

Fry Release

When to release

We recommend feeding fry for at least 2 - 3 weeks before releasing. The best release time for chum is April. Chum survive best when they can reach the ocean early. Coho may be kept a little longer but no later than mid-May. All fry survive best when the weather is warmer and aquatic insects have hatched in the stream.

Before you go . . .

Allow an hour+ to remove fry from tank. Discuss fry release methods and student streamside behavior.



Transport to site

Keep the lid on the bucket. Secure bucket during transport. Keep out of direct sunlight. Do not use ice blocks or floating coolers in the water bucket as these may crush the fry during transport.

At the site

On arrival place bucket in shady spot. Slowly add a little creek water to the bucket. This will cool and aerate the water and begin acclimatizing the fry to the creek water.

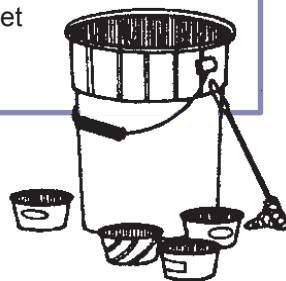
Transfer fry from tank

- 1 Siphon 3/4 of tank water out and fill clean 5 gallon bucket. Leave at least 10 cm of air space at the top of the bucket to incorporate air into water.
- 2 Gently scoop out fry using a dipnet. Avoid contact with your hands by carefully pinching the bottom of the net. Turn the dip net upside down over the bucket of water so fry will fall into the water without being handled.
- 3 Count the fry as they are removed. Fisheries and Oceans requires this number for Fry Release Records.
- 4 If you are not leaving immediately, aerate the bucket with an airstone or frequently stir the surface of the water with a dipnet to incorporate air. Keep the bucket in a cool spot out of sunlight.

Preparation

You will need :

- clean 5 gallon bucket with lid (the bucket used for water changes)
- siphon (gravel cleaner)
- 500 ml containers for students to use
- dipnet



How to release

- Release in small groups of 6 to 8 with an adult supervisor.
- Use clean, 500 ml containers.
- Half-fill each container with water from bucket.
- Dipnet a fry from the bucket into the container.
- Use *Student Handout* for detailed instructions.
- As needed, add more creek water to the 5 gallon bucket to keep water cool and aerated.

**Take only memories.
Leave only soft
footprints**

Stream stewardship guidelines

- Many schools may use this site to release.
- Keep to existing trails to avoid trampling on streamside plants. This causes erosion which clouds the water and then fry will not see to catch food.
- Students should respect the natural site by not running, jumping, or screaming in an uncontrolled manner.
- Stay out of the water, which creates silt and crushes the aquatic insects which fry eat (not allowing boots will help this guideline).
- Please take all food and litter with you when you leave.



STUDENT HANDOUT:

HOW TO RELEASE YOUR FRY

MATERIALS:

Small container (500 ml)

Fry with water

PROCEDURE:

Step 1. Obtain fry from supervisor.

Step 2. Gently carry your cup and fry to the creekside.

Step 3. Decide where to release your fry.

- Look for an area that is "safe" for the fry.
- Walk lightly so the bank is disturbed as little as possible.
- Walk in other people's footprints and try not to make new ones

Step 4. Hold the cup so the opening is facing upstream against the current.

- Gently lower the cup into the creek (just the lip).
- Allow a little creek water to enter your cup.
- Lift the cup up. Wait a minute.

Step 5. Slowly lower your cup into the creek and let your fry swim out.

- Don't rush your fry - let them decide.
- If they are reluctant - pull the cup downstream, away from the fry.

