002
.....Minimum Size Limit..... 32 inches
.....Possession Limit..... 1 per person

.....Additional Regulations.....[Catch Report Required](#)
No possession of 32" or greater striped bass in the [Spawning Reaches](#) 1 May through 15 June.

Trophy Season regulations apply in Virginia's Territorial Sea and the Chesapeake Bay and its Virginia tributary rivers, **except for the tributary rivers emptying into the Potomac River (see note below for more information on Potomac River striper regulations).**

Other Virginia restrictions: You may not combine possession limits when seasons overlap or you fish in multiple jurisdictions. Gaffing striped bass or attempting to gaff striped bass is illegal in Virginia marine waters.

Federal water striped bass regulations: Atlantic Ocean waters beyond the 3 mile limit are closed to the taking and possession of striped bass all year.

Potomac River striped bass regulations: Different regulations apply in the Potomac River and its tributaries, including its Virginia tributaries. These areas are subject to the rules and regulations of the Potomac River Fisheries Commission, P.O. Box 9, Colonial Beach, VA 22443, (804) 224-7148; (800) 266-3904. PRFC rules as of 3/1/02 are below, for further information on these rules contact PRFC directly.

2002 PRFC Spring Season: April 20, 2002 - May 15, 2002

Open Area: Below Harry W. Nice Bridge (Rt.301)

Minimum Size Limit: 28"

Possession Limit: 1 per person

Bait Restrictions: No live eel. No more than 2 hooks

2002 PRFC Summer/Fall Season: May 16, 2002 - December 31, 2002

Open Area: Below Woodrow Wilson Bridge (I-95)

Minimum Size Limit: 18" with only 1 over 28"

Possession Limit: 2 per person



Bait Restrictions: None

General PRFC Restrictions: When fishing for striped bass during closed season - barbless hooks are required; sport fish license is required (check reciprocity status by using link below this table on saltwater fishing license requirements); possession of fillets is prohibited; fish caught by hook&line may not be sold or offered for sale except by commercial license; fish whose size is prohibited, season is closed, or is in excess of possession limit must be immediately released to the waters where found.



STURGEON [Code Section 28.2-303]

.....illegal to possess

	<p><u>SUMMER FLOUNDER</u></p> <p>[Regulation 4 VAC 20-620-10 et seq.]</p> <p>Effective June 1, 2002 the following statewide limits will be in effect:</p> <p>Minimum Size Limit.....17 1/2 inches Possession Limit.....8 per person Closed Season (illegal to possess).....January 1 through March 28, 2002</p>
	<p><u>TAUTOG</u></p> <p>[Regulation 4 VAC 20-960-10 et seq.]</p> <p>Minimum Size Limit.....14 inches Possession Limit.....7 per person</p>

Click on the following PDF links to get a printable, condensed version of the regulations summarized above: [General Size/Possession Limits Card](#) / [Striped Bass Regulations Card](#)

ADDITIONAL REGULATIONS:

Saltwater Fishing License Requirements.....Individual license required in Chesapeake Bay, and its tributaries, unless fishing on licensed pier, licensed charter boat or licensed private boat; or specifically exempted. Click on link to see specific information on licensing requirements, license fees, or license agents. **Effective July 1, 2002 a license will be required in ocean waters (click on the license requirements link to learn more).**

Cast Net.....License required to use cast net, except to catch small quantities of mullet, menhaden, or minnows.

Measurements.....Size limits are total length measurements; fish must be measured tip of nose to tip of tail, except black sea bass, which are measured from tip of nose along the centerline of the body, to the center of the tail.

Altering fish while on board boat.....alteration of fish such that the fish can not be identified or properly measured may not be legal. Consult [Regulation 4 VAC 20-580](#) for more information.

Snagging.....Illegal to snag, or attempt to snag, any fish.

« **ALL REGULATIONS are Subject to Change**; Regulations affecting Virginia fishermen are established by the Commonwealth of Virginia, Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission and federal management agencies; these regulations are subject to review and change throughout the calendar year. **For more information on the most current regulations, contact: Virginia Marine Resources Commission, 2600 Washington Ave., Newport News, VA 23607 (757) 247-2200.**

