Imminent snapper madness in Geelong

Neil Slater  October 2016 » Area Articles / Victoria & Tasmania / Central / Geelong /

October is pretty much snapper month in the region. Tackle shops are low on 6kg spin rods, 10kg line and block pilchards, while over at boat service centres, there’s a two-month wait! Boat ramps can get quite hectic at this time of year, so bring your patience and help someone out if you see them struggling.

October will always see the trout and redfin kick into gear, so Wurdee Boluc is definitely worth a shot if the salt is out of the question. Wurdee received an influx of water late August and dirtied up to the point the fishing was hard going. Michael Evans from Last Cast Fishing Tours says the water was milky and the fishing was tough. Michael did manage a 48cm redfin casting and retrieving a Nories Metal Wasaby spoon from the rock wall. Geelong’s Barwon River can see larger redfin bite well in October, but if the water remains discoloured from excess rain, it will make lure fishing difficult.

Corio Bay inner harbour saw a burst of unusually early snapper caught by anglers fishing from Cunningham Pier and nearby out of boats late in August. It’s hard to tell if this is just a bit of luck or a very early run. The water was still quite cold at the time, so possibly a bit of luck, but we’ll take it! These were quality fish too, up around the 4-5kg mark and taken on whole pilchards by land and boat anglers, plus a few were caught on soft plastic lures jigged in 8m of water by boaties.

Kelvin Baldwin from Victorian Trout and Redfin fished with Alan Greig inside Corio Bay late in August, where Alan caught a ripper snapper using pilchards for bait. They caught the big snapper close to midday and they dropped two others; one to the anchor rope and another to the reef.

Garfish have been kicking about the local piers in Geelong. They have been most consistent at Limeburners rock wall, Cunningham Pier and Portarlington Pier, but have been caught all over Corio Bay.

King George whiting have been difficult to locate in Corio Bay as Ross Winstanley can attest. Ross spent a few fruitless trips at his Singaree Bay haunts for not much at all. He has had better luck drifting the weed beds off Clifton Springs for calamari either side of a kilogram in weight.

The rocks at St Helens have been producing a few flathead around the 40cm mark for land-based anglers. Best baits have been pilchard pieces and squid strips.

Clifton Springs has been popular with the spring calamari run where anglers have enjoyed good numbers either side of a kilogram in weight. Michael Evans fished off Clifton Springs with one of his mates recently where they caught their bag limit of calamari in 2-3 hours. Michael says they drifted over the weed beds in 3-5m of water and the best colours have been green or white on bright days and pink or orange on dull days.

Rod Ludlow from Beachlea Boat Hire at Indented Head says the squid have not stopped with many of his hire boats bagging out. Any of the weed beds and reefs in between St Leonards all the way around to Steeles Rocks near Portarlington have been producing at all times of the day.

Whiting are still around, but a little inconsistent, with the best spots being 8-12m of water off Indented Head and out near the Prince George light. Both tides seem to do equally well for whiting while squid and pipis have been the best bait.

Gummy sharks to 12kg have been caught inside Port Phillip Bay out off Indented Head in the deeper water plus off Barwon Heads in 40m of water. Fresh Australian salmon or calamari seems to be the go-to bait for gummy sharks lately.

Flathead have been about in good numbers for anglers drifting the deeper water between Indented Head and St Leonards.

Rod notes that it has been a cold winter but the fish are hot and it is easy to get a feed at the moment with only the best to come as spring moves in.

Inside the Queenscliff Boat Harbour has been busy for silver trevally, small salmon and calamari. The trevally haven’t been overly big at 35-40cm, but great fun when casting soft plastics. Queenscliff should see an upgrade in calamari sizes around the start of October. The larger ones can give 3kg a nudge and are still excellent table fare at this size. You sure get a lot of bait yield from the bigger ones if you plan on upgrading again to a snapper or gummy!

The start of October should see the snapper queue up along the Surf Coast along with school and gummy sharks. Expect a few pesky draughtboard sharks to raid our baits meant for snapper and gummies. Sometimes it seems they are everywhere and moving does nothing.

John Albrecht from Torquay Angling Club reports there has been a few Australian salmon one to 2kg caught by anglers fishing from Jan Juc Beach. Offshore from Torquay has seen quality gummy and school sharks over the deeper reef areas plus a couple of snapper. John says the King George whiting have been a little difficult to locate but then again, not too many anglers have been out in smaller boats chasing whiting due to the rough weather.
The Barwon River estuary saw plenty of small silver trevally, Australian salmon and yellow-eyed mullet in the estuary over September.

**Fish HARD – Die Happy!**

Catch a few around Geelong, Bellarine Peninsula or Surf Coast to Lorne recently? Send in a report to --e-mail address hidden-- with “VFM” in the subject field or give me a call on 0408 997348. Please include where (without giving away your secret spot!), when, what on and who caught the fish. Pictures are always great, but please make sure they are at least 1mb (file size).

Images

Alan was super pumped with this quality early season snapper.

Michael says Wurdee should improve this October.
Plenty of calamari have been caught around the Bellarine.