

# Rains to bring bumper barra haul to fishers

**BEN JONES**

ANGLERS in the West Kimberley are looking towards a big year of fishing after the region's bumper wet season gave a shot in the arm to local fisheries.

Floodwaters from the Fitzroy River and nutrient-laden freshwater runoff from Roebuck Plains are fuelling the local marine environment.

Kimberley TAFE aquaculture lecturer Jeff Cooper said the excess nutrients that ended up in the waterways meant higher production in local fisheries.

"There's a lot of research which indicates the bigger the wet the more fish you get," he said.

"I'd expect to see a more productive barra season, salmon season and a bigger billfish season."

Mr Cooper said the extra nutrients in Roebuck Bay lead to increased populations of baitfish which attracted more predatory fish.

He said there would also

likely be a bigger barramundi season with the floods providing extra habitat for juvenile fish, which grew quicker in the flooded, fertile floodplains before heading back to the main river as the waters receded.

Slim's Barra Charters owner Clint "Slim" Money said the Fitzroy River had fished well for the past four to five years since the last big wet season.

He said he expected another good season this year before the large numbers of fish spawned grew to maturity.

"In a couple of years we're likely to see a huge amount of 50-60cm size fish," he said.

"A good wet season is always going to mean we're in for a good barra season.

"Hopefully the big flow will gouge out the river, make it a bit deeper, freshen it up and we'll have to hunt around a bit for the holes and ledges around the place."

He said the most notable effect of the season was high waters were mostly keeping fishermen out of the river later than usual in the year.

## 3.03.11 Winch handle theft left us in dangerous situation at

TO THE inconsiderate person who stole my winch handle at Entrance Point Boat ramp, thanks very much.

You left me on the concrete ramp with a 6.7m boat, with a following sea and surf with my two boys aged 10 and 14 and NO winch

handle. We had to retrieve the boat with the wheel brace and I got my hand caught between the wire and the trailer because we were working slowly in such dangerous conditions.

Is it not bad enough that we have some average boat ramps to

retrieve our boats in and also have to deal with simpletons who steal from their fellow boaties?

I am a strong believer in karma and the person who put us in such a perilous position is in for a bad dose, so watch out!

**Leon Mead, Broome**



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