

Australian Society for Fish Biology

NEWSLETTER

Murray cod management model



An application of **ESSENTIAL** by
Charles Todd Freshwater Ecology ARI



“promoting fish studies and providing a forum for the exchange of information between fisheries managers and fish biologists”

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Cover Image (*image and research by Charles Todd and John Koehn*):

Splash screen for the Murray Cod Management Model highlighted in our feature article on page 7. The program has been developed to model population distribution, structure and dynamics to help meet the objectives of the species' national recovery plan.

Editorial

Piscean enthusiasts,

Well the festive season is upon us and I believe it is time to propose a toast on the back deck and welcome you to another ASFB newsletter. In the wake of the success of the 2009 IPFC/ASFB Perth conference the Christmas edition brings you news of what's been happening across the country in the lead up to next years ASFB conference in Melbourne.

In our feature article Charles Todd and John Koehn present the Murray Cod Management Model, an investigation into modelling population distribution, structure and dynamics to help meet objectives of the Murray Cod National Recovery Plan. As a teaser for all interested parties, Charles and John have included some visual snippets of what the program can offer.

Around Australia acoustic tagging seems to be the name of the game again whether it's Murray cod in the Murray (Vic), congollis in the Corrong (SA) or Steve Beatty on sawfish (WA). Queensland fish, however, nibble the proverbial biscuit with the students at JCU planning to stick a tag in anything that moves, as they target blue threadfin, scalloped hammerheads, white spot guitar fish, blacktip reef sharks and narrow sawfish. And if you're wondering what sort of scales these fish can be tracked on, then look no further than the imminent deployment of the Australian Acoustic Tracking and Monitoring System (AATAMS) lines on the north coast of NSW. By this time next year our seas will be a cacophony of bleeping pingers. Or is it pinging bleepers?

If you're interested in your own back yard some particular highlights can be found in the state reports. Ash Fowler, for example, is investigating fish growth and condition in artificial habitats, pulling up red-belted anthias from submerged oil-rigs in NSW. Up in Queensland Bernie Cockayne, Kate Engledow and Luke Galea have been studying breeding behaviour, movements and intriguing nest-building habits of freshwater catfish, while in the ACT Dan Starrs and Brendan Ebner have been luring crayfish with hoop nets. Rory McAuley and the WA shark team have almost completed deployment of acoustic receivers in the Shark Monitoring Network to investigate occurrence, movements and behaviour of white sharks off the Perth coast. In SA our recently appointed vice-president, Bronwyn Gillanders continues to study the amazing aggregations of giant Australian cuttlefish, while at the other end of the size scale Hannah Murphy (Victoria) is using larval ecology to investigate recruitment variability of snapper around Port Phillip Bay. If you wish to strain your eyes even further, down in Tasmania Pancho Neira is engaged in a project to develop a genetic/morphological databank for the identification of eggs of Australian marine fishes.

We have included some biographies of recent inductees to the Ichthyology Hall of Fame including Stephen Hamar Midgley, Martin Gomon and Peter (Scary) Last, and reviewed a few possible additions to any scientific library that should easily fit into your Christmas stocking.

As always, many thanks go to our State representatives and committee

convenors, without whose tremendous help the society would not have achieved all the success in 2009. And finally a huge thank you to all who contributed to the newsletter.

In signing off, I hope you all enjoy the newsletter. Have a very merry Christmas and I sincerely hope Santa leaves a fish on the end of your line and not in your stocking.

Cordelia Moore

Editor

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