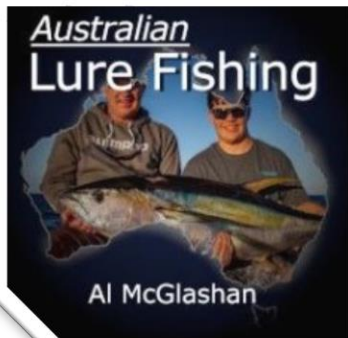


Australian Lure Fishing Podcast [Episode 388](#)



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

Al McGlashan

Bluewater Fishing & Photography Identity

Al is a very well known Sydney-based fishing personality, author of 9 fishing books, presenter and producer of the top fishing TV series “Fishing With Mates”. Al frequently makes appearances from stage to talk about his fishing exploits and has taken Australian fishing photography and videography to new levels. Al recently launched his own podcast series “Best Job In The World” in which he describes the many fishing adventures he has embarked on over the years.



Al's Tips For Sydney Tuna Fishing

- La Niña weather patterns, such as we've experienced in 2021, tend to push yellowfin tuna further down the East Coast of Australia. Sydney had experienced a good run of decent sized yellowfin in 2021 as a result. As the water cools the southern bluefin tuna will move up and push the yellowfin out.
- These days it's possible to be very mobile, so Sydney anglers can easily change where they launch based on intel as to where the tuna are aggregated. It's very important to develop networks so as to know where the fish are likely to be as it changes very quickly. Having a handheld radio on a separate channel allows anglers to communicate with nearby colleagues without the noise and clutter of many users on the larger radio.
- Tuna will often follow a boat once you find them.

- Because motors are so reliable these days it's possible to target tuna from trailerboats. These days the main cause of motor breakdowns is water in the fuel – or not monitoring the fuel closely enough and running out. Have all the right safety gear and make sure it's accessible, dry and in full working order before you leave the ramp.
- The first thing to do if you're trying to figure out where the fish are is to use social media, but take what's posted publicly with a grain of salt. A direct message to people posting images of tuna is worth a try, as is a phone call to local tackle stores to see what's being caught in the area.
- The water temp preferences of both yellowfin and bluefin tuna are different from year to year, likewise their preferences for water colour can change. Al finds it's more about where the bait is aggregated and that tuna will move into green water or happily handle higher or lower temps if that's where the bait is.
- Birds are essential indicators of tuna, especially yellowfin. Gannets are especially good, as they tend to eat bigger bait species. For some reason around Sydney the bluefin often don't have birds on them. Sperm whales tend to be a good indicator that bluefin might be around.
- Look for areas of slower current, around 1.5 knot is ideal, and cover as much ground as you can, travelling cross current whenever you can. Set your sounder for the top 50 fathoms and look for accumulations of bait or of fish. Bluefin are often present in such large numbers they can black out the entire screen, yellowfin tend to travel in much smaller pods.
- Matching the hatch may not be as important when tuna fishing as most anglers think. For unexplained reasons, the lures that are most effective each year tend to change without notice.
- Tuna like lures in clean water, so using outriggers to get the lures well out either side of the wash is a good strategy and also helps to keep the leader up out of the water a little more.
- Try and position yourself ahead of the fish, so you're dragging the lures past them. There's no point pulling lures behind the tuna. Often tuna on the surface will swim into the wind.
- When you get a hookup, keep the rest of the gear out for as long as possible to allow the possibility of a multiple hookup. When you do decide to bring in the rest of the lures, be prepared that they could get hit right up until the lure is lifted out of the water.
- Every time you feed a lure out behind the boat, run it between your fingers to check for nicks in the mono. If you detect damage, cut off some mono to be on the safe side.

Al's Tuna Fishing Tackle

- Al fishes 80lb line exclusively because he doesn't want to risk hooking the fish of a lifetime and being under-gunned. Standard offshore trolling gear is the norm, Shimano Talica's loaded with 80lb mono and backed with 80lb braid are the preferred tool of the trade.
- It's worth having a stickbait rod on board too, for when the fish are feeding actively on the surface. Sometimes they will readily take a stickbait when they refuse a trolled lure or will take a stickbait cast out whilst another angler is fighting a fish. An 18000 size Stella reel loaded with 80lb mono and a matching stickbait rod.

Al's Best Lures For Sydney Tuna Fishing

- Tuna seem to have favourite lures that change from year to year. It pays to put out at least one wildcard lure each time you fish, as often you'll discover a new lure that is working particularly well.
- The Halco Laser Max seems to be particularly effective off Sydney in 2021, but does require a hook and ring upgrade before being put into the firing line. It works surprisingly well up short on the outrigger, but also works well on the long corner or the shotgun. In the US, this lure has been found to be very effective even cast into schools of feeding tuna.
- A Pro Squidgy soft plastic can be deadly on yellowfin particularly but also on bluefin, though Al recommends buying the pre-rigged version as the unrigged ones can be exceedingly difficult to make swim properly. Looks ugly and has a strange swimming action but works a treat well back on the shotgun. Can cause leader chafing, so take precautions with leader protection.
- A skirted trolling lure is always an effective option, but interestingly a larger sized skirt (8-12") than would ever be used further south seems to work well off Sydney. Al likes the darker purplish colours and often runs them off the long and short rigger – although the short rigger for tuna would be about 20m further back than if he was targeting marlin. There are lots of good brands, but you'll need to rotate through until you figure out what's working this year.
- For stick baiting, a 6" Halco Slidog is a good option, but there are plenty of others on the market. Sinking stickbaits are popular, but Al finds that floating stickbaits can also be deadly.