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Around the Jetties

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An Anglers Newsletter

"Every angler is an individual, and builds up his own style with bait or lure, according to his tackle and personal ideas. There's no sounder way to learn river fishing in this country than by starting on bass. They're not easy, but they're very worthwhile."

Vic McCristal "Freshwater Fighting Fish" 1964

Editorial

Thanks to those anglers who took a little time and put in a submission to the Gippsland Lakes Coastal Board on its recommendations to remove the availability of power boats to use the high water ramp at Bemm River, and to close the Wingan Inlet to power boats. This publication brought information on this 2012 Coastal Boating Action Plan to readers (Issue 56) and provided a 5-page submission on the issue to the Coastal Board. Hopefully both recommendations will be withdrawn, however the rating of ramps in this 2012 Gippsland Coastal Action Boating Plan continues to give great concern to ramp users as demonstrated by the support for the submissions to improve the safety at Metung and North Arm, both rated in this document as being "**above the required condition.**" I have another concern, and that is simply that anglers who are a major user of these facilities were not actively consulted, nor were angling clubs automatically provided with a copy of the actual document listing ratings of ramps and proposed closures. Given these concerns and the lack of credible consultation this document should be withdrawn.

An inaccurate document is a danger to ramp users and may well be relied on by authorities for the allocation of funding in the future and this is stated in the document. If funds are not applied to the areas in real need the document will only create greater danger for ramp users and the public generally but specifically for recreational anglers who use these facilities daily. Congratulations to Bemm River who organised a community meeting on the proposals contained in this plan and confronted the chair of the Coastal Board with their concerns.

We now wait to hear how, or if the Gippsland Lakes Coastal Board intends to proceed, given the concerns that have been made so evident. It should also be noted that this venture has in no way added to the reputation of the Coastal Board and its directors, two of whom are members of the newly formed Gippsland Lakes Ministerial Advisory Committee.

The real outcome of this exercise is that anglers must be aware of proposals being suggested by ill-informed authorities that may restrict their sport or impact on small communities that rely on recreational angling for their economic survival.

Ainley Projects prepared the Gippsland Lakes Coastal Boating Action Plan 2012 for the Coastal Board. The cost of this consultants report has not been made public.

Perhaps the view of the community is summed up in the final statement of member for East Gippsland Tim Bull, in his excellent four page submission to the Gippsland Lakes Coastal Board on this issue when he writes-

"I would like to see a much greater level of community consultation, including extensive media and well publicised meetings in each of the regions and in particular the townships where there is a recommendation to alter the future role of local facilities."

Letter on this Boating Plan

I received the following note from David Kramer on the 27th April on this report. David was a former CEO of VRFish and is currently a Director of Future Fish, a non-profit fishing organisation.

"Lynton

It amazes me that another report has been done on boat ramps, albeit with inaccurate findings. VRFish has spent significant funding on a Victorian boat ramp condition study, which is more than suitable to use in prioritising.

I'm pretty sure Fisheries Victoria also commissioned another regional facilities condition report 2 years ago, and now this.

These Government bodies need to stop doing reports and sink the funding into fixing boat our ramps. I got tired of fighting the battle some time ago, maybe it's time to get angry with theses guys!

David"

Editor- One of the major problems over many years has been the number of reports and research projects undertaken on the Gippsland Lakes with little cohesion between authorities or Universities.

Illegal Snapper Catch a Blight on the Sport

In the last couple of weeks, it has been brought to my attention by media releases that a few recreational anglers' snapper fishing in Port Phillip Bay have illegally taken massive hauls of small snapper, and of course, this is at the expense of fishing in the future and fellow anglers who adhere to the regulations.



On the 7th May in a DPI Media release two Springvale men were intercepted at Mordialloc caught with 31 snapper hidden on board their boat. They presented four fish to Fisheries Officers when intercepted, however an inspection found another 31 snapper in a hidden compartment under the boat floor.

Officers seized the vessel and fishing equipment. Director of Education and Fisheries Enforcement Michael Hodder said those who took fish in such circumstances were a criminal element with no regard for present or future generations and I think recreational anglers would totally agree with this sentiment.

It was reported that on May 10th two men from Reservoir and Noble Park were intercepted, again it was at Mordialloc at about 8 o'clock at night, with an enormous catch of undersize snapper. The men aged 61 and 67 were returning their boat to shore and were found to have 81 snapper in an ice cooler, of which 65 were undersize fish. Michael Hodder said, "Our patrols checked dozens of boats last night, and everybody else was doing the right thing." The men will be charged with taking undersize snapper, exceeding the bag limit, and in one case, fishing without a licence. The angler's boat, tackle and fish were seized by fisheries officers.



It is hoped the court will take strong action against such illegal fishing. I think recreational anglers would congratulate the fisheries officers whose actions are helping to save the fish stock of a wonderful fishery from the illegal actions of the few recreational anglers who can rightly be regarded as a criminal element of a great sport.

Opportunity for Input into the Allocation of Recreational Fishing Licence Funds.

Agriculture and Food Security Minister Peter Walsh has called for nominations for anglers to join the Recreational Fishing Grants Program, which provides in his words “grass roots advice to the Government on how best to spend the recreational fishing licence funds in Victoria.”

The “working group” appointed for a three-year term is made up of six recreational fishers, who bring a range of fishing knowledge from across the state.

The working group also includes one person nominated by VRFish, and one person representing the multi million dollar recreational fishing industry.

Mr Walsh stated, “The opportunity to join this group is open to all Victorian recreational fishers who have a passion for fishing and are interested in helping Fisheries Victoria continue its important work of improving fishing opportunities.”

The role of the Working Group will be assessing applications for funding from angling clubs, community groups, councils and other government agencies.

The term of appointment is for three years, and sitting fees, travel expenses will be covered.

Nominations close on Tuesday 31st July 2012.

For more information or to nominate contact Robin Billen from Horton International on 9650 2555 or email billen@horto-intl.com.au

Editors Comment.

This publication has been critical of the secrecy associated with the membership and operation of this working group, including a VRFish appointed representative who cannot report to the anglers association and is not known to anglers generally. It is felt by this publication that such a secretive working group does not contribute to open government, and leads to distrust. Hopefully, this approach will change.

However

It is most important that the very best people nominate for these important positions and that they cover the state including Gippsland. For this reason, readers of this recreational angler’s newsletter wherever you reside, please consider nominating for one of these positions.

Travis Dowling, Director of Fisheries Management, has stated, “This is a fantastic opportunity for recreational fishers to have a greater say in improving their sport. I would be most grateful if you could help by encouraging members of your organisation to submit an Expression of Interest for Working Group Membership.”

Travis Dowling has provided a single sheet setting out a skeletal outline of the task and selection criteria. If you are interested I can mail this to any reader to provide a brief outline of the requirements.

Cannibal Fish Threatens our Rivers

A report in the Weekly Times May 2nd suggests, “One of the world’s worst fish is set to invade Australia’s biggest rivers. The fish is the Mozambique tilapia named as one of the 100 worst invasive fish on the planet. It is reported that it has established invasive colonies in the upper reaches of the Murray system, and it is only a matter of time until it enters to the Darling River and spreads.



It was first discovered in Queensland during the 1970’s and was thought to be illegally imported into Australia.

Once breeding populations were established farm dams were stocked with the species. The Murray Darling Basin Authority commissioned research into the spread of the tilapia, which established the species, was eating juvenile native fish.

The Weekly Times article has indicated that the research project charted the expected range of the species and this included the Darling through to Wentworth and the Murray and downstream into South Australia.

Editor

The above report was taken from the Weekly Times article of early May supplied by Terry Smythe. The following is a summary of added information researched for Around the Jetties on the Tilapia. This fish is known as the rabbit of the Cichlid fish family. It is also known as the Mozambique "Mouth Brooder" as it carries its eggs in its mouth and they hatch in the mouth in 3-5 days and then remain in the mouth for a further 10 days. The species are a very strong fish and have been known to live for a considerable time on the bank of a stream, and it is recorded this can be for over 2 weeks. They eat almost anything and can survive water temperatures of between 8-42 degrees Celsius. They grow to around 36cms and live for around 13 years. (It has been suggested they do not get over 20cms in Australia.) Currently they have established colonies in Nth and Sthn. Queensland.

Of some concern was one report that suggested a species of Tilapia had established a self-sustaining population in the heated waters of the Hazelwood Power Station pondage and in the creek below the pondage. However, according to Cadwallader and Backhouse in their excellent book, 'A guide to the Freshwater Fish of Victoria', this is the Black Mangrove tilapia and it is unlikely this species will be able to withstand the cooler temperatures of most Victorian waters. The real concern seems to be with the Mozambique tilapia, as they can dominate local fish communities and they cause considerable degradation to the banks of streams.

In a 2005 ABC 7.30 Report Kerry O'Brien referred to tilapia as being the "cane toad of the waterways." Dr Alan Webb from James Cook University commented on the tilapia saying, "it's a remarkable hardy fish. It can live in a wide range of habitats and conditions. It can breed very rapidly. It can eat almost anything." This provided a concise reason for concern at this species over the last decade. Dr Webb went on to say that 6-7 tilapia were placed in several ponds on the Mirage resort golf course in Port Douglas and 18 months later they removed 16 tonnes of the species from these ponds following poisoning.

Farm raised tilapia are one of the most highly consumed fish in America, whilst this month a two day forum was held in Queensland on the subject of tilapia incursions into Australian rivers, and two DPI speakers from Victoria participated.

Finally the view of a Queensland angler is best expressed in this note I discovered on a web site on tilapia. **"G'day. Tilapia are out of control in a lot of dams in SE Queensland. In the last five years they have exploded. Not sure what the DPI can do about it-probably a bit late, but it's a big worry I tell you."**

Readers may recall that Fisheries Victoria gave approval after consultation for Future Fish to undertake a trial stocking of barramundi in the Hazelwood Pondage subject to the approval of the owners. It seems this approval has not been forthcoming. Now this is particularly interesting as the heavy stocking of barramundi is considered a possible control method for tilapia in Queensland. It appears there are two varieties of tilapia in the pondage and a number of varieties of discarded aquarium fish, and all of these might well be removed with a stocking of barramundi.

In NSW it is an offence to possess, buy or sell tilapia with a fine not exceeding \$11,000. This species of fish is the most popular species used in aquaponics in Europe.

Aquaponics

This is growing plants and fish in an integrated system. Water from the fish tank circulates through a grow bed where the plants are grown. This water carries the fertilizer from the fish excretions to the plants so that both benefit from the integrated system. The method of plant and fish growth is becoming most popular in Australia following its growth overseas. A previous article in an earlier Around the Jetties indicated that the biggest sale of fish from the Ballarat hatcheries was now trout for the growing aquaponics systems in Australian backyards.

Note We have approached Fisheries Victoria for information on this species and regulations associated with tilapia however as yet we have not had a response.

Recreational Fishing Forum at Bairnsdale

On Tuesday 15th May over 40 recreational anglers gathered for the ninth Round Table Forum in the series of 12 being conducted across the state by Fisheries Victoria. Anglers travelled from Leongatha in the south to Bemm River in the east to attend this forum. These forums are designed to give anglers an opportunity to bring forward ideas, and hear of projects being undertaken using recreational licence fees, and Government Fishing Initiative funding. These forums also give anglers the opportunity to raise their concerns. Bill McCarthy, Lakes Entrance Fisheries Officer spoke of compliance matters generally, and Christopher Collins, executive officer of VRFish, spoke of the services VRFish could offer and the fact that the current Minister had agreed to funding for a further 4 years.



Director of Fisheries Introduction

The Director of Fisheries Management, Travis Dowling, chaired the evening and he provided an outline of initiatives being undertaken by Fisheries Victoria. His message related to his vision that “**angling tomorrow should be better than it is today.**” He indicated that action would be taken before next summer to introduce a slot size for dusky flathead and that would probably be a minimum size of 30cms with a maximum size of 55cms, and this was to protect the breeding fish.

This follows consultation meetings in Lakes Entrance and Mallacoota with anglers who target this particular species. Information on this proposal was provided in previous issues of Around the Jetties.

Travis also indicated that the format of the fishing licence is being reviewed, with major changes to be introduced by next year. Travis talked of 24 projects currently being undertaken to upgrade and restore ramps and the policy of providing more access points for anglers. Some weeks previously Travis met with Parks Victoria and local anglers to examine possible improvement to access to Lake Tyers particularly catering for the elderly and handicapped anglers. His report also touched on the development by Fisheries of fishing platforms and fish ladders. He indicated that \$3.5m of the \$4m government Fishing Initiative funding for this year had been spent with more projects to be undertaken this financial year.

Of particular interest to the modern angler was the use of the I phone to provide the fishing guide and added angling information to anglers. For many anglers this will be an exciting advance. Travis also spoke briefly on the stocking of lakes and streams following the recent prolonged drought, and he spoke with particular excitement of the growth rate of Rainbow trout in Lake Bolac. Travis also spoke of the Port Phillip Bay snapper fishery and indicated that this year provided the best fishery on record and Fisheries Victoria was taking steps to ensure the continuation of this booming recreational fishery.

Anglers Concerns, Ideas and Questions

The second hour of the meeting was entirely occupied with questions and comments of anglers, and discussion covered a wide range of issues of concern. Of particular concern was whether and how anglers would be involved in discussions on the protection of spawning fish at the mouth of rivers. Particular concern was also expressed by a number of anglers at the state of fishing in the Gippsland lakes and the decline in black bream and dusky flathead and the impact of commercial netting on the fishery. An outline of fishing in the Nicholson River was given by a member of the Nicholson Angling Club who indicated that previously the Nicholson Club had 14 competitions on the river per annum, however due to the decline in black bream stocks today only one such competition is undertaken. In the last competition 40 anglers landed only 5 fish from a full day competition. He also stated that in 15 years of children’s fishing days, covering hundreds of young anglers only 8 size fish had been landed. This provided a stark outline of the current lakes and river recreational fishing.

An angler questioned the decline in snapper fishing off the coast, and the problems associated with controlling the snapper fishery when Commonwealth and state regulations were involved were briefly outlined by Travis. It was evident that the state authorities are aware of this problem and are currently working on a solution. Another angler raised the issue of commercial netting of pilchards and salmon within metres of beaches where anglers are surf fishing. This was particularly prevalent in this area, and at holiday times it creates ill feeling as anglers and tourists see these nets removing sought after species, and as one angler said, “for in general cat food.” It was noted that some years previously VRFish had sought a moratorium from netting the beaches for three months over the Xmas period. Another angler suggested there should be an exclusion zone of perhaps several kilometres from the beaches.

One angler suggested that netting should be banned in Jones Bay due to the kill of birds in this area, which is heavily populated with water birds. Another angler from the Lake Tyers Angling Club brought up the possibilities of stocking Lake Tyers with estuary perch citing the fact that the lake has a small population of estuary perch and that in the 80's commercial fishermen caught considerable numbers of this species. Travis Dowling indicated this would be examined and he was aware of applications for the stocking of this species in Lake Tyers.

The point was made quite forcefully by anglers that the stocking of bass and estuary perch in rivers flowing into the Gippsland Lakes is only supporting commercial fishing and has little impact on recreational fishing, as they are netted when they move into the Gippsland Lakes to spawn. A comparison was made with the successful stocking and populations of bass and estuary perch in the Snowy River where no commercial netting takes place.

Considerable concern was levelled at the Gippsland Lakes Coastal Board with its Boating Action Plan, which attempted to remove powerboats from Wingan Inlet and to reallocate the high water ramp at Bemm River to non-powered boats and canoes. It was obvious this had created considerable ill feeling. Finally an angler requested a greater presence from Fisheries officers in the Dargo and Omeo areas where out of season fishing of the trout streams is a problem. Bill McCarthy, Lakes Entrance Fisheries Officer, indicated he had only been able to get into that area once in the last twelve months due to pressure in the coastal areas, whilst Travis Dowling suggested illegal angling should be reported to Fisheries on the 24 hour reporting line.

Whilst this meeting closed at 9.00 pm, when I left the Director of Fisheries Management still had a number of anglers seeking to raise questions with him, and I would imagine discussions would have gone on for some time.

This was a great evening of practical communication between anglers and Fisheries Victoria and I am sure all anglers appreciated the work put into these forums across the state by Travis Dowling and for Fisheries Victoria supporting this initiative.

Editor

An elderly and most experienced angler speaking to me after the meeting said-

“You know this is like a breath of fresh air. My goodness we’ve waited a long time for this to happen.”

Odd Bits and More

An Old Fisherman

Recently I was at the Lake Tyers Launching Ramp when this old chap came confidently into the jetty and tied up as if he did this regularly. The boat was a true fisherman's boat with rods and gear everywhere and with the long poles slung on the side of the boat. These poles signify a bait angler for he uses the poles pushed into the mud or sand to hold the boat whilst he sits back with his rods set and fishes. None of the modern anglers have poles; they instead have an electric motor for movement along the banks, as they cast plastics and hard-bodied lures.



As this chap lifted his keeper net to leave the boat I suddenly recognised under the old hat it was our regular correspondent and Lake Tyers diarist Bob McNeil, and as almost always, he had a lovely bag of fish both bream and dusky flathead. Now I thought it was worthwhile sharing a photo of what I regard as the outfit of the bait fisherman, which has changed little in the last fifty years but still manages, in the hands of an experienced angler, to catch a good share of fine fish.

Bob may be seen before daylight on Tuesday and Friday mornings heading out into Lake Tyers, almost regardless of weather, and I know of only two chaps who tackle their fishing so early and with such

enthusiasm. Long may Bob be seen in the early mornings heading out into Lake Tyers for another fishing venture and a further recording of his catch in his diary?

Bob is one of a number of “general” angler diarists across the state who record information about their normal fishing trips, providing information on targeting preferences and species composition of catches. When this information is collated Fisheries Victoria can see trends and changes in fish stocks in particular waters. In the 2010/11 Angler diary monitoring report, the diary angler’s statistics specifically raised concerns over the decline of large dusky flathead in both Lake Tyers and Mallacoota. This in turn led to discussions between anglers and Fisheries Victoria and recommendations being made for suggested changes to protect this species, which is found in Victoria only in East Gippsland waters, and which has increased in popularity with anglers in recent years.

Bob McNeil’s Diary Reports 21st March to 15th May

Bob reports that in this period he caught an amazing number of bream, 258, of which 110 were undersize. These fish were caught in the bottom lake and Bob in his report says the undersize bream “are in larger numbers than I have experienced.” And of course this is good news for the future. Bob also made the point that the fishing has been great despite the changes in water level and the discolouration of the water during this period. An interesting comment was that the fish he has caught have been remarkably healthy with solid fillets on the larger bream being 10mm thick. About 1/3rd of the size fish were greater than 32cms. He also made the comment that he had to move regularly, as it seemed that after catching one or two size fish, in the first couple of casts, the fishing generally went quiet.

As well as the bream, in this period Bob caught 39 flathead, mostly on prawn, whilst fishing for bream and on other occasions on small mullet. Bob made the interesting observation on the 4th April that “some bream have ripe spawn and milt” which would seem to be very early for spawning when compared with other local waters. On the 21st March, Bob landed 16 bream between 6.30am and 9.30 am with 8 being size fish. He also landed two luderick 42 and 40cms, which are excellent fish and add variety to the lake fishing. These were the only luderick caught in this diary period and are a relatively rare catch on prawn.

Bob has made the observation that he believes the bream have started to move up the arms in preparation for spawning. The biggest bream captured was 40cms and the biggest flathead was 67cms with only 4 flathead being greater than 50cms, which supports the need to protect these larger female fish. A final comment from Bob was that “a large flock of cormorants have taken up residence in the lake and the mind boggles at the amount of fish these birds must consume.”

Editor

As always Bob provides a wonderfully thought provoking view of this fishery, and all readers are indebted to this angler for these regular reports.



Have You Seen This?

It was a cold and wet Sunday afternoon, and I decided to spend a short time watching a channel 183 known as the Aurora Channel on pay TV. I found this channel by accident and had never seen it advertised anywhere; however I had noted that it showed a number of fishing shows that seemed to be made by groups of anglers. On this occasion I was surprised to see a fishing show with a list of sponsors and surprisingly they included Fisheries Victoria.

The program I watched was on snapper fishing in Port Phillip followed by the tagging of fish caught and the insertion of transmitters in the stomachs and then their release. The program included diagrams of the placement of receivers around the bay to record the movements of this species. Lee Raynor, (Rex Hunt’s son in law) whom I recall many years ago being groomed for television by Rex Hunt, hosted the program, however his presentation was factual and provided a most informative program. The point was made that this research is being undertaken using licence fee funding, and that the report on the movement of snapper will be made available to anglers. As Lee Raynor said this will make a great increase in our knowledge of this species.

A second program followed this program again with Fisheries Victoria as a sponsor, however this time providing information on the catching Garfish in Westernport and I would believe this information could be applied to any water. This program was one of the best and most factual fishing programs I have seen. The viewer was taken through all aspects of Garfish fishing and ultimately to the preparation of the fillets of this species. I think any angler would have learnt something from this program, which again was hosted by Lee Raynor.

Now what concerns me is that anglers and clubs would have little opportunity to see these programs, as I am unaware of any publicity on dates and times of these shows. Perhaps Fisheries Victoria could provide copies of these television programs to angling clubs using DVD'S and they would form the basis of an excellent program at club meetings and provide anglers with information on the use of their licence fees. For those not in angling clubs, perhaps the DVD's could be made available at a subsidised cost to anglers and they could be advertised in the Recreational Fishing Guide. I do not know how many other informative programs have been made however I would rate the two programs I saw as equal to any fishing program I have watched previously.

Travis Dowling Director of Fisheries Management said at the recent Recreational Angling Forum in Bairnsdale on the 15th May that Fisheries Victoria that the proposals outlined here were most positive and Fisheries would examine the suggestions.

Defining Marine and Inland Waters

In the recreational Fishing Guide in the last couple of years as the result of a requests from anglers and from this publication there has been a diagrammatic map showing what waters are marine and what are inland in a number of estuaries. This is important because whilst anglers are allowed four rods in marine waters only two are allowed in inland waters.

A problem has still existed in that for many anglers and tourists in particular, it is hard to establish the boundaries of marine waters in areas such as the Nowa Nowa Arm of Lake Tyers. Director of Fisheries Management, Travis Dowling agreed at the Round Table Forum of recreational anglers to a sign being placed on the boundary of the marine and inland waters. This step further assists anglers when boating up this arm of Lake Tyers to be aware of just when they are entering inland waters. Perhaps a similar approach may be necessary in other estuaries.

Protection of Spawning Fish at the mouth of Rivers



Commercial Catch of Black Bream
after a flood event. The fish were not removed from the net when the photo was taken.

A contributed photo

Readers would be aware of the government commitment to protect spawning fish at the mouth of rivers from commercial nets, which can be set within 400 metres of the mouth. Readers would also be aware that Bruce Robinson, former VICTAG Coordinator, suggested that a 3-kilometre netting exclusion zone should be established at the mouth of rivers. When contacted Bruce indicated that suggestion was made to start discussion of this commitment of the current government.

Going through some correspondence I came across a note from Ron Brymer who has provided a number of interesting articles and photos for this newsletter. **Ron wrote in 2009 that he believed commercial netting should be banned for three months within 1 kilometre of river mouths and suggested this should be one month either side of the spawning month, which he named as October and added that all rivers in Gippsland should be closed during the spawning period.**

The late Peter Spehrs, a regular correspondent and writer for Around the Jetties, in a letter to this publication in October 2009 stated, **“Netting restrictions should apply to a kilometre from river mouths, with the Barrier, around Metung and the Cunningham Arm being totally restricted from**

netting.” It is interesting that these views were put forward well before the commitment of the government to protect spawning fish was communicated to anglers in 2010.

Now what is the view of other readers? This publication would like to have your views on this question of how to protect spawning fish at the mouth of rivers, and what exclusion zone for commercial netting should apply

As well as an exclusion zone at the mouth of rivers, this newsletter believes that the suggestion of the late Peter Spehrs, that the Barrier, Cunningham Arm and the area around Metung should be free of commercial netting. I would add that Jones Bay should also be considered for protection from netting. This proposal seems reasonable today, given that the number of commercial fishermen has declined from 32 in the late 1990’s to only ten today, whilst the pressure from recreational fishing continues to increase with the continuing development of tourism and boating in the lakes area.

Important

A Statement of This Publications Position on Netting at the Mouths of Rivers

It is the view of this publication that any move to protect spawning fish at the mouths of rivers from commercial nets means any regulation must be for the whole year as it is impossible to define a specific month for spawning, and protection must be provided against netting of fish forced from the rivers in flood situations. It also needs to be remembered that both estuary perch and bass leave the rivers to spawn in saline waters. The movement of bass commences in June and then they return to the rivers after spawning in October/November, whilst the movement of estuary perch to the salt water is thought to occur in November/December in Victoria with the return of the fish to the rivers in Jan/Feb.

This of course means that to protect spawning species in the Gippsland Lakes, the regulations must apply to the entire year if we are going to protect bass, estuary perch and black bream from commercial nets at the mouths of rivers.



Remember This? Dangerous Boat Ramps

Readers would be aware of this publications support for the petition to improve the safety of the North Arm and Metung boat ramps, and the request for the organizer of the petition Mark Frost to withdraw the petition as the East Gippsland Shire had agreed to repairs being undertaken. There seems to be very little in the way of repairs occurring so I contacted Graeme Reeve of the Shire who is responsible for these boat ramps for information.

Graeme informed me that currently the ramps are being cleaned weekly to remove slime from the ramp and this is an interim measure until a plan is approved for major repairs from a number of options being currently examined. These include putting a grate on the ramps or placing grooves in the ramps to the ultimate step of removing the ramp slabs and replacing them. Graeme indicated funding is available and the CEO of the Shire is suggesting action as quickly as possible. Meanwhile Mark Frost has hundreds of signatures for change that he is not throwing out at the moment, remembering it was hoped action would be taken prior to Easter to improve the safety of these ramps.

Anglers Can Assist in Protecting our Fisheries

Bill McCarthy, Lakes Entrance Senior Fisheries Officer, in talking of compliance matters at the Round Table Forum, drew the attention of anglers to the illegal use of lightweight monofilament netting and the fact that if this netting is left it continues to trap and kill fish. This type of illegal action can have a major effect on fish stocks in an area, and if such netting is observed, anglers should immediately contact Fisheries Victoria.

The other most disturbing matter for recreational anglers raised by Bill was the use of fish catching explosives.

These items were found on the bank at Lake Tyers. As the inscription indicates on the explosive, they are



specifically designed to explode in deep water and to kill fish. Every recreational angler should support Fisheries Victoria by reporting the finding of any of the explosive packets. It would also be useful to find where such commercial explosives are obtained as it is the view of this publication that **the sale of such an item should be banned in this state.**

In both the above cases these are criminal acts that we as anglers should not tolerate.

Editor

In 2009 three fishers used 200 metres of monofilament net at Carrum Beach and after a call on (13 Fish) by an angler they were apprehended with 62 Australian salmon and one silver trevally. They were convicted and fined \$3000 plus \$1260 each as compensation to the state of Victoria. Nets equipment and a vehicle were seized. The use of monofilament in Victoria is prohibited, as it is indiscriminate in the capture of fish. The magistrate warned the offenders that should they reappear in the future on a similar charge, they could look forward to Jail sentences and faced fines in the vicinity of \$20,000.

Anglers who suspect an illegal fishing activity should call (13 Fish) 133474

Recreational Fishing and Smart Phones

I was interested in this talk of a smart phone, so I checked on the Fisheries Victoria website. This phone will allow you to download much of the information contained in the current Recreational Fishing Guide including 65 full colour illustrations of species, catch limits and the minimum legal size of species. It will also direct you to the nearest point where you can buy a licence. It will provide a direct link to fisheries for reporting illegal fishing, and also a direct line to the water police. This obviously is the way forward for the new generation of anglers. For me, I will still write a letter and leave the new technology to the young.

Next Issue of Around the Jetties

The next issue of Around the Jetties will be the June Issue and we aim at ten issues per year.

Contributions- Your contributions to this angling newsletter are most welcome and we look forward to publishing your items of interest.

Readers- Don't forget you may get a friend or an interested angler onto the mailing list for **Around the Jetties** by simply sending us an email with details of the person you are nominating and his email address or a letter with details of a mailing address.

Good Health and good fishing
Lynton Barr



Worried about your mortgage? At least the scenery is great! North Arm Lakes Entrance .