



## Snapper

Between the months of October and February each year snapper enter Western Port and Port Phillip Bay in huge numbers. Snapper are the number one target species for many saltwater anglers around Melbourne.

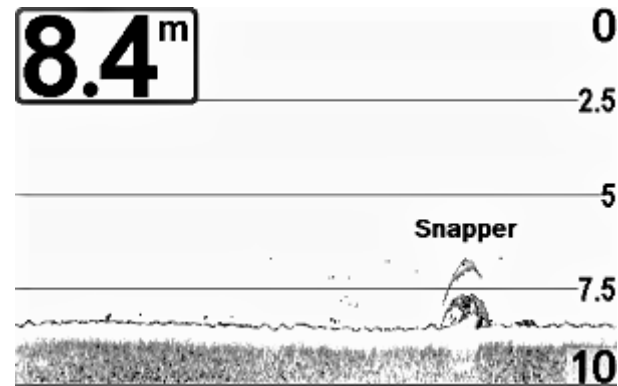
The reason the Snapper migrate to our bays is to spawn. October is generally when they are about in good numbers, as the water temperature is the main catalyst for this with around 17C suiting them the best. This can change by a month or so depending on factors such as rainfall, wind direction and air temperatures.

The average size for these schooling fish is between 3 – 6kg, yet it isn't uncommon to hear of fish over 8kg or so being caught. The best bite time for this run of fish is from early October through til early December, with another good bite normally around mid-February running into early May.

The best way to find snapper in the bays is by using a modern GPS/sounder combo. Having a reliable unit is a fairly critical part of snapper fishing, and helps to pinpoint your fishing locations faster, as the fish can move about a lot over the course of a few days or

as the weather changes. **Talk to us in-store for up to date location reports and information.**

'Marking' fish on the sounder as arches or blobs is the first way to locate fish, whether these fish are sitting nearby to structure or baitfish school, on by themselves. Once you have found some fish on the unit the rest of the plan comes into preparation.



**A nice snapper marking above a small reef**

### **Suggested Tackle for Snapper Fishing**

The choice of outfit will be determined by location you are fishing, as these two bays are vastly different and need to be geared up accordingly. Port Phillip has very little tidal flow on the snapper grounds and therefor much lighter 'finesse' snapper tackle be used – and this approach normally works far better than heavier tackle. Westernport has very strong tidal flows and large sinkers must be used sometimes so the outfit choice needs to reflect this.

### **Port Phillip Bay**

Rod – 7ft – 7'6" 4 -10kg line rating with soft loading tip section. Fibreglass or graphite.

**\*Ultra-soft tip sections allow fish to mouth baits and hook themselves without feeling any resistance.**

Reel – 3000 – 8000 size spin reel, with quality drag system.

Line – 12 – 20lb soft touch monofilament

**\*Mono is far superior for PPB as braid tends to float in the water column due to slack current and can tangle when using multiple rods.**

### **Westernport**

Rod – 7ft – 7'6" 7-15kg line rating with slightly soft tip section. Fibreglass or graphite.

**\*Remember to factor in expected sinker size when choosing WPB rods, and the tip needs to hold the weight without too much strain.**

Reel – 6000 - 12000 size spin reel, with quality drag and heavy-duty gearing system.

**\*Gear system must be strong for winching up big sinkers and bycatch**

Line 20 – 30lb soft touch monofilament, or 30 – 50lb quality braided line

### **Rigging for snapper**

As per the rod and reel choice, the rigging end of the system for snapper will vary slightly over the two separate locations. Slightly heavier tackle is suggested for Westernport as more bycatch is encountered and can strain lighter hooks and swivels. The following is a general overview of suggested tackle for rigging for snapper.

### **Westernport**

Leader – 50 -80lb hard coated leader material

**\*Withstands more abrasion from reef and bycatch**

Hooks – 5/0 – 7/0 Chemically sharpened circle hook

**\*Single hook presents bait better in current. Hook size dependant on bait choice and size**

Swivel – Black crane or rolling type in 60 – 100lb strength

**\*Black swivel for less flash and bite offs from couta, leatherjacket etc etc**

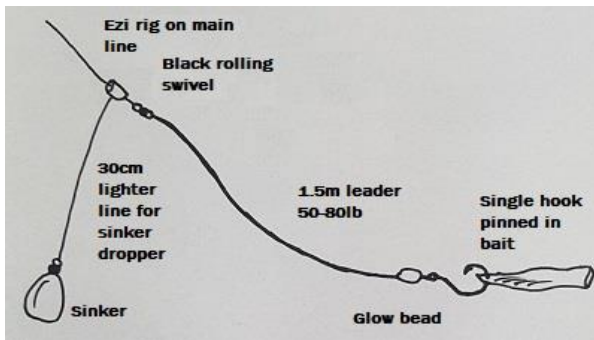
XOS glow bead or lumo sleeve tubing

**\*Visual attractant for fish/prevents bite offs**

Ezi-rig or sinker slider clip

**\*Add 30cm of lighter line than main line to help raise bait off the seabed and minimize snag break offs**

Sinker – bomb or snapper lead dependant on depth and current strength



**Example of Westernport snapper rig  
Baits and berley for snapper**

### **Port Phillip**

Leader – 40 – 60lb supple leader material

**\*Supple leader presents baits much more naturally on seabed. Heavier leader for early season fish as they have sharper teeth**

Hooks – 3/0 – 6/0 Twin snell-rigged chemically sharpened

‘Octopus/beak/suicide’ patterns

**\*Hook size dependent on bait choice and size**

Swivel – Black crane or rolling in 40 – 70lb strength

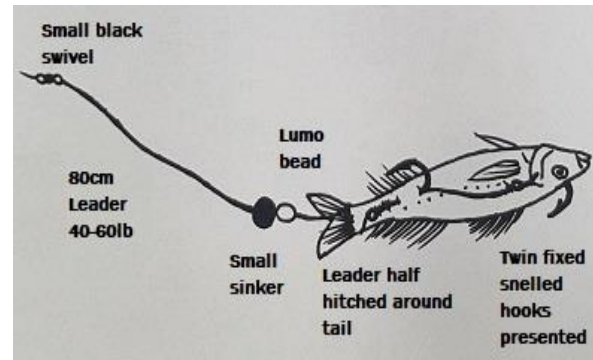
**\*Black swivel for less flash and more natural presentation**

Medium size glow bead

**\*Visual attractant for fish**

Sinker - pea or marble sized ball or bean

**\*Smaller sinker presents bait much more naturally in little current flow**



**Example of Port Phillip Bay snapper rig**

The best baits can generally be what are found in the area that you are fishing. Below is a list of suggested baits that are consistent fish producers. Pilchards, squid, silver whiting, yakka, couta, red rockets, garfish, mantis shrimp and slimy mackerel.

Berley is critical especially when in Port Phillip, as it can trigger the fish in your area to come on the bite. Cubed pilchard pieces can be excellent when used in conjunction with a pellet style berley. Small handfuls every 20 minutes or so can help stimulate the fish and get them on to you baits.

**For any additional information or specifics talk to us in-store.**

**Good Luck & Happy Fishing!**

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*This handout is for use as information only, and the suggestions are based on our experiences for fishing this particular location and or species.*