

# Marron

## Recreational fishing guide



**A current licence is required to fish for marron**

### **Please note:**

- The recreational marron fishing open season is from 12 noon, 8 January to 12 noon, 5 February of the same year.
- Fishing for and transporting marron is prohibited at all other times.
- Setting marron fishing gear before 12 noon on 8 January or after 12 noon on 5 February is prohibited.

# Contents

<b>Legal fishing gear.....</b>	<b>1</b>
Drop nets .....	1
Scoop net .....	1
Snare .....	2
<b>Licences .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Marron waters .....</b>	<b>3</b>
Snare-only waters .....	4
<b>Closed waters .....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Catch and size limits.....</b>	<b>6</b>
Trophy waters.....	6
All other marron waters .....	6
<b>Protecting marron .....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Identifying freshwater crayfish .....</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Boats and diving .....</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Transporting marron .....</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Catch care .....</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Aquatic pests, diseases and fish kills .....</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>FishWatch .....</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>Follow the rules .....</b>	<b>15</b>

## Important disclaimer

The Chief Executive Officer of the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development and the State of Western Australia accept no liability whatsoever by reason of negligence or otherwise arising from the use or release of this information or any part of it.

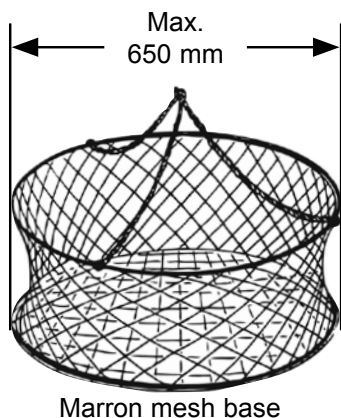
Copyright © State of Western Australia  
(Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development), 2025

# Legal fishing gear

You may use only one of these methods at one time.

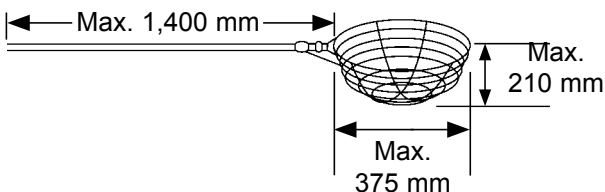
## Drop nets

Up to 6 drop nets per licensed fisher may be used. Nets must have a rigid marron mesh base (mesh dimension must be 32 mm by 80 mm or greater) with a base ring and top ring minimum size of 400 mm and a maximum size of 650 mm.



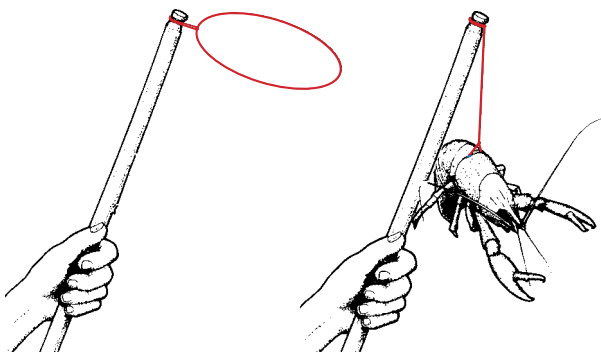
## Scoop net

One wire basket crab scoop may be used per licensed fisher. Wire baskets must have a maximum of 6 vertical wires (wire less than 5 mm diameter) and a maximum of 75 individual rectangles. Fine mesh nets are illegal.

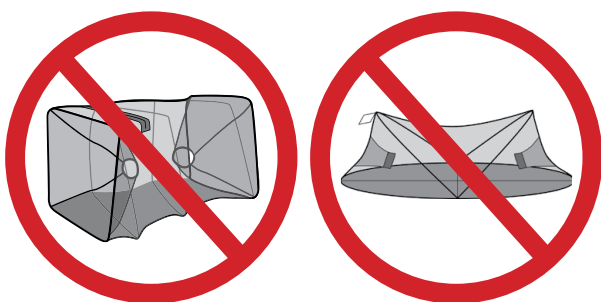


## Snare

One bushman's pole snare may be used per licensed fisher. Snares must be self-tightening only, this means there must be nothing attached to the pole to enable a person to open or close the noose.



All other fishing gear, including any type of trap, is illegal. Examples of 2 such illegal traps, including an 'opera house' trap, are shown below.



# Licences

You must have a current recreational fishing for marron licence and be prepared to produce it if required. Apply for a new licence or renew an existing licence online on our website at **[dpiird.wa.gov.au/individuals/recreational-fishing/get-a-recreational-fishing-licence/](http://dpiird.wa.gov.au/individuals/recreational-fishing/get-a-recreational-fishing-licence/)**.

Alternatively, application forms are available from Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (DPIRD) offices.

## Marron waters

Within 50 m of the waterline of marron waters:

- You may have only legal marron fishing gear in your possession.
- Licensed freshwater anglers (including anglers under 16 years) may possess a landing net. However, using a landing net to fish for marron is prohibited.

Marron waters include:

- **Collie River** (upstream of the Australind Bypass Road and downstream of the Wellington Dam wall, and upstream of the Mungilup Road Bridge);
- **Deep, Gardner, Warren, Donnelly, Blackwood, Capel and Preston rivers** and their tributaries;
- **Moore and Hutt rivers** and their tributaries; and
- **Murray River** (upstream from the Pinjarra weir).

## Snare-only waters

In these waters, you may only use a pole snare to take marron, and you may not be in possession of any marron fishing gear except a pole snare within 50 m of the waterline.

All other methods are illegal.

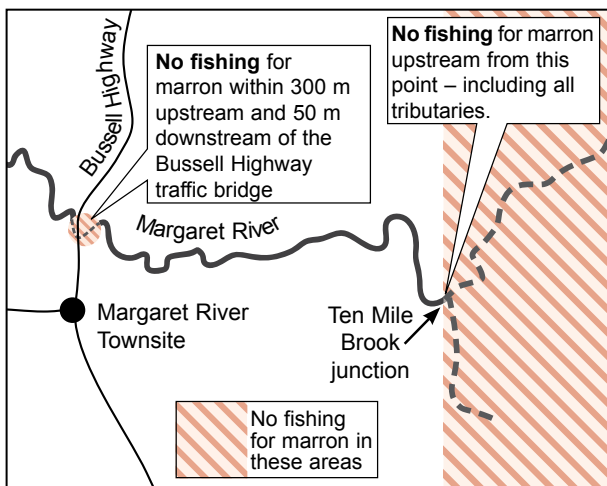
Snare-only waters include:

- **Margaret River** (outside of closures – see closed waters section);
- **Big Brook Dam, Drakes Brook Dam, Glen Mervyn Dam and Logue Brook Dam;**
- **Harvey Dam** and the **Harvey River** upstream of the South Western Highway including the tributaries flowing into those waters;
- **Waroona Dam** (Lake Navarino) and its tributaries; and
- **Wellington Dam** (all waters and tributaries upstream of the Wellington Dam wall, excluding the Collie River upstream of Mungalup Road Bridge).



**Scan to view a map  
of snare only and  
trophy waters**

# Closed waters



**Public drinking water supply dams** - these dams and their catchment areas are managed by Water Corporation. All fishing is prohibited in these dams and catchments to help keep your drinking water supplies safe. Penalties apply. For details visit the Water Corporations website [watercorporation.com.au](http://watercorporation.com.au)

**Shannon River** – the Shannon River and its tributaries are closed to all fishing.

**Margaret River** – you must not fish for marron in the Margaret River and its tributaries upstream of the Ten Mile Brook junction (to protect a species known as ‘hairy marron’), or in waters within 300 m upstream and 50 m downstream of the Bussell Highway traffic bridge.

# Catch and size limits

## Trophy waters

Trophy waters are specific areas that have a higher minimum legal size and lower bag and possession limits. This gives marron fishers the opportunity to target and catch larger, trophy-sized marron.

‘Trophy waters’ are within 500 m of the high water mark of Harvey Dam, Waroona Dam and the Hutt River.



- **Minimum legal size** to keep – **90 mm** carapace length.
- **Daily bag limit** per licensed fisher – **5** marron.
- **Possession limit** – a person must not possess more than **5** marron at any time on or adjacent to trophy waters.

## All other marron waters



- **Minimum legal size** to keep – **80 mm** carapace length.
- **Daily bag limit** per licensed fisher – **8** marron.
- **Possession limit** – **16** marron.

**Please note:** The daily bag limit applies from noon on any given day until noon the next day. ‘Possession limit’ means you may only accumulate your daily bag limits up to this number. A possession limit applies everywhere except in your principal place of residence.



# Protecting marron

The marron fishery is unique because it is purely for recreational fishers. However, over time, the total catch has declined greatly due to a combination of environmental factors and fishing pressure. The fishing rules are in place to help protect vulnerable breeding populations so that the WA community will have marron in the future.

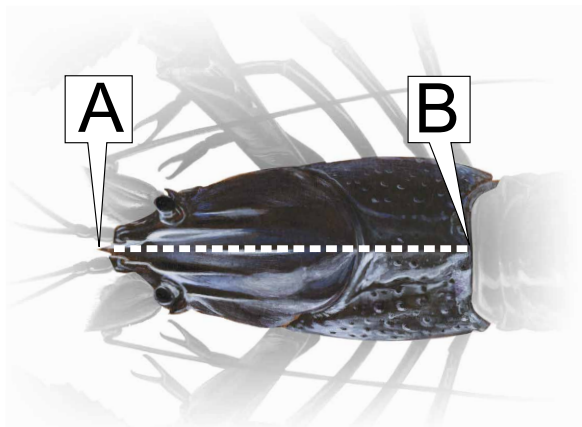
You must measure each marron as soon as you catch it, then immediately and carefully return to the water:

- undersize marron; and
- female marron carrying eggs or young.



The marron fishery is a shared resource. Don't restrict others access to the shoreline and please dispose of all rubbish and old bait properly.

## How to measure a marron



Measure from the tip of the horn on the marron's forehead (A) to the back edge of the carapace (B). If the gauge fits over the back of the carapace, and is even slightly loose, the marron is too small and must be returned to the water immediately. Measure accurately using an approved gauge, available from tackle shops. Measuring with anything else, such as a drink can or ruler, can lead to mistakes.

## Identifying freshwater crayfish

### Freshwater crayfish features

- Keel – ridge along top of head.
- Rostrum – long spike that sticks forward between the eyes.
- Telson – middle panel of tail.
- Chelipeds – claws.

## **Marron (smooth and hairy)**

Largest freshwater crayfish, endemic to south-west of Western Australia.

- Can grow to more than 380 mm.
- Colour ranges from black to brown, striped, red and cobalt blue.
- 5 keels along head, 3 pairs of short spines on rostrum, 2 small spines on telson.
- Narrow pincer-like chelipeds (claws).

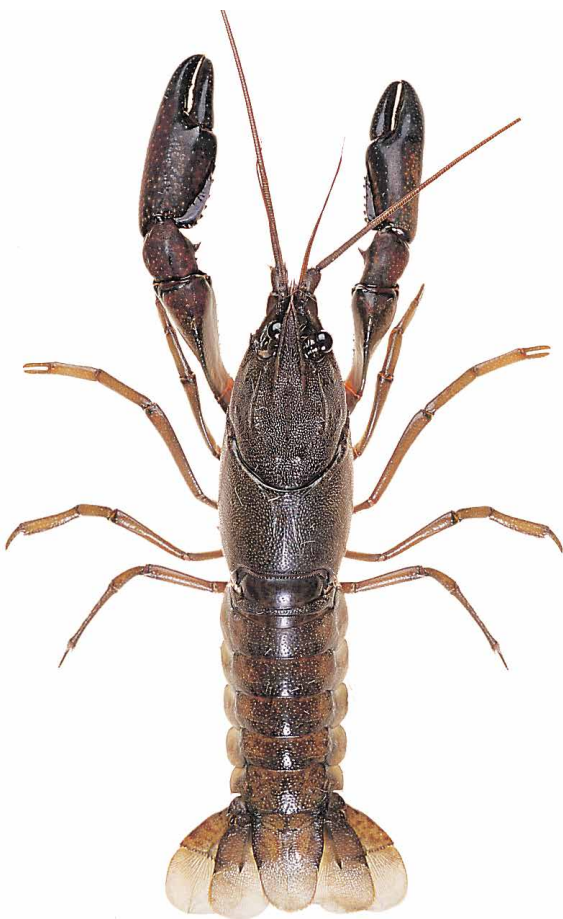
Smooth marron are found in most south-west rivers and dams. Hairy marron (endangered) are found in the upper reaches of Margaret River. Hairy marron's heads and sometimes tails are covered in clusters of short hairs and their central keel is longer.



## Gilgie

- Small, up to 130 mm in total length.
- Colours range from black-brown to light brown, speckles on chelipeds.
- 5 keels along the head, but only 2 pairs of small spines on the rostrum
- Chelipeds narrower than koonacs or yabbies.

Gilgies can be commonly found in streams, rivers and irrigation dams in the South West.



## Koonac

- Relatively large, up to 200 mm in total length.
- Can survive through drought by burrowing.
- Colours are usually very dark, ranging from blue-black to mottled brown-black.
- 4 keels on head (2 prominent), no spines on rostrum or telson. Unique chelipeds are very broad and serrated on inside edge.

Koonacs are often found in seasonal rivers and swamps that dry-up during summer.



**Yabby** (introduced species, native to Eastern states of Australia)

- Smaller than marron – very few grow to 130 mm in length.
- Colours range from beige or coffee colour to almost black.
- 4 keels on head (2 more obvious), short rostrum with no spines.
- Inner edges of chelipeds have a mat of obvious hairs not found on WA crayfish species.



Yabbies are a threat to the marron fishery and may carry diseases that affect other freshwater crayfish. **Never release them, if you catch a yabby, keep it.**

# Boats and diving

Snorkelling or using compressed air to catch marron is prohibited. Fishing for marron from a boat or personal water craft (e.g. kayak, canoe, SUP) is also illegal. You may only transport marron by boat if you have fished an area not accessible by vehicle, but marron must still have been caught from the land using a pole snare.

Fishers may transport scoop nets or drop nets only on the Donnelly River downstream of the boat landing. This privilege will be revoked if abused. Fishing from a boat is still illegal.

## Transporting marron

Marron caught during open season must be taken to your residence by midnight on the last day of the season.

Transporting marron outside the season including marron grown in dams on private property is illegal. Marron purchased from a licenced commercial aquaculture facility must only be transported with receipt as proof of purchase. This helps to protect the marron aquaculture industry, which is licensed to grow and sell marron to restaurants and the public.

# Catch care

Keep your marron alive in a shaded, damp sack until you are ready to cook them. Don't use a bucket of water as it will quickly become polluted and suffocate them.

Place marron in the freezer for a few minutes to anaesthetise them before preparing for consumption.

To dispatch a marron, insert a sharp knife between the eyes and cut through the centreline of the head and thorax (splitting) in one quick movement.

# Aquatic pests, diseases and fish kills

To help keep WA's waters pest and disease free, thoroughly clean and dry all gear before moving to another waterway or area.

Report catches or sightings of aquatic pests, diseases and fish kills to **FishWatch**, or our Biosecurity Branch on 1300 374 741 or email **[Aquatic.Biosecurity@dpird.wa.gov.au](mailto:Aquatic.Biosecurity@dpird.wa.gov.au)**

For more information about aquatic pests visit **[dpird.wa.gov.au/businesses/pests-weeds-and-diseases/aquatic/](http://dpird.wa.gov.au/businesses/pests-weeds-and-diseases/aquatic/)**



# FishWatch

The FishWatch phone line provides the quickest and most efficient way to report sightings or evidence of:

- illegal fishing
- aquatic pests and diseases
- fish kills.

You can also submit other reports online to **[connect.crimestopperswa.com.au/organisation-report/fishwatch/](https://connect.crimestopperswa.com.au/organisation-report/fishwatch/)**

Reports made to Crimestoppers are not monitored outside normal working hours or on weekends.



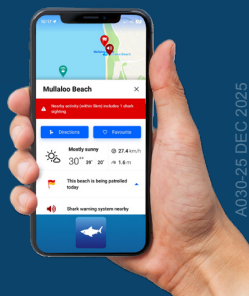
## Follow the rules

All fishing may be subject to surveillance by Fisheries and Marine Officers. If you break recreational fishing rules you may be given an infringement notice or have legal action taken against you. Fines may be as high as \$5,000 for an individual plus up to 10 times the prescribed value of the species.

Report shark sightings  
to Water Police on

**08 9442 8600**

Download the  
SharkSmart WA app



A030-25 DEC 2025

**SHARKSMART.COM.AU**

## Recfishwest

Love your fishing? So do we!

As the peak body for rec fishing, our purpose is to ensure great fishing experiences for all in the WA community forever. Visit our website to find out about some great fishing initiatives.



**recfishwest.org.au**

# Hook up to the rec fishing rules

It's easy to keep up to date with Western Australia's recreational fishing rules. Whether it's for bag and size limits, seasonal closures or licences, all the rules are at your fingertips.



Go to **rules.fish.wa.gov.au** for rules covering more than 180 fish species. Use the interactive maps to discover information about marine protected areas and common species by region.



The free Recfishwest app provides access to the rules even if you're out of phone range and has an easy fish identification feature.



Grab a copy or download from **dpird.wa.gov.au/rec-fishing-guides**



## About this guide

This publication is to provide assistance or information. It is only a guide and does not replace the *Fish Resources Management Act 1994* or the *Fish Resources Management Regulations 1995*. It cannot be used as a defence in a court of law. The information provided is current at the date of printing but may be subject to change. For the most up-to-date information on fishing and full details of legislation contact select DPIRD offices or visit the website.



[rules.fish.wa.gov.au/Species/Index/29](https://rules.fish.wa.gov.au/Species/Index/29)

## Contact us

1300 374 731 (1300 DPIRD1)

[enquiries@dpird.wa.gov.au](mailto:enquiries@dpird.wa.gov.au)

### Albany Office

444 Albany Highway,  
Albany WA 6330  
08 9845 7400

### Busselton Office

48A Bussell Highway,  
Busselton WA 6280  
08 9752 2152

### Fremantle Office

14 Capo D'Orlando Drive  
South Fremantle WA 6162  
08 9432 8000

### Geraldton Office

69-75 Connell Road,  
Geraldton WA 6530  
08 9920 8400

### Hillarys Office

39 Northside Drive  
Hillarys WA 6025  
08 9203 0111

### Mandurah Office

107 Breakwater Parade,  
Mandurah Ocean Marina  
Mandurah WA 6210  
08 9583 7800

[dpird.wa.gov.au](https://dpird.wa.gov.au)

ABN: 18 951 343 745

**FISHWATCH**



REPORT  
▶ Illegal fishing  
▶ Pests and diseases  
▶ Fish kills  
**1800-815-507**  
24 HOUR REPORTING



Scan to report  
illegal fishing