

## Treating Animals Humanely

By adopting just a few simple habits, SEINE participants can greatly increase the chances that the fish they catch and release will survive, meaning that each program participant can positively influence the future of Connecticut's fishing stocks by striving for 100 percent survival of released fish.

Certain fish are considered to be sensitive/management species, and must be removed from the seine net and returned to the water as quickly as possible.

Those species are:

- River herring (*Alosa sp.*)
- Winter flounder (*Pseudopleuronectes americanus*)
- Northern puffer (*Sphaeroides maculatus*)
- Tomcod (*Microgadus tomcod*)
- American eel (*Anguilla rostrata*)
- Summer flounder (*Paralichthys dentatus*)
- Lined sea horse (*Hippocampus erectus*)
- Rainbow smelt (*Osmerus mordax*)

### Guidelines for collection and handling fish

- Place each species of fish in a large container of water
- Handle fish as little as possible and only with clean, wet hands or the small aquarium nets.
- When photographing or measuring fish, minimize the amount of time they are out water. (It's best to take pictures of fish while they are in a small amount of water.)
- Avoid damaging the gill cover when handling fish.
- Never put your hands or fingers in a fish's gills or eyes.

The following recommendations are from the National Science Teacher's Association (NSTA) position statement on the humane treatment of animals

- Become knowledgeable about the acquisition and care of animals appropriate to the species under study so that both students and the animals stay safe and healthy during all activities.
- Follow local, state, and national laws, policies, and regulations when live organisms, particularly native species, are included in the classroom.
- Develop activities that promote observation and comparison skills that instill in students an appreciation for the value of life and the importance of caring for animals responsibly.
- Instruct students on safety precautions for handling live organisms and establish a plan for addressing such issues as allergies and fear of animals.
- Espouse the importance of not conducting experimental procedures on animals if such procedures are likely to cause pain, induce nutritional

deficiencies, or expose animals to parasites, hazardous/toxic chemicals, or radiation.

- Refrain from releasing animals into a non-indigenous environment.