



# **TWEED TOURISM**

## **STORY OPPORTUNITIES**

**for**

## **Fishing & Boating media**

With its winding rivers, wide estuary and offshore reefs, the Tweed region in Northern NSW offers a wealth of fishing and marine-related story opportunities. The visual elements of Mt Warning's dramatic silhouette and the lush green countryside add up to a brilliant backdrop for filming.

On the following pages, we have put together a number of ideas and story angles that may interest your audience. Operator contact details are included if you would like to liaise with them directly. Alternatively, Tweed Tourism's media consultant, Karen Ransome, would be happy to organise any set-ups that you require.

**Media Contacts:**

Karen Ransome  
Verve Consulting  
Ph: 07-5538 7379  
Fax: 07-5538 7379  
Mob: 0431 958 726  
Email: [kransome@technet2000.com.au](mailto:kransome@technet2000.com.au)

**TAG LINE:**

**For further information –  
TWEED TOURISM  
1800 674 414  
[www.tweedtourism.com.au](http://www.tweedtourism.com.au)**

See [Facts & Figures](#) section for more detailed information re location, distances from major cities and air access.

## DEEP SEA FISHING CHARTERS

The cross-over of tropical, sub-tropical and temperate waters off the Tweed Coast adds up to a huge variety of big game fish. A number of operators offer deep sea fishing charters that head out from the Tweed Marina to the offshore reefs in search of billfish, cobia, mackerel, mahi mahi, tuna, pearl perch, snapper, mullaway and parrot fish. They cater for groups of up to 12 or more, as well as individuals. Operators supply all the necessary bait and tackle, and the required fishing permits.

### Operator Details:

Operator - Seamaster Fishing Charters (there are also several others)  
Contact - Peter Bolic  
Address - River Terrace, Tweed Heads  
Phone - 07-5524 8849 or 0415 593 901  
Email - [seamaster@bigpond.com](mailto:seamaster@bigpond.com)  
Website - [www.seamasterfishingcharters.com](http://www.seamasterfishingcharters.com)

## FLY FISHING FOR AUSTRALIAN BASS

Deep in the Tweed Valley, Clarrie Hall Dam is a favourite (and very beautiful) location for bass fly fishing. It's stocked every year with over 20,000 fingerlings so the chances of getting a nibble are always good. There are no fly fishing operators, as such, but we would be happy to organize a local fisherman to take you out on the dam and perhaps show you some other good fishing spots along the Tweed River.

### Contact Details:

Central contact - Tweed Tourism  
Contact - Karen Ransome  
Phone - 07-5538 7379 / 0431 958 726  
Email - [kransome@technet2000.com.au](mailto:kransome@technet2000.com.au)

## A LITTLE LOCAL FISHING KNOWLEDGE

River and estuary fishing is obviously a major pastime right along the Tweed River. We would be happy to set you up with local fishermen and crabbers who can take you out to their favourite spots, to talk about what you can catch, etc. and maybe even throw in a few of their own recipes.

### Contact Details:

Central contact - Tweed Tourism  
Contact - Karen Ransome  
Phone - 07-5538 7379 / 0431 958 726  
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## SNORKEL WITH TURTLES & LEOPARD SHARKS

Located approximate 600m offshore from Fingal Head, the Cook Island Aquatic Reserve is one of the best-kept secrets along the east coast – home to a large permanent colony of green and loggerhead turtles, and the docile leopard sharks who visit during the summer months. The abundance of marine life also includes bull rays, spotted eagle rays, giant gropers, wobbiegongs and the occasional grey nurse shark, with rock caves and coral gardens adding to the area's underwater charms. A number of operators take divers out to the reserve, while Fingal Dive Charters and Tweed Snorkelling and Whale Watching Adventures offer regular cruises for snorkellers of all levels.

Operator Details:

Operator - Fingal Dive Charters  
Contact - Mal Hennessey  
Address - Fingal Road, Fingal Head  
Phone - 0418 711 659  
Email - [fingalcharters@ozbizweb.com](mailto:fingalcharters@ozbizweb.com)

**WHALE WATCHING: UP CLOSE & VERY PERSONAL!**

Tweed operators offer a very different brand of whale watching to what you will find anywhere else along the east coast ... getting up close and very personal in a 10-man zodiac (inflatable runabout). The curious humpbacks regularly pop up right next to the boat – almost within touching distance – and it’s a breath-taking experience when some of them ride the gentle swells, heading straight for you. The whale watching season runs uninterrupted from early June to late November, with daily sightings usually fairly close to Cook Island and the shoreline. The 3-4 hour whale watching adventure finishes with brunch at the Sheoak Shack in Fingal – a laid-back surfie-style café featuring shell mobiles and some sling seats made from driftwood and fishing nets.

Operator Details:

Operator - Tweed Snorkelling & Whale Watching Adventures  
Contact - John & Leah Van Blanken  
Address - Boats depart from Fingal Public Wharf on the Tweed River  
Phone - 0410 659 034  
Email - [snorkel5@bigpond.net.au](mailto:snorkel5@bigpond.net.au)  
Website - [www.tweedoceanadventures.com.au](http://www.tweedoceanadventures.com.au)

N.B. Local whale watching cruises are also offered in a dive boat by Fingal Dive Charters

**THE WORLD'S 'SEXIEST' UNIVERSITY COURSE**

With its world class surfing beaches and our thriving surfing industry, Southern Cross University decided that their Tweed campus was the ideal place to introduce Australia’s first degree in surfing. Developed in conjunction with Surfing Australia, the Diploma of Sport Management (Surfing Studies) was voted one of the ‘sexiest’ university courses in the world by FHM Magazine.

It is a one-year full-time business management course, specifically designed to prepare graduates for careers in the international surfing industry, offering a balance of theory and practical experience.

The course was introduced in 2004 and graduates are now employed in the management of surfboard manufacturing companies, surf accessories and clothing manufacturing, wholesale and retail sales of surf products, surf tourism and in the organisation of surf events and surf schools.

Operator Details:

Operator - Southern Cross University  
Phone - 07-5506 9312  
Email - [jak.carroll@scu.edu.au](mailto:jak.carroll@scu.edu.au)  
Website - [www.scu.edu.au/essm](http://www.scu.edu.au/essm)

### **KAYAKING ON CUDGEN CREEK**

Winding through the Tweed Coast wetlands, Cudgen Creek is an important habitat for a wide variety of bird and marine species. The best way to access this wilderness area is on a guided kayak tour where you might also catch a glimpse of the local river dolphins.

Operator Details:

Operator - New Tweed Coast Adventures  
Contact - Tracey Thuys  
Address - The Boathouse at Salt Village, Pointbreak Circuit, South Kingscliff  
Phone - 02-6674 1039  
Website - [www.tweedcoastadventures.com.au](http://www.tweedcoastadventures.com.au)

### **SURFING SAFARI**

The Northern NSW coastline is the traditional birthplace of the Aussie surfing legend and Australia's current world champions, Mick Fanning and Stephanie Gilmore. ... so where better to learn to surf like a pro? Local surf schools offer group lessons for beginners, private lessons for experienced surfers, school programs and coaching.

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### **UNDERWATER BUSHWALKING**

This is a walk on the wildside with a difference: A guided scuba dive along the Tweed River. Unlike your regular bushwalk where wildlife sightings are few and fleeting, you'll see marine life in abundance on this scuba safari – dolphins, turtles, rays, octopus, moray eels and fish by the hundreds. This could also be done at night when the underwater inhabitants of the river are even more active and the phosphorus puts on a spectacular light show. Underwater lights would be required for filming (which also slightly dim the effects of the phosphorus, unfortunately) but I think we can source these locally if the crew don't have easy access to suppliers. Alternatively, the daytime experience is still an excellent option.

This particular operator could also take the crew out diving with grey nurse sharks off the Tweed Coast out at the "9-mile" where they gather during the winter months. Sightings can't be guaranteed but the sharks are usually there most of the time from mid-July onwards.

Operator Details:

Operator - Kirra Dive  
Contact - Tim  
Address - 133 Wharf Street, Tweed Heads  
Phone - 07-5536 6622  
Email - [frontdesk@kirradive.com](mailto:frontdesk@kirradive.com)  
Website - [www.kirradive.com](http://www.kirradive.com)

## OYSTERS DON'T COME ANY FRESHER THAN THIS!

Commercial oyster farming is an important industry in the Tweed region, with the leases predominantly located along the banks of the Tweed River and in the Terranora Inlet. The local variety is based on the Sydney rock oyster stock but – like wine – the flavour and colour of oysters will vary depending on where they are grown.

A number of co-ops along the highway and Kennedy Drive, west of Tweed Heads, sell locally-grown oysters but Lee and Robert Eyre have taken it one step further by opening their own Oyster Bar where people can come in and sample freshly shucked oysters, either grown locally in their nearby leases when they are harvesting or from suppliers at other times of the year.

At the Birds Bay Oyster Farm right on the banks of the river, you can see how the oysters are brought in from the 'beds' on 'trays' before being harvested and shucked. Their lunch menu features Birds Bay oysters Kilpatrick, mornay and *au naturale*, as well as live mudcrabs and spanner crabs caught by local fishermen who also supply Lee and Robert's very popular Catch-a-Crab cruises.

They also showcase the freshwater Akoya pearls which are also grown here in small quantities with a small gift shop featuring locally-designed Akoya pearl jewellery.

### Operator Details:

Operator - Birds Bay Oyster Farm  
Contact - Lee Eyre  
Address - Birds Bay Drive, West Tweed Heads  
Phone - 07-5599 9972  
Email - [info@perfectour.com](mailto:info@perfectour.com)  
Website - [www.catchacrab.com.au/perfectour](http://www.catchacrab.com.au/perfectour)

## CATCH YOUR OWN SEAFOOD PLATTER

Operated by Lee and Robert Eyre of Perfectour (see also Birds Bay Oyster Farm), Catch-a-Crab Cruises are one of the most popular – and awarded – attractions in the Tweed region.

The daily cruises depart from Birds Bay Oyster Farm on the Tweed River and travel through the small islets and wetlands of the Terranora Inlet, giving passengers the chance to get 'hands on' as the boat stops to feed wild pelicans, pulls up on a sandbar so everyone can have a go at pumping for yabbies and then cruises past the crab pots to haul in the day's catch. An informative presentation on the local spanner and mudcrabs, and some leisurely time dangling the fishing rods over the side complete the three hour cruise.

Returning to the Birds Bay Oyster Farm, passengers can dine on their catch with a succulent crab platter and sample the locally grown oysters.

Catch a Crab also run educational cruises for school groups and have won numerous awards, including Tourism NSW's Award of Distinction and have been inducted into Northern Rivers Tourism's Hall of Fame.

### Operator Details:

Operator - Catch a Crab Cruises  
Contact - Lee Eyre  
Address - Birds Bay Drive, West Tweed heads  
Phone - 07-5599 9972  
Email - [info@perfectour.com](mailto:info@perfectour.com)  
Website - [www.catchacrab.com.au](http://www.catchacrab.com.au)

## CRUISE THROUGH THE RAINFOREST

The only one of its kind in the region, Tweed Endeavour Cruises takes you by boat through the rainforests of Stotts Island and past the Tweed's sprawling canefields to the historic riverport of Tumbulgum.

Stop along the way to feed the wild birds of prey and keep a close eye out for friendly river dolphins as you learn more about the region from Captain Bill's commentary. After browsing through the art galleries, craft shops and historical country pub at Tumbulgum, you'll enjoy a seafood feast onboard as you travel back to the Tweed.

Tweed Endeavour Cruises also offer a unique Fishmarket Cruise which stops for a behind-the-scenes tour of the largest seafood export factory on the Tweed and a Crab Catching Cruise where you can try yabby pumping, fishing, bird feeding and, of course, crab catching.

### Operator Details:

Operator - Tweed Endeavour Cruises  
Contact - Sonya or Scott  
Address - Tweed Marina, River Terrace, Tweed Heads  
Phone - 07-5536 8800  
Email - [info@goldcoastcruising.com](mailto:info@goldcoastcruising.com)  
Website - [www.goldcoastcruising.com](http://www.goldcoastcruising.com)

## RELAX IN A FLOATING SPA

The Tweed River is just perfect for houseboating but Boyds Bay Houseboats offer something a little different with their luxury deck-top heated spa. Feel the tension fade away as you lie back in the spa with a glass of champagne and float along through a passing panorama of canefields, rainforests and Mt Warning. The historic riverside village of Tumbulgum is a popular houseboating destination where you can tuck into a traditional pub lunch at the 1887 hotel and wander through the art galleries, craft stores and historic cemetery.

### Operator Details:

Operator - Boyds Bay Houseboats  
Contact - Michelle Day  
Address - Tweed Marina, River Terrace, Tweed Heads  
Phone - 1800 468 732 / 07-5599 1436 / 0412 878 400  
Email - [sales@goldcoasthouseboats.com](mailto:sales@goldcoasthouseboats.com)  
Website - [www.goldcoasthouseboats.com](http://www.goldcoasthouseboats.com)

## BEACH HOLIDAY ON A BUDGET

Whilst the Tweed's new luxury retreats get plenty of attention, you can still find budget beach accommodation on the Tweed Coast. The Hideaway is located right on Cabarita Beach, with accommodation available in very nicely appointed self-contained motel units or a couple of spacious two-room family suites.

Prices for the oceanfront rooms start from just \$131 per night Monday-Thursday or \$148 on weekends (min two night stay). For two people, that's just \$65.60/\$74 per person. The family room, sleeping up to six people, starts from \$197 per night during the week which works out at less than \$33 per person!

This would be a great property to feature as part of a budget holiday special – one of the Tweed's best-kept secrets. We also have a number of other well-priced accommodation options along the Coast, including the cabins in our beachfront caravan parks which represent excellent value.

Operator Details:

Operator - The Hideaway  
Contact - Chris & Maria Gregory  
Address - 21 Cypress Crescent, Cabarita  
Phone - 02-6676 1444  
Website - [www.cababeach.com.au](http://www.cababeach.com.au)

**LUXURY BARBEQUE BOATS**

A very different way to plan a picnic in the Tweed is to hire out one of the luxury barbeque pontoons available from Neptune's Pleasure Pontoons. The boats are equipped with an onboard barbeque, CD stereo system, full length canopy top, fish finder and even an on-board toilet. If you don't trust your luck with a rod and reel, you can always stock up on fresh prawns from the trawler, oysters from the Kennedy Drive farmers and local fish from the co-op before you head out. Alternatively, the operators will do full catering. A great way to spend a day out with friends.

Operator Details:

Operator - Neptunes Pleasure Pontoons  
Contact - Noel & Liana Wynne  
Address - Tweed Marina, River Terrace, Tweed Heads  
Phone - 0402 55 11 44  
Email - [info@neptunespleasurepontoons.com.au](mailto:info@neptunespleasurepontoons.com.au)  
Website - [www.neptunespleasurepontoons.com.au](http://www.neptunespleasurepontoons.com.au)

**TOUR THE LOCAL FISH MARKETS**

We have a number of larger co-ops that will take visitors behind-the-scenes to find out more about the local seafood industry – what species are caught in the area, how to correctly fillet fish, how they are prepared, how they are packaged for the local and export markets, etc. Markwell's Deep Sea Fishery at Chinderah conducts tours of their riverfront seafood facility as part of select group cruises offered by Tweed Endeavour Cruises, while the family-operated Mennitti's Seafood, just near the Tweed Marina in River Terrace, Tweed Heads, will take people behind the scenes on request.

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**DRIVE-BY SEAFOOD BANQUET**

Following the 'food trail' is a great way to get out and explore the countryside. In Tweed Heads, however, you can put an ice-filled esky in the boot and stock up on a seafood banquet:

- Get off to an early morning start and meet the prawn trawlers at the Tweed marina where you can buy fresh off the back of the boat;
- Drive along the riverbank to Birds Bay and hop on the Catch-a-Crab cruise. The boat stops at sandbars and everyone gets off to go pumping for yabbies. Further along the river, you pull in the pots for a haul of mudcrabs and then throw a line off the side to catch a few silver bream;
- Driving back towards Tweed Heads, you can buy fresh oysters from one of the co-ops whose harvest comes from the oyster beds in the river;

- Back at Tweed Marina, you can hire out a luxury pontoon and set off to find a deserted river beach where you can barbeque the day's catch on board.

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### **TWEED SEAFOOD RECIPES**

Any of our Tweed water- and fishing-focussed stories could be supplemented with a cooking demonstration and/or recipes incorporating locally caught seafood, such as mudcrabs, oysters, prawn, snapper, mahi mahi and any of the other deep sea varieties. To add a little interest, we could set the cooking demonstration up in a location such as on the crab-catching cruise boat, a wharf-side barbeque or the barbeque pontoon. We could also ask the chef to include some unique fruits grown only in this region, such as the native fingerlime which is like lemon-flavoured caviar and is supplied to some of Sydney's leading restaurants, such as Tetsuya's. We have a number of leading 'celebrity' chefs in the region that you may like to include in a segment such as this, including:

- Steve Snow from Fins at Salt
- Greg Pieper from Bamboo Restaurant at Santai and Sandbar + Grill at Casuarina
- Michael Jenkins from Peppers

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## FACTS & FIGURES

- Location:** Northeast NSW from the Queensland/NSW border (adjacent to the Gold Coast) south to Pottsville/Wooyung and west to the Border Ranges
- Distances:** 105kms from Brisbane (1 hour drive)  
835kms from Sydney (11 hours 30 minutes drive)
- Airport Access:**
- Gold Coast Airport  
*Domestic:* *Virgin Blue, Jetstar*  
*International:* *Air Asia X, Air New Zealand, Pacific Blue, Tiger Airways*
- Ballina Byron Airport  
*Domestic:* *Virgin Blue, Regional Express, Jetstar*
- Lismore Regional Airport  
*Domestic:* *Regional Express*
- Key regions:**
- Tweed Coast**  
*A string of unspoilt coastal villages stretching along 35kms of ocean beaches from Fingal Head to Wooyung and incorporating the new multi-million dollar developments at Salt/Casuarina and Kingscliff's trendy 'eat street'.*
- Tweed Valley**  
*Nestled in the ancient caldera of the Mt Warning volcano, the Valley is fringed with World Heritage rainforests and offers lush growing conditions for a wide range of regional produce.*
- Tweed Heads**  
*One of Australia's favourite family holiday destinations, renowned for its award-winning restaurants, beachfront accommodation, boutique shopping and clubs.*
- Contact:** **TWEED TOURISM**  
[www.tweedtourism.com.au](http://www.tweedtourism.com.au)  
**1800 674 414**