

# Carp Care - Tips

## Introduction

Every year more and more anglers are fishing our dams and rivers so it's quite possible that many fish will be caught multiple times. Due to the repeat captures and the impact it may have on a fish's conditions, it's becoming more important to look after our fish to ensure a sustainable fishing community for generations to come – we all want to someday catch beautiful big fish in our dams and it starts with us the anglers to preserve and educate other anglers to enable our fish to continue with healthy growing.

The words 'fish care' can be divided into the following categories:

### Bank side equipment:

- Rods and Reels: determines how we play fish
- End Tackle: mainlines, traces, hooks
- Bait: the type of bait we apply
- Netting of fish: landing nets, weigh slings, cradles and unhooking mats
- Handling of fish: the human factor how we handle and fish
- Fish Treatment: fish care products to treat hook marks and injuries

For the Purpose of this exercise we cover all the above aspects excluding:

- Netting of fish: landing nets, weigh slings, cradles and unhooking mats
- Handling of fish: the human factor how we handle and fish
- Fish Treatment: fish care products to treat hook marks and injuries

## Fish Care

### *Netting of fish*

- All fish to be netted using a proper specimen landing net – the soft mesh type material, preferably the ones with the smaller mesh holes as small hook baits tend to get stuck in the bigger mesh holes during the netting of a fish which could result in a hook being torn from fish
- When attempting to lift the fish from the water after you have netted it, ensure that all fins of the fish are flat along its flank/side and not stuck in the net. Imagine lifting a 20kg fish with its fin stuck the wrong way in the net – it will snap
- Then lift Mr. Carp (or Mrs.) from the water's edge, being cautious not to bump the carp on any obstacles and gently lower the fish onto the unhooking matt or cradle  
  
(it's advisable to to dismantle the landing net and then 'roll' the net towards the fish creating a smaller and stronger are to lift)
- PS. Don't rush and chase a fish into the net – play a fish tired and net the fish when its tired otherwise you might get a hook pull.



## Transferring fish from net to sling / Carrying of fish in Sling

- Fish must be transferred from the landing net to the sling in the quickest time possible.

Attempt to remove the hook as soon as possible to prevent any potential injuries from the hook that might get stuck in the net or weigh sling (always wet the sling before use to protect the protective slime from carp's body)

When netting a fish from the boat, the fish can be "escorted" in the landing net alongside the boat if the fish is too heavy to lift it up into the boat - ensure to always keep a unhooking matt in the boat – try and remove the hook to prevent any potential injuries

Why? To prevent the hook lodged in the fish's mouth from getting stuck in the landing net etc. A hook can easily get stuck in the net which could damage the fish's mouth should the fish flap around inside the net.

- Should a fish be netted away from your swim, the "netter" must carry the sling with him to where the fish will be netted – its better to carry a fish in a weigh sling vs a landing net
- From there carry the fish inside the sling by the "netter" and "angler" back to the cradle for unhooking purposes
- Don't carry fish in your arms/chest height back to the cradle, you might trip and fall which could cause damage to the fish
- Before you zip up the sling and lift the fish onto the scales, check that all the fins are flat to the fish's body. If they are not this will cause unnecessary stress to the fish and potentially damage its fins.



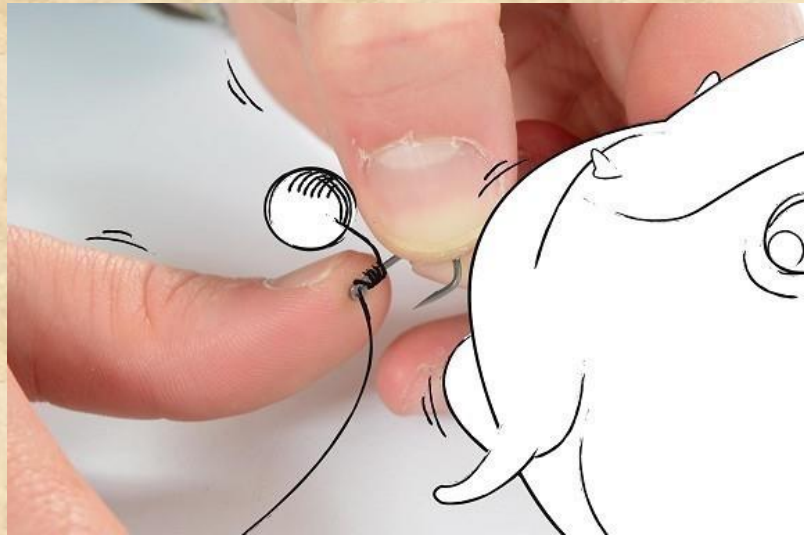
## Transfer to cradle

- **Remove all watches, arm bands etc that may injure fish during handling**
- Wet all unhooking mats and cradles before use
- Always keep fish wet – ensure that the fish have enough water to keep it from stressing, some cradle facilitates adequate room to add water and keep fish safe (advisable to keep a filled bucket of water next the cradle / unhooking mat)
- Should fish flap around use forearms and hands and gently press down to keep fish calm



## Unhooking of fish & removing the hook

- If you fishing with a partner let the partner gently hold the fish's body and head while you grip the hook correctly when removing it from a fish's mouth.
- You need to hold the hook at two points, apply steady thumb pressure against the eye of the hook and use your index finger to prevent the hook from moving around.
- Push down, once you've got to grips with the hook, applies thumb pressure to the eye of the hook whilst pushing down the shank in the opposite direction to the point of penetration.



## Weighing Process

- Position the weigh stand above the cradle with 2 persons lifting the sling and fish onto the scale
- Be alert at all times as fish can react in the sling and possibly rip the sling from the scale damaging the scale and fish
- Its advisable to position the stand over the cradle or unhooking mat, if you don't have a tripod use the weigh bar / hands and weigh fish over the matt from a safety point of view



## Sacking Process

- Consider fish safety before sacking fish overnight – ie Otters , stress etc
- When sacking a fish kindly ensure the following:
  - ✓ Sack fish in deep enough water to improve oxygen levels
  - ✓ Ensure sack is large enough to accommodate fish size
  - ✓ Tie sack cord tightly to a solid pen or bankstick to prevent sack getting lost
  - ✓ Advisable to use floating retainer slings – safer and more fish friendly



## Photographing your trophy – Handling of Carp

- This may seem like a no brainer for many, however, we still see people in photographs or on the bank almost cuddling their catch rather than holding it correctly.
- It is paramount to hold a carp in the right manner for two reasons. Firstly it will be a more comfortable experience for the fish and secondly, your photos will look great.
- Dropping a fish might result in damage to internal organs and death

### *Keep low*

- Make sure you are in a crouched or kneeling position when holding the fish at all times, and always hold the fish over the mat, in case for any reason the fish should begin to flap and force you to lose grip.
- NO STANDING WITH FISH unless you are waist deep in water with a floating unhooking mat beneath the fish

### *Fingers and fins*

- To hold a carp correctly, one hand must be placed with your index and middle fingers gripping either side of the pectoral fin and the other hand should repeat the process on the carp's anal fin.
- **Prevent fingers from entering the carp's gill plates or from holding the carp by the gill plates – touching the internal gills aka red filaments which are like 'blood vessels' which supplies carp with oxygen – touching could cause damage and excess bleeding reduction in oxygen and potential death!**

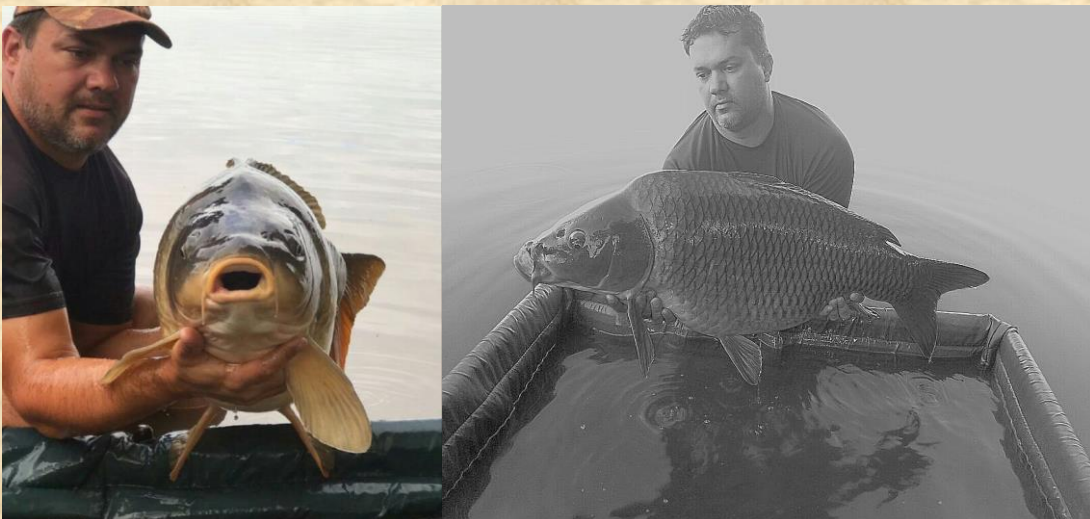
## Close to your body

- Never hold a fish too far away from your body, as you will find it difficult to safely control the fish should it start to flap around.
- Always stick to tucking your elbows and upper arms parallel to your body with your forearms at a right-angle; this is the safest and best way to hold a carp.

### Correct position



- Support elbows and fish weight on your knees
- Hold fish over the 'safezone' of the cradle or unhooking mat incase it falls





**Wrong position, not bad but too high no unhooking matt**



### *Both Sides*

- Kindly take photos of both sides of the fish, this will assist you in identifying fish in future to track growth etc. etc.

### *Mouth and Body treatment prior to release:*

- It is imperative that all excessive hook marks and injury to body are treated with a disinfectant product – there are a variety of products available
- Treating hook marks and injuries will reduce and prevent bacterial infection, improve healing times and permanent damage, reduce stress and improve overall condition

## How to apply medic treatment: **Fish Clinics Carp Care**

### **Mouth:**

Apply 2-4 drops of liquid to both mouth and or body – only 2-4 drops are needed per hook mark or scale injury – the Propolis spreads evenly over the injury ang gelling on contact so no need to use lots – it will last many sessions





**Body:**

Applying the Wound Powder (disinfects, dries wound, seals water from penetrating for hours)

**Before**



**After – Wound Powder applied – offers hours of protection**





## Fish Clinic's Carp Medi Kit



### Product Information:

Fish Clinic's revolutionary Carp Care kit provides anglers an affordable treatment for carp injuries – the product was designed over years of development with laboratory research and input so you know you are getting the best for your fish.

### Each Kit contains:

- 2\*10ml Propolis liquid: treatment for mouth and body
- 1\*10ml Wound Powder: to treat scars and injuries on body
- 1\*Drying towel

Supplied in a handy protective container

## Releasing your prize fish



### Credits:

- **Carpology** (illustrations)