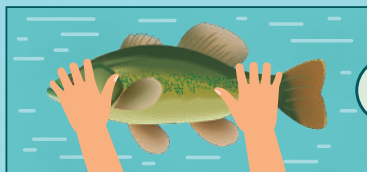


FISH FIZZING

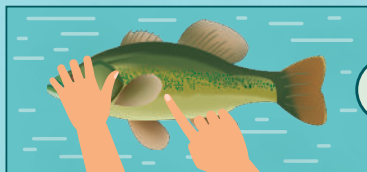
BEGIN AS SOON AS FISH SHOWS BAROTRAUMA SYMPTOMS.

The entire fizzing process should take 10-15 seconds, a small investment of time to increase bass survival.



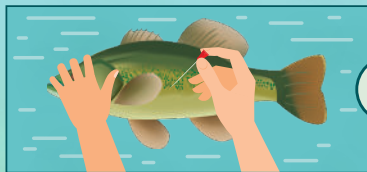
1

Hold fish by the lower jaw or around the head, and position fish so its side is facing up at the water surface.



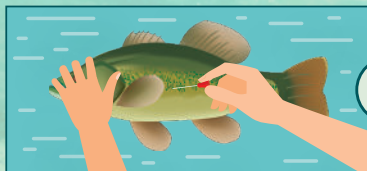
2

Position the pectoral fin (on side of fish) flat against the body, in a natural, relaxed position, pointing toward the tail.



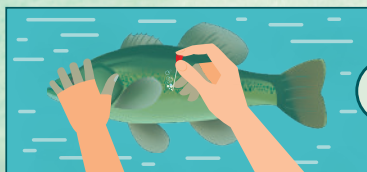
3

With beveled side of a 16 gauge, 1.5-inch needle facing up, orient the needle three scales behind the tip of the pectoral fin.



4

Insert at about a 30- to 45-degree angle by sliding needle tip under trailing edge of scale towards the fish's head.



5

Submerge fish and needle, raise the needle to a 60- to 90-degree angle, and insert needle until air bubbles exit the needle base. Vent small fish (less than 3 pounds) for 3-5 seconds and larger fish for 5-8 seconds.

REMOVE THE NEEDLE AND WATCH FISH.

If the fish cannot submerge, flip fish over and vent more gas from the fish's air bladder as described above. If bubbles don't exit the needle, check for blockage by blowing through the needle. If blockage persists, clear debris from needle using a syringe.

BAROTRAUMA “THE BENDS”

Barotrauma usually occurs when fish are angled to the surface from deep water, typically during winter and summer. Afflicted fish have over-inflated swim bladders, and they can't stay submerged. The condition has been associated with the reduced survival rate of tournament black bass after they've been caught and released.

Fizzing is a low-cost, effective method anglers can use to increase chances of survival for fish with barotrauma by eliminating unnecessary air and sun exposure. Prolonged air and sun exposure increases the chance that a fish will acquire bacterial infections, which weaken the fish and increase recovery time.

Watch a tutorial: GettinFizzyWithIt.com

Contact an AGFC Black Bass Program biologist at 877-525-8606 with questions concerning the fizzing process.

Illustration by Duane Raver

SIGNS OF A DISTRESSED FISH

- Fish tries to swim deeper, but can't
- Fish rolls over multiple times
- Fish swims in a nose-down position
- Belly of fish is distended or inflated

