HOMES BUILT ON YOUR LAND!

- **Chalet II**
  - 3 Bedrooms, 2.5 Bath
  - 1,924 SF Under Roof

- **Country Cabin**
  - 2 Bedroom, 1 Bath
  - 930 SF Under Roof

- **Country Colonial I**
  - 4 Bedrooms, 2.5 Bath
  - 3,001 SF Under Roof

- **Grand Sierra V Split**
  - 5 Bedrooms, 2 Bath
  - 2,913 SF Under Roof

- **Cherokee Farmhouse 5**
  - 5 Bedrooms, 2.5 Bath
  - 2,844 SF Under Roof

- **Gatlinburg**
  - 4 Bedrooms, 3.5 Bath
  - 4,197 SF Under Roof

- **Frontier**
  - 3 Bedrooms, 2 Bath
  - 1,242 SF Under Roof

- **Lake Blue Ridge Ext.**
  - 3 Bedrooms, 2.5 Bath
  - 2,066 SF Under Roof

110+ PLANS

Prices may be different in some areas, do not include land improvements, and subject to change.

STOP CALL NOW

**Locations**

- Ellijay, GA (706) 273-7139
- Augusta, GA (706) 855-5227
- Bremen, GA (770) 537-5337
- Cullman, AL (256) 737-5055
- Lavonia, GA (706) 356-1015

Opelika, AL (334) 610-4110
Warner Robins, GA (478) 953-0601
Waynesville, NC (828) 456-3309
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 Registration & Regulations ............................................. 15
Fish Kill Reporting ......................................................................... 18
Turn in Poachers Contact Information ........................................... 18
Public Fishing Areas ..................................................................... 19
Kids Fishing Opportunities ............................................................. 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 ................................................. 16-17
Mountain Trout Fishing ................................................................. 22-25
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

ABOUT THIS PUBLICATION
Welcome to Georgia’s 2023 Fishing Seasons and Regulations. Fishing regulations are set by the Board of Natural Resources, acting on the recommendations of the Wildlife Resources and Coastal Resources Divisions’ professional staff. Laws are set by the elected members of the General Assembly. This guide is designed to help you understand the laws and regulations for fishing in Georgia. For complete rules and exact wording, refer to the Game and Fish Code (Title 27) and the current copy of the Department of Natural Resources, fishing regulations (Chapters 391-2 and 391-4) on file with the Secretary of State. The cost of this publication is offset through the sale of advertising space. The Georgia Department of Natural Resources neither endorses the products or services listed nor accepts any liability arising from the use of products or services listed. Every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of the information contained within this publication. If any errors are discovered, the online version of this publication found at www.GoFishGeorgia.com will be updated.

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Editor: John W. Bowers, Georgia Wildlife Resources Division
Assistant Editor: Aubrey Pawlikowski, Georgia Wildlife Resources Division
Advertising: J.F. Griffin Publishing, (413) 884-1001

Cover and Table of Contents photos provided by David Cannon of David Cannon Photography
How lucky are we to live in a state with access to so many public fishing opportunities close to home? With more than 500,000 acres of public water, 16,000 miles of streams and rivers, and 160 public boat ramps, an opportunity to Go Fish Georgia is never hard to find.

Thanks to Georgia’s many licensed anglers, we are able to operate ten hatcheries that stock more than 10 million fish per year, including trout, striped bass, hybrid striped bass, catfish, walleye, largemouth bass, and bluegill.

The Gateway to Fishing program continues to excel in reaching new potential anglers across the metro Atlanta area by providing access to rods and reels, experienced anglers, and information. It brings me great joy to see the smiling faces of those we reached and hope their experiences at Gateway to Fishing events encouraged them to get out on the water on their own.

Now, more than ever, being good stewards of Georgia’s resources is important. DNR staff works diligently each day to protect and enhance opportunities and species for all Georgians to enjoy, but we need your help. By taking simple steps like not dumping baitfish or moving fish between waterbodies, we can ensure these precious resources are here for generations to come.

Serving as Commissioner of the Department of Natural Resources offers me a unique opportunity to support the outdoor passions that were instilled in me at an early age. I hope each of you find time to wet a line this year and I look forward to seeing you out on the water.

Mark Williams
Commissioner, Georgia Department of Natural Resources

Your dollars make a difference. The Wildlife and Sportfish Restoration Program creates a direct link among anglers and industries needed to expand and enhance opportunities for saltwater and freshwater resources.
When it comes to caring for your piece of Georgia, you need the ultimate productivity partner. Look no further than the Sub-Compact Tractor. With a loader that attaches in seconds, you can get to work faster and enjoy more time doing what you love.

22 GEORGIA LOCATIONS
STATEWIDE OR GENERAL OFFICES

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

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

CHARLIE ELLIOTT WILDLIFE CENTER
543 Elliott Trail, Mansfield, GA 30055
Visitors Center .................................................. 770-784-3059

GO FISH EDUCATION CENTER
1255 Perry Pkwy, Perry, GA 31069
Main Number .................................................. 478-988-6701

COASTAL RESOURCES DIVISION HEADQUARTERS
One Conservation Way, Brunswick, GA 31520
Main Number .................................................. 912-264-7218
Coastal Law Enforcement .................................. 912-264-7237

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

WRD FISHERIES REGIONAL OFFICES AND FACILITIES

NORTHWEST REGION (1) ................................. 706-295-6102
2650 Floyd Springs Road, Armuchee, GA 30105
Law Enforcement (Acworth) .............................. 770-529-2424
Law Enforcement (Atlanta) ............................... 770-769-9680

ROCKY MOUNTAIN PFA & RECREATION AREA
SUMMERTON HATCHERY

NORTHEAST REGION (2) ................................. 770-535-5498
2150 Dawsonville Hwy, Gainesville, GA 30501
Law Enforcement (Gainesville) ......................... 770-535-5499

BUFORD TROUT HATCHERY  BURTON HATCHERY

EAST CENTRAL REGION (3) ............................ 478-825-6151
1014 MLK Blvd., Fort Valley, GA 31030
Law Enforcement (Thomson) ............................. 706-595-4211
Law Enforcement (Augusta) ............................. 706-737-1480

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

WALTON HATCHERY  MCDUFFIE HATCHERY & PFA
MARBEN PFA  FLAT CREEK PFA

SOUTHWEST REGION (5) ................................. 229-430-4256
2024 Newton Road, Albany, GA 31701
Law Enforcement (Albany) .............................. 229-430-4252

BIG LAZER CREEK PFA  SILVER LAKE PFA
CORDELE HATCHERY  STEVE COCKE HATCHERY

COASTAL REGION (6) ......................................... 912-727-2112
130 Hatchery Drive, Richmond Hill, GA 31324
Law Enforcement (Brunswick) ......................... 912-264-7237

EVANS COUNTY PFA  RICHMOND HILL HATCHERY

>> See pages 19-21 for Public Fishing Area Information.
The target shooting and hunting community prides itself on being safe and responsible with firearms in all situations—from using them outdoors to storing them safely at home. Sometimes, however, unusual conditions such as extremely dry environments require an extra level of awareness and safety on the part of shooters.

Wildfires have many possible causes. The National Shooting Sports Foundation, the trade association for the firearms and ammunition industry, reminds all shooters that during dry and hot weather conditions their use of certain ammunition and targets could accidentally ignite a wildfire. NSSF reminds all target shooters and hunters, as well as other outdoor enthusiasts, to consider the potential consequences of their activities in fire-prone environments.

- Make it a point to know the regulations and rules related to shooting in areas experiencing dry and hot conditions, whether on public or private land or at shooting ranges. Many national forests, for example, do not allow recreational shooting when fire restrictions are in effect.

- Consider the type of ammunition and targets you are using. Minimize the risk of fires by not using steel-jacketed ammunition, ammunition with steel-core components, tracer rounds or exploding targets in fire-prone areas.

- Remember that equipment, such as cars and ATVs, can have extremely hot exhaust systems that could ignite dry vegetation, so park only in designated areas.

- Extinguish and dispose of smoking materials safely.

- Follow guidelines to extinguish campfires.

- Warn others of potential dangers and behaviors for starting wildfires.

- Report any wildfire you see to authorities.

- Spread this message to other target shooters, hunters and outdoor enthusiasts.
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.

**WHAT’S NEW**

- Updated regulations for House Pond at Silver Lake PFA. See page 21.
- Seven new state records caught in 2022! See pages 28 & 42.
- Blueback Herring may now be used for bait on Lake Allatoona.

**DEFINITIONS**

**ARTIFICIAL LURE**

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

**DAILY LIMIT**

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

**FISHING**

Catching, capturing, taking, or killing fish, mussels and all seafood and includes all lesser acts such as attempting to catch, capture, or kill by any device or method and directly assisting any person in catching or attempting to catch fish or seafood.

**GAME FISH**

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

**IMMEDIATE FAMILY**

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

**MOUNTAIN TROUT**

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

**NONGAME FISH**

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

**PUBLIC FISHING AREA**

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

**RESIDENT**

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

**SPORTFISHING**

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GATEWAY TO FISHING PROGRAM

Bringing people together—one cast at a time.

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

Want to partner? Learn more at www.GoFishGeorgia.com
FRESHWATER & SALTWATER
LICENSE REQUIREMENTS

BUYING LICENSES
You can purchase a Georgia fishing license:
• Online 24 hours a day, 7 days a week at GoFishGeorgia.com or GoOutdoorsGeorgia.com.
• Using the Go Outdoors GA App, see page 12.
• In person at license dealers statewide including most WRD/CRD regional offices; state parks; marinas; major retailers; and sporting goods, bait and tackle, and hardware stores. A complete list of license agents can be found at GoFishGeorgia.com.
• 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(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 received or printed. Game Wardens may require photo identification when checking fishing licenses. Exception: A fishing license is not required to fish in private ponds (does not include ponds owned by governments—city, county, state, or federal) nor by a resident and their immediate family when fishing on their land. See definition of immediate family on page 6.

RESIDENTS (see definition, page 6)
• Proof of residency is a Georgia driver’s license or official State of Georgia ID card and is required to purchase a resident fishing license.
• Georgia resident military veterans who were on active duty for 90 or more consecutive days and who were honorably discharged on or after July 1, 2005 may obtain one annual Honorary Hunting and Fishing License free of charge. Such veterans may obtain this license by providing a copy of their DD Form 214 and a completed DNR application.
• Senior Citizens: Georgia residents born on or before June 30, 1952 may obtain a Lifetime Sportsman’s License free of charge. An optional Lifetime Sportsman’s Plastic Card may be purchased for $10. Reduced cost licenses are available for residents age 65 and older born after June 30, 1952 (see page 10).
• Discount Disability License: Georgia residents who are permanently and totally disabled may obtain a discounted Disability License. A qualifying disability is an impairment of a permanent and total nature and is certified as such by the Department of Veterans Affairs, Social Security Administration, Medicaid, Medicare or Railroad Retirement System.
• Any resident who is totally blind may apply for a Lifetime Honorary Fishing License and must provide a Physician’s Certification of Blindness with the application.

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

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

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

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

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

In spring - cogongrass produces fluffy white seedheads.
Leaves have finely serrated margins (often light yellow-green in color) and prominent, off-center white mid-veins.
Root system is a dense, thick root mat with extremely long, scaly and sharp pointed rhizomes.

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

FOR HELP WITH COGONGRASS IDENTIFICATION AND ERADICATION, REPORT SIGHTINGS ONLINE AT GATREES.ORG, CONTACT YOUR LOCAL GFC FORESTER OR CALL 229-869-8592.
## FRESHWATER & SALTWATER

### RECREATIONAL FISHING LICENSE FEES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LICENSE</th>
<th>TERM</th>
<th>RESIDENT</th>
<th>NON-RESIDENT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Combo Hunting &amp; Fishing License</td>
<td>Annual</td>
<td>$30.00</td>
<td>$150.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>One-Day</td>
<td>$5.00</td>
<td>$30.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>+Additional Day</td>
<td>$1.00</td>
<td>$10.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apprentice Hunting &amp; Fishing License</td>
<td>One-Day</td>
<td>$5.00</td>
<td>$30.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### FISHING LICENSES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LICENSE</th>
<th>TERM</th>
<th>RESIDENT</th>
<th>NON-RESIDENT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fishing License (Resident: 16–64, Nonresident: 16+)</td>
<td>Annual</td>
<td>$15.00</td>
<td>$50.00</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>One-Day</td>
<td>see combo</td>
<td>$10.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>+ Additional Day</td>
<td>see combo</td>
<td>$3.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Optional Youth Fishing License (&lt;16)</td>
<td>Multi-Year¹</td>
<td>$10.00</td>
<td>Not Offered</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior Sportsman’s License (65+)</td>
<td>Annual</td>
<td>$7.00</td>
<td>Not Offered</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trout License (must additionally have a Fishing License)</td>
<td>Annual</td>
<td>$10.00</td>
<td>$25.00</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>One-Day</td>
<td>$5.00</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>+ Additional Day</td>
<td>$1.00</td>
<td>$2.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Saltwater Information Program (SIP) Permit (see pages 40–41)</td>
<td>Annual</td>
<td>FREE</td>
<td>FREE</td>
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<tr>
<td>Commercial Fishing License</td>
<td>Seasonal</td>
<td>$20.00</td>
<td>$200.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Disability Fishing License</td>
<td>Annual</td>
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<td>Not Offered</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Three-Year</td>
<td>$9.00</td>
<td>Not Offered</td>
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### PUBLIC LAND ACCESS

<table>
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<tr>
<th>LICENSE</th>
<th>TERM</th>
<th>RESIDENT</th>
<th>NON-RESIDENT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Georgia Lands Pass</td>
<td>Annual</td>
<td>$30</td>
<td>$60</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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 initially or if done before license expires.

## COMMERICAL FISHING LICENSES

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

### Freshwater

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

### Saltwater

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

Licenses may also be purchased from these DNR offices:
- One Conservation Way
  - Brunswick, GA 31520
  - (912) 264-7237
- 2065 Hwy. 278 S.E.
  - Social Circle, GA 30025
  - (800) 366-2661

## GEORGIA’S PUBLIC BOAT RAMPS

WRD operates more than 160 boating access sites across the state providing access to your favorite activities, such as fishing. The purchase of fishing licenses and related equipment helps install and operate these sites. Inappropriate use and vandalism to these sites costs tens of thousands of dollars annually, reducing our ability to provide new opportunities.

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It took over three years of R&D to create the first Havalon EDC. The REDI features the all new REDI-Lock replaceable blade system, which lets you easily swap between styles of semi-permanent AUS-8 steel blades. Unlike the original Piranta line, REDI blades are designed for extended use and abuse, and can even be re-sharpened. The REDI is also the first Havalon to have spring assist for smooth, one hand opening, further proving that it is REDI for any adventure.
FRESHWATER

GENERAL REGULATIONS

FRESHWATER GAME

SPECIES DAILY LIMITS

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

- Once the daily limit for a particular species is taken, it is unlawful to continue to fish for that species.

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

SEASONS

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

- **Trout Seasons:** All designated trout waters are now open year round.

- **Flint, Chattahoochee and Spring Creeks:** The Flint River and its tributaries from the Georgia Power Co. dams at Albany to the US Hwy 84 bridge; the Chattahoochee River and its tributaries from the Columbia Lock and Dam to the GA Hwy 91 bridge; and Spring Creek and its tributaries downstream to GA Hwy 253 are CLOSED to striped bass fishing and spear fishing from May 1–October 31 each year.

- **Lakes Seminole:** All fishing, including spear fishing, for any species in the marked areas around five fish refuges in Lake Seminole is prohibited from May 1–October 31 each year.

- **Coosa River:** The season for taking lake sturgeon from the Coosa River and its tributaries is CLOSED. See [GofishGeorgia.com](http://GofishGeorgia.com) for more information on this closure and how to identify this fish.

- **Noodling or Grabbling:** The season is open March 1–July 15 statewide in freshwater.

LENGTH LIMITS

**Note:** There are no minimum length limits on freshwater game fish unless they are listed below, or on pages 19-23. 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

STRIPE BASS, WHITE BASS, & HYBRID WHITE-STRIPE BASS

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

- **See agreement with South Carolina (page 16)**
- The minimum length for all fish is 22 inches on the North Newport River, Medway River including Mount Hope Creek, Little Ogeechee River, Ogeechee River; Oconee River downstream of GA Hwy 22 in Milledgeville; Ocmulgee River downstream of GA Hwy 96 bridge between Houston and Twiggs counties; Altamaha River, Saint Mary's River, Satilla River, and the tributaries to these river sections; and from saltwater.
- The minimum length is 27 inches on the Savannah River and its tributaries downstream of J. Strom Thurmond Dam (2 fish limit).
- See table on page 13 for full details

FISHING GEAR MUST BE REGULARLY CHECKED

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

CREEL AND POSSESSION NOTE TO ANGLERS

Creel and possession limits are **per person**. For Game Wardens to correctly determine compliance with these limits, each individual should keep trout or other fish on separate stringers or in separate creels. It is unlawful for one individual to possess more than the legal limit of any fish species. For possession restrictions on Dukes Creek see pages 22-23.

FRESHWATER TURTLES

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

FISHING ON WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AREAS

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

FISHING WITHOUT PERMISSION

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

Permission is not required to fish in the Chattahoochee, 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.
## SPECIES DAILY LIMITS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SPECIES</th>
<th>DAILY LIMIT</th>
<th>EXCEPTIONS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bass (Genus Micropterus)</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>- Lake Lindsay Grace (Wayne Co.) — Only one bass may be greater than 22 inches.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catfish Channel and/or Flathead</td>
<td>No limit</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crappie Black and/or White</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pickerel Chain, Grass and/or Redfin</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shad American and/or Hickory</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Striped Bass, White Bass and/or Hybrid White-Striped Bass</td>
<td>15, only two of which can be 22 inches or longer.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunfish or Bream Bluegill, Flier, Redbreast, Redear, Rock bass, Spotted sunfish, Warmouth and/or Shadow bass</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>Bream: See South Carolina Agreement on page 16.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trout Brook, Rainbow, Brown trout, and any hybrids of these species</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>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.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walleye</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

See page 19 for special limits on Public Fishing Areas.  
See table on page 43 for other species that may be found in freshwater.  
Sturgeon – May not be taken in fresh or saltwater in Georgia.
FRESHWATER

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, and
  2. Submerged at least three feet below the surface of the water, and
  3. Attended regularly and removed after the completed fishing trip.
- Unmarked or unattended trotlines will be confiscated by DNR. It is unlawful to use any sport trotline within one-half mile below any lock or dam.
- Only catfish and nongame fish (year-round) and American and Hickory shad during shad season may be taken with trotlines.
- Trotlines are not permitted on Lake Toccoee or any State Park Lake or at any Public Fishing Area.
- 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 Toccoee, any State Park Lake, or at any Public Fishing Area.
- 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.

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

BOW FISHING
Nongame fish (does not include channel or flathead catfish, see note below) may be taken by bow and arrow from freshwater under the following conditions:
- Possession of a sport fishing license is required to bow fish in Georgia.
- Arrows must be equipped with barbs or similar devices for recovering fish and must be attached to the person or bow by a line sufficient for recovering the arrow and fish.
- Poisonous or exploding arrowheads are illegal.

IN GEORGIA
IT IS UNLAWFUL TO:
- Possess or use live blueback herring for bait in all fresh waters except the following: Lakes Allatoona, 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 Toccoee dam on Toccoee 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).
- 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).
• 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.

BOAT REGISTRATION
• All boats that carry any means of mechanical propulsion (electric trolling motor and/or gas motor) and all sailboats 12 feet and longer must be registered.
• You may register or renew online at GoBoatGeorgia.com
• A Boat Registration Application by mail can be obtained from 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 FLATION 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.”

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

OUTBOARD MOTOR RESTRICTIONS
• No motor in excess of 99 hp may be operated on the Ogeechee River upstream of State Hwy 119.
• No motor in excess of 25 hp may be operated on Lake Juliette or Lake Tugalo.
• Georgia State Park lakes often have boat and motor restrictions. Check with the Park Office at each park for details.

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

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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.

### FRESHWATER AGREEMENTS WITH BORDERING STATES

#### 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 Alabama 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

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

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

- **List of Game Fish in South Carolina differs from Georgia.**
- **Note:** South Carolina regulations differ for crappie and bream.

### 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 Tugalo (Toogalo) and Seneca Rivers; the Tugalo River from its mouth to the junction of the Tugalo 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, Tugalo (Toogalo) 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).

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

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

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

Visit georgiawildlife.com/ans to learn more.

©️ Georgia Department of Natural Resources

[2023 GEORGIA SPORT FISHING REGULATIONS](https://www.gofishgeorgia.com)
LENGTH, CREEL AND POSSESSION LIMITS
See Georgia-South Carolina chart above for the length, creel and possession limits for the border waters covered by this agreement.

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

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

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

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

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

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

DID YOU KNOW?
The Wildlife Resources Division fisheries staff maintain 11 Public Fishing Areas all across Georgia. Fish one today!
GeorgiaWildlife.com/allpfas
CALL 1-800-241-4113

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

REPORT POACHERS
- Poaching is the illegal fishing and hunting of wildlife.
- Poachers rob you of hunting opportunities.
- Poachers steal everyone’s wildlife.
- Poachers give ethical anglers and hunters a bad name.
- Rewards are paid if an arrest is made.
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- 25-week Game Warden Academy for non-POST
- 14-week Game Warden Academy for POST
- Retirement with Defined Benefit and 401(k) and 407 plans
- Comprehensive benefits package
- New tattoo policy

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

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SOME LIMITATIONS APPLY

SAFETY

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

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

**LENGTH AND DAILY LIMITS:**
Unless a pond or lake has been posted as having a different length limit or daily limit, the following apply:

**LENGTH LIMIT:**
Largemouth bass: 14 inches minimum unless otherwise posted.

**DAILY LIMITS:**
Largemouth bass (unless otherwise posted) .... 5
Bream or sunfish
(of any one species or a combination)............ 15
Channel catfish........................................ 5
All other species ....................................... see page 13
Grass carp must be released immediately.

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

**HUNTING ON PUBLIC FISHING AREAS**
There are hunting opportunities available at several PFAs located around the state. Refer to the Hunting Regulations Guide for a complete list of PFA hunting opportunities and regulations or visit GoHuntGeorgia.com.

**BIG LAZER CREEK**
* Talbot County, 229-430-4256
* **Fish Species:** Largemouth bass, Hybrid striped bass, Bluegill and Redear sunfish, Channel catfish, Black crappie. Live fish (minnows) are allowed for bait.
* **Water:** 195 acre lake.
* **Facilities:** Concrete two-lane boat ramp, fishing piers, fish cleaning station, shooting range, restrooms, picnic tables, primitive camping, some facilities accessible to persons with disabilities.
* **Directions from Talbotton:** East on US Hwy 80 for 4 mi.; left on Po Biddy Road for 6.4 mi.; left on Bunkham Road; left into area.

**MARBEN PFA (CHARLIE ELLIOTT WILDLIFE CENTER)**
* Jasper/Newton Counties, 478-825-6151 or 770-784-3059
* **Fish Species:** Largemouth bass, Bluegill, Redear sunfish, Black crappie, Channel catfish. Live fish (minnows) are allowed for bait.
* **Note:** Daily Bag Limit is five (5) largemouth bass, only one (1) of which can be 16 inches or longer.

**DODGE COUNTY**
* 478-374-6765 or 912-285-6094
* **Fish Species:** Largemouth bass, Bluegill, Redear sunfish, Channel catfish, Black crappie. Live fish (minnows) are allowed for bait.
* **Note:** Largemouth bass between 16 and 24 inches must be released immediately. Bass up to 16 inches and over 24 inches can be kept (limit 5 total per person, only 1 over 24 inches).
* **Water:** 104 acre lake.
* **Facilities:** Concrete boat ramps, fishing piers, fish cleaning station, 3-D archery range, restrooms, picnic tables, nature trail, some facilities accessible to persons with disabilities. Primitive camping is allowed.
* **Directions from Eastman:** South on US Hwy 23/341 for 3 mi.; left on County Rd. 49 for 0.6 mi. to lake.

**EVANS COUNTY**
* 912-727-2112
* **Fish Species:** Hybrid striped bass, Largemouth bass, Bluegill, Redear sunfish, Channel catfish, Black crappie, Brown bullhead. Live fish (minnows) are allowed for bait.
* **Water:** Three ponds encompassing 122 acres (8, 30, 84 acres).
* **Facilities:** Concrete boat ramps, picnic pavilion, event center (visit GoOutdoorsGeorgia.com for pricing and reservations), static and 3D archery ranges, fishing piers, fish cleaning station, restrooms, picnic tables, tent and RV camping in designated areas (visit GoOutdoorsGeorgia.com 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, Redear sunfish, Channel catfish, Black crappie. Live fish (minnows) are allowed for bait.
**FRESHWATER PUBLIC FISHING AREAS**

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

**Fish species:** Largemouth bass, Bluegill, Redear 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).

**Directions from East Dublin:** Take US Hwy 82 for 10 mi.; left on Keens Crossing Rd. for 1.4 mi., PFA entrance on right.

**MCDFUFFIE**

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

**Fish Species:** Largemouth bass, Bluegill, Redear 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, tent and RV camping in designated areas (visit GoOutdoorsGeorgia.com for pricing and reservations), archery range, hiking trails, picnic tables, pavilions and some facilities accessible to persons with disabilities.

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

**OCMULGEE**

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

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

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

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

**Rocky Mountain Recreation & Public Fishing Area**

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

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

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

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

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

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

**PARADISE**

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

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

**Note:** Daily creel limit is five (5) hybrid striped bass.

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

**Facilities:** Restrooms, fish cleaning station, picnic area, concrete boat ramps, archery range, primitive camping, (visit GoOutdoorsGeorgia.com for pricing and reservations), fishing piers, boat dock, nature trail, numerous bank fishing opportunities, 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.

**Restrictions:**
- All activities prohibited on upper and lower reservoirs.
- It is illegal to possess alcoholic beverages.
- Day fishing only.
- No one may rappel, rock climb or hang glide.
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.
- Operate a motor vehicle, including off-road vehicles, in a reckless and negligent manner, or in a manner that willfully causes damage to roads, ditches, wildlife habitat, berms, firebreaks, campgrounds or parking areas.
- Hold an organized event of more than 8 people without first obtaining a Right-of-Entry permit from the public fishing area.

SILVER LAKE
Decatur County, (229) 430-4256

Fish Species: Largemouth bass, Bluegill, Redear 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. The harvest of hybrid striped bass in House Pond is one fish not less than 18 inches in total length and for Bluegill, redear sunfish, and warmouth is five (5) singly or in combination and not less than 8 inches in total length. House Pond is open only from sunrise on Thursday through sunset on Saturday.

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.

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

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

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

IMPOUNDMENTS ON TROUT STREAMS
ANGLERS CAN:
• Fish for fish species other than trout without a trout license on Dockery and Rock Creek lakes.
• Fish at night, except on Dockery and Rock Creek lakes. See Trout Fishing Hours for details.

IMPOUNDMENT NOTES:
• If you fish 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 (Steel Bridge Road) downstream to GA Hwy 53.
• Chattahoochee River from Sope Creek (off Columns Drive) downstream to US Hwy 41 (Cobb Parkway).

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

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.

Note: While fishing any specially regulated waters with a minimum size limit, it is unlawful to possess a trout which is less than the specified minimum size regardless of where the fish was caught.
the Conservation Area, including the GA Hwy 75 Alternate right-of-way. Possession of any bait, lure, or gear not legal for use on the stream is unlawful.

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

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

NOOINTOLTA CREEK AND ITS TRIBUTARIES ON BLUE RIDGE WMA
- Size limit: 16 inches for all mountain trout

Sign up for weekly trout stocking reports

For a weekly list of trout stocked during stocking season, please visit georgiawildlife.com/fishing/trout for our comprehensive Weekly Stocking Report. Sign up for email updates to get the latest on local fishing hot spots and much more.
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., Conasauca 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 Catosa Co Rd. 257; Hurricane Cr. watershed upstream from Peters Branch; Little Chickamauga Cr. watershed upstream from Catosa Co Rd. 387; Tiger Cr. watershed upstream from GA Hwy 2.

CHATTOOOGA 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; Wilsont 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; Nancynortown Cr. watershed upstream from Nancynoyoke Cr.; North Fork Broad R. watershed; Panhier Cr. watershed; Roberts Branch watershed; Soque R. watershed upstream from the mouth of Deep Cr.; Toccoa Cr. watershed.

HARALSON COUNTY
Flatwood Cr. watershed; Lasseter 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.

LUMPIN COUNTY
Amicalola Cr. watershed; Cane Cr. 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
Possom 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 ST011 (GA Hwy 136); Town Cr. watershed; Wildcat Cr. watershed.

POlk COUNTY
Cedar Cr. watershed upstream from Polk Co Rd. 121; Little Cedar Cr. watershed; Pumpkinline

2023 GEORGIA SPORT FISHING REGULATIONS

www.GoFishGeorgia.com
FRESHWATER

Tallulah Falls, Tugaloo and Yonah reservoirs
Tallapoosa R. watershed; Thompson Cr. watershed upstream from NRCS flood control
watershed; Timpson Cr. watershed; Wildcat Cr. watershed; Popcorn Cr. watershed; Seals Cr.
watershed; Flat Cr. watershed; Joe Cr. watershed; LaCounts Cr. watershed; Moccasin Cr.
watershed; Popcorn Cr. watershed; Seals Cr. watershed; Timpson Cr. watershed; Wildcat Cr.
watershed; Worse Cr. watershed; and all other streams or parts of streams not listed above,
except: Tallulah R. downstream from Lake Burton Dam, Chattooga R. below Warwoman
Cr., and tributaries to Burton, Seed, Rabun, Tallulah Falls, Tugaloo and Yonah reservoirs
not listed above.

RABUN COUNTY

Bad Branch watershed Bad Cr. watershed; Crow
Cr. watershed (includes Slick Shoal Cr.); Dicks
Cr. watershed; Dickenson Branch; Falls Branch
watershed; Flat Cr. watershed; Joe Cr. watershed;
LaCounts Cr. watershed; Moccasin Cr. watershed;
Popcorn Cr. watershed; Seals Cr. watershed; Timpson Cr. watershed; Wildcat Cr.
watershed; Worse Cr. watershed; and all other streams or parts of streams not listed above, except:
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; Kiutussee Cr. watershed; Low Cr.
watershed; Nottely Reservoir; Little Toccoa 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.

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;
Bugscliffe 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.

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 Spr Cr.) watershed; Swamp Cr. watershed upstream from Whitfield Co Rd. 9; Tiger Cr. watershed.

COMMERCIAL FISHING

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

SALE OF FISH & AQUACULTURE

Game Fish

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

Domestic Fish

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

**SMALLMOUTH BASS**
- Upper jaw extends to about middle of eye
- Usually has vertical stripes along body
- 3 short spines on anal fin

**SPOTTED BASS**
- Upper jaw not past rear of eye
- Spiny and soft dorsal fin clearly connected
- Tooth patch on tongue

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

**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

**HYBRID WHITE-STRIPED BASS**
- Back arched, body deep
- Stripes distinct and usually broken
- Tongue with two tooth patches
- 2nd anal spine 2/3 or more the length of 3rd anal spine

**HYBRID WHITE BASS**
- Seldom exceeds 3 pounds
- Tongue with one tooth patch
- Stripes often faint
- 2nd anal spine 2/3 or more the length of 3rd anal spine

**WALLEYE**
- Sharp teeth
- No spots on dorsal fin
- Dark area at base of dorsal fin
- White spot at bottom of tail

**WHITE BASS**
- Tongue with two tooth patches
- 2nd anal spine ½ or less the length of 3rd anal spine

**FLATHEAD CATFISH**
- Head wide and flat
- Body dark in color
- Tail not forked

**SMALLMOUTH BASS**
- Upper jaw extends to about middle of eye
- Usually has vertical stripes along body
- 3 short spines on anal fin

**LARGEMOUTH BASS**
- Upper jaw extends beyond eye
- Spiny and soft dorsal fin separate or nearly so
- Tongue normally smooth, tooth patch rare

**HYBRID**
- Back arched, body deep
- Stripes distinct and usually broken
- Tongue with two tooth patches
- 2nd anal spine 2/3 or more the length of 3rd anal spine

**WHITE BASS**
- Tongue with two tooth patches
- 2nd anal spine 2/3 or more the length of 3rd anal spine

*Fish identification pictures: Duane Raver or © Joseph Tomelleri*
**BLACK CRAPPIE**
- 7-8 dorsal spines
- Body color pattern irregular arranged spots

**REDEAR SUNFISH (SHELLCRACKER)**
- Red edge on operculum ear flap
- Spotted body

**REDBREAST SUNFISH**
- Long, dark ear flap
- Blue lines on head
- Ear flap (operculum) not wider than eye

**CHAIN PICKEREL (JACKFISH)**
- Elongated body with chain-like markings
- Sharp needle-like teeth

**BLUEGILL**
- Black spot on soft dorsal fin
- Vertical bars on body

**RAINBOW TROUT**
- Small black dots throughout the body that extend into the tail
- Red stripe along side on silvery body

**BROWN TROUT**
- Black and red-orange spots inside light circles on brown body
- Caudal fin (tail) square

**BROOK TROUT**
- Light, wormlike markings on dark upper body
- White leading edge on lower fins (pectoral, pelvic and anal)

**REDBREAST SUNFISH**
- Red edge on operculum ear flap
- Spotted body

**BROWN TROUT**
- Black and red-orange spots inside light circles on brown body
- Caudal fin (tail) square

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

**AMERICAN SHAD**
- Bluish or green above with a silvery side
- Deeply forked tail

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

*Fish identification pictures: Duane Raver or © Joseph Tomelleri*
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SPECIES</th>
<th>WEIGHT</th>
<th>ANGLER</th>
<th>LOCATION</th>
<th>DATE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bass, Hybrid</td>
<td>25 lb. 8 oz</td>
<td>David Hobby</td>
<td>Lake Chatuge</td>
<td>May 1995</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bass, Largemouth</td>
<td>22 lb. 4 oz</td>
<td>George Perry</td>
<td>Montgomery Lake</td>
<td>June 1932</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bass, Redeye</td>
<td>3 lb. 7 oz</td>
<td>Steve Williams</td>
<td>Lake Hartwell</td>
<td>April 2004</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bass, Shoal (tie)</td>
<td>8 lb. 5 oz</td>
<td>Joseph McWhorter</td>
<td>Chattahoochee River</td>
<td>Dec 2021</td>
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<td>Bass, Smallmouth</td>
<td>7 lb. 2 oz</td>
<td>Jack Hall</td>
<td>Lake Chatuge</td>
<td>March 1973</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bass, Spotted</td>
<td>8 lb. 2 oz</td>
<td>Wayne Holland</td>
<td>Lake Burton</td>
<td>Feb 2005</td>
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<td>Bass, Striped (tie)</td>
<td>63 lb.</td>
<td>Terry McConnell</td>
<td>Lake Richard B. Russell</td>
<td>April 2009</td>
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<td>Bass, Suwanee</td>
<td>3 lb. 9 oz</td>
<td>Laverne Norton</td>
<td>Ochlocknee River</td>
<td>Oct 1984</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bass, White</td>
<td>5 lb. 1 oz</td>
<td>J.M. Hobbins</td>
<td>Lake Lanier</td>
<td>June 1971</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bowfin</td>
<td>16 lb. 3 oz</td>
<td>Jimmy Tucker</td>
<td>Suwannee River</td>
<td>June 2014</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bullhead, Brown</td>
<td>5 lb. 8 oz</td>
<td>James Andrews</td>
<td>O.F. Veal Pond</td>
<td>May 1978</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bullhead, Yellow</td>
<td>4 lb. 15 oz</td>
<td>Glenn Settles</td>
<td>Ogeechee River</td>
<td>Oct 2003</td>
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<td>Carp, Common</td>
<td>35 lb. 12 oz</td>
<td>Rev. Donald Clark</td>
<td>Lake Jackson</td>
<td>1972</td>
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<td>Catfish, Blue</td>
<td>110 lb. 6 oz</td>
<td>Tim Trone</td>
<td>Chattahoochee River</td>
<td>Oct 2020</td>
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<td>Catfish, Channel</td>
<td>44 lb. 12 oz</td>
<td>Bobby Smithwick</td>
<td>Altamaha River</td>
<td>May 1972</td>
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<td>Catfish, Flathead</td>
<td>83 lb.</td>
<td>Carl Sawyer</td>
<td>Altamaha River</td>
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<tr>
<td>Catfish, White</td>
<td>8 lb. 10 oz</td>
<td>James Sanders</td>
<td>Savannah River</td>
<td>June 1996</td>
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<tr>
<td>Crappie, Black (tie)</td>
<td>4 lb. 4 oz</td>
<td>Shirley Lavender</td>
<td>Acree’s Lake</td>
<td>June 1971</td>
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<td>Crappie, White</td>
<td>5 lb.</td>
<td>Theresa Kemp</td>
<td>Bibb Co. Pond</td>
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<td>Gar, Longnose</td>
<td>31 lb. 2 oz</td>
<td>Rachel Harrison</td>
<td>Coosa River</td>
<td>March 2022</td>
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<tr>
<td>Muskellunge</td>
<td>38 lb.</td>
<td>Rube Golden</td>
<td>Blue Ridge Lake</td>
<td>June 1957</td>
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<tr>
<td>Perch, Yellow</td>
<td>2 lb. 9 oz</td>
<td>Thomas Lewis</td>
<td>Savannah River</td>
<td>Feb 2013</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pickerel, Chain</td>
<td>9 lb. 6 oz</td>
<td>Baxley McQuaig Jr.</td>
<td>Homerville</td>
<td>Feb 1961</td>
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<td>Pickerel, Redfin</td>
<td>2 lb. 10 oz</td>
<td>Gene Brantley</td>
<td>Lewis’ Pond</td>
<td>July 1982</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pike, Northern</td>
<td>18 lb. 2 oz</td>
<td>Keith Gragg</td>
<td>Lake Rabun</td>
<td>June 1982</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sauger</td>
<td>4 lb. 3 oz</td>
<td>Stuart Bowers</td>
<td>Clarks Hill Reservoir</td>
<td>April 1986</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shad, American</td>
<td>8 lb. 3 oz</td>
<td>Henry Saxley</td>
<td>Savannah River</td>
<td>April 1986</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shad, Hickory</td>
<td>2 lb. 10 oz</td>
<td>Timmy Woods</td>
<td>Ogeechee River</td>
<td>March 2022</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shadow Bass</td>
<td>0 lb. 10 oz</td>
<td>Kristen Brown</td>
<td>Flint River</td>
<td>June 2016</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sunfish, Bluegill</td>
<td>3 lb. 5 oz</td>
<td>P.F. Gumm</td>
<td>Shamrock Lake</td>
<td>July 1977</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sunfish, Flier</td>
<td>1 lb. 4 oz</td>
<td>Curt Brooks</td>
<td>Lowndes Co. Pond</td>
<td>Feb 1996</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunfish, Green</td>
<td>1 lb. 7 oz</td>
<td>Jeff Sumner</td>
<td>Private Pond</td>
<td>Feb 2006</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunfish, Redbreast</td>
<td>1 lb. 12 oz</td>
<td>Lester Roberts</td>
<td>Satilla River</td>
<td>May 2022</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sunfish, Redear</td>
<td>4 lb. 2 oz</td>
<td>Pat Lawrence</td>
<td>Richmond Co. Pond</td>
<td>June 1995</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sunfish, Spotted</td>
<td>11 oz.</td>
<td>Jacob Hornady</td>
<td>Sumter Co. Pond</td>
<td>April 2019</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sunfish, Warmouth</td>
<td>2 lb.</td>
<td>Carlton Robbins</td>
<td>Private Pond</td>
<td>May 1974</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trout, Brook</td>
<td>5 lb. 10 oz</td>
<td>Russell Braden</td>
<td>Waters Creek</td>
<td>March 1986</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trout, Brown</td>
<td>20 lb. 14 oz</td>
<td>Chad Doughty</td>
<td>Chattahoochee River</td>
<td>July 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trout, Rainbow</td>
<td>17 lb. 8 oz</td>
<td>Mark Cochran</td>
<td>Soque River</td>
<td>May 2004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walleye</td>
<td>14 lb. 2 oz</td>
<td>Wes Carlton</td>
<td>Lake Rabun</td>
<td>Feb 2016</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**WAY TO GO!**

There’s a new state record redbreast sunfish! Angler Lester Roberts broke the previous record set in 1998 with his 1-lb., 12-oz. Satilla River rooster. Congratulations, Lester on a great catch.
With you wherever you go.
The most up-to-date fishing regulations online!
eRegulations.com
Explore Georgia's aquatic life & outdoors like never before!

IT'S TIME TO GEORGIA!

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

Hours
Fri.–Sat. 9 a.m.–5 p.m.
Sun. 1 p.m.–5 p.m.
September 1–May 31 open Fri.–Sun.
June 1–August 31 open Wed.–Sat

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

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

1255 Perry Pkwy Perry, GA 31069
(478) 988-6701
GET KIDS Hooked!

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

KIDS FISHING EVENTS
Kids Fishing Events are held monthly during the spring and summer at DNR Public Fishing Areas. Kids can fish for free in stocked ponds with the help of experienced volunteers. Visit GoFishGeorgia.com/kidsfishing for more information on:
- Kids Fishing Event locations and dates
- Places to take kids fishing
- Tips for fishing with kids
- Downloading a “My First Fish” Certificate

YOUTH FISHING PROGRAMS
Want to get your child hooked on fishing but not sure how or where? Check out one of these opportunities for youth anglers:
- Summer Fishing Day Camps at the Go Fish Education Center (GoFishEducationCenter.com/education-gfec).
- Fish-n-Learn Education Programs for youth ages 7-15. (GeorgiaWildlife.com/FishAndLearn)
- Gone Fishin’ Overnight Camps for youth ages 11-13 at Charlie Elliott Wildlife Center (GeorgiaWildlife.com/charlie-elliott-wildlife-center).

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

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

GIVE THE GIFT OF FISHING!
Get Rewarded for Fishing!

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

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

Youth (under age 16) are eligible for a Youth Angler Award if they catch a fish that meets or beats a specific weight or length. Weights and lengths are adjusted to match skill levels of this younger age category (as compared to the Adult category). What will they win?

- Certificate
- Hat
- T-Shirt

Full program details available at any Fisheries office or at georgiawildlife.com/fishing/anglerawards.

Looking for a certified scale? Whether applying for an angler award (by weight) or a state record—fish must be weighed on a scale that has been certified accurate to the nearest ounce, or lesser weight, by the GA Department of Agriculture within the last year. Find a list of certified scales by scanning the QR code.

Lunker Catches Earns Rewards!
Angler Orville Newlin III caught this 10 lb, 10 oz large-mouth bass from Ocmulgee Public Fishing Area. This catch qualifies him for a Trophy Bass Award. As part of that program, he earns a certificate, hat, t-shirt, an entry into a drawing for a reward package, and 2 passes to the Go Fish Education Center. Catch a largemouth bass over 13 pounds, and get a replica mount of your catch!
GEORGIA'S BLACK BASS SLAM

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
**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.

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.

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

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

Environmental Protection Division: 404-656-4713 | Coastal Resources Division: 912-264-7218 | Wildlife Resources Division: 770-918-6406
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>River Name</th>
<th>Bass</th>
<th>Bluegill</th>
<th>Bowfin</th>
<th>Buffalo</th>
<th>Bullhead</th>
<th>Carp</th>
<th>Catfish, Blue</th>
<th>Catfish, Channel</th>
<th>Catfish, Flathead</th>
<th>Catfish, White</th>
<th>Crappie</th>
<th>Mullet, Striped</th>
<th>Perch</th>
<th>Pickerel</th>
<th>Chain</th>
<th>Redbreast</th>
<th>Redhorse</th>
<th>Redear</th>
<th>Sunfish, Green</th>
<th>Trout</th>
<th>Brown</th>
<th>Trout, Rainbow</th>
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<tr>
<td>Alapaha River</td>
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<td>Allatoona Crk. (Cobb Co.)</td>
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<td>(Buford Dam to Morgan Falls Dam)</td>
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<td>(Pea Crk. to West Point Lk., below Franklin)</td>
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<td>(Oliver Dam to Upatoi Crk.)</td>
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<td>Flint River (Spalding/Fayette Cos.)</td>
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<td>Flint River (Mериwether/Upson/Pike Cos.)</td>
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<td>Flint River (Macon/Dooley/Worth/Lee Cos.)</td>
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<td>Flint River (Dougherty/Baker Mitchell Cos.)</td>
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<td>Gum Crk. (Crisp Co.)</td>
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<td>Kinchafoonee Crk. (above Albany)</td>
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<td>Little River (above Clarks Hill Lake)</td>
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<td>Little River (above Ga. Hwy 133, Valdosta)</td>
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<td>Mill Crk. (Murray Co.)</td>
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<td>Muckalee Crk. (above Albany)</td>
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<td>Ochlockonee River (Moultrie to Thomasville)</td>
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<td>Ochlockonee River (Thomasville to state line)</td>
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<td>Ocmulgee River (Houston/Twiggs Co.)</td>
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# FISH CONSUMPTION GUIDELINES: RIVERS & CREEKS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NO RESTRICTIONS</th>
<th>ONE MEAL PER WEEK</th>
<th>ONE MEAL PER MONTH</th>
<th>DO NOT EAT</th>
<th>NO DATA</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bass, Largemouth</td>
<td>Bass, Other</td>
<td>Bass, Spotted</td>
<td>Bass, White</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bass, Striped</td>
<td>Bluegill</td>
<td>Buffalo</td>
<td>Bullhead</td>
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<tr>
<td>Carp</td>
<td>Catfish, Blue</td>
<td>Catfish, Flathead</td>
<td>Catfish, White</td>
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<td>Cobia</td>
<td>Grapple</td>
<td>Mullets, Stippled</td>
<td>Perch, Yellow</td>
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<td>Redhorse</td>
<td>Redfish</td>
<td>Sucker</td>
<td>Sunfish, Green</td>
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<td>Trout, Brown</td>
<td>Trout, Rainbow</td>
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<tr>
<th>FRESHWATER</th>
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<tr>
<th>Ocmulgee River (Telfair/Wheeler Cos.)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Oconee River (above Barnett Shoals)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oconee River (Milledgeville to i-16)</td>
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<td>Ogeechee River (all to Ft. McAllister)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ohooppee River (Emanuel/Toombs Cos.)</td>
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<td>Okfentokee Swamp (Billy's Lake)</td>
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<td>Oostanaula River (Floyd/Gordon Cos.)</td>
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<td>Patulipa Crk. (upstream of Beaver Crk., Taylor Co.)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Patulipa Crk. (downstream of Beaver Crk.)</td>
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<td>Pipemaker Canal</td>
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<td>Proctor Crk. (near Atlanta Fulton Co.)</td>
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<td>Satilla River (near Folkston, Camden Co.)</td>
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<td>Savannah River (above &amp; below New Sav. Bluff Lock &amp; Dam)</td>
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<td>Savannah River (Chatham/Screven Cos.)</td>
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<td>Savannah River (Effingham)</td>
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<td>Savannah River (Flt. Howard)</td>
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<td>Savannah River (Tidal Gate)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Savannah River (New Savannah Bluff Lock &amp; Dam to Savannah Estuary)</td>
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<td>Short Crk. (Warren Co.)</td>
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<td>South River (Panola Sheals, Rockdale Co.)</td>
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<td>South River (Henry Co., Snaping Shoals)</td>
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<td>Spring Crk. (Seminole/Decatur/Miller Cos.)</td>
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<td>St. Marys River (Charlton Co.)</td>
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<td>Sumac Crk. (Murray Co.)</td>
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<td>Tallapoosa River (GA Hwy 100)</td>
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<td>Trib. To Hudson River (Alto, Banks Co.)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Withlacoochee River (Berrien/Lowndes Cos.)</td>
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* 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.

---

DNR AT WORK

Collecting genetic data from bass is as simple as a tongue swab. DNA from the swabs is tested as part of an ongoing assessment of the West Point Lake largemouth bass stocking program. The DNA data will help identify previously stocked fish and provide valuable evidence as to the success of the ongoing stocking program.
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<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Lengths</th>
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<td>Albany By-Pass Pond</td>
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<td>Acworth</td>
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<tr>
<td>Allatoona</td>
<td>12-16&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td>Andrews</td>
<td>12-16&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td>Banks</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bartlett's Ferry</td>
<td>&gt;16&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bear Crk. Reservoir</td>
<td>12-16&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td>Black Shoals (Randy Poynter)</td>
<td>&gt;12&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td>Blackshear</td>
<td>12-16&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td>Big Lazer PFA</td>
<td>12-16&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td>Blue Ridge</td>
<td>12-16&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td>Burton</td>
<td>&gt;12&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pond N. Bush Field (Augusta)</td>
<td>12-16&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td>Carters Lake</td>
<td>&gt;16&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chatuge</td>
<td>12-16&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clarks Hill</td>
<td>12-16&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evans County PFA</td>
<td>&gt;12&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flat Creek PFA (Lonice Barrett Lake)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goat Rock</td>
<td>&gt;12&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hamburg</td>
<td>&gt;12&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hartwell (Tugaloo Arm)</td>
<td>12-16&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hartwell (main body of lake)</td>
<td>12-16&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heath Lake (Rocky Mountain PFA)</td>
<td>&gt;12&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High Falls</td>
<td>&lt;12&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hugh M. Gillis PFA</td>
<td>&gt;12&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jackson</td>
<td>&gt;12&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Juliette</td>
<td>&gt;12&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ken Gardens</td>
<td>&gt;12&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kolomoki Mounds S.P.</td>
<td>&gt;12&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lanier</td>
<td>&gt;12&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Little Ocmulgee S. P.</td>
<td>&gt;12&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marben PFA</td>
<td>&gt;12&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meyers (Baxley)</td>
<td>&gt;12&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McDuffie PFA (West)</td>
<td>&gt;12&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nottely</td>
<td>&gt;12&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oconee</td>
<td>&gt;12&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oliver</td>
<td>&gt;12&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rabun</td>
<td>&gt;12&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reed Bingham S.P.</td>
<td>&gt;12&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Richard B. Russell</td>
<td>&gt;12&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seminole</td>
<td>&gt;12&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sinclair</td>
<td>&gt;12&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stone Mountain</td>
<td>&gt;12&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tobesofkee</td>
<td>&gt;12&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tugalo</td>
<td>&gt;12&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tribble Mill Pk. Pond (Gwinnett Co.)</td>
<td>&gt;12&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Varner</td>
<td>&gt;12&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Point</td>
<td>&gt;12&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Worth (Chehaw Reservoir)</td>
<td>&gt;12&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Worth (Flint Reservoir)</td>
<td>&gt;12&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yonah</td>
<td>&gt;12&quot;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**FISH CONSUMPTION GUIDELINES: LAKES**

**NO RESTRICTIONS**

**ONE MEAL PER WEEK**

**ONE MEAL PER MONTH**

**DO NOT EAT**

**NO DATA**
**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.

**2022 FORESTRY FOR WILDLIFE PARTNERS**

The Georgia Department of Natural Resources’ Wildlife Resources Division honors our 2022 Forestry for Wildlife Partners for their outstanding accomplishments in incorporating wildlife conservation practices as an integral part of their land management. These partners had a positive impact for wildlife habitat on about 1 million acres. Learn about FWP, including our new focus on partner projects and a lower minimum acreage at [georgiawildlife.com/fwp](http://georgiawildlife.com/fwp).
Which path will YOU choose?

Follow us to find your path.
GaStateParks.org
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 ANGLER**

- Buy a fishing license with the free Saltwater Information Program (SIP) permit. Funds from the license support fisheries management, boating and fishing access projects, and conservation law enforcement. Your SIP permit helps identify you as a Georgia saltwater angler, which aids in management decisions and the allocation of federal funds.
- Handle the fish as little as possible. Leaving a fish in the water is the best option when releasing it, but if you must remove it from the water, wet your hands first to avoid removing its protective slime.
- When taking a photograph with the fish, be sure to support its weight by holding the fish horizontally and support its weight with your hands.
- If a fish looks lethargic, gently force water through the mouth and over the gills by holding it in the current, or slowly moving the fish in a figure-eight motion.
- Use non-stainless steel non-offset circle hooks when possible. It is believed that these hooks reduce the rate of gut hooking in fish and helps increase their chance of survival after release. Non-stainless steel hooks also rust quicker than stainless if it is left in the fish.
**Fishing Licenses:** See page 8 for information on license requirements.

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

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**SALTWATER FISHING INFORMATION**

**GEORGIA SALTWATER FISHING REGULATIONS**

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

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

**Coastal Resources Division**
Marine Fisheries Section
One Conservation Way,
Brunswick, GA 31520-8687
912-264-7218 or fax 912-262-3143
www.CoastalGaDNR.org

**FEDERAL SALTWATER FISHING REGULATIONS**

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

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

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

**NOAA - Gray’s Reef National Marine Sanctuary**
10 Ocean Science Circle
Savannah, GA 31411
graysreef@noaa.gov
912-598-2345
www.graysreef.noaa.gov

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**RECREATIONAL FISHING**

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

**RELATED DEFINITIONS**

**Maximum Size:** the specific size in length above which it is unlawful to take that finfish species.
**Minimum Size:** the specific size in length below which it is unlawful to take that finfish species.
**Open Season:** that specified period of time during which one may take certain finfish species from any waters of the state.
**Daily Creel Limit:** the lawful amount of a species of finfish that a person may take in one day.
**Possession Limit:** the lawful amount of a species that a person can legally have at one time.

**Bushel:** 8 gallons.

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**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, Chippewy 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

### Saltwater

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SPECIES</th>
<th>WEIGHT</th>
<th>MALE ANGLER (year)</th>
<th>WEIGHT</th>
<th>FEMALE ANGLER (year)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dolphin</td>
<td>68 lb. 1.9 oz.</td>
<td>James Roberts (2022)</td>
<td>54 lb. 8 oz.</td>
<td>Romona Arsenault (1977)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grouper, Goliath*</td>
<td>124 lb. 0 oz.</td>
<td>James Chumley (1976)</td>
<td>Harvest prohibited, therefore record no longer allowed.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seaturtle, Spotted</td>
<td>9 lb. 7 oz.</td>
<td>Tommy Hall (1976)</td>
<td>7 lb. 8 oz.</td>
<td>Amanda Wooten (1990)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shark, Mako</td>
<td>440 lb. 0 oz.</td>
<td>Tyler Gary (2017)</td>
<td>No minimum weight</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shark, Sandbar (Brown)*</td>
<td>158 lb. 8 oz.</td>
<td>Chet Lee Kirby (1979)</td>
<td>124 lb. 0 oz.</td>
<td>Dorothea Bays (1985)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shark, Tiger</td>
<td>794 lb. 0 oz.</td>
<td>Chuck Hall (1975)</td>
<td>190 lb. 0 oz.</td>
<td>Pam Page (2012)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Snapper, Cubera</td>
<td>10 lb. 0 oz.</td>
<td>Chris Gray (2012)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Snapper, Yellowtail</td>
<td>5 lb. 0 oz.</td>
<td>Eddie N. Vannmeter II (2014)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swordfish</td>
<td>205 lb. 8 oz.</td>
<td>Brendin A. Page (2014)</td>
<td>No minimum weight</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weakfish (Summer Trout)</td>
<td>6 lb. 8 oz.</td>
<td>Frank Taylor (1976)</td>
<td>Minimum weight: 3 lb.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SPECIES</th>
<th>OPEN SEASON</th>
<th>DAILY LIMIT AND POSSESSION LIMIT</th>
<th>MINIMUM SIZE (inches)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Amberjack*</td>
<td>All year</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>28 FL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Eel</td>
<td>All year</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>9 TL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Atlantic croaker</td>
<td>All year</td>
<td>25</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Atlantic sturgeon</td>
<td>No Harvest</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Billfish (Blue marlin, White marlin, Saffish)*</td>
<td>Catch and Release Only</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black drum</td>
<td>All year</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>14 TL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black sea bass*</td>
<td>All year</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>12 TL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bluefish</td>
<td>All year</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>12 FL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cobia</td>
<td>Mar. 1 - Oct. 31</td>
<td>1 per angler, max 6 per boat.</td>
<td>36 FL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dolphin*</td>
<td>All year</td>
<td>10 (Not to exceed 60 per boat, except for headboats which are allowed 10 per paying customer.)</td>
<td>20 FL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flounder</td>
<td>All year</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>12 TL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gag grouper*</td>
<td>All year</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>24 TL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>King mackerel*</td>
<td>All year</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>24 FL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Red drum (Channel bass, Spottail bass, Redfish)**</td>
<td>All year</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>14 TL (23 TL maximum)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Red porgy*</td>
<td>All year</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>14 TL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Red snapper*</td>
<td>All year</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>20 TL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sharks (other than Hammerheads, SSC and Prohibited Sharks)*</td>
<td>All Year</td>
<td>1 per angler or boat, whichever is less</td>
<td>83 FL (Shortfin Mako)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sharks: Hammerheads (Great, Scalloped, and Smooth)*</td>
<td>All Year</td>
<td>1 per angler or boat, whichever is less</td>
<td>78 FL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small shark composite (SSC)* (Atlantic sharpnose, Bonnet-head, Spiny dogfish)</td>
<td>All Year</td>
<td>1 per angler</td>
<td>30 FL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sheephead</td>
<td>All year</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>10 FL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spanish mackerel*</td>
<td>All year</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>12 FL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spot</td>
<td>All year</td>
<td>25</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spotted seatrout</td>
<td>All year</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>14 TL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Striped bass (Saltwater)</td>
<td>All year</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>22 TL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Striped bass (Savannah River)</td>
<td>All year</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>27 TL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tarpon</td>
<td>All year</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>68 FL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tripletail</td>
<td>All year</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>18 TL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weakfish</td>
<td>All year</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>13 TL</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

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

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

---

**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](image1)

![Total Length](image2)

---

**TAGGED FISH**

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

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

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

ATLANTIC CROAKER
- Dorsal fin spotted
- Tiny barbels

BLACK SEA BASS
- Notch
- Short white tabs on tail

BLACK DRUM (Young)
- Loses vertical bars with age
- Barbels
- 2 Spines

SOUTHERN KINGFISH (WHITING)
- Distinctly forked tail fin
- 7–8 diagonal dusky bands

SHEEPSHEAD
- Keeps vertical bars throughout life
- No barbels
- 3 Spines
- Large flat incisor teeth

TRIPLETAIL
- Dark spot or spots

WEAKFISH (Summer Trout)
- No spots on fins
- Indistinct dark freckles on upper body

RED DRUM
- Spots on fins
- Distinct dark spots on upper body

SPOTTED SEATROUT

GEORGIA SPORT FISHING REGULATIONS
www.GoFishGeorgia.com
**SHARKS FOUND IN GEORGIA WATERS THAT CAN BE HARVESTED (NOT INCLUDING SMALL SHARK COMPOSITE ABOVE)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Species</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Blacknose</td>
<td>Blacktip</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bull</td>
<td>Finetooth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lemon</td>
<td>Nurse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scalloped Hammerhead</td>
<td>Smooth Hammerhead</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thresher</td>
<td>Tiger (has interdorsal ridge)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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.

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**SMALL SHARK COMPOSITE**

- **ATLANTIC SHARPNOSE**
  - White on rear edge
  - Second dorsal fin begins above middle of anal fin

- **SPINY DOGFISH**
  - Offshore in winter
  - White spots
  - No anal fin

- **BONNETHEAD**
  - Shovel or bonnet-shaped head
  - Evenly rounded edge with no indentations

- **KING MACKEREL**
  - Up to 60 lbs.
  - Lacks black patch
  - Lateral line drops sharply

- **SPANISH MACKEREL**
  - Averages 2–4 lbs.
  - Bright gold spots
  - Gradually sloping lateral line

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**SHARK ANATOMY** (view from above)

- **BLACKTIP**
  - Color dark to bluish-grey with a Z-shaped pattern
  - Pointed snout
  - Sharp, pointed irregular teeth

- **SAND TIGER**
  - Harvest prohibited

- **SANDBAR**
  - Harvest prohibited
  - Color brownish-grey above white below
  - Similar in size

- **BONNETHEAD**
  - Shovel or bonnet-shaped head
  - Evenly rounded edge with no indentations

---

**Fish identification pictures by:** Duane Raver
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 shrimp. 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 shrimp 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 30-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://www.GeorgiaOutdoorMap.com).

**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 ⅛ inch and a “Food shrimp cast net” having a minimum bar mesh of ⅜ inch. Bait shrimp cast nets cannot be used to take shrimp for personal consumption; however, food shrimp cast nets may be used to take bait. There are no length restrictions on either net and cast nets may be modified with the addition of duct tape or other materials to enhance performance.

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

---

**Guidelines for Sea Turtle Protection**

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

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

If you cannot reach Georgia DNR, cut the line as short as possible and release the turtle.
**Harvest Limits:** Recreational cast netters collecting bait shrimp are limited to two quarts per person at any time, provided that person may take a maximum of four quarts of bait shrimp per day. When two or more persons occupy the same boat, there may be no more than four quarts of bait onboard the boat at any time, and the persons occupying the boat may take no more than eight quarts of bait shrimp per day. Bait shrimp may be alive or dead when caught with a cast. No person taking food shrimp with a cast net may possess more than 48 quarts of heads-on shrimp or 30 quarts of shrimp tails in any day. When one or more persons occupy the same boat, there may be no more than 48 quarts of heads-on shrimp or 30 quarts of shrimp tails on board at any time. No vessel owner shall allow the vessel to be used to take more than the allowable catch limits in any day.

**STONE CRABS**

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

**BLUE CRABS**

**AREAS, SEASONS, HOURS**

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

**GEAR**

**Traps:** Up to six standard size crab traps (2 x 2 feet or smaller) may be used recreationally. Two unobstructed escapement rings (2 ¼ 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 public waters without 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 crammers 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 diamondback terrapins in commercial-style crab traps. Terrapins that enter crab traps cannot escape and often drown. To learn how to build your own terrapin excluder call 912-264-7355.

**SHELLFISH**

**SEASON AND HOURS**

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

**GEAR**

Shellfish may only be taken with handheld implements.

**AREAS**

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

**SIZE AND HARVEST LIMITS**

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

**WHELK (CONCH)**

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

**BAIT MINNOWS**

**SEASON, HOURS AND AREAS**

Bait minnows may be harvested year-round.

**GEAR**

No more than two traps may be used recreationally, except that a licensed saltwater fishing guide may use a maximum of four traps. A minnow trap must be less than 24 inches in length, 18 inches in width, or 9 inches in height for a rectangular trap; or, 30 inches in circumference for cylindrical traps. The throat opening must be no larger than 1 inch, and bar mesh must not be smaller than 1/4 inch (square or diameter). Each trap must have attached a tag or float bearing the name and address of the person using the trap. Subject to specific gear design criteria, sizes, time of day, and area restrictions outlined in these regulations, bait minnows may also be taken recreationally year-round in seines and cast nets.

**POSSESSION LIMITS**

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

WWW.GOFLISHGEORGIA.COM
Purchase a license online at www.GoFishGeorgia.com or by phone 1-800-366-2661
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). 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.

- **Don’t exhaust fish.** Use gear and line strength to minimize playing time, landing the hook can be removed with less damage to the fish.

- **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.

- **Avoid encounter.** If catching fish that you don’t want or cannot keep due to regulations, 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.

- **Plan ahead.** Before you go, decide whether you might release fish on your trip and prepare the equipment necessary to do so.

- **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.

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**WILDLIFE VIOLATOR COMPACT**

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

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**RECOMPRESSION TOOLS**

- Fish Descender
- Seaqualizer
- Recompression Tool
- Weighted Milk Crate

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**RANGER HOTLINE**

**TO REPORT VIOLATIONS**

Please refer to call out box on page 18.

**TO REPORT VIOLATIONS IN FEDERAL WATERS**

- U.S. Coast Guard stations in Brunswick 912-267-7999 and Tybee Island 912-786-5440
- NOAA’s toll-free, 24-hour Fisheries Enforcement hotline 800-853-1964
- DNR LE 800-241-4113

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**INTERSTATE WILDLIFE VIOLATOR COMPACT MEMBER STATES**

As of June 1, 2022.
Shhhhh. No wake zone.

Protect your baby (and their toys) with coverage for fishing gear and personal property too.

1-800-PROGRESSIVE / PROGRESSIVE.COM

Mobile District – www.sam.usace.army.mil
Savannah District – www.sas.usace.army.mil