



# Fishcare Tasmania Operational Report 2012/13

July 2013



## **About Fishcare Tasmania**

Fishcare Tasmania is a program that educates the community about sustainable recreational fishing practices.

The Fishcare program is a partnership between Government and volunteers who have an interest in fostering a community-wide understanding of sustainable fishing practices and encouraging responsible recreational fishing behaviours. Fishcare kindles stewardship and encourages recreational fishers to understand their individual and cumulative fishery, social and environmental impacts.

Fishcare Tasmania is a program within the Recreational Fisheries Section of the Department of Primary Industries, Parks, Water and Environment's Wild Fisheries Management Branch. The primary source of funding is through the Fishwise Fund - funds derived from the sale of recreational sea fishing licences. The Recreational Fisheries Section has three part-time regional Fishcare Coordinators – one based on the Northwest, one in Launceston and one in Hobart.

The program is very much community partnership orientated with Fishcare Volunteers having a hands on, interactive role. We have around 60 -100 Fishcare volunteers working around Tasmania to improve your recreational fishing experience and to make sure that there are fish for the future.

Fishcare encourages recreational fishers to fish in a responsible manner. Key communication and awareness activities focus on informing Tasmanian communities where to obtain information about the fisheries rules and responsible fishing practices. Key messages relate to how to care for our fisheries, handling fish and releasing undersize fish to increase survival, and only taking what you need for a feed.

Fishcare conducts a wide range of education and fisheries awareness activities catering for all ages across many areas of Tasmania. Fishcare attend regional shows, community fairs, boat shows, conduct responsible fishing clinics and maintain Fish Measuring and Identification signs that have been installed around the state. Fishcare conduct a schools program, assisting with classroom activities using resources such as the Marine Links Educational Kit, and fishing gear to conduct responsible fishing clinics.

Fishcare volunteers who dedicate time to conduct activities in regional and local communities are the backbone of the program. Many thanks go out to the Fishcare volunteers who undertake the activities outlined in this report.

*Rod Pearn - Principal Fisheries Management Officer (Recreational Fisheries) and the rest of the Recreational Fisheries Section (Damian, Quenton, Rob. Sally and Vicki).*

### **Preparation of this report**

This report was prepared by Robert Green, Southern Fishcare Volunteer Coordinator, with input from the staff at the Recreational Fisheries Section, Wild Fisheries Management Branch, DPIPWVE and Fishcare volunteers.

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# FISHCARE TASMANIA

## 12 MONTH OPERATIONAL REPORT FOR 2012-13

Fishcare encourages fishers to fish responsibly, improve fish survival through correct handling and only take what they need for a feed. The methods used to distribute this information are educational and communications programs. The educational program is divided between specific in-school presentations and activities associated with the broader community. The communications activities are aimed at larger audiences, but these two activities occasionally overlap.

In 2012/13, Fishcare Tasmania key achievements included:

- distribution of fisheries awareness products, conducted responsible fishing activities and exhibits, maintain signage and targeted delivery of messages.
- increased focus on school based activities by conducting 76 school based classroom or fishing clinic activities to over 2115 students (up from 1756 in 2011/12).
- Targeted community wide activities at 69 exhibits at school and community fairs - almost all with the “kids fishing pool”.
- Conducted 24 fishing clinics (non schools) to almost 523 individuals eg. School holiday programs or community activities.
- Targeted adult fishing activities by attending fishery forums and boat shows and conducting group patrols at several key fishing locations.
- Attended the Wooden Boat Festival, AgFest and Liawenee Open days and particular regional shows.
- A total of 60 Fishcare volunteers remain in the program.



*A class from Fahan School with FCV's Peter Wall and Horace Lazaras look at the small fish in a nursery area.*

## Summary of Events

	Events	No of events	No of people attending *	Activity Duration (Hrs)	Staff hours	Volunteer hours	Trailer usage (days)
1	<b>School classroom activities</b>	45	1337	77	92	79	4
2	<b>School fishing clinics or Field activities</b>	31	778	80	122	282	14
3	<b>Fairs associated with schools or small communities</b>	20	14600	86	74	266	20
4	<b>Fishing clinics conducted with groups other than schools</b>	24	523	93	88	383	19
5	<b>Fishing Forums/Boat Shows/ Fishing Shows (Public event)</b>	10	5000	64	124	191	9
6	<b>Targeted Patrol or events</b> eg. opening of the cray season, Swimcart, NW Shark	4	670	31	34	154	6
7	<b>Talks and presentations to association, eg fishing clubs and other community groups.</b>	2	30	6	8	3	
8	<b>Regional events Agricultural shows and large fairs.</b> (These events draw people from around a large regional area.) Non specific to fishing or boating.	9	27300	59	29	267	8
9	<b>State Wide Events</b> AgFest	1	65600	24	100	104	3
	Liawenee	1	3500	16	50	384	2
	Wooden Boat Festival	1	200000	40	82	241	3
10	<b>Other Events-</b> non specific to fishing or boating.	12	4282	45	32	111	6

\* School events are actual numbers and contacts; other events are estimations from event organisers or obtained from web sites.

## Communications

The communications agenda for Fishcare is to communicate the identified key messages to the general public. The main method is using the Fishcare display trailers and angling pool when attending large regional and small community shows, boat shows, fishing expo's and other targeted events.

The Fishcare trailer and our well-known angling pool is now synonymous with communicating responsible fishing practices and sought out by parents and children at many of the shows. The introduction of banners and brighter display panels has seen an increase in the visual appeal and attractiveness of the display. The improved display has drawn larger crowds resulting in wider distribution of communications material such as guides, rulers, stickers and promotional items.



Social media increases our ability to reach a higher number of fishing clients with more expected as older generation mobile phones are replaced with new smartphones. Fishcare launched a Facebook page this year and has been frequently receiving recognition of promotional messages.



Fishcare maintains a calendar of events on the DPIPWE web page along with other information and contacts. Not only is this media used for external clients, it is now an important component of our internal communications with the volunteers along with Email.

Fishcare Coordinators and volunteers have participated in radio and television interviews, had images of their activities appear in news papers and nationally distributed trade magazine.



## Fishcare Education Program

The education program continues to deliver the key messages identified by the Recreational Fisheries communications plan specifically tailored to target audiences. These messages are delivered during activities and events throughout the year.

**'Fish for the future'** is our key message and aims to promote responsible and sustainable fishing.



**'Only take what you need for a feed'** or the modified message for adult fishers 'Only take what you need for an immediate feed' aims to encourage fishers to limit their catch to less than the bag limits and possession limits for their immediate personal consumption.



**'Measure your catch'** encourages the fisher to find out the size limits and use a measuring device.



**'Gently put the little ones back'** promotes the correct handling of undersize fish to reduce trauma and survival to grow and breed.



**'Think of the environment and other fishers'** encourages fishers to consider their individual influences on water quality and habitat degradation and behaviour when using a shared resource.

The delivery of the Fishcare Schools Program is aimed at early learning to Year 12 students and is divided between activities directly involving participation with schools and broader community based activities. Adult educational awareness is as a result of their association with children or through other communication strategies

# The Schools Program is divided into three activities;

## I. School Classroom Activities



*NW student ,Hayley undertaking a forensic dissection of a fish*

Students are introduced to the basic principles of sustainability using the marine environment and how fish interrelate to their habitat and basic requirements to survive. To develop an understanding of the various influences humans have on the marine habitat and the effects on fish stocks through extractive use. The Schools Program introduces limitations such as bag, possession and size limits and why they are put in place to protect the fish and to maintain a sustainable resource.

Through a basic understanding of fish physiology, students become aware of humane treatment of fish they intend to keep and methods to increase survival of released fish.

These classes are designed to help explore changes to the marine environment and how these changes impact on fish stocks and the sort of measures individuals can take to ensure fish for the future.

The content descriptions of the Australian Curriculum, Science Foundation are referred to as a general guide when preparing classes for Foundation to year 10 classes.

## 2. School Fishing Clinics and Field Excursions

Students are introduced to recreational sea fishing and the basic equipment needed. The course increases their awareness of size limits and measuring fish, and the correct handling methods to improve fish survival on release by using De-hookers and gently releasing the little ones. They are shown practical examples of humane treatment of fish (iki jime) and their preparation for consumption to increase the meat return and reduce fish wastage.

Field excursions enable an onsite investigation of coastal and intertidal habitats and organisms and to determine localised environmental influence on these marine habitats.



*Northern Coordinator Quenton Higgs along with FCV Garry Mondon and Dane Burgess training students to fish for the future*

### 3. School Fairs

Fishcare attends school fairs to promote Fishcare activities to the broader school community through the use of the display trailer and the fishing pool. Although our activities may be viewed by organisers as entertainment this has resulted in an increase in demand for us to attend these events. The pool introduces the principles of fish identification to determine size and possession restrictions using entertaining, visual and tactile activities. The trailer provides a colourful platform for the distribution of Guides, rulers and other information specific to recreational fishing.

#### Summary of School Events

<b>Event</b>	<b>Schools</b>	<b>Students</b>	<b>Staff and Volunteer Hours</b>
Classroom Activities	45	1337	171
Fishing Clinics	31	778	404
School Fairs	20	14600	340

During 2012-13, Fishcare continued its focus outside the metropolitan areas by building ties to specific schools in each of the regions. These areas are growing communities of enthusiastic recreational fishers with easy access to the coastal areas.

The North West conducted in-school presentations and fishing clinics at Strahan, Rosebery, Stanley, Table Cape and Boat Harbour.

The North conducted in-school presentations and fishing clinics at Norwood, Winnaleah, Beauty Point and Georgetown and closer links were developed with Bridport.

The South conducted in-school presentations and fishing clinics at Nubeena, Swansea, Triabunna, Orford, Geeveston, Dover, Kingston, New Norfolk and Margate. The presentations are more often conducted to multiple classes during any one day with the possibility of returning to attend the classes that were not available.

The increase in Fishcare presentations to schools has been mostly as a result of these block presentations.

A new initiative in the south has been the development of a partnership with the Far South Wilderness Camp where up to 100 students in any one day participate in classroom activities and then put this knowledge to practical experience during fishing clinics.



# Community based activities are divided into six activities;

## I. Fishing Clinics for Groups outside the Education System

Fishing clinics are offered to groups outside the education system for any age groups where sufficient numbers attend. Information on circle hooks, line weight, size limits, how to measure fish and humane treatment of fish are mixed with basic understanding of how to set up and use fishing equipment. Our Fishcare volunteers have become aware that many fishers do not know how to process or cook the fish they catch. The volunteers have a broad pool of knowledge and experience and can demonstrate correct fish processing so



FCV Les Harrison provides advice during fishing clinic

fishers get the greatest return and enjoyment out of their fish caught. The promotion of participation in recreational fishing is not the principal aim of Fishcare however the running of clinics is an opportunity to communicate responsible fishing practices.

The organisations running the clinics are responsible for the care of the participants and the provision of supervisors. All Fishcare volunteers are aware of their responsibility to ensure that everyone is safe and any hazards are identified.

Clinics have been conducted at Wynyard, Stanley, Port Sorell, George Town, Mowbray, Inspection Head, Rocherlea, Nubeena, Dover, South Arm and Hobart to scout groups, school holiday programs, disabled and rehabilitation groups, youth with learning difficulties, Senior's Week activities and migrant groups.

The diverse backgrounds of the participants and their reason for participating in the fishing clinics add other dimension to the Fishcare program. Younger fishers are intrigued by the marine environment, the excitement of catching a fish and display empathy towards the fish on release. Older participants still enjoy the same aspects but are looking for learning and lifestyle challenges as well as the ability to participate in fishing with other intergenerational family members.

Migrant groups sometimes view fishing as a means of survival and providing nutrition to their family with little knowledge of the resource. The Fishcare clinics introduce them to sustainable practices and assist with adjustment to living in their local community.

## 2. Boat Shows, Fishing Forums and Shows

These trade events focus directly on the recreational angler from the beginner to the enthusiast. Fishing forums are designed to induce fishers to participate in or improve their skills in various fisheries. Fishcare is given the opportunity to set up display tables and address the audience about responsible fishing.



FCV David Bye and Allan Stevens at the Hook Line and Sinker Fishing Forum, in Launceston

Fishcare participated in two boat shows, one in the NW and one in the South conducted by retail companies by providing displays on responsible fishing which includes the angling pool and trailer display. These shows enable Fishcare to come into contact with boat owners or those contemplating the purchase of a vessel and people who wish to become more involved in recreational fishing.

This year Fishcare were invited to set up displays in each region Burnie, Launceston and Hobart for the Hook Line and Sinker fishing forums. Merv Hughes was a guest speaker and a panel of fishing experts were there to give presentations about fishing for various species around the state. Over a thousand recreational fishers attended over the three nights.

## 3. Targeted events

These activities are targeted at specific recreational fishing events. The events are conducted annually and are considered an important local community and cultural event. The major State wide event is the opening of the rock lobster season, with other regional events including shark fishery events on the NW coast and an Australian salmon fishing competition at St Helens on the East Coast.

In addition to these event patrols by groups of volunteers are conducted. These patrols cover large sections of the coast taking in various locations, popular boat ramps, holiday areas and fishing spots. At each location the trailer display is set up and information about recreational fishing is made available to the public. These patrols also provide an opportunity for the volunteers to maintain the fish ID measuring signs and replace or install new platform measuring rulers.



Mick Barrett, David Gilbert installing rulers at Coles Bay

At all events, Fishcare volunteers actively patrol the areas providing information relevant to sustainable fishing practices for the target species and any bycatch. The Fishcare presence at these events has the additional effect of acting as a reminder to fishers to value the resource, to fish responsibly and to comply with fishing regulations.

## 4. Talks and Presentations

Talks are usually at the invitation of adult community groups such as fishing clubs, Lions Clubs, and other social groups. The presentations provide an insight into the activities of Fishcare, the reasons and the key messages. Scout Groups, school holiday programs and other youth groups provide a relaxed environment for children to learn about responsible fishing and use the experience to obtain recognition for their participation.

## 5. State Wide and Regional Events

Regional events with attendances ranging from 1000 to 60,000 which are non specific to fishing and boating and are the biggest activities that Fishcare attend by number. They are mostly agricultural or community shows outside metropolitan areas that fit within the target rural areas. The smaller regional shows are attended by Fishcare from the relevant region. Larger State wide events such as Agfest, Wooden Boat Festival and IFS Open weekend at Liawenee are attended by DPIPWE staff and volunteers from around the State.



*Fishcare display at AgFest*

Fishcare's presence at these events enables exposure to a mass audience including both visual and personal contacts. The smaller shows of less than 5000 people enable the displays to concentrate on issues specific to that region such as shark refuge areas, scallop seasons, netting and size and possession limits for seasonally available fish. These events provide contacts with a boarder representation of the community and a means of ascertaining issues that are of concern to those people. They are also a source of information about any general misunderstandings around what responsible fishing is, which in turn helps Fishcare develop better communications materials.

## 6. Other Events

Individual Fishcare volunteers display communications material as part of their other interests at community events or at other voluntary activities. These are not official Fishcare activities but attract incidental interest from passer-byes. They provide an outlet for information on recreational fisheries and give the enthusiastic volunteers an opportunistic involvement in the program with a minimal of effort.

## Fishcare Volunteer Numbers, Recruitment and Training

As of 30 June 2013, a total of 60 volunteers were registered and remain active in the in the program. (Minimum activity of 48 hours through the year per volunteer (average 4 hours per month)).

Several Fishcare volunteers retired after many years of dedicated service. Retired Fishcare volunteers remain in contact with the program as 'Friends of Fishcare' or honorary members. Two Fishcare volunteers were recruited to the program including one in the Northwest and one in the South.

In 2012/13 recruitment focused on the Southern Region (all areas including the South East) and North West Region (particularly Circular Head and the West Coast).

### Numbers of Fishcare Volunteers

Region	2012 /13	2011/12	2010/11	2009/10
North	35	36	33	<b>33</b>
North west	15	19	11	<b>23</b>
South	10	11	18	<b>21</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>77</b>

### School Trained Volunteers

Two additional Fishcare volunteers attended and passed the in-schools training provided by the Education Department's Marine Discovery Centre.

FCVs Trained for Schools		
Region	2012/13	2010/11
North	14	14
North west	6	4
South	3	3
<b>Total</b>		<b>21</b>

## State Wide Training

State wide training days were conducted during the weekend 12<sup>th</sup> - 14<sup>th</sup> October in the South at The Lea, Kingston and the Woodbridge Marine Discover Centre.

Friday night introduced the new Recreational Sea Fishing Guide and other information prior to the new season starting. Guest speaker Lee Buchanan from Corporate Communications, DPIPW conducted a presentation on 'An Introduction to Social Media' using Facebook and web pages.



*Marine Discover Centre teacher Pam Elliot and FCVs sort through benthic sample*

Training on the Saturday was conducted at the Woodbridge Marine Discover Centre where the volunteers were to learn about various marine habitats. Two sessions were conducted; the first was with the centre's Primary Teacher Andrew Walsh on "Coastal marine creatures" here they examined the diversity of invertebrates found in the Channel. The second was with the centre's Secondary teacher Pam Elliott sampling the benthic biodiversity at a number of sites on board the FV Penghana.

Darcie Hunt, a fisheries graduate from Australian Maritime

College, and a FCV gave a presentation on commercial fishing methods and the use of devices to minimize by-catch and improve sustainability.

Each of the Regional Coordinators conducts regular meetings or liaises with the volunteers at events to ensure that they are informed and kept up to date with of any events or changes.

## Funding Assistance for Conducting Events

The intention is to align activities and events to core Fishwise business needs. Where non-core events and activities are conducted, they must not consume significant financial or staff resources.

Inland Fisheries Service provided sponsorship to ensure that Fishcare volunteers provided support to the Liawenee Trout weekend. This assisted by covering direct costs for activities that may be outside the scope of the Fishwise Fund (funds from recreational sea fishing).

Fishcare received funding sponsorship to run Family Fishing Days from West Tamar and George Town Councils.

Funding was provide by the Girl Guides to cover the costs of the Fishcare volunteers conducting off-site fishing clinics at Beauty Point for the National Girl Guide camp held at Quercus Park near Cressy during January.



*Girl Guides learning about Tasmanian fish from FCV Allan Stevens while attending their national camp.*

## Fishcare Northern Regional Report 2012 - 2013

	Events	No of events	No of people attending	Contact hours	Staff hours	Volunteer hours	Trailer usage (days)
<b>1</b>	School classroom activities	<b>6</b>	<b>255</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>2</b>	School fishing Clinics or Field activities	<b>3</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>3</b>	Fairs associated with schools or small communities	<b>5</b>	<b>2600</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>4</b>	Fishing clinics conducted with groups other than schools	<b>14</b>	<b>345</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>251</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>5</b>	Fishing Forums/Boat s Shows/ Fishing Shows (Public event)	<b>3</b>	<b>560</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>6</b>	Targeted Patrol or events eg Opening of the cray season, Swimcart NW Shark	<b>3</b>	<b>570</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>134</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>7</b>	Talks and presentations to associations, eg fishing clubs and other community groups.						
<b>8</b>	Regional events Agricultural shows and large fairs (These events draw people from around a large regional area.) Non specific to fishing or boating.	<b>6</b>	<b>13300</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>143</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>9</b>	State Wide Events AgFest, Liawenee	See summary					
<b>10</b>	Other events non specific to fishing or boating.	<b>7</b>	<b>3210</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>4</b>
	FCV meetings	<b>4</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>494</b>	
	IFS events	<b>1</b>	<b>5000</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>384</b>	<b>2</b>
	Training for Schools Program						
	Total	<b>53</b>	<b>91050</b>	<b>262</b>	<b>315</b>	<b>1762</b>	<b>42</b>

## Fishcare Southern Region Report 2012 - 2013

	Events	No of events	No of people attending	Contact hours	Staff hours	Volunteer hours	Trailer usage (days)
1	School classroom activities	29	586	36	55	16	
2	School fishing clinics or Field activities	24	445	48	81	172	10
3	Fairs associated with schools or small communities	13	9600	58	60	177	15
4	Fishing clinics conducted with groups other than schools	7	123	29	33	100	6
5	Fishing Forums/Boat Shows/ Fishing Shows (Public event)	2	1500	23	30	61	2
6	Targeted Patrol or events eg. opening of the cray season, Swimcart, NW Shark						
7	Talks and presentations to association, eg fishing clubs and other community groups.						
8	Regional events Agricultural shows and large fairs.(These events draw people from a large regional area.) Non specific to fishing or boating.	2	12000	15	20	80	2
9	State Wide Events AgFest, Liawenee						
10	Other Events not specific to fishing or boating.	5	1072	17	22	42	2

\* School events are actual numbers and contacts; other events are estimations from event organisers or obtained from web sites.



## Fishcare Northwest Regional Report 2012 - 2013

	Events	No of events	No of people attending	Contact hours	Staff hours	Volunteer hours	Trailer usage (days)
<b>1</b>	<b>School classroom activities</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>496</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>13.5</b>	<b>13</b>	
<b>2</b>	<b>School fishing clinics or Field activities</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>183</b>	<b>19.5</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>3</b>	Fairs associated with schools or small communities	<b>2</b>	<b>2400</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>4</b>	Fishing clinics conducted with groups other than schools	<b>3</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>5</b>	Fishing Forums/Boat s Shows/ Fishing Shows (Public event)	<b>5</b>	<b>2940</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>6</b>	Targeted Patrol or events eg Opening of the cray season, Swimcart NW Shark	<b>1</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>7</b>	Talks and presentations to associatiuon, eg fishing clubs and other community groups.	<b>2</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>3</b>	
<b>8</b>	Regional events Agricultural shows and large fairs (These events draw people from a large regional area.) Non specific to fishing or boating.	<b>1</b>	<b>3500</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>9</b>	<b>State Wide Events</b>						
<b>10</b>	<b>Other events non specific to fishing or boating.</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>8</b>	
	FCV meetings/training updates	<b>7</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>22.5</b>	<b>24.5</b>	<b>161</b>	<b>1</b>