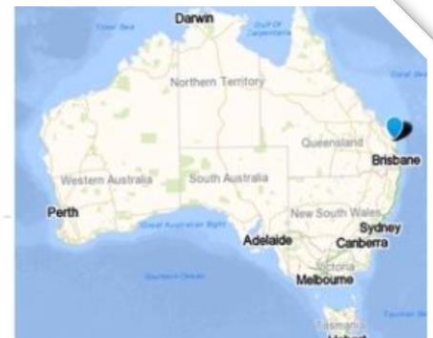


Australian Lure Fishing Podcast [Episode 371](#)



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Tri Ton

Hervey Bay Fishing Guide

Tri has spent the past 9 years as a sportfishing guide working the Hervey Bay, Fraser Island and Great Sandy Straits area to help clients target a range of species from tunas to mackerel and of course trevally. Prior to that he had a decade working in the tackle trade, so his entire working life revolves around fishing. When he's not guiding, Tri loves nothing better than to go and chase some squid.



Tri's Hervey Bay Squidding Tips

- Squid fishing is accessible, fun, sustainable and a great way to put some tasty fresh seafood on the table. In the Hervey Bay area, the northern calamari, or tiger squid, is the largest and tastiest target species.
- Squidding isn't just a night time option, they can be targeted right through the daylight hours.
- Tri prefers to target squid in less than a metre of water, because the visual aspect is entertaining and allows him to read the reaction of the squid and change his approach. But they can be easily found and caught around the Hervey Bay area in deeper water from 4-8m also.
- Clear water is essential. Squid are very visual hunters and tend to avoid areas where the water is dirty. Look for weed beds, shallow rocky reefs, a small gutter coming out of

mangroves or even just undulations over a sandy bottom. Often you'll find squid schooled up in these areas and can make casts to them.

- A little bit of current helps to make the squid active, even though they may not actually be sitting right in the current. Be prepared to move around and fish different areas on different tides. For example, they may move into mangrove channel areas on the incoming tide but may move away to other areas as the tide falls because the water tends to be a bit dirtier. Neapish tides often fish best because they give the angler a longer window of opportunity.
- Calamari tend to be darker in colour when they are inactive and lighter in colour when they're when they are aggressive. Try different jigs and retrieves until you get a response from them.
- It's important to set the hooks on a squid because a lot of them are lost when an angler thinks they are hooked but they're actually just holding the jig. Squid tend to take a jig sideways and setting the hooks quite aggressively is important because it turns the jig around and presents the points to where they can hook a tentacle.
- Lots of people tend to work a squid jig very subtly, essentially a slow roll close to the bottom with occasional pauses. Tri finds that a much more aggressive, active retrieve style works better.
- When landing squid, do it at the front or back of the boat and keep the rod horizontal to lead the squid away from the boat, then get the net behind it. Avoid pulling the squid towards yourself with the rod held high, or you're likely to cop a faceful of ink. Leave them in the net over the side of the boat for a bit to empty their ink reserves.

Tri's Squid Fishing Tackle

- Reasonably light gear works best when you're fishing crystal clear, shallow water in full daylight, but the rod needs to be able to cast the weight of the jig.
- Tackle that would normally be used for flathead fishing is about right for targeting northern calamari.
- A 10lb leader is about right. If flathead or longtom start smashing your squid jig you might need to up the leader to 15lb, but it will come at the cost of less bites. Tri will go down to 4lb leader at times if the water is clear and he can see squid rejecting lures.

Tri's Best Squid Jigs For Northern Calamari

- The price of squid jigs is generally an indication of quality – quality jigs are usually \$15-20, look for quality brands like Yamashita or Yo-Zuri. Cheaper jigs will catch squid, but tend to catch less than quality jigs because they don't tend to be balanced properly for a good

action. They also tend to be poorly made, resulting in the belly weight falling out if it hits a rock, or the fabric being ripped up quickly by squid. If you are only squidding occasionally, cheap jigs are ok. If you plan to do it a bit, get the better quality jigs.

- Squid jigs are available in a large range of sizes and there are also different sink rates within each of the sizes. Tri generally suggests a slow sinking jig in the 2.5 size, as these are usually taken readily by squid and can be worked through shallow water nicely.
- In deeper water, jigs that are both bigger and heavier may be preferred.
- Jig colour can be pretty important as squid are eagle eyed and you're targeting them in full daylight in shallow water. Yamashita produce a very helpful colour selection guide that you can [check out here](#).
- Tri's approach is to start with a pretty aggressive retrieve with a fairly bright colour. This involves sharp, hard "jig, jig, pause" movements of the rod, reeling the whole time so there's no slack line on the drop – squid almost always hit the jig on the drop. If they're not responsive he'll try a more subtle retrieve or will change jig colour, downsize leader or try other.
- Often you won't know a squid has taken a jig you might not realise until you go to lift the rod and it feels like you've caught weed. Remember to set the hook!