



**FREE
NSW
GUIDE**

Go Freshwater Fishing

FEATURED LOCATION:

LAKE MULWALA

**A FAMILY FISHING
PARADISE!**



dpird.nsw.gov.au



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FOREWORD

FROM DPIRD



Throwing a line in at a new spot always makes for a great fishing adventure, whether it's on a family holiday or just somewhere new close to home. No matter your fishing expertise, NSW boasts a wide range of fish species and great places to catch them, including in our many inland rivers, impoundments and streams as well as the productive estuaries, lakes, beaches and rocky headlands on the NSW coast. There are also many inshore and offshore fishing opportunities from your boat or if using one of the many experienced charter fishing services available.

There are many reasons to go fishing, including to unwind and relax, spend time with family and friends, enjoy nature and of course to catch a tasty meal of fresh fish. Over a million people in NSW enjoy this fantastic lifestyle and the great news is that you are never too old or young to take up fishing so get out there and give it a go! Getting into fishing is easy. If you don't know where to start, just head into your local tackle store where the friendly staff can provide tips on tackle, bait and techniques plus point you to a safe, convenient spot to throw a line in.

DPIRD has developed these *Go Fishing* guides as a snapshot of popular NSW fishing locations in both fresh and saltwater to help improve your recreational fishing experiences.

For more information on other locations, fish species, size and bag limits, permitted gear and other information not listed in these guides, visit the **DPIRD website** or download the **FishSmart app** to your mobile device.

The **FishSmart NSW app** provides recreational fishers 24/7 access to essential information on fishing in NSW.

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NSW**



OVERVIEW



Lake Mulwala is located 3 hours from Melbourne and 6 and a half hours from Sydney, dividing the townships of Mulwala (NSW) and Yarrawonga (Vic). Formed in 1939 as part of the of the Murray-Darling Irrigation Scheme the Yarrawonga Weir as it is known, was built to raise the water level in the Murray River to divert water via gravity into two major channels, the Mulwala Main Canal (NSW) and the Yarrawonga Main Channel (Vic).

Mulwala is a year-round fishery with the dominant target species being Murray cod which recruit naturally in the lake's old riverbed and abundant sunken timber. Summer is a popular time for fishing the lake and while the warmer months generally produced more fish, the winter months are when anglers catch the larger Murray cod the lake has built a reputation for. Mulwala is not only known for large Murray cod, it also boasts excellent fishing for golden perch, Murray crayfish and non-native species such as redfin and European carp.

Note: If you plan on targeting Murray cray in Lake Mulwala ensure you check the FishSmart app for rules and regs.

Continued on page 4



Continued from page 3

While Lake Mulwala is the main attraction, the Murray River up and downstream of the lake holds all of the mentioned species and should not be overlooked, especially at busier times like summer school holidays.

The townships of Mulwala and Yarrawonga offer a lot more than just a base for fishing. There is plenty to do in the area with expansive forests, walking tracks, parks, cafes, and ample accommodation options. Mulwala offers not only excellent fishing but is a great family destination with a bonus of being close to two major population centers. Pack the gear, load up the boat or kayak and see what one of NSW's premier freshwater sportfishing dams has to offer.

Note: Yarrawonga Weir to Tocomwal (Refer to map below). The following waters are closed to all methods of fishing including catch and release fishing between September and November (inclusive) each year; the Murray River and its NSW tributaries, from Yarrawonga Weir downstream to the Newell Highway bridge at Tocomwal. Between the months of December and August inclusive each year, general inland fishing regulations apply.



NSW Victorian Agreement

For many years both NSW and Victorian fishing rules applied to Lakes Hume and Mulwala, as the official border between the two States runs underneath the lake. The border's hidden location made it difficult for anglers to identify the border's exact position and to follow the different fishing rules of each State. Anglers also needed to hold both NSW and Victorian fishing licenses when fishing on the lakes.

To resolve the cross-border confusion and to make it easier for anglers to know and follow fishing rules, an agreement was reached for a single State to manage recreational fishing in Lake Mulwala. From September 1 2004, NSW assumed control of management of recreational fishing in Lake Mulwala and NSW fishing rules applied to all parts of the lake upstream from the Yarrawonga Weir to a point where the Ovens River enters the Murray River, marked by the Bundalong boat ramp.

Lake Hume is still managed by Victorian Fisheries Authority (VFA), please check <https://vfa.vic.gov.au>

WHERE TO FISH

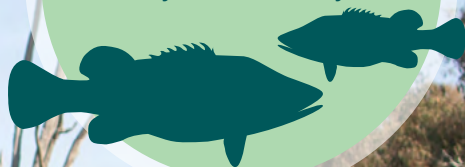
Much of the success of fishing at Mulwala comes from the vast amount of easy access provided for anglers. Fishing can be had from most of the shoreline or for anglers fishing from a boat, a short trip to the sunken forests provides even more areas to fish. Fish can be caught throughout the lake, so any accessible location provides a chance for a fish. The lake also has many well maintained and free boat ramps and parklands surrounding it. Many boardwalks and shoreline parks also surround the lake making shore-based access very easy for anglers of all abilities.

North of the Murray Trail and Boardwalk

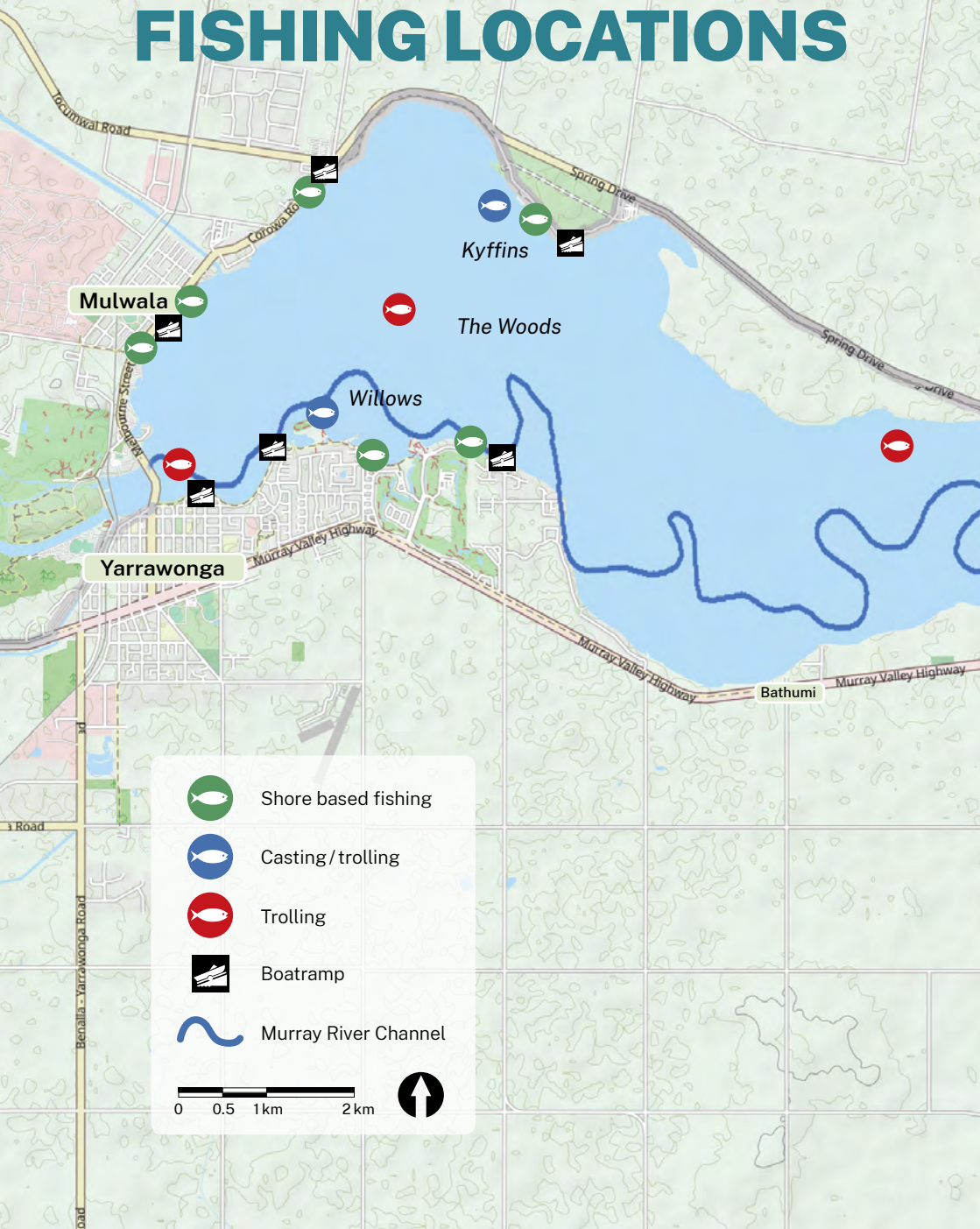
The Federation Council has constructed a 200m long boardwalk and trail at the northwest section of the lake this structure completes a bike riding trail joining the townships of Corrowa and Mulwala, however, fishing is permitted with the boardwalk providing excellent access for pedestrian-based fishing. The boardwalk extends out into the lake and gives anglers access to areas that would usually only be accessible by boat. Anglers can cast to snags and weed beds for the length of the boardwalk and beyond with an accompanying track following the lake for over 4 km of shore-based access. Anglers are reminded to leave this as well as all other areas clean and free from rubbish to ensure ongoing use.

Fun fact!

Lake Mulwala is not stocked with Murray cod, they recruit naturally!



LAKE MULWALA FISHING LOCATIONS



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East Plain

Boardwalk



Collendina



Everglades



Gul Is.



Murray Valley Highway

Bundalong



Naughtons Bend

Esmond

Camerons Bend

NOTE: This fishing map is only to be used as a general reference overview.

See www.dpiird.nsw.gov.au for details on fishing regulations.

Not for navigation.

See www.rms.nsw.gov.au for info on boating safety and regulations.

Not for navigation.

FACT BOX

Murray cod handling

A trophy-sized Murray cod is a once-in-a-lifetime capture for most anglers. Looking after these great native sportfish is paramount to ensure their survival.

When landing a cod use a large knotless net. Once the fish is in the net, leave it in the water until you have your brag mat, camera, and other equipment ready. Never lay the fish on a hot deck, always wet the brag mat before laying the fish down to measure.

When handling large cod, it is recommended to not use lip grips as this can cause damage to the fish's jaw, simply thumb grip the fish's lower jaw using a gloved hand.

Always support the weight of the fish with your second hand. When lifting, always lift the fish parallel; never put any pressure on the vertebrae behind the fish's head.

If your camera is immediately available, take a few quick pictures and then place the fish in the water until it is ready to swim away.

Some fishers even choose not to hold the fish and hop into the water with large cod, this can make an amazing shot and memory plus a nice cool off in summer, however, in the frigid cold of winter it would not be recommended.



KEY TARGET SPECIES



Murray cod

Lake Mulwala's best known for its Murray cod fishing. Murray cod are a predatory and ambush species, hiding in or amongst snags, which Lake Mulwala has many. Murray cod are extremely territorial, they are known for eating almost anything that moves across their path. When it comes to size of food, Murray cod will attack lures or bait that are almost as big as themselves. The Murray cod season starts on December 1 and continues through to August 31.



PEAK SEASON: December – April.

TECHNIQUE: A variety of lures work for Murray cod in the lake. Swimbaits, diving minnows, soft plastics, spinnerbaits, and lipless crank baits ranging from 60 to 150mm can work. Casting to the many snags, weed and reed beds and retrieving at a slow steady pace is a proven technique in the lake. Using surface lures early morning or late afternoon is an exhilarating way to entice these magnificent fish. Trolling the edge of old riverbeds with deep divers or using shallow runners trolled slowly through the timber can often yield results. For those not partial to lure fishing, using bait can be equally as rewarding. Try grubs, cheese, chicken, and yabbies. Using these baits from the boat or shore can show any beginner the strike of a Murray cod.

TACKLE: A medium to heavy 6–10 kg outfit loaded with 15–24kg braided mainline with a metre or so of 15–24kg fluorocarbon leader will cover most situations. A large knotless landing net, gloves, and heavy-duty pliers to dislodge hooks are important pieces of equipment to have.

SPECIAL TIP: The lake is known for taking tackle, a good lure retriever is worth its weight in gold when fishing Mulwala.

HOT SPOTS: Some key Murray cod areas include The Willows, Everglades, The Woods and Kyffins. Trolling the edges of old riverbeds can also prove very rewarding. The banks of Chinamans Island are an excellent spot to cast a lure from the boat or shore.

CLOSED SEASON: September 1 – November 31



Golden perch

Golden perch frequent the lake and have a year-round season but September to December is renowned for better fishing. The lake is regularly stocked with golden perch and it is not uncommon for good numbers to be caught. They can be caught anytime of the day especially near weed beds and standing trees.



PEAK SEASON: Year-round, September to December for better fishing.

TECHNIQUE: Casting small lipless crankbaits, soft plastics and hard-bodied lures at standing trees, reeds, and weedy margins; trolling old riverbeds with small hard-bodied lures measuring between 50-90mm will often hook a fish or two.

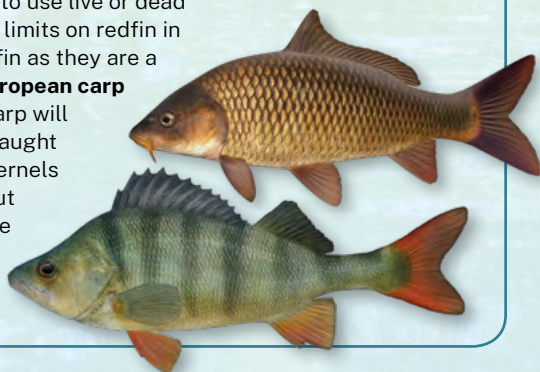
Bait fishing can be productive and fishing scrub worms, yabbies or shrimp around the areas mentioned is great way to score a few perch.

TACKLE: A 2-4 kg spin outfit loaded with 4-5kg braided mainline with a metre of 4-5kg fluorocarbon leader is all that is needed. Small hardbody lures of a variety of colours work well. Soft plastics with 1/6-1/4 oz jig head and size 1 or 2 hook also work well on the lake's golden perch.

HOT SPOTS: Golden perch can be found throughout the lake, but key areas include the Willows and Gul Island. The latter if you have a boat. For shore-based access easily accessible locations are near the Mulwala Canal offtake and under the rail bridge on the Mulwala side of the lake.

OTHER SPECIES

Redfin, which are a noxious pest in NSW, are known to frequent Lake Mulwala and at times will take bait or lure quite readily. Redfin, also known as English perch, were introduced to Australia from Europe in the 1860s but quickly took over some waterways. Redfin compete for food with our native species, spread the EHN disease and predate on other fish. Anglers should remember that it is illegal to have live redfin or translocate them in NSW and to use live or dead redfin for bait. There are no bag or size limits on redfin in NSW. Many anglers enjoy catching redfin as they are a good sport and a popular table fish. **European carp** are also spread throughout the lake. Carp will sometimes take a lure but are mostly caught on baits such as worms, shrimp, corn kernels and bread. Carp have spread throughout the Murray-Darling Basin and can cause serious degradation to natural aquatic systems. Like redfin, there are no bag and size limits on carp.



FACT BOX

DRAINING OF LAKE MULWALA



Every three to five years water managers drain Lake Mulwala in the middle of winter to conduct maintenance on infrastructure and to limit the spread and growth of a weed called Leafy Elodea (*Egeria densa* weed). This weed can take over the lake and apart from annoying anglers and boaters, it can also clog channel systems and infrastructure. When water levels are low, the weed gets exposed to the air and winter frosts which kills a significant percentage of it.

Anglers can still fish in the lake during this time, but they should be aware that the lake is difficult to access, boat ramps are often unusable and exposed debris can be a hazard. Those anglers that make it onto the river/lake still need to abide by normal fishing regulations during this period and should keep an eye out for any special fishing closures that may be in place.

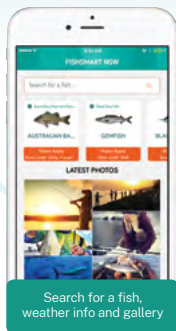
During the drawdown, tourists, and anglers flock to the lake to see it drained with some keen boaters navigating through the old creek and riverbeds to fish and explore the remaining wreckage of yesteryear that is usually hidden by the lake.

Check out the app: FishSmart

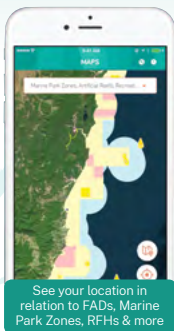


DPIRD has created an app that provides recreational fishers with 24/7 access to essential information they need to know to fish in NSW, such as:

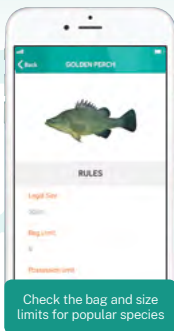
- ❑ a pictorial guide of common recreational species, bag & size limits, closed seasons and fishing gear rules
- ❑ real-time maps to locate nearest FADs (Fish Aggregation Devices), artificial reefs, Recreational Fishing Havens and Marine Park Zones
- ❑ local weather, tide, moon phase and barometric pressure to help choose best time to fish
- ❑ guides on spearfishing, fishing safely, trout fishing, regional fishing
- ❑ DPIRD contact for reporting



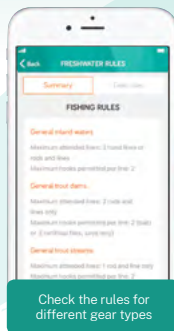
Search for a fish, weather info and gallery



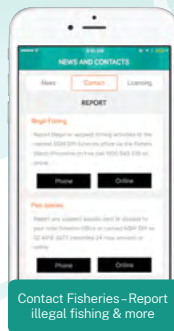
See your location in relation to FADs, Marine Park Zones, RFHs & more



Check the bag and size limits for popular species



Check the rules for different gear types



Contact Fisheries - Report illegal fishing & more



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