

## General Information

The following laws pertain mainly to noncommercial saltwater fishing, shrimping, crabbing and shellfishing for personal consumption. Individuals (age 16 and older) harvesting marine resources, including finfish, oysters, clams, shrimp and crab must purchase an annual or temporary Saltwater Recreational Fishing License - unless fishing on a licensed public fishing pier; fishing on a licensed charter vessel while under hire; using 3 or fewer drop nets, 3 or fewer fold up traps, or 3 or fewer handlines with no hooks and a single bait per line (chicken necking); or shrimp baiting (which requires a shrimp baiting license).

Fishing piers and chartered vessels charging a fee for fishing must purchase a Marine Recreational Fishing license annually. Applications for Pier and Charter Vessel Licenses are available from the DNR office in Charleston.

Any person engaged in selling any fish or fishery product, including bait, must first obtain a license from the Marine Resources Division. Regulations concerning commercial saltwater fishing are provided with commercial licenses and are available through the Marine Resources Division at the address below.

**For more information, contact:** SCDNR, Marine Resources Division, P.O. Box 12559, Charleston, SC 29422, 843-953-9301, [www.dnr.sc.gov](http://www.dnr.sc.gov).

**For federal fishery limits and regulations, contact:** South Atlantic Fishery Management Council, 4055 Faber Place Drive, Suite 201, North Charleston, SC 29405, 843-571-4366, [www.safmc.net](http://www.safmc.net).

## Saltwater Fishing Methods & Devices

### Hook and Line

**Permits/License:** Saltwater Recreational Fishing License required. Federal Highly Migratory Species Permit required when fishing for tuna, billfish and swordfish in federal waters and for possession of these species in state waters. For sharks, a federal permit is required only when fishing in federal waters.

**Seasons:** No closed season.

**Restrictions:**

- It is unlawful to fish from a boat within 300 feet of commercial fishing piers extending into the Atlantic Ocean.
- Fishing from the shore in the waters under or within 50 feet on either side or beyond the end of any ocean fishing pier in Horry County is prohibited.

### Gigging

**Permits/Licenses:** Saltwater Recreational Fishing License.

**Restrictions:**

- It is unlawful to gig red drum or spotted seatrout during Dec., Jan. and Feb.
- It is unlawful in Georgetown County to gig for fish in saltwaters from the northern tip of North Island to the northern tip of Magnolia Beach during daylight hours.

### Bangsticks

- It is unlawful to take, have in one's possession or to land or sell any species of fish taken by means of a bangstick or similar device.

## Cast Nets (Other than Shrimp Baiting)

**Permits/Licenses:** Saltwater Recreational Fishing License required.

### Seines & Gill Nets (Anchor, Set, Stake & Drift Nets)

**Permits/Licenses:**

- Saltwater Recreational Fishing License required.
- To operate a haul seine a commercial license is required.
- Powerboats transporting nets or other commercial fishing equipment must have vessel decals.

**Seasons:** No closed season in saltwater (except shad, sturgeon and herring).

**Restrictions:**

- Red drum and spotted seatrout may not be taken by nets. Sharks may not be taken by gill nets.
- Gill nets no longer than 100 feet with a 3-inch minimum stretched mesh size may be used only in unrestricted areas of the Atlantic Ocean. Gill nets no longer than 100 yards with 3-inch minimum stretched mesh size may be used only in special designated inshore areas.
- Gill nets must be marked with one end buoy that is international orange in color with the name and address of the owner. Operator must be within 500 feet of the net, be within hailing distance and have visual contact with the net at all times when deployed.
- Nets may not be set more than halfway across any waterway at any time.
- Stationary or fixed nets, including gill nets, may not be set or placed within 600 feet of a net previously set.
- It is unlawful to use any seine or gill net in any waters within a state park; except, small hand seines and cast nets for taking shrimp are allowed.

## Special Information

**Special Management Zones** - The following Artificial Reefs have been declared "Special Management Zones" and are protected by federal regulations:

*BP-25, Beaufort 45, Betsy Ross, Bill Perry, C.J. Davidson, Cape Romain, Capers, Charleston 60, Comanche, Eagles Nest, Edisto 40, Edisto 60, Edisto Offshore, Fripp Island, Georgetown, Greenville, Hilton Head, Hunting Island, Kiawah, Little River Offshore, North Inlet, Paradise, Pawley's Island, Ten Mile, Vermilion, Wayne Upchurch, Will Goldfinch and Y-73.* Fishing may be conducted only with handheld hook and line gear and spearfishing gear (excluding powerheads). The use of fish traps, longlines, gill nets and trawls is prohibited. Powerheads (bangsticks) are prohibited except for safety purposes. It is unlawful to possess, land or sell any species of fish taken with a bangstick (reef and non-reef areas).

**Unlawful to Sell Gamefish** - The following species have been declared gamefish and native caught fish may not be sold: red drum (channel bass), spotted seatrout, striped bass and tarpon. The purchase, barter, trade, or sale of billfish, including marlin, sailfish and spearfish, is unlawful regardless of where taken or landed. Swordfish may be sold under commercial laws only.

**Prohibited Practices** - The use of dynamite, gun powder, lime or any other explosive in or about any waters of this state is unlawful. The commercial sale of diamondback terrapins is prohibited. Harvest and possession of horseshoe crabs is prohibited without a commercial permit.

It is unlawful to sell or offer for sale any sea turtles or to offer for sale, sell or destroy any sea turtle eggs. Sea turtles are protected by the Federal Endangered Species Act. It is unlawful to display, feed, net, trap, harpoon, molest or otherwise interfere with the well-being or normal activity of marine mammals of the orders Cetacea, Sirenia and Pinnipedia, including but not limited to bottlenose dolphin, spotted dolphin, common dolphin, manatee, porpoise, harbor seal and any species of whale in any waters of the state. Marine mammals are also protected by federal law.

**Marine Protected Areas (MPA's)** - Four MPA's (Snowy Grouper Wreck, Northern SC, Edisto, and Charleston Deep Artificial Reef) are located off of the SC coast. Fishing or possession (unless gear is appropriately stored) of snapper grouper species and shark bottom longlining is prohibited in these areas. For locations and more details on these MPA's please visit [www.safmc.net](http://www.safmc.net) or call 843-571-4366.

## Annual License Fees

### Saltwater Recreational Fishing License

Annual Resident License.....	\$10
Annual Non-Resident License.....	\$35
Temporary Resident License (14 days).....	\$5
Temporary Non-Resident License (14 days).....	\$11

### Shrimp Baiting License

Resident License.....	\$25
Non-Resident License.....	\$500

**Commercial Pier License (>100 feet).....** \$350

**Commercial Pier License (≤100 feet).....** \$150

### Charter Vessel License

(6 or fewer passengers).....	\$150
(7-49 passengers).....	\$250
(50 or more passengers).....	\$350

## Size & Catch Limits for Saltwater Fish

TL=Total Length, FL=Fork Length; AIW=Atlantic Intracoastal Waterway; **State Waters** extend from the saltwater-freshwater dividing line to the 3-mile limit. **Federal Waters** extend from the 3-mile limit to 200 miles offshore (international waters). For information on how to measure a fish, see page 17.

**All species in this section must be landed with head and tail intact.**

Species	Limits	Size Limit	Seasons/Restrictions
<b>Sport Fish</b>			
Black Drum	5 per person per day (state waters)	14-inch minimum (TL) and 27-inch maximum (TL) (state waters)	<b>Season:</b> No closed season
Bluefish	15 per person per day (all waters)	No size limit	<b>Season:</b> No closed season
Cobia	2 per person per day (all waters)	33-inch minimum (FL) (all waters)	<b>Season:</b> No closed season <b>Restrictions:</b> Charter and headboats must have a Coastal Migratory Pelagics permit to fish for this species.
Dolphin	10 per person or 60 per boat per day (all waters); headboats have no boat limit.	No size limit	<b>Season:</b> No closed season
Flounders (Southern, Summer & Gulf)	Rod & reel or gigging only - 20 per person per day, not to exceed 40 per boat per day (state waters)	14-inch minimum (TL) (state waters)	<b>Restrictions:</b> Size limits apply to both recreational & commercial fishing.
Greater Amberjack	1 per person per day (all waters) In April, 1 per vessel per trip	28-inch minimum (FL) (all waters)	<b>Restrictions:</b> Commercial harvest restrictions during April. Prohibits sale of fish harvested under bag limit when season is closed.
Hardhead Catfish and Gafftopsail Catfish (Saltwater Catfish)	Possession is prohibited	Possession is prohibited	<b>Season:</b> No open season. If caught, must be released immediately.
King Mackerel	3 per person per day (all waters)	24-inch minimum (FL) (all waters)	<b>Season:</b> March 1 to February 28. <b>Restrictions:</b> Fishery may be closed to all harvest if total allowable catch is met (state & federal waters). Charter and headboats must have a Coastal Migratory Pelagics permit to fish for this species.
Red Drum (Channel Bass/ Spottail)	3 per person per day (state waters) 0 per person per day (federal waters)	15-inch minimum (TL) and 23-inch maximum (TL) (state waters)	<b>Season:</b> May be taken only by rod & reel year-round or by gigging March through November. <b>Restrictions:</b> May not be harvested from federal waters. South Carolina native caught fish may not be sold (state waters).
Sheepshead, Spadefish	No more than 20 per person per day in aggregate with the snapper grouper complex species.	None	<b>Season:</b> No closed season
Spanish Mackerel	15 per person per day (all waters)	12-inch minimum (FL) (all waters)	<b>Season:</b> March 1 to February 28. <b>Restrictions:</b> Fishery may be closed to all harvest if total allowable catch is met (state & federal waters). Charter and headboats must have a Coastal Migratory Pelagics permit to fish for this species.
Spotted Seatrout	10 per person per day (state waters)	14-inch minimum (TL) (state waters)	<b>Season:</b> May be taken only by rod & reel year-round or by gigging March through November. <b>Restrictions:</b> South Carolina native-caught fish may not be sold (state waters).
Striped Bass, Hybrid Bass and Combinations	10 per person per day except 2 per day in Savannah River saltwaters. See page 15.	None in saltwaters, except 27-inch (TL) minimum in Savannah River saltwaters. See page 15.	<b>Restrictions:</b> • May be taken only by rod & reel year-round. • May not be sold (state waters).
Tarpon	1 per person per day (state waters)	No size limit	<b>Restrictions:</b> May be taken only by rod & reel and may not be sold.
Wahoo	2 per person per day	No size limit	<b>Season:</b> No closed season <b>Restrictions:</b> No sale of recreationally caught fish.
Weakfish	10 per person per day (state waters)	12-inch minimum (TL) (state waters)	<b>Season:</b> No closed season
<b>Atlantic Tunas</b>			
Albacore, Skipjack	None	No size limit	<b>Restrictions:</b> Federal permit required.
Bigeye, Bluefin Tuna	Check current federal regulations by calling 1-888-USA-TUNA (1-888-872-8862) or checking <a href="http://www.nmfspermits.com">www.nmfspermits.com</a> .	27-inch minimum (FL)	<b>Restrictions:</b> • Check current federal regulations by calling 1-888-USA-TUNA (1-888-872-8862) or checking <a href="http://www.nmfspermits.com">www.nmfspermits.com</a> . • Federal permit required.
Yellowfin Tuna	3 per person per day	27-inch minimum (FL)	<b>Restrictions:</b> Federal permit required.
<b>Porgies &amp; Snappers</b>			
Red Porgy	3 per person per day	14-inch minimum (TL)	<b>Season:</b> No closed season
Vermilion Snapper	10 per person per day (all waters) (recreational)	12-inch minimum (TL) (recreational and commercial)	<b>Restrictions:</b> Seasonal restrictions and possession limit changes pending. Please check with the South Atlantic Fisheries Management Council at <a href="http://www.safmc.net">www.safmc.net</a> or 843-571-4366 before fishing for this species.

Species	Limits	Size Limit	Seasons/Restrictions
<b>Other Snappers (Excluding Vermilion)</b>			
Red Snapper	10 per person per day from this group (including all snapper species except Vermilion), and no more than 2 Red Snapper may be included in the total (state & federal waters).	20-inch minimum (TL)	<b>Restrictions:</b> Possession limit changes pending. Please check with the South Atlantic Fisheries Management Council at <a href="http://www.safmc.net">www.safmc.net</a> or 843-571-4366 before fishing for this species.
Lane Snapper		8-inch minimum (TL)	<b>Season:</b> No closed season
Black Snapper		No size limit	<b>Season:</b> No closed season
Blackfin, Cubera, Dog, Yellowtail, Gray, Mahogany, Silk, Schoolmaster & Queen Snapper		12-inch minimum (TL)	<b>Season:</b> No closed season
Mutton Snapper		16-inch minimum (TL)	<b>Season:</b> No closed season
Hogfish	None	12-inch minimum (FL) (all waters)	<b>Season:</b> No closed season
<b>Sea Bass, Grouper &amp; Tilefish</b>			
Black Sea Bass	15 per person per day (recreational; all waters)	12-inch minimum (TL) (recreational; all waters); 10-inch minimum (TL) (commercial; all waters)	<b>Season:</b> Open unless total allowable catch is met.
<b>Grouper, Tilefish Combinations</b>			
Gag & Black Grouper	5 per person per day from this group; no more than 2 Gag or Black Groupers or more than 1 Snowy Grouper or more than 1 Snowy Grouper or Golden Tilefish may be included in this total (state & federal waters).	24-inch minimum (TL)	<b>Restrictions:</b> Seasonal restrictions and possession limit changes pending. Please check with the South Atlantic Fisheries Management Council at <a href="http://www.safmc.net">www.safmc.net</a> or 843-571-4366 before fishing for these species.
Scamp, Red, Yellowfin & Yellowmouth Groupers		20-inch minimum (TL)	<b>Restrictions:</b> Seasonal restrictions and possession limit changes pending. Please check with the South Atlantic Fisheries Management Council at <a href="http://www.safmc.net">www.safmc.net</a> or 843-571-4366 before fishing for these species.
Blueline Tilefish, Golden Tilefish, Misty Grouper, Sand Tilefish, Snowy Grouper, Yellowedge Grouper		No size limit	<b>Season:</b> No closed season
Coney, Grasby, Red Hind, Rock Hind, Tiger Grouper		No size limit	<b>Restrictions:</b> Seasonal restrictions and possession limit changes pending. Please check with the South Atlantic Fisheries Management Council at <a href="http://www.safmc.net">www.safmc.net</a> or 843-571-4366 before fishing for this species."
Warsaw, Speckled Hind Groupers	1 Warsaw and 1 Speckled Hind per vessel per trip (included in aggregate bag limit)	No size limit	<b>Season:</b> No closed season
Nassau Grouper, Goliath Grouper	Possession is prohibited		<b>Season:</b> No open season
<b>All Other Snapper Grouper Complex Species Combined</b>			
Species including but not limited to: Lesser Amberjack; Cottonwick; Bluestripe, White, Smallmouth, French and Spanish Grunts; Scup, Sheepshead, Almaco, Bar, Crevalle and Yellow Jacks; Black Margate; Margate; Whitebone, Knobbed, Jolthead, Saucereye, Grass and Longspine Porgies; Porkfish; Puddingwife; Banded Rudderfish; Sailors Choice; Bank Sea Bass; Rock Sea Bass; Spadefish; Gray, Queen and Ocean Triggerfish	20 per person per day from this group	No size limit	<b>Season:</b> No closed season. <b>Restrictions:</b> Bluerunners and tomtates are excluded from the bag limit.
<b>Sharks</b>			
Federal Highly Migratory Species Permit required in federal waters. All sharks must be landed with fins, head and tail naturally attached.			
Dogfish (Spiny & Smooth)	None (all waters)	No size limit	
Atlantic Sharpnose	1 per person per day (state and federal waters)	No size limit	
Bonnethead	1 per person per day (all waters)	No size limit	
Blacknose, Blacktip, Blue, Bull, Finetooth, Great Hammerhead, Scalloped Hammerhead, Smooth Hammerhead, Lemon, Shortfin Mako, Nurse, Porbeagle, Spinner, Thresher, Tiger and Oceanic Whitetip Sharks	1 shark per boat from this group	54-inch minimum (FL)	
Atlantic Angel, Basking, Bignose, Dusky, Galapagos, Longfin Mako, Narrowtooth, Night, Caribbean Reef, Sandbar (outside of commercial shark research fishery), Sevengill, Caribbean Sharpnose, Silky, Bigeye Sixgill, Sixgill, Smalltail, Bigeye Thresher, Bigeye Sand Tiger, Sand Tiger, Whale and White Sharks.	Possession is prohibited		<b>Season:</b> No open season. <b>Restrictions:</b> Sharks from this group may not be kept. If caught, sharks from this group must be released immediately.

Species	Limits	Size Limit	Seasons/Restrictions
<b>Billfish</b>			
Federal Highly Migratory Species Permit required. All billfish to be released may not be removed from the water. All recreationally caught Atlantic billfish landed must be reported to NMFS within 24 hours of landing at the dock. Anglers can report by calling 1-800-894-5528 or by visiting <a href="http://www.nmfspermits.com">www.nmfspermits.com</a> .			
Blue Marlin	None	99-inch minimum from lower jaw (FL) (all waters)	<b>Restrictions:</b> May be taken only by rod & reel and may not be sold
White Marlin	None	66-inch minimum from lower jaw (FL) (all waters)	<b>Restrictions:</b> May be taken only by rod & reel and may not be sold
Sailfish	None	63-inch minimum from lower jaw (FL) (all waters)	<b>Restrictions:</b> May be taken only by rod & reel and may not be sold
Swordfish	1 per person per day, up to 3 per vessel per trip	47-inch minimum from lower jaw (FL) (state and federal waters)	<b>Restrictions:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• May be taken only by rod &amp; reel and handlines. Handlines must be attached to, or remain in contact with, the vessel at all times.</li> <li>• Recreationally taken fish may not be sold.</li> </ul>
Longbill Spearfish	Possession is prohibited		
<b>Sturgeon &amp; Shad</b>			
Shortnose Sturgeon	Possession is prohibited		<b>Restrictions:</b> Unlawful to catch, buy, sell, possess, or ship. Classified as an endangered species.
Atlantic Sturgeon	Possession is prohibited		<b>Season:</b> No open season until further notice. <b>Restrictions:</b> Unlawful to catch, buy, sell, possess or ship.
American Shad, Herring	10 shad per person per day except in Santee River and Rediversion Canal (20 per person per day). 1 U.S. bushel of herring per person per day.	No size limit	<b>Season:</b> No closed season for recreational fishing with castnet or hook & line, including rod & reel. Skimbow nets allowed Feb. 1 through Apr. 30. <b>Restrictions:</b> Gillnets allowed as for commercial use. If fishing gillnets recreationally must adhere to recreational limits.

Species	Bag & Size Limits	Seasons/Restrictions
<b>Crabs, Lobster &amp; Shellfish Harvesting</b>		
Blue Crabs	<b>Permits/Licenses:</b> Saltwater Recreational Fishing License required. See page 20 for gear exemptions. <b>Limit:</b> None (state waters) <b>Size:</b> 5-inch minimum carapace width (point to point)	<b>Restrictions:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Females with egg mass (sponge) must be returned to water unharmed immediately.</li> <li>• For recreational purposes no more than two traps (pots) per person with owner's name and address marked on yellow floats only.</li> </ul>
Stone Crabs	<b>Permits/Licenses:</b> Saltwater Recreational Fishing License required. See page 20 for gear exemptions. <b>Limit:</b> None (state waters) <b>Size:</b> Claws must be 2 3/4-inch minimum forearm (propodus)	<b>Restrictions:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Only crabs with 2 claws may have one removed.</li> <li>• Only the larger of two claws may be kept.</li> <li>• It is unlawful to possess any stone crab body, live or dead.</li> <li>• No claw may be removed from a female with egg mass.</li> <li>• For recreational purposes no more than two traps (pots) per person with owner's name and address marked on yellow floats only.</li> </ul>
Spiny Lobster	<b>Permits/Licenses:</b> Saltwater Recreational Fishing License required. <b>Limit:</b> 2 per person per day (all waters) <b>Size:</b> Carapace must be over 3 inches	<b>Season:</b> No closed season. <b>Restrictions:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Removal of tail at sea prohibited.</li> <li>• No harvest of berried females is allowed.</li> <li>• No explosives, poisons, spears, or piercing devices other than fishing hooks are allowed.</li> </ul>
Oysters	<b>Permits/Licenses:</b> Saltwater Recreational Fishing License required. <b>Limit:</b> 2 U.S. bushels per person per day from public or state shellfish grounds. No boat or vehicle, or boat and vehicle combination, may contain more than three personal limits regardless of the number of persons on the boat or in the vehicle. In order to possess three personal limits, there must be three persons on the boat or in the vehicle. If there are four or more persons on the boat or in the vehicle, there is a maximum possession limit of three personal limits. <b>Size:</b> No Limit	<b>Season:</b> typically Sept. 16 through May 15; may be shortened or extended by the DNR. <b>Restrictions:</b> A person may harvest shellfish (clams and/or oysters) recreationally no more than two days per seven day period. <b>Shell Recycling:</b> Oyster shells are collected throughout the coastal area and reused for shellfish culture. Call 843-953-9300 for shell drop-off site locations, or visit <a href="http://saltwaterfishing.sc.gov/oyster.html">saltwaterfishing.sc.gov/oyster.html</a> for detailed maps of locations.
Clams	<b>Permits/Licenses:</b> Saltwater Recreational Fishing License required. <b>Limit:</b> 1/2 U.S. bushel per person per day from public or state shellfish grounds. No boat or vehicle, or boat and vehicle combination, may contain more than three personal limits regardless of the number of persons on the boat or in the vehicle. In order to possess three personal limits there must be three persons on the boat or in the vehicle. If there are four or more persons on the boat or in the vehicle, there is a maximum possession limit of three personal limits. <b>Size:</b> 1-inch minimum thickness	<b>Season:</b> Typically Sept. 16 through May 15; may be shortened or extended by the DNR. <b>Restrictions:</b> A person may harvest shellfish (clams and/or oysters) recreationally no more than two days per seven day period. <b>Shell Recycling:</b> Oyster shells are collected throughout the coastal area and reused for shellfish culture. Call 843-953-9300 for shell drop-off site locations, or visit <a href="http://saltwaterfishing.sc.gov/oyster.html">saltwaterfishing.sc.gov/oyster.html</a> for detailed maps of locations.

Species	Bag & Size Limits	Seasons/Restrictions
<b>Crab &amp; Shellfish Methods &amp; Devices</b>		
<b>Crab Pots (Traps)</b>	<b>Permits/Licenses:</b> Saltwater Recreational Fishing License required. Licensees can fish no more than two pots recreationally. A commercial Saltwater Fishing License, Vessel Decal, and Gear License are required for over two pots. (Other information is provided with licenses.)	<b>Season:</b> No closed season <b>Restrictions:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If unattended each pot float must bear name and address or license number of owner.</li> <li>• No crab pot shall be left unattended in coastal waters more than 5 days.</li> <li>• No crab trap or pot may be set within 100 yards of a public boat landing or launching area or set so as to be left dry at low tide.</li> <li>• A float attached to a crab pot or trap must be made of solid, buoyant material which does not sink upon being punctured or cracked. The floats must be constructed of plastic, PVC Spongex, plastic foam, or cork. The primary float for a recreational pot or trap must be yellow in color and at least ten inches in length if rectangular, cylindrical, or conical and at least five inches in diameter or width. Round or spherical floats must be at least six inches in diameter. Buoy lines for crab pots must be made of nonfloating material.</li> </ul>
<b>Gathering Shellfish (Oysters &amp; Clams)</b>	<b>Permits/Licenses:</b> Saltwater Recreational Fishing License required.	<b>Seasons:</b> Typically Sept. 16 through May 15 (½ hour before sunrise to ½ hour after sunset). <b>Restrictions:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shellfish may be harvested recreationally from State shellfish grounds and Public shellfish grounds. Public and State shellfish grounds are marked with signs. Recreational harvesting is allowed on culture permit grounds (formerly leases), but only when the harvester has in possession written permission from the culture permit holder. License must be in possession while harvesting.</li> </ul> <i>Maps of areas where oysters and clams may be gathered in season for recreation may be found on the web at <a href="http://www.dnr.sc.gov">www.dnr.sc.gov</a> or by writing Marine Resources at PO Box 12559, Charleston, SC 29422. <a href="http://www.dnr.sc.gov/marine/shellfish/regs.html">www.dnr.sc.gov/marine/shellfish/regs.html</a>.</i>
<b>Shrimp Harvesting</b>		
<b>Catch Limits for Shrimp - Certain exemptions apply to permitted charter vessels and licensed bait dealers. For information, contact SCDNR, Marine Resources Division, P.O. Box 12559, Charleston, SC 29422 or call 843-953-9312.</b>		
<b>Taking Shrimp Without Bait</b>	<b>Permits/Licenses:</b> Saltwater Recreational Fishing License required. See page 20 for gear exemptions. <b>Limits:</b> Daily catch 48 quarts whole or 29 quarts headed per boat, per person if no boat is used, or per seining party.	<b>Seasons:</b> May 1 through December 15. <b>Restrictions:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 12 dozen dead or live shrimp per boat December 16 through April 30.</li> </ul>
<b>Shrimp Baiting</b>	<b>Permits/Licenses:</b> Shrimp Baiting License and individual pole marker tags required. A license is not required for residents assisting license holders. License available Monday of the second full week in June. <b>Limits:</b> Daily catch 48 quarts whole or 29 quarts headed per boat or per person if no boat is used.	<b>Seasons:</b> 60-day period set by SCDNR beginning at 12:00 noon on the last Friday on or before Sept. 15. Call 843-953-9312 for season dates. <b>Restrictions:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shrimp caught over bait cannot be sold.</li> <li>• No more than 10 poles can be used per license per day. Poles may not exceed 1-inch in diameter and <b>each pole</b> must have a numbered tag attached which corresponds with the shrimp baiting license. Each pole must also be marked with reflective tape.</li> <li>• No more than 10 poles can be used per boat.</li> <li>• All poles of a licensed set must be within 100 linear yards of each other and sets of poles must be at least 25 yards apart. Poles may not be set within 50 yards of any dock, public landing or boat ramp. Unattended poles will be confiscated.</li> <li>• Owners of private docks or persons with written permission may bait from those docks once properly licensed and with numbered tag displayed.</li> <li>• Shrimp pots or traps are prohibited.</li> <li>• Individuals who are: 1) owners or officers of a corporation which owns a vessel specified on a trawl license; 2) masters of a vessel specified on a trawl license application; 3) licensed to use a channel net; 4) licensed to use a cast net for a commercial purpose; or 5) licensed as a wholesale seafood dealer may not obtain a shrimp baiting license.</li> <li>• Cast nets used for taking shrimp over bait must have a minimum mesh size of ½-inch square (1-inch stretch).</li> </ul>
<b>Shrimp Seines</b>	<b>Permits/Licenses:</b> Saltwater Recreational Fishing License required.	<b>Season:</b> No closed season <b>Restrictions:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maximum length of shrimp seine 40 feet, maximum depth 6 feet, minimum mesh size, ½ inch square (1 inch stretch), maximum mesh size ¾ inch square (1.75 inch stretch).</li> <li>• Tail bags or pockets are not allowed on seines when pulled by hand.</li> <li>• Staked seines are considered commercial channel net devices; allowances and restrictions are provided with the purchase of a commercial license.</li> <li>• One limit per seine per day.</li> </ul>
<b>Trawling</b>	<b>Permits Licenses:</b> Commercial Saltwater Fishing License, Vessel Decal and Gear License required.	<b>Restrictions:</b> Trawling for personal use is restricted to the same license requirements, areas and seasons as commercial trawling. This information is provided with license.



**Call SCDNR  
(843) 953-9300  
FOR NEAREST  
DROP-OFF SITE**



**Help keep South Carolina's  
waters clean and safe**



**Recycle your used  
monofilament**

For recycling  
locations and other  
information call  
**843-953-MONO**

# Legislation Changes Saltwater Recreational Fishing License Requirements

## What fishing requirements have changed?

Individuals recreationally fishing in saltwater from shore (beach, bank, private dock, free public pier, etc.) and those recreationally shrimping and crabbing will be required to have a saltwater recreational fishing license.

## Who is required to have a fishing license?

The new legislation will require all who recreationally harvest fish, oysters, clams, shrimp and crab to have a saltwater recreational fishing license. Individuals under the age of 16 will be exempt from licensing requirements and senior and disability license holders will not need to purchase an additional saltwater license. Additional exemptions include individuals fishing on a licensed public fishing pier; individuals fishing on a licensed charter vessel while under hire; individuals using 3 or fewer drop nets, 3 or fewer fold up traps, or 3 or fewer handlines with no hooks and a single bait per line (chicken necking); and individuals shrimp baiting (will still be required to purchase a shrimp baiting license.)

## When will the changes occur?

Saltwater fishing license requirements will change July 1, 2009.






## Why did the changes occur?

Changes to SC's saltwater recreational fishing license will provide better information about recreational catch, which will lead to better management of SC's valuable marine resources.

## Saltwater Fishing License Basics

### • License Types & Fees

Annual Resident	\$10	
Annual Non-resident	\$35	
14-day Resident	\$ 5	
14-day Non-resident	\$11	
Senior License*	\$ 9	
Disability License**	NO COST	

### • License Term

Annual licenses valid from July 1 - June 30  
14-day licenses valid 14 days from date of purchase

\* Must be a domiciled SC Resident for six months immediately prior to application and have attained 64 years of age. Includes the saltwater fishing privilege.

\*\*Must be a domiciled SC resident for one year prior to application and determined to be totally disabled. 3 Year Disability Fishing License includes the saltwater fishing privilege. See page 57 in the SCDNR Rules and Regulations for application.

## What benefits do I get from the changes?

With the license changes, SC anglers will simply need to purchase one license to fish anywhere in both state and federal waters. Revenue generated from saltwater recreational fishing license sales will be used to directly benefit SC's marine recreational resources.

## Where can I buy a fishing license?

Saltwater recreational fishing licenses can be purchased online by visiting [www.dnr.sc.gov](http://www.dnr.sc.gov); by telephone calling 1-866-714-3611, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week; or by visiting SCDNR license sales agents across the state. To learn more information about the saltwater recreational fishing license or about SC saltwater recreational fishing visit [www.dnr.sc.gov](http://www.dnr.sc.gov).



## Shrimp Baiting License Application

**Note: Applications with incomplete information will not be processed and will be returned to the applicant.**

Make check payable to SCDNR  
Mail to: SCDNR License Section  
PO Box 11710, Columbia, SC 29211-1710 (803) 734-3833  
PO Box 12559, Charleston, SC 29422-2559 (843) 953-9312

<b>Applicant's Social Security</b>		<b>Applicant's Name</b>				
# _____ - _____ - _____		_____	_____	_____	_____ / _____ / _____	_____
		Last	First	MI	Gender	Race Date of Birth
<b>Applicant's Address</b>					<b>County of Residence</b>	
Street or Box # _____		City _____		State _____	Zip _____	
<b>Telephone</b>		<b>Driver's License No./State</b>		<b>Amount of Money Enclosed</b>		
_____ - _____ - _____		_____ - _____		(Circle One)		
				Residents - \$25      Non-residents - \$500		
I understand that persons whose recreational privileges are suspended are not eligible to apply for, hold, or use SCDNR recreational licenses, permits, stamps, or tags.						
Signature _____				Date _____		
Please complete the above information, sign and return with the appropriate fee to the mailing address above.						

# FY2009 Saltwater Recreational Fishing License Report

## Introduction

The South Carolina Recreational Fishing License Program, since its inception in July 1992, has provided significant benefits to the state. Allocated funds continue to support programs, activities, and resource management functions that are of great value to the protection, maintenance, enhancement, and enjoyment of healthy and diverse marine recreational fisheries, associated fish stocks, and marine habitats. The original Marine Recreational Fishing Stamp program was modified in 2002 to give South Carolina resident and out-of-state anglers a variety of license options from which to choose. The modification has allowed for revenues to double, which provides additional support for activities important to state saltwater recreational anglers.

Since the inception of the license, as of April 30, 2009, approximately 1,674,820 individual saltwater stamps/licenses have been sold to marine recreational anglers over the course of the program's existence. Since July 2008, 124,193 individual saltwater recreational licenses of all available types have been purchased, resulting in the generation of approximately \$1.32 million in total revenue, the vast majority of which by law must be used to benefit saltwater recreational fisheries for the state. The following are highlights of the activities, projects, and programs carried out by the Marine Resources Division that received support from the Saltwater Recreational Fishing License Program over this past fiscal year.

## FY 2009 Highlights

**Artificial Reefs** – Twelve artificial reef construction projects were completed this fiscal year on 9 permitted reef sites along the coast. These projects included the addition of 3 deck barges, 71 concrete pilings, 44 NYC subway cars, and 26 armored personnel carriers. Routine monitoring and assessment of numerous reefs were conducted throughout the year, and 4 missing reef buoys were replaced on offshore reef sites. A second edition of the SC artificial reef guide was completed and is being distributed upon request. Additionally, a project to evaluate the placement of existing artificial reefs off South Carolina in regards to oceanographic features and spawning of reef fishes continued this year. The overall goal of this project is to collect information on both artificial and natural reefs located at similar depths in order to help improve the current network of artificial reefs to take advantage of reef fish spawning and recruitment patterns to enhance reef productivity. - \$166.9K

**Marine Fish** - SCDNR's Marine Gamefish Tagging Program continues to promote responsible angling ethics and conservation through the support of license-generated funds. Last year, trained volunteer anglers tagged and released 744 fish. Information was received from 124 recaptured fish and 79% of those recaptured were released with the tag intact. 479 of the fish tagged (61%) and released were red drum. One recapture of note was a greater amberjack originally tagged off of Charleston, SC in July 2002 that was recaptured seven years later in May 2009 off of the Florida coast.

Another important component in SCDNR's effort to maintain high quality fishing opportunities is our effort to monitor recreationally important species. Staff collect size, age, and reproductive information from a variety of species. Information is collected using gear designed to catch and record data in a standardized, repeatable fashion using long-lines to catch large adult red drum offshore; trammel nets to catch smaller juvenile red and black drum, flounder, sheepshead, and seatrout inshore; and electro-shocking in estuarine waters farther upstream. SCDNR fisheries biologists also visit fishing tournaments and manage fish drop-off freezers in several locations where participating anglers can donate specimens for scientific study. Over the past year, staff attended five fishing tournaments and collected information from 331 fish specimens comprising 10 different species. Recreational anglers donated 255 additional fish through the drop-off freezer program, and 373 total tag returns were reported for red drum, black drum, and sheepshead.

Saltwater recreational fishing license revenue also helps fund SCDNR's red drum stocking research program. Adult wild red drum maintained in the lab are conditioned to spawn by incrementally changing the day length and temperature similar to what they would experience in the wild. When conditions are right red drum will spawn in the tanks and fertilized eggs can be collected. Larvae that are produced are then carefully maintained in ponds. All animals produced at



the Waddell Mariculture Center have a unique genotype or "genetic fingerprint" so that they can later be distinguished from their wild cohorts. When the fish held in ponds grow to the desired length, they are harvested and transported to stocking sites along the coast. During FY2009, 920,622 red drum were released as part of a license funded project. Specifically, 899,431 total fingerling red drum (1-1.5 inches) were stocked in Winyah Bay and the North Edisto River; 2,401 total advanced juveniles (3-4 inches) were stocked into Winyah Bay, Little River, and Murrells Inlet; 2,000 advanced juveniles will be released in

Winyah Bay later this spring; and an additional 500 fish are being grown out to sub-adult size for release in Winyah Bay. Also during 2008, 1,290 total legal size sub-adult red drum were released into the Ashley River, Winyah Bay, Murrells Inlet, and Little River; and another 15,000 advanced juveniles are currently being grown out for release later this year in the ACE Basin. Genetic techniques using non-lethal sampling allow hatchery fish to be identified from their wild cohorts by having anglers remove a small tissue sample before releasing the fish. This allows scientists to determine the percent contribution stocked fish are making to the overall population in various estuarine systems. During FY2009, over 1,092 red drum samples have been processed by the genetics lab.

An effort to assess the bycatch in the commercial channel net and shad gill net fisheries continued this year to determine the potential impact these fisheries may have on recreationally important finfish species. Additionally a project collected fishery dependent data on coastal and oceanic pelagic species, including species of billfish, dolphin, tuna, and wahoo. During 2008, 868 billfish catches were reported to SCDNR of which 100% were released. - \$441.1K

**Oysters** - Over 39,522 bushels of shell were planted on 9 public and state shellfish grounds in 4 coastal counties during FY2009. Twenty-three shell recycling sites, located throughout the coastal zone, continue to serve as collection points for donated shell, allowing the public to participate in oyster reef restoration and enhancement in recreational harvesting areas. A record 15,445 bushels of oyster shells were recycled in FY2009. SCDNR biologists are evaluating new ways to enhance and restore local shellfish beds. Researchers are testing different substrates for shell planting, as well as developing efficient and accurate ways to assess oyster reefs including the effects shell planting and recreational harvesting have on these reefs. The SC Oyster Restoration and Enhancement program (SCORE) built oyster reefs at two sites in Charleston Harbor restoring 0.255 acres of shoreline with the help of multiple school groups and civic organizations. Additionally a Marine Recreational Fisheries survey was funded to collect information on the recreational shellfish fishery as well as the attitudes and preferences of SC saltwater recreational fishing license holders. Shellfish maps are available to the public free of charge by writing: Recreational Shellfish Maps, Shellfish Management Program, SCDNR, P.O. Box 12559, Charleston, SC 29442-2559, by calling (843) 953-9854, or from the SCDNR Web site ([www.dnr.sc.gov](http://www.dnr.sc.gov)), click on "Fish," then "Marine," then "SC Public Shellfish Grounds" or "SC State Shellfish Grounds." - \$322.1K

**Education, Information, Outreach** - The saltwater license website ([saltwaterfishing.sc.gov](http://saltwaterfishing.sc.gov)) continues to provide the public with updated information on rules and regulations and saltwater fishing related news. The Carolina Coastal Discovery (CCD) Marine Education Program continues to provide vessel and land based education activities operating out of the Marine Resources Center in Charleston, DNR facilities in the Ashepoo-Combahee-Edisto (ACE) Basin, and in Georgetown and Horry Counties, reaching about 3,500 students, teachers, and adults with education programs during FY2009. The CCD Program's education initiatives included marine animal dissections, salt march ecology, marine invertebrate taxonomy, barrier island studies, beach walks, bird and estuarine species identifications, and water quality monitoring. CCD Program information and application forms are now available online at [www.dnr.sc.gov/ccd/](http://www.dnr.sc.gov/ccd/) - \$176K

