

# STEWARDSHIP SHORT: Fish the Coast



## Take Action

**Know the Fishing Regulations**

**Practice Sustainable Fishing**

**Follow Best Practices**

**Get Involved**

## Explore

### Georgia Outdoor Map

[www.georgiaoutdoormap.com](http://www.georgiaoutdoormap.com)

### Sapelo Island WMA

[georgiawildlife.com/sapelo-island-wma](http://georgiawildlife.com/sapelo-island-wma)

### Gray's Reef National Marine Sanctuary

[graysreef.noaa.gov](http://graysreef.noaa.gov)

## Connect

### Georgia Department of Natural Resources

<https://gadnr.org>

### Coastal Conservation Association

[www.joincca.org](http://www.joincca.org)

### Clean Coast

[www.cleancoast.org](http://www.cleancoast.org)

### South Atlantic Fishery Management Council

[safmc.net/citizen-science-initiative/](http://safmc.net/citizen-science-initiative/)

### Georgia Rivers Network

<https://www.garivers.org>

*The Georgia coast is abundant in a variety of seafood. If you follow regulations and respect the environment, fishing on the coast can be a fun and rewarding experience!*

## Action 1 | KNOW THE FISHING REGULATIONS

Fishing regulations are established to help protect and conserve marine resources for future generations. Ensure you are fishing legally by staying up to date on state and federal requirements.

- Purchase a state recreational fishing license to fish, shrimp, crab, or harvest oysters and clams. Not only are fishing licenses required by law, but a portion of the license sales goes towards fish habitat conservation efforts. Licenses can be purchased at most sporting goods stores or bait and tackle shops as well as online at [www.gooutdoorsgeorgia.com](http://www.gooutdoorsgeorgia.com).
- Acquire a free and mandatory saltwater information permit, or SIP card, at [coastalgadnr.org/SIPPermit](http://coastalgadnr.org/SIPPermit).
- Learn how to properly measure a fish. Know the current size and possession limits for each species. This information is available in the free DNR sportfish regulations booklet, which you can download at [gadnr.org](http://gadnr.org). Paper copies are also available at coastal bait shops or the UGA Aquarium.
- If you plan to eat your catch, consult safe seafood consumption guidelines at [epd.georgia.gov/fish-consumption-guidelines](http://epd.georgia.gov/fish-consumption-guidelines).

## Action 2 | PRACTICE SUSTAINABLE FISHING

- Use native bait to avoid introducing non-native and potentially invasive species.
- Check crab traps every 24 hours and install a bycatch reduction device on your trap to prevent terrapin drownings.
- It is required by law to install cull rings on your crab trap. These are circular openings which allow crabs smaller than regulation size to escape from the trap.
- Don't cast your line if a sea turtle or marine mammal is in the area. Give them at least 50 yards of space.
- If you do hook a sea turtle, pull it in with a net and immediately contact GA DNR at 1-800-2-SAVEME. Do not try to remove the hook yourself. If you cannot reach the response team and are unable to bring the turtle to shore, cut the line as short as possible before releasing the turtle.
- Dispose of monofilament line properly. Fishing line that isn't properly discarded can remain in the environment for hundreds of years and entangle wildlife.





## Action 3 | FOLLOW BEST HANDLING PRACTICES

Reduce your impact on wild fish populations during catch and release fishing by applying best handling practices that minimize injury and mortality among released fish. Learn more at [www.catchandrelease.org](http://www.catchandrelease.org)

- Circle hooks have the lowest risk of injury and mortality during catch and release.
- Use a dehooking device to reduce handling time. If possible, dehook fish in the water.
- If you must bring a fish onboard, use a knotless rubber landing net, support the animal's body horizontally, use wet hands and avoid lifting the fish by the jaw.

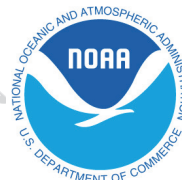
## Action 4 | GET INVOLVED

Fisheries scientists strive to promote and manage sustainable fish populations. Find out how you can get involved to become a steward within the angler community.

- Participate in fishing-related citizen science like the Marine Sportfish Carcass Recovery Program or the Cooperative Angler Tagging Program.
- Get involved with conservation efforts impacting your favorite waterway.



Marine Extension and  
Georgia Sea Grant  
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This Stewardship Short was prepared by Marine Extension and Georgia Sea Grant under grant award #NA17NOS4190164 to the Georgia Department of Natural Resources from the office for Coastal Management, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. The Statements, findings, conclusions and recommendations are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of DNR, OCM or NOAA.

## Fish the Coast References

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