

From the Fisher's Mouth

1st February 2010

Fish kills are a natural event occurring in both fresh and salt water that can be attributed to a wide variety of causes. The fish kill in Wagga's Lake Albert is an event where the cause can be placed on the lack of available runoff. Whilst it's sad to see so many dead and dying fish, to put it in perspective, a NSW Fisheries report that I read recently indicated that 60-80 kills (both big and small) occur state wide each year.



The main contributing factor in any fish kills appears to be higher water temperatures (and consequently lower dissolved oxygen levels) and lower water levels. Unfortunately for the fish in the lake is that they have nowhere else to go. There aren't any deep holes for them to seek refuge. The birds feast on the small fish exposed in the puddles left over, whilst the large fish succumb to high water temperatures and low levels of dissolved oxygen.

The deep silt layer will make it challenging for the council workers to remove the dead fish, so areas close to the lake may be a bit smelly.

On a brighter note, there is plenty of water in the river, which is fishing exceptionally at the moment. The afternoon seems to be producing more fish, with Mudguts spinnerbaits in purple or red/black doing most of the damage. There is an art to fishing spinnerbaits, so it pays to learn how to use them correctly as they can be a frustrating piece of tackle for the uninitiated.

Blowering also produced some excellent golden perch and small cod for Riverina Sportfishing last week. The bigger cod eluded my clients, but the goldens kept the evenings busy. The standout lures to use were the 50 or 70mm AC Invader or small Hammerheads in any dark colour.

Remember that if you are fishing at night you only need to have your red and green navigation lights illuminated. The white anchor light is only illuminated when your boat is anchored. Having a bright white light switched on will attract insects and also render your night vision useless.

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