

Fish technology offers new insight

East Gippsland fishers got a sneak peak at new fishing technology at Nicholson last Saturday, when the Nicholson Angling Club and the East Gippsland Catchment Management Authority joined forces to host an information and discovery day.

Those keen on throwing in a line were able to see first-hand how the world's only electrofishing boat that can be used in salt water

works, as demonstrated by scientists Jason Lieschke and Adrian Kitchingman from the Arthur Rylah Institute, Department of Environment and Primary Industries (DEPI).

Under the theme of learning more about local estuaries, morning and afternoon sessions took in details about fish habitat and what local authorities have done to improve the region's estuaries and waterways from Ken Judd

(EGCMA), Renae Ayres (Arthur Rylah Institute) and Ken Bradley (Nicholson Angling Club).

Researchers from the Department of Environment and Primary Industries (DEPI) are trialling new techniques of surveying fish populations and mapping habitat for fish including using the world's only electrofishing boat capable of operating in salt water.

DEPI's fish ecologists have found electrofishing is a less intrusive way to survey and map fish populations than traditional survey techniques such as netting.

Simon Conron from Fisheries Victoria spoke about methods used to assess fish stock levels, while DEPI researcher Adrian Kitchingman and senior scientist Jason Lieschke hit the water to demonstrate electrofishing techniques.

Nicholson Angling Club has taken on projects over a number of years that include fencing river frontage to prevent stock access to the river, revegetation with native species, installation of fish habitat with logs, and water monitoring as part of the Waterwatch program.



Arthur Rylah Institute scientist Jason Lieschke and Department of Environment and Primary Industries (DEPI) researcher Adrian Kitchingman demonstrate to assembled fishers how the electrofishing mechanism works. (PS)



Mr Lieschke and Adrian Kitchingman man a tinny as part of the demonstration off the Nicholson jetty. (PS)