

From the Fisher's Mouth

31st May 2010

Catching a fish in cold water is a lot more challenging than it can be in the warmer months. The metabolism of fish is a lot slower in chilly water meaning that they need to eat less often, however like any creature (apart from hibernating bears) they still need to eat through winter to stay alive.

The docile nature of a cold fish requires that your lure or bait needs to be placed in front of the fish precisely else it will ignore your offering. For a predatory fish such as Murray cod, the placement of a lure in particular needs to be just in front of the fish (about 30-100cm) and also just above its eye level.



Cod have eyes located on top of the head and they live underneath logs and other structure. The adaptation of the fish to survive in these conditions means that they look up for food. When they attack they swim quickly out from their lair,

snatch the prey, and then dive back to the hideout to digest the morsel.

Each cod has a 'bite' window where it looks for food to swim, float or fall through. Recognising where these windows are is paramount to fishing success, but if you fish on the edge of the current adjacent to snags you will be close to the fish.

Learning the feeding habits of a wily old Murray cod has taken me over twenty years so far (and I'm still learning) so don't expect to crack it in a day or two. Take notice of where you get bites and build your own knowledge base that enables informed decisions on where to fish.

On the subject of fish feeding in cold water, the easiest species to target through winter are Murray crayfish and Murray cod. The other popular angling species such as golden perch, redfin, and even carp become reasonably hard to tempt in cold water, yet are easily caught through spring, summer and autumn. Cod on the other hand seem to bite more consistently in winter whilst the Murray cray relishes cold water.

Changing your target species to suit the conditions is an effective method of ensuring that you will at least be targeting a species more likely to bite, than one that you are less likely to tempt.