

## Purpose of This Guide

This guide summarizes fishing regulations in the USVI and is a tool to help you identify and measure fish you catch. Regulations pertain to territorial (0-3 mi from shore) and federal waters (3-200 mi from shore) unless specified.

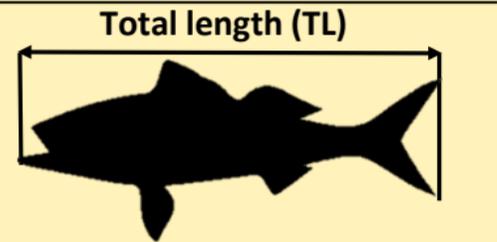
This guide is not comprehensive of all managed species. Fishing regulations are subject to change. It is your responsibility to become familiar with the latest regulatory updates. For current regulations, contact the Division of Environmental Enforcement or the National Marine Fisheries Service (see last panel of this guide).

If there is a discrepancy between this guide and regulations in the VI Code or Code of Federal Regulations, the regulations take precedence.

## How to Use This Guide

- Use the photos and ruler to identify and measure your fish
- Note size limits, catch limits, and closed seasons for certain species
- Note managed or restricted areas
- Contact local and/or federal management agencies for questions or complete regulations

### Legend



**Total length (TL)**

**Common name**

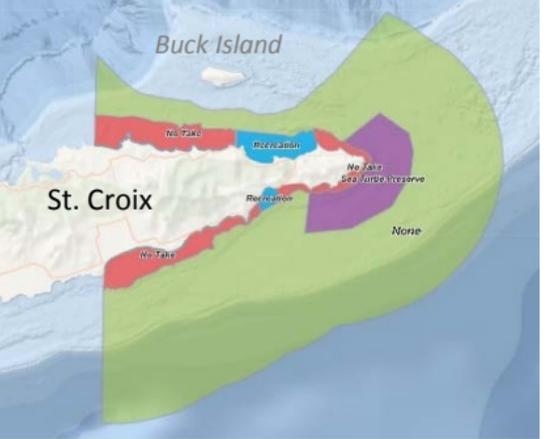
*Scientific name*

Regulations

## General Fishing Rules

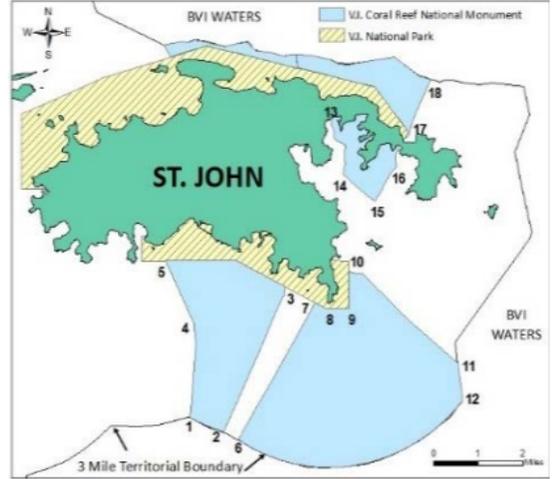
- No explosives, poisons, drugs, or other chemicals may be used to fish in territorial or federal waters.
- Only registered commercial fishers with a valid business license issued by the Dept. of Licensing & Consumer Affairs may sell locally caught seafood to the public.
- Sale, barter, or trade of catch by recreational fishers is prohibited.
- Traps, pots, and seine nets are considered commercial gear types and may not be used by recreational fishers.
- Anyone convicted of violating any fisheries law or regulation in the USVI may be subject to fines and other penalties.

## St. Croix East End Marine Park



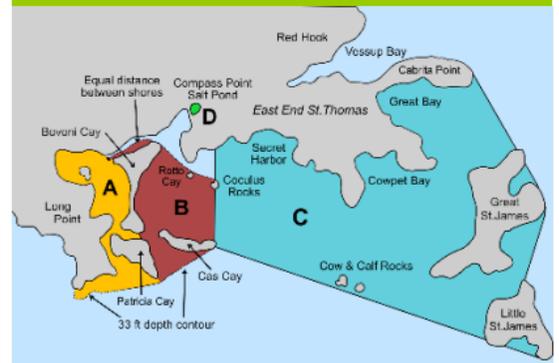
- EEMP Management Zones**
- Recreation Zone
  - No Take Zone
  - Sea Turtle Preserve Zone
  - Open Zone
- V.I.C., Title 12, Chapter 1, §98*

## VI National Park and Coral Reef National Monument



- Additionally, no fishing is permitted in:**
- Red Hook National Park Service Dock
  - Cruz Bay Finger Pier and Bulk Head
  - All boat exclusion areas
- For more information on Park regulations, contact NPS (340-776-6201).
- 36 CFR 7.74; 36 CFR 7.46*

## Cas Cay/Mangrove Lagoon, St. James, and Compass Point Marine Reserves and Wildlife Sanctuaries



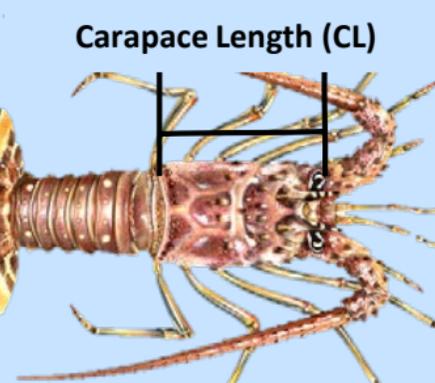
- For areas A, B, C, and D:**
- No Fishing
  - No Hunting
  - No Littering
  - No Take of Conch, Lobster, or Whelk
- V.I.C., Title 12, Chapter 1, §96*

## Queen Conch Regulations



- Closed Season: Jun. 1 – Oct. 31**
- Must have minimum shell length of **9 in.** from the spire to the distal end, or **3/8 in.** lip thickness
  - Commercial Trip Limit: **200** conch per day per registered commercial fishing vessel
  - Recreational Bag Limit: **6** conch per day per recreational (personal use) fisher; not to exceed **24** per boat per day
- V.I.C. Title 12, Chapter 9A, §316*

## Queen Conch Regulations



- Carapace Length (CL)**
- It is illegal to take lobster if:**
- The CL is less than **3 ½** inches
  - It is egg-bearing or has been stripped of its eggs
  - It has been speared, hooked, or otherwise impaled during capture
- Lobster must be landed whole**
- V.I.C. Title 12, Chapter 9A, §319*

## Whelk (West Indian Top Shell) Regulations



- Closed Season: April 1– Sept. 30**
- Must be landed live and whole in shell
  - Shell must have a diameter of **2 and 7/16** inches
- V.I.C. Title 12, Chapter 9A, §316*
- Available Resources**
- The following resources are also available from the Division of Fish and Wildlife:
- Commercial & Recreational Fishers' Information Handbook
  - Fish and lobster measuring gauges
  - Activity and coloring books for children
  - Wildlife and fish fact sheets and ID guides
  - Educational posters and brochures

## Important Phone Numbers

- For All Emergencies: 911
- Division of Fish and Wildlife**  
St. Thomas/St. John: 340-775-6762  
St. Croix: 340-773-1082
- Division of Environmental Enforcement**  
St. Thomas/St. John: 340-774-3320  
St. Croix: 340-773-5774
- U.S. Coast Guard (CH 16)**  
St. Thomas: 340-344-3537  
St. Croix: 340-332-7008  
24-Hour Emergency: 787-729-6800
- National Park Service**  
St. Thomas/St. John: 340-776-6201  
St. Croix: 340-773-1460
- NOAA Fisheries**  
Southeast Regional Office: 727-824-5305  
Highly Migratory Species: 727-824-5399
- Division of Fish & Wildlife Website**
- <http://www.dpnr.gov/fish-and-wildlife/>

## A Quick Reference Guide to Fishing Regulations of the USVI

2018



**U.S. Virgin Islands**  
Department of Planning & Natural Resources  
Division of Fish and Wildlife

