FISHING LITTER HURTS WILDLIFE
Please take it home with you

Litter is unsightly for anyone who cares about their environment. Unfortunately part of this problem is caused by lost or discarded fishing tackle.

It's also responsible for injuring thousands of wild animals every year.

Fishing litter can cause needless suffering to wildlife

- Line can wrap round an animal and cut the blood supply to parts of its body.
- Hooks, line and weights can be swallowed and cause internal blockages or injury.

Tackling the problem

- Please take unwanted fishing line home and cut it into small pieces before putting it in the bin.
- Please be aware of surrounding trees and avoid fishing where they may snag lines – discarded line caught up in foliage causes problems for wildlife.
- Please don't leave baited tackle unattended – always remove the bait from the hook and place the tackle in a safe place.
- Please use a bait box so that there is no chance of leaving an empty bait tin behind by mistake.

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Fact file

- Over 1,000 wild birds were admitted to RSPCA wildlife centres between 2005 and 2013 as a result of entanglement in fishing litter. **57 percent (601) of these were swans.**
- A report for the Environment Agency in 2002 estimated that every year the RSPCA and other groups attend over **8,000 sick and injured swans.**
- Fishing tackle-related injuries were the biggest single cause of swan rescues – estimated at **3,000 a year.**

The good news is that, between 2005 and 2009, the number of calls about swans affected by discarded fishing tackle dropped by 22%. However, around a quarter of all calls to the RSPCA about swans involved fishing tackle – a proportion that has remained relatively steady over the five-year period. This data indicates that the issue of discarded fishing litter remains a problem for swans.

Most anglers do care and angling associations and the Environment Agency have produced codes of practice and worked to encourage responsible behaviour.

Wherever a day's angling takes you – whether it's rivers, lakes, canals or coastal waters – there may be rubbish strewn around. The RSPCA is working with the angling community and other organisations to get to grips with the problem, but we also rely on responsible individuals to help keep their local stretch of river, canal or coastline litter-free.

IF YOU SEE SIGNS OF WATER POLLUTION
Report it immediately to the Environment Agency hotline on 0800 80 70 60.

Water pollution can have a catastrophic impact on animals which live above and below the water-line.

>> www.rspca.org.uk/allaboutanimals

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All kinds of litter can be harmful to wildlife and domestic animals

- Bottles can be death-traps for small animals such as mice and voles.
- Glass bottles and jars break easily, leaving sharp pieces which can be dangerous to animals.
- Animals get entangled in rubber bands and plastic beer-can rings.
- Plastic pots and cans are dangerous to animals like hedgehogs which can get their heads stuck in them.

»» FIND OUT HOW YOU CAN HELP AT:
www.rspca.org.uk/allaboutanimals/helpandadvice/litter

Keeping a look-out

Please help by keeping a look out for litter left by others. Or you could even have a friendly word with a litterbug if you catch one in the act.

Everyone needs to:

- take all their rubbish away – plastic bags, drink cans, plastic and glass bottles, plastic pots and beer-can rings can all be wildlife killers – and cut up rubber bands and beer-can rings before throwing them in the bin.
- dispose safely of any rubbish they see – even if it is not their own!

»» IF YOU SEE AN INJURED WILD ANIMAL: PLEASE REPORT IT TO THE RSPCA ON 0300 1234 999

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