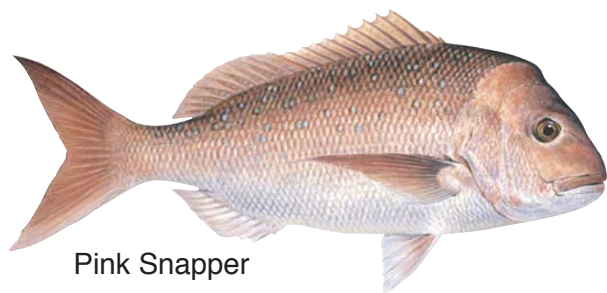


Cockburn and Warnbro Sounds pink snapper closure extension

The Cockburn and Warnbro Sounds pink snapper spawning closure has been extended from 1 September to 31 January. In addition, the area of the closure has been extended north to Fremantle Fishing Boat harbour and west to the inside of Five Fathom Bank (see map overleaf). The extension to the closure is to provide additional protection for spawning pink snapper.

Closure information

It is illegal to fish for pink snapper, or be in possession of pink snapper while line fishing, in the closed waters during the closed season. Line fishing for other species from a boat is allowed as long as there are no pink snapper on board. However, pink snapper taken outside the closed area may be transported through the closure area as long as no line fishing is undertaken.



Pink Snapper

Protecting spawning pink snapper

Cockburn and Warnbro Sounds support the largest known spawning schools or 'aggregations' of pink snapper in the West Coast Bioregion and are critical for sustaining adequate breeding stocks of these long lived species across the bioregion. The Cockburn and Warnbro Sounds pink snapper spawning closure aims to provide targeted protection for this important spawning event. The closure has been a key management measure for pink snapper sustainability in the West Coast Bioregion since 2000.



A school or 'aggregation' of pink snapper in Cockburn Sound. Fish like these are the 'lifblood' of the stock in the West Coast Bioregion.

Over the last few years, there has been increased targeted fishing pressure on spawning pink snapper in Cockburn and Warnbro Sounds in the lead up to the current closure – as well on migrating pre-spawning pink snapper on grounds adjacent to Cockburn Sound, Warnbro Sound and Owen Anchorage (e.g. Five Fathom Bank).

This pressure impacts on the effectiveness of the spawning closure and therefore on the pink snapper stock as a whole.

Importance of protecting spawning aggregations

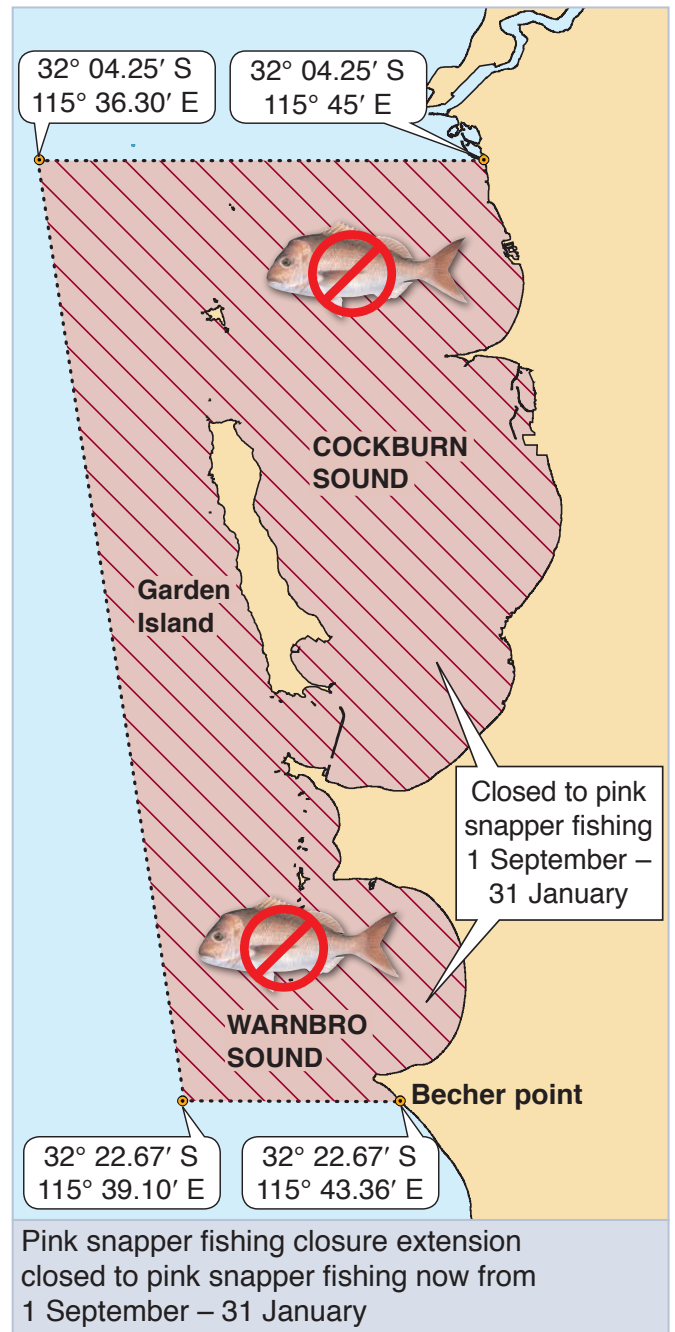
Pink snapper in the West Coast Bioregion are currently in recovery. The recreational catch of pink snapper in the Metropolitan and South-West areas is mainly made up of relatively young fish and little or no fish over 20 years old. With pink snapper capable of living to 40 years of age, this highlights that there is still a way to go before pink snapper stocks are considered to have recovered on the West Coast.



Recreational fishing boats targeting spawning pink snapper in Cockburn Sound.

Recent good catches of pink snapper by recreational and charter fishers in the Metropolitan and South West areas have mainly comprised a limited number of strong 'recruitment' years when large numbers of fish make it through to adulthood and contribute to future stocks.

This highlights the importance of protecting key pink snapper spawning aggregations to ensure pink snapper stocks are able to spawn successfully and boost the stock when favourable environmental conditions occur.



Important disclaimer

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