

ANGLING TRUST

SPECIMEN FISH AWARD SCHEMES 2023 RULES



1. ENTRY CONDITIONS: The schemes are open to Members and Members of Affiliated Clubs, provided in both cases that at the time of the capture of the fish their current subscription or affiliation fees have been paid.

2. DURATION: The schemes are an annual one. They open on 1st December in each year and closes on 30th November of the following year.

3. TWO SECTIONS: The schemes are divided into two sections. Section B is for fish caught from boats and kayaks. Section S is for fish caught from the shore, piers, harbour walls or breakwaters.

4. SPECIMEN FISH: The minimum size of a specimen fish of each species in each section shall be decided, and may be varied, by the Angling Trust Competition Group Committee from time to time. Any variation made by the CG Committee shall be notified to each affiliated club individually and reasonable notice shall be given before it comes into effect. No fish below the minimum specimen size is eligible for this competition. The sizes at present in force are set out in the Schedule hereto and are in pounds (lbs & ozs), or Kilos (Kgs).

5. LIMIT OF WATERS: Only fish caught in the coastal waters of England (including the Channel Islands), Scotland, Wales and Ireland are eligible. [See also Rule 9 (iv)]. A boat angling trip is normally of one day or 24 hrs duration, but if in the course of a trip, whether it be of one day or more, the boat puts into a port which is situated geographically in a different Specimen Area, then that port becomes the port of departure for the remainder of the fishing trip and the specimen weights of that port will be implemented. If for whatever reason the boat puts into a foreign port for which there are no Specimen Area Weights, then the Specimen Weights of the original port of departure will apply.

6. WEIGHING: *To Qualify for the Principal Awards and Certificates of Merit-*

- All fish must be weighed on scales, steelyards or spring balances.
- All weighing must be certified in writing by an official of a recognised Angling Club, and two witnesses, or one witness and photographic evidence, by either a digital camera, or a mobile camera, as per the "Catch and Release" method.
- All weighing equipment must carry a current certificate of test.

Failure to comply with any of these requirements will render the registration null and void. Certificates of Test are obtainable from the Department of Weights and Measures. A copy of this certificate must be sent to the Hon. Fish Recorder with a club's or association's first registration made in any one year. All weighing equipment must be tested every 5 years and carry a current certificate of test.

There are certain species that have restrictions that require them to be weighed at sea, or measured. These are Bass, Monkfish, Undulate Ray, Silver Eel, and Spurdog. Some of these species are on the critically endangered list within the Northeast Atlantic. There is a national restriction on landing Tope caught from a boat, which includes kayaks, and by rod and line. Any boat caught Tope are legally required to be released as soon as possible after capture.

The situation with Bass is that the EU brought into existence a conservation measure that from the 1st January 2016, all Bass must be returned alive to the sea. To facilitate this measure, we have introduced a "Measure and Release" rule for the scheme, for Bass. Each area has a "Specimen Length" for Bass caught either from the shore, or from a boat. From the length given for a fish, we can determine the weight by using the Scottish Sea Angling Conservation Network's "Give Fish a Chance" online converter.

A Bass caught from the shore can also be weighed under the Catch and Release scheme.

For further information, go to:

<http://www.ssacn.org/gfac/length-to-weight>

For further information, go to:

<http://www.anglingtrust.net/page.asp?section=163§ionTitle=Legal+Minimum+Landing+Sizes+For+Sea+Fish>

and

http://www.anglingtrust.net/core/core_picker/download.asp?id=3391&filetitle=Recommended+Retention+Size+Limits+For+Sea+Angling%2C+Matches+and+Competitions

However in the interests of conservation, the weight in lbs of the species Tope, may be calculated using the following formula - $Girth \times Girth \times Length$ divided by 800. All measurements should be taken in inches. The girth is measured at widest part of the fish, and the length, for the purposes of these formulae only, from tip of nose to the fork in the tail. Tables of the formula are available on request from the Angling Trust, as is a formula for calculating the weight of the common skate.

Until such time as a suitable way of measuring sharks has been agreed, it has been decided to exclude these species from the list of weights. Once a reliable method has been agreed we will then re-enter them into the scheme.

Weighing at Sea: In addition, provided the registration form so indicates, fish weighed at sea will be accepted, but any certificates awarded will clearly indicate that the weight of the fish was estimated and the fish returned alive to the sea.

Catch and Release: A weighing method whereby the fish caught from the shore must be captured alive and weighed on tested digital/electronic scales, and the fish is released at place of capture. For fish caught from a boat, the fish must be captured and weighed alive on the boat on the tested digital/electronic scales and the fish released at the place of weighing. In both cases, a photograph must be taken of the captor with the fish, and is to be made available, as necessary, to verify the capture/weight/species/release. The photograph can either be taken with a digital camera or a mobile phone camera.

The testing of the members digital/electronic scales must be against their club's scales, and a record of the testing must be kept, by the club. A label must be fixed to the member's scales showing the date they needed to be re-tested, a unique number for the scales, and who the scales belong to. These details must also be kept in the log kept by the club, together with the date when the scales were first tested. Any scales reading more than 0.5oz above the club scales will not be accepted. The member's scales must be tested every year.

In the case of the catch and release scheme, only one witness is required who is present at the time of capture and release of the fish.

7. REGISTRATION: A Declaration in the form set out in the Schedule hereto must be filled in and signed by the captor and given by him to the Hon. Secretary of his club, and the latter will send the Declaration together with the Registration particulars in the form also set out in the Schedule duly completed, to the Manager of the Specimen Awards Scheme of the Angling Trust, or other Officer appointed for this purpose, within 30 days of the end of the month in which the fish was caught, except in the case of fish captured in of NOVEMBER, when 14 days are allowed. Registrations should be sent direct to the Manager at the following address: 20 Chatsworth Road, Bitterne, SOUTHAMPTON SO19 7NJ. Further proof of capture, identification and/or weight may be asked for, and in its absence the registration may be refused.

The form may also be sent in electronically, in Excel format, but does not need to be signed. Any form sent electronically must be kept by the club or angler in case there is a requirement to see the completed form manually.

8. FISHING RULES: The following Angling Trust Marine Festival and Competition Rules No. 11 apply to this scheme and all entrants must abide by them:-

Rule B2, 3 & S2 - as to tackle ***with the exception that not more than two rods with three single hooks or two pennel mounted baits between the two rods may be used. Only one pennel mounted bait is allowed on each rod and so constructed that the measurement between the eyes of the two hooks do not exceed 20cm for boat angling & 10 cm for shore angling.***

9. AWARDS:

- (i) Awards are decided on a percentage system based on the amount by which a fish exceeds the minimum weight of a specimen fish in force at the time of its capture. The awards are in the form of Specimen Certificates, and are issued to the captors club at the end of each year.
- (ii) No individual shall receive more than 1 Certificate for the same fish.
- (iii) In the case of every award and in such other cases as the Manager of the scheme shall decide, the claimant of a certificate or Special Award shall within 28 days of issue of a request for a statutory declaration send to the Manager of the scheme such a declaration in an approved form, stating that the capture of the fish in respect of which the award or Certificate is claimed was by fair angling methods and that the rules of the competition

at the time were observed in all respects. The declaration is to be sent in addition to and not in substitution for the Specimen Fish Registration Form.

- (iv) The AT CG Committee may, at its discretion, award Bronze Certificates for any exceptional fish not included in the list of Specimen Fish. These will be termed "Special Awards".
- (vi) All captors of specimen fish accepted into the scheme have the option to purchase an appropriately engraved gilt, silvered, or bronze medal, to commemorate the capture.
- (vii) Regional Sizes. For the purpose of Registration, applicable regional sizes are determined by the point of departure for a claim made under Section B (Boats) and shore fishing station or venue under Section S (Shore).

10. JUNIOR SPECIMEN AWARDS SCHEME:

- (i) All rules appertaining to the AT Senior Specimen Fish Award Scheme will apply to the AT Junior Award Scheme and participation is open to Juniors of affiliated clubs and Junior Sea Angling clubs affiliated to the AT in their own right.
- (ii) Juniors are defined as not having attained the age of 17 years as at the commencement of the current year's scheme, this commencement date being the 1st December of each year. A Junior who attains 16 years of age within the current year's scheme will be classed as a Junior for the purpose of further registrations to the end of that year's scheme which is the 30th November each year.
- (iii) The juniors will have their own set of specimen weights, for each area.
- (iv) Any junior can enter the senior scheme, if they wish, but the same fish cannot be entered into both schemes.

11. PRINCIPAL AWARDS:

- (i) The SEA ANGLING NEWS TROPHY For the greatest number of Certificates awarded to an affiliated club for the year.

12. ANGLING TRUST COMPETITON GROUP COMMITTEE: All arrangements for the Specimen Fish Awards Scheme are in the hands of the AT CG Committee, whose decision on any point shall be final and binding on all parties.

13. COPYRIGHT: These rules, revised in July 2022, are the copyright of the Angling Trust and may not be reproduced whole or in part without its consent in writing.

1 July 2022