



# Wallis Lake Recreational Fishing Guide

## Fisheries Compliance Unit

July 2024

Fishing is a fun, outdoor activity for the whole family. Fishing rules help ensure healthy and sustainable fisheries for future generations.

The waterways of the Wallis Lake district provide excellent beach, rock, and boat fishing opportunities. This guide provides essential information on fishing, including any closures and restrictions, which apply within Wallis Lake region comprising Wallis and Smiths Lakes estuaries, Khappinghat Creek, the Manning River and its tributaries, Crowdy Head, and the offshore waters between Seal Rocks and Diamond Head.

The Port Stephens – Great Lakes Marine Park covers an area of ocean waters within the Wallis Lake region between Cape Hawke Surf Life Saving Club and Seal Rocks, offshore to the 3 nautical mile limit of state waters. It also covers the estuarine waters of Smiths Lake and its tributaries. For further information on marine park rules and zoning see [www.mpa.nsw.gov.au](http://www.mpa.nsw.gov.au) or phone (02) 4916 3970.

DPI fisheries officers routinely patrol waterways, boat ramps and foreshores to advise anglers about responsible fishing practices and to ensure compliance with NSW fishing regulations.

Information on bag and size limits and legal fishing gear can be obtained at [www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/fisheries](http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/fisheries) or by visiting your local DPI fisheries office.

To report suspected illegal fishing activity, call the Fishers Watch phone line on **1800 043 536** (free call) or on-line at: [www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/fisheries/compliance/report-illegal-activity](http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/fisheries/compliance/report-illegal-activity). All calls will be treated as confidential and you can remain anonymous.

## RECREATIONAL FISHING FEE

When fishing in NSW waters, both freshwater and saltwater, you are required by law to pay the NSW recreational fishing fee and carry a receipt showing the payment of the fee. This applies when spear fishing, hand lining, hand gathering, trapping, bait

collecting and prawn netting or when in possession of fishing gear in, on or adjacent to waters.

All money raised by the NSW recreational fishing fee is spent on improving recreational fishing in NSW. Projects include:

- building artificial reefs to create new fishing locations;
- fish aggregating devices (FADs) to enhance fishing for dolphinfish and even tuna and marlin;
- creation of recreational fishing havens;
- angler facilities such as fish cleaning tables and fishing platforms;
- stocking of freshwater fish in dams and rivers;
- essential research on popular recreational fish species;
- restoring important fish habitat;
- marine stocking of prawns in estuaries;
- angler education and advisory programs such as the Fishcare Volunteer program, fishing workshops, Get Hooked...it's fun to fish primary schools education and fishing guides.

Much more information is available at [www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/fisheries](http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/fisheries).

You can pay the NSW recreational fishing fee at [www.onegov.nsw.gov.au](http://www.onegov.nsw.gov.au) or by calling 1300 369 365 or at many outlets throughout NSW, such as most fishing tackle stores, caravan parks, local shops, service stations and many Kmart stores.

Some exemptions apply to paying the fishing fee, including people under the age of 18, holders of pensioner concession cards and Aboriginal people. For further information on exemptions go to [www.dpi.nsw.gov.au](http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au) or call (02) 4424 7499.

You may not need to pay the NSW recreational fishing fee if you are fishing on a charter boat, hire boat or under the supervision of a fishing guide. Please check with the charter/hire boat operator, or guide, before you go fishing. If they do not hold a recreational fishing fee exemption certificate you will need to pay the NSW recreational fishing fee.

## RECREATIONAL FISHING CLOSURES

A number of fishing closures exist in the Wallis Lake area. These exist for a variety of reasons, from public health and safety to preserving unique aquatic environments. The majority of these closures are signposted and penalties apply for not complying with fisheries rules and regulations.

### General fishing closures

**All NSW waters.** During the period May to August (inclusive) each year Australian Bass and Estuary Perch can only be taken by catch and release fishing in any NSW waters except impoundments and the waters of rivers above impoundments.

### Recreational netting and trapping

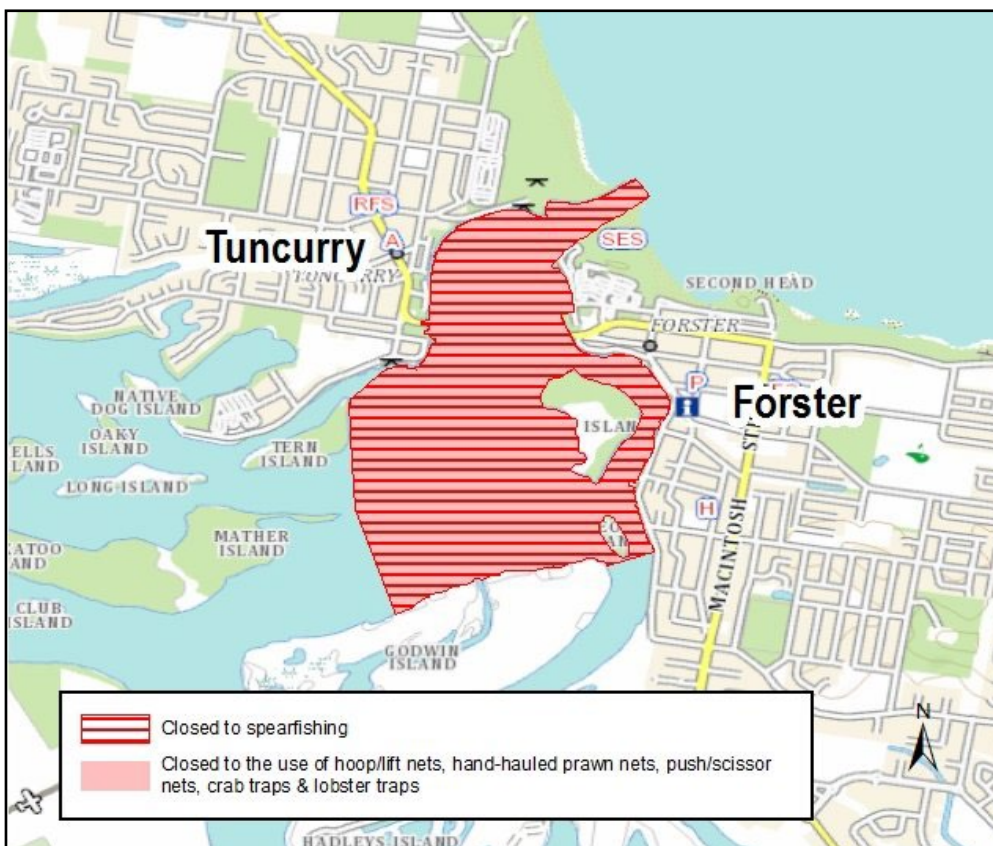
**Wallis Lake (Figure 1).** The following waters are closed to any method involving the use of hoop or lift net, hand-hauled prawn net, push or scissors net (prawns), crab trap or lobster trap: the whole of the tidal waters within the following boundaries: commencing at the entrance to Wallis Lake at the eastern extremity of the northern breakwater; and bounded by that breakwater and a part of the foreshores of the Village of Tuncurry generally southerly to the southerly prolongation of the western side of Wharf Street; then by a line drawn

southwesterly to the northern foreshore at a point 32°10.97'S, 152°29.88'E; then by a line drawn generally southerly to the northern foreshore at a point 32°11.27'S, 152°29.89'E; then by a line drawn generally southeasterly to the southwestern foreshore of Godwin Island at a point 32°11.56'S, 152°29.99'E; then by the northern foreshore of that island northeasterly to the northernmost point; then by a line drawn generally northeasterly to the western prolongation of the southern boundary of section 27, Village of Forster; then by that foreshore generally northerly to the southern breakwater; by that breakwater to its eastern extremity and by a line across the entrance to the point of commencement.

**Manning River (Figure 2).** The following waters are closed to nets of every description, other than the landing net: the whole of the tidal waters of Manning River and its tributaries, from a line drawn across the river at the junction of Cedar Party Creek, including that creek upstream to Abbots Falls near Wingham.

**Manning River (Upper Reaches).** The following waters are closed to any method involving the use of a net, other than a landing net: the whole of the non-tidal waters of Manning River and its tributaries, from Abbots Falls near Wingham upstream to its source.

Figure 1. Wallis Lake





**Wallis Lake (Forster Keys Canal Estate) (Figure 3).** The following waters are closed to any method involving the use of a net, other than a dip or scoop net (prawns), a hoop or lift net or a landing net: the whole of the canal waters of Forster Keys Estate, adjacent to (but not including) Pipers Creek, contained within a line drawn across the entrance to Wyuna Canal, a line drawn from the southwest corner of Lot No 1 Wyuna Place to the northwest corner of Lot No 87 Elouera Crescent and a line from the southeast corner of Lot No 160 Elizabeth Parade to the southwest corner of Lot No 116 Sirius Key.

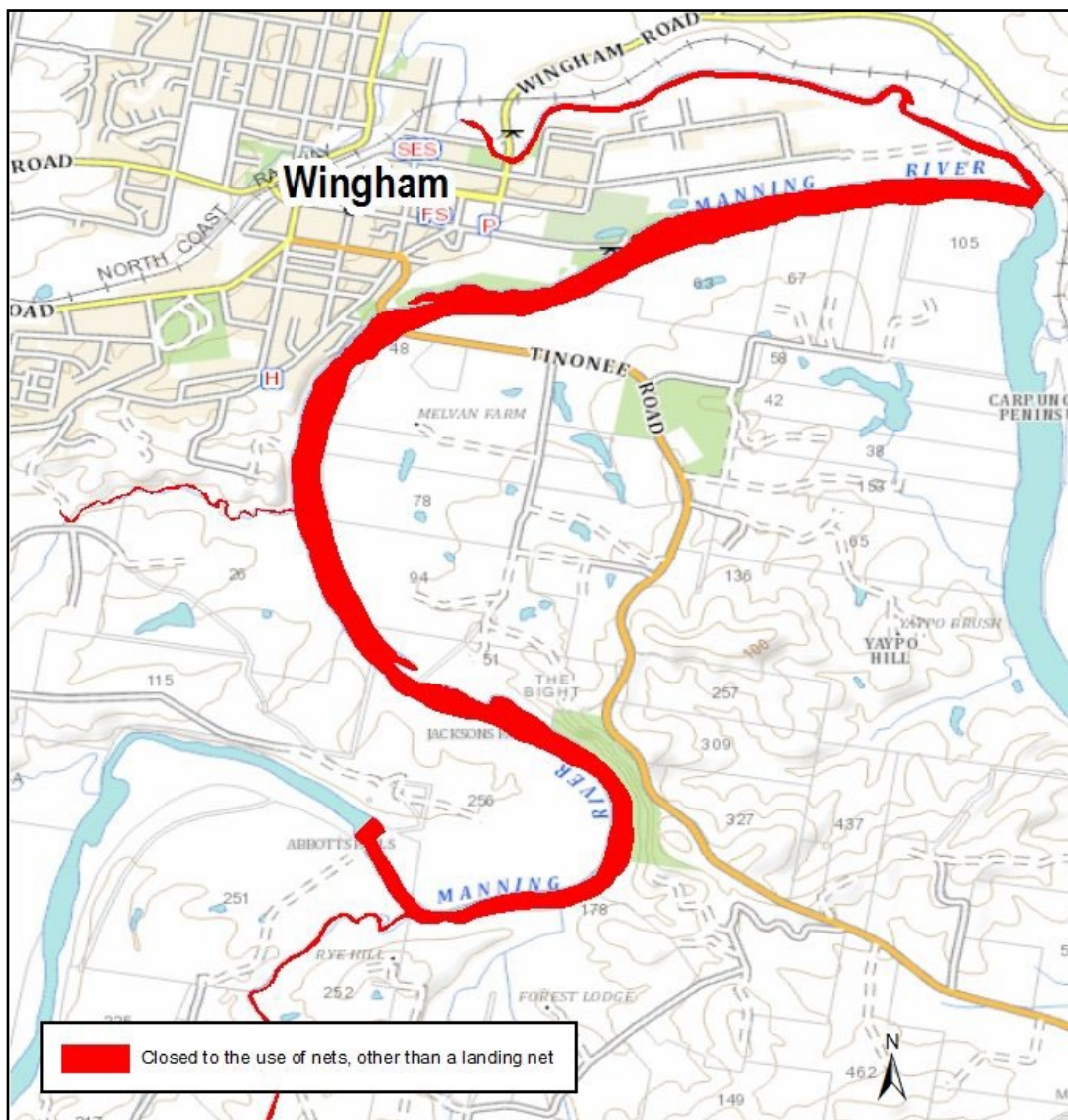
**Crowdy Head Boat Harbour (Figure 4).** The following waters are closed to any method of taking rock lobster and are also closed to any method involving the use of a trap or a hoop or lift net: the whole of the waters of Crowdy Head boat harbour and the adjoining South Pacific Ocean up to a line drawn from the northernmost extremity of the

southern breakwater to the westernmost extremity of the northern breakwater, that part of the South Pacific Ocean extending 100 metres in a westerly direction from the abovementioned line, and that part of the South Pacific Ocean extending 100 metres on the seaward side of the breakwaters of Crowdy Head boat harbour from the beginning of the breakwaters to their extremities.

**Wallamba River.** The following waters are closed to any method involving the use of a net, other than a landing net: the whole of the waters of Wallamba River and its tributaries, upstream to its source from the Pacific Highway bridge at Nabiac.

**Wallamba River (Upper Reaches).** The following waters are closed to any method involving the use of a net, other than a landing net: the whole of the non-tidal waters of Wallamba River and its tributaries, from the causeway at Clarksons Crossing, Nabiac upstream to its source.

Figure 2. Manning River



## Spearfishing and diving

Spearfishing in NSW is a popular form of recreational fishing and has been recognised for its selective fishing practices. Spearfishers and divers are permitted to use:

- a snorkel when taking fish;
- SCUBA and hookah apparatus for scallops and sea urchins only; and
- bare/gloved hand only when taking lobsters.

Spearfishers and divers are **not** permitted to use:

- a light with a spear/spear-gun;
- powerheads and/or explosive devices.

Spearfishing is prohibited in freshwater as well as many entrances, coastal lagoons and other tidal waters.

The following areas covered by this guide are closed to spearfishing:

**All NSW ocean beaches**, excluding the last 20m at each end of the beach.

**Wallis Lake (Figure 1).** The whole of the tidal waters within the following boundaries: commencing at the entrance to Wallis Lake at the eastern extremity of the northern breakwater; and bounded by that breakwater and a part of the foreshores of the Village of Tuncurry generally southerly to the southerly prolongation of the western side of Wharf Street; then by a line drawn southwesterly to the northern foreshore at a point 32°10.97'S, 152°29.88'E; then by a line drawn

generally southerly to the northern foreshore at a point 32°11.27'S, 152°29.89'E; then by a line drawn generally southeasterly to the southwestern foreshore of Godwin Island at a point 32°11.56'S, 152°29.99'E; then by the northern foreshore of that island northeasterly to the northernmost point; then by a line drawn generally northeasterly to the western prolongation of the southern boundary of section 27, Village of Forster; then by that foreshore generally northerly to the southern breakwater; by that breakwater to its eastern extremity and by a line across the entrance to the point of commencement.

**Manning River (Figure 5).** The whole of the tidal waters of that part of the Manning River at Harrington within the following boundaries: commencing at the southwestern extremity of the northern training wall and bounded by a line west to the northwestern bank of Manning River, by the line of high water mark generally northerly and easterly to the breakwater; by that breakwater generally easterly to its eastern extremity, by a line southwesterly to the northern extremity of the sandbank forming the southern point of entrance of Manning River (Harrington Inlet), by the line of high water mark of the southeastern bank of the Manning River generally southwesterly to the eastern shore of the mouth of Mangrove Creek; and then by a line generally northeasterly to the point of commencement. Additional waters closed to spearfishing are: the whole of the waters of the lagoon north of the northern training wall at Manning River and near the entrance of the river, known as the Harrington Swimming Lagoon.

Figure 3. Forster Keys Canal Estate

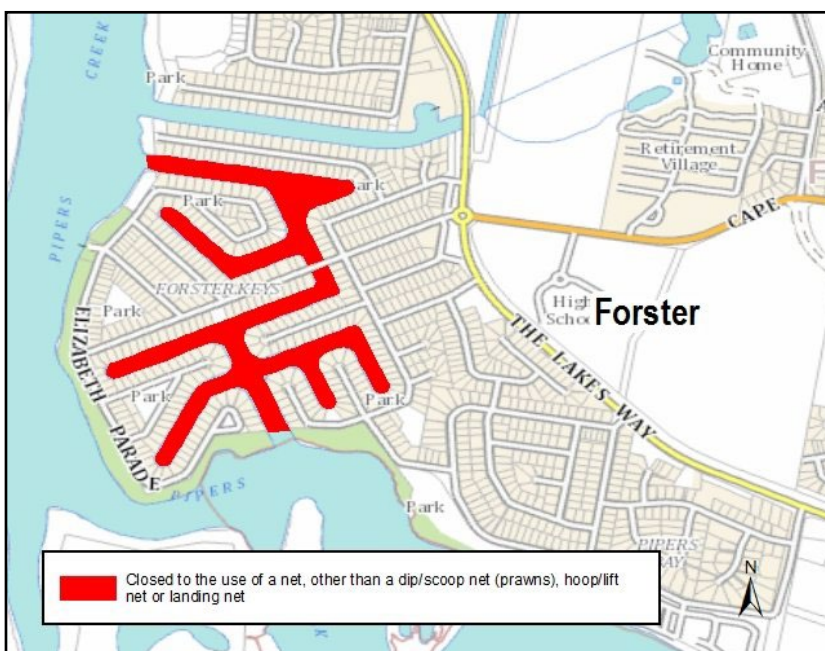




Figure 4. Crowdy Head

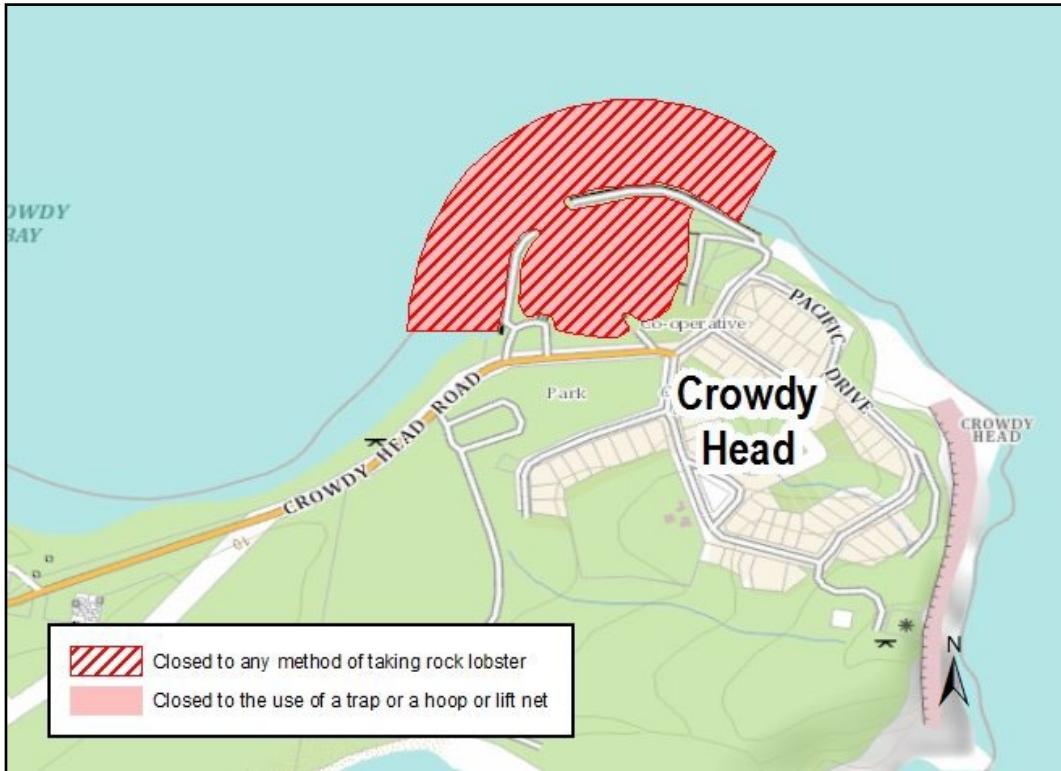
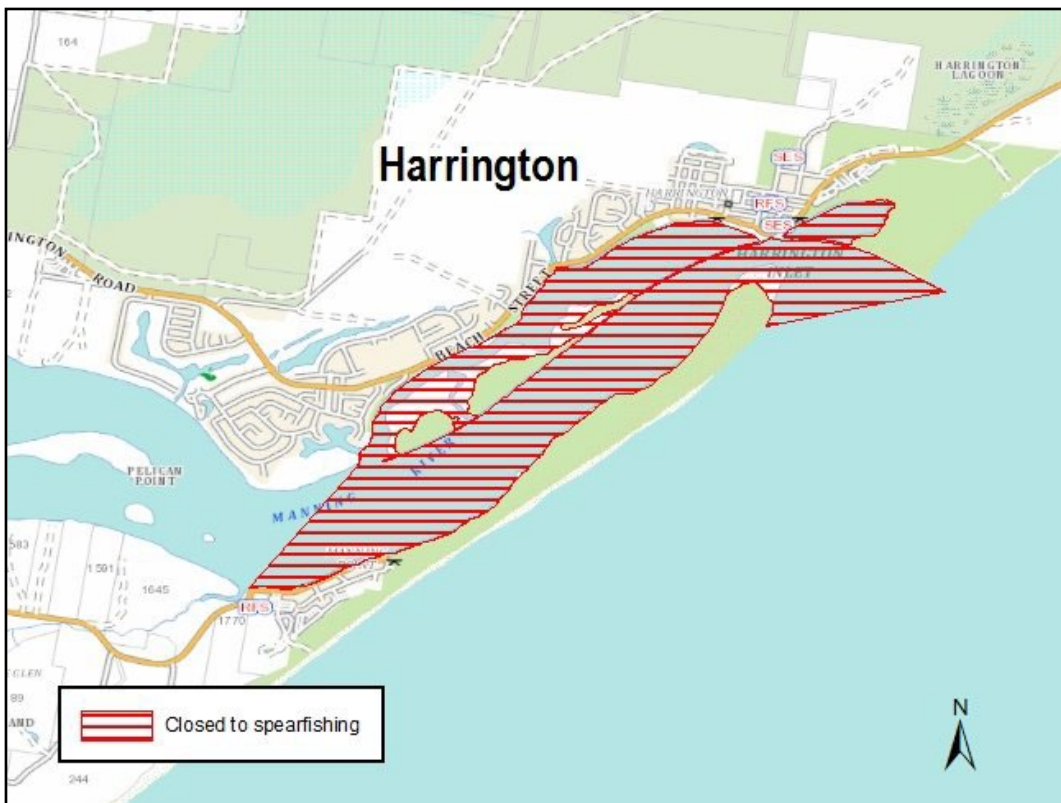


Figure 5. Manning River



## GENERAL RECREATIONAL FISHING RULES

- It is illegal for recreational fishers to sell their catch.
- Taking Eastern Blue Groper (also known as Blue, Brown or Red Groper) is prohibited.
- Protected species, prohibited size or fish in excess of the bag limit must be returned to the water immediately.
- It is illegal to jag/foul hook fish other than through the mouth.
- Leave all commercial fishing gear in place and do not disturb commercial fishers going about their lawful business.
- You must not alter the length of fish by filleting and/or removing the head until you are well away from the water. This rule does not apply at areas normally used for cleaning fish, such as boat ramp cleaning tables, if the fish are for immediate consumption or immediate use as bait, or for fish that do not have a legal length. You may clean fish by gilling and gutting only.
- It is an offence to interfere with any oyster lease. Please ensure that your vessel, your vessel's wash or your tackle does not interfere with any part of an oyster lease, including the oysters.
- Abalone gut is prohibited for use as bait in NSW waters to prevent the spread of abalone viral ganglioneuritis (AVG).
- Collecting pipis by recreational fishers for human consumption is prohibited in NSW. A maximum of 50 pipis is permitted to be collected for bait and not be removed more than 50m from the high tide mark. Pipis and cockles may contain toxins due to natural algal blooms. The blooms are not always visible.

### Fishing safely

Fishing is fun, but remember to take care and exercise caution. Rock fishing can be particularly dangerous due to the unpredictable nature of the ocean. Follow these basic safety tips at all times when rock fishing:

- Always wear a life jacket
- Stay alert to the weather conditions
- Plan an escape route in case you are washed in
- Never turn your back on the ocean

- Wear appropriate non-slip footwear and light clothing
- Do not jump in if someone is washed in - wait for assistance
- Never fish alone

For more information go to

[www.safefishing.com.au](http://www.safefishing.com.au)

### Responsible fishing

- Reduce wildlife injuries by attending your lines and avoid bird feeding areas.
- Only catch sufficient fish for your immediate needs. Release all others using best practice catch and release techniques. Remember all fish, including scavengers, are important to the ecosystem.
- If you retain your catch, dispatch all fish and invertebrates swiftly and humanely.
- Dispose of all litter and fish waste responsibly.
- Be considerate of others and keep noise to a minimum, especially in residential areas.
- Reduce wildlife injuries by attending your lines and avoid bird feeding areas.
- Use environmentally friendly fishing tackle such as lead alternative sinkers, biodegradable line, and non-stainless hooks where possible.
- Act responsibly when you have reached your bag limit and you remain in the fishing grounds.
- Do not interfere with commercial fishing activities or commercial fishing gear.

### Recreational harvest of shellfish

Shellfish are filter feeders and they sometimes accumulate harmful substances from the water during feeding. Shellfish collected by recreational fishers should never be eaten raw. This is because recreationally harvested shellfish are not subject to the same strict food safety controls as commercially harvested shellfish. Consequently the NSW Food Authority recommends eating only shellfish harvested under a recognised program. For more information check the DPI Recreational Fishing Guide or [www.foodauthority.nsw.gov.au](http://www.foodauthority.nsw.gov.au) or phone 1300 552 406.

### Penalties

Penalties apply to persons who take or possess fish (including invertebrates, shells, etc.) taken in contravention of fishing closures, including aquatic reserves and intertidal protected areas.

## Further information

For more information about fishing restrictions that apply to Wallis Lake's waterways and beaches, please contact the;

Wallis Lake Fisheries Office.

2 Palm Street

Postal Address: PO Box 89

Tuncurry NSW 2428

Phone: 1800 043 536

Web: [www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/fisheries](http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/fisheries)

Check for updates of this Recreational Fishing Guide at:

[www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/fishing/recreational/resources](http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/fishing/recreational/resources)

---

© State of New South Wales through the NSW Department of Trade and Investment 2024. You may copy, distribute and otherwise freely deal with this publication for any purpose, provided that you attribute the NSW Department of Primary Industries as the owner.

Published by the NSW Department of Primary Industries.

Disclaimer: The information contained in this publication is based on knowledge and understanding at the time of writing (July 2024). However, because of advances in knowledge, users are reminded of the need to ensure that information upon which they rely is up to date and to check currency of the information with the appropriate officer of the Department of Primary Industries or the user's independent adviser.

INT15/102824

---