

# New book brings proud history of trout

## EDITORIAL



with Scott Coghlan

FOR many years, the trout fishing bible in WA was Neil J Coy's fabulous book, *Freshwater Fishing in South-West Australia*.

Neil passed away last year, but had he still been with us today (and I add that I never met the man so I guess I can't be certain) I feel confident that he would have been glad someone else took up the cudgels on behalf of trout fishers and built on his efforts to record the history of these fish and this fishery.

And not only has passionate trout angler Glen Power done that, he's done an incredible job of building on the information Neil so painstakingly gathered for his book, bringing fascinating new aspects of the stocking history in WA to light in his massive new publication, *Trout in Western Australia*.

At nearly 500 pages, this is as comprehensive a history of trout fishing, and indeed of the stocking of many species including murray cod, redfin perch, golden perch and even tench, in WA as you will find, and which will likely ever exist.

Throw in more than 250 images chronicling the development of trout fishing in WA, it is the absolute perfect Christmas or birthday gift for the trout aficionado in your life.

It has been a labour of love over more than five years for Glen, a Rhodes Scholar who studied aquatic sciences and who's discovery of trout fishing changed his life forever.

Glen finds hunting trout to be the perfect escape from his day job in health, having run several hospitals and been chief of staff to the Minister for Health in WA.

An honorary life member of the Western Australian Trout and Freshwater Angling Association, he has introduced his two sons to the pastime as well, so his commitment to the betterment of this fishery is unquestionable and lifelong.



■ These shots at the Lefroy Brook are among more than 200 images in Glen Power's book, *Trout in Western Australia*.

In producing this mammoth book, which Glen funded himself at considerable cost, he has dug deep into the 150-year history of freshwater stocking in WA, far beyond what even Coy covered.

It was a process he found quite addictive, so interested was he in the information he started uncovering.

The result are some remarkable facts that were previously unpublished and which further highlight the special part this fishery has played in the building of communities in the South-West.

This is particularly so in the years when many of the people taking up residence in our regions were from other countries, and saw trout fishing as a way to not only maintain the connection with their previous life in the homeland, but also to source food from waterways that previously carried no table fish.

There are some amazing revelations in the book, such as the first recorded trout catch in WA, by a Dr Dickenson in the Blackwood River, after an 1896 release.

The birthplace of the first batch of trout successfully stocked out in WA (Forrest's hatchery at Picton) was also the birthplace of our first premier, Sir John Forrest.

In 1905, 80,000 rainbows from New Zealand were stocked into the Blackwood, while the Canning River had a substantial hatchery at Lamb's Spring Brook and was undoubtedly a trout fishery in the late 1800s and early 1900s, as was Mundaring Weir.

University of WA founder Winthrop Hackett was a big supporter of stocking, and put redfin perch and carp into Perth's Lake Monger in 1896.

Indeed, the lake became a recreational reserve initially due to its development as a fishery.

Trout were also stocked into Herdsman Lake until the early 1900s, while the Frankland and Denmark rivers produced good trout from the 1950s to the 1970s.

Indeed the history of stocking of Perth lakes makes for intriguing reading, with the revelation that trout did quite well in Lake Joondalup in the 1960s.

Bibra Lake was also stocked, while Lake Leschenaultia was a good fishery for several years and I can recall a couple of very productive days there early in my trout fishing adventures, even sleeping out overnight to get a prime spot on the jetty on opening day!

Having fished the upper Serpentine River for several years, it was with a tinge of sadness that I read about the demise of this once glorious trout fishery, which at one point was producing some of the biggest fish in the country.

It was with envy that I read of the remarkable McCarthy's Dam near Williams, which produced incredible fish for a period.

As an Albany resident, I was fascinated to learn of the early role the town played in stocking efforts, with trout ponds established in the 1870s.

Glen also points out the untapped potential of this part of the south coast, and the opportunity to expand freshwater fishing in the South-West is a recurring theme in the book, as it not only looks back, but seeks to promote a vibrant future for trout fishing in WA.

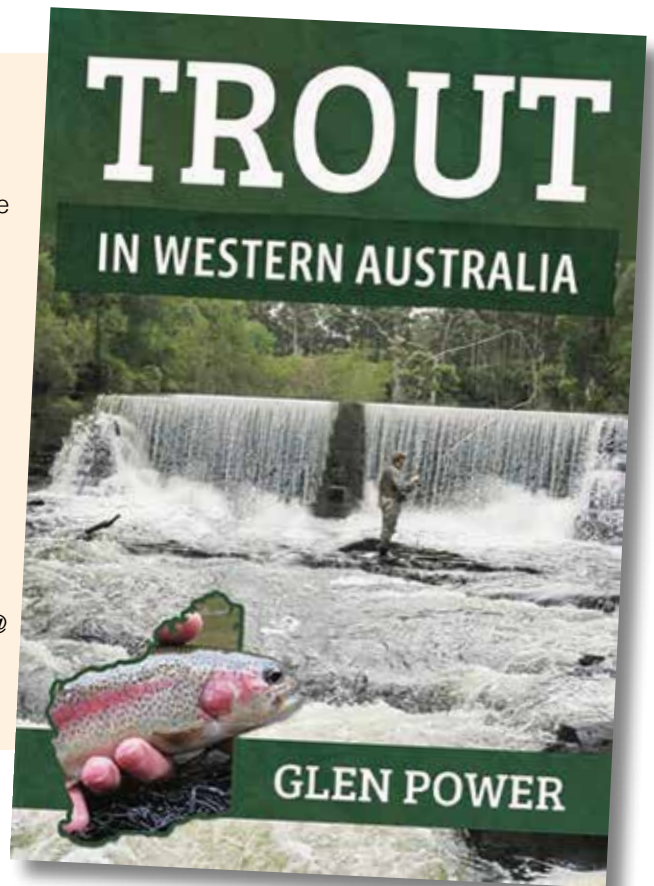
A must for any trout fishing aficionado, *Trout in Western Australia* has been published in two formats initially, a hard-cover version and a special limited edition leather-bound, signed and numbered copy, of which 150 (to match this history of WA trout) are available.

# fishing to life



● Scott Coghlan has been editing *Western Angler* since 2004 and written for the magazine for more than 20 years. A former journalist for *The Australian* and *Australian Associated Press*, he is a keen kayak and inshore fisher and writes the fishing page for *The West Australian* and *The Sunday Times*.

□ THIS new book *Trout in Western Australia* by Glen Power explores the 150-year history of trout and freshwater angling in Western Australia. Richly illustrated with 254 photographs, this 480-page volume also outlines contemporary fisheries management and angling methods in the rivers, streams and lakes Western Australia. The book is available through Amazon or by emailing [troutinwesternaustralia@gmail.com](mailto:troutinwesternaustralia@gmail.com)



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