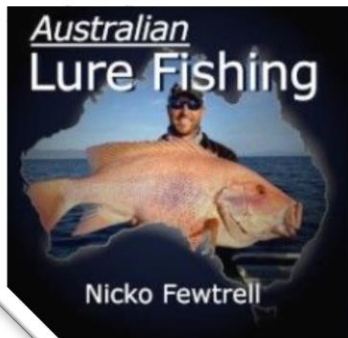


Australian Lure Fishing Podcast [Episode 386](#)



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Nicko Fewtrell

Victorian Fishing Educator And Blogger

Nicko is well-known Australian fishing for his TV fishing antics as Co-host of the AFN Fishing show on 7 Mate. He's a Far North Queensland Resident and regularly spends days scanning the sea floor for wonky holes, then targeting the quality nannygai that inhabit them.



Nicko's Tips For Bloomfield Nannygai

- A lot of North Queenslanders still see nannygai as a bait species, but they absolutely love metal jigs and will almost always take a well presented metal.
- "Wonky holes" are areas on the seabed close to the coast where underground rivers break through and create freshwater springs in the sea floor. They can be from the size of a kitchen sink to the size of a cricket pitch or bigger. Wherever there are wonky holes there will be an ecosystem that holds coral trout, cod, red emperor and of course nannygai and fingermark. It's not unusual for pelagic species to be found around wonky holes too.
- There are lots of wonky holes around, Nicko recommends spending time every trip adding a few more marks to your GPS so that you can rotate through wonkies and not fish the same ones too often.
- The good news for anglers is that wonkies tend to be inshore and only in depths of 15-30m, so there's no need to travel all the way to the reef, no need for a large boat and any half

decent sounder is enough to find them. Once you know what you're looking for they're easy to find.

- Nicko gives an extra 10 minute tutorial on finding wonkies in his ALF Plus episode, which is available to [Team Doc Lures](#) members. We cover where to look, how to set up your sounder and what to look for.
- New wonky holes tend to appear and older ones get more active towards the end of the wet season when the groundwater has been recharged. Nonetheless, they can be fished all year round.
- Nicko finds that northerlies and north westerlies tend not to fish that well on wonky holes. An 8-12 knot south easterly is perfect and allows the angler to spot lock on the wonky without the silhouette and shadow of the boat spooking the fish. Fishing inshore the water tends to be a little murky, but the cleaner you can get, the better as really dirty water doesn't fish that well. The leadup to the full moon fishes well and the new moon at night can be effective, too.
- Sometimes on the bigger tides there can actually be less current moving through the channel between the reef and the shore.
- Boat positioning is critical, nannygai are usually not sitting right on the wonky hole, but are sitting downcurrent where the freshwater is being carried by the current. Scan around the wonky hole to find where the fish are, then cast A plonk is a great way to stay on a wonky without the hum of the electric motor alerting the fish.

Nicko's Nanygai Fishing Tackle

- Wonky holes don't have a lot of hard structure, so typical 20-30lb spin or baitcast gear will be more than enough. Sharks are not too much of a problem on wonkies and the fish can be played on light gear and brought up reasonably slowly, allowing them to be released with a good survival rate.
- Using 80lb Schneider Line as a leader might seem like overkill on a 20lb mainline, but it allows the angler to wrap a couple of turns of line around the hand and lift a fish into the boat.

Nicko's Lure Selection For Bloomfield Nannygai

- A 7" Gulp Jerkshad in any colour will be very successful on nannygai. The way to fish these is one a reasonably heavy jig head. The usual strategy of using the lightest jig head you can get away with isn't necessarily the best one on wonky holes when there's a current running – a heavier head allows the angler to keep the lure in the zone and to work it more erratically.

Don't be afraid to bring the lure up 7-8m off the bottom occasionally and allowing it to waft back down, often it will be taken on the drop.

- The 100mm Nomad Vertex soft vibe is great, but don't be afraid to switch to a larger size in this lure if you're having trouble getting down to depth, nannygai will eat quite large lures without fuss. The vibe is a very subtle lure that's best slow hopped no more than a metre off the bottom. Cast upcurrent, let it sink, do a few hops, then free spool down to the bottom and repeat.
- A crab lure is very effective on wonky hole nannygai, and it doesn't really matter what sort. Nicko fishes the crab lures on a paternoster dropper rig using a metal jig in place of a sinker. This can be slow pitched off the bottom, allowing the crab to gently waft around in the zone, starting with the fish directly below the boat to get a reference point, then move 20ft upcurrent and do another drop, keep going until you get the first fish, then move another 5 ft or so and start fishing!