

# Riverina Sportfishing Report

9<sup>th</sup> October 2008

When you have a spare week without wife and children, there is no other choice but to head off on a fishing safari.

My most recent expedition I was joined by Dave Carter and his son Mitch. Our trip started near Balranald fishing some very exclusive water, however after a couple of days and getting a sore arm from casting we had a dozen or so fish to our name and having missed a few decent fish we pulled camp and drove further west to the Murray River at Mildura.

For the next two days we cast and trolled extracting another ten or so fish, but still hadn't hit the mother load, so we packed up again and drove back toward Hay.

I have a special piece of water at Hay that produced thirty seven fish in the next two days. Our technique was casting spinnerbaits and despite little action through the middle of the day, the afternoon bite was something to behold. A bite off every other log and fish to 87cm with an average of 60-65cm makes it very special fishing.



With a big storm looming on the horizon we left the fish biting and opted for a shower and a bed (rather than a swag) in Hay. Tempting as it was to stay and catch more fish, the 20mm of rain would have seen us stuck in the paddock for a long time.

With tracks turned to slush we spent the last morning of our trip having a lazy troll in the township of Hay. The boat ramps and access roads in Hay are all weather 2WD accessible and allow easy wet weather options. Despite being in the middle of town we landed half a dozen fish without even trying and missed a few others.

In the week of fishing we drove exclusively at night covering over 2000km. We hit two kangaroos, saw emus swimming, saw tiger, black & carpet snakes, a goanna, a wombat and caught about sixty fish.

To go on a safari such as this you need to be very well prepared. Being away for long periods in remote locations, your vehicle, trailer and boat all need to be very well prepared and meticulously serviced. We also carry loads of recovery gear and a tool kit as you always break something or get bogged. With no-one around to help you it pays to be prepared for the worst.

Travelling light when you are 'on tour' allows a quick and easy move to a new location. With a minimalist camp we could be on the road within the hour from when we stopped fishing.

A trip such as this is very tiring with hard fishing through the daylight hours and driving at night eating into your sleeping time, but by having our options open we eventually found some hungry fish and enjoyed some of the best our country has to offer.

A fishing safari isn't for everyone, but for me, I can't wait for the next opportunity.

Jamin Forbes