



*Map of Great Bay, NJ showing ghost pots (white dots) imaged in survey areas along the Bay shore and River mouth (note: mid-Bay not surveyed as of publication).*

## Location, Location, Location

**K**nowing how to place a pot correctly increases the likelihood that it will still be there when you come back. Know the depth of the water you're fishing and use the correct length of line (double the high tide water depth). Tides can be strong and it is important that you weight your trap to keep it from straying. Avoid setting traps in high traffic areas to prevent cut buoy lines.



For more information, or to learn what recreational boaters and shore visitors can do to help reduce ghost pots, visit [www.WeCrabNJ.org](http://www.WeCrabNJ.org).



# GHOST FISHING

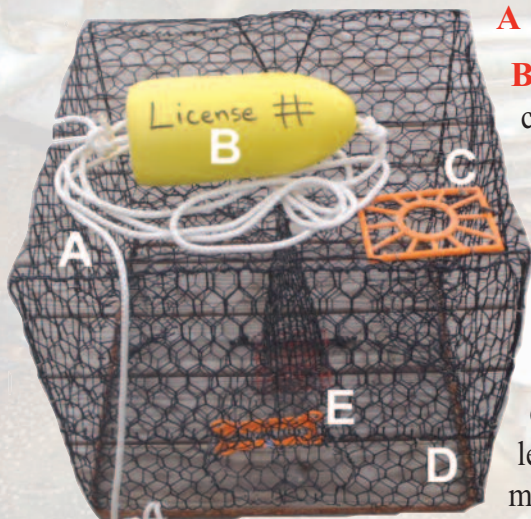
*Why Should Recreational Crabbers Care?*



## The Problem

**C**ommercial and recreational crabbers rely heavily on NJ estuaries to either make a living or catch some dinner using "Chesapeake-style" commercial crab traps. Boat traffic, incorrectly set gear, vandalism, shifting tides, and storms can unfortunately result in lost or damaged gear. These lost pots are called "Ghost Pots" and they continue to fish, accumulating blue crabs and other species that become trapped in the ghost pots. This has an impact on our estuaries and the enjoyment of the estuaries in various ways.

# How to Properly Rig a Commercial Style Crab Pot



**A** Proper type and length of rope. It is illegal to use floating rope.

**B** Commercial float (not homemade) with license number clearly marked.

**C** State-required biodegradable escape panel (or equivalent; see regulations for details).

**D** Rebar to weigh down the pot (bricks placed inside the pot will also work).

**E** Excluder device – required in all funnel entrances when the pot is set in any body of water less than 150' wide at mean low water and any man made lagoon.



*Homemade floats often fail!*

## Working with Crabbers, Boaters, and Shore Visitors

**T**he Richard Stockton College of NJ and the Jacques Cousteau National Estuarine Research Reserve have joined forces to identify, map, and remove ghost pots with the help of local watermen while increasing awareness among boaters, shore visitors, and recreational and commercial crabbers. If you're on the water, you have an important role in helping to reduce the occurrence of ghost pots.

**Don't forget your crabbing license for \$2! And remember – it's your job to know the complete rules and regulations. Find them at [www.state.nj.us/dep/fgw/njregs.htm#marine](http://www.state.nj.us/dep/fgw/njregs.htm#marine)**

## Use the Proper Gear

**U**se highly visible colors on commercial buoys and highlight them with reflective tape so they can be seen more easily at night. Be sure to label your float with your current license number.



*Lost pots can damage your boat or others!*

Save time and get it right – find out how to purchase a “Rig ‘Em Right” kit by visiting [www.WeCrabNJ.org](http://www.WeCrabNJ.org).