

fishinglines

The magazine of Victoria's Peak Recreational Fishing Body

AUTUMN 2013



Squid –the jig is up
Destination Westernport
Natives around Melbourne
Mornington Peninsula
Patterson River

THE NEW VICTORIAN MARINE SAFETY ACT HAS ARRIVED



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The Marine Safety Act 2010 (Vic) took effect on 1 July 2012. It ensures that everyone involved in boating activities shares a common safety focus.

This new legislation, which replaces the *Marine Act 1988* (Vic), introduces a number of changes and new responsibilities for recreational boaters in Victoria.

Safety duties

A new concept that safety on the water is a shared responsibility and that everyone must take reasonable care to protect themselves and others. You have a 'shared responsibility' for marine safety if you are:

- an owner of a vessel
- a person involved in recreational boating activities (a master, operator or passenger)
- a person who designs, supplies or modifies vessels, marine safety equipment or infrastructure
- a member of the public.

Your responsibility for safety depends on the activity, the risks involved in that activity and your capacity to control those risks.

Owner onus

This ensures that those responsible for a maritime offence are held accountable for their actions. This means that if an offence is committed by someone operating a vessel, other than the owner, and that person cannot be identified, then

the owner of that vessel will generally be liable, unless they can establish who was responsible. This applies when a person breaks any waterway rule when operating a vessel.

Licensing

A boat operator license is now known as a 'marine license' and a person who is the master of a vessel must hold a marine licence. There are two types for those who satisfy the requirements:

- a general marine license – for those aged 16 and older
- a restricted marine license – for those at least 12 years old. Once they turn 16, the license becomes a general marine license.

Registration

The person who registers a vessel must be 14 years of age or older.

What is Transport Safety Victoria's role?

Transport Safety Victoria (TSV) is the State's safety regulator for bus, maritime and rail transport. We are responsible for administering the new Marine Safety Act.

For more information visit our website at www.transportsafety.vic.gov.au and subscribe to our email alerts.

You can also follow us on Twitter @MaritimeTSV.



Fishing Lines

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Welcome

We all understand that the effort you put into anything has a direct relationship on what you get out of it. Recreational fishing is an excellent example of an activity that rewards those who put in the time and effort to learn the subtle techniques that lead to successful fishing.

You cannot catch fish by sitting in front of the television or in your office behind a large desk. One of the major benefits of fishing is that you have to get out and experience the outdoors, interact with nature, enjoy some casual exercise walking along a riverbank, take some time to enjoy the tranquility of sitting in a boat floating on a lake or in one of Melbourne's magnificent bays and estuaries. Contemplate the world while sitting under a shady tree and have some time to yourself to restore your work/life balance. Various research studies conducted around the world confirm the therapeutic benefits of recreational fishing to society.

Fishing is also a great way to teach both adults and children how to participate in life. By participating in fishing activities with family and friends, they gain a sense of belonging, make new friends, keep themselves active and interested and develop confidence in themselves at the same time. They have an opportunity to pit their skills against a fish that uses instinct rather than the convoluted thought processes that we humans too often use. It is a key ingredient of success and is something we should encourage in our children.

Fishing is not only about catching a fish – it is about getting to know your environment, your society, your family, your friends, yourself and building your knowledge and understanding of nature and your environmental footprint. Recreational fishers understand the habits

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and instinctive behavior of fish. They understand the long term benefits of healthy habitat and as a consequence of this knowledge and empathy with nature, fishers make exceptional environmental stewards.

Melbourne is fortunate to have some great fishing locations virtually on our doorsteps. We have a range of metropolitan freshwater lakes that are regularly stocked with trout and native species prior to school holiday periods and a magnificent bay and estuary system that supports a wide range of popular recreational fish species like snapper, whiting, bream and flathead to name just a few.

While we have healthy bays, estuaries and metropolitan lakes, Melbourne has a critical lack of appropriate boat launching facilities in the greater Melbourne metropolitan area to cater for our many recreational fishers. VRFish recently completed a review of boat ramps and is currently working with the government to increase the number and quality of boat ramps across the metropolitan area.



Melbourne also has a large number of Fishing Clubs, some of which have been in existence for more than eighty years. These Clubs allow fishers to enjoy the camaraderie of like-minded individuals and to learn to fish from knowledgeable members. I would encourage prospective fishers to seek out a local fishing Club and benefit from the knowledge of these experienced fishers.

Melbourne is a vibrant, cosmopolitan society and we have a wide range of culturally and linguistically diverse (CaLD) recreational fishers. Fishers from these cultures use a myriad range of fishing knowledge, experience and techniques to catch fish and I am constantly amazed at the various methods used by fishers from different cultures to catch the same species of fish. However, one thing remains constant, they all experience the same thrill, anticipation and excitement when they catch a fish.

The VRFish mission is to increase participation in recreational fishing across Victoria. VRFish is delivering on this outcome by ensuring that the revenue raised from fishing licences is targeted towards improving fish habitat, increasing the efficiency and effectiveness of fish stockings, ensuring appropriate access to fishing locations and developing educational programs that encourage responsible fishing practices.

Fishing can be a lifetime journey of exciting and wonderful experiences. Share them with your family and friends.

Tight Lines

Russell Conway
Chair

Welcome to the latest edition of VRFish's *Fishing Lines* magazine. The theme for this issue is the

many and varied recreational fishing opportunities in and around Melbourne. Metropolitan based recreational fishers, particularly those that target freshwater fish, believe that they need to head at the very minimum, 100 kilometres beyond the city before they can experience good fishing. Well, as you can see, this is just not necessary.

Not only does Melbourne have Port Phillip Bay and Westernport right on its doorstep abounding with iconic fin fish species like snapper, whiting, flathead, gummies and calamari it also holds hidden jewels like scallops, rock lobster and abalone just to name three popular dive species. We've got well known waterways flowing into the two bays like the iconic Yarra and Maribyrnong Rivers both of which are chock-a-block with estuary species such as bream and mulloway plus other less well known creeks and rivers like the Bunyip, Cardinia and Yallock with even lesser known secrets like estuary perch.

Throughout metropolitan area Melbourne based recreational fishers have access to a number of lakes stocked annually by Fisheries Victoria with catchable size rainbow trout especially for kids and their families during the school holidays. VRFish members, particularly Ron Lewis of Native Fish Australia, have long advocated for more and more Melbourne lakes and dams to be stocked with salmonids and native species and we are optimistic of this becoming a reality.

There are other less well known places to catch native fish such as Albert Park Lake with its healthy and viable golden perch (yellowbelly) population and of course the Yarra River above Templestowe where the mighty Murray cod can be found along with the highly valued Macquarie perch.

VRFish has been at the leading edge of ensuring that Victorian recreational fishers are spoiled for choice. Our Vision Statement is "to ensure full access to a diverse and

healthy Victorian recreational fishery" and with all of the great spots that we have to go fishing I reckon that we can tick that box!

Since the last issue of *Fishing Lines*, VRFish has been at the forefront on the following issues:

- > The campaign to stop the so called "supertrawler", the MV Margiris, later renamed the Abel Tasman, from operating in Australian waters.
- > VRFish has also taken a leadership role in the creation of the Murray-Darling Basin Recreational Fishing Council (MDBRFC). We were instrumental in forming an unprecedented united response to the Basin Plan. With the publication of the true economic contribution of recreational fishing we were able to provide a succinct and powerful message that healthy rivers = healthy fish = healthy fisheries.
- > We attended the National Recreational Fishing Conference last August and had the opportunity to present a paper on the importance of recreational fishers having an understanding of the contribution that recreational fishing makes to the economy. There is no doubt that the 2009 report by Ernst & Young is a gift that just keeps on giving and, in my opinion, is probably one of the most significant achievements by VRFish over the last five years.
- > VRFish again had a strong presence at the Melbourne Winter Boat Show and also the 4WD and Fishing Show and we plan to have a significant presence there again in 2013.
- > VRFish took a lead position in the decision to suspend the stocking of brown trout into Lakes Purrumbete & Bullen Merri for a period of two years and the continued stocking effort with rainbow trout to assist the redevelopment of a new and viable stocking regime of Chinook salmon. It was also noted that in the interim, several year classes of resident Brown



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trout would still be available for anglers to target and most importantly, commencement of stocking this species would take place in 2014.

- > VRFish was a co-partner with the Mt Baw Baw Alpine Resort and Fisheries Victoria in the successful "Fly Fish Baw Baw" event
- > Working with Parks Victoria in developing an MoU and opening recreational fisher access to Albert Park Lake, Devilbend Reservoir and Werribee River (refer to the PV article in this issue).
- > Signing a four year funding arrangement for VRFish with DPI Fisheries Victoria.
- > Taking a lead role through VRFish State Council Member and President of Game Fishing Association of Victoria, Geoff Fisher, in response to the VEAC Investigation into Marine Parks. Thanks Geoff!
- > VRFish held a very successful Regional Workshop and State Council Meeting at Torquay in March to commence the process of developing our Marine Policy. The prime objective of this policy is to provide a framework for the continued management of the Victorian recreational marine & estuarine fishery.

All of these successes are reliant on the great work of the VRFish team i.e the Board, the State Council and most especially the Staff. I'd like to pay particular credit to Simon and Kate for all their great work over the last six months. There are many challenges ahead and we look forward to working through them.

Tight Lines

Christopher Collins
Executive Officer

caught & court

Divers fined for taking rock lobster with spears

Two Warrnambool men were fined \$1,000 each in the Warrnambool Magistrates Court in March after pleading guilty to using hand spears to take local rock lobster and other fisheries offences late last year.

In November 2012, the two defendants, aged 24 and 25, were observed snorkeling together near Thunder Point, Warrnambool. They were photographed by Fisheries Officers as they took several rock lobsters using a hand spear. They placed them in a bag hidden among rocks.

After about an hour the two men packed up their catch, changed out of their wetsuits and returned to the car park where they were intercepted by Fisheries Officers.



The court was told the Officers found six rock lobsters, of which all but one were undersize. The smallest female measured 77mm instead of the required 105mm. The smallest male lobster measured 81mm instead of the required 110mm.

The men also pleaded guilty to exceeding the daily bag limit of two and failing to have a current fishing licence.

Both men represented themselves and in their plea to the magistrate claimed they had 'no idea' about the size and catch limits and the ban on using spears to take lobsters. The magistrate told the defendants their excuses were not convincing as they had both held fishing licences before.

The men were fined \$1000 each without conviction and ordered to pay costs of \$86 each. Their seized diving equipment was forfeited.

In a separate matter an 18-year-old man from Melton West was also fined \$750 without conviction after pleading guilty to using prohibited equipment in the form of a speargun to take lobster.

The court was told that in November 2012, west of Port Fairy, the man was inspected by Fisheries Officers as he returned to his vehicle. The inspection revealed two lobsters that showed signs of being speared.

Three more frozen lobster were discovered in a portable ice chest and the man admitted they had also been taken by spear over the previous two days. The defendant made full admissions and was co-operative and there were no other charges.



Queenscliff snapper catch over the limit

In March, Fisheries Officers seized more than 60 snapper taken by two men at Swan Bay in Queenscliff.

Geelong Fisheries Officers were undertaking routine patrols at the Swan Bay boat ramp when they inspected the vessel with two men onboard.

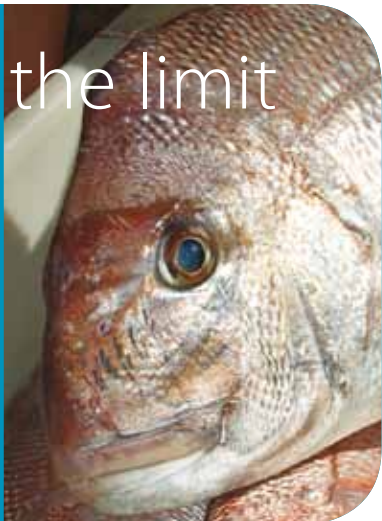
One man was a 51 year-old from Winchelsea and another a 55 year-old from Deans Marsh.

Officers seized the vessel and 62 snapper from the men and it will be alleged they were taken for the purpose of selling them.

There will be an ongoing investigation into the matter and it is likely the two men will be charged on summons with exceeding the catch limits for snapper.

Anglers are reminded that the catch limit for snapper is 10, of which no more than three fish may be equal to or exceed 40cm in length.

Anyone who sees or suspects illegal fishing activity is encouraged to ring the 24-hour fisheries offence reporting line 13 FISH (13 3474).



Illegal snapper haul uncovered at Black Rock

A 59-year-old Brunswick man had his boat seized by Fisheries Officers at Black Rock on Easter Monday for allegedly exceeding the snapper bag limit and trying to conceal part of his illegal catch.

Fisheries Officers inspected the man's vessel at the Black Rock boat ramp at approximately 7.50pm and were shown a bucket of nine snapper.

The Officers then conducted a search of the vessel and located two portable drill cases behind the fuel tank.

The cases allegedly contained a further 22 legal size snapper, which made the man's total catch of 31 snapper far in excess of the daily bag limit of ten.

The man's vessel was seized and, when the matter goes to court, the Magistrate will decide if it's to be forfeited.

He is expected to be charged on summons with exceeding the bag limit for snapper and hindering and obstructing Fisheries Officers by concealing part of his catch.

If found guilty, the man faces fines of up to \$3000 plus costs and potentially a criminal conviction.

Fisheries Victoria doesn't tolerate the concealing of fish to avoid inspection by our Officers and will not hesitate in seizing vessels, vehicles or equipment.



Recreational fishing forums

Fishers can have their say and learn more about what Fisheries Victoria is doing to improve recreational fishing across the state at ten public forums being held in June 2013, in partnership with VRFish.

Fishing personalities will be coming along too, including Rex Hunt who will be attending the Greensborough forum and Merv Hughes, author of 'Caught in the Deep', who will attend the Nagambie, Bendigo, Inverloch and Lakes Entrance forums.

If you cannot make it along on the night:

- > email your ideas to improving.fishing@dpi.vic.gov.au, or
- > post them on www.facebook.com/DPIVictoria

Fishers from multicultural communities are encouraged to attend the Werribee forum during Refugee Week while hearing from female fishers will be the focus of the Wodonga forum.

Broadening engagement with fishers is delivering on a commitment within the State Government's \$16 million Recreational Fishing Initiative.

LOCATION	JUNE	TIME	VENUE
Torquay	Wednesday 3	7pm	Torquay Angling Club, The Esplanade, Fisherman's Beach
Port Fairy	Wednesday 5	7pm	Port Fairy Community Services Centre, Cnr Campbell & Atkinson Streets
Greensborough	Thursday 6	7pm	Greensborough Angling Club, 161 Para Road
Eildon	Tuesday 11	7pm	DPI Office, Snobs Creek, Goulburn Valley Highway
Nagambie	Wednesday 12	7pm	Nagambie Angling Club, McLeods Street, Kirwins Bridge
Bendigo	Thursday 13	7pm	Bendigo Legion Angling Club, Gateway Rotary Park, 26 High Street, Kangaroo Flat
Inverloch	Tuesday 18	7.30pm	Anderson Inlet Angling Club, 88 The Esplanade
Lakes Entrance	Wednesday 19	7pm	Gippsland Lakes Fishing Club, Bullock Island
Corryong	Wednesday 26	7pm	Towong Shire Offices & Corryong Library, 76 Hansen Street
Werribee	Thursday 20	10am - 2pm	Werribee Baptist Church, Cnr Heaths Rd & Derrimut Rd
Wodonga	Tuesday 25	7pm	DPI Office, 1 McKoy St, Kiewa Room

DESTINATION WESTERNPORT

by JOHN LINDHOLM

Just a quick stones throw from the hustle and bustle of Melbourne suburbia, Westernport holds a veritable wonderland of fishing and boating experiences, and a whole new adventure.

When I first started to fish Westernport it was a deep murky mystery. Its not just me either! Many boaties are hesitant to leave the ease of neighbouring Port Phillip Bay, to explore the wonders of Westernport due to its huge tidal run through channels, islands, mangroves, rocks and tidal ramps. Vast areas of mud and sandbars seem to appear from nowhere on the ebb, ready to engulf the inexperienced and careless who will have a long wait for the tide to return to float free. Tales of misadventure are daunting enough to put quite a few good fisho's off this wonderful waterway.

Yet the lure of such rich diversity, a host of target species, and a cavalcade of scenery, structure and marine life make Westernport a place that rarely leaves effort unrewarded. It has everything from the

humble flathead to the mighty mako within spitting distance of each other, and readily accessible to the trailerboat fisherman.

Species regularly targeted include snapper, gummy shark (flake to us Mexicans), King George whiting, salmon, garfish, leatherjackets, squid, the strange elephant fish and many more. It is a lucky dip with more than enough surprises to cheer up even the most jaded fisher-person.

Years ago, I was fortunate enough to fish commercially with one of the "old" Pro netters that used to work out of Hastings on the eastern side of the Port. His vessel was equipped with all the technology - well, that was available in the 1940s at least! A compass, and two Bamboo poles that he used as depth sounders, one at around 15 feet for the deep, and one around 10 feet for the shallow. With these he could tell what sort of bottom we were over i.e.-mud, sand, weed, and he was more in tune with what we were fishing on than any of us young fella's with our fancy depth sounders. Armed with this mighty array of gadgetry this fellow

would navigate some of the trickiest areas of Westernport on the blackest of new moon nights in search of his catch.

A truly an amazing bloke and a seaman of yesteryear, his skills are all but forgotten in this high tech age. About four years ago, I convinced him to invest in a GPS/Map plotter and in many ways, I am somewhat sad that I did.

This brings me to the point. Recent advances in GPS and sounder technology have given many more anglers equipment and confidence to venture into the maze of channels and islands that is this wonderful Port, and those anglers are reaping the benefits.

Rewards

GPS with map data allows most Boaties to have a safe day out without running aground on one of the myriad of mud banks that are scattered throughout the system. Some of the best fishing is found high up in channels that disappear into the large stands of surrounding mangroves, many of which are listed Ramsar wetlands. This is the feeding ground for the fertile waters that flow in and out of Bass Strait at high speeds. It is common to find dolphins, seals, large pelagic's, the elusive mulloway and frightfully sizeable sharks right up high in small channels and tributaries.

The deeper, more open waters can hold huge schools of snapper, as well as a myriad of baitfish balls that can blacken out a sounder from top to bottom. But when the tide start to wane, don't forget to get a bait down deep for a big channel whiting, gummy or school shark, or even the humble flathead.

High tide heralds the emergence of all manners of worms, crustaceans and other sand dwellers, and of course, their predators

aren't far behind them on the flooding banks. You can often find whiting, squid and our Victorian mini marlin (the nobby red beaked garfish) in as little as one metre of water. The sand holes amongst the weed beds are the target areas for this exciting, and often visual form of fishing.

Elephant fish are a strange visitor to an area called the triangle, bound by Rhyll to the south, Corinella to the northeast and Tortoise Head to the North West. These weird looking fish arrive in huge numbers in late summer each year, and are eagerly targeted by many anglers, particularly inexperienced punters on the larger charter boats. Thankfully, the charter fleet led the way by introducing their own strict bag limit of one per angler per day to give these seemingly prehistoric creatures the chance to spawn.

There are two large entrances to Westernport either side of the world famous Phillip Island with its Penguin rookery that attracts many thousands of international visitors to this beautiful coastal retreat. Its western tip has "The Nobbies" seal colony which often attracts that larger denizen of the deep, the white pointer. Offshore mako sharks are in very good numbers, even though some blind conservationists like to tell us otherwise. This rugged coast and its many beautiful surf beaches hold vast numbers of Australian salmon, tailor, trevally, blue throat wrasse and even some elusive yellowtail kingfish. Last season saw the return of the striped tuna, and we have been hearing unconfirmed whispers of some Southern bluefin tuna that have made a terrific return further west in the State.

Boaters beware!

The one thing that sets Westernport so far apart from neighbouring Port Phillip Bay, (or as we lovingly call it "Lake Disappointment" or "The Pond") is the fact that it actually fully encompasses French Island. This means that no matter how bad the weather, there is always a "Lee" area for protection to fish. But remember, you still need to be able to get there and back safely; a point I cannot stress highly enough!

The North, or main arm can turn truly treacherous in a big northerly blow, with an opposing flood (incoming) tide. It is not unusual to encounter seas of over 2 metres height forced up by the huge pressure with very little space between the steep peaks. Just as with boating in any unfamiliar area it is wise to seek local knowledge before venturing out. First time boaters would be wise to take a trip on one of the many Charter vessels to feel out the port and gain some insight into local waters and techniques.

There are charters working out of Yaringa, Hastings, Stoney Point, Rhyll, Corinella and San Remo, ranging in size from small trailerable boats catering for groups of 4-5 people, up to vessels with capacities up to 20 passengers.

An inviting tourist attraction at Hastings is the elegant "Georgiana McHaffey". She is an ex Japanese ferry that has been set up to take groups of up to 150 passengers on a twilight cruise under the careful eye of Captain Matt Rankin. You will indulge in a gourmet delight of finger food, fine local wines (and beer of course) whilst being entertained by jazz or great cover bands. I highly recommend this as a great night out at a very reasonable price.

The rap!

Westernport is not just a fishing destination. Its waters present a vast range of experiences from gentle mangrove estuaries, to the mighty and sometimes tempestuous Bass Strait. Its surrounding districts are dotted with wineries, cottage industries, rural townships and landscapes, beautiful vistas over the port itself, tourist attractions, surf shops and restaurants. Its lower reaches present some world-class diving and surfing adventures, as well as two wide entries to Bass Strait and its offshore fishing grounds.

Victoria's Westernport is well worth a visit - with, or without the boat!

Launching & boat facilities

Westernport is a port, not a bay! It is reasonably well serviced with a number of boat ramps and marina facilities and plenty of shore-based access. It is also home to the Blue Scope Steel works, ESSO and other industry so care must be taken in the commercial shipping channels.

Boat ramps are located at:

Hastings

An all tide 4 lane concrete ramp with good fish cleaning facilities. It is situated at the head of the long and winding Hastings Bight, in an area well protected from all but a howling easterly wind.

Stoney Point

A three lane concrete ramp with good fish cleaning facilities. "Stoney" can be a little tricky at times as it is more exposed to the south easterly sea breezes that are the norm for the summer season. Its still quite safe, but gets extremely crowded.

Warneet

A two lane concrete ramp with floating pontoons this is situated in the upper reaches of the port and I would recommend that you plan to launch and retrieve here at least an hour or two either side of low tide or be left high and dry.

Tooradin

This is further around to the East from Warneet and has a floating pontoon.

Flinders

At the more Southern end of the Port there is beach launching by 4 wheel drive, giving quick access to Bass Strait

Corinella

Two lane concrete ramp with piers to both sides. Suitable for larger craft but as with most Westernport ramp be careful at low tide.

Philip Island has ramps located at:

Newhaven

Just over the San Remo bridge at the entrance to Phillip Island. This ramp is subject to the tidal pull and can be a bit of a handful to the inexperienced boater. This is the closest point to the Eastern entrance to Bass Strait.

Rhyll

A two lane concrete ramp with reasonable tie up facilities. Once again subject to a fair amount of tide flow.

Marinas at Yaringa and Hastings:

Yaringa

Situated on the northwestern corner of the port, offers wet berths and dry storage. There is a chandlery and fine restaurant on-site. It is privately owned with no access to the general boating public.

Hastings

This is the larger of the two marina's, and has facilities for most boat related activities, Westernport Marina at Hastings features chandlery, restaurant, bar, reception centre, travel lift, wet berth and dry storage and hardstand service facilities. Hastings is a hive of activity and that is home to a large Charter fleet.



Natives around Melbourne



by TIM CURMI

GOLDEN PERCH

There are limited opportunities to catch a native fish around Melbourne. Endemic native species include Australian grayling and river blackfish, have both dramatically reduced in numbers for a number of reasons, and angling for natives around Melbourne relies on translocated natives such as golden perch, Macquarie perch and Murray cod.



GOLDEN PERCH

Macquarie perch and Murray cod were first translocated from King Parrot Creek into the Plenty River around 1857. Since that date many thousands of both species were translocated into the Yarra catchment, mainly by metropolitan angling clubs, in an attempt to establish a recreational fishery for these larger native fish. As a direct result of these translocations, there is now a self supporting population of both Murray cod and Macquarie perch in the middle reaches of the Yarra River, particularly around Warrandyte.

Both species can be successfully angled using commonly used methods such as bait and lure fishing, with surface lures on hot nights being particularly successful for the larger Murray cod. As this is a very limited resource, catch and release should be practiced at all times. The Macquarie perch in the Yarra River is the biggest self sustaining population left in Victoria and is a vital resource for the future of the species, especially in light of the limited breeding success at DPI Fisheries Victoria's Snobs Creek fish hatchery.

The Macquarie perch in the Yarra River is the biggest self sustaining population left in Victoria and is a vital resource for the future of the species, especially in light of the limited breeding success at DPI Fisheries Victoria's Snobs Creek fish hatchery.

The only waterway in the Melbourne area currently stocked with native fish of any kind is Albert Park Lake. After many years without stocking, DPI Fisheries have recommenced stocking 5000 golden perch per year to maintain the fishery. Currently fish up to 10 kg are regularly caught during the warmer summer evenings. Lure casting using small/medium hard bodies as well as lipless crankbaits catch the majority of



MURRAY COD

the fish with the secret being a slow erratic retrieve. There are also reports of a small number of large Murray cod and the ever present carp.

Angling is restricted by Parks Victoria to certain sections around the lake in an attempt to limit interaction between anglers and other users of the lake such as the ever present joggers. As with the Yarra River, catch and release should be practiced at all times to ensure the bright future of this fantastic fishery.

There are many other native species that are suitable for stocking around Melbourne. These include Australian bass and estuary perch which are both great angling species and suitable for stocking in many of the waterways around the Melbourne area. With so many waterways, it is unfortunate that Albert Park is only one that is currently stocked with natives. It would be great to see an expanded stocking regime of native species in the future.



AUSTRALIAN BASS

Port Phillip Bay

a world class fishery on the doorstep of Australia's second largest city

By PAUL HAMER & COREY GREEN

King George whiting, *Sillaginodes punctatus*

King George whiting are the fine food fish of the Bay and offer great sport on light tackle for anglers fishing near shallow seagrass beds and reef habitats, particularly around the Bellarine Peninsula and the western regions of the Bay. While they don't look as impressive as the iconic snapper, their life-cycle is perhaps the most remarkable of all the species captured in Bay.

Some facts about King George whiting in Port Phillip Bay

- > King George whiting captured in Port Phillip Bay are all juveniles, mostly less than 4 years of age.
- > King George whiting do not spawn in Port Phillip Bay, adults up to 18 years of age are found in coastal waters, and spawning is thought to occur in late autumn/winter off far western Victoria and South Australia, with known spawning areas occurring near Kangaroo Island.
- > Small larvae travel 100's km from the coastal spawning grounds on ocean currents for 80-100 days before entering Port Phillip Bay, from late August until late November at a size of 18-20mm long (see photo). Once in the Bay they then settle in seagrass beds that provide the critical juvenile nursery habitats.
- > Winter weather patterns, such as westerly winds, influence the successful transport of the larvae to Port Phillip Bay, and the number of larvae entering the Bay each spring varies greatly, this in turns influences the number of fish available to fishers over the next 3-4 years.
- > Over the last 50 years the King George whiting fishery in Port Phillip Bay has been cyclic with peaks and troughs in catches occurring at approximately 12 year intervals, these cycles closely match those of the westerly winds.
- > King George whiting in Port Phillip Bay reach the legal size limit of 27cm at 2-3 years of age.
- > Current research, partly funded by recreational fishing licence fees, is examining the relationship between replenishment of the Port Phillip Bay fishery and the known spawning areas in South Australia.

Flathead

Flathead, the bread and butter species of the Bay. Not so much regarded for their sport fishing qualities or appearance, as for their delicately flavoured flesh. Many people say you can't go past a beer battered flaty fillet when it comes to an eating fish from the Bay. There are two species of flathead common in Port Phillip Bay, the most common is the sand flathead, *Platycephalus bassensis*. The other species, yank or blue spot flathead, *Platycephalus speculator*, while being less common, grows significantly faster larger than sand flathead. For unknown reasons the sand flathead population has taken a dive in Port Phillip Bay over the last 20 years. While there is still plenty of sand flathead available to anglers, the future size of the bay's population is somewhat uncertain.

Some facts about flathead in Port Phillip Bay

- > Sand flathead grow slower and rarely exceed 35cm length in Port Phillip Bay, compared to the coastal waters of Bass Strait where they often reach 40-50cm length.
- > Yank flathead are commonly captured at 40-50cm length in Port Phillip Bay.
- > Both species are known to spawn in the bay, with an extended spawning period over spring and summer.
- > Sand flathead can reach up to 23 years of age in Port Phillip Bay and typically reach maturity between 2-5 years of age and 20-25cm length.
- > Yank flathead can reach at least 12 years of age and typically mature at about 2 years age.
- > Sand flathead are more common in depths over 10m in the bay, where as large Yank flathead can be found in both deeper and shallower waters.
- > Spawning success and subsequent replenishment of both the sand and Yank flathead populations in the Bay, similar to snapper is highly variable from year to year, and it is thought that poor spawning success over the last 20 years is behind the long-term decline in the Bay's sand flathead population.
- > Current research on sand flathead is examining whether or not the Port Phillip Bay sand flathead population remains largely isolated from those in coastal waters and Westernport.

Victorians are privileged to have a range of top quality fisheries in the sheltered and easily accessible waters of Port Phillip Bay.

Key species that come to mind include: snapper, King George whiting, flathead and calamari. Similar sheltered bays adjacent to other large cities around the world are crowded with trading vessels,

highly polluted and were fished out many years ago. The point is - we should never take for granted the quality of fishing and the relatively healthy state of the waters of Port Phillip Bay. With good environmental and fisheries management there is no reason why we can't expect future generations to have the same experience fishing out on 'the Bay' as we have. But we

all have a role to play, and an important part of this begins with educating ourselves and the next generation about the remarkable lives of the fish themselves. This article provides some interesting facts about the lives of the Bay's valued recreational fishery species and what drive their numbers.



Snapper, *Pagrus auratus*

Snapper are clearly the iconic species of Port Phillip Bay. They can be captured all year around by those in the know, but the fishing really fires up from October through to about Christmas time. The reason for this is that snapper move in to the bay in large numbers from wintering grounds in coastal waters to spawn during late spring and summer. While this annual migration occurs underwater and out of our view, it is none-the-less a spectacular natural phenomenon that has no doubt been repeated for thousands of years.

Some facts about snapper in Port Phillip Bay

- > Snapper may live up to 40 years, although most fish captured in Port Phillip are less than 20 years old.
- > The low currents, warm summer water temperatures and abundant plankton and bottom dwelling invertebrate life in the Bay provide an optimal growing environment for small snapper, larvae and juveniles.
- > Port Phillip Bay is the main spawning and nursery habitat for snapper in central and western Victoria, providing replenishment for the 'western snapper stock' that extends from Wilsons Promontory to south eastern South Australia.
- > The success of snapper spawning in the Bay each year (measured by annual research surveys of the numbers of baby snapper – see photo) is highly variable, with some years seeing complete failure and other years seeing babies in plague proportions. This variation is the major influence on the numbers of fish entering the fishery several years later. The fishery in the Bay is currently very strong after several years of high spawning success in the early/mid 2000's.
- > The cause of variation in spawning success is poorly understood, but is thought linked to environmental influences (i.e. river flow) that affect the abundance of the microscopic plankton the snapper larvae feed on during their first few weeks of life.
- > Key spawning and juvenile nursery areas for snapper occur over sandy/muddy bottoms in the eastern and northern region of the Bay between Mornington and Altona, and between Clifton Springs and Pt Wilson in the Geelong Arm.
- > Snapper reach the legal size limit of 28cm at 3-4 years of age, and are mostly mature at 40cm and 5-6 years of age
- > Current research funded by recreational license fees is using electronic acoustic (sound) transmitter tags to study migration dynamics of snapper between Port Phillip Bay and coastal waters, and among regions within the Bay.



Calamari, *Sepioteuthis australis*

Targeting calamari by recreational anglers in Port Phillip Bay has increased significantly over the past decade. They are no longer seen as just a bait species to catch snapper with but are now recognised for their great eating qualities. Indeed they are now seen as a true sport fishing opportunity, with specifically designed rods and reels to catch them and a plethora of different jig designs and colours on the market to catch them (or perhaps more so to catch anglers). While some work has been done on the biology of calamari in other states (Tasmania and South Australia), there is little know about their biology and ecology in Port Phillip Bay

Some facts about calamari in Port Phillip Bay

- > Complete their lifecycle from birth to death in less than one year.
- > Grow rapidly, and can reach up to 55cm hood length.
- > Attach their eggs to marine plants such as seagrasses.
- > Can spawn all year around although show a consistent spawning peak between spring and summer.

As the locations and importance of spawning habitat for calamari are not known in the Bay, scientists from Fisheries Victoria are conducting research on the spawning needs of calamari in Port Phillip Bay. The project, funded by recreational fishing licence fees, aims to identify:

- > critical habitats required for reproduction and egg deposition of calamari.
- > spawning seasons by determining the presence of egg masses and reproductive condition.
- > movement patterns around critical habitats using electronic acoustic (sound) transmitter tag technology.

Squid

by LUKE McCREDDEN

...the jig is up

I recently had a conversation with a friend about what Autumn and Winter mean to us in the way of fishing. It's quite often referred to as the time to put the boat in the shed and wait for the sun to come out again. But for both of us, one thing kept creeping in to the conversation. That was the humble southern calamari, or simply referred to as squid.

I grew up squid fishing in the southern part of Port Phillip Bay and year round we would target them with a variety of methods. Land based, from a boat, artificial jigs or the old faithful baited prong, I love it all.

Things have come a long way in squid fishing and now there are specific rods, reels, line, leader, techniques..... etc the list goes on, but personally if you ask me, it has become very over complicated. For years and years we've had no issues catching squid, so, in my opinion, why would we change things!?!

My style of squid fishing when I was a youngster is still very similar to how I fish for them now. Artificial jigs didn't have quite the extensive range in brands, colours and size back then, but the theory was the same. I remember using quite a lot of bright greens and oranges

back in the day and it's no surprise that my squid jig box still has plenty of those.

I love jigs and I probably have way too many but I love collecting them and trying out new ones to see what works. Over the last few years fishing areas like Queenscliff, Point Lonsdale, Sorrento, Portsea and up off the rocks at Mount Martha, there are a couple of stand out jig colours for me.

Firstly, a simple white or pearl colour, it just seems to get it done right throughout the day whether the sun is shining or it's a miserable day. The other, which is probably my favourite and "go-to" jig is a dark natural coloured jig with a red foil underbelly. This is the first jig to hit the water for me.

The southern part of Port Phillip Bay is my favourite area for targeting BIG squid and the broken ground, weed beds and clear water in the Lonsdale Bight, off Sorrento and Portsea, out of Blairgowrie and Rye is exactly why those big squid are there. Not to mention the plentiful amount of food for the squid like king George whiting and crustaceans that call the same area home.

Westernport is another area you could confidently target the larger calamari and I've had a lot of success



fishing the weed beds on the edges of the middle spit and up over the Tyabb Bank. These areas are shallow and easy to find the weed beds and the spots that calamari would call home to feed.

While 90% of my squid fishing is from a boat, I still love to hit up some of my favourite spots on foot from time to time. Flinders Pier and Warneet would be my top two Westernport landbased squid spots, while Mt Martha rocks and Queenscliff Pier are my favourite for fishing on foot around Port Phillip Bay.

So much to write about for squid fishing here in Victoria, so little time, but the beauty of it is, it's all worth exploring. So whether in a boat or on foot, get out there and enjoy Victoria's magnificent fishery that is the Southern Calamari.

GONE FISHING



DON'T PUT YOUR LIFE ON THE LINE



ALWAYS
WEAR A PFD



NEVER
FISH ALONE



STAY ALERT!
CONDITIONS
CHANGE

IN AN EMERGENCY CALL 000



www.lifesavingvictoria.com.au



VRFish Strategic Plan 2012–2017

Five Key Pillars

The VRFish Strategic vision is supported by five key pillars and is underpinned by our core values. VRFish is committed to producing the following outcomes:



VRFish Representing Your Interests

As the peak body representing a community of over 721,000 Victorians, VRFish works to provide fishers with support through facilitation, advocacy, education strategies and policy development. We consult broadly with the recreational fishing community to represent their views in an accurate and timely manner to Government and their agencies, as well as communicate effectively with the recreational fishers of Victoria.

VRFish Charter
...is to consult broadly with the recreational fishing community to represent the views of recreational fishers in an accurate and timely manner to Government and their agencies, as well as communicate effectively with the recreational fishers of Victoria.

VRFish Vision
...is to ensure full access to a diverse and healthy Victorian recreational fishery.

VRFish Mission
...is to represent and advocate the interests of the Victorian Recreational fishing community.



Improving your fishing

By **MARC AINSWORTH**

Senior Fisheries Communication Advisor, DPI

Fisheries Victoria continues to improve fishing opportunities by stocking fish, improving access, building fish cleaning tables, installing reefs and upgrading boat launching facilities.

These projects are funded by your fishing licence fees and the State Government's \$16 million Recreational Fishing Initiative.

Stay up to date by following Fisheries news on Facebook or Twitter:

www.facebook.com/DPIVictoria www.twitter.com/DPI_Vic

One million extra Murray cod fingerlings have been stocked into **Lake Eildon** over the last three years, funded by fishing licence fees. Although these fish will take four to six years to reach the minimum legal length of 60cm, previous stockings of cod into Lake Eildon produced very good fishing last summer.



Your fishing
licence fees
at work

In February, fishing licence fees funded Victoria's first prawn stocking into **Lake Tyers**. 300,000 Eastern King prawn larvae were released and are expected to be a 'takeable' size by Christmas. Another one million larvae will be released later this year.



Fishing licence fees are helping to restore fish habitat in the **Broken Creek** between Numurkah and Nathalia. Research indicated a low density of large wood habitat in the area so the Goulburn Broken CMA installed 209 snags. Another 40 snags will complete the project. Improving in-stream habitat should provide more homes for Murray cod and golden perch.

Boating access to **Lake Tyers** has been improved with the installation of two new floating jetties at the Fisherman's Landing and Lakeside Drive boat ramps. The East Gippsland Shire installed the jetties using a grant from the Recreational Fishing Initiative.



The Corangamite Catchment Management Authority (CMA) has built a new fishway on the **Barwon River** at the lower breakwater. The vertical slot fishway will facilitate the passage of native fish, including bream, estuary perch and even mulloway. Fishing licence fees contributed to the project.



The dual-lane boat ramp at **Tooradin** has been widened to three lanes and new floating pontoons have replaced old timber jetties. The car park will also be sealed in the near future. The improvements were funded by the State Government's Boating Safety and Facilities Program and the Recreational Fishing Initiative www.dpi.vic.gov.au/betterfishing

Snapper!

by **TREVOR HOGAN**

Once again the current snapper season has not disappointed anglers. Port Phillip Bay certainly is the jewel in the crown with the quantity and the size of snapper improving each year.

This season was a little different than other years in so far as the main body of fish never left the Frankston to Ricketts point area with sensational catches coming in from Chelsea and a lot of people traveling to Carrum to take advantage of the short run to hot spots. It's amazing to think that in less than an hour you are packing up to come home with your bag limit.

For others the challenge has been to find new ways to catch our beloved snapper. Soft tackle has certainly been the trend, trying to give the advantage back to the fish not the angler.

Another method is trolling hard bodies such as bibbed minnows on down riggers. This is becoming more popular or some fisho's are just being lazy and won't put an anchor down.

Either way it's great to see that anglers are becoming more responsible in finding ways to catch and release fish, even to the point I am noticing sales of circle hooks have increased over the last couple of years.

More so this year pilchards have been the stand out bait whether it's because the fish were thick or simply just no need to complicate the matter (keep it simple) Even though last season I thought it can't get any better than the silver whiting, scad, squid and garfish as the top bait.

I recently took a walk down Frankston Pier and witnessed half a dozen anglers on a hot pinkie bite. The fish were from 33cm to 40cm and it was great to see almost non-stop action.

With water temperatures over the 21 degree mark over the festive season we saw a slowdown in catches now into late April and the weather still in the high 20's the water temp is hovering around 19 degrees the fish are coming back on the bite again with some good catches off Anse tts in 18 meters, this probably will be like last season where they just didn't stop all winter.

Funny in November you can't get a car space when red fever starts yet, April and May has a hot bite and hardly any one chasing them. Having said that the tuna run at Portland is under way and the whiting in Westernport have fired up – you've got to love Victoria.

I recently took a walk down Frankston Pier and witnessed half a dozen anglers on

Another method is trolling hard bodies such as bibbed minnows on down riggers. This is becoming more popular or some fisho's are just being lazy and won't put an anchor down.

a hot pinkie bite. The fish were from 33cm to 40cm and it was great to see almost non-stop action. Bait used was cubes of pilchards with a 1/0 hook on a paternoster rig and whiting rods. The anglers were being smashed up landing one in five; don't know who had more fun; them or me watching the mayhem!

I have been running Patterson River boat ramp for the last 17 years with my wife Lynette and in that time I have witnessed the bad years when if you landed a fish there was an autopsy performed to see what it had eaten, size of hook used, what pound line, sinker size, sharp teeth, blunt teeth etc...

Victorian anglers are now enjoying the best fishery we have ever seen. Every year



*Photos courtesy of Al McGlashan
al@almcglashan.com*

we say it can't get better than this, due to both good management and the passion of anglers to learn and educate others on responsible fishing practices we will be enjoying our sport for many years to come.

For more information contact Trevor Hogan at www.launchingway.com.au

Mornington Peninsula we just love it

By CHARLIE MICALLEF

Rosebud Reef is one of my favourite locations at this time of the year because it is fairly shallow. The trick here is to fish at first light and last light although I have had good catches during the day on a strong south westerly or north westerly wind.

The number of species I have caught and seen on this reef is outstanding; large boarfish, all sorts of wrasse, leather jackets, red mullet, King George whiting, pinkies, Sergeant Baker, slimy mackerel, silver trevally, barracouta, large flathead, snook, pike, squid, gummy sharks, skate, banjo sharks, Australian salmon and bronze whaler sharks.

The number of species I have caught and seen on this reef is outstanding...

As you can see lots can be taken and seen from this special reef. The reef itself is located between Rye and Rosebud Pier. It is not hard to find, just ask some of the locals and I am sure they will help you out.

The Rye wreck is another great spot. Try not to get on top of the wreck as you may lose your anchor so fishing the outskirts of the ship wreck is the way to go. Again this is a shallow location so first and last light will provide your best catch.

Over the last few weeks very big snapper have been caught on this wreck, so you just don't know what it will hold. We are getting further to the Heads now so there will be much more current, meaning that you will need more lead to get your bait to the sea floor. However during tide changes and days when there is not much current, again strip baits can be very deadly. Try squid or 'cotta that you have caught yourself. You need the extra toughness in this area as far as bait goes because there are a lot of small peckers.

You might also try Tootgarook. The weed beds between Rye and Tootgarook are home to many squid and King George whiting at this time. You don't need to fish deep, in fact no more than three or four metres of water will produce the species particularly on an overcast day. Remember when the water is clear the prawn plastic jigs work quite well on the squid, however after a blow and the water is discoloured; use the skewer type jigs with pilchards or silver whiting wrapping them up in 'bait mate'.

Rye Pier is not a personal favourite as far as piers goes, but it does produce some action for the kids. Toward the end of the pier produces the better garfish and squid catches; however during the period from Christmas through to Easter it can get very busy.



Freediving and spearfishing

Cray season is now on and we have the makings of a good season. If the conditions continue to be good with a little effort we could all catch our bag limit. There have been a few reports of good crays from Port Lonsdale all along the Mornington Peninsula as well as patchy reports from Phillip Island. The Mornington Peninsula divers are doing quite well. So far they have pulled crays out of "Number 16", St Paul's Rd and of course, Koonya Ocean Beach.

However for every size crayfish there are many undersized ones as well. Don't be tempted to keep the undersized ones as it is breaking the law and you will be caught. You are not doing the environment any good by taking small crayfish, so give them time to grow.

www.savageseasadventures.com.au
Charters / media. 0415242902

SHARKS

One of my favourite target species is sharks! Whether its gummy sharks, school sharks, bronze whalers, seven gills, it doesn't matter. When you hook up to one of these guys there is nothing better than feeling that thump, thump, thump on the end of your fishing rod! They will be in bigger numbers as the water warms up in the Bay and this is when I target them the most. Most areas in the southern Port Phillip Bay hold good sharks. The key is of course berley, berley, berley. Yes we all know it brings in rubbish fish but it's only a matter of time before your targeted species will find your bait.

First light seems to produce the best quality fish both in Bass Strait and Port Phillip Bay, with last light also known for its great captures.



Patterson River

– more than just a boat ramp!

Thirty-five kilometres south east of Melbourne, along the Nepean Highway, is Patterson River. Well known as a major stepping off point for recreational fishers heading into Port Phillip to chase the highly prized snapper, it is also a popular fishing destination itself.

By **TREVOR BUCK**

Patterson River or “Patterson Cut” as it was originally named is, for the most part, manmade. It was designed to drain the Carrum Carrum Swamp into Port Phillip encouraging selection of eighteen farm allotments during the mid nineteenth century. One hundred years later farming in the area had all but ceased and a new suburb, to be known as Patterson Lakes, was commenced where houses would be built overlooking a system of canals and lakes along with a marina.

In the main river there is a thriving boat launching facility. On the boat trip along the river toward Port Phillip it is easily noticeable that there are plenty of people fishing along the banks. Head upstream from the boat launching facility and you’ll see a similar story. As you travel into the marina area you’ll be in a system of canals and lakes via the loch gates. The Patterson River is a fishing destination in its own right and a surprisingly productive one at that.

At the river mouth you will often find anglers venturing out onto the rock groynes chasing Australian salmon that commonly enter into the river and venture upstream. The conditions some anglers venture into are often cold and windy but these appear to be the best times to target Australian salmon with bait but more often these days with small metal slice lures or soft plastics.

Only a little way upstream are the road and rail bridges and this location hides a dark and lurking secret that rarely reveals

Occasionally an angler will catch a last glimpse of their fishing outfit disappearing into the drink as a result of the system’s secret...

itself. More on this later.

Continuing upstream there are anglers regularly fishing from the banks and around the boating facilities with the docks providing a comfortable and easy platform to relax and fish. But keep clear of this area during peak boating times as this is the busiest boat launching facility in Melbourne, possibly Victoria. This stretch and right up past the loch gates almost to the freeway is popular with anglers chasing black bream. There are some chunky fish in the system, enough to test anglers of all experience levels.

Occasionally an angler will catch a last glimpse of their fishing outfit disappearing into the drink as a result of the system’s secret; a secret that reveals itself on warm and still evenings in late summer when you can often observe something rolling on mullet near the surface. These are silver mullet, or jewfish, as they are commonly known.

The majority of the jewfish in the system are up to 10lb and can be landed on suitable fishing gear. In recent years some anglers are actively targeting these fish with lures in the

four to six inch range. Large soft plastics are also very effective. This is where we venture back to the bridges as they hold jewfish of a much larger size. Stories abound of bust-offs and surface swirls big enough leave even the more experienced angler standing mouth agape in awe.

Into the lakes system next, where access is the domain of boating and kayak anglers, and residents fishing from private jetties and landings. Patterson Lakes is a very popular training ground for a good number of tournament anglers and it is not uncommon to find some very elaborate tournament boats plying the system of canals. They are mainly chasing black bream that respond well to a number of different lures and techniques but are challenging enough to hone the skills of even the more experienced tournament angler.

As you would expect there are jewfish within the lakes and canals and captures up to 10lb are not unheard of. Quite a surprise if you’re chasing black bream with ultra finesse gear!

So next time the weather isn’t so kind or you’re looking for somewhere new to go fishing, look again at Patterson River and Patterson Lakes – you might enjoy it.



Healthy State of Fishing

It’s no secret that recreational fishing is popular in Victoria. You’ll be pleased to know it’s actually good for you too. Research shows a visit to a park or waterway improves the health of your mind, body and soul.

As manager of some of the best fishing destinations in the state Parks Victoria is committed to recreational fishing. This was demonstrated recently with the signing of a memorandum of understanding between Parks Victoria and VRFish. Parks Victoria, VRFish and the community can work together in a positive way to ensure access and enjoyment of our environment while supporting natural values education and practical conservation.

Parks Victoria is working to ensure fishing in Victoria is better than ever:



Standing (L-R): Ian Christie General Manager Parks Victoria; Christopher Collins EO VRFish; Donna Bauer MP Member for Carrum; Chris Hardman Regional Manager Parks Victoria. Sitting (L-R): Bill Jackson CEO Parks Victoria; Russell Conway Chair VRFish; Ryan Smith MP Minister for Environment and Climate Change.

Werribee River

A new one kilometre stretch of access trail has been completed along Werribee River. The new trail provides easy access to the river and safe access for fishing along a beautiful stretch of the riverbank. Works are continuing with revegetation, signage and additional fishing tackle bins planned over the next few months.

Patterson River

Patterson River’s boat ramps are now the highest capacity ramps in Victoria following over \$4.1 million dollars in government investment over the past 5 years. The latest works completed last year included improved mooring capabilities and a new fishing platform to the east of ramp four with wheelchair access. More improvements including additional sealed parking are planned.

Devilbend Natural Features Reserve

For the very first time in November Parks Victoria rangers and anglers cast a line from two new fishing and viewing platforms at Devilbend Natural Features Reserve. It was the first time the public has had access to the site following the decommissioning of the reserve as a water supply facility. The reservoir has been stocked with brown trout and rainbow trout by the Department of Environment and Primary Industries.

Karkarook Park

Karkarook Park is an increasingly popular fishing destination that is now regularly stocked with fish throughout the year by the Department of Environment and Primary Industries. The most common catches are redfin and trout.

Albert Park

A new fishing platform has been added to Albert Park Lake and Department of Environment and Primary Industries fish stocking by the has increased the popularity and accessibility of fishing in the heart of Melbourne.

Port Phillip & Westernport

Significant Government investment is continuing to maintain and upgrade facilities across Port Phillip and Westernport. Pier upgrades have recently been completed at Queenscliff Pier, Point Lonsdale Pier, Swan Bay Jetty and Hastings Jetty. Boating and swimming zone upgrades are continuing across Port Phillip and Westernport and ongoing dredging program continues to provide safer boating access at places like Queenscliff, Patterson River, Mordialloc Creek and San Remo. Works will also commence soon on the final stage of the Mornington Pier replacement.

There’s a few things you can do to help Parks Victoria protect the future health and reputation of fishing and in turn your right to fish:

- > Always take your rubbish home with you.
- > Never leave discarded fishing line or hooks behind that might get entangled in wildlife or marine life.
- > Always throw fish and sea stars back in the water if you’re not planning to take them home for consumption.

- > Pull in your lines if you’re fishing and a boat is approaching especially from piers and river banks.
 - > Always follow the appropriate fishing regulations.
- Parks Victoria sees a very healthy future for fishing in Victoria and we’re keen to continue working with VRFish and the recreational fishing community to keep our fishing fantastic.

For more information visit www.parks.vic.gov.au or call 13 1963.



AUSTRALIAN GRAYLING

Fish of the Yarra

Image provided by Tarmo A. Raadik

Dights Falls weir on the Yarra River in Abottsford, Melbourne, has long been considered one of the most significant in-stream barriers to native fish passage in Victoria. The man made weir was installed in 1895 to divert water to power a flour mill. Today, it regulates the water level upstream for 16km.

The historic Studley Park and Fairfield boathouses rely on the water level to support their businesses, as well as recreational fisherman, canoe, kayak and boat users who enjoy the river. Melbourne Water, the caretaker of rivers and creeks around Melbourne, is responsible for managing this culturally significant asset, which had come to the end of its life. After careful consideration with relevant stakeholders, it was decided the weir was to be replaced. A new concrete weir was installed, completed at the end of 2012. In addition to replacing the weir, a new vertical slot fishway was installed in the same location to allow fish passage past the weir, opening up vast reaches of the Yarra catchment. It is expected to benefit up to 200 kilometres of the Yarra and its upstream tributaries, boosting native migratory fish numbers and species diversity.

The Yarra River supports 17 species of native fish, including 11 that are migratory requiring passage between saltwater and freshwater environments as part of their lifecycles. One of many species, the Australian grayling (*Prototroctes maraena*), is listed as vulnerable under the federal Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999.

The common galaxias is another native species that will benefit from the new fishway. By completing its lifecycle upstream, the galaxias populations should increase. The good news for responsible fisherman is that this species is the perfect food source for the Macquarie perch and the Murray cod, resulting in improved fishing opportunities upstream in the Yarra.

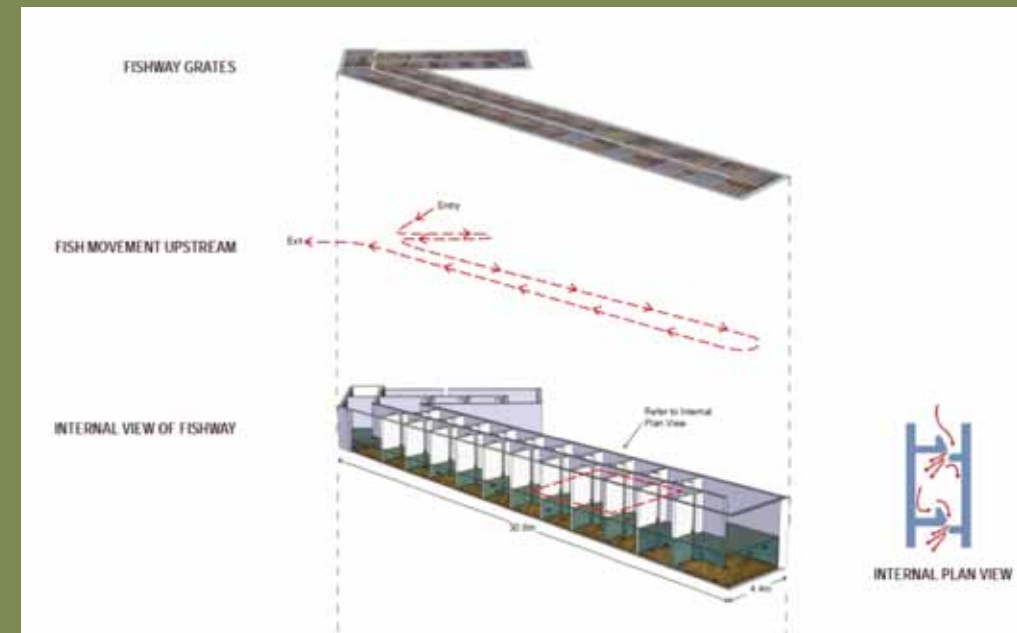
How the fishway works

The vertical slot fishway allows native fish to move upstream past the weir.

The fishway features a gently sloped concrete channel divided by baffles to create a series of connected pools.

The baffles slow the water down and create water steps between each chamber gentle enough for the fish to swim upstream.

The fishway is landscaped into the river bank and covered by grates to protect fish from predators above.



The Yarra River supports 17 species of native fish, including 11 that are migratory requiring passage between saltwater and freshwater environments as part of their lifecycles.



History of Dights Falls weir

In the 1840s, water was diverted from the Yarra River in Abottsford through an inlet channel to turn an undershot water wheel, which powered a local flour mill. In order to regulate flow or to ensure flow for times when river levels were low, a rough stone weir was constructed by the owner of the flour mill, John Dight.

In 1895, the Melbourne Metropolitan Board of Works (MMBW) built a weir structure based on driven timber piles to regulate the water level. This weir was named Dights Falls weir, after John Dight. The weir was repaired several times in its life until it was finally replaced in 2012 with a new concrete weir.

If you would like more information, please contact Melbourne Water on 13 17 22 or melbournewater.com.au

Now cook it!

Bacon & Fish Pie

Serves 6

Ingredients

2 Tablespoon olive oil
2 onions – thinly sliced
2 cloves garlic
2 stalks of celery – finely sliced
2 rashers bacon – roughly chopped
1 teaspoon vegetable stock (I use Vegeta)
3 tablespoons flour
1½ cups fish stock
2 cups milk and 1 cup cream – combined
1 kg fish
Salt and pepper to season
¼ cup parsley
2 sheets puff pastry
1 egg slightly beaten

Method

- * Heat oven to 220°C
- * Heat oil a large saucepan.
- * Add onion, garlic, celery and bacon – stir until softened over medium - high heat.
- * Add vegetable stock and stir through, cook for a further minute
- * Add flour and mix well
- * Add fish stock, milk and cream
- * Stir – Simmer gently over med-low heat for 5 minutes approx. and add fish.
- * Simmer for a further 5-10 minutes until sauce thickens
- * Divide evenly between ramekins.
- * Cut puff pastry into rounds slightly larger than the ramekins.
- * Brush egg around edge of pastry – put over ramekins – Brush more egg over top of pie.
- * Cook in oven for 20 minutes until golden brown

Topping Variation

Potato/cheese

- * Boil 4 large potatoes
- * When soft mash with salt and pepper to season add 1 tablespoon butter and a little milk or cream.
- * Add handful grated cheese.
- * When pie is in ramekins spoon potato mash on top add dollop of butter and sprinkle grated cheese on top.
- * Cooking time remains same



RACHEL MCGLASHAN

Rachel, wife of one of Australia's most respected fisho's, has always fished and worked right alongside Al. With Al fishing over 200 days of the year, a regular supply of fish is always on hand at the McGlashan house, which suits Rachel well considering her love of cooking. Rachel has created "Dinner with the Fishwife" a selection of her original fish-based recipes, which will help you prepare an easy menu of fish any time.

"I am no chef. I am a mother and a fisherman's wife, and what I do well is to use what I have available to me - and that is a lot of fresh fish!"

While catch and release is still important, to Rachel there are few things better than catching and cooking your own fish. As anglers we are spoilt with easy access to some of the best tasting fish. There is something special about being able to head out and catch 'a feed' for ourselves.

But what many don't realise is the versatility that fish offers. It is not only easy to cook with it can be used in so many ways that are sure to guarantee that your catch will never go to waste. 'Dinner with the Fishwife' will ensure you are never without ideas on what to do with your catch.

Including tips on how to store and prepare fish, this book is the ultimate for seafood lovers and enthusiasts.



Honey Ginger Seafood Stack

Serves 4

Ingredients

1/3 cup honey
3cm piece ginger, finely chopped or grated
3 garlic cloves, crushed
2 tablespoons lime juice
1 dozen raw prawns, de-veined, heads removed, tails left on
1 dozen scallops
1/4 cup peanut oil
4 fish fillets
1 red onion, cut into wedges
1 carrot, cut into matchsticks
1 green capsicum, cut into match sticks
100g snow peas
1/2 cup coriander leaves, chopped
extra coriander to garnish

Method

- * Combine the honey, ginger, garlic and lime juice in a bowl. Set half aside for later. Add the prawns and scallops to the remaining marinade. Cover and marinate for 15 minutes.
- * In a frypan, heat 1 tablespoon of the oil, add fish and cook for 2 to 3 minutes each side until cooked. Remove to a plate and keep warm.
- * In the same pan heat another tablespoon of oil, add the prawns and scallops and cook for 2 to 3 minutes. Remove to a plate and keep warm. Heat remaining oil and add onion, carrot and capsicum. Stir-fry for 2 minutes. Add the snow peas and stir fry for a further minute. Remove from the heat and toss the coriander through. Divide vegetables among four plates. Top with the fish, prawns and scallops. Drizzle with reserved marinade and garnish with extra coriander.



Coconut Crumbed Fish

Ingredients

1/3 cup shredded coconut
1 cup breadcrumbs
1/3 cup parsley, finely chopped
2 tablespoons thyme, finely chopped
1 teaspoon garlic granules
4 fish fillets
1 egg white, lightly beaten
oil spray

Method

- * Preheat oven to 220°C. Line a baking tray with baking paper. Combine the coconut, breadcrumbs, parsley, thyme and garlic.
- * Take each fish fillet and dip in egg white and then coat with the crumb mix.
- * Place on the baking tray, spray with oil and bake for 15 to 20 minutes until golden and cooked through.
- * TIP: Be brave and try substituting the flavours. Try chilli flakes instead of parsley and thyme. You may not always get it right but use the recipes only as a guide and use flavours your family like!

Rachel 'The Fishwife' McGlashan

Working hard so Al can fish hard!!

www.thefishwife.com.au

www.almcglashan.com



Fishing in Victoria

– something
for everyone



Victorian fishers are a blessed lot – the fisheries across the State provide ample opportunities to ply your skill and feed your family.

Over 721,000 Victorians share a passion for recreational fishing, and there are fishing clubs scattered all over the State catering to fishers whether they be hooked on feeding 'old man' cod or like to chase the big reds as they come into our bays to spawn. There are many reasons a large segment of VRFish members belong to fishing clubs:

- > Fishing clubs give fishers access to a fantastic group of people who love to talk about fishing as much as they do.
- > They give a sense of contributing to the local community.
- > Club membership provides an opportunity to participate in social and competitive events.
- > They give the ability to improve fishing by learning from more experienced fishers or to share your own knowledge.
- > Club membership also provides a means to contribute to the political landscape of fishing, and have your say in issues that affect you and your favourite fisheries.

Contact one of our member clubs opposite for more information.



Member directory

Albert Park Yachting & Angling Clubs Association

PO Box 11, Albert Park VIC 3206
Contact: Peter Taylor
Phone: 03 96905530
Email: info@apyac.org.au
Web: www.apyac.org.au

Association of Geelong & District Angling Clubs

130 Coppards Rd, Whittington VIC 3219
Contact: John Hotchin
Phone: 03 52486817
Email: jhotchin@bigpond.net.au
Web: www.fishinggeelong.com

Australian Anglers Association (VIC)

23 Queenscliff Rd, Newcomb VIC 3219
Contact: Tomothy Hose
Phone: 0428 521 449
Web: www.aaavic.org

Australian National Sportfishing Association (VIC)

46 Pitt St West Footscray 3012
Contact: Wayne Zita
Phone: 0425 756511
Email: waynez62@hotmail.com
Web: www.ansavic.com.au

Ballarat & District Anglers Association

PO Box 163, Ballarat Mail Centre VIC 3353
Contact: Chris Doody
Phone: 03 8647 2040 / 0428 304004
Email: chrisdoody@bigpond.com

Beaumaris Motor Yacht Squadron

PO Box 45, Black Rock VIC 3193
Contact: Paul Morgan
Phone: 03 9598 5156
Email: bmys@bigpond.com.au
Web: www.bmys.com.au



Boating Victoria

2/77 Beach Road, Sandringham VIC 3191
Contact: Ian Fox
Phone: 03 95970066
Email: boating@yachtingvictoria.com.au
Web: www.boatingvictoria.com.au

Council of Victorian Fly Fishing Clubs

13 Fernlea St, Traralgon VIC 3844
Contact: Rod Booker
Phone: 03 5174 4606
Email: rbharcourt9@gmail.com

Far West Anglers Association

571 Deakin Ave, Mildura VIC 3500
Contact: Colin Mansell
Phone: 0427 210 373
Email: mansellcj@ncable.com.au

Fishcare Victoria

574 Main Street, Bairnsdale VIC 3875
Contact: Jenny Allitt
Phone: 03 51520456
Web: www.fishcare.org.au

Game Fishing Association of Victoria

PO Box 408, Mentone VIC 3194
Contact: Kevin Oates
Phone: 0428 783 228
Email: secretary@gfav.com.au
Web: www.gfav.com.au

Gippsland Angling Clubs Association

PO Box 293, Nicholson VIC 3882
Contact: John Bourke
Phone: 03 5155 1505

Goulburn Valley Association of Angling Clubs

18 Ross Street, Nagambie VIC 3608
Contact: Wally Cubbin
Phone: 03 5794 2744/0428 942 744
Email: wcubbin@bigpond.net.au



Howqua Angling Clubs Fish Protection Association

4 Links Drive, Rowville VIC 3178
Contact: Gary O'Donohue
Phone: 03 9780 2547/0400 063793

Metropolitan Anglers Association

237 Military Road, Avondale Heights VIC 3034
Contact: William Richards
Phone: 03 9337 5113
Email: fishomaa@hotmail.com

Midland & North Central Angling Association

PO Box 366, Goldern Square VIC 3555
Contact: Linda Moody
Phone: 0428 518 818
Email: lindamoody55@yahoo.com.au

Mid Northern Association of Angling Clubs

12 Lockwood Street, Birchip VIC 3483
Contact: Alan Digby
Phone: 03 5492 2822
Email: alasue@hotmail.com

Native Fish Australia

PO Box 162, Doncaster VIC 3108
Contact: Graeme Creed
Phone: 03 9848 2285
Email: gcreed@optusnet.com.au
Web: www.nativefish.asn.au

North East Angling Association

PO Box 3229, Albury NSW 2640
Contact: Stafford Simpson
Phone: 02 6040 6987
Email: vk2ast@tpg.com.au

Scuba Divers Federation of Victoria

GPO Box 1705, Melbourne VIC 3001
Contact: Stephen Fordyce
Email: sdfv@sdfv.org.au
Web: www.sdfv.org.au



South Gippsland Angling Clubs Association

PO Box 32, Tooradin VIC 3980
Contact: Max Fletcher
Phone: 03 5941 3754
Email: mfletche2@westnet.com.au

South West District Association of Angling Clubs

13 Marfell Road, Warrnambool VIC 3280
Contact: Robert O'Neill
Phone: 03 5561 5596
Email: robertoneill7@bigpond.com

Southern Freedivers

PO Box 213, Brunswick VIC 3056
Contact: Clint Engel
Phone: 0409 613 804
Email: info@brimbosports.com
Web: http://southernfreedivers.org.au

Victorian Fishing Charters Association

PO Box 125 Patterson Lakes VIC 3197
Contact: John Willis
Phone: 0407 053 484
Email: john@beachmarine.com.au

Victorian Piscatorial Council

PO Box 248, Kerang VIC 3579
Contact: George Hardwick
Phone: 03 5457 6222
Web: http://home.vicnet.net.au/~vpca/welcome.htm

Wimmera Anglers Association

4 Decastella Drive, Horsham VIC 3400
Contact: Ken Flack
Phone: 03 5382 4453
Email: flackyk@gmail.com



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