

TEXAS COMMERCIAL FISHING



REGULATIONS SUMMARY

2023



2024

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Subject to updates by Texas Legislature
or Texas Parks and Wildlife Commission

TEXAS COMMERCIAL FISHING REGULATIONS SUMMARY

This publication is a summary of current regulations that govern commercial fishing, meaning any activity involving taking or handling fresh or saltwater aquatic products for pay or for barter, sale or exchange. Recreational fishing regulations can be found at OutdoorAnnual.com or on the mobile app (download available at OutdoorAnnual.com). This publication can be found online at tpwd.texas.gov/publications/pwdpubs/media/pwd_bk_v3400_0074.pdf

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LIMITED-ENTRY AND BUYBACK PROGRAMS

“Limited-entry” commercial license management programs have been in effect for bay and bait shrimp since 1996, crabs since 1998, saltwater finfish since 2000 and gulf shrimp and oyster fisheries since 2005.

To retain commercial eligibility for limited-entry fisheries, buyers must have purchased the previous year’s commercial fishing license.

Commercial license buyback programs are also in place for commercial bay and bait shrimp boat, crab, finfish and oyster boat licenses (not for commercial gulf shrimp boat licenses).

A moratorium is currently in effect on the sale of new commercial licenses for freshwater mussels.

For more information contact TPWD Coastal Fisheries at 4200 Smith School Road, Austin TX 78744, (512) 389-8448, or email zack.thomas@tpwd.texas.gov.

COMMERCIAL FISHERMAN LICENSE TYPES

Subject to change. Fees are not refundable.

GENERAL COMMERCIAL FISHERMAN’S

Resident (Type 372)\$26	Non-resident (Type 340)..... \$189
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Required to catch aquatic products from state waters for pay or for sale, barter or exchange or any other commercial purpose; or unloads in this state aquatic products that were taken from water outside this state and have not been previously unloaded in another state or a foreign country, for pay or for sale, barter or exchange or any other commercial purpose. Is required for working as a crewmember on a licensed oyster boat. May not be used to land crabs in Texas. (Commercial Crab Fisherman’s License is required).

A non-resident residing in a state that denies the privilege of commercial fishing in that state to a Texas resident because of residency status is not eligible for a non-resident general commercial fisherman’s license.

Exceptions: a person who holds a commercial shrimp boat captain’s license, commercial oyster boat captain’s license, a bait dealer’s license and catching bait only, commercial crab fisherman’s license, commercial finfish fisherman’s license, Class A and Class B menhaden boat license, or the crew of a licensed commercial shrimp boat is not required to obtain a general commercial fisherman’s license.

COMMERCIAL FINFISH FISHERMAN’S (LIMITED ENTRY)

Resident (Type 371) \$360	Non-resident (Type 361)..... \$1,440
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Required for any person who takes finfish for commercial purposes from the coastal waters of this state. Finfish are living resources having either cartilaginous or bony skeletons

Exceptions:

- A licensed bait dealer who takes finfish for bait only is not required to have this license.
- A person in a vessel licensed as a menhaden boat who takes menhaden is not required to have this license.

- A licensed commercial shrimp boat captain and the crew of a licensed commercial shrimp boat are not required have this license when catching finfish incidental to legal shrimp trawling operations.

To operate a boat bearing a commercial finfish fisherman’s license plate, you must possess on board:

- a commercial finfish fisherman’s license OR
- a general commercial fisherman’s license, the original finfish fisherman’s license AND a copy of an affidavit permitting the boat operator to fish the commercial finfish fishing devices owned by the person to whom the commercial finfish fisherman’s license was issued. This affidavit must contain the date, original signature of the current license holder, the designated agent, and commercial finfish license number matching the commercial finfish license plate number on the boat.

A person operating a boat for commercial finfish fishing is not required to possess a commercial fishing boat license.

A person purchasing this license will receive two (2) license plates bearing a number unique to that person.

A boat operated for the purposes of commercial finfish fishing is required to have commercial finfish fisherman’s license plates prominently displayed as to be clearly visible from both sides of the boat.

No more than one set of commercial finfish license plates and license may be on board a commercial finfish fishing boat at any one time.

Federal Commercial Vessel permits, and applicable endorsements, are required to take, possess, land or sell red snapper, grouper, or tilefish in state waters.

SHRIMP BOAT CAPTAIN’S

Resident (Type 333)\$50 Non-resident (Type 433)..... \$126

Required to operate a commercial shrimp boat **catching or attempting to catch** shrimp and other aquatic products from the public waters of this state or **unloading or attempting to unload** in this state shrimp and other aquatic products taken from waters outside this state.

OYSTER BOAT CAPTAIN’S

Resident (Type 309)\$32 Non-resident (Type 409)..... \$126

Required to operate a commercial oyster boat while taking oysters from state waters

OYSTER FISHERMAN’S

Resident (Type 370) \$126 Non-resident (Type 470)..... \$315

Required to take oysters from public waters for pay or sale, barter or exchange or any other commercial purpose. (Not required of the captain and crew onboard a licensed commercial oyster boat.)

HARVESTER / SHELL RECOVERY TAGS (GREEN AND WHITE)

Green Tag (Type 301)..... \$0.20 White Tag (Type 303) \$0.20

CRAB FISHERMAN’S (LIMITED-ENTRY LICENSE)

Resident (Type 338) \$630 Non-resident (Type 438)..... \$2,520

Required to take or land crabs for commercial purposes from coastal waters. No person may hold more than three commercial crab fisherman’s licenses.

Exceptions: A person may operate a boat bearing a commercial crab fisherman's license plate ONLY if that person possesses on board an original commercial crab fisherman's license OR a general commercial fisherman's license, AND a copy of an affidavit permitting the boat operator to fish the commercial crab fishing devices owned by the person to whom the commercial crab fisherman's license was issued. The affidavit must contain the date, original signature of the current license holder, the designated agent, and commercial crab license number which matches the commercial crab license plate number on the boat. A person operating a boat for commercial crabbing purposes is not required to possess a commercial fishing boat license.

Buyers of this license will receive two (2) license plates bearing a number unique to the buyer. A boat operated for purposes of commercial crab fishing must have a commercial crab fisherman's license plate prominently displayed (clearly visible from both sides of the boat).

No more than one set of commercial crab fisherman's license plates and license may be on board a commercial crab fishing boat at any one time.

COMMERCIAL MUSSEL AND CLAM FISHERMAN'S

Resident (Type 320)\$38 Non-resident (Type 420)..... \$1,008

Required to take mussels, clams or their shells from state waters for commercial purposes. A moratorium on the sale of new licenses is in effect for the Texas commercial freshwater mussel fishery.

FISHING GUIDE LICENSE

Fishing guide licenses are required for any person who for compensation, accompanies, assists, or transports any person engaged in fishing in the public waters of the state.

Freshwater Fishing Guide License

Resident and Non-resident (Type 600) \$132

All-Water Fishing Guide License

Resident (Type 610) \$210 Non-resident (Type 710)..... \$1,050

All-Water Paddle-Craft Fishing Guide

Resident (Type 650) \$210 Non-resident (Type 750)..... \$1,050

No person operating a motorized vessel or boat as a fishing guide on or in salt waters may be issued a fishing guide license unless the person presents original documentation to the license agent that the applicant possesses a valid and appropriate U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) Operator's License. It is the operator's responsibility to assure compliance with USCG regulations. For more information, call the USCG Regional Examination Center at (713) 948-3350.

Commercially-licensed fishing guides may catch bait, including menhaden from a boat, without having a commercial boat license, or a menhaden boat license, so long as the bait is not sold.

Paddle-craft fishing guides (canoes, kayaks, etc.) can qualify for a license upon presentation of certification or proof of completion of a TPWD boater safety course, CPR/First Aid training, and a paddle-craft leading course from the American Canoe Association or another TPWD approved course.

All-Water fishing guide license holders with valid USCG vessel operator's licenses are also qualified as All-Water paddle craft fishing guides.

All-Water fishing guide and All-Water paddle craft licenses are available only at TPWD Law Enforcement offices. Freshwater fishing guide licenses are available wherever licenses are sold.

A Louisiana resident who holds a valid Louisiana license equivalent to the Texas freshwater fishing guide license may engage in business as a fishing guide on all Texas waters north of the Interstate Highway 10 bridge across the Sabine River that form a common boundary between Texas and Louisiana.

COMMERCIAL FISHING BOAT LICENSE TYPES

Current boat registration or documentation papers must be presented at time of purchase. A “non-resident boat” is one that does not have a Texas Certificate of Number or a United States Coast Guard Certificate of Documentation that lists the owner’s address in Texas.

While commercial plates are on board, all commercial regulations apply, including size, bag and possession limits. Recreational fishing can only occur when the commercial plates are completely removed from the vessel.

COMMERCIAL FISHING BOAT (LICENSE AVAILABLE TO BUY)

(Type 304).....\$27

Required of each boat that must be registered under federal or state laws and is used in taking aquatic products except menhaden, oysters and shrimp from the public waters of the state or for boats unloading within the state such products taken outside the state’s waters for pay, barter, sale, exchange or any commercial purpose.

CLASS A MENHADEN BOAT (LICENSE AVAILABLE TO BUY)

(Type 325)..... \$4,200

Required for each boat used in the coastal waters of this state for the purpose of catching, storing and transporting menhaden for pay, barter, sale or exchange. Persons aboard a menhaden boat for the purpose of taking menhaden are not required to possess a general commercial fisherman’s license or commercial finfish fisherman’s license.

CLASS B MENHADEN BOAT (LICENSE AVAILABLE TO BUY)

(Type 329).....\$50

Required for each boat used for assisting a Class A Menhaden boat in catching menhaden. Persons aboard a Class B Menhaden boat for purposes of catching menhaden are not required to possess a general commercial fisherman’s license or commercial finfish fisherman’s license.

CLASS C MENHADEN BOAT (LICENSE AVAILABLE TO BUY)

(Type 339)..... \$420

Required for each boat used in the coastal waters of the state for the purpose of catching, storing, and transporting menhaden for pay, barter, sale or exchange. Persons aboard a menhaden boat for the purpose of taking menhaden are not required to possess a general commercial fisherman’s license or commercial finfish fisherman’s license. The holder of a Class C menhaden boat license may not take or harvest from the public water of the state more than 300 pounds a day of menhaden. Additionally, with a Class C menhaden boat license, the license holder is allowed to fish in the bays and is also allowed to use a cast net, whereas Class A and Class B are not.

BAIT-SHRIMP BOAT (LIMITED-ENTRY LICENSE)

Resident (Type 337) \$366 **Non-resident (Type 437)..... \$788**

BAY-SHRIMP BOAT (LIMITED-ENTRY LICENSE)

Resident (Type 336) \$382.80

Non-resident (Type 436)..... \$825

GULF-SHRIMP BOAT (LIMITED-ENTRY LICENSE)

Resident (Type 330) \$495

Non-resident (Type 430)..... \$1,485

COMMERCIAL GULF SHRIMP BOAT OFFLOADING LICENSE

(Type 434)..... \$1485

Required to unload shrimp, or other aquatic products taken incidental to lawful shrimping activities, caught or taken from saltwater outside of the state without having been previously unloaded in another state or foreign country.

Vessels must possess a Federal Gulf Shrimp Permit prior to applying for this license. Trawls and trawl doors must be within the confines of the hull while the vessel makes nonstop progression from waters outside state to the port or point where unloading is to occur. This license does not allow harvest of aquatic products in state waters.

Commercial Shrimp Boat Captain's license is also required for the captain, in addition to a vessel license, to lawfully unload shrimp and other aquatic products.

COMMERCIAL OYSTER BOAT (LIMITED-ENTRY LICENSE)

Resident (Type 306) \$441

Non-resident (Type 406)..... \$1,764

BAIT DEALER LICENSE TYPES

LICENCIAS PARA VENDER CARNADA

All bait dealers who purchase aquatic products from anyone except other dealers, and all bait dealers who harvest aquatic product(s) themselves are required to report landings under the Trip Ticket Program.

Todos los vendedores de carnada que compran productos acuáticos de cualquiera persona excepto otros vendedores, y todos los vendedores que cosechan sus propios productos acuáticos, deben reportarlas al programa de Trip Ticket.

INDIVIDUAL BAIT DEALER

VENDEDOR DE CARNADA INDIVIDUAL

(Type 312).....\$38

Required to catch, transport or sell one's own catch of minnows, fish or other aquatic products (except shrimp and crabs) for bait. If using a boat to catch bait, a commercial fishing boat license is required. An additional class C Menhaden boat license is required to retain Menhaden when using a boat. In addition to this license, a \$60 permit to sell nongame fish taken from public fresh water is required. This can be obtained by calling (512) 389-4444.

Requerida para pescar, transportar o vender carpitas, pescados u otros productos acuáticos (excepto camarones y cangrejos) para carnada. Barcos utilizados para pescar carnada también deben tener la licencia para pesca comercial. Barcos utilizados para pescar la sardina lacha (lacha escamuda) deben tener esta licencia de clase C. Vender pescados no deportivos de agua dulce pública requiere un permiso adicional de \$60, lo cual se puede obtener al 512-389-4444.

BAIT DEALER – PLACE OF BUSINESS (BUILDING)

VENDEDOR DE CARNADA – LUGAR DE NEGOCIOS (EDIFICIO)

(Type 515).....\$38

Required to buy for purposes of sale minnows, fish, shrimp in non-coastal counties or other aquatic products for bait.

Requerida para comprar y vender carpitas, pescados, camarones en condados no costeros u otros productos acuáticos para carnada.

BAIT DEALER – PLACE OF BUSINESS (MOTOR VEHICLE)

VENDEDOR DE CARNADA – LUGAR DE NEGOCIOS (VEHÍCULO)

(Type 516).....\$38

Required to operate a place of business and buy, for the purpose of sale from a motor vehicle, minnows, fish, shrimp in non-coastal counties or other aquatic products for bait.

Requerida para operar un lugar de negocios y comprar para vender (desde un vehículo) carpitas, pescados, camarones en condados no costeros u otros productos acuáticos para carnada.

BAIT-SHRIMP DEALER – PLACE OF BUSINESS (BUILDING)

VENDEDOR DE CAMARON DE CARNADA – NEGOCIO (EDIFICIO)

(Type 335)..... \$215

Required to operate an established place of business engaged in selling shrimp for fish bait. Minnows, nongame fish or other aquatic products may also be sold for fish bait under this license. Only the place of business/building bait dealer’s license is required for grocery stores which do not unload or purchase shrimp directly from commercial bait-shrimp boats.

Requerida para operar un lugar de negocios que vende camarones para carnada. Carpitas, pescados no deportivos, u otros productos acuáticos también puede ser vendidos para carnada. Para las tiendas de comestibles que no descargan ni compran camarones directamente de barcos camaroneros comerciales.

WHOLESALE, RETAIL AND OTHER BUSINESS LICENSES AND PERMITS

LICENCIAS Y PERMISOS COMERCIALES PARA NEGOCIOS MAYORISTAS Y MINORISTAS

“Place of business” means a permanent structure on land, or a motor vehicle, where aquatic products or orders for aquatic products are received, sold or purchased. This does not include boats or other floating devices, public cold-storage vaults, portions of a structure used as a residence, or vehicles from which no orders are taken and no shipments or deliveries are made, other than to the place of business of the licensee.

“Lugar de negocios” es una estructura permanente en tierra, o en un vehículo, que compra, vende o recibe productos acuáticos o pedidos de productos. Esto no incluye botes u otras embarcaciones flotantes, instalaciones públicas para almacenamiento en frío, partes de una estructura utilizadas para residencia, o vehículos desde los cuales no se toman pedidos y no se realizan envíos o entregas, excepto en el lugar de negocios del licenciatarario.

Aquatic products lawfully taken from outside the U.S. and imported into Texas must abide by the same size limits as those landed in Texas. Aquatic products lawfully taken from waters of another state may be sold in this state by licensed dealers without regard to size limitations imposed on such products taken within this state.

Productos acuáticos legalmente pescados fuera de los EE. UU. e importados en Texas deben cumplir con los mismos límites de tamaño que existen en Texas. Productos acuáticos legalmente pescados de otros estados pueden ser vendidos en este estado por comerciantes con licencia.

Dealers must maintain records of the source and disposition of such undersized or oversized products, for as long as the undersized or oversized products are retained, and for at least 30 days thereafter.

Los comerciantes deben mantener registros de las fuentes y la disposición de tales productos de tamaño insuficiente o de gran tamaño, por el tiempo que se conserven, y durante al menos 30 días a partir de entonces.

Shellfish dealers certified by the Texas Dept. of State Health Services (DSHS) may buy oysters directly from the holder of a Commercial Oyster Boat license, Commercial Oyster Boat Captain's license, or a Cultivated Oyster Mariculture permit holder.

Comerciantes de mariscos certificados por el Departamento Estatal de Servicios de Salud de Texas pueden comprar ostras (ostiones) directamente de personas que tienen la licencia de barco comercial de ostras, la licencia de capitán de un barco comercial de ostras, o titular de un permiso de maricultura de ostras cultivadas.

Dealers who purchase aquatic product(s) from anyone except other dealers, or who harvest aquatic product(s) themselves, are required to report landings under the Trip Ticket Program.

Comerciantes que compran productos acuáticos de cualquiera persona excepto otros comerciantes, o que pescan por sus propios productos acuáticos, deben reportar sus cosechas con el programa de Trip Ticket.

WHOLESALE FISH DEALER (each place of business except trucks)

DISTRIBUIDOR MAYORISTA DE PESCADOS (cada lugar de negocios excepto camionetas)

(Type 314)..... \$825

Wholesale fish dealers who purchase aquatic product(s) from anyone except other dealers, and all wholesale fish dealers who harvest aquatic product(s) themselves, are required to report their landings under the Trip Ticket Program, as described in the "Record-Keeping Requirements" section of this publication.

Mayoristas que compran productos acuáticos de cualquiera persona excepto otros comerciantes, o que pescan por sus propios productos acuáticos, deben reportar sus cosechas con el programa de Trip Ticket.

Wholesale fish dealers may purchase for resale, or receive for sale, barter, exchange, or any other commercial purpose aquatic products only from persons or entities in this state who hold a valid:

Mayoristas sólo pueden comprar para reventa, recibir, intercambiar, o para cualquier propósito comercial los productos acuáticos de las personas o entidades en este estado que tienen una de estas licencias [EN]:

- general commercial fisherman's license;
- commercial oyster fisherman's license;
- commercial oyster boat license;
- wholesale fish dealer's license;

- operator of a Texas aquaculture facility;
- commercial oyster boat captain’s license;
- commercial shrimp boat license;
- commercial shrimp boat captain’s license;
- commercial crab fisherman’s license;
- commercial finfish fisherman’s license;
- cultivated oyster mariculture permit.

WHOLESALE FISH TRUCK DEALER LICENSE (per truck used as a business)

LICENCIA PARA DISTRIBUTOR PESCADOS EN CAMIONETA (uno para cada camioneta)

(Type 315)..... \$590

Required to operate a place of business for purposes of selling, offering for sale, canning, preserving, processing, or handling for shipments or sale aquatic products to retail or wholesale fish dealers, hotels, restaurants, cafes, or consumers.

Requerido para operar un negocio que vende, enlata, preserva, procesa o maneja para envío o venta productos acuáticos a otros distribuidores mayoristas, hoteles, restaurantes, cafés o consumidores.

RETAIL FISH DEALER LICENSE (each place of business except trucks)

LICENCIA PARA DISTRIBUIDOR MINORISTA DE PESCADOS (cada negocio excepto camionetas)

(Type 302)..... \$92.40

Required for any person who operates a place of business and sells aquatic products.

Requerida para operar un negocio que vende productos acuáticos.

Retail fish dealers may purchase for resale, or receive for sale, barter, exchange, or any other commercial purpose aquatic products only from persons or entities in this state who hold a valid:

Minoristas pueden comprar para reventa, recibir, intercambiar, o para cualquier propósito comercial los productos acuáticos de las personas o entidades en este estado que tienen una de estas licencias [EN]:

- wholesale fish dealer’s license;
- operator of a Texas aquaculture facility;
- general commercial fisherman’s license;
- commercial shrimp boat captain’s license;
- commercial shrimp boat license when dealer has given written notification to TPWD of intent to purchase aquatic products from the holder of a general commercial fisherman’s license or a commercial shrimp boat license;
- cultivated oyster mariculture permit;
- commercial crab fisherman’s license;
- commercial finfish fisherman’s license.

Retail fish dealers who purchase aquatic product(s) from anyone except other dealers, and all retail fish dealers who harvest aquatic product(s) themselves are required to report these landings under the Trip Ticket Program, as described in the “Record-Keeping Requirements” section of this publication.

Minoristas que compran productos acuáticos de alguien además de otros distribuidores, y minoristas que cosechan sus propios productos acuáticos, deben reportar sus cosechas con el programa de Trip Ticket.

RETAIL FISH TRUCK DEALER LICENSE (each truck used as a place of business)

LICENCIA PARA CAMIONETAS QUE VENDEN PESCADOS (cada camioneta)

(Type 316)..... \$171.60

Required to operate a place of business and sell aquatic products.

Requerida para operar un lugar de negocios y vender productos acuáticos.

MENHADEN FISH PLANT LICENSE

LICENCIA PARA PLANTA DE SARDINA LACHA O LACHA ESCAMUDA

(Type 326)..... \$180

Required to operate, at a fixed location on land, any installation where fish and fish by-products are processed by pressure, heat or chemical means into fish oil, fish solubles, fish scraps or other products.

Requerida para operar, en un lugar fijo en tierra, una instalación en donde pescados y sus subproductos están procesados por presión, calor o químicas para crear aceite, solubles, restos u otros productos.

TEXAS FINFISH IMPORT LICENSE

LICENCIA PARA IMPORTAR PESCADOS DE ALETAS EN TEXAS

(Type 380).....\$95

Required to receive directly from another state or country, or to import these fishes in Texas:

Requerida para recibir de otro estado o país, o para importar estos pescados en Texas:

- bass of the genus *Micropterus*
- blue marlin
- crappie
- flathead catfish
- goliath grouper
- longbill spearfish,
- muskellunge,
- northern pike
- red drum
- sailfish
- sauger
- snook
- spotted seatrout
- striped bass
- tarpon
- walleye
- white bass
- white marlin
- yellow bass
- hybrids of any of these

Not required for fishes raised and sold by the operator of a Texas aquaculture facility or subsequent sales of those fish by other dealers, or for persons transporting these fish by common carrier from outside this state to a point of delivery outside this state, provided the fish are not unloaded in Texas and are accompanied by a bill of lading.

No requerida para pescados criado y vendido por el operador de una instalación acuícola de Texas o ventas posteriores de ese pescado por otros distribuidores, ni para personas que transportan estos pescados por transportista común desde fuera de Texas a un punto de entrega fuera de Texas, siempre que los pescados no se descarguen aquí y que tenga una carta de porte.

SHELL BUYER LICENSE

LICENCIA PARA COMPRAR CONCHAS

Resident (Type 324) \$126

Non-resident (Type 424)..... \$1,890

Required to purchase for commercial use mussel and clam shells taken from public waters.

Requerida para comprar conchas de mejillones y almejas tomado de aguas públicas para uso comercial.

CULTIVATED OYSTER MARICULTURE PERMIT

\$450 (per acre per year in public waters)

\$170 (per acre per year on private property)

Authorizes a person to purchase, receive, grow, and sell cultivated oysters.

CULTIVATED OYSTER MARICULTURE NURSERY-HATCHERY PERMIT

\$170 (per acre per year on private property)

\$170 (per acre per year plus \$0.01/square foot in public waters)

Authorizes a person to purchase, receive, and grow seed and larvae, and sell oyster seed. May not sell oysters for consumption.

NONGAME FRESHWATER FISH (PERMIT) \$60

PERMISO PARA PESCADOS NO DEPORTIVOS EN AGUA DULCE

Required to sell nongame species taken from state fresh waters, including hybrids. Examples:

Requerido para vender especies no deportivos tomados de aguas dulces del estado, incluyendo híbridos.

- Bowfin
- Buffalo (bigmouth, smallmouth, black)
- Bullhead (black, yellow)
- Carp (common, grass, bighead, goldfish)
- Freshwater Drum (gaspergou)
- Gar (alligator, shortnose, longnose, spotted)
- Mullet
- Rio Grande cichlid (perch)
- River carpsucker
- Shad (gizzard, threadfin)
- Shiners and minnows (listed species)
- Silversides
- Tilapia

This permit is also required to collect gizzard or threadfin shad for personal use (such as for bait or for stocking private ponds) and for transportation from public waters in containers that total 30 gallons or more in volume.

Este permiso también es requerido para coleccionar alosas para uso personal (por ejemplo, para carnada o para almacenar estanques privados) y para transportar de aguas públicas en contenedores de 30 galones o más en volumen.

Additional licenses, such as a General Commercial Fisherman's License, Individual Bait Dealer's License, and/or a Commercial Fishing Boat License (if using a boat to catch nongame fish) may be required to harvest freshwater fish for commercial sale.

Licencias adicionales, tales como la licencia general para pesca comercial, la licencia individual para vender carnada, y-o la licencia para barcos de pesca comercial (si se usa el barco para pescar especies no deportivas) podrán ser requeridos cosechar peces de agua dulce para la venta comercial.

Licensed fishing guides who catch shad ONLY for use as a part of guide services are not required to possess this permit.

Guías licenciadas que pescan alosa para uso durante sus servicios no tienen que poseer este permiso.

For more information on nongame freshwater permits, or to apply, call (512) 389-4742 or visit tpwd.texas.gov/business/permits.

Para más información sobre permisos de pesca en agua dulce, o para solicitarlo, favor de visitar o llamar: tpwd.texas.gov/business/permits, (512) 389-4742.

BUYING AND SELLING AQUATIC PRODUCTS TAKEN FROM PUBLIC WATERS

FRESHWATER FISH

Provided all other commercial fishing regulations are met, including licensing, channel and blue catfish longer than 14 in. may be taken from public fresh waters of the following counties or locations:

- Angelina and Trinity rivers)
- Bowie
- Camp
- Cass
- Chambers
- Franklin
- Freestone
- Gregg
- Hardin
- Harris
- Harrison
- Houston (Neches
- Jasper
- Jefferson
- Lamar
- Leon
- Liberty
- Madison
- Marion
- Montgomery
- Morris
- Nacogdoches
- Navarro
- Newton
- Orange
- Panola
- Polk
- Red River
- Sabine
- San Augustine
- San Jacinto
- Shelby
- Titus
- Trinity
- Tyler
- Upshur
- Walker
- Colorado River (Bastrop, Colorado, Fayette, Matagorda, Wharton)
- Falcon Lake (Starr, Zapata)

SALTWATER FISH

Provided all other commercial fishing regulations are met, including licensing, and size, possession and bag limits, saltwater fish species NOT LISTED BELOW may be taken from public waters and sold. Species listed below MAY NOT be taken for commercial purposes:

- Bass of genus *Micropterus*
- Bass, striped or white or yellow
- Catfish, flathead
- Crappie, black or white
- Drum, red
- Grouper, goliath or Nassau (catch and release only)
- Marlin, blue or white
- Sailfish
- Seatrout, spotted
- Snook
- Spearfish, longbill
- Tarpon
- Hybrids of these fish

RESTAURANT PURCHASES

Restaurant owners, operators or employees may purchase aquatic products (only for consumption by the restaurant's patrons on the restaurant premises) only from persons or entities in this state who hold a valid:

- general commercial fisherman's license;
- wholesale fish dealer's license;
- operator of a Texas aquaculture facility;
- commercial shrimp boat license;
- commercial shrimp boat captain's license;
- commercial crab fisherman's license;
- commercial finfish fisherman's license;
- cultivated oyster mariculture permit.

EXOTIC SPECIES

Many Texas waterways are under attack by invasive species, which can push aside native plants and animals and damage aquatic ecosystems.

It is illegal to possess tilapia, grass carp or any other fish listed as harmful or potentially harmful, without first killing the fish by gutting, beheading, gill-cutting, or another means or placing the fish on ice. Triploid grass carp cannot be taken from waters where a valid Triploid Grass Carp Permit is in effect.

Importation, sale, transportation and release of exotic fish, shellfish, or aquatic plants designated harmful or potentially are prohibited except by special permit from TPWD. See a list of potentially harmful species at tpwd.texas.gov/invasives.

Exotic species, including imported and non-Gulf-state shrimp, may not be used as bait. Legal bait shrimp options include brown, northern white, pink and mantis shrimp. For more information visit tpwd.texas.gov/baitshrimp.

If lawfully purchased from an exotic species permit holder, wholesale and retail fish dealers may display live tilapia, but they must gut or behead tilapia before selling or delivering them to any other person, and they may not transfer live tilapia between any dealers who do not possess exotic species permits.

For more information on exotic species regulations, or to apply for permits, visit tpwd.texas.gov/business/permits or email IFpermits@tpwd.texas.gov.

REGULATIONS OVERVIEW

These rules also apply to fish, shrimp, crabs or other aquatic life caught in the Exclusive Economic Zone and landed in Texas. Residents 17 years of age or older while fishing **MUST** have on their person a driver's license or personal identification issued by Texas Department of Public Safety. Non-residents must have similar documents issued by their state or country of residence.

It is **UNLAWFUL** to:

- take, attempt to take, possess, sell or purchase fish within a protected length limit, in greater numbers, by other means, or at any time or place other than as provided in this guide and in the Parks and Wildlife Code.
- transport any fish within a protected length limit, or in excess of the daily bag limit or possession limit.
- possess any recreational limits of fish while on board a licensed commercial fishing boat. On board a commercial shrimp boat, fish legally taken incidental to a legal shrimp operation may only be possessed by a person with a shrimp boat captain's license or a licensed commercial shrimp boat.
- use a gaff except to aid in landing fish caught by other legal devices, means, or methods. Fish landed with a gaff may not be below the minimum, above the maximum, or within a protected length limit.
- release into public waters a fish with a device or substance implanted or attached that is designed, constructed or adapted to produce a signal used to monitor, track, follow or aid in the location of the released fish.

- catch, possess, use, transport, purchase or sell commercially protected game fish or part thereof as bait (some, such as cobia and sharks, may be caught and sold).
- land or possess billfish, except swordfish (by the captain or crew of a commercial fishing vessel).
- leave edible fish or bait fish taken from state waters to die without intent to retain for consumption or bait.

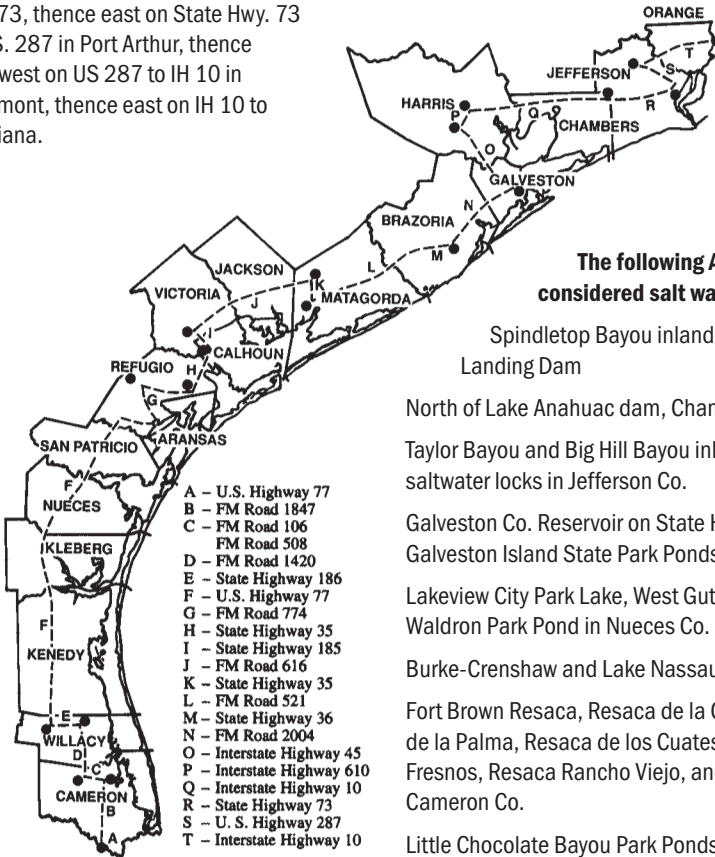
STATE WATERS AND FEDERAL WATERS

Texas recreational and commercial fishermen fishing more than 9 nm off the coast of Texas are in federal waters and are subject to rules and regulations that may differ from those in state waters. It is a violation of state law to possess aquatic animal life in Texas that was unlawfully taken in violation of federal law in the Exclusive Economic Zone. For federal regulations call the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council at (888) 833-1844 (toll-free) or visit gulfcouncil.org/fishing-regulations

FRESHWATER / SALTWATER BOUNDARIES

All waters east and south of the following ARE considered salt waters:

From Brownsville Int'l Toll Bridge north on U.S. 77 to the junction of Paredes Lines Rd (FM 1847), thence north on FM 1847 to the junction of FM 106 east of Rio Hondo, thence west on FM 106 to the junction of FM 508 in Rio Hondo, thence north on FM 508 to the junction of FM 1420, thence north on FM 1420 to State Hwy. 186 east of Raymondville, thence west on State Hwy. 186 to the junction of U.S. 77, thence north on U.S. 77 to the Aransas River, thence east to Aransas River Rd at Bonnie View boat ramp; thence north on Aransas River Rd to FM 136 to FM 2678 to FM 774 in Refugio, thence east on FM 774 to State Hwy. 35 south of Tivoli, thence north on State Hwy. 35 to State Hwy. 185, thence north on State Hwy. 185 to FM 616, thence northeast along FM 616 to State Hwy. 35, thence south on State Hwy. 35 to FM 521, thence north on FM Road 521 to State Hwy. 36, thence south on State Hwy. 36 to FM 2004, thence north on FM 2004 to IH 45 between Dickinson and La Marque, thence northwestward on IH 45 to IH 610 in Houston, thence east and north along IH 610 to IH 10 in Houston, thence east on IH 10 to State Hwy. 73, thence east on State Hwy. 73 to U.S. 287 in Port Arthur, thence northwest on US 287 to IH 10 in Beaumont, thence east on IH 10 to Louisiana.



The following ARE NOT considered salt waters:

- Spindletop Bayou inland from Russels Landing Dam
- North of Lake Anahuac dam, Chambers Co;
- Taylor Bayou and Big Hill Bayou inland from saltwater locks in Jefferson Co.
- Galveston Co. Reservoir on State Hwy. 146 and Galveston Island State Park Ponds #1- #7;
- Lakeview City Park Lake, West Guth Park Pond, Waldron Park Pond in Nueces Co.
- Burke-Crenshaw and Lake Nassau, Harris Co;
- Fort Brown Resaca, Resaca de la Guerra, Resaca de la Palma, Resaca de los Cuates, Resaca de los Fresnos, Resaca Rancho Viejo, and Town Resaca, Cameron Co.
- Little Chocolate Bayou Park Ponds #1 and #2 in Port Lavaca, Calhoun Co.

DEVICES, MEANS AND METHODS

It is unlawful to fish with more than 100 hooks on all devices combined in fresh water – see trotline and jugline regulations for more information. A person may fish with multiple poles or other devices, except as provided in this guide

It is UNLAWFUL to possess a device designed to catch fish or other aquatic life in or on the public water of this state where the use of the device is prohibited or are not identified in this document as legal devices.

In coastal waters, a prohibited device may be possessed on board a vessel if the vessel is in port or in a marked channel going directly to or from an area in this state where the use of the device is permitted.

Gill nets, trammel nets, strike nets and seines (other than minnow seines) may not be possessed within 500 yards of any public coastal waters.

GEAR TAGS

A tag constructed of material as durable as the device to which it is attached. The gear tag must be legible, contain the name and address, or customer number of the person using the device, and date the device was set out. Date is not required for saltwater trotlines or crabtraps fished under a commercial license. For juglines, freshwater trotlines, minnow traps, and throwlines, properly marked buoys or floats qualify as valid gear tags.

TROT LINES

NONGAME fish, channel catfish and blue catfish may be taken by trotline. For trotlines fished under a commercial license, flathead catfish may not be retained or possessed. Red drum, spotted seatrout, and sharks caught on a trotline may not be retained or possessed. Trotlines may not be used with:

- Mainline length exceeding 600 ft.
- Hooks spaced less than 3 horizontal ft. apart
- Metallic stakes
- Main fishing line and attached hooks and stagings above the water's surface.

FRESHWATER TROT LINES

Must be used with a valid gear tag and marked by an orange float that is more than six inches in length and three inches in width. Gear tags must be attached within 3 ft. of the first hook at each end of the trotline and are valid for 6 days after the date set out. No more than 50 hooks on any one trotline. May not be used in:

- Community Fishing Lakes
- Reservoirs or river sections within state parks
- Bellwood Lake, Smith County
- Boerne City Park Lake, Kendall County
- Brushy Creek (Williamson County) from the Brushy Creek Reservoir dam downstream to the Williamson/Milam county line
- Brushy Creek Reservoir, Williamson County
- Canyon Lake Project #6, Lubbock County
- Deputy Darren Goforth Park Lake, Harris County
- Dixieland Reservoir, Cameron County
- Fayette County Reservoir, Fayette County
- Lake Bastrop, Bastrop County
- Lake Bryan, Brazos County
- Lakes Coffee Mill and Davy Crockett, Fannin County
- Lake Naconiche, Nacogdoches County
- Lake Pflugerville, Travis County
- Pinkston Reservoir, Shelby County
- North Concho River (OC Fisher dam to Bell St. dam)
- South Concho River (Lone Wolf dam to Bell St. dam)
- Tankersley Reservoir, Titus County
- Wheeler Branch Reservoir, Somervell County

SALTWATER TROT LINES

No more than 20 at one time. Must be used with valid gear tags attached within 3 ft. of the first hook at each end of the trotline. Must be marked with yellow flagging attached to stakes or with a yellow buoy showing the commercial finfish angler's license plate number. Letters must be in a contrasting color at least 2 in. high and attached to end fixtures.

Construction and Design Restrictions:

- Mainline may not exceed 600 ft. long
- May not use metallic stakes.
- May not place the main fishing line and attached hooks and stagings above the water's surface.
- Must be marked with yellow flagging attached to stakes or with a yellow floating buoy not less than 6 in. high and 6 in. wide, attached to end fixtures.
- Floats must be yellow. Buoys or floats may not be made of plastic bottle(s) of any color or size.
- May not be baited with other than natural bait. Natural bait is whole or cut-up portion of a fish or shellfish or a whole or cut-up portion of plant material in its natural state, provided none of these may be altered beyond cutting into portions.
- Hooks must be 3 ft. apart. May not be used with hooks other than circle-type hook with point curved in and having a gap (distance from point to shank) of no more than .5 in., and with circle diameter no less than 5/8 in.

Placement and Location Restrictions:

- May not be used in or on waters of the Gulf of Mexico within state jurisdiction;
- No closer than 50 ft. to another trotline or within 200 ft. of the edge of the Intracoastal Waterway or its tributaries.
- May not be used in Aransas Co. in Little Bay or Aransas Bay within .5 mile of a line from Hail Point on Lamar Peninsula, then direct to the eastern end of Goose Island, then along the southern shore of Goose Island, then along the causeway between Lamar Peninsula and Live Oak Peninsula, then along the eastern shoreline of Live Oak Peninsula past Fulton, past 9-Mile Point, past Rockport to a point at the east end of Talley Island, including Copano Bay within 1,000 ft. of the causeway between Lamar Peninsula and Live Oak Peninsula.
- No trotline or trotline components, including lines and hooks, but excluding poles, may be left in or on coastal waters between 1 p.m. Friday and 1 p.m. Sunday each week, except that attended sail lines are excluded from the restrictions imposed by this clause. When small craft advisories or higher marine weather advisories issued by the National Weather Service are in place at 8 a.m. Friday, trotlines may remain in the water until 6 p.m. Friday. If small craft advisories are in place at 1 p.m. Friday, trotlines may remain in the water until Saturday. When small craft advisories are lifted by 8 a.m. Saturday, trotlines must be removed by 1 p.m. Saturday. When small craft advisories or higher marine weather advisories are still in place at 1 p.m. Saturday, trotlines may remain in the water through 1 p.m. Sunday. It is a violation to tend, bait or harvest fish or any other aquatic life from trotlines during the period that trotline removal requirements are suspended under this provision for adverse weather conditions. For enforcement purposes, TPWD policy will delineate the geographic area covered by marine weather advisories.

MORE DEVICES, MEANS AND METHODS

ARCHERY: Lawful archery equipment may be used to take NONGAME fish. Any fish that is edible or can be used for bait (including gar, common carp, buffalo) may not be released after being taken. State regulations permit bow fishing in most public waters except the Aransas River and Poesta Creek in Bee Co.; public water in state-owned riverbeds of La Salle or McMullen counties; and public water in state-owned riverbeds of the Nueces, Frio and Atascosa rivers in Live Oak Co. Bow anglers are advised to check with local authorities that may have local ordinances. On navigable streams in Dimmit, Edwards, Frio, Kenedy, Llano, Maverick, Real, Uvalde, or Zavala counties, it is prohibited to fish with arrows equipped with fletching, un-barbed arrows, or bows not equipped with a reel and line.

CAST NET: Legal to take NONGAME fish and other aquatic animal life. May not be greater than 14 ft. in diameter. In SALT WATER, NONGAME fish and other aquatic animal life may be taken for bait purposes only.

CIRCLE HOOK: It is UNLAWFUL to fish for red snapper using any hook other than a circle hook when using natural bait.

DIP NET: Legal to take NONGAME fish and other aquatic animal life. May be used to aid in the landing of fish caught by other legal devices. In SALT WATER, NONGAME fish and other aquatic animal life may be taken for bait purposes only.

GAFF: May be used to aid in landing fish caught by other legal devices, means, or methods. Fish landed with a gaff may not be below the minimum, above the maximum, or within a protected length limit.

GIG: May be used to take NONGAME fish.

HANDFISHING: using any other device while handfishing is prohibited. No person may intentionally place a trap (including boxes, barrels, pipes) for purposes of taking catfish by hand. May be used to take channel catfish and blue catfish in fresh water. For handfishing under a commercial license, flathead catfish may not be retained or possessed.

JUGLINE: For use in FRESH WATER to take NONGAME fish, channel catfish and blue catfish. For juglines fished under a commercial license, flathead catfish may not be retained or possessed. Juglines MAY NOT be used in:

- Community Fishing Lakes
- Reservoirs or river sections within state parks
- Bellwood Lake, Smith Co.
- Boerne Lake, Kendall Co.
- Canyon Lake Project #6, Lubbock Co.
- Dixieland Reservoir, Cameron Co.
- Gibbons Creek Reservoir, Grimes Co.
- Lake Bastrop, Bastrop Co.
- Lake Bryan, Brazos Co.
- Lakes Coffee Mill and Davy Crockett, Fannin Co.
- Lake Naconiche, Nacogdoches Co.
- Lake Pflugerville, Travis Co.
- North Concho River (OC Fisher dam to Bell St. dam)
- South Concho River (Lone Wolf dam to Bell St. dam)
- Tankersley Reservoir, Titus Co.
- Wheeler Branch Reservoir, Somervell Co.

Juglines must be used with a valid gear tag attached within 6 in. of the free-floating device. Gear tags are valid for 6 days after the date set out and must include the number of the permit to sell nongame fish taken from fresh water, if applicable. Commercial juglines must be marked with orange, free-floating devices that are not less than 6 inches in length and 3 inches in width.

MINNOW TRAP: Legal to take nongame fish and other aquatic animal life for bait purposes. Traps may not exceed 24 in. The throat may not exceed 1 x 3 in. Traps must be marked with a floating, visible buoy of any color other than orange that is not less than 6 inches in length and 3 inches in width. Buoy must have a gear tag (valid for 6 days) visibly attached.

PERCH TRAP: Legal in salt water for taking NONGAME fish and other aquatic animal life for bait purposes. May not exceed 18 cubic ft. Must be marked with a floating visible orange buoy not less than 6 in. length and 6 in. wide. Buoy must have a gear tag (valid for 6 days) attached. Must be equipped with a degradable panel as described for crab traps.

Buoys or floats may not be made of plastic bottle(s) of any color or size.

No type of trap may be placed within the area in Cedar Bayou between a TPWD sign erected where Mesquite Bay flows into Cedar Bayou and the sign erected near the point where the pass empties into the Gulf of Mexico.

POLE AND LINE (UNDER COMMERCIAL FISHING LICENSE): May be used to take NONGAME fish. GAME FISH may not be retained or possessed except blue and channel catfish. It is UNLAWFUL to use a pole and line to take or attempt to take fish by foul-hooking (catching a hook in an area other than the fish's mouth), snagging, or jerking.

PURSE SEINE: for salt water only. Not less than 1.5 in. stretched mesh, not including the bag, may be used only to take menhaden from the third Monday in April through Nov. 1. Purse seines for menhaden may not be used in any bay, river, pass or tributary, within one mile of any barrier, jetty, island or pass, nor within .5 mile offshore in the Gulf of Mexico. When using purse seines to take menhaden, edible aquatic products may not exceed 5% by volume.

SEINE (Includes push net): Legal for NONGAME fish and other aquatic animal life. May not be longer than 20 ft. May not have mesh exceeding 1.5 x 1.5 in. Must be manually operated. In SALT WATER, NONGAME fish and other aquatic animal life may be taken by seine for BAIT PURPOSES.

SHAD TRAWL: Legal in fresh water for taking NONGAME fish and other aquatic animal life. May not be longer than 6 ft. or have a mouth larger than 36 in. in diameter. May be equipped with a funnel or throat. Must be towed by boat or hand.

SHRIMP TRAWL: May be used to take nongame fish in salt water. See "Commercial Shrimping" for design restrictions. "Legal shrimping operations" means using a legal trawl in places, at times, and in manners as authorized by TPWD. Nongame fish (except species regulated by bag or size limits) taken by some shrimping operations may be retained.

SPEAR GUN: May be used to take NONGAME fish. Not permitted in community fishing lakes.

THROWLINE: May be used to take NONGAME fish, channel catfish and blue catfish in fresh water. When used under a commercial license, flathead catfish may not be retained or possessed. Must be used with a valid gear tag attached (valid for 6 days) and marked with a floating, visible buoy of any color other than orange that is not less than 6 inches in length and 3 inches in width. May not be used in:

- Community Fishing Lakes
- Reservoirs or river sections within state parks
- Bellwood Lake, Smith Co.
- Boerne Lake, Kendall Co.
- Canyon Lake Project #6, Lubbock Co.
- Dixieland Reservoir, Cameron Co.
- Gibbons Creek Reservoir, Grimes Co.
- Lake Bastrop, Bastrop Co.
- Lake Bryan, Brazos Co.
- Lakes Coffee Mill and Davy Crockett, Fannin Co.
- Lake Naconiche, Nacogdoches Co.
- Lake Pflugerville, Travis Co.

- North Concho River (O.C. Fisher dam to Bell St. dam)
- South Concho River (Lone Wolf dam to Bell St. dam)
- Tankersley Reservoir, Titus Co.
- Wheeler Branch Reservoir, Somervell Co.

UMBRELLA NET: Legal to take NONGAME fish and other aquatic species. NONGAME fish and other aquatic animal life may be taken for bait purposes only. May not have within the frame an area that exceeds 16 square feet.

WATER-DRAINING REQUIREMENTS

Clean, drain and dry your boat. Persons leaving or approaching public fresh water are required to drain all water from their vessels and on-board receptacles (includes live wells, bilges, motors and any other receptacles or water-intake systems that contact public waters. This rule applies at all sites where boats can be launched and includes all types and sizes of boats whether powered or not, personal watercraft, sailboats, kayaks/canoes, or any other vessel used to travel on public waters.

Live fish, including personally caught live bait, cannot be transported in or aboard a vessel in water that comes from the water body where the fish were caught. Personally-caught live bait can be used in the water body where it was caught.

Transporting and using commercially purchased live bait in water while fishing from a vessel is allowed, provided persons in possession of the bait have a receipt that identifies the source of the bait. Any live bait purchased from a location on or adjacent to public water that is transported in water from that water body can only be used as bait on that same water body.

Vessels leaving public fresh water may be transported on a public roadway without water being drained, provided the vessel is transported via the most direct route to another access point located on the same water body during that same day.

Marine sanitary systems are not covered by these regulations. Following these procedures does not exempt persons from complying with prohibitions against transporting exotic aquatic species that are visible to the unaided eye, such as adult zebra mussels, which can attach to boats or trailers.

TRANSPORTATION REQUIREMENTS

VEHICLE MARKING REQUIREMENTS



Motor vehicles, trailers or semi-trailers transporting aquatic products for commercial purposes are required to exhibit the inscription "FISH" on the rear of the vehicle, from left to right, attached or painted on the vehicle in block letters of good proportion in contrasting color to the background and at least 6 in. high, or marked in the lower left portion, on the rear of the vehicle with a decal (see illustration) as prescribed by the Texas Parks and Wildlife Commission. For more information call (512) 389-4853. Each dealer or company is responsible for generating their own decal according to provided guidelines. Truck decal must be at least 6" x 6" and in contrasting color to the truck.

INTERSTATE TRANSPORTATION

No person may bring into this state and deliver aquatic products for commercial purposes unless the person has obtained a wholesale fish dealer's license, a retail fish dealer's license, a bait dealer's license, cultivated oyster mariculture permit, or an exotic species interstate transport permit, as applicable, issued by TPWD. Aquaculture facilities located in states other than Texas must acquire a Bait Dealer License, Wholesale or Retail fish dealer license as applicable before selling products within Texas.

Aquatic products lawfully taken from the waters of another state may be sold within this state by licensed dealers without regard to size limitations imposed on such products taken within this state. A record of the source and disposition of such undersize or oversize products shall be maintained by the dealer for as long as the undersize or oversize products are retained and for at least 30 days thereafter.

No person may transport aquatic products out of this state for commercial purposes unless the transporter first obtains a wholesale fish dealer's license or a retail fish dealer's license. A person who delivers aquatic products for a licensed wholesale fish dealer or retail fish dealer must possess a copy of the dealer's license while making deliveries.

IMPORTING COMMERCIAL AQUATIC PRODUCTS

To import or possess a wildlife resource taken outside this state, you must possess the wildlife resource and be able to produce a valid hunting, fishing or other applicable license, stamp, tag, permit or document for the state or country in which the wildlife resource was legally taken.

To import or possess a wildlife resource from another state or country, you must produce upon demand by a game warden a valid driver's license or personal identification certificate.

Fish imported into Texas and landed by boat must comply with Texas bag and size limits. This does not apply to fish caught under the authority of an approved Federal Fishery Management Plan.

Importation of harmful or potentially harmful exotic species requires an "Exotic Species Permit" — examples of exotic species include triploid grass carp and tilapia. For more information email IFpermits@tpwd.texas.gov

RECORD-KEEPING REQUIREMENTS

TRIP TICKETS AND HARVEST REPORTS

All aquatic products landed or transferred by a licensed commercial fisherman to another person must be recorded for each trip, regardless of the species involved. Each trip's landings will link to information about the commercial fishermen and their equipment. These may be recorded electronically using software provided by TPWD or on paper using forms provided by TPWD.

Dealers who purchase or receive aquatic product(s) from anyone other than another dealer must file a monthly report with TPWD on or before the 10th day of each month following the month in which the activity occurred. The report must be filed every month, whether or not reportable activity occurs. The filing of an incorrect or false report is unlawful. This report must include the forms for all transactions conducted during the period covered by the report.

Commercial anglers who sell or transfer their catch to individuals other than a wholesale fish dealer, retail fish dealer, wholesale truck dealer, retail truck dealer, bait dealer, or bait-shrimp dealer must also report these sales or landings by filing a monthly report with the TPWD on or before the 10th day of each month following the month in which reportable activity occurred.

Processed aquatic products not sold to the processing dealer must be reported by the commercial angler at the landing weight prior to processing.

Trip tickets are required for all aquatic products transferred or sold and must be completed at the time products are delivered from the fisherman to the dealer. They must include:

- name of seller
- commercial license type and number of seller
- Texas driver's license
- date of sale
- # of lbs. sold per species
- unit and condition codes
- count and/or market size
- water body or bay system from which products were taken
- price paid per pound per species
- gear used to harvest the aquatic product
- trip time
- fishing time
- commercial fishing vessel name
- commercial fishing vessel registration number
- dealer name
- commercial license number of dealer.

Dealer report forms for aquatic products are available by writing: Commercial Harvest Program, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, Dickinson Marine Laboratory, 1502 FM 517 E, Dickinson, TX 77539 or calling (281) 534-0117 or by emailing justin.esslinger@tpwd.texas.gov or cindy.bohannon@tpwd.texas.gov.

SHIPPING INVOICES

All aquatic products (uncooked, fresh or frozen) shipped for commercial purposes must be accompanied by an invoice prepared by the shipper containing:

- Invoice Number
- Date of Shipment
- Name and Physical Address of Shipper (Fish Dealer)
- Name and Physical Address of Receiver
- Quantity of Aquatic Products contained in the shipment; finfish by species, number or weight; oysters by volume; and all other aquatic products by weight.

Shippers shall sequentially number invoices during each license year. No number may be used twice during any one license period.

Shipper and receiver shall maintain a copy of invoice for a period of one year from date of shipment.

LABELS FOR SHIPPING CONTAINERS

All commercial shipping containers of aquatic products must attach a label to the outside and list the following:

- Aquatic Products Transportation Invoice number of the shipment of which the container is a part
- Kind of aquatic product contained
- Weight of aquatic product in the container

Finfish may not be shipped in individual packages that contain more than one species. A commercial fisherman licensed to take aquatic products from Texas waters transporting their own catch within this state is not required to invoice the shipment or label containers.

COMMERCIAL FINFISH

COMMERCIAALLY PROTECTED FINFISH

- Bass of the genus *Micropterus**
- Bass, striped*
- Bass, white*
- Bass, yellow
- Catfish, flathead*
- Crappie, black*
- Crappie, white*
- Drum, red*
- Grouper, goliath (formerly called jewfish)
- Marlin, blue
- Marlin, white
- Muskellunge
- Pike, northern
- Sailfish
- Sauger
- Seatrout, spotted
- Snook
- Spearfish, longbill
- Tarpon
- Walleye
- Hybrids of any of these fish*

* To be lawfully imported, sold or purchased in Texas, bass of the genus *Micropterus*, crappie, flathead catfish, red drum, striped bass, white bass or a hybrid of any of these fish must be farm raised and fed a prepared feed containing 20% or more of plant protein or grain by-products as a primary food source.

Exception: Bass of the genus *Micropterus* and crappie reared in private waters may be sold by an operator of a Texas commercial aquaculture facility for the purpose of stocking: 1) public waters (permit required to introduce fish into public waters) and 2) private waters (with documentation required under Section 134.018, Agriculture Code).

COMMERCIAL FINFISH BAG, POSSESSION AND LENGTH LIMITS

Species	Bag Limit	Possession Limit	Minimum Length (inches)	Maximum Length (inches)
Amberjack, greater	1	2	38	No limit
Drum, black ^a	No limit	No limit	14	30
Catfish: blue and channel	25 ^b (in any combination)	50 (in any combination)	14	No limit
Catfish, gafftopsail	No limit	No limit	14	No limit
Cobia	1	2	40	No limit
Flounder ^c	30 ^c	30 ^c	15	No limit
Gar, alligator ^d	1 ^e	2 ^e	No limit	No limit ^f
Grouper, black	4	8	24	No limit
Grouper, gag	2	4	24	No limit
Grouper, Nassau	0	0	Catch and release only	Catch and release only
Mackerel, king	3	6	27	No limit
Mackerel, Spanish	15	30	14	No limit
Mullet: all species, their hybrids and subspecies ^g	No limit	No limit	No limit	12 during Oct.-Jan.
Shark:				
Atlantic sharpnose, blacktip, bonnethead	1 See Special Regulation ^h	2	24	No limit
Allowable shark species			64	No limit
Hammerhead (smooth, great, scalloped)	1	2	99	No limit
Prohibited shark species ⁱ	0	0	Catch and release only	Catch and release only

Species	Bag Limit	Possession Limit	Minimum Length (inches)	Maximum Length (inches)
Sheepshead ^a	No limit	No limit	15	No limit
Snapper, lane	No limit	No limit	8	No limit
Snapper, red ^j	4	8	15	No limit
Snapper, vermilion	No limit	No limit	10	No limit
Triggerfish, gray	20	40	16	No limit
Tripletail	3	6	17	No limit

a Only the holder of a commercial finfish fisherman's license is exempt from recreational bag and possession limits while commercial fishing for black drum or sheepshead.

b Exceptions to catfish daily bag limit:

- 1) In Lakes Caddo, Livingston, Sam Rayburn, and Toledo Bend, and the Sabine River from Toledo Bend dam to the I.H. 10 bridge, the daily bag limit for blue and channel catfish is 50 in any combination, and no more than 5 catfish 30 inches or greater in length may be retained each day;
- 2) In lakes lying totally within a state park and community fishing lakes, the daily bag limit for blue and channel catfish is 5 in any combination, taken by pole and line only.

c Flounder Special Regulation: Daily bag is 30 fish except Nov. 1-Dec. 14 when the fishery is closed. Possession limit is equal to the daily bag.

On board a licensed commercial shrimp boat the limit is equal to the recreational limit per each person with a current shrimp boat captain's license and is subject to the 50% bycatch rule.

d Alligator Gar: During May, no person shall take alligator gar from, or possess alligator gar while on, the Red River (including Lake Texoma) and all tributaries that drain directly or indirectly to the Red River on the Texas/Oklahoma border in Cooke, Grayson, Fannin, Lamar, Red River, and Bowie counties.

When conditions such as water temperature and flooding are conducive for spawning, the TPWD Executive Director may temporarily prohibit attempting to take alligator gar in a specified area for a period not to exceed 30 days. Conditions that would be used to invoke this action include water temperatures between 68 to 82°F and occurrence of moderate flood levels as defined and reported by U.S. Geological Survey gauges (srh.noaa.gov/wgrfc). Notice of this action will be posted on the TPWD website, distributed to print and broadcast media, and shared through social media. The notice will specify the area to be closed and when lawful fishing for alligator gar may resume. For current closure notices, visit tpwd.texas.gov/gar-closure.

Mandatory Harvest Reporting - All alligator gar harvested from public fresh waters other than Falcon must be reported within 24 hours online or through the "My Texas Hunt Harvest" mobile app: tpwd.texas.gov/myhunt. This is in addition to Trip Ticket reporting.

e Falcon International Reservoir daily bag limit is 5. Possession limit is 10.

f On the Trinity River and all tributary waters (from I-30 bridge in Dallas downstream to I-10 bridge in Chambers Co., including the East Fork of the Trinity River and all tributaries upstream to the dam at Lake Ray Hubbard) the maximum length limit is 48 in.

g May not take from public waters or possess on board a boat mullet over 12 in. from Oct.-Jan. No limits apply during other months.

h Daily bag limit is one (1) fish for all allowable shark species INCLUDING Atlantic sharpnose, blacktip and bonnethead. Non-offset, non-stainless steel circle hooks MUST be used when fishing for sharks (including prohibited shark species) in state waters.

i Prohibited shark species: Atlantic angel, Basking, Bigeye sand tiger, Bigeye sixgill, Bigeye thresher, Bignose, Caribbean reef, Caribbean sharpnose, Dusky, Galapagos, Longfin mako, Narrowtooth, Night, Sandbar, Sand tiger, Sevengill, Shortfin mako, Silky, Sixgill, Smalltail, Whale, White, Oceanic Whitetip.

j Red snapper may be taken using pole and line, but it is UNLAWFUL to use any kind of hook other than circle hook when using natural bait.

Possession limit does not apply to fish possessed by a person who has an invoice or sales ticket showing the name and address of the seller, number of fish by species, date of the sale, and other information required on a sales ticket or an invoice.

For all wildlife resources (including fish) taken for personal consumption and for which there is a possession limit, possession limit shall not apply after the resource reaches its final destination and/or point of sale with required invoices.

No angler may possess more than the daily bag limit or fish within a protected length limit as established for those waters.

It is UNLAWFUL for any person to possess a finfish of any species, except broadbill swordfish, shark, or king mackerel, taken from public water that has the head removed unless the fish has been 1) finally processed and delivered to a final destination or to a certified wholesale or retail dealer, or 2) finally landed on the mainland, a peninsula, or barrier island not including jetties or piers and is not transported afterwards by boat.

It is UNLAWFUL for any person to possess a finfish of any species taken from coastal water, except broadbill swordfish or king mackerel, that has the tail removed unless the fish has been 1) finally processed and delivered to a final destination or to a certified wholesale or retail dealer, or 2) has been finally landed on the mainland, a peninsula, or barrier island not including jetties or piers and is not transported afterwards by boat.

Any person fishing for any species of reef fish as defined in 50 C.F.R. Part 622 must possess a descending device or venting tool that is rigged and ready for use and must deploy the descending device or venting tool on all fish exhibiting signs of barotrauma that are released following catch.

COMMERCIAL SEASONS FOR RED SNAPPER, SHARKS AND KING MACKEREL

Commercial seasons for these species in Texas waters run concurrently with commercial seasons established in federal waters of the EEZ (more than 9 nautical miles (nm) off shore).

SNAPPER

No person aboard any vessel shall sell, barter, trade, or exchange red snapper; land or attempt to land red snapper for the purpose of sale, barter, trade, or exchange; or possess red snapper for the purpose of sale, barter, trade, or exchange unless the person possesses a valid federal permit for the harvest of Gulf of Mexico Reef Fish, a valid federal red snapper Individual Fishing Quota (IFQ) vessel endorsement and a sufficient allocation for red snapper.

COMMERCIAL SEASON FOR GULF MENHADEN

Commercial fishing season for menhaden (*Brevoortia patronus*) begins the third Monday in April and continues until whichever of the following first occurs: November 1; or the total catch for the season reaches 31,500,000 pounds.

PADRE ISLAND NATIONAL SEASHORE

To profit from public resources at Padre Island National Seashore, or within its aquatic perimeter, you must obtain a National Park Service "Commercial Use Authorization" permit. For more information visit nps.gov/pais

FINFISH IMPORTATION

A commercially protected finfish lawfully taken or raised for commercial purposes in the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) under the authority of a Federal Fishery Management Plan or Federal Permit

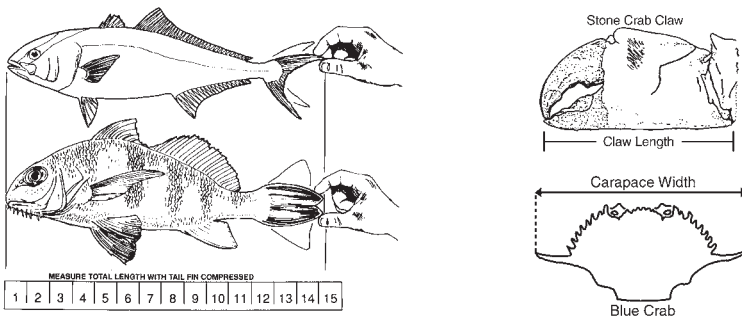
may be transported into Texas by the harvesting vessel. Commercially protected finfish may only be unloaded to the holder of a Texas Finfish Import License.

SHARK FINS

It is UNLAWFUL to buy, sell, offer to buy or sell, or possess for sale, transport, or ship for the purpose of sale, or advertise for sale, a shark fin regardless of where the shark was taken or caught. A person who violates this provision commits a Class B Parks and Wildlife misdemeanor. Exception: An unprocessed shark carcass that retains all of its fins naturally attached to the carcass may be bought, sold, or possessed for sale, transport or shipment. Additional regulations take effect Sept. 1, 2023. For more information, contact TPWD at (512) 389-4853 or le.fisheries@tpwd.texas.gov.

MEASURING FISH AND CRABS

Measure a straight line from the tip of the snout to the extreme tip of the tail or caudal fin (not over the curve of the body) with the fish lying on its side and with the jaw closed in a normal position, not extended in any way. Squeeze or rotate the tail to produce maximum overall length.



COMMERCIAL SHRIMPING

Required licenses include Commercial Shrimp Boat Captain's License, Commercial Gulf Shrimp Boat Offloading License, Commercial Shrimp Boat License (Bay, Bait or Gulf).

To fish recreationally from a licensed commercial shrimp boat, and to catch and retain fish species prohibited from sale, commercial plates must be removed from the boat. While no commercial plates are on board, recreational fishing regulations apply. Commercial regulations apply when commercial plates are on board.

It is UNLAWFUL to:

- take or attempt to take shrimp within the boundaries of any natural or man-made pass leading from the inside waters to the outside waters of the state.
- use a trawl or fail to have spreading devices on deck and trawl bag untied at a time when shrimping is prohibited.
- possess trawls that are too wide or have small mesh in areas where prohibited. Such trawls may be possessed on vessels in port or in a marked channel going directly to or from an area in Texas its use is permitted.
- remove the heads of shrimp while aboard boats in inside waters.
- possess devices designed to catch fish or other aquatic life, including shrimp trawls, in or on state waters where their use is prohibited.
- retain a red drum, spotted seatrout or lightning whelk on board a licensed commercial shrimp boat with a trawl on board.

- off-load, transfer, sell, or barter any amount of live or dead shrimp to a person aboard another vessel, while aboard a vessel licensed as a commercial bay shrimp boat.
- off-load, transfer, purchase, or barter from a person aboard a vessel licensed as a commercial bay shrimp boat any amount of live or dead shrimp while aboard a vessel;
- off-load, transfer, sell, or barter any amount of live or dead shrimp, except an amount of live or dead shrimp not to exceed two quarts per sport fisherman or one gallon (by volume) for two or more sport fishermen may be off-loaded, transferred, sold, or bartered to a person aboard a sport fishing vessel; while aboard a vessel licensed as a commercial bait shrimp boat to or
- off-load, transfer, purchase, or barter from a person aboard a vessel licensed as a commercial bait shrimp boat any amount of live or dead shrimp, while aboard a vessel, except a person aboard a recreational fishing vessel may off-load, transfer, purchase, or barter an amount of shrimp not to exceed two quarts per sport fisherman or one gallon (by volume) for two or more recreational fishermen.

Commercial shrimp boat license plates must be prominently displayed as to be clearly visible from both sides of the boat.

Fresh shrimp may be held in possession during open seasons and five days thereafter. Bait dealers and sport fishermen may possess bait shrimp all year.

The captain of a licensed commercial shrimp boat must hold a Commercial Shrimp Boat Captain's license.

Nongame fish and other aquatic products taken incidental to legal shrimp trawling operations (excludes lightning whelks, game fish, commercially protected finfish, red snapper, grouper, and tile fish which are NOT considered allowable bycatch) may be retained if each person that retains a lawful limit (equal to the recreational daily bag limit) of fish has a current shrimp boat captain's license, or is the licensed owner of the shrimp boat, and:

- total weight of aquatic products retained, in any combination, does not exceed 50% by weight of shrimp on a shrimping vessel; or
- from May 1 to Sept. 30 up to 1,500 live nongame fish not regulated by bag or size limit and/or 300 dozen ribbonfish may be retained daily for bait purposes on board a vessel licensed for commercial bait shrimp fishing.

Taking aquatic products of illegal size on board a licensed commercial shrimp boat engaged in the lawful taking of shrimp is not a violation if the aquatic products of UNLAWFUL size are returned to the waters from which they were taken in a manner to ensure their best chances of survival.

All nongame fish and other aquatic products lawfully retained as bycatch under the above guidelines are considered to be commercial as all commercial regulations apply when the commercial plates are on board the vessel.

DISPLAY BOAT NUMBERS

Commercial shrimp boats must exhibit vessel documentation or registration number on the port and starboard sides of the deckhouse or hull and on an appropriate weather deck. The number in block Arabic numerals in contrasting color to the background must be at least 18 inches in height on vessels over 65 feet and 10 inches in height for all other vessels and be permanently attached.

NET MEASUREMENT

All total widths specified for commercial otter trawls, including try nets, are measured along the uninterrupted corkline from leading tip of door to leading tip of door, including any and all add-on

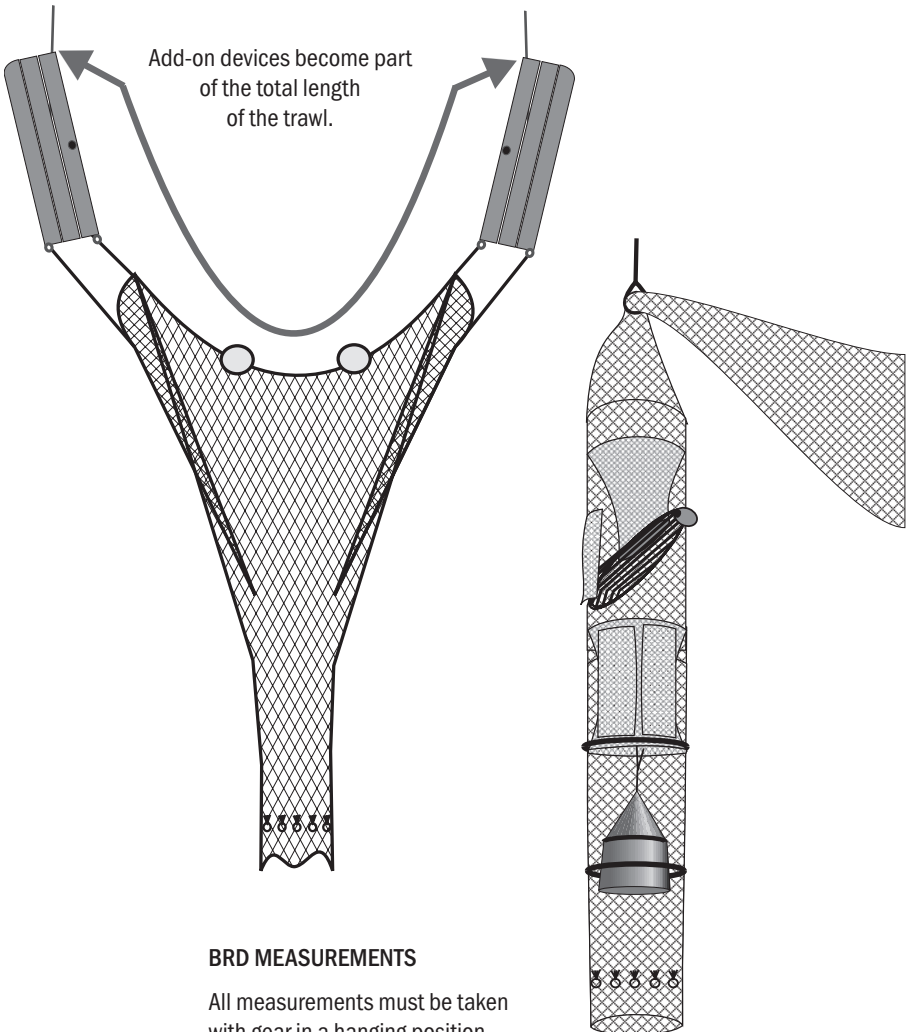
devices or attachments to the corkline. All beam trawl widths are measured along the beam in its fully extended position.

Mesh sizes specified for commercial trawls apply to the trawl, bag and trawl liner and are measured in inches of length between the two most widely separated knots in any consecutive series of five stretched meshes after the trawl has been placed in use.

NET LIMITATIONS

For additional information on specifications for trawls, BRDs and TEDs, call the nearest Coastal Law Enforcement office (see page 54). Diagrams are derived from images provided by the National Marine Fisheries Service.

OTTER TRAWL



BRD MEASUREMENTS

All measurements must be taken with gear in a hanging position.

Type I:

Trawl Size: Otter trawls must have doors at least 3 ft. long as measured along the door centerline from leading tip of door to trailing edge of door; and each net cannot exceed any of the following dimensions as measured along an uninterrupted corkline from leading tip of door to leading tip of door including all add-on devices or attachments to the corkline. Dimensions:

Door Length (ft.)	Total Width (ft.)
3' or more but less than 4'	71'
4' or more but less than 5'	73'
5' or more but less than 6'	75'
6' or more but less than 7'	77'
7' or more but less than 8'	79'
8' or more but less than 9'	81'
9' or more but less than 10'	83'
10' or more but less than 11'	85'
11' or more but less than 12'	87'
12' or more	89'

Type II:

Trawl Size: Otter trawls must have doors at least 3 ft. long as measured along the door centerline from leading tip of door to trailing edge of door; and each net cannot exceed any of the following dimensions as measured along an uninterrupted corkline from leading tip of door to leading tip of door including any and all add-on devices or attachments to the corkline. Dimensions:

Door Length (ft.)	Total Width (ft.)
3' or more but less than 4'	40'
4' or more but less than 5'	42'
5' or more but less than 6'	44'
6' or more but less than 7'	46'
7' or more but less than 8'	48'
8' or more but less than 9'	50'
9' or more but less than 10'	52'
10' or more	54'

Seabob Net:

Trawl Size: Otter trawls must have doors at least 3 ft. long as measured along the door centerline from leading tip of door to trailing edge of door; and each net cannot exceed any of the following dimensions as measured along an uninterrupted corkline from leading tip of door to leading tip of door including any and all add-on devices or attachments to the corkline. Dimensions:

Door Length (ft.)	Total Width (ft.)
3' or more but less than 4'	48'
4' or more but less than 5'	50'
5' or more but less than 6'	52'
6' or more but less than 7'	54'
7' or more but less than 8'	56'
8' or more but less than 9'	58'
9' or more but less than 10'	60'
10' or more	62'

Try Nets (Gulf and Inshore – Bay Shrimping):

Otter Trawls – Total width: 21 ft.; Doors: 450 square in.

Beam Trawls – May not exceed 10 ft. in width

Try Nets (Inshore – Bait Shrimping):

Otter Trawls – Total width: 12 ft.; Doors: 450 square in.

Beam Trawls – May not exceed 5 ft. in width

TURTLE EXCLUDER DEVICE (TED) required in certain trawls

For additional information on specifications for trawls, BRDs and TEDs, call the nearest Coastal Law Enforcement office (see page 54). Diagrams are derived from images provided by the National Marine Fisheries Service.



Standard Grid



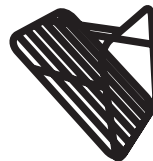
Bent Rod



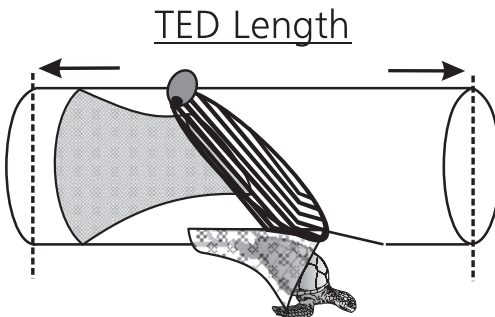
Anthony



Bent Pipe



Fixed Angle

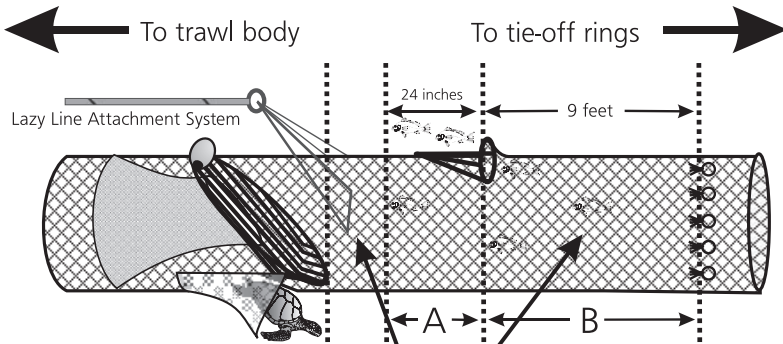


If webbing immediately around TED has a mesh size smaller than allowed for the trawl, such webbing may not be greater than 60 total stretched meshes in length.

BYCATCH REDUCTION DEVICE (BRD) required in certain trawls

For additional information on specifications for trawls, BRDs and TEDs, call the nearest Coastal Law Enforcement office (see page 54). Diagrams are derived from images provided by the National Marine Fisheries Service.

FISHEYE AND SEA EAGLE BRDs



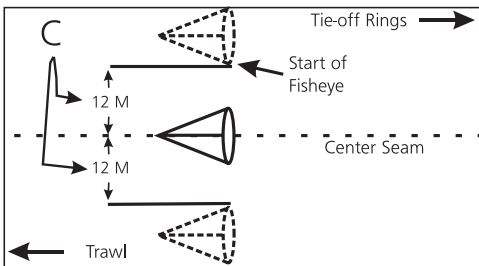
Key Measurements

Lazy Line Placement

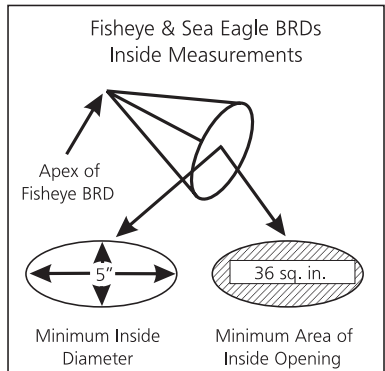
- A. Fisheye opening may not be placed less than 24 inches behind lazy line attachment system.
- B. Fisheye opening must be less than 9 ft. from the cod end tie-off rings.
- C. Fisheye may not be placed more than 12 meshes either side of the center seam of the tail bag.

- Lazy lines, choker straps, elephant ears, rings and other lines may be placed in these areas.
- Fisheye opening may not be obstructed by any ropes, rings, elephant ears or straps.

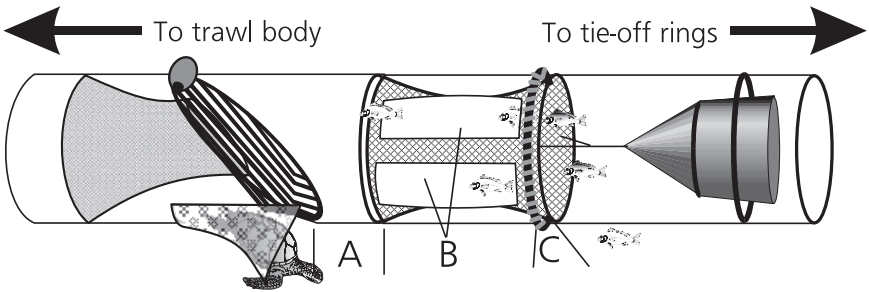
Top View of Tail Bag



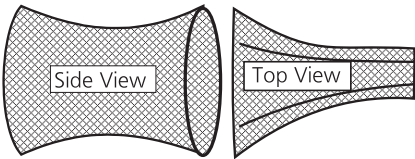
Fisheye & Sea Eagle BRDs
Inside Measurements



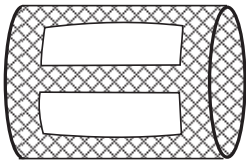
JONES-DAVIS BRD



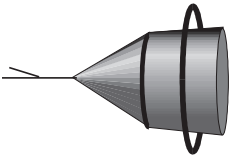
Components



Funnel Section



Escape Openings
(Openings are cutouts in the body of the trawl tail bag)



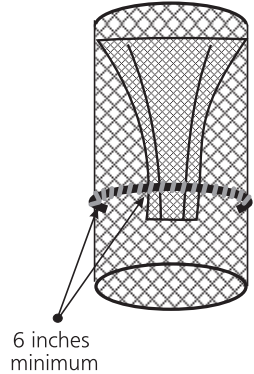
Jones-Davis Cone Stimulator



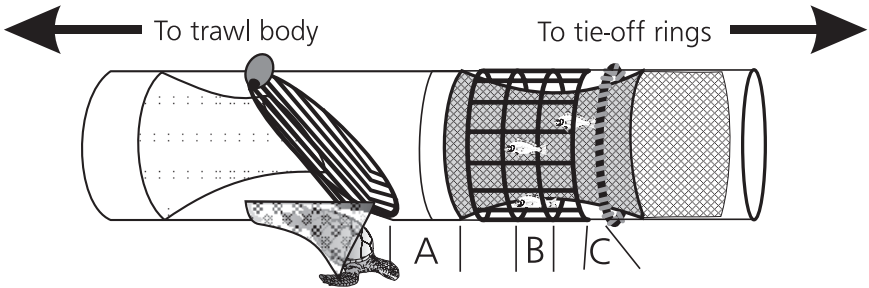
Semi-rigid Hoop

Key Measurements

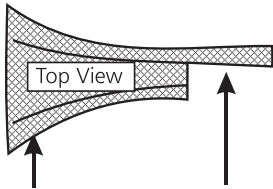
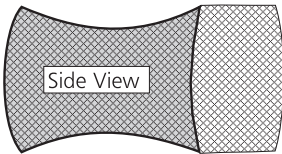
- Leading edge of the Escape Opening must be within 18 inches of the posterior edge of the TED grid.
- BRD escape opening should total a minimum of 864 sq. in.
- Clearance between the 28-inch hoop and the side of the funnel, when hanging, should be at least 6 inches.



LARGE MESH EXTENDED FUNNEL BRD

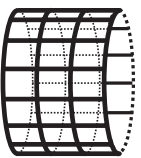


Components



Funnel Section

Funnel Extension



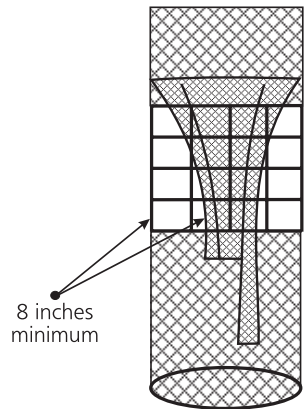
Large Mesh Escape Section



Semi-rigid Hoop

Key Measurements

- A. BRD funnel should not be more than 14 inches from the posterior edge of the TED grid.
- B. Mesh size of the Large Mesh Escape Section should be between 4 and 5 inches on a side.
- C. Clearance between the posterior edge of the large mesh escape section and the funnel, when hanging, should be at least 8 inches.



BAY AND BAIT SHRIMPING

Boats having on board or displaying bait shrimp boat licenses must operate under commercial bait shrimp regulations, including 200 lb. daily limit; maintaining 50% of the shrimp alive; fishing in places authorized for bait shrimping; and selling or unloading to bait shrimp dealers or recreational anglers.

Boats licensed for both bay and bait shrimp may not shrimp in both a major bay and any other water on the same calendar day from May 15 to July 15 (Spring Open Season).

Boats licensed for both bay and bait shrimp may not take more than 800 lbs. of heads-on shrimp per calendar day during from May 15 to July 15 (Spring Open Season).

MAJOR BAYS (listed from north to south)

- Sabine Lake (north of Cameron Causeway south of a line marked by the GIWW [Sabine Neches Canal/Sabine River] between the eastern most tip of Goat Island to the western most tip of Stewts Island)
- Trinity Bay (south from a line extending from the mouth of Double Bayou to Double Bayou Channel Marker 14, to Separator C-2, to Point Barrow)
- Galveston Bay
- East Bay (west from a line extending from Frozen Point to the GIWW Marker 12)
- Matagorda Bay (west of a line extending from a location on the mainland where a line running northwest [bearing 330 degrees] from Shellfish Marker A intersects the mainland; thence southeast to Shellfish Marker A near the mainland, thence to Shellfish Marker B near the end of Shell Island Reef, thence to the tide gauge near Matagorda Peninsula, and thence southeast [bearing 153 degrees] to Matagorda Peninsula)
- East Matagorda Bay
- Tres Palacios Bay (south of a line from Grassey Point to the mouth of Pilkington Bayou)
- Espiritu Santo Bay
- Lavaca Bay (seaward of State Hwy. 35)
- San Antonio Bay (seaward of a line from McDowell Point to Mosquito Point)
- Aransas Bay
- Corpus Christi Bay (exclusive of the area bounded by a line extending from the GIWW at the southwest point of Dagger Island chain, along Dagger Island to the southeast tip of Ransom Island, then southeast to the westernmost point north of Marker 14 in the Corpus Christi Ship Channel)
- All exclusive of tributary bays, bayous and inlets, lakes and rivers.

BAIT BAYS – includes major bays and the following (listed from north to south)

- Gulf Intracoastal Waterway (GIWW) exclusive of all tributaries
- Chocolate Bay
- West Bay (south and west of IH 45 Causeway Bridge and the GIWW inclusive of the area south of a line extending west from IH 45 Causeway Bridge at Virginia Point, along the southern edge of Tiki Island to the northeastern tip of North Deer Island at Channel Marker 48)
- Trinity Bay (north from a line extending from the mouth of Double Bayou to Double Bayou Channel Marker 14, to Separator C-2, to Point Barrow)
- Old Brazos River (Inorth of the GIWW in Brazoria County)
- Baroom Bay
- Upper Laguna Madre

- Alazan Bay
- Baffin Bay, and
- Lower Laguna Madre including Brownsville Ship Channel

NURSERY AREAS

Coastal waters not specifically named above as “Major Bays” or “Bait Bays.” Includes tributary bays, bayous, inlets, lakes and rivers that provide growth and development environments for post-larval and juvenile shrimp. Does not include outside waters, major bays or bait bays.

GULF-SHRIMP BOATS: SEASONS, LIMITS, GEAR

Closed Seasons:

Federal Waters (9-200 nautical miles from the Texas Coast), shrimping is closed:

May 15** – July 15**

Summer Closed Season for Federal Waters off Texas may change prior to publication of this guide. For current rules, please call the National Marine Fisheries Service at (727) 824-5305 or your nearest TPWD Law Enforcement office.

Within 5 nautical miles of the Texas coast (Zones N1, N2, S1, S2), shrimping is closed:

at night (30 minutes after sunset to 30 minutes before sunrise).

Dec. 1 – Feb. 15

Within 5 nautical miles of the Texas coast in the South Zone (Zones S1, S2), shrimping is closed:

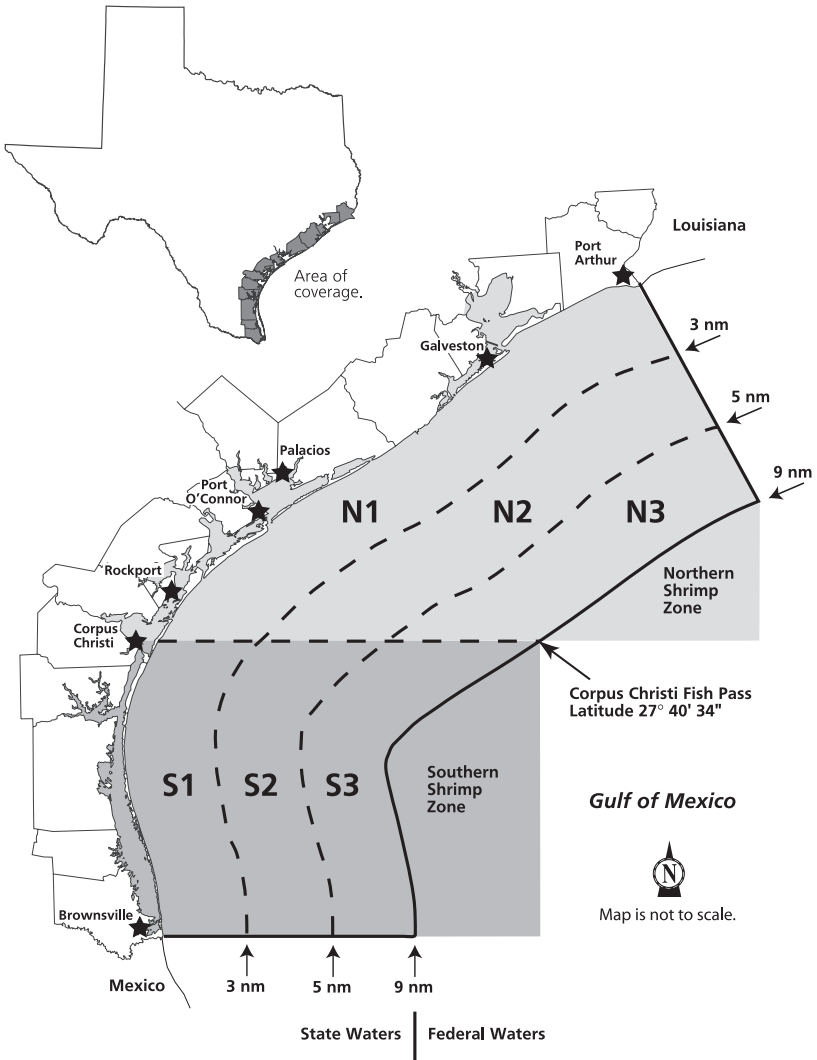
Feb. 16 – May 15**

Within 9 nautical miles of the Texas coast (Zones N1, N2, N3, S1, S2, S3), shrimping is closed:

from 30 minutes after sunset May 15** to 30 minutes after sunset July 15**

** Dates may change by TPWD providing 72 hours public notice on new closing dates and 24 hours’ notice on new opening dates.

GULF SHRIMP FISHERY MANAGEMENT ZONES



SOUTHERN SHRIMP ZONE

(South from Corpus Christi Fish Pass [Latitude 27° 40' 34"] to the border with Tamaulipas (Mexico))

State Outside Waters of the Southern Shrimp Zone are open to commercial shrimping as follows:

Southern Shrimp Zone					
Map Segments	Location	Season (Dates)	Hours	Limits	Trawl Requirements
S3	5-9 nautical miles	July 16** – Nov. 30 Dec. 1 – May. 15**	Day and Night	Bag: No Limit Size: No Limit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of trawls: No Limit Mesh Size: Not less than 8-3/4 inches over 5 stretched meshes Trawl Size: No Limit Approved BRDs[†] are required Approved TEDs[‡] are required
S2	3-5 nautical miles	July 16** – Nov. 30	30 min. before sunrise to 30 min. after sunset		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of trawls: No more than 2 Mesh Size: Not less than 8-3/4 inches over 5 stretched meshes Trawl Size: Net Type I Approved BRDs are required Approved TEDs are required
S1	Inside 3 nautical miles	July 16** – Nov. 30	30 min. before sunrise to 30 min. after sunset	Bag: No Limit Size: No Limit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of trawls: No more than 2 Mesh Size: Not less than 8-3/4 inches over 5 stretched meshes Trawl Size: Net Type I Approved BRDs are required Approved TEDs are required

**Dates may change by TPWD providing 72 hours' public notice on new closing dates and 24 hours' notice on new opening dates.

NORTHERN SHRIMP ZONE

(North of a line from the Corpus Christi Fish Pass [Latitude 27° 40' 34"] to the border with Louisiana)

Northern Shrimp Zone					
State Outside Waters of the Northern Shrimp Zone are open to commercial shrimping as follows:					
Map Segments	Location	Season (Dates)	Hours	Limits	Trawl Requirements
N3	5-9 nautical miles	July 16** – Nov. 30 Dec. 1 – May. 15**	Day and Night 30 min. before sunrise to 30 min. after sunset	Bag: No Limit Size: No Limit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of trawls: No Limit Mesh Size: Not less than 8-3/4 inches over 5 stretched meshes Trawl Size: No Limit Approved BRDs¹ are required Approved TEDs² are required
N2	3-5 nautical miles	Feb. 16 – May 15** July 16** – Nov. 30	30 min. before sunrise to 30 min. after sunset	Bag: No Limit Size: No Limit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of trawls: No more than 2 Mesh Size: Not less than 8-3/4 inches over 5 stretched meshes Trawl Size: Net Type I Approved BRDs are required Approved TEDs are required
N1	Inside 3 nautical miles	Feb. 16 – May 15** July 16** – Nov. 30	30 min. before sunrise to 30 min. after sunset	Bag: No Limit Size: No Limit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of trawls: No more than 1 Mesh Size: 6-1/2 inches over 5 stretched meshes Trawl Size: Seabob Net Approved BRDs are required Approved TEDs are required
N1, N2 & N3	Seabobs	Dec. 1 – May 15** July 16** – Nov. 30	30 min. before sunrise to 30 min. after sunset	No person catching seabobs may catch or have on board a boat any other species of shrimp which exceed 10%, in weight or number of the entire catch.	
**Dates may change by TPWD providing 72 hours' public notice on new closing dates and 24 hours' notice on new opening dates.					

COMMERCIAL BAY-SHRIMP BOATS – SEASONS, LIMITS AND GEAR RESTRICTIONS (MAJOR BAYS ONLY)

Location	Season (Dates)	Hours	Limits	Trawl Requirements
Major Bays	Spring Open Season May 15 – July 15	30 min. before sunrise to 30 min. after sunset	Bag: 800 pounds Size: No Limit	<p>Main Net:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No more than 1 net may be used at any one time as a main net. Mesh Size: 6-1/2 inches over 5 stretched meshes Trawl Size: Net Type II (Beam trawls used as the main trawl cannot exceed 25 feet in width.) Approved BRDs are required Approved TEDs are required
Major Bays	Fall Open Season Aug. 15 – Nov. 30	30 min. before sunrise to 30 min. after sunset	<p><u>Aug. 15 – Oct. 31</u> Bag: 50 heads on per pound Size: No Limit</p> <p><u>Nov. 1 – Nov. 30</u> Bag: No Limit Size: No Limit</p>	<p>Main Net:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No more than 1 net may be used at any one time as a main net. <u>Aug. 15 – Oct. 31:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mesh Size: Not less than 8-3/4 inches over 5 stretched meshes <u>Nov. 1 – Nov. 30:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mesh Size: 6-1/2 inches over 5 stretched meshes Approved BRDs are required Approved TEDs are required Trawl may not exceed 95 ft. in total width.
Major Bays – Only south of the Colorado River	Winter Open Season Feb. 1 – April 15	30 min. after sunset to 30 min. before sunrise	Bag: No Limit Size: No Limit	<p>Main Net:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No more than 1 net may be used at any one time as a main net. Mesh Size: 6-1/2 inches over 5 stretched meshes Trawl Size: Net Type II (Beam trawls used as the main trawl cannot exceed 25 feet in width.) Approved BRDs are required Approved TEDs are required

COMMERCIAL BAIT-SHRIMP BOATS – SEASONS, LIMITS AND GEAR RESTRICTIONS (MAJOR BAYS AND BAIT-BAYS)

Location	Season (Dates)	Hours	Limits	Trawl Requirements
<p>Major Bays and Bait Bays</p>	<p>Year-round</p>	<p>30 min. before sunrise to 30 min. after sunset</p>	<p>Bag: 200 pounds Size: No Limit</p> <p>Special Requirements: <u>Nov. 15 – Aug. 15:</u> at least 50% of the onboard catch must be kept in a live condition. <u>Aug. 16 – Nov. 14:</u> all shrimp must have heads attached.</p>	<p>Main Net:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No more than 1 net may be used at any one time as a main net. • Mesh Size: 6- 1/2 inches over 5 stretched meshes • Trawl Size: Net Type II (Beam trawls used as the main trawl cannot exceed 25 feet in width.) • Approved TEDs are required
<p>LAGUNA MADRE SPECIAL BAIT-SHRIMP REGULATIONS</p> <p>All year in the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway between markers 17 and 57 in the Laguna Madre (Nueces Co.) commercial bait-shrimp boats may take bait-shrimp from 1 a.m. to 30 minutes before sunrise each day with a legal beam trawl only. It is UNLAWFUL to take or attempt to take shrimp with a trawl at any other time or in any other place in the Laguna Madre in Nueces Co. north of a line starting on the mainland at the most northeasterly point on the north side of the entrance of Whiteley Channel then proceeding in a straight line to the north end of Pita Island; then continuing on a line to the southernmost point on the westerly most spoil island bordering the north side of the New Humble Channel (as also called Hap's Channel); then continuing on a line along the north edge of the New Humble Channel (as also called Hap's Channel) to its junction with the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway; then continuing on a straight line to the Nueces/Kleberg Co. line marker on Padre Island.</p>				

COMMERCIAL CRABBING (BLUE OR STONE)

It is UNLAWFUL to place, fish or leave a crab trap component in coastal state waters from Feb. 16-25, 2024.

There are no public salt waters, seasons or times closed to the taking and retaining of crabs and ghost shrimp, EXCEPT as provided in this guide. It is lawful to take, attempt to take or possess crabs and ghost shrimp by means, in numbers, and of sizes as described below.

CRABBING DEVICES AND RESTRICTIONS

Crab Line: A baited line with no hook attached. Must be marked with a white floating buoy not less than 6 inches in height, 6 inches in length and 6 inches in width. Buoys must be marked with a commercial crab fisherman's license plate number in letters of a contrasting color at least 2 inches high attached to the trap. Buoys or floats may not be made of plastic bottle(s) of any color or size.

CRAB TRAPS

May only remove crab traps from the water or remove crabs from crab traps during the period from 30 minutes before sunrise to 30 minutes after sunset.

MAXIMUM NUMBER OF TRAPS: Only 200 crab traps at a time may be used while fishing under a commercial crab fisherman's license. Only 20 crab traps at a time may be used while fishing under the authority of a commercial finfish fisherman's license. Crabs harvested are for bait purposes only and may not be sold.

TAG REQUIREMENTS: Must be used with a valid GEAR TAG attached within 6 in. of the buoy.

CONSTRUCTION AND DESIGN RESTRICTIONS:

- May not exceed 18 cubic feet
- Must be equipped with at least two escape vents in each crab-retaining chamber and located on outside trap walls.
- Escape vents must be at least 2-3/8 in. in diameter.
- Must be marked with an attached white floating buoy not less than 6" x6" x6"
- Crab traps fished under the authority of a commercial crab fisherman's license must have buoys marked with a commercial crab fisherman's license plate number in letters of a contrasting color at least 2 in. high.
- Traps fished under commercial finfish fisherman's licenses must have buoys marked with license plate numbers preceded with the letter "F" in letters of a contrasting color at least 2 in. high attached to the trap.
- Buoys or floats may not be made of plastic bottle(s) of any color or size.
- Traps must be equipped with degradable panels (considered degradable if one of the following methods is used):
 - trap lid tie-down strap is secured to the trap at one end by a simple loop of untreated jute twine, sisal twine or untreated steel wire with a diameter of 20 gauge or smaller. Lids must be secured so that when the twine or wire degrades, the lid will no longer be securely closed

- trap contains at least one sidewall, not including bottom panel, with a rectangular opening no smaller in either dimension than 3 x 6 in. Any obstruction in this opening may not be secured in any manner except laced, sewn, or otherwise obstructed by a single length of untreated jute twine, sisal twine or untreated steel wire with a diameter of 20 gauge or smaller, knotted only at each end and not tied or looped more than once around a single mesh bar. When twine or wire degrades, the sidewall opening will no longer be obstructed
- obstruction may be loosely hinged at the bottom of the opening by no more than two untreated steel hog rings and secured at the top of the obstruction in no more than one place by a single length of untreated jute twine, sisal twine or untreated steel wire with a diameter of 20 gauge or smaller. When the twine or wire degrades, the obstruction will hinge downward and the sidewall opening will no longer be obstructed.

TRAP PLACEMENT RESTRICTIONS

- No closer than 100 feet to any other crab trap, EXCEPT when secured to a pier or dock.
- May not fish a crab trap in public fresh waters.
- May not fish a crab trap within 200 ft. of a marked navigable channel in Aransas Co.; and in the water area of Aransas Bay within one-half mile of a line from Hail Point on Lamar Peninsula, then direct to the eastern end of Goose Island, then along the southern shore of Goose Island, then along the eastern shoreline of the Live Oak Peninsula past Fulton, past Nine Mile Point, past Rockport to a point at the east end of Talley Island including that part of Copano Bay within 1,000 feet of the causeway between Lamar and Live Oak Peninsulas.
- May not possess or use any traps in waters north and west of Hwy. 146 where it crosses Houston Ship Channel.
- May not use or place more than three crab traps in public waters of the San Bernard River north of a line marked by the boat access channel at Bernard Acres.

BAITING CRAB TRAPS

It is UNLAWFUL to use any part of a game fish for bait, except for processed catfish heads used as crab-trap bait by a licensed crab fisherman, provided the catfish is obtained from an aquaculture facility permitted to operate in the United States. A person who uses catfish as bait under this subparagraph shall, upon the request of a TPWD employee acting within the scope of official duties, furnish appropriate authenticating documentation, such as a bill of sale or receipt, to prove that the catfish was obtained from a legal source.

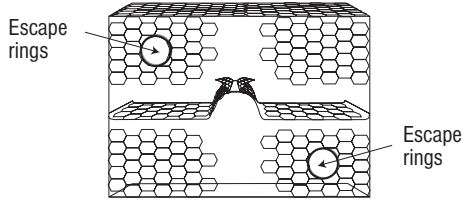
OTHER PERMITTED DEVICES

Devices legally used for taking of fresh or saltwater fish or shrimp may be used to take crab if operated in places and at times authorized by a proclamation of the Parks and Wildlife Commission or the Parks and Wildlife Code.

CRAB TRAP REQUIREMENTS

ESCAPE RINGS

A crab trap must be equipped with at least two escape vents in each crab-retaining chamber and located on the outside trap walls (saltwater perch traps are not required to be equipped with escape rings). Escape vents must be at least 2-3/8 inches in diameter.



DEGRADABLE PANELS

A crab trap and a saltwater perch trap must be equipped with a degradable panel. A trap is considered to have a degradable panel if one of the following methods is used in construction of the trap:

<p>OPTION 1</p>	<p>The lid tie-down strap is hooked into a LOOP of approved material.</p>	
<p>OPTION 2</p>	<p>The lid tie-down strap is hooked into a BRIDLE of approved material.</p>	
<p>OPTION 3</p>	<p>A hole (minimum of 3 in. x 6 in.) may be cut in the trap sidewall AND EITHER</p>	
	<p>a. The hole is laced over with a single strand of approved material; OR</p>	
	<p>b. Wire mesh is laced into the hole with a single strand of approved material; OR</p>	
	<p>c. The hole is covered by a hinged door tied once at the top with a single strand of approved material.</p>	

BAG, POSSESSION AND LENGTH LIMITS

BLUE CRAB

Daily Bag: No limit

Possession: No limit

No more than 5% by number, of undersized blue crabs may be possessed for **bait purposes only** and must be placed in a separate container.

May not possess egg-bearing (sponge) crabs.

May not possess a female crab that has its abdominal apron detached.

Minimum Length: five inches

Measured across the widest point of the body from tip of spine to tip of spine (see page 27).

STONE CRAB (right claw only)

Daily Bag: No limit

Possession: No limit

Only the right claw may be retained or possessed.

The body of the stone crab must be returned immediately to the water from which it was taken.

Minimum Length: 2.5 in. claw measurement

Measure from the tip of the immovable claw to the first joint behind the claw).

*Commercial crabbing within Aransas National Wildlife Refuge is prohibited.
For more information call (361) 286-3559.*

COMMERCIAL WILD OYSTERING

The TPWD Executive Director may close an oyster area upon finding that it is being overworked, damaged, or in need of reseeding or restocking. Information on closures will be available at all TPWD offices.

- Current **Shellfish Harvest Area Status** can be obtained 24 hours a day (toll-free, in-state) at (800) 685-0361 or at dshs.texas.gov/seafood/shellfish-status.aspx.
- Current **Shellfish Classification Maps** can be obtained at coastal TPWD offices, DSHS Seafood and Aquatic Life Group offices in Bacliff, Port Lavaca, and Corpus Christi, or by request from the Austin office at (512) 834-6757 or dshs.texas.gov/seafood/shellfish-harvest-maps.aspx.
- **Harvesters MUST NOT sell shellfish (oysters, clams, and mussels) to anyone not certified by DSHS as a Shellfish Dealer and TPWD-licensed as a Dealer.**
- **Only a DSHS Certified Shellfish Shucker-Packer can process (shuck, repack or relabel) shellfish.**
- **TPWD-licensed wholesale or retail fish dealers, fish truck dealers and restaurants are not allowed to process shellfish unless certified by DSHS.**
- **Wholesale or retail fish dealers, fish truck dealers and restaurants MUST NOT sell shellfish unless it originated from a certified shellfish dealer with a certified shellfish dealer tag or label attached or affixed to the container.**

- Trip records showing **harvest time to temperature compliance** are required on delivery by certified shellfish dealers for their records. The captain of the harvest vessel must document each day's start time of harvest (when the first oyster is on deck).
- If shellfish are harvested and refrigerated within DSHS prescribed time frames, they require a **White Harvester Shellfish/Recovery Tag**.
- If shellfish are NOT harvested and refrigerated within DSHS required time frames, they require a **Green Harvester Shellfish/Recovery Tag** and **MUST** be sold to a Certified Shellfish Dealer certified as a Shucker-Packer (SP) for post-harvest processing or shucking.
- **It is illegal to dump human bodily waste overboard.** This can cause serious illnesses and infectious disease outbreaks, resulting in the closure of harvesting areas and significant financial losses to the industry. Human waste must be secured and located onboard, to prevent contamination of shellfish by spillage or leakage, and must be properly disposed onshore.

The appropriate tag (green or white) must be affixed to the sack regardless of the season or whether Molluscan Shellfish Harvesting and Handling requirements apply. (25 TAC §241.57)

SEASONS

Nov. 1 – Apr. 30 except in private Certificate of Locations with permits from TPWD where there is no closed season. During open season, oysters may be taken Mon.-Fri. from sunrise to 3:30 p.m.

BAG LIMITS

30 “sacks” per day (no more than 110 lbs. per sack, INCLUDING dead oyster shell and the sack).

SIZE LIMITS

3 in. (greatest length of shell) or larger. Oysters 0.75-3 in. and dead oyster shell greater than 0.75 in. (measured along any axis) must be culled and returned to the reef from which taken and each cargo may contain no more than 5% of oysters and/or dead shell of these sizes.

No more than the equivalent of six sacks of un-culled oysters are permitted on board while on a reef and must remain un-sacked and separate from the culled cargo.

MEANS AND METHODS

During the open public season, it is UNLAWFUL while taking or attempting to take oysters for pay or for the purpose of sale, barter or exchange or any other commercial purpose to use more than one dredge, use a dredge which exceeds 48 in. in width and a two-barrel capacity, or have on board more than one dredge, unless it is secured to or on the wheelhouse or deck in such a manner as to be readily accessible for use. Commercial oyster boats are limited to not more than 30 sacks of legal-size oysters.

OYSTER DREDGE: For taking of oysters in salt water only. May not exceed 48 in. width and 2-barrel capacity. Legal dredges are to only be used in places, times, and manners authorized by TPWD.

MINOR BAYS CLOSED TO OYSTER HARVEST

- Christmas Bay, Brazoria County
- Carancahua Bay, Calhoun and Matagorda County
- Powderhorn Lake, Calhoun County
- Hynes Bay, Refugio County
- St. Charles Bay, Aransas County
- South Bay, Cameron County
- Mesquite Bay, Aransas and Calhoun County
- Carlos Bay (partial), Aransas County
- Ayres Bay (partial), Calhoun County

Areas along all shorelines with DSHS-approved or conditionally approved areas for shellfish harvest extending 300 ft. from the water's edge or exposed oysters inside of the 300 ft. area ARE ALSO CLOSED.

Repeated convictions for undersized oyster violations may result in a Class B Misdemeanor penalty for captain and crew. License suspensions may apply. License suspensions for repeated violations may apply to captain, crew, oyster boat, and the purchasing wholesale dealer (certified shellfish shipper).

Taking oysters in a restricted area is a Class A Misdemeanor. Everyone on the vessel can be found in violation.

Harvesting, shucking, processing and selling oysters must conform to all regulations specified by DSHS.

HARVESTER/SHELL RECOVERY TAG

Affix the appropriate (green or white) harvester/shell recovery tags to the outside of each sack of oysters at the time of harvest, in the location of harvest, with information required by DSHS under the National Shellfish Sanitation Program, and keep affixed during transportation to a dealer, regardless of the season or whether the requirements of Molluscan Shellfish Harvesting and Handling apply.

CULTIVATED OYSTER MARICULTURE

More information on the Cultivated Oyster Mariculture program and how to apply for a permit can be found online at: www.tpwd.texas.gov/fishboat/fish/comercial/com_cf/com_index.phtml. Permit holders should follow any special additions to their Permit Provisions.

- Cultivated Oyster Mariculture Permit holders following all sanitation requirements and that have obtained a certification from DSHS in one of the Certified Shellfish Dealer categories may sell their products to restaurants and specified venues. Otherwise, they may only sell their products to a DSHS certified Certified Shellfish Dealer that also is TPWD-licensed as a Dealer.
- Only a DSHS Certified Shellfish Shucker-Packer may process (shuck, repack or relabel) shellfish.
- TPWD-licensed wholesale or retail fish dealers, fish truck dealers and restaurants may not process shellfish unless certified by DSHS.
- Wholesale or retail fish dealers, fish truck dealers and restaurants MAY NOT sell mariculture oysters unless they originated from a certified shellfish dealer with a certified shellfish dealer tag or label attached or affixed to the container or unless they originated from a Cultivated Oyster Mariculture Permit holder who is also DSHS certified with Cultivated Oyster Harvester tag attached or affixed to the container.
- The mariculture harvester must document compliance with harvest time to temperature matrix. This information includes start time of harvest and, if used, records of refrigeration.
- Commercial Oyster Mariculture Permit holders that incorporate desiccation practices in their operation must re-immersion oysters for a minimum of 14 days prior to harvest. Records of date of re-immersion and date of final harvest, shall be reported to TPWD as part of harvest reports.

- If shellfish are harvested and refrigerated within DSHS required time frames, they require a Blue Cultivated Oyster Harvester Tag.
- If shellfish are NOT harvested and refrigerated within DSHS required time frames, they require a Green Cultivated Oyster Harvester Tag and MUST be sold to a Certified Shellfish Dealer certified as a Shucker-Packer (SP) for post-harvest processing or shucking.
- It is illegal to dump human bodily waste overboard. This can cause serious illness and infectious disease outbreaks, resulting in the closure of harvesting areas and significant financial losses to the industry. Human waste must be secured and located onboard, to prevent contamination of shellfish by spillage or leakage, and must be properly disposed of onshore.

SEASONS

There is no closed season to the harvest of oysters from Cultivated Oyster Mariculture facilities. Oysters may be harvested 30 minutes after sunrise to sunset.

SIZE LIMITS

- Oysters harvested from a Cultivated Oyster Mariculture Permitted area must be a minimum size of 2.5 inches in length (measured along the greatest length of the shell).
- Oysters greater than 1 inch in length (as measured along the greatest length of the shell) produced under a Cultivated Oyster Mariculture Nursery-Hatchery Permit in waters classified as Prohibited or Restricted Areas must be transferred to a DSHS-approved depuration area and held in that depuration area for a minimum of 120 days before harvest under a Commercial Oyster Mariculture Permit. Otherwise, these oysters must be destroyed.

OTHER STIPULATIONS

- Cultivated Oyster Mariculture is restricted to seed and larvae from native Eastern Oyster (*Crassostrea virginica*) broodstock collected in Texas waters. Please see “Oyster Biosecurity and Genetic Integrity Protocols” located on the TPWD website for a full outline of broodstock, seed, and larvae stipulations.
- A Cultivated Oyster Mariculture Permittee or Cultivated Oyster Mariculture Nursery-Hatchery Permittee may designate subpermittees to perform permitted activities in the absence of the permittee.
- At all times that the permittee or subpermittee is conducting permitted activities, they must have on their person a legible copy of the appropriate permit under which the activity is being performed. A subpermittee must also have on their person an Authorized Subpermittee(s) List.
- It is unlawful for a person holding a Cultivated Oyster Mariculture Permit or Cultivated Oyster Mariculture Nursery-Hatchery Permit to possess a commercial oyster dredge or oyster tongs within a Cultivated Oyster Mariculture permitted area or aboard a vessel transporting oysters to or from a Cultivated Oyster Mariculture area.
- It is unlawful for a person holding a Cultivated Oyster Mariculture Permit to comingle or allow the comingling of wild-caught oysters with oysters from a Cultivated Oyster Mariculture permitted area.
- It is unlawful for a person other than the permittee or subpermittee to remove or harvest cultivated oysters from their permitted area.
- No person may place a cultivated oyster in a natural oyster bed or private oyster bed.

CONSUMPTION BANS AND ADVISORIES

Fish and shellfish can accumulate contaminants from the waters in which they live. DSHS monitors fish in the state for the presence of environmental contaminants and alerts the public through **bans and advisories** when a threat to human health may occur from their consumption. Consumption of clams, mussels, and other molluscan shellfish taken from public fresh waters is prohibited by DSHS.

Consumption bans mean possession and consumption is prohibited. Licensed catch-and-release fishing is allowed.

Consumption advisories are recommendations to limit consumption to specified quantities, species, and sizes.

For a list of bans and advisories, or a list of areas tested where no bans or advisories were issued, visit dshs.texas.gov/seafood or call (800) 685-0361 (shellfish) or (512) 834-6757 (fish).

RETENTION BANS ON FINFISH AND SHELLFISH

By order of DSHS, retention bans on finfish and shellfish are in effect in the following areas:

Lavaca Bay, inshore of a line beginning at the last point of land at the northeastern approach of Lavaca Bay Causeway, then southwest to Aquatic Life Marker A to Aquatic Life Marker B to Channel Marker #12, then southeast to Aquatic Life Marker C to Aquatic Life Marker D to Aquatic Life Marker E to Channel Marker #74, then northeast to Aquatic Life Marker F to the southernmost point of land on the man-made island east of the ship channel, is closed to the retention of finfish and crabs. Catch and release of finfish and crabs is lawful. (Due to mercury.)

SEA TURTLES AND OTHER PROTECTED AQUATIC SPECIES

It is UNLAWFUL to take, kill, or disturb sea turtles or their eggs. Species found in the Gulf of Mexico include Green, Loggerhead, Kemp's ridley, Leatherback and Hawksbill. It is unlawful to take or kill diamondback terrapin or marine mammals such as porpoises, dolphins or whales. If you accidentally catch a sea turtle, immediately call (866) 887-8535 for information on how to help without injuring yourself or further injuring the animal. Any other aquatic life (except threatened and endangered species) not addressed in this guide may be taken only by hand or with the devices defined as lawful for taking fish, shrimp, oysters or crabs in places and at times as provided in this guide.

OFFSHORE AQUACULTURE

TPWD prescribes procedures and conditions for operating offshore aquaculture in Texas waters and implements its responsibilities under the Texas Agriculture Code, by protecting wild marine resources. TPWD's responsibility is to protect the health and viability of native populations of fish, shellfish, and aquatic life in state waters, including endangered species. These are the conditions under which marine species may be introduced into an offshore aquaculture facility without damaging surrounding water and marine resources.

Regulation of offshore aquaculture involves state and federal jurisdictions: Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) has primary responsibility for establishing and enforcing water

quality standards, Texas General Land Office (GLO) is responsible for managing state-owned submerged lands, Texas Animal Health Commission (TAHC) is responsible for management of animal disease necessary to protect agriculture, and DSHS is the primary agency for protecting human health and safety, including seafood safety. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (COE) and the United States Coast Guard (USCG) are responsible for establishing maritime navigation standards and for identifying, marking and mitigating navigational hazards.

The intent is that people applying to various agencies for required permissions be able to do so simultaneously, so that the many needed reviews, inspections and other activities can be accomplished in the minimum amount of time. All other permits must be obtained before a permit is approved by TPWD.

CRIMINAL PENALTIES AND CIVIL VALUE RECOVERY

If you violate fish and wildlife laws, in addition to civil restitution, you may:

- be fined (Class C - \$25-\$500; Class B - \$200-\$2,000; Class A - \$500-\$4,000; State Felony - \$1,500-\$10,000);
- be jailed (Class B and higher offenses);
- face automatic suspension or revocation of licenses for up to five years;
- forfeit gear used to commit a violation.

Game wardens who encounter a suspected regulations violation will file a criminal complaint in court. Fines are assessed by the presiding judge hearing the case. Commercial aquatic products illegally harvested may be confiscated and sold.

Texas is a member of the Interstate Wildlife Violator Compact (IWVC), which helps member states share information about fish and wildlife violators and deny licenses to those who fail to comply with conservation law in member states.

CIVIL RESTITUTION

IN ADDITION TO CRIMINAL PENALTIES for hunting and fishing violations, TPWD will seek civil recovery value for loss or damage to wildlife resources. Civil restitution is payable to TPWD and is in addition to fines assessed by the court. Civil restitution will be assessed following each violation, and each violator will receive an invoice from TPWD. Failure to pay will result in refusal to issue a license, tag or permit. Hunting or fishing after such a refusal is a Class A misdemeanor, punishable by a fine of \$500-\$4,000; jail not to exceed one year; or both. For questions call (512) 389-4630.

Reinstatement of license privileges following revocation or denial requires an application and a \$100 application fee.

DEFINITIONS

Aquaculture: producing and selling cultured species raised in private facilities.

Aquatic Product: Any live or dead uncooked, fresh or frozen aquatic animal life.

Artificial Lure: Any lure (including flies) with hook(s) attached that is man-made and used as a bait while fishing.

Bait: Something used to lure any wildlife resource. It is unlawful to use game fish or any part thereof as bait.

Barotrauma: A condition caused by expansion of gases inside a fish, such as the stomach coming out of the mouth, bulging eyes, bloated belly, and/or distended intestines.

Barrel of Oysters: three boxes of oysters in the shell or two gallons of shucked oysters without shells. Box dimensions are 10 in. x 20 in. x 13.5 in. In filling a box for measurement, oysters may not be piled more than 2.5 in. above the height of the box at its center.

Bycatch Reduction Device (BRD): A device installed in the cod end (tail bag) of shrimp trawls to exclude finfish.

Cast Net: A net which can be hand-thrown or cast to drop over an area.

Charter Vessel: A vessel less than 100 gross tons that meets the requirements of the USCG to carry six or fewer passengers for hire and carries a passenger for hire at any time during the calendar year. A charter vessel with a commercial permit is considered a charter vessel when it carries a passenger who pays a fee, or when there are more than three persons aboard, including operator and crew.

Circle Hook: A hook designed to turn perpendicularly back toward the shank to form a circular / oval shape.

Community Fishing Lake: A public impoundment 75 acres or smaller located within an incorporated city limit or public park, or an impoundment of any size lying totally within a state park. See the full list at: tpwd.texas.gov/fishboat/fish

Crab Line: A baited line with no hook or pole attached.

Crab Measurement: Blue crabs are measured across the widest point of the body from tip of spine to tip of spine. Stone crab claws are measured by the distance from the tip of the immovable claw finger to the first joint behind the claw.

Daily Bag Limit: Quantity of a species that may be taken in one day.

Day: A 24-hour period that begins at midnight and ends the following midnight.

Descending Device: An instrument capable of releasing a fish at the depth from which the fish was caught with a weighted hook, lip clamp, or container that will hold the fish while it is lowered to depth to effect release. The device must be capable of releasing the fish automatically, by actions of the operator of the device, or by allowing the fish to escape on its own when at depth. The device must use a minimum of a 16-ounce (454-gram) weight and a minimum of a 60-ft (15.2-m) length of line.

Dip Net: Mesh bag suspended from a frame attached to a handle.

Fishing Guide: A person who, for compensation, accompanies, assists, or transports a person or persons engaged in recreational fishing in Texas waters.

Fishing Guide Deck Hand: A person in the employ of a fishing guide who assists in operating a boat for compensation to accompany or to transport a person or persons engaged in fishing in the water of this state

Gaff: Any hand-held pole with a hook attached directly to the pole.

Game Fish: Fish that may be taken only by pole and line, except as otherwise provided in this guide. Includes hybrids or subspecies:

- Bass, Alabama or Guadalupe
- Bass, largemouth or smallmouth
- Bass, spotted or striped
- Bass, white or yellow
- Catfish, blue or channel
- Catfish, flathead
- Cobia
- Crappie, black or white
- Drum, red
- Mackerel, king or Spanish
- Marlin, blue or white
- Pickerel
- Sailfish
- Sauger
- Seatrout, spotted
- Sharks
- Snook
- Spearfish, longbill
- Swordfish, broadbill
- Tarpon
- Tripletail
- Trout, brown or rainbow
- Wahoo
- Walleye

Gear Tag: A tag constructed of material as durable as the device to which it is attached. The gear tag must be legible, contain the name and address, or customer number, of the person using the device, and date the device was set out. Date is not required for saltwater trotlines or crabtraps fished under a commercial license. For juglines and freshwater trotlines, properly marked buoys or floats qualify as valid gear tags.

Gig: Any hand-held shaft with single or multiple points, barbed or barbless.

Handfishing: Fishing with HANDS. The use of ANY other fishing device while handfishing (including but not limited to gaff, pole hook, trap, spear, or stick) is UNLAWFUL.

Harvester/Shell Recovery Tag: An identifying marker that must be affixed to the outside of each sack of oysters at the time and location of harvest containing information required by DSHS under the National Shellfish Sanitation Program.

Headboat: A vessel that holds a valid USGGS “Certificate of Inspection” to carry passengers for hire. A boat with a commercial vessel permit is considered a headboat when it carries a passenger who pays a fee or, in the case of persons aboard fishing for or possessing coastal migratory fish or Gulf reef fish, when there are more than three persons aboard, including operator and crew.

Individual Fishing Quota (IFQ): A form of limited access that assigns fixed shares of total allowable catch to each user.

Inside Waters: Bays, passes, rivers or other bodies of water landward from the Gulf of Mexico. In these waters, the tide rises and falls, and saltwater shrimp are found or migrate.

Jug Line: A fishing line permitted only in certain freshwater areas with five or less hooks tied to an orange buoy.

Lawful Archery Equipment: Includes longbow, recurved bow, compound bow, and crossbow.

Natural Bait: A whole or cut portion of a fish or shellfish or a whole or cut portion of plant material in its natural state, provided none has been altered beyond cutting into portions.

Nongame Fish: All species not listed as “game fish” except endangered or threatened fish, which are regulated separately. For a full list, see “threatened and endangered species” at tpwd.texas.gov/huntwild/wild/wildlife_diversity

Non-resident: A person who does not meet resident requirements.

Offshore Aquaculture Facility: All enclosures and associated infrastructure used to produce, hold, propagate, transport or sell stock under authority of an offshore aquaculture permit.

Outside Waters: Gulf of Mexico extending from the shoreline seaward to nine nautical miles.

Otter Trawl: A funnel-shaped trawl with wings, and a mouth held open by floats and weights, spread by trawl doors fastened to the wings.

Permanent Structure: A building designed, planned and constructed to remain at one location.

Place of Business: A permanent structure on land or a motor vehicle where aquatic products or orders for aquatic products are received, sold or purchased, but does not include a boat or any floating device, public cold-storage vault, portion of a structure used as a residence, or a vehicle from which no orders are taken or no shipments or deliveries are made other than to the place of business of a licensee in Texas.

Pole and Line (includes rod and reel): A line with a hook, attached to a pole.

Possession Limit: A maximum number of a species that may be possessed at one time.

Residence: A permanent structure where a person regularly sleeps and keeps personal belongings. Does not include temporary abodes or dwellings such as hunting or fishing clubs, club houses, cabins, tents, or trailer or mobile homes used as hunting or fishing camps, or any hotel, motel or rooming house used on a temporary basis.

Resident: A person who has lived in Texas continuously for more than 6 months immediately before buying a license. (includes residents, spouses or dependent children at home who enter U.S. Armed Forces and claim Texas residence.

Sack of Oysters: A volume of oysters that weighs no more than 110 lbs. including dead shell and the weight of the sack.

Seine (including push net): A section of non-metallic mesh webbing, with the top edge buoyed upwards by a floatline and the bottom edge weighted.

Shark Fin: The fresh and uncooked, or cooked, frozen, dried, or otherwise processed, detached fin or tail of a shark.

Spear: Shaft with single or multiple points, barbed or barbless, propelled by any means (does not include arrows).

Spear Gun: Any hand-operated device designed and used for propelling a spear (does not include crossbows).

Stock: Native species of fish, shellfish, or aquatic plants intended for use in, transport to, or containment within an offshore aquaculture facility under terms of an offshore aquaculture permit.

Throwline: Fishing line with five or fewer hooks and one end attached to a permanent fixture. May also include swivels, snaps, rubber, and rigid support structures.

Trap: A rigid device of various designs and dimensions used to capture aquatic organisms.

Trawl: A beam trawl or otter trawl with a bag-shaped net which is used to catch shrimp.

Beam Trawl: Trawl without wings, the mouth of which is held open by a rigid beam of wood or metal.

Trotline: A non-metallic main fishing line with more than five hooks attached and with each end attached to a fixture.

Turtle Excluder Device (TED): Device installed in a shrimp trawl forward of the cod end (tail bag) for excluding sea turtles

Umbrella Net: Non-metallic mesh net suspended horizontally in the water by multiple lines and attached to a rigid frame.

Venting tool: A device capable of penetrating the abdomen of a fish for purposes of releasing gases accumulated in the body cavity as a result of retrieving the fish from depth. It must be a sharpened, hollow instrument that allows air to escape and of at least a 16-gauge, with an outside diameter of no less than 0.065 inches (1.65 mm).

Wildlife Resources: Any wild animal, wild bird, or aquatic life.

WHERE TO BUY COMMERCIAL FISHING LICENSES

COASTAL AREA OFFICES

BEAUMONT, 5655 Eastex Freeway, Suite A
(77706) (409) 892-8666

BROWNSVILLE, 5460 Paredes Line Road,
Suite 201 (78526) (956) 546-1952

CORPUS CHRISTI, 5541 Bear Lane,
Suite 232 (78405) (361) 289-5566

HOUSTON (north), 350 North Sam
Houston Pkwy E., Suite 100 (77060)
(281) 931-6471

HOUSTON (south), 10101 Southwest Frwy,
#206 (77074) (713) 779-8977

LAMARQUE, 14037 Delany Road (77568)
(409) 933-1947

ROCKPORT, 715 South Highway 35
(78382) (361) 790-0312

VICTORIA, 2805 N. Navarro, Suite 600A
(77901) (361) 575-6306

ALL OTHER OFFICES

ABILENE, 281 North Willis (79603)
(325) 673-3333

AMARILLO, 203 SW 8th, Suite #200,
(79101) (806) 379-8900

BROWNWOOD, 301 Main, Suite D (76801)
(325) 646-0440

COLLEGE STATION, 12845 FM 2154
(Wellborn Road), Suite 160 (77845)
(979) 696-4148

EL PASO, 401 East Franklin, Suite 520
(79901) (915) 834-7050

FORT WORTH, 5400 Airport Freeway, Suite
E (76117) (817) 831-3128

GARLAND, 346 Oaks Trail, Suite 100
(75043) (972) 226-9966

KERRVILLE, 309 Sidney Baker South
(78028) (830) 257-7611

LAREDO, 5119 Bob Bullock Loop (78041)
(956) 718-1087

LUBBOCK, 1702 Landmark Lane, Suite 1
(79415) (806) 761-4930

LUFKIN, 4100 S. Medford Drive, Suite
204B (75901) (936) 632-1311

MIDLAND, 4500 West Illinois, Suite 307
(79703) (432) 520-4649

MT. PLEASANT, 212 South Johnson
(75455) (903) 572-7966

RUSK, 580 West 6th Street (75785)
(903) 683-2511

SAN ANGELO, 3407 South Chadbourne
(76903) (325) 651-4844

SAN ANTONIO, 2391 N.E. Loop 410, Suite
409 (78217) (210) 348-7375

TEMPLE, 3615 So. General Bruce Drive
(76504) (254) 778-8913

TYLER, 11942A FM 848, Suite 100
(75707) (903) 534-0388

WACO, 1601 East Crest Drive (76705)
(254) 867-7951

WICHITA FALLS, 4822 Kemp Blvd., Suite
1300 (76308) (940) 723-7327

TEXAS PARKS AND WILDLIFE DEPARTMENT HEADQUARTERS

4200 Smith School Road, Austin 78744
(512) 389-4800

OPERATION GAME THIEF

Reward Hotline: (800) 792-4263

Make a difference by reporting poaching, pollution and dumping, arson in state parks and intoxicated boaters! Up to \$1,000 may be paid for information leading to the conviction of a person for a violation of our state's wildlife and fisheries laws, laws related to environmental crime, arson and intoxicated boaters.

Operation Game Thief (OGT) is an official Texas wildlife crime-stopper program and a privately funded 501(c)(3) nonprofit. Please consider supporting efforts to protect precious natural resources and keep the waterways safe by sending a tax-deductible donation to OGT, or by becoming an OGT member, ogtx.org. Donations can also be sent to TPWD, 4200 Smith School Road, Austin, Texas 78744, or received by phone (512) 389-4381.

OPERATION



GAME THIEF



**4200 Smith School Road
Austin, Texas 78744
www.tpwd.texas.gov**

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