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*Local Fishing Reports
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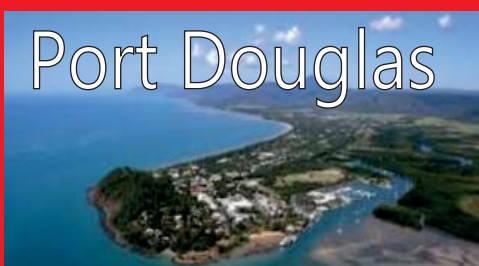


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Temperature and rainfall

Sea surface temperatures across the Marine Park are forecast to drop to around 0.5°C above the long-term averages in May — below levels expected to cause further coral bleaching.

However, they are currently unseasonably high — between 1.3°C and 2.1°C above the long-term regional averages (from 2 to 8 April).

The Bureau of Meteorology forecasts around average rainfall over Marine Park catchment areas for the rest of April and into May.

Reef health

As referenced in the Reef snapshot: summer 2024–25 the Reef this summer experienced:

Results of aerial surveys and in-water monitoring to date suggest the Reef has experienced widespread coral bleaching across the Far Northern and Northern regions of the Marine Park — mostly a result of prolonged exposure to higher-than-average water temperatures.

This event is the sixth since 2016 and, while less extensive than the coral bleaching event in 2023–24, it is the second time the Reef has experienced widespread bleaching events across consecutive summers.

The coral bleaching observations this year are consistent with the patterns of heat stress and flood plumes seen across the Reef over the summer months between Mackay and the top of Cape York.

Record rainfalls led to flooding in the Northern and Central regions, causing some freshwater coral bleaching and coral mortality on some inshore reefs (result of Cyclone Alfred).

Climate change is the greatest threat to reefs worldwide. This summer closely follows the disturbance events from 2023–24, affecting the Reef's opportunity to recover. It will take time to fully

understand the extent and implications of these compounding climate-driven events. A total of 380 in-water Reef Health Impact Surveys (RHIS) were conducted across the Marine Park from 27 March to 10 April 2025. Various coral bleaching was reported on 19 of the 33 reefs surveyed (58%).

Northern region: most surveyed reefs had low-level (1-10%) coral bleaching prevalence*, with some reports of medium (11-30%) to high-level (31-60%). Central region: most reefs had no coral bleaching, low (1-10%) or medium (11-30%) coral bleaching prevalence.

Southern region: either no or low (1-10%) coral bleaching prevalence were recorded in the Southern region.

Far Northern Region: No in-water reports were available during this period.

The Reef Authority partners with the tourism industry, government, science, and university data collectors to ensure access to the most up-to-date data across the World Heritage Area.

Our management actions build and support Reef resilience and include enforcing compliance with the Reef's zoning plan and ensuring people are enjoying the Reef in a responsible way.

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Local Fishing News

From a local point of view the month of April dished up a mixed bag of weather - some really good and also the opposite side of the coin with some pretty ordinary stuff. But that is typical for this time of year and you roll the dice when it comes to weather. I am pleased to say that 2/3rd's of the school holiday period was mostly conducive to accommodating to all styles of fishing. This was important for charters during a busy period. The start of May looks quite windy and hopefully this doesn't trend too much down the track.

River Reports

The local Dickson Inlet had a ripper month when the charter fleet was forced to stay inside the harbour due to strong winds. Multiple reports of mangrove jack up to 44cm were recorded. The inlet is well known to produce this kind of result at this time of year. A simple half pilchard unweighted amongst the appropriate snags was all that was required. Grunter and bream were the other species prominent.

On the Daintree River the best results were acquired on the neap tides. Around the full moon phase the tides were a touch too big creating a dirty river system leaving a smaller door open right on the turn of the tide. Quality fingermark have been featured strongly and this river is well known for producing these tasty morsels. When the river was dirty fresh dead baits worked brilliantly across the flats for grunter over 50cm and that's a brilliant return. Other than this certain pockets of the river held really good numbers of river trevally up to a few kilo. A few barra and mangrove were recorded as well. Mud crabs are now starting to turn up as a bonus if you take the effort to chase them.

Reef Reports

The back end of April saw the reef really change it's tune. Reduced water temperatures and the hint of the current changing to come from the south all see to brighter days ahead. Big days still in deeper water 30m plus saw large mouth nannygai, emperor species, reef mangrove jack, golden trevally and coral trout all play a significant role in a day's catch. Sharks were a bit toothy but that seems to be part of the exercise nowadays. Anyway the fish returned home were right up there and there was plenty of them to keep the punters really happy. Spanish mackerel also started to show some form, so trolling on top of these deep pinnacles and rubble patches should be part of the program. The May period will only go to another level, get the weather right and you'll be in for a treat.



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