SSACN

Plastic Dart

Tagging Guidelines

The Scottish Shark Tagging Programme is part of the Sea Angling Conservation Network

A registered Scottish charity RegNo. SC039015

SSACN – SSTP

Plastic Dart Tagging Guidelines

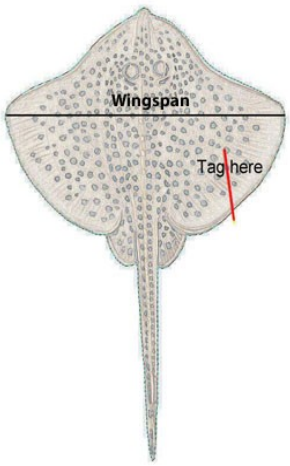
If the health of the fish is at all in question - return it immediately.

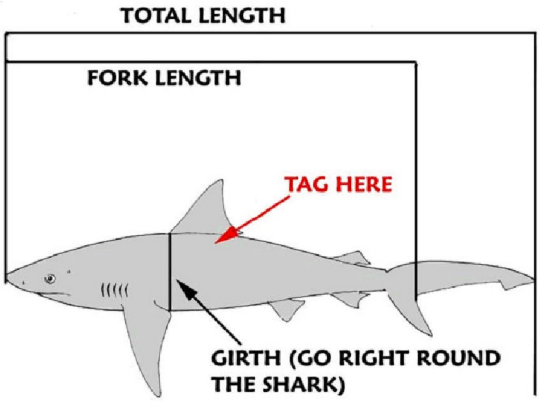
Whilst sharks may look big and tough creatures they are actually quite delicate, especially when out of the water so when tagging it is necessary to return them to the water with the minimum of fuss and distress to the fish.

Please follow these few simple guidelines :

- ✔ **Strike early** : This is essential to avoid a deep hooked fish as gut hooked sharks have a much lower survival rate than mouth hooked sharks.
- ✔ **Be Prepared** : Have T bars, pliers, wire cutters, tagging kits, weighing slings, cameras etc. on hand. Note the tag number before tagging the fish
- ✔ **Get wet** : Carry out as much of the measuring, tagging, hook removal as possible with the fish still in the water. See diagram below for where measurements should be taken. A flexible sewing measuring tape is the preferred option.
- ✔ **Support the fish** : When weighing or photographing the fish never lift a fish by the tail, lift it supporting the main body area as much as possible; only use weighing slings which fully support the whole fish.
- ✔ **Damaged fish** : Release damaged or bleeding sharks without tagging, as this gives them a better chance of survival.
- ✔ **Look after yourself** : Shark Skin is highly abrasive and tough and the spines will easily pierce your skin.

Do not weigh fish unless you have the appropriate weighing slings.



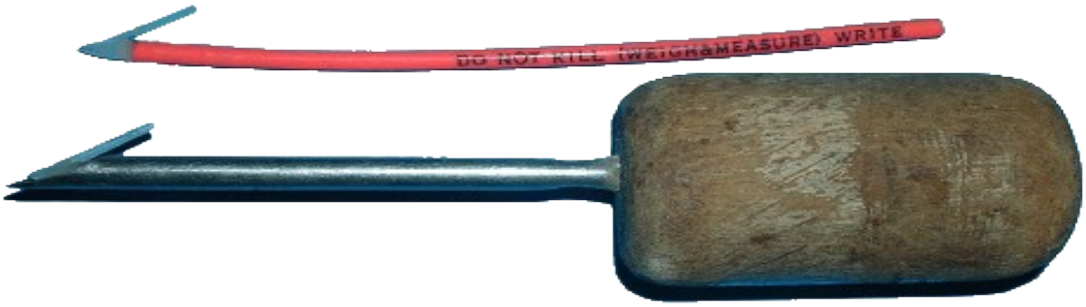


SSACN – SSTP

Inserting the tag

Do not be over anxious: By taking time to tag this will ensure secure anchorage of the tag and correct placement.

Write the tag no. on the record card BEFORE inserting the canula



- ***Loading the cannula:*** place the blunt end of the tag inside the pointed end the cannula and line the tag up so only the anchor barb is showing.
- ***Inserting the cannula:*** push cannula firmly through the skin until the anchor barb just disappears under the skin. In the case of round sharks place the tag either side of the dorsal fin at a 45° angle; for skates and rays, approximately 1/3 of the way into the wing at its widest point.
- ***Removing the cannula:*** Give the cannula a slight twist and remove from fish. Tug the tag slightly to set the barb.

See the codes of best practice at :

- Spurdog http://www.tagsharks.com/spurdog-code-of-best-practice
- Tope http://www.tagsharks.com/tope-handling-a-code-of-best-practise
- Common skate http://www.tagsharks.com/common-skate-code-of-best-practice

If the health of the fish is at all in question - return it immediately.