

Boat, Bike and Paddle Hire Fishing Guide



Fishing in Brisbane Waters

Brisbane Water is an estuary water system located in the Central Coast, just North of Sydney, NSW, Australia. Brisbane Water originates at the confluence of the Narara and Coorumbine Creeks, to the south-east of Gosford and travels in a Southerly direction for approximately 18 km to the mouth at Broken Bay, about 7 km from the Tasman Sea, at Barrenjoey Head.

The Brisbane Waters estuary system, and has long been a popular fishing area for locals and visitors alike and offers plenty of variety for the serious sports fisherman to the occasional weekend angler with kids.

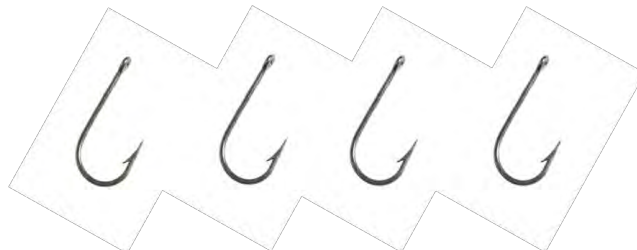
Common estuary species are the target and big rewards can be found in the form of large flathead and jewfish if you are either lucky or skilled enough. There are plenty of angling options around the place, and fishing will vary from season to season.

A number of towns surround the shores of Brisbane Water, including Booker Bay, Davistown, Ettalong Beach, Gosford, Green Point, Kincumber, Phegans Bay, Saratoga, Wagstaffe, and Woy Woy. Contained within Brisbane Water is St Huberts Island, Rileys Island, and Pelican Island; and adjoining the estuary is Brisbane Water National Park to the west and Bouddi National Park to the east. The total catchment area of the river is approximately 165 square km.

Please note we encourage you take a fish or 2 for dinner but please practice a catch and release especially for those bigger breeding female fish especially the larger flathead etc.

Don't forget to take a camera with you on your trip. Publish a photo of your catch to go to our Boat, Bike and Paddle Hire Facebook page to enter our "Monthly Catch" competition.

At Boat, Bike and Paddle Hire we also sell a variety of fishing bait and tackle as well as keeping a small range of fishing tackle for hire for those one off occasions. All are sold at competitive prices.



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Yellow Fin Bream



Standard Names:

Black Bream, Yellowfin Bream, Frypan Bream, Pikey Bream, Tarwhine

Eating Qualities

Filletts are soft and pale white. They are well suited to simple panfrying or gentle cooking methods such as steaming and poaching.

When: Bream are available throughout the year, although the better catches are made from early summer, through autumn and into early winter.

Time: Early mornings or evenings are a good time to try for bream. Tides aren't a major concern, although the first half of a run-in tide tends to be quite reliable.

Bait: A variety of baits will catch bream in Brisbane water with prawns, worms and pink nippers being the top baits.

Lure: When casting lures from a boat or Kayak on a rising tide, cast small hard body lures or poppers along the edges of the mangroves through the main channels. Both are effective methods of catching beam.

Where: Found all over Brisbane water such as on the northern side of Pelican Island there are plenty of leases and shallows where casting a variety of different lures will take bream. Poppers, shallow running hard body lures and very lightly weighted plastics are the best bet although, as the water here is generally shallow with snaggy weed beds and mangrove roots, snags will catch any lure that sinks down too quickly.

Sand Whiting



Standard Names:

Standard Names: King George Whiting, Sand Whiting, Yellowfin Whiting, Trumpeter Whiting, various School Whiting (group) and others

Eating Qualities

Whiting have a delicate, sweet white flesh. Filletts require careful handling but are versatile. They can be steamed, poached, pan-fried, or grilled. Also a great fish for deep frying, especially with a coating such as a batter or crumb.

When: Summer is often regarded as the best time for these fish, but Brisbane water has been known to produce some very big whiting through the cooler months as well.

Time: Early mornings or evenings are a good time to try for bream. Rising tides are probably the best times to try for Whiting over the shallow flats

Bait: Bloodworms or squirt worms but also peeled prawns, pink nippers, green nippers and soldier crabs.

Lures: Not typically chased on lures but have been known to take a lures particularly poppers

Where: Found all over Brisbane water such as on the northern side of Pelican Island there are plenty of leases and shallows where casting a variety of different lures will take bream. Poppers, shallow running hard body lures and very lightly weighted plastics are the best bet although, as the water here is generally shallow with snaggy weed beds and mangrove roots, snags will catch any lure that sinks down too quickly.

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Flathead



Standard Names:

Tiger Flathead, Dusky Flathead, Rock Flathead, Deepwater Flathead, Southern Sand Flathead, Blue spotted Flathead

Eating Qualities

A popular and versatile fish but the flesh of larger fish can be slightly dry and coarse

A very popular fish and chip fish

When: Flathead are available throughout the year, but the months of October through to March are the best bet.

Time: Early mornings or evenings are a good time to try for Flathead. Tides aren't a major concern, although the first half of a run-in tide tends to be quite reliable.

Bait: A variety of baits will catch Flathead in Brisbane water with Pilchards and Mullet being the top baits with live poddy mullet picking up the bigger fish.

Lure: Larger soft plastics work and be sure to take a camera with you so you can take a happy snap and then carefully release the big female flathead. The smaller flathead are much better to eat and by releasing the big ones we help ensure the future of our local flathead population. A photo is a million times better than a dead fish anyway.

Where: The best areas to try are the edges of the weed beds up around the bridges. Adjacent to Pelican Island and Paddy's Channel are also very reliable places to target them.

Leatherjacket



Standard Names:

There are 60+ species of Leatherjacket and Reef Leatherjacket

Eating Qualities

They have firm, white, lustrous flesh that becomes quite dense on cooking but remains moist. The meat holds its shape when diced and used in curries or soups, and fillets can be steamed, poached or pan fried

When: Available throughout the year, but the spring and summer months are the best bet.

Time: Early mornings or evenings are a good time to try for bream. Tides aren't a major concern, although the first half of a run-in tide tends to be quite reliable.

Bait: A variety of baits will catch Leatherjacket Bloodworms or squirt worms but also peeled prawns, pink nippers, green nippers and soldier crabs

Where: The best areas to try are the edges of the weed beds up around the bridges. Adjacent to Pelican Island and Paddy's Channel are also very reliable places to target them.

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Luderick



Standard Names:

Luderick, previously known as Blackfish, Black Bream, and Parore (NZ)

Eating Qualities

Predominantly herbivorous Luderick are often muddier in flavour than those from open water. Make sure you fully remove the black stomach lining before cooking as it will taint the flavour.

Luderick have a moist, soft white flesh and a distinct flavour. Dry methods of cookery such as grilling, baking or barbecuing are recommended for fillets, while whole fish can be baked, BBQ'd or steamed and hold up well when used in wet preparations such as soups or curries

When: Through the cooler month's luderick is another popular Brisbane Water fish target. For boat fishers, blackfish can be caught at the area adjacent to the leases on the northern side of Pelican Island and over at Saratoga and Davistown.

Time: Early mornings or evenings are a good time to try for Luderick. Tides aren't a major concern, although the first half of a run-in tide tends to be quite reliable.

Bait: Green weed can be found around Brisbane water shorelines but they are also partial to a feed of pink nippers, squirt worms or small live shrimp. Size 8 hooks are suitable for weed or shrimp baits, a larger size 4 or 2 may be best for the other baits.

Where: The best areas to try are the edges of the weed beds up around the bridges. Adjacent to Pelican Island and Paddy's Channel are also very reliable places to target them.

Jewfish



Standard Names:

Jewfish, Mulloway

Eating Qualities

A well-regarded eating fish with firm white flesh and few bones Small fish are popular to roast or BBQ whole, but can taste soapy. Medium fish have a nice large moist flake when grilled or fried. Larger fish can be dry and are better suited to soups, curries and other wet dishes.

When: Brisbane Water has a good reputation for jewfish and although most fish encountered here are schoolies in the 2-4kg bracket, larger fish between 10-15kg aren't too uncommon.

Time: Tide changes at either the bottom or the top of the tide are when most jewfish are hooked, particularly at the bridges. Despite the fact that they can be caught through the day on lures, it's a better bet to target them early in the morning or late in the afternoon. Night tends to be better when using baits.

Bait: Baits of live tailor, but other first class baits are very fresh strips of tailor, live mullet, live pike, live herring and fresh squid. Generally, the bigger the bait the greater the chance of hooking a decent jewfish.

Lures: Jewfish will take soft plastics, like 3" to 6" and in most cases the current will be running hard so a reasonably heavy jig head will be required to keep in contact with the bottom, but that also depends on the size of the plastic being used. A 1/8oz is good but a quarter or even half ounce may be better for some of the larger plastics.

Where: The best areas to try are the road and rail bridges are a good place to try for Jewies, but they can also be caught in Paddy's Channel, closer to town in Woy Woy Channel and down at the Rip bridge, where there are some deep holes.

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Mullet

**Standard Names:**

Yellow eye Mullet, Sea Mullet, Diamond scale Mullet, Sand Mullet, many commercially available species are sold without differentiation under the name 'Mullet'.

Eating Qualities

A strong, distinct taste and moist oily flesh. It can be grilled or pan fried, with the skin crisping beautifully, it is also suitable for marinating, serving escabeche style, or baking.

When: In Brisbane Water mullet can be found all year round in small and large shoals as well as larger bull mullet.

Time: Tide changes at either the bottom or the top of the tide are when most are hooked. It's better to target them early in the morning or late in the afternoon.

Bait: Baits of bread and grain work well as well as peeled prawn and worms.

Where: Fish with a small hook size, size 6 or smaller, short shank, no weight, suspended below a small float, and burley up a bit with other balls of bread, or pellets, keep an eye out for shoals and birds and places such as Paddy's Channel, closer to town in Woy Woy Channel and down at the Rip bridge.

Other Species

These are just a few of the more common species of fish that you will find in the Brisbane water system but you will also find the following fish;

- Tailer
- Red Snapper (Pinkies)
- Australian Salmon (occasionally)
- Bulls Sharks
- Blue Swimmer Crabs
- Mud Crabs (often caught around the mangrove areas)
- Hair tails
- Oysters
- Squid
- Silver Trevally

Don't forget to speak to our team to our team to see what's biting at the moment

