

2026 GCC FFI Mixed Bag Classic

A Fly Fishing Scavenger Hunt

Overview: The 4th annual GCC FFI Mixed Bag Classic is a Multi-day, Mixed Bag Fly Fishing contest hosted as part of GCC FFI's Gulf Classic. Anglers fishing in one of four divisions (more below) will be challenged to Catch-Photo-Release as many of 16 eligible species/categories (plus a variety of "wild cards" and bonuses) as possible with the highest total points accrued in each division declared the winner. Coupled with additional awards for Beach Cleanup, Unique Catch and Longest Fish, this event will feel more like a scavenger hunt than a conventional fishing tournament

When: April 30, 2026 – May 3, 2026

Where: Gulf State Park (Gulf Shores, AL) & surrounding waters

*see Boundaries Map for more details

Who: Fly Anglers of all ages in attendance at the Gulf Coast Classic

The Important Stuff: Rules, Registration, etc.

1. Registration & Fees:

- a. All registered "Classic" participants are eligible to participate in the Mixed Bag Classic
 - i. No additional entry fee is required
 - ii. Additionally, each participant must submit an FFI tournament waiver form prior to participation

2. Divisions:

- a. Participants may register for one of the following two (2) divisions:
 - i. Adult
 - ii. Youth (under 18)

3. Disqualification:

- a. Failure to abide by **any** of the following rules shall result in participant disqualification.

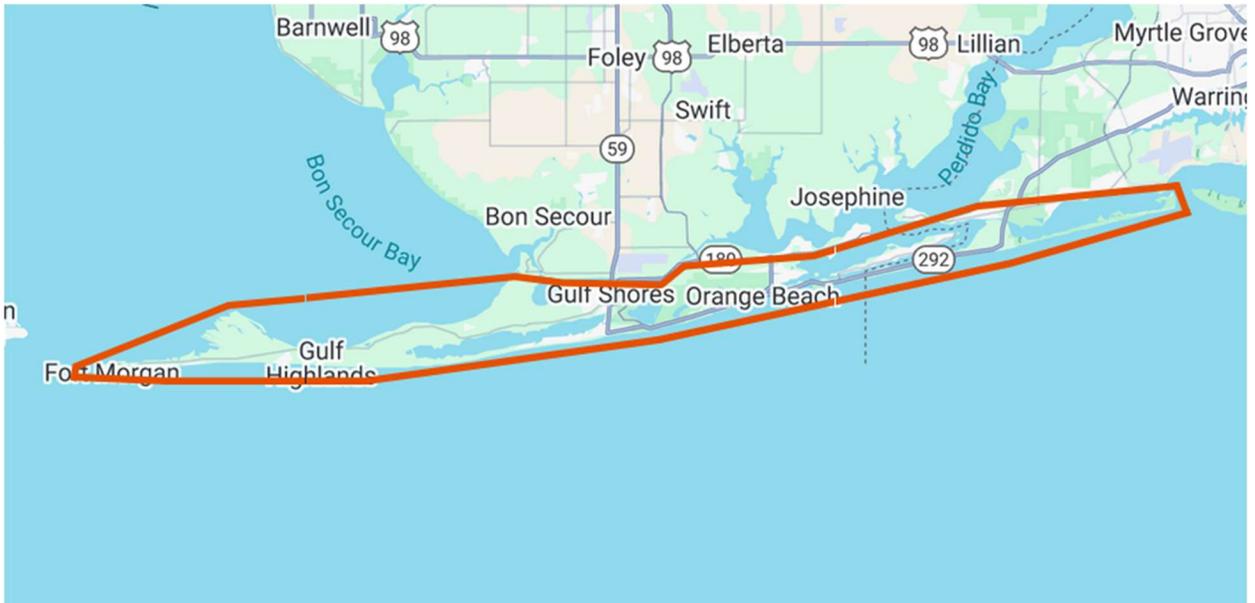
4. Tournament Dates:

- a. Fish submitted to this contest must be caught during the time frame prescribed below:
 - i. Lines In: April 30, 2026 at first light (5:43 AM)
 - ii. Lines out: May 3, 2026 at noon (12:00 PM)

5. Tournament Boundaries:

Note: Boundaries have been reduced in 2026 to ensure anglers remain within a closer proximity to the festival grounds at Gulf State Park

- a. 2026 Tournament Boundaries are as follows:
 - i. North: Northern Shore of Big Lagoon encompassing Big Lagoon SP on the Florida side; extending west into Alabama where it parallels Alabama Coastal Connection/Hwy 180 to Oyster Bay and extends north of the barrier Island to the western Terminus of Fort Morgan.
 - ii. South: 1/2-mile offshore from the nearest barrier island
 - iii. East: Eastern edge of Fort McRee (Johnson Beach) at Pensacola Pass
 - iv. West: Mobile Bay at Fort Morgan



****Anglers may fish from shore or watercraft anywhere within the above boundaries****

2026 Eligible Species/Categories

1 Point	2 Points	3 Points	4 Points	5 Points	Bonuses
Wildcard 1	Bass, Largemouth (18")	Ladyfish (18")	Black Drum (27")	Sheepshead (18")	<i>Volunteer Bonus (5 Points)</i>
Wildcard 2	Sunfish (<i>Lepomis</i> sp) (9")	Catfish, Fresh or Salt (14")	Pompano, Florida (15")	Jack, Atlantic Crevalle (24")	<i>Classic Confluence Bonus (3 Points)</i>
Wildcard 3	Seatrout, Spotted (20")	Mackerel, Spanish (18")	Flounder (14")	Tarpon (30")	<i>Support Your Local Fly Shop Bonus (3 Points)</i>
Wildcard 4	Drum, Red (27")	Snapper, Mangrove (12")	Gar, Any Species (30")	Mullet (<i>Mugil</i> sp) (12")	<i>Beach Cleanup Bonus (3 Points)</i>
Lunker Bonus (1 Point; 6x limit)					

6. Eligible Species:

- a. One fish from each of the following 16 eligible Species/Categories may be submitted.
 - i. Species/Categories are worth 2 to 5 points as defined in the chart above.
- b. Additionally, four (4) "Wild Card" species may also be submitted.
 - i. "Wild Card" species are defined as any species not represented by one of the 20 eligible Species/Categories
 - 1. *Wild Card entries may include only one additional species from a listed category*
 - a. *i.e. Only one additional "Sunfish (*Lepomis* sp)" may be submitted*
 - 2. Wild Card entries are each worth 1 point towards your score.
- c. Bonus Categories
 - i. 2026 Bonus Categories are as follows:
 - 1. Volunteer Bonus: a 5-point bonus will be awarded to any angler that serves as a volunteers (minimum ½ day) during the Classic.
 - a. Bonus automatically applied upon completion of volunteer shift.
 - 2. Classic Confluence Bonus: a 3-point bonus will be awarded to any angler that completes the Classic Confluence at this year's Festival (Volunteers are not eligible for this bonus).
 - a. Photo of completed stamp card must be submitted for credit.
 - 3. Support Local Bonus: a 3-point bonus will be awarded for visiting & making a purchase at a local fishing retailer.

- a. Photo of angler in front of shop with purchase must be submitted for credit.
- 4. Beach Cleanup Bonus: a 3-point bonus will be awarded for collecting trash along waterways during the course of the tournament.
 - a. A photo of collected refuse must be submitted for credit.
- 5. Lunker Bonus: A “Lunker” Bonus of 1-point will be awarded for any eligible species caught that exceeds the length notated on the Eligible Species/Category table.
 - a. Images must be clear with the entire fish & both ends of the tape measure visible to receive credit.
 - b. A limit of six (6) “Lunker” bonuses will be awarded per angler.

7. Eligible Equipment:

- a. Only fly rods and reels may be used in this competition.
 - i. Conventional tackle and handlines are prohibited
- b. Flies shall be defined as any hand-tied lure consisting of feathers, fur and/or synthetic materials.
 - i. Flies may not be tied on Treble hooks.
Rope flies are prohibited

8. Submission & Acceptance Criteria of Eligible Species

- a. This is a Catch-Photo-Release (CPR) Tournament
 - i. Submission of all entries shall be completed through the Mixed Bag portal on the Classic website (<https://ffigulfcoastclassic.com/fly-fishing-tournament/>)
- b. All submissions must meet the following criteria to be accepted:
 - i. The entire fish MUST be visible in the photo
 - ii. The fish must be identifiable as the noted Species/Category
 - 1. Identifications brought into question may be rejected at the discretion of tournament officials.
 - iii. The fish must be alive at the time the photograph was taken.
 - 1. Submissions containing obviously dead fish will be rejected.
 - iv. FFI's Soft Handling Practices must be observed
 - 1. Fish should be handled in a net or with wet hands. Fish photographed on the ground or being mishandled will be rejected at the discretion of the judges.
 - 2. See the following link for more details:
<https://www.flyfishersinternational.org/Conservation/Conservation-Education/Soft-Release>
 - v. The fly used to catch the fish and/or Fly Rod/Reel must be visible in the photo.
 - vi. The Tournament identification code/token must be visible in the photo.
- c. All submissions shall be considered "Pending" until "Approved/Accepted" by tournament officials.

9. Scoring:

- a. The 2026 Tournament will be scored using the tiered point system defined in the Eligible Species/Category table found in section 6.
 - i. Each Species/Category has been assigned a value between 2 and 5 points with four additional wild card species valued at 1 point each.
 - ii. Additional bonuses shall be awarded as follows:
 - 1. Volunteer Bonus: 5-points
 - 2. Classic Confluence Bonus: 3-points
 - 3. Support Local Bonus: 3-points
 - 4. Beach Cleanup Bonus: 3-points
 - 5. Lunker Bonus: 1-point/Lunker (limit 6)
 - a. See Section 6.c for all Bonus details
 - iii. A total of 77 points is possible for the submission of all Species/Categories (including Bonuses & Wildcards)
- b. **Final standings will be reported for each division with the Cumulative Point leader in each division being designated as the Division Winner (1st Place).**
 - i. In the event of a tie, total Species/Categories submitted will serve as the primary tiebreaker.
 - 1. Should this tiebreaker fail, time of final submission will determine the winner.

10. Awards and Prizes:

- a. An awards ceremony shall be held at Gulf State Park following the conclusion of fishing at 1:00 PM on Sunday, May 3, 2026.
- b. Final standings shall be announced and prizes awarded (at a minimum) to the 1st Place finisher in each of the designated divisions.
 - i. Prizes: **TBD**
- c. Additional Prizes (**TBD**) Shall be awarded as follows:
 - i. Top Woman Angler
 1. Highest scoring woman angler (Excluding 1st place division winners)
 - ii. Beach Cleanup
 1. Determined based on quantity (weight of trash) collected during the tournament.
 2. Weigh-in will be conducted 1-hour prior to the awards ceremony

Note: Pylons and other wooden debris are excluded
 - iii. Unique Catch
 1. Awarded by a panel of sponsors, this award will be presented to the angler who submits the most unique catch during the course of the tournament
 - iv. Longest Fish
 1. Based off submitted "Lunker" bonuses, this prize will be awarded for the longest fish of any Eligible Species/Category submitted during the tournament.

11. Local, State and Federal Regulations:

- a. It is the responsibility of all participating anglers to abide by local, state and federal regulations as it pertains to angling, use of watercraft and other tournament activities.
 - i. This includes, but is not limited to, maintaining current fishing licenses for the waters being fished, following all boater safety laws when on the water and following relevant traffic laws when driving to and from fishing sites.
- b. Failure to abide by these laws will result in immediate disqualification.