

Australian Lure Fishing Podcast [Episode 523](#)



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John Couri

Kayak Bream Tournament Angler

John Couri started fishing the Sydney area for jewfish as a kid before progressing to offshore gamefish and in the last four years, tournament kayak fishing. He's had instant success on the tournament bream scene and recently qualified to compete in the Australian Championships on the Gold Coast in July 2022.



John's Tips For Parramatta River Bream Fishing

- In winter in the Parramatta River and Sydney Harbour John likes to target fish in deeper water of 2.5-4m where there is plenty of flow. There is still some really good edge fishing to be had though, so he doesn't overlook those areas.
- This system has tons of great structure including, wharves, pontoons, bridges, boat hulls, mooring blocks, marinas, poles, slipway rails, rocky shorelines and plenty more.
- For kayak fishing, plan your run for the day to ensure you have plenty of structure in close proximity so if a spot isn't fishing well, it's just a short run to the next structure.
- On the run-in tides near the high John fishes the shorelines and on run-out tides he'll fish the deeper areas like mooring blocks.
- John likes a bit of wind and plans his trips around finding places that are exposed to wind. He also likes the new moon and the associated higher tides.

- Points on either side of a bay or bends in the river are always worth spending some time looking at. John likes the side of the point where the current hits the point at full force. He finds the fish aren't always facing into the current, so it can take some casts to figure out which way they're facing.
- Once you find a piece of structure or a depth of water where the fish are holding you'll often find that by seeking out similar habitat and depths you'll find more fish that are active.
- A typical day for John will start with fishing the last of the run-in tide around the edges and shorelines and then retreating to the deeper mooring blocks and structures for the entire runout tide.
- On unfamiliar waters John looks for advice from anglers who know the area better, then resorts to google maps and looks to see what the wind and tide will be doing and where the types of structure that he'll target sit within that wind and tide regime.
- If the fishing is tough, stay focussed and stick with one or two lures that you know have a good chance of getting a bite and fishing them thoroughly. Use scents and do the usual things like sizing down your leader and slowing your retrieves.

John's Bream Fishing Tackle For The Parramatta

- It's best to have rods and reel combos matched to the lures you'll be throwing, and to have one rod rigged with each style of lure, ready to be picked up and put into action when the circumstance arises.
- For shallow crankbaiting John uses a Millerods Twitch Freak with a 2000 size Daiwa Revelry reel 10-12lb Gosen braid and a long leader of 3-5lb Yamatoyo Chinu Harris fluorocarbon.
- The Millerods Twitch Freak is also good for Cranka Crabs, coupled with a 2500 size Daiwa reel with 3-5lb straight through fluorocarbon. John finds this results in less pulled hooks than a braid/fluoro combination.
- For small soft plastics such as Gulp Crabbies and Ecogear Aqua Prawns John likes the Millerods Grub Freak, which is just over 7' in length, coupled with a 2000 size reel.
- If you're getting started or on a limited budget then it's good to get a versatile outfit for soft plastics and a second outfit for throwing both crankbaits and Cranka Crabs. For throwing plastics look for a stiffer rod with a light tip in the 7' to 7'3" size range and couple it with a 2500 size reel, 10-12lb braid and a long leader of 3-6lb fluorocarbon. For the crank/crab rod, something a little under 7' with some flex through the middle section will help with casting light lures.

John's Bream Fishing Lures

- The Cranka Crab in smaller sizes and the heavier 5.9g weight are perfect for fishing the deeper water. Olive is a good colour choice, as are UV and glow. This lure is super versatile and can be fished effectively on pretty much all of the structures discussed in this interview. Cast it as close as possible to the structure and allow it to sink down, often it will be taken on the drop. Then work it super slowly and wind the fish on when it takes the crab. On slipway rails make casts close to the water's edge and very slowly work the crab along the length of the rail.
- The River2Sea Baby Vibe in 35mm size is an excellent lure for working past mooring blocks and as a noisy lure it's great for getting a strike during the cooler months when the fish can be shut down at times. Cast the lure past the structure you're fishing, let it sink to the bottom and then retrieve slowly giving the rod tip plenty of twitches and shakes. This lure will be hit on the drop but is also often taken as it comes past a mooring block or underneath the hull. Can also be fished behind pontoons, across the front of pontoons, down poles and other structures in water to four metres deep.
- The Jackall Chubby is a great hard-body crankbait and will take fish from the Parramatta River system by simply casting it into shallow, rocky patches, weedbeds, slipways and so on and then simply slow rolling the lure back out.
- The Gulp Crabby is a great beginner or fallback lure when the fishing is tough. Put it on a size 2 hook with a 1/28 weight and just cast it near pontoons, poles, rock and wharves, letting it sink vertically down the structure on a slack line, watching closely and being ready to set the hook if the line behaves unnaturally.