

CENTRAL QUEENSLAND FISHING

THE LOCAL SECRETS



fishqueensland.com.au



CENTRAL QUEENSLAND FISHING



fishqueensland.com.au





CONTENTS

Know the rules.....	06
DON'T GET CAUGHT	
Freshwater fishing frenzy.....	08
BANANA SHIRE	
Muddy water madness.....	10
THEODORE & MOURA	
Home of the barramundi.....	12
MOUNT MORGAN & ROCKHAMPTON FRESHWATER	
Saltwater safari.....	14
ROCKHAMPTON SALTWATER & PORT ALMA	
Central Queensland fishing map.....	16
Queensland fish species.....	18
Isaac coast fishing.....	20
ST LAWRENCE TO CAPE PALMERSTON	
Mack attack.....	22
SARINA & MACKAY CITY	
Blue water river fishing.....	24
MACKAY CITY & MACKAY MARINA	
World-class dam fishing.....	26
POINEER VALLEY & THE DAMS	
Northern Beaches & Hibiscus Coast.....	28
EIMEO TO ST HELENS BEACH	
Strike gold.....	30
THERESA CREEK, CONNORS RIVER & LAKE ELPHINSTONE	
Home of wild Saratoga.....	32
CENTRAL HIGHLANDS	
Visitor Information Centres.....	36



EXPECT THE UNEXPECTED

CENTRAL QUEENSLAND OFFERS A DIVERSITY OF SALT AND FRESHWATER FISHING EXPERIENCES THAT ARE DESTINED TO BE THE SUBJECT OF FISHING STORIES FOR YEARS TO COME.

There are a couple of special reasons that the fishing is great here. Firstly, the dams are stocked by local fish stocking organisations. Support them by buying your freshwater impoundment fishing licence. Secondly, the Queensland Government has established net free zones off the Rockhampton/Port Alma coast and St Helens Beach to Cape Hillsborough, allowing fish stocks to regenerate. This all makes for some great fishing.

Sink your toes into white sandy beaches and cast-off vast headlands. Drop a line into pristine rivers from your kayak. Motor across flood plains and through interconnecting creeks. Central Queensland has it all and the fishing is world-class.

The diversity of fishing grounds is matched only by the huge variety of species on offer.

Feel the thrill of watching a barramundi launch itself out of the water or the red flash of the mangrove jack beside your boat. Experience the impressive power of a long-tailed tuna or the spirited sound of the banded grunter in battle.

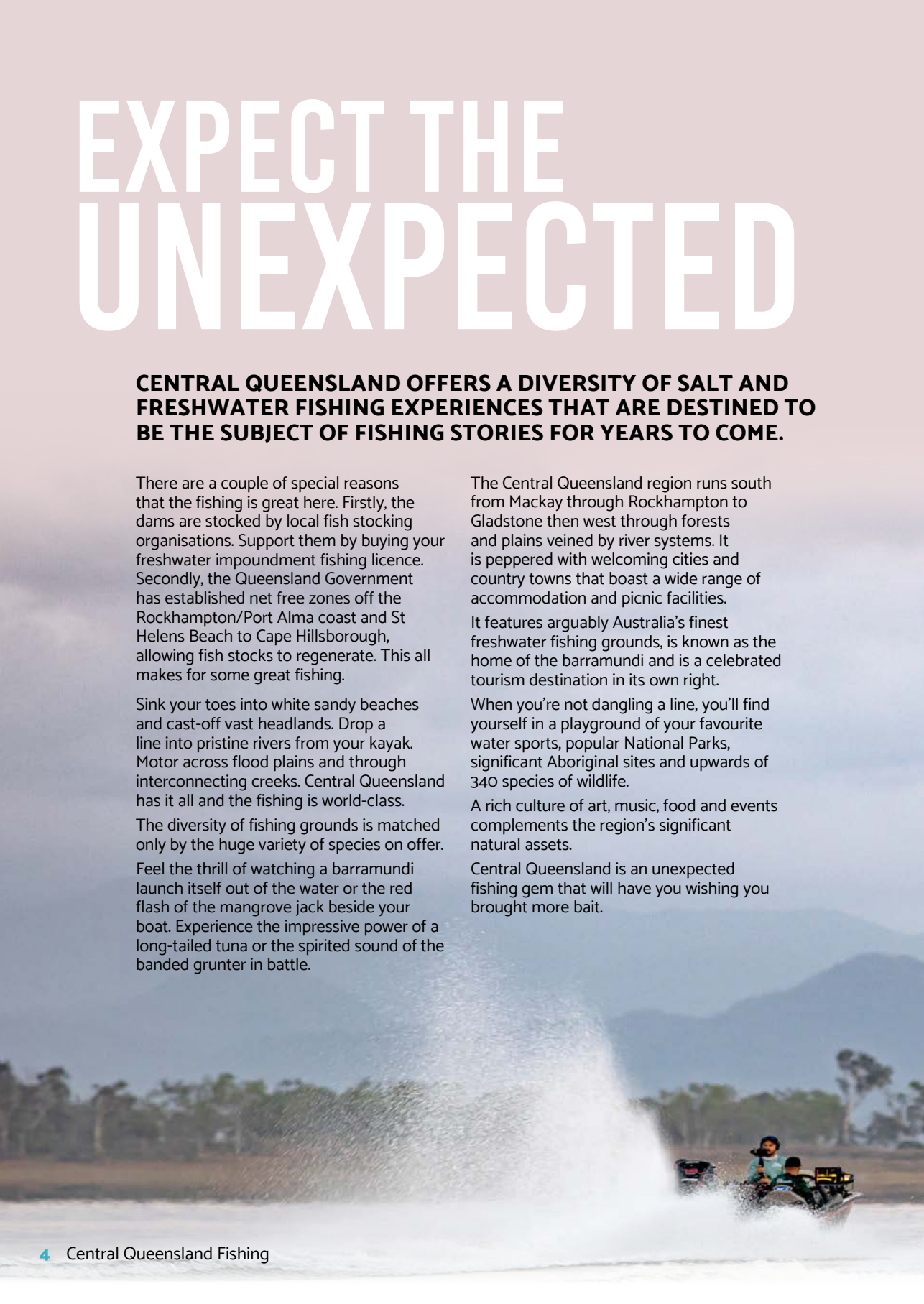
The Central Queensland region runs south from Mackay through Rockhampton to Gladstone then west through forests and plains veined by river systems. It is peppered with welcoming cities and country towns that boast a wide range of accommodation and picnic facilities.

It features arguably Australia's finest freshwater fishing grounds, is known as the home of the barramundi and is a celebrated tourism destination in its own right.

When you're not dangling a line, you'll find yourself in a playground of your favourite water sports, popular National Parks, significant Aboriginal sites and upwards of 340 species of wildlife.

A rich culture of art, music, food and events complements the region's significant natural assets.

Central Queensland is an unexpected fishing gem that will have you wishing you brought more bait.



In this brochure we unearth our favourite hot spots and the local secrets that'll turn a day's fishing into a campfire story that's worth telling for years to come.

BANANA REGION

Banana Shire	2 hours and 25 minutes south west of Rockhampton	Burnett and Leichhardt Highways
Callide Dam, Theodore and Moura	1 hour and 48 minutes south of Rockhampton	Burnett Highway

ROCKHAMPTON REGION

Mount Morgan and Rockhampton Freshwater	35 minutes south west of Rockhampton	Burnett Highway
Rockhampton Saltwater and Port Alma	47 minutes south of Rockhampton	Bruce Highway

ISAAC COAST REGION

Isaac Coast – St Lawrence to Cape Palmerston	2 hours and 10 minutes north of Rockhampton	Bruce Highway
--	---	---------------

MACKAY REGION

Blacks Beach to St Helens Beach	17 minutes to 1 hour north of Mackay	Various routes
Sarina	31 minutes south of Mackay	Bruce Highway
Pioneer Valley	38 minutes west of Mackay	Mackay-Eungella Road
Mackay City and Mackay Marina	Mackay is 3 hours and 50 minutes north of Rockhampton	Bruce Highway

ISAAC REGION

Lake Elphinstone	1 hour and 40 minutes south west of Mackay	Peak Downs Highway
Theresa Creek Dam	3 hours west of Mackay	Peak Downs Highway

CENTRAL HIGHLANDS REGION

Lake Maraboon	20 minutes south of Emerald	Gregory Highway
Nogoa River	Emerald is 3 hours west of Rockhampton	Capricorn Highway
Bedford Weir	1 hour east of Emerald	Capricorn Highway
Bingegang Weir	2 hours north east of Emerald	Capricorn Highway



DON'T GET CAUGHT

KNOW THE RULES

THERE IS A REASON WHY A BOUNTY OF FISH SPECIES CALL CENTRAL QUEENSLAND HOME. OUR REGULATIONS KEEP OUR RIVERS, OCEAN AND WATERWAYS FULL AND MAKE EVERY DAY A GOOD FISHING DAY.

Check individual limitations in the Queensland Recreational Boating and Fishing Guide available from local bait and fishing shops, online at www.daf.qld.gov.au or download the App from Google Play or App store.

Rules for freshwater boating also apply. For more information, check www.msq.qld.gov.au or call 13 23 80.





The Queensland Government provides recreational fishing rules and regulations that govern the use of fishing equipment, catch limits and closures, and size and possession limits.

Equipment usage restrictions cover the use of breathing devices, traps, pots, nets, hand pumps, spear guns and the number of fishing lines and hooks that can be used at any one time.

Limitations on the size and number of certain fish are in place in order to conserve heavily sought-after species. Certain waterways are regulated or closed for a period of time due to a population of endangered or threatened species living there.

There is a general possession limit of 20 fish for all species without a prescribed possession limit. Certain fish within Central Queensland have individual limits. This includes barramundi which must be at least 58cm in length but no larger than 120cm with a possession limit of 5 per person or 10 per boat with 2 or more people.

Mackay and Rockhampton Regional Councils encourage sustainable harvesting by encouraging anglers to take a feed and not a fridge full. Both councils also encourage letting 1 metre plus breeding barramundi (which are the size of all females) off the hook.

THE MACKAY & ROCKHAMPTON NET FREE ZONES

Net free zones are in place from St Helens to Cape Hillsborough and in Rockhampton. The zones encourage all recreational fishers to fish more sustainably, keeping fish stocks at a healthy level. Healthy fish stocks mean great fishing.

Fishers are asked to take a voluntary pledge to adhere to codes of practice in both areas.

The codes include four key values:

1. Maintaining healthy fish stocks through sustainable harvest behaviours
2. Proper care and handling of all fish being released to maximise survival rates
3. Zero tolerance for illegal fishing activities
4. Care and respect of our environment

More details can be found at:

www.mackayregion.com/hooked-on-mackay/pledge or
www.fishingthefitzroy.com.au/voluntary-code-of-practice



BANANA SHIRE

FRESHWATER FISHING FRENZY

GET READY! THE BANANA SHIRE IS ARGUABLY THE BEST REGION FOR FRESHWATER FISHING ANYWHERE IN AUSTRALIA. TAKE YOUR PICK OF DIFFERENT STYLES OF FISHING, TARGETING A HUGE VARIETY OF SPECIES. YOU WON'T BE DISAPPOINTED.



The Banana Shire is an easy drive from Rockhampton or a day's drive from Brisbane. It offers lakes, weirs, rivers and creeks full of fat freshwater barramundi, yellow belly, cod and more.

It's easy to see why various fishing competitions dot the calendar.

Friendly locals and purpose-built fishing, camping and accommodation facilities, make it an easy destination to wet the line, get the blood pumping with some great fighting fish and keep you coming back year after year.

If you've got freshwater fishing fever, there is no better place in Australia for a fishing adventure than the Banana Shire.



DAWSON RIVER HOT SPOTS

The mighty Dawson River runs wild through the Banana Shire from Expedition National Park in the south west to Baralaba in the north west. It offers enough wild freshwater fishing locations to fill a few hours or a few days.

Neville Hewitt Weir is about 30 minutes' drive from Banana Shire or 2.5 hours west of Gladstone. It offers easy access to Dawson River fishing from Bedford street, behind the Baralaba hospital.

Set off from the boat ramp and expect anything from barramundi, saratoga, sleepy cod, yellow belly, grunter and spangled perch to be on the bite.

LAKE CALLIDE HOT SPOTS

Lake Callide was constructed in 1965 to supply water to a nearby power station, however today it definitely has a name for itself as a fishing hot spot and is ideal for beginners.

Lake Callide is an easy 1 hour and 30 minute drive from Gladstone and just 15 minutes from Biloela.

If you're fishing from the banks, don't be surprised if you're sharing them with some local cattle, otherwise your tinnie will feel right at home on the dam.

Well executed fish stocking programs make the lake popular grounds for saratoga, barramundi, yellow belly, eel tailed catfish, sleepy cod and longtom. It's also home to redclaw, a type of crayfish that is considered a local delicacy.

Make sure you purchase a stock impoundment permit before fishing. These are available online from Queensland Government.

DON RIVER HOT SPOTS

The Don River runs across the very north of Banana Shire.

Gear up for wild river fishing on the Don River, chasing a battle with saratoga and yellow belly or head to Dumpy Creek, west of Goovigen, to fish for catfish. If you've got freshwater fishing fever, there is no better place in Australia for a fishing adventure than the Banana Shire.

GLEBE WEIR

Situated 54 km from Taroom on Theodore Road (Leichhardt Way). Fish for Saratoga, golden perch, silver perch, catfish, sleepy cod and spangled perch. There is no fishing from 100m upstream to 200m downstream of the weir. Bank access, boat ramp, toilets, drinking water, picnic tables, and caravan and camping sites are available.



GET HOOKED

Head to Cracow Beach on the Dawson River to spot Water Monitor lizards cruising across the water fishing for a feed.



WHAT REELY MATTERS

Location: 2 hours and 25 minutes' drive south west of Rockhampton via Burnett and Leichhardt Highways.

Best time of year to fish: year-round

Fishing grounds: lakes, weirs, rivers and creeks

Facilities: vary from fully serviced caravan and camping sites to free self-sufficient bush camping

Species: barramundi, golden perch (yellow belly), saratoga, silver perch, spangled perch, small mouth sooty grunter (black bream), banded grunter, eel-tailed catfish, fork-tailed catfish, sleepy cod, spangled perch, alligator gar, freshwater crayfish and redclaw

THEODORE AND MOURA

MUDDY WATER MADNESS

THE MUDDY WATERS OF THE DAWSON RIVER SEND ANGLERS INTO A FRENZY, WHILE THE UNIQUE COMMUNITIES AND TOWNS PROVIDE UNEXPECTED CHARM WHEN IT'S TIME TO PUT THE RODS AWAY.



WHAT REELY MATTERS

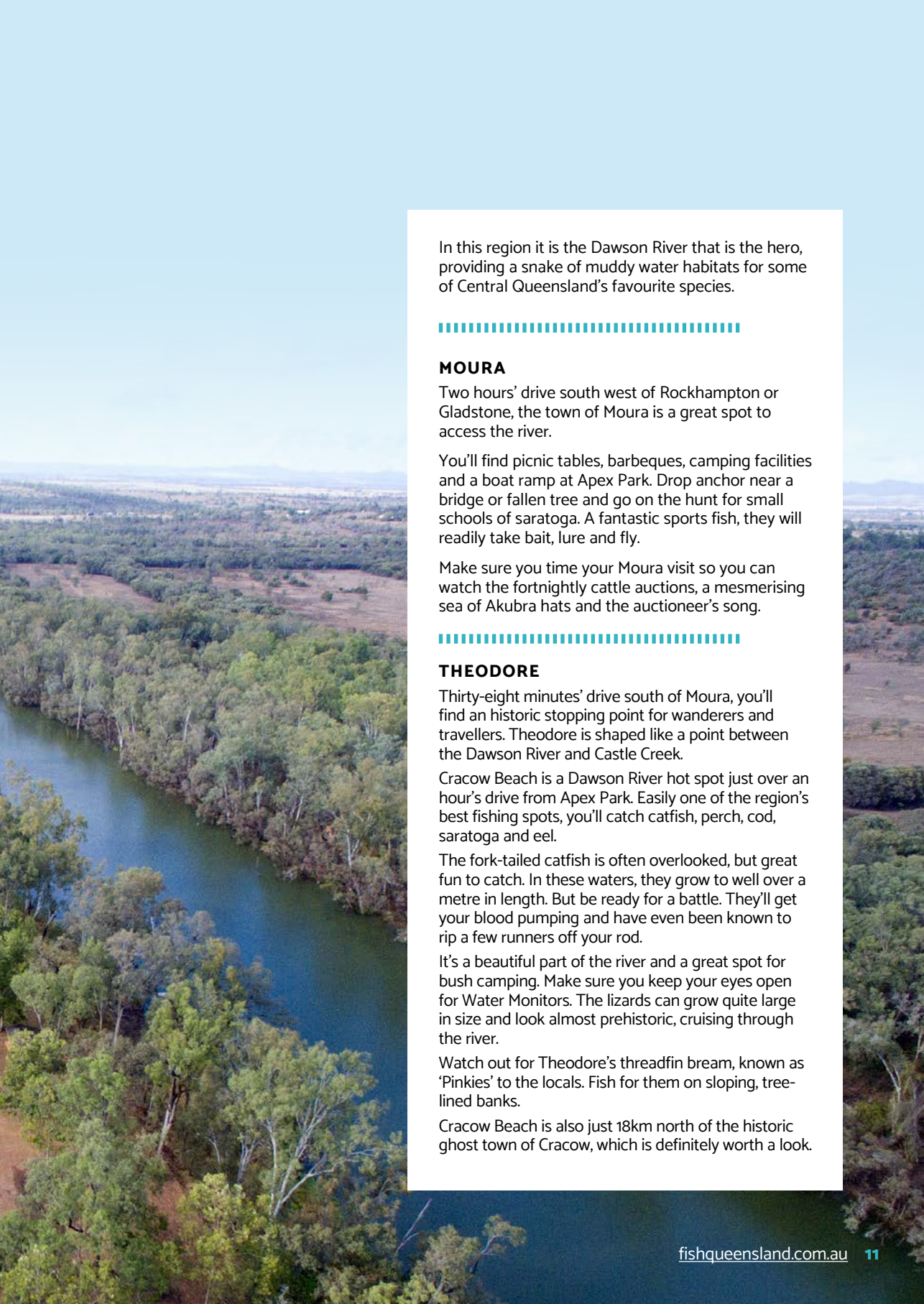
Location: 1 hour and 45 minutes' drive from Rockhampton or 1 hour and 25 minutes from Gladstone

Best time of year to fish: year-round

Fishing grounds: weirs, rivers and creeks

Facilities: caravan parks, camping grounds, picnic grounds and accommodation

Species: yellow belly, barramundi, redclaw crayfish, saratoga, threadfin bream, silver perch, eel-tailed catfish, sleepy cod, alligator gar and spangled perch



In this region it is the Dawson River that is the hero, providing a snake of muddy water habitats for some of Central Queensland's favourite species.

MOURA

Two hours' drive south west of Rockhampton or Gladstone, the town of Moura is a great spot to access the river.

You'll find picnic tables, barbeques, camping facilities and a boat ramp at Apex Park. Drop anchor near a bridge or fallen tree and go on the hunt for small schools of saratoga. A fantastic sports fish, they will readily take bait, lure and fly.

Make sure you time your Moura visit so you can watch the fortnightly cattle auctions, a mesmerising sea of Akubra hats and the auctioneer's song.

THEODORE

Thirty-eight minutes' drive south of Moura, you'll find an historic stopping point for wanderers and travellers. Theodore is shaped like a point between the Dawson River and Castle Creek.

Cracow Beach is a Dawson River hot spot just over an hour's drive from Apex Park. Easily one of the region's best fishing spots, you'll catch catfish, perch, cod, saratoga and eel.

The fork-tailed catfish is often overlooked, but great fun to catch. In these waters, they grow to well over a metre in length. But be ready for a battle. They'll get your blood pumping and have even been known to rip a few runners off your rod.

It's a beautiful part of the river and a great spot for bush camping. Make sure you keep your eyes open for Water Monitors. The lizards can grow quite large in size and look almost prehistoric, cruising through the river.

Watch out for Theodore's threadfin bream, known as 'Pinkies' to the locals. Fish for them on sloping, tree-lined banks.

Cracow Beach is also just 18km north of the historic ghost town of Cracow, which is definitely worth a look.

MOUNT MORGAN & ROCKHAMPTON FRESHWATER

HOME OF THE BARRAMUNDI

SINCE THE DREAMING TIME, MAN HAS KNOWN THE ROCKHAMPTON REGION TO BE THE HEART OF AUSTRALIA'S MIGHTY BARRAMUNDI REGION. TODAY, THIS TITLE HAS NEVER BEEN TRUER. WELCOME TO BARRAMUNDI COUNTRY.

The mighty Fitzroy River veins its way through the Rockhampton region, the largest river system on the eastern seaboard of Australia.

Its prime estuary and freshwater fishing grounds include 36 tributaries and one of the most diverse range of fishing in the country.

It's an easy fishing destination with accommodation facilities in the region ranging from high end hotels to basic bush camping, with free barbeques, picnic areas and playgrounds readily available.

Rockhampton is an easy half day drive from Brisbane with key fishing spots like Mount Morgan just over 30 minutes' drive from the city.

The Rockhampton Airport makes this fishing hot spot one of the few locations where you can fly in, check in and boat out in a couple of hours.



BRING YOUR OWN BOAT, take advantage of local charter services and make sure you double check the calendar of fishing events dotted throughout the year.

Without a doubt many anglers head to this region chasing barramundi that can measure over a metre in length. But outside of barramundi season you'll find king threadfin on the bite.

Whether barramundi or threadfin are the better fighter and better eating will continue to remain the subject of animated arguments around camping grounds, bars and pubs across Central Queensland.

You'll also find sleepy cod, eel-tailed catfish, saratoga, silver and golden perch, redclaw and banded grunter ready to take a bait.

WHAT REELY MATTERS

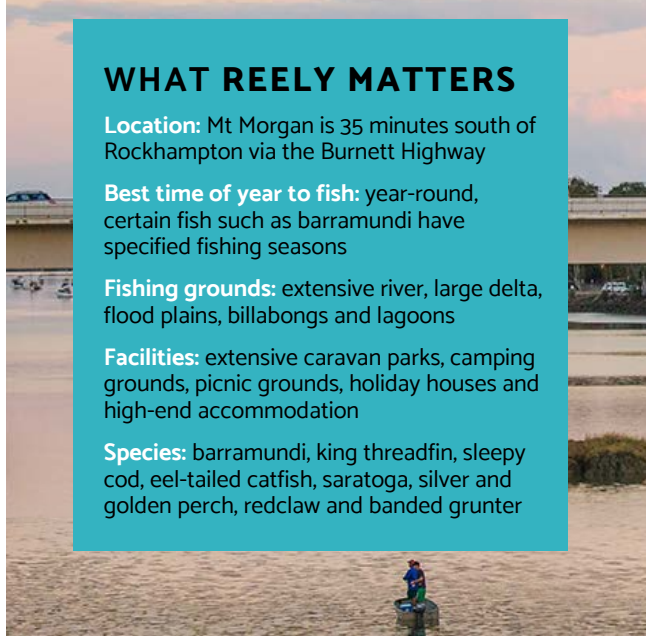
Location: Mt Morgan is 35 minutes south of Rockhampton via the Burnett Highway

Best time of year to fish: year-round, certain fish such as barramundi have specified fishing seasons

Fishing grounds: extensive river, large delta, flood plains, billabongs and lagoons

Facilities: extensive caravan parks, camping grounds, picnic grounds, holiday houses and high-end accommodation

Species: barramundi, king threadfin, sleepy cod, eel-tailed catfish, saratoga, silver and golden perch, redclaw and banded grunter



ROCKHAMPTON HOT SPOTS

Ask any local fisherman about the best spots for barramundi and king threadfin and you're likely to hear the name 'new bridge'.

That would be the Neville Hewitt Bridge which offers multiple fishing holes around the bridge, rock bars and other submerged structures. To fish 'new bridge' from the shore, head to Col Brown Park. There are plenty of shady spots to pull up a deck chair.

A bit further down the Fitzroy River you'll find the tree branches and logs of The Cut are attractive enough to hold barramundi all year round.

The bend just as you head out of the Rockhampton CBD is known as Devil's Elbow. It's an unstoppable combination of deeper water, rock piles and old gum trees.



FITZROY RIVER MUST-HAVE LURES

1. 20 to 30g soft-vibe
2. 3" shrimp and jigheads
3. Deep diving 12 to 15cm minnow

MOUNT MORGAN HOT SPOTS

Mount Morgan is approximately one hour's drive west of Port Alma or 35 minutes south west of Rockhampton and home to Mount Morgan No 7 Dam, one of the most picturesque and active freshwater fishing spots in the region.

True to the Australian Way Mount Morgan too has a nickname and is referred to as No 7 Dam by the locals.

Wide open spaces, shaded playgrounds with free barbeques and speed restrictions on the water make No 7 Dam a great fishing ground for everyone from beginners to professionals.

Kayak fishermen should paddle out onto the dam in the early morning to a song of lorikeets. Troll along the weed edge with a shallow diver and land some sleepy cod.



ROCKHAMPTON SALTWATER & PORT ALMA

SALTWATER SAFARI

**SALTWATER CREEKS AND PORT ALMA
CREATE AN ENDLESS VARIETY OF
FISHING ADVENTURES, ALL WITHIN
EASY REACH OF ROCKHAMPTON.**

Where the freshwater estuaries end, the saltwater safari begins. Interconnecting creeks feed into an expansive port mouth and out into Keppel Bay and Curtis Island beyond.

GET HOOKED

Give the barramundi and king threadfin the best chance to see your lure. Cast into the clearest water.



WHAT REELY MATTERS

Location: 50 minutes south east of Rockhampton on the Bruce Highway and Port Alma Road

Best time of year to fish: year-round, certain fish such as barramundi have specified fishing seasons. Starting at midday on 1 February each year, barramundi season stretches right through till midday on 1 November

Fishing grounds: port mouth, interconnecting creeks and reef-lined islands

Facilities: extensive caravan parks, camping grounds, picnic grounds, holiday houses and high-end accommodation

Species: barramundi, king threadfin, blue salmon, grunter and jewfish. Out wide, coral trout, sweetlip and red emperor, spanish mackerel, cobia and long tailed tuna



PORT ALMA HOT SPOTS

About a 50 minute drive south of Rockhampton you'll find Port Alma marking the southern end of the Fitzroy Delta. Head to the Port Alma boat ramp and fish right on the mouth to catch blue threadfin or head to the Bajool boat ramp at the end of Port Alma Road.

Once your boat's wet, you'll have access to Casuarina Creek, Inkerman Creek, Raglan Creek, Connors Creek and the Narrows. Here you'll find plenty of action barramundi, king threadfin, blue salmon, jewfish and grunter.

Casuarina Creek deserves its own mention. You can access it via a gap in the rock wall just north of Thompson Point. We call it the hole in the wall.

Raglan Creek adjoins Port Alma and runs between Curtis Island and the mainland. Full of mangroves and tidal habitats, it's our pick of the Port Alma region if you're chasing barramundi.



SOUTHERN KEPPEL BAY HOT SPOTS

From the Port Alma boat ramp at the end of Port Alma Road you'll gain offshore access to the southern part of Keppel Bay.

Grab your sinkers and bottom bash for saltwater favourites like coral trout, sweetlip and red emperor or kick the motor into gear and troll for cobia and the undeniably exhilarating fight of hooking a long-tailed tuna.

Spanish mackerel patrol the region and are best hooked on 110-190mm hard bodied lures or pilchards and garfish. Try to avoid using wire as this can scare them off.



CENTRAL QLD FISHING LOCATIONS

THE CENTRAL QUEENSLAND AREA INCLUDES RIVER, DAM, BEACH, REEF AND OFFSHORE FISHING SUITING DIFFERENT WEATHER CONDITIONS AND SEASONS.



STRETCHING FROM LAKE CALLIDE NEAR BILOELA TO THE PIONEER RIVER AT MACKAY THIS COMPACT AREA IS EASILY REACHED BY CAR OR BY AIR. THE DAMS ARE REGULARLY STOCKED TO ENSURE THERE ARE A GOOD SUPPLY OF FISH TO CATCH.



SEE MORE ONLINE
fishqueensland.com.au



QUEENSLAND FISH SPECIES

Barramundi



An exciting and popular target for anglers. Excellent eating.

Silver Perch



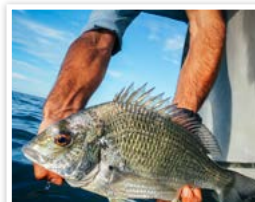
An excellent fighting fish. Smaller fish are good eating.

Coral Trout



Caught in saltwater near reef, excellent eating.

Bream



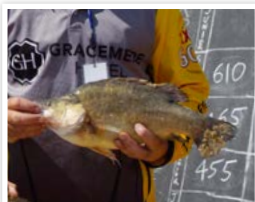
Common estuary fish, usually up to 1kg, good eating.

Saratoga



Jumping fighters and are a favourite amongst fly fishers.

Yellow Belly



Excellent eating fish - A white flesh with a mild, light and delicate taste.

Jewfish



Saltwater fish, good eating.

Flathead



Caught in sandy estuarine and river areas, excellent eating.

Sooty Grunter



They hit hard and provide great entertainment. Good eating.

Blue & Threadfin Salmon



Great fighting fish, grow up to 120cm.

Mackerel



Good fighting and good eating saltwater fish.

Mangrove Jack



Found in all of our tropical coastal tidal mangrove estuaries. Excellent eating.



SEE MORE ONLINE
fishqueensland.com.au

DISCOVER AUSTRALIA'S BEST KEPT FISHING SECRET. THE CENTRAL QUEENSLAND REGION IS HOME TO SOME OF AUSTRALIA'S BEST FIGHTING FISH - **BARRAMUNDI, SOUTHERN SARATOGA AND SOOTY GRUNTER** PLUS A WHOLE RANGE OF FRESH AND SALTWATER SPECIES.

Cobia



Great fighting fish generally offshore, grow up to 45kg.

Mud Crab



Found in mangroves and estuaries of Tropical Queensland. Excellent eating.

Red Emperor



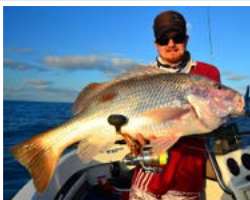
Generally caught in offshore reefs and are excellent eating.

Redclaw



Fresh water crayfish found in inland streams and dams. Good eating.

Fingermark



Hard fighting fish found in estuaries and reefs, excellent eating.

Shark



Many varieties of shark found in salt and brackish water. Known as flake they are quite good eating.

Saddletail Snapper



Good eating coastal and reef fish.

Spanish Mackerel



Good sizes offshore fish, good eating

Trevally



Great fighting fish. Oily, firm, dense meat.

Tuna

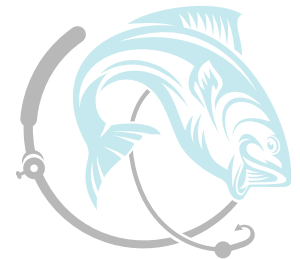


Seven species of offshore fish. Good eating.

Whiting



Caught in estuaries, bays and surf beaches. Good eating.



ST LAWRENCE TO CAPE PALMERSTON

ISAAC COAST FISHING

ONE HUNDRED KILOMETRES OF SANDY BEACHES, WINDING CREEKS, SOME SHADOWED BY CLIMBING HEADLANDS, THE ISAAC COAST IS A PICTURESQUE FISHING FAVOURITE. NO WONDER IT'S CALLED THE SERENITY COAST.

St Lawrence marks the middle point between Mackay to the north and Rockhampton to the south, an easy two-hour drive from both. From Brisbane it is a good day's drive, but entirely worth the journey with both exceptional fishing grounds and diverse fish species teeming in picturesque settings.





In St Lawrence itself, you'll find a weir just west of the Bruce Highway that sits on St Lawrence River. This river is highly tidal, almost emptying on the low tide, but is a serious consideration if you're hunting either barramundi or the red flash of the mangrove jack.

Back on the coast and an easy 30 minute drive north of St Lawrence you'll come across the rustic beachside community of Clairview with its abundance of mudcrabs, great beach fishing for whiting and blue salmon and ocean or island fishing for salmon and coral trout.

Just 11 minutes further north, Carmila Creek is famed by the locals for its sunset fishing. Either from the shore near the creek mouth or after launching your boat from the ramp, you'll find barramundi, mangrove jack, trevally and flathead ready for battle.

Twenty-six minutes' drive north of Carmila and just 10 minutes from Cape Palmerston National Park, lie Yarrawonga and Notch Points. Both are 20-30m tall headlands that tower over sandy beaches and nearby Hall Creek.

The points are only accessible via 4WD and the trip is highly tide dependent. It's a fun trip and highly regarded by the locals for whiting and flathead.

WHAT REELY MATTERS

Location: 1 day's drive from Brisbane, 2 hours north of Rockhampton or 2 hours south of Mackay

Best time of year to fish: year-round, certain fish such as barramundi have specified fishing seasons

Fishing grounds: rivers, creeks, dams, weirs, beach, open ocean and island fishing

Facilities: extensive caravan parks, camping grounds, picnic grounds, holiday houses and accommodation

Species: barramundi (barra), bream, whiting, flathead, mangrove jack and mud crabs



SARINA & MACKAY CITY

MACK ATTACK

THE SARINA TO MACKAY REGION OFFERS ANGLERS
RAINFOREST STREAMS, BLUE WATER RIVERS AND
WORLD-CLASS FISHING IMPOUNDMENTS.



WHILE THERE'S MUCH TO BE SAID ABOUT BATTLING A BARRAMUNDI, THE LOCALS WILL ARGUE THAT THERE'S EVEN MORE EXCITING FISH SPECIES IN THE AREA.

And they'll proudly tell you there's no better place in Australia to catch a sooty than the Mackay region.

Looking past the riches of reef fishing off the coast of this Central Queensland region, between Sarina and Mackay you'll find beaches and mangrove-fringed shores. The area's creeks and freshwater rivers are prime fishing destinations. And that's before you head inland to the dams!

Beginning in Sarina, just 30 minutes' drive south of Mackay, the snapper and trevally swim together at Sarina Beach. Just 10 minutes from the centre of Sarina, this beach offers two boat ramps for access to Sarina Inlet and the ocean beyond.

More than 10km of mangrove-fringed shores extend along Plane Creek and out to Sarina Inlet. These are prime grounds for exhilarating battles with our grunter.

Just 15 minutes' drive north of Sarina, Hay Point opens up to offshore islands and reef dwelling species such as sweetlip, coral trout and snapper (in the cooler months).



WHAT REELY MATTERS

Location: 1 day's drive from Brisbane or easily accessible via Mackay Airport

Best time of year to fish: year-round, certain fish such as barramundi have specified fishing seasons

Fishing grounds: beaches, creeks and reefs

Facilities: extensive caravan parks, camping grounds, picnic grounds, holiday houses and accommodation

Species: barramundi (barra), flathead, bream, blue salmon, king threadfin, mangrove jack, trevally, whiting, fingermark, queenfish, black jew, red emperor, cod, tarpon, nannygai and snapper



BLUE WATER RIVER FISHING

MACKAY IS A COASTAL CITY ON A SPECIAL BLUE RIVER WITH UNFORGETTABLE FISHING TALES.

There are very few locations where you can fish for barramundi and big pelagics without leaving the city or even getting the boat wet. Mackay City is one of those gems.

You'll see fishermen lining the edge of the marina pulling in their share of whiting, bream and even flathead. Take a short walk to the end of the breakwater and you can tangle with mackerel, tuna, trevally and even big black jew.





GET HOOKED

A 6 to 8kg baitcaster or spin-rod is the perfect combo for barramundi close to Mackay City.

WHAT REELY MATTERS

Location: 1 day's drive from Brisbane or easily accessible via Mackay Airport

Best time of year to fish: year-round, certain fish such as barramundi have specified fishing seasons

Fishing grounds: marina, breakwater, Pioneer River, creeks and the Gooseponds

Facilities: extensive caravan parks, camping grounds, picnic grounds, holiday houses and accommodation

Species: barramundi, bream, flathead, blue salmon, threadfin salmon, grunter, mangrove jack, trevally, whiting, fingermark, queenfish, black jew, barracuda and cod

Millions of dollars' worth of boats on one side and the Pacific Ocean on the other, the breakwater view isn't the only thing you'll find striking. Rig up with a long cast metal lure or float baits to attract the sizeable mackerel and trevally cruising past the rock wall.

Away from the coastline, Dumbleton Weir is home to barramundi. Another popular barramundi hot spot lies in the North of Mackay at Gooseponds Creek.

Access this shallow system from the water's edge at Malcolmson Street and Glenpark Street or Evans Avenue. You'll also find tarpon and snake-head gudgeon, a close relative of the sleepy cod.

WORLD-CLASS DAM FISHING

WITH A MIGHTY RIVER AND THREE BOUNTIFUL DAMS, IT'S AS IF THE PIONEER VALLEY WAS DESIGNED BY A FISHERMAN.

The Pioneer River flows from the mountains in the west to its mouth at the centre of Mackay. It is easily accessible by foot and kayak. From fishing platforms in River Street, Forgan Bridge and East Point you'll get larger bream, whiting, trevally and flathead.

The Cattle Creek Bridge Crossing, just after Gargett, will surely become a favourite spot with fallen trees, deeper water and shady holes making prime habitats for barramundi, sooty grunter and more.

WHAT REELY MATTERS

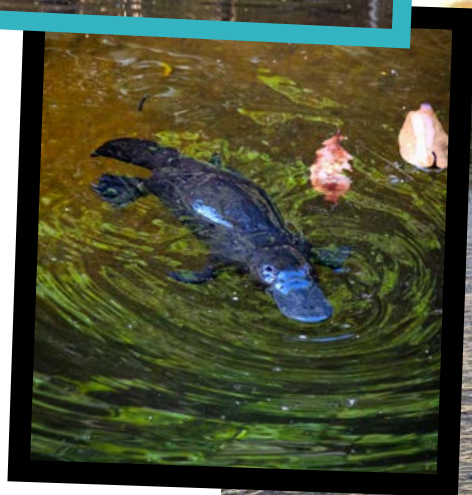
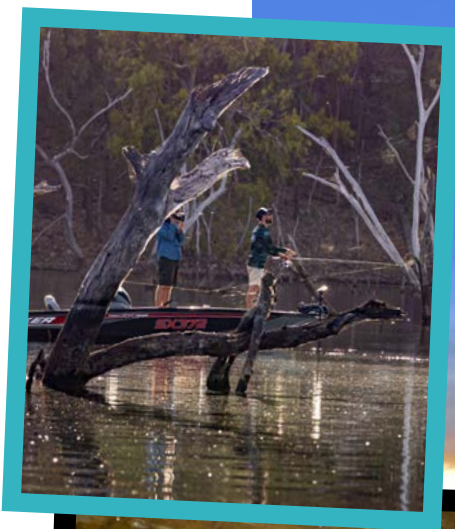
Location: 1 day's drive from Brisbane or easily accessible via Mackay Airport, the dams lie between 30 minutes and just over 1 hour from Mackay

Best time of year to fish: year-round barramundi fishing in the dams and restricted season in the river and coastal areas

Fishing grounds: river and dams

Facilities: caravan parks, camping grounds and picnic grounds

Species: barramundi (barra), sooty grunter, fork-tailed catfish, eel-tailed catfish and spangled perch





KINCHANT DAM

The first of the region's three mighty dams is about 35 minutes' drive west through North Eton. Kinchant Dam is accessed via a bitumen and dirt road from Mirani, past the Pioneer Valley Golf Course. While the park area is ideal for picnics and barbeques, it also has a licensed restaurant and cabins.

But it's the Kinchant Dam fishing that will keep you staying longer. With more than 190 structures deployed throughout the dam, there are 36 hot spots and much debate amongst the locals as to which is the best spot with sooty grunter and barramundi popular catches. The Dam is known as the home of barramundi with catches over 130cm, including the world record 135cm, 41.5kg catch on a 15kg line. A 137cm barramundi was also caught here in the 2019 ABT competition.

Approximately 25 minutes further drive west through the beautiful Pioneer Valley, you'll find Teemburra Dam.



TEEMBURRA DAM

A nature lover's paradise, this dam is more secluded and doesn't allow water skiing which also makes it popular for kayak fishermen.

Take the Mackay-Eungella Road and turn off just before the Pinnacle Pub on the left to access the dam. Cast lures around dense standing timber and you'll surely get smashed by barramundi up to and over a metre and sooty grunter up to 50cm.



EUNGELLA DAM

Eungella Dam is a further 1 hour and 20 minutes' drive from Teemburra Dam.

The easiest way is to turn left at The Chalet at Eungella and drive along Eungella Dam Road. Be careful because even the locals sometimes miss the small sign marking the turn off.

Eungella is home to excellent fighting fish, made even more fun when you use light gear. Eungella is the home of the sooty grunter up to and over the magic 50cm mark, an excellent fighting fish that hits hard and provides great entertainment for light tackle sports fishing enthusiasts.

The Pioneer Valley might captivate you with its beauty, but its fishing adventures will make you want to stay.



LOCAL SECRET

Head to Broken River for a rare spotting of platypus bobbing through the waters.



NORTHERN BEACHES & HIBISCUS COAST

THERE ARE SWEET REEF FISH AND DIVERSE CREEK SPECIES ON OFFER AROUND HEADLANDS, ROCKY BAYS AND CREEKS, BUT IT'S THE THRILLING POWER OF THE MACKEREL THAT REALLY GETS THE BLOOD PUMPING.

Within easy reach of the rich fishing grounds of Mackay, the Eimeo to St Helens Beach region offers headlands, breakwaters, beaches and creeks all within an hour's drive of each other.

Eimeo itself is just 17 minutes' drive north of Mackay. Fish off the rocks under the 60-metre-high conical headland of Eimeo Point or head to the nearby creek to chase mangrove jack and bream.

Rig up with gang hooks and pilchards and head just 10 minutes north to Shoal Point to tempt the mackerel.





Constant Creek is full of threadfin salmon, barramundi, mangrove jack and grunter. The Constant Creek Boat Ramp can be found on Howells Road.

Smalleys Creek is only 17 minutes' drive north and well worth a visit. It's a great spot for whiting fishing. They'll be champing at the bit if you use yabbies.

Cape Hillsborough should not be missed. It offers great low tide fishing and plenty of hot spots for mangrove jack, barramundi, whiting and the mighty mackerel as you walk around the headlands towards Wedge Island. Anglers catch blue salmon off the rocky headlands on the beach to the north of the cape.

Finally, Halliday Bay is just 4km up Cape Hillsborough Road. There is a boat launch area in the southern corner of the bay. Rocks fringe both ends and the southern end is worth a visit if you enjoy catching mangrove jack.

Seaforth is another pristine beach close by with great picnic and barbeque facilities. The nearest concrete boat ramp is the Victor Creek Ramp on the Seaforth Port Newry Road.

St Helens Beach to Cape Hillsborough is home to one of only three net free zones in Queensland. This allows the angler to encounter a smorgasbord of hard-fighting, great-tasting fish that can be caught on a multitude of different techniques.

WHAT REELY MATTERS

Location: Just 45 minutes' drive from Mackay or a full day's drive from Brisbane

Best time of year to fish: year-round, certain fish such as barramundi have specified fishing seasons

Fishing grounds: beaches, headlands, breakwaters and creeks

Facilities: extensive caravan parks, camping grounds and picnic grounds and accommodation

Species: barramundi, flathead, blue salmon, threadfin salmon, grunter, mangrove jack, trevally, whiting, fingermark, mackerel, queenfish, coral trout, sweetlip, tuna, nannygai and red emperor



LOCAL SECRET

Wallabies come down to the beaches of Cape Hillsborough around sunrise. It's a beautiful and rare sight, and one that you'll never forget.

THERESA CREEK, CONNORS RIVER & LAKE ELPHINSTONE

STRIKE GOLD

IN A REGION BUILT ON PURE GOLD, YOU'LL THINK YOU'VE STRUCK IT RICH WITH A BOUNTY OF GOLDEN PERCH AND SARATOGA CALLING THIS PLACE HOME.

This is a region of open landscapes, rich colours, vibrant communities and undisturbed fishing territory.





LOCAL SECRET

Make sure you stay at Lake Elphinstone until sunset for the seemingly endless views and the end of the day song of hundreds of birds.



In Clermont itself search the waters off the bank below the dam for barramundi and saratoga that lie in wait. Just 20 minutes from Clermont, Theresa Creek Dam is a local favourite for those chasing barramundi. The dam is positioned perfectly to reduce the effect of the coastal south-easterly winds which put the barramundi off the bite in other areas.

Make sure you have a Stocked Impoundment Permit for the Theresa Creek Dam and get ready to see the barramundi jump.

Clermont is one of northern Australia's most historic towns with more than 150 years of stories involving gold, shearing and the cattle industry and even a French connection.

Head about 1 hour and 20 minutes west from St Lawrence to find Connors River. Its large snags, rock bars and undercuts make it seem purposely made for sooty grunter. Get up early to catch them at their most active as the sun rises.

Follow in the footsteps of pioneers and gold diggers and head along Peak Downs Highway until Nebo Junction BP Petrol Station, then 53km along Collinsville/Elphinstone Road. From there, take Sutton Development Road and head for Lake Elphinstone.

The lake itself is a natural, permanent water body and ancient meeting point and food source for local indigenous people.

Today it attracts water sports enthusiasts and anglers alike. Many start at the southern end of the lake that offers access to boat ramps and basic amenities.

But once on the water the wide tree lined river offers many nooks and spots for awakening sleepy cod or hooking the acrobatic barramundi and saratoga.



CENTRAL HIGHLANDS

HOME OF WILD SARATOGA

WHILE THE SHEER DIVERSITY OF FISHING ON OFFER IN THIS REGION IS UNDENIABLE, IT'S THE OPPORTUNITY TO HUNT FOR A WILD SARATOGA THAT HAS ANGLERS OBSESSED. NATIVE ONLY TO THE FITZROY BASIN, THERE IS NOWHERE ELSE IN THE WORLD THAT CAN OFFER THE PROSPECT OF CATCHING A 'WILD' SARATOGA.



WHAT REELY MATTERS

Location: Location: 3 hours west of Rockhampton or a day's drive from Brisbane.

Best time of year to fish: year-round

Fishing grounds: dams, weirs, rivers and creeks

Facilities: vary from fully serviced caravan and camping sites to free self-sufficient bush camping

Species: wild saratoga, barramundi, yellow belly (golden perch), silver perch, sleepy cod, murray cod, eel-tailed catfish, sooty grunter and redclaw

GET HOOKED



Morning and afternoon are the best times to hunt for wild saratoga. Look for very quiet areas and be sure to take a stealthy approach as they are easily spooked.



IT'S NO WONDER THIS REGION KEEPS ANGLERS COMING BACK FOR ITS SHEER DIVERSITY OF FISHING LOCATIONS AND SPECIES.

NOGOA RIVER

Nogoa River offers weir fishing at the Selma and Town weirs, downstream from Fairbairn Dam. Our pick is the bottom (Town) weir, which offers easy-access, tree-lined banks and fishing rewards in the way of wild saratoga, yellow belly and barramundi.

LAKE MARABOON

The midway point between Rockhampton and Longreach, Lake Maraboon should not be missed. It is the only water body in the Central Queensland area that was once actively stocked with murray cod, not to mention is currently stocked with five other species, all primed to give unforgettable fishing experiences.

If freshwater crayfish is more your taste, put redclaw on the menu using opera house traps and vegetables as bait. With so many options, you could spend several hours to several days exploring Lake Maraboon's 15,000 hectares.

Make sure you stay until sunset to see the sky light up in vivid hues of red, orange and yellow. Then settle in for the night and enjoy a Red Claw beer at the nearby cabin and caravan park.

BEDFORD WEIR

Join the hunt for a wild saratoga at Bedford Weir, a short 20 minute drive north of Blackwater. Cast at the edge of water lilies and around fallen trees to coax out the prehistoric looking fish. It may take patience and persistence but your first wild saratoga strike will be etched into your mind forever. If the fish are biting, stay a few days and make use of the great camping facilities including hot showers, toilets and barbeques.

BINGEGANG WEIR

Venture off the beaten track to Bingegang Weir, a 40 minute drive north of Dingo on the mighty Mackenzie River. The spot is popular for its population of wild saratoga and secluded bush surrounds. You can easily spend a day at Bingegang without meeting another person. Just you and the fish.

Other spots that will catch your attention, hook, line and sinker include Bundoora Dam, Comet River, Mackenzie River (Riley's Crossing) and Zamia Creek.

When you're ready for a break, swap the line for a sieve and try your hand fossicking at the Sapphire Gemfields. Alternatively, put your sneakers on and have the camera handy to explore the beauty of our National Parks including Carnarvon Gorge and Blackdown Tableland.



@explorerockhampton
#ExploreRockhampton

@fishingthefitzroy
#FishingTheFitzroy

@centralhighlandsqld
#centralhighlandsqld

@SandstoneWondersQueensland
#sandstonewonders
#fishingqueensland





Australian Government



Queensland Government

@isaacregionalcouncil
#ourisaac

@hookedonmackay
#hookedonmackay

@mackaytourism
#meetmackayregion



DISCLAIMER: Although funding for this product has been provided by both the Australian and Queensland Governments, the material contained herein does not necessarily represent the views of either Government.

This brochure is brought to you by Mackay Tourism Limited. The information is provided as a guide only and may have been provided to Mackay Tourism Limited by third parties. Irrespective of any measures taken by Mackay Tourism Limited to check that the information is accurate or complete, in no event will Mackay Tourism Limited be liable to any person in contract, tort (including, but without limitation, negligence) or otherwise if any information on this site is incomplete or inaccurate.

PHOTO CREDITS: Tourism & Events Queensland, Marine Media "Australian Fishing Championships" and "Guided Fishing Downunder"

VISITOR INFORMATION CENTRES



Biloela Tourist Information Centre

Callide Street, Biloela Qld 4715

P: (07) 4992 2405

Blackwater International Coal Centre

Capricorn Highway, Blackwater Qld 4717

P: (07) 4982 7755

E: manager@biccc.com.au

Capricorn Spire Visitor Information Centre

176 Gladstone Road, Rockhampton Qld 4700

P: (07) 4936 8000

Central Highlands Visitor Information Centre

3 Clermont Street, Emerald Qld 4720

P: (07) 4982 4142

E: emerald@chdc.com.au

Clermont Visitor Information Centre

Clermont Historical Centre

15855 Gregory Highway, Clermont

P: (07) 4983 3311

Duaringa Historical and Tourism Centre

Mackenzie Park, Duaringa Qld 4712

P: (07) 4935 7077

Mackay Region Visitor Information Centre

Sarina Field Of Dreams, 1 Railway Square

Sarina Qld 4737

P: (07) 4837 1228

E: bookings@mackayregion.com

Mackay Visitor Information Kiosk

Bluewater Lagoon, Mackay Qld 4740

P: (07) 4837 1228

E: bookings@mackayregion.com

Melba House Visitor Information Centre

Melba House, Eungella Road, Marian Qld 4753

P: (07) 4954 4299

E: pvt-da@pioneervalley.com.au

Mount Morgan Railway Museum And Visitor Information Centre

1 Railway Parade, Mount Morgan Qld 4714

Open: 9am - 4pm Daily

P: (07) 4938 2312

W: mountmorgan.org.au

Moura Administration, Tourism Visitor Information Centre

43 Gillespie Street, Moura Qld 4718

P: (07) 4992 9500

E: enquiries@banana.qld.gov.au

Rural Hinterland Visitor Information Centre

11 Exhibition Street, Biloela Qld 4715

P: (07) 4992 5400

Springsure Federation Woolshed Information Centre

Gregory Highway, Springsure Qld 4722

P: (07) 4984 1961

Taroom Visitor Information Centre

10 Yaldwyn Street, Taroom Qld 4420

Open: Mon-Fri 10am-2pm (Dec-Feb)

Mon-Fri 9am-4pm (Mar-Nov)

P: (07) 4628 6113

E: hottaroom@hotmail.com

Theodore Visitor Information Centre

55a The Blvd, Theodore Qld 4719

P: (07) 4993 1900

E: theodoreinfocentre@gmail.com

ISAAC REGIONAL COUNCIL OFFICES

Clermont Office

Corner Karmoo and Daintree Streets

Clermont Qld 4721

Dysart Office

Shannon Crescent, Dysart Qld 4745

Glenden Office

Ewan Drive, Glenden Qld 4743

Middlemount Office

Shopping Centre, Middlemount Qld 4746

Moranbah Office

Grosvenor Complex, Batchelor Parade

Moranbah Qld 4744

Nebo Office

10 Reynolds Street, Nebo Qld 4742

St Lawrence Office

36 Macartney Street, St Lawrence Qld 4707

