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Fishing Port Douglas News



with Heff

Massive News on the Fishing Magazine Front

I have written for this magazine representing the Port Douglas region for 22 years, in Australia's biggest fishing magazine, Fishing Monthly. They are closing their doors and is explained below by Chief Editor, Jacqui Thomas:

'As I reflect on the past 17 years with Fishing Monthly, I am filled with gratitude and appreciation for each of you. It has been an incredible journey, and I feel fortunate to have had the opportunity to work alongside such talented and dedicated individuals, inside and outside the office.

Your hard work, knowledge, and commitment have been the backbone of everything we've achieved. I want to especially acknowledge those who have been with us through some of the most challenging times—whether it was the global financial crisis, Robyn's fraud ordeal, or the trials brought on by Covid. Your resilience and determination during those difficult periods never went unnoticed, and it is thanks to you all that we were able to persevere and keep on going.

It has been a privilege to lead this team, and I truly appreciate the contributions each of you has made to our success. I am proud of all that we have accomplished together, and I

wish every one of you the very best for the future.

I will be in touch before the final sign off, but in case I don't get the chance again I want you all to know how appreciated you are!

To put it into a nutshell printing costs for general distributions to retail outlets and postal costs for subscriptions have got beyond our viable interests.

There will be a big Finale' magazine for the December issue 2024.'

Jacqui Thomas

Fishing Monthly Magazines

Upon reflection and in my opinion everything is now all on-line. Not many people read literature as we've always known. The customer and generation demands information on the spot. For Australia's longest standing hard copy format to eventually fold to this trend is testimony to this. It's a shame but I enjoyed the opportunity to supply some 230 articles over the years which captured approximately 200,000 reader anglers every month.



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Fishing On the Daintree

with Jamie Beitzel



Well, what a busy month that has been for me. With barely a day off I'm ready for a bit of R&R. Not that this is going to happen entirely because there's always a job to do on the boat. As anticipated it was exciting times to be fishing the Daintree River. I've always said that October is the premium month to fish because we have very settled conditions, the water clarity is mostly brilliant and importantly the fish are ready and primed to play up. The only time when it was tough was on the those 3m tides right on the moon and the water was flowing at a rate of knots. Besides this it was happy days!

Okay we'll start with the javelin fish (grunter) and river trevally species. I found them in solid numbers almost working in tandem with each other up across the sand flats on a rising tide. This tends to be within the first mile or so from the river mouth. It doesn't take much water to cross the flats to see them get busy, sometimes in knee deep water and even less. These fish were ideal for the kids to have some fun time using lighter spin gear.

Back in the main channel and down towards the mouth on that first half of the rising tide, golden trevally were busy ploughing the sandy floor bed. They'll take fresh dead baits and also will aggressively go for a smaller sized live sardine. Up to 4kg they were a heap of fun and manageable for most anglers to take on.



For the more seasoned angler the fingermark remained super busy amongst the deeper snags in the main channel. Probably the biggest one I caught was 60cm with the average size being 50cm. They go hard for their size and it's a matter of lock and load when they strike. If I find myself fishing on top of the tide I will specifically target them and always use live bait which they can't resist. Being a member of the mangrove jack family they are notoriously territorial. Going on to everyone's favourite, the barramundi did not disappoint. They tend to reside along the banks and in the deep and also quite shallow water under the shade of a mangrove tree line. They are particular feeders and when their mood appeals it doesn't always happen on a certain part of the tide. I think the key is to find a holding office of them hanging together and it's a matter of which fish will be first to attack. They've been pretty consistent in their size ranging from 65-80cm. Gun lure fisherman have enticed a strike but for the average angler live bait is always a winner. Looking ahead it's evident that the winds are shifting to the east with no sign of rain in the near future. These are still good conditions for the river. I expect the fishing to keep rolling along nicely for the month of November.



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Akula Sportfishing



with Jason Knack

The month of October ran a lot more smoother from an operational point of view mainly due to a steady flow of tourists and considerably more favourable conditions for fishing offshore. Looking back we probably only had to reschedule a small number of trips due to the wind factor.

Typically we performed a lot of half day and 5hr trips which seems to be where the price range with most people at the moment. We did a handful of offshore full day trips and these were conducted on those magical days when the outer reef is displayed in its most magical format.

The half day and 5hr trips fished quite well with solid numbers of smaller large mouth nannygai up to 42cm and good legal sized bar cheek coral trout were up and about. There were a few solid gold spot cod thrown in the mix as well, so it wasn't overly difficult to entertain a good trip for people. A lot of families opted for this time frame keeping in mind their kid's attention span. To be honest I agreed with the parent's call on most trips recently. That's the trend nowadays but I remember as a kid I would fish from dusk to dawn if given the chance.

On our full day trips boy did I cover some miles with what I call VIP clients. These guys even if you didn't know them prior are the sort of people you'd easily have a beer at the pub with them - good people and very understanding. They tend to have a bit of



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experience about them and very accommodating. I am pleased to say we did deliver with some great coral trout, reef mangrove jack to 8kg, large mouth nannygai to 7kg and gold band snapper to 60cm or around 4kg. The gold band snapper is generally found in deeper water and only at certain sections of the reef which I keep under my hat. They are in my opinion in the top 3 of eating species with their own beautiful texture and flavour. I do have a slight preference for coral trout and large mouth nannygai but the gold band snapper is right up there with them.

There was a bit of shark activity at times especially around the moon period and they'll continue to pester as water temperatures warm up. It's unfortunately part of the DNA of fishing the reef as their numbers increase.

With Reef Closures upon us I've opted to have a bit of a break and go fishing with the Old Man down on the Gold Coast canals which is pretty relaxing fishing. I'll be back on deck in early November and word on the street by the second week of November it will go quieter till Christmas.

Saltaire Charters



with Craig Newbold

Okay back in range and ready for a monthly report. Saltaire has maintained a very busy program up north catering for island VIP tourists with a mixture of diving, snorkelling and fishing trips.

On our 50ft Mothership Escapade and our 7.5m sportfishing boat we just did a 9 day trip fishing the Great Barrier Reef taking in the splendours of Hope Islands and surrounding reefs. We actually spent quite a bit of time navigating the mothership into the heart of Cairns Reef up closer to Cooktown. It's an amazing reef system shaped like a horse shoe. Once inside the fishing opportunities are incredible. You have deep water where you can target the likes of coral trout, red emperor, large mouth nannygai, spanish mackerel and a heap of other reef species. Then on the right tides you have the ability to walk exposed sand flats and parts of the reef. Our flyfishing clients on this trip loved this and managed to pick up 18 different species on the fly. This included the elusive permit or snub nosed dart which absolutely go like the clappers and also the brutal Gt species which is a tall order on the same

equipment. There was no shortage of fishing activity no matter the style of fishing we opted for. Being plonked in the middle of an amazing reef system on a comfortable mothership was simply an anglers paradise. I must say we were blessed with exceptional weather, good tides and good company. It made for a trip to remember for all involved and will go down as one of our best trips completed.

It goes to show you don't have to travel the proverbial mile to experience great fishing and give us a call if this is down your alley. We are also looking at an extensive program later in 2025 up at Cape York and once again touch base to find out more information. Our pricing won't be beaten either ! Our program is filling up fast so enquire now. We are ideally set up for 6 pax to have a trip of a lifetime.

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