

OUTDOORS

New state record longnose gar caught on Lake Blackshear

Announcing a new freshwater fish state record is a great way to kick off the beginning of March! Georgia has a new state record longnose gar, caught by angler Silas Turner of Hawkinsville, Ga. His catch, caught on March 5, 2026 on Lake Blackshear near Cordele, weighed 31 lb, 14 oz, and replaces the 2022 record (31 lb, 2 oz), according to the Georgia Department of Natural Resources' Wildlife Resources Division (WRD).

"Congrats to Silas! It has been almost a year since Georgia has been able to announce a new freshwater fish state record and we are thrilled to congratulate Mr. Turner on this huge longnose gar catch," said Scott Robinson, Chief of Fisheries for the Wildlife Resources Division. "We hope that this catch inspires anglers across the state to get outdoors and Go Fish Georgia, because you never know when that next state record might be on the end of your line!"

Let's hear about the fishing trip! After a morning of guiding fishing trips, Silas Turner was headed out to check out some more fish for upcoming excursions when he spotted what he thought was a bass. He picked up a bass plug and threw out a cast, and much to his surprise the fish that took the lure turned out to be a huge gar! Silas fought with it for about 15 minutes be-



Silas Turner with his new state record longnose gar.

fore landing it. Knowing he had a big catch, he took it immediately to get weighed and then headed to the Cordele Fish Hatchery to have the catch verified and weighed on an official certified scale. Silas has been fishing for about 23 of his 28 years and primarily targets crappie and bass, often participating in tournaments throughout the year. He is looking forward to having the gar mounted so he can tell the story for years to come!

Longnose gar (*Lepisosteus osseus*) are

members of the gar family and are considered relics from a large group of primitive fishes. Longnose gar have an elongated body, are greenish black on top and yellow toward the belly. They have black spots along their sides and fins. A long, narrow snout contains many sharp needle-like teeth. They prefer weedy areas of deep or shallow lakes and streams. Gar feed primarily on other fish.

Georgia anglers support fisheries conservation! Did you know that your license purchase allows Georgia WRD to

continue to do important research, maintain and operate public fishing areas and more? Purchase a Georgia license at goutdoorsgeorgia.com.

For fishing tips and information, be sure to check out the Angler Resources page at GeorgiaWildlife.com/fishing/angler-resources.

Information about state-record fish, including an application and rules, can be found at GeorgiaWildlife.com/fishing/recordprogram/rules or in the current Hunting and Fishing Regulations Guidebook.

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