

# Seining Without A Partner: How to Make the Task Easier

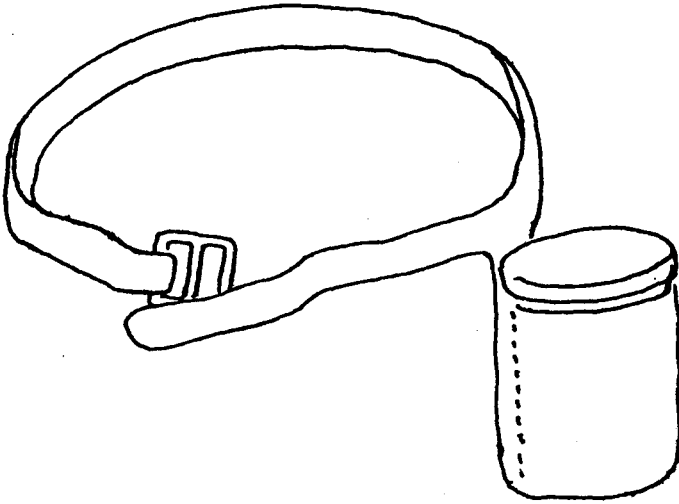
By Jim Pitts

How many Saturday mornings have you risen early, mowed the lawn, gulped down breakfast, and finally after weeks of waiting for a few free hours in which you can go splashing called your seining partner only to find he's stuck in bed with a sore throat and a raging fever? When such occasions arise, all is not lost. You can still embark into the wild with a good chance of bringing home a few new species of cyprinids for your collection.

A one man seining operation can be conducted in two general ways; haphazardly, with a great deal of frustration and little success, or with some reasonable planning and a good chance of bringing home what you set after. In planning your lonely mission, you should avoid streams that you have not previously worked. Accidents are a possibility in streams of which you have had no prior experience, and remember no one may be around to help you out. Also, you should avoid working in water deeper than one or two feet. Pulling or pushing a seine alone is generally not an easy feat under the best of conditions. Deep and swift waters may demand more strength than one man can muster. Finally, as a sound precaution, tell at least one person where you intend to do your collecting and when you expect to return.

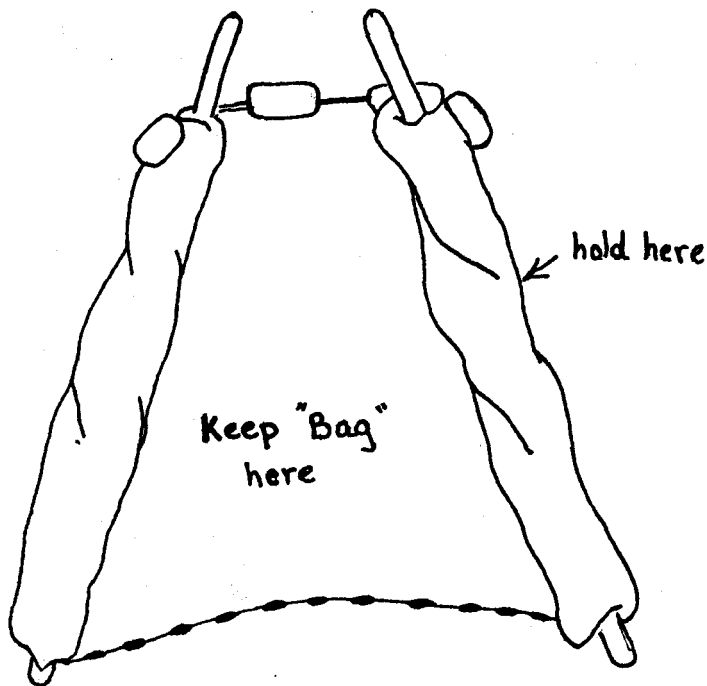
We are all familiar with the problem of hauling in a seine load, then racing back twenty yards or so to the last beaching point to retrieve the fish container. This is hindrance enough when two or three persons are available to run the errand. When you are seining alone the task becomes too great to consider. The solution is to carry your containers with you, which is easily accomplished by carrying them in a pouch securely fixed to your waist. The army has made drab green pouches for about anything a person might wish to carry, and you may find one of their models adaptable to your needs. If this is not possible, a pouch may be sewn together from canvas or nylon material. A pouch worn low on your waist is easiest to reach. Wide mouth jars may be the most suitable containers for use in a waist pouch. Their only drawback is the possibility of breakage. A quart jar will hold a surprising number of small live fish. Replenishing with fresh water every fifteen or twenty minutes will increase the jar's capacity. Two jars may be carried by those who wish to collect live and preserved speci-

mens. Lids should be secured tightly on both containers, and the jars should be strongly wedged in or affixed to their pouches so their bouyancy does not dislodge them in high water.



Canvas belt for carrying fish container while seining.

Seining by an individual obviously cannot be accomplished with an open ten foot seine. The seine should be rolled around the poles to a width that can be easily managed. I have found two methods of one man seining to be effective. In the first method, the seine is rolled to resemble a broad triangle with the top removed. The seine is spread as broadly as feasible at the bottom, while the top of the seine is closer together with the poles held a foot or two from the top in order to increase balance. The seine should have enough bag to maximize its fish-holding ability without being stepped on. When approaching obstacles the collector should always manuever around them since his hands are not free to lift the lead line. The second method is a bit more specialized, but I have found it to be more effective. The collector walks backwards pulling the seine after him. Obviously this only works safely when the area to be seined has been closely scrutinized for obstacles, drop-offs, etc. An appreciable bag can be kept in the seine this way since the seine cannot be walked on. The backwards system is particularly effective when working the edges of rock ledges. In either method it is important to survey for an easy beaching area before you begin a haul.



Method for folding seine for use by a single collector.

You will undoubtedly be somewhat less productive as a lone seiner than with a partner. The trick to making your trip successful lies in a combination of planning, patience, and endurance. Although the task of seining alone is somewhat more strenuous, it is nonetheless very rewarding. The cliché about appreciating the things we work for is as true as it is overstated.