

# Recreational Sea Fishing



## GUIDE • 2024-25



*1 November 2024 - 31 October 2025*

# Minister's Message



The Tasmanian Government continues to improve recreational sea fishing opportunities for Tasmanians.

The Better Fishing Grants program continues to fund improved recreational sea fishing facilities around the State, from new fishing pontoons to weather buoys that provide fishers with real-time weather information. A further \$1 million in funding has been provided to continue this important grant program.

The Government is delivering on its commitment to develop harvest strategies, with work underway on an Abalone Harvest Strategy and Rock Lobster Harvest Strategy. I encourage you to have your say as they are developed, either directly or through your certified recreational fishing body, TARFish.

The recovery of Tasmania's favourite recreational fish species, sand flathead, remains a priority.

This Government's \$900,000 contribution underpins a \$3.3 million

FRDC research program to support stock recovery. Our commitment to recovery is unwavering, as evidenced by the allocation of \$1.2 million for stock enhancement. This is a significant investment to support the recovery of this iconic fishery and I encourage all fishers to share a commitment to abide by the rules and bring back the fishery as soon as possible.

Unfortunately, Tasmania Police checks last summer reported significant compliance issues, particularly in the southeast, where stocks are most depleted. Consequently, I have made the decision to revise on-water possession limits in the D'Entrecasteaux Channel, Derwent River, Frederick Henry and Norfolk Bays and the Eastern Zone.

I will consider the effectiveness of compliance checks over the coming summer and determine whether more direct measures to safeguard stocks are necessary. These may include requiring all flathead species caught in the southeast to be landed unfileted, or potentially the full closure of the sand flathead fishery in this region until there is evidence of stock recovery.

It is incumbent on us all to do the right thing. Our sand flathead fishery is a precious shared resource, which we all want to see recover to be sustainable well into the future.

***In recognition of the deep history and culture of this Island, we would like to acknowledge and pay our respects to Tasmanian Aboriginal people; the past and present Custodians of Land and Sea Country.***

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# What's new this year?

## Gillnetting in Macquarie Harbour

As part of conservation actions to protect the endangered Maugean skate, recreational gillnetting is no longer permitted in Macquarie Harbour. It is the policy of the Government to phase out all recreational gillnetting statewide by 2030 (see page 36).

## Changes to rock lobster catch reporting procedures

Rock lobster catch reporting procedures have changed to increase the rate of reporting.

**You are now required to report your catch immediately after tail-marking your last lobster and before moving further than 250m away.** If you do not catch any rock lobster, you must make your report immediately after your last pot or ring has been hauled or after you have finished diving and before moving further than 250m away. See page 54 for more detail.

## On-water possession limits for sand flathead

There has been a minor change to sand flathead management which may affect fishers that move between zones, or fish overnight.

**An on-water possession limit equal to your daily bag limit now applies. This means that while on water, you cannot have more fish in your possession than the daily bag limit for the zone you are in.** For example, if you are fishing in the Eastern Zone but will be coming back to shore in the

D'Entrecasteaux Channel, you can only possess a maximum of 2 sand flathead per person.

The on-land possession limit, which applies to your home and anywhere else on land in Tasmania, remains unchanged (10 fish). Bag limits also remain unchanged.

**These changes aim to keep catch within the sustainable levels informed by scientific advice in the 2023 Scalefish Rules Review.**

## Squid spawning closure dates and areas

Squid spawning closure areas and dates have been set for the next 3 years. The north coast will be closed between 1 September and 31 October inclusive.

The East Coast calamari spawning closure area has been expanded. It now includes all waters from Lemon Rock south to Whale Head and is closed from 15 October to 14 November inclusive (see page 28).

## Upcoming opportunities to Have Your Say

The Scallop Rules will open for public consultation within the next 12 months and will include proposed changes to allow for scallop catch sharing. The draft Rock Lobster Harvest Strategy, which aims to provide holistic and transparent guidelines for the management of all sectors of the rock lobster fishery, will also be released for public consultation in 2025.

## What type of fishing needs a licence?

You need a licence for the following types of recreational sea fishing:

- abalone;
- rock lobster dive;\*
- rock lobster pot;\*
- rock lobster ring;\*
- scallop;
- graball net;
- mullet net;
- beach seine net; and
- set line (includes longline and dropline).

*\* It is a requirement of this licence that you report your fishing details and your catch.*

You don't need a licence for rod and line fishing in marine waters, but an Inland Fisheries Licence is required for any fishing in inland waters, including some river mouths and estuaries. See page 89.

## Licence Fees

From 1 November 2024 to 31 October 2025, the following costs apply:

### Standard Licence:

**\$65.45** – first licence (base fee of \$56.10 plus \$9.35 for first licence). Each additional licence type - **\$9.35**.

**Concession Licence:** Commonwealth Pension, DVA Concession, Government Seniors cardholders and persons under 16. Health Care cardholders are not eligible.

**\$37.40** – first licence (base fee of \$28.05 plus \$9.35 for first licence). Each additional licence type - **\$9.35**.

### Additional Licence:

**\$9.35** – add a licence type plus the cost of the new licence.

## Where do I buy or renew a licence?

Fishing licences are available from Service Tasmania or online at: **[fishing.tas.gov.au/licence](https://fishing.tas.gov.au/licence)**.

## When will my licence expire?

The recreational licensing year begins on 1 November each year. Licences are valid from the date of issue to 31 October.

## Age Restrictions

You must be at least 10 years old to hold a rock lobster, abalone, scallop, graball net, mullet net or set line licence.

## Check your licence online

To check your existing licences or your licence number go to: **[fishing.tas.gov.au/licence](https://fishing.tas.gov.au/licence)**.

## Aboriginal Fishers

Recreational fishing rules apply to both recreational and Aboriginal fishers. If you are an Aboriginal person engaged in an Aboriginal fishing activity, you do not have to hold a fishing licence, but you must follow all other fisheries rules, except:

- you are not required to report rock lobster catch (pg. 54),
- you are not required to use specific abalone tools (pg. 44), and
- you may take and possess limpets and elephant snails.

If you wish to engage in an Aboriginal fishing activity which is not permitted under fisheries rules you may apply for a permit.

### *Unique Identifying Code (UIC)*

If using pots, caufs, unattended rings, gillnets or set lines, you must mark and display a unique identifying code (UIC) on your gear. Further details about Aboriginal fishing and how to apply for a UIC are available at [fishing.tas.gov.au](http://fishing.tas.gov.au).

## Gear marking

### *Marker Buoys*

Marker buoys must be:

- at least 195 mm in diameter;
- marked in figures not less than 70mm high and 12 mm wide; and
- specifically designed as a buoy and float on the surface of the water.

Additional buoys may be used for visibility.









*A marker buoy with licence number*

### *Marking Your Gear*

You will be issued with a unique licence number that you can use in future years. Mark a gear code and this number on your buoy for:

- rock lobster pots, caufs and unattended rings (see pages 57 and 58);
- graball and mullet nets (page 35); and
- set lines (page 32).

Species	Season
<p>Rock lobster and giant crab (see map on page 50)</p> 	<p><b>Waters outside the East Coast Stock Rebuilding Zone (ECSRZ)</b> Open from 2 November 2024.</p> <p><b>East Coast Stock Rebuilding Zone</b> Open from 7 December 2024.</p> <p><b>Eastern Region (including ECSRZ)</b> Closed from 1 May 2025.</p> <p><b>Western Region (Females)</b> Closed from 1 May 2025.</p> <p><b>Western Region (Males)</b> Closed from 1 September 2025.</p>
<p>Scallops</p> 	<p>2025: Open from 12 April to 31 July inclusive. The D'Entrecasteaux Channel remains closed.</p>
<p>Squid / Calamari (see maps on page 28)</p> 	<p><b>South east</b> South of Lemon Rock to Whale Head (including Coles Bay and Great Oyster Bay). Closed from 15 October to 14 November inclusive in 2024, 2025 and 2026.</p> <p><b>North Coast</b> North of Cape Grim and Cape Naturaliste. Closed from 1 September to 31 October inclusive in 2024, 2025 and 2026.</p>
<p>Striped trumpeter</p> 	<p>Closed from 1 September to 31 October inclusive each year.</p>
<p>Banded morwong</p> 	<p>Closed from 1 March to 30 April inclusive each year.</p>
<p>Garfish</p> 	<p><b>Northern Waters</b> North of Cape Grim and Cape Naturaliste. 2025: Closed from 15 January to 14 February.</p> <p><b>Southern Waters (all other waters)</b> 2025: Closed from 15 November to 14 December.</p>

For changes to published fishing seasons see [fishing.tas.gov.au](https://fishing.tas.gov.au) or the *Fishing Tas* app.

# Get the **NEW** *Fishing Tas* app

- Fish ID guide to 150+ species
- Maps for wherever you fish
- Quick access to the latest rules

Use the app to  
**report your  
rock lobster  
catch**



Download today!



## Catch Limits Explained



### Bag Limit

The maximum number of a particular type of fish you can take in any one day.



### Possession Limit

The maximum number of a particular type of fish you as an individual fisher can have at any one time in Tasmania. Some possession limits apply to a specified area (e.g. on-water possession limits).



### Boat Limit

The maximum number of a particular type of fish that can be possessed in one boat on any one day. Personal daily bag and possession limits still apply.

### For example

Australian salmon



15



30






No boat limit

## Don't highgrade your catch




- Count and measure as you go to keep within catch limits.
- Highgrading your catch is not allowed. You can't bring **more than your daily bag limit** back to the boat or shore and sort them there (unless following rules for sharing catch when group fishing e.g. for rock lobster).
- Fish are regarded as **taken** and in your possession as soon as collected or caught.

Catch limits are a combined total for all species in a fish group.




# Bag, possession and size limits




Fish Group - Scalefish					Minimum Size
Baitfish (anchovy, sprat, sardine, hardyhead)		50	100	-	-
Barracouta		15	30	-	-
Boarfish, Longsnout		2	4	-	45 cm
Bream (marine waters)		5	10	-	25 cm
Cod		15	30	-	-
Elephantfish		2	4	-	-
Flathead, Sand*	D'Entrecasteaux Channel, Derwent River, Frederick Henry and Norfolk Bays	2	2	-	Legal size between 35-40 cm
	Eastern Zone	5	5	-	
	Northern/Western Zone	10	10	-	
	King and Flinders Islands	10	10	-	35 cm
	On land	-	10	-	-
Flathead, Tiger*		20	30	-	32 cm
*Combined limits apply for sand and tiger flathead		20	30		
Flathead, Bluespotted and Rock		5 (Only 1 over 60 cm)	10	-	40 cm
Flounder		15	30	-	25 cm
Garfish		15	30	-	25 cm
Gurnard and Ocean Perch		15	30	-	-
Kingfish, Yellowtail		5	10	-	45 cm
Leatherjacket		10	20	-	20 cm
Mackerel and Redbait		30	60	-	-
Morwong, Banded		2	4	-	Legal size between 36-46 cm

# Bag, possession and size limits

Fish Group - Scalefish				Minimum Size
Morwong, Jackass and Other	10	20	30 (jackass only)	25 cm
Mullet	15	30	-	25 cm
Pike, Longfin	15	30	-	-
Salmon, Atlantic (marine waters)	12	24	-	-
Salmon, Australian	15	30	-	20 cm
Snapper	5	10	-	30 cm
Snook	5	10	-	-
Squid - Southern Calamari	10	20	-	-
Squid - Goulds	15	30	-	-
Swordfish or Marlin	1	1	2	-
Tailor	5	10	-	-
Trevalla, Blue-eye	5	10	25	-
Trevally, Silver	10	20	-	20 cm
Trout (marine waters)	12	24	-	-
Trumpeter, Bastard	Eastern region	2	10	42 cm
	Western region	5	10	
Trumpeter, Striped	Eastern region	2	8	55 cm
	Western region	4	8	
Tuna, Bluefin, Yellowfin, Bigeye	2	2	4 (only 2 over 1.5m)	-
Tuna, Albacore	5	10	-	-
Tuna, Skipjack	10	20	-	-
Warehou, Blue and Silver	10	20	30 (blue only)	25 cm
Whiting, King George	5	10	-	35 cm
Whiting, Other	15	30	-	-
Wrasse	5	10	-	30 cm
Other fish not listed, except ornamental and protected species	5	10	-	-

# Bag, possession and size limits

Fish Group - Shark				Minimum Size
Shark, Mako and Blue	1	2	2	-
Shark, School and Gummy	2	2	see below*	75 cm or 45 cm headed & tailed
Sharks and Rays, Other, except elephantfish	2	4	see below*	-
* Shark boat limit (all species combined except elephantfish)			5	

Fish Group - Other				Minimum Size
Abalone	10	20	-	<b>Blacklip:</b> Arthur River east to Musselroe Point: <b>120mm</b> Other waters: <b>138mm</b> <b>Greenlip:</b> Montagu east to Bridport: <b>132mm</b> Other waters: <b>145mm</b>
Octopus	5	10	-	-
Rock lobster	Eastern Region	2	4	10
	Western Region	5	10	25
	Northern Bass Strait	2	4	10
	Mainland Tasmania, Flinders, Cape Barren and Bruny Islands including homes, shacks and vehicles	-	10	-
Scallops	50	50 (on water) 100 (on land)	-	Queen and commercial: 100mm, doughboy: 80mm  male: 140 mm female: 150 mm
Giant Crab	1	1	-	
Inshore Crabs	15	30	-	-
Prawns	50	100	-	-
Bait Invertebrates (soldier crabs, burrowing shrimp, marine worms)	50	100	-	-

## How to Report Illegal Fishing

Fishwatch is a 24-hour hotline to Tasmania Police for reporting illegal fishing activities. Help combat illegal fishing by reporting:

- The time and location of the offence;
- Fishing gear used, including licence or ID numbers;
- Car registration numbers and boat names and descriptions; and
- Names or descriptions of persons involved.

Information can be given anonymously.



## Buying or Selling Recreational Fish is Illegal

You are not allowed to sell, buy, barter or raffle recreationally caught fish. Both the seller and purchaser are liable for prosecution and heavy fines may apply. Offenders may face confiscation of boats and fishing gear and be prevented from holding a fishing licence in the future.

## Can I give fish away?

If you give fish away, make sure the receiver understands the possession limits for that species. Proof of purchase is required if you have fish in excess of the possession limit.

## Important

Only call Fishwatch if you are reporting illegal fishing. For other enquiries (including lost, stolen or irretrievable gear) call **1300 720 647**.



# Do you have a great idea for **improving fishing facilities** in your local area?



*See what could be funded at your favourite fishing spot*  
[fishing.tas.gov.au/better-fishing-grants](http://fishing.tas.gov.au/better-fishing-grants)

