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Fishing on the Daintree

By Jamie Beitzel



The salt water has well and truly passed the ferry crossing in the Daintree River, bringing with it golden trevally, grunter and queenfish, so fishing off the Public Wharf is once

again worth while for the land based fisho, particularly with a run in tide on dusk. Be aware though that while the fish are biting well, so are the sandflies, which have been bad in the overcast, still conditions. I find Rid cream the most effective, particularly if you have already been bitten, or use Rid spray on arrival so not to taint your bait.

The calmer conditions between the trade winds were great, and I kept up my 100% spanish mackerel catch rate on each trip offshore since mid May, which shows they are consistent if you can get out there. Only a handful of grey mackerel caught have been reported to my knowledge. My



cousin Owen has travelled to Wonga near every year for the past 30 years to target mackerel, using my Dad's unique "grey lines". This year he has caught only 12, some of which were

passed onto Scrubber Harris, who is collecting the frames for DPI&F's research team. I am seriously wondering why the spanish are still numerous enough, while the greys and queenies are

so depleted.

The most consistent species for eating in the Daintree have been the javelin fish (grunter) fished on the bigger tides in the shallows. 50-60cm fish have been the norm on most trips, on all varieties of bait. For the lure fisher, the odd barra flash on sunny days is rewarding, with trevally being the most common lure hooked fish around the snags in brackish waters. Also the occasional large pikey (black) bream will have a go at lures fished very, very close to a structure. They are spawning at the

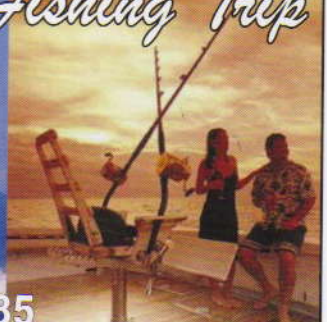
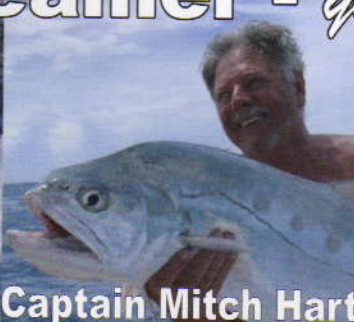
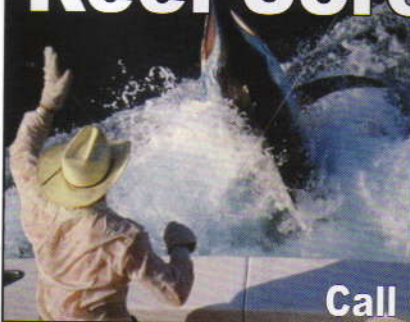


moment, and seem to be quite aggressive at snatching a bait, lure or fly.

In September the water temperature can only increase, livening up near all species in the Daintree. Though the south easterly can and have persisted through September in past years, in the calm periods offshore, more variety of reef species are sure to be seen. See you on the Daintree or nearby soon!



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