

GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

# SPORT FISHING

## REGULATIONS



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Supports Marine Habitats



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» 2022

Freshwater Creel Limits — Page 13  
Updated PFA Regulations — Page 19  
Freshwater Fish Records — Page 28  
Saltwater Fish Records — Page 42



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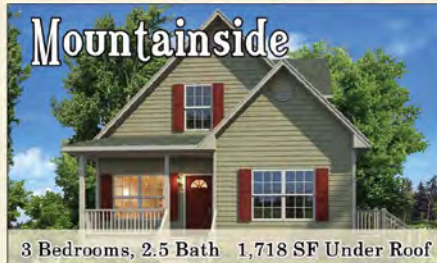
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4 Bedrooms, 2.5 Bath 3,613 SF Under Roof

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334-610-4110

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BROWSE PLANS



Ellijay, GA pricing shown. Pricing may be different in some areas, subject to change, and does not include land improvements.





GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

# SPORT FISHING

## REGULATIONS

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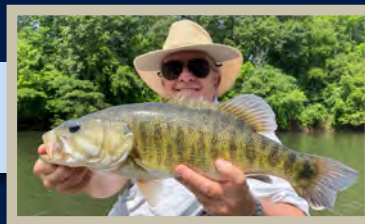
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**Angler Award Program**  
See page 32.



## 2022 FRESHWATER AND SALTWATER SPORT FISHING REGULATIONS

Brian P. Kemp, Governor

Mark Williams, Commissioner, Department of Natural Resources

Ted Will, Director, Wildlife Resources Division

Doug Haymans, Director, Coastal Resources Division

Thomas Barnard, Colonel, Law Enforcement Division

## ABOUT THIS PUBLICATION

Welcome to Georgia's 2022 Fishing Seasons and Regulations. Fishing regulations are set by the Board of Natural Resources, acting on the recommendations of the Wildlife Resources and Coastal Resources Divisions' professional staff. Laws are set by the elected members of the General Assembly. This guide is designed to help you understand the laws and regulations for fishing in Georgia. For complete rules and exact wording, refer to the Game and Fish Code (Title 27) and the current copy of the Department of Natural Resources, fishing regulations (Chapters 391-2 and 391-4) on file with the Secretary of State. The cost of this publication is offset through the sale of advertising space. The Georgia Department of Natural Resources neither endorses the products or services listed nor accepts any liability arising from the use of products or services listed. Every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of the information contained within this publication. If any errors are discovered, the online version of this publication found at [www.GoFishGeorgia.com](http://www.GoFishGeorgia.com) will be updated.

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# SPORTFISHING

## COMMISSIONER'S MESSAGE

### CREATING MORE FISHING OPPORTUNITIES

With Department of Natural Resources properties spread throughout the state, I know firsthand how blessed we are to have the opportunity to enjoy the beauty and natural resources our state offers.

It is more crucial now than ever to share our knowledge of wildlife conservation through fishing and hunting with our neighbors and others who have never had the opportunity to be exposed to this valued lifestyle. That is why I am very excited to share that the Wildlife Resources Division has launched a new effort focused on providing these opportunities through The Gateway to Fishing program. This program is dedicated to providing more fishing opportunities and learning experiences for those who want to learn to fish or help a neighbor or loved one learn to fish. I am very much looking forward to tracking this program's growth and most of all seeing the smiling faces on Georgians whom the program helps to catch their first fish.

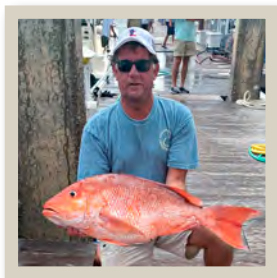
Our more than 1 million resident anglers bring so much to this state through their love of fishing. Fishing in Georgia is responsible for more than 14,000 jobs, \$635 million in salaries, and over \$250 million in state, local and federal tax revenues. Anglers also generate \$1.4 billion in retail sales.

If you've picked up a copy of our Fishing Regulations guide before, you already know that I am a proud Georgia native. Of the many reasons I love this state, the abundance of natural resources available to everyone is at the top of the list. If this is your first time, thank you, we are glad you are here. I am confident that you will soon share my love for fishing in Georgia.

I have a few favorite fishing holes as I am sure many of you do, but in Georgia, a short drive in any direction can put you on a great spot to fish. Whether in a pond catching bluegill with crickets, fishing for catfish or shoal bass in our pristine rivers, enjoying the beauty of north Georgia while catching rainbow trout in cold-water streams, fishing for bass or crappie in our reservoirs, or the multitude of saltwater fish species found along our amazing coast you are always only a short drive from great fishing. If you forget your gear, our Wildlife Resources and State Parks Divisions can help. These divisions coordinate to provide fishing equipment loaner stations and stock fish in our state park lakes across Georgia. Come for great fishing and stay a while at one of the many camp sites or cabins. So, this year, I encourage you to cast a line somewhere new and enjoy all the recreational opportunities this great state has to offer.

#### Mark Williams

Commissioner, Georgia Department of Natural Resources



**Your dollars make a difference.** The Wildlife and Sportfish Restoration Program creates a direct link among anglers and industries needed to expand and enhance opportunities for saltwater and freshwater resources.



EST. 2004  
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## About This Guide

This high-quality guide is offered to you by the Georgia Department of Natural Resources through its unique partnership with J.F. Griffin Publishing, LLC.

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## CONTACT INFORMATION &amp; OFFICES

## STATEWIDE OR GENERAL OFFICES

## WILDLIFE RESOURCES DIVISION STATE HEADQUARTERS

2067 US Highway 278 SE, Social Circle, GA 30025

Main Number ..... 706-557-3333  
 Toll Free ..... 833-557-3303  
 Game Management ..... 706-557-3350  
 Fisheries Management ..... 706-557-3305  
 Law Enforcement ..... 770-918-6408  
 Wildlife Conservation ..... 706-557-3213

## WILDLIFE RESOURCES CONSERVATION CENTER

2065 US Highway 278 SE, Social Circle, GA 30025

Boating Registration ..... 800-366-2661  
 Hunting & Fishing Licenses ..... 800-366-2661  
 Boating Education ..... 770-918-6408  
 Hunter Education ..... 706-557-3355  
 Special Permits Unit ..... 770-918-6408  
 Private Lands Program ..... 478-994-7583

## CHARLIE ELLIOTT WILDLIFE CENTER

543 Elliott Trail, Mansfield, GA 30055

Visitors Center ..... 770-784-3059

## GO FISH EDUCATION CENTER

1255 Perry Pkwy, Perry, GA 31069

Main Number ..... 478-988-6701

## COASTAL RESOURCES DIVISION HEADQUARTERS

ONE CONSERVATION WAY, BRUNSWICK, GA 31520

Main Number ..... 912-264-7218

Coastal Law Enforcement ..... 912-264-7237

REPORT A FISH KILL/RANGER HOTLINE ..... 800-241-4113

## WRD FISHERIES REGIONAL OFFICES AND FACILITIES

## NORTHWEST REGION (1) ..... 706-295-6102

2650 Floyd Springs Road, Armuchee, GA 30105

Law Enforcement (Acworth) ..... 770-529-2424

Law Enforcement (Atlanta) ..... 770-769-9680

ROCKY MOUNTAIN PFA  
& RECREATION AREA

## SUMMERVILLE HATCHERY

## NORTHEAST REGION (2) ..... 770-535-5498

2150 Dawsonville Hwy, Gainesville, GA 30501

Law Enforcement (Gainesville) ..... 770-535-5499

## BUFORD TROUT HATCHERY BURTON HATCHERY

## EAST CENTRAL REGION (3) ..... 478-825-6151

1014 MLK Blvd., Fort Valley, GA 31030

Law Enforcement (Thomson) ..... 706-595-4211

Law Enforcement (Augusta) ..... 706-737-1480

## THOMSON OFFICE ..... 706-595-1619

## WALTON HATCHERY

## MCDUFFIE HATCHERY &amp; PFA

## MARBEN PFA

## FLAT CREEK PFA

## SOUTH CENTRAL REGION (4) ..... 912-285-6094

108 Darling Ave., PO Box 2089, Waycross, GA 31502

Law Enforcement (Metter) ..... 912-685-2145

## OCMULGEE PFA

## DODGE COUNTY PFA

## BOWENS MILL HATCHERY

## PARADISE PFA

## HUGH M. GILLIS PFA

## BUY A LICENSE

Need a hunting or fishing license? Here's how to purchase one:



## Online

Visit [gooutdoorsgeorgia.com](http://gooutdoorsgeorgia.com) or scan the QR code to the right.

## By Phone

Call 1-800-366-2661 to speak with a local representative who can help.

Mon.-Fri. 8:00 a.m.-6:00 p.m. | Sat.-Sun. 9:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.

## FOLLOW US ON SOCIAL MEDIA



@WildlifeResourcesDivisionGADNR



@GeorgiaWildlife



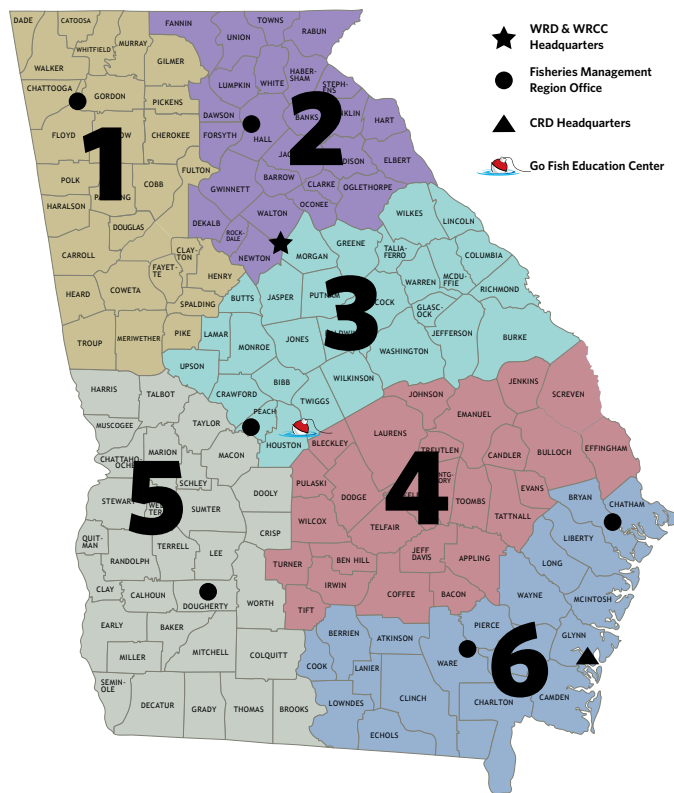
GeorgiaWildlife.blog



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<http://bit.ly/wrdnews>

## SOUTHWEST REGION (5) ..... 229-430-4256

2024 Newton Road, Albany, GA 31701

Law Enforcement (Albany) ..... 229-430-4252

## BIG LAZER CREEK PFA

## SILVER LAKE PFA

## CORDELE HATCHERY

## STEVE COCKE HATCHERY

## COASTAL REGION (6) ..... 912-727-2112

130 Hatchery Drive, Richmond Hill, GA 31324

Law Enforcement (Brunswick) ..... 912-264-7237

## EVANS COUNTY PFA

## RICHMOND HILL HATCHERY

&gt;&gt; See pages 19-21 for Public Fishing Area Information.



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## SPORTFISHING DEFINITIONS

### ARTIFICIAL LURE

Any lure made completely of natural or colored wood, cork, feathers, hair, rubber, metal, plastic, tinsel, styrofoam, sponge, string, or any combination of such materials, in imitation of or as a substitute for natural bait. This does not include any item sprayed with or containing scented or chemical attractants.

### DAILY LIMIT

The number of fish that may be taken, caught, or killed during any one day.

### FISHING

Catching, capturing, taking, or killing fish, mussels and all seafood and includes all lesser acts such as attempting to catch, capture, or kill

by any device or method and directly assisting any person in catching or attempting to catch fish or seafood.

### GAME FISH

Fish that are listed under Daily Limits (see pages 13 and 43).

### IMMEDIATE FAMILY

All persons living in one household under one head of household and bearing a blood or dependent relationship to the head of household.

### MOUNTAIN TROUT

Brook, Brown, and Rainbow trout and any hybrids of these species. Referred to in this Guide as "Trout."

### NONGAME FISH

Any fish not designated as game fish under Daily Limits (see pages 13 and 43).

### PUBLIC FISHING AREA

Designated areas owned and/or operated by the Department of Natural Resources, Wildlife Resources Division, Fisheries Section for the primary purpose of fishing and are open to the public. These are listed on pages 19–21.

### RESIDENT

Resident means any person who has been domiciled within the State of Georgia (declared Georgia the only state of legal residence) for a period of at least three months. A valid Georgia driver's license or Georgia ID is required to show residency. Nonresident full time Georgia college students with a valid college ID living in Georgia, and nonresident active duty military personnel with a valid U.S. DOD Common Access Card with Uniformed Services affiliation and the dependents of such military personnel may obtain resident hunting and fishing licenses other than resident lifetime, disability and honorary licenses. Nonresident landowners must purchase a nonresident license.

## WHAT'S NEW

- Minnow trap use is now legal in freshwaters. Details on page 14.
- Waters Creek trout regulations have changed. Details on page 23.
- Largemouth bass regulations have changed on two Public Fishing Areas. See pages 19–21.

## PROTECTED SPECIES MAY BE ENCOUNTERED WHILE FISHING

It is unlawful to capture, kill, or harm any protected species. If you accidentally capture a protected species while fishing or collecting bait, please release it unharmed immediately.

There are 58 fish, 10 salamanders, one frog, one snail, 27 mussels, 20 crayfish and 14 turtles under protection in Georgia.

Exception: all native crayfish, including state protected species, can be used as bait as long as they are not harvested from burrows. Bait species should never be transferred between water ways.

For more information contact DNR's Wildlife Conservation Section at **(706)557-3213**.

Search the rare species data portal for a list of protected species in your watershed at our website.



**MAP TURTLE**

Aquatic turtle with prominent spiny keel on midline of shell. Found in large streams, rivers in northwest and southwest portions of state.



**ALLIGATOR  
SNAPPING TURTLE**

Huge aquatic turtle that may weigh more than 100 lbs. Occurs in large streams, rivers, reservoirs in the southwest corner of the state. Jaws are powerful—keep a safe distance!



**REDHORSE SUCKER**

There are several protected species of redhorse suckers that can easily be confused with common carp while bow fishing. For more information on sport fish and carp identification, please visit **GeorgiaWildlife.com/fishing/identification**.



**EASTERN HELLBENDER**

Large, harmless salamander found in clear, rocky mountain streams such as trout streams.

Up to 29" in length,  
11-20" typical



**ALTAMAHA SHINER**

A state protected minnow that is common in rocky sections of large rivers and streams in the Oconee and Ocmulgee river systems.



# GATEWAY TO FISHING PROGRAM

*Bringing people together—one cast at a time.*

The Georgia Wildlife Resources Division's (WRD) new Gateway to Fishing program is seeking to partner with communities to enhance awareness about fishing in metro Atlanta, suburban parks and other public waters. WRD provides fish, technical assistance, and the use of the mobile catch trailer which comes equipped with rods, reels, and other fishing supplies needed to host an event.



Want to partner? Learn more at [www.GoFishGeorgia.com](http://www.GoFishGeorgia.com)

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# FRESHWATER & SALTWATER LICENSE REQUIREMENTS

## BUYING LICENSES

You can purchase a Georgia fishing license:

- Online 24 hours a day, 7 days a week at [GoFishGeorgia.com](http://GoFishGeorgia.com) or [GoOutdoorsGeorgia.com](http://GoOutdoorsGeorgia.com).
- Using the Go Outdoors GA App, see page 12.
- In person at license dealers statewide including most WRD/CRD regional offices; state parks; marinas; major retailers; and sporting goods, bait and tackle, and hardware stores. A complete list of license agents can be found at [GoFishGeorgia.com](http://GoFishGeorgia.com).
- By telephone at 800-366-2661, 8 a.m. – 6 p.m. M–F, 9 a.m. – 5 p.m. S–S.

**Notes:** Social Security Number is required for the purchase of all licenses to meet requirements for Georgia Code 19-11-9.1(a).

## 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. Additionally, a free SIP is required to fish in saltwater. A temporary authorization number obtained by telephone or internet sale may be used for seven days until the paper copy is received or printed. Game Wardens may require photo identification when checking fishing licenses. **Exception:** 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 resident and their immediate family when fishing on their land. See definition of *immediate family* on page 6.

## RESIDENTS (see definition, page 6)

- Proof of residency is a Georgia driver's license or official State of Georgia ID card and is required to purchase a resident fishing license.
- Georgia resident military veterans that were on active duty for 90 or more consecutive days and who were honorably discharged on or after July 1, 2005 may obtain one annual Honorary Hunting and Fishing License free of charge. Such veterans may obtain this license by providing a copy of their DD Form 214 and a completed DNR application.
- **Senior Citizens:** Georgia residents born on or before June 30, 1952 may obtain a Lifetime Sportsman's License free of charge. An optional Lifetime Sportsman's Plastic Card may be purchased for \$10. Reduced cost licenses are available for residents age 65 and older born after June 30, 1952 (see page 10).
- **Discount Disability License:** Georgia residents who are permanently and totally disabled may obtain a Discounted Disability License. A qualifying disability is an impairment of a permanent and total nature and is certified as such by the Department of Veterans Affairs, Social Security Administration, Medicaid, Medicare or Railroad Retirement System.
- **Any resident who is totally blind** 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 **Agreements for Bordering States** on pages 16–17.
- Nonresidents under 16 do not require a fishing license or trout license.

## LANDS PASS

Any person age 16 and older, entering a WMA or PFA must have a valid license that allows fishing or hunting or a Lands Pass (exclusions apply, visit [GeorgiaWildlife.com/LandAccess](http://GeorgiaWildlife.com/LandAccess)). A Lands Pass is available as an alternative and allows access only, but is the more expensive option. Designated fee areas are marked with a sign at the site or area entrance.

## 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 16–17.

## TROUT LICENSES

- Landowners and their immediate families (see definition on page 6) may fish on their premises without a trout license.
- All resident anglers ages 16 and older must have a trout license and Georgia fishing license to fish in designated trout waters and to fish for or to possess trout. See page 23 for special trout regulations.
- All nonresident anglers, 16 or older, regardless of physical condition, must possess a nonresident fishing license and nonresident trout license to fish for or possess trout or to fish in designated trout waters.
- Lifetime Sportsman's, Sportsman's, Honorary (free), and Discount Disability licenses include the trout fishing privilege.
- **State park visitors** are not required to have a trout license to fish in the impounded waters of the Park. However, those visitors wishing to harvest trout will need to have a trout license in their possession.



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[StopAquaticHitchhikers.org](http://StopAquaticHitchhikers.org)

**DISCOVER FISHING ON GEORGIA'S  
FREE FISHING DAYS!**

- No fishing license, trout license or Lands Pass (WMAs/PFAs) required to fish.
- All waters of the state
- Must be a Georgia resident
- Does not include fees at private lakes
- All other Fishing Regulations apply

**JUNE 4 & 11 & SEPT 24**

**OLDER ADULT  
LIFETIME LICENSE**

- This \$375 multi-year license is for resident anglers between the ages of 50-59.
- This license includes a fishing, hunting and big game license and is good for the lifetime of the angler.
- A free plastic fishing license is also included with the order!

[GoOutdoorsGeorgia.com](http://GoOutdoorsGeorgia.com)

**DON'T MISS OUT!**



# **WARNING!**

## **COGONGRASS IS CREEPING INTO GEORGIA!**

**To prevent loss of forestland and wildlife habitat,  
report sightings to the Georgia Forestry Commission.**



In spring - cogongrass produces fluffy white seedheads.



Leaves have finely serrated margins (often light yellow-green in color) and prominent, off-center white mid-veins.



Root system is a dense, thick root mat with extremely long, scaly and sharp pointed rhizomes.

Cogongrass may not look dangerous, but it is one of the world's worst weeds! It grows in full sun or shade, is spread by wind-blown seeds and underground rhizomes and chokes out all native vegetation. Most ground-dwelling animals such as quail, turkey, and deer do not travel through cogongrass.

GEORGIA FORESTRY  
COMMISSION



**FOR HELP WITH COGONGRASS IDENTIFICATION AND ERADICATION,  
REPORT SIGHTINGS ONLINE AT [GATREES.ORG](http://GATREES.ORG),  
CONTACT YOUR LOCAL GFC FORESTER OR CALL 229-869-8592.**



## FRESHWATER & SALTWATER RECREATIONAL FISHING LICENSE FEES

LICENSE	TERM	RESIDENT	NON-RESIDENT
<b>COMBO HUNTING &amp; FISHING LICENSES</b>			
Combo Hunting & Fishing License	Annual	\$30.00	\$150.00
	One-Day	\$5.00	\$30.00
	+Additional Day	\$1.00	\$10.00
Apprentice Hunting & Fishing License	One-Day	\$5.00	\$30.00
<b>FISHING LICENSES</b>			
Fishing License (Resident: 16–64, Nonresident: 16+)	Annual	\$15.00	\$50.00
	One-Day	see combo	\$10.00
	+ Additional Day	see combo	\$3.50
Optional Youth Fishing License (<16)	Multi-Year <sup>1</sup>	\$10.00	Not Offered
Senior Sportsman's License (65+)	Annual	\$7.00	Not Offered
Trout License (must additionally have a Fishing License)	Annual	\$10.00	\$25.00
	One-Day	\$5.00	\$10.00
	+ Additional Day	\$1.00	\$2.00
Saltwater Information Program (SIP) Permit (see pages 40–41)	Annual	FREE	FREE
Commercial Fishing License	Seasonal	\$20.00	\$200.00
Disability Fishing License	Annual	\$3.00	Not Offered
	Three-Year	\$9.00	Not Offered
<b>PUBLIC LAND ACCESS</b>			
Georgia Lands Pass	Annual	\$30	\$60

1 - Privileges for the multi-year Youth License are valid until the person's 17th birthday.  
+ Additional Day - days can be added for up to 11 consecutive days

LICENSE	AGE	TERM	RESIDENT	NON-RESIDENT
<b>SPORTSMAN'S LICENSES</b>				
Sportsman's License (Resident: 16–64, Nonresident: 16+)	16–64	Annual	\$65.00	\$400.00
		One-Day	\$25.00	\$170.00
		+ Additional Day	\$3.00	\$20.00
Optional Youth Sportsman's License	<16	Multi-Year <sup>4</sup>	\$15.00	Not Offered
Senior Sportsman's License (65+)	65+	Annual	\$7.00	Not Offered
Non-resident Youth Sportsmen's License	<16	Annual	–	\$50.00
One-Time Honorary Veterans License	–	One-Year	FREE	Not Offered
Disability Sportsman's License	–	Annual	\$5.00	Not Offered
	–	Three-Year	\$15.00	Not Offered

LICENSE	AGE	TERM	RESIDENT	NON-RESIDENT
<b>LIFETIME LICENSES</b>				
Infant Lifetime Sportsman's License	Under 2	Lifetime	\$500.00	\$500.00
Youth Lifetime Sportsman's License	2–15	Lifetime	\$600.00	Not Offered
Adult Lifetime Sportsman's License	16–49	Lifetime	\$750.00	Not Offered
Older Adult Lifetime Sportsman's License	50–59	Lifetime	\$375.00	Not Offered
Senior Discount Lifetime Sportsman's License	60–64	Lifetime	\$315.00	Not Offered
Senior Lifetime Sportsman's License	65+	Lifetime	\$70.00	Not Offered
Senior Lifetime Hunting License	65+	Lifetime	\$35.00	Not Offered
Senior Lifetime Fishing License	65+	Lifetime	\$35.00	Not Offered
Free Senior Lifetime Sportsman's License (born on or before June 30, 1952)	see page 8	Lifetime	FREE	Not Offered
Military and Veterans Lifetime Sportsman's License	16–49	Lifetime	\$600.00	Not Offered
Non-Resident Grandchild Lifetime Sportsman's License	2–15	Lifetime		\$1,500.00
Shooting Preserve Lifetime License	–	Lifetime	\$75.00	\$75.00

Transaction fee applies: \$2.50 online; \$3 at a retail outlet; \$5 by telephone

<sup>4</sup> Privileges for the multi-year Youth License are valid until the person's 17th birthday.

+ Additional Day – days can be added for up to 11 consecutive days

\* It is illegal to sell any freshwater or saltwater fish harvested with a recreational license.



## MAKE A DIFFERENCE

The Trout Unlimited license plate provides vital funding for Georgia's trout conservation and management programs. For only \$25 more than the standard plate, you can help fund stocking trucks, trout feed, equipment, raceway enclosures, habitat improvement and more.

## COMMERCIAL FISHING LICENSES

Most commercial fishing licenses may be purchased by mail. Applications are online.

### Freshwater

[georgiawildlife.com/licenses-permits-passes/commercial](http://georgiawildlife.com/licenses-permits-passes/commercial)

### Saltwater

[coastalgadnr.org/Commercial-Fishing](http://coastalgadnr.org/Commercial-Fishing)

Licenses may also be purchased from these DNR offices:

One Conservation Way  
Brunswick, GA 31520  
(912) 264-7237

2065 Hwy. 278 S.E.  
Social Circle, GA 30025  
(800) 366-2661

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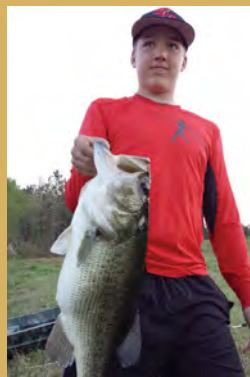
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## FRESHWATER GENERAL REGULATIONS

### FRESHWATER GAME SPECIES DAILY LIMITS

- It is unlawful to take in one day or to possess at any one time, except at a residence or commercial storage facility, more than the daily limit for each species. It is unlawful to possess more than a total of 50 individuals of all the game fish listed in this section, except channel and flathead catfish. **New:** See page 13 for actual creel limits.
- Once the daily limit for a particular species is taken, it is unlawful to continue to fish for that species.

**Exception:** Daily limits differ on certain waters shared by Georgia and South Carolina. See **Agreements with Bordering States** (pages 16–17).

### SEASONS

There is no closed season for fishing in freshwater in Georgia except for the following:

- Trout Seasons:** All designated trout waters are now open year round.
- Flint, Chattahoochee and Spring Creeks:** The Flint River and its tributaries from the Georgia Power Co. dams at Albany to the US Hwy 84 bridge; the Chattahoochee River and its tributaries from the Columbia Lock and Dam to the GA Hwy 91 bridge; and Spring Creek and its tributaries downstream to GA Hwy 253 are CLOSED to striped bass fishing and spear fishing from May 1–October 31 each year.
- Lakes Seminole:** All fishing, including spear fishing, for any species in the marked areas around five fish refuges in Lake Seminole is prohibited from May 1–October 31 each year.
- Coosa River:** The season for taking lake sturgeon from the Coosa River and its tributaries is CLOSED. See [GoFishGeorgia.com](http://GoFishGeorgia.com) for more information on this closure and how to identify this fish.
- Noodling or Grabbling:** The season is open March 1–July 15 statewide in freshwater.

### LENGTH LIMITS

**Note:** There are no minimum length limits on freshwater game fish unless they are listed below. All lengths are Total Length (see “How to Measure Fish,” page 43). You must release all fish shorter than the minimum length indicated for that species.

#### LARGEMOUTH BASS

12 inches statewide **except:**

- Lake Blackshear: 14 inches
- Lake Blue Ridge: no minimum (0 inches)
- Lake Burton: no minimum (0 inches)
- Lake Juliette: no minimum (0 inches)
- Lake Lanier: 14 inches
- Lake Oconee: 14 inches
- Lake Lindsay Grace: bass between 15 and 22 inches must be released immediately. All others may be kept. In addition, only one bass may be greater than 22 inches.
- Lake Walter F. George: 14 inches
- West Point Reservoir: 14 inches
- Public Fishing Area lakes operated by the Department of Natural Resources: 14 inches. This limit will not apply to lakes which have been posted as having a different length limit for largemouth bass.

#### SHOAL BASS

- Lake Lanier: 14 inches
- Flint River and its tributaries (below Warwick Dam): 12 inches
- Flint River and its tributaries (above Warwick Dam): 15 inches

#### SPOTTED BASS

- Lake Lanier: 14 inches

#### STRIPED BASS, WHITE BASS, & HYBRID WHITE-STRIPED BASS

You may only keep two fish of the total limit that are 22 inches or longer, **except:**

- See agreement with South Carolina (page 16)**
- The minimum length for all fish is 22 inches on the North Newport River, Medway River including Mount Hope Creek, Little Ogeechee

River, Ogeechee River; Oconee River downstream of GA Hwy 22 in Milledgeville; Ocmulgee River downstream of GA Hwy 96 bridge between Houston and Twiggs counties; Altamaha River, Saint Mary's River, Satilla River, and the tributaries to these river sections; and from saltwater.

- The minimum length is 27 inches on the Savannah River and its tributaries downstream of J. Strom Thurmond Dam (2 fish limit).
- See table on page 13 for full details

### FISHING GEAR MUST BE REGULARLY CHECKED

- Attend to gear such as limb lines and minnow traps. (Anglers are encouraged to check all gear within 24 hours).
- Make every reasonable effort to retrieve lost gear (including hooks, line and lead sinkers).
- Recycle used fishing line.

### CREEL AND POSSESSION NOTE TO ANGLERS

Creel and possession limits are per person. For Game Wardens to correctly determine compliance with these limits, each individual should keep trout or other fish on separate stringers or in separate creels. It is unlawful for one individual to possess more than the legal limit of any fish species.

### FRESHWATER TURTLES

Individuals may not possess more than 10 freshwater turtles (any combination of species) without a valid permit. There is no closed season for the harvest of freshwater turtles, however, taking of species protected by federal or state law is prohibited (for a list of species access: [GeorgiaWildlife.com/species#reptiles](http://GeorgiaWildlife.com/species#reptiles)). For more information on turtling regulations see [GeorgiaWildlife.com/turtling](http://GeorgiaWildlife.com/turtling).

### FISHING ON WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AREAS

Unless otherwise posted, fishing is allowed on WMAs according to statewide regulations. Alcohol use is prohibited on WMAs except in designated camping areas. Refer to the Hunting Regulations Guide for a complete list of WMA regulations.

### FISHING WITHOUT PERMISSION

It is unlawful to fish on someone else's property without permission. Game Wardens and other law enforcement officers are charged with enforcing this law. Always ask permission before entering private land.

Permission is not required to fish in the Chattahoochee or Oconee National Forests, on Wildlife Resources Division Public Fishing Areas (PFAs) or Wildlife Management Areas (WMAs), or in Georgia State Parks ([gastateparks.org](http://gastateparks.org)) as long as all applicable state regulations are followed.

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# FRESHWATER GAME SPECIES DAILY LIMITS

SPECIES		DAILY LIMIT	EXCEPTIONS
Bass	Largemouth, Redeye (Coosa), Shoal, Smallmouth, Spotted, and/or Suwannee bass	10	• Lake Lindsay Grace (Wayne Co.) — Only one bass may be greater than 22 inches.
Catfish	Channel and/or Flathead	No limit	—
Crappie	Black and/or White	30	—
Pickereel	Chain, Grass and/or Redfin	15	—
Shad	American and/or Hickory	8	—
Striped Bass, White Bass and/or Hybrid White-Striped Bass	—	15, only two of which can be 22 inches or longer.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Limit taken from the North Newport River, Medway River including Mount Hope Creek, Little Ogeechee River, Ogeechee River, Oconee River downstream of GA Hwy 22 in Milledgeville, Ocmulgee River downstream of the GA Hwy 96 bridge between Houston and Twiggs counties, Altamaha River, St. Mary's River, Satilla River, and the tributaries to these river sections; and from saltwater is a two fish limit, both of which must be 22 inches in length or longer.</li> <li>• Limit taken from the Savannah River and its tributaries downstream of J. Strom Thurmond Dam is a two fish limit, both of which must be 27 inches in length or longer.</li> <li>• Limit taken from Lake Richard B. Russell from the Russell Dam to Lake Hartwell Dam and Lake Secession Dam, all tributaries to Lake Richard B. Russell is two (2) striped bass per day, only one (1) of which can exceed 34 inches in length.</li> <li>• See the Fishing Regulations for shared waters for Georgia and South Carolina on page 16.</li> </ul>
Sunfish or Bream	Bluegill, Flier, Redbreast, Redear, Rock bass, Spotted sunfish, Warmouth and/or Shadow bass	50	Bream: See South Carolina Agreement on page 16.
Trout	Brook, Rainbow, Brown trout, and any hybrids of these species	8	See Amicalola Creek, Chattahoochee River, Chattooga River, Smithgall Woods, Smith Creek, Toccoa River, and Waters Creek on pages 22-25. See the new limits for shared waters of Georgia and South Carolina on page 16.
Walleye	—	8	—

See page 19 for special limits on Public Fishing Areas.

See table on page 43 for other species that may be found in freshwater.

Sturgeon - May not be taken in fresh or saltwater in Georgia.



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## **HOOK & LINE**

- There is no restriction on the number of poles and lines used to fish for game fish **except**:
  - Fishing for trout in designated trout waters: 1 pole
  - Fishing on Public Fishing Areas: 2 poles
  - Sport shad fishing: 2 poles
- Anglers using more than two poles and lines to fish for shad must abide by commercial shad regulations.
- Landing nets may be used to land fish legally caught.
- Game fish may be used as live bait (where live bait is legal) if they are taken legally and you do not exceed daily creel and possession limits.

## **SPORT TROT LINES**

- A sport trotline is one line or a combination of lines using less than 51 hooks. Sport trotlines must be:
  1. Marked with the owner's name and address and with visible buoys, and
  2. Submerged at least three feet below the surface of the water, and
  3. Attended regularly and removed after the completed fishing trip.
- Unmarked or unattended trotlines will be confiscated by DNR. It is unlawful to use any sport trotline within one-half mile below any lock or dam.
- Only catfish and nongame fish (year-round) and American and Hickory shad during shad season may be taken with trotlines.
- Trotlines are not permitted on Lake Tobesofkee or any State Park Lake.
- Use of 51 or more hooks is considered Commercial Fishing (see page 25).

## **SET HOOKS & JUGS**

- Only catfish and nongame fish (year round) and American and Hickory shad during shad season may be taken with set hooks and jugs.
- It is illegal to use jugs and set hooks on Lake Tobesofkee or any State Park Lake.
- A sport fishing license is required to fish with set hooks and jugs in Georgia.
- There are no other restrictions on the use of set hooks and jugs (number of, dimensions, materials, etc.).
- DNR encourages anglers using these methods to check them regularly, remove them at the end of the fishing day, and avoid areas popular with recreational boaters.

## **SPEAR FISHING**

- "Spearing" is the use of a handheld spear or similar device and the use of a weapon, other than a firearm, which propels the spear to which a wire, rope, line, etc. is attached and secured to the weapon or the person using the weapon.
- Only nongame fish, and catfish as described below, may be speared in freshwater and are not to be sold or used for commercial purposes.
- The taking of flathead and channel catfish by spear may be done any time day or at night by light in the Savannah River and its tributaries and impoundments in the Savannah River Basin only.
- All spears must have barbs or other devices to recover fish and must be attached to a line secured to the person using the weapon.
- A sport fishing license is required to spear fish in Georgia.
- The person spearing fish must be completely submerged.

**Note:** See **Seasons** on page 12.

## **CAST NETS, BOW NETS, MINNOW SEINES & TRAPS**

- Dip nets and cast nets may be used to take threadfin shad, gizzard shad, and blueback herring for bait except cast nets may not be used in State Park Lakes.
- Bow nets are considered sport shad fishing gear and shall have a minimum legal size of 3½ inches stretched mesh.
- Up to 50 nongame fish 5 inches in length or less may be taken using a minnow seine or trap and are not to be sold or used for commercial purposes.
- All other fish and eels taken in a minnow seine or trap must be released immediately unharmed into the water.
- A minnow seine must be less than 20 feet in length and have a 3/8 inch or less mesh (square or diameter).
- A minnow trap must be less than 24 inches in length, 18 inches in width, or 9 inches in height for a rectangular trap; or, 30 inches in circumference for cylindrical traps. The throat opening must be no larger than 1 inch, and bar mesh must not be smaller than 1/4 inch (square or diameter).
- Each minnow trap must have an attached tag or float bearing the name and address of trap owner.
- An individual may deploy up to 2 traps at any time.
- In addition to designated trout waters, minnow seines and traps may not be used in the following water bodies:
  - Mainstem of Etowah River upstream of Lake Allatoona and all Etowah River tributary streams that enter the Etowah River within or upstream of Lake Allatoona.
  - Raccoon Creek and its tributary streams in Paulding and Bartow counties.
  - Entire mainstem of the Conasauga River and all Conasauga River tributary streams entering the Conasauga mainstem from the east.
  - Coosawattee River and all tributary streams upstream from Carter's Lake Dam and the Coosawattee River between Carter's Lake and its confluence with the Conasauga River.
  - Mainstem of Talking Rock Creek.
  - Mainstem of South Chickamauga Creek downstream from Swanson Mill Dam.

## **BOW FISHING**

Nongame fish (does **not** include channel or flathead catfish, see note below) may be taken by bow and arrow from freshwater under the following conditions:

- Possession of a sport fishing license is required to bow fish in Georgia.
- Arrows must be equipped with barbs or similar devices for recovering fish and must be attached to the person or bow by a line sufficient for recovering the arrow and fish.
- Poisonous or exploding arrowheads are illegal.
- Arrows cannot be discharged into the water closer than 150 feet to anyone engaged in any other means of recreation.

## **IN GEORGIA**

### **IT IS UNLAWFUL TO:**

- Possess or use live blueback herring for bait in all fresh waters except the following: Lakes Bartlett's Ferry, Blue Ridge, Chatuge, Goat Rock, Juliette, Lanier, Nottely, Oliver, and West Point; and the Altamaha River watershed downstream of the following: Juliette dam on the Ocmulgee River, Lake Juliette dam on Rum Creek, Lake Tobesofkee dam on Tobesofkee Creek, Lake Sinclair dam on the Oconee River; and watersheds of all other streams that flow directly into the Atlantic Ocean (this drainage includes Lakes Hartwell, Russell, Clarks Hill, Burton, Tugaloo, and Rabun). For maps of restricted waters go to [www.GoFishGeorgia.com](http://www.GoFishGeorgia.com) and see "Freshwater Regulations" section.
- It is unlawful to possess and fish with live blueback herring in Alabama waters.
- Fish for game fish, except American shad, hickory shad, channel catfish, blue catfish, or flathead catfish, by any means other than pole and line.
- Take any fish from public freshwater by any method other than the methods listed on this page. Snagging fish is illegal.
- Use electronic devices, explosives, poisons, or firearms to take fish.
- Stock or release fish or bait into any public waters except the water from which it was taken.
- Discard fish caught in public waters.
- Take protected species (see pg. 6).



- Legal hours for fishing with bow and arrow are from sunrise to sunset, except that fish (nongame) may be taken at night while using a light in reservoirs over 500 acres in size.
- Any game fish with an open wound possessed by a person bow fishing will be considered evidence of taking fish illegally.
- Know your target— the take of protected species is unlawful (see pg. 6).
- **Note:** Channel and flathead catfish are game fish, and may not be taken by bow and arrow, except in the Savannah River and its tributaries and impoundments in the Savannah River basin by bow and arrow any time during the day or at night by the use of a light.

## NOODLING

- Is legal in Georgia's freshwater from March 1 – July 15 with a sport fishing license.
- The only species of fish that may be taken by hand, **without** the aid of any device, hook, snare, net or other artificial element and without the use of any scuba equipment, air hose or other artificial breathing apparatus are flathead, channel and blue catfish.
- It is not legal to alter any natural or man-made features in order to attract or capture fish by hand. It is not legal to raise any part of a natural or artificial device out of the water to aid in the hand capture of enclosed fish.

## BOAT REGISTRATION

- All boats that carry any means of mechanical propulsion (electric trolling motor and/or gas motor) and all sailboats 12 feet and longer must be registered.
- You may register or renew online at [GoBoatGeorgia.com](http://GoBoatGeorgia.com)
- A Boat Registration Application by mail can be obtained from [GoBoatGeorgia.com](http://GoBoatGeorgia.com)
- Register or renew by phone at **800-366-2661**.
- Georgia honors all other states' registrations, provided the boat is not used in excess of 60 consecutive days in Georgia.

## PERSONAL FLOTATION DEVICES

- A wearable personal flotation device (PFD) is required for each person aboard a vessel. PFDs must be readily accessible to all occupants, in good and serviceable condition, legibly marked with the US Coast Guard approved number, and of appropriate size for the occupants. One Type IV throwable device must also be on board all vessels except Class A vessels (boats less than 15' 11" which also includes personal-watercraft, canoes and kayaks).
- Children under age 13 must wear a PFD when the vessel is under way, unless the child is within a fully enclosed cabin.
- PFDs must be worn by each person aboard a vessel in an area marked as "hazardous area."

## OUTBOARD MOTOR RESTRICTIONS

- No motor in excess of 9.9 hp may be operated on the Ogeechee River upstream of State Hwy 119.
- No motor in excess of 25 hp may be operated on Lake Juliette or Lake Tugalo.
- Georgia State Park lakes often have boat and motor restrictions. Check with the Park Office at each park for details.

## BOATING SAFETY

- No vessel may be operated above idle speed within 100 feet of any moored or anchored vessel, vessel adrift, or any wharf, pier, piling, or persons in the water, or shoreline next to a full or part-time residence, public park, public beach, public swimming area, marina, restaurant, or other public use area.
- Tybee, Sea, St. Simons, and Jekyll Islands have temporal (May 1 – Sept. 30) 1,000 ft. safety zones.
- It is unlawful to operate a vessel while under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
- To learn about boating education please visit [GoBoatGeorgia.com](http://GoBoatGeorgia.com)
- Visit [GoBoatGeorgia.com](http://GoBoatGeorgia.com) for complete boating regulations.



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# AGREEMENTS WITH BORDERING STATES

Agreements with bordering states allow holders of Georgia fishing licenses to fish in the waters covered without obtaining a fishing license from the bordering state.

**Note:** Regulations under these agreements may differ from Georgia's general laws and regulations. If this is the case, the laws and regulations of the agreement explained in this section are to be followed.

## ALABAMA

### WATERS COVERED

The banks and waters of only that portion of the Chattahoochee River forming the boundary between Georgia and Alabama and Lakes Bartletts Ferry (Harding), George W. Andrews, Goat Rock, Oliver, Seminole, Walter F. George (Eufaula) and West Point; however, this agreement does not include that portion of West Point Reservoir lying upstream (north) of Georgia Hwy 109 bridge on the Chattahoochee River arm of the reservoir. The waters covered by this agreement do not include other streams or tributaries which flow into the Chattahoochee River or its impoundments or the portion of Lake Seminole covered by the agreement with Florida or Lake Weiss.

### LICENSES

All persons meeting the sport fishing requirements of Georgia or Alabama may fish from the banks and in the waters covered without having to obtain any other license.

### MINIMUM LENGTH LIMITS

- **Largemouth bass:**
  - Lake West Point: 14 inches
  - Lake Walter F. George: 14 inches
- All other fishing laws and regulations of the State of Georgia apply in Georgia waters covered by this agreement.

### CREEL AND POSSESSION LIMITS

All creel and possession limits on waters covered by this agreement are the same as Georgia's statewide limits.

## GEORGIA - SOUTH CAROLINA BORDER WATERS RECIPROCAL AGREEMENT

SPECIES	WATER BODY	POSSESSION LIMIT	SIZE LIMIT
Striped bass or hybrid bass or combination	Lakes Hartwell and Clarks Hill	10	only 3 may be over 26 inches
Striped bass or hybrid bass or combination	Lake Russell	2	only 1 may be over 34 inches
Striped bass, hybrid bass, white bass or combination	Savannah River downstream of Clarks Hill dam	2	27-inch minimum length limit
White bass	All border waters covered except for Savannah River downstream of Clarks Hill dam (see above for size limit).	10	no size limit
Trout	All border waters covered	5	no size limit
Bass (largemouth, spotted, redeye, smallmouth or combination)	All border waters covered	10	12-inch minimum length for largemouth bass
Walleye or Sauger or combination	All border waters covered	8	no size limit
aggregate of all game fish (does not include catfish)*	All border waters covered	40	

All other laws and regulations of Georgia apply in the Georgia portion of waters covered by this agreement.

\* List of Game Fish in South Carolina differs from Georgia.

**Note:** South Carolina regulations differ for crappie and bream.

- **Note: It is illegal to possess and fish with live blueback herring in Alabama waters covered by this agreement.**

## SOUTH CAROLINA

### WATERS COVERED

On the banks and in the waters of all channels of the Savannah River from its mouth to the junction of the Tugaloo (Toogaloo) and Seneca Rivers; the Tugaloo River from its mouth to the junction of the Tugaloo and Chattooga Rivers; and the Chattooga River to the North Carolina state line (35th parallel of North latitude at Ellicott's Rock). This agreement also applies to all the waters and banks of Clarks Hill Reservoir (Strom Thurmond), Richard B. Russell Reservoir, Hartwell Reservoir, Yonah Lake, Tugaloo (Toogaloo) Lake, the New Savannah Bluff Lock and Dam, and Stevens

Creek Lake (except that portion on the Stevens Creek arm upstream of South Carolina Hwy 53). The agreement does not apply to any flowing portions of tributary streams to these impoundments nor to tributary streams of the Savannah, Tugaloo and Chattooga Rivers.

### LICENSES

- All persons meeting the freshwater license requirements of Georgia or South Carolina may fish from the banks and in the waters covered without having to obtain any other license.
- This agreement does not apply to commercial fishing or saltwater sport fishing.
- A South Carolina saltwater fishing license is required when fishing from a boat on the South Carolina side of the Savannah River downstream of where the CSX Railroad trestle crosses the Back River.

## STOP THE SPREAD!

Help keep Aquatic Nuisance Species (ANS) out of Georgia. Non-native or introduced species present problems for many of our native fish and plant populations. You can help by practicing the 4 Rs:

- **REFRAIN** from relocating fish or aquatic plants to areas in which they are not native
- **REMOVE** any non-native species you catch while fishing
- **REPORT** any non-native species you encounter to your local fisheries office
- **REMEMBER** to practice CLEAN, DRAIN AND DRY after returning to the boat ramp

Visit [georgiawildlife.com/ans](http://georgiawildlife.com/ans) to learn more.





## LENGTH, CREEL AND POSSESSION LIMITS

See Georgia-South Carolina chart above for the length, creel and possession limits for the border waters covered by this agreement.

## GENERAL NOTES

- Any person using baskets, jugs, minnow seines, trot lines, or other set hooks in the waters covered must comply with the laws, rules and regulations of the state in which the baskets, jugs, minnow seines, or trot lines are fished, regardless of their residence.
- No person may carry to either state or possess in such state more fish than the laws of that state or those of this agreement permit, even though the fish were caught in the waters of the other state.

## FLORIDA

### WATERS COVERED

- The waters and the banks of the St. Mary's River, not including its tributaries.
- The waters and banks of Lake Seminole, bounded on the west by Florida State Road No. 271; on the south by the Jim Woodruff Dam; on the east by the line immediately east of the Chattahoochee Marina (also known as the Booster Club) running northwest across the reservoir to the tip of land at the junction of the Flint and Chattahoochee Rivers, west of Spring Creek; and on the north by the Herman

Talmadge Bridge across the Chattahoochee River (please see map at [GoFishGeorgia.com](http://GoFishGeorgia.com)).

## LICENSES

- Any person who has a valid fishing license and properly issued permits or licenses, or both, required by Georgia or Florida in their possession may sport fish for freshwater fish in the waters covered.
- Georgia Honorary Disability License is not recognized by Florida under this agreement.
- A nonresident fishing license is required to fish, castnet, seine, crab, gig, sport bait trawl, or harvest shell fish in saltwater in Georgia.
- A Florida saltwater fishing license is required to fish for or to possess saltwater fish on the Florida side of the St. Mary's River.

## CREEL AND POSSESSION LIMITS

- The limit for striped bass, white bass, and hybrid white-striped bass on the St. Mary's River is two fish which must be 22 inches or longer.
- For all other species in the waters covered, Georgia's statewide creel and possession limits (page 13) apply.
- All other fishing regulations of the State of Georgia apply on the Georgia side of the St. Mary's River and the Georgia portion of Lake Seminole. Florida laws and regulations apply on the Florida side of the St. Mary's River and the Florida portion of Lake Seminole.

## NORTH CAROLINA

### WATERS COVERED

Lake Chatuge and all tributary branches lying in Georgia or North Carolina which are accessible by boat from the main body of the reservoir.

## LICENSES

- Holders of a valid Georgia or North Carolina fishing license may fish with hook and line in Lake Chatuge only from boats. Boats may not be anchored to the shore or to a pier or boat dock connecting to the shore.
- Senior citizen and youth license exemptions authorized by either state are honored by both states on Lake Chatuge.
- All other laws and regulations of Georgia apply to the Georgia portion of Lake Chatuge. All other laws and regulations of North Carolina apply to the North Carolina portion of Lake Chatuge.

## DID YOU KNOW?

The Wildlife Resources Division fisheries staff maintain 11 Public Fishing Areas all across Georgia. Fish one today!

[GeorgiaWildlife.com/allpfas](http://GeorgiaWildlife.com/allpfas)

- GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS -

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All seven warmwater hatcheries operated by the Wildlife Resources Division actively produced fish this spring. As a result, over 1.5 million largemouth bass, 2 million hybrid striped bass, 1.5 million striped bass, and 800,000 walleye were stocked in lakes around the state.

## CALL 1-800-241-4113

### REPORT FISH KILLS

Help protect our valuable fish resources. Report fish kills as quickly as possible.

### REPORT POACHERS

- Poaching is the illegal fishing and hunting of wildlife.
- Poachers rob you of hunting opportunities.
- Poachers steal everyone's wildlife.
- Poachers give ethical anglers and hunters a bad name.
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Public Fishing Areas (PFAs) are great places for family outings! You can fish from the bank or a boat, picnic, hike, watch wildlife, and enjoy the outdoors. Good bank fishing opportunities are available at all PFAs and many of them have special kids fishing areas for young anglers.

## LICENSES:

- Anglers 16 years of age and older must possess a valid fishing license.
- To enter a PFA, visitors 16 years of age and older must have a valid license that allows fishing or hunting or a Lands Pass (see page 8).
- Not all PFAs have the ability to sell licenses on site. Please call each PFA for details. Licenses can also be obtained online or by phone.

## LENGTH AND DAILY LIMITS:

Unless a pond or lake has been posted as having a different length limit or daily limit, the following apply:

## LENGTH LIMIT:

Largemouth bass: 14 inches minimum unless otherwise posted.

## DAILY LIMITS:

Largemouth bass (unless otherwise posted) .... 5  
Bream or sunfish  
(of any one species or a combination) ..... 15  
Channel catfish ..... 5  
All other species ..... see page 13

**Grass carp must be released immediately.**

## HOURS OF OPERATION

Public Fishing Areas hours of operation are open seven days a week, 24 hours a day, unless otherwise indicated in the following PFA listing or posted at the site.

## HUNTING ON PUBLIC FISHING AREAS

There are hunting opportunities available at several PFAs located around the state. Refer to the Hunting Regulations Guide for a complete list of PFA hunting opportunities and regulations or visit [GoHuntGeorgia.com](http://GoHuntGeorgia.com).

## BIG LAZER CREEK

Talbot County, 229-430-4256

**Fish Species:** Largemouth bass, Hybrid striped bass, Bluegill and Redear sunfish, Channel catfish, Black crappie. Live fish (minnows) are allowed for bait.

**Water:** 195 acre lake.

**Facilities:** Concrete two-lane boat ramp, fishing piers, fish cleaning station, shooting range, restrooms, picnic tables, primitive camping, some facilities accessible to persons with disabilities.

**Directions from Talbotton:** East on US Hwy 80 for 4 mi.; left on Po Biddy Road for 6.4 mi.; left on Bunkham Road; left into area.

## MARBEN PFA (CHARLIE ELLIOTT WILDLIFE CENTER)

Jasper/Newton Counties, 478-825-6151 or 770-784-3059

**Fish Species:** Largemouth bass, Bluegill, Redear sunfish, Black crappie, Channel catfish. Live fish (minnows) are allowed for bait.

**Note:** Daily Bag Limit is five (5) largemouth bass, only one (1) of which can be 16 inches or longer.

**Water:** 20 ponds, totaling 293 acres, ranging in size from 1 to 95 acres.

**Facilities:** Kids only ponds, concrete boat ramps (6 lakes), boat docks, restrooms, fishing piers, fish cleaning station, picnic areas, primitive camping, (visit [GoOutdoorsGeorgia.com](http://GoOutdoorsGeorgia.com) for pricing and reservations) shooting and archery ranges, and some fishing areas accessible to persons with disabilities.

**Note:** Check information board for lakes that are open for fishing when you visit.

**Directions From Mansfield:** South on GA Hwy 11 for 2.7 mi.; left on Marben Farm Rd. Follow signs.

## DODGE COUNTY

478-374-6765 or 912-285-6094

**Fish Species:** Largemouth bass, Bluegill, Redear sunfish, Channel catfish, Black crappie. Live fish (minnows) are allowed for bait.

**Note:** Largemouth bass between 16 and 24 inches must be released immediately. Bass up to 16 inches and over 24 inches can be kept (limit 5 total per person, only 1 over 24 inches).

**Water:** 104 acre lake.

**Facilities:** Concrete boat ramps, fishing piers, fish cleaning station, 3-D archery range, restrooms, picnic tables, nature trail, some facilities accessible to persons with disabilities. Primitive camping is allowed.

**Directions From Eastman:** South on US Hwy 23/341 for 3 mi.; left on County Rd. 49 for 0.6 mi. to lake.

## EVANS COUNTY

912-727-2112

**Fish Species:** Hybrid striped bass, Largemouth bass, Bluegill, Redear sunfish, Channel catfish, Black crappie, Brown bullhead. Live fish (minnows) are allowed for bait.

**Water:** Three ponds encompassing 122 acres (8, 30, 84 acres).

## PUBLIC FISHING AREAS



## FRESHWATER PUBLIC FISHING AREAS

**Facilities:** Concrete boat ramps, picnic pavilion, event center (visit [GoOutdoorsGeorgia.com](http://GoOutdoorsGeorgia.com) for pricing and reservations), static and 3D archery ranges, fishing piers, fish cleaning station, restrooms, picnic tables, tent and RV camping in designated areas (visit [GoOutdoorsGeorgia.com](http://GoOutdoorsGeorgia.com) for pricing and reservations), some facilities accessible to persons with disabilities.

**Directions From Claxton:** East on US Hwy 280 for 8.5 miles; right on Old Reidsville-Savannah Road for 1 mile; left on Old Sunbury Road (dirt), PFA 0.3 miles on right marked by Wildlife Resources sign.

### FLAT CREEK

**Houston County, 478-825-6151**

**Fish species:** Largemouth Bass, Bluegill, Red-ear sunfish, Channel catfish, Black crappie. Live fish (minnows) are allowed for bait.

**Water:** 102 acre lake and Kids Only special event pond.

**Facilities:** Concrete two-lane boat ramp, fish cleaning station, restrooms, picnic tables, grills, pavilion, bank fishing, archery range, fishing pier and some facilities accessible to persons with disabilities.

**Directions from I-75:** Take I-75 to exit 134 (South Perry Parkway), Turn west onto South Perry Parkway, Travel approx. 0.25 miles and turn left (South) on Georgia Highway 41, Drive

about 2 miles and turn left into Flat Creek Public Fishing Area.

### HUGH M. GILLIS

**Laurens County, 478-296-6192 or 912-285-6094**

**Fish species:** Largemouth bass, Bluegill, Red-ear sunfish, Channel catfish, Black crappie, Brown bullhead.

**Note:** Largemouth bass between 16 and 24 inches must be released immediately. Bass up to 16 inches and over 24 inches can be kept (limit 5 per person).

**Water:** 109 acre lake and two 1 acre KFE ponds. Live fish (minnows) are allowed for bait.

**Facilities:** Concrete boat ramps, fishing pier, fish cleaning station, restrooms, primitive camping, picnic tables, open-air covered pavilion (first come, first serve), some facilities accessible to persons with disabilities.

**Directions From East Dublin:** East on US Hwy 80 for 10 mi.; left on Keens Crossing Rd. for 1.4 mi., PFA entrance on right.

### MCDUFFIE

**McDuffie County, 706-595-1684 or 706-595-1619**

**Fish Species:** Largemouth bass, Bluegill, Red-ear sunfish, Channel catfish.

**Water:** 7 ponds varying in size from 5 to 37 acres (102 total acres).

**Facilities:** Concrete boat ramps, courtesy docks, fish cleaning station, fishing piers, restrooms, picnic tables, tent and RV camping in designated areas (visit [GoOutdoorsGeorgia.com](http://GoOutdoorsGeorgia.com) for pricing and reservations), archery range, hiking trails, picnic tables, pavilions and some facilities accessible to persons with disabilities.

**Directions From Thomson:** South on Hwy 17 to US Hwy 278; left (east) for 5.6 mi.; right on Ellington Airline Road for 2.8 mi.; right on Fish Hatchery Road for 0.8 mi.

### OCMULGEE

**Bleckley/Pulaski Counties, 478-783-2557 (PFA) or 912-285-6094 (Waycross)**

**Fish Species:** Largemouth bass, Bluegill, White crappie, Redear sunfish, yellow bullhead

**Note:** Largemouth bass are catch-and-release.

**Water:** 106 acre lake and Kids only Special Event Pond. Live fish (minnows) are allowed for bait.

**Facilities:** Two-lane Concrete Boat ramp, courtesy dock, fish cleaning station, 2 fishing piers, restrooms, picnic tables, bank fishing, and nature trail. Some facilities accessible to person's with disabilities. Primitive (tent only) camping is allowed in designated area near WMA.

**From Hawkinsville:** Take HWY 341/27 south over the Ocmulgee River. In approximately a mile turn left onto HWY ALT 129/26. Continue 0.3 miles and turn left onto Upper River Road. Travel approximately six miles then turn left onto Allison's Landing Rd. In approximately a mile, fork right at the PFA sign.

**From Cochran:** Take HWY Alt 129 North turn left onto Porter Rd. Travel about eight miles and turn right onto Allison's Landing Rd. then turn right into the PFA at the sign.

### PARADISE

**Berrien County, 229-533-4792 or 912-285-6094**

**Fish Species:** Largemouth bass, Bluegill, Red-ear sunfish, Channel catfish, Black crappie, Brown bullhead. Live fish (minnows) are allowed for bait.

**Water:** 68 lakes encompassing 525 acres of water.

**Facilities:** Restrooms, fish cleaning station, picnic area, concrete boat ramps, archery range, primitive camping, (visit [GoOutdoorsGeorgia.com](http://GoOutdoorsGeorgia.com) for pricing and reservations), fishing piers, boat dock, some facilities accessible to persons with disabilities.

**Directions From Tifton:** East on US Hwy 82 for 8 mi. to Whitley Road near Brookfield; follow signs from US Hwy 82 to the area.

### ROCKY MOUNTAIN RECREATION & PUBLIC FISHING AREA

**Floyd County, 706-802-5087**

**Fish Species:** Largemouth bass, Bluegill, Red-ear sunfish, Channel catfish, Black crappie, Walleye. Live fish (minnows) are allowed for bait.

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**Water:** Two lakes (202 and 357 acres). Heath Lake is open the 1<sup>st</sup>–10<sup>th</sup> of each month **only**.

**Facilities:** Concrete boat ramps, fishing jetties, restrooms, picnic shelters, scenic overlooks, hiking trails, tent and RV camping, group primitive camping, group picnic area, biking trails, swimming beach, some facilities accessible to persons with disabilities.

**Fee:** Daily or annual Rocky Mtn. PFA parking permit required (one per vehicle).

**Restrictions:**

- All activities prohibited on upper and lower reservoirs.
- It is illegal to possess alcoholic beverages.
- Day fishing **only**.
- No one may rappel, rock climb or hang glide.

**Directions From Rome:** North on US Hwy 27 for 10.4 mi.; left on Sike Storey Road 0.4 mi.; left on Big Texas Valley Road 5.4 mi. to entrance.

**SILVER LAKE**

Decatur County, (229) 430-4256

**Fish Species:** Largemouth bass, Bluegill, Red-ear sunfish, Channel catfish, Black crappie, Brown bullhead. Live fish (minnows) are allowed for bait except in Panic Pond.

**Note:** The harvest for largemouth bass in Panic Pond is one fish greater than 24 inches per day. Panic Pond is open to fishing Saturday – Monday and is closed to all fishing during July and August.

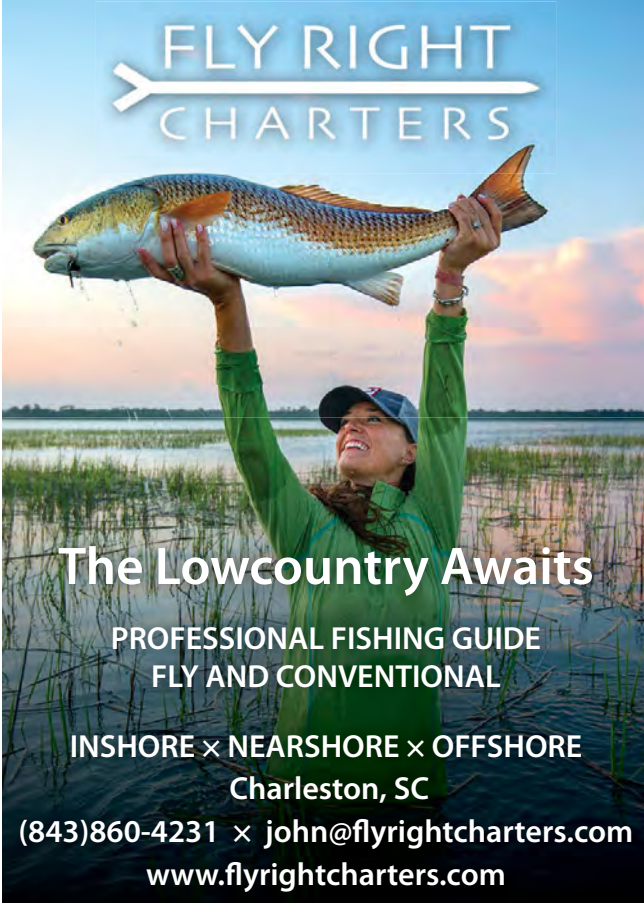
**PUBLIC FISHING AREAS  
UNLAWFUL ACTIVITIES**

- Operate boats on ponds or lakes posted as closed to boats.
- Operate gas outboard motors unless lake is posted as being open to the use of outboard motors. NOTE: Gas motors, if allowed, must be operated at idle speed only.
- Fish in a pond or lake that has been posted "closed."
- Fish with any gear other than pole and line.
- Fish with more than two poles and lines.
- Use or possess live fish (minnows) for bait, unless otherwise posted.
- Consume alcoholic beverages except at campsites on the area. No alcoholic beverages are allowed anywhere on Rocky Mountain PFA.
- Operate personal watercraft (jet skis), sailboats, or sailboards.
- Allow children under 14 years of age to be on PFA without adult supervision.
- Fish at night at Rocky Mountain PFA.
- Drive on any closed road or block any gate.
- Camp any place other than designated camping areas. NOTE: Contact the PFA before visiting for regulations regarding camping.
- Swim, except at Rocky Mountain Recreation and PFA beach.
- Ride horses in restricted areas or areas not designated as open to equestrian use.

**Water:** Thirty ponds totaling more than 480 acres.

**Facilities:** Five ponds with concrete boat ramps with accompanying service piers, restrooms and primitive camping in designated areas. Some facilities are accessible to persons with disabilities.

**Direction from Bainbridge:** South on Hwy 253 (Spring Creek Rd.) to Hwy 310 (Yates Spring Rd.); left for 2.5 mi; right on Silver Lake Rd. for 0.8 mi.



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## FRESHWATER TROUT FISHING

WRD uses special regulations (see below) and stocking to provide quality trout fishing in Georgia. About one million rainbow trout and brown trout are stocked each year from March through mid-September. The number of trout stocked and the stocking frequency depend on a stream's fishing pressure, public access, and water conditions. Streams with greater public access are stocked more often with more trout. General information about trout stocking and the Trout Streams of Georgia Map are available from WRD offices and at [GoFishGeorgia.com](http://GoFishGeorgia.com). The map includes Georgia's trout streams, roads, and a list of recommended streams.

Trout need clean, cold water to survive. Georgians can be good trout managers by using proper land use practices. Trees and other vegetation left along stream banks provide shade to keep water cold and help prevent soil from washing into the stream.

Many trout streams are bounded by private property. It is your responsibility to know when you cross a property line. Obtain permission from the landowner before fishing on private property.

**Note: While fishing any specially regulated waters with a minimum size limit, it is unlawful to possess a trout which is less than the specified minimum size regardless of where the fish was caught.**

The most up-to-date regulations online.

[eRegulations.com](http://eRegulations.com)

### TROUT SEASON

All designated trout waters are now open year round (see pages 24–25 for stream listings).

### TROUT FISHING HOURS

- Fishing 24 hours a day is allowed on all trout streams and all impoundments on trout streams **except** those in the next paragraph.
- Fishing hours on Dockery Lake, Rock Creek Lake, the Chattahoochee River from Buford Dam to Peachtree Creek, the Conasauga River watershed upstream of the Georgia-Tennessee state line and Smith Creek downstream of Unicoi dam are 30 minutes before sunrise until 30 minutes after sunset. Night fishing is not allowed.

### TROUT FISHING RULES

- Trout anglers are restricted to the use of one pole and line which must be hand held. No other type of gear may be used in trout streams.
- It is unlawful to use live fish for bait in trout streams. Seining bait-fish is not allowed in any trout stream.

### IMPOUNDMENTS ON TROUT STREAMS

#### ANGLERS CAN:

- Fish for fish species other than trout without a trout license on Dockery and Rock Creek lakes.
- Fish at night, **except** on Dockery and Rock Creek lakes. See Trout Fishing Hours for details.

#### IMPOUNDMENT NOTES:

- If you fish for or possess trout, you must possess a trout license. If you catch a trout and do not possess a trout license you must release the trout immediately.
- **State park visitors** are not required to have a trout license to fish in the impounded waters of the Park. However, those visitors wishing to harvest trout will need to have a trout license in their possession.

### DELAYED HARVEST STREAMS

Anglers fishing delayed harvest streams must release all trout immediately and use and possess only artificial lures with one single hook per lure from Nov. 1–May 14 annually. The use of additional “dropper” lures on one line is permitted as long as each lure contains one single hook. These restrictions do not apply from May 15–Oct. 31 of each year. The following streams are delayed harvest streams:

- **Amicalola Creek** from County Road 192 (Steele Bridge Road) downstream to GA Hwy 53.
- **Chattahoochee River** from Sope Creek (off Columns Drive) downstream to US Hwy 41 (Cobb Parkway).

- **Chattooga River** from GA Hwy 28 bridge upstream to the mouth of Reed Creek.
- **Smith Creek** on Unicoi State Park from Unicoi Dam downstream to the Unicoi State Park property boundary.
- **Toccoa River** on U.S. Forest Service land from 0.4 miles above the Shallowford Bridge upstream to a point 450 feet upstream of the Sandy Bottom Canoe Access.

Visit [GoFishGeorgia.com](http://GoFishGeorgia.com) to see maps of Delayed Harvest Streams and learn more about this program.

### ARTIFICIAL LURES ONLY

In streams listed here only artificial lures may be used. It is unlawful to possess any other type bait on an “artificial lures only” stream (see definitions on page 6).

- **Chattahoochee River** from GA Hwy 20 to the boat ramp at the National Park Service Medlock Bridge Park immediately upstream of GA Hwy 141.
- **Coleman River** and its tributaries from its junction with the Tallulah River upstream to Forest Service Bridge No. 54.
- **Conasauga River** and its tributaries (except Jacks River watershed) upstream of the Georgia-Tennessee state line are restricted to using only artificial lures from Nov. 1 through the last Saturday in March of each year.
- **Hoods Creek** and its tributaries on the Warwoman WMA.
- **Jones Creek** and its tributaries on US Forest Service property.
- **Mountaintown Creek** and its tributaries upstream of Mountaintown Creek Watershed Structure No. 2 (Hills Lake).
- **Noontootla Creek** and its tributaries on Blue Ridge WMA. **Note:** All trout less than 16 inches in length caught from this section of Noontootla Creek must be released immediately.
- **Stanley Creek** and its tributaries on the Rich Mountain WMA.
- **Walnut Fork Creek** and its tributaries on the Warwoman WMA.

### OTHER TROUT STREAM REGULATIONS

#### MOCCASIN CREEK

That portion of Moccasin Creek between Lake Burton Hatchery water intake and a sign marking the approximate normal pool level of Lake Burton is restricted to anglers under 12 years of age and holders of Honorary Licenses.

#### SMITHGALL WOODS-DUKES CREEK CONSERVATION AREA

Dukes Creek and its tributaries within the Dukes Creek Conservation Area are open to fishing year round by reservation only. For reservations call 706-878-3087.

- Only artificial lures with barbless hooks may be used or possessed on the portion of Dukes Creek and its tributaries in White County on



the Conservation Area, including the GA Hwy 75 Alternate right-of-way. Possession of any bait, lure, or gear not legal for use on the stream is unlawful.

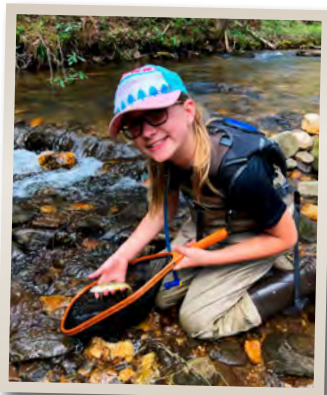
- All fish caught from Dukes Creek and its tributaries in White County on the Conservation Area, including the GA Hwy 75 Alternate right-of-way, must be immediately released where caught.
- No trout may be possessed while fishing on any stream on the Conservation Area or the GA Hwy 75 Alternate right-of-way.

#### WATERS CREEK

- **Size limits:** 22 inches for brown and rainbow trout and 18 inches for brook trout. It is a violation to possess a trout smaller than these limits while fishing on Waters creek.

#### NOONTOTLA CREEK AND ITS TRIBUTARIES ON BLUE RIDGE WMA

- **Size limit:** 16 inches for all mountain trout



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#



Cr. watershed upstream from Polk Co Rd. 437; Silver Cr. watershed; Spring Cr. watershed; Tallapoosa R. watershed; Thompson Cr. watershed upstream of Polk Co Rd. 441.

### **RABUN COUNTY**

Bad Branch watershed Bad Cr. watershed; Crow Cr. watershed (includes Slick Shoal Cr.); Dicks Cr. watershed; Dickenson Branch; Falls Branch watershed; Flat Cr. watershed; Joe Cr. watershed; LaCounts Cr. watershed; Moccasin Cr. watershed; Popcorn Cr. watershed; Seals Cr. watershed; Timpson Cr. watershed; Wildcat Cr. watershed; Worse Cr. watershed; and all other streams or parts of streams not listed above, except: Tallulah R. downstream from Lake Burton Dam, Chattooga R. below Warwoman Cr., and tributaries to Burton, Seed, Rabun, Tallulah Falls, Tugaloo and Yonah reservoirs not listed above.

### **STEPHENS COUNTY**

Little Toccoa Cr. watershed; Middle Fork Broad R. watershed upstream from NRCS flood control structure No.44; North Fork Broad R. watershed upstream from NRCS flood control structure No. 1; Panther Cr. watershed; Toccoa Cr. watershed upstream from Toccoa Falls.

### **TOWNS COUNTY**

Bearmeat Cr. watershed; Bell Cr. watershed; Bugscuffle Branch watershed (Allen Mill Cr.); Burch Branch watershed; Fodder Cr. watershed; Hightower Cr. watershed; Hiwassee R. watershed downstream to Towns Co Rd. 87; Hog Cr. watershed; Shake Rag Branch watershed; and all other streams or parts of streams not listed above, except: Hiwassee R. downstream from Towns Co Rd. 87 and tributaries to Chatuge Reservoir not listed above.

### **UNION COUNTY**

Bracket Cr. watershed; Camp Cr. watershed; Conley Cr. watershed; Coosa Cr. watershed; Ivylog Cr. watershed; Kiutuestia Cr. watershed; Low Cr. watershed; Nottely R. watershed upstream from Nottely Reservoir; Youngcane Cr. watershed; and all other streams or parts of streams not listed above, except: Butternut Cr. watershed, Nottely R. downstream from Nottely Dam, and tributaries to Nottely Reservoir not listed above.

### **WALKER COUNTY**

Chappel Cr. watershed; Chattanooga Cr. watershed upstream from Walker Co Rd. 235; Concord Cr. watershed; Duck Cr. watershed; East Fork Little R. watershed, which flows into Dade

County; East Fork Little R. watershed, which flows into Chattooga County, including Gilreath Cr.; Furnace Cr. watershed; Gulf Cr. watershed; Harrisburg Cr. watershed, including Dougherty Cr. watershed, upstream from Dougherty Cr.; Johns Cr. watershed; Left Fork Coulter Branch watershed; Little Chickamauga Cr. watershed; Rock Cr. watershed, including Sawmill Branch, upstream from Sawmill Branch; Ruff Cr. watershed; Snake Cr. watershed; West Armuchee Cr. watershed; West Chickamauga Cr. watershed upstream from Walker Co Rd. 107.

### **WHITE COUNTY**

Chattahoochee R. watershed upstream from the GA Hwy 255 crossing of the Chattahoochee R.; Little Tesnatee Cr. watershed (includes Turner Cr watershed) upstream from the mouth of Turner Cr.; Town Cr. watershed upstream from the mouth of Jenny Cr.

### **WHITFIELD COUNTY**

Coahulla Cr. watershed upstream from Whitfield Co Rd. 183; Dry Cr. watershed, which is a part of East Chickamauga Cr. watershed; Snake Cr. watershed; Spring Cr. (Deep Spring Cr.) watershed; Swamp Cr. watershed upstream from Whitfield Co Rd. 9; Tiger Cr. watershed.

## **COMMERCIAL FISHING**

- It is unlawful to fish commercially except in waters opened for commercial fishing by regulation of the DNR Board.
- It shall be unlawful to engage in commercial freshwater fishing without having all valid commercial fishing licenses.
- It is unlawful for any person to sell or purchase any game fish, however American shad, hickory shad, channel catfish, and flathead catfish taken while commercial fishing may be sold as described in the Game and Fish Code.
- For information on fish baskets, including usage, construction, and licensing contact the nearest Fisheries Section office or visit our website at **GoFishGeorgia.com**
- For a complete copy of the freshwater commercial fishing regulations visit **GoFishGeorgia.com**
- For saltwater commercial fishing information contact the Coastal Resources Division or visit **CoastalGADNR.org**

## **SALE OF FISH & AQUACULTURE**

### **Game Fish**

It is unlawful for any person to sell or purchase any game fish except under the following conditions:

- Game fish may be sold by properly licensed commercial fish hatcheries, wholesale and retail fish dealers, and pond owners (see following paragraph) who conform to the Game and Fish Code.
- Game fish may be sold from a pond when the owner has obtained a valid permit from DNR Law Enforcement Section (2 weeks required to process). NOTE: The permit must be displayed at the pond and the fish must be packaged and labeled for transport from the pond with the permit number and the number and pounds of each species contained in the package. Fish must remain so packaged until processed or released into another pond. NOTE: A permit will be issued only once annually and limits the time for taking fish from the pond to 15 days.
- Game fish shipped into Georgia may be lawfully transported, sold, and resold provided each person in possession of said game fish has an authentic bill of sale or lading which details the source of the fish and the species, number and pounds of the fish.

### **Domestic Fish**

- Aquaculturists (fish farmers) must register with the Department of Natural Resources in order to sell domestic fish.
- Registration applications are available from any Fisheries Section office, at **GoFishGeorgia.com**, or by calling 770-918-6408. Find Aquaculture information under the Fishing Regulation section of the WRD website.
- Domestic fish are lawfully obtained farmed fish which are held in confinement in private ponds, but only if they are fish species which are either indigenous to Georgia or have been recognized prior to 1992 as having an established population in public waters in Georgia. White perch is not recognized as a domestic fish. Persons in possession of domestic fish from registered aquaculturists must have an authentic bill of sale or lading which identifies the seller, the date of transaction and at least two of the following for each fish species: number, weight, or average length.

# GEORGIA FRESHWATER FISH



## LARGEMOUTH BASS

- Upper jaw extends beyond eye
- Spiny and soft dorsal fin separate or nearly so
- Tongue normally smooth, tooth patch rare
- **World Record 22 lb. 4 oz.**



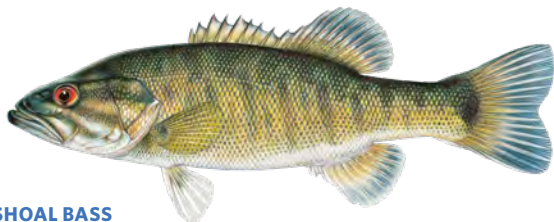
## SMALLMOUTH BASS

- Upper jaw extends to about middle of eye
- Usually has vertical stripes along body
- 3 short spines on anal fin
- State Record 7 lb. 2 oz.



## SPOTTED BASS

- Upper jaw not past rear of eye
- Spiny and soft dorsal fin clearly connected
- Tooth patch on tongue
- State Record 8 lb. 2 oz.



## SHOAL BASS

- Found in Chattahoochee, Flint, and Ocmulgee Rivers
- Vertical bars on fish of all sizes
- No tooth patch on tongue
- Light golden color
- **World Record 8 lb. 3 oz.**



## REDEYE BASS

- Small tooth patch found on tongue
- Sides olive to brown in coloring; dark vertical bars; prominent dark spot on the gill cover
- White margin on tail
- State Record 3 lb. 7 oz.



## WHITE BASS

- Seldom exceeds 3 pounds
- Tongue with one tooth patch
- Stripes often faint
- 2nd anal spine 2/3 or more the length of 3rd anal spine
- State Record 5 lb. 1 oz.



## HYBRID

## WHITE-STRIPED BASS

- Back arched, body deep
- Stripes distinct and usually broken
- Tongue with two tooth patches
- 2nd anal spine 2/3 or more the length of 3rd anal spine
- State Record 25 lb. 8 oz.



## STRIPED BASS

- Body slender
- Stripes distinct, occasionally broken
- Tongue with two tooth patches
- 2nd anal spine 1/2 or less the length of 3rd anal spine
- State Record 63 lb.

## CHANNEL CATFISH

- Numerous small, black spots present
- Deeply forked tail fin
- State Record 44 lb. 12 oz.



## FLATHEAD CATFISH

- Head wide and flat
- Body dark in color
- Tail not forked
- State Record 83 lb.



## WALLEYE

- Sharp teeth
- No spots on dorsal fin
- Dark area at base of dorsal fin
- White spot at bottom of tail
- State Record 14 lb. 2 oz.







#### BLACK CRAPPIE

- 7-8 dorsal spines
- Body color pattern irregular arranged spots
- State Record 4 lb. 4 oz.



#### REDEAR SUNFISH (SHELLCRACKER)

- Red edge on operculum ear flap
- Spotted body
- State Record 4 lb. 2 oz.



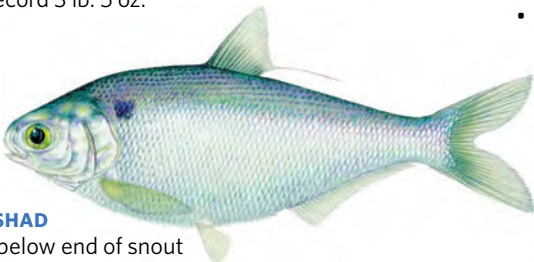
#### REDBREAST SUNFISH

- Long, dark ear flap
- Blue lines on head
- Ear flap (operculum) not wider than eye
- State Record 1 lb. 11 oz.



#### BLUEGILL

- Black spot on soft dorsal fin
- Vertical bars on body
- State Record 3 lb. 5 oz.



#### GIZZARD SHAD

- Mouth below end of snout
- Elongated dorsal fin ray
- Deep body
- Blunt snout



#### RAINBOW TROUT

- Small black dots throughout the body that extend into the tail
- Red stripe along side on silvery body
- State Record 17 lb. 8 oz.



#### BROWN TROUT

- Black and red-orange spots inside light circles on brown body
- Caudal fin (tail) square
- State Record 18 lb. 6 oz.



#### BROOK TROUT

- Light, wormlike markings on dark upper body
- White leading edge on lower fins (pectoral, pelvic and anal)
- State Record 5 lb. 10 oz.

#### CHAIN PICKEREL (JACKFISH)

- Elongated body with chain-like markings
- Sharp needle-like teeth
- **World Record 9 lb. 6 oz.**



#### AMERICAN SHAD

- Bluish or green above with a silvery side
- Deeply forked tail
- State Record 8 lb. 3 oz.



#### THREADFIN SHAD

- Mouth at end of snout
- Elongated dorsal fin ray
- Pointed snout
- Yellow tail fin



## WAY TO GO!

There's a new lake record for channel catfish at Dodge County Public Fishing Area! Angler Thomas Muncher broke the previous lake record with this 13 lb. 7.5 oz. whis-kerfish. His catch also qualified him for a 2021 Angler Award. Congratulations, Thomas on a great catch.



**FISHNET CHARTERS**  
CAPE COD - BUZZARDS BAY  
Targeting all species of gamefish  
Sea Bass - Strippers - Tautog








508-951-9991  
capt.meltrue@gmail.com  
www.captainmeltrue.com

SPECIES	WEIGHT	ANGLER	LOCATION	DATE
Bass, Hybrid	25 lb. 8 oz.	David Hobby	Lake Chatuge	May 1995
Bass, Largemouth	22 lb. 4 oz.	George Perry	Montgomery Lake	June 1932
Bass, Redeye	3 lb. 7 oz.	Steve Williams	Lake Hartwell	April 2004
Bass, Shoal	8 lb. 5 oz.	Joseph Matthew McWhorter	Chattahoochee River	Dec 2021
Bass, Smallmouth	7 lb. 2 oz.	Jack Hall	Lake Chatuge	March 1973
Bass, Spotted	8 lb. 2 oz.	Wayne Holland	Lake Burton	Feb 2005
Bass, Striped (tie)	63 lb.	Kelly Ward	Oconee River	May 1967
		Terry McConnell	Lake Richard B. Russell	April 2009
Bass, Suwanee	3 lb. 9 oz.	Laverne Norton	Ochlocknee River	Oct 1984
Bass, White	5 lb. 1 oz.	J.M. Hobbins	Lake Lanier	June 1971
Bowfin	16 lb. 3 oz.	Jimmy Tucker	Suwannee River	June 2014
Bullhead, Brown	5 lb. 8 oz.	James Andrews	O.F. Veal Pond	May 1978
Bullhead, Yellow	4 lb. 15 oz.	Glenn Settles	Ogeechee River	Oct 2003
Carp, Common	35 lb. 12 oz.	Rev. Donald Clark	Lake Jackson	1972
Catfish, Blue	110 lb. 6 oz.	Tim Trone	Chattahoochee River	Oct 2020
Catfish, Channel	44 lb. 12 oz.	Bobby Smithwick	Altamaha River	May 1972
Catfish, Flathead	83 lb.	Carl Sawyer	Altamaha River	June 2006
		Jim Dieveney	Altamaha River	July 2010
Catfish, White	8 lb. 10 oz.	James Sanders	Savannah River	June 1996
Crappie, Black (tie)	4 lb. 4 oz.	Shirley Lavender	Acree's Lake	June 1971
		Steve Cheek	Lake Spivey	March 1975
Crappie, White	5 lb.	Theresa Kemp	Bibb Co. Pond	April 1984
Gar, Longnose	30 lb. 13 oz.	Gerald Kennedy	Lake Lanier	Sept 2013
Muskellunge	38 lb.	Rube Golden	Blue Ridge Lake	June 1957
Perch, Yellow	2 lb. 9 oz.	Thomas Lewis	Savannah River	Feb 2013
Pickerel, Chain	9 lb. 6 oz.	Baxley McQuaig Jr.	Homerville	Feb 1961
Pickerel, Redfin	2 lb. 10 oz.	Gene Brantley	Lewis' Pond	July 1982
Pike, Northern	18 lb. 2 oz.	Keith Gragg	Lake Rabun	June 1982
Sauger	4 lb. 3 oz.	Stuart Bowers	Clarks Hill Reservoir	April 1986
Shad, American	8 lb. 3 oz.	Henry Baxley	Savannah River	April 1986
Shad, Hickory	2 lb. 3 oz.	Christian Jones	Ogeechee River	February 2021
Shadow Bass	0 lb. 10 oz.	Kristen Brown	Flint River	June 2016
Sunfish, Bluegill	3 lb. 5 oz.	P.F. Gumm	Shamrock Lake	July 1977
Sunfish, Flier	1 lb. 4 oz.	Curt Brooks	Lowndes Co. Pond	Feb 1996
Sunfish, Green	1 lb. 7 oz.	Jeff Sumner	Private Pond	Feb 2006
Sunfish, Redbreast	1 lb. 11 oz.	Emory Walden	Coweta Co. Pond	April 1998
Sunfish, Redear	4 lb. 2 oz.	Pat Lawrence	Richmond Co. Pond	June 1995
Sunfish, Spotted	11 oz.	Jacob Hornady	Sumter Co. Pond	April 2019
Sunfish, Warmouth	2 lb.	Carlton Robbins	Private Pond	May 1974
Trout, Brook	5 lb. 10 oz.	Russell Braden	Waters Creek	March 1986
Trout, Brown	20 lb. 14 oz.	Chad Doughty	Chattahoochee River	July 2014
Trout, Rainbow	17 lb. 8 oz.	Mark Cochran	Soque River	May 2004
Walleye	14 lb. 2 oz.	Wes Carlton	Lake Rabun	Feb 2016

RED indicates new record!

Blue type denotes a World Record Fish (either IGFA or NFFHF)



**It's not just a job, it's a calling.**

# GAME WARDEN

**IS BECOMING A GEORGIA GAME WARDEN YOUR CALLING?**

**IF YOU ENJOY WORKING OUTDOORS, RIDING ATVs, BEING ON THE WATER, AND ARE UP FOR A CHALLENGE, IT JUST MAY BE THE CAREER FOR YOU.**



## IS THIS THE CAREER FOR YOU?

**THE GA DNR LAW ENFORCEMENT DIVISION IS TAKING APPLICATIONS FROM JANUARY 1 - MAY 31 FOR THE GAME WARDEN ACADEMY.**

- Starting Salary: \$41,236
- 23-week Game Warden Academy
- Comprehensive Benefits Package
- Retirement with Defined Benefit and 401(k) and 457 plans
- New tattoo policy

### Basic Requirements:

- 21 years old
- Associate Degree OR 60 semester hours from accredited college or university OR 4 years active-duty military service with Honorable Discharge

**VISIT [www.gadnrle.org/careers-le](http://www.gadnrle.org/careers-le) AND APPLY TODAY!**



**GEORGIA**  
DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

**LAW ENFORCEMENT DIVISION**





# Visit the Go Fish Education Center to explore Georgia's aquatic life & outdoors like never before!

## Pricing

\$5 | Kids (2 & under: free)  
\$6 | Seniors & Active Military  
\$7 | Adults

(plus tax)

## Hours

Fri-Sat | 9 a.m.-5 p.m.  
Sun | 1 p.m.-5 p.m.

Sept 1-May 31 open Fri.-Sun.

June 1-August 31 open Wed.-Sat.

- Aquarium exhibits housing native Georgia fish, turtles & alligators
- Interactive fishing, hunting & boating simulators
- Catch & release casting pond where bait & poles are provided

For field trip information, other educational opportunities & general information, please visit our website

**[GoFishEducationCenter.com](http://GoFishEducationCenter.com)**

It's time to



**Take exit 134 on I-75  
Head east  
Entrance on left**

N 32.43340  
W 83.74360

(478) 988-6701





# Get Kids Hooked!

With over 500,000 acres of lakes and 16,000 miles of streams in Georgia, there are plenty of opportunities to get kids hooked on fishing.

## KIDS FISHING EVENTS

Kids Fishing Events are held monthly during the spring and summer at DNR Public Fishing Areas. Kids can fish for free in stocked ponds with the help of experienced volunteers. Visit [GoFishGeorgia.com/kidsfishing](http://GoFishGeorgia.com/kidsfishing) for more information on:

- Kids Fishing Event locations and dates
- Places to take kids fishing
- Tips for fishing with kids
- Downloading a "My First Fish" Certificate

## YOUTH FISHING PROGRAMS

Want to get your child hooked on fishing but not sure how or where? Check out one of these opportunities for youth anglers:

- Summer Fishing Day Camps at the Go Fish Education Center ([GoFishEducationCenter.com/education-gfec](http://GoFishEducationCenter.com/education-gfec)).
- Fish-n-Learn Education Programs for youth ages 8-15. ([GeorgiaWildlife.com/FishAndLearn](http://GeorgiaWildlife.com/FishAndLearn))
- Gone Fishing Overnight Camps for youth ages 7-15 at Charlie Elliott Wildlife Center ([GeorgiaWildlife.com/charlie-elliott-wildlife-center](http://GeorgiaWildlife.com/charlie-elliott-wildlife-center)).

## EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

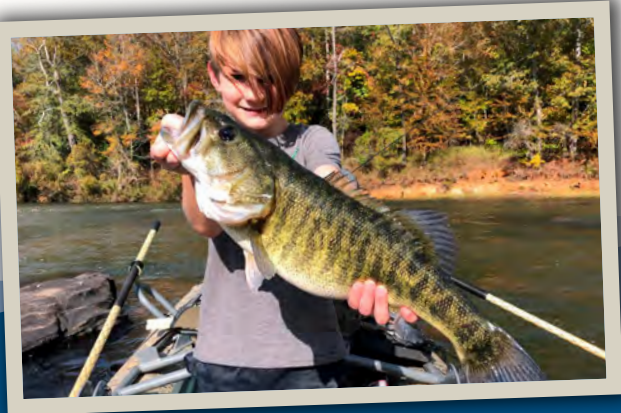
Plan a school trip to one of our seven regional wildlife education centers in Georgia. Each center offers hands-on, nature based programming around fishing and wildlife conservation. The GoFish Center in Perry, GA offers interactive, hands-on lessons, live fish and wildlife exhibits, fishing simulators and so much more! Visit [GoFishGeorgia.com/AllEducationCenters](http://GoFishGeorgia.com/AllEducationCenters) for more information.

## SUMMER CAMPS

Charlie Elliott Wildlife Center, just an hour east of Atlanta, offers a variety of day and overnight summer camps. Programs include topics like backyard nature, shooting sports, wildlife conservation, and outdoor skills for ages 7-15. Activities include fishing, canoeing, hiking, pond studies, orienteering and more. Visit [GeorgiaWildlife.com/charlie-elliott-wildlife-center](http://GeorgiaWildlife.com/charlie-elliott-wildlife-center) for more information.

## GIVE THE GIFT OF FISHING!

Got a young angler in the house? Buy a lifetime license for a child and save hundreds. It's never too early! Visit <https://georgiawildlife.com/lifetimelicense> for more information.





# BRAGGING BOARD



## Get Rewarded for Fishing!

Nothing beats a great day of fishing, except when you get rewarded for doing it! Georgia offers multiple categories for anglers to earn awards, including Adult and Youth Angler Awards, Public Fishing Area Awards and Trophy Bass Awards.

And don't worry if that fish you caught today doesn't qualify, because with so many great places to go, there is always a chance to Go Fish Georgia and try again! This year, we want to tell you more about the Public Fishing Area (PFA) Award Category.

Each Georgia Public Fishing Area ([georgiawildlife.com/allpfas](http://georgiawildlife.com/allpfas)) maintains record catches for that specific PFA. Anglers who catch either a PFA record fish or the largest fish of each species at the PFA and properly documented their catch are eligible for an angler award. What will they win?

- Certificate
- Hat
- T-Shirt

Full program details available at any Fisheries office or at [gofishgeorgia.com/fishing/anglerawards](http://gofishgeorgia.com/fishing/anglerawards).



### Big Fish Earn Big Rewards!

Angler Amanda Parker caught this 14 lb, 9 oz largemouth bass from Tired Creek Reservoir in Grady County, qualifying her for a Trophy Bass Award. As part of the Angler Award program, she earned a certificate, hat, t-shirt, an entry into a drawing for a reward package, 2 passes to the Go Fish Education Center, and a free replica mount of her catch!

**Looking for a certified scale?** Whether applying for an angler award (by weight) or a state record—fish must be weighed on a scale that has been certified accurate to the nearest ounce, or lesser weight, by the GA Department of Agriculture within the last year. Find a list of certificated scales by scanning the QR code. Can't find a certified scale near you on the list? Check with your nearby grocery, hardware store, or local marina.





# GEORGIA'S BLACK BASS SLAM

**Altamaha**



**Bartram's**



**Chattahoochee**



**Largemouth**



**Redeye**



**Shoal**



**Smallmouth**



**Spotted**



**Suwannee**



**Tallapoosa**



## BE A SUCCESSFUL "SLAM" ANGLER:

1. Catch 5 of the 10 species
2. Make sure it's a legal catch & hit the length limits
3. Take several photos

For complete details visit  
[www.GaBassSlam.com](http://www.GaBassSlam.com)



## FISH CONSUMPTION GUIDELINES: GEORGIA WATERS

## THE HEALTH BENEFITS OF EATING FISH

Sport fish caught in Georgia are generally good quality and safe to eat. Fish provide a high protein, low fat diet which is low in saturated fats. Fish may have substantial health benefits when they replace a high fat source of protein in the diet.

## WHAT ARE THE GUIDELINES?

Georgia DNR samples fish from water bodies each year to test for contaminants such as PCBs, chlordane, and mercury. Many of the fish tested have few or no contaminants and are safe to eat. **Waters where fish have been tested and found to be clean are listed to the right.** Fish from waters listed in the tables had some level of contaminants so you should restrict the amount of fish you eat from these waters. Recommendations are made to limit how often you eat a meal of fish from these sources to either once per week or month. A meal of fish is about 4 to 8 ounces. These guidelines are based on eating fish from a listed area for at least 30 years. That is because it would take months or years of regularly eating contaminated food to accumulate levels in your body that would affect your health.

**“One meal per week” means that eating a 4- to 8-ounce serving no more than once per week should cause no significant health risks.**

## SPECIAL NOTICE FOR PREGNANT WOMEN, NURSING MOTHERS AND CHILDREN

If you are pregnant or a nursing mother, or plan to become pregnant soon, you and also children under 6 years of age are sensitive to the effects of some contaminants. Women and children in these categories may wish to eat fish less often than recommended in the tables.

## HOW TO REDUCE YOUR HEALTH RISK

**Eat smaller fish and vary the kind of fish you eat.** Contaminants build up in top predators (bass), bottom feeders (catfish), and older (larger) fish to a greater extent than panfish, such as bream and crappie.

**Clean and cook fish properly.** Some chemicals have a tendency to concentrate in the fatty

## NO CONSUMPTION RESTRICTIONS

**Fish have been tested from the following water bodies and no restrictions on consumption are recommended.**

## Lakes

City of Adairsville pond; Allen Creek WMA Ponds A and B; Brasstown Valley Kid Fish Pond; Bowles C. Ford Lake (Savannah); Clayton Co. Water Auth. lakes; Dodge Co. PFA; Fort Yargo State Park; Hard Labor Cr. State Park (Rutledge); High Falls Lake; Mayer (City of Savannah); McDuffie PFA (East); Nancy Town Lake; Olmstead; Paradise PFA (Patrick and Horseshoe 4); Payton Park Pond; (Valdosta); Rocky Mountain PFA Lakes Antioch (East and West); Seed; Marben PFA (CEWC) Lakes Shepard, Margery, and Bennett; and Walter F. George; Silver Lake WMA.

## Rivers and Creeks

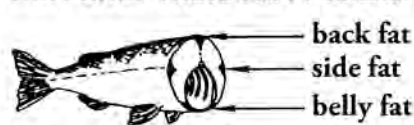
Alcovy River; Boen Creek (Rabun Co.); Brasstown Creek (Towns Co.); Broad River; Buffalo Creek (Carroll Co.); Butternut Creek (Union Co.); Cane Creek (Lumpkin Co.); Chattanooga Creek; Chattooga River (NW Ga.); Chickasawhatchee Creek; Coleman River; Conasauga River in Cohutta Forest; Dukes Creek; Daniels Creek (Cloudland Canyon State Park); East/South Chickamauga Creek; Goldmine Branch; Jacks River; Jones Creek; Little Dry Creek (Floyd Co.); Little Tallapoosa River; Little Tennessee River; Mill Creek (Whitfield Co.); Moccasin Creek (Lake Burton Trout Hatchery); Mud Creek (Cobb Co.); Nickajack Creek; Noonday Creek (Cobb Co.); Ocmulgee River (Butts, Monroe and Pulaski Cos.); Oconee River (below Barnett Shoals to Lake Oconee, Laurens Co. and Milledgeville to Dublin); North and Middle Oconee Rivers; Olley Creek; Ponder Branch (Walker Co.); Proctor Creek (Cobb Co.); Slab Camp Creek (Oconee Co.); South River (Hwy 36, Butts Co.); Spirit Creek; Stamp Creek (Pine Log WMA); Stekoa Creek; Yahoola Creek; Yellow River; Sewell Mill Creek (Cobb Co.); Tallulah River; Upatoi Creek; Tributary to Cedar Creek (Hart County WMA); Headwaters of Chestatee River (Turner's Corner); and Hayner's Creek (Savannah).

tissues of fish. By removing the fish's skin and trimming the fat, you can substantially reduce contaminants.

**Cook fish so fat drips away.** Broil, bake, or grill fish and do not use the drippings. Deep-fat frying removes some contaminants,

but discard the oil once you have cooked the fish. Pan frying removes few contaminants.

## TRIM AWAY THESE FATTY AREAS.



## GUIDELINES FOR GEORGIA

The following tables list the current guidelines for eating fish for lakes and rivers in Georgia. **Please note: Lakes and rivers listed on this page (above) have been tested and the fish found to contain little or no contamination.** If the lake or stream where you fish is listed in the following tables (on pages 34–37), it is safe to eat the amount listed for a given species from that body of water. Water bodies are listed alphabetically.

“These guidelines are non-binding recommendations EPD determines based on the body of water a fish comes from, the species of fish and the amount of fish a person consumes. The purpose of these guidelines is to provide detailed information in an understandable format for people who eat fish. Waters listed in the fish consumption guidelines are not necessarily assessed as impaired using USEPA guidelines for Section 303(d) of the Clean Water Act.”

More details on fish contaminant testing are available in the publication “Guidelines for Eating Fish from Georgia Waters” available at: [www.gaepd.org](http://www.gaepd.org)

**Call for a copy or more information:**

Environmental Protection Division: 404-656-4713 | Coastal Resources Division: 912-264-7218 | Wildlife Resources Division: 770-918-6406



## FISH CONSUMPTION GUIDELINES: RIVERS &amp; CREEKS

NO RESTRICTIONS	Bass, Largemouth	Bass, Other	Bass, Shoal	Bass, Spotted	Bass, Striped	Bass, White	Bluegill	Bowfin	Buffalo	Bullhead	Carp	Catfish, Blue	Catfish, Channel	Catfish, Flathead	Catfish, White	Crappie	Mullet, Striped	Perch, Yellow	Pickrel, Chain	Redbreast	Redhorse	Redeer	Sucker	Sunfish, Green	Sunfish, Other	Trout, Brown	Trout, Rainbow
ONE MEAL PER WEEK																											
ONE MEAL PER MONTH																											
DO NOT EAT																											
NO DATA																											
Alapaha River																											
Alapahoochee River																											
Allatoona Crk. (Cobb Co.)																											
Altamaha River (US Hwy. 1)																											
Altamaha River (below US Route 25)																											
Apalachee River																											
Beaver Crk. (Taylor Co.)																											
Brier Crk. (Burke Co.)																											
Canoochee River (Hwy 192 to Ogeechee River)																											
Chattahoochee River (Helen to Lk. Lanier)																											
(Buford Dam to Morgan Falls Dam)																											
(Morgan Falls Dam to Peachtree Crk.)																											
(Peachtree Crk. to Pea Crk.)																											
(Pea Crk. to West Point Lk., below Franklin)																											
(West Point dam to I-85)																											
(Oliver Dam to Upatoi Crk.)																											
Chattooga River (NE Georgia, Rabun County)																											
Chestatee River (below Tsnatee Riv.)																											
Conasauga River (State Line to Calhoun)																											
Coosa River (River Mile Zero to Hwy 100, Floyd Co.)																											
Coosa River (Hwy 100 to Stateline, Floyd Co.)																											
Coosa River (Coosa, Etowah below Thompson-Weinman dam, Oostanaula)																											
Coosawattee River (below Carters)																											
Etowah River (Dawson Co.)																											
Etowah River (above Lake Allatoona)																											
Etowah River (below Lake Allatoona dam)																											
Flint River (Spalding/Fayette Cos.)																											
Flint River (Meriwether/Upson/Pike Cos.)																											
Flint River (Taylor Co.)																											
Flint River (Macon/Dooly/Worth/Lee Cos.)																											
Flint River (Dougherty/Baker Mitchell Cos.)																											
Gum Crk. (Crisp Co.)																											
Holly Crk. (Murray Co.)																											
Ichawaynochaway Crk.																											
Kinchafoonee Crk. (above Albany)																											
Little River (above Clarks Hill Lake)																											
Little River (above Ga. Hwy 133, Valdosta)																											
Mill Crk. (Murray Co.)																											
Muckalee Crk. (above Albany)																											
Ochlockonee River (Moultrie to Thomasville)																											
Ochlockonee River (Thomasville to state line)																											
Ocmulgee River (below Macon, Bibb Co.)																											
Ocmulgee River (Houston/Twiggs Co.)																											

# FISH CONSUMPTION GUIDELINES: RIVERS & CREEKS

NO RESTRICTIONS																												
ONE MEAL PER WEEK																												
ONE MEAL PER MONTH																												
DO NOT EAT																												
NO DATA																												
	Bass, Largemouth	Bass, Other	Bass, Shoal	Bass, Spotted	Bass, Striped	Bass, White	Bluegill	Bowfin	Buffalo	Bullhead	Carp	Catfish, Blue	Catfish, Channel	Catfish, Flathead	Catfish, White	Crappie	Mullet, Striped	Perch, Yellow	Pickrel, Chain	Redbreast	Redhorse	Redear	Sucker	Sunfish, Green	Sunfish, Other	Trout, Brown	Trout, Rainbow	
Ocmulgee River (Telfair/Wheeler Cos.)																												
Oconee River (above Barnett Shoals)																												
Oconee River (Milledgeville to I-16)																												
Ogeechee River (all to Ft. McAllister)																												
Ohoopsee River (Emanuel/Toombs Cos.)																												
Okefenokee Swamp (Billy's Lake)																												
Oostanaula River (Floyd/Gordon Cos.)																												
Patsiliga Crk. (upstream of Beaver Crk., Taylor Co.)																												
Patsiliga Crk. (downstream of Beaver Crk.)																												
Pipemaker Canal																												
Proctor Crk. (near Atlanta Fulton Co.)																												
Satilla River (Waycross, Ware/Pierce Cos.)																												
Satilla River (near Folkston, Camden Co.)																												
Savannah River (above & below New Sav. Bluff Lock & Dam)																												
Savannah River (Chatham/Screven Cos.)																												
Savannah River (Effingham)																												
Savannah River (Ft. Howard)																												
Savannah River (Tidal Gate)																												
Savannah River (New Savannah Bluff Lock & Dam to Savannah Estuary)																												
Short Crk. (Warren Co.)																												
South River (Panola Shoals, Rockdale Co.)																												
South River (Henry Co., Snapping Shoals)																												
Spring Crk. (Seminole/Decatur/Miller Cos.)																												
St. Marys River (Camden Co.)																												
St. Marys River (Charlton Co.)																												
Sugar Crk. (Murray Co.)																												
Sumac Crk. (Murray Co.)																												
Suwannee River																												
Swamp Crk. (Redwine Cove Road)																												
Talking Rock Crk.																												
Tallapoosa River (US Hwy 127)																												
Tallapoosa River (GA Hwy 100)																												
Trib. To Hudson River (Alto, Banks Co.)																												
Withlacoochee River (Berrien/Lowndes Cos.)																												

\* This striped bass population migrates annually between West Point Lake and Morgan Falls Dam.

†† Women who are pregnant or nursing and young children may wish to further restrict their consumption due to the variable mercury levels in these fish.





## FISH CONSUMPTION GUIDELINES: LAKES

NO RESTRICTIONS	Bass, Hybrid	Bass, Largemouth	Bass, Spotted	Bass, Striped	Bass, Other	Bluegill	Bullhead	Carp	Crappie	Catfish, Blue	Catfish, Channel	Catfish, Flathead	Catfish, Other	Redbreast	Suckers	Sunfish, Redear	Walleye
ONE MEAL PER WEEK																	
ONE MEAL PER MONTH																	
DO NOT EAT																	
NO DATA																	
A H Stephens State Park		<16"									>12"						
Albany By-Pass Pond																	
Acworth																	
Allatoona	12-16" >16"	<16" >16"	<12" >12"		<12" 12-16"				<12"								
Andrews																	
Banks		<12"															
Bartlett's Ferry	<12" >16"	12-16" >16"	>12"	<16"	>16"				<12" >12"	<12" >16"							
Bear Crk. Reservoir		<16"									>12"						
Black Shoals (Randy Poynter)		>12"							<12"	<12" >12"							
Blackshear		12-16"							>12"	<12" 12-16"	>16"						
Big Lazer PFA		12-16" >16"								>16"							
Blue Ridge		12-16" >16"	<12" 12-16"		12-16"					>12"							
Burton		>12"	12-16" >16"														>16"
Pond N. Bush Field (Augusta)		12-16"															
Carters Lake	>16"	>12"	<16" >16"	>16"						>12"							12-16" >16"
Chatuge	>16"	<16" >16"	12-16" >16"							>16"		12-16"					
Clarks Hill	<16" >16"	<12" >12"					12-16"										
Evans County PFA		>12"								>16"							
Flat Creek PFA (Lonice Barrett Lake)		12-16" >16"								>16"							
Goat Rock	>12"	12-16" >16"			<16"					12-16" >16"							
Hamburg		<12" 12-16"															
Hartwell (Tugaloo Arm)	<12" >12"	<16" >16"	12-16"	<12" >12"				>16"									>16"
Hartwell (main body of lake)																	
Heath Lake (Rocky Mountain PFA)										>16"							
High Falls	<12" >16"									>12"							
Hugh M. Gillis PFA		12-16"															
Jackson		<12" 12-16" >16"					12-16"						<16"				
Juliette		<16"								>12"							
Ken Gardens		12-16" >16"					<12"			<16"							
Kolomoki Mounds S.P.																	
Lanier		<12" 12-16" >16"	>12"	12-16" >16"	12-16"			>16"									>16"
Little Ocmulgee S. P.		<12" >16"					12-16"										
Marben PFA		>12"								>16"							
Mayers (Baxley)		>12"							<12"								
McDuffie PFA (West)		>12"								>12"							
Nottely		<12" 12-16" >16"	<16"	>16"						12-16"							
Oconee	<12"	12-16"											<12"				
Oliver	<12"									<16" >16"							
Rabun		<12" >12"	12-16" >16"										<16" >16"				12-16" >16"
Reed Bingham S.P.													>16"				
Richard B. Russell		<16" >16"	<16"						<16"				<16" >16"				
Seminole							<12" 12-16"				>12"				>12"		
Sinclair							12-16"		<16"								
Stone Mountain		<12" >12"															
Tobesofkee		<12" >12"															
Tugalo		12-16" >16"	<16"										12-16"				12-16" >16"
Tribble Mill Pk. Pond (Gwinnett Co.)		12-16"															
Varner		>12"									>16"						
West Point	<12" 12-16" >16"	12-16" >16"	<12" 12-16"	>16"							<16" >16"						
Worth (Chehaw Reservoir)		>12"										>12"					
Worth (Flint Reservoir)		12-16"									>16"						
Yonah																	>16"

# FISH CONSUMPTION GUIDELINES: COASTAL RIVERS & CREEKS

NO RESTRICTIONS	Atlantic Croaker	Bass, Striped	Bluefish	Blue Crab	Drum, Black	Drum, Red	Flounder	Sheepshead	Southern Kingfish (Whiting)	Spot	Spotted Seatrout	Striped Mullet	Shrimp	Tripletail
ONE MEAL PER WEEK														
ONE MEAL PER MONTH														
DO NOT EAT														
NO DATA														
Turtle River System (Purvis, Gibson Crks.)														
Turtle & Buffalo Rivers (upriver Hwy 303)														
Turtle River (Hwy 303 to Channel Marker 9)														
Turtle River (Channel Marker 9, South Brunswick River to Dubignon & Parsons Creeks)														
Terry & Dupree Creeks (Dupree Creek to 0.5 mile below confluence with Terry Creek)														
Terry & Dupree Creeks (Terry Creek 0.75 mile above Back River to confluence with Back River)														
Back River (North of Torras Causeway)														
Back River (South of Torras Causeway)														
Academy Creek														
Savannah Estuary		≥27"												
Wassaw Sound														
Ossabaw Sound														
St. Catherine's Sound														
Sapelo Sound														
Altamaha Sound														
St. Simons Sound														
St. Andrew Sound														
Cumberland Sound														
Atlantic Ocean														

## KING MACKEREL SPECIAL JOINT STATE CONSUMPTION 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 and children age 12 and younger
	1 meal per week for other adults
Over 39 inches	Do Not Eat

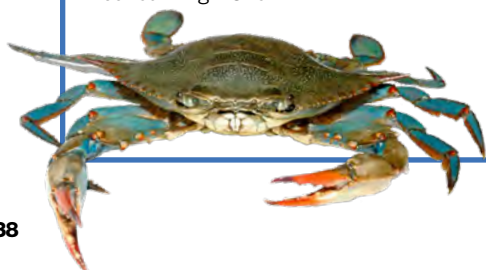
## SALTWATER ADVISORY

Harmful toxins called PCBs are stored in the hepato-pancreas ("the green gland" also known as the mustard, tomalley, or liver) found in the body section of blue crabs.

Recent studies have shown that crabs in the Middle Turtle River and Purvis and Gibson Creeks contain high levels of PCBs. While the crab meat may still be eaten in recommended amounts, the hepatopancreas should not be eaten because of the high PCB levels.

If crabs are cooked whole, the juice should not be consumed. Because PCBs are transferred to cooking liquid, crab cooking liquid should also be discarded.

Cleaning crabs before you cook them ("backing" the crabs and rinsing out the guts and the gills) reduces the risk of consuming PCBs.



## 2021 FORESTRY FOR WILDLIFE PARTNERS

The Georgia Department of Natural Resources' Wildlife Resources Division honors our 2021 Forestry for Wildlife Partners for their outstanding accomplishments in incorporating wildlife conservation practices as an integral part of their land management. These partners had a positive impact for wildlife habitat on about 1 million acres. Learn about FWP, including our new focus on partner projects and a lower minimum acreage at [georgiawildlife.com/fwp](http://georgiawildlife.com/fwp).

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# Discover Yourself.



Georgia  
State Parks  
& Historic Sites



GaStateParks.org



## SALTWATER FISHING IN GEORGIA

From the deep waters of the Gulf Stream across a wide expanse of open Atlantic Ocean through winding tidal rivers to remote marshes, coastal Georgia offers a diversity of inviting places for the saltwater angler. Whether you fish from the surf, a fishing pier, or a boat, there is always something ready to tug on your line.



DNR's Coastal Resources Division builds and maintains a variety of essential fish habitats, both inshore and offshore. Funds generated by the sale of our **Support Fish Habitat** license plate are used to buy retired vessels like the one seen above for offshore reefs, recycled shell for artificial oyster beds, and a variety of other fish habitats.

Learn more at [CoastalGaDNR.org/HERU](http://CoastalGaDNR.org/HERU)

### FIVE THINGS YOU CAN DO TO BE A RESPONSIBLE ANGLER

- Buy a fishing license with the free Saltwater Information Program (SIP) permit. Funds from the license support fisheries management, boating and fishing access projects, and conservation law enforcement. Your SIP permit helps identify you as a Georgia saltwater angler, which aids in management decisions and the allocation of federal funds.
- Handle the fish as little as possible. Leaving a fish in the water is the best option when releasing it, but if you must remove it from the water, wet your hands first to avoid removing its protective slime.
- When taking a photograph with the fish, be sure to support its weight by holding the fish horizontally and support its weight with your hands.
- If a fish looks lethargic, gently force water through the mouth and over the gills by holding it in the current, or slowly moving the fish in a figure-eight motion.
- Use non-stainless steel non-offset circle hooks when possible. It is believed that these hooks reduce the rate of gut hooking in fish and helps increase their chance of survival after release. Non-stainless steel hooks also rust quicker than stainless if it is left in the fish.



# DRIVE GEORGIA WILD

Help "Drive Georgia Wild" with a specialty tag from Georgia DNR, available at your local county tag office.



[www.DriveGeorgiaWild.com](http://www.DriveGeorgiaWild.com)



**Fishing Licenses:** See page 8 for information on license requirements.

- Licenses are required for hook and 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.
- A FREE Saltwater Information Program (SIP) permit is required for anyone age 16 and over who fishes in saltwater. SIP permits expire one year from date of issuance.
- 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. Persons interested in purchasing a Saltwater Guide's License should call the DNR Coastal Regional License Office at 912-264-7237.

## SALTWATER FISHING INFORMATION

### GEORGIA SALTWATER FISHING REGULATIONS

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

#### Georgia DNR Coastal Office

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,  
Brunswick, GA 31520-8687  
912-264-7218 or fax 912-262-3143  
[www.CoastalGADNR.org](http://www.CoastalGADNR.org)

### 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  
North Charleston, SC 29405  
843-571-4366 or 866-SAFMC-10  
[www.safmc.net](http://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](http://www.nmfspermits.com)

For more information about fishing, boating, and diving at Gray's Reef National Marine Sanctuary, contact:

#### NOAA - Gray's Reef National Marine Sanctuary

10 Ocean Science Circle  
Savannah, GA 31411  
[graysreef@noaa.gov](mailto:graysreef@noaa.gov)  
912-598-2345

[www.graysreef.noaa.gov](http://www.graysreef.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!

### ARTIFICIAL REEFS

Georgia maintains 15 inshore and 22 offshore artificial reefs located from inside the estuary to 80 miles offshore. The 19 reefs beyond 3 miles offshore are designated as federal Special Management Zones and as such, only allow hand-held and spear fishing gear. For more information, coordinates and updates go to [CoastalGaDNR.org/ArtificialReefsMarineHabitat](http://CoastalGaDNR.org/ArtificialReefsMarineHabitat).

### 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. A commercial license is required to sell any seafood.

### 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; see page 46).

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.**

**Sharks:** Recreational harvest of sharks is limited to hook and line gear only. Additionally, anglers must use non-offset, corrodible, non-stainless steel circle hooks when fishing for sharks recreationally, except when fishing with flies or artificial lures.

## RELATED DEFINITIONS

**Maximum Size:** the specific size in length above which it is unlawful to take that finfish species.

**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 that a person can legally have at one time.

**Bushel:** 8 gallons.

## SALTWATER DEMARCATION LINE

This line is established in this state as the separation point between saltwaters and freshwaters for commercial fishing and sport fishing. The saltwater demarcation line is defined below:

- The point at which U.S. Highway 17 crosses the following bodies of water and their tributaries shall be the line of demarcation for them: St. Mary's River, Satilla River, South Altamaha River, Champney River, Butler River, Darien River, Little Ogeechee System (except Salt Creek), North Newport River, Medway River, Big Ogeechee River, and the point at which Georgia Highway 25/South Carolina 170 crosses the Savannah River and its tributaries. All water seaward of these points shall be considered saltwater.
- The following streams and their tributaries are designated as salt water for their entire length: Crooked River, Little Satilla River, South Brunswick River, Turtle River, Sapelo River, South Newport River, Salt Creek (Little Ogeechee System), and all other rivers, streams, and tributaries in the six coastal counties which are not enumerated in this subsection.
- For purposes of crabbing, that portion of the St. Mary's River and the Satilla River System (including the Satilla River and White Oak Creek) which is seaward of the points at which the Seaboard Coastline Railroad crosses such streams and that portion of the Altamaha River System which is seaward of the points at which I-95 crosses the streams of that system shall be considered salt water. It shall be unlawful to place any crab trap in the waters of this state other than that described as salt water in Code Section 27-4-1 or by this subsection.

## GEORGIA'S SALTWATER GAMEFISH RECORDS

SPECIES	MEN'S RECORD		WOMEN'S RECORD	
	WEIGHT	MALE ANGLER (year)	WEIGHT	FEMALE ANGLER (year)
Amberjack, Greater	92 lb. 1 oz.	Ben W. Key, Jr. (1975)	72 lb. 8 oz.	Tricia L. Nicosia (1986)
Barracuda, Great	54 lb. 8 oz.	Wayne Hall (1999)	47 lb. 8 oz.	Marie Franklin (1999)
Bass, Black Sea (tie)	5 lb. 11 oz.	J.C. Hadden, Jr. (1994)	4 lb. 8 oz.	Evelyn B. Carter (1983)
	5 lb. 12 oz.	Willie J. Oakman (1998)		
Bluefish*	17 lb. 12 oz.	Gary Q. Altman (1980)	14 lb. 4 oz.	Kathy Sikes (1986)
Cobia	88 lb. 12 oz.	Jeffrey Clark (1985)	68 lb. 5 oz.	Wanda Carroll (1999)
Croaker, Atlantic	5 lb. 12 oz.	David Flynt (1977)	2 lb. 11 oz.	Caroline Hicks (2014)
Dolphin (tie)	67 lb. 6 oz.	Michael Sheppard (1997)	54 lb. 8 oz.	Romona Arsenault (1977)
	67 lb. 9.6 oz.	Will Owens (2019)		
Drum, Black	92 lb. 0 oz.	John H. Thomas Jr. (2010)	80 lb. 0 oz.	Jennifer Swenson (2009)
Drum, Red (Channel Bass)*	47 lb. 7 oz.	Richard Price (1986)	38 lb. 13 oz.	Sandra Price (1986)
Flounder (Composite)	15 lb. 8 oz.	Walter C. Hewitt (1982)	15 lb. 10 oz.	Janice Youmans (1990)
Grouper, Gag	38 lb. 0 oz.	David Sapp (2002)	20 lb. 0 oz.	Joyce L. Richards (1984)
Grouper, Goliath*	124 lb. 0 oz.	James Chumley (1976)	Harvest prohibited, therefore record no longer allowed.	
Grouper, Red	26 lb. 6.4 oz.	Bruce C. Bartlett, Jr. (2021)	19 lb. 2 oz.	Karen Kratzer (2016)
Grouper, Scamp	27 lb. 2 oz.	Jakob Hallstrom (2014)	23 lb. 6 oz.	Kathy Wash (1987)
Grouper, Warsaw	252 lb. 0 oz.	Gene Whitehurst (1981)	Harvest prohibited, therefore record no longer allowed.	
Jack, Crevalle	38 lb. 8 oz.	Lex Bazemore (2001)	30 lb. 6 oz.	Ann Allen (1981)
Kingfish (Whiting)	2 lb. 12 oz.	Harold Guinn (1975)	2 lb. 4 oz.	Lois E. Guinn (1975)
Ladyfish	3 lb. 12 oz.	Dwight Thornton (1977)	5 lb. 0 oz.	Marjorie Nighbert (1978)
Mackerel, King	75 lb. 12 oz.	Joe H. Bell (2004)	45 lb. 7 oz.	Jessica Pace (2016)
Mackerel, Spanish	8 lb. 4 oz.	James I. Geiger (1991)	7 lb. 14 oz.	Ida Knight (1988)
Marlin, Blue*	491 lb. 8 oz.	John C. Howard, Jr. (1985)	178 lb. 0 oz.	Susan D. Meek (1985)
Marlin, White*	49 lb. 12 oz.	Thomas Hester (1986)	Harvest prohibited, therefore record no longer allowed.	
Mullet, Striped	9 lb. 3 oz.	Steve Middleton (1994)	Minimum weight: 4 lbs.	
Pinfish	1 lb. 15 oz.	Ty Cobb (2017)	1 lb. 14 oz.	Nicole Starnes (2020)
Pompano, African	40 lb. 0.48 oz.	Richard Bjorneby (2021)	25 lb. 13 oz.	Jennifer Roberts (2016)
Pompano, Florida	5 lb. 4 oz.	Bill Knightburoff (2002)	1 lb. 7 oz.	Laura A. Cheek (1982)
Porgy (Composite)	15 lb. 14 oz.	Louis F. Jiran (1988)	Minimum weight: 3 lbs.	
Porgy, Red	5 lb. 6 oz.	Jimmy Ginn (1980)	Minimum weight: 4 lbs.	
Runner, Rainbow	17 lb. 12 oz.	Tyler Bond (1984)	Minimum weight: 5 lbs.	
Sailfish*	65 lb. 0 oz.	Vann Downs (1981)	38 lb. 5 oz.	Laura Hammond (1992)
Seatrout, Spotted	9 lb. 7 oz.	Tommy Hall (1976)	7 lb. 8 oz.	Amanda Wooten (1990)
Shark, Blacktip	131 lb. 0 oz.	Albert Lee Boyd (1978)	148 lb. 0 oz.	Allison Gerber (2008)
Shark, Bonnethead	22 lb. 8 oz.	Zachery Gross (2009)	22 lb. 11.5 oz.	Amanda Page (2012)
Shark, Bull	455 lb. 0 oz.	Mark D. Noble (1978)	121 lb. 9 oz.	Jennifer Swenson (2011)
Shark, Dusky*	272 lb. 8 oz.	Bill Hunter (1978)	6 lb. 2 oz.	Wendy Mead (1982)
Shark, Hammerhead	770 lb. 0 oz.	Charlie Marshall (1973)	10 lb. 0 oz.	Katherine Bullis (1985)
Shark, Lemon	375 lb. 0 oz.	Thomas Winslow (1974)	322 lb. 0 oz.	Deborah Carpenter (2011)
Shark, Mako	440 lb. 0 oz.	Tyler Gary (2017)	No minimum weight	
Shark, Nurse	244 lb. 0 oz.	Bill Watson (1981)	Minimum weight: 50 lbs.	
Shark, Sandbar (Brown)*	158 lb. 8 oz.	Chet Lee Kirby (1979)	124 lb. 0 oz.	Dorothea Bays (1985)
Shark, Sand Tiger*	290 lb. 0 oz.	Billy Castle (1977)	212 lb. 6 oz.	Clara Adams (1984)
Shark, Spinner	145 lb. 6 oz.	Edward J. Hawie (2009)	Minimum weight: 50 lbs.	
Shark, Thresher	116 lb. 0 oz.	Mark D. Noble (1976)	Minimum weight: 50 lbs.	
Shark, Tiger	794 lb. 0 oz.	Chuck Hall (1975)	190 lb. 0 oz.	Pam Page (2012)
Sheepshead	14 lb. 14 oz.	Ralph V. White (2002)	12 lb. 9 oz.	Linda Carroll (2003)
Snapper, Cubera	10 lb. 0 oz.	Chris Gray (2012)	—	
Snapper, Gray	12 lb. 9 oz.	David Blackshear (2011)	10 lb. 11 oz.	Lindsey Paulk (2020)
Snapper, Mutton	18 lb. 6.56 oz.	Benjamin Lewis (2019)	18 lb. 9.92 oz.	Janet Monroe (2019)
Snapper, Red	37 lb. 8 oz.	Bill Shearin, Jr. (1988)	29 lb. 8 oz.	Phyllis Thompson (1989)
Snapper, Vermillion	3 lb. 11 oz.	Scott Funderburk (2018)	3 lb. 10 oz.	Alli Deyoung (2018)
Snapper, Yellowtail	5 lb. 0 oz.	Eddie N. Vanmeter II (2014)	—	
Snook	10 lb. 2 oz.	Lester Rooks (1990)	10 lb. 6 oz.	Marlene Patton (2008)
Spadefish, Atlantic	13 lb. 2 oz.	Shahram Zare (2004)	11 lb. 5 oz.	Deidra H. Jeffcoat (2003)
Swordfish	205 lb. 8 oz.	Brendin A. Page (2014)	No minimum weight	
Tarpon	161 lb. 0 oz.	C. Edwards (1995)	139 lb. 0 oz.	Wendy A. Mead (1986)
Triggerfish, Gray	11 lb. 3 oz.	Dean Williams (1989)	11 lb. 5 oz.	Elizabeth Zeagler (1987)
Tripletail	38 lb. 14 oz.	Kyle Thigpen (2005)	29 lb. 6 oz.	Jordan Davis (2017)
Tuna, Blackfin	40 lb. 8 oz.	Tyler Deal (2016)	30 lb. 8 oz.	Penny Morgan-Turner (1999)
Tuna, Yellowfin	249 lb. 2 oz.	Ken Cooper (1980)	165 lb. 4 oz.	Anne Smith (1973)
Tunny, Little	22 lb. 1 oz.	Rusty Blackburn (2017)	20 lb. 0 oz.	Str. Mary Clarice (1973)
Wahoo	123 lb. 3 oz.	Michael Stefanick (2000)	77 lb. 0 oz.	Linda Li-Chao Yang (1988)
Weakfish (Summer Trout)	6 lb. 8 oz.	Frank Taylor (1976)	Minimum weight: 3 lb.	

For more information on Saltwater records, go to Coastal Resources Division at 912-264-7218

RED indicates new record!

\* Current regulations require the immediate release of these fish and therefore are not eligible for state records. Due to the maximum 23 inch size limit on Red Drum, a state record cannot be submitted.



## SEASONS, LIMITS, SIZES

All limits per person unless specified. FL = fork length, TL = total length (see "How to Measure a Fish" below)

SPECIES	OPEN SEASON	DAILY LIMIT AND POSSESSION LIMIT	MINIMUM SIZE (inches)
Amberjack*	All year	1	28 FL
American Eel	All year	25	9 TL
Atlantic croaker	All year	25	
Atlantic sturgeon		No Harvest	
Billfish (Blue marlin, White marlin, Sailfish)*		Catch and Release Only	
Black drum	All year	15	14 TL
Black sea bass*	All year	15	12 TL
Bluefish	All year	15	12 FL
Cobia	Mar. 1 - Oct. 31	1 per angler, max 6 per boat.	36 FL
Dolphin*	All year	10 (Not to exceed 60 per boat, except for headboats which are allowed 10 per paying customer.	20 FL
Flounder	All year	15	12 TL
Gag grouper*	All year	2	24 TL
King mackerel*	All year	3	24 FL
Red drum (Channel bass, Spottail bass, Redfish)**	All year	5	14 TL (23 TL maximum)
Red porgy*	All year	3	14 TL
Red snapper*	All year	2	20 TL
Sharks (other than Hammerheads, SSC and Prohibited Sharks) <sup>A</sup>	All Year	1 per angler or boat, whichever is less	54 FL 83 FL (Shortfin Mako)
Sharks: Hammerheads (Great, Scalloped, and Smooth) <sup>A</sup>	All Year	1 per angler or boat, whichever is less	78 FL
Small shark composite (SSC) <sup>A</sup> (Atlantic sharpnose, Bonnet-head, Spiny dogfish)	All Year	1 per angler	30 FL
Prohibited Sharks (NO HARVEST) <sup>A</sup>	Sand tiger, Sandbar, Silky, Bigeye sand tiger, Whale, Basking, White, Dusky, Bignose, Galapagos, Night, Reef, Narrowtooth, Caribbean sharpnose, Smalltail, Atlantic angel, Longfin mako, Bigeye thresher, Sharpnose sevengill, Bluntnose sixgill, Oceanic Whitetip, and Bigeye sixgill		
Sheepshead	All year	15	10 FL
Spanish mackerel*	All year	15	12 FL
Spot	All year	25	
Spotted seatrout	All year	15	14 TL
Striped bass (Saltwater)	All year	2	22 TL
Striped bass (Savannah River)	All year	2	27 TL
Tarpon	All year	1	68 FL
Tripletail	All year	2	18 TL
Weakfish	All year	1	13 TL

\* These species are also federally managed from 3 to 200 miles offshore. Go to [www.safmc.net](http://www.safmc.net) for federal regulations. BILLFISH: State regulation changes are proposed, effective March 1, 2022. See [coastalgadnr.org](http://coastalgadnr.org) for regulation change.

\*\* Red Drum are a gamefish in Georgia [O.C.G.A. 27-1-2 (36)(l)]. As gamefish, Red Drum may only be fished for with pole and line (rod/reel) [O.C.G.A. 27-4-5].

A These species are also federally managed. Go to [www.fisheries.noaa.gov/atlantic-highly-migratory-species/atlantic-highly-migratory-species-minimum-sizes-and-bag-limits](http://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/atlantic-highly-migratory-species/atlantic-highly-migratory-species-minimum-sizes-and-bag-limits) for federal regulations.

## TAGGED FISH

Coastal Resources Division (CRD) biologists are conducting long-term studies on the growth, migration and fishing exploitation rates of red drum, black drum, tarpon, and tripletail. If you catch a tagged fish, please record and report the following information: 1) your name, address, and phone number, 2) fish species, 3) date caught, 4) tag number, 5) total length and location, and 6) whether the fish was kept or released. To report a tagged fish call (912) 264-7218. If released, please do not remove the tag.

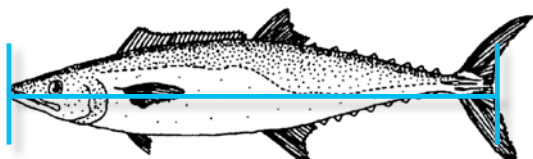
If kept, please return the tag to GADNR/CRD, One Conservation Way, Brunswick, GA 31520. If the tag number is not legible lightly scrape the tag with your fingernail or similar flat object.

If you are an angler who practices catch and release and would like to become a cooperative angler please contact the Cooperative Angler Tagging Program at 912-264-7218 or visit [www.CoastalGaDNR.org/FishTag](http://www.CoastalGaDNR.org/FishTag).

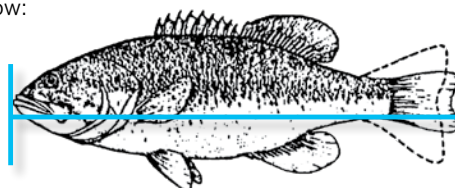


## HOW TO MEASURE A FISH

Freshwater fish are measured as Total Length (TL). Minimum sizes for saltwater finfish are measured in two ways: Total Length (TL) and Fork Length (FL). Methods for measuring fish are indicated below:



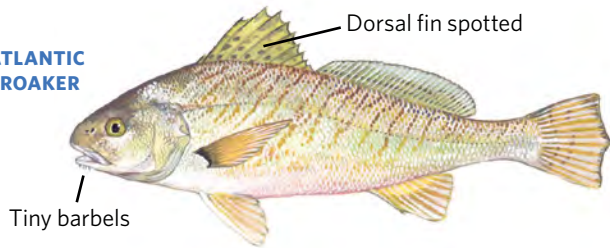
**Fork Length**



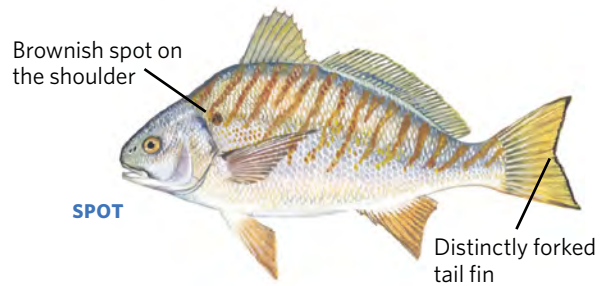
**Total Length**

**GEORGIA SALTWATER FISH**

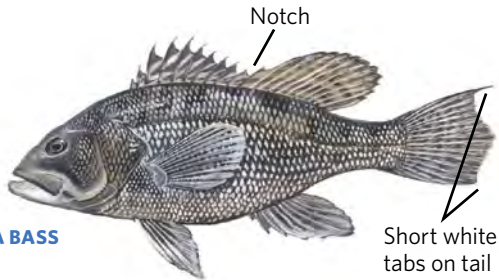
**ATLANTIC CROAKER**



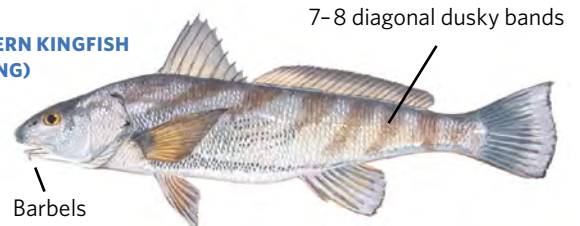
**SPOT**



**BLACK SEA BASS**

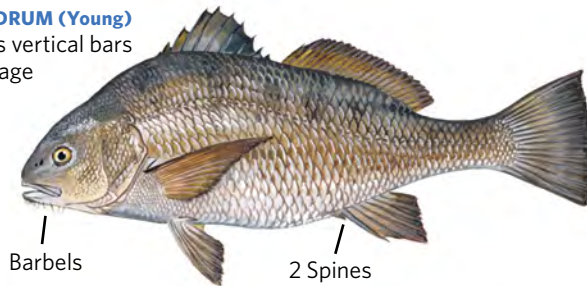


**SOUTHERN KINGFISH (WHITING)**



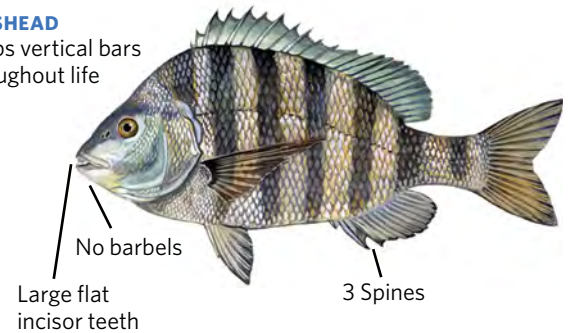
**BLACK DRUM (Young)**

- Loses vertical bars with age



**SHEEPSHEAD**

- Keeps vertical bars throughout life



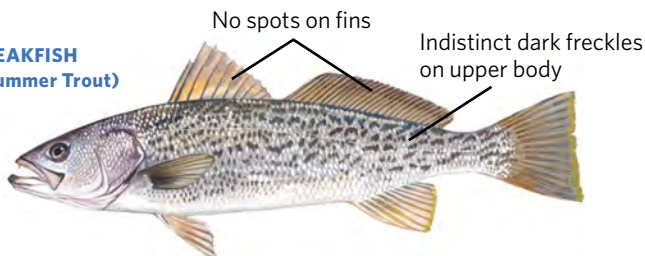
**TRIPLETAIL**



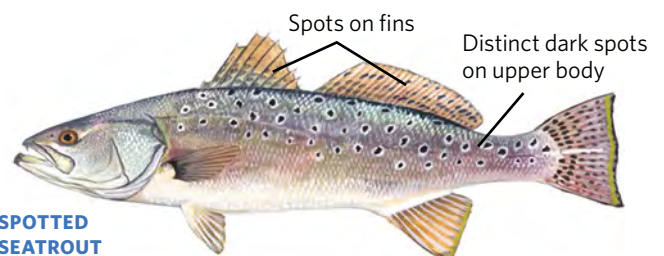
**RED DRUM**



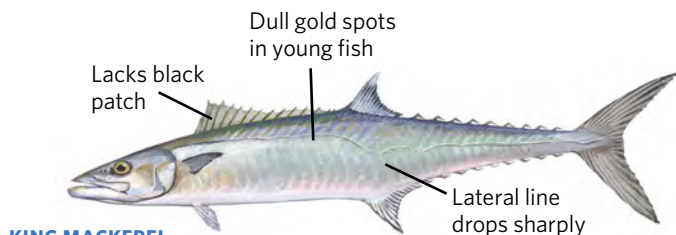
**WEAKFISH (Summer Trout)**



**SPOTTED SEATROUT**

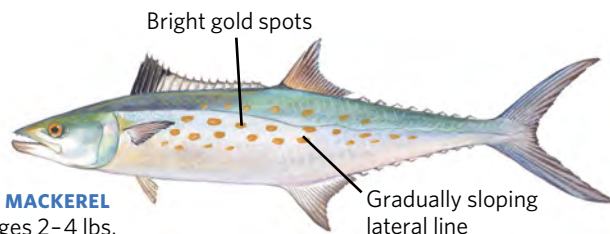






#### KING MACKEREL

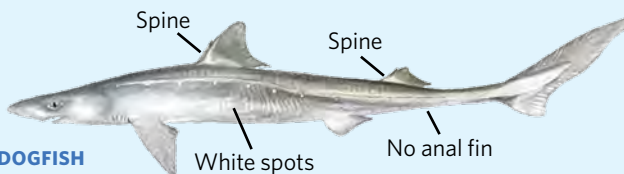
- Up to 60 lbs.



#### SPANISH MACKEREL

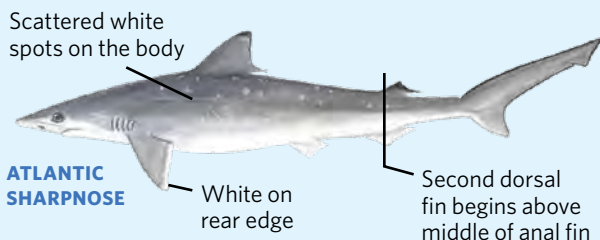
- Averages 2-4 lbs.

## SMALL SHARK COMPOSITE



#### SPINY DOGFISH

- Offshore in winter

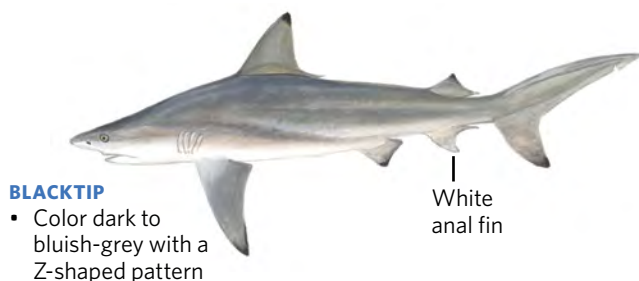


#### ATLANTIC SHARPNOSE



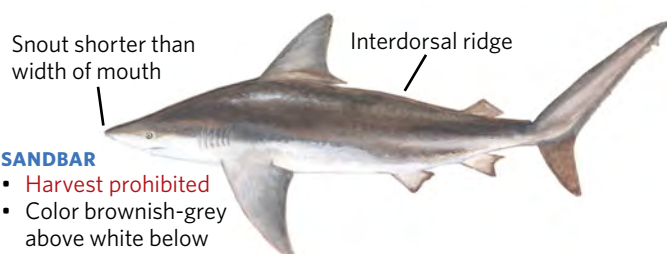
#### BONNETHEAD

- Shovel or bonnet-shaped head



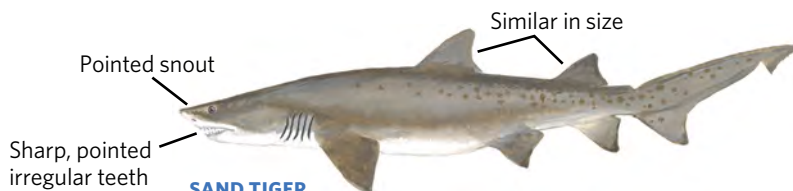
#### BLACKTIP

- Color dark to bluish-grey with a Z-shaped pattern



#### SANDBAR

- Harvest prohibited
- Color brownish-grey above white below

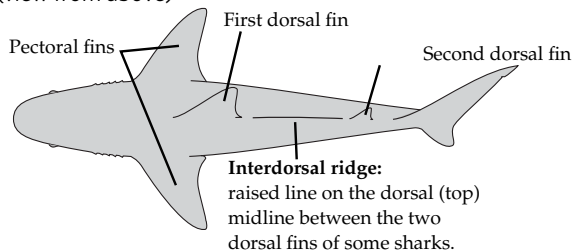


#### SAND TIGER

- Harvest prohibited

#### SHARK ANATOMY

(view from above)



#### SHARKS FOUND IN GEORGIA WATERS THAT CAN BE HARVESTED (NOT INCLUDING SMALL SHARK COMPOSITE ABOVE)

Blacknose	Blacktip
Bull	Finetooth
Lemon	Nurse
Scalloped Hammerhead	Smooth Hammerhead
Thresher	Tiger (has interdorsal ridge)

Most sharks with an interdorsal ridge caught in Georgia waters will be included in the "prohibited" or "no harvest" categories.

If you are not sure of the species and whether you may keep it, release it.

See the complete Seasons, Limits, Sizes list on page 43.

Fish identification pictures by: Duane Raver

## SHRIMP, CRAB, SHELLFISH &amp; BAIT MINNOWS

A Georgia fishing license is required to recreationally fish for any seafood, whether for personal consumption or bait. **It is illegal to sell any seafood or bait harvested with a recreational license!**

## SHRIMP

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

## SHRIMP "BAITING" PROHIBITED

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.

## SHRIMPING SEASON

Unless otherwise designated, there is no closed season for the harvest of bait shrimp, regardless of the approved gear used. 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.CoastalGADNR.org](http://www.CoastalGADNR.org).

## TRAWL NETS (Sport Bait Shrimping)

**Gear:** Power-drawn trawl nets 10 feet or smaller may be used in saltwaters to harvest shrimp for bait. Information on the specific net dimensions for bait trawls is available from DNR offices in Brunswick.

**Areas:** Unless designated otherwise, a 10-foot sport bait trawl may be used at any season

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 [GeorgiaOutdoorMap.com](http://GeorgiaOutdoorMap.com).

**Hours:** Trawling for bait shrimp is legal only between the hours of ½ hour before official sunrise to ½ 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 ½ 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.

**Commercial licenses are required to use trawl nets (power-drawn or hand-retrieved) to harvest shrimp for food. Trawling for food shrimp may only be conducted in the waters seaward of the sound boundary when those waters are open to the harvest of food shrimp.**

## SEINES

**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 Georgia's saltwaters. The use of seines over 12 feet long in any inlet or tidal slough is prohibited. Seines less than 100 feet long and with a minimum stretch mesh of 1 ¼ inches 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 ½ inches may be used only on the oceanfront sides of beaches. Seines over 300 feet long are also prohibited. It is unlawful to

use any seine in saltwaters such that it blocks more than ½ of the entrance of any tidal river, creek, slough, or inlet to the ocean.

**Hours:** Unless otherwise designated, seines may be used any time of day during the open season for bait shrimp and food shrimp.

**Harvest Limits:** Recreational seiners collecting bait shrimp are limited to two quarts per person at any time and no more than four quarts per person per day, or a maximum of four quarts per group at any time or eight quarts per day. No one person taking food 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 NETS

**Gear:** A cast net is a cone shaped net with a weighted circumference thrown and retrieved by hand without mechanical assistance. Two types of cast nets are defined: a "Bait shrimp cast net" having a minimum bar mesh of ¾ inch and a "Food shrimp cast net" having a minimum bar mesh of ¾ inch. 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 length restrictions on either net and cast nets can be modified with the addition of duct tape or other materials to enhance performance.

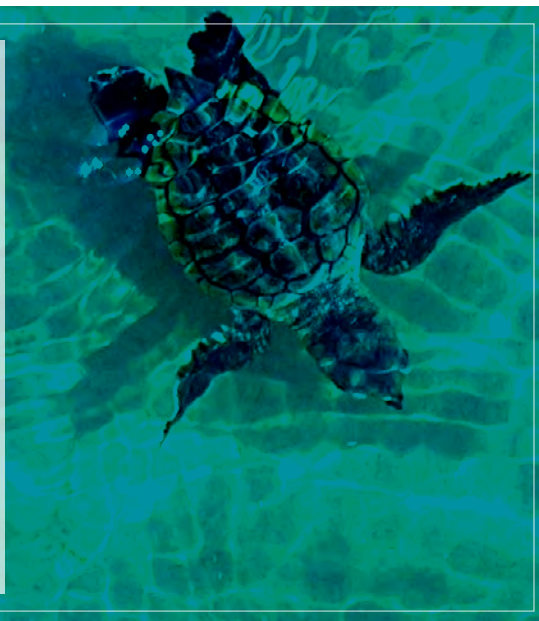
**Areas and Hours:** During the open season and unless designated otherwise, cast nets may be used to harvest bait or food shrimp at any time of day in all of Georgia's saltwaters.

## Guidelines for Sea Turtle Protection

If you hook or entangle a sea turtle while fishing, contact Georgia DNR Hotline: 1-800-2-SaveMe.

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

If you cannot reach Georgia DNR, cut the line as short as possible and release the turtle.





**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 onboard 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 may be alive or dead when caught with a cast. No person taking food shrimp 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.

## STONE CRABS

Georgia does not regulate the harvest of stone crab; however, the harvest of the whole crab is discouraged. It is recommended that only one claw measuring at least 2 ¾ inches from the elbow to the tip of the lower, immovable finger be removed. A properly removed claw should not have meat from the body attached.

## BLUE 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 (2 x 2 feet or smaller) may be used recreationally. Two unobstructed escapement rings (2 ¾ 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 lawfully established system of waterway 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. To learn how to build your own terrapin excluder call 912-264-7355.

## SHELLFISH

### SEASON AND HOURS

Saltwaters may be opened for taking shellfish between January 1 and December 31. Prior to harvesting any shellfish, check with the DNR-Coastal Resources Division ([www.CoastalGADNR.org](http://www.CoastalGADNR.org)) for any seasonal closures that may be in effect during the calendar year. Shellfish must be harvested between the hours of ½ hour before official sunrise and ½ hour after official sunset.

### GEAR

Shellfish may only be taken with handheld implements.

### AREAS

Updated charts of approved public shellfish picking areas can be obtained from the Coastal Resources Division or at [CoastalGaDNR.org/ApprovedRecHarvestAreas](http://CoastalGaDNR.org/ApprovedRecHarvestAreas). It is illegal to harvest shellfish except in areas designated for such purpose.

### 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 ¾ inch 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.

## WHELK (CONCH)

Recreational harvest of whelk is limited to 1 bushel/person. There is no minimum size, closed season or closed area. A recreational fishing license is required, including hand harvest from the beach.

## BAIT MINNOWS

### SEASON, HOURS AND AREAS

Bait minnows may be harvested year-round.

### GEAR


No more than two traps may be used recreationally, except that a licensed saltwater fishing guide may use a maximum of four traps. A minnow trap must be less than 24 inches in length, 18 inches in width, or 9 inches in height for a rectangular trap; or, 30 inches in




circumference for cylindrical traps. The throat opening must be no larger than 1 inch, and bar mesh must not be smaller than ¼ inch (square or 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.



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## HANDLING & RELEASING FISH GENERAL GUIDELINES

Many marine fish have gas-filled organs called swim bladders. These organs control buoyancy and allow the fish to maintain depth. When some fish are brought quickly to the surface, the gas in the swim bladder can over-expand and rupture the bladder, a condition known as "**barotrauma**." Escaping gas fills the gut cavity which can lead to everted stomachs or intestines. If released in this condition, the fish cannot descend and may float away and die. Generally, fish caught deeper than 30 feet will suffer some effects of barotrauma.

- **Recompression.** The **best and first choice** for release should be to return fish to the depth from which they are caught, a technique known as recompression. A variety of recompression tools are on the market, including descender devices, release weights, and release baskets (see [TakeMeFishing.org/FishSmart](http://TakeMeFishing.org/FishSmart)). Fish should be returned to the depth of capture when practical. If catching fish at great depth, returning them to at least 60 to 100 feet will dramatically improve survival.
- **Venting.** If recompression is not possible, venting is a second option. Venting helps the gas escape and allows the fish to descend. A simple venting tool can be made by mounting a sharpened football needle in a 1" x 3" dowel rod with a hole drilled lengthwise through the rod to allow gas to pass. Hold the fish gently on its side. Insert a 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 puncture a protruding stomach or try to push the stomach back into the throat. Remember a knife is not a proper venting tool!**

By developing a few simple habits, anglers can greatly increase the chances that the fish they release will survive. Try these tips the next time you go fishing.

- **Plan Ahead.** Before you go, decide whether you might release fish on your trip and prepare the equipment necessary to do so.
- **Avoid Encounter.** If catching fish that you don't want or cannot keep due to regulation, change your fishing depth, move to a different area, or use different bait.
- **Use Appropriate Gear.** Use non-stainless steel hooks that dissolve quickly. Use non-offset circle hooks when fishing with natural bait to avoid gut-hooking. Flatten barbs so the hook can be removed with less damage to the fish.
- **Don't Exhaust Fish.** Use gear and line strength to minimize playing time, landing fish as quickly as possible. If possible leave the fish in the water rather than bringing them on board.
- **Handling the Fish.** If you must handle the fish, use knot-less rubberized landing nets, rubberized gloves, or wet towels or wet hands to avoid removing the slime layer. Make sure to wet your measuring board or boat deck. Don't put your fingers in the gills.

## RANGER HOTLINE

### TO REPORT VIOLATIONS

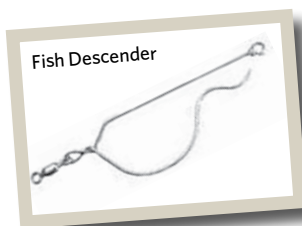
Please refer to call out box on page 18.

### TO REPORT VIOLATIONS IN FEDERAL WATERS

- 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
- DNR LE 800-241-4113

- **Keep horizontal and support the body of the fish.** The lower jaw is not meant to support the full weight of any fish.
- **Time is of the Essence!** Release fish as soon as practical and do not keep them out of the water longer than necessary. Have your camera always on the ready.
- **Some Fish May Need a Little Assistance.** If the fish does not immediately swim away, support the fish horizontally in the water and gently move it back and forth so that water runs over the gills. Release the fish when it is able to swim away on its own.

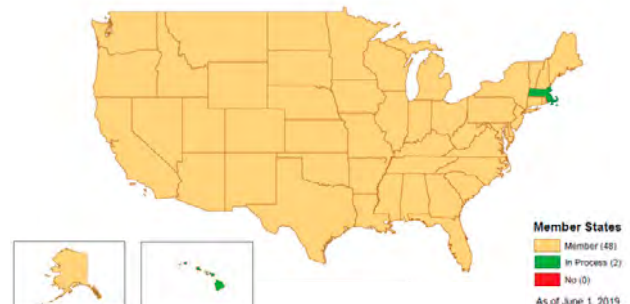
## RECOMPRESSION TOOLS



## WILDLIFE VIOLATOR COMPACT

Georgia, along with 48 other states, is a member of the Wildlife Violator Compact (WVC). This allows Wildlife Officers to treat non-residents hunting in WVC member states as if they were a resident of that state in regards to wildlife violations. All wildlife law violators will be held more responsible due to the fact that their illegal activities in one state can affect their hunting privileges in all WVC member states.

### Interstate Wildlife Violator Compact Member States





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