



A GUIDE TO SEA ANGLING IN THE SOUTHERN FISHERIES REGION

by

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Produced by the Central Fisheries Board for and on behalf of the Southern Regional Fisheries Board.

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Foreword

The Southern Regional Fisheries Board is responsible for the promotion of Sea Angling within its region from Bannow Bay in Co. Wexford to Ballycotton in Co. Cork and is delighted to co-operate with the Central Fisheries Board in compiling this guide to give both the first time and experienced angler an aid to Sea Angling in this region.

This area is a varied coastline with quiet bays such as Bannow Bay, Dunmore East and Youghal, estuaries such as Waterford and the River Blackwater (Munster) and harbours such as Helvick and Knockadoon all with easy access.

Many well established angling centres and charter boats are scattered along this sea board. It also offers excellent shore fishing for a significant variety of species.

This guide gives detailed information on all angling areas and shore fishing marks. It covers boat contacts, fish species and baits that are best suited to the area. Any angler will have ready access to all necessary information on sea angling including maps and illustrations.

It only remains for me to wish all anglers the best of luck while fishing and stay safe.

A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of several loops and a long horizontal stroke at the bottom.

Brian Sheerin

Chief Executive Officer

Southern Regional Fisheries Board

Maps, Diagrams & Design by; **Shane O'Reilly**, Central Fisheries Board.

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PLEASE NOTE

Errors or Inaccuracies

While every effort has been made to ensure that the information contained in the guide is accurate, no responsibility will be accepted by the Fisheries Boards for any errors or inaccuracies therein.

Access to the Seashore

References in this guide regarding access to the shore at various points, does not imply rights of way and anglers should ensure that, where necessary, they obtain permission from landowners in order to enter or cross private lands.

Respect for the Environment

Please leave the shore as you would hope to find it. Do not leave litter and do not discard hooks, line or tackle which may be a danger to animals or humans.

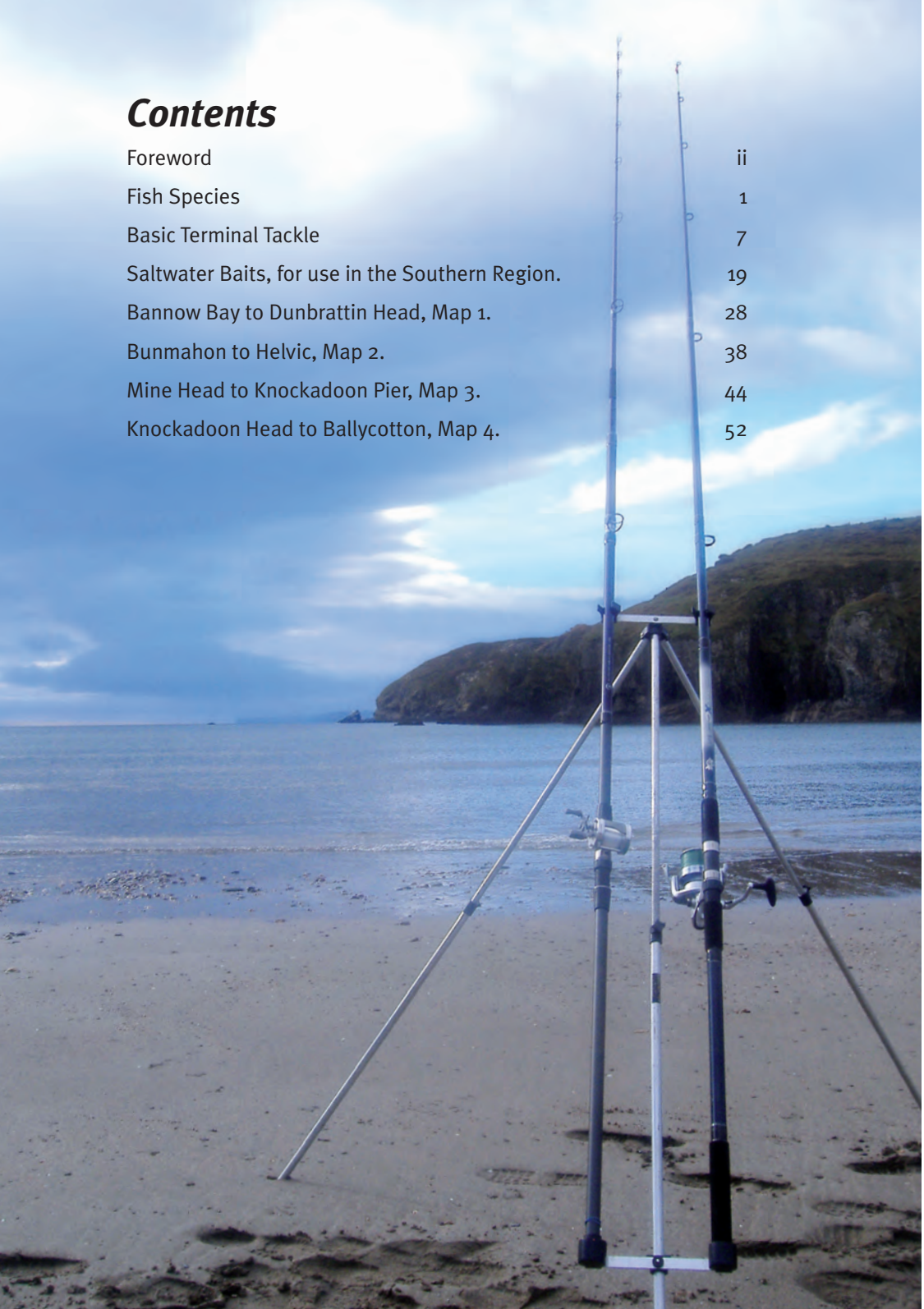
Safety at Sea

It should be noted that all anglers going to sea in small boats must wear life jackets at all times. Anglers under 16 years of age must also wear life jackets at all times when on board licensed charter vessels. All other anglers on board a charter vessel must have access to a life jacket.

It is the responsibility of every angler on a charter boat, to ask to see the current certification from the Dept. of Marine and to view a copy of the vessel's insurance policy before setting out to sea.

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Fish Species

Flounder (*Platichthys flesus*)

Eyes and colour normally on the right side, but “reversed” examples are more common amongst flounders than among other flatfishes. Conspicuous enlarged, rough, hard scales on head ridge, anterior part of lateral line and along bases of dorsal and anal fins on the eyed side. Dark brown to greenish-grey, sometimes with vague orange spots; blind side uniform opaque white. Grows to about 2.26 kg (5 lbs). Often occurs in fresh water well above the limits of the tide. Specimen weight: 1.1 kg (2.42 lbs).



Turbot (*Scophthalmus maximus*)

Turbot are large flatfish and are regarded as one of the major prizes of Irish sea angling and they are also highly regarded for the table. The upper side is a mottled brown with numerous bony lumps or tubercles. The body is diamond shaped. Turbot can grow to over 18 kg (40 lbs), Specimen weight: 8.16 kg (18 lbs).



Pollack (*Pollachius pollachius*)

Very popular sport fish. Can be taken from both boat and shore on the Southern coast. Common over areas of rough ground, reefs and sunken wrecks. Easily identified from its near relation, the coalfish, by the protruding lower jaw and by the shape of the lateral line which is bent over the pectoral fin. Tail not forked. Usually brown or bronze on back and flanks. Grows to over 9 kg (20 lbs). Specimen weight: 5.4kg (12 lbs).



Cod (*Gadus morhua*)

Common on most coasts and unlikely to be mistaken for any other species, even though the colour of adults varies. Caught over a wide range of seabed from reefs and wrecks to areas of shingle and sand and in many of the larger estuaries. Cod are available throughout the year, but generally “peak” fishing times are May and June (boat angling) and December and January (shore fishing). Grows to over 22 kg (50 lbs). Specimen weight: 9.07 kg (20 lbs).



Ling (*Molva molva*)

Long, eel-like, member of the cod family which has a large barbel under the chin and a mouth of sharp teeth. Olive or red-brown in colour, sometimes mottled. A very popular sport fish, particularly with wreck and reef anglers. Almost exclusively a boat caught fish. Grows to about 22 kg (50 lbs). Specimen weight: 11.34 kgs (25 lbs).



Mackerel (*Scomber scombrus*)

Very common on all coasts in summer when they can be taken by both boat and shore anglers in very large numbers at times. Easily identified by dark, wavy stripes on green upper body and silver undersides. Mackerel are an important bait fish when fishing for other species. Specimen weight: 1.13 kg (2.5 lbs).



Wrasse (Labrus)

Large family of deep bodied, hard scaled fish. Two species are of interest to Irish anglers: the Ballan Wrasse (*Labrus bergylta*) which grows to about 4.5 kg (10 lbs), specimen weight, 2.15 kg (4.75 lbs) and the colourful Cuckoo Wrasse (*Labrus mixtus*) (which grows to around .9 kg (2 lbs), specimen weight, .567 kg (1.25 lbs). Both are very common in Irish waters particularly where there are rocky areas of weed covered reef.



Bass (Dicentrarchus labrax)

This blue backed, silver cousin of the American striped bass is one of Ireland's most sought after sport fish. It is equally at home in the turmoil of an Atlantic surf beach or in the quietness of an estuarine backwater. Most common below a line drawn from Galway to Dublin, with a good population in the Southern region. A protected species by law, with a bag limit of 2 fish per angler in any 24 hour period and minimum size of 40 cms. Grows to about 9 kg (20 lbs). Specimen weight: 4.536 kg (10 lbs).



Gurnard (Triglidae)

There are three species of Gurnard which anglers can expect from waters in the Southern region. Grey Gurnard (*Eutrigla gurnardus*) which grows to about 1.6 kg (3.5lbs), specimen weight .68 kg (1.5 lbs); Red Gurnard (*Aspitrigla cuculus*) which grows to about 1.8 kg (4lbs), specimen weight .907 kg (2 lbs) and Tub Gurnard (*Trigla lucerna*) which grows to over 5.5 kg (12lbs), specimen weight 2.268 kg (5 lbs). Gurnards are bottom living fish, normally found on sandy or muddy bottoms in depths of 50-150 feet.



Conger Eel (Conger conger)

Dorsal, caudal and anal fins continuous; no pelvic fins. Dorsal begins about level with tip of pectoral. Body rather stout and muscular. Mouth large; the upper jaw the larger. Grows to over 45 kg (100 lbs). Offshore, inshore and in lower reaches of large estuaries. Specimen weight: 18.14 kg (40 lbs).



Skate (Raja)

Three species of skate have been recorded by anglers in Irish waters. They are:- White Skate (*Raja alba*) (specimen weight 54.3 kg, 120 lbs); Long Nose Skate (*Raja oxyrinchus*) (specimen weight 36.287 kg, 80 lbs); and Common Skate (*Raja batis*) (specimen weight suspended). In the interests of conservation, the Irish Specimen Fish Committee removed the Common Skate from its list of acceptable species in 1976. Since then, all Common Skate taken by anglers have been returned alive to the water. In recent years, fish to almost 90 kg (200 lbs) have again re-appeared in the Southern region.



Ray (Raja)

Popular with boat and shore anglers and often confused with skate; but those with more rounded discs and short noses are generally termed ray. Normally a summer species they are available from May to October. Four species of ray are of interest to anglers in the Southern region. They are Thornback Ray (*Raja clavata*) (specimen weight 9.07 kg, 20 lbs); Blonde Ray (*Raja brachyura*) (11.3 kg, 25 lbs); Cuckoo Ray (*Raja naevus*) (2.04 kg, 4.5 lbs); Homelyn Ray (*Raja montagui*) (2.268 kg, 5 lbs).



Shark

There are five species of shark which anglers may contact in Irish coastal waters. They are the Mako (*Isurus oxyrinchus*), Thresher (*Alopias vulpinus*), Six Gilled (*Hexanchus griseus*), Porbeagle (*Lamna nasus*) and the Blue (*Prionace glauca*). Of these, only the latter two are caught with any degree of regularity in the Southern region, the others being mainly accidental catches. Shark fishing is very popular during the summer months.



Tope (Galeorhinus galeus)

Medium sized shallow water shark, fairly common on the Southern coast of Ireland during summer. Greyish in colour with short, triangular pectorals and deeply notched tail fin. Very popular sport fish, particularly with inshore boat anglers. Male fish to 13 kg (30 lbs) are often encountered in "packs" but much larger females are either "loners" or are found in small groups. Grows to about 36 kg (80 lbs). Specimen weight, 18.14 kg (40 lbs).





SOUTHERN REGION SEA FISH RECORDS

Species	Weight	Angler	Place of Capture	Date
Angler Fish	19.96 kg	A v. Zonderland (NL)	Dungarvan	28.08.1977
Bass*	7.75 kg	Malcolm Tucker (GB)	Whiting Bay, Ardmore	27.04.1973
Black Sole*	2.87 kg	Eddie Cull	Ballycotton	28.12.1986
Bream, Red	2.49 kg	Siegfried Lange (D)	Youghal	19.07.1981
Brill	2.50 kg	John Cronin	Ardmore	16.07.1984
Coalfish	9.25 kg	Pierre de Winter (B)	Youghal	12.08.1984
Cod*	19.05 kg	I.L. Stewart	Ballycotton	1921
Conger	23.00 kg	David O'Connell	Youghal	14.06.1986
Dab	.92 kg	Paul Beglin	Dunmore East	28.01.1989
Dogfish, Spur	7.20 kg	H. Gibson (GB)	Ballycotton	28.08.1977
Dogfish, L.S.	1.70 kg	Dermot O'Brien	Youghal	10.06.1979
Dogfish, G.S.	9.18 kg	James Monaghan	Dunmore East	29.07.1973
Flounder	1.94 kg	Michael Elliot	Bannow Bay	30.12.1992
Garfish	1.52 kg	John A. O'Connor	Dunmore East	08.10.1997
Gurnard, Tub	2.54 kg	Carl Denutte (B)	Dunmore East	07.10.1997
Gurnard, Grey	1.13 kg	Finbar O'Neill	Youghal	23.09.1973
Gurnard, Red	1.12 kg	Luke Nolan	Dunmore East	15.06.2003
Haddock	4.33 kg	H.Kerkum	Dungarvan	04.09.1970
Hake	6.38 kg	Padraig McSweeney	Ballycotton	01.08.1982
John Dory	2.66 kg	Cyril Thompson	Hook Head	04.06.1983
Ling	17.24 kg	Sean Clancy	Youghal	21.09.1986
Mackerel	1.19 kg	H. de Rooy (NL)	Dungarvan	03.09.1976
Megrim	.99 kg	Bepi van Leeuwan (NL)	Dungarvan	30.06.1985
Mullet, Grey	3.08 kg	Wm. Connolly	Ballycotton	25.08.1971
Plaice*	3.73 kg	Eddie Cull	Ballycotton	23.01.1982
Pollack*	8.70 kg	J.N.Hearne	Ballycotton	1904
Pouting	1.64 kg	John Higgins	Ballycotton	02.09.2001
Ray, Thornback	11.11 kg	Bernard Walsh	Ballycotton	18.05.1969
Ray, Cuckoo	2.25 kg	William Cunningham	Ballycotton	01.08.1982
Ray, Homelyn	2.80 kg	J. C. Koop (NL)	Dungarvan	12.08.1970
Ray, Painted*	7.81 kg	Eddie Cull	Ardnahinch (Garryvoe)	29.08.1994
Ray, Electric	15.65 kg	John Brown	Woodstown Strand	26.08.1986
Rockling, 3 Bearded	1.32 kg	Sean Furlongw	Slade	02.06.1997
Shark, Blue	68.04 kg	Walter Dworzack (A)	Ballycotton	07.08.1988
Shark, Porbeagle	113.40 kg	Connie McGrath	Dungarvan	05.06.1975
Skate, Common*	100.25 kg	T. Tucker	Ballycotton	1913
Stone Basse	4.76 kg	M. Carter (GB)	Dungarvan	06.09.1995
Tope	18.14 kg	R. Carter (GB)	Dungarvan	04.09.1969
Turbot	9.53 kg	William Magan (NL)	Dungarvan	31.08.1980
Twaite Shad*	1.54 kg	Michael O'Leary	St. Mullins	07.05.1999
Whiting	1.79 kg	David W. Padfield	Ballycotton	16.07.1971
Wrasse, Ballan	3.22 kg	Mark Dunphy	Hook Head	19.08.2001
Wrasse, Cuckoo	.78 kg	Kieran Connery	Tramore	20.08.2005

* Current or previous Irish record fish.

© Irish Specimen Fish Committee



Basic Terminal Tackle

There are two basic types of terminal tackle which the sea angler will find useful in the Southern Fisheries Region. These are the paternoster and the leger. All sea fishing terminal tackle is based on these two patterns or a combination of both. It should be noted that all the 'pieces' which go to make up these rigs are available in the majority of tackle shops. Let us look, in a little more detail, at some of the terminal rig arrangements which have proven successful in the Region.

Shore Fishing

In general, multi-hook rigs do not lend themselves to shore fishing at many locations in the Southern Region as the sea bed can be very mixed and the more hooks one has on the end of the line, the greater are the chances of fouling the bottom.

When fish are feeding at distances of 100 metres or more from the shoreline, multi-hook rigs are again a disadvantage because the more hooks and bait one has on a trace, the less distance will be attained due to wind resistance.

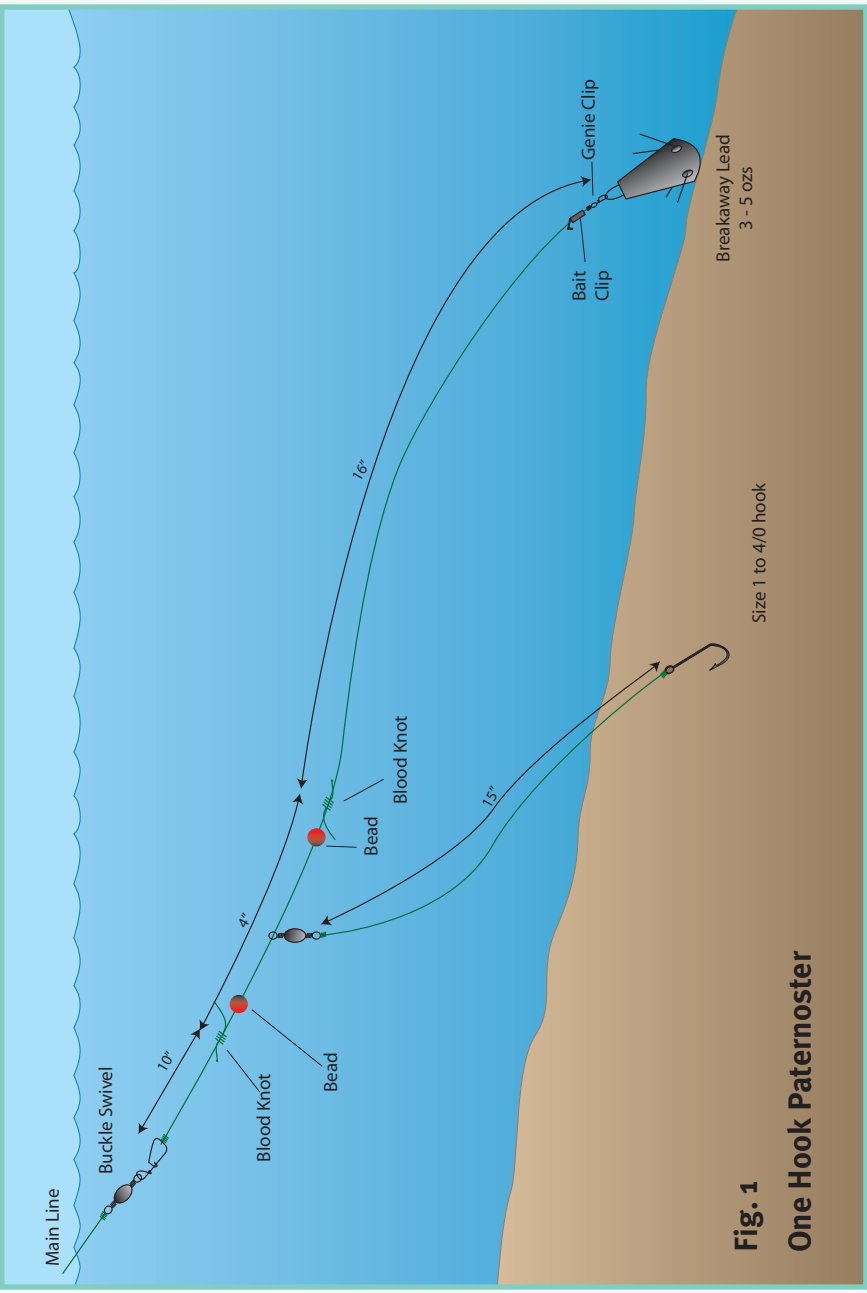


Fig. 1
One Hook Paternoster



The **One Hook Paternoster** (fig. I) is the ideal setup for reaching fish which are feeding at long range from the shore. This is a very simple rig which sports a running dropper, between two blood knots. Small beads act as buffers against the knots to prevent the dropper swivel from moving out of its confines. At the bottom of the main trace, and immediately behind the 'Genie' lead retainer, is a bait clip. When the hook has been baited up, it is hung tightly into the clip. The bait will then be directly behind the lead, giving it a streamlined effect and lessening the possibility of soft baits flying off during the cast. When the trace hits the water, it compresses and the snood drops out of the clip, presenting a complete bait to any fish in the vicinity. The line strength and hook size are dependent on the species sought, but this type of rig is useful for codling and whiting in winter and bass in summer.

When fish are feeding close to the shoreline and distance casting is not essential, the **Two Hook Paternoster/Leger** (fig II) is recommended because it offers the angler the best of both worlds, in that, a conventional snood can be fished while legering at the same time. This system works particularly well for flatfish on open beaches and will also take ray, dogfish etc. from deep water rock marks which give access to sandy ground.

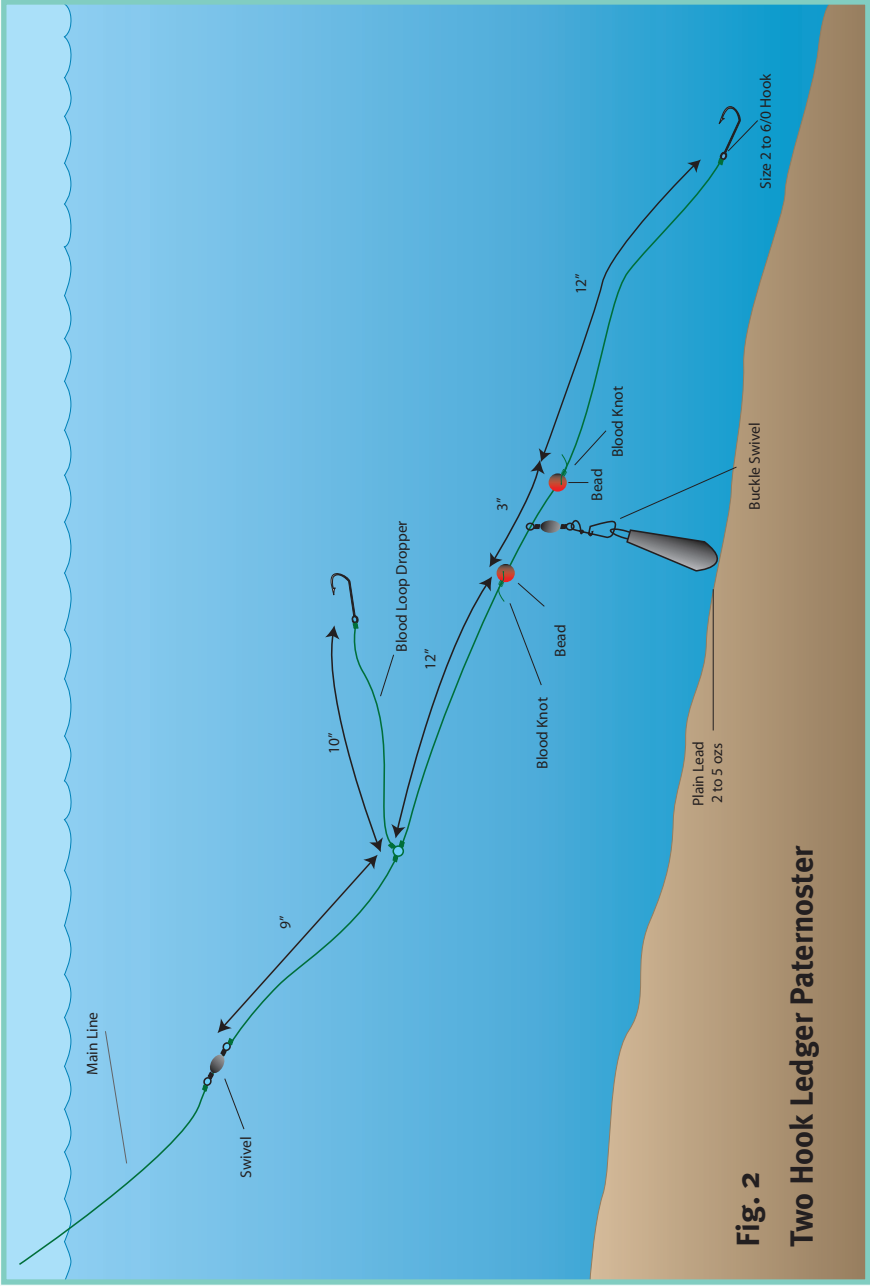


Fig. 2
Two Hook Ledger Paternoster



BOAT FISHING

The **Boat Fishing Paternoster** (fig III) can, in theory, have any number of hooks suspended from the main line on snoods or droppers, with a lead attached below the bottom hook. The rig allows baits and lures or a combination of both to be fished at all levels from just under the surface, through mid water and all the way down to the sea bed. Another advantage which the paternoster has is that a number of baits can be worked or “jigged” together in an enticing manner without tangling with each other. It is recommended that for ease of use this rig should have no more than three droppers attached.

A second type of boat fishing terminal tackle is the **Running Leger** (fig IV) which can be fished tight to the sea bed for all the bottom living species from dabs to common skate. Again this can be a multi hook rig (three hooks, usually being the maximum). When fishing for larger species, such as tope or monkfish, one hook rigs are advisable to prevent two or more fish grabbing baits at the same time! Two large fish pulling against each other would put unnecessary strain on the terminal tackle and almost surely lead to a breakage. For some of the more “toothy” fish the trace should be made up from heavy duty nylon or multi-strand wire. The free running nature of this rig means that when a big fish picks up the bait, it can make off with it, without feeling any resistance. The angler should allow the fish to take line until it stops to turn the bait before swallowing. The strike should be delayed until the fish starts to move again.

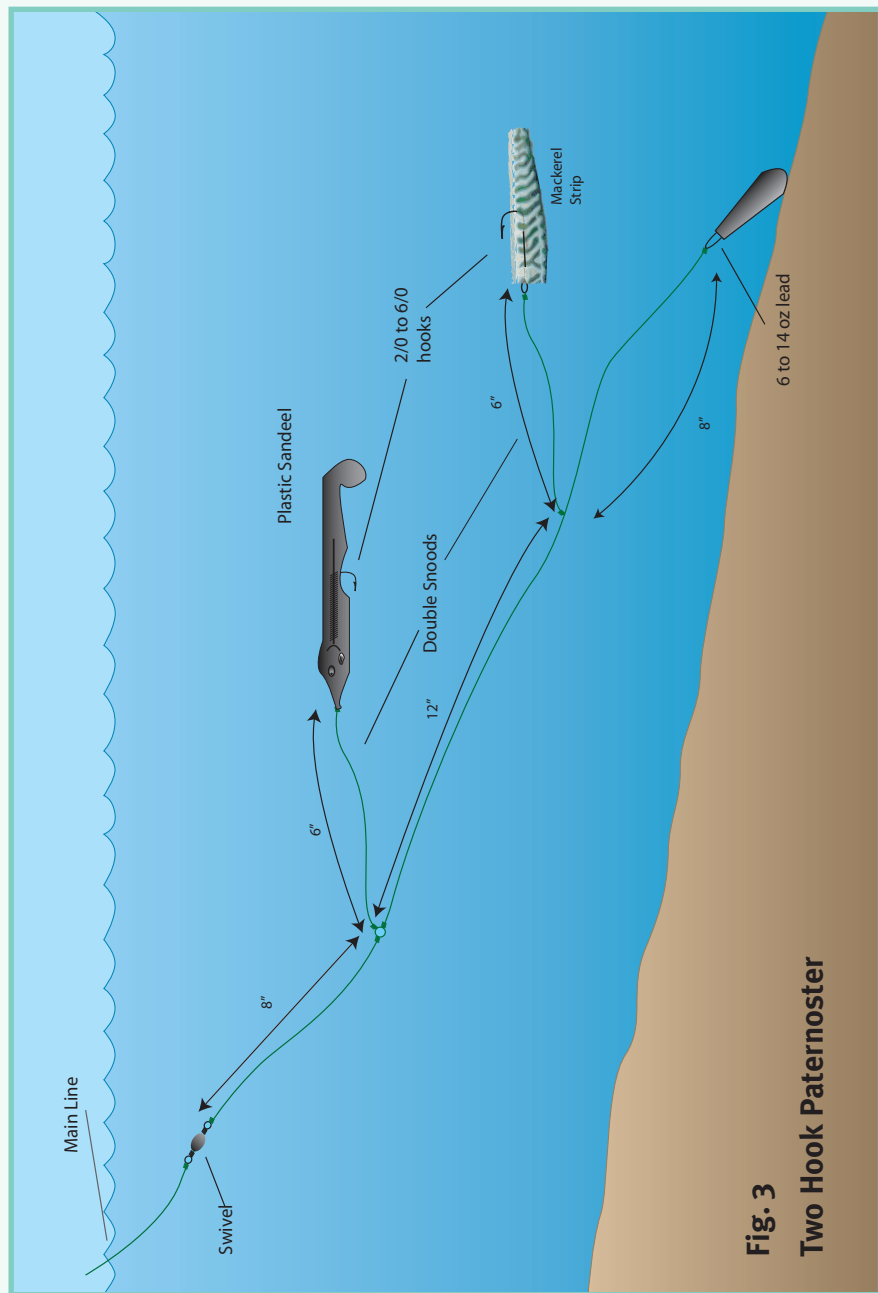


Fig. 3
Two Hook Paternoster

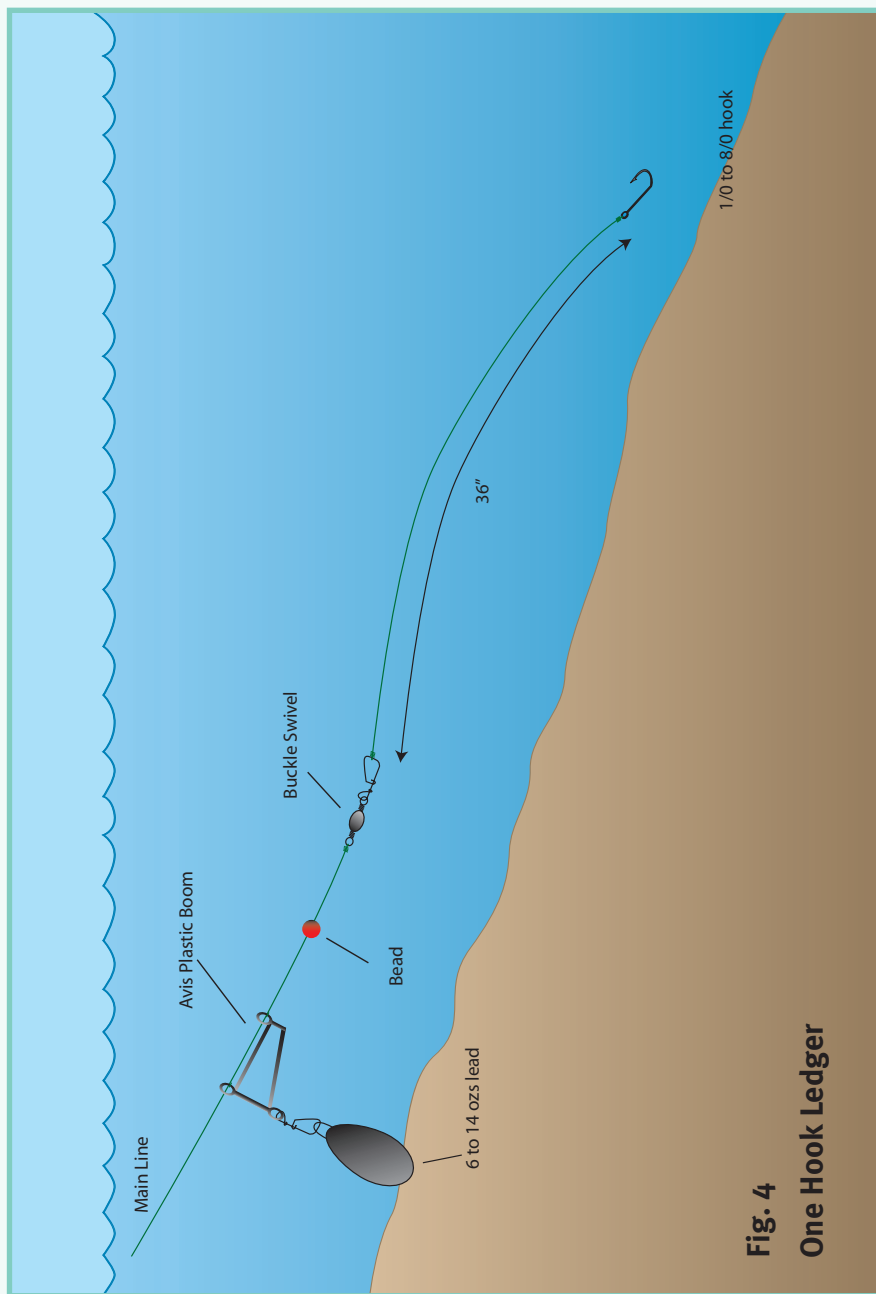


Fig. 4
One Hook Ledger

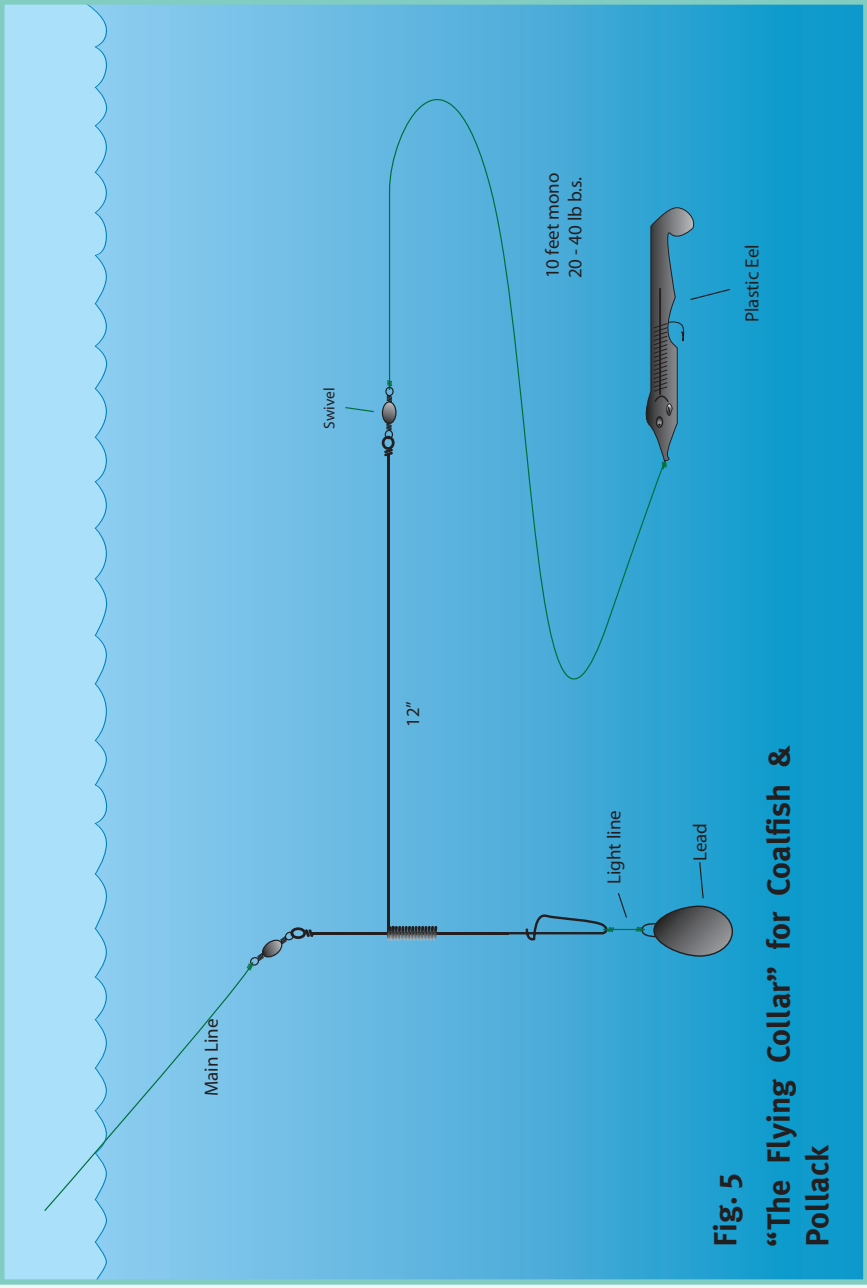


Fig. 5
"The Flying Collar" for Coalfish & Pollack

There are many specialist boat rigs based on either of the above but one of the most successful fish catchers in the Southern area is the **“Flying Collar”** (fig V). This is basically a leger rig with a longer than usual, fixed dropper. At one time wire coat hangers were cut and shaped to create long booms, but today at least one major tackle manufacturer produces booms for this purpose. The rig which normally uses an artificial eel or shad is best employed while drifting over a deep water reef or wreck and should be lowered to the sea bed and reeled back slowly toward the boat. This process should be repeated until fish are contacted. Pollack and coalfish are the main target fish but many other species have fallen to this technique including conger, ling and cod.

FLOAT FISHING FROM SHORE AND BOAT

One of the most successful methods for catching a wide range of sea fish is through the use of a **Saltwater Float Fishing Rig** (fig VI). Despite what some so called “purist” sea anglers may think, float fishing is a true sea angling method, and in many cases it is the first introduction that beginners and freshwater anglers have to fishing in the sea. It is a very effective way of shore fishing from piers, harbour walls, rocky headlands or while inshore boat fishing. Mullet, mackerel, pollack, wrasse, and garfish can all be taken this way using baits as varied as bread, worm, shellfish or fish strips. The rig can be adjusted to suit the depth being fished and the float slides between a movable stop knot and the trace which is attached to the main line by a small swivel. Beads are inserted between the knots to act as buffers. The trace is weighed down with shot, with the number used being dependent on the size of the float and bait. As a general rule of thumb, the top third of the float should be above water. Size of hook and bait are dependent on the type of fish being sought and in fact a scaled up version of this rig can also be employed from boats where larger fish such as tope or shark are the quarry!

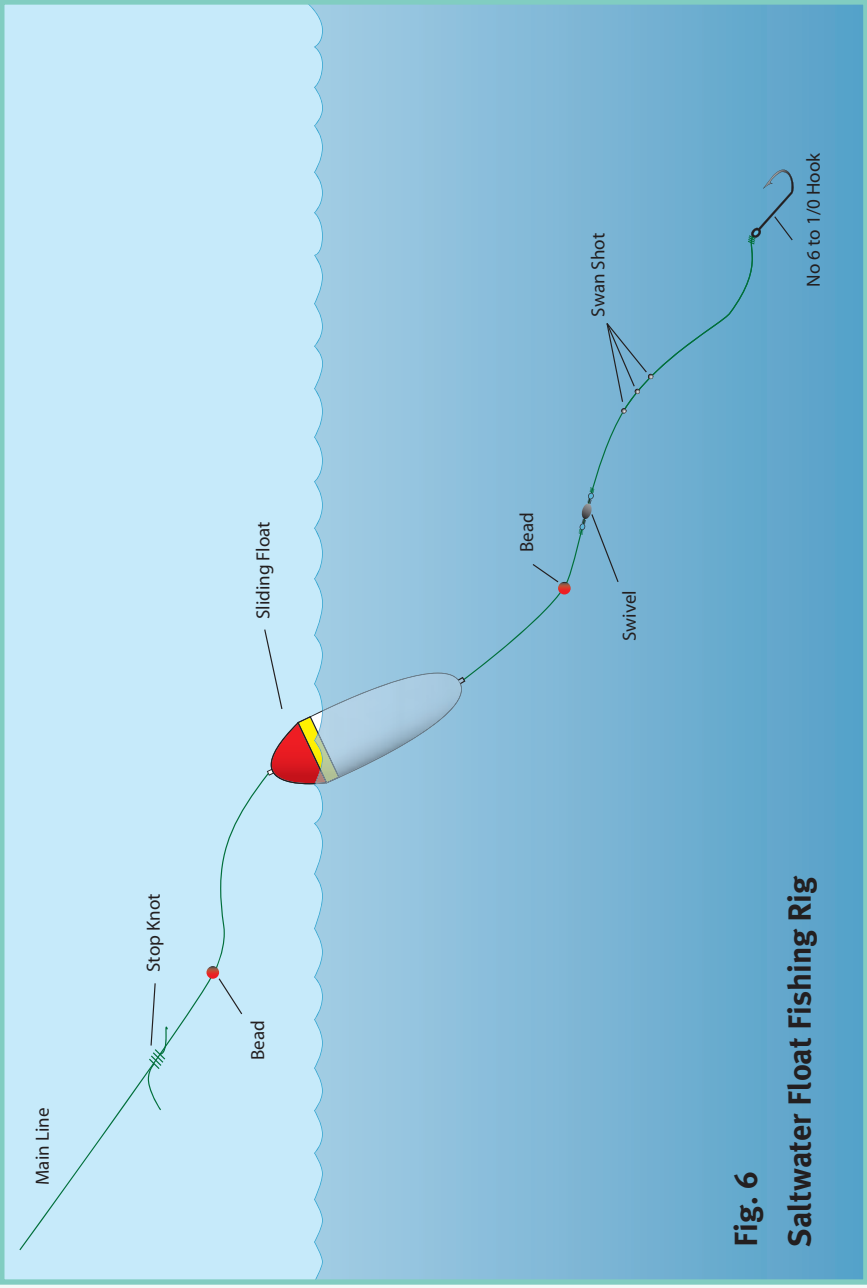


Fig. 6
Saltwater Float Fishing Rig

Basic rod, Line & Reel configurations for the Southern Region

Rod	Reel and Line	Use	Target Species
2 - 3 metre graphite or kevlar spinning rod.	Freshwater type fixed spool reel loaded with 2 - 4.5kg monofilament line.	Float fishing, spinning or plug fishing from piers, harbour walls, rocks or in estuarine channels.	Sea-trout, bass, mullet, mackerel, coalfish, pollack and garfish.
2.5 - 2.8 metre graphite fly rod rated 8 to 10 weight.	Saltwater fly reel loaded with fly line suitable for saltwater use.	Fly fishing from rocks, piers and in estuaries.	Sea-trout, bass, garfish, mackerel and pollack.
3.3 - 3.7 metre graphite bass rod with a casting weight of 80 - 112 grams.	Small multiplying reel or medium fixed spool reel loaded with 5.5 - 8 kg monofilament line.	Bait fishing on surf beaches, in estuaries or from rocks.	Bass, sea-trout, flounder dab, wrasse, and pollack.
3.7 - 4 metre graphite beach rod with a casting weight of 140 - 170 grm.	Small to medium multiplying reel or medium to large fixed spool reel loaded with 7.8 - 12 kg monofilament line and having a shock leader of 18 - 25 kg mono.	Rock, pier, estuary or beach fishing where distance casting is necessary.	Ray, dogfish, huss, cod and tope.
1.80 - 2.20 metre graphite boat rod of line class 2.7 kg - 4.5 kg.	Small multiplying reel loaded with 2.5 - 4.5 kg monofilament or braided line.	Boat fishing in shallow to moderately deep water.	Plaice, dabs, gurnard wrasse, rockling, and whiting.
1.80 - 2.20 metre graphite boat rod of line class 4.5 kg - 6.8 kg.	Small to medium multiplying reel loaded with 4.5 - 6.5 kg monofilament or braided line.	Boat fishing over offshore reefs, sand banks and wrecks.	Pollack, coalfish, cod, haddock, ray, turbot, and ling.
1.80 - 2.20 metre graphite boat rod of line class 9.0 kg - 13.6 kg.	Medium to large (up to 4/0 size) multiplying reel loaded with 9 - 13 kg monofilament or braided line.	Boat fishing in deeper water and over deep wrecks and reefs.	Blue and porbeagle shark, skate, tope, conger, and ling.
2.20 - 2.80 metre graphite up tide boat rod to cast 80 - 225 grams.	Medium multiplying reel loaded with 6.8 - 8 kg monofilament line and having a shock leader of 18 - 25 kg.	Boat fishing in shallow water, where casting baits away from the boat yields best results.	Ray, tope, huss, bass, and dogfish.



Saltwater Baits, For Use in the Southern Region

LUGWORM

The presence of lugworm (*Arenicola marina*) is recognised by the spaghetti-like spiral of sand which they leave on the foreshore at low tide. They are abundant in estuaries and on many sheltered beaches throughout the area and trench digging for an hour or so with a garden fork will usually produce enough worms for a day's fishing. In the Southern Region lugworm have traditionally been a shore angler's bait, normally associated with fishing for flounder, wrasse, and dabs but they are also very effective in attracting codling and whiting while inshore boat fishing. Lugworm can be kept alive for a few days, wrapped in newspaper and placed in a cool box.



RAGWORM



Red and king ragworm (*Nereis pelagica* and *Nereis virens*) are found in parts of Waterford harbour and are a proven fish catcher in the area and an excellent bait for flatfish, whiting, pouting, codling and dogfish. Ragworm will stay alive for over a week if kept in a cool-box, on a tray of coral sand, and moistened regularly with fresh sea water.

Harbour ragworm or “**maddies**” (*Nereis diversicolour*) are very common in muddy reaches of most estuaries in the area. These small ragworm are a good standby bait, when used in bunches, for float-fishing for mullet and wrasse or when legering for flatfish. Harbour ragworm are difficult to keep alive for more than a few days.

White ragworm or “**herring-bone rag**” (*Nephtys hombergi*) are also fairly common, frequenting many lugworm beds and being particularly effective when used in conjunction with other baits such as lugworm or mackerel strip. White ragworm will stay alive for up to a week if kept in similar conditions to red ragworm. It should be noted, however, that white ragworm will not survive if put into the same tray as the more aggressive reds.



Large white ragworm or “**silvers**” (*Nephtys caeca*) are rare and localised in their distribution throughout the entire country. They are, however, the single most sought after bait by shore match anglers who tend to jealously guard the location of “silver” beds. Large white ragworm are often the only bait that will attract fish in bright conditions and many shore competitions have been won by the angler with a good supply of them. They are normally found in clean coarse sand in the vicinity of the low spring tide line, particularly where masonry worms (which have little use as bait) are located. Large whites can be kept for quite long periods, in trays of moist coral sand, but should never be mixed with other ragworm species.

CRAB

Crab has possibly been the most popular shore fishing bait in the Southern Region for almost as long as anglers have fished there. It has accounted for a wide range of species over the years, including many specimen and several record fish.

The Common Shore or green crab (*Carcinus maenas*)

moults at least once a year, usually prior to mating. This generally takes place in May or June, although moulting crabs can be found as late as October in some parts of the south and south-west coasts. Crabs can be collected along sheltered shores, particularly where there is an abundance of serrated wrack (*Fucus serratus*) which provides good cover for them. Not all shore crabs are suitable as baits and only “peelers” or “softies” are used.

A “peeler crab” is one which is in the process of shedding its shell and is generally regarded as the prime crab bait. To tell a “peeler” from an ordinary hard-backed crab, one should twist the last segment off one of the legs. If the segment comes away and there is white flesh underneath, the crab is unsuitable and can be returned to its hiding place. If, however, the segment comes away easily, revealing the newly formed, soft red flesh underneath, the carapace and under shell can be peeled off for use as bait.

Crabs which have already shed their shells but have not yet hardened (a process which takes about a week) are known as “softies”. They are rubbery to the touch and cannot nip as the claws are too soft to do any damage. In most conditions a soft crab will be almost as effective as a “peeler” although the scent may not be as strong. In order to ensure that crab baits are properly presented on the hook they should be tied on with elasticated thread.



Crab can be used in almost any sea angling situation from the estuary and beach where they are excellent for most species through inshore boat fishing for ray, dogfish and flatfish to deep sea fishing for cod.

Hermit Crab (*Eupagurus bernhardus*) can be collected in a pre baited drop net in rock pools or below pier walls. Hermit is good bait for cod, ray, and flatfish from boats, but is virtually impossible to cast from the shore due to the soft nature of the tail section. As with all crab baits, hermit crab should be tied to the hook with elastic thread.

Other species of crab such as the velvet swimming crab (*Portunus puber*) also make excellent baits but they are seldom encountered in moulting condition.

SQUID AND CUTTLEFISH

The **common squid** (*Loligo forbesi*) and common cuttlefish (*Sepia officinalis*) are superb baits for a wide range of species. In the past they were rarely seen on fishmonger's slabs as they were not a popular food item here, but in the new millennium there has been a considerable increase in the migrant workforce and as a result many, previously uncommon, foodstuffs, including squid, are now widely available.

Squid will also fall occasionally to baited lures, while boat fishing and should be frozen while still fresh. They are well suited to being transported in a cool box where they will remain frozen as long as the ice blocks are renewed regularly.

Most tackle shops now carry the smaller “**calamari squid**” possibly (*Loligo vulgaris*) which can be purchased, frozen, in handy 454g cartons of ten. These are valuable bait for various species of ray as well as dogfish, cod and conger.

SHELLFISH

Shellfish are very a valuable bait, when fishing for specific species, particularly fish with a soft or small mouth e.g.; haddock, sole or dab.

Cockle (*Cardium edule*) live buried just under the surface of damp sand and can be gathered, on many parts of the coastline. They are very useful for shore angling and inshore boat fishing and plaice, dab, flounder, whiting and all the wrasse family will take cockle freely. Cockle is also productive when used in a “cocktail” with other baits such as lugworm or squid. Cod and whiting find this combination particularly attractive.

The **Common whelk** or **buckie** (*Buccinum undatum*) is the largest of the whelk family and the thick flesh is a tough bait for cod, whiting, pouting, coalfish, wrasse and dogfish. Common whelks are a deeper water shellfish than their cousins the periwinkles, living mainly among the stones and mud of the lower shore. As with hermit crab, a pre-baited drop net hung for a few hours at high tide from the end of a pier wall will usually yield ample whelk for a days fishing.

The **Common Gaper** (*Mya arenari*) which is oval shaped and dark grey to black in colour is found in muddy creeks and estuaries. They can be detected at low tide, by searching for a key-hole shaped depression in the mud. The hole is created by the long siphon with which the gaper filters small food particles out of the water. Gapers can be dug up with a wide tined garden fork and when the siphon is removed, it provides a very good boat angling bait for a number of species. Used in combination with lugworm or ragworm, it is also a useful shore angler's bait for bass and flatfish.

Most other species of clam are found in deep water and do not come into the anglers range until a gale throws them up onto the shore.

The **Common Mussel** (*Mytilus edulis*) can be found on most sheltered rocky shores, particularly in the vicinity of a fresh water outflow, where they can be gathered with ease. Once mussels have been removed from their shells, the soft flesh should then be tied to the hook with elasticated thread. This provides excellent bait for shore and boat fishing where codling, coalfish, plaice and dabs are expected.

When mussels are not required for immediate use, they should be taken from their shells and within a few hours, frozen down, in "ziplok" bags containing batches of twenty or so. This allows for ease of storage and future transport in a cool box. Frozen mussel is an excellent standby for winter fishing when other baits are difficult to obtain.

Another excellent boat and shore bait is **Razorfish** (*Ensis siliqua*) which are not uncommon in the Southern Region, but requiring a little more effort to collect than mussel.

Razors are narrow shellfish which grow to about 17cms in length and live in damp sand near the low water line. They are difficult to dig because they can be up to a meter below the surface and the slightest movement on the sand in their vicinity sends them spurting to the bottom of their hole. The best method for capturing them is to take a carton of salt onto the beach, treading carefully onto the razor beds. Once a razor burrow has been located, some salt should be poured into the hole. In an effort to expel the salt, the shellfish speeds back to the surface, where dexterity and nimbleness are then called for to grab the razor and place safely in a bucket. This can be a very hit and

miss exercise but an hour or so will yield twenty or thirty shellfish. Razor is tough bait which is attractive to many summer species but is particularly effective for autumn bass and winter cod.

FISH BAITS

All forms of oily fish are useful in virtually every sea angling situation, but are particularly effective when seeking the larger predators such as shark, tope, monkfish, skate and tuna.



Mackerel (*Scomber, scombrus*) can be used for almost every species of fish from both boat and shore. It can be used in “strip” form for turbot, megrim, pollack, coalfish and gurnard. In “last” form (the tough tail section) for ray, bull huss, spurdog, and ling, while whole mackerel can be used for sharks, skates and conger.

Mackerel can be bought in

most fish shops, in season, or can be caught while spinning from harbour walls or rocky outcrops. A string of brightly coloured feathers or lures can also be employed while boat fishing to take mackerel in numbers. Freshly caught, mackerel, will out fish most frozen fish baits but it is always worth stashing away a few fillets in the freezer for the leaner days of winter, when fish bait is scarce. Most oily fish deteriorate quickly, particularly in warm weather, and should therefore, be frozen within a few hours of capture,

Mackerel can also be frozen whole, but the innards should be removed and stomach cavity cleaned out with salt water, before doing so. Unlike many other parts of Ireland, most local tackle shops now carry a supply of vacuum packed, frozen mackerel.

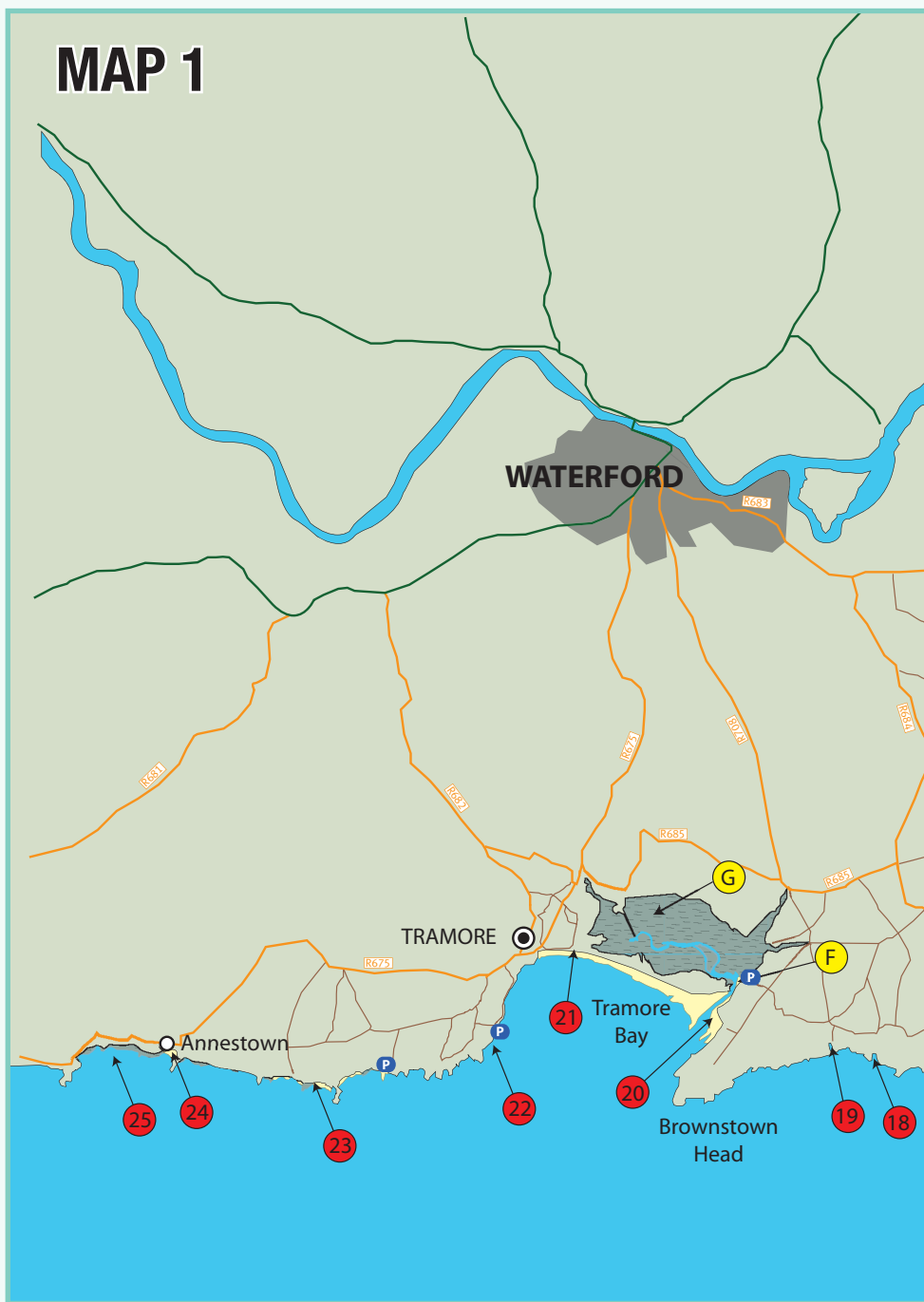
Herring (*Clupea harengus*) are seldom caught on rod and line but are important bait for many species of fish. Herring can be bought fresh in most fishmongers and supermarkets and have the advantage that they survive freezing better than mackerel and do not deteriorate as swiftly when thawed. Herring works well in combination with other baits, particularly red ragworm.

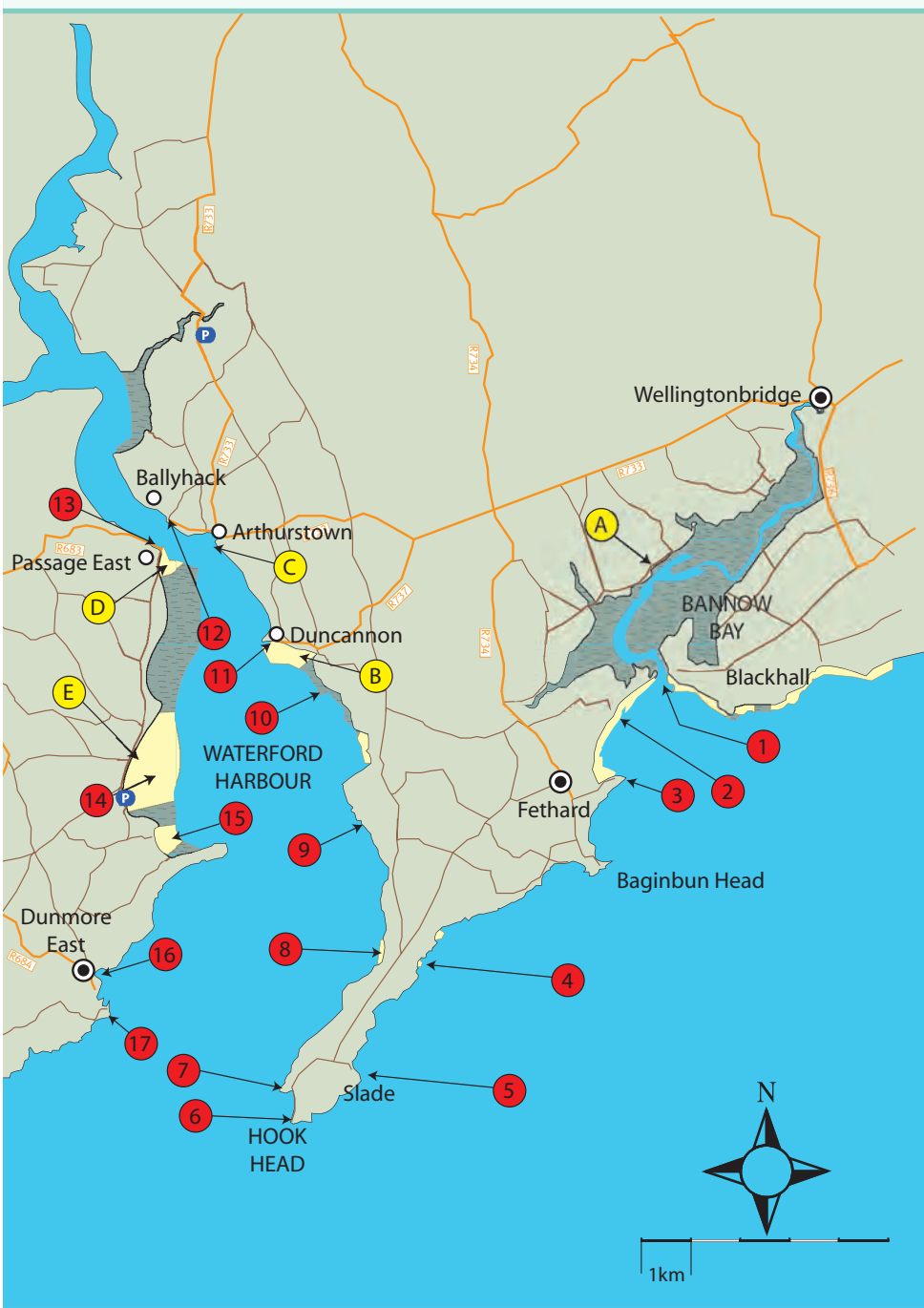


The **Lesser sand-eel** (*Ammodytes tobiannus*) which grows to about 15 cms and the Greater sand-eel or launce (*Ammodytes lanceolatus*) which can grow to over 30 cms are very important bait fish.

Lesser sand-eel are common along sandy shores where they are excellent bait for bass, pollack, and dogfish. They can be collected by the Cornish method known as “vingelling” in the wet sand with a blunt bread knife or bill hook. The blade should be pulled in a sweep through the top 15cms of sand and when a sand-eel is located, it will wriggle out to the surface where speed is essential to grab it before it can escape under the sand again. The greater sand-eel is seldom seen on the shore line being a deeper water fish. They can however be taken on small Sabiki type lures while boat fishing and are prime bait for turbot, ray, tope and cod. Sand-eel will stay alive for several hours in a large bucket of cool, aerated sea water.

MAP 1





Chapter 1 (Map 1)

Bannow Bay to Dunbrattin Head.

The almost land locked **Bannow Bay (1)** enters the sea through a narrow channel about 4.8km north east of Fethard. Shore fishing from either side of the channel mouth at Blackhall to the east and Newtown to the west is productive on the first two hours of the flood tide and around high water for bass to over 4.50kg and flounder to over 1.75kg. Gilthead bream, smoothound and seatrout have also been taken in the area. As the tide rises, so other parts of the estuary are worth exploring. One such area is at Newtown on the eastern side of the bay where the channel runs parallel to the shore. Despite the fact that this is an extremely muddy area it offers good possibilities because the channel is within easy casting range. The most popular bait in Bannow Bay is crab which will take all species with the exception of seatrout. Freelined sandeel is the best method for them. On the western shore of the bay in the vicinity of **St. Kieran's Quay (A)** crab can be collected in the weedy margins, while lugworm are plentiful in the mud along the channel banks. From the beach at **Fethard Bay (2)** bottom fishing over sand will produce flounder, dab, plaice, and bass. Occasional ray and dogfish will be taken on night tides with crab, sandeel or mackerel baits offering best opportunities.

At high water the harbour at **Fethard (3)** holds a fair head of mullet during the summer months while the rocky ground to the east around Ingard Point offers bottom fishing for wrasse, dogfish, rockling and conger. The R734 road terminates in Fethard village and a much smaller one winds its way from there for a further 10 kms out along the Hook Peninsula. Just under halfway along (4.5km) a small "boreen" runs to the south east, off the main road, to the attractive little cove of **Sandeel Bay (4)**. The beach is made up mainly of sand but it also contains a number of rough patches. Night fishing is generally recommended, as fish tend to move close to this shore in the dark. Fishing on the bottom will yield bass, flounder and conger, at low water and the first two hours of a flooding tide. Spinning over the rocks to the south will produce pollack and mackerel in season. 3.5km further on, the road meets a T junction. The east facing road runs for 1.25km to the little harbour of **Slade (5)** where shore fishing at high water will yield dogfish, conger, wrasse and rockling to bottom fished baits, and spinning produces mackerel (in season), pollack and coalfish. The slipway there is tidal, parking is restricted, and access is difficult for small boats wishing to launch and fish there during the summer. The main boat fishing areas are concentrated over the reefs and gullies to the south of Hook Head for pollack, coalfish, cod, john dory, ling and conger, while several wrecks, further south, in water around 50 metres deep hold conger to over 18kg, ling over 9kg and specimen pouting of over 1.5kg.



There is also some excellent fishing over sand to the east of Slade for ray, plaice, dabs, whiting, gurnard, codling and occasional haddock. This is a favoured area when winds are blowing from the west.

The road leading south west of the T junction runs for a further 2.0km to a lighthouse which stands on the craggy tip of **Hook Head (6)**. It is said that a mariners warning light has been in place there for over 1400 years(true) but today's stubby, black and white striped, version dates from Norman times. The rocks around the lighthouse are a popular competition venue and peg numbers have been painted on the ledges by local club anglers. Spinning from these ledges, accounts for pollack, mackerel and coalfish. Bottom fishing over very foul ground is for rockling, dogfish, wrasse, codling and conger. Care should be taken in this area as large swells break on the rocks after storms. There are also a number of blowholes along the shoreline which can suddenly send large volumes of water cascading over the rocks .

Tides at Hook Head can be calculated by adding 15 minutes to the Cobh time, or 6 hours 15 minutes to the Dublin time. About a kilometre back along the road a small track runs almost due west, towards the shallower waters of Waterford Harbour. This is known locally as **Churchtown (7)** where bottom fishing over very foul ground produces dogfish, wrasse and conger. Float fishing yields pollack and coalfish while occasional bass, dab and flounder

can be found over the sandy patches about 55 to 60 metres out from the rock. Crab is the top bait there. North of Churchtown at **Lumsden's Bay (8)** and **Templetown (9)** the rough ground of the headland begins to give way to the sand and mud of the estuary. Dogfish and wrasse are common over the rough patches and spinning with a plug can be very rewarding for bass around high water. Bass will also be taken on crab baits over the sandy patches and flounder can also be expected there.

The twin coves of **Dollar and Booley Bays (10)** which are divided in the middle by the rocky ridge of Black Point are popular bass fishing locations. A number of 4.5kg plus fish have been recorded there over the years with sandeel and crab baits accounting for most of the bigger fish. In recent seasons, these locations have attracted anglers practising plug and fly fishing for bass with the middle of the beach close to the rock proving more productive than the open stretches of sand on either side. Dogfish, dab, flounder, plaice, seatrout and silver eel are also possible there, particularly on night tides.

A Norman fort guards the entrance to the harbour at **Duncannon (11)** at the end of the R737 road. On the sands to the south of the fort, the first two hours of the flood tide are most productive for seatrout and bass to 5.12kg, while spinning. Bottom fishing will also produce bass, plus occasional codling, flounder, dab, silver eel and dogfish. On the northern side of the impressive ramparts is the outer quay wall of the harbour where anglers can fish for conger on night tides. There is a slipway in the harbour where boats can be launched throughout most tides, with the possible exception of low water on springs, to explore the fishing on Waterford Harbour which is the estuary of the 3 sister rivers the Barrow, Nore and Suir. Two purpose built charter boats are based in the harbour and are available for much of the year. One big advantage there is that bad weather seldom leads to a cancellation of fishing, because if it is too inclement on the productive Hook Head grounds then alternative sport can be found in the estuary where bass, flatfish and eels are the target species. At low water lugworm, small white ragworm, and occasional sandeel can be dug on **Duncannon Strand (B)** with the southern end of the beach most productive.

Fishing into the channel from the banks between **Arthurstown and Ballyhack (12)** will yield flounder, silver eel, codling, whiting and bass. Crab is the best bait, fished at night, on leger tackle, through the last hour of the ebb, and first two hours of the flooding tide. The quay wall at Ballyhack will also produce conger at high tide after dark. On the banks of the shallow **King's Bay (C)**, north of the old quay at Arthurstown, mussel can be collected and ragworm dug. The all tide ferry slipway at Ballyhack cannot be used to launch small



Passage East

boats because there is no facility nearby whereby trailers and towing vehicles can be parked.

In May and June each year a major fish migration, takes place through Waterford Harbour when twaite shad run in from the sea to spawn. This event usually coincides with the peak of the spring tides and migrating fish provide superb light tackle sport on lure and fly at St Mullins on the River Barrow. With the exception of the 3 sisters system, twaite shad are virtually extinct in all other Irish waters, making the annual “shad run” one of the most unique fishing attractions in the entire country.

A cross-harbour car ferry operates regularly between Ballyhack and **Passage East (13)**, the eastern gateway to the city of Waterford which stands on the River Suir some 10kms to the west. There are a number of top class tackle shops in the city where bait can also be purchased during the summer months.

An all tide slipway is to the north of the quay at Passage to facilitate the car ferry but small boats can be launched and retrieved there during periods when the ferry is out on the water. Would be boat anglers should note that

the ferry takes precedence on the slipway so it is essential that no hold ups occur due to poorly parked trailers, or slow launches and retrievals.

At high tide, the outer wall of the harbour provides bottom fishing for bass and flounder on crab baits, while spinning or “plugging” from the banks to the south produces bass from low tide through the first couple of hours of the flood. At low tide the shore around the mussel banks, at the northern end of **Passage Strand (D)** affords the collection of mussel and provides excellent digging for ragworm.

The coast road runs south of Passage for 5kms to **Woodstown Strand (14)**. The beach is very shallow there and at low tide strips by over 800 metres. There is however, reasonable depth at high tide and beach fishing provides sport with bass to 5.8kg, silver eel and flounder. Occasional black sole to over 1.5k. and electric ray to over 15kg have also been recorded. Night tides in autumn are generally most productive with the top baits being sandeel and crab. The beach below **Woodstown Car Park (E)** is of firm sand along the low tide line and cockles are plentiful and easily collected there. Some lugworm is also available.

Two kilometres to the south is **Fornaught Strand (15)** which is a small shallow beach, of less than a kilometre in length. It appears to be squeezed between Knockavelish Head on the northern side and the considerable lump of Creadan Head which juts out for almost 2km into Waterford Harbour in the south. Like Woodstown this beach fishes best around high water on an autumn evening when bass, flounder, sole, dogfish, silver eel and occasional plaice can be expected. On the northern side of Dunmore Bay, about 700 meters from the R684 road, is the picturesque, south facing, **Ladies Cove (16)** which is almost totally surrounded by red sandstone cliffs. Fishing over sand from the rocky platforms on the southern side will produce dabs, flounder, plaice, dogfish and occasional bass. The beach is very sheltered and as a result is very popular in good weather with swimmers and sun worshippers. On such occasions, fishing is fruitless and is restricted to evening tides when the beach becomes almost deserted. (Care should be exercised there at all times, as the rocks can be cut off at high water, particularly on spring tides).

On the south western corner of Waterford Harbour is the picturesque fishing port of **Dunmore East (17)** which is one of the most important commercial fishing centres in Ireland. The area is also a popular holiday destination and there is a wide range of accommodation locally, including a plush 4 star hotel and numerous well appointed self-catering cottages, many of which have thatched roofs. The town also has a growing reputation for its reasonably priced eating places, which specialise in fresh, locally caught, fish and seafood.



Dunmore East

Two charter boats are based in the harbour and are generally available from April to the end of September, while a slipway can be accessed on the northern side of the Western quay. It should be remembered that this is a working harbour which can be very busy at times. The slipway is also popular with canoeists and general boat enthusiasts in the summer months, so anglers are advised to launch small boats early in the morning if they want to beat any possible rush! Parking is also restricted on the pier so vehicles and trailers may be required to park in the main car park above the East Pier.

A wide range of species is available to boat anglers including blue shark to over 48kg from July to September. There is top class boat fishing over mixed ground, in water up to 20 metres deep, between Red Head and the Falskirt Rock off Swines Head which may not be visible at low water, where a wide range of species is available. Included are pollack to 5.9kg, cod to 12.50kg, ling to 14.18kg, whiting to 1.50kg, pouting to 1.4kg and ballan wrasse to 2.25kg. It is also one of the few areas in Ireland where red bream and john dory turn up with any degree of regularity. Tides are strong in the area and anglers in small boats, in particular, should pay attention to wind speeds and tide heights, because sea conditions can change very quickly there. The golden rule, as in any similar situation, is to seek local advice and “if in doubt, don’t go out.”

Shore anglers are spoilt for choice in Dunmore with pier, beach and rock fishing, all available locally. Irish specimen rockling over 1.25kg, ballan wrasse over 2.25kg, bass to 6.9kg and flounder over 1.35kg have all been recorded there while pollack, mackerel (in season) and garfish have also been caught from the rocks below the car park to the south of the town. Some bits and pieces of tackle can be bought in the general store on the main street, some 250 metres from the pier, but specialised tackle will have to be purchased in Waterford.

Tides at Dunmore East are +00.13 minutes on Cobh times.

Some 4kms west of Dunmore, along the scenically, spectacular shore road, and just beyond Swines Head is **Rathmoylan Cove (18)** where there is bottom fishing for flounder, dogfish and occasional bass. Spinning from the rocks to the east provides sport with pollack and bass on plugs and fishing is best when high tide and dusk coincide. Fishing is similar at **Ballymacaw Cove (19)** some 2kms further west but spinning and plug fishing is best on the western point of the cove where mackerel can be a welcome addition to catches in summer. There is an old slipway in Ballymacaw which has suffered some damage during storms, which means that boats can only launch and retrieve there at high water. The space for turning and reversing trailers is very restricted and parking is also limited. All in all not the sort of place that the majority of small boat anglers would choose to set out from.

As the coast swings away west from Ballymacaw and around Brownstown Head, which juts out to sea for 3kms to the south west, the large expanse of Tramore Bay, opens up. There is a car park about a kilometre west of Corballymore cross roads which affords access to the shore at **Saleens (F)**. To the north of the car park, peeler and soft crab can be collected under the seaweed, at low tide. Moulting crabs begin to appear there about mid May and can, in some years, be available up to the end of September. To the south of the car park in the narrows between the eastern end of Tramore Strand and Saleens the main channel funnels through the narrows of **Rinnashark (20)**. Traditionally crab baits have accounted for many big fish from either side of the channel including bass to 6.4kg and flounder to 1.75kg. Plug fishing has also become extremely popular and the area also appears to be the ideal place for the growing number of saltwater fly fishing enthusiasts to try their skills. Grey & Golden Grey Mullet too are visitors to the area and as the tide fills they make their way through the narrows into the estuary behind. Care must be taken as high tides can leave anglers cut off from the mainland.

As the estuary opens up it uncovers a vast expanse of mudflat behind the beach at low tide. This is known as the **Back Strand (G)** where lugworm are plentiful particularly to the south of the R685 road as it runs close to the dyke wall. Peeler and soft crab can also be collected around the stone and weed margins at the outlet from the marsh, below Lisselan.



Saleens

The popular holiday town of Tramore, some 10km south of Waterford City, sits at the western end of the 4km long **Tramore Strand (21)**. During the fine days of summer, the beach attracts hordes of holiday makers, making fishing totally impossible. After dark, however, when the tourists have adjourned to the cafes and bars the beach angler may find fishing of a very high calibre in the surf, for bass to 6.5kg and flounder to 1.3kg. In periods of high pressure, when the sea is becalmed, painted ray to 5.8kg, dogfish to 1.4kg, and dabs to .45kg can be taken by those anglers capable of casting baits up to 130 metres off the beach. The summer is not the only time of year for anglers to visit Tramore Strand, because during the winter from October to February, there are no problems with swimmers and sun worshippers, and numerous big bass have been recorded by anglers prepared to put in the time and effort to catch them. Codling and whiting are also possible, at night, during these colder months. Crab, sandeel, ragworm and mackerel strip are the best baits there and the most productive periods are the last hour of the ebb through the first half hour of the flood, and one hour either side of high water. There is a tackle shop on Main Street in the town.

Tides at Tramore are + 00.13 minutes on Cobh times.

The shore road to the south of the town runs parallel to the sea for 2kms before reaching a car park at **Newtown Cove (22)**. Between there and Newtown Head, some 2kms further south, there are a number of access points where spinning and plug fishing is possible in summer for mackerel, pollack, occasional garfish and bass. Float fishing will produce ballan and corkwing wrasse and coalfish. This area should never be approached in easterly winds which cause waves to break on the shore or when rain is falling, as the rocks can become slippery and dangerous in these conditions. The local authority have erected notices advising anglers, that as a safety measure, fishing is not permitted at the bathing place.

On the headland stands three high concrete pillars. These were erected by Lloyds of London in 1823 as navigational aids to warn vessels away from the rocks and shallows of Tramore Bay. Standing on the central pillar is a statue dressed in Georgian seafarers costume and known as the 'Metal Man'. Local legend has it that on nights of high winds and rough seas the Metal Man can be heard warning shipping away from the treacherous shore beneath by calling out;

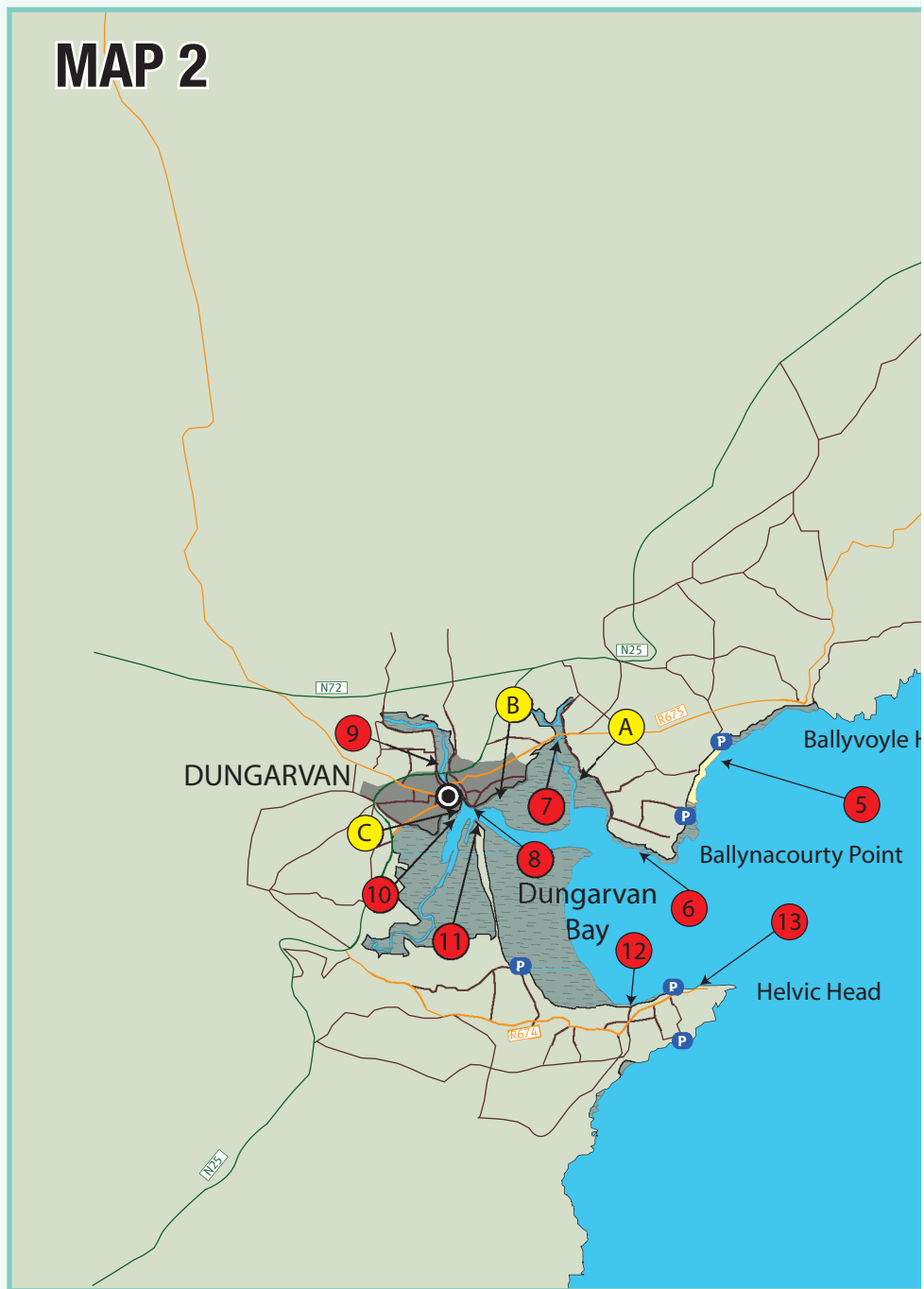
"Keep out, keep out, good ships from me,..... For I am the rock of misery".

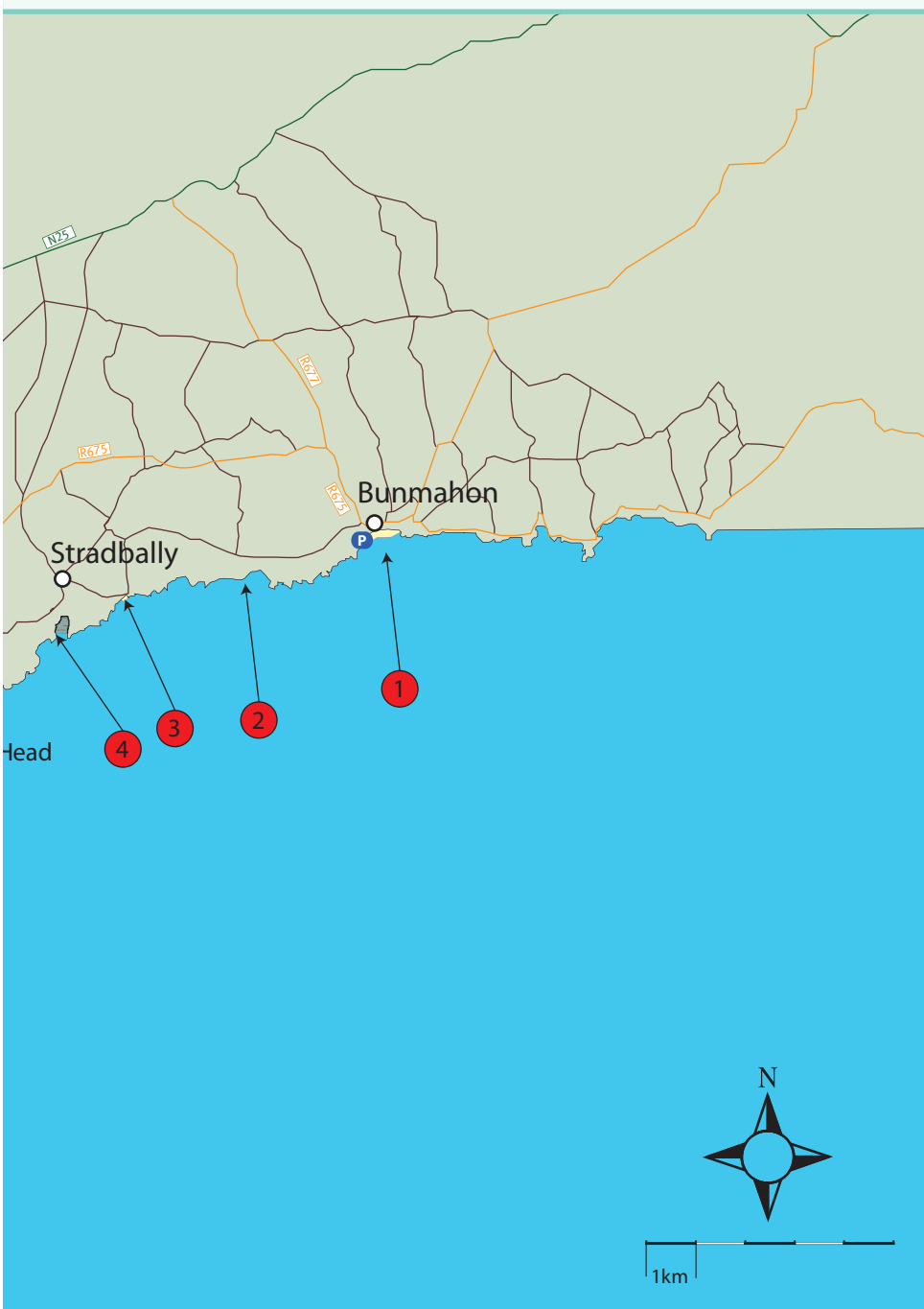
Boat anglers take note!

About 4km west of Tramore on the R675 road there is a sharp turn to the left after Fennor Bridge and a narrow road runs for 2kms down to the very pretty cove at **Kilfarrasy (23)**. The Kilfarrasy Stream crosses the beach there and when surf is running the combination of freshwater and churning wave acts as a magnet for flounders and bass. In calmer conditions, particularly at night, thornback ray, dogfish and even the occasional conger are possible. This is a popular venue with local anglers who hold regular club competitions there. The beach at **Annestown (24)** is situated where the R675 road from the east meets the coast and provides similar conditions and fishing to Kilfarrasy. At the western end of the beach, where the Annestown Stream enters the sea, mullet will occasionally be taken on small ragworm baits. Bottom fishing from the middle of the beach, at high water will produce bass to over 5.5kg, flounder, dogfish and thornback ray. On the south western side of Annestown is **Dunbrattin Head (25)** where bottom fishing close to the rock will yield conger, dogfish and huss particularly at night while float fishing and spinning accounts for wrasse and pollack. Boat fishing off the Head yields ray, dabs, plaice, gurnard, dogfish, pollack, codling and mackerel in season.



MAP 2





Chapter 2 (Map 2)

Bunmahon to Helvic

Just to the west of the junction of the R661 and R675 roads, is the seaside village of **Bunmahon (1)**. In the mid 1800's this was the centre of a thriving copper mining industry. Today, however, the beautiful blue flag listed beach, shows little evidence of its industrial past and is instead a major attraction for surfers and anglers alike. Beach fishing in spring and autumn is good for bass to 4.5kg, and flounder to 1.4kg with the obvious hotspot being where the Mahon River enters the sea. In calm spells, particularly on warm summer nights, thornback ray to over 9kg, plaice to 1.4kg and dogfish to 1.5kg have also been recorded, so there is plenty to aim at. Best baits are crab, sandeel, ragworm and mackerel strip. Boat fishing in the area will produce ray, plaice, pollack, codling, conger, ling, pouting and dab. About 3km west of Bunmahon on the narrow coast road a small lane runs down to the sheltered cove at **Ballydwan (2)** where fishing amongst the rocky outcrops in spring and autumn will produce bass and flounder. Dogfish and occasional ray are available from June to September particularly when high water and darkness coincide. Best baits are crab and sandeel, cast well out from the beach.

The coast road dips close to the sea at **Ballyvooney Bridge (3)** where the beach is a mixture of sand and rock. Fishing there is conducted mainly on night tides with bass, flounder, dogfish and coalfish all possible. The coast road turns sharply inland from there towards Stradbally village and about a kilometre south of there is **Stradbally Cove (4)** where bass, dogfish and flounder can be taken from the beach in moderate surf. Low water and the first two hours of a flooding tide, is the favoured period, particularly when this coincides with dusk.

There are several access points off the R675 road to the 2km long, south east facing, **Clonea Strand (5)** which is a popular beach with holidaymakers during the summer.

In fine weather, the beach becomes crowded, and anglers will find little room for manoeuvre, so fishing becomes a nocturnal activity. At the northern end close to Ballyvoyle Head, the beach is generally rocky with some sandy patches. Fishing is best around high water when spinning, with lures and plugs, fly fishing with streamer flies, or float fishing with sandeel or crab baits will pay dividends for bass and pollack. To the south, the rest of beach is mainly of fine clean sand, and in southerly or south easterly winds a surf will rise. Bass and flounder are the main target species, but dab, dogfish and even occasional ray have also been taken.

Spinning krill or wedge type lures and surface plugs from the rocks around the lighthouse and below the golf course to the west of **Ballinacourty Point (6)** will yield bass, pollack and mackerel (in season). Bottom fishing from the pier will produce bass, flounder and dogfish, and the best time is from half tide on the flood, through high water, to the first hour of the ebb. There is a slipway at Ballynacourty which can be accessed at most stages of the tide, but it is advisable to use a four wheel drive vehicle to tow the boat out on to the beach at extreme spring tide lows. Parking is available in the general area but care should be taken to avoid obstructing access to nearby premises.

North of Ballynacourty Pier, lugworm can be dug on the eastern banks of the **Glendine River (A)** and crab gathered under the weed and around the rocks.

At low tide, several pools are formed in the Glendine River to the north of the road bridge at **Barnawee (7)**. Bottom fishing there, with crab baits, on the early flood tide, will attract flounder. Spinning or plug fishing around high water will turn up bass and occasional seatrout, while fly fishing for the latter species could also pay dividends.

Mullet are numerous and ground baiting at low tide with mashed bread and sardine, or similar tinned fish in oil (not tomato sauce!) should keep them interested enough to take float fished or free lined baits as the water rises on the flood.

Below the old priory on the eastern shore of the Colligan River at **Abbeyside (8)** spinning and plug fishing for bass can be carried out over the last few hours of the flood tide and through high water. Bottom fishing is also productive, particularly with crab baits for flounder and eels from the late ebb, through low water and on the first hour of the flood tide. There is a slipway at Abbeyside which is only accessible on the hours around high water. Boats launched there will have to negotiate the channel to Ballinacourty and the use of an up to date navigational chart is essential. The sandbanks in the estuary are also prone to movement, so local advice should be sought. The parking of vehicles may also be restricted when the town car parks are full.

On **Spit Bank (B)**, lugworm can be dug on the sandy patches and crab collected under the weed and between the rocks south and east of the priory.

The town of **Dungarvan (9)** which stands on the western shore of the River Colligan dates back to around the seventh century when Saint Garbhan founded a church there. The town which is the administrative capital of County Waterford has a population of around 8,000 people and has been recognised as a sea angling centre for over sixty years. There is a vast array of angler friendly accommodation locally, and several well stocked tackle shops carry

a full gamut of equipment and bait. Charter boats ply for hire from April to September and there is quality fishing to satisfy even the most discriminating of anglers, whether they wish to drift for shark, bottom fish over reefs or sand for pollack and cod or anchor on a wreck for conger and ling.

Some of the more notable catches, over the years, have included blue shark of 57.92kg, porbeagle shark of 113.4kg, angler fish of 19.96kg, ballan wrasse of 2.53kg, pollack of 5.63kg, conger of 21.32kg, turbot of 9.53kg, hake 5.8kg and stone basse of 4.76kg.

The voluntary CFB shark tagging programme has been in operation at Dungarvan virtually since its inception, and over the years, many fish have been tagged and released there. One fish worth mention was a blue shark which had been tagged off Dungarvan and recaptured in mid Atlantic halfway between the Cape Verde Islands off Africa and the Leeward Islands in the Western Caribbean. This fish had travelled a minimum of 3,170 kilometres and had been at liberty for 360 days.

Small boat fishing in the Harbour and Bay can be very productive with the main species being bass, flounder, plaice, ray and dogfish. On spring tides in late summer and early autumn, large numbers of bass often congregate in the narrow channels feeding heavily on sandeel. These “shoaling” bass offer superb sport on light tackle, particularly when live sandeel is free lined or float fished in the tideway. Dawn or dusk are particularly exciting times to fish there.

Above the old Railway Bridge which is between the R675 and N25 ring road, there is fishing in the main channel of the Colligan River, where crab baits, will produce flounder to over 1.36kg. The best flounder fishing has traditionally been found in mid winter, usually on the last hour of the ebbing tide, through the low water period and on to the first two hours of the flood. Bass are also available in the same general area in spring and autumn and will fall to plugs and spinners. Mullet are common in summer and the patient angler who is willing to ground bait through, possibly two or three tides, should be richly rewarded. Indeed fish of over 2.70kg are possible. South of the quays the shore road leads west and away from the town. Below the **Swimming Pool (10)** there is a channel which fishes best on a flooding tide for bass and flounder. Fish to over the specimen size for both species have been recorded there. The area of foreshore along the **Sea Wall (C)** adjacent to the swimming pool is also a prime bait gathering area at low tide. In spring and early summer, peeler and soft crab are common under the weed along this stretch, and some lugworm can also be dug there.

3km south of the town on the N25, after the main road crosses the River Brickey, there is a sharp turn to the east which runs to the south of Dungarvan



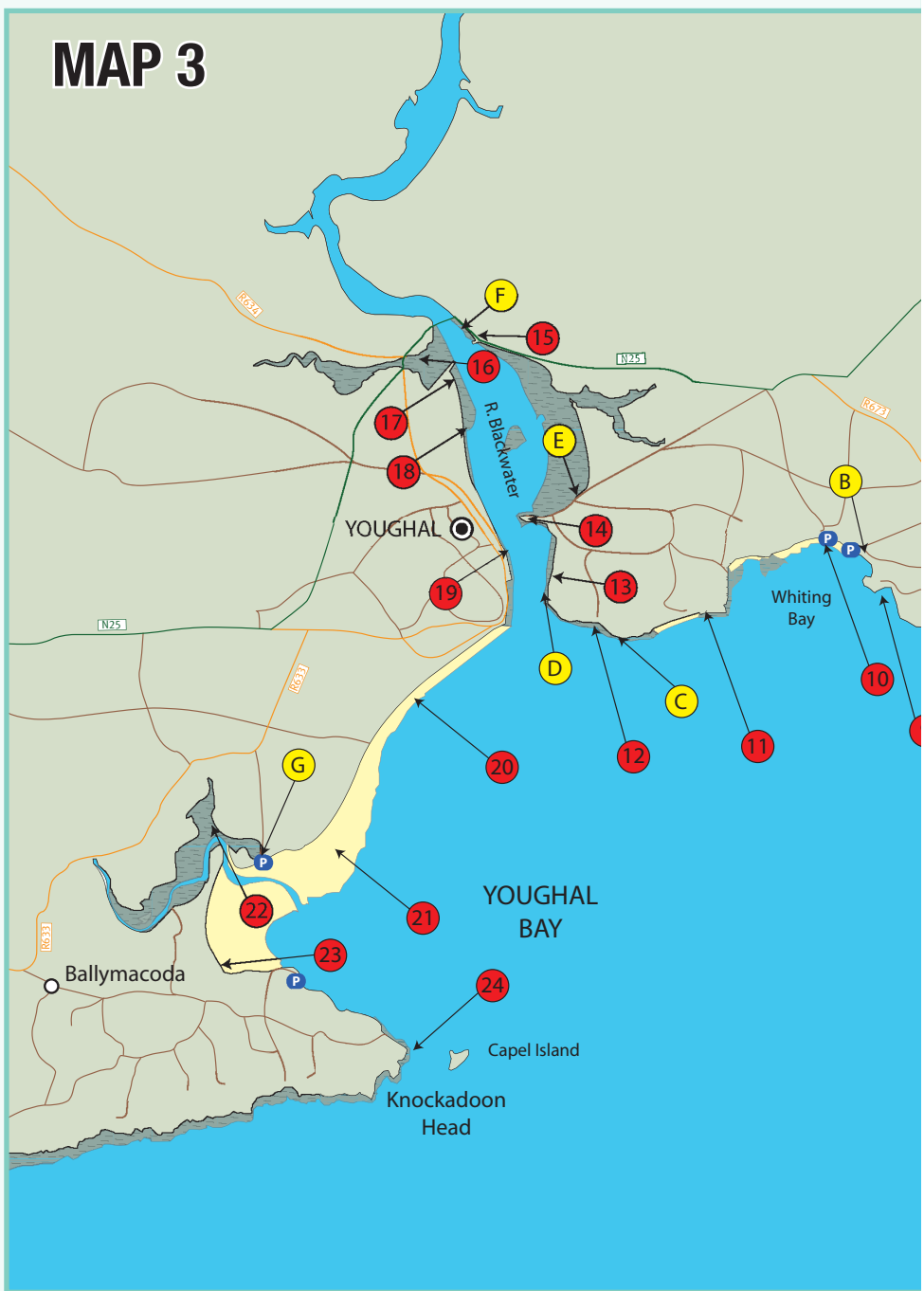
Dungarvan

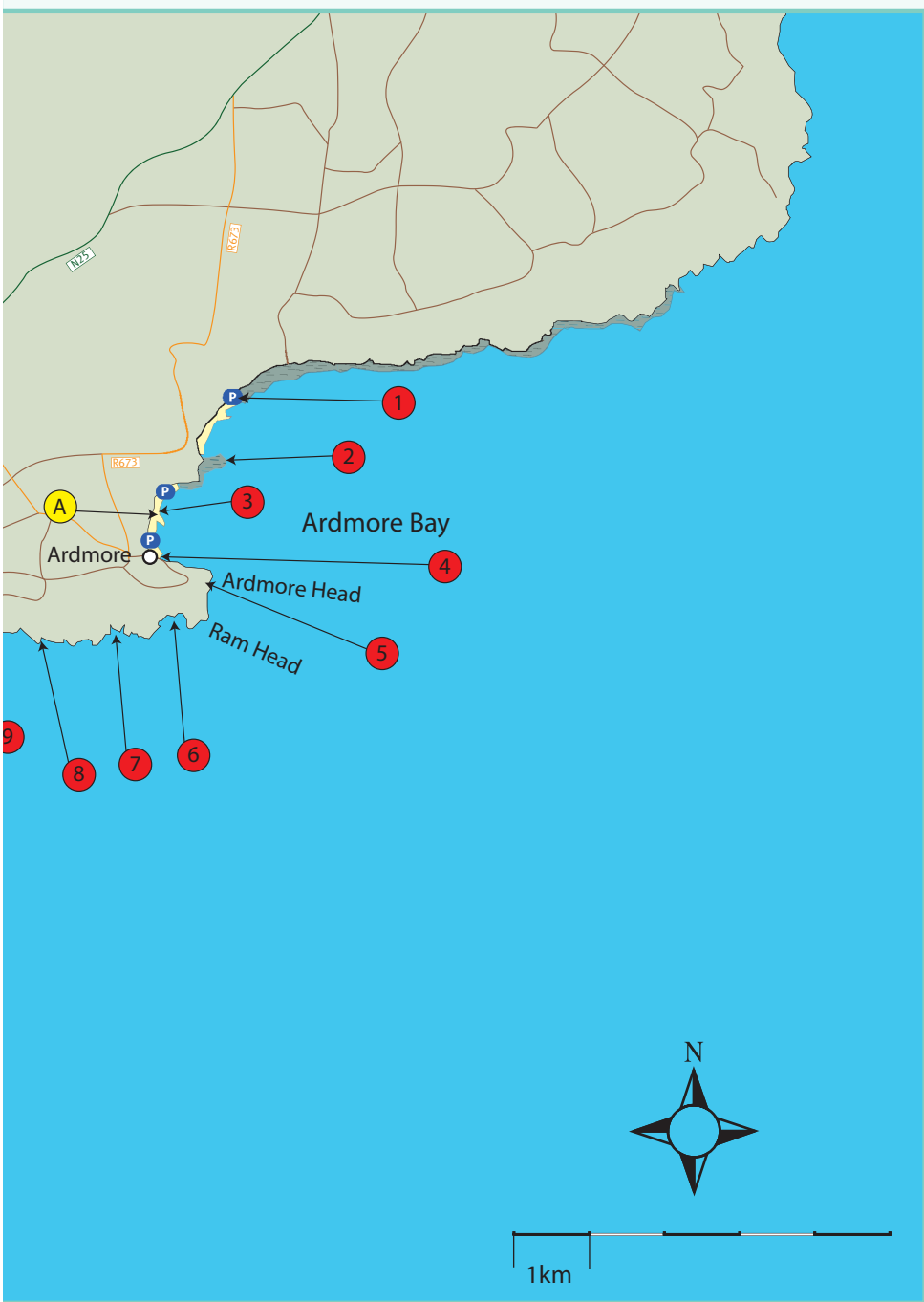
Bay and leads to the small Gaeltacht or “Irish speaking” enclave of An Rinn (Ring). About halfway along the southern shore the 3km long, **Cunnigar Spit (11)** projects north into Dungarvan Bay. This narrow piece of land shelters the mudflats along the banks of the River Brickey as it winds its way to sea. At the point of the spit the Colligan and Brickey Rivers meet, and bottom fishing there with crab baits, yields bass, flounder, golden grey mullet and gilthead bream to specimen size. Spinning with wedge spoons or plugs also accounts for numbers of bass at times. The most productive period is the last two hours of a flooding tide and an hour into the ebb.

East of the Ballynagaul is the busy harbour at **Helvic (12)** where there is top class pier fishing for mullet and conger. From the main pier, small fish baits will attract grey mullet of over 3kg as they scavenge among the discarded carcasses from the commercial trawlers. Conger to over 22kg, have been recorded from both piers, with the best fishing always after dark on a flooding tide. Distance casting from the main pier has also produced ray and dogfish on crab and mackerel baits. East of the harbour is **Helvic Head (13)**, which protects the southern corner of Dungarvan Bay. From there spinning accounts for mackerel (in season) pollack and occasional garfish while float fishing produces ballan wrasse to over specimen size of 2.15kg

Tides at Dungarvan Bay are + 00.12 minutes on Cobh times.

MAP 3





Chapter 3, Map 3

Mine Head to Knockadoon Pier.

Ballyquinn Strand (1) which is about 8kms west of Mine Head has a huge reputation for turning up Irish Record and Specimen fish. Some notable captures over the years have included painted ray of over 5kg, plaice over 3kg, black sole of 1.9kg, lesser spotted dogfish of 1.62kg and flounder of 1.59kg. Thornback ray, bass and dabs can also be expected there. A flooding tide into darkness is the best period particularly from June to September, when crab, sandeel, mackerel and ragworm baits will all take fish.

Between Ballyquinn and Ardmore Bay to the south, is an area of low rock and boulder known as the **Black Rocks (2)** where plug fishing and spinning has yielded bass to almost 5kg, pollack to over 3kg and mackerel in summer. Bottom fishing produces dogfish and occasional conger.

Ardmore Beach (3) is popular with swimmers and windsurfers for much of the year. The beach fishes best during the hours of darkness so it is unlikely that anglers will be disturbed by either type of sporting enthusiast. As on Ballyquinn the species available include painted and thornback ray, plaice, flounder and sole. The successful baits are also similar. Lugworm can be dug on the beach just north of the **Car Park (A)**

Small boats can be launched from the slipway at **Ardmore Pier (4)** to fish in depths up to 40metres. Cod of over 11kg are a fairly regular occurrence over mixed ground in the area as are whiting, pouting and ray. There are several wrecks within easy striking distance of Ardmore including the 1330 ton steamer “Kenmare” which went down south of Ram Head in 1915 and the “Comita” of Glasgow which sank east of Ram Head in 1917 following a collision with a mine. Conger, ling, and pollack can all be expected over local wreck sites with the very real possibility of a specimen fish being taken.

Bottom fishing from the pier has produced bass, sole, plaice, ray and dogfish. Spinning has accounted for seatrout and mackerel, while mullet are also possible on float fished or free lined baits.

Spinning and float fishing from the rocks on **Ardmore Head (5)** will produce pollack, mackerel (in season), ballan and corkwing wrasse, seatrout and occasional garfish. On the southern side of Rams Head there are a number of vantage points where rock fishing is available. The best marks are **Fr. O'Donnell's Well (6)**, **Fallawaderra (7)** and **Fall an Iarann (8)**. All these sites produce pollack and mackerel while spinning, wrasse on float fishing tackle using crab or ragworm baits, and occasional conger on bottom fished baits of squid or mackerel. As the rocky ground of Rams Head begins to give way to sand at **Goat Island (9)** so the fishing also changes. Bottom fishing produces



bass, dab, flounder, dogfish and coalfish while spinning at high tide yields mackerel (in season) and occasional seatrout.

From the R673 at Sluggera Cross Roads a narrow road runs south west to a car park at **Ballynamona (B)** where there is excellent digging for lugworm, on the beach 500 metres to the left. Crab can also be collected under weed and around the base of rocks. The beach at **Whiting Bay (10)** faces almost due south and takes on surf conditions when the wind is in that quarter. There is a car park adjoining the beach which is situated virtually midway along. Fishing can be carried out from either side of the car park, but to the west, the beach is cleaner and contains less stone and weed. Numerous specimen fish have been taken there including plaice of almost 2.85kg and a one time Irish Record bass of 7.72kgs! Sandeel, crab and ragworm are the best baits.

Sheltered between Cabin Point in the east and Blackball Head in the west is **Calliso Bay (11)**, which is popular as a surf fishing venue. Although the beach is less than a kilometre in length it throws up a wide range of species annually. Surf fishing with crab or sandeel baits, over sand, produces bass, flounder and dogfish. Bottom fishing over mixed sand and rock at the eastern end yields conger, wrasse and rockling while spinning in late summer and autumn accounts for bass and seatrout.

Mangan's Cove (12) lies between Blackball Head and East Point at the eastern entrance to the Blackwater River Estuary. Bottom fishing over mixed ground



yields bass, ray and dogfish on crab, sandeel and ragworm baits in summer. Lugworm and crab are the best baits for flounder and codling in autumn and winter. Crab can also be collected there at **(C)** in spring and early summer. As the coastline swings north into the Blackwater estuary, the shore becomes rugged and weed covered. At first glance there may appear to be little prospect for shore angling but the rough ground gives way to mud and sand at about 50 metres. From East Point to **Monatrae House (13)**, casts into the channel of 80 to 120 metres, will produce bass, dogfish and occasional plaice and ray in summer and flounder, codling and eels in autumn and winter. Crab can be collected along the foreshore at **(D)**.

A short distance north of Monatrae House is **Ferry Point (14)** which is a spit of land running at right angles to the main shore and almost dissecting the Blackwater Estuary, creating a narrows along the eastern shore. This has traditionally been one of the most consistently prolific shore angling locations on the south coast. The main beach is of steep shingle which fishes best from half way up the flood tide, through high water and two hours into the ebb. Codling and flounder are the main target fish in winter and spring, with bass, plaice and dogfish showing in summer. Bottom fishing from the point for an hour at slack water, at low tide, can also provide excellent flounder fishing with fish to over 1.36kg possible. Spinning into the fast water of the narrows, also accounts for seatrout and mackerel at high water. Conger are also commonly taken on night tides at the angle of the beach close to the rocks, below the

Monatrae House access. The slipway at Ferry Point is accessible at all stages of the tide, but care must be taken if using a car to launch or recover, as this area can be covered in a thin film of weed making for very slippery conditions. When strong winds are blowing downriver, care should also be exercised, to avoid boats being pushed on to the stony beach adjoining the slipway.

North of Ferry Point is a large area of estuarine mud and sand and above the road at **Newtown (E)** lugworm are plentiful and can be dug with comparative ease. Travelling along the main N25 from the east, and about half a kilometre before crossing the main road bridge, on a sharp bend, is the remains of the **Old Bridge (15)**. Bottom fishing from there two hours either side of high water will yield flounder, bass, and codling on crab and worm baits while spinning will account for small pollack. Between the old bridge and new **Youghal Bridge (F)**, soft and peeler crab can be collected at low tide in spring and early summer. In good years there may be a second “peel” in July or August.

As the River Blackwater is crossed so one moves from County Waterford into County Cork and on the western shore only a few hundred metres beyond the bridge, and before the N25 byass the **Tourig River (16)** flows below Rincrew Bridge and into the main Blackwater channel. Spinning at high water produces bass and seatrout, while bottom fishing turns up flounder and eels. To the south of the Tourig River, the western end of the old road once made its Cork landfall. Immediately to the south is an old **Dyke Wall (17)** which protects a large area of marsh, known as the Youghal Mudlands from high tides. This runs south to the old **Carpet Factory Pier (18)**. There is first class fishing on this stretch for flounder, codling, plaice and bass. Crab is by far the best bait while bottom fishing although spinning at several spots along the wall and pier is also worth trying for bass.

The sea side town of **Youghal (19)** from the ancient Irish “Eochail” meaning “yew wood”, was probably first settled by early Christians and developed into a strategically important site with the arrival of the Vikings in the 9th century. The town’s most famous inhabitant was Sir Walter Raleigh who was mayor in 1588/9 and resided at the 15th century “Myrtle Grove”.

In 1956 film director John Houston used Youghal as the main location for the filming of Herman Melville’s classic “Moby Dick” which was a huge success at the box office and is regarded locally as being the most important shot in the arm for tourism to the town.

An angling charter boat operates from the town quays and specialises in shark, reef and wreck fishing. Boat fishing off Youghal has produced many specimen fish, including red bream 2.49kg, coalfish 9.25kg, conger 23kg, lesser spotted dogfish 1.70kg, grey gurnard 1.13kg, ling 17.24kg, blue shark 15.87kg, cod 13.04kg, pollack 6.8kg, thornback ray 9.30kg, plaice 2.34kg. Some of the better fishing marks are a remarkably short run from the pier

which has obvious advantages for small boat enthusiasts. The inshore fishing in Youghal Bay is of a very high standard particularly for bass, ray, conger, flounder, codling, plaice, dab, and dogfish. Shore fishing from the quays and Green Park Corner (opposite Walter Raleigh Hotel) is best on a flooding tide for flounder, bass, codling, plaice, conger and dogfish. In mid summer night tides are generally most productive and crab, sandeel, mackerel and ragworm are the best baits. There is a tackle shop in South Main street in the town.

The 5km long, south east facing **Youghal or Redbarn Strand (20)** is a popular, shore fishing and tournament stretch which features a number of events every year. This is also a favoured beach with day trippers and tourists so fishing is mainly restricted to off peak holiday periods or on night tides when relative peace and tranquillity prevail. The beach is best fished on a flood tide and catches tend to peak when the water is well aerated by a rolling surf. Bass and flounder are the main quarry but match anglers enjoy the annual inshore migration of coalfish from October to December. Crab and lugworm are the most popular baits there.

At **Pillmore Strand (21)** on the northern side of the entrance to the Womanagh River estuary, a flooding tide will yield bass, flounder and occasional plaice, with codling showing in winter. Spinning in the channel will also occasionally result in seatrout. Below the **Pillmore Car Park (G)** lugworm are plentiful on the channel banks and can be dug easily.

Inside **Pillmore Estuary (22)** below the R633 road, spinning in the channel on a flood tide will produce bass and seatrout. Bass to 4.5kg and flounder to 1.40kg will also fall to bottom fished crab baits. Spring tides can be difficult to fish at Pillmore due to the inordinate amount of floating weed that is carried along with them. This can be very frustrating as cast after cast is swept away up tide by heavy clumps of weed which engulf the terminal tackle on every cast. This can also lead to high losses of tackle, so tides like this should be avoided. On the southern side of the estuary at **Ballymacoda (23)**, bass and flatfish arrive for a short period of an hour or so around high water and can be caught on crab or worm baits. Night tides are generally best there. About 5km east of Ballymacoda village is **Knockadoon Pier (24)** where spinning at high tide is successful for pollack and mackerel (in season). Float fishing produces mullet but prior ground baiting will afford best chances of success.

Dogfish, ballan and corkwing wrasse are also common around the pier as are a whole community of mini species including tompot blenny and black goby.

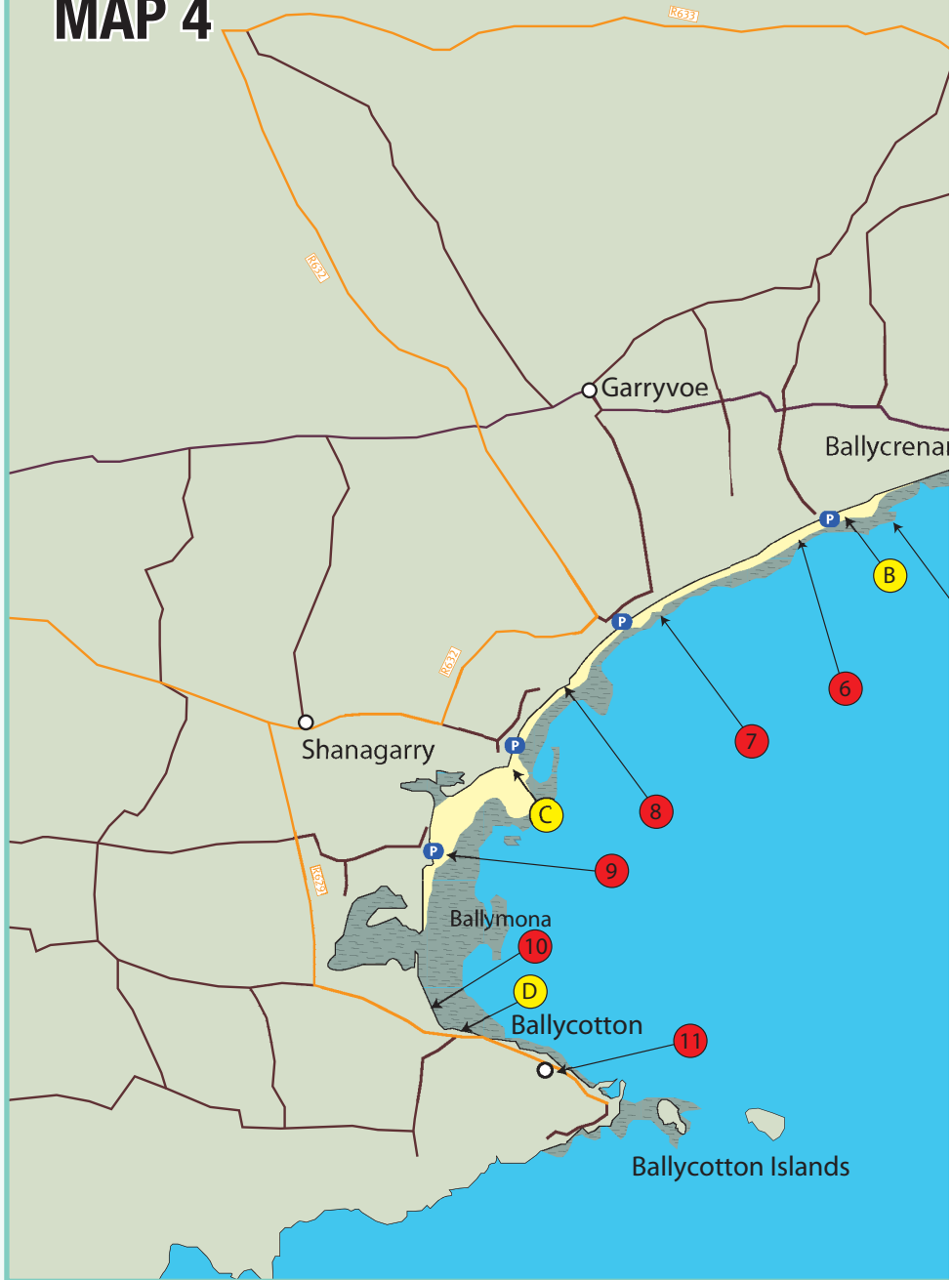
Small boat fishing locally around Capel Island is for codling, wrasse, pollack, conger, coalfish, with baited feather lures offering best opportunities.

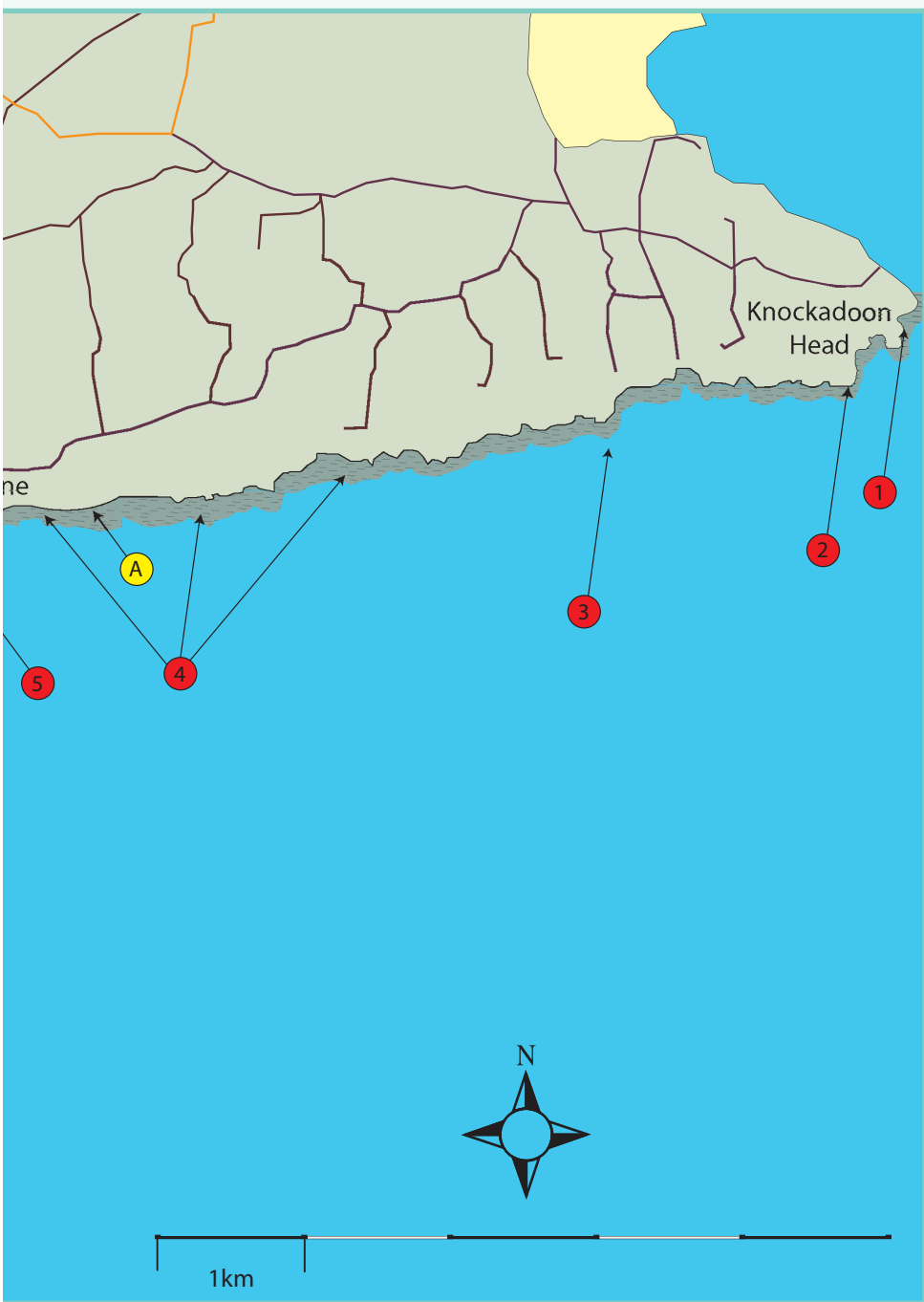
Tides at Youghal are +00.14 minutes on Cobh times.



Blackwater Estuary

MAP 4





Chapter 4, Map 4

Knockadoon Head to Ballycotton

There is a track across the headland that leads down to the fishing mark on **Knockadoon Head (1)** where there is spinning and float fishing for pollack, wrasse, mackerel and mullet. Bottom fishing will yield conger and rockling.

On the southern corner of Knockadoon Head a narrow road runs towards an **Old Signal Tower (2)**. The ground below the tower is of weed and rock, interspersed by a number of sandy patches, over which spinning and float fishing can be carried out for pollack, mackerel and wrasse. Bottom fishing will produce conger, cod and coalfish.

The rocks at **Ballymakeragh (3)**, particularly on the eastern side of the small headland, offer several productive vantage points for wrasse, dogfish, rockling and bass in summer. Codling and coalfish can also be taken there in late autumn. The best baits are crab, lugworm, mackerel and squid.

The beach at **Ballycrenane (4)** is over 1km in length and due to the varied nature of the inshore seabed along the stretch, offers some very interesting beach fishing.

At the eastern end, fishing is influenced by the rock, weed and sand mixture, so rough ground species such as, coalfish, rockling, conger, ballan and corkwing wrasse can be expected. Bass can also be taken on plugs or spinning tackle at high water in spring and summer, while codling usually turn up to bottom fished baits, in autumn and winter. As one moves west, so the beach becomes cleaner, and is made up mainly of sand. When surf is running, bass and flounder can be expected in autumn and codling in winter. In the calmer summer conditions, the species list is enhanced by dabs, plaice, thornback ray, painted ray and dogfish. Lugworms are plentiful in the sand on the beach at **(A)** and can be dug easily. Sandeel can also be dug up in summer, particularly at low tide on springs.

Bottom fishing from the tumble of rocks at the seaward end of **Ballinwillling Reef (5)** produces dogfish, rockling, flounder and bass. Casting out over sand gives best results. To the left of the **Car Park (B)** peeler and soft crab can be collected in summer. Bottom fishing in front of the car park on **Ballinwillling Strand (6)** will return bass, flounder, conger and coalfish. Bass and flounder are also probable while fishing between the stream and the outflow from the marsh with codling also possible in autumn. The top baits on this stretch are crab, lugworm and mackerel.



Garryvoe Strand (7) is one of the best known shore fishing locations in the Southern Region, and has an awesome reputation for its consistent specimen fish returns. Several bass and painted ray over the specimen weight of 4.5kg are captured, almost annually while specimen flounder to over 1.36kg and dogfish of 1.58kg have also been taken.

Over the years many shore angling tournaments have been staged, ranging from local club competitions to full blown inter-provincial or international matches and on more than one occasion a winning bag in excess of 45kgs has been recorded! Lugworm, squid, crab and mackerel are the best baits on Garryvoe.

Between the car parks at Garryvoe and Shanagarry the beach is known as **Ardnahinch (8)** where the fishing is of similar quality to the shore to the east. A large number of specimen fish have been taken there including an Irish Record painted ray of 7.81kg. Bottom fishing will also produce turbot, thornback ray, flounder, conger, codling and bass. Night tides are generally more productive than daylight ones, particularly in mid summer. Lugworm can be dug on the beach close to the **Shanagarry Car Park (C)**.

Where the Bay swings to the south at **Ballynamona (9)** a large area of lagoon and wetland opens up behind the beach and extends all the way back to the R629 road. This is not only a good fishing place but it is also an ornithological site of international significance as it is the annual stopping off point for many rare gulls and waders.

Anglers visiting the area in winter should be aware of this and try not to disturb the many roosting birds in the vicinity.

From the beach at the entrance to the lagoon, surf fishing, two hours either side of high water will produce bass, flounder and codling. Spinning will also occasionally account for seatrout.

On the western side of the channel, as the R629 begins to swing south east and about 1km before Ballycotton, a small lane runs down to the beach at **Silver Strand (10)**. At the southern end near the rocky ground, congers of over 9kg have been taken. Bass are fairly common on a flood tide over sand and specimen flounder of over 1.30kg have also been recorded there.

The village of **Ballycotton (11)** boasts the longest sea angling history in the entire country. It was there in the early 1900's that the "Dreadnaughts", a group of anglers from the London based Explorer's Club first set up a base, and their exploits over the early years of the century has become the stuff of angling legend. No fewer than three of the oldest records on the Irish list



continue to survive there. They are pollack of 19lbs 3ozs (8.72kg) from 1904, common skate of 221 lbs (100.70kg) from 1913 and cod of 42lbs (19.05kg) from 1921. As the years rolled by, further records were also set up only to be beaten elsewhere, but at the time of writing three survive; they are one boat caught record for mackerel of 1.87kg in 1979, and two shore caught records for plaice of 3.73kg in 1982 and black sole of 2.87kg in 1986. Charter boats operate annually from May to the end of September and specialise in reef and shark fishing. Boat anglers have a very wide range of species to aim for, including spur dog to 7.20kg, garfish to 1.20kg, hake to 6.38kg, ling to 13.38kg, pouting to 1.64kg, thornback ray to 11.11kg, cuckoo ray to 2.25kg, blue shark to 68.04kg, and whiting to 1.79kg. Two species above all others seem to predominate at Ballycotton; pollack and conger. Although they seldom grow over the specimen weight for either species (5.44kg for pollack and 18kgs for conger), the sheer numbers available on the local reefs, almost guarantees a good days sport, with the possible exception of mid winter.

Shore anglers too will find the harbour area to be a top class fishing location as the shore caught records above, both came from the breakwater wall. Mullet are common in the summer months and fish of over 3kg have been caught on small float fished fish strips.

Crab can be collected along the shore below the Old Schoolhouse **(D)** on the R629 road.

Spring tides at Ballycotton are +00.11 minutes on Cobh times.

The Southern Regional Fisheries Board strongly advises shore anglers to wear a lifejacket at all times, particularly on exposed rock platforms. It should also be noted that the law in Ireland requires all users of small craft to wear a lifejacket while on board. The use of marine band radio (VHF) is also strongly recommended as the use of mobile phones at sea is not compatible with the Irish Coastguard and other emergency services. It is also essential that someone on shore should be informed of the intended fishing location and the estimated time of return. This applies for both shore and boat fishing.



Notes

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