### STATE COASTAL WATERS (Internal and 0-3 miles) | FEDERAL MANAGEMENT INFORMATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FINFISH SPECIES (note symbols)</th>
<th>Minimum Length</th>
<th>Bag Limits (per person)</th>
<th><a href="https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/species/bluefish">Link</a></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bluefish (M)</strong></td>
<td>None</td>
<td>3/day (M)</td>
<td><a href="http://safmc.net/regulations/">Link</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cobia</strong></td>
<td>See the most recent Cobia DMF proclamation at <a href="http://www.ncmarinefisheries.net">www.ncmarinefisheries.net</a></td>
<td><a href="http://safmc.net/regulations/">http://safmc.net/regulations/</a></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Wahoo</strong></td>
<td>None</td>
<td>2/day</td>
<td><a href="https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/species/cobia">Link</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Dolphin (B)</strong></td>
<td>None</td>
<td>10/day</td>
<td><a href="http://safmc.net/regulations/">http://safmc.net/regulations/</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>King Mackerel (H)</strong></td>
<td>24” FL</td>
<td>3/day</td>
<td><a href="http://safmc.net/regulations/">http://safmc.net/regulations/</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Spanish Mackerel (H)</strong></td>
<td>12” FL</td>
<td>15/day</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tuna: Bluefin, Bigeye and Yellowfin (G)</strong></td>
<td>Bigeye and Yellowfin tuna 27” Curved FL</td>
<td><a href="https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/topic/atlantic-highly-migratory-species">Link</a></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Spiny Dogfish</strong></td>
<td>None</td>
<td>None</td>
<td><a href="https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/species/atlantic-spiny-dogfish">Link</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sharks (G)</strong></td>
<td>See most recent DMF proclamation at <a href="http://www.ncmarinefisheries.net">www.ncmarinefisheries.net</a></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Blue Marlin (G)</strong></td>
<td>99” LJFL</td>
<td>1 per vessel per trip, either blue marlin or white marlin</td>
<td><a href="https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/topic/atlantic-highly-migratory-species">Link</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>White Marlin (G)</strong></td>
<td>66” LJFL</td>
<td>1 per vessel per trip, either blue marlin or white marlin</td>
<td><a href="https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/topic/atlantic-highly-migratory-species">Link</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sailfish (G)</strong></td>
<td>63” LJFL</td>
<td>1/day</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### CLOSED UNLAWFUL TO POSSESS

#### Spotted Seatrout (Speckled Trout) ▲

- 14” TL: 4/day
  - No Federal Regulations

#### Weakfish (Gray Trout) ▲

- 12” TL: 1/day

#### Sheephead

- 10” FL: 10/day
  - No Federal Regulations

#### Black Drum (C)

- 14” – 25” TL: 10/day
  - No Federal Regulations

#### Tarpon

- UNLAWFUL TO POSSESS
  - No Federal Regulations

#### Striped Bass

- (A): 4/day

#### American Shad (D)

- None: 1/day
  - No Federal Regulations

#### Hickory Shad (D)

- None: 1/day
  - No Federal Regulations

#### Alewife and Blueback Herring

- UNLAWFUL TO POSSESS
  - No Federal Regulations

#### American Eel (E)

- 9” TL: 25/day
  - [Link](https://www.greateratlantic.fisheries.noaa.gov/sustainable/recfishingregs/index.html)

#### Scup (North of Cape Hatteras only)

- 9” TL: 40/day
  - [Link](https://www.greateratlantic.fisheries.noaa.gov/sustainable/recfishingregs/index.html)

#### Black Sea Bass (North of Cape Hatteras)

- 13” TL: 15/day
  - SEASON OPEN May 15–Sept. 30 & Oct. 10–Dec. 31
  - [Link](https://www.greateratlantic.fisheries.noaa.gov/sustainable/recfishingregs/index.html)

#### Black Sea Bass (South of Cape Hatteras)

- 13” TL: 7/day
  - [Link](http://safmc.net/regulations/)

#### Snappers, Groupers, Porogys, Triggerfish, Jacks, Tilefish, Grunts, Spadefishes, Wrasses and Sea Basses (H)

- See the most recent Snapper/Grouper Complex recreational DMF proclamation at [www.ncmarinefisheries.net](http://www.ncmarinefisheries.net)
  - [Link](http://safmc.net/regulations/)

#### Mullet (striped and white)

- UNLAWFUL TO POSSESS FROM NOVEMBER 7 TO DECEMBER 31 NORTH OF THE HIGHWAY 58 BRIDGE UNLAWFUL TO POSSESS FROM NOVEMBER 10 TO DECEMBER 31 SOUTH OF THE HIGHWAY 58 BRIDGE 200/day (species combined)
  - No Federal Regulations

#### Spot

- None: 50/day
  - [Link](http://safmc.net/regulations/)

#### Atlantic Croaker

- None: 50/day
  - [Link](http://safmc.net/regulations/)

### PROHIBITED FINFISH SPECIES

- Sharks: whale, basking, white, sand tiger, bigeye sand tiger, Atlantic angel shark, bigeye sixgill, bigeye thresher, bignose, Caribbean reef, Caribbean sharptooth, dusky, Galapagos, longfin mako, shortfin mako, narrowtooth, night, sandbar, silky, sevengill, sixgill, and smalltail. Other finfish: river herring, Atlantic sturgeon, shortnose sturgeon, Nassau grouper, Goliath grouper, Warsaw grouper, speckled hind and red snapper.

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**IMPORTANT**: Check with Division of Marine Fisheries for most current minimum lengths and creel limits.

www.ncmarinefisheries.net

Persons engaged in recreational fishing in North Carolina coastal waters are required to possess a Coastal Recreational Fishing License in accordance with G.S. 113-174.1

You can also download the Fish Rules Mobile App at [fishrulesapp.com/](https://fishrulesapp.com/)

https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/
**STATE COASTAL AND EEZ WATERS (Internal and 0-200 miles)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SHELLFISH and CRUSTACEANS</th>
<th>Minimum Size</th>
<th>Bag Limits (per person)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>BLUE CRAB (F)</strong></td>
<td>5&quot; Carapace Width</td>
<td>UNLAWFUL TO POSSESS from January 1-31 North of Highway 58 bridge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>UNLAWFUL TO POSSESS from March 1-15 South of the Highway 58 bridge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>50 Crabs/Day not to exceed 100 Crabs/Vessel/Day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>STONE CRAB CLAWS (J)</strong></td>
<td>2 ¾ &quot; Propodus Length</td>
<td>UNLAWFUL TO POSSESS from June 15 – August 15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(no possession limit during open season)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SPINY LOBSTER (K)</strong></td>
<td>3&quot; Carapace Length (L)</td>
<td>2/Trip</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>HARD CLAM (I)</strong></td>
<td>1&quot; Thick</td>
<td>100 Clams/Day not to exceed 200 Clams/Vessel/Day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>OYSTER (I)</strong></td>
<td>SEASON CLOSED</td>
<td>UNLAWFUL TO POSSESS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>BAY SCALLOP</strong></td>
<td>SEASON CLOSED</td>
<td>UNLAWFUL TO POSSESS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CONCHS and WHELKS</strong></td>
<td>None</td>
<td>10/Day not to exceed 20/Vessel/Day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>MUSSELS</strong></td>
<td>None</td>
<td>100/Day not to exceed 200/Vessel/Day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SHRIMP (N)</strong></td>
<td>Closed Shrimping Area</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Open Shrimping Area</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**SYMBOLS TO LOOK FOR:**

- Albarine Sound Management Area: see the most recent DMF proclamation at [www.ncmarinefisheries.net](http://www.ncmarinefisheries.net) for season open and close dates. During open season, 1 person per person per day and a harvest slot limit of 18 inches to less than 25 inches TL; Atlantic Ocean, year-round: 1 person per person and a harvest slot limit of 28 inches to less than 35 inches TL. Unlawful to gig, spear, or gaff striped bass. Central Southern Management Area: Unlawful to possess striped bass (including hybrid bass).
- Unlawful to possess red drum greater than 27" TL. Unlawful to gig, spear, or gaff red drum. One black drum per person per day over 25" TL is allowed.
- For aggregate creel limits for American shad and hickory shad: see the most recent DMF proclamation at [www.ncmarinefisheries.net](http://www.ncmarinefisheries.net). Unlawful to take or possess American shad from the Atlantic Ocean.
- Recreational Commercial Gear License (RCGL) holders are allowed up to 96 quarts (heads on) or 60 quarts (heads off) of shrimp per person per day if more than one person aboard a vessel possesses a valid RCGL.

**Size and Creel Limits for Shellfish:**

- Shrimp: The creel limit for blue shrimp is 5 fish per person per day in all private (non for-hire) recreational fisheries. Recreational anglers engaged in a for-hire vessel can possess up to 5 blue shrimp per person per day.

**Bag Limits (per person):**

- 10 clams per person per day
- 100 clams per person per day (heads on)
- 60 clams per person per day (heads off)
- 100 clams per day not to exceed 200 clams per vessel per day
- 10 clams per person per day not to exceed 20 clams per vessel per day
- 20 clams per vessel per day

**Conch and Winkle Limits:**

- 10/Day not to exceed 20/Vessel/Day
- 100/Day not to exceed 200/Vessel/Day
- 100 clams per day not to exceed 200 clams per vessel per day

**State Coastal and EEZ Waters:**

- The state has regulated the taking of shellfish and other marine resources in the coastal and EEZ waters of North Carolina. The regulations are found in the North Carolina Administrative Code (NCAC) and the North Carolina Administrative Order (NCAO).

**Contact DMF or visit [www.ncmarinefisheries.net](http://www.ncmarinefisheries.net) to obtain the most recent DMF shellfish and polluted area proclamations for specific areas, seasons, or other restrictions. An interactive map of areas closed to the harvest of shellfish due to water quality monitoring by DMF’s Shellfish Sanitation section can be viewed at [https://ndnr.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=5759aa19d7484a3b82a8e440fba643aa](https://ndnr.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=5759aa19d7484a3b82a8e440fba643aa).**

**For seasons, bag limits, size limits or closures for shellfish, please refer to the most recent DMF shellfish and polluted area proclamations for specific areas, seasons, or other restrictions.**

**OYSTER (I):**

- Season open January 1 – August 31, except year-round when taken by boated pots.
- It is unlawful to possess immature female crabs at any time and it is illegal to possess dark sponge crabs from April 1 – April 30.
- In state or federal waters, federal permit required for Highly Migratory Species, tunas, billfish, swordfish and sharks (excluding Atlantic bonito, little tunny (false albacore), and blackfin tuna; [https://fishpermits.nccaa.gov](https://fishpermits.nccaa.gov)). Prior to removal from vessel, all billfish, swordfish and bluefin tuna must be reported at NC HMS reporting stations. See the DMF website for more details. For seasons, bag limits, size limits or closures for shellfish, please refer to the most recent DMF shellfish and polluted area proclamations for specific areas, seasons, or other restrictions.

**BAY SCALLOP:**

- Season open January 1 – August 31, except year-round when taken by boated pots.
- It is unlawful to possess immature female crabs at any time and it is illegal to possess dark sponge crabs from April 1 – April 30.
- In state or federal waters, federal permit required for Highly Migratory Species, tunas, billfish, swordfish and sharks (excluding Atlantic bonito, little tunny (false albacore), and blackfin tuna; [https://fishpermits.nccaa.gov](https://fishpermits.nccaa.gov)). Prior to removal from vessel, all billfish, swordfish and bluefin tuna must be reported at NC HMS reporting stations. See the DMF website for more details. For seasons, bag limits, size limits or closures for shellfish, please refer to the most recent DMF shellfish and polluted area proclamations for specific areas, seasons, or other restrictions.

**CONCHS and WHELKS:**

- Size and creel limits for spotted seatrout and weakfish taken in inland waters are the same as the recreational limits for those species in adjacent joint and coastal waters.
- For size and creel limits for spotted seatrout and weakfish taken in inland waters, please see [www.ncwildlife.org](http://www.ncwildlife.org).

**Morehead City Office (24 hours):**

- Elizabeth City Office: 800-682-2632 or 800-338-7805 or 252-473-5734
- Manteo Office: 800-338-7804 or 252-946-6481
- Washington Office: 800-248-4536 or 910-796-7215
- Wilmington Office: 301-427-8505
- NMFS (Fed. Reg.): 301-427-8505

**THIS FLYER IS EFFECTIVE August 17, 2023 AND IS FOR GENERAL INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES AND HAS NO LEGAL FORCE OR EFFECT. FISHERY RULES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE. THESE RESTRICTIONS APPLY TO FISH TAKEN FOR RECREATIONAL PURPOSES AND INCLUDE HOOK AND LINE. Updated State regulations can be found at [https://deq.nc.gov/recreational-size-bag-limits](https://deq.nc.gov/recreational-size-bag-limits) and updated Recreational Commercial Gear License information can be found at [https://deq.nc.gov/recreational-commercial-gear-license](https://deq.nc.gov/recreational-commercial-gear-license). FOR INLAND WATER FISHING REGULATIONS, CALL WILDLIFE RESOURCES COMMISSION 919-707-0220 OR [WWW.NCWILDLIFE.ORG](http://WWW.NCWILDLIFE.ORG).**