



Newscast



An information bulletin for recreational fishers

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Summer's on the way - order your fishing licence books NOW!

A reminder to all licence agents: with the summer holidays approaching, now's the time to make sure your monthly returns are up to date, and to order more licence books if necessary. To order more books, contact the NSW Department of Primary Industries' (DPI) recreational licensing team on (02) 9527 8585.

Trout fishing season re-opens

The October long weekend marked the start of the 2004 trout fishing season in NSW. Trout streams are closed each year over winter to protect spawning fish and were re-opened to fishing from midnight on Friday October 1. General trout dams and lakes are open to trout fishing all-year round.

More trout for the New England and Barrington Ranges

Between 14 and 30 September 2004, 230,000 rainbow trout fry were released into the MacIntyre River catchment around the towns of Glen Innes, Inverell and Tenterfield, and 192,000 were stocked into the Gwydir and Macleay River catchments around the towns of Inverell and Wollomombi / Ebor (via Armidale). In addition, 118,000 rainbow trout fry were released into the upper Manning River and tributaries around the Barrington Tops region. Trout stocking in the New England and Barrington areas is conducted in conjunction with the New England Trout Acclimatisation Society (NETAS), a group of volunteers dedicated to improving trout fishing in the north of the State. The fish were produced at the Government's trout hatchery at Ebor.

More Fish Attracting Devices (FADs) for anglers

Fifteen FADs funded by the Saltwater Trust are being deployed along the NSW coast for the 2004/05 fishing season. This season will see new FADs deployed at Woolli, Swansea, Sydney north (off Broken Bay), Sydney south (off Port Hacking) and Wollongong. For exact GPS coordinates (WGS84) and more information on the program, visit www.fisheries.nsw.gov.au/rec/sw/fad/home_fad.htm.

Fishkill at Ballina

During early October a number of fish kills occurred at the North Lakes Canal Estate in Ballina. Up to 40 mullet and moderate sized bream died due to low dissolved oxygen in one of the estate's canals. Low dissolved oxygen is attributable to the warmer weather and little in flow of water to the canals. The layout of some developments can exacerbate these conditions. The DPI is working with Ballina Shire Council to develop ways to improve the water quality in the canals and reduce the occurrence of fish kills. Initiatives include working with residents to improve vegetation along riverbanks to reduce pollutants and nutrients entering into the canals. The DPI maintains a database



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on fishkills across the state and there is a protocol for reporting such incidents. Information on how to make a report and what details to provide is available on our website at www.dpi.nsw.gov.au. Reports on fishkills can also be made to your nearest Fisheries Office.

From the courts

- A 34-year-old man from Maclean was charged with illegally trapping eels on the Clarence River. Over 70 kilograms of eels were seized and returned to the water alive. The man was fined \$1,000 and the Court ordered the forfeiture of his boat, motor and five eel traps. The use of eel traps is banned in freshwater rivers and streams because eel traps can trap and drown air-breathing native wildlife such as platypuses and turtles.
- A 41-year-old man from the ACT was caught stealing abalone near Eden. 240 abalone were found in his car, of which 229 were under legal size. The abalone was later returned to the water. Fisheries Officers also seized the mans car and dive gear.

Anyone with information on illegal fishing activity is urged to contact their local DPI Fisheries Office or call the Fishers Watch phone line on 1800 043 536.

Prawning – did you know?

The possession limit for prawns is 10 litres. Most people use handheld scoop nets to catch prawns, which can have have a maximum diameter ring of 0.6m, a handle length not longer than 1.2m; a minimum mesh size of 20mm, and the drop (or length of net) no more than 1.25m. Hand hauled and scissor (push) nets can also be used but these nets must be registered at your local fisheries office. These nets must also not be set, joined or placed with any other net; and must be continuously and manually pulled or propelled through the water. Check out the website for information on the legal dimensions of the nets. Fish caught in hand-hauled or scissor prawn nets which are subject to a legal length must be returned to the water unharmed.

Apply for funding from the Recreational Fishing Trusts

NSW Department of Primary Industries (DPI) invites the general community to apply for funding from the Recreational Fishing Trusts. In 2003/04 \$9 million was raised from licence sales and anglers are already enjoying the results. The recreational fishing fee is funding projects such as more coastal and inland Fisheries Officers, fish stocking, angler facilities such as fish cleaning tables and fishing platforms, Game Fish Tagging programs, Fishcare Volunteers, restoration of fish habitats to improve fish stocks, fish aggregating devices, essential research on popular angling species and recreational fishing havens. For an application kit or more information call 9527 8411 or visit www.dpi.nsw.gov.au