



Catch & Release (C&R) Best Practice

A fish is too valuable to be caught and enjoyed only once.

Be a responsible angler by practicing effective catch and release fishing.

Follow this simple advice to maximise of fish survival:

- Use barbless hooks, or de-barb the hook with pliers or forceps;
- Use tackle that is strong enough to bring the fish to hand quickly to avoid overtiring the fish. The longer a fish is played, the more lactic acid is built up which in turn threatens the survival of the fish; particularly during the summer and warm low water;
- Do not remove the fish from the water after playing it. It would be like you trying to hold your breath for a few minutes after running a marathon. Fish cannot hold their breath, and so may suffer damage to their gills and respiratory system. Lactic acid build up from playing the fish cannot be metabolised and poisons the fish;
- Wherever possible use a release tool to quickly remove the hook without having to remove the fish from the water, or even handle the fish. These are inexpensive and stocked by most good tackle shops.
- Use a net if it is the only way of controlling the fish. Only use a knotless mesh net to avoid damage to the eyes, gills, fins and body.
- Wet your hands when handling the fish. Dry hands or gloves will remove the protective mucous membrane (slime) that covers the fish, exposing it to waterborne infection and disease.
- Never squeeze the fish and do not hold it near the gills or eyes.
- Gently hold the fish under the belly, facing the current, allowing it to fully recover until it swims away. This is a good time for a photo opportunity.

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