

General Notes And Information

Local Tackle Shops

Murphy's Tackle
92 North Main St
Wexford 053 24717

Hayes Cycles and
Fishing
108 South Main St
Wexford 053 22462

Dave's Tackle
Ardcavan Wexford
053 24307

S.E.A.i

South East Angling Ireland

www.bassfishing.ie

Information

While every effort has been made to ensure that the information contained in this guide is accurate at the time of print, no responsibility will be accepted by SEAI for errors or inaccuracies contained within this document



Angling Guides Available in This Series

Part 1 North and East Co.Wexford

Part 2 Wexford Hbr

Part 3 South East Co.Wexford

Part
3
Of Four

Shore Angling on the Wexford Coast



South East County Wexford

Rosslare Point To Carnesore Point

S.E.A.i
South East Angling Ireland

Part 3—Rosslare Point To Carnesore Point

Introduction

The south eastern shoreline region of the county is remarkable in that it offers a range of different venues in very close proximity. Each venue provides species of fish which can be difficult to catch from the shore elsewhere in Ireland. During the summer months it is often possible to catch both tope and smoothound at one venue then drive for less than fifteen minutes to catch wrasse and conger eel at another. When the weather blows hard there are several options facing the angler but generally one of the five venues remains fishable on most occasions. These venues can sometimes be considered specialist but with some planning and advice the rewards can be a catch of a lifetime.

S.E.A.i~

South East Angling Ireland



Wexford is situated in the south eastern corner of Ireland

- Rosslare Point
- Rosslare Strand
- Rosslare Harbour
- St Helens
- Carnesore Point
- The Coombe

Area 3 is bounded to the North by Rosslare point and to the South by The Coombe. Services and facilities are available at Rosslare Strand and Rosslare Hbr. **Carnesore point and the Coombe are remote and dangerous venues and a high level of caution should be exercised here.**

To contact SEAi
www.bassfishing.ie
jimhendrick@tinet.ie

Tips and General Advice For Beginners

Weather

Day by day and hour by hour the weather is prone to change. This is important to the angler not only from a fish catching point of view but also the ability to remain fishing while feeling comfortable in any weather condition is often a necessary part of sea angling. If you are considering going fishing watch the weather forecast the day before, listen to the shipping forecast on radio or even read the forecast in daily newspapers. Go fishing well prepared because undoubtedly, the weather will change and often for the worse, when you are fishing keep a constant eye on wind direction, cloud cover, the height of the sun, all these factors help to add up to a successful days angling.

Tides

Combined with weather, tides play an extremely important, if not the most important part in successful sea angling. To help you find the right tide, tables are available from local shops and they are willing to help you read them. In general a rising tide over dawn, dusk or even during daytime is better than a falling tide during the day. Spring tides often bring fish closer to shore in some venues, while in others it may force them to move off until the tidal stream reduces. Over time and with experience it is often possible to select venues for success by combining the existing weather and tidal state.

Night Fishing

Night fishing on a lot of venues can be very successful, particularly on the north county beaches. A lot of species tend to move closer to shore under the cover of darkness, thus making them more accessible to the shore angler. Fishing at night is a whole new experience for many people and calls for some special equipment and increased care. If you are considering a night time trip it is probably best to venture out with an experienced angler for the first few sessions. Make sure you stay warm, have a bright headlamp or beach lamp, something warm to drink, know where you are going and can get back, and always tell someone what your intentions are.

Bait

If you cannot acquire your own bait it is available both fresh and frozen in the local angling shops, especially during the summer months. It is advisable to ring ahead of your trip to book your supplies. When you are out fishing it is often worthwhile taking the opportunity to search for bait holding areas in your vicinity, you cant beat fresh bait!

Quick notes and information

Getting there: Access to any of the venues covered in this guide is easy with the exception of the Rosslare Point. There are small car parking areas at all of the locations and the venues are within walking distance. From Wexford town take the N25 and head for Rosslare Ferry Port, which is sign posted very well. Using Kilrane as your base it is a simple drive to The Safe and Rosslare Hbr, east will bring you to Rosslare strand and point, while further south you will find Carnesore Point and the Coombe.

Baits: Because a lot of the venues are very different in the methods employed, the different types of bait needed to catch such a diverse range of species is quite large. At Rosslare both point and shore, carry fresh peeler crab and mackerel plus large frozen sand eel. In Rosslare Hbr and the Safe, again fresh mackerel is the key to catching conger, while worm baits combined with peeler crab work well for the smaller species. At St Helens again fresh peeler crab is successful and a local secret is squid fished whole for the bigger bass. At Carnesore point ragworm proves lethal for wrasse and other species – King Rag if you can get it is definitely the best. All of the above mentioned work well at the Coombe.

Tackle: The seabed along the south east coast varies from venue to venue, at Rosslare point and shore expect some the powerful adversaries of tope and smoothound and set your gear to match. In Rosslare Hbr conger eel will test gear to the last and it must be very strong and capable of dealing with large fish. St Helens lies somewhere in between with rough ground and powerful fish – medium sized spinning gear is also an option. At Carnesore point bring along, spinning tackle, float tackle and a strong beach caster and multiplier to combat the terrain.

Terminal Rigs: Single hook clip downs work best at Rosslare for tope and smoothound, three hook flappers when chasing other species. Strong wire traces in Rosslare Hbr and The Safe for conger, and pulley rigs with size 4/0 hooks at St Helens. Spinning, float fishing, and rough ground gear are required at Carne

Facilities: At Rosslare Hbr and Rosslare there are shops, pubs, restaurants, bed and breakfasts and even a Five Star Hotel. There are no facilities in the remoter areas of Carnesore point and The Coombe, last port of call for food and drink supplies would be at the super market in our Lady's Island.

Rosslare Point



Directions: From Wexford Town N25 to Rosslare . Left for Rosslare Strand after Killinick, left in village past golf club. Road ends into track after 2kms, follow track to point—be careful of rising tides.

Species: Tope, smoothound, bass, lesser spotted dogfish, ray.

Bait: Fresh mackerel, sand eel, peeler crab

Terrain: Sandy bottom.

Rosslare Point or the Burrow Shore

The burrow shore at Rosslare has recently become an almost cult venue due to the summer catches of **Tope** (a type of shark) and the ever popular smoothound. During or just after periods of high pressure particularly during the months of July and August, both of these species can be caught quite often. If you have never fished for these species it may be worth a visit to the area during the summer evenings to watch and learn from the enthusiastic few who often pursue these fish around the Wexford coast all summer long. To the seasoned angler the area presents an opportunity that is rare in Irish waters, the possibility of landing a 30lbs + fish from the shore.

Tackle needs to be strong and in good condition rather than heavy. Attention should be paid to rod, reel and mainline especially if targeting tope. Palm sized multipliers like the ABU 6500 loaded with 15-18lbs mainline and 50lbs shock leader, coupled with a rod capable of dealing with a hard fighting heavy fish cover most situations at this venue. Beach casters similar in design to Century's tip tornado are ideal even if a little expensive they are a great all round fishing tool and can cover a variety of venues and species. Terminal rigs are simple one hook clip downs to minimise damage to fish. Incorporate some steel trace to your snood length to prevent being bitten off' and ensure that your shock leader has some extra length to prevent abrasion from the tough skin of the fish. Hooks should strong size 5/0's or 6/0's. Breakaway impact leads offer bait protection with the added advantage of increasing your distance Often heralded as the holy grail in a lot of fishing situations distance casting, while not essential can lead to improved catches. The most successful bait has been sand eel and mackerel for tope, and fresh peeler crab for smoothound. When you are successful and have landed your tope, it may need two people to do so, treat the fish with some degree of care, take your fotos quickly and return the fish to the sea.

Rosslare Strand



Directions: N25 to Rosslare Strand Car Park at Village or right up hill to old Coast Guard Station. Steps to left.

Species: Smoothound, ray, lesser spotted dogfish, dab, flounder, whiting.

Bait: Peeler crab, sand eel, frozen mackerel

Terrain: Sandy bottom

Rosslare Strand

Rosslare strand provides the angler with similar choices to that which can be experienced at the Burrow shore. The chances of catching tope decrease somewhat, while the chances for smoothound increase. This is also a more productive winter venue. While in the village of Rosslare strand drive up the hill towards the old coast guard station on your right hand side, there is parking on your left and access to the beach is provided by a set of steps. This area is known locally as 'The cannons', as there are two old cannons stationed here. The recommended target species for this area is that summer favourite – **Smoothound.**

Single hook clip downs with size 1/0 and fresh peeler crab prove to be the most successful combination. Distance casting again not essential but can be a distinct advantage. Standard beach casting equipment and 15 lbs line with shock leader is fine for these hard fighting fish. There is also the distinct possibility of landing thornback ray while fishing for smoothound with chances increasing on evening rising tides during a period of high pressure- unfortunately the ever-present dogfish can sometimes be a plague.

Be careful while angling during the summer months, as this is a popular beach for bathers and strollers. During the winter months – particularly from November through January several of the winter species can be caught here – whiting, codling, coalfish and dabs all make an appearance. Successful baits are frozen mackerel – lugworm- and fresh peeler crab, if available is great for the codling. Three hook flapper traces with size 1 hooks cover most of the fishing situations, attaching a rolling lead and some fluorescent beads after dark will improve your chances for sand dabs. Because of its ease of access and a high level of safety coupled with a high catch rate it is an ideal venue during the winter months to initiate the younger angler.

Catch Calendar for this region

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Bass			1	2	3	4	5	4	3	2		
Coalfish	4	3	1						1	2	3	
Codling	4	3	2	1			1	2	3	4	5	
Conger			1	2	3	4	5	5	3	2	1	
Dogfish			1	2	5	5	5	5	3	2	1	
Flounder	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	3	4	2	1	
Garfish				1	3	4	4	3	1			
Mackerel				1	3	4	5	4	2	1		
Mullet				1	3	4	5	4	2	1		
Pollack				1	3	4	5	4	2	1		
Tope				3	4	5	4	2	1			
Smoothound				3	4	5	4	2				
Whiting	4	3	2	1			1	2	3	4	5	
Wrasse				1	3	4	5	4	2	1		
Chances	Low		Poor		Fair		Best		Fair			
Catch Rate	13	10	6	6	18	35	44	50	44	30	22	16

How to Use the Catch Calendar

This calendar is not based on scientific evidence but on a number of observations made over several years while angling in the area. It is provided here, and in each of the five guides as an indicator to the angler as to what general species it is possible to catch in the area and when to catch them. I have graded a possible success rate of between 1 and 5. No number means you are very unlikely to catch this species at the time indicated. For example the chances of catching a bass in this area during April is indicated at 1 - which means you are unlikely to catch a bass in April here. However as you move across the page and the months move by, your chances improve steadily and the best time for catching bass here is during August indicated at 5. In fact if you look at the total catch rate at the bottom of the chart, August is indeed the best month to fish in this area for most species. It may be that in some years September may fish better or even July might be a success but this chart is merely a general guide over time.

The Coombe— Extreme Care Needed



Directions: As Carnesore— except don't drive to point, parking available on right of track to point.

Species: Ray, wrasse, bullhuss, bass, pollack, tope, mackerel, garfish, flounder, codling, coalie.

Bait: Mackerel, lugworm, sandeel

Terrain: Steep too shingle beach

The Coombe

The final area of the south-eastern region of the county that we will cover is known locally as 'The Coombe'. It is a favourite amongst local anglers as a late summer venue because mackerel tend to shoal very close to shore from July through September. Our target species here is **Thornback Ray**; although somewhat infrequently caught they are a distinct possibility. It is very important to note that this area is particularly dangerous as the steep to shingle beach and a very fast flowing tide coupled with very deep water produces a serious set of circumstances for the angler.

Thornbacks and other rays tend to lie closer to shore than one would anticipate so distance casting is not essential – fishing gear does need to be a little stronger than normal as thornbacks will often hang in the tide producing a heavy drag. An ABU 6500 sized multiplier or medium fixed spool with 18lbs line and shock leader with a one hook drop down ledger proves to work best as the bait is fished close to the bottom. Baits tend to vary from cocktails of crab and sand eel to that traditional Irish favourite fresh mackerel and ragworm. If you are successful and manage to hook a fish play him slowly and carefully especially when he begins to approach the shore. It is very crucial that during the last few moments just before the fish is landed that you time your retrieve with an incoming wave, as there is a tremendous undertow and pull on an outgoing wave which can cause break offs and lost fish. After or during periods of high pressure and settled weather seem to work best and evening neap tides definitely are more productive and easier to fish. Beware of the doggie plague, it can become extremely frustrating as LSD's are very common in this area – crab baits tend to attract them less but they are not as popular with thornbacks or vice versa, its there for you to discover. The Coombe is one of those areas that has a habit of throwing up the unexpected fish, - turbot, blonde ray, tope, smoothound, spur dog and even giant spider crabs.

Skill Level—**All levels**

Facilities **No**

Page **8**

Rosslare Hbr & 'The Safe'— Care Needed



Directions: N25 to Rosslare Hbr. Left in Kilrane Village opposite Pub on right, after 2kms - over bridge down to The Safe.

Species: Conger eel, lesser spotted dogfish, dab, whiting, codling.

Bait: Fresh mackerel, lugworm, squid.

Terrain: Mixed sand and rock

Rosslare Hbr

'The Safe' and Rosslare harbour offer the angler easy access to a different set of options than he would have experienced at the previous two venues. Firstly lets deal with 'the Safe' – access is relatively easy although be aware that the area is also a compound for newly imported cars and security may be an issue. When you arrive in the area you will have to walk approximately 1 kilometre towards your right - into the harbour area. In order to be successful in the target species at either the Safe or Rosslare harbour requires a different set of tackle requirements.

Conger eels when hooked are formidable adversaries – twisting and spinning with frantic dives for shelter amongst the rocks – it is necessary during the first few moments of hooking a fish to be able to hold and pull him clear of the area in which he lives. If he establishes a foothold with his tail during these first few moments it is virtually impossible to remove the fish. Once in clear water the strength of the fish will become evident as he attempts to dive for cover and safety. Tackle needs to be strong with mainline of 40 lbs breaking strain – multipliers like the ABU 7500 and a powerful beach caster are necessary to hold the fish and maintain control. The terminal rig is a simple short running ledger of steel trace and size 6/0 hook with a smaller hook size 2/0 fixed pennel style to help point the bait. If you can get your hands on some fresh mackerel then this is definitely the best choice, during the winter months during a mild spell, whiting – which can be caught at the venue - also prove to be successful.

It is necessary to mention that some care needs to be taken when landing these fish particularly when moving about on the rocks after dark, removing hooks from the fish can be an adventure and never put your fingers into the congers mouth, remember minimise stress to the fish and leave hooks where they are if you feel they aren't easily removed by cutting the trace.

Skill Level—**Intermediate**

Facilities **Yes**

Page **5**

St Helens



Directions: N25 Wex.—Rosslare, right at Kilrane—follow signs for St Helens Golf Club. Right to car-park.
Species: Bass, lesser spotted dogfish, flounder, some ray.
Bait: Squid, fresh mackerel. Peeler crab
Terrain: Rocky points and sand

St Helens

St Helens is a venue that not only has some fantastic fishing possibilities but is also a great family amenity providing a safe beach to swim and rock pools to explore and splash in for the little ones. Again, access is easy with plenty of car parking facilities. Tuskar rock light-house is visible on the horizon and Carnesore point – our next port of call - can be seen to the right of the harbour in the distance. Your target species at this venue is **Bass** and a variety of methods can be employed.

One of the most successful methods and one that allows you to enjoy the scenery while staying on the move is spinning with either classic plugs like rapalas or a heavier more traditional spinner like the ABU Toby. A nine foot spinning rod and a small fixed spool spinning reel with 8 to 10lbs breaking strain line and a box of spinners is often all that is required to capture this great fighting fish and a true prize of Irish waters. Best times are early morning or late evening rising spring tides, walking towards the right of the harbour at low tide you can identify various rocky outcrops which provide feeding grounds for bass as the tide rises. A slight south-easterly breeze will help your catch rate as this generates more activity in the water and bass come quite close to shore – often to be caught at your feet. The idea is to cover as much ground as possible fishing your spinner over and often through the outcrops where fish are lurking for food. Moving from one outcrop to the next and fishing with such light tackle is an experience that is hard to beat. When you manage to strike lucky and find yourself into a fish ensure that the drag is set to allow the fish to take line on the initial run – try to control his direction as he will often swim into and around rocks for cover, be careful when reaching to land the fish as they have sharp protective gill covers and spikes on their pectoral fins. **Remember only two fish can be caught and kept by one angler in a 24 hour period and fishing for bass is banned from May 16th – June 16th.**

Skill Level—**All levels**

Facilities **Yes**

Page 6

Carnesore Point—Extreme Care Needed



Directions: N25 toward Rosslare, left at Tagoat to Lady's Island. Right at Y in road pass lobster pot, left after wind farm
Species: Wrasse, pollack, bass, bullhuss, conger eel, mackerel, codling, coalfish, rockling.
Bait: Fresh mackerel, squid, lugworm, peeler crab, ragworm.
Terrain: **Very rough ground**

Carnesore Point

Carnesore point is somewhat more difficult to find and access can often be a little unsuitable for the average car. Follow directions for the Lobster pot restaurant, pass it on your right and the point can be accessed on the next turn left after the entrance to the wind farm. The laneway is often a bit bumpy and watch out for sand traps along the way but careful driving will see you there. As you will see the fishing grounds are very rough and depending on your species there are several options open to the angler- float fishing, spinning, strong gear like that used in Rosslare harbour and the safe all can be used to great success. Our target species at this venue is the strong fighting and colourful **Ballan Wrasse**. Fishing with a light rod and very simple one-hook paternosters should allow you to minimise tackle losses while enjoying the strength of these fish. There is no need for distance casting here. Ragworm and peeler crab prove to be the killer bait and fish are often very plentiful. If you are experiencing a lot of tackle losses then try fishing with a sea float and some drilled ball leads. A drop length depends on the state of the tide but four to five feet is sufficient. Fishing from low water through a rising tide is best but be very careful as it can rise behind you if you are unaware. When catching wrasse treat the fish gently as they often take some time to recover after being landed, hold the fish in the water for a few moments and he should swim away. While fishing for this species it is often possible to set a second rod with heavier tackle cast a little further. Thornback ray, conger eel, and tope can all be caught here on occasion and it is worth experimenting with times and tides for the best results. The best baits for the bigger species are - fresh mackerel and squid which works especially well for bullhuss. Spinning on an early morning or late evening tide can be very productive as there are often large shoals of Pollack and mackerel in the area.

Skill Level—**Expert**

Facilities **No**

Page 7