



Newscast



An information bulletin for recreational fishers

Edition 30, June 2004

Message for licence agents

A reminder to all licence agents: backdating licences is an offence. You may forward date a licence for a period of four weeks.

Want to apply for funding from the Recreational Fishing Trusts?

NSW Fisheries invites clubs, organisations, councils, community groups and individuals to apply for funding from the Recreational Fishing Trusts. In 2002/03 \$8.4 million was raised from licence sales and anglers are already enjoying the results. The recreational fishing fee is funding projects such as more coastal and inland Fisheries Officers, fish stocking, angler facilities such as fish cleaning tables and fishing platforms, fish aggregating devices, essential research and many others. For an application kit or more information call 9527 8411 or visit www.fisheries.nsw.gov.au

Fish Aggregating Devices (FADs)

During winter some of the 13 FADs along the NSW coast will be removed for maintenance. FAD's are yellow, spherical buoys designed to attract surface-feeding fish such as tuna, mackerel, dolphin-fish and marlin during summer. Please check the NSW Fisheries website at http://www.fisheries.nsw.gov.au/rec/sw/fad/home_fad.htm before venturing offshore.

Local help needed to implement new fish passage project

NSW Fisheries is seeking the assistance of local fishers and the community to help identify barriers that may be blocking fish passage. Many native fish are migratory and need to be able to swim upriver to breed and reach favourable habitats. Some road crossings such as causeways, fords or culverts can cause localised increases in water flows, creating strong currents that stop or restrict fish from travelling upstream. These currents can scour the bed of the creek on the downstream side of the crossing creating a waterfall effect. Native fish like bass and mullet can't leap and even 10cm is too large a step for them to conquer. If you know of a fish "unfriendly" road crossing, call Natalie McCarthy at NSW Fisheries Richmond Fisheries Office on (02) 6686 2018 or write to NSW Fisheries, PO Box 154, Ballina 2478.

NSW Fisheries calls on "weed warriors" to help combat *Caulerpa*

Caulerpa taxifolia currently occurs in nine estuaries in NSW, including Burrill Lake, Narrawallee Inlet and Lake Conjola, with infestations ranging from isolated patches to dense beds covering many hectares. The green, fern-like *Caulerpa* weed grows rapidly and regenerates easily from pieces that break off existing plants. It has the potential to overtake seagrass beds, which are important nursery areas for fish. Boat users can help prevent the spread of *Caulerpa* by:

- Avoiding boating near known *Caulerpa* colonies.
- Checking anchors, ropes and chains before leaving an area.
- Checking fishing equipment; nets, traps and fishing lines before use.
- Checking dive gear such as wetsuits bags and other equipment before use.
- Collect any fragments of *Caulerpa* that you may have accidentally picked up. Seal the pieces in a plastic bag and dispose of them.

Fresh sightings of *Caulerpa taxifolia* can be reported by calling the NSW Fisheries' 24-hour recorded reporting line on 02 4916 3877 or by emailing pests@fisheries.nsw.gov.au

General information 1300 550 474

Agent enquiries or changing contact details: 02 9527 8589, Fax 02 9527 8409

Good news for freshwater habitats

The Recreational Fishing Freshwater Trust has set aside \$300,000 over the next three years to rehabilitate inland fish habitats, which will increase recreational fish populations in NSW. Funding for 14 projects in 2003/04 will rehabilitate about 80 hectares of floodplain and freshwater wetlands. These projects include: removing obstacles to fish movement along 40 km of river; reintroducing large woody debris into 7 km of river to create habitat for native fish and rehabilitating over 30 km of riverbanks by removing weeds and replanting native vegetation. Research projects will look at issues such as fish passage design and improving water flows to wetlands. Freshwater fish such as Australian bass, golden perch, Murray cod, eastern freshwater cod, freshwater catfish and freshwater mullet will directly benefit from this work.

Biology of black bream

The Recreational Fishing (Saltwater) Trust is funding a study on the biology of black bream, a key recreational fish species found in southern NSW Estuaries. Over 500 black bream have been sampled from Lake Coila and Lake Brou. Preliminary results show that all fish caught have been sexually mature ranging in size from as small as 5 to 33cm and that bream are spring spawners. Fish spawn in the evening with the majority of fish being caught in the riverine sections of the estuary. A second study on bream is also being funded through the Saltwater Trust small grants program and will be carried out by the University of Wollongong. The study will undertake a genetic analysis to determine the importance of cross breeding between black and yellowfin bream.

Catching lobsters - did you know?

Not more than one lobster trap is to be used by any person at any time. The base or floor of the trap may be either rectangular (not exceeding 1.2m x 1.2m) or circular (not exceeding 1.2m in diameter). A buoy with a minimum diameter of 12cm clearly marked "L" with your name in letters not less than 5cm high must be attached. No rope should float on the surface of the water. Lobster traps must not be used in inland waters or in any water more than 10m deep. When snorkelling lobsters can only be taken with bare or gloved hands (no scuba) and no hook or other implement can be used.

Tournament monitoring program

The Recreational Fishing Trust is funding the collection and analysis of angling catch and effort data at selected fresh and saltwater fishing events. The research started in freshwater regions in 1999 and expanded into saltwater in 2002. Anglers at selected competitions are issued with a "Fishing Report Kit", which they use to record all their fishing activities during the event. This includes the length of fish landed and how long they spent fishing. The information allows a catch rate (number of fish caught per angling hour or angling trip) to be calculated for various waterways, which can then be compared year on year. By providing this essential information, which helps us monitor the status of various fishing locations, anglers are contributing to the sensible and sustainable management of NSW fish stocks. NSW Fisheries appreciates their efforts and the continuing support and the cooperation of associated fishing clubs and organisations throughout NSW. For more information contact Tim Park on (02) 9527 8411.

Trout fishing season - winter closure reminder

Remember that trout streams will be closed to recreational fishing from midnight on Monday, June 14. The annual closure gives brown, rainbow and brook trout a chance to breed. Fishers can still take trout in designated dams, all year round. Trout streams will reopen to recreational fishers at midnight on October 1.