

Park Rules and Regulations

The following “**Pennekamp Lobster Exclusion Zones**” are closed at all times to the harvest of **any lobster species** and are marked with white and orange information spar buoys.

- Turtle Rocks
- Basin Hill Shoals
- Higdon’s Reef
- Cannon Patch
- Mosquito Bank North
- Mosquito Bank South
- Three Sisters North
- Three Sisters South

See adjacent chart for location and GPS coordinates. Chart is not to be used for navigational purposes.

Sport Season: is always the last **consecutive** Wednesday and Thursday in July. Begins 12:01 a.m. on the first day of the Sport Season and ends at 12:00 midnight on the last day of the Sport Season.

All of John Pennekamp Coral Reef State Park is closed during the 2-day Sport Season to the harvest of any lobster species.

Regular Season: Begins at 12:01 a.m. on August 6, and ends at 12:00 midnight on March 31. **In addition** to the above named “Pennekamp Lobster Exclusion Zones,” during the Regular Season **no person shall harvest any lobster species from or within any coral formation (patch reef) regardless of its proximity to, or exclusion from, a marked “No Lobstering” area.**

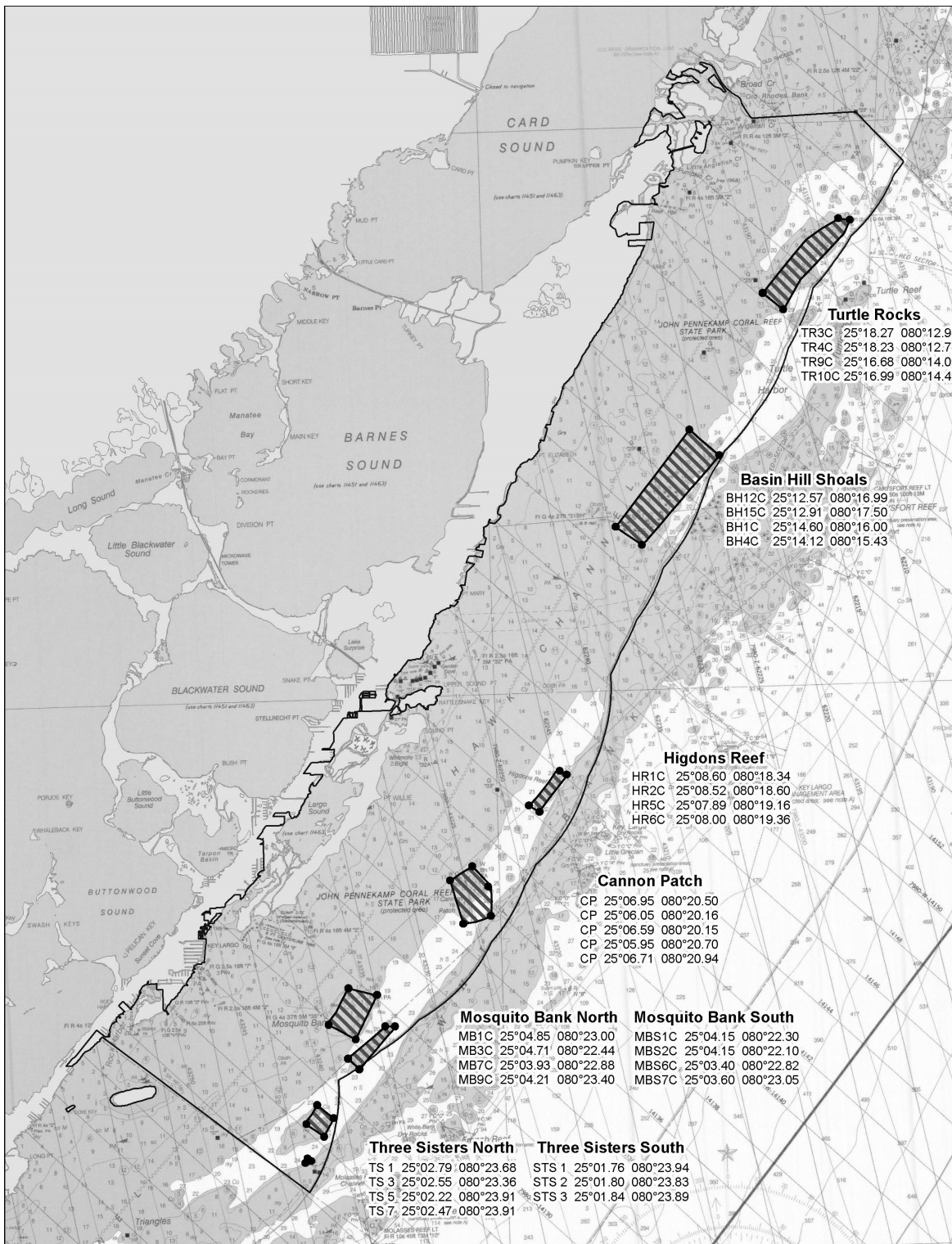
It is also prohibited to harvest lobster from any “**artificial habitats in State Waters,**” which are defined as any material placed in the waters of the State that is reasonably suited to provide cover and habitat for spiny lobster.

In addition, in Unincorporated Monroe County, during the **3 days preceding Sport Season, the entirety of Sport Season and the first 5 days of Regular Season,** there is **no diving or snorkeling** within:

- 300 feet of improved residential or commercial shoreline
- Any manmade or private canal
- Any public or private marina

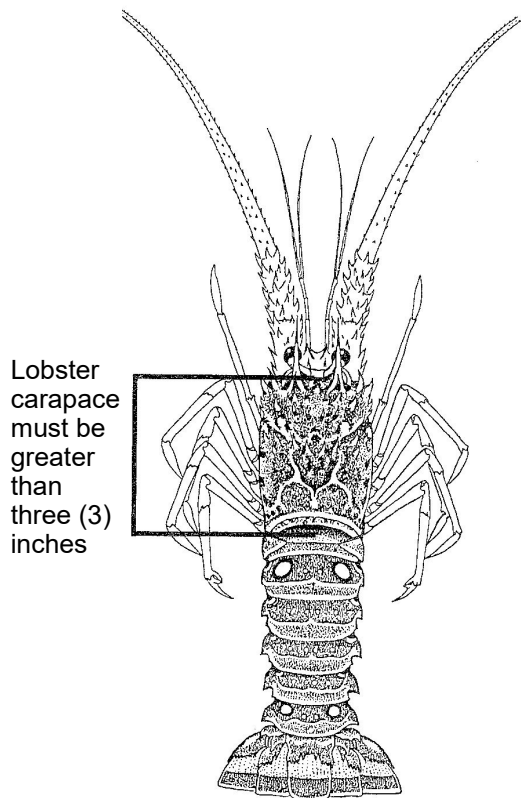
Exception: diving & snorkeling is allowed in front of his or her property to the center line of the canal or 100 ft. of open water.

Bag limit: Six (6) per recreational harvester per day.



Measuring Lobster

- ✓ No person shall harvest or attempt to harvest spiny lobster by diving unless they possess, while in the water, a gauge made for measuring lobster.
- ✓ All lobster must be measured in the water, if harvested by diving.
- ✓ Lobster carapace must be greater than three (3) inches to be harvested or possessed. All undersized lobsters must be released unharmed. The carapace measurement begins at the forward edge between the rostral horns, excluding any soft tissue, and proceeds along the middle to the rear edge of the carapace.
- ✓ All recreationally harvested lobster must remain in whole condition while at sea.
- ✓ Tails may only be separated on land. When the tail is separated from the body, it must be greater than 5½ inches.



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Alternative format
available upon request.

Facts for All Seasons:

Possession: Lobster must be of legal size before they are in possession. NOTE: You may not have lobster in your possession in Everglades National Park (Florida Bay).

Bag Limits: The Federal bag limit cannot be combined with the State bag limit. People NOT actively harvesting or not properly licensed may NOT be counted for purpose of bag limits.

License Requirements: Recreational harvesters are required to possess a valid Florida Saltwater Fishing License with a current spiny lobster permit. Consult your license agent for exemptions.

Gear: Harvesting or attempting to harvest spiny lobster using any device that will or could puncture, penetrate, or crush the exoskeleton (shell) or the flesh of the lobster, and the use of such devices, is prohibited.

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

Egg-bearing (berried) lobster regardless of species must be released unharmed. Stripping egg-bearing females of eggs, and possession of spiny or ridged slipper lobster tails from which eggs have been removed is prohibited. Eggs are an orange, yellow, brown, or red mass found covering the underside of the lobster's tail.

Spanish or spotted (*Panulirus guttatus*) and slipper (*Scyllarides aequinoctialis*) lobster are closed year-round to harvest in Key Largo and Looe Key Existing Management Areas, Everglades and Dry Tortugas National Parks, Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary Ecological Reserves, Sanctuary Preservation Areas and Special-Use Research Only Areas. During the Regular Season, they are closed to harvest in John Pennekamp Coral Reef State Park Lobster Exclusion Zones and from or within coral formations (patch reefs) within the Park.

"Artificial Habitats in State Waters" is any material placed in the waters of the State that is reasonably suited to providing cover and habitat for spiny lobster. Placing artificial habitat or harvesting lobster from artificial habitat is prohibited. Such material may be constructed of, but is not limited to, wood, metal, fiberglass, concrete, or plastic, or any combination thereof, and may be fabricated for this specific purpose or for some other purpose. Artificial habitat does not include fishing gear allowed by FWC or artificial reefs permitted by Florida DEP or Army Corps.

Commercial Lobster Traps and Ghost Traps: It is a felony to molest, damage, or take lobster from traps in State or Federal waters. (Recreational trapping is prohibited.)

"Bully-netting" is using a circular frame attached at a right angle to the end of a pole and supporting a conical bag of webbing. Possession of bully nets is prohibited in Everglades National Park (Florida Bay).

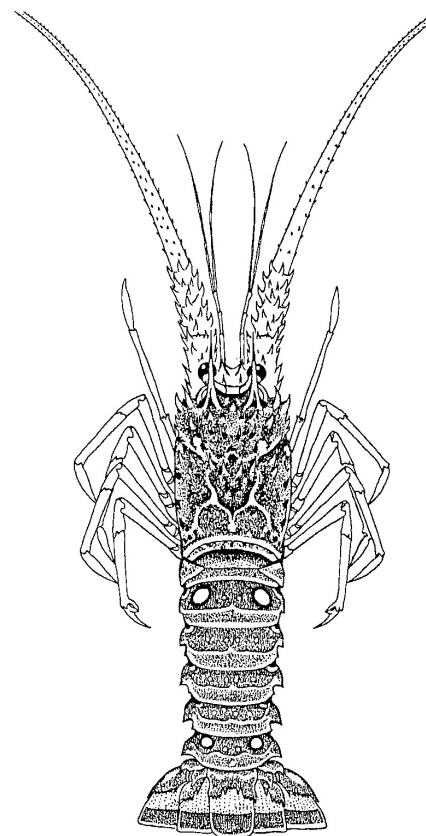
"Hoop-netting" is using a frame, circular or otherwise, supporting a shallow bag of webbing and suspended by a line and bridles. Possession of hoop nets is prohibited in Everglades National Park (Florida Bay).

Dive Flag: All divers and snorkelers in the water are required to prominently display a Diver-Down flag. Vessel operators must slow to idle speed within 100 yards of a dive flag.

Regulations for Recreational Harvest of Lobster in

**John Pennekamp
Coral Reef State Park**

07/2021



Florida Spiny Lobster
Panulirus argus