

March 2016 Field Day Report

Bluff Creek March 2016

Synopsis

The March 2016 field day was an away safari incorporating a major drive to Bluff Creek – East of Albany. Mixed weather underpinned an enjoyable weekend, of socializing, 4WD/recovery experiences and topped off with mixed bags of fish captures including some with Salmon. Weather changed each half day from initially wild, wind and rain, to sunshine coupled with occasional weed for the last couple of days. This resulted in tough fishing conditions for the Saturday field day event. Sunday and Monday the weather improved considerably and was even warm to hot by midday.

The Trip.

The trip down to Bluff creek is about a 7 to 8 hour drive including an allowance for fuel and food stop overs.

A total of 14 Surfcaster Anglers and 2 Visitors came to the away safari. (i.e., Pat McKeon, Dean Stewart, Martin Wearmouth, Shayne Wignell, Gary Parkinson, Ken Howells, Scott Williamson, Peter Butland, Sri Srigandan Peet and Sandra Wessels, Theo Van Niekerk, Mark Nurse and Peter Osborne.& Visors, Vincent Tomazin, and Alistair)

The first group, including Ken, Gary, Scott, Peter B went down early on Wednesday, the second group (Peter, Pat, Dean and Alistair) set track on Thursday and had their camp set up by that evening. The next groups of the Wessels and Theo followed by Mark and Shayne then followed by Martin. The track in was in the usual conditions, i.e. narrow, parts heavily overgrown - so some vehicle scratches - with some steep dunes to climb over and some soft sand spots. The run along the beach was again on very very soft sand with many vehicles already cutting up the sand and then over a small dune and into the camping area. Ray was hauling in his camper trailer, but had the trailer swapped over to Dean who hauled this into the camp site. The initial groups set up Camp Number 1 of tents, tent trailers etc. with Mark dropping off the club generator for hooking up freezers, lights etc. The communal toilet was a walk and a shovel out of sight of others.

The Fishing

Fishing sessions were generally periods on Saturday and Sunday afternoon and Sunday and Monday mornings where fish captures were spread across these periods.

However early arrivals undertook some fishing on Friday – Pat got off to a good start with a good salmon and others determining there were Herring and Skippy about.

Unfortunately Alistair had contacted his family and had an issue where he needed to address. He returned to Perth without wetting a line

Sign on was on Saturday morning; however Mark organized a social that was a resounding success. He purchased all the goodies (bacon, eggs, sausages, mince, beans, and bread) and provided for all of us to have a barbeque breakfast. Martin had bought along his gazebo and set it up as the BBQ venue. Delicious, what a way to start a field day. From all of us, thanks Mark.

For Saturday afternoon, one group generally tried fishing along the stretch of beach stretching from in front of the camp from adjacent to the creek to less than a km further west. Others fished beside the west end exposed reef, and the South African group went down to their favourite reef area well to the east down a very soft beach track. Saturday afternoon gave tough fishing conditions with wind, rain and swell

One of the highlights of the weekend was Shane's experience. He had a voucher from a tackle shop and decided to use it to get an Alvey reel. He got the latest generation 650 Alvey, super drag and ultra-lightweight. He was thrilled to hook up and land two Salmon with the reel providing good control. The story goes further. He had one of those small surf poppers off the top swivel above the usual mulie set-up. Thinking he was attached to the Salmon on the Mulie hooks he used usual control and forces to eventually use a shore wave break to pull the fish up on the beach. The fish immediately dropped off the hooks; fortunately Martin was beside him and managed to grab the Salmon before the next wave took it away. On examining the rig he realized it was hooked on the Surf Popper and the small soft hook had straightened out and thus pulled out. Phew – what a way to catch a fish. Last field day he landed a Garfish on this same popper and this month the Salmon, a versatile lure. Shane also caught his bag limit of Herring and his bag limit of Skippy.

Sri also had a buzz on hooking up and landing a good Salmon near the east reef. He also got his bag limit of Herring and one a Skippy. He enjoyed the experience as catching Salmon is always a thrilling event.

Martin also found Salmon, he kept one and undertook catch and release on two more. He also did a catch and release on a 1 metre bronze shark. He also had his bag limit of Herring and Skippy plus a Whiting. Thanks to Martin for bringing and setting up his Gazebo.

Ken, Gary, Scott, and Vincent mostly fished in front of the camp. They ended up with some Herring and a few Skippy. Unfortunately they did not manage to capture any Salmon. Ken and Gary were going on to Esperance following the field day, so with small bags of fish they decided to miss the weigh-in and left early Monday to head East. Peter Butland has some health issues that precluded him from casting/fishing so he came along for the social aspects of the Field Day.

Pat and Dean initially fished between the Bluff Creek mouth and the south reef, with little success. They shifted up to beside the reef on Monday morning. Despite others getting Salmon right beside them, and Pat getting one before the field day started, they were unable to get connected to this species during the competition. They managed bag limits of Herring and one Skippy each. Pat assisted myself and Ken with overcoming problems with camp stoves – in my case he gave me his spare stove as I had left mine sitting on the bench and not being packed. He gave this to Ken and company to take to Esperance as Ken's camp stove had a gas fill bottle problem and would not properly light up.

Mark, Theo Peet and Sandra fished some of the time at the reef area well east of our campsite and beside the Salmon, Skippy and Herring, some of them getting additional species including Tailor, Tarwhine, Banded Sweep, Western Rock Blackfish, and Flathead. They moved a couple of times to adjacent to the east reef area and then on Monday joined me on the east side of actual Bluff Creek. Peet had a great bag of fish with a good selection of species. While only landing two Salmon, with all the fish weight he had the heaviest bag and with 9 species he had the highest field day points. He remains as the yearly top bag weight per Section 11 as his bag weight of 19.08 kg remained exactly the same as last year for fish weighed in June 2015. Sandra managed 3 Salmon, and included in her bag some of those misc. species. One of her Salmon was the heaviest at 4.41 kg, gilled and gutted. Theo managed Skippy and Herring bag limits and some misc. species, but was unable to hook onto a Salmon. Right place at the right time – 20 metres away the fish you can catch includes a Salmon but with a great amount of frustration, where you fish is devoid of this species.

Mark moved around and fished both east and west of Bluff Creek. He bagged out on Salmon, Skippy and Herring but did a "catch and release" on all fish caught. However he recognized that one of his Salmon was a really good one so managed to get his (calibrated) scales and determine that it weighed 7.80 kg before releasing same. Well done Mark, as this fish now takes out the Section 6 category.

I fished most of the time just east of actual Bluff Creek. Within an hour and a half of the field day start on Saturday, in rough conditions, I had 3 good Salmon in my bag. With great frustration, for the rest of the weekend, despite best efforts and long hours I could not find my fourth Salmon despite having people on both sides of me catching one. Early Sunday morning, I did revert to fishing off the exposed reef east of the camp, low tide, swell not too large and the start of a sunny day with little wind. First hour and a half, the action was very slow - only a couple of Skippy. Was thinking of leaving and just when I started to put this plan into action, a school of Skippy moved in – landed the next 6 in less than 30 minutes. I continued to catch Herring at all locations, used some for bait both fillets and a herring live bait but could not entice that elusive fourth Salmon.

Based on the SCAC scoring system, fish capture results and the top ten fisher persons, the results are listed below in this issue of Reel Talk.

While catches did have a hit and miss component or better luck for some, bag sizes were generally up on last year's Bluff Creek weigh-in. Hence most were pleased that they had a feed of fish to take home. It was also good to see that people with fish greater than their needs, handing them to people with low catches – that's what club fishing is about.

4WD Adventures

The first 4WD event was a police safety / breathalyzer test just south of Mt Barker. A potential new club member and visitor to the field day, Alister, was pulled up and was lucky he did not get a vehicle inspection notification – i.e. to fit his spot lights he bent the top two corners of his registration plate – Police advised that no modifications whatsoever to plates. He was able to straighten them out to the satisfaction of the police inspector. Those that came through on Wednesday and Friday did not run into the police check point.

As noted above, the beach section had very soft sand. Early arrivals including non-fishers had already torn up and down the beach where some did not have tires down to 15 psi, resulting in sand being very cut up with deep tracks wandering all over.

Tires down to at least 15 psi, and trying with care trying to stay in existing tracks and driving at a steady slow speed allowed one to get from point A to point B. Despite this we had a few vehicles that buried wheels and had to get towed out of their dilemma.

On entering the beach, Dean was to be the first one to get sand bogged, immediately followed by Peter who then took the corner too tight up into the camp area managed to get bogged a second time within 30 minutes. Going in convoy (i.e. at least a second vehicle) with access to shovels, snatch straps and Max Tracks were the order of the day. Club members continued to get bogged throughout the weekend and also assisted others in extracting themselves from wheels buried down to the axles.

Local Fishing

Three Surfcaster fished locally. Due to a vehicle problem and after getting well down the Albany Highway, Mark Hansen returned to Perth and decided to fish local. He fished the North Mole on Saturday afternoon/ early evening and caught 8 herring and tried the river a little later but to no avail. George Holman and Gary Gildersleeves fished beaches closer to their home, with Gary missing out completely and George bagging a Flathead and a Pike

Hope to see you at our April field day at Cape to Cape – while expectations for this venue are high review of above results gave low numbers of Salmon caught at Bluff, hence it will be interesting to see that for a later period (by 3 weeks) if Salmon will arrive at this section of coastline. There has been some limited anecdotal information that some have appeared in the Perth area.

Tight lines

Peter Osborne, Field Day Officer 2015/2016



The Supervisor



The Manager and his Boss



The Product



It's tough at most field days...



Our new Prez going old school



Management addressing the Board, the bait board, and the results...

Sportsperson of the year sections for March			
Section	Angler	Species	Weight
Best scale fish	Sandra Wessels	Salmon Australian	4.41
Best bag of scale fish	Peet Wessels	Mixed bag	19.08
Best shark	Martin Wearmouth	Shark	2.00
Best bag including sharks	Martin Wearmouth	Mixed bag	18.24

Field day prizes for March			
Section	Angler	Species	Weight
Best scale fish	Sandra Wessels	Salmon Australian	4.41
Best bag of scale fish	Peet Wessels	Mixed bag	19.08
Best shark	Martin Wearmouth	Shark	2.00
Best bag including sharks			

Field Day Sections up to and including March			
Section	Angler	Species	Weight
1A Best scale fish (1st six months)	Gary Parkinson	Snapper Pink	7.64
1B Best scale fish (2nd six months)	George Holman	Spanish Mackerel	3.10
2 Most meritorious fish	0	0	0.00
3 Best shark (4.5kg min)	0	0	0.00
4 Best mulloway (2kg min)	0	0	0.00
5 Best tailor (1kg min)	Peter Osborne	Tailor	1.55
6 Best salmon (3kg min)	Martin Wearmouth	Salmon Australian	4.48
7 Best skipjack trevally (0.5 kg min)	Peet Wessels	Skipjack Trevally	1.67
8 Best mackerel (2kg min)	George Holman	Spanish Mackerel	3.10
9 Best yellowtail kingfish, samson or amberjack (4kg min)	Sandra Wessels	Yellowtail Kingfish	4.41
10 Best scale fish (Other than above)	Peet Wessels	Baldchin Groper	1.84
11 Best bag of scale fish	Peet Wessels	Mixed bag	19.08
12 Best bag of mulloway (2 fish min)	0	0	0.00
13 Best bag of tailor (2 fish min)	Sandra Wessels	Tailor	5.38
14 Best fish on single handed rod (max 4kg line)	Mark Hansen	Herring, Australian	0.12
15 Best fish caught on fly rod	0	0	0.00
16 Best fish on single handed rod, soft plastic lure (max 4kg line)	Mark Hansen	Wrasse (all species) 1 only	0.25
17 Best fish on single handed rod, hard body lure (max 4kg line)	0	0	0.00

ANGLER		Species Salmon Australian	Species Tallor	Species Herring, Australian	Species Flathead (all species)	Species Pike	Species Skipjack Trevally	Species Whiting (other than listed)	Species Wrasse (all species) 1 only	Species Tarwhine	Species Banded Sweep	Species Shark	Species Western Rook Blackfish	Total weight	No. of Species	No. of fish	F.D. points	Attendance			Total points
																		Field Day	Local	General Meeting	
Peet Wessels	Number	2	2	12	1		7		1	2	2		3	19.08	9	32	280.8	1		1	300.8
	Total weight	7.26	1.52	2.69	0.16		2.82		0.57	1.24	0.96		1.86								
	Weight of best	4.02																			
Sandra Wessels	Number	3	1	12			4		1	2			3	18.32	7	26	253.2	1		1	273.2
	Total weight	10.66	0.83	2.41			1.77		0.45	0.93			1.27								
	Weight of best																				
Martin Wearmouth	Number	3		12			8	1				1		18.24	5	25	232.4	1		1	252.4
	Total weight	10.27		2.61			3.79	0.07				1.50									
	Weight of best																				
Mark Nurse	Number	4		12			8							16.24	3	24	192.4	1		1	212.4
	Total weight	14.00		0.64			1.60														
	Weight of best																				
Peter Osborne	Number	3		12			8							15.23	3	23	182.3	1		1	202.3
	Total weight	9.91		1.79			3.53														
	Weight of best																				
Shane Wignell	Number	2		12			8							11.52	3	22	145.2	1		1	166.2
	Total weight	6.34		2.18			3.00														
	Weight of best																				
Theo Van Niekerk	Number			12			5			3	4			7.59	4	24	115.9	1			125.9
	Total weight			2.54			1.83			1.89	1.33										
	Weight of best																				
Sri Brigandan	Number	1		12			1							5.76	3	14	87.6	1		1	107.6
	Total weight	3.96		1.54			0.26														
	Weight of best																				
Dean Stewart	Number			11			1							1.57	2	12	35.7	1		1	55.7
	Total weight			1.18			0.39														
	Weight of best																				
Pat McKeown	Number			12			1							1.56	2	13	35.6	1		1	55.6
	Total weight			1.38			0.18														
	Weight of best																				
George Holman	Number				1	1								0.39	2	2	23.9	1	1		43.9
	Total weight				0.26	0.13															
	Weight of best																				
Mark Hansen	Number			8										0.70	1	8	17.0	1		1	37.0
	Total weight			0.70																	
	Weight of best																				
Gary Parkinson	Number	0												0.00	0	0	0.0	1		1	20.0
	Total weight																				
	Weight of best																				
Ken Howells	Number	0												0.00	0	0	0.0	1		1	20.0
	Total weight																				
	Weight of best																				
Peter Butland	Number	0												0.00	0	0	0.0	1		1	20.0
	Total weight																				
	Weight of best																				
Scott Williamson	Number	0												0.00	0	0	0.0	1		1	20.0
	Total weight																				
	Weight of best																				
Gary Gildersleeves	Number	0												0.00	0	0	0.0		1		10.0
	Total weight																				
	Weight of best																				