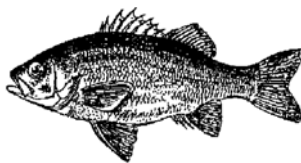




Australian Bass, MACQUARIA NOVEMACULEATA



THE BRONZE BATTLER

NEXT MEETING

WEDNESDAY

3rd August

GUEST SPEAKER

David Booth

David is the scientist conducting the sampling following the stocking of Berowra Creek

Northmead Bowling, Recreation and Sporting Club Ltd.

166 Windsor Rd Northmead.

7.30 pm start till 11pm.

PATRON:	Dr Wayne Erskine, PhD
President	Dave Claydon..... 9829-1503 (H)
Vice President	Domenic Squadrito..9799-1796(H)
Past President	Alan Izzard..... 9653- 2309 (H)
Secretary	Domenic Squadrito..9799-1796(H)
Treasurer/Membership	
Secretary	Garnet Noble.....9476-3881(H)
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Publicity Officer	Alan Izzard.....9653-2309(H)
Editor:	Alan Izzard.....9653 2309(H)

Project Officers:	
Parramatta River	Alan Fowkes.....9626-9938(H)
Hacking River	Warren Hackshall....9525 0090(H)

PRESIDENTS MESSAGE

It was fantastic to receive some much-needed rain, the Shoalhaven area had enough to fill Tallowa Dam, and so much rain there is still a large flow over the spillway. The Georges received enough to raise the river 1 metre and this had the effect of flushing large quantities of Salvinia down the river and over the weir at Liverpool. Before the rain a floating boom was placed above the Canterbury road causeway, this boom collected large amounts of Salvinia and floating rubbish during the rain period. Even better the boom was cleared by the council soon after. Before the rain the council placed notices in the local paper that is was planning to spray herbicide to kill the Salvinia.

This flush has come at the right time to reduce the amount of Salvinia in the river before summer when most growth occurs and makes the council think twice about spraying herbicide into the river. Reading fishing reports in the Daily Telegraph the fishing reporter is advising of catches of Bass and Estuary Perch in the lower reaches of the Hawkesbury. The Bass are there to breed and I believe they should be left alone to do this. From what I have read studies have shown that Murray Cod caught while spawning will reabsorb their roe or worst case cause other fish in the school not to spawn.

No matter what evidence produced some anglers will always target spawning Bass, but I think that Bass Sydney members would agree they should be left alone to breed. At the next meeting I would like to hear your opinion as to what you think about people targeting spawning Bass. Is it a major concern? and if so what do you think we should do?

There was also one report of up to 1 kg Bass caught below the weir which made me take a quick trip down to the weir to check the fishway. The good news is that the fishway is clear of rubbish and there is a good flow of water through the fishway, this will make the passage of Bass easier and prevent schooling of fish below the weir wall.

I am looking forward for the weather to warm up so I can drag the kayak out and do some fishing, hope you can make the next meeting to catch up.
Dave Claydon.

SQUASH THOSE BARBS !!!

How many times have you been told to squash the barbs on your hooks? Not just for the fish's sake but for your own as well. It seems that sometimes the message is just plain forgotten and we all need reminders occasionally. Sometimes the reminder can be quite painful and embarrassing, just ask former member and would be fly caster Gordon Murphy, or Grumpy as he was more commonly known. Gordy managed to embed a fly into his arm and had to go to hospital to have it removed. Every cloud has a silver lining though and Gordy can now boast of catching his biggest Grunter ever. Serves him right for moving to Bribie Island.

PS Congratulations to Murph and Sue who are to be married early next year.

TRIP NORTH

Baz and I have recently spent two months on the road. We left late April and headed north, our first stop was one of my favourite places, Mylestrom, just north of Urunga with the Bellinger and Klang rivers close by and North Beach just over the dunes. The bream and flathead loved my favourite orange Esoteric lure. Our next stop Elliot Heads the wind was strong so we made it an overnight stay.

We had heard good reports of a camp stay at Baffle Creek just north of Bundaberg on the back road to 1770, what a find, we spent a week there but could have stayed a month. The camp stay was set on forty acres with individual sites surrounded by trees, a small creek on the property giving access to Baffle creek. A large well equipped camp kitchen and a campfire with everything supplied, wood, camp ovens, jaffle irons, billies etc. There were two boat ramps and we could just pull the boat up of a night, bushwalks, lots of birds and best of all the fishing was good. Several types of bream, jack, angelfish and trevally caught on lures and six-pound fire line. Good fun.

We then took off to 1770 for a week very pretty good weather and scenery but fished out, managed to catch pike and bar tale flathead had trouble getting anything of size. Off to Lake Awonga where the camp overlooked the lake with a camp kitchen and fire next to our site. The weather was kind allowing us to use the electric most of the time but most important I caught my first barra there, totally stoked.



My first Barra!

Baz catching barra on bass gear in fifty and sixty five foot of water. Highlight, on the lake at sunset, the water glassed out with a 360 degree view, colours ranging from orange to deep purple with pelicans flying single file just above the water. We stayed there a week and should have stayed longer.

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Recognise the hat?

Mackay next where we caught up with relatives, then off to Peter Faust Dam great camp with rock wallabies and bush turkeys keeping us company, the fish didn't want to play the game so we moved on to Townsville and more relatives then headed west.

Carnarvon Gorge looked good in all the pamphlets so headed there, the rain started and after a cool night with a herd of cattle for company headed towards the gorge only to be stopped by a ranger telling us the road was closed. Headed south and stayed at St George on the Balonne River definitely worth another visit. With the weather closing in started to head for home. A couple of nights at Lightning Ridge, then Dubbo and a visit to the Zoo, Baz taking me under duress. Then a very low Burrendong dam, Orange, where we had sleet and snow, then home.

Trish.

Above article supplied by Tricia Brown.

Sounds like they had a wonderful trip. How many others are green with envy right now?

Editor.

New Member

Club members were able to welcome our newest member at the last General Meeting. Jim Taylor from Greystanes checked out our website and then came along to our AGM in April and decided at that meeting to join up. He was one of the "few" at the June GM and will be absent from August as he will be travelling in the far north. Welcome Jim, we hope that we will see you on the water when you get back.

Club fees

Many members are still unfinancial. Please check if you have paid your subs for this year and if not please either sent a remittance or better still come along to the meeting on the 3rd of August and pay in person. Remember membership numbers count when dealing with politicians etc.

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NSW CFA Annual Awards Nomination

Nominee : **Peter Morison**

Bass Sydney has nominated Peter for the "Individual of the Year" for his work on the Parramatta project. Follownig is an article I submitted to Fishing World and Freshwater Fishing.

Bass Sydney has been collaborating with Peter Morison of Parramatta City Council to see the construction of fishways on 4 weirs on the Parramatta River.

The Parramatta River plays a unique role in the history of both Aboriginal inhabitants and the earliest European settlers. What was valued most were its clean waters and plentiful supply of bass, eels and other native fish. Both have suffered as our population has grown.

In the early 1800's the first weirs were constructed to provide drinking water to Parramatta's growing settlement. Later on, other weirs were built in order to support the mills, control flooding and also to create a lake near the old Parramatta Lunatic Asylum.

For almost 200 years the unintended consequence of these actions has been the denial of free access for native fish between the upper and lower reaches of the river. This has had severe consequences for those species dependent on such access for spawning migration.

There are **six** species of migratory fish **known** to occur in the upper Parramatta River but there may be up to eleven species in total. These five additional species may be present in the upper Parramatta River in very low numbers, or there may be remnant populations in other freshwater streams leading into the lower Parramatta River.

The River has been divided by the Charles Street Weir at the tidal limit and the Marsden Street Weir, 500 metres upstream. These weirs cannot be removed for transport reasons in the case of Charles Street (the Parramatta River Cats provide public transport between Parramatta and Sydney Harbour), and for heritage reasons in the case of Marsden Street. In addition to these major barriers, two other weirs exist within the first few kilometres of the tidal limit. The "Kiosk" weir is a minor obstruction but just upstream of this is the weir constructed to form the lake mentioned above. It has a significant head loss.

Parramatta City Council (PCC) has now responded to the problem by developing plans for fishways on all 4 weirs.

Funding has been secured with PCC committing \$400,000 to the project, the Upper Parramatta River Catchment Trust committing \$130,000, and The Department of Primary Industries (NSW Fisheries) providing \$15,000 from the Recreational Trust and Environmental Trust funds (NSW Fisheries funds are specifically for the Kiosk weir).

The total of \$545,000 is available to construct the fishways and to provide education and interpretative signage at each of the four sites.

PCC has demonstrated its commitment to the project by recent public comment. Media coverage has included an interview with the Lord Mayor, David Borger, on ABC 702 radio, an article in the Daily Telegraph and local features in both the Parramatta Sun and Advertiser.

A Development Application has been lodged to construct the Charles Street and Kiosk Weir fishways in 2005 and PCC plans to construct the remaining two fishways in 2006.

With PCC's demonstrated level of commitment and Peter's constant enthusiasm we are confident that native fish in the Parramatta River will be granted a new lease of life.

Bass Sydney would like to publicly acknowledge Peter's and PCC's efforts on behalf of native fish and are committed to supporting their endeavours in any way they can.

THE WONDERFUL MACLEAY

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Mid way through last year a fishing mate at work suggested a trip up the Clarence for a week in January to chase a few Bass. The suggestion sounded quite appealing, so we decided to give it some thought and research possible reaches of the river that may be accessible by kayak. After talking to those that had experienced this magic river and looked at all the possibilities I had second thoughts. Firstly it's a long drive, secondly camping in remote areas mid summer can be very tiring and finally it appeared there would be a lot of paddling involved to access good water. With this in mind it was decided to consider the Macleay.

Alan Izzard had fished the Macleay Basscatch with Bill Spiers and his reports were encouraging. I had a good mate living in Kempsey, so there may be a chance to catch up with him, so we decided to give it a go. I convinced Bass Sydney Treasurer, Garnet Noble to join us, and to make the trip easier we booked a cabin in the little town of Bellbrook. Bellbrook has an important place in Australian Bass fishing history. One of Australia's first commercial fishing lures, the Bellbrook Wobbler, was developed here by fishing legend Bill Southam. Carved in red cedar these lures are now serious collectors items. Bellbrook itself is a heritage listed town. Situated about 55 km upstream from Kempsey it sounded like a good base camp. This would allow fishing to Georges Junction (a further 45 km upstream) or down toward Kempsey. The cabin at The Bellbrook Retreat turned out to be a good move. Very comfortable, ideally suited for two or three fishos and at \$50.00 per night was good value. Better still it is situated about 100 metres from the historic Bellbrook pub. Ace.

One way to fish this river's long reaches is with 2 cars, however this means big days on the water and traversing lots of barren shallow stretches in the heat of the day. After a few days this approach can take its toll, so we opted for evening or morning sessions, allowing some time for R & R. In the end, the early mornings proved best and this allowed us to recover in the afternoons and maybe have a beer or two at the pub.

We arrived on a Sunday afternoon and after unpacking hit the river upstream of Bellbrook bridge about 6pm. Full of enthusiasm we fished till dark. The results were encouraging, with Kevin landing 4 fish to 380, Garnet 1 @ 385 and me 1 @ 491mm. Yeah, that's right, 491. As Dave Sanegor always says, these big Bass can almost swallow beer cans and he's right. This fish was huge. It was a real thrill and totally unexpected as we were fishing in Mackenzies creek at the time. The creek was quite dirty in comparison to the main river and pretty skinny water. I cast a Taylor made surface lure under a low melaleuca and sensed a stir on the surface. A second cast further under the tree and hook up.

I had no idea this was a prize fish at this moment, however when the Bass was finally along side, it was a different story. It was difficult to thumb grip this fish as the lure was across her huge mouth, but finally she was in the kayak and the three of us were pretty much speechless for a moment or two. After photos and admiring looks, she was on her way. After that the boys complained that I was setting the bar a bit high for the week following.

Well for me things went down hill from there, actually both Garnet and I struggled to consistently produce fish each day, Kevin on the other hand was more productive, probably because he is more hungry and never gave up, always trying different things and in the end it paid off.

We started our week at Georges Junction, 45 kms upstream from Bellbrook. Up stream from here is really wild Bass country with lots of granite boulder strewn rapids that make portaging bloody hard work for the old blokes. With crystal clear water and little shade it

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was tough going producing Bass. We headed downstream after lunch and fished Blackbird Flat, a better stretch of water with more shade, finally giving it away late afternoon. The days tally, Milton zilch, Garnet a tortoise and Kevin 3 fish to 372. Mmm, things were starting to look grim. The rest of the weeks results were: Tuesday, Milton 2 fish to 292, Garnet one at 373 and Kevin 3 to 386, Wednesday : Milton and Garnet zilch, Kevin 2 to 430. Thursday : Milton 2 fish to 408, Garnet 3 fish to 410 and Kevin 11 fish to 401. Interestingly there were not many small fish. The smallest was 180. I guess in some respects we couldn't complain with 5 fish over 400.

This is a beautiful river, no Carp, no pollution and no salvinia, it's a Bass fisherman's dream, although it is harder to fish than the Nepean. There is little shade along the banks with many shallow stretches of crystal clear water, which makes the Bass a bit scarce. The best option is to be on the water just before first light, which means very early mornings. It is one of the rivers that you always want to go back to because it is so enjoyable, with an abundance of wild life. We saw huge tree pythons, you know the ones you see just beside you when you go in under a tree to retrieve your lure, cat fish swimming around their nests, monster eels, eagles swooping to take water hens, ducks darting around the river bed in 3 metres of water chasing small fish and of course wallabies and kangaroos.

It was a rewarding trip and believe it or not, we only got to the pub once, bugger. Better luck next trip.

Milton Lazarus.

WINTER EXPLORATION TRIP

Just thought I would give you a bit of info on a bass fishing Trip I went on in late May

My girlfriend and I went for a fish on the upper Nepean at Menangle. We fished a promising looking pool below a weir, which had plenty of good-looking snags, using beetle spins with no results. We continued to fish down stream to the over pass with no results. After a small portage we came upon a small pool of about 25m x5m and in there I caught a fat 28cm fish. We continued to fish another 2km with no result. With the sun getting low we headed back, casting as we went, again nothing. On reaching the pool where I got the previous fish I scored another chunky 31cm fish with a mouth full of shrimp which tangled me up in the snags twice before I eventually pulled him out.... looking forward to fishing this same place again in spring.

Dallas Smith



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GREAT SOUTH LAND TO THE DEEP SOUTH

Livin' & Fishin' in Alabama, USA

Installment 3

Much has happened in the last few months - I've been very busy with not only a house purchase, but also my wife has had serious health problems, so subsequently I have not done much fishing.

We began the year with serious house hunting and by the end of February, negotiations were proceeding. At the same time, the weather started to move away from Winter and I was getting very itchy to fish as the previous 2 or 3 months was wintery and I had not fished at all. When I finally went out for a few hours fishing at the end of Feb and had just caught my first fish for 2005; I got a phone call from Janet saying that I'd better get back to take her to the hospital! She had been suffering from abdominal pain for 2 or 3 days prior to that.

Well, to cut short the story, Janet ended up having about 40cm of her lower colon removed and was subsequently diagnosed as colon cancer! A bit of a surprise to say the least! It was caught in time and her prognosis is excellent. However, it made the task of negotiating and keeping an eye on the house transaction more difficult as I could not rely on Janet to do a lot of the day-to-day stuff. Thank God we had health insurance!

We purchased the house at the end of March and have embarked on a roller coaster ride of emotions ever since. Not only has there been a lot of work (painting, cleaning, etc), there were (& continuing) disputes with the sellers. Not going to go into that, but the whole house purchase has given us fresh insights into American life! So far, we cannot say that we've settled into our new home as there is so much more to do. It's been a tough year as we were living out of our suitcases from July '04 until April '05 and we're still not living yet!

It was a great feeling when our stuff was finally delivered (in good shape) as I had all my fishing gear and my beloved kayak. I have finally used my kayak for the first time last weekend (now mid-July) and while I enjoyed it, I was probably too optimistic as I used it on Lake Guntersville, a lake I haven't even seen before and Alabama's largest impoundment. I work in Decatur which is on the shores of Lake Wheeler, Alabama's second largest impoundment. Our home in Huntsville is roughly in between both lakes. As some of you might know, I don't like fishing big lakes and am now looking for more kayak-friendly spots and smaller rivers.

On the fishing front, I have managed a few personal firsts in the last few months -

Species - I have now accounted for about 9 species of American FW fish. 8 species on lures and a Channel Catfish on bait. I say "about" 9 species because it's difficult to distinguish the many species of Sunfish. It is truly mind boggling to realize how many FW species of angling interest there are here! I have also had a guided fishing trip in the salt of the Mississippi Delta in Louisiana. It was paid for and organized by a fish meal supplier that we visited. So, I've accounted for another 3 SW species - redfish, speckled trout and some undesirable SW catfish. I caught the biggest redfish of the trip - a 20 pounder on light spinning gear & 14lb Fireline. Redfish are like a coppery coloured jewie and it was the best fight I've had for a long time.

PB Largemouth Bass - In early June I caught a Largemouth exceeding 4.5lbs from a colleague's farm pond. It was the first LM bass I've kept and I was very glad as it was superb on the plate - mild flavoured, firm, white flesh. Better than Aussie bass or Murray Cod, but I actually wished it had more flavour! I've kept a few more since then!

Bustoffs - I've now experienced my first bustoff here. A couple of months ago, I went for a sneaky lunch-time fish for a few minutes near work. This is a bay where I discovered the joys of fishing buzzbaits among the lily pads last Fall. This time, the lily pads were growing back after their winter

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dieback, but were not quite very thick yet. There were a few channels I could work a lure and I only had UL spinning gear with me. With the sun overhead and not expecting to catch anything, I was casting a small Betts Spin spinner bait on 6lb line when I got a big hit which I couldn't control and the fish took me into the nearest bunch of pads and *sayonara* baby! A couple of weeks ago, I was back at the farm pond when I hooked another large fish of about 3.5 - 4lbs on UL gear again, but this time I managed to lose it because I tried to drag it up the bank instead of jaw gripping it. Yes, line broke and I lost that fish too. Also cost me a pair of fishing sunnies as I vainly tried to jump in to grab the fish - no fish & no sunnies either!

Creek fishing - in my quest to find smaller rivers to kayak before I got my roof racks, I discovered a small creek nearby. I checked it out and found a great looking stretch and easy access. I soon found that while that particular stretch is too small to kayak, it was fine to wade fish. I really enjoyed doing it - wet wading along the shady creek with UL spinning gear as I would do for trout in Oz. Caught a few fish, but no bass even though I could see a few nice fish in the clear water, but they wouldn't bite. I've been doing a lot of poring over maps in the last couple of weeks!

Smallest fish - on the above wading trip, I caught my smallest ever lure-caught fish ever. A small sunfish which took a Betts Spin - I swear it was about 2.5" (less than 60mm)!

Pictures:

Our House



20lb redfish caught on a live shrimp



I'll try to pen another installment in another couple of months. Keep in touch! (Tham)

Lunker largemouth



Mississippi Delta total catch



Thanks to everyone for their input for this issue of the "Battler". You all have made my job much easier. Remember members- It's your newsletter!
Alan Izzard.