

A woman and a young girl are sitting on a wooden pier, fishing. The woman is wearing a striped tank top and dark pants, and the girl is wearing a colorful swimsuit. They are both looking out at the water. A fishing rod is visible on the left side of the frame. The background shows a clear blue sky and a body of water.

Get outside,
GO FISHING

WESTERN PORT BAY

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DID YOU KNOW?

There are more than **30,000** known species of fish. And over **5,000** of those are in Australia.



GO FISHING

Fishing is a fun and healthy activity available to everyone.

This beginners booklet will help people find safe fishing spots around Western Port Bay. It will explain:

- the basic fisheries rules
- the role of Fisheries Officers
- tips for fishing safely
- how to rig your fishing rod
- how to handle fish
- what to do with unwanted fish
- how to keep your catch fresh and safe to eat
- the best places, times and bait to catch a variety of fish.

WHY GO FISHING?

Fishing can be fun in so many ways.

It is a good way to:

- spend time with family and friends
- have some time away from your electronic devices
- enjoy the natural world. You never know what you will see
- help keep your mind and body healthy
- experience the thrill of catching your own dinner
- learn patience while you wait to catch a fish.

Fishing also helps children to learn respect for:

- our environment by taking your rubbish home
- our fisheries by knowing and following the rules
- other people fishing by not crowding them
- our fish by treating them carefully and not hurting them
- our fish populations by reporting illegal fishing to 13 FISH (13 3474).



PLANNING YOUR FISHING TRIP

Like most activities, a little planning can help make your day special. The basic gear you will need to take with you to go fishing is:

Up-to-date fishing information

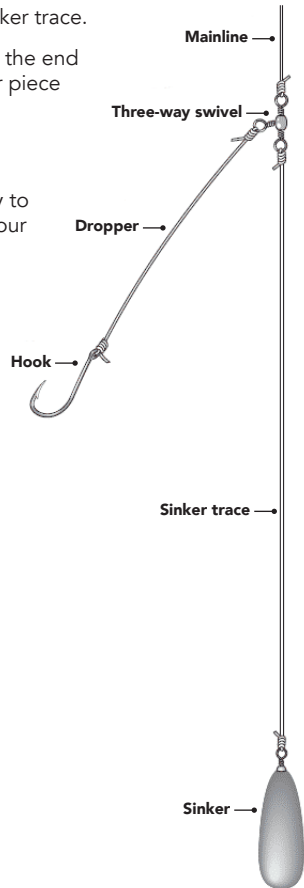
- Your fishing licence or proof of exemption (see pg 22 for more information).
- Your free Victorian Recreational Fishing Guide or the free Vic Fishing App.
- Your free fish measuring ruler.

Your fishing gear (a fishing tackle shop will be able to help you with this equipment)

- A fishing rod and reel or a hand line.
Talk to your local tackle shop to get the best equipment for the fish you would like to catch.
- Biodegradable fishing line.
Talk to your local tackle shop to get the best weight for the fish you would like to catch.
- Circle hooks.
- Non-lead sinkers.
- Three way swivel to tie a paternoster rig (see pg 6).
- Towel or gloves.
A wet towel or gloves protects both you and the fish when you are holding it.
- A bucket or esky with a rope attached.
This is used to keep your catch cool and safe to eat (and it can also be a float to throw to a person if they fall in the water).
- A knotless landing net.
This allows you to bring the fish to land without hurting it.
- A hook remover or long nosed pliers.
- A fishing priest.
This is a wooden or metal tool with a heavy blunt end that is used to kill fish very quickly and painlessly. To kill a fish, strike the top of the head just behind the eyes with a sharp heavy blow.
- Sharp knife (to cut up bait, gut fish and cut the fishing line).
- Bait and ice.

Paternoster rig

- Cut a length of fishing line off the end of your fishing line that is attached to the rod, this is called the Mainline.
- Tie a snap swivel to the end of the mainline.
- Take the length of fishing line and fold it so there is a longer length and a shorter length.
- Wrap the folded end over your finger, then around the doubled line and poke it back through the loop made by your finger. Grab each end of the line and pull tight.
- Tie a sinker to the end of the longer piece of line. This is called the sinker trace.
- Tie a hook to the end of the shorter piece of line. This is called the Dropper.
- You are ready to put bait on your line and start fishing.



SAFETY AROUND WATER

**Our waterways are beautiful and must be treated with respect.
For a fun filled, safe fishing adventure use the following checklist.**

Check the weather and water forecast BEFORE you go fishing

The BOM (Bureau of Meteorology) has all the information on weather across Victoria.

If the weather looks bad at the place where you would like to go fishing then it is best to find another place to fish or fish another day.

Tell someone, who is not fishing with you, your fishing plans

Always:

- tell someone where you are going fishing
- who you are going with
- the mobile phone of all the people you are going fishing with
- what time you will get home

Should the worst happen, this person will be able to get you help.

Remember if you change your plans, let this person know.

Never fish alone

Always fish with another person. You can keep each other safe.

Take your safety gear and keep it close to you

Basic safety gear includes a first aid kit, esky/bucket and rope, phone, water, sunscreen, hat and non-slip shoes.

Fish from a jetty or fishing platform

These areas are the safest places to fish from.

If there is not a jetty or fishing platform at the fishing spot you go to, choose a flat, safe place to fish from instead.

Make sure this area is easy to come and go from, has no rocks, holes or steep banks or overhangs.

Don't drink alcohol

Keep your eye on the water

Water conditions can change quickly and be unpredictable.

If someone falls into the water:

1. Tell the person to **stay calm** and roll onto their back
2. Throw them something that floats like a bucket or esky lid with a rope tied to it so you can pull them to safety
3. Call or Phone 000 if the person needs medical help
4. **DO NOT** enter the water yourself unless you are a trained lifesaver.

FISHING LOCATIONS



Hastings

5

Bittern

1

Stony Point Pier

9

Merricks Beach

6

Flinders Pier

4

Cowes Jetty

3

Tooradin Inlet

10

Corinella Jetty

2

7

Rhyll Jetty

8

San Remo Jetty

FISHING LOCATIONS

1 BITTERN

The sleepy hollow of Bittern offers a long sandy beach which provides room for plenty of fishing fun.

Likely to catch: Australian Salmon, Flathead, King George Whiting and Yellow-Eye Mullet.

Attractions close by: Bittern Sunday Market, wineries.



2 CORINELLA JETTY

Corinella is a hidden gem. Settled in 1826, Corinella and it's jetty is set in a quiet natural setting. A mixture of rural farmland and oceanic calmness. Corinella Peir is settled in Western Port Bay and offers a great variety of fishing opportunities. There is some excellent fishing also to be had 500m to the left of the pier from the point.

Likely to catch: Flathead, King George Whiting, Silver Travelly and Snapper.

Attractions close by: Phillip Island and it's many attractions.



3 COWES JETTY

Make your way around Phillip Island and discover seaside hamlets, iconic wildlife, stunning coastal landscapes, and international motorsport events. Get up close to little penguins on the beach, come face-to-face with snoozing koalas then enjoy some wonderful fishing opportunities from the Cowes Jetty.

Likely to catch: Australian Salmon, Flathead, King George Whiting, Silver Trevally, Snapper and Squid.

Attractions close by: Phillip Island Nature reserve, Koala Sanctuary, Mini Golf, Moto grand prix track, Churchill Island.



4 FLINDERS PIER

Flinders Pier is one of the best land-based locations in Western Port for catching a variety of species, especially Squid and King George Whiting. It is also a picturesque costal town with lots to offer including some of the cleanest air in the world due to the Antarctic winds that get blown straight into the town.

Likely to catch: Australian Salmon, King George Whiting, Leatherjacket, Silver Trevally and Squid.

Attractions close by: Chocolate shops, Wineries, Pt Nepean National Park, swimming, Horse riding, Sunny Ridge Strawberry Farm.



5 HASTINGS

Amaze at the pelicans assembling on the Hastings foreshore as you watch the fishing boats come in and out of this historic fishing village.

Likely to catch: Australian Salmon, Flathead, King George Whiting and Silver Trevally.

Attractions close by: There is an indoor swimming pool and café right at the entrance of the pier. Tyabb Packing house, Golf, charter boats, Moonlit Sanctuary.



6 MERRICKS BEACH

Merricks Beach is a small seaside town. It is one of the few coastal places within a 100 km radius of Melbourne that has been basically untouched by development and as such has a significant Koala population. An interesting fact about Merricks Beach is that all of the streets in the area are still unsealed and it has experienced little change since the 1960s.

Likely to catch: Australian Salmon, Flathead, King George Whiting and Yellow-Eye Mullet.

Attractions close by: Sommers Camp, Coolart Park.



7 RHYLL JETTY

This small and peaceful fishing village is located at the northern end of Phillip Island. Enjoy a wander through the pristine natural landscapes surrounding the village, discover abundant wildlife, and cast a line in at the Rhyll jetty to catch your own fresh seafood dinner.

Likely to catch: Australian Salmon, Flathead, Garfish, King George Whiting, Silver Trevally and Yellow-Eye Mullet.

Attractions close by: Koala Conservation centre, Phillip island nature reserve, Rhyll trout and bush tucker farm, Cowes.



8 SAN REMO JETTY

San Remo is the gate way to Phillip Island and a beautiful, rugged town in its own right. There are deserted beaches, historical walks and a vibrant village atmosphere waiting for you.

Likely to catch: Australian Salmon, King George Whiting, Leatherjacket, Silver Trevally, Snapper. and Squid

Attractions close by: San Remo to Cowes Cycling track, Cape Woolamai walking track, George Bass Costal Walk, Phillip Island.



9

STONY POINT PIER

Crib Point, Victoria lies on the shores of Western Port Bay in the heart of the beautiful Mornington Peninsula. This small coastal township is adjacent to HMAS Cerberus the Australian Navy's major training base.

Likely to catch: Australian Salmon, Flathead, King George Whiting, Silver Trevally, Snapper, Squid and Yellow-Eye Mullet.

Attractions close by: French Island (catch the ferry) and it's iconic inhabitants.



10

TOORADIN INLET

Tooradin is a pleasant costal village, home to the channel of Sawtells Inlet which meanders through this small town.

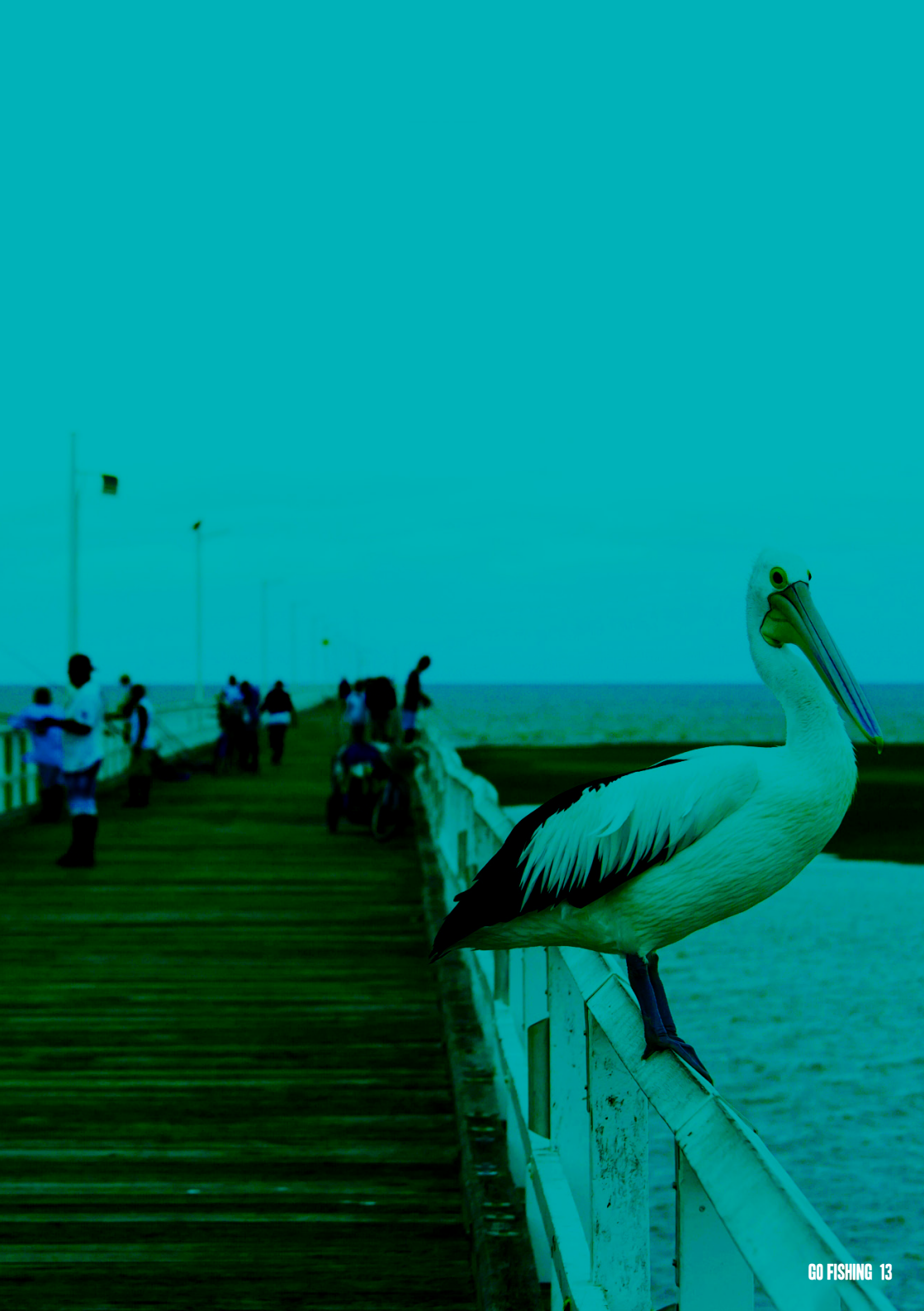
Likely to catch: Australian Salmon, Bream, Flathead, King George Whiting, Silver Trevally and Yellow-Eye Mullet.

Attractions close by: the Dolphin fish made for the 2006 Commonwealth games calls Tooradin home, Local fishing museum.



There are many marine protected areas along the Victorian coast line that you are not allowed to fish in.

If you choose to fish in a location not covered in this book make sure it is not in a one of these areas. For a full list of these sites visit www.parkweb.vic.gov.au/explore/find-a-park/marine-protected-areas



WHAT YOU'LL CATCH: NATIVE



Australian Salmon

NOTE: Young Australian Salmon can be mistaken for Australian Herring (Tommy rough). Please see the Victorian Recreational Fishing Guide to learn how to identify the difference.

Peak season: March – September.

Minimum legal size: 21cm.

Bag limit: 20 per person per day (a total limit of 20 Australian Salmon and/or Australian Herring).

Baits: Pilchards, whitebait, pipis, squid.

Time and tides: Morning or late afternoon. A few hours either side of high tide.

Locations:



Bream

Peak season: June – November.

Minimum legal size: 28cm (must be kept whole until you get home – can be gutted and scaled – see pg 17).

Bag limit: 10 per person per day

Baits: Bass yabbies, sandworms, prawns, mussels.

Time and tides: Morning or late afternoon. A few hours either side of high tide.

Location:



! Measure fish from the tip of the nose with the mouth closed to the end of the tail.





Flathead

Peak season: October – March.

Minimum legal size: 27cm.

Bag limit: 20 per person per day.

Baits: Pilchards, whitebait, prawns, squid.

Time and tides: Can be caught throughout the day. A few hours either side of high tide.

Locations:



Garfish

Peak season: November – July.

Minimum legal size: no minimum.

Bag limit: 40 per person per day.

Baits: Pipis, prawns.

Time and tides: Can be caught throughout the day.

Location:



WHAT YOU'LL CATCH: NATIVE



King George Whiting

Peak season: November – April.

Minimum legal size: 27 cm
(must be kept whole until you get home
– can be gutted and scaled – see pg 17).

Bag limit: 20 per person per day

Baits: Pipsis, mussels, bass yabbies, squid.

Time and tides: Morning or late afternoon.
A few hours either side of high tide.

Locations:



Leatherjacket

Peak season: Year round

Minimum legal size: no minimum.

Bag limit: 20 per person per day.

Baits: Small pieces of pipi or squid.

Time and tides: Can be caught throughout
the day.

Locations:





Silver Trevally

Peak season: October – May.

Minimum legal size: 20cm.

Bag limit: 20 per person per day.

Baits: Pilchards, whitebait, pipis, squid.

Time and tides: Morning or late afternoon.
A few hours either side of high tide.

Locations:



Snapper

Peak season: October – May.

Minimum legal size: 28cm
(must be kept whole until you get home
– can be gutted and scaled – see pg 17).


Bag limit: 10 per person per day
(of which no more than 3 can exceed 40cm).

Baits: Pilchards, silver whiting, whitebait, squid.

Time and tides: Morning or late afternoon.
A few hours either side of high tide.

Locations:



 **Keep your fish whole as this enables Fisheries Officers to measure the fish to make sure they are the legal size.**

WHAT YOU'LL CATCH: NATIVE



Squid

Peak season: April – October.

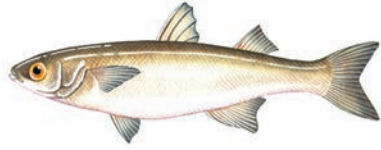
Minimum legal size: no minimum.

Bag limit: 10 per person per day.

Baits: Pilchards, silver whiting.

Time and tides: Can be caught through the day and at night under lights.

Locations:



Yellow-eye Mullet

Peak season: March – September.

Minimum legal size: no minimum.

Bag limit: 40 per person per day.

Baits: Sandworms, small pieces of pipi, whitebait or chicken, bread crust.

Time and tides: Can be caught throughout the day.

Locations:

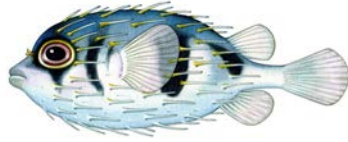


UNWANTED AND UNREQUIRED FISH

Unwanted fish (e.g. puffers, toadies) are fish that you don't want or are not allowed to keep. They must be returned to the water immediately and without hurting them.



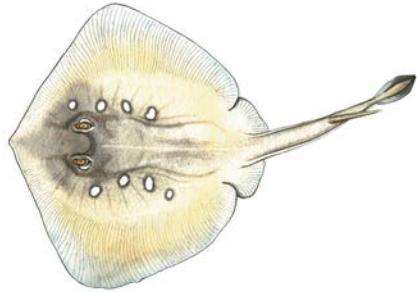
Toadfish



Puffer



Eleven Armed Seastar



Ray



There are new restrictions around taking rays.

For further information download the free Vic Fishing App on page 23.

RESPONSIBLE FISHING BEHAVIOUR

Responsible fishing is not only about fishing within the rules but also about respecting and caring for the fish, native animals, the environment, other water users and fishers.

Responsible fishers care for:

- **the fish they catch by:**

- never leaving their fishing rod unattended
- using a net without knotted mesh to bring the fish in
- handling the fish carefully using a wet glove or towel
- supporting the fish in a flat position, not dangling it from a line
- removing the hook from the mouth quickly with a hook remover or long nosed pliers
- cutting the line as close as possible to the fish's mouth if it has swallowed the hook
- identifying the fish quickly
- measuring the fish quickly on a cool, wet surface
- quickly deciding if you can and want to keep the fish if they are the correct size.

- **the fish they release by:**

- gently and quickly lowering them into the water. If you are close to the water, you can do this with your hands. If you are higher above the water put the fish into a bucket of water and lower it down
- putting back unwanted fish immediately and carefully into the water. **DO NOT** release NOXIOUS species.

- **the fish they are allowed to keep by:**

- killing them quickly with a fishing priest, using the method described on pg 5
- storing them on ice to keep them safe to eat.

- **our fish populations by:**

- ALWAYS following the rules
- reporting illegal fishing to 13 FISH (13 3474)
- respecting Fisheries Officers who help people understand and enforce the rules.

- **their fishing spots by:**

- leaving the area clean. Take all your rubbish home including leftover bait and any fish waste
- using environmentally friendly fishing tackle
- sharing the space respectfully with other people including other anglers, swimmers and snorkelers
- Place tangled fishing line into a 'Seal-the-Loop' rubbish bin so that it cannot hurt or kill our native wildlife. If there is not a 'Seal-the-Loop' bin at the fishing spot, take it home with you and put it in your rubbish bin.



UNDERSTANDING THE FISHING RULES

There are many rules to remember when you go fishing in Victoria. Not all are covered in this beginners guide. For information on all the fishing rules search online for 'Victorian Recreational Fishing Guide' or download the free 'Vic Fishing' App.

Why do we have fishing rules?

Fishing rules make sure that we have fish now and in the future by:

- not allowing people to take too many (called a bag limit)
- putting small fish back into the water so they can grow and breed (called a minimum size)
- returning the larger, best breeding fish to the water (called a maximum size)
- stopping people from fishing in certain areas and at certain times to protect fish (called a closed season)
- only using the equipment we are allowed to.

Fishing rules protect fish. If you don't know what the rules for a fish you catch, put it straight back in the water.

Never put it in a bucket or bag. If you do this and it is not the right size or you shouldn't have it at all, you can get in trouble with a Fisheries Officer.

Do I need a fishing licence?

If you are between the age of 18 and 70 and fishing in Victoria then yes, you need a licence, even if you are just helping your children.

Some people don't need to have a fishing licence; this is called an exemption. For a list of exemptions search online.

Where can I buy a fishing licence?

Fishing licences can be bought online (search Victorian Recreational Fishing Licence).

You can also buy them at shops where you can buy your fishing equipment.

A licence can be purchased for 3 days, 28 days, 1 year and 3 years.

IMPORTANT information: If you are fishing in the Murray River you will need to get a NSW fishing licence.

WHAT ARE THE FISHING RULES?

Basic fishing rules

If you want to go fishing, this information will help you understand the fishing rules.

1. Legal size

legal size means the smallest (minimum legal size) and the largest (maximum legal size) fish you can legally keep.

If you catch a fish that is too small or too big, you must put it back into the water straight away.

The legal size of fish must be checked quickly.

Measure fish from the tip of the nose with the mouth closed to the end of the tail.



Fish that you wish to keep should be killed immediately and placed on ice.

2. Bag limit

Bag limits are the maximum number of the right sized fish you catch and keep in one day.

3. Return unwanted fish

You must return unwanted fish to water immediately and without hurting them, except for noxious species like carp. These must NOT be returned to the water alive.

4. Closed seasons

A time of the year when you cannot take some fish. This is to give them some extra protection while they breed and look after their babies.

5. Legal fishing equipment

Each person fishing can have:

- 2 fishing rods with 2 hooks attached in rivers and lakes (inland waters)
- 4 fishing rods with 2 hooks attached in marine waters
- you must stay close to your rods while they are in the water.

6. Don't fillet your fish while you are fishing

You can gut and scale your dead fish.

If you are fishing in areas not included in this beginners guide you will need to also check that you are:

- **not** in prohibited, restricted areas
- **not** fishing in a closed season.

All the fishing rules can be found in the Victorian Recreational Fishing Guide and the Vic Fishing App.

Where to get the correct information

- download the free Vic Fishing App
- get a free paper copy of the Victorian Recreational Fishing Guide sent to you by calling 13 61 86

Breaking the fishing rules can result in large fines and other serious consequences.

STAY UP TO DATE

Download the free Vic Fishing App here



FISHERIES OFFICERS

A Fisheries Officer's main responsibility is to help people fish within the rules.

How will I recognise a Fisheries Officer?

Fisheries Officers usually wear a dark blue uniform that shows the Officer's name and title.

Sometimes a Fisheries Officer will not be in uniform. If not, they will always show you official identification when they come to talk to you.

What can I expect when a Fisheries Officer comes to talk to me?

A Fisheries Officer can:

- give you information about fishing and the rules
- ask you to show them your current fishing licence or proof of your exemption and your driver's licence
- ask to look in your bag, fishing equipment, esky, container, vehicle and/ or boat
- measure and count the fish you've kept to check they are the right size and the correct number.

What powers do Fisheries Officers have?

By law Fisheries Officers can:

- stop and look in any boat or vehicle
- ask for your name and home address
- search any equipment such as baskets, eskies or other containers
- issue 'on the spot' fines called an infringement notice
- take any fish, fishing gear or other equipment, including vehicles and boats, that may have been used to commit an offence
- place alleged offenders under arrest.

Fisheries Officers are also authorised to enforce laws relating to:

- litter, maritime safety and protected areas.

What happens if I am caught not following the rules?

Under the *Fisheries Act 1995*, Fisheries Officers have powers of arrest, search and seizure.

If you are caught doing the wrong thing, or the Officers believe you have not followed the rules, they will:

- explain what it is you have done wrong
- request your full name and home address which you **MUST** provide
- ask you questions
- issue a receipt if any fish, property or documents have been seized
- advise you of the likely outcome.



REPORT ILLEGAL FISHING

If you see or think someone is breaking our fishing rules, move away and call

13 FISH (13 3474).

Provide as much detail as possible including:

- time and date
- location
- car or boat registration numbers
- the number of people involved
- what the people are doing.

Information you give is very valuable and is treated in strict confidence. Your information helps us to plan patrols and other enforcement operations.



GET OUTSIDE GO FISHING

Why not include fishing in all your family's holidays or short trips around Victoria.

These guides will give you all the information you need to take your family fishing wherever you are in Victoria.

Get Outside Go Fishing:

- East Gippsland
- Family fishing lakes
- Lake Eildon
- Murray Cod in urban lakes
- North East
- North West
- Port Phillip Bay
- South West
- Western Port Bay

To get a copy of any or all of these booklets please ring 136 186 (our customer service centre) and ask to have it sent to you.

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