



# *Fishing Post*

*Atlanta Salt Water Sportsman's Club*

*April 2008*

## **FWC Approves New Gulf Red Snapper and Reef Fish Gear Regulations**

The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) on Thursday approved changes to management rules for red snapper harvested in Gulf of Mexico state waters. The FWC also approved new rules that will require all commercial and recreational anglers fishing for any Gulf reef fish species to use circle hooks, de-hooking devices and venting tools.



These new rules are similar to recently implemented red snapper regulations in Gulf federal waters that are intended to end over-fishing of red snapper in the Gulf and reduce release mortality of Gulf reef fish.

The new rules reduce the daily recreational bag limit for red snapper from four fish to two fish per person and establish a zero daily bag limit for captains and crew of for-hire vessels in all Gulf waters off Florida's coast.

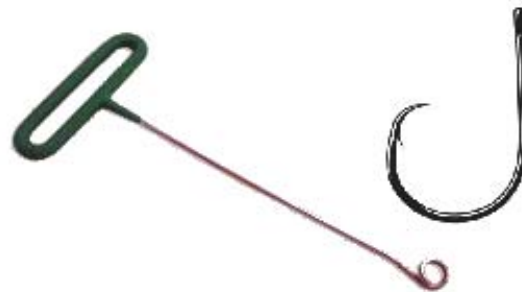
No change will be made to the April 15 through Oct. 31 Gulf recreational red snapper harvest season in state waters. However, new federal rules establish a June 1 through Sept. 30 recreational harvest season in Gulf federal waters adjacent to Florida waters.

Other new FWC rules reduce the minimum size for commercially harvested red snapper in the Gulf and for imported red snapper from 15 to 13 inches total length, and reduce the daily commercial bag and trip limit for red snapper harvested in Gulf state waters off Florida from four fish to two fish daily per person.

The new rules also require fishers on all vessels in the Gulf reef fish fishery to possess and use certain gear, including non-stainless steel circle hooks that must be possessed aboard a vessel and used to harvest any Gulf reef fish when natural baits are used. A circle hook is a fishing hook designed and manufactured so that the point is turned perpendicularly back

to the shank to form a generally circular or oval shape.

At least one de-hooking device is required as well and must be used to remove hooks embedded in Gulf reef fish with minimum damage. The de-hooking device must be constructed to allow the hook to be secured and the barb shielded without re-engaging during the removal process. It must be blunt and all edges rounded, and it must be of a size appropriate to secure the range of hook sizes and styles used in the Gulf reef fish fishery. At least one venting tool is also required and must be used to deflate the swim bladders of Gulf reef fish to help release the fish with minimum damage. This tool must be a sharpened, hollow instrument, such as a hypodermic syringe with the plunger removed or a 16-gauge needle fixed to a hollow wooden dowel. A tool such as a knife or an ice-pick may



not be used. The venting tool must be inserted into the fish at a 45-degree angle approximately 1 to 2 inches from the base of the pectoral fin and be inserted just deep enough to release the gases so that the fish may be released with minimum damage.

"Today's action will help to improve Gulf red snapper populations while maintaining the sport fishing season that benefits several North Florida fishing communities," said FWC Chairman Rodney Barreto. FWC's new red snapper rules take effect on April 1. The rules requiring circle hooks, de-hooking devices and venting tools for all reef fish species take effect on June 1.

There are also rumors circulating that snapper season may be further shortened (in federal waters) to end on August 5th - because FL and TX have elected not to have state regulations mirror the new federal regulations...no official word yet.

# *News Bites*



## **Don't Forget to Renew That HMS Permit!**

A Highly Migratory Species Permit is required by anyone fishing for Tuna, Billfish, Swordfish, or Sharks. These permits are available on-line at <https://hmspermits.noaa.gov/PermitList.asp> or via automated telephone system at **1-888-872-8862**. Regardless of purchase date, the permits are valid until the end of 2008. Edits/changes to existing permit information must be made at time of renewal or prior to May 31.

## **A Great Big *THANK YOU* To Our Volunteers**

Thanks to everyone who contributed their energy and valuable time to represent the club at the recent events (Atlanta Boat Show, Big Game Dinner, and Bass Pro Spring Classic). Our club depends on member volunteers and you folks really came through for us - Thank You for the support and for caring enough to make a difference. Your efforts are definitely appreciated!

## **From the Helm to the Cockpit**

*As a "not for profit organization" ASWSC holds tournaments, meetings and events that produce income. This income is used to not only expand the club, but is used to support conservation and research to protect our oceans for the future.*

*The conservation organizations we support and those that support ASWSC each have a part in this effort. The knowledge of what each of these organizations does individually, not only supports Sportfishing, but the environment and fisheries worldwide. Our part in these efforts is mostly economic and in the education of our members.*

*If you review the ASWSC history document and the goals of the club you will find that the purpose Leon Brown, founder, had in mind was to educate and work together as a group. This educational process reaches in many directions as witnessed by the diversity of our speakers at meetings, tournaments and events. Over the years, many of our members have gained tremendous knowledge. Some have attained professional levels and become extremely accomplished in the sport. This says a lot about what ASWSC does and continues to pursue.*

*"Neophyte, A seeker after knowledge",*

**Tight Lines,  
Scott Rowe, President  
Atlanta Saltwater Sportsman's Club**

# Memories from 2007



# 2007 Memories (cont.)



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*The International Game Fish Association is a not-for-profit organization committed to the conservation of game fish and the promotion of responsible, ethical angling practices through science, education, rule making and record keeping.*

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## Upcoming Events, Reminders and Deadlines

**NEXT MEETING: Tuesday, April 8th / 7PM**

**Winfield Hall - 3890 Satellite Blvd., Duluth, GA - 770.495.8088**

**Scheduled Speaker: Lanny Deal of Mann's Bait Company**

### 2008 MEMBERSHIP DUES

We still have a few stragglers. If you haven't renewed your membership for 2008, stop putting it off. Remember, paid membership is also required to participate in the new *Angler of the Year* program. Please send in your Membership Application and payment to:

**ASWSC, P.O. Box 29551, Atlanta, GA 30359-0551**

### SPONSORS & SPEAKERS

We're still looking for sponsors and speakers for 2008. If you know of an organization that might be a good candidate for sponsorship or someone who could potentially provide an informative or entertaining presentation to the club membership, we want to know about it. If you are anxious about making a contact directly, please let Tom Adrien or Scott Rowe know, and they'll take it from there.

Contact Tom Adrien

Phone: 478-972-9188

Email: [theseasickness@yahoo.com](mailto:theseasickness@yahoo.com)

### VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR GUY HARVEY EVENT

Bass Pro was impressed enough with our recent participation at the Spring Classic event to invite us back for another event on June 1st at the Sugarloaf Parkway location. If you are not planning to attend the Keys Tournament (begins June 1), please volunteer to represent the club. It's also a great chance to meet Guy Harvey, who will be featured at the event.

### NEXT TOURNAMENT: Venice, LA

**April 9th - 12th, 2008**

Application and Tip Sheet Available on the Website

### UPCOMING TOURNAMENT: Apalachicola, FL

**May 8th - 10th, 2008**

Application and Tip Sheet Available on the Website

**ARE YOU IN THE LOOP?** *If you are not getting emails from the club, please be sure to send your current email address to [info@aswsc.org](mailto:info@aswsc.org). We'll add you to the mailing list so you can receive the latest information as quickly as possible.*

For latest club information check out [www.aswsc.org](http://www.aswsc.org)