Sport Fishing Regulations

(including crabbing, clamming, oystering and shrimping)

Special Conditions

You may Fish, Crab, Clam, Oyster, and Shrimp in the Indian River Lagoon, Mosquito Lagoon, Banana River Lagoon, Mosquito Control Impoundments and Interior Freshwater Lakes except for the restricted areas of the Kennedy Space Center or as noted below. For several days in advance of Space Shuttle launches, the normal restricted area is expanded which temporarily closes certain waters that are normally open to sports fishing. If you have questions regarding these temporary closures, you may call the Refuge for more information. Individuals found in NASA's normal or expanded Restricted Area are subject to arrest. All Florida Fishing Regulations apply as well as the following Refuge Specific Regulations:

- You must posses a current signed Refuge Sports Fishing Permit at all times while fishing on the Refuge. The permit is self-issuing and assures you have read and understand Merritt Island NWR's fishing regulations.
- You may fish at night from a boat in the waters of Haulover Canal, Mosquito Lagoon, Indian River Lagoon and Banana River Lagoon. Bank fishing after dark is not permitted. Impoundments and interior ponds are not open to night fishing.
- You may launch a boat at night from the following boat ramps: Bairs Cove, Bio Lab and Beacon 42. All other Refuge Boat Ramps are closed to night launching.
- You may not crab or fish from Black Point Wildlife Drive or any side road connected to Black Point Wildlife Drive except L Pond Road.
- You may not launch boats, canoes, kayaks from Black Point Wildlife Drive or any side road connected to Black Point except L Pond Road.
- Motorized vessels are not permitted in the Banana River Lagoon within the posted No-Motor Zone. This includes any vessel having an attached or non-attached internal combustion or electric trolling motor capable of use.
- You may not use air thrust boats, hover craft or personal watercraft in Refuge waters.
- Vessel speeds must not exceed Idle Speed in Bairs Cove and KARS Marina or Slow Speed/Minimum Wake in Haulover Canal. Florida law also regulates boat speeds on other waters of the Refuge.
- You may not harvest or posses horseshoe crabs.
- Anglers and crabbers must attend their lines.
- Commercial fishermen and Fishing Guides are required to obtain an annual Special Use Permit.
- Camping and/or overnight parking, firearms and open fires are prohibited. Pets must remain on a leash or in your vehicle/vessel.
- To improve fishing and protect grass flats, two Pole & Troll Zones have been established in Mosquito Lagoon. (See Map) The zones are delineated with buoys. Within the zones, internal combustion engines must be shut off (except in posted channels) and vessels drafting more than 12 inches at rest must not enter. Vessels may be propelled by a non-motorized power source such as drifting, push poles, paddles, etc. Electric trolling may be used through the zones. Boats may operate internal combustion engines only in the posted channels within the Pole & Troll Zones.
- Additional information may be obtained by contacting Refuge Headquarters on SR 402 between the hours of 8:00 a.m.- 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday; telephone (321) 861-0667. To report a law enforcement violation, call 321-861-3378.