

MANGROVE JACK

One must remain alert when fishing for mangrove jack as they will ambush a bait with lightening speed followed up by a strong run which often leads to snagging up on mangrove roots or other submerged obstacles. The trick is to hold the fish away from these hazards. Reasonable expectations will range from 600g to 2kg with the odd 3.5kg jack turning up. They grow to approx. 1m and a weight of around 11.5kg. If not handled correctly the dorsal and lateral fin spines can deliver puncture wounds.

They also possess very sharp canine type teeth that can hit the unsuspecting finger with alarming speed. They are best held firmly on the under side of the belly with a heavy cloth, taking care to avoid the gill spikes. Use a gaff or landing net to retrieve fish.

BAITS

Live poddy mullet, small herrings, yabbies, small winter whiting and whiting heads can be used as baits. A shallow surface or deep diving minnow type lure or a surface popper are also useful. Although present all year round the feeling is to fish the last 2 hours of the run out and the first 3 hours of the run in tides, between October and February in the early morning, late afternoon and night. Fishing at anchor gets the nod over drift fishing. They have been taken in the bays and estuaries and appear to show no preference for sky conditions. Winds up to 15 knots from the south, south-east and south-west are

suitable to jack fishing. All types of bottoms seem suitable to mangrove jack provided they can take refuge amongst underwater obstacles.

RODS, REELS AND RIGS

Gear yourself up with a medium taper boat rod to three metres and unite the rod with a medium to heavy duty egg beater reel capable of 250m by 8kg mono or a 150mm side cast reel.

HOW TO CATCH MANGROVE JACK

BAITS

Anchor boat. Adjust drag mechanism on reel to just under breaking strain of line. Cast to selected spot and allow bait to settle. Take up slack line. A very strong bump at the rod tip is usually the first indication of a jack's presence. This will be followed a few seconds later by a gear stripping run. It is crucial to have a firm grip of the rod when the initial bump is felt as the following run will be aimed directly at snags. As soon as the run starts, strike and hold rod firmly upright. This will reduce the chance of the fish entering snags. As Mangrove Jack are extremely powerful fighters, it is imperative to keep the line tight at all times. Take your time in retrieval of fish. As it tires, take up the weight of the fish.

LURES

Cast out and retrieve slowly. Repeat. Ensure lure hooks are solid and in good condition. Set drag mechanism on reel



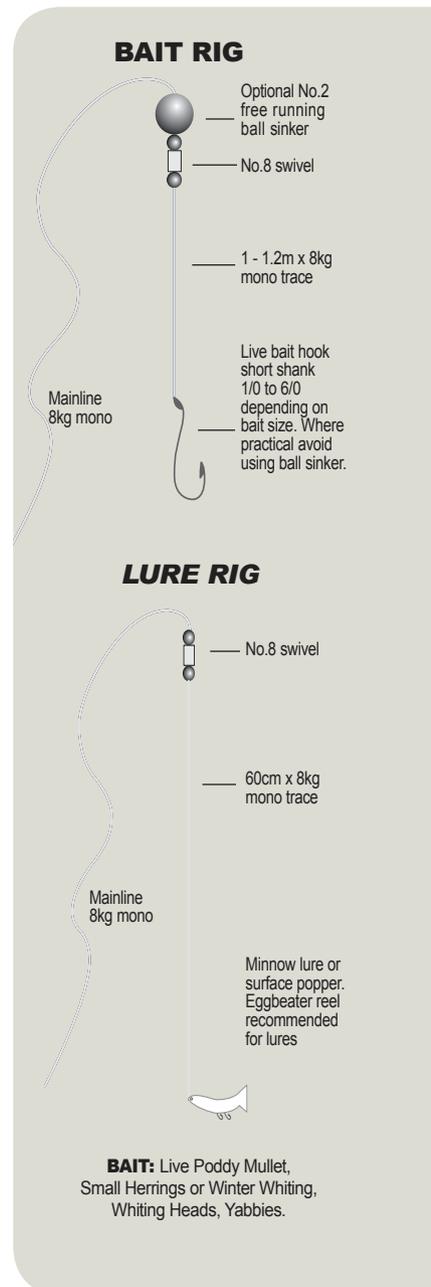
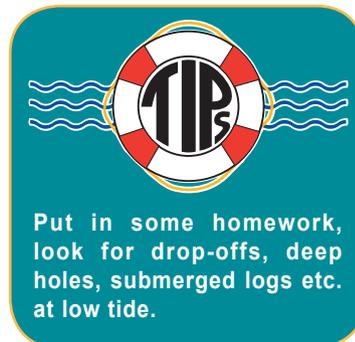
*“Splendid table fish”
“Extremely powerful fighter”
“Caught in Northern NSW”*

to just under breaking strain of line. Follow previous instructions as for baits when a hook up occurs.

WHERE TO CATCH MANGROVE JACK

Refer to Map pages.

MANGROVE JACK = MJ



Tucka Time!



Fillet of Mangrove Jack with French Mustard

Ingredients

2-150g skinless fillets
½ tbsp French mustard
½ tbsp melted butter

½ tbsp lemon juice
1 tbsp tomato sauce
Salt and fresh crushed peppercorn to taste

Method

Mix all of the ingredients together and brush over both sides of fish fillets. Place fillets into a greased pan and cook over low heat until fish flakes, turning twice only.