

Australian Lure Fishing Podcast [Episode 380](#)



[Go to the episode online](#) | [Download mp3](#)

Peter Herbst

SEQ Fishing Writer and Tackle Insider

Peter has over three decades of experience fishing in southeast Queensland and is a frequent writer for Bush and Beach magazine. A former tournament angler, when he's not out on the water Peter is working hard for top Aussie tackle importer EJ Todd.



Peter's SEQ Giant Herring Tips

- At the southern end of the Great Sandy Strait, Tin Can Bay is a substantial waterway with shallow banks, mangrove lined creeks, deep channels, rock bars and ledges that produce everything from whiting to Giant Trevally and everything in between.
- The Great Sandy Strait separates Fraser Island from the mainland and water movement is substantial, especially on larger tides. Tides push in at both ends of the strait causing complex flow patterns.
- Good numbers of giant herring can be found right through southeast Queensland in the large bays, broadwaters and straits that contain undulating sand structures and reasonably strong currents.
- Ideal habitat consists of water 2-4m deep at low tide with 8-10m deep water not too far away, where a decent current hits a sandbank that may or may not be dry at low tide. A current line is also a good indicator of giant herring habitat and bait doesn't hurt – although

Peter doesn't usually see a lot of bait at Tin Can Bay. Giant herring like to sit behind the sand undulations, out of the current and dart out to grab food that is carried past.

- Giant herring are very mobile fish and can be sitting in different parts of a waterway on different phases of the tide. Mapping and side scan sonar are your friend, as is Google Earth. Look for several spots that you can move between by first finding sand undulations and then figuring out the direction the water will hit them from on different tides.
- Peter likes a runout tide, but has caught herring on all phases of the tide. Bigger tides obviously generate stronger currents, which favours the giant herring and a low tide late in the is perfect. Peter leans towards the new moon period over the full moon, particularly the leadup to the moon when the tides are building and the water is clean. That said, super clear water isn't critical, they can be caught in slightly dirtier water.
- Giant herring are a year-round option in Tin Can Bay, but autumn and spring often fish a little better. Herring are slower and a little softer fishing during the cool months.
- It's critical to be very alert and ready to detect a bite and to immediately and decisively set the hooks when the bite comes. Giant herring can be aggressive feeders, but a large proportion of them are also lost due to poor hook sets.
- Bycatch when herring fishing can include golden trevally and queenfish.
- Giant herring tend to be a little on the sensitive side, so handle them carefully, keep them out of the water for the minimum possible time and if you don't need a photo, release them without removing them from the water at all.

Peter's Giant Herring Fishing Tackle

- Don't make the mistake of fishing too light, this species might not be a dirty fighter, but it is super fast, capable of changing direction instantly, jumps and head shakes - and has an abrasive mouth that will quickly rub through a light leader. 30lb fluorocarbon is the minimum leader Peter will use, 40lb is a safer option.
- Peter prefers baitcast gear for this species because the style of retrieve used for herring can be taxing on the angler. Smaller, low profile baitcast reels are lightweight and save a lot of strain injury – though they do hold less line, so be prepared to go and chase a fish! Sunline Castaway braid in PE 2.5 to 3, a 20lb baitcast rod and 40lb fluorocarbon leader complete the outfit.

Peter's Favourite Giant Herring Lures

- Vibes, blades and other lure styles get a really good response from giant herring, but the number of fish landed tends to be fairly low, with lures getting flung out when the fish jumps.

Best success comes from using single hook style lures that tend to stay in the bony, rough mouth of a herring more securely. Also, herring can sometimes take the lure deep, so the survival rate is much higher with a single hook than if a vibe or blade is deep in the fish's throat.

- The 3.5" Molix RT Shad in bright colours is a very successful lure. A yellow chartreuse colour with lots of UV is one of Peter's favourites. Because it's a high current area and casting accuracy can be important, a ½ oz jig head is a good starting point, drop down to 3/8 oz if the water is shallow or the current is slow, or bump it up to ¾ oz if the water is deep or the current fast.
- A 5" Molix Fork Flex in bright colours (pink is good) on a ¾ oz, 5/0 TT HeadlockZ jig head is deadly. Fish it with aggressive, hard twitches of the rod and then let it sink back close to bottom before repeating. Be sure to set the hook hard, as with all lure styles as this fish will definitely throw loosely set hooks.
- A 3.5" Live Target Fleeing Shrimp on a ¾ oz jig head completes the lure selection. This lure is fished in much the same way as the previous two.