

Freshwater and Saltwater License Requirements

BUYING LICENSES

There are several ways for you to purchase a Georgia fishing license.

- Buy in person at license dealers statewide including WRD/CRD offices; State Parks; marinas; major retailers; sporting goods, bait & tackle, and hardware stores.
- Internet sales are also available 24 hours a day/7 days a week at www.gofishgeorgia.com

NOTE: license improvements coming see pg. 4

NOTE: Social Security Number is required for the purchase of all licenses.

WHO NEEDS A FISHING LICENSE

Anglers age 16 and older must have a current Georgia fishing license in their possession while fishing in fresh or salt water in Georgia. Conservation Rangers may require identification when checking fishing licenses. EXCEPION: A fishing license is not required to fish in private ponds (does not include ponds owned by governments-city, county, state, or federal) nor by a landowner and their immediate family when fishing on their land.

Residents:

- Proof of residence, such as a Georgia driver's license, is required to purchase a resident fishing license.
- For purposes of buying a fishing license, residents are U.S. citizens living in Georgia for a least three months and includes out-of-state college students living in Georgia. Students may use a current Georgia student I.D. as documentation. Residents also include full-time, active duty military personnel who are stationed in Georgia or who list Georgia as their home of record, and their dependents.
- A free hunting and fishing license may be issued once for military veterans discharged from active duty on or after July, 1 2005 who were on ordered Federal duty for a period of 90 days or longer. Valid for 12 months from date

of issue. More details may be found at www.gofishgeorgia.com under "Fishing License Information"

- Residents 65 years of age or older: May fish with the Senior (65+) Lifetime License. This license can be obtained free from license dealers by furnishing proof of age (driver's lic., birth certificate, etc.).
- Permanently and totally disabled: Residents may obtain a Disability Honorary Combination Hunting and Fishing License by applying to the License Unit (800-366-2661). Proof of disability must accompany the application. Proof of disability may come from the U.S. Dept. of Veterans Affairs, Social Security Admin., Railroad Retirement System or other government agency.
- Blind persons: May apply for a Lifetime Honorary Fishing License and must provide a Physician's Certification of Blindness with the application.

Nonresidents:

- Nonresidents 16 or older, regardless of physical condition, must have a valid nonresident Georgia fishing license to fish in Georgia freshwater and saltwater, except in private ponds. See also "RECIPROCAL AGREEMENTS for BORDERING STATES" pg. 19-20.
- Nonresidents under 16 do not require a fishing license or trout license.
- Before July 1, 2008, Florida residents 65 years of age or older—See "Agreement with Florida" on page 20. Note: changes coming see page 20.



2008-2009 Recreational Fishing License Fees

Licenses are valid for one full year from date of purchase
Note: license improvements coming - see box pg. 4

Resident Licenses:

| | |
|---------------------------------------|---------|
| Sportsman's..... | \$60.00 |
| Fishing | 9.00 |
| One-Day Fishing | 3.50 |
| Trout | 5.00 |
| Combination Hunting and Fishing | 17.00 |
| Wildlife Management Area... | 19.00 |

See page 2 for information on Lifetime License prices.

LIFETIME & ANNUAL SPORTSMAN'S LICENSES

• Lifetime licenses are available for anglers of all ages. See pg 2 for details. The Lifetime license satisfies all state license requirements for the life of the purchaser. Senior (age 65+) lifetime licenses are free (\$10 for a plastic, permanent card).

• Annual Sportsman's license is a single license that covers all sport hunting & fishing licenses (except Federal Duck Stamp). Includes: Regular Hunting Lic., Primitive Weapons Lic., Big Game Lic., WMA Lic., GA Waterfowl Lic., Fishing Lic., Trout Lic. and H.I.P. permit.

RECIPROCAL AGREEMENTS for BORDERING STATES

Georgia DNR has Agreements with Alabama, Florida, North Carolina, and South Carolina allowing holders of Georgia fishing licenses to fish in the waters covered without obtaining a fishing license from the bordering state. See Agreements with Bordering States on pages 19-20.

TROUT LICENSES

- All resident anglers ages 16 to 64 must have a trout license & Georgia fishing license to fish in designated trout waters and to fish for or to possess trout.
- Resident Senior (65+) lifetime & honorary license holders are not required to have a trout license.
- Landowners & their immediate families may fish on their premises without a trout license.
- All nonresident anglers, 16 or older, regardless of physical condition, must possess a nonresident fishing license & nonresident trout license to fish for or possess trout or to fish in designated trout waters.
- Florida residents, 16 or older, must possess a nonresident trout license to fish for or possess trout or to fish in designated trout waters.
- STATE PARK VISITORS are not required to have a trout license to fish in the impounded waters of the Park.

PUBLIC FISHING AREAS see pg 16

LOST YOUR LICENSE?

- Go to www.gofishgeorgia.com and follow the links to print out a replacement for any recreational license.

Georgia Recreational Saltwater Fishing

Fishing Licenses: See page 5 for information on license requirements.

- Licenses are required for hook & line fishing, castnetting, seining, crabbing, gigging, sport bait trawling, and harvesting shellfish.
- A Georgia Fishing license is required for anglers returning to Georgia ports or transiting Georgia waters with recreational catches from federal waters beyond the state's 3-mile territorial sea.
- Reciprocal agreements with Alabama, South Carolina, and Florida currently **do not apply** to saltwaters.
- Georgia saltwater fishing guides have the option of purchasing a blanket fishing license to cover their customers. Anglers booking a trip with a Georgia saltwater fishing guide should inquire if they will need a Georgia fishing license or whether they will be covered by the guide's license.

Saltwater Fishing Information

Georgia Saltwater Fishing Regulations

For information & updates on licenses, regulations, & fishing in Georgia's inshore and offshore saltwaters contact:

Georgia DNR Coastal Law Enforcement

One Conservation Way, Suite 201
Brunswick, GA 31520-8687
912-264-7237 or fax 912-262-3166

Coastal Resources Division Marine Fisheries Section

One Conservation Way, Suite 300
Brunswick, GA 31520-8687
912-264-7218 or fax 912-262-2318
<http://crd.dnr.state.ga.us/>

Federal Saltwater Fishing Regulations

For information and updates on recreational fishing regulations in federal waters (3-200 miles offshore), contact:

South Atlantic Fishery Management Council

4055 Faber Place Dr., Suite 201
Charleston, SC 29405
843-571-4366 or 866-SAMFC-10
www.safmc.net

For information and updates on federal regulations and required permitting for tunas, billfish, and sharks, contact:

National Marine Fisheries Service

HMS Management Division
1315 East-West Hwy
Silver Spring, MD 20910
301-713-2347
www.nmfspermits.com

For information on the Gray's Reef National Marine Sanctuary contact:

Gray's Reef Sanctuary Program
10 Ocean Science Circle
Savannah, GA 31411
912-598-2345
www.graysreef.nos.noaa.gov

Wanton Waste

Sort or cull your catch on the water. Return undersized or unwanted wildlife to the water alive. When you throw away wildlife, you are not only wasting valuable resources, but you are also breaking the law!

Offshore Artificial Reefs

Georgia has 22 artificial reefs located from 3-80 miles offshore. Most are designated as Special Management Zones(SMZ)by the Federal government. Within these zones, only handheld hook-and-line and spear-fishing gear may be used. For further information, coordinates, and updates on Georgia's offshore artificial reefs, contact the Coastal Resources Division.

Boating Safety Zones

Boating safety zones have been established off Jekyll, Tybee, St. Simons, and Sea Islands. These zones extend from the northernmost point to the southernmost point of each of these islands and from the highwater mark to a distance 1,000 feet seaward. From May 1 through September 30, power boats, jet skis, and other motorized craft are prohibited in these zones.

SALTWATER FINFISH Landing Requirements/ Transfer Prohibition

All saltwater finfish (including sharks) under state or federal regulation must be landed with head and fins intact. Anglers must make catches available for inspection by government officials. Saltwater finfish subject to size and bag limits cannot be transferred to another person or vessel on the water. Commercial licenses are required to sell recreationally caught finfish.

Gear

A seine may not be used as a gill net (a net constructed of single webbing attached to a float line and lead line and fished in a stationary manner to ensnare or entangle fish in the meshes). Only flounder may be taken

with a gig (any handheld shaft with single or multiple points, barbed or barbless). All seasons, hours, creel limits, minimum size limits, and other regulations applicable to saltwater finfish apply regardless of the gear used.

Related Definitions

Minimum Size: the specific size in length below which it is unlawful to take that finfish species.

Open Season: that specified period of time during which one may take certain finfish species from any waters of the state.

Daily Creel Limit: the lawful amount of a species of finfish that a person may take in one day.

Possession Limit: the lawful amount of a species of finfish that a person can legally have at any one time.

Sea Turtles and Marine Mammals

It is unlawful to harm, harass, or disturb any sea turtle adult, hatchling, eggs, nest, carcass, or skeletal remains under both State and Federal law. It is also unlawful to offer for sale, sell, or possess any sea turtle, or sea turtle parts. If any accidental capture occurs, release immediately either by direct release or by cutting any hook and line as close to the turtle as possible. Report any dead or injured sea turtles to the Georgia DNR Nongame Conservation Section, Endangered Wildlife Program 1-800-2-SAVE-ME.

It is unlawful for any person to display, feed, net, trap, harpoon, molest or otherwise interfere with the well-being or normal activity of marine mammals including bottlenose & spotted dolphin, manatee, and any species of whale. Report sightings of dead or injured marine mammals to 1-800-2-SAVE-ME.

Saltwater Finfish - Seasons, Limits, Sizes

All Limits Per Person Unless Specified

| Species | Open Season | Daily Limit | Possession Limit | Minimum Size (in.) |
|---------------------------|---|------------------------|---------------------|--|
| Blue marlin | | Catch and Release Only | | |
| White marlin | | Catch and Release Only | | |
| Sailfish | | Catch and Release Only | | |
| Tarpon* | 3/16-11/30 | 1 | 1 | 68 FL |
| Amberjack | 3/16-12/31 (No Sale April 1 - April 30) | 1 | 1 | 28 FL |
| Cobia | 3/16-11/30 | 2 | 2 | 33 FL |
| Dolphin | All year | 10 ^a | 10 ^a | 20 FL |
| King mackerel | All year | 3 | 3 | 24 FL |
| Spanish mackerel | 3/16-11/30 | 15 | 15 | 12 FL |
| Sheepshead | All year | 15 | 15 | 10 FL |
| Atlantic sturgeon | no harvest allowed | | no harvest allowed | |
| Bluefish | 3/16-11/30 | 15 | 15 | 12 FL |
| Black sea bass | All year | 15 | 15 | 12 TL |
| Gag grouper | All year (No Sale March 1 - April 30) | 2 | 2 | 24 TL |
| Red drum | All year (spottail bass, redfish, or channel bass) | 5 | 5 | 14 TL (None longer than 23 in.) |
| Black drum | All year | 15 | 15 | 10 TL |
| Weakfish | All year | 6 | 6 | 13 TL |
| Flounder | All year | 15 | 15 | 12 TL |
| Whiting | All year | no possession limit | no possession limit | 10 TL |
| Spot | All year | 25 | 25 | 8 TL |
| Atlantic croaker | All year | 25 | 25 | 8 TL |
| Tripletail | All year | 2 | 2 | 18 TL |
| Red snapper | All year | 2 | 2 | 20 TL |
| Spotted seatrout | All year | 15 | 15 | 13 TL |
| Striped bass ^b | All year | 2 | 2 | 22 TL |
| Sand tiger shark | no harvest allowed | | no harvest allowed | |
| Small shark composite** | All year | 2 | 2 | 30 TL |
| Sharks*** | All year | 2**** | 2**** | 48 TL (limit may include only one longer than 84 in.) |
| Red Porgy | All year (No sale Jan. 1 - April 30) | 3 | 3 | 14 TL |

* Gamefish or no sale status ** Consists of Atlantic sharpnose, bonnethead, & spiny dogfish

*** Consists of all sharks other than sand tiger shark & small shark composite

**** Two per person or boat, whichever is less FL = fork length TL = total length.

^a Not to exceed 60 per boat, except for headboats which are allowed 10 dolphin per paying customer.

^b See Savannah River information on page 6.

King Mackerel Special Joint State Guidance Issued by Georgia, North Carolina, South Carolina and Florida For South Atlantic Ocean

| Size Range (Fork Length, Inches) | Recommendations for Meal Consumption of King Mackerel Caught Offshore Georgia Coast |
|----------------------------------|--|
| 24 To Less Than 33 Inches | No Restrictions |
| 33 To 39 Inches | 1 meal per month for pregnant women, nursing mothers & children age 12 & younger; 1 meal per week for other adults |
| Over 39 Inches | Do Not Eat |

REPORTING VIOLATIONS

To report violations, contact DNR Law Enforcement in Brunswick 912-264-7237 or call the Toll-Free 24-hour Hot Line 800-241-4113. To report violations in Federal waters contact U.S. Coast Guard stations in Brunswick 912-267-7999 and Tybee Island 912-786-5440, NOAA's toll-free, 24-hour Fisheries Enforcement hotline 800-853-1964, or DNR LE 800-241-4113.

Shrimp and Crabs

A Georgia Fishing license is required to recreationally fish for any seafood, whether for personal consumption or bait. The sale of recreationally harvested seafood or bait is prohibited.

SHRIMP

"Baiting" Shrimp: It is unlawful to place, deposit, distribute, or scatter any bait of any kind in, on, or over any waters so as to lure, attract, or entice shrimp toward the bait or to cause shrimp to congregate in the area where bait is placed. It is illegal to knowingly fish for shrimp in baited waters.

Food Shrimping Season: The season for the recreational harvest of food shrimp is the same as that established for commercial shrimping. The Commissioner of DNR may open the season from May 15 through the end of February; however, it is generally opened mid-June through mid-January. The opening and closing of the food shrimping season is announced via coastal media outlets, posted at marinas, and at www.gadnr.org (click on Coastal Resources.)

SPORT BAIT SHRIMPING WITH POWER-DRAWN NETS

Gear: Power-drawn nets 10 feet or smaller may be used in saltwaters to harvest shrimp for bait. Information on the specific net dimensions is available from DNR offices in Brunswick and Demerries Creek (Richmond Hill).

Bait Zones: A 10-foot sport bait trawl may be used to take shrimp only in rivers and creeks or portions thereof that have been opened to bait shrimping by DNR. Charts of established "Bait Zones" are also available at DNR offices in Brunswick and Demerries Creek.

Seasons, and Hours: Unless otherwise designated, bait zones are open year-round for sport bait shrimping. Sport bait shrimping is legal only between the hours of $\frac{1}{2}$ hour before official sunrise to $\frac{1}{2}$ hour after official sunset.

Harvest Limit: A sport bait shrimper may not possess at any time more than two (2) quarts of shrimp, no more than $\frac{1}{2}$ pint of which may be dead, and may not take more than four (4) quarts of shrimp within a 24-hour period. When two or more persons occupy the same boat, there may be no more than four (4) quarts of shrimp on board the boat at any time; no more than one pint of

which may be dead, and no more than eight (8) quarts of shrimp may be taken within a 24-hour period.

SEINING FOR SHRIMP

Gear and Areas: Seines equal to or smaller than 12 feet long, with a maximum depth of four feet, and a maximum stretch mesh of one (1) inch may be used throughout the year and throughout Georgia's saltwaters. Seines up to 100 feet long and with a minimum stretch mesh of $1\frac{1}{4}$ inch may be used on sand beaches of any barrier island in Georgia. Seines from 100 to 300 feet long and with a minimum mesh size of $2\frac{1}{2}$ inches may be used only on the oceanfront sides of beaches. The use of seines over 12 feet long in any inlet or tidal slough is prohibited. Seines over 300 feet long are also prohibited. It is unlawful to use any seine in saltwaters such that it blocks more than $\frac{1}{2}$ of the entrance of any tidal river, creek, slough, or inlet to the ocean.

Hours: During the open season, seines may be used at any time of day.

Harvest Limits: No one person taking shrimp solely by means of a seine, whether such person is acting alone or in a group of persons, may possess more than 24 quarts of shrimp with heads on or 15 quarts of tails taken by such seine in any 24-hour period. If any person or group of persons occupying the same boat is in possession of a cast net and a seine, such person or persons shall be subject to the limits imposed for shrimp taken by cast net.

CAST NETTING FOR SHRIMP

It is unlawful for any person to sell or otherwise dispose of, for human consumption, any shrimp taken as bait.

Gear: Georgia law defines a cast net as a cone shaped net with a weighted circumference thrown and retrieved by hand without mechanical assistance. Two types of cast nets are further defined: a "Bait shrimp cast net" having a minimum bar mesh of $\frac{3}{8}$ inch and a "Food shrimp cast net" having a minimum bar mesh of $\frac{1}{2}$ inch (the minimum bar mesh will increase to $\frac{5}{8}$ inch on March 1, 2009.) Bait shrimp cast nets cannot be used to take shrimp for personal consumption; however, food shrimp cast nets may be used to take bait. There are no restrictions on

the length of a bait or food shrimp cast net. Bait and food shrimp cast nets can be modified with the addition of duct tape or other materials to enhance performance.

FOOD SHRIMP

Hours and Areas: During the open season, cast netting for personal consumption may be conducted at any time of day in all the state's saltwaters.

Harvest Limits: No person taking shrimp for personal consumption with a cast net may possess more than 48 quarts of heads-on shrimp or 30 quarts of shrimp tails in any day. When one or more persons occupy the same boat, there may be no more than 48 quarts of heads-on shrimp or 30 quarts of shrimp tails on board at any time. No vessel owner shall allow the vessel to be used to take more than the allowable catch limits in any day.

BAIT SHRIMP

Season, Hours and Areas: There is no closed season for cast netting for bait. Cast netting for bait may be conducted at any time of day in all of Georgia's saltwaters.

Harvest Limits: Recreational cast netters collecting bait shrimp are limited to two quarts per person at any time, provided that person may take a maximum of four quarts of bait shrimp per day. When two or more persons occupy the same boat, there may be no more than four quarts of bait on board the boat at any time, and the persons occupying the boat may take no more than eight quarts of bait shrimp per day. Bait shrimp taken with a cast net may be live or dead.

CRABS

Areas, Seasons, Hours: Unless otherwise designated, the saltwaters of Georgia are open year-round for recreational crabbing at any time of the day.

Gear: Traps - Up to six standard size crab traps (2X2 feet or smaller) may be used recreationally. Two unobstructed escapement rings ($2\frac{3}{8}$ inch inside diameter) must be installed on an outside vertical wall. Each trap must be marked with a fluorescent green or lime green float bearing the owner's name and address in one-inch letters. Traps should be sufficiently weighted to prevent loss in strong tidal currents. It is unlawful to place or set crab traps in the channel of any stream with a

Crabs (cont.)

lawfully established system of water-way markers. Disposal of crab traps in public waters is a violation of State and Federal laws.

Other Gear: - Subject to other restrictions outlined in these regulations, legal crabs may be taken with other legal fishing gear such as seines, cast nets, hand-lines, and lift rings.

Size and Harvest Limits: It is unlawful to take or possess any crab less than 5 inches from spike to spike across the back (other than a "peeler" or a "mature adult female" crab). Peelers must measure at least 3 inches from spike to spike across the back. No sponge (egg-bearing) crabs are allowed. Recreational crabbers may take no more than one bushel of crabs during any 24-hour period. No more than two bushels may be taken recreationally or possessed during a 24-hour period on a boat with more than one person aboard.

Terrapins in Crab Traps: Recent studies have investigated the effectiveness of excluder devices for preventing the capture of diamond-back terrapins in commercial-style crab traps. Terrapins that enter crab traps cannot escape and often drown. Experimental excluder devices are available for any recreational crabber interested in installing them in their traps. Go to www.gadnr.org and click on Coastal Resources to find out where to pick them up.

Shellfish and Bait Minnows

SHELLFISH

Season and Hours: Saltwaters may be opened for taking shellfish between January 1 and December 31. Shellfish must be harvested between the hours of $\frac{1}{2}$ hour before official sunrise and $\frac{1}{2}$ hour after official sunset.

Gear: Shellfish may only be taken with handheld implements.

Areas: Updated charts of approved public picking areas for shellfish should be obtained from Coastal Resources Division's Ecological Services Section or at www.gadnr.org (click on Coastal Resources). It is illegal to recreationally harvest shellfish except in designated public picking areas, unless authorized in writing by a private property owner with legal harvest rights to an area. Private property owners wishing to harvest recreational quantities of shellfish or to issue permission to others must notify and provide DNR with specific information. It is unlawful to give permission to take shellfish from a closed area. Harvesters taking shellfish from private property must have on their person proof of ownership or permission.

Size and Harvest Limits: Oysters must measure no less than three inches from hinge to mouth, unless the oyster cannot be removed from a legal-sized oyster without destroying it. For clams, the maximum depth from one shell half to the other must be at least 3/4" thick. Recreational quantity limits are up to two bushels of oysters and one bushel of clams per person per day, with a maximum limit of six bushels of oysters and one bushel of clams per boat per day.

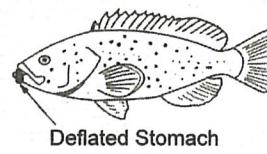
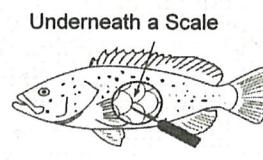
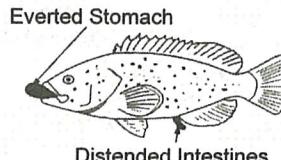
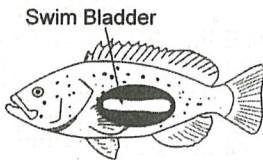
BAIT MINNOWS

Season, Hours and Areas: Bait minnows may be harvested year-round. Bait minnows may not be trapped in freshwater.

Gear: No more than two traps may be used recreationally, except that a licensed saltwater fishing guide may use a maximum of four traps. Maximum dimensions for rectangular traps may not exceed 24"x8"x9". Cylindrical traps may not exceed 24" in length and 30" in circumference. Recreational bait minnow traps shall have a mesh size of no smaller than $\frac{1}{4}$ inch bar mesh. The throat opening of the funnel shall not exceed $\frac{3}{4}$ inch in diameter. Each trap must have attached a tag or float bearing the name and address of the person using the trap. Subject to specific gear design criteria, sizes, time of day, and area restrictions outlined in these regulations, bait minnows may also be taken recreationally year-round in seines and cast nets.

Possession Limits: No individual recreationally harvesting bait minnows may possess more than two quarts of bait minnows at any given time. A licensed saltwater fishing guide may possess not more than 10 quarts at any given time.

Deflating Your Fish



Deflated Stomach

Many marine reef fish have gas-filled organs called swim bladders. These organs control buoyancy and allow the fish to maintain a certain depth in the water column. When some fish are brought quickly to the surface, the gas in the swim bladder can over-expand and rupture the bladder. Escaping gas fills the gut cavity. If released in this buoyant condition, the fish cannot descend and may float away and die. Swim bladder over-expansion can cause everted stomachs or intestines, as shown here. If a fish is unable to submerge, be prepared to vent the fish's gut cavity and get the fish back into the water as quickly as possible if you wish to release it. Venting helps the gas escape, allows the fish to descend, and improves survival.

Use wet gloves to handle the fish and have a deflating tool on hand. A simple deflating tool can be made by mounting a sharpened football needle in a 1"x3" dowel rod. A center hole is drilled lengthwise through the rod to allow gas to pass from the needle through the rod. Hold the fish gently on its side. Insert the needle through the thin lower body wall below the rear end of the pectoral fin. Insert the needle only as far as needed to allow the gas to escape. Squeeze gently to help push the gas out. Do not try to push the stomach back into the throat. Revive the fish in the water and release it when it can swim upright.