



Newscast



An information bulletin for recreational fishers

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Six artificial reefs for Botany Bay

Recreational fishing in Botany Bay is set to get even better since the deployment of six small artificial reefs this month. The reefs are part of a three-year \$369 000 pilot programme funded by the Recreational Fishing Trusts. The reefs will create new fish habitats in this popular recreational fishing spot, attracting various species of fish. The six reefs are made up of 180 concrete reef ball modules, which can be easily moved, or removed completely, if necessary. DPI staff have installed the artificial structures in six locations in Botany Bay - Yarra Bay (3 reefs), Astrolabe Cove (1 reef) and Congwong Bay (2 reefs), in depths ranging from 9 to 14 metres.

Prior to the deployment, scientific surveys of the sites and surrounding natural reefs were conducted so they could be compared with the artificial structures once in place. The program will play a vital role in providing information on the benefits of artificial reefs as a fisheries enhancement tool. Research on the reefs will aim to determine the structures effectiveness and any likely impacts. The study will give the NSW Government a sound basis for making informed decisions about artificial reef construction and their effectiveness in the future. The artificial reefs are a great example of recreational licence fees being put back into the fishing community.

Anglers praised for helping with fish migration study

The participation of anglers has greatly contributed to the success of a study on the migration patterns of fish along the Murray River system and they are being asked to keep up the good work.

NSW DPI Freshwater Fish Ecologist, Dr Lee Baumgartner, said NSW DPI scientists, together with their counterparts from Victoria and South Australia have tagged fish along the Murray and Murrumbidgee Rivers with microchip tags similar to those used to tag pets. Automated tracking stations that record the movement of fish through fishways are being progressively installed along the Murray River. Unlike previous tagging studies that relied on recapturing the fish, the tracking stations automatically record the location of the fish as they swim through the fishway. The fish have also been externally tagged with yellow tags that can be easily recognised by anglers. Contact details to report the recapture of tagged fish are printed on each tag.

Since the tagging of fish began in 2001 more than 10,000 fish have been tagged and released into the main channel of the Murray and Murrumbidgee Rivers. A further 500 fish have been tagged in the Shoalhaven catchment. Tagged species include native fish such as Murray cod, silver perch, golden perch, Australian bass, catfish, mullet and bony bream, and introduced fish such as carp, goldfish and redfin perch. Dr Baumgartner said initial results showed that some fish have moved more than 500 kilometres along the Murray River in as little as three months and as far as 1700 kilometres during a two-year period.

NSW anglers who catch a tagged fish in the region are asked to freecall 1800 185 027 to report the date of the catch, tag number, place of catch, length and species of fish. Alternatively, anglers can report their catch online at:

<http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/aboutus/resources/majorpubs/guides/freshwater-fishing-guide-2005-07>

All anglers reporting their catch will receive details of the original tagging location and will be rewarded with a 75 millimetre 'Oar-Gee' plow lure.

More mulloway for northern rivers

Fish stocks in the Manning River have received a big boost this March with the introduction of 20,000 fingerling mulloway, while the Tweed River received 6,500 fingerling mulloway this April. This major stocking project is being run by NSW DPI and the University of New South Wales. The project will evaluate the impact of releasing mulloway in estuaries, including their effect on food sources such as other fish and prawns. The stocking is part of an ongoing commitment by the Recreational Fishing Trusts to improve fishing in NSW.

Trout streams closed for spawning season

Designated trout streams are closed to recreational fishing from Tuesday June 13, and will re-open on Saturday September 30. This annual closure gives brown, rainbow and brook trout a chance to breed uninterrupted, however anglers can still fish in designated trout dams all year round. These closures are an important way of ensuring the valuable recreational fishing industry is sustainable and can continue to benefit rural and regional NSW.

Detailed information on trout fishing rules (including designated trout streams) can be found in the NSW DPI's Freshwater Fishing Guide, available from NSW DPI Fisheries offices, [online](#) and most bait and tackle stores.

Court comes down hard on abalone poachers

Two men have each been sentenced to a month's jail each after being found guilty of separate abalone-related offences. Both men were found in possession of hundreds of abalone, many of which were undersized.

A 36-year-old and a 30-year-old man appeared at Bega Court and were sentenced to one-month's jail for possessing more than the maximum quantity of fish. They each received an additional one-month's imprisonment (to be served concurrently) for possessing prohibited-size fish, and were ordered to pay \$6,820 and \$3,410 in costs respectively.

Marine park draft zone plan released

After months of meetings with stakeholders, many hours of discussion and ongoing negotiations, a draft zoning plan for the Port Stephens Great Lakes Marine Park is now available and open to public comment until 23 September 2006. Copies of the plan can be obtained and viewed at the MPA website, the Port Stephens-Great Lakes Marine Park office, Taylors Beach, the Department of Primary Industries and National Parks offices, public libraries, selected fishing tackle outlets and local council offices. There will also be several public information sessions.

Further information on marine parks can be found at www.mpa.nsw.gov.au