



The Tweed is a beautiful, practical river for families - and a great place to build a child's confidence in boating.



# Exploring The Tranquil Tweed River

*With Jeff Borg and his family in their Quintrex Fishmaster*

**T**he Tweed River is located on the border of New South Wales and Queensland. The river starts in the Border Ranges' National Park, flows over a weir near the sleepy town of Murwillumbah and winds its way approximately 30km to the river mouth at Tweed Heads.

It is also the southern point of the tourist capital of Australia, "The Gold Coast". South East Queensland and in particular the Gold Coast, is the fastest growing region in Australia and there is a good reason why so many people are moving here for their "sea change". We are spoilt living on the Gold Coast with the perfect weather and lifestyle, not to mention the magnificent waterways that surround us. Like the slogan says, "Great one day, perfect the next".

The Gold Coast has plenty of attractions for the holidaying family and accommodation is catered for from the humble tent

site to 5 Star resorts. Many motels and caravan parks cater for trailerboats as well.

There are many Theme parks like Movie World, Dream World, Sea World and Wet 'n Wild that will amuse the kids, and to accommodate the wife's retail therapy, there are large shopping centres like Pacific Fair at Broadbeach, Australia Fair at Southport, Robina Town Centre, the Oasis at Broadbeach as well as the tourist strip at Surfers Paradise.

The beaches and restaurants are world class and the locals are a friendly bunch.

There is plenty to see on the waterways of the Gold Coast - you can cruise on the Southport Broadwater which is on the northern border of the Gold Coast or travel south to the Tweed River.

The Tweed is a quiet, largely undeveloped river that is mainly used by the locals and is an ideal boating retreat if you are looking for some rest and relaxation. Once on the river you will notice that the average size boat here

is 4 to 5 metres - it is very rare that you have to contend with the bow wave from a 10 metre plus cruiser.

The river winds through approximately 60km of mangroves, protected rainforest and canefields, so you can always find a cosy, quiet nook to spend some quality time on your boat - whether that is fishing, reading the paper, having a cuppa, listening to the radio/ CD or just enjoying the magnificent scenery.

There are two major arms to the river with many offshoots to explore and they are both as impressive as the other. There is the Terranora Inlet, which is the western arm, and the main river, which travels towards Murwillumbah.

The best boat ramp by far is the all weather, two lane ramp at Fingal Head which is sheltered in a small bay and protected from the wind and tidal current. Any sized trailer boat can be launched here - the ramp is so good, I've had no problems launching and retrieving my 5m

Fishmaster when I am on my own, in strong winds. There is a sandy beach to the side, which all boatowners love and a good jetty nearby for those in your party who don't like to get their feet wet. It is also the closest ramp for boats crossing the Tweed Bar to fish offshore. Also located close by is a good fish cleaning facility, toilets and plenty of off street parking.

There are many ramps on the river system, but be wary of those that are open and go straight into the main river - strong tidal currents and afternoon seabreezes can easily ruin a good day out.

The Tweed Bar is a nasty one, especially if the seas are up. The bar may look good going out on an incoming tide but when the tide changes, the bar's personality changes with it and it can be quite dangerous - pressure waves tend to generate when you least expect them.

If you are not experienced at crossing coastal bars I strongly recommend you stay clear