



Warm summer weather brings a fish-for-all

Prime Minister Jacinda Adern introduced her partner Clarke Gayford this week as a fisherman.

"I'm his biggest catch," she told a class at Paihia Primary School on Monday. Gayford, labelled our first man of fishing, would no doubt agree but he has been enthusiastically detailing catches of the marine variety in the marvellous summer we have all been enjoying.

On Jan 27 he tweeted: I wish more people could see whats in our local ocean. Left from Auckland and in one day have seen huge schools of fish including: 2 manta rays 1 spine tailed devil ray 50+ sunfish 1 pod of whales dolphins mahi mahi 2 marlin and a short billed spearfish. In stunning blue water. Magic.

Pre-Christmas The Big Fish, Bait and Tackle Co, based in Auckland, reported: "Snapper are being caught in large numbers, with our waters also loaded with kingfish and it looks like game season has come early. This glorious weather is going to continue and long live this plentiful snapper fishery."

In January its fishing report said "our Hauraki Gulf is full of brilliant fish life. Big snapper, kingfish and kahawai are being caught in close... you don't even have to go that far to catch a feed, surfcasting anglers have been landing 35-45cm snapper all the way along Bucklands Beach".

They have been catching kingfish in Wellington Harbour too, with the Oriental Bay seawall a popular spot.

In late autumn a Stuff report from the Manukau said "the harbour has loads of trevally, a few gurnard and a billion little snapper". Further out "on a good day out there you can easily catch your limit of 10 snapper in an hour".

Reports from throughout the country confirm a bonanza fishing season. In Taranaki a monster 14.2kg (31.4lb) snapper was caught from the Oakura shore.

Egmont Seafoods managing director Keith Mawson said people could expect to see an increase in the number of snapper that size.

“The Taranaki fishery is in really good health,” he said.

He believed catch limits under the Quota Management System for both commercial and recreational fishers were benefiting Taranaki waters.

Perhaps the most dramatic fishing change is the appearance of highly prized kingfish in Otago Harbour and along the southeast coast of the South Island.

A decade ago, a single catch was rare.

This summer the mighty gamefish, predominantly a recreational catch, that can grow to more than 30kg have become common.

Spear fishers landed two kingies in Bluff Harbour last month, believed to be a first for Southland, and snapper have been recorded in Fiordland.

Whether this is a one-off event thanks to the La Nina weather pattern that brings warm, sunny weather and tranquil seas remains to be seen but the trend is undeniable.

While there are yearly fluctuations, overall sea temperatures are increasing.

Coastal water temperatures are between 2-6 degrees C above average at present, according to University of Otago marine ecologist Prof Steve Wing.

That may see winners and losers – potentially stressful for paua and some salmon farming – but a boon for warmer water species and those who pursue them.

Climate change is not all bad and the evidence is there are plenty of fish for all.



Seafood New Zealand chief executive Tim Pankhurst with his



Businessman and avid recreational fisherman Brent Harman with a fine snapper caught from his launch in the Hauraki Gulf.

summer catch; hapuka caught off the Wairarapa coast at new year.

Seaweek 2018

Seaweek – Kaupapa Moana , New Zealand’s annual national week about the oceans, is gearing up for another big week of teaching kiwis about the sea. This year's theme will be “*Toiora te Moana – Toiora te Tangata* – Healthy Seas, Healthy People” and will bring a focus on how humans and oceans interact. Seaweek – Kaupapa Moana 2018 will take place from Saturday 3 to Sunday 11 March 2018.

There are events throughout the country, including snorkel days through New Zealand's marine reserves, education-hubs and coastline clean ups.

To learn more, [click here](#).



News

Competition for Timaru’s fishing workforce is increasing, as Sealord looks to fill spots on its new \$70 million trawler, *Stuff* reports. The vessel will be based in Nelson, but the company has begun advertising for positions in South Canterbury where Talley’s and Sanford employ over 500 people collectively. Sealord public affairs and communications manager Julie North said they were looking for a variety of workers to fill spots on the factory trawler. “The new vessel is being launched to complement the existing Sealord fleet, as part of our fleet renewal process, and demonstrates our confidence in the sustainable management of New Zealand fisheries,” she said.

Farmed salmon in the Marlborough Sounds are dying due to the warm sea temperatures, *Stuff* reports. Preferring temperatures between 12 to 17 degrees Celsius, king salmon have had to endure warmer waters since December, with one farm being consistently over 19C for the past three weeks. New Zealand King Salmon chief executive Grant Rosewarne said salmon cannot regulate their body temperature, which has caused some to die. “We have adjusted feed times to the beginning and end of each day when the water surface temperatures are cooler, and are putting extra effort into maintaining the farm environment in optimal condition for as low a stress environment as possible,”

he said.

Anti-fishing groups have renewed their attacks on CRA2 as consultation on sustainability measures for the rock lobster fishery come to an end. Recreational fishing group LegaSea has called the fishery "functionally extinct", whilst the Environmental Defence Society's policy director Raewyn Peart believes the fishery should be closed. The Ministry for Primary Industries has put forward four different total allowable commercial catch reductions for the fishery; from the current 200 tonnes to 80, 100, 120 or 140 tonnes. To submit on the different options, [click here](#). Submissions close at 5pm today.

Returning to TV...

Gone Fishin', one of the country's longest-running TV programmes, will celebrate 25 years in New Zealand homes this Sunday when its latest season, sponsored by Bostik, kicks off.

Veteran host Graeme Sinclair will pass on the baton for the first episode, with his son James taking over anchoring duties.

James heads out on to the Hauraki Gulf to catch some good fish and joins the annual Stillwater fishing competition.

The episode airs at 5 pm Sunday on Three.

Season one of Ocean Bounty will start repeating on Sundays at 11 am from Feb 25. The show begins in Fiordland where an accord between stakeholders has commercial rock lobster fishers voluntarily confined to working outside the fiords, while the internal more sheltered waters are reserved for recreational activities.
