



## FWC Division of Marine Fisheries Management

Contact for more info:  
850-487-0554 or  
[marine@myfwc.com](mailto:marine@myfwc.com)

Visit Hot Sheet [online!](#)

# HOT SHEET – SEPTEMBER 2013

(Valid through September 30, 2013)

### Issues covered in this posting:

[Commission Meeting](#), [Snook](#), [License-Free Fishing](#), [Bay Scallop](#), [Vermilion Snapper](#), [Venting Tools](#), [Season Updates](#), [Events](#)

---

### Issue: COMMISSION MEETING

#### Action: Marine Fisheries items Sept. 5 in Pensacola

**Information:** Marine Fisheries management items will be discussed by the Commission Sept. 5 in Pensacola.

#### Topics being discussed include:

- Adding 4 license-free fishing days to the calendar – consent agenda
- Enhancing the definition of snagging as it applies to tarpon and prohibiting the use and possession of gear rigged with a weight attached to the bottom of the hook while fishing in Boca Grande Pass. – final public hearing
- Eliminating the February-through-March recreational closed season for several species of grouper in Gulf of Mexico state waters – federal consistency measure
- Eliminating the Nov. 1 through March 31 recreational closed season for vermilion snapper in Atlantic state waters – federal consistency measure
- Clarify blue runner regulations in state waters and extend those regulations into federal waters – draft rule

Links for more information:

[Commission Agenda](#) [MyFWC.com]

[Back to top](#)

---

### Issue: SNOOK

#### Action: The recreational harvest season for Florida's premier game fish, snook, opens Sept. 1 statewide

**Information:** The FWC encourages anglers to use moderation when determining whether or not to take a snook home. Gulf snook populations were negatively impacted by a 2010 cold kill. Gulf snook numbers currently exceed FWC's management goals but are still rebuilding to pre-cold-kill levels, which is one of the reasons why it is important to handle fish with care in this region and use moderation when determining whether or not to harvest one.

Regular season closures designed to help protect the species during vulnerable times such as cold weather begin Dec. 1 in Gulf state and federal waters, including Monroe County and Everglades National Park, and Dec. 15 in Atlantic state and federal waters, including Lake Okeechobee and the Kissimmee River.

Management measures such as the one-fish-per-person, per-day bag limit, annual closed seasons and size limits will help continue rebuilding snook populations on both coasts. Minimum and maximum size limits help protect juvenile and older breeding fish within the population. In the Atlantic, snook must be not less than 28 inches and not more than

## FWC Division of Marine Fisheries Management

32 inches total length, which is measured from the most forward point of the head with the mouth closed to the farthest tip of the tail with the tail compressed or squeezed while the fish is lying on its side. In the Gulf, they must be not less than 28 inches and not more than 33 inches total length.

A snook permit as well as a recreational saltwater license is required unless the angler is exempt from having a license. Snagging and spearing snook is prohibited.

It is illegal to buy or sell snook.

Anglers can report their catch on the Snook and Gamefish Foundation's website at [Snookfoundation.org](http://Snookfoundation.org) by clicking on the Angler Action link. Researchers also ask anglers who harvest the fish to save their filleted carcasses and provide them to the FWC by dropping them off at a [participating bait and tackle store](#). For the county-by-county list, go to [MyFWC.com/Research](http://MyFWC.com/Research) and click on "Saltwater," "Saltwater Fish," "Snook," and "Snook Anglers Asked to Help with Research."

If you see a snook fishery violation, please call the Wildlife Alert Program at 888-404-FWCC (3922).

Links for more information:

[Snook](#) [MyFWC.com]

[Back to top](#)

---

### Issue: LICENSE-FREE FISHING

#### Action: Sept. 1 is a saltwater license-free fishing day

**Information:** Florida residents and visitors can experience Florida's unique saltwater fishing opportunities first hand without being required to have a recreational saltwater fishing license on Sept. 1.

License-free fishing days, including freshwater days, were held earlier this year on April 13 and June 8 for freshwater and June 1 for saltwater. The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) will consider adding four additional license-free fishing days to the calendar at the Sept. 5 meeting in Pensacola. If approved, there will be two more saltwater and two more freshwater license-free fishing days before the end of 2013. All other regulations still apply.

All bag limits, seasons and size restrictions apply on these dates. For fishing tips, locations and rules, visit [MyFWC.com/Fishing](http://MyFWC.com/Fishing).

An annual license for residents can be purchased at 1-888-FISH-Florida or at [License.MyFWC.com](http://License.MyFWC.com). All fishing license fees are used to support Florida fish and wildlife conservation and help attain additional funding for Federal Aid in Sport Fish Restoration projects.

Links for more information:

[License Information](#) [MyFWC.com]

[Back to top](#)

---

# FWC Division of Marine Fisheries Management

## Issue: BAY SCALLOP

### Action: Season closes Sept. 25

**Information:** Bay scallop season closes Sept. 25 in state waters from the Pasco-Hernando county line to the west bank of the Mexico Beach Canal in Bay County.

Links for more information:

[Bay Scallop Information](#) [MyFWC.com]

[Back to top](#)

---

## Issue: VERMILION SNAPPER

### →Federal Gulf

### Action: 10 vermilion snapper bag limit set within 20-fish aggregate

**Information:** In Gulf federal waters, a 10-vermilion snapper bag limit within the 20-fish aggregate reef fish bag limit will go into effect Sept. 3.

In state waters of the Gulf, the bag limit for vermilion snapper is 10 per day, and this bag limit is not a part of the 10-snapper aggregate bag limit.

State waters in the Gulf are from shore to 9 nautical miles. Federal waters extend from 9 nautical miles out to about 200 nautical miles.

Links for more information:

[Gulf Council Bulletin](#) [MyFWC.com]

[Back to top](#)

---

## Issue: VENTING TOOLS

### →Federal Gulf

### Action: Venting tool requirement eliminated Sept. 3

**Information:** In Gulf federal waters, the requirement to use venting tools when fishing for reef fish will be eliminated starting Sept. 3.

Venting tools are still required in state waters of the Gulf when fishing for reef fish. The FWC will consider consistency for Gulf state waters by removing the requirement to use venting tools at a future Commission meeting.

State waters in the Gulf are from shore to 9 nautical miles. Federal waters extend from 9 nautical miles out to about 200 nautical miles.

Links for more information:

[Gulf Council Bulletin](#) [MyFWC.com]

[Back to top](#)

---

## Issue: SEASON UPDATES

### Action: Upcoming recreational season openings and closures for September-October

**Information:** The following species have upcoming season openings/closures:

# FWC Division of Marine Fisheries Management

(May not include all harvest openings/closures. View [regulations online at MyFWC.com](#) for more.)

Sept. 1 – Snook (Atlantic and Gulf) opens

Sept. 25 – Bay Scallop closes

Oct. 15 – Stone Crab opens

Links for more information:

[FWC Snook](#) [MyFWC.com]

[FWC Bay Scallops](#) [MyFWC.com]

[FWC Stone Crab](#) [MyFWC.com]

[FWC Recreational Regulations](#) [MyFWC.com]

[Back to top](#)

---

## SEPTEMBER-OCTOBER 2013 EVENTS

[Sept. 5-6: FWC Commission Meeting – Pensacola](#)

[Sept. 14-15: Florida Sportsman Expo – Tampa](#)

[Sept. 28: FWC Wildlife Alert Run Wild 5K – Tallahassee](#)

[Oct. 12-13: Florida Sportsman Expo – West Palm Beach](#)

[Oct. 22-24: FWC Lionfish Summit – Cocoa Beach](#)

[Back to top](#)