

## OUR WATER STORY, IS YOUR WATER STORY

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### MEDIA RELEASE

#### **Aquaculture Gladstone makes a splash with new interpretive display for visitors**

Gladstone Area Water Board (GAWB) will launch the new Aquaculture Gladstone Interpretive Display, complete with a live fish exhibit, on Friday 20 October 2023.

Aquaculture Gladstone is a \$12 million multi-species, purpose-built fish hatchery located at Lake Awoonga, approximately 30 kms from Gladstone in Central Queensland.

During production, the hatchery can breed and release into Lake Awoonga up to 1.35 million Barramundi, Mangrove Jack and Sea Mullet fingerlings a year.

The new interpretive display creates an accessible experience for visitors to learn about the different fish species being bred at the Aquaculture Gladstone fish hatchery, the aquaculture industry more broadly, biosecurity and biological pest species.

GAWB Chief Executive Officer, Darren Barlow, said the new interpretive display has been in the works since the Aquaculture Gladstone facility opened in November 2022.

“Our team has been working hard on plans to drive the future growth and development of Queensland’s aquaculture industry through tourism, education, research, and development,” Mr Barlow said.

“Aquaculture Gladstone is currently one of the most significant fish breeding and stocking programs in Queensland, and we hope this new interpretive display will transform the facility into a premier visitor attraction as well.

“The new visitor area is a fantastic experience which offers value as both a recreational and educational destination, there is certainly something here for everyone.”

Minister for Water, Minister for Regional Development and Manufacturing, and Member for Gladstone, Glenn Butcher MP, will attend the launch.

“Aquaculture Gladstone is accelerating the future development and expansion of Central Queensland’s growing aquaculture sector, and it’s fantastic to see the facility officially open to the general public,” Minister Butcher said.

“Aquaculture Gladstone’s fish restocking program cements Lake Awoonga as Queensland’s premier fishing destination and restocking program.

“Lake Awoonga is synonymous with great Barramundi fishing, so it’s fitting that we are celebrating the opening of this new facility in the same day as National Barramundi Day.

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“Aquaculture Gladstone is the beginning of several flow-on benefits for our region including employment, skills development, income sources for local marine service industries, increased tourism and supply chains.

“I look forward to this facility becoming a well-known and well-sought-after destination among locals and visitors to the Gladston region.”

Aquaculture Gladstone have recently welcomed the incredibly rare, golden Barramundi into the fish hatchery, a fish which is extremely rare in the wild and the chance of one being born is one-in-ten million.

The golden Barramundi are in rare company, as Aquaculture Gladstone is also home to another rare fish – fully-grown, white adult Barramundi. Fewer than one per cent of Barramundi share the white or gold colouration and scientists are unsure of how this pigment mutation occurs, but recent research by Mainstream Aquaculture and their golden Barramundi breeding program is leading the way with this species.

This ‘must see’ Aquaculture Gladstone interpretive display is now accepting bookings for tours in 2024. The Interpretive Display Area will be open to the public on Tuesdays and Thursdays between 10am and noon, commencing from the beginning of November.

To book or find out more information, head to [www.gawb.qld.gov.au](http://www.gawb.qld.gov.au).

Gladstone Area Water Board, as a Queensland Government Bulk Water Supply Authority, delivers safe and reliable water services which promote economic development and enhances the lifestyle of regional Queensland. Gladstone Area Water Board owns and operates Awoonga Dam on the Boyne River, along with a network of delivery pipelines, water treatment plants and other bulk water distribution infrastructure.

To ensure long-term water security for Gladstone’s urban and industrial customers, the 117-kilometre Fitzroy to Gladstone Pipeline project is under development. When delivered, the pipeline will form part of the Gladstone Area Water Board network and provide enhanced water security and reliability for the region. For more information about Gladstone Area Water Board and the Fitzroy to Gladstone Pipeline project, please visit [www.gawb.qld.gov.au](http://www.gawb.qld.gov.au)

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