

EA-South West/03-12

Box 7



## Bass fishing in the Fal Estuary and Coastal Area

A guide to fisheries regulations

CORNWALL SEA  
FISHERIES COMMITTEE



ENVIRONMENT  
AGENCY

## The Fal Estuary and Coastal Area

### BASS FACTS

Bass grow and mature slowly and may not breed until they are 7 years old.

Undersized bass (under 37.5cm) **MUST ALWAYS BE RETURNED**. It is illegal to catch and keep a smaller bass.

The Cornish Federation of Sea Anglers sets a bass minimum weight of 2.5 lbs for competitions.

*By returning bass under 37.5cm we maximise the opportunities for spawning success for this slow growing species.*

To help conserve our stocks of sea-fish and shellfish here in the estuary, please read this leaflet and keep it with you for reference. All relevant contacts and legislation are included to help you stay within the law and protect our fish stocks. For information on salmonid fishing please refer to our leaflet 'Rod & Line Fisheries Byelaws - South West Region'.

Within the estuary and coastal zone there are a number of areas in which specific fisheries legislation applies to bass fishing. These areas are outlined on the map on the opposite page. Full legislation details are given on the tables which follow for each individual area.

### SPECIAL AREA OF CONSERVATION (SAC) MANAGEMENT

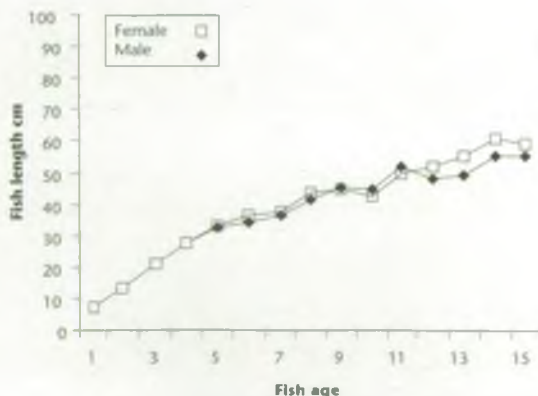
The Fal and Helford estuaries are now recognised as among the most important sites in Europe for their marine wildlife.

Of special interest for its shallow inlets and bays, saltmarshes, mudflats and sandbanks the SAC has a Scheme of Management developed by a partnership of interested organisations.

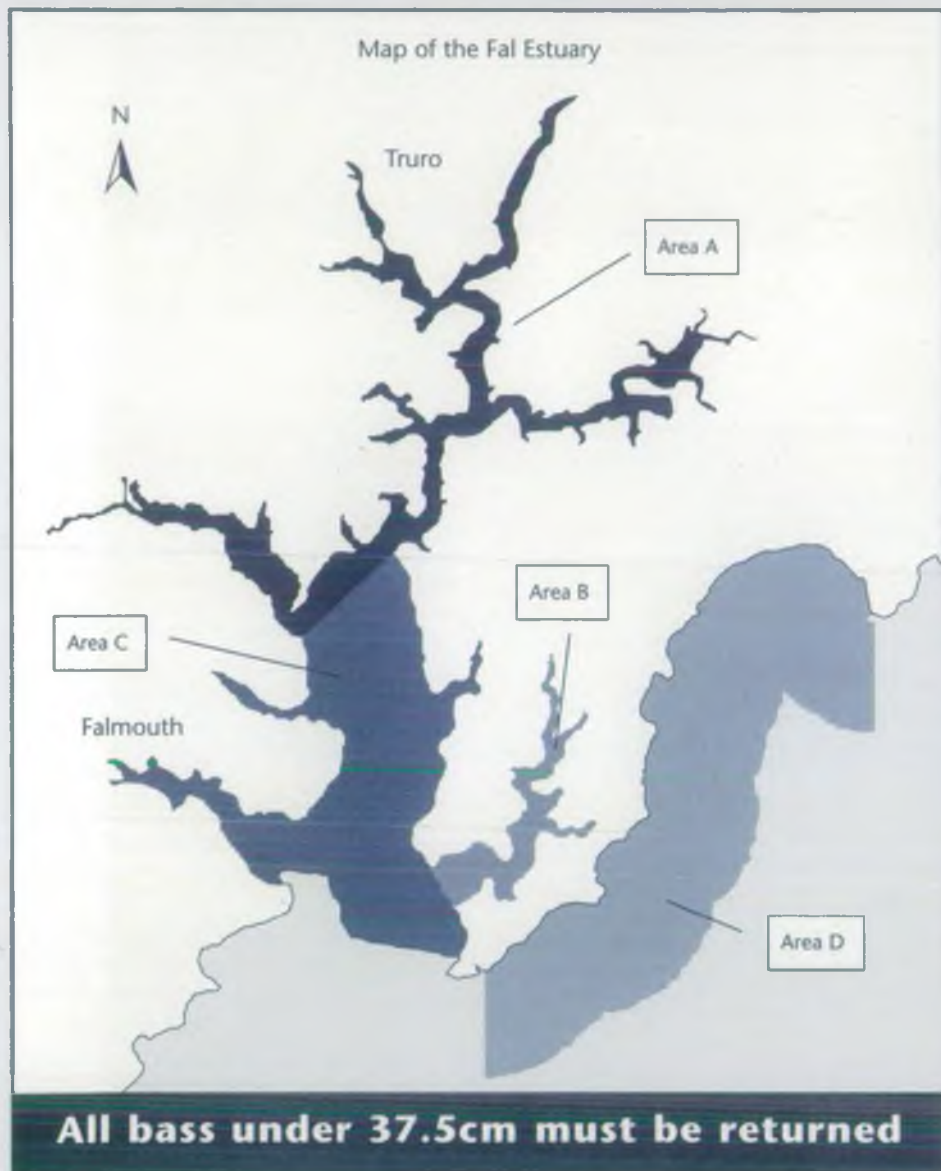
### HOW CAN YOU HELP?

Illegal fishing can take place and your support in reporting such activity can help stamp it out. Contact the Environment Agency's HOTLINE number to report any incidents that concern you,

**0800 80 70 60**



Bass growth chart



# Legislation by specific area for bass

(Larger map on page 3)



Area A
  Area B
 Bass nursery areas

ROD FISHING LEGISLATION	NETTING LEGISLATION
ALL BASS UNDER 37.5CM MUST BE IMMEDIATELY RETURNED TO THE WATER WITH MINIMAL HARM.	
<p><b>FROM 1 MAY - 31 DECEMBER</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● ROD AND LINE ANGLING AND HAND LINING FOR BASS FROM A BOAT IS PROHIBITED</li> <li>● FISHING FROM A BOAT USING SAND EELS AS BAIT IS PROHIBITED</li> </ul>	<p><b>FROM 1 MAY TO 31 DECEMBER</b></p> <p>NETTING FOR BASS IS PROHIBITED. ANY BASS CAUGHT IN NETS DURING THIS TIME MUST BE IMMEDIATELY RETURNED TO THE WATER</p>
<p><b>ALL YEAR</b></p> <p>ROD AND LINE ANGLING FOR BASS IS PERMITTED ALL YEAR FROM THE SHORE, BUT <b>MINIMUM LANDING SIZE OF 37.5CM</b> MUST BE OBSERVED</p>	<p><b>ALL YEAR</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● ANY FORM OF TRAWLING IS PROHIBITED IN THIS AREA</li> <li>● FIXED ENGINES AND UNATTENDED DRIFT NETS ARE PROHIBITED</li> <li>● ANY GILL OR SIMILAR ENMESHING NETS WITH A MESH SIZE BETWEEN 71MM AND 89MM STRETCHED ARE PROHIBITED</li> </ul>

The Environment Agency is the authority for sea fish in Areas A+B.

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EMERGENCY HOTLINE

**0800 80 70 60**

The minimum size limit for bass in Cornish estuaries and on the coast out to a six mile limit is **37.5cm**. It is an offence to retain any bass under this size from either an estuary (Environment Agency byelaw, 6 November 2002) or from the coast out to six miles (Cornwall Sea Fisheries bass byelaw, 7 April 1997)

If you believe you have seen illegal fishing taking place, please report it. It would help any investigation if you could note the following:

- Time
- Date
- Location
- Description of any boat, vehicle or people involved
- Description of any fishing gear used



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## Measuring guide for bass

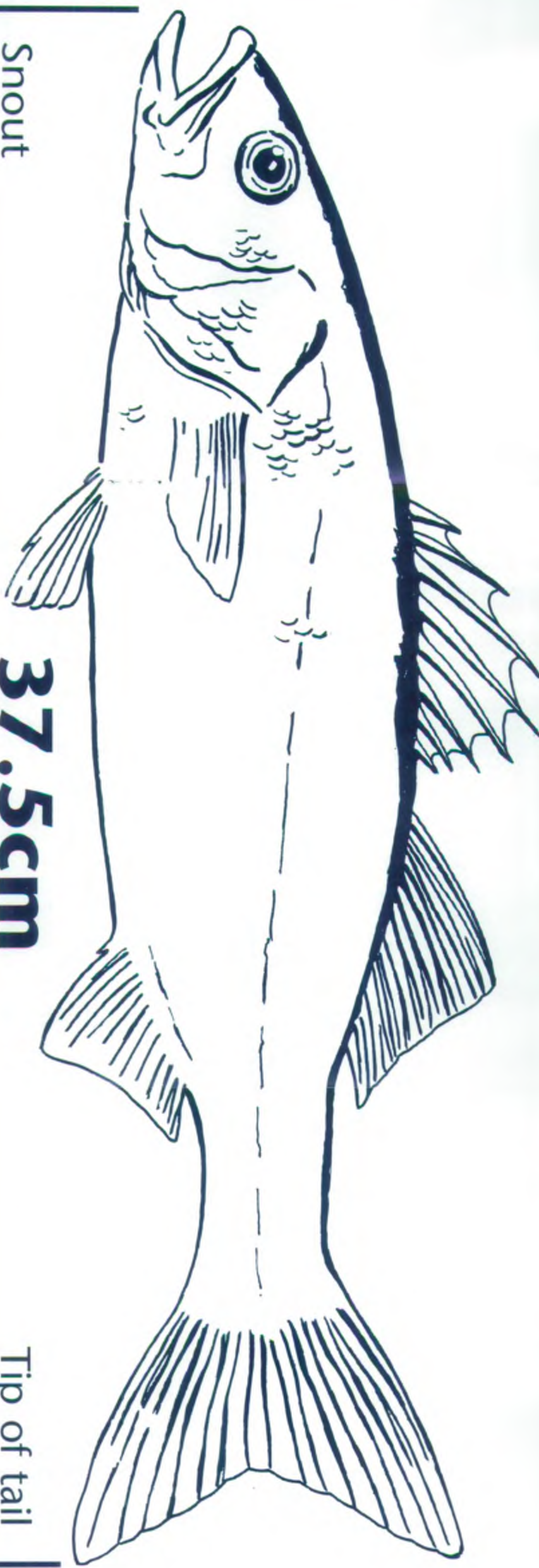
To help conserve our stocks of bass please use this guide to measure your catch. All bass under 37.5cm must be returned immediately to the water with minimum harm.

# Minimum Bass Size

Snout

**37.5cm**

Tip of tail



Area C

ROD FISHING LEGISLATION	NETTING LEGISLATION
<p>ALL BASS UNDER 37.5CM MUST BE IMMEDIATELY RETURNED TO THE WATER WITH MINIMAL HARM</p>	
<p>ROD AND LINE ANGLING AND HAND LINING FOR BASS FROM A BOAT AND FROM THE SHORE IS PERMITTED ALL YEAR BUT <b>MINIMUM LANDING SIZE OF 35.7CM</b> MUST BE OBSERVED</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● ALL DRAFT OR SEINE NETS MUST HAVE A MINIMUM MESH SIZE OF 1.5 INCHES KNOT TO KNOT, OR 6 INCHES AROUND THE MESH WHEN WET WHEN NETTING</li> </ul>
<p>FISHING FROM A BOAT AND FROM THE SHORE USING SAND EELS AS BAIT IS PERMITTED BUT MINIMUM LANDING SIZE OF 37.5CM MUST BE OBSERVED</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● ANY FORM OF TRAWLING IS PROHIBITED IN THIS AREA</li> <li>● FIXED ENGINES AND UNATTENDED DRIFT NETS ARE PROHIBITED</li> <li>● ANY GILL OR SIMILAR ENMESHING NETS WITH A MESH SIZE BETWEEN 71MM AND 89MM STRETCHED ARE PROHIBITED</li> </ul>

The Environment Agency is the authority for sea fish in Area C.

Area D

ROD FISHING LEGISLATION	NETTING LEGISLATION
<p>ALL BASS UNDER 37.5CM MUST BE IMMEDIATELY RETURNED TO THE WATER WITH MINIMAL HARM.</p>	
<p>FISHING FROM A BOAT AND FROM THE SHORE USING SAND EELS AS BAIT IS PERMITTED BUT MINIMUM LANDING SIZE OF 37.5CM MUST BE OBSERVED</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● THE HEADLINE OF ANY FIXED ENGINE MUST BE AT LEAST 3 M BELOW THE SURFACE OF THE WATER AT ANY STATE OF THE TIDE</li> <li>● UNATTENDED SURFACE DRIFT NETS ARE PROHIBITED</li> </ul>

The Cornwall Sea Fisheries Committee (CSFC) is the authority for sea fish in Area D. The Environment Agency has powers under Salmon and Freshwater Fisheries Act 1975(SAFFA) in this area and up to a 6 nautical mile offshore limit.

Falmouth and Truro Harbour Authority may also have regulations concerning fishing in these areas.

## Minimum catch sizes

Many other species of fish and shellfish are found in the Fal Estuary and Coastal Area, and these may have the following minimum sizes applied to protect their stocks.

COMMON FISH MINIMUM SIZES			
Bass	37.5 cm	Grey Mullet	20 cm
Mackerel	20 cm	Lemon Sole	25 cm
Whiting	27 cm	Flounder	25 cm
Pollack	30 cm	Plaice	27 cm
Cod	35 cm	Saithe	35 cm
Dab	15 cm	Dover Sole	24 cm

All fish are measured from snout to end of tail.

COMMON SHELLFISH MINIMUM SIZES	
Edible / Brown Crab male	160 mm
Edible / Brown Crab female	140 mm
Edible / Brown Crab female	150 mm (CSFC)
Spider Crab male	130 mm
Spider Crab female	120 mm
Velvet Crab	65 mm
Lobster (carapace)	87 mm
Lobster (carapace)	90 mm (CSFC)
Crawfish (carapace)	95 mm
Crawfish (carapace)	110 mm (CSFC)
Scallop	100 mm

CSFC – shellfish caught in Cornwall Sea Fisheries Committee district.

- Any salmon and sea trout caught in season and within the regulations can only be retained if a valid rod licence is held
- Other forms of fishing such as trawling, scalloping and cockle harvesting may also be subject to restrictions
- **Netting for salmon and sea trout is prohibited all year.**

**FAILURE TO COMPLY WITH FISHERIES REGULATIONS MAY RESULT IN PROSECUTION, FORFEITURE OF GEAR AND FISH, A FINE OF UP TO £5000 ON SUMMARY CONVICTION.**



## Useful contacts

### **THE ENVIRONMENT AGENCY**

SIR JOHN MOORE HOUSE  
VICTORIA SQUARE  
BODMIN  
CORNWALL  
PL311EB  
TEL: 01208 78301  
FAX: 01208 78321

### **CORNWALL SEA FISHERIES COMMITTEE**

COUNTY HALL  
TRURO  
CORNWALL  
TR1 3AY  
FAX: 01872 323836

### **CHIEF FISHERY OFFICER - CSFC**

OLD BONDED WAREHOUSE,  
QUAY STREET,  
PENZANCE, CORNWALL  
TR18 4BD  
TEL: 01736 369817  
FAX: 01736 331020

### **DEFRA - REGIONAL OFFICE**

MAST HOUSE, SHEPHERDS WHARF  
24 SUTTON ROAD  
PLYMOUTH  
PL4 0HJ  
TEL: 01752 635050

### **FALMOUTH & TRURO PORT HEALTH AUTHORITY**

THE DOCKS  
FALMOUTH  
CORNWALL  
TR11 4NR  
TEL: 01326 211581

## SOUTH WEST REGION ADDRESSES

### REGIONAL OFFICE

Environment Agency  
South West Region  
Manley House  
Kestrel Way  
Exeter EX2 7LQ  
Tel: 01392 444 000  
Fax: 01392 444 238

### SOUTH WESSEX

AREA OFFICE  
Environment Agency  
Rivers House  
Sunrise Business Park  
Higher Shaftesbury Road  
Blandford DT11 8ST  
Tel: 01258 456 080  
Fax: 01258 455 998

### DEVON AREA OFFICE

Environment Agency  
Exminster House  
Miller Way  
Exminster  
Devon EX6 8AS  
Tel: 01392 444 000  
Fax: 01392 316 016

### CORNWALL AREA OFFICE

Environment Agency  
Sir John Moore House  
Victoria Square  
Bodmin PL31 1EB  
Tel: 01208 78301  
Fax: 01208 78321

### NORTH WESSEX AREA OFFICE

Environment Agency  
Rivers House, East Quay  
Bridgwater TA6 4YS  
Tel: 01278 457 333  
Fax: 01278 452 985



[www.environment-agency.gov.uk](http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk)

ENVIRONMENT AGENCY  
GENERAL ENQUIRY LINE

**0845 933 3111**

ENVIRONMENT AGENCY  
FLOODLINE

**0845 988 1188**

ENVIRONMENT AGENCY  
EMERGENCY HOTLINE

**0800 80 70 60**

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