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Botany Bay artificial reef expanded

The Department of Primary Industries (DPI) has recently expanded the artificial reef in Botany Bay to twice its original size. The reef, which is located in Yarra Bay, now covers an area of 2,000m² and is made up of 400 individual reef balls each weighing up to 1 tonne. This is the fifth reef to be completed as part of the estuarine artificial reefs project, bringing the total number of reef balls deployed as part of the project to 2,300. The project is part of a series of fisheries enhancement projects implemented using funds from the recreational fishing trust that includes the popular Fish Aggregating Devices (FADs).

In addition to estuarine artificial reefs, DPI has recently obtained approval to deploy the first of three purpose built offshore artificial reefs in an area approximately 1.2 km east of South Head in 38m of water. The large reef will be made from steel and will weigh in excess of 42 tonnes, standing up to 12m high. The tender for the construction and deployment of the large steel framed structure has recently closed. Following deployment, the reef will be monitored in detail for three years to evaluate its effectiveness. Recreational fishers can check out the DPI website for updates on the progress of this and other fisheries enhancement projects (www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/recreational).



Picture: A recently deployed Botany Bay reef ball being investigated by a school of inquisitive Silver Trevally.

Newscast

Attention Rock Fishers!

Rock fishers make up a small but passionate sector of the fishing community and while it is an enjoyable pastime for many, unfortunately it is a sport that poses many dangers. The recent deaths of two rock fisherman in Sydney Harbour and another in the Royal National Park is a sad reminder of these dangers, and highlights the importance of the following key messages to ensure your safety while fishing:

- ❖ Never fish alone.
- ❖ Wear a lifejacket.
- ❖ Inform others of your plans.
- ❖ Wear light clothing and appropriate footwear.
- ❖ Observe first and fish later.
- ❖ Stay alert.
- ❖ Plan an escape route in case you are washed in. Stay calm - if you are washed in, swim away from the rocks and look for a safe place to come ashore or stay afloat and wait for help to arrive.
- ❖ It is not always safe to jump in if someone is washed into the water. Preferably use rope or something that floats to rescue the person. If there is an Angel Ring nearby know how to use it. Dial 000 to get help.

For more information on rockfishing safety visit www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/recreational or www.safefishing.com.au.

Help keep abalone disease out of NSW – don't use abalone gut as bait!

The use of abalone viscera (gut) as bait or burley has been banned for recreational and commercial fishing in NSW since 2007. This closure has been implemented to protect NSW's abalone stocks from abalone viral ganglioneuritis (AVG), which can be transferred via infected abalone gut. Although this virus has no known effects on human health, AVG has caused massive losses of abalone in Victoria, with up to 95% mortality in certain areas since this disease was first identified in 2005. AVG has been confirmed as far east as Cape Otway, in south-west Victoria, approximately 590km from the NSW and VIC border. NSW anglers are encouraged to use alternative baits like cunjevoi, pipis, prawns, and bread. Remember to check your local fishing rules for gathering bait and bag and size limits apply. By respecting the ban on taking fish with abalone gut, fishers will be helping protect abalone stocks for future generations. For more information visit www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/fisheries.

Have your say on the protection of the grey nurse shark

DPI has released a discussion paper on the protection of grey nurse sharks in NSW. The public is invited to make a submission on the issues raised in the discussion paper and on future management arrangements for the protection and recovery of grey nurse sharks in NSW. The paper will be on public exhibition until Friday 26 August 2011. Fishing and diving at Fish Rock and Green Island provides many social and economic benefits to the local community and it is important that the community has the chance to provide input into the future of the area.

DPI will also be conducting a scientific review of the effectiveness of management arrangements in meeting domestic and international commitments to conserve marine biodiversity and ensure the conservation of the grey nurse shark well into the future. The outcomes from community consultation and the scientific review will be used to guide the development of new management arrangements at Fish Rock and Green Island.

Recreational fishers are reminded that fishing with bait or wire trace while anchored or moored, or attaching weights of more than 500 grams to fishing lines is prohibited within 200 metres of Fish Rock and Green Island. These changes only affect recreational fishing and the commercial fishing closures at Fish Rock and Green Island to protect grey nurse sharks will continue unchanged. For further information visit the DPI website at <http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/fisheries>.

The search is on for Future Recreational Fishing Leaders

Expressions of Interest from dedicated recreational fishers to take up the challenge of becoming effective leaders and advocates for recreational fishing are being sought for participation in a joint NSW and Qld workshop. The workshop which is being co-hosted by the Recreational Fishing Alliance of NSW, Sunfish Qld and the Australian National Sportfishing Association will be held at North Keppel Island Environmental Education Centre in Queensland from 17 to 20 November 2011. Entry is limited to around 15 participants.

Expression of Interest forms are available from the following websites www.rfansw.com.au or www.sunfishqld.com.au and entries close 31 July 2011.

For further information about this exciting opportunity, contact the workshop Coordinator, Mr Malcolm Poole in NSW (president@rfansw.com.au) or Mr Kim Martin in Queensland (kisu1917@bigpond.com).

Did you know redfin perch are now noxious in NSW?

In December 2010, NSW introduced further changes to the NSW Noxious Fish List as part of a consistent approach to the management of ornamental fish throughout Australia. The NSW Noxious Fish List now includes an additional 67 listings that have been agreed nationally as having a high-risk pest potential. In addition, the NSW Government has listed redfin perch (*Perca fluviatilis*) as a Class 1 noxious fish as it poses a significant threat to native fish species. The noxious listing of redfin perch (redfin) aims to protect native species and to prevent the intentional translocation and stocking of this pest fish outside its known range. The new rules will be enforced from 1 July 2011.

What does the redfin noxious listing mean for recreational fishers?

- ❖ There is no size or bag limit for redfin in NSW and anglers may continue to target this species.
- ❖ If you catch a redfin we encourage that you quickly and humanely dispatch it; you may utilise it as food, or you can dispose of it in an appropriate manner.
- ❖ It is not illegal to immediately return live redfin to the water where caught; however, we encourage you to dispatch and utilise redfin wherever possible.
- ❖ It is illegal to be in possession of a live redfin in NSW (e.g. in a bucket, aquaria, keeper net, live well etc) and you can be fined. Anglers in NSW can only possess dead redfin. If anglers in NSW are retaining caught redfin the catch can only be stored dead (e.g. on ice in an esky).
- ❖ It is illegal to use live or dead redfin as bait in NSW.
- ❖ The noxious listing of redfin applies in NSW, including in Lake Mulwala and the Murray River to the top of its southern bank where NSW fishing rules apply. The listing does not apply in Lake Hume where Victorian fishing rules apply.
- ❖ Possession of live Class 1 noxious fish species is totally banned in NSW. There are heavy penalties for possessing, selling or importing them (up to \$5,500 for an individual or \$11,000 for a corporation).

For more information visit www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/fisheries/pests-diseases or contact the DPI Aquatic Biosecurity Unit at aquatic.pests@industry.nsw.gov.au or on (02) 4982 1232.