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Alligator Fishing Method (hook and line)

Alligators are nocturnal and most catches will be made at night. Although it is not legal to take alligators at night many hunters scout for gators at night to find where the big ones are.

Baited hooks and lines are suspended above the water by some type of structure. In most cases hunters will use poles, branches, or trees to suspend baits as well as provide for a stationary object for securing the end of the line. The most commonly used baits are chicken quarters or beef melt. Approximately 30' of line is tied off to the bottom of the structure while the baited hook end is suspended about 1-2' above the water surface. Most hunters hang the bait higher at the beginning of the season to prevent smaller gators from taking the bait. As the season goes on the bait can be lowered to increase the probability of a catch. The baited end is suspended in such a manner to allow for easy line removal by an alligator. Clothes pins are most often used to hold lines to facilitate easy line removal. Excess line is rolled up near the base of the structure. Take care to coil the line so it will not tangle. Alligators (feeding primarily at night) will take the bait. Once alligator lines are set and baited, alligator hunters should inspect their hooks and lines and remove captured alligators daily. Alligators should be dispatched immediately upon checking lines. Shot placement should be centered directly behind the skull. In the event that an alligator is hooked and the hunter's quota has been reached, the hunter should immediately release the alligator in the most humane method possible. Most alligators swallow the hook and the stomach acids will dissolve the hook. All hooks and lines should be removed when an alligator hunter's quota is reached.