



## UPPER NOOSA RIVER BASS 2025

### INFORMATION RATING



Key species: Australian Bass

Fish timeframe: 2016-2025

Fisher timeframe: 2021-2025

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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.

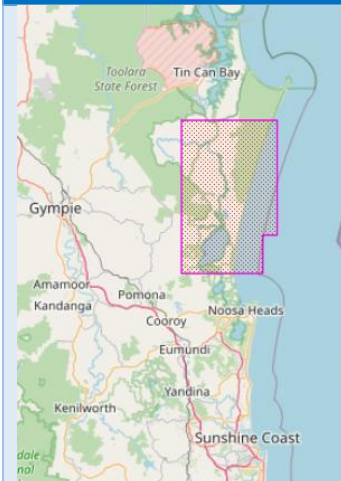
Over the past decade tagging has been undertaken mostly in Sep-Oct by the same group of taggers. As such fisher activity may not be reflective of the actual activity in the river. Activity was curtailed in 2022 with high flows in the river for most of the year resulting in a lowering of fishing effort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

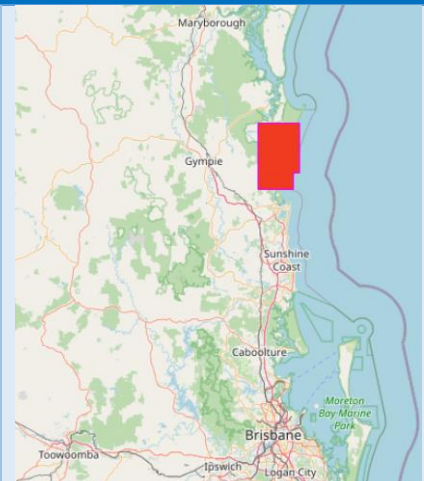
Bass tagged in the river were mostly undersized with legal fish ranging from 11% in 2019 to 52% in 2023 and 2024. There haven't been any trophy fish over 500mm tagged in any year however the largest fish was 490mm in 2022 and just short of the trophy length.

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

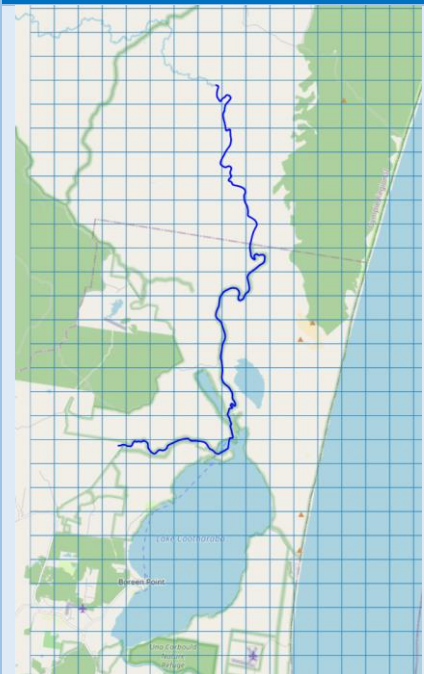
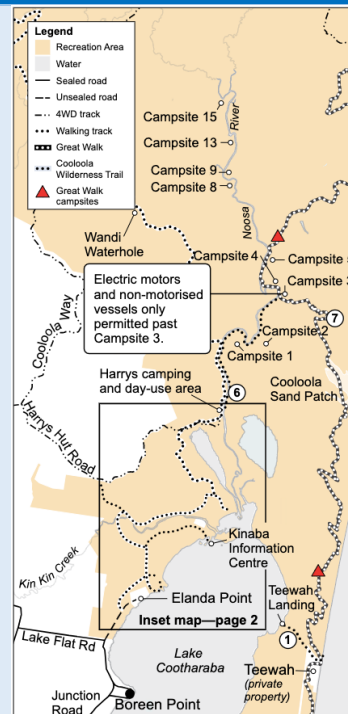


Upper Noosa River  
26.17°S  
153.03°E



## WATERWAYS

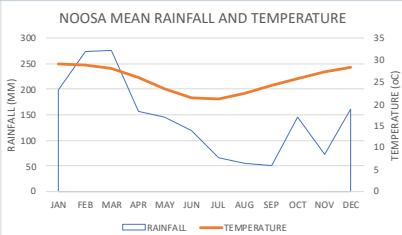
Tag grid map  
Upper Noosa River SC23  
Noosa River  
Above Lake Cootharaba  
Noosa River  
length 25km  
Kin Kin Creek  
length 5km



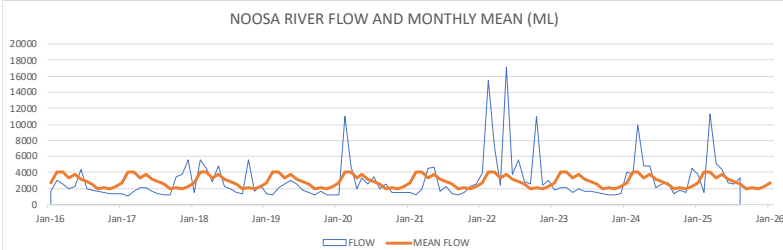
ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS

Noosa  
Mean monthly rainfall  
(mm)  
Mean monthly air  
temperature (°C)

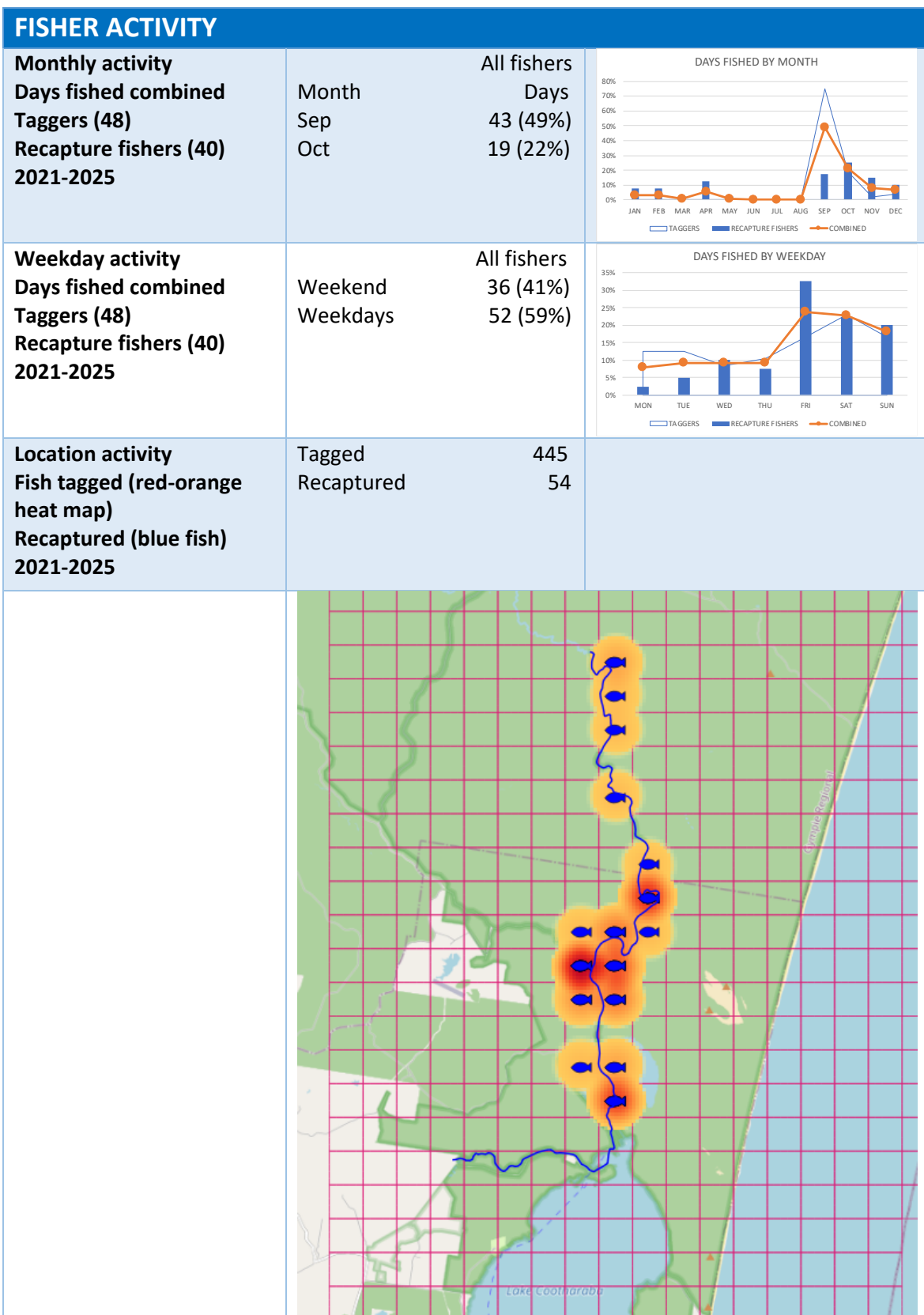
Rainfall  
Feb 274  
Mar 277  
Temperature  
Jan-Feb 29  
Max (mm)  
Max (°C)

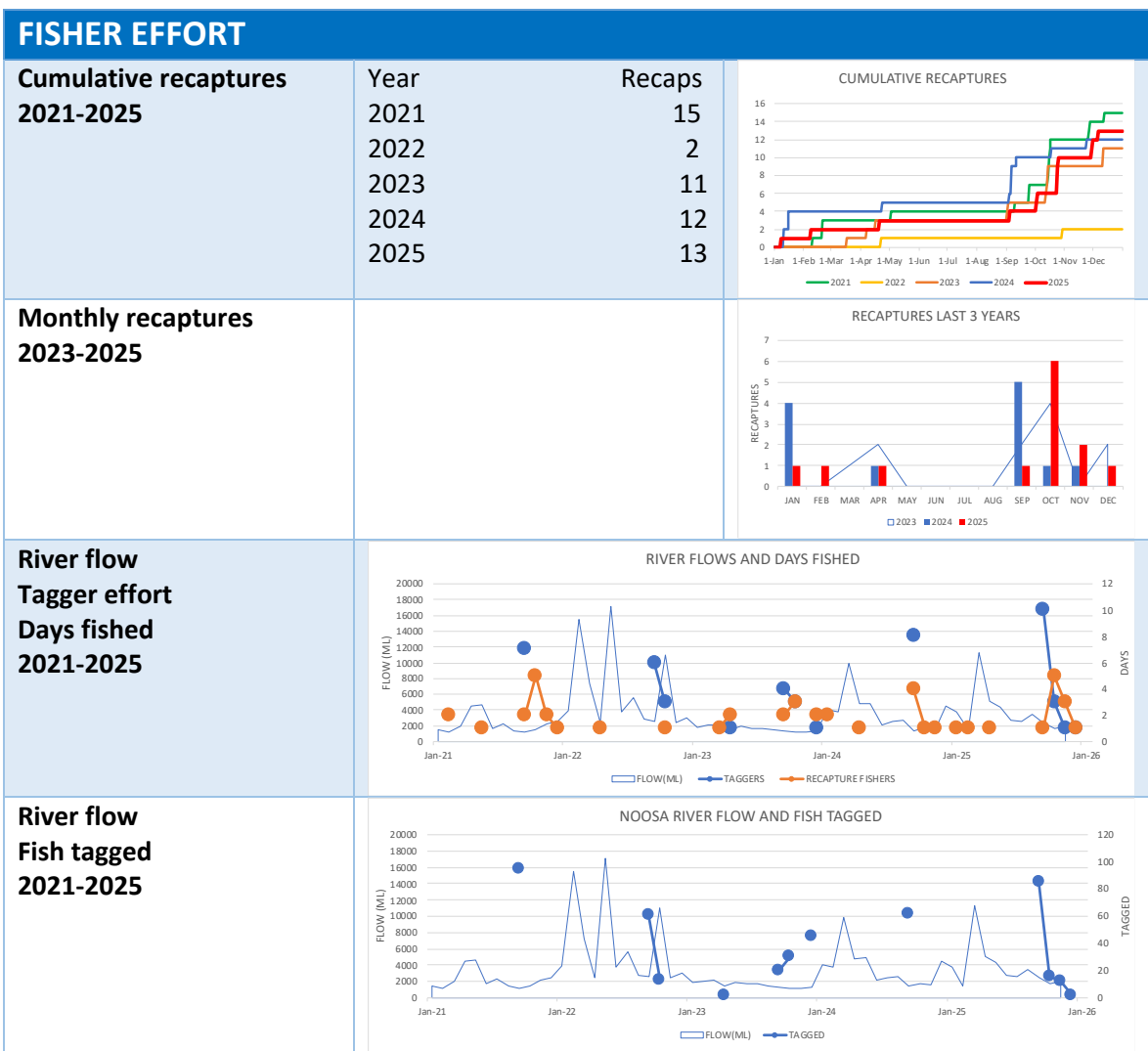


Noosa River flows and  
monthly mean flows (ML)  
2016-2025



TYPE OF FISHERY																														
DATA RELIABILITY																														
Sample size (days fished) Tag days (blue arrow) Recaptures (orange arrow) Confidence % Error % 2021-2025	<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> <div><div></div><div></div></div>	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%	
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Seasonality Mean monthly rainfall (mm) Days fished combined Taggers Recapture fishers 2021-2025	Months most effort Days fished Sep Oct	<div>FISHING SEASONALITY</div>																												
Harvest or experiential fishery Release rate of recaptured legal Bass (ex-taggers) 2021-2025	Legal Bass kept rate Legal fish 23 Kept 1 (4%) Released 22 (96%)	<div>TYPE OF FISHERY</div>																												
Local or visitor fishery Where recapture fishers live 2021-2025	Recapture fishers 53 Local 15 (28%) Visitor 38 (72%)	<div>TYPE OF FISHER</div>																												
Gender of recapture fishers (ex-taggers) 2021-2025	Recapture fishers 43 Female 0 (0%) Male 43 (100%)	<div>GENDER OF RECAPTURE FISHERS</div>																												





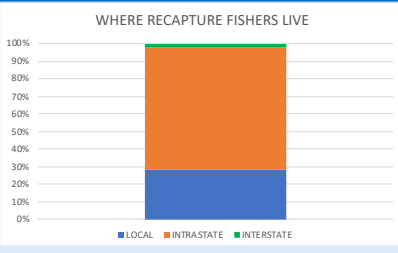
FISHER TRAVEL		
Cumulative distance (km) home to recapture location 2021-2025	Year	Km
	2021	1613
	2022	1046
	2023	1754
	2024	1451
	2025	1898
Distance (km) home to recapture location 2021-2025		
Travel proxy distance from where fishers live to recapture location 2021-2025	Range (km)	
	Local	21-67
	Intrastate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



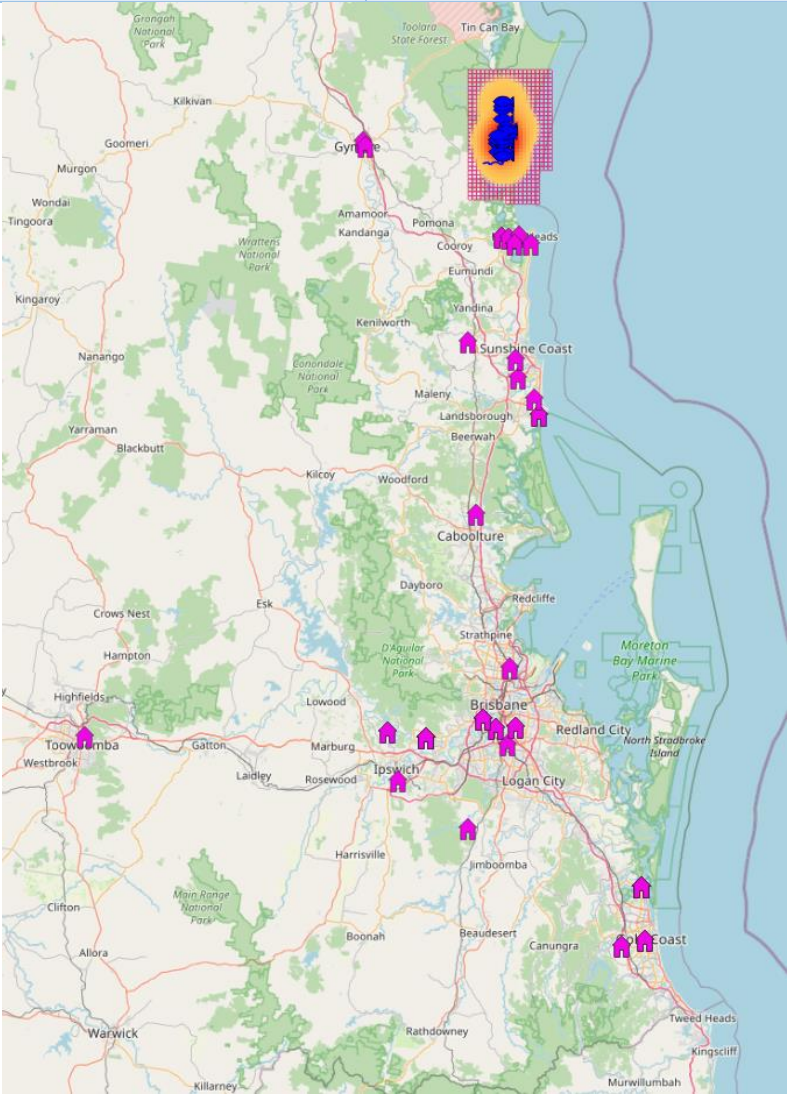
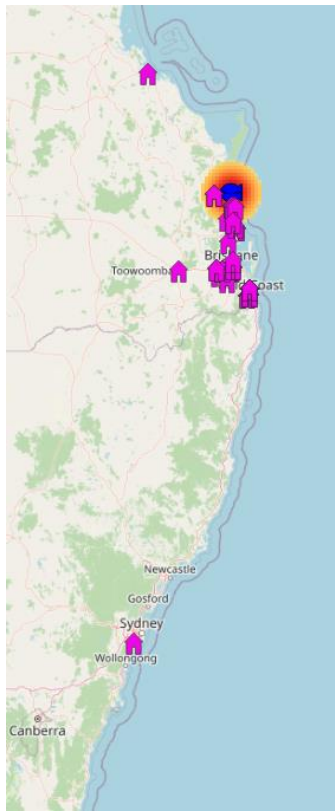
# WHERE RECAPTURE FISHERS LIVE

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

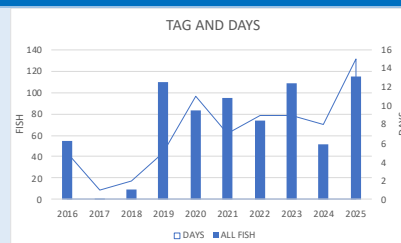
Reliability level	LOW	MODERATE	MODERATE	HIGH
Samples	10	41	68	271
Confidence	80%	80%	90%	95%
Error	20%	10%	5%	5%



### TAG AND EFFORT

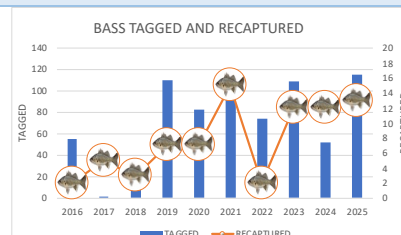
Fishing effort  
Days fished (72)  
Fish tagged (703)  
Catch rate (fish/day)  
2016-2025

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



Bass tagged  
Recaptured  
2016-2025

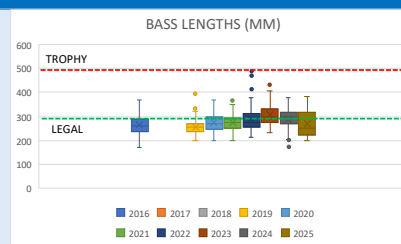
Tagged 703  
Recaptured 78  
Recapture rate 11.1%  
Tagged 2025 115  
Recaptured 2025 13



### LENGTHS

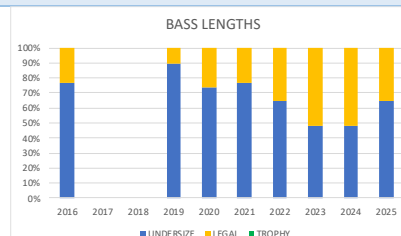
Average length (mm)  
Bars show length range  
Dots show outliers  
2016-2025

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

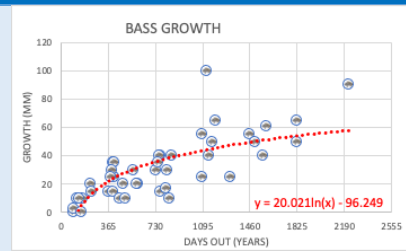
High	Low	Now
Legal-trophy		
2024	2019	2025
52%	11%	36%
Trophy		
No fish over 500mm in any year		



## GROWTH

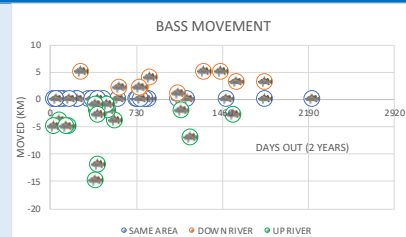
**Bass growth based on recaptures**  
Fish tagged 200-300mm  
2016-2025

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



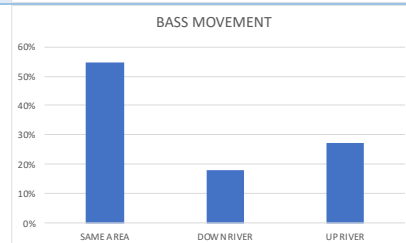
## MOVEMENT

**Bass movements**  
2016-2025



**Bass movements**  
2016-2025

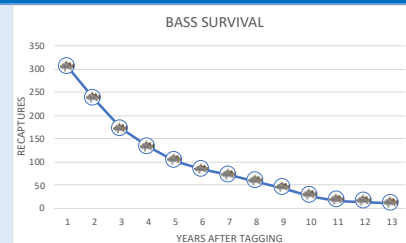
Recaptures	55
Same area	30 (55%)
Up river	15 (27%)
Down river	10 (18%)
Outside river	0 (0%)



## SURVIVAL

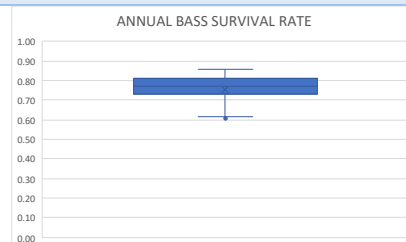
**Bass survival based on recaptures by years out after tagging**  
1985-2025

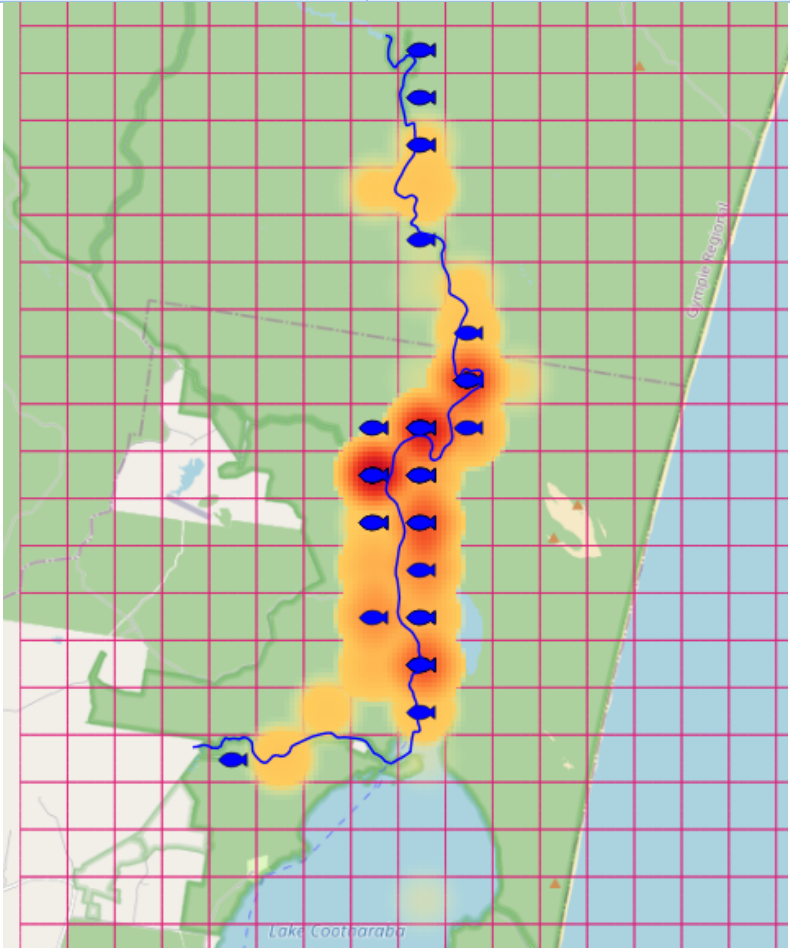
Year	Recaptures
1	305
5	101
10	26
15	7
20	1
Longest time out (years)	20.5



**Annual survival rate**  
All years

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



LOCATIONS		
<b>Noosa River</b> <b>Tagged (red-orange heat map)</b> <b>Recaptured (blue fish)</b> <b>2016-2025</b>	Tagged fish	703
	Recaptured	78
 <p>The map displays the Noosa River system, including Lake Coorabara and the Coorabara River. A red-orange heat map indicates the distribution of tagged fish, showing a high concentration in the central part of the river. Blue fish icons represent recaptured fish, which are distributed along the length of the river. The map is overlaid with a grid.</p>		

## 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.