

Forster NSW (Oysters = Bream!)

We join Kim and Steve Bain for a hot session on the Wallis Lakes oyster racks chasing bream with a whole new attitude to lures and plastic. If you've wanted to try these new techniques but weren't sure how or where to begin - this report provides a fascinating insight into fishing techniques for bream that will work just about anywhere . . .

It was a very casual week away, representative of a family fishing holiday to a seaside town. A little fishing, not stressing about it too much, some sight seeing, dining on fresh seafood and putting the feet up.

Relaxing at the Forster Beach Caravan Park beside the water, we had a nice view of the river from the villa balcony. "That looks like a good fishing spot and you can see the oyster barges working nearby" is the thought that goes through my mind. "Yeah, let's go for a fish" is the thought that follows soon after. Five minutes later I pilot my Stessl Edge Tracker away from the ramp. Within a few minutes we've parked adjacent an oyster lease and a hookup comes on the first cast. The action is thick and fast. Everybody is catching bream with the only problem being that everyone on board is holding their catch for a photo yet no-one is reaching for the camera.

A fish each is ample for dinner. The Forster stocks are high quality, with some of the biggest bream I've ever seen. And that's just the



Above: Standing racks are often exposed at low tide, at high tide they're completely covered - the bream get on top of them to feed. **Below:** Bream are plentiful outside of the fences around the oysters leases.

ones that we get to the boat. How big was the one that I couldn't control? Like many others it got away!

Silver flashes behind the lures. A fish causes the water to boil and whirlpool. A screaming drag is a giveaway that the brake wasn't set tight enough. If the bream gets any line from you it gets its freedom. Even if they don't get any line they're still likely to dive under a barnacle encrusted oyster rack or around a post and cut you off.



Above: Small Rebel Crawfish are my favourite hardbodied lure, the bream seemed to like them too, particularly these red/brown deep divers. Work them down the middle between the racks and into the current (the water pressure against the bib gives the vibrating swimming action without having to move the lure too fast) on the falling tide as the water drops to the level of the trays on the racks. The bream will take refuge under the racks when the tide gets this low and the deep diver gets down in their faces. The same scenario goes for floating racks, but on any stage of the tide, as the water never gets above them.

Below: The locals tie up to the posts outside of the floating racks and reintroduce themselves to a few bream.

