

“Trophy-sized fish” that are caught in Virginia waters can be registered through the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries’ Angler Recognition Program. This program grants:

**Trophy Fish Awards:** Certificates for registration of trophy size fish.

**Expert Angler Awards:** Certificates and patches for registration of 10 trophy fish of the same species.

**Master Angler Awards I-V:** Certificates and patches for registration of 5 trophy fish of different species. Five successive levels.

**Angler of the Month:** Pins for registration of the largest trophy fish of each species, by certified weight, each month.

**Angler of the Year:** Pins for registration of the largest trophy fish of each species, by certified weight, each year.

**Creel of the Year:** Recognizes the angler who catches and registers the most trophy-sized fish from January 1 through December 31, annually. Accolade presented is determined annually.

### Program Policies

- The fish must be caught in Virginia waters (within the state line on boundary waters), the freshwater part of the Potomac River that borders Virginia, or above the designated Freshwater/Saltwater line on tidal waters.
- The fish must be caught legally (in accordance with Virginia Freshwater Fishing Regulations) by noncommercial methods.

- The fish must meet or exceed the minimum weight or length.
- The fish must be registered according to the proper procedures. Fish may be certified by weight, or length, or both. Weights from store-certified scales or personal scales will be accepted. Personal scales must be calibrated and certified within a year of date of catch. (See the Trophy Fish page on our website for more information about calibrating and certifying scales.)
- Applications must be received within 60 days to be eligible for Angler of the Month/Year competition. There is no deadline for submission of a Trophy Fish Award Application.
- All applicants are encouraged to submit a photo of their catch with each submission.

### Certifying a Trophy Fish by Weight

- Take your fish to a store with certified scales. Have a clerk weigh the fish and complete the witness information on the trophy fish application and include the date the scale was certified.
- Or, weigh your fish on a personal scale that has been certified. Have an observer witness and verify the weight and fill out the witness information or if a witness is not available, take a picture of the fish on the scale, displaying the weight of the fish. Fill out the date the scale was certified, the company or organization certifying the scale, the make and model and the maximum weight of the scale. (Scales must be certified within a year prior to the date of catch. See the Trophy Fish page on our website for more information about calibrating and certifying scales.)

## Trophy Fish Lengths and Weights

To qualify as a trophy, fish must meet or exceed the following lengths or weights.

SPECIES	LENGTH	WEIGHT
Largemouth Bass	22"	8 lbs.
Smallmouth Bass	20"	5 lbs.
Striped Bass	37"	20 lbs.
Hybrid Striped Bass*	24"	8 lbs.
Rock Bass	12"	1 lb.
White Bass	18"	2 lbs. 8 ozs.
Bowfin (Grindle)	30"	10 lbs.
Flathead Catfish	40"	25 lbs.
Channel Catfish	30"	12 lbs.
Blue Catfish	38"	30 lbs.
Common Carp	34"	20 lbs.
Chain Pickerel	24"	4 lbs.
Crappie	15"	2 lbs.
Freshwater Drum	24"	6 lbs.
Gar	40"	10 lbs.
Muskellunge	40"	15 lbs.
Northern Pike	30"	6 lbs.
Yellow Perch	12"	1 lb. 4 oz.
White Perch	13"	1 lb. 4 oz.
Sunfish	11"	1 lb.
Brook Trout	16"	2 lbs.
Brown Trout	25"	5 lbs.
Rainbow Trout	22"	4 lbs.
Walleye	25"	5 lbs.
Sauger**	18"	2 lbs.

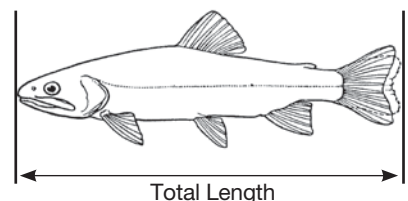
\* Claytor and Flannagan reservoirs only

\*\* Clinch and Powell rivers only

### Qualifying a Trophy Fish by Length and Photo

- Lay the fish on top of or beside a flat measuring rule.
- Do not lay the rule over the curvature of the fish’s body.
- Close the fish’s mouth and squeeze the tail lobes together.
- Measure from the tip of the snout to the end of the tail to the nearest 1/4-inch. See diagram below.
- Have an observer verify the length and complete the witness information on the trophy fish application. Or, take a picture of the fish next to the ruler and submit the photo with application.
- Return the fish safely to the water if desired.

### How to Measure a Fish



Stephen Miklandric proudly holding one of his many citation fish.

**Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries**  
**Freshwater Trophy Fish Award Application Form**

**Mail-in Application:** Certify the size of the fish. Fill out completely, one application form for each fish, \$5.00 per fish. (No charge for youth 15 and under.) Please include VA fishing license number or exempt status. You may include more than one application form per envelope. Applications may be found in the Freshwater Fishing Regulations or online at [www.dgif.virginia.gov/forms-download/EDUC/EDUC-006.pdf](http://www.dgif.virginia.gov/forms-download/EDUC/EDUC-006.pdf). Mail the application form(s) with payment and make check or money order payable to the Treasurer of Virginia. Send to: Cashier, VDGIF, P.O. Box 90778, Henrico, VA 23228-0778.

**Please print clearly**

VA Fishing License # (or write Exempt if license exempt) \_\_\_\_\_

Check box if applicant is 15 or under and receiving a trophy fish award for the 1st time for this species.

Birth Date: \_\_\_\_\_ m/ \_\_\_\_\_ d/ \_\_\_\_\_ y/      Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_  Jr  Sr  II  III  \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address \_\_\_\_\_ Apt. # \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_  Female  Male

• Species of Fish: \_\_\_\_\_ • Date Caught: \_\_\_\_ m/ \_\_\_\_ d/ \_\_\_\_ y/

• Weight of Fish: \_\_\_\_\_ • Length of Fish (to nearest 1/4-inch): \_\_\_\_\_

• Name of water where caught: \_\_\_\_\_ • Name of County/City where caught: \_\_\_\_\_

• Type of water where caught:  River  Public Lake/Reservoir  Stream  Private Pond/Lake

• Live release?:  Yes  No

**Check the box below that applies and fill in information requested— see Program Policies for details**

**Weight Certification:** (Select One)     Store Scale/Witness     Certified/Calibrated Personal Scale/Witness     Certified/Calibrated Personal Scale/Photo

Store/Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Witness Name \_\_\_\_\_

Witness Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Personal Scale:    Date Certified/Calibrated \_\_\_\_\_    Certified/Calibrated by \_\_\_\_\_

Scale Make/Model \_\_\_\_\_    Scale Max Weight \_\_\_\_\_

**Length Certification:**

Witness Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

Witness Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

**Length by Photo Certification:** Take photo of fish next to ruler. Print your name, birth date, and fish species on back of the photo. Enclose with application. Photos become property of VDGIF and may be used in publications.

**(Angler sign here)** I, \_\_\_\_\_ hereby affirm that the above information is true and that in taking this fish I complied with all state fishing regulations and rules of the Virginia Angler Recognition Program and that the witness/es actually witnessed the weighing and/or measuring of this fish. I understand that photos become the property of VDGIF and may be used in agency publications.