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Tracey Lenz
Communications and Projects Officer
Gladstone Area Promotion and Development Limited
PO Box 5186
Gladstone, Queensland 4680, Australia

By Tracey Lenz
809 words

ESTUARY ENTHUSIASTS DISAPPEARING ACT

There's a strange thing happening around Gladstone. Estuary anglers are going missing for days and weeks at a time. They leave their homes early in the morning uptight, stressed but return in a Zen-like state. No exhaustion from too much sun and travel, no tales of the big one that got away. Clearly, these anglers have been leisurely indulging in the tranquil surrounds of Gladstone's estuaries.

The Gladstone Region is home to a multitude of easily accessible estuary fishing spots. All offer a wide variety of fishing and crabbing experiences. The district's estuarine paradise starts about 30 kilometres north of Gladstone Harbour. Known as The Narrows, the area consists of many tidal creeks and inlets and, like all of Gladstone's estuaries, can be easily reached by small and large boats alike. The aquatic environment of The Narrows ranges from gravel and mud banks to deep rocky holes and channels through to oyster rock outcrops perfect for a day's fishing or crabbing. You won't come away disappointed from The Narrows as fishing at places like Graham's Creek, Pacific Creek and Ramsey's Crossing can produce a haul of Barramundi and other prized species including the famous Gladstone Mud Crab. One word of advice, take insect repellent. The Narrows is Sandfly city.

Just around the corner from Gladstone's central harbour is the mouth of the Calliope River. The hot water outlet at the rear of the Gladstone Power Station has proved to be an extremely popular spot with local anglers. The warm water attracts Barramundi, Queenie's, Trevally, Bream and Whiting who are always looking to pounce on unsuspecting prey. This area also has access to a boat ramp, toilet and parking facilities making it the perfect starting point for estuary exploration.



Boyne Island and Tannum Sands is located about 30 minutes drive from Gladstone and is home to countless creatures of the deep. The area abounds with an array of excellent estuary fishing hot spots. The Boyne River often produces a good catch while the "Lillie's" is a well known place to fish. The mangroves provide an abode to many fish and tests the skills of most anglers. Fishing from the banks of the river can also be a masterstroke as a ready supply of Bream and Grunter wait. South Trees Inlet and the South Trees pipeline provide safe areas to fish when the weather's rough. A catch of Barramundi, Mangrove Jack, Grunter, Salmon or Bream is not uncommon.

Wild Cattle Creek, located at the southern end of Tannum Sands Main Beach, sports a wide selection of fish including Barramundi, Salmon, Whiting and crabs. Wild Cattle Island also has plenty of Flathead, Mackerel and Whiting just waiting

to be caught. Access to and from the island can be by either boat or foot at low tide. Be careful though, the area is known for its powerful rips. If planning an expedition by foot plan your trip carefully as the tide and incoming water level can change very quickly.

About an hour's drive from Gladstone, the peaceful surrounds of Turkey Beach are regularly interrupted with the cries of sheer joy from those who have just seized a mother load of fish. Sheltered in the waters of Rodd's Bay, Turkey Beach and

the surrounding tidal creeks are home to many aquatic treasures. Anglers salivate at the thought of feasting on Sand Whiting, Flathead and Estuary Cod or a tasty Mudcrab from places like Seven Mile Creek, Morris and Colosseum Inlet. How does reef fishing in the estuaries sound. Absurd? Well it's definitely not the case at Pancake Creek and Ethel Rock. Both locations offer coral reef systems in the protected estuary waters. Throw you line in and catch the finest reef specimens here.

The estuary fishing on the Discovery Coast is probably the area's best kept secret. While tourists discover the pristine reef, beautiful national parks and endless beaches, the estuaries of Agnes Water and 1770 are virtually untouched. There are plenty of places to fish and enjoy the scenery. The national parks, Deepwater and Eurimbula are dotted with a creeks flowing with estuarine species like Trevally, Barramundi, Mudcrabs and if you're lucky, Mangrove Jack.

Just a stone's throw away is Baffle Creek, one of the few remaining unspoiled estuary systems in the South East corner of Queensland. The creek is a 120 kilometre long waterway and the variety of environments found range from sand flats and rock bars to mangroves. This makes Baffle Creek the perfect home for over 70 popular fish and 10 crustacean species including mackerel, bream, trevalla, dart, whiting, and barramundi. In fact, recent environmental studies have revealed that the creek is the perfect home for Mangrove Jack due to the natural water courses, water quality and snags found throughout the creek.

For further information on estuary fishing excitement contact Gladstone Area Promotion and Development on (07) 4972 4000 or www.gladstoneregion.info.