

From the Fishers Mouth

12 July 2010 Jamin Forbes

For most of us living in the southern regions of Australia, we dream of the opportunity to spend time fishing north Queensland or the Northern Territory. The fishing in comparison to what we enjoy in NSW and VIC is simply unbelievable.



If you watch fishing DVD's and TV shows the top end fishing seems almost too easy, however in reality I have yet to come across a fish that wants to commit suicide and you will need skill and knowledge to be able to fool fish in tropical waters.

Barramundi for example are a much sought after species and the skills Murray cod fisherman accrue will stand you in good stead to catch a barra or two, however you will need to adapt your techniques to suit how this species feeds.

A good knowledge of tides is essential as the fish bite in certain areas as the tide moves. Fish also move with the tides, so it's very important to maintain a grasp of

where the water is moving and put your boat in the right place at the right time. If you don't follow the flow of water, you will struggle to catch anything.

Another factor to fishing the top end is to be observant. Many times as we slowly fished along we would see large fish lying under the mangroves. In this instance we would position a lure just in front of the fish and most times entice a strike. Another tip is to watch the birds. Birds look for feeding fish and make the most of the disrupted baitfish to snap up an easy meal. If the birds are feeding there is every chance that large fish are feeding underneath.

July is meant to be the most difficult time of year to catch tropical species as the water is a little too cold for them, yet with patience and being observant we landed almost three hundred fish in six days fishing. In this total were barramundi, queenfish, mangrove jack, threadfin & blue salmon, estuary cod, trevally, barracuda, archer fish, long tom, fingermark, jewfish, bream, flathead, catfish, and a couple of fish that we couldn't identify. Not to mention picking up a feed of mud crabs most days using the landing net.

The top end is great fishing, however don't expect the fish to come easy. Educate yourself on some basic tide principles and top end fishing techniques. Also don't skimp on the quality of your tackle as the fish ruin any substandard gear.