



NSW Guide

www.dpi.nsw.gov.au

FREE!

Go Fishing

Featured Location:

Tuross Head

Recreational Fishing Haven & Far South Coast Estuary

Hot Spot!



Recreational
Fishing Trusts

FISH
FOR LIFE
NSW

BUILDING A HEALTHY
FISHING FUTURE



Foreword from NSW DPI



Overview	3
Location Map	4
Key Target Species	6
Other Species	9
Handy Knots	9
Catch & Release Info	10

IMAGES: Cover image: Courtesy of Pat Brennan. P3, 6 and 7 images: Pat Brennan. Fish illustrations: Pat Tully. All other images: NSW DPI.
JTN 16385 10/2023

This fishing location guide is produced by the NSW Department of Primary Industries (NSW DPI) LMB 3020 Nowra NSW 2541, for and on the behalf of the state of New South Wales. This guide is produced using funds from the Recreational Fishing Trust as part of our commitment to providing recreational fishers with comprehensive, user-friendly information.

© State of New South Wales through Department of Regional NSW [2023].

Disclaimers

This publication may provide assistance or information but NSW DPI and its employees do not guarantee the publication is without flaw or is wholly appropriate for any particular purpose and therefore disclaims all liability for any error, loss or other consequence which may arise from relying on any information in this publication. This publication is a guide only, it does not replace the *Fisheries Management Act 1994* or other acts and statutory rules applying to or affecting recreational fishing. It is a summary of laws and regulations at the time of publication and cannot be used as a defence in a court of law.

Recreational fishing regulations may change during the lifetime of this publication. It is the responsibility of fishers to ensure they are acting within the law at all times. Check regulations with your local NSW DPI fisheries office or www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/fisheries.

The product trade names in this publication are supplied on the understanding that no preference between equivalent products is intended and that the inclusion of a product name does not imply endorsement by the department over any equivalent product from another manufacturer.

No material matter in this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form by electronic or mechanical means, photocopying or recording without the written permission of NSW DPI.

Throwing a line in at a new spot always makes for a great fishing adventure, whether it's on a family holiday or just somewhere new close to home. No matter your fishing expertise, NSW boasts a wide range of fish species and great places to catch them, including in our many inland rivers, impoundments and streams to the productive estuaries, lakes, beaches and rocky headlands on the NSW coast. There are also many inshore and offshore fishing opportunities from your boat or if using one of the many experienced charter fishing services available.

There are many reasons to go fishing, including to unwind and relax, spend time with family and friends, enjoy nature and of course to catch a tasty meal of fresh fish. Over a million people in NSW enjoy this fantastic lifestyle and the great news is that you are never too old or young to take up fishing so get out there and give it a go! Getting into fishing is easy. If you don't know where to start, just head into your local tackle store where the friendly staff can provide tips on tackle, bait and techniques plus point you to a safe, convenient spot to throw a line in.

NSW DPI has developed these *Go Fishing* guides as a snapshot of popular NSW fishing locations in both fresh and saltwater to help improve your recreational fishing experiences. For more information on other locations, fish species, size and bag limits and permitted gear not listed in these guides, visit the NSW DPI website or download the **FishSmart App** from the App store on your Android or iPhone.



Sydney •

Overview

Tuross Lake is a Recreational Fishing Haven and trophy flathead fishery located on the South Coast between Moruya and Narooma, about 2.5 hours' drive from Canberra and four hours' drive from Sydney. Tuross Lake, which is part of the Batemans Marine Park, is probably best known by anglers due to the diversity in fish habitats that it offers. These habitats range from flats and snags to oyster leases and deep holes – all host a wide range of popular estuary sportfish.

Tuross can turn on some monster flathead in very shallow water, often on surface lures intended for whiting. Speaking of which, the phenomenon of whiting on surface lures was actually born in Tuross Lake under the innovation of local guide, "Captain" Kevin Gleed. There are literally kilometres of shallow banks and flats in the Tuross system providing champagne surface fishing.

Big bream can be caught on the flats at the entrance, under any of the many oyster leases or deep in the snags flanking the middle and upper sections of the system. There are also more than a few very keen mulloway specialists who concentrate their efforts in this system. In amongst all this are the luderick enthusiasts who target big bronze backs along the rocky banks or reefs in the lower section. Top that off with the holiday fisho who's keen for a feed of fresh fish and chooses Tuross for its reliability.

Tuross Head is actually a strip of land that separates Tuross Lake and Coila Lake. The town of Tuross is situated a few kilometres off the Princes Highway. While only a small township, it boasts a shopping centre, cafes and eateries, service station, boat hire, several caravan parks, camp grounds and plenty of other accommodation options.

• *Tuross Head*

continued on page 5



Not for navigation.
 See www.rms.nsw.gov.au
 for info on boating
 safety and regulations.

- | | | | | | | | | |
|-------------------------|---|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------------|------------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------------|
| BA Bass | NSW State Forest | No Wash Zone | Warning Overhead Power Cables | Caution Submerged Rocks | Starboard Pipe Beacon | Starboard Aqua Buoy | East Cardinal Aqua Buoy | Public Wharf Jetty or Landing |
| B Bream | NSW National Parks | Four Knot Speed Limit Area | Caution Entrance Bar Crossing | Formed Surface Launching Ramp | Port Pipe Beacon | Port Buoy No Top Marker | East Cardinal Conical Buoy | Water tap Fish cleaning |
| EP Estuary Perch | + Dangerous area Breaks at times | Eight Knot Speed Limit Area | Caution Shallow Water | Launching Ramp Parking & Facilities | Starboard Buoy No Top Marker | North Cardinal Aqua Buoy | Iso. Danger Conical Buoy | |
| F Flathead | | | | | | | | |
| M Mulloway | | | | | | | | |
| W Whiting | | | | | | | | |

Tuross Lake itself is quite unique for a southern estuary. Its main inflow comes from the Tuross River, which starts well up in the Kybean Range. The river's upper reaches provide good bass fishing for those prepared to put in the effort to make the journey. There are expansive stretches of shallow sand bars interspersed with deep pools which hold the bass.

As the river reaches the lower coastal reaches, numerous estuarine lakes, such as Bumbo and Borang, join the system. Around this section, the river splits several times, making navigation a challenge. If you're interested in exploring the upper or middle sections of the Tuross system, get a map and study it. There are lots of dead ends...

As the river gets closer to the coast, it opens into a series of basins with several large bays full of oyster leases – a favourite bream habitat – linked by channels. The town of Tuross sits on the northern shore of the main basin of Tuross Lake. The main basin used to flow straight out to the ocean and was quite deep. The effects of drought over the past 20 years have seen the front section of the lake become very shallow, making boat navigation tricky. At times, the entrance has completely closed up. It is generally regarded as an unsafe bar from which to head out to sea.

Aside from the main waterway, the numerous bays, creeks, channels and mini lakes in the system mean that there's always a quiet, protected and productive location for shore, boat or kayak-based anglers.



Key target species

Dusky Flathead

PEAK SEASON – October to April.

TECHNIQUE – Bait fishing with whitebait, fresh prawns, live prawns or live poddy mullet; lure casting with soft plastics, vibes and deep diving hard-bodies.

TACKLE – 2-4kg spin outfits, 2-3kg braid or mono line and 4-6kg leader. For bait fishing, use 1/0 to 4/0 non-offset circle hooks on a running sinker rig. Tuross isn't a particularly deep system so when fishing soft plastics try light jig heads of 3 to 9 grams on 1/0 or 2/0 hooks. Stick with tails in the 6-12cm size. Curl or paddle tails work well, as do shads. Start with natural colours like grey, silver, "black & gold" or greens but don't be afraid of using something bright if things are quiet. An effective retrieve technique is to let your plastic hit the bottom then "rip" the rod firmly and allow the lure to swim back to the bottom. Be prepared for the bite as it sinks. Vibes can be substituted for soft



plastics, especially when drifting water with significant depth changes. Diving hard-bodies can be effective around drop-offs and flats. Surface lures like poppers or mini stickbaits are the way to go over large shallow areas.

HOT SPOTS – Drop-offs, flats systems, creek mouths and oyster leases.

BAG & SIZE LIMITS – 5 per day 36cm to 70cm. All Dusky Flathead outside of this size range will be required to be released back into the water.

See www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/fisheries for more info on handling and releasing trophy-sized flathead, including best practice catch & release techniques.

Bream

PEAK SEASON – Year round.

TECHNIQUE – Bait fishing with fresh prawns, fish strips, live marine worms and prawns; lure fishing with soft plastics, vibes and small hard-bodied divers.

TACKLE – 2-3kg spin outfits, 2kg braid or mono and 2-5kg leader. For bait fishing, use size 2-1/0 non-offset circle hooks unweighted or with a small running “00” ball sinker. The use of berley is effective when targeting bream on bait. Use 1-2 gram jig heads on size 1-2 hooks teamed with 3-8cm “wiggler” style tails when targeting bream on plastics. Use a slow “lift and drop” technique. Vibes are effective in deeper water and surface poppers are deadly around snags or oyster leases, especially during summer. Hard-bodies come into their own around oyster leases and snags in the middle to upper reaches.

HOT SPOTS – Oyster leases, snags and flats.

SIZE & BAG LIMITS – 10 per day 25cm and over.



Whiting

PEAK SEASON – November to April.

TECHNIQUE – Bait fishing with live saltwater yabbies or marine worms; surface luring with poppers and small stickbaits.

TACKLE – 1-3kg spin outfits, 2kg braid or mono and 2-5kg leader. When bait fishing, use a size 1-1/0 non-offset circle or long shank hook making sure it matches the bait size and shape. Try a running sinker rig with a metre of 2kg trace. Cast small surface lures around sandflats and shallow weed-beds for exciting top-water action on hard fighting whiting! A gun tip: Keep your retrieve brisk and consistent.

HOT SPOTS – Flats, shallow weed beds.

BAG & SIZE LIMITS – 20 per day 27cm and over.



Try using poppers or stickbaits for exciting surface action on whiting.



Mulloway

PEAK SEASON –

October to April.

TECHNIQUE – Bait fishing with live mullet or large strips of fresh fish or squid; lure fishing with medium to large soft plastics or soft vibes.

TACKLE – 4-8kg spin outfits. 8-10kg braid or mono and 10-20kg leader. When bait fishing, use 6/0-8/0 non-offset circle hooks on a running sinker rig. Use 10-20 gram jig heads on size 3/0-5/0 extra strong hooks teamed with 10-20cm paddle or shad tail. "Black & gold" is a consistent tail colour. For soft vibes, use models that are 10cm or longer.

HOT SPOTS – Drop-offs, reefs and bait schools.

BAG & SIZE LIMITS – 1 per day 70cm and over. Boat limit of 2 per boat per day (if 2 or more fishers onboard). Charter boat limit of 3 per boat per day.



Luderick

PEAK SEASON –

Year round.

TECHNIQUE – Bait fishing with green weed using chopped up weed and sand as berley.

TACKLE – 3-4kg spin outfits generally using longer 3m slow action rods. Standard luderick rigs incorporate a stem float weighted by split shot terminating in a size 6-8 sneck hook baited with strands of green weed. Some anglers are having success using artificial "weed flies" in place of weed.

HOT SPOTS – Edges of weed beds, channels, reefy areas.

BAG & SIZE LIMITS – 10 per day 27cm and over.



Other Species



A number of other common species including garfish, mullet, tailor, flounder and silver trevally can also be caught in Tuross's productive waters. Tailor can be prolific in the system and smaller specimens can sometimes play havoc with anglers using soft plastics as they snip the tails in half. If this starts happening, switch to a hard-body or metal blade.

As mentioned earlier, native bass are available in the upper reaches with some spectacular kayak/canoe waters below the range. Trout exist in the uppermost reaches above Tuross Falls and occasionally turn up amongst the bass below the falls. As the fresh starts to run to salt, enigmatic estuary perch can be targeted around sunken trees.

HANDY KNOTS

UNI KNOT – This is an excellent knot for connecting hooks and swivels to the end of fishing lines. A very dependable knot. Use more wraps with lighter line, less with heavier line. It can also be used to attach your fishing line to your reel by passing the line around the back of the spool rather than through the eye of the hook.



1. Thread line through eye.



2. Make this configuration.



3. Begin wrapping loop C with tag A.



4. Continue wrapping four to six times.



5. Moisten the line and form a knot by pulling tag A against loop C.



6. As you continue to pull on the tag all of the spirals in the tag are transferred to the loop D.



7. This forms a slipping knot and loop.



8. The loop C disappears as the knot slides down on to the eye.

DOUBLE UNI KNOT – This is a useful knot for joining two lines.



1. Overlap the lines to be joined then encircle one line with the tag of the other.



2. Wrap the double strand inside the formed loop.



3. Make four wraps in all.



4. Do the same with the other line so the knot in each line is tied around the other.



5. Moisten the line and tighten each knot in turn.



6. Draw the knots together, tighten once more, then trim the tags.

CATCH & RELEASE INFO

Catch & release fishing is becoming increasingly popular, with many anglers now electing to release key species such as flathead, bream, tailor and mulloway. Recent research by NSW DPI has shown that most fish survive using current C&R techniques.

Key ways to release fish successfully include:

- Using non-offset circle hooks and artificial lures.

- Using suitable tackle to minimise fight times.
- Using knotless landing nets.
- If deeply hooked, cutting the line close to the mouth.
- Minimising the fish's time out of the water.
- Using wet hands or gloves to handle fish.
- Reviving the fish upon release.

See www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/fisheries for more info on best practice C&R techniques.



A HEALTHY FISHING FUTURE IS IN YOUR HANDS

Help us build a positive future for recreational fishing in NSW.

By fishing responsibly, you can safeguard fish stocks and protect the places we love to fish. When you hold a current recreational fishing licence, your fee contribution is used for improving local facilities like fishing platforms and enhancing fishing experiences with artificial reefs and FADs.



Live for Fishing. Fish for Life. Learn more at
WWW.DPI.NSW.GOV.AU/FISHFORLIFE

