

# LINEBURNER

VOLUME 240 PRICELESS

*FISHING TROPICAL FAR NORTH QUEENSLAND*

DEC 20

Features

Blue Marlin on the Go  
Going Wild Local Style  
New Addition Ripper  
Plus Local Reports





**BRANSFORDS**  
Discount Tackle Shop  
ABN 99 061 777 722

QUALIFIED ADVICE • FISHING CHARTERS • WHOLESALE/RETAIL • PHONE/WEB ORDERS  
Web: [www.bransfords.com.au](http://www.bransfords.com.au) Email: [keith@bransfords.com.au](mailto:keith@bransfords.com.au) Proprietor: Keith Graham

**Captain Cook Hwy, Clifton Beach 4879**  
**Ph: (07) 4055 3918**  
**Best Tackle Prices in FNQ**

### Our Valued Contributors:



'Sharky' Shane Down  
Local Expert



Steve Adamson  
Dragon Lady Charters



Damian Collette  
Saltaire & Allure Charters



Jake Wyatt  
Exceed Sportfishing



Mick Hart  
Magazine Chef



Fraser Allen  
Local Deckhand



Keith Graham  
Bransfords Tackle



Dylan Case  
Nautical Marine Sales



Bruce Belcher  
Daintree Croc Tours



Lynton Heffer (Heff)  
Owner / Editor



Jase Teelow  
Gunnell Rod Australia



Jake Collette  
Master V Skipper



Jamie Beitzel  
Fishing On the Daintree



Ethan 'Choppa' Scott  
Junior Reporter



Contact Us if you'd like to  
Contribute - Most Welcome

This magazine is published by The Line Burner business of Port Douglas & welcomes any Far Nth Qld contributions including editorials & photographs. The views expressed in this magazine do not necessarily reflect the views of the magazine, the editors, or the authors themselves. The magazine does not guarantee accuracy, validity, honesty or politeness of content, and we shall not be held responsible for the content of mentioned websites. The content (photos, art, articles etc...) found within are the property of the submitter and not our magazine.  
Contacts: Ph 0409 610 869  
[www.fishingportdouglas.com.au](http://www.fishingportdouglas.com.au)  
[info@fishingportdouglas.com.au](mailto:info@fishingportdouglas.com.au)  
Fishing Port Douglas  
Po Box 108  
Port Douglas 4877

**Front Cover:**  
**Exceed**  
**Sportfishing**  
**with the Cream**  
**of the Crop reef**  
**species - Red**  
**Emperor**



**FISHING**  
*Port Douglas*  
**River - Reef - Game**  
Ph: 0409 610 869  
[www.fishingportdouglas.com.au](http://www.fishingportdouglas.com.au)

# ESSENTIAL FISHING SERVICES

### TACKLE STORES

**Bransfords Discount Tackle Shop**  
On the Highway - Clifton Beach 40553918  
See them on Instagram & Facebook  
**Nautical Marine - Pt Douglas 40996508**

### FISHING CHARTERS

**Fishing Port Douglas - 0409610869**  
**Dragon Lady Charters - 0429372466**  
**Saltaire Charters - 0459323888**  
**Exceed Sportfishing - 0409610869**  
**On the Daintree - 0409610869**

### BOAT & 4WD WRAPS

**Port Signs - 0437031572**

### CAMPING CRYOVAC MEAT PACKAGES

**Mossman Butchery - 40981669**

### 4WD REPAIRS & SERVICING

**Port Douglas Automotive - 40995177**

### BOAT SERVICING & REPAIRS

**PD Marine Engineering - 0478546676**  
**PD Suzuki Marine - 0419593694**  
**Above Grade Marine Services - 0417195559**

### BATTERIES

**Battery World Cairns - 131760**

# The Best Game Boat in FNQ

By Heff - The Shaka 60ft Game Boat

One of the Best Ever liveboard game boats ever built in Australia is soon to be based based in Port Douglas FNQ in January. In a nutshell, Shaka marks the absolute pinnacle of Australian custom-boat building in the heavy-tackle, live-aboard, big marlin-fishing scene.

In association with Saltaire Charters, at Fishing Port Douglas we are very excited to be Managing this vessel moving forward in 2021.

Hand built by Barry Martin using cold-moulded methods — western red cedar, strip-planked core, all encased in fiberglass and epoxy resin — Shaka is conceived as the ultimate liveboard fishing boat for catching 1000lb marlin on the Grand Barrier Reef.

The unique 21 degree deep-V hull with prop tunnels offers an amazing ride in a big 60 footer with 3000hp. Just as importantly, the curved transom means you can back up with agility when chasing that monster marlin leaping from

the raging Coral Sea.

As Shaka was purpose designed to fish the entire length of the Great Barrier Reef, she has the speed to get to the bite, the seaworthiness to fish comfortably in the all conditions outside The Reef, and the flexibility and accommodation to double as the 'mothership'.

At 60 foot, and powered by twin 1500hp MTU engines, Shaka has a top speed of 42 knots, a cruising speed of 32 knots and a range of 865 nautical miles at 20 knots. With a dedicated pump room and engine room built to stringent Australian offshore survey regulations, she is said to be engineered like no other boat for extended liveboard fishing.

One part is the high end fishing, the other part is the absolute 'Entertainer'. Shaka provides a standard of luxury accommodation commensurate with her fishing prowess. She is designed to make extended liveboards a pleasure no matter the destination. The unique four-cabin layout offers numerous sleeping options from catering for a simple family overnight cruise through to a 10-day tournament. With tropical-strength air conditioning and the finest of domestic appliances, you derive comfort in the tropics and far from home, while the unique retractable rear glass windows generates a feeling of spaciousness and involvement in the fishing action from inside the plush saloon.

Next Page ....

7 + ( 8 1 1 ( / / 5  
\$ 8 6 7 5 \$ / , \$

**Wonga  
Beach**  
**Service Station**  
Daintree Road

Last fuel stop this side of  
the Daintree River!

Fuel - Oil - Bait

Ice - Tackle - ATM

Boating Accessories

Fast Food & Groceries

Ph: 4098 7616

**MARKHAM**  
timber  
naturally the best choice

PO Box 687  
5 Sawmill Road  
Mossman 4873

**Framing Timber**  
**Wall Sheeting**  
**Hardwood**  
**CCA Logs**  
**Moldings**  
**Cypress**  
**Fencing**  
**Lattice**

Brian & Tricia Markham  
Proprietors

Ph: 07 4098 2197  
Fax: 07 4098 2394

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

Ph: 0409 610 869



Download your  
Line Burner  
now online

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



**HAPPY POOLS**

- Pool servicing & water testing
- Private pools, Body Corporate, Holiday homes
  - Selling pumps, chlorinators, filters, pool heaters
- Ask us about 9 Star energy saving pumps

**Daryl Taylor**  
**0404 286 187**

**Ph/Fax 4098 5780**  
[happypools@bigpond.com](mailto:happypools@bigpond.com)

**MAX STOCK'S**  
WHOLESALE FOOD SERVICE • 100% LOCALLY OWNED

A wholly owned and operated local company, distributing wholesale dry, chilled and frozen grocery items direct to the kitchens of leading restaurants, cafes, hotels and sports & entertainment venues.



**Proudly Servicing**  
**Port Douglas,**  
**Mossman, Cairns**  
**and District**  
**Phone 4035 3911**

### Shaka 60ft Cont ....

### FISHING INVENTORY

As Shaka's main purpose is to catch giant black marlin, a custom Release teak helm chair takes centre stage in the expansive teak-laid cockpit, with high sides, teak coaming and wide outward opening door to slide the biggest of marlin aboard. All fishing gear is the best money can buy with no stone unturned and meticulously maintained by our professional crew.

There is a 600lb/day Eskimo ice machine, Rupp outriggers, electric teaser reels, oversized refrigeration, live bait tank, kill tanks and a beautiful stainless marlin tower. The electronics include 15in touch VEI screens, Wesmar Searchlight Sonar and Furuno high output depth sounder, plus a bow thruster. There is a full array of screens in the tower, too.

Professionally maintained and crewed, Shaka is among only a few revered fleet of game-fishing boats on the East Coast of Australia and is built by Assegai Marine.

**DESTINATIONS** We have the ability to depart from the following destinations pending on our schedule: Port Douglas, Cairns, Cooktown and Lizard Island. All trips can be tailored made to your desire. Destinations include the following depending on the length of your time.

- Ribbon Reefs No. 1 -10
- Linden Banks
- Opal Ridge
- Lizard Island – the Cod Hole
- Hope Island
- Fitzroy Island
- Osprey Reef in the Coral Sea

- Bouganville in the Coral Sea
- The Seamount in the Coral Sea
- Princess Charlotte Bay
- Cape York
- Papua New Guinea

**Additional Services** To add to your Ultimate Adventure we have direct access to the following:

**Saltaire** 35ft Game Boat – easily the classiest and professional boat in FNQ for it's size class. Heavy tackle, Light Tackle, Gt Popper Fishing, Reef Fishing & Snorkelling. Ideal as a secondary boat tied next to the Shaka.

**Motherships** Having been in the industry for over 25yrs we have a selected group of Super Yachts we can arrange for the Platinum Mothership Experience.

For more information contact us at [www.fishingportdouglas.com.au](http://www.fishingportdouglas.com.au) or better, call 0409610869. This is the Ultimate GBR Experience you'll get North of the Border !!



**FUEL • OIL • SEAFOOD • BAIT • ICE**

Dickson Inlet, Port St, Port Douglas  
**Phone 4099 6792**

**0419 278 170**

**24 HOUR EMERGENCY PLUMBING SERVICES**

**GENERAL MAINTENANCE**  
**RENOVATIONS & NEW INSTALLATIONS**  
**ROOFING**  
**HIGH PRESSURE DRAIN CLEANING**  
**HOT WATER SERVICE INSTALLATIONS**

**NATHAN FITZGERALD**  
[nfpplumbing@outlook.com.au](mailto:nfpplumbing@outlook.com.au)

**QBCC: 1294530**  
**ABN: 679 641 30253**



## The Dragon's Den

By Steve Adamson

What can I say, a month is a long time in our line of work and we've seen the first signs of normal life as we are normally accustomed to. We are seeing a bit more trade than normal for a December period and forward bookings in the short term just may see us out of the woods. It's been a tough year to combat but opening the borders has been key all along. I sense everyone is over Covid around the country and hopefully our governors keep moving forward despite any minor lapses.

Well, one couldn't wish for a better run of weather for December as pretty much all days have been 10 knots or less, and if it crept over this it was a blessing as it's been hot work on the water. The variable winds have been a bit challenging at times but you have to expect that at this time of year when it's been so calm. We've experienced a couple of nice drops of rain overnight which invariably makes the next day a bit steamy, but we haven't seen any hint for the moment that a monsoon trough is on its way. Time will tell I guess.

On the fishing front we've come across all and sundry with a mixed bag of fruit coming back to the docks on every day. The general rule has been the fish are biting hot on a couple of hangs depending on the tide, then it's been a matter of scratching around to top up the chiller. There's been no dominant species but I'll give it to the coral trout this month which we generally see come back in good numbers. Following this it's been a mixture of small and large mouth nannygai, some big mackerel on the float rig, spangled & red



**DRAGON LADY**  
PORT DOUGLAS

Certificate of Excellence  
2019 WINNER

**0429372466**

emperor, baldy bream and gold spot trevally. The Gold Spot always seem to turn up in numbers at this time of year and tend to pull the arms off the clients when we get onto a patch of them. They pack a serious punch and always tend to create a bit more mayhem on the deck for us crew. They can be a saviour if proceedings are that bit quieter. Despite what some people may there's no problem with them on the plate when eaten fresh, no issue at all.

We've had great support this period with local trades utilising our boat for their Christmas parties, especially from Cairns and the Tablelands - more so than any previous year. I would like to extend my appreciation to you all and I know you've enjoyed your day out with us.

Moving forward I'm going to frank, we are literally booked out between Christmas and New Year with the odd exception and the first week of January is selling like hot cakes. The whole of January looks more busier than usual for a matter of fact which is encouraging. I'd highly suggest to get on the blower to gauge where our bookings stand. We are available for last minute Gift Vouchers as well, but best to call.

Let's hope for a better 2021, take care and Merry Christmas.

PORT DOUGLAS **pda** AUTOMOTIVE

Driven to deliver quality care and service for you and your car.

- ★ All Mechanical Repairs
- ★ Tyre Sales and Repair
- ★ EFI Diagnostics
- ★ Suspension Repairs
- ★ Air Conditioning
- ★ Mini Bus Servicing
- ★ Wheel Alignments
- ★ Auto Electrical
- ★ Safety Insp Stn AIS# 9119

P 4099 5177 E [service@portdouglasautomotive.com.au](mailto:service@portdouglasautomotive.com.au)  
F 4099 5420 41 Warner Street, Port Douglas

Specialising in Marine Carpets

**N.Q. Carpet Cleaning Services**

More than a clean... ABN 804 2801 0097

Brad & Glenda Evans

Port Douglas, Mossman, Cairns and surrounding districts

Mob: 0429 935 206  
Email: [reefpark1@bigpond.com](mailto:reefpark1@bigpond.com)

Office Home Resort Marine Car  
Carpet & upholstery cleaned



Download your  
Line Burner  
now online

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



5 / 12 Grant Street, Port Douglas  
[www.thebarbershopportdouglas.com.au](http://www.thebarbershopportdouglas.com.au)



barbershopportdouglas



barbershopportdouglas

Group bookings for wedding parties or events  
[bookings@thebarbershopportdouglas.com.au](mailto:bookings@thebarbershopportdouglas.com.au)

A 10+ YEARS  
LOCAL BUSINESS

CUSTOM BUILT WEB SITES

ONLINE BOOKING

WEB DEVELOPMENT

ONLINE SHOPS

DESIGN

DIGITAL MARKETING

LET'S MEET

**ICIT**

4098 8268

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

## Breathing in the Saltaire

By Damian Collete



We've seen a bit more trade this month once the borders opened but it has been absolute slim pickings for the majority of the year when it comes to charter work. Basically we lost over 90 days of work due directly to Covid, which has been a hard pill to swallow. For specialised game and reef fishing charter which attracts higher end clientele it has been a matter of doing what you can. Re-locating boats elsewhere, working in the slip yards on others and being grateful for any charter work that has come to fruition.

However the borders did re-open to most but NSW has been basically cut off again. This has resulted in further cancellations for us and is a killer for the tourism industry. In saying this we are looking forward to a better than normal Christmas & New Year trade which gives us all some stamina to keep moving forward.

As I mentioned we have completed a few charters to this point and I'm going to concentrate on one particular trip. It was a little bumpy, unlike the most of December, and we venture to the continental shelf with the hope of landing a marlin. By the time of the charter the black marlin scene had basically dried up several weeks earlier. However to land a marlin at this time of year requires to travel further east from the shelf and you basically hedge your bets on landing a blue marlin. There are quite a few extra miles to cover but if the client wants to land one this is what is required at this time of year.

There is a bit of a change up in tactics for this type of trip running big skirted lures as opposed to big skip baits. Also the trolling speed is a bit higher by a couple of knots to get the right action and bubble trail of the lures. Once you go that bit wider you open yourself up to anything big and predatory.

First off the cuff was a big wahoo which gobbled up the starboard outrigger lure. They hit hard and fast, and are the quickest mackerel species on the planet reaching speeds up to 90km per hour. Imagine a hapless

bait fish swimming around, they wouldn't even see it coming. This 50lb specimen was within the first half hour of putting the lures in the water so it was a great start.

Then not too long after it was port outrigger lure to get smashed and I saw it come in sideways. A blue marlin hit it like a tonne of bricks and immediately went beserk on the surface once it felt the sting of the hook. It then proceeded to greyhound multiple times at incredible speed and power. Then as they often do they run deep and then there is a dog fight on your hands. The trick is to try and keep them up as close as you can on the surface which is high end winding on behalf of the client and some quick boat maneuvering. It was a good team effort and 20 minutes later we tagged a rampaging 500lb blue marlin. In 'blue' terms it was a ripper and any bigger than this then you really have your work cut out for you.

So by 11.30am we had achieved the main target with the bonus of a good sized wahoo. We really didn't see much more action following this but our clients were thrilled beyond their expectations to land a big billfish which was the aim of the trip. ■



**SALTAIRE Charters**  
Phone  
0409610869  
Full Blown  
Excitement!

## South Mossman Roadhouse

6AM - 8PM  
7 DAYS

Fishing Gear  
Bait and Ice  
Auto Care



Hot Food  
Sandwiches  
Cold Drinks



129 Alchera Drive Mossman QLD 4873 Ph: 07 4098 1656  
ABN: 34 069 005 438 003

# The Local Beat in FNQ

By Heff

In this section we'll cover a few topics which may have an impact on your holiday and fishing aspirations in the New Year.

It is not a concern at the moment for FNQ but we are always monitoring what the weather may hold in the near future. The bureau say **Monsoonal** conditions to strengthen across northern Australia. After the first burst of monsoonal weather across Australia last week, a monsoon trough which formed off the northwest of Australia recently dissipated. Current atmospheric conditions are favourable for the redevelopment of a monsoon trough across northern Australia in the coming week.

The main focus of monsoonal conditions near the Australian region is currently well to the east of the country, associated with severe tropical cyclone Yasa, east of Vanuatu. While Yasa is not expected to move near Australia, it is likely that a monsoon trough in the vicinity of Yasa will extend westwards in the coming week, across the Gulf of Carpentaria and into the Timor Sea, to the north of Australia. This could lead to the establishment of a broad monsoon flow across northern Australia, and potentially the official onset of the Australian monsoon in the NT. Anyone considering coming to FNQ in January should not be deterred from visiting.

The land **temperature** is warm, even for our standards and this is likely to continue in the coming weeks. Average humidity is around 70-80% and the feel like temperature is mid to high 30's. Any rainfall will increase the humidity. If coming from down south you will note the difference.

**Covid** has thrown another spanner in the works with a lot of cancellations coming from the Sydney region. It's just been another kick in the guts when things seemed to be getting on track. I just

received a cancellation on a game boat for the early New Year despite living in the ACT. Unfortunately this chap has just visited Sydney for the day for business purposes when this latest outbreak occurred. He is devastated not to being able to holiday and go out on a fishing trip of a lifetime.

Locally we've seen a good influx of people roll through town but highly suspect they are living within the state. It's been a relief to see actual people around the streets and marina which are not locals. The town is ready to provide a great holiday, but like everyone we are watching this space very closely.

On the **Fishing** front, with great weather on hand the coastal and reef fishing is our most popular activity. At this time of year it is all about quality and not necessarily quantity. A big fish landed will easily make up for the half a dozen slightly smaller ones.

For game fishing enthusiasts Gt popper fishing is on the money with good big tides and whilst the weather is calm. We are still catching marlin, a bit wider and they are blue marlin. Mixed in with some tuna and wahoo it is worth the cost and effort.

In the rivers the main species are fingermark, queenfish, river trevally and mangrove jack. There are barra's around and must be released at this time of year during their closure. The Daintree River is by far the best system to fishing at the moment. ■



River - Reef - Game

Ph: 0409 610 869

www.fishingportdouglas.com.au



AND NOW PRINT  
AVAILABLE  
AS WELL

TEXT:  
0419757864

CALL:  
07 4099 4353

ONTHESPOT  
SIGNSPORT  
DOUGLAS.COM.AU



Why troll around when  
everything you need is here!

Find all your marine power needs under one roof.  
Batteries, accessories, you need it, we've got it.



297 Mulgrave Rd Westcourt CAIRNS Ph. 13 17 60



MARINE ELECTRONICS

ABN 34 342 029 951

Authorised Agent for:  
Furuno • JRC • TMQ  
Raymarine • Garmin  
Coursemaster  
Koden • Simrad  
Navman • Robinson  
GME Electrophone

Mobile service for all service & repairs  
Quality Workmanship  
Qualified Technician

m: 0429 494 659 f: (07) 4094 2165

e: pdme@primusononline.com.au  
PO Box 882 Port Douglas QLD 4877



**PORT DOUGLAS**

**FRESH Local Seafood**

- PRAWNS • OYSTERS
- MUD CRABS • BUGS
- CALAMARI
- SMOKED & MARINATED PRODUCE
- CONDIMENTS
- FRESH SALAD • PLATTERS
- LUNCH PACKS
- PRAWNS COOKED DAILY

**TUESDAY - SATURDAY 10am - 5.00pm**  
**SUNDAY 10am - 3.00pm (Closed Mondays)**  
 11 Grant Street, Port Douglas  
 Phone: 4099 4960



**River - Reef - Game**  
 Ph: 0409 610 869  
[www.fishingportdouglas.com.au](http://www.fishingportdouglas.com.au)

**Barrier Reef Tavern**

**Bistro**  
**TAB - Pokies**  
**Drive Thru**  
**Bottleshop**  
**Sky Channel**  
**Pool Table**



Reef St  
 Four Mile  
 Port Douglas

# FNQ GBR Adventure

By Paul Dawe



Hi my name is 'Dawesy' and I lived in Port Douglas for around 10yrs not so long ago. Unfortunately the call of work saw me return to Victoria but I get up north every year. Originally I came up with a band of mates from Victoria to play footy for the local AFL Crocs. Being country boys we were born and bred for camping, boating, hunting and of course fishing.


Since 2004 a group of us have done a Cape York every year, which to be honest has been a lot of hard yards to organise especially being based down south. Basically a 10 day trip has entailed 5 days of organising / travelling and only 5 days enjoying the real stuff of fishing, hunting and camping. From airport travel, to getting local supplies, to driving with boats / motor bikes and trailers some 600km from Port Douglas, it has been enjoyable but arduous. We had been doing out of Port Stewart for a long time which is way north on the east coast of the Cape. It's been a lot of fun over the years and the real stuff has been exceptional. However, how could we maximise our play time was the question?

So I was thinking away not so long ago and I came up with the concept of purchasing a barge. We did our homework and recently my mate who was a bit cashed up, sourced a something which would be ideal and we could base in FNQ. It was by chance we

found this beauty and now is currently is based at the Port Douglas marina. A 33ft barge with heaps of deck space, landing platform and a wheelhouse with an awesome set up including drive station, toilet and shower has now become our future project for exploring the wonders of FNQ.

Our maiden voyage saw a band of us travel up north on the hope that the borders would be open in early December. Luckily they were and we found ourselves in Port Douglas around midday. Now we hadn't actually laid eyes on the boat yet but inside intel had us feeling confident. Upon first sight everything seem to be well in order so we got hammering getting supplies. I had access to welding equipment so I was busy adding gunnell holders that arvo' to suit some game rods. It was a mad scramble but by 9pm that evening we set off on our next adventure. Much better than spending days on the road just to get going!

With auto pilot steering twin 100hp motors I skippered the vessel throughout the night at around 6-7 knots heading north. The weather forecast looked glamour for the coming days ahead. It was exciting and the boat ran well. At 5am with the first hint of the sun rising we were at Ribbon Reef No.5. I got the boys up out of their swags and we were catching coral trout soon after. ➡

**CAIRNS GAME FISHING CLUB**

**COCK & BALL TAVERN**  
 "Famous for Value"

**GREAT VALUE MEALS**  
**NO. 1 POKIES PUB**  
**BARS • FUNCTIONS**

**"Friendly Water Hole"** Cnr. Grove & Digger Streets

**ABOVE GRADE MARINE SERVICES**

**SHIPWRIGHTS**  
**FIBREGLASS SPECIALISTS**

- ◆ BOAT BUILDING
- ◆ REFITS
- ◆ CUSTOMISING
- ◆ RESPRAYS
- ◆ ANTI FOULS
- ◆ DETAILING

APPROVED INSURANCE REPAIRER

info@abovegrade.com.au  
[www.abovegrade.com.au](http://www.abovegrade.com.au)



**0417195559**



**GBR Adventure Cont ....**

From this point on it was all party and heaps of fishing. We bottom bashed and trolled and explored to our hearts content for the next 7 days. We spear fished some of the most amazing reefs, snorkeled when we wanted and chilled out when we felt the need. We did make it up to Ribbon Reef No. 10 and across to Lizard Island at our most northern points and it was just amazing. The postcard weather made it an easy and much more enjoyable experience. Nothing was an issue and the boat ran like a gem.

Overall the fishing was a bit tamer than what I expected but we scored a heap of good fish including coral trout, red emperor, some ripping Gt's and mackerel whilst trolling. Some of our night sessions on the 'Reds' were quite handy I must say.

It was on the last day of fishing traveling home in around 200m of water on the edge of the shelf, when the fish of the trip occurred. I was late afternoon and I was in the process of cleaning all the gear. It was the last rod and reel in the holder with a skirted lure attached when the ratchet sung a merry tune. The Tiagra 50 reel was at fever pitch and the soapy sponge and bucket was quickly traded for a big fight on the rod. At first we thought it was a good sized marlin but soon it revealed itself as a spectacular sailfish which carried on in sensational fashion. Wow, what a ripper fish!

Following a good 15 minute song and dance we had this beauty at the boat. In

sailfish terms it was huge and it took three of us big boys to be able to get it onto the boat for a quick picture before releasing. I'm guessing it was easily a 100kg or more just by the weight. That was the pinnacle to finish off an amazing trip. We stayed behind the reef for the night following this before reaching Port Douglas in the early morning. Now having done a lot of trips north by road this vessel has changed our whole thought process. This first trip was a reconnaissance trip to establish the capabilities of the barge.

We now know the following - can carry 4 motor bikes, have the ability to pull up on any beach or river, carry enough fuel in drums, is comfortable and safe having been in survey and do what the hell we want. We may get it up to Weipa by transport for next year and explore a lot of rarely visited waters. There's also thought to go to Lockhart and then explore the likes of the Olive River etc... which are basically only accessible by boat. My mate who purchased the boat is going to throw around 100K at it before the next trip to include a flybridge, put twin 200hp engines on and extend the deck further to include a game chair, amongst other ideas.

It looks like our FNQ adventures are going to go to a whole new level with the fun time maximised no matter where we fly into or base the boat.

I'm already saving and have eyed off some new toys to take along .... ■




**FISHING**  
*Port Douglas*  
**River - Reef - Game**  
Ph: 0409 610 869  
www.fishingportdouglas.com.au

**KYE CHAPPLE**   
**PEST CONTROL**

**Call: 0423249913**

Far North Queensland  
For All Pest Control Solutions  
E: kyechapplepestcontrol@gmail.com

- Termites
- Cockroaches
- Ants
- Spiders
- Rats & Mice
- Mosquito's
- Flying Insects

**PORT DOUGLAS**



Only Fully Qualified Suzuki Agency Here  
All Outboards Serviced & Repaired  
SALES - SERVICE - PARTS  
Contact Peter  
Ph: 0419 593 694 E: spstaig@bigpond.com  
18 Teamster Close Craglie 4877




**PORT DOUGLAS** *Marine*

Ph: 07 4223 4725

**DIESEL - INBOARD - OUTBOARD**



**ENGINEERING**

**SALES**

**SERVICE**

**PARTS**

**REPAIRS**

**EVINRUDE**

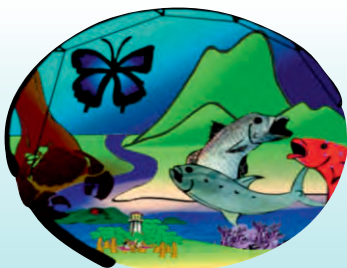
**YANMAR**

**VOLVO PENTA**



**Advertise  
Here  
Distribution  
Cairns  
Port Douglas  
Mossman  
Daintree  
Cooktown  
plus 1000's of  
followers via  
downloads &  
facebook**

  
**FISHING**  
*Port Douglas*  
**River - Reef - Game**  
Ph: 0409 610 869  
[www.fishingportdouglas.com.au](http://www.fishingportdouglas.com.au)



*James Beitzel's*  
**FISHING  
ON THE  
DAINTREE**  
**RIVER, COAST  
and REEF**  
Call  
**0409610869**

## On the Daintree Charters

With Jamie Beitzel



Gee's don't we know it has been the hottest time of year in the tropics. December has proven to be a bit of a Ground Hog Day with calm seas for the most, not a lot of breeze and stinking hot weather. I don't mind it though because it gets me out of the river more often and we explore the coastline for some fantastic fishing.

One thing I will mention though is that even having worked this coastline for some 30yrs I'm always finding new bits and pieces to fish along the way and quite a few of them have provided the goodies. Even when I head outside the river mouth I always try and get a supply of live sardines from within as they don't last long on the end of a hook out there. The live bait have been tougher to source but I have a couple of spots where a can scrounge enough to do the job.

Where I tend to fish along the coast there's no a lot of small fry to be had. It's normally good size to really good size. My main quarry has been large mouth nannygai up to 8-9kg and there's always the likes of golden and gold spot trevally to further test the punters.

I've really enjoyed the company the past few weeks with quite a few families, and

being a family man myself I get a lot of satisfaction out of seeing the kids land any sort of fish. At times there's been quite a few big ones which have required a bit of assistance if you know what I mean.

I've done several charters within the river and I'm always mindful to ensure where we fish is offering some sort of breeze to keep things that bit more comfortable. Surprisingly there's some really handy queenfish up to 90cm in the main channel, the fingermark are red hot at times and of the bigger bracket. Then there's been an endless run of river trevally and a few barra and mangrove jack in the heavy timber areas. The day time fishing in the river can be a little tougher in the middle parts of the day because of the heat, but catching the tide at the right time is the key. There's a fair bit of salt pushing way upstream on the bigger tides and definitely worth a look.

In finishing off 2020, thanks to all that continued to support our humble family business and we've met a lot of new clients which will re-visit at some point. Here's to a tricky start to the New Year but importantly enjoy your Christmas with your family in these challenging times.



Port Douglas



Phone: (07) 4098 5761  
Cnr Captain Cook Highway &  
Port Douglas Rd, Pt Douglas QLD 4877  
Email: [portdouglasiga@cornetts.com.au](mailto:portdouglasiga@cornetts.com.au)  
OPENING HOURS:  
DAILY  
MON-SUN: 7AM - 8PM

**CORNETTS  
SUPERMARKETS**

**SUPA IGA IGA**

**FULL RANGE OF GROCERIES**  
• LOCAL BREAD • DELICATESSEN  
• FRESH FRUIT & VEGIES • FREEZER  
• DAIRY • FRESH MEAT • BAIT & ICE

Cooktown



Phone: (07) 4069 5633  
29 Helen St, Cooktown, QLD 4895  
Email: [cooktowniga@cornetts.com.au](mailto:cooktowniga@cornetts.com.au)  
OPENING HOURS:  
MON-FRI: 8AM - 7PM  
SAT: 8AM - 6PM  
SUN: 8AM - 5PM



## Whet your Whistle



POST OFFICE  
HOTEL 1928

Drive thru Bottle Shop Modern TAB Facilities Jackpot Carnivale & Fast Lane Links Mill Street Mossman Telephone 4098 2151

# Reel Cooking with Mick Hart

## Christmas Prawn Appetiser



With so much to cook and eat at Christmas this simple but very appetiser is a perfect filler in between the main courses. It's not an Australian Christmas if there is no locally caught seafood involved. Santiago is the best local prawn trawler in the region - good luck if you can get hands on their produce at this time of year.

### INGREDIENTS

- 10 gem lettuce leaves
- 1/3 cup (100g) whole-egg mayonnaise
- 1 tbs flat-leaf parsley, finely chopped
- 2 tsp capers, rinsed, drained, chopped
- 2 tsp chopped chives
- 10 cooked prawns, peeled (tails intact), deveined
- Juice and finely grated zest of 1/2 a lime
- 1/2 tsp smoked paprika



### METHOD

1. Arrange lettuce on a platter.
2. Place the mayonnaise, parsley, capers and chives in a bowl and stir to combine. Season.
3. Dollop into lettuce and top with prawns.
4. Drizzle over lime juice and sprinkle with zest and paprika to serve.

# Mossman Meats

FREE Delivery to  
surrounding areas

DAILY

No Order too  
Big or Small

Specialise in  
Camping & Boating  
Vacuumed Packages

Now  
Stocking  
Local  
Seafood



**UNDER NEW MANAGEMENT**  
**Free Home Delivery**

All Beef & Pork  
is locally  
sourced from the  
rich volcanic soils  
of the Tablelands

Now Mossman's  
Only Specialised  
Butchery

PROUD  
SUPPORTERS  
of the  
Junior & Senior  
AFL CROCS

3 Junction Rd Mossman • Ph 07 40981669 • E [bnbmeatsmossman@gmail.com](mailto:bnbmeatsmossman@gmail.com)



IT PAYS TO BOOK  
PHONE BB'S DAINTREE RIVER CRUISES

Ph: 07 4098 7717

info@daintreerivercruises.com.au www.daintreerivercruises.com.au



# magical daintree

## Daintree Tours History with Bruce Belcher

Prior to 1987, I had worked at Shipshape Chandlery and tackle, in Port Douglas, for 4 years. I became disillusioned with that job and needed more stimulation. At one point earlier a Daintree River tour operator had offered me a job as a tour guide but I pushed it aside as I was quite happy serving commercial fishermen! God only knows why!

I eventually took the plunge and was engaged by John and Marj Robb, of Daintree Wildlife Safari and began training under David Thompson and David Armbrust, two prominent and respected tour guides and personalities in the district.

At that point there were only 6 boats on the river. Each boat had a permit to operate in the Conservation Zone, issued by Qld. Parks and Wildlife Service. John was the second operator behind Crocodile Express, which started in 1979. He was passionate and believed that he was the only person skilled enough to have such a high standard and that anyone else was second rate. He spent time after work drilling me about how useless everyone else was and that they had no place on the river. He became so focused on his obsession that it became embarrassing. He even had confrontations with locals over issues.

After a year another operator started up and John's frustration intensified to a point whereby he approached other boats and hindered their movements, for which he was reported and cautioned. His obsession evolved into paranoia whereby he locked everything needlessly but still claimed that other operators were putting contaminants in his boat fuel. He was so convinced that he even offered to prove it to me but I waved it away and he was disappointed that I didn't support him.

Time passed and more operators started up. The three of us saw less of John as he slowly sunk into some sort of submission as he gradually seemed to lose the plot. It was quite sad as he was a sincere and passionate tour guide.

Between 1988 and 1994, eight more operators started, bringing the sub-total to 14 boats. John abandoned his activities and went back to his boyhood days near McKay and continued his career as a machinery operator. I can only imagine his mental condition then and I never saw him again. Marj, his wife, continued with the business remarkably well.

Gaining permits on the river became a gold rush. By early 1995 there were 24 boats; far too many! Operators got together and lobbied the QPWS to cease issuing new permits. As there were too many dogs fighting over the same bone, tensions became heated and the competition took its toll.



As tour operators and business owners, normal demographics started to separate the sheep from the goats! Some found it hard to conduct business through a lack of acumen and fell by the wayside. Others found that by drinking alcohol at 10am, it soon clouded their thinking. One operator's boat developed electrolysis in his aluminium hull and due to a lack of care, ignored it and the boat sank and so did his business.

So, here we are in 2020. There are only 16 boats left (four major operators control 13 boats). The other 3 have a small boat each. Self-regulation has taken control and all of us get on well and tourism is healthy on the Magical Daintree River. See you next month.



30yrs Experience  
Best River & Coastal  
Fishing Experience  
Magical Scenery  
Croc Spotting  
Eco Tour Included  
Call: 040961086

## Douglas Community & Sports Club Inc.

Open 10am Mon-Sat  
Open 9am Sunday Breakfast

UPSTAIRS COCKTAIL BAR  
FRESH PRAWNS

A LA CARTÉ MENU  
AIR-CONDITIONED  
GAMING ROOM

DRINK SPECIALS  
MONDAY - SATURDAY

STUNNING VIEWS

Weekly Member's Badge Draw  
from 6:30pm Wednesdays - from 4:30pm Sundays

Phone: 4099 5553 Email: info@thetinshead-portdouglas.com.au