

Shoalhaven 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 Shoalhaven waterways provide excellent beach, rock, and boat fishing opportunities. This guide provides essential information on fishing, including any closures and restrictions, which apply along the Shoalhaven coast from Gerroa and Lake Conjola.

The Jervis Bay Marine Park is within the Shoalhaven district and extends from Kinghorn Point in the north to Sussex Inlet in the south. The tidal waters of Currumbene Creek, Moona Moona Creek, Carama Inlet, Wowly Gully, Callala Creek and Currarong Creek are also within the Marine Park. For further information on marine park rules and zoning see 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, through the [FishSmart app](#) or by contacting your local fisheries office.

To report suspected illegal fishing activity, call the Fishers Watch phone line on **1800 043 536** (free call) or report on-line at <https://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/fishing/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 spearfishing, 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 fish into 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.

You can pay the NSW recreational fishing fee at 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 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 [District] 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.

Currambene Creek - Lady Denman Heritage Complex (Figure 1)

Shoalhaven River - Tallowa Dam (Figure 2). The waters of Shoalhaven River, from the Tallowa Dam wall downstream for a distance of 300 metres to a line drawn across the river indicated by two posts on opposite banks of the river.

Figure 1. Lady Denman Heritage Complex

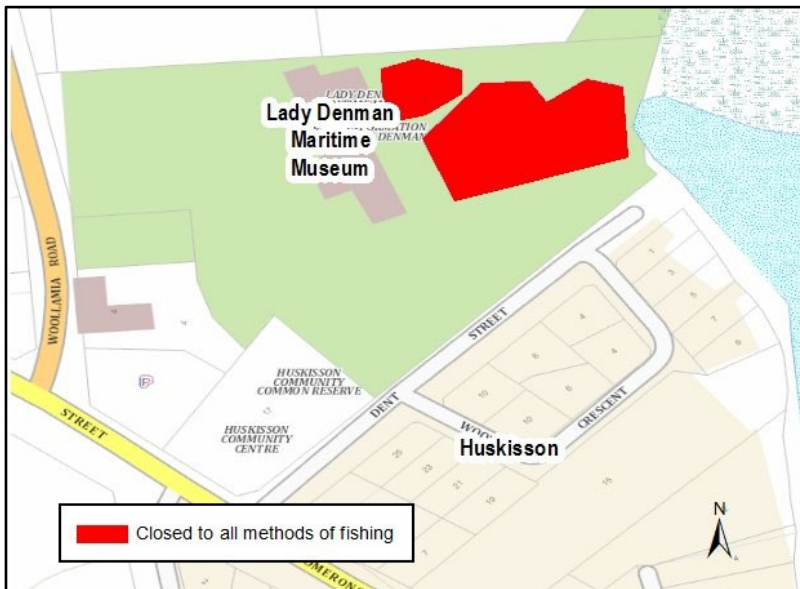
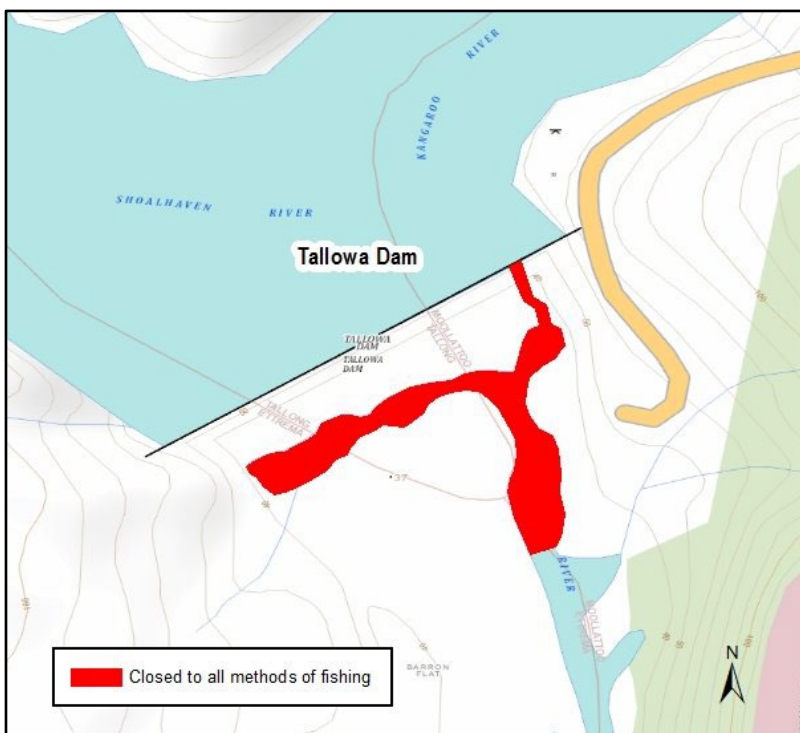


Figure 2. Tallowa Dam



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

Crookhaven River entrance (Figure 3). The following waters are closed to all methods involving the use of a trap, other than a bait trap; the waters

of Crookhaven River, from its confluence with the South Pacific Ocean upstream to a line drawn from the western extremity of Orient Point, generally northeasterly to the southeastern extremity of Haven Island, then generally easterly to the western extremity of the training wall of Comerong Island.

Canal Lagoon & Berrara Creek. The use of a hoop or lift net is prohibited in all the waters of Canal Lagoon and Berrara Creek, from their confluence with the South Pacific Ocean upstream to their source.

Figure 3. Crookhaven River

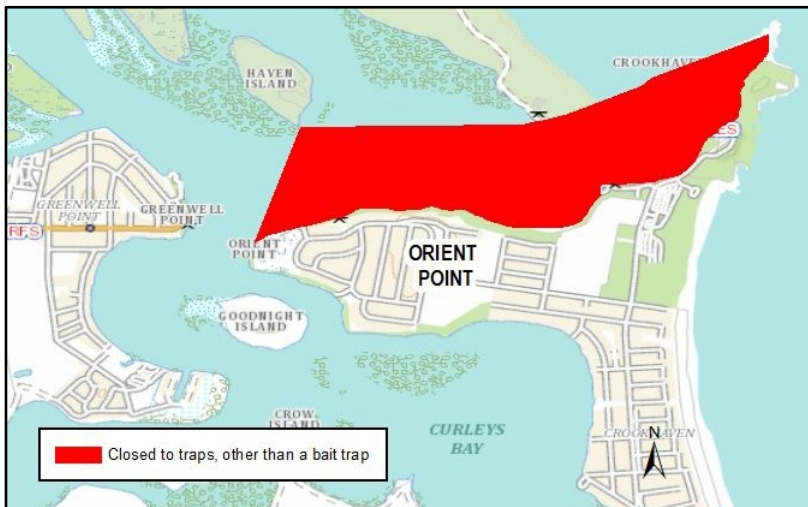
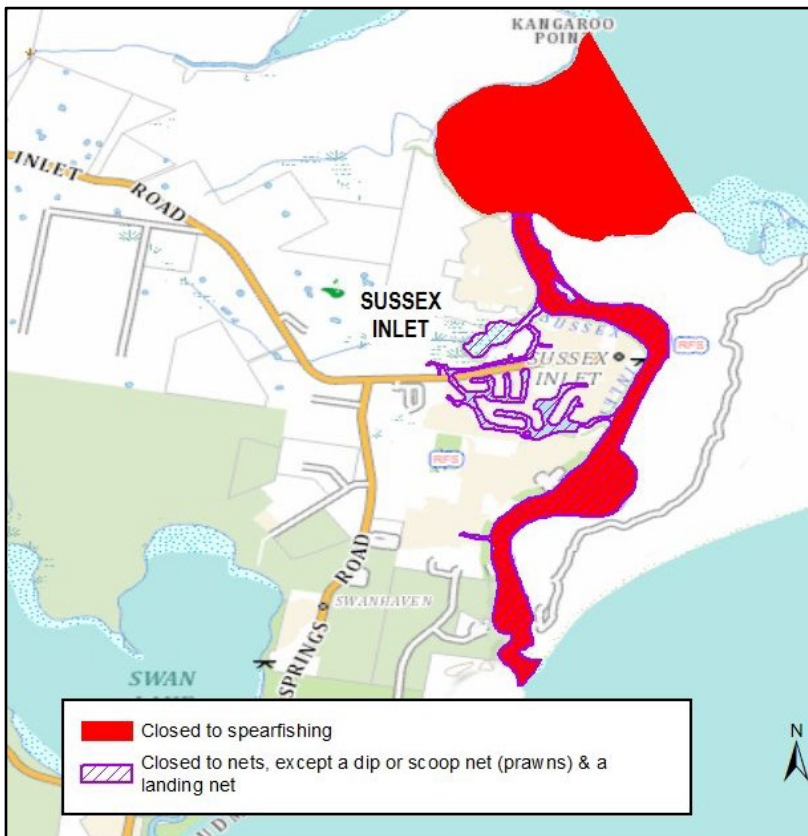


Figure 4. St Georges Basin and Sussex Inlet



St Georges Basin including Sussex Haven (Figure 4). The following waters are closed to the use of nets, other than a dip or scoop net (prawns) and a landing net; all the waters of Sussex Haven and its tributaries, from its confluence with the South Pacific Ocean upstream to its confluence with St Georges Basin.

Swan Lake (Figure 5). The following waters are closed to the use of nets, other than a dip or scoop net (prawns) and a landing net; all the waters of Swan Lake bounded by a line commencing at a

post marked FD on the eastern foreshore of Swan Lake at the intersection of the western prolongation of the southern boundary of portion 54 with the high water mark, then by a line bearing due west for 91 metres, then by a northerly line to a point 91 metres due west of a post marked FD on the foreshore at the intersection of the western prolongation of the northern boundary of portion 56, then by a line easterly to that post, and then generally southerly by the high water mark to the point of commencement.

Figure 5. Swan Lake

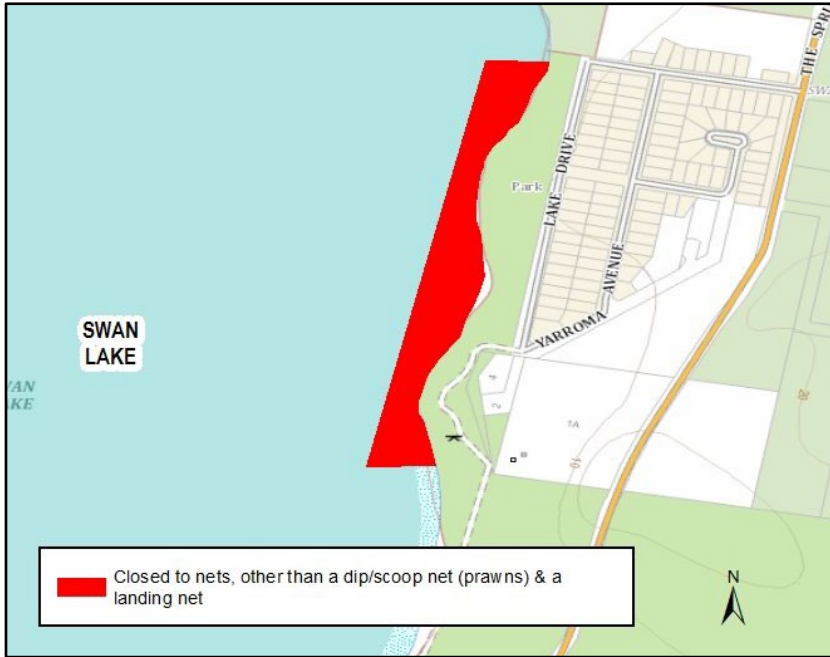
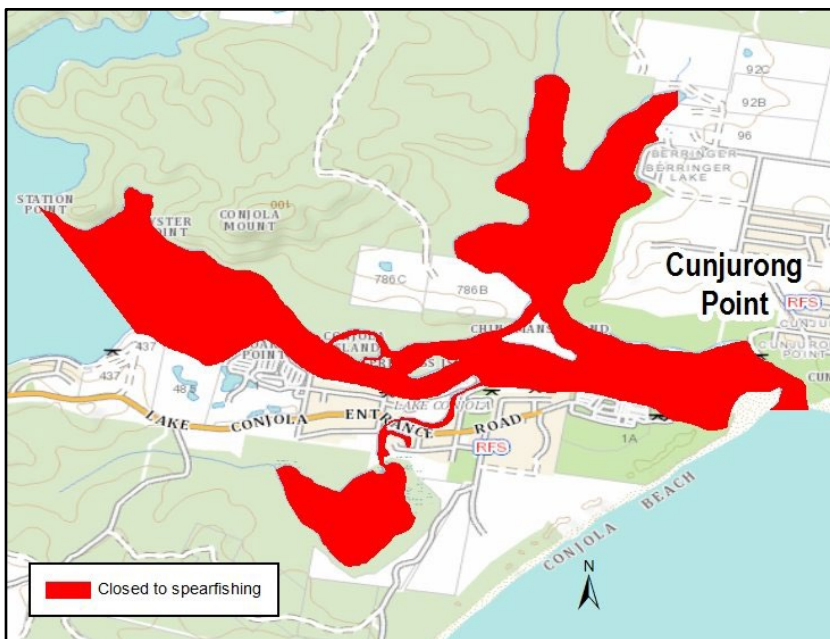


Figure 6. Lake Conjola



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.

Lake Conjola & Berringer Lake (Figure 6)

eastwards of a line drawn from the northern extremity of Roberts Point to the western extremity of Station Point, downstream to the South Pacific Ocean.

Sussex Haven and St Georges Basin (Figure 4).

All the waters of that part of Sussex Haven, its creeks and inlets, and that part of St Georges Basin, its creeks and bays, between a line drawn northeasterly from the most easterly southeastern corner of Reserve 81746 for Public Recreation notified 3 July 1959, to the point of junction of the eastern shore of Sussex Haven with the shore of the South Pacific Ocean and a line from the easternmost extremity of Kangaroo Point bearing 144° to a point marked broad arrow over FD on the southern shore of the Basin, situated about 1.6 km easterly from the junction of the southern shore of the Basin with the eastern shore of Sussex Haven.

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.

- 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 within 50m of the high tide mark. Pipis and cockles may contain toxins due to natural algal blooms. The blooms are not always visible.
- Intertidal invertebrates must not be shucked except for immediate use as bait.
- It is illegal to jag/foul hook fish other than through the mouth.

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

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.
- 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 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 the Shoalhaven waterways and beaches, please contact the;

Shoalhaven Fisheries Office.

4 Woollamia Road

Postal address: PO Box 97

HUSKISSON NSW 2540

Phone: 1800 043 536

Web: www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/fisheries

Check for updates of this Recreational Fishing Guide at:

www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/fishing/recreational/resources

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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.

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