

SUMMARY OF CAYMAN ISLANDS MARINE CONSERVATION LAWS

LOBSTERS

- **Closed season:** 1 March through 30 November. No one may take lobster from Cayman waters during these months. No one may purchase, receive or possess lobster taken from Cayman waters during these months.
- **Open season catch limit:** Three per person or six per boat per day, whichever is less.
- **Size limit:** Six inch tail minimum size.
- Only spiny lobster (*P. argus*) may be taken.

CONCH

- **Closed season:** 1 May through 31 October. No one may take conch from Cayman waters during these months. No one may purchase, receive or possess conch taken from Cayman waters during these months.
- **Open season catch limit:** Five per person or ten per boat per day, whichever is less.
- No one may purchase or receive more than five conchs from Cayman waters in any one-day.

WHELKS

- **Closed season:** 1 May through 31 October. No one may take whelk from Cayman waters during these months. No one may purchase, receive or possess whelk taken from Cayman waters during these months
- **Open season catch limit:** Two-and-a-half gallons in the shell or two-and-a-half pounds of processed whelks per person per day.
- No one may purchase or receive more than two-and-a-half gallons in the shell or two-and-a-half pounds processed whelks from Cayman waters in any one day.
- Chitons, periwinkles and bleeding teeth may not be taken from Cayman waters at any time.

ECHINODERMS

- Echinoderms (includes starfish, sea eggs/urchins, sea cucumber, sand dollars etc) may not be taken from Cayman waters at any time.

TURTLES

- No one may disturb, molest or take turtles in Cayman waters without a licence from the Marine Conservation Board.
- Possession of turtle eggs is prohibited.
- For licensed fishermen, closed season runs from 1 May through 31 October..

SHARKS

- No one may feed, attempt to feed or provide or use food to attract any shark in Cayman waters.

NASSAU GROUPERS

- **Designated Grouper Spawning Areas are protected.**
- **Closed season:** 1 January through 31 December 2003 and every alternate year thereafter (i.e. 2005,2007,2009 etc.).
- **Open season catch limit:** (2004, 2006, 2008 etc.) twelve grouper per person or per boat per day applies in these areas.
- During open season only line fishing is permitted in these areas by Caymanians.
- **Size limit:** Twelve inch minimum size limit applies throughout Cayman waters year round.

OTHER FISH

- **Protected fish:** Jew fish, tilefish (whities), filefish (pipers) and angelfish, including Grey, French and Queen angels (old monks), may not be taken from Cayman waters at any time.
- **Size limit:** Eight-inch minimum size on all other fish except goggle eyes, herrings (including sprats), anchovies and silversides (including loggerhead and fine fry).

FISH POTS

- Must be licensed by the Marine Conservation Board
- Only Caymanians over 18 may be granted licences.
- Only two pots per family and pots must be identified with a DOE tag.
- No fish pot may be set within a one-mile radius of any Designated Grouper Spawning Area from 1 November through 31 March.

SPEAR GUNS & SEINE NETS

- No one may use a speargun (includes Hawaiian sling, polespear, harpoon, hookstick or any device with a pointed end which may be used to impale, stab or pierce any marine life but does not include a striker) or seine net without a licence from the Marine Conservation Board. NOTE: A striker is defined as a wooden pole, no shorter than 10 feet, with a maximum of 2 barb-less prongs attached to one end.
- No one may possess a speargun without a licence.
- No one may import a speargun or any parts for a speargun.
- Only Caymanians over 18 may be granted licences.
- **Speargun catch limit:** Three fish per licensed person per day.
- No one may possess more than six fish that have been caught by a speargun.
- No one may spearfish within a one-mile radius of any Designated Grouper Spawning Area from 1 November through 31 March.

FISHING LICENSES

- Unless licensed by the Marine Conservation Board, residents who do NOT possess Caymanian Status may not take or attempt to take, by any means, any marine life while he is on shore or in any part of Cayman waters in which he can stand.
- No licence is required for catch and release fishing.

GENERAL RULES

- Damaging coral by anchor, chains or any other means **ANYWHERE** in Cayman waters is prohibited.
- No taking of **ANY** marine life alive or dead while on SCUBA.
- No taking of any coral, sponges, etc. from Cayman waters.
- Wearing gloves while diving or snorkelling in Cayman waters is prohibited.
- Export of live fish or other marine life is prohibited.
- Fishing with gill nets, poison or other noxious substances is prohibited.
- Dumping **ANYTHING** in Cayman waters is prohibited.
- The export of conch shells and or black coral requires a CITES permit, issued through the DOE.

PENALTIES

Violation of any of these laws is an offence carrying a maximum penalty of CI\$500,000 fine and one year in jail. Upon conviction, forfeiture of the vessel or other equipment may also be ordered.

Call for further information
Department of Environment
580 North Sound Way, Grand Cayman.

Phone: 949-8469 Fax: 949-4020
Cayman Brac: 926-0136

Little Cayman: 926-0135

VHF: Channel 17

Report offences to VHF 17, 948-6002 or 911

Report oil spills or other marine pollution to the DOE 949-8469 or 911

WEBSITE: www.gov.ky/doi

EMAIL: doi@gov.ky

PUBLIC MOORINGS

Public moorings are located around each of the islands to reduce anchor damage to coral. These 18 or 30 inch white buoys may be identified by their blue stripe and yellow pick-up line and may be used free of charge. The smaller buoys are designed to hold vessels up to 60 feet long and the larger buoys are for vessels up to 100 feet. Where possible, please tie up to a buoy instead of anchoring. **It is an offence to anchor so as to damage coral anywhere in Cayman waters.** Please limit your use of the mooring to 3 hours or less. It is the responsibility of the boat operator to ensure that the mooring is in safe condition – do not leave the boat unattended while on the mooring.

Damaged moorings may be reported to the
Department of Environment on VHF 17.

Rules for Cayman Islands Marine Parks



MARINE PARK ZONE

- No taking of any marine life alive or dead, except:
 - ☐ line fishing from shore is permitted ([see FISHING LICENSES section over page](#));
 - ☐ line fishing at depths of 80 ft or greater is permitted;
 - ☐ taking fry and sprat with a fry or cast net is permitted. NOTE: fish traps, spear guns, pole spears and other nets are totally prohibited.
- No anchoring - use of fixed moorings only, except:
 - ☐ boats of 60 ft or less may anchor in sand, so long as no grappling hook is used, and neither the anchor nor the rope or chain will impact coral;
 - ☐ anchoring permitted in designated Port anchorage areas—contact Port Security VHF Channel 16;
 - ☐ anchoring prohibitions suspended during emergencies and by permission of Port Director.
- Bloody Bay, Little Cayman - Special restrictions have been placed on the use of the Bloody Bay Marine Park, no commercial operations may use the park without a licence from the Marine Conservation Board.



NO DIVING ZONE

- No SCUBA diving



DESIGNATED GROUPER SPAWNING AREAS

- East and West End of: Cayman Brac, Little Cayman and Twelve Mile Bank. Coxswain Bank and South West Point Grand Cayman.
- No fishing for Nassau Groupers in 2003 and during every alternate year after (ie 2005, 2007 etc);
- During open season only line fishing is permitted in these areas by Caymanians;
- No fish pots or spearfishing within one-mile radius of Designated Grouper Spawning Area from 1 November through 31 March.



REPLENISHMENT ZONE

- No taking of conch or lobster by any means;
- Line fishing ([see FISHING LICENSES section over page](#)) and anchoring permitted;
- Anchor, chain or line must not touch coral;
- Spear guns, pole spears, fish traps and nets prohibited, except that fry and sprat may be taken with a fry or cast net.

NOTE: These zones include the outside edge of the reef to a depth of 20 feet.



ENVIRONMENTAL ZONE

- No taking of any marine life, alive or dead with no exceptions
- No in-water activities
- Public may access only at speeds of 5 m.p.h. or less
- No anchoring of any boat

NOTE: Line fishing, fish traps, nets, spear guns and strickers are totally prohibited.



ANIMAL SANCTUARIES/RAMSAR SITES

- No hunting,
- No collecting of any species
- No littering .

