

Angler Activity Badge – Guidance notes for Scout Leaders



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0845 300 1818

Page 5. Water safety

Tell a parent or guardian where you are going, who with and for how long

Never wade into water because of the risk of drowning. Water can be deep, cold and have strong undercurrents.

Cover any open cut with a waterproof plaster before fishing. Always wash hands or use antiseptic hand wipes after contact with water, or when having lunch during fishing.

Page 7. Fish health and codes of practice

Fish are in need of help when they gasp for air at the water surface, or sit very still in the waters edge even when disturbed.

The Environment Agency hot line number is 0800 807 060.

Follow our good rule guide - Golden rules for angling and wildlife.

Page 9. Fishing rigs

A waggler rig is a straight float attached to the line at one end only. The line from the float to the hook can be any length, but rarely more than 2m. Split shot are normally used to secure the float with additional shot fixed at intervals down the line to approximately 12cm from the hook. The total weight of the shot should cock the float in water so that the tip is only just showing above the surface.

A swim feeder rig is any kind of swim feeder attached by a secured loop to the main line with a hook tied up to 50cm from the feeder. One common variant is called the 'method feeder' where the feeder slides along the line by means of a central tube – a swivel with a bead above stops the feeder sliding down to the hook.

Casting into the tight circle is good practice for fishing in natural conditions, however if this proves to be too difficult some flexibility should be shown.

Page 13. Fish identification, food, habitats and fishing methods

An identification book of British freshwater and marine fish species is needed; this will help illustrate the differences between fish and highlight some of their food and habitat requirements; the following can be used as a supplement:

Roach – silver body with red eyes and red fins; lives in freshwater lakes and rivers; eats silk weed and small insects; good baits are maggot, bread or sweet corn; sizes 16 or 18 hook are best.

Chub – large bronze scales, orange fins and big mouth; lives in fast flowing rivers; eats small insects; good baits are maggot, bread or worm; sizes 10 or 12 hook are best.

Tench – bronze/green in colour, small red eyes and thick paddle like tail; lives in lakes; eats small insects; good baits are maggot, bread or worm; sizes 8 or 10 hook are best.

Common Carp – deep body, large golden scales, big mouth and tail; lives in lakes; eats small insects; good baits are maggot, bread or worm; sizes 6 or 8 hook are best.

Grayling – long silver body with black speckles, large colourful dorsal fin; lives in fast flowing clean rivers; eats small insects; good baits are fly, spinner, maggot or worm; sizes 12 or 14 hook are best.

Salmon – fine silver scales, long body, big forked tail; lives both at sea and in fast flowing clean rivers; eats shrimps at sea; good baits are fly, spinner, shrimp or worm; sizes 6 or 8 hook are best.

Brown trout – brown with red spots, orange or pale belly; lives in fast flowing clean rivers and

lakes; eats small insects; good baits are fly, spinner, maggot or worm; sizes 10 or 12 hook are best.

Rainbow trout – silver with pink stripe along each side; lives in fast flowing rivers and lakes; eats small insects; good baits are fly, spinner, maggot or worm; sizes 10 or 12 hook are best.

Bass – silver scales, spiny dorsal fin and big mouth; lives in the sea; eats small fish; good baits are fly, spinner, crab or rag worm; sizes 2 or 4 hook are best.

Cod – fat, deep body, brown with white spots, whisker under chin and big mouth; lives in the sea; eats crabs and small fish; good baits are crab or lug worm; sizes 2/0 or 1/0 hook are best.

Flounder – flat body, brown with small dark spots, white belly; lives the sea; eats small worms; good baits are rag or lug worm; sizes 6 or 8 hook are best.

Grey Mullet – silver with black stripes, big lips; lives in the sea; eats weed and small insects; good baits are fly, spinner, bread or rag worm; sizes 8 or 10 hook are best.

Mackerel – black back, blue and green tiger stripes over silver, forked tail; lives in the sea; eats small fish; good baits are fly, spinner or feathers; sizes 8 or 10 hook are best.

Page 15. Pollution, poaching, water users and litter

If pollution or poaching is suspected call the Environment Agency hotline number on 0800 807 060.

Other water users such as boaters and canoeists often have an equal right to use a waterway so should be respected, as you would like them to respect your needs.

Litter should be taken home and disposed of properly; this will protect wildlife from damage. Cut monofilament line into small pieces before it is put into the waste bin to protect birds on open landfill sites.

Page 17. General knowledge

Keep nets, if one is really needed, should be placed in water covering most of the rings and if possible weighted or staked at the end to stop the net folding over.

Landing nets should be held still under the water until the fish is brought over the top, when the net can be lifted to trap the fish, before being brought back to the bank. The net should not be lifted up with the fish inside as this will break the net or pole.

Handling fish: unhooking fish is made easier and quicker by using barbless hooks; be careful not to rub any slime off the fish's scales as this is a protective layer against disease; wet hands are good for this but do not use a dry cloth; if the hook is inside the fish's mouth always use a suitable disgorging; fish are delicate and should be returned unharmed to the water as soon as possible after unhooking; fish held in the air for more than a 2-3 minutes may not recover.

A lower strength hook length is used to allow the main tackle to be protected against breakage if snagged on a submerged object. The hook length however should be made strong enough to cope with the size of fish expected.

The date of the current closed season for coarse fish on rivers is between 15 March and 15 June inclusive.

A fishing licence is a legal document issued by the Environment Agency allowing the person to use rod and line to catch fish from all inland waters. A fishing permit is supplied by a private fishery owner and allows the holder to fish the owner's private water; this does not allow the permit holder to fish anywhere else.

Freshwater fishermen over the age of 12 years must have a valid rod licence.

Page 21. Claiming the certificate

Scouts Angler Badge
c/o Bernie Barron
Environment Agency
Mance House
Arthur Drive, Hoo Farm Industrial Estate,
Worcester Road, Kidderminster,
Worcs DY11 7RA

Please note date of birth on page 21

**To receive your free packs please visit
<http://scouts.webfulfilment.com/form.asp?>**