



“They go like hell!” – Local fisherman lands big, burly bull shark

Description

AN impressive 1.4 metre bull shark caught up behind Abergowrie is attracting significant attention online from locals who were shocked to learn that sharks were flourishing in that vicinity and others who say they’ve “seen bigger”.

The photo, posted on TRAVEL, TOURISM & Flood CHATTER BOX – Hinchinbrook & Ingham (2018-present), shows 65-year-old Mal Craven’s catch of the day loaded onto the back of a four-wheeler and extending well past the sides of the vehicle.

Originally from Stone River, Mr Craven has been fishing the Herbert River near Zatta’s Hole for over 20 years and said there has “definitely” been an increase in the number and size of bull sharks in the area – but he’s not complaining.

“I fish for bull sharks, that keeps me amused during the day, and then at night time, early mornings and afternoon, I fish for barra,” Mr Craven said.

“It’s all good fun once you hook one, even the small ones take a lot to get in, they fight really well ... they go like hell.

“When I first fished for them they were only there for three, four months [of the year] and then you couldn’t catch them, but now you can go there 12 months of the year and catch bull sharks,” he said.

In response to comments that bigger bull sharks are present in the area, Mr Craven admitted to seeing them up to nearly two metres in length, but confessed that they are difficult to land without suitable fishing gear and strength.

“I have hooked one, but the bigger one, the gear just wasn’t heavy enough or strong enough to get him in and neither was I,” he joked.

Despite an obvious increase in numbers, Mr Craven doesn’t believe the sharks pose a danger to people but views the species as more of a “nuisance if you’re barra fishing.”

"You end up with a shark instead of a fish," he said.

"They ate one of my barras last year, they left me with the head, it was about 0.9 to a meter long, it was a big barra.

"(But) nobody swims in the Herbert anyway, if you swim in the Herbert ... you've got to have something wrong with you, simply because of the crocodiles."

In a remarkable feat, Mr Craven landed the bull shark using only a handline and squid as bait but said that his record was catching four bull sharks during one fishing trip.

But he was still happy with the extraordinary catch which evidently did not go to waste.

"I took the slabs off him," Mr Craven said.

"We eat the sharks all the time, they're nice eating actually."



Local fisherman, Mal Craven with his record catch of four bull sharks in one trip.

Date Created

08/04/2022

Author

rcoco