



NSW Guide
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FREE!

Go Fishing

Featured Location:

St Georges Basin

Recreational Fishing Haven & South Coast Estuary

Hot Spot!



Foreword from NSW DPI



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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

St Georges Basin is a Recreational Fishing Haven and trophy fishery located near Jervis Bay, about 2.5 hours' drive south of Sydney. The Basin is famous for its giant dusky flathead and is home to a plethora of other popular estuary sportfish.

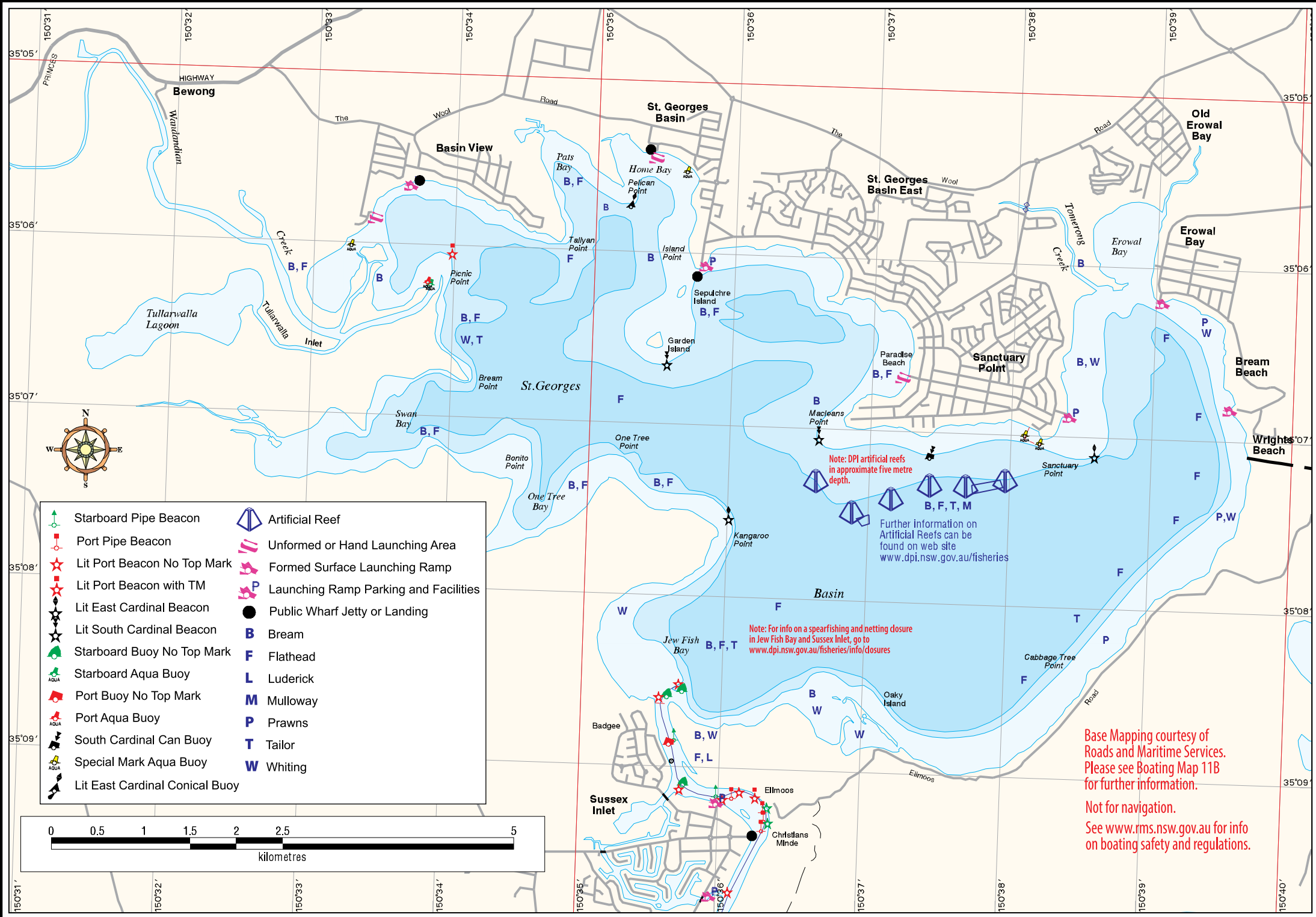
Fringed by a number of small towns and villages including Basin View, Sanctuary Point and Old Erowal Bay, the Basin features numerous shallow sandy beaches, coves, bays, headlands and creeks. It's an extremely productive and popular fishery for Shoalhaven locals and for visitors from other areas with plenty of holiday accommodation, caravan parks and camping grounds.

The Basin is linked to the sea via Sussex Inlet on the southern side with the other major tributary being Wandandian Creek, a tree-lined waterway popular with boat and kayak anglers targeting bream on lures. A number of smaller waterways also drain into the Basin.

Popular with land-based and boat/kayak anglers, St Georges Basin offers year-round estuary sportfishing access in calm and reasonably protected waters.

As well as being a Recreational Fishing Haven, the Basin has a system of DPI artificial reefs, constructed using funds from the Recreational Fishing Trust. These reefs provide valuable habitat for key recreational fishing species and additional fishing opportunities for local and visiting anglers. See separate Fact Box on page 6 for details and GPS co-ordinates for the artificial reefs.





FACT BOX

ARTIFICIAL REEFS IN THE BASIN

St Georges Basin boasts the largest estuarine artificial reef system in Australia, with about 1000 “reef balls” – which can be up to 1.2m wide, 0.9m high and 1000kg in weight – deployed by DPI Fisheries over a four-hectare area covering 650 m² of seabed.

The reefs have become extremely popular and productive fishing locations, with bream, tailor and snapper being common catches.



GPS CO-ORDINATES FOR THE REEFS, WHICH ARE LOCATED ON THE FIVE METRE CONTOUR OFF SANCTUARY POINT, ARE:

St Georges Basin Artificial Reef – 1
Co-ordinates: 35 07.303'S, 150 36.622'E

St Georges Basin Artificial Reef – 2
Co-ordinates: 35 07.491'S, 150 36.900'E

St Georges Basin Artificial Reef – 3
Co-ordinates: 35 07.396'S, 150 37.166'E

St Georges Basin Artificial Reef – 4
Co-ordinates: 35 07.314'S, 150 37.430'E

St Georges Basin Artificial Reef – 5
Co-ordinates: 35 07.314'S, 150 37.701'E

St Georges Basin Artificial Reef – 6
Co-ordinates: 35 07.271'S, 150 37.970'E

St Georges Basin Artificial Reef expansion number 1. Co-ordinates:
NW Corner - 35 07.492'S, 150 36.905'E
NE Corner - 35 07.449'S, 150 37.031'E

SW Corner - 35 07.642'S, 150 36.981'E
SE Corner - 35 07.598'S, 150 37.107'E

St Georges Basin artificial Reef expansion number 2. Co-ordinates:
NW Corner - 35 07.277'S, 150 37.788'E
NE Corner - 35 07.259'S, 150 37.928'E
SW Corner - 35 07.306'S, 150 37.789'E

Key target species

Dusky Flathead

PEAK SEASON – September–May

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

TACKLE – 3-6kg spin outfits, 3-4kg braid or mono line and 4-6kg leader. For bait fishing, use 1/0 to 4/0 (depending on bait size) non-offset circle hooks on a running sinker rig. Try 9 to 14 gram jig heads on 3/0 hooks teamed with 6-10cm "paddle tail" or "shad" style plastics in mullet, "black & gold" or prawn type colours. Use a "lift and drop" retrieve. Vibes can be substituted for soft plastics. Diving hard-bodies can be effective around drop-offs and flats.



HOT SPOTS – Drop-offs, weed edges, flats systems, creek mouths.

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 (i.e. mullet, striped tuna etc), marine worms; lure fishing with soft plastics, vibes and small hard-bodied divers.

TACKLE – 2-4kg 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" retrieve.

HOT SPOTS – Drop-offs, flats, weed beds, artificial reef system.

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



Yellowfin bream are a mainstay in St Georges Basin and can be caught using either bait or lures.

Whiting

PEAK SEASON – November to April.

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

TACKLE – 2-4kg spin outfits, 2kg braid or mono and 2-5kg leader. When bait fishing, use size 2-1/0 (depending on bait size) non-offset circle hooks on a running sinker rig. Cast small surface lures around sandflats and shallow weed-beds for exciting top-water action on hard fighting whiting!

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.



Snapper

PEAK SEASON – Year round.

TECHNIQUE – Bait fishing with strips of fresh fish; lure fishing with vibes and soft plastics.

TACKLE – 3-4kg spin outfits. 4kg braid or mono and 4-6kg leader. When bait fishing, use 2-2/0 (depending on bait size) non-offset circle hooks on a running sinker rig. Use 3-4 gram jig heads on size 1 hooks teamed with 4-6cm “wiggler” style tails when targeting snapper on plastics.

HOT SPOTS – Drop-offs, artificial reef system.

BAG & SIZE LIMITS – 10 per day 30cm and over.



Luderick

PEAK SEASON – Year round.

TECHNIQUE – Bait fishing with green weed and occasionally as bycatch when targeting bream using marine worms or prawns as bait.

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.



Tailor

PEAK SEASON – Year round.

TECHNIQUE – A common bycatch when bait and lure fishing for bream, snapper and flathead. Larger specimens can be targeted by trolling deep divers along drop-offs and around bait schools.

TACKLE – 4-6kg spin outfits with 6kg braid and 6-8kg leaders. A short length of wire trace or heavy mono “bite leader” may be required to avoid bite-offs from the tailor’s sharp teeth.

HOT SPOTS – Drop-offs, around bait schools, artificial reef system.

BAG & SIZE LIMITS – 10 per day 30cm and over.



Other Species



A number of other species including garfish, mullet, tarwhine, flounder and fan-tail leatherjackets can also be caught in St Georges Basin's productive waters. A population of mullet, an iconic sportfish prized by anglers in NSW, is becoming established in this waterway. Native bass are available to adventurous anglers exploring the headwaters of tributaries running into Basin.

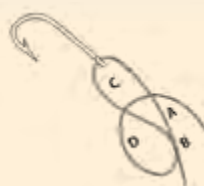
As well, St Georges Basin offers great prawning and crabbing during the warmer months. The prawns "run" during the dark of the moon and can be targeted with dip or hand hauled nets over the shallow sand flats fringing the basin. Tasty blue swimmer crabs (as well as the occasional mud crab) are on the cards if you set a crab trap or hoop net on sand adjacent to a weed bed or drop off.

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.

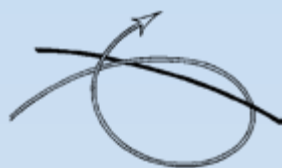


7. This forms a slipping knot and loop.



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

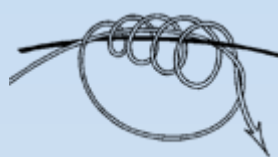
DOUBLE UNI KNOT – This is a useful knot for joining two lines.



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 mullet. 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

