COD FAMILY

Hake

Merluccius merluccius

Not recorded off Sussex in our sources | Confirmed record



Hake (*Merluccius merluccius*). Picture: Assianir, CC BY-SA 4.0 (creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/), via Wikimedia Commons: commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Merluccius_merluccius_037.JPG.

Key facts

IDENTIFY IT
Long, pollack-like fish with a big head, sharp teeth, a blue-grey back and a blackish mouth lining.

SIZE
Up to about 1.8 m and over 12 kg.

HABITAT
Mostly near the bottom at 100–550 m over various seabeds, feeding higher in the water at night.

OFF SUSSEX
Not recorded in our sources

AROUND BRITAIN
No months in our sources

METHODS
Oily baits such as mackerel and herring; squid also works.

GROUP
Cod family

IN SHORT
Hake looks a little like a pollack, but it has a bigger head and sharp teeth. Our sources do not record it off the Sussex coast. British boat record: confirmed.

COME FISHING WITH US

Fish with Kestrel Warrior from Brighton Marina

The hake is not one of the fish our sources record off Sussex, so no Kestrel Warrior trip targets it. Come and fish the Sussex coast on one of our eight trips (Prices 2027):

- **Sightseeing tour** 1 hour, £20 pp
- **Squid and cuttlefish trip** 3 hours, £55 pp
- **Sea fishing trip at anchor, multiple species** 8 hours, £75 pp
- **Wreck fishing at anchor** 10 hours, £110 pp
- **Mackerel trip** 90 minutes, £27 pp
- **Sea fishing trip, multiple species** 4 hours, £55 pp
- **Flatfish drift trip** 8 hours, £90 pp
- **Shark fishing trip** 10 hours, £150 pp

Free tuition and free gutting and filleting of your catch. Rod hire £10 per person; fishing tackle is included on the shark trip.

Scan to book

Book: ring **07896 471691** (8am to 9pm, seven days a week) · info@kestrelwarrior6.co.uk · kestrelwarrior6.co.uk/contact/

About the hake

Hake looks a little like a pollack, but it has a bigger head and sharp teeth. The back is blue-grey and the lining of the mouth is blackish. It is a long fish, and the teeth tell you it is a predator.

It can grow to about 1.8 m and over 12 kg. It lives mostly near the bottom, in 100 to 550 m of water over various seabeds. At night it feeds higher in the water.

For a Sussex angler, that depth is the main point. The record does not list Sussex as a place to catch hake, so this is a fish to know about rather than one to expect on a day out of Brighton.

Where hake are fished for, oily baits are used. Mackerel and herring are named, and squid also works.

The record fish tells you something too. It came from Loch Etive in Scotland, not from the English Channel.

On the boat

Hake live mostly near the bottom at 100 to 550 m, and feed higher in the water at night. Oily baits such as mackerel and herring are used, and squid also works. The record gives no months for Britain or Sussex, and does not list Sussex as a place to catch hake, so we cannot say when or where they are best locally.

British boat-caught record

Confirmed record

Weight	25 lb 12 oz 14 dr (11.706 kg)
Where	Loch Etive, Scotland
When	1997
Angler	R Roberts

Confirmed British boat-caught record: R Roberts, 25 lb 12 oz 14 dr (11.706 kg), Loch Etive, Scotland, 1997. The official weight-based boat records were frozen in June 2024. The official list gives the year only, not the full date.

Care and rules

The minimum size for hake in UK waters is 27 cm. Measure any fish you plan to keep, and return smaller ones. The record has no further notes on release or eating. Rules change: check the current rules before you fish.

Did you know?

Hake feeds higher in the water at night, though it spends most of its time near the bottom. It has a blackish lining to the mouth and sharp teeth.

Sources: Planet Sea Fishing - Hake; Gov.uk - Minimum Conservation Reference Sizes; BRFC Sea Fish Listings June 2026. The full guide, with links to every source: kestrelwarrior6.co.uk/sea-fish-guide/hake/