



Lynton.G. Barr  
P.O.Box 23  
Swan Reach 3903  
Victoria  
Phone 03 5156 4674  
Email delbarr1@bigpond.com

# Around the Jetties

## No 37

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So great a range of foods will the bream eat, that I have heard it referred to as a scavenger. Not the bream surely. I prefer to think of it as tolerant towards its food, and somewhat cosmopolitan in its taste.

Fish and Fisheries of Australia by T.C. Roughly 1953

#### **Editorial**

#### **Twin River Bream Competition a Success But?**

650 anglers took part in the most recent Twin Rivers bream competition, with most of those anglers fishing the three local rivers. According to the Bairnsdale Advertiser this number of anglers was made up of 210 teams of which 50 practiced catch and release. I think almost all anglers would agree our bream stocks in the Gippsland Lakes are at the lowest level ever, and show no sign of recovery, and I think it is generally accepted that due to increased salinity black bream when spawning are seeking saline water in the rivers to spawn. Given the indications that many fish caught in the Twin River competition were in spawning mode I would raise the question can responsible anglers in 150 teams remove these fish at this critical time in the life cycle of black bream without in some way impacting on the black bream fishery in the Gippsland Lakes. Of course the argument often goes “that if recreational anglers don’t catch these fish they will be taken in commercial nets,” and this has some validity, but there is a basic difference in that these fish are currently in the river to spawn. According to Fisheries Victoria’s survey of anglers fishing in this competition most of the larger fish caught were female and most were indicating that spawning was close. If we are serious about protecting the black bream stock at this time, then the Twin Rivers Competition should consider being totally catch and release, or at a time of year when black bream are not spawning. This publication has suggested that Fisheries Victoria should give consideration to a closed season in the rivers over a determined spawning period. At the very least this is an important matter that warrants consideration for the future.

A report in the Bairnsdale Advertiser indicated that 50 of 210 teams practiced catch and release, and these anglers released 200 black bream and that is to be commended. No statistics on the total catch of black bream have been made available.

#### **Push for More Marine Parks**

The Victorian National Parks Association has listed priority areas for marine protection in Victoria and called for the creation of these parks by 2012. Included in the priority areas are the Gippsland Lakes, the Ninety Mile Beach, the Bemm Reef, Mallacoota Inlet and Gabo Island in East Gippsland. I have not seen any

indication as to what parts of these estuaries and coastal environment have been targeted by the Victorian National Parks Association. From the small Fact Sheet produced it would seem that wetlands for birds is a key element, whilst in the Gippsland Lakes seagrasses and estuarine grasses are listed for protection. Craig Ingram Independent Member for East Gippsland has suggested this may be an ambit claim prior to a State election, and whilst this might be true anglers should be wary of such a broad claim covering 20 areas around the state with specific areas of concern in East Gippsland. I contacted the Victorian National Parks Association and the Director of Conservation Simon Branigan could not identify specific spatial areas of the Gippsland Lakes or Mallacoota but he did indicate that a scientific review undertaken over the past two years would be released in coming weeks as a starting point for consideration of areas for Marine Parks. He also noted that in the 2002 process to create Marine Parks some areas of Mallacoota Inlet were identified as warranting further protection and they would be part of the priority areas to be considered as having a high conservation value.

#### **From the Victorian National Parks Fact Sheet- Marine and Coastal supplied by Craig Ingram MP**

“Fishing has a major influence on marine natural values in Victoria, not only affecting the target species but also having indirect impacts on other marine species, communities and ecological processes. Targeted marine fishing can alter population structures, often removing key high-level predators, which are vital to the healthy functioning of a marine eco-system. Scallop and fish trawling causes substantial seabed habitat damage.”

We will undoubtedly hear more on the topic of Marine Parks.

#### **Editor**

I am very surprised at the Victorian National Parks Association coming out with a list of priorities for National Parks that would seem to include for example, the whole of the Gippsland Lakes and Mallacoota Inlet. Whilst I don't think the intent is to declare these waters totally Marine Parks the action of naming whole areas has created a great backlash against the Association across Victoria. I am sure that if some wetlands for bird life had been specified recreational anglers would have given the proposal serious consideration, however the approach taken by the Victorian National Parks Association has been totally counterproductive and deserves condemnation. This is rather sad as most recreational anglers are ambassadors for the environment, and as was found in a recent study, anglers fishing Lake Tyers cited non catch values as their most important motivation for participating in recreational fishing. (87% shore based anglers and 71% of boat anglers.) What this really means is that a vast majority of recreational anglers love the bird life that is part of the enjoyment of a mornings fishing and the environment they share and this is the major reason for those mornings on the lake rather than judging the morning on fish caught. When fishing on Lake Tyers, I like most anglers, love to watch the sea eagles soaring above and listen to the sounds of the Wonga pigeon in the bush that surrounds this pristine lake. It is a great shame that the Victorian National Parks Association has not recognised that the anglers of this state could be some of their greatest supporters rather than opponents fighting to protect their fishing rights. This has been a bad call for the Victorian National Parks Association and they can ill afford to put the largest sporting group in the state totally offside as they have done with their listing of Priority Areas for Marine Parks.

#### **Late News-The State Government has vetoed this suggested expansion of Marine Parks**

#### **Fishing Diary**

Over the last ten years I have kept a detailed fishing diary in which I have recorded every fishing trip I have undertaken in that period and the conditions and results of the fishing trip. This 200-page document provides a remarkable ability to look at changing conditions over the ten-year period. For example the diary commences on the 7<sup>th</sup> January 2000. On that morning I fished Lake Tyers using whitebait and glassies as bait and fished from 6.30am to 10.30. These were my usual fishing hours particularly in summer and on this occasion, my wife Dawn accompanied me. It was a fine morning with a north wind of 10-20 knots. We fished in a sheltered position opposite Lake Tyers House. Now the catch was quite remarkable in that it comprised 14 gurnard, (30-36cms) and 4 salmon (31-37), as well as 1 undersize tailor and 4 undersize snapper, which were returned. The gurnard as they were landed were quite a beautiful fish and we found them excellent eating. What I find particularly interesting is the change in species caught from 2000 to 2010. It is years since I have caught a gurnard in Lake Tyers and almost the same for salmon, and of course on that morning in 2000 the staple catch of today, namely black bream and dusky flathead were completely missing from our morning bag of fish. The snapper were 25-28cms and we would watch these young snapper grow and become part of the available Lake Tyers species in the next year or two.

In a Fisheries report by Hall D.N. and MacDonald C.M. (1985) the following statement appeared “Black bream and River garfish were the main recreational target species accounting for 69% and 18% respectively of the total recreational catch weight.” This provides a further indication of the change in the Lake Tyers recreational catch. Today we seldom see a boat fishing for garfish in the lake and most times a few hardened old fishermen chase this species from the bank at Nowa Nowa.

## **Fishing Report from July 18<sup>th</sup> 1988**

Perhaps its worthwhile looking back and considering the following report covering a few of the anglers who fished the Tambo and Mitchell Rivers, at this time of the year, but 22 years ago. This information provided by Geoff Trusler of Hawthorn from tourism releases of the day and allows us to apply recent history to the current fishing situation..

### **“Tambo River**

Des and Theresa Hajdu landed 40 bream for 13.5 kgs over two days last week. Theresa caught the heaviest bream weighing 1kg. Barry Forest and his mate from Yallourn North hooked 24 bream and 12 mullet on Wednesday and 30 bream on Saturday. David Girao and Leo Seiler of Dromana fished for three days for 90 bream weighing around 26 kgs. The Beaumaris Angling Club fished the Tambo over 4 days with seven members and captained by Sandy Aitchison. They took home 127 bream.

“Spud,” Pat, and Paul Regulski of the Moe Angling Club over the weekend landed 154 bream for 56kgs. All the above catches were made at Reynolds Road and Marshall’s Flat.

### **Mitchell River**

Over the weekend the fish were taken between the “Cut” and “Two Bells.” Sam Simson of Wy Yung and his son John from Melbourne fished the Mitchell from Shadouf Lodge to the Silt Jetties on Monday for a mixed bag of bream luderick and mullet. The best bream caught was taken by John and weighed about 1kg. On Sunday the Bairnsdale Angling Club held a competition in the Mitchell River only. Eleven members fished for ninety-two bream using sandworm as bait. The heaviest bream was caught by Len Leggiere weighing 1kg, and Merv. Taylor landed the heaviest bag including 23 fish and weighing just over 7kgs.

### **Nicholson River**

The Nicholson River Angling Club held a competition in open waters over the weekend with 34 competitors fishing for 281 bream weighing 104.17kgs. Jack Lee took the heaviest bream at 1.3kgs whilst the heaviest bag was won by Mick Gurney 9.6kgs. Jenny Crane won the heaviest fish caught by a lady with a fish weighing 510grams. Some fish were caught below the road bridge on the Nicholson but most were caught in the Mitchell and Tambo on sandworm.”

### **Editor**

I am always amazed when I read of the catches in East Gippsland Rivers and how the catches of the major recreational species have declined in the space of a mere twenty years. In the days of this report in 1988, there was no bag limit and the size limit was 24cms. As well it should be remembered that there were 32 commercial licences operating in the Gippsland Lakes who took 206 tonnes of black bream and 157 tonnes of yellow eye mullet and 44 tonnes of silver trevally as part of their 674 tonne catch in the Gippsland Lakes in that year. Statistics like those above make it difficult to argue against major changes to management to even attempt to maintain fish stocks at current levels. I was talking to a respected older angler this week who could remember when thousands of black bream could be seen in the Mitchell Backwater all heavy with spawn, and he was asking why is it these spawning grounds have never been closed to protect these fish. Now that’s a good question.

## **Odd Bits**

### **Twin Rivers Fishing Competition**

The Twin Rivers Fishing Competition which in reality covers the Gippsland Lakes and Lake Tyers was held on the weekend of July 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> and was a great success if judged by the number of competitors lining the river banks and in boats in the local rivers. I had a short discussion with the Fisheries Victoria assistant who was monitoring the catch by interviewing anglers and recording their catch. She indicated that the catch of black bream was well down on last year, and only odd fish were being caught. Most of the fish caught were females that were in spawning mode. She also indicated that a number of large black bream were

returned to the water by anglers, which was most pleasing given that some of the fish were 40-44cms and obviously key spawning fish. [See Editorial](#)

## **Camping on the Banks of Rivers**

During the Twin Rivers competition dozens of anglers in tents and vans camped on the banks of the rivers despite the signs forbidding camping. In particular camping was prevalent along the Tambo River where excellent river access roads have been developed within metres of the riverbank. Whilst in most cases anglers were very responsible with regard to rubbish, there are some health problems associated with allowing this camping, as only one set of toilets exist in around 12-15 kilometres of river bank on both the east and west bank of the river. I had earlier contacted the East Gippsland Shires By-laws officer to discuss the matter of riverbank camping. Initially he was unsure whether this was a Shire responsibility, but when I told him of the signs prohibiting camping he indicated he would examine the signs, however he stated he could do nothing about illegal camping as he was not working on the weekend. I found this surprising as I would have thought the Shire may have put up portable signs as the permanent signs are generally very small, and I would have thought the by laws officer would have been available on the weekend to advise visitors. Perhaps the East Gippsland Shire needs to examine their approach to protection of the riverbanks in the Shire and the issue of camping. There is no doubt that signs need to be larger and more evident to visitors.

## **Fisheries Victoria Reports**

A major achievement of Fisheries Victoria has been the publication of a large number of reports in recent months, and Around the Jetties has provided summaries of these reports for recreational anglers. These reports have included material on aspects of Lake Tyers and Mallacoota Inlet and on specific fish species such as estuary perch and Bass. This months report provides information on Lake Tyers and angler satisfaction with this water whilst accounting for substantial changes in the fishery. Fisheries Victoria should be congratulated on the release of these reports.

## **Native Fish Stocking to June 2010**

I thought these statistics provided an interesting look at the emphasis Fisheries Victoria is placing on the restocking of rivers with our native fish species.

The Annual average stocking 2000-2005 were as follows

**Murray Cod 222,000 Golden perch 497,000 Aust Bass 23,000 Silver perch 14,000 Trout Cod 33,000**

The stocking for 2010 to June was as follows

**Murray Cod 434,000 Golden perch 1.1mill Aust bass 52,000 Silver Perch 31,000 Trout Cod 7,000**

These figures would indicate that over 1.5 million native species have been stocked in Victorian Rivers in the first six months of this year. These figures do not include the restocking of the Snowy River with Australian bass by authorities other than Fisheries Victoria. I am aware of a substantial stocking program undertaken by the East Gippsland Catchment Management Authority for Australian bass and this was the subject of information in previous "Around the Jetties. I contacted Ken Judd of the east Gippsland Catchment Management Authority for an update. Ken confirmed that in 2008/9 250,000 Australian bass were released in the Victorian waters of the Snowy River by the East Gippsland Catchment Management Authority, and the NSW authorities released 170,000 Australian bass in 2007/8 in the NSW section of the Snowy River. I was informed that the growth rate of these fish has been good but the real test is yet to come and this is whether these fish will spawn in the Snowy River. Fisheries Victoria statistics suggested there has been no stocking of Australian bass in the four years prior to 2010 when 52,000 bass were released. These Australian bass produced by Fisheries Victoria have been stocked in selected lakes south of the great divide.

I find it somewhat surprising that there has not been a breeding program for estuary perch remembering Lake Bolac has been approved for stocking with this species when that lakes water level recovers. I also wonder why we have not seen attempts to restock our rivers with Catfish, which I have always thought of as an iconic Murray -Darling species. I have great memories of fifty years ago catching marvellous catfish in Frenchman's Creek to the west of Wentworth. Today the only place where anglers may keep a catfish is the Wimmera River, which runs into Lake Hindmarsh in the Mallee, south of Rainbow and the bag limit is 2 fish.

## **A New Publication**

The Department of Primary Industries and Fisheries Victoria has just released a new publication “Port Phillip Bay fish in our waters.” This report features the King George whiting and snapper and I commend this colourful book/report to all anglers. I found the explanation of the movement of King George whiting larvae from the South Australian spawning grounds to Victorian bays and estuaries well explained and illustrated, as was the importance of sea grass for this species. The improvement of snapper stocks in Port Phillip Bay is also clearly explained. For your copy of this free book contact the DPI Customer Service Centre on 136 186. The report can also be obtained at [www.dpi.vic.gov.au/fisheries](http://www.dpi.vic.gov.au/fisheries) on your computer.

### **Dusky Flathead in the Gippsland Lakes.**

Many anglers have caught numbers of dusky flathead in the Gippsland Lakes in recent years. In 1995 in a Fisheries survey and report of recreational fishing in the Gippsland Lakes, dusky flathead does not even rate a mention as a species sought by recreational anglers whilst black bream 67% and whiting 13% were the main species for boat anglers and black bream 60% and yellow eye mullet 23% being the main shore based angler catches. In the years 1995 to 2004/5 the commercial catch of dusky flathead was an average of a low 7 tonnes per annum. In 2005/6 the commercial catch exploded to 44 tonnes and the dusky flathead became a prime recreational and commercial species and anglers had the vision of a revitalised dusky flathead recreational fishery in the Gippsland Lakes. Since 2005/6 the dusky flathead numbers have declined annually until today it is probably back to a 10 tonne commercial catch if the trend of the last five years continues and this is reflected in the marked decline in the recreational catch according to anecdotal angler information. In 2008/9 the commercial catch from the Gippsland Lakes was 20 tonnes and this was the state total. In other words all dusky flathead marketed in this state came from the Gippsland Lakes and the return was \$89,000 to the ten commercial fishermen and this yielded a meagre return of \$4.45 per kg taken in commercial nets. It may be that recreational anglers are watching a rapid decline in a top recreational species for very little return to commercial fishermen. Surely the dusky flathead and recreational anglers deserve a better management plan that will attempt to ensure dusky flathead remain a top recreational species in the Gippsland Lakes.

Source-Information from 1995 “Survey of the Recreational Fishery in the Gippsland Lakes 1995”  
Simon Conron and Patrick Coutin

### **Gippsland Lakes Taskforce-Seagrass and Fish Populations**

In 2008 the Gippsland Lakes Taskforce contracted Dr Jeremy Hindell from the Arthur Rylah Institute for Environmental Research to undertake two snapshot studies. One was of the current seagrass situation and the other study involved the sampling of the fish communities of the Gippsland Lakes, following the toxic blue green algal blooms of November 2007. The results of the snapshot studies were provided to the Gippsland Lakes Taskforce in September 2008. These short studies (snapshot) were to provide a baseline for future studies measuring changes in seagrass and fish communities. The Taskforce indicated that it intended to replicate the sampling in mid 2009. We have now reached mid 2010 and there has been no indication of further studies as recommended in the report on the fish mass and seagrass status. The 2008 study found substantial seagrass loss and low fish numbers. To measure change in fish assemblages and the relation with any possible seagrass recovery, further sampling would be needed and was expected. Currently there is no indication from the Gippsland Lakes Taskforce of further research in both these areas that are so important to the recreational fishery of the Gippsland Lakes. Very little information is released to the public by this taskforce and there is no better example of the current approach than the problems associated with European Shore Crabs, and which the Gippsland Lakes Taskforce seems to have largely ignored. Seagrass, fish status and shore crabs would seem to be three major areas of current concern that should be addressed by this taskforce.

The original Snapshot study of Dr Hindell was summarised in Around the Jetties Issue 21 January 2009.

### **Inland Waters Classification**

Released in July is the Inland Waters Classification draft which covers all streams in Victoria and classifies them into being trout or native fish streams. Whilst the draft suggests this will not be used specifically for restocking of inland waters it will provide assistance in fisheries management for at least ten years if agreement is reached on the draft. Areas across Victoria are dealt with as basins and all streams in a basin are examined and a recommendation provided. For example the Tambo River upstream of Ensay along with the Haunted Stream, Timbarra River and Mt Elizabeth Creek are classified as trout waters whilst the Tambo

River downstream of Ensay and the Nicholson River are classified as native streams. This 40 page document may be obtained from Fisheries Victoria and submissions suggesting change are to be sent to **Anthony Plummer** Fisheries Victoria, GPO Box 4440 Melbourne Vic 3001.

Closing Date 9am Monday 16<sup>th</sup> August 2010-07

#### **Editors Comment**

This provision of less than a month for responses means angling clubs who wish to discuss this classification draft will have difficulties in making a response given the short period provided for submissions. I would suggest there will be few responses due to the time factor.

### **Lake Tyers Fisheries Reserve Reference Group.**

As part of the Lake Tyers Management Plan of 2006 a Lake Tyers reference group was to be established to work with the department of Primary Industry “to deliver the desired management outcomes” from the Lake Tyers Management Plan. I understand that after four years this reference group has been formed and will undertake its first meeting on the 26<sup>th</sup> August. This group will be made up of representatives nominated by VRFish, Fisheries Victoria,, local government, local indigenous interests, the East Gippsland Catchment Management Authority, and Parks Victoria. This group will be required to establish fishery monitoring and research programs and to carry out day to day management processes. Within the Management Plan of 2006 are eight objectives to be achieved by this group some of which have already been achieved. (See the attached report to this edition of Around the Jetties.)

#### **Editors Comment**

It would seem necessary to include representatives of the local angling clubs in this reference group in their own right, and hopefully the reference group will also provide a detailed annual report of the activities of the group, which is made available to the angling community. The question also arises as to how members of the angling community can put every day concerns to this group that is responsible for day to day management. This has not been specified and immediately issues such as unauthorised camping around Lake Tyers comes to mind as a management problem that needs addressing. Hopefully the membership of this committee will be published in the near future. A similar group for Mallacoota Inlet is to be formed however I have seen no publicity on whether this has occurred despite the Management Plan being published in 2006.

Local anglers who fish Lake Tyers can be somewhat disappointed they are not seen as being **specifically recognised**, and particularly those who have worked with Fisheries Victoria in recent programs in Lake Tyers as well as the scientific anglers who have worked over some years providing information to Fisheries including fish otoliths to assist in the development of Management Decisions.

### **Increasing Numbers of Readers**

After the last publication of Around the Jetties (special issue 36) covering the latest Fisheries Victoria statistics on the commercial catch in the Gippsland Lakes, the number on the email distribution list increased by 25 readers recommended to the publication by current readers. In actual fact the number of readers will have increased by far more than 25 because a couple of the new readers had recently commenced business in the area of fishing tackle in a large regional centre, and hoped to provide their customers with free copies of Around the Jetties. The growth in this publications readership has been quite amazing given that word of mouth has been the only method of publicity, and all readers are recommended to receive the publication by friends and others. We welcome the new additions to the mailing list and hope that Around the Jetties provides interesting and informative information and we hope that you may contribute to the publication in the future. By the way the publication and analysis of the commercial catch for the Gippsland Lakes only occurs in Around the Jetties, which is strange given its importance as one of the few tools to assess the state of the fish stocks in the Gippsland Lakes.

### **Lake Tyers Fisheries Reserve Management Plan.**

**Recreational fishery monitoring needed to facilitate management of the Lake Tyers Fisheries Reserve. (Funded by Recreational Fishing Grant Program**

(By Julia Kent, Therese Stokie, Murray MacDonald, Natalie Bridge and Simon Conran.)

The Lake Tyers Fisheries Reserve Management Plan was declared in 2007 and identified a need for information on recreational fishing and the status of key target fish stocks. To achieve this information (1) Access point surveys were conducted to profile the fishers and assess their level of satisfaction. (2) Through creel surveys to monitor fishing trends, catch rates, size composition and discard rates for key species. The recruitment of anglers to the voluntary diary program was to be part of this project. (3) To monitor the stock status of key recreational species by the collection of data from research angler diarists and creel surveys. The initial focus has been on black bream and dusky flathead.

The report found through the access survey that Lake Tyers in 2008/9 was a most popular fishing destination for Gippsland residents and seasonally popular for anglers visiting from Melbourne and other parts of Victoria. The number of locals fishing dropped in autumn, but the number of visitors from around Victoria increased at this time. Gippsland anglers made up a higher proportion of anglers during winter and this same trend was evident at Mallacoota.

In 2008/9 a majority of Lake Tyers anglers surveyed identified a non-catch value as the primary motivation to going fishing, however a significant minority of boat anglers identified that the success and enjoyment of their fishing trip was related to the catch rates resulting from that trip.

Satisfaction with recreational fishing in Lake Tyers in 2008/9 was high with more than 75% of both boat based and shore based anglers satisfied with their fishing experience. This satisfaction level is higher than that set as a minimum performance level in the Management Plan.

Similar or even higher levels of satisfaction have been recorded in a similar study at Mallacoota Inlet. This report also records the change in the target species of recreational anglers and refers to the 1985 study, which identified black bream and garfish as being the main species. In 1985 less than 10% of anglers fishing Lake Tyers targeted dusky flathead and this species was less than 3% of the retained catch. By 2006/7 dusky flathead had overtaken black bream as the most popular species for boat based anglers, whilst garfish had virtually disappeared as a target species for recreational anglers. In recent years dusky flathead had become an important component for shore based anglers.

The increasing targeting and catching of dusky flathead in Lake Tyers and other East Gippsland estuaries since the late 1990's may be due to increased numbers but also the shift to highly effective artificial lures including plastic lures may also have had an impact on the success rate when fishing for dusky flathead. (This publication has reported on concerns at the declining size and bags of dusky flathead in recent years.)

Data collected by "research" angler diarists has also shown a substantial decline since the early 2000's in the proportion of large fish in Lake Tyers dusky flathead catches, whilst a similar but less pronounced trend has been observed at Mallacoota. This report suggests "the most plausible explanation for this trend is due to increased targeted fishing pressure on large- mostly female-flathead.

In NSW it was found that 50% of female dusky flathead reach sexual maturity at approximately 56cms. If the same is true in Victoria, a significant number of female dusky flathead are removed from the fishery before they reproduce. This in turn will affect recruitment of dusky flathead to the fishery. This report notes that further research on dusky flathead is required to understand the impact of this trend.

It may be appropriate as a precautionary measure to review the effectiveness of current fishery management measures in protecting the reproductive capacity of dusky flathead in Lake Tyers and elsewhere

The report notes that black bream are estuarine residents and subject to large fluctuations in year class numbers and it is suggested these variations are largely driven by environmental factors. Black bream catch rates have been fairly stable since 2000 in Lake Tyers based on two strong year classes spawned in the late 1990's. This report suggests bream catches in Lake Tyers will decline in the next few years as spawning since 2000 has been only average or below average. It notes there has been some evidence of an increased abundance of juvenile bream (16-20cms) and this may indicate the next strong year class. It will take several more years for these fish to reach minimum legal length.

Targeting and catching of other species such as tailor, luderick, silver trevally, and Australian salmon in Lake Tyers has fluctuated over the years with no clear pattern. It is likely that targeting of these species reflects successful reproduction in the estuary or migration of marine species when the lake is open to the sea. Angler interview response has indicated that Lake Tyers recreational fishery is providing a satisfying fishing experience for most anglers although the catch rates for black bream and dusky flathead have been lower

than other Victorian fisheries like Mallacoota. The report concludes that much of the satisfaction may be due to non-catch values such as the nature and beauty of the lake.

### **Editors Comment**

This has been an excellent report and I hope my summary reflects the findings of the report in a manner that anglers can easily follow. Of particular significance has been the acknowledgement of the decline in the numbers of the large female dusky flathead and the recognition of the need for further research and management decisions to protect this estuarine species. This report also indicates that it may be several years before bream fishing returns to post 2000 levels and this will depend on the strength of the current spawning of black bream. Most bream anglers in Lake Tyers in the last eighteen months have reported large numbers of small bream around and under their boats and this report comments on this observation and suggests it will be a couple of years before these fish enter the fishery. It is very evident that the current Lake Tyers fishery is almost totally dependent on the strength of the black bream and dusky flathead stocks, and it may be that anglers will not see any great variety of other species, until the lake opens again, and a diversity of species such as gurnard, salmon, snapper and leather jacket migrate to the lake. It needs to be acknowledged that the problems associated with dusky flathead are also evident in Mallacoota Inlet and particularly in the Gippsland Lakes.

### **Readers**

Remember you may get an interested angler or friend on to our mailing list by simply sending us an email with details. Some angling clubs are using Around the Jetties as a news publication and are simply attaching a face sheet of club news for members, and this makes a simple club bulletin.

### **Contributions**

Your contributions to this publication are most welcome, and we look forward to publishing your items of interest.

**Good health and good fishing**  
**Lynton Barr**

Opinions expressed in this newsletter are those of the author unless otherwise acknowledged.

MATERIAL FROM THIS NEWSLETTER MAY BE REPRODUCED  
BUT IT WOULD BE APPRECIATED IF THE AUTHOR AND PUBLICATION WERE NOTED



Photo of one camp along the banks of the Tambo River during the Twin Rivers weekend Competition.