

Thanks for checking out this eBook!

The following pages contain articles taken directly from the membership side of the My Fishing Cape Cod blog.

Hopefully you'll find the following pages helpful. At the least, I hope you this eBook succeeds as a good pre-stripped bass fishing season read.

Without a doubt Cape Cod is a great place to go fishing for striped bass. There are also a ton of other fish species to pursue like bluefish and Bluefin tuna. Unfortunately catching a nice fish off Cape Cod is not always simple and easy-especially for folks not terribly familiar with the area.

This quick and handy guide contains inside information geared towards getting your 2013 striped bass season started off on the right foot. I think we have a lot to look forward to this year. If you are hoping for a cow striper, then the live bait strategies in this eBook should help.

If you have any questions please don't hesitate to ask. Hopefully you'll find some value in the following pages, and if not then that is A-OK too.

Have a great 2013 fishing season and maybe I'll see you on the water!

Take care,

Ryan

How to Quickly Boost your Odds of a Big Bass by Using Live Bait

Perhaps you are not able to fish Cape Cod 7 days a week, and you are looking to maximize the short windows of time you do get to fish the Cape.

Most people who enjoy fishing the Cape, only get a few trips in each summer. These people are eager to make the most of their short windows of fishing opportunity. They want to make a memory for their kids, and put a fish or two on the grille for dinner.

These are Dads and Moms who want to have a nice, safe day on the water and enjoy the excitement and satisfaction of catching a big striped bass.

Does this sound familiar to you? Odds are it does. Most of us are not able to spend as much time fishing the Cape as we would like. Life, kids, the career-you name it and it will get in the way of fishing.

The good news is that there are certain Cape fishing techniques that naturally provide less experienced anglers and folks who can't be on the water 7 days a week – with a better than normal chance at hooking up with a big bass. Said another way, by fishing the Cape with live bait, you will in most cases improve your odds of success – as opposed to fishing with the fake stuff.

In essence, live bait does all the work for you. You do not have to be an expert caster or jigger, you just let the bait swim out and wait for it to be gobbled up by a fish.

This is why I choose live bait for the majority of my Cape fishing charters aboard the Miss Loretta. Often times I have folks with me who have never before fished Cape Cod for striped bass. Live bait is the perfect choice in these scenarios.

In the below video I was fishing with my Mom, my uncle and my cousins. For my cousins this was their first time ever fishing the Cape for striped bass.

[Click here to view](#)

So how can you make the most of those precious few Cape Cod fishing trips next season?

That is the goal of this post-to show you how to find and use live bait to put that one big fish of the summer in your boat.

Now I cannot guarantee that these following tips will result in you catching the fish of your dreams. You still have to put some time and energy in.

But I can guarantee that these tips will quickly shift the odds in your favor.

My Favorite 2 Types of Live Bait

Since I was a little kid I've had a blast catching striped bass using live eels and live mackerel. Both baits are relatively easy to acquire and stripers absolutely love them.



Live mackerel work best during the months of May and June off Cape Cod. They can be caught primarily in Cape Cod Bay but also on occasion around Nantucket, off the Back Side, off Provincetown and along the South

Shore. I could not recommend a better fishing technique than live lining mackerel during the spring. I have had many trips where bass refused live eels and variety of other baits, but would readily gobble up a live mack during this time of the season.

To learn how to find and catch live mackerel I would recommend giving this article a read.

[Click here to view article](#)

Live eels really begin producing for me once late July rolls around. From late July through the end of October, live eels have produced many big fish over the years. Fortunately for us fishermen, live eels are typically available at most bait and tackle shops throughout the Cape Cod region.

However during the 2012 season we did experience a live eel shortage which made eels very hard to find for a few weeks. Luckily eels can be kept alive for months in a properly aerated tank and for days in a moist environment. Eels don't even require water to breathe-however if you are storing eels I would recommend setting up a simple

bait tank with an aerator. Be sure to change the water once it gets cloudy.



Of course other types of bait are available on Cape Cod as well. Live scup and pogies are two other types of bait fish that commonly catch big strippers.

I personally do not have a bunch of experience fishing with live scup (although I may give it a try during 2013). Pogies may very well be the strippers' favorite food so I'd recommend live-lining them if you can find. Typically I will use a gill-net to catch pogies which requires some added effort.

If you'd like to learn more about catching pogies using a gill-net I would recommend reading this blog post.

[Click here to view the post](#)

Live Bait Gear

To keep things simple I am going to refer to 2 separate methods for fishing live bait.

The first method is for fishing calm water and the second is for fishing in channels and areas with a lot of current.

Method #1

For fishing opens bays, harbors, beach fronts and estuaries with little or no current I recommend using a 6-7 foot medium action spinning rod. A good reel for me has been the Penn 440 ssg. Load the reel up with 30-50 pound braided line and connect the braid to a 30-50 pound mono or fluorocarbon leader using a [Slim Beauty knot](#). I would highly recommend using a size 5/0 to 7/0 circle hook.

The Penn 44ssg is a good all around reel.



I would recommend not using any weight in these situations as often times the fish will be suspended and not holding tight to the bottom. If the wind is causing your boat to drift at extreme speeds then consider adding a small rubber core sinker to your leader to help get the bait down.

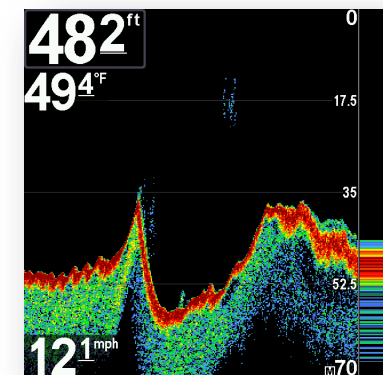
Once you locate the fishing using your sonar or by finding birds working/fish breaking, put the boat in neutral and drift through the area with the lines out. Allow your baits to swim away from the boat a good 20-40 yards and keep the bail open. Keep your finger on the line and when you feel a take allow the line to go. Count to 4 and then flip the bail. No need to set the hook –

allow the bass and the circle hook to do the hook-setting for you.

Method #2

This method works well in areas where there is a lot of current. Often times in these spots bass will hug the bottom as opposed to being spread throughout the water column.

In these types of areas bass will settle in behind a rip or piece of structure. What you want to do is get your live bait into these nooks and crannies. For example you want to get your bait into or around a hole, like the one in the below sonar image.



The method to use in these scenarios is called “Three-Waying.” The next article in this eBook covers this technique in great detail.

Presentation is Everything

Often times everyone in a fleet will be using the same bait. Why then do some folks hook up while others go without?

Generally the reason has to do with presentation. If you aren’t hooking up but everyone is around you, then your presentation could be to blame.

Here are some things to keep in mind with regards to proper presentation:

- 1) When hooking a mackerel, insert the hook into the mouth and up through a nostril. Make sure the mackerel can open his mouth – this will help the mackerel stay alive much longer while on the hook.
- 2) When hooking an eel always have a dry rag on hand. Hook the eel up under both jaws and out through an eye ball. Use a lob

type cast – quick snap type casts often result in the eel tearing from the hook.

3) Whenever possible do not use weight unless you are 3-waying. Bass will feel the added weight when they pick the bait up and spit the bait immediately.

4) When you get a bite, allow the fish to run for 4 seconds before flipping the bail over. Be sure that line comes smoothly off your reel. If the line gets hung up, or if someone touches the lines as it is ripping from the reel the bass will notice this and spit the bait.

5) When a fish takes the bait, point the rod tip in the direction of the fish. This will further reduce friction as you allow the fish to take line from the reel for 4 seconds. If you hold the rod tip high in the air, the bass will feel the friction of the line going through the rod guides and will spit the bait.

6) If you are going to put a rod in the rod holder, flip the bail. You will only frustrate yourself by leaving the bail or clicker on as

the bass will feel that something is wrong and end up spitting the bait.

7) If you catch a fish, do everything in your power to repeat everything exactly – most importantly try to repeat the exact same drift.

8) If you drift through a bass filled area but don’t get a bite, try changing the direction of your drift. For whatever reason we have often caught fishing drifting in one particular direction – but not in any other.

I hope this live bait run-down will help you catch a nice bass next season. As always feel free to contact me for any reason – I am happy to help!

Tight lines and take care,

Ryan

For more articles like this, [join as a MFCC member](#).

3 Waying Live Eels in Rips for Striped Bass



Striped bass fishing is pretty unique if you think about it. What other fish species can be targeted in open water, up tight to the beachfront, in rivers, harbors, bays, canals, estuaries, rips, rock piles, shoals, and drop-offs as well as in a variety of other interesting environments. Without a doubt

the striped bass is a very dynamic and opportunistic fish species.

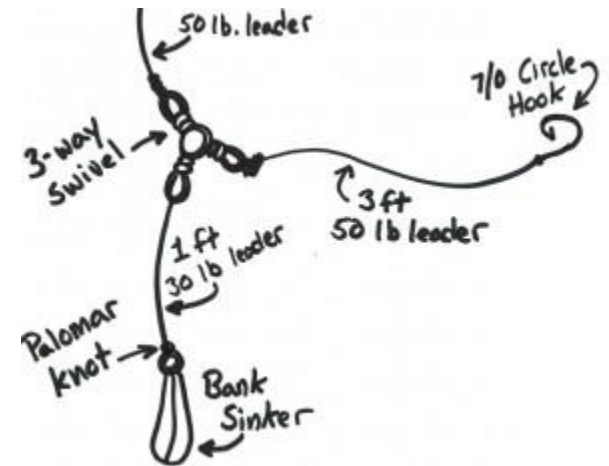
Maybe this helps to explain why so many striped bass flock to Cape Cod each season. The Cape has just about every striped bass environment imaginable. Stripers can be found from the boulder strewn coastline of the Elizabeth Islands to the tidal flats of Brewster and virtually everywhere in between.

Some of the most unique *Cape Cod striped bass fishing* environments are places with extraordinary current. In particular I am envisioning areas where a strong tidal flow is squeezed through harbor openings, creeks, channels and island passageways. These types of areas present an interesting feeding opportunity for stripers and often attract big *striped bass* like clockwork.

Of course there are never any guarantees when it comes to striped bass. However bass do seem to behave with a reasonable amount of predictability when they settle into rips and areas with intense current-

especially contrasted to how they behave in open water, structure-less zones.

In my experience the best fishing in current laden areas occurs around forms of structure. A deep hole or rocky peak jutting up from the ocean bottom is a good place to start. When the current is really cranking bass will settle down deep in a hole or behind a rocky peak. Picture it like a pedestrian using a building to block a stiff breeze. The stripers successfully get out of the current, and can still keep a keen eye out for any bait that may be tumbling by in the current.



3 way swivels come in super handy when fishing current laden areas.

Usually the key for fishing these types of spots is to get your bait or jig right along the bottom, in tight to the piece of structure. This can be accomplished in many different ways; however my favorite method is to 3-way live eels.



A 3-way swivel is a nifty little piece of terminal tackle that makes fishing rips and

channels much easier. The main line is tied to one arm of the 3-way, a leader and hook to another, and a sinker to the third. Basically it's the easiest way I know of to get a big eel straight to the bottom, even when the current is cooking.

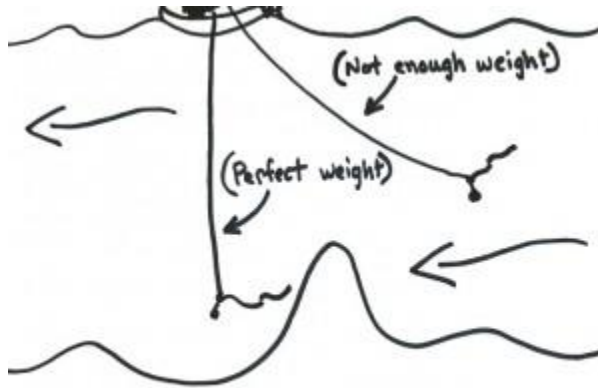
The most crucial component of 3-waying eels is the angler's ability to keep the eel right along the bottom, which is usually where the bass are. Unfortunately this is also where all the snags, weeds and rocks reside. It takes a little practice (and about 100 lost rigs!) but once you get a feel for it you can literally bounce the eel off the bottom and smack it directly into rocks without getting hung up.

In areas with a real swift current it's not uncommon to use as much as 10 ounces of weight. A regular old bank sinker typically does the trick. Just be sure to tie the bank sinker to the 3-way using a [Palomar knot](#) and not an overhand or [Trilene knot](#)-to help prevent the knot from slipping.

The way you gauge how much weight to use is pretty simple. Try a drift using, say 4

ounces as an example. If during the drift you are having trouble detecting bottom and keeping your line near vertical then you most likely need more weight. If you can detect bottom easily and keep the line near vertical then 4 ounces or less is probably a pretty good weight. As the current increases and decreases it's often best to add or lose weight accordingly.

If you are fishing a real dramatic rip, ledge or hole it may be necessary to constantly adjust the amount of line you keep out during the drift. As you drift up the front side of the rid, it makes sense to reel in some line. As you fall off the backside of the rip into deeper water, it's usually best to drop the rig directly to the bottom of the hole.



Use as little weight as necessary to keep the line nearly vertical during the drift.

So to make a long story short, concentrate on always keeping the eel just above the bottom while keeping your line nearly vertical.

The most exciting part about catching big stripers using this method is the initial bite. Bass that are feeding in the current hit so much harder and with much more vigor than bass residing in open water. These guys absolutely crush the eel and can jerk the rod right out of your hands if you're not paying attention.

I like to use circle hooks in these situations because it makes the hook setting process simple and easy. When the bass bites, I like to lower the rod tip and point it directly at the water. As hard as it is for me to resist setting the hook I try to allow the bass to get the line tight. This usually takes 1-3 seconds (although it feels like much longer!). Then you just start cranking and hand on-no need to set the hook.

Because this technique relies a lot on a fisherman's ability to "feel" the bottom and "detect" bites, braided line is the most recommended line for the job. Distinguishing bites from bottom is a breeze with 40 or 50 pound Power Pro, because braided line has next to no stretch. Trying to hold bottom in heavy current with monofilament is much more challenging.

Surprisingly lead core line also performs well when it comes to 3-waying eels. So no worries if all you have on the boat are trolling setups. Lead core is colored differently every 10 yards, so it is very easy to gauge how much line you have

out. Knowing how much line is in the water can help prevent getting snagged on the bottom.

Having the boat positioned in the right zone through a drift is also very important. You definitely don't want to waste time on a poor drift route, especially when the bite is hot. Using your sonar be sure to mark the exact location of the fishy structure. Motor a bit up current of the structure and position the boat in a way that will bring the boat directly over the structure. Kick the engine into neutral, drop the eels to the bottom and drift on through.

I'd say the majority of bites usually come from fish that are sitting directly in the hole or behind the rip. However bites will often times come from fish positioned in front of the leading edge of the rip, on top of rip and even well behind the hole. The most important tip I can provide is to just be ready at all times, or you may lose a rod and reel over the side (which has happened to me on numerous occasions!).



In big current, most big bass will position themselves around and directly behind pieces of current-blocking structure.

I never catch many fish 3-waying rips during slack tide. Moving water does a great job of concentrating stripers around structure. When the tide slacks off, I think the fish leave the rips and holes and venture around a bit. Of course we have caught fish 3-waying during slack; however the fishing is almost always better when the tide is cranking.

As previously mentioned, expect to lose some rigs to the bottom-especially when you are just starting out with 3-

waying. When you do get hung up on the bottom, consider immediately snapping the line instead of fiddling around in a powerful current and rip. If I get snagged on the bottom when the current is cooking, I'll immediately wrap the line around the handle of a gaff and just hold on. Often times the entire rig will break free from the snag. If that doesn't happen the line will quickly part. Usually the line snaps at the leader, which is obviously much better than simply cutting your line at the rod tip.

That's about it as far as 3-waying eels is concerned! Stay tuned for an upcoming members post about some of the best Cape Cod fishing spots for 3-waying.

Tight lines and good luck live eel **striped bass fishing** this season. And of course be sure to join the rapidly growing MFCC community on [Facebook](#)

Thanks!

Ryan

For more articles like this, [join as a MFCC member](#).



Fishing Live Eels from Shore During October 101

Live eels work great from shore all summer long. However I believe striped bass eat eels with even more abandon during the month of October. The bass are on their way south, and they will happily slurp down an eel that happens to swim their way.

In this post I plan on divulging any little secret tip or tactic I think will help you hook up with more bass this October fishing eels from the sand. We'll even talk a little bit about areas worth tossing an eel or two during this special month.

Live Eel Gear

I have been using the Penn 440ssg for two years now with amazing results. This small and economical reel can withstand hundreds of bass up to and above the 40 pound mark. The reel is also good because small fish are fun to battle on it as well. It's a good all around choice for various situations and environments.

I pair the Penn 440ssg with a 6 foot medium action spinning rod. I like a forgiving tip with backbone to turn a good size bass. Make sure to **not select** a rod that is very stiff. A stiff fishing rod will exert too much pressure on the eel, resulting in the eel tearing from the hook after "not so many" casts.

I use 50 pound Power Pro braided line on the Penn 440ssg. The diameter of the line is, I believe, the same as 12 pound monofilament. This means I can pack around 150 yards of 50 pound test Power Pro onto the reel. This is plenty of line in most situations, unless you plan on fishing an area with very strong current like the Cape Cod Canal – which would require a completely different type of setup.

When fishing with eels I choose either a 5/0 or 6/0 hook or a 7/0 or 8/0 hook. I choose the size of the hook based on the size of the bass I expect to catch. If the fish are schoolies with a small keeper or two in the mix I choose a 5/ or 6/0. If the bass are big I go with the 7/0 or 8/0. Circle hooks work best in my opinion and help prevent gut hooking bass.

Of course other good things to bring along include a rag, a headlamp, 50 pound leader material and a mesh bag to transport the eels as you wade around in the water.

Technique

I prefer to use a “lob” type cast with eels as opposed to a “snap” type cast. Lobbing the eel out there will help prevent tearing the eel from the hook. A snap like cast will quickly tear the eel and send it flying off into oblivion.

Reel the eel in back towards shore at a slow pace, just enough to keep the eel from burying itself in the bottom. Sometimes it can pay to experiment with the speed of the retrieve. Bass, especially large ones,

have no problem destroying an eel that is reeled in quickly along the surface. Be sure to keep your rod tip high in the sky in preparation of a bite.



When a bass hits the eel you will feel a slight to heavy “bump.” As soon as you feel this bump lower your rod tip and allow the line to get tight before setting up on the fish. Try to do this without causing any unnatural tension on the line, as tension will cause the bass to immediately spit the eel in most cases.

Once the line gets taught set up on the fish. No huge hook sets are necessary if you are using a circle hook. Simply tighten up on the bass and reel him in.

Helpful Hints

1) Eel size

If there are big bass in the area and you want to target the biggest of the bunch, use the largest eel in your bucket. I’ve had good success using eels that were all of 2 feet and an inch around. Big stripers have no problem engulfing all but the largest of eels.

If you are not sure what size bass you will encounter, a regular medium size eel is a good bet. These casts best and are your all around best option.

If there are schoolies and small keepers around, go with a pencil size eel. The smallest eels do not cast well, however you will get more hookups using the smaller version. Small eels are much easier for these young fish to swallow, resulting in a much better hook up ratio.

2) Bass scratches on the eel

Not sure if you just felt a bite from a bass? Take a close look at the body of your eel. If you notice scratches, then you did have a bass bite the bait.

Bass will cause abrasions on the eels skin, caused by their sandpaper like teeth. This is a good way to help distinguish between a bass hit and the eel just kicking extra hard.

3) Is the eel dead?

Eels work best when they are alive. If after a while your eel appears to be lifeless, hold on just one more second before throwing him away.

Cover his eyes with your hand and if the eel is alive, he will curl his tail. As long as the eel has a curl in his tail he is good to go.

Good luck!

Ryan

For more articles like this, [join as a MFCC member](#).



Be sure to register for the FREE live bait fishing webinar happening on January 9th.

Space is limited so keep an eye on your email inbox for further details and a link to the registration page – coming soon.

Thanks and have a great day!

Ryan

Thank you for checking out this eBook.