

"Tips to Successful Striper Fishing"

by Capt. John

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Sandy Hook, NJ

“Stripers... bait fishing techniques”

What's a Striped Bass?

- The most popular inshore gamefish in the Northeast that range in size on average from 5 - 40+ lbs.
- During the fall, some migrate up into both the Hudson River and the Chesapeake River and remain dormant for the winter.
- Stripers live both in salt and freshwater.
- Feed on: Bunker, peanut bunker, clams, sandworms, eels, crabs, sea bass, etc.
- Most feeding activity takes place just before dark and again just after sunrise.



Photo courtesy of Saltwater Sportsman Magazine

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What's a Striper? Continued.....

- It takes about 7 years for a bass to grow to 36” and weighing 20 lbs, at age 10 they weigh 30 lbs. and at age 14, 40 lbs..
- The preferred water temperature range for Stripers is between 45 and 65 degrees.
- Just before and after full moon and new moon phases appear to stimulate Striper feeding.
- Current NJ regulations for retaining Stripers: 2 fish @ 28” or greater in NJ bays, river and shore to 3 miles offshore.

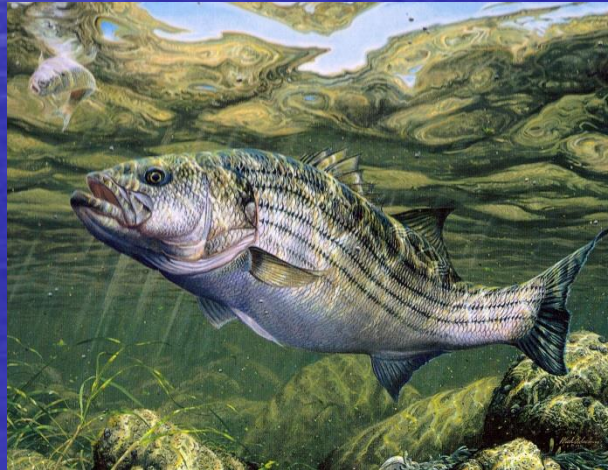


Photo courtesy of Saltwater Sportsman Magazine

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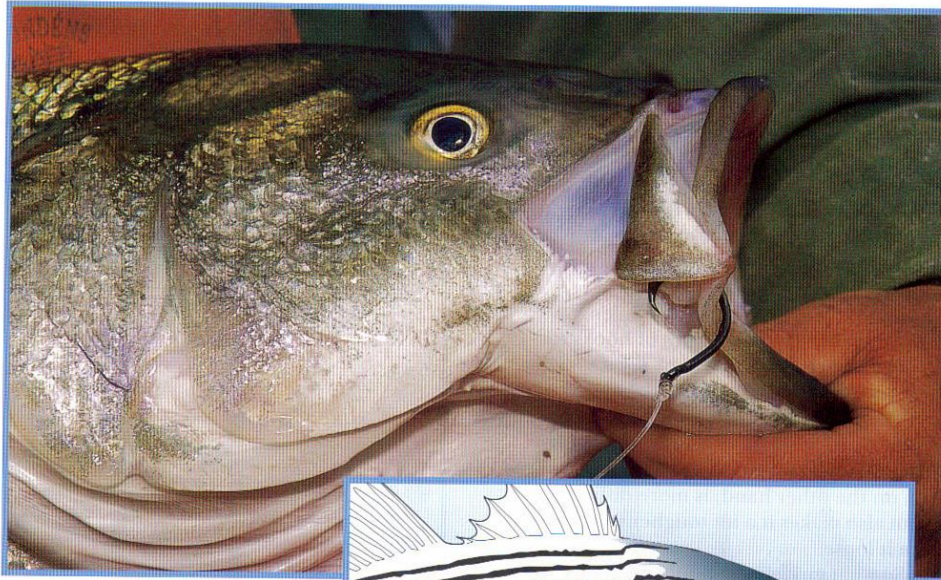
Tackle we use for Striper chunking, worming and eeling:

Rod:	6'6" Med-Hvy Bait caster rod
Reel:	Penn International 965 Level Wind Reel
Line:	20 lb test Ande monofilament Drag set for 5 lbs (1/3 breaking strength of line)
Leader:	30 lb test fluorocarbon Ande
Hooks:	6/0-9/0 Gamagatsu Octopus “Circle” hooks for clamming & chunking, 4/0 live bait hook for eeling and 4/0 bait holder hook for worming

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How circle hooks work.....

Use them, encourage others and let's preserve this great game fish.



CIRCLE HOOKS are not set like standard hooks. Instead, the angler allows the bass to swallow the bait and swim away. As the fish swims away, the tension on the line pulls the hook out of the fish's throat (1) and as the hook's eye clears the striper's mouth, the hook rotates, which positions the barb (2) so it penetrates the corner of the mouth.

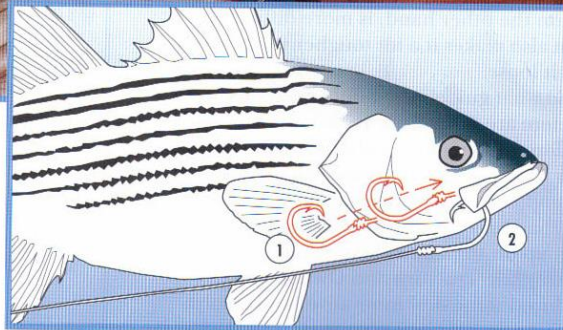


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Fishfinder Rig for chunking and clamming Striped Bass:

Standard Striper Chunking/Clamming Rig-

Black plastic sliding sinker holder place on your running line.

75# black barrel swivel tied to the end of your running line.

24" Fluorocarbon 30 lb. leader snelled to a 6/0-9/0 Gamagatsu Octopus **circle** hook.

Sinker 2-4 oz. lead bank sinker

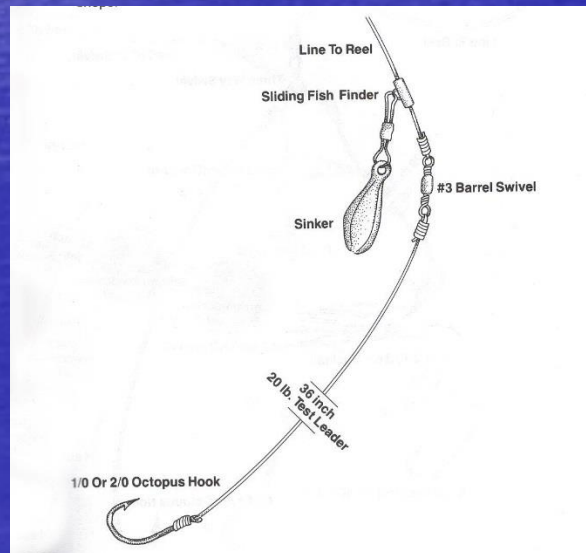


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Rig for worming Striped Bass:

Standard Striper Worming Rig-

3 way Swivel (50-75 #) tied to your running line.

12" Dropper for you sinker.

36" Fluorocarbon 30 lb. leader snelled to a 4/0 Gamagatsu bait holder hook.

Sinker- 2, 4 to 6 oz. lead bank sinker

3-4 river water soaked (not tap water) Sandworms

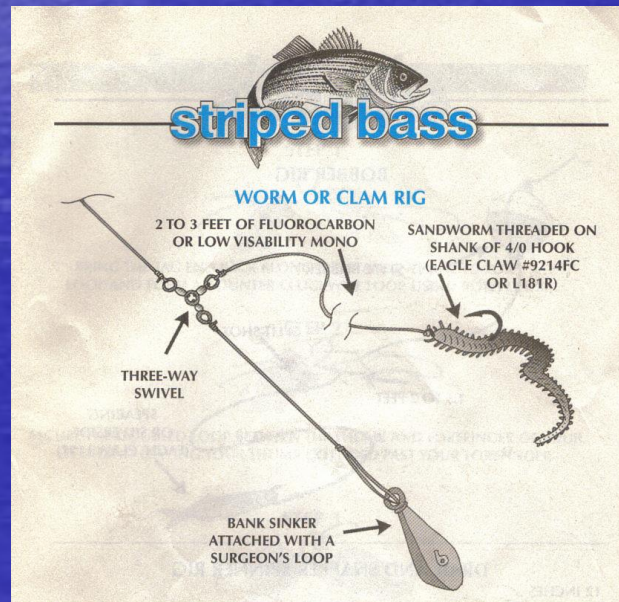


Photo courtesy The Fisherman Library

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Bait presentation when worming:

- Let sandworms soak in river water/sea water. They will enlarge 3-4 times their original length.
- Thread one sandworm thru head and up shank of hook.
- Lance 2-3 additional sandworms
- You'll be drifting 3-4 sandworms

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Bunker preparation for chunking:

- Fresh netted Bunker (or fresh dead)
- Bunker head hooked through the gill plate. (the head will be facing the oncoming striper as it swims towards bait making it easier for the striper on pickup. Remember that Stripers swallow their prey from the head first.)
- Small bunker chunks for chumming.

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Preparing whole fresh caught bunker for chunking



CHOPPED BUNKER for chumming and baiting.

Photo courtesy of Saltwater Sportsman Magazine

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Bait preparation when clamming:

- Use fresh sea clams
- Impale whole clam on hook after shucking, and crack clam shells overboard.
- Crack 4 or 5 whole clams in a plastic bucket, break up clams with baseball bat, add sea water and dole out overboard (pour out juices & cracked clam shells together)
- Anchor up & chum with cracked clams mixture.

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Eel presentation:

- Use live whole “pencil” eels.
- Using a 4/0 Gamagatsu live bait hook, place hook thru 1 eye and out thru mouth.
- Drift “Rip”, channel edges or use “stemming” method.
- Based upon speed of current, adjust the size of bank sinker to use, or maybe none at all?
- Store eels as shown on next slide.

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Long term eel storage at your dockside:
Drill ¼" dia holes in top, bottom and sides and use large stones as ballast.



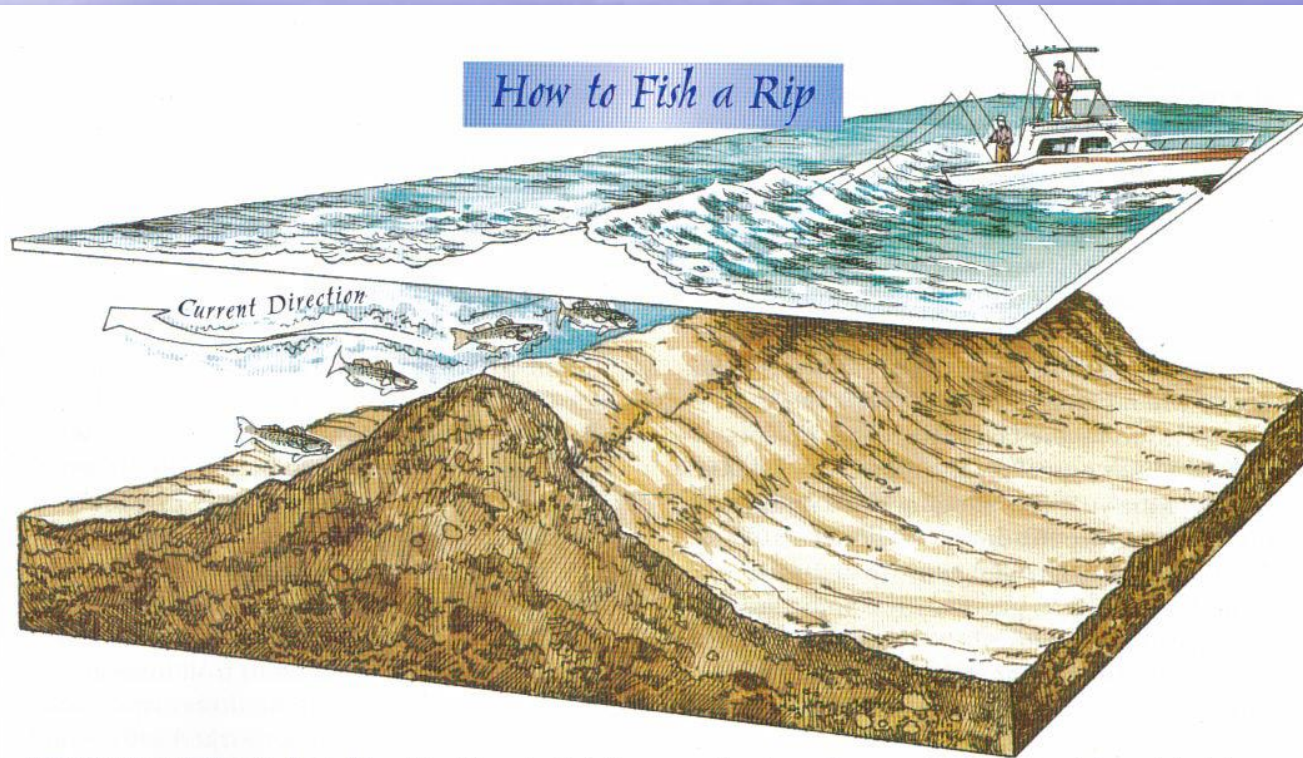
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Where to Find Stripers.....Structure!!!!

- Tidal Rips (“The Rip”)
- Channel edges (Ambrose, Sandy Hook, Reach)
- Dredge holes
- Underwater structures-sunken objects
- Clam Beds (False Hook), Mussel Beds (BTC)
- Rock piles (Shrewsbury!)
- Around schooled baitfish
- Following bluefish “on the feed”
- Bridge abutments
- Jetties

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"Stemming" process while fishing "The Rip"---Try it!!!!



POSITION YOUR BOAT just in front of the rip's white water. Maintain your position by applying enough power to stay in front of the rip's standing wave. Present your lure or bait to the active fish, which will be set up in front of or on top of the lip.

Photo courtesy of Saltwater Sportsman Magazine

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Fishing tips for Boaters

- Drift or anchor around structure.
- Fish will usually be found down current of structure.
- Fish the days between the new moon and full moon.
- Fish just before dawn or at dusk.
- Fish at night.
- Watch for bird action *natures fishfinder*
- Bait should be at or near bottom at all times (0-5' from bottom)
- Fish reel in free spool
- Just enough weight to hold bottom.
- On pickup, engage reel.
- Circle hooks will set themselves. (Don't cross his/her eyes)
- Maintain pressure, reel slowly & don't pump the rod.
- Allow fish to run when he wants to, then retrieve your line again.
- Net fish from the head ONLY
- Keep your fish in a cooler well iced. (Bleed your catch!)

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Fishing tips for Boaters, continued....

- Using your GPS, mark your “start” spot when drifting.
- If you score, mark your “score spot” GPS location.
- Repeat your drift using these 2 coordinates.
- Day before tasks:
 - Check out weather reports from NOAA Ambrose (ALSN6) online or handheld vhf radio.
 - Check out tide tables. (Incoming in spring/Outgoing in fall)
 - Have a game plan...1st, 2nd, and 3rd locations.

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June Stripers
Father & son-1st Stripers ever
caught-26 lbs to 34 lbs.



Spring Stripers in Raritan Bay

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Striper eeled in Ambrose Channel



Striper eeled at "The Rip"

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Striper fishing at the clam beds
The crew from Cabelas, Hamburg, PA



Raritan Bay Striper caught
drifting sandworms in spring.

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3 generations of fisherman...
Clamming at the clam beds
around the "False Hook"



Early spring Striper caught on mussel
beds in Raritan Bay

Stripers...

bait fishing techniques



Fall Striper fishing with live eels along Ambrose Channel



Fishing at dusk for Stripers in Raritan Bay

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25' Parker Sport Cabin

**Stripers, Weakfish, Fluke,
Blues, Albacore, Bonito,
Blackfish & Sea Bass**

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