



Australian Bass, *MACQUARIA NOVEMACULEATA*



THE BRONZE BATTLER

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President's Message

Spring is not far away! Warm water temps and minimal rain this winter hopefully means this has been another productive spawning season for the Bass in the Sydney basin. Now all we need is a bit of rain in early spring to kick start another season of Bassing.

July marked the 3rd anniversary of our work at Russell St and I am happy to report that the site is really starting to come along. We are starting to see germination of native species on site and our plantings have taken off. Native hibiscus and Acacia's are popping up in areas that were previously thickly covered with Lantana. Everyone that has worked on the site should be feeling very proud of themselves.

This also marks the time of year when the twitching in the casting arm gets a bit much for some and they have to relieve themselves with a little retail therapy. Some new rods and lures will be passed around and drooled over at this year's Bass Catch campsite! For those who are not aware we are camping in a much more central spot this time, which means excellent dusk/dawn and evening fishing, but also means less facilities. So please remember to bring some water along!

-Ash

NEWS

The Bass Sydney committee would like to thank all members who participated in the recent survey for their feedback regarding the club. The rate of participation was excellent and this will allow us to carefully consider everyone's responses. The committee will respond to the feedback shortly.

The Editors message: Unable to wait for September to roll around, I decided I needed a Bass fix...the destination, Lake St Clair up in the Hunter Valley. After cancelling the previous weekend due to wild weather we decided to take a gamble the following weekend. After the alarm had gone off at 4am I felt like I had only just shut my eyes. I could hear the rain pounding on the roof at home in Newcastle which was admittedly disheartening. A quick look at the radar on the Bureau's webpage showed only light rain at the dam. So we took our time having breakfast, hitching up the boat and making our way up to the dam. With the new Hunter Expressway the usual 2 hour trip was a brisk 1 hour and 10 mins....you beauty! The clouds appeared to part over the dam and I started to get just a

little bit excited. As we arrived the dam was calm and there was no rain, and more importantly, not another boat trailer in sight...the weather must have scared them off. We launched the boat and headed straight to a known spot of mine to start casting. Within 20 minutes down came the rain, within 10 minutes we were all wet (even with wet weather gear). The wind started to pick up and we decided to move into a bay to seek some refuge and try sound up some schools of bass. After a bit of poking around I managed to find a few bass in about 30ft of water holding about 12ft down stacked on each other. We moved slightly away with the electric motor and began casting soft plastic slider grubs at the spot we identified the fish. We let the plastic sink all the way to the bottom and then began an ultra-slow retrieve back to the boat. Within about 5 mins of casting my dad was on with a healthy bend in his G.Loomis spin rod..."grab the scoop, I'm on!"...I'd often proclaimed that my old man has the luck of the Irish with soft plastics, it seems that whenever he ties one on, he always managed to catch something! He even caught a Murray Cod in Windamere on a soft plastic which is a rare feat in itself. Anyways, after a nice little battle we boated a healthy fat bass. It wasn't going to break and PB's but it was a start! The wind picked up a little more and I was spending more time working the electric to keep us in the same spot then I was casting, after a few mins of drifting away too much we decided to seek refuge in another bay on the other side of the dam which was protected by tall hills. When we arrived in the bay, the first thing I noticed was how much lower the water level was from my previous trip there 12 months ago. The trees that used to be in the water were now out with their root systems fully exposed to marvel at the perfectly preserved maze of intertwined roots, that was a pretty cool thing to see! Anyways, back to the fishing! I concentrated on points and deeper water, but my old man decided that he was going to target the banks. We found a nice rocky bank on a very small point which had a mix of weed and a nice tree about 2 metres off it. Dad's first cast landed right between the 2 and within a few seconds he was on again. "get the scoop, your old mans on again"...grrrr, the old boy was schooling me in plastics fishing for Bass! This fish was giving him more curry then the last, and he wasn't muscling this one in...he played it for a bit, letting the rod tire it out with some nice big dives the Bass finally rose to the surface and promptly into the landing net. NICE, what this Bass lacked in length he certainly made up in breadth, 390mm in length but with the shoulders of a nice front rower. A few happy snaps and back into the water she went! This was my younger brothers first time fishing, apart from a handline from a boat when he was younger. It's been some time since I've had to tutor someone in the basics of fishing, casting etc. But it seems we have quite a natural on our hands. After some minor pointers he was throwing around plastics like a bloody pro! Pointing and shooting with his casts getting almost equal distance with me. Whooshing and whipping sounds of the rod and line peeling off his reel and running through the guides...I was impressed! No tangles, minimal snags or hang ups in trees, my only regret is that I couldn't get him onto a fish! Regardless, I think my younger brother will be keen to join us again in the warmer months when the fishing is red hot. I can't wait to get him onto his first Bass and then his first surface bite, then I know he'll be truly "hooked".

After 5 hours of fishing we saw some ominous clouds in the distance coming over at a fast pace and decided to head back to the ramp and lightning speed and get the boat back on the trailer as quickly as possible. Just as we pulled the boat out of the water and put the gear in the car the heavens really opened up. Dumping rain, blowing hard and flashes of lightning. Our day was done! Not the most productive but considering the conditions and circumstances I think we did well. A nice recon mission and a rather enjoyable experience for me teaching my younger brother how to fish. I even gave him one of my rods as a present and further incentive to continue his pursuits. Here are some pics of Dad's fish, Enjoy!

- Pete



320mm Bass



390mm Bass



390mm Bass

Bass Season Close

Anglers are reminded that the annual fishing closure for Australian bass and estuary perch from all rivers and estuaries in NSW commences on 1 June. Bass are also off limits throughout Queensland from 1 June until 31 August 2014.

NSW Department of Primary Industries (DPI) have stated the zero bag limit protects Australian Bass while they spawn.

An annual three month closure for Australian bass and estuary perch was introduced after feedback from the community during the review of recreational fishing rules in 2007. During the winter months bass become vulnerable to overfishing as they form large groups and migrate to parts of estuaries with the right salinity to trigger spawning. This closure protects the fish species during this spawning period to ensure they can remain a popular catch with recreational fishers for many generations to come.

The zero bag limit does not apply to Australian bass and estuary perch caught in freshwater impoundments and dams, as they do not breed in these areas.

All fish in freshwater impoundments, like Glenbawn Dam and Glennies Creek Dam in the Hunter Valley, Brogo Dam near Bega and Clarrie Hall and Toonumbar Dams in the northeast are stocked fisheries, meaning anglers may continue to fish for these species in those waters all year round.

Any Australian bass or estuary perch caught in rivers during the closure must be returned to the water immediately with the least possible harm. Anyone caught retaining Australian bass or estuary perch will be issued with a penalty notice or in more serious matters will face local court.

A proposal to extend the closed season to ensure spawning protection for bass in all areas of the State can be found at <http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/fisheries/recreational/info/review>. Detailed information on fishing rules is at www.fisheries.nsw.gov.au.

Bass Sydney's BONZA BONDING BONFIRE

Where: 45-47 Bloodwood Rd., Fiddletown 2159 (backs on to Marra Marra NP) Look for the BS Banner.

When: Saturday the 9th of August.

What: As I live on 25 acres, some of which is bush, I tend to get broken branches etc during the year which I stack, makes a great bonfire. All members and their families are invited. You can arrive anytime after 2.00pm and stay as long as you like, even camp if you wish, stacks of room. We will have a BAR-B-Q, BYO, which we will light at about 4.00 so the kids can be fed and will probably set the bonfire off at about 5-5.30.

Why: This is a great way to meet and greet before the start of the new Bass season, maybe make some alliances and plans for the new season as well.

Bring a chair as well.

As we have horse's on the property **NO** fireworks please.

I also have 2 dams which have fish, 1 with Bass and the other with a couple of large Silvers and 1 Golden Perch if you want to have a flick. Rumour has it there may be a juvenile Cod in there too.

www.google.com.au/maps/@-33.565963,151.0788987,16z

PS, the P.A.C. may also have a re-convening.

- **Al Izzard**

Bass Sydney Patonga Outing – 12/7/14

A chilly, but beautiful morning greeted us on the day. After a long drive from Sydney, I launched at the end of Jacaranda Ave, Patonga into a swift rising tide just on 7am. I hadn't seen anyone at that stage. Surely I would see them on the water? I got a message from Damian that he and Al Phillis and Mischelle and her man Peter had just launched their respective boats from Brooklyn.

I was propelled upstream at a good pace, with not a lot of paddling. Everything looked good for my first visit to Patonga Ck. Before I knew it I was at the first set of oyster racks, but I couldn't really fish it efficiently even when I tied myself up to a pole. On I went until I eventually got to the top pool where the majority of the oyster racks are. The tide was peaking by then and I was able to spend quite some time fishing the racks. Up until then I had not got a single bite and I was beginning to doubt if I was going to catch anything. Under a rack I finally got a good fish on – probably a flatty as it didn't feel like a bream, but I dropped it. I had a couple of other bites that I also dropped. Not looking so great, staring at a possible zippo score!

Before I knew it, it was after 11am and I started to follow the outgoing tide back to meet up with people for lunch. I had encountered several kayak paddlers, but I didn't come across any BS people. There was a pair of yak fishos that was behind me, but I didn't get close enough to see who they were. They turned out to be Ged Delany and his mate Lee Sullivan. On the way back I finally landed a mid-40's flathead to break my drought, caught on a light jighead with a small 70mm Squidgy Flickbait. That was it for me – one fish. Aside from the Squidgy Flickbait, I tried my usual array of lures, crankbaits, popper, Sammy, small Gulp, larger Gulp.

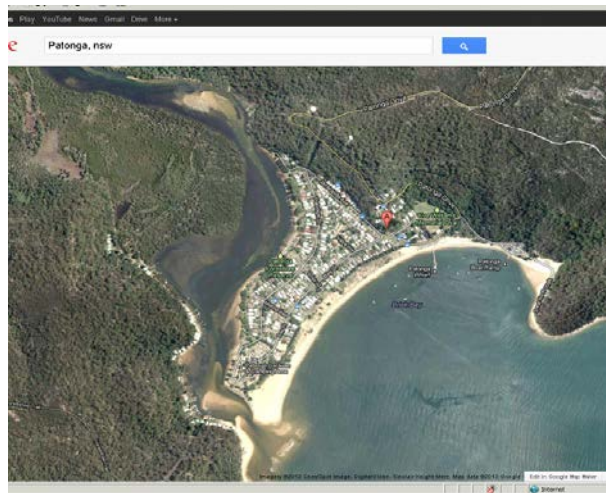
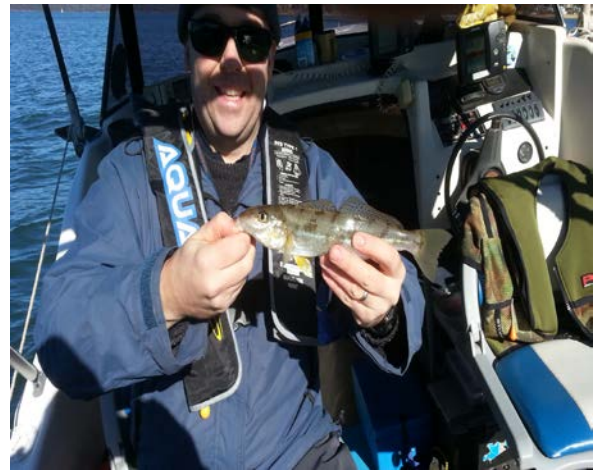
After I got my yak on the car, Milton turned up. He'd driven all that way just to have lunch with us. When we got to the fish & chip shop, I saw Kerith Power enjoying a feed of fish & chips. She had come for a paddle only and said that she saw me on the water, but didn't want to disturb me! Craig Somerville was also there and he had been there since before me and he scored a couple of flathead, but lost a rod & reel to something that took it out of a rod holder! Damian & Al didn't get much on their boat, but Damian caught his first ever whiting! It looks like a diver whiting to me. Mischelle & Pete were targeting some wash on some Broken Bay headlands for drummer. They didn't land many drummer, but Pete caught an EP from under a moored boat in Pittwater. The star was Ged's mate Lee who landed a couple of good flathead, including a fine specimen of 62cm as well as some little flathead and a blackfish. All were caught on a lipless crankbait! So, not a single bream was caught, but everybody was on the scoreboard for the draw.

The fish & chips was excellent, probably the best I've had for a long time and at a reasonable price. Too bad it's so far from home, otherwise I would patronise them more often! Most of us tucked in to our feed with gusto. The 2 boats were inconvenienced by not being able to tie their boat up to the wharf opposite the fish shop, but most of us were able to sit together and talk fishing for a while. We drew straws for the prizes and Craig won the prize from Al's Tackle Store which was a small spin reel. That will go somewhat to replace the lost outfit I'm sure! The second prize of a 6-pack of beer was won by Mischelle.

After lunch I donated my flathead to Craig and was about to leave for home when I got a kind invitation to fish on Mischelle & Pete's boat for a couple of hours. The wind and swell had come up by then and we tried a couple of spots, but had to retreat to more sheltered waters. Except for some kelpies, we didn't add to our tallies.

So, it was a decent turnout, a beautiful day, a nice spot, a few fish and excellent fish & chips. Thanks to Al Phillis for donating the First Prize.

- **HS Tham**



Berowra club outing 12/4/14

The forecast of high winds & showers put off most people from attending this club outing. Only 2 members got out – Al Phillis and I, on his boat! Thanks for the invitation Alan!

Actually, the day started beautifully after we launched not long after dawn. Water was clear, high tide in about an hour and nice & calm. Bites came pretty quickly and I was soon on the scoreboard with some small flatties. The best fishing was over the shallow flats a k or so above the ferry. I ended that session with a legal flathead, 2 legal bream and a bunch of undersized flatties, bream & flounder. All on Gulp & light jigheads. WTD's over the flats did not catch anything and I think I only got a swirl on one cast. Unfortunately for Al, he resisted using the smelly Gulps and didn't catch a fish! Even bait didn't work.

When the wind came up, we were entertained by the sight of dozens of schoolgirls on canoes being blown all over the place. It must have been some sort of school holiday outing of some sort. We were a bit nervous for them at one stage being blown towards the ferry cables. I would not like to have been one of their adult minders that day!

We then moved, trying to fish at various spots all the way down to the mouth of Berowra Ck. Zip! Maybe we should have stayed upstream, but it was very difficult lure casting from the boat in the high wind, without a bow-mounted electric.

I enjoyed it and it was pleasant morning fishing with Al, in comfort. He and Linda enjoyed the fish for dinner.



Theresa Park with Wollondilly Bass Club 27/4/14

3 members made it to WBC's invitation to a BBQ and to fish from private property at Theresa Park. A few others wanted to go, but had to pull out for various reasons. Derek Sonter, Mischelle Janus and I joined the Wollondilly boys who had permission to launch from a farming property. Mischelle brought me my new camera and the pix here are my first on it. Thanks Misch!! My old camera now resides at the bottom of the Lane Cove R at Woolwich, but that's another story!!

I was impressed to see a bunch of their guys with a gazebo up and BBQ sizzling when we got there around 11:30am. A couple of sausage sangers later, we were set up and launching. The launch looked worse than it really was and definitely easier to launch from than at Cobbitty Rd. As I found when they came to our Open Day in January, they have some impressive craft and all of us broke into upstream and downstream groups. Derek, Mischelle and I went downstream.



Barometer was high that day although it was mainly overcast and cool. Water felt cool too. I wasn't sure what to expect, but I kept my expectations low. So I was more than pleasantly surprised to land a 33cm FL bass within 5mins of starting. It took a new lure that I was given (thanks Ash!), a River 2 Sea ultra-shallow lure that looked like a beetle. Not quite a wakebait, but it only dived about 2" max. A good cast was rewarded by an instant boil. I left it there for a few seconds and started to retrieve it when it was taken.



That was about it for me for the next few hours. As per that area, there was no end of good-looking spots to cast at and I tried all my usual lures. I was aware that the Wollondilly boys are buzzbait fanatics too and I certainly gave that a go. I probably didn't persist long enough with them and settled on the usual crankbaits and jigspins. I dropped a high-20's fish when it snagged me in some underwater sticks on a jigspin and didn't catch anything else except for a small bass on a buzzbait 5mins from the end. We packed up and I was on the road home soon after 4:30pm.

The most anyone caught was 5 fish and most people got a couple, with quite a few bass in the 30's. Most of the fish were caught on buzzbaits or ultra-shallow lures or surface lures. Biggest bass of the day was a 35 or 36cm bass. Unfortunately, both Derek & Mischelle lucked out. I was happy to finish my bass season with the 33 and the last fish of my season on a buzzbait!

- HS Tham

Know Your Lure Segment

This edition of 'know you lure' comes to you from Damian Balfour. This will be a new regular segment in the Bronze Battler...thanks to Damian for the great idea!

#57 - Attack Minnow.

Attack Minnow's natural instinct is one of 'knowing no fear', here we can see it has taken on the might of the freshwater herring & a full bellied specimen of 200mm at that; and won. Get to know your lure and all it's capabilities and mutual respect will ensue. This record breaking specimen was ensnared downstream from a wide riffle on the Nepean R., whereupon the Attack Minnow was cast upstream, midday in full sunshine, and retrieved at mid-speed until WHAM, a Herring hit the middle body treble and inhaled the three pointer.



Lake St Clair – Singleton 5/7/14

With the winter months leaving coastal bass waters out of action for anglers, many people may end up not making the most of a great opportunity to fill in the closed season. New South Wales' bass dams all offer sensational fishing over winter, the main two being Lake St. Clair and Glenbawn in the Hunter Valley, but there are many other smaller options such as Lake Lyell, Clarrie Hall and Toonumbar.

Impoundment bass school up during winter, and are generally easy to find off prominent points, around timbered areas or river arms. A recent trip to Lake St. Clair really opened my eyes to how hot the fishing can get while we're rugged up in our winter woollies, with over 70 bass boated over two days!

It was only a matter of 100 meters from our camp before we found our first school, which was an impressive sight on the sounder screen, with fish spreading from 40-25ft. Suspended bass are suckers for a well presented blade or soft plastic, I opted for a Megabass Blading-X, 1/4oz in Gill colour, Dad tied on the ever reliable Atomic Plazos 2.5" paddle tail in smoke yellow core, weighted with a 1/4oz Atomic Seekerz jighead. The technique was a bit tricky to refine, but once we figured it out we had non-stop action. Casting the lures out and sinking them to the bottom and retrieving with a kill and burn, which involves a stop and start retrieve of fast cranking followed by a long pause to let the lure sink. We found the bass hit Blading-X's during the freefall and the plastics during the roll.

We focused on the Carrowbrook arm of the dam, and would motor around looking for small groups of arches on our main sounder, if we spotted a few fish, we knew there were bucket loads there. It was important not to fish directly above the bass, so we'd motor away and cast at the identified spot, it would often take some persistence to draw the first bite, but once we caught one the sounder screen would explode with fish, and it would have a decent 30 minute period of white knuckle fishing.

On our last morning of fishing, we found a bank that was loaded with bass. After boating a few on blades, I struggled to get bites, so I changed it up and tied on a 2.5" Atomic Paddle Tail in Red Pumpkin, and what a way to gain confidence in a colour I had never used before. Seven fish from the subsequent seven casts was a personal record for mine, and it goes to show how changing your approach when things slow down can have awesome outcomes. A small modification we made to our plastics was dipping the tails in CSI quick coat worm dip in chartreuse, this gave the tail a bright yellow glow that helps the lures stand out in deep water, and with comparison between fishing un-dipped plastics I can say it definitely made a difference. A small application of Megastrike scent also helps when the fish are nipping the lures. Between dad and I, we caught 23 out of this school in no more than three hours, definitely my hottest bite ever. The bites were effortless to draw with us sinking the lure to the bottom and using a dead slow roll back to the boat.

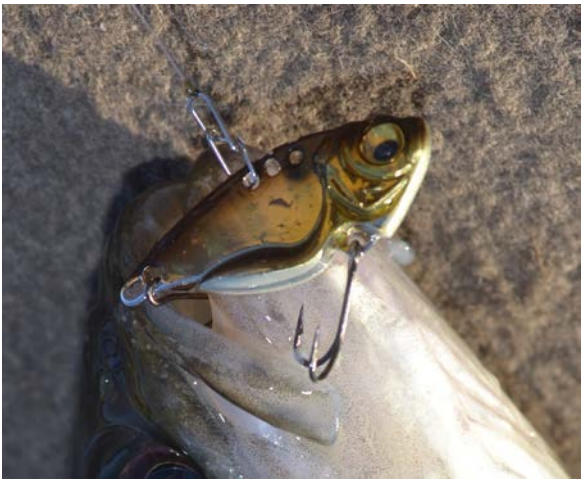
We all know bass are one of the best pound-for-pounders out there, and fishing light is a great way to get the most out of your fishing, but it also requires using quality tackle that will not let you down. I opted for two rods being the Samurai Reaction 201 for blades, and 203 for plastics, both are 7' 2-6lb rods, which I had matched with Daiwa Luvias 1003 reels, loaded with 6lb Unitika braid and approx. 15ft of Unitika 6lb fluorocarbon leader.

So if you're stuck in a rut during the bass closed season, definitely put a day or two aside and hit up one of our awesome bass impoundments, and you may well have a great trip like I did.

- **Chris Frith**

Chris is a friend of mine and has a burning passion for fishing and tries to maintain a healthy involvement in the industry through fishing tournaments and media work. He is also the man responsible for getting my pic up in one of the Fishing Monthly Magazines a couple of years ago. On

behalf of Bass Sydney I'd like to thank Chris for writing the article. We hope it will encourage people to give the rivers a break during the closed season and target them in the dams instead.



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4WD Camping Tournaments News

All set for AYC Grand Final

The AYC Grand Final is set for Sunday, 10th October, at the Sydney Olympic Park. The event will feature a variety of fishing competitions, including bass, trout, and sea fishing. The winner of the Grand Final will receive a trophy and a cash prize.

The AYC is a not-for-profit organization that promotes fishing and boating in Australia. It has been established for over 20 years and has a large membership base. The AYC is committed to providing a safe and enjoyable fishing experience for all its members.

The AYC Grand Final is a major event in the fishing calendar and attracts thousands of anglers from across the country. It is a great opportunity for anglers to test their skills and win big prizes.

The AYC Grand Final is open to all anglers, regardless of their skill level. It is a great way to spend a day with friends and family, and to enjoy the outdoors.

The AYC Grand Final is a must-see event for all fishing enthusiasts. It is a great way to see some of the best fishing in Australia, and to win big prizes.

Item	Price
10kg Bag of Bait	\$12.95
20kg Bag of Bait	\$24.95
30kg Bag of Bait	\$36.95
40kg Bag of Bait	\$48.95
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Gerard Delany – Bass Catch Report

After five years of fishing Bass Catch with a great mate Lee Sullivan of mine and having seen the same sections of the river we decided to try a section that we had not previously fished, Wallacia to Penrith. We decided to make it an overnight trip and camp somewhere in the Nepean Gorge. This would give us an opportunity to see how well we could pack camping gear into our respective kayaks, Lee's Bass and my Acadia 280.

I decided to travel as light as possible and packed a Black Wolf Cocoon Bivy and light weight sleeping bag, small gas burner and aluminium cooking gear and some food. Lee had similar items. All this was packed in a dry bag with spare clothes packed in another. Lucky for us the bit of care take packing and ensuring that everything was kept dry paid dividends as the weekend progress.

Under ominous clouds we put the kayaks in at Wallacia and started paddling downstream. Within 200 metres of our launch the skies opened up and we were hit with a torrential downpour. Not long after this we caught up with a couple of guys from Springwood and left them to the top section as they were only fishing down to the weir. I picked up a couple of fish in the low 200s using soft plastics just at the top of the weir. It was fairly easy getting down below the weir with Lee using the new fishway and I taking the option of going down the old fish ladder on the left.

The section below the weir is some of the prettiest and fishy section of the river. Wallacia Gorge is steep sided with plenty of cover for fish in the form of rocky outcrops, fallen timber and overhanging branches. There are three sections that Lee and I had to carry the kayak with none larger than 20 metres. I picked up four fish in this section with the highlight being a 297mm fish after coming down one of the chutes, spinning the kayak around and casting up into the eddy. He came out and slammed the lure and after a brief fight was netted. This section is approximately 1.5 kms and finishes at the section above Norton's Basin.

This was the toughest section of Day 1 with Lee and I having to carry, slide, manoeuvre and swear at our kayaks for 250 metres of boulder hopping. It would have been so much easier if we hadn't planned an overnigher. The paddle down from Nortons is fairly easy with a couple of shallow sections but no major obstacles. Another couple of fish in the 3.5 kms to the junction of Erskine Creek and the Nepean.

Lee and I set up camp, cooked dinner and then had one last fish before tuning in for the night. I picked up my largest fish for the weekend at 326mm on a Black Jitterbug. We had paddled and scrambled over 7.5 kms for the day with torrential downpours, showers and the occasional glimpse of sun. I had caught eleven fish and was happy to call it a night around 9:00pm

The next morning we woke with the skies once again looking like they were going to open up. We decided to paddle down to Tench Reserve and apart from a three fish caught on the troll in the morning we put our heads down and dug our paddles and headed for home. The rain started around 10:00am and didn't let up and got progressively heavier throughout the day. Erskine Creek to Tench Reserve is approximately 12.5 kms so we were happy to be off the water mid-afternoon.

Lee and I are to do this section again but hope to do it under better conditions.

- Ged



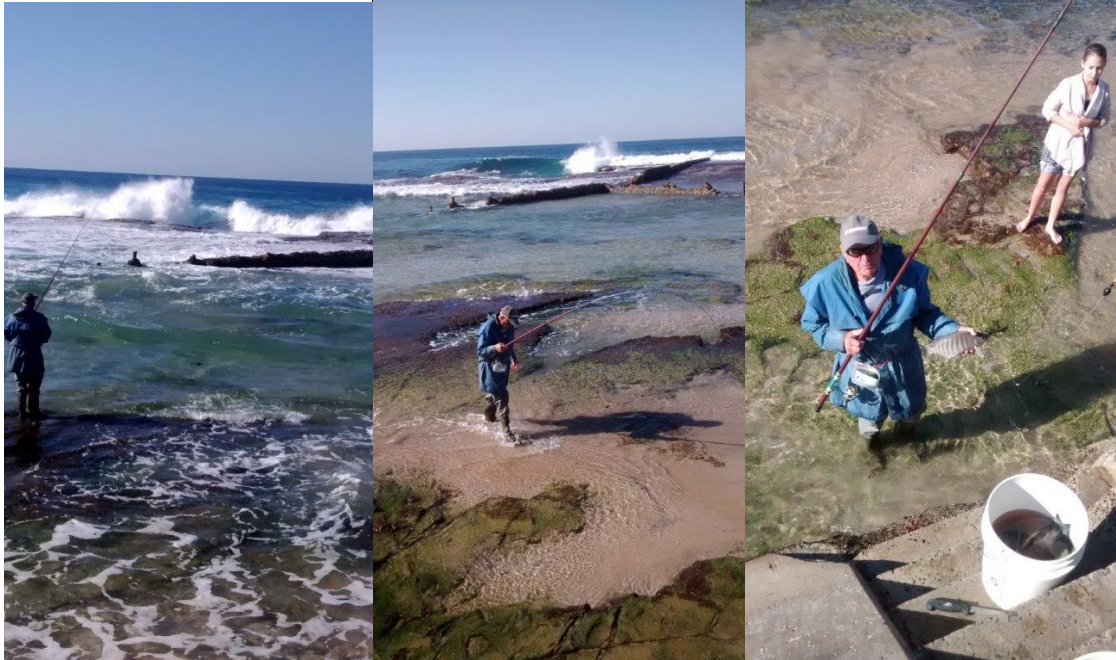
Christmas in July

After contemplating for years now I finally bit the bullet and bought a second hand Hobie Pro Angler 14 , took it out for the first time last weekend and on a tough fishing day I landed this beauty for my only fish for the day. Hope you enjoy the pics!

- Andre Dukino



Recent Catches from Bass Sydney Members and Affiliates



Baz's Winter Bass (Blackfish) on his back door step!



Tham's 41cm PB blackfish and some nice squid



<https://www.facebook.com/BassSydneyFishing>

**Next Meeting is on Tuesday
August 12 - 7:30pm at
Northmead Bowling Club**

Kayak Raffle

- Wilderness Systems Aspire 100 kayak.
- Worth \$900+ retail
- For BASS SYDNEY MEMBERS ONLY
- \$2 per ticket
- Unlimited no. of tickets can be bought
- Will be drawn at the Christmas Party 2014



Specifications:

Length:	10' / 305 cm
Width:	27.5" / 70 cm
Max Capacity:	300 lbs. / 136 kg
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Weight:	44 lbs. / 20 kg
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Monthly Fishing Cartoon Funny



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