

Tips for Saltwater Catch & Release



COVER PHOTO BARRY BECK

The time it takes to land and release your catch and the way you handle it is critical to its survival.

TACKLE

- Use tackle and line strong enough to bring your fish in quickly.
- Fish caught on artificial lures are much more likely to survive than fish caught with bait.
- Barbless hooks allow a quicker release and decrease injury to your fish.

These guidelines are agreed to by anglers from all regions. Check with local experts for specific concerns in your area.



LANDING YOUR CATCH

- Land your fish quickly.
- Cut your line to release large fish before they are played out.
- Knotless or rubber mesh nets minimize damage and handling time.
- Never gaff a fish you intend to release.

HANDLING YOUR CATCH

- Minimize the time your fish is out of the water.
- Keep fingers away from gills and eyes.
- Wet your hands when handling your fish.
- Never squeeze your fish.
- Measure and photograph your fish while it is in the water.



PHOTO BY VERNIE LEHMBERG

TO RELEASE A FISH

- use artificial lures
- land fish quickly
- minimize the time your fish is out of the water
- handle the fish gently
- back the hook out
- cut your line if the fish is deeply hooked
- support the fish facing into the current until it swims from your hands

CATCH AND RELEASE WORKS

It is not necessary or advisable to kill every fish you catch. Catch and release is a valuable tool in protecting important fisheries resources worldwide from excessive harvest.

The following chart of survival rates reflects handling by anglers involved in scientific studies.

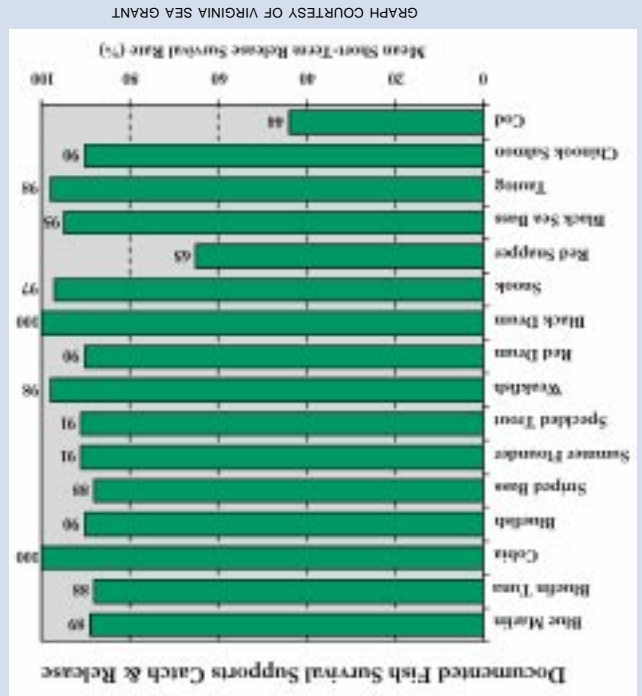


PHOTO TIPS

The best photographs show water still dripping from your fish. Hold your breath while your fish is out of the water, if you have to breathe it is time to put your fish back.



PHOTO BY CAPT. STEVE SOULE

GO BARBLESS

Barbless hooks allow a fish to be released more quickly and with less handling. They are also safer for you.

CUT THE LINE ON DEEPLY HOOKED FISH

When you weigh your catch, it is best to support it in a cradle made with knottless or rubber mesh.

Specialized tools are useful for gripping the jaws of toothy fish. You should still support your fish's belly to avoid injury when using these tools.

USING NETS OR GRIPS

The number of fish killed as a result of being deeply hooked is greatly reduced by the use of circle hooks.

CIRCLE HOOKS



<http://www.fedflyfishers.org>

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