



NewsCast



An information bulletin for recreational fishers

Edition 47, April 2006

Catch one with a tag and be rewarded

Fishers along the coast can win a reward, learn something interesting and help increase the survival rates of caught-and-released fish, if they're lucky enough to land a tagged yellowfin bream, trevally or mulloway. The program is part of a NSW Department of Primary Industries (DPI) and Recreational Fishing Trusts initiative to learn more about where hooked-and-released fish end up, and how they fare compared to other fish.

Approximately 3000 mulloway, 500 silver trevally and 2000 yellowfin bream are to be used in the research project. Many of the fish were caught by around 70 anglers in 35 boats who took part in the organised fishing events in Botany Bay over this summer. These fish, along with those already collected by researchers, were measured and weighed, then tagged and released.

These fish could end up anywhere along the east coast, so it will be a great help to our knowledge base if they are caught and the information is passed on to NSW DPI. If you catch one of the tagged fish, we need to know the date, location of capture, your name, address and telephone number and the tag details. Any recreational or commercial fishers who report their catches of tagged fish will be rewarded with a \$10 gift voucher for each tagged fish, and will also be given details on where and when their fish was first released and how much it subsequently grew. The fish are easy to identify. They each have a yellow plastic tag with the words 'NSW DPI Coffs Hrb', a fish code number, and a telephone number - 02 6648 3910. This research is part of a three-year project, funded by the Recreational Fishing Trust and NSW DPI, aimed at developing handling techniques and best practices to ensure survival rates of fish which are caught and then released.

Those lucky enough to land a tagged fish should freeze the special catch with tag and then contact Dr Paul Butcher as soon as possible on 02 6648 3910 or 0438 950 838 or paul.butcher@dpi.nsw.gov.au or any NSW DPI Fisheries office.

Sydney Harbour recreational fishing and dioxin contamination - update

Preliminary results from additional testing has shown that dioxin levels in pelagic species of fish in Sydney Harbour are below the elevated levels that have been found in bream and prawns. Early results on a range of species taken east of the Harbour Bridge including yellowtail, sand whiting, kingfish, luderick and trumpeter whiting, show dioxin levels below the maximum level recommended by the expert panel. Results from bream, squid, trevally and prawns have revealed the presence of higher levels of dioxin. These results represent only 10% of the current testing program and while they are a positive sign, the current warnings about eating fish taken from Sydney Harbour will remain. An expert panel has recommended recreational fishers eat no more than 150 grams of fish per month or no more than 300 grams of prawns per month. Both amounts should not be eaten in the same month. The health warnings will be reviewed once the final test results are in. More information is available at www.foodauthority.nsw.gov.au or phone 1300 552 406.

General information 1300 550 474

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

www.dpi.nsw.gov.au

Two Sydney men to face court over illegal netting in Lake Illawarra

Two Marrickville men are to face court over eight illegal fishing charges after allegedly being caught with illegal fishing nets on Lake Illawarra on Sunday 26 February. DPI Fisheries Officers apprehended the 48 and 46-year-old in their vehicle after watching them for a number of hours on Lake Illawarra. The Fisheries Officers searched their vehicle and found eight monofilament meshing nets, measuring more than 1 km in length. They also found almost 300 fish and crabs, with over half being of prohibited size. With the help of Port Kembla Water Police, DPI Fisheries Officers seized the illegal nets, a Toyota Tarago, the catch - mainly sand whiting, tarwhine, blue swimmer crabs, flathead and bream - and all storage containers.

The charges the two men face carry the following maximum penalties:

- Possession of undersized fish - max. penalty \$11 000 or 3 month's prison
- Exceeding possession limits - max. penalty \$11 000 or 3 month's prison
- Possessing fish illegally taken - max. penalty \$11 000 or 3 month's prison
- Possessing crabs carrying eggs - max. penalty \$5500
- Possessing illegal fishing gear (3 counts each) - max. penalty \$22 000 or 6 month's prison
- Taking fish for sale when unlicensed - max. penalty \$110 000

Shellfish closure - Bellinger River

A fishing closure has been implemented to protect human health following consultation with the NSW Food Authority. The taking of all species of bivalve molluscs (including oysters and cockles) is prohibited by all methods from all waters from a line commencing at the confluence of the Bellinger and Kalang Rivers upstream to the tidal limit of the Bellinger River. This fishing closure is effective for a period of one year.

Angel Ring update

The angel ring project is run by the NSW Branch of the Australian National Sportfishing Association (ANSA) and funded by the NSW Recreational Fishing Trusts and other organisations. It involves the installation of angel rings (or life buoys) at known rock fishing black spots and results in the saving of several lives a year. One of the biggest cost items to the angel ring program is replacing missing rings and damaged posts. On average, ANSA NSW replaces 25 missing rings a year. ANSA NSW is reminding anglers to be vigilant in areas with rings and to report missing, damaged or stolen rings to ANSA NSW on 1800 079 009.

Fishcare looks for new volunteers

NSW DPI is looking for new Fishcare volunteers on the North Coast and is inviting interested people living in the Forster-Tuncurry, Port Macquarie, Coffs Harbour, Grafton-Maclean-Yamba and Tweed Heads areas to nominate for the program. Volunteers assist the NSW DPI in educating the public on recreational fishing regulations and sustainable fishing practices. The NSW Recreational Fishing Trust funds the program. Information on the Fishcare Volunteer Program and nomination forms can be obtained by visiting the NSW DPI website, or by phoning Mark Asquith on 02 66520918.