

**VIRGINIA MARINE RESOURCES COMMISSION
2012 RECREATIONAL FISHING REGULATIONS FOR
VIRGINIA'S MARINE WATERS SIZE and POSSESSION LIMITS**

AMBERJACK

Minimum Size Limit.....32 inches
Possession Limit.....2 per person

AMERICAN EEL

Minimum Size Limit..... 6 inches
Possession Limit......50 per person

BLACK DRUM (DRUM, DRUMFISH)

Minimum Size Limit.....16 inches
Possession Limit.....1 per person

BLACK SEA BASS (state waters; federal rules apply 3-200 miles)

Minimum Size Limit.....12 ½ inches
Possession Limit......25 per person
Open season.....May 22 - October 11; November 1 - December 31

BLUEFISH

Minimum Size Limit.....None
Possession Limit......10 per person

COBIA

Minimum Size Limit......37 inches
Possession Limit.....1 per person

GRAY TROUT (WEAKFISH)

Minimum Size Limit......12 inches
Possession Limit.....1 per person

GROUPER (All species, including Wreckfish)

Minimum Size Limit.....None
Possession Limit.....1 per person

HERRING (RIVER HERRING; ALEWIFE; BLUEBACK)

Minimum Size Limit.....Closed; Illegal to possess

KING MACKEREL

Minimum Size Limit......27 inches
Possession Limit.....3 per person

RED DRUM (CHANNEL BASS, REDFISH)

Minimum Size Limit......18 inches
Maximum Size Limit......26 inches
Possession Limit.....3 per person

SCUP (PORGY)

Minimum Size Limit......8 inches
Possession Limit......50 per person

SHAD (AMERICAN SHAD)

Minimum Size Limit.....Closed; Illegal to possess

SHEEPSHEAD

Minimum Size Limit.....None
Possession Limit.....4 per person

SPADEFISH

Minimum Size Limit.....None
Possession Limit.....4 per person

Where open or closed seasons are specified, dates are inclusive.



All regulations are subject to change. It is the angler's responsibility to know and abide by all current regulations and laws. Check for new regulations before you go fishing. www.mrc.virginia.gov



February 2012

SPANISH MACKEREL

Minimum Size Limit.....14 inches
Possession Limit.....15 per person

SPECKLED TROUT (SPOTTED SEATROUT)

Minimum Size Limit.....14 inches
Possession Limit (April 1 - November 30).....10 per person
Possession Limit (December 1 - March 31).....5 per person
Only one speckled trout may be 24 inches or greater Dec. - March

STRIPED BASS (ROCKFISH, STRIPER)

Regulations on seasons, size limits, possession limits, available on separate regulation card or from the Virginia Marine Resources Commission. (For contact information, see below.)

STURGEON

.....Illegal to Possess

SUMMER FLOUNDER (FLUKE)

Minimum Size Limit.....16 ½ inches
Possession Limit.....4 per person

TAUTOG

Minimum Size Limit.....16 inches
Possession Limit.....3 per person
Season Closed.....April 16 – Sept 23

TILEFISH (Blueline, Golden & Sand Tilefish)

Minimum Size Limit.....None
Possession Limit.....7 per person

SHARKS (All species except Spiny and Smooth Dog Sharks) *

Minimum Size Limit......54 inches fork length **
Possession Limit......1 per vessel ***

A non-boat assisted shore angler is entitled to a vessel possession limit.
Season Closed.....May 15 - July 15
(Includes Blacktip, Bull, Great Hammerhead, Lemon, Nurse, Scalloped Hammerhead, Smooth Hammerhead, Spinner, and Tiger Shark)

Federal waters, beyond the Three Mile Limit governed by different regulations set by the Mid-Atlantic Fisheries Management Council.

*Recreationally Prohibited Species – It is illegal to take, catch or possess any shark from the "Recreationally Prohibited Species" list, as defined in Regulation 4VAC20-490-20, including but not limited to the following species commonly encountered in Virginia: Atlantic Angel, Dusky, Sand Tiger, Sandbar, White, and Bigeye Thresher Sharks. No size or possession limits apply to Dog Sharks.

**All sharks (All species except Spiny Dog Sharks) must be landed with head and fins attached; no minimum size applies to Atlantic Sharpnose, Bonnethead, Blacknose, and Finetooth Sharks.

***Possession limit for Atl. Sharpnose and Bonnethead Sharks is 1 per person. Sharks may only be taken by handline or rod and reel; No spearing or bowfishing.

ADDITIONAL REGULATIONS

Saltwater Fishing License – Individual license required in the Chesapeake Bay and its tributary rivers and in all seaside and coastal ocean waters out to the Three Mile Limit Line, unless fishing on a licensed pier, licensed charter or headboat, or licensed private boat; or unless specifically exempted. For a FIP number, register at: www.mrc.virginia.gov/FIP or call 1-800-723-2728.

Measurements – Size limits are in total length; fish must be measured from the tip of the nose to tip of tail, except Black Sea Bass, which are measured from tip of nose along the centerline of the body, to the center of the tail.

Snagging – Illegal to snag, or attempt to snag, any finfish.

VMRC website: www.mrc.virginia.gov

Information may also be obtained from the Virginia Marine Resources Commission, 2600 Washington Ave., 3rd Floor, Newport News, VA 23607, (757) 247-2200; or from the Virginia Saltwater Fishing Tournament, 2600 Washington Ave., 3rd Floor, Newport News, VA 23607, (757) 491-5160.

**Virginia Marine Resources Commission
2012 Recreational Fishing Regulations
For Striped Bass in Virginia's Marine Waters**

Coastal Season January 1 - March 31
and May 16 - December 31

Possession Limit 2 per person
Minimum Size Limit 28 inches

Coastal Regulations Apply in Virginia's coastal ocean waters inside the Three Mile Limit Line, plus all of the creeks, bays, inlets and tributaries on the seaside of Accomack County, Northampton County (including areas east of the causeway from Fisherman Island to the mainland) and the City of Virginia Beach (including federal areas and state parks, fronting on the Atlantic Ocean and east and south of the point where the shoreward boundary of the Territorial Sea joins the mainland at Cape Henry).

*** Chesapeake Area Season (Spring)** May 16 - June 15, 2012
Possession Limit 2 per person
Minimum Size Limit 18 inches
Maximum Size Limit** 28 inches

Chesapeake Area Regulations Apply in the main stem of the Chesapeake Bay and its Virginia tributaries. Refer to the reverse side of this card for information pertaining to Potomac River "open seasons."

** 1 fish of the 2 fish possession limit may be larger than 32 inches as provided for in the Trophy Season regulations except in the spawning reaches of the tributary rivers where no fish 32 inches in length or longer may be possessed. Combining limits for overlapping seasons or regulations is prohibited – no more than 2 fish allowed in any overall limit at any time.

Virginia Trophy Season*
Chesapeake Bay and Tributaries May 1 - June 15, 2012
Potomac River Tributaries Same as main stem of Potomac River
Coastal Waters (Territorial Sea). May 1 - May 15, 2012
Possession Limit 1 per person
Minimum Size Limit. 32 inches

Trophy Season Regulations Apply in Virginia's Territorial Sea and the Chesapeake Bay and its Virginia tributary rivers, except the spawning reaches of the tributary rivers where no fish 32 inches in length or longer may be kept or possessed.

* Catch report required for any fish 32" or larger kept during Trophy Season. Regulations apply in the Chesapeake Bay and the Territorial Sea. Trophy Season possession limit cannot be combined or added to the limit for any overlapping season.

All measurements are in total length; fish are measured from the tip of the nose to the tip of the tail.

**Virginia Marine Resources Commission
Important Information Concerning
Saltwater Fishing Regulations
For Striped Bass**

Regulations in Spawning Reaches of Virginia's Tributary Rivers

Regulations in the spawning reaches of Virginia's Chesapeake Bay tributary rivers are the same as the regulations for Chesapeake Bay. Except no trophy fish (no fish 32" in length or longer) may be kept or possessed from May 1, 2012 – June 15, 2012.

Federal Waters Regulations

Atlantic Ocean waters beyond the Three Mile Limit Line are closed to taking and possession of striped bass all year.

Potomac River Striped Bass Regulations

Please contact the Potomac River Fisheries Commission (PRFC) for information on regulations governing the striped bass harvest in the Potomac River and the Spring, Summer-Fall seasons of the Virginia tributaries of the Potomac River. Contact information for the PRFC office is 222 Taylor Street, Colonial Beach, VA 22443, (804) 224-7148, or (800) 266-3904 or on the internet at www.prfc.state.va.us

Illegal to Gaff Striped Bass

Gaffing Striped Bass or attempting to gaff Striped Bass is illegal in Virginia Marine Waters.

**All Regulations are Subject to Change.
It is the Angler's Responsibility to Know and
Abide by all Current Regulations and Laws
Check for New Regulations Before You Go Fishing.**

Regulations are subject to review and change throughout the year. Information on the most current regulations can be obtained from the Virginia Marine Resources Commission, 2600 Washington Ave., Third Floor, Newport News, Virginia 23607, (757) 247-2200; from the Virginia Saltwater Fishing Tournament, 2600 Washington Ave., Third Floor, Newport News, Virginia 23607, (757) 491-5160; and from the Virginia Marine Resources Commission internet website at

www.mrc.virginia.gov



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