

THE BURLEY LINE



Luke on a Local River



From the Editor's Desk

Following on from the 'photo of the month', we've got a story about trout season opening on the Cotter from Luke and Nathan – just missed getting in last month, thanks guys. Seems you've been up there with success again since that report – shame I can't emulate unlike my *guru* Peter – story and photo here. With the relaxation of restrictions on us traveling into the 'border bubble', I'm hoping to get more stories from all of you arriving on my desk for next *Burley Line*.

Held over from last month, we have the segment taking a bit of a "Retrospective" of CAA for the past 17 years. Thanks JM for this suggestion.

With my Membership Officer hat on – yet another reminder that fees are due – go to ['join us'](#) to update your contact details via the webform or simply email me. Please note our new bank account numbers (these were changed last year), they are given on the "join us" page. So far 30 of you have signed up including one new member (welcome Travis) – means 17 from last year remain to renew. Amongst other benefits, CAA has again acquired a Public Liability Insurance policy. This will support financial members in the event of a member of the public seeking compensation due to an incident during an official CAA club event. This coverage commences in November before our first event for the season. Life Members are covered automatically even without payment of fees.

Coming Events

Meeting: 10th November.

More details via email. Via Zoom from 7:30.

Fly Tying: 24th November

We've decided Zoom works best even when we aren't locked down. From 7:30 – more instructions via email in due course.

Next Events

28th Nov Natives under the care of Alan S.

Webinar Recordings – Native Fish Showcase

Peter is very interested in progress of the recovery of Macquarie Perch locally and natives in general. He attended a series of webinars recently and has provided [a link to the recordings](#). The four titles were:

- Native fish in the Upper Murrumbidgee – the good, the few and the missing.
- Reaching for Recovery of the endangered Macquarie Perch in South East NSW.
- Murray River crayfish in the Upper Murrumbidgee River.
- Taking Stock of Stocky Galaxias. If you have a particular interest in Stocky Galaxias, here are some pages/podcasts specifically on these critters:
 - [Researchers dash to save Stocky and his mates...](#)

- [New handbook supporting the conservation of nine NSW threatened freshwater fish species](#)
- [DPI Description](#) – Gaden Hatchery is actively part of a research breeding program.

An Opening Weekend Story

It is excellent to see Luke rejoin the club – he's been a substantial contributor to *Burley Line* in the past including assistance/inspiration in developing the blog concept and the Newsletter template. Here he and another old friend, Nathan, are reporting on the opening weekend – apologies I couldn't get it into last month's edition.

Luke

With ACT in lockdown, Nathan and I explored the local river to wet a line for opening weekend. After a bit of bush-bashing, we popped out on a part of the river we haven't fished before and were met with the perfect water flow for czech-nymphing which saw us land fish almost immediately.

We slowly worked downstream and were lucky enough to land multiple fish out of each run and pool, all varying in size but all healthy rainbows. Even luckier, we surprisingly only ran into one other angler on the water which is unheard of for opening weekend and in lockdown. The usual jig nymphs were the fly of choice, varying with hot pink and bright orange beads. As we worked down and eventually got to the pool to walk back to the car, we both counted approx. 20 fish landed each, with many more dropped or missed hookups. A great outing to open the season and great to see local waters fishing so well.







Cotter with Peter and Bill

We were kinda hoping to emulate these younger members and headed up on Fri 8 Oct. Didn't expect to find so many of the access points already occupied, and ended up at the Bendora Dam carpark. No-one there, looking good, till a spin fisherman turned up.

As so often is the case, Peter was far better than Bill at selecting the right water and had success, three fish in the 'ten inch' region, but then this beauty. Meanwhile Bill fought his way down a gorge and eventually only managed one of those ten-inchers on for a few moments (enough to see and identify).



From Peter:

42 cm rainbow trout caught in the Cotter river 08 October 2021. Was in excellent condition and caught on a #12 cream caddis pupa. Caught three other rainbows between 20.5 cm and 24cm. Great day for fishing.

A “Retrospective”



JM suggested to me that since there might be fewer fishing reports due to lockdown, it might be fun to look back on some previous highlights. I decided to pick out some of our past ‘photos of the month’ and other interesting/topical ones. One from each year.

This current incarnation of CAA Newsletter started in [Oct 2004](#). Our mate Peter appeared in the issue reporting on the opening of the season on the Eucumbene River near Kiandra – turns out we couldn’t do that this season (modesty prevents me from showing the other ‘fish’ photo from that report).

El Presidente at the time, Geoff, with a stonker on the Eucumbene the following year. [Dec2005 Issue](#).





Back in the days when we had a club boat. Alan on Brogo Dam.
[Dec 2006](#)
Issue.

Charlie with a good looking carp – “our beach” near the Boathouse was a pleasant spot in the afternoon.
[Jul 2007 issue.](#)





Peter, Ian and Stuart headed to NZ in Feb 2008 and abandoned me. Their report in the [Mar 2008 issue](#) shows Ian on the rocks beside the Maitara. One of his favourite spots on dusk with the fish rising in complex eddies.

Stuart leads one of the early fly tying lessons. [May 2009 Issue](#).





In his most recent stint as President, Ian instigated the idea of presenting the heritage Hardy's Rod to a member who had contributed significantly during the year. Here presenting to the ever hard-working Lyall reported in [Sep 2010 issue](#).

[The Apr 2011](#) Issue reported on our coast trip – Randy landed the big one, 70+cm flathead in the shallows.





In the [March 2012 Issue](#), Life Member now deceased, Max, reported on floods through the huts on “the river that shall not be named” which occurred in Nov 2011. Thankfully, they are now fully repaired and ready for our trip next year with Greg W in the lead.

It must have been around [Oct 2013 issue](#) when we started to have ‘Photo of the Month’. Here JQ and Darlene in a photo-op with April Vokey after Darlene’s lesson.





How often have we seen this dude in the Newsletter holding a big fish? I suspect this an alternative photo of the 5.8lb 56cm Brown caught by Nathan at Eucumbene, rather than the photo in the [Sep 2014 issue](#).

We have had some very young junior members, but I think Kelly's little fellow was the youngest ever to attend an event. Here with Mum in between casts on the 2015 Tumut trip – [Jul 2015 Issue](#).



Evan (see <https://www.createafly.com.au/>) competing in the inaugural 120 minute challenge at Bondi Forest Lodge (report in [Sep 2016 issue](#)). Evan showed us how you can tie flies just using your haemostats.



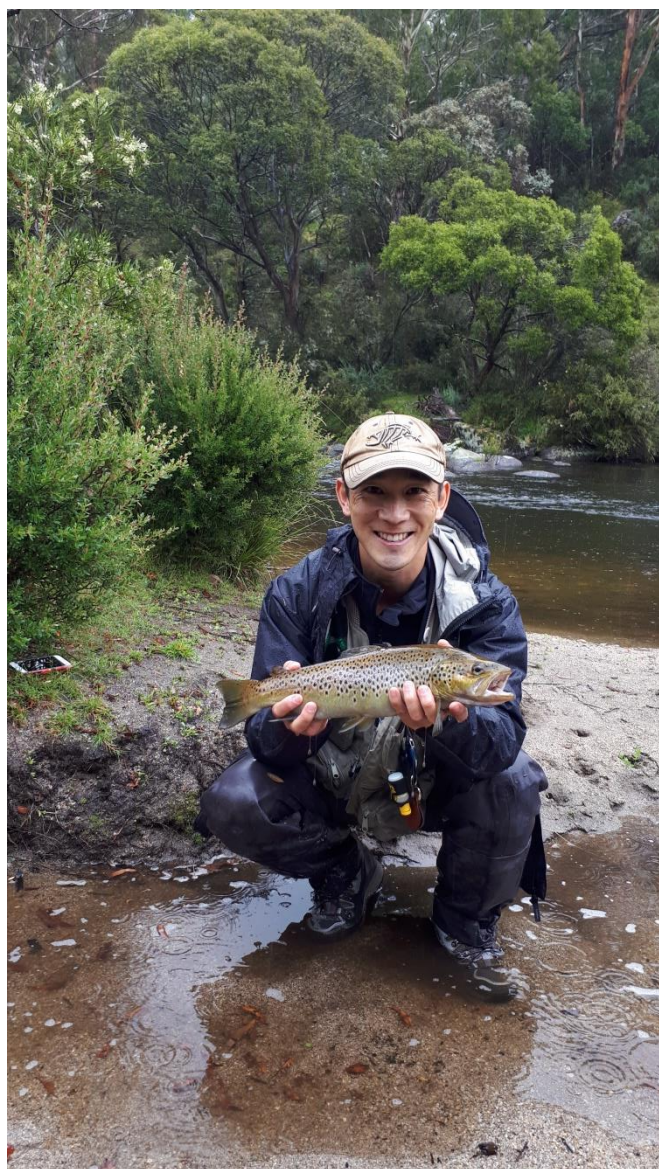
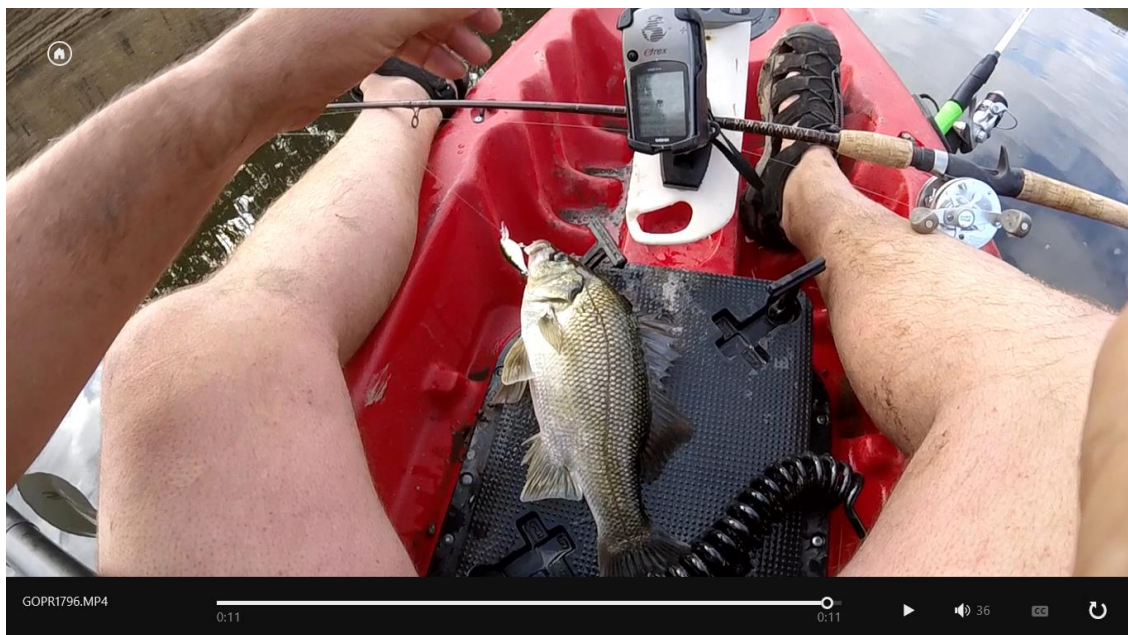
Luke with a beaut (non-spawner) from Lake Eucumbene. Reported in [Oct 2017 Issue](#).

Who says we only fish for trout – here's Claude on the Feb 2018 Natives event. Reported in [Mar 2018 Issue](#).



And here Rod and his NZ Snapper. [Dec 2019 Issue](#).

Over the years, Jason M has possibly been the most successful on bass at Brogo. Here in [Feb 2020 issue](#) with his 37cm specimen.



Ken joined the club purportedly to learn about stream fishing, but he was a gun on the 2021 Jindabyne trip reported in [Feb 2021 Issue](#).

Another Contemplative Piece

My call for copy brought further fruit from Ken. I'll put this into the [Beginner's Blog](#), not because Ken is a beginner, but rather I think his story will inspire novices.

Ken – Fish Reflections 2021

I have been contemplating sharing my reflections on the previous season but never managed to put finger to keyboard. But there was a call for a fluff piece in the newsletter, so this is just about my fishing journey this year...

I moved back to Canberra about two years ago. One motivation was to fish more, and particularly to develop a river skillset. I had almost exclusively fished the lakes and have developed sufficient proficiency not to be a fish-whisperer but was able to put everything together sometimes in a good-enough way to be successful. And I was relatively relaxed about doing so. Any fanciful thoughts of doing any river fishing were quickly extinguished by memories of my first attempts – if my line wasn't tangled in the tussock and sticks at my feet, they were stuck in the tree behind. 'Where am I casting? I don't know, just get it in'. If I got the fly in the water, it would get wedged behind a rock. Tie a new one on, only to lose it two casts later in another tree that I swear wasn't there before. It was a nightmare. I would occasionally try again but proficiency always seemed to be beyond reach. Nevertheless, the quest for personal improvement and skill development can be a great motivator and last season (2021) I sucked it up and tried again.

The Jindabyne trip was an early venture and a satisfying one for me. Bill and I had a short session on the first day before anyone else arrived and that turned out to be a lucky thing as I caught my first river fish of 'reasonable' size.



The fly boxes came out that night and I was fascinated at everyone else's exquisite candy – "Hey, I don't have one of those, or that, and what's THAT?!" I have a brown one, a small one and a dry one. That will just have to do. Next day, different setting, more walking, smaller water and smaller fish. But the walk up the valley was pretty and catching feisty little fish on dry and nymph was a lot of fun. And then on the last morning, went exploring and caught a couple by myself before heading home. What was most satisfying for me on this trip was confirming which parts of the water held fish and why 'there' and not 'there'. And that simple strategy guided my approach for other trips.

Cut to the end... I also fished this year's spawn run. I usually cringe at this because I prefer to avoid certain behaviours of others during this event but I remain nevertheless, curious. I forced myself to do it and convinced myself that it would serve me well to notch up more on-water time for skill and knowledge development and so, went but walked away from the crowds. This was astonishing, previous attempts – zero but plenty this time. I had caught enough to feel sufficiently satisfied to not bother about catching more which allowed me to experiment with flies. By the way, they all work. Claude reckons I'm some lucky rabbit's foot but I'm not a magical fisherman and my flies aren't that special either. The real eyeopener was finding groups of fish and watching their behaviour. They'd chase and bite each other, shove each other out the way and jockey for position. And when the mood music was just right, they'd turn on their side, dig up the redds and do their spawning thing. It was fascinating watching them all day. I've heard the argument against disturbing them when they're spawning but I think that's overestimating our powers of influence. From what I saw, they are completely task oriented and couldn't care less. A few dragged me up and down river for a few minutes before getting released, and then just slot right back into position in the queue, barely a few metres from you as if nothing happened. So that was all very interesting and a good bookend to my year on the river.

I caught little fish...



...and big fish.



As for the lake, it had been a while since I fished Eucumbene regularly so the radar was a bit wobbly and skills a bit rusty. Nevertheless, it was pleasant simply to revisit an old habit more regularly than I've been able to in recent years.



Admittedly, the early season was difficult. The rising water had flooded new ground and drowned these grubs who would float out of ground looking for air and then get helplessly picked off one by one. Food everywhere but it seemed that no one could actually create a reliable imitation. I only had limited success with mine but you tell me, is there much difference between mine and the real thing? Perhaps it was the wriggling that set them apart or maybe the natural was floating up as opposed to sinking down. Who knows but with similar rising water again this season, it's another opportunity to experiment.



Thankfully, they switched to another food source and sometimes that made it easier, sometimes harder. All that rotting junk on the edges meant it was only a matter of time before the midge started balling up and that meant fun time ahead. This rarely lasts long so I was lucky enough to jag a couple of trips to coincide with this and ended up having one of my best sessions with a midge ball ever. You can barely see your fly in the fading light but you hear the 'bloop'.



And then there's this. Does anyone have any idea what these critters are? Jaime? I've previously heard that there are clouds of daphnia out in the middle of the lake and if so, that's a pretty hard thing to imitate. Whatever they are, the fish were stuffed with them.



I didn't fish much of the mudeye season or hear that there was much of that happening. I'm still hoping for a return of good muddler season.

I have however been hearing that it's been harder to catch fish in the lake over the past few years, and that too has been my lived experience. Everyone tells me miserably that the fish are gone. This is not comforting news when you've driven all the way from Sydney or spent a precious leave pass to go fishing. Admittedly, I grew increasingly tired of this narrative. 'They are not there, they've all died, there's no fish here' and the list of excuses goes on. Maybe true but I am surprised at the lengths we sometimes go to to explain why we fished all day and didn't even get a touch or see a rise. I was even told that thousands of fish were taken by pelicans and all the yabbies eaten by foxes so the fish starved to death. That's creative stuff. A more measured reason might be we were in the wrong bay, at the wrong part of the bay, in an unproductive part of the lake. We might have a good fly but not fishing it at the right depth or action for that time of the day or year. We might have persisted too long in the same area using the same method that was successful 'last time' but not now. Why don't we use those excuses? I've blanked out more than I would like to recall but I also did catch fish and they are there, even in recent years.

So to sum up my previous season very simplistically, I caught little fish and big fish. I bagged out and not bagged out. Much to my delight I seemed to have crossed a point with river fishing. I have also not caught fish and blanked out in previously productive waters more often than I would like. There were important lessons learnt, didn't always catch fish but did have a number of highlights, good to be doing it again and a good season to get things going again. However, I am reminded that 'one swallow does not make a summer'. The test for me is whether this can be repeated again and again. However, my point of all this, if you haven't noticed, is that as an average fisherman with average flies, if I can catch them, anyone else can, pelicans or no pelicans.

For Those of You Who Want to Fish the Mataura River

I just got news that David Murray-Orr, notable guide on the Mataura, has decided to wind back a bit. He used to produce a weekly blog post on the state of fishing, with lots of hints on flies to use/techniques etc. Anyway, he will stop blogging and just fish for fun, however for **For**

NZ Pure Fly Series 4 Free on Youtube

[Series 4 of Pure Fly NZ](#) continues on from where Series 3 left off, following some of the best kiwi anglers on numerous fly fishing adventures into New Zealand's pristine wilderness. Featuring 8 epic missions finished in 4K, Series 4 was filmed when the borders were closed. Hour long episodes. 4 episodes available and 4 to come over the next 4 weeks. Subscribe to the channel to be alerted.

Stuff You May Have Already Read on our [News Blog](#)

Don't forget that you can register to receive automatic emails when new posts are uploaded. Fill out the form on the right of any post.

[Oct NSWCFR Newsletter](#)

- **Animal Welfare Reform** – sign the NSW Parliament E-Petition I think only available to NSW Residents. This proposed legislation would have significant impact on angling.
- **Have your say on Warragamba Dam** the planned raising of the dam wall has potential impact on upstream rivers
- **Successful application for rainbow trout redd mapping project** the RFFTEC (the dudes who manage the trust fund that manage licence fees) has approved a project to explore mapping trout redds – you can't manage things you don't understand. This will feed into the research supporting the trout strategy.
- Two items relating to the management of wild horses in KNP.

Stuff You May Have Already Read on our [Facebook Page](#)



If you are on Facebook, you should consider "liking and following" the [CAA Facebook page](#).

For those of you who don't subscribe to Facebook, click on headings below to look at the post – you don't need to join Facebook. Facebook is a fast moving medium so I'll only be putting stuff here in *Burley Line* that is of a longer-term interest – often that'll mean nothing in any particular month, but I'll keep the placemaker.

Other News

Additional news and links from supporting groups



NSW Council of Freshwater Anglers

Remember you can subscribe to the Newsletter (*Freshwater Fisher*) yourself, there is a link in every monthly newsletter. Previous CFA newsletters can be accessed [via their archive](#). They also have a presence on [Facebook](#). The [key correspondence](#), a useful calendar of events and recent videos are on their website.

Don't forget you can donate to the CFA by [becoming a 'Foundation Member'](#) and personally support their good work. The website explains what that means – only the equivalent of \$0.50 per week.

October Newsletter advised in CAA News Blog.

Recreational Fishing Alliance of NSW

Remember you can subscribe yourself, there is a link in every monthly newsletter. Recent, previous RFA newsletters can be accessed via their [archive](#). They also have a presence on [Facebook](#).

Fisheries Victoria News – 'Nibbles'

After a quiet period, a [new issue](#) arrived. Remember you can subscribe yourself, here is the [link](#). News and updates from Fisheries Victoria can be found also on their [Facebook page](#) (you don't need to be a Facebook user). Interesting items in this edition:

- \$181,523 Landcare grant to help recover Macquarie Perch in bushfire affected areas of North East Victoria.
- Better black bream fishing in the Gippsland Lakes.
- Trout cod and Murray cod production at Snobs Creek.
- Snobs Creek Hatchery team are hard at work stocking trout across the state – link to stocking database is provided.
- Upgraded track access to the Goulburn River between Murchison and Shepparton.

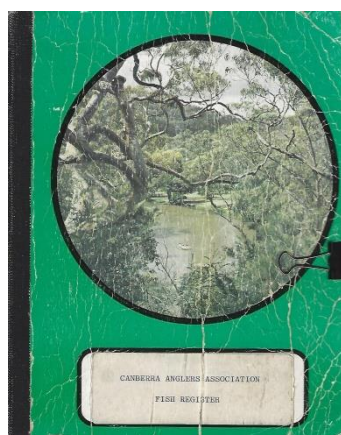
Long Term Program of Events Not Formally Part of CAA Events

Provided for your calendar planning, members can see the diversity of angling events available to attend and some might even choose to get a CAA group together to attend an event outside our formal calendar which would broaden our horizons greatly. If anyone spots a non-CAA event that might be of interest to members, please email *Burley Line*. COVID continues to play havoc with these events.

Dates	Event Details
Recent advice is that this is now proposed for Dec	Buckenderra Caravan Park organize a trout catch and release event called the Anaconda Trout Challenge. There is a limit of 150 participants. The word is that there'll be a special prize exclusively for fly anglers. Here are some pages related to the 2020 event https://www.facebook.com/buckenderraholidayvillage/posts/2749280708483144 https://www.facebook.com/buckenderraholidayvillage/posts/2820574901353724
17 and 18 Jan 2022. Continue to monitor the website link.	NSW DPI Kids' Fishing Workshops at Gaden Hatchery Jindabyne as part of their wider program. https://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/fishing/recreational/resources/fishing-workshops/kids
	These have been annual regulars in the past
Feb	the Thredbo fly fishing expo (free event) – 2021 was lost to COVID, https://www.thredbo.com.au/events/fly-fishing-weekend-2020/
Fri 29 Apr to Sun 1 May	NSW Council of Freshwater Anglers InterClub Meet – this is now on the CAA 2021-22 program so I'll delete this from this section after this newsletter. http://canberra-anglers.asn.au/blog/cfa-annual-interclub-flyfishing-meet-3-5-may-2019-program-and-other-info/
Oct	We can anticipate Go Fishing Day NSW version. https://gonefishingday.com.au/

Notable Fish Recorded

The intent of this segment is to encourage folk to get out fishing and share the joy. It is not the 'official record of catches' and so can include catches of interest that aren't eligible for trophies. Currently, the authoritative list for consideration for the [club trophies](#) is the little green book brought to meetings by the Secretary clearly marked as "Canberra Anglers Association Fish Register" pictured here. The process will change this year and we hope to receive clear guidance prior to our first event. In the meantime, please take photos of your catch with a tape or other verifiable measurement device (eg rod, but not your foot or hand).



We welcome emails advising how you are going, but don't forget to formally register them. Please be aware that I tend to collect catch information from word of mouth and articles submitted for publication. I occasionally peruse the little green book, but inclusion in *Burley Line* can't be interpreted as having been checked by me as being registered.

Angler	Species	Length	Method	Location/Event/ Date
Peter K	Redfin	33cm	No advice (likely to be fly)	Vicinity of Point Hut, 25 Sep
Peter K	Redfin	33cm	Fly	Vicinity of Point Hut, 27 Sep
Claude, Al, BJ and Shaun	Rainbows and browns	unreported	Fly	Cotter River, 2 and 4 Oct
Luke and Nathan	Rainbows	unreported	Fly	"local river" on opening weekend
Peter	Rainbows	Best at 42cm three others between 20.5 cm and 24cm	Fly	Cotter, 8 Oct
Peter K	Redfin	36cm	Fly	Vicinity of Point Hut, 17 Oct

Contact Us

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NOTE: Apart from Official Club Policy or Official Reports, the views expressed in this newsletter are not necessarily those of the Canberra Anglers Association.

Join Us

Thinking of becoming a member? The membership application form can be found on our website. Fees are payable each year after our AGM (adjustments will be made for joining later in the year). 2021/2022 rates are unchanged from last year:

- General Membership \$40.00
- Family Membership \$50.00
- Concession Membership (age pension or concession card) \$15.00
- Junior Membership (U18 years) \$15.00

Payment can be made via bank transfer (details on the form) or in-person at one of our meetings. More information on our website or contact us via email.

Contribute to *The Burley Line*

Contributions are always encouraged to *The Burley Line* and can be sent in via the email listed on the left (or via clicking the link on the web home page below "contact us"). Whether it be photos, trip reports, gear reviews, advertising, places to visit, we encourage it all.

Additionally, posts for our blog are also welcome, especially for our cooking page, gear notes and places to visit. Comments on individual blog posts are also encouraged.

Supporters

Canberra Anglers Association would like to thank the supporters below for their ongoing assistance to our club. We encourage all members to support these groups where possible.



Capital Fly Casting



www.capitalflycasting.com