

FISHING REGULATIONS

General Statewide Freshwater Fishing Regulations

pages 10-13

Florida's Freshwater Fish Hatcheries

page 18



TrophyCatch

See page 4

Valid from July 1, 2023 to June 30, 2024



► Search MyFWC on Social Media



Florida
Fishing
Map!

page 15



Congrats, it's a boat.



Protect your baby with a leader in boat insurance.

1-800-PROGRESSIVE / PROGRESSIVE.COM

PROGRESSIVE

CONTENTS



Message from the FWC	2	Taking Mussels & Clams	11
TrophyCatch	4	Special Regulations for Alligator Gar, Atlantic, Gulf and Shortnose Sturgeon	11
Introduction & FWC Offices	6	Statewide Bag & Length Limits	12
Fishing License Requirements & Fees	8	Special Bag & Length Limits	12
Federal Aid in Sport Fish Restoration (SFR)	9	Florida Top Fishing Spots Map	15
Freshwater License Exemptions	10	Fish Identification Chart	16-17
Methods of Taking Freshwater Fish	10	Freshwater Fisheries Conservation Highlights	18
Game & Nongame Freshwater Fish	10	TrophyCatch Research Highlights	19
Prohibited Gear for Taking Marine Fish in Fresh Water	10	Fish Management Area Regulations	21
Methods of Taking Bait	11	Summer Fishing Camps for Youth	24
Restricted Species	11	Frequently Answered Questions	27
Use of Fish for Bait	11	Fish Consumption Advisory	28

Buy your license online!

When you buy your license online, it's fast, convenient and saves time and travel.

Download the FWC Fish-Hunt-FL app for your iPhone or Android for instant access.

You can obtain a license 24 hours a day at GoOutdoorsFlorida.com and begin fishing immediately!

Licenses are also available toll-free at 1-888-FISHFLORIDA (1-888-347-4356). Handling fees apply to telephone and Internet sales.



MyFWC.com

Visit MyFWC.com/Fishing for up-to-date information on fishing, boating and how to help ensure safe, sustainable fisheries for the future.

FLRules.org

For the latest rules, always visit FLRules.org. FWC rules are in chapter 68.

Fish and Wildlife Alert Reward Program

Report fishing, boating or hunting law violations by calling toll-free 1-888-404-FWCC (3922); on cell phones, dial *FWC or #FWC depending on service carrier; report violations online at MyFWC.com/WildlifeAlert or text: Tip@MyFWC.com.

Stop the Spread of Nonnative Species

It is illegal to introduce any nonnative fish or any other nonnative organism into the waters of the state. To find out more visit MyFWC.com/WildlifeHabitats.

The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission does not allow discrimination on the basis of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, age or disability. If you believe you have been discriminated against in any program, activity or facility of this agency which receives Federal financial assistance, you should contact/write to:

Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, Office of Human Resources, 620 South Meridian Street, Tallahassee, FL 32399-1600; Telephone 850-488-6411

or contact/write to: Civil Rights Accessibility Coordinator for Public Access, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration Program, 5275 Leesburg Pike, Falls Church, VA 22041; Telephone 703-358-2349 or 703-358-2131.



On the cover

TrophyCatch participant Wendy Biles caught this 10.2 pound bass from a kayak! Photo by Jason Haynes.





Sound Research Guides the Future of Florida Fishing

By Chairman Rodney Barreto

This year the FWC's popular TrophyCatch program is heralding its 11th season as the "Season of Research," in celebration of the decade of data that anglers like you have contributed to our understanding of Florida largemouth bass. The designation is timely, as the FWC continues to pioneer fish management through multiple research initiatives that all contribute to practical management strategies to improve fishing.

One of the most recent is the Florida Trophy Bass Project, which focuses on producing, documenting, and promoting trophy bass and increasing your opportunities to catch a Florida trophy. Current progress and specific research strategies will be highlighted at <https://myfwc.com/fishing/freshwater/fl-trophy-bass-project/> as the new program develops.

Fish stocking has long been a critical component of fish management, and the FWC's Florida Bass Conservation Center (FBCC) and Blackwater Fish Hatchery are keystones to Florida freshwater fish research and management. The FBCC, built in 1965 and significantly upgraded in 2007, is capable of out-of-season spawning to boost annual production and pioneered raising largemouth bass fry to a larger "Phase II" size to reduce predation and greatly improve stocking survival. The Blackwater hatchery was constructed in 1938 and is the production site for FWC's striped bass and striped bass hybrids (including sunshine bass). Recently, the Blackwater hatchery successfully completed the very first spawning and stocking of shoal bass in Florida, working toward restoring this fish's population following the devastating effects of Hurricane Michael in 2018. You can read more about FWC's hatcheries and the innovations their research has "spawned" in the Conservation Article on p. 18.

While research-grounded regulations are another important fishery management tool, that same research and a continual rules review process sometimes eliminates regulations as well. A comprehensive black crappie (speck) rules review that is a component of the FWC's Black Crappie Management Plan resulted in the removal of special black crappie regulations from ten waters this year (see "Freshwater Rule Changes" below). The research leading to that significant rules reduction included not only new biological data on crappie populations, but stakeholder input from you to be included in the rule-making decision process.

Circling back to TrophyCatch, you can find out more about participating in the program on p. 4 and learn some of the research results that you may have contributed to on p. 19. Thank you for being a part of the research that guides FWC's management decisions for today and ensuring quality fishing for Florida's future.

Freshwater Rule Changes

- Removed specific length and bag limits for crappie, and reverted to the statewide crappie regulations of no minimum length limit and a 25-fish bag limit, on the following Fish Management Areas: Bobby Hicks Park Pond, Gadsden Park Pond, Hardee County Park, Lake Jackson (Osceola County), Largo Central Park Nature Preserve, Middle Lake, Montgomery Lake, Suwannee Lake, Walsingham Park Lake, and Watertown Lake.
- In the lower Ochlockonee River: The bag limit for striped bass is 3, only one of which may be 24 inches or longer in total length. There is no minimum length limit.

For the latest rules, always visit FLRules.org. FWC rules are in chapter 68.

EST. 2004
J.F. GRIFFIN
PUBLISHING

Williamstown, MA | Birmingham, AL

About This Guide

This high-quality guide is offered to you by the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission's Division of Freshwater Fisheries Management through its unique partnership with J.F. Griffin Publishing, LLC.

The revenue generated through ad sales significantly lowers production costs and generates savings. These savings translate into additional funds for other important agency programs.

If you have any feedback or are interested in advertising, please contact us at 413.884.1001 or at www.JFGriffin.com

Graphic Design:

Jon Gulley, Dane Fay, Evelyn Haddad,
Chris Sobolowski



J.F. Griffin Publishing, LLC is proud to print the official Florida Freshwater Fishing Regulations summary on post-consumer recycled paper.



This guide is also available online at

eRegulations.com



JOHN DEERE



Catch the Big One
at your local Ag-Pro.

YOUR **HOME** TEAM

AgProCo.com



SCAN ME

TrophyCatch

Celebrating 14,000 caught, documented and released bass including 135 Hall of Fame wins of bass weighing over 13 lbs.

TrophyCatch Anglers ARE Citizen-Scientists!

It all centers around fishing. But the hard part is remembering to take the right photo or video documenting your 8+ lbs. catch on a scale, release the bass and share your catch story at www.TrophyCatch.com.



TrophyCatch anglers provide this extremely valuable data that influences FWC research projects such as genetic studies, the ecological health of Florida's fresh waterbodies, and the proper way to handle a trophy-sized bass for minimal stress.

This program's data assists with the FWC's freshwater black bass regulation changes and it will continue to play a key role in management decisions for Florida's fresh waterbodies. More details can be found at bit.ly/TrophyResearch.

TrophyCatch Goals:

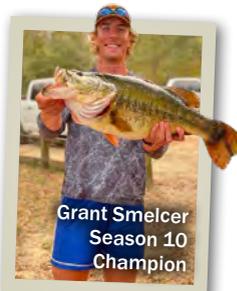
- Turn TrophyCatch anglers into Citizen-Scientists who are focused on trophy bass to help FWC better enhance, conserve, and promote trophy bass fishing.
- Encourage catch-and-release of the biggest, oldest, most valuable bass.
- Promote Florida's freshwater fishing by collaborating with anglers, fishing-related businesses and local communities.

Be "in the KNOW":

See who's catching the largest bass, learn more about Florida waters and what companies support this program! Simply sign up for program only emails at TrophyCatch.com, and "Like" or "Follow" us on Facebook and YouTube/TrophyCatchFlorida for the latest catches and partner information.

Big Catch

Celebrates anglers who land memorable-sized catches of 33 different freshwater species! Flip to page 16 to find out more about our Big Catch program and how to become an Elite Angler.



State Record

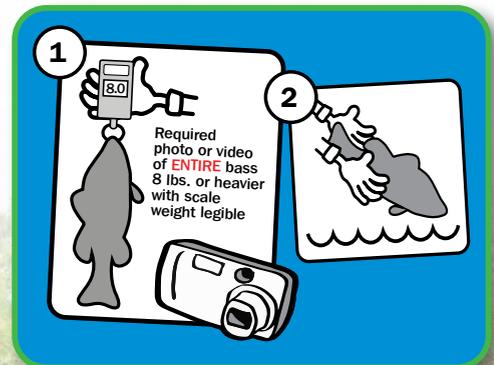
There are important details to know if you catch a possible Florida state record. Call the nearest FWC Regional Office to report a record. Learn more at BigCatchFlorida.com/State-Record.aspx

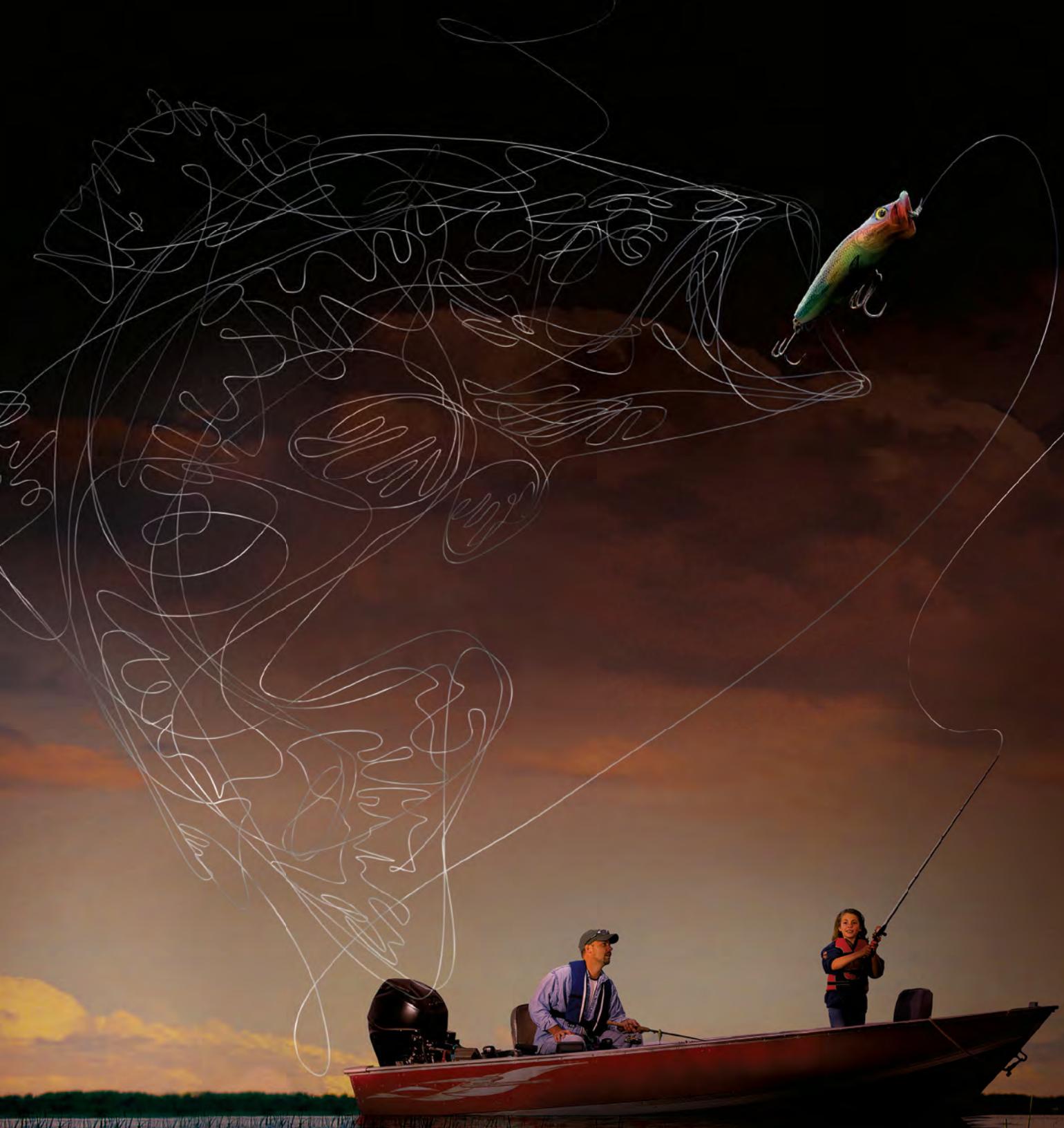
FREE Entry to WIN this boat!

Visit TrophyCatch.com to share your catch data or use the TrophyCatch app!



How to submit your 8 lbs. or larger bass:





THE SIMPLE ACT OF FISHING, PRESERVES FISHING.

Every time you purchase a fishing license or register your boat, a portion of the proceeds go toward preserving our nation's coastlines, lakes, rivers and streams. Protecting our memories on the water for generations to come.

Learn more at TakeMeFishing.org/Conservation



TAKEMEFISHING.org



This free booklet is your guide to Florida's freshwater fishing laws and regulations. The Florida Administrative Code is the final authority on fishing laws (www.FLrules.org). The publisher strives to ensure this information is accurate but assumes no liability for errors that may occur. In addition, rules can change between publications. Contact the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) if you have questions not adequately covered in this booklet. This publication is valid from July 1, 2023, to June 30, 2024.

Florida remains the "Fishing Capital of the World," due to great resources and responsible management. We consider the quality of life that is associated with recreational activities

and living in a healthy environment to be extremely important to Floridians and visitors and are also striving to make Florida the undisputed "Bass Fishing Capital of the World."

The FWC uses the best scientific management possible to help fulfill its mission of "Managing fish and wildlife resources for their long-term well-being and the benefit of people." To fund those efforts, the Legislature sets fishing license fees and exemptions, as well as penalties for violating fish and wildlife conservation laws. **State law guarantees money from the sale of fishing licenses goes to the FWC and cannot be diverted.**

In 1950, Congressmen Dingell and Johnson, at the request of anglers and the fishing industry, created the Federal Aid in Sport Fish Restoration (SFR) program, wherein fishing tackle was assessed an excise fee and the monies returned to the states for fish restoration projects. The "Wallop-Breaux" amendment in 1984 added import duties on sport fishing equipment, pleasure boats and yachts as well as taxes on motorboat fuels. The result is one of the most successful "user-pays, public-benefits" programs in the world, with

taxes from the sale of outdoor recreation supplies enhancing and promoting the resource.

Fifteen percent of Florida's SFR funds went to boating access — building and repairing ramps and courtesy docks. The remainder went to fresh and saltwater fisheries conservation projects such as habitat restoration, fish stocking, artificial reefs construction and youth fishing clinics.

The FWC encourages all anglers to buy a license (GoOutdoorsFlorida.com). Even if you are legally exempt, you can contribute to the future of our fisheries resources by buying a license and helping the FWC keep your federal tax dollars in Florida to support sportfish restoration.

Recreational fishing is an enjoyable, wholesome experience that reflects a happy and healthy lifestyle. Moreover, it is the number 1 gateway activity to get youth connected to nature in active outdoor recreation, which can reduce obesity, improve grades and, most of all, add enjoyment to their lives.

The FWC is working hard to ensure safe and sustainable recreational fishing for all of our citizens and guests and depends on your license fees to make sure there are fish for tomorrow.



Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission

Managing fish and wildlife resources for their long-term well-being and the benefit of people.

620 South Meridian Street
Farris Bryant Building
Tallahassee, FL 32399-1600
850-488-4676
800-955-8771 TDD

Commissioners

Rodney Barreto
Chairman, Coral Gables

Preston Farris
Tampa

Steven Hudson
Fort Lauderdale

Gary Lester
Oxford

Albert Maury
Coral Gables

Gary Nicklaus
Jupiter

Sonya Rood
St. Augustine

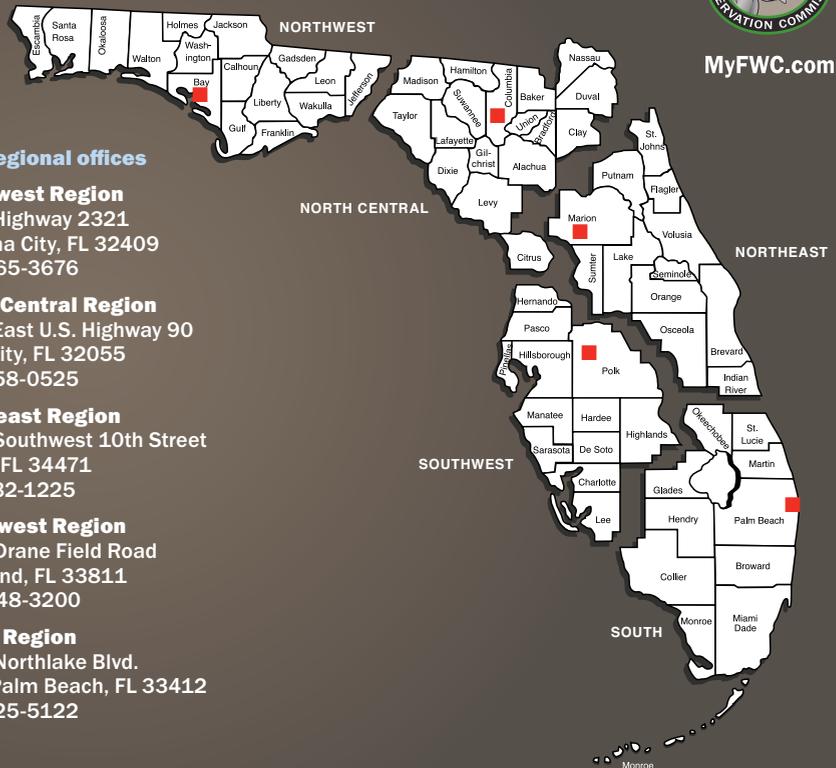
Staff

Roger A. Young
Executive Director

Dr. Thomas H. Eason
Assistant Executive Director

FWC regional offices

- **Northwest Region**
3911 Highway 2321
Panama City, FL 32409
850-265-3676
- **North Central Region**
3377 East U.S. Highway 90
Lake City, FL 32055
386-758-0525
- **Northeast Region**
1239 Southwest 10th Street
Ocala, FL 34471
352-732-1225
- **Southwest Region**
3900 Drane Field Road
Lakeland, FL 33811
863-648-3200
- **South Region**
8535 Northlake Blvd.
West Palm Beach, FL 33412
561-625-5122



MyFWC.com

PLAN ON REAL Florida

LAKE DORA
HARRIS CHAIN
OF LAKES

DISCOVER
**LAKE
COUNTY**
FLORIDA

DISCOVERLAKEFL.COM @DISCOVERLAKECOUNTYFL

why get towing? | breakdowns happen

Breakdowns are unpredictable, make them less stressful with an Unlimited Towing Membership from TowBoatU.S. You can relax, we've got your back.

BoatU.S. JOIN TODAY!
BoatUS.com/Towing

Details of services provided can be found online at BoatUS.com/Agree. TowBoatU.S. is not a rescue service. In an emergency situation, you must contact the Coast Guard or a government agency immediately.

Fishing license requirements and fees

License, permit, and issuance fees and exemptions are established by the Legislature. In addition to the cost of licenses and permits specified in this section, license agents charge issuance fees for selling licenses and permits. For up-to-date license information, visit MyFWC.com/License. Anglers may use credit cards to purchase licenses and permits 24 hours a day at GoOutdoorsFlorida.com or by calling toll-free 888-FISH-FLORIDA (347-4356). This enables anglers to obtain and use licenses immediately. Handling fees will apply on all Internet and telephone sales. License sales are nonrefundable.

Licensing requirements follow the species of fish you are fishing for, regardless of where you are fishing. Please see the “Frequently answered questions” on page 27 for more information. For fishing license exemptions, please see page 12, but remember anyone can buy a license to contribute to conservation.

Resident Freshwater Fishing Licenses

For purposes of fishing in Florida, a “resident” is defined as any person who has declared Florida as his or her only state of residence as evidenced by a valid Florida driver license or identification card with both a Florida address and a Florida residency verified by the Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles (HSMV). If the person does not have a Florida driver license or identification card on record with HSMV, a Florida voter information card, declaration of domicile, homestead exemption, or Florida Military Orders (active-duty United States military personnel and their immediate family members also stationed here) may be used as proof of Florida residency at a license agent or Tax Collector location.

Freshwater Fishing (valid 12 months from specified start date)	\$17.00
Youth Freshwater Fishing (optional for children under the age of 16 and valid until 17 th birthday—a fishing license is not required until age 16)	\$17.00
BEST BUY 5-Year Freshwater Fishing (valid 5 years from specified start date)	\$79.00
Freshwater/Saltwater Fishing Combo (valid 12 months from specified start date)	\$32.50
Freshwater Fishing/Hunting Combo (valid 12 months from specified start date)	\$32.50
Freshwater/Saltwater Fishing/Hunting Combo (valid 12 months from specified start date)	\$48.00
Resident 64+ Silver Sportsman's License includes Freshwater Fishing and Hunting licenses; and Wildlife Management Area, Archery, Muzzleloading Gun, Crossbow, Deer, Turkey and Florida Waterfowl permits (valid 12 months from specified start date)	\$13.50
Resident 64+ Silver Sportsman's License includes Freshwater Fishing and Hunting licenses; and Wildlife Management Area, Archery, Muzzleloading Gun, Crossbow, Deer, Turkey and Florida Waterfowl permits (valid five years from specified start date)	\$67.50
Sportsman's License includes Freshwater Fishing and Hunting licenses; and Wildlife Management Area, Archery, Muzzleloading Gun, Crossbow, Deer, Turkey and Florida Waterfowl permits (valid 12 months from specified start date)	\$80.50
Gold Sportsman's License includes Hunting, Saltwater Fishing and Freshwater Fishing licenses; and Wildlife Management Area, Archery, Muzzleloading Gun, Crossbow, Deer, Turkey, Florida Waterfowl, Snook and Lobster permits (valid 12 months from specified start date)	\$100.00
Youth Gold Sportsman's License (optional for children under the age of 16 and valid until 17 th birthday—a fishing license is not required until age 16—hunter safety certificate required—includes same licenses and permits as Gold Sportsman's License)	\$100.00
Military Gold Sportsman's License includes same licenses and permits as Gold Sportsman's License Available at county tax collectors' offices with current military identification card for Florida residents who are active duty or fully retired members of the U.S. Armed Forces, Armed Forces Reserve, Florida National Guard, Coast Guard or Coast Guard Reserve. Fully retired veterans may renew online. (valid 12 months from specified start date)	\$20.00
5-Year Gold Sportsman's License (includes Freshwater Fishing, Hunting and Saltwater Fishing licenses; and Wildlife Management Area, Archery, Muzzleloading Gun, Crossbow, Deer, Turkey, Florida Waterfowl, Snook and Lobster permits)	\$494.00

Nonresident Freshwater Fishing Licenses

Freshwater Fishing (valid 12 months from specified start date)	\$47.00
3-Day Freshwater Fishing (valid 3 consecutive days from specified start date)	\$17.00
7-Day Freshwater Fishing (valid 7 consecutive days from specified start date)	\$30.00

Lifetime Licenses (For Florida Residents Only)

Lifetime licenses are available to Florida residents only. Funds generated from sales of these licenses are invested, creating an endowment to support long-term conservation of Florida's fish and wildlife resources. Costs of lifetime licenses are less than what would be spent on annual licenses, permits and fees, and are valid in Florida even if you move out of state.

LIFETIME SPORTSMAN'S LICENSE (includes Hunting, Freshwater Fishing and Saltwater Fishing licenses; Deer, Wildlife Management Area, Archery, Turkey, Muzzleloading Gun, Crossbow, Florida Waterfowl, Snook and Lobster permits)	
4 years or younger	\$401.50
5-12 years	\$701.50
13 years and older	\$1,001.50
LIFETIME FRESHWATER FISHING LICENSE	
4 years or younger	\$126.50
5-12 years	\$226.50
13 years or older	\$301.50

Federal Aid in Sport Fish Restoration – A legacy of success

How often do you see people or businesses wanting to be taxed and happy about it?

In 1937, President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed the Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration Act. This Act has been key to implementing the North American Model of Wildlife Conservation (see MyFWC.com). Between 1941 and 1950, sport-fishing businesses paid a federal excise tax that was deposited in the general treasury of the United States but did not directly benefit manufacturers or anglers. In 1950, sportsmen and businesses teamed with conservation-minded policy makers to redirect these existing federal excise taxes to the Restoration Program (aka: SFR, Dingell-Johnson or Wallop-Breaux).

The concept was to restore sportfish populations and improve public access, so more people can enjoy fishing and so fishing sales would increase. Sport Fish Restoration (SFR) came about as a result of anglers wanting to see more money directed toward restoring the nation's recreational fisheries, and ensuring better fishing opportunities for themselves and future generations. It has been the best thing for anglers since fishing reels were invented.

Today, SFR uses a small excise tax on fishing reels and other fishing tackle, as well as a motor boat fuel tax, to fund sport fish restoration and boating access programs. These excise taxes are collected by the Department of Interior and each state reports annually on the number of unique license anglers. Along with land mass, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service then calculates each state's eligible allotment and is responsible for coordinating on SFR funding to each state. It is working. There are now at least 77 percent more anglers than in 1950. Purchases of tax-related items by anglers have increased by nearly 200 percent in dollars (adjusted for the consumer-price index) since 1955.

Anglers and fishing businesses want to know the benefits they receive in return. To help answer this, Andrew Loftus Consulting and Southwick Associates analyzed data on excise taxes invested, fishing participation, and angler purchases of excise-

tax related products for a 2011 report to the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies. The report found that excise-tax related return-on-investment ranged from 1,585 percent in 1970 to 2,643 percent in 1980.

In Florida, SFR provides millions of dollars to support boating access and freshwater and saltwater fisheries conservation. In freshwater fisheries, the FWC uses this money to improve fisheries habitat, stock fish, conduct research and manage fish populations. We also conduct aquatic education programs and provide valuable fishing and conservation tips to anglers.



WORLD CLASS FRESHWATER FISHING

Covered Boat Slips
 RV Sites with Full Hookups
 Waterfront Cabin Rentals
 Close to Central Florida Springs



1675 Camp South Moon Road, Astor, Florida 32102 TEL: 386.749.2721
 MORE INFO: parramorescamp.com E-MAIL: reservations@parramorescamp.com

Game and nongame freshwater fish

Game Fish: black bass, crappie, bluegill, redear sunfish, warmouth, redbreast sunfish, spotted sunfish, flier, mud sunfish, longear sunfish, shadow bass, peacock bass, white bass, striped bass and sunshine bass.

Nongame Fish: all freshwater fish are defined as nongame fish, except grass carp and fish defined as freshwater game fish. **Note:** Alligator gar require a Scientific Collectors Permit to take.

Methods of taking freshwater fish

Game fish may only be taken with pole-and-line or rod-and-reel. There is no limit on the number of rods an angler may use.

Freshwater fish may not be taken by use of any free-floating, unattached device, or by taking of fish or wildlife with firearms, explosives, electricity, spear gun, poison or other chemicals. The taking of fish by underwater swimming or diving is prohibited. It is unlawful to sell, offer for sale or transport out of the state any freshwater game fish unless specifically permitted by the FWC, except that licensed anglers may transport two days' bag limit of legally harvested game fish.

It is illegal to possess any freshwater fish along with gear that cannot legally be used to take freshwater fish, including gear types listed above and below for taking nongame fish or bait. An exception is game fish may be possessed together with cast nets having a stretched mesh size not greater than 1 inch; minnow dip nets not more than 4 feet in diameter; minnow seines having a stretched mesh size not greater than 1 inch, a length not more than 20 feet and a depth not more than 4 feet;

and minnow traps not more than 24 inches in length and 12 inches in diameter, with a funnel entrance not more than 1 inch in spread.

***NOTE:** Statutory provisions (790.052(3), F.S.) made it lawful for persons to own, possess, and lawfully use firearms and other weapons, ammunition, and supplies for lawful purposes including fishing, camping, or lawful hunting or going to or returning from a fishing, camping, or lawful hunting expedition. Consequently, although firearms may **not** be used to take fish, they can be in possession of someone with legally taken fish.

Nongame fish may be taken:

- With pole-and-line, or rod-and-reel, and by bush hook, setline or trotline baited with cut bait or other substance; but not including live game fish or any part of any game fish; bush hooks, setlines or trotlines (limited to 25 hooks total) are permitted for taking nongame fish for personal use, but only in those areas where trotlines may be lawfully used in accordance with the Wildlife Code of the State of Florida. Refer to the "Commercial Freshwater Fisheries Rules and Regulations Summary." Bush hooks, setlines and trotlines must be clearly and legibly marked with the harvester's name and address while being used or possessed in or upon the waters of the state.
- At night by bow and arrow, and gigs.
- During daylight hours by manually operated spears, gigs, snatch hooks, crossbow or bow and arrow from a boat or from shore except at the spillways of the Eureka and Rodman dams on the Oklawaha River or on the spillway of the Jim Woodruff Dam on the Apalachicola River or in Miami-Dade County canals south of the C-4 and east of the L-31N and L-31W canals inclusively.

- By the use of cast nets in the South and Northeast regions, in Citrus County, and in the Southwest Region, except that possession or use of cast nets in waters adjoining Saddle Creek Fish Management Area, Polk County, confined by Morgan Combee Road, U.S. Highway 92 and Fish Hatchery Road are prohibited.
- Using a bow and light at night. Night bow-fishing tournaments do not require a permit in the Northwest Region.
- By netting and impounding at night from Sept. 1 to May 1 in specified waters of Northwest Florida. Nets used to take nongame fish (typically suckers) in these specified waters must be less than 100 feet in length, have a minimum 3-inch stretched mesh and shall be continuously attended to ensure immediate release of any trapped game fish. Contact the Northwest Regional office for details (page 6).
- For personal use by any person possessing a valid freshwater fishing license by the use of not more than one slat basket or one wire trap, made as specified in Rule 68A-23.003, FAC, and used only in those waters where use of wire traps or slat baskets is permitted for commercial purposes. Refer to the "Commercial Freshwater Fisheries Rules and Regulation Summary." Passive fishing gear such as slat baskets or wire baskets must be clearly and legibly marked with the harvester's name and address while being used or possessed in or upon waters of the state.

Prohibited gear for taking marine species in freshwater

- **Spearfishing:** Use of any hand or mechanically propelled, single or multi-pronged spear or lance, barbed or barbless, to harvest

License Exemptions: You do not need a freshwater fishing license if...

- You are a child under 16 years of age.
- You are a Florida resident 65 years of age or older and you possess proof of age and residency, such as a Florida driver's license or ID, or an optional no-cost Resident 65+ Hunting and Fishing Certificate.
- You are a resident who is fishing with live or natural bait, using poles or lines that are not equipped with a fishing-line-retrieval mechanism, and you are fishing for noncommercial purposes in your home county. However, you must have a valid fishing license to fish by any method in a fish management area. This is often referred to as the cane-pole exemption.
- You are fishing in the St. Mary's River or Lake Seminole (but not including tributary creeks in Florida) and have a valid Georgia fishing license.
- You are fishing in your county of residence on your homestead or the homestead of your spouse or minor child, or if you are a minor child hunting or freshwater fishing on the homestead of your parent.
-  You are a Florida resident certified as totally and permanently disabled and you possess a Florida Resident Disabled Person Hunting and Fishing Certificate.
- You are a resident who is a member of the Armed Forces of the United States, you are not stationed in this state, and you are home on leave for 30 days or less, upon submission of orders.
- You have been accepted as a client for developmental disabilities services by the Agency for Persons with Disabilities. The agency must furnish proof to such clients.
- You possess a Resident Freshwater Commercial Fishing License.
- You are freshwater fishing on License-Free Freshwater Fishing Days: first weekend in April (April 6-7, 2024) and the second weekend in June (June 8-9, 2024).

A fish pond is a man-made pond constructed for the primary purpose of fishing, entirely within the property lines of the owner and with no surface water connection to public waters.

- You are fishing in a fish pond of 20 acres or less that is located entirely within the private property of its owner.
- You are fishing in a fish pond of more than 20 acres, whose owner has purchased a fish pond license at a fee of \$3 per surface acre.

or attempt to harvest any marine species while diving in freshwater is prohibited.

- Spearfishing for mullet in fresh water is prohibited; however, gigging from above water is permitted.

Methods of taking bait

Freshwater shrimp and golden shiners of any size, or other freshwater nongame fish, including catfish, less than 8-inches total length may be taken for bait by the following methods, unless specifically prohibited:

- Cast nets having a stretched mesh size not greater than 1 inch in fresh waters of the state, unless specifically prohibited.

- Minnow dip nets not more than 4 feet in diameter.
- Minnow seines having a stretched mesh size not greater than 1 inch, a length not more than 20 feet, and a depth not more than 4 feet.
- Minnow traps not more than 24 inches in length and 12 inches in diameter, with a funnel entrance not more than 1 inch in spread.
- Any game fish taken by these methods must be released immediately.
- Taking of bait for the purpose of sale requires a commercial fishing license.

Use of fish for bait

- Black bass, peacock bass or any part thereof may not be used as bait.
- No live nonnative fish, except variable platys and fathead minnows, may be transported to or between waters for use as bait. Live goldfish and carp may not be used as bait.
- Whole pickerel or panfish (e.g., bluegill, redear sunfish, redbreast sunfish, spotted sunfish, flier, warmouth) or parts thereof may be used as bait for sportfishing by the angler who caught them. Whole pickerel or bream or parts thereof may not be used as bait for trotlines or bush hooks or any method other than by rod and reel or pole and line.
- Panfish less than 4 inches in total length raised by a licensed aquaculture facility may be purchased and used for bait.

Taking and possession of freshwater mussels

Certain families of freshwater mussels may be collected for personal use. The bag limit for freshwater mussels from these families is 10 per person (or 20 half shells). The possession limit is two days bag limit (see images to right and FAQ, page 27).

Mussels shall be taken by hand-picking only. Use of brailles, crowfoot bars, or other mechanical methods is prohibited. Freshwater mussels, live or dead, may not be taken for later sale.

Sizes indicated are average adult dimensions for identification purposes only.



3 inches
Florida
Shiny Spike



3½ inches
Paper
Pondshell

Other clams

Species of freshwater mussels from other families, such as the Asian clam, have no bag or possession limits.



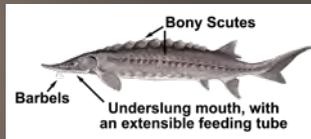
1½ inches

Restricted species

Live specimens of Conditional (68-5.004(1), F.A.C.) and Prohibited (68-5.006(1), F.A.C.) nonnative species may not be possessed. Northern black bass (*Micropterus salmoides salmoides*) are on the conditional nonnative species list. Stocking northern black bass is prohibited. Pure Florida bass (*Micropterus salmoides floridanus*) may only be purchased from permitted hatcheries with genetically authenticated pure Florida bass stocks. The importation into or transportation within the state of any live bass species, except authenticated Florida largemouth bass is prohibited (68A-23.009, F.A.C.). For more information, contact the nearest regional office (page 6). See Chapter 68-5 and 68A, F.A.C. at www.FLRules.org for details.

Protected Sturgeons

The species of sturgeon found in Florida—Atlantic (*Acipenser oxyrinchus*), Gulf (*A. o. desotoi*), and shortnose sturgeons (*Acipenser brevirostrum*)—are protected both federally and in the state of Florida. No person shall take, possess or sell any sturgeon or parts thereof, or their nests or eggs, except as allowed by specific federal or state permit or authorization. People who inadvertently catch one must immediately release it alive back to the water.



It is illegal to possess alligator gar without a permit.



It is illegal to possess alligator gar without a Scientific Collectors Permit. Alligator gar are an endemic top predator found only in the panhandle rivers and grow to more than 120 pounds. Due to limited numbers, harvest is restricted. Their gator-like snout is distinctly different than spotted and longnose gar, the two other species of gar found in the panhandle.

ORDER NOW
20% OFF

Ad code:
FG2023

Shields of Strength

shieldsofstrength.com | 800.326.7882

Statewide bag and length limits

Special bag and length limits apply to some lakes, rivers (this page) and Fish Management Areas (pages 21–26). Other fishes considered to be nongame fishes have no bag or possession limits, except as noted in individual Fish Management Area regulations.

No person shall take in any one day more than the following bag limits of freshwater game fish:

- **5 Black bass** (including largemouth, Suwannee, spotted, Choctaw and shoal bass, individually or in total), only one of which may be 16 inches or longer in total length. There is no minimum length limit for largemouth bass.
 - » No person shall kill or possess any Suwannee, shoal, spotted, or Choctaw bass that is less than 12 inches in total length.
 - » **Chipola River and its tributaries:** No person shall kill or possess shoal bass on the Chipola River or its tributaries. Any shoal bass that are caught must be released immediately.
- **50 Panfish** including bluegill, redear sunfish (shellcracker), flier, longear sunfish, mud sunfish, shadow bass, spotted sunfish (stumpknocker), warmouth and redbreast sunfish, individually or in total.
- **25 Crappie** (speckled perch).
- **20 Striped bass, white bass, and sunshine bass** (individually or in total), of which only 6 may be 24 inches or longer in total length.
 - » In the Suwannee River, areas north and west of the Suwannee River, and in any tributary,

creek or stream of the Suwannee River: the bag limit for striped bass is 3, each of which must be at least 18 inches in total length (20 fish combined bag limit)(See map page 20).

- » In the lower Ochlockonee River (downstream of the Jackson Bluff dam to Ochlockonee Bay): the bag limit for striped bass is 3, only one of which may be 24 inches or longer in total length. There is no minimum length limit (20 fish combined bag limit) (See map page 20).
- **2 Butterfly peacock bass**, only one of which may be 17 inches or longer in total length.
- **10 Alabama shad, American shad, hickory shad, and blueback herring** (individually or in total), which may only be taken with hook and line gear.
- **25 American eels**, must be nine inches or greater in total length. The recreational bag limit for American eels is 25 per angler per day. Wholesale/Retail purchase exemption. Recreational anglers purchasing American eel as bait may possess more than the legal bag limit provided that the eels were purchased from a licensed dealer.

Notes:

- No person shall have in his possession more than two days' bag limit of freshwater game fish (see Rule 68A-23.005 for details).
- Each angler is responsible for his or her own bag limit. It is illegal to transport or possess more than two days' bag limit of fish per licensed angler without a commercial license. Exceptions are fish legally acquired from aquaculturists (fish farmers) for use in aquaria, for brood stock, pond stocking, or properly marked for the market.

- No native freshwater fish or their eggs may be taken or possessed except as permitted by these rules nor shall anyone wantonly or willfully waste the same.
- It is illegal to possess grass carp or alligator gar without a permit; these fish must be released immediately (see page 13).
- **Keep game fish intact:** black bass, striped bass and white bass or their hybrids, peacock bass, or crappie and panfish (for crappie and panfish, only in waters where minimum-length or slot-size limits for these fish apply) may not be filleted, nor their head or tail fin removed, until the angler has completed fishing for the day.

Special bag and length limits

See Fish Management Area regulations for bag and length limits for lakes in the Fish Management Area system (Pages 21–26).

- **Jim Woodruff Reservoir, Lake Seminole.** In the waters of and on the banks of the waters 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 a line immediately east of the Chattahoochee Marina, also known as the Booster Club, running northwest across the lake 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: 10 black bass, each must be 12 inches or greater in total length; 15 striped bass, white bass and sunshine bass

Make a difference for Florida's freshwater fisheries — Buy a "Go Fishing" bass plate.




Available at tax collector's offices © Glen Lau

"Stash the Trash"



Let's work together to protect our fish and wildlife. Find out how at: MyFWC.com/StashTheTrash

(individually or in total), of which no more than two may be 22 inches or longer in total length; 30 crappie (speckled perch); 50 panfish (does not include crappie); 15 pickerel (chain, grass and redbfin). Possession limit is 50 fish total, regardless of species.

- **St. Marys River and its tributaries:** 10 black bass, each must be 12 inches or greater in total length; two striped bass, sunshine bass or white bass, both of which must be at least 22 inches in total length; 30 crappie (speckled perch); 50 panfish (does not include crappie); 15 pickerel (chain, grass and redbfin).
- **Lake Talquin, Leon and Gadsden counties (including that portion of the Ochlockonee River lying between Lake Talquin and the railroad trestle that is located immediately below U.S. Highway 90, that portion of the Little River lying between Lake Talquin and County Road 268, that portion of the Rocky Comfort Creek lying between Lake Talquin and County Road 65-B, and that portion of Bear Creek lying between Lake Talquin and Bear Creek Road, those portions of Ocklawaha and Hammock creeks lying between Lake Talquin and State Road 267, those portions of Blount's, Freeman [Stoutamire], and Harvey and Polk creeks lying between Lake Talquin and State Road 20):** Crappie less than 10 inches in total length must be released immediately.
- **Silver Glen Springs in Lake and Marion counties and Salt Springs in Marion**

County: Fishing is prohibited in and within 50 yards of the springs.

- **Rainbow Springs, Marion County:** Fishing is prohibited from the headwaters of Rainbow Springs to a point one mile downstream on Rainbow River within Marion County.
- **Wildcat Lake, Marion County (Ocala National Forest):** Black bass must be released immediately.
- **St. Johns River Water Management Area (Farm 13, including the Stick Marsh), Indian River and Brevard counties:** Black bass must be released immediately.
- **Fellsmere Water Management Area (commonly known as Headwaters Lake and Egan Lake), Indian River County:**
 - » Black bass must be released immediately.
 - » Circle hooks required when fishing with natural bait greater than 3" in length.
- **S.N. Knight Tract, Indian River County (locally known as Kenansville Lake):** Black bass must be released immediately.
- **Lake Okeechobee:** Crappie (speckled perch) less than 10 inches in total length must be released immediately. Lake Okeechobee, for purposes of these rules, is defined as any point lakeward of a boundary line delineated by the following points:
 - » Intersection of St. Rd. 78 and U.S. 441
 - » U.S. 441 SE to St. Rd. 5 ("80")
 - » St. Rd. 5 ("80") to St. Rd. 25 (U.S. 27)
 - » St. Rd. 25 (U.S. 27) to St. Rd. 78
 - » St. Rd. 78 to U.S. 441

Including:

- » Harney Pond Canal (C-41) north of St. Rd. 78 to South Florida Water Mgmt. District (SFWMD) structure S-71
- » C-41-A Canal, southeast of S-84
- » Indian Prairie Canal (C-40) north of St. Rd. 78 to SFWMD structure S-72
- » All of Taylor Creek and Nubbin Slough in Okeechobee County
- » C-38/Kissimmee River south of SFWMD structure S-65E to St. Rd. 78
- » All of L-50 Canal in Glades County
- » Fisheating Creek to U. S. 27
- » All of Sportsman's Canal (LD-3) in Glades County
- **Perdido River:** 10 black bass; 15 striped bass, white bass and sunshine bass (only 5 of which may be 22 inches or longer in total length); 30 crappie (speckled perch, all of which must be 9 inches or longer); 50 panfish (does not include crappie, possession limit is 50 fish total, regardless of species).
- **Lake Jackson (Walton County):** 5 black bass (all of which must be 12 inches or greater in total length, only one of which may be longer than 22 inches in total length); 15 striped bass, white bass and sunshine bass (only 5 of which may be 22 inches or longer in total length); 30 crappie (speckled perch); 50 panfish (does not include crappie, possession limit is 50 fish total, regardless of species).

Reel in the memories

Sitting on the most biodiverse estuary in the Northern Hemisphere, Martin County is a fisherman's paradise. Ocean, lake and river ecosystems are home to more than 800 species of fish, from the ever-popular sailfish and snook to largemouth bass and perch. Forget your gear? Visit one of Martin's many bait and tackle shops or outdoor retailers. Inshore, offshore, saltwater or fresh, head out for an adventure and reel in the memories.

DiscoverMartin.com



Florida Top Fishing

The locations below are expected to be top Florida fishing locales this year. For species-specific Top Spots descriptions and up-to-date Quarterly Fishing Forecasts check www.MyFWC.com/Fishing/Freshwater/Sites-forecasts/.



Top Freshwater Fishing Locations

NORTHWEST REGION							
ID	NAME	COUNTIES	BASS	CRAPPIE	PANFISH	STRIPER	CATFISH
1	Escambia River	Santa Rosa, Escambia	●▲			●	
2	Yellow River	Santa Rosa, Okaloosa, Walton	+		●▲	●	●▲
3	Choctawhatchee River	Walton, Washington			●▲		●▲
4	Holmes Creek	Holmes	+		●▲		
5	Apalachicola River	Jackson, Gadsden, Calhoun, Gulf, Liberty, Franklin			●▲	●	●▲
6	Ochlocknee River and Lake Talquin	Gadsden, Leon, Liberty	●	●		●	▲
7	Wacissa River	Jefferson	●+		●		

NORTH CENTRAL REGION							
ID	NAME	COUNTIES	BASS	CRAPPIE	PANFISH	STRIPER	CATFISH
8	Eagle Lake	Hamilton	▲			▲	
9	Lower Suwannee River	Dixie			+		
10	Lochloosa Lake	Alachua		▲			
11	Orange Lake	Alachua	●		▲		
12	Lake Rousseau	Citrus, Marion, Levy	●▲				
13	Hernando Lake in Tsala Apopka Chain	Citrus	●				

NORTHEAST REGION							
ID	NAME	COUNTIES	BASS	CRAPPIE	PANFISH	STRIPER	CATFISH
14	Wildcat Lake	Lake	●				
15	Lake Harris	Lake				+	
16	Little Econ River (Blanchard Park)	Orange			▲+		
17	Lake Santiago	Orange			▲		▲
18	Lake Tohopekaliga	Osceola	●▲				
19	Lake Marian	Osceola		▲			
20	Fellsmere Water Management Area	Indian River	●▲				

SOUTHWEST REGION							
ID	NAME	COUNTIES	BASS	CRAPPIE	PANFISH	STRIPER	CATFISH
21	Lake Tarpon	Pinellas	●▲		●▲		
22	Tampa Bypass Canal (Sixmile Creek)	Hillsborough				▲+	
23	Tenoroc Fish Management Area	Polk	●▲		●▲	+	▲+
24	Winter Haven Chain of Lakes	Polk	●▲	●▲	●▲		
25	Lake Weohyakapka/Walk-in-Water	Polk	●	●▲			●
26	Lake Istokpoga	Highlands	●▲	●▲	▲		

SOUTH REGION							
ID	NAME	COUNTIES	BASS	CRAPPIE	PANFISH	STRIPER	CATFISH
27	Lake Okeechobee	Palm Beach, Martin, Glades, Okeechobee, Hendry	●	▲			▲
28	Urban Canals	Broward, Miami-Dade, Palm Beach	+		+		
29	Osborne-Ida Chain of Lakes	Palm Beach	+			+	
30	Everglades Canals	Broward, Miami-Dade	▲		+		
31	Lake Trafford	Collier		▲			

- Sites for Trophy or Quality Sized Fish
- ▲ Sites with High Catch Rates
- ⊕ Sites with Unique Fishing Opportunities

Spots



FLORIDA FRESHWATER FISH

Florida freshwater fishes are divided into game fish that have specific bag and length limits and may only be taken with pole-and-line or rod-and-reel, and nongame fish, which are all others. A license is required to take nongame fish, but additional gear types are allowed (see page 12). Nonnative fish are those that do not occur in Florida naturally; most should be harvested and never released. Exceptions are peacock bass, which is a game fish, and triploid grass carp, which are stocked for vegetation control. Where applicable, state record (SR) weights and the Big Catch (BC) qualifying length or weight for adults are provided below. See page 4 or BigCatchFlorida.com for more details including youth qualifying sizes, slams, specialist, master, elite angler and the TrophyCatch citizen-science rewards program.

GAME FISH

BLACK BASS



Largemouth bass:
SR 17.27 lbs; BC 24"/8.0 lbs



Spotted/Choctaw bass:
SR 3.75 lbs; BC 16"/2.0 lbs



Shoal bass:
SR 5.95 lbs; BC 16"/2.0 lbs



Suwannee Bass:
SR 3.89 lbs; BC 14"/1.5 lbs

PANFISH



Black crappie:
SR 3.83 lbs; BC 14"/2.0 lbs



Bluegill:
SR 2.95 lbs; BC 10"/1.0 lb



Redear sunfish:
SR 4.86 lbs; BC 11"/1.25 lbs



Flier:
SR 1.35 lbs; BC 8"/0.5 lb



Redbreast sunfish:
SR 2.08 lbs; BC 9"/0.5 lb



Warmouth:
SR 2.44 lbs; BC 9"/0.5 lb



Spotted sunfish:
SR 0.83 lbs; BC 7"/0.5 lb

TEMPERATE BASS



Striped bass:
SR 42.24 lbs; BC 30"/12.0 lbs



White bass:
SR 4.69 lbs; BC 15"/2.5 lbs



Sunshine bass:
SR 16.31 lbs; BC 20"/5.0 lbs



Butterfly peacock bass:
SR 9.11 lbs; BC 18"/4.0 lbs

CICHLID

NONGAME FISH

CATFISH



Channel catfish:
SR 44.50 lbs; BC 25"/12.0 lbs



White catfish:
SR 18.88 lbs; BC 22"/5.0 lbs



Yellow bullhead:
SR 5.05 lbs; BC 14"/1.5 lbs



Brown bullhead:
SR 7.02 lbs; BC 16"/2.0 lbs

BOWFIN, SHAD, PICKEREL & GAR



Bowfin:
SR 19.00 lbs; BC 28"/8.0 lbs



American shad:
SR 5.19 lbs; BC 18"/3.0 lbs
See rules page 12



Chain pickerel:
SR 6.96 lbs; BC 22"/3.0 lbs



Longnose gar:
SR 41.00 lbs; BC 40"/15.0 lbs



Florida/Spotted gar:
SR 9.44 lbs; BC 28"/4.0 lbs

For details on state records and angler recognition programs visit: BigCatchFlorida.com

Fish art by Duane Raver, Jr., and Diane R. Peebles.

NONNATIVE-NONGAME FISH



Flathead catfish:
SR 69.90 lbs; BC 36"/25.0 lbs



Blue catfish:
SR 69.50 lbs; BC 36"/25.0 lbs



Jaguar guapote:
SR 2.78 lbs; BC 13"/1.5 lbs



Mayan cichlid:
SR 2.37 lbs; BC 11"/1.0 lb



Oscar:
SR 2.34 lbs; BC 11"/1.25 lbs



Yellow perch:
SR 1.47 lbs; BC 12"/0.75 lb



Common carp:
SR Vacant - 35 lbs. to qualify;
BC 30"/20.0 lbs



Blue tilapia:
SR 9.57 lbs; BC 18"/5.0 lbs

With you
wherever
you go.

The most up-to-date
fishing regulations online!



 **eRegulations.com**

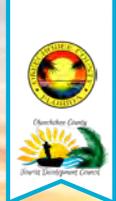


BACKWOOD BARNS
WE TAKE PRIDE IN OUR BARNS

352.356.1008
850.371.1977
352.363.0128

Proverbs 22:1 – “A good name
is to be chosen rather than
great riches, loving favor rather
than silver and gold.”

***Serving all of Florida**

Okeechobee
County

Famous for its down-home hospitality, Okeechobee is perfectly situated on the northern shores of Lake Okeechobee, the best freshwater fishery in the state. This is an ideal destination for all types of outdoor activities.



www.VisitOkeechobeeCounty.com

Florida's Freshwater Fish Hatcheries: Stocking for the Future



Florida Bass Conservation Center (FBCC)



Blackwater Hatchery aerial view

The FWC operates two freshwater fish hatcheries for all of Florida. The **Blackwater Hatchery** was built in 1938 and is located in Santa Rosa County within the Blackwater State Forest. It is primarily responsible for stocking waters in the Northwest Region of the state. Blackwater is responsible for the spawning and production of all striped bass and striped bass hybrid fry needed for fingerling grow-out and stocking statewide. Due to a lack on successful natural reproduction in southeastern river systems, striped bass spawning and stock enhancement projects conducted by Blackwater are vital to maintaining populations of this hard-fighting sportfish in Florida and throughout the southeast as part of the Gulf Striped Bass Fishery Management Plan, a cooperative effort managed by the USFWS along with the states of Florida, Alabama, and Georgia.

Blackwater was critical to an innovative stocking effort following the destructive landfall of Category 5 Hurricane Michael in 2018. The storm had moved directly through the Chipola River watershed, the only location in

Florida where shoal bass (a Species of Greatest Conservation Need) are found. Post-hurricane sampling indicated the existing shoal bass population had declined 80-90% because of the storm's effects. In an unprecedented effort, shoal bass broodfish were collected and transported to Blackwater to attempt spawning in hatchery ponds. Shoal bass are a riverine species that have very specific spawning habitat requirements. Blackwater biologists worked over several seasons to identify these needs and recreate this habitat in hatchery ponds. The first successful spawning at Blackwater took place in Spring 2022 and fingerling shoal bass were stocked for the first time in Florida in May of that year. Subsequent stockings are planned in an effort to restore the Chipola shoal bass population to pre-hurricane levels. Additional information on the Blackwater hatchery can be found at: MyFWC.com/fishing/freshwater/stocking/blackwater/.

The **Florida Bass Conservation Center and Richloam State Fish Hatchery (FBCC)**, MyFWC.com/fishing/freshwater/stocking/

(fbcc/) is the larger, more modern facility located on the Withlacoochee State Forest, in Sumter County. A 2007 renovation modernized the facility, originally built in 1965. This state-of-the-art freshwater fish hatchery and research facility is dedicated to conservation of the unique Florida largemouth bass and other freshwater sport fish. One of the tremendous features of FBCC is the inclusion of heated and chilled water allowing for out of season spawning capabilities for Florida largemouth bass, which creates two separate spawning cycles in a single year, thus increasing overall bass production. Additional benefit comes from being able to stock larger "Phase II" bass fingerlings, a process innovated at the FBCC in coordination with sister Blackwater hatchery. These larger fingerlings face reduced predation, greater forage availability, and better survival — all leading to better fishing.

Additional innovations for stock enhancement and restoration at Richloam include freshwater mussel propagation and culturing native aquatic vegetation. Staff have successfully produced native freshwater mussels. By scaling up this production, these mussels will be stocked in Lake Trafford in Collier County, with the potential to improve water quality and provide beneficial habitat. FBCC is also expanding into the production of desirable submerged aquatic vegetation, like eel grass, for use in aquatic habitat restoration programs.

Past research led to the formulation and production of the Richloam Bass Diet, an industry accepted standard for feed used during the raising of largemouth bass for stocking. Current research also lets FBCC serve as the laboratory to examine the best prey for adult bass to consume to reach trophy size rapidly.

FBCC has a visitor center with an overlook for watching fish production activities and self-guided exhibits with informative displays, which is open 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

TrophyCatch Research Highlights

This year the FWC's TrophyCatch program is excited to mark the milestone of 10 full years of citizen science data collected from anglers like you since the program's inception in 2012. To commemorate that achievement, TrophyCatch is celebrating this 11th year as the "Season of Research!" Here is what some of that research has revealed.

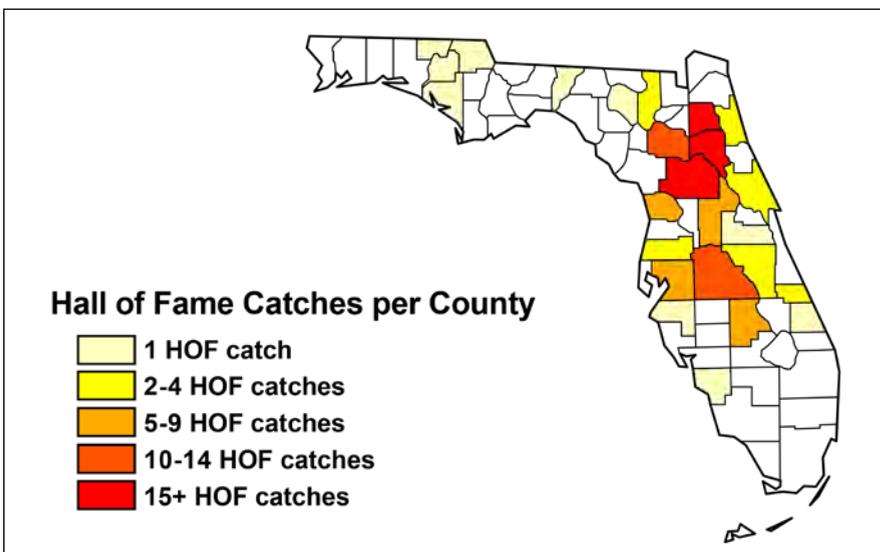
Where's the best place to go bass fishing? Florida, the Bass Fishing Capital of the World, of course! Within Florida, there are more than 8,000 named lakes and 12,000 miles of rivers. Nearly all of them hold bass, with the possibility of a trophy weighing 8 pounds or more that can qualify for submission to TrophyCatch. Based on all TrophyCatch data recorded so far, below are Florida's Top 5 bass fishing locations.

Where are Florida's very big bass? These are TrophyCatch Hall of Fame club fish, weighing 13 pounds or heavier. A decade of data pinpointed a definite geographical trend, with central Florida offering a "mega bass corridor" where most of the State's "teens" or larger have come from (see map below). Clay, Putnam, and Marion counties top the list, accounting for about 40% of all TrophyCatch HOF catches. Plan your fishing trips accordingly!

If you contributed to the data shown here, we thank you for your participation! If you have yet to do so, you can find out more about TrophyCatch on p. 4 and register at TrophyCatch.com. You can also find more research highlights and see notable TrophyCatches by following the TrophyCatch Facebook page at Facebook.com/TrophyCatchFlorida.

TrophyCatch Top 5 Waterbodies (through March 2023)

Waterbody	Lunker	Trophy	HOF	Total	%
Rodman Reservoir	963	200	5	1168	8%
Lake Kissimmee	773	164	2	939	7%
Lake Istokpoga	521	97	2	620	4%
Lake Tohopekaliga	450	80	0	530	4%
Lake Okeechobee	422	65	0	487	3%



Fishbrain – Fishing App



The Fishbrain app for iPhone and Android now includes freshwater fishing regulations. Enable location services, and the app will automatically show you regulations for your position.



Whether you like to fish or the comforts of riding, Mike's Marine Supply has the boats to fit your needs.

- **Boats & Motors**
- **Factory Promotions**
- **Service & Parts**

850-984-5637 or 850-984-5693
1296 Coastal Highway
Panacea, FL
www.mikesmarineflorida.com

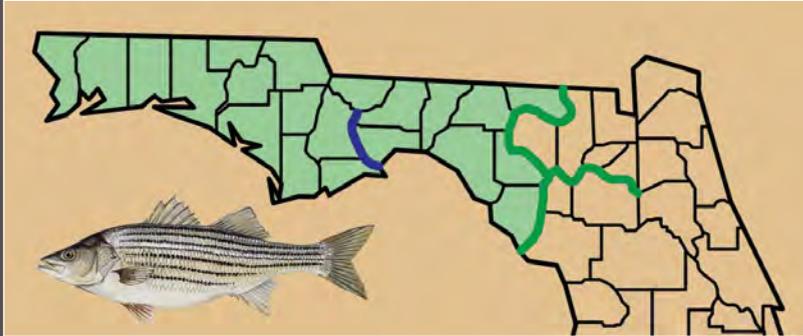
STORE HOURS
Mon-Tue: 8:00-5:00 Wed: 8:00-1:00
Thu-Sat: 8:00-5:00
Closed Sundays

Apply for the FWC School Fishing Club grant to support your school's student anglers!

MyFWC.com/SFC

Striped bass map

- In the Suwannee River, areas north and west of the Suwannee River, and in any tributary, creek or stream of the Suwannee River (**green shading and line**): the bag limit for striped bass is 3, each of which must be at least 18 inches in total length (20 fish combined bag limit of striped bass, white bass, and sunshine bass, see page 12).
- In the lower Ochlockonee River (downstream of the Jackson Bluff dam to Ochlockonee Bay)(**blue line**): the bag limit for striped bass is 3, with no minimum length limit and only one of which may be 24 inches or longer in total length (20 fish combined bag limit of striped bass, white bass, and sunshine bass, see page 12).



Big Catch
Freshwater angler recognition program—
for novices to aficionados!

Register to win!
Check out the Big Catches.
Post your photos.

BigCatchFlorida.com

FLORIDA FISH ART CONTEST WINNERS 2023

Bailing Du (4-6)

Cavan Du (Grades K-3)

Ethan Booz (10-12)

Emma Nemes (7-9)

The Fish Art Contest has grown into an international competition introducing youth to the wonders of fishing and the outdoors. FWC, in collaboration with Wildlife Forever, organizes the competition each year for Florida’s young artists to show their talent. For more information, see MyFWC.com/fishart.

Access Restrictions

Lake Iamonia and Carr Lake, Leon County: Gasoline motors may not be used on boats during the regular duck season (Nov. 18–26 and Dec. 9–Jan. 28 proposed dates).

Lake Miccosukee, Jefferson County: Gasoline motors more than 10 horsepower may not be used on boats during the regular duck season (Nov. 18–26 and Dec. 9–Jan. 28 proposed dates).

Regulations for Fish Management Areas

1. A fishing license is required for residents from 16 to 64 years of age, and for nonresidents 16 or more years of age, to fish by any method, including cane poles, on a Fish Management Area. Refer to Fishing License Fees for exemptions (Pages 8 and 12).
2. The possession of fishing tackle is prohibited on any Fish Management Area that is closed to fishing.
3. Bag limits and methods of taking freshwater fish apply except as provided for a particular Fish Management Area.
4. The possession of nets (other than legal minnow seines, cast nets or dip nets), fish traps, trotlines or setlines is prohibited unless specifically authorized by rules established for a particular Fish Management Area.

5. Persons entering or leaving Fish Management Areas that have designated entry points shall enter or leave only at such designated points.
6. Any vehicle, boat or other transportation device may be searched while in, entering or leaving a Fish Management Area.
7. Fish Management Areas may be temporarily closed to accommodate management projects (e.g., drawdowns), or if unsafe conditions exist, or as otherwise specified in a specific Fish Management Area rule.
8. Intentional release of wildlife or freshwater fish on Fish Management Areas is prohibited.

Northwest Region (see map on page 6 for regions)

Lake Stone, Escambia County: open to fishing.

- Gasoline motors may not be used on boats.
- Channel catfish bag limit: 6
- No motor vehicles on dams, spillways and fishing fingers.

Joe Budd Pond, Gadsden County: Closed to fishing, except as authorized by permit for Commission-sanctioned events (see MyFWC.com/Fishing for details). Open to fishing during daylight hours on Saturdays and Sundays during July, August and September or as specified by order of the Executive Director.

- No motor vehicles on dams, spillways and fishing fingers.

- Gasoline motors may not be used on boats.
- Panfish bag limit: 20
- Channel catfish bag limit: 6
- Sunshine bass bag limit: 10
- Black bass bag limit: 1
- Black bass less than 16 inches in total length must be released immediately.

Lake Victor, Holmes County: open to fishing.

- Gasoline motors may not be used on boats.
- Channel catfish bag limit: 6
- Black bass bag limit: 15
- Black bass 16 inches in total length or longer must be released immediately.
- Circle hooks required when fishing with natural bait greater than 3" in length.
- No motor vehicles on dams, spillways and fishing fingers.

Merritt's Mill Pond, Jackson County: open to fishing.

- The taking of fish and wildlife with rifles is prohibited.
- Gigs are prohibited.
- Trotlines may be used.
- Redear sunfish (shellcracker) bag limit: ... 10
- Redear sunfish less than 10 inches in total length must be released immediately.
- No bag limit for channel catfish.

(Continued on page 22)

FROM SHIP TO SHORE AND EVERYWHERE IN BETWEEN.

THE NEW HAVALON® TALON™ QUIK-CHANGE II™ MULTI-BLADE CUTLERY SYSTEM BRINGS TOGETHER NEARLY 40 YEARS OF EXPERTISE IN THE SURGICAL FIELD AND DECADES OF QUALITY TIME SPENT OUT IN OPEN WATERS.

THIS INNOVATIVE PLATFORM FEATURES A VARIETY OF RELIABLE ADD-ON BLADES DESIGNED TO MAKE CLEAN WORK OF THE DIRTY WORK ALL THE WAY FROM SHIP TO SHORE.

TALON BY HAVALON KNIVES

10 DIFFERENT STYLES OF BLADES AVAILABLE

©2023 HAVALON KNIVES

(Continued from page 21)

Lake Piney Z, Leon County: open to fishing.

- Panfish bag limit: 20
- Channel catfish bag limit: 6
- Swimming, and taking of fish or wildlife with firearms or possession of alcoholic beverages are prohibited.
- Watercraft shall be allowed only as authorized by the City of Tallahassee.
- Access is prohibited from sunset until sunrise.
- Use or possession of cast nets or minnow seines is prohibited.
- No motor vehicles on dams, spillways and fishing fingers.

Hurricane Lake, Okaloosa County: open to fishing.

- Gasoline motors may not be used on boats.
- Channel catfish bag limit: 6
- No motor vehicles on dams, spillways and fishing fingers.

Karick Lake, Okaloosa County: open to fishing.

- Gasoline motors may not be used on boats.
- Channel catfish bag limit: 6
- No motor vehicles on dams, spillways and fishing fingers.

Bear Lake, Santa Rosa County: open to fishing.

- Gasoline motors may not be used on boats.
- Channel catfish bag limit: 6
- No motor vehicles on dams, spillways and fishing fingers.

Juniper Bay Lake, Walton County: open to fishing.

- Channel catfish bag limit: 6

North Central Region

(see map on page 6 for regions)

Lakes Lochloosa, Orange and Newnans, Alachua County: open to fishing.

- Trotlines having a gallon-sized plastic float at each end may be used, provided that such lines are sunk to the bottom or to a minimum depth of 4 feet.
- No bag limit for channel catfish.

Camp Blanding area, Clay County: Open to fishing.

Magnolia and Lowry Lakes will be open to fishing on days and times determined by Camp Blanding Post Commander.

Openings may be changed at discretion of Post Commander to accommodate military training. All anglers will be required to check into and out of area at a manned check station.

- Guns are prohibited for taking of fish or wildlife except during designated hunting seasons for Camp Blanding Wildlife Management Area.
- Boat launching permitted only at designated areas.
- Camping is prohibited.
- During periods closed to hunting, vehicles may be operated only on roads to designated access areas.
- Use of all-terrain vehicles is prohibited.
- All watercraft shall be operated at idle speed only.
- Channel catfish bag limit: 6

Ronnie Vanzant Park, Clay County: open to fishing from 30 minutes before sunrise until 30 minutes after sunset.

- Boats or any floating vessel apparatus are prohibited.
- No swimming or camping.
- No person 16 years of age or older shall fish unless accompanied by an angler less than 16 years of age.
- Fishing permitted only with hook and line or rod and reel.
- Nets are prohibited, except for dip nets.
- Panfish bag limit: 20
- Channel catfish bag limit: 6

Alligator Lake, Columbia County: open to fishing.

- Fishing is prohibited in Ponderosa Pond except for authorized groups permitted by FWC.
- Channel catfish bag limit: 6

Montgomery Lake, Columbia County: open to fishing.

- Boats are restricted to idle speed—no wake.
- Panfish bag limit: 20
- Channel catfish bag limit: 6

Watertown Lake, Columbia County: open to fishing.

- Taking of fish or wildlife with firearms is prohibited.
- Watercraft shall be operated only at idle speed before 10 a.m. and after 4 p.m. daily.
- Panfish bag limit: 20
- Channel catfish bag limit: 6

Baymeadows, Duval County: open to fishing from 30 minutes before sunrise until 30 minutes after sunset.

- Gasoline motors may not be used on boats.
- Swimming, taking of fish or wildlife with firearms, possession of alcoholic beverages or use of cast nets is prohibited.
- Panfish bag limit: 20
- Channel catfish bag limit: 6

Bethesda Pond, Duval County: open to fishing from 30 minutes before sunrise until 30 minutes after sunset.

- Gasoline motors may not be used on boats.

- Swimming, taking of fish or wildlife with firearms or possession of alcoholic beverages, and use of cast nets are prohibited.
- Panfish bag limit: 20
- Channel catfish bag limit: 6

Crystal Springs Park, Duval County: open to fishing from 30 minutes before sunrise until 30 minutes after sunset.

- No person between the ages of 16 years and 64 years shall fish unless accompanied by an angler less than 16 years of age; by an angler 65 years of age or older; by an angler who has been certified by the U.S. Veterans Administration, U.S. Social Security Administration, by any branch of the U.S. Armed Services, or by a licensed physician in this State to be totally and permanently disabled and has obtained a permanent license issued pursuant to Section 379.352(5), F.S.; or by an angler with proof of acceptance as a client for developmental services by the Agency for Persons with Disabilities.
- Swimming, taking of fish or wildlife with firearms or possession of alcoholic beverages, and use of cast nets are prohibited.
- Boats are prohibited.
- Panfish bag limit: 20
- Channel catfish bag limit: 6

Hanna Park ponds, Duval County: open to fishing from 30 minutes before sunrise until 30 minutes after sunset.

- Gasoline motors may not be used on boats.
- Taking of fish or wildlife with firearms or possession of alcoholic beverages, and use of cast nets are prohibited.
- Panfish bag limit: 20
- Channel catfish bag limit: 6

Huguenot Pond, Duval County: open to fishing from 30 minutes before sunrise until 30 minutes after sunset.

- Gasoline motors may not be used on boats.
- Swimming, taking of fish or wildlife with firearms or possession of alcoholic beverages, and use of cast nets are prohibited.
- Panfish bag limit: 20
- Channel catfish bag limit: 6

Oceanway Pond, Duval County: open to fishing from 30 minutes before sunrise until 30 minutes after sunset.

- Gasoline motors may not be used on boats.
- Swimming, taking of fish or wildlife with firearms or possession of alcoholic beverages, and use of cast nets are prohibited.
- Panfish bag limit: 20
- Channel catfish bag limit: 6

Pope Duval East and West ponds, Duval County: open to fishing from 30 minutes before sunrise until 30 minutes after sunset.

- Gasoline motors may not be used on boats.
- Swimming, taking of fish or wildlife with firearms or possession of alcoholic beverages, and use of cast nets are prohibited.
- Panfish bag limit: 20
- Channel catfish bag limit: 6



St. Augustine Road ponds (North and South), Duval County: open to fishing from 30 minutes before sunrise until 30 minutes after sunset.

- Gasoline motors may not be used on boats.
- Swimming, taking of fish or wildlife with firearms or possession of alcoholic beverages, and use of cast nets are prohibited.
- Panfish bag limit: 20
- Channel catfish bag limit: 6

Eagle Lake, Hamilton County: open to fishing from 30 minutes before sunrise until 30 minutes after sunset.

- Gasoline motors may not be used on boats.
- Swimming and taking of fish or wildlife with firearms are prohibited.
- Channel catfish bag limit: 6

Lang Lake, Hamilton County: currently closed. See MyFWC.com/fishing/freshwater/regulations/ for current status.

Koon Lake, Lafayette County: open to fishing.

- Taking of fish or wildlife with firearms is prohibited.
- No bag limit for channel catfish.

Suwannee Lake, Suwannee County: open to fishing.

- No camping.
- No motor vehicles on dam and fishing fingers.
- Taking of fish or wildlife with firearms or possession of alcoholic beverages is prohibited.
- Access to the area from 30 minutes after sunset until 30 minutes before sunrise for any use other than fishing and launching and loading of boats is prohibited.
- Black bass bag limit: 15
- Black bass 16 inches in total length or longer must be released immediately.
- Circle hooks required when fishing with natural bait greater than 3" in length.
- No bag limit for channel catfish.

Northeast Region

(see map on page 6 for regions)

Fox Lake, Brevard County: open to fishing.

- No airboats for fishing or frogging.
- No bag limit for channel catfish.

South Lake, Brevard County: open to fishing.

- No airboats for fishing or frogging.
- Trotlines may be used.
- No bag limit for channel catfish.

Pellicer Pond, Flagler County: open to fishing.

- Channel catfish bag limit: 6

Lake Blue Cypress, Indian River County: open to fishing.

- Trotlines may be used.
- No bag limit for channel catfish.

Clermont Chain of Lakes, Lake County (Cook, Winona, Palatlahaha, Crescent, Louisa, Minnehaha, Hiawatha, Minneola, Wilson, Susan and Cherry): open to fishing.

- Trotlines may be used from sunset until 9 a.m.
- No bag limit for channel catfish.

Lake Griffin, Lake County including all Emerald Marsh water bodies open to Lake Griffin, and including all points lakeward of a boundary line delineated by: County Road 44 and Burrell Lock and Dam on Haynes Creek (formerly Haines Creek); County Road 464c at Moss Bluff Lock and Dam: open to fishing.

- Trotlines are prohibited from 9 a.m. Friday until one hour before sunset on Sunday.
- Trotlines are also prohibited from 9 a.m. until one hour before sunset Monday through Thursday from May 1 through Oct. 31.
- No trotline may be secured to or fished within 50 yards of a private pier or dock.
- No bag limit for channel catfish.
- Crappie less than 10 inches in total length must be released immediately.

Bear Creek Park, Orange County: open to fishing.

- Swimming, and taking of fish or wildlife with firearms or possession of alcoholic beverages are prohibited.
- Cast nets are prohibited.
- Panfish bag limit: 20
- Channel catfish bag limit: 6

Clear Lake, Orange County: open to fishing.

- Swimming, and taking of fish or wildlife with firearms or possession of alcoholic beverages are prohibited.
- Cast nets are prohibited.
- Channel catfish bag limit: 6

Hal-Scott Lake, Orange County: open to fishing.

- Swimming, and taking of fish or wildlife with firearms or possession of alcoholic beverages are prohibited.
- Gasoline motors may not be used on boats.
- Cast nets are prohibited.
- Panfish bag limit: 20
- Channel catfish bag limit: 6
- Black bass must be released immediately.

Lake Ivanhoe, Orange County: open to fishing.

- Swimming, and taking of fish or wildlife with firearms or possession of alcoholic beverages are prohibited.
- Panfish bag limit: 20
- Channel catfish bag limit: 6
- Cast nets are prohibited.

Lake Lawne, Orange County: open to fishing.

- Swimming, and taking of fish or wildlife with firearms or possession of alcoholic beverages are prohibited.
- Cast nets are prohibited.
- Channel catfish bag limit: 6

Lake Santiago in Demetree Park, Orange County: open to fishing.

- Swimming, and taking of fish or wildlife with firearms or possession of alcoholic beverages are prohibited.
- Boats are prohibited.
- Panfish bag limit: 20

- Channel catfish bag limit: 6
- Cast nets are prohibited.

Lake Underhill, Orange County: open to fishing.

- Swimming, and taking of fish or wildlife with firearms or possession of alcoholic beverages are prohibited.
- Cast nets are prohibited.
- Panfish bag limit: 20
- Channel catfish bag limit: 6
- Black bass must be released immediately.

Shadow Bay Park, Orange County: open to fishing.

- Swimming, and taking of fish or wildlife with firearms or possession of alcoholic beverages are prohibited.
- Cast nets are prohibited.
- Bluegill bag limit: 5
- Bluegill less than 12 inches in total length must be released immediately.
- Channel catfish bag limit: 1
- Channel catfish less than 30 inches in total length must be released immediately.
- Black bass must be released immediately.

(Continued on page 24)

NATURALLY A FANTASTIC PLACE



Econfina
River Resort

CALL TO RESERVE YOUR
STAY (850) 584-2135

LODGING

FUEL

RV HOOK UP

BAIT & TACKLE STORE

FISHING GUIDES



4705 ECONFINA RIVER RD LAMONT, FL 32336

(Continued from page 23)

Starke Lake, Orange County: open to fishing.

- Cast nets and minnow seines are prohibited.
- No bag limit for channel catfish.

Turkey Lake, Orange County: open to fishing.

- Swimming, and taking of fish or wildlife with firearms or possession of alcoholic beverages are prohibited.
- Cast nets are prohibited.
- Panfish bag limit: 20
- Channel catfish bag limit: 6
- Black bass must be released immediately.
- Except for sanctioned events, gasoline motors may not be used on boats.

East Lake Tohopekaliga, Osceola County: open to fishing.

- No bag limit for channel catfish.
- Nongame fish may be taken by castnets, dip nets, seines, trotlines, set lines, bush hooks, and traps as specified in Rules 68A-23.002, 68A-23.003 and 68A-23.004, F.A.C.

Lake Jackson, Osceola County: open to fishing.

- Cast nets, minnow lift nets and minnow seines are prohibited.
- Black bass must be released immediately.
- No bag limit for channel catfish.

Lake Marian, Osceola County: open to fishing.

- No bag limit for channel catfish.
- Minnow lift nets, fish traps and trotlines may be used.

Lakes Tohopekaliga (West Lake Tohopekaliga), Cypress, Hatchineha, and Kissimmee, Osceola and Polk counties: open to fishing.

- No bag limit for channel catfish.
- Nongame fish may be taken by castnets, dip nets, seines, trotlines, set lines, bush hooks, and traps as specified in Rules 68A-23.002, 68A-23.003 and 68A-23.004, F.A.C.

Secret Lake, Seminole County: open to fishing.

- Swimming, and taking of fish or wildlife with firearms or possession of alcoholic beverages are prohibited.
- Personal watercraft are prohibited.
- Cast nets are prohibited.
- Panfish bag limit: 20
- Channel catfish bag limit: 6

Lake Panasoffkee, Sumter County: open to fishing.

- Trotlines may be used.
- No bag limit for channel catfish.

Lake Dias, Volusia County: open to fishing.

- No bag limit for channel catfish.

Southwest Region

(see map on page 6 for regions)

Marl Pits 1 and 3, Charlotte County: open to fishing.

- Panfish bag limit: 20
- Bluegill and redear sunfish less than 8 inches in total length must be released immediately.
- Channel catfish bag limit: 6

Marl Pit 2, Charlotte County: open to fishing.

- Bluegill and redear sunfish less than 10 inches must be released immediately.
- Bluegill and redear sunfish combined bag limit: 10
- Channel catfish bag limit: 6

Webb Lake, Charlotte County: open to fishing during posted hours.

- Gasoline motors may not be used on boats.
- Panfish bag limit: 20
- Channel catfish bag limit: 6
- Bluegill and redear sunfish less than 8 inches in total length must be released immediately.
- Vehicles may be used only on designated roads.

Hardee County Park, Hardee County: open to fishing.

- All anglers shall enter at the Park main entrance, the designated entry point, unless otherwise instructed.
- Angling from a boat is allowed by entry pass issued by Hardee County.
- Angling from shore does not require an entry pass unless otherwise posted at the Park main entrance.
- Days and hours of operation and quotas for freshwater fishing are posted at the Park main entrance. Fishing is permitted in designated lakes only. Any lake may be closed to public access by Hardee County for management purposes, or in the event that access to the lake exposes the public to danger, by posting notice at the Park main entrance.
- Sunshine bass bag limit: 6
- Panfish bag limit: 20
- Channel catfish bag limit: 6
- Fish may not be filleted, nor their head or tail fin removed, until the angler has left the Park. Disposal of fish remains within Hardee County Park is prohibited.
- Taking of fish and wildlife with guns is prohibited.
- Motor vehicles may be operated only on designated roads, parking areas, and boat ramps.
- Vehicles may not obstruct designated roads, boat ramps and fire lanes.
- Swimming and float tubes are prohibited.
- Watercraft are restricted to idle speed—no wake.

Lake Istokpoga, Highlands County: open to fishing.

- No bag limit for channel catfish.
- Nongame fish may be taken by cast nets, dip nets, seines, trotlines, set lines, bush hooks and wire traps. Refer to the Florida Commercial Freshwater Fisheries brochure.

Summer Fishing Camps for Youth

The FWC is combating the tendency for today's youth to disconnect from nature and the outdoors, through the Florida Youth Conservation Centers Network (FYCCN). This initiative is providing "Fishing and Basic Boating Skills Camps" (Fish Camps) throughout the state.

Fish Camps, for youth ages 9–15, combine teaching and practical application of angling and boating skills. An instructor provides a fish identification and anatomy lesson, and a law enforcement officer conducts a boating safety demonstration. The goal of Fish Camp is to establish individuals as life-long anglers and stewards of aquatic and fisheries resources, so they can benefit from a healthy, active connection with nature.

This unique program utilizes partners to expand the reach and cost-effectiveness of the camps. Plans are to establish at least one Fish Camp in each county. There are currently about 20 camps; two of the best established are the Ocala and Everglades camps. To locate a camp, or to help start a camp at a new location, email FYCCN@myfwc.com.

FWC staff developed and tested the Fish Camp model using Federal Aid in Sport Fish Restoration funds. Expanding the program relies on anglers, who voluntarily donate when buying a fishing license. FWC assists cooperators with startup costs for new camps and trains non-FWC trainers to ensure quality experiences. FWC staff also assists with evaluating camps to ensure positive impacts

on campers' environmental awareness, fishing skills, and long-term participation.

Fish Camps are fun and exciting for kids and what they learn will help them to live happier and healthier lives and become advocates for sustaining our environmental resources.



fyccn! Florida Youth Conservation Centers Network

Al Lopez Park Lake, Hillsborough County: open to fishing.

- Cast nets or minnow seines are prohibited.
- Panfish bag limit: 20
- Channel catfish bag limit: 6
- Swimming, and taking of fish or wildlife with firearms are prohibited.

Bobby Hicks Park Pond, Hillsborough County: open to fishing.

- Cast nets and minnow seines are prohibited.
- Swimming and taking of fish or wildlife with firearms are prohibited.
- Gasoline motors may not be used on boats.
- Panfish bag limit: 20
- Channel catfish bag limit: 6

Dover District Park Lake, Hillsborough County: open to fishing.

- Cast nets or minnow seines are prohibited.
- Panfish bag limit: 20
- Channel catfish bag limit: 6
- Swimming, and taking of fish or wildlife with firearms or possession of alcoholic beverages are prohibited.

Edward Medard Park Reservoir, Hillsborough County: open to fishing.

- No person shall use any gear other than hook and line or rod and reel to take and possess game fish and nongame fish species.
- Persons possessing a valid freshwater commercial fishing license may use cast nets to catch nongame fish other than channel catfish from 12:01 AM Tuesday to 12:01 AM Friday.
- Days and hours of operation, park entrance and other user fees shall be designated by Hillsborough County and posted at the park main entrance.

Gadsden Park Pond, Hillsborough County: open to fishing.

- Cast nets and minnow seines are prohibited.
- Swimming and taking of fish or wildlife with firearms are prohibited.
- Gasoline motors may not be used on boats.
- Panfish bag limit: 20
- Channel catfish bag limit: 6

Lake Thonotosassa, Hillsborough County: open to fishing.

- Trotlines may be used from sunset until 9 a.m. Sunday through Thursday.
- No bag limit for channel catfish.

Steven J. Wortham Park Lake, Hillsborough County: open to fishing.

- Cast nets or minnow seines are prohibited.
- Panfish bag limit: 20
- Channel catfish bag limit: 6
- Swimming, and taking of fish or wildlife with firearms or possession of alcoholic beverages are prohibited.

Manatee Lake, Manatee County: open to fishing.

- Trotlines may be used from sunset until 9 a.m., Sunday through Thursday.

■ Outboard motors more than 20 h.p. may not be used.

- No bag limit for channel catfish.

Middle Lake, Pasco County: open to fishing.

- Watercraft shall be operated at idle speed only.
- The following are prohibited within 150 feet of the boat launch site; swimming, taking of fish or wildlife with firearms, camping, or open fires.
- Bluegill and redear aggregate bag limit: 20
- Bluegill and redear sunfish less than 8 inches in total length must be released immediately.

Freedom Lake Park, Pinellas County: open to fishing.

- Cast nets or minnow seines are prohibited.
- Panfish bag limit: 20
- Channel catfish bag limit: 6
- Swimming, and taking of fish or wildlife with firearms or possession of alcoholic beverages are prohibited.

Lake Seminole, Pinellas County: open to fishing.

- Trotlines may be used from sunset until 9 a.m.
- No bag limit for channel catfish.

Lake Tarpon, Pinellas County: open to fishing.

- Trotlines may be used from sunset until 9 a.m. Sunday through Thursday.
- No bag limit for channel catfish.

Largo Central Park Nature Preserve, Pinellas County: check entrance for open or closed status.

- Cast nets and minnow seines are prohibited.
- Swimming, taking of fish or wildlife with firearms and possession of alcoholic beverages are prohibited.
- Gasoline motors may not be used on boats.
- Panfish daily bag limit: 20
- Channel catfish daily bag limit: 6

Walsingham Park Lake, Pinellas County: open to fishing.

- Cast nets or minnow seines are prohibited.
- Swimming, and taking of fish or wildlife with firearms or possession of alcoholic beverages are prohibited.
- Gasoline motors may not be used on boats.
- Bluegill and redear aggregate bag limit: ... 20
- Sunshine bass bag limit: 4
- Sunshine bass less than 10 inches in total length must be released immediately.
- Channel catfish bag limit: 6

Lake Crago, Polk County: open to fishing.

- Largemouth bass, crappie and sunshine bass: statewide size and bag limits apply.
- Wire traps may be used for nongame fish.
- Trotlines may be used from sunset until 9 a.m.
- No bag limit for channel catfish.
- Boats are restricted to idle speed—no wake.

Lakes Hatchineha and Kissimmee, Polk County: open to fishing.

- No bag limit for channel catfish.
- Nongame fish may be taken by castnets, dip nets, seines, trotlines, set lines, bush hooks,

and traps as specified in Rules 68A-23.002, 68A-23.003 and 68A-23.004, F.A.C.

Lake Parker, Polk County: open to fishing.

- Wire traps may be used for nongame fish.
- No bag limit for channel catfish.

Mosaic Fish Management Area, Polk and Hardee counties: open to fishing.

- Fishing is allowed only by daily permit issued by the FWC.
- All anglers must check in and out at the Mosaic creel station, the designated entry point, unless otherwise instructed.
- Days and hours of operation and quotas shall be as designated by the FWC and posted at the Mosaic creel station (typically Mosaic is open Friday through Monday). Fishing is permitted in designated lakes only. All other lakes and restricted areas, so posted, are closed to public fishing. Any lake may be temporarily closed to public access for management purposes, or in the event that access to the lake exposes the public to danger, by posting notice at the creel station.

■ **Unless otherwise specified, Mosaic FMA harvest restrictions are:**

- » Black bass must be released immediately.
- » Sunshine bass bag limit: 6
- » Crappie bag limit: 10
- » Crappie less than 10 inches in total length must be released immediately.
- » Channel catfish bag limit: 6
- » Fish may not be filleted, nor their heads or tail fins removed, until the angler has checked out at the Mosaic creel station. Disposal of fish remains within Mosaic property is prohibited.
- » Taking of fish and wildlife with guns is prohibited.
- » Motor vehicles may be operated only on designated roads, parking areas and boat ramps.
- » Vehicles may not obstruct designated roads, boat ramps, gates or fire lanes.
- » Swimming and float tubes are prohibited.
- » Rough fish may be removed from designated lakes by cast nets and minnow seines by permission of the landowner.
- » Outboard motors more than 10 h.p. may not be used.

■ **Regulations for individual Mosaic FMA lakes are as follows:**

- » **Haul Road Pit:**
 - Black bass 16 inches in total length or longer must be released immediately.
 - Black bass bag limit: 2
- » **LP2 West:**
 - No boats permitted.

Saddle Creek Park, Polk County: open to fishing.

- Cast nets are prohibited.
- Channel catfish bag limit: 6

(Continued on page 26)

(Continued from page 25)

Tenoroc Fish Management Area, Polk County:

- Fishing, hunting or trapping is allowed only by FWC permit. All anglers and hunters must check in and out at the Tenoroc Fish Management Area headquarters and deposit their valid fishing or hunting license with the custodian unless otherwise instructed. On water bodies where special-opportunity alligator hunts are permitted, participants may use guns and baits as specified in Rule 68A-25.042, F.A.C., when taking alligators. Permitted alligator hunt participants are exempt from the requirement to enter at designated points.
- Days and hours of operation and quotas shall be as designated by the FWC and posted at area headquarters (currently Friday through Monday only). Fishing is permitted in designated lakes only. Lakes may be closed to public access for management purposes or if access to the lake exposes the public to danger, by posting notice at the Tenoroc check station office.
- Discharge of firearms is limited to the FWC firing range or at FWC sponsored events.
- All dogs must be leashed, except as authorized by FWC.
- **Unless otherwise specified, Tenoroc FMA harvest restrictions are:**
 - » Crappie bag limit:..... 10
 - » Crappie less than 10 inches in total length must be released immediately.
 - » Sunshine bass bag limit:..... 6
 - » Channel catfish bag limit:..... 6
 - » Black bass must be released immediately.
 - » Fish may not be filleted, nor their head or tail fins removed, until the angler has checked out at the area headquarters.
 - » Cast nets and minnow seines are prohibited.
 - » No person shall have any gun under his/her control while under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
 - » Public access is prohibited in areas posted as "Restricted" for protection of threatened or endangered species, or environmentally sensitive areas.
 - » Motor vehicles may be operated only on named roads, designated parking areas, and fishing ramps as designated in the area use brochure.

- » Vehicles may not obstruct designated roads, boat ramps, gates or fire lanes.
- » Swimming and float tubes are prohibited.
- **Regulations for Tenoroc lakes are as follows:**
 - » **Lakes 10, A, Butterfly, C, Coronet, F, Fish Hook, G, Half-Moon, Horseshoe, Hydrilla, Legs Lost, Lake East, Lost Lake West, Tern, 2, 3, and 4 (primitive launch only on Lakes 10, Butterfly, F, Fish Hook, G, Half-Moon, Lost Lake East, Lost Lake West, and Tern):**
 - Gasoline motors may not be used on boats.
 - » **Cemetery Lake:**
 - Boats may not be used.
 - Panfish bag limit: 20
 - Anglers may keep no more than 5 bluegill and redear sunfish 8 inches or longer in total length per day.
 - » **Lakes B and 5:**
 - Boats are restricted to idle speed—no wake.
 - Black bass 16 inches in total length or longer must be released immediately.
 - Black bass bag limit: 2
 - » **Long Lake:**
 - Crappie bag limit:..... 25
 - No size limit for crappie.
 - Largemouth bass and sunshine bass: statewide size and bag limits apply.
 - No bag limit for channel catfish.
 - » **Picnic Lake:**
 - Gasoline motors may not be used on boats.
 - Black bass bag limit: 2
 - Black bass 16 inches in total length or longer must be released immediately.
 - » **Pine (formerly East and West Pasture Lakes) and Derby Lakes:**
 - Boats may not be used.
 - Closed to fishing unless authorized by FWC permit for agency-sanctioned events except for anglers who have been certified by the U.S. Veterans Administration, U.S. Social Security Admin-

istration, by a branch of the U.S. Armed Services, or by a licensed Florida physician to be totally and permanently disabled and has obtained a permanent license issued pursuant to 373.561 (5) (b), F.S. or unless that person presents proof of acceptance as a client for developmental disabilities services by the Agency for Persons with Disabilities. One properly licensed person may fish if accompanying or assisting a permitted individual as described above.

- Other than anglers described above, no one 16 years or older shall fish on Pine or Derby lakes unless accompanied by a child under 16 years of age.
- Panfish bag limit: 20
- Anglers may keep no more than 5 bluegill and redear sunfish 8 inches or longer in total length per day.
- Derby Lake: Daily bag limit for black bass shall be five per day, only one of which may be 16 inches or greater in total length.
- » **Shop Lake:**
 - No bag limit for black bass.
 - Black bass 16 inches in total length or longer must be released immediately.
 - Circle hooks required when fishing with natural bait greater than 3" in length.

South Region

(see map on page 6 for regions)

Plantation Heritage Park Lake, Broward County: open to fishing.

- Panfish bag limit: 20
- Channel catfish bag limit: 6
- Bluegill and redear sunfish less than 8 inches in total length must be released immediately.

The northern-most Tropical Park Lake, Miami-Dade County: open to fishing.

- Panfish bag limit: 20
- Channel catfish bag limit: 6
- Bluegill and redear sunfish less than 8 inches in total length must be released immediately.

Caloosa Park Lake, Palm Beach County: open to fishing.

- Black bass must be released immediately.
- Panfish bag limit: 20
- Channel catfish bag limit: 6
- Bluegill and redear sunfish less than 8 inches in total length must be released immediately.

Lake Okeehelée, Palm Beach County: open to fishing.

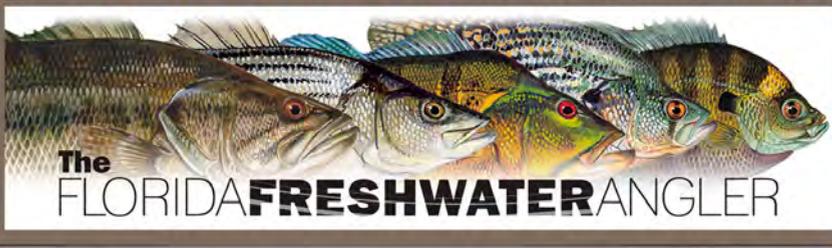
- Gasoline motors may not be used on boats.
- Panfish bag limit: 20
- Channel catfish bag limit: 6
- Bluegill and redear sunfish less than 8 inches in total length must be released immediately.

Palm Lake, St. Lucie County: open to fishing.

- Gasoline motors may not be used on boats.
- Channel catfish bag limit: 6

Sign up to stay in the know!

Subscribe to The Florida Freshwater Angler newsletter free at bit.ly/FFASubscribe under "Freshwater Fishing"



Frequently answered questions

Do I need a freshwater or saltwater fishing license or both?

In general, you need a freshwater license to take freshwater fish and a saltwater license to take saltwater fish, unless one of the exemptions specified on page 10 applies. If you are fishing in fresh water where no saltwater species live, you need a freshwater license and, likewise, if you are fishing in the ocean or Gulf you need a saltwater license. However, when you get into estuarine areas where salt and fresh water mix and fish of both types can be found, the issue becomes less clear. The interpretation of the rule is:

You need either a freshwater, saltwater or combination license, or appropriate exemption, to take fish (take is legally defined as taking, attempting to take, pursuing, molesting, capturing or killing any fish, or their nests or eggs by any means whether or not such actions result in obtaining possession of such fish or their nests or eggs). If you are using species-specific gear, your license should be appropriate (e.g., freshwater or saltwater) to the species you are targeting. Otherwise you need an appropriate type license to keep your catch and must immediately release any species for which you are not licensed. License requirements follow the species of fish, regardless of where they are caught. For example, if you only have a freshwater license and are primarily fishing for largemouth bass or bream (freshwater species) in a river, but happen to catch a red drum (a saltwater species), you must immediately release the red drum. An exception is you may take mullet from fresh water with only a freshwater fishing license, even though they are normally considered a saltwater species.

What regulations apply to frogs?

Pine Barrens treefrogs, Gopher frogs, and Florida bog frogs may not be taken from the wild. For all other frogs and toads, there are no seasons, bag or size limits and a recreational license is not needed. To sell frogs or take frogs to sell, a commercial fish dealers license is required. Frogs may be taken in accordance with 68A-26.002, Florida Administrative Code (FAC), including use of gigs—provided gigs are not specifically prohibited in the area. Florida Bog frogs, Pine Barrens tree frogs, and gopher frogs may not be possessed without a Scientific Collectors Permit.

What regulations apply to freshwater crayfish?

There are no seasons, gear, bag or size limits for freshwater crayfish, and neither a recreational nor commercial license is needed. It is illegal to take Florida's state-listed crayfish (Panama City, Sims Sink and Black Creek crayfishes) and all cave-inhabiting crayfish.

What regulations apply to freshwater turtles?

Licenses and permits are not required to take a recreational bag limit of turtles in accordance with rules provided below. Freshwater turtles can only be taken by hand, dip net, minnow seine or baited hook.

Freshwater turtles taken from the wild may not be sold, but freshwater turtles raised on turtle

aquaculture facilities or purchased from licensed vendors as captive bred stock can be sold pursuant to possession limits in accordance with 68A-25.002 FAC. Snapping turtles, cooters and map turtles may not be taken from the wild because of similarity to Alligator snapping turtles, Suwannee cooters, and Barbour's map turtles, respectively. Additionally, Alligator snapping turtles, Suwannee cooters, Barbour's map turtles, Diamondback terrapins, and Striped mud turtles from the Lower Keys may not be taken from the wild or possessed without a Scientific Collecting Permit or other authorization from the FWC.

The following species have a possession limit of two: loggerhead musk turtles, box turtles, and Escambia map turtles. For all other freshwater turtles, take is limited to one turtle per person per day from the wild, except for those with zero take allowed as described in the previous paragraph. Freshwater turtles can only be taken by hand, dip net, minnow seine or baited hook. Many freshwater turtle species may be taken year round, but softshell turtles may not be taken from the wild from May 1 to July 31. In addition, collection and possession of freshwater turtle eggs is prohibited without a permit. You may transport no more than one turtle at a time, unless you have proof that all turtles were purchased legally (receipt indicating the purchase date, quantity and species of turtles acquired, the name and address of supplier, and license identification number of supplier), an importation permit from the FWC for turtles being brought into Florida, or a valid Aquaculture Certificate of Registration from the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (FDACS: FloridaAquaculture.com). Red-eared sliders may be harvested without a permit but not possessed alive without a Conditional Species license or permit. Those in possession of a valid Aquaculture Certificate of Registration and restricted species authorization from the FDACS (FloridaAquaculture.com) may culture and sell red-eared sliders, but only to out-of-state recipients or Floridians who have a valid Conditional Species license or permit. However, certified turtle farmers that buy red-eared sliders for direct retail sale must have a License to Possess Class III Wildlife for Exhibition or Public Sale (ESC). Conditional species information is at MyFWC.com/license/wildlife/nonnative-species. ESC license information is available at MyFWC.com/license/captive-wildlife/applications/. Rules subject to change; see FLrules.org for the latest.

What regulations apply to clams, mussels and other mollusks?

Regulations governing taking and possession of freshwater mussels are covered by 68A-23.015 FAC. A freshwater fishing license is required unless otherwise noted. In summary, "Taking" live or dead freshwater mussels for the purpose of sale, as well as "selling," is prohibited. Bag Limit: No person shall take more than 10 freshwater mussels, or 20 half-shells of the families Unionidae and Margaritiferidae per day. Additionally, no person may possess more than two days' bag limit (20 individuals, 40 half-shells) of any mussels of these families. Any deviation requires a permit from the Executive Director, in accordance with 68A-9.002 FAC (see illustrations, page 11).

- Freshwater mussels from families other than the two mentioned above, such as Asian clams, may be taken for bait or personal use and no recreational license is needed.
- Mussels may only be taken by "hand-picking." Use of brailles, crowfoot bars, or other mechanical methods is prohibited.
- Federally protected mussels may not be taken; see MyFWC.com/media/27005/mussel-brochure.pdf.

What regulations apply to harvesting fish for home aquaria?

Rules and regulations for recreational take and possession apply. You cannot be in possession, nor may your aquarium contain more than these limits. Legal methods of collecting and license requirements also apply. You need a freshwater fishing license to take (defined as "taking, attempting to take, pursuing, hunting, molesting, capturing, or killing any freshwater fish, their nests or eggs, by any means, whether or not such actions result in obtaining possession of such freshwater fish or their nests or eggs"). Avoid taking Florida's endangered species. A list of them can be found at MyFWC.com/WildlifeHabitats.

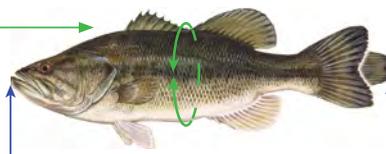
How do I use total length and girth to estimate bass weight?

When you don't have a scale, you can use total length and girth to get a rough estimate of a bass' weight. Use the following formula: Total Length (in inches) squared, times girth (in inches) divided by 1200. For example, a 22" long bass with a girth of 15" would weigh about 6.1 pounds ($22 \times 22 \times 15 / 1200 = 6.1$). See MyFWC.com/fishing/freshwater/fishing-tips/bass-weight-calculator/ for an online calculator.

How to measure your catch

Measure Girth around the fattest part of the fish

Measure Total Length with mouth closed and tail squeezed together



Florida's freshwater fish—fun to catch, good to eat & healthy too!

Why eat fish?

Eating fish may help reduce your risk of heart attack and stroke. Fish high in omega 3 fatty acids—a type of fatty acid that supports fetal, infant and child brain and eye development—are good for mothers and children.

How much should I eat?

Adults should eat about 8 ounces of fish each week, and women who are pregnant, or breastfeeding, should eat 8 to 12 ounces (cooked weight) of fish per week. Eating a variety of fish has the most benefit.

What about mercury exposure?

For most people, the risk of eating mercury-exposed fish is not a health concern, but developing fetuses and young children are more sensitive to the effects mercury has on the brain. Women of childbearing age and young children should eat fish with low mercury levels. Mercury can't be cut away, cleaned or cooked out of fish.



Basic Guidelines for Eating Freshwater Fish

The following Basic Eating Guidelines provide general advice to anglers from all untested fresh waters in the state. For more detailed guidance for all fresh waters, consult the Florida Department of Health publication *Basic Guidelines for Eating Freshwater Fish* (<http://bit.ly/FishAdvisories>) or call 850-245-4250. You can search for guidelines for specific water bodies at <https://dchpexternalapps.doh.state.fl.us/fishadvisory/>. (Fish illustrations by Duane Raver, Jr. and Diane Rome Peebles)

WOMEN OF CHILDBEARING AGE & YOUNG CHILDREN

<p>Eat up to a maximum of 2 meals per week of these fish with very low mercury: (1 meal is 8 oz. uncooked, or 6 oz. cooked)</p>	 <p>Brown bullhead</p>	 <p>Blue tilapia</p>
<p>Eat up to a maximum of 1 meal per week of these fish with very low mercury:</p>	 <p>Redear sunfish</p>	 <p>Bullseye snakehead</p>
<p>Eat up to a maximum of 1 meal per month of these fish with low mercury:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Black crappie • Bluegill • Butterfly peacock bass • Chain pickerel • Channel catfish • Mayan cichlid • Redbreast sunfish • Spotted sunfish • Yellow bullhead • Warmouth • White catfish <p>Black bass including largemouth bass: Bass smaller than 16 inches.</p> <p>If in one month you eat a meal of the fish listed above: Don't eat any more fish listed as eat 1 meal per month. Instead eat only other high omega-3, low-mercury fish for the remainder of the month, try: farm raised rainbow trout, salmon, farm raised catfish and mullet.</p>	
<p>Do NOT eat:</p>	<p>Black bass including largemouth bass larger than 16 inches. Avoid eating bowfin and gar.</p>	

ALL OTHER INDIVIDUALS

<p>Eat up to a maximum of 2 meals per week of these fish with very low mercury: (1 meal is 8 oz. uncooked, or 6 oz. cooked)</p>	 <p>Redear sunfish</p>	 <p>Bluegill</p>	 <p>Brown bullhead</p>	 <p>Blue tilapia</p>
<p>Eat up to a maximum of 1 meal per week of these fish with low mercury:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bullseye snakehead • Butterfly peacock bass • Black crappie • Mayan cichlid • Chain pickerel • Yellow bullhead • Channel catfish • Redbreast sunfish • Spotted sunfish • Warmouth • White catfish 			
<p>Eat up to a maximum of 1 meal per month of these fish with moderate mercury:</p>	<p>Black bass including largemouth bass: Bass of any size.</p> <p>If in one month you eat a meal of the fish listed above: Don't eat any more fish listed as eat 1 meal per month. Instead eat only other high omega-3, low-mercury fish for the remainder of the month, try: farm raised rainbow trout, salmon, farm raised catfish and mullet.</p>			

We are Florida's State Forests and we are

**CALLING
YOU OUT.**



STATE FOREST RECREATION
NATURE, ADVENTURE, SELF-RELIANCE

Plan your visit at ExploreFloridaForests.com

Set an Example for Life



**US Army Corps
of Engineers®**
Jacksonville District



Produced under a grant from the Sport Fish Restoration and Boating Trust Fund, administered by the U.S. Coast Guard.

