

## **NEW REGULATIONS FOR HIGHLY MIGRATORY SPECIES!**

New regulations are in effect for recreational anglers who target highly migratory species (HMS) in state waters and in federal waters of the Atlantic, Gulf of Mexico, and U.S. Caribbean. Highly migratory species are Atlantic tunas (bluefin, yellowfin, bigeye, skipjack, and albacore), sharks, swordfish, billfish (sailfish, spearfish, and blue and white marlin). Federal waters extend from 3 to 200 miles on the Atlantic coast and from 9 to 200 miles on the Gulf coast of Florida. Below are the new regulations that will affect Florida anglers.

### **HMS Angling Permit**

Recreational anglers that target any HMS fish must purchase a federal permit. The permit is issued to the fishing vessel, so it will cover all anglers onboard. Anglers can apply for a permit online at [www.nmfspermits.com](http://www.nmfspermits.com) or by calling 1-888-872-8862. This permit is not required for anglers fishing for billfish, swordfish, and sharks in state waters.

### **HMS Reporting**

Any HMS fish caught in federal waters (excluding sharks and non-bluefin tunas) that is landed (killed and brought to shore) must be reported to NOAA fisheries within 24 hours. Call 1-800-894-5528 to report landings of swordfish and billfish, and 1-888-872-8862 to report bluefin tuna landings. **In addition, new state regulations require persons landing billfish and swordfish caught in state waters to report to NOAA at the phone number above.**

### **Swordfish Bag Limit**

Anglers are now limited to 1 swordfish per person with a vessel limit of 3 per boat, per day in **both federal and state waters**. Regardless of the length of the trip, no more than the daily limit may be possessed onboard a vessel. This bag limit includes charter boats and head boats. Swordfish harvested from **both federal and state waters** must be landed in whole condition.

*For more information about federal HMS regulations, visit [www.nmfs.noaa.gov](http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov).*