

Australian Lure Fishing Podcast Episode 273



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Josh Kopp

Tournament Yellowbelly Enthusiast

Josh is based in Central NSW and has been fishing freshwater yellowbelly tournaments for a number of years, especially on Lake Windamere.



Josh's Windamere Yellowbelly Fishing Tips

- If you're on a spot that holds yellowbelly and you're not catching fish in the first 10 minutes, change spots. There's no shortage of fish in the system, so find an active school and don't waste time on inactive fish.
- When finding yellas on your sounder Josh finds the fish that are close to the bottom tend to be easier to catch than the ones further up the water column.
- In the early spring the fish will be 50:50 on the trees and the banks but as the water warms above 18 C the fish will move to the banks, so look around points and places where the wind blows directly onto it.
- A good strategy in spring is to find places where the bank is just within casting distance and the water depth is about 6m, especially where there are weedbeds. Josh likes to cast parallel with the banks so his lures are working at pretty much constant depth.

- Wind is your friend – fishing exposed shorelines puts you onto fish that have been activated by water oxygenation, stirring up of food and the cover of a broken water surface. Overcast conditions are good too.
- If the fishing is slow, try changing things up, adding scent to your lure, slowing down or using a little more finesse. Once you figure out what's working on one school of Windamere yellows it will usually work on all schools across the storage.

Josh's Suggested Yellowbelly Fishing Tackle

- A 7' spin rod with a 2500 size reel, 10lb braid and 10lb fluorocarbon leader is a good all-round option that will cover most scenarios. Josh uses a stiffer rod (3-4kg) when he's fishing with lures with single hooks (eg vibes with assist hooks) and switches to a slightly shorter rod (6'6") for vertical grubbing.

Josh's Best Yellowbelly Fishing Lures

- Ecogear ZX40 blade in Dark Night colour is a very good option for Windamere in spring. This lure can be jigged, fished vertically or cast traditionally. Josh likes to use it on banks that have plenty of weed as it's a good lure to rip through. They're great early in the season when the fish are still slightly slow to get moving. Let the lure hit bottom, rip it and then let it sit on the bottom for up to 1 minute. Each hop needs to only be 100-200mm and just enough to get the lure vibrating. Fish will dig through the weed and often take the stationary lure, so watch for tick on the line.
- A 95mm soft vibe such as the Jackall Transam or Zerek Fishtrap retrofitted with assist hooks is a great option when the fish are more active. It's fished in much the same place as the ecogear blade, but is worked by slow rolling it through the weed whilst shaking the rod top to impart action. After 10-15 seconds you can let the lure hit the bottom and let it sit there for a few seconds to a minute before commencing the retrieve again.
- A 3" grub such as the Berkley Grub or Daiwa Bait Junkie on a 1/4oz jig head is perfect for vertical fishing trees. Josh likes the camo colours, especially ones with UV in them. He'll drop the lure to the bottom and slow roll it vertically back up. Alternatively, he'll lift the rod whilst tapping the rod butt with his hand to create more darting activity in the lure. If you see a fish follow, lift the rod a little quicker and you'll usually get the strike.