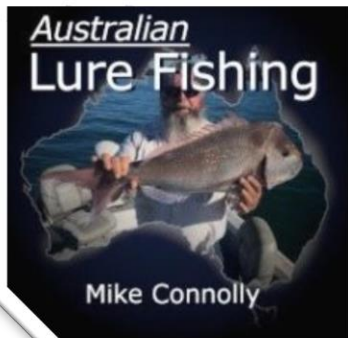


# Australian Lure Fishing Podcast [Episode 389](#)



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## Mike Connolly

Moreton Bay Inshore Specialist

Mike is a long-time resident of the south-side of Brisbane, former tournament angler and occasional fishing writer. Being retired he spends a lot of time fishing the waters near his home not only for snapper, but for all manner of other species from whiting to tuna.



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## Mike's Tips For Moreton Bay Topwater Snapper

- Snapper quite often move into very shallow water from 0.5 to 2m deep when there is bait there to feed on. They don't often feed on the surface, but when they do it can be on for young and old. You need to be prepared and know what to look for so you can respond when you're on the water and an opportunity arises.
- The small anchovies that are a favourite food source in Moreton Bay will often move into shallow water, especially pre-dawn and dawn. When this happens, watch for large, distinctive boils behind the bait that signal either snapper or large bream. Unlike the slashing surface disruption caused by tuna, bonito, mackerel, tailor or trevally, the snapper will boil without breaking the surface. Baitfish sprays are a good sign that snapper may be on the prowl.
- Casting a small, walk the dog style stickbait into areas where boils are visible can result in quality snapper simply by working it quickly across the surface. Surface lures can be the only

option at these times because the water can be too shallow to work more traditional snapper lures.

- When the fish are in super shallow water (<1m) it's not uncommon to get fish of around 55cm and can be sight fished. It can be successful to work surface lures where the water depth is up to 2m.
- Times when you find fringing reef with 1-2m of water on top and dropping off into 4-5m with blue jellyfish blown onto the reef can be very productive with a topwater lure. If you're observant you'll see plenty of jellyfish that are missing parts as a result of snapper bites.
- The last three hours of the runout tide can be an awesome to target snapper, as the water is running back off the fringing reefs and bringing baitfish and other food items back to the drop off where the snapper are waiting.
- When fishing shallow the sharks are not too much of a problem, allowing the angler to fish a bit lighter without losing the fish – or at least the back half of it.
- On a clear day, the best opportunity is from an hour or so before sunrise until an hour or so just after sunrise. On cloudy, overcast days the bite period can be significantly longer. 5-8 knots of wind is about perfect, more than 10 knots is getting too strong. Glassed out days tend not to be so productive and might require a detour out to some deeper water.
- It's important that there is some water movement, the fishing tends to be pretty quiet on the slack tides.

## Mikes Surface Snapper Fishing Tackle

- 15lb braid and a leader of anywhere from 8-14 lb fluorocarbon is enough to be able to stop the fish of a lifetime but not so heavy as to prevent the small, finely balanced stickbaits from working.
- A 2500 Daiwa Exists are Mike's preferred reel for their smooth drag (you'll need to use a heavy drag for this style of fishing). He couples these with a 2-4kg, 7 foot fast action graphite rods, such as an Edge or a Loomis.

## Mikes Top Moreton Bay Snapper Lures

- A 65mm Sammy in Ghost Shrimp colour is a great option when the snapper are creating boils in shallow water. It's important to remove the factory fitted and upgrade to a robust single hook. By working the lure briskly and without pauses you will filter out the bycatch and catch almost exclusively snapper. Similar styles of lure (eg Sugapens or Slippery Dogs)

- When fishing plastics beneath the surface Mike will use a ¼ oz head and a 4-5" Baby Bass style split tail plastic. Look for places where there are signs of bait, usually on the lee sides of the structure.
- A floating bibbed lure that gets down to 20 feet and with about an 80mm long body is great for working along the edges or down the fronts of reefs.