



2017 Feb Newsletter

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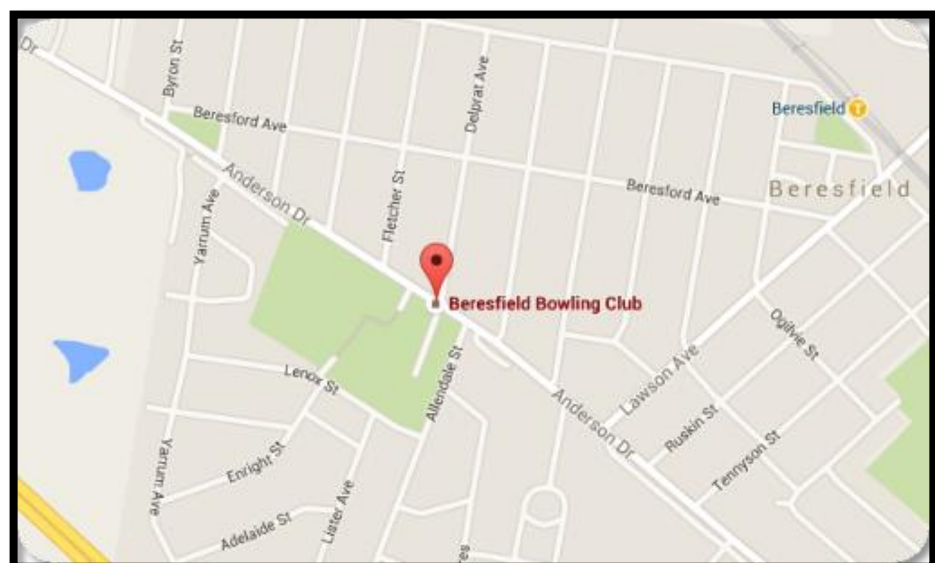
Brent Blackwell

Jeff Yates

Noel King

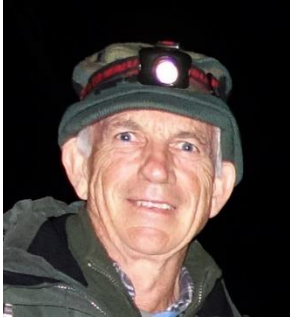
Hunter Valley Fly Fishing Club meets on the first Wednesday of each month at:-

Beresfield Bowling Club
Anderson Drive
Bersefield
At 6.30pm



Editor's comments

Jeff Yates



Another successful bass release, a tradition that our club has had for many years. Thanks to Darren for organising the release, as it is always hard with last minute notification.

Rod Esdaile recently visited NZ and has compiled a great report of his exploits. The quality of the article and the photos will put him in big demand for future reports.

The club had its annual salt water visit to Hawks Nest/Jimmys Beach and by all reports those attending had a great time. Tom had a few issues with his camera so we are unable to bring you any photos but I think the cartoon says it all.

Brent has done a reccy to a camping property on the Karuah river and has included information on his findings.

I have included a couple of articles about a recent Snowy adventure, the first one is about an extremely unlucky trout, proving the old proverb "curiosity killed the cat" is also relevant to fish. The second article is about the wanderings and fishing exploits of a small group in the Snowy.

Comments and articles of your fishing exploits are always welcome so don't be shy. If you think your article in your opinion lacks the finesse, I am sure we can help tiss it up. Photos are always welcome. What about some fly recipes or tying tips?

President's Report

Darren Foster



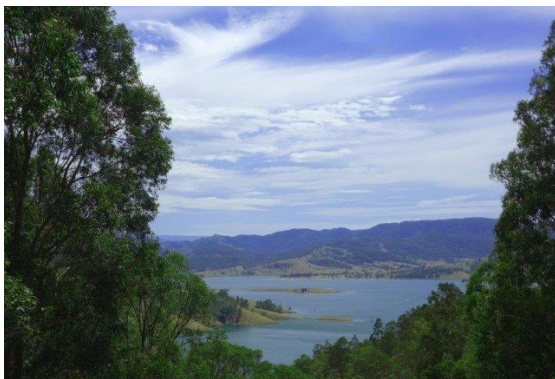
Darren is taking a well earned rest at Crescent Head and I'm sure he will have some stories to share on his return.

Month	Date	Venue/Event	Trip Master	Contact Number
January	21 st	Fly Tying/Fishing with Lawrence & Cherie	Lawrence B.	0432989797
February	01 st	Club Meeting at Bero Bowlo	All	
February	5 th	Bass release Lake St Clair	Darren	0413392774
February	17 th – 19 th	Hawks Nest – Saltwater	Tom Jones	0406662713
March	01 st	Club Meeting at Bero Bowlo	All	
March	TBA	Fly Tying at Jim's - Trout	Darren/Jim	0413392774
March	10 th – 12 th	Lithgow	Rod Esdaile	
April	05 th	Club Meeting at Bero Bowlo	All	
April	31 st M – 2 nd A	Swansea	Darren/Jim	0413392774
April				
May	03 rd	Club Meeting at Bero Bowlo	All	
May				
May				
June	07 th	Club Meeting at Bero Bowlo	All	
June	16 th – 18 th	Lake St Clair - Bass		
June				
July	05 th	Club Meeting at Bero Bowlo	All	
July	15 th	Xmas in July at Bero Bowlo	Cherie	
July	29 th – 31 st	Possible Bass Classic - St Clair	Cherie	
August	02 nd	Club Meeting at Bero Bowlo	All	
August	4-6 th or 11-13 th	Swansea – Saltwater - Salmon	Darren	0413392774
August				
September	06 th	Club Meeting at Bero Bowlo	All	
September	15 th – 17 th	Hastings	Lawrence	0432989797
September				
October	4 th	Club Meeting at Bero Bowlo	All	
October				
October				
November	3 rd or 10 th	Club AGM at Bero Bowlo	All	
November				
November				
December	6 th	Club Meeting at Bero Bowlo	All	
December				
December				

2017 St Clair Bass release

by Jeff Yates

It's that time of the year again, when the earnings of our club are pumped into bass stocking at Lake St Clair. This \$ for \$ stocking has been a long standing initiative of our club, which we are rightly proud of, and without our efforts, the fishery would not be such a fantastic place to fish.



On Sunday morning 5/2/17, four of our club members met Glen Searle from Searle Aquaculture, to distribute 10,003 bass fingerlings into Lake St Clair. The fish arrived after a 16 hour road trip from Palmers Island in tip top condition, without a fatality. Rob, Wayne, Darren and myself carried buckets of lake water up to the truck, then temperatures were equalised from the truck tank, before a hundred fish at a time were added to the bucket. The fish were then transferred around the lake edges thanks to Wayne and his tinny.

Incidentally, Wayne brought 3 children up to help us out, and their assistance was greatly appreciated. Pumbi helped Glen to net the fish in the holding tank

and later went with Wayne in the boat together with Piper and Hayley to release the fish into weedbeds on the far shore.



Darren organised the release and has kept in close contact with Glen over the past few months. Our club has supported Glen through a difficult time, when his first batch of fish were found to have Nodavirus, and his entire stock were destroyed to prevent contamination of other fisheries. As a result, these fish arrived a little later than normal, but were healthy and active. Glen was once a professional fisherman, but saw the light and become a successful fish breeder. He now breeds a number of species other than bass, including jewfish, flathead and bream.

Another successful release for HVFFC and look forward to doing battle with their big brothers during the winter months.



NZ Fishing Trip - December 2016

By Rod Esdaile

In early December last year, I had the good fortune to experience 4 days of guided fly fishing in NZ South Island.

The story goes something like this: -

My son, Mark, lives in Glenbrook and a bloke, Roland, walks his dog past Mark's house.

Mark and Roland were talking out the front of Mark's house while their respective dogs were socialising and Roland says in conversation that the week after next he is going to NZ.

"Oh yeah?" says Mark semi-interested, "What for?"

Roland says "I am doing a guided fly fishing trip."

"Really?" says Mark, "My dad fly fishes."

Roland says "Does he really? Does he want to come to NZ for a week because the bloke I was going with has just pulled out and the trip is all booked and pretty much paid for?"

"I don't know" says Mark "But I will check with him."

Mark rings me and my response was "Hell yeah! but I'll have to run it past Jo (wife)." Broached the question with Jo and it was not well received so I thought that was the end of it.

The following weekend we are at Mark's place for a family birthday 'do' and Mark uses a bit of reverse psychology on Jo saying, "Yeah, I suppose it is a bit much dad wanting to go to NZ but those sort of opportunities don't come around that often." I don't know what else he said but a little while later Jo came up to me and said, "You can go to NZ." Massive fist pump from me!!

So, checked my passport – good, still current.

At this stage I had not even spoken to Roland, let alone met him. Mark said he seemed an alright sort of a guy. So I rang Roland and we arranged to meet for coffee at Penrith Plaza (and he paid for it – bonus!).

Conclusion, Roland seems like a nice guy that I could spend a week fishing with that was not going to murder me in my sleep. He assured me that the NZ guide, Steve Cary, was a good guide as he had fished with him a couple of times before, including in February that year.

So, next hurdle, flights to NZ to coincide with the trip. Roland had booked his flights months before. We were to fly to Queenstown and pick up a hire car and drive to Twizel (middle of the South Island in case you don't know). So, off to the local Flight Centre to arrange flights. As luck would have it, I was able to book the same flights as Roland and with adjoining seats.

We landed in Queenstown around mid-day 5th December to grey skies and a weather report that suggested the next few days were going to be the same, with showers – bummer! Not good sight fishing weather.

Got the hire car (which Roland had previously hired and paid for – mind you, the bloke that pulled out paid for half the car and half the house rental in Twizel) and headed for Twizel – a two-and-a-half-hour drive stopping on the way at Cromwell for supplies and at Omarama for our fishing licences. No fishing that day.



Roland at Lindis Pass on the road from Queenstown to Twizel

Next morning, 6th, I was up early and cooked bacon and eggs, mushrooms and tomatoes and toast for breakfast. I then found out that Roland is allergic to certain foods - which turned out to be almost everything. So he couldn't eat the eggs (except for the yoke), the bread, butter, milk So much for breakfast!

Steve Cary (the local guide) arrived at around 8.30am and we headed off to the Twizel coffee shop for his morning coffee (which became a daily time waste in my opinion – I just wanted to get out there and fish).

The weather was looking crook that morning with rain coming in from the NW so Steve decided to head east to try to get away from it – through Kurow (Richie McCaw's home town. If you don't know who Richie McCaw is, ask a Kiwi) and through Duntroon.

Two hours later! (we were nearly at the east coast – just over that next ridge) we arrive at a gorgeous little stream - clear as crystal. I walked back to the little one lane bridge that we had just crossed over (there are plenty of those in NZ) while Roland was still rigging up. Straight below the bridge I could see a nice brown trout holding in the current and actively feeding.



The bridge and the beautiful little stream – Roland still rigging up

I waited and waited for Roland to get rigged and organised and we eventually started descending off the bridge abutment towards the stream. Roland lost his footing half way down sending rocks and gravel tumbling down the slope. By the time we got near the water the trout was nowhere to be seen. I think he heard us coming – you think!!

We fished that stream (I can't remember the name of it but I do remember it was an unpronounceable Maori name – like most of them) travelling upstream for a good distance seeing fish in the fast flowing clear water, casting to them, mucking up the cast and the take and landing only one fish that day. It sure highlighted to our guide what he was in for with the two of us.

Next day, 7th, overcast and showery again. We headed north east through Tekapo to somewhere near Fairlie – another long drive! I really didn't think we needed to drive two hours from Twizel to find trout – they're everywhere. This day

we fished the Ophir River (I think). On second thoughts and looking at Google Maps, it probably wasn't - maybe just another unpronounceable river. The fish spotting was hard but I did manage to land some lovely fish. I pulled two big rainbows and one big brown out of the same bit of soft water off the main current.

The flies Steve had us mostly using were Royal Wulff dry flies and a little red worm fly that Steve ties up out of chenille. Most takes we had were on the worm fly but many reasonable casts saw the fish refuse anything we offered them – often going through several fly changes before the fish spooked with a blistering run down stream or just sliding into deeper water out of harm's way.

Most of the fish we saw and cast to were spectacularly uncooperative but the surrounds were beautiful with the banks awash with the colours of the wild flowers – lupins of all colours, white daisies with yellow centres and yellow somethingorother (see the photos).



Nice rainbow from the soft water off the main flow behind me



Brown out of the same pool



Steve Cary with the other fat rainbow I caught out of the same pool. Roland appearing over Steve's left shoulder

The scenery in some of these places is simply stunning. If you haven't been to NZ

South Island, do yourself a favour and go there. More photos of stunning later.





Not all the fish I caught were huge but “a fish is a fish”

Next day, 8th, was a brilliant sunny day with not a cloud in the sky. We had been waiting for a day like this to fish the Tasman River which flows from Mt Cook

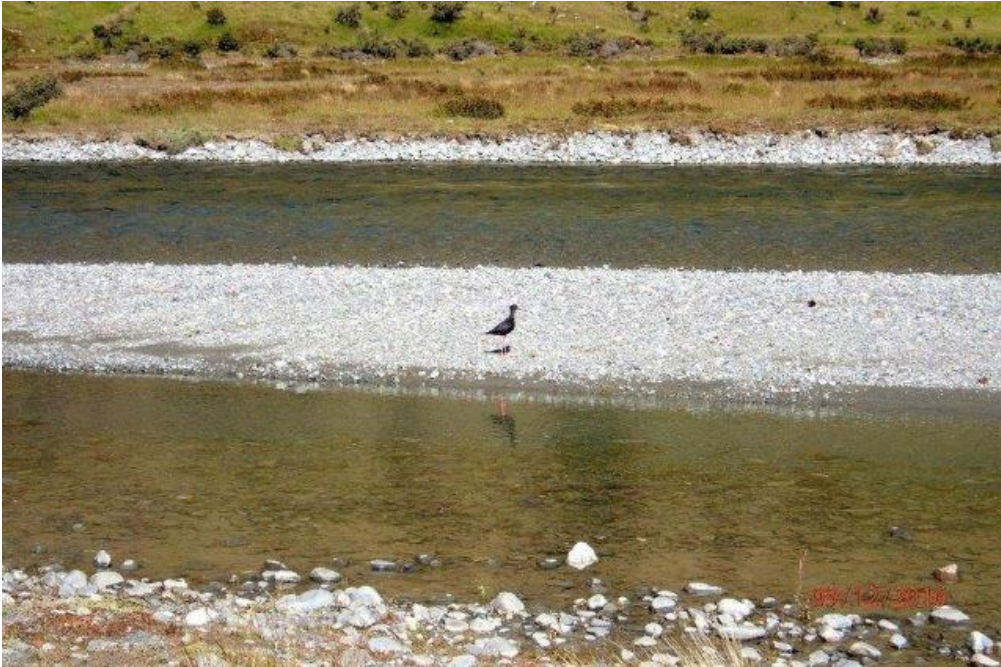
in to the stunningly beautiful, turquoise Lake Pukaki. The fishing was not good but the scenery was breathtakingly beautiful. NZ is such a picturesque country.



Tasman River with Mt Cook in the middle background

We did manage to spot a Black Stilt. Steve informed us that this bird is a critically endangered species. I Googled this when I got home and he was correct.

Apparently they are cross breeding with the Pied Stilt so the Black Stilt may soon no longer exist. I got a couple of poor photos of it.



Critically endangered Black Stilt

As I mentioned, the fishing was not good in the Tasman so we moved on to the Twizel River where I hooked and lost

several good fish (expletives!!), finally landing a nice brown. On the last cast of the last day, Roland landed his only fish – a beautiful brown.



Steve with Roland's big brown trout on the last cast of the trip

It never ceases to amaze me how these guides see spotty fish on a dappled bottom in that fast flowing water under overcast skies. But they do – sometimes. We generally fished late enough to back in Twizel by 5 – 5.30pm which was always a bother because no sooner had we arrived back in Twizel when the sun came out. We could have fished for another two

hours under sunny skies! But I suppose every guide has to have a life.

Overall it was a great trip – hard fishing mainly due to the weather conditions that made fish spotting difficult for the guide and us and the reluctance of the fish to actively participate. But, despite it all, some nice fish were caught.



This is NOT a NZ trout. It's a Hinchinbrook Queenfish – but that's another story.

END

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Country River Camp

By Brent Blackwell

As I have travelled along the Bucketts Way, I have seen a sign for camping on the Karuah River. Recently, I did investigate this sign.

Driving along the Bucketts way, you turn off before Booral into the Washpool Road, proceed about 6km, then turn into the driveway with the sign "Country River Camp". The access road is rough, after about 2km you arrive at a house. I talked to the owner and he explained the site and its amenities.

Camping and river access are available. As the river bank is subject to major flooding, there are no permanent structures at the river. Toilets and showers are built into the end of the house, so you

walk up from the river bank, a stairway has been provided.

The riverbank has been mowed, providing a rustic camping area, about 500 metres long. Access to the river is by a cut in the bank, you can drive down to river level making it easy to put in kayaks. The access is at the top end of a pool 1.5km long, below this is a rockbar.

I hope to go and have a fish here, as soon as the hot weather goes away.

Costs are \$15 per head per night and \$5 per head per day for access to fish. You have to take your rubbish home. Fires are allowed, however you must purchase firewood from owner.



Things that go bump in the night

by Jeff Yates

It was in the wee hours of the morning while stalking fish on Eucumbene, casting to shadows, rocks, stumps and other places of structure when a splashing sound emitted from near a partially drowned log. Until now, an otherwise quite night of fishing with only the occasional touch to break the monotony. My luck was about to change.

I crept up to make a comfortable cast to the log where the noise came from. The muscles tensed, as I let the fly settle before an enticing retrieve back to shore. No luck, but another splosh kept me interested. Another cast, and with twitchy fingers I again retrieved the fly with it making a slight gurgling sound as it pushed through the meniscus on the way back to shore. No take!

This carry on continues for another minute or so. But what was making the sound? Was it a water rat? It certainly can't be a trout, as the splashing was regular and there was no hatches evident during the night.

Several more casts only compounded my frustration. A number of theories were discussed before I hit the water with my headlamp. There at the base of the log was a monster trout swimming back and forth and not seeming to be too stressed. I cast to it under the spot light and the trout just swam to the other side of the log. Was it caught on an abandoned set line?

It soon became too much for Peter as he lunged into the thigh deep water with landing net at hand. My light caught the tussle as the big fish was swooped up and spirited to the safety of the bank.

The 4 of us were admiring the beautifully coloured brown when someone saw a Churchie dangling from its massive jaw. A Churchie the same size and colour that we had tied that very same day back at camp. (A Churchie is a semi floating mud eye pattern which is used to target fish during mud eye hatches and known to only a few of us keen fisherman.)

Then the penny clicked. Rod E informed us that early in the night he was using a 2 fly rig when the top fly impaled itself into a log. He broke the rig as he tried to free it, and fearing the water too deep he left it for a day time retrieval.

Collectively we started to piece together the probable fate of the big brown. It was going about its business chasing yabbies in the shallows and investigating the fallen timber for food, when it sighted a mud eye dancing around on the surface, propelled by the ripple generated by a light breeze. A calculated suck and the rest is history. We solved the riddle of ***"things that go bump in the night"***.



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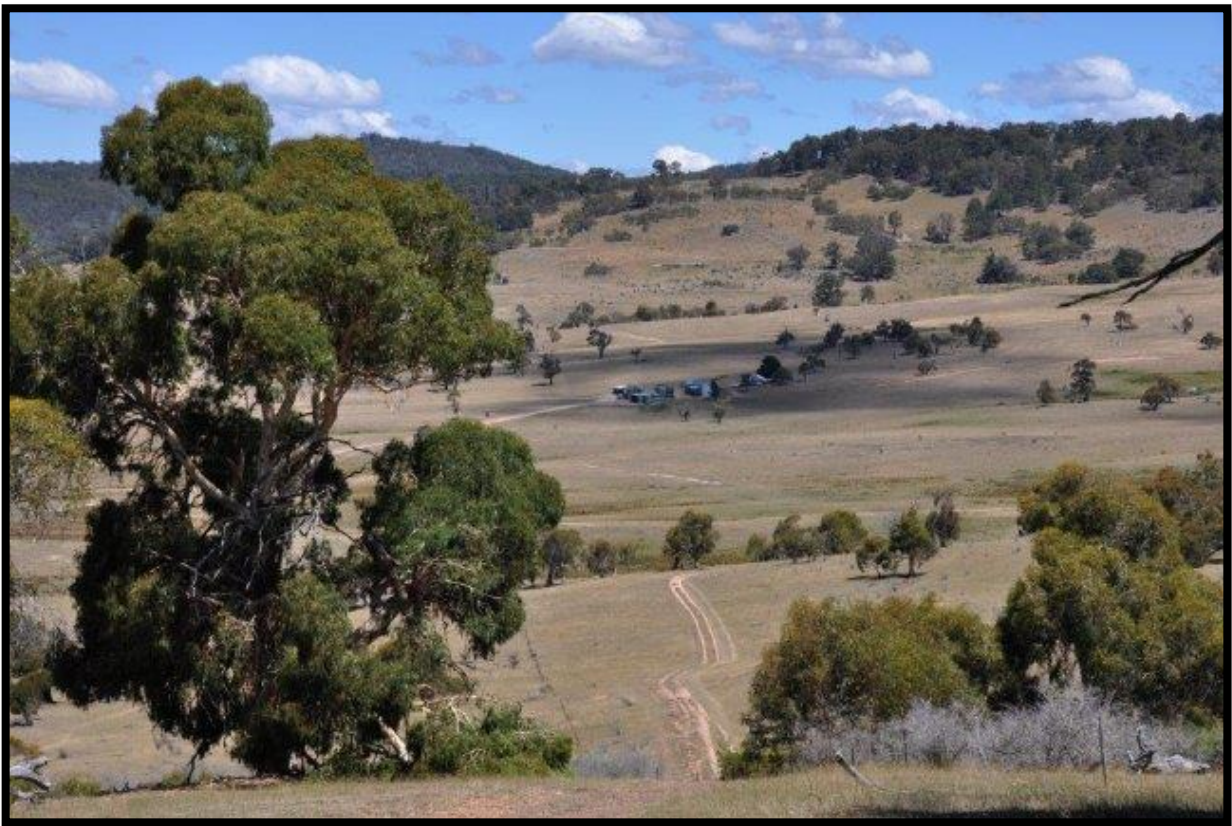
More than just a fishing trip

by Jeff Yates

Memories are forged by moments in time, and as with most of our trips the moments are plentiful and pleasant. A person can only blame themselves if they fail to enjoy these snippets of our collective experiences.

With this philosophy behind us we again do battle with the Snowy Mountains trout.

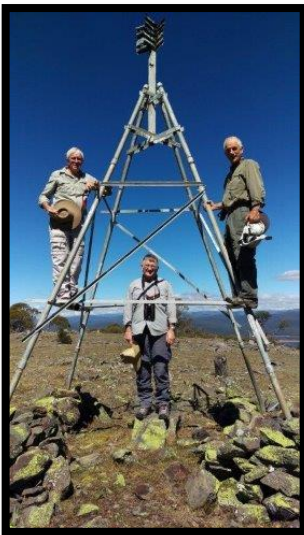
Even before we left home, the record high temperatures and massive water releases from Eucumbene to augment power for the 3 southern states was giving us concern. On arrival, the lack of riparian growth backed up our concerns, however, in true pioneering spirit, just another challenge to find fish.



Joining me on this trip were Rod E, Rod F and reliable Peter. Peter and myself missed the lunch time rendezvous at Cooma's oldest pub, the Australian Hotel, due to a couple of nasty car accidents on the freeway. A quick haste was made to reach our accommodation and get to a fishing spot before dark. We decided to fish around the camp as we were a little lagged by the travelling, but this decision was vindicated with a lovely brown caught in the corner of a soak by Rod E.

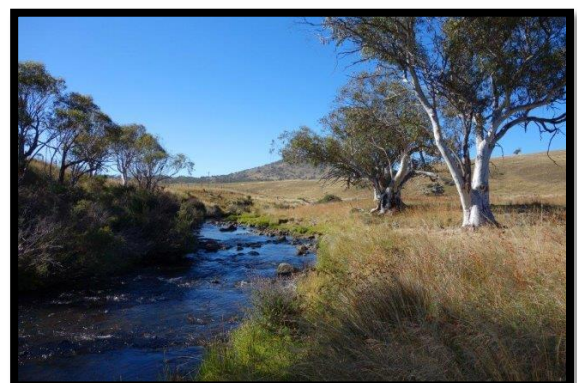


The next day we gave Rod E & Rod F an orientation of the massive property from the top of Mt Cobrabald, with views out over the whole of Lake Eucumbene. Rod E, a burnt out surveyor in a previous life, paid particular attention to the trig point, which he nimbly climbed for a better view of the surroundings. Next was the disused copper mine and smelter, then onto the likely fishing locations, and finally back to the cabin for lunch and preparation for the night's fishing.



A mid-week journey to Jindabyne to restock the cupboards and test the waters is always a must do. We walked the newly completed bike track between Hatchery and Nursery Bays to a couple of wonderful bays full of promise. Rod F hooked up on arrival and we had a play with a couple of small chunky rainbows, but again, the hot weather influenced the outcome. The accommodation on Lake Jindabyne was most welcome and the meals were superb. The next day after the obligatory coffee, we visited the Moonbah River and sighted a number of small trout. The excitement was too much for the Rods who made plans to revisit the river the next day via the TSR.

Fishing over the next few days was mediocre with a number of rainbows caught, but in poor condition. The Rods caught up with Fred staying around at Braemar Bay and they travelled up to a favorite spot on the Gungarlin River. This river rises high above the Snowy Plains with its source 1660m above sea level, supplying a perennial flow of cold water to the stream before finally flowing into the Snowy River. The boys had a great time catching the colourful and plentiful rainbows, and arrived back at camp just before dark absolutely pooped.





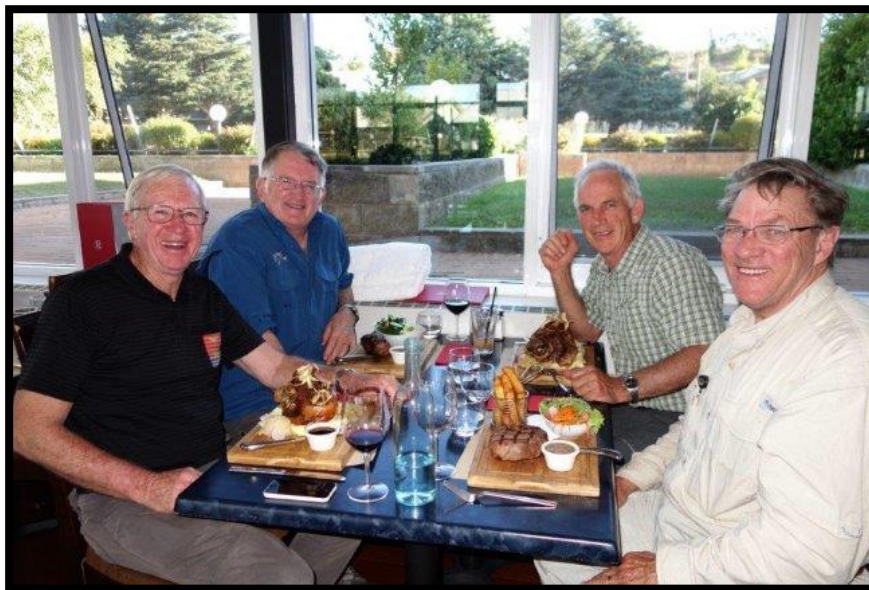
Onto Dalgety township on the banks of the Snowy River, which was one of the proposed sites for the ACT before Canberra was selected. Here bass are stocked below the bridge and trout above. The day was hot so the locals were cooling off in the river rather than fishing it. We had a better idea to cool off with a quick beer at the pub before heading back to camp.

To summarise the week, you would say that we had a fantastic time, caught around 40 trout in the lakes, travelled extensively in the boat and car trying to locate fish, looked at other accommodation options and sights, but most of all we enjoyed the company of 4 like-minded fly fishermen pursuing the dream.



Foxy guiding Rod E around a difficult section of track to the lake

Slumming it over a meal at Jindabyne



Hawks Nest report by Tom Jones

A great weekend was had by all who attended the Hawks Nest /Jimmys Beach outing recently. One of the hardest things when first planning the weekend is picking the right weekend to suit. Thankfully we got that right as the weekend before the temperature was 44 degrees.

We arrived at Jimmys Beach at the same time as Wayne, Bill and Dante and also an unwelcome guest (in the form of a windy, electrical storm). During the storm we managed to set up however Wayne's gazebo got remodelled into a tent fly. Unfortunately the storm put a dampener on the night fishing on Friday night and we stayed at camp.

The next morning we had perfect weather Fred and Tony went wading in the river downstream from the Hawks Nest Boat ramp, the Hunt boys launched their boat and headed up and down the river. My little crew fished from the old wharf at the boat ramp. Glenn, Mark and Brent travelled up for the day and fished the river in Glenn's boat.

Tony and Fred caught a couple of fish between them with Fred going all out and catching a crab on fly. Glenn, Brent and Mark had the best score of the weekend with 5 flathead and one bream caught. Glenn told me that he hooked a 60 cm flathead but the fish had other plans and didn't hang around for Glenn to land it. Glenn later compensated with landing a nice 40 cm flathead.

I dropped something that had a bit of strength to it close to the jetty. Our youngest son Hamish was the only one in our crew that landed a fish with his very impressive 5 cm bream (landing the fish was the easy part, convincing Hamish that we had to throw it back was the hard bit) Reilley put a much more convincing argument up that if we put it back we can eat it when we catch it next time).

Some of us met at the Tea Gardens Hotel for lunch whilst Glenn's crew fished on. At the pub we met up with Jim and Janet and

Chris brought along young Ethan and Annabelle.

After lunch we took a drive up to Mungo Brush and had a look and it looks a good place to explore for a future trip.

We had plans of fishing on the beach on Saturday night however right on cue another electrical storm changed everything (that was the storm that the weather apps didn't know about until it started).

***Tom heading out
for a fish***





Fishy Pics



*A brown caught on a Churchie
Fly
By Jeff Yates*



Scape Pics



Moombah hut
By Jeff Yates

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