

# Fishing for the facts

Fisheries research in the Northern Territory is undertaken by a small group of scientists based in Darwin. In any given year they travel to most major coastal centres to collect data from all fishing sectors. You can help NT Fisheries with recreational fishing research in the Top End by donating frames of tropical snappers and other reef species as outlined below. The information will then be used by NT Fisheries to ensure the sustainable harvest of these recreationally important species.

## BACKGROUND

Much of our knowledge of tropical snappers (Lutjanids) comes from research undertaken in Queensland and Western Australia and more information is needed on Northern Territory stocks. This, in conjunction with a recognised need to increase the scientific monitoring of recreational fishing, means that NT Fisheries requires several hundred fish frames from each of the locally caught tropical snappers (such as those overleaf). Frames from other tropical snappers as well as cods, coral trout and emperors can also be submitted.

Scientists will then measure the length of the frame and remove the two otoliths (ear bones). Each otolith will be thinly sliced and the fish's age estimated from the number of growth rings. By aging many fish from the same area we can then describe the age structure and estimate the fishing mortality rate for that location (information vital to management of these slow growing, late maturing fishes).

## SAMPLE LABELLING AND PACKAGING

Each frame should be accompanied by a label stating the following:

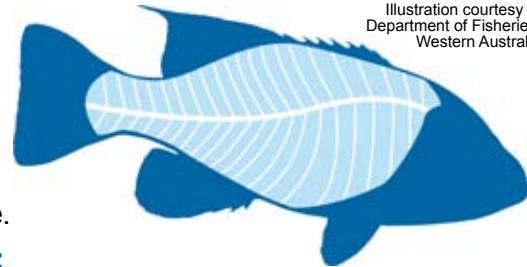
**Common name**

**Date of capture**

**Depth of capture**

**Location of capture:** preferably as latitudes and longitudes but area names are also suitable.

**Fisher contact details:** name, address and phone number/email.



*A fish frame: head to tail with guts intact – we don't need the wings.*

Frames should be individually bagged to prevent labels getting mixed up.

NT Fisheries will provide freezer bags and labels printed on waterproof paper to fishing clubs and charter boat skippers on request.

Please also consider taking digital images of both your GPS/sounder and the fish shortly after capture so as to record the date, depth and location of fish capture.

**Fisher contact details and exact capture co-ordinates will remain confidential.**

## WHERE TO DROP YOUR FRAMES OFF

Please drop your frames off at the locations below or contact the relevant fishing clubs/premises listed.

**Decomposing or rotten material will not be accepted.** Frames will be frozen until such time as they can be picked up and/or dissected by NT Fisheries staff.

**Darwin:** NT Fisheries, Goff Letts Building, Berrimah Farm, Berrimah (open from 8:00 am to 4:21 pm weekdays - out of hours submissions may be possible by prior arrangement). Ph: 8999 2144 or email: fisheries@nt.gov.au.

**Dundee Beach:** Dundee Lodge, Ph: 8978 2557.

**Gove/Nhulunbuy:** Gove Tackle and Outdoors, Ph: 8987 1748.

**Groote Eylandt:** Anindilyakwa Sea Ranger Shed, Ph: 8987 4041.

**King Ash Bay:** King Ash Bay Fishing Club, Ph: 8975 9800.

**Limmen Bight River:** Limmen River Fishing Camp, Ph: 8975 9844.



Amateur Fishermen's Association  
of the Northern Territory

## WIN PRIZES

For each frame donated with the correct details you will gain an entry to both the annual and quarterly regional prize draws. The annual prizes will be drawn at the AFANT AGM typically held in February/March. Quarterly regional prizes will be drawn in February/March, June, September and November/December. See the NT Fisheries website at [www.fisheries.nt.gov.au](http://www.fisheries.nt.gov.au) for current prize details. Alternatively, Google™ tropical snapper research NT.