

# Get Hooked ON MACKAY

- ✓ 365 days a year fishing
- ✓ A huge variety of species
- ✓ One of Queensland's only net free zones
- ✓ Stocked barramundi dams with no closed season
- ✓ World-class fishing and boating facilities



**THE MACKAY REGION -  
AUSTRALIA'S PREMIER RECREATIONAL FISHING DESTINATION**

# Why Mackay

## for your next fishing holiday?



The Mackay Region is ideally located roughly halfway between Brisbane and Cairns along the Queensland coast, and is well known nationally and internationally, as one of the best fishing locations in Australia.

Within 45 minutes you can be fishing at a tropical reef, rainforest stream, blue water river, a sandy estuary or an inland dam. With the highest fishing participation rate in the state, a huge variety of species and world class fishing and boating facilities The Mackay Region offers the perfect destination for your next holiday or fishing adventure.

## Getting here



Fly direct from Brisbane, Rockhampton or Townsville, roadtrip via the Bruce Highway, catch a bus with Greyhound Australia or hop on a Queensland Rail train.



### Distance to Mackay

|              |         |
|--------------|---------|
| Airlie Beach | 149km   |
| Rockhampton  | 336km   |
| Townsville   | 389km   |
| Cairns       | 735km   |
| Brisbane     | 953km   |
| Sydney       | 1,741km |
| Melbourne    | 2,320km |

### Fishing Events Calendar

Mackay has several fishing clubs and organisations that all run competitions throughout the year. For more information on exciting events, visit [www.mackayregion.com/events](http://www.mackayregion.com/events)

|     |  |
|-----|--|
| May | World Sooty Grunter Championships                |
| May | Mackay Expo                                      |
| Jul | Mackay Spanish Mackerel Shootout                 |
| Oct | Kids Fishing Day                                 |
| Oct | Calen Fishing Classic                            |
| Oct | Australian Fishing Championship begins in Mackay |

### Mackay Climate

| Month          | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|----------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Average max °C | 30  | 30  | 28  | 27  | 24  | 22  | 21  | 22  | 25  | 27  | 29  | 30  |
| Average min °C | 23  | 23  | 22  | 20  | 17  | 14  | 13  | 14  | 16  | 20  | 22  | 23  |
| Rainfall mm    | 293 | 311 | 303 | 134 | 104 | 59  | 47  | 30  | 15  | 38  | 87  | 175 |

\*Temperature and rainfall are approximate averages only. Source: [www.bom.gov.au/climate](http://www.bom.gov.au/climate) from Mackay Aero Station.

# Help to get you started



## Do I need a fishing permit?

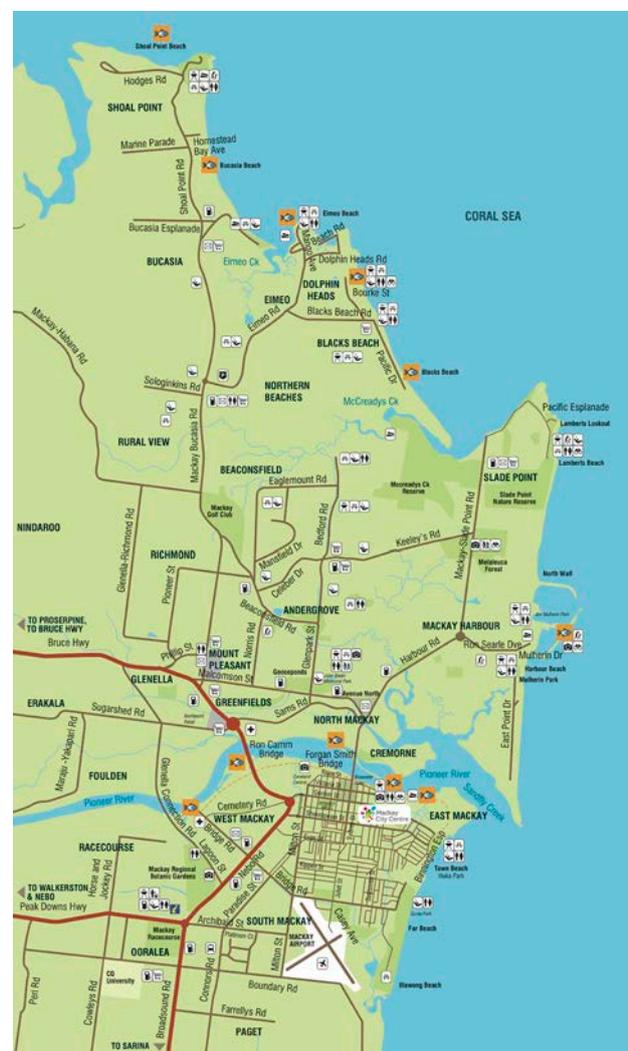
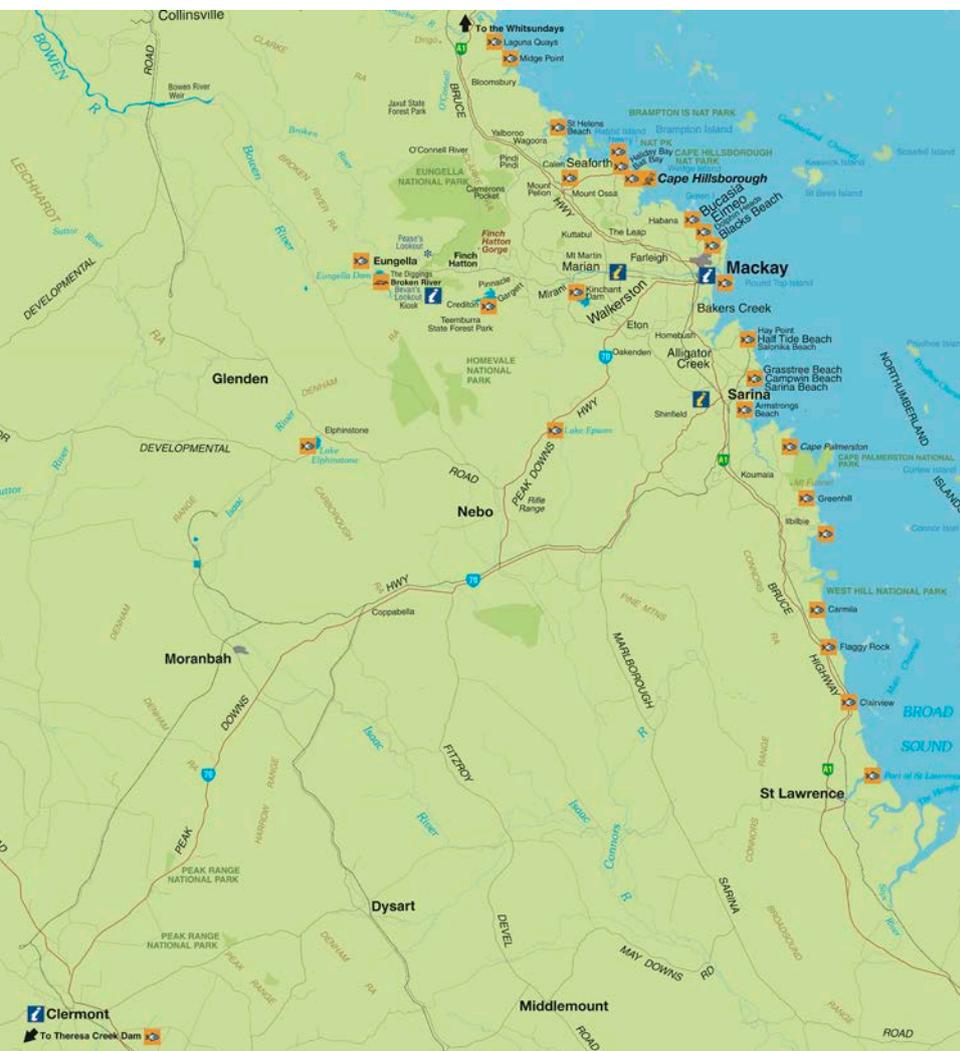
Most areas of Queensland do not require a permit for fishing however, a Stocked Impoundment Permit (SIP) is required for some Queensland impoundments including Kinchant, Eungella and Teemburra dams. SIPs cost \$10 a week or \$50 a year, for those over 18 years of age. SIPs can be purchased online at [qld.gov.au/recreation](http://qld.gov.au/recreation) or over the counter at Queensland and selected NSW Australia Post outlets.

## Help sustain our fishery

Please be aware that size and possession limits apply to most fish and crustaceans. For more information visit [qld.gov.au/recreation](http://qld.gov.au/recreation).

The annual barramundi closed season along Queensland's east coast starts from midday on 1 November, effective through to midday on 1 February. Exceptions apply to Eungella, Kinchant and Teemburra Dams.

Fishing in the Great Barrier Reef? You'll need to know about zoning maps. For the Mackay Region, use zoning map 12. Help protect our patch of the reef and it's marine life by visiting the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority website [www.gbrmpa.gov.au](http://www.gbrmpa.gov.au)



# Mackay & Northern Beaches

Mackay and Northern Beaches is blessed with some truly remarkable and unique fish habitats, many no more than a stone's throw away from the City Centre.



**Target Species:** Barramundi, flathead, bream, blue salmon, king/threadfin salmon, mangrove jack, trevally, whiting, fingermark, queenfish, black jew, barracuda, cod



**Best Spots:** Mackay city's Pioneer River, Mackay Marina and breakwater, Northern Beaches



**Boat Ramps:** River Street, Mackay Marina, McCreedy's Creek, Eimeo, Eimeo Creek at Bucasia, Dunrock



Several dedicated fishing platforms give the angler easy access to one of the only true blue water rivers in Australia, the Pioneer River, which runs through the centre of Mackay and provides sizeable barramundi, salmon and mangrove jack.

Whiting, bream and flathead can also be found in the Mackay Marina and surrounding beaches. The scenic drive to the end of the breakwater rewards the angler with the opportunity to target big pelagic species such as makeral and trevally. Long casting metal lures or floating baits work best and catching one of these speedsters landbased without aid of a boat to give chase, is a very rewarding experience.



Those looking for a quick afternoon fish can also try the Gooseponds in North Mackay or the Lagoons near the Botanical Gardens. These spots are easily accessible for any angler and, thanks to stocking efforts, now sport healthy populations of barramundi and tarpon.

## Keen to tackle a famous barra?



People from all over the world have travelled to Northern Australia to land the famous barramundi, arguably Australia's most iconic fish. The Mackay Region has some of the best barramundi fishing in the world. That metre-plus barramundi of your dreams is swimming right here in Mackay. To land one, we recommend a 5 – 10kg baitcaster or a spin rod with a 4000 size reel and 20-30lb braided line. Large hard-bodied lures between 60-120mm, soft plastics and vibes work well. Those preferring to use bait should opt for prawns, herring or live mullet



# Cape Hillsborough & Hibiscus Coast

St Helens Beach to Cape Hillsborough is home to one of only three net free zones in Queensland. This allows the angler to encounter a smorgasbord of hard-fighting, great-tasting reef fish that can be caught on a multitude of different techniques.



**Target Species:** Barramundi, flathead, bream, blue salmon, king/threadfin salmon, mangrove jack, trevally, whiting, mackerel, coral trout, fingermark, sweet lip, tuna, nannygai, red emperor, red throat, cobia, queenfish



**Best Spots:** Seaforth, Cape Hillsborough, Newry Island, Midge Point



**Boat Ramps:** Constant Creek, Cape Hillsborough Beach Access, Victor Creek Seaforth, Murray Creek, St. Helens Beach, Laguna Quays



**You will need a boat (or arrange a charter) to access the shipping channel and reef systems which are a considerable distance offshore, but there are also quality fishing grounds in closer around the islands.**

Seasoned anglers use the traditional squid or cut flesh baits while younger generations are having great success on plastics, vibes and metal jigs. Hordes of pelagic speedsters turn up on mass from November to February each year and chasing these fish with metal slugs has got to be one of the most fun things you can do standing up.

Landbased anglers don't miss out either, with spectacular fishing along the many creeks and estuaries that are home to big barramundi and mangrove jacks, whilst the beaches produce the usual bread and butter species.

Please be aware that estuarine crocodiles do inhabit several of The Mackay Region's waterways. To remain crocwise visit this website; [environment.des.qld.gov.au/wildlife/livingwith/crocodiles](http://environment.des.qld.gov.au/wildlife/livingwith/crocodiles)



## Want to work your muscles with our hard-hitting Reef Species?

Mackerel, trevally and coral trout are just some of the hard-fighting, great-tasting fish The Mackay Region has in abundance. To target these reef species, we recommend heavy-duty rods with at least 5000 size reels, loaded with 30lb braid and 50lb leader as a minimum. Fast trolling lures and metal slugs work best, whilst the excitement of hooking up on large surface poppers can't be beaten. Live bait is another option which is well worth the effort of catching it with a cast net or bait jig on light spin gear.





# Sarina & the Isaac Coast

Anglers heading south from Mackay are met with some truly unique and world-class fishing.



**Target Species:** Barramundi, flathead, bream, blue salmon, king/threadfin salmon, mangrove jack, trevally, whiting, mackerel, coral trout, fingermark, sweet lip, tuna, snapper, nannygai, red emperor, red throat, cobia, queenfish



**Best Spots:** Offshore islands and reefs, Sarina, Cape Palmerston, Clairview and Carmila Beaches



**Boat Ramps:** Hay Point, Grasstree Beach, Campwin Beach, Perpetua Point, Sunset Drive, Freshwater Point, Rocky Dam Creek, Carmila Beach, Clairview Beach, Waverley Creek



**The many shoals, reefs and islands offshore provide anglers with many hard-fighting fish that can be targeted through a range of methods.**

Fast trolling lures entice big predators such as mackerel, whilst casting at schools of bait fish with large surface poppers will have anglers hanging on as bar-fridge-size giant trevally take hold.

The beaches down the coast are not only beautiful but also produce excellent fishing for the landbased angler. Working soft plastics across the sand bars is an always popular tactic for flathead. If you are turning to bait, prawns, yabbies and sandworms are great choices for bream and whiting, whilst pilchards work well for trevally, dart and the odd queenfish.



Crabbing is also very popular in these areas, with some truly massive mud crabs inhabiting the shallow waters and inlets around The Mackay Region. Load your crab pots with fresh bait, such as chicken legs or fish frames, leave for a few hours during the run of the tides and return for a few delicious mud crabs.



## Tips on entertaining the kids with bread and butter species

You don't need a flash boat or expensive gear to have a blast fishing in The Mackay Region. Most of us grew up catching the bread and butter species, and they still get the adrenaline going every time on light gear. Heading down to the nearest beach, jetty or boat ramp with a \$15 rod or \$5 handline, with prawns, squid or mullet will still catch bream, whiting and flathead and put a smile on any face.

# Freshwater Rivers & Dams

Freshwater fishing in The Mackay Region is second-to-none and most can be done just inland of Mackay, in The Pioneer Valley region, with three world-class impoundment fisheries within 90 minutes of the City Centre.



**Target Species:** Barramundi, sooty grunter, saratoga, yellowbelly, jungle perch



**Best Spots:** Kinchant, Eungella, Teemburra, Theresa Creek & Bundoora Dams and Lake Elphinstone.



**Boat Ramps:** All the above locations have boat ramps



Head west from Mackay to find Kinchant and Teemburra Dams (known as one of the best places in the world for large barramundi), and Eungella Dam, which is located high up in the ranges and is renowned for sooty grunter fishing. With a stocked impoundment permit, barramundi can be targeted year-round in these dams and many an angler has ticked off a legendary metre-plus barramundi here.

Fishing at these dams works best from a boat, but fish can be caught from the banks. Look to cast close to structure or weed beds to entice the predatory fish out for a bite. Camping options are available at Kinchant and Eungella Dams.



Heading west towards Clermont, Theresa Creek and Bundoora Dams also provide great fishing with healthy populations of saratoga, yellowbelly and barramundi being present. Meanwhile, Lake Elphinstone near Glenden, is a very popular spot for catching the famous redclaw crayfish.

The rivers and creeks are also worth checking out, with the Pioneer River at Mirani and Marian producing good catches of sooty grunter and barra, and Funnel Creek in the Sarina Range known for its saratoga and sooty grunter.



## Tips for targeting Sooty grunter

A favourite freshwater fish, sooty grunter fight hard. The Mackay Region is famous for its sooty grunter and in May every year Eungella Dam hosts the World Sooty Championship. Light spin gear works best for sooty grunter. We suggest a 2-4kg rod, and a 2500 reel loaded with 8lb line. Soft plastics, small hard-bodied lures between 30-80mm, small poppers and stickbaits all work well.



VVV  
Fish in-style and protect yourself from the sun with a Hooked on Mackay fishing shirt. Purchase yours from the Mackay Region and Mackay Visitor Information Centres. Branded lures are also available!

# Who can hook you up with all things fishing?



## Fishing Operators

**Inshore Fishing Mackay**  
p. 0457 254 740  
fb. InshoreFishingMackay

**Fishin' Magician**  
p. 0478 720 781  
fb. Fishin'Magician

**Elizabeth E II**  
p. 4955 2563  
w. elizabetheii.com.au

**Mackay Fly and Sportfishing**  
p. 0407 674 350  
w. mackaysportfishing.com.au

**Action Charters**  
p. 0417 452 346  
w. actioncharters.com.au

**Reefari**  
p. 0413 821 736b  
w. reefari.com

## Tackle Stores

**Tackle World Mackay**  
p. 4957 2145  
318 Shakespeare Street, Mackay

**Nashy's Compleat Angler**  
p. 4957 2272  
25 Harbour Road, North Mackay

**BCF**  
p. 4942 3499  
8-10 Windmill Crossing, Mackay

**Freddys Fishing & Outdoors**  
p. 4942 0360  
6 Trade Court, Mackay

**The Square Peg**  
p. 4941 8256  
3 Batchelor Pde, Moranbah

## Inspiration

**Hooked on Mackay**  
fb. HookedOnMackay  
w. hookedonmackay.com

**Fish & Boat Magazine**  
w. fishandboat.com.au

**Fishing Monthly Magazine**  
w. fishingmonthly.com.au

**Casting Cowboys Fishing**  
fb. Castingcowboys  
insta. @Casting\_cowboys

## Ready to go?

Mackay Tourism can help you plan your next fishing holiday, with access to a range of fishing tour operators and other important information to make your trip enjoyable.

w. mackayregion.com  
e. bookings@mackayregion.com  
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insta. @visitmackay



The Mackay Region has a dedicated fishing platform full of useful information for anglers. Visit [www.hookedonmackay.com](http://www.hookedonmackay.com) or Hooked on Mackay on Facebook.