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Media Release

Treat Samson Fish With Care

Recfishwest has urged the fishing public to fish responsibly as the popular Samson fish season fast approaches.

Recfishwest Regional Policy Officer Andrew Rowland said there have been a small number of local anglers and charter boat operators not doing the right thing in regard to handling the Samson fish.

Named for their incredible strength, Samson fish are one of the strongest and best fighting fish on the west coast.

“Samson fish aggregate in large numbers during summer and national and international anglers travel to Western Australia to experience what is often described as a thorough workout wrestling Samson fish,” Dr Rowland said.

“The state’s Samson fish sport fishery is considered world class and attracts international attention with anglers and TV crews from all over the world heading to WA.

“Size is what it’s all about with ‘sambos’, they have been recorded at more than 53kg in WA and in recent years fish over that size have been caught off the back of Rottnest Island.

“They are also known to travel more than 2500 kilometres to Kangaroo Island in South Australia, returning to the Rottnest area where they aggregate to spawn between about November through to February.

“The uniqueness of these amazing fish is even more reason to urge those fishing for them to treat them with care and respect.”

Dr Rowland said jigging for Samson fish considerably reduced the risk of injuries due to gut hooking compare to fishing for them with bait.

“If you give deep water jigging a try, remember to bring your fish up the last 10 metres or so quite slowly to give it time to vent expanding gas naturally.

“And when releasing a fish, support it with two hands while you lift it from the water, take photographs quickly and then spear it back in. If we handle the Samson fish we catch responsibly, this recreational fishery will have a long-term future.”

People fishing for Samson fish are also urged to make sure that if they catch any tagged fish to record all the details of the tag, the tag number record the location of where it was caught and what depth, the length of the fish and what condition it is released in.

“This way you can effectively report the details of the re-caught fish. It’s your way of helping out, and keeping Samson fishing a sustainable sport that we can enjoy for a long time,” Dr Rowland said.

For more information about how to fish responsibly for Samson fish check the [Recfishwest](http://www.recfishwest.org.au) website at www.recfishwest.org.au.

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