



Australian Bass, MACQUARIA NOVEMACULEATA



THE BRONZE BATTLER

PATRON: Dr Wayne Erskine PhD

PRESIDENT: Ashley Thamm
PUBLICITY OFFICER: Andre Dukino
SECRETARY: Gary Perry
TREASURER John Stokes

ENVIRONMENTAL PROJECT OFFICERS: Alan Izzard, Garry Blount
EDITOR: Peter Hatzidimitriou
EVENTS, POINTS SCORE & BASSCATCH OFFICER: HS Tham

GENERAL COMMITTEE: Derek Sonter and Paul Matten

Contact: info@basssydney.com

CLUB NEWS

Well it's that time of the year again for our annual Christmas dinner.

Location: NEW EMPRESS RESTAURANT Shop 8 / 2 Marsden Road
Ermington 2115.

<http://goo.gl/maps/U5zeT>

Date: Tuesday 9th December.

Time: 7.00 pm Please be punctual as serving will commence at 7.30pm.
Being a banquet we all need to be seated before serving can commence.

Cost: \$33/head. Please pay John Stokes before dinner.

The restaurant is upstairs right on the corner of Victoria & Marsden roads. There is ample parking behind the buildings. Turn in, drive under the arch then turn right into the car park. Drinks are available at the bar.

There will be lucky door prizes and awards (inc. Club 400 certificates) presented on the night. This dinner is a great opportunity to sit around and talk about our fishing exploits during the year. Partners welcome.



Bass Sydney Fishing Club Inc.
BRANCH OF NATIVE FISH AUSTRALIA



Affiliated with
The Council of Freshwater Anglers



The Editors Message

Ho Ho Hooo, Merry Fishmas! I'd like to personally wish all Bass Sydney members and their families a wonderful Christmas and safe holiday period. The club has had another successful year and I've enjoyed the privilege of being a member and the editor of this great club. I hope you all get some lovely new fishing toys from Santa and make the most of your break from work if you have time off. I personally look forward to catching up with you all soon. Tight Lines.

- **The Editor**



Christmas Breamin and Bassin

Well the festive season is here once again and yet I haven't had too many trips out this season,. Despite the lack of time on the water I have managed a handful of Bass from various yak trips with the biggest tipping the 400 mark. A new rod and reel setup has seen my casting accuracy improve which should hopefully in turn result in even more catches! The other good news is that my back has improved and I'm able to do a 5 hour session without being in complete pain which is great news for me! I'm finally going to hit my secret creek in Newcastle these holidays. Let's hope there's some Bass in there! Please enjoy these pics from some of my more recent outings.

- **Pete**



Lane cove annual November bass catch

For those who have never attended this event (of which there would not be many), this is an opportunity fish the lane cove river into the night with the ease of a drive out. As we obtain the key each year and launch from cottonwood glen bbq area we are able to leave late after a few snags and many a tale of what could have been.

As per usual this was a well-attended event with 10 people hitting the water. First on the agenda was the clearing of the fish way of any debris that could inhibit the passage of bass. A sizable log had been lodged here and was impeding fish passage. With Damien and Rico shifting the log I was free to take photos and tell them how they should be doing it.

All in attendance seemed to yet again enjoy this mini bass catch with varying success on the fish side of things, yet fun was had by all.

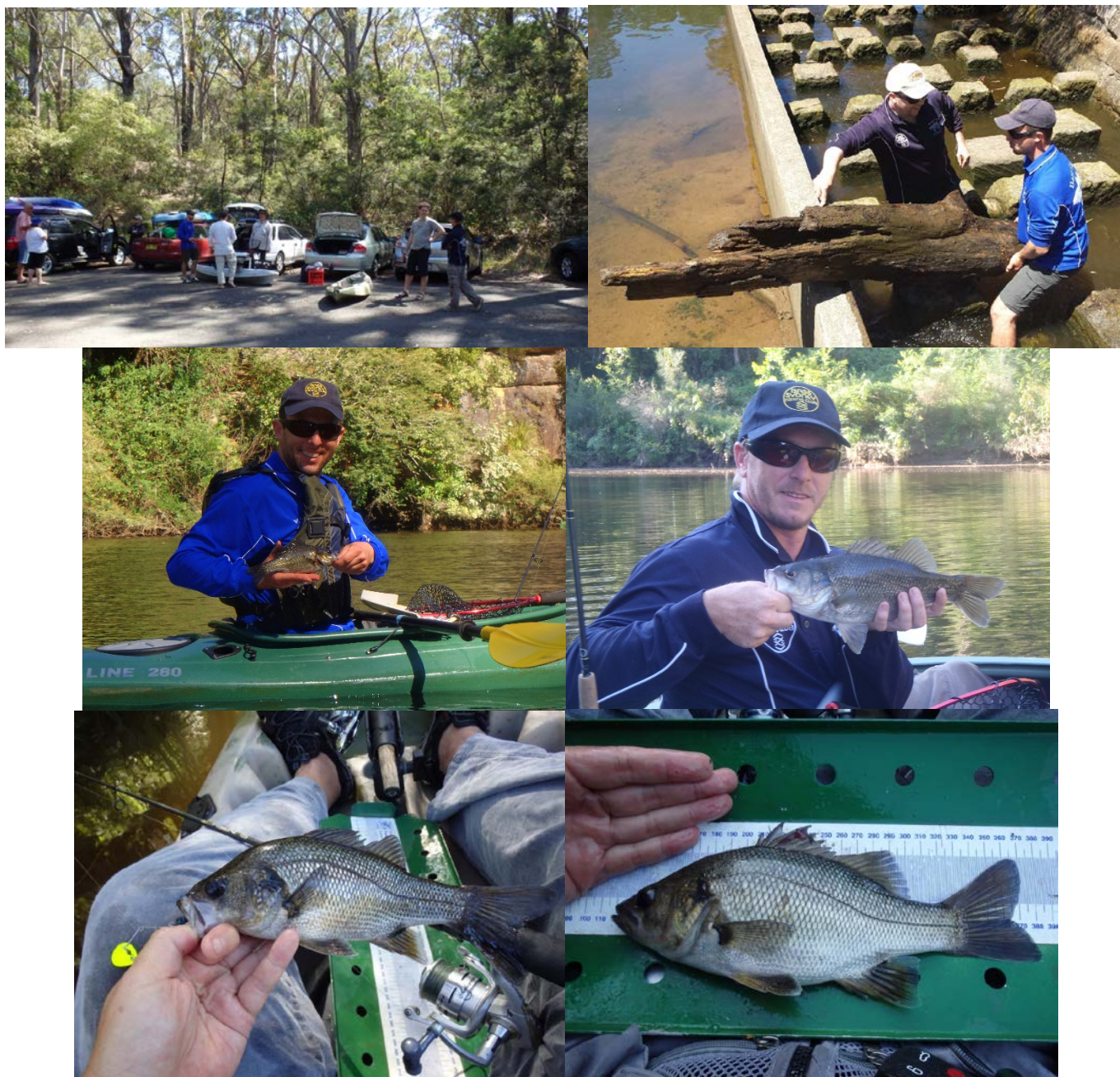
My days fishing was great with plenty of small bass eager to take my lure, and the company was pretty good too. A few laughs and some cursing as is the norm when things don't go right.

Congratulations to Milton Lazarus for catching the largest bass. Milton's Bass went 365mm.

The most bass caught was 18 caught by Daniel, who also took the extra point for best five bass.

In total 46 bass were caught over the 5 or so hours most were on the water.

As you can see by the table below a lot of fish were caught in a similar size range and this maybe something we need to keep an eye on.



Bass size	Qty caught
0mm-180mm	1
181mm-200mm	7
201mm-220mm	13
221mm-240mm	17
241mm-260mm	4
261mm-280mm	1
281mm-300mm	nil
301mm-320mm	2
321mm-340mm	nil
341mm-360mm	nil
361mm-380mm	1

On a final note we also had Prof Culum Brown join us to talk about a proposed LCR Bass tagging project. Which if it gets the go ahead and things look promising should be quite interesting. More info on this will be provided as it comes to hand.

- **Daniel Flood**

The Williams River Bass Catch November 2014

Bass Sydney attendance at this popular event was almost non-existent. Jim Taylor and I waved the flag on behalf of the club and enjoyed ourselves even though the fishing for us was tough.

We decided to launch and fish upstream of Clarence Town at Mill Dam Falls. Harold Strahan kindly arranged access through a property almost at the falls so it was an easy day. Originally we thought to fish all the way down to the caravan park, but in the end fished up to the falls and back about two or three kilometres of river. Must be getting old.



Unfortunately the local Sheldon Shield Bass fishing event was on the same weekend however we figured their boats would not be up near the falls due to the rock bars that make navigation difficult. Wrong, there were at least four boats and most of the people were casting ½ ounce Spinner baits to each shore. Boom boom, not good when you are trying to sneak up on some unsuspecting Bass.

We fished six hours for six fish, tough going to say the least, but the day was quite pleasant after the horrific 40 degrees plus we experienced on Friday afternoon setting up camp.

As usual the boys from Hunter Native Fish fed us well on Friday and Saturday nights with their excellent BBQ steaks, sausages, onions, mushrooms, cold slaw, pasta salad etc. followed by Paul Gogarty's wife's warm homemade golden syrup dumplings with custard and fresh cream. Amazing stuff and something totally unexpected. Thanks Paul.

Jim and I didn't bother fishing on Sunday morning so we packed up just before the rain came and hit the road. It poured all the way to the M1.

One of the HNF guys fishing from his boat downstream of the caravan park near the ski lodges managed 80 Bass over Saturday & Sunday mind you he was on the water at first light on both days. His mate caught around 60 so those two guys did well. Les Simshauser and Ari fished from Alison bridge to Glen William bridge and it turned out to be a physical day due to very low water. Lots of dragging, but they still caught Bass 83 between them.

As usual HNF held the big raffle on Saturday night and first prize was a 25 litre esky full of beer. Luck deserted us this time so the HNF guys were happy as we have cleaned up in the raffle previously.

Left hand picture is Mill Dams Falls, really just a rock bar, but a nice spot.

- **Milton Lazarus**

H-N Bass Catch October 18th & 19th

I was eagerly anticipating this as the start of the season this year has been lean pickings as far as most people were concerned! The weekend looked perfect on paper – good weather, water only slightly stained, river flowing well and high barometer. However, it was very, very tough!! A heap of people registered donuts and for others, the size was well down. Theories even included cold water temperature from the ice, snow and hail that descended on the Blue Mountains a week or so before the Bass Catch! The water felt cold to me, but I didn't have a thermometer with me.

This Bass Catch was the first time we've camped at the Shaws Farm picnic area and the consensus was that it was a really nice venue. There was a huge covered area, plenty of firewood (courtesy of the Yellomundee Regional Park Ranger, Paul Glass), nice toilets and space for quite a few tents.

It's OK. . . I got it!



The next day saw Paul Matten and I launch from Russell St for a float to the Shaws Farm campsite. It was tough going with me landing 12 fish that day and only 1 fish that just squeaked over the 200mm mark! Paul, as in recent events, kicked butt with 17 bass landed. This turned out to be the most caught by anyone. We ran into Ged and his mate Lee who was on a longer float between Penrith weir and Devlins. They did it tough too, but Ged landed a couple of quality fish. Everyone we ran into reported the same – slow, tough fishing.

Saturday night saw a slightly bigger crowd at the campsite. We met new member Trent Deaves who fished the next day. We ran our raffles and as usual, I got nothing! I had miscalculated with the food and had over catered. I don't think anyone went hungry that night, nor for Sunday breakfast! Thanks to the Macman for doing the breaky cooking!

Sunday saw Damian and I do the loop down towards Devlins and back up to the campsite. The sun was bright and the fishing was even tougher!! By the time we got back to the camp, everyone else had gone. We broke camp and were the last to leave.



Thanks must go to our Garry Blount who, through his efforts with bush regeneration at Yellomundee Regional Park and the subsequent good relations he has with the Rangers there, secured the special permission for us to camp at what is normally a day-use site.

The numbers:

- 27 anglers
- 88 fish landed
- No. of Donuts recorded: 7
- Largest bass: 368mm (Ged Delany)
- Smallest bass: 97mm (Shayne Fell)
- Most fish: 17 (Paul Matten)
- Best 5: 1444mm Ged Delany
- Most Points: Paul Matten

- **HS Tham, Bass Catch Officer**

Club Testimonial - Matt McHugh

It's funny how chance meetings can develop into really fruitful relationships. In April 2013 Tham contacted me through my website. The site is primarily focussed on Luderick but also general fishing topics. Tham is a dedicated blackfisherman during the winter and was comparing notes on fishing in and around Middle Harbour. He passed on that he mainly concentrated on yak fishing for Bass, Bream and other natives.

At the beginning of the season he passed on information about the spring Bass Catch. I liked the sound of the camping and Bass were something I had always wanted to target. My boys and I had a great weekend and were made to feel very welcome by the Bass Sydney club members.

I resolved after that weekend to get a kayak, and a few lures, and really have a crack at catching a few. First I bought a great second hand Australis Bass from David Claydon. Then the plan was to get a double for me and Daniel to use while Rory paddled the Bass. I looked for a while and then picked up a Seabird Designs Fisherman 12 from Anaconda on super special. Couple of paddles and PFDs later and we were on the water in our local at the Lane Cove River.

Paddling was fun through the end of the season, but I must confess to not catching a single fish. Had a couple of hook-ups, and a few hits, but no luck. What I didn't know then (and I know now) is that the fish in the Lane Cove have probably seen every Bass lure in the tackle shop by the end of the season! Luderick were the staple for the off season, even caught up with [Tham for a successful session](#). At the beginning of the season I missed the opening Bass Sydney event, but not long afterwards Tham and I met for an early morning session in the Lane Cove River. We had a pretty successful session and I landed [my first yak caught Bass](#). Two fish over the 30cm mark and both caught on the Jig Spins. Tham also caught a couple, it was a relief to finally break the duck.





Daniel and I then attended the 2014 spring Bass Catch, we had a great time but found the fishing tough. The boy really got some good practice at casting and retrieving and eventually landed two small fish on the troll, I caught bugger all!

Back in Sydney I had a day off on the [Halloween Friday](#) and went solo on the Lane Cove River. After an early start I decided to use crankbaits and concentrated on getting my casts in tight to timber. I really tried to get the lures banging across the timber, a bit like I would if I was fishing for yellowbelly on rivers or dams. I figured this was a good way to get some confidence with the lures and try something different. This really paid dividends as I started getting hits immediately. I then hooked and landed a 30cm fish, before losing another of the same size when the lure got hooked on a snag while fighting the fish. Not long after I got a lovely cast from distance into the V of a fallen snag, right up against the bank. As I cranked the lure out, it got hit about three times and then finally crunched by what felt like a good fish. This one really gave me some curry, diving into a snag well out from the shore and then sticking to it like glue, but I finally managed to extract a nice one of around 35cm. The Lane Cove River Bass catch was a bit of a washout for me, but again Daniel managed two small fish! Again it was nice to fish with the Bass Sydney guys and great to sit around talking rubbish and lying about great captures.

[Just last Sunday I met up with Tham again for a late afternoon session.](#) First cast was a 30cm fish for me and I thought I finally had this Bass Fishing caper nailed. That was my last fish, Tham caught 9, including two lovely fish in the mid-30s!



A chance encounter with Tham indeed. I'm really enjoying the fishing, and have met some great people with the club. We've been made to feel welcome and learnt a lot about yak bassing. Really looking forward to the Christmas Party and perhaps the Parra River bass catch. All the best for the holiday season.

- **Matt**

Spring Time Gold – Pete Hatzi

I completed my annual pilgrimage to Windamere Dam in November to chase some Golden Perch also known as Yellow Bellies or Yellas. It was at this dam I fell in love with lure fishing and more importantly freshwater fishing for Natives. The weather gods smiled upon us and we had 3 days of complete sunshine and no wind (uncommon for WINDamere). The only thing that wasn't hot was the level of fish feeding activity! The dam had seen 3 comps in consecutive weeks, I believe this shut the dam down considerably. Despite the tough fishing I had to think outside the box when all the usual presentations and spots were not producing. I managed to land a few fish which prevented me from losing my sanity! Regardless of whether you catch fish or not, the beauty of Windamere dam always sweetens the deal. Silent lures and bright colours seemed to do the damage this trip on shutdown fish where previously very dark and super noisy lures dominated the usual spring time feeding frenzies. I also managed to land a new species for myself which happened to be quite a pleasant by catch, a decent wallop of Eel-Tailed Catfish. Enjoy the pics.





- Pete

PNG Trip Report – Josh Pearson

Early this year I made the decision to chase down some fish that were on my bucket list, which fish to target though? I weighed up a number of options including Peacock Bass in South America, Barra in NT, Kingies in NZ, GT's in Oman.... the list was endless! There was always one front runner though that has captivated my fishing imagination, the hardest pulling fish as described by some of the best fisherman in the world, the PNG Black Bass. A member of the Lutjanid family (think jacks, red bass etc.), very little is actually known about the species apart from what anglers have been able to collate, they grow well in excess of 50lb and 120cm in length however landing a fish in this size class is nigh on impossible! They generally inhabit the freshwater stretches of rivers and have been found up to 800km upstream in the Fly River, they have also been caught in the brackish and estuaries. While scientific information is scant, the reputation of these fish as being brawlers that demolish tackle is well known, stories of wire being ripped out of lures, rods broken, gears shredded in reels, hooks straightened....everything you want in a fish really!

Gearing Up

Having never travel fished overseas or chased anything that reaches XOS sizes, it was quite the experience getting prepared for the trip. So many differing opinions on what rods, reels and tackle to use, the one consensus was that it all needed to be strong. I spent a lot of time researching and received plenty of help from Jason and Jia An from PNG, I went to my rod builder Mark Newcombe with some specifications and he turned some real beauties up for me; 40-60lb Ten20 Custom Spin (Shimano Saragosa 10k), 30-50lb Ten20 Custom Cast Spiral Wrap (Daiwa Ryoga Bay Jigging C2025PE), 8-16lb Ten20 Cast Bass Rod (Daiwa Ryoga 1016HL). Strong lures were a necessity with a definite preference to ones that were through wire (i.e.. single piece of wire for all hangers and tow point), all lures got upgraded hooks and rings, by far the most popular were Owner ST-66 6X trebles, VMC 4x were definitely not up to the task however their inline singles were fantastic once connected. I personally ran Ten Mouth GT Split rings rated to 120lb, but any of the top brands will do the trick, just remember that the bass will find the weakest link in your tackle and you will lose fish, the better the gear, the less you will lose.

Line choice is a very personal thing and will vary depending on reel and fishing style, I ran Varivas Avani PE5 (80lb) on both of the heavier outfits and Toray 20lb on the smaller one, good quality braid is such a pleasure to use and is definitely worth the extra money. Leader was easy, 100lb or 130lb on the heavier outfits, 40lb on the light stick. My only leader knot used on the entire trip was the FG knot, feels like nothing on the cast and retains excellent knot strength, I did take a PR bobbin also as a backup option. Tackle storage was great with the VS-3080 produced by Versus Meiho, it easily held over 100 lures and a dozen packets of SPs, all my terminal tackle including line, hooks, pliers, rings, swivels etc. and was great to take on the tenders each day.

Getting There

I flew Air Niugini after a recommendation from the charter operators and was not disappointed, their baggage staff have a great reputation with anglers unlike the Australian operators into the region who like to test the limits of how strong your tube is... I was greeted at the airport by Jia An and got to see some of Port Moresby on the way back to our compound in Boroko, I had arrived the day before Independence Day and preparation for the national day was in full swing! The charter to West Papua was great, being new to propeller aircraft definitely made the flight more interesting and after a quick refuel stop at a logging airport we had made it to our destination!



Trip Report

The operators at Sport Fishing PNG had arranged everything prior to arrival but there is always that air of trepidation when entering an area for the first time. This particular river system had been on the radar for 3 years and with the assistance of the local Mayor and government officials it was made a reality. Things work very differently in PNG in that the local Villages and people own the river that passes through their land, permission must be granted and compensation provided before you can fish there, this is where the experienced planning from Jason and his team really shone. We were met at the airport by the Mayor and a few hundred villagers, we learnt then that there had not been tourists to this particular region since 1977! After a quick hello and picking up a few local prawns (YUM!) we transferred to the mothership K2O.



This vessel is pure class, basically a luxury hotel on the water, while exploring the ship I heard a noise coming from the front. Going up we saw some welcoming war canoes that had been arranged by the Mayor. These things were phenomenal, I counted the people and they had 46 blokes in one canoe alone, all stand up paddlers from before SUP was cool! The ornately carved heads of the canoes were reflective of the village the canoe was produced by, one had a crocodile head bearing a human head in its mouth, another a snake etc.





We went ashore to meet the villagers and attend a sing sing outside the local schoolhouse. I was blown away by this cultural experience, more than 100 performers in the heat of the day, trying local cuisine and listening to the mayors speech to the local people about how tourism would positively influence the local communities unlike the rape and pillage mentality of the logging and resource companies. Poverty is a huge issue in PNG, they do have plenty of food from subsistence farming and local wildlife, the big areas for opportunity are health and education, these areas are a big focus for Jason Yip, the owner and operator of the tour company and the biggest form of compensation to the villages comes in the form of health and education including donations of goods as well as funds.





We did end up fishing that afternoon in a couple of the local swamps had a few touches on the surface but the day was all about the sing sing and the sunset!



Day 2 saw us up before the sun and having a cracker breakfast whipped up by Chef Alex before getting out amongst it. The river in the lower reaches is dominated by floodplains, big swamps and endless banks of reeds, we focussed our efforts on the swamp drains but the water was a little low, we still found fish but they were harder to hook than if the water was say a metre higher! Plenty of fish caught including a nice 80cm Barra followed by a stonker bass from Simon at 31lb on consecutive passes. I managed my first Bass at 8lb after being smoked by a much larger fish, a couple of nice barramundi to 80cm and another small bass right on dusk. Trolling was a necessity as the fish were holding at about 8m, casting didn't produce anywhere near as many fish! Catfish were an ever present theme in the lower reaches but some were massive and not scared of hitting a lure!



The Barra became much more plentiful once we were away from the villages and we managed plenty around the 80-85cm mark on 5-8m divers, it was simply a matter of finding them. We had a particularly hot session on a snaggy creek bend pulling Barra after Barra and also catching a few XOS tarpon, even the bait grows big here! We spent a bit of time exploring the smaller creeks and found a spot where the locals had freshly dug out a canoe by hand, crazy ingenuity! Had some more experience with how hard to land these fish can be, lost 3 today well over the 20lb mark to straightened hooks, my fishing mate Blue got smoked by a huge fish that straightened the ring and bent the other 2 out!



The snags became more and more important the further upstream we went particularly when it came to the bass, one particularly memorable snag was located on the bend in the river close to a swamp drain, we had some monumental losses with boils that looked like someone had thrown a bathtub in. Our boat managed to land about 20 bass from this one particular corner as the fish continued to drop in and feed. The other boats had similar success without the bigger numbers a bit upstream and again snags near drains were the successful areas.



The further upstream away from villages the more plentiful the crocodiles became, the locals advised that they regularly take crocs greater than 5m from this river and seeing a massive croc slide next to your spot was a bit disconcerting! We pushed upstream until the tank of fuel ran out but the water kept getting lower and muddier and the decision was made to fish back downstream, the river was completely different up here and was proper jungle with parrots galore and many different types of birds of prey. We came across a great snag on the return run and fished it hard, we had a triple hook-up which made things very interesting as well as another 7 bass before calling it a day and going to see a local village, Moli and I gave a brief talk on what we were in the area doing before getting shown around the village and seeing how they lived.





Having already been over some of the ground on the return run proved to be beneficial, we knew where the fish would be so it was just a matter of time before the bite came, we fished a creek and found some super aggressive tilapia??? Or maybe sooty grunter? Which kept us occupied for a while, we continued upstream a fair distance and found the boys working a creek mouth adjacent to a massive snag pile, the report they gave was great, loads of fish, best so far 40lb with a few 30lb fish thrown in. We continued upstream a little but the lure of a firing snag was too great. I got spanked by 3 separate fish, 2 bust offs, my boat mate Rod suffered a similar fate and we left the snag to the boys and went back down with our tail between our legs. Managed a few more fish on the run back to the boat and relaxed with some cleansing ales listening to the boys talk of beasts.





The crocs were more active today, saw 3 and one of the other boats had a 4m surface next to them for a look! Cracker of a Barra caught on the trusty Scorpion 5m, went 94cm and around 30lb, went pretty well but they have nothing on the bass! Also managed a 23lb bass on the light gear, swamp drain in the rain and it produced loads of fish in a very fun session! Also managed a 25 odd pound catfish on the bloody surface!





We came across a local family who had captured a baby sea eagle, if it had more flight feathers we would have purchased to release but in PNG if you can catch it, you can eat it! Very cool nonetheless getting up close with this animal.



Our final day saw a quick visit to another village before heading off downstream to the airstrip, arriving early allowed us to fish the surrounds and this proved to be a great option. The Barra were on the chew but more importantly so were the bass! I just continued to get smoked by monster fish, to put this into perspective, I locked up the drag on the Ryoga BJ to around 11kg pressure + additional because I had line out, on a 50lb jigging rod and they were unstoppable... A fitting way to finish a trip, the other fellas managed a few but I wasn't disappointed!





It would be amiss of me to leave out my first half day fishing off PoM, I was brand new to popping and indeed using any outfit bigger than about 20lb so I had some learning to do. Jia An was fantastic with advise on casting the bigger lures and I was soon casting acceptably, I had made a decent cast to a coral bommie in a few metres of water and was slowly blooping it back, I lost sight of the lure in the trough of a swell, at that same moment the rod loaded up and I was onto my first fish of the trip! I cranked the drag up substantially to about 10kg and worked the fish into deeper water, once away from the reef it was a relatively easy affair despite the fish fighting the whole way back to the boat. A 9kg Red Bass was a great way to start my trip account and cool to get a relative of the target species on my first outing



I lost way more fish this trip than I landed and I will be back! This trip is something every fisho needs to have a go at and have absolutely no hesitation recommending Jason and his team. If you have any questions or queries please do not hesitate to ask, I will be putting a video together soon but as you can probably imagine there is loads of footage to sift through!

Tight lines and screaming drags,

- Josh

Feature Member of the Month

Andre D continues to impress this season with a multitude of BIG bass and even bigger EP's...cracking fish mate, well done!



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

**Next Meeting is on Tuesday
February 10 - 7:30pm at
Northmead Bowling Club**

Kayak Raffle

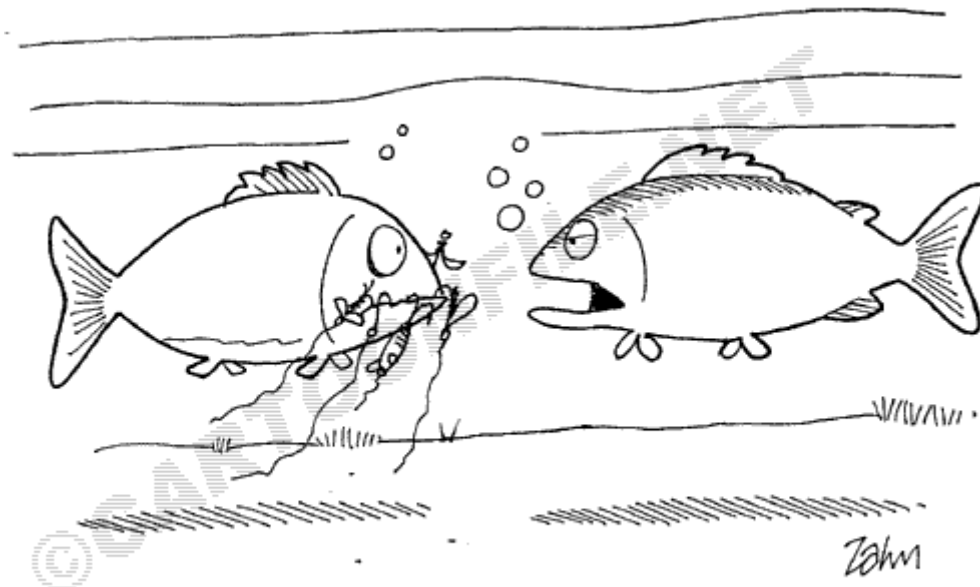
- Wilderness Systems Aspire 100 kayak.
- Worth \$900+ retail
- For BASS SYDNEY MEMBERS ONLY
- \$2 per ticket
- Unlimited no. of tickets can be bought
- Will be drawn at the Christmas Party 2014



Specifications:

Length:	10' / 305 cm
Width:	27.5" / 70 cm
Max Capacity:	300 lbs. / 136 kg
Deck Height:	14" / 36 cm
Weight:	44 lbs. / 20 kg
Cockpit Length:	49" / 124 cm
Cockpit Width:	22.25" / 57 cm

Monthly Fishing Cartoon Funny



"You're the dumbest bass in the lake!"

We all know that same fish off the same snag, EVERY time

Our great sponsors:

Nepean River Tours:



Gazza's Grass:



Millerods:



Dreamfish:

Dream it See it Catch it
Buzzbaits & Spinnerbaits hand-made locally in the Blue Mountains.
www.dreamfish.com.au
www.webstore.dreamfish.com.au

Al's Tackle Store:

