

Ladder of Angling Achievement Rules

(Revised 6/11/2026)

Who

Limited to members of the PGI Fishing Club (Club).

General Rules

When you join the Club you automatically earn “Angler” status. There are eight levels above “Angler”

Bronze Class Angler

Silver Class Angler

Gold Class Angler

Lifetime Master Angler Level 1 (Snook)

Lifetime Master Angler Level 2 (Redfish)

Lifetime Master Angler Level 3 (Tarpon)

Grand Master Angler (Shirt)

Grand Master Angler (Star)

All entries must be caught in local waters that are accessible to the general public and are within a 50 nautical mile radius of Charlotte Harbor.

This is an ongoing program. Changes made to these rules beginning in 2014 are not retroactive.

The length of an eligible fish shall be measured to the closest ½ inch from the closed mouth to end of the pinched tail. Estimated lengths of partial fish are not accepted. The total length of the wingspan of a stingray; fork length estimated of barracuda, Shark, Tarpon maybe estimated using your fishing rod (leader, or other known length while the fish is in the water). Anglers should state “fork-length measurement” for those species so required with each submission.

The first table below identifies the 33 species of fish eligible for the Ladder of Angling Achievement Program. This table also identifies the "eligible size" each species must equal or exceed in order to qualify for levels above the "bronze" level, as described in the following section of these rules. The second table shown below identifies the minimum length specific eligible species must meet in order to earn points for these species.

Generally, the "eligible size" listed for this Program equals State and/or Federal legal lengths of species contained in their respective fishing regulations for harvesting fish; however always refer to FWC for legal size when harvesting fish. All anglers must thoroughly familiarize themselves with current regulations so that illegal size fish (i.e., fish below minimum legal lengths or above the maximum legal length for species having slot limits), prohibited fish and/or fish out of season are not kept. Release such eligible fish immediately after determining their length and taking a picture as specified herein for credit towards your Ladder of Angling Achievement. State and Federal regulations are governed by the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council, respectively.

Fish caught using paid Charter Captains or paid Guides are eligible for your Ladder of Angling Achievement only, as are fish fought by a single member claiming the species and/or points but where minimal assistance is provided by another individual with whom you are fishing. For example, if a fishing partner hooks a fish and hands you the rod without fighting it, or removes a rod from the rod holder that has hooked a fish and hands you the rod to fight the fish and it is brought to the boat on your own, it is eligible for your Ladder of Angling Achievement only. Under such circumstances, the fish would not be eligible for a Club record, the Fish of the Month contest, the Master Angler Tournament or the Isles Trophy Race.

The Club encourages CPR (catch, photograph, and release).

At the discretion of the Board Officers, an honorary GMA may be awarded to a member for significant and lifelong contributions to the PGI Fishing Club.

How to Earn Levels

First fish caught – members submitting their first fish caught from the list of eligible species will receive a **Club hat**. There are no size limits applied to the first fish.

Bronze Class Angler – Five (5) different species on the list of eligible species. There are no size limits.

Silver Class Angler – Five (5) different species of fish meeting their respective eligible size shown on the list, and earn a minimum of 300 points.

Gold Class Angler – Seven (7) different species of fish meeting their respective eligible size shown on the list, and earn a minimum of 700 points.

Lifetime Master Angler Level 1 (Snook) – Nine (9) different species of fish meeting their respective eligible size shown on the list, and earn a minimum of 1000 points.

Lifetime Master Angler Level 2 (Redfish) – Thirteen (13) different species of fish meeting their respective eligible size shown on the list, and earn a minimum of 1400 points.

Lifetime Master Angler Level 3 (Tarpon) – Eighteen (18) different species of fish meeting their respective eligible size shown on the list, and earn a total of 1700 points.

Grand Master Angler Shirt – Twenty-three (23) different species of fish meeting their respective eligible size shown on the list, and earn a total of 2000 points.

Grand Master Angler Star - A total of 2000 new points for any year after achieving Grand Master Angler status. Grand Master Anglers can only receive one star per calendar year.

Recording/Reporting Fish

Paid Charter Captains and paid Guides may only be used for the Ladder of Angling Achievement, fish caught with paid Captains/Guides must be identified as such when submitting an entry. Also, if you received assistance in catching the fish as described above from any fishing partner, please indicate that as well so that such fish can be excluded for consideration for Club records or entry into our other contests.

All entries are cumulative. Once you enter an eligible size fish, it and any points earned will count toward the next award level.

A digital photograph in jpeg format of your photo showing your face, along with the fish, identified with your last and first name, length of fish, fish species, and date caught, attached to your email, will be your entry form (honor system must prevail).

Shark, Stingray, Tarpon, and Barracuda should be photographed while they are in the water and not brought on board unless they are being kept in accordance with all applicable State and/or Federal regulations and requirements. Additionally, photographs submitted for Shark, Stingray, Tarpon and Barracuda do not require that both the angler and the fish be in the photo; submitting a photo of the fish alongside the boat with or without the angler is acceptable. Shark, Stingray, Tarpon, and Barracuda fought and brought alongside the boat such that the leader could be touched shall count as a “landed” fish.

Your submittal is now your entry form for all club fishing events (Master Angler Tournament, Ladder of Angling Achievement Program, Fish of the Month Contest, and Isles Trophy Race).

Eligibility for this program will be determined by The Club appointed Fishing Events Record Keeper and Director. Their decision is final.

All submittals must be emailed to the Club at fishphotos@pgifishingclub.org

ELIGIBLE ANGLER ACHIEVEMENT SPECIES

SPECIES	ELIGIBLE SIZE	SPECIES	ELIGIBLE SIZE	SPECIES	ELIGIBLE SIZE
Amberjack	34" Fork	Grouper, Red	20	Shark	All Fork
Barracuda	All	Grouper, Gag & Black	24	Sheepshead	12"
Black Drum	14"	Grunt	All	Snapper, Am. Red	16"
Bluefish	12" Fork	Jack Crevalle	All Fork	Snapper, Mangrove	10" (State) (12" Fed)
Blue Runner	All	King Mackerel	24" Fork	Snapper, Yellowtail	12"
Bonita	All	Ladyfish	All	Snapper (all others*)	10-18"
Catfish (all)	All	Permit	11" Fork	Snook	28"
Cobia	36" Fork	Pinfish	All	Spadefish	All
Flounder	14"	Pompano	11" Fork	Spanish Mackerel	12" Fork
		Pompano, African	24" Fork	Stingray	All (wing)
		Redfish	18"	Tarpon	All Fork
		Seatrout, Spotted	15"	Tripletail	18"
				Whiting	All

Snapper, All Others: Lane, Schoolmaster, Vermillion (10"); Cubera, Dog, Mahogany (12"); Mutton (18")

Fish that can not be legally harvested must be promptly released unharmed.

You must be a member of the PGI Fishing Club at the time the fish is caught to enter the fish in the LOA.

NOTE: FOM entries must be submitted by the end of the last day of the month.

NOTE: Master Angler & Trophy entries must be submitted within 3 weeks of being caught.

NOTE: Fish species Eligible Size "Fork" means the fish length is measured from nose to fork of the tail.

Notes:

1. There are 33 eligible species of this in this program. Any of the subspecies listed qualify for that particular species on your Ladder of Achievement.

2. Eligible size is the minimum total length in inches unless identified as fork length. Total length is a straight-line measurement from the tip of the closed mouth to the end of its

pinched tail. The fork length is a straight-line measurement from the tip of the closed mouth to the fork. Fork-length measurements should be so-noted in your submission of the length of the fish.

3. The angler is responsible for knowing the fishing regulations applicable to the area(s) where the fish are caught and having necessary State/Federal license, permits, or tags.