

Shore-based Shark Fishing



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Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission

Shore-based Shark Fishing

- Florida's beaches are a popular fishing destination
- Shore-based shark fishing popular for decades
 - Catch-and-release oriented
 - Anglers often participate in research-related tagging programs
- Can occur from beaches, bridges, or piers
- Often occurs at night
- Participants: private anglers and shore-based guides



Statewide Shark Fishing Regulations

Recreational harvest regulations

- Bag/vessel limits: 1 shark/person with a maximum of 2 sharks/vessel
- Minimum size limit: 54 inches for several species
- Allowable gear: hook and line only
 - Use of natural bait prohibited when using treble hooks
- Sharks must be landed with head, tail, and fins attached
- Harvest prohibited for 27 shark species



Photo courtesy of Albert Kok

New Statewide Shark Fishing Regulations

- Required no-cost, annual SBSF permit
 - Mandatory for all SBSF anglers ages 16+
 - Online education prerequisite
- Shore anglers: prohibition on chumming from the beach and delaying release of prohibited sharks
- Shore- and vessel-based shark fishers required
 - Keep prohibited sharks in the water
 - Use non-stainless circle hooks
 - Possess/use appropriate cutters

Implemented to improve understanding of the shore-based shark fishery, maximize survival of released sharks, and address public safety concerns



Effective July 1, 2019



Education and Outreach

Permit-required education: available to everyone

- Includes info about shark fishing regulations, shark ID, and respectful/courteous behavior
- MyFWC.com/SharkCourse

Shark-Smart Fishing guidelines

- Address user conflicts and best practices

Developing protocol for reporting dead prohibited sharks



<https://myfwc.com/fishing/saltwater/recreational/sharks/>

Shark-Smart Fishing

Help released sharks survive.
Fish safe and Shark-Smart!



Shark survival: why it's important

Sharks are apex predators that play an important role in marine ecosystems. Releasing sharks in a way that increases their chance of survival is an important step toward achieving and maintaining healthy, sustainable shark populations.

Prohibited species: Know before you go!

- Many species of sharks are prohibited from harvest, possession, or landing in Florida.
- Prohibited species must be released immediately and unharmed.
- Prohibited species caught from the shore should be left in as much water as possible while maintaining the safety of the angler and those nearby.
- Do not bring prohibited species onto a fishing vessel, a pier or bridge or onto dry land beyond the surf zone.
- If you cannot safely and quickly remove the hook from the mouth, a bolt cutter may be used to cut the hook. If this method delays release or it becomes unsafe to do so, leave the hook in the shark and cut the leader as close to the hook as you can. Wire leaders can be cut with wire cutters.
- Treat unknown catches as a prohibited species and release them.

Negative shark encounters

Not every encounter with a shark is intentional or wanted. Sharks have been known to take fish off the line and even bite boat motors. These negative shark interactions are an unfortunate side effect of healthy and sustainable shark populations. While it may be unfavorable, the best way to avoid negative interactions with sharks is to move to another area and away from where shark activity is occurring.

Shark-Smart tackle

- Proper tackle is the first step in responsible catch-and-release shark fishing.
- Use non-stainless steel, non-offset circle hooks.
 - Less likely to hook fish in vital organs
 - Easier to remove
 - More likely to rust away
- Flatten or file down hook barbs.
- Use appropriate hook size for the shark targeted.
- Use heavy tackle, a minimum of 80-pound test.
- Tail-ropes are a commonly used gear that can be helpful in controlling the shark for a quick release.

Questions?

