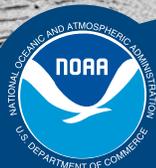


Barbless Circle Hook News

Issue 3, September 2009



NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE
PACIFIC ISLANDS FISHERIES SCIENCE CENTER



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Highest Finish in Project History!

See details inside.



2009 Happenings...

The 2009 barbless circle hook season has started off with a bang! New tournaments and outreach events made this a very busy and productive year. The number of barbless circle hook challenges and the number of anglers that signed up increased again this year. Tournament angler numbers were up and catches were pretty steady despite the sometimes rough and windy fishing conditions this year.

There were 6 tournaments that had barbless circle hook challenges. The year started off in March with the new GT Masters tournament on Oahu. The tournament was part of the first annual Hawaii Ocean Expo held at the Neil Blaisdell exhibition hall. The Gen Fujikawa Ninja Shootout, the 11th Annual Pole Benda, the 2009 Tokunaga Ulua Challenge (UC), and the 34th Hilo Casting Club (HCC) tournaments rounded out the first 5 barbless challenges. The remaining barbless challenge for 2009 is scheduled to be included within the First Annual Mike Sakamoto Memorial Scholarship tournament being held on Oahu on September 18-20, 2009. The weigh in will be held at the Pier 38 domestic fishing village.



Richard Beaudet, HCC, 2nd place Ulua Division.

Highest Tournament Finishes!



Kahana Itozaki, HCC, 2nd place Omilu Division.

The project achieved several milestones again this year. Tournament participation percentages increased this year averaging in the mid 30% range. The tournament with the highest percentage of barbless anglers was the HCC tournament with 42%. The HCC tournament also broke another barbless record for highest tournament finishes in the Ulua and Omilu categories. Two second place finishes for barbless caught fish were achieved; a **65.8** pound ulua caught by Richard Beaudet, and an **18.6** pound omilu caught by Kahana Itozaki. Other barbless catches of note are Kahana's 3rd place 52.2 pound ulua in the Pole Benda. Rody Dasalla's 7th place 65.9 pound ulua in the Tokunaga UC, and Jeromy Harada's 4th place 16.2 pound omilu in the Tokunaga UC.

There were some great barbless catches during the tournaments. Howard Yoshida topped the list this year with a spectacular catch of 5 uluas during the Tokunaga UC. He successfully released 2 and weighed in 3. Kahana Itozaki, a new convert to using barbless circle hooks, placed 3rd in the Pole Benda the first time he tried barbless circle hooks. He also weighed in 2 uluas at the Tokunaga UC and 2 omilu in the HCC tournament.



Ulua and 'O'io Tagging Projects

Ulua Tagging Project

We would like to thank Hawaii's fishermen for their outstanding support and dedication of the DAR Ulua Tagging Project. The project reflects the importance and stewardship of our resources by fishermen in Hawaii. This dedication and effort has made the project a great success!



Tagging has played an important role in gathering data on Hawaii's papio/ulua resources.

The information from tagging and recovery can give us growth rates, travel and spatial distribution of fishing effort. This information can be used to guide future management decisions of this resource.

The ultimate goal of this project is to promote conservation and management of resources while providing for the needs



of subsistence, recreational and commercial fishing for the people of Hawaii.

Mahalo,
Clay Tam
Ulua Tagging Project

'O'io Tagging Project

The 'O'io Tagging Project is progressing well in 2009. To date there have been a total of 425 'o'io tagged with the largest number (59%) coming from Malama Bay, followed by Maunalua Bay (21%), and Kaneohe Bay (11%). A total of 1,139 rod hours have been reported during the survey period with Malama Bay comprising (50%) of the effort, followed by Maunalua Bay (23%), and Kaneohe Bay (17%).

There has been a large increase of volunteer anglers for the 'o'io Tagging Project in 2009. This increase is primarily due to an invitation for the 'o'io tagging project, that was mailed to the participants of the State of Hawaii's Papio/Ulua Tagging program in February 2009. Many anglers requested tagging kits and immediately starting tagging bonefish. Anglers quickly began reporting their trips through the projects website, <http://oceanicinstitute.org/tagging/> and by calling the tagging line, 735-8290 on Oahu.

Twelve tagged bonefish recaptures have been reported since July 2009. No



original data were available for 6 of the 12 but efforts are underway to obtain this information. One bonefish tagged at Paiko Drive in February 2005 was recaptured in Hawaii Kai 1,534 days later. Another fish tagged at Ala Moana in 2005 was also recaptured at Ala Moana 1,424 days later. However, the tag for this fish was damaged and only the first 3 digits were legible. Of the original records that matched the tag number, the 2005 tag report from Ala Moana is most likely the matching record. A bonefish tagged in Kaneohe Bay in 2005 was at large for 1,233 days and also recaptured in Kaneohe Bay. With the exception of one caller that did not leave his name, all anglers that reported a recaptured tagged 'O'io received a project logo t-shirt.

Kim Harding
'O'io Tagging Project

How to make a barbless circle hook.





Monk seals and marine turtles in 2009



Monk Seals

Although the precise number of monk seals in the main Hawaiian islands is unknown, the 113 individual seals identified in 2008 can serve as a minimum population estimate. In recent years, 5-10 seals have been accidentally hooked by shorefishing gear, and in 2009, 11 had been hooked as of early August. All of these have resulted in hands-on rescues to remove the gear, and in one instance a seal was brought into temporary veterinary care and required anesthesia in order to remove a hook deep in the throat. As evidenced in the past rescues, this is potentially dangerous both for the animal and the researcher alike. The proactive voluntary use of a selfshedding barbless circle hook by fishermen could result in a less injurious outcome should an accidental hooking occur. – John Henderson, *Hawaiian Monk Seal Research Program*.

Marine Turtles

Hawaiian sea turtle strandings have been documented by the Marine Turtle Research Program of PIFSC since 1982. There are currently more than 5,300 stranding reports of which approximately 1,050 turtles were involved with fishing gear such as line, net, or hooks. Of those, a little more than half involved fishing line and approximately 15% involved hooks. About half of these turtles were successfully released alive. Reports are also received from recreational divers about entangled or hooked turtles, but these reports are not included in the stranding reports. By using barbless circle hooks, sea turtles and other incidentally captured animals may be easily released without much harm to the animal. It may also prevent loss of fishing gear to the fishermen if the hook can be dislodged instead of being taken with the animal. – Shawn, *Marine Turtle Research Program*.



Outreach Activities



Kid's Activities

Kalaheo Elementary Fishing Club

Outreach activities with the Kalaheo fishing Club continued through the year with the students making their usual Friday fishing excursions. Their end-of-year campout was held at a site along the Huliia stream adjacent to the Menehune Fishpond. Fishing



and crabbing were a success with more big crabs than fishes being caught this year. Fun was had by all while practicing good fishing ethics and etiquette. Kudos to Mr. Joel Kawate and Mr.

Richard Kalauawa for motivating their students by using fishing as an educational tool.

Hawaii High School Marine Fisheries and Resources Summer Course

This summer course geared towards 10th to 12th graders has been held at the Moanalua High School for the past 3 years. The class consists of guest lecturers, class activities, field trips, CPR, and first aid certification. Topics run from alien species, aquaculture, stock assessment, cultural and traditional fisheries, ecosystem-based approach to management,



fishing and ocean safety, fish as a resource, fish biology and habitats, fish ID, seafood safety, fish cleaning and preparation, fisheries conservation and management, fisheries economics and marketing, fisheries dependent and fisheries independent research, fishing gear and techniques, insular fisheries overview, stock enhancement, pacific pelagic fisheries overview, protected species, and recreational fisheries. It is a truly hands-on summer experience for the kids interested in pursuing a career in fisheries.



The BCH project has been involved in outreach to these students and has promoted and provided barbless circle hooks for use at their fishing outings.

Saint Louis Elementary Fishing Club

The project also did outreach with the Saint Louis Elementary School Fishing Club. Dean Murata of The Rod Shop coordinated the after school classroom and outside activities. The students learned about barbless circle hooks while learning to spool line, tie hooks, make rigs, cast spinning rods, wise use of our resources, taking care of your fishing area, and a lot of other good kine fishing stuff.

Tournament Activity - 2009

2009 Tournament Outreach

There were numerous outreach events that expanded the project to different islands this year. The **5th Annual Lanai Keiki Catch Tournament** in early April was a new one for 2009. It



is sponsored by the Maui Police Department, Lanai Division, Parks and Recreation, and the Four Seasons Resorts on Lanai. Officer Kim Masse and Executive Assistant Nalani Silva hosted the wildly popular keiki only event. Over 100 kids of all ages participated with sign-ups happening until the last minute. There were multiple weigh-in times and the kids were limited to a couple



of safe fishing areas. It was nice to see families fishing together and parents and kupuna passing down local fishing knowledge and techniques to the young-er generation. Events like these bring



families and communities together while perpetuating traditional local fishing. The fishing area was extremely family friendly with bathrooms and camp grounds. The entire family was urged to camp out and fish during this event.



The kids caught lots of small game and were very proud of their catches. PIFG brought along gyotaku legend Naoki Hayashi and his assistants. They provided on-the-spot gyotaku services for

the participants. Some of the fish were

still wiggling just prior to printing. Eels were a popular catch to print and many were



so long that they coiled around the small t-shirts. Naoki was a very popular attraction and he combined environmental education while



explaining and doing the printing. PIFG did a throw net demo and training,

fishing safety demos, and displayed the State's Ulua Tagging Project information. The FREE barbless hook samples at-

tracted lots of curious kids as well as parents. Additional outreach was performed by



walking the fishing area both day and night. Lots of prizes were given out by age groupings and commonly caught species. It was a fun time for all and a very successful event.



The **12th Annual K-Mart fishing tournament** weigh-in was held on July 19th. Barbless circle hook outreach packets and Ulua/papio tagging and



sign-up forms ran out even before the weigh-in was completed. This annual family-oriented event hosted a total of 300 participants of which nearly 100 were kids. The almost anything goes species format enabled most of the anglers to weigh in a multitude of reef fish species to win prizes. There was even a largest eel category. Fish of all shapes, sizes, and colors were weighed in by kids and adults alike. The largest ulua this year was a 65 pounder. There was also a **79** pound ulua weighed in by a true sportsman angler who disqualified his catch saying

it just before the official tournament start time. His honesty was duly noted and highlighted in front of the entire crowd which served to set a good example for all the anglers. The most interesting catch of the tournament was a **16** pound spotted knife jaw. This year tournament organizer Jarett Chytka wasn't available, therefore, Sandy Higa, who helped start the tournament 12 years ago, stepped





up to the plate and got it done. Our thanks goes out to Jarrett, Sandy, and all the great K-Mart volunteers.

The project also had an opportunity to do outreach at the **PIFSC Science Night** in Kona during the HIBT. Many of the team members and vessel Captains that attended the presentations and poster session were supportive of the project. The offshore fishermen are also looking for ways to be more fish-friendly in their angling. They remarked that many tournaments for sailfish and striped marlin in different areas around the country and the world are also adopting the use of circle hooks when using live or fresh dead baits. One local fisherman also said that he uses barbless circle hooks for his palu ahi and ika shibi fishing. When the bite is hot he can get the hook back into the water a lot faster without the barb. I guess in Hawaii we are just one step ahead with our barbless circle hook approach. Hawaii fishermen are leading the way again.

The recently ended 35-year-old **Lihue Fishing Tackle tournament** is in hiatus for the 2009 season. Although shop owner Jean Nakamura has declared the end to her tournament activities there are numerous rumors of its resurrection floating around various parts of Kauai. Only time will tell if this summertime tradition will continue. **Atlacpac's Weighmaster and Obake tournaments** were also cancelled this year due to conflicts in timing with other events and reserving weigh-in sites. We all hope for their successful return next season.

Barbless Circle Hook Tournament Challenges

First Annual GT Masters March 27-29, 2009

The first annual Hawaii Ocean Expo at the Blaisdell Exhibition Hall hosted the first annual GT Masters fishing tournament. The Eastside Outkastaz Fishing Club organized this first fishing tournament that weighed in on a stage within the exhibition hall. The logistics of the weigh-in stand, slime containment, and clean up were conquered by the Eastside

Outkastaz fishing club. The Outkastaz teamed up with the Atlacpac Fishing Club to organize and run the weigh in. Nearly 250 fishermen entered with 40 of them entering the barbless circle hook challenge. Although there were only a few catches using the barbless circle hooks the tournament was a success with the largest ulua weighing in at **67.9 lbs** and several others in the 55 lb. class to take the top positions. It is unfortunate that only after the fact I learned that Gani's **55 lber** was caught on a barbless circle hook. The project is truly sorry for not acknowledging his awesome catch while at the Expo. At



the time it was the largest barbless circle hook caught fish for 2009. Barbless circle hook angler Harvey Shima placed third overall in the 'o'io (bonefish) competition with a **7.4 lb** fish. A highlight for the BCH and the Ulua Tagging project was that one of the 55 lb

uluas was caught on a barbless circle hook and was also a tagged fish. It was tagged by Dean Kitamura on 8/7/07, fork length 37 inches (approximately 38 lbs), at Kahuku, Oahu. It was recovered by Francis "Gani" Ganitano on 3/27/09, fork length 43.7 inches (55.5 lbs), at Kahuku, Oahu. The fish was tagged within a mile of where it was caught, it had been free for 598 days, had grown 6.75 inches, and had added approximately 17 pounds. Where it had been feeding and growing is a mystery.

Gen Fujikawa Ninja Shootout April 24-26, 2009

This is the first annual Gen Fujikawa Ninja Shootout fishing tournament. Gen Fujikawa was a young waterman taken before his time while diving at Sandy Beach. This tournament was put on by his ohana as a tribute to his memory. The proceeds from the tournament was donated to the Aloha Aina Gen Memorial Award which provides scholarships to students at Leeward and Kapiolani community colleges. The scholarship award was started by Gen's parents, Kapiolani Community College professors Robin and Linda Fujikawa.

The weigh-in was held at Kapolei High School on the west side of Oahu. There



were various food and game booths and entertainment by a Taiko group as well. Almost 190 men, women, and children signed up to participate. Thirty five anglers

signed up to fish barbless. Although there were only a few fishes caught with barbless circle hooks there were lots of fish weighed in for the tournament. Many barbless anglers said that the fish that were caught decided to bite on the barbed hooks instead. Better luck next time. The tournament winner was a 53 lb white ulua caught by 14-year-old

Tournament Activity - 2009

Shawn Lopez (<http://kgmb9.com/main/content/view/16679/290/>) who caught his prize winning ulua in 15 minutes at 3 am Saturday morning.

Kim Harding (the 'O'io lady) was also present to sign up more 'o'io tagging volunteers and to get more specimens for her project. It is interesting that this late season tournament yielded the largest sizes of the sharp jaw 'o'io (*Albula virgata*) that she has collected. It was also interesting that both species were caught from the same area by a single fisherman. Even more fortuitous is that they were both caught on barbless circle hooks.



11th Annual Pole Benda May 21-24, 2009

The 11th Annual Pole Benda tournament weigh-in did not disappoint again this year. There were 115 participants and 35 anglers signed up to fish using barbless circle hooks. A 65 pound ulua and a 58 pound ulua took the top 2 places. Although there were many fish weighed in for the tournament, only a single **52.2** pound ulua was caught on a barbless circle hook. The **52.2** pound white ulua, caught by Kahana Itozaki of the Hilo Casting Club, placed 3rd overall.



This was the first tournament that Kahana, a long time ulua fisherman, had tried using the barbless circle hooks. After years of doubt he finally proved

to himself that they do work. He also missed 2 ulua using the barbless circle hooks but didn't attribute the losses to the barbless hooks. Additionally his ulua

had also been previously tagged. Tagging records indicate that the fish was at liberty for 666 days, grew 4 inches, and traveled (straight line) approximately 45 miles. Originally tagged on July 25, 2007 in Kona at a fork length (FL) of 38 inches it was recovered on May 21, 2009 off Kau at 42 inches FL. This was the second recovery of a tagged ulua caught using a barbless circle hook during a tournament.



2009 Tokunaga Ulua Challenge June 11-14, 2009

This year there was a mind boggling, record setting 501 entrants making this perhaps the largest shore fishing tournament in the state today. Of these 501 entrants, 8 were ladies, 39 were from neighbor islands, 184 participated in the barbless hook category, and 175 in the



tag and release category. The tournament organizers are very proud to have been the first to offer such categories and to encourage responsible shoreline fishing. The kudos for this tournament were also highlighted by a June 2009 USA Today article (<http://www.usatoday.com/travel/destinations/10great/2009->

[06-04-fishing-tournaments_N.htm?POE=TRVISVA](#)) naming it as one of the "10 great places to compete hook, line and sinker" even beating out the prestigious Hawaii International Billfish Tournament in Kona which celebrated its 50th tournament this year.

This year the anglers commented that the fishing was slower than normal and the fish that were being caught were not as large as last year's banner crop of 100 pounders. This being said, the fish that were brought to the scale were still huge. Angler speculation was that the higher than normal surf during the fishing period hampered both the fish and fishermen especially affecting the traditional omilu grounds. The barbless catch numbers were about the same as last year with 15 barbless caught fishes being weighed in. The highlights were that a number of anglers caught multiple uluas going barbless. Howard Yoshida used barbless VMC 16/0 hooks to catch 5 white uluas, two of which were successfully released. Kahana Itozaki also weighed in 2 white uluas. Another project milestone was advanced as Rody Dasalla placed 7th overall with a barbless ulua weighing in at **65.9** pounds. Last year Oahu angler Mitchell Taketa (Atlacpac Fishing Club) placed 10th overall with a 66.9 pound barbless white ulua to finish in the money. This was the first time any angler placed in any tournament with a barbless fish. This year the Ulua Challenge



Bruce Blyth, 1st place, Ulua Tokunaga UC.



was won by BI angler Bruce Blyth with an **89.8** pound white ulua. Oahu angler Duane Fukumoto (Atlapac Fishing Club) led nearly the entire way with an **89.7** pound white ulua before being dropped into second place near the end of the weigh in time period. The out of town anglers are putting on a stronger showing every year.



Duane Fukumoto, 2nd place, Ulua Tokunaga UC.



34th Annual Hilo Casting Club Tournament July 21-25, 2009

The Hilo Casting Club's 34th Annual Fishing Tournament weigh-in on Saturday 7/25 provided another opportunity for the BCH project to outreach to fishermen. This is the second year that the tournament has included a barbless circle hook challenge. There were 57 anglers out of a total of 135 that signed up for the challenge making the ratio of anglers, at 42%, the highest ever for



any tournament. The largest fish of the tournament was a **79.1** pound white ulua caught by S. Yamamoto. The lucky fisherman also weighed in a **78.4** pound white ulua and a **13** pound omilu to win what might just be the last Tournament Angler trophy donated by the Governor's office. Only one place in a category can be won by any angler so this freed up the second place spot for Richard Beaudet who caught a **65.8** pound white ulua on a longshank barbless circle hook. This is the highest tournament finish for a barbless circle hook ulua. Kahana Itozaki weighed in two large omilu caught using barbless circle hooks. His **18.6** pound omilu was large enough to take second place which was also the highest finish for a barbless circle hook omilu in any



tournament. Some of the regulars who always catch big during the tournament noted the large south swell, which sent many anglers home early, as a factor in this competition.

In addition to all the big fish that were weighed in there were 2 very special ones hidden among the rest. Kila Furman caught a **37** pound ulua that was originally tagged by Fred Desha. The ulua had been free for 744 days and grew 3 inches (36 inches to 39 inches).

Jordan Kaholoaa re-captured a **30** pound ulua that was tagged by Keith Caldwell. That **30** pounder had been free for 766 days and grew 3.75 inches (31 inches to 34 3/4 inches). Thank you to all the anglers that are tagging and releasing more and more uluas every year. The information is priceless.



Mike Sakamoto Memorial Scholarship Tournament, September 18-20, 2009.

This new tournament will feature a Barbless Circle Hook Challenge and a Tagging Challenge and is dedicated to our dear friend and fellow fisherman, Mike Sakamoto. The late Mike Sakamoto was not only an avid fisherman but a vigilant citizen concerned with issues relating to our ocean environment. He was also a very strong promoter of conservation and had a significant role in changing attitudes of fishermen throughout the State of Hawaii with his long running television show, Fishing Tales. In his memory, the Sakamoto family and the Pacific Islands Fisheries Group (PIFG) have created a scholarship fund intended to provide opportunities for local students interested in careers focused on the monitoring and management of our ocean resources. The goal of the tournament is to help the Mike Sakamoto Memorial Scholarship Fund provide annual scholarship awards of \$5,000 to two selected students. The awards are expected to given out in October at the 4th Annual Fishing and Seafood Festival at Pier 38 in Honolulu.

Fishing and Seafood Festival 2009

Largest Barbless Circle Hook Ulua for 2009

Every year the BCH project gives out the largest barbless circle hook ulua of the year (BCH year - September thru August). The award is presented at the annual October Fishing and Seafood Festival at Pier 38. Last year's winner was Mitchell Taketa of the Atlapac Fishing Club in Honolulu. He caught the 66.9 pound ulua during the Tokunaga UC to take 10th place. That was the first time a barbless ulua placed in any tournament.



Rody Dasalla 7th place Tokunaga UC 2009

This year's winner is a long-time Hilo Casting Club member, Rody Dasalla, with his **65.9** pound ulua that he caught during the Tokunaga UC. His ulua took 7th place, the highest place any barbless ulua has taken in the UC. His catch narrowly beat Richard Beaudet's 65.8 pound ulua that took second in the HCC tournament. Congratulations to Rody and many thanks for tagging and releasing all those smaller uluas. You're setting a great example for the rest of us.

A promotional poster for the 4th Annual Hawaii Fishing & Seafood Festival. The poster features a collage of images showing people fishing, a woman holding a fish, and a woman at a market stall. Text on the poster includes: 'FOOD | GAMES | LIVE ENTERTAINMENT | INFORMATIVE ACTIVITIES', 'CELEBRATING OUR FISHING AND SEAFOOD HERITAGE...', '4th ANNUAL Hawaii FISHING & SEAFOOD Festival', 'PACIFIC ISLANDS FISHERIES GROUP', 'SUNDAY OCT. 11, 2009 9 AM TO 4 PM', 'PIER 38 HONOLULU FISHING VILLAGE', 'FREE HCC PARKING & ADMISSION', and logos for IZUO, POP, HawaiiSeafood, and the United Fishing Agency.

At the third annual Fishing and Seafood Festival, the **2008 Largest Barbless Ulua** award was given to **Mitchell Taketa** for his **66.9 lb barbless ulua** that placed **10th** in the **S. Tokunaga Ulua Challenge**. **This was the first barbless ulua to place in a major tournament in Hawaii.**





Thanks go to all the anglers that have tried the hooks and provided the "proof of the pudding," so to speak, by putting your faith in the hooks and using them. For the new converts I imagine that your faith was really put to the test those first few times. I hope that your trust has been rewarded and the fish was tasty. I know that mine were.



This year was another interesting year. I talked to many fishermen and everyone had some story, interesting observations, or insights to tell. Some of the highlights for me were:

Sportsmanship-seen at Kauai at the K-Mart tournament where a participant self-disqualified his huge 79 lb ulua stating that he had caught it just before the official start time.

Most barbless uluas in a tournament - Howard Yoshida's 5 uluas in the Tokunaga UC. He said he thought that he got better penetration in the ulua's hard mouth by using barbless circle hooks because the barbs did not present additional resistance.

Still stay on - Mitchell Taketa who caught and released an 'o'io during Atlapac's Kapapa island outing. After a lengthy dinner, it was still on when he went back to check his bait. He also went on to catch an ulua and a papio on barbless as well.

Barbless convert - Richard Beaudet, 2nd place winner at the HCC tournament, said that he has been using the barbless circle hooks regularly for a while now and he prefers them over the barbed ones. He has been having good success at catching the big ones on barbless. He and Rody may have just convinced long-time skeptic Troy Haspe to give them a try this coming season.

Barbless Newbie - Kahana Itozaki who only this year started trying the hooks. He has been proving to himself and others that they do work by placing third in the Pole Benda the first time he tried them. He then weighed in 2 barbless ulua in the Tokunaga Ulua Challenge and caught the second place Omilu winner in the HCC tournament. His 2nd place omilu couldn't get away and was dead on the line when he checked bait. How's that for holding power?

The numbers of anglers willing to try the barbless circle hooks has been increasing as the catches keep on rolling in.

None of the accomplishments could have happened without the support of the tournament organizers and anglers, the fishing tackle suppliers, and the support of the PIFSC for the past 5 years. Thank you to all who helped make 2009 a great year of outreach. The true winners are the uluas, turtles, and monk seals that somehow got away and managed to shake out those barbless hooks. Thanks for trying them out...Kurt

Program Manager's Message

IT WORKS!

The ease of shedding a barbless circle hook has been on record now since 2007. Every year there are an average of 5-10 seals that show up with a barbed circle hook in some part of their body. The undeniable "proof" that the barbless circle hooks could easily be self-shed comes from this 2007 incident from the Big Island which was documented by NOAA researchers.



"Well, we got super lucky last night and got the hook out without even touching the seal. I've attached two pics so you can see the hook in the mouth and the hook by itself. It appears that the fisherman may have cut off the barb so the seal actually pulled the hook out herself when she reacted to me getting close, she moved away and popped it right out!!"

A lot of unintended interactions can have a similar outcome if barbless circle hooks are used by responsible fishermen. Many thanks to the fisherman who used this one...you were definitely ahead of the game.

Please practice responsible fishing. keep on using them. – Kurt

Barbless Circle Hook Catches By You!

Send us photos of your barbless hook catches so we can add them to our growing collection. Please remember that sending us your photos means that you have implicitly given your permission for us to use them.



Barbless Circle Hook Catches By You!



If you would like to have your barbless catches listed, please call, email, or write me and I'll be glad to add it to the growing list of anglers and catches.

Send us photos of your barbless hook catches so we can add them our growing photo list. Sending in your photos will give us implicit permission to use them for publicizing the NOAA Barbless Circle Hook Program.

For more info contact: Kurt Kawamoto-(808) 983-5326 or Kurt.Kawamoto@noaa.gov. 2570 Dole Street, Hon., HI 96822-2396.