



# Richmond 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 Richmond district waterways provide excellent beach, rock, and boat fishing opportunities. This guide provides essential information on fishing, including any closures and restrictions, which apply along within the Richmond district from Byron Bay in the north, to Woody Bay in the south and west to the Great Dividing Range.

Lennox Head is a popular recreational fishing area within the Richmond region and is the southern boundary of the Cape Byron Marine. For further information on marine park rules and zoning see [www.mpa.nsw.gov.au](http://www.mpa.nsw.gov.au).

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 Richmond 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.

### Total fishing closures

All methods of fishing are prohibited in the following waters.

Figure 1. Richmond River – southern Burns Point ferry



**Richmond River (Figure 1).** The following waters are closed to all methods of fishing: Southern Burns Point – the whole of the waters within a 50m radius of the southern Burns Point ferry approach ramp on the Richmond River at Ballina.

### 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

**Richmond River, lower reaches (Figure 2).** The following waters are closed to any method involving the use of a trap, other than a bait trap: the whole of the waters of the Richmond River and tributaries from a line drawn between the eastern extremities of the northern and southern breakwaters, upstream to the Burns Point ferry crossing.

**Richmond River – Ballina Quays (Figure 3).** 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 the Richmond River

known as Ballina Quays, north of a line drawn from the southwestern corner of lot 1 Riverside Drive, bearing 231°31' to the southwestern bank of Ballina Quays.

### Richmond River – Artificial Lakes (Figure 2).

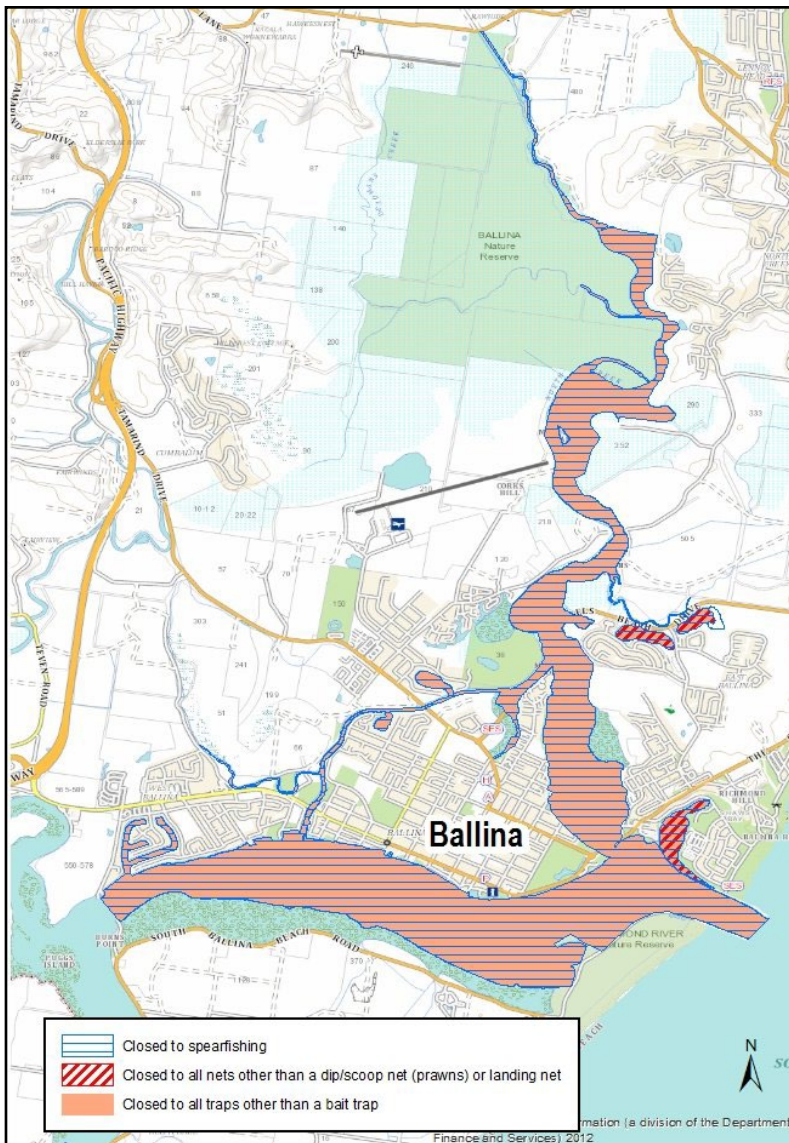
The following waters are closed to any method involving the use of a net, other than a dip or scoop net (prawns) or a landing net: the whole of the tidal waters of the artificial lakes known as Prospect Lake, Chickiba Lake at East Ballina, Shaws Bay and Saltwater Lagoon (north of the northern training wall and breakwater) and their tributaries.

**Richmond River and Wilsons River (upper reaches).** The following waters are closed to any method involving the use of a trap, other than a bait trap: the whole of the tidal waters of the Richmond River and tributaries (including all the waters of the Wilsons River), upstream from the road bridge at Woodburn.

**Evans River Entrance (Figure 4).** The following waters are closed to the use of a lobster trap, a crab trap, or a bait trap: the whole of the waters of Evans River and its tributaries, from a line drawn

between the northernmost points of the eastern and western breakwaters at the entrance to Evans River, upstream to Elm Street road bridge.

**Figure 2. Richmond River – lower reaches, artificial lakes and spearfishing**



## 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.

**Richmond River (Figure 2).** The following waters are closed to spearfishing: the whole of the waters of the Richmond River and its tributaries upstream from a line drawn between eastern extremities of the northern and southern breakwalls at its



confluence with the South Pacific Ocean to the Burns Point ferry crossing.

**Evans River (Figure 4).** The following waters are closed to spearfishing: the whole of the tidal waters of the Evans River together with its tributaries, from

the Pacific Highway bridge, downstream to its meeting with the South Pacific Ocean, together with the waters of the South Pacific Ocean for a distance of 50 metres from the northern breakwall of the River.

Figure 3. Ballina Quays

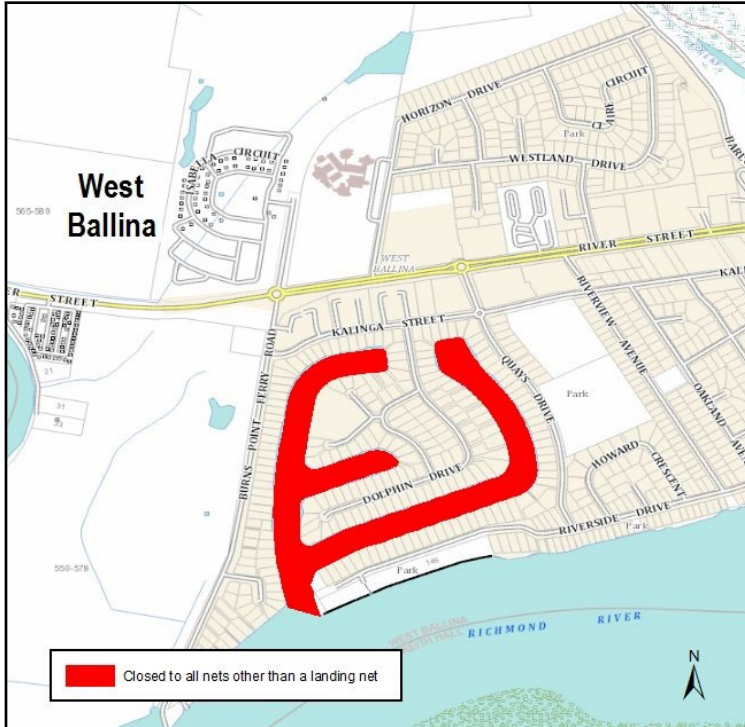
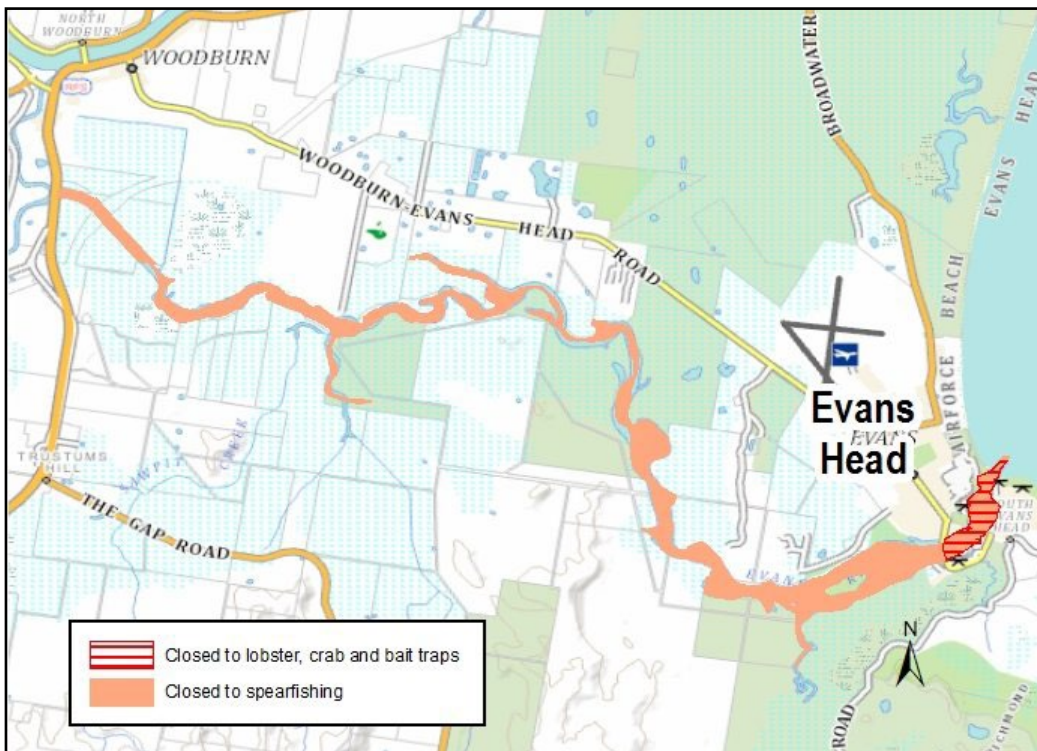


Figure 4. Evans River



## 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 Richmond's waterways and beaches, please contact:

Richmond Fisheries Office.

1243 Bruxner Highway

WOLLONGBAR NSW 2477

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.

INT15/98455

---