

OUR WATER STORY, IS YOUR WATER STORY

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Media Release

One million reasons for Lake Awoonga anglers to smile

Christmas has come early for Lake Awoonga anglers, with Aquaculture Gladstone today releasing the facility's one millionth Barramundi fingerling for the FY24 restocking season.

Gladstone Area Water Board CEO Darren Barlow says this fingerling is a symbol of the health of GAWB's hatchery, Aquaculture Gladstone, and the health of Lake Awoonga.

"Aquaculture Gladstone is one of the largest fish stocking programs in Queensland and is actively driving future growth and development of Queensland's aquaculture industry," Mr Barlow said.

"The hatchery was opened in November 2022 and with world class facilities and a highly experienced team, Aquaculture Gladstone is delivering high quality native fish fingerlings both to Lake Awoonga and to other catchments on request.

"This is a milestone for the team, as this is the first time in history GAWB has released one million Barramundi fingerlings into Lake Awoonga in a calendar year.

"While these fingerlings might be on the bottom of the food chain right now, in a few years these fish will claim their rightful place as the icon of Lake Awoonga, attracting recreational fishers to the area," said Mr Barlow.

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

Officially opened in November 2022, the facility has capacity to produce a total of five million fingerlings per year including Barramundi, Mangrove Jack and Sea Mullet.

Minister for Water, Minister for Regional Development and Manufacturing, and Member for Gladstone, Glenn Butcher MP, says the milestone is an impressive start following the first year of operations for Aquaculture Gladstone.

"Aquaculture Gladstone is accelerating the future development and expansion of Central Queensland's growing aquaculture sector, and it's fantastic to see for the first time this annual total of one million Barramundi fingerlings released into Lake Awoonga," Minister Butcher said.

"Lake Awoonga is synonymous with great Barramundi fishing, and this is in large part to the ongoing fish restocking program from Aquaculture Gladstone.

"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," said Minister Butcher.

In addition to its successful fish breeding program, Aquaculture Gladstone has recently opened an interpretive display at the hatchery.

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.

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There is also a live fish exhibit where visitors can watch the incredibly rare Golden Barramundi and White Barramundi.

For more information about Aquaculture Gladstone, including how to visit the interpretive display or book a group tour, please visit www.gawb.qld.gov.au

Ends

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