



Sportfishing in Georgia

Along the rivers, ponds and reservoirs of Georgia, anglers share tales about the huge fish they watched their grandfather pull out of the family fishing hole or about the one that was so big it snapped the line. While children listen wide-eyed to these stories of the past, more experienced anglers often simply shake their heads in disbelief. But now, anglers can prove their outstanding catch through two programs sponsored by the Department of Natural Resources, Wildlife Resources Division.

The Wildlife Resources Division recognizes anglers who catch trophy fish through the **Angler Award Program** and the **Freshwater Fish State Record Program**.

In order to qualify for an Angler Award, the catch must meet minimum weight or length requirements. Freshwater Fish State Records are set when the catch weight exceeds the existing record by one ounce or more.

If you think that your catch qualifies for an Angler Award or a Freshwater Fish State Record, check the official rules printed in this brochure to see if you qualify as an outstanding Georgia angler. For more information about these programs, contact one of the Wildlife Resources Division, Fisheries Offices listed below:

Albany.....	229-430-4256
Bowens Mill.....	229-426-5272
Buford Trout Hatchery.....	770-781-6888
Burton Trout Hatchery	706-947-3112
Calhoun.....	706-624-1161
Calhoun.....	770-387-4821
Dawson	229-995-4486
Fort Valley	478-825-6151
Gainesville	770-535-5498
Metter.....	912-685-6424
Social Circle.....	770-918-6418
Richmond Hill.....	912-727-2112
Summerville.....	706-857-3394
Thomson	706-595-1619
Waycross.....	912-285-6094
West Point.....	706-845-4180

Current state records may be found at www.gofishgeorgia.com

Official Rules for the Angler Award and Freshwater Fish State Record Programs

1. All game fish, in addition to carp, catfish, bowfin, gar, white perch and yellow perch, are eligible for **Angler Awards** and/or **Freshwater Fish State Records**. Species that are not eligible for state records are denoted with an * in the table at right. Both resident and non-resident anglers are eligible. The Wildlife Resources Division (WRD) reserves the right to refuse any questionable entry.
2. The **Angler Award Program** runs from Jan. 1 - Dec. 31. Applications must be received no later than Jan. 15 of the year following the catch. To qualify for an Angler Award, the fish must meet the minimum weight or length requirements listed in the table at right.
3. For both programs, fish must be caught in Georgia during the legal angling season for the species taken in accordance with all fishing laws and regulations. Fish must be caught on sporting tackle and be hooked and landed by the entrant. Bush hooks, trot lines, jugs, baskets, nets, etc., are not considered sporting tackle. Fish caught from hatcheries or intensive fish culture facilities are not eligible. Freshwater fish caught from private waters in which adults of the species in question are stocked are not eligible.
4. To enter the **Angler Award Program**, the angler must submit an application with a clear, side view photograph of the fish. A photograph of the angler with the fish must also be submitted. Fish total length (TL) must be measured with a ruler or tape measure. To determine TL, measure the fish from the tip of the snout to the back of the tail fin with the fin squeezed together. See back of sheet for catch-and-release and length submission information. Fish may also be weighed on a certified scale (see # 7 below).
5. Applications for **Freshwater Fish State Records** must be submitted within 90 days of the catch. To qualify as a new Freshwater Fish State Record, the fish must weigh at least one ounce more than the existing record. Any catch which matches the weight of an existing record, or that exceeds the record by less than an ounce, will be considered a tie. Anglers can receive a current list of Freshwater Fish State Records by contacting a WRD Fisheries Office or by visiting www.gofishgeorgia.com. NOTE: Frozen fish may NOT be submitted for state records.
6. For **State Record Fish**: The fish must be weighed in the presence of two witnesses, both of whom must be at least 18 years old and not a member of the entrant's immediate family. Both witnesses and the owner of the scale, if not a witness, must provide an address and telephone number on the application. Witnesses are not necessary if the fish is weighed on a certified scale at a WRD Office. The angler must submit an application with a clear, side view photograph of the fish and a photograph of the angler with the fish.
7. Fish must be weighed on a scale that has been certified accurate to the nearest ounce, or lesser weight, by the Department of Agriculture within the last year. Fish may be weighed in pounds and ounces or in metric; however, metric weights will be converted to pounds and ounces. Estimated weights will not be accepted. The weight of the sling, platform or rope (if one is used when weighing the fish) must be determined and deducted from the total weight. Only one-ounce graduations will be recognized. Visual fractionizing of graduations is not allowed. Weights that fall between two graduations of the scale must be rounded to the lower of the two.
8. **For State Record Fish**, a WRD Fisheries Section biologist must identify the fish and sign the application. No mounted fish will be accepted. Please call before visiting a Fisheries Office to be sure someone is available to identify the fish (see office list at left). For **Angler Award Fish**, a WRD Fisheries Section biologist or technician must identify the actual fish or a photo. See back of sheet for catch-and-release and length submission information.

Recognition: Anglers whose fish qualify as **Freshwater Fish State Records** will receive a certificate when the record is official. **Angler Award** winners will receive a certificate during January of the year following the catch. The names and addresses of individuals who receive Angler Awards and Freshwater Fish State Records may be posted on the WRD website, released to the media, or other interested parties.

Minimum Weights & Lengths Eligible for Angler Awards		
Species	Weight (Pounds)	Length (inches)
Largemouth Bass	10.0	26
Shoal Bass	4.0	20
Spotted Bass	5.0	23
Smallmouth Bass	3.0	19
Suwannee Bass	2.0	16
Redeye Bass	1.0	13
Striped Bass	25.0	36
Hybrid Bass	8.0	25
White Bass	2.5	17
Bluegill	1.5	13
Redear Sunfish (Shellcracker)	1.5	14
Redbreast Sunfish	1.0	11
Rock Bass	1.0	11
Warmouth	1.0	11
Shadow Bass	1.0	11
Flier	0.5	9
Spotted Sunfish	0.5	9
Green Sunfish	0.5	9
Walleye	4.0	23
Chain Pickerel	3.5	24
Redfin Pickerel	1.0	18
Brook Trout	0.5	10
Brown Trout	4.0	20
Rainbow Trout	4.0	20
Freshwater Drum	5.0	22
American Shad	4.0	24
Hickory Shad	1.5	18
Black Crappie	2.0	15
White Crappie	2.0	15
Channel Catfish	12.0	32
Blue and Flathead Catfish	20.0	33
White Catfish	2.5	17
Brown Bullhead	2.0	17
Yellow Bullhead	2.0	17
Spotted and Flat Bullhead	2.0	15
Carp (Common and Grass*)	15.0	31
Bowfin	10.0	30
Longnose Gar	10.0	43
Spotted and Florida Gar	5.0	28
White Perch *	1.0	13
Yellow Perch	1.0	15

Note: * Denotes species NOT eligible for State Records

Georgia Angler Award and Freshwater Fish State Record Official Application

Please print or type all information clearly. Send this application and photographs as required to:

Georgia Angler Award and Freshwater Fish State Record Program 2070 U.S. Highway 278 SE, Social Circle, Georgia 30025

Fish species: _____ Weight: lbs. ____ oz. ____ Length (inches) _____

Date Caught: _____ Bait used: _____ Tackle type: _____

Lake or stream where caught: _____ Nearest Town/County: _____

Angler name: _____ Age: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Daytime telephone: _____ Fishing License # (if applicable): _____

I hereby swear that the above statements are true; that I complied with the program rules and Georgia Sport Fishing Regulations when catching this fish. I consent to allow the Georgia Department of Natural Resources to use my name, the information provided on this application and photographs in promoting fishing and the Georgia Angler Award and Freshwater Fish State Records Program.

(Applicant's signature or parental signature if under 18 years of age) (Date)

We the undersigned witnessed the weighing of the fish described above and verify the weight on this application.

1. Signature: _____ Daytime telephone: _____

Address: _____

2. Signature: _____ Daytime telephone: _____

Address: _____

Scale Owner: _____ Telephone: _____

Name of Scale Operator/Witness (store manager or employee): _____

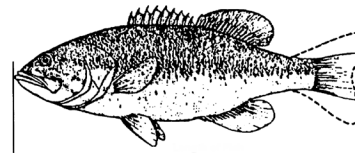
This fish qualifies as: _____ Angler Award _____ New Freshwater Fish State Record

(Name and Signature of Wildlife Resources Division Employee identifying/weighing fish) (Date)

Requirements and Guidelines For Submitting Catch-and-Release Fish and Fish Photographs (Angler Award Fish Only)

See opposite side of sheet for full requirements for **State Record Fish** submissions. For fish being submitted for **Angler Awards** based on length and which have not been weighed on certified scales:

1. Measure the fish to the nearest inch using a standard, English-unit ruler or measuring tape. Measure the fish as shown in the diagram below.



Total length

2. Clearly photograph the fish to permit proper identification and verification of length. Tips:
 - Photographs showing the entire length of the fish, the rod and reel used to make the catch and the ruler or tape used to measure the fish are helpful for faster application processing.
 - At a minimum, photograph the fish lying on its side on a flat surface with the ruler or marked tape placed beside the fish.
 - For proper species identification, the clearest possible photographs should be submitted. This is important in the case of hybrids and fishes that may be confused with similar species.
 - The fish should be broadside to the camera and no part of the fish should be obscured.
 - Photographs from various angles are most helpful.
3. A photograph of the angler with the fish is also required.



Georgia's Angler Award Program and Freshwater Fish State Records



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