

# Lake St. Clair, St. Clair Lagoon and Lake King William

## Anglers Access

REGION: CENTRAL



### Lake St Clair Angling Regulations

To fish in any open public inland water in Tasmania you must hold a current Inland Angling Licence unless you are under 14 years of age. A summary of the regulations are contained within the Tasmanian Inland Recreational Fishing Code.

Species	Min. size	Bag limit
Brown trout, Rainbow trout	300 mm	12*

\* Total daily bag limit: 12 fish for both species combined.

Method	Season
Fly fishing Artificial lures	From the first Saturday in August to the Sunday nearest the 30th April.

### St Clair Lagoon Angling Regulations

Species	Min. size	Bag limit
Brown trout, Rainbow trout	300 mm	5*

\* Combined daily bag limit of 5 fish can only include 2 fish exceeding 500 mm in length.

Method	Season
Fly fishing Artificial lures	From the first Saturday in August to the Sunday nearest the 30th April.

### Lake King William Angling Regulations

Species	Min. size	Bag limit
Brown trout, Rainbow trout	220 mm	20*

\* Total daily bag limit: 20 fish for both species combined.

**Please note:** The Western Shore of Lake King William is within the Franklin Gordon Wild Rivers National Park. To protect the unique native fauna and flora these areas are restricted to the use of artificial lures and fly-fishing only. This applies only to shore based anglers.

Method	Season
Fly fishing Artificial lures Bait fishing	Open all year round.

#### CONTACT DETAILS

17 Back River Road,  
New Norfolk, 7140  
Ph: 1300 INFISH  
[www.ifs.tas.gov.au](http://www.ifs.tas.gov.au)



Inland Fisheries Service

### Getting There

Lake St. Clair can be reached from Hobart on the Lyell Hwy A10 via Derwent Bridge in around 2.5 hours. Lake King William at Butlers Gorge can be reached from Hobart on the A10 in approximately 2 hours.

### Background

#### Lake St Clair and St. Clair Lagoon

Lake St. Clair is a long narrow natural lake and is the deepest glacial lake in Australia with a maximum depth of 174m. The lake is situated within the Cradle Mountain, Lake St. Clair National Park, part of the Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area, and is noted for its crystal clear water and unparalleled scenic beauty. St Clair Lagoon is situated at the southeastern end of the main lake and is separated by a small weir. The lagoon is a shallow weedy storage that has a dam and control gate to regulate its outflow.

Lake St. Clair is the source of the River Derwent that flows into the sea at Hobart. Whilst it is well known for being the finishing point for the Overland Track, The lake and lagoon are popular recreational fisheries.

Sheer dolerite cliffs rise up steeply from the 200 metre deep waters and the lake is surrounded by forest, providing stunning scenery. Fishing and boating are allowed on the lake and a Visitors Centre nearby at Cynthia Bay provides information on the lake's geology, history and wildlife. The visitor centre also houses a restaurant, shop, fishing and Visitor Information Centre. The restaurant looks over the lake - dining with a world heritage view. There are alpine lodges, a backpacker lodge, camping facilities and powered sites - the full range of accommodation options.

Be warned that the weather can change from clear blue skies to rain and cold conditions very quickly. It is best to wear layers of clothing and bring wet-weather protection.

Lake St Clair and St. Clair Lagoon are within the Cradle Mountain, Lake St. Clair National Park. To protect the unique flora and fauna these waters are reserved for artificial lures and flies only, bait fishing is not permitted within National Parks.

Park fees apply and a National Park Pass is to be displayed on vehicles and boats. Park Passes are available from the visitor's centre at Cynthia Bay.

#### Lake King William

Hydro Tasmania created Lake King William in 1950 with the construction of the 70m high Clark Dam across the Derwent River. In the late 1960's a further 6 metres was added to the dam wall, increasing the storage capacity of the lake. The lake is heavily drawn upon for electricity generation and undergoes large fluctuations in water level throughout the year. Brown trout were present in the system before completion of the dam but 100,000 yearling rainbow trout were introduced upon filling of the lake. Subsequent stockings of rainbow trout continued through the early 1950's but despite these stockings it is brown trout that dominate angler's catches. The many creeks and rivers that flow into Lake King William provide limitless spawning opportunities which has resulted in a large population of small trout.

The Western Shore of Lake King William is within the Franklin Gordon Wild Rivers National Park. To protect the unique native fauna and flora these areas are restricted to the use of artificial lures and fly-fishing only. This applies only to shore based anglers.

#### Recreational Fishery Management

Lake St Clair, St. Clair Lagoon and Lake King William are managed as wild trout fisheries. Angling regulations and seasons are specific for each water. Anglers should ensure that they are familiar with and observe these regulations which can be found in the Tasmanian Inland Recreational Fishing Code.

### Angling Notes

#### Lake St Clair and St Clair Lagoon

Fishing for both brown and rainbow trout is popular in the southern end of Lake St Clair. Spinning and trolling account for reasonable catches particularly during rough or overcast days. The clear water gives fly fishers the opportunity to polaroid fish around the lake margins. Good hatches of mayfly occur in the summer months providing good dry fly fishing. The best fly-fishing however, occurs at St Clair Lagoon with all facets of the sport available at different times, depending on the time in the season and water levels.

#### Lake King William

Trolling is a reliable way to catch large bags of predominantly brown trout at Lake King William, with spinning and baitfishing also very productive at times. The best areas for fishing are in the northern end of the lake and the Guelph basin. Fly-fishing can also be very productive with dry fly activity, particularly on evening in the north west corner of the lake and the Guelph basin. The water is clear enough to polaroid, which can be productive on some of the steeper shores. Loch style fly fishing with two or three wet or dry flies is a successful method.

### Code of Conduct

- Be aware of and comply with fishing regulations.
- Respect the rights of other anglers and users.
- Protect the environment.
- Carefully return undersized, protected or unwanted catch back to the water.
- Fish species and other organisms must not be relocated or transferred into other water bodies.

## Protect our Waters

Recreational anglers have a responsibility to look after fisheries resources for the benefit of the environment and future generations.

- Do not bring live or dead fish, fish products, animals or aquatic plants into Tasmania.
- Do not bring any used fishing gear or any other freshwater recreational equipment that may be damp, wet or contain water into Tasmania. **Check, clean and dry** your fishing equipment before entering Tasmania.
- Do not transfer any freshwater fish, frogs, tadpoles, invertebrates or plants between inland waters.
- Check your boat, trailer, waders and fishing gear for weed and other pests that should not be transferred before moving between waters.
- Do not use willow (which is a plant pest) as a rod support as it has the ability to propagate from a strike.

## Native Fish Management

A landlocked population of the native climbing galaxias (*Galaxias brevipinnis*) occurs in both Lake St. Clair and St. Clair Lagoon. This species is the largest of the Tasmanian galaxiids reaching lengths in excess of 250 mm. Adults are rarely seen but schools of juveniles can often be seen in late summer around the margins of the lake. Climbing galaxias are likely to be present in Lake King William.

## Pest Fish Management

Anglers can help reduce the spread of pests in Tasmanian waterways by not transferring fish between waters. Offences may incur significant penalties.

## Recreational Use

- Please remove all rubbish and do not litter.
- There is a public toilet at Cynthia Bay. Anglers are encouraged to bring portable toilets or be sure to walk at least 100 metres from the water; dig a 15-centimetre hole and bury waste including the toilet paper.

## Access Rules

- Keep to formed tracks.
- Do not litter – please take your rubbish with you.
- Respect private land – if in doubt ask permission.
- Firearms are prohibited in National Parks.
- National Parks are fuel stove only areas: Do not light fires.
- All flora is protected in National Parks: Do not cut or break any vegetation.

## Responsible Boating

At Lake St Clair there is a formal boat ramp at Cynthia Bay that is really the only practical spot to launch a boat. There are full camping amenities at Cynthia Bay and some informal camping spots at the northern end of the lake at Narcissus. Huts are located at Narcissus and Echo Point however these are often occupied by bushwalkers.

Lake King William has a large boat ramp situated at the southern end of the lake at Butlers Gorge which is useable at most water levels. Launching areas at the northern end of the lake accessible from the Lyell Highway are not always useable due to the highly variable water level of the lake.

There are several areas prohibited for navigation:

- In St. Clair Lagoon for a distance of 300 metres upstream from the St. Clair Dam.
- In the River Derwent for a distance of 300 metres downstream from the St. Clair Dam.
- Lake King William: the waters bounded by Clark Dam, a sign on the western bank approximately 300 metres upstream of the dam and a sign on the eastern bank approximately 100 metres upstream of the dam.

Practice minimal impact boating by accelerating gently in shallow water to avoid the underwater wash from the propeller jet stirring up silt and mud. This sediment clouds the water, disturbs sensitive weed beds, smothers aquatic plants and degrades fish habitat.

## Remember

- Check your wash - if it's white it's all right - if it's brown slow down.
- Fishing from a boat within 100 metres of an angler fishing from the shore is prohibited unless the boat is securely moored.
- Do not park on or obstruct boat ramps.

## Lake Level

Information on current lake level for Lake St Clair and Lake King William is available from [www.hydro.com.au/water/lake-levels](http://www.hydro.com.au/water/lake-levels)

- Report any unusual fish captures or algal sightings immediately to the Inland Fisheries Service
- Report illegal activities to; Bushwatch 1800 333 000



Brown and Rainbow trout illustrations Trevor Hawkins  
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