

Australian Lure Fishing Podcast Episode 291



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Kyle Hennig

Sponsored Angler And Youtuber

Kyle is a Townsville based sport fishing enthusiast who shares his fishing knowledge via YouTube and Instagram. He's a familiar face on social media where he regularly posts on a blistering range of species.



Kyle's Coral Trout Fishing Tips

- The number one thing in coral trout fishing is finding current. Where there's no run there's no fun. The next thing is to find structure. Anywhere the current strikes structure and causes turbulence and upwelling is great, it doesn't matter whether it's in water as shallow as 1m or way out in a hundred metres.
- By switching between working the shallows and working deeper water Kyle manages to fish effectively for coral trout irrespective of whether tidal currents are strong or weak. If the tidal flow is strong Kyle focuses on inshore areas where the strong currents assist in aggregating bait and result in trout becoming more aggressive. When the current is less strong or at the turn of the tide it's worth fishing the deeper water with jigs. This is difficult when the current is strong but productive when the tide slows.

- Weather is the main factor when fishing offshore from Townsville. If the weather is good, all else is irrelevant, get out and fish! However, if good weather coincides with big tides and overcast skies then conditions are prime for coral trout – and most other reef species.
- Ledges and large bommies that stand away from the main reef structure are prime coral trout habitat. When fishing these structures in the shallower inshore waters Kyle recommends positioning your boat to the side of the structure and casting the lures across the current. Avoid casting to areas where you need to work fish over a bommie, as trout are notorious for diving into cover.
- Coral trout are almost always on the pressure points, so fish the edges of structure that face into the current.
- It's important not to allow coral trout to turn back to the reef. The first few seconds and the first 10m of the fish are typically a locked drag affair.
- When trout are aggressive they will travel a long way from their ledge or bommie to take a lure but often they won't even look at it unless it passes very close to their home.

Kyle's Coral Trout Fishing Tackle

- 50lb line is the minimum Kyle would recommend for coral trout fishing. Kyle prefers high-end spin gear, rather than overhead – but it's a personal preference and others may prefer overhead, especially for jigging. An 10000 size Shimano Stella reel, 50lb braid and 100lb leader, coupled with a 7' St Croix rod in the 25-40lb line class allows for casting of lures but also gives enough strength to stop trout when necessary.
- For jigging in 40m or more of water Kyle still likes spin gear but steps up to a 14000 Stella reel and a Shimano Jewel jig rod.

Kyle's Top Coral Trout Lures

- When fishing shallow water a surface popper is a fun, visual and effective way to target coral trout. Any popper and any size will do, they're not fussy, but definitely upgrade hooks and rings to avoid disappointment! Trout will take quite large lures with aggression but are very tough on the terminals. Kyle works poppers by casting them long and then working them with sweeps of the rod followed by short pauses, others like to crank them flat out or work them with shorter rips. Mix it up and different retrieves can work on different days.
- Hard body lures of pretty much any size are very effective and are great for covering lots of water on the coral flats. Choose a diving depth that puts the lure close to the coral trout's home, but understand that the closer you get to structure the higher the chances of getting smoked, even by a relatively small trout. Kyle likes to work these lures at a reasonable,

constant pace without pauses, reasoning that he can create a reaction bite as trout don't have time to think before striking.

- Sinking glidebaits, once again in any size, are very productive and are visually exciting to use. Vary the retrieve until you find what's working, but Kyle generally prefers to use long sweeps of the rod with plenty of pauses between and often finds the strikes come on the pause. Westin Glidebaits are among Kyle's favourite coral flats trout lures.
- Jigs such as the Missing At Sea Haymaker and Drunk Skunk in the 80-120g range are perfect for dropping down to trout in 40m or more of water. Kyle marks the structure he wants to fish on his sounder and then lets his boat drift off the mark to get a sense of the drift. He then moves up current and casts ahead of the drift. If you get everything right the lure should be close to the bottom and vertically beneath the boat when the boat passes over structure. Work the lures with gentle upwards movements of the rod, followed by allowing it to flutter back down close to bottom. Keep it within a metre or two of the bottom and once the boat has drifted past the mark simply crank in, reposition the boat and start again.