

2020

# GEORGIA SPORT FISHING REGULATIONS



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**Cartecay**

4+ Bedrooms, 2.5 Bath  
3,613 SF Under Roof

**\$195,100**



**Columbus**

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2,376 SF Under Roof

**\$117,700**



**Frontier**

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1,242 SF Under Roof

**\$310,800**



**Country Colonial II**

4 Bedrooms, 2.5 Bath  
4,309 SF Under Roof

**\$171,600**



**Jasper Split**

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2,294 SF Under Roof

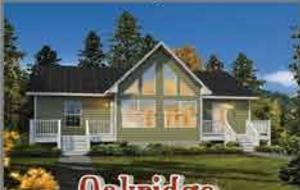
**\$303,400**



**Gatlinburg**

4+ Bedrooms, 3.5 Bath  
4,197 SF Under Roof

**\$153,500**



**Oakridge**

3 Bedrooms, 2 Bath  
1,542 SF Under Roof

**\$221,100**



**Dawson Creek**

3 Bedrooms, 2 Bath  
2,761 SF Under Roof

**\$166,100**



**Lake Blue Ridge Ext.**

3 Bedrooms, 2.5 Bath  
2,066 SF Under Roof

**\$197,100**



**Riverstone Manor**

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**Augusta, GA**  
706-855-5227

**Lavonia, GA**  
706-356-1015

**Prattville, AL**  
334-290-4397

**Waynesville, NC**  
828-456-3309

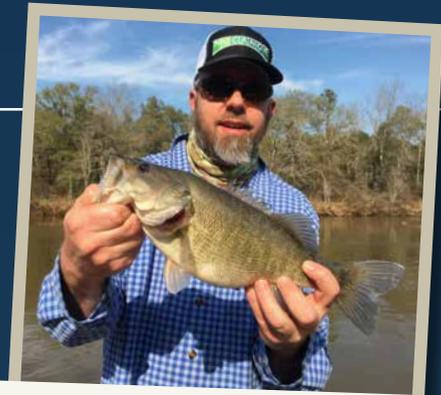
Ellijay, GA pricing shown. Pricing does not include land improvements and subject to change. Some homes may show options not included in base price.

# Contents

Commissioner's Message .....2  
 Wildlife & Sport Fish Restoration Program .....2  
 Fisheries Section Offices & Public Fishing Areas .....4  
 Definitions .....6  
 Protected Aquatic Species .....6  
 Free Fishing Days .....8  
 License Requirements .....8  
 Buying Licenses .....8  
 Recreational License Prices .....10  
 Boating Regulations .....15  
 Fish Kill Reporting .....18  
 Turn in Poachers Contact Information .....18  
 Public Fishing Areas .....19  
 Get Kids Hooked .....31  
 Angler Awards Program .....32  
 Guidelines for Eating Fish .....34-38  
 Measuring Fish Length .....43

**Freshwater Section** ..... 12  
 Seasons .....12  
 Length Limits .....12  
 Daily Limits .....13  
 Fishing Methods .....14  
 Agreements with Bordering States .....16  
 Trout Fishing .....22  
 Commercial Fishing .....25  
 Sale of Fish .....25  
 Freshwater Fish Identification .....26-27  
 State Freshwater Record Fish .....28  
 Handling & Releasing Fish .....48

**Saltwater Section** ..... 40  
 State Saltwater Record Fish .....42  
 Finfish Limits and Information .....43  
 Saltwater Fish Identification .....44-45  
 Sport Bait Shrimping .....46  
 Crabs .....47  
 Shellfish .....47  
 Bait Minnows .....47  
 Recompression Tools .....48  
 Handling & Releasing Fish .....48



**Georgia Bass Slam**  
 See page 33.

## 2020 FRESHWATER AND SALTWATER SPORT FISHING REGULATIONS

Brian P. Kemp, Governor  
 Mark Williams, Commissioner, Department of Natural Resources  
 Rusty Garrison, Director, Wildlife Resources Division  
 Doug Haymans, Director, Coastal Resources Division  
 Thomas Barnard, Colonel, Law Enforcement Division

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|   | Tim Lowe   |

\* List of Board Members was current as of press time. To see a current list of Board Members please go to [www.GADNR.org](http://www.GADNR.org).

**Note:** The Wildlife Resources & Coastal Resources Divisions designed this guide to help you quickly find and understand regulations for fishing in Georgia. The Game & Fish Code and rules of the Department of Natural Resources are the final authority on questions on law. This publication was partially paid for by the sale of advertising. The Georgia Department of Natural Resources does not necessarily endorse products or services listed.

**Editors:** John W. Bowers & Sarah E. Hanson, Georgia Wildlife Resources Division

**Advertising:** J.F. Griffin Publishing (413) 884-1001

### On The Cover

Angler Wyatt Crews of Waycross with a black crappie he caught at Lake Mayers near Baxley, GA.

Photo provided by  
**Bert Deener, Georgia DNR**



## COMMISSIONER'S MESSAGE

## Creating More Fishing Opportunities

I have always had a special connection with the natural world around me. I attribute that connection to the values instilled in me during my formative years, as well as being fortunate enough to live in a place with such abundant and beautiful natural resources. Over time, I developed a fierce passion for hunting, fishing, and all things outdoors, and that is why, as Commissioner of the Department of Natural Resources, I feel incredibly blessed to be in such a position that allows me to connect with so many like-minded individuals, and to play a role in passing these traditions down to the next generation of sportsmen and women.



Considering that Georgia is home to well over a million anglers, I know I am not alone in my appreciation and passion for this amazing sport. Here at DNR, we are so thankful to have such an ardent and unwavering community of supporters who do so much for wildlife conservation efforts.

At DNR, conserving and protecting our natural resources is a huge part of our mission. We are constantly looking for new ways to safeguard these resources while searching for new ways to accommodate greater access and better fishing opportunities for the public. One way we do this is by stocking our waters with catchable fish. For instance, every year we stock 1 million catchable trout in streams, rivers and small lakes across Georgia. Trout stocking begins in March and continues through October. Currently we're targeting a larger sized trout as part of this effort to keep our rivers and streams full of fish and fun to fish.

Your continuous support through your fishing license purchases, and your numerous trips to our lands, keep us thriving and allows us to continue our efforts of conservation. We are working on new ways to enjoy the outdoors, such as the first ever full-service campground that will be opening at the Evans PFA this fall. I hope you are able to enjoy these amenities while you fish and enjoy the fishing opportunities across our state. We are so thankful for your continued support and appreciate you allowing us to fulfill DNR's mission. I'm excited to see you all out on the water!

**Mark Williams**

Commissioner, Georgia Department of Natural Resources

## Your dollars at work for Georgia!

*Successful Angler-funded Partnership to Improve Fishing*

When you purchase a fishing license, excise tax dollars paid by manufacturers come back to Georgia!!

Your license fees and Sport Fish Restoration dollars at work:

Management of public waters, production of sport fish for stocking in public waters, development and management of Public Fishing Areas, aquatic education programs, development and maintenance of boating access facilities and more.

These programs pay for freshwater and saltwater activities to benefit these resources.

**Better fishing,** boating, hunting & wildlife-associated recreation.

**State agencies** implement programs & projects.

**States** receive grants.

**U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service** allocates funds to state fish & wildlife agencies.



**Anglers,** hunters, boaters purchase fishing/hunting equipment & motor boat fuels.

**Manufacturers** pay excise tax on that equipment and boaters pay fuel taxes.

**To learn more about Sport Fish Restoration in Georgia, visit [www.fws.gov](http://www.fws.gov) and [www.gofishgeorgia.com](http://www.gofishgeorgia.com)**



Williamstown, MA | Birmingham, AL

## About This Guide

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

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Jon Gullely, Dane Fay, John Corey, Evelyn Haddad, Chris Sobolowski



This guide is also available online at

**eRegulations.com**



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- CARNESVILLE.....10963 GA Hwy 106 • (706) 384-5555
- CARTERSVILLE.....1534 Highway 411 N • (770) 387-0340
- CONYERS.....1377 Dogwood St SW • (770) 760-0010
- DACULA.....2173 Winder Hwy • (678) 376-3240
- DALTON.....2404 E Morris St • (706) 226-3097
- DIXIE.....4281 US Hwy 84 W • (229) 263-4133
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- GRAYSON.....1721 Athens Hwy • (770) 979-2201
- JASPER.....280 Shelby Lane • (678) 454-3100
- MACON.....4951 Sheraton Dr • (478) 405-7900
- MADISON.....1350 Lions Club Rd • (706) 342-2332
- MCDONOUGH.....192 Industrial Blvd • (678) 673-3680
- MERESHON.....2477 Hwy 32 • (912) 647-2022
- MILLEDGEVILLE.....2661 North Columbia St (Hwy 441 N) • (478) 387-4205
- NEWNAN.....81 Millard Farmer Industrial Blvd • (770) 254-0383
- ROME.....867 Cedar Ave SW • (888) 404-0137
- THOMASVILLE.....12793 U.S. 19 S • (229) 226-4881
- VALDOSTA.....4506 North Valdosta Rd • (229) 257-0000

SHOP ONLINE AT



**CONTACT INFORMATION & OFFICES**

**STATEWIDE OR GENERAL OFFICES**

**1 Wildlife Resources Division State Headquarters**

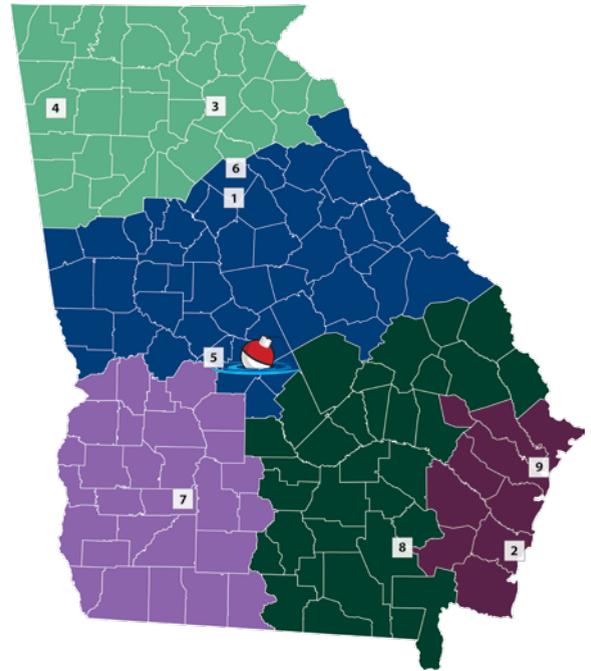
2067 US Highway 278 SE, Social Circle, GA 30025  
 Main Number .....706-557-3333  
 Toll Free .....833-557-3303  
 Game Management.....706-557-3350  
 Fisheries Management.....706-557-3305  
 Law Enforcement .....770-918-6408  
 Wildlife Conservation.....706-557-3213

**Wildlife Resources Conservation Center**

2065 US Highway 278 SE, Social Circle, GA 30025  
 Boating Registration .....800-366-2661  
 Hunting & Fishing Licenses .....800-366-2661  
 Boating Education.....770-918-6408  
 Hunter Education.....706-557-3355  
 Special Permits Unit.....770-918-6408  
 Private Lands Program.....478-994-7583

**2 Coastal Resources Division Headquarters**

One Conservation Way, Brunswick, GA 31520  
 Main Number .....912-264-7218  
 Coastal Law Enforcement.....912-264-7237  
  
**Report a Fish Kill ..... 800-241-4113**  
**Ranger Hotline ..... 800-241-4113**



**WRD FISHERIES REGIONAL OFFICES AND FACILITIES**

**3 Northeast Office**

2150 Dawsonville Hwy, Gainesville, GA 30501  
 Gainesville.....770-535-5498  
 Law Enforcement (Gainesville).....770-535-5499

**Buford Trout Hatchery**

**Burton Hatchery**

**4 Northwest District Office**

2650 Floyd Springs Road, Armuchee, GA 30105  
 Armuchee .....706-295-6102  
 Law Enforcement (Acworth).....770-529-2424  
 Law Enforcement (Atlanta) .....770-769-9680

**Rocky Mountain PFA & Recreation Area**

**Summerville Hatchery**

**5 West Central Office**

1014 MLK Blvd., Fort Valley, GA 31030  
 Fort Valley .....478-825-6151

**Marben PFA/Charlie Elliott**

**Wildlife Center** .....478-825-6151 or 770-784-3059

**Big Lazer Creek PFA**

**West Point District Office**

**Flat Creek PFA**

**6 East Central Office**

2065 US Highway 278, SE Social Circle, GA 30025  
 Atlanta number .....706-557-3305

**Walton Fish Hatchery**

**Thomson District Office**

District Office .....706-595-1619  
 Law Enforcement Office.....706-595-4211  
 Augusta Number .....706-737-1480

**McDuffie PFA & Hatchery**



**Go Fish Education Center** ... 478-988-6701

1255 Perry Pkwy., Perry, GA 31069

**7 Southwest Office**

2024 Newton Road, Albany, GA 31701  
 Albany.....229-430-4256  
 Albany Law Enforcement .....229-430-4252

**Silver Lake PFA**

**Steve Cocke Hatchery**

**Cordele Hatchery**

**8 South Central Office**

108 Darling Ave., PO Box 2089, Waycross, GA 31502  
 Waycross.....912-285-6094  
 Metter Law Enforcement .....912-685-2145

**Ocmulgee PFA**

**Bowens Mill Hatchery**

**Hugh M. Gillis PFA**

**Dodge County PFA**

**Paradise PFA**

**9 Coastal Office**

130 Hatchery Drive, Richmond Hill, GA 31324  
 Richmond Hill .....912-727-2112  
 Coastal Law Enforcement.....912-264-7237

**Evans County PFA**

**Richmond Hill Fish Hatchery**

>> See pages 19-21 for Public Fishing Area Information.

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## 2020 DEFINITIONS

**Artificial Lure**

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

**Daily Limit**

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

**Fishing**

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

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

**Game Fish**

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

**Immediate Family**

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

**Nongame Fish**

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

**Public Fishing Area**

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

**Resident**

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

**What's New**

- New camping reservation system available at [GoOutdoorsGeorgia.com](http://GoOutdoorsGeorgia.com)
- Reservations can be made up to 13 months in advance, online or by calling 1-800-366-2661.
- RV camping now available at Evans County PFA, and McDuffie PFA
- PFAs are open 365/24/7 to fit any work or sleep schedule
- Hold your special occasions at the new event center at Evans County PFA

**Protected Species May Be Encountered While Fishing**

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

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

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

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

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

**REDHORSE SUCKER**

There are several protected species of redhorse suckers that can easily be confused with common carp while bow fishing. For more information on sport fish and carp identification, please visit [georgiawildlife.com/fishing/identification](http://georgiawildlife.com/fishing/identification).

**MAP TURTLE**

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

Up to 29" in length,  
11–20" typical

**EASTERN HELLBENDER**

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

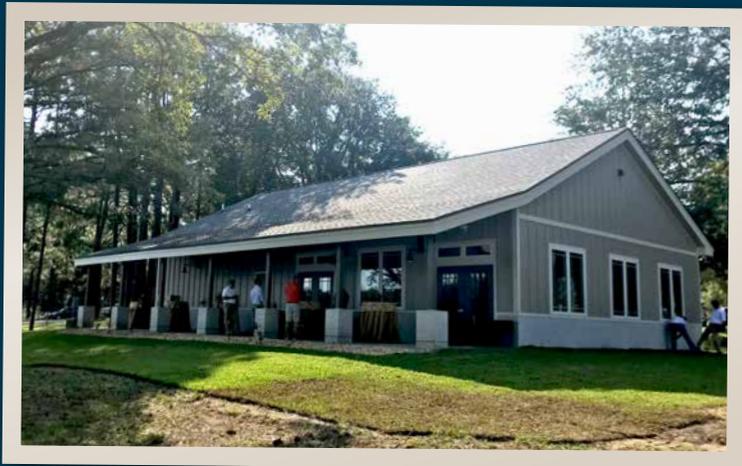
**ALLIGATOR SNAPPING TURTLE**

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

**ALTAMAHA SHINER**

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

# Evans County PFA now Offering RV Camping and Space at New Event Center



**Hold events, Go Fish and RV camp at Evans County PFA!**

Make reservations at [www.GoOutdoorsGeorgia.com](http://www.GoOutdoorsGeorgia.com)



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The Boogie Buzz Buzzbait  
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# FRESHWATER & SALTWATER LICENSE REQUIREMENTS

## Buying Licenses

You can purchase a Georgia fishing license:

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

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

## Who Needs a Fishing License

Anglers age 16 and older must have a current Georgia fishing license in their possession while fishing in fresh or salt water in Georgia. Additionally, a free SIP is required to fish in saltwater. A temporary authorization number obtained by telephone or internet sale may be used for seven days until the paper copy is received or printed. Conservation Rangers may require photo identification when checking fishing licenses. **Exception:** A fishing license is not required to fish in private ponds (does not include ponds owned by governments—city, county, state, or federal) nor by a resident and their immediate family when fishing on their land. See definition of *immediate family* on page 6.

## RESIDENTS

- Proof of residence is a Georgia driver's license or official State of Georgia ID card and is required to purchase a resident fishing license.
- Georgia resident military veterans that were on active duty for 90 or more consecutive days and who were honorably discharged on or after July 1, 2005 may obtain one annual Honorary Hunting and Fishing License free of charge. Such veterans may obtain this license by providing a copy of their DD Form 214 and a completed DNR application.
- **Senior Citizens:** Georgia residents born on or before June 30, 1952 may obtain a Lifetime Sportsman's License free of charge. An optional Lifetime Sportsman's Plastic Card may be purchased for \$10. Reduced cost licenses are available for residents age 65 and older (see page 10).
- **Discount Disability License:** Georgia residents who are permanently and totally disabled may obtain a discounted Disability License. A qualifying disability is an impairment of a permanent and total nature and is certified as such by the Department of Veterans Affairs, Social Security Administration, Medicaid, Medicare or Railroad Retirement System.
- **Any resident who is totally blind** may apply for a Lifetime Honorary Fishing License and must provide a Physician's Certification of Blindness with the application.

## NONRESIDENTS

- Nonresidents 16 or older, regardless of physical condition, must have a valid nonresident Georgia fishing license to fish in Georgia freshwater and saltwater, except in private ponds. See also **Agreements for Bordering States** on pages 16–17.
- Nonresidents under 16 do not require a fishing license or trout license.

## Lands Pass

Any person age 16 and older, entering a WMA or PFA must have a valid license that allows fishing or hunting or a Lands Pass (exclusions apply, visit [georgiawildlife.com/LandAccess](http://georgiawildlife.com/LandAccess)). Designated fee areas are marked with a sign at the site or area entrance.

## Reciprocal Agreements for Bordering States

Georgia DNR has Agreements with Alabama, Florida, North Carolina, and South Carolina allowing holders of Georgia fishing licenses to fish in the waters covered without obtaining a fishing license from the bordering state. See **Agreements with Bordering States** on pages 16–17.

## Mountain Trout Licenses

- All resident anglers ages 16 and older must have a trout license and Georgia fishing license to fish in designated mountain trout waters and to fish for or to possess trout. See page 23 for Waters Creek special regulations.
- All nonresident anglers, 16 or older, regardless of physical condition, must possess a nonresident fishing license and nonresident trout license to fish for or possess trout or to fish in designated trout waters.
- Lifetime Sportsman's, Sportsman's, Honorary (free), and Discount Disability licenses include the trout fishing privilege.
- Landowners and their immediate families may fish on their premises without a trout license.
- **State park visitors** are not required to have a trout license to fish in the impounded waters of the Park. However, those visitors wishing to harvest mountain trout will need to have a trout license in their possession.
- See **Public Fishing Areas** on pages 19–21.

## Discover Fishing on Georgia's Free Fishing Days!

**June 6, June 13 and September 26, 2020**

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

## Older Adult Lifetime License

### Don't miss out!

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



**STOP AQUATIC HITCHHIKERS!**

Be A Good Steward.  
Clean. Drain. Dry.  
[StopAquaticHitchhikers.org](http://StopAquaticHitchhikers.org)

**WARNING**  
**REPORT SIGHTINGS OF COGONGRASS  
TO THE GEORGIA FORESTRY COMMISSION  
TO PREVENT LOSS OF FOREST LANDS.**



*Cogongrass can grow in full shade or sun and is spread by both wind-blown seeds and underground creeping rhizomes.*

*Keys To Identification:*

- Large **fluffy white seedheads** are only present in the spring.
- The root system is a dense, thick root mat with extremely long, scaly, and **sharp pointed** rhizomes.
- Leaves have **finely serrate** (knife-like) margins (often **light yellow-green** in color) and prominent off-center white mid-veins.

*Cogongrass is considered to be the “seventh worst weed in the world” and can grow so dense in forests that many ground-dwelling animals such as quail, turkey, and deer find it nearly impossible to travel through.*

*If Cogongrass is allowed to go unchecked, it will choke out all native vegetation.*

*The Georgia Forestry Commission has an eradication program to control Cogongrass, but we need your help. Please report sightings of Cogongrass online at [GaFrees.org](http://GaFrees.org), contact your local GFC Management Forester or call 229-430-5122.*

**Remember: The loss of Cogongrass is your gain.**



**GEORGIA FORESTRY  
COMMISSION**

2020 RECREATIONAL FISHING LICENSE FEES

LICENSE	TERM	RESIDENT	NON-RESIDENT
<b>Combo Hunting &amp; Fishing Licenses</b>			
Combo Hunting & Fishing License	Annual	\$30.00	\$150.00
	One-Day	\$5.00	\$30.00
	+Additional Day	\$1.00	\$10.00
Apprentice Hunting & Fishing License	One-Day	\$5.00	\$30.00
<b>Fishing Licenses</b>			
Fishing License (Resident: 16-64, Nonresident: 16+)	Annual	\$15.00	\$50.00
	One-Day	see combo	\$10.00
	+ Additional Day	see combo	\$3.50
Optional Youth Fishing License (<16)	Multi-Year <sup>1</sup>	\$10.00	Not Offered
Senior Sportsman's License (65+)	Annual	\$7.00	Not Offered
Trout License	Annual	\$10.00	\$25.00
	One-Day	\$5.00	\$10.00
	+ Additional Day	\$1.00	\$2.00
SIP Permit	Annual	FREE	FREE
Commercial Fishing License	Seasonal	\$20.00	\$200.00
Disability Fishing License	Annual	\$3.00	Not Offered
	Three-Year	\$9.00	Not Offered
<b>Public Land Access</b>			
Georgia Lands Pass	Annual	\$30	\$60

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

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

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

Transaction fee applies: \$2.50 online; \$3 at a retail outlet; \$5 by telephone  
<sup>4</sup> Privileges for the multi-year Youth License are valid until the person's 17th birthday.  
 + Additional Day - days can be added for up to 11 consecutive days  
 \* It is illegal to sell any freshwater or saltwater fish harvested with a recreational license.

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Commercial Fishing Licenses

Commercial fishing licenses may be purchased in-person or by mail from DNR offices located at:

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

OR

2062 Hwy. 278 S.E.,  
 Social Circle, GA 30025  
 (800) 366-2661

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# GENERAL REGULATIONS

## Freshwater Game Species Daily Limits

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

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

## Seasons

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

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

## Length Limits

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

fish shorter than the minimum length indicated for that species.

## LARGEMOUTH BASS

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

## SHOAL BASS

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

## SPOTTED BASS

- Lake Lanier: 14 inches

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

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

- **See agreement with South Carolina (page 16)**
- The minimum length for all fish is 22 inches on the North Newport River, Medway River including Mount Hope Creek, Little Ogeechee River, Ogeechee River; Oconee River downstream of GA Hwy 22 in Milledgeville; Ocmulgee River downstream of GA Hwy 96 bridge between Houston and Twiggs counties; Altamaha River, Saint Mary’s River, Satilla River, and the tributaries to these river sections; and from saltwater.

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

## TROUT

No minimum length limit for trout **except:**

- Waters Creek:
  - Brown and rainbow trout: 22 inches
  - Brook trout: 18 inches
- Noontootla Creek and its tributaries on Blue Ridge WMA
  - All trout: 16 inches

## Fishing Gear Must Be Regularly Checked

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

## Creel and Possession Note to Anglers

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

## FRESHWATER TURTLES

- No more than 10 freshwater turtles (any combination of species) may be possessed one time. There is no closed season for the harvest of freshwater turtles, however, taking of species protected by federal or state law is prohibited (for a list of species access: <https://georgiawildlife.com/species#reptiles>). For more information [www.georgiawildlife.com/turtling](http://www.georgiawildlife.com/turtling).

## Fishing on Wildlife Management Areas

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

## Fishing Without Permission

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

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

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**GAME SPECIES DAILY LIMITS** (See page 19 for special limits on Public Fishing Areas.)

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

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

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## FISHING METHODS

### Hook & Line

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

### Sport Trotlines

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

### Set Hooks & Jugs

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

### Spear Fishing

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

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

### Seines, Cast Nets, Bow Nets

- Only nongame fish less than 5 inches in length may be taken using a minnow seine and are not to be sold or used for commercial purposes.
- All other fish and eels taken in minnow seines must be released immediately unharmed into the water.
- A minnow seine must be less than 20 feet in length and have a 3/8 inch or less mesh (square or diameter).
- Minnow seines may not be used in designated trout waters.
- Minnow traps are illegal in freshwater.
- Dip nets and cast nets may be used to take threadfin shad, gizzard shad, and blueback herring for bait except cast nets may not be used in State Park Lakes.
- Bow nets are considered sport shad fishing gear and shall have a minimum legal size of 3 1/2 inches stretched mesh.

### Bow Fishing

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

- Possession of a sport fishing license is required to bow fish in Georgia.
- Arrows must be equipped with barbs or similar devices for recovering fish and must be attached to the person or bow by a line sufficient for recovering the arrow and fish.
- Poisonous or exploding arrowheads are illegal.
- Arrows cannot be discharged into the water closer than 150 feet to anyone engaged in any other means of recreation.
- Legal hours for fishing with bow and arrow are from sunrise to sunset, except that fish (nongame) may be taken at night while using a light in reservoirs over 500 acres in size.
- Any game fish with an open wound possessed by a person bow fishing will be considered evidence of taking fish illegally.
- Know your target - the take of protected species is unlawful (see pg. 6).
- **Note:** Channel and flathead catfish are game fish, and may not be taken by bow and arrow, except in the Savannah River and its tributaries and impoundments in the Savannah River basin by bow and arrow any time during the day or at night by the use of a light.

### Noodling

- Flathead, channel and blue catfish may be taken by hand, **without** the aid of any device, hook, snare, net or other artificial element and without the use of any scuba equipment, air hose or other artificial breathing apparatus.
- **Noodling** is legal in the fresh waters of the state from March 1–July 15 each year.
- A sport fishing license is required to noodle in Georgia.
- It is illegal to take game fish (other than the catfish species listed above) or any other species of fish by hand.
- It is not legal to alter any natural or man-made features in order to attract or capture fish by hand. It is not legal to raise any part of a natural or artificial device out of the water to aid in the hand capture of enclosed fish.

## In Georgia It Is Unlawful To:

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



**BOAT REGISTRATION**

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

**PERSONAL FLOTATION DEVICES**

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

**OUTBOARD MOTOR RESTRICTIONS**

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

**BOATING SAFETY**

- No vessel may be operated over idle speed within 100 feet of any moored or anchored vessel, vessel adrift, or any wharf, pier, piling, or persons in the water, or shoreline next to a full-time or part-time residence, public park, public beach, public swimming area, marina, restaurant, or other public use area.
- Recreation boaters in coastal waters please note: Tybee, Sea Island, St. Simons, and Jekyll Islands have temporal (May 1 – Sept. 30) 1,000 ft. safety zones.
- Alcohol and boats do not mix! It is unlawful to operate a boat while under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
- To learn requirements for operating your boat please visit [www.goboatgeorgia.com](http://www.goboatgeorgia.com) or obtain the *Handbook of Georgia Boating Laws* from any DNR Law Enforcement Office.
- To learn about a boating safety course please visit [www.goboatgeorgia.com](http://www.goboatgeorgia.com) or contact the Boating Education Coordinator at 770-918-6414 or any DNR Law Enforcement Office (see page 4).

See [www.goboatgeorgia.com](http://www.goboatgeorgia.com) for complete boating regulations.

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# AGREEMENTS WITH BORDERING STATES

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

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

## Alabama

### WATERS COVERED

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

### LICENSES

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

### MINIMUM LENGTH LIMITS

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

### CREEL AND POSSESSION LIMITS

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

## Georgia - South Carolina Border Waters Reciprocal Agreement

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

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

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

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

## South Carolina

### WATERS COVERED

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

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

### LICENSES

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

## Stop the Spread of Aquatic Nuisance Species

Non-native or introduced species can be an issue in Georgia, often presenting problems for many of our native fish and plant populations. You can help by practicing the 4 Rs:

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



**LENGTH, CREEL AND POSSESSION LIMITS**

See GA-SC chart above for the length, creel and possession limits for the border waters covered by this agreement.

**GENERAL NOTES**

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

**Florida**

**WATERS COVERED**

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

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

**LICENSES**

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

**CREEL AND POSSESSION LIMITS**

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

**North Carolina**

**WATERS COVERED**

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

**LICENSES**

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

**Did You Know?**

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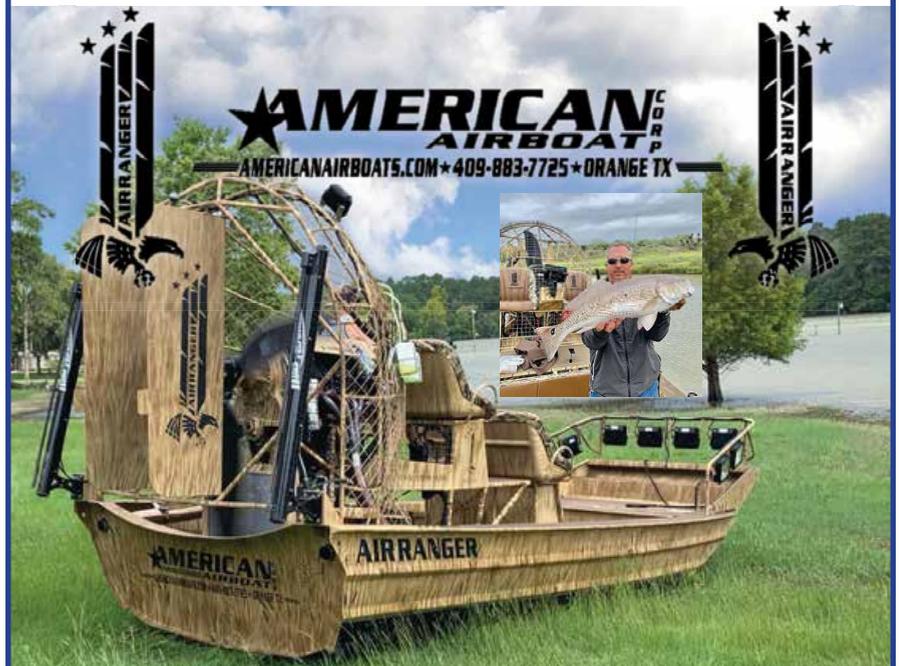


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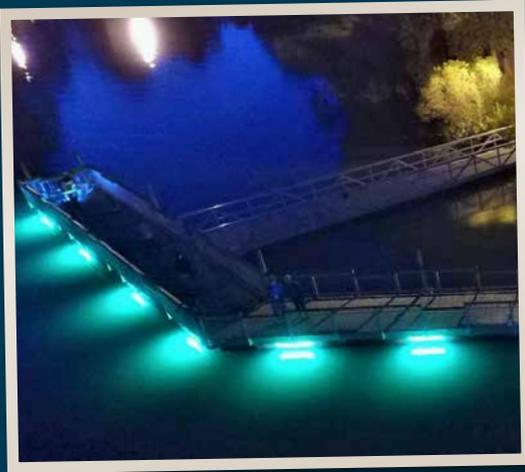
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# PUBLIC FISHING AREAS

Public Fishing Areas (PFAs) are great places for family outings! You can fish from the bank or a boat, picnic, hike, watch wildlife, and enjoy the outdoors. Good bank fishing opportunities are available at all PFAs and many of them have special kids fishing areas for young anglers.

## Please Read Before Fishing a PFA

### LICENSES:

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

### LENGTH AND DAILY LIMITS:

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

### LENGTH LIMIT:

Largemouth bass: 14 inches minimum unless otherwise posted.

### DAILY LIMITS:

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

**Grass carp must be released immediately.**

### HOURS OF OPERATION

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

## Hunting on Public Fishing Areas

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

### BIG LAZER CREEK

**Talbot County, 478-825-6151**

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

**Water:** 195 acre lake.

**Facilities:** Concrete two-lane boat ramp, fishing piers, fish cleaning station, shooting range, rest-

rooms, picnic tables, primitive camping, some facilities accessible to persons with disabilities.

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

### MARBEN PFA (CHARLIE ELLIOTT WILDLIFE CENTER)

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

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

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

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

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

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

### DODGE COUNTY

**478-374-6765 or 912-285-6094**

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

**Note:** There is no minimum size on largemouth bass, but each angler is only allowed 1 bass over 16 inches.

**Water:** 104 acre lake.

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

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

### EVANS COUNTY

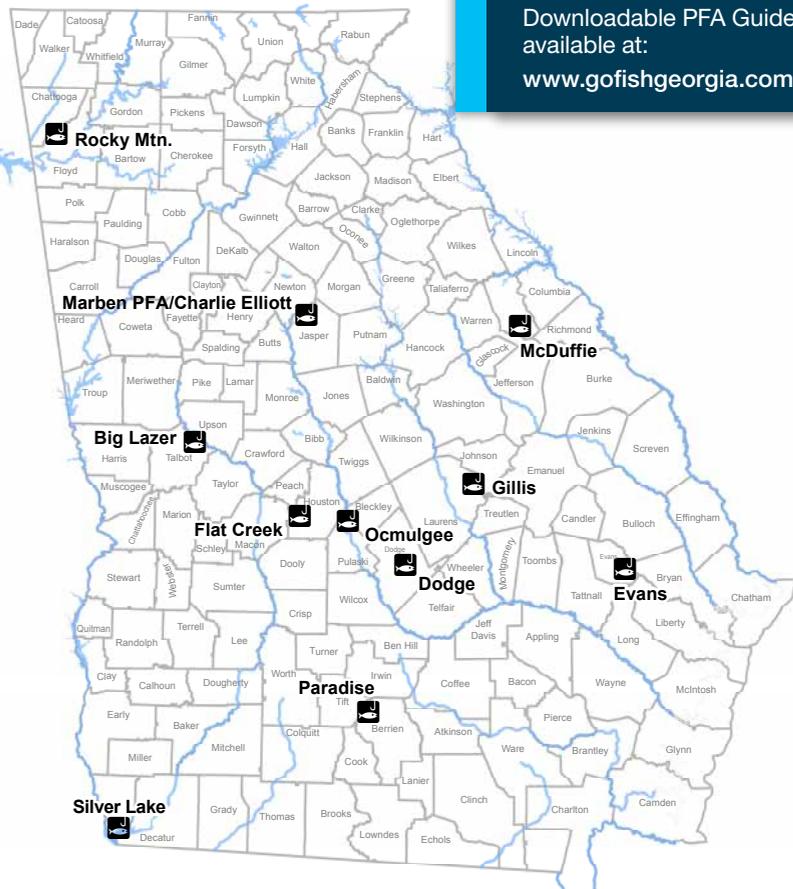
**912-727-2112**

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

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

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

## PUBLIC FISHING AREAS



**PUBLIC FISHING AREAS**

for pricing and reservations), some facilities accessible to persons with disabilities.

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

**FLAT CREEK**

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

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

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

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

**Directions from I-75:** Take I-75 to exit 134 (South Perry Parkway), Turn west onto South Perry Parkway, Travel approx. 0.25 miles and turn left (South) on Georgia Highway 41, Drive about 2 miles and turn left into Flat Creek Public Fishing Area.

**HUGH M. GILLIS**

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

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

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

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

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

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

**MCDUFFIE**

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

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

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

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

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

**OCMULGEE**

**Bleckley/Pulaski Counties**

**478-783-2557 (PFA) or 912-285-6094 (Waycross)**

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

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

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

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

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

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

**PARADISE**

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

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

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

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

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

**ROCKY MOUNTAIN RECREATION & PUBLIC FISHING AREA**

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

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

The most up-to-date regulations online.

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# Public Fishing Areas Unlawful Activities

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

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

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

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

**Restrictions:**

- It is illegal to possess alcoholic beverages.
- Day fishing **only**.

• No one may rappel, rock climb or hang glide.

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

**SILVER LAKE**  
**Decatur County**  
**(229) 430-4256**

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

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

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

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

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

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# FRESHWATER TROUT FISHING

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

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

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

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

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## Trout Season

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

## Trout Fishing Hours

- Fishing 24 hours a day is allowed on all trout streams and all impoundments on trout streams **except** those in the next paragraph.
- Fishing hours on Dockery Lake, Rock Creek Lake, the Chattahoochee River from Buford Dam to Peachtree Creek, the Conasauga River watershed upstream of the Georgia-Tennessee state line and Smith Creek downstream of Unicoi dam are 30 minutes before sunrise until 30 minutes after sunset. Night fishing is not allowed.
- See page 23 for fishing hours of Waters Creek.

## Trout Fishing Rules

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

## Impoundments On Trout Streams

### ANGLERS CAN:

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

### IMPOUNDMENT NOTES:

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

## Delayed Harvest Streams

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

- **Amicalola Creek** from County Road 192 (Steele Bridge Road) downstream to GA Hwy 53.
- **Chattahoochee River** from Sope Creek (off Columns Drive) downstream to US Hwy 41 (Cobb Parkway).
- **Chattooga River** from GA Hwy 28 bridge upstream to the mouth of Reed Creek.

- **Smith Creek** on Unicoi State Park from Unicoi Dam downstream to the Unicoi State Park property boundary.
- **Toccoa River** on U.S. Forest Service land from 0.4 miles above the Shallowford Bridge upstream to a point 450 feet upstream of the Sandy Bottom Canoe Access.  
Visit [www.gofishgeorgia.com](http://www.gofishgeorgia.com) to see maps of Delayed Harvest Streams and learn more about this program.

## Artificial Lures Only

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

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

## Other Trout Stream Regulations

### MOCCASIN CREEK

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

### SMITHGALL WOODS-DUKES CREEK CONSERVATION AREA

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

- Only artificial lures with barbless hooks may be used or possessed on the portion of Dukes Creek and its tributaries in White County on the Conservation Area, including the GA Hwy 75 Alternate right-of-way. Possession of any bait, lure, or gear not legal for use on the stream is unlawful.

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

### WATERS CREEK

Waters Creek, located on the Chestatee WMA, is managed for trophy trout. Waters Creek and its tributaries are open on Wednesdays, Saturdays, and Sundays between 6:30 a.m. and 6:30 p.m. Eastern Standard Time (7:30 p.m. Eastern Daylight Saving Time) with the following restrictions:

- Artificial lures with a single barbless hook no larger than a #6 must be used. Only one lure can be used at a time. You cannot possess lures that do not meet these criteria while on the area.

- Landing nets may not exceed two (2) feet in length.
- Possession of any bait, lure, landing nets or gear not legal for use on the stream is unlawful.
- No night fishing.

### Size and possession limits:

- **Size limits:** 22 inches for brown and rainbow trout and 18 inches for brook trout. It is a violation to possess a trout smaller than these limits while fishing on Waters creek.
- **Possession limit:** One (1) trout may be possessed daily. No person may take more than three (3) trout from January 1 to December 31 each year.

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## Trout Stocking Information Online

For a weekly list of trout stocked during stocking season, please visit [georgiawildlife.com/Fishing/Trout](http://georgiawildlife.com/Fishing/Trout) for our Weekly Stocking Report. You can also sign up for email updates to get the latest on local fishing hot spots and much more.

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# TROUT STREAMS DESTINATIONS BY COUNTY

**All Trout Streams** are open to fishing throughout the year.

**Watershed:** the stream and all its tributaries (streams flowing into that stream).

Abbreviations used throughout this section:

**Cr. = Creek and R. = River**

**NOTE:** The following trout streams have special regulations (see pages 22–23 before fishing): Amicalola Cr., Chattahoochee R., Chattooga R., Coleman R., Conasauga R., Hoods Cr., Jones Cr., Moccasin Cr., Mountaintown Cr., Noontootla Cr., Smithgall Woods-Dukes Cr., Smith Cr., Stanley Cr., Toccoa R., Walnut Fork Cr., and Waters Cr.

## BARTOW COUNTY

Boston Cr. watershed upstream from GA Hwy 20; Connesena Cr. watershed; Dykes Cr. watershed; Pine Log Cr. watershed; Pyle Cr. watershed; Salacoa Cr. watershed; Spring Cr. watershed; Stamp Cr. watershed upstream from Bartow Co Rd. 269; Toms Cr. watershed upstream from Bartow Co Rd. 82; Two Run Cr. watershed; Ward Cr. watershed.

## CARROLL COUNTY

Tallapoosa R. watershed north of I-20, not including Little Tallapoosa R. watershed.

## CATOOSA COUNTY

Dry Cr. watershed, which is a part of the East Chickamauga Cr. watershed, upstream of Catoosa Co Rd. 257; Hurricane Cr. watershed upstream from Peters Branch; Little Chickamauga Cr. watershed upstream from Catoosa Co Rd. 387; Tiger Cr. watershed upstream from GA Hwy 2.

## CHATTOOGA COUNTY

Allgood Branch watershed; Chappel Cr. watershed; Chelsea Cr. watershed; East Fork Little R. watershed, including Gilreath Cr.; Hinton Cr. watershed; Kings Cr. watershed; Little Armuchee Cr. watershed upstream from Co Rd. 326; Mt. Hope Cr. (Coon Cr.) watershed; Perennial Spring watershed; Raccoon Cr. watershed upstream from GA Hwy 48; Ruff Cr. watershed; Storey Mill Cr. watershed; Taliaferro Cr. watershed.

## CHEROKEE COUNTY

Bluff Cr. watershed upstream from Cherokee Co Rd. 114; Boston Cr. watershed; Pine Log Cr. watershed; Salacoa Cr. watershed; Soap Cr. watershed upstream from Cherokee Co Rd. 116; Stamp Cr. watershed; Wiley Cr. watershed.

## COBB COUNTY

Chattahoochee R. upstream from the mouth of Peachtree Cr.

## DADE COUNTY

Allison Cr. watershed; East Fork Little R. watershed; Lookout Cr. watershed, upstream from Dade Co Rd. 197; Rock Cr. watershed.

## DAWSON COUNTY

Amicalola Cr. watershed upstream from GA Hwy 53; Anderson Cr. watershed; Long Swamp Cr. watershed; Nimblewill Cr. watershed; Shoal Cr. watershed upstream from the mouth of Burt Cr.; Sweetwater Cr. watershed.

## FANNIN COUNTY

Charlie Cr. watershed; Flat Cr. watershed; Rock Cr. Lake; Star Cr. watershed; Wilscot Cr. watershed; and all other streams or parts of streams not listed above except: Toccoa R. watershed below the mouth of Stanley Cr. to Blue Ridge Reservoir and tributaries of Blue Ridge Reservoir not listed above.

## FLOYD COUNTY

Dykes Cr. watershed; Johns Cr. watershed upstream from Floyd Co Rd. 212; Kings Cr. watershed; Lavender Cr. watershed upstream from Floyd Co Rd. 893; Little Cedar Cr. watershed; Mt. Hope Cr. watershed; Silver Cr. watershed upstream from GA Hwy 1E (Floyd Co Rd. 631); Spring Cr. watershed, which flows into Etowah R.; Toms Cr. watershed.

## FORSYTH COUNTY

Chattahoochee R.

## FULTON COUNTY

Chattahoochee R. upstream from the mouth of Peachtree Cr.

## GILMER COUNTY

Harris Cr. watershed; Johnson Cr. watershed; Mountaintown Cr. watershed; Tails Cr. watershed; and all other streams or parts of streams not listed above, except: Coosawattee R. downstream from old GA Hwy 5 (Gilmer Co Rd. 239), Talking Rock Cr., and tributaries to Carters Reservoir not listed above.

## GORDON COUNTY

Johns Cr. watershed upstream of Floyd Co Rd. 212; Pin Hook Cr. watershed upstream from Gordon Co Rd. 275; Pine Log Cr. watershed upstream from GA Hwy 53; Rocky Cr. watershed upstream from Gordon Co Rd. 210; Salacoa Cr. watershed upstream from US Hwy 411; Snake Cr. watershed.

## GWINNETT COUNTY

Chattahoochee R.

## HABERSHAM COUNTY

Amy's Cr. watershed upstream from GA Hwy 17; Chattahoochee R. watershed upstream from GA Hwy 255 crossing of the Chattahoochee R.; Liberty Cr. watershed; Middle Fork Broad R. watershed; Nancytown Cr. watershed upstream from Nancytown Lake; North Fork Broad R. watershed; Panther Cr. watershed; Roberts Branch watershed; Soque R. watershed upstream from the mouth of Deep Cr.; Toccoa Cr. watershed.

## HARALSON COUNTY

Flatwood Cr. watershed; Lassetter Cr. watershed; Mann Cr. watershed upstream from Haralson Co Rd. 162; Tallapoosa Cr. watershed; Tallapoosa R. watershed upstream from Co Rd. 222.

## HART COUNTY

Savannah R. from Hartwell Dam downstream to Richard B. Russell Reservoir.

## LUMPKIN COUNTY

Amicalola Cr. watershed; Cane Cr. watershed upstream from the GA Hwy 52 bridge; Cavender Cr. watershed; Chestatee R. watershed upstream from the mouth of Tesnatee Cr.; Dockery Lake; Etowah R. watershed upstream from Castleberry Bridge; Shoal Cr. watershed; Yahoola Cr. watershed upstream from GA Hwy 52.

## MURRAY COUNTY

Conasauga R. watershed upstream from the Georgia-Tennessee state line (includes Jacks R. watershed); Holly Cr. watershed upstream from the mouth of Dill Cr., including Dill Cr. watershed; Mill Cr. watershed upstream from Murray Co Rd. 27; Mill Cr. (Hasslers Mill Cr.) watershed, which is within Holly Cr. watershed; North Prong Sumac Cr. watershed; Rock Cr. watershed, the most southern of two Rock Cr. watersheds which are in the Holly Cr. watershed, upstream from Murray Co Rd. 4; Rock Cr. watershed, the most northern of two Rock Cr. watersheds which are in the Holly Cr. watershed, upstream from Murray Co Rd. 301; Sugar Cr. watershed upstream from Murray Co Rd. 4; Sumac Cr. watershed upstream from Coffey Lake.

## PAULDING COUNTY

Possum Cr. watershed upstream from Paulding Co Rd. 64; Powder Cr. (Powder Springs Cr.) watershed; Pyle Cr. watershed; Pumpkinvine Cr. watershed upstream from Paulding Co Rd. 231; Raccoon Cr. watershed upstream from State Route 2299 (Paulding Co Rd. 471); Tallapoosa R. watershed; Thompson Cr. watershed; Ward Cr. watershed.

## PICKENS COUNTY

Amicalola Cr. watershed; Ball Cr. watershed; Bluff Cr. watershed; Cartecay R. watershed; Cove Cr. watershed upstream from Pickens Co Rd. 294; Fausett Cr. watershed; Fisher Cr. watershed; Hobson Cr. watershed; Little Scarecorn Cr. watershed; Long Swamp Cr. watershed, including Darnell Cr. watershed, upstream from Cove Cr.; Mud Cr. watershed; Pin Hook Cr. watershed; Rock Cr. watershed; Salacoa Cr. watershed; Scarecorn Cr. watershed upstream from GA Hwy 53; Sevenmile Cr. watershed; Sharp Mountain Cr. watershed; Soap Cr. watershed; Talking Rock Cr. watershed upstream from S1011 (GA Hwy 136); Town Cr. watershed; Wildcat Cr. watershed.

## **POLK COUNTY**

Cedar Cr. watershed upstream from Polk Co Rd. 121; Little Cedar Cr. watershed; Pumpkinpile Cr. watershed upstream from Polk Co Rd. 437; Silver Cr. watershed; Spring Cr. watershed; Tallapoosa R. watershed; Thompson Cr. watershed upstream of Polk Co Rd. 441.

## **RABUN COUNTY**

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

## **STEPHENS COUNTY**

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

## **TOWNS COUNTY**

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

## **UNION COUNTY**

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

## **WALKER COUNTY**

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

Cr.; Furnace Cr. watershed; Gulf Cr. watershed; Harrisburg Cr. watershed, including Dougherty Cr. watershed, upstream from Dougherty Cr.; Johns Cr. watershed; Left Fork Coulter Branch watershed; Little Chickamauga Cr. watershed; Rock Cr. watershed, including Sawmill Branch, upstream from Sawmill Branch; Ruff Cr. watershed; Snake Cr. watershed; West Armuchee Cr. watershed; West Chickamauga Cr. watershed upstream from Walker Co Rd. 107.

## **WHITE COUNTY**

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

## **WHITFIELD COUNTY**

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

## **Commercial Fishing**

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

## **Sale of Fish & Aquaculture**

### **Game Fish**

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

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

### **Domestic Fish**

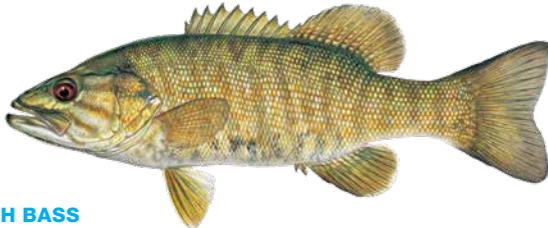
- Aquaculturists (fish farmers) must register with the Department of Natural Resources in order to sell domestic fish.
- Registration applications are available from any Fisheries Section office, at [www.gofishgeorgia.com](http://www.gofishgeorgia.com), or by calling 770-918-6408. Find Aquaculture information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

GEORGIA FRESHWATER FISH



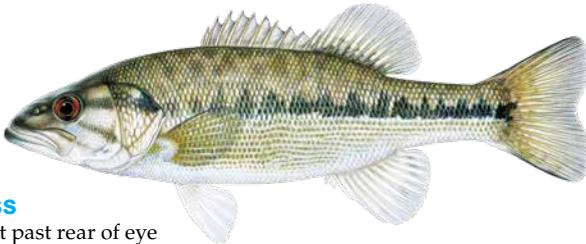
**LARGEMOUTH BASS**

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



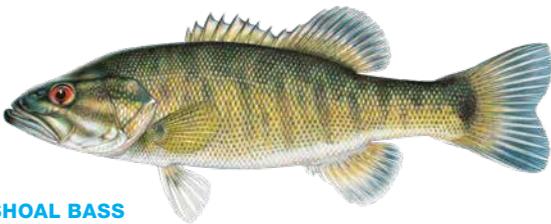
**SMALLMOUTH BASS**

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



**SPOTTED BASS**

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



**SHOAL BASS**

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



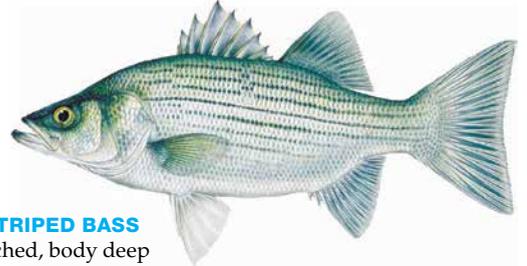
**CHAIN PICKEREL (JACKFISH)**

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



**WHITE BASS**

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



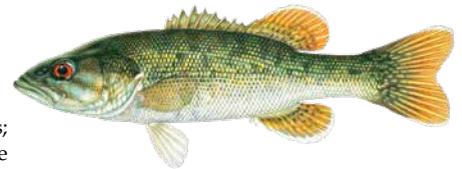
**HYBRID WHITE-STRIPED BASS**

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



**STRIPED BASS**

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



**REDEYE BASS**

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



**FLATHEAD CATFISH**

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



**WALLEYE**

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



**BLACK CRAPPIE**

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



**RAINBOW TROUT**

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



**REDEAR SUNFISH (SHELLCRACKER)**

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



**BROWN TROUT**

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



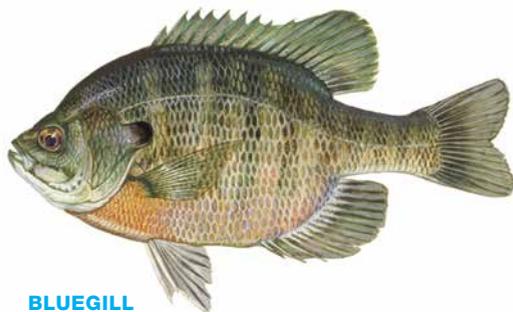
**REDBREAST SUNFISH**

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



**BROOK TROUT**

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



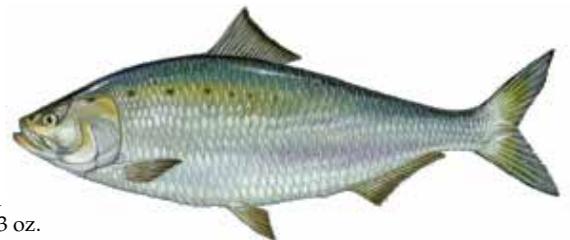
**BLUEGILL**

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



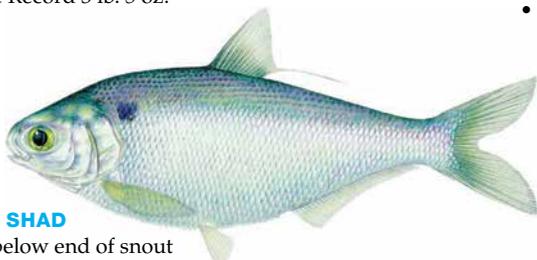
**CHANNEL CATFISH**

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



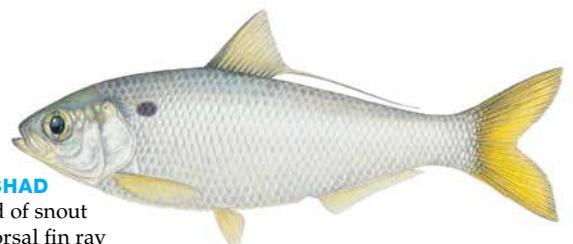
**AMERICAN SHAD**

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



**GIZZARD SHAD**

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



**THREADFIN SHAD**

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

# FRESHWATER FISH RECORDS



## Way To Go!

Young angler Jose Reyes caught two award-winning fish on the same day at Paradise Public Fishing Area. The two channel catfish he caught weighed a combined 18 lb. 15 oz and both were more than 24 inches long. At only 14 years old, Jose is well on his way to becoming an expert fisherman.

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SPECIES	WEIGHT	ANGLER	LOCATION	DATE
Bass, Hybrid	25 lb. 8 oz.	David Hobby	Lake Chatuge	May 1995
Bass, Largemouth	22 lb. 4 oz.	George Perry	Montgomery Lake	June 1932
Bass, Redeye	3 lb. 7 oz.	Steve Williams	Lake Hartwell	April 2004
Bass, Shoal	8 lb. 3 oz.	David Hubbard	Flint River	Oct 1977
Bass, Smallmouth	7 lb. 2 oz.	Jack Hall	Lake Chatuge	March 1973
Bass, Spotted	8 lb. 2 oz.	Wayne Holland	Lake Burton	Feb 2005
Bass, Striped (tie)	63 lb.	Kelly Ward	Oconee River	May 1967
		Terry McConnell	Lake Richard B. Russell	April 2009
Bass, Suwanee	3 lb. 9 oz.	Laverne Norton	Ochlocknee River	Oct 1984
Bass, White	5 lb. 1 oz.	J.M. Hobbins	Lake Lanier	June 1971
Bowfin	16 lb. 3 oz.	Jimmy Tucker	Suwannee River	June 2014
Bullhead, Brown	5 lb. 8 oz.	James Andrews	O.F. Veal Pond	May 1978
Bullhead, Yellow	4 lb. 15 oz.	Glenn Settles	Ogeechee River	Oct 2003
Carp, Common	35 lb. 12 oz.	Rev. Donald Clark	Lake Jackson	1972
Catfish, Blue	93 lb. 0 oz.	Richard Barrett	Altamaha River	Oct 2017
Catfish, Channel	44 lb. 12 oz.	Bobby Smithwick	Altamaha River	May 1972
Catfish, Flathead	83 lb.	Carl Sawyer	Altamaha River	June 2006
		Jim Dieveney	Altamaha River	July 2010
Catfish, White	8 lb. 10 oz.	James Sanders	Savannah River	June 1996
Crappie, Black (tie)	4 lb. 4 oz.	Shirley Lavender	Acree's Lake	June 1971
		Steve Cheek	Lake Spivey	March 1975
Crappie, White	5 lb.	Theresa Kemp	Bibb Co. Pond	April 1984
Gar, Longnose	30 lb. 13 oz.	Gerald Kennedy	Lake Lanier	Sept 2013
Muskellunge	38 lb.	Rube Golden	Blue Ridge Lake	June 1957
Perch, Yellow	2 lb. 9 oz.	Thomas Lewis	Savannah River	Feb 2013
Pickereel, Chain	9 lb. 6 oz.	Baxley McQuaig Jr.	Homerville	Feb 1961
Pickereel, Redfin	2 lb. 10 oz.	Gene Brantley	Lewis' Pond	July 1982
Pike, Northern	18 lb. 2 oz.	Keith Gragg	Lake Rabun	June 1982
Sauger	4 lb. 3 oz.	Stuart Bowers	Clarks Hill Reservoir	April 1986
Shad, American	8 lb. 3 oz.	Henry Baxley	Savannah River	April 1986
Shad, Hickory	1 lb. 15 oz.	Mark Bowers	Ogeechee River	April 1995
Shadow Bass	0 lb, 10 oz	Kristen Brown	Flint River	June 2016
Sunfish, Bluegill	3 lb. 5 oz.	P.F. Gumm	Shamrock Lake	July 1977
Sunfish, Flier	1 lb. 4 oz.	Curt Brooks	Lowndes Co. Pond	Feb 1996
Sunfish, Green	1 lb. 7 oz.	Jeff Sumner	Private Pond	Feb 2006
Sunfish, Redbreast	1 lb. 11 oz.	Emory Walden	Coweta Co. Pond	April 1998
Sunfish, Redear	4 lb. 2 oz.	Pat Lawrence	Richmond Co. Pond	June 1995
Sunfish, Spotted	11 oz.	Jacob Hornady	Sumter Co. Pond	April 2019
Sunfish, Warmouth	2 lb.	Carlton Robbins	Private Pond	May 1974
Trout, Brook	5 lb. 10 oz.	Russell Braden	Waters Creek	March 1986
Trout, Brown	20 lb. 14 oz.	Chad Doughty	Chattahoochee River	July 2014
Trout, Rainbow	17 lb. 8 oz.	Mark Cochran	Soque River	May 2004
Walleye	14 lb. 2 oz.	Wes Carlton	Lake Rabun	Feb 2016

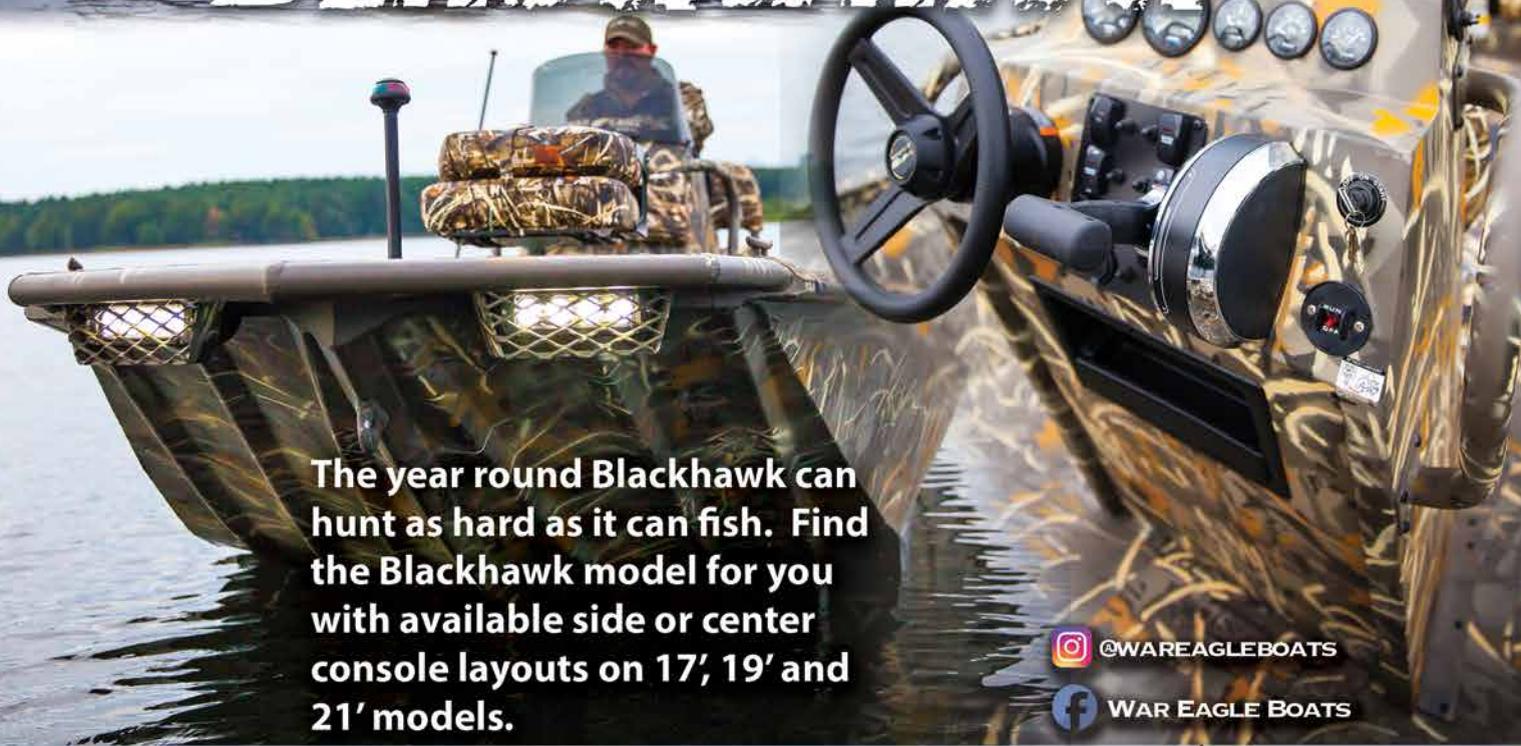
RED indicates new record!

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

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(plus tax)

## Hours

### September 1 - May 31

Friday & Saturday 9 a.m.–5 p.m.  
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### June 1 - August 31

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Sunday 1 p.m.–5 p.m.

- See over 200,000 gallons of aquariums/exhibits
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- Enjoy virtual fishing & hunting simulators
- See how fish are raised in a state-of-the-art hatchery
- Catch & release fish in the stocked outdoor fishing pond (poles & bait provided)

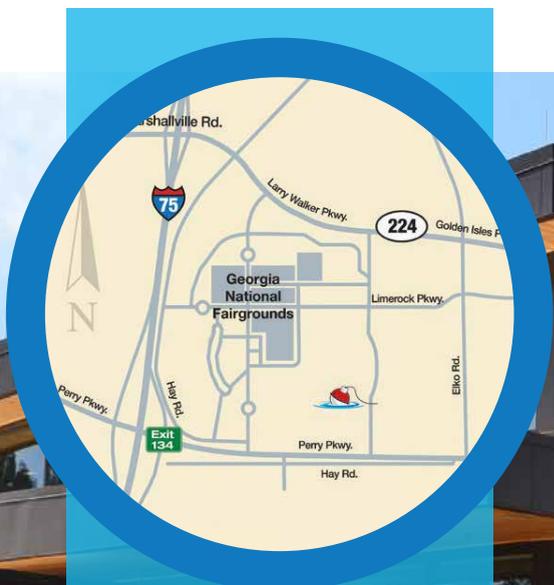
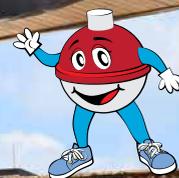
For field trip information, other educational opportunities & general information, please visit our website

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

It's time to



# GO FISH



Take exit 134 on I-75  
Head east  
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# Get Kids Hooked!

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

## KIDS FISHING EVENTS

Kids Fishing Events are held monthly during the spring and summer at DNR Public Fishing Areas. Kids are able to fish for free in stocked ponds with the help of experienced volunteers. For more information on:

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

Visit [www.gofishgeorgia.com/kidsfishing](http://www.gofishgeorgia.com/kidsfishing)

## YOUTH FISHING PROGRAMS

Want to get your child hooked on fishing but not sure how or where. Try one of our Summer Fishing Day Camps at the Go Fish Education Center (<https://gofisheducationcenter.com/education-gfec>). Try one of our weekend long Fish-n-Learn Education Programs (<https://georgiawildlife.com/FishAndLearn>) for youth ages 8-15. A weekend isn't long enough? Try one of our week-long Gone Fishing Overnight Camps at Charlie Elliott Wildlife Center in Mansfield ([georgiawildlife.com/CharlieElliott](http://georgiawildlife.com/CharlieElliott)).

## EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

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

## SUMMER CAMPS

Charlie Elliott Wildlife Center (hour east of Atlanta) offers a variety of day and overnight summer camps programs around the topics of backyard nature, shooting sports, wildlife conservation, and outdoor skills for ages 7-15. Activities include fishing, canoeing, hiking, pond studies, orienteering and more. Visit [georgiawildlife.com/CharlieElliott](http://georgiawildlife.com/CharlieElliott) for more information.

## GIVE THE GIFT OF FISHING!

Got a young angler in the house? Buy a lifetime license for a child and save hundreds. It's never too early!



# BRAGGING BOARD



## Don't Miss Your Opportunity to Win an Award!

Since the addition of the new angler award categories, Georgia anglers have been trying hard to catch that prize-winning fish. Some of them succeeded but all are winners because they chose to Go Fish Georgia! This year we want to take some time and tell you more about the **Trophy Largemouth Bass Category**.

**Categories and incentives for the Trophy Bass Category will be:**

- 10–12.99 lb on private or public water in Georgia:
  - » Certificate
  - » T-shirt and hat
  - » Entry in a drawing for an end of year reward package
  - » Photo published on WRD Social Media
  - » Two passes to the Go Fish Education Center
- Bass equal to or greater than 13 lb on private or public water in Georgia:
  - » Same as above, plus replica mount of the fish



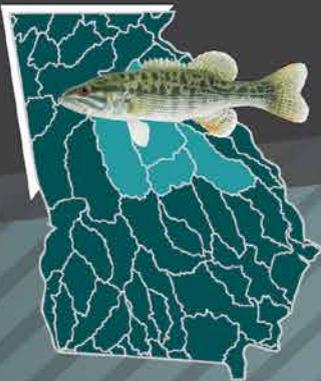
### What a Catch!

Angler Cindy Horne nabbed this 13.42 lb largemouth bass from Tired Creek Reservoir in Grady County. Her catch became the first eligible largemouth from region 3 to qualify for the Trophy Bass Angler Award. As part of the program, Cindy will receive a replica mount of her catch.

Full program details are available at any Fisheries office as well as [GoFishGeorgia.com/fishing/anglerawards](http://GoFishGeorgia.com/fishing/anglerawards).

# GEORGIA'S BLACK BASS SLAM

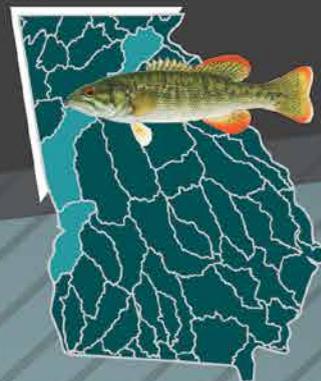
**Altamaha**



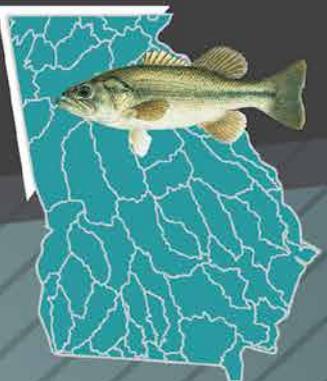
**Bartram's**



**Chattahoochee**



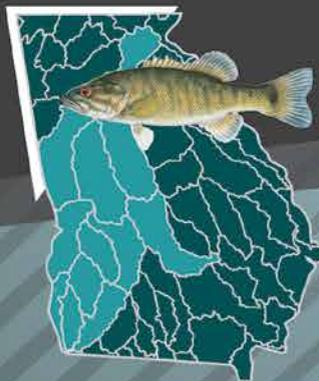
**Largemouth**



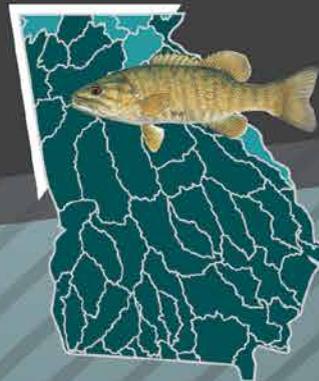
**Redeye**



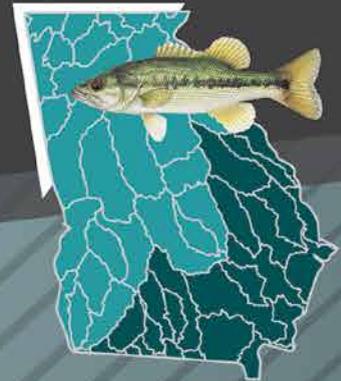
**Shoal**



**Smallmouth**



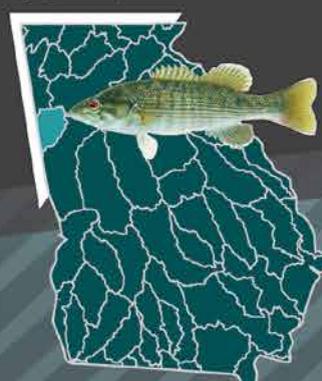
**Spotted**



**Suwannee**



**Tallapoosa**



## BE A SUCCESSFUL "SLAM" ANGLER:

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

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

# FISH CONSUMPTION GUIDELINES: GEORGIA WATERS

## THE HEALTH BENEFITS OF EATING FISH

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

## WHAT ARE THE GUIDELINES?

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

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

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

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

## HOW TO REDUCE YOUR HEALTH RISK

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

**Clean and cook fish properly.** Some chemicals have a tendency to concentrate in the fatty tissues of fish. By removing the fish's skin and trimming the fat, you can substantially reduce contaminants.

## No Consumption Restrictions

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

### Lakes

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

### Rivers and Creeks

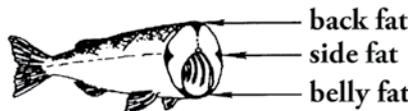
Alcovy River; Boen Creek (Rabun Co.); Brasstown Creek (Towns Co.); Broad River; Buffalo Creek (Carroll Co.); Butternut Creek (Union Co.); Cane Creek (Lumpkin Co.); Chattahoochee River (Chattahoochee, Early and Stewart Cos.); Chattanooga Creek; Chattooga River (NW Ga.); Chickasawhatchee Creek; Coleman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

**Cook fish so fat drips away.** Broil, bake, or grill fish and do not use the drippings. Deep-fat frying removes some contaminants, but discard the oil once you have cooked the fish. Pan frying removes few contaminants.

## GUIDELINES FOR GEORGIA

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

## TRIM AWAY THESE FATTY AREAS.



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

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

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

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

# FISH CONSUMPTION GUIDELINES: RIVERS & CREEKS

NO RESTRICTIONS	Bass, Largemouth	Bass, Other	Bass, Shoal	Bass, Spotted	Bass, Striped	Bass, White	Bluegill	Bowfin	Buffalo	Bullhead	Carp	Catfish, Blue	Catfish, Channel	Catfish, Flathead	Catfish, White	Crappie	Mullet, Striped	Perch, Yellow	Pickereel, Chain	Redbreast	Redhorse	Redear	Sucker	Sunfish, Green	Sunfish, Other	Trout, Brown	Trout, Rainbow	
ONE MEAL PER WEEK																												
ONE MEAL PER MONTH																												
DO NOT EAT																												
NO DATA																												
Alapaha River	NO DATA									NO DATA											NO DATA			NO DATA				
Alapahoochee River										NO DATA																		
Allatoona Crk. (Cobb Co.)				NO DATA																				NO DATA				
Altamaha River	NO DATA						NO DATA					NO DATA		NO DATA				NO DATA										
Altamaha River (below US Route 25)	NO DATA												NO DATA	NO DATA				NO DATA										
Apalachee River	NO DATA											NO DATA	NO DATA															
Beaver Crk. (Taylor Co.)										NO DATA																		
Brier Crk. (Burke Co.)	NO DATA																								NO DATA			
Canoochee River (Hwy 192 to Lotts Crk.)	NO DATA									NO DATA			NO DATA									NO DATA						
Canoochee River (Lotts Crk. to Ogeechee River)	NO DATA									NO DATA			NO DATA									NO DATA						
Casey Canal	NO DATA																NO DATA											
Chattahoochee River (Helen to Lk. Lanier)	NO DATA	NO DATA	NO DATA	NO DATA	NO DATA					NO DATA			NO DATA										NO DATA					
(Buford Dam to Morgan Falls Dam)	NO DATA										NO DATA																	NO DATA
(Morgan Falls Dam to Peachtree Crk.)	NO DATA	NO DATA	NO DATA	NO DATA	NO DATA	NO DATA					NO DATA													NO DATA			NO DATA	
(Peachtree Crk. to Pea Crk.)	NO DATA	NO DATA	NO DATA	NO DATA	NO DATA	NO DATA					NO DATA													NO DATA			NO DATA	
(Pea Crk. to West Point Lk., below Franklin)	NO DATA				NO DATA																							
(West Point dam to I-85)	NO DATA									NO DATA																		
(Oliver Dam to Upatoi Crk.)	NO DATA			NO DATA						NO DATA																		
Chattooga River (NE Georgia, Rabun County)																												NO DATA
Chestatee River (below Tesnatee Riv.)														NO DATA														
Chickamauga Crk. (West)																												
Cohulla Crk. (Whitfield Co.)																												
Conasauga River (below Stataline)																												
Coosa River (River Mile Zero to Hwy 100, Floyd Co.)	NO DATA				<20"	NO DATA						<18"	18-32"	>32"														
Coosa River (Hwy 100 to Stataline, Floyd Co.)	NO DATA				<20"	NO DATA						<18"	18-32"	>32"	NO DATA													
Coosa River (Coosa, Etowah below Thompson-Weinman dam, Oostanaula)					<20"	NO DATA																						
Coosawattee River (below Carters)										NO DATA																		
Etowah River (Dawson Co.)																												NO DATA
Etowah River (above Lake Allatoona)																												NO DATA
Etowah River (below Lake Allatoona dam)	NO DATA				NO DATA	NO DATA				NO DATA			NO DATA															NO DATA
Flint River (Spalding/Fayette Cos.)	NO DATA																											NO DATA
Flint River (Meriwether/Upson/Pike Cos.)																												NO DATA
Flint River (Taylor Co.)	NO DATA	NO DATA																										NO DATA
Flint River (Macon/Dooly/Worth/Lee Cos.)																												NO DATA
Flint River (Dougherty/Baker Mitchell Cos.)																												NO DATA
Gum Crk. (Crisp Co.)											NO DATA																	NO DATA
Holly Crk. (Murray Co.)																												NO DATA
Ichawaynochaway Crk.	NO DATA																											NO DATA
Kinchafoonee Crk. (above Albany)																												NO DATA
Little River (above Clarks Hill Lake)																												NO DATA
Little River (above Ga. Hwy 133, Valdosta)	NO DATA																											NO DATA
Mill Crk. (Murray Co.)																												NO DATA
Muckalee Crk. (above Albany)	NO DATA																											NO DATA

# FISH CONSUMPTION GUIDELINES: RIVERS & CREEKS

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

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

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

# FISH CONSUMPTION GUIDELINES: LAKES

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

# FISH CONSUMPTION GUIDELINES: COASTAL RIVERS & CREEKS

RESTRICTION LEVEL	Atlantic Croaker	Bass, Striped	Blue Crab	Drum, Black	Drum, Red	Flounder	Sheepshead	Southern Kingfish (Whiting)	Spot	Spotted Seatrout	Striped Mullet	Shrimp	Yellowtail (Silver Perch)	Summer Flounder
NO RESTRICTIONS	Red	White	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Red	Orange	Orange	Red	Green	White	White
ONE MEAL PER WEEK	Orange	White	Blue	Blue	Blue	Green	Blue	Blue	Orange	Blue	Orange	Green	White	White
ONE MEAL PER MONTH	Orange	White	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Orange	Orange	Blue	Orange	Blue	White	White
DO NOT EAT	Red	White	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Green	White	White
NO DATA	White	White	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Green	White	White
Turtle River System (Purvis, Gibson Crks.)	Red	White	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Red	Orange	Orange	Red	Green	White	White
Turtle & Buffalo Rivers (upriver Hwy 303)	Orange	White	Blue	Blue	Blue	Green	Blue	Blue	Orange	Blue	Orange	Green	White	White
Turtle River (Hwy 303 to Channel Marker 9)	Orange	White	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Orange	Orange	Blue	Orange	Blue	White	White
Turtle River (C. Marker 9 & So. Brunswick River to Dubignons & Parsons Crk.s)	Blue	White	Green	Green	Green	Green	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Green	White	White
Terry Crk. (South of Torras Causeway to Lanier Basin)	Green	White	Green	White	White	White	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Blue	White
Terry & Dupree Crk.s (North of Torras Causeway to Confluence w/ Back River)	Blue	White	Green	White	White	White	Blue	Blue	Blue	Orange	Green	Green	White	White
Back River (1 mi. above Terry Crk. to Confluence with Torras Causeway)	Blue	White	Green	White	White	White	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	White	White
Back River (South of Torras Cswy. to St. Simons Sound)	Green	White	Green	White	White	White	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	White	White
North Newport (Upper), incl. Cay/Peacock	White	White	Blue	White	White	White	White	White	White	White	Green	White	White	White
Savannah Estuary	White	Orange (≥27")	White	White	White	White	White	White	White	White	Green	White	White	White
Atlantic Ocean	White	White	White	White	White	White	Blue	White	White	White	White	White	White	Orange

## KING MACKEREL SPECIAL JOINT STATE CONSUMPTION GUIDANCE ISSUED BY GEORGIA, NORTH CAROLINA, SOUTH CAROLINA AND FLORIDA FOR SOUTH ATLANTIC OCEAN

SIZE RANGE (FORK LENGTH, INCHES)	RECOMMENDATIONS FOR MEAL CONSUMPTION OF KING MACKEREL CAUGHT OFFSHORE GEORGIA COAST
24 to less than 33 inches	No Restrictions
33 to 39 inches	1 meal per month for pregnant women, nursing mothers and children age 12 and younger 1 meal per week for other adults
Over 39 inches	Do Not Eat

### Saltwater Advisory

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

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

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

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



### 2019 Forestry for Wildlife Partners

The Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Wildlife Resources Division, proudly honors the 2019 Forestry for Wildlife Partners for their outstanding accomplishments in incorporating fish and wildlife conservation practices as an integral part of their overall land management goals.





## Room with a View

Book your private cabin, yurt or campsite today in Georgia's State Parks!



FISHING



CANOEING



HIKING



COZY CABINS



FAMILY TIME



STAR GAZING



ROASTING  
MARSHMALLOWS



SPECTACULAR  
SCENERY

**Georgia**  
**State Parks**  
& Historic Sites

Book your adventure at [GaStateParks.org](http://GaStateParks.org).  
Gift cards available online and at your favorite state park.

800-864-7275

**FISHING IN GEORGIA**

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

**Five things you can do to be a responsible saltwater angler**

1. Buy a fishing license and the free SIP permit. Funds from the license support fisheries management, building and repairing boating and fishing access projects, and conservation law enforcement. Your SIP permit helps us identify you as a Georgia saltwater angler.
2. Use the right tools for the job when releasing fish. Using proper tackle for the fish you are targeting and proper handling techniques improves the chances that a released fish will survive. For more information visit [TakeMeFishing.org/FishSmart](http://TakeMeFishing.org/FishSmart).
3. Be courteous to your fellow anglers.
4. Take a kid fishing.
5. Buy a Marine Habitat License Plate (see below)

**Buy a Marine Habitat License Plate – It's Easy!**

**BUY THE TAG AT YOUR COUNTY TAG OFFICE**

Ask for the Marine Habitat License Plate for your vehicle or trailer, it is only \$25 plus your usual county tag fees. (If your county does not have them in stock, you will receive a temporary tag and in about a week you will receive your tag in the mail.)

**WHAT WILL THE MONEY BE USED FOR?**

80% of the funds from sales of this license plate will be used in combination with Federal Aid in Sport Fish Restoration as well as donations from businesses, private individuals, and conservation groups to enhance habitats used by a variety of marine species.

Learn More at [CoastalGaDNR.org/LicensePlate](http://CoastalGaDNR.org/LicensePlate)



An underwater scene featuring a large, reddish-brown fish swimming over a rocky seabed with green algae. The text "GEORGIA GO FISH!" is written in large, bold, black letters across the top, and "Support Fish Habitat" is written in white at the bottom.

## RECREATIONAL FISHING

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

- Licenses are required for hook and line fishing, castnetting, seining, crabbing, gigging, sport bait trawling, and harvesting shellfish.
- A Georgia Fishing License is required for anglers returning to Georgia ports or transiting Georgia waters with recreational catches from federal waters beyond the state's 3-mile territorial sea.
- Reciprocal agreements with Alabama, South Carolina, and Florida currently do not apply to saltwaters.
- A free Saltwater Information program (SIP) permit is required for anyone age 16 and over who fishes in saltwater. Beginning January 1, 2020 all new SIP Permits will expire one year from the date of issuance. SIP Permits obtained prior to January 1, 2020 will expire on the last day of February.
- Georgia saltwater fishing guides have the option of purchasing a blanket fishing license to cover their customers. Anglers booking a trip with a Georgia saltwater fishing guide should inquire if they will need a Georgia fishing license or whether they will be covered by the guide's license. Persons interested in purchasing a Saltwater Guide's License should call the DNR Coastal Regional License Office at 912-264-7237.

## Saltwater Fishing Information

### GEORGIA SALTWATER FISHING REGULATIONS

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

#### Georgia DNR Coastal

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

#### Coastal Resources Division

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

### FEDERAL SALTWATER FISHING REGULATIONS

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

#### South Atlantic Fishery Management Council

4055 Faber Place Dr., Suite 201  
North Charleston, SC 29405  
843-571-4366 or 866-SAFMC-10  
[www.safmc.net](http://www.safmc.net)

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

#### National Marine Fisheries Service

HMS Management Division  
1315 East-West Hwy  
Silver Spring, MD 20910  
301-713-2347  
[www.nmfspermits.com](http://www.nmfspermits.com)

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

#### Gray's Reef Sanctuary Program

10 Ocean Science Circle  
Savannah, GA 31411  
912-598-2345  
[www.graysreef.nos.noaa.gov](http://www.graysreef.nos.noaa.gov)

### WANTON WASTE

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

### ARTIFICIAL REEFS

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

### BOATING SAFETY ZONES

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

## Saltwater Finfish

### LANDING REQUIREMENTS/TRANSFER PROHIBITION

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

### GEAR

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

Only flounder may be taken with a **gig** (any handheld shaft with single or multiple points, barbed or barbless).

**All seasons, hours, creel limits, minimum size limits, and other regulations applicable to saltwater finfish apply regardless of the gear used.**

**Sharks:** Recreational harvest of sharks is limited to hook and line gear only.

### RELATED DEFINITIONS

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

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

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

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

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

**Bushel:** 9.3 gallons or approximately 37 quarts.

### Saltwater Demarcation Line

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

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

## GEORGIA'S SALTWATER GAMEFISH RECORDS

SPECIES	MEN'S RECORD		WOMEN'S RECORD	
	WEIGHT	MALE ANGLER (year)	WEIGHT	FEMALE ANGLER (year)
Amberjack, Greater	92 lb. 1 oz.	Ben W. Key, Jr. (1975)	72 lb. 8 oz.	Tricia L. Nicosia (1986)
Barracuda, Great	54 lb. 8 oz.	Wayne Hall (1999)	47 lb. 8 oz.	Marie Franklin (1999)
Bass, Black Sea (tie)	5 lb. 11 oz.	J.C. Hadden, Jr. (1994)	4 lb. 8 oz.	Evelyn B. Carter (1983)
	5 lb. 12 oz.	Willie J. Oakman (1998)		
Bluefish*	17 lb. 12 oz.	Gary Q. Altman (1980)	14 lb. 4 oz.	Kathy Sikes (1986)
Cobia	88 lb. 12 oz.	Jeffrey Clark (1985)	68 lb. 5 oz.	Wanda Carroll (1999)
Croaker, Atlantic	5 lb. 12 oz.	David Flynt (1977)	2 lb. 11 oz.	Caroline Hicks (2014)
Dolphin (tie)	67 lb. 6 oz.	Michael Sheppard (1997)	54 lb. 8 oz.	Romona Arsenaault (1977)
	67 lb. 9.6 oz.	Will Owens (2019)		
Drum, Black	92 lb. 0 oz.	John H. Thomas Jr. (2010)	80 lb. 0 oz.	Jennifer Swenson (2009)
Drum, Red (Channel Bass)*	47 lb. 7 oz.	Richard Price (1986)	38 lb. 13 oz.	Sandra Price (1986)
Flounder (Composite)	15 lb. 8 oz.	Walter C. Hewitt (1982)	15 lb. 10 oz.	Janice Youmans (1990)
Grouper, Gag	38 lb. 0 oz.	David Sapp (2002)	20 lb. 0 oz.	Joyce L. Richards (1984)
Grouper, Goliath*	124 lb. 0 oz.	James Chumley (1976)	Harvest prohibited, therefore record no longer allowed.	
Grouper, Red	19 lb. 8 oz.	John Wren (2012)	19 lb. 2 oz.	Karen Kratzer (2016)
Grouper, Scamp	27 lb. 2 oz.	Jakob Hallstrom (2014)	23 lb. 6 oz.	Kathy Wash (1987)
Grouper, Warsaw	252 lb. 0 oz.	Gene Whitehurst (1981)	Harvest prohibited, therefore record no longer allowed.	
Jack, Crevalle	38 lb. 8 oz.	Lex Bazemore (2001)	30 lb. 6 oz.	Ann Allen (1981)
Kingfish (Whiting)	2 lb. 12 oz.	Harold Guinn (1975)	2 lb. 4 oz.	Lois E. Guinn (1975)
Ladyfish	3 lb. 12 oz.	Dwight Thornton (1977)	5 lb. 0 oz.	Marjorie Nighbert (1978)
Mackerel, King	75 lb. 12 oz.	Joe H. Bell (2004)	45 lb. 7 oz.	Jessica Pace (2016)
Mackerel, Spanish	8 lb. 4 oz.	James I. Geiger (1991)	7 lb. 14 oz.	Ida Knight (1988)
Marlin, Blue*	491 lb. 8 oz.	John C. Howard, Jr. (1985)	178 lb. 0 oz.	Susan D. Meek (1985)
Marlin, White*	49 lb. 12 oz.	Thomas Hester (1986)	Harvest prohibited, therefore record no longer allowed.	
Mullet, Striped	9 lb. 3 oz.	Steve Middleton (1994)	Minimum weight: 4 lbs.	
Pinfish	1 lb. 15 oz.	Ty Cobb (2017)	12.8 oz.	Jordan McCullough (2018)
Pompano, African	37 lb. 1.28 oz.	Alvin Dezern (2019)	25 lb. 13 oz.	Jennifer Roberts (2016)
Pompano, Florida	5 lb. 4 oz.	Bill Knightbuford (2002)	1 lb. 7 oz.	Laura A. Cheek (1982)
Porgy (Composite)	15 lb. 14 oz.	Louis F. Jiran (1988)	Minimum weight: 3 lbs.	
Porgy, Red	5 lb. 6 oz.	Jimmy Ginn (1980)	Minimum weight: 4 lbs.	
Runner, Rainbow	17 lb. 12 oz.	Tyler Bond (1984)	Minimum weight: 5 lbs.	
Sailfish*	65 lb. 0 oz.	Vann Downs (1981)	38 lb. 5 oz.	Laura Hammond (1992)
Seatrout, Spotted	9 lb. 7 oz.	Tommy Hall (1976)	7 lb. 8 oz.	Amanda Wooten (1990)
Shark, Blacktip	131 lb. 0 oz.	Albert Lee Boyd (1978)	148 lb. 0 oz.	Allison Gerber (2008)
Shark, Bonnethead	22 lb. 8 oz.	Zachery Gross (2009)	22 lb. 11.5 oz.	Amanda Page (2012)
Shark, Bull	455 lb. 0 oz.	Mark D. Noble (1978)	121 lb. 9 oz.	Jennifer Swenson (2011)
Shark, Dusky*	272 lb. 8 oz.	Bill Hunter (1978)	6 lb. 2 oz.	Wendy Mead (1982)
Shark, Hammerhead	770 lb. 0 oz.	Charlie Marshall (1973)	10 lb. 0 oz.	Katherine Bullis (1985)
Shark, Lemon	375 lb. 0 oz.	Thomas Winslow (1974)	322 lb. 0 oz.	Deborah Carpenter (2011)
Shark, Mako	440 lb. 0 oz.	Tyler Gary (2017)	No minimum weight	
Shark, Nurse	244 lb. 0 oz.	Bill Watson (1981)	Minimum weight: 50 lbs.	
Shark, Sandbar (Brown)*	158 lb. 8 oz.	Chet Lee Kirby (1979)	124 lb. 0 oz.	Dorothea Bays (1985)
Shark, Sand Tiger*	290 lb. 0 oz.	Billy Castle (1977)	212 lb. 6 oz.	Clara Adams (1984)
Shark, Spinner	145 lb. 6 oz.	Edward J. Hawie (2009)	Minimum weight: 50 lbs.	
Shark, Thresher	116 lb. 0 oz.	Mark D. Noble (1976)	Minimum weight: 50 lbs.	
Shark, Tiger	794 lb. 0 oz.	Chuck Hall (1975)	190 lb. 0 oz.	Pam Page (2012)
Sheepshead	14 lb. 14 oz.	Ralph V. White (2002)	12 lb. 9 oz.	Linda Carroll (2003)
Snapper, Cubera	10 lb. 0 oz.	Chris Gray (2012)	—	
Snapper, Gray	12 lb. 9 oz.	David Blackshear (2011)	10 lb. 4 oz.	Becky Manley (2015)
Snapper, Mutton	18 lb. 6.56 oz.	Benjamin Lewis (2019)	18 lb. 9.92 oz.	Janet Monroe (2019)
Snapper, Red	37 lb. 8 oz.	Bill Shearin, Jr. (1988)	29 lb. 8 oz.	Phyllis Thompson (1989)
Snapper, Vermillion	3 lb. 11 oz.	Scott Funderburk (2018)	3 lb. 10 oz.	Alli Deyoung (2018)
Snapper, Yellowtail	5 lb. 0 oz.	Eddie N. Vanmeter II (2014)	—	
Snook	10 lb. 2 oz.	Lester Rooks (1990)	10 lb. 6 oz.	Marlene Patton (2008)
Spadefish, Atlantic	13 lb. 2 oz.	Shahram Zare (2004)	11 lb. 5 oz.	Deidra H. Jeffcoat (2003)
Swordfish	205 lb. 8 oz.	Brendin A. Page (2014)	No minimum weight	
Tarpon	161 lb. 0 oz.	C. Edwards (1995)	139 lb. 0 oz.	Wendy A. Mead (1986)
Triggerfish, Gray	11 lb. 3 oz.	Dean Williams (1989)	11 lb. 5 oz.	Elizabeth Zeagler (1987)
Tripletail	38 lb. 14 oz.	Kyle Thigpen (2005)	29 lb. 6 oz.	Jordan Davis (2017)
Tuna, Blackfin	40 lb. 8 oz.	Tyler Deal (2016)	30 lb. 8 oz.	Penny Morgan-Turner (1999)
Tuna, Yellowfin	249 lb. 2 oz.	Ken Cooper (1980)	165 lb. 4 oz.	Anne Smith (1973)
Tunny, Little	22 lb. 1 oz.	Rusty Blackburn (2017)	20 lb. 0 oz.	Str. Mary Clarice (1973)
Wahoo	123 lb. 3 oz.	Michael Stefanick (2000)	77 lb. 0 oz.	Linda Li-Chao Yang (1988)
Weakfish (Summer Trout)	6 lb. 8 oz.	Frank Taylor (1976)	Minimum weight: 3 lb.	

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

RED indicates new record!

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

**SEASONS, LIMITS, SIZES**

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

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

\* These species are also federally managed from 3 to 200 miles offshore. Go to [www.safmc.net](http://www.safmc.net) for federal regulations.

Tagged Fish

Coastal Resources Division (CRD) biologists are conducting long-term studies on the growth, migration and fishing exploitation rates of red drum, black drum, tarpon, and tripletail. If you catch a tagged fish, please record and report the following information:

- 1) your name, address, and phone number, 2) fish species, 3) date caught, 4) tag number, 5) total length and location, and 6) whether the fish was kept or released. To report a tagged fish call (912) 264-7218. If released, please do not remove the tag.

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

If you are an angler who practices catch and release and would like to become a cooperative angler please contact the Cooperative Angler Tagging Program at 912-264-7218.

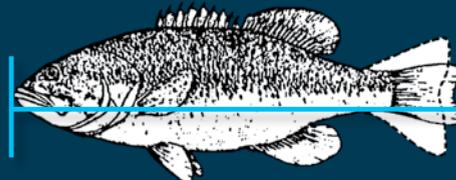


How to Measure a Fish

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



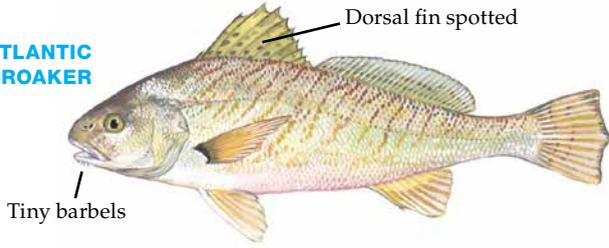
**Fork Length**



**Total Length**

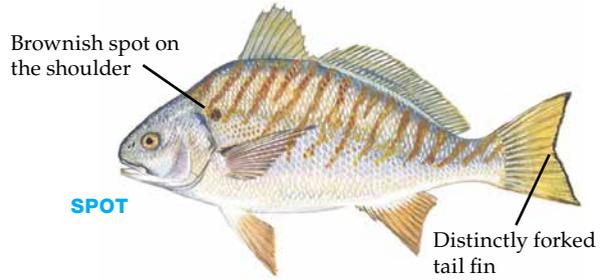
# GEORGIA SALTWATER FISH

**ATLANTIC CROAKER**

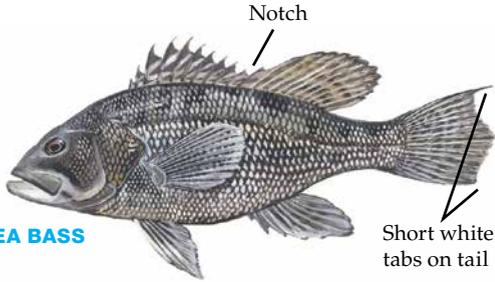


Brownish spot on the shoulder

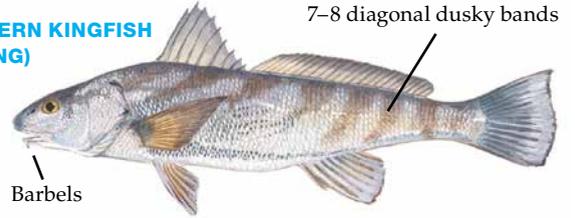
**SPOT**



**BLACK SEA BASS**

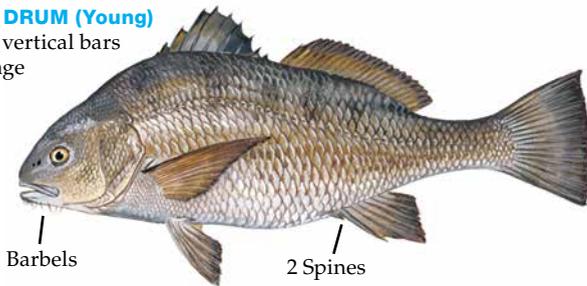


**SOUTHERN KINGFISH (WHITING)**



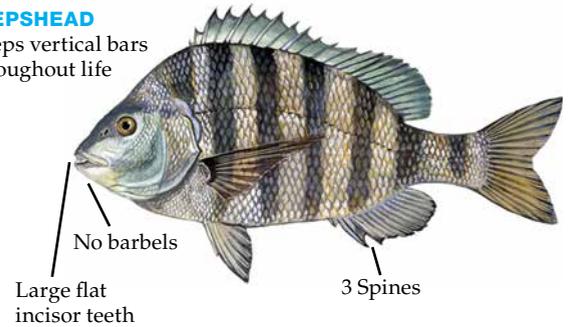
**BLACK DRUM (Young)**

- Loses vertical bars with age



**SHEEPSHEAD**

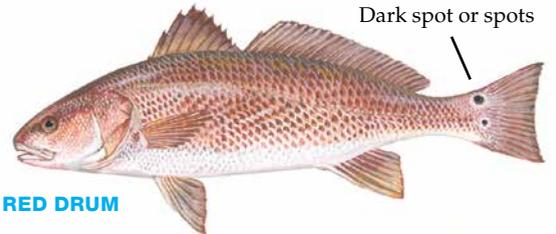
- Keeps vertical bars throughout life



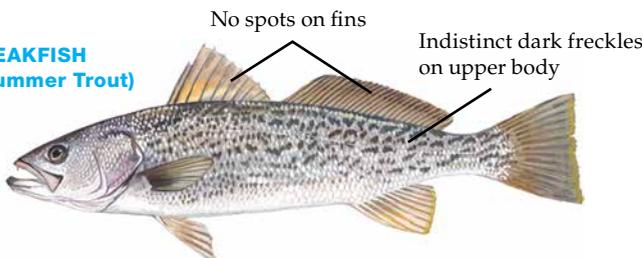
**TRIPLETAIL**



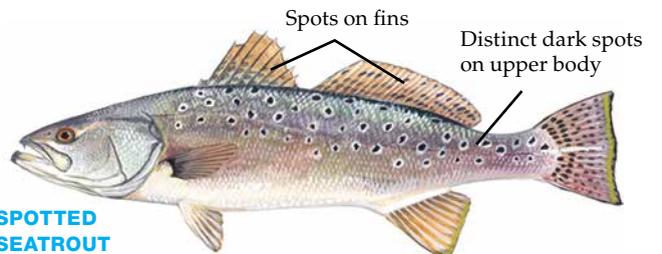
**RED DRUM**

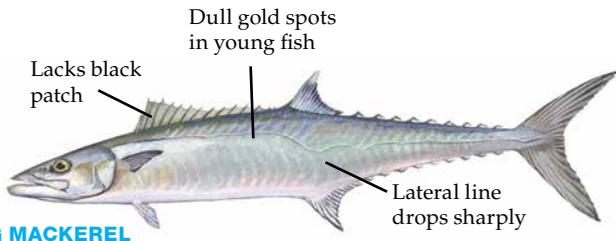


**WEAKFISH (Summer Trout)**

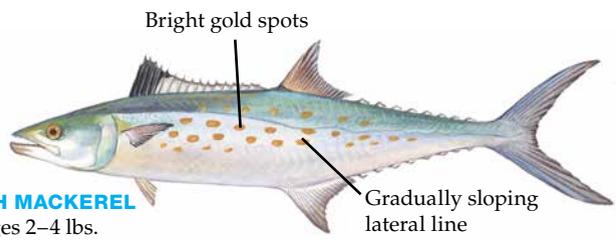


**SPOTTED SEATROUT**



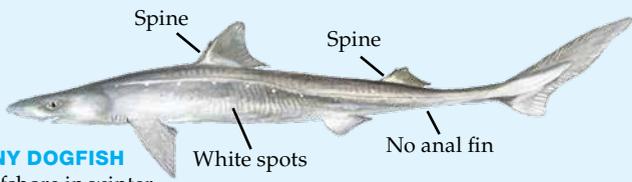


**KING MACKEREL**  
 • Up to 60 lbs.

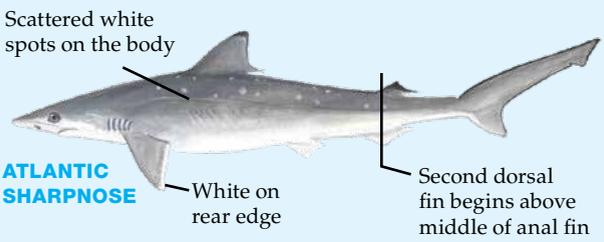


**SPANISH MACKEREL**  
 • Averages 2-4 lbs.

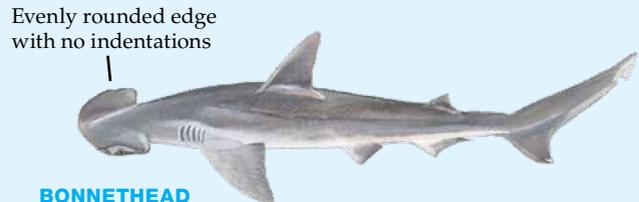
**SMALL SHARK COMPOSITE**



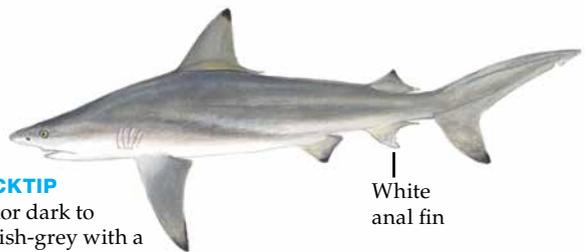
**SPINY DOGFISH**  
 • Offshore in winter



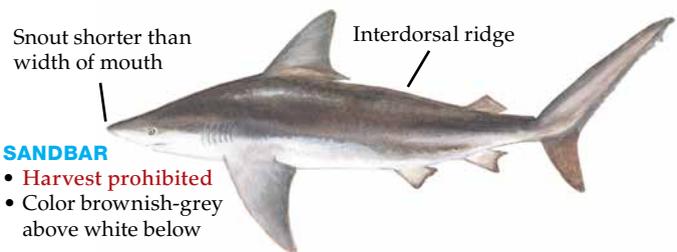
**ATLANTIC SHARPNOSE**



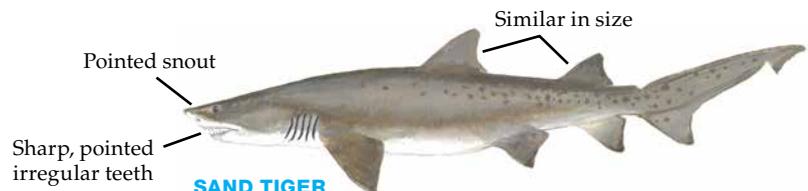
**BONNETHEAD**  
 • Shovel or bonnet-shaped head



**BLACKTIP**  
 • Color dark to bluish-grey with a Z-shaped pattern

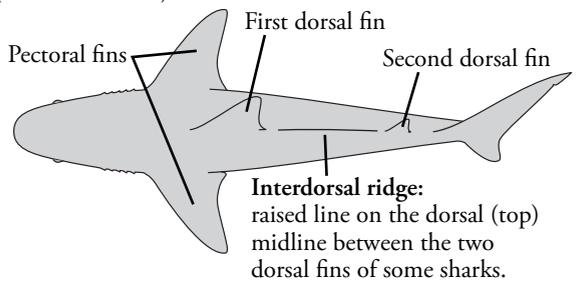


**SANDBAR**  
 • Harvest prohibited  
 • Color brownish-grey above white below



**SAND TIGER**  
 • Harvest prohibited

**SHARK ANATOMY**  
 (view from above)



**SHARKS FOUND IN GEORGIA WATERS THAT CAN BE HARVESTED**  
 (not including small shark composite above)

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

Most sharks with an interdorsal ridge caught in Georgia waters will be included in the "prohibited" or "no harvest" categories.  
 If you are not sure of the species and whether you may keep it, release it.

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

**Fish identification pictures by:** Duane Raver

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

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

### Shrimp

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

#### SHRIMP "BAITING" PROHIBITED

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

#### SHRIMPING SEASON

Unless otherwise designated, there is no closed season for the harvest of bait shrimp, regardless of the approved gear used. The season for the recreational harvest of food shrimp is the same as that established for commercial shrimping. The Commissioner of DNR may open the season from May 15 through the end of February; however, it is generally opened mid-June through mid-January. The opening and closing of the food shrimping season is announced via coastal media outlets, posted at marinas, and at [www.CoastalGADNR.org](http://www.CoastalGADNR.org).

#### TRAWL NETS (Sport Bait Shrimping)

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

**Areas:** Unless designated otherwise, a 10-foot sport bait trawl may be used at any season to take shrimp only in rivers and creeks or portions thereof that have been opened to bait shrimping by DNR. Charts of established "Bait Zones" are also available at [georgiaoutdoormap.com](http://georgiaoutdoormap.com).

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

**Harvest Limit:** A sport bait shrimper may not possess at any time more than two (2) quarts of shrimp, no more than ½ pint of which may be dead, and may not take more than four (4) quarts of shrimp within a 24-hour period. When two or more persons occupy the same boat, there may be no more than four (4) quarts of shrimp on board the boat at any time; no more than one pint of which may be dead, and no more than eight (8) quarts of shrimp may be taken within a 24-hour period.

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

#### SEINES

**Gear and Areas:** Seines equal to or smaller than 12 feet long, with a maximum depth of four feet, and a maximum stretch mesh of one (1) inch may be used throughout Georgia's saltwaters. The use of seines over 12 feet long in any inlet or tidal slough is prohibited. Seines less than 100 feet long and with a minimum stretch mesh of 1 ¼ inches may be used on sand beaches of any barrier island in Georgia. Seines from 100 to 300 feet long and with a minimum mesh size of 2 ½ inches may be used only on

the oceanfront sides of beaches. Seines over 300 feet long are also prohibited. It is unlawful to use any seine in saltwaters such that it blocks more than ½ of the entrance of any tidal river, creek, slough, or inlet to the ocean.

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

**Harvest Limits:** Recreational seiners collecting bait shrimp are limited to two quarts per person at any time and no more than four quarts per person per day, or a maximum of four quarts per group at any time or eight quarts per day. No one person taking food shrimp solely by means of a seine, whether such person is acting alone or in a group of persons, may possess more than 24 quarts of shrimp with heads on or 15 quarts of tails taken by such seine in any 24-hour period. If any person or group of persons occupying the same boat is in possession of a cast net and a seine, such person or persons shall be subject to the limits imposed for shrimp taken by cast net.

#### CAST NETS

**Gear:** A cast net is a cone shaped net with a weighted circumference thrown and retrieved by hand without mechanical assistance. Two types of cast nets are defined: a "Bait shrimp cast net" having a minimum bar mesh of ¾ inch and a "Food shrimp cast net" having a minimum bar mesh of ¾ inch. Bait shrimp cast nets cannot be used to take shrimp for personal

## Guidelines for Sea Turtle Protection

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

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

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

consumption; however, food shrimp cast nets may be used to take bait. There are no length restrictions on either net and cast nets can be modified with the addition of duct tape or other materials to enhance performance.

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

**Harvest Limits:** Recreational cast netters collecting bait shrimp are limited to two quarts per person at any time, provided that person may take a maximum of four quarts of bait shrimp per day. When two or more persons occupy the same boat, there may be no more than four quarts of bait onboard the boat at any time, and the persons occupying the boat may take no more than eight quarts of bait shrimp per day. Bait shrimp may be alive or dead when caught with a cast. No person taking food shrimp with a cast net may possess more than 48 quarts of heads-on shrimp or 30 quarts of shrimp tails in any day. When one or more persons occupy the same boat, there may be no more than 48 quarts of heads-on shrimp or 30 quarts of shrimp tails on board at any time. No vessel owner shall allow the vessel to be used to take more than the allowable catch limits in any day.

## Stone Crabs

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

## Blue Crabs

### AREAS, SEASONS, HOURS

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

### GEAR

**Traps:** Up to six standard size crab traps (2 x 2 feet or smaller) may be used recreationally. Two unobstructed escapement rings (2 ¾ inch inside diameter) must be installed on an outside vertical wall. Each trap must be marked with a fluorescent green or lime green float bearing the owner's name and address in one-inch letters. Traps should be sufficiently weighted to prevent loss in strong tidal currents. It is unlawful to place or set crab traps in the channel of any stream with a lawfully established system of waterway markers. Disposal of crab traps in public waters is a violation of State and Federal laws.

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

### SIZE AND HARVEST LIMITS

It is unlawful to take or possess any crab less than 5 inches from spike to spike across the back (other than a "peeler" or a "mature

adult female" crab). Peelers must measure at least 3 inches from spike to spike across the back. **No sponge (egg-bearing) crabs are allowed.** Recreational crabbers may take no more than one bushel of crabs during any 24-hour period. No more than two bushels may be taken recreationally or possessed during a 24-hour period on a boat with more than one person aboard.

**Terrapins in Crab Traps:** Recent studies have investigated the effectiveness of excluder devices for preventing the capture of diamond-back terrapins in commercial-style crab traps. Terrapins that enter crab traps cannot escape and often drown.

## Shellfish

### SEASON AND HOURS

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

### GEAR

Shellfish may only be taken with handheld implements.

### AREAS

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

### SIZE AND HARVEST LIMITS

Oysters must measure no less than three inches from hinge to mouth, unless the oyster cannot be removed from a legal-sized oyster without destroying it. For clams, the maximum depth from one shell half to the other must be at least ¾ inch thick. Recreational quantity limits are up to two bushels of oysters and one bushel of clams per person per day, with a maximum limit of six bushels of oysters and one bushel of clams per boat per day.

## Whelk (conch)

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

## Bait Minnows

### SEASON, HOURS AND AREAS

Bait minnows may be harvested year-round. **Bait minnows may not be trapped in freshwater.**

### GEAR

No more than two traps may be used recreationally, except that a licensed saltwater fishing guide may use a maximum of four traps. Maximum dimensions for rectangular traps may not exceed 24 x 8 x 9 inches. Cylindrical traps may not exceed 24 inches in length and 30 inches in circumference. Recreational bait minnow traps shall have a mesh size of no smaller than ¼ inch bar mesh. The throat opening of the funnel shall not exceed ¾ inch in diameter. Each trap must have attached a tag or float bearing the name and address of the person using the trap. Subject to specific gear design criteria, sizes, time of day, and area restrictions outlined in these regulations, bait minnows may also be taken recreationally year-round in seines and cast nets.

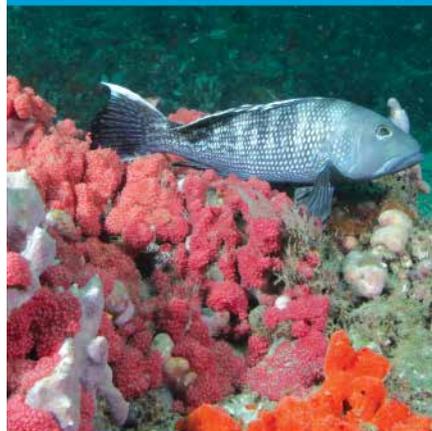
### POSSESSION LIMITS

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



**FISHING HAPPENS HERE!**

Gray's Reef National Marine Sanctuary



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National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

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## HANDLING & RELEASING FISH GENERAL GUIDELINES

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

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

- **Do not puncture a protruding stomach or try to push the stomach back into the throat. Remember a knife is not a proper venting tool!**

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

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

## Ranger Hotline

### TO REPORT VIOLATIONS

Please refer to call out box on page 2.

### TO REPORT VIOLATIONS IN FEDERAL WATERS

- U.S. Coast Guard stations in Brunswick 912-267-7999 and Tybee Island 912-786-5440
- NOAA's toll-free, 24-hour Fisheries Enforcement hotline 800-853-1964
- DNR LE 800-241-4113
- **Keep horizontal and support the body of the fish.** The lower jaw is not meant to support the full weight of any fish.
- **Time is of the Essence!** Release fish as soon as practical and do not keep them out of the water longer than necessary. Have your camera always on the ready.
- **Some Fish May Need a Little Assistance.** If the fish does not immediately swim away, support the fish horizontally in the water and gently move it back and forth so that water runs over the gills. Release the fish when it is able to swim away on its own.

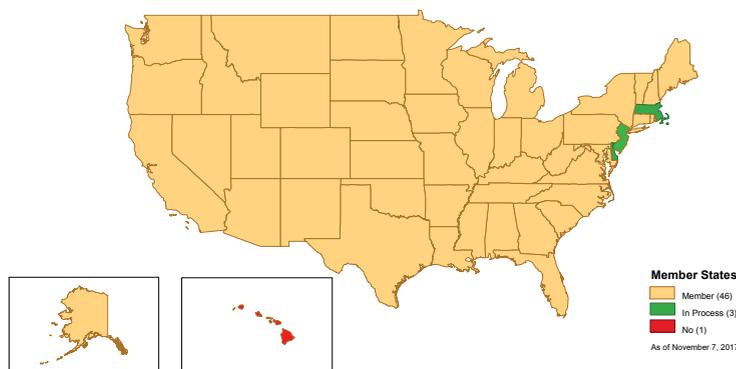
## Recompression Tools



## Wildlife Violator Compact

Georgia, along with 46 other states, is a member of the Wildlife Violator Compact (WVC). This allows Wildlife Officers to treat non-residents hunting in WVC member states as if they were a resident of that state in regards to wildlife violations. All wildlife law violators will be held more responsible due to the fact that their illegal activities in one state can affect their hunting privileges in all WVC member states.

### Interstate Wildlife Violator Compact Member States



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