



It was worth the effort.



This cobia was caught on a plastic around a channel marker in northern Moreton Bay.



A pennant fish from Straddie.



Getting through the whitewater can be tough.



Be aware of what's around you.



Terry took a while to land this 7kg model.

Heading a bit further offshore

FOR a change the weather has been kind more often than not, so chances to hit up some spots out to sea have been an option.

Over the last month we have headed out with a plan to target snapper now that the ban is over, but there have been too many pelagics around which have sidetracked us more often than not.

Recent trips on Moreton Bay have found plenty of undersize squire with a few keepers on soft plastics.

These fish have been hard to find, with a couple caught after a lot of searching then barely a touch on the next outing; even dropping down to light lines didn't help.

One early morning trip to Wellington Point with a few of the lads had us turning up to great conditions, but the fish were having a sleep-in.

Once the sun was up we kept seeing birds diving and tuna smashing the surface so the chase was on.

Chasing bust-ups in a boat can be frustrating to say the least, so you need to have luck on your side when doing it from a kayak.

I managed to be bitten clean off by a suspected mackerel and Terry pulled the hooks on a couple of fish.

One of the other lads didn't stay connected for too long either.

Den was out the back of the pack trolling and landed his first mackerel and was stoked with his catch.

Halfway to Straddie the fish disappeared and we started thinking about



Kayaking
by TOM LASZLO

the long haul back to the mainland when a westerly come out of nowhere.

Fortunately our group all have a fair bit of stamina for just such a scenario, and kayaks that are capable of handling some big chop coming over the sides.

A sit-in yak without a skirt would get into trouble very quickly.

Another safety condition I place on myself is to only travel out offshore with at least one other person.

I have had an old kayak crack and start to leak before, and although I managed to get back safely, I had a fishing buddy to save my butt if it got much worse.

With a fantastic forecast recently, Den and Terry headed up to the Sunshine Coast in search of better quality snapper early one morning.

On the way to some structure, packs of tuna were surfacing nearby and within casting distance, but casting slugs at them scored no fish.

A change of tactics to big Snapback plastics in bright colours was tried and Den dropped one while Terry managed to land a metre long tuna after a tiring fight on his 20lb Daiwa spin combo with a 5-inch pink Snapback jerk bait.

The boys forgot all about snapper for a while, but not to keep an eye out for commercial shipping.

I'll often fish around shipping markers in the bay and off the Sunny Coast and am amazed how

close some of these massive ships come to these beacons.

The bow wave on one of those big guys is massive and I'd hate to get anywhere near them, so when one of the guys signals a ship coming, I head for the shallow side of the beacon as far as possible before it gets to me.

From when you see a ship on the horizon to when it's right there can be as little as 15 minutes so I don't think about just one more cast, a tanker going past doesn't seem to spook the fish.

In deeper water I have most success with soft plastics in white or green ranging from 5-7 inches.

As I drop the lure down through the water column I try to keep the line as vertical as I can by pedalling slowly and adjusting my direction as it wafts down to the bottom with minimal weight.

Once on the bottom I do a few lifts and wind up a few turns until I get it halfway back and repeat the process.

If the drift is too fast the fish show little interest.

The Hobie makes this

process a whole lot easier because you don't have to put the rod down to paddle.

I want to stress how important it is to keep safe out there.

It gets a lot bumpier and wetter than the sheltered water.

When launching into surf, make sure no hooks or lines can get you into trouble.

If you are inexperienced, find someone to go with and there are plenty of online forums with 'going fishing' sections.

Most importantly, be aware of what's around you, as boats big and small will not see you.

Last year one kayaker off NSW was mowed over by a big cruiser on autopilot.

Thankfully he was OK, but his kayak looked like it had gone through a woodchipper.

And be sure to carry food and ample water.

As a last word, please leave the bass in the rivers and creeks alone for the next three months to give them the best chance to boost wild stock.

The floods have definitely helped clean out their natural habitat, so let's do what we can to protect it. ↴



Den caught this spotty north of Peel Island.