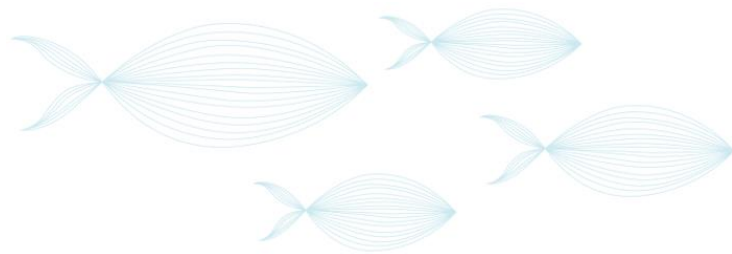


# Changes to fishing rules in Queensland

## September 2019



## Why recreational fishing rules have changed

Queensland's fisheries are important to many different people in many different ways.

Commercial fishers and seafood suppliers depend on them for their livelihood. Recreational and charter fishers love to wet a line, and fishing tourism benefits local businesses and the economy. Traditional fishers have an enduring connection to their sea country, and our community wants to enjoy fresh Queensland seafood and know that our environment is being cared for.

Following extensive consultation over the last two years on proposed reforms, a number of changes have been made to recreational, charter and commercial fishing rules – these **new rules started on 1 September 2019** and aim to:

- protect the long-term sustainability of our fisheries
- rebuild depleted snapper, pearl perch and scallop stocks
- combat black-marketing of priority species
- standardise fishing rules and support compliance.

By following these new rules you can still enjoy your fishing, while helping to make sure we have fish for the future.

**Please note:** Queensland Boating and Fisheries Patrol will not immediately issue fines for non-compliance with these changes. Over the first few weeks the Queensland Government will be providing education and awareness. Our website, recreational fishing app and recreational fishing guides are being updated to reflect the new rules.

## Changes to tidal fishing rules

### Size limits

New rule	Why?
Pearl perch minimum legal size limit increased from 35 cm to 38 cm *Applies to commercial, recreational and charter fishers	Pearl perch stocks are depleted. Increasing this size limit will allow more fish to reach maturity and reproduce.
King threadfin minimum legal size limit increased from 60 cm to 65 cm on the east coast *Applies to commercial, recreational and charter fishers	The size limit has been increased to allow more king threadfin to mature on the east coast.

## Possession limits

New rule	Why?
Mud crab possession limit reduced from 10 to 7	This possession limit for mud crabs has been reduced to keep fishing pressure within sustainable levels.
Pearl perch possession limit reduced from 5 to 4	Pearl perch stocks are depleted. Reducing this possession limit will ease fishing pressure on this species.
Blue swimmer crab possession limit of 20	This possession limit has been introduced for blue swimmer crab to keep fishing pressure within sustainable levels.
Boat limits (with 2 or more people on board) for nine priority black-market species will be two times the individual possession limit – mud crab, prawns, snapper, black jewfish, barramundi, shark, Spanish mackerel, sea cucumber and tropical rock lobster *These boat limits do not apply to charter fishers	Boat limits aim to prevent people taking large numbers of these high-value species to sell on the black market.
Tropical rocklobster possession limit of 5 now applies in all Queensland waters	This makes the possession limit the same in all Queensland waters.
Mollusc and gastropod (including pipis) possession limit reduced from 50 to 30 *Moreton Bay remains closed to collection of molluscs and gastropods (excluding pipis, which would be subject to the reduced possession limit of 30)	Molluscs and gastropods are easily overfished because they do not move and there is easy access to fishing grounds near urban centres. Fishing pressure on these species has increased in recent years so the possession limit has been reduced to protect them.
General possession limit of 20 introduced for all species without a prescribed possession limit (excluding some bait species)	The general possession limit aims to prevent overfishing of species that don't have a specific possession limit.
No possession limit for the following bait species – southern herring, common hardyhead, Australian sardine, Australian anchovy, silver biddy, saltwater yabby, soldier crab and non-regulated worms (e.g. mangrove worms)	There are no sustainability concerns for these bait species, so they have no possession limit and are exempt from the new general possession limit of 20 (above).
Possession limit of 50 introduced for certain bait species – mullet (excluding diamondscale, sea and freshwater mullet), cuttlefish or squid (excluding tiger squid), smooth-clawed rock crab and yellowtail pike	This possession limit has been introduced for certain bait species to keep fishing pressure within sustainable levels.
Oyster possession limit clarified in the regulations – a person must eat oysters (excluding pearl oysters) on the spot where they are taken	This change makes it clear that pearl oysters can be taken away from the site where they are collected, as long as they are the correct size.
Clarified in the regulations that a possession limit of 50 applies to the Cribb Island worm (formerly known as blood worm)	This is an administrative change to clarify the name of the species.

## No-take species

New rule	Why?
Hammerhead shark is a no-take species	Hammerhead sharks are listed as conservation-dependent under federal laws. They are now a no-take species to prevent numbers declining further.
White teatfish is a no-take species	White teatfish are important to local ecosystems, easily overfished and a high-value black-market species.

## Closures

New rule	Why?
New seasonal closure for snapper and pearl perch – 15 July to 15 August each year *Applies to commercial, recreational and charter fishers	Snapper and pearl perch stocks are depleted. This 1-month closure aims to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• reduce fishing pressure on both species</li> <li>• protect snapper stock during its spawning season when they are most vulnerable to being caught.</li> </ul>
New closed waters that prohibit take of black jewfish within 200 m from the Hay Point and Dalrymple Bay coal terminals *Applies to commercial, recreational and charter fishers	There are serious concerns about the sustainability of black jewfish due to significant increases in catch and black-marketing. Closed waters have been introduced to protect areas where black jewfish are known to gather in large numbers.
Standardised start and end times for the majority of fishery closures – midnight to midnight	Consistent start and end times aim to simplify compliance with closures.

## Other changes

New rule	Why?
Crab pots and dillies must be marked with the surname and address of the person <b>using</b> this gear	This makes it clear who is using the gear, and how many pots and dillies the person is using, so the gear limit can be enforced effectively.
Mulloway and scaly jewfish must be kept whole while on board a vessel *Applies to commercial, recreational and charter fishers	As these species can be misidentified as black jewfish, the fish must be kept whole while on a boat so the appropriate limits can be enforced.
Black jewfish will become a no-take species for all sectors when the total allowable commercial catch is reached Check the current status of the fishery at <a href="http://fisheries.qld.gov.au">fisheries.qld.gov.au</a> or on the 'Qld Fishing' app. *Applies to commercial, recreational and charter fisheries	There are serious concerns about the sustainability of black jewfish due to significant increases in catch and black-marketing. This rule has been introduced to manage fishing pressure on black jewfish.

## Changes to freshwater fishing rules

### Size limits

New rule	Why?
<p>Single minimum legal size limit of 60 cm for Mary River cod and Murray cod</p> <p>*Applies to commercial, recreational and charter fishers</p>	<p>Mary River cod is listed as 'endangered' under federal laws. The size limit has been increased to allow this species to reach maturity and reproduce.</p>
<p>Murray cod maximum size limit of 110 cm removed</p> <p>*Applies to commercial, recreational and charter fishers</p>	<p>Murray cod of this size are rare in Queensland rivers and are not likely to contribute to reproduction, and those caught and released in stocked impoundments often die several days after capture.</p>

### Possession limits

New rule	Why?
<p>Australian bass possession limit in stocked impoundments increased from 2 to 5</p>	<p>There are enough Australian bass in stocked impoundments to support an increased possession limit.</p>
<p>Mary River cod possession limit of 1 in stocked impoundments expanded to include Wyaralong Dam, Ewen Maddock Dam, Caboolture River Weir, Robina Lakes, Lake Kurwongbah, Enoggera Reservoir and Lake Manchester</p>	<p>Expanding the stocked impoundments allows fishers to take Mary River cod all year round, while closures are in place in rivers and creeks (listed below).</p>

### Closures

New rule	Why?
<p>Standardised start and end times for the majority of fishery closures – midnight to midnight</p>	<p>Consistent start and end times aim to simplify compliance with closures.</p>
<p>Tinana Creek and its tributaries upstream of Teddington Weir wall closed to all forms of fishing</p>	<p>These two closures aim to ease fishing pressure on Mary River Cod, which is listed as 'endangered' under federal laws.</p>
<p>New waters closed to line fishing (or possession of a fishing line) from 1 August to 31 October in the following locations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coomera River (upstream of defined boundary)</li> <li>• Albert River (upstream of defined boundary)</li> <li>• Running Creek</li> <li>• Christmas Creek</li> <li>• Stanley River (upstream of defined boundary)</li> <li>• Mary River (upstream of defined boundary, excluding Baroon Pocket Dam, Borumba Dam and Lake MacDonald)</li> </ul>	<p>The closed waters from 1 August to 31 October aim to protect Mary River cod during the spawning season.</p>
<p>Murray cod seasonal closure changed to 1 August to 31 October each year</p>	<p>The dates have been changed to align with the new closed waters to line fishing (above).</p>

### Other

New rule	Why?
<p>Freshwater traps must be marked with the surname and address of the person <b>using</b> the apparatus</p>	<p>This makes it clear who is using the trap, and how many traps the person is using, so the gear limit can be enforced effectively.</p>

## Changes to charter fishing rules

New rule	Why?
Offshore charter fishers now permitted to use trot lines to take spanner crabs	The regulations have been updated to remove the need for General Fisheries Permits to be issued for this activity.
Snapper and pearl perch extended possession limit removed	Snapper and pearl perch stocks are depleted. Removing this extended possession limit will reduce fishing pressure on both species.

**Please note:** As part of the fisheries reform process, further regulatory changes are expected to be considered before the end of the year.

## More information

For more information, visit [fisheries.qld.gov.au](http://fisheries.qld.gov.au) or call **13 25 23**.