

Media Release

The Hon Melissa Horne MP

Minister for Consumer Affairs, Gaming and Liquor Regulation

Minister for Ports and Freight

Minister for Fishing and Boating



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FISHERS HOOKED AS GOLDEN TAG HITS MAJOR MILESTONE

Regional Victoria is experiencing a fishing tourism boom, with the Golden Tag competition racking up a huge \$100,000 in prizemoney paid to winners since being expanded and relaunched.

Minister for Fishing and Boating Melissa Horne said the competition is having big benefits on the tourism industry, with fishers travelling across the state to chase up to \$10,000 for landing a tagged fish.

The competition started in March 2020 to encourage tourism after bushfires in Gippsland and the Victoria's North East, before being suspended as Victoria dealt with the Coronavirus pandemic and travel restrictions.

An expanded, state-wide competition was relaunched at Loch Sport in November 2020 to encourage visitation to more of regional Victoria. In the months since, tagged fish have been caught all over the state from flathead at Mallacoota, to Murray cod in the Wimmera, to trout near Bright and much more.

The lucky fisher to chalk up the \$100,000 mark was Gary Arthurson, one of many East Gippsland residents who knows all too well how difficult 2020 was. Gary was fishing at Tamboon Inlet last month when he landed a tagged flathead and collected \$2,000 to reach the competition milestone.

All up, in excess of \$270,000 has been paid for more than 70 catches since Golden Tag began and there are still approximately 1000 tagged fish swimming in Victorian waters.

Some of the species included in the Golden Tag competition are flathead, bream, luderick and whiting in Gippsland, brown and rainbow trout in the North East, Murray cod and golden perch north of the divide and popular marine species such as kingfish and southern bluefin tuna off the South West coast.

For all the details on what has been tagged and where, visit www.vfa.vic.gov.au/goldentag

Quotes attributable to Minister for Fishing and Boating Melissa Horne

"The Golden Tag competition has been a huge success in getting fishers and their families out to regional Victoria and supporting local businesses while making some great memories."

"With more than 1000 tagged fish still swimming and the competition running through until the end of 2021, there's plenty of time to plan your next fishing holiday and dangle a line."

Quote attributable to VRFish Chair Rob Loats

"Golden Tag is an extra reason for anglers to get out and have a fish. It's getting new people involved in the pastime who we hope will become passionate lifelong anglers."

Quote attributable to FutureFish Director David Kramer

"These fish are paying for themselves with a flow-on effect running through the economy. The real winner here is regional tourism."

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