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# Fishing Port Douglas News



## with Heff

### Grand Slam & PB's on the Cards ...

The upcoming month of April is always a big tick on the fishing calendar. It is the tail section of the wet season and the only thing stopping the fun is the full moon period over the Easter weekend. It does have a bit of a reputation of delivering the last decent deluge of the season, however forecast models suggest we should get lucky this year. If this remains the case then it will be game on, both inshore and offshore.

We have already experienced what we call up here a proper wet season and the weeks ahead is when the fruit is ripe to pick in fishing terms. Depending on where you decide to fish here's a couple of real case scenarios of achieving a Grand Slam. By the term Grand Slam we mean highly targeted or preferred fish to catch by at least 4 species in a day.

River & Coastal fish on this list include barramundi, mangrove jack, fingermark and big 1m queenfish in the rivers firstly. Along the adjacent coastline all sorts are quite possible including spanish mackerel, giant trevally, big 1m queenfish, northern bluefin tuna, island trout and big large mouth nannygai. No matter whether you concentrate on one area or possibly do a big combo session I think April is right on the money for your inshore efforts.

Going further to the outer reef and with

premium fishing conditions improving dramatically then these fish off the bottom are truly possible - red emperor, large mouth nannygai and coral trout. Bonus species to be considered a highly targeted fish include cobia, maori sea bream, cattle dog cod and jobfish. If you also mix it up on surface pelagic scene include spanish mackerel, giant trevally and even possibly a small black marlin to add to your Grand Slam tally.

If you are able to achieve a Grand Slam in any form you have had a great day's fishing by anyone's standard. I can almost guarantee that there will a personal best fish species caught in amongst it all.

That's why we love living and fishing up here. Check us out on [www.fishingportdouglas.com.au](http://www.fishingportdouglas.com.au) if you are visiting and fish with the best guides to give you the best chance of achieving such results.



  
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# Fishing On the Daintree

with Jamie Beitzel



For us up on the Daintree River it was an eventful past few weeks I must say. For the first couple of weeks we battled some fairly harsh weather conditions with a lot of rain crossing the area. We managed to get through most of our trips but there were a couple we had to refund particularly when the heavens opened up. By week three of the month everything improved dramatically and we continued on our merry way.

On the fishing front, for those first couple of weeks I had to be quite innovative and I must say I did a pretty good job. I still had my couple of secret spots to source live bait and the old fashioned fresh dead baits played an important role. Even with the river running brown at times I was fortunate enough to salvage quite a few great fingermark which are a feature of our river. The key here was to make the most on the incoming tides pushing some salt into the river. Outside of this tide I made the most of the very low tide concentrating around the drains of the run off creeks and came up with a few barra, not big ones but a barra is a barra ! In the heat of the moment a few bigger ones were lost but that is part and parcel of the charter industry. Also during these tougher conditions I always managed to pick

your reliable grunter across the flats and a few stingrays and shovel nose shark which keep the clients entertained for quite some time. Generally people are just happy to see the rod bending and the fish putting up a good fight. As a bonus I had the crab pots out on most occasions and was able to secure a legal mud crab or two on each trip. With good weather finally arriving so did some premium tides. Naturally the fishing went to a new level. My go to fish was the fingermark and they were feisty. I don't know of another system in Qld which holds such a healthy supply of these fish. They are one of the slowest growing fish in the tropics but I'm blessed to have plenty of them to keep me occupied well and truly over the legal limit. In saying this, because of their slow growth rate I maintain very strict limits as to what is taken out of the system. Other fish which became rather easy to catch including a horde of river trevally and a few big queenfish returned to the river. The bigger queenfish will become a real feature of my tours in the next month or so.

For me Easter looks extremely busy, bookings are very limited and the initial weather forecasts look sensational. It will be great fishing ahead !



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# Dragon Lady Charters

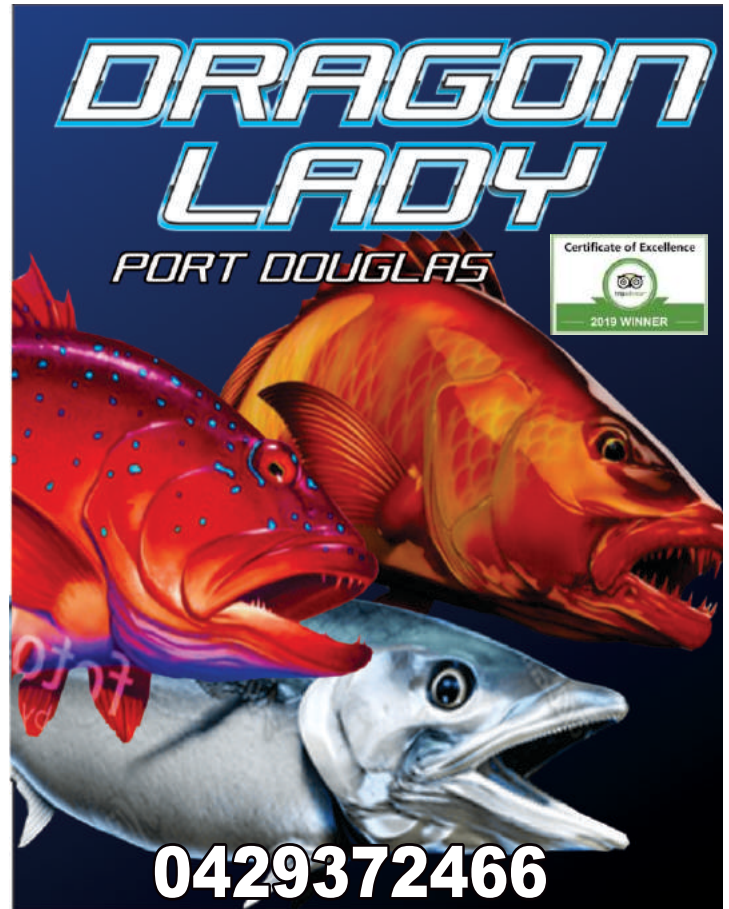
with Derek Brown



Hi my name is Derek Brown and I'm the new owner of Dragon Lady Charters. I have recently taken over the business from the legendary Steve Adamson which grew this outstanding charter business over 20yrs ago. I have all the intentions of continuing this legacy by providing a great and genuine fishing experience for all that join us for a day out the Great Barrier Reef - the best fishing in the world.

We have maintained all the same crew which have served this company well for many years. Personally I want make any wholesale changes but probably bring my own personal experiences in from the IT world to the table and my extreme passion for fishing in paradise over 10yrs in Port Douglas. From a client point of view nothing much changes and we intend to maintain the high standards already in place.

Having taken over since the start of March it has been a real learning curve and I suspect this revolving door wont change in that regards. We conducted quite a few trips for the month and the fishing to be honest exceeded expectations. We had some days to contend with less favourable conditions



but overall the results were quite favourable. Our best days saw some cracking large mouth nannygai up to 6-8kg come over the side plus there was always something else in between. Small mouth nannygai, mackerel on the float, gold spot trevally, sweetlip, red emperor and coral trout all contributed to our daily tally. There was never a dull moment to say the least.

With quietest two months of the year behind us, the heat is turning up for the Easter period with bookings. Be sure to book ahead to avoid disappointment and with the forecast in the immediate future looking brilliant, I'm expecting we'll be running almost every day over the holiday period. Look forward to meeting you in person on the boat when you join us .....

# Saltaire Charters



## with Craig Newbold

With our Saltaire vessel going through a rigorous maintenance program during March we out sourced our bookings with high quality product at hand. In fact ex-skipper on Saltaire, Jake Collete played a big role ensuring our clients remained in the best of hands.

One very interesting trip Jake was in charge of was drifting along the edges of the shelf. This was by the request of the client and they actually did extremely well for this time of the year. Fishing in a range of depths from 50-150m they caught dogtooth tuna, yellowfin tuna, the elusive gold band snapper and red emperor. They had the perfect weather day to achieve this and it was deemed a success.

Jake's other gig was an overnight trip entailing a mixed program of reef and light game tackle. This also produced quite a few different fish in great

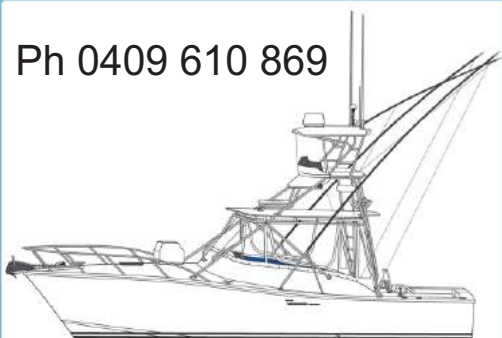
conditions. Large mouth nannygai were plentiful, gold spot trevally played havoc, coral trout were around and the light tackle efforts produced yellowfin just outside of the reef on the shelf. A big thank you goes out to Jake and his crew plus their operations manager Anna in assisting us get this together.

The other trip we had we utilised the services of Damon Gruzdev and gave the clients also a ripping day on the reef catching coral trout, mackerel and a range of other species.

In an industry which has had a bit of a reputation of not working in with each other, I find it pleasing that some barriers have been smoothed over. At the end of the day it's all about the client and continuing the fact that Port Douglas is the best fishing destination in Australia.



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