

North Johnson – Fresh Water Run Off



I have mentioned numerous times about the productive fishing period available a few days after heavy rain. Well, last week one of Cairns's best known guides, Terry Holman, took me to the North Johnson river for a bit of a play.

The river was right up, backed up on a huge early morning tide as well. We had to settle into some fairly unproductive fishing downstream of the main highway bridge

while we waited for the river to fall enough to allow us to push upstream to the productive zones Terry was most anxious to try.

But in a little over an hour the water dropped just enough for us to squeeze under the bridge. Admittedly we had to remove the rocket launcher (rod holder) and lie flat on the floor, but we were soon on our way, scooting across the fast flowing water on our way upstream.



You could see rippled zones on the water that obviously held rock bars and substantial structure but the water was high enough to not cause too many problems. Coming back down again might prove a different story though mused Terry!

It was not long before we were into our first fish, a medium sized sooty grunter (fresh water black bream) that took the 10cm gold Yozuri deep diver on my third cast!

It just got better as the day wore on. Sure we had a few quite moments where the fish went to sleep for a few minutes, but by drifting back downstream on the fast flowing current, casting to small eddies, rock bars, bank side weed verges and small feeder gutters we accounted for four

barra, one mangrove jack, fifteen jungle perch and over thirty sooty's.



A great days fishing in anyone's view.

By the time we reached the boat ramp, the water had dropped over 3 metres. There was no problem at the bridge but those rippled zones I mentioned on our way up had turned to small rapids needing extreme care - hard rocks, a spinning propeller and fast shallow water can be the ingredients of a major disaster if not traversed with caution.