

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Blue Crabs:

Q: What is the best time of year to catch blue crabs?

A: Generally the Fall and Spring are the best times for catching crabs.

Q: Where can I fish for blue crab?

A: Recreational license holders can catch crabs in all Mississippi coastal waters located south of Interstate-10. Commercial blue crab fishermen must stay south of the CSX railroad bridges. For a more detailed description of the areas open to crabbing please visit <http://www.dmr.ms.gov/images/regulations/title-22-part-04.pdf>.

Q: Is there a season on blue crabs?

A: No, crabbing is allowed year round with the exception of the winter crab sanctuary located southwest of Cat Island. The sanctuary is closed to all crabbing activities from January 1 to March 31 annually.

<http://dmr.ms.gov/images/fisheries/shrimp-crab/crab-map.jpg>

Q: Do I need a license to use drop nets?

A: No license is required to use drop nets. However, a recreational or commercial license is required to harvest blue crabs using crab traps.

Q: How many crab traps can a recreational crabber have?

A: Recreational license holders may have up to six traps per household.

Q: How do I properly identify my crab traps?

A: The float should have the recreational or commercial crab license number and vessel registration number if applicable. The inside of each trap should be tagged with the full name of the license holder.

Q: How many blue crabs can I keep?

A: There is no creel/bag limit on blue crabs. However, hard shell blue crabs must be at least 5 inches from the tip the lateral spine to the other. Soft shell blue crabs and peeler crabs have no size limit. No egg bearing crabs may be kept.

Q: Can I pick up a derelict crab traps?

A: No, it is unlawful to remove crab traps not licensed to you except during an official MDMR authorized clean-up event. For more details on Mississippi's Derelict Crab Trap Removal Program please visit <http://www.dmr.ms.gov/index.php/marine-fisheries/shrimp-a-crab/90-derelict-crab-trap-removal-program>.

Shrimp:

Q: Where can I find information about shrimp licenses?

A: Detailed information about shrimp licenses can be found by visiting <http://www.dmr.ms.gov/index.php/marine-fisheries/shrimp-a-crab/71-shrimp-license>.

Q: When does shrimp season open and close?

A: Shrimp season is officially opened when the MDMR has determined that the shrimp have reached the legal size of 68 shrimp per pound. Shrimp season annually closes north of the Intracoastal Waterway December 31 and south of the Intracoastal Waterway April 30. For more information on the opening and closing of shrimp season, call the MS Shrimp Hotline: 1-866-WE-TRAWL.

Q: Where can I go to purchase fresh shrimp directly from commercial shrimp boats?

A: Fresh Mississippi shrimp can be purchased from commercial fishermen at the Biloxi Small Craft Harbor, Ocean Springs Harbor, and Pass Christian Harbor.

Q: Do I need a license to catch shrimp using a cast net and can I use it in the bays?

A: No, a recreational shrimp license is **not** required to catch shrimp in a cast net; however a recreational fishing license is needed to retain any fish caught in the net. A cast net can be used in the bays located near Bay St. Louis, Biloxi, Gautier, and Ocean Springs (south of Interstate-10) to catch shrimp. Up to 50 pounds can be retained per person per day for personal consumption, only. The cast net cannot exceed twelve feet in diameter.

Q: When do I need to use TED's (turtle excluder devices)?

A: TED's must be used by recreational and commercial fishermen in all trawl nets that have mechanical assist (pulley, block and tackle, winch, etc.). For more information on TED's please visit the NOAA Fisheries Service Harvesting System Unit's TED webpage at: <http://www.sefsc.noaa.gov/labs/mississippi/ted/> or call the local NOAA office at 228-762-4591.

Q: What are the differences between a live bait shrimp license and a commercial shrimp license?

A: For details pertaining to live bait and commercial shrimp license regulations please visit (provide link to commercial/live bait comparison page)