



**PIKE ANGLERS
ALLIANCE
FOR SCOTLAND**

CODE OF CONDUCT

THIS IS THE RECOMMENDED CODE OF CONDUCT WHICH IS QUITE SELF-EXPLANATORY, AND IS ENCOURAGED AS A MODEL FOR ALL PAAS MEMBERS TO FOLLOW.

The Club's Committee feels that this should be the minimum standard set for PAAS Members to adhere to when out fishing any water way in Scotland. This will also be seen as a set of guidelines for the beginner to use extensively and for constant referral but not seen as a definitive rule book. It will also serve the more experienced angler as a reminder of what the best fishing practices for Pike are. The Club has no wish to make these recommendations seem like the laws as seen by the current residing Committee. It is to be used as a directive for better angling practices.

1. Obtaining Permission to Fish

When getting started always seek the permission of the property owner, where applicable, and ensure that you have purchased a permit if required to do so. The title of property owner would come under the title heading of either the water lessee, the Riparian Owner or the controlling Angling Club. Only the controlling body of the water can pass out the right to fish by either permit or a written letter of consent to fish

2. Terms and Conditions of Permission to Fish

Always consider and abide by the terms and conditions of the permits or those set by water/fishery owners. Breaking them will only bring the angler into conflict with consenting Riparian Owner, Lessee or Angling Club.

3. Choosing a Swim

When choosing your swim please consider other anglers and water users. Leave plenty of room and enjoy your time without being obtrusive in relation to fellow anglers, fellow water users or wildlife. Boat anglers should take care not to encroach upon other anglers or anchor in trolling routes. Similarly, boat anglers should consider keeping a reasonable distance away from nesting sites particularly in the summer months.

4. Never leave rods unattended

It is preferred that rods should never be left unattended. If you leave your rods then it is recommended that you bring your rods in and secure the hooks firmly to the rod. Leaving baits attached to hooks could lead to wildlife becoming snagged on what looks like an easy meal.

5. The Recommended Minimum Tackle Requirements

The recommended level and amount of tackle and unhooking equipment available should comprise of the following, breaking strain of line as a guide would be 15lb nylon or at least 50lb braided line, a landing net, forceps, traces of at least a minimum of 18 inches in length or preferably 24 inches long, unhooking mat, scales and a strong set of hook cutters. Some form of bite indication should be employed e.g bite alarms and Pike swingers to detect drop-backs Lure anglers may want to consider the following; using a net of a larger mesh to avoid hooks tearing up the net and possibly damaging a fish and using traces that should be made for purpose for example jerk bait leaders etc.

6. The Recommended Hook sizes for Bait Fishing

The use of semi-barbed or crushed barbed hooks in sizes of 6 and 8's would not appear unreasonable sizes for the beginner to use to start with. However, it is suggested that sized 10 hooks are inappropriate for use in any area of pike fishing in this day and age. This however does not stop the more experienced angler from using hook sizes 2's and 4's if the Angler feels competent to fish with such hook sizes.

7. Placing hooks into baits

For example, when using dead baits it is important to consider the position of both hooks when they are placed into the bait in order not to cause the likelihood of deep hooking of a pike. It is advised for the beginner that most ledgered dead baits have the top treble placed into the root of the tail of the dead bait and the other placed in its flank no further down than the dorsal fin.

This can be revised by the experienced angler as an alternative quick strike rig where by the hooks of reasonable size are placed in the baits where the hook can be attached into the head or thereabout . A lot of custom made instant strike rigs are made by obtaining the use of the larger hook size for instant strike purposes. However, when using the larger hook size it is recommended that the strike not be delayed as deep hooking with large hooks could cause serious injury to the fish and possibly death in unfortunate circumstances.

8. Timing the Strike for the benefit of the Fish

When you do get a run act promptly and strike - better to lose a fish than have it deep hooked. Never wait for a second run. Tighten down to the fish as soon as you have indication the bait is being taken – in most cases, the pike has the bait in its mouth therefore strike! An early strike means that the worst that can happen is that you will fail to hook the fish occasionally. On the other hand, leave it too long, and deep hooking is often the end result. It is recommend and advised that beginner boat anglers should never ledger baits without a visible means (a float) of registering a pike run or take.

(Note – P.A.A.S. recommends that anglers wear a life preserver/jacket at all times when afloat)

9. Handling and Unhooking of the Fish

All pike regardless of size should be handled with care. Upon catching a fish never lay the fish on hard ground. Use an unhooking mat, or find an area of soft grass or if in a boat use carpet underlay or a foam mat. Unhook the pike, by laying the pike on its back, carefully kneeling to ensure that each knee is against (not on) each flank of the fish. This allows controlled restraint of the pike's movement and then firmly holding and lifting its lower jaw with a gloved hand you can remove the hooks with your other hand. Be careful when you find it necessary to insert the forceps behind the gill covers. At all times make sure the fish is held firmly – if the fish shakes free of your grip – regain your composure and start the process again. Never use forceps or bolt croppers unless you have a firm grip of the pike with your free hand. Never use pike gags or make shift implements to hold the jaws open, these are illegal to use.

10. Weighing the Fish

Weigh your pike using a weighing sling or soft net ensuring that you wet the net/sling first. Never use the balance hook of the scales under the chin of the fish . (Note – when holding your pike, support it properly. Try not to suspend your pike by the chin only – always support the full length of the pike with both hands – retain control, reduce the risk of, to both you and your pike! It is

advised that fish are carried back to the water in either a weigh sling, a weigh net or a landing net.

11. Fish Retention, Photography and Recovery

Try not to retain pike in a specially designed pike tube or retention unless absolutely necessary. Pike should only be retained for the purpose of taking photographs, and then it is recommended that it should not extend any further than 15 minutes. If a fish requires to be retained for the purpose of recovery always sink the tube or sack sufficiently under the surface and leave undisturbed once in position. Bank sticks can be utilised in order to maintain your pike in an upright position whilst recovering when bank fishing. It is not recommended to transport or tow the fish in boats in tubes or sacks under any circumstances as it could possibly drown the fish. All pike should be returned to the water as soon as possible and never retain them just for the sake of it. Always try to land your pike as quickly as is reasonably practicable, particularly in warm weather/water temperatures – never 'play them for a longer period of time than is necessary. Ensure your tackle is up to the job!

12. Fishing with Live Vertebrates (Fish)

As of the 1 st August, 2007 the Scottish Executive through the Scottish Environmental and Rural Affairs Department (SEERAD) passed a Bill to make fishing with live vertebrates (fish) in Scotland illegal. In light of this the Committee wishes to reiterate to all PAAS members that they should adhere to this Bill. It is now an offence to fish for any predator with live vertebrates (live fish) and anyone found doing so will be contravening the Act and will likely be prosecuted in a Scottish Court of Law along with bringing the Club into disrepute.

13. Illegal Fish Movements

Never introduce fish from one water into another. Always be aware of the legislation regarding angling with rod & line in Scotland. Be aware that to be in possession of Salmon Parr (dead or alive, even if from a fish farm) is an offence.

14. The Leaving of Litter

Never leave litter, or tackle behind, particularly line and hooks. Always carry a bag for litter and take your litter home at the end of each trip. PAAS encourages its members (and all anglers) to clear any litter left by other anglers from the bank side. The only evidence of your stay at the waters edge should be your footprints!

15. Following the Country Code

Please always close gates on farmland and take care not damage crops, fences or trees. Never start fires unless you have the express permission of the property owner to do so. Always park your vehicle safely, especially on farmland, remember obstruction of gateways may lead the farmer to moving your vehicle in a manner that may well damage your car. Please respect the Scottish Countryside and its Wildlife. They are unique, and part of your heritage! Please remember that your conduct in whatever circumstances should be exemplary and that your actions may be judged as a measure of the standards held and encouraged by the Pike Anglers' Alliance for Scotland.

For the future of all our Sport, please practice Catch and Release.