

CATCH & RELEASE



Conservation minded anglers are becoming more aware of the increased pressures and stress on Nova Scotia's fisheries resources. Studies have shown that adopting proper catch and release techniques, and careful handling helps to ensure fish health and survival.

- 1) Using artificial flies and lures increases the chances of survival. Live bait is often swallowed deeply which increases the risk of injury to the fish. Cut the line if a hook is swallowed deeply, the fish will work the hook out with time.
- 2) Using circle hooks or barbless hooks can reduce harm to released fish.
- 3) Do not play a fish until exhaustion. Use equipment heavy enough to play a fish rapidly.
- 4) Keep air exposure to a minimum. Avoid beaching a fish as this will remove the protective slime and can lead to infection later.
- 5) Do not lift the fish out of the water by the tail. This can damage the spine of the fish.
- 6) Avoid squeezing the fish between the pectoral (chest) fins, this is where the heart is situated.
- 7) Do not touch the gills and avoid placing fingers under the gill plate.
- 8) Take the time to revive the fish. Support the fish by placing a hand under the belly and keep the fish underwater. If in moving water, face the fish into the current while continuing to support it. Keep a relaxed grip on the tail and when it is ready, the fish will swim away.