VFISH
VICTORIAN RECREATIONAL
FISHING PEAK BODY

NaturallyVic
HANDLE WITH CARE



Annual Report

2025-26



Let's Make Fishing Better, For Everyone!

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

Cover Image: Anna Cumming



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Chairman's Report

On behalf of the Board of Directors, it gives me extreme gratitude to provide the annual report of our independent Victorian Recreational Fishing Peak Body, VRFish, for the year 2025-26.

This year, we have completed a very powerful milestone in receiving a historic five-year funding agreement that will consolidate the future of our peak body and, most importantly, provide our valued staff and Executive Officer ongoing employment security. Sincere appreciation must be extended to The Hon. Enver Erdogan MLC, Minister for Outdoor and Recreation, for endorsing this funding agreement that clearly promotes confidence in the future of our peak body.

Board of Governance

Our Board's continued governance principles are sound, adhere to best practice and have continued to reflect resilience in decision making that continues to achieve outcomes from our five-year strategic plan whilst always referencing our current policies and six advocacy pillars.

With a forward vision, the Board has supported a practical need to update current policy positions and develop new policies that reflect current recreational fisheries management and, most importantly, emerging issues that may impact on recreational fishing, access and associated fishing/boating outcomes.

Throughout the year, our Board Members have been 'on the ground' promoting VRFish and consulting with many recreational fishers while attending events hosted by the VFA across the state. It's particularly heartening to have recreational fishers continue to attend our stand and support their peak body and join as members.

To my fellow Board members, I sincerely thank you for your unwavering support, governance, integrity and commitment to our mission and vision of 'making fishing better, for everyone.'

Finance, Risk, Audit Committee

Under the guidance of the Finance, Risk and Audit Committee Chair, Steven Relf, the committee has meticulously managed our finances where outcomes have once again been delivered within our budget predictions. Most importantly, our peak body is clearly in a sound financial position moving forward. On behalf of the Board, I must extend our gratitude to all the committee members in producing this magnificent result.

VRFish Operational Staff

Strong appreciation must be accredited to all our staff for their overwhelming support throughout the year. Our newly appointed Executive Officer, Anthony McGrath, has grasped his role very quickly and continues to play an integral role in building stakeholder relationships while addressing the never-ending day-to-day issues ensuring Victoria's recreational fishers receive exponent value from their peak body. Our Communications Manager, Holly Amos, continues to excel with her amazing promotion while distributing members newsletters, social media, promoting surveys and in-general delivering widespread communications. And finally, our VRFish Operations Manager and Company Secretary, Amanda Szabo, provides an invaluable and supportive service that ensures our company obligations are adhered to with professionalism and commitment.

Rob Loats
Chairman



Advocacy

Throughout the year, VRFish has continued to be very active in maintaining the organisation's sound representative advocacy linked to the state's freshwater and saltwater recreational fisheries. Our vision is always to make fishing better for everyone and, importantly, advocacy is a keynote deliverable linked to our funding agreement where our measured outputs continue to deliver, and often exceed, our KPI's.

Collaboration

VRFish continues to promote and foster collaborative partnerships with State Government Ministers, Shadow Ministers, Victorian Fisheries Authority, Better Boating Victoria, numerous authorities and government agencies to ensure we receive up-to-date information prior to potential management decision making. It is also of high relevance that our peak body representing over one-million recreational fishers welcomes every opportunity to promote detailed advice on the multitude of issues associated with protecting and enhancing the recreational fishing experience. As reflected in our statement of purposes, we will also continue to recognise the heritage and culture of our First Nation People and promote reconciliation through recreational fishing.

Members

Our Victoria-wide membership are realistically the heroes of VRFish who have supported us for over thirty years. I must also extend a special welcome all new members who have joined our peak body this year and look forward to your future contributions. On behalf of the Board and staff of VRFish, please accept our gratitude to all members, stakeholders, and organisations for your magnificent volunteer contribution and ongoing support and assistance throughout the year. Let's never forget members numbers reflect strength, and most importantly strength with unity is the cornerstone of ongoing success.

Member Awards

Moving forward, several of our long-term VRFish members received very well-deserved Lifetime Achievement Awards for their exceptional, volunteer service over many years to the peak body.

It is extremely exciting to share that one of our committed VRFish members has been recognised for his ongoing achievements. Sean Crombie, who is a member of the Victorian OzFish Unlimited Campaspe-Loddon Chapter was awarded the prestigious Victorian OzFisher of the Year Award for his highly valued delivery of the Lake Eppalock and Upper Coliban Reservoir habitat projects. Our peak body strongly supports fish habitat projects and on behalf of VRFish we pass on our appreciation to Sean and sincere congratulations for being presented with this achievement. Let's never forget habitat makes fish happen.

At last year's annual meeting, I was privileged to be appointed as the Chairperson of the Board to lead VRFish for a two-year term of office. I currently remain steadfast to complete this term of office and move on following the 2027 annual meeting. As a not-for-profit sector peak body, we must continue to work cohesively together with our members and the recreational fishers of Victoria to evolve, grow and deliver our vision 'to make fishing better for everyone.'

Tight lines,

Rob Loats
Chairman

Executive Officer's Report

In November 2025, I received the honour of being appointed to the role of Executive Officer of VRFish.

As a former VRFish State Council member, and 'Young Future Leader program' graduate I was well aware of what I'd gotten myself into and very excited by the prospect of being able to have a positive impact on Victoria's recreational fishing.

2025/26 has been a huge year for recreational fishing. For me, the greatest win has been working with the Minister for Outdoor Recreation to establish a five-year funding agreement for VRFish. This may seem insignificant to many, however in the 31 years that VRFish has existed as the peak body, it has never had funding beyond three years and on many occasions only received year-by-year funding. This five-year agreement means that we have operational tenure across two state government election cycles providing us with greater independence to represent the views of fishers.

Another key achievement this year was being awarded the opportunity to hold the 2027 National Recreational Fishing Forum in Victoria. VRFish will cohost the event with the Australian Recreational Fishing Foundation (ARFF) with funding from Fisheries Research and Development Corporation (FRDC).

In February, I attended the World Recreational Fishing Conference in South Africa, as part of a delegation of current and emerging leaders from throughout Australia. VRFish was strongly represented at the conference, with two of our members also being awarded bursaries form the commonwealth government to attend. There were



VRFish EO Anthony McGrath with Trout Cod



Anthony McGrath
VRFish Executive Officer

over 150 delegates sharing and learning from each other over four days. One of the highlights for me was a presentation that benchmarked all fishing licence programs through the world. The study found that Victoria has the most comprehensive program and should be considered the world standard.

A considerable amount of work over the past year has been building capacity within VRFish to provide greater support to recreational fishers, fishing clubs and to apply greater influence on issues that impact the sector. One of the ways we have done this is by building greater cohesion with the state government through the Victorian Fisheries Authority and establishing a closer relationship with our Minister.

With the support of our board and membership, we have established a list of priorities that we are seeking support for from those contesting the November state government election in Victoria, with a focus on five key themes: better fish, better access, better environment, better regulation, and a better future. We released this list in April. Since then, the VRFish Chair and I have met with all major and minor parties to highlight the importance of recreational fishing to the health and wellbeing of people and to the environment, as well as the economic benefit fishers provide in regional and metropolitan communities.

I would like to thank the support of the VRFish Board who have weathered several storms with stability and remain focused on making fishing better for all Victorians, regardless of where you fish or what you fish for. I'd like to thank Robert Loats as our long-standing Chairperson for his guidance in my first year in the role. I'd like to thank the VRFish staff, Holly Amos and Amanda Szabo. They are the 'well-oiled machine' behind the scenes, doing all the heavy lifting. Without them, VRFish wouldn't operate as well as it does. Their strive for continuous improvement is admirable!

Most importantly, I'd like the thank all the fishing volunteers that give their time to do the things that need to get done. Whether it is cooking a BBQ, planting trees, building habitats, or putting your hand up to help run a club or moderate a social media page. The hours given to making fishing better would total in the hundreds of thousands each year and without your passion, we wouldn't have such a huge voice.

We now shift our focus to 2026/27 and the opportunities that it will bring. A new state government will be formed and with that will come opportunities. We will seek to improve our relationships across borders, with other jurisdictions that impact shared fish stocks. We will continue to support clubs, associations and organisations to deliver their services and support to fishers and fish. We hope to expand the footprint of VRFish and grow our engagement and representative function. Most importantly, we will strive to make fishing better for everyone, by tackling the key issues that impact us when we're doing what we love – fishing!

VRFish achieves a lot for its size and I'm proud to be a part of it. If it isn't the best job in the world, I would be surprised.

Let's make fishing better for everyone.

Anthony McGrath
VRFish Executive Officer

About Us

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 a part of a huge and diverse community of 1,114,000 recreational fishers that injects more than $7.1 billion in direct and indirect economic contribution to the Victorian economy every year and supports tens of thousands of jobs.

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.

Access

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

Water

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

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.

Promote

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

Support

Supporting our VRFish members and empowering recreational fishers to lead advocacy issues.

Our Board Members



Rob Loats, Chairperson

Rob is a past primary production business manager from rural Victoria.

He has extensive experience of issues associated with natural resource and water management and skills associated with finance, government and non-government state agency inputs and outputs.

Rob has provided long term representation of the Donald Angling 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 a member of the Fisheries Revenue Allocation Committee (FRAC), is a past Chairman and member of the Recreational Fishing Licence Working Group, Currently, the Chair of the Northcentral CMA Native Fish Recovery Flagship Waterways Project PSC. He is a past member of the DEECA Riparian Forum Advisory Group, Snobs Creek Fish Hatchery Advisory Board and Life Member of the Mid Northern and Wimmera Angling Associations and Donald Angling Club. Rob's efforts have also earnt him the National Mal Ramsay Lifetime Achievement Award 2012. Rob has always been interested in water quality and has recently completed 30 years of voluntary water monitoring with the North Central CMA Waterwatch Program. Rob is also a current member of the Grampians Wimmera Mallee Water Recreational Water Committee.

Rob has a very strong affinity in habitat protection and reinstatement, measurable environmental water deliverables and a strong supporter of recreational water allocations, and as a past member of the National Fish Habitat Network, Murray-Darling Murray Cod Taskforce, Native Fish Strategy, and continues to promote the values of fish habitat and projects that protect and restore habitat in Rivers, Creeks, Wetlands and Water Storage Reservoirs, especially woody habitat.

Rob joined the VRFish Board to promote the interests of all Victorian recreational fishers and to apply his knowledge regarding strategic business directives, financial management and skills associated with responding to government policy directives to promote the best possible long-term outcomes for all recreational fishers.



Scott Jefferis, Deputy Chairperson

Scott joined the Board in 2024 and is currently the VRFish Deputy Chair.

He is the Vice President of the Dunlop Bayswater Angling Club and the Secretary/Treasurer of Howqua Angling Clubs Association.

A lifelong fisho, Scott enjoys fishing in the Murray between Gunbower and Swan Hill, Lake Eppalock and Lake Eildon. Scott says, "Fishing has always been a family affair for me and I have fond memories of my grandparents and father taking me fishing and now enjoy fishing with my daughters". More recently, his family have been chasing the elusive metre Murray cod in Yarrawonga.

He has over 20 years' experience working in the IT industry including ten years as a business owner/ partner and four years as founder/ director where he has developed a high level of understanding of IT and cyber security, financial management, human resources and vendor management.

Scott is highly involved in his local community including more than seven years as School Council President where he worked with the education department, local council and politicians. And, more than thirteen years in various roles, including Vice President and Secretary, at his local cricket club where he has played a key role in community consultation.

Scott has greatly enjoyed being a part of the Dunlop Bayswater Angling Club and is keen to contribute to VRFish through supporting the success of other fishing clubs.



Steven Relf

Steven has a strong commitment to recreational fishing and has advocated on behalf of anglers for more than 27 years.

Steven is the former deputy chair of VRFish and current chair of the finance, risk & audit committee.

Steven believes fishers need a strong peak body to ensure they have a voice to fisheries decisions makers and government.

As a VRFish representative Steven can give back to the sport he has enjoyed for a very long time.



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.



Jingjing Nan

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

A respected community leader, entrepreneur, and multicultural advocate, Jingjing has dedicated more than a decade to building connections between multicultural communities, government, business, and community organisations across Australia. Her work has contributed significantly to strengthening multicultural engagement, social cohesion, and cross-cultural understanding throughout Victoria.

Jingjing is a passionate recreational angler and scuba diver with a deep connection to Victoria's waterways and marine environment. She has spent countless hours exploring rivers, lakes, coastal waters, and underwater ecosystems, developing a strong appreciation for the beauty, biodiversity, and importance of healthy aquatic environments. For Jingjing, fishing and diving are more than recreational activities—they are meaningful ways to connect with nature, promote wellbeing, and foster a sense of adventure and discovery.

Jingjing believes recreational fishing plays an important role in bringing people together across generations, cultures, and communities. She is committed to encouraging greater participation in fishing and outdoor recreation, particularly among women, young people, families, and multicultural communities. Through her involvement with both VRFish and the Victorian Chinese Angling Association, she actively promotes fishing as an accessible and inclusive activity that supports physical and mental wellbeing while strengthening community connections.

As a VRFish Board Director, Jingjing brings extensive experience in community engagement, communications, and multicultural outreach. She is committed to helping VRFish build stronger relationships with Victoria's diverse communities, promoting sustainable fishing practices, increasing participation in recreational fishing, and ensuring that future generations can continue to enjoy and protect Victoria's rich aquatic and marine environments.

Our Board Members



Lydia Cahill

Lydia is a highly experienced Senior IT Business Analyst and Project Manager contracting in the private sector.

She brings a diverse skill set spanning Aged Care, Health Insurance, Engineering and Infrastructure, Fast Moving Consumer Goods and Information Technology. Her professional expertise includes business transformation, stakeholder engagement and policy development across complex organisational environments.

From humble beginnings bait fishing for snapper and King George whiting, Lydia's passion for fishing evolved into more specialised genres, and she is now best known as an avid topwater and lure angler. She fishes across Victoria for Southern bluefin tuna, yellowtail kingfish and, on occasion, Murray cod. Whenever possible, Lydia travels throughout Australia and internationally in pursuit of the mighty giant trevally.

Since becoming a mum, Lydia has also reconnected with the simplicity and joy of grassroots fishing – rediscovering the importance of accessible, family friendly fishing experiences and the role they play in fostering future generations of recreational fishers.

She contributes to VRFish with a deep understanding of recreational fishers' needs and concerns, strengthened by her industry experience as a brand ambassador and Tuna Champions ambassador.

Driven by a commitment to ensuring infrastructure meets the needs of fishers and guided by a strong conservation and sustainable fishing mindset, Lydia's business acumen and policy development capability ensure that recreational fishers' interests are clearly articulated and strongly represented.



Lee Spyrou

Lee is a passionate advocate for recreational fishing, boating, conservation and community leadership.

She has dedicated much of her life to ensuring future generations can enjoy healthy waterways while creating opportunities for more people to participate in recreational fishing.

As the first female President of Albert Park Yachting & Angling Club since its establishment in 1909, Lee has worked to strengthen one of Victoria's oldest recreational fishing clubs by fostering an inclusive, welcoming culture and encouraging greater participation from women, juniors and families. She is particularly passionate about building confidence and independence, mentoring women to gain their boat licences, develop boating skills and become leaders within recreational fishing.

Lee serves as a Director of VRFish, is a member of the Victorian Fisheries Authority's Recreational Fishing Licence Trust Advisory Committee and the Recreational Fishers Leaders Forum and is a WIRFAB Ambassador. In 2026, she was selected as part of the Australian delegation to attend the World Recreational Fishing Conference in South Africa, representing Victoria on the international stage and bringing global knowledge, innovation and best practice back to Australia's recreational fishing community.

Her leadership extends beyond governance through her long-standing commitment to conservation and collaborative partnerships. Lee has played a key role in advancing shellfish reef restoration initiatives across Port Phillip, working alongside government, environmental organisations, industry and community groups to restore marine habitat and improve recreational fishing opportunities for future generations.

Lee believes the greatest measure of leadership is creating opportunities for others. She is committed to building an inclusive recreational fishing community where people of all ages, backgrounds and abilities feel welcomed, respected and inspired to participate, while helping the next generation of leaders thrive.



The Australian Delegation who attended the 11th World Recreational Fishing Conference in South Africa



John Spragg

John has spent the last 50 years fishing both fresh and saltwater.

He enjoys giving back to the sport and pastime he has loved for so long. He is passionate about the sustainability of our fish stocks, and he wants to see his grandkids have the opportunity to catch fish as he has.

Now retired, John was the President of Bellingham-Marine for Australasia and Middle East – the global leader in design, manufacture and construction of floating marinas and related floating facilities. He was also Vice-Chairman or member of the Maina Industries of Australia for around 25 years.

John is currently Senior Vice-President of the Victorian Fly Fishers Association (VFFA) and on the committee for Albert Park Yachting & Angling Club (APYAC). John was instrumental in changing the way APYAC measure fish for competitions to ensure they can be released back into the water.

John brings to VRFish experience in management, dispute resolution, a passion for sustainability in fishing and a love of fishing both fresh and saltwater.



Cody McLeod

Cody's passion for recreational fishing and marine conservation was a driving factor in his decision to join the VRFish Board.

Cody is passionate about giving back to recreational fishing and is deeply committed to environmental sustainability, particularly in the context of marine ecosystems. As a board member of the Reef Reconstruction Coalition, Cody has been actively involved in efforts to restore declining local oyster beds and reef systems in Port Phillip Bay.

Currently pursuing a Bachelor of Commerce at the University of Melbourne, Cody brings to the VRFish Board experience in financial analysis and business growth strategies, recently leading the expansion of an e-commerce platform into US and Australian markets. He also has experience with underwater drone reef mapping, securing funding and managing complex environmental projects.

A member of Albert Park Yachting and Angling Club (APYAC), Cody has been mentored by founding VRFish board member, Bob Pearce. Cody will bring a fresh energy and a young leaders perspective to the board.

VRFish Members



Fishing Clubs & Associations

- Albert Park Yachting & Angling Club
- Altona Boating Angling Club
- Anderson Inlet Angling Club Inverloch Inc
- Association of Geelong & District Angling Clubs Inc
- Australian Anglers Association (Victoria)
- Australian National Sportsfishing Association (Victoria)
- Bairnsdale Flyfishers Club Inc
- Bairnsdale RSL Fishing Club
- Ballarat & District Anglers Association
- Ballarat Fly Fishers Club
- Balmoral & District Angling Club
- Barham Angling Club
- Baringhup Cairn Curran Native Fishing Club
- Bass Strait Game Fishing Club Inc
- 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
- Brunswick City Anglers Club
- Burnanga Indigenous Fishing Club Inc
- Camperdown Angling Club Inc
- Casterton Angling Society Inc
- Castlemaine District Fish Protection Society & Anglers Club
- Central Vic Lure Casters Inc
- Charlton Angling Club Inc
- Clayton RSL Angling Club
- Clunes Angling Club
- Cobden Angling Club Inc
- Corinella Boating & Angling Club
- Corio Bay Anglers Club
- Council of Victorian Fly Fishing Clubs
- Craigieburn Angling Club Inc
- Dandenong Club Sports Fishing Clubs
- Danglers Fishing Club Inc
- Dartmoor Angling Club
- Derrinallum Anglers Club
- Didyabringyarodalong Angling Club Inc
- Donald Angling Club
- Dungula Maniga Banga

- Dunlop Bayswater Angling Club
- Elwood Angling Club
- Essendon Fish Protection Society & Anglers Club
- Fairfield & Alphington Fish Protection Society & Anglers Club Inc
- Game Fishing Association of Victoria
- Geelong & District Anglers Club & Fish Protection Society
- Geelong Freedivers Inc
- Geelong Gun & Rod Association Inc
- Geelong Western Beach Fishing Club
- Gippsland Lakes Fishing Club
- Gippsland Lakes Recreational Fishing Alliance
- Goulburn Valley Association of Angling Clubs
- Greensborough & District Angling Club
- Greenvale Sport & Game Fishing Club
- Hamilton Anglers Club
- Hampton Park Angling Club
- Healesville Angling & Fish Proection Society Inc
- Heathcote Angling Club Inc
- Hobsons Bay Sport & Game Fishing Club Inc
- Horsham Angling Club Inc
- Howqua Angling Clubs Association
- Inverloch Fishing Club Inc
- Jingellic-Walwa Fishing Club
- Keysborough Angling Club
- Kiewa Valley Fishing Club
- King River & District Fishing Club
- Knox Boat Fishing Club
- Knox Club Sportfishing Club
- Koroit & District Angling Club Inc
- 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
- Leitchville Bunyips Sporting Club Inc
- Leongatha Angling Club Inc
- Leopold Angling & Aquatic Club
- Loch Sport Fishing Association Inc
- Longwarry Angling Club Inc
- Lorne Aquatic & Angling Club
- Lowhead Road Fishing Club Inc
- Loy Yang Recreational Angling Club Inc
- Maffra & District Angling Club
- Maldon Angling & Outdoors Club Inc
- Maryborough Angling Club Inc
- McLoughlins Beach Angling Club
- Metropolitan Anglers Association
- Mid Northern Association of Angling Clubs
- Midland & North Central Angling Association
- 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
- Pakenham Angling Club
- Port Albert Fishing Club Inc
- Port Campbell Boating Club
- Port Fairy Angling Club
- Portland Sport Fishing Club
- Poseidon Angling Club Inc
- Preston Northcote Angling Club
- Red Tag Flyfishers
- Rhyll-Phillip Island Angling Club Inc
- Ringwood & District Angling Club Inc
- Rochester & District Angling Club
- Rosebud RSL Angling Club
- Rowvillian Angling Club
- Sandringham Anglers Club
- SCUBA Divers Federation of Victoria
- Snapper Point Angling Club
- South Eastern Anglers & Toorak Angling Club
- Southern Boat Fishing Club
- Southern Fly Fishers (Aust) Inc
- Southern Peninsula Angling Club
- Springvale RSL Angling Club
- St Arnaud Angling Club
- Stawell & District Angling Club Inc
- Sunbury Angling Club Inc
- Sunshine Fly Casting Club
- Tatong Anglers Group
- The Victorian Fly-Fishers' Association Inc
- Thorpdale & District Angling Club
- Toolamba Fishing Club Inc
- Toonalook Amateur Fishing Club
- Tooradin Angling Club
- Torquay Angling Club
- Undera Angling Club
- Upper Yarra Angling Club Inc
- Upwey Angling Club Inc
- Venus Bay Angling Club
- Victoria Chinese Angling Association Inc
- Victoria Police Angling Club Inc
- Victorian Game Fishing Club
- Victorian Piscatorial Council Inc
- Wangaratta Fly Fishing Club Inc
- Warneet Fishing Club
- Warrnambool & District Anglers Club
- Warrnambool Fly Fishers Club Inc
- Warrnambool Offshore & Light Game Fishing Club
- Waverley & District Anglers Inc
- Welshmans Reef Water Sports Club
- Werribee & District Anglers Club
- Westernport Angling Club Inc
- Williamstown Newport Anglers 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

Affiliated Organisations

- Boating Industry Association of Victoria
- Dive Industry of Victoria Association
- Fishcare Victoria
- Geelong & District Casting Club Inc
- No Netting Southwest Victorian Coast Inc
- OzFish Unlimited
- OzFish Unlimited (Bayside Chapter)
- OzFish Unlimited (South West Chapter)
- Professional Fishing Instructors & Guides Association
- Tangaroa Blue
- That's The Thing About Fishing Inc
- Victorian Fishing Charter Association
- Walkerville Campers Association

Member Reports

Ballarat Fly Fishers Club

Learn to Fly Fish Workshop

In 2025, the Ballarat Fly Fishers Club was proud to welcome new and emerging anglers to its third "Learn to Fly Fish" workshop at Lake Wendouree. The event brought together 25 enthusiastic participants for a friendly and practical introduction to fly fishing and the club. The day began with an overview of the club and its activities, followed by an accessible introduction to the fundamentals of fly fishing and practical seasonal strategies for fishing Lake Wendouree.

A highlight of the workshop was the generous sharing of knowledge between experienced club members and those just beginning their fly-fishing journey. Participants received expert guidance in the mechanics of fly casting before putting theory into practice on the water, supported one-on-one by club members. Although fishing conditions were challenging, with only a small number of rainbow trout caught, the day was about much more than the catch. It gave participants the chance to build confidence, ask questions, make connections and experience the encouragement that sits at the heart of the fly-fishing community.

The workshop was made possible through the efforts of the organising committee and the generosity of club members who gave their time, knowledge and encouragement throughout the day. The Ballarat Fly Fishers Club also gratefully acknowledges the support of the Victorian Fisheries Authority, whose grant funding enabled the club to purchase starter packs for participants, including a club hat, brag mat, Polaroid sunglasses, fly box and a selection of flies to use on Lake Wendouree. The club also thanks its industry supporters for helping make the event such a positive experience.

Overall, the workshop strengthened local connections, introduced more people to the enjoyment of fly fishing, and reinforced the important role clubs play in creating welcoming pathways into recreational fishing. We look forward to running the workshop again in 2026.

Shaun Watson

Vice-President
Ballarat Fly Fishers Club



Workshop Participants



Victorian Fisheries Authority's Ben & stocking assistants at Tullaroop Reservoir

Midland & North Central Angling Association

Midland & North Central Angling Association member clubs have been strong with their involvement in community support this past year.

Heathcote AC are actively involved with the Dementia Alliance's fishing based events at Lake Eppalock, and Kyneton AC continues its role as the angling club chosen to assist with the implementation of fishing based social welfare and health programs such as its direct assistance to Fishing for Mental Health by fund raising and event participation at Upper Coliban. Bendigo & District Fly Fishers members are continuing their support for the Mending Casts organisation, being involved with fundraising and assistance with organising a retreat for the Bendigo region.

The VFA has been very busy with fish stocking in the Loddon-Campaspe basins with Tullaroop Reservoir's future as a trophy trout fishery benefitting from advanced yearling salmonid stocking over recent years. Members from M&NCAA clubs including Maryborough, Castlemaine and Bendigo & Dist Fly Fishers, and Ballarat District Anglers Association members from Clunes, Creswick and Lakeside clubs were keen to support fish releases on multiples of consecutive days with boats and muscle. Restocking events for the Kennington reservoir after its refurbishment with assistance from the RFLT, were well publicised, with members of Bendigo Legion and Bendigo & Dist. Fly Fishers rallying to the call to assist.

M&NCAA president Sean Crombie was honoured with OzFish's Victorian OzFisher of the Year award for 2026. Sean's dedication is well demonstrated by the amount of his own resources he applies to support recreational fishing and his strong work ethic. Sean's achievements include developing and supporting access and habitat projects, his strong contribution to the VFA's stocking program on behalf of rural fishers, his work to ensure success of the annual Midland Shield competition, and being in the moment with recreational fishing issues.

Greg Hellsten



Sean Crombie handing largest fish trophy to Nick Atyeo



Ross Albiston & John Gray stocking at Tullaroop Reservoir

Member Reports

Tatong Anglers Group

Tatong Anglers Group (TAG) was formed by concerned anglers back in 1993 after the devastating floods that impacted heavily on fish and fish habitat.

Since that time, TAG members have continued to work restoring and installing fish habitat and restocking fish to the rivers and lake in the Broken River catchment.

TAG is a friendly club with over 100 members ranging in age from 8 months to 90 plus years. TAG members have been actively involved in stocking fish in the past 12 months, using their boats to release 82,000 Murray Cod and 90,000 Golden Perch into Lake Nillahcootie. The Broken River from Lake Nillahcootie to Shepparton also saw members release 26,000 Cod and 49,000 Golden Perch. One of the highlights for members this year was releasing 13,300 Macquarie Perch into the Broken River below Lake Nillahcootie.

Terry Armstrong

Secretary



Stocking Murray Cod into Lake Nillahcootie, TAG members using their boats to disperse 82,000 Murray Cod around the Lake habitat to improve survival rate.



TAG members stocking Golden Perch into Lake Benalla.





Albert Park Yachting & Angling Club

New Shellfish Reef Restoration Success

Albert Park Yachting and Angling Club (APYAC) has continued to carry out shellfish reef restoration works and each project that we initiate seems to achieve even more outstanding success than previous projects.

Shellfish reefs have suffered greatly worldwide from over exploitation and environmental damage. This includes our beloved Port Phillip where oyster beds, scallop beds and reef areas have been decimated. Some of this happened from the late nineteenth century, whilst the desecration of the reefs in northern Port Phillip started in the 1980's.

Our reef restoration works in Port Phillip commenced about ten years ago through a foundation partnership with Victorian Fisheries Authority and The Nature Conservancy, resulting in successful projects completed in several locations around the bay. Margarets Reef, off St Kilda is probably the biggest of the restored areas, with a reef area larger in size than the MCG.

The most recently completed reef restoration project is Kayakers' Reef 1.0, which is located about 800 metres off the Kerferd Road pier. This project cost was $100,000 and was 50% funded from recreational fishing licence funds, with the additional 50% being contributed by APYAC.

The project was managed by the VFA's Brent Womersley, who did a brilliant job, which resulted in it being an outstanding success. Oyster triangles were deployed for the first time and these were seeded with baby oysters at the Victorian Shellfish Hatchery. This proved to be a game changer, as the tiny oysters had grown to 50mm within five months. Additionally, new oyster recruitment was also observed when this survey was conducted.

Cardium Marine's Ben Cleveland provided vital support throughout the course of the project. Ben has been involved with all of our reef restoration projects for over ten years.

These projects are not just about attracting fish, but increasing marine biodiversity and purifying the water at the locations – a single oyster can purify 200 litres of water per day. Just imagine what millions of them are doing. There are other potential benefits as well, as the new reef areas are believed to sequester carbon to mitigate the impacts of climate change. As to the fish, they move into restored reef areas very quickly. The fish love the newly restored reefs and so do recreational fishers.

Currently, a new reef restoration project (Kayakers 2.0) is almost complete and we are hoping to get some more funding to further extend the abovementioned reef areas. APYAC is also planning a process to restore fifteen other reef areas in northern Port Phillip and we are working on a process to fund such a big project. More news to come on this.

Bob Pearce

Albert Park Yachting
& Angling Club

Strategic Plan 2024-28

VRFish is the Peak Body representing recreational fishers in Victoria with a commitment to provide better recreational fishing experiences for all Victorians.

To do this, we provide opportunities for all Victorian recreational fishers to contribute their views and opinions through surveys, face to face engagement, email, phone, social media and working groups. Their broad and diverse input helps to shape our strategy and advocacy priorities that benefit all recreational fishers.

Some of this work is done through, and together with our members. Our membership comprises of individuals, recreational fishing associations, fishing clubs and affiliated organisations that share the love of recreational fishing and are united in a collective pursuit to make fishing better for current and future generations.

We also engage with a wide network of collaborative partnerships at a state and national level with individuals, organisations and community members who share our values and objectives for recreational fishing.

Our Vision

To make fishing better, for everyone!

Our Mission

VRFish works to make fishing better through leadership in advocacy, policy development and fisher participation.

We work towards making fishing better by:

- Protecting our fishing future
- Enhancing our fishing experiences
- Leading and innovating

Our Values

- **Respect for People:** we value our people and their diversity, knowledge and experiences
- **Innovative:** we are willing to try new things in our pursuit of excellence
- **Integrity:** we are accountable, honest, ethical and genuine; we celebrate the good things we do and learn from our setbacks
- **Evidence-based:** we critically consider all the available evidence and data in developing our policy
- **Passion:** our love of fishing drives us to be persistent and tenacious in our vision to make fishing better

Our Guiding Principles

- Maintaining recreational fisher's social license to operate
- Represent more recreational fishers
- Meeting the growing needs and aspirations of recreational fishers
- Involve and reflect the diversity of fishers
- Increase the incidence of Government's decision and policy making being informed by expertise-based and broad public opinion
- Improve the quality of information available for recreational fishers



Advocacy

Presenting a clear advocacy platform and amplifying the voice of recreational fishers.

We do this through our six advocacy pillars:

1. Access
2. Habitat
3. Water
4. Promotion
5. Best Practice
6. Support

1. Educating and engaging the community
2. Protecting and enhancing recreational fishing and the environment
3. Leading and innovating the sector
4. Supporting recreational fishers

- A greater connection to recreational fishers across the diversity of Victorian communities
- VRFish enhances the quality and flow of information to our members, stakeholders and the community
- Supporting the social licence of recreational fishing
- Improving access to water, fisheries, waterways and supporting healthy fish habitats
- Developing skilled leaders and guiding VRFish into the future
- VRFish business model supports the resourcing to service our members and the recreational fishers effectively
- Empowering recreational fishers to advocate effectively
- Supporting our members for sustainability

- Identify our target audiences so we can better understand how to engage and communicate with them
- Map our stakeholders so we can better understand their information needs
- More recreational fishers are stewarding ethical practices within recreational fishing and improving the environment
- Working together with Government and the sector to deliver improved access
- Clarify our training, development and leadership needs across VRFish and recreational fishing
- Set our whole of plan financial goals and identify tactics for sustainability
- Deliver the advocacy strategy
- Growing VRFish membership and supporting our members

Communication & Engagement

1 July 2025 – 30 June 2026

Social Media

Instagram

Followers
3,298

Facebook

Followers
14,628

Engaged Users
134,781

Views
2,248,799

X

Followers
1,195

Email

Subscribers
53,172

Threads

Followers
466

VRFish featured in the media at least 205 times during 2025/26.

Website

Page views
109,834

Users
72,968

Articles published
130

Face-to-Face Engagement

Fishing club events
9

VRFish 30th Anniversary Regional Forum
1

Fisher engagement events
14

Conferences and expos
3



VRFish EO Anthony speaks to Victorian Fisheries Authority's Habitat Officer Andrew Briggs

VRFish attends Docklands Event





VRFish Board Members Rita Caulfield & Steven Relf at the Snobs Creek Hatchery Open Day

Surveys

1,023 recreational fishers had their say in the VRFish Kingfish Survey.

Top News Articles

1. Exploring Victoria's cool winter fishing spots
2. Proposed projects set to restrict access to our bays
3. Family fishing these school holidays
4. 10 million fish stocked across Victoria
5. The need to control carp in Australian waterways
6. Decommissioning of oil and gas infrastructure in Bass Strait
7. It's time to take action on carp
8. Abalone and rock lobster season opening
9. New VRFish Executive Officer appointed
10. Making fishing better for all Victorians



VRFISH
VICTORIAN RECREATIONAL FISHING PEAK BODY

Let's make fishing better, for everyone.

RECREATIONAL FISHING CODE OF CONDUCT

VRFISH 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.**



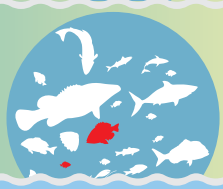
2. **RESPECT** the rights of other anglers and users.



3. **PROTECT** and restore the environment and fish habitat.



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

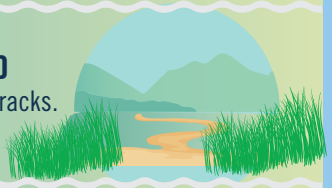


5. Fish species and other organisms must not be **RELOCATED**/transferred into other water bodies.

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



7. Use **ESTABLISHED** access roads and tracks.



8. **ATTEND** to your fishing gear and value your catch.



9. **EDUCATION** - pass on your knowledge.



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



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vrfish.com.au

VRFish Kingfish Survey Results

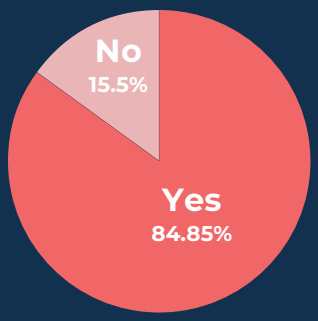
In September 2025, VRFish asked recreational fishers to share whether they supported changes to fishing regulations for Yellowtail Kingfish as proposed by the Victorian Fisheries Authority.

A total of 1,023 recreational fishers responded to the online survey.

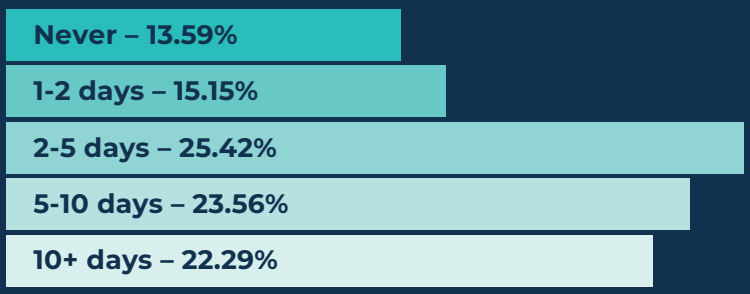
We found that majority of recreational fishers were supportive of the proposal as the reduced bag limit better reflects recreational fisher views of a reasonable day's harvest.

We used the feedback to form the VRFish submission to the Victorian Fisheries Authority's proposal to change the daily bag limit for Yelllowtail Kingfish.

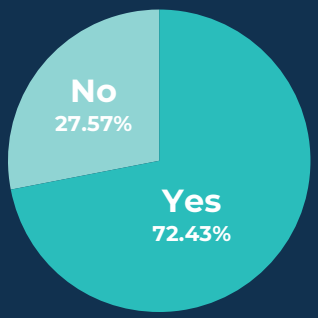
Do you recreationally fish for Kingfish in Victoria?



How many days a year do you fish for Kingfish?



Do you support the proposal to reduce the Victorian recreational fishing bag limit for Kingfish from 5 to 2 per person per day?



As a result of the public consultation, the Victorian Fisheries Authority later announced a reduction in the bag limit for Yellowtail Kingfish from five to two fish per person, per day.

VRFish Priorities

Habitat & Water

Protecting, restoring & enhancing where fish live.

Our Vision

To improve fish habitat so that our recreational fisheries can thrive, through:

- Habitat protection, restoration and enhancement
- Co-management of natural resources
- Secure water allocations for recreational fishing
- Shared benefits for recreational fishing from environmental flows

Victorian recreational fishers know that better fish habitat delivers better fishing outcomes. VRFish continues to play a lead role in advocating for investment in fish habitat and promoting the role that all Victorian recreational fishers can play in identifying areas that require attention and leading the implementation of restoration efforts.

Across the state, there are many recreational fishing organisations, fishing clubs and volunteers that are undertaking incredible work on behalf of their fishery. VRFish has continued to promote the importance of recreational water allocations to stocked fishing lakes and the value of environmental water to recreational fishers.

2025/26 Highlights

- VRFish attended meetings and provided a submission to the Murray Darling Basin Plan Review.
- Continued supporting the Albert Park Yachting and Angling Club and partners shellfish reefs construction in Port Phillip.
- VRFish promoted information from West Gippsland CMA to inform fishers of the benefits of e-water flows in Gippsland waterways.
- Advocated for a $2.5m fish habitat fund to deliver marine and inland habitat restoration projects.
- Called for carp control measures to be implemented to recover our struggling waterways and support native fish populations.
- Advocated for water security and the allocation of recreational water for recreational fishing to protect the recreational fishery on the Wimmera-Mallee pipeline.
- Advocated to broaden the 10inTen endangered native fish species recovery program.
- VRFish participated on the North Central Regional Waterway Strategy – Steering Committee, Review of Western Sustainable Water Strategy and Grampians Wimmera-Mallee Water Board Stakeholder Group.
- Participated in the draft Victorian Waterway Management Strategy and CMA's regional waterway strategies consultation.



VRFish Board Member John Spragg stocking fish



Goulburn Valley Association of Angling Clubs tour Arcadia Native Fish Hatchery

Access

Ensuring better access to fishing opportunities.

Our Vision

Safe, easy and ongoing access, through:

- Maintaining and extending access to fisheries
- Improved pier and land-based fishing opportunities
- Better boating infrastructure, governance and investment
- Safe harbours for ocean fishing

A significant issue facing Victorian recreational fishers is access. A high priority for VRFish is ensuring better access and appropriate facilities so that all Victorians can enjoy the vast range of fishing opportunities across the state.

By providing adequate access, it allows people of all ages, backgrounds, demographics and abilities to enjoy wetting a line. VRFish and its members spend countless hours advocating for better access or maintaining our current level of access.

2025/26 Highlights

- VRFish consults on the Better Boating Fund including the recreational boating dredging and access program.
- Raised awareness within the recreational fishing community about proposed onshore and offshore energy terminals and windfarm projects.
- VRFish has a dedicated webform for recreational fishers to submit where they've been locked out from accessing public land.
- VRFish advocated for recreational fishing access to all urban waters throughout Victoria, including Edwardes Park Lake and Newport Lakes, to be mandated.
- Advocated for new inland fisheries to be developed close to Melbourne by opening Yan Yean Reservoir, Merrimu Reservoir and Djerriwarrh Reservoir to recreational fishing.
- Advocated for the continued delivery of the Victorian Recreational Boating Strategy priorities.
- Advocated for additional funding to improve crown land access to public water, by activating unused road reserves.

VRFish Priorities

Participation & Support

Increased participation in fishing & supporting our members.

Our Vision

Increased participation and recognition of the benefits of recreational fishing, through:

- Promoting and growing participation amongst non-fishers, especially youth
- Affordable fishing opportunities
- Quality fishing experiences and catch rates
- Improved recognition and social and economic benefits
- Stronger fishing clubs and associations
- Developing skilled leaders, empowering recreational fishers to advocate effectively and guiding VRFish into the future
- Growing VRFish membership and supporting our members

VRFish is a membership organisation of people that love fishing. It's only natural our work is aimed at making fishing better for everyone and attracting new people to our wonderful sport. Victoria is blessed to have a diverse range of fishing opportunities and we are cognisant to promote affordable and family-friendly fishing as part of this amazing mix. We know how important recreational fishing is to the economy of Victoria and health and well-being of individuals and communities. Our role is to ensure recreational fishing is recognised for these benefits from members of parliament, the media and the community as a whole. Fishing clubs and associations are an integral part of our recreational fishing sector, their local communities and VRFish. Our vision is to support fishing clubs to thrive and become stronger.

2025/26 Highlights

- Continued to attract new VRFish members including individual adults, juniors, fishing clubs and affiliated organisations.
- Promoted fishing club events such as come-and-try fishing clinics, fishing talk nights, and fundraisers.
- Attended Victorian Fisheries Authority's recreational fishing events such as their Hooked-On event series, hatchery open days and other events.
- VRFish presented at fishing club meetings to engage with our Foundation Members and Fishing Club Supporters.
- Promoted Australian Recreational Fishing Foundation's Gone Fishing Day initiative and encouraged people to go fishing or participate in local events.
- VRFish actively promoted and supported club-based initiatives for LGBTIQA+ community.
- Through our communications, promoted responsible recreation along our waterways.
- Promoted Victorian family-friendly fishing locations and beginner tips to encourage novice fishers, families and youth to participate in fishing.
- Promoted recreational fishing grants programs and supported fishing club applications.

Organisational Excellence, Advocacy & Partnerships

Striving for organisational excellence, advocacy & building partnerships.

Our Vision

Continually striving for organisational excellence, through:

- Quality governance and organisational processes
- Greater accountability to stakeholders
- Improved recognition and support from recreational fishers
- Strategic and effective communications and engagement
- Strong and constructive relationships with Government and Stakeholders

VRFish strive to be a high performing organisation that has strong foundations through our members and collaborative partnerships with other organisations. With our limited resources, we leverage our success and achievement through the passion and tireless advocacy of our volunteer membership and effective working partnerships with our stakeholders. As a strong and independent peak body for recreational fishing in Victoria, we continue to be open, transparent and accountable to maintain support from recreational fishers.

2025/26 Highlights

- In 2025, VRFish celebrated 30 years of representing Victoria's recreational fishing.
- Generation of significant VRFish content and messaging through the publishing of 130 website articles, 109,834 website views, 482 Facebook posts, and 341 Instagram posts.
- Increase in followers across social media channels (Facebook and Instagram).
- VRFish featured in the media more than 210 times advocating on issues that impact recreational fishing in Victoria. An increase of 175% on last financial year.
- Promoting funding opportunities and advice to our members to assist their work in making fishing better in their local area.
- Ongoing relationships with Boating Industry Association of Victoria, OzFish Unlimited and Tangaroa Blue.
- As a recognised sport and recreation body, VRFish works with Sport and Recreation Victoria to promote VRFish and grant funding opportunities for our members.
- Ongoing relationships with Government stakeholders including the Victorian Fisheries Authority, Better Boating Victoria, Victorian Environmental Water Holder, Catchment Management Authorities, DEECA, Department of Transport, Parks Victoria, Australian Fisheries Management Authority and Water Authorities.
- VRFish provides advice on organisational and member progress under Sport and Recreation initiatives. This is essential for VRFish recognition as a state level peak body, member access to Sport and Recreation Victorian grant funding and compliance with the Active Victoria Framework.
- Supported fishing clubs through providing advice and assistance in club governance procedures and best practice.

VRFish Priorities

Best Practice

Promoting best practice fisheries management and informed fishers.

Our Vision

Best practice fisheries management and informed fishers, through:

- Adoption of responsible fishing practices and behaviours
- Prioritised fish stocking
- Science-based and responsible fisheries regulation
- Greater investment into research, development and extension
- Legislative recognition of recreational fishing
- Improved aquatic pest management

VRFish lead the way in promoting best practice behaviours and attitudes within our sector, as well as raising awareness and helping the fishing community understand their rights and obligations. Central in fostering greater stewardship within our fishers is our Code of Conduct. Recreational fishers expect sustainably managed fisheries and strive for quality fishing experiences.



Minister Steve Dimopoulos and VRFish Rob Loats at the Opening of the Snobs Creek Macquarie Perch Recovery Centre

Recreational fishers know too well the adverse impacts that pest species have on our aquatic ecosystems and our fishing. VRFish provides consolidated and expertise-based advice back to Government in the development of fisheries management plans and when management issues arise. To make fishing better for all Victorian fishers and regional communities, VRFish and our members play a vital role in shaping the annual inland fish stocking program.

2025/26 Highlights

- Conducted a survey of 1,023 recreational fishers regarding the Victorian Fisheries Authority's proposed change to Kingfish bag limits.
- VRFish provided expert advice to the Victorian Fisheries Authority on the proposed changes to Yellowtail Kingfish bag limits.
- Attended the Murray Darling Carp Summit, co-hosted by the Victorian Fisheries Authority and Australian River Restoration Centre, to address the lack of action on carp.
- VRFish attended the Victorian Fisheries Authority's Recreational Fishing Leaders Forum in Nagambie.
- VRFish consulted on the Corner Inlet Fishery Management Plan – Management Advisory Committee.
- Participated in the Vic Fish Stock meetings to shape the annual fish stocking plan and priorities across Victoria.



Minister Enver Erdogan, VRFish Deputy Chair Scott Jefferis and members of the Bendigo Legion Angling Club and Bendigo and District Fly Fishers at Kennington Reservoir

- VRFish Executive Officer and two VRFish members attended the World Recreational Fishing Conference in South Africa along with the Australian delegation of recreational fishing representatives.
- Advocating for Yellowtail Kingfish to become a recreational only species in Victoria.
- VRFish provided a submission on the Outdoor Recreation Victoria legislation and advice to both sides of government regarding the bill.
- Promoted rock fishing safety through VRFish communications to encourage fishers to adopt responsible rock fishing behaviours and raise awareness of lifejacket laws at high-risk locations.
- Promotion of Fisheries Notices that are in place to ensure awareness and compliance amongst the recreational fishing community.
- VRFish sat on both the Rock Lobster Fishery Management Plan steering committee and resource assessment group.
- Provided advice to the Victorian Fisheries Authority on various Fisheries Notices consultation including Portland Bay Commercial, Recreational Abalone Open Days for Victorian central waters, Corner Inlet Cockle, and Gippsland Lakes Black Bream.
- VRFish is a member of the Play It Safe by the Water committee and promotes water safety through our communications.
- VRFish and our members were involved in both commonwealth and state fisheries management, with important submissions and participation in numerous fisheries management processes.
- Promoted boating safety through VRFish communications to encourage fishers to adopt responsible boating behaviours when spending time on the water.
- Promoted best practice handling techniques through the Care for Cod and Help Wild Trout in Hot Water campaigns.
- Promoted marine debris reduction initiatives by Tangaroa Blue, OzFish Unlimited, Parks Victoria and Zoos Victoria.
- Engaged with project teams for the Port of Hastings Victorian Renewable Energy Terminal, Vopak Victoria Energy Terminal, and Star of the South Offshore Wind projects to represent recreational fishing.
- Raised awareness of the abalone disease outbreak in South Australian waters with Victorian fishers.
- Advocated for a review of recreational abalone regulations, with a view to provide more equitable access in Victorian central waters.
- VRFish provided expert advice on Melbourne Water and Goulburn-Murray Water Recreational Area Management Plans.

THE VALUE & BENEFITS OF FISHING

VFISH
VICTORIAN RECREATIONAL FISHING PEAK BODY

1,113,506
Victorians go fishing every year

Average fisher spend
$338
per trip

6.8 million
fishing trips per year

On average, each fisher goes fishing **6.8** times per year

27,300 jobs
supported by rec fishing

55%
prefer bait fishing

$7.51 billion
economic contribution to Victorian economy

Source: The economic value of recreational fishing in Victoria (2020) undertaken by Ernst & Young commissioned by the Victorian Fisheries Authority and Better Boating Victoria.

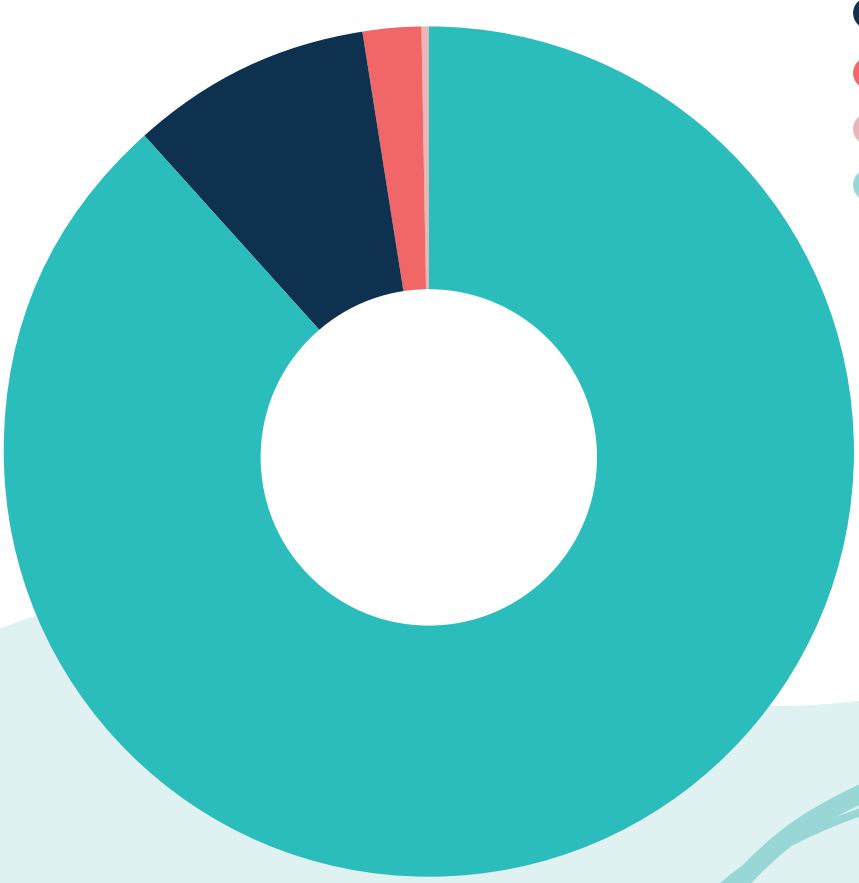
Health and Wellness Benefits of Fishing:

1. Fishing is a great way to spend quality time with family and friends
2. Fishing reduces stress and helps you unwind
3. Fishing gets you outdoors
4. Fishing can improve your cardiovascular health
5. Fishing is a healthy lifestyle activity
6. Fishing increases your Vitamin D levels
7. Fishing promotes patience and self-fulfilment
8. Fish are a good source of protein and nutrition
9. Fishing lets you unplug from the digital world
10. Fishing supports conservation

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p: 03 5221 1104
e: info@vfish.com.au
www.vrfish.com.au

LET'S MAKE FISHING BETTER, FOR EVERYONE!

VRFish Expenditure 2025/26



- Salary and Wages – $327,348
- Operating Costs – $147,958
- Board and Meeting Expenses – $33,745
- Depreciation – $9,050
- Membership – $80

Total Expenditure $518,181

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

VRFish EO Anthony presents Joan Washington with Pat Washington's Lifetime Achievement Award with the Bairnsdale Fly Fishers Club





VRFish Lure Painting Activity





VRFish Deputy Chair Scott Jefferis, VRFish EO Anthony McGrath, Minister Steve Dimopoulos, Luba Grigorovitch MP, VRFish Board Member Lee Spyrou





VRFish Board Members John Spragg and Lee Spyrou

VRFISH
VICTORIAN RECREATIONAL
FISHING PEAK BODY

PO Box 4574
Geelong VIC 3220, Australia
P: 03 5221 1104
E: info@vrfish.com.au

vrfish.com.au