

Annual Report 2022/23



A woman with blonde hair, wearing a yellow knit beanie and a black shirt, is smiling and holding a large, reddish-brown fish with white scales. The background is a blue ocean under a clear sky. The image is framed by teal and white decorative shapes at the bottom.

Michelle



Visit our website to learn more about how we're making fishing better for everyone.



**Let's Make
Fishing
Better, For
Everyone!**

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Cover Image:
Daniel Hawkins
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Chairman's Report



As a passionate recreational fisher and VRFish Chair, I always welcome presenting an annual report that includes a future outcome to move VRFish forward into achieving a magnificent three decades of representing the recreational fishers of Victoria.

To be acknowledged by the Hon. Sonyia Kilkeny Minister for Outdoor Recreation regarding the work VRFish has progressed since our review towards becoming a strong, modern, and diverse organisation is extremely gratifying. Further to be offered a new three-year funding agreement to continue our valuable representation and identify and develop future young community leaders during this funding period is extremely welcomed.

Once again, the leadership with our Finance and Risk Management Committee has provided magnificent input into the management of our finances and Risk Management linked to cyber security protection. With pleasure I can confirm the current VRFish financial position will move us forward with confidence for the year ahead.

The Board

Once again appreciation must be extended to all the Board Members throughout the year for their commitment to ensure our finances are prudently managed and we comply with ASIC requirements and the Incorporation Act. It has been very refreshing to have a committed gender equity Board to provide a diverse range of views with decision making during Board meetings or as required out of session. As we move forward it's becoming very apparent

that cultural diversity on the Board is very valued, and future linkages with our first nation community a desirable outcome. Further to this outcome VRFish has provided exponent input into establishing a new Aboriginal Fishing Club that are now members of VRFish.

VRFish Staff

Many recreational fishers statewide recognise our Executive Officer Ben Scullin as the best recreational fisher advocate in Victoria. With the multitude of issues, he has to address every week this takes time, commitment and a vision to succeed.

Our Operational Manager and Company Secretary Amanda Szabo has once again provided excellent day-to-day office management, compliance and her Board support is highly valued.

Our Communications Manager Holly Amos is on maternity leave, in her absence VRFish has appointed Matt Oakley to fill this highly important role. Currently Matt has the task of promoting social media outputs, writing member reports, general communications and drafting this annual report. His dedication and support have provided many great communication outcomes.

VRFish Members

Appreciation must be extended to our volunteer members who support VRFish brilliantly and most importantly promote issues of importance that have every potential to make a difference. On many occasions we encourage our VRFish Members to have input and rectify localised issues due to our Executive Officer having a multitude of issues to attend to on a daily basis and must prioritise accordingly. It must be noted we do not always promote every output in the media, that does not mean we are not addressing an issue as raised by recreational fishers or Members.

Victorian Government Support of Recreational Fishing

VRFish welcomes the magnificent investment and support the current Victorian State Government continues to provide for recreational fishing. Most importantly the linked social, economic and community wellbeing outcomes that recreational fishers and their families value highly.

The VRFish promoted funding of several important issues have been supported by the State Government these include, but not limited to; stage two development of Arcadia Fish Hatchery to make it Australia's largest

native fish hatchery, the recovery plan for Macquarie Perch, a new small native fish hatchery, fish restocking, fish habitat reinstatement, fishing club grants, and rebuilding and refurbishing piers that are so important to provide land based marine fishing access to all cultural communities.

World Recreational Fishing Conference Melbourne

The Victorian Fisheries Authority must be highly commended with the administration and management of this highly valued recreational three-day fishing event. A plethora of world presenters provided some magnificent evaluations on a huge multitude of issues linked to recreational fishing. Our own Australian presenters and scientists must also be commended in providing world class evaluations on the management of recreational fishing in Aussie land.

Better Boating Victoria

If we reflect back a few years when VRFish raised the unacceptable state of many of our boat launching facilities and now if we reflect on the current situation, we would notice an amazing difference.

The Executive of BBV must be highly commended with their excellent and committed replacement and upgrades that has, and continues to occur statewide. It is totally amazing to view first hand how much is being achieved despite rising costs and compliance with red-tape. These upgrades are now being noticed by interstate fishers who regularly note they envy what is occurring in Victoria.

Floods and Hypoxia Water

The widespread rainfall recorded was very positive to refill water storage reservoirs and lakes and provide waterway flows. Unfortunately, outcomes also included widespread flooding across Northern Victoria and a terrible outbreak of Hypoxia water where thousands of native fish perished. The Chief Scientist at ARI presented survey results against baseline data sets outlined native fish numbers between Bamah and Boundary Bend in the Murray River suffered a large decline in numbers. Surveys conducted in the Broken Creek and the Little Murray River show more severely affected. As the result of flooding in Northern Victoria water diversion of this poor quality into Kangaroo Lake also killed thousands of native fish, including at least one hundred, meter long Murray Cod.

The above is just a snapshot of examples of what has occurred over the past year. Current important agenda items VRFish is currently involved with include; promoting an equitable recreational fisher take of Rock Lobster, ensuring recreational water receives a high security of supply, continued unrestricted public land access, vehicle access via licenced closed roads, seismic surveys and windfarms.

In general, if we were to analyse what VRFish achieves as a volunteer member organisation representing over one million recreational fishers with only three staff employees there is no doubt our recreational fishing Peak Body is achieving magnificent results in "Making Fishing Better for Everyone"



Take care
Rob Loats
CHAIRMAN



... establishing a new Aboriginal Fishing Club that are now Members of VRFish.

Executive Officer's Report

To see VRFish in a position to move onto the 'front foot' in 2023/24 and making fishing better for everyone is just reward. VRFish members can be rightly proud of our achievements.

What a year! The tail end of a restrictive funding agreement, completion of our rapid organisational change agenda being recognised and promoted by State Government, full emergence from the covid overwintering as we found our 'new normal' and re-engaged with the aquatic environment, a state election, and a massive workload. I'm more than thankful for the VRFish Board leadership and guidance over the year, without which VRFish couldn't have delivered such an impressively successful year.

I'm happy to report a solid financial outcome for the year, with special thanks to the Finance, Audit and Risk Committee. VRFish operations, and therefore success, is built on prudent fiscal management. So is VRFish sustainability. It always impresses me that VRFish can deliver big wins for recreational fishing and our members with such a small budget, professional staff and the countless hours, sweat and tears of our dedicated volunteers. Recreational fishing is clearly a passion!

VRFish staff deserve special commendation for their dedication and excellence. Amanda Szabo held the fort at head office, while our communications were ably managed by Matt Oakley who filled Holly's position while away on paid parental leave. We welcomed two new recreational fishers to the VRFish

family with our Communications Manager Holly and Board member Lydia both contributing to the more than one million recreational fishers in Victoria. Uncle Benny has the VRFish 'Lure Learning' spin combos already set up for their first lure training sessions!

Our new 3-year funding agreement with State government is further testament to our success over the last year. A fundamental shift in the contract, allowing for better alignment with our strategic planning to deliver on the aspirations and needs of our members and recreational fishers. We're also developing improved face to face engagement with our members through our successful member forum processes and the development of our young leaders' program in our operational planning.

Working alongside our stakeholders is a big part of what we do to ensure making fishing better for everyone is just that. Supporting Victorian Fisheries Authority and Better Boating Victoria has been a cornerstone of VRFish success this financial year. It's not until reporting time that I note just how much workload this entails, and more importantly, how many solid outcomes for recreational fishers we have delivered together. I still pinch myself that I get to attend professional meetings and discuss all things recreational fishing and boating.

Andrews Labor government support for VRFish and recreational fishing is a continued blessing, and our Minister the Hon Sonya Kilkenny has delivered above and beyond for us on some extraordinary issues. I still live in hope that one day the Minister will greet me with an outstretched mobile phone and a pic of the 7kg Snapper from that morning, wide off Carrum.

Moving VRFish onto the front foot to generate even more positive outcomes for recreational fishers and encapsulating this in the next 5-year strategic plan will be an important piece of work for VRFish and our members. So is empowering VRFish members and volunteers to engage and find solutions to recreational fishing issues and delivering more positive outcomes than VRFish can deliver alone.

I love Fishing! And I'll defend it!

Ben Scullin

Executive Officer



Ben Scullin VRFish

About Us



Our Mission Statement

Let's make fishing better, for everyone.

Who We Are

Established as the Victorian Recreational Fishing Peak Body, VRFish, is your not-for-profit, independent voice representing Victoria's recreational fishers since 1995. We are proud to be part of a huge and diverse community of 1,114,000 fishers that injects \$2.99 billion each year in economic contribution to the Victorian economy.



We are not the government. We are fishers that want to make fishing better for everyone. Whether it's fish habitat, water security and quality, fishing access and infrastructure or best practice, we aim to work in partnership to make sure Victoria's fishing experiences continue to improve, be sustainable and more enjoyable for all generations of Victorians.

To get the job done, we leverage the skills and passion of our membership and employ a small team of professional staff. The more support we have from Victorian fishers, the stronger voice we have to stand up and protect our fishing future.

What We Do

VRFish needs to be the voice of our fish. Threats to fishing are becoming more complex than ever before as we strive to look after the environment that our fish depend on and tackle issues such as pollution, water management, industrial development, diminishing fishing access, litter and illegal fishing.



VRFish works to raise the profile of fishing as a recreational activity with significant social, cultural and economic benefits. At the same time, we are protecting our fishing lifestyle so that you can get outdoors, connect with nature, relax and enjoy quality time with your family and friends.

We are passionate about supporting you to fish for the future by fostering the adoption of responsible fishing practices and behaviours. The next generation of fishers need our support so that they are given the same opportunities to get outdoors and get hooked on fishing as when we were growing up.

Our Priorities



Habitat

Improving our vital fish habitats through protection, restoration and enhancement.



Promote

Promoting fishing in Victoria, creating new and vibrant fisheries and supporting the next generation of fishers.



Best Practice

Supporting our fishers to take a lead role in the stewardship of our fish and waterways, fish responsibly and promote fish for the future.



Water

Keeping our rivers flowing and defending recreational and environmental water allocations.



Access

Fixing our boat ramps and defending your fishing rights to access our waterways.



VRFish Board meeting

Our Board Members



Rob Loats, Chairperson

Rob is a primary production business manager from rural Victoria. He has extensive experience of issues associated with natural resource and water management and skills associated with government and non-government state agency inputs and outputs.

Rob has provided long term representation for his local club as president and secretary, long term representation of two local angling associations as president and is a past member of the state Fisheries Co-Management Council. He has been on the Fisheries Revenue Allocation Committee (FRAC), is a past Chairman and member of the Recreational Fishing Licence Working Group, member of the Murray Darling Basin Murray Cod Fishery Advisory Group, the North Central Catchment Management Authority Community Leaders Group, Chair of the Northcentral CMA Gunbower, Lower Loddon Native Fish Recovery Plan and a current member of the Snobs Creek Fish Hatchery and Liberation Governance Board. He is a current member of the DELWP Riparian Forum Advisory Group and Life Member of the Mid Northern and Wimmera Angling Associations and Donald Angling Club. Rob's efforts have also earned him the National Mal Ramsay Lifetime Achievement Award 2012.

Rob has always been interested in water quality and has recently completed 25 years of voluntary water monitoring with the North Central CMA Waterwatch Program.



Steven Relf, Deputy Chair

Steven brings a wealth of experience to the Board of VRFish and is experienced in dealing with a variety of complex issues, adding value to the organisation in an ever-changing environment. Now retired Steven has had over 26 years experience as a senior manager in local government.

A member of the Dunlop Bayswater Angling Club (39 years) and Club President for the last 20 years, Steven has a strong commitment to our rivers and streams and a desire to see them returned to their natural condition. Steven is the Former President of the Howqua Association Angling Clubs, and has been a delegate of VRFish for the last 20 years. Steven is the current deputy chair of VRFish and chair of the finance, audit and risk committee.

Steven believes fishers need a strong peak body who can advocate on their behalf and provide a voice back to the VFA and government

As a VRFish representative, he is able to give back to the sport he has enjoyed for many years.



Neville Dance

Neville has been an avid fisherperson since he was 6 years old and fishing in the Hopkins and Curdies Rivers with his father.

Around the age of 18, Neville developed a strong urge to start salt water fishing. This passion encouraged Neville to join the Warrnambool Offshore & Light Game Fishing Club and the Game Fishing Association of Victoria. He is now a life member of both clubs.

Neville previously served as Vice-President of the Game Fishing Association of Victoria and still remains on their committee. He has also served as a member of the Recreational Fishing Licence Grants Committee. He currently represents the Game Fishing Association of Victoria to VRFish.



Rita Caulfield

Rita currently works in the fishing tackle industry and is a familiar face on the tackle/boat/camping industry show circuit.

Rita's passion for recreational fishing, small business acumen and massive Cod smashing ability will serve recreational fishers well.

Within the recreational fishing community, she's known as 'Metre Rita' after reeling in 2x metre barramundi on consecutive casts. As one of the of top ranked Murray cod lure fishers in Australia, Rita has more 'metre cod' under her belt than the VRFish Board and Executive combined.



Hilary Ingram

Hilary Ingram is a keen Melbourne born fisher who has travelled throughout Victoria to fish or scuba dive over the last 40 years.

Though he has never been a member of a fishing club, he is a frequent flyer to areas like Lake Bullen Merri, Lake Purrumbete, Malmsbury Reservoir, Goulburn River and the Upper Coliban Reservoir.

In the last 20 years, Hilary has been dabbling in the world of scuba diving, completing approximately 1,000 recreational dives, mostly along the coastline of south-eastern Australia.

Hilary has been working in finance as an auditor for almost 40 years and continues to work full time specialising in auditing small to medium sized companies to ensure the fundamentals are in line with the financiers' requirements.



Jingjing Nan

Jing Jing is currently the Vice President of the Victorian Chinese Angling Association and founder of Nan International Media.

She is deftly experienced in marketing and event planning and is also skilled in business management.

Jingjing's passions are fishing and scuba diving. She really loves the sea and believes that the marine world is full of mystery and fun. Her goals for 2022 include exploring the beautiful ocean world more and calling on more people to participate and fall in love with fishing.

Jingjing says "As a new member to the board of VRFish. I will try my best to assist the organisation in promotional work, and plan more interesting activities and projects to bring more vitality to VRFish."



Lydia Cahill

Lydia is a highly experienced Senior Business Analyst and Project Manager contracting in the private sector, who brings a unique set of skills spanning across Aged Care, Health Insurance, Engineering and Infrastructure, Fast Moving Consumer Goods and Information Technology.

From humble beginnings bait fishing for snapper and King George whiting, Lydia's fishing passion developed into more specialised genres and is better known as an avid topwater / lure angler. Lydia fishes across Victoria for Southern bluefin tuna, yellowtail kingfish and occasionally Murray cod. Where possible, Lydia travels to a range of Australian and international destinations primarily in the pursuit of the mighty giant trevally.



Lee Spyrou

Appointed April 2023

Lee Spyrou is the newest member of the VRFish Board. Lee is an avid fisher and brings a wealth of experience and expertise to our organisation.

Lee has been fishing since she was a child, and her love for the sport has only grown stronger over the years. She is passionate about sustainable fishing practices and protecting our waterways for future generations. Lee's commitment to the environment and her extensive knowledge of fishing makes her a valuable addition to the VRFish Board.

Skye Kirne retired April 2023

In Memoriam:

Honoring Franz Grasser VRFish Board Member 1956-2023

It is with deep sorrow and heartfelt gratitude that we remember the life and legacy of Franz Grasser, a cherished member of the VRFish Board since his election in 2005. Franz's remarkable journey through the world of recreational fishing, his unwavering commitment to our cause, and his profound passion for the sport have left an indelible mark on our community.

Franz' connection to the waterways of Victoria was more than a pastime; it was a lifelong love affair with the outdoors, a tribute to the natural beauty of our region, and a testament to the power of fishing to shape a life.

Franz' heart belonged to Patterson Lakes. As an adult, he made these pristine waterways his playground, a place where he could escape and immerse himself in the tranquillity of fishing. It was in the serene waters of Patterson Lakes that Franz truly thrived, where he formed lasting friendships, and where he sought solace, joy, and connection with nature.

Franz's commitment to recreational fishing went beyond the act of casting a line; it extended into advocacy and conservation efforts. His dedication to the VRFish Board was a testament to his passion for protecting the very waters he so dearly loved. Franz understood the delicate balance that existed between anglers and the environment, and he worked tirelessly to ensure that this balance was maintained for future generations.

As a key member of the Boating Industry Association of Victoria, Franz also played a crucial role in bridging the gap between boating and fishing communities, advocating for sustainable practices that benefited both sectors.

In addition to his advocacy work, Franz had a keen interest in smoked fish. His artistry in preparing and sharing this delicacy with fellow anglers was legendary. Many board meetings were enriched by his culinary expertise, turning fishing outings into memorable feasts, where stories, laughter, and smoked fish were shared in abundance.

Franz will be missed throughout the recreational fishing community of Victoria, and especially by all he touched through his tireless work with VRFish.

Tight lines, Franz



Kate Norman
@kateelisen



Nikki Bryant
@purplepatchfishing

21.3m
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7.02s



David Borninkhof
@bucklednbentfishing_borno



Brent James
@brent_james_fishing

VRFish Members



Fishing Clubs and Associations

- Albert Park Yachting & Angling Club
- Altona Boating Angling Club
- Anderson Inlet Angling Club Inverloch Inc.
- Bairnsdale Flyfishers Club Inc
- Bairnsdale RSL Fishing Club
- Balmoral & District Angling Club
- Barham Angling Club
- Bass Strait Game Fishing Club
- Beaumaris Motor Yacht Squadron
- Bellarine Pirates Angling Club
- Bendigo & District Fly Fishers Inc
- Bendigo Legion Angling Club Inc
- Bentleigh RSL Angling Club
- Berwick Angling Club
- Black Dog Creek Fishing Club
- Blackrock Under Water Dive Group
- Blind Bight Fishing Club
- Blue Rock Angling Club
- Brighton Central Angling Club
- Brunswick City Anglers Club
- Burrenbeet Anglers Club
- Burnanga Indigenous Fishing Club Inc
- Camperdown Angling Club Inc
- Casterton Angling Society Inc
- Central Vic Lure Casters
- Charlton Angling Club Inc
- Clayton RSL Angling Club
- Cobden Angling Club Inc
- Corinella Boating and Angling Club
- Corio Bay Anglers Club
- Craigieburn Angling Club Inc
- Dandenong Club Sports Fishing Clubs
- Dartmoor Angling Club
- Derrinallum Anglers Club
- Didyabringyarodalong Angling Club Inc
- Donald Angling Club
- Dunlop Bayswater Angling Club
- Elwood Angling Club
- Fairfield-Alphington Fish Protection Society & Angling Club
- Geelong & District Anglers Club and Fish Protection Society
- Geelong Freedivers
- Geelong Gun and Rod Association Inc
- Geelong Western Beach Fishing Club
- Greensborough & District Angling Club
- Greenvale Sport and Game Fishing Club
- Healesville Angling & Fish Protection Society Inc
- Hobsons Bay Sport and Game Fishing Club Inc
- Horsham Angling Club Inc
- Jingellic-Walwa Fishing Club
- Keysborough Angling Club Inc

- Kiewa Valley Fishing Club
- King River and District Fishing Club
- Knox Boat Fishing Club
- Knox Club Sportfishing Club
- Kyneton Angling Club
- La Trobe Valley Scuba Club inc.
- Lake Boga Sports Fishing Club
- Lake Mulwala Angling Club
- Lake Purrumbete Angling Club
- Lake Tyers Beach Angling Club Inc
- Leongatha Angling Club Inc
- Leopold Angling and Aquatic Club
- Loch Sport Fishing Association Inc
- Longwarry Angling Club Inc
- Lorne Aquatic and Angling Club
- Lowhead Road Fishing Club Inc
- Loy Yang Recreational Angling Club Inc
- Maffra & District Angling Club
- Maldon Angling and Outdoors Club Inc.
- Maryborough Angling Club Inc
- McLoughlins Beach Angling Club
- Mitcham Angling Club
- Mordialloc Boating & Angling Club
- Mornington Peninsula Fly Fishers Inc
- Myrtleford & District Sportfishing Club
- Nagambie Angling Club Inc.
- Nangiloc Fishing Club
- Nicholson Angling Club
- Noble Park RSL Anglers Club
- Oakdale Angling Club & Fish Protection Society
- Omeo Angling Club
- Ormond Angling Club & FPS
- Pakenham Angling Club
- Port Albert Light Game & Sports Fishing Club Inc
- Port Campbell Boating Club
- Port Fairy Angling Club
- Portland Sport Fishing Club
- Preston Northcote Angling Club
- Red Tag Flyfishers
- Ringwood and District Angling Club Inc
- Rochester & District Angling Club
- Rosebud RSL Angling Club
- Rowvillian Angling Club
- Sandringham Anglers Club
- Snapper Point Angling Club
- Southern Boat Fishing Club
- Southern Fly Fishers (Aust) Inc
- Southern Peninsula Angling Club
- Stawell and District Angling Club Incorporated
- St Arnaud Angling Club
- Sunbury Angling Club Inc
- Sunshine Fly Casting Club
- Tatong Anglers Group
- Thorpdale and District Angling Club
- Toolamba Fishing Club Inc
- Tooradin Angling Club

- Torquay Angling Club
- Undera Angling Club
- Upper Yarra Angling Club
- Upwey Angling Club Inc
- Venus Bay Angling Club
- Victoria Police Angling Club Inc.
- Victorian Game Fishing Club
- Wangaratta Fly Fishing Club Inc.
- Warrnambool & District Anglers Club
- Warrnambool Fly Fishers Club Inc
- Warrnambool Offshore & LG Fishing Club
- Waverley and District Anglers
- Werribee and District Anglers Club
- Westernport Angling Club
- Williamstown Sportfishing & Game Club
- Wimmera Offshore Sport & Gamefishing Club
- Wonthaggi Angling Club
- Wy-Yung Angling Club
- Yaringa Fishing Club
- Yarra Valley Fly Fishers
- Yinnar Angling Club Inc.
- Association of Geelong and District Angling Clubs
- Australian Anglers Association (Victoria)
- Australian National Sportsfishing Association (Victoria)
- Ballarat & District Anglers Association
- Council of Victorian Fly Fishing Clubs
- Game Fishing Association of Victoria
- Gippsland Angling Clubs Association
- Goulburn Valley Association of Angling Clubs
- Howqua Angling Clubs Association
- Metropolitan Anglers Association
- Mid Northern Association of Angling Clubs
- Midland & North Central Angling Association
- SCUBA Divers Federation of Victoria
- Victoria Chinese Angling Association Inc.
- Victorian Piscatorial Council Inc.

Affiliated Organisations

- Boating Industry Association of Victoria
- Dive Industry of Victoria Association
- Fishcare Victoria
- OzFish Unlimited
- OzFish Unlimited [Bayside Chapter]
- OzFish Unlimited [South West Chapter]
- Professional Fishing Instructors and Guides Association
- Tangaroa Blue
- That's The Thing About Fishing
- Victorian Fishing Charter Association

Member Reports



Keysborough Angling Club



History

The Keysborough Angling Club was formed in 1978 by four mates who loved to fish. They met in each other's houses with more like minded people joining. With the membership growing they moved the meetings to various locations until our final clubrooms at the Edithvale Golf Club which we share with the golfers, and both clubs enjoy social activities together. Over the years the club has ebbed and flowed and today we have a growing membership of approximately sixty who meet regularly to talk fishing, boating, techniques and the best spots to fish. We also have 11 life members including the four original members.

Information

Our club meets on the first Wednesday of each month, excluding January, at the clubrooms. There is a bar with subsidised drinks and a light supper is served at the end of the meeting. We have a small raffle at each meeting where, for a small outlay, members could win a rod, a reel, knives, tackle or a 'special' prize. Membership is \$70 per year and covers the member, their spouse or partner, dependant children or grandchildren.

Activities

Our season is from July to June with a presentation night early July of the next year. We hold 4 weekend overnight competitions covering the four water types: Woodside Beach (surf), Lake Tyers (estuary), Port Welshpool (saltwater) and Eildon and surrounding rivers

(freshwater). In the other months one day competitions are held at various locations and waters. All competitions are meant to be light-hearted and points are awarded with prizes given out at our presentation night. Some 'fun' awards are handed out too!

This year we have been holding social fishing days where members gather to fish, have a bbq, talk fishing and have a laugh or two. We hope to expand these in the coming year.

Our major fundraising event is our trivia night held in May at the clubrooms and is well attended with a raffle of great prizes donated by our sponsors. A two-course meal is provided for a very small cost.

Members of both the angling club and the golf club come together for a Christmas party – there is good food, a hamper raffle is held and Santa comes along to hand out Kris Kringle presents and gifts for any children that attend.

Conclusion

We would love to meet anyone who would like to join our club and it doesn't matter if you are a novice, occasional or experienced fisherperson as all are very welcome and our members have a range of skills and talent that can help you with any questions or advice you may require. We aim to be a friendly, social club of all those who love to fish, boat, talk about fishing or want to know how to catch 'the big one.' Contact the secretary for more information and the next meeting date.



Mornington Peninsula Fly Fishers Inc

CLUB ACHIEVEMENTS 2022 - 2023.

The club is happy to report that the club appears to be going from strength to strength after Covid & that the club achieved 25 years as an incorporated organisation last month. A significant milestone for our club.

The highlights for 2022-2023 to name a few.

- One-Fly Saltwater event won by Jon Cartledge.
- Christmas breakup at Devilbend Natural Features Reserve.
- Club member of the year for 2021, Jon Cartledge.
- 15-year awards, Andrew Patuszka, Peter Cattermole, Alf Klarenbeek & David Mead.
- Club trips to Blairgowrie (Saltwater), Tasmania, Big River, New Zealand, Warburton, Bullen Merri, Howqua River.
- Averaging 20+ members to each of our meetings in the last 12 months.
- Raffle prizes to the value of \$350.
- Club meeting at Devilbend Natural Features Reserve with a sausage sizzle & a fish afterwards.
- "Make an Offer" night.
- Favourite flies in your fly box night.
- Social night, (Dinner).
- Fly-tying nights & on a wet Sunday afternoon (June).
- Almost 10 New members in 2022-2023.
- Guest speaker, Tom Jarman, in recognition of our 25th Birthday.

Graeme Hay
Club President



South East Angling Toorak Angling Club

South Eastern Anglers is a unique family orientated club with ample kids and women involved in the Club.

We are a club that shares all experiences and knowledge catering for all levels of fishers.

We are unique in that the club owns a boat for member use and a house by the water in Warneet for member accommodation and events.

We meet monthly to share all our fishing reports and regular presentations.

At SEATAC, a successful fishing trip is not just about the size of the catch; it's about sharing in the joy of the experience.

Whether it's a child's first fish, a grandparent's heartfelt advice, or the camaraderie of like-minded anglers, the victories are celebrated together, reinforcing the sense of belonging that makes SEATAC special.



SEATAC is more than a fishing club; it's a home away from home for many. It's a place where the laughter of children, the wisdom of elders, and the beauty of nature converge to create unforgettable moments. SEATAC's commitment to being a family-friendly fishing club ensures that the legacy of fishing and togetherness will endure for generations to come.

Dunlop Bayswater Angling Club

Celebrating Excellence in Fishing



"It's an honour to be named Senior Club Champion," Rita exclaimed after receiving the award. "The camaraderie and competition within DBAC have pushed me to become a better angler, and I'm grateful for the support and friendships I've found here."

The Dunlop Bayswater Angling Club (DBAC) enjoyed another successful year of camaraderie, competition, and conservation in the world of recreational fishing.

Among the highlights of this event were the crowning of Rita Caulfield as the Senior Club Champion and Amy Jeffers as the Junior Club Champion. This is the first time in club history that this has been achieved by a female. Well done ladies!

Rita Caulfield: **Senior Club Champion**

Rita won 4 of the 7 shields we have for the senior division (Largest Trout, Largest Fresh Water Fish, Largest Native, Number of species -8). She also won Freshwater Champion and Club Champion with a whopping 202.3 points. Rita's dedication to recreational fishing has not gone unnoticed. Her consistent performance and unwavering enthusiasm have earned her the coveted title of Senior Club Champion. With a deep knowledge of local waters and a keen sense of angling strategy, Rita's success is a testament to her passion and commitment to the sport.

Amy Jeffers: **Junior Club Champion**

In the junior category, the spotlight was on Amy Jeffers, a rising star in the world of recreational fishing. Amy's skills and sportsmanship earned her the title of Junior Club Champion. Her passion for angling and her eagerness to learn from her fellow club members have set her on a path to a promising future in the sport.



Steve Relf: **Life Membership.**

One of the most touching moments of the AGM was the awarding of life membership to Steve Relf. Steve's unwavering dedication to DBAC and his tireless efforts in promoting responsible fishing practices, organising club events, and mentoring young anglers have left an indelible mark on the club's history.

"Steve Relf embodies the spirit of our club," remarked a club official during the ceremony. "His passion, leadership, and commitment to both angling and the DBAC community have been extraordinary. Awarding him a life membership is a small token of our immense gratitude."



Rob Timmers



Andrew Ketelaar
Trout fishing master



Caitlin Berecny
@Caitlinfishes



James Matarazzo
@jamesfishingadventures

VRFish at Work



Advocacy in Action

As we reflect on another year of tireless efforts and achievements, we are proud to present the 2023 VRFish Annual Report.

This year, we want to shine a spotlight on the core of our organization - our mantra:

"VRFish at Work."

It encapsulates our commitment to advocating for recreational fishing in Victoria and the dedication of our team, with a special mention of the exceptional advocacy work led by Ben Scullin.

A Passionate Pursuit

At VRFish, we believe that recreational fishing is more than just a pastime; it's a way of life for thousands of Victorians. It's about connecting with nature, fostering a sense of community, and enjoying the therapeutic effects of the water. VRFish has been tirelessly advocating for the rights and interests of recreational fishers since its inception, and our work continues to make a significant impact.

While we celebrate our achievements in 2023, we are acutely aware that our work is far from over. VRFish remains dedicated to preserving and enhancing recreational fishing in Victoria. We are grateful for the unwavering support of our members and the wider recreational fishing community. Together, we will keep pushing for positive change and a brighter future for recreational fishing in Victoria



We look forward to another year of collaboration, innovation, and progress.

VRFish

supporting women in recreational fishing

In the world of recreational fishing, there is a growing and influential group of enthusiasts who are breaking new ground, challenging stereotypes, and contributing immensely to the sport's vibrancy and sustainability.

These trailblazers are women, and their presence in recreational fishing is not only important; it's indispensable.

At VRFish, we are committed to promoting diversity and inclusivity in recreational fishing, and that includes recognizing and celebrating the crucial role that women play in our community. This annual report is an opportunity to shed light on the significance of women in recreational fishing and acknowledge their invaluable contributions.



WIRFAB leader and VRFish member Michelle Brittain loves recreational fishing.

Breaking Down Barriers

Women have always been present in recreational fishing, but their involvement was often overshadowed or underrepresented.

In recent years, however, we have witnessed a remarkable transformation. Women are no longer content to remain on the sidelines; they are actively breaking down barriers and venturing into the waters with the same passion and skill as their male counterparts.

Through the Victorian Fisheries Authority's Women in Recreational Fishing and Boating network, women in recreational fishing are also serving as mentors and role models for the next generation of anglers. Their presence inspires young girls to pursue their interests in fishing, opening doors to new experiences and opportunities. The positive impact of these role models cannot be overstated, as they help shape the future of our beloved pastime.

'Recreational fishing overall for me is a great way to enjoy the outdoors, explore and connect with nature and people, improve mental health and wellbeing and physical fitness. I thrive to empower all other anglers and have been a supportive role model to all the single mums and independent women. It is an important industry that contributes to the wellbeing of many communities across Australia and beyond. This is the reason why I became a WIRFAB leader to help connect, educate and share experiences for a better fishing and boating future.'

'We are so lucky here in Victoria to have an abundance of species to catch as well as take home for a feed. the Victorian Fisheries Authority have been amazing at keeping our fisheries sustainable, size and bag limits and the incredible fish stocking in our lakes and rivers.'

My favourite species are the bread and butter of fishing. King George whiting, Southern calamari, blue spot flathead, pink snapper, gummy shark and I'm lucky enough to have two of my favourite pelagic in my backyard which are the yellowtail kingfish and southern bluefin tuna.'

Communication & Engagement

July 2022 - June 2023



Website

Page views

128,330

Users

72,996

Articles published:

82



Social Media



followers

12,948



followers

2,950



followers

1,244



instagram tags

2,877



subscribers

55,689



Facebook Reach:

484,534

Facebook Engaged Users:

38,865

Communication & Engagement



Top 10 News Articles

July 2022 - June 2023

1) VRFish Victorian State Election Agenda

2) Outrage as regulations pushed to ban kids fishing in local parks

3) Importance of stocked fishing lakes to Victorian recreational fishers

4) Catch a mighty Murray cod

5) Victorian recreational fisher priorities revealed

6) River trout season opens on Saturday

7) Give Murray cod a rest on the nest

8) The cod are biting at Eildon

9) Cod open season kicks off on Thursday

10) Events to get your family hooked on fishing



RECREATIONAL FISHING CODE OF CONDUCT

VRFB HAS DEVELOPED THIS CODE OF CONDUCT FOR RECREATIONAL BOAT, SHORE, RIVER, STREAM AND JETTY FISHERS IN VICTORIA.

Recreational fishers have a responsibility to look after fisheries resources for the benefit of the environment and future generations of fishers. This Code of Conduct provides guidelines to minimise conflicts on the water, demonstrate best practice for responsible fishing and result in a more enjoyable fishing experience for all.

1

Awareness of and compliance with fishing **REGULATIONS**.



6

Always seek **PERMISSION** when entering private property.



2

RESPECT the rights of other anglers and users.



7

Use **ESTABLISHED** access roads and tracks.



3

PROTECT and restore the environment and fish habitat.



8

ATTEND to your fishing gear and value your catch.



4

Carefully return **UNDERSIZED**, protected or unwanted catch back to the water.



9

EDUCATION - pass on your knowledge.



5

Fish species and other organisms must not be **RELOCATED**/transferred into other water bodies.



10

Respect Aboriginal sites, **CULTURE** and values.



Hooked on Fishing

explains
her love of
recreational
fishing.

Nikki Bryant
@purplepatchfishing

Fishing is my escape from the hustle and bustle of the city and work. There is nothing better than jumping in the car heading to one of our favourite fishing destinations at the end of a busy week.

Being on the water you are at one with nature and get to see some amazing things not to mention the most spectacular sunrises. I also love the social side of fishing. I have made a lot of friends through my love of fishing and the places it has taken me.

My passion is estuary fishing, bream and flathead are at the top of my species to target but nothing beats catching a nice mulloway.

You can usually find me on one of the estuaries in East Gippsland

but one of the advantages of doing competitive bream tournaments is we get to travel to other areas of Victoria as well.

Strategic Plan

2020 – 2024

Key Focus Area:

**As the Peak Body,
this means we will focus on:**

***Protecting our
fishing future***

Engaging our members, recreational fishers and other groups to plan for our future.

Being at the forefront of promoting responsible and ethical fishing and best practice in fisheries management.

***Enhancing our
fishing experiences***

Understanding what impacts our members when they are fishing in order to effectively improve experiences for recreational fishers.

***Leading and
innovating***

Presenting a clear advocacy platform and anchoring our thinking in the future.

Creating best practice and innovation through developing the skills of our staff, board and other.

This will make a difference for you by:

- Keeping you updated on what we are doing and how you can be involved.
- Linking the activities, you love with a new generation of recreational fishers.
- Working to secure access to your fisheries.
- Informing you about the fishing management priorities and policies.

- Giving you information about our plans and solutions to make fishing better.
- Making it easy for you to share information about fishing with us and others.
- Knowing our position statements and having an opportunity to shape them.

- Securing more support for recreational fishing.
- Growing the number of people who share our interests in recreational fishing.
- Developing our ability to fund what is important to recreational fishers.

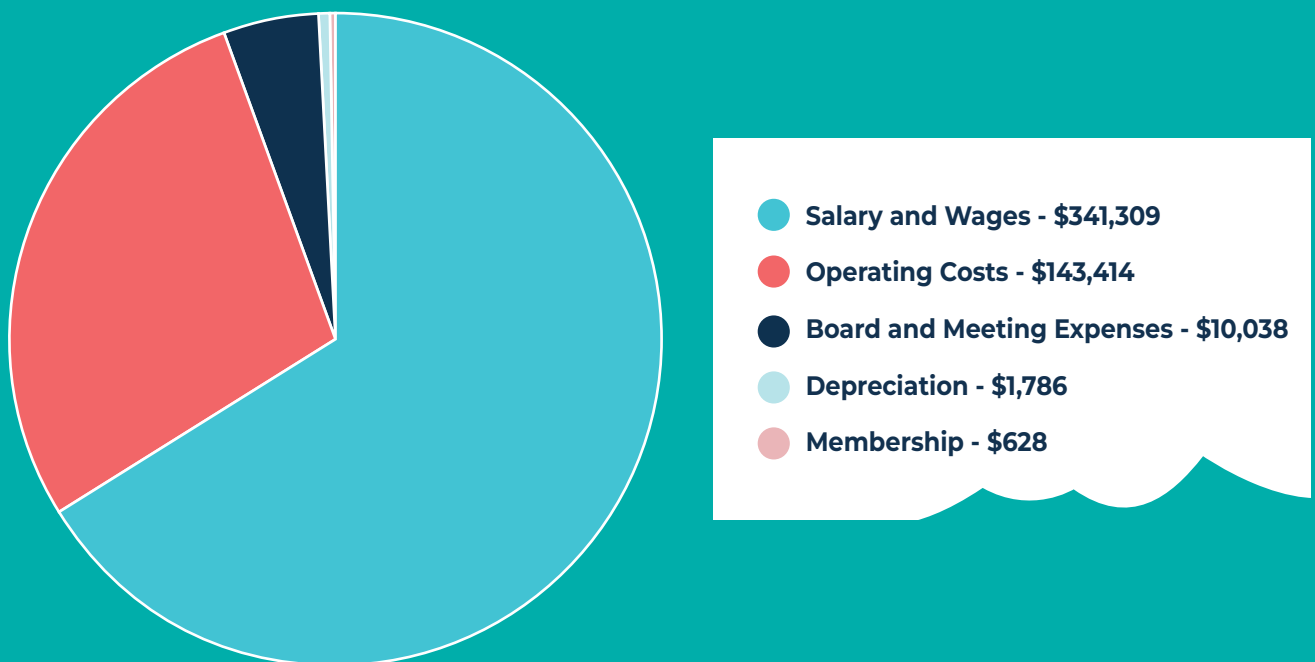
What we will have achieved together by 2024 is:

- No net loss of fisheries and access to recreational fishing.
- Members, recreational fishers and other groups will know the way we do things at VRFish and how we engage with them.
- There are more new recreational fishers of all ages actively involved with VRFish.
- Increased the recognition of the role recreational fishers play in the stewardship and conservation of fish and our waterways.

- Better fishing opportunities, including increased boat launching capacity and quality.
- Marine, freshwater and estuarine habitat restoration and enhancement rolling plans are successfully implemented and activated.
- An effective feedback loop system is place and operating well so we know what is happening and so do you.

- Recreational fishers, the government and the public will be more aware of and informed about our advocacy efforts and will be able to engage to make a stronger voice.
- There will be greater diversity of people who are actively involved in VRFish through membership.
- Multiple revenue streams are in place to ensure we are sustainable and investing in areas of importance.
- We have an effective leadership and governance program in place.
- Our members and partners will feel valued.

VRFish Expenditure 2022/23



We know how important recreational fishing is to the economy of Victoria and health and well-being of individuals and communities.

SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC SURVEY OF RECREATIONAL FISHERS VICTORIA



FRESHWATER

Victorians fishers are more likely to go fishing in freshwater areas than other Australians.



80.6%
VICTORIANS



63.1%
AUSTRALIANS



16.4%
ADULTS

840,900

Victorians go fishing every year



If kids fish at a similar rate to young adults, over

+1M

Victorians fish annually

More than half of Victorian recreational fishers went fishing on one or two occasions per year



12.8 go fishing for more than **FIVE** days.



ECONOMIC CONTRIBUTION

In 2019-20, recreational fishing in Victoria contributed:

2.27B to the Victorian economy

19,737 full-time equivalent jobs



79%

of Victorian residents believe recreational fishing is a moderately or highly acceptable activity



REGULATION COMPLIANCE:

Almost all fishers in Victoria believe they can comply with recreational fishing rules and regulations.



Includes catch and size limits and best practice methods for handling their catch.



GREATER MELBOURNE:

\$ 1.6B
13,595 jobs



REGIONAL VICTORIA:

\$ 606M
6,142 jobs



NATIONAL IMPACT:

\$ 2B
19,000 jobs

Source: National Social and Economic Survey of Recreational Fishers 2018-2021, Fisheries Research and Development Corporation, 2023



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RUTH BEEBY

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