

Alabama Regulations History for Certain Fishes

Last updated 4-19-2019 ecw

Spotted Sea Trout

March 28, 1963	Established legal size of Speckled Trout 12" that can be in possession (of anyone).
October 23, 1963	Amended the above rule to state "No person shall sell, offer for sale, or have in possession for sell, speckled trout which measures less than 12 inches.
August 8, 1978	Non-commercial limit of Speckled seatrout is 50 per day, still 12" Total Length size. Persons returning from a two-day trip may possess a two-day limit.
July 23, 1979	Non-commercial limit of Speckled seatrout changes to 25 per day, still 12". Persons returning from a two-day trip may possess a two-day limit
September 26, 1980	When using a seine or net of any type in state waters the possession limit of spotted seatrout will be 100 pounds per boat per day.
April 2, 1981	Illegal for any person or persons to take more than 100 pounds of spotted seatrout from the Gulf waters of Alabama between May 15 and September 15.
November 17, 1981	It is illegal to have in possession small than 12", provided a 5% allowance for undersized fish is permitted.
September 30, 1982	Regulation reworded to change the 5% undersized fish to 5% OTHER SIZED fish.
April 19, 1984	The rule changes that "individuals fishing in the waters of the State of Alabama are limited to...". Limit changes to 15 fish per day, with a two-day limit still allowed for two-day (or more) trips. Commercial and Non-Commercial limit still allows 5% allowance for "other sized fish". Regulation 83-MR-11
April 19, 1984	Regulation stating that the possession of Speckled Sea Trout for for sale is now illegal. Illegal to catch Speckled Sea Trout with a Trawl. Regulation 83-MR-12
January 10, 1984	Taking of Speckled Trout by any means whatsoever is illegal for 30 days. January 11,1984 to February 10, 1984.
January 20, 1984	The previous regulation is repealed. Effective 20 January 1984.
April 15, 1985	Proof must be provided showing the out of state origin of Speckled Sea Trout.
March 24, 1986	Creel limit changes to 10 fish per day. The two-day limit is still in effect and a 5% undersized fish allowance remains. Size limit moves to 14" .
April 16, 1987	Undersized fish allowance changes to "2 fish of other sized fish" is permitted.
May 15, 1989	The two-day possession limit is repealed.
August 28, 1989	Limit changed from "daily catches" to "Possession Limit".
September 15, 1992	Taking of Speckled Sea Trout prohibited by means of a trawl.
February 24, 1997	Name officially changed from Speckled trout to Spotted Seatrout.
December 20, 2000	The two "other sized" fish limit is removed for Spotted Seatrout. No further changes for Spotted Seatrout since December 2000.

Flounder

December 20, 2000
September 23, 2008

Gulf and Southern Flounder. Species is not listed in regulations

Flounder size limit added. 12" total length minimum size.
10 fish creel limit established for Flounder.

No further changes for Flounder since September 2008

Red Drum

August 8, 1978

Established a 25 per day limit on Red Fish (Red Drum). No more than two days limit on trips lasting more than two days. Minimum size is 14" Total Length, but not more than two over 36 inches.

November 17, 1981

Size limit still 14" total length but no more than two fish over 36". Establishes a 5% allowance for undersize fish of the 25 fish limit.

September 30, 1982

Regulation reworded to change the 5% undersized fish to 5% OTHER SIZED fish.

April 19, 1984

The rule changes that "individuals fishing in the waters of the State of Alabama are limited to...". Limit changes to 15 fish per day, with a two-day limit still allowed for two-day (or more) trips. Commercial and Non-Commercial limit still allows 5% allowance for "other sized fish". **Regulation 83-MR-11**

April 19, 1984

Regulation stating that the possession of Speckled Sea Trout for for sale is now illegal. Illegal to catch Speckled Sea Trout with a Trawl. **Regulation 83-MR-12**

January 10, 1984

Taking of Redfish by any means whatsoever is illegal for 30 days. January 11, 1984 to February 10, 1984.

January 20, 1984

Previous regulation repealed.

April 15, 1985

Proof must be provided showing the out of state origin of Redfish.

April 16, 1987

Redfish creel limit changes to 5 fish per day. Two day limit on trips two days or more still allowed. Other sized fish limit changes to 2 fish (from 5%). Maximum size limit changes to 32" total length.

March 29, 1988

Size changes to 16" minimum, but not longer than 26" total length. Two fish per day of OTHER SIZE fish no longer applies to Redfish. No oversized fish allowed and only one undersized fish allowed. Limit changes to 3 fish per day.

May 15, 1989

The two-day possession limit is repealed.

February 24, 1997

1 oversized fish allowed in the 3 fish limit. Redfish renamed Red Drum in the Regulations

May 14, 2010

Regulation changed to allow state officers the ability to write a state citation instead of a Federal citation in federal waters for possession of red drum in federal waters: "No person who is subject to the jurisdiction of the State of Alabama shall possess a red drum in federal waters."

Red Snapper

August 8, 1978	Established a 25 per day limit on Red Snapper. No more than two days limit on trips lasting more than two days. No fish smaller than 8" Total Length
November 17, 1981	Size limit still 8" total length . Establishes a 5% allowance for undersize fish of the 25 fish limit.
September 30, 1982	Regulation reworded to change the 5% undersized fish to 5% OTHER SIZED fish.
July 1, 1986	Red Snapper size changes to 11" total length.
May 15, 1989	Regulation Changes to SNAPPER 10 per day (ALL SPECIES COMBINED), The two-day possession limit is repealed. Size changes to 12" total length.
June 6, 1990	Red Snapper 7 fish limit. 13" total length.
February 4, 1994	Red Snapper size goes 14" total length
February 23, 1995	Size limit changes to 15" total length (Commercial size 14 inches total length). Creel limit changes to 5 fish.
August 23, 1996	Commercial size changes to 15" total length.
February 24, 1997	Red Snapper name changed to Red snapper in the regulations
July 22, 1998	creel limit changes to 4 fish.
June 3, 1999	size changes to 18" total length
March 21, 2000	Size changes to 16" total length.
March 21, 2000	Effective 12:01 am April 21, 2000, through October 31, 2000, all state waters will be open to recreational red snapper fishing. Establish Open Season for Red Snapper.
July 10, 2001	Sets the Alabama Recreational Red Snapper season to open and close with the Federal Red Snapper Season.
May 29, 2008	Creel limit changes to 2 fish
May 12, 2014	All red snapper must be reported to AL Marine Resources before landing the fish.

Gray Snapper

June 6, 1990	Part of 10 Fish aggregate limit (Gray Snapper, Mutton Snapper, Yellow Tail Snapper included). 12" total length
December 20, 2000	established 10 fish limit for Gray snapper. Size limit changes to 12 inches total length. No longer part of the snapper aggregate

Mutton Snapper

June 6, 1990	Part of 10 Fish aggregate limit (Gray Snapper, Mutton Snapper, Yellow Tail Snapper included). 12" total length
December 20, 2000	Mutton snapper, yellow tail snapper move out of the Gray snapper, Mutton snapper, Yellow tail snapper limit.

Yellow Tail Snapper

June 6, 1990	Part of 10 Fish aggregate limit (Gray Snapper, Mutton Snapper, Yellow Tail Snapper included). 12" total length
--------------	--

December 20, 2000

Mutton snapper, yellow tail snapper move out of the Gray snapper, Mutton snapper, Yellow tail snapper limit.

Vermillion Snapper

June 6, 1990

8" total length

March 10, 1998

size changes to 10" total length

January 25, 2006

Size changes to 11" total length

April 20, 2007

size changes to 10" total length

March 12, 2014

Creel limit instituted, 10 fish limit

Lane Snapper

June 6, 1990

8" total length

Gray Triggerfish

July 22, 1998

Size limit of 12 inches total length.

September 24, 2008

Size limit changes to 14" fork length

July 31, 2013

Creel limit instituted at 2 fish

January 11, 2018

Size limit changes to 15" Fork length. Creel limit reduced to 1 fish.

REEF FISH SPECIES

February 24, 1997

20 fish aggregate bag limit for reef fish species for which there is not other bag limit (including Banded rudderfish and Lesser amberjack)

Spanish Mackerel

November 17, 1981

Spanish Mackerel added to regulation. 12" Fork Length, no creel limit established.

September 30, 1982

Regulation reworded to change the 5% undersized fish to 5% OTHER SIZED fish.

October 22, 1987

Size changes to 14" TOTAL Length

March 29, 1988

10 fish per day limit begins. Size limit removed.

February 24, 1997

Spanish Mackerel renamed Spanish mackerel

December 20, 2000

creel limit moves to 15 fish

King Mackerel

March 29, 1988	2 fish per day limit for persons fishing on piers and private boats, and for persons fishing from charter boats, 3 per day excluding captain and crew. No size limit.
June 6, 1990	From June 6, 1990 through June 30, 1990, one fish per person per day, after which period the following shall apply: 2 for persons fishing on piers and private boats, and for persons fishing from charter boats, 3 excluding captain and crew.
January 28, 1991	From the effective date of this amendment through June 30, 1991, one fish per person per day, after which period the following shall apply: 2 for persons fishing on piers and private boats, and for persons fishing from charter boats, 3 excluding captain and crew.
January 14, 1992	From 6:00 am January 15, 1992 through June 30, 1992, one fish per person per day, after which period the following shall apply: 2 for persons fishing on piers and private boats, and for persons fishing from charter boats, 3 excluding captain and crew.
October 21, 1992	2 fish limit including fishing from a charter boat.
July 14, 1994	Size changes to 20" total length.
February 24, 1997	King Mackerel renamed King mackerel
May 31, 2000	Size changes to 24 inches Fork length.
March 20, 2017	Creel limit changed to 3 fish

Cobia (Ling)

March 29, 1988	37" total length size limit begins. No Creel limit
May 15, 1989	The two-day possession limit is repealed.
April 29, 1992	It shall be unlawful to take or possess for recreational (and commercial) purposes more than 2 ling (Cobia) from the waters of the State of Alabama
July 21, 1992	2 fish limit
February 24, 1997	Ling (Cobia) renamed Cobia

Black (Gag) Grouper

March 29, 1988	18" total length begins. No Creel limit
May 15, 1989	The two-day possession limit is repealed.
July 31, 1990	Creel limit established. Black (Gag) Grouper limit set as part of the 5 fish in aggregate, 20" total length
December 20, 2000	Size limit changes to 22 inches total length

July 22, 2009	Grouper Aggregate changes to 4 fish (no more than 2 Red grouper and no more than 2 Gag grouper)
April 17, 2012	No more than four red grouper and no more than 2 gag grouper included in aggregate.
April 20, 2015	No more than 2 red grouper and no more than 2 gag grouper included in aggregate.

Black Grouper

December 13, 2002	established Black Grouper separately with a size limit of 22" total length. Part of the 5 Grouper Aggregate.
-------------------	--

Red Grouper

December 13, 2002	established size limit of 20" total length, part of the 5 Grouper Aggregate.
January 25, 2006	Only one Red Grouper allowed in the 5 grouper aggregate.
July 22, 2009	Grouper Aggregate changes to 4 fish (no more than 2 Red grouper and no more than 2 Gag grouper)
April 17, 2012	No more than four red grouper and no more than 2 gag grouper included in the aggregate.
April 20, 2015	No more than 2 red grouper and no more than 2 gag grouper included in the aggregate.

Yellowfin Grouper

December 13, 2002	established size limit of 20" total length, part of the 5 Grouper Aggregate.
July 22, 2009	Grouper Aggregate changes to 4 fish (no more than 2 Red grouper and no more than 2 Gag grouper)

Scamp

December 13, 2002	established size limit of 16" total length, part of the 5 Grouper Aggregate.
-------------------	--

Amberjack

May 15, 1989	3 per day limit
April 11, 1991	GREATER AMBERJACK 28" fork length
February 24, 1997	Amberjack renamed Greater amberjack in the creel limit. Creel limit reduced to 1 fish.
September 23, 2008	Size limit changes to 30" Fork length
April 20, 2015	Size limit changes to 34"

Striped Bass

(In designated Salt Water areas)

October 11, 1989 6 fish per day. 16" total length.

Tripletail

December 20, 2000 3 fish limit established. 16" total length

April 17, 2012 Size limit changed to 18"

Florida Pompano

June 6, 1990 12" total length

December 20, 2000 3 fish creel limit established.

Sheephead

April 17, 2012 Sheephead creel limit instituted, 10 fish. Size limit set at 12" Fork length

Tarpon

September 13, 1993 60" total length.

Sharks

December 20, 2000 shark size and limits begin. Varies by species (Place holder for future research)

