

Australian Lure Fishing Podcast Episode 308



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Nigel Kruger

Sponsored Angler, Callide Dam Barra Fishing Gun

Nigel lives just a few minutes from Callide Dam, allowing him to make numerous trips to the storage, even if just for an hour or two, to figure out the patterns and get the local barra dialled in. He spends plenty of time taking others out onto the lake too, recently helping a young angler bag his first 120cm fish.



Nigel's Top Callide Barra Tips

- Callide Dam holds some great barra and with current water levels Nigel reckons you're a strong chance to hook a metre plus fish in the main basin during summer 2020. This storage can switch on and off very quickly, especially in response to wind and temperature.
- As with other storages, you can fish points and flats in Callide Dam, but the fish here seem to stay on the move and with a lack of any weedbeds the best results usually come from focussing on the windblown bays. Find fish with your sidescan sonar and then stay with them until you crack the code and figure out how to tempt them.
- Late afternoon is always a good time to target barra in the windblown bays, particularly if the wind has been consistently blowing into them over a few days. Early morning is a good time to target fish among structure.

- The leadup to the full moon has been a productive time for Nigel, not just because fish are active, but because it enables night fishing whilst being able to see where you're casting. Other bite periods tend to coincide with moon rise and set and with tide changes in local estuaries.
- Don't be afraid to troll lures, especially if you're new to the system. Use the electric motor and troll just fast enough to keep the lure working. This is a great strategy that can turn up fish while you are sounding around looking for fish.
- Callide is a system where it's good to have a wide range of lures and a wide range of lure styles in your kit.
- Once you've found fish, keep trying different things, varying lures, retrieves and techniques until you start catching fish. Be sure not to forget what you were doing when you got that bite..... you want to be able to repeat the process!

Nigel's Suggested Barramundi Fishing Tackle

- An Edge 705 spin rod coupled with a quality 3000-4000 sized reel. For fishing the basin where the water is fairly clear of structure a 30lb Toray braid is sufficient, but around the timber Nigel prefers 40lb Toro braid. Callide holds some really good fish now, so 80-100lb Toray fluorocarbon leader is preferred, it's overkill on smaller fish but could save you when the fish of a life time comes along.

Nigel's Top Barramundi Fishing Lures

- The 7" Castaic Jerky J Swim is a quality lure for Callide Barramundi and can be worked very slowly and still get a consistent tail beat. Nigel suggests running a stinger hook on this lure and usually runs them on a 9/0 jig with a 5/8 oz weight (in the basin) or 1/4 oz (in the timber). In the deep-water Nigel likes to count the lure down to depth and slow roll it through the fish, trying a few twitches or pauses or different retrieve speeds until he finds the pattern that works. Around the timber it pays to switch to the 1/4 oz jig head, which allows the lure to be fished slower and kept in the fishes face a lot longer. Nigel prefers not to fish weedless, but to position the bat and make casts into clearer water adjacent to snags.
- The 110mm Imakatsu Rip Rizer is a great lure for picking up those mid-water fish, but other hard body suspending lures such as the Shadrap can work well too. Nigel spends some time at home preparing his lures by upgrading the hooks and rings and then using stick-on weights until the lure either suspends or just slowly floats. BKK hooks are a good option, hookup rates seem to be better with straight hooks, inward curling points are a better option when fishing among the timber. Once the lure lands, give it two seriously sharp jerks, then

let it pause for 3-5 seconds before repeating. In shallow bays Nigel does this until the lure is half back, then cranks it in and makes another cast. In deep water, work the lure right back to the boat. Be sure to leave it in the water for a second or two at the end of the retrieve – sometimes fish follow it all the way back, or sit under the boat waiting for the lure.

- A Madness Shiriten Vibe is a very versatile option, but is particularly effective for imitating the free-living redclaw that frequent Callide Dam. Allow the lure to sink into the mud, then lift it with a couple of sharp rod lifts to create a puff of mud before letting it sink back down. In deeper water it can sometimes work to similarly to the way it has just been described, but keeping it mid-water.