



Photo: John Graves

Saltwater Recreational Fisheries Atlantic Highly Migratory Species

MAINE TO TEXAS AND
THE U.S. CARIBBEAN

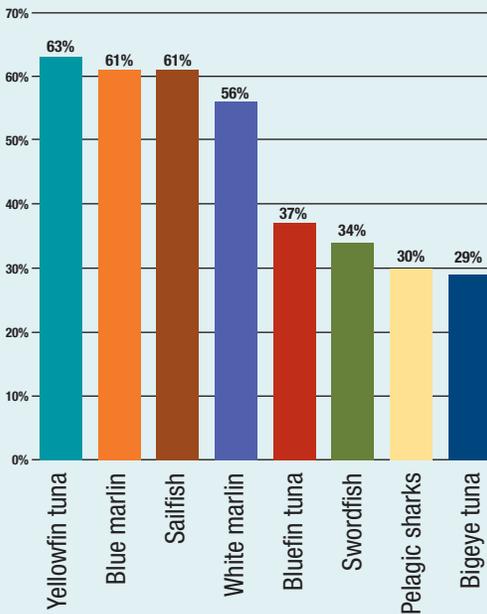
**In 2016,
NOAA Fisheries
issued more than
20,000 HMS angling
permits and nearly
4,000 HMS
charter/headboat
permits**

Big game fishing for Atlantic Highly Migratory Species (HMS) in the United States is some of the most exciting fishing in the world. From Maine to Texas and the U.S. Caribbean, recreational fishermen pursue HMS (tuna, billfishes, swordfish, and sharks) for sport, pleasure, and in many instances, to put food on the table. Atlantic HMS anglers make important economic contributions in coastal communities throughout the Atlantic and Gulf coasts, driving more than \$180 million in sales and supporting 2,725 jobs nationwide. Unique among federally managed fisheries, Atlantic HMS are directly managed by the Secretary of Commerce through NOAA Fisheries, not by a federal fishery management council. NOAA Fisheries works domestically and internationally, with a federal advisory panel and the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT), to ensure healthy oceans and sustainable and enduring fishing opportunities for HMS anglers.

Targeted Species

Sailfish, blue marlin, white marlin, and yellowfin tuna are targeted in over half of Atlantic HMS tournaments.

Percentage of HMS Tournaments Registered for the Most Popular Species or Species Group in 2015



Source: Atlantic HMS Tournament Registry, 2015 data.

Popular Recreational Species in the Atlantic HMS

2015 Species	Total Catch NUMBERS OF FISH	Harvested Released	% PRIVATE BOAT	% FOR HIRE
MAINE TO VIRGINIA*				
Yellowfin tuna	32,000		70%	30%
Bluefin tuna	9,000		68%	32%
Albacore tuna	5,000		73%	27%
Bigeye tuna	4,000		76%	24%
Shortfin mako	9,000		82%	18%
NORTH CAROLINA TO TEXAS AND PUERTO RICO**				
Blacktip shark	228,000		96%	4%
Atlantic sharpnose shark	231,000		78%	22%
Yellowfin tuna	39,000		49%	51%

*Source: Large Pelagic Survey.

**Source: Marine Recreational Information Program.

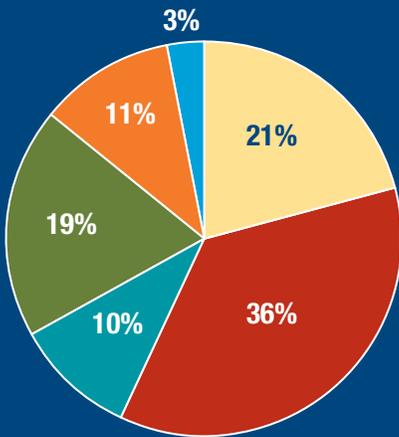


**NOAA
FISHERIES**

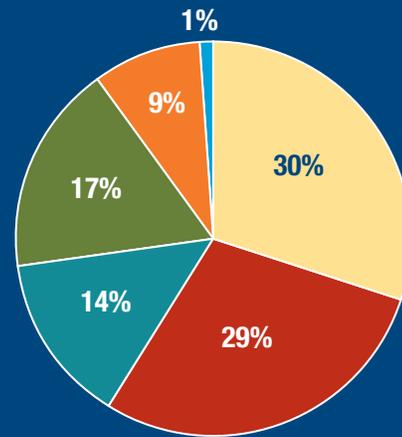
Atlantic Highly Migratory Species (HMS)

Permits and Tournaments by Region

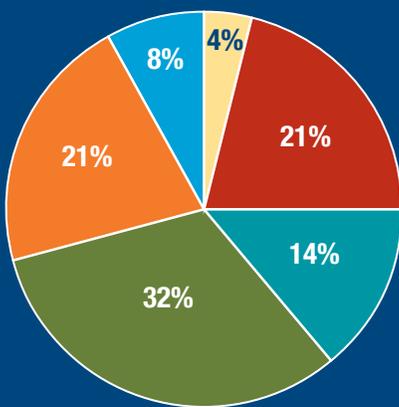
HMS angling vessel permits (2016)



HMS charter/headboat vessel permits (2016)



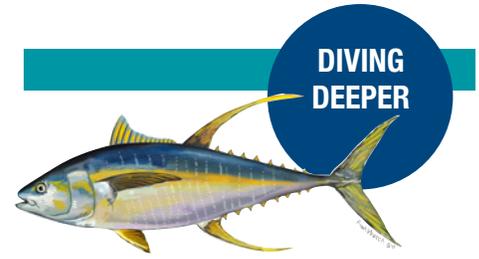
HMS tournaments (2006-2016)



Key

- New England
- Mid-Atlantic
- South Atlantic
- Florida*
- Gulf of Mexico
- Caribbean

*Florida contributes a considerable number of permits and tournaments, thus it's listed separately.



Yellowfin Tuna

Yellowfin tuna are found worldwide in tropical and sub-tropical oceans and are the most frequently landed HMS in United States recreational fisheries in the Atlantic, Gulf of Mexico, and U.S. Caribbean. They are managed under a total allowable catch limit established by ICCAT; however, there are no country specific quotas. Yellowfin tuna are not considered overfished or subject to overfishing by the United States. They are of great importance to both recreational and commercial U.S. fisheries, despite the fact U.S. landings comprise less than two percent of total international catch. Yellowfin tuna are available year round in the Gulf of Mexico and U.S. Caribbean, migrating up the Atlantic Coast during the spring and summer months. Recreational landings of Atlantic yellowfin tuna in the United States have varied over recent years, but have generally decreased, which may be influenced by a variety of factors including local availability due to the migratory nature of the species. Existing recreational regulations include a minimum size of 27" curved fork-length and bag limit of 3 fish per person per day.

BY THE NUMBERS

2015 HMS Durable Expenditures and Economic Impacts to the U.S. Economy*

Region	Expenditures in millions	Jobs	Total Output in millions	Value Added in millions	Income in millions
US Atlantic**	\$180	2,725	\$393	\$227	\$144
Northeast	\$65	746	\$77	\$60	\$40
Southeast	\$115	1,417	\$162	\$111	\$72

*Durable goods include vessels, vehicles, rods and reels, tackle, second homes, boat accessories, etc.

**Includes the Gulf of Mexico and U.S. Caribbean. U.S. Atlantic impacts exceed the sum of impacts in the Northeast and Southeast regions because they include spillover impacts to industries in states outside of those regions.

LEARN MORE

For more information about Atlantic Highly Migratory Species Management, visit [our webpage](#).

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Fishing for bluefin tuna, billfish, or swordfish?

Remember to report landings, as well as dead discards for bluefin tuna.

Check out the NOAA Fisheries mobile reporting app at:

<https://hmspermits.noaa.gov/mobileApp> go to

<https://hmspermits.noaa.gov/>

or call 888-872-8862 (for tuna)

or 800-894-5528 (for billfish and swordfish)