



RIVER EXE & TRIBUTARIES ASSOCIATION

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( Member of South West Rivers Association )

MAR 2017

### NEW GUIDE TO SALMON CONSERVATION ON THE EXE

The Atlantic Salmon is in global decline to the point where it is now regarded as an endangered species.

Rod catches on the Exe have fallen over the last 5 years and, over the last 3, the river appears not to have met its conservation target level which puts the river on the 'probably at risk' register meaning there is a limited harvestable surplus of fish. Rather than run the risk of the imposition of mandatory regulations, there is much that every angler can do to protect our salmon stocks and your Committee has therefore drafted the following guide to fishing on the Exe.

Last season the C&R on the river was 78% which is an improvement on previous years but we would urge all anglers to take their part in improving this over the coming season and thereafter until stocks return to a safer level. By releasing fish now we are helping to safeguard our ability to catch fish in the future. However safely releasing a fish is often the hardest part of catching it and we would urge all anglers to adhere to the following guidelines.

- Release ALL salmon before the 16th June ( mandatory )
- Release all MSW fish throughout the season ( fish 7lbs or over )
- Always carry an appropriate knotless net, never beach a fish.
- Always carry a Ketchum or similar appropriate disgorger.
- Before starting to fish look to ensure a suitable place to net it.
- Do not use treble hooks in any form of fishing.
- Ensure barbs are fully closed on double and single hooks.
- Only use single hooks when spinning.
- Play the fish as quickly as possible.
- Keep the fish in the net in the water whilst unhooking and photographing.
- Never pick the fish up by the wrist ( tail ).
- When releasing gently hold the fish with its head upstream and be patient, it will swim off when it is ready.
- During extended hot weather and low flows salmon will be stressed anyway and we recommend not fishing in these conditions.

We would urge every angler on the Exe to follow the above guide to help ensure the future of our sport.