



Newscast

An information bulletin for recreational fishers



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Murray Cod season opened on December 1

Freshwater anglers are reminded that the size limit for Murray cod increased from 55cm to 60cm on 1 December to provide better protection for immature fish and enhance their breeding opportunities. There is a daily bag limit of two per person a day and a total possession limit of four from either rivers or dams. The minimum legal length of Murray cod is 60cm, but anglers can keep only one fish of more than 100cm in length. Live finfish including carp, and birds and mammals cannot be used as bait. Remember, a similar species, the endangered trout cod, is fully protected and anglers must release any trout cod they catch. Every year a three-month closure on fishing for Murray cod, from September to the end of November, protects this native species during its breeding season.

Would you like to join NSW DPI as a Get Hooked- volunteer?

DPI's new schools fishing education program *Get Hooked It's Fun to Fish* was successfully piloted in Terms 3 and 4 of 2008. As part of this program children learn about sustainable fishing, environmental responsibility, and fishing safety through games and hands-on learning. Over 40 schools participated around the state, with 15 specially trained volunteers assisting with in-class activities and at fishing workshops. Feedback from schools and volunteers has been very positive. In 2009 over 100 schools will participate in *Get Hooked It's Fun to Fish*, with many more specially trained volunteers to assist in classrooms. Training will be held for new volunteers in Term 1 2009 in: Sydney - 17 & 18 January, North Coast – 31 January & 1 February, Western NSW – 7 & 8 February, South Coast – 21 & 22 February. If you are interested in volunteering in 2009, please contact Kerrie Deguara on (02) 9527 8473 or kerrie.deguara@dpi.nsw.gov.au

Trout back on the menu

Anglers are reminded that trout streams in NSW opened on the October long weekend 2008, and will remain open until the end of the June 2009 long weekend. The opening marked the end of the annual spawning run when trout travel up rivers and streams to breed.

NSW Future Leaders in Recreational Fishing Program

The Recreational Fishing Alliance of NSW is seeking interested recreational fishers, including women and indigenous fishers to participate in the NSW Future Leaders program. Selected participants will ideally be between 20 – 45 years old and will be mentored by a group of recognised leaders in recreational fishing advocacy and fisheries management. The program will provide the opportunity for participants to be exposed to a raft of current state fisheries issues in fresh and saltwater, to see how fisheries management and compliance operates, and to spend time viewing one of Australia's pristine marine environments. A 5 day workshop will be held in Coffs Harbour in February 2009 and NSW DPI will be contributing some expertise to the workshop. If you are interested in participating visit www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/fisheries/recreational/future-leaders or for more information contact the RFA NSW on (02) 4362 1687 or 0403 125 766. **Applications close 17 December 2008.**

\$12 million boost to recreational fishing

The State's anglers will directly benefit from \$12 million worth of projects specially designed to enhance recreational fishing. The NSW Recreational Fishing Trust has allocated a total of \$2.9 million to new and ongoing freshwater projects, while over \$9 million is being spent on saltwater fishing projects in 2008/09. Some projects chosen by the trust for funding include:

- Additional prawn stocking in Wallagoot Lake (\$95,000);
- Research into developing fishing gear and practices that improve the survival of released fish;
- A research study investigating rock fishing fatalities (\$67,000);
- Educational programs for school children such as Get Hooked - its fun to fish;
- Installing fish cleaning tables at a number of locations across NSW;
- A Recreational Mobile Squad of Fisheries Officers;
- Fish Aggregating Devices (FADs); and
- Expanding estuarine artificial reefs

The Recreational Fishing Trusts are directly funded by fish licence fees – so anglers can rest assured that the fees they pay for their licenses are reinvested into worthwhile recreational fishing projects for their benefits. More details of the projects can be found at www.dpi.nsw.gov.au.

Abalone gut ban continued to protect NSW abalone stocks

A closure was implemented late last year banning the recreation or commercial use of abalone gut as bait or burley for the taking of any fish in all waters of NSW. This closure has now been renewed for a further 12 months in an attempt to continue to protect NSW's abalone stocks from abalone viral ganglioneuritis (AVG), which can be transferred in abalone gut. 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 since this disease was first identified in 2005. AVG has been confirmed as far east as White Cliffs near Johanna, south-west Victoria, approximately 610 km from the NSW/VIC border. Several alternative baits are available to pursue the species normally targeted with abalone gut. These include cunjevoi, pippies, prawns, and bread. By respecting the ban on taking fish with abalone gut, fishers will be helping protect abalone stocks for future generations. For further information please contact the Aquatic Biosecurity Unit on (02) 4982 1232.

Anglers reminded of fishing closure in Cod Grounds Marine Reserve

The Cod Grounds Commonwealth Marine Reserve located off Laurieton in mid-northern NSW protects important habitat for the critically endangered grey nurse shark. The Reserve consists of a circle with a radius of 1000 metres centred at a point of latitude 31° 40' 52" south, longitude 152° 54' 37" east. Anglers planning to fish locations near the Reserve are advised to save these coordinates in their GPS units. Anglers are reminded that all forms of commercial and recreational fishing, including spear fishing, are not permitted in the Reserve. Further information on the Reserve is available at www.environment.gov.au/coasts/mpa/cod-grounds/index.html, and at local NSW DPI Fisheries Offices.

NSW DPI would like to wish all recreational fishers a happy and safe festive season.

General information 1300 550 474

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

www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/recreational