

## GENERAL INFORMATION

### General Information

The following laws pertain to recreational saltwater fishing, shrimping, crabbing and shellfishing. Individuals (age 16 and older) harvesting marine resources, including finfish, oysters, clams, shrimp and crab must purchase an annual, temporary or 3 Year Saltwater Recreational Fishing License - unless fishing on a licensed public fishing pier; fishing on a licensed charter/headboat vessel while under hire; using 3 or fewer drop nets, 3 or fewer fold up traps, or 3 or fewer handlines with no hooks and a single bait per line (chicken necking); or shrimp baiting (which requires a shrimp baiting license).

Fishing piers and chartered vessels charging a fee for fishing must purchase an annual

Public Fishing Pier or Charter/Headboat Vessel license, respectively. Applications for Public Fishing Pier and Charter Vessel Licenses are available from the SCDNR office in Charleston.

Any person engaged in selling any fish or fishery product, including bait harvested in SC state waters, must first obtain the appropriate license. Regulations concerning commercial saltwater fishing are provided with commercial licenses and are available through the Marine Resources Division at the address below.

As required by S.C. Code Section 8-29-10, applicants for a commercial license or permit are required to complete an affidavit entitled "Verification of Lawful Presence in the United States" certifying that the applicant is law-

fully in the United States. The affidavit MUST be completed, notarized and returned with the application.

For more information, contact: SCDNR Licensing, P.O. Box 12559, Charleston, SC 29422, 843-953-9301, <http://www.dnr.sc.gov/licensing.html>.

For federal fishery limits and regulations, contact: South Atlantic Fishery Management Council, 4055 Faber Place Drive, Suite 201, North Charleston, SC 29405, 843-571-4366, [www.safmc.net](http://www.safmc.net).

To learn about the projects and programs that received support from the Saltwater Recreational Fishing License Program this fiscal year, visit <http://saltwaterfishing.sc.gov>.

### Saltwater Fishing Methods & Devices

For information on how to purchase a Saltwater Recreational Fishing License see page 8.

#### Bush Lines / Pole Lines

##### Permits/License

Saltwater Recreational Fishing License required.

##### Restrictions

Recreational fisherman may not use more than ten bush or pole lines with single hooks or baits.

#### Hook & Line

##### Permits/License

Saltwater Recreational Fishing License required. Federal Highly Migratory Species Permit required when fishing for tuna, billfish, swordfish, and sharks in federal waters. The same federal permit is also required for possession of these species in state waters, with the exception of sharks.

##### Restrictions

- It is unlawful to fish from a boat within 300 feet of commercial fishing piers extending into the Atlantic Ocean.
- Fishing from the shore in the waters under or within 50 feet on either side or beyond the end of any ocean fishing pier in Horry County is prohibited.

#### Gigging

##### (Gig, Spear, & Bow & Arrow)

##### Permits/Licenses

Saltwater Recreational Fishing License required.

##### Restrictions

- It is unlawful to gig for flounder in salt waters during daylight hours. For the purposes of this section, gigging does not include underwater spear fishing.
- It is unlawful to gig for sharks.
- It is unlawful to gig red drum or spotted seatrout during Dec., Jan. and Feb.
- It is unlawful in Georgetown County to gig for fish in saltwaters from the northern tip of North Island to the northern tip of Magnolia Beach during daylight hours.

#### Cast Nets

##### (Other than Shrimp Baiting)

##### Permits/Licenses

Saltwater Recreational Fishing License required.

#### Seines & Gill Nets

##### (Anchor, Set, Stake & Drift Nets)

##### Permits/Licenses

Saltwater Recreational Fishing License and Gill Net Equipment License required. For more information on equipment licenses call 843-953-9311.

##### Seasons

No closed season in saltwater (except shad and herring see page 43).

##### Restrictions

- SC gamefish (cobia, red drum, spotted seatrout, tarpon, and striped bass) may not be taken by nets. Sharks may not be taken by gill nets.
- No more than one lawful gill net can be used recreationally.
- Gill nets no longer than 100 feet with a 3-inch minimum stretched mesh size may be used only in unrestricted areas of the Atlantic Ocean. Gill nets no longer than 100 yards with 3-inch minimum stretched mesh size may be used only in special designated inshore areas.
- Gill nets must be marked with one end buoy that is international orange in color with the name and address of the owner. Operator must be within 500 feet of the net, be within hailing distance and have visual contact with the net at all times when deployed.
- Nets may not be set more than halfway across any waterway at any time.
- Stationary or fixed nets, including gill nets, may not be set or placed within 600 feet of a net previously set.
- It is unlawful to use any seine or gill net in any waters within a state park; except, small hand seines and cast nets for taking shrimp are allowed.

### Need to Know On the Go?

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## Trotlines (Long Lines)

### Permits/Licenses

Saltwater Recreational Fishing License and Trotline Equipment License required. For more information on equipment licenses call 843-953-9311.

### Restrictions

- No more than two trotlines with a cumulative total of 50 hooks or baits can be used recreationally.
- Trotlines used in the inshore SC saltwaters must have at least one end buoy, international orange in color with the name and address of the owner.
- Trotlines used in the Atlantic Ocean must be marked with a buoy not less than 20 inches in diameter at each end, international orange in color, which floats in a manner to be clearly visible at all times.

## Special Information

### Special Management Zones

The following Artificial Reefs have been declared "Special Management Zones" and are protected by federal regulations: BP-25, Beaufort 45, Betsy Ross, Bill Perry, C.J. Davidson, Cape Romain, Capers, Charleston 60, Comanche, Eagles Nest, Edisto 40, Edisto 60, Edisto Offshore, Fripp Island, Georgetown, Greenville, Hilton Head, Hunting Island, Kiawah, Little

River Offshore, North Inlet, Paradise, Pawleys Island, Ten Mile, Vermilion, Wayne Upchurch, Will Goldfinch and Y-73. Fishing may be conducted only with handheld hook and line gear and spearfishing gear (excluding powerheads). The use of fish traps, longlines, gill nets and trawls is prohibited. Powerheads (bangsticks) are prohibited except for safety purposes. It is unlawful to possess, land or sell any species of fish taken with a bangstick (reef and non-reef areas). The harvest and possession of snapper grouper and coastal migratory pelagic species by commercial and recreational fishermen will be limited to the recreational bag limit within the Special Management Zones.

### Unlawful to Sell Gamefish & Billfish

The following species have been declared gamefish and native caught fish may not be sold: cobia, red drum (channel bass), spotted seatrout, striped bass and tarpon. The purchase, barter, trade, or sale of billfish, including marlin, sailfish and spearfish, is unlawful regardless of where taken or landed.

### Prohibited Practices

- Harvest of red drum from federal waters (3-200 miles offshore) is prohibited.
- The use of dynamite, gun powder, lime or any other explosive in or about any waters of this state is unlawful.
- It is unlawful to take, have in one's possession or to land or sell any species of fish taken by means of a bangstick or similar device.

- The commercial sale of diamondback terrapins is prohibited.
- Harvest and possession of horseshoe crabs is prohibited without a commercial permit. A permit is not required to possess a castoff or molted shell of a horseshoe crab.
- It is unlawful to sell or offer for sale any sea turtles or to offer for sale, sell or destroy any sea turtle eggs. Sea turtles are protected by the Federal Endangered Species Act.
- It is unlawful to display, feed, net, trap, harpoon, molest or otherwise interfere with the well-being or normal activity of marine mammals of the orders Cetacea, Sirenia and Pinnipedia, including but not limited to bottlenose dolphin, spotted dolphin, common dolphin, manatee, porpoise, harbor seal and any species of whale in any waters of the state. Marine mammals are also protected by federal law.
- It is unlawful to buy, sell, possess or ship Shortnose Sturgeon and Atlantic Sturgeon.

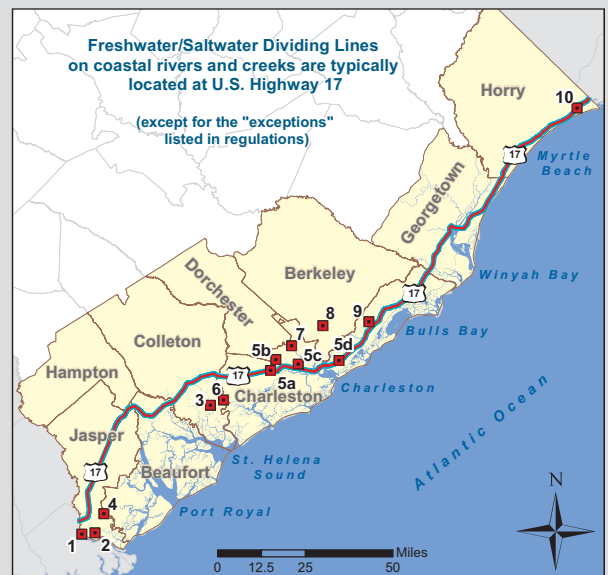
### Marine Protected Areas (MPA's)

Four MPA's (Snowy Grouper Wreck, Northern SC, Edisto, and Charleston Deep Artificial Reef) are located off of the SC coast. Fishing or possession (unless gear is appropriately stored) of snapper grouper species and shark bottom longline gear is prohibited in these areas. For locations and more details on these MPAs, please visit [www.safmc.net](http://www.safmc.net) or call 843-571-4366.

## FRESHWATER/SALTWATER DIVIDING LINE

The dividing line between saltwater and freshwater on the rivers listed is defined in this section. All waters of the rivers and their tributaries, streams and estuaries lying seaward of the dividing lines are considered saltwaters, and all waters lying landward or upstream from all dividing lines are considered freshwaters for purposes of licensing and regulating commercial and recreational fishing. Except as otherwise provided below, the saltwater/freshwater dividing line is US Highway 17:

1. On Savannah River the dividing line is the abandoned Seaboard Railroad track bed located approximately one and three-fourths miles upstream from the US Highway 17A bridge.
2. Wright River is salt water for its entire length.
3. On Ashepoo River the dividing line is the old Seaboard Railroad track bed.
4. On New River the dividing line is at Cook's Landing.
5. Wallace River (5a), Rantowles Creek (5b), Long Branch Creek (5c), and Shem Creek (5d) are saltwater for their entire lengths.
6. On Edisto River the dividing line is the abandoned Seaboard Railroad track bed near Matthews Canal Cut.
7. On Ashley River the dividing line is the confluence of Popper Dam Creek directly across from Magnolia Gardens.
8. On Cooper River the dividing line is the seaward shoreline of Old Back River at the confluence of Old Back River downstream from Bushy Park Reservoir.
9. Wando River is saltwater for its entire length.
10. On the Intracoastal Waterway in Horry County the dividing line is the bridge across the Intracoastal Waterway at the intersection of S.C. Highway 9 and US Highway 17.



For more information visit:  
[www.dnr.sc.gov/marine/dividingline](http://www.dnr.sc.gov/marine/dividingline)

# SIZE & CATCH LIMITS

TL=Total Length, FL=Fork Length; See page 54 for information on how to measure a fish.

AIW=Atlantic Intracoastal Waterway; **State Waters** extend from the saltwater-freshwater dividing line to the 3-mile limit. **Federal Waters** extend from the 3-mile limit to 200 miles offshore (international waters).

**Up to date fishing regulations can be found on the SCDNR website at <http://www.dnr.sc.gov/regs/saltwaterfish.html>.**

**All species in this section must be landed with head and tail intact.**

## SOUTH CAROLINA FINFISH: INSHORE & OFFSHORE

SPECIES	CLOSED SEASON	BAG LIMIT	SIZE LIMIT	RESTRICTIONS
<b>INSHORE FINFISH</b>				
<b>American Shad</b>	No closed season for recreational hook & line harvest; For all other gears, seasons as for commercial harvest.	10 shad per person per day except in Santee River and Rediversion Canal (20 per person per day)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>See page 43 for licensing, permitting, and gear requirements.</li> </ul>
<b>Herring</b>	See page 36 for closed areas.	1 US bushel of herring per person per day		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>See page 43 for licensing, permitting, and gear requirements.</li> </ul>
<b>Black Drum</b>		5 per person per day	14-inch to 27-inch TL	
<b>Bluefish</b>		15 per person per day		
<b>Flounders</b> (Southern, Summer & Gulf)		10 per person per day not to exceed 20 per boat per day	15-inch TL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bag limits apply to hook and line or gig.</li> </ul>
<b>Red Drum</b>	May not be harvested by gig Dec. 1 - Feb. 28	2 per person per day (state waters) not to exceed 6 per boat per day 0 per person per day (federal waters)	15-inch to 23-inch TL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>May only be taken by rod &amp; reel and gig.</li> <li>May not be harvested from federal waters.</li> </ul>
<b>Saltwater Catfishes</b> (Hard-head & gafftopsail catfishes)	Possession prohibited	Possession prohibited		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If caught must be released immediately.</li> </ul>
<b>Sheepshead</b>		10 per person per day not to exceed 30 per boat per day	14-inch TL	
<b>Spotted Seatrout</b>	May not be harvested by gig Dec. 1 - Feb. 28	10 per person per day	14-inch TL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>May only be taken by rod &amp; reel and gig.</li> </ul>
<b>Striped Bass</b>	Possession prohibited: June 1 – Sept. 30 except in lower reach of the Savannah River (2 per person per day year round; see page 30 for details.)	Possession prohibited: June 1 – Sept. 30; 3 fish per person per day: Oct. 1 – May 31 except in lower reach of the Savannah River (2 per person per day year round; see page 30 for details.)	26 inch TL except in lower reach of the Savannah River (27 inch TL; see page 30 for details.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>May only be taken by rod &amp; reel.</li> </ul>
<b>Hybrid Bass, White Bass, &amp; Combinations</b>		In lower reach of the Savannah River: 2 per person per day  All other saltwaters: no bag limit	In the lower reach of the Savannah River: 27 inch TL  All other saltwaters: no size limit	
<b>Tarpon</b>		1 per person per day	77-inch FL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>May only be taken by rod &amp; reel.</li> </ul>
<b>Tripletail</b>	No associated regulations			
<b>Weakfish</b>		1 per person per day	12-inch TL	
<b>Atlantic Croaker, Spot, Whiting</b>		50 per person per day aggregate bag limit		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bag limit applies to hook and line only.</li> </ul>

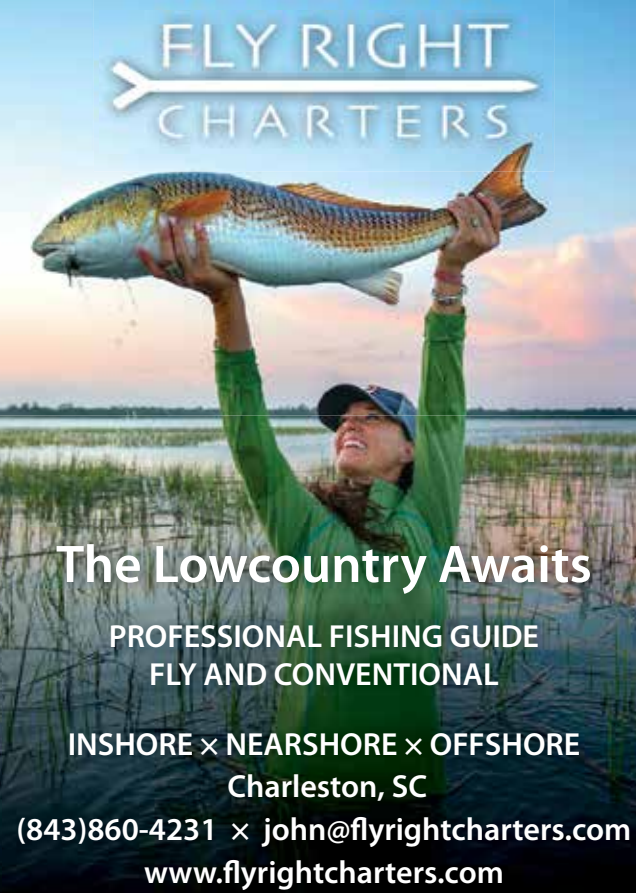


An operator or crew member onboard a for-hire or commercial vessel must have a valid Operator Card when underway fishing for Dolphin/Wahoo. These species are also managed by the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council (SAFMC) in federal waters. Regulations may change. Please contact the SAFMC at 843-571-4366 or [www.safmc.net](http://www.safmc.net) to get the most up to date regulations on these species.

The harvest and possession of coastal migratory pelagic species by commercial and recreational fishermen will be limited to the recreational bag limit within the Special Management Zones. See "Special Information" (page 47) for information on SMZs.

## SOUTH CAROLINA FINFISH: INSHORE & OFFSHORE

SPECIES	CLOSED SEASON	BAG LIMIT	SIZE LIMIT	RESTRICTIONS
<b>OFFSHORE FINFISH</b>				
<b>Cobia</b>	May 1 to May 31 in state waters south of 032° 31.0 N latitude (Jeremy Inlet, Edisto Island) In federal and all other state waters, closed when Annual Catch Limit (ACL) is met	1 per person per day and no more than 3 per boat per day in State waters <b>south</b> of 32.31 1 per person per day and no more than 6 per boat per day Federal waters and State waters <b>north</b> of 32.31	36-inch FL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>For-hire vessels must have a Coastal Migratory Pelagics permit to fish for this species in federal waters.</li> <li>In state waters may only be taken by rod &amp; reel and gig.</li> </ul>
<b>Dolphin</b>		10 per person per day not to exceed 60 per boat per day. Headboats have no boat limit	20-inch FL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>For-hire vessels must have a Dolphin Wahoo permit to fish for this species in federal waters.</li> <li>Sale of recreational catch is prohibited.</li> </ul>
<b>King Mackerel</b>		3 per person per day	24-inch FL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>For-hire vessels must have a Coastal Migratory Pelagics permit to fish for this species in federal waters.</li> </ul>
<b>Spanish Mackerel</b>		15 per person per day	12-inch FL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>For-hire vessels must have a Coastal Migratory Pelagics permit to fish for this species in federal waters.</li> </ul>
<b>Wahoo</b>		2 per person per day		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>For-hire vessels must have a Dolphin Wahoo permit to fish for this species in federal waters.</li> <li>Sale of recreational catch is prohibited.</li> </ul>




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## SIZE &amp; CATCH LIMITS

## SOUTH CAROLINA

## SNAPPER GROUPE COMPLEX

Many of these species are managed under annual catch limits. Seasons may be closed when catch limits are met. Visit <http://sero.nmfs.noaa.gov> for the latest information on the status of annual catch limits.

These species are also managed by the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council (SAFMC) in federal waters. Regulations may change. Please contact the SAFMC at 843-571-4366 or [www.safmc.net](http://www.safmc.net) to get the most up to date regulations on these species. You can also download the FREE mobile application Fish Rules. Fish Rules is available for both android and apple products.

Recreational and commercial fishermen are required to use dehooking tools when fishing for snapper grouper species. Non-stainless circle hooks are required when fishing with natural baits for snapper grouper species.

Sale of snapper grouper under the recreational bag limit is prohibited. For-hire vessels must have a Snapper Grouper permit to fish for these species in federal waters.

The harvest and possession of snapper grouper species by commercial and recreational fishermen will be limited to the recreational bag limit within the Special Management Zones. See "Special Information" (page 47) for information on SMZs.

Sea Turtle Release Gear Requirements: For-hire vessels fishing for snapper grouper species and possessing a federal for-fire permit must have onboard NMFS approved sea turtle release gear and follow release protocols. For more information, call 727-824-5312 or visit, [http://sero.nmfs.noaa.gov/sustainable\\_fisheries/gulf\\_sa/turtle\\_sawfish\\_release/index.html](http://sero.nmfs.noaa.gov/sustainable_fisheries/gulf_sa/turtle_sawfish_release/index.html)

SPECIES	CLOSED SEASON	BAG LIMIT	SIZE LIMIT	RESTRICTIONS
<b>Greater Amberjack</b>		1 per person per day	28-inch FL	• In April, for-hire vessels are limited to 1 per person/day or 1 per person/trip.
<b>Hogfish</b>		2 per person per day	17-inch FL	
<b>Wreckfish</b>	Closed: Jan. 1 – June 30 and Sept. 1 – Dec. 31	1 per vessel per day		
<b>SEABASS</b>				
<b>Black Seabass</b>	In federal waters, closed when Annual Catch Limit (ACL) is met	7 per person per day	13-inch TL	
<b>PORGIES AND SNAPPERS</b>				
<b>Red Porgy</b>		3 per person per day	14-inch TL	
<b>Vermilion Snapper</b>		5 per person per day	12-inch TL	
<b>Red Snapper</b>	Possession prohibited	Possession prohibited		
<b>Lane Snapper</b>		10 per person per day from this group	8-inch TL	
<b>Black, Blackfin, Cubera, Dog, Yellowtail, Gray, Mahogany, Schoolmaster</b>			12-inch TL	
<b>Silk and Queen Snapper</b>			12-inch TL	
<b>Mutton Snapper</b>		5 per person per day, included in the above group limit of 10 per person per day	18-inch TL	
<b>GROUPE AND TILEFISH</b>				
<b>Gag &amp; Black Grouper</b>	Closed: Jan. 1 – Apr. 30	Included in the 3 grouper aggregate daily bag limit; Maximum of 1 gag or black grouper (but not both) per person/day	24-inch TL	
<b>Scamp, Red, Yellowfin, &amp; Yellowmouth Groupers</b>	Closed: Jan. 1 – Apr. 30	Included in the 3 grouper aggregate daily bag limit	20-inch TL	
<b>Golden Tilefish, Blue- line Tilefish, and Sand Tilefish</b>	Closed: Sept. 1 – Apr. 30	Included in 3 grouper aggregate bag limit; Blueline tilefish – 3 per person per day (May- August only); Golden tilefish – 1 fish per person per day		
<b>Misty &amp; Yellowedge Grouper</b>		Included in the 3 grouper aggregate daily bag limit		
<b>Coney, Graysby, Red Hind &amp; Rock Hind</b>	Closed: Jan. 1 – Apr. 30	Included in the 3 grouper aggregate daily bag limit		

SPECIES	CLOSED SEASON	BAG LIMIT	SIZE LIMIT	RESTRICTIONS
<b>Snowy Grouper</b>	Sept. 1 - Apr. 30	Included in the 3 grouper aggregate daily bag limit; Only 1 fish per VESSEL per day (May - August only)		
<b>Warsaw and Speckled Hind</b>	Possession prohibited	Possession prohibited		
<b>Nassau &amp; Goliath Grouper</b>	Possession prohibited	Possession prohibited		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If caught must be released by cutting the line and not removing the fish from the water.</li> </ul>
ALL OTHER SNAPPER GROUPE COMPLEX SPECIES				
Including but not limited to: Lesser Amberjack; Cottonwick; White Grunt; Scup; Almaco & Bar Jacks; Margate; Whitebone, Knobbed, Jolthead, Saucereye & Longspine Porgies; Banded Rudderfish; Sailors Choice; Bank Seabass; Rock Seabass; Ocean Triggerfish		20 per person per day aggregate bag limit		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tomtates are excluded from the bag limit.</li> </ul>
<b>Gray Triggerfish</b>			12-inch FL	
<b>Spadefish</b>				



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# SIZE & CATCH LIMITS

## SOUTH CAROLINA

### BILLFISH & ATLANTIC TUNAS

Federal Highly Migratory Species Permit required to fish for these species. All billfish to be released may not be removed from the water. All recreationally caught Atlantic billfish landed must be reported to NMFS within 24 hours of landing at the dock. Anglers can report by calling 1-800-894-5528 or by visiting <https://hmspermits.noaa.gov/>. Recreationally caught billfish may not be sold.

SPECIES	CLOSED SEASON	BAG LIMIT	SIZE LIMIT	RESTRICTIONS
<b>BILLFISH</b>				
<b>Blue Marlin</b>			99-inch FL from lower jaw	• May only be taken by rod & reel.
<b>White Marlin</b>			66-inch FL from lower jaw	• May only be taken by rod & reel.
<b>Sailfish</b>			63-inch FL from lower jaw	• May only be taken by rod & reel.
<b>Swordfish</b>		1 per person per day not to exceed 4 per vessel per trip	47-inch FL from lower jaw	• May only be taken by rod & reel and handlines. Handlines must be attached to, or remain in contact with, the vessel at all times. • See <a href="https://hmspermits.noaa.gov/">https://hmspermits.noaa.gov/</a> for for-hire vessel bag limits.
<b>Roundscale Spearfish</b>			66-inch FL from lower jaw	• May only be taken by rod & reel.
<b>Longbill Spearfish</b>	Possession prohibited			• If caught fish must be released immediately.
<b>ATLANTIC TUNAS</b>				

Federal Highly Migratory Species Permit required to fish for these species except for the Other Tunas. Check current federal regulations by calling 1-888-USA-TUNA (1-888-872-8862) or checking <https://hmspermits.noaa.gov/>.

<b>Albacore, Skipjack</b>	No associated regulations.			
<b>Bigeye Tuna</b>			27-inch curved FL	
<b>Bluefin Tuna</b>		NOAA Fisheries has adjusted the Atlantic Bluefin tuna daily retention limits which applies to vessels permitted in the Highly Migratory Species Angling category and the HMS Charter/Headboat category. Visit <a href="https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/bulletin/bluefin-tuna-angling-category-daily-retention-limit-adjustment">https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/bulletin/bluefin-tuna-angling-category-daily-retention-limit-adjustment</a> for detailed information regarding bag limits prior to fishing.		• See <a href="https://hmspermits.noaa.gov/">https://hmspermits.noaa.gov/</a> for for-hire vessel bag and size limits. • All recreationally caught Atlantic billfish and Bluefin tuna landed must be reported to NMFS within 24 hours of landing at the dock.
<b>Yellowfin Tuna</b>		3 per person per day per trip	27-inch curved FL	
<b>Other tunas:</b> Blackfin, Bonita, and Little tunny	No associated regulations.			

## SHARKS

Federal Highly Migratory Species Permit with a Shark Endorsement are required in federal waters to recreationally fish for, retain, possess, or land sharks. All sharks must be landed with fins, head and tail naturally attached. Recreational anglers may only catch sharks using a rod & reel or handline. All other gears prohibited. Additionally, anglers aboard federally permitted vessels fishing recreationally for sharks are required to use non-offset, non-stainless steel circle hooks, except when fishing with flies or artificial lures. Check current federal regulations and find a shark identification guide by visiting <http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/hms/compliance/regulations/index.html>

SPECIES	CLOSED SEASON	BAG LIMIT	SIZE LIMIT	RESTRICTIONS
<b>Dogfish</b> (spiny & smooth)	No associated regulations.			
<b>Atlantic Sharpnose</b>		1 per person per day		
<b>Bonnethead</b>		1 per person per day		
<b>Blacknose, Blacktip, Blue, Bull, Finetooth, Lemon, Nurse, Porbeagle, Spinner, Thresher, Tiger and Oceanic Whitetip Sharks</b>		1 shark per vessel per day	54-inch FL	
<b>Shortfin Mako</b>			83-inch FL for Females, 54-inch to 71-inch FL for Males	
<b>Great Hammerhead, Scalloped Hammerhead and Smooth Hammerhead Sharks</b>			78-inch FL	
<b>Atlantic Angel, Basking, Bignose, Dusky, Galapagos, Longfin Mako, Narrowtooth, Night, Caribbean Reef, Sandbar, Sevengill, Caribbean Sharpnose, Silky, Bigeye Sixgill, Sixgill, Smalltail, Bigeye Thresher, Bigeye Sand Tiger, Sand Tiger, Whale and White Sharks</b>	Possession prohibited	Possession prohibited		• If caught, sharks from this group must be released immediately, without removing it from the water.

## SOUTH CAROLINA CRUSTACEANS & SHELLFISH REGULATIONS

SPECIES	CLOSED SEASON	POSSESSION & SIZE LIMIT	RESTRICTIONS
<b>CRAB, LOBSTER AND SHELLFISH</b>			
<b>Blue Crabs</b>		Size Limit: 5-inch minimum carapace width (point to point)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Females with egg mass (sponge) must be returned to water unharmed immediately.</li> </ul>
<b>Stone Crabs</b>		Size Limit: Claws must be 2 3/4-inch minimum forearm (propodus)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Only crabs with 2 claws can have one removed.</li> <li>Only the larger of the 2 claws may be kept.</li> <li>No claw may be removed from a female with egg mass.</li> <li>It is unlawful to possess any stone crab body live or dead.</li> </ul>
<b>Spiny Lobster</b>		Possession Limit: 2 per person per day Size Limit: 3-inch minimum carapace	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Removal of tail at sea prohibited.</li> <li>No harvest of berried females.</li> <li>No explosives, poisons, spears, or piercing devices other than fishing hooks are allowed.</li> </ul>
<b>Oysters</b>	Typically closed May 16 – Sept. 30; may be shortened or extended by the SCDNR. Call 843-953-9300 for season dates.	Possession Limit: 2 US bushels per person per day from public or state shellfish grounds; No boat, vehicle, or boat/vehicle combination may contain more than 3 personal limits regardless of the number of people on the boat or in the vehicle	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A person may recreationally harvest shellfish (oysters and/or clams) no more than 2 days per 7 day period.</li> </ul>
<b>Clams</b>	Typically closed May 16 – Sept. 30; may be shortened or extended by the SCDNR. Call 843-953-9300 for season dates.	Possession Limit: 1/2 US bushel per person per day from public or state shellfish grounds; No boat, vehicle, or boat/vehicle combination may contain more than 3 personal limits regardless of the number of people on the boat or in the vehicle. Size Limit: 1-inch minimum thickness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A person may recreationally harvest shellfish (oysters and/or clams) no more than 2 days per 7 day period.</li> </ul>
<b>SHRIMP</b>			
<b>Taking Shrimp Without Bait</b>	Closed: Dec. 16 - Apr. 30	48 quarts whole or 29 quarts headed per day (sunrise to sunrise) per boat, per person if no boat is used, or per seining party	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>12 dozen dead or live shrimp allowed per boat during closed season.</li> <li>See Crustacean and Shellfish Methods and Devices for Shrimp Seine Gear Restrictions (see above).</li> </ul>
<b>Shrimp Baiting</b>	2018 Shrimp baiting season Sept. 7 (Noon) - Nov. 6 (Noon)	48 quarts whole or 29 quarts headed per day (sunrise to sunrise) per set of poles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Participants must have a shrimp baiting license.</li> <li>License holders, while shrimping from a boat, may be assisted by a resident who is not required to have a shrimp baiting license.</li> <li>Shrimp caught over bait cannot be sold.</li> <li>No more than 10 poles can be used per license per day. Poles must be marked with reflective tape and may not exceed 1-inch in diameter and each pole must have a numbered tag attached which corresponds with the shrimp baiting license.</li> <li>No more than 10 poles can be used per boat.</li> <li>All poles of a licensed set must be within 100 linear yards of each other and sets of poles must be at least 25 yards apart. Poles may not be set within 50 yards of any dock, public landing or boat ramp. Unattended poles will be confiscated.</li> <li>Owners of private docks or persons with written permission may bait from those docks once properly licensed and with numbered tag displayed.</li> <li>Shrimp pots or traps are prohibited.</li> <li>Cast nets used for taking shrimp over bait must have a minimum mesh size of 1/2-inch square (1-inch stretch).</li> <li>Individuals who may NOT obtain a shrimp baiting license are: 1) owners or officers of a corporation which owns a vessel specified on a trawl license; 2) masters of a vessel specified on a trawl license; 3) licensed to use a channel net; 4) licensed to use a cast net for a commercial purpose; 5) licensed as a wholesale seafood dealer.</li> </ul>



### Crustacean & Shellfish Methods & Devices

When fishing for crustaceans or shellfish, a Saltwater Recreational Fishing License is required — unless you are using 3 or fewer drop nets, 3 or fewer fold up traps, or 3 or fewer handlines with no hooks and a single bait per line (chicken necking); or shrimp baiting (which requires a shrimp baiting license).

#### Crab Pots

##### Permits/Licenses

Saltwater Recreational Fishing License required.

##### Restrictions

- Licensee can fish no more than two pots recreationally. A Commercial Saltwater Fishing License, Vessel Decal, and Gear license are required for over two pots.
- If unattended each pot float must bear the name and address or license number of owner.
- No crab pot shall be left unattended in coastal waters more than 5 days.
- No crab trap or pot may be set within 200 yards of a public boat landing or launching area or set so as to be left dry at low tide.
- A float attached to a crab pot or trap must be made of solid, buoyant material which does not sink upon being punctured or cracked. The floats must be constructed of plastic, PVC Spongex, plastic foam, or cork. The primary float for a recreational pot or trap must be yellow in color and at least ten inches in length if rectangular, cylindrical, or conical and at least five inches in diameter or width. Round or spherical floats must be at least six inches in diameter. Buoy lines for crab pots must be made of nonfloating material.
- Retaining blue crabs caught in the freshwater of the state is prohibited; any blue crabs caught must be returned to the waters immediately.

#### Shellfish

(Oysters, Clams, Mussels, Whelks, and other Mollusks)

##### Permits/Licenses

Saltwater Recreational Fishing License required.

##### Season

Typically open Oct. 1 through May 15 (1/2 hour before sunrise to 1/2 hour after sunset.) Call 843-953-9300 for season dates.

##### Restrictions

- Shellfish may be harvested recreationally from State shellfish grounds and Public shellfish grounds. Public and State shellfish grounds are marked with signs. Recreational harvesting is allowed on culture permit

grounds (formerly leases), but only when the harvester has in possession written permission from the culture permit holder. License must be in possession while harvesting.

\*A bushel is two 5 gallon buckets filled to a level top. Three personal limits is 6 bushels for oysters and 1.5 bushels for clams.

Maps of areas where shellfish may be gathered in season for recreation may be found on the web at [www.dnr.sc.gov/marine/shellfish/shellfishmaps.html](http://www.dnr.sc.gov/marine/shellfish/shellfishmaps.html), by calling 843-953-9854 or by writing Marine Resources at PO Box 12559, Charleston, SC 29422.

#### Shrimp Seines

##### Permits/Licenses

Saltwater Recreational Fishing License required.

##### Restrictions

- Maximum length of shrimp seine 40 feet, maximum depth 6 feet, minimum mesh size, 1/2 inch square (1 inch stretch), maximum mesh size 7/8 inch square (1.75 inch stretch).
- Tail bags or pockets are not allowed on seines when pulled by hand.
- Staked seines are considered commercial channel net devices; allowances and restrictions are provided with the purchase of a commercial license.

#### Trawling

##### Permits/Licenses

Commercial Saltwater Fishing License, Vessel Decal and Gear license required.

##### Restrictions

- Trawling for personal use is restricted to the same license requirements, areas and seasons as commercial trawling. This information is provided with the license.

#### Shell Recycling

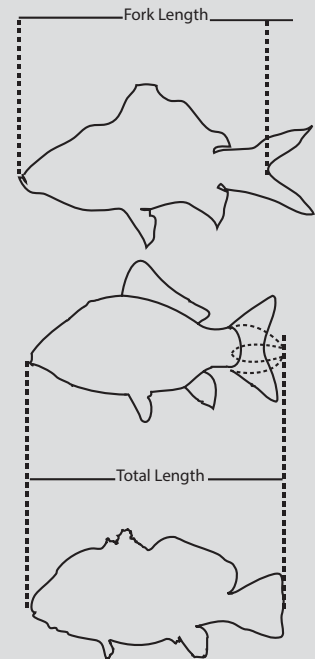
Oyster shells are collected throughout the coastal area and reused for maintenance of public grounds. Call 843-953-9300

for shell drop-off site locations, or visit [www.saltwaterfishing.sc.gov/oyster.html](http://www.saltwaterfishing.sc.gov/oyster.html) for detailed maps of locations.

### MEASURING A FISH

#### How to Properly Measure a Saltwater Fish

TL=total length measure: From the closed mouth (snout) to the tip of the tail fin when pinched together. It is a straight line measure, not over the curvature of the body. FL=fork length measure: From the tip of the closed mouth (snout) to the center of the fork of the tail. It is a straight line measure, not over the curvature of the body.



### GUIDELINES FOR SEA TURTLE PROTECTION

If you hook or entangle a sea turtle while fishing, contact South Carolina DNR Hotline: 1-800-922-5431. Sea Turtle Handling Release Guidelines Quick Reference [www.dnr.sc.gov/marine/tagfish/pdf/SeaTurtleHandlingReleaseGuidelines.pdf](http://www.dnr.sc.gov/marine/tagfish/pdf/SeaTurtleHandlingReleaseGuidelines.pdf)

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

If circumstances don't permit you to hold the animal and contact DNR, cut the line as short as possible and release the turtle.