



Keep Australia's fishing spots free from disease

Every fisher has a role to play in protecting Australia's waterways.

Diseases and pests that affect aquatic animals can easily spread between waterways by the movement of contaminated bait and fishing equipment.

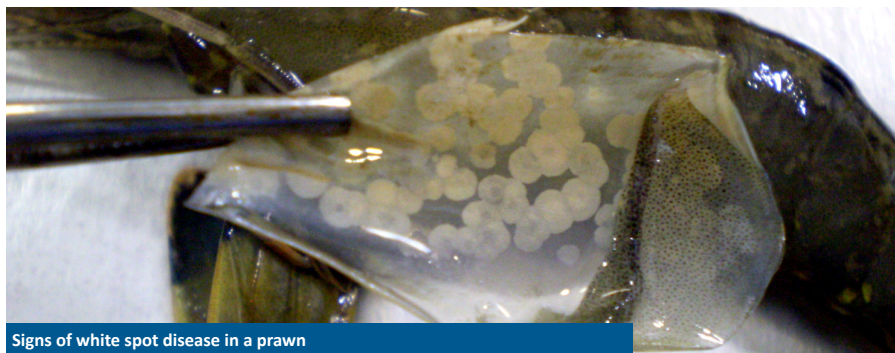
Disease outbreaks can cause major social and economic damage to Australia's seafood industries.

Tips to keep your favourite fishing spot disease free

- If you use prawns, marine worms or yabbies as bait, make sure you always use wild-caught. Get it from a trusted supplier or catch your own in your local area.
- Prawns and other seafood purchased from the supermarket or fishmonger are meant for human consumption and **must not be used as bait**. Although safe for human consumption, they have the potential to spread diseases when used as bait.
- Uncooked prawn waste could introduce diseases into our waterways if not disposed of properly. Put all unwanted bait and seafood in the bin.
- Keep your fishing gear, boat and trailer clean. Make sure that any debris and seaweed is removed. In particular, check wheel arches on trailers, boat propellers, fishing tackle and footwear.
- Use soapy water to clean your boat and trailer, fishing rods and other equipment, and allow them to dry completely before using them at another location.

If you use prawns, marine worms or yabbies as bait, make sure it is wild-caught. Get it from a trusted bait supplier or catch your own in your local area.





Signs of white spot disease in a prawn

Photo courtesy of the Queensland Department of Agriculture and Fisheries

White spot disease

An outbreak of white spot disease occurred in prawn farms in South-East Queensland in December 2016 and has since been subject to an eradication program. The disease has caused major economic damage to affected prawn farmers.

Low levels of the virus that causes white spot disease has been found in the Moreton Bay area of Queensland. Make sure you abide by movement restrictions that apply in certain areas of South-East Queensland to prevent further spread.

Prawns are safe to eat. White spot disease does not pose a threat to human health or food safety.

The disease can only be diagnosed through appropriate laboratory testing. Infected prawns and yabbies may not display any symptoms. In some cases, white spots can appear on them because of freezer burn or bacterial and fungal infections.

If you suspect that you have purchased prawns with white spot disease symptoms, do not use them or throw them away. Keep them refrigerated and phone the Emergency Animal Disease Watch Hotline from anywhere in Australia on 1800 675 888. You will be connected to your local department of primary industries or fisheries, and provided with further advice.

More information

If you would like more information about the white spot disease eradication program, or how to keep your favourite fishing spot disease free, visit the **outbreak.gov.au** website.



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