

Best practice handling guide

Starry smooth-hound (*Mustelus asterias*)

Retrieving the shark out of the water

- Don't wait too long to retrieve the shark, this will minimize the chance on a deep hooked shark.
- Don't lift the shark by the hook, gills and tail.
- Use a net to lift the shark out of the water horizontally; this minimizes the chance of damaging the shark.



Image 1. Handling a Starry smooth-hound: one hand behind the pectoral fin and one underneath the second dorsal fin.

Accelerate the shark

- Use a net when releasing the shark, if this is not possible: release the shark as close to the water as you can.
- Keep the shark with its head into the current, fresh water will flow through the gills.
- Let the shark swim away, do not throw the shark back in the water.

Tips:

- Make sure that you've got everything you need, and in reach. Such as: camera, measuring tape and container with seawater.
- A wet towel covering the head and eyes can calm an agitated or restless shark.
- Stainless-steel hooks will not corrode if you have to cut the line. Always use a hook that will corrode, this way if you have to cut the line it will dissolve.

Handling

- Support the shark as much as you can.
- Use two hands when lifting the shark. Place one hand behind the pectoral fin and one underneath the second dorsal fin (image 1).
- Not realising the shark right after retrieving? Use a container with seawater were the shark can rest.
- Don't hold the shark out of the water for too long.
- If you have to lay the shark down make sure the surface is moist.



Image 2. Realising a shark, close to the water.

FAQ:

How do I recognize a Starry smooth-hound?

A starry smooth-hound looks a lot like the smooth hound. The second dorsal fin is almost as big as the first dorsal fin. The starry smooth-hound has white spots over its body while the smooth hound doesn't. On the ID card for sharks and rays you can see how you can recognize the other shark species from the Starry smooth-hound. Go to: www.sportvisserij nederland.nl, vis en water, onderzoeken/databases, shark ray and id cards.

Why a best practice handling guide?

This handling guide is meant for recreational fishers who catch sharks. By following this handling guide you'll give the shark the best chance of survival.

When should I strike?

As fast as you can, this way you will avoid a deep hooked fish. It's better to miss the shark than deep hook one.

Why should I handle a shark as shown?

Sharks have no ribs like humans to protect their organs. It's important not to put too much pressure on the organs. They look very tough but are very vulnerable out of the water.

Why can't I lift a shark up its tail?

If you lift a shark up its tail the internal organs can be suppressed. This can lead to internal damage. If you put the shark back it seems to swim away, but after a couple of days it will die.

Why use a net?

If you can't get the shark out of the water horizontally use a net to raise the shark.

Why is it better not to let an exhausted shark directly free?

An exhausted shark will not swim away directly. It can sink to the bottom and drown. By holding the head into the current fresh water with oxygen will give the animal a boost and it will swim away.

How long can a shark survive out of the water?

Never hold a shark out of the water longer than 4 minutes. A longer timespan can damage the shark. It's important not to hold the shark out of the water longer than necessary.

Why tag a shark?

Not much is known about the dispersion and migration of sharks. By giving the shark a tag more information can be collected. If someone finds a shark with a tag they can report the number.

How do they tag sharks?

Tagging sharks is done with a Rototag (picture 2) and a special pliers. Every shark that is tagged gets a number that is registered if the shark is caught. The tag is placed at the first dorsal fin.

Caught a shark with a tag?

Go to www.sharkray.nl, write down the number, length, location of catch, depth and a photo if possible. Register this information on the site of sharkray.nl or call: +31-306058400.

*source data is found on the site of sharkray.nl



Picture 1. The pliers that are used to tag a shark.



Picture 2. The tag that is placed. The registered number is on the right and the places where you can register the number if found on the left.



Best practice handling guide

Common Stingray (*Dasyatis pastinac*)

Retrieving the stingray out of the water

- Don't wait too long to retrieve the shark, this will minimize the chance on a deep hooked shark.
- **Watch out: The stingray's sting is venomous!**
- A wet towel over the tail to protect yourself from getting stung. Hold it firmly.
- If your landing the ray hold it from you (and so the tail, it can sway).

Tips:

- Make sure that you've got everything you need, and in reach. Such as: camera, measuring tape and container with seawater.
- Stainless-steel hooks will not corrode if you have to cut the line. Always use a hook that will corrode, this way if you have to cut the line it will dissolve.
- Langstellige haak, the hook size can be adjusted to the used bait.



Image 1. Common stingray (*Dasyatis pastinac*)

Handling

- The best thing to do is not holding the ray. For your own safety and that of the ray.
- Not realising the ray right after retrieving? Use a container with seawater were the shark can rest.
- Hold the ray as short as possible out of the water.
- If you have to lay the ray down make sure the surface is moist.
- Don't turn the ray on its back. You can damage the mucous layer.

Accelerate the ray

- Release the ray carefully. Let the ray swim out of the net (image2) and do not throw the ray in the water.



Image 2. Releasing a Common stingray.

FAQ:

How do I recognize a stingray?

Stingrays have no spots like other ray's. They are brown/grey coloured (image 2). Look on the website at for www.sportvisserij nederland.nl, vis en water, onderzoeken/databases, shark ray and id cards on how to recognize stingrays from other ray's.

Why a best practice handling guide?

This handling guide is meant for recreational fishers who catch stingray's. By following this handling guide you'll give the ray the best chance of survival.

When should I strike?

As fast as you can, this way you will avoid a deep hooked fish. It's better to miss than deep hook one.

Why should I handle a ray as shown?

Not only for your own safety, but that of the ray to. A stingray has a barb were they can lash out with. The barb is sharp and venomous. Even just a scratch can be very painful. If you are stung or scratch by a stingray pour hot water (not boiling) over the wound. By following this best practice handling guide you give the ray the best chance of survival and handling the ray as safe as possible.

Why cover the stingray's barb?

At 2/3 of the tail a venomous barb is visible. By covering it with a towel you can control it. Hold it firmly this prevents the ray from swaying the tail. This is for you own safety and very important.

Why shouldn't I remove the barb?

The barb of the ray is their only protection against enemy's. By removing the barb you'll leave the ray defenseless. Also a wound appears were the barb has been, what can infect.

Why use a net?

By using a net you can bring the ray on board safely and see were the tail is. Also it's a good and safe way for the ray to be released.

How long can a ray survive out of the water?

Never hold a ray out of the water longer than 4 minutes. A longer timespan can damage the ray. It's important not to hold the ray out of the water longer than necessary.

*source data is found on the site of sharkray.nl