



## ARNHEMLAND BARRAMUNDI NATURE LODGE



# TAILS FROM THE LODGE

[www.barralodge.com.au](http://www.barralodge.com.au)

08 8983 1544

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email: [roger@nafa.com.au](mailto:roger@nafa.com.au)

**Recently we received a letter from one of our regular clients who visited the lodge in July with his family.**

### Letter from Andy

Visiting the Arnhemland Barramundi Nature Lodge in the middle of the year is a treat – especially when the weather is perfect and the fishing fires up!

I've been to the Lodge at the beginning of the Wet in October and at the end – March – several times. The fishing's never failed me and the coastline and estuaries always provide wonderful vistas of untouched wild Australia.

Let's face it – sometimes the build-up weather and the tail of the Wet can be tiresome. So it was Maningrida in July. It was Maningrida in July, with the family.

It was either going to be brilliant or – as the last group into the Lodge before the traditional mid-year break – it was a potential for a quiet few days of boat trips and intermittent excitement if some fish hadn't yet realised it was time for a holiday. Instead the place fired!

It's a remarkable thing about Arnhemland Barramundi Nature Lodge that just an hour and a half after leaving the runway in Darwin you can be on the water and fighting Australia's iconic sports fish. With guide Ben and family friend from Griffith in the NSW Riverina, Steve Gazzola, we were at the junction of the Liverpool and Tomkinson River within a half-hour of reaching the boat ramp of the north Arnhemland settlement. Not only was the weather brilliant, the rivers were playing and there was a beautiful fishing trying hard to take a Shimano rig out of my hands on the Liverpool River after just my second cast. I'd hardly dropped a 10+ Classic into the water when Wham! a decent fish better than 90 cm leapt for show and made first-time Territory visitor, Steve, sit straight and take notice. Then – as it so often can – things went very quiet.

We trolled, cast and persisted around the junction and a host of snags with a few successes, but they were infrequent and obviously smaller fish feeding only sporadically. Ben wasn't adverse to the idea of beating a likely rough afternoon trip back to Maningrida by heading in before lunch and crossing the bay to a creek on the other side of the Liverpool's mouth. We'd both often seen the

*Andy Bruyn looks very pleased with his 102cm Barra in July.*



effect of the falling tide on the channel into the creek through expansive mudflats. Big barra sit just off the flats waiting for the feast of bait and prawns coming off the mud into the concentrated channel. Up and back we trolled over a hole in the channel and every pass brought us fine fishing. Doubles, even triples (you can't stop a good guide having fun in the office, can you?) and it was fire after fire and fish for fish like classic wet season fishing for the better part of an hour and a half. Lunch came and went and none of us was hungry when there was so much action on the water in the wake of the boat.

Then came a hit on my line, that even among so many good fish - caught my attention. Ben brought the boat the mid-channel to give me the best chance with the fish and when she came up for a look and tried to shake the bomber that had been her downfall – pretty serious shiver, too, it was – we all cheered to greet what looked like a ripper on the line. After a fair bit of having it her own way, I finally got this girl to the side of the boat and into Ben's expertly handled net .... at 95 cm she was a beautiful silver estuary barra who put up a terrific fight

because she'd been hooked in the relatively shallow water of the channel and was forced to fight wide, rather than deep. Great fun!

Steve and I settled back into the trolling as the fish were still biting and a couple of double hook-ups later I got another whack on the line and started to play all over again. During the cheering Ben quipped that this one might be even a little bigger. "At least five centimetres bigger, I hope, mate," I responded.

She fought every bit as well and shied away after every glimpse of the hull of the Oceanmaster. We finally got her into the boat and ran the tape over her, and at 102 cm she put a smile on my face that's still there today

*Guide Benn Boulton releases a Barramundi*



– and still will be, especially when I get to go back to the Arnhemland Barramundi Nature Lodge in October with the Channel Nine Barra Challenge team for the bi-annual bash.

I'll be on the Metre Board – the rest of the team still has to get there.

Isn't it funny how the 80 or so other fish of the two day weekend get so scarce a mention

when their big sisters come out to play?

Well done to the crew at the Lodge – especially Ben and Mick as guides and to Mark in the kitchen. Even Manager Dave and the world's oldest backpacker Graham contributed with crabs and snapper.

Both the big girls are – of course – back in the river and Maningrida's estuary breeding

more barra, but smaller and tastier fish on the Lodge menu with muddies and bluewater classics made the tables at night an equally delightful experience at Arnhemland Barramundi Nature Lodge. To Alex and all the crew – many thanks for a terrific Dry Season adventure, for a definitely amateur fisherman, a better than one metre barra.

**Tim Abbott and family were also at the lodge in July, they really got amongst the action as well and had a terrific time. They sent in a bunch of fishy snaps including Golden Trevally, GT's, Queenfish & Barra.**



*September & October are filling fast so jump in and reserve your fishing trip and take advantage of our great "Barra Frenzy" specials. See details also attached.*

## INAUGURAL ARNHEMLAND FLY FISHING WEEK

*With Peter Morse – Australia's foremost saltwater fly fisherman in the remote Arnhemland wilderness of the Northern Territory.*

**DATE:**  
10-17 December 2009

**VENUE:** The multi-award-winning Arnhemland Barramundi Nature Lodge

**THE FLY FISHING:** This remote and exclusive region has rarely been fished by fly fishermen. The barra and inshore blue-water fishing with conventional tackle is first rate and at times exceptional. Land-based beach and flats fishing potential is relatively unknown and you may very well be the first person to explore these untouched beaches.

**ITINERARY:**  
10th Dec - 17th December 2009 – 7 nights with 6 days of Fly Fishing

Thursday 10th Dec Depart Darwin at 1.55pm with Air North  
Arrive in Maningrida at 3.00pm

*Accommodation for 7 nights in a quad share Deluxe Ensuite Cabin or twin share Tropical Safari Style Tent*

11th – 16th Dec Fly Fishing in Arnhemland

Thursday 17th Dec Depart Maningrida at 12.05pm with Air North  
Arrive in Darwin at 1.10pm

**Limited spaces available.**

For Bookings or further enquiries;

Contact: Roger Sinclair Ph: 08 8983 1544 or

Email: [roger@nafa.com.au](mailto:roger@nafa.com.au) [www.barralodge.com.au](http://www.barralodge.com.au)

