

Media Release



The Hon Jaala Pulford MLC

Minister for Agriculture

Minister for Regional Development

Deputy Leader of the Government in the Legislative Council

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ALL ABOUT THE BASS IN GIPPSLAND

The Andrews Labor Government is boosting recreational fishing opportunities in Gippsland, stocking the Tambo River and Lake Guthridge with 9,000 and 4,000 Australian bass respectively.

Creating new fishing opportunities through stocking delivers on the Labor Government's *Target One Million* plan to grow recreational fishing participation to one million anglers by 2020.

Lake Guthridge in Sale already receives catchable size rainbow trout for the June and September school holidays each year. However, the development of a bass fishery right in town will provide additional fishing opportunities for locals and visitors alike, especially in summer.

The fingerlings ranged from 2.5cm to 8cm in length and were funded by *Target One Million* and the East Gippsland Catchment Management Authority.

The release of 7,000 bass fingerlings into the Tambo River, between Bruthen and the Timbarra River, complements the 28,000 fingerlings released into the river since 2013.

Similar stockings in the Mitchell River over several years have produced encouraging results with anglers reporting the capture of small bass, consistent with the growth rates expected from those releases.

More broadly, Victoria's Australian bass stocking program has continued to expand, supported by recreational fishing licence fees, and now boasts 17 lakes and rivers.

Nearly 700,000 bass have been released since 2002 and perhaps the most successful waterway has been Blue Rock Lake, where anglers have been catching legal size bass for several years.

Boating rules on Blue Rock Lake were relaxed last year and vessels of any length, carrying any engine size, can now navigate the lake and make the very most of the fishery, which also includes stocked trout.

For more information about Australian bass stocking in Gippsland visit www.vic.gov.au/basstocking

Quotes attributable to Minister for Agriculture Jaala Pulford

"Improving recreational fishing opportunities is at the heart of the Andrews Labor Government's Target One Million plan to get more people fishing, more often."

Quotes attributable to Member for Eastern Victoria Harriet Shing

"This is another great catch for Gippsland anglers – time spent fishing with family and friends is great for our wellbeing and also for our regional tourism and hospitality industries."