



Department of
Primary Industries

NSW Guide

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FREE!

Go Freshwater Fishing

Featured Location:

Burrinjuck Dam



Trophy-sized MURRAY COD!

Foreword from NSW DPI



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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.

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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.

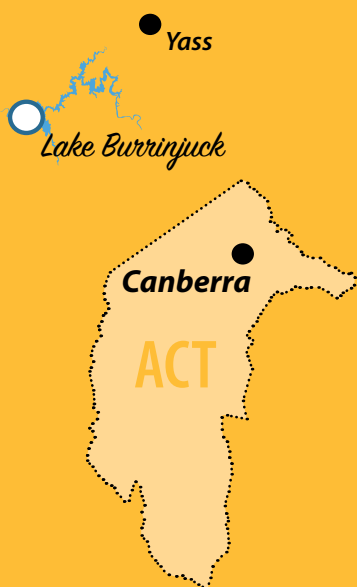
There are many reasons to go fishing, including to unwind and relax, spend time with family and friends, enjoy nature and of course to catch a tasty meal of fresh fish. Over a million people in NSW enjoy this fantastic lifestyle and the great news is that you are never too old or young to take up fishing 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.

Overview

Being located just under two hours' drive from Canberra and about four hours from Sydney makes Burrinjuck Dam an ideal weekend getaway for freshwater fishing enthusiasts. It's great for the family too with a range of budget-friendly accommodation options and friendly wildlife including resident kangaroos and amazing native birdlife, meaning there's plenty of things to do and see.

Construction of the dam started in 1909; at the time it was the fourth largest dam in the world. The advent of World War 1 resulted in significant construction delays, meaning it wasn't completed until 1928.



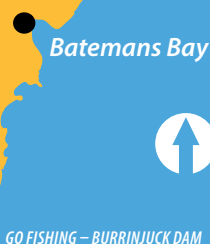
Burrinjuck was built primarily to provide releases of water for irrigation of crops, like cotton, fruit and vegetables, as well as pastures for sheep and cattle.

The dam still supports agriculture across the 660,000 hectares of the Murrumbidgee Irrigation Area, which is centred on the towns of Griffith and Leeton. It also supplies stock and household water needs for landholders and towns along the Murrumbidgee River as well as environmental flows, flood mitigation and hydroelectricity.

Apart from irrigation and water supply needs, Burrinjuck is also well known as a popular and productive fishery, especially for native Murray cod. While cod are high on the target list for most anglers who visit Burrinjuck, the dam boasts quality fishing for golden and silver perch, brown and rainbow trout, European carp, redfin and crayfish.

Fed by three major tributaries – the Murrumbidgee, Goodradigbee and Yass rivers – the dam has plenty of fishy water to be explored, including the main basin and the three river arms.

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As previously mentioned, there are plenty of other things to do apart from fishing if you're staying at one of the dam's four accommodation parks. For example, you can take a walk along the famous Hume and Hovell track, enjoy some bird watching or just laze about in the sun along the dam's foreshore.

All up, Burrinjuck Dam certainly is a special place offering excellent fishing with a bonus of being close to major population centres. Pack the gear, load up the boat or kayak and see what one of NSW's premier freshwater dams has to offer.

This guide to fishing in Burrinjuck Dam is part of a series of *Go Fishing* handbooks produced by NSW DPI Fisheries. Keep an eye out for existing and upcoming editions covering a range of fresh and saltwater locations around the State.



FACT BOX

Correct handling

The trophy-sized Murray cod that inhabit Burrinjuck Dam are a once-in-a-lifetime capture for most anglers. Looking after these great native sportfish is paramount to ensure their survival.

When landing a cod use a large knotless net. Once the fish is in the net, leave it in the water until you have your brag mat, camera and other equipment ready. Never lay the fish on a hot deck, always wet the brag mat before laying the fish down to measure.

When handling large cod it is recommended to not use lip grips as this can cause damage to the fish's jaw, simply thumb grip the fish's lower jaw.

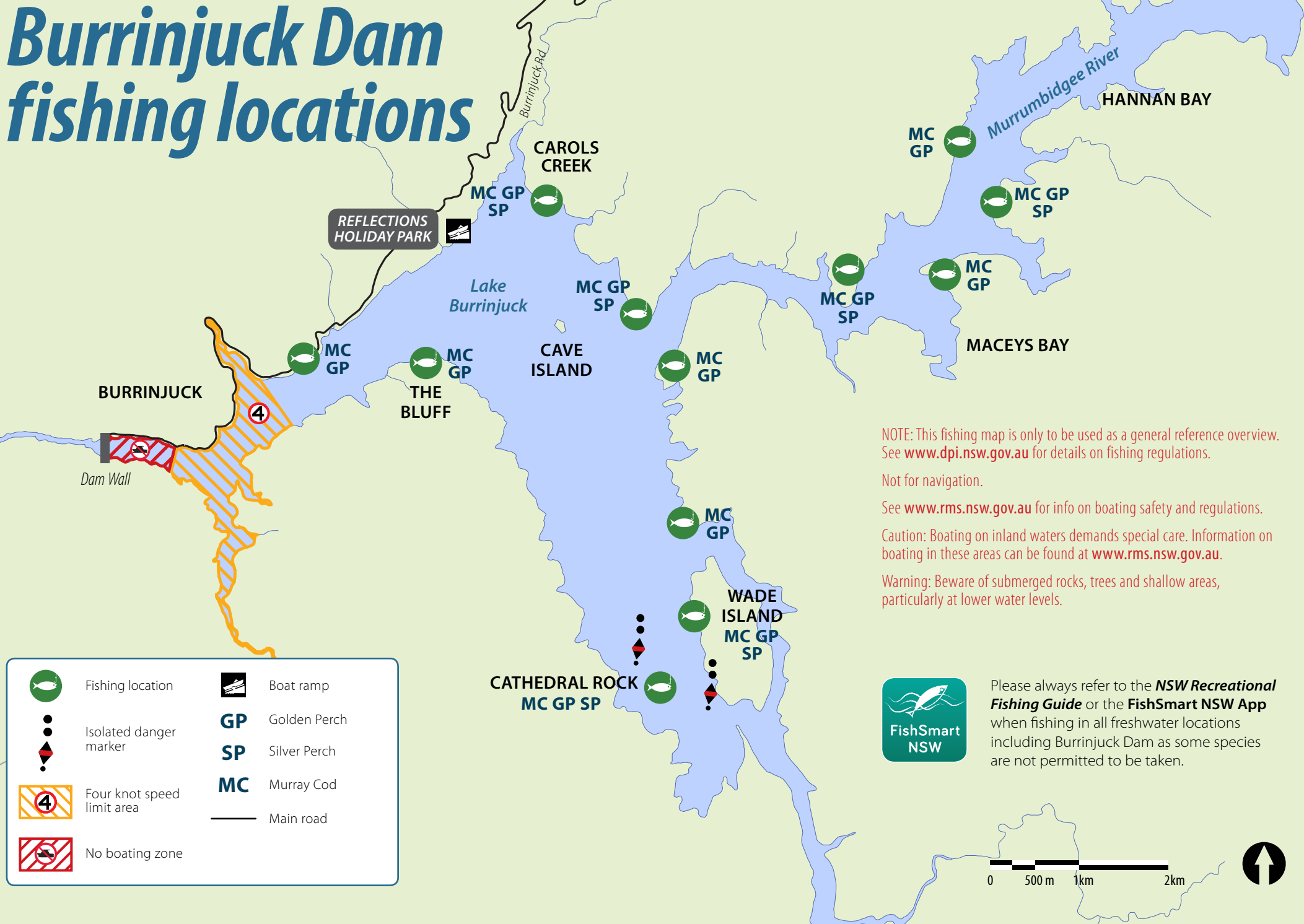
Always support the weight of the fish with your second hand. When lifting, always lift the fish parallel; never put any pressure on the vertebrae behind the fish's head.

If your camera is immediately available, take a few quick pictures and then place the fish in the water until it is ready to swim away.

Some fishers even choose not to hold the fish and hop into the water with very large cod, this can make an amazing shot and memory plus a nice cool off in summer, however, in the frigid cold of winter it would not be recommended.



Burrinjuck Dam fishing locations



FACT BOX

Catching *Murray Cod* on big soft plastics

In the past few years the technique of casting big soft plastics and swimbaits for Murray cod has really come to life in Burrinjuck Dam. During winter the redfin and carp in the dam become active and are actively hunted by Murray cod across the shallower dam edges.

Large 150–200 mm soft plastics and jointed hardbody swimbaits that ideally represent the redfin and carp are perfect options for large cod. The best locations include points and bays near the old river and creek beds and areas where you can see redfin and carp rising. Hold your boat well away from the bank in 5–7 m of water and cast towards the bank.

Fish the lure with a slow roll back to the boat, the odd pause can elicit a strike from a wary fish just following. Try to work your lure at varying depths and speeds each cast until you get a bite and repeat the retrieve that proved successful.

June, July and August are the best months for this technique.

Make sure you have a heavy rod to help with casting the large lures and to land the big fish. Make sure hooks, split rings and lures are strong as the bite from a big cod has immense power.



Key target species



Golden Perch



PEAK SEASON: Year-round, September to December renowned for trophy-sized specimens.

TECHNIQUE: Casting small lipless crankbaits, soft plastics and hard-bodied lures at standing trees, flooded banks and rocky points; trolling rocky points at a depth contour between 4-7 m with small hard-bodied lures measuring between 50-90 mm.

TACKLE: 2-4 kg spin outfits, 2.1m graphite rod, 2500 size spin reel, 4-5 kg braided mainline with a rod length of 4-5 kg fluorocarbon leader. Small soft plastics with 1/6-1/4 oz jighead and size 1 or 2 hook work well on golden perch.

HOT SPOTS: Maceys Bay / Wade Island / Murrumbidgee River arm entrance.

BAG & SIZE LIMITS: 5 per angler per day, 30 cm legal length.

POSSESSION LIMIT: 10.



Murray Cod



PEAK SEASON: April – August.

TECHNIQUE: Bait fishing with large yabbies and grubs from the bank, especially at night; trolling hard-bodied deep diving lures in the 90-150 mm size range around rocky banks and sunken logs; casting large spinnerbaits and soft plastics (focus on steep rocky banks during summer and shallow grassy areas in the cooler months).

TACKLE: Heavy 6-10 kg baitcaster outfits loaded with 15-24kg braided mainline with a rod length of 15-24 kg fluorocarbon leader. A large knotless landing net, gloves and heavy-duty pliers are important pieces of equipment to have onboard.

HOT SPOTS: The Bluff / Cave Island / Cathedral Rocks.

BAG & SIZE LIMITS: Two per angler per day, slot limit of 55-75 cm.

POSSESSION LIMIT: 4.

CLOSED SEASON: September 1st – November 31st



Silver Perch

Silver perch were once widespread and abundant throughout most of the Murray Darling Basin system; however, they have declined across most of their natural range over recent decades and are now classed as a “vulnerable species”.



Silver perch are a moderate to large native freshwater fish usually reaching 30–40 cm in size and 0.5–1.5 kg in weight, but have been recorded up to 8 kg. Silver perch fight hard and are a great sportfish and you don't need specialised gear. If casting for silver perch consider using small lures or even flies due to their small mouth size.

They aren't fussy eaters and take a range of baits. Earthworms, aquatic insects, shrimp, small yabbies, bread and even corn are well worth trying.

HOT SPOTS: Maceys Bay / Hannan Bay / McCarrs Creek

BAG & SIZE LIMITS: Five per angler per day, 25 cm legal length.

POSSESSION LIMIT: 10, all year round in listed dams.



Brown and Rainbow Trout

Many years ago before Murray cod rose to fame, Burrinjuck was best known as being a trout fishery. DPI stocks both rainbow and brown trout into the dam's cool, clean waters with the cooler months the best time to target these freshwater sportfish.



Trolling or casting small diving hard-bodies or “Tassie Devil” style lures is an effective technique when targeting trout. They also respond to baits such as worms, mudeyes and artificial “Powerbait” style products.

Trout have a minimum size limit of 25 cm in Burrinjuck with a daily bag of five fish and a possession limit of 10.



Other species

Introduced **REDFIN**, which are a Class 1 noxious pest in NSW, are also present in Burrinjuck, sometimes in large numbers.

Redfin, aka English perch, are native to northern Europe and were introduced to Australia in the 1860s. It is illegal to be in possession of live redfin in NSW. It is also illegal to use live or dead redfin for bait.

There are no bag or size limits on redfin in NSW. Many anglers enjoy catching redfin as they are good sport and a popular table fish. Redfin can be targeted on similar lures to those used for trout.

EUROPEAN CARP are also available in Burrinjuck. This introduced species originates from central Asia and can grow to impressive sizes. Carp will sometimes take a lure meant for a cod or yellowbelly but are most commonly caught on baits including worms, shrimps, corn kernels and bread. Carp have spread throughout the Murray-Darling Basin and can cause serious degradation to natural aquatic systems. As with redfin, there are no bag and size restrictions on carp. Anglers are encouraged to humanely dispatch and utilise any carp caught in Burrinjuck.

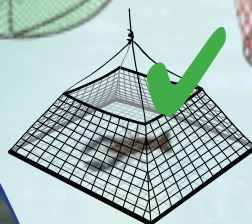


Help reduce wildlife drowning in yabby traps

Only use approved nets in all NSW waters from **30 April 2021**

You are not permitted to use yabby traps. You may use up to 5 hoop / lift nets or open pyramid lift nets, or a combination of both, to take yabbies. Yabbies caught in a shrimp trap used lawfully to take freshwater shrimp may also be taken.

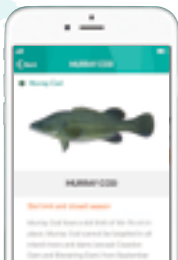
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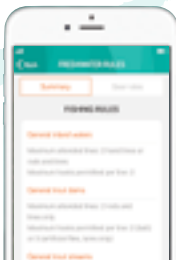
Check out the app: **FishSmart**

NSW DPI has created an app that provides recreational fishers with 24/7 access to essential information they need to know to fish in NSW, such as:

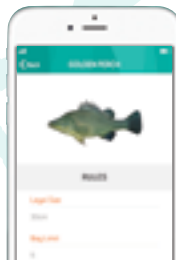
- ❑ a pictorial guide of common recreational species, bag & size limits, closed seasons and fishing gear rules
- ❑ real-time maps to locate nearest FADs (Fish Aggregation Devices), artificial reefs, Recreational Fishing Havens and Marine Park Zones
- ❑ local weather, tide, moon phase and barometric pressure to help choose best time to fish
- ❑ guides on spearfishing, fishing safely, trout fishing, regional fishing
- ❑ DPI contact for reporting illegal fishing, fish kills, pest species etc. and local Fisheries Offices
- ❑ DPI Facebook news.



Search for a fish, weather info and gallery



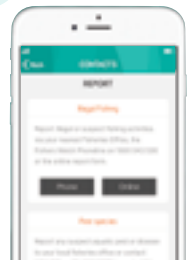
Find information on fishing rules & more



Check the bag and size limits for popular species



Check the rules for different gear types



Contact Fisheries – Report illegal fishing & more