

# Let's Go Catching!



# Catching Fundamentals

The “How”

The “Where”

The “When”

# The “How” , “When” and “Where” Considerations

The “How” very much depends on your personal preferences, but always be ready to adapt and adjust to the conditions and to the fish. Whatever method(s) you choose, consider all of the following:

## 1. Fly Fishing

Matching the hatch, choosing fly patterns that resemble the prey or strike impulse patterns when the fish have "lock jaw"

Color, shape, and size of the fly matter

Water column: Where are the fish feeding? Surface? Just below or down deep?

Line type: sinking, intermediate or floating. Get your offering to the fish.

Match the rod to the fish and to the line

## 2. Light Tackle

Spinning gear

Conventional gear

Match your tackle to the angling needs

Color, shape, size, type of lure does matter

Lure types, hard baits, soft plastics, spinners, impulse baits, swimmers, top waters, jigs, etc

Line type, size and strength, mono, braids etc.

Tried and true terminal tackle and knots

Matching the hatch (or impulse strike triggering lures)

Attractants that provide that “edge” when fish need a bit of coaxing

Water column, get your bait to the fish

## 3. Bait

Live bait choices that match the local menu and are specific to feeding patterns

Chunking and chumming techniques that produce feeding incentives, chum lines, small suspended chunks

Attractants such as adding flash, color and contrast to the bait, such as squid skirts and colored yarn, especially red

## 4. Trolling

Line type: wire, mono, lead-core, braid

Lure types: top water baits, swimmers, shallow and deep diving, jigs, etc.

Water column position: the strike zone, type of bottom structure

Live bait: type, storage, freshness, techniques



# The How; Catching Tools



**Flies, Soft Plastics ,Plugs and Bait**

# Baits





# Daytime Winners



# Nighttime Winners



# Light Tackle Plugs





# Surf Plugs







## Daytime Winners

## Nighttime Winners



## Daytime Trolling, Tube 'n Worm



Nigh Time Trolling with large swimmers  
on lead core or wire line in rip currents



# The “How” , “When” and “Where” Considerations

## Match the “How” with the “When”

The **“when”** can be the most important consideration for success. Some fish will feed better at different times of the day and may depend on current weather conditions or other factors listed below. Sometimes choosing the “best” conditions comes down to your experience and other "local" knowledge that you can readily get from other anglers or your resident tackle shops.

### 1. Time of day

Sunrise, the magic time, is usually an all around good time to find fish eating and the low light conditions help stimulate impulse strikes

Daytime feeding patterns are generally slower and very dependant on other factors, especially the presence of forage food

Evening and the approaching dark can be the best time of day for finding actively feeding fish

Nighttime brings darkness and a sense of well being to the larger fish, best time for big fish

### 2. Weather

Sun and especially bright sun can keep fish spooky and off the bite unless there is bait working, so go deep, fish structure

Clouds and dim sunlight usually will stimulate daytime feeding especially where bait and structure are present

Wind speed and direction can be an ally or enemy. Know the water you’re fishing, follow slick lines, check the lee shore

High or low pressure systems can create or eliminate feeding patterns and bait movement in an area or water column

3. Water clarity conditions need to be addressed; whether the water is clear or stained, adjust as necessary

4. Tides can be critical to feeding times and bait movement in or out of specific areas and offshore

5. Moon phase: some are better than others and change with the season, bait movements can be affected, big tides and minus tides

6. Weather fronts: big impacts can be expected, warm fronts turn on the bite, while cold fronts turn it off

7. Water temperature and change with water depth, look for the thermocline

8. Seasons of the year dictate migration patterns of both predators and bait and also can determine area residency patterns of both

# The When

**Mornings: topwater plugs, flies, soft plastics, jigs, trolling worms and live baits**

**Daylight: Live baits trolled or pitched, chumming and chunking**

**Darkness: Trolling big swimming plugs, pitching eels, topwater plugs, big black flies**



# The “How” , “When” and “Where” Considerations

## Match the “When” with the “Where”

**With the how and when in place**, the where is *where* the action is. Always remember that most, if not all, game fish are *ambush predators* and will be found where they can best accomplish the element of surprise and expend the least amount of energy. Whether you are fishing from a boat, walking a bank, shoreline, or tidal flat, be aware of your surroundings and pay careful attention to potential “structure” and “ambush zones.”

Current and current seams are areas of different water flow and present excellent ambush opportunities

Sea foam on a rocky shore or beach front and slick lines provide structure for baitfish; look for feeding fish in or around those types of structure

Water depth may determine where baitfish reside and as such become an ambush zone

Tide flow and direction generally determine bait movement in a river, channel, tidal flat, or in the open ocean. Gamefish will seek ambush zones in these areas

Rocks and weed beds provide the ultimate structure for baitfish

Floating debris provides structure and hiding places for baitfish and become floating ambush zones

Troughs and humps are feeding areas, so where there is food, there are eaters

Points and depressions usually are associated with changes in water flow and depth thereby establishing ambush sites and gathering areas for bait

Cut banks offer protection from current and provide overhead structure so expect these areas to hold bait

Flats (mussel beds & sand bars) provide many habitats areas for feeding and spawning, gamefish party places!

Creek mouths and estuaries are prime time places, rich in nutrients, abundant areas of structure, natural ambush environments

Bait balls provide security in numbers for bait and easy feeding zones for gamefish

Working birds are the torchlight to the promised land; find the birds working, and you have found the feeding fish

# Target the Suds!



**During the summer months the best time to target stripers is in the low-light times, dawn, dusk & nighttime, but what about the those bright, sunny days with the sun overhead?**



# What are Suds?

- Suds are striper structure, cover, shade
- Suds are where baitfish, crabs and other striper food hole-up during the daylight
- Suds are ambush zones usually with deep water adjacent



# What are Suds?

- **Suds are the highly oxygenated water with dissolved minerals, organics and gases that produce effervescent foam**
- **They are NOT BEER FOAM!**



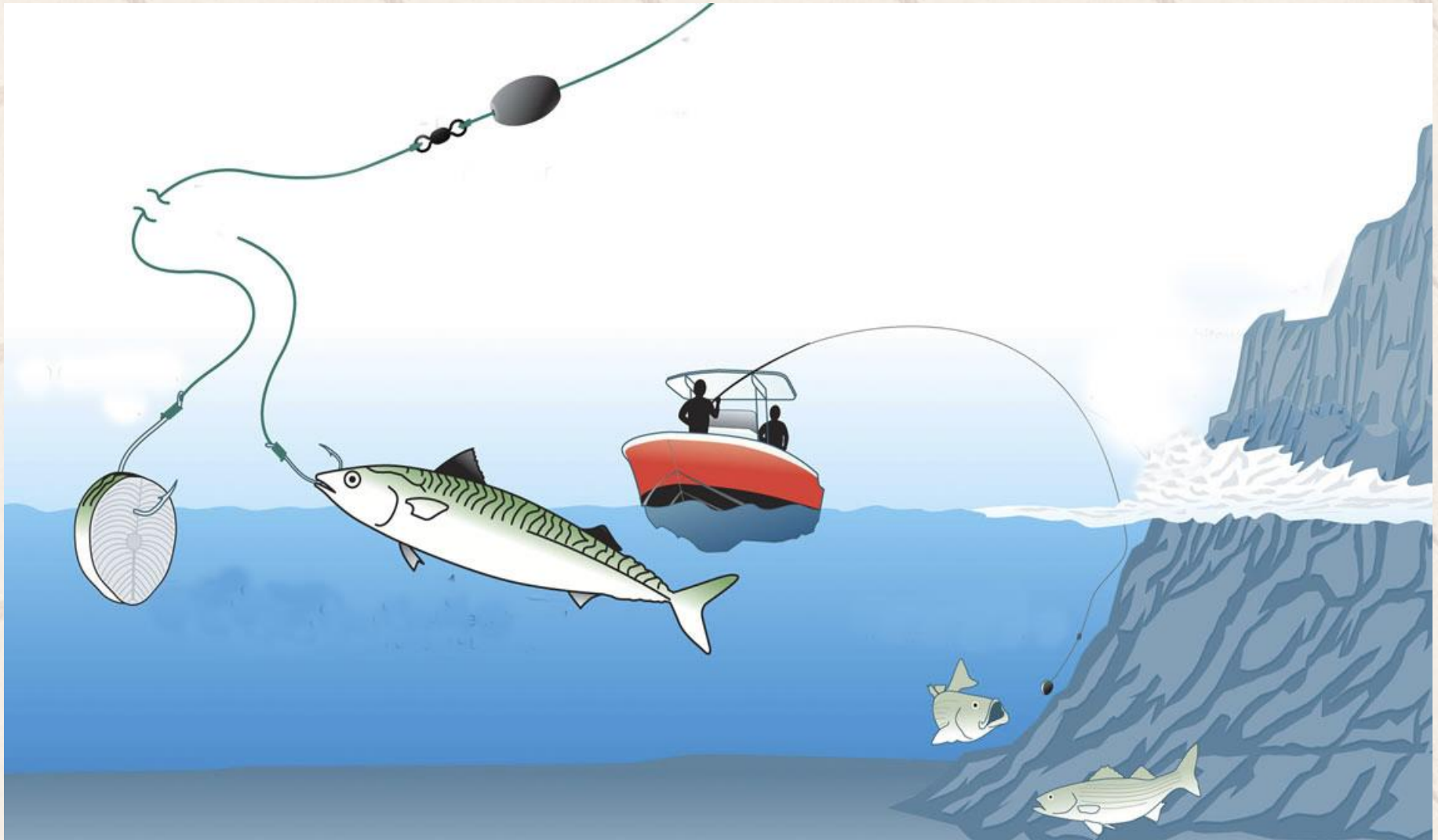


# Where are Suds Found?

- Ocean suds are the result of churning water propelled shoreward into rocky shores, beaches or offshore reefs
- They can also be found in rivers, like the Merrimack, on the flats when current seams are created at the intersection of tide and river currents



# Pitching Baits





**The BIRDS lead the way to the “Promised Water”**

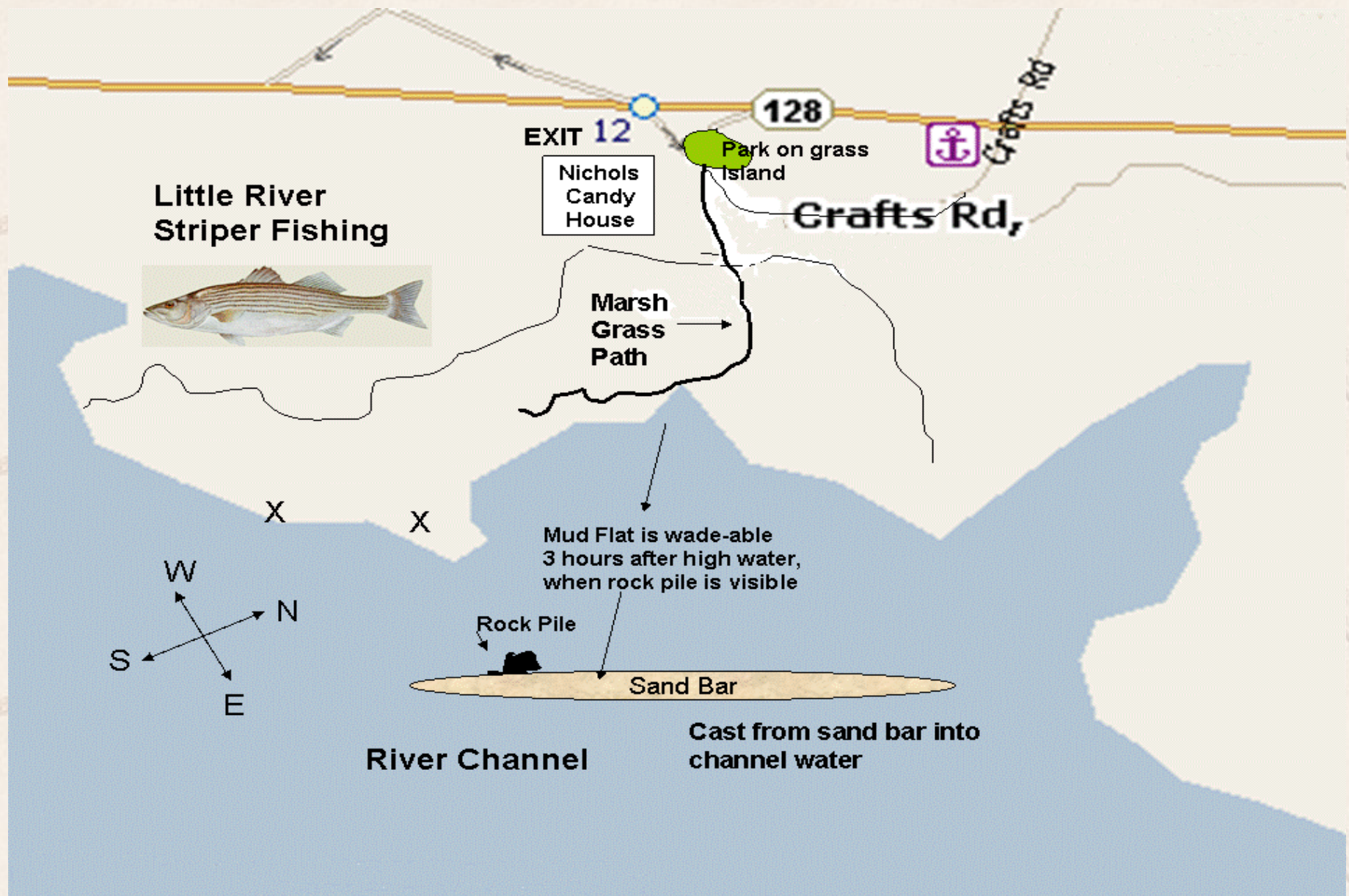


# Backwaters

- Gloucester/Rockport
- Essex
- Ipswich/Rowley
- Newburyport/Newbury



# Gloucester

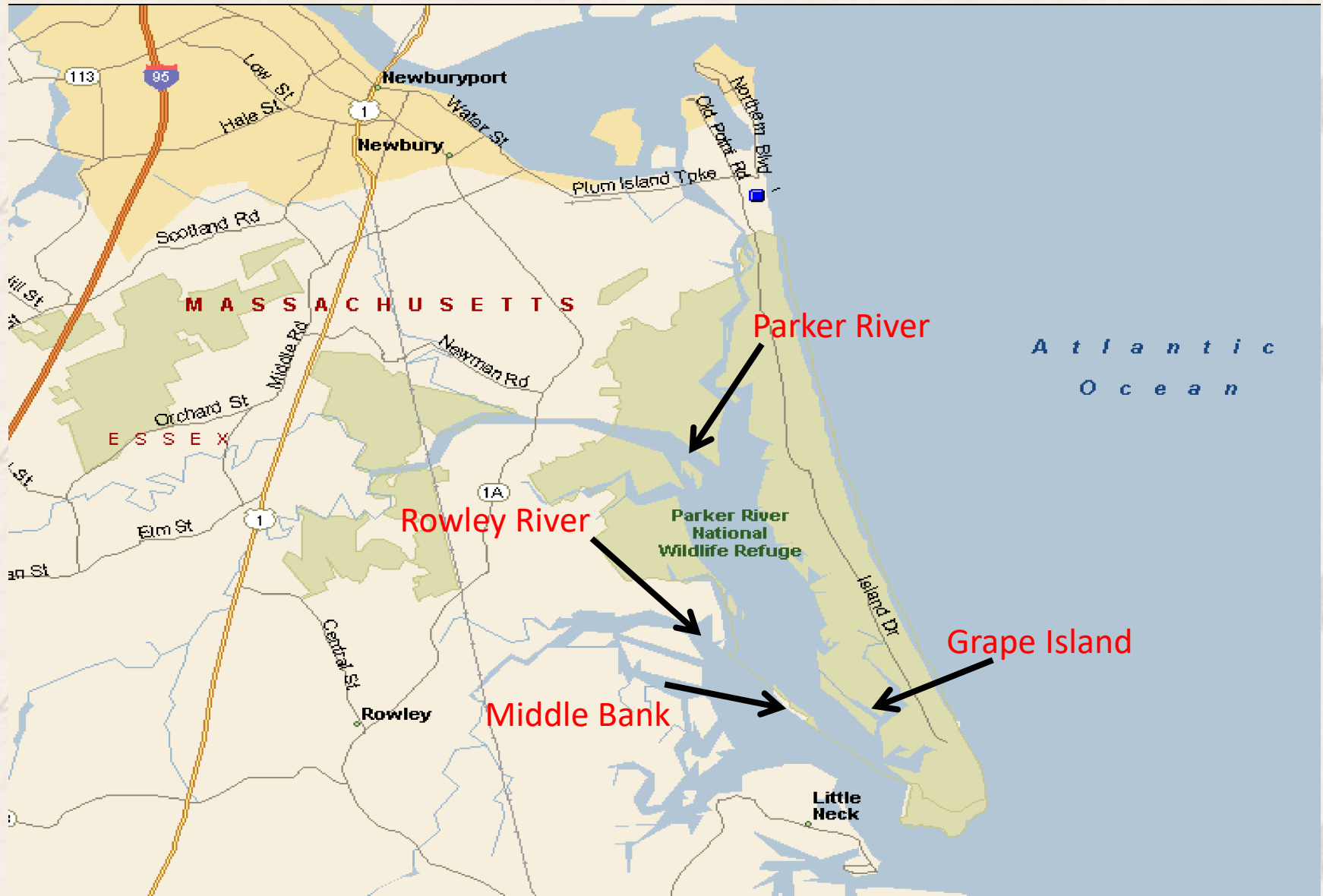


# Essex/Ipswich/Rowley





# Plum Island Sound





# Newburyport













**And don't forget to use the Boga!!!!!!**





# The Good Ole Days!





## Length, Age And Weight Chart Of Stripped Bass

Length	12"	13"	14"	15"	16"	17"	18"	19"	20"	21"	22"
Age	1	1	2	2	2	3	3	3	3	4	4
Max lb	1.0	2.0	2.5	3.0	3.5	4.0	4.5	5.0	5.5	6.0	6.8
Avg lb	1.0	1.5	2.3	2.5	3.0	3.5	4.0	4.3	4.8	5.0	5.8
Min lb	1.0	1.0	2.0	2.0	2.5	2.8	3.0	3.5	4.0	4.3	4.8
Length	23"	24"	25"	26"	27"	28"	29"	30"	31"	32"	33"
Age	4	5	5	6	6	6	7	7	8	8	9
Max lb	7.5	8.3	8.8	10.0	11.0	12.0	12.9	14.0	15.0	16.7	17.8
Avg lb	6.3	7.0	7.8	8.5	9.8	10.3	11.0	12.3	13.0	14.5	15.8
Min lb	5.0	6.0	6.3	7.0	8.0	8.8	9.7	10.3	11.0	12.0	13.0
Length	34"	35"	36"	37"	38"	39"	40"	41"	42"	43"	44"
Age	9	10	10	11	12	12	13	13	14	14	15
Max lb	19.0	20.5	22.0	23.5	25.5	27.2	29.5	31.0	33.5	36.3	39.0
Avg lb	16.5	18.0	19.5	20.7	22.0	24.5	26.0	27.3	29.7	32.0	34.0
Min lb	14.0	15.5	16.8	17.5	19.0	20.7	22.0	23.0	25.0	27.0	29.0
Length	45"	46"	47"	48"	49"	50"	51"	52"	53"	54"	55"
Age	15	16	16	17	17	18	18	19	19	20	20
Max lb	41.0	44.0	47.5	51.0	54.0	58.0	62.0	65.0	68.0	73.0	80.0
Avg lb	36.0	38.7	42.0	44.0	47.0	50.0	55.0	58.0	60.0	64.0	70.0
Min lb	30.5	32.5	35.0	37.0	39.0	42.0	45.0	47.0	49.0	52.0	56.0



# HELP Striped Bass SURVIVE Catch & Release

Despite our best intentions, stripers experience stress and physical injury during capture and handling and, depending on the degree of these impacts, may not survive.

The mortality rate of striped bass following release is not trivial. Fishery scientists assume a 9% mortality rate for striped bass caught and released by recreational anglers. Applying this to the 2017 yields an estimate of over 3.4 million dead stripers!

By using best catch-and-release practices, anglers can ensure greater chances of survival of released fish and increase their contributions to conservation of this important recreational species.

## Choose Tackle Wisely

- Always use appropriate tackle that allows stripers to be brought in quickly.
- When fishing with plugs and lures, consider removing one or two sets of treble hooks or replacing them with single hooks.
- Use single, barbless hooks whenever possible to ease hook removal and reduce tissue damage and handling stress.
- When fishing with natural or live bait, use non-offset circle hooks to minimize gut hooking.
- When using "snag and drop" techniques to snag live bait on treble hooks, transfer and swim baits on a single circle-hook rig.

## Minimize the Fight

- When you feel a strike, set the hook quickly to prevent the fish from taking the hook deep where it may cause organ damage and be difficult to remove.
- Once a fish is hooked, land it quickly rather than playing it to exhaustion.

## Handle with Care

- Ideally, keep the fish in the water to reduce stress and the potential for injury.
- If a fish must be removed from the water, handle it as little as possible, and release it quickly.
- Avoid using gaffs to land striped bass that are going to be released.
- When using a landing net, use a net with small mesh made of rubber, knotless nylon, or other soft, non-abrasive material.
- If you need to lift a striped bass, hold it horizontally by gripping the lower jaw and supporting its weight under the belly.
- Once a striper is landed, keep it from thrashing around and injuring itself.
- When unhooking a striped bass, handle it using wet hands or wet cotton gloves to minimize removal of the fish's protective mucous.
- Avoid touching the eyes and gills.
- If a fish is hooked deep, cut the leader as close as you can to the hook and leave it in the fish.

## Release it Right

- Fish should be quickly and gently returned to the water in an upright, horizontal position.
- Revive fish by holding them headfirst into the current. Place one hand around the fish's tail and the other under its belly or grasp its jaw between your thumb and forefinger.
- Gently move fish in a figure-8 pattern to get water flowing through the mouth and over the gills. Always keep the fish moving forward, never backward.
- Do not let the fish go until it is able to swim strongly and freely out of your grasp.

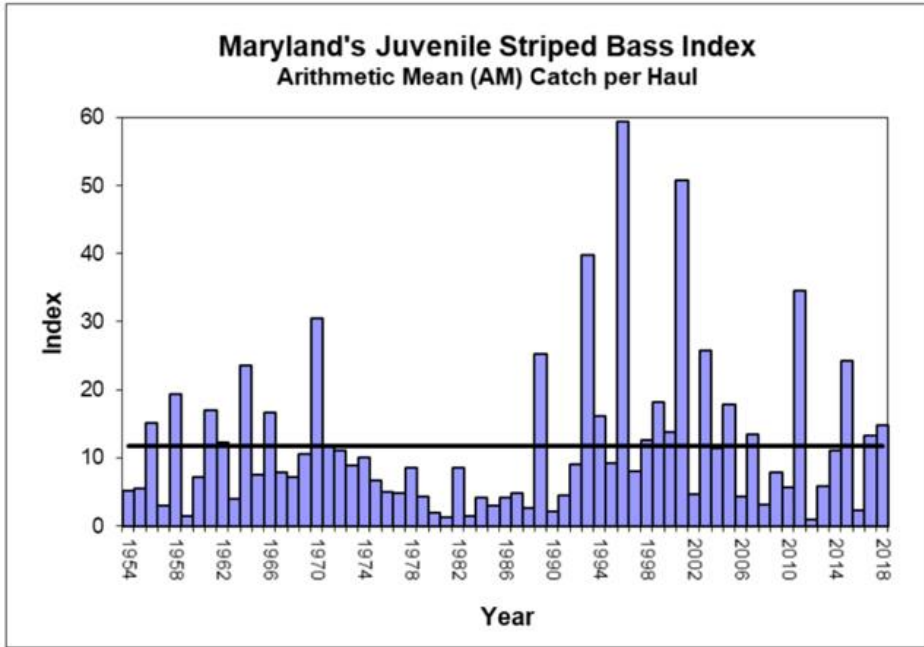
Reference: Turkman, J. and A. Danylech. 2012. Assessing Impacts of Catch and Release Practices on Striped Bass.



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# So that these Day's become the Good Ole Day's



# About Skip

**Captain Skip Montello (USCG licensed ) founded North Coast Angler Charters [www.northcoastangler.com](http://www.northcoastangler.com) and charters from Cape Ann to the Merrimack River. Skip is a passionate fly and light tackle angling professional with a lifetime of experience fishing New England waters for stripers, blues and bluefin tuna. He has also fished the Florida Keys, Bahamas, Great Lakes tributaries for salmon and steelhead, Alaska, Newfoundland, British Columbia, Patagonia Jurassic Lake, Pyramid Lake, Nevada and New Zealand. He is frequently called upon to present local angling and fly tying seminars for various fishing clubs and other organizations. Skip directs the long running and popular “Fish On” seminar series for the Memorial Hall Library in Andover MA. Beginning in 2008, Skip writes an Insiders Column and Feature Stories for On the Water Magazine. Skip also contributed to Pat Ford’s book, “Fly-Fishing Daydreams”. When not fishing , Skip is an exhibiting professional photographer and sailing instructor. Skip was the Grand Champion in the 2008 Rivers Edge Striped Bass Tournament (Catch and Release) in the Fly Fishing Division. FB@ North Coast Angler, [www.skipmontellophotos.com](http://www.skipmontellophotos.com), Instagram @Skip Montello**

**Skip has Pro Guide Status with many Fishing Products Companies including;**

**Temple Fork Outfitters**

**Simms Products**

**Hogy**

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**Airflo Fly Lines**

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