

Looking After Your Catch

Angling provides us with the rare privilege of holding a wild creature appreciating its natural beauty. We have a responsibility to the fish to ensure that we look after them and return them with care. Fish are a bit like us, can hold their breath for a while but not for too long and they can be held but not squeezed to hard.

When your bait and hook is in the water you must ensure its watched at all times, once a fish is hooked it must be landed as soon as possible. Bring the fish to you calmly and slowly, its hard when you are excited about your catch , but this is the best way to make sure it does not fall off.

If the fish is about the size of your hand, you can safely swing the fish in to a hand, anything bigger will need to be picked out of the water or landed with a net. A wet hand is best to handle a fish, but if you really don't like the slime a wet towel that's rinsed often is nearly as good. Try not to let the fish flap or "swim" when its out of the water, by holding it gently or laying it on something soft.

Barbless hooks are best, both for the fish and if you accidently hook yourself, (it happens). A barbless hook is a bit like a pin prick, a barbed one is harder to get out, especially from a jumper. Hooks are easily removed, you just reverse the way they went in, most of time fingers are all you need, but a disgorging tool helps if you cant quite reach the hook. Ask the tackle shop for one, they are just a few pence and really help when you need one.

Once unhooked, you may want a photo or to weigh or measure your fish, do this as quick as you can and as low to the ground as you can. Fish are slippery at times and if one does slip from your hands its better closer to the ground.

The best bit of catching a fish is letting it go in as near perfect condition as possible. It's a great feeling to let the fish swim from your hands, so when its safe to do so, lower the fish and let it swim away. But don't risk yourself, a fish gently dropped in to the water, wont be much different to when they jump out of the water themselves. But never throw a fish back in or let it flap around on the ground. Avoid using keepnets, its much better to let your fish swim off straight away, but if you do don't tow your net behind a boat and keep retention time to a minimum.

Treat your fish with respect and they will quickly forget their capture and re-join their shoal and continue feeding.

Responsible Angling

Just as we have a responsibility to the fish we catch, it is important that we make sure our we look after other wildlife and the environment. A fishing rod and line is very good at catching fish, but we must take care not to catch birds and other wildlife.

A fishing rod should never be left unattended, and if ducks or swans get too close simply lift your line out of the water so they don't get tangled. Birds wont know that the bait you throw in for the fish is not for them, so be careful if there are ducks, swans or geese near you.



Should a bird accidentally tangle your line, put the top of the rod in the water and slowly reel in the line. Often the bird will calmly come towards you, where you can carefully untangle it.

Should you need assistance with an injured bird or animal for any reason, contact Broads Watch at broadswatch2020@gmail.com

Its always bad to leave litter, but fishing tackle litter can be very dangerous to wildlife, make sure you take it all away with you.

Used or tangled fishing line is best recycled, at the various recycling points around the Broads. Not only does this keep the line away from birds and animals, it means its remade in to something useful.

While fishing try to keep your equipment neat and tidy especially around footpaths and quay heading. It stops it getting broken or lost and keep the path clear for other people wanting to come past.

Anglers and Boats

It is not always easy for a skipper to see anglers on the riverbank, and certainly not easy to see a tiny float in the water. The boat will always win if your line gets tangled, if a boat looks like it may run over your line, reel or lift your tackle out of its way. In most cases any conflict is accidental, while it can be frustrating , its just part of fishing on the Broads.

THE BEST ANGLERS LEAVE ONLY FOOTPRINTS AND TAKE ONLY MEMORIES



Broads Angling Services Group

The Broads Angling Services Group (BASG) is a Community Interest Company run by anglers and looking after angling on the Broads. You will see our logo in many places on the Broads, from line recycling to custom made platforms for disabled anglers.

Our Angling Strategy has been used for over 20 years to help protect The Broads We regularly help the Environment Agency with monitoring and tagging projects to get a better understanding of how fish live in The Broads. Fishery

There are more tips on fishing the Broads and you can keep up to date with BASG Projects by following our facebook and youtube page, we are easy to find, just search for Broads Angling Services Group.



Rod Licence

Everybody over the age of 13 (Under 17's are free) will need a rod licence before you fish, its easy to do online at www.gov.uk/fishing-licences, scan the QR or drop in to a post office.



Fishing Regulations

There are rules about, when, where and how you can catch fish. The QR code will link you to the very latest information.



Printing of this leaflet is supported by income from rod licence sales



Broads Angling Services Group

Catching Fish on The Broads



**BROADS CLOSED FOR FISHING 15th MARCH—15th JUNE
FISHING REOPENS 16th JUNE**

Welcome to the Broads - an Angler's Paradise.

With its vast network of rivers, dykes, reed-fringed bays and open water, the Broads are one of the UK's most unique and historic fishing areas which are cherished by anglers from far and wide.

The Broads are home to many species of fish, some that live in big shoals, some that have grown to be the biggest ever and a few that are rare and difficult to catch. With so much water and so many fish, it's no surprise that people have travelled here for over 100 years to cast a rod in the quiet waters of the Broads.

Thousands of people each year catch their first fish while on holiday on the Broads, for some it is the start of an angling journey, for others it creates a single memory that lasts a lifetime.

Angling provides a very rare privilege for us to hold and admire a wild animal in its natural environment. But with that privilege comes a responsibility to respect the fish and wildlife.

This booklet has information that will help you catch fish on the Broads, but also contains lots of useful information on how to look after the fish you catch and the environment around you.



Our fish are a vital part of the Broads ecosystem with many of the birds and animals that you will see here eating fish as part of their natural diet. It's important to treat the fish we catch carefully and make sure that our tackle doesn't harm any wildlife.

One of the best parts of angling is to watch the fish swim away safely after we have taken a few moments to admire them.



Catching Fish on The Broads

Although the Broads is home to literally millions of fish, they aren't spread out like currents in a cake, which makes finding where they live important. Luckily most fish live in shoals; when you catch one, you will often catch more. Fish shoals are found where food collects, and this is often around moored boats, quay headings and village centres. This is great for boat-based holiday's as fishing from the bow of a boat when moored up can be very productive.

Rivers are usually deeper in the middle, with a step down from shallow water at the edge. Fish often look for food at the bottom of the step, so don't think you have to cast very far out to catch fish. On the Broads themselves, reed-beds, lily pads and water weeds are also attractive to fish. Some birds, like Grebes and Herons can tell you where the fish are as you may see them catching their food. Certain times of the day, especially dawn and dusk, fish will splash the surface, or even jump right out.

Tackle and Bait

Angling on the Broads is so popular most of the larger villages have friendly tackle shops where you can buy tackle and bait. Don't be afraid to ask for advice on how to or where to fish, they are always happy to help and often know the best spots.

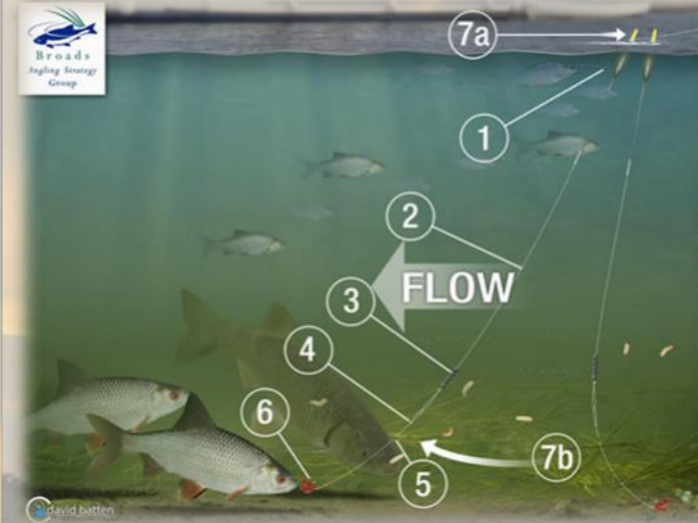
The shops will sell all sorts of baits, maggots and worms being the most popular and will catch every species of fish in the Broads. But if you aren't so keen on the wriggly stuff, sweetcorn and bread catch plenty of fish and you can pick up supplies almost everywhere.

Catch And Release

99.9% of anglers return their catch, Broads Fish don't tend to taste very nice, so there's no need to keep them. There are VERY strict rules on keeping fish, there is a link to the rules on the next page.



Float Fishing



Float fishing is one of the simplest fishing methods to catch a fish. It is ideal where the water is still or slowly moving.

The float (1) stays on the surface of the water with the bait (6) suspended below.

The float is threaded on the reel line (2) and held in place with split shot that are nipped on the line either side of the float. Extra shot (3) are added further down the line until the float sits upright in the water. This is known as "cocking" the float and takes a little trial and error to get right, but most floats have a guide printed on the side.

The hook line (5) is lighter breaking strain and attached to the reel line using a loop knot, the tackle shop will show you how to do this. Your hook (6) size should match your bait, size 16 for maggots, size 14 for sweetcorn or size 10 for bread flake or worms.

The distance between the hook and the float will determine how deep you bait is suspended. A bait near the bottom is a good start, try different depths until you start to catch fish.

When the fish picks up the bait the float will bob or go under, when it does, gently flick the rod back to around 11 o'clock position and the fish should be hooked.

If the water is flowing, you need to let line out from the reel, otherwise the water will push the line up (7b) and the float will take on a slanted position. Let the float drift in the flow for a few meters, then recast, often the fish will bite just before you reel in.

Feeder Fishing

Feeder fishing is often the easiest method if the river flow is fast. The feeder is filled with sample of bait and sinks to the bottom where it falls out of the feeder and attracts fish to eat. The feeder (4) is attached to a clip swivel (3) and threaded on to the reel line (1). The hook line (5) is a lighter breaking strain and tied to one side of a stop swivel (2) and the other side tied to the reel line. The Hook size should match the bait you are using, in most cases the hook (6) should be 30-60cm away from the feeder.

Your hook (6) size should match your bait, size 16 for maggots, size 14 for sweetcorn or size 10 for bread flake or worms.

When you are ready fill the feeder and cast out against the flow of water (upstream), as the feeder sinks it will travel with the water flow a little. The faster or deeper the water the further upstream you will need to cast.

When the feeder settles on the bottom the line will tighten in the flow and may bend the rod tip a little, you can angle your rod so it's easiest to see. When the fish picks up the bait the line will be pulled through the clip swivel (3) and the rod tip will knock back and forth to show a "bite".

When you get a bite, sharply lift the rod to around 11 o'clock position and you should hook the fish. If you don't, try waiting a little longer or hold the line in your fingers a "feel" for the bite. If you don't get a bite after 5-10 minutes, refill the feeder and cast again to the same spot, after a few casts you will have a nice patch of bait on the bottom and the fish will soon come to feed.

