

# Is it silver, or is it sand?



Shane Gassner.

In Port Lincoln, and I suspect throughout South Australia, a species of trevally other than the common silver variety is caught on a regular basis. This species, while very closely related to the silver trevally (*Pseudocaranx dentex*) is in fact a sand trevally (*Pseudocaranx wrighti*).

As the pictures show, the similarities between these two fish are quite remarkable.

Do you need to know the difference between the two? Yes, in the past couple of seasons there have been changes to our size and bag limits for several popular fish species caught in South Australia.

The tackle busting silver trevally is one of those fish. It now has a size limit of 24cm and a bag limit of 20. Note that this regulation is quite specific to silver trevally and makes no reference to sand trevally.

Technically speaking, there is no restriction regarding size or bag limits on sand trevally. But, as always, we should only take home what we can use immediately. Just like silver trevally, sand trevally make good tucker fresh, but are not a great fish to freeze for any period of time.

So how do you tell the difference between the two? Here are a few distinguishing features.

**When is a silver trevally not a silver trevally? The answer is, of course, when it's a sand trevally! In this article, Shane Gassner, Fisheries Officer, West Region, gives readers a few tips on how to tell the difference and why that might be important from a fisheries compliance point of view. Shane, who is one of 17 new Fisheries Officers, is based in Port Lincoln, South Australia's largest fishing port. Port Lincoln is an ideal place for a new officer to start his or her career because it provides an insight into a range of commercial fishing practices including prawns, abalone, tuna as well as fast growing aquaculture industries. The region is also popular among recreational fishers.**



Silver trevally (top) and sand trevally (below).

Silver trevally:

- are generally larger than sand trevally,
- very chrome-like in appearance straight from the water,
- has a broader, fuller body (not unlike that of a bream),

- features an elongated and slightly smudged black spot on the gill plate.

Sand trevally:

- is generally smaller, usually less than 20 centimetres,
- has a yellow tinge to the body with faint yellow vertical stripes,
- has a narrower body (almost like a stretched silver trevally), and
- features a black spot on gill plate which is round and very defined.

It's not easy to pick the difference, but if you are encountering both of these species on a regular basis, give it a go.

If in doubt, it is probably best to return any trevally less than 24cm back to the briny.

Happy summer fishing!

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