

Trolling Loch Lomond.

Right from the first day of the season in February to the last day in October, Salmon and Sea Trout can be caught on the troll. There is not a better way of getting acquainted with the Loch's shoreline than a seasons trolling, meandering into every bay in search of Salmon or Sea Trout. On a fine day it is a magnificent day out, stopping off on one of the islands for lunch, meeting up with fellow anglers to discuss fishing tactics. I won't say I learned the art of trolling from any of the Loch's greats as I never, I bought a boat with a lifelong friend and off we went. Our initial attempts varied between dragging and dredging but soon we got the hang of it. At first we used to follow the odd boat in front, see where he was going, what speed he was going at and his distance from the shore.

Getting started

Before anglers go out on Loch Lomond can I advise them of the current byelaws in force. Every power driven boat must be registered by its owner with the National Park Authority. Upon registering the Authority will issue a unique registration number and annual mark which must be clearly displayed on both sides of the boat.

The master of a boat shall ensure that at all times the boat is carrying sufficient lifejackets or buoyancy aids of an appropriate size and weight for each person on board at any one time.

When trolling a trolling shape is required to be displayed. This should be an orange coloured ball about 200mm in diameter fixed to a pole or rod 750mm long and positioned where it is clearly visible. This should mean that no boat passes within 100m astern of a fishing boat. Most loch users obey this but you will get individuals not knowing the byelaws. I have had various entanglements over the years, speedboats, jet ski's, and ma, pa and the weans in a yacht with a deep keel that tacked over my three lines.

Wearing a lifejacket or floatation suit is a must on a large loch. I personally wear an automatic lifejacket which self inflates when it hits the water. I put it on before I board the boat and it remains on till I step off later in the day. I have sheltered between the islands and let a squall blow over before continuing trolling .

Check the weather, most anglers do this via websites, the postcode for Balloch is G83, various websites include

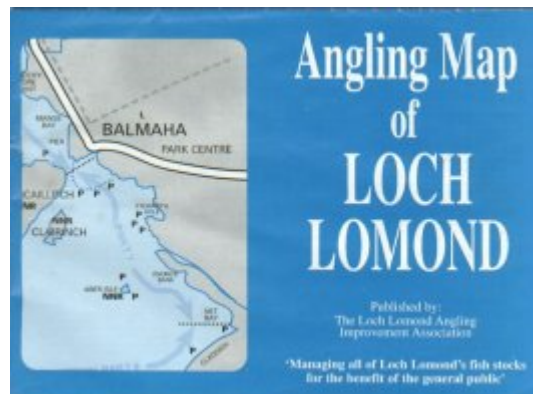
<http://www.xcweather.co.uk/>

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/weather>

<http://www.metoffice.gov.uk/>

Angling Map of Loch Lomond

The LLAIA have prepared an angling map of Loch Lomond. The Loch has been divided into 15 parts indicated by arrows on the map itself, with the corresponding information on trolling in blue type and fly fishing in black type. The information on the map is an extremely good starting point for those wishing to fish the Loch.



The cost is £5.70 for the normal Angling Map, which includes postage. Also available is a completely flat (unfolded) Angling Map of Loch Lomond, this is posted inside a tube and costs £ 10.00, which covers price of tube and postage. Please go to the resource section of this website for further details.

Loch Lomond Navigation Guide

This guide contains detailed maps showing depths and hazards in Loch Lomond. It is available from the Duncan Mills Memorial Slipway in Balloch priced at £12



Boats for Trolling

I would recommend a boat of 16ft to 19ft and an outboard 4hp to 8hp. There are many boat's that fit this description, Orkney Longliner, Arran, Pebble, Lomond 18, Anglers Fancy to name but some.

Top photo is Committee member and Website reporter Jim Raeburn's boat, bottom photo is my own.



Anglers Fancy 19ft built by Burke Boats, Co Mayo



Lomond 18ft built by Loch Lomond boat builders, Jamestown Industrial Estate, Alexandria

Trolling Tackle.

Rods

I have used various rods over the years ranging from spinning rods, fly rods, carp rods, made from cane, fibreglass and carbon. Having also experimented with different length's for the outside/inside rods varying from 10ft to 16ft, my final setup is now 12ft rods for the outside/inside and 8ft for the poker. These lengths are my own personnel preference, feel free to experiment yourself. One thing I would say is the longer thin walled carbon rods wouldn't be my first choice, I have tried them and they are just too soft an action for me.

The rods I use for trolling are shown below

1: Daiwa CF98 – 12B Trolling Special, these rods are a number of years old but can still be picked up second hand on Ebay or Gumtree. (Outside / Inside rods)



2: Ron Thompson 8' Hard Core (Poker rod)



I find these rods are as good as any, nothing fancy but fit for purpose.

Reels for the Outside / Inside rods



Starting at the top going clockwise, Daiwa M-Two, Daiwa M-One, Daiwa SG-375 and Shimano Moocher 2000GT.

These large capacity centrepin reels are ideal for trolling Loch Lomond, I use them on the outside / inside rods. They all have a 1:1 ratio and can be handed to suit right or left hand retrieve. All that is required is to remove the two screws that hold on the lineguard, reposition it, remove the anti-reverse ratchet, flip it over and reassemble the reel.

Reels for the Poker rod

My preference of reel for the poker rod is the high speed multiplier, I was given this reel years ago and have never had a single problem with it. Pulling out the line by hand while the drag is on isn't a problem but don't ask me to cast it, I have tried but the inevitable over run is always the result.



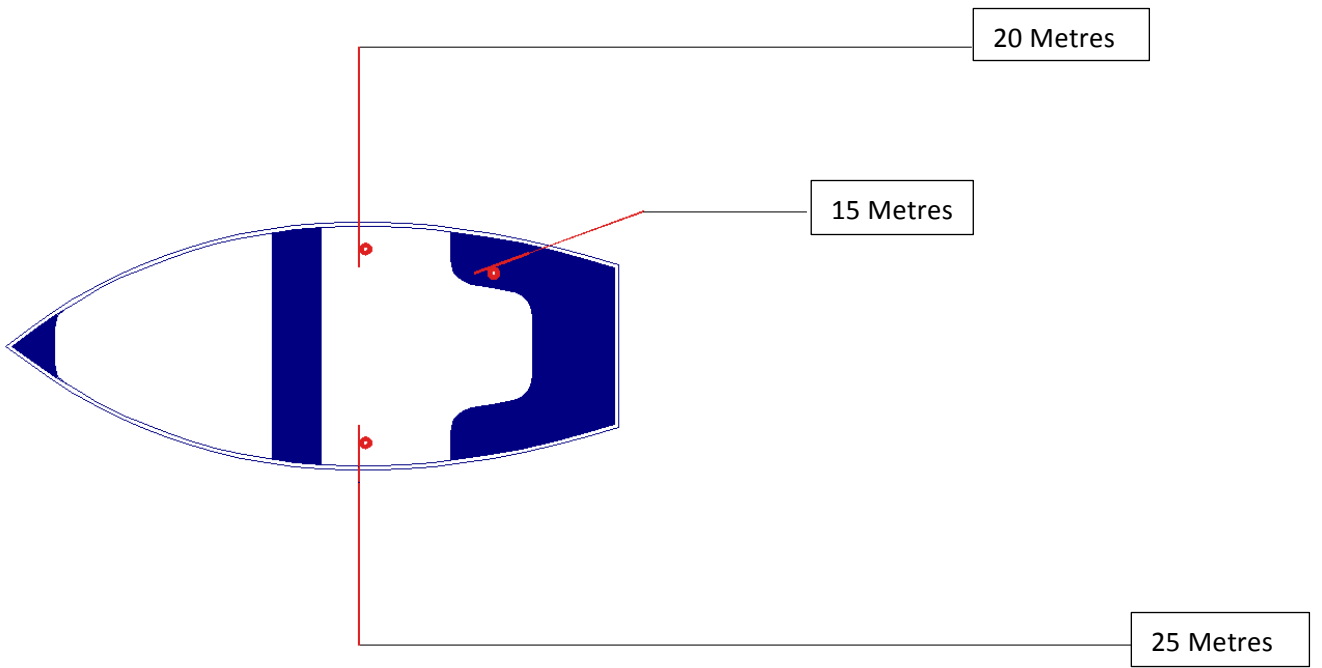
Shimano Triton 100-G

Trolling line lengths.

Filling up large capacity centrepin reels with new line every year can be an expensive business . One way to reduce the cost is to fill them with flyline backing and then attaching quality line like Maxima Chameleon for the final 15, 20 and 25 meters. Every season the monofilament can be replaced at a fraction of the cost.

There are probably no two anglers on Loch Lomond who fish the same lengths of line, I know various guys, some fish their lures close to the boat, others seem ridiculously long but they still catch fish.

The trolling lengths shown below are my preference, after I attach the monofilament to the backing I measure out and cut the line to the 3 different lengths. Monofilament line with a breaking strain of around 15 - 20lb should be ideal.



Trolling lures.

Toby's

Abu Toby's were first manufactured in the 50's and are still going strong to this day. Originally manufactured in Sweden , production moved to Taiwan in 1981. The Toby is a legendary catcher of fish, incredibly effective when cast or trolled, in fresh or salt water. Unfortunately over the years I have lost nearly all the original Swedish one's I bought as a boy, some are probably still stuck fast down at Rhu point .

The sizes I use for trolling are shown below, left hand column, 30 g, middle column 28g and 18g, right hand column 12g. As you can see they come in a variety of colours and lengths. I put the 30g and 28g toby's on the poker rod with the lighter 18g saved for the outside / inside rods.

I convert all my toby's to a double split ring between the lure and treble hook, this increases the chances of a hooked fish staying on. Some guys wire a flying treble to the existing one, others prefer a breakaway treble that breaks free from the tail of the lure but is attached to the swivel by means of a short piece of monofilament



Kynoch's

The Kynoch Killer was introduced in the UK by the late Iain Kynoch for Salmon fishing on the Tay, British Registered Design No 88812. The origins of this lure can be found in Canada and America where it was hand carved from wood. The design was licenced for a short time by ABU and called the ABU Kynoch. The Kynoch's shown below are from the 70's, they are all 4" long. The line is threaded through the sloping face of the lure and exits at the bottom just aft of the eye. When a fish is hooked the lure is free to travel up the line well away from the treble. I particularly like to fish this lure on the poker, it has a great action darting and weaving about in the wake of the outboard.



Rapala's

Invented in the 1930's by Lauri Rapala to mimic the movements of a wounded fish. Every Rapala is tank tested to make sure it has the right action straight out the box, although minor adjustments can be made by bending the eye up, down, right or left. They come in a variety of colour's, lengths, floating or sinking. I like the 11cm and 13cm ones the best, particularly the orange variety. Sometimes I have three oranges rapala's on at once in a variety of lengths. I only leave the tail treble on these lures, it's far easier to release fish without damage.



A days trolling.

After armoring yourself with some of the equipment mentioned above, it's time to head out. There are various places on the Loch a boat can be kept or launched but probably the most easily accessible is the Duncan Mills Memorial slipway in Balloch. There is a launching fee of £55 per year for unlimited use or a single use launch of £15 (launch and retrieval). If you launch there then there's only one way you can head, North. At the start of the season then the most popular place to troll is the East shore from Balloch past Boturich Castle, Ross Priory, Endrick bank and towards the Ross Isles. One of the most likely places for a Spring salmon is the Boturich shore, care should be taken here as there are large boulders and rocky outcrops in this area. Play safe and troll slightly deeper until the area is familiar.

There is no need for me to cover all the trolling areas as the angling map of Loch Lomond produced by some members of the previous committee is extremely useful and I would recommend it as it covers the entire length of the Loch.

Early season my preferred lures are rapalas, with the outboard set at a steady speed, slightly above walking pace and as the season progresses I will switch to toby's and increase the boat speed making sure the lures aren't getting dragged along the surface.

Continually check the lures for weed, slime and twigs, if anything is caught on the lure the action goes completely and the chance of catching a fish reduces.

Boats trolling towards each other must always pass port to port, I mention this as it was the mistake I made first time I was out, much to the annoyance of another Loch angler

When a fish is hooked I head out to deep water reeling in the other two rods as I go, I then put the engine into neutral and play the fish. Get the biggest landing net available, one day you'll welcome it. Last season there was a 27lb fish off the Loch caught by a Balmaha angler.

The above article is a brief insight into trolling, it's meant to give some hints for new members looking to troll Loch Lomond. There are many rods, reels and lures available, I have shown what I use and hope it can be some help.

The one thing I would like to emphasize more than anything, please be safe, don't take any chances and return home safe.

Regards

J.Muir

Bailiffing



Loch Lomond is patrolled regular both midweek and at the weekend. Anglers must be in possession of a current permit before fishing the Loch any unlicensed anglers will be “sniffed out “

LLAIA Conservation

Mr Paul Devlin of [Glasgow Angling Centre](#) has kindly agreed to sponsor our spring fish conservation initiative. With immediate effect any angler who catches and releases a spring salmon before 1 June will be entitled to claim a reward. GAC have agreed to provide the angler with a £20 tackle voucher. This will be matched by the LLAIA ,providing the captor an opportunity to claim a £40 voucher. The rules are simple. The release of the fish must be witnessed and where possible, photographic or video evidence submitted. All claims will be decided by the committee.

Conservation Measures In Force On The Lomond System.

For the avoidance of doubt, the following conservation measures are now in force throughout the Lomond system since 7 March 2013.

Salmon.

1. Full and associate members will be allocated 5 tags per year. Where a salmon is killed a tag must be fixed on the carcass immediately.
2. No salmon may be killed after 30 September.

Sea Trout.

1. There is no tagging system for sea trout.
2. No sea trout may be killed before 1 May or after 30 September.
3. All hen sea trout over 3lb in weight caught after 31 August will be released.
4. No more than 2 sea trout can be taken on any day.

Coarse Fish.

1. All coarse fish must be returned to the water alive.

General Conditions.

1. All coloured or unseasonable fish must be returned, irrespective of the time of year when caught.
2. No worm fishing is allowed before 1 May.
3. Worm fishing between 1 May and 31 May will be by use of circle hooks only.
4. Minimum worm hook size remains size 8 in order to protect juvenile fish.
5. Use of shrimp or prawn is banned.
6. Use of fish roe including power bait is banned.

Committee Recommendations.

1. Anglers are requested to return as many salmon and sea trout as possible given the fragile state of stock in the recent past.
2. We strongly recommend that [circle hooks](#) should be the only type of hook used when fishing with the worm, given that they rarely lead to a fish being hooked down the back of the throat.