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# Fishing Port Douglas

with Heff



Sea surface temperatures continued to ease across the Marine Park these past couple of weeks.

Queensland's wet season has also come to an end, ranking as the 9th wettest on record since 1900, with most Marine Park catchments receiving above-average rainfall. We can all testify to this as there was a 4 month consistent rainfall.

Climate conditions remain neutral, however, sea surface temperatures in the Pacific Ocean (between the Tropic of Cancer and the Tropic of Capricorn) are warming. Current Bureau of Meteorology outlooks indicate a possible El Niño developing by late winter, which could bring drier conditions to Northern Queensland in the months ahead. This will be welcomed by many.

## Temperature

Sea surface temperatures declined slightly, dropping by 0.3–0.6°C across the Marine Park. Over the coming month, temperatures are expected to sit close to average, although some offshore reefs in the Far Northern and Northern regions may remain slightly above average (up to 0.8°C).

## Rainfall

With the start of the dry season, rainfall was below average across most catchments, with totals generally below 25mm. The Wet Tropics was the exception, receiving up to 150mm.

Looking ahead, forecasts suggest a low chance of above-average rainfall across the Marine Park during May into June.

## Reef health

Over the past week, 49 Reef Health Impact Surveys were conducted across six reefs.

In the Northern region, five reefs were surveyed, with low to moderate coral bleaching recorded and low to moderate coral damage observed across all sites.

In the Central region, one reef was surveyed with no bleaching and low coral damage.

Coral disease was recorded on three reefs during this period.

Additional Eye on the Reef monitoring reported coral bleaching on 11 of 14 reefs surveyed across the Marine Park.

## In Other News

Port Douglas recorded very healthy numbers of tourists / visitors for annual Carnivale' festivity which covered 2 weeks of various activities, peaking on the last weekend of 22nd May. Fishing charter vessels remained reasonably busy during this period with weather patterns changing for the benefit of most operations.


## Fishing Reports Next Page ....



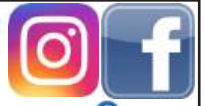
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### Local Fishing News

Finally the rain started to subside in the back end May and the weather took a turn for the better. Lovely sunny days dawned the coastline and night temperatures became very mild to a very comfortable level. As anticipated these conditions were due to arrive which would turn the fishing into full throttle as you'll read.

### River Fishing

With the easing of slightly cooler conditions, barramundi only remained active during the day time more so in the shallower water offering the warmth of the sunshine. Turn of the tides and the first of the half of the change are the prime times. Outside of this mangrove jack are frisky amongst heavy structure along the banks and fingermark are playing their part in the deeper waters with some form of structure whether it be a sunken log or a rise in depth on the sounder such as a wall from a deep hole.

If you avoid the big tides which still hold some water the sand flats in various systems are fishing well for javelin fish, river and golden trevally plus a couple of surprises such as sporting permit and blue salmon. Overall our inshore river and creek systems fish better at the moment outside the big tide moon period.

On those rising tides early morning, along the beach will see you come across queenfish, trevally, javelin fish and dart. The good old quality peeled prawn is a winner to try and brilliant fun on light spin gear on a running sinker rig.

### Reef Fishing

The coastal and offshore reefs have really turned the corner in a major way. It is exciting to say the least and in my opinion probably one of the best times in the calendar year to catch majority of species in that 'first night-itis'. You know when you first go away for a good time, that initial period puts you in one of the moods and you go hard ! As expected the later part of May saw the air temperatures drop which turned the sea surface temperatures into a new phase. When this occurs it appeals to most reef species and this has been the case.

Coral trout a couple of weeks ago went ballistic and can be found between 15-25m making them accessible to most. Nannygai in the depths on the calmer days were thriving whether it was a wonky hole, shipwreck or a proper rubble patch on the reef. Trolling lures in between these locations started see the spanish mackerel begin their winter run as well and will only get better.

Other species to rear their heads included cobia, golden trevally, general trevally and big gold spot cod. These are the bonus fish and can add significantly to a magnificent day on the water.

With tides our best results are in between the neap to moon periods. A 2m swing seems to be more productive from low to high and vice versa.

Weather also plays a massive part for all types of vessels and as mentioned we are looking at a decent run for the short term. This is the window we've been waiting for patiently and you have to 'make hay whilst the sun is shining' !

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