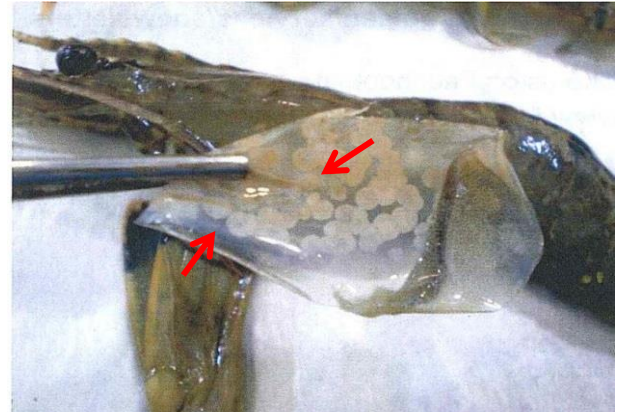
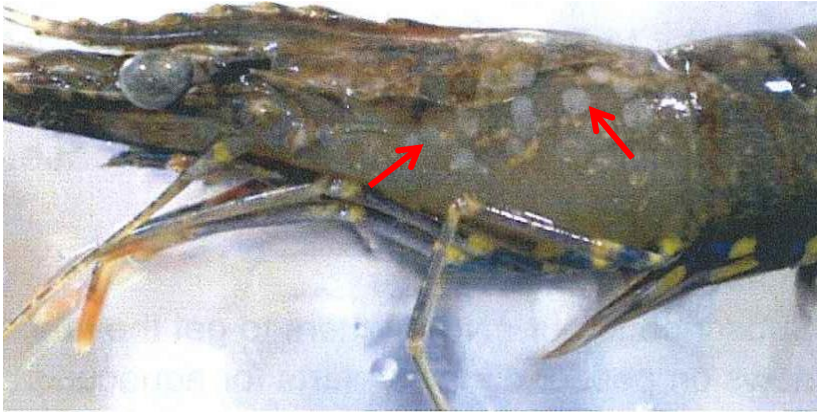




White spot disease in prawns



White spot disease (WSD) is a highly contagious disease that affects crustaceans. It has now been detected on all seven prawn farms near Brisbane, South East Queensland (QLD) and in the marine environment. This disease is currently **NOT** known to be present in WA, however, if left unmanaged but could pose a serious threat to many crustacean species.

Following recent further detections of WSD in Moreton Bay QLD, the WA Government has put in place tighter import requirements that now prohibit the entry into WA of all live and uncooked crustaceans (previously only prawns) and worms from north of Rockhampton in QLD south to a line between Coffs Harbour and Port Macquarie in [NSW](#). These changes compliment action taken by the Federal Government to suspend all uncooked prawn imports from overseas and to recall all imported prior to the suspension.

However, it is still possible that some high risk prawns may be available for sale and recreational fishers therefore **MUST NOT use as bait any uncooked prawns or other crustaceans intended for human consumption**. Fishers can also help by not disposing of crustacean waste including heads and shells in or near waterways.

Fishers should check their bait prawns or other crustaceans for signs of WSD and any thought to have the disease should be retained and immediately reported to our **FishWatch 24 hour hotline** on **1800 815 507**.

The import into WA of any crustaceans or polychaete worms must be compliant with import requirements under the *Biosecurity and Agriculture Management Act 2007* (see below).

Key features

- WSD is a highly contagious viral infection that affects all decapod crustaceans.
- Cooking destroys the virus so cooked products do not present an infection risk, nor do affected crustaceans pose a threat to human health or food safety.
- Prawns with WSD may have a loose shell with numerous white spots (0.5-2.0 mm in

diameter) on the inside surface of the shell and a pink to red discolouration.

Impacts

- A widespread outbreak of WSD in WA could pose a serious threat to crustaceans including prawns, crabs, lobsters and marron.
- There could also be implications for the State's emerging prawn aquaculture industry, and commercial fisheries that currently enjoy a WSD-free trade status.
- In prawn farm operations this disease can result in 100 per cent mortality within a few days of the onset of visible signs of the disease.

What are some alternative bait options?

Talk to your local bait supplier about alternative bait options or only buy locally caught WA bait (sometimes the source is not clearly labelled so check with your bait supplier that it is caught in WA).

Some bait alternatives include:

- Local WA coral prawns
- Mullies (pilchards)
- Squid
- Sandworms
- Cockles (pipis)
- Small crabs (not mud or blue swimmer)
- Soft plastic lures
- Hard body lures

Further information

- On WSD - fish.wa.gov.au/Sustainability-and-Environment/Aquatic-Biosecurity/Pages/Biosecurity-Incidents.aspx
- On WA import requirements for all live and uncooked crustaceans and polychaete worms - agric.wa.gov.au/iaquarantine/default.ASP (under the *Commodity* field, search using the term 'crustacean')

Import requirements for all live and uncooked crustaceans and polychaete worms

Prescribed potential carrier	Import requirements
Live or uncooked crustaceans of the Order Decapoda, including but not limited to lobster, crayfish, prawns, shrimp, crabs, Moreton Bay Bugs and yabbies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The crustaceans or parts of crustaceans have been taken from, or aquacultured in the Northern Territory, Victoria, Tasmania or South Australia, and the containers holding the crustaceans or parts of crustaceans are labelled with the producer, the trade or common name of the crustaceans, and the place where the crustaceans were taken or aquacultured; <p>Or</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If produced by aquaculture in QLD or NSW, the crustaceans or parts of crustaceans have been produced by an aquaculture facility North of Latitude 23°S (QLD adjacent to Yeppoon) or South of Latitude 31°S (NSW adjacent to Port Macquarie) and have been processed, packaged and labelled for human consumption, and have been tested and certified as free from White Spot Syndrome Virus in accordance with the sampling and testing regime provided by the Department of Fisheries, WA ; <p>Or</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If taken from the waters of QLD or NSW, the crustaceans or parts of crustaceans are accompanied by a statutory declaration, made by a representative of a business approved by the Director General of the Western Australian Department of Fisheries for the purposes of this requirement, stating that the crustaceans or parts of crustaceans have been consigned by that business and: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ are wild caught; and ○ are taken from waters North of Latitude 23°S (QLD adjacent to Yeppoon) or South of Latitude 31°S (NSW adjacent to Port Macquarie); and ○ are processed for the purposes of human consumption; and ○ have been processed at a facility that has adequate biosecurity measures in place to segregate the processing of the crustaceans to be imported to WA from crustaceans, or equipment, or containers, or water used in the processing of crustaceans taken or produced from an area South of Latitude 23°S and North of Latitude 31°S.
Polychaete worms - worms of the class Polychaeta	The polychaete worms have not been taken from an area South of Latitude 23°S (QLD adjacent to Yeppoon) and North of Latitude 31°S (NSW adjacent to Port Macquarie) and the containers holding the polychaete worms are labelled with the producer, the trade or common name of the polychaete worms, and the place where the polychaete worms were taken.