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Around the Jetties

October 2015

Issue 95

An Anglers Newsletter

The perch is a very good and very bold biting fish. He is one of the fishes of prey, that like the pike and trout, carries his teeth in his mouth, which is very large; and he dare venture to kill and devour several other kinds of fish. He spawns but once a year and is by physicians, held very nutritive.

The Compleat Angler Izaak Walton 1897

Editorial



I am sorry that part of this issue is dealing with Federal politicians and their obvious lack of concern for the Nicholson River. I would have thought the Federal Government would have been vitally concerned that a man made structure in the Nicholson River is destroying the function of the river. It is equally troubling that the State Coalition Government so recently in power did nothing to remove the dam other than to blame the Federal Government for lack of funding.

Whilst we can be very disappointed at the lack of support for the removal of the Nicholson Dam, I think anglers can have a real sense of pride in the success of the Gippsland Perch Search. If the next stage of this project is successful estuary perch will be stocked in Lake Tyers and this may be the restoration of a fishery that was formerly part of this estuary. Remember that 1.5tonnes were taken from the estuary in the early 1980's and the estuary perch never seemed to recover from this commercial netting. Thanks to Fisheries Victoria and the advocacy, over a considerable period of time, of John Harrison and the Lake Tyers Beach Angling Club plus a group of recreational anglers for their support in catching brood stock, we may see the restoration of numbers of estuary perch to this beautiful estuary.

Gippsland Perch Search Success

*The second weekend of the East Gippsland Perch Search was a success, however there is still some scientific work to be undertaken. Craig Ingram, Coordinator of the **Project One Million** and coordinator of this project, provides the following fascinating report on the weekend search for estuary perch..*





Hi all

I would like to thank everyone who assisted and participated in the Gippsland perch search, for the collection of estuary perch brood fish for the Governments Target One Million marine stocking project

I would specifically like to thank Rob Caune from the Marlo Angling Club and Don Cunningham from the Bemm River Angling Club for local coordination and organisation of the anglers for the perch search.

I would also like to thank Kevin Reynolds (President Marlo Angling Club) and Mark Cunningham (Bemm River bait and tackle) for

their logistical support and assistance as well as VRFish Chairman, Russell Conway for his support and attendance.

So far so good and everyone's effort has put us in a good place with the project but I would like to point out that this is just stage one of a complex project and there is still a number of risks that could impact on its success.

Weather and river conditions made fishing on the weekend a bit of a challenge with high and dirty water due to recent rainfall but thankfully the participating anglers delivered the goods

The following are the results from the weekend

- 16 volunteer anglers helped collect estuary perch broodstock for our breeding program.
- A total of 58 estuary perch were caught by two teams based at Marlo and the Bemm River.
- The condition of the fish was excellent with mature high quality females and several males showing signs of running milt.
- The fish were each tagged and finclip samples were taken for DNA analysis to ensure no hybrids (estuary perch and Australian bass) are used.
- All of the fish were transported to a Narooma hatchery where they are acclimatising before the spawning process commences, most probably this weekend.

It's now a waiting game and we have our fingers crossed that all goes according to plan. I will provide an update early next week on any progress.

Yours Craig



Photos Courtesy of Craig Ingram

The team Fin clipping for DNA prior to transporting Perch to Narooma

The Bemm River Report From Don Cunningham



The angling clubs from Marlo and Bemm River were invited to join with Fisheries in an attempt to catch estuary Perch for brood purposes. Anglers fished on Friday and Saturday the 25th and 26th September.

Bemm River anglers had good success with lures and sandworm to catch some excellent quality perch. Saturday was the better day, cloudy with a gentle breeze.

The water was very dirty and fairly low, so it was great to see some good quality perch coming in. Craig Ingram managed the project and was pleased with the effort and thanked both clubs and their members. Anglers had to draw on their many years of experience to catch the fish. The perch were loaded up on Sunday morning for their trip to Narooma.



Photo courtesy of Di Cunningham of Rob Warren, Bemm River Angling Club

Editor

Don was delighted with the catch of estuary perch at Bemm River and the quality of the fish which were largely 35-45cms in length. He said that most were caught on lures but some anglers had good results with sandworm under a float. The fishing was not easy and floating weed proved a problem, and certainly local knowledge was important. Most fish caught from Don's boat were caught in a 45 minute period when both anglers had action, and then the fishing became quiet. We will all now await Craig's report and the DNA analysis. As soon as we get any definite report we will send a short news item to readers. To my mind, one of the great results of an effort like this is the cooperation between fisheries and anglers to achieve a result. If all goes well Lake Tyers and Tamboon Inlet will be stocked with estuary perch this year, and brood stock will be available for future stocking in other waters of East Gippsland in coming years.

A special thank you to Craig Ingram for his efforts and organisation.

Reduction In Black Bream Bag Limit?

I received the following email (5th September) from Don Ellis, Chairman of the Metropolitan Anglers Association in which he raises on behalf of the MAA an interesting issue for anglers to consider. The email is as follows-

Lynton

Currently there is a bag /possession limit for black bream of ten fish per day. Fish must measure a minimum length of 28cms. There has been a significant shift by MAA anglers who have been advocating a reduced bag/possession limit to 5 fish per angler per day. Before the MAA submits to Fisheries Victoria on this issue we would like to get the feeling of Gippsland anglers on this major reduction in bag/possession limits. It is felt by MAA anglers that reduced limits should apply until plenty of bream are again found in the estuaries.

Regards

Don Ellis for the Metropolitan Anglers Association,

This bag of bream caught 1998 Total weight over 14lbs (6.5kg)

Editor

There is no doubt that the stock of black bream in the Gippsland Lakes and tributaries has declined over the last two decades. This decline has involved environmental change in the lakes which includes greater salinity levels, declining sea grass beds and declining inflow from rivers flowing into the lakes..

In addition ten commercial fishermen continue to net the Gippsland Lake species with no catch limits, and with flood events they can take massive numbers of spawning bream forced out of rivers by the freshwater inflow. In 2007-8 this amounted to over 100 tonnes of black bream being removed above the normal annual average catch of 30-50 tonnes. Despite requests from anglers successive Governments in recent years have not offered buybacks to commercial fishermen or taken any steps to reduce this commercial catch of black bream.



It should also be noted that the overall commercial catch of other species in the Gippsland Lakes has declined. An example of this is the dusky flathead, which has declined from 48 tonnes in 2004/5 to a mere 8 tonnes in 2012/13, whilst commercial catches of yelloweye mullet have declined from 128 tonnes in 1989/90 to 15 tonnes in 2012/13. It is reasonable to suggest the recreational fishery of the Gippsland Lakes has suffered a massive decline and in [reality few anglers ever obtain the current bag limit of black bream in the Gippsland Lakes](#) or tributaries, and there is little chance of the current bag limit for dusky flathead (5 fish) being caught in the Gippsland Lakes. The Gippsland Lakes have historically been the largest black bream commercial fishery in Victoria, when 200 tonnes per annum were caught by commercial fishermen in the eighties and recreational anglers caught a similar tonnage. However, today this is no longer the case for commercial or recreational anglers.

Background

[The current bag/possession limit for black bream \(10 fish per day\) was set in 2008 when fisheries regulations were reviewed.](#) For the review, I and a number of other anglers including the late Peter Spehrs, put forward submissions to both Fisheries Victoria and VRFish seeking a reduction in the bag limit to five fish per day because the evidence pointed to a possible collapse in the black bream fishery. In his submission of 2008, Peter wrote describing the black bream catch as “put another way, a commercial catch greater than 200 tonnes per annum was made from 1981 to 1991 has dropped to an average 31.75 tonnes per annum over the last four years.”

When the Exposure Draft of the proposed regulations was released by Fisheries Victoria in May 2008, we were delighted to see that the black bream daily catch limit was reduced to **five fish with a 28cm size limit**. However, when the final Fisheries Regulations were released in late 2008, we were surprised to see **the bag limit returned to ten fish per day**. On seeking reasons for this change, we were told metropolitan anglers made strong objection to the bag limit reduction as it made visits to Gippsland uneconomic if they couldn't have the ability to take more fish. **Thus the bag limit was set for the next decade based on the ability of anglers to fill eskies with fish, rather than concern for fish stocks.**

This background indicates that in 2008, without angler pressure to take more fish, we could have had a 5 fish bag limit.

Peter Spehrs wrote, “The status of this fishery is under a cloud and until there is a sustained and substantial evidence that the bream fishery is recovering we must apply conservative harvesting regulations. After all a personal bag of 5 bream in excess of 28cms is more than adequate to meet the immediate personal needs of an average family.”

I would personally continue to support the reduction of the bag limit for black bream from ten fish per day to five fish per day as was suggested in 2008 when regulations were being reviewed. However, many recreational anglers would suggest that any savings made by the adoption of this reduced bag limit would simply mean more bream taken in commercial nets with no overall increase in the stock of black bream. **To really improve black bream stocks the proposed reduction in the recreational bag limit would need to be accompanied with the introduction of quotas for commercial fishermen.** This move is unlikely to gain the support of the ten commercial fishermen.

Over the years, any suggested steps to improve fish stocks in the Gippsland Lakes have been undermined by the commercial fishery. Calls to stock black bream in the Gippsland Lakes, as has occurred in Western Australia, have been found inapplicable due to the commercial netting in the Gippsland Lakes. When regulations such as those introduced to protect dusky flathead were introduced, they were modified to satisfy ten commercial fishermen, even though that modification might reduce spawning of the species in the Gippsland Lakes. (Note the release of dusky flathead over 55cms does not apply to commercial fishermen even though fish of that size are more than likely to be female with great egg capacity.) See Dusky Flathead Fisheries Notice, below.

If readers have views on this suggestion of a reduced bag limit for black bream from the Metropolitan Anglers Association, please forward your thoughts to this newsletter and we will forward them to the MAA.

Dusky Flathead Fisheries Notice

*I received 1/9/2015 a Fisheries Notice, which has the objective of setting minimum and maximum size limits for recreational dusky flathead in Victorian waters. **This will set these regulations for the next twelve months, when a further notice will be required.** Anglers are requested to provide comments in writing by October 2nd 2015 to Ms Monique Lean, Fisheries Manager, PO Box 2392 Melbourne Vic 3001. The following are some small parts of my response to this request.*



In 1994, Fisheries scientist Dr Murray MacDonald did a report on the “Lake Tyers Fin Fisheries” and dusky flathead hardly rated a mention. **Since that time dusky flathead have probably become the most sought after species along with black bream in Lake Tyers.** In the Bemm River, dusky flathead have become a major target for recreational anglers and Don Cunningham from Bemm River writes, “I have been associated with Bemm River for sixty years and I have never experienced anything like the last couple of years” (3) with dusky flathead in great numbers. However, he added, “two major hatchings in sixty five years is not very good odds.” Mallacoota has always been known for dusky flathead and in a survey conducted by Fisheries Victoria in Mallacoota Inlet between 1998 and 2008 (Over 4000 interviews) over 2000 anglers reported dusky flathead as the primary target.

These are three prominent dusky flathead areas in this state and we have no knowledge of how the effective spawning of female dusky flathead influence stocks in these waters. Anglers have been concerned at the status of dusky flathead stocks and this led to a meeting on the 8th March 2012 of recreational anglers with Scientist Simon Conran and Fisheries Director Travis Dowling in Lakes Entrance. This resulted in a motion that “**the minimum size of dusky flathead be increased to 30cms and the maximum size should be reduced to 55cms.**” This motion was passed with great support from anglers, and at a further meeting in Mallacoota the same motion was passed. Recreational anglers were leading the push to protect female flathead and support the sustainability of this species in the East Gippsland waters.

The greatest concern of anglers is the long term sustainability of this species, given the introduction of soft plastic lure fishing, and the vastly increased number of anglers targeting dusky flathead.

For the above reasons it is most important that the current regulations setting conservative minimum and maximum size limits for dusky flathead as set out in the current Fisheries Notice namely the minimum 30cm and maximum 55cm size limits are applied for the next twelve months to protect dusky flathead from increasing fishing pressure,

Of concern to recreational anglers is the statement in the Summary of Proposed Fishing Notices that “**the Fisheries Notice does not apply to commercial fishers.**” Whilst the 55cm maximum size limit provides a “no take refuge for large dusky flathead and is intended to help rebuild breeding stocks.”

The fact that this does not apply to commercial fishers means that stock maintenance of dusky flathead relies on recreational fishers accepting the current regulations with no similar contribution from commercial fishers. In addition in recent years the commercial catch of dusky flathead in the Gippsland Lakes has declined from 48 tonnes in 2005/6 to a mere 8 tonnes per annum today. This is thought to be in response to high flathead prices of \$40-50 per kg and the continuing decline in the black bream commercial catch.

This decline in dusky flathead should be of considerable concern to Fisheries Victoria and should lead to considering the application of the maximum size limit to commercial fishers, in an effort to protect the large breeding female fish.

Should the current minimum and maximum size limits apply for the next twelve months and should those regulations apply to commercial fishers? **I would be interested in the views of readers.**

Wild Trout Conference Next Month

This is a reminder to trout anglers that on the 21st November in Mansfield a most important conference on wild trout will be held. Trout anglers would be aware of the decline of trout in the trout streams of Gippsland and North Eastern Victoria. This conference will bring together fisheries scientists and anglers to discuss current research and proposals for the future. Fisheries Executive Director Travis Dowling said that seats were still available for the one day conference.



Presentations will outline how successful natural spawnings were last winter in 12 rivers which is a key determinant in the future health of these fisheries. Other topics will include bankside vegetation and its influence on trout food, the movement of trout in the Delatite River, and quantifying the difference trout releases have made to angler catch rates in two rivers that were stocked.

Of particular interest for those attending is that they will have the opportunity to discuss the proposed introduction of a minimum size for trout, and hear from scientists about how different minimum sizes would impact trout stocks and harvest opportunities.

An evening program sponsored by the Mansfield Angling Club, will be presented by “Dr Dan Dauwalter, of Trout Unlimited, on how anglers and the government in the United States are managing their valuable trout and salmon fisheries.”

Whilst little research has been undertaken on East Gippsland trout streams, from angler anecdotal information it would seem that Gippsland trout waters face the same difficulties as those facing the North East streams. **It would be great if angling clubs based in Gippsland could sponsor a couple of club members to attend this important conference and bring back a report for the local clubs.**

I must say after years of trout fishing, I have always been opposed to the removal of the size limit in Victorian waters for trout. I had a personal feeling that this move degraded a wonderful sport fishery, however I was

never able to determine who actually proposed the no size limit fishery. I would be pleased to hear from any angler who can provide some information on the removal of the size limit for trout and any reasons that support such a move.

VRFish Supports Game Fishing in Victoria.

On the 14th September, I received a Media release from VRFish suggesting game fishing was here to stay and supporting this sports fishery. This follows a call from the **Humane Society International** to list recreational game fishing as a key threatening process under federal legislation.

This approach is not unexpected and recreational fishing will face attacks from anti fishing bodies in the future. The media release suggests that, “If listed it would be an offence for recreational fishers to harm or injure the listed species, even where the species are unintentionally caught when targeting other species.”

VRFish Chairman Russell Conway said, “This is an outlandish claim that has no basis. It is a knee jerk reaction to the sensible decision by the Australian Government not to proceed with listing five species of sharks under the Convention of Migratory Species earlier this year.”

VRFish in this media release made the following important statement –

VRFish strongly supports cooperative action by countries to ensure they address the real risk to thresher and other shark species, which includes targeted commercial fishing, by-catch, illegal unregulated shark finning operations and the trade in shark fins.”

Dallas D’Silva General Manager of VRFish pointed out that recreational fishing in Victoria is valued at \$2.3 billion to the state economy and provides thousands of jobs. He added, “ the game fishery for Southern Blue Fin Tuna alone in Portland is estimated to be worth \$15 million to the regional economy.”

The Bemm River Report – Don Cunningham



Anglers are finding bream in the river and recent rain has caused the river and lake to be very brown in colour. There has been very little movement into the lake and it will take some time to clear up. Bream can be found in schools, and can be a good size, but small and undersize fish will be persistent. Sandworm under a float, fishing after dark has produced great sport, and the warmer nights make for some exciting action. With the water low, the best areas for night fishing are near the weed beds. Estuary perch will take sandworm under a float, however using this method, the bream seem to be too quick for the perch.

Some salmon, trevally and luderick have been landed. The salmon seem to be in poor condition, but they put up an outstanding fight.

Recent consultation with the East Gippsland Shire, regarding the poor condition of the boat ramp, has resulted in a short term fix project to be carried out next week.

Despite the continuing rain, it is behaving as if the lake could soon close.

Editor.

Another great report from Don, and the pleasing aspect of this report is that something is about to be done to provide a temporary solution to the problem of the boat ramp at Bemm River. Hopefully, this solution will provide for safe launching until the major repairs are undertaken. The issue of the boat ramp has been ongoing over a number of years, and it is about time the issue was finally resolved to the satisfaction of the Bemm River community.



Lake Tyers and the Gippsland Lakes

The second ramp at Number 2 Launching area has been completed. This will greatly add to the ease of launching and retrieving boats on Lake Tyers.



This development together with the upgrade (right) of the Fisherman's Landing launching ramp and floating jetty has meant excellent facilities are now available for boat users.



At the same time, a fishing platform for bank anglers is being constructed at Fisherman's Landing. (right)

A fishing platform is proposed for the area adjacent to the Number 2 ramp, the old jetty has been removed.

I believe this will also mean that facilities for parking will need to be examined by authorities to complete the upgrade of boating facilities. It should also be pointed out that the East Gippsland Shire is working together with residents to develop a foreshore beautification of the area, and this may include additional facilities for the launching of canoes.

[This has been a remarkable development that has involved the Lake Tyers Beach Angling Club. It will have the effect of drawing a greater public response to this beautiful estuary and its fishery with the stocking of mulloway and the possible stocking of estuary perch.](#)

[This may enhance the current black bream and dusky flathead fishery.](#)

In recent years over the Xmas holiday period out of interest I have done a boat count and found a total greater than 100 boats on each occasion having launched to access Lake Tyers, and I would believe that almost all would be directed to the fishery of Lake Tyers. This does not include the new phenomenon of canoes and kayaks. Over 20 years ago when I first commenced fishing Lake Tyers there was a single ramp at Number 2 with a poor surface and no jetty and difficult access with no parking area and generally only 4-5 boat trailers at the ramp. There has been a massive change at Lake Tyers and with this change I foresee greatly increased pressure on the fishery, which is currently showing signs of that pressure. For example, the number of large dusky flathead being caught has markedly declined, and the bream fishery appears to have similar pressure.

The boating fraternity has greatly increased in size across the state and this is also being reflected in the usage of Lake Tyers. It needs to be remembered that this estuary covers an area of only 25 square kilometres.

Within 5 kilometres of Lake Tyers we have the Gippsland Lakes, which cover an area of 450 square kilometres or are eighteen times the size of Lake Tyers, yet development of recreational fisheries in this largest of this states estuaries is almost non existent. No better example exists than the decommissioned dam on the Nicholson River, which is a monument to the lack of Government and local interest in fish movements in the Gippsland Lakes. In the twenty years of Lake Tyers development we have seen the tributaries of the Gippsland Lakes dramatically decline and one only has to look at the Tourism fishing reports of the 1980's to see that decline when compared with sparse angler catches today. Any recreational anglers coming to this area of East Gippsland would be most likely to currently bypass the Gippsland Lakes and devote fishing energy to Lake Tyers.

[My concern is simply that, if the current inaction to develop recreation fishing resources in the Gippsland Lakes continues, we stand the chance of seeing the fishery of Lake Tyers unable to cope with the number of](#)

anglers. This could ultimately lead to two estuaries in danger of not coping with the current number of anglers much less the suggested million anglers.

This question will need to be addressed by the current Government and the Gippsland Lakes Coordinating committee when it is formed, together with Fisheries Victoria and local bodies such as Catchment Management Authorities.

Minister Hon. Lisa Neville Comments on Nicholson Dam

Local member Tim Bull received the following letter from Minister for the Environment, Climate Change and Water on the 4th September. This letter was in reply to Tim Bull's letter of the 3rd of April about the Victorian Governments position on removal of the now disused Nicholson River Dam.

Dear Tim,

As you identify in your letter, a plan to decommission Nicholson Dam was prepared by East Gippsland Water in August 2011. During the planning it was agreed that the cost was to be shared equally between the Victorian government, EGW, and the Commonwealth Government. In 2012, the Commonwealth informed the Victorian Government that it was unable to fund the project. The substantial funding shortfall could not be bridged by the Victorian Government and EGW at the time.

Decommissioning Nicholson Dam would provide benefits to the ecological health of the Nicholson River. It would remove a significant fish barrier and reconnect the upstream reaches of the river to the Gippsland Lakes. There are also annual maintenance and operation costs that would be saved by EGW.

I support the decommissioning of the Nicholson Dam, and have asked the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) to consider options for progressing this project. Investment will be dependent on the priority identified through planning and the willingness of other stakeholders to contribute.

I would welcome any assistance in securing a contribution from the Commonwealth Government towards the decommissioning of the dam.

Thank you again for raising this matter with me.

Hon Lisa Neville MP

Minister for Environment, Climate Change and Water.

Editor

This letter provides a glimmer of hope for the removal of the dam. The letter would seem to firmly put the matter in the hands of the Commonwealth Government to provide its share of the cost of decommissioning of the dam that was agreed to in August 2011, and then withdrawn in 2012. It would seem from the Ministers letter that if local federal member for Gippsland, Darren Chester MLA, can get the Commonwealth Government to meet its commitment agreed to in 2011, there is every chance the other parties involved will meet their original commitment, and the dam will be decommissioned. It would then be likely that the release of 100,000 Australian bass into the Nicholson River agreed to in 2012 would proceed. This would be a significant contribution to the Target One Million project and the rehabilitation of the recreational fishery in the Nicholson River.

Darren Chester MLA has written to the Federal Minister for the Environment Greg Hunt seeking the Ministers advice as to whether some environmental funding might be available to support removal of the dam. (See Issue 94 for a copy of that letter.)

It is to be hoped that the local member is able to convince the Federal Minister to restore the committed funding for the removal of the dam. This would seem to be the initiative that would promote action to remove the dam.

In the words of Dr Sharon Davis, Executive Director of Water resources Division 28/8/15

“Any future investment in the project (removal of the Dam) will need to consider the costs and benefits and the **willingness of other stakeholders to contribute.**” (See Issue 94 for the full text of this letter.)



No Help Forthcoming

Latest Federal Response to a Request for Assistance

On the 23rd September I received a letter from local Federal member Darren Chester in which he states- **“I regret that Minister Hunt has reiterated Minister Barnaby Joyce’s earlier advice that this matter falls within the jurisdiction of the Victorian State Government and there are no Federal funding streams to assist.”**

The letter from Darren Chester was accompanied by a letter from The Hon. Greg Hunt Minister for the Environment referring me to **Barnaby Joyce MP’s advice that this is a state matter**. This is strange in that in 2011 the Federal Government of the day was going to contribute to the removal of the dam. I find it difficult to understand that if this was a state matter why the Coalition Government during its time in power made no attempt to remove the dam.

It really does mean that Governments, State and Federal, have had very little interest in the removal of the dam, and the opening of the Nicholson River to fish movement, public usage and the health of the Gippsland Lakes generally.

Items in Brief

Coroner Calls for Lifejackets

After a twelve-month education period, the wearing of life jackets will be made compulsory while rock fishing in NSW. Almost a fifth of the one million NSW residents who apply for a fishing licence each year will engage in rock fishing according to the Recreational Fishing Alliance statistics. At a recent inquest, the Westpac Rescue Helicopter gave evidence at the inquiry that every struggling rock fisher wearing a lifejacket was rescued as they drifted away from the impact zone. The General Manager of the service’s Hunter Region said, **“If you don’t wear one you’re a bloody idiot.”** This move by the NSW Government followed the third inquest in four years of a death whilst rock fishing, and the introduction of life jackets was a recommendation of the coroner that was accepted by the NSW Government.

Source Australian Newspaper 15th July 2015

Barramundi on the Menu at Marlo

Recently Dawn and I went for a run to Marlo to see water levels and access whether I should be taking the boat down to the Brodribb. We stopped in at the Marlo Hotel/Motel for lunch and were surprised to see barramundi on the Specials Board in the Bistro area. We decided on a grilled filet of barramundi with chips and salad for lunch. Now I have to say this was one of the best grilled fish dishes in a long time, and the salad served with it was beautiful with a wide variety of ingredients. I often find that salad in many hotel/motels is a large amount of lettuce with a couple of small quarters of tomato. This was not the case at Marlo. Actually we went for another drive to Marlo on the first Saturday of the school holidays, with the thought of a grilled barramundi filet in our minds, however there were so many cars at the Hotel that we decided to give it a miss. We had a chocolate malted and salad sandwich from the Marlo General Store and sat in the car at the estuary jetty in sunshine for a quite different lunch than we had anticipated. We were entertained by the antics of a large seal that has been at the jetty for well over twelve months living on fish skeletons tossed towards him by anglers cleaning fish.

Barramundi farming is one of the fastest growing aquaculture developments in Australia. In June of this year the West Australian Government gave the company Marine Produce Australia approval to expand its barramundi production at Cone Bay from 1000 tonnes to 7000 tonnes per annum. This is only one development of a number of companies developing aquaculture facilities in the Kimberley Region of Western Australia. The Western Australian Minister for Fisheries has indicated that he believes the Kimberley region could produce 100,000 tonnes of barramundi annually in the future. The barramundi in this region is considered close to perfection as an eating fish and it is thought the tides in the area keep the fish in the pens constantly active, and this leads to a better product than fish contained in ponds with little tidal action.

Of course we have the possibility of a recreational barramundi fishery in the Hazelwood pondage. This was a commitment of the Andrews Government.

School Whiting being Filleted

At Lakes Entrance Co-op a new machine has been installed that can trim the head and tail of a school whiting and filet the fish. This machine can handle six school whiting per second. The school whiting together with tiger flathead is one of the main targets of the commercial offshore Danish Seine netting.

Source September SEFTIA Newsletter

The Gippsland Lakes Co-ordinating Committee

When the Andrews Government came to power the Gippsland Lakes Ministerial Advisory Committee was disbanded and is currently being replaced by a **Gippsland Lakes Co-ordinating Committee**.

This new committee will have up to 12 members made up of 5 community members and 5 members of public sector agencies with water experience. The committee will have co-chairmen namely the heads of the East Gippsland Catchment Management Authority and the head of the West Gippsland Catchment Management Authority.

Applications for membership of this Co-ordinating Committee closed on the 24th August.

This committee will provide advice to the Minister for Environment, Climate Change and Water the Hon Lisa Neville MP. As well as advising the Minister, the committee will make recommendations on the allocation of funds, and will monitor and evaluate programs associated with the lakes.

It is to be hoped the Co-ordinating Committee will direct its energies towards projects that will provide scientific knowledge leading to an assured future for the Gippsland Lakes rather than funding art shows, triathlons, and the writing of songs and recording CD's as occurred with the Gippsland Lakes Ministerial Advisory Committee.

Of concern to recreational anglers are three projects namely

1. "Determining the Economic Value of Fishing in the Gippsland Lakes"
2. "The Economic Value of boating in the Gippsland Lakes" and
3. "A review of stock assessment methodologies for fish in the Gippsland Lakes."

These projects were announced on the 6th January 2014, by the CEO of the Gippsland Lakes Ministerial Advisory Committee, however nothing further has been heard since that date. This has been a very disappointing outcome from a body with funding in excess of \$10 million. I understand these projects have been completed but not released.

Dry Conditions pose Problems.

A reader sent me a cutting from the Weekly Times 23/9/2015 in which concern is expressed at the effect of low rainfall in South West Victoria. The article suggests the Bostock Reservoir near Ballan is currently at 4.8 per cent full. The article states that thousands of trout and salmon have been released into this reservoir in recent years. Fisheries Victoria spokesman Nick Foster is quoted as saying 2500 brown trout were to be released into this reservoir, however their release was diverted to the Pykes Creek Reservoir. Pykes Creek Reservoir is at 19 per cent full. Much of the recent stocking has taken place in the lakes of South West Victoria, and conditions facing these lakes could pose major problems for fish stocks. I have had readers from North East Victoria also indicating a lack of rainfall and small flows in streams. Waters like Lake Toolondo that lacks water security must also be a concern facing this summer with its low rainfall predictions.

A Little Bit of History.



This photograph circa late 1930's-40's was sent to me by Lorraine Scott, and it shows her grandfather, Edward Hunt with the home made fishing rod constructed from a sapling and a lovely trout, the result of his fishing.. The photo was taken on the Goulbourn River at Kevington.

Around the Jetties and Local Newspapers.

A reader raised with me the question as to why local papers (Bairnsdale and Lakes Entrance) don't have items like the stocking of estuary perch and mulloway into local waters as a news item. About 3 weeks ago I went to the office of the Bairnsdale Advertiser to raise this very matter. The editor was absent but I spoke to a member of the editorial staff and provided him with copies of newsletter 93 and 94 and drew his attention to three items, namely the stocking of local waters, the fascinating history of mulloway in the Gippsland Lakes and the problems associated with the removal of the Nicholson Dam wall. I offered to put the paper on the mailing list, and they could use any items they felt were of interest, and my contact seemed most interested in my proposal. The only proviso was that items used should be acknowledged as being from Around the Jetties. He indicated he was surprised that he had not seen the newsletter previously and he would talk to the editor and they would be in touch.

No contact has been made, and no interest was shown in local recreational angling issues raised in Around the Jetties. I can only presume that items such as the status of the Nicholson River are of little interest to local papers.

[Around the Jetties on Line
www.laketyersbeach.net.au](http://www.laketyersbeach.net.au)

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. We do not advertise but rely on readers talking to others and the number of readers just continues to increase.

Good Health and Good fishing

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