



THE WESSELS

Australia's premier saltwater fly-fishing destination



THE WESSEL ISLANDS – EAST ARNHEM LAND, AUS

WHERE

The Wessel Islands are one of Australia's most remote and untouched fly fishing destinations.

Nestled at the top of the Northern Territory, the archipelago is completely uninhabited and given its remote location, has remained largely untouched by people since the 19th century. The only small remnants that remain on land are those which date back to WW2. The Islands themselves present a network of coves, clear sandy flats, mangroves and freshwater creeks bringing an unrivalled diversity of species and create a true fly fisherman's paradise.

'The Wessels' in collaboration with Aussie Fly Fisher & Wildcard Luxury Tours are currently the only licensed operator accessing these pristine island flats.

WHAT

Your 6 day, 7 night trip is completed aboard a spacious 70ft Mothership - 'Wildcard' along with three tenders with electric motors. The Wildcard family have over 40 years experience in the region and will ensure your fly fishing trip is a memorable one, both on and off the flats.

Two species of Indo-Pacific Permit are available – T.Anak and T.Blochii, as well as the endemic Blue Bastards and Black Spotted Tusk Fish also provide an inviting flats challenge. If you are looking for variety, Queenfish, Barramundi, Giant Trevally, Spanish Mackerel, Coral Trout, Golden Trevally, Brassy Trevally and Giant Herring all inhabit the flats, mangrove creeks and rocky island channels.

Join us for an incredible adventure in one of Australia's truly most remote fly fishing destinations.



GENERAL PROGRAM

- 6 FULL DAYS GUIDED FISHING
- FLATS / ESTUARINE / BLUE WATER
- KEY SPORT TARGETS
 - PERMIT (*Trachinotus Blochii and Anak*)
 - BLUE BASTARDS
 - BLACKSPOT TUSKFISH
 - GOLDEN TREVALLY
 - BRASSY TREVALLY
 - GIANT TREVALLY
 - BARRAMUNDI
 - CORAL TROUT AND OTHER REEF SPECIES

The trip offers six days of fly fishing around the Wessel Islands with most travel time on the mother ship scheduled on the first afternoon and final evening, to maximise fishing time.

Fishing options include flats fishing, either by shallow wading or purpose-built inshore boats; fly fishing for Barramundi and Mangrove Jack in the small mangrove creeks; and fishing the larger blue water channels for pelagic species such as GTs, Queenfish and Mackerel.

Each fishing day typically runs 8am to 4pm-5.30pm, depending on group preferences and tidal conditions.

Wildcard anchors in different locations throughout the week, focusing on new flats and fisheries to create a huge expanse of options.





WILDCARD FACILITIES

Wildcard is a 70ft premier vessel, providing everything you need for a relaxing and first-class experience:

- Air conditioning throughout
- 3 x custom built fishing dories with electric motors
- Twin Share rooms with ensuite in every room . Upgrade to private Queen Room available
- Emergency satellite phones
- VHF & HF Radios
- AIS Satellite location
- Fully catered meals and non-alcoholic beverages
- Laundry services available
- LOOP Fly Rod /Reel hire available via AFF Travel on request

Note: given the nature of the remote location, guests are advised there is limited / no wi-fi / telephone reception on departure from Gove Harbour, for the duration of the trip until returning prior to departure on the final day.





MEALS, BEVERAGES & ACCOMMODATION

All meals and non-alcoholic beverages are included in the price of the trip.

Each day you will be treated to a range of first-class dining options. Enjoy three course meals, fresh and locally sourced ingredients and a personalised culinary experience.

Accommodation is based on twin share rooms each with a private bathroom, individually controlled air-conditioning, TVs with USB port for movies, international power adaptors and black out curtains.

Upgrade options are available to a private Queen Room, or used for couples.





ITINERARY

Day 0

Arrive at Gove Airport. An Aussie Fly fisher or Wildcard representative will greet you at the airport and transfer guests to the boat to settle in and enjoy some light refreshments. Depending on tide times, Wildcard will depart the harbour in the evening and travel through the night to the first fishing destination.

The voyage is typically calm, with the odd ocean swell passing through some of the island passages. If you struggle with seasickness, crew can assist with medication. Dinner is served either before departing the harbour, or during a calm passage of the voyage.

Days 1-5

Breakfast is typically served from 7.00am each day. The fishing boats aim to leave the mothership around 8.00am. Guests have the option to maximise fishing time by requesting a packed lunch, or can return to Wildcard for lunch. Each fishing day runs to around 4.00pm-5.30pm depending on fishing.

At the end of each day the crew will clean your gear, hand you a refreshing face towel and a drink of your choice. You can then retire to the front deck or air conditioned lounge, enjoying a choice of canapés until dinner is served at your groups preferred time.

Day 6

Breakfast is served as per your regular schedule and the boats leave for fishing at 8.00am. On the final day, anglers return to the mothership by 4.00pm to ensure all the fishing boats can be tethered to the ship for the return voyage. Wildcard will travel through the night to return guests to Nhulunbuy Harbour.

Final Morning

Breakfast will be served on Wildcard and guests will be transferred to Gove airport for their flights home.





GEAR LIST

Fishing Gear / Terminal Tackle

- 2 x 9 or 10 Weight Rod/Reel For Permit, Blue Bastards, Golden Trevally, Barramundi, Queenfish etc. Tropical Floating line on one option and F/I line on the other option. Minimum of 250m of 30lb backing loaded on reels. Recommended lines: Scientific Anglers Infinity Saltwater Taper, SA Sonar Titan Clear Tip, SA Grand Slam Clear Tip
- 1 x 12 Weight Rod/Reel for Giant Trevally, Brassy Trevally, Spanish Mackerel, Large Queenfish – Floating, F/I and fast sink lines (500-750gr Sink Tip). All lines to have a minimum core of 50 pounds.

The 12 weight reel should have a minimum of 15 pounds drag, preferably 20. Minimum of 300m of 50lb backing loaded on reels. Recommended lines: SA Big Water Taper #12 Floating, SA Sonar Sink Max 700gr.

- Leader Material – 12lb, 16lb, 20lb, 25lb, 40lb, 60lb and 100lb fluorocarbon leader will cover all applications.
- Tapered leaders in 16lb and 20lb can be handy for Permit & Blue Bastards.
- Pliers/clippers/Hook Sharpener
- Day pack or Bum bag (Waterproof is recommended)
- Waterproof Fly Boxes





FLIES

Having the right flies for the trip is important and we suggest you discuss options with us directly. Below is a basic suggestion. Wildcard also carries a modest selection of Wessel Island favourites that are available for sale.

Permit, Blue Bastards, Golden Trevally, Tuskfish:

Bring a range of crab patterns, but we recommend:

- Alphlexo Crab in Clear/White Barred Legs, Clear/White Legs, Clear/Pink Legs, Tan/Yellow Legs. Bring Alphlexo Crabs with double weighted orange hotspot, and single weighted, size 2 and 1/0. Bring some extra heavy.
- VGDC Crabs – Tan with Yellow Legs, 2 and 1/0
- Shrimp Patterns ranging from 1/0 to 2. Tie lightly weighted through to very heavy. Typically, any trigger fish style shrimp flies work well on the Blue Bastards and Tuskfish.

Barramundi & Mangrove Jack:

- Pink Things, Barra Bunnies, Barra Toads in 1/0 to 2/0.

GTs, Brassys, Spanish Mackerel, Queenfish, Coral Trout:

- Bait fish style profiles ranging from 1/0-4/0 Clousers, Brush Flies 4/0-6/0, Fatboys, Piper style etc. There is so much bait, particularly mullet on the flats so colours such as tan/white, Black, Chartreuse/White.
- NYAP and Double Barrel Poppers in 4/0 to 6/0.

Note: It is not uncommon to catch 25+ new species in a week. The above flies will sufficiently cover the range of fishing options.





CLOTHING & OTHER ITEMS TO BRING

Northern Australia has a warm tropical year-round climate. With temperatures in cooler months averaging around 28C or 82F to the low 30's C (mid 80's F) in warmer months. Whilst the weather is very comfortable, we recommend bringing specific clothing to maximise your comfort when out fishing in whether it be in the sun, rain or whilst wet wading.

- Waterproof Shell Jacket – Goretex, Patagonia H2NO or similar
- 2 x “quick dry” long pants
- 2 x “quick dry” shorts
- 3 x “quick dry” long sleeve collared /hooded shirt
- Bike shorts (or alternative) - helps avoid chaffing on flats
- Long ‘skins’ pants/tights for wading the flats – compulsory at the warmer end of the season (August onwards – compulsory for wading)
- Fingerless fishing/sun gloves
- Hat, polarised sunglasses x 2 and Neck buff
- Thick & thin socks and Underwear
- T-shirts, casual clothing for mothership & travel
- Flats wading boots and neoprene wading socks
- Thongs/crocs/sandals/jandles/flip flops
- Water bottle, toiletries & sunscreen /skin protection. Travel size bug repellent and sunscreen to take out fishing. NB: Repellent & Sunscreen are provided on the mothership.
- Camera, head torch & spare batteries
- Passport (International Guests)





FLIGHTS AND TRAVEL

Flights are booked to **Gove (Nhulunbuy), Northern Territory, Australia.**

There is one flight in/out each day from either Cairns or Darwin which is operated by Air North. These can be either booked directly, or by contacting us and we can help make the necessary arrangements for you.

We recommend allowing a minimum of two hours layover between any flight connecting through to Gove. This ensures that any delays to your first flight don't impact your flight through to your final destination. Air North flights are limited strictly to 20kg luggage limit and additional luggage allowance can only be purchased at check in subject to availability, therefore we recommend that you pack lightly.

Please do not hesitate to contact us with your proposed flight plans so we can assist in any way.



INCLUSIONS

Trip includes

- 6 full days guided fly fishing – 1 guide/skiff per 2 anglers
- 7 nights accommodation – Wildcard Mothership - twin share with ensuite. Single room supplement available for an additional fee (limited to 2 rooms per trip).
- Ground transfers in Gove, NT
- All meals and non-alcoholic beverages
- Required fishing license and permits
- **AFF WESSEL ISLANDS GIFT PACK** – Patagonia /AFF Sun Shirt, AFF Cap, SA 20lb Fluoro Leader, Wessels Fly Pack.
- Laundry Services available each day
- All mothership crew, vessel fuel and incidentals

Not included

- Return flights to Gove, Northern Territory, AUS
- Alcohol can be pre-purchased before the trip and available on the mothership.
- Travel & medical insurance (compulsory)
- Flies, Fly Lines & Terminal Tackle. A small selection of Flies and fly lines are available for purchase on the mothership.
- 9, 10 & 12 Weight Rods & Reels can be hired on each trip for AUD \$150 per set up for the week if you prefer not to travel with extra gear or break a rod on the trip.
Breakage fee is AUD \$75 per section. Regarding gear hire, please note **guests must bring their own fly lines.**
- Guide tips – Tips are welcome for the guides and crew, but not compulsory.





BOOKING CONDITIONS

Deposit to confirm booking: 40% of Total Cost

- Final Balance payment will be invoiced and is due 6 weeks before the trip.
- Deposit is non-refundable unless a replacement is found.
- Once final payment is paid it is non-refundable unless a replacement is found by the guest.

COVID-19 Travel Restrictions – 100% money back guarantee

Guest cancellations due to **Covid-19 Federal and State Government Travel Restrictions** which directly effect guest's ability to travel to the destination due to factors outside of their control, will have a 100% money back guarantee. 100% money back guarantee does not extend to personal illness or close contact quarantine requirements.





CONTACT US

CUSTOMER ENQUIRIES

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