

Techniques and Terminology for Crab Netters: An In-Depth Guide

Crab netting is a time-honored tradition that requires specialized techniques and terminology. Whether you're a seasoned crabber or an aspiring novice, understanding these intricacies is essential for success on the water.



Techniques and Terminology for Crab Netters by F.T. Rossi

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Types of Crab Pots

Crab pots, also known as crab traps or trotlines, are the primary tool used by crab netters. They come in various shapes and sizes, each designed for specific crab species and conditions.

- **Funnel Pots:** These pots feature a cone-shaped funnel that leads to a central bait chamber. Crabs are lured into the pot and become trapped as they attempt to escape.

- **Box Pots:** Box pots are rectangular or square, with a door that crabs can enter in search of bait. Once inside, they are unable to find their way out.
- **Ring Nets:** Ring nets are circular frames with mesh or netting attached. They are used to scoop up crabs from the bottom of the ocean.

Baits for Crab Netting

Bait is crucial for attracting crabs to your pots. Different species prefer different baits, but some common options include:

- **Fish Scraps:** Fish heads, tails, and other scraps are a popular and cost-effective bait for many crab species.
- **Baitfish:** Live or frozen baitfish, such as herring or anchovies, can be highly effective in attracting crabs.
- **Chicken Necks:** Chicken necks are a common choice for crab netters as they provide a strong scent and are relatively inexpensive.
- **Squid:** Squid is a versatile bait that can be used for a wide variety of crab species.

Fishing Strategies

Crab netters employ various fishing strategies depending on the target crab species, the season, and the local conditions:

- **Drift Fishing:** Drift fishing involves setting out a series of crab pots in a line or "drift" and letting them drift with the current or tide.

- **Soaking:** Soaking involves anchoring crab pots in a specific location and leaving them for a period of time to allow the crabs to find the bait and enter the traps.
- **Jigging:** Jigging involves repeatedly raising and lowering crab pots to attract crabs and induce them to enter the pots.

Crab Netting Terminology

Crab netters have their own unique vocabulary that defines their craft. Here are some essential terms:

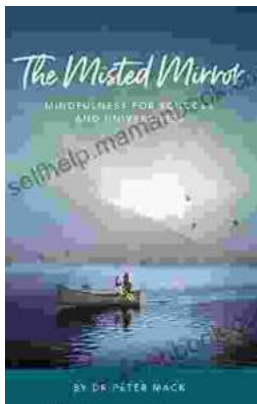
- **Bycatch:** Non-target species that are accidentally caught in crab pots.
- **Escape Ring:** A ring in the side of a crab pot that allows undersized crabs to escape.
- **Ghost Pot:** A crab pot that has been lost or abandoned and continues to catch crabs.
- **Slick:** A trail of bubbles on the water's surface caused by a crab pot's rope.
- **Tidal Zone:** The area between the high and low tide marks where crabs are often found.

Mastering the techniques and terminology of crab netting is essential for successful and sustainable crab fishing. By understanding the different types of crab pots, baits, and fishing strategies, as well as the specialized vocabulary used by crab netters, you'll be well-equipped to navigate the challenges and rewards of this fascinating industry.



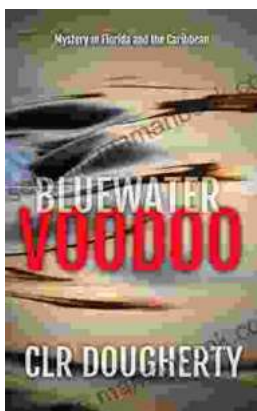
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