



# RECREATIONAL REGULATIONS South Atlantic Snapper Grouper Complex

(Updated January 1, 2021)

**NOTE: This listing is published for informational purposes and has no legal force or effect. Fishery regulations are subject to change.**

For updated information, visit [www.safmc.net](http://www.safmc.net), download our mobile app or call 843-571-4366

## List of Species

### SNAPPERS

Lane Snapper  
Yellowtail Snapper  
Gray Snapper  
Mutton Snapper  
Vermilion Snapper  
Red Snapper

Queen Snapper  
Blackfin Snapper  
Cubera Snapper

Silk Snapper

### TILEFISHES

Golden Tilefish  
Blueline Tilefish  
Sand Tilefish

### PORGYS

Red  
Jolthead  
Saucereye  
Whitebone  
Knobbed  
Longspine\*  
Scup

### TRIGGERFISH

Gray  
Ocean\*

### GRUNTS

White Grunt  
Margate  
Tomtate  
Cottonwick\*  
Sailors Choice

### GROUPERS

Gag  
Scamp  
Red Grouper  
Black Grouper  
Speckled Hind  
Snowy Grouper  
Warsaw Grouper  
Wreckfish  
Rock Hind  
Graysby  
Yellowedge Grouper  
Coney  
Red Hind  
Goliath Grouper  
Misty Grouper  
Nassau Grouper  
Yellowmouth Grouper  
Yellowfin Grouper

### JACKS

Greater Amberjack  
Bar Jack  
Almaco Jack  
Lesser Amberjack  
Banded Rudderfish

### SEA BASSES

Black Sea Bass  
Bank Sea Bass\*  
Rock Sea Bass\*

### SPADEFISH

Spadefish

### WRASSES

Hogfish

\*Ecosystem Species

## Recreational Closures - CURRENT

Species	Effective Date of Closure	Harvest Reopens
Red Snapper	July 18, 2020	July 9, 2021, if allowed by NOAA Fisheries
Blueline Tilefish	September 1, 2020	May 1, 2021
Snowy Grouper	September 1, 2020	May 1, 2021
Wreckfish	September 1, 2020	July 1, 2021
Hogfish (East Florida & Florida Keys)	November 1, 2020	May 1, 2021
Shallow Water Grouper*	January 1, 2021	May 1, 2021
Red Grouper in the Carolinas	January 1, 2021	June 1, 2021

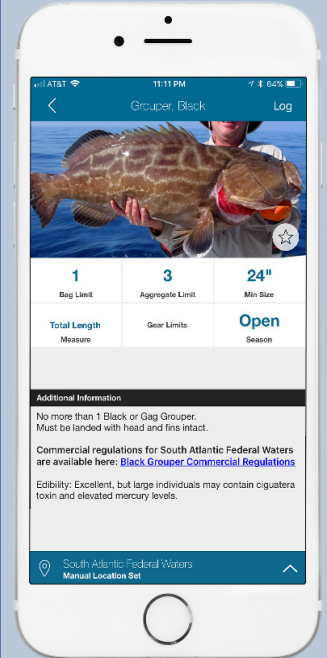
\*Shallow Water Grouper (gag, black grouper, scamp, red hind, rock hind, yellowmouth grouper, yellowfin grouper, graysby, coney, red grouper - note: red grouper in NC & SC remains closed through the month of May)

#### Additional Notes:

- The sale of bag-limit caught snapper grouper species is prohibited.
- Recreational and commercial fishermen are required to have a [descending device](#) on board and readily available for use when fishing for or possessing snapper and grouper species in federal waters of the South Atlantic. Descending devices must be attached to at least 16 ounces of weight and at least 60 ft of line.
- Recreational and commercial fishermen are required to use [dehooking tools](#) when fishing for snapper grouper species.
- The use of non-offset, non-stainless steel [circle hooks](#) is required for all species in the snapper grouper complex when using hook-and-line gear with natural baits in waters north of 28 degrees N. latitude.
- Non-stainless steel hooks are required when using hook-and-line gear with natural baits when fishing for snapper and grouper species south of 28 degrees N. latitude.

## Know Before You Go!

Download the **FREE Fish Rules App** for federal regulations in the South Atlantic!



## Aggregate Grouper Bag Limit

Three (3) groupers per person/day includes:

Species:	Additional Notes:
Gag grouper Black grouper	Maximum of 1 gag or black grouper (BUT NOT BOTH) per person per day
Snowy grouper	Snowy grouper limited to 1 per VESSEL per day (Season is May through August only; closed September through April)
Golden Tilefish	Maximum of 1 golden tilefish per person per day
Blueline Tilefish	Maximum of 3 blueline tilefish per person per day (Season is May through August only; closed September through April)
Misty, Red, Scamp, Yellowedge, Yellowfin, Yellowmouth, Sand Tilefish, Coney, Graysby, Red Hind, and Rock Hind	All included in Aggregate Grouper Bag Limit under the 3 per person per day limit.

## Aggregate Snapper Bag Limit

Ten (10) snapper per person/day

\*includes blackfin, cubera, gray, lane, mutton, queen, silk, & yellowtail

- Mutton Snapper:** included in the 10 snapper aggregate but you may only retain 5 mutton snappers per person per day
- Cubera Snapper Regulations:**
  - Fish  $\geq$  30-inches Total Length (TL) = Maximum of 2 **cubera** per person (not to exceed 2 per/vessel) off Florida. These are not included in the 10 snapper bag limit.
  - Fish  $<$  30" TL = Included in the 10 fish bag limit

## Additional Regulations for Specific Snapper Grouper Species

In addition to the aggregate snapper bag limits, fishermen may retain:

Species:	Bag Limit:
Greater Amberjack	1 per person/day (In April, for-hire limited to 1/person/day or 1/person/trip, )
Hogfish	1/person/day, E. FL & FL Keys ; 2/person/day in NC, SC, GA
Red Porgy	3 per person/day OR 3 per person/trip, whichever is more restrictive
Vermilion Snapper	5 per person/day

## Other Snapper Grouper Complex Species

20 Fish Aggregate Bag Limit

There is an aggregate bag limit of 20 fish per person inclusive of the following species: whitebone porgy, jolthead porgy, knobbed porgy, saucereye porgy, scup, gray triggerfish, bar jack, almaco jack, banded rudderfish, lesser amberjack, white grunt, margate, sailor's choice, Atlantic spadefish.

Within the aggregate bag limit, an angler may retain 10 fish of any one species.

## Summary of Recreational Regulations - Commonly Caught South Atlantic Snapper Grouper Species

Species - Common Name	Size Limit	Harvest Status/Bag Limits/ Other Regulations
Black Grouper*	24-in TL	CLOSED; Included in 3 Grouper Aggregate bag limit with 1 gag or black (not both) per person/day
Black Sea Bass	13-in TL	OPEN; 7 fish/person/day; Fishing year runs from April 1 - March 31 annually
Cubera Snapper	12-in TL	OPEN; 2 per person (not to exceed 2 per vessel) for fish 30" TL or larger off East Florida; Fish < 30" TL included in 10 Snapper Aggregate bag limit
Gag*	24-in TL	CLOSED; Included in 3 Grouper Aggregate bag limit with 1 gag or black (not both) per person/day
Gray Snapper (Mangrove)	12-in TL	OPEN; Included in 10 Snapper Aggregate bag limit
Gray Triggerfish	12-in FL	OPEN; Included in 20 Fish Aggregate Bag Limit
Greater Amberjack	28-in FL (no coring)	OPEN; 1 per person/day; (In April, for-hire/charter vessels limited to 1 per person/day or 1 per person/trip.);
Hogfish	16-in FL ( <i>E. FL &amp; FL Keys</i> ) 17-in FL ( <i>NC, SC, GA</i> )	CLOSED in E. FL and Florida Keys, 1 fish/person/day in E. FL (Seasonal Closure November 1 - April 30)  OPEN in NC, SC, GA, 2 fish/person/day in NC, SC, GA
Mutton Snapper	18-in TL	OPEN; 5 per person per day; Included in 10 Snapper Aggregate bag limit
Red Grouper*	20-in TL	CLOSED in GA & E. FL; Included in 3 Grouper Aggregate bag limit CLOSED in NC & SC; Included in 3 Grouper Aggregate bag limit
Red Porgy	14-in TL	OPEN; 3 per person/day OR 3 per person/trip, whichever is more restrictive
Red Snapper	No minimum size	CLOSED; 1 per person/day
Scamp*	20-in TL	CLOSED; Included in 3 Grouper Aggregate bag limit
Snowy Grouper	None	CLOSED; Included in the 3 Grouper Aggregate bag limit with a 1 fish/VESSEL/day limit (Seasonal closure Sept 1 - April 30)
Tilefish, Blueline	None	CLOSED (Seasonal closure Sept 1- Apr 30 annually); Included in the 3 Grouper Aggregate bag limit with a 3 fish/person/day limit
Tilefish, Golden	None	OPEN; Included in the 3 Grouper Aggregate bag limit with a 1 fish/person/day limit
Vermilion Snapper	12-in TL	OPEN; 5 fish/person/day
Yellowedge Grouper	None	OPEN; Included in the 3 Grouper Aggregate bag limit
Yellowfin Grouper*	20-in TL	CLOSED ;Included in 3 Grouper Aggregate bag limit
Yellowmouth Grouper*	20-in TL	CLOSED; Included in 3 Grouper Aggregate bag limit
Yellowtail Snapper	12-in TL	OPEN; Included in 10 Snapper Aggregate bag limit

\*Indicates species included in the Annual Shallow-water Grouper Spawning Season Closure January 1 through April 30, except for red grouper in NC & SC, which will remain closed through May 31.

### The following species are closed to possession or harvest:

Goliath Grouper

Nassau Grouper

Speckled Hind

Warsaw Grouper

**Sea Turtle Release Gear Requirements:** For-hire vessels fishing for snapper grouper species and possessing a federal for-hire permit must have onboard NMFS approved sea turtle release gear and follow release protocols. **For more information, call 727-824-5312 or visit, [http://sero.nmfs.noaa.gov/sustainable\\_fisheries/gulf\\_sa/turtle\\_sawfish\\_release/index.html](http://sero.nmfs.noaa.gov/sustainable_fisheries/gulf_sa/turtle_sawfish_release/index.html)**

**Quota monitoring information for the recreational annual catch limits is available from NOAA Fisheries: [http://sero.nmfs.noaa.gov/sustainable\\_fisheries/acl\\_monitoring/recreational\\_sa/index.html](http://sero.nmfs.noaa.gov/sustainable_fisheries/acl_monitoring/recreational_sa/index.html)**