

LEGAL REQUIREMENTS

Government regulations introduced in 2015 mean it is now the law that

All salmon must be returned to the water between 15 January and 31 March.

This is a legal requirement, even if a fish is dead. Failure to do so may result in a criminal conviction.

WORMING DISCOURAGED

The Board has long requested that worms should not be used before 1 June nor after 31 August in any part of the district. As many fish are deeply hooked, the Board considers this method of fishing incompatible with conservation.

Now the Board is requesting 100% catch and release in 2020, it would discourage anglers from worming. But should it be undertaken, only Circle hooks or Shelton release hooks which are designed to help prevent deep hooking should be used.

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January 2020

BOARD RECOMMENDATIONS

Salmon

All salmon and grilse should be released throughout the entire season.

Sea trout

All sea trout should be released throughout the entire season.

*TAY DISTRICT SALMON
FISHERIES BOARD*

SAVING TAY SALMON

**CATCH AND RELEASE
REGULATIONS AND CODE**

2020

CONSERVATION

At the present time all stocks of Tay salmon are under pressure, not just spring salmon. Accordingly the Tay District Salmon Fisheries Board is seeking to do everything possible to protect and enhance stocks. An important element has been to encourage catch and release by anglers, since studies have shown that over 80% of released fish survive and few are re-caught.

CATCH AND RELEASE PROGRAMME

The Board promotes a Catch and Release programme throughout the entire River Tay district. Since the programme commenced in 1999, the proportion of spring fish released increased from 10% to nearly 100% in 2018. The Board wishes this level to be maintained in order to see real lasting benefits in terms of more salmon in future.

REMOVE HOOKS FROM RAPALAS

Rapala and similar lures are popular on some beats on the Tay and in Loch Tay. As the number of treble hooks attached can lead to problems in hook removal it is recommended that such lures should be used with a maximum of one treble hook only.

SAFETY ON THE TAY

The Tay is a large river which is potentially dangerous for the unprepared. Accidents and fatalities have occurred when safety considerations have been overlooked. **Anglers fishing the Tay should always consider their own and others' safety. The Tay Board commends the use of lifejackets whether on a boat or wading.**

MAKING RELEASE A SUCCESS

It is essential that proper procedures are followed to minimise stress and prevent any damage to the fish and to allow survival to spawning.

Landing the fish:

- Use a fine, knotless meshed landing net and ensure the fish remains in the water. **Keep the fish in the net and in the water. Do not lift it out of the water.**
- **Do not beach the fish**, as abrasion can lead to infection.
- **DO NOT LIFT BY THE TAIL!**
- Minimise handling the fish.

Removing the hook:

- Wet your hands. A dry, bare, warm hand can cause abrasion which later may lead to infection.
- Remove the hook gently. If possible remove the hook using forceps or a hook disgorger, taking care not to squeeze the fish.
- **The use of barbless or micro barbed single hooks is strongly recommended**, as they make removing the hook easier.
- Take care with fresh, early fish as they are prone to damage and fungal infection.

Returning the fish:

- If possible, try to slip the fish out of the net **without touching it!**
- If you really must, then support the fish, in a current, facing upstream and allow time for the fish to recover and swim away on its own.
- Do not weigh the fish but estimate the weight of the fish from its length. Record all fish caught and released.
- Photographs by all means, but **do not remove the fish from the net** which should remain in the water. However tempting, **please don't grasp a fish's tail!** This can result in fungal infection.