



NSW Research Angler Program

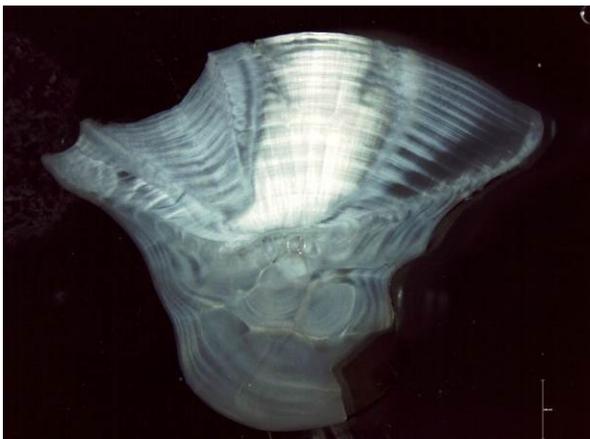
Issue 7 June 2015

Welcome to the slightly “new look” NSW Research Angler Program newsletter – providing you, the research anglers and spearfishers of NSW, feedback on the data you are collecting by donating your frames to research.

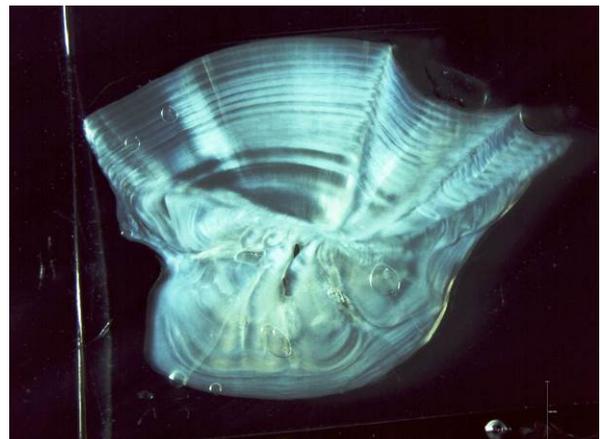
In this issue

Notable donations from Autumn 2015.....	1
Project Progress – Autumn 2015.....	5
“Keen Angler Diary” Component	8
The things mulloway eat...!	9
NSW RAP – ANSA pilot tagging project update..	11
NSW RAP presentations	16
The “Top Fives”!	17
Drop-off Locations	19
Monthly Prize Draw Winners!	20

Notable donations from Autumn 2015



Longer but younger! The otolith section from David Birt’s 139 cm, 13 year old Newcastle mulloway.



Shorter but older! The otolith section from Peter Giblin’s 130 cm, 14 year old Broken Bay mulloway.

A pair of fine March mulloway were donated over autumn by a pair of fine March mulloway fishers. David Birt, fishing out of Newcastle and Peter Giblin in the Hawkesbury River-Broken Bay area have certainly put in the hours chasing mulloway over the years and their two fish coming in at 139 and 130 cm

respectively are tribute to their dedication to chasing the mighty mulloway. David's 139 cm 25.5 kg fish was one of 12 fish he and young apprentice Matthew Birt donated to the program over autumn. Along with the fish pictured below, the Birt's haul included 4 fish between 80 and 90 cm and 4 over 90! Peter Giblin began his mulloway fishing with his dad back in the halcyon days of the Hawkesbury mulloway fishery when fish the size of the one pictured below were commonplace. Even though trophy-sized jewies aren't as plentiful as they once were, Peter proves that if you know what you're doing, these legendary fish can still be found (and caught)!



David's 139 cm of chunky autumn Newcastle mulloway: in the top ten largest 13 year old mulloway so far recorded in NSW!



Peter's stonking 130 cm of late March Broken Bay mulloway: in the top ten largest 14 year old mulloway so far recorded in NSW!

When it comes to knowing what you've been doing, you don't have to have been chasing mulloway for decades like David and Peter (although I'm told it helps!), but you do need to put in hours on the water to unravel the secrets of successfully targeting these elusive creatures. And one guy who has certainly managed to achieve this as borne out by his donations to the NSW RAP over autumn is Newcastle angler, Scott Purnell. Scott's autumn was certainly one of the most productive we have seen since the start of the program with his six donated fish coming in at 117, 121, 124, 131, 133 and 134 cm from the beaches and rocks north of Newcastle. Given how similar in size these 6 fish were, it's not very surprising that they were all of a similar age weighing in at 9, 10,9, 9, 10 and 10 years old respectively. Clearly 2005-06 was a big couple of years for mulloway births around Newcastle. This information is absolutely fascinating to fisheries researchers trying to piece together the exact nature of the relationship between environmental conditions and mulloway recruitment, and fundamental for our knowledge of the mulloway stock in NSW.



Great Scott! A selection of Scott Purnell's awesome autumn mulloway catches from the beaches and rocks around Newcastle generously donated to the NSW Research Angler Program. Keep 'em coming Scott!

As with last season, we again had some great support for the NSW RAP from charter operators over autumn. Craig McGill and his [Fishabout Tours](#) charter business have been a common sight on Sydney Harbour for more than 20 years. This autumn, we were fortunate enough to be the beneficiaries of Craig's decades of local experience and his enthusiasm for the NSW RAP in the form of two fine mulloway caught by some of Craig's clients and generously donated to the program. Our sincerest thanks to Craig and his team, as well as all the other charter operators who 'do the hard yards' in search of mulloway so that their clients have a day to remember on the water, for their enthusiastic involvement in the NSW RAP.



A happy Fishabout Tours client with 108 cm of Sydney mulloway donated to the NSW RAP from autumn estimated to be 5 years old. Photo courtesy Fishabout Tours.



Peter Hopkins had a top day out with Craig McGill and Fishabout Tours with a lovely 83 cm fish from Sydney Harbour estimated to be 4 years old. Photo courtesy Fishabout Tours.

The NSW RAP played a small part in inspiring the next generation of fisheries researchers when a group of students enrolled in the [Masters of Marine Science and Management](#) program got involved in processing some of the autumn-donated mulloway which came through the fisheries research laboratory at the [Sydney Institute of Marine Science](#). Most of the students had not dissected anything anywhere near as large as a mulloway frame and were thoroughly fascinated throughout. As all mulloway fishers know, jewies can have a powerful influence over people, so much so that we even had a couple of offers of future volunteer assistance from the students!



Otolith extraction from the frame of a large mulloway is demonstrated by NSW RAP scientist Julian Hughes to Masters students at the Sydney Institute of Marine Science.

Project Progress – Autumn 2015

One hundred mulloway frames exactly were donated to the NSW RAP by 34 dedicated research anglers and spearfishers over autumn. From the very early days of the program in summer 2014 when just 47 frames were donated, the program has certainly come a very long way in a very short time.

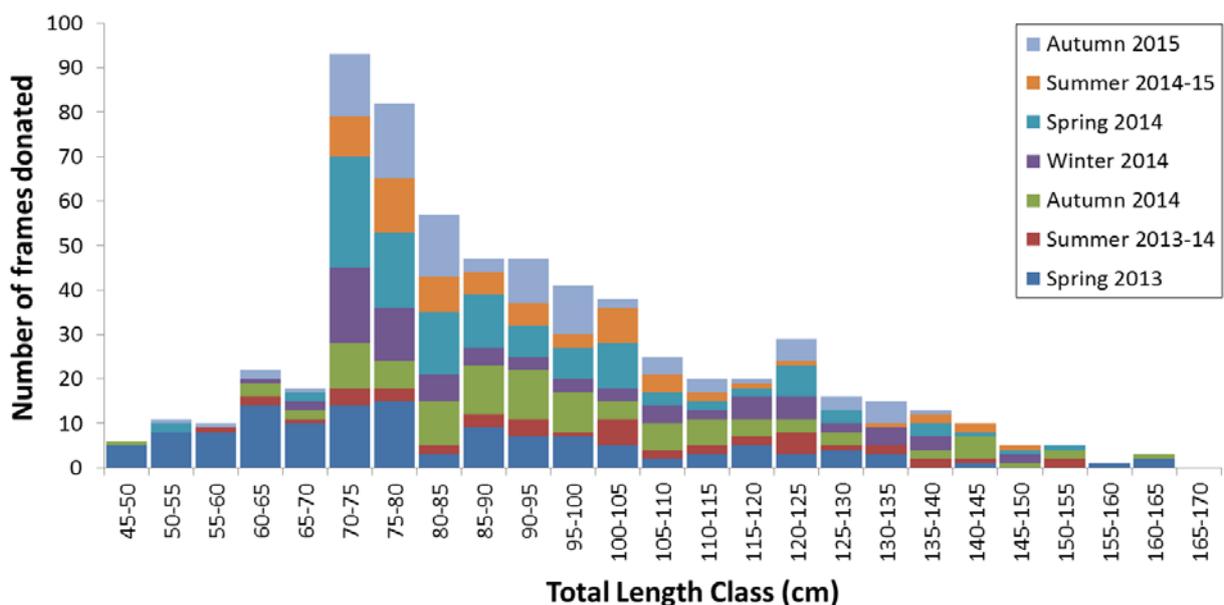
One of the great challenges in mulloway fishing is to catch a metre-plus jewy – and we certainly had plenty of those donated through autumn with 26 frames from fish greater than 100 cm in length. Included in this group were 16 fish of over 120 cm along with 6 in the 130's all the way up to a 139 cm beauty from Newcastle! These fish don't come along every day, but when they do the data is priceless to fisheries researchers. Through the involvement of fishers in the NSW RAP, we now get our hands on this information far more often.

Trophy-sized mulloway are one thing, but while you're waiting for a bite from a 100 pounder, there's still plenty of skill involved in, and enjoyment to be had, from wrestling with fish in the 70-100 cm length bracket. This is exactly what our Research Anglers have been into once again over autumn with 70% of our donated fish in this size class.

The frame from a donated 130 cm male mulloway ready for processing. This frame was one of 100 to come through the laboratory over autumn.

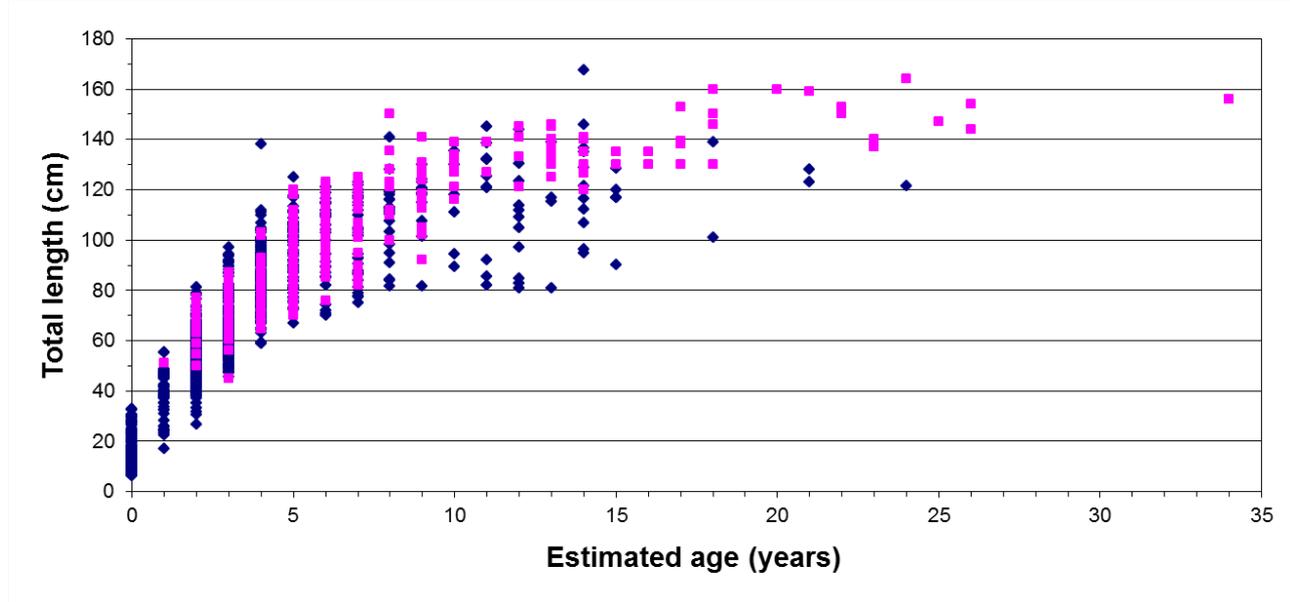


Length frequency of mulloway donated to the NSW Research Angler Program since the commencement of the program in September 2013.



As can be seen from the below graph, since the start of the program in September 2013, the size and age information we have for mulloway in NSW is now far more complete; not only does it look like rec fishers catch faster-growing mulloway, but the all-important far end of the graph now shows some information from the largest and oldest mulloway in NSW. This improvement in our knowledge of NSW mulloway population is a direct result of involving recreational mulloway fishers in research. This situation is a win for Fisheries NSW researchers, a win for mulloway and a win for those who love to target this legendary sportfish.

Size-at-age data for mulloway in NSW: the blue points represent the data Fisheries NSW had for mulloway prior to the start of the program (mainly from commercial sources). The purple points represent data from recreationally-caught fish donated to the program since the commencement of the NSW RAP in September 2013.



The below table outlining some of the key features of biological data collected for mulloway in NSW nicely summarise this dramatic improvement in our knowledge. Since the commencement of the NSW RAP in September 2013, the number of fish we have collected data from estimated to be older than 15 years has almost tripled and we have four times as many older than 20 years! We have almost cracked “the century” of fish greater than 120 cm in length, with over 50 of these bigger than 130 cm and a precious 24 larger than 140 cm!

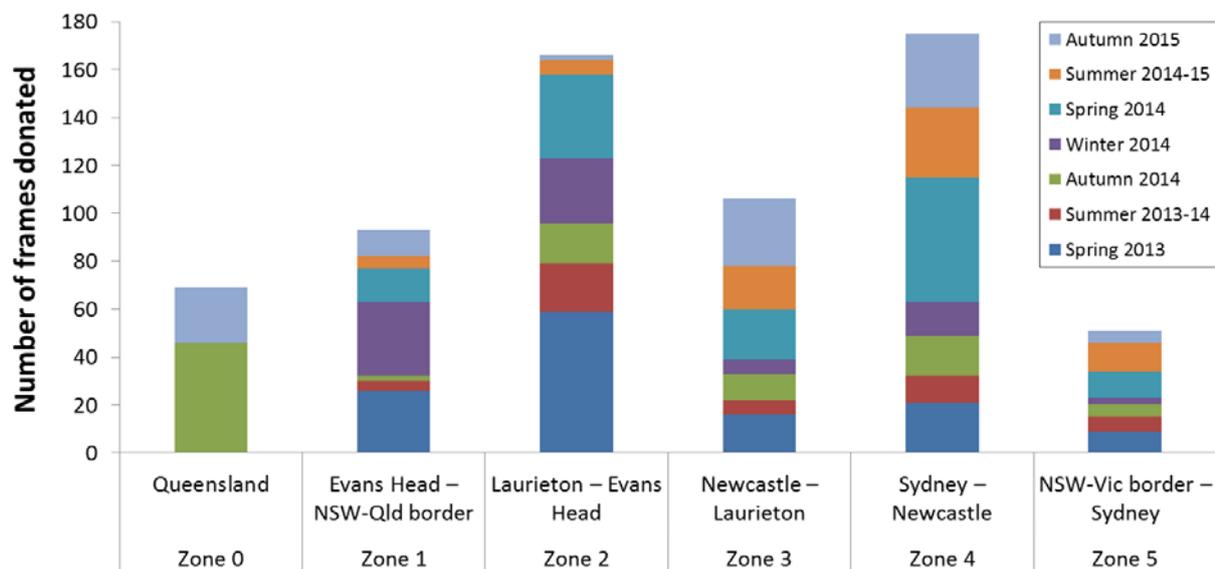
Comparison of some key features of biological data collected for mulloway by NSW Fisheries prior to the implementation of the NSW RAP, and data collected by the NSW RAP since September 2013.

Feature	Prior to NSW RAP	NSW RAP
10 years or older (number of fish)	52	70
15 years or older (number of fish)	10	27
20 years or older (number of fish)	3	12
Oldest fish	24 years (121.5 cm)	34 years (156.0 cm)
120 cm or larger (number of fish)	38	96
130 cm or larger (number of fish)	17	52
140 cm or larger (number of fish)	5	24
Largest fish	167.6 cm (14 years)	164.0 cm (23 years)

The graph below shows the number of mulloway frames donated to the program by recreational fishers to the end of May 2015. The metro and Central Coast mulloway hunters have once again made their jewy-fishing skills evident with the highest number of frames donated (31) to the program over autumn coming from Zone 4 (Sydney – Newcastle). We had a record number of frames donated from Zone 3 than ever before with 28 frames coming from the area from Newcastle north to Laurieton. As occurred this time last year, we once again managed to take possession mulloway frames collected from southern Queensland waters from our north of the border mates from the Queensland Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry's "Keen Angler Program". These fish will provide us with important data from mulloway at the very northern extent of their distribution in eastern Australia, as well as provide us with an opportunity to discuss other interstate issues like how much we all love Paul Gallen and how many of Queensland's State of Origin team were actually born in Queensland!

Some of our largest mulloway donated to the program so far came during winter last year and there will no doubt be plenty of jewy fishers braving the cooler weather for a crack at a trophy-sized fish again this winter. So, if it all comes together for you and you do nail a monster (or a mulloway of any size – legal of course), please keep the program in mind – remember, even if it is only one frame, one head, or a single jewel, we want it!

Number of mulloway frames donated by recreational fishers to the NSW Research Angler Program since the commencement of the program in September 2013.



And don't forget that you can now post the jewels from your mulloway catches to us making donating to the program even easier! All you need to do is contact us at the NSW RAP (T: 9435 4671, E: research.angler@dpi.nsw.gov.au) and we will send you out a reply-paid padded post pack and data label. Then it's simply a matter of filling out the data label and placing it, along with a single jewel from your fish into the post pack (right), seal it, stick it in the nearest Australia Post box and let the postman do the rest! And the good news is we only need a single otolith from each fish – so you can now contribute vital information on the health of the mulloway stock and still keep a jewel for the jar in the garage!



“Keen Angler Diary” Component

The number of Keen Angler Diarists out on the water catching mulloway and recording details of their catches continues to grow steadily. Our Keen Angler Diarists represent the small number of dedicated, highly-specialised mulloway fishers who probably make up a large proportion of the recreational catch making this component of the NSW RAP absolutely critical for researchers to make a better informed estimate of what the recreational mulloway catch might look like. Every mulloway fishing trip, whether it be a successful one or a “blank”, counts towards this understanding of the recreational mulloway fishery so please continue to be diligent in filling out your diaries!

We will be “calling in” the diaries from our earliest Keen Angler Diarists shortly so that we can begin compiling what promises to be some fascinating data on the recreational mulloway fishery. Once analysed, we will share the results of this component in upcoming newsletters (but strictly no location information!!!).



All “Keen Angler Diarists” are provided with a small 20 page waterproof diary to record information from 200 mulloway fishing trips along with a custom-made extra-long 160 cm NSW RAP fish measuring mat (photo left – Chad Busteed) for you to accurately measure the lengths of the mulloway you catch. If you regularly chase mulloway and would like to contribute some crucial data on the recreational mulloway fishery, please contact us (T: 9435 4671, E: research.angler@dpi.nsw.gov.au) and we will send you out a Keen Angler Diary pack.

And don't forget, there's a \$50 MO Tackle voucher up for grabs for the first 5 guys to complete their diaries (that's 200 trips!).

The things mulloway eat...!

The most common prey items in the diet of mulloway are widely reported to be fish and squid. Not surprisingly, these are the most commonly used baits when targeting mulloway in NSW, however the opportunistic feeding behaviour of mulloway are occasionally borne out by very interesting things found in mulloway stomachs. Whilst gut content analysis isn't specifically a part of the NSW RAP, plenty of mulloway frames with the stomachs intact come through our labs to be processed. This season's photos feature some favourite mulloway food (and popular baits!) along with a couple of more unusual prey items:



A threadfin bream (*Nemipterus* sp.) from the stomach of a mulloway caught offshore from Fraser Island (Queensland).



A pair of VERY digested Australian anchovies (*Engraulis australis*) from a mulloway taken off the South Coast rocks.



Some favourite mulloway fare all taken from the stomach of a single fish! Above: two yellowtail scad (*Trachurus novaezelandiae*) and a slimy mackerel (*Scomber australasicus*) and right: five juicy Australian sardines (*Sardinops sagax*).





This photo sent in by one of our Keen Angler Diarists shows a serious mouthful of cuttlefish (*Sepia* spp.) from a Central Coast jewy.



Assorted pieces of small swimming crabs (family Portunidae) from a Brisbane River mulloway.

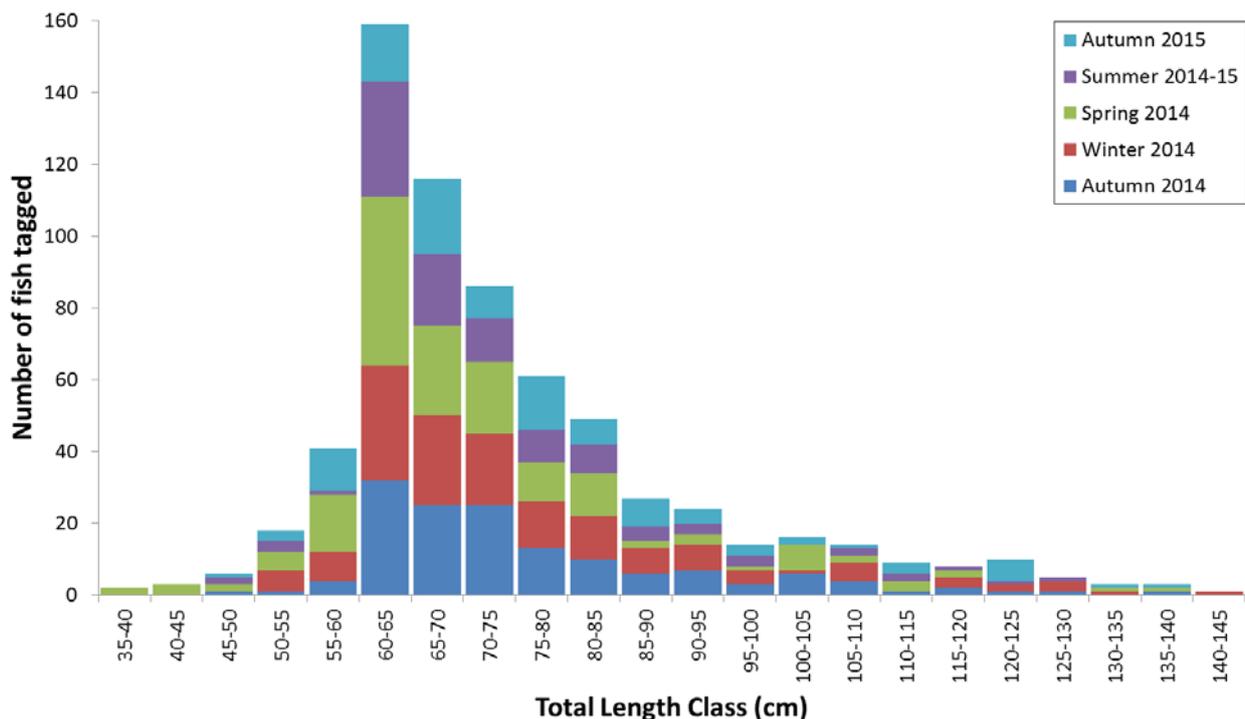
If you have any images of weird and wonderful things you've discovered in mulloway stomachs, please send them in to the [NSW RAP](#) and we will do our best to identify what your mulloway has been feasting on! Stay tuned for future editions of "***The things mulloway eat...!***" in upcoming NSW RAP Newsletters.

NSW RAP – ANSA pilot tagging project update

Another great season for the NSW RAP-ANSA pilot mulloway tagging project with participants tagging another 113 mulloway over autumn bringing the grand total to a huge 675 mulloway tagged since the start of this component in March 2014, almost 70 of these being fish of over a metre in length! The majority (81%) of autumn-tagged fish were caught on lures with just 22 fish taken on bait, but regardless what technique was used, this is an hugely impressive effort from all involved in the tagging program!

You can also now stay up-to-date with all the comings and goings of this component of the NSW RAP by visiting the project Facebook page ([Newtag – NSW Tagging Program – Mulloway](#)).

Length frequency of mulloway tagged as part of the NSW RAP-ANSA tagging project since its commencement March 2014.



Of these 113 fish, 82 came from Sydney Metro region thanks to the predictably superhuman efforts of Chris Cleaver with 19 fish tagged (including a 130 cm model) and Dan Selby's [Sydney Sportfishing Adventures](#) clientele with 18 tagged fish (featuring 4 fish between 109 and 122 cm). These fish came from some of the most heavily fished systems on the east coast, if not the whole of Australia, making the numbers even more impressive. Speaking of impressive, were two cracker autumn mulloway tagged in Broken Bay both caught on lures – Bob Gordon's cracking 120 cm fish was followed by Dean Overhall's 136 cm beast which was the largest mulloway tagged over autumn (and the equal third largest tagged overall!). However, our two most prolific taggers overall weren't the most prolific over autumn 2015, Chris and Dan "pipped at the post" by Andrew Talbot and his amazing tally of 20 fish, all tagged in the underestimated Port Hacking system.

Another 28 fish were tagged from north of Sydney ably led by Mark Saxon from [Castaway Estuary Fishing Charters](#) with 10 fish tagged from the Hastings River. This area also saw some impressively-sized fish tagged over autumn with Mick Leavey's 120 cm fish from Yamba, Duncan Crocket's 121 cm fish from South West Rocks and Kieran Hill's 124 cm fish from Newcastle all topping 120 cm mark.

Stuart Hindson played a lone hand for South Coast mulloway taggers managing to tag and release a couple of lovely South Coast fish out of Wagonga Inlet.



Tag! Dan Selby with tagged mulloway A585173 on 13th April 2014 just prior to release. Photo courtesy Dan Selby.



Recapture! Justin Attard with mulloway A585173, 355 days later on April 3rd 2015. Photo courtesy Justin Attard.



Tag #A585408: found in a 110 cm mulloway caught by Riagan Dowling at Stockton Beach. Put there by George Armao 349 days earlier at the Georges River! Photo courtesy Joel Edwards.



A family affair! Peter, Tom and Jack had a top autumn day's fishing with Dan Selby tagging and releasing this horse of a Hawkesbury mulloway. Photo courtesy Sydney Sportfishing Adventures.

As if this autumn's tagging result weren't already impressive enough, we also saw seven tagged mulloway recaptured over autumn 2015! Amazingly, of these seven fish, the amount of time an autumn-recaptured mulloway spent at liberty was a minimum of 100 days with two fish out there for almost an entire year! This is a great achievement as it quite clearly demonstrates that a mulloway tagged as part of this component of the NSW RAP will retain its tag for a long period of time, long enough to reveal some fascinating insights into the movements and growth of mulloway in NSW. And just to demonstrate how awesome this information can be is the example of a tagged 110 cm mulloway caught by Riagan Dowling fishing Stockton Beach on the 17th of April this year. This fish had been tagged almost a year earlier (349 days) when 108 cm in length by George Armao in the Georges River (Sydney) approximately 150 km to the south – quite the journey, even for a solid fish metre-plus mulloway!



Tagged mulloway #A585408's amazing journey! A 108 cm mulloway tagged by George Armao in the Georges River (Sydney) travelled approximately 150 km to Stockton Beach (Newcastle) in 349 days where it was recaptured by Riagan Dowling at 110 cm long. Image courtesy Newtag – NSW Tagging Program – Mulloway.

Remarkably, we had a tagged fish at liberty for even longer than this recaptured in autumn with Justin Attard's 85.5 cm fish pictured above caught at Wisemans Ferry on April 3rd tagged by Dan Selby way back on April 13th 2014 when just 76 cm long. This was one of 3 mulloway tagged by Dan in the Hawkesbury which were recaptured in autumn, the others being a 110 cm fish which had grown 2 cm in its 244 days at liberty before being recaptured at Berowra Creek and a 98 cm fish which had grown 3 cm in its 309 days at large before being apprehended by one of Australia's most renowned mulloway hunters, Sol Bannura, at Bobbin Head.

Tagged mulloway interim recaptures for autumn 2015 (as of 11 April 2015):

Tagging angler	Total length (cm)	Tagging location	Recapture angler	Recapture location	Total length (cm)	Days at liberty
Dan Selby	95	Hawkesbury River	Sol Bannura	Bobbin Head	98	309
Chris Cleaver	60	Middle Georges River	Anthony Pucc	Georges River	70	282
Dan Selby	76	Hawkesbury River	Justin Attard	Wisemans Ferry	85.5	355
Dan Selby	108	Hawkesbury River	Neville	Berowra Creek	110	244
Abdullah Atlihan	66	Hawkesbury River	Mike Hollis	Hawkesbury River	70	100
Chris Cleaver	70	Lower Georges River	Wayu Jaya	Lower Georges River	78	142
George Armao	108	Middle Georges River	Riagan Dowling	Stockton Beach	111	349

Given the truly staggering number of mulloway out there that have been tagged by Chris Cleaver (126 at last count!), it is almost inevitable that his fish get recaptured regularly and this season was no different with another 2 mulloway tagged by Chris being recaptured in autumn. Both fish were tagged and recaptured in the Georges River, a 70 cm fish which had grown 10 cm in 282 days (0.35 mm per day!) caught by Anthony Pucc and a 78 cm fish caught by Wayu Jaya after 142 days growing 8 cm (0.56 mm per day!). And just to keep things “in the family”, our final autumn recapture was made by NSW RAP frame donor and Keen Angler Diarist Mike Hollis in the Hawkesbury River. Mike’s 70 cm mulloway was tagged exactly 100 days earlier by another NSW RAP frame donor and Keen Angler Diarist, Abdullah Atlihan, in the Hawkesbury River when 66 cm in length!

An eighty-something centimetre tagged mulloway about to be released back into the very jewfishy waters of the mighty Hawkesbury River, hopefully to be recaptured by another lucky angler sometime down the track. Photo courtesy Sydney Sportfishing Adventures.



Top Five taggers for autumn 2015 (as of 31 May 2015):

Tagger	No. fish tagged	Region
Andrew Talbot	20	Sydney
Chris Cleaver	19	Sydney
Dan Selby	18	Sydney
Mark Saxon	10	Port Macquarie
Jamie Gauci	9	Sydney

Top Five taggers overall (as of 31 May 2015):

Tagger	No. fish tagged	Region
Chris Cleaver	126	Sydney
Dan Selby	92	Sydney
Paul Blade	51	Coffs Harbour
George Armao	28	Sydney
Joel Edwards	25	Everywhere!
Andrew Talbot	25	Sydney
Mark Saxon	25	Port Macquarie

Top Five largest fish tagged for autumn 2015 (as of 31 May 2015):

Tagger	Total length (cm)	System
Dean Overhall	136	Broken Bay
Chris Cleaver	130	Botany Bay
Kieran Hill	124	Newcastle Harbour
Dan Selby	122	Botany Bay
Duncan Crocket	121	Macleay River

Top Five largest fish tagged overall (as of 31 May 2015):

Tagger	Total length (cm)	System	Season
Dan Selby	144	Hawkesbury River	Winter 2014
Mark Pirie	138	Clarence River	Autumn 2014
Dean Overhall	136	Broken Bay	Autumn 2015
Clay Hilbert	136	Bellinger River	Spring 2014
Joel Edwards	134	Newcastle Harbour	Spring 2014

Next time you're out chasing mulloway, keep an eye out for one of our yellow NSW DPI tags like this one in the shoulder of Paul Blade's 50th tagged mulloway just prior to release!



If you are fortunate enough to catch a tagged mulloway, please record the tag number, measure the length of the fish, and contact either the NSW DPI Gamefish Tagging Program (T: 4424 7411, E: gamefish.tagging@dpi.nsw.gov.au) or the NSW Research Angler Program (T: 9435 4671, E: research.angler@dpi.nsw.gov.au). The tag will be yellow, approximately 12 cm long and located just beneath the dorsal spines.

The crucial data collected by this project will help us to learn more about the movements, growth and post-release survival of this iconic fish. Stay tuned for future updates in the Winter 2015 NSW RAP Newsletter!

Once again, an enormous thank you must go to the [ANSA NSW Branch](#), and in particular Stan Konstantaras and Chris Anagnostou, for managing this important and fascinating component of the NSW Research Angler Program.

NSW RAP presentations

NSW Research Angler Program

- Collect biological data from recreationally-caught individuals for use in stock assessments
- Little data from largest (& potentially oldest) animals in population
- RFT funded (licence fees)
- Opportunity for recreational fishers to get involved in research
- 1 million rec fishers in NSW – an untapped resource

The slide includes two graphs: 'Rec Fishers (1000)' vs 'Commercial Age Classes' and 'Commercial Age Classes' vs 'Rec Fishers'. Both graphs show a positive correlation between the number of recreational fishers and the number of commercial fishers across different age classes. The slide also features the NSW Research Angler Program logo and the Department of Primary Industries logo.

On May 21st, a presentation on the NSW RAP was given at the annual Fishcare State Meeting in Gerringong on the NSW South Coast, home to more than a few NSW Research Anglers! NSW DPI's Fishcare volunteers give an enormous amount of their time to educate the public (mainly kids) on recreational fishing and hopefully many of these great members of the rec fishing community now have a little more information to pass on about the NSW RAP and how to become involved!

If you are a member of a fishing club (spearfishing or angling) or a tackle shop hosting regular fishing-related presentations and are interested in having someone from the NSW RAP give a talk on the program, please don't hesitate to get in contact with us (E: research.angler@dpi.nsw.gov.au, T: 9435 4671) and we will send someone out to get you and your audience 'revved-up' about the program!

The “Top Fives”!

Our sincerest thanks to the following dedicated mulloway Research Anglers and spearos who have made it into our “Top Five” lists of frame donors overall and those for Autumn 2015.

As well as donating autumn’s largest mulloway, the fine 139 cm model mentioned earlier in the newsletter, David Birt also managed to top our list of frame donors for autumn with 9 fish. Together with the additional 3 donated by Matthew Birt brings the Birt family’s contribution to the NSW RAP this season to an awesome 12 fish! Murat Atlihan was once again right up there with 7 mulloway to 108 cm from Botany Bay putting himself well-and-truly in our overall “Top Five” for the first time. Scott Purnell’s 112 kg cumulative autumn haul was the first time we’ve gotten our hands on 6 metre-plus fish from a single donor in a single season! Thanks to the efforts of Anthony O’Brien we managed to boost our South Coast mulloway data and James McEwan’s 3 fish were part of 15 fish donated from Lake Macquarie alone. Seasoned North Coast Research Angler Mark Pirie’s 3 fish included a pair of big fellas from Yamba at 127 and 124 cm, whilst on the other side of the Clarence, Vince Collins kept himself busy with 3 fish going 110, 124 and 125 cm. As usual, Daniel Hughes still found time to donate some of his catches taken from around Laurieton and he is now firmly perched at number three in our overall “Top Five”!

As well as those mentioned above, thanks to all the fishers who donated their autumn-caught mulloway to the NSW RAP, here’s hoping for a similarly cracking winter 2015 of mulloway-hunting!

“Top Five” donors autumn 2015 (as of 31 May 2015):

Donor	No. frames donated	Region
David Birt	9	Newcastle
Murat Atlihan	7	Sydney
Scott Purnell	6	Newcastle
Anthony O’Brien	3	Wollongong
Daniel Hughes	3	Laurieton
James McEwan	3	Lake Macquarie
Matthew Birt	3	Newcastle
Mark Pirie	3	Yamba
Vince Collins	3	Iluka

“Top Five” donors overall (as of 31 May 2015):

Donor	No. frames donated	Region
Paul Blade	44	Coffs Harbour
James Sakker	23	Coffs Harbour
Daniel Hughes	20	Laurieton
John St Vincent Welch	16	Evans Head
Mark Pirie	16	Yamba
Murat Atlihan	16	Sydney

There were so many big fish donated to the RAP over autumn that there really wasn't much between our "Top Five" largest mulloway donated in terms of length. Just 9 cm separated the season's largest fish, David Birt's 139 cm Newcastle fish, a pair of 130 cm jewies donated by Peter Giblin (Broken Bay) and Lewis Sayer (Batemans Bay) and a bunch of Scott Purnell's fish filling in between! Even though Peter and Lewis' fish weren't the largest, they were our two oldest autumn-donated fish at 15 and 14 years old each.

“Top Five” largest fish donated and associated ages autumn 2015 (as of 31 May 2015):

Donor	Total length (cm)	Estimated age (years)	Region
David Birt	139	13	Newcastle
Scott Purnell	134	10	Newcastle
Scott Purnell	133	10	Newcastle
Scott Purnell	131	9	Newcastle
Peter Giblin	130	14	Sydney
Lewis Sayer	130	15	Batemans Bay

“Top Five” largest fish donated and associated ages overall (as of 31 May 2015):

Donor	Total length (cm)	Estimated age (years)	Region	Season
Adam Price	164	24	Sydney	Spring 2013
Keith Kneebone	160	20	Sydney	Autumn 2014
Mark McCabe	159	21	Sydney	Spring 2013
Vaughan Little	156	34	Nowra	Spring 2013
Scott Robson	154	26	Newcastle	Summer 2013-14

Sean Benson a prime May lucky prize draw winning mulloway! Sean's \$50 voucher from MO Tackle Coffs Harbour will hopefully help him catch many more mulloway like this (and donate them to the NSW RAP)!



“Top Five” oldest fish donated and associated lengths autumn 2015 (as of 31 May 2015):

Donor	Estimated age (years)	Total length (cm)	Region
Lewis Sayer	15	130	Batemans Bay
Peter Giblin	14	130	Sydney
David Birt	13	139	Newcastle
Scott Purnell	10	134	Newcastle
Scott Purnell	10	133	Newcastle
Mark Pirie	10	126.9	Yamba
Scott Purnell	10	121	Newcastle

“Top Five” oldest fish donated and associated lengths overall (as of 31 May 2015):

Donor	Estimated age (years)	Total length (cm)	Region	Season
Vaughan Little	34	156	Nowra	Spring 2013
Scott Robson	26	154	Newcastle	Summer 2013-14
Evan Leeson	26	144	Port Macquarie	Autumn 2014
Marwan Nasr	25	147	Sydney	Spring 2014
Adam Price	24	164	Sydney	Spring 2013
Robert Thorpe	23	137	Newcastle	Autumn 2014
Mark Pirie	23	140	Yamba	Autumn 2014

Drop-off Locations

Many thanks must once again go to all participating drop-off locations for their enthusiastic involvement in the program. This program would simply not be possible without your continued support. The list of drop-off locations for donated frames is changing regularly as more tackle retailers become involved in the program. For the mulloway hunters of the Far North Coast, the tackle shop drop-off point for you has moved (but only slightly!): **Pottsville Bait & Tackle** are still in Pottsville Beach but are now located at **2/16 Philip St (T: 6676 0588)** where Rick and Bruce will gladly accept your mulloway frames! For the full and up-to-date list of places where you can drop-off your frames, please visit:

<http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/fisheries/recreational/researchangler/drop-off-locations>

Monthly Prize Draw Winners!

The lucky monthly NSW Research Angler Program prize winners for autumn were decided by randomly drawing one frame donor from each month.

Congratulations to the following Research Anglers:

March	Daniel Hughes	(Laurieton)
April	Joel Pavey	(Port Macquarie)
May	Sean Benson	(Cessnock)



Each winner will receive either:

- a \$50 gift voucher generously donated by MO Tackle Coffs Harbour (for use in-store or online),
- or a mullo-way-ready lure pack worth \$50 containing a selection of proven hardbody, soft plastic and blade-style mullo-way-catchers from Storm, Killalure, Berkley and Rupes.

Future winners will be published in upcoming newsletters and on our website. Don't forget to include your contact details (phone number, postal or email address) on the label accompanying your donated frame to ensure your chance of winning!

Remember, if you're going to catch and keep a mullo-way for a feed, please fillet your fish and donate the frame, head or a single otolith to research –

WE NEED THE DATA FROM YOUR FISH!

THANK YOU FOR YOUR ONGOING SUPPORT. KIND REGARDS AND HAPPY FISHING!

The NSW Research Angler Program is part of the Resource Assessment & Monitoring Unit of the Fisheries NSW Research Branch and is generously funded by the NSW Saltwater Recreational Fishing Trust and the NSW Department of Primary Industries.

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