

How to make pilchard rings

When I was growing up in South Florida, I used Pilchard Rings (aka - "Ribbon Rigs") to catch baiffish (Pilchards / Menhaden) from the fishing piers . Recently, I discovered that they have been declared to be a "gill net", theoretically "illegal", and not available in stores anymore. I always used to make my own, as a kid.

So, for purely "historical value" . . .

"HOW TO MAKE PILCHARD RINGS"

MATERIALS :

6 ft. of #7 Dark-Colored, Solid Leader Wire

1 Barrel Swivel

1 Snap Swivel (to allow weight changes)

Cardboard Toilet Paper or Paper Towel Tube

3 ft. of Bright Red Ribbon (3/8" - 1/2" wide)

Pyramid, Bank, or Dipsey/ Bass Sinker (3/4oz - 1 1/2oz +/-)

CONSTRUCTION :

(1) Start with a six-foot length of No. 7 dark leader wire.

(2) Bend it in half and slide on a barrel swivel.

(3) Tie a LOOSE, TWO-TURN, overhand knot in the wire near the bend to "capture" the swivel

(4) Form a loop, using a the toilet paper or paper towel tube as a "mandrel" (you may need to vary the loop size depending on baiffish sizes in your area) and make a SINGLE-TURN Overhand Knot,

(5) ALTERNATE the direction of the Overhand Knots each time to help the rig hang straighter

(6) Repeat until you have a series of loops, leaving a couple of inches of wire free at the bottom

(7) Slip on the Snap Swivel and connect the loose ends of the wire, using a SHORT Haywire Twist

(8) Hold the rig at each end and pull on it to stretch the loops out into an oval shape

(9) Attach the bright red ribbon at one end by knotting it to the Swivel loop

(10) Pass the ribbon through rings one-third and two-thirds of the way up the rig

(11) Attach the ribbon to the other Swivel, leaving some slack in the ribbon when fully extended

(12) Attach the Sinker to the Snap Swivel and the rig is complete

HOW TO USE:

Tie the rig to a light spinning rod and lower or cast it into a baitfish school and let it sink. You will feel baitfish hitting the rig. Keep the line tight and wait for the rod to bend. When it does, wait a few seconds and reel up.

Remove baitfish and repeat, as desired !

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