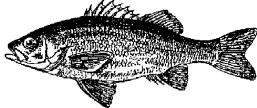




Australian Bass, MACQUARIA NOVEMACULEATA



# THE BRONZE BATTLER

PATRON: Dr Wayne Erskine PhD

PRESIDENT: HS Tham phone 0402058903  
VICE PRESIDENT: Ashley Thamm ph: 91811768  
PAST PRESIDENT: Chris Ghosh phone 96366896 (h)  
SECRETARY: Gary Perry ph: 0416112990  
TREASURER/  
M/SHIP SECRETARY: Garnet Noble phone 9476 3881 (h)  
POINTS SCORE & BASSCATCH OFFICER: Al Izzard

PUBLICITY OFFICER: Ashley Thamm  
EDITOR: Ashley Thamm phone 91811768  
ENTERTAINMENT & EVENT ORGANISER:  
PROJECT OFFICERS:  
Parramatta River: Alan Fowkes phone 9626 9938  
Hacking River: Warren Hackshall phone 9525 0090 (h)  
Lane Cove River: Milton Lazarus phone 9874 7323  
Emu Plains Regeneration: Alan Izzard phone 96532309

## PRESIDENT'S REPORT

With the 2011/2012 Bass season in full swing we find ourselves in the 'festive season' again. Time is in even shorter supply with demands of work, family and of course, prime bassin' time all competing with each other. I know I'm having trouble making it all balance out!

I did take the weekend off to attend the Williams BassCatch and unlike a year ago, we were blessed with good weather and the river in good state. I had both good and bad – good in that I got a PB in numbers caught in a day (60), but bad in that I rolled the yak and lost my much-loved UL spin rod. After all the kayak fishing I've done over 15 years, 2 countries and numerous rivers; I've experienced 2 capsizes in 12 months. Must be either getting old or it's a case of familiarity breeding contempt. At least I can say a HNF guy also came to grief in the same rapid about 5mins after I did. I note that John Stokes has also joined the Bass Sydney Swimming Club on the same day on another stretch of the Williams. Watch that white water!! Sometimes its better to walk it.

Merry Christmas to everyone, keep safe and enjoy the warmer months.

**HS Tham**

## **Brad's last hurrah!**

When I heard that Brad was intending to return to the USA in early November I thought that it might be a good idea to try and find him some decent size fish before he went. With that in mind I made a few calls and then booked a couple of days at Bellbrook on the Macleay River. Unfortunately the weather is not very predictable this time of year and true to form it really played up for the week we were there, beautiful sunny days up to the day we arrived and then 4 seasons almost daily after we checked in. We decided to give the fishing a miss the first afternoon and to give it a go the next day. Somehow a bottle of Ribena (?) happened to be drained that evening and yours truly slept through what I am told was one hellava storm during the night, better than sleeping tablets.

### **Day 1.**

Overcast and the storms predicted kept some of us close to home in the morning but the younger crew decided to have a go regardless. The older more sensible crew waited till after lunch before launching, only to be chased off the water by an approaching storm later in the day. The fish tally was nothing really to write home about with only 8 fish landed during the day. Dave Claydon and Neville Lelo scoring 3 each and Anthony Hutt and I making up the numbers with 1 a piece.

### **Day 2.**

Decided to push on regardless, all wet weather gear was donned as we set off and as it turned out it was certainly needed, the showers were the only consistent thing all day.

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*Self enjoying the day!!!*



*Dave, Anthony & Milton sheltering under some trees.*

The biggest drama today was Nev. losing a fish that appeared to be well over the 400 mark, although the wind at times proved to be a real pain in the butt. 28 fish landed on the day with Dave collecting 8, Anthony 7, Milton 5 and the rest of us picking up the dregs.

#### **Day 3.**

Tuesday's weather was much better as we launched on a stretch that none of us had fished before so we were all looking forward to something new. Neville and Garnet showed us how to catch and drop big fish, again losing fish that appeared to be well over 400, a couple of very depressed people. Graeme went for a bit of a dip on one of the rapids, welcome a new member to the BS Swimming Club, numbers are growing rapidly. The fishing was hard work with only 15 fish landed on the day between the 8 of us.

#### **Day 4.**

Weather today started off well as we launched onto a stretch that we had heard delivered some good fish the previous week, you know the week that the sun was shining!!! We were ever hopeful. At last some good fish were landed, I started it off with a 398 which was soon overtaken my Milton landing a 412 almost within spitting distance. When we caught up to the younger crew who had paddled off downstream we discovered that 2 more good fish had been landed, Anthony with a 420 & Dave with a 430mm. 21 fish landed overall and some very nice ones amongst them.

#### **Day 5.**

Dave left us today to rejoin his family on the coast, I am sure we all thought that that was good, more chance for the rest of us. We decided to have a bit of a break today and rested up in the Pub. most of the day. However the lure of a late afternoon session had 4 of us on the water at about 3.00 O'clock. We managed 5 fish between us and for once everyone managed a fish. When we got back to the Pub an almighty storm blew up and pretty soon the power went out. We had to rely on bottled beer, just as well we were cooking with gas.

#### **Day 6.**

At last some decent weather and a fair forecast. Launched reasonably early and split up a bit at the start, as usual, but it was not long before we were all together again. Brad had lost a good fish the previous day and mentioned that he had tightened his drag right up. I explained that he probably pulled the hooks as Aussie Bass did not have really hard mouths and that he should loosen his drag and not try to pull their heads off when he set the hooks. He took it all on board and did not lose another fish and top scored on the last day. His best fish went 392, but he reckons we measure them wrong and it should be 415mm. Maybe in the States pal. We managed 16 this day with Graeme as well scoring a PB along with his Bronze Medal for swimming, yep over again, cannot say too much, I damn near went over on the same rapid.

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420



398



412



How to land a PB



Graeme with his PB 390mm



Lunch



Just looking!



Nothing like a bit of white water to start the day



Lies, lies and more lies!



392/415, whatever, still a nice PB



Nice place for a quiet beer after a day on the water



Brad enjoying another beer.

All together a great week, even if we had to call it quits early because of another storm that was heading our way, those phones the Techno Twins carry are great, showed exactly where the storm was and how soon we could expect it. We landed 93 Bass over the week and about 12 Herring, not too shabby!!!

We will be saying goodbye to Brad at the end of October and I want to say that it has been a pleasure to have him around. We may not have gotten that 400 **FORK** length Bass but we came close. Who knows maybe he will get it on the upcoming H/Nepean Bass catch, if not maybe one day he might return and we can try again on the mid north coast. I hope everything goes well for him back home and I wish him luck with those lifetime decisions he will need to make each morning, i.e. play golf or go fishing??? poor bastard!

Alan Izzard

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### October Basscatch

Well the Bass have been caught, the beer has been drunk and the camping gear has all been packed away. It was another successful weekend with everyone getting amongst good numbers of fish and generally having a good time. My weekend couldn't have gone any better, this is the first Basscatch I have taken my 2 boys along to and they had an absolute ball.

I fished a stretch of water upstream, I had picked it because it has a huge weir that has in the past been a major problem to fish passage in the river. The fact that the country is breathtaking had a bit to do with it too.

I think I was the only person at the Basscatch actually hoping to not catch many fish, if I didn't catch many that meant the recently installed fish ladder is doing its job and the fish would be well and truly upstream by now and not trapped below the weir as they have been in previous years.

I launched above the weir to see if the fish had been moving up that far. I called out to Daniel who had hit the water about 3 minutes before me, he informed me he had already caught one so I lobbed a cast into a couple of sticks about 10m away and a feisty little fish was all over it. Yep they were definitely up here.

The 3 of us got 2 fish each in the first 10 minutes, then starting paddling down to check out the new fishway.

I was feeling a little spatially challenged that morning so after a few calls of it *should* be just around *this* corner we eventually relented and had a few more casts along the way. I had 6 by the time we reached the weir.

We scrambled down the rocks with our yaks and floated downstream. It's a spectacular section of the river and we were all itching to get into a few. We flogged the first few pools without a touch, I was hoping that they weren't schooled up below the weir, but geez one or two more would have been nice!!

We turned around and dragged the yaks back up the rocks and I left the others to fish their way back to the ramp.

On Sunday my boys crammed in as much bacon and eggs as they could (thanks again to Bass Sydney for catering!) before we packed up and headed to Emu Plains to plant a few Lomandras before heading home, being 3 and 4 it didn't take my boys long to strip their gear off and jump in the river. The rest of the guys unloaded the yaks and hit the water for another round and I couldn't help getting out the rod and having a few casts into some of the eddies.

Thanks again for another excellent weekend and i'll see you all again in February!



*A few pics of the Lomandra's getting a drink and being planted at Russell St*

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*The next generation learning about the bush and having fun doing it!*



## **LANE COVE BASS CATCH**

The weather gods were very kind to us and Saturday afternoon turned out very pleasant. Fine and sunny with just a light breeze and ideal for Bass fishing although I believe the barometer had fallen. This by the way is normal for a Bass Sydney event. By dusk it was magic on the water although the singing cicadas were strangely quiet.

We met at the fish way, performed the customary clean out then caught up with Kathryn Wem, the Lane Cover National Park Field officer who we have supported in her bid to get a grant for bank regeneration on the river upstream.

Kathryn kindly turned up with a chain saw to help us cut up the logs in the fish way and on the weir.

After a briefing to welcome members and to outline the afternoons plan we headed up to area 13 Cotton Wood Glen our launching spot.

Garnet gave our two new members Sherif Tadros & Shayne Alexander their Bass Sydney welcome packs and everyone received a catch card and pencil, then it was off to chase a Bass or two.

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The water was a real tannin colour so who knows what the fishing was going to be like.

The Lane Cove lived up to expectations, that is tough fishing and after many casts from the boat house downstream to De Burgs bridge well upstream members returned to Cotton Wood Glen for our BBQ just on dark.

It was the customary sausage and onion sizzle, but that didn't appear to phase 14 hungry Bass fishermen and we demolished 40 odd sausages and a stack onions followed by tea and coffee. Dave Parker kindly brought his Yamaha generator and light, so we had a great setup.

Everyone enjoyed the opportunity to just relax and chat and I believe a BBQ like this after an event just makes the outing so much more enjoyable. Not only that but as the gates close at 7pm we have the whole park to ourselves and it's very quiet.

The catch results were reasonable, but not great and in particular there were no small fish taken, that is in the

90 to 120mm range. In total we caught 22 Bass. Alan maxed out with four fish and the sizes were impressive

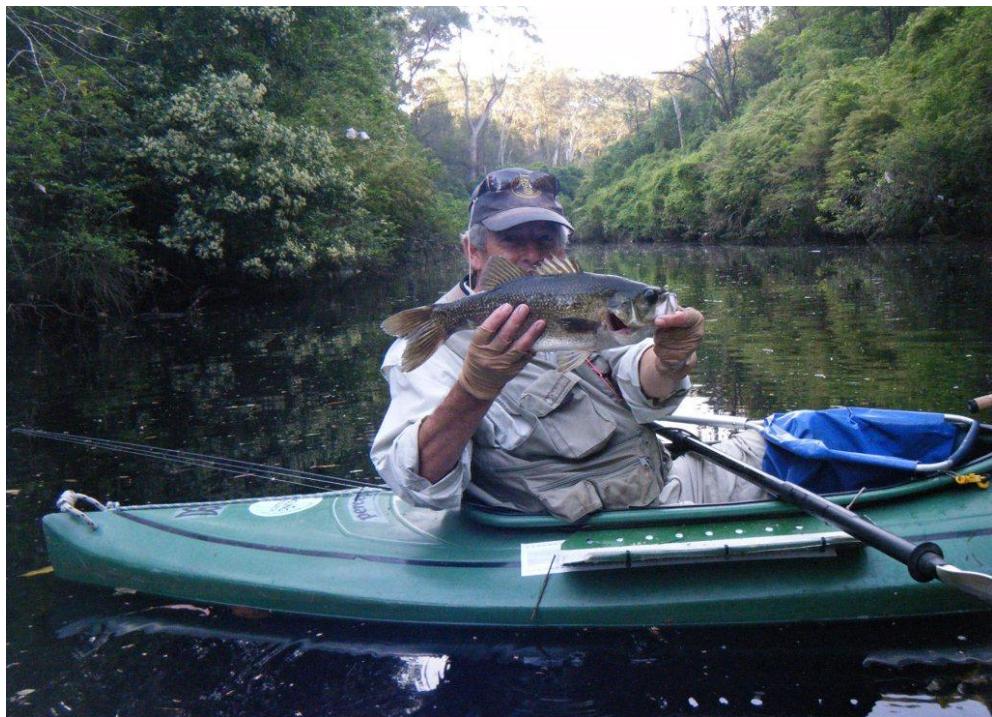
with 260, 405, 412 & 253. The two big fish in the enclosed photos were caught about ten minutes apart whilst Neville managed a 401 and a 283. Daniel caught three, 260, 295 & 390. Nice to see new member Shayne Alexander catch three, a 370, 290 and a 230. Other members caught one's and two's and some lucked out.

A special welcome to new member Sherif Tadros who had never been Bass fishing before but not to be deterred Sherif turned up with a small inflatable, a box of lures and a short rod. Both Tham and I spent some time with Sherif both on and off the water and I'm sure it was a great learning experience for him. In addition Sherif had the opportunity to paddle my Minnow so he could get a feel for kayak fishing.

So thanks to all those who made the effort to come and along and join us. Special thanks to Greg & Glen Rouland who travelled all the way from Camden. Also Neville from the Central Coast and Sherif from Little Bay. Having 14 members was a record for the Lane Cove.



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Als 415mm

Milton Lazarus

### Williams River Bass Catch

by John Stokes

With much excitement and anticipation, Trent and I have been working on the Williams plan for a few months. Trent grew up in the area and has had much success in the upper reaches, with a total of 151 fish in one day many moons ago. We arrived to set up camp late on Friday and got busy loading the vehicle for the 4:30am rise the next day. After helping Tham and Ron car shuffle, we reach the launching spot about 6:00am to find the river up a little and running well.



*(Not sure if the poor picture quality is due to my camera or the heavy fog)*

Interestingly, members of Trent's family have lived both upstream and downstream of the launch spot, and we were able to see the remnant of a cable bridge used to cross the river up to 30 years ago. On the Sunday, we were able to show Trent's grandfather photos of the bridge and some perch caught and released from his old haunt.

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The hits started pretty quickly once we got going, and I had 2 fish measured within 15 minutes. Trent had a slower start, but was soon well ahead of me. There were a few portages required heading upstream, and since we were both pretty new, there were some hairy moments with the river running harder than 'normal'.



During a longer portage, we decide to slow down and start casting from the bank. I had an immediate hit, and it wasn't long before we had some more fish measured. I had the most success with a  $\frac{1}{4}$  Buzzbait, while Trent didn't even get to try 'walking the dog', before his first ever Sammy cast was smashed. Once the fog cleared, the surface action ceased.

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Trent had 3 big hits heading upstream, but was not able to land them. However, on the return trip he was able to tempt one of them and managed a 300mm Bass after a short fight.

We had a blast fishing the narrow moving water, and learnt a lot about portages and shooting riffles. However the biggest lesson for me came on the final riffle. I took the wrong approach, and in an instant I was driven into a log. There was nowhere to go, and as soon as I started paddle backwards and across the current, I was rolled and experienced my first capsiz.

I actually found the capsiz enjoyable, because the river was much cooler than the 34°C day and I got to test my rod storage and leashes. The kayak ended up half full of water, but I was very pleased that the rod holders and leashes all worked to keep my gear secure. The only loss was a pair of sunnies.

We finished with 27 bass between us and we are looking forward to March.



**John Stokes**

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### Parramatta River “Basscatch”

Given the late change to the date and the appalling weather from late morning on the 4<sup>th</sup> Dec, I've decided to make this “event” even more flexible.

Whilst there were a few hardy souls who ventured out on the 4<sup>th</sup>, it would be great to rack up a few more fishing hours to finalise our grant obligations and it would be even better to get a few more fish on the board!

So here's the deal. If you fish the fresh water in the Parramatta River at any time over December/January let me know where you fished, how long fished for and (hopefully) the fork length of anything you caught. Whilst we all most enjoy our lure casting I'm open to any fishing method so you might choose to soak a worm in Parramatta Park whilst ostensibly taking the family for a picnic!

Have a great holiday season and thanks for your help.

Alan Fowkes

A few pics from the Upper reaches of the P'matta River courtesy of Garnet Noble



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*Member Graham Pike is on the Murray-Darling Basin Authority Taskforce and he wrote 2 interesting pieces for the Battler –*

### **NATIVE FISH AUSTRALIA ORIGINAL LEADS WORLD FIRST FISH RECOVERY PROJECT**

One of the first members of Native Fish Australia is directing a world-first \$3 million project he designed to protect and enhance a disease-free stock of endangered Macquarie perch in the national capital's enlarged Cotter Dam, now under construction.

A keen young Mark Lintermans was a founding member of the ACT Branch of NFA. Some 29 years later he is Senior Research Fellow in Freshwater Fisheries Ecology and Management at the University of Canberra and the author of a hundred or more scientific journal articles and book contributions all on the biology and ecology of eastern Australia's native freshwater fish and crustaceans.

Mark's latest book, in 2009, *Fishes of the Murray-Darling Basin: an introductory guide*, published by and available free from the Murray-Darling Basin Authority in Canberra, is a comprehensive, detailed classic and should be in every native fish enthusiast's library.

(Note: you can get this booklet via this link: <http://www.mdba.gov.au/files/publications/MDBA-Fish-species-book.pdf> )

Mark's passion for native fish became a career when he began work, about 25 years ago, as one of the technicians monitoring the management of native and introduced species in the Australian Capital Territory for the Territory's Conservation department.

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He worked his way up to become the fisheries manager for the Territory and spent decades researching and understanding the biology and ecology of its freshwater fishes and crustaceans. This pre-ordained him for the project of a lifetime – the proposal, research, design, implementation and management of a unique, overarching plan to protect and enhance stocks of native fish during and after the construction of a large new Cotter River dam, replacing the much smaller one, to help drought proof Canberra.

The existing Cotter Reservoir and surrounds provide critical habitat to several species of threatened aquatic fauna including Macquarie Perch, Trout Cod, Murray Cod, Two-spined Blackfish and Murray River Crayfish. The reservoir is also uniquely free of Redfin perch and its associated EHN virus, fatal to several native species.

The Enlarged Cotter Dam (ECD) Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) assessed the likely impact of the ECD and concluded there was a risk that the new reservoir could impact on a number of threatened native fish, in particular, the endangered Macquarie Perch (*Macquaria australasica*). The increased inundation level (of about 50m vertical height) would result in the loss of existing macrophytes (reed beds) which provide important shelter and food habitat for the fish. Without appropriate mitigation measures, the fish could also be exposed increased levels of predation from piscivorous birds such as Cormorants and Darters. A resulting fish management plan led by Mark focused on the need for the investigation of artificial fish habitat to compensate for the loss of the existing macrophyte shelter habitat caused by fluctuating water levels in the enlarged dam's operation. There may be some reinstatement of macrophytes along the edges of the dam once it is completed and filled but habitat enhancement would still be badly needed.

The research directed by Mark showed that of the artificial habitats trialed (rock reefs, pipes and pipes with grills), rock reefs are the preferred habitat of adult Macquarie Perch and the interstitial spaces (gaps) between rocks can provide the essential habitat in which Macquarie Perch can shelter from predation by piscivorous birds.

The University of Canberra's Institute of Aquatic Ecology advised that rocks of about 0.8m to 1.2m, placed in a 'reef' arrangement, would provide an appropriate level of shelter habitat for threatened native fish, in particular, Macquarie Perch. Mark and his colleagues also advised that the design of a rock reef "pyramid" structure of about 3-4 rocks wide and 2-3 rocks high, with rocks placed carefully to provide interstitial spaces of about 150mm to 250mm, would provide adult Macquarie Perch with suitable shelter habitat for protection against predators (birds) in the ECD reservoir.

Additionally, it was concluded that as the fish would occupy the upper strata of the water body, it would be necessary for shelter habitat to be provided along the contours where possible, and within a range of 5m to 28m below the ECD reservoir's Full Supply Level. This range (5 to 28m) would give threatened and endangered fish species access to shelter habitat at various water depths. Placement of shelter habitat along the reservoir shoreline would be intended to replicate the existing pattern of shelter currently provided by the fringing macrophytes, also along the shoreline.

The proposal which Mark initially thought was a very long shot in a bureaucratic and engineering world not usually given to concern about native fish, has romped home and is, in fact, already a reality, well ahead of the construction of the new dam wall.

It's not been without its tribulations, however. For example, Mark went through long line of heavy machinery operators before he found only two who could control their machines with sufficient delicacy to consistently and precisely stack large rocks on top of each other and still leave the internal spaces and crevices of a size necessary to make new homes for all of Cotter's current and future Macquarie Perch.

The accompanying photographs were taken during a visit to the Cotter Dam site during October's annual Native Fish Forum organised by the MDBA in Canberra.

1<sup>st</sup> pic: Mark Lintermans explains just three of his series of rock reefs built along different contours just below what will be the top operating water levels in the expanded Cotter Reservoir, Canberra.

2nd pic: Mark Lintermans and a closer look at one of his rock reefs at the site of the enlarged Cotter Reservoir under construction near the national capital.

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*3<sup>rd</sup> pic: The old Cotter Dam Wall and part of the existing reservoir photographed from what will be the top of the new dam wall.*

*4<sup>th</sup> pic: The scale of the enlarged Cotter reservoir native fish rock reef project can be judged from this photograph showing just one of the series of rock reefs around the hill contours in the right background. The reefs will be at varying depths near top water level in the new reservoir. This photograph was taken from what will be the top of the new Cotter Dam wall.*



**Further Reading:** *Enlargement of Cotter Dam – Construction of Rock Reef Fish Habitat*, ACTEW Corporation and ActewAGL, Canberra, May 2010 (available through Google)

*Enlarged Cotter Dam Fish Management Plan, Version 2*, ACTEW Corporation and ActewAGL, Canberra, November 2010 (available through Google)

Mark Lintermans – [www.canberra.edu.au/faculties/science/staff/profiles/mark-lintermans](http://www.canberra.edu.au/faculties/science/staff/profiles/mark-lintermans)

**Graham Pike**

Member of the Community Stakeholder Taskforce,  
Native Fish Strategy, Murray-Darling Basin Authority (MDBA)

## THE GRAVEST THREAT TO OUR NATIVE FISH

European carp have taken a far back seat to another introduced fish species as a most serious and imminent threat to eastern Australia's native freshwater fishes, including Australian Bass.

The threat was emphasised when an entire session was devoted to Tilapia – Mozambique mouth-brooders - at October's 2011 Native Fish Forum organised by the Murray-Darling Basin Authority in Canberra.

Alien fish species are recognised as one of the eight major threats to native fish in the Murray-Darling Basin and the Tilapia (*Oreochromis mossambicus*) is by far the worst of these aliens. The Authority's Native Fish Strategy includes as one of its key driving actions the control of Tilapia and other alien species.

Tilapia are among the world's 100 worst invasive species and are perhaps the greatest threat to Australia's aquatic ecosystems. Most likely introduced for the aquarium trade, Tilapia are spreading alarmingly quickly and can be found in many locations in Queensland, despite expensive continuing control measures. The Native Fish Forum was told that at one location they were within only 11km of entering a headwater stream of the Murray-Darling Basin, home to 35 species of Australian native fishes. If that occurs, there seems little doubt that they'll eventually destroy or at least substantially reduce populations of all our unique native freshwater species because Tilapia outcompete our native fish for habitat and food and their feeding and nesting habits can degrade water quality.

Three characteristics make Tilapia highly successful as an invasive species:

- They are prolific breeders capable of reproducing all year round;
- Tilapia are omnivores and feed on a wide variety of both plant and animal matter,
- They can adapt to a wide variety of aquatic habitats, including habitats of high salinity, and can breed in both fresh and brackish water.

If Tilapia become established in the Murray-Darling Basin and/or our coastal streams, it will be almost impossible to eradicate them.

Tilapia vary in colour from dark olive to silver grey, depending on their age and their environment. They are generally deep-bodied fish with thin profiles, long snouts and pronounced lips/jaws.

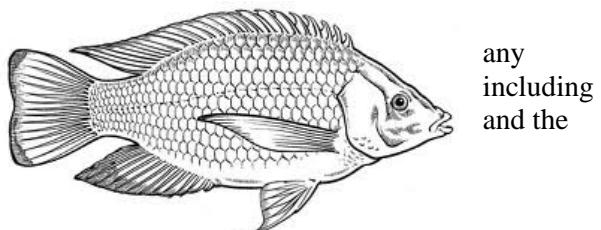
The Tilapia's dorsal or upper fin is continuous and ends in an extended point. Most Australian native species have a dorsal fin with a dent/gap in the middle and a rounded end. Their pelvic or belly fins are long and almost touch the front of the anal (bottom) fin. This is unlike most native species which have short pelvic fins.

Tilapia infestations are usually caused by people moving the fish between waterways. Here's a list definite DO NOTS:

- Do not use Tilapia as bait, dead or alive. Tilapia are mouth brooders and even dead adults may be carrying viable eggs/larvae in their mouths.
- Do not empty aquariums into local waterways (or even down the toilet).
- Do not stock dams or ponds with Tilapia. Use local native fish instead if you must stock.
- Do not return a catch of Tilapia to the water. Kill them humanely away from the water and either bury them or put them in a bin.

Governments are tracking pest fish infestations. If you catch or see Tilapia or suspect someone of stocking or moving them, report it, the date, location, description of the fish, a photograph if possible name or description of the waterway.

In NSW the reporting number is: (02) 4916 3877, or visit [www.dpi.nsw.gov.au](http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au).



any  
including  
and the

Graham Pike

## NEWS

### Xmas Dinner 13<sup>th</sup> December

After the success of the last two years, the Christmas banquet will once again be held at the corner of Marsden and Victoria roads. Unfortunately I didn't see the shredded beef on the menu this year but don't let that deter you, I'm sure it will still be a great evening.

Dinner will cost \$36 per member and will be held at the:

NEW EMPRESS RESTAURANT,

Shop 8 / 2 Marsden Road

Ermington 2115

9804-6844

### MacDonald River Basscatch

The Macdonald River Basscatch is once again being hosted by the Springwood boys on the 14<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup> of January. For members that haven't been to this event camping is right on the banks of a great pool just below St Albans. The river offers a few options with good fishing in the brackish at times and plenty of Bass in the fresh. As the local pamphlets at the pub say, the average size of a Bass up there is 50cm, so be prepared for some lunkers.....

In reality the fish are generally a bit smaller than that but can be caught in good numbers on the right day.

### Georges River Freshwater Event

For the brave and the foolhardy Bass Sydney is holding an event on the Georges River.

Those that attend had best get their affairs in order and say a decent farewell to their loved ones as not all that set out in the morning will return. Those that survive the restless natives and methane swamps will surely be rewarded with some very surprising fishing for their efforts.

For self-defence lessons or any info on this event members should contact Tham who actually already survived a trip this year. Tham & Greg Rouland went for a late arvo session early November and report that the place is full of small fish with a few bigger ones mixed in. If they had used extra-small lures like a BassCatch, they may have caught a couple of dozen each, judging from the number of hits they experienced. On dusk and after dark, they switched to buzzbaits & surface lures and got some big hits. Greg actually hooked up on a large popper to a strong fish before the hooks pulled.



### New Member(s)

Bass Sydney would like to welcome new members, Derek Sonter, Shayne Alexander, Daniel Flood and Sherif Tadros.

**Derek Sonter** is married with 2 teenage boys. He's a big soccer fan and still plays in the over-35's. Derek grew up game fishing with his grandfather out of the Newcastle & Port Stephens Game Fishing Club and has held numerous club & interclub records, Champion Boat awards and has held 2 Junior World Records (88kg striped marlin on 10kg line, 134kg hammerhead on 10kg line).

Derek gave fishing away after grandfather died, but has re-discovered it in the last couple of years and has recently got himself a kayak and a few bass lures. Has got a few bass so far, but nothing of any size yet.

**Shayne Alexander** is an experienced angler who is married with 2 kids and manages a wholesale plant nursery near Penrith. He loves his bassing which he has been doing for around 8yrs, mainly on the Nepean & the Central Coast. He also makes a few surface lures as a hobby. He attended his first club outing at the Lane Cove BassCatch where he got a few.



(One of Shayne's surface creations)

**Sherif Tadros** is married and is a Ear, Nose & Throat doctor from Egypt and came to Australia via a few years in New York state, USA. Sherif works as a Facility Manager & Research Fellow at the University of NSW where he's working on the causes & prevention of hearing loss. He enjoys a bit of rock fishing and looks forward to his first Aussie Bass. He also attended his first club outing at the LCR BassCatch recently and after struggling with a little inflatable raft, has already bought himself a nice SOT kayak. After a barrage of advice from Milton, Alan and Tham, with a few lures thrown in, it won't be long before he becomes a bass fisho!

**Daniel Flood** has been busy prior to joining Bass Sydney with 3 Basscatches already under his belt and a few days work out at Russell St. He was also present at the LC event and managed a new PB of 39cm.

### **Hawkesbury-Nepean BassCatch February 19 & 20**

Just a quick reminder to all that the next basscatch will be held on the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> of Feb. Camping will once again be held at Cattai from Friday the 18th, weather permitting.

All new members are encouraged to attend as it is a great opportunity to fish some lovely sections of the river and learn a few new tricks.

### Ed's Fishing Report

The alarm was set for 5 and the car was loaded up, as usual though natures alarm clock (toddlers) woke me at 2am so the yak was thrown on the roof and I was suddenly presented with the opportunity of a Friday morning session to kick off a big weekend of Bass fishing.

Driving in the dark has its advantages, it means I don't stop at every single creek and river crossing looking for access, making notes, maps and reminders that inevitably get lost or destroyed during the course of the weekend or become a part of the ever-growing list of places for "next season".

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I was on the water 2 minutes after I arrived, 5 minutes in and I was onto my first Bass of the trip. A great start. Move onto the next snag....



This was worth the 2am wake up!



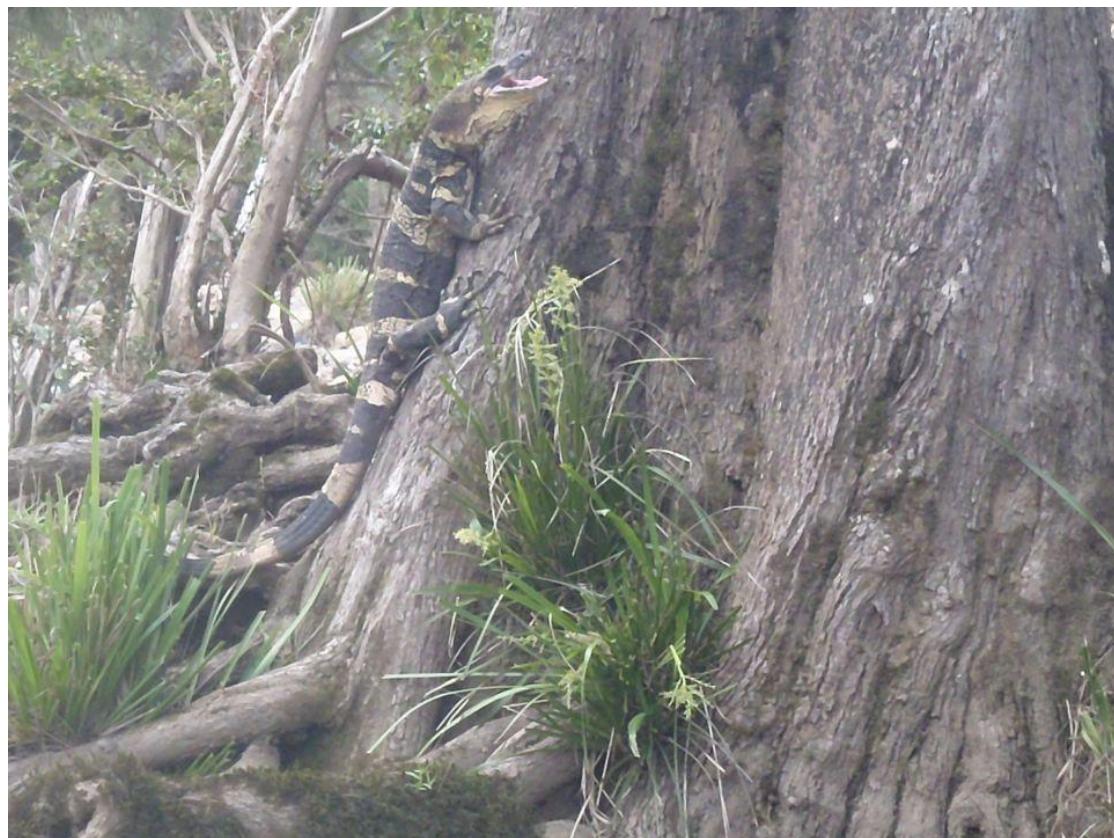
The fish were absolutely belting the lure, but as there were a lot of mid water boulders the fish were coming in fairly easily after an initial tussle. I grew confident and lobbed my lure deep into some fallen timber in some fast flowing water. The lure was nailed and deep in the timber before the stupid expression could appear on my face. That's what you get for being cocky!

December 2011



I scrambled up the first of many obstacles that weekend into the small pool above. The river has long sections of fast flowing water, sometimes a few hundred meters, sometimes a few km's long. The pools with calm water in between usually aren't very big, once again usually only a few hundred meters long but they are worth the effort as access is extremely limited in the river.

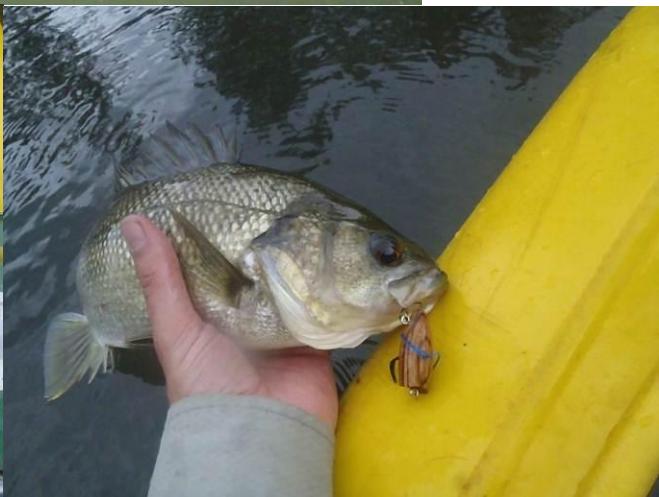
All of the fish were in great condition and they were not stuffing around with the lure. Every fish that hit the lure, both surface and subsurface was landed. I picked up 13 fish in 3.5 hours, only one of which was below 300mm.



This guy was about 7 foot long I reckon and when he saw me he scurried to the closest tree and just watched me go past. I had no choice but to pass close by and we kept a watchful eye on each other as I bumped the kayak down the rocky drain.

December 2011

The next morning was tough to say the least. I opted to go upstream of where I had been the day before so I dragged the kayak a few km's through the scrub to get to the pool I had last fished. I thought it was going to be another magic morning but the fish just weren't biting as the guys fishing downstream later confirmed. The buggers didn't start hitting until about 1 o'clock, but from then on it was magic. By that stage I had been off the water for an hour or 2 resting and avoiding the heat, but I was determined to get some good fish on some of my home made poppers. It was a magic session with both big and small fish making an absolute racket with heart stopping surface strikes which rarely connected and even when the hooks did find their mark the fish were doing all sorts of tricks to throw the barbless trebles. It was great fun with only a couple of fish landed but with some very memorable moments. I tied on my trusty slider to pick up the ones I had missed or had toyed with me on my way back to the camp.



The next morning I packed quickly and hit the river with 2 members of Hunter Native Fish. We headed to a pool downstream I had fished once last year. The fish were ready to play again and it didn't take long before one of the Hunter boys pulled in a nice 380mm. I must admit I was taking notes as he'd used a new lure the day before and had pulled out a nice 405mm. I think i'm heading out to the tackle store tomorrow.....

This must be where the little fish like to hang out as the general size of fish was much smaller. There were still plenty of decent fish around though

December 2011



Contemplating the trip on the long drive home, I caught 40 fish with 30 of them over the 300mm mark, nothing huge but a river that is definitely worth further investigation. Access into the feeders is the next plan already being hatched, I might have to make up some bigger poppers next time though and wait until the cicada's are in full swing.... Stay tuned....

**Ashley Thamm, Editor**

Xmas Dinner!!  
13<sup>th</sup> December

The dinner will once again be held at the New  
Empress, corner of Marsden St and Victoria  
Road

December 2011

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