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# Fishing Port Douglas News



## with Heff

The start of school holidays have ignited the traditional start for the tourist season however there were earlier signs of activity from the start of June. I sense it correlated with the extreme cold snap that occurred down south and people are super keen to escape the cold. Well for all forms of business in the area we can expect a steady flow of trade for the next 6 months. Fishing charters are no exception to the rule so pre-booking trips are very recommended to avoid disappointment.

Living up in paradise certainly does have its perks and just recently was such an occasion. We had a photo shoot to launch our new extended trip reef package entailing our 50ft Escapade Mothership, 35ft Saltaire Game Boat and 20ft Ocean Whaler Sportfishing vessel catering for up to 8 pax. Have a look at our website, it's great value!

Anyway we chose a nice calm weather day and headed to Snapper Island which in local terms is just up the road. This is a stunning National Park island with the best scenery as it sits just underneath the enormity of the Daintree World Heritage Rainforest. There's some pretty handy fishing to be enjoyed but it's selling point is the panoramic view from a 360 degree perspective. In every direction there's something stunning to catch

the eye.

The photo shoot was accomplished by around 1pm and with the team departing, ex-Dragon Lady skipper, Steve Adamson him and I opted to stay the afternoon and night on the water aboard Escapade in the protected waters of Snapper Island. With a big, comfortable vessel at our disposal we settled in for a very cruisy afternoon and evening. We had a good fish catching various species, probably the biggest being a couple of unusual Oceanic Salmon Catfish around 12kg and boy did they go like the clappers. We had a couple of quiet drinks and ate fresh fish as well. Seriously we had the whole area to ourselves with the odd tinnie cruising past. We both agreed that it's got us buggered as to why wouldn't more local people wouldn't take advantage of such a place within such close proximity. The slow sinking sunset was just awesome as the big guy in the sky went to sleep behind Daintree Rainforest. Ah well, more fool them I say.

In the morning we were welcomed by an equally welcoming sunrise, had a moment to reflect over a coffee taking in the surrounds before heading back for the short trip to Port Douglas. It was as good as a mini holiday in my opinion!



  
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# Fishing On the Daintree

with Jamie Beitzel



Hi to everyone out there reading my monthly report. I can tell you off the cuff that things are pretty busy up here on the Daintree in regards to tourists, plus also happy to say the fishing has been very good. With the weather pattern changing to a more tolerable outcome I have found myself covering a bit of ground along the coast and within the river. I've had the whole box and dice the past month working with some lovely, happy go lucky families and couples/groups, your more serious angler that can fish and then those that think they can fish but honestly have little idea. That's the nature of the business and I've really enjoyed my time of late, which the good fishing has attributed to that positivity.

I guess I spent about 75% of my time within the river which is always a pleasure. Live bait hasn't been an issue for me and when your loaded with premium baits you know you are going to get some interest in the fish department. These baits have turned into 1m queenfish on a regular basis and they don't disappoint with high quality action on the surface and hard driving runs underneath. I tend to release these fish and when boated they must be handled with extreme care as they are quite fragile. A super quick photo is paramount and a quick release is required in no more than 20 seconds. They

are a fantastic sportfish to have in our system at this size and I'm very protective in my attitude towards them.

Other than this I've seen a good run of big grunter across the flats up to 55cm and plenty of 1-2kg river trevally. There's also had some monster Gt's getting busy across the flats and have had some brilliant moments chasing these guys once hooked up. Amongst the snags I've managed a few barra to 60cm and my old favourite the fingermark have continued to provide some decent action.

On the super calm days we opted to head along the coast around Snapper Island and what I call inshore patches. These trips turned out pretty good with 1m Queenfish around the island, medium spanish mackerel in the deeper water on the surface and some nice nannygai and cobia down below. I found there were a few cat and mouse games this past month with a couple of other not regular charters visiting the area but I'm always one step ahead protecting my marks.

We are super busy ahead with bookings with school holidays with a handful of potential vacancies available so please call ASAP. I anticipate the fishing to remain very productive in the current conditions we've experienced in the past few weeks.

Cheers Jamie



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# Dragon Lady Charters

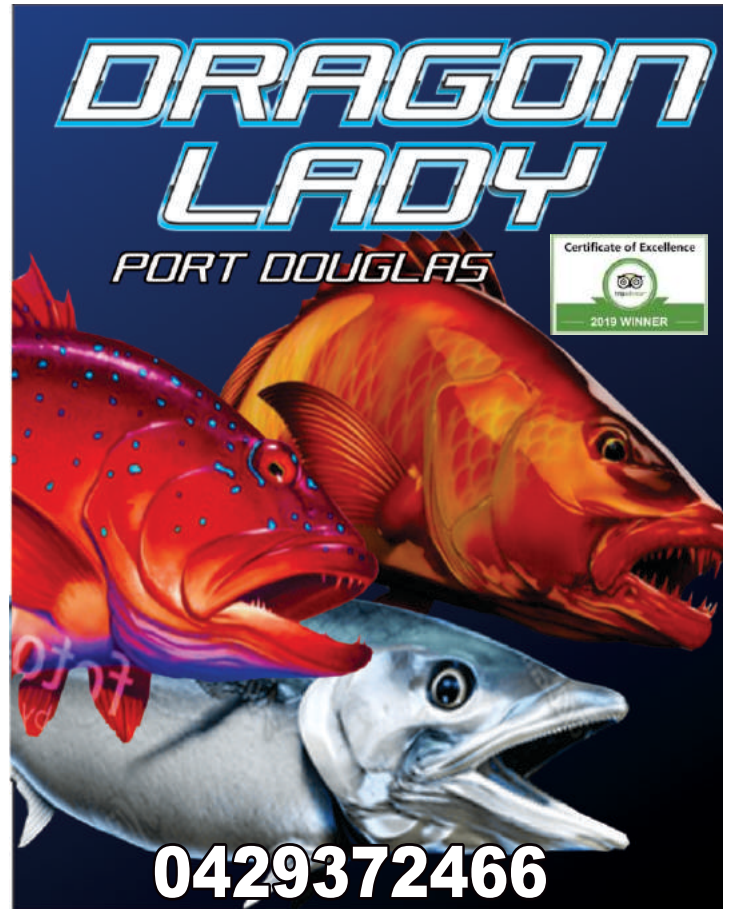
with Derek Brown



We've ticked along fairly smoothly in the past few weeks and the weather improved dramatically as the days went by. When you consider the previous two months were challenging to say the least, it was a welcome reprieve. The good weather also coincided with increased numbers of tourists visiting the Far Nth who have already started to vacate the cold southern states for a break.

Every day is a different day on the reef but we really started to see the fish come on the bite with more regularity and they're appreciative of the cooler conditions. Overall it was a mixed bag of fish that we rustled up, some days going through the roof and others a tad quieter. However we didn't experience a bad day when it came to catching solid fish numbers.

Highlights included some solid days on the mackerel float where it was engaged consistently throughout the day with species up to 10kg providing a lot of buzz around the boat. We had some bright moments when the red emperor were hot to trot and the best registered was easily 10kg and that is considered a trophy fish. At other times the large mouth nannygai up to 8kg were providing some scintillating sessions and a big favourite



of ours to tap into. Small mouth nannygai to 50cm certainly filled in the gaps and were generally caught in high numbers. Basically they are the exact same as the taste of a eating a large mouth nannygai. Probably from a tourist point of view they are absolutely perfect for a feed for two people after the trip that night. As expected coral trout up to 5kg always featured on any given day and often became the main catch for the day. When you tail off with species such as trevally, maori bream, cattle dog cod and sweetlip then the accumulative catch does build up nicely.

The fishing on the reef will continue to fire on all cylinders so if you are looking for a great valued day hooking into some premium fish give us a holler. Officially the busy tourist season has kicked into gear so booking ahead is certainly advised.



# Saltaire Charters

## with Craig Newbold



The recent weeks have seen us expand our portfolio into a couple of new areas, which in the current economic climate is not a bad idea.

We still conducted a handful of stock standard fishing charters which were mainly a combination of reef and light game fishing. These trips went typically well catching spanish mackerel and longtail tuna on the surface and a good supply of coral trout from off the bottom. If you can strike the good weather at this time of year there's no better place to be fishing than on the Great Barrier Reef.

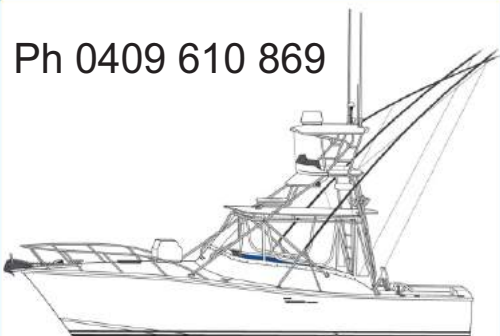
A new contract we picked up recently is assisting the Rescue Air Services with their training drills for the next 12 months. We did quite a few of these this month and I'll explain how it all works. The rescue aeroplane departs Cairns and flies north bound towards Low Island. At a nominated time our Saltaire boat is in position on the water deploying a big orange buoy as a target. The plane then flies around and intermittently drops various rescue apparatus

from a great height down on the target. It is then our job to retrieve from the water the objects which record various data from the exercise. These objects vary in size and content. Weights can range from 12kg, 15kg, 25kg to 60kg and contents change from medical supplies, to food supplies and life rafts. Often they are attached to 400m of rope so that is part of the retrieval process as well. Lucky for us we have a team of young, good deck hands which lap up this sort of work.

This last month we also launched our extended reef fishing charter package entailing our 50ft Escapade Mothership, 35ft Saltaire boat and 20ft Ocean Whaler sportfishing boat. We can cater for up to 8 pax covering all aspects of fishing and the pricing is completely affordable. Go to [www.fishingportdouglas.com.au](http://www.fishingportdouglas.com.au) for a closer look for a trip you'll never forget. We have our first trip in a couple of weeks and looking forward to it very much.



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