

# Part 2/3

## Narrow Barred Spanish Mackerel

**T**he Spanish Mackerel, Narrow Barred Mackerel or Tanguite as it is internationally recognised, is probably the holy grail of offshore trailer boat sport fishermen.

As a package, spaniards have the lot: Size. Great eating qualities. Available to anglers around a massive part of coastal Australia and their combination of looks, attitude and sporting ability make one fine animal indeed and one that has an armada of admirers around the country.

### Background

Narrow Barred Spanish Mackerel are the largest of the true mackerel clan that we have on offer in Australia.

Nicknames include Spanish, Spaniards, Blues or narrow-bars.

Elongated in shape, with a gob full of triangle teeth that can cut bone, they



also sport the vertical bars along their flanks, which gives them their "narrow bar" name.

Appearing dark blue along the back and shoulders, their flanks are pure flash broken up by the blue/purple-tinged bars, with a white belly.

Their tail is forked and rigid.

Spaniards are designed for speed.

The spaniard's distribution takes up the

entire Top End of Oz, and branches down as far as Perth off Western Australia and Sydney in the East.

Being pelagic, there have been instances where spaniards have been found outside of this range, though these are infrequent pop ups that show individual fish that have migrated past the main populace.

The Game Fishing Association of Australia's records show the largest

weighed Spanish Mackerel coming in at 38.75kg from Dampier in Western Australia. However, there are anecdotal accounts of the species reaching 2.2m in length and a growth potential of 45kg+.

Areas of interest for large spaniards include the Whitsunday Islands, Moreton Bay, Dampier and Exmouth.

These areas have all had mackerel over 35kg taken from there.

Having said this, the average narrow-barred mackerel is more likely around 6-10kg, with a specimen of 20kg considered a quality fish indeed.

Spaniards are a year-round proposition in areas where the water is 22 degrees or more.

During an Aussie summer and autumn, there is an annual spawning migration down both East and West coasts, with the school sized fish occurring first.



The author with a nice narrow-bar that took a skirted lure.

The mackerel clan boast some of the most highly regarded target species around the entire tropical and sub-tropical coastlines of Australia. Their average size, availability to small boat anglers, great eating and impressive looks endear themselves to all who target these tasty speedsters.

Special Report by Aaron Concorde