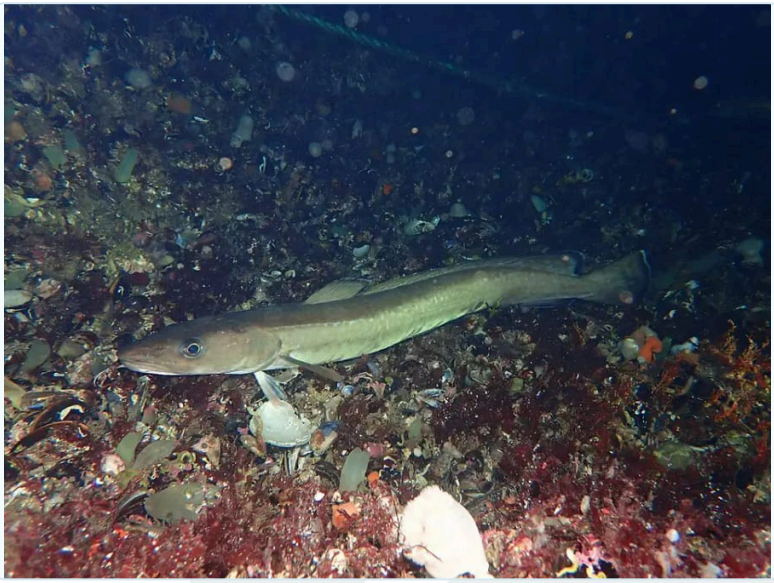
COD FAMILY

# Ling

*Molva molva*

Caught off the Sussex coast | Confirmed record



Ling (*Molva molva*). Picture: Vsevolod, CC BY 4.0 (creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/), via Wikimedia Commons: commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Molva_molva_243643723.jpg.

**IN SHORT**

Ling is a long, slim fish in brown-green, with one barbel on the chin. Kestrel Warrior names ling among the big wreck predators off Brighton and Newhaven. British boat record: confirmed.

## Key facts

**IDENTIFY IT**
Long, slim, brown-green fish with one chin barbel, a short first back fin and a very long second back fin.

**SIZE**
Up to about 2 m; boat-caught fish are usually far smaller in the south.

**HABITAT**
Rocky ground and wrecks at 20-300 m, with larger fish in the colder north of the range.

**OFF SUSSEX**
Recorded off Sussex; no months in our sources

**AROUND BRITAIN**
No months in our sources

**METHODS**
Fish baits, especially mackerel; baited pirks and baited spoons.

**GROUP**
Cod family

COME FISHING WITH US

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## About the ling

Ling is a long, slim fish in brown-green, with one barbel on the chin. Look at the back and you will see a short first fin and a very long second one. It belongs to the cod family, but has a build all of its own.

It can grow to about 2 m, although boat-caught fish are usually far smaller in the south. The larger fish live in the colder north of the range. Ling like rocky ground and wrecks, in water from 20 to 300 m deep.

That makes it a wreck fish, and Sussex anglers have a real chance of one. Kestrel Warrior names ling among the big wreck predators off Brighton and Newhaven, and runs a winter article on cod, pollack and ling.

Baits are fish baits, especially mackerel, and baited pirks and baited spoons are also used.

One thing needs saying early. Boat-caught ling are damaged by pressure change coming up, so Wikipedia advises against releasing them. Decide what you will do with a fish before you set out to catch one.

## On the boat

Ling are caught over rocky ground and wrecks in 20 to 300 m, on fish baits, especially mackerel, and on baited pirks and baited spoons. Kestrel Warrior names ling among the big wreck predators off Brighton and Newhaven, and runs a winter cod, pollack and ling article. The record gives no months for Britain or Sussex, so we do not say when they are best.

## British boat-caught record

Confirmed record

| | |
|---|---|
| **Weight** | 67 lb 5 oz (30.533 kg) |
| **Where** | Muckle Flugga, Shetland Isles |
| **When** | 2013 |
| **Angler** | J Isbister |

Confirmed British boat-caught record: J Isbister, 67 lb 5 oz (30.533 kg), Muckle Flugga, Shetland Isles, 2013. 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 ling is 63 cm. Boat-caught ling are damaged by pressure change, so Wikipedia advises against releasing them. The Marine Conservation Society lists it as a fish to avoid. Think about this before you decide to fish for them. Rules change: check the current rules before you fish.

## Did you know?

Ling can reach about 2 m in length, although boat-caught fish are usually far smaller in the south. The larger ones live in the colder north of the range.

**Sources:** Planet Sea Fishing - Ling; Wikipedia - Molva molva; 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/ling/