

SAFMC Release 2025 Data Summary

All data summarized below were submitted to SAFMC Release in 2025.

Where Entries Came From

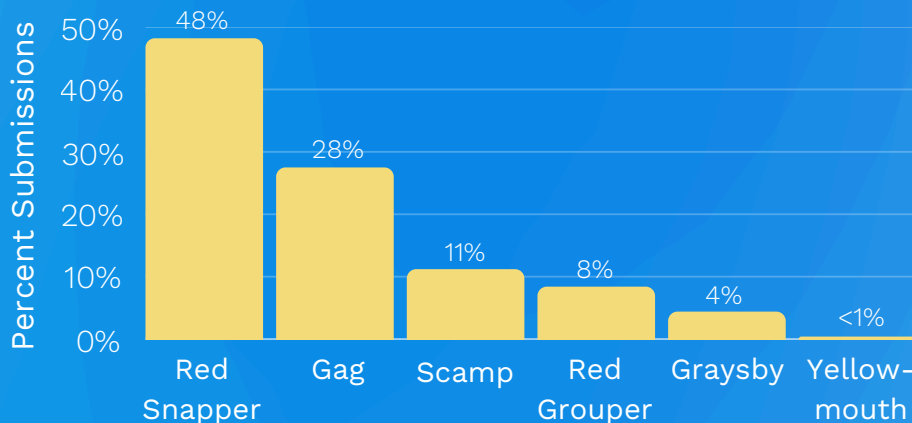


The majority of releases recorded in 2025 were caught on recreational trips (64%), followed by charter (26%) and headboat (10%).

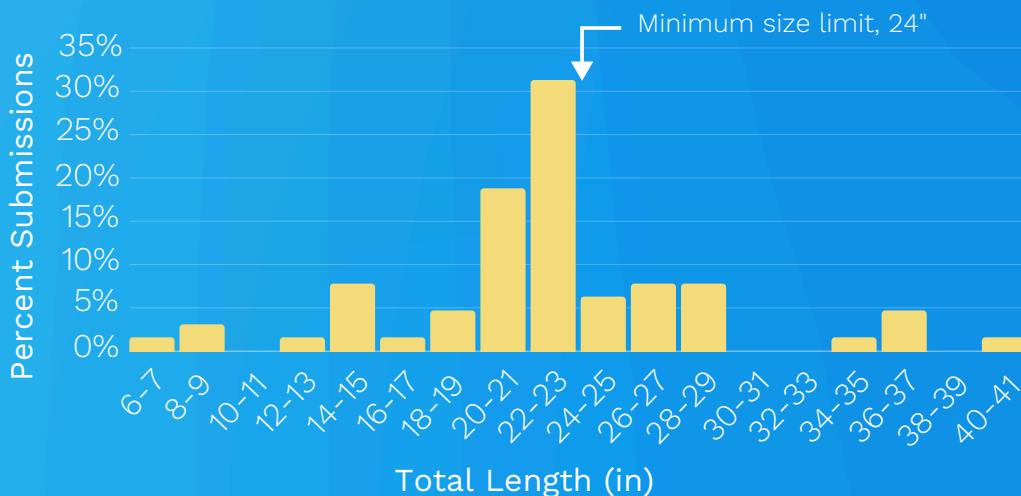
Most submissions came from South Carolina (46%), followed by North Carolina (31%) and Florida (23%). No Georgia submissions in 2025.

Species Submitted and Lengths

Red Snapper was the most commonly recorded species in 2025, followed by Gag. Red Snapper and Gag have been the most commonly submitted species since all project species were incorporated in 2022. Check out previous data summaries [on our webpage](#).



Gag Grouper Lengths



Gag

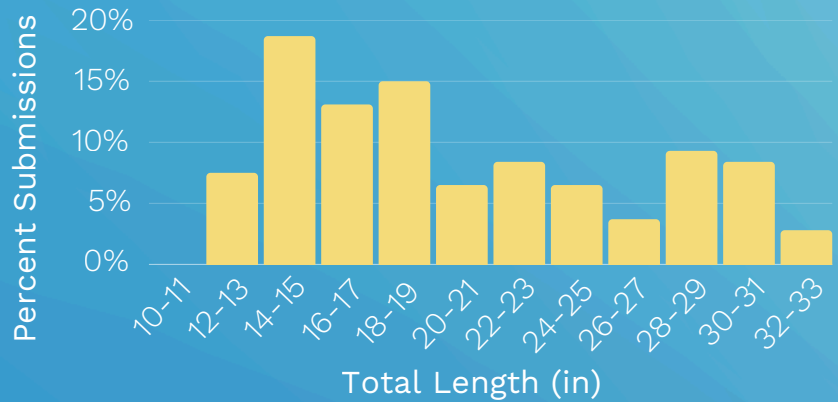
Smallest: 7 in
Largest: 41 in
Average: 23 in
Average depth caught: 88 ft



Red Snapper

Smallest: 12 in
 Largest: 32 in
 Average: 20 in
 Average depth caught: 88 ft

Red Snapper Lengths

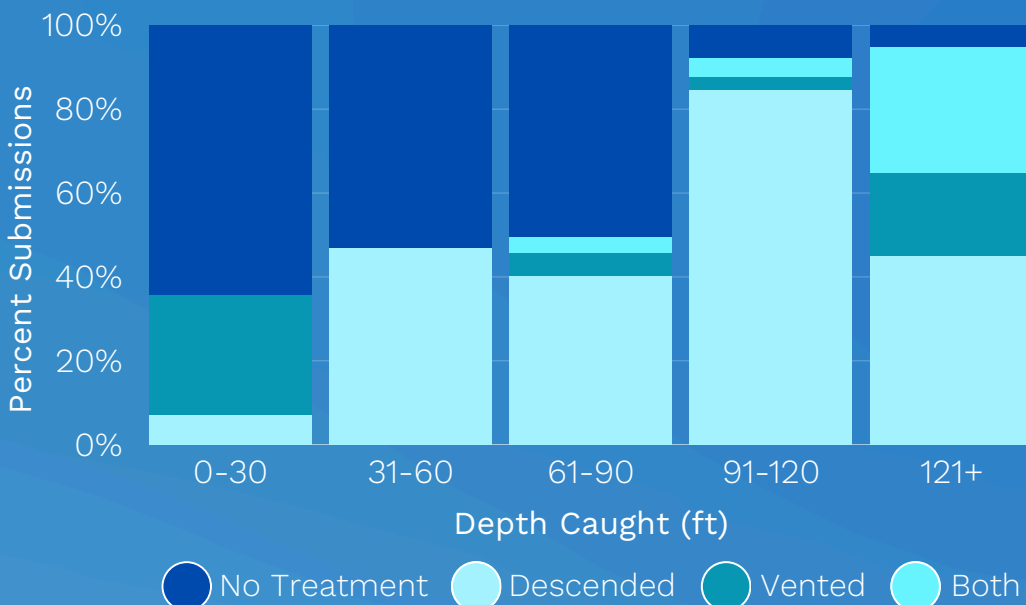
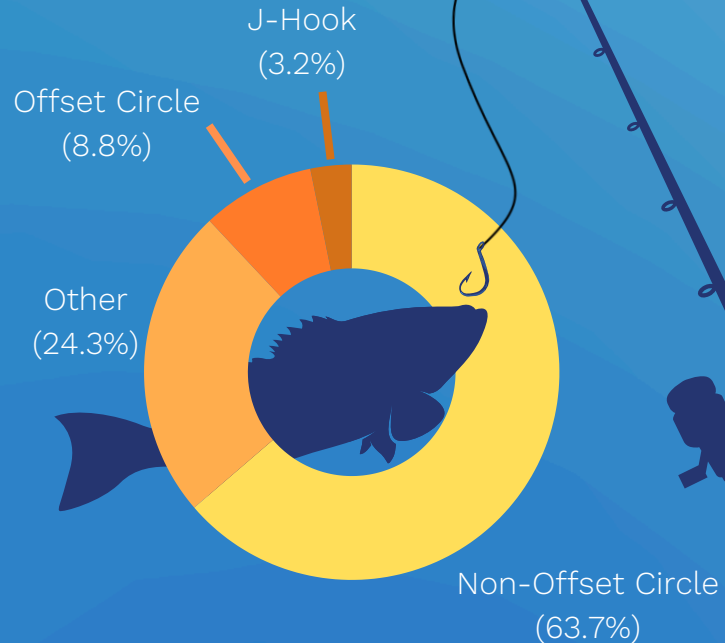


Shark Depredation, Hook Type, and Release Treatment



~2% of recorded releases experienced shark depredation

Non-offset circle hooks were the most frequently recorded hook type in 2025. This is great because these are less likely to hook fish in lethal areas, like the gills. 'Other' hooks, which includes jigs, were the second-most commonly recorded hook type. About 94% of recorded releases were hooked in the jaw. For hook regulations, visit the [Best Fishing Practices webpage](#).

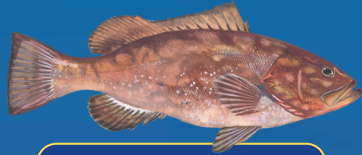


Generally, as depth caught increases, so does the percent of releases being treated for barotrauma, such as being descended, vented, or both. This makes sense because the risk of barotrauma increases with depth caught. Knowing the [signs of barotrauma](#) is key to knowing when to assist your fish.

Participant Recognition Program Milestones

In the SAFMC Release Participant Recognition Program (PRP), participants are recognized for meeting project-specific milestones, such as submitting the largest and/or smallest of each species, recording the most species, and submitting the most releases overall. Find updated 2026 milestones in the [2026 PRP Milestones document](#), but for now, check out some of the 2025 PRP winners below.

Size Matters



Red Grouper

Smallest: 11 in
Vincent Gatto

Largest: 23 in
Victor Tucker



Gag

Smallest: 7 in
Chris Kimrey

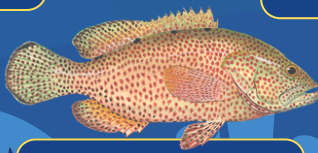
Largest: 41 in
Jake Harmon



Scamp

Smallest: 16 in
Chris Kimrey

Largest: 35 in
Jake Harmon



Graysby

Smallest: 10 in
Vincent Gatto

Largest: 17 in
Nigel Bowers



Red Snapper

Smallest: 12 in
Nigel Bowers
Graham Free
Mark McWaters

Largest: 32 in
Mark McWaters
Victor Tucker

Around the Reef

Jake Harmon is in the lead!

To win this milestone, a participant records information for all 11 project species. Jake has submitted valuable information on six species! This milestone is being replaced in 2026 with the Species Spotlight milestone. Check out the 2026 [PRP Milestones Document](#) for details.



Release Champion

Nigel Bowers is our 2025 Release Champion!

Huge congratulations to Nigel for submitting an impressive 65 entries this year. His champion status is well-deserved!



Thank you to all our SAFMC Release participants for sharing what they see on the water.

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Have questions? Drop us a line.
Discover more on our [webpage](#)

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