

Australian Lure Fishing Podcast Episode 345



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Dick Pasfield

North Western Australian Fishing Writer

Dick has been fishing the Kimberley for a very long time, and his runoff barra fishing adventures have at times resulted in sessions where two anglers land over 100 fish! When he's not fishing, Dick is writing about fishing and has authored 95 articles so far for popular fishing magazines.



Dick's Ord River Barramundi Fishing Tips

- The regulation of the Ord River system to create Lake Argyle some 40 years ago has changed the fluvial geomorphology of the river downstream. The system has become more channelised, with less floodplain and a much-reduced flooding wet season flooding regime. This has changed the behaviour of the fish, making the system fish differently to systems such as the Daly, for instance.
- Floodplains at the bottom of the system tend to receive water from the limited catchments downstream of Lake Argyle and also get encroachment of salt water on king tides. They hold plenty of feed for barra, resulting in Ord river fish becoming very large and stocky.
- Tides and time of day are the key factors to consider. Dick likes to be on the water well before dawn and will head 35 km downstream to be near the feeder creeks as the sun rises. A king tide around dawn is ideal, and Dick will defy the common convention and work

against the tides for a while, giving himself greater opportunity to fish the runout as he works back upstream later in the morning.

- The creeks and creek mouths tend to hold plenty of fish, but the better specimens are usually beaten to the lure by smaller fish in these areas. The better option for quality fish is just the eddies upstream (run-in tide) or downstream (run-out tide) of the creek mouths.
- Dick suggests fishing likely areas, even if nothing appears on the fish finder- often fish aren't easily picked on the sounder screen from the heavy submerged structure but are there and will take a lure if it's presented.
- If you're on a spot that's holding fish but they're not talking your lures, move off and try somewhere else, returning later to fish that spot on a different phase of the tide. Often fish will "switch on" when conditions change.
- Barramundi aren't necessarily gathered at the mouths of the feeder creeks when water is running off. The floodplains can fill and overflow as early as January, but barra will be up on the plains when they're not accessible. It's not until late in the season when the water starts to fall in the floodplains that the barra take up station at the feeder creek mouths.

Dick's Ord Barramundi Fishing Tackle

- Dick hates losing a fish with a lure in its mouth, so tends towards heavier tackle. A 5-10kg, 7' spin rod with a 4000 size reel, 50lb line and 100lb leader will do the trick. Dick can't decide whether a fast taper rod for setting hooks and twitching lures trumps a medium action rod that offers shock absorption on a hooked fish, so you may need to buy both!

Dick's Ord River Fishing Lures

- The 125mm Halco Scorpion with a 5m diving bib is a gun Ord River barramundi lure (and Dick also mentioned this lure in his previous two barra interviews). It can be cranked down to depth and then worked fast or slow, twitched, paused and allowed to float over snags. Dick follows his gut on what retrieve to use on a given day, the rest of us will need to mix it up and figure out what's working.
- The 120mm Bills Bug Fat Rat is a fizzer style surface lure that's very affective fished along shorelines near creeks, as well as around the rafts of floating corkwood timber that sometimes form in the Ord River as material gets washed from the floodplains. These can simply be cast into fishy territory and worked on a very slow roll with pauses and twitches. Also great at night for anyone who is impervious to being eaten by crocodiles, work it along shorelines and the edges of weedbeds.

- The 5" Berkley Hollow Belly is a great option when fished on a 7/0 standard jig head of 3/8 to 1/2oz weight and allowed to fall vertically into the deep ledges and undercuts. It can simply be slow rolled out of these places. It's also a great lure when you're fishing places where the bank drops down deep straight off the edge. An advantage of the hollowbelly with a single hook is that fish are usually well hooked and you can put a bit more pressure on them.
- 95-100mm Soft vibes are also effective in the same places as the Berkley Hollowbelly, allowed to sink into deep ledges or undercuts and slow rolled back.