

# Hooked up

Whether you're trolling for a big barra on the Daly, flicking a plastic into the lilies on a Kakadu billabong, or chasing macs on the blue water, we've got you covered



**MATT FLYNN**  
FISHING

**T**here are so many good fishing opportunities at the moment. Sailfish have been going gangbusters off Dundee.

The Spanish mackerel have arrived at Darwin's Lee Point.

Big jewfish are biting well on coastal reefs and wrecks.

Full mud crabs will be on the move soon, if they aren't already.

Tuna schools move into the harbour at this time.

All this is on top of the great barra fishing being had across the board.

There were some big barra landed over Easter.

Not everyone did well, but there was no shortage of fish seen on sonar.

The East Alligator River is now open to 4WD.

For Darwin fishos, the world is their oyster at this time of year, after a good Wet.

In reports, Fishing and Outdoor World's Ronald Voukolos said most crews were focused on barra, but the bluewater was becoming a distraction.

"On the barra scene there have been a couple of big ones from around Shady Camp, fish over 110," he said.

"The Daly River was a bit hit and miss.

"A friend Wade Kelly fished the coastal creeks out of the Daly and didn't do well so he and came back in and fished inside Palmerston Island and had a good session on fish to 85.

"Vehicles are getting into the East Alligator River now, and crews are getting fish — it should only get better out there next week.

"Matt West did the South Alligator River and got fish to 75, they got about 30 all up and dropped a big one, he said the water was just getting to the right level for fishing the rockbars.

"I went downstream on the Adelaide River and we got a couple in the 80s, there is still a bit of water there but it didn't fire for us as we expected, and we got caught in a big storm.

"The fish were there though, including threadies. The Adelaide River upstream has been all right.

"On the bluewater the Easter bill fishing was unbelievable. One crew tagged more than a dozen sailfish.



Michael Rutishauer with an 80cm South Alligator River barramundi, entered in the FFF Seadogs competition's March round.

Picture: SUPPLIED

"Graeme Wrightson was out there and raised and dropped a heap of sailfish.

"Dave Gregory was barra fishing the Finnis River and on the dead part of the tide he ducked out to the bluewater and put a teaser out, they caught one sailfish on a Gulp and another on a Halco Madeye.

"The reef fishing has also been good out there, but the weather has not been so good."

Top End Tackle World's Charlotte Klose said some coastal creeks had been going off.

"Last weekend's spring tides got it going," she said.

"Pretty much everywhere they have been catching big fish and good numbers.

"The Daly and the South Alligator have been good and upstream on the Roper has been quite good too, along with Shady Camp's coastal creeks.

"A 125 was caught at Shady Camp at Sampan Creek on Saturday.

"Someone caught a 113 at the Daly and there were a few barra of 110cm caught over the weekend.

"The sailfish have been good off Dundee. One crew raised 22, hooked 18 and landed 12 so there are heaps out there.

"Inland, I have not heard much yet from Corroboree Billabong aside from a few rats being caught.

"The Adelaide River has been fishing well, Scotts Creek mouth has been good and Marrakai Creek.

"The East Alligator was not open for Easter so there were no reports.

"A few fish are being caught in the harbour.

"I have not heard any reports of mackerel yet, the charter boats are getting jewies on the half day charters."

Craig's Fishing Warehouse's Craig Grosvenor said Swim Creek had fished well in Chambers Bay.

"But like anywhere it can be all go one day and the next day it struggles," he said.

"I have yet to hear from Corroboree Billabong, it is probably still too high there, with only rats caught so far.

"There have been a few barra on the upper Adelaide River.

"The Daly has fished well over Easter, a mate did well at Clear Creek and then sounded up a heap of big fish at the mouth of Cleanskin.

"The sailfish have been about already.

"Mal Strong has been into the mackerel off

Darwin at Lee Point.

"Buffalo Creek has been producing landbased fish at dawn and dusk, but nothing much in the middle.

"There have been barra caught in the harbour to 84cm, so the harbour barras are obviously doing all right.

"There has been the odd big jewfish trolled up at the mouth of Shady Camp, Darin Riley got a 130cm jewfish on barra gear."

One bloke still smiling will be Joss Gentle, who made the trip to Darwin for the 2018 run-off.

He fished the Finnis River and caught a 124cm barramundi on a gold Bomber lure.

It was only his third barramundi.

Another one smiling is Jack "theodosius" Feeney who entered the winning 119cm Shady Camp fish in the FFF Seadogs March round at [www.fishingterritory.com](http://www.fishingterritory.com).

He was fishing with skipper Craig "Lats" Latimore.

The big fish took a Reidys Renegade.

There's still time to enter the 2018 Seadogs brag mat competition as it is judged on the best six of 11 rounds.

Lob at [www.fishingterritory.com](http://www.fishingterritory.com) for details.

## GEESE SHOOTING SHOULD BE A GOOD SEASON, DESPITE 'LACKING' AERIAL SURVEYS OF THE TOP END

**T**he geese at Harrison Dam and Lambell's lagoon finally flew off to breed two weeks ago.

These local birds certainly stayed close to Darwin and gorged themselves on banana plants, paw paws and Cavalcade grass destined for hay since January.

The horticulturalists get hit hard these days. Their crops are attacked by birds, including geese from July to March. That is a long time to be paying staff to drive around scaring them off.

Let us hope the breeding season is a ripper. It should be.

The rainfall for the past three months has been just what the geese order for successful nesting and recruitment.

Areas of the Top End had rainfall in January ranging from 400-800mm, February: 300-400mm, and March: 100-400mm. These should be ideal conditions for nests not to be

abandoned due to flooding and eggs should hatch.

When our local birds flew away I rang a countryman from the Daly River area and asked if he could let me know when they begin nesting in his area.

He said that his nanna said there were already eggs in nests at Peppimenarti.

I have another contact that has country in Kakadu who will report when he sees nesting occur out east.

I don't believe the aerial surveys will take place until May so many of the early nests out in the Daly River and Moyle River regions will go uncounted.

I believe this was the case last year. I was on the aerial survey over this area and saw hundreds of what I believed were recent nests that neither had a goose sitting on them, nor eggs.

When I tried to claim these as nests the

scientist back at HQ denied that they were nests, but standing platforms.

It wasn't until some days later when we saw goslings running away from such a nest (standing platform) that I was proved correct.

Unfortunately, days of seeing these vacated nests were not added to the data. I have my doubts on the integrity of the aerial survey because of this.

A cynic may ask if the goose population was so low, the indigenous harvest over the past few years would have been very low too.

Has the mortality rate for Aborigines reliant on goose meat been reflective of people dying of starvation at the out stations? Were there food drops to supplement what they could not hunt?

The scientists certainly said the indigenous harvest would still be 60,000 despite there only being 725,000 birds.

They also state Aboriginal people hunt

60,000 birds when there were 2.9 million geese. I'm afraid I don't get it. Something doesn't add up.

Everyone can come out and try clay target shooting every Friday arvo at the NT Field and Game range, Brandt Rd, Mickett Creek Shooting Complex, Knuckey Lagoon from 5pm till 9pm.

There is a 50 target Simulated Field clay competition at the range next Sunday morning from 8am. All members welcome.

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— BART IRWIN