

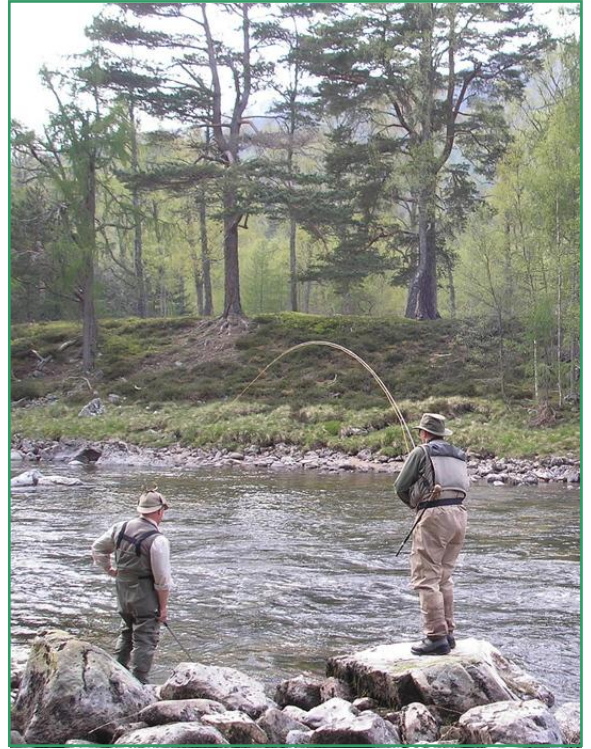


The River Dee Brief

August 2011

Spring Catches

2,814 salmon were landed from February to May this year, continuing the pattern of improving rod catches during the spring period since 2000. The spring-run salmon is the most fragile stock component and these increasing runs have taken many years to recover in the river. The catch and release policy is recognised as having real value in ensuring that spring fish reach their spawning grounds safely in the autumn. Spring salmon are not out of the woods yet and vigilance is needed to ensure that this vulnerable stock component doesn't come under increased threat. There has been a number of salmon in excess of 30lbs landed with the largest reported at 39 lb from Commony, followed by a 36 lb salmon at Borrowston. Anglers and Ghillies alike are commenting favourably about the increasing numbers of fish which is reflected in the increased numbers of bookings made by anglers. Angling tourism is worth approx £12 million to the local economy.



Water Abstraction

There has been ongoing water abstraction for many years from the River Dee catchment to provide residents and businesses in Aberdeenshire and Aberdeen with a fresh water supply. There is a study being carried out this summer to monitor the impacts of water abstraction on salmon, freshwater pearl mussels and otters of the Dee, with a view to ensuring that future water demands do not damage the River Dee environment and ecology.

THE DALMORE DEE DRAM



This spring saw the Dalmore distillery continue to provide support to the River Dee Trust with the launch of the Dee Dram 2011 season edition. This followed the success of the Dee Dram in 2010 where the limited edition sold out in nine weeks. This is part of a joint venture with our sister rivers the Spey, Tay and Tweed, which saw Dalmore master distiller Richard Paterson create four brand new single malt whiskies to reflect the unique characters of each river. For every bottle sold a donation of £4.00 will go to each of the River Trust's and Foundations. These new whiskies are highly desirable and collectable and would make a wonderful gift. They can be obtained locally throughout Deeside at Strachan's of Deeside, Deeside Drinks Emporium and Kelly's of Cults.

To order the Dalmore Dee Dram online go to <http://www.onlinespirits.co.uk/dalmore-dee-dram>

Japanese knotweed is a non native invasive species which is found on our river banks. This plant is difficult to remove once it is established as any small piece of the plant can take root and re-establish. It is a particularly dense growing plant which prevents other plant species from growing beside it as its root system is very dense, as is its canopy of leaves. During winter when the river floods, areas of river bank occupied by Japanese knotweed are prone to substantial erosion as this plant dies back over the winter, meaning there is no vegetation to stabilise the river bank against spates. There is a programme underway by the River Dee Trust, with the help of trained volunteers, to facilitate the removal of this plant from the river banks of the Dee, Cowie and Carron.

The Association of Salmon Fishery Boards- have asked all fisheries in Scotland to be vigilant to the presence of Pink Salmon (*Oncorhynchus gorbuscha*). This species is native to the Pacific region although it was stocked into Russian rivers in the 1960s. The species has spread westwards from Russia and has now colonised northern rivers of Norway. In August of this year two male pink salmon were caught on the Tweed. There is now concern that this species may spread to colonise other areas of Europe including Scotland.

Male pink salmon are characterised by a large hump, which develops as the fish approaches spawning time. A photograph of a male caught on the Tweed this year is shown below on the left. Females are characterised by a large amount of spotting on the tail fin, as shown below on the right.



If any pink salmon are caught on the Dee they should be killed, retained and the River Office informed on the 24 hour telephone number (013398 80411). The fish will be collected, species confirmed, and the relevant authorities notified. Your help in detecting this species would be greatly appreciated as one of the first signs of the presence of this undesirable species would be in the rod catch. If you have any queries related to pink salmon then please do not hesitate to contact the River Office.

IntroDee Programme-The River Dee Trust has as one of its cornerstones a commitment to provide educational programmes and experiences to adults and children. This year the Trust has delivered 20 educational presentations to adult and children's groups and has taken in excess of 250 people to the riverbank and trout fishery to help explain the life cycle of salmon and trout. Participants have also been able to learn to fly fish at Raemoir trout fishery. Some of the school children after attending these outdoor experiences have taken an interest in fishing. Please contact the River Office to arrange a visit for any interested groups or organisations.