

Capt. Dave Peros



Light Tackle Fishing and
Casting Tips and Tricks

Why Light Tackle?

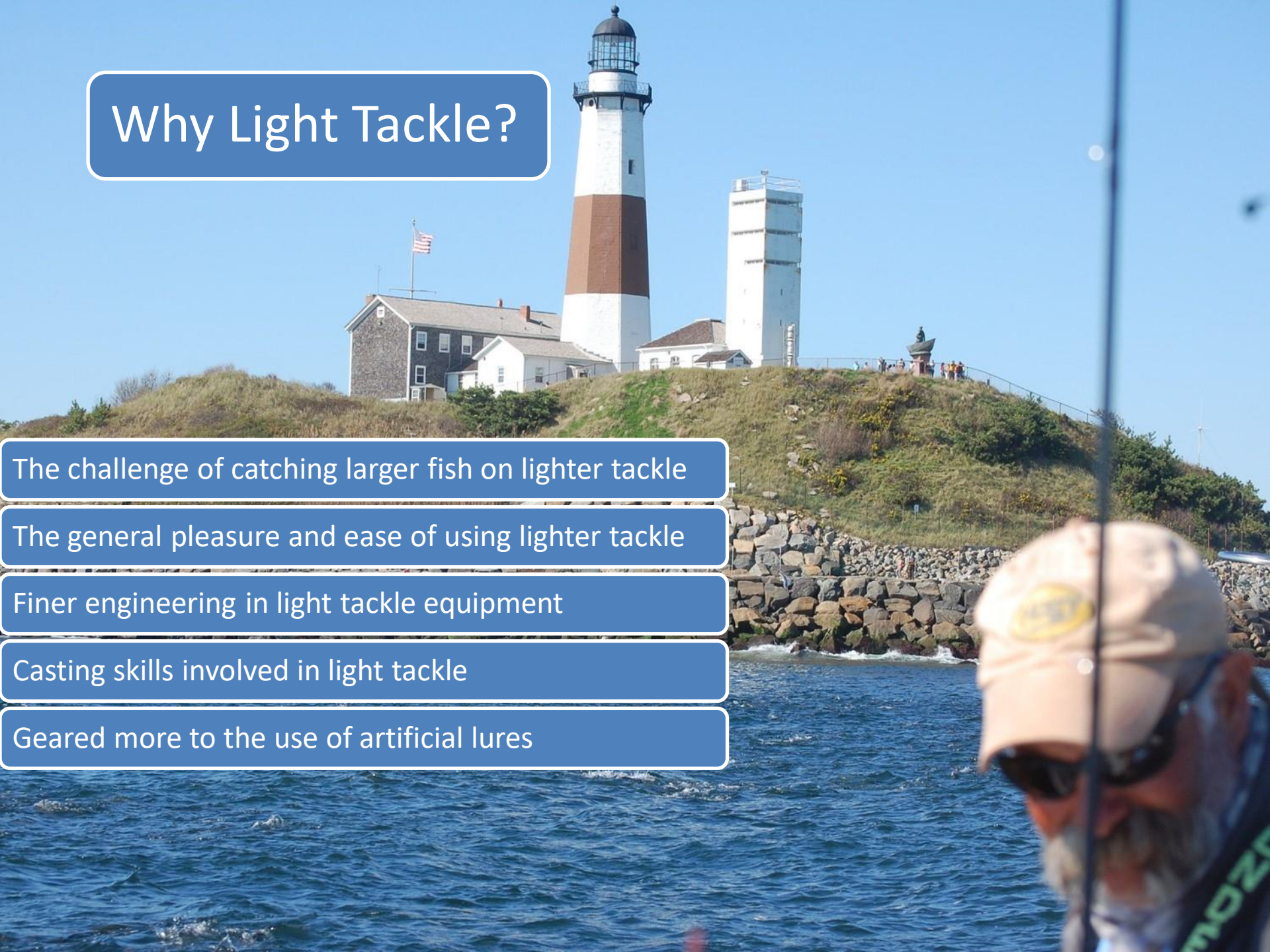
The challenge of catching larger fish on lighter tackle

The general pleasure and ease of using lighter tackle

Finer engineering in light tackle equipment

Casting skills involved in light tackle

Geared more to the use of artificial lures



Why Not Use Light Tackle?

A person wearing a dark hoodie and a light-colored cap is seen from behind, fishing on a boat. The fishing rod is bent, and the line is visible against the sunset sky. The sun is low on the horizon, casting a golden glow over the water and the distant shoreline.

Over stresses fish, resulting in higher level of mortality

Frustration over failure to develop necessary skills

Criticism that some light tackle activity is simply grandstanding



Steps To Becoming A Better Light Tackle Angler

Develop Casting Skills

Develop Rigging and Knot Tying Skills

Develop Proper Fishing Playing Skills

Develop Proper Release Skills

Maintain Equipment



What Is Light Tackle?



The one issue I struggle with is whether you can use braided line in light tackle fishing. I use monofilament line between 8 and 17-pound test, the latter typically only when fishing around rocky structure such as around the Elizabeth Islands.

When it comes to leaders, I use between 12 and 30-pound fluorocarbon, tied directly to the main line with a knot, as opposed to swivels or other hardware.



An aerial photograph of a coastal area, likely a bay or estuary, showing intricate sandbar patterns and shallow water channels. The water is a mix of light blue and green, while the sandbars are a light tan color. The overall scene is a complex, natural landscape.

Have I Tried Braid?

Yes, I have and frankly fooling around with braid between 8 and 17-pound test – or in that range – was a disaster, starting with the sewing thread diameter in terms of knots, landing fish, and increased casting problems for clients.

That's not to say there aren't casting problems with mono, even my personal favorite - no longer made – Berkley Silver Thread.



Casting Issues and Changes

Stop Using Handle To Trip Bail – Limit Line Sloughs and “Sneezes”

Use Longer Line/Leader Drop To Increase Casting Efficiency

Learn To Turn Over Lures and Rigs

Smooth Out Casting Stroke and Delivery



Develop Rigging and Knot Tying Skills



I use many of the same knots that I do in fly fishing, especially the Blood Knot and Improved Blood Knot for connecting leader and main line.

If my target is bluefish or other toothy critters, therefore requiring heavier shock leaders, I use some combination of the Bimini Twist, Slim Beauty, and others knots designed for this purpose.

Developing Rigging and Knot Tying Skills



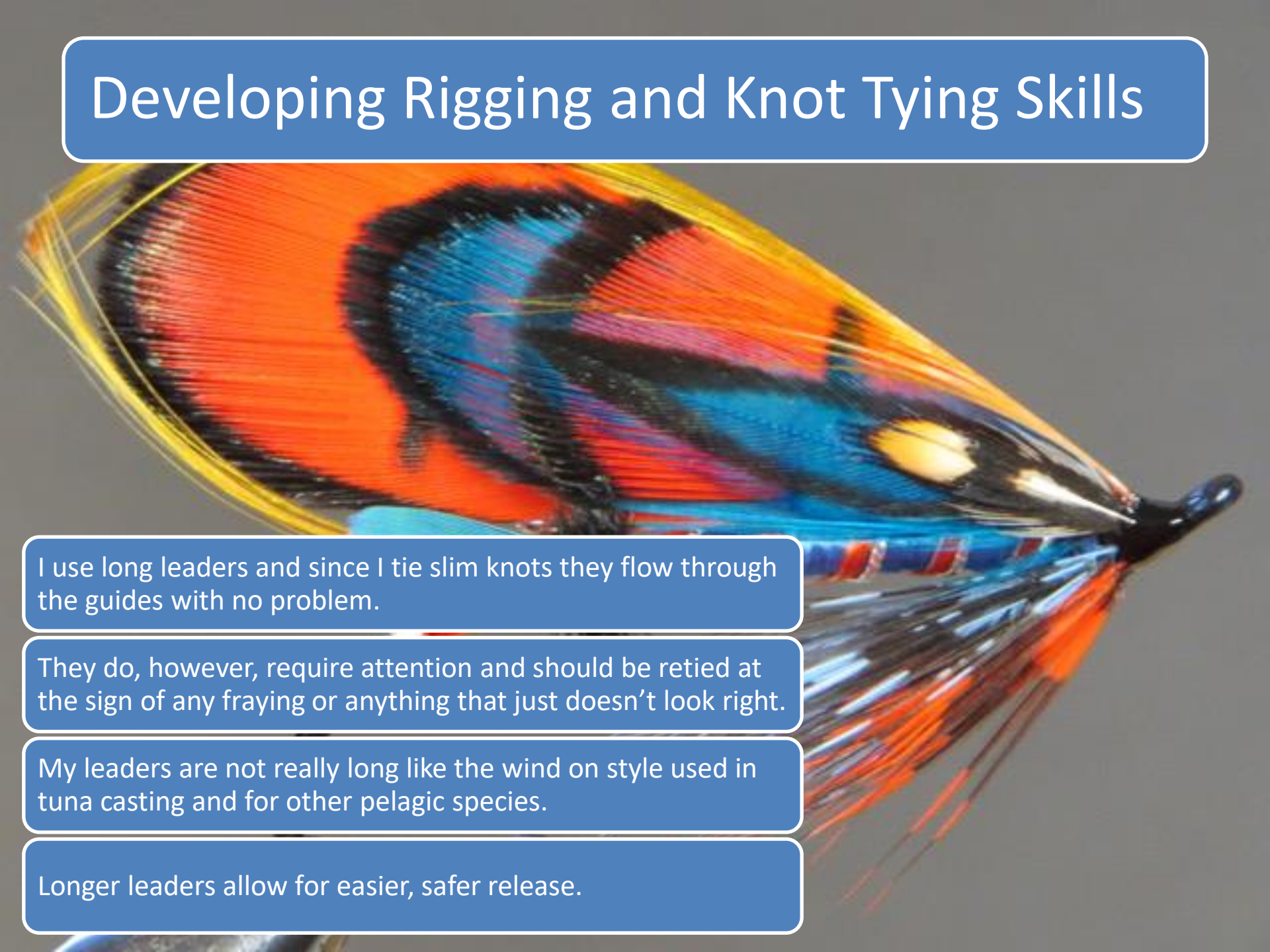
If am fishing myself, I use loop knots to attach lures, but if I am fishing with customers where changing lures, especially plugs, more frequently could be an issue, I will use a snap, especially a Duolock and I have tried the newer paper clip style.

Using knots in rigging requires paying attention and doing things right, which makes me a better angler.



YAMAHA
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Developing Rigging and Knot Tying Skills



I use long leaders and since I tie slim knots they flow through the guides with no problem.

They do, however, require attention and should be retied at the sign of any fraying or anything that just doesn't look right.

My leaders are not really long like the wind on style used in tuna casting and for other pelagic species.

Longer leaders allow for easier, safer release.



Rigging Plugs For Light Tackle Use



I use no more than one set of treble hooks on any of my plugs, with the hook at the head of the plug when targeting bass.

I like VMC hooks.

I do everything possible to completely crush the barbs on my hooks. I wish manufacturers of treble hooks would switch over to manufacturing barbless ones.

I have tried in line singles and they do work –within limits.

Rigging Plugs For Light Tackle Use

A vibrant mural on a wall depicting various marine life. At the top left is a large shark. Below it is a bright red lobster. To the right of the lobster are several different fish species, including a blue and yellow striped fish, a blue and white fish, and a flatfish. The background is a light-colored, textured wall.

At the very first indication that we are into bluefish, I switch to plugs with a single tail Siwash, again from VMC.



A fisherman with a grey beard and sunglasses is shown from the side, wearing a tan cap and a blue long-sleeved shirt. He is holding a large, silver and blue striped bass fish. The background is the blue-green water of the ocean. The text is overlaid on the right side of the image in blue rounded rectangular boxes.

Mono or Braid?

Despite all the claims about braid and distance, in most cases, the problems with it outweigh the benefits, in my opinion

This is especially true with beginners

Did you notice that I emphasized closing the bail by hand when discussing the basics of casting?

The reason is simple: **ELIMINATING LOOSE LINE.**

Developing Proper Fish Playing Techniques

A large fish, possibly a salmon, is captured mid-leap from the water. The fish's body is arched, with its tail and dorsal fin clearly visible. The background shows a sunset sky with a bird in flight and a line of trees on the shore.

Using light tackle eliminates the propensity towards “ripping lips.”

Light tackle rewards skillful hook setting techniques, as opposed to trying to rip a fish’s head off.

Light tackle fishing encourages learning how to use a reel’s drag and an angler’s hands properly.

Developing Proper Fish Playing Techniques

Light tackle helps an angler learn how to use rod angles to subdue a fish more quickly



Developing Proper Release Skills

A close-up photograph of a person's hand holding a large fish, likely a salmon, in the water. The fish is held horizontally, with its head to the left and tail to the right. The fish has a dark, mottled pattern on its side and a lighter, silvery-green color on its head. The water is dark and rippled, with some light reflecting off the surface. The person's hand is visible on the right side of the frame, holding the fish's tail. The background is a blurred view of the water and sky.

The use of longer leaders with light tackle allows for in water release and more control of a fish at boatside.

Since barbless hooks make for more efficient hook ups with light tackle, they also allow for cleaner releases.

Since you're trying to "hook" a fish when using light tackle, you're generally going to have fewer foul hooked fish, especially with topwater lures.



Line Rollers and Line Twist

A mural of a yellow-striped snapper fish on a blue background with black and white decorative elements. The fish is the central focus, painted in shades of yellow and brown with blue stripes. It is surrounded by stylized black and white branches and leaves. The background is a solid blue color.

While many reel repair places and folks who perform their own maintenance do a good job, there is one feature that is often neglected: the line roller bearing, bushing, and sleeves.

These can be as simple as a couple of parts or as complicated as you will find on higher priced reels by Shimano, Daiwa, and other top of the line reel makers.

Maintaining Equipment

A sunset over a lake with silhouettes of trees and a boat. The sky is filled with vibrant orange, red, and purple clouds, reflecting on the water. The foreground shows the dark silhouettes of trees and a boat on the right side.

More Attention To Consistent Maintenance

Two Main Areas of Concern With Reels:

Line Rollers

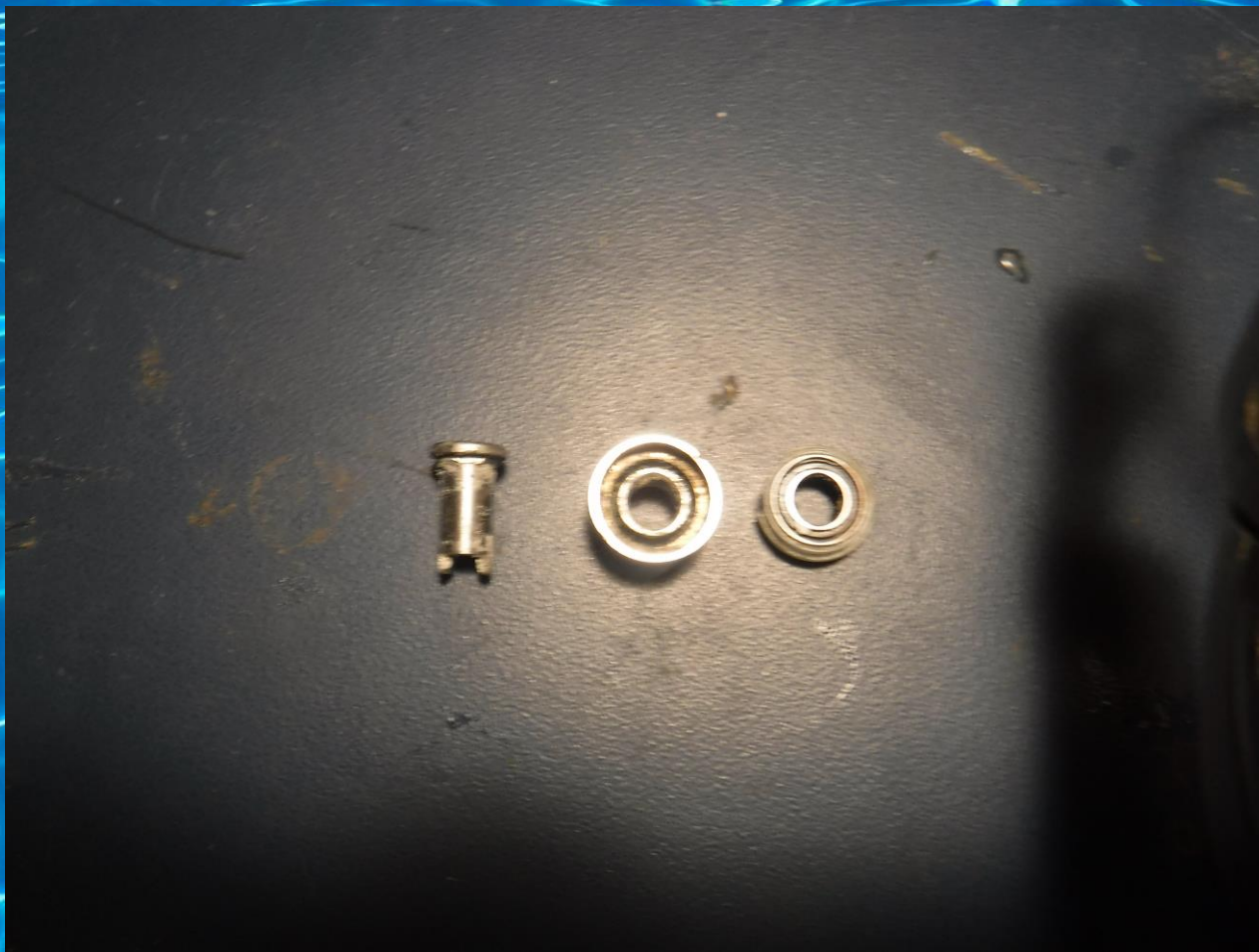
Drags

Line Roller





Line Roller



Line Roller



Drag Maintenance

A photograph of a fishing rod bent over the ocean, illustrating drag maintenance. The rod is dark and curved, with a line extending from the reel towards the horizon. The ocean is blue with white-capped waves. The sky is clear and blue, with a few birds flying in the distance.

Light tackle emphasizes the purpose of a drag on a reel and can teach the use of an angler's hands to fine tune and adjust drag tension on the fly

Carbon fiber vs. felt

Benefit and reality of sealed drags

Light Tackle Always Has You Ready For the Unexpected





The End!