

Australian Lure Fishing Podcast [Episode 537](#)



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Adam Royle

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Adam is the current president of Queensland Sportfishers and an enthusiastic member of the Hinchinbrook Sportfishing Club and keen volunteer fish tagger. Formerly a regular contributor to Bush and Beach magazine, he still writes for the mag when opportunities present. Adam has been fishing Hinchinbrook for a couple of decades and is one a first names basis with a large number of mangrove jack in the area.



Adam's Hinchinbrook Winter Mangrove Jack Tips

- In summer the water temperatures in the shallows of the smaller creeks can get a little too high for the Jacks - water over 30 C is uncomfortable, so it's best to fish the bigger systems with access to deeper, cooler water in those months.
- In winter the fish tend to be in the shallower systems where the water can get warm enough for them to avoid the cold for a while.
- Winter is the dry season in the Wet Tropics Region, so the water in most creeks is fairly clear. If you can find water that's slightly cloudy or has a greenish tinge you'll get best results. Very clear or very dirty water make for tough fishing.
- Look for places where there is a laydown mangrove or a tree that juts out a little further from the rest and causes a pressure point. Jacks can be either on the up-current side or the down current side.

- Small feeder creeks as small as 1-2m on outside bends are great places to fish where they meet the main channel. Jacks being found on the points at either side of the creek mouth.
- If the water is clear and there is a wall of mangrove roots you'll often find bait and jacks. If you stop and listen you'll often hear the jacks working.
- Warm, sunny days are great – and fishing the run-in tide in the afternoon generally yields the most consistent results. A 1.2 to 1.8m tide is perfect as it creates enough run to get the fish active but not so much that it's difficult to fish or the water becomes too dirty.
- Sometimes when working a slower lure you'll find the fish flash but don't connect and if you follow with cast using a faster lure you can get a reaction bite.
- Often in summer the splashdown of a lure can attract a jack, but in winter it can spook them. It's not a bad idea to feather the line during casting and try to land the lure more subtly if you can.

Adam's Hinchinbrook Jack Tackle

- Adam likes shorter rods for fishing tight among the mangroves as they allow for pinpoint casting, can be used among the branches and leaves and make it easier to skip cast a lure under the mangroves.
- A 4-6kg Veritas spin rod with a little removed from the tip and the butt cut off just beneath the reel seat is Adam's secret weapon. He couples this with a 3000 size Stradic Ci4 reel, 20lb Schneider braid and 30lb Schneider fluorocarbon leader. Abrasion resistance is the important factor when it comes to lines and leaders.

Adam's Hinchinbrook Jack Fishing Lures

- The original Squidgies Prawn in 3" is a great paddletail for jacks, although Adam is less keen on the biotough plastics that replaced the original Squidgies formula. If you're using the biotough lures, the 4" size is a better option. These are rigged on Gamakatsu EWG hooks that have been bent upwards about 6-8mm down from the neck and then bent again at the other end to turn the hook point down. This modification makes it possible to rig a 5/0 hook instead of a 4/0 and gives superior snag resistance as well as making the lure track better. A piece of very thin copper wire is used to rig the front of the lure so it can't slide down the hook shank. This lure needs to be worked very slowly. A lumo bead cut into 3 pieces provides three stoppers for keeping your lure from slipping down the hook shank.

- 4" Savage Gear 3D Fat Minnow T-Tail plastics are awesome on jacks. Adan trims the nose a little to make it less pointy. This is rigged the same way as the Squidgies prawn but can be worked faster. A small ball sinker in the loop knot can also help make the lure track straighter.
- The ZMan Goat (3") and even more so the Billy Goat (4") is a slender, frog style lure that is incredibly snag resistant and very easy to skip cast. The Billy GOAT is deadly rigged weedless on a 6/0 TT Lures chinlockz hook and fished on the surface unweighted as a surface lure, even during winter. The hookup rates and resistance to snagging are phenomenal.