

# Australian Lure Fishing Podcast [Episode 397](#)



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## Brent Hodges

NSW Central Coast Jewfish Specialist

Brent has been fishing Australia's East Coast estuary systems for 20 years and writing about it for nearly as long. He's amassed over 100 featured articles and countless fishing reports, not to mention over 40 cover photos. In today's episode Brent takes us to the NSW south coast, where he loves to target Australian salmon over the winter months.



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## Brent's NSW South Coast Salmon Tips

- The NSW south coast has a myriad of small estuary systems that provide anglers with opportunities for targeting bread and butter species. During winter the key species to target are salmon, silver trevally and yellowfin bream.
- During the cooler months the "fastwater" at the mouths of the estuaries is a great place to focus your energy, especially on the bigger tides when the water is flowing quite quickly through the various channels.
- Australian salmon are present all year round in these systems, but during the cooler months they tend to move into the estuaries more and congregate in good numbers.
- Deeper holes, especially where the tidal flow is broken by a bend in the river, weedbed, sand bank or hard structure are perfect places to start looking for Australian salmon. The presence of bait is always a good sign as salmon follow bait.

- Whilst salmon are accommodating and will take a wide range of lures worked in different ways, they're not always easy – despite the common perception. The key is to know how to get them to bite when they're not feeding, and sometimes resorting to finesse fishing techniques similar to you'd use for bream.
- The bigger tides fish best, but salmon can be caught on lots of different tides, so get out and give it a go regardless. The last 2 hours of a bigger tide are ideal, especially if they coincide with low light periods.
- Overcast conditions tend to extend the bite over longer periods, although bright sunny days can be welcome during the cold southern winters! A little bit of ripple makes the fishing easier, but Brent prefers the glassy, oily days because he loves the visual aspect of salmon fishing.

## Brent's Salmon Fishing Tackle

- Brent uses a 1-3 kg, 7'7" Abu Garcia Rayrex rod coupled with a 20 or 25 size spin reel, 4lb X9 braided mainline and 6lb fluorocarbon leader.

## Brent's top Australian Salmon Lures

- The Berkley 3" Power Minnow in Pearl Watermelon and Pearl Blue Shad colours are a must have lure. When the water is super clear the "Casper Clear" colour is a good option. Generally speaking a 1/16 oz jig head with a size 1 hook is a good match for this lure and the conditions in the estuaries. Brent likes to drift with the flow and cast ahead of the boat at a 45 degree angle and allow the lure to sink to the bottom before working it back with subtle hops. Once the boat drifts to the point that the lure is at 90 degrees you can wind the lure in and start again. Try and keep the movement of the lure as natural as possible.
- The Berkley Pro-Tech 65mm Slurp is a walk the dog style lure that's perfect when the fish are actively feeding on baitfish. Replacing the treble hooks with singles, or even removing the front treble and replacing the rear one with a single will help reduce lost fish. Contrary to popular belief, surface lures for salmon don't always need to be worked fast. A walk the dog retrieve with plenty of pauses will get the lure zig zagging on the surface and salmon often take them while they are stationary. Fish don't have to already be active on the surface, if you know they are in the area it can be very satisfying to convince them to come up and take a surface lure.
- The Berkley 3" Powerbait Nemesis is great when the fish are less aggressive and is also a good lure for less experienced anglers as it's very easy to work. Chartreuse or Bleak colours are good, the latter is great for imitating baitfish. It can be rigged on 1/12 to 1/8 jig heads and

can be fished in the same way as the Power Minnow, or slow or medium rolled back to the angler.