

Fishing from the Desktop

Jamin Forbes 18th September 2007

The internet is a fantastic tool for fisherman. At your fingertips is an almost endless resource for all things fishing. You can buy gear, research products, get the latest reports, check the weather, chat in online forums, download maps or just browse through fishing photo's.

After a trawl through my bookmarks, one website stood out as a resource that every fisherman should be familiar with. The NSW Water Information Site at <http://waterinfo.nsw.gov.au> lists almost every river, creek and dam in NSW. From this list you can select specific locations where measurements are taken (For example you can select the Murrumbidgee at twenty four locations along its length).

Each site has thirty days of history with the default reports set up to plot river and dam heights, water temperatures, flow and conductivity. The data is updated every few hours allowing very accurate assessments.

These charts become more than just squiggly lines on the screen when you apply them to what you experience on the water. For example if the water level at Wagga Wagga is 0.7m, I know that in order to get my boat over certain rapids I need 1.2m, so to try would be a waste of time. I make a decision to fish different water that I know is navigable at 0.7m.

But if I noticed that Blowering and Burrinjuck started releasing water and Gundagai had just registered a 1m rise, within a couple of days the river at Wagga would get a similar rise and I could easily drive my boat over the rapids.

The greatest advantage of this website is that within a few mouse clicks you can gain a clear picture of where the water is rising and falling. As a rule, if the water level is dropping, the fishing will be ordinary and you will have mud to contend with when launching and retrieving your boat. If the water is stable (and has been for a week or so), or just starting to rise gently, this is an indication that the fish should be more amenable.

Once you learn how to read the information presented on Waterinfo, knowing where to fish becomes more science than guesswork.

Based on the data presented on Waterinfo, I guided two trips last week and arrived at my chosen location to find stable water and easy boat launching (we also managed to catch fish both days).

The return to warm sunny days will see water temperatures start to climb again with the fishing continuing to improve along with it. Keep an eye on how the water moves and more fish will come your way.