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General Fishing Product Category Review: Are Circle Hooks for You?

By Jeff Williams

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Circle hooks have created a debate in the last few years between anglers who fish rivers and those who fish lakes. When using circle hooks in rivers, I haven't had much trouble fishing in good current. Although they performed well in current, fishing calm water areas such as the big reservoirs I ply for giant blue cats, the hook design gave me a bit of a problem with the hook-up ratio in the slack water. I began having hook-up problems when I fished areas with no current because the bait wasn't held straight on the hook. Full circles were oftentimes double hooking back into the chunk or live baits causing me to miss a lot of fish. What would I do when I am anchor fishing in a lake with a lot of slack in my lines due to boat sway from the wind? I went back to my old standby treble and J-style hooks for quite awhile.

Circle hooks are designed to hook the fish without much rod movement by the angler. Just leave it in the rod holder and as the line gets tight and the rod bows down, the pressure penetrates the hook into the corner of the mouth of the fish and the fight is on. I felt this was a no brainer in current areas, but I tried to picture how these specialized hooks were going to work in lakes without current. I tried to imagine how a fish swims off the bait in a lake as opposed to a river. Without current, the fish could swim in any direction with the bait. The fish might swim at your boat or they might swim crossways with your boat, making a tight line hook up with a circle hook very difficult. A year ago I learned from some other catfishermen that Daiichi came out with a modified circle hook that would work in all situations. If the fish didn't swim away from the boat, the angler could still set the hook on the fish! Last year I gave the new circle hook called the Circle Hook Lite a try.

After I began to use the hook, I found out in short order that a quick, had jerk wasn't the ticket to hooking blues manually with circles. As soon as we started using a long sweep of the rod, we started hooking fish that weren't being very cooperative. Fish would move to the boat, away from the boat, along side the boat - every direction you could imagine and we were catching them just as good if not better once we learned good circle hook technique.

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Anatomy Of The Circle–Hook Hook Set

Once you notice a fish has taken the bait and is not moving away from the bait and is not moving away from the boat and tightening the line, pick up the rod. Then reel in as much line as possible until you feel the steady pressure of the fish on the end of the line. Once the tip of the hook has started to penetrate, the hook and the fish will do the rest. It's as simple as that. If the fish isn't giving much resistance, you can use a long sweeping motion of the rod to bury the hook.

Other Benefits

The other neat option that the CircleChunk Light has is a bait–stop barb on the shank to help with that persistent problem of double hooking your bait. There is no perfect hook, we all have to accept the fact

that sometimes the most bone jarring of strikes never result in a hook up, and some little pullovers result in a mighty deep hook set, but after using these hooks for a year I'm convinced they work better than my old stand bys.

I was a pretty hard sell at first, I'll have to admit, but I'm glad I gave the circle chunk lite a try. I have used them in both current and slack or dead water situations. These hooks perform the same wherever you fish. I feel good about using hooks with such consistent performance as well as being a quality–made and super–sharp hook right out of the package. After years of trying all kinds of hooks from big treble hooks to kahyle hooks, I believe that the improved circle hook Daiichi has come up with is a fantastic option for any angler.

Fishing done right is work, and the harder you work at the perfect hook set the happier you will be with the reward at the end of your line.

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The Ancient Fishing Secrets Are Still Here Today

By Willie Jones

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Fishing has been a part of our survival for as long as recorded history and probably much longer. Ancient cave paintings from 10,000 years ago depict fishing along with fish bone remains and animal bone hooks. Even ancient stone anchors are currently being displayed in museums.

Everywhere on this planet, what ever culture, each has its own history in fishing and techniques, most of which are still used today. In fact, almost all ancient cultures have used boats, hooks, nets and spears of some kind.

The ancient Romans used rods and lines, nets and spears. The ancient Greeks used rods and woven baskets and woven cages that stay under water where caught fish are kept alive until they are needed.

Some cultures have been more creative than others and have very interesting techniques such as the night fishing in Japan. It is called cormorant fishing. It requires 7 to 8 cormorant birds that have handlers to train them. Once trained, they go out at night on a long narrow boat that has a long rod in front of it with a hanging basket that is in flames, the birds are each on a leash and are trained to dive down and catch fish, which they are experts in. This technique is still being practiced today and if you are for any reason going to Japan, you may want to sign up to see this phenomenon.

In the Columbian basin, ancient tribal salmon fishers have past down a fishing technique that is still being practiced today. Tribal families for many generations have built wooden scaffolding that is very strong and stable that spans the river. This enables them to drop the nets that capture many salmon at one time. In the smaller rivers of the basin, dip nets are used because you can control them better. These nets historically have been made with hemp twine, sinew and tree pitch. These nets have a long pole attached to them and one stands in the water and scoops up the fish.

In medieval Europe, V shaped structures were built to herd fish into waiting nets.

Some cultures have used poisonous plants to stun fish so that it is easy to catch them. This is a dangerous practice and has been made illegal to fish this way due to the obvious safety issues. One does not want to risk eating a fish that has been poisoned.

Fishing today is not only for survival but is a huge sport all over the world. But when you really look at it, not much has really changed in how we fish. The major difference really is in the advancements made in hooks and nets.

How ever you fish, may the ones you catch be as big as the ones that got away.

Willie Jones is a freelance writer, researcher, floral designer, and artist, for Art Inspires, Inc. Make sure you enroll in the free motivational poster drawing at



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