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THE DEVERON FLYER

The Deveron, Bogie and Isla Rivers Charitable Trust

Newsletter 34, February 2018

Welcome to the 34th newsletter of the Deveron, Bogie & Isla Rivers Charitable Trust.

The Trust's objectives are to 'conserve, protect and rehabilitate salmon, sea trout and trout and other indigenous species of animal, bird, insect and plant life and more generally to promote the ecological cycle for the benefit of the inhabitants of the Deveron'.

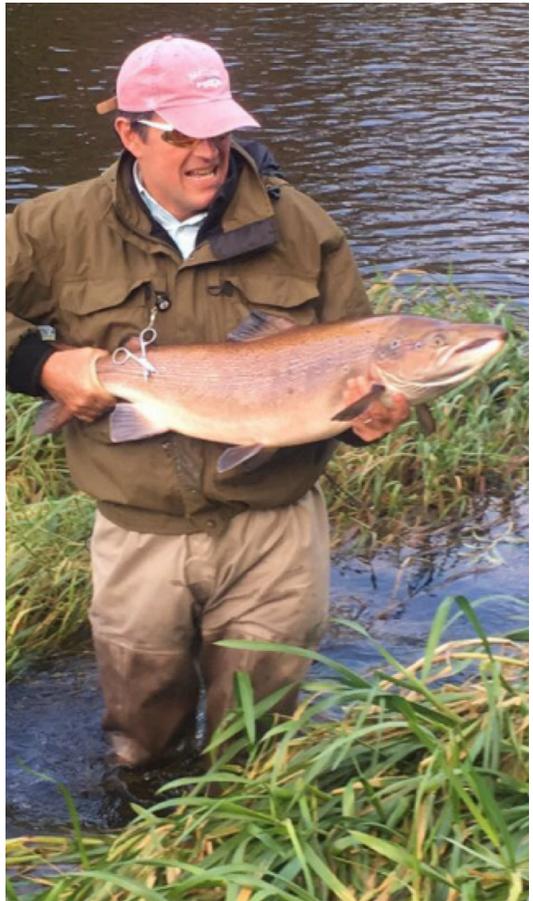


Opening time

The River Deveron District Salmon Fishery Board (RDevDSFB) and The Deveron, Bogie and Isla Rivers Charitable Trust (DBIT) are delighted to announce the opening of the Deveron salmon season in association with The Deveron (Single Malt).

The Morison trophy will be presented at the river opening ceremony on the 12th February at 10am, Turriff Angling Association lodge (by kind permission of the Turriff Angling Association) and the opening ceremony will follow thereafter.

Special guest, Iain 'The Bear' Milne (centre) will present the Morison Trophy. Mr Milne is one of Scotland's greatest ever rugby union players, winning 44 caps and was one of three brothers who all played for Scotland. Mr Milne is also a passionate Angler. Educated at George Heriot's School in Edinburgh, he played prop, and was part of the Grand Slam winning side in 1984 and was selected for the British
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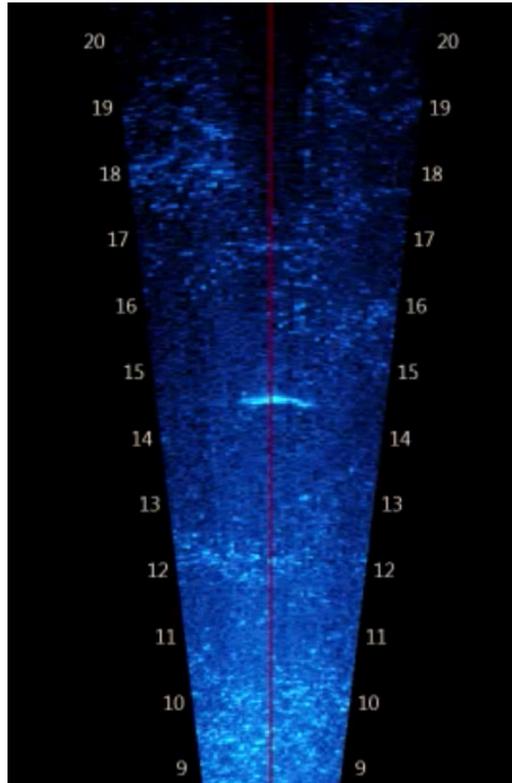


And the Morison Trophy goes to...

Mr Minter-Kemp will be presented with the Morison Trophy for his 28lb salmon at the opening ceremony on 12th February 2018 at Turriff Angling Association Lodge.

Counting on the future – Deveron hydroacoustic fish counter

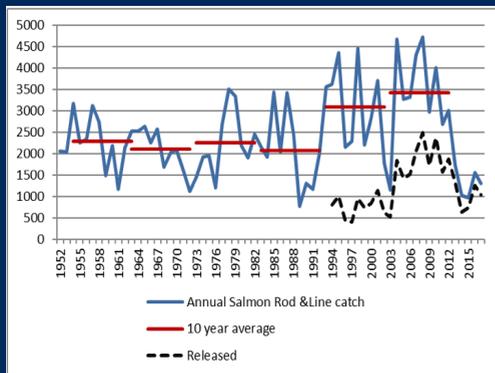
During 2016 and 2017 the DBIT have been investigating technology available to count adult salmon and sea trout entering the river Deveron. Accurate and fast estimates of salmon and sea trout runs are required to help manage stocks sustainably, and will in turn help the rural economy. The technology options available to us is reduced, due to counting equipment traditionally being attached to large structures such as crump weirs that are not present on the Deveron main stem. For this reason, we have completed two local trials of ARIS multibeam hydro acoustic counters, which have low engineering and structural requirements and will shortly be completing a trial of a Gemini multibeam sonar. Hydro acoustic counters use sound wave technology to emit pulses of sound in the water and listen for the returning echo, much like an echosounder on a boat. The counter then converts the returning echo to image data and uses complex software to identify and measure fish. To date we have been very pleased with the results of the trials and are currently in discussions with the RDevDSFB and other stakeholders to take the project forward during 2018.



Sonar image of salmon passing

Catches 2017

The salmon rod catch at 1,313 was down 16% from 1,563 in the previous year and once again below the long-term average of 2,437. Of the 1,313 salmon and grilse caught, 81% were returned. Spring salmon catches (to the end of May) were 89, a decrease of 11% from the previous year, with 85% returned to the river. The sea trout catch in 2017 was 377, a decrease of 15% from the 444 caught in 2016. A creditable 96% were returned in line with the Deveron Angling Code. 17 beats recorded brown trout totaling 747. The fixed engine (nets) stations did not operate during 2017. The Water of Philorth, which enters the sea near Fraserburgh, recorded 21 sea trout and 1 grilse.



Stepping out...

Mr Robert Shields stepped down as chairman of the DBIT at the Open AGM held in September, but will remain a trustee. Mr Shields of Avochie, spearheaded the formation of the Trust and held the office of chairman for 17 years until his recent retirement.

During Mr Shields' time at the helm, a huge variety of vital work has been carried out locally, including the building of a number of salmon ladders and passes and a hatchery/research facility. Strong links have also been forged with schools and a popular education programme developed, along with a highly successful invasive species (e.g. Giant Hogweed, American Mink) control programme. More recently, the DBIT are at the forefront of smolt tracking research with the recent publication of a peer-reviewed paper in the scientific journal, Ecology of Freshwater Fish. Mr Jim Cruickshank has taken over as chairman and is very much looking forward to working with everybody.



Mrs Shona Paxton has also recently stepped down from her role as Clerk and Administrator. Mrs Paxton has been an integral part of the team and we wish her a long and joyous retirement. We welcome Mrs Sarah Roebuck, who has taken over both roles.

Malcolm Hay presenting Robert Shields (left) with a crystal decanter

Conservation Status Assessment for the 2018 Angling Season

For the 2018 Angling season, the Scottish Government has classified the river Deveron as a Category 2 river. The new classification requires the RDevDSFB to take the necessary management action to reduce salmon exploitation. Mandatory catch and release will not be required in the first instance, but the Government will review this annually. In line with the new categorisation, the RDevDSFB has reviewed and updated the Deveron Angling Code for salmon and trout and is implementing additional management measures to protect juvenile salmon during their river phase. The Water of Philorth (coastal) has been classified as a Category 3 river, which requires all salmon to be returned by law throughout the 2018 season.



Opening time *Continued from front page*

Lions in 1983 and 1986. Mr Milne was inducted into the French Rugby Union Hall of Fame in 2011, a hugely significant accolade, as his career overlapped with some of the best French scrummaging players such as Vaquerin, Paparemborde and Dubroca.

Mr Robert McConnell, voluntary membership secretary of the DBIT, will have the honour of opening the Deveron salmon season. Mr McConnell has been instrumental in the success of the Trust membership, raising significant project funding over many years. Mr McConnell will bless the river with a dram of 18 y/o Deveron malt. Mr Robin Minter-Kemp, winner of the Morison Trophy for 2017, will make the first cast of the season. Mr Minter-Kemp secured the trophy by landing a 28lbs salmon from Upper Inverichnie.

River Deveron Conservation Code for salmon and trout 2018



Your Board remains extremely concerned over fragile levels of fish stocks in the river and in particular spring salmon and sea trout. Anglers are asked, therefore, to observe the following statutory regulations and guidelines throughout the season:

Salmon & Grilse

- From 11th February to 31st May (inclusive) **all** salmon to be returned. It is illegal to take any salmon (dead or alive) from 11th February to 31st March (inclusive) each year.
The River Deveron District Salmon Fishery Board will donate one bottle of Scotch Whisky per angler, for safely returning a spring salmon between the 1st April and 31st May (Follow set claim procedure and Call 01466 711388 to claim) Strictly over 18s only.
- From 1st June to 31st October (inclusive), weekly rods may retain one salmon or grilse per rod per day with a maximum of one per rod per week. Day rods to return all salmon.
Anglers are asked to observe the Board's aspiration that all hen fish, and any cock salmon over 10lbs be returned. Therefore, the Board requests that only male fish under 10lbs be retained.

Sea Trout

- All sea trout to be returned throughout the season.
The guidance on sea trout will be in place until stocks recover to acceptable levels.

Brown Trout

- From 15th March to 6th October (Inclusive), all Brown Trout under 10 inches in length to be returned. No more than two brown trout per rod per week to be retained
- It is illegal to fish without legal right or written permission from the beat owner or representative*
- It is illegal to kill unclean or unseasonable fish (baggots, gravid fish, kelts)*
- It is illegal to sell or buy wild salmon roe*
- It is illegal to attempt to deliberately foul - hook fish*
- Only knotless landing nets to be used – it is illegal to use gaffs or tailers*
- It is illegal to fish with prawns, shrimps or salmon roe throughout the catchment and throughout the year*
- Fishing for salmon and/or sea trout on a Sunday is prohibited*
- Spinning lures should have only one single set of hooks with a maximum sized four crimped or barbless*
- Anglers are reminded that it is illegal to sell rod-caught salmon or sea trout*
- Injured or damaged fish out with the above limits should be handed to the proprietor*
- All farmed salmon and pink salmon (*Oncorhynchus gorboscha*) must be retained and notified to the RDevDSFB*

All visiting anglers must read, act upon and sign a Gyrodactylus salaris declaration form immediately prior to going fishing. If disinfectant is required please contact RDevDSFB Office (01466 711388) or your beat ghillie/manager/agent.

For further information please contact:

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The Deveron, Bogie and Isla Rivers Charitable Trust is a registered charity. No. SC 032131