

http://www.ncfisheries.net/recreational/recguide.htm  **JUN** **AUG** **NOV**  
 350 captures 5 Feb 2005 - 31 Dec 2019 2009 2010 2011 About this capture

North Carolina Department of Environment and Natural Resources



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## 2010 NC Recreational Coastal Waters Guide For Sports Fishermen August 2010 Version

(Website chart reflects the most recent changes to size and bag limits)

[Download a printable PDF version of this Rec Guide](#)

New weakfish bag limit effective May 16, 2010. See [FF-54-2010](#)

New Snapper/Grouper rules effective August 17, 2010. See [FF-65-2010](#)

New Spotted Seatrout size limits effective Sep. 24, 2009. See [FF-40-2010](#)






For inland water limits contact Wildlife Resources Commission 1-919-707-0220

or visit their website [www.ncwildlife.org](http://www.ncwildlife.org)

A [Coastal Recreational Fishing License](#) went into effect Jan. 1, 2007

for all of the state's coastal and ocean waters.

	<b>State Coastal Waters (Internal &amp; 0-3 Miles)</b>		<b>Exclusive Economic Zone EEZ (3-200 miles)</b>	
<b>Finfish Species</b> (note symbols)	<b>Minimum Length</b>	<b>Bag Limits (Per Person)</b>	<b>Minimum Length</b>	<b>Bag Limits (Per Person)</b>
<b>Greater Amberjack</b>	28" FL	1/Day	28" FL	1/Day
<b>Bluefish</b>	None	15/Day Only 5 greater than 24" TL	None	15/Day
<b>Cobia</b>	33" FL	2/Day	33" FL	2/Day
<b>Wahoo</b>	None	2/Day	None	2/Day
<b>Dolphin (B)</b>	None	10/Day	None	10/Day
<b>King Mackerel (J)</b> <a href="#">Species Identification</a>	24" FL	3/Day	24" FL	3/Day
<b>Spanish Mackerel (J)</b> <a href="#">Species Identification</a>	12" FL	15/Day	12" FL	15/Day
<b>Tuna(H);Bluefin(J), Yellowfin &amp; Bigeye</b>	Yellowfin 27" CFL Bigeye 27" CFL	Yellowfin 3 per day	Yellowfin tuna 27" CFL	Yellowfin Tuna 3 per day
<b>Sharks(J)</b> (excluding spiny and smooth dogfish)	(L)	1/Vessel/Day	54"FL (F, H )	1/Vessel/Day
<b>Sharks, Atlantic Sharpnose and Bonnethead (F)</b>	None	(F)	(F, H)	1/Day
<b>Blue Marlin( H)</b>	99" LJFL	1/vessel/trip either Blue or White Marlin	99" LJFL	
<b>White Marlin (H)</b>	66" LJFL	1/vessel/trip either Blue or White Marlin	66" LJFL	

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<b>Flounder</b> (Internal) <a href="#">See Proclamation for area descriptions</a>  <a href="#">PDF Map of Area</a>	14" TL Western Albemarle and Pamlico sounds and rivers and south of Brown's Inlet 15" TL Eastern Albemarle, Croatan, Roanoke, Pamlico, Core and Bogue sounds (O)	8/Day					
<b>Flounder</b> (Ocean) <a href="#">See Proclamation for area descriptions</a>	15" TL north of Brown's Inlet 14" TL south of Brown's Inlet (O)	8/Day	15" TL north of Brown's Inlet 14" TL south of Brown's Inlet (O)			8/Day	
<b>Spotted Seatrout</b> (Speckled)	14" TL	10/Day	14" TL			10/Day	
<b>Weakfish</b> (Gray Trout)	12" TL	1/Day see <a href="#">FF-54-2010</a> )	12" TL			6/Day	
<b>Mullet</b> (Striped and White)	None	200/Day (species combined)	None				
<b>Tarpon</b>		1/Day				1/Day	
<b>Striped Bass</b> <a href="#">See striped bass details</a>	(A)	(A)	<b>Unlawful To Possess</b>				
<b>American and Hickory Shad</b>	None	10/Day	None			10/Day	
<b>Alewife and Blueback Herring</b>	None	<b>No Harvest</b>	None			<b>No Harvest</b>	
<b>American Eel</b>	6" TL	50/Day	6" TL			50/Day	
<b>Scup</b> (North of Cape Hatteras)	8" TL	50/Day	10" TL			50/Day (E)	
<b>Black Sea Bass</b> (North of Cape Hatteras) (C)	12.5" TL	25/Day	12.5" TL			25/Day	
<b>Black Sea Bass</b> (South of Cape Hatteras)	12" TL	15/Day	12" TL			15/Day	
<b>Groupers (J&amp;K)</b>		(See Below)				(See Below)	
<b>Red, Scamp, Yellowfin and Yellowmouth Groupers</b>	20" TL	3/Day (all groupers combined; includes only 1 speckled hind, 1 warsaw, 1 golden tilefish, 1 snowy, and no more than 1 black or gag grouper, individual or combined) (K)	20" TL			3/Day (all groupers combined; includes tilefish, only 1 speckled hind, 1 warsaw, 1 golden tilefish, 1 snowy, and no more than 1 black or gag grouper, individual or combined) (K)	

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(Pinky Whitefish)		(See above)		(See above)
<b>Warsaw Grouper</b>	None	1/Vessel/Trip (See above)	None	1/Vessel/Trip (See above)
<b>Red Porgy</b> (Silver Snapper, Pinky)	14" TL	3/Day	14" TL	3/Day
<b>Dog, Gray, Cubera, Mahogany, Queen, Schoolmaster and Yellowtail Snappers</b>		10/Day (Species combined; includes up to 2 Red Snapper)	12" TL	10/Day (Species combined; includes up to 2 Red Snapper)
<b>Mutton Snapper</b>		See Above	16" TL	See Above
<b>Silk and Blackfin Snappers</b>	12" TL	See Above	12" TL	See Above
<b>Red Snapper</b>	<b>NO POSSESSION</b>		<b>NO POSSESSION</b>	
<b>Vermillion Snapper (J)</b>	12" TL	5/Day	12" TL	5/Day
<b>Hogfish (Hog Snapper)</b>	12" TL	5/Day		
<b>Reef Complex Species</b> Includes sheepshead, spadefish, gray triggerfish, white grunt, knobbed porgy and more (see below) (I) (J)		20/Day		20/Day

### Prohibited Finfish Species

<b>Coastal Waters</b> (Internal waters and Atlantic Ocean out to 3 miles)	<b>EEZ</b> (Atlantic Ocean more than 3 miles)
Sharks; (whale, basking, white, sand tiger, bigeye sand tiger, Atlantic angel shark, bigeye sixgill, bigeye thresher, bignose, Caribbean reef, Caribbean sharpnose, dusky, Galapagos, longfin mako, narrowtooth, night, sandbar, silky, sevengill, sixgill, and smalltail), sturgeon, Nassau grouper, Goliath grouper (jewfish), and spearfish	Sharks; (whale, basking, white, sand tiger, bigeye sand tiger, Atlantic angel shark, bigeye sixgill, bigeye thresher, bignose, Caribbean reef, Caribbean sharpnose, dusky, Galapagos, longfin mako, narrowtooth, night, sandbar, silky, sevengill, sixgill, and smalltail), red drum, striped bass, sturgeon, Nassau grouper, Goliath grouper (jewfish), and spearfish.




### Shellfish

State Coastal and EEZ Waters  
Internal and 0-200 miles

<b>Species</b> (note symbols)	<b>Minimum Length</b>	<b>Bag Limits</b> (Per Person)
<b>Blue Crab (M)</b> <a href="#">Identification Help</a>	5" Carapace Width (Minimum) 6 3/4" Carapace Width (Maximum) (G)	50 crabs/day not to exceed 100 crabs/vessel/day
<b>Hard Clam</b>	1" Thick	100 clams/day not to exceed 200 clams/vessel/day
<b>Oyster (N)</b>	3" Shell Length	1 bushel/day not to exceed 2 bushels/vessel/day
<b>Bay Scallops (N)</b>	None	1/2 bushel/day, not to exceed one bushel per vessel
<b>Conchs &amp; Whelks</b>	None	10/day not to exceed 20/vessel/day
<b>Mussels</b>	None	100/day not to exceed 200/vessel/day

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### Explanation of Symbols

(A) Albemarle Sound Management Area: contact DMF for seasons, areas or other limits; Atlantic Ocean year-round: 2 per person per day at 28" TL minimum; Other coastal areas (excluding Inland Waters-regulations set by Wildlife Resources Commission), 2 per person per day at 18" TL minimum and unlawful to possess between 22" – 27" TL in Joint waters. Moratorium in Cape Fear River system. Season October through April, statewide by proclamation (except Cape Fear River). Includes hybrid bass.

(B) Limit of 10/person/day or 60/trip, whichever is less.

(C) Size limit to change to 12 ½ inches total length. May 22, 2010.

(D) Unlawful to possess red drum greater than 27 inches total length. Unlawful to gig, spear, or gaff red drum.

(E) North of Cape Hatteras Scup recreational season may change this summer.

(F) See prohibited species list above; Legal sharks include: tiger, blacktip, spinner, lemon, bull, nurse, smooth and scalloped and great hammerhead, blacknose, finetooth, bonnethead, shortfin mako, blue, thresher, porbeagle, and oceanic whitetip. One (1) Atlantic sharpnose (no minimum size) and one bonnethead (no minimum size) per person per day may be landed in addition to allowable bag limits for other sharks.

(G) Mature female crabs are exempt from minimum size. Maximum size is effective September through April and applies to mature females only.

(H) In state or federal waters, federal permit required for Highly Migratory Species, excluding Atlantic bonito, little tunny (albacore), and blackfin tuna: (978) 281-9370 or [hmspermits.noaa.gov](http://hmspermits.noaa.gov). Prior to removal from vessel, all billfishes, swordfish and bluefin tuna must be reported at NC HMS reporting stations. DMF website for more details.

(I) Reef complex species: whitebone porgy, jolthead porgy, knobbed porgy, longspine porgy, sheepshead, gray triggerfish, queen triggerfish, yellow jack, crevalle jacks, bar jack, almaco jack, lesser amberjack, banded rudderfish, white grunt, margates, spadefish and scup 20 per person per day in combination.

(J) For seasons, bag limits, size limits or closures for tunas, billfishes, and sharks contact NMFS Highly Migratory Species Division (1-800-894-5528 or [hmspermits.noaa.gov](http://hmspermits.noaa.gov) or [www.nmfs.noaa.gov](http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov)). For snapper, grouper, and mackerels contact the South Atlantic Council (1-843-571-4366 or [www.safmc.net](http://www.safmc.net)) and see **Proclamation FF-65-2010**.

Vermilion snapper season is closed November 1-March 31. Shallow water grouper species (gag, black grouper, red grouper, scamp, rock hind, red hind, coney, grasby, yellowfin, grouper, yellowmouth grouper and tiger grouper) harvest is prohibited January 1–April 30. Possession of red **snapper is currently prohibited**.

(K) Groupers in the management unit include: red, yellowfin, yellowmouth, black, warsaw, snowy, yellowedge, and misty grouper; gag, scamp, speckled hind, red hind, rock hind, graysby, and coney. The three (3) grouper bag limit in the EEZ also includes blueline, golden, and sand tilefish. No possession of Nassau and Goliath grouper.

(L) It is unlawful to possess Large Coastal and Pelagic sharks less than 54 inches (Fork Length).

(M) One crab pot may be used from private property or private pier, without a license – Reference 15A NCAC 3J .0302.

(N) Contact DMF or visit [www.ncdmf.net/procs](http://www.ncdmf.net/procs) for seasons, areas, or other restrictions.

(O) The line dividing Pamlico Sound runs from Pt. of Marsh in Carteret County northeasterly to Bluff Pt. in Hyde County. The line dividing Albemarle Sound runs from the shore of the mouth of the Alligator River northeasterly to the western shore of the mouth of North River at Camden Pt. Browns Inlet is located in Onslow County and the line runs through the northeast side of the Inlet. These descriptions are general and **Proclamation FF-2-2010**, dated March 26, 2010, has the specific coordinates of the line locations.

**Total length** (TL) is measured from tip of snout with mouth closed to top of compressed tail. **Fork length** (FL) is measured from tip of snout to middle of fork in tail. **Lower jaw fork length** (LJFL) is measured from lower jaw to middle of fork in tail. **Curved fork length** (CFL) is the measurement of the length taken in a line tracing the contour of

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**Ocean boundary** is defined as water seaward of the **COLREGS Demarcation Lines** as indicated on National Ocean Service navigation charts

No one may possess aboard a vessel or while engaged in fishing any fish subject to limits without head and tail attached, except for alewife and blueback herring used for bait provided not more than two fish per boat/operation may be cut at any one time – Reference 15A NCAC 3M .0101

**IMPORTANT** Check with Division of Marine Fisheries for most current minimum lengths and catch limits. 252-726-7021 or 800-682-2632.  
For inland water limits contact Wildlife Resources Commission 1-919-707-0220 or visit their website [www.ncwildlife.org](http://www.ncwildlife.org)

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THIS DOCUMENT IS EFFECTIVE May 1, 2010 AND IS FOR GENERAL INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES AND HAS NO LEGAL FORCE OR EFFECT. FISHERY RULES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE. THESE RESTRICTIONS APPLY TO FISH TAKEN FOR RECREATIONAL PURPOSE AND INCLUDE HOOK AND LINE.  
(Updated 8/18/10)