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VOLUME 297 PRICELESS

FISHING TROPICAL FAR NORTH QUEENSLAND

JAN 26

*Local Fishing Reports
& Some More....*





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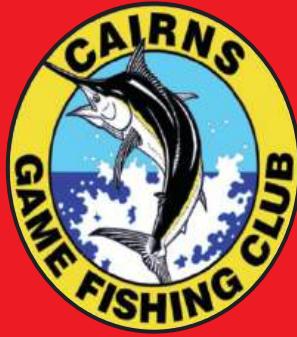
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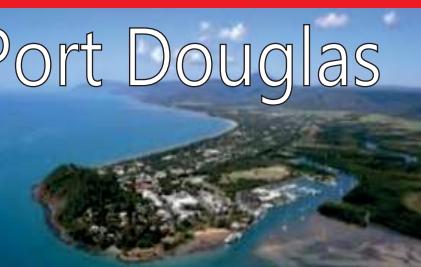


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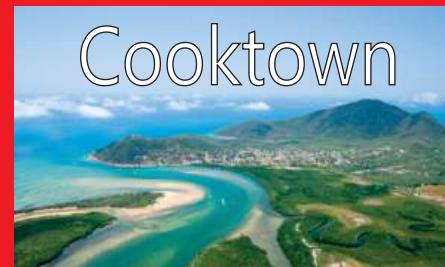


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Local Situation

Heavy rainfall over the past few weeks has led to flood plumes flowing into the Marine Park in the Northern, Central and Southern regions. These plumes are being closely monitored, with water quality checks underway through the Marine Monitoring Program.

Temperature

Sea surface temperatures have eased in some areas this week. The Far Northern region cooled by about 0.4°C, the Northern region stayed steady and the Central and Southern regions warmed slightly by 0.2–0.3°C. Temperatures across all regions are now close to the long-term average for this time of year.

With cooler temperatures in the Far Northern region, heat stress has eased and reefs here have returned to a bleaching watch status.

Offshore Wind Conditions

Mostly very favourable except for when a low pressure system gets closer to the land coming from the sea. The latest cyclone alert issued by the main Bureau in early January was completely not warranted and cost the local marine industry a fortune due to loss of business. More mentioned next page.

Rainfall

In January, very heavy rainfall continued in the Far North and central parts of Queensland following the tropical low linked to ex-tropical cyclone Koji. Some rainfall stations recorded region receiving over 500 mm in a week. Most of the rainfall has occurred late afternoon into the evening.

Reef Health

Basically there's nothing alarming in this department. Everything is

From 12 – 18 January, 124 Reef Health Impact Surveys were completed across 19 reefs in the Northern, Central and Southern regions. Low to medium levels of coral bleaching were recorded on nine reefs. At one reef in the Northern region, a small number of coral colonies were fully bleached, with very low levels of recent coral mortality observed.

Additional Eye on the Reef reports also noted coral bleaching on 11 reefs across all three regions. Some low to medium bleaching has been seen at offshore reefs in the Southern region, likely linked to short periods of heat stress earlier in January.

Flood plumes from the Wet Tropics and Mackay–Whitsunday catchments have moved into parts of the Marine Park. These plumes, which carry fresh water and sediment, may have contributed to bleaching and coral stress on some inshore reefs. Flood plumes from the Fitzroy catchment may develop in coming weeks and are being monitored.

Fishing Reports Next Page



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Local Fishing News

My biggest tip with anyone coming up this way is to get on the phone and talk with a local who's in the marine industry. Especially when it comes to water conditions and weather with someone like us. The debacle the media and government bureaucratic departments put us in, with regards to the last cyclone watch was a public disgrace. I'm not going to bullshit here because it cost the local industry 10's of thousands of dollars for a so-called cyclone which my passed grandmother would have known was never going to effect the Douglas Shire. All commercial boats were forced to leave marina berths for 2 days and go up the local creek just to see picture perfect conditions pass us by and see some rain and wind slide way, way further down south. Picture this, jump in your car and drive 6hrs in any direction. That's how far south it went and if you are reading this from interstate you'd be in another state as well. Just as an example of the stuff up I had to cancel 26 people who were affiliated with the cricket Barmy Army hellbent on going fishing our area on the Great Barrier Reef. They thought we were 'Barmy' and highly disappointed with the outcome. There is no argument there but we were hamstrung by a higher authority. I could write about this forever but you get fed up with these white collar government workers that don't understand the inconvenience and cost associated with their decision making. Enough said

River Fishing

We'll keep this short but the afternoon rains have helped to stir up the systems with a rejuvenation of bait being spread around. Barra are back on the cards as of the 1st February and definitely on the money. Mangrove jack have relished nicely with some dirty water and fresh around plus fingermark on our better systems have been consistent in deeper water. It has been a healthy period for our coastal waters and will see it prosper in the coming months. The rains have also flushed out a few mudcrabs from the mangroves but be aware they are not fully plated with meat inside.

Reef Fishing

This has been pleasantly surprising with scores of tuna and spanish mackerel to tangle with ploughing the paddocks on the outer reef with trolled lures. To be honest it has been one of the better January periods I've seen in this regard. The rain has cooled off the sea temperatures to a nice state and the pelagics agree. Off the bottom there's been some real quality coral trout to be snared in 35m plus of water with large mouth nannygai also having a crack. Unfortunately sharks remain super keen and have accounted for some potential impressive sessions to be enjoyed to the max. The big issue is that our stocks are being depleted by the sharks far more than the angler who is imposed with very strict bag limits. For example for an individual who is lucky enough to take home 3-4 trout or nannygai could be losing triple of that to sharks. This has been an ongoing debate for too many years now.

Be assured the weather pattern looks very favourable for offshore trips in the near future, just expect some rain late afternoon or even a bit of a storm.

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