

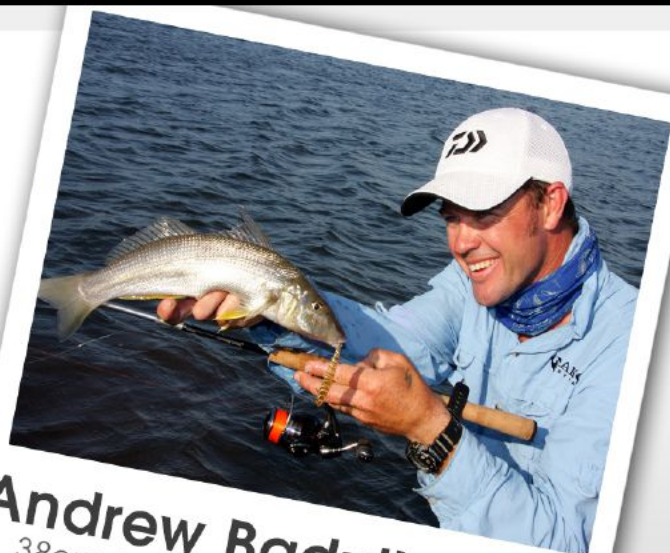


# Target Species

**Sand Whiting** - *Sillago ciliata*

## Where to fish

Sand whiting inhabit sandy areas within estuaries, bays and coastal beaches at a depth generally between 0.5-6m. When targeting whiting within an estuary focus on the sand flats during an incoming tide, particularly the upper reaches of the tidal front, and channel edges during the run out tide. On the beach, look for areas of interest such as shallow gutters and holes, corrugated trenches and divots, and also the edges of washy sandbars.



**Andrew Badullovich,**  
 38cm to the fork, Tuross River, NSW

## How to target

When targeting Sand whiting you have the option of bait fishing in estuaries, bays and beaches vs surface luring in estuaries and bays. When bait fishing use live or fresh bait and incorporate a slow retrieve with the occasional pause into your style. When surface luring constantly cover new ground, cast up current and retrieve with the tide, and vary the action and pace of retrieve. Throwing a pause into a fast erratic retrieve is dynamite on timid fish. To set the hook with whiting employ a slow lift or gentle lean rather than a sharp strike.



**Great Family Fun,**  
 This nice whiting took a ghost shrimp





Sand whiting



## ▶▶ Hints & Tips

Sand whiting are generally caught in estuaries, bays and surf beaches from northern Queensland to Tasmania. Anglers adopt a finesse approach and use light line, lightweight outfits and live baits or surface lures to target them.

- 1 When fishing the sand flats cast into the sun where possible as silhouettes or shadows cast over the water easily spook Sand whiting.
- 2 When surface luring vary your retrieve and figure out what mood they're in and what's working best on the day.
- 3 Stopping and pausing a slow retrieved bait or fast, erratic retrieved lure is dynamite.
- 4 The ideal conditions for surface luring the flats are: rising barometer, sun in the face and wind at your back, casting up current and retrieving with the tide.

### Rod & Reel

To get more enjoyment out of your Sand whiting fishing it's best to adopt a finesse approach with a lightweight, light line outfit. In protected waters go for something like a 2-4kg 7 foot graphite spin rod and a 1000-2500 size reel to suit.

On the surf beaches use a light 10-12 foot rod and balance with a 4000-6000 size spin reel or a lightweight graphite Alvey.

### Line and leader

- Bait: 4-6lb monofilament & 0.5-1.0m 4-6lb fluoro carbon leader.
- Lure: 2-4lb braid & 1.5m 4-6lb monofilament leader (the shorter the more action imparted).

### Terminal Tackle

- Size 4-8 long shank hook, size 4-8 swivel, and size 0-2 ball sinker (slightly heavier in the surf).
- Fine gauge, roughly size 12 treble.

### Best Lures

Small poppers or walk-the-dog style hard-bodied surface lures, eg Bassday SugaPen 70's.

### Best Bait

The best baits for Sand whiting are live ghost shrimp (nippers or yabbies), bloodworms, beach worms and pippies.

### Filleting

See the 'Fillet Whiting' video for the correct method of filleting Sand whiting.



**Whiting Surface Lures**  
 Carrying a variety will often help





Sand whiting

## RIGGING FOR SURFACE LURING

Targeting Sand whiting on surface lures is great sport and can be quite productive. Use a 2-4lb braid mainline and join it to a 1.5m, 4-6lb mono leader with a Double-Uni knot or similar. At the other end of the leader a loop knot (e.g. Lefty's Loop) will enable walk-the-dog style surface lures freedom to move and zig-zag during the retrieve. Alternatively, tying a knot tight to the tow-point of a cup-faced popper will aid the popper to track straight during a constant blooping retrieve.



**Surface Lure Rig**  
 Loop knot & Double-Uni

## RIGGING FOR BAIT FISHING

Whether bait fishing from the shore or from a boat the rig you use remains the same, the only thing that differs is the amount of weight you use. Fishing a monofilament mainline can be beneficial as the elasticity reduces the chance of pulled hooks. Sand whiting rigs vary but a simple rig that works consists of a size 4-8 long shank hook, 0.5-1m monofilament leader, and a running ball sinker above a swivel. Bait up with a live nipper or beach worm and you're in business.



**Running Ball Rig**  
 Fishing with bait