



# PROPER RED DRUM HANDLING TECHNIQUES

If you catch a Red Drum, make sure to practice proper handling techniques to increase the chance of survival of your fish:



When handling large Red Drum, be sure to hold the fish horizontally and support the fish's body with two hands.

- Keep large fish horizontal when out of the water and avoid lifting the fish solely by its head or tail. Holding large fish in a vertical orientation can injure the fish.
- Use wet hands or gloves when handling fish. Avoid handling fish with dry hands or dry towel as this will remove the fish's protective slime.
- When lifting large fish, use two hands to support the body and avoid touching the gills.
- Never drag a fish across dry sand or other rough surfaces.
- Use methods that reduce deep hooking such as circle hooks when bait fishing.
- Minimize the time the fish is handled and return the fish to water as quickly as possible.

## FUN FACTS ABOUT RED DRUM

- Did you know Red Drum is the state saltwater fish of North Carolina?
- Red Drum are extremely resilient when handled and released properly. Tagged Red Drum have been recaptured after being at large for as much as 20 years.
- Red Drum can grow to over 50 inches in length, obtain weights of over 70 pounds and commonly live for more than 40 years of age.
- Red Drum are part of the drum family named for the distinctive drumming sounds they make. Did you know only the males make drumming sounds? The drumming sound is used during mating season by males to attract females.



## WANT TO LEARN MORE?

Scan the QR code to the right to watch a video about proper catch and release techniques.

