



UPPER NOOSA RIVER BASS 2025

INFORMATION RATING



Key species: Australian Bass

Fish timeframe: 2016-2025

Fisher timeframe: 2021-2025

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AUSTRALIAN BASS



Product of Infofish Australia



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UPPER NOOSA RIVER OVERVIEW

The upper Noosa River is largely undeveloped. It is in the Noosa National Park with several campsites along the river. Boating on the river is limited to electric motors and is popular with kayak fishers. Most tagging activity is from Lake Cootharaba to Campsite 3.

Tagging in the upper Noosa River for Bass has been ongoing since the 1980's providing a long timeline of data that helps understand the dynamics of Bass in the river. Being largely a natural system, the Noosa River provides an important comparison with Bass stocked in SEQ lakes.

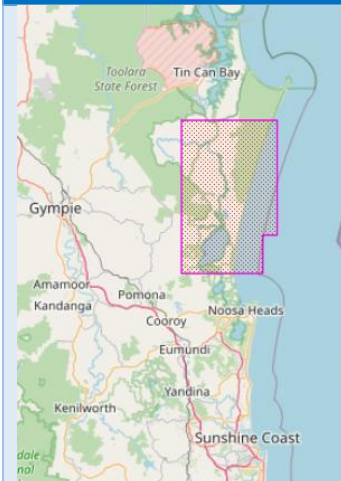
Over the past decade tagging has been undertaken mostly in Sep-Oct by the same group of taggers. As such fisher activity may not be reflective of the actual activity in the river. Activity was curtailed in 2022 with high flows in the river for most of the year resulting in a lowering of fishing effort and a low number of recaptures.

Bass fishing in the river is mostly experiential with few fish being kept and is mostly a male visitor fishery with those recapturing fish mostly coming from the Sunshine Coast, Brisbane and the Gold Coast.

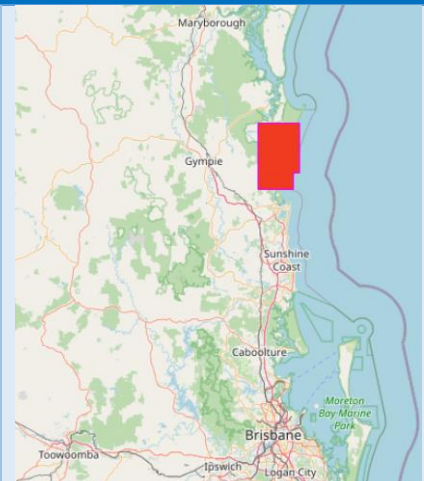
Bass tagged in the river were mostly undersized with legal fish ranging from 11% in 2019 to 52% in 2023 and 2024. There haven't been any trophy fish over 500mm tagged in any year however the largest fish was 490mm in 2022 and just short of the trophy length.

Bass in the river are slow growing. Fish tagged at 200-300mm grew an average 22mm in the first year and 72mm by the end of the fifth year. However, Bass in the river survive for many years with the longest time out being 20.5 years for a fish tagged in 1996 and recaptured in 2016.

UPPER NOOSA RIVER LOCATION

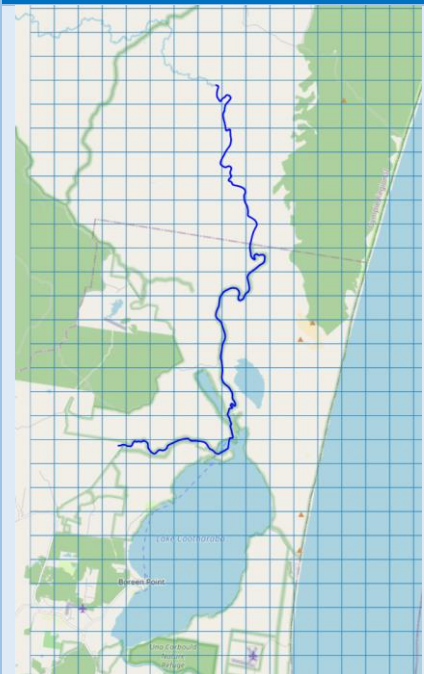
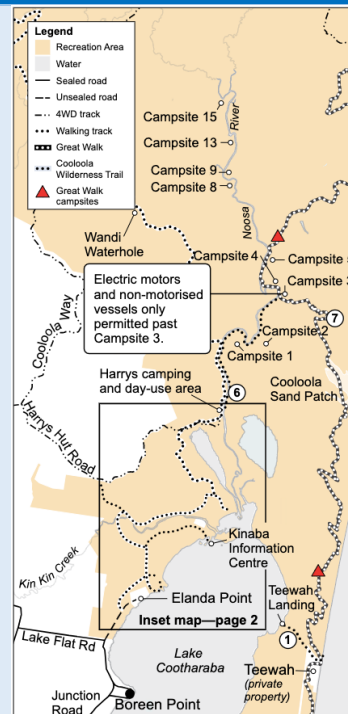


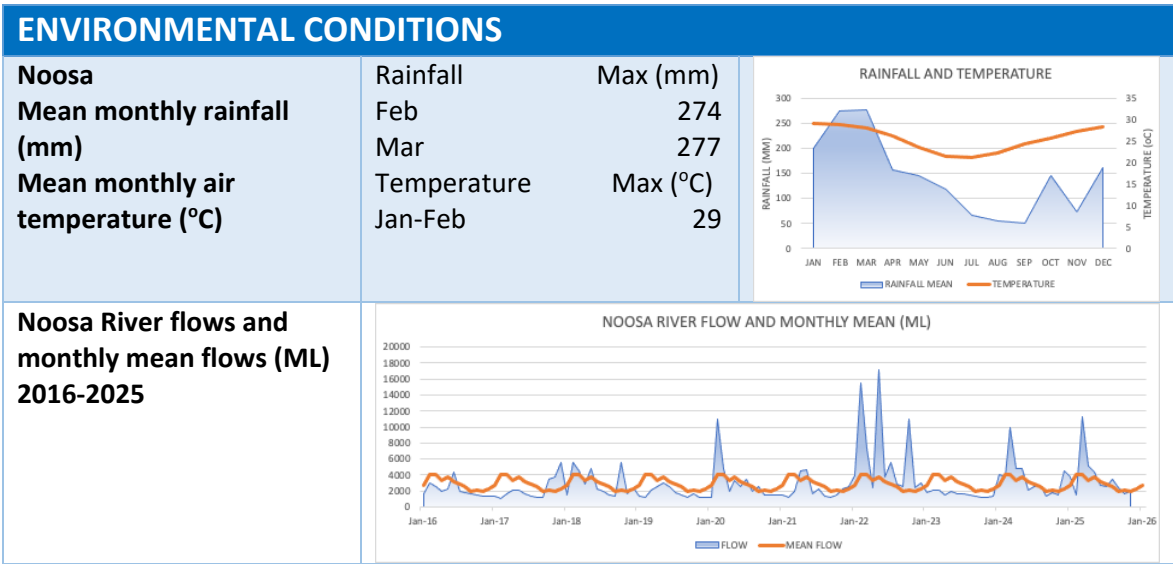
Upper Noosa River
26.17°S
153.03°E



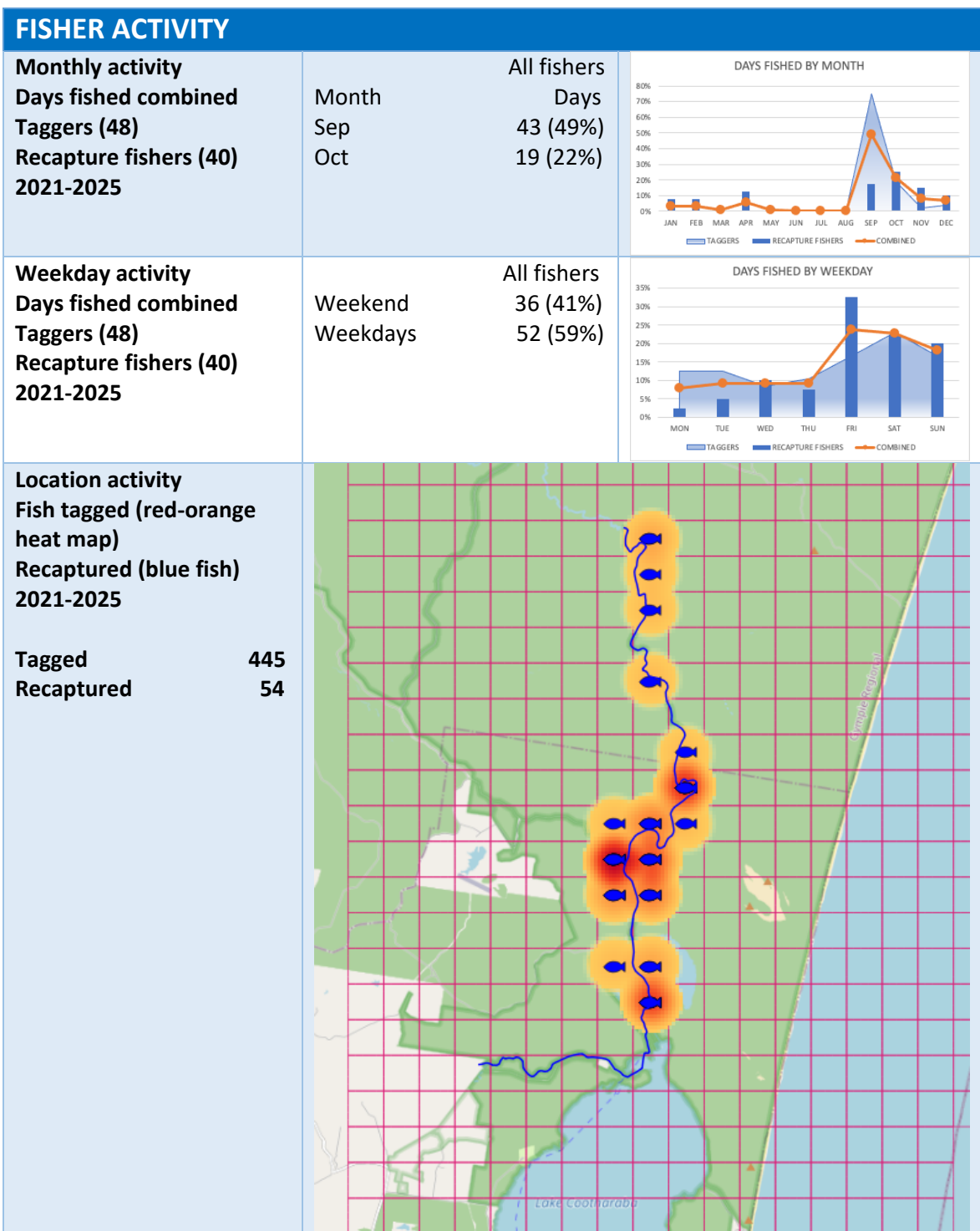
WATERWAYS

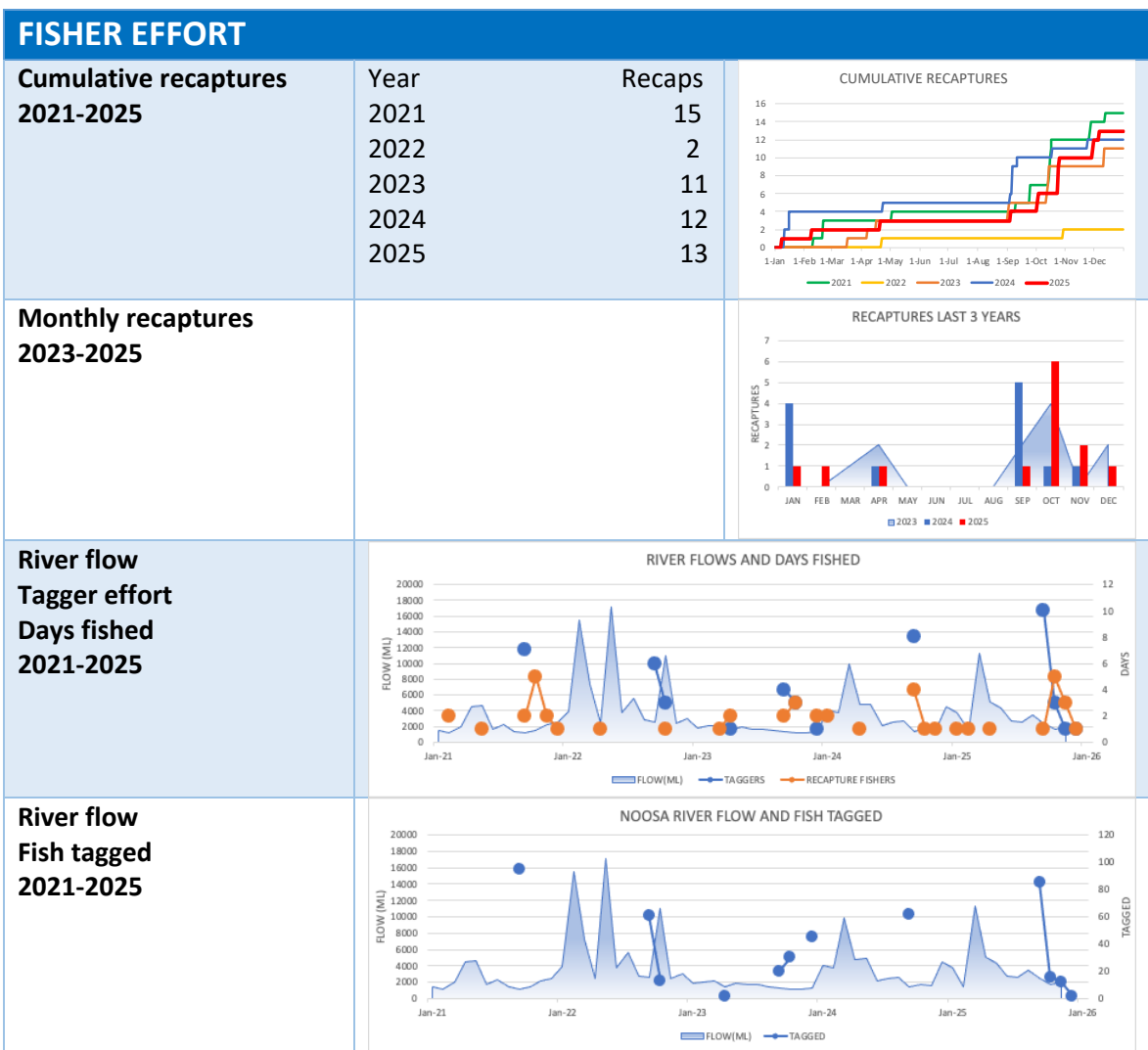
Tag grid map
Upper Noosa River SC23
Noosa River
Above Lake Cootharaba
Noosa River
length 25km
Kin Kin Creek
length 5km





TYPE OF FISHERY																														
DATA RELIABILITY																														
Sample size (days fished)	<table><tr><td>Reliability level</td><td>LOW</td><td colspan="2">MODERATE</td><td>MODERATE</td><td colspan="2">HIGH</td></tr><tr><td>Samples</td><td>10</td><td>41</td><td>68</td><td>271</td><td>384</td><td>664</td></tr><tr><td>Confidence</td><td>80%</td><td>80%</td><td>90%</td><td>90%</td><td>95%</td><td>99%</td></tr><tr><td>Error</td><td>20%</td><td>10%</td><td>10%</td><td>5%</td><td>5%</td><td>5%</td></tr></table>		Reliability level	LOW	MODERATE		MODERATE	HIGH		Samples	10	41	68	271	384	664	Confidence	80%	80%	90%	90%	95%	99%	Error	20%	10%	10%	5%	5%	5%
Reliability level	LOW	MODERATE		MODERATE	HIGH																									
Samples	10	41	68	271	384	664																								
Confidence	80%	80%	90%	90%	95%	99%																								
Error	20%	10%	10%	5%	5%	5%																								
Tag days (blue arrow)																														
Recaptures (orange arrow)																														
Confidence %																														
Error %																														
2021-2025																														
Seasonality	Months most effort																													
Mean monthly rainfall (mm)	Days fished	Sep Oct																												
Days fished combined																														
Taggers																														
Recapture fishers																														
2021-2025																														
Harvest or experiential fishery	Legal Bass kept rate																													
Release rate of recaptured legal Bass (ex-taggers)	Legal fish	23																												
	Kept	1 (4%)																												
	Released	22 (96%)																												
2021-2025																														
Local or visitor fishery	Recapture fishers	53																												
Where recapture fishers live	Local	15 (28%)																												
2021-2025	Visitor	38 (72%)																												
Gender of recapture fishers (ex-taggers)	Recapture fishers	43																												
2021-2025	Female	0 (0%)																												
	Male	43 (100%)																												



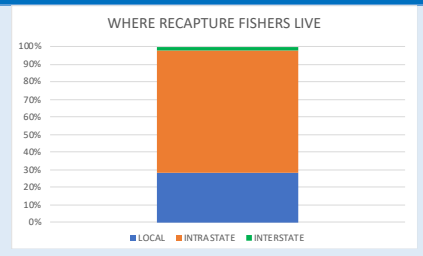


FISHER TRAVEL		
Cumulative distance (km) home to recapture location 2021-2025	Year	Km
	2021	1613
	2022	1046
	2023	1754
	2024	1451
	2025	1898
Distance (km) home to recapture location 2021-2025		
Travel proxy distance from where fishers live to recapture location 2021-2025		Range (km)
	Local	21-67
	Intrastate	96-299
	Interstate	890
Average proxy distance home to recapture location 2021-2025		Av distance (km)
	Local	43
	Intrastate	174
	Interstate	890

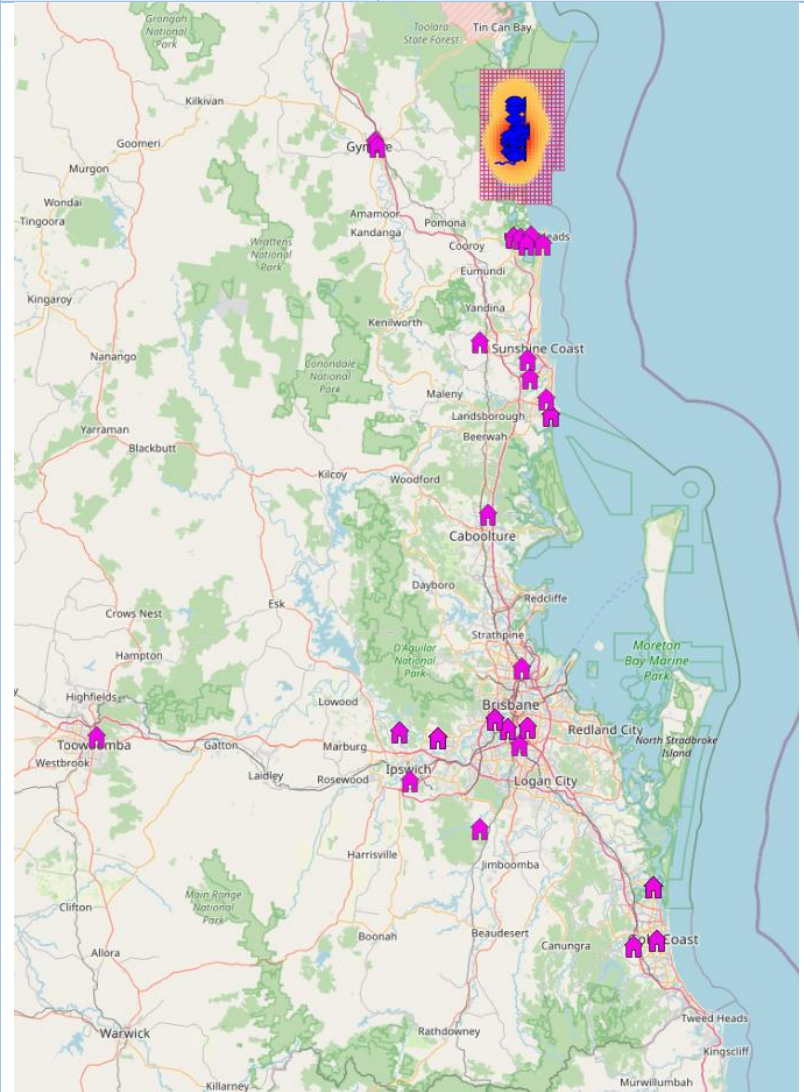
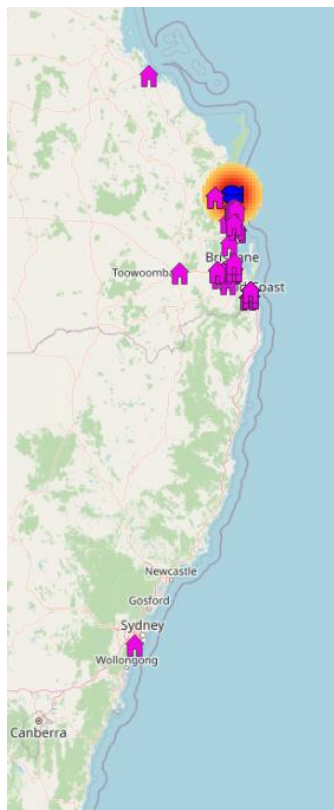
WHERE RECAPTURE FISHERS LIVE

Where recapture fishers live
Local (<80km)
Intrastate (Qld postcode)
Interstate
2021-2025

Recaptures	53
Local	15 (28%)
Intrastate	37 (70%)
Interstate	1 (2%)



Where recapture fishers live (pink houses)
Local
Intrastate
Interstate
2021-2025



AUSTRALIAN BASS



DATA RELIABILITY

Sample size (av fish/year)
Tagged (orange arrow)
Recaptures (orange arrow)
Confidence %
Error %
2021-2025

Reliability level	LOW			MODERATE		MODERATE		HIGH
Samples	10	41	68	271	384	664		
Confidence		80%	80%	90%	90%	95%	99%	
Error		20%	10%	10%	5%	5%	5%	



TAG AND EFFORT

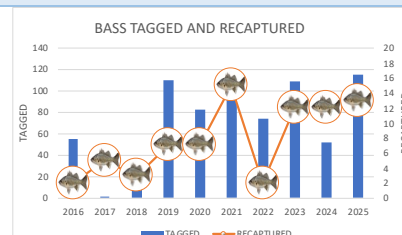
Fishing effort
Days fished (72)
Fish tagged (703)
Catch rate (fish/day)
2016-2025

Overall catch rate 9.8
Insufficient days fished each year for a yearly catch rate



Bass tagged
Recaptured
2016-2025

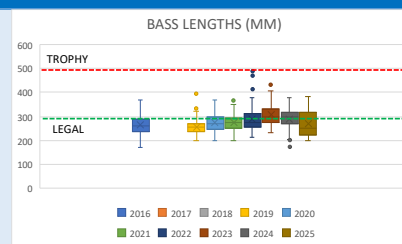
Tagged 703
Recaptured 78
Recapture rate 11.1%
Tagged 2025 115
Recaptured 2025 13



LENGTHS

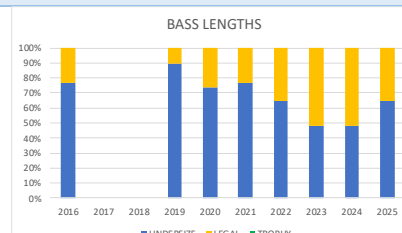
Average length (mm)
Bars show length range
Dots show outliers
2016-2025

High	Low	Now
Average length		
2023	2019	2025
306	255	268
Largest		
2022	2021	2025
490	365	385



Fish length percentage (%)
Undersize <300mm
Legal 300-499mm
Trophy 500+mm
2016-2025

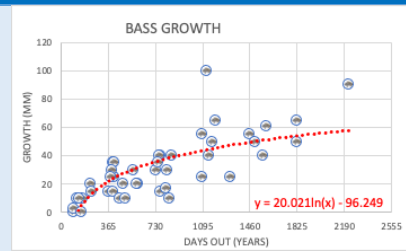
High	Low	Now
Legal-trophy		
2024	2019	2025
52%	11%	36%
Trophy		
No fish over 500mm in any year		



GROWTH

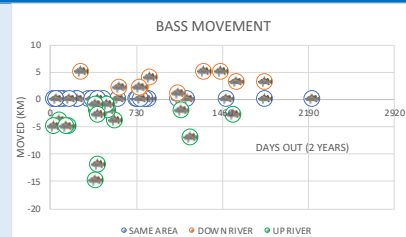
Bass growth based on recaptures
Fish tagged 200-300mm
2016-2025

Recaptures	44
Annual growth (mm)	
Year 1	22
Year 2	36
Year 3	44
Year 4	50
Year 5	54



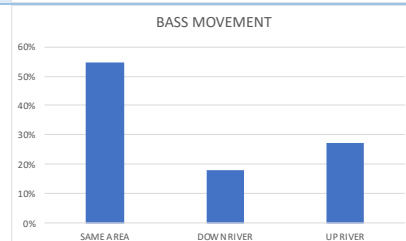
MOVEMENT

Bass movements
2016-2025



Bass movements
2016-2025

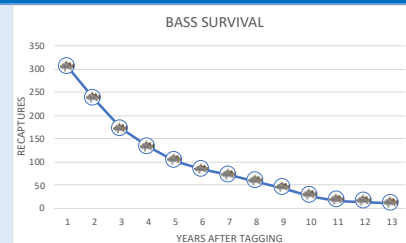
Recaptures	55
Same area	30 (55%)
Up river	15 (27%)
Down river	10 (18%)
Outside river	0 (0%)



SURVIVAL

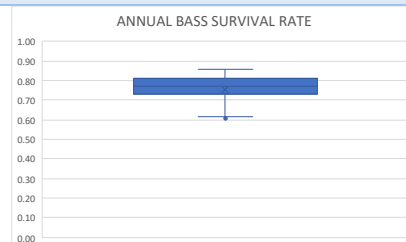
Bass survival based on recaptures by years out after tagging
1985-2025

Year	Recaptures
1	305
5	101
10	26
15	7
20	1
Longest time out (years)	20.5



Annual survival rate
All years

Average annual survival	
Rate	0.76 (76%)
Range	0.60-0.86



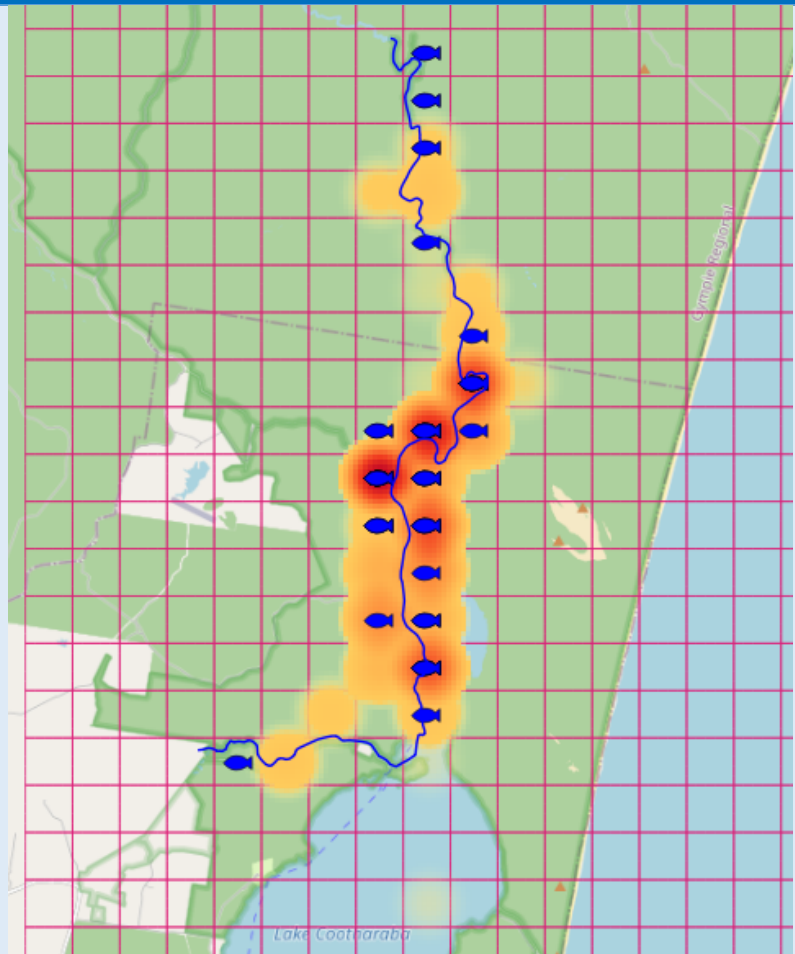
LOCATIONS

Noosa River

Tagged (red-orange heat map)

Recaptured (blue fish)
2016-2025

Tagged fish	703
Recaptured	78



Data sources

Data used in the Upper Noosa River Bass Crystal Bowl are:

- Tag records and recapture records at <http://crystalbowl.infofishaustralia.com.au/>.
- River flow from Station 140002A on Teewah Creek at Coops Corner from <https://water-monitoring.information.qld.gov.au/>.
- Rainfall from Station 040995 Noosaville and temperature from Station 040861 Sunshine Coast Airport from <http://www.bom.gov.au/climate/data>.

Basis for analysis

- Data reliability for fishers based on the sample size over the past 5 years for days fished by taggers and by fishers recapturing fish.
- Data reliability for fish based on average number of fish tagged and recaptured per year over the past 5 years.
- Catch rates calculated as number of fish tagged/fisher day for T20 fishers (taggers) with a minimum of 12 fisher days (at least 1 per month) to provide a reliable catch rate.
- Undersized Bass are <300mm, legal fish are ≥300 and <500mm and trophy fish are ≥500mm.
- Growth calculated using a logarithmic curve from recaptures where fish were out for 90 days or more and had positive growth.
- Survival rate based on the number of recaptures each year after tagging.
- Movement distance calculated as the shortest distance by water from the tag to the recapture location using Google Earth.
- Distance from fisher's home to recapture location is the straight-line distance between locations based on Google Earth coordinates with Local <80km, Intrastate ≥80km and Qld postcodes, Interstate postcodes other than Qld.