

Australian Lure Fishing Podcast Episode 259



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Mat Cameron

Clarence River Kayak Fisho And Bass Specialist

Matt is a high-profile bream and bass tournament angler based in the Grafton area with 18 top ten placings across a range of disciplines. He fishes from bank and boat but is especially passionate about fishing from a kayak and has been fishing for bass in the Clarence River Gorge has been his favourite pastime for many years.



Mat's Clarence Gorge Bass Fishing Tips

- The harder you work the better results you'll get. Get up earlier than other anglers, walk further, fish harder.
- There are access points and private camp grounds on working cattle properties at Wave Hill Station to the west and The Gorge on the east. Its possible to launch a small tinnie at the gorge, or a kayak from either side. You can also walk up from either side, it's hard work but possible and definitely worth it.
- The Gorge is a stretch of about 2-3km with vertical cliffs and deep water of 15m or so depth. Look for the foamy bays where tributaries trickle down the vertical cliffs and fish will be stacked beneath.

- Fish also line up along cliff walls, in the pressure wave in front of mid-stream boulders, on snags, anywhere!
- The Spring months fish best, from season opening. But all months ending with “ber” fish well, in other words September to December.
- Spring brings the biggest diurnal temperature fluctuations, with very cool night and fairly warm days. Bass will come up into the shallows in the cool and will retreat back to deeper water as the sun gets up and the water warms. A high barometer with distant storms and sticky, humid weather usually fishes well.
- If the fishing is slow, try fishing low and slow, switching lures and going through a few options until you find what’s working.

Mat’s Gorge Bass Fishing Tackle

- Mat fishes a bit heavier in the gorge because large fish and strong currents can make things tough. He takes 2 rods in case he has a fall and breaks one.
- The Samurai Refraction baitcast rod in the 12-15lb line class, a Daiwa Zillion reel in 15-16 size and 14lb Unitika braid with a 12lb fluorocarbon leader is Mat’s preference for throwing heavier lures.
- A 7’ Samurai Inflict spin rod in the 8-16lb range with a 2000 size Daiwa Caldia reel 10lb Unitika braid and 10lb fluorocarbon leader is the setup for lighter lures or when he’s fishing deeper with light blades or soft plastics.

Mat’s Clarence Gorge Bass Fishing Lures

- The 95mm Bassday Sugapen is a great topwater lure and one of Mat’s favourites for Clarence Gorge bass. These can be cast long into cliff faces and worked slowly through back eddies with longer sweeps of the rod, or faster with short sharp walk the dog action when you’re casting across the current and the water tends to put a belly in the line.
- The Atomic Hard Plastic Lipless Crankbait in 60mm size is a great option once the bass have retreated to deeper water. They work in both the rattling and silent patterns but Mat prefers a noisy lure. Cast them long, let them sink on a semi taut line and watch closely to see when the lure hits the bottom, then start working it back with either short hops or a slow roll with the rod held high. Keep them close to the bottom but don’t leave them at rest for too long or the water flow will carry them beneath rocks.
- Mat’s final option is a 3/8 or 1/2oz Bassman Football Jig. These are great because they sink fast and can be put in tight to vertical cliffs. Football jigs have the weed guard that makes them snag resistant, allowing the angler to work them along the bottom in very small hops.

Bites are rarely aggressive on these lures, but tend to be a rapid “tap, tap, tap”. When this happens, set the hook a little harder than you normally would, as it’s necessary to deflect the weed guard for the hook to get home.