



Newscast



An information bulletin for recreational fishers

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South Coast Lakes get prawn stocking for Christmas

Three million juvenile eastern king prawns have been placed in Wallagoot Lake and one million in Back Lake (near Merimbula) as the second part of a three year research project that is funded by the Recreational Fishing Trusts and carried out by researchers from the University of New South Wales.

The tiny stocked juvenile prawns weigh less than a gram and will be able to be harvested when they reach about 50mm in total length. Prawns stocked in the first stage of the project in late January 2007 have shown good survival and excellent growth rates reaching over 30g in size. During the three year study, fish will be caught from stocked and non-stocked areas to estimate the proportion of the stocked prawns that are consumed by predators. Over 18 million prawns are harvested annually by recreational fishers Australia-wide. More than 65% of these are harvested in NSW. The eastern king prawn accounts for around 83 percent of the recreational prawn catches in NSW.

Fisheries officers check out South Coast fishers

More than 400 recreational fishers were checked by NSW Department of Primary Industries (DPI) Fisheries Officers during an operation that began before and continued over the Murray cod opening weekend. Five Fisheries Officers participated in the operation from 29 November to 2 December, which checked 418 fishers in the south west of the State, predominantly along the Murray River. There was an overall compliance rate of 88 per cent and the operation is a timely reminder to fishers that NSW DPI Fisheries Officers regularly patrol waterways across the State and compliance with fisheries legislation is strictly enforced. Fishers should check fishing rules and related closures. If people observe fishers doing the wrong thing, they should report it to the nearest Fisheries Office or contact Fisherman's Watch on 1800 043 536.

New closure to protect abalone stocks

A new closure has been put in place to protect NSW's abalone stocks from abalone viral ganglioneuritis (AVG), which can be transferred via abalone gut. It is now illegal to use abalone gut as bait or berley, either recreationally or commercially, for the taking of any fish in all waters of NSW. Although this disease has no known effects on human health, AVG has caused massive losses of abalone in Victoria, with up to 95% mortality in certain areas in the last two years. At present, there is no indication that AVG is present in NSW abalone stocks. However, the use of abalone gut as bait has been identified as a high risk factor for introducing AVG into NSW abalone populations. If AVG entered NSW, it is likely that the impact would devastate abalone stocks in NSW. Several alternative baits are available to pursue the species normally targeted with abalone gut. These include cunjevoi, pippies, prawns, and bread. By respecting restrictions on taking fish with abalone gut, fishers will be helping protect abalone stocks for future generations.

For further information please contact the Strategy Leader for Aquatic Biosecurity Health, on (02) 4982 1232 or email bill.bardsley@dpi.nsw.gov.au.

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