High levels of mercury have been discovered in largemouth bass, bowfin and gar from certain water bodies in the South Region. The Department of Health has issued advisories recommending limited consumption of these species from the affected waters. For specific information, consult the Freshwater Sport Fishing Regulations Summary or visit the Department of Health’s fish advisory site at www.DOH.state.fl.us/FloridaFishAdvice.

Everglades cover photograph and photograph on page 22 courtesy of Tim Roettiger. Illustrations on pages 16-19 by Paul Thomas, FWC.
South Region
Popular fishing areas

Special regulations in effect for the water bodies below are shown in bold. Some Fish Management Areas (FMA) and Wildlife Management Areas (WMA) may have other specific regulations. Regulations are subject to change. Consult the current Florida Freshwater Fishing Regulations Summary (also available at MyFWC.com/Fishing) for up-to-date, statewide or regional daily bag and length limits.

Broward County

Everglades Water Conservation Area 2 — (see page 22) consists of 210 square miles of Everglades marsh connected with perimeter canals. Largemouth bass and panfishes such as bluegill, redear sunfish, oscar, and warmouth are abundant. Points of entry are a boat ramp at the Stub Canal access area off US 27 six miles north of the intersection of I-75 and US 27; and the Sawgrass Recreation Area on US 27, two miles north of Alligator Alley (SR 84, I-75). Under low water conditions, Area 2 offers excellent bass, bluegill and oscar fishing in the canals. For bass, try plastic worms during the day and topwater plugs or minnow imitations early in the morning or late in the afternoon. Shiners are the best live bait. Panfish “bed” during the warmer months and offer sport for fly-fishing anglers using floating and sinking flies or canepolers using crickets or red wigglers. Also abundant are catfish that can be taken by fishing chicken liver, prepared baits, or live worms on the bottom.

A daily bag limit of 5 black bass, only one of which may be 14 inches or longer, is in effect for this area.

Everglades Water Conservation Area 3 — (see page 22) covers 915 square miles of Everglades wetlands bordered by a canal system. The most sought after fish are largemouth bass, bluegill, redear sunfish, oscar, Mayan cichlid, and warmouth. The L-67A Canal in particular regularly posts Florida’s highest bass catch rates during low-water periods. Main access points are Everglades Holiday Park on US 27, six miles south of Alligator Alley (SR 84, I-75); and multiple ramps off US 27 and Tamiami Trail. Most of Area 3’s fishing in Broward County is limited to canals along Alligator Alley, US 27, the Miami Canal, Holiday Park and other systems. However, when water levels are high enough, marsh access trails off the L-67A Canal provide access to marsh areas for outboard powered boats. Try plastic worms, minnow imitations and crankbaits in the canals for bass; topwater lures can also be effective, especially during the early morning or evening. Live shiners provide the best bait. Panfish take live worms, crickets, and artificial lures such as small jigs and beetle spins. Fishable populations of peacock bass now exist in the major Broward County canals as far north as the Pompano Canal (C-14), including the North and South New River Canals. Butterfly peacock have been caught as far west as the L-67A Canal in Area 3; however, this area does not yield consistent catches, nor is it expected to in the near future. Most rock pits and ponds in eastern Broward County are connected to canals by culverts, so they also may contain butterfly peacock.

A daily bag limit of 5 black bass, only one of which may be 14 inches or longer, is in effect for this area.

Plantation Heritage Fish Management Area — (see page 26) take University Drive to Peters Road and turn east. Turn north on South Fig Tree Lane and the park will be on your immediate right. For park information, call (954) 791-1025. The lake is six acres in size and is characterized by a sand bottom and very clear water. The blue tint of the water is a harmless dye placed in the lake to reduce algae growth. Good shoreline access is available around most of the lake. Bluegill and redear sunfish are available and can be readily caught on live worms or crickets; effective lures include small jigs and
beetle spins. Channel catfish can exceed 12 pounds here and are stocked annually; they will bite well on chicken liver or commercial “stink baits.” Large-mouth bass are plentiful but small (<14”), and can be caught on small plastic worms, minnow imitations, crankbaits, or spinnerbaits.

Special fishing regulations:
- All largemouth bass must be released immediately.
- Channel catfish daily bag limit: 6.
- Panfish daily bag limit: 20.
- Bluegill and redear sunfish less than 8 inches in total length must be released immediately.

Major urban canal systems — several good boat ramps are located on Broward County canals that offer quality fishing for largemouth bass, butterfly peacock, bluegill, and redear sunfish. Anglers can also catch several exotic panfishes including Mayan cichlid, oscar, and spotted tilapia, which were illegally released and pose a threat to native species. These exotics provide excellent eating and there are no bag or size limit restrictions. Detailed fishing maps of some canals with directions to ramps can be found online at MyFWC.com/Fishing/pdf under “South Florida Peacock Bass Fishery Brochures.” Boat ramp locations can also be obtained from area tackle shop operators (tackle shop list available at MyFWC.com/Fishing/offices/cityfish/CITFISH1b.pdf). A good ramp providing access to the Pompano Canal (C-14) is located in Veterans Park at the intersection of University Drive and Southgate Boulevard. For bank angling, good access is available along the South New River Canal (C-11) bordering the north side of Griffin Road. Unfortunately, some vandalism occurs at boat ramps and care should be taken to secure and keep valuables out of sight while out fishing.

A daily bag limit of 5 black bass, only one of which may be 14 inches or longer, is in effect for this area.

Glades County

Lake Okeechobee — This 730-square mile lake is world famous for outstanding largemouth bass, crappie, bluegill, and redear sunfish angling. Numerous fish camps, parks with fishing piers, and boat ramps surround Florida’s largest lake. Unfortunately, excessive water levels, extreme turbidity, vegetation loss, and impacts of multiple hurricanes have severely depleted fish habitat and populations within the lake recently. These issues are still being addressed, and anglers should contact local marinas or tackle shops prior to planning a trip.

The following angling information is based on historical rather than present trends: Lake Okeechobee sport fish move from one season to another, and it is highly recommended that visitors hire a fishing guide with local knowledge of the lake for at least their first trip. The best times to try for large bass are during the late winter and early spring when the fish are on spawning beds in pickerelweed and peppergrass flats. Plastic worms, weedless spoons, and topwater lures all perform well for bass, while live shiners are the best natural bait. Winter is the traditional speckled perch (black crappie) season, but these fish can be taken at any time of the year with local knowledge of their whereabouts. It is important to keep moving to locate the schools where crappie congregate. The prime bait for “specks” is
a Missouri minnow, while small plastic or marabou jigs provide the best choices in lures. Bluegill and redbreast sunfish (shellcracker) fishing is usually best in the warmer months of late spring and often the shorelines of the lake’s canals are lined with bedding fish. Small beetle spins and jigs are usually the most productive lures. Flyfishing anglers will do well with small popping bugs, wet flies, and rubber spiders. The lake’s thriving catfish population can be tempted using chicken or beef liver, live worms, and commercial “stink baits.” Saltwater visitors such as snook, tarpon, and crevalle jack often venture into Lake Okeechobee. Current information, updated quarterly, is available from the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) web site at MyFWC.com/Fishing/forecast/sor.html. Anglers should also consult local tackle shops and fish camps. A map is available at the South Florida Water Management District (www.swfwmd.state.fl.us/) web site at MyFWC.com/Fishing/pdf/sfwmdmap.pdf. Access points within Glades County include Harney Pond Canal; Indian Prairie Canal; Buckhead Ridge Resort, SR 78W; Glades RV Park & Marina, 4380 Indian Hills Dr. SW; and Twin Palms Camp, SR 78W.

**Hendry County**

**Lake Okeechobee** — (see Glades County and page 24 for general information about this lake.) Hendry County access points to Lake Okeechobee include Scott Martin Angler’s Marina, 910 Okeechobee Blvd., Clewiston; Roland & Mary Ann Martin Marina, 920 East Delmonte, Clewiston; Jolly Roger Marina, US 27, Clewiston; and public launching ramps and city docks, also on Okeechobee Boulevard.

**Size and bag limit regulations for largemouth bass on Lake Okeechobee are subject to change. Consult the current Freshwater Fishing Regulations Summary for up-to-date information.**

**Miami-Dade County**

**Everglades Water Conservation Area 3** — (see Broward County and page 22 for general information about this area.) Miami-Dade County launching sites (ramps only) are located on US 41 west of Miami at the S-12C, S-12D and S-333 water management structures.

A daily bag limit of 5 black bass, only one of which may be 14 inches or longer, is in effect for this area.

**Tropical Park Fish Management Area** — (see page 26) Take SR 826 (Palmetto Expressway) to SW 40th Street (Bird Road). Head west and turn left immediately into the park. You can also take the Florida Turnpike to the SW 40th Street exit and travel east to Tropical Park. For park information, call (561) 966-6600. Tropical FMA is the northernmost of three lakes located within the park. It is characterized by clear water, shellrock bottom, and abundant native and exotic vegetation. The lake is 12 acres in size. Bluegill and redear sunfish are available and can be readily caught on live worms or crickets; effective lures include small jigs and beetle spins. Spotted tilapia are also available and can be taken on live worms and dough balls. Channel catfish can exceed 10 pounds here and are stocked annually; they will bite
well on chicken liver or commercial “stink baits.” Largemouth bass are plentiful with individuals close to nine pounds present. Bass can be taken on plastic worms, minnow imitations, crankbaits, or spinnerbaits; weedless lures are recommended.

Special fishing regulations:

- All largemouth bass must be released immediately.
- Channel catfish daily bag limit: 6.
- Panfish daily bag limit: 20.
- Bluegill and redear sunfish less than 8 inches in total length must be released immediately.

Major urban canal systems — some of the most popular peacock bass fishing canals (east of Krome Ave.) are Snapper Creek (C-2), Cutler Drain (C-100 series), Black Creek (C-1), Snake Creek (C-9), and the Tamiami Canal (C-4) including the eastern Airport Lakes (Blue Lagoon) area. In addition, many of the smaller lateral canals, rock pits and ponds located throughout eastern Miami-Dade County also contain good butterfly peacock populations. These sites can also provide good fishing for largemouth bass, bluegill, and redear sunfish. Anglers can catch several exotic panfishes as well including Mayan cichlid, oscar, and spotted tilapia, which were illegally released and pose a threat to native species. These exotics provide excellent eating, and there are no bag or size limit restrictions.

Directions to canals with detailed fishing maps can be found online at MyFWC.com/Fishing/pdf under “South Florida Peacock Bass Fishery Brochures.” Up-to-date fishing reports and boat ramp locations are also available from most area tackle shop operators (tackle shop list available at MyFWC.com/Fishing/offices/cityfish/CITFISH1b.pdf).

A boat ramp is located on Snake Creek, just north of the intersection of US 441 and Ives Dairy Rd. Another good boat ramp providing access to the Airport Lakes portion of Tamiami Canal is located in Antonio Maceo Park just north of NW 7th St. at NW 51st Ave. All canals listed above have paved boat ramps except C-100. Unfortunately, some vandalism occurs at boat ramps and care should be taken to secure and keep valuables out of sight while out fishing.

A daily bag limit of 5 black bass, only one of which may be 14 inches or longer, is in effect for this area. A daily bag limit of 2 butterfly peacock, only one of which may be 17 inches or longer, also applies.

Okeechobee County

Lake Okeechobee — (see Glades County and page 24 for general information about this lake.) Okeechobee County access to Lake Okeechobee includes Okee-Tantie Campground and Marina, 10430 SR 78W, 4 ½ miles west of US 441; Taylor Creek Resort RV Park, US 441 and Taylor Creek; The Fijian RV Park, 6500 US 441; O’Kissimmee, S at Kissimmee River; Butch’s Backyard Bar (previously Butch’s Fish Camp), US 441, one mile south of Taylor Creek Bridge; and Zachary Taylor RV Resort, 2995 US 441SE, Okeechobee.

Size and bag limit regulations for largemouth bass on Lake Okeechobee are subject to change. Consult the current Freshwater Fishing Regulations Summary for up-to-date information.

Palm Beach County

Lake Okeechobee — (See Glades County and page 24 for general information about this lake.) Palm Beach County access points to Lake Okeechobee include Slim’s Fish Camp on Torry Island, SR 717, Belle Glade; Belle Glade Campground, adjacent to Slim’s Fish Camp on Torry Island; and Pahokee Harbor Pier at Pahokee State Park.

Size and bag limit regulations for largemouth bass on Lake Okeechobee are subject to change. Consult the current Freshwater Fishing Regulations Summary for up-to-date information.

Everglades Water Conservation Area 1 — a 221-square mile portion of the Everglades managed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (www.fws.gov/). The area provides good fishing for largemouth bass, bluegill, redear sunfish, warmouth and catfish. Access is provided at the Arthur R. Marshall Loxahatchee National Wildlife Refuge (561-734-8303) off US 441
between Boynton Beach Blvd. (SR 804) and Atlantic Ave. (SR 806); Loxahatchee Recreation Area, SR 827 west of US 441 near the Palm Beach/Broward County line; and at 20-Mile Bend off Southern Blvd. (SR 80) 11.5 miles west of US 441 (SR 7), on 20 Mile Bend Boat Ramp Rd. Generally, Conservation Area 1 fishing is limited to the canal system. Bass will take plastic worms, crankbaits, spinnerbaits, and topwater lures with early spring the best time of year. Bluegill, redear sunfish, and warmouth can be caught on baits such as live worms and crickets and artificial baits including small jigs, beetle spins, and flyrod popping bugs and wet flies. Large catfish can be caught by fishing live worms, chicken liver, and “stink baits” on the bottom. A daily bag limit of 5 black bass, only one of which may be 14 inches or longer, is in effect for this area.

**Okeeheelee Fish Management Area** — (see page 26) take I-95 to Forest Hill Boulevard and head west. The park entrance is between Jog Road and the Turnpike overpass on the north side of Forest Hill Blvd. For information about boat rentals, call (561) 304-1344. For park information, call (561) 966-6600. The lake is 157 acres in size. It is characterized by clear water, a sand bottom, and plenty of native and some exotic vegetation. A smaller 11-acre section, separated from the remainder of the lake by a bridge, is the focus of fish stockings and most other intensive management activities. However, fishing is available throughout the entire lake. A concrete boat ramp in excellent condition allows launching of non-gas powered boats. Boat rentals and a fishing pier are also available. Shoreline access is excellent. Largemouth bass in this system are plentiful but small (less than 12” on average); fish small plastic worms, minnow imitations, or topwater lures for this species. Live shiners are the best bait, but set the hook quickly to avoid deeply hooking fish. Bluegill, redear sunfish and Mayan cichlid can be caught on live worms or crickets. Channel catfish are stocked annually and have been documented up to five pounds in the lake with much larger individuals reported by anglers. Try chicken liver or “stink baits” fished on the bottom for catfish.

**Special fishing regulations:**
- All largemouth bass must be released immediately.
- Channel catfish daily bag limit: 6.
- Panfish daily bag limit: 20.
- Bluegill and redear sunfish less than 8 inches in total length must be released immediately.

**Caloosa Fish Management Area** — (see page 26) exit I-95 at Atlantic Ave. and proceed west. Turn north on Congress Ave.; the park entrance will be on the right. For park information, call (561) 966-6600. Caloosa lake is four acres in size and is characterized by a sandy bottom and consistently high turbidity. Shoreline vegetation consists primarily of submerged pondweed around most of the lake and, to a lesser degree, elagalass. Shoreline access is excellent around nearly the entire lake. There are few bass in the system. Spotted tilapia can be taken on live worms and dough balls, while bluegill, redear sunfish, and Mayan cichlid can be caught on those baits as well as live crickets. Channel catfish are present up to five pounds in size. They are stocked annually and will take bottom-fished chicken liver, commercial “stink baits,” and live worms.

**Special fishing regulations:**
- All largemouth bass must be released immediately.
- Channel catfish daily bag limit: 6.
- Panfish daily bag limit: 20.
- Bluegill and redear sunfish less than 8 inches in total length must be released immediately.

**Lake Osborne** — exit I-95 at 6th Ave. S. or Lantana Road and travel west to Congress Ave. From 6th Ave. S., go south to the John Prince Park entrance; if arriving from Lantana Road, go north to park entrance. Boat ramps in good condition are available. For park information, call (561) 966-6600. Lake Osborne is a 356-acre multi-recreational-use lake with excellent fishing for largemouth bass, sunshine bass, bluegill, and catfish. After a series of warmer than average winters, some butterfly peacock have also found their way into the lake. However, butterfly peacock are sensitive to water temperatures below 60° F, which makes them susceptible to population fluctuations. Largemouth bass are plentiful and grow large in this system. Anglers should try plastic worms, minnow imitations, crankbaits, and spinnerbaits. Live shiners provide the best bait. Bass will often be located near the edges of hydrilla present in the lake. Sunshine bass fishing is usually best from October to February. These fish can be taken on minnow-imitating lures, but trolling live shad is even more effective. Fishing under the 6th Ave. bridge with cut shrimp, shad, or shiners will also produce fish during winter. Bluegill, redear sunfish, and Mayan cichlid can be caught using live worms or crickets. Black crappie are also present and will bite on Missouri minnows and small plastic or marabou.
jigs. With crappie it is important to fish the deeper areas on the lake until a school is located. Fish attractors placed in the lake by FWC attract bass and sunfish as well as crappie. Lake Osborne is intensively used by water skiers, anglers, pleasure boaters, and campers.

A daily bag limit of 5 black bass, only one of which may be 14 inches or longer, is in effect for this area. A daily bag limit of 2 butterfly peacock, only one of which may be 17 inches or longer, also applies.

Lake Ida — exit I-95 at Atlantic Boulevard heading west and turn north on Congress Ave. Turn right on Lake Ida Road and the Lake Ida Park entrance will be on the left. Good boat ramps are present. For park information, call (561) 966-6600. Lake Ida is a 159-acre lake with good populations of largemouth bass, sunshine bass, bluegill, Mayan cichlid, catfish, and moderate numbers of butterfly peacock. This system is very similar to Lake Osborne regarding the species of fish and quality of angling available (see above).

A daily bag limit of 5 black bass, only one of which may be 14 inches or longer, is in effect for this area. A daily bag limit of 2 butterfly peacock, only one of which may be 17 inches or longer, also applies.

Lake Catherine — exit I-95 at Northlake Blvd. and travel east, then turn north on MacArthur Boulevard and travel ½ mile to the lake, located on the west side of the road. This 10-acre lake is located within Palm Beach Gardens. It offers good fishing for largemouth bass, bluegill, catfish, and sunshine bass. A concrete boat ramp is available.

A daily bag limit of 5 black bass, only one of which may be 14 inches or longer, is in effect for this area.

Major urban canal systems — numerous canals located in Palm Beach County provide good fishing for largemouth bass, bluegill, and redear sunfish. Anglers can catch several exotic panfishes as well, including Mayan cichlid, oscar, and spotted tilapia, which were illegally released and pose a threat to native species. These exotics provide excellent eating and there are no bag or size limit restrictions. After a series of warmer than average winters, a few butterfly peacock have also found their way into southern canals. However, butterfly peacock are sensitive to water temperatures below 60° F which makes them susceptible to periodic population fluctuations. Detailed fishing maps of some Palm Beach County canals with directions to boat ramps may be found online at MyFWC.com/Fishing/pdf under “South Florida Peacock Bass Fishery Brochures.” Consult local bait and tackle shop operators as well for specific locations (tackle shop list available at MyFWC.com/Fishing/offices/cityfish/CTIFSH1b.pdf). The Earman River Canal (C-17) is accessible via the ramp at Lake Catherine (see above). The extensive E-4 Canal system and associated canals — West Palm Beach (C-51), Boynton (C-16), and Delray (C-15) — can be accessed via boat ramps in Lakes Osborne and Ida (see above) as well as the Boynton Canal itself. Unfortunately, some vandalism occurs at boat ramps and care should be taken to secure and keep valuables out of sight while away fishing.

A daily bag limit of 5 black bass, only one of which may be 14 inches or longer, is in effect for this area. A daily bag limit of 2 butterfly peacock, only one of which may be 17 inches or longer, also applies. Only boats with motors 10 horsepower or smaller are allowed on the Earman River (C-17) Canal.

St. Lucie County

Palm Lake Fish Management Area — (see page 26) take I-95 to Route 712 (Midway Rd.) and travel east approximately 5 miles. Turn south on Seagrape Rd. just before the blinking yellow traffic signal (about 1 mile east of US Hwy. 1). Travel ½ mile to the lake, located on the east side of the road within Indian River Estates. Palm Lake is four acres in size with an average depth of 15 feet. Water clarity is excellent despite a high amount of tannin. Shoreline access is available around the entire lake. Largemouth bass can be caught on plastic worms, minnow imitations, crankbaits, or spinnerbaits; golden shiners provide the best live bait. Bluegill and redear sunfish can be taken on live worms or crickets. The lake is stocked annually with channel catfish, which can be caught using bottom-fished chicken liver, commercial “stink baits,” and live worms.

Special fishing regulations:
■ Channel catfish daily bag limit: 6.
■ Gasoline motors may not be used on boats.
## South Region

### Accommodations guide to fish camps and other access points

(Information presented on fish camps is subject to change. Please contact the owner/operator to verify services available.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>Water body</th>
<th>Fish camp/Access point</th>
<th>Ramp</th>
<th>Bait</th>
<th>Gas</th>
<th>Food</th>
<th>Ice</th>
<th>Lodge/Camp</th>
<th>Fishing license</th>
<th>Guides/Boat rental</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Broward</td>
<td>Conservation Area 3</td>
<td>Everglades Holiday Park (Take I-95 or the Turnpike and exit onto Griffin Rd. Travel west and cross US 27. Holiday Park is at the very end of Griffin Rd.) 21940 Griffin Rd. Southwest Ranches, FL 33332 954-434-8111</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>G,R</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>C,RV,E</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>GD,B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Broward</td>
<td>Conservation Area 3</td>
<td>Mack’s Fish Camp (From intersection of US 27 and Krome Ave. (SR 997), travel southwest on SR 997 approx. 3/4 mile. When you reach the Miami Canal levee, turn right and travel northwest 2 miles) P.O. Box 297678 Pembroke Pines, FL 33029 954-536-7400</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>C,RV,E</td>
<td></td>
<td>GD,B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Broward</td>
<td>Conservation Area 2</td>
<td>Sawgrass Recreation Park (From I-75S take US 27N (Exit 23). It’s two miles north on the right) 1005 N. US 27 P.O. Box 291620 Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33329 954-369-0202</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>C,RV,E</td>
<td></td>
<td>GD,B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collier</td>
<td>Lake Trafford</td>
<td>Lake Trafford Marina (From LaBelle take SR 29 south to Immokalee. Turn right onto Lake Trafford Rd. (CR 890). The marina is on the left side near the end of the road. From I-75 take Exit 123 (CR 850) and drive east approximately 20 miles to SR 82. Turn right onto SR 82 and drive east approximately 5 miles to SR 29. Turn right onto SR 29 and head south to Lake Trafford Rd. Turn right onto Lake Trafford Rd. and travel to the marina near the end) 6001 Lake Trafford Road Immokalee, FL 34142 239-657-2401</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>RV,E</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>GD,B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glades</td>
<td>Lake Okeechobee</td>
<td>Buckhead Ridge Resort (From Okeechobee City take SR 78W (heading south). Cross the Kissimmee River and the resort is approximately 1 mile down the road, approximately 6-7 miles south of Okeechobee City) 670 SR 78W Okeechobee, FL 34974 863-763-2826</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>L,RV,E</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>GD,B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glades</td>
<td>Lake Okeechobee</td>
<td>Glades RV Park &amp; Marina (Where US 27 and SR 80 intersect take SR 80W. The marina is on the right side of the road approx. 8 miles west, 12 miles east of LaBelle) 4380 Indian Hills Dr. SW Moore Haven, FL 33471 863-983-8070, 863-673-5653, Marina 863-673-5653</td>
<td>PR</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>L</td>
<td>RV,E</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>GD Info</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Legend:** ✓ - facility or service available  
PR - private ramp  
G- groceries, snacks  
R- restaurant  
L- cabins, cottages, or rooms  
C- campsites  
RV- camper or RV hookups  
E- electric  
B- boat rental  
GD- guide service
### South Region

#### Accommodations guide to fish camps and other access points

(Information presented on fish camps is subject to change. Please contact the owner/operator to verify services available.)

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<th>Lodge/ Camp</th>
<th>Fishing license</th>
<th>Guides/ Boat rental</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Glades</td>
<td>Lake Okeechobee</td>
<td>Twin Palms Camp (From Okeechobee City take SR 78W (heading south) approximately 20 miles to Lakeport. It’s on the right side of the road. From Moore Haven go north on SR 78W. It is approx. 10 miles north of Moore Haven on the left side of the road) Route 6 PO Box 885 Okeechobee, FL 34974 863-946-0977</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>C,L,E</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glades</td>
<td>Lake Okeechobee</td>
<td>Uncle Joe’s Marina &amp; Motel Fish Camp (From Clewiston take US 27N (heading west). Turn right (north) onto CR 720. Turn right onto Griffin Rd. SE to the marina. The marina is at Liberty Point Recreation Area between Clewiston and Moore Haven. approx. 7 miles from Clewiston) 2005 Griffin Rd. SE Moore Haven, FL 33471 863-983-4818 or 863-983-9421</td>
<td>PR</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td>C,L,RV,E</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hendry</td>
<td>Lake Okeechobee</td>
<td>Scott Martin Angler’s Marina From Clewiston where Central Ave. and US 27 intersect take US 27S (SR 80) east and turn left at the light on N. Francisco St. At the end is the marina. It is approx. 1 mile from the center of Clewiston. 910 Okeechobee Blvd. Clewiston, FL 33440 863-983-2126</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td>C,RV,E</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hendry</td>
<td>Lake Okeechobee</td>
<td>Jolly Roger Marina (From Clewiston take US 27S (SR 80) east just before the bridge on the canal) 1095 E. US 27 Clewiston, FL 33440 863-983-7402</td>
<td>PR</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td>GD,B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hendry</td>
<td>Lake Okeechobee</td>
<td>Roland &amp; Mary Ann Martin Marina (From Clewiston where US 27 and Central Ave. intersect take US 27S (SR 80) east approximately 1 mile to Del Monte Ave. Turn left onto Del Monte Ave. and then turn right onto E. Del Monte Ave. The marina is approx. 1 mile from the center of Clewiston) 920 East Del Monte Ave. Clewiston, FL 33440 863-983-3151</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td>C,L,RV,E</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Martin</td>
<td>Lake Okeechobee</td>
<td>J &amp; S Fish Camp (From Okeechobee City take US 441 (Conners Hwy.) approx. 18 miles south. The camp is on the right. From Port Mayaca, the camp is approx. 7.5 miles north of the Port Mayaca bridge on US 441 on the left side.) 9500 SW Conners Hwy. Okeechobee, FL 34974 772-597-4455</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>Food Cart</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td>C,L,RV,E</td>
<td>B, Boat Slips</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Legend:** ✓ - facility or service available  
PR- Private ramp  G- groceries, snacks  R- restaurant  L- cabins, cottages, or rooms  C- campsites  RV- camper or RV hookups  E- electric  B- boat rental  GD- guide service
## South Region

### Accommodations Guide to Fish Camps and Other Access Points

(Information presented on fish camps is subject to change. Please contact the owner/operator to verify services available.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>Water Body</th>
<th>Fish Camp/Access Point</th>
<th>Ramp</th>
<th>Bait</th>
<th>Gas</th>
<th>Food</th>
<th>Ice</th>
<th>Lodge/Camp</th>
<th>Fishing License</th>
<th>Guides/Boat Rental</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Okeechobee</td>
<td>Lake Okeechobee</td>
<td>Okee-Tantie Campground &amp; Marina (From Okeechobee City take SR 78W (heading south). The marina is before the Kissimmee River approx. 6 miles south of Okeechobee City) 10430 SR 78W Okeechobee, FL 34974 863-763-2622</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>GD,B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Okeechobee</td>
<td>Lake Okeechobee</td>
<td>Taylor Creek Resort RV Park (From Okeechobee City take US 441 south. It's just before the Taylor Creek Lock on the water, approx. 3 miles south of Okeechobee City) 2730 US 441SE Okeechobee, FL 34974 863-763-4417</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Okeechobee</td>
<td>Lake Okeechobee</td>
<td>Butch's Backyard Bar (Butch's Fish Camp) (From Okeechobee City take US 441 south to 1 mile past Taylor Creek. It is located on the right, approx. 7 miles south of Okeechobee City) 4870 US 441SE Okeechobee, FL 34974 863-763-8262</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Okeechobee</td>
<td>Lake Okeechobee</td>
<td>The Fijian RV Park (From Okeechobee City take US 441 south 8.3 miles. It is located on the right) 6500 US 441SE Okeechobee, FL 34974 863-763-6200</td>
<td>PR</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Okeechobee</td>
<td>Lake Okeechobee</td>
<td>Zachary Taylor RV Resort (From Okeechobee City go south on US 441 approx. 3 miles to the first drawbridge and turn left) 2995 US 441SE Okeechobee, FL 34974 863-763-3377</td>
<td>PR</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Palm Beach</td>
<td>Lake Okeechobee</td>
<td>Slim's Fish Camp (Take SR 80 from either direction into Belle Glade and turn west onto West Canal Street North (SR 717), which will become Torry Island Rd. The camp is at the very end of the road) 215 Marina Drive Belle Glade, FL 33430 (SR 717, Torry Island Road) 561-996-3844</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>GD,B</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Legend:** ✓ - facility or service available

- PR - Private ramp
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- L - cabins, cottages, or rooms
- C - campsites
- RV - camper or RV hookups
- E - electric
- B - boat rental
- GD - guide service
## South Region
### FWC managed boat ramps for freshwater fishing access

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>Water body</th>
<th>Landing</th>
<th>Directions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Broward</td>
<td>L-38E Canal, WCA-2</td>
<td>Stub Canal</td>
<td>From intersection of I-75 and US 27, west of Ft. Lauderdale, travel north on US 27 for 6.0 miles. Ramp is on right side of road at Stub Canal access area.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Broward</td>
<td>L-38W Canal, WCA-3</td>
<td>S-11A</td>
<td>From intersection of I-75 and US 27, west of Ft. Lauderdale, travel north on US 27 for 2 miles. Ramp is on left side of road nearly opposite Sawgrass Recreation Area.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Broward</td>
<td>L-38W Canal, WCA-3</td>
<td>Johnnie’s Bass Hole</td>
<td>From intersection of I-75 and US 27, west of Ft. Lauderdale, travel north on US 27 for 14.7 miles. Ramp is on left side of road directly across from the S-7 pump station.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Broward</td>
<td>L-38W Canal, WCA-3</td>
<td>Weasel Trail</td>
<td>From intersection of I-75 and US 27, west of Ft. Lauderdale, travel north for 6.3 miles on US 27. Ramp is on the left side of the road.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Broward</td>
<td>L-67A Canal, WCA-3</td>
<td>Holiday Park</td>
<td>From intersection of I-75 and US 27, west of Ft. Lauderdale, travel south on US 27 for 6.0 miles. Turn right onto Griffin Road extension. Go 0.6 mile to ramp. A second ramp is available slightly farther west at the very end of the road.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glades</td>
<td>Lake Okeechobee</td>
<td>Indian Prairie Canal</td>
<td>From intersection of SR 78 and SR 721 south of the Brighton Indian Reservation, travel north on SR 78 for 7.4 miles. Turn right at Indian Prairie Canal and go 0.5 mile to the ramp.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miami-Dade</td>
<td>L-67C Canal, WCA-3</td>
<td>Tamiami Trail (S-333)</td>
<td>From intersection of Tamiami Trail and Krome Ave. (SR 997) west of Miami, travel west on Tamiami Trail 12.3 miles to Structure S-333. Turn right onto Levee Rd. and go 0.5 miles past FWC Ramp on Canal L-67A and ramp will be at end of road on right.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miami-Dade</td>
<td>L-67A Canal, L-29 Canal, WCA-3</td>
<td>Tamiami Trail (S-333)</td>
<td>From intersection of Tamiami Trail and Krome Ave. (SR 997) west of Miami, travel west on Tamiami Trail 12.3 miles to Structure S-333. Turn right onto Levee Rd. and go 0.1 mile to ramp on left.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miami-Dade</td>
<td>L-29 Canal, WCA-3</td>
<td>Tamiami Trail</td>
<td>From intersection of Tamiami Trail and Krome Ave. (SR 997) west of Miami, travel west on Tamiami Trail 12.9 miles to Structure S-12D. Ramp is located 200 yards west of S-12D structure on right side of road.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miami-Dade</td>
<td>L-29 Canal, WCA-3</td>
<td>Tamiami Trail</td>
<td>From intersection of Tamiami Trail and Krome Ave. (SR 997) west of Miami, travel west on Tamiami Trail 16.0 miles to Structure S-12C. Ramp is located 200 yards west of S-12C on right side of road.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miami-Dade</td>
<td>L-29 Canal, WCA-3</td>
<td>Tamiami Trail</td>
<td>From intersection of Tamiami Trail and Krome Ave. (SR 997) west of Miami, travel west on Tamiami Trail 1.3 miles to Structure S-334. Turn right and cross over structure. Turn left on Levee Rd. and go 3.0 miles to ramp.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## South Region
### FWC managed boat ramps for freshwater fishing access

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>Water body</th>
<th>Landing</th>
<th>Directions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Miami-Dade</td>
<td>WCA-3 (Airboat ramp)</td>
<td>Mack’s Fish Camp</td>
<td>From intersection of US 27 and Krome Ave, (SR 997), travel southwest on SR 997 approx. 3/4 miles. The ramp is across canal from turn to Mack’s Fish Camp.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Palm Beach</td>
<td>C-18 Canal</td>
<td>Loxahatchee Slough</td>
<td>From I-95 or Turnpike exit at PGA Blvd. Go west 4.0 miles from I-95 or west 2.1 miles from Turnpike. Ramp is on northeast corner of the intersection of PGA Blvd. and the canal.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Palm Beach</td>
<td>WCA-2 (Airboat ramp)</td>
<td>Lox Road</td>
<td>From intersection of SR 7 (US 441) and Lox Rd. (SR 827) travel west on Lox Rd. to end, just before Loxahatchee NWR entrance. Ramp is to left on west side of L-36 levee.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Report impaired boaters and fish and wildlife violators
Impaired operators are putting themselves, you and other people on the water in danger. Those who violate Florida’s fish and wildlife laws are actually stealing from those who are abiding by laws and trying to ensure that our fish and wildlife resources can be enjoyed for future generations. Do your part by calling the local FWC law enforcement office at 1-888-404-FWCC (3922) or #FWC on your cell phone. You may be eligible for a cash reward and can remain anonymous.

**Wildlife Alert!**

Report fish and wildlife violations

REW A R D

Call toll-free 1-888-404-FWCC
Fish identification

- Largemouth Bass
- Butterfly Peacock*
- Bluegill
- Redear Sunfish
- Spotted Sunfish
- Warmouth
- Black Crappie
- Sunshine Bass
- Channel Catfish
- White Catfish

*Exotic species. Artwork by Duane Raver, Jr.
Fish identification

Brown Bullhead

Yellow Bullhead

Mayan Cichlid*

Oscar*

Florida gar

Spotted Tilapia*

Longnose Gar

Blue Tilapia*

Chain Pickerel

Bowfin (Mudfish)

*Exotic species. Mayan cichlid, spotted tilapia and blue tilapia by Diane Peebles; other artwork by Duane Raver, Jr.
The best live bait is a golden shiner, fished under a float or free-lined. Typically, the shiner is hooked through the lips or back with a large hook, 2/0 to 5/0. A medium to medium-heavy rod with 14-to 20-pound test line is preferred, particularly when fishing in areas with thick vegetation or cover.

The plastic worm is the most dependable artificial bait for largemouth bass. A weedless “Texas-” or “Carolina-rigged” worm is effective for fishing Florida lakes with heavy plant cover. Worms come in a variety of colors and scents, and bass may favor certain types depending on water color and light conditions; be sure to have both light and dark colors available, as well as several sizes of

Black bass

The largemouth bass is the best known and most popular freshwater gamefish in Florida. Found statewide, largemouth bass have excellent growth rates, particularly in the productive waters of central Florida. Historically known for huge bass, Florida remains an outstanding destination to catch a trophy.

Spring is the best time of year to catch bass, when fish move into shallow water to spawn. Spawning may occur as early as January in south Florida and as late as May in the panhandle, but February, March and April are peak months. Most large bass are taken at this time; after spawning, many large females move to offshore areas.
tapered worm weights from 1/8 to 1/2 ounce. Purple “metalflake” or “red shad” worms with twirly-tails are popular, and plastic lizards or crayfish imitations can be effective as well.

Most plastic baits are worked slowly along the bottom or through cover by raising the rod tip a few feet, then allowing the bait to sink. The line should be kept fairly tight to feel the strike. Typically an angler will feel the bass “tap” the lure once or twice lightly. By lowering the rod tip and waiting only until the slack is out of the line before setting the hook, anglers greatly lessen the chance of injury to the fish due to deep hooking.

With active bass and dense underwater vegetation, “jerkworms” are an excellent bait. Rigged without sinkers, these worms are jigged rapidly over vegetation, with brief pauses to let the worm sink slowly. Bass hit these baits hard, and an instant hookset is recommended.

Spinnerbaits are very good in the spring, usually fished slowly around drop-offs and cover. If a slow retrieve fails, try “buzzing,” i.e., retrieving the spinnerbait rapidly so the blades ripple the surface.

Crankbaits typically imitate baitfish or crayfish, and a steady retrieve is usually effective. The design of the plastic lip determines how deep the lure dives, and anglers can select their choice of baits based on water depth. Popular colors are white, shad, firetiger (green-striped with orange underside) and crayfish.

Topwater baits are exciting to fish because the angler can see the strike. Topwater plugs that imitate wounded baitfish may be twitched to entice bass. Others are designed to make noise, and a faster, erratic retrieve may antagonize a bass into striking. Topwater lures are most successful during early morning or late afternoon. Stay ready for a surprise strike and set the hook immediately.

Although the largemouth bass is by far our most common black bass, other species are found in Florida. The smaller Suwannee bass occurs in the Suwannee River and its tributaries, the Ochlockonee River and the Wacissa and Aucilla rivers. Favoring rock outcrops and moving water, Suwannee bass prefer crayfish to many prey items of largemouth. Crayfish-imitating crankbaits worked through deep-water bends will attract these hard fighting fish, as will plastic worms, plastic lizards or crayfish. The Santa Fe River is another good spot, and trophy-sized Suwannee bass up to three pounds can be found in the Ochlockonee River north of I-10.

Panfish

A variety of panfish, or bream as they are popularly known, is available throughout Florida. Bluegill, the most common panfish, thrives in lakes and ponds, but good populations are found in rivers, particularly below dams. Bluegill eat mostly insects and their larvae, but live worms or crickets are the best bait, either fished on the bottom or suspended below a float. Bluegill spawn throughout the summer, congregating in large “beds.” Anglers may find numerous shallow nest-holes
scooped out in shallow areas. Meal worms, grubs, sand maggots or grass shrimp will also catch bedding bluegill. Use a small hook, #6 or #8, with a split shot sinker about six inches up the line, and concentrate on water less than six feet deep. For artificial baits, a 1/8-oz. “beetle spin” with a white or chartreuse body on ultralight tackle is an excellent choice.

The redear sunfish, or shellcracker, is another popular panfish. Although they prefer snails and clams, redear sunfish are caught most often on earthworms around the full moons of March and April when their spawning activity peaks. Redear prefer hard bottom, congerating in deeper water than bluegill. Shellcracker grow larger than bluegill, with fish over 1 pound common.

Redbreast sunfish, also known as river bream and redbellies, are the flowing water cousins of bluegill. Redbellies are more common in rivers than bluegill, and often can be found in backwater areas with less flow. The same live baits that work for bluegill will also catch redbreast sunfish.

The spotted sunfish, or stumpknocker, is an often overlooked stream panfish. Aptly named, the stump-knocker can be found in the tangle of roots at the water’s edge. Although spotted sunfish rarely exceed eight inches, this feisty species provides great sport on light tackle. Tiny (1/16 oz.) “beetle spins” pitched close to the shoreline can be deadly, particularly tipped with freshwater clam meat. The Peace River is one of the best local spots for this sportfish.

Black crappie

Black crappie, known locally as speckled perch or specks, are a cool weather favorite in Florida. Crappie weighing up to two pounds are not uncommon. The premier fishing location is Lake Okeechobee, but good crappie fishing can be found throughout the state. Unlike most other panfish, crappie spend much of their time offshore, feeding on small fish. Successful anglers often drift through deeper water, fishing with small minnows or freshwater grass shrimp until they find a school. Try a light wire #4 hook and small split shot below a float. Speck anglers typically use several rods or poles, fishing at different depths until they pinpoint concentrations of fish. Specks move inshore to spawn during the early spring, sometimes gathering in large numbers around heavy cover. Crappie also readily strike artificials; 1/16 oz. to 1/8 oz. feathered or curly-tail jigs in white, yellow, pink and chartreuse are popular. Tipping these jigs with a live minnow makes them even more effective. Night fishing for crappie is an effective technique. Any of the above baits fished near a lantern or floodlight can produce nice stringers. Most crappie fishing occurs in the cooler months, but anglers who fish into the summer do very well, especially at night.

Striped bass, white bass and sunshine bass

Striped bass are found primarily in the Apalachicola and the St. Johns rivers and their tributaries, and to a lesser extent in Lake Talquin and the Ochlockonee, Blackwater, Nassau and St. Marys rivers. Striped bass need long stretches of flowing water to reproduce successfully, and these conditions are rarely found in Florida. Stripers do not tolerate water temperatures over 75° F for long; during Florida summers, striped bass become less active and must find cool water springs or canopied streams to survive. Because of this, striped bass populations are maintained only through annual stockings from Commission and federal hatcheries.

The best striper fishing occurs from fall through spring, when fish are actively feeding. Live shad are very effective, particularly below Jim Woodruff Dam on the Apalachicola River, and around bridge pilings on the St. Johns River near Jacksonville. Stripers may weigh up to 60 pounds; use heavy tackle with 3- to 4-oz. weights in high
flow areas. In the St. Johns River, the Croaker Hole and the jetties at the south end of Lake George are good fall and spring stripier areas, and the first few miles of the Wekiva River have several locations where stripers congregate. Live menhaden, golden shiners, croakers or eels are good choices as bait. Lures that resemble baitfish also produce impressive strikes. These include heavy jigs, as well as sinking and floating lures in white, chrome or chartreuse.

**White bass**
are found in the Apalachicola River, Ochlockonee River and Lake Talquin. In the same family as stripers, white bass seldom exceed four pounds, with one- to two-pound fish more common. The best white bass fishing occurs in the spring, when fish move upriver to spawn. Small crayfish or grass shrimp on #4 hooks fished in deep river bends or at the edge of sand bars are effective baits. Put a 1/4 oz. egg sinker above your swivel, with an 8- to 12-inch leader tied to your hook; use lighter line for the leader, so if you get snagged you don’t have to replace the complete rig. Small jigs in white or brown are often productive.

The **sunshine bass**, a hybrid of striped bass and white bass, is artificially spawned at Commission hatcheries. Hybrids are stocked in lakes with an abundance of gizzard and threadfin shad. Sunshine bass are also stocked together with stripers in some river systems, and some of the best fishing is found in the Apalachicola and St. Johns rivers. The mouth of the Escambia River near Pensacola has good hybrid fishing, and sunshine bass fish around the fish attractors in Newnans Lake near Gainesville. Good sunshine bass fishing also occurs at Medard Park and Manatee Reservoir in the Southwest Region. Live bait, including shad, grass shrimp and crayfish are especially effective, but jigs, spoons and imitation-minnow plugs also produce. In urban lakes, shrimp, squid, chicken liver and even cut-up pieces of hot dogs will attract sunshine bass. Sunshine bass readily concentrate around mechanical feeders that periodically dispense food pellets.

**Catfish**
Catfish are one of the staples for anglers who enjoy eating their catch. **Channel catfish** are abundant throughout Florida, spawning in holes and crevices in flowing water. Channel catfish may exceed 40 pounds, although the typical size is less than five pounds. **White catfish, yellow bullhead and brown bullhead** usually range from one to two pounds, and readily spawn in lakes and ponds where they also pro- vide good fishing. Most catfish prefer many of the same food items as bream, although they are opportunistic and will rarely pass up any meal. The “whiskers” are loaded with sensory cells that enable catfish to locate their food by smell. Take advantage of this by using baits with strong odors: chicken liver or gizzards, shrimp, cut mullet and commercial stinkbaits. Other baits work well too, especially earth-worms, and occasionally freshwater clams. Many cat-fish become active just before dusk and at night, and fishing success is best during these times. Fish on the bottom with a sturdy #2 to #4 hook and a heavy split shot sinker. Catfish spines may cause a painful injury, and anglers should take care when handling these fish. The Commission’s Florida Bass Conservation Center produces 200,000 - 300,000 channel catfish annually for stocking in urban lakes.

**Blue tilapia**
The exotic species, **blue tilapia**, is abundant throughout South and Central Florida’s many urban lakes, where it tolerates poor water quality extremely well compared to native sportfishes. Often overlooked by recreational anglers because they rarely bite a hook under normal fishing conditions, tilapia can be trained to feed on floating fish food dispensed by hand or from automatic feeders. Concentrations of tilapia feeding on pelletized food can actually be caught routinely on hook-and-line using a #6 or smaller hook baited with a pellet, piece of hot dog or doughball. By regularly visiting your neighborhood pond and chumming them up with fish pellets, you can create your own outstanding fishery. Larger tilapia that reach up to five pounds fight well and their white meat is very tasty. FWC-managed sites at Webb Lake, Saddle Creek Park and Lopez Park in the Southwest Region provide good tilapia fishing near automatic fish feeders.
Basic flipping

Flipping is a highly effective technique for catching largemouth bass that was developed during the mid-1970’s. The technique involves dropping a lure vertically in specific spots around various types of cover. The preferred tackle is a 7- to 8-foot heavy-action rod and bait-casting reel spooled with 20- to 30-pound test line. This type of heavy tackle is often needed to pull bass out of, or away from, thick vegetation or cover. With proper equipment and plenty of practice, anglers can precisely and quietly flip a bait into the targeted area and avoid spooking fish. Flipping is often done in relatively shallow water and in close proximity to the boat. Large-mouth bass can usually be found near some type of cover or underwater structure. Typical areas that can be flipped for bass include: trees, rocks, piers, docks, stumps and dense aquatic plants. Stained or colored water is preferred for flipping, because bass can be approached without being disturbed.

In Florida, the preferred artificial baits to flip for largemouth bass are weedless “Texas-rigged” plastic worms, lizards and crawfish. A 1/8- to 1/2-ounce tapered worm weight is also needed to sink the baits through heavy cover. Other baits such as jig & pigs, tube baits and jigs can also be used for flipping; be sure to rig them weedless when fishing around heavy cover. Dark-colored baits are preferred in stained water, while lighter ones should be used in clear water. Oily, commercially-available fish scents are often applied by anglers to help the lure slip through thick vegetation.

Follow the steps in the diagram to flip your bait into “holes” in cattails, bulrush, hydrilla or other structure. With some practice, this technique can be done smoothly, effortlessly and with deadly accuracy.

As the bait sinks, remain in contact with the line, feeling for a strike. Typically an angler will feel the bass “tap” the bait or maybe see the line jump suddenly. If no strike is felt, try vertically jigging the bait after it reaches the bottom. Normally a bass will strike the bait as it falls. Many times, an angler will not feel the strike, but will see the line moving away from where it entered the water. If this occurs, lower the rod tip and wait until the slack is out of the line before setting the hook. If a strike is felt, set the hook immediately and aggressively. Make sure the reel’s drag is set high and keep plenty of tension on the line after the fish is hooked to help pull it away from heavy cover.

1. Extend 6 or 7 feet of line past the rod tip. Pull an arms length of line out with your free hand and begin raising the rod tip, allowing the lure to swing toward you, while pulling line through the guides with your free hand at the same time.

2. When the lure swings back even with your body, lower the rod tip.

3. Immediately sweep the rod back up, swinging the lure “pendulum style” forward toward your target.

4. Release line in your free hand as needed and the lure should swing out to your target and drop quietly down into the water.
Bank fishing opportunities

Although many Florida waters are accessible only by boat, a number of bank fishing opportunities exist in the South Region. Many are conveniently located in urban areas where anglers can enjoy fishing with little planning or travel. In some places, FWC fish attractors congregate fish within casting distance of bank anglers. Refer to South Region Popular Freshwater Fishing Areas (page 3) for details on the sites listed.

Broward County
- Plantation Heritage Fish Management Area - Plantation
- South New River (C-11) Canal - Davie
- Hillsboro (G-08) Canal along Lox Rd (SR 827) - Pompano Beach

Miami-Dade County
- Tropical Park Fish Management Area - Miami
- Aerojet (C-111) Canal - Florida City

Palm Beach County
- Lake Osborne - Lake Worth
- Lake Ida - Delray Beach
- Lake Catherine - Palm Beach Gardens
- Okeeheelee Fish Management Area - West Palm Beach
- Caloosa Fish Management Area - Boynton Beach
- Turnpike (E-2W) Canal along Boca Rio Rd - Boca Raton

St. Lucie County
- Palm Lake Fish Management Area - Ft. Pierce
The sport fishery of the Everglades

The Everglades is the largest freshwater system in Florida, covering nearly 6,000 square miles and extending south from Lake Okeechobee to Florida Bay. A large part of the southernmost portion of the “River of Grass” resides in Everglades National Park, which encompasses 2,200 square miles and is the second largest national park in the contiguous 48 states (see www.nps.gov/ for more information). To the northwest of the park lies the 2,400 square mile Big Cypress National Preserve, and to the immediate north are the Water Conservation Areas (WCA).

Water Conservation Areas 1, 2 and 3 are located in the western portions of Palm Beach, Broward and Miami-Dade counties. These areas, covering 1,352 square miles, are readily accessible to east coast anglers and probably receive the majority of fishing pressure within the Everglades. The WCAs were designated by Congress in 1948 “to receive flood waters from surrounding areas and store them for beneficial municipal, urban and agricultural use.” Additional functions considered were to “benefit fish and wildlife in the Everglades.”

The most important variables determining the quality of bass fishing in the Everglades are water quantity and quality. These issues are currently being addressed by a multi-agency restoration effort. Water levels are regulated by the South Florida Water Management District through a 1,400-mile system of canals, dikes, water control structures and pumps, but ultimately depend on weather conditions. Hurricanes in particular can have dramatic and long-lasting effects on water levels and water quality in the WCAs, as well as on systems that affect the WCAs such as Lake Okeechobee. South Florida’s rainy season generally lasts from late spring to fall, with an average of 50 inches of rain falling on the Everglades. November generally signals the start of the dry season and, depending on its severity, the onset of drought conditions.

Electrofishing samples from the L-35B Canal in WCA-2 between 2000-2005 showed 87 percent of largemouth bass were 10 inches or larger, and 35 percent were over 14 inches. Similar data from the L-67A Canal in WCA-3 documented 63 percent of bass over 10 inches, with 28 percent over 14 inches. The current size limits (5 bass daily bag limit with only one fish over 14 inches) encourage harvest of the very abundant smaller bass while protecting larger fish.

Between 2000 and 2005 recreational use of these canals was heavy. Anglers typically spend an average of 50,000 hours fishing the L-35B Canal in WCA-2 between December and May. Largemouth bass catch rates on that canal have been among the best in the state, averaging 2.0 bass per hour with a historical high of 2.4 bass per hour. Data gathered during a similar survey on the L-67A Canal in WCA-3 showed that anglers fish an average of 56,000 hours there between December and May. Bass catch rates on the L-67A were outstanding, averag-
Who needs a freshwater fishing license and why?

Who needs a freshwater fishing license? Fishing licenses are required for anglers 16 years old or older and for resident anglers less than 65 years of age. Non-resident seniors are required to buy a license. Other special exemptions apply, such as for residents fishing in their county of residence with a cane pole (for details see MyFWC.com/Fishing). A license is your low cost ticket to enjoy all the recreational benefits of freshwater fishing in “Florida – The Fishing Capital of the World.”

What are my fees used for? Except for administrative fees charged by the tax collector or agent and processing surcharges, all of the money spent on fishing licenses goes to the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) to “Manage fish and wildlife resources for their long-term well-being and the benefit of people.” In addition, each license holder that buys a license helps the FWC to recover excise taxes from the Federal government, which you spend on items such as fishing tackle or boats, and for motor boat fuel taxes, through the Federal Aid in Sportfish Restoration program.

Where do I get a license? The least expensive place to buy is at your tax collectors office. For added convenience, many bait-and-tackle shops and sports retail-ers (e.g., Wal-Mart, K-Mart, Sports Authority) sell licenses, for a small additional fee.

Instant licenses also are available via the Internet (MyFWC.com/License.html) or a toll free call to 1-888-FISH-FLORIDA (347-4356). A credit card is required, and there is an additional convenience fee. Using these methods enables you to begin fishing right away. Starting dates for licenses may be designated by you for up to two months (60 days) from the date of purchase, to help you with trip planning. License fees, exemptions and surcharges are set by the Florida Legislature and are subject to change.

What is the Total Licensing System (TLS)? TLS electronically captures information from the sale of fishing licenses in real time, regardless of where they are sold. The system uses cash-register like licenses printed on a weatherproof paper or special coded number licenses. This enables the FWC to track and accurately verify license sales, lessens the burden on sales agents, reduces errors and provides greater convenience to anglers. Instant license coded numbers enable you to buy a license from home via the Internet or anywhere that you can access a phone and start fishing immediately – no more waiting for the store to open or worrying if they have sold out of a particular type of license. Get the urge, get your license and GO FISHING!
The sport fishery of Lake Okeechobee

Lake Okeechobee has historically been Florida’s best-known and most consistent sportfishing lake. Covering 730 square miles (448,000 acres), Okeechobee is the second largest freshwater lake entirely within the borders of the United States and is aptly named “big water” in the language of the Seminole Indians. Unfortunately, since the adoption of higher regulation water level stages on the lake during the early 1990s, extreme high water events greater than 18 feet above NVGD (National Vertical Geodetic Datum, comparable to mean sea level) have occurred recently. High water levels, together with high winds, have had a devastating effect on many plant communities. From the constant beating of high wind and waves, thousands of acres of plants such as bulrush, peppergrass, eelgrass, and hydrilla were uprooted or broken off. Plants near the bottom or in protected areas were subjected to die-off from little or no sunlight reaching them as a result of highly turbid water. These problems have been exacerbated by the recent impacts of multiple hurricanes. Fish populations, including those of largemouth bass and black crappie, have been negatively impacted. These issues remain unresolved as of spring 2006.

Much of the information below is based on historical information and does not reflect these most recent trends. For the most up-to-date information, anglers should contact local marinas and tackle shops. Fishing forecasts and current conditions for Lake Okeechobee, updated quarterly by FWC, are also available at MyFWC.com/Fishing/forecast/sor.html.

Historically, Lake Okeechobee boasted excellent fishing, and is expected to again, based on the great diversity of habitat types and fish species that afforded anglers a myriad of choices of where to fish and what to catch.

The “Big O” is probably most famous for its outstanding largemouth bass angling. The lake is host to nearly 500 bass tournaments and 35,000 anglers annually. Okeechobee bass anglers actively practice catch-and-release. Prior to the current slot limit (see below) anglers typically released 75-80 percent of largemouth bass. Since the slot limit regulation began, the release rate has risen to nearly 95 percent.

Lake Okeechobee’s outstanding habitat and subtropical climate are reflected in the rapid growth of its bass. Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation
Commission studies of trophy largemouth found that Okeechobee bass have some of the fastest growth rates found among natural water bodies, with an average weight gain of 1.3 pounds per year.

Population dynamics and the abundance of smaller bass led biologists to impose a 13-to-18-inch protected size limit (slot limit) in 1996. This means that bass less than 13 inches and bass longer than 18 inches may be kept, but fish in the protected “slot” must be released immediately. This regulation encourages harvest of the abundant smaller bass, while protecting the relatively scarce intermediate-sized fish. Anglers are still able to catch enough bass for a meal, while release of two- to three-pound bass will maintain a quality fishery. Although harvest of bass over 18 inches is permitted (with only one bass 22 inches or longer allowed), the Commission encourages live release of these larger individuals, particularly trophy bass. As expected, the results of the regulation have been positive. Large numbers of quality 13 to 18 inch bass are caught and recycled by anglers. Size and bag limit regulations for largemouth bass on Lake Okeechobee are subject to change. Consult the current Freshwater Fishing Regulations Summary for up-to-date information.

Fisheating Creek Bay, from Horse Island to Harney Pond Canal, is one of many areas that consistently produces largemouth bass. Although not nearly as dense as in the past, fish-attracting peppergass, eelgrass, and hydrilla cover a good portion of the bay. Hydrilla tops out during summer and fall, and recedes during the winter months affording many excellent areas to fish through the following spring.

The South Bay area (or the Bay Bottom as it’s locally referred to) is another top bass fishing area. Many large bass are caught on the Bay Bottom each year by casting spinnerbaits or plastic worms, or by drifting live shiners.

Largemouth bass over 10 pounds are frequently caught on Lake Okeechobee. Typically, live shiners are the bait of choice for large bass, but many are caught on plastic worms and spinnerbaits.

Lake Okeechobee is renowned for its black crappie (speckled perch) fishery as well. Anglers have averaged catching as many as two specks per hour in previous years, a success rate rarely observed elsewhere. Nearly a million specks are caught annually. The most popular black crappie fishing takes place on the north end of Lake Okeechobee. During the fall and winter months, anglers usually drift fish for crappie using Missouri minnows. Crappie anglers sometimes fish as far as 10 miles from shore. Once the crappie move into vegetated shorelines around the lake, usually in January and February, many are caught on crappie jigs from 1/16 to 1/8 ounces. Fisheating Creek Bay can rival the north end of Lake Okeechobee in popularity among crappie fishermen. Many excellent crappie catches are consistently reported from Fisheating Creek Bay near the Harney Pond Canal.

Although bluegill and redear sunfish (shellcracker) are caught year-round, the peak times are spring and summer. The best method is to locate beds visually, but often the water is too deep or muddy. Under these conditions, anglers must keep moving until they start catching fish. This is particularly true for bluegill; shellcracker beds are easier to find as this species prefers clear, shallow water. Despite this, redear sunfish can be less reliable than bluegill, sometimes “on the bed” one day but not the next. Live worms are the preferred bait for shellcrackers; bluegill are less picky and will readily take worms as well as crickets or grass shrimp.
The goal of the FWC’s Community-Based Fisheries Program is to promote recreational freshwater fishing in metropolitan southeast Florida, and to encourage and assist municipalities in managing their waters for angling. The program currently provides angling enhancements at five lakes within parks in Broward, Miami-Dade, Palm Beach, and St. Lucie counties. These Fish Management Areas (FMA) provide many conveniences and amenities and are conveniently located near large population centers. Refer to South Region Popular Freshwater Fishing Areas on page 3 for details on fishing these sites.

- Plantation Heritage FMA (6.4 acres, Plantation, Broward County)
- Tropical FMA (12 acres, Miami, Miami-Dade County)
- Okeeheelee FMA (157 acres, West Palm Beach, Palm Beach County)
- Caloosa FMA (4 acres, Boynton Beach, Palm Beach County)
- Palm Lake FMA (4 acres, Ft. Pierce, St. Lucie County)

A variety of enhancement activities provide good angling at these FMAs. Unwanted plants are controlled or removed to provide good shoreline access for anglers. Introduction of desirable native plants benefits fishes by providing cover for young and adult fish alike, as well as habitat for necessary forage organisms such as insects and minnows. Stocking of channel catfish provides more fish for anglers to catch. These fish do not reproduce well in South Florida waters, and so are stocked annually to maintain a harvestable population. Over 275,000
channel catfish have been stocked in the FMAs since the program’s inception, and individuals up to fourteen pounds have been landed. In order to provide food for stocked fish, as well as those already present, fish feeders at each managed lake dispense food several times per day. Fish feeders attract fish to the area, making them the best locations to land bluegill, redear sunfish, and catfish. Aeration systems help to protect the investment in equipment, time, and stockings by reducing the chance of a low-oxygen fish kill occurring at one of the FMAs. Artificial or brush fish attractors provide cover for fishes and forage organisms, drawing bluegill and redear sunfish as well as largemouth bass. Fish attractors are marked by buoys for easy identification. Many of these improvements are completed with the assistance and cooperation of county Parks and Recreation Department cooperators. All of these enhancements improve angling and the quality of fish populations.

Special regulations help to protect the fish within the FMAs and ensure that the harvest (keeping of fish) that occurs on these sites can be sustained without unduly depleting the fish populations. The following regulations are in effect at Plantation Heritage, Tropical, Okeeheelee, and Caloosa FMAs:

- **All largemouth bass must be released immediately.**

- **Channel catfish daily bag limit:** 6.
- **Panfish daily bag limit:** 20.
- **Bluegill and redear sunfish less than 8 inches in total length must be released immediately.**
- **Gasoline motors may not be used on boats.**

Palm Lake FMA has only the following two regulations:

- **Channel catfish daily bag limit:** 6.
- **Gasoline motors may not be used on boats.**

A fishing license is required for residents from 16 to 64 years of age, and for nonresidents 16 or more years of age, to fish by any method, including cane poles, on a Fish Management Area.

**Sport Fish Restoration** funds pay for 75% of this program. These monies are federal tax dollars collected from the sale of fishing equipment, accessories, and motor boat fuel taxes to support access improvements, educational programs, aquatic habitat improvement, and fisheries research.
Fishing for Florida’s Butterfly Peacock Bass

Sportfishing techniques

The butterfly peacock (also called peacock bass) is an extremely popular freshwater game fish introduced to south Florida in 1984. It is readily caught by bank and boat anglers using a wide variety of tackle and bait that ranges from live shiners to artificial lures and flies. Butterfly peacock prefer live fish and fish-imitating baits often used by largemouth bass anglers, but they rarely hit plastic worms commonly used to catch largemouth bass.

Fishing is typically good throughout the year; however, most butterfly peacock heavier than four pounds are caught between February and May. Shaded areas provided by bridges, culverts and other structures generally are productive fishing spots, along with fallen trees, canal ends, bends and intersections. Nearly all butterfly peacock are caught during daylight hours.

The easiest way to catch butterfly peacock is by using live bait. A favorite choice is a small golden shiner about three inches in length, referred to locally as a “peacock shiner.” These can be fished below a float or free-lined while either casting or slow-trolling with an electric motor along canal edges. A small split shot weight may be required to fish the shiner at the proper depth.

Topwater lures (with and without propellers), minnow-imitating crankbaits and a variety of jigs fished on casting or spinning tackle are good choices for artificial baits. These include floating and sinking Rapalas and Yozuri minnows, Rat-L-Traps, Shad-Raps, Jerk’n Sams, Wobble Pops, Tiny Torpe-
doses. A plastic, twin-tailed minnow and jig combination buzzed across the surface or tossed at fish sighted in deeper water also can be productive. Small tube lures and jigs are frequently used to sight-fish butterfly peacock, especially when they are aggressively guarding spawning beds near the shoreline. Although bigger baits (up to five inches) may entice more trophy-sized fish, baits less than three inches in length will produce more consistently than larger ones. In general, even big butterfly peacock will take baits smaller than largemouth bass anglers typically use.

Dahlberg divers, Lefty’s deceivers, Clousers, epoxy minnows, zonkers and surface poppers are all popular selections of flyfishers. Many anglers prefer gold, fire-tiger or natural-colored lures; flyfishermen like chartreuse or yellow flies with flashy strips of mylar-type materials.

Most butterfly peacock anglers use light spinning tackle with six to eight-pound test line. Light lines and tippets generate more strikes than heavier ones, and heavier lines aren’t necessary because canal-caught butterfly peacock tend to be open-water fighters.

The butterfly peacock can be handled by its lower jaw, using the same thumb-and-finger grip used for largemouth bass, although this will not immobilize them. By the end of the day, successful anglers using this grip will have many minor thumb scrapes caused by sandpaper-like teeth. These can be avoided by using tape, a leather thumb-guard or a fish landing device like the BogaGrip.

The current bag limit for butterfly peacock is two fish per day, only one of which may be greater than 17 inches long. This 17-inch length regulation gives added protection to large fish, which is essential for maintaining a high quality sport fishery. If the popularity of butterfly peacock fishing continues to grow as expected, it may be necessary to consider even more restrictive regulations to protect this fishery (e.g., the bag limit may be reduced to one fish). All regulations for sport fish are subject to change, so always check to be sure of current rules.

The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission encourages anglers to practice catch- and-release when fishing for butterfly peacock. Overall, this species is a hearty fish and nearly 100 percent will survive being caught and released when properly handled. However, butterfly peacock do not survive as well in live wells or as long out of water as do largemouth bass. It is important that they be released quickly to maximize their chances for survival.

Where to fish

Low water temperature is the most important factor for butterfly peacock in Florida. Laboratory temperature studies have documented that butterfly peacock die in water colder than 60 degrees. In fact, the first attempt to study butterfly peacock in the 1960s failed when all fish died due to low pond temperatures. In the early 1980s, it was discovered that canals of coastal southeast Florida were warmer than other waters during the winter, and some rarely dropped below 65 degrees. The main reason for this is the Biscayne Aquifer that lies just a few feet below the ground. During winter, the warmer water flowing from this aquifer into canals creates the warm temperatures critical to the survival and success of many exotic fishes. The butterfly peacock is no exception. In fact, of all exotic fishes currently established in Florida, the butterfly peacock is the least tolerant of low water temperatures.

Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission – MyFWC.com – South Region Fishing Guide
Butterfly peacock have over-wintered and reproduced successfully every year since their introduction in 1984. No additional fish have been stocked since 1987. Although butterfly peacock occasionally experience partial winterkills, coastal southeast Florida canals provide conditions that should permanently support a high quality sport fishery for this important species.

Unlike some of their relatives, butterfly peacock do not venture into salt water and are restricted to salinities similar to those tolerated by largemouth bass. This intolerance to salt water and low water temperatures prevents butterfly peacock from becoming widespread outside the metropolitan southeast Florida area.

The best and most up-to-date fishing reports for butterfly peacock are available from local bait and tackle shop operators. A few tackle shops cater specifically to butterfly peacock anglers. There also are several professional guides who specialize in fishing for this species. Experienced guides are especially helpful for visiting anglers and those who want to quickly learn the basics, plus a few of the best canals to fish. For first-time, non-guided butterfly peacock anglers, it is strongly recommended to check with local freshwater tackle shops for the best locations and baits to use.

**Why are they here?**

About 20,000 butterfly peacock fingerlings were stocked into major canal systems of south-east Florida between 1984 and 1987 by the FWC. These fish were introduced to increase predation on illegally introduced and abundant exotic forage fishes, especially the African spotted tilapia, as well as to enhance freshwater sportfishing opportunities in the metropolitan Miami-Ft. Lauderdale area. This project has been extremely successful, and butterfly peacock currently represent a multi-million dollar sportfishery in Florida.

The butterfly peacock was introduced by FWC staff only after many years of research. Fisheries scientists are opposed to introductions of exotic fishes that have not been thoroughly studied. A species that has been beneficial in one location may be harmful elsewhere. All introductions need to be scientifically evaluated before any species is released into a new area. For this and other reasons, it is illegal for anglers to release live butterfly peacock anywhere other than back into the waters from which they were caught.

Because of careful planning and preliminary evaluations, Florida’s butterfly peacock fishery has been cited as a model program by several state, national and international environmental groups. In light of this success, it is important to re-emphasize the caution with which this introduction was approached. The butterfly peacock is a justified exception to the FWC’s general rule of prohibiting introductions of exotic fishes.
Did you know many of the fatal accidents occur in smaller, open boats on inland waters during daylight hours when weather and visibility are good? The fact is, most boating fatalities don’t have anything to do with bad weather or hazardous sea conditions. US Coast Guard statistics show that about 90% of the boating deaths each year happen when a boat capsizes or someone falls overboard in exactly these conditions. That is why it is so important to take proper safety precautions – regardless of where you are boating. Here are a few boating tips that can make your time on the water much safer.

**Always know what’s going on around your boat**

Most boating accidents involve collisions with other boats or fixed objects (docks, markers, bridge piers). Scan constantly while operating your boat and maintain 360 degree awareness on the water. Remember, staying alert is the most critical part of boating!

![Scan constantly!](image)

**Develop a “Life Jacket Habit”**

Just carrying life jackets on board may meet the legal requirements, but wearing one at all times will help you survive should you unexpectedly end up in the water. Improvements in technology have brought inflatable life jacket models that can be worn all the time without any discomfort. Newer inflatable belt pack life jackets are so slim, you don’t feel like you are wearing a life jacket at all. Visit MyFWC.com and follow the “Boating” link for more boating safety information.

![Try an inflatable life jacket...they’re easy to use!](image)

**Don’t let alcohol sink your day!**

Alcohol consumption is a primary factor in many boating accidents in Florida and across the nation. With wind, wave action, heat, vibrations and other environmental conditions on the water affecting your reflexes, the last thing you need is to allow alcohol to further limit your ability to react in an emergency. Alcohol and boating don’t mix!

**Wear your ignition safety switch lanyard**

Installed on nearly all boats and small outboard motors, ignition safety switches only work when used properly. Hook safety switch lanyard to a wrist strap and get into the habit of wearing it anytime the motor is running. A boat operator who hits a submerged object, has a steering malfunction, or just hits another boat’s wake wrong, is susceptible to being thrown overboard. Once in the water, you have a good chance of being hit by your own vessel – and its spinning propeller. This can be avoided by using an ignition safety switch lanyard.

**Always have the required safety equipment**

FWC law enforcement officers will probably meet you sometime on the water and will want to make sure your boat has all of the required safety equipment and that the items are in good condition and ready for use when needed. These items include life jackets for every passenger, a fire extinguisher, a whistle or horn, working navigation lights and a set of flares if you plan on venturing out onto coastal waters.
Help conserve Florida’s fish and wildlife

Purchasing a bass tag for your vehicle or trailer costs just $27 more than a conventional tag. Twenty-five dollars of that goes to the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission. The money supports fish and wildlife conservation programs throughout Florida. Buy yours at your local tax collector’s office.

Buy a Bass Tag Today!

fish for tomorrow

Only half of Florida’s anglers buy a license, but their license fees are a vital source of funding for fish and wildlife conservation. Seniors, youths, saltwater shoreline anglers and others that are exempt can contribute to fish and wildlife conservation simply by voluntarily buying a fishing license. Each license bought captures more Federal Aid in Sportfish Restoration money, and brings tackle and motor boat fuel taxes home to Florida.

Invest in the future of fishing, buy a license today.

Visit: MyFWC.com/License
Call: 1-888-Fish-Florida

Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission
MyFWC.com