

2008 Our Year in Review



RUN OFF MARCH /APRIL 2008.

Our first groups for 2008 arrived in early March & enjoyed some outstanding "run off" barramundi fishing.

One of the great things about fishing the run off at the Arnhemland Barramundi Nature Lodge is that you are free from competing for prime spots with the large numbers of other local & interstate anglers that flood out on to the big tidal rivers at this time of year. March & April are the best months to experience coastal wetlands that are draining via wet season channels that provide a smorgasbord of aquatic & terrestrial creatures for barramundi to gorge upon.



Brynley Evers was part of the first group at the lodge in March 2008 & scored this nice Mangrove Jack

At the end of March through to early April, we had our first big client group of the year: The Channel Nine Network. In three days, the group of 15 caught 384 barra up to 93 cm, and all manner of blue water species, including big queenfish, Spanish mackerel to 23 kg, giant and golden trevally and the iconic giant herring. There were also notable captures of big black jew on barra lures. The fishing only got better through April; Julian Smith bagged

the first metre-plus barra of the season — a 105 cm fish from the top of the Liverpool River guided by Jason Vickery. Also on board that day were fellow Victorians, Michael McClusky and Justin Clinch. Unbelievably, they boated 156 barra in the one day. Justin also caught a 24 kg giant trevally during a brief sojourn to the river mouth.



Justin Clinch hefts his Giant Trevally

Michael said as he departed from the Lodge airstrip: "What a trip! You couldn't ask for a better fishing holiday." And Julian and Justin reiterated his comments.

April highlights continued with the annual arrival of Tony Otton and his group of nine.

This group has a lot of fun and each member could write "The Book of Sledging". Split into Victorian and NSW contingents, the group held a heavily-contested State Of Origin competition, with NSW winning narrowly. Champion angler was Matthew Kennett who had never seen a barra before arriving at the Lodge. Matt's first fish measured 91 cm and his second went 92 cm. By the end of five days, he added the following big barra to his catch list: 97 cm, 95 cm, 90 cm and 89 cm. Most of the big fish came from the Blyth River, although he caught the 95cm in Rolling Bay. The group caught plenty of other big barra, over 400 fish in total, and double and triple hook-ups were common. According to Tony Otton and Rob McIldowie, who have been on all four trips



Even a late wet season shower failed to deter the Barra from biting. Nikki Helbig with a gleaming salty barra in March 2008



Matt Kennett, Stephen Healy & Tony Otton, know all about the amazing "Run Off" fishing available in the six rivers & many creeks accessed by the Arnhemland Barramundi Nature Lodge. This triple barra catch was part of a hectic, arm-cranking session in April this vear.

over the last four years, each year the trip has gotten better. "It was just an amazing holiday," Tony said.

Rob agreed, stating: "The Lodge just seems to get better and better."

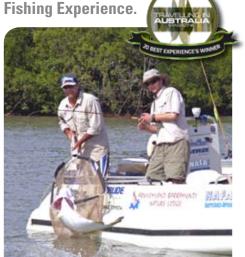
Also at the lodge in April were four American anglers from Wisconsin. They also caught barra to 96 cm and up to 70 barra in one day. Tom Wiegand said he had been to Canada 17 times on guided fishing trips and this first visit to Australia and the Lodge was the best ever. "We didn't know what we were coming to, and to find such comfortable accommodation with en suite bathrooms, great food and even your laundry done for you has blown us away," Tom said. "And the fishing was simply amazing."

Other corporate groups that visited the lodge in April included 12anglers from the Madill Motor Group & 16 from Lion Nathan.



Reigning Miss Indy, Kate Hockly, was at the Lodge in March for a NAFA photo shoot and filming for Channel Nine's Fishing North Australia. A self-confessed mad fisher lady, Kate caught plenty of barra during our March "Run Off". You can see more of Kate on our NAFA Website: www.nafa.com.au

In May 2008 the prestigious international travel industry magazine, Travelling In Australia, has judged the Northern Territory's Arnhemland Barramundi Nature Lodge to be Australia's Best



An international panel of Premier Aussie Specialists recently served as judges for the inaugural Travelling In Australia Magazine 20 Best Experiences Awards.

Right: Travelling in Australia Award, American visitor

Craig Andler battles a furiously leaping barra

Nominations from all states were put forward by various tourism bodies, and judging was online in total secrecy.

"In launching the awards, we wanted to shine the spotlight on some of the best products Australia has on offer," explained Editor Chantal Dunbar.

When one of the judge's, Patti Pake,
Travel Experts, USA, was asked what makes
Arnhemland Barramundi Nature Lodge
Australia's Best Fishing Experience for you,
she replied: "The Arnhemland Barramundi
Nature Lodge is an eco-luxe retreat located
in one of the most sacred of Aboriginal areas.
A stay there combines the best of fishing,
birding and Aboriginal culture. What makes this
fishing lodge so unique is that its guests have
exclusive access to six Arnhemland rivers.
This allows you multiple options for fishing
opportunities and plenty of barra chomping on
the line."



It was wonderful last May, to again host a visit from Peugeot Australia and many of its Dealer network. organised by Bob Stanton Corporate Fishing, Peugeot visited in 2006 with 22 guests, and this year there were 24. The Lodge was working on overload but it all ran super smoothly. An innovation this year was a Bell Jet Ranger helicopter. Everyone in the group experienced a thrilling half-day chopper fishing. That's how you really get to appreciate the remote wilderness location of the Lodge. The chopper flew over vast wetlands and escarpments, did a bit of "impromptu mustering" of wild Asiatic Buffalo herds, annoyed a few sunning crocs, flew with thousands of airborne waterfowl, and landed at some otherwise inaccessible fishing hotspots. In four days, the group landed over 500 barra



Toyota Material Handling Group's Chairman CEO, Terry Unnai, found a whale of a barra in the Liverpool River. This one measured 104 cm but weighed 18 kg.



Shaana McNaught from Tourism NT with a splendid threadfin salmon from the Liverpool River.

and a variety of other species including a rarely caught Permit, to boot.

Rob Danby organised another group of anglers for the third year in a row. Rob is another regular visitor to the lodge. This year the party of 15 visited in May & once again scored well. Johnny Tripodi was part of that group & his comment when surveyed after the trip was; "Great guides and staff, all the necessary luxuries & great fishing".









TMHG CEO Steve Harper battles another leaping barra.

The Arnhemland Barramundi Nature Lodge continues to perform for corporate groups. We were pleased to welcome back a group of 14 Managers from Toyota Material Handling Group (TMHG). Once again conditions were favourable and both barra and a host of sportfish obliging. *A whale of a barra was caught on the trip.* It measured 104 cm but must have been close to that in girth. The lucky angler was Chairman CEO, Terry Unnai.

Andrew Munro & his party also fished the lodge in May, with Dick Cribb landing an almost metery that went 99cm. Andrew & his group landed some great threadfin salmon as well as barramundi.

June was a busy month at the lodge & although we had no large corporate visitors, we were constantly busy with smaller groups that enjoyed very good barramundi & pelagic action.



Scott Seymour from Toyota Queensland corporate group with a fine 94cm model

Warren Steptoe show's how it's done.



Craig Glenister visited the lodge in June with four friends including Col Cordingly & David Kestel, after his visit Craig had this to say about his trip: "What a wonderful experience. Staff, were friendly & experienced. Interesting fishing with different guides as each had their own gear, style & preferences. I learned more about barra this way - learned more about the guides. Magnificent country, seen as it has been for eons - the wonder would catch you as you turned to cast & saw a sea eagle take a fish from the water at full stretch. The light you get nowhere else in the world, enfolding everything & making it seem more real. I'll tell you; just thinking about the place makes me smile".

Also visiting in June was respected fishing & boating journalist Warren Steptoe.

Warren's trip resulted in a feature article in the September 2008 issue of Modern Fishing, titled "Paradise Lodge". The article provides an excellent insight into the barramundi & other great fishing available at the lodge.

A F TA CHOOSES LODGE FOR NATIONWIDE JUNIOR DV D

The Australian Fishing Tackle Association (AFTA) is currently producing its second DVD in the Learning To Fish series.

Over 200,000 copies will be distributed around Australia, with coverage of all Australian states and Territories. In conjunction with NAFA magazine, the Lodge was chosen for the Northern Territory segment. James Stefanovich, 16 and a mad-keen Darwin junior angler, was the star, fishing alongside Alex who was doing the teaching. The youngster slayed them, catching barra hand over fish casting lures and a 110cm northern mulloway

The lodge staff enjoyed a well earned 3 week break during August, but returned on the 22nd of August to welcome 16 corporate clients from WAECO Pacific P/L.

trolling our famous Rock bar.



James Stefanovich, a mad-keen Darwin junior angler, and a lure caught 110cm northern mulloway.

The NAFA Challenge soon followed with the first of two Toyota Motor Corporation groups in early September. The first of these became the basis of our "Tails from the Lodge October Edition", where lodge guide Jason Hill detailed the exploits of some of Toyota Victoria's group's 15 members. He summed up their stay thus;

"In total my boat bagged 161 barra and I can honestly say that only a small handful were undersize. This is just my story of what happened that week, there were four other boats out there bringing the group total to 560 Barra for 4 days fishing plus plenty of other species caught throughout the Challenge. Thanks again guys, it was a pleasure". Jason Hill (Hilly).





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The excellent barra fishing continued through September with Riley Tolmay's group from Bombardier Recreational Products & a private group of 12 organised by Steve Tatt from Sydney were also part of the hot barra bite that month. Steve & his crew landed in







BRP's Dan Brown with a spectacular Queenfish.

excess of 400 barra in 4 hectic days, not to mention the other species caught.

October saw
the second Toyota
Corporate group of
12 arrive, hoping to
continue the success
of the first group. Host
Sean Hanley was
looking to better Chris
Beuths 107cm but
could only manage a
101cm barra, however,
the group landed over
300 barra in four days.

Lodge regular Elton

Stone was back at the lodge again with five friends as part of a Top End adventure that stretched from the Kimberley's to Arnhemland. Elton has visited the lodge every year since it opened in 2004.

For the second time in 2008 Channel hosted 17 clients & staff at the lodge for their "Wide World of Sports Barra Challenge". Bert Gardiner was part of a group of six in late October when Bert snared a beauty of just over a metre.





At the end of October & during the first week of November we had two highly respected fishing journalists at the lodge. Firstly Jim Harnwell & son Harry followed by arguably Australia's highest profile saltwater fly fishing exponent Peter Morse. They both have articles in the pipeline that will feature in national fishing publications.

November was a busy month with large back to back groups from Angling Adventures both of which scored very well on barra. The first group totted up a cricket score whilst the second group score although not as impressive had many fish in the 80 - 90cm range.

Due to the worsening financial downturn, late November & early December proved to be a little quieter at the lodge from a client perspective, but those that were there enjoyed some excellent barramundi & blue water pelagic action.



Peter Morse fly casting for Barra in one of our freshwater billabongs.



Bert Gardiner (R) & guide Mick Eddy, show off Bert's nuggety 101cm Barra, from October 2008.





Peter Nixon (L) & Elton Stone with a fine barra double trolling the "Rockbar



2009 AT THE LODGE

Our 2009 season will kick off from Sunday 22nd of March 2009.

Having held our prices unchanged for the previous two years we have had to increase our prices slightly for next year, however, we are conscious of the current economic & financial issues that are affecting everyone at present & have minimised this increase as far as possible.

No matter what outcomes flow from the current economic turmoil you can rest assured that our Barra will take not the slightest heed of such a downturn & we are looking forward to another terrific season opener.

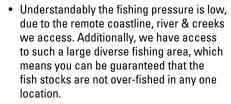
SOME FACTS ABOUT THE ARNHEMLAND BARRAMUNDI **NATURE LODGE.**

· We have access to a huge fishing area (6 fish-rich rivers, 150km of virtually uninhabited coastline, beautiful tropical islands and inland lagoons) available to us exclusively, as well as a spectacular level of environmentally-sensitive accommodation, for which we willingly pay significant annual lease payments and per-person-per-day royalties to the traditional owners of this vast, pristine area.





Deluxe Ensuite Cabin showing awning, private patio & setting.



- · We provide at no additional charge, quality ice cold beers from our well stocked Barramundi Bar plus selection of hand picked wines to compliment our gourmet meals as part of our comprehensive up market packages.
- Our spacious Deluxe Cabins feature a full size en-suite bathroom, cool tiled floors, multiple oscillating fans, fully stocked complementary bar fridge, and are able to accommodate up to four king single beds in comfort & feature their own personal patio area complete with an outdoor table setting.
- · We have no water restrictions & the lodge's water supply is considered by almost all



Enjoying a cold drink at the Barra Bar

that have sampled it to be the best naturally sourced supply they have tasted.

- We have a fleet of the acclaimed, state-of-the-art customised Ocean Master sportfishing boats, with the latest E-TEC high-performance outboard motors (which we change over annually), all equipped with current generation Lowrance fish-finding technology, VHF radios, EPIRBS & Satellite phones in the event of an emergency.
- We employ a Master Chef who provides guests with an amazing culinary experience, including seafood banquets comprised of succulent local barramundi and mud crabs. Additional fresh seafood delicacies are brought in twice weekly from Darwin specialist seafood wholesalers.

AND FINALLY

We would like to take this opportunity to wish all our clients a Merry Christmas & Happy New Year. We hope to see you all again at the lodge in 2009.





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