

Spooning for Striped Bass



Spooning refers to jiggging a one to four ounce lead or metal spoon up and down. You will see a lot of people doing it incorrectly. You will see people jerking the spoon up as hard as they can, and then they drop the rod tip down to the water leaving the line to go slack. This often will lead to snagging fish in the belly, which has given spooners a bad reputation as snaggers.

When done correctly spooning snags relatively few fish, and can be a very effective way of catching big numbers of fish. With striped bass, you can catch a lot of small fish up to ten pounds.

I'm by no means an expert at spooning. The notes on this page were taken from seminars given by Allen Fong and Don Paganelli at Fisherman's Warehouse in Sacramento, CA. Hopefully they will help you to catch a few fish and avoid being labeled as a snagger!

- Edge of sandbars are good
- Fish inclines
- 1 – 3 oz jigs - keep the spoon vertical at all times
- Fish break lines in 20-30 feet of water
- Rocks on the bottom
- Imitates a dying minnow
- 15 lb test main line
- Attach a swivel with 30 lb test monofilament leader 2-3' long keeps the spoon vertical
- Ultimate legend minnow brand has a rattle
- Hopkins spoons, Gibbs Minnows, Megabait Jigs
- Pop up 1-2 feet, pause, and follow down slowly
- Feel for a tick on the way down - this is a hit
- Keep it near the bottom at all times
- Switch out the treble barbed hooks for 2/O to 4/O Gammakatsu Siwash single hooks
- Paint your spoons with Rustoleum Hunter's Green, Black or White
- Use dark spoons in dark, deep or muddy water, white in clear or shallow water
- Later in the year when it's cold is a good time (November – January)
- Bait stays near the bottom when it's colder
- Water below 50 degees
- Look for fish on edges of channels and current breaks
- Outgoing tide is good
- Barely jump it on the bottom – wounded fish
- Don't spoon unless you see fish on the sonar
- Current at the top is faster than current at the bottom
- Keep line vertical using the electric motor
- Look for sudden drops holding fish with your sonar
- Near the mouth of Three Mile Slough and the San Joaquin there are some good drops. It starts about 8' deep – fish it during the outgoing tide
- 2 oz. size is a good weight
- Rod – 12-20 lb rated heavy Loomis 7'2" rod

- South fork of the Mokelumne is good
- Fish edges of shipping channels

Shows

- How to Jig (Fun Fishing TV)
- How to Jig (Informative Fisherman)
- How to Jig Advanced (Informative Fisherman)