

## **DA Fishing Column**

**17<sup>th</sup> August 2006**

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The frosts of late winter linger, but the days are starting to get warmer and longer which sparks native fish to start thinking about spawning. The closed season for Murray cod starts from the 1<sup>st</sup> of September and ends of the 30<sup>th</sup> November and is designed to protect the fish when they are at their most susceptible.

However, the closed season for cod is a good time to target golden perch as they school up to spawn. The Old Man Creek at Beaver's Weir and the Murrumbidgee below Berembled Weir are two locations that form barriers to the golden's migration and large numbers of them congregate below these structures. Lure casting below the weirs (observe the safe distance) in September/October is a very productive technique.

On a spikier subject, I have been lobstering twice this season (both trips in the past two weeks). The first trip yielded a bag limit of lobsters for Michael Reynolds, his youngest son Harry, my son Tully and I, in three hours. The size was excellent with only one lobster needing a measurement check and the others being well over size. The second trip bought me back to reality with only a handful of lobsters for almost a full day. Remember that the season closes at the end of this month.

The crystal clear water in the river at the moment is perfect for lure fishing. You can often see the fish as they swim out and eat your artificial offering. The cold water is keeping the fish right in amongst the structure so make sure your lures go deep in the snags.

On Saturday the 5<sup>th</sup> August, Marty and I spent a day lure fishing on the river. Throughout the day, I was giving Marty a flogging having caught two trout cod at 50 & 54cm, two golden perch at 50 & 53cm and dropping one other fish.

As the afternoon wore on, Marty became dejected as he failed to attract a fish with any of his lures. He changed tactics and rummaged through my lure box. With renewed enthusiasm he flicked my lure (a carefully rigged quad-spin with stinger hook and soft plastic trailer) toward the snag to which I have just been casting. The water exploded beside the boat as a massive Murray cod inhaled Marty's lure just under the water and powered back toward its home.

Marty saw the cod eat the lure and immediately clamped down on the spool in an effort to stop the fish from busting off on a snag. Luckily the fish turned and battled in clear water and we were able to wrestle the huge fish into the net. The cod was 110cm long and weighed 22.0kg. After posing for a few photo's the fish was released back into the icy seven degree water.

It was a perfect example of how perseverance can pay off (especially in winter fishing). As a good friend on mine always says – 'five minutes is a long time in fishing'.