



Surf Casting and Angling Club of WA (Inc.)

PO Box 2834, Malaga WA 6944

ABN 29 925 237 020

Telephone 08 9209 2117 Email surfcast@iinet.net.au

Club Web page <http://www.surfcasters.iinet.net.au>

August 2011 Field Day Rottnest

The Aug 2011 Rottnest field day lived up to expectations and those of us that went had a thrilling fishing experience.

The Surf Casting Club has been using Rottnest for the August venue since I joined the club some 30 years ago, and even in recent times when not working overseas, the thought of a Rottnest field day was always an anticipation of catching great fish like Salmon, Yellowtail Kingfish, Skippy and of course Herring.

At the August General Meeting John Curtis's presentation of Solunar tables reinforced the observation that a Low pressure weather system was not the best time as fish tend to go off the bite. Fortunately this did not occur on this weekend. Despite some terrible weather the foregoing anticipation was realized.

A team of some 7 SCAC fisherpersons (Mark and Wendy Hansen, Peet and Sandra Wessels, Greg Keet, Ian Taggart, and Peter Osborne) and 2 visitors arrived Friday night or Saturday morning.

Saturday morning at 11 am the bus trip out to West End and observation gave weather not too bad, but deteriorating.

Of course we stopped at the bakery to get a hot pie for lunch on the way out. To my and Sandra's palates, the lamb and rosemary pies are a real treat.



The Rottnest cottages we stayed in – very comfortable

On arrival, we spread out from the Tennis Courts to Wilsons. Those who tried the Tennis Courts could not get the herring to go on the bite, very unusual. Whereas Ian Taggart and I who tried Wilsons for Tailor, could not find Tailor but Herring were on the boil for a short period, disappeared and then came back again. Both locations gave the odd Wrasse, Skippy and Western Rock Blackfish.

Around 3 pm most of us took a break at the bus stop to have a drink/coffee to restore energy and again engage in anticipation of what was to come. About 4 pm we made our way to Radar reef. For those not already at the Tennis Courts, even though downhill, it is a tough climb down. The presence of the low was starting to be felt, but the wind was N/NW, hence some protection from the Island. Initially a few tarwhine and Western Rock Blackfish were caught, then at 4:30 pm I had the first hit of a Yellow Tail Kingfish (YT), only a relatively small one (63 cm) but do they fight.



Greg Keet modeling what a well equipped fisherperson wears at Radar Reef



Radar Reef late afternoon. Conditions here were not great but were fishable

From that point on it all started to happen. People to the left, people to the right, rods bent, following a real tug of war battle, mixtures of exhilaration and dismay as some managed to get their fish in their bag and some had a bust-off. Most managed to land at least one Yellowtail. Greg Keet quietly fishing on the outside end quietly and efficiently landing YT and slipping a couple into his bag, not like some of our South Africans who tend to be somewhat vocal when they hook up, Sandra you know what I mean.



Notice the seagulls above each fisherperson, bait stealers or good fairies watching over us?



Peet Wessels with a good Buff Bream

If there was any weak point in a fishing outfit (knots, nicks in the line, leaders too light etc) or inability to control the fish (keep them away from sharp rocks on edge of the reef – bigger fish are good at doing this) it was going to be a break off. A few skippy came in as it started to get dark with the YT starting to shut down. While the low tide was still fairly high at 0.6m, and wind was high, the swell was fairly low which gave reasonable fishing conditions, for experienced fisherpersons. Still had to be careful as an odd higher wave came through.

After cleaning fish on the rocks, a group of happy anglers made their way up the cliff to get the bus at 7:30 pm. When at the top of the cliff, the low really hit us, high wind and rain. I took a small umbrella out in anticipation, which immediately turned inside out. All of us huddled in our rain gear and wet suits and we were glad to see the bus arrive. Lots of excited talk on the bus as everyone wanted to relive their successes or bust-offs. Once back in the very comfortable cottages, the foregoing was followed by a hot shower and a hot meal. Everyone slept well that night.

Sunday morning gave a sleep-in, breakfast, gear clean-up and some making new rigs. Then a repeat of loading up the bus at 11 am, stop off at the bakery and an informative tour, compliments of the bus driver, out to West End.

Again a mixture of persons heading to Tennis Courts and Wilsons, with a few more showing up at Wilsons. Mark picked it right and again tried the Tennis Courts using small plastics for herring. This time it worked well for him as he got his bag limit. Wendy was successful too but not to the same numbers as Mark. Wilsons was not as prolific with fewer herring compared to the previous day, however an odd Western Rock Blackfish, Skippy, Tarwhine, and Wrasse were caught. Ian Taggart stayed at this location catching these smaller fish and was not able to raise a tailor late afternoon.

Again the plan of being on Radar Reef at 4 pm was put into practice. While the tide was the same, wind a bit lighter but more in our face, the swell was a different matter. It was nearly double the previous night being at 5 to 6 metres. While the outer reefs give protection, some pretty high lumps of water come over the top of Radar. An incorrect placement of foot or not anticipating a wave correctly gave a probability of being bowled over. I had one bowl over followed by Sandra being well and truly bowled. Fortunately I was right beside her so managed to reach down and pull up on her feet a spluttering and drenched fisher lady.

In the first 40 minutes a few Wrasse, Western Rock Blackfish and Tarwhine were caught. Was great there was nearly an absence of Buff Bream. Then on the dot of 4:30 pm I had a hook-up with a YT as the first for the evening. The action was not as fast or furious as the previous night, however all succeeded in getting hook-ups. Again some successes with fish in the bag and some bust-offs. Sandra of course adding to the noise when she hooked up and landed YT, even letting loose with yells when persons beside her hooked up. Yep I fished beside her. Thought about the need for using earplugs for the next time I go fishing with Surfcasters.

After landing a few and losing one by not being careful enough had a hook-up and while thinking this is a good fish that I have in control, this YT decided it had enough of me playing around and decided to head out to sea. Full drag lock and the reel screamed in protest until he stripped off 100 metres and broke me off on a reef.

Peet a few seconds later also had a good hook up and with skilful playing and manoeuvring managed to land his fish. Before gilling and gutting would have been in excess of 7.0 kg., a great capture.

At the other end of the line of fisherpersons, Mark surpassed his previous night by landing at least 4 fish.

By then it was approaching dark and with a few of us being bowled it was considered too dangerous to stay out in the dark, so we carefully waded back to shore and cleaned fish and made our way up to the road and bus stop.

Was not as windy and no rain as compared to the previous night so allowed us to change out of wetsuits and into warm dry clothing before the bus came.

To compare the evening's action my personal statistics on YT were 10 fish hooked and 3 bust-offs for Saturday evening and on Sunday evening, 5 fish hooked with 2 bust-offs and total of four fish kept. Others had similar comparisons. The reel I use is an 8000 series Mitchell loaded with 15kg line, that I had taken to Rottnest some 3 times before, however this trip proved its undoing. While I played the last two YT I hooked, the reel sounded as though I



Peet and Sandra Wessels with Peet's Yellow Tailed Kingfish

had thrown a handful of coarse sand in the gearing. Just confirms the point on how hard this species fight.

Back to the cottage and hauling all the fish to a street light table for the weigh-in. Here we admired and weighed some great bags of fish, and took photos of groups and individuals holding up their Yellowtail all with a big grin on their faces.

Relax again after this, hot food, shower, sleep in, and following morning load crates, then down to the bakery for a coffee etc, whereupon we were advised the ferry was delayed. Instead of leaving at 11 am, we found it was rescheduled for 2:30 pm.

Some relaxed back at the cottage, some went on an island bus tour and some visited the Rottneest museum. Of all the times I have visited Rottneest have never done the latter. Was very interesting and is recommended if you visit Rottneest.



Peter Osborne with Skippy

On boarding the ferry was a rough and exhilarating ride back as swell was 6 + metres and strong 30 to 40 knot winds. Definitely could not have fished Radar Reef on Monday. We were lucky to have reasonable conditions for Saturday afternoon and early evening.



Peter Osborne with Western Rock Blackfish and Tarwhine



Peter Osborne with YTKs

While fishing conditions were in the range of up to just fishable, these will be forgotten over time but the joy of catching some really great, i.e. large, and tough fighting yellowtail kingfish will imprint on our minds forever.

If you can organize your calendar and budgets, I thoroughly recommend you join us on a sojourn to a Rottneest field day if you possibly can to enjoy some truly remarkable fishing.

Assistant Field Day Officer, Peter Osborne

Catch results and points for the August Field Day

Angler	Weight	Species	Fish	Points
Peter Osborne	17.38 kg	7	30	293.8
Peet Wessels	13.95 kg	6	12	249.5
Mark Hansen	10.96 kg	4	30	199.6
Sandra Wessels	7.32 kg	7	11	193.2
Greg Keet	7.44 kg	4	6	154.4
Ian Taggart	1.39 kg	2	9	83.9
Wendy Hansen	0.77 kg	2	7	77.7
Peter Pekaar	0.23 kg	1	1	22.3
John Crompton	0	0	0	20
Allan Jones	0	0	0	10
Shane Becu	0	0	0	10

Points include Field Day and August General Meeting points.

Species weighed at the Rottneest Field Day were:- Yellowtail Kingfish, Skipjack Trevally, Wrasse, Breaksea Cod, Herring, Tarwhine, Western Rock Blackfish and Sweep.

Species weighed at the Local Field Day were:- Tarwhine.

Sportsperson of the Year winners for August 2011

Best scale fish	Peet Wessels	Yellowtail Kingfish	5.83 kg
Best bag of scale fish	Peter Osborne	Mixed Bag	17.38 kg

Field day section winners for August 2011

Best scale fish	Peet Wessels	Yellowtail Kingfish	5.83 kg
Best bag of scale fish	Peter Osborne	Mixed Bag	17.38 kg

Field Day sections 2011/12

Up to and including August Field Day.

1A	Best Scale Fish (1st Six Months)	George Holman	Pink Snapper	6.55 kg
1B	Best Scale Fish (2nd Six Months)			
2	Most Meritorious Fish	To be awarded by Committee		
3	Best Shark (4.5kg min)			
4	Best Mulloway (2.0kg min)			
5	Best Tailor (1.0kg min)	Justin Rose	Tailor	1.92 kg
6	Best Salmon (3kg min)			
7	Best Skipjack Trevally (0.5 kg min)	Sandra Wessels	Trevally, Skipjack	1.13 kg
8	Best Mackerel (2kg Min)			
9	Best Scale Fish (Other than above)	Peet Wessels	Yellowtail Kingfish	5.83 kg
10	Best Bag Of Scale Fish	Peter Osborne	Mixed Bag	17.38 kg
11	Best Bag Of Mulloway (2 Fish Min)			
12	Best Bag Of Tailor (2 Fish Min)	Justin Rose	Tailor	5.58 kg
13	Best Fish On S/H Rod 4kg b/s line (max)	Peter Osborne	Wrasse	0.36 kg
14	Best Fish Caught on Fly Rod	Frank Gaudin	Trevally, Skipjack	0.75 kg

Field Day top scores for 2011/12

Total scores up to and including August Field Day and General meeting.

Name	Points	Rank	Name	Points	Rank	Name	Points	Rank
Peet Wessels	742.5	1	Wendy Hansen	164.5	12	Wayne Shaw	57	23
Peter Osborne	733.3	2	Marcia Pekaar	150.7	13	Ray Walker	50	24
Sandra Wessels	559.1	3	Sumarie Gaudin	148.5	14	Ron Lindsay	50	25
Mark Hansen	385.4	4	Michael Gaudin	123.5	15	Shane Becu	50	26
Theo Van Niekerk	327.7	5	John Crompton	120	16	Lachlan Spickett	40	27
Greg Keet	324.7	6	Stuart Spickett	108.8	17	Olivia Keet	40	28
George Holman	317.2	7	Allan Jones	106.1	18	Sharon Osborne	40	29
Justin Rose	241.5	8	Nick Edwards	103.6	19	Shane Wignell	32.8	30
Peter Pekaar	196.9	9	Pat McKeown	83.6	20	Sarah Wignell	21.4	31
Frank Gaudin	187.4	10	Morgan Keet	66.3	21	John Curtis	20	32
Ian Taggart	174.2	11	Felicity Keet	62.5	22			

Update to Species Badge competition

The list of species registered to members has been updated for catches during the August Field Day and open entries.

Pat McKeown has finally caught that elusive garfie to give him the 10 species needed for his Species Badge.

Recorder, John Curtis



Pat McKeown with that elusive garfish.