

Australian Lure Fishing Podcast [Episode 438](#)



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Leila Bartolo

NT Tournament Angler And Fishing Personality

Leila is a very active member of the NT fishing community, having competed in multiple tournaments including the Barra Nationals and having won the Secret Women's Business tournament twice. She's skipper of the Slippery Gypseas fishing team and when she's not fishing Leila is co-founder of the Staunch Crab fishing apparel brand with her husband Simon.



Leila's Top Tips For Saratoga

- It's not hard to find saratoga and as they are quite an aggressive fish it's usually pretty easy to get a strike. The trick is getting a decent hook set and extracting the fish from the lilies is the trick. Leila's strategy is to use single hooks and fast action rods pointed at 45 degrees during the retrieve and also to strike straight upwards, then keep the rod high and crank hard to keep the fish moving out of the salad.
- Leila prefers casting but trolling small hard bodies can be effective too and can be easier on super-hot days. Places where there is weed extending from the bank and/or lots of lilies is a great place to start looking for fish.
- Corroboree Billabong gets strong winds quite often in the afternoons, so early morning is often the best time, especially around first light fishing surface offerings. There is often another bite around 8.30 to 9am when the water starts to warm and the insects get more active.

- Extracting saratoga from deep in the lilies is about keeping the rod tip high and winding hard to keep the fish from being able to turn its head. If the fish gets you into the vegetation, as a last resort you can try free spooling and see if the fish comes back out.
- Be sure to wet the carpet or brag mat and cool it down before putting a fish on it. And if you don't need a pic, the best thing is to release them boatside by flicking out the hooks and avoid handling them at all.

Leila's Saratoga Fishing Tackle

- A fast action Venom Rod coupled with an Abu Revo Rocket baitcast reel is a good combo for the billabong and will handle both saratoga and the freshwater barra that are likely to snaffle a well-presented lure. Leila finds that Fins braid is fairly abrasion resistant and coupled with a leader with 40lb leader will cover most needs in Corroboree. The balance is to choose leader that is light enough for your lures to work but heavy enough to minimise lost fish.

Leila's Top Saratoga Fishing Lures

- The 90mm Akame Hybrid is a cross between a prawn and a baitfish and comes pre-rigged as a weedless presentation and can be fished across the surface or allowed to sink beneath the surface and slow rolled (for barra) or worked erratically (for toga) in the fish's face. This lure can be landed on a lily pad and twitched off the edge for a waiting saratoga.
- A ZMan Minnowz Paddletail is great rigged weedless, cast deep into the lilies and fished a foot or two under the surface.
- Reidy's Little Lucifer is a 65mm small hard bodied lure that runs at around 2m when trolled at dead slow speed on the above-described tackle. To be effective, these lures need to be twitched whilst trolled.