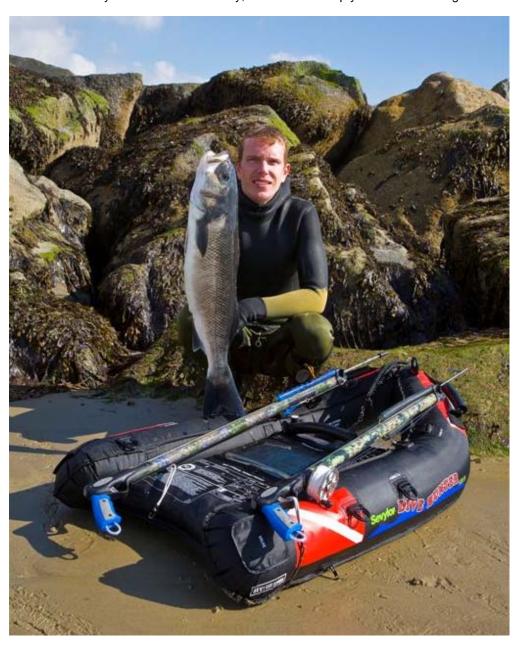
## **Bognor Bass**

## **Autumn 2007 – Kevin Daly (10 1/4 lb)**

The sea was flat calm on a beautiful October morning. I swam out to the Bognor deep reef on my Sevylor buoy, a trip which takes about 40 minutes each way. The water was about 2 degrees colder and there were not as many small bass in the open as there had been two weeks earlier when I had last done the swim to the deep reef. There were still loads of mullet seen almost every dive and some big pollack.

After some time, I found a prominent bit of structure and swimming around the edge of it, I found the opening of a nice hole. I had a peek around the edge and saw a group of about 5 big bass at the back all facing me. Lying still, I watched and waited for them to approach. Two of them very slowly swam to the opening of the cave and into range. They were very relaxed so I had time to aim carefully and pulled the trigger. The bass was stoned. I backed away slowly, gently tugging the line to get the bass out, hoping not to frighten the rest.

I put the fish on my float and tried to find the hole again. This took about 15 minutes in the current and murky water but unfortunately, the hole was empty when I found it again.



## Autumn 2007 - Ross Gilfillan (12 3/4 lb)

I seem to have drifted a bit far with the tide as the reef has flattened. Even the stacked dinner plate cracks have merged into a jumble sale of gravel & block. Lying on the bottom looking out over this desert of gravel - suddenly a shoal appears from my left riding the current, but also agitated by something. The ones in front are massive but even the laggards are over 10lb. A speculative shot falls well short of these silver ghosts.

I pop up, initially angry, then grateful for the chance to see such beautiful fish. What were they doing here on such poor structure? Why were they in such a hurry? ....Kevin...? could be, as they had come from the direction I had seen him last. I moved up current looking for the ground they had come from.

Swimming on the bottom along the flat reef I saw a raised section of reef - the arch was vaulted with light coming in from front & rear. There's a dog leg to a 'proper' dark cave on the left - is that the head of a fish? I wait out in the open - the bass gets curious & moves into the main cave - I think there are others behind. I wait - the fish does not seem intent on escape & I want the best chance of killing it quietly. Whack - the spear sticks & the fish drags me along the reef. I pull it away from the cave & wrap my legs around it to keep the noise to a minimum. Good shot to the head.

I dive again but the cave is empty.

