

Fish This



Cast Net Bait Bucket

A CAST NET IS AN ESSENTIAL PART OF MY GEAR whenever I head out with rod and reel in hand. My wife prefers to fish with bait, and it is common for the bait stand to be sold out when we arrive, especially holiday weekends. Enter the cast net.

Cast nets are affordable and provide a relatively quick return on investment, allowing the angler in need to harvest enough live bait to quickly recoup the price of the net, sometimes in a single trip. Keeping all of the bait the net captures is not always easy. Frantic baitfishes and shrimp start flipping and flopping the instant they are loosed from the net. The eyesight and hand coordination of a 13-year old comes in handy as you try to capture the flouncing fish food. The baits are not fully secured even when deposited in a nearby bucket; many baitfishes will quickly jump out of the bucket. Finger mullet can go airborne quicker than a Patriot missile, leaving the angler red-faced and baitless.

Cast Net Bait Buckets solves this problem. Developed by Trevor and Amy Allen and sold through their company, LanKat Outdoor Products, the Cast Net Bait Bucket helps you keep the bait you catch once it is in your cast net.

Trevor is a serious fisherman who has small children, ruling out 4 a.m. wake-up calls. By the time he gets the crew ready to go, bait stands are often depleted. He shared this problem with me recently at Spring Fling, which is held each year by the Rockport Chamber of Commerce. I smiled the

smile of understanding, having walked a mile in his shoes.

The Cast Net Bait Bucket is a well-built product based on an industrial plastic bucket

by Greg Berlocher

et. A wide-mouthed funnel sits on top and guides the captured bait into the safe confines of the bucket. A flotation collar girdles the perimeter of the bucket, allowing you to take it where the bait is. A hundred small holes allow plenty of water to circulate, keeping the bait alive and frisky.

The flotation collar holds the bucket at just the right height when you are wading. After a cast of the net, you drop the lead weights into the 17-inch funnel and shake

inside from going Houdini on me. The Cast Net Bait Bucket would have made life much easier.

Allen just introduced a second version of the Cast Net Bait Bucket aimed at boaters. The difference is the bucket is solid and does not have a flotation collar. The bucket holds a good supply of water, providing the bait plenty of room and avoiding overcrowding. Throw an air stone from a portable air pump through the funnel hole and you can keep your bait alive for a long time.

As a secondary benefit, the bucket helps keep your boat clean. Cast nets pull up all manner of muck, mud, and seagrass when hauled in. A quick snap of the wrist and all of that mess ends up in the funnel and not on the floor of your boat.

The funnel on both models is bolted to a lid that screws onto the bucket. The molded threads on the lid are extremely smooth. After a half turn, the lid snaps into place so you do not have to worry about the top half of the bucket flying off and hitting someone when your boat is on plane.

The bucket comes with 10 feet of poly rope left unfinished on the end. It would be a nice touch if the company added some sort of connector to the end of the rope so wade-fishermen could quickly snap it on and off their wading belts.

I give the Cast Net Bait Bucket extremely high marks. It is a well thought out product and works as advertised. The company is based in Texas and sold through independent sporting good stores in Austin, Burnet, Corpus Christi, Houston, Port Aransas, Rockport, and Victoria.

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the net. The trapped fish drop into the funnel and then slide into the bucket. The 4-inch hole in the funnel is just the right size—large enough to get your hand easily into and out of, but small enough to keep leaping baitfishes from escaping.

Having grown up with two older brothers, I was assigned bucket duty as a young charge. I diligently followed the seine pulled by my siblings with bait buckets in tow, and then did my best to hold open the spring-loaded trapdoor of the bait bucket while trying in vain to keep the pin perch and shrimp