



NSW Guide

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**FREE!**

# Go Fishing

*Featured Location:*  
**Bermagui**

*Recreational fishing*  
**Hot Spot!**



# Foreword from NSW DPI



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Cover Image: Nathan Brindle angler image by Chris Cleaver and all other images by Chris Cleaver. Fish illustrations: Pat Tully.

16765 08/2022

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.

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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

The coastal town of Bermagui, or “Bermi” as it’s commonly known, is located on the NSW South Coast just over five hours’ drive from Sydney and about 3.5 hours from Canberra.



Famed for its protected harbour, spectacular coastline and relative closeness to the continental shelf, Bermi boasts a rich fishing heritage, helped in no small part by the publicity generated by American novelist and gamefisherman Zane Grey who fished the area back in the 1930s.

Now, almost a century after Grey’s pioneering efforts targeting sharks, marlin and other gamefish, Bermi remains a must go destination for big fish enthusiasts.

Black, blue and striped marlin are the targets off Bermi during the summer season. As the air and sea temps begin to cool with autumn and winter, the focus of local and visiting anglers changes to yellowfin and bluefin tuna.

While many fishos head to Bermi with offshore capable trailerboats in tow, the local charter boat fleet offers a range of options for those interested in a day or two out with expert skippers and crew.

If offshore fishing isn’t your thing, there are plenty of estuaries and beaches to explore. For example, Wallaga Lake just north of Bermi township produces all the estuary favourites including whiting, dusky flathead, luderick and bream.

The ocean beaches to the north and south of Bermagui are some of the most spectacular along the entire South Coast. Australian salmon, tailor, bream, gummy sharks and mulloway can be targeted at various times off Bermi’s surf beaches.

While fishing is a major drawcard for the area, there’s plenty to do for non-fishing family members or if the weather’s not playing the game. There are great places to swim, surf, kayak and snorkel within a quick drive from town.

If you’re into bushwalking, Mimosa Rocks National Park offers some great tracks and amazing scenery. The famous Blue Pool, Horse Head Rock, Camel Rock and the historic Montreal Goldfield, Australia’s only seaside goldfield, are other key attractions to explore during a visit to Bermi.

With plenty of accommodation options, as well as a variety of cafés, pubs, restaurants and bars, Bermagui really is a great fishy holiday option. Plan your trip today!

This *Bermagui Go Fishing* guide is part of a series of guides to popular locations in NSW. Keep an eye out for our range of location guides to salt and freshwater fishing locations as we’re constantly adding new spots and updating existing guides.

A stylized map of the NSW South Coast. Sydney is marked with a white arrow pointing to the coast. Bermagui is marked with a white circle on the coast. The map is set against a blue background representing the ocean.

Sydney

Bermagui

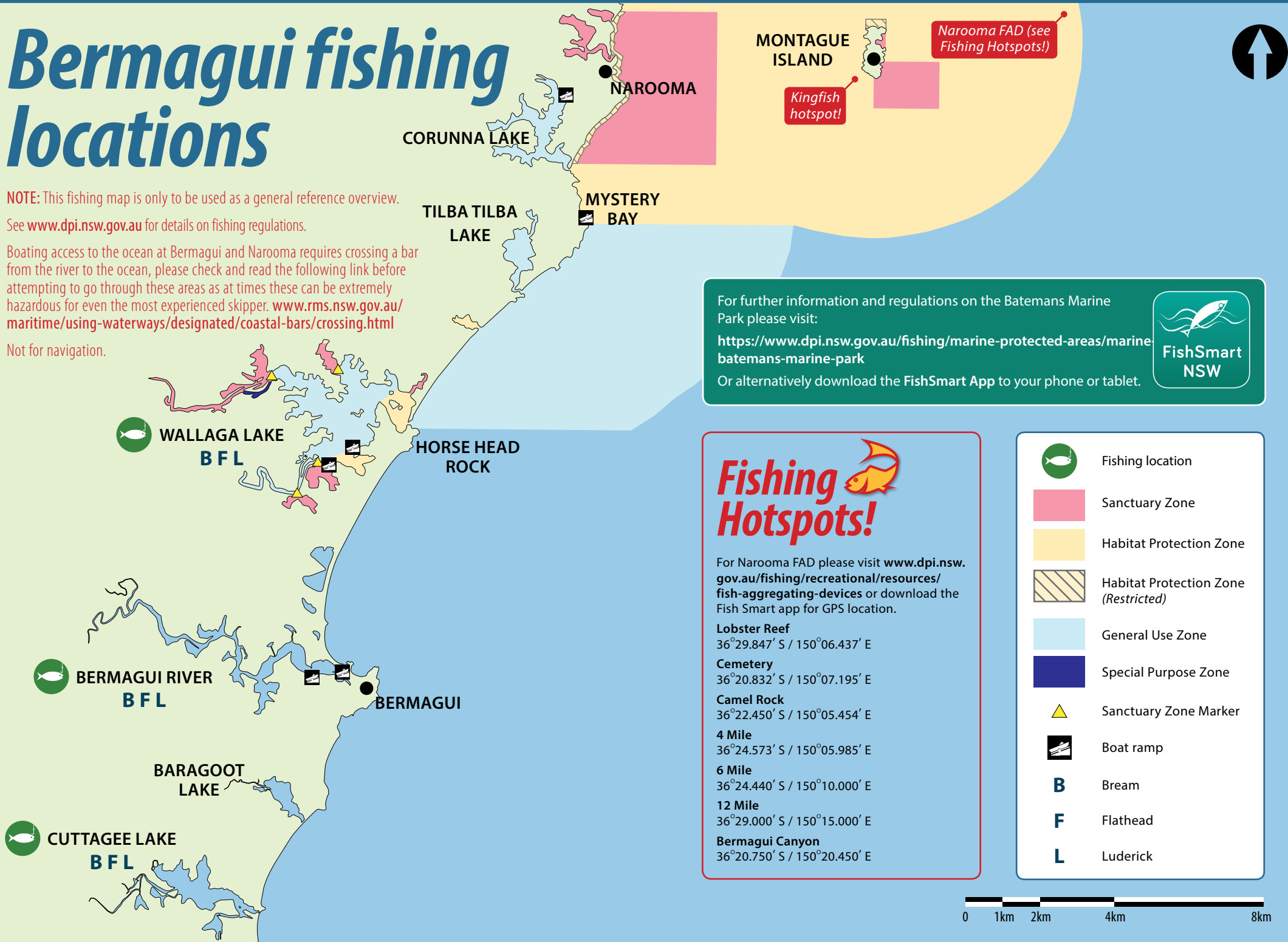
# Bermagui fishing locations

**NOTE:** This fishing map is only to be used as a general reference overview.

See [www.dpi.nsw.gov.au](http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au) for details on fishing regulations.

Boating access to the ocean at Bermagui and Narooma requires crossing a bar from the river to the ocean, please check and read the following link before attempting to go through these areas as at times these can be extremely hazardous for even the most experienced skipper. [www.rms.nsw.gov.au/maritime/using-waterways/designated/coastal-bars/crossing.html](http://www.rms.nsw.gov.au/maritime/using-waterways/designated/coastal-bars/crossing.html)

Not for navigation.



MONTAGUE ISLAND

Kingfish hotspot!

Narooma FAD (see Fishing Hotspots!)

For further information and regulations on the Batemans Marine Park please visit:

<https://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/fishing/marine-protected-areas/marine-batemans-marine-park>

Or alternatively download the FishSmart App to your phone or tablet.



## Fishing Hotspots!

For Narooma FAD please visit [www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/fishing/recreational/resources/fish-aggregating-devices](http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/fishing/recreational/resources/fish-aggregating-devices) or download the Fish Smart app for GPS location.

- Lobster Reef**  
36°29.847' S / 150°06.437' E
- Cemetery**  
36°20.832' S / 150°07.195' E
- Camel Rock**  
36°22.450' S / 150°05.454' E
- 4 Mile**  
36°24.573' S / 150°05.985' E
- 6 Mile**  
36°24.440' S / 150°10.000' E
- 12 Mile**  
36°29.000' S / 150°15.000' E
- Bermagui Canyon**  
36°20.750' S / 150°20.450' E

- Fishing location
- Sanctuary Zone
- Habitat Protection Zone
- Habitat Protection Zone (Restricted)
- General Use Zone
- Special Purpose Zone
- Sanctuary Zone Marker
- Boat ramp
- B** Bream
- F** Flathead
- L** Luderick



# Key target species



## Whiting



**PEAK SEASON:** November to April.

**TECHNIQUE:** Bait fishing with live saltwater yabbies or marine worms; lure fishing with small blades, surface poppers and small stickbaits.

**TACKLE:** 1-3kg 2.1m graphite spin outfits with 2-3kg braid and 2-5kg mono or fluorocarbon 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 2-5kg trace. Cast small blades, surface poppers and stickbaits around sandflats and shallow weed-beds for some exciting action on hard fighting whiting! **A gun tip: Keep your retrieve brisk and consistent.**

**HOT SPOTS:** Wallaga Lake / Bermagui River / Haywards Beach.

**SIZE & BAG LIMITS:** 20 per day 27cm and over, 20 in possession.



## Bream



**PEAK SEASON:** Year round.

**TECHNIQUE:** Bait fishing with fresh prawns, fish strips (i.e., mullet, striped tuna) and 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. Circle hooks are preferred for catch & release. 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:** Wallaga Lake / Bermagui River / Three Brothers Rocks.

**SIZE & BAG LIMITS:** 10 per day 25cm and over, 20 in possession.



## Dusky Flathead

**PEAK SEASON:** October to April.

**TECHNIQUE:** Bait fishing with whitebait, fresh prawns, live prawns or live poddy mullet; lurecasting with soft plastics, vibes and deep diving hard-bodies.



**TACKLE:** 2-5kg spin outfits, 3-6kg braid or mono line and 5-8kg leader. For bait fishing, use 1/0 to 4/0 non-offset circle hooks on a running sinker rig. Depending on the depth you're fishing jig heads of 7 - 21grams on 2/0 or 5/0 hooks. Stick with tails in the 6-12cm size. Curl or paddle tails work well, as do shads. Natural colours are the preferred options in the typically clear waters of South Coast systems. 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.

**HOT SPOTS:** Wallaga Lake / Bermagui River / Cuttagee Lake.

**BAG AND 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.



## Yellowtail Kingfish

**PEAK SEASON:** Year-round, warmer months generally more productive.

**TECHNIQUE:** Jigging, trolling and drifting baits around reefs, drop offs and bait schools.



**TACKLE:** 10-24kg heavy spin or overhead tackle loaded with 24-37kg braid or mono line and leaders from 40-60kg. Non-offset circle hooks in the 6/0-9/0 size range are preferred when bait fishing with fresh squid or slimy mackerel.

For jigging, use rods rated from PE5-8 in spin or overhead configuration with a quality reel to match loaded with PE5-8 braid and a leader from 40-80kg. Use a variety of jigs from longer slender versions used fast and the slower leaf shaped versions in 100-300grams.

**HOT SPOTS:** Montague Island / 6 Mile Reef / 12 Mile Reef.

**BAG & SIZE LIMITS:** 5 per day 65cm and over, 5 in possession.



## Snapper

**PEAK SEASON:** Year-round, April to October are key months of the NSW South Coast.

**TECHNIQUE:** Bait fishing with pilchards and strips of fresh tuna or similar; lure fishing with soft plastics, jigs and vibes.

**TACKLE:** 4-6kg spin outfits, 4-8kg braid or equivalent mono and a leader of 8-15kg. When bait fishing, use 2/0 – 7/0 non offset circle hook with a running ball sinker. Allow the bait to drift naturally in the current. The use of berley is advised when targeting snapper around reefs. Snapper can be targeted on deeper reefs and gravel beds using a traditional paternoster rig baited with squid, fresh tuna or pilchards. Try a soft plastic in place of bait on the hook as it can work well if bait is not producing the goods. Lure fishing is very successful for South Coast snapper. Try "octopus" and slow jigs in the 60-200gram size or jigheads in the 7-27gram size with 4-7-inch plastics. These lure recommendations will work from the shallows out to 70m depth range.

**HOT SPOTS:** 4 Mile Reef / 6 Mile Reef / Camel Rock / Montague Island.

**SIZE & BAG LIMITS:** 10 per day 30cm and over, 10 in possession.



## Sand & Tiger Flathead

**PEAK SEASON:** Year-round.

**TECHNIQUE:** Drifting deep water areas adjacent to reef using Paternoster rigs.

**TACKLE:** 10-15kg spin or overhead outfits, 10-15kg braid or mono line and 15kg leader. Use 3/0-5/0 non-offset circle hooks on droppers above a suitable "snapper" style sinker (size and weight depending on water depth, current and drift rate). Good baits include strips of fresh squid, yellowtail fillets and salted slimy mackerel fillets.

**HOT SPOTS:** For sand and tiger flathead, drift areas of sandy seabed adjacent to reefy areas in water from 20-80m in depth offshore to the north and south of Bermagui.

**BAG & SIZE LIMITS:** 10 per day 33cm and over, 20 in possession.





## Striped Marlin

**PEAK SEASON:** January to April.

**TECHNIQUE:** Trolling skirted lures or drifting/slow trolling bridle-rigged slimy mackerel around bait congregations close to the continental shelf line.

Keep a look out for birds and seals as they will signal where bait schools have been pushed to the surface. If you see bait, a "stripey" usually won't be far away!

Tide changes can result in increased marlin activity. If a tide change is coming up, make sure your lures are running well, your baits are fresh and healthy and you're in a good-looking area!

**TACKLE:** 15-24kg lever drag overhead game outfits with 15-24kg monofilament with a plaited double then a 50-100kg wind on leader to a heavy-duty game snap swivel to attach a lure for trolling or an 8/0-10/0 circle hook leader for using bait.

**HOTSPOTS:** 12 Mile Reef / Kink / Bermagui Canyon.

**BAG & SIZE LIMITS:** No legal length, 1 of each species per day, 1 in possession.



## Southern Bluefin Tuna

**PEAK SEASON:** May to August

**TECHNIQUE:** Trolling skirted, bibless or minnow lures and cubing with fresh pilchards, yellowtail and slimy mackerel around temperature breaks over the continental shelf line.

Keep a look out for muttonbirds and especially gannets and albatross they will signal where the bait schools are. The fish will follow the bait.

As with marlin, tide changes can be a peak of tuna activity on an otherwise quiet day. When coming up to a tide change, ensure your lures are running well or you are cubing near a good temp break with signs of life.

**TACKLE:** 15-24kg lever drag overhead game outfits with 15-24kg monofilament with a plaited double knot then a 50-100kg wind on leader to a heavy-duty game snap swivel to attach a lure for trolling or an 8/0-10/0 circle hook leader for using bait.

**HOTSPOTS:** Temperature breaks over the continental shelf in 500-2000 fathoms.

**BAG & SIZE LIMITS:** No legal length, bag limit of 1, 1 in possession.







## Other species

Bermagui offers a range of fishing options apart from big game species. For example, the headwaters of local freshwater creeks produce **Australian bass** and maybe even the odd endangered native **grayling**.

As these creeks join the main tributaries, the brackish waters provide opportunities to target **estuary perch** and **black bream**. Travelling closer to the ocean, all the usual estuary species are on the cards.

The lakes and rivers then lead out to the ocean beaches where **tailor** and **salmon** are key targets, and then the inshore and offshore reefs.

Bermagui really does have a lot to offer anglers of all skill levels and interests. Check it out for yourself!

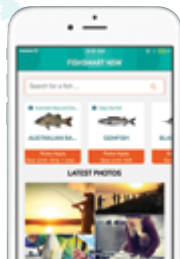




# Check out the app: **FishSmart**

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:

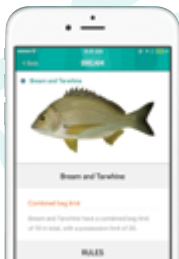
- a pictorial guide of common recreational species, bag & size limits, closed seasons and fishing gear rules
- real-time maps to locate nearest FADs (Fish Aggregation Devices), artificial reefs, Recreational Fishing Havens and Marine Park Zones
- local weather, tide, moon phase and barometric pressure 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



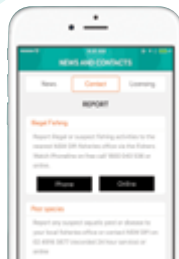
See your location in relation to FADs, Marine Park Zones, RFHs & more



Check the bag and size limits for popular species



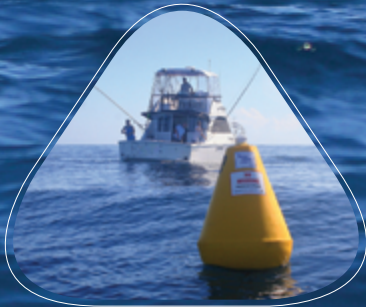
Check the rules for different gear types



Contact Fisheries – Report illegal fishing & more

# CREATING MORE PLACES TO FISH

... that's what the NSW DPI  
FADs program is all about!



NSW DPI installs 30 fish aggregating devices (FADs) off popular fishing ports along the NSW coast from September to June.

FADs attract fast growing pelagic fish such as Mahi Mahi (Dolphinfish), Wahoo and Marlin and create an alternative fishing location for recreational sport and game fishers.

FADs are deployed in NSW by DPI using funds from the Recreational Fishing Trust.

Visit the FADs webpage for GPS coordinates of your nearest FAD, FADs distance off the coast and the best access point.

[www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/fishing/recreational](http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/fishing/recreational)

