

A Guide to Mississippi Saltwater Fishing

Rules and Regulations 2006 - 2007



Mississippi Department of Marine Resources
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www.dmr.state.ms.us



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Mississippi Department
of Marine Resources



Mississippi Department of Marine Resources



State of Mississippi

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Mississippi Department of Marine Resources

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For more information, contact the Mississippi Department of Marine Resources,
1141 Bayview Avenue, Biloxi, MS 39530, (228) 374-5000.

Visit our Web site: www.dmr.state.ms.us.

The information provided in this guide is an overview of regulations in effect as of May 1, 2006 concerning saltwater fishing in Mississippi's marine waters prepared in accordance with Mississippi Code Annotated §49-15-18. However, this guide is not, nor is it intended to be, a definitive publication of all regulations appertaining to saltwater fishing in Mississippi. Complete texts of all regulations and statutes are available at the office of the Mississippi Department of Marine Resources. While every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of the information contained in this guide, readers are reminded that in the event of a conflict between state statute and CMR regulations, state statute will take precedence. If you are fishing in another state or federal waters, please consult fishing regulations that would be applicable. Readers are further reminded that the regulations are subject to change.

This public document is **not for sale**, and all rights to the publication are reserved to the DMR. Copies may be made for educational purposes only.

All licenses may be purchased at the Mississippi Department of Marine Resources.

Recreational saltwater fishing licenses may be purchased at most Wal-Mart, Kmart, sporting goods stores, bait shops and fishing camps.

For more information contact the Mississippi Department of Marine Resources at (228) 374-5000.

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Fishing and Boat Licenses

FISHING LICENSES

A Mississippi saltwater fishing license is required for anyone to harvest fish in the coastal and marine waters of this state with the following exceptions:

- Any person under the age of 16
- Residents 65 years of age or older
- Residents who are adjudged totally service-connected disabled by the Veteran's Administration or 100% disabled through Social Security.

OTHER RECREATIONAL LICENSES

Mississippi residents who are not over 16 years of age, who are 65 years of age or older or residents who are adjudged totally service-connected disabled by the Veteran's Administration or 100% disabled through Social Security are exempted from obtaining recreational crab, shrimp and oyster licenses. This exemption applies only to vessels registered in the applicable resident's name.

Anyone exempted from these license requirements must have a valid driver's license and proof of service-connected disability or social security disability, if applicable, in his possession while fishing.

Temporary residents stationed at a military base in Mississippi can use a military I.D. to purchase a resident fishing license.

Free Fishing Day – July 4 is a free saltwater sportfishing day. Anyone may fish without a recreational saltwater license in the marine waters (waters south of Interstate 10) of the state of Mississippi on this one day each year.

Saltwater sportfishing licenses expire June 30 of each year.

All commercial boats, whether resident or nonresident, fishing for shrimp, oysters, crabs or finfish (with gill net, trammel net or similar approved nets) within the territorial waters of the State of Mississippi are required to be licensed as described herein.

BOAT LICENSES

Proof of residence must be shown, along with valid boat registration/documentation before any license can be purchased. Proof can be a valid driver's license, homestead exemption, voter's registration card or a Mississippi state tax return.

All commercial seafood licenses expire April 30 of each year.

License Fees

<u>TYPE OF LICENSE</u>	<u>RESIDENT LICENSE FEES</u>
SHRIMP	
Recreational	\$15
Shrimp/Captain Under 30' Boat	\$60
Shrimp/Captain 30' to 45' Boat	\$85
Shrimp/Captain Over 45' Boat	\$110
Mississippi Captain's License	\$10
CRAB	
Commercial Crab Trawl	\$75
Commercial Crab Trap	\$75
Recreational Crab Trap	\$5
FISH	
Recreational Fishing License*	\$5.85
Fishing Boat License/Gill & Trammel Net	\$100
Charter Boat	\$200
Commercial Hook and Line/Gig per Vessel	\$100
Commercial Hook and Line/Gig per Fisherman	\$100
Menhaden Boat/Net	\$150
OYSTER	
Recreational	\$10
Tonging	\$60
Dredging	\$110
LIVE BAIT	
Live-bait Dealer	\$50
Live-bait Boat	\$100
BUSINESS LICENSE	
Interstate Commerce	\$20
Seafood Dealer	\$100
Seafood Processor	\$200
Menhaden Processor	\$500
Seafood Transport License	\$100

* Valid for recreational methods of taking finfish south of U.S. Interstate 10.

License fees for nonresidents may vary. Call the Department of Marine Resources at (228) 374-5000 for current license fees if you are a nonresident.

Recreational Fishing Limits*

	Minimum Length in Inches	Number of Fish Bag/Possession
COBIA	33 FL	2
MULLET	No Limit	No Limit
FLOUNDER	12 TL	15
RED DRUM ♦	18 TL to 30 TL**	3
SPOTTED SEATROUT	14 TL	15
KING MACKEREL	24 FL	2
SPANISH MACKEREL	No Limit	15
RED SNAPPER	16 TL	4
VERMILLION SNAPPER	10 TL	20 (in aggregate)
LANE SNAPPER	8 TL	
GRAY TRIGGERFISH	12 TL	
ALMACO JACK	No Limit	
GOLDFACE TILEFISH	No Limit	
ANCHOR TILEFISH	No Limit	
TILEFISH	No Limit	No Take
BLACKLINE TILEFISH	No Limit	
BLUELINE TILEFISH	No Limit	
GOLIATH GROUPER	No Take	
NASSAU GROUPER	No Take	
WARSAW GROUPER	No Limit	1 per vessel
RED & YELLOWFIN GROUPERS	20 TL	5 (in aggregate)
BLACK & GAG GROUPERS	22 TL	1 per vessel
SCAMP	16 TL	
OTHER GROUPERS	No Limit	
SPECKLED HIND	No Limit	10 (in aggregate)
GRAY, SCHOOLMASTER, CUBERA, DOG, MAHOGANY AND YELLOWTAIL SNAPPERS	12 TL	
MUTTON SNAPPER	16 TL	
QUEEN, BLACKFIN, SILK AND WENCHMAN SNAPPERS	No Limit	

* It is illegal to sell any seafood taken with a recreational license.

** Range represents minimum and maximum lengths.

♦ Recreational fishermen may retain only one red drum over 30 inches.

TL = TOTAL LENGTH - Straight line distance from tip of snout to tip of tail.

FL = FORK LENGTH - Straight line distance from tip of snout to fork of tail.

CFL = CURVED FORK LENGTH - Tip of the upper jaw to the fork of tail measured along the contour of the middle of the body.

Recreational Fishing Limits*

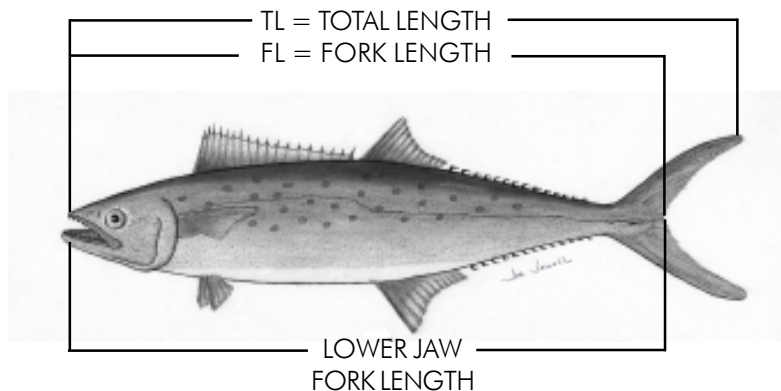
	Minimum Length in Inches	Number of Fish Bag/Possession
GREATER AMBERJACK	28 FL	1
LESSER AMBERJACK AND BANDED RUDDERFISH	14 FL to 22 FL**	5 (in aggregate)
HOGFISH	12 FL	5
BIGEYE TUNA	27 CFL	No Limit
YELLOWFIN TUNA	27 CFL	3
BLUE MARLIN	99 lower jaw FL	No Limit
WHITE MARLIN	66 lower jaw FL	No Limit
SAILFISH	63 lower jaw FL	No Limit
Longbill Spearfish	No Take	No Take
SHARKS (LARGE COASTALS & PELAGICS)	37 TL	1 per person up to 3 per vessel
SHARKS (SMALL COASTALS)	25 TL	4
CRABS - HARD SHELLS	5 ***	No Limit
CRABS - SOFT SHELL	No Limit	No Limit

***It is illegal to sell any seafood taken with a recreational license.**

**Range represents minimum and maximum lengths.

***As measured from the tip of one lateral spine across the back of the shell to the tip of the opposite lateral spine.

HOW TO MEASURE FISH



Federal regulations may differ from state regulations. For federal regulations, contact the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council at 1-888-833-1844 or www.gulfcouncil.org.

Commercial Fishing Limits

	Minimum Length in Inches	Number of Fish Bag/Possession
COBIA♦	33 FL	2
MULLET	10 TL	No Limit
FLOUNDER	12 TL	Quota
RED DRUM	18 TL ♦♦	Quota
SPOTTED SEATROUT	14 TL	Quota
KING MACKEREL	24 FL	3000 lbs.
SPANISH MACKEREL	14 FL	No Limit
GOLIATH GROUPER	No Take	No Take
NASSAU GROUPER	No Take	No Take
WARSAW GROUPER	No Limit	1 per vessel
RED & YELLOWFIN GROUPERS	20 TL	No Limit
GAG & BLACK GROUPER	24 TL	No Limit
SCAMP	16 TL	No Limit
OTHER GROUPERS	No Limit	No Limit
RED SNAPPER	15 TL	200 lbs.
VERMILLION SNAPPER	10 TL	No Limit
LANE SNAPPER	8 TL	No Limit
GRAY TRIGGERFISH	12 TL	No Limit
GRAY, SCHOOLMASTER, CUBERA, DOG, MAHOGANY & YELLOWTAIL SNAPPERS	12 TL	No Limit
MUTTON SNAPPER	16 TL	No Limit
GREATER AMBERJACK	36 FL	No Limit
LESSER AMBERJACK & BANDED RUDDERFISH	14 FL to 22 FL ♦♦♦	No Limit
HOGFISH	12 FL	No Limit
BIGEYE TUNA	27 CFL	No Limit
YELLOWFIN TUNA	27 CFL	No Limit
BLUE MARLIN	No Take	No Take
WHITE MARLIN	No Take	No Take
SAILFISH	No Take	No Take
Longbill Spearfish	No Take	No Take

♦It is illegal to sell cobia caught in Mississippi territorial waters or cobia landed in Mississippi.

♦♦Commercial fishermen may retain only one red drum over 30 inches.

♦♦♦ Range represents minimum and maximum lengths.

Between October 1 and September 30 of the following year, when landing reports, as required by law, indicate that the 35,000-pound catch limit for red drum or the 40,000-pound catch limit for spotted seatrout or the 74,000-pound limit for flounder has been reached, the Department of Marine Resources will, with adequate notice, issue a news release and public notice closing state waters to commercial fishing for red drum, spotted seatrout or flounder for the remainder of that fishing year.

Federal regulations may differ from state regulations. For federal regulations, contact the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council at 1-888-833-1844 or www.gulfcouncil.org.

NOTE: Fishing seasons for some species may be closed by order of the Commission on Marine Resources. Advance notice of such closures will be given.

Sharks

The numerous shark species are divided into three management groups:

I. LARGE COASTAL SHARKS

sandbar	<i>Carcharhinus plumbeus</i>
blacktip	<i>Carcharhinus limbatus</i>
dusky*	<i>Carcharhinus obscurus</i>
spinner	<i>Carcharhinus brevipinna</i>
silky	<i>Carcharhinus falciformis</i>
bull	<i>Carcharhinus leucas</i>
bignose*	<i>Carcharhinus altimus</i>
narrowtooth*	<i>Carcharhinus brachyurus</i>
Galapagos*	<i>Carcharhinus galapagensis</i>
night*	<i>Carcharhinus signatus</i>
Caribbean reef*	<i>Carcharhinus perezii</i>
tiger	<i>Galeocerdo cuvier</i>
lemon	<i>Negaprion brevirostris</i>
sand tiger*	<i>Odontaspis taurus</i>
bigeye sand tiger*	<i>Odontaspis noronhai</i>
nurse	<i>Ginglymostoma cirratum</i>
scalloped hammerhead	<i>Sphyrna lewini</i>
great hammerhead	<i>Sphyrna mokarran</i>
smooth hammerhead	<i>Sphyrna zygaena</i>
whale*	<i>Rhincodon typus</i>
basking*	<i>Cetorhinus maximus</i>
white*	<i>Carcharodon carcharias</i>

II. SMALL COASTAL SHARKS

Atlantic sharpnose	<i>Rhizoprionodon terraenovae</i>
Caribbean sharpnose*	<i>Rhizoprionodon porosus</i>
finetooth	<i>Carcharhinus isodon</i>
blacknose	<i>Carcharhinus acronotus</i>
smalltail*	<i>Carcharhinus porosus</i>
bonnethead	<i>Sphyrna tiburo</i>
Atlantic angel*	<i>Squatina dumeril</i>

*Possession of these species is prohibited by state ordinance and federal law.

III. PELAGIC SHARKS

shortfin mako	<i>Isurus oxyrinchus</i>
longfin mako*	<i>Isurus paucus</i>
porbeagle	<i>Lamna nasus</i>
thresher	<i>Alopias vulpinus</i>
bigeye thresher*	<i>Alopias superciliosus</i>
blue	<i>Prionace glauca</i>
oceanic whitetip	<i>Carcharhinus longimanus</i>
sevengill*	<i>Hepranchias perlo</i>
sixgill*	<i>Hexanchus griseus</i>
bigeye sixgill*	<i>Hexanchus vitulus</i>

*Possession of these species is prohibited.

RECREATIONAL SHARK LIMITS

Recreational fishermen may possess no more than one of the large coastal and pelagic shark species per person and no more than three of the large coastal and pelagic shark species per vessel.

The minimum size limit for large coastal sharks is 37 inches total length.

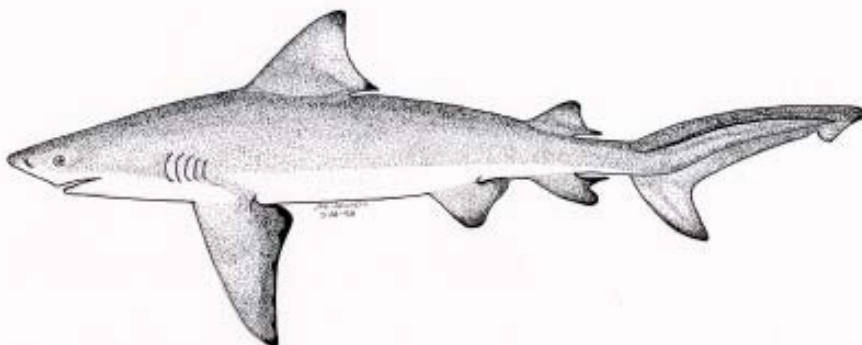
Of the small coastal shark species group, recreational fishermen may possess four sharks per person per day.

The minimum size limit for small coastal sharks is 25 inches total length.

COMMERCIAL SHARK LIMITS

All shark species are under federal quotas.

The practice of finning, which is removing only the fins and returning the remainder of the shark to the sea, is illegal.



Red Snapper

Lutjanus campechanus



Abounding around the offshore artificial reefs and other bottom obstructions, the red snapper is a coveted foodfish along the Gulf Coast. These brilliant fish are distinguished by their red coloration and reef-dwelling habits. Snapper are typically caught on heavy tackle, using cut fish for bait.

Mullet

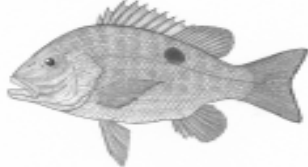
Mugil cephalus



Both striped and white mullet are called "Biloxi Bacon" along the Mississippi Gulf Coast as this species is a staple for subsistence fishermen and a principal prey species for larger fish. Mullet are most commonly taken using cast nets. Hook-and-line fishermen can catch these fish with very small hooks and doughball baits.

Lane Snapper

Lutjanus synagris



The color pattern of this snapper makes it easy to distinguish from the other snappers which occur along the Mississippi Gulf Coast. They are a red color with eight to ten yellow/gold horizontal stripes along the sides and a black spot beneath the dorsal fin. This species is less abundant than either the red or vermillion snappers.

Red Drum

Sciaenops ocellatus



Redfish are another favorite species of local anglers. These bruisers can get upwards of 30 pounds. Feeding habits are intermediate between their cousins, the bottom-feeding black drum and the more surface-feeding spotted sea trout. Blue crabs and gold spoons are among the best bait to use for catching redfish.

Gray Snapper (Mangrove)

Lutjanus griseus



This small snapper is commonly found inshore congregating around seagrass beds, rocky areas and piers. This species is often found in mixed schools with pinfish and pigfish. As they grow larger they move offshore over hard bottoms and can be caught around artificial reefs.

Vermillion Snapper (Beeliner)

Rhomboplites aurorubens



This snapper is bright red in color and its body shape is narrower than that of the red snapper. Vermillion snapper are small snapper which are found in the same habitat as red snapper and caught on the same type of baits.

King Mackerel*Scomberomorus cavalla*

Kings are constantly on the move and migrate along the entire northern Gulf of Mexico where they may congregate around oil rigs, offshore wrecks and shoalwater. King mackerel in excess of 60 pounds are taken each year by fishermen who troll and cast for them as far south as the mouth of the Mississippi River.

Gag Grouper*Mycteroperca microlepis*

During the summer months when the water temperatures increase along the coast, juvenile gag grouper are often caught by fishermen fishing around rock piles and pilings. The larger adults occur offshore in deeper water, usually over hard bottoms and around some kind of structure.

Spanish Mackerel*Scomberomorus maculatus*

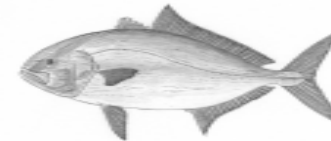
Spanish mackerel are abundant in the Sound from early summer through mid-fall. Caught best on fast moving, silvery lures, they form the summer staple of the charter fishery. Care should be taken when removing these toothsome critters from the hook.

Spotted Seatrout*Cynoscion nebulosus*

Locally called speckled trout or simply "speck," this fish is widely sought in coastal waters Gulfwide. Specks upwards of five pounds are not uncommon, but the average school trout will be around a pound or so. Trout can be caught year-round, but spring and fall are peak fishing times.

Cobia*Rachycentron canadum*

Called lemonfish locally, the cobia is truly a big game species. Lemonfish up to 100 pounds are caught annually during the spring run. Lemonfish have a decided preference for congregating around buoys, anchored vessels, etc. Live catfish or white trout are preferred bait though a jig or feather might also entice a big lemon into striking.

Greater Amberjack*Seriola dumerili*

This fish is generally found around deep water oil rigs or artificial reefs. Greater amberjack can reach weights in excess of 100 pounds and can put up an excellent fight when hooked. The greater amberjack is the largest of the four amberjack species which occur in the Gulf of Mexico.

Catch and Release

WHY RELEASE FISH?

1. A fish is too valuable a resource to be caught only once.
2. A personal commitment to conservation adds fun to fishing.
3. Size, season, and bag regulations make release of some fish mandatory.

HOW TO BEGIN

1. Use barbless or circle hooks that are made from metals that rust quickly.
2. Set your hook immediately. Try to prevent a fish from swallowing the bait.
3. Work a fish out of deep water slowly, so it can adjust to the pressure change.
4. Otherwise, land your quarry quickly; don't play it to exhaustion.

HANDLING YOUR CATCH

1. Leave the fish in the water (if possible) and don't handle it.
2. Net your catch only if you cannot control it any other way.
3. When you must handle a fish: Use a wet glove or rag to hold it; turn a fish on its back or cover its eyes with a wet towel to calm it; don't put your fingers in the eyes or gills of your catch. Larger fish may be kept in the water by holding the leader with a glove or by slipping a release gaff through the lower jaw. Avoid removing mucus or scales.

REMOVING THE HOOK

1. If possible, back the hook out the opposite way it went in.
2. Cut the leader close to the mouth if a fish has been hooked deeply or if the hook can't be removed quickly.
3. Use needle-nose pliers, hemostat or a hookout to remove the hook and protect your hands.
4. For a larger fish in the water, slip a gaff around the leader and slide it down to the hook. Lift the gaff upward while pulling downward on the leader.
5. Do not jerk or pop a leader to break it. This could kill the fish.

THE RELEASE

1. Gently place the fish in the water, supporting its mid-section and tail.
2. Resuscitate an exhausted fish by moving it back and forth or tow it alongside the boat to force water through its gills.
3. For fish pulled up from deepwater air bladder deflation is achieved by inserting a thin point wire, knife or hollow tube through the side of the fish immediately behind the upper part of the pectoral fin base. The deflation position varies between species. However, penetration at a point below the fourth or fifth dorsal fin spine is generally appropriate.
4. Watch the fish to make sure it swims away.
5. If it doesn't, recover the fish and try again.

Mississippi Sportfishing Records

To qualify for saltwater sportfishing record consideration anglers must complete an official application that may be obtained from the Mississippi Department of Marine Resources, and abide by the following rules:

1. Fish must be hooked, fought, and brought to net or gaff by the applicant with no help from any person, except that another person may operate the net or gaff. Catches on handlines or other non-sporting equipment will not be considered.

2. a. Conventional Records: Fish must be legally caught in a sporting manner on rod, reel and line or pole and line, and hooked with any legal hook or lure.

b. Fly Fishing Records: Fish must be legally caught using conventional fly fishing tackle. The lure used must be a recognized type of artificial fly. Treble hooks are prohibited. The use of any other type of lure or natural bait, either singularly or attached to the fly is prohibited. The fly used must be submitted with the application.

3. Two (2) color photographs should be submitted with each application:

a. One (1) of angler and fish.

b. One (1) showing a clear, close-up side view of the fish.

Photos become the property of the Mississippi Department of Marine Resources.

4. Fish MUST be weighed on certified scales or scales legal for trade, i.e. grocery store scales, etc. The weighing must take place in the presence of two (2) witnesses other than the applicant, who MUST sign the application form or a separate statement attesting that they witnessed the OFFICIAL weight. NO provision for weight loss will be allowed. The actual weight of the fish AT THE TIME OF WEIGHING will be the OFFICIAL WEIGHT. It is also desirable to include signature(s) on the application form of the witness(es), if any, to the actual catching of the fish. Witnesses to the weight and catch CANNOT be the same persons. Rodeo entries are considered valid and acceptable weights.

5. Length of the fish must be measured in a straight line from the tip of the snout to the tip of the tail AND from the tip of the snout to the fork of the tail (see diagram on page 5).

6. Girth of the fish will be measured around the thickest portion of the body.

7. Applications for saltwater species SHALL be positively identified AND verified by a Professional Fisheries Biologist and/or a Rodeo Weighmaster.

8. Only fish caught in Mississippi waters or fish caught in adjacent waters and landed in a Mississippi port will be considered.

9. The Mississippi Department of Marine Resources reserves the right to further check fish identification or verification of witnesses and to refuse any application that is questionable. It will be considered "Just Cause" for disqualification of current application and any previous records established by anyone who knowingly falsifies a Record Application. All rules will be strictly adhered to. The decision of the Mississippi Commission on Marine Resources will be final.

Saltwater Finfish

METHODS OF TAKING

Saltwater finfish may be taken from Mississippi waters by any of the following methods:

- Hook-and-line: cane pole, handline or rod-and-reel
- Trotline
- Spear or gig
- Cast nets and brail (brill) nets: Not to exceed 12 feet in radius, may be used in marine waters only. No freshwater species may be in a fisherman's possession while he is using a cast net or brail net.
- Small-mesh beach seines under 100 feet in length and with a maximum 1/4-inch square mesh size.
- Trammel or gill nets, seines or any similar contrivance must be under 1,200 feet in total length. Gill and trammel nets must have a minimum 1 1/2-inch square mesh size. From October 15 through December 15 of each year, gill and trammel nets must have a minimum square inch mesh size of 1 3/4-inches. Gill and trammel nets must be made of DMR-approved degradable materials.
- Permitted eel traps must have a minimum of 1/2 by 1 in. square mesh size.

SPECIAL PROVISIONS

Commercial fishing is prohibited north of the CSX Railroad bridge in the three coastal counties of Mississippi.

The possession of a gill net, trammel net or like contrivance, or any other equipment prohibited for use in the taking or harvesting of seafood on a vessel on the marine waters of this state where the use of the net, contrivance or equipment is prohibited, shall constitute prima facie evidence that an offense has been committed to take or harvest seafood with nets, contrivances or equipment prohibited by this chapter, unless the vessel is:

- (a) Anchored or moored at a permanent facility intended for the mooring of vessels;
- (b) Traveling directly between a marina, harbor or public boat launching facility and a United States Coast Guard marked and maintained navigation channel; or
- (c) Traveling within a United States Coast Guard marked and maintained navigation channel.

A special permit and regulations for commercial eel fishing must be obtained from the Department of Marine Resources. All fish traps or pots and eel traps or pots must be clearly marked with the owner's full name, permit or license number. All fish traps or pots and eel traps or pots must be checked and emptied at least once every 48 hours.

Purse seines may not exceed 1,500 feet in length, except those used expressly to catch menhaden. Menhaden purse seines must have a mesh size no smaller than 1/2-inch square (1 inch stretch).

The use of gill or trammel nets is prohibited within one-half (1/2) mile of the shoreline.

All nets, regardless of type, must be clearly marked with the owner's name or license number. Floats or buoys must be placed at intervals of 100 feet or less. Nets, seines or fish traps are not permitted in the following areas:

Within any river, bayou, creek, canal, stream, tributary, lake, bay, inlet, or other water source entering into salt waters, except:

- Point Aux Chenes Bay
- Middle Bay - Jose Bay
- L'Isle Chaude Bay
- Heron Bay
- South Rigolets
- Biloxi Bay, south of a line between Marsh Point, Ocean Springs and Grand Bayou, Deer Island
- Pascagoula Bay, south of a line beginning at a point on the shoreline at the southern terminus of range lines R7W and R6W near Camp Lamotte; thence southeasterly along the most direct line to the southernmost point of Twin Islands; thence easterly along the most direct line to the southern point of Rabbit Island; thence easterly along the most direct line to beacon "Occ R 4 sec 100 feet" on the eastern side of Northrop Grumman Ship Systems; thence southeasterly following the shoreline of the southeasternmost point of Northrop Grumman Ship Systems; thence easterly along the most direct line to the southernmost point of land adjoining the entrance of Yazoo Lake and South Rigolets and Biloxi Bay south of a line drawn between Marsh Point and Grand Bayou.

Nets, seines, or fish traps used for catching fish are not permitted within 1,200 feet of any pier or harbor. Nets, seines or fish traps are not permitted within 100 feet of the mouth of any bay, bayou, creek, canal, stream, lake, inlet, channel or tributary or within any area that would block the mouth of any such water body. (Please note: gill and trammel nets are prohibited within one-half (1/2) mile of the shoreline.)

In addition, the National Park Service prohibits commercial fishing within the Gulf Islands National Seashore boundary, which is a one mile perimeter around Ship, Horn and Petit Bois Islands.

CATCH RESTRICTIONS

King mackerel fishing is defined as a fishing activity in which the sole purpose is to catch king mackerel. Catching in excess of 10 percent by weight of species other than king mackerel while net fishing for king mackerel is prohibited.

Mullet fishing is defined as any net fishing activity in which 90 percent or more of the total catch by weight consists of mullet. Mullet fishing using traps, seines or nets other than cast or brail nets is not permitted within 1,200 feet of any public or hotel/pier nor within 300 feet of any private pier, provided that such piers are in usable condition and extend 75 feet or more from the shoreline. Nets must not exceed 1,200 feet in length.

Between October 1 and September 30 of each year, when landing reports, as required by law, indicate that the 35,000-pound catch limit for red drum, the 40,000-pound catch limit for spotted seatrout or the 74,000-pound quota for flounder has been reached, the Department of Marine Resources will, with adequate notice, issue a news release and public notice closing state waters to commercial fishing for red drum, spotted seatrout or flounder for the remainder of that fishing year.

Purse seines may not be used to catch in excess of five percent, by weight, in any single set of the net, any of the following fishes:

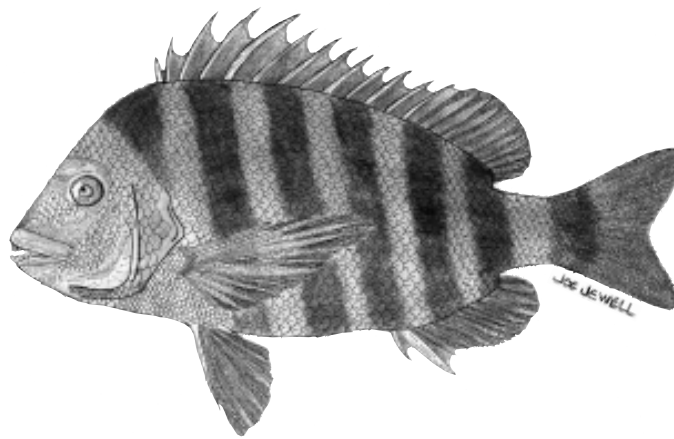
- bluefish
- cobia (ling or lemonfish)
- dolphin
- jack crevalle
- king mackerel
- pompano
- Spanish mackerel
- spotted seatrout (speckled trout)

It also is illegal for any vessel carrying a purse seine to have on board, in excess of 10 percent by weight of the total catch, any of the aforementioned species.

It is further illegal for any vessel carrying a purse seine to have on board any quantity of red drum (redfish).

Commercial fishermen may retain two cobia per person for personal consumption. Commercial fishermen are not permitted to have in their possession any Atlantic bluefin tuna, Nassau grouper or Goliath grouper.

It is illegal to sell cobia caught in Mississippi territorial waters or landed in Mississippi.



Recreational Fishing

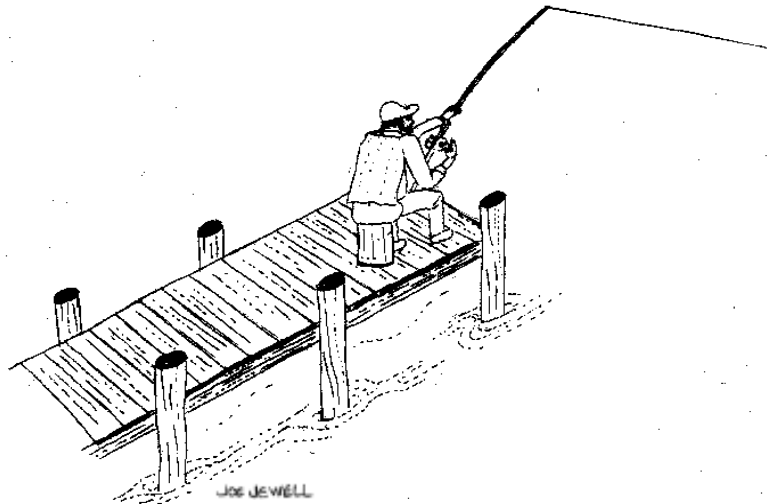
SPECIAL PROVISIONS

Please see the "Fishing Licenses" section in the front of this booklet for more information on Mississippi recreational saltwater sportfishing licenses and Mississippi's free saltwater sportfishing day. A recreational saltwater fishing license is required for all methods of recreational finfish harvest.

It shall be unlawful for recreational fishermen to sell or offer for sale any seafood caught in or landed in the State of Mississippi, and only licensed commercial fishermen may catch and sell seafood. Furthermore, it shall be unlawful for any person, firm or corporation to purchase, buy, barter for, or trade for any seafood caught in or landed in the State of Mississippi that was caught or landed by a recreational fisherman, or that was transported into the State of Mississippi by a recreational fishermen.

Recreational fishermen not fishing in Mississippi waters may transport and land fish that meet the minimum size and creel limits of the waters in which they were legally caught. Said recreational fishermen must possess a valid saltwater sportfishing license as may be required in the waters where the fish were caught. In the absence of minimum size or creel limits in another jurisdiction, Mississippi law will prevail.

Recreational fishermen are permitted to catch and retain only one Atlantic bluefin tuna per boat per week. All Bluefin catches must be reported to the Department of Marine Resources, Office of Marine Fisheries, 1141 Bayview Avenue, Biloxi, MS 39530. Phone (228) 374-5000.



Persons on a licensed charter boat or headboat may possess a two-day bag limit only when complying with the following conditions and only for the species listed in subsection F as listed below:

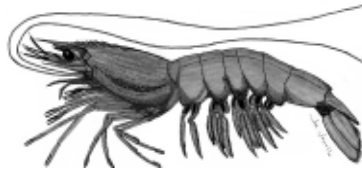
- A. Charter boats must be less than 100 gross tons and meet U.S. Coast Guard requirements to carry six or fewer passengers.
- B. Headboats must hold a valid certificate of inspection issued by the Coast Guard.
- C. The charter boat or headboat must possess a federal reef fish permit if fishing for reef fish or in possession of reef fish in federal waters.
- D. The charter boat or headboat must have two Coast Guard certified captains aboard (as required by Coast Guard regulations for trips over 12 hours).
- E. Each person aboard the charter boat or headboat must possess a certificate, issued in the name of the chartering company, stating the time and date the charter left the dock and the trip must be in excess of 24 hours.
- F. King and Spanish mackerel, snappers (red, vermillion, lane, gray, mutton, yellowtail, schoolmaster, cubera, dog, mahogany, queen, blackfin, silk and wenchman), groupers (misty, snowy, yellowedge, warsaw, speckled hind, red, yellowfin, black, gag, scamp, yellowmouth, rock hind and red hind), hogfish, gray triggerfish, lesser amberjack, banded rudderfish, almaco jack, goldface tilefish, anchor tilefish, blackline tilefish, blueline tilefish and greater amberjack.

Charter and recreational fishermen, fishing in the Gulf of Mexico over 24 continuous hours, may possess filleted fish in Mississippi waters, if they have filed a float plan with the Department of Marine Resources in advance and have a signed copy aboard their boats. Float plans are available at the Department of Marine Resources during regular working hours, Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. until 5 p.m. Float plans must be filed and received during these times, before the boat's departure on the fishing trip. A float plan does not allow anglers to possess a two-day catch.

Shrimp

COMMERCIAL METHODS OF TAKING

During open seasons and in open areas, saltwater shrimp may only be taken with shrimp trawls, trawls, butterfly nets, skimmer nets, push trawls, beach seines and cast nets. North of the barrier islands, within the Mississippi Sound, shrimp may only be taken with a single net measuring no larger than 50 feet along the headrope and 60 feet along the footrope or not more than two nets, each measuring no more than 25 feet on the headrope and 32 feet on the footrope. A test (or try) trawl no longer than 12 feet along the headrope and 15 feet along the footrope used with boards not more than 30 inches in length is permitted.



Licensed shrimp trawlers may keep up to 25 pounds in total of white trout, croaker, black drum, ground mullet, gafftopsail catfish and flounder and three dozen blue crabs for personal consumption.

It shall be unlawful to use skimmer trawls or wing nets with a maximum size greater than 25 feet on the headrope and 32 feet on the footrope.

All recreational and commercial shrimp vessels with a mechanical assisted retrieval system must have a Turtle Excluder Device (TED).

RECREATIONAL METHODS OF TAKING

Recreationally harvested shrimp cannot be sold.

Recreational fishermen may keep up to 25 pounds in total of white trout, croaker, black drum, ground mullet, gafftopsail catfish and flounder and three dozen blue crabs for personal consumption.

Brail (brill) nets not exceeding 12 feet maximum radius may be used to catch up to 50 pounds of shrimp (heads on) per person, per day in coastal rivers and streams south of Interstate 10.

Persons catching shrimp with cast nets or brail nets shall not remove the heads of the shrimp on site.

Small mesh beach seines under 100 feet in length and with a maximum 1/4-inch square mesh size.

Holders of a recreational shrimp trawling license are limited to the use of a single net measuring no larger than 16 feet along the headrope.

RESTRICTED AREAS

Trawling is not generally permitted in any area within one-half (1/2) mile of the mainland, except by duly licensed live-bait dealers. Please contact the Department of Marine Resources for more details on closed areas.

Trawling is prohibited north of the Intracoastal Waterway (tugboat channel) starting at midnight December 31 of each year. The area south of the Intracoastal Waterway (tugboat channel) will be closed to trawling after April 30 of each year and prior to the opening of shrimp season (special extensions may be made by the Commission on Marine Resources pending sampling findings).

It shall be unlawful to recreationally trawl within the boundaries of the Gulf Islands National Seashore.

SEASON

Shrimp season is officially opened by public notice at such time that the Department of Marine Resources, Office of Marine Fisheries, has determined that the shrimp have reached legal size.

LEGAL SIZE

Shrimp smaller in size than 68-count to the pound are not to be taken in Mississippi waters, other than by licensed live-bait boats.

SPECIAL PROVISIONS

It is illegal for anyone to wash a trawl by pulling it within any waters that are closed to shrimping. It also is illegal for anyone to clean nets by pulling them within any waters that are closed to the use of that size, type or number of trawls.

It is illegal to use a saltbox in Mississippi waters in which the salt solution exceeds 100 parts per thousand salinity.

Commercial shrimpers are permitted to sell their legally caught shrimp live.

LIVE-BAIT SHRIMPING

Live-bait catcher boats are prohibited from trawling north of the CSX Railroad bridge in the three coastal counties of Mississippi.

The live-bait fishery is viewed as a service to recreational fishermen and to the tourist industry of Mississippi. The special privileges granted and the regulations imposed are intended to ensure that this service may be performed with minimal impact on shrimp and fish populations.

Written application for live-bait licenses must be made to the Mississippi Commission on Marine Resources between January 1 and April 30 preceding the license year.

Shrimp of 100-count to the pound are the minimum legal size for licensed live-bait dealers. Live-bait dealers must mark their boats and transport vehicles with the designation "LIVE BAIT" in letters at least six inches high on both the port and starboard sides of the vessel and at least four inches high on the transport vehicle. The name of the bait camp must be similarly displayed on the boat and transport vehicle.

Live-bait boats must be equipped to adequately maintain live shrimp on board. Such boats also are restricted to tows of 25 minutes or less and are not permitted to have on board in excess of 30 pounds of dead shrimp at any time.

Live-bait trawling is permitted only during the hours beginning 30 minutes before sunrise and ending at sunset, then only using a trawl no larger than 16 feet on the headrope and 22 feet on the footrope, except areas west of Bayou Caddy where trawls may be 25 feet on the headrope and 32 feet on the footrope. Special areas may be opened to live-bait trawling and additional restrictions imposed.

Fish caught coincidental to a live-bait operation may be retained and sold for chum. Fish retained must be of legal commercial size. However, if crabs are to be kept, the dealer is required to hold a valid Mississippi commercial crab license.

Live-bait camps must meet the following special requirements:
Each camp must have adequate holding and aerating systems, which must be cleaned of dead shrimp at least every 12 hours.

No bulk sales of dead shrimp are permitted. Dead shrimp may be sold only with the heads attached and in containers holding no more than 16 ounces. No more than five 16-ounce containers may be sold to an individual in one day.

Someone must be readily available to serve customers during appropriate hours, and each live-bait dealer application must include these hours, at least eight hours per 24-hour period.

Purchasing dead shrimp in bulk quantities from a live-bait dealer is illegal and punishable by a \$5,000 fine for the first offense. Additional information and regulations governing live-bait are available from the Mississippi Department of Marine Resources.

Oysters

METHODS OF TAKING

During open status, oysters may be taken only by hands, tongs and dredges.

Dredges for oystering may not exceed 140 pounds in weight nor may they have an excess of 16 teeth. Teeth on the dredge must be 5 inches or less in length.

Restrictions on the maximum number of dredges carried or the maximum number of sacks that may be harvested daily will be established seasonally by the Commission on Marine Resources.

DEFINITIONS TO KNOW

APPROVED AREA

The classification of a State shellfish growing area, which has been approved by the State Shellfish Control Authority (SSCA) for growing or harvesting shellfish for direct marketing. The classification of an approved area is determined through a sanitary survey conducted by the State shellfish control authority. An approved shellfish growing area may be temporarily closed area when a public health emergency, hurricane or flooding is declared.

CONDITIONALLY APPROVED AREA

The classification of a State shellfish growing area, determined by the SSCA to meet approved area criteria for a predictable period. The period is conditional upon established performance standards specified in a management plan. A conditionally approved shellfish growing area is closed when the area does not meet the approved growing area criteria and is temporarily closed by the SSCA.

RESTRICTED AREA

State waters that have been classified by the State shellfish control authority as an area from which shellfish may be harvested only by permit from the SSCA and are subjected to suitable and effective treatment through relaying.

PROHIBITED AREA

A prohibited area is a growing area where there is no current sanitary survey or where the sanitary survey or other monitoring program data indicate that fecal material, pathogenic microorganisms, poisonous or deleterious substances, marine toxins, or radionuclides may reach this area in excessive concentrations. The taking of shellfish for any human food purposes from such areas is prohibited.

Definitions from the National Shellfish Sanitation Program's Guide for Control of Molluscan Shellfish, 1999 Revision.

Oysters may be taken only from those waters approved for shellfish harvest by the Commission on Marine Resources. These area waters are subject to reclassification.

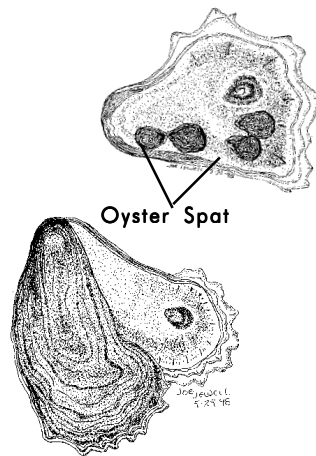
The harvesting, shucking, processing and sale of oysters must conform to all regulations specified by state statute and in the ordinance, adopted by the Commission on Marine Resources.

Several natural reefs are located in approved waters. They include:

- Pass Marianne Reef
- Telegraph Reef
- Buoy Reef
- Umbrella Reef
- Pelican Key Reef

The major natural oyster reefs known to be located entirely within conditionally approved waters include:

- St. Joe Reef (St. Joseph's Point Reef)
- Waveland Reef
- St. Stanislaus Reef
- Square Handkerchief Reef
- Henderson Point Reef
- Bay St. Louis Reef
- Kittiwake Reef (Long Beach Reef)
- White House Reef
- North and South Rigolets
- Middle Bay



Following a rainfall, riverstage, or other pollution event, conditionally approved reefs and affected privately leased areas may be temporarily closed to oystering when poor water quality conditions exist. Such closures are released to local newspapers, television and radio media. Pertinent information about the opening and closing of reefs is available by calling the **Mississippi Department of Marine Resources at (228) 374-5000**. The information may be updated daily during oyster season. Information on the current status of any shellfish growing waters in this state may be obtained from the Department of Marine Resources.

SPECIAL PROVISIONS

Both recreational and commercial oyster harvesters must purchase a license from the Department of Marine Resources.

Oysters taken from Mississippi waters must be tagged. These tags are issued by the Department of Marine Resources at officially designated check-in, check-out stations. These stations will be identified in the opening order for oyster season. Both commercial and recreational oystermen must check in at the designated check station before going to reefs and must check out at the same station.

Tags are issued at the time of inspection. Each tag must be completed with the harvester's name, license/identification number, harvest date, harvest area and the shell-stock dealer's name and identification number if the oysters are to be sold. Tags must be affixed to the sacks with the fasteners provided by the DMR. All harvesters are required to pay a shell retention fee to the Department of Marine Resources on the day of harvest. Shell retention fees will be used to further oyster production in the state.

Oysters taken from private leases must be so designated by tags indicating the official lease numbers issued by the Department of Marine Resources.

Oysters taken for personal consumption also must be inspected and a tag will be issued for each sack. Such tags will identify that the contents are not to be sold.

Each boat or vessel used to harvest or transport shellfish is required to have onboard a functional approved marine sanitation device (MSD), portable toilet or other approved sewage disposal receptacle to contain human sewage.

Oysters destined for interstate commerce must originate from a certified Mississippi dealer with a fixed cooler facility.

Any oysters taken from other than Mississippi waters must be accompanied by a bill of lading indicating the point of origin.

Between May 1 - September 30 harvest vessels must have an awning or similar covering above shellstock to provide protection from the sun.

SEASONS

The commercial oyster season is regulated by the Commission on Marine Resources and notice thereof will be duly published in local newspapers and released to both the radio and television media.

During open season, oysters may be taken only during daylight hours.

LEGAL SIZE LIMITS

Oysters taken in Mississippi waters must be at least three inches from hinge to bill. At times, however, the Department of Marine Resources may adjust this limit upon public notice to that effect.

LEGAL CATCH LIMITS

Recreational catch limits, set by Statute 49-15-46 (4), and commercial catch limits, set by Statute 49-15-38, are set annually.



Eastern oyster (*Crassostrea virginica*)

Crabs

METHODS OF TAKING

Traditional methods of taking crabs:

- Traps (pots)
- Handline
- Drop net
- Dip net
- Trawls



SPECIAL PROVISIONS

A recreational crab license is required for crab traps.

It shall be unlawful to have any sponge crabs (egg-bearing crabs) at any time of year. All sponge crabs shall immediately be returned to the water alive.

It is illegal to remove crabs from traps or pots for which one is not specifically licensed. It is illegal to remove crab traps from the water between the hours of 1/2 hour after sunset to 1/2 hour before sunrise.

All crabs, except for peeler crabs (those that are about to shed) and soft-shell crabs (those that have recently shed), must be five inches or larger as measured from the tip of one lateral spine across the back of the shell to the tip of the opposite lateral spine. Peeler crabs, if under five inches, must be in a separate container during commercial harvest activities.

All crab trap floats must be visibly marked with corresponding commercial or recreational crab license number. In addition, all crab traps fished from a boat must also be marked with the vessel's Mississippi registration number. A crab trap float line must be of non-floating or weighted material and easily cut with a knife. All floats must measure six inches in diameter. It is illegal to place any crab trap so that the trap, the trap line or float is in any navigable waterway and interferes with normal boat traffic.

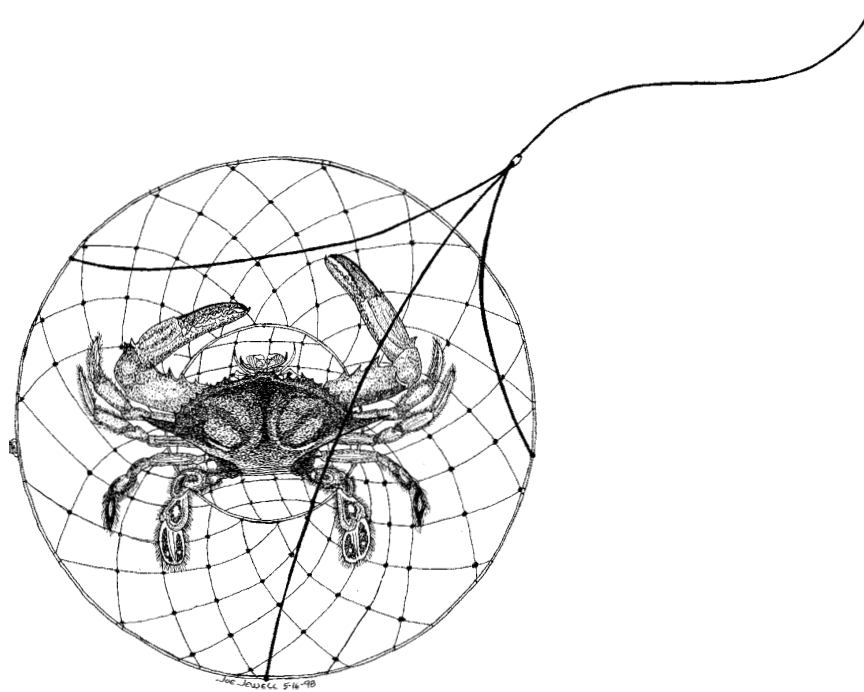
Effective January 1, 2004, all crab traps must be permanently marked for ownership by a corrosion-resistant metal or plastic tag attached to the trap. The tag must be supplied by the fisherman and must be legibly stamped with license holder's full name.

COMMERCIAL

Commercial crabbing is prohibited north of the CSX railroad bridge in the three coastal counties of Mississippi. Crabs may be taken by trawl, but the trawl must not exceed the maximum allowable dimension specified under "Methods of Taking for Shrimp" and must comply with all other regulations governing the use of a trawl. Crabs incidentally caught in trawls must be immediately returned to the water unless the boat operator holds a valid Mississippi commercial crab license. Licensed shrimp trawlers may keep up to three dozen blue crabs for personal consumption. Licensed commercial crab fishermen may register a buoy color code with Marine Patrol.

RECREATIONAL

It shall be unlawful for any person recreationally fishing for crabs for personal use or consumption, by means of crab traps or crab pots, to use in excess of six (6) such traps or pots per household. Traps or pots must be marked with the owner's name, and if traps or pots are being fished from a vessel, the traps or pots must be marked with the vessel's Mississippi registration number. Recreational crab traps are not allowed north of Interstate 10.



Menhaden

METHOD OF TAKING

Menhaden are traditionally taken using purse seines. Boats and nets for taking menhaden are commercially licensed separately.

SEASONS

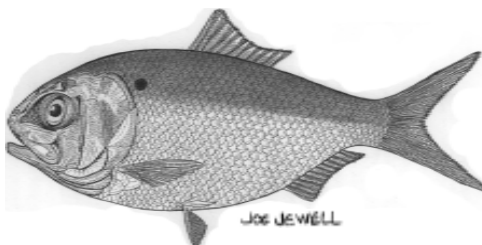
Menhaden season opens on the third Monday of April and closes on November 1 each year.

SPECIAL PROVISIONS

Purse seines for taking menhaden may not be used in any bay, river or bayou, nor within one mile of the shorelines of Hancock or Harrison counties.

Purse seines may not be used to catch in excess of five percent by weight, in any single set of the net, any of the following species:

- bluefish
- cobia (ling or lemonfish)
- dolphin
- jack crevalle
- king mackerel
- pompano
- Spanish mackerel
- spotted seatrout (speckled trout)



It also is illegal for any vessel carrying a purse seine to have on board in excess of 10 percent by weight of the total catch any of the aforementioned species.

It is further illegal for any vessel carrying a purse seine to have on board any quantity of red drum.

Data Reporting Requirements

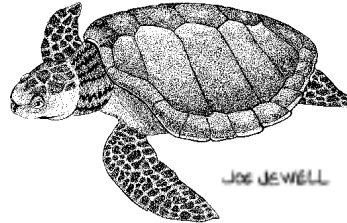
Statistical agents of the Department of Marine Resources, Office of Marine Fisheries, are authorized and empowered to obtain information on all fish and shellfish landed in Mississippi. This information may be collected from the fishermen in the form of interviews and/or questionnaires and may also be obtained from the purchase slips or landing records of each seafood dealer, processor or landing firm. All such statistical information obtained by the Department of Marine Resources will remain confidential and will not be released except in aggregate form.

Cooperation with statistical agents is appreciated. For more information on the statistical program and associated data reporting requirements, contact the Mississippi Department of Marine Resources, Office of Marine Fisheries.

Protected Species

Certain marine species are protected by federal law and include but are not restricted to the following species:

- All marine mammals
- West Indian manatee
- Atlantic Ridley, hawksbill, leatherback, loggerhead and green sea turtles
- Atlantic sturgeon
- Marine birds
- Smalltooth & largetooth sawfish



Should any of these species be inadvertently taken in nets or otherwise, they must be immediately released unharmed.

Sea turtles inadvertently caught in trawls may appear to be dead, but the Endangered Species Act of 1973 requires that fishermen attempt resuscitation of such sea turtles. Regulations specify using either of the following methods:

1. Place the sea turtle on its breastplate and elevate its hindquarters several inches, OR
2. Place the turtle on its back and pump its breastplate with either hand or foot.

The regulations further specify that the turtles be released over the stern of the vessel (with engines in neutral).

Information on sea turtle observations is greatly needed in Mississippi waters. Please take note of any distinguishing characteristics and the location of the sighting. Contact the Mississippi Department of Marine Resources at (228) 374-5000 in the event you have any such information.

If either a sea turtle or marine mammal is found stranded (dead or alive), immediate notification should be made to the following offices:

- **National Marine Fisheries Service (228) 762-4591**
- **Southeastern U.S. Marine Mammal and Sea Turtle Stranding Network 1(800) 799-6637**
- **Department of Marine Resources (228) 374-5000**

Please note that criminal violations (intentionally shooting, killing or harming endangered or threatened animals) of the Endangered Species Act carry a maximum fine of \$20,000 and a jail sentence of up to one year. Should this action be observed call NMFS or DMR Marine Patrol.

Marine Litter

The Marine Litter Act of 1989 prohibits the dumping of wastes, garbage and other debris from vessels and empowers the marine enforcement officers to uphold and enforce the provisions as set forth in the act. U.S. Coast Guard officers are further authorized to make arrests under federal law.

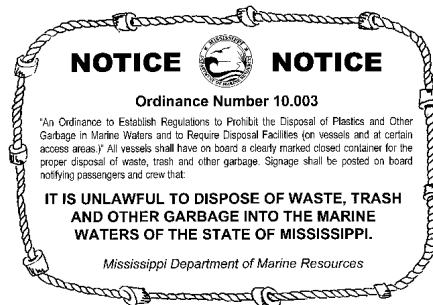
MARINE LITTER ORDINANCE - 10.003

- "Vessel" means any boat, barge or other vehicle operating in the marine environment from the largest supertanker to the smallest recreational craft.
- "Person" means any human individual discharging garbage from land, vessel, plane or fixed or floating platforms.
- "Garbage" means all food wastes but does not include fresh fish or their parts.

It shall be unlawful for any person or vessel to discharge any type of plastics including synthetic ropes, fishing nets, garbage bags and other garbage including paper products, glass, metal, dunnage, lining and packing materials into the marine waters of this state.

All marinas and access areas used by vessels shall be required to have proper disposal facilities on site.

All vessels shall have on board a clearly marked closed container for the proper disposal of waste, trash and other garbage. Signage shall be posted on board notifying passengers and crew that it is unlawful to dispose of waste, trash and other garbage into the marine waters of the State of Mississippi.



This Marine Litter Sticker may be obtained free of charge at the Mississippi Department of Marine Resources. This sticker is required to be visibly displayed in all vessels (including personal watercraft) within the marine waters of the state of Mississippi.

"Closed Container" means any sealed and properly labeled receptacle. The size and volume of the container shall be determined by the length and purpose of the cruise/voyage, the number of passengers and crew on board, and the amount of trash or garbage to be generated. Closed containers shall include, but not be limited to, buckets or cans with lids, or water tight garbage bags with appropriate ties. Closed containers shall be clearly and permanently marked with weather resistant materials.

EXCEPTIONS

The regulations contained herein shall not apply during the following emergencies:

- Discharges of garbage from a ship for the purpose of securing the safety of a ship and those on board or saving life at sea.
- The escape of garbage resulting from damage to a ship or its equipment, if all reasonable precautions have been taken before and after the occurrence of the damage to prevent or minimize the escape.
- The accidental loss of synthetic fishing nets or the loss of synthetic material during repair of nets, provided all reasonable precautions have been taken to prevent such losses.
- Refuse or other flotsam, found in nets during trawling activities, may legally be returned to the sea without violating these regulations. Regulations prohibit the intentional discharge of fishing nets at sea.

It should be noted that it is illegal to throw trash or allow it to enter into the marine waters of this state from piers, docks, bridges or land.

PENALTIES

Any person or vessel convicted of violating any provision of these regulations shall be guilty of a misdemeanor and upon conviction shall be punished by a fine not to exceed \$500. Each day of a continuing violation constitutes a separate violation. Violations of more than one section or subsection of these regulations, or parts thereof, shall be considered separate offenses and punished as such.

Any person or vessel convicted of a second or subsequent violation of any provisions of these regulations shall be guilty of a misdemeanor and upon conviction shall be punished by a fine not to exceed \$10,000.

Any person violating federal marine litter laws may receive fines up to \$50,000. A provision of the federal law may award a portion of criminal penalties or civil fines assessed against a violation to the person who gives information that leads to a conviction or assessment of a penalty.

MISSISSIPPI COASTAL CLEANUP

Annually, the Department of Marine Resources sponsors the Mississippi Coastal Cleanup in conjunction with the International Coastal Cleanup. The third Saturday of every September coastal states and countries around the world dedicate this day to ridding the coastline of marine debris. Mississippi has one of the most successful cleanups in the world. Each year we have over 4,500 volunteers and the cleanup continues to grow. Along with the event, the Department of Marine Resources promotes marine debris awareness and education on prevention throughout the year. Be sure to contact the Department of Marine Resources and find out how you can participate in the next coastal cleanup, the largest event to help stop marine debris.

Invasive Species

Non-native invasive species can harm Mississippi's natural environments by out-competing native animals and plants for food and space. Aquatic plants can degrade water quality, reducing oxygen available to native aquatic species.

The impact to fishing and hunting can be substantial. Fish populations can be reduced by competition from non-native species and reduced water quality. Invasive aquatic plants can cover the water surface, making fishing impossible. Reduced water quality may degrade habitat for other animals as well. Non-native aquatic plants can clog motor intakes, degrade swimming areas, and can even reduce property values in areas where non-native aquatic plants have taken over.

YOU CAN HELP prevent the spread of non-native invasive plants and animals by:

- Removing any aquatic plants from boat propellers, intakes, trailers and gear before leaving a launch area.
- Never releasing plants, fish or animals into a body of water unless they came out of that body of water.
- Eliminating water from equipment before transporting.
- Blowing out jet-ski intakes and washing boats and equipment land side before traveling into a new waterway.

For more information on invasive aquatic species:
www.ProtectYourWaters.net

To report invasive species call the Mississippi Department of Marine Resources at (228) 523-4064



STOP AQUATIC HITCHHIKERS!™

Prevent the transport of nuisance species.
Clean all recreational equipment.
www.ProtectYourWaters.net