

# Australian Lure Fishing Podcast Episode 315



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## Scotto James

Big Bream Enthusiast & Custom Tackle Maker

Scotto has been living in Tasmania for a number of years and has studied the black bream there in detail. Finding that mainstream tackle limited his ability to catch quality fish in numbers, he went about developing tackle and techniques specifically for the task.



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## Scotto's East Coast Tasmania Bream Fishing Tips

- Fishing passively to bream will catch both passive and aggressive fish. Fishing aggressively will catch only aggressive fish. In Scotto's experience, 80% of the time (or more) bream are being passive, so fishing with hard body lures will limit your results.
- Wading microsystems – those tiny estuaries that might be only a few hundred metres to a few kilometres long and often landlocked – is deadly effective but requires specific techniques. These systems can contain just about every type of structure associated with bream in a very short length and it's not uncommon to fish all of them in a single session.
- The bream (and trout) fishing in Tasmania can be hottest when the wind is severe – sometimes up to 50 knots. Getting the wind behind allows casting of very light lures 50-80m or more using the gear Scotto uses, reaching unsuspecting fish.

- Stealth is vital, casting with the wind and sometimes from 20m or so from the waters edge, or making long casts with long rods whilst wading can put lures in front of fish that have no inkling of the anglers presence and will often take them quite aggressively.
- Catching filter feeding fish is about loading your lures with scent and understanding that fish are feeding on the scent, not the lure.
- Once a hooked bream has his head above horizontal, he becomes disorientated and is under the anglers control. For the techniques and tackle Scotto uses the rod is typically high-sticked, so it's best to set the drag hard and use some force to set the hooks. Be ready to quickly back the drag off to fighting pressure once the hook is set.
- Many anglers try to set the hook when they see a "tick" on the line. Scotto finds that first tick is the bream disabling its prey and much more consistent hook ups come if you wait a second or two longer to feel more sustained pressure on the rod tip.

## Scotto's Bream Fishing Tackle

- Note: Nothing mainstream here, you're gonna have to go looking for all of this stuff!
- Messiah Custom Tackle "Slingshot" spin rods are in the 2-3 kg class and are 8'6" to 10'6" in length, although the 10'6" rods are more of a trout option. Whilst these may seem a little on the heavy side for bream, that's necessary for the specific techniques Scotto uses. The long rods make for long casts, allow the belly of the line to be kept off the water and provide a fighting angle that gives the angler an advantage in getting the fish's head up.
- A 2500 size, shallow spool reel that has a drag that can be quickly backed of with a half twist of the drag cap in important. Shimano's 2500S is great, but you'll need to bring it in from Japan.
- 4 lb braid and 4lb copolymer leader completes the outfit. Scotto finds this to be thinner and more abrasion resistant than fluorocarbon for its strength and superior as a leader for shy fish.

## Scotto's 3 Top Bream Fishing Lures

- The Pro Lure Paddle Grub is perfect for fishing unweighted to filter feeding bream, with the tiger prawn colour seeming less likely to spook the fish. This is loaded up with scent, such as S-Factor to the extent that Scotto can go through a full tube of the stuff in a session. Cast the unweighted lure among filter feeding bream and simply allow it to waft down slowly. Fish will try to pick the scent off the lure, allowing you to set a hook. In other areas, such as flats, the Paddle Grub can be cast unweighted in front of fish that just stopped "mudding" and are about to move to a new area to restart their mudding activities.

- Small topwater lures such as the Ecogear PX55 ZX or Bassday Sugapen are effective when fish are feeding in shallow water. The surface presentation keeps the lures free of weed and in the zones. Choose lures that have assist stingers as the rear hook, or retrofit stingers yourself. Scotto believes the fish are often attacking the stinger, rather than the actual lure, so hooks hanging a few inches below surface have a greater conversion rate. Fishing topwater on long casts becomes a bit like fishing hardbodies, since its not visual when the lure is a long way off!
- When fish are feeding more actively, small hard bodies such at the Zipbait Rigge 54mm, Ecogear MW62 or one of the Pro Lure 36mm crankbaits is the ticket. With the long rods and long casts it's not necessary to put the lure in such close proximity to snags as most bream anglers would expect. The stealth factor means bream are unsuspecting and a lure landed within 2m of a snag will often be taken with gusto. As a bonus, the entire fisht is then carried out away from structure, putting the odds in the anglers favour.