

Recreational fishing in the ACT

Recreational fishing in the public waters of the ACT does not require a licence, but you must comply with the *Fisheries Act 2000*, which aims to sustainably manage our fish populations.

The public waters of the ACT are divided into **prohibited waters, open waters and trout waters.**

ACT prohibited waters

You are not allowed to fish in the following waters at any time:

1. Cotter River upstream of new Cotter dam wall, to the junction of Condor Creek, including the Cotter Reservoir;
2. Cotter River and catchment upstream of Bendora dam wall, including Bendora and Corin reservoirs;
3. Murrumbidgee River downstream of Angle Crossing to the junction with the Gudgenby River;
4. Tidbinbilla River and catchment within the Tidbinbilla Nature Reserve; and
5. Kellys Swamp and Jerrabomberra Swamp within the Jerrabomberra Wetlands Nature Reserve and any areas where fishing is prohibited as described in the Jerrabomberra Wetlands Nature Reserve Plan of Management 2010.

Small areas on some waterways may not be available for fishing for land management purposes, for example dam wall exclusions and parts of Jerrabomberra Wetlands.

Open waters

You may fish in open waters all year around. Open waters include all public waters in the ACT that are not prohibited or trout waters. This includes the Murrumbidgee River downstream from the junction with the Gudgenby River and upstream from the concrete crossing at Angle Crossing to the ACT border; the Molonglo River downstream of its junction with the Queanbeyan River; and urban lakes and ponds.

There is special section of Open Waters on the Murrumbidgee River downstream of Uriarra Crossing. This area is Catch and Release only for Murray Cod. You may fish downstream of Uriarra Crossing like other Open Water river sections, except that any Murray Cod you catch in this area must not be taken and must be released unharmed. You can use either two **attended** fishing rods, two **attended** hand lines, or one of each, with no more than two hooks on each line. You can also have a landing net. An attended fishing rod requires the angler to be within 10 metres of their fishing gear and/or can see their gear at all times.

Artificial lures, flies and live or natural bait can be used as bait, but fin fish, fish eggs and frogs must not be used.

It is illegal to dig for worms along river banks or in nature reserves.

Murray Cod caught in these waters out of season must be returned to the water unharmed.

Trout waters

Trout fishing waters include:

- > Gudgenby River and its catchment and tributaries;
- > Naas River and its catchment and tributaries;
- > Paddys River and its catchment and tributaries;
- > Condor Creek and its catchment and tributaries;
- > Cotter River and its catchment and tributaries downstream of Bendora Dam to the junction with Condor Creek;
- > Molonglo River above junction with the Queanbeyan River to the ACT border;
- > Orroral River and its tributaries.

Open season for trout waters is from the start of the October Labour Day long weekend to the end of the June Queen's Birthday weekend.

You may only use one attended fishing rod, with no more than two hooks per line, supplemented by a landing net.

Only artificial fly and lure fishing is permitted in trout waters during open season.

See Fisheries ACT Classification map for zoned waters within the ACT.

Protected species

There are seven species in the ACT that are totally protected. It is illegal to target or catch these species. Their protected status helps conserve the species so their populations may recover.

Trout Cod *Gudu*



Two-spined Blackfish *Wagar*



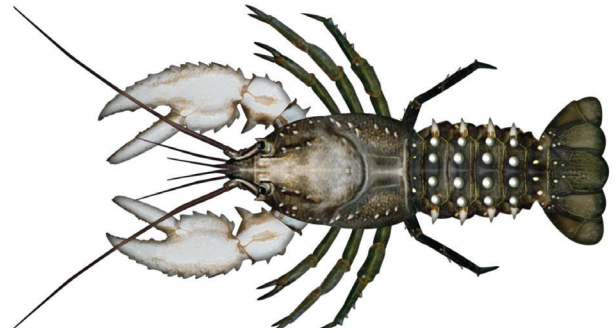
Macquarie Perch *Gubay*



Silver Perch *Dhingur*



Murray River Crayfish *Murunung*



Alpine Spiny Crayfish



Rieks Crayfish



If you catch a protected fish, you must release it with as little injury as possible and report the capture to ACT Conservation Research on 13 22 81. This will help us monitor the status of these threatened species.

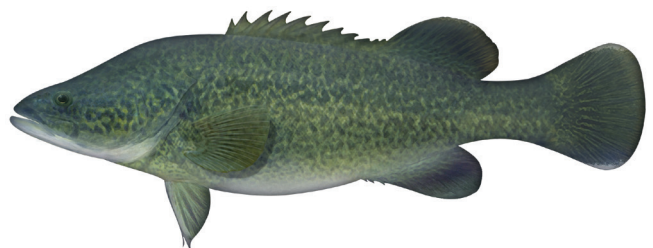
Please note the differences between the Trout Cod, a protected species (therefore not allowed to be taken), and the Murray Cod, which can be taken during its open season.

Trout Cod *Gudu*
TOTALLY PROTECTED



Head profile straight, upper jaw overhangs lower. Dark spots and irregular dashes or bars with few markings on the head. Generally blue/grey on dorsal (upper) becoming paler, almost white on ventral surface.

Murray Cod *Mangi*
Closed season September to November



Concave head profile, jaws equal or bottom jaw protrudes. Green mottled pattern on the body and head. Can be finely speckled in larger fish. Generally green/ olive/yellow/golden on dorsal (upper), becoming paler more creamy/white on ventral (lower). Larger fish can have a blue-green sheen.

Recreational and pest species

You may fish for the following species only during the seasons shown below. Bag and size limits help to sustainably manage recreational fish populations for the future.

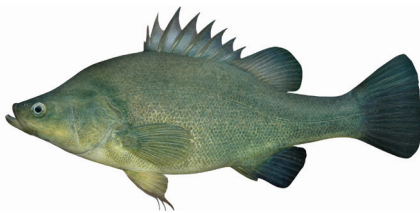


Murray Cod

Bag limit of 1 per day in the Murrumbidgee River with the exception of the area downstream of Uriarra Crossing to the ACT–New South Wales border, no Murray Cod may be taken here at any time. 2 in all other waters, with a **size limit of between 55cm and 75cm**.

Open water season: 1 December to 31 August.

Trout water season: 1 December to June Queen’s birthday long weekend inclusive.



Golden Perch

Bag limit of 2 per day in the Murrumbidgee River, 5 in all other waters with a **30cm minimum length**.

Open water season: All year.

Trout water season: October Labour Day long weekend to June Queen’s birthday long weekend inclusive.



Trout (brown or rainbow)

Bag limit of 5 per day with a **25cm minimum length**.

and Trout water season: October Labour Day long weekend to Queen’s birthday long weekend in June inclusive.



Carp

No bag limit or minimum length.

Open water season: All year.

Trout water season: October Labour Day long weekend to June Queen’s birthday long weekend inclusive.



Redfin

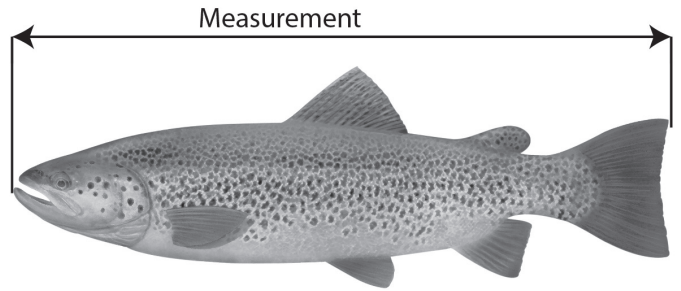
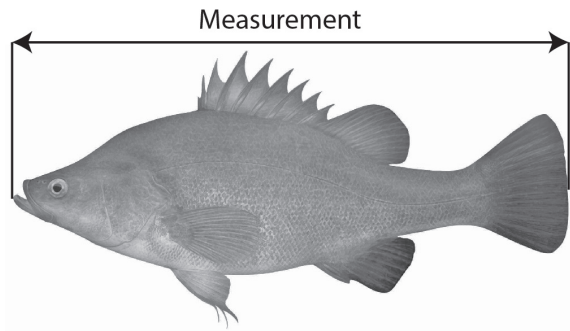
No bag limit or minimum length.

Open water season: All year.

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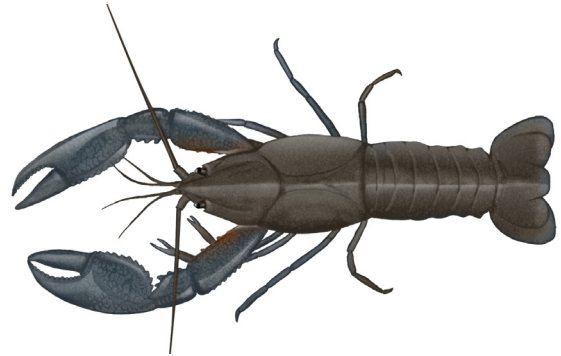
Measuring a fish

The length of a fish is measured from the tip of the snout to the tip of the tail.



Yabbies

You can fish for yabbies in the ACT, but enclosed traps such as opera house, shrimp, minnow and yabby traps are prohibited.



You may use up to 10 baited lines (no hooks) and five hoop nets, except in the nature reserves in the Murrumbidgee River Corridor (Woodstock, Stoney Creek, Swamp Creek, Bullen Range and Gigerline nature reserves) and where hoop nets are prohibited.

The unenclosed hoop nets must have a drop of 1 metre or less and be attached to no more than two hoop rings or frames with a diameter of not more than 1.25 metres and a mesh size of not less than 13 millimeters.



Baited lines and all nets except a landing net are prohibited in trout waters.

Carp and redfin

Carp



Redfin



Carp and redfin are pests. They can be taken with natural baits such as corn, bread or garden worms, shrimp or yabbies (only in open waters) or artificial lures. You can keep them or return them to the water where they were caught. If you kill the fish, dispatch them humanely then dispose of them appropriately, and not beside the water's edge.

Googong Reservoir

Fishing in Googong Reservoir is governed by the NSW Department of Primary Industries (NSW DPI) *Fisheries Management Act 1994* and associated regulations. To fish in NSW waters you will need a NSW recreational fishing licence, which is available from most tackle shops, on the web at licence.nsw.gov.au or by calling 1300 369 365.

More information about fishing at Googong Reservoir is available at www.environment.act.gov.au/parks-conservation/parks-and-reserves/find-a-park/rural/googong-foreshores.

General information

- > Return all protected species to the water immediately.
- > It is illegal:
 - to use fish eggs, live fin fish, frogs or tadpoles as bait. If they escape they may become an invasive species or introduce diseases
 - to use gaffs, spears, spear guns, bows and arrows, poisons, explosives or firearms to catch fish in the ACT
 - to move fish from one water body to another or stock fish without a permit
 - to remove the heads or fillet fish while next to a lake, river or stream
 - for recreational anglers to sell their catch.
- > Do not release fish or plants from a home aquarium into any waterways as they may become pests or introduce diseases.
- > Power boats, including electric boats, are prohibited on Canberra's urban lakes without a permit. Contact Access Canberra to apply for a permit.
- > Please report any illegal fishing activity to Access Canberra.
- > **Penalties of up to \$5000 apply for contravention of the *Fisheries Act 2000*.**

Ethical fishing practices

- > Understand and follow fishing regulations and report any illegal fishing activities.
- > Do not take more fish than you need.
- > Return any undersized, unwanted or protected fish to the water alive.
- > Wet your hands or use a wet cloth before handling fish to improve their survival rate.
- > Treat fish humanely when releasing them by doing it quickly:
 - keep them in the water as much as possible
 - revive a tired or semi conscious fish by moving it gently forward to wash water through its gills until it is able to swim normally.
- > When landing fish, support the middle of the fish's body, head and tail.
- > Don't use green prawns as bait because white spot disease may impact local crayfish. For more information about white spot outbreak.gov.au/current-responses-to-outbreaks/white-spot-disease
- > Always attend your gear so that fish can be retrieved as soon as they are caught.
- > Cut the line if you are unable to remove a hook quickly.
- > If you are catching numerous undersized or protected fish, change your methods or locations.
- > Humanely kill any fish you are keeping.
- > Prevent pollution and protect wildlife. The water catchment feeding into the Cotter Dam and the Murrumbidgee River is used as a water supply for the ACT so take all litter, dead fish, discarded line and glass home to be disposed of. The Murrumbidgee River Corridor is a No Bins area.
- > Fires are only permitted in designated fireplaces.
- > Respect the rights of other users.

Ngunnawal names provided by the Winnagay Ngunnawal Language Group

Image © NSW Department of Primary Industries.

For further information

Call Access Canberra on 13 22 81 or visit environment.act.gov.au

If English is not your first language and you require a translating and interpreting service, please phone 13 14 50.

This information is also available in **Chinese, Serbian, Vietnamese, Russian, Dari and Arabic** by calling 13 22 81 or environment.act.gov.au



ACT
Government

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