

Australian Lure Fishing Podcast [Episode 481](#)



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Owen McPaul

Gold Coast Jack Gun

Owen is a former bream and bass tournament fisho who moved to the Gold Coast five or so years ago and became obsessed with mangrove jack fishing. He's giving a jack fishing presentation at the Gold Coast Sportfishing Club on 10 February 2022, so go along and ask some questions.



Owen's Mangrove Jack Fishing Tips

- Owen often spends a fair bit of time motoring around using his side imaging sonar to look for bait, and even larger jacks, before starting to fish.
- Mangrove jack fishing on the Gold Coast is all about being in the right place at the right time and tide. The fish are littered all over the Gold Coast, in every canal and natural river system, so start anywhere, but be sure to look for the "pressured edges". In other words, fish the side that the current is flowing into any hard structure, whether it's a pontoon, rock wall, mangrove system or other hard structure.
- Often jacks aren't feeding but can be enticed into a reaction bite by working the lure quickly past them and within inches of structure.
- The Nerang River system has less rocky structure than the Coomera and tends to fish during the last half of the runout tide when the bait and fish have limited cover and tend to be hiding immediately under the pontoons. The Coomera is opposite and fishes best on the run

in tide when the fish are pushing up over rocky structure looking for bait. Good bite windows often happen on the turn of the tide when the current has slowed.

- An approaching storm fires the jacks up and is a good time to focus on fishing the rock bars at night. Once the fresh water comes down and the system is chocolatey it's better to stick to areas down near the mouth where seawater pushed up on the incoming tide.
- When fishing pontoons, the instant you get a strike it's important to get the rod tip down low and preferably in the water. Also fish a heavy drag, close to locked up to avoid the fish busting you off on the pontoons.

Owen's Jack Fishing Tackle

- An 8-14lb or even up to 17-25lb baitcast rod with matching reel, 30lb braid and a 20-40lb leader has you covered for most jack fishing. Quality braids, fluorocarbons and good knots are critical to your success on jacks.

Owen's Mangrove Jack Lures

- The 80mm Luckycraft G-Splash is a great hard body topwater lure for fishing early mornings during late summer and autumn when the prawns start running - particularly along retaining walls, where it can be fished by casting parallel to the wall and cranking back on a constant retrieve. It's also a great option around the entrance to canals on the runout tide.
- The 4" Molix RT Shad is a great soft plastic paddletail option, which Owen typically fishes on a 1/2oz TT Headhunter Extreme jighead. This is a versatile lure that can be burned along retaining walls, sunk down 20-30 ft if necessary or slung under pontoons. Owen prefers to fish an exposed hook to maximise hook sets and is willing to lose a few lures along the way. Ideally, slow your retrieve over rockbars until you're feeling the lure make contact with the structure, but on pontoons a fast burn is a better approach.
- 100mm Luckycraft Pointers are great for tempting mangrove jack in shallow water, especially if fished on a fairly fast retrieve, as fast as possible before the lure starts to become unstable. Deep diving versions are great along rock walls, especially if you get the lure banging into structure. The unique shape of the pointer bib helps to keep it snag resistant.