



## Spurdog Plastic Dart Tagging Guidelines



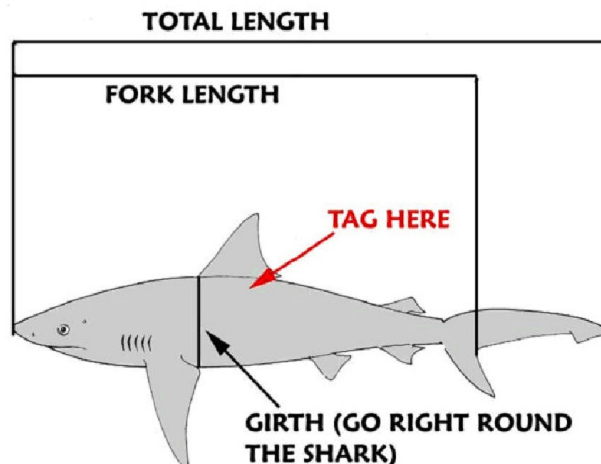
The well being of the fish we catch has to be our principle concern.

Whilst spurdog 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
- ✓ Tag/measure the spurdog in the water: carry out as much of the measuring, tagging, hook removal as possible with the fish still in the water. A flexible sewer's measuring tape is the preferred option.
- ✓ Weighing/photographing the spurdog: lift the fish supporting the main body area as much as possible and use a weigh sling which fully supports the whole fish. Never lift a fish by the tail. See image for where to measure from.
- ✓ 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.

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



## Inserting the tag

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



- ***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, either side of the dorsal fin and below the dorsal line at a 45° angle.
- ***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.ssacn.org/spurdog/best-practice>
- Tope <http://www.ssacn.org/sharks-fighting-for-survival/handling-tope-sos-best-practice>
- Common skate <http://www.catchalot.co.uk/tagging/crcode.htm>

### **The Scottish Sea Angling Conservation Network**

www.ssacn.org - Fish for the future – email: [contact@ssacn.org](mailto:contact@ssacn.org)

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