

of Interstate 95 and in the Tar River Reservoir (Nash Co.) **except in waters in and west of Haywood, Buncombe and Rutherford counties where it is unlawful to possess, transport or release live White Perch.**

Possession and Use of Game Fish

1. It is unlawful to take, in any one day, more than the daily creel limit of any inland game fish having a specified creel limit.
2. It is unlawful to possess more than the daily creel limit while fishing, boating or afield; or to possess at any place more than three days' creel limit.
3. It is unlawful to possess fish whose size, creel or season restrictions are not in compliance with the regulations on the waters being fished.
4. It is unlawful, while fishing, to change the appearance of fish subject to size limits or daily creel limits or remove the head and/or tail from fish that are regulated by a size limit so that they may not be measured and/or identified.
5. It is unlawful to destroy unnecessarily any inland game fish

taken from public fishing waters.

6. Inland game fish may be used as bait if they are legally taken and are in agreement with the size and creel limits of the waters being fished and other regulations.

Seasons There are no closed seasons on inland game fishes with the following exceptions:

1. In Hatchery Supported Trout Waters, where the season for all fishes is closed and fishing is prohibited from March 1–April 1, 2017. This closed season for fishing does not apply to power reservoirs or municipal water supply reservoirs.
2. On U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service National Wildlife Refuges, where federal regulations apply. See pages 44–46 for a list of refuges and contact information.
3. On the Roanoke River, where the striped bass season is closed from May 1–end of February from the Roanoke Rapids Dam downstream to the mouth of the river at Albemarle Sound, unless changed by proclamation of the Executive Director, Wildlife Resources Commission.

BASS IDENTIFICATION CHART	MORONE IDENTIFICATION CHART
<p style="text-align: center;">Largemouth Bass <i>Found statewide</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">No patch of teeth on tongue*</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">White Bass</p> <p style="text-align: center;">One patch of teeth on tongue</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Spotted Bass <i>Found west of I-77 and in the Cape Fear River Basin</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">One patch of teeth on tongue*</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Striped Bass</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Two patches of teeth on tongue</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Smallmouth Bass <i>Found west of I-77 and in the Uwharrie and Dan rivers</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">No patch of teeth on tongue</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Bodie Bass (striped bass hybrid)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Two patches of teeth on tongue</p>

*Largemouth bass X spotted bass hybrids may have a small patch of teeth on the tongue.

Additional information on these and other species can be found at ncwildlife.org/fishing

4. In the Central-Southern Striped Bass Management Area where it is unlawful to possess striped bass or Bodie bass (striped bass hybrid) from May 1 – Sept. 30.
5. In Cape Fear River and tributaries below Buckhorn Dam where possession of striped bass and Bodie bass (striped bass hybrid) is prohibited.
6. In Sutton Lake, where possession of largemouth bass is prohibited from Dec. 1 – March 31.
7. Fishing is prohibited from Feb. 15 – April 15 in the Linville River from the mouth, as marked at Lake James, upstream to the N.C. 126 bridge.
8. Seasons and size and creel limits for spotted sea trout, flounder, and red drum are the same as those recreational limits established by the Division of Marine Fisheries in adjacent joint and coastal fishing waters. For current limits, see portal.ncdenr.org/web/mf/recreational-fishing-size-and-bag-limits or call 252-726-7021 or 800-682-2632.

- Trotlines must be set parallel to the nearest shore in all public waters, where their use is authorized.
- Each trotline, set-hook and jug-hook shall have attached the user’s name and address or the user’s WRC customer number legibly inscribed.
- Each trotline shall be conspicuously marked at each end, and each set-hook shall be conspicuously marked at one end with a prominent flag or floating object.
- Metal cans and glass containers cannot be used as markers.
- The number of jug-hooks that may be fished is limited to 70 per boat.
- Trotlines, set-hooks and jug-hooks must be fished daily, and all fish must be removed daily.
- Trotlines, set-hooks and jug-hooks without bait or not properly labeled may be removed from the water by wildlife enforcement officers.
- Blue crabs may be taken recreationally with a single line with multiple baits without hooks (see restrictions under “Taking Nongame Fish, Crustaceans, and Mollusks for Bait or Personal Consumption” on page 29).

TROT LINES, SET-HOOKS AND JUG-HOOKS

- A trotline is a fishing device consisting of a horizontal common line having multiple hooks attached.
- A set-hook is a fishing device consisting of a single line having no more than three hooks that is attached at one end only to a stationary object.
- A jug-hook is a fishing device consisting of a single line having no more than three hooks that is attached at one end only to a float.
- Trotlines, set-hooks and jug-hooks may be fished under any license that authorizes basic fishing privileges.
- It is unlawful to use live bait with trotlines, set-hooks or jug-hooks.

Exceptions

- No trotlines, set-hooks or jug-hooks may be used in the impounded waters of Sandhills Game Land.
- No trotlines, set-hooks or jug-hooks may be used in Public Mountain Trout Waters, except impounded waters of power reservoirs and municipal water supply reservoirs open to the public for fishing.
- In Lake Waccamaw, it is unlawful to use trotlines, set-hooks or jug-hooks from May 1–Sept. 30.

REGULATIONS FOR WARMWATER GAME FISH

State waters are classified as: inland, joint and coastal (see “General Information” on page 16). These state waters are collectively referred to as public fishing waters. Certain fishes, including largemouth bass, crappie and mountain trout are designated inland game fish and under the jurisdiction of the Wildlife Resources Commission in all public waters; whereas, some species, including striped bass, white and yellow perch, flounder and red drum, are designated as inland game fish only in inland waters (see list on page 16).

LOCATION

SIZE LIMIT

DAILY CREEL LIMIT*

LOCATION	SIZE LIMIT	DAILY CREEL LIMIT*
Black bass (including largemouth, smallmouth and spotted)		
-All public waters except those listed below	14-inch minimum, except 2 may be less than 14 inches	5 in combination, including only 2 less than 14 inches
- Roanoke River downstream of Roanoke Rapids Dam - Currituck, Roanoke, Croatan, and Albemarle Sounds and all their tributaries - Chowan River and its tributaries (including the Meherrin River) - Yeopim River - Pasquotank River - Perquimans River - North River - Northwest River - Scuppernong River - Alligator River (including the Alligator/Pungo Canal east of the NC Hwy 264/45 bridge) - Lake Mattamuskeet and associated canals (Hyde Co.) - Pungo Lake (Washington and Hyde counties) - New Lake (Hyde Co.) - Lake Raleigh (Wake Co.)	14-inch minimum	5 in combination
- Sutton Lake (New Hanover Co.)	14-inch minimum <u>Dec. 1–March 31:</u> No bass may be possessed.	5 in combination <u>Dec. 1–March 31:</u> No bass may be possessed.
- Buckhorn Reservoir (Wilson and Nash counties) - Cane Creek Lake (Union Co.)	16-inch minimum	5 in combination
- Lake Thom-A-Lex (Davidson Co.)	18-inch minimum	5 in combination
- Shearon Harris Reservoir - Lake Hampton (Yadkin County)	14-inch minimum, except that 2 may be less than 14 inches and no bass between 16–20 inches may be possessed	5 in combination, including only 2 less than 14 inches

*Please note: “In combination” means the total number for all species combined.