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FISHING THE RIGHT WAY IN THE MARLBOROUGH SOUNDS THIS SUMMER

Using the right tackle and tactics in the Marlborough Sounds this summer will help to avoid catching blue cod and give any that are caught and released the best chance of survival.

The enclosed waters of the Marlborough Sounds have been closed to all recreational blue cod fishing until 1 October 2012, but there are still plenty of fishing opportunities in the Sounds. It is important that everyone plays their part to conserve the fishery.

AVOID CATCHING BLUE COD

People fishing in the Sounds may catch some blue cod while fishing for other species. Fishers must return these fish to the sea quickly, carefully, and safely to give them the best chance of survival.

You can minimise catching blue cod by moving to a new spot if you do start catching them and by avoiding areas you know the species live. The prime blue cod habitat is rocky reef areas—avoiding these areas is the best way to minimise catching them.

There are many books and sources of information available to recreational fishers to help tailor fishing for other species. Check these out or ask your fishing tackle store for the best local advice.

CHOOSE THE RIGHT HOOK

By choosing the right hook you can help to make sure that blue cod, or any other undersize fish you accidentally catch, are in good condition and likely to survive being released.

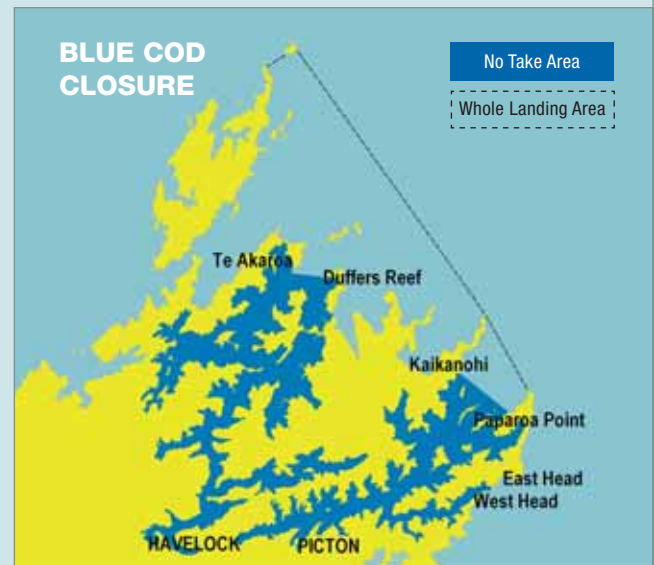
Barbless hooks help prevent hook damage. You can easily crimp the barbs on ordinary hooks with pliers or file the barb off.

Barbed hooks can tear the flesh of fish when being removed, which can lead to infection and death. They also add to the sport of fishing, but make sure you keep tension on the line!

Circle hooks help to make sure the fish you catch are hooked in the lip rather than through the roof of their mouth. This helps to make sure that hook damage is minimised and the fish is more likely to survive after being released.



Large hooks (generally size 6 or larger) and larger bait are very effective for reducing the number of small fish you catch. Larger hooks catch larger fish and blue cod you accidentally catch are less likely to swallow the hook and become 'gut hooked'.



IF YOU CATCH A BLUE COD IN THE CLOSED AREA

DO

- Only take the fish out of the water if you have to
- Use a wet cotton cloth or rubber gloves (or at least wet your hands) when handling the fish
- Lie the fish on a soft wet surface if you need to handle it out of the water
- Minimise the time the fish is out of the water
- Remove the hook carefully from lip hooked fish
- Cut the line for gut hooked fish
- Return the fish gently to the sea.

DON'T

- Hold the fish by putting your fingers inside the gill covers
- Poke or touch the eyes and never hold the fish by the eye sockets
- Use a 'gob stick' to remove hooks
- Squeeze the gill covers or gut area
- Lift the fish by the tail as this can dislocate the spine
- Drop or place the fish on a hot, dry boat deck or on rocks.