

# Great winter catches

## FISHING INSHORE

WHOA, the last month has been one of the best fishing winters that I have had for a long time, not just on the ocean but in our river systems too.

From Cape Naturaliste to Cape Leeuwin, our coastline has been boiling with fish, loads of herring are out there and will happily gobble down any bait thrown at them, or any small lure or soft plastic launched in their general direction.

## FISHING OFFSHORE

AS is the case for most of us down south, winter is just a bit of a waiting game as to when you can get out on that ocean. In the last couple of weeks we had two ripper days on Friday and Saturday and the boat ramps were at capacity with empty boat trailers.

Most of the boys who went out had good catches of fish. The usual catches

The skippy have also been a good size this winter and have been easy to find along our shores. These little brawlers can be fished out of any of our reef holes as the sun sets.

We are still getting impressive catches of large tailor along the coast and most of these fish are weighing in around 5-11lbs. The bait of choice is still a fresh mulie or surface retrieved lures.

of good-sized dhuiies and pink snapper found their way into the ice boxes, along with some southern blue fin tuna.

If you are heading out over the next few weeks I wouldn't hesitate in running a lure from the back of the reef breaks to wherever it is you are heading, as there is a good chance of picking up pike, bonito or southern blue fin.

## FRESH WATER FISHING

The Blackwood and Margaret River systems are experiencing their usual winter flush of fresh water and this either puts the fish on or off the bite, depending on the moon and how you're holding your tongue when fishing them.

I have had some great days fishing the Blackwood only to be followed up by a

total dud the next day, same place, same time, same bait, but not the same amount of fish.

There are fish in our river systems but they can be hit and miss. King George and yellow fin whiting are the target fish in the Blackwood at present, but they seem to be tapering off and maybe heading to saltier water.

## FREEDIVING

SAME story for the boys who were lucky enough to get out on the days with light winds and swell, finally some clear water produced good catches all round by all accounts.

There are reports of solid dhuiies not too far out and good-sized red snapper in the slightly deeper water.

Brothers Zane and Jake English were putting their new ski to the test as a freediving and spearfishing vessel and landed two solid dhuiies for their efforts. Skis are a brilliant spearfishing tool if set up correctly, and a safe haven to jump back onto if there are any tooth harvesters in the near vicinity.

A big Happy Father's Day to all the dad's who fish and dive our coast and don't forget that if you have a great picture and a fishing story, get it to us via email by Saturday, September 1, to go in to the draw to win a six-pack of beer with neoprene holder. Email: dsc@westnet.com.au

'Till next month, stay safe out there and respect our oceans.

—Ant Bostock



**SPEAROS:** Zane and Jake English show off a nice pair of dhuiis.



**SALTY DOGS:** Jayden McFerran and Jack Bevan with some King George, crabs and a rare seaweed whiting. They caught two seaweed/seagrass whiting and released one.



**A FEED OF FISH:** Paul Smith with a great catch of tailor and, top, Fi with her lovely whiting caught in the Blackwood River.



**OFFSHORE:** Greg Ross had a productive couple of outings with Dave McMahon of Augusta aboard the Barossa Pearl.



**AUGUSTA COMES GOOD:** David and Jasmin McMahon of Margaret River have had a couple of good weekends fishing from a boat off Augusta. Dave, above and below, caught an awesome dhufish on a recent weekend. It was 900mm long and he estimates about 13-14kg. The following weekend they came back with a couple of awesome pinkies.



## Young man and the sea

BEN Lupton, 13, shows off a 68kg southern blue fin tuna he caught in an epic struggle, a bit like Ernest Hemingway's *The Old Man and the Sea*.

The fish was hooked by Ben while he was trolling for pike in 12m of water in Geographe Bay.

It was a long battle but he finally got the fish to the boat but was unable to bring it aboard due to its size – Ben's small tinny was only a 3.5m vessel. Ben jumped into the water and tied the tuna's tail off to the anchor line and dragged it back to shore.

Epic effort Ben, this is truly a fish of a lifetime and a little bit of a *The Old Man and the Sea* tale to tell for many years to come.

