

## What To Know Before You Go . . .

**Spearfishing** is defined as the taking of any saltwater fish through the instrumentality of a spear, gig, or lance operated by a person swimming at or below the surface of the water. *The use of powerheads, bangsticks, and rebreathers remains prohibited.*

**Possession of spear equipment:** Possession of spears and spearguns is prohibited in Everglades National Park, Dry Tortugas National Park and Florida State Parks.



**Coral is protected** from damage and removal in State and Federal waters. Do NOT touch, hold on to, stand on, break or otherwise harm coral. It is a fragile living animal.

**Bag and Size Limits:** The federal bag limits cannot be combined with state bag limits. Remember to abide by regulations regarding size limits. Objects underwater appear 25% larger. Check with agencies for current regulations: [www.myfwc.com](http://www.myfwc.com) or [www.nmfs.noaa.gov](http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov)

**License Requirements:** Recreational harvesters are required to possess a valid Florida Saltwater Fishing License. Consult your license agent for purchasing and exemptions to licensing requirements or visit [www.myfwc.com](http://www.myfwc.com).



**Dive Flag:** All divers and snorkelers in the water are required to prominently display a divers-down flag. The minimum size for any divers-down flag displayed on a buoy or float towed by the diver is 12" by 12". The minimum size for any divers-down flag displayed from a vessel or structure is 20" by 24". Any divers-down flag displayed from a vessel must be displayed from the highest point of the vessel or such other location which provides that the visibility of the divers-down flag is not obstructed in any direction.

**State Waters** are all salt waters surrounding the Florida Keys out to three (3) nautical miles from the nearest point of land including islands on the Atlantic side and out to nine (9) nautical miles from the nearest point of land including islands on the Gulf side. Consult NOAA nautical charts. Information and chart distributors can be found at [chartmaker.ncd.noaa.gov](http://chartmaker.ncd.noaa.gov).

*This is not an official publication of spearfishing rules and regulations.*

### For additional information such as fishing regulations including size and bag limits-

[www.myfwc.com](http://www.myfwc.com)                      [www.dep.state.fl.us](http://www.dep.state.fl.us)  
[www.nmfs.noaa.gov](http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov)                [floridakeys.noaa.gov](http://floridakeys.noaa.gov)  
[www.nps.gov/ever](http://www.nps.gov/ever)                    [www.nps.gov/drto](http://www.nps.gov/drto)

### Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission

Division of Law Enforcement      (888) 404-3922  
Marathon Office                      (305) 289-2320  
Division of Marine Fisheries        (850) 487-0554

### South Atlantic Fishery Management Council

(866) 723-6210

### Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council

(888) 833-1844

### John Pennekamp Coral Reef State Park and Dagny Johnson Key Largo Hammock Botanical State Park

(305) 451-1202

### Windley Key Fossil Reef Geological State Park and Lignumvitae Key Submerged Land Management Area

(305) 664-2540

### Long Key State Park

(305) 664-4815

### Curry Hammock State Park

(305) 289-2690

### Bahia Honda State Park

(305) 872-2353

### Fort Zachary Taylor Historic State Park

(305) 292-6713

### Everglades and Dry Tortugas National Parks

(305) 242-7700

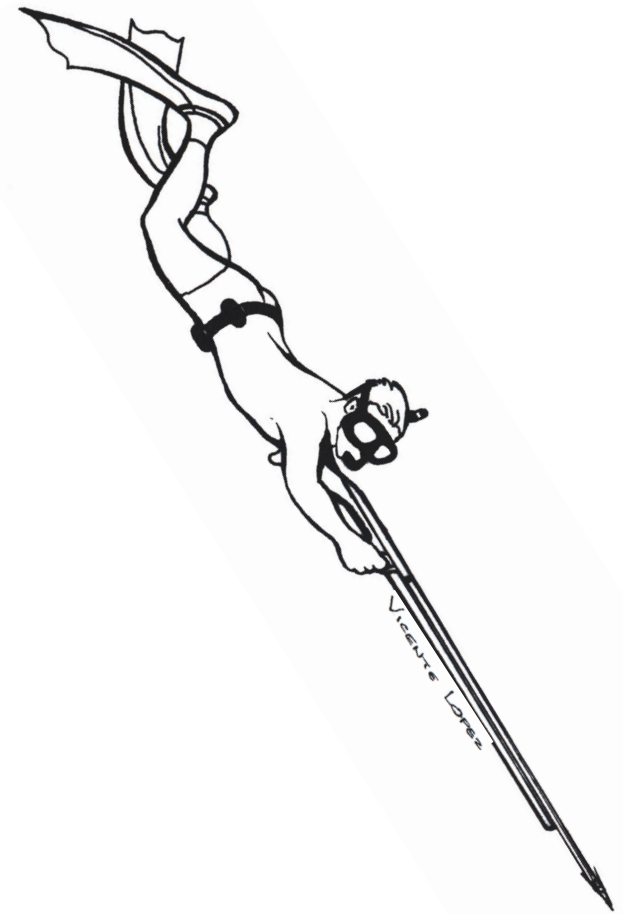
24-hour Dispatch (305) 242-7740

### Florida Keys National Wildlife Refuges

(305) 872-2239

### Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary

Key Largo Office                      (305) 852-7717  
Key West Office                        (305) 809-4700



# Regulations for Spearfishing for Monroe County, Florida including the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary

## ***Spearfishing is Prohibited in the Following Areas of Monroe County:***

- **State Waters from Long Key north to the Miami-Dade County line** (*including the island of Long Key*)

**State Waters** are all salt waters surrounding the Florida Keys out to three (3) nautical miles from the nearest point of land including islands on the Atlantic side and out to nine (9) nautical miles from the nearest point of land including islands on the Gulf side.

- **Everglades National Park**
- **Dry Tortugas National Park**

### • **State Parks**

- The following state parks are within State Waters in the Upper Keys - spearfishing is prohibited
  - Dagny Johnson Key Largo Hammock Botanical State Park
  - John Pennekamp Coral Reef State Park
  - Windley Key Fossil Reef Geological State Park
  - Lignumvitae Key Submerged Land Management Area
  - Long Key State Park
- The following state parks boundaries extend out to 400 feet from the shoreline - spearfishing and the possession of spearfishing equipment is prohibited in these areas.
  - Curry Hammock State Park
  - Bahia Honda State Park
  - Fort Zachary Taylor Historic Sate Park

### • **Beaches, Piers, Bridges**

Within 100 yards of a public swimming beach, any commercial or public fishing pier, or any part of a bridge from which public fishing is allowed.

### • **Jetties**

Within 100 feet of any part of a jetty that is above the surface of the sea - except for the last 500 yards of a jetty that extends more than 1,500 yards from the shoreline.

### • **Unincorporated Monroe County**

It is unlawful for any person to use, fire or discharge any speargun on or below the surface of the water in any man-made canal in the unincorporated areas of Monroe County.

### • **Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary**

#### • **Existing Management Areas (EMAs)**

Possession of spearfishing equipment within these Existing Management Areas is prohibited except while transiting through without stopping.

- Key Largo - adjacent to John Pennekamp Coral Reef State Park and extends to the 300 foot depth
- Looe Key - five-square-nautical mile area surrounding Looe Key reef

The following no-take areas are marked by 30" diameter round yellow buoys:

#### • **Sanctuary Preservation Areas (SPAs)**

- Carysfort Reef
- Elbow
- Key Largo Dry Rocks
- Grecian Rocks
- French Reef
- Molasses Reef
- Conch Reef
- Hen and Chickens
- Davis Reef
- Cheeca Rocks
- Alligator Reef
- Coffins Patch
- Sombrero Key
- Looe Key
- Newfound Harbor
- Eastern Dry Rocks
- Rock Key
- Sand Key

#### • **Special-use Research Only Areas**

- Conch Reef
- Looe Key Patch Reef
- Tennessee Reef
- Eastern Sambo

#### • **Ecological Reserves**

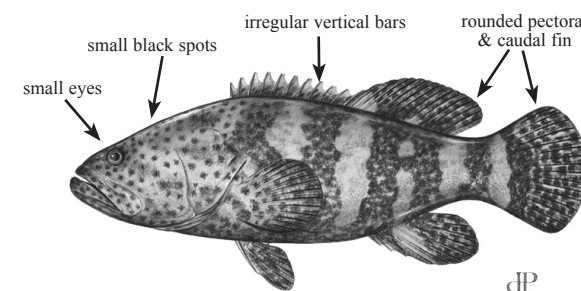
- Western Sambo
- Tortugas (not currently marked)

## ***Species Prohibited for Harvest by Spearing:***

- African Pompano
- Billfish (all species)
- Blue Crab
- Bonefish
- Goliath Grouper (Jewfish)
- Lobster
- Manta Ray
- Nassau Grouper
- Permit
- Pompano
- Families of Ornamental Reef Fish (Angelfish, Butterflyfish, Cornetfish, Damselfish, Parrotfish, Pipefish, Porcupinefish, Puffers, Seahorse, Squirrelfish, Surgeonfish, Triggerfish (except gray and ocean), Trumpetfish, Trunkfish,)
- Red Drum
- Sharks
- Snook
- Spotted Eagle Ray
- Spotted Seatrout
- Stone Crab
- Sturgeon
- Tarpon
- Tripletail
- Weakfish

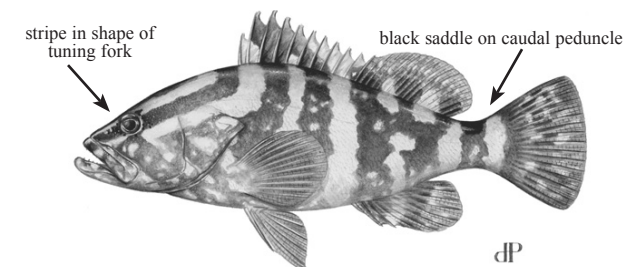
## ***Know Your Fish Before You Go***

(These 2 fish are protected and often confused with similar looking species.)



### **Goliath Grouper (Jewfish)**

head and fins covered with small black spots; irregular vertical bars present on the sides of body; pectoral and caudal fins rounded; eyes small



### **Nassau Grouper**

color light background with brown or red-brown bars on sides; stripe in shape of tuning fork on forehead; black dots around the eyes; large black saddle on caudal peduncle