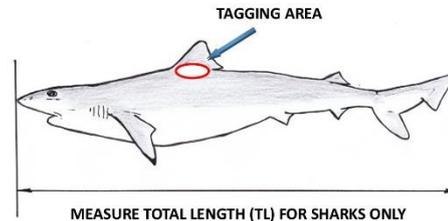
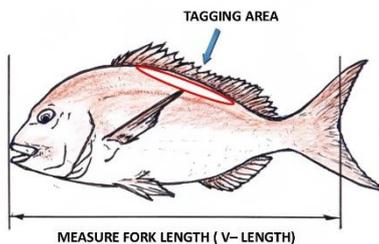




Tagging code of practice

In keeping with our commitment to sustainable fisheries, ethical angling and productive science we have put together this tagging code of practice for our research teams. It is important for our results to be productive that the fish we Tag are handled in a way that is of least invasive and does not alter their natural behaviour while back in the wild. It is also important that the data we collect, procedures followed and record keeping is accurate. Since we are here to learn as much as we are here to teach we may need to adjust this code of practice over time as required. We invite your valued input.

1. **Catch.** When using baits it is recommended that barbless recurve or circle hooks are used to avoid gut hooking and make hook removal easier. Generally avoid lengthy fights and adjust to using tackle that allows you to land fish quickly. Barbless hooks also minimise damage to the fish's mouth or jaw. Any fish gut hooked, injured or impaired (e.g. fish foul hooked in the eye) or excessively bleeding should not be tagged and released. Survival of released fish is paramount. Avoid using 3 prong hooks in jigs. Remove hooks using pliers.
2. **Deep water.** Fish caught from deep water can have poor chances of survival on release. Visible signs like eyes bulging, scales lifting and swim bladder or stomach protruding from the mouth are poor candidate for release and should not be tagged. Research has shown that a slower ascent rate can prevent embolism for a healthier release.
3. **Landing.** When landing fish try to use a landing net, lip grabber or lift the fish by the line onto an area where the fish will not damage itself. Preferably directly onto the measure board. Do not use a gaff unless unavoidable and then only hook through the mouth area. Handle the fish as little as possible and avoid putting your fingers into the gills or eyes.
4. **Measuring.** For scaled fish, Place the fish gently on the measure board. Ideally left side up. Move the nose of the fish up to the measure head board and read the measurement to the base of the "V" in the tail. This is Fork length. NOTE: This measurement is to be a straight line measurement and not over the curvature of the body.



Note: for **Sharks only** measure Total length "TL" snout to tip of tail and for **Rays only** "span width" wing tip to wing tip.

5. **Tag placement.** Placing a wet hand or towel over the fishes head place the tag applicator into the upper back of the fish in the areas indicated below the dorsal fin. Insert the tag applicator at a steep angle with the tag barb towards the dorsal fin. As soon as the tag has pierced the skin angle the tag pole back towards the tail pushing the tag in and along the back bone finger spines. Twist the tag pole ¼ turn clockwise rotating the tag barb in towards the spine. Retract the applicator and gently tug on the tag to set the barb. Recheck and record tag number. Watch our "How to Tag" video.
6. **Release.** Carefully pick up the fish avoiding dropping, squeezing or putting your fingers in the gills or eyes and lower it back in the water. Avoid throwing it into the water from a great height. A good way to release the fish is to use the measure board as a slide. This reduces handling the fish too.
7. **Record.** Make sure you record all the required details of the catch and forward them on ASAP. Catch and recapture forms are available online so you can either email or post returns.

Date, Tag number, Species, Location, GPS co-ordinance, Length, Depth of capture
As well as Angler/tagger details and any comments are required.

Where possible take photos or video so to share with our followers on line

