

Tree River Goes Single Barbless



In 2001, Plummer's Arctic Lodges made a wise decision to go catch and release with the exception of lunch fish to ensure the continuity of world class and world record fishing in our waters. This step forward was also marked by other conservation measures including using barbless hooks. This year, Tree River went one step further and recommended guests switched over to a single barbless hook on their lure. Here's why:

- Single barbless hooks reduce the number of hook point penetrations in the fish's mouth and subsequently minimizes injury and associated bleeding. This is especially important when the hook becomes buried in the back of the fish's mouth (near the gills) where an injury has increased potential of being a lethal one.
- Hook removal time is longer with treble hooks than with single barbless, increasing fish handling time and air exposure. Air exposure has been found to be the primary cause of fish mortality in catch and release angling.
- Treble hooks are more susceptible to becoming caught in the net which also increases handling time and air exposure. The remaining hooks in the fish's mouth can rip and tear flesh causing tissue damage and bleeding.



One catch and release study found that fish mortality from treble barbless hooks was 4.5 times higher than mortality from single barbless hooks (Reingold & Melvin, 1979). This can have a substantial impact on fish mortality in an intensive catch and release sport fishery such as on the Tree River.

Many of you this season also experienced the benefit of losing far less lures than in previous seasons. Fortunately, single hooks are much less likely to become wedged in the cracks and crannies on the rock bottom of the Tree.

Thanks to all of you for making this year's move to single barbless a great success. In light of the fact that most lures come equipped with treble hooks, we will continue to supply our guides with high quality single hooks for easy conversion. Please just ask your Tree River Guide to switch you over and we will continue to have the best arctic char fishery in the world!

See you back on the Tree!

Sean Barfoot
Manager, Tree River Lodge

I encourage you to check out the following website for further information on the benefits of single barbless hooks:

www.nativefishsociety.org/documents/BarbedandBarblessHooksLitReview408.pdf