

2013

ANNUAL REVIEW



ASSOCIATION OF SALMON FISHERY BOARDS

(ASFB)

RIVERS AND FISHERIES TRUSTS OF SCOTLAND

(RAFTS)



Contents

01	Chairmen's introductions
02	ASFB news
04	RAFTS news
06	Engagement beyond the sector
07	MIAP
08	Barrier removal
10	Delays in the run-timing of grilse
11	The Upper Dee scheme
12	Access to salmon fishing
14	Salmon fisheries enforcement
15	Improving the fishing experience
16	The impact of hydro schemes
17	An overview of the 2012 season
18	River reports
35	ASFB & RAFTS, facts and figures
36	Maps of Boards and Trusts
37	Contact details

The Association of Salmon Fishery Boards is the representative body for Scotland's 41 District Salmon Fishery Boards (DSFBs) including the River Tweed Commission (RTC), which have a statutory responsibility to protect and improve salmon and sea trout fisheries.

The Association and Boards work to create the environment in which sustainable fisheries for salmon and sea trout can be enjoyed. Conservation of fish stocks, and the habitats on which they depend, is essential and many DSFBs operate riparian habitat enhancement schemes and have voluntarily adopted 'catch and release' practices, which in some cases are made mandatory by the introduction of salmon conservation regulations. ASFB creates policies that seek, where possible, to protect wider biodiversity and our environment as well as enhancing the economic benefits for our rural economy that result from angling.

Formed in 2005, Rivers and Fisheries Trusts of Scotland (RAFTS) is an independent freshwater conservation charity representing Scotland's national network of 25 rivers and Fisheries Trusts and Foundations. Our members work across over 90% of Scotland's freshwaters to protect and develop our native fish stocks and populations by undertaking a range of activities including freshwater, river habitat restoration, fish and fisheries monitoring, research and education programmes. RAFTS is the membership organisation of the Fisheries and Rivers Trusts operating in Scotland and is, itself, a charity and company limited by guarantee.

Chairmen's introductions



ANDREW WALLACE - RAFTS

2012 was a busy and challenging year for Rivers and Fisheries Trusts of Scotland (RAFTS). The chill wind of the financial crisis continues to blow relentlessly and funding opportunities for charities have inevitably got tighter. Members are feeling this pressure and the network is now devoting considerable time to making the best use of existing opportunities by hunting as a pack and working more shrewdly.

Positive examples of this include the Pearls in Peril LIFE+ Project, which was secured in 2012 and is now underway. This is a substantial project targeted at the conservation of pearl mussels and their habitats (£3m over the next 5 years). The RAFTS team is also preparing a considerable further (£5m over 5 years) LIFE+ application to consolidate the burgeoning invasive species management programme. Work also continues on barrier removals, supported by funding from the SEPA Restoration Fund. We are now seeing a substantial nationwide programme of barrier removals, many of which people have been looking at and scratching their heads about for decades. There is no better value for money in fisheries management than the opportunity of creating access to nursery and juvenile habitats which may not have been available since the Industrial Revolution.

RAFTS and its network of 25 – and soon to be 26 – Trusts/Foundations (a new Trust is emerging in the far northeast) continue to place fish and fisheries at the centre of their business. However, as funders rightly demand ever more value for money, it is imperative we think creatively about the opportunities that lie ahead. By bundling priorities that are of interest to a wider variety of interest groups and tackling problems at a catchment scale, we can continue to attract much needed investment in Scotland's freshwaters.

Finally, I must thank the RAFTS' membership and all the staff and volunteers working within the Trusts, and RAFTS itself, for all their hard work and commitment in difficult times. I must also thank all the fellow organisations with whom we co-operate so closely – such as ASFB, AST, S&TA, RT, WTT and FishLegal. The next few years will demand ever more discipline and co-operation within the Trust network, and beyond, if we are to continue to thrive and deliver benefits to Scotland's freshwater fish and their habitats.



ALAN WILLIAMS - ASFB

This review reflects significantly on the work of both the Association of Salmon Fishery Boards (ASFB) and Rivers and Fisheries Trusts of Scotland (RAFTS) and gives an early indication of the results from Scottish salmon fisheries in 2012. Sadly, it will not be a year which will be remembered for strong salmon abundance. Scottish rivers suffered alongside those in other North Atlantic seaboard countries, which lends credibility to marine mortality theories.

Much of the Association's work during the year was focused on impending legislation and regulation. Together with other fisheries organisations, the Association took a keen interest in the decision by Westminster to issue the North East England Net Limitation Order. This will ensure, over time, the cessation of salmon netting at sea in the area to which it refers. The Association, led by Alan Wells, and assisted by senior representatives of both the Tweed and the Tay, played a significant role in ensuring that the government was aware of the impact that these nets were likely to be having on Scottish salmon stocks.

Meanwhile the Aquaculture and Fisheries (Scotland) Bill was introduced at Holyrood and representatives from the Association and individual Fishery Boards and Trusts have given evidence to the Rural Affairs Climate Change and Environment Committee during its scrutiny of the Bill. The Association will continue to monitor the progress of the Bill keenly. Interested parties can observe the Association's position on this legislation and other matters on our website.

This review is always produced to reflect the end of one fishing season as another begins. This gives me an ideal opportunity to project a positive attitude towards Scottish fishing in 2013 and to wish everyone involved a successful and enjoyable season. In addition, may I also record thanks to Strutt & Parker and Gillespie MacAndrew for once again sponsoring this review.



ASFB/RAFTS acknowledges and thanks the following for their support of their work:

Worshipful Company of Fishmongers

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ASFB news

DR ALAN WELLS - Policy and planning director, ASFB & BRIAN DAVIDSON - Operations Director, ASFB & RAFTS

Policy development

During 2012, ASFB completed policy papers on aquaculture and beaver introductions and issued joint guidance with RAFTS on dealing with aquaculture and offshore renewable energy developments.

Aquaculture and Fisheries Bill

The Aquaculture and Fisheries (Scotland) Bill was introduced to Parliament in October. The Rural Affairs, Climate Change and Environment Committee visited the Upper Dee Riparian Scheme – designed to mitigate against climate change-induced effects in freshwater. Here the Committee witnessed spawning salmon and visited the Marine Scotland Science Girnock Burn Research Facility. In addition, the Committee visited the Lochaber DSFB to learn more about the hatchery operations and the issues for wild fish relating to aquaculture.

ASFB submitted written evidence and were invited to give further evidence as part of a roundtable discussion on aquaculture. In addition, ASFB met with a number of committee members to clarify some of the issues surrounding the Bill.

The Committee issued the Stage 1 report in February, which backed the general principles of the Bill, but also argued it needed to be ‘more robust’. We support the conclusions of this report and were particularly encouraged to see the recommendations relating to a greater resolution of publication of sea lice data and the need for individually numbered tags in any future system of carcass tagging. We look forward to working closely with Committee members at Stage 2 and 3 to help to ensure that the legislation is fully fit for purpose.



The Rural Affairs Climate Change and Environment Committee visit the Dee.

North Atlantic Salmon Conservation Organisation (NASCO)

ASFB attended NASCO's annual meeting in Edinburgh in June 2012. On a positive note 3-year quotas were agreed for the high seas fisheries in Greenland (which allowed a continuing subsistence fishery) and the Faroe Islands (who agreed not to fish). However, the outcomes of the meeting were largely frustrating from a wild fisheries perspective – an external review into NASCO's function which recommended legally-binding resolutions for participating parties will not be considered until at least the 2013 annual meeting.

Mixed stock fisheries

ASFB, in partnership with a number of our Boards on the east coast, the Atlantic Salmon Trust and the Salmon and Trout Association, made several submissions to the Environment Agency and Defra in relation to the North East England Review of the Net Limitation Order, which was put in place in order to phase out the North East England drift net fishery. It is notable that the Scottish Government closed its own drift net fishery 50 years ago and drift net fisheries have been closed in all other parts of the British Isles. Recent research undertaken by Marine Scotland Science on behalf of the Environment Agency demonstrated that 70-75% of the catch in the drift net fishery is of Scottish origin.

The order was finalised in December and the UK Government has confirmed that it remains its policy to close the fishery. In addition, the drift net fishery has now been given an end point of ten years from now and the only T&J nets that will continue after that point are those that are demonstrated to be exploiting adequate stock levels. Defra has also asked the EA to investigate the feasibility of imposing quotas on the fishery, within the next ten year period until closure, to prevent excess catches being taken. ASFB welcomed these decisions by DEFRA, as they recognise good science and established best fishery management practice, at the same time as allowing the fishermen a gradual exit from the fishery.

In Scotland, Ministers instructed Marine Scotland Science to carry out an investigation into the early running spring stock in the South Esk, including the composition of the net fishery. As part of this decision, a licensed extension to the net fishery was issued for 2 weeks in September. While ASFB welcomed the significant investment by the Scottish Government in the South Esk Fisheries Management Demonstration Project, we did not support the principle of increased commercial exploitation as recompense for displaced fishing effort arising from the scientific work. ASFB was therefore very pleased that the Scottish Government later revoked the licence for years two and three of the project.

Aquaculture

ASFB continue to engage with the Scottish Government and the aquaculture industry in an attempt to develop a more constructive relationship between the two sectors and to focus on joint problem solving. ASFB is a member of the Ministerial Group on Aquaculture which, following a review of priorities, will now include a specific sub-group on interactions between aquaculture and wild fisheries. In addition, ASFB have a place on the Board of the Scottish Aquaculture Research Forum, which allows us to influence the research priorities funded through this organisation.



Marine salmon farm, near Kylesku.

Following the award of a grant from The Fishmongers' Company Scottish Special Projects Fund, ASFB and RAFTS hosted a very successful workshop in an attempt to improve the engagement of wild fisheries organisations in the aquaculture planning process. The event was attended by DSFBs, individual Fishery Trusts, Marine Scotland Policy, Marine Scotland Science, SNH and planners from Highland and Argyll & Bute Councils.

Offshore renewable energy

As we highlighted in last year's review, the potential negative impacts of offshore renewable developments on migratory fish species are very difficult to assess. ASFB are working with Marine Scotland, the Crown Estate, the industry and academics to try and plug the significant information gaps that exist. ASFB are contributing as an industrial partner to a project, led by UHI in Thurso, to model hydrodynamic effects on fish movement and to source, consolidate, compile, review and interpret data on the movements of salmon in the seas around Scotland. ASFB contributed to a workshop to inform the priorities of the new joint University of Aberdeen/University of Dundee Offshore Renewables Institute and ASFB will contribute to a workshop and subsequent report regarding the potential impacts on migratory salmonids from wave and tidal developments in the Pentland Firth and Orkney Waters.



Tidal turbine, Orkney.

Land Reform

A Land Reform Review Group, chaired by Dr Alison Elliot, has been appointed by Scottish Ministers to identify priorities for future land reform. ASFB have submitted evidence to the group relating to the ownership, management and community benefits arising from freshwater resources.

Governance of DSFBs

ASFB has been promoting the concept of good corporate governance as a key priority, following the launch of our Code of Good Practice in 2011. This provides a framework to demonstrate that the DSFB network will follow key principles of operational good practice, and that the system of salmon fishery management through DSFBs is fit for purpose. The Code will be amended to reflect the requirements of the Aquaculture and Fisheries Bill.

National bailiff co-ordination

ASFB is leading further development work to improve the co-ordination of salmon fisheries enforcement across Scotland. A group is currently considering how best to make use of the existing bailiff network in order that maximum benefit can be gained from the considerable professional expertise that is on tap. This will consider the potential for the transfer of skills, information and resources from one area to another, at times best placed to meet local enforcement priorities. Allied to this will be the compilation of an inventory of skills and experience so that the best resources can be identified. This process will also enable individuals and their respective organisations to gain new skills and experience in relation to enforcement and management. For further details see p14.

PhD studentship – University of Stirling

ASFB are very pleased to announce that Sandra Schlittenhardt has started a PhD studentship, co-supervised by Prof Randolph Richards (University of Stirling) and Dr David Bruno (Marine Scotland Science) investigating skin lesions in salmon, associated with recent entry into freshwater. The funding for the project is coordinated by ASFB, with the support of a number of individual Boards. We are very grateful to Marine Scotland, which has made a significant financial contribution to the project. It is hoped that this project will give us a far better understanding of the relationship between skin lesions and secondary infections which are responsible for mortality and, ultimately, will allow informed management decisions to be taken in the event of an outbreak of disease.

ASFB governance

The Association's Executive Committee has executive authority to act on behalf of our 41 member Boards. The committee met five times during the course of 2012 to discuss a wide range of business and support and guide the executive directors.

Key items of business during 2012 included the formal ratification of the Code of Good Practice for member Boards, approval of formal ASFB policy papers and an internal review of the management and structure of the organisation. A constant theme during 2012 has been scrutiny of the proposals for the Aquaculture and Fisheries (Scotland) Bill.

The association convened two member's meetings during 2012. The AGM was held on 13 November, at which the 2011 accounts were approved and an operating budget for 2013 was set. The reports from Directors were presented by the Operations Director and Policy & Planning Director, and a workshop was convened to discuss the implications of the Aquaculture & Fisheries Bill.



RAFTS news

CALLUM SINCLAIR - Director, RAFTS

Staff changes

RAFTS has welcomed a number of new staff in the last 12 months – Jim Mann joined the Scottish Mink Initiative last March to cover the Aberdeenshire area; Rob Mitchell joined in August to manage the increasing caseload of barrier remediation works; and Lorna Wilkie, Flora Grigor-Wilson and Steff Ferguson joined in January as part of the new Pearls in Peril project team. Over the same period we have, however, said goodbye to Sarah Atkinson, Catherine Robinson and Elizabeth Clements. We thank Sarah and Catherine for their work on the Scottish Mink Initiative and Elizabeth for her role in barrier remediation. We wish all three well in the future.

Biosecurity and invasive non-native species

Since the preparation of Biosecurity Plans by Trusts, work on invasive non-native species has expanded quickly. Currently, a number of multi-year regional projects are funded by the Water Environment Fund; the CIRB Interreg project is in full swing in southwest Scotland; and the Scottish Mink Initiative is active across much of the north. In addition, some Trusts have undertaken local work on invasive species control and management. This area will remain a high priority and we have recently prepared a LIFE bid with Scottish Natural Heritage and Trusts to consolidate much of this work.

Barrier assessment and remediation

Trusts invest considerable resources in helping to deliver practical local works to restore the water environment in catchments across Scotland. With the implementation of the Water Framework Directive and the Water Environment Fund we are now able to secure funds and support for some of this work, with particular priority being given to the assessment and easement (or removal) of barriers to fish passage, as well as practical invasive non-native species control schemes.

Working on barriers to fish passage (see p8-9) we have helped secure funding to assess, ease and remove a number of obstacles across Scotland. We have also developed an evidence-based prioritisation system, which ensures that works which will deliver greatest benefits to the environment are dealt with first. As the size – both physical and financial – and complexity of the barrier schemes increase, we need to make our contractual, tendering and financial management procedures transparent and ever more robust, to ensure that RAFTS and Trusts remain SEPA's preferred partners in the ongoing programme.

Dipping a toe into Europe

Recognising the change in both local and national funding opportunities RAFTS and individual Trusts have begun to engage in European funding and in European-funded projects. These schemes provide opportunities to multiply existing secured funding and also to showcase work in Scotland to a wider audience. They also, however, require significant time to prepare strong applications and have significant administrative and financial management requirements for partners.

The 'Controlling priority invasive non-native riparian plants and restoring native biodiversity' (CIRB) project, funded by Interreg IVa, has been running since 2010 – with partners in both parts of Ireland, alongside



Giant Hogweed. Image: Stuart Brabbs.

Ayrshire, Galloway and Argyll fisheries Trusts, RAFTS and the Tweed Forum – and has delivered a broad range of invasive species control and management activities. Led by Queen's University in Belfast, this project is highly regarded by the funding bodies and there may be future opportunities to maintain and develop this work.

Following a successful application, prepared in spring 2011, the Pearls in Peril LIFE+ project is now up and running and will continue until 2016. Co-funded by 14 different organisations across Great Britain, this partnership will help safeguard the future of freshwater pearl mussel (*Margaritifera margaritifera*) populations at 21 Special Areas of Conservation in Scotland, England and Wales. The freshwater pearl mussel is declining throughout its range but, as Britain contains an estimated 50% of its known breeding populations in Europe, this project has significance in both a European and global context. Including RAFTS, there are a total of 11 Scottish Trusts and fishery bodies involved in the project.

Last year we also submitted a further LIFE bid to support actions across much of Scotland on invasive non-native species. The application, which was led by Scottish Natural Heritage and will be worth roughly £4.8 million if successful, is currently being considered by the European Commission. A final decision is anticipated by the summer.

While each of these projects could, or does, provide significant financial inputs into freshwater and environmental management, there is a significant up-front investment required to prepare applications, as well as ongoing commitment needed to implement these schemes. However, such substantial projects, which are not purely associated with fish or fisheries management, may be the best areas for Trusts to focus on in order to ensure financial sustainability.

Governance

Key to the overall management and governance of RAFTS is the role played by its Board of Directors. In 2012 the Board initiated new activities to improve governance and oversight. These include the development of a corporate plan; the completion of a Code of Good Governance for members; the preparation of new technical and operational policy positions; effective progress and financial monitoring systems for projects and programmes; and the preparation of interests and skills registers and summaries for Directors. All of these actions help ensure that RAFTS continues to operate effectively and appropriately, both as a charity and as a limited company, and to meet its obligations in both areas.

These are challenging and uncertain times for the fisheries sector, due to the financial pressures coming from reductions in public sector funding support and the increasing competition to secure external funds, as well as the potential consequences of the Aquaculture and Fisheries Bill and the pending governance review of the sector which will follow.

It has therefore never been more important that RAFTS is managed and operated effectively and has close relationships with its members and other partners. If RAFTS and member Trusts work collaboratively then we will be better placed to emerge as strong, credible and effective bodies. If not, we run the risk of severe consequences and could compromise the integrity of the current Trust network.

Future finance

RAFTS and individual Trusts are without doubt facing the most challenging financial times since their inception. It is acutely evident that funding to support the work of local Trusts is becoming increasingly restricted and competitive, both from public and private sector sources, and there is a notable decrease in locally available funding. At the same time, there are increased restrictions being placed on national funding sources, such as the Water Environment Fund, which is in place to support the Water Framework Directive implementation.

These restrictions are manifested in requests for increasing justification for funds and greater requirements for supporting data, which itself takes more time and effort to produce. At the same time funders increasingly require applicants to build financial multipliers into projects. These current features of the financial and grant funding landscape are making it increasingly difficult for many Trusts to operate in a financially sustainable way in the short, medium and longer terms.

We are now witnessing a pronounced shift whereby bigger, strategic projects are much more appealing to funders, as these schemes may allow additional funds – for example from European sources – to be managed within, arguably, more effective and efficient central administrative

models. RAFTS and individual Trusts must consider adapting our positions accordingly. Clearly, there are major challenges ahead and it is unlikely to be sustainable to continue to operate without considering change in practice and areas of operation.

Fishery management planning and aquaculture

Since 2009 individual Fishery Trusts have helped to initiate, deliver and promote the fishery management planning process, supported by the Scottish Government. Fishery management plans have been prepared and implemented across Scotland in a locally prioritised and evidence-based way. In 2012 Trusts prepared implementation summaries for each management plan and produced posters to display major implementation activities at local and national events and conferences. Alongside the genetics reports currently being concluded for each Trust as part of the Focusing Atlantic Salmon Management on Populations (FASMOP) project, an impressive body of work has been delivered. All documents are available from the RAFTS website.

However, the Government's funding for fishery management planning is likely to end shortly and this will test the robustness of the process. We hope work will continue, locally and across Scotland, but it seems likely that implementing fishery management plans will be, at best, reduced in many areas.

Meanwhile the Managing Interactions Aquaculture Project (MIAP) has continued in 2012/13 (see p7). We believe this is making an important contribution to improving the management of interactions between wild fish and the aquaculture industry.



Sweep netting for sea trout smolts, Gairloch. Image: Peter Cunningham.



Wider Engagement of ASFB and RAFTS

DR ALAN WELLS - Policy and planning director, ASFB

ASFB and RAFTS are the representative bodies for the statutory District Salmon Fishery Boards and the charitable Fishery Trusts across Scotland. Each network performs an essential role in the management and conservation of Scotland's salmon and freshwater fish and fisheries.

In addition to regular engagement with the Scottish Government and the Scottish Parliament, we contribute to a number of national stakeholder groups. With a combined membership offering near-total coverage of the Scottish mainland and Western Isles we are in a unique position to influence national policy across a wide range of issues of importance to Scottish society. Below are some of our key areas of external involvement.

River basin management planning

The Water Framework Directive was introduced in 2000 to establish systems to manage the water environment, and was transposed into Scots Law by The Water Environment and Water Services (Scotland) Act 2003. There are a number of advisory groups which contribute to ensuring that these targets will be met.

Boards and Trusts contribute to all of Scotland's Area Advisory Groups (except Orkney and Shetland) in order to assist and contribute to river basin management planning in their respective districts. The Fish and Fisheries Advisory Group was created to provide advice to SEPA on monitoring and classification of fish populations and the protection of fish populations and fisheries interests when regulating activities which affect the water environment. Both ASFB and RAFTS contribute to this group. ASFB and RAFTS also sit on the Diffuse Pollution Management Advisory Group, a partnership that focuses on improving Scotland's water environment by reducing rural diffuse pollution. Both ASFB and RAFTS are members of the National Advisory Group, which has the role of advising on the development of river basin planning in Scotland and providing support and guidance to the Area Advisory Groups.

Flood risk management

The Flood Risk Management (Scotland) Act 2009 aims to reduce the adverse consequences of flooding on communities, the environment, cultural heritage and economic activity. To take a sustainable approach to managing flood risk we need to look at whole river catchments. With an in-depth knowledge of Scotland's river catchments, Boards and Trusts are ideally placed to contribute to local advisory groups tasked with the delivery of flood risk management strategies.

Aquaculture

ASFB and RAFTS continue to engage with the Scottish Government and the aquaculture industry in an attempt to better manage the potential impacts of aquaculture on wild fish populations and develop a more constructive relationship between the two sectors. ASFB and RAFTS are members of the Ministerial Group on Aquaculture which, following a review of priorities, will now include a specific sub-group on interactions between aquaculture and wild fisheries. ASFB and RAFTS both have a place on the board of the Scottish Aquaculture Research Forum, a registered charity and an independent company whose main aim is to support research into aquaculture and related areas

Marine strategy

The Marine Strategy Forum (MSF) was established in July 2009 to provide advice on Marine Scotland's key strategies and priorities, including marine conservation and planning for matters such as renewables and aquaculture. ASFB were invited onto the MSF in 2011 and this provides us with the opportunity to influence these key issues at a national level.

Species reintroductions

ASFB is a member of the National Species Reintroduction Forum which is tasked to contribute to broad scale, strategic issues relating to species reintroductions in Scotland. One of the first tasks of the Forum was to set up a new working group to investigate the possible interactions between beavers and salmonid fish.

PAW Scotland

The Partnership for Action Against Wildlife Crime (PAW) is a multi-agency body comprising representatives of the organisations involved in wildlife law enforcement in the UK. It provides opportunities for statutory and non-Government organisations to work together to combat wildlife crime.

ASFB are members of PAW, and specifically input to the Scottish Poaching Sub Group within the PAW framework. Membership of PAW has facilitated an excellent working relationship with the National Wildlife Crime Unit, where a number of practical and operational initiatives have been and continue to be developed between ASFB, NWCU and the DSFBs.

Scottish Fisheries Co-ordination Centre

The Scottish Fisheries Co-ordination Centre (SFCC) was established in 1997 to meet the need for high quality fisheries information and standard data collection methods in the light of a growing awareness and concern for salmonid decline throughout Scotland. The SFCC is an association of Fisheries Trusts, District Salmon Fishery Boards, the Scottish Government, Marine Scotland Science and others, which aims to support its members in collecting, collating, using and providing information on salmon and freshwater fish, their habitats and fisheries. RAFTS is a co-opted member of the SFCC Management Committee.

Invasive non-native species

RAFTS is a member of the GB Non Native Species Secretariat Training Working Group, which was established to identify training needs and training opportunities for organisations and community groups for INNS prevention, surveillance and control.

dot.rural

dot.rural focuses on the rural digital economy and believes that rural areas of the UK can, through the user-led application of digital technology, be more economically, socially and environmentally sustainable. The aim is to harness the RCUK Digital Economy Hub's expertise with a range of partners to realise this ambition. Activities are organised around four rural challenges: Healthcare, Accessibility & Mobilities, Conservation of Natural Resources and Enterprise & Culture. RAFTS chairs the Natural Resource Conservation user panel.



Interactions with aquaculture: MIAP

CALLUM SINCLAIR - Director, RAFTS & DONNA-CLAIRE HUNTER - Aquaculture Officer, RAFTS

The Managing Interactions Aquaculture Project (MIAP) is an initiative supported by funding from the Scottish Government and started in April 2011 after the end of the Tripartite Working Group (TWG).

It was developed by RAFTS, at the request of many west coast Trusts and Boards, in order to further inform the interactions between aquaculture and wild fish populations.

More specifically, it is designed to identify and reduce the impacts of aquaculture when and where interactions with wild fisheries take place. We believe that there needs to be a greater understanding and recognition of the impacts of aquaculture on wild fisheries, in order to allow more effective management decisions and mitigation measures to be put in place.

The MIAP partners identified three key work streams, which have since been taken forward:

- **Post-smolt sweep netting**
A monitoring effort aimed at understanding the current population status of wild sea trout on the west coast of Scotland and their interactions with two species of sea lice – *Lepeophtheirus salmonis* and *Caligus elongates*.
- **Genetic sampling**
A regional project aimed at exploring the use of genetic tools to distinguish between farmed and wild fish and assessing their utility for identifying individuals of mixed farm and wild ancestry.
- **Locational guidance**
A project aimed at developing tools which will provide guidance to planners and other policy makers so that the concerns of wild fish bodies are more clearly expressed and can be incorporated and/or considered in planning- and policy-related decisions.

Project outputs

Post-smolt sweep netting

The project completed regional sweep netting surveys in the spring/summer of 2011 and 2012, having reassessed and refined the network of sites to ensure that surveys are undertaken at a range of distances from operational aquaculture units. This allows the data collected to be used to consider and better understand the relationship between sea lice numbers on wild sea trout smolts and the distance from aquaculture production areas. Full regional reports, available on the RAFTS website for 2001 and 2012, confirm that in some areas lice numbers are above thresholds understood to be detrimental to wild fish. Previous TWG data of this type collected from 2003-2009 has recently been analysed and published by Marine Scotland Science (Middlemas et al, 2012), who concluded that sea lice loadings recorded on wild sea trout post-smolts were positively related to the mean weight of salmon on the nearest fish farm, and negatively related to the distance to that farm. Data from the MIAP is available to further consider this relationship in later analyses.

Genetic sampling

Genetic sampling was undertaken by Trusts across the west coast to support the development of a tool to identify the presence of Norwegian source materials in the genetic composition of wild fish samples. The report, available on the RAFTS website, confirms that Scottish and Norwegian fish can be distinguished by genetic analysis and also strongly suggests that Norwegian genetic materials are present in around 25% of the wild fish samples collected and analysed.

Locational guidance

This has been the most challenging and, recently, the most contentious aspect of the project, as it seeks to use existing information associated with the marine and freshwater environments to undertake a sensitivity analysis of areas on the west coast and to make this available (as GIS layers) to fishery groups engaged in marine spatial planning. A first version is scheduled to be available by April.

While the best available data and information will be used, we recognise that other desirable data – such as smolt migration routes or information on lice dispersal – is not currently obtainable. However, fish farm applications continue to be submitted and must be considered by planners in the absence of such data. The locational guidance project is an attempt to provide DSFBs and Trusts with information to ensure that legitimate concerns are effectively highlighted to planners. This project should be set in the context of the RAFTS and ASFB policy position on aquaculture, which advocates the relocation of farms from sensitive locations and a move to closed containment production.

MIAP at last gives us an opportunity to encourage planners to direct aquaculture development to less sensitive areas.

Context of locational guidance

The locational guidance part of the project has been much criticised by a few individuals in recent months. However, the project has many supporters who, while recognising the challenges and limitations of the work, have acknowledged that this sort of tool will allow us to better influence planning decisions. Supporters include the Salmon and Trout Association Scotland, the Atlantic Salmon Trust and Fish Legal, in addition to RAFTS and ASFB.

There are already a number of criteria by which planners and Government currently prioritise geographical areas for aquaculture development. This means that, in some areas on the west coast, an effective presumption in favour of development of finfish aquaculture seems apparent.

Wild fish groups and bodies do not make decisions as to where aquaculture developments do or do not take place. These decisions are made by planners and we must find a more effective strategy to influence their decision making and persuade them of the sensitivities and importance of wild fish and fisheries.

It must be recognised that there is substantial political commitment to expanding Scottish aquaculture production, which has the clear potential to compound the risks facing wild salmon and sea trout. The MIAP model, which is being welcomed by planners and others who have struggled with the absence of consistent and credible planning representations from the wild fish sector, at last gives us an opportunity to encourage planners to direct aquaculture development to less sensitive areas.

Those who simply oppose all aquaculture development must think hard about what our options are: either better sited development, taking some account of wild fisheries concerns – which is the opportunity MIAP gives us; or more of the same – namely widespread aquaculture development throughout large parts of the west coast.



Barrier prioritisation and removal

ROB MITCHELL - RAFTS Project Management Officer

If 2011 was described as a year of planning, preparation and positive progress when it came to barrier work, 2012 moved it up a gear. RAFTS has made significant strides in terms of refinement and inception of the prioritisation process, the streamlining of the funding application process, and undertaking actual physical works.

The barrier prioritisation process is designed to highlight manmade barriers no longer in use that impact the ability of salmon to migrate. The options available can be split into two types; the removal or partial removal of the barrier to allow access through it, and the easement of the existing structure by way of rock ramps or the installation of a fish-pass.

RAFTS continues to be a key partner for SEPA in terms of removing barriers to fish migration, as illustrated in the recent SEPA consultation document 'Improving the physical condition of Scotland's water environment'. In this context RAFTS works to help Trusts identify priority barriers and to produce evidence-based applications for works to enable barrier easement or removal. The emphasis is on collaboration, with the Trusts providing vital biological and ownership information and local liaison, and RAFTS taking on the management of funding applications, engineering surveys and physical works.

The results of barrier classification are discussed with Trusts and candidates for further action are then identified, based on the results of prioritisation and the obtaining of landowner consents.

SEPA has stated that the public funds within the Water Environment Fund (WEF) must be utilised cost-effectively, and each application submitted must clearly illustrate the benefit of the proposed actions. As such, the process developed in 2011 has been further refined so that it is evidence-based, clear and effective, without becoming over-complicated. An easily understood scoring system, based upon the passability of each barrier and its relative value in terms of habitat potential, has been formulated. Passability scores are calculated using either the fish stock status above and below each barrier or SNIFFER assessments. Habitat potential is calculated using the biological quality of upstream habitat and the physical distance potentially available to fish upstream. The resultant score can be compared to any barrier across the country, effectively producing a prioritisation listing.

Applying the above prioritisation procedure to data sets from Water Framework Directive classification provided by SEPA, and working with data provided by the member Trusts, a list of regional and national priority barriers is being created. Use of GIS makes the results of the prioritisation visual and clear. The maps created illustrate not only the geographical location and passability of each barrier, but also the amount of catchment that would be opened up to migratory species.

The results of the prioritisation process categorise barriers as being:

- Multiple barriers within single catchments, such as those on the River Almond in West Lothian/Edinburgh.
- Single barriers with complex issues, such as Kempleton Mill on the Tarff in Galloway – a barrier whose removal could impact downstream erosion.
- Single barriers with no complex issues, such as the dam on the River Evelix in the Kyle of Sutherland.

The results of barrier classification are discussed with Trusts and candidates for further action are then identified, based on the results of prioritisation and the obtaining of landowner consents. Engineering assessments are undertaken on the agreed candidates. The information from the prioritisation process, SEPA classification and initial engineering assessment, including cost estimates, is used to produce funding applications to the WEF. RAFTS submits applications to the WEF in line with submission deadlines (roughly every two months).

Post-approval, RAFTS produces tender documents, sets deadlines and invites appropriate firms to tender for specified contracts. Standard terms and conditions, tender workshops and a tender scoring system all produce an open and fair procurement process. RAFTS manages the design or physical works contracts that have been awarded.

An important target in 2012 was to carry out physical works. It is therefore pleasing to report that, between September and December 2012, four barriers were removed and one barrier eased in various parts of Scotland.

And so, on to 2013 and what will prove to be a very exciting year for the barrier prioritisation process and barrier removal/easement. RAFTS is currently involved in some very complex applications, including catchment-based approaches tackling groups of barriers on the River Almond in Edinburgh/West Lothian and the Tyne in East Lothian. The national roll-out, whereby each Trust is taken through the process, is due for completion by the end of September, and a first-stage national prioritisation will then be available.

However, by its very nature this is a living process and 2013 will see merely the first phase of a project that has plenty of potential for growth. Importantly for RAFTS and the individual Trusts, the prioritisation process will deliver evidence-based applications to the Water Environment Fund in future and therefore we can ensure that member Trusts are able to make the most of this vital source of funding to effect real and tangible improvements to fisheries.

CASE STUDY 1

The barrier to be eased was at Linn Potts on the River Isla, a tributary of the Deveron. A specialist contractor was employed for this work, as the barrier lies beneath a footbridge on land owned by the Strathisla Distillery. The pool below the significant and steep leap is sufficiently deep to allow fish to gain appropriate speed for the ascent. However, a notch cut in the concrete barrier of only 1-2 feet was too narrow and many fish hit the concrete and fell back into the pool below, as was shown by a camera fitted by the local Board. The physical works involved cutting through (and carefully disposing of) the remaining concrete lip, widening the notch across the entire width of the barrier (around six feet) and enabling fish to clear the barrier with far greater ease.

CASE STUDY 2

A barrier on the site of the Arecleoch wind farm in Galloway was tackled so that fish could reach the pristine habitat upstream. Permission to access and work on this site was particularly tricky to obtain, as it is a working wind farm, but the experience enabled the local Trust and RAFTS to hone our skills in technical communications. Indeed, Galloway Fisheries Trust's liaison with the site owners was particularly helpful.

CASE STUDY 3

The Black Burn, which is a tributary of the River Lossie, had two gabion-basket weirs which significantly impaired the ability of salmonids to reach the excellent spawning grounds above. A particular problem was the lack of any significant depth in the pools immediately below each barrier, making the ascent more difficult. The physical works took place with significant input from the Director of the Findhorn, Nairn & Lossie Fisheries Trust, and he was able to assist the contractor in utilising material removed from the weirs to create useful riffle/pool sections where the barriers used to be.

CASE STUDY 4

The River Evelix in the Kyle of Sutherland has historically been impounded at a loch outflow on Skibo Estate land, in order to control the flow and draw salmon from the lower river upstream in times of low water so that the laird could be sure of fish in the upper river. A very large structure, the barrier presented some interesting challenges, not least an otter 'couch' situated at its base. Following on from physical works, visitors to the site today would be totally unaware that a large dam wall was present only a few months ago, and the otter couch was carefully removed under licence and then replaced in the same spot using GPS coordinates.



Case study 2, Arecleoch Weir before (top) and after (above).



Case study 4, Evelix before (top) and after (above).



Recent delays in the run-timing of grilse

CHRIS TODD - Professor of Marine Ecology, University of St Andrews

Few people would argue that there have not been obvious changes in the UK's climate in the last few decades. One tangible anecdotal indicator – as noted by *The Times* – is in Whitehall, where the trees presently remain in full leaf right through Remembrance Day, whereas in the 1950s and 1960s they were leafless by this time.

Phenological studies focus on changes in the timing of distinct events in the life cycles of organisms – from the timing of migration, reproduction, or emergence from hibernation to first leaf burst, first flowering, or leaf fall in plants. Recent comprehensive analyses of botanical garden records collated throughout Europe show that, since the 1970s, spring has advanced at an overall rate of ~2.5 days per decade and winter has been similarly delayed. The net result is that the growing season in Europe is now significantly longer than in the 1970s.

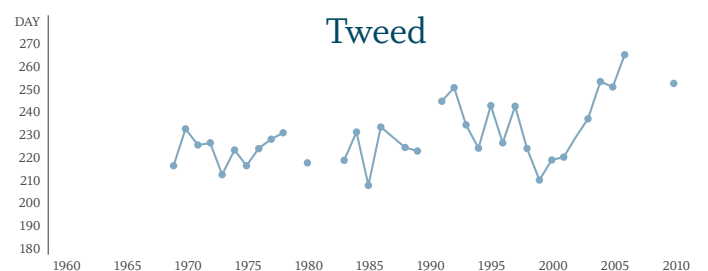
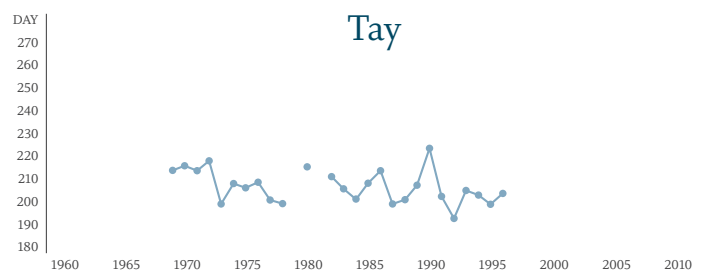
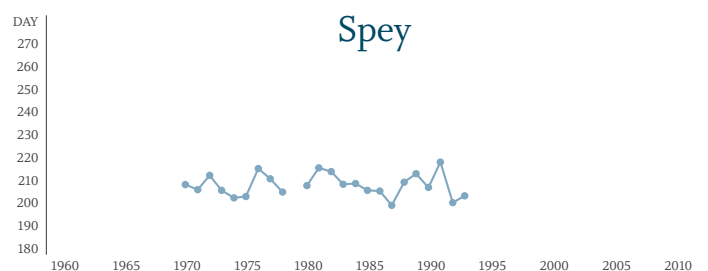
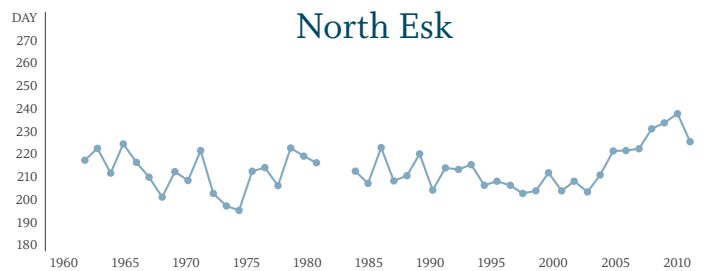
This might have beneficial effects for juvenile salmon in freshwater, in permitting a longer growth season and perhaps increasing food availability during winter. The timing of smoltification and river emigration of juvenile salmon is influenced by multiple factors, including day length, temperature and water flow rates. In Scotland, most smolts emigrate in early May, but some leave in April and others delay departure until June. On the North Esk, the present median date of smolt emigration is around May 7. Most smolts in Scottish rivers are 2 or 3 years old at emigration, but some leave at one year old, and a few at 4 or more years of age.

Interestingly, the earliest smolts tend to be older, with one year-olds migrating especially late. It is likely that the latter are fast-growing fish that manage to attain, in that spring, the minimum size (~9 cm length) to withstand the physiological challenge of entry to seawater. Moreover, just as the earliest migrating smolts tend to be older, so too the earliest returning grilse tend to be from older smolts, with grilse of river age one returning in late summer or autumn.

Utilising Marine Scotland data, we have analysed the timing of grilse returns to the Spey, Tay, Tweed and North Esk, collated from their monitoring of commercial, in-river net catches. Tweed grilse typically return rather late in the summer, but the Spey, Tay and North Esk show closely similar timings, with grilse runs peaking in late July. The time-series data available for these rivers varies: for the Spey (1970-93) and Tay (1968-1996) the data are curtailed due to closure of those fisheries, but for the Tweed and North Esk we have detailed information from the 1960s up to the present day.

We modelled the median dates of grilse returns for river ages 1 to 3 and the illustrated graphs show the median date of return for grilse of river age 2 (the most common smolt age class across rivers). The most striking outcome was a pattern of generally increasing delay in return to the North Esk and Tweed since the 1990s. For example, the Tweed shows an average delay in return of ~5 days per decade. Comparing the present to the turn of the millennium, grilse returning to the North Esk are ~3 weeks later, whilst for the Tweed the delay may extend to 5-6 weeks. The data for the Tay and Spey show comparatively little variation, but crucially we lack data for these rivers over the past 20 years or so.

So what is driving this pattern? In the knowledge that river flow can markedly affect the movement and behaviour of salmon, we suspected that perhaps the



Median date of return for grilse on the North Esk, Spey, Tay and Tweed (Day 210 = 29th July for example)



River Tweed. Image: Andrew Graham-Stewart.

recent pattern of delay might be explicable by dry summers and low flow rates.

To allow for the occurrence of spates, we therefore modelled the median date of return of grilse to all these rivers in relation to both daily river flow and variability of flow over the summer, and to condition factor (skininess) of the grilse. The period from the late 1990s has been one of very marked declines in grilse condition throughout Scotland: in essence, grilse in 1997 typically showed extremely high condition, but this has fallen precipitously ever since and the data for the North Esk and Tweed show no clear sign of impending improvement.

Somewhat surprisingly, the models showed no significant effect of river flow across the four rivers, with the exception of a small, but significant, effect of variability in flow for the Tweed. Tweed grilse tend to show a pattern of earlier median return date in relation to greater flow variability during the summer/early autumn months. While river flow was generally of little importance across this analysis, fish condition did show a large effect. In recent years

of poor condition grilse there has been a clear pattern of delayed migratory return – grilse are presently staying at sea longer, perhaps in response to their relatively poor feeding in the Norwegian Sea.

What are the consequences of this research? Granted, the analysed data relate only to major east coast rivers but, given the widespread occurrence of skinny grilse in recent years, it is likely that these results are relevant throughout Scotland. Indeed, many anglers renting the same week on a river early each summer will have been aware of fewer grilse in recent years.

From a management perspective, an immediate consequence is that current (poor quality) grilse stocks will be relatively protected from exploitation because of their overall migratory delay. But perhaps of concern here is the complementary inference: that in years of high quality grilse (eg 1997) those prime parents – which arguably should be protected more intensely – are more subject to exploitation from both netmen and anglers, because they return earlier.



Alleviating the effects of climate change – the Upper Dee project

MARK BILSBY - *River Dee Director*

We normally think of climate change as something likely to occur at some stage in the future, or in countries many miles away from Scotland, but we are already starting to notice problems at home.

In 2007 one of the River Dee Trust biologists came back from a morning's electro-fishing survey work, mentioning that it was too hot to survey, as the water temperature was 27°C. This piqued our interest, as we did not know whether this was a one-off event caused by an exceptionally hot day or whether it was a more regular occurrence. By talking to other groups it became apparent that water temperatures above 25°C are now routinely found each year, typically in the upper reaches of the catchment, and Marine Scotland Science also reported that they had detected a 2°C rise in average water temperatures over the last 30 years on the Dee.

This was all very interesting, but what does it mean for the salmon and trout living in the catchment?

The upper temperatures that salmon can survive at are not absolute and are dependent upon the length of time fish are exposed to them. However, when water temperatures exceed 21°C feeding activity is suppressed, leading to poor growth rates. The upshot is that, at sustained high temperatures, the mortality rate of salmon increases.

Looking ahead, the likely amount that water temperatures will rise by is a controversial topic, as the scientific community can't agree on a figure. However, international consensus has been reached that the average air temperature in Scotland will rise by around 4°C by 2080, and this will be accompanied by a 17% decrease in summer rainfall.

Overall, the water temperatures during the summer months in the upper reaches of the Dee are already too warm at times for salmon and will get significantly warmer over the course of this century.

While no Board or Trust is going to be able to reduce climate change, it is not all doom and gloom, as we can effect change locally. When things become too hot we all seek shade from the sun. However, in the upper reaches of the Dee there is very little shade, due to the absence of trees in

recent times. Since 2009 the River Dee Trust and Dee DSFB have therefore been looking at ways to reforest these upper reaches.

After calculating the number of trees needed, the two organisations quickly realised that the job would require outside support. But, through talking to various interests in the catchment, it became apparent that several groups were keen on the idea of tree planting, for a multitude of different reasons. These ranged from linking fragmented remnants of woodland together, to flood prevention, to carbon sequestration, to improving conditions for freshwater pearl mussels. Whatever the motive, the different groups – comprising the two Dee river organisations, Cairngorm National Park Authority, Scottish Natural Heritage, SEPA, Forestry Commission Scotland and the Dee Catchment Partnership, along with three very patient and supportive estates of Invercauld, Mar and Mar Lodge – came together with the common aim of planting trees.

This size of partnership was critical as, by having everyone onside, a number of practical and technical issues were dealt with in a quick and proactive manner. This was helped by the fact that the planting schemes were designed in collaboration with local farmers, keepers, foresters and stalkers, so the plantations could dovetail with existing land management practices without causing too much disturbance.

The work reached an important milestone in September, when an application for EU support for a freshwater pearl mussel restoration project, in conjunction with SNH and RAFTS, was approved. This unlocked the £2.5 million needed to take the project from being a pipedream to a scheme that is achievable over the next four years.

The necessary staff have now been recruited and the planning work is now being turned into practical delivery. Again the breadth of the partnership involved has been essential, as the Dee Board and Trust could not have got this project off the ground on their own.

The trees will slowly grow and, as they do, they will start to cast shade on the river. By 2080 the plantations will help to offset the increase in air temperatures by creating enough shade to reduce water temperatures by around 6°C. So, with a bit of luck, we should be able to help protect the salmon on the Dee for the next few generations of angler.



Access to salmon fishing

DR ALAN WELLS - Policy and planning director, ASFB

Contrary to popular belief, much of Scotland's salmon and sea trout fishing is accessible at a modest cost, and there are days on rivers and lochs available to suit anglers of all ages, abilities and financial means. As a result, last year ASFB launched an innovative new website – fisheries.asfb.org.uk

This highlights accessible and affordable angling, on both club waters and private beats, and gives full details of some 280 readily-available fisheries throughout the country.

Admittedly, as with many other recreational and sporting activities, fishing at the top end of the market will always attract a premium price, and this tends to reinforce a general perception that salmon fishing is beyond the reach of many anglers. The new ASFB website helps to illustrate that fishing is readily available on many exceptionally productive stretches of water – both on world-famous rivers, and some less well-known but surprisingly fruitful lochs and rivers elsewhere.

Neither a commercial site, nor one which sells tickets, it is intended to provide facts and help guide anglers to good value fishing in places where

there is a realistic chance to catch a salmon. As a result it should help the angler to make an informed choice and will also highlight that salmon and sea trout fishing across the country is an activity that can be enjoyed by all.

That so much fishing is still so readily available is due, in no small part, to the country's long tradition of angling clubs, which dates back to the 19th century. Initially these clubs were generally focused on trout fishing. Some have fallen by the wayside, perhaps remembered occasionally when an engraved competition trophy from a particular club surfaces at auction, but a great many have survived, indeed thrived, to this day.

Many of these have become, in part or wholly, salmon angling clubs – some have leased or purchased the fishing rights from former netting interests in the lower reaches of rivers; some are long-standing tenants of council-owned or privately-owned stretches; and others have acquired fishings on the open market. The Crown Estate has 140 tenancies of salmon fishing, one third of which are held by angling clubs, not least the lower Clyde where the impact of industry and pollution has been reversed and salmon runs have recovered dramatically.

Nor is club or association water necessarily unproductive, contrary to some people's belief. Indeed, a number of prime stretches of river are held by clubs and I would estimate that around 20 per cent of Scotland's annual rod catches of salmon are on club water. Several clubs are quite capable of recording an annual catch in four figures – for example Nairn AA



Association water on the River Dee.

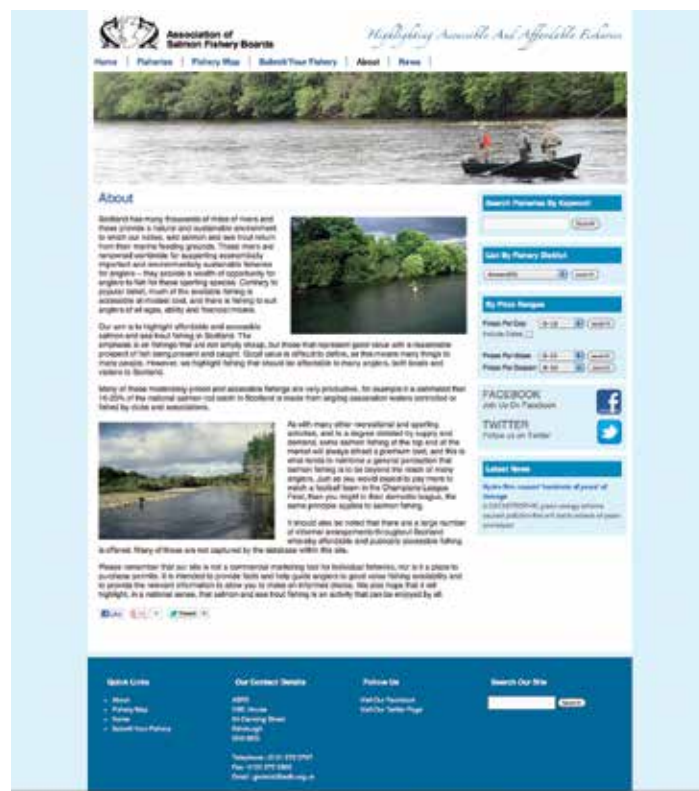
(the dominant force on the river, which controls several sections), Wick AA (which has access to, and runs, the whole river) and Aberdeen and District AA (the country's largest club, which owns a large portfolio of fishings on the Dee, Don and Ythan). Stirling Council's beat on the River Forth, which is not a club as such but is run on similar lines, was the most prolific beat in Scotland in 2010 with a catch of 1,351.

A number of prime stretches of river are held by clubs and I would estimate that around 20 per cent of Scotland's annual rod catches of salmon are on club water.

Clubs offer their members astonishing value, with most memberships costing between £80 and £200 annually. For those wishing, or able, to fish almost every day this equates to a pound or two per day, and there are very few sports or pastimes that offer this sort of value. Of course, most local anglers avail themselves of the opportunity when time permits and when conditions are right; being 'washed off' club water does not have the same implications as it does on expensive private beats, where obviously the money is paid whether the river is fishable or not.

The appeal of many club waters is such that some anglers who move to Scotland from south of the Border (often on retirement), decide the exact location of their new home by whether it falls within the catchment of a particular angling association. In this context it is worth noting that virtually all clubs offer permits to visitors, the income from which often subsidises members' subscriptions.

Most forward-looking Fishery Boards appreciate the important role that club waters play in the scheme of things; they ensure that salmon angling is essentially available to all and that the depth of an individual's pockets is not the overriding factor. Granted, at times the most productive pools on club waters can become crowded, but anyone prepared to walk a little or fish less social hours will usually be able to circumvent such problems.



The ASFB's fisheries website was launched in 2012.

Apart from club fishings, there are numerous private beats which offer salmon angling by the day or week at very reasonable cost – with plenty charging about £50 per day or £150 per week – and these also feature among the ASFB site's hundreds of fisheries. What's more there are also a large number of informal arrangements throughout Scotland whereby affordable and publically accessible fishing is offered.

As a result, those who are prepared to do a little research, on one website alone, will surely see that salmon angling in Scotland is far from an exclusive pursuit.



Association water on the River Deveron.



River Gress, Isle of Lewis.



Salmon fisheries enforcement – pooling the resource

BRIAN DAVIDSON - Operations Director, ASFB & RAFTS

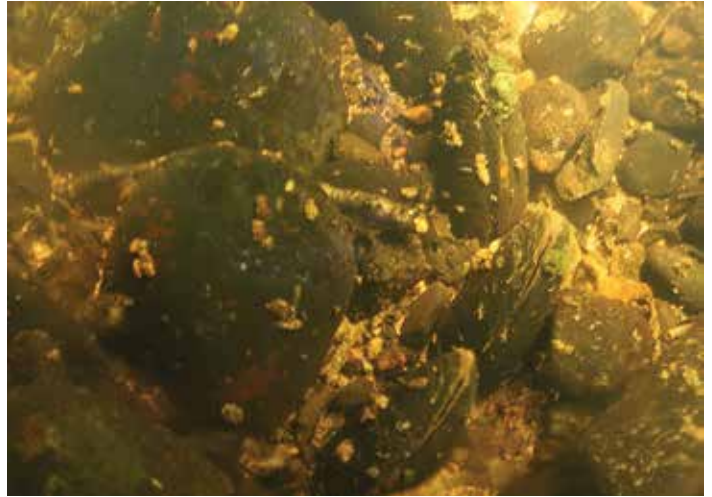
In these increasingly straitened times, it is vital that we maximise the efficiency of the dedicated salmon enforcement resource we are lucky to have in Scotland. This means two things – firstly, ensuring that we effectively deploy the considerable skills, experience and professional knowledge that our bailiffs possess; and, secondly, promoting partnerships with other agencies where we have a mutually identified interest in law enforcement.

With only about 200 accredited bailiffs – many of whom are part-time and some of whom are even voluntary – at our disposal to police approximately 125,000 km of river, resources are undoubtedly stretched. However, it is clear that the time of the year when fish stocks are under the greatest pressure varies markedly on different rivers – so there may be scope to identify when bailiffing expertise and resources might be exchanged between rivers.

Accordingly, consideration is being given to forming a pool of enforcement expertise which would be capable of being deployed in other districts, with prior arrangement of both the 'donor' Board and the recipient river. This obviously requires consensus to make it work, and to this end ASFB is co-ordinating discussions to explore how we might encourage, across Scotland, a greater transfer of knowledge, skills and hands-on assistance from one Board to another.

This will help those rivers requiring extra assistance to deal with specifically identified local enforcement problems. It will also provide the benefit of utilising personnel from outwith the district, which can be advantageous in many types of operation where conflict is a possibility. As well as having the obvious benefit of being able to draft in more expertise for operational purposes, of equal importance will be the transfer of new skills and knowledge from one district to another. To support this, an inventory of skills relevant to each Board is being developed, which will show at a glance the range of skills and experience that is potentially available. This will contribute towards bailiffs' Continued Professional Development, in addition to the existing initiatives, such as the annual bailiff's seminar, training courses, examinations, and local training workshops.

As well as looking to improve our internal co-ordination of enforcement, it is just as important that we look beyond the boundaries of our own sector and identify partners where common interests can allow us to work in a more intelligent manner to protect fish and their habitats. To this end, ASFB continues to build on our good relationship with other wildlife crime partners, principally the National Wildlife Crime Unit (NWCUC) and their network of Wildlife Crime Officers. Poaching of salmon and other fish is now formally classified as a wildlife crime, and NWCUC have raised awareness of this aspect of wildlife crime on a number of occasions, including dedicated 'Operation Salmo' initiatives in recent years to highlight poaching issues and focus resources on local problem areas.



Pearl mussel.

NWCUC and ASFB have many common aims in relation to protection of Scotland's wildlife, as the protection of one often benefits the other. A good example is the freshwater pearl mussel and the Atlantic salmon, species which enjoy a symbiotic relationship, with pearl mussel larvae attaching themselves to the gills of migrating salmon and sea trout to ensure their distribution in river systems. Recognising this, NWCUC invited ASFB to consider the joint signing of a formal Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to help ensure that vigilance is heightened in those rivers where pearl mussels are present and protected. The signing of the MoU signifies formal co-operation between the ASFB and those Boards where pearl mussels are present, and will provide a framework within which intelligence can be reported to NWCUC, at times when bailiffs are already on patrol.

In the words of Charles Everitt, the NWCUC's Scottish Investigative Support Officer: *'The NWCUC recognises the vital role that the ASFB and affiliated bailiffs can play in protecting the endangered freshwater pearl mussel in Scotland's rivers. The mussels are protected by law and any intentional or reckless disturbance is an offence whilst also having a devastating impact on local populations. Hence we are looking to work in partnership with ASFB to highlight incidents of potential disturbance to ultimately afford the ailing population of pearl mussels every chance to flourish.'*



Brian Davidson and Charles Everitt sign the pearl mussel MoU.



Casting an eye to the future - what more could my beat do for me?

DAVID SMART - Partner, Strutt & Parker LLP

Stand back, take stock and cast an eye to the future. We are all very busy these days, but this is something that all owners of salmon fishing beats should do every so often. Two questions that spring to mind are: is the beat performing to its potential and is it offering the quality fishing experience that today's discerning angler seeks?

One of the first things that come to mind when considering maximising the potential of a stretch of river is to try and improve the 'fishability' of the beat. This invariably will involve in-river works of some sort. All too often, as soon as you mention the Water Environment (Controlled Activities) Regulations 2011, administered by SEPA, which regulate in-river works and the protection of the riverine environment, it results in a big sigh and a shake of the head and then the question: 'is it really worth the hassle?' In my view, yes it is.

It is too easy to get bogged down in the bureaucracy and legislative hoops that need to be jumped through in order to satisfy The Powers that Be that any fishery improvement work is not detrimental to natural riverine processes and flora and fauna. However, even if it is just river bank maintenance work which is required to prevent creeping erosion ('a stitch in time' and all that) or if it's pool improvement work which will improve fish lies and the fishability of the beat, then it is certainly worth the hassle.

It has been proven time and time again that the key to dealing with the CAR legislation is to engage with the various regulatory bodies or stakeholders at an early stage and then work with them as partners in the project. Before fully designing a project and making an application to SEPA for a CAR licence or registration, I think it is imperative to get the decision-makers in the application process on site and to engage with them to explain exactly what the project is, why it is required and its socio-economic, as well as environmental, impacts. They are then fully appraised and it ensures an informed decision-making process. The whys and wherefores are frequently only apparent when in situ. My advice is don't be scared: tackle the legislation head on and most of the time it is not as bad as you might think.

It has been proven time and time again that the key to dealing with the CAR legislation is to engage with the various regulatory bodies or stakeholders at an early stage and then work with them as partners in the project.

The second issue when reviewing your beat is adding value. The popularity of salmon fishing is still on the increase and it is now more accessible to a wider spread of the population, due to the ease of online booking. There are more overseas anglers than there used to be and many are looking for a quality fishing experience with modern facilities, while also still enjoying the traditional charm and services of a ghillie. Some DSFBs are on to this and are now looking at the service provided by proprietors in their District and are, in many cases, trying to help by offering advice to proprietors as to what anglers are now looking for when booking a salmon fishing experience in Scotland. I have worked with Ken Reid of the Dee DSFB to review service provision on some beats and, as a result, I have been involved in the two most recent new-build fishing hut constructions on the river.

Both huts now provide wonderfully warm, modern, safe and enjoyable places to relax while enjoying the fishing experience, as well as welcome and cosy refuges from some of the more inclement weather that we all have to endure these days. There is, of course, a balance to be struck, as a fishing hut that is too comfortable, warm and cosy might mean that some anglers prolong their lunch and aren't out on the river making use of the improved fishing pools that have also been provided!

My message is that, in these straitened times when people are more careful about how they spend their money, people are coming to expect higher quality services and products when on holiday and a salmon river is no different to other destinations, with anglers willing to pay slightly more for what they know will be a quality holiday experience.



A state-of-the-art fishing hut, like this one on the Moriston, can add value to your fishing.
Image: Andrew Graham-Stewart.



Hydro-electricity – what hope for the salmon?

ROBERT SCOTT-DEMPSTER - Gillespie Macandrew

My previous article in this publication focused on the passage of rafters and canoeists down rivers. On this occasion I thought we should return to a rather more important topic – namely the passage of fish back up them!

It will not have escaped the notice of most readers that a plethora of hydro schemes have been springing up all over Scotland. This is particularly so in the Highlands, where high rainfall and steep gradients provide the ideal environment for generating electricity through hydro power. For those not familiar with 'run-of-river' schemes the concept is very simple:

You build a weir across a burn, from which a suitable flow of water is diverted into an off-take pipe. This pipe channels the water by the most direct route to a point downhill (and further downstream) so as to maximise its velocity. The height drop is known as 'head'. It is then directed through an electricity generating turbine before being returned to the burn by means of another pipe or channel known as a 'tail race'.

Disruption or delay to fish migration can have significant adverse impacts on the distribution and/or abundance of fish populations. Run-of-river hydropower schemes can pose significant risks to fish migration and the impacts can extend far beyond the site of the hydropower scheme.

This presents three potential issues for migratory fish. Firstly, they have to pass (and not enter or be diverted by) the tail race. Secondly, the natural flow of water between the off-take pipe and the tail race will be reduced as a result of the water which has been siphoned off. Thirdly, and most significantly, the weir presents a barrier to upstream migration.

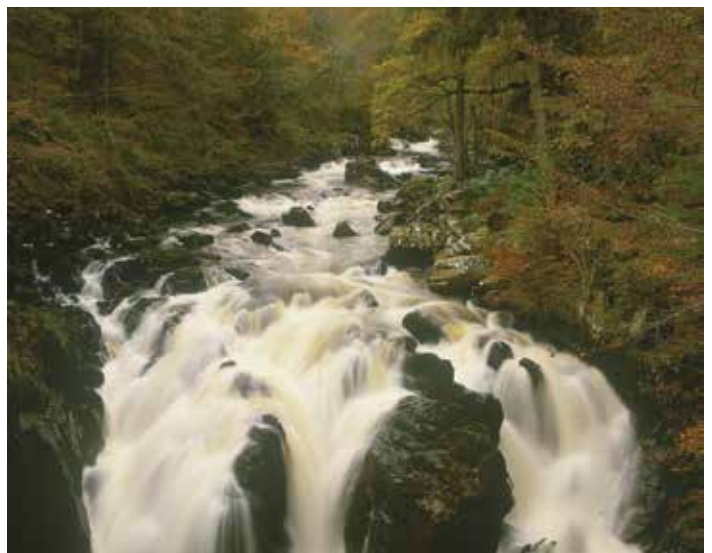
Enter the Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA). To develop a hydropower scheme you need a water use licence from SEPA. Such a licence will only be forthcoming if SEPA are satisfied that the scheme does not have an 'unduly adverse impact on the water environment' – which includes fish.

There is nothing new in legislation which seeks to preserve the passage of migratory fish upstream. However, it is encouraging that, in light of this potential new threat, the following statements are forthcoming from SEPA when making their assessment as to whether to grant a licence:

'Disruption or delay to fish migration can have significant adverse impacts on the distribution and/or abundance of fish populations. Run-of-river hydropower schemes can pose significant risks to fish migration and the



Image: Andrew Graham-Stewart.



A natural barrier to fish migration.

impacts can extend far beyond the site of the hydropower scheme. Unless such risks can be avoided, authorisation will generally be refused.'

'Developers are advised to consider:

- sites which are upstream of natural barriers to fish migration*
- sites where fish habitat upstream is only very poor quality or very limited*
- utilising existing weirs that are currently acting as a significant barrier to fish migration on the basis that fish passage is improved.*

'We will only consider applications to develop other sites where the developer provides evidence that the fish passage provisions proposed (including the accompanying management regime) will be effective in safeguarding fish migration.'

Where necessary SEPA will demand highly engineered fish passes, screens and minimum flow levels, and is encouraging to see that, in this aspect at least, the interests of the fish come first.



2012: a fair to middling season

ANDREW WALLACE - Chairman, RAFTS

The 2012 salmon season was very much of two halves. A dry spring which, in parts of the UK, led to water shortages and some really very serious concerns about the potential environmental impacts of a long hot summer, was then followed by one of the wettest and most miserable summers on record.

Curiously, parts of northwest Scotland missed out on this until much later in the year and had challenging low water conditions throughout much of the summer.

Any analysis of spring stocks was hampered to an extent by these early season conditions, but spring runs were not particularly exciting and, although the grilse runs came in at a much more traditional time in mid-July, they were, as with the year previously, not particularly strong or lengthy. This seems to have been a pattern around the North Atlantic, with Iceland having one of its poorest grilse runs in living memory. The autumn runs throughout Scotland were generally mediocre, with no big bonanzas on some of the traditional back-end rivers.

That said, the high water favoured anglers – at least on the small- to medium-sized rivers, where catches tended to be good. However, this was more a reflection of good angling conditions than strong runs of fish. The bigger rivers tended to fare less well and catches on all the Big Four rivers were lower than in 2011. One marked feature throughout Scotland was the presence of encouraging numbers of well-conditioned multi-sea-winter (MSW) salmon, with historically high numbers of fish in the 20lb and 30lb bracket. On many systems MSW salmon outnumbered or challenged grilse numbers in the catch, which is something we have been seeing more of in recent years.

Fish counter results around the country tended to concur with the analysis above, indicating a mediocre year. Other bellwethers of stock, such as the fish counter at Riding Mill on the Northumberland Tyne, told a similar story, with the lowest fish count (salmon and sea trout) since 2002. In

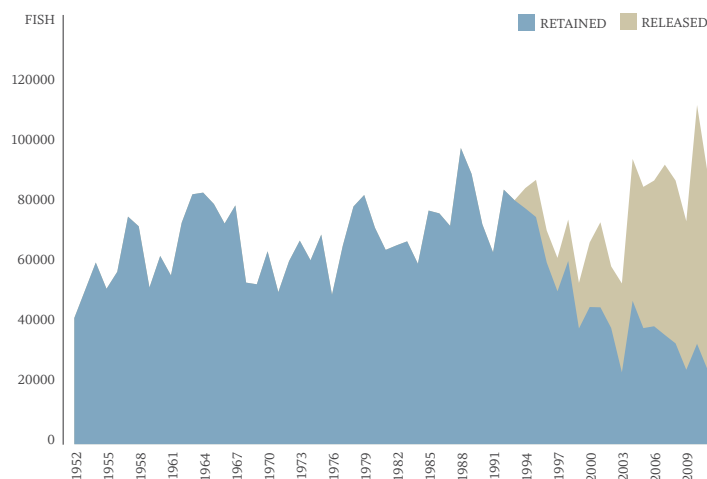
the last 5 years the Riding Mill count has been: 2009 – 22,731; 2010 – 45,602; 2011 – 35,975; and 2012 – 21,939. If ever proof was needed of the unpredictability of migratory salmonid runs, this counter reveals how difficult it is to make any predictions based on what has happened in previous years. These results show how the bumper runs of 2010 – when Scotland had its all-time highest rod catch – were preceded by one of the lowest counts on record. These sorts of results lead us inevitably to the conclusion that, when conditions at sea allow, migratory fish runs can respond swiftly and spectacularly, but not necessarily consistently. They also show that any attempts at prediction are not for the faint-hearted.

The sea trout situation remains patchy, with some stronger runs reported in some areas, such as the Forth, but this species is still in a far from satisfactory state – although water conditions throughout the summer generally did not favour sea trout angling. The situation in the northwest, where sea-trout are exposed to the additional problem of salmon aquaculture, showed no change. Catch and release rates continue to improve for sea trout, but are still too low. The case for catch and release of a long living, multi-spawning fish hardly needs emphasising.

When conditions at sea allow, migratory fish runs can respond swiftly and spectacularly, but not necessarily consistently. They also show that any attempts at prediction are not for the faint-hearted.

One other encouraging piece of information was the salmon catch and release rates for 2011 (the official figures for which were published in the autumn of 2012). These showed that, for the first time, release rates for spring fish tipped the 90% mark. This will have naysayers of the policy grinding their teeth, but it is clear evidence that catch and release on threatened stocks of fish is now an overwhelmingly accepted precautionary conservation policy that allows the fishery, and therefore the income, to continue with minimum impact on stock – a satisfactory conclusion to a long-term hearts and minds campaign and the inevitable power of logic.

Interestingly, high profile critics in the salmon farming industry, of all people, are challenging catch and release, claiming that angling for these stocks should cease. This reveals a startling lack of understanding of both the economics and the biology of salmon fisheries. Without angling there is no money to invest in conservation and management. Without management there will be fewer fish. With catch and release you can preserve the income and the investment, and all the evidence suggests this can be done with almost no damage to the stock. Until these critics come up with an alternative solution to how we fund fisheries management they are best ignored.



NATIONAL SALMON/GRILSE ROD CATCH STATISTICS SCOTLAND, 1952-2011
SOURCE - MARINE SCOTLAND SCIENCE

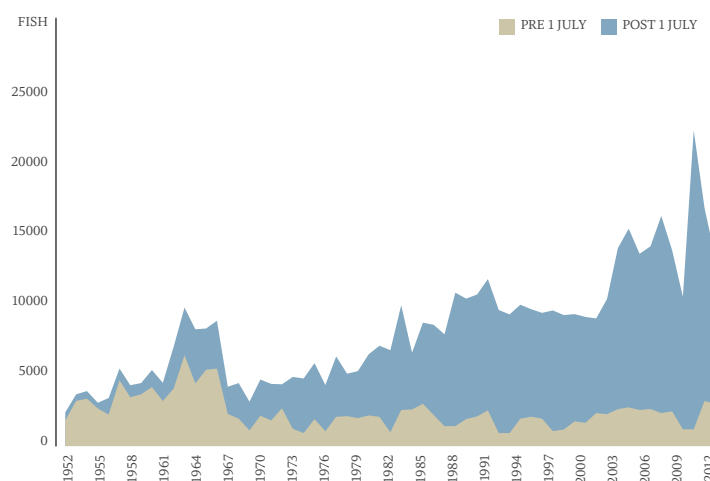
Tweed

Nick Yonge - Director, Tweed Commission and Foundation

The catch was lower than the previous two years, falling by a similar proportion to other east coast rivers. The year was distinguished by unusual weather patterns, with an extraordinarily mild and dry March followed by regular and unpredictable rainfall throughout the fishing season. Indeed, the Tweed received 122% of its average rainfall (1971-2000) from March – December, which resulted in many days of lost fishing opportunity for both the rods and in-river nets. The Tweed Spring Salmon Conservation Measures resulted in 97% of spring fish being returned by rods; the in-river nets also returned all 189 springers that they caught, for which compensation was paid by the RTC. Payments were also made to fisheries on the tributaries and Upper Tweed, which had agreed by contract to additional conservation measures – including restrictions on fishing methods and provision of information.

	2012 total	pre Jul 1	post July 1	total nets	10yr average	Release rate	Largest fish
Salmon	14,296	2,853	10,343	1,182	15,073	97% / 49%*	43lb
Sea Trout	2,139	n/a	n/a	1,162	1,102	44%	n/a

Season dates: 1 Feb – 30 Nov. * Spring / summer.



TWEED ROD CATCH STATISTICS 1947-2012

SOURCE - RIVER TWEED COMMISSIONERS

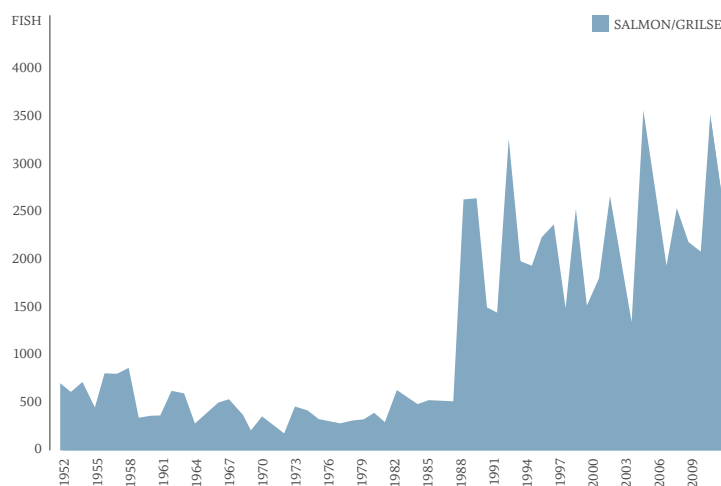
Forth

Patrick Fotheringham - Director, Forth DSFB

The spring run was patchy and relatively weak compared to recent seasons, while sea trout appeared to be quite numerous at times. However, they were not evenly distributed across the District and the River Allan, in particular, was poor. Summer grilse arrived in July, which was earlier than in recent seasons, but were not there in huge numbers. Given that it was once more a wet summer, it is hard to determine whether catches reflected the strength of the run or the favourable fishing conditions and the autumn run was thought to be relatively weak. A large-scale invasive species project has been launched and detailed habitat surveys carried out in key areas of the District. A considerable amount of work is going into fish passage issues, which are still a major concern across almost all of the District's rivers.

	2011 total	total nets	10yr average	Release rate	Largest fish
Salmon	2,612	59	2,559	85% / 65%*	30lb
Sea Trout	1,181	101	892	72%	7lb

Season dates: 1 Feb – 31 Oct. * Spring / summer.



FORTH DISTRICT ROD CATCH STATISTICS 1952-2011

SOURCE - FORTH DSFB

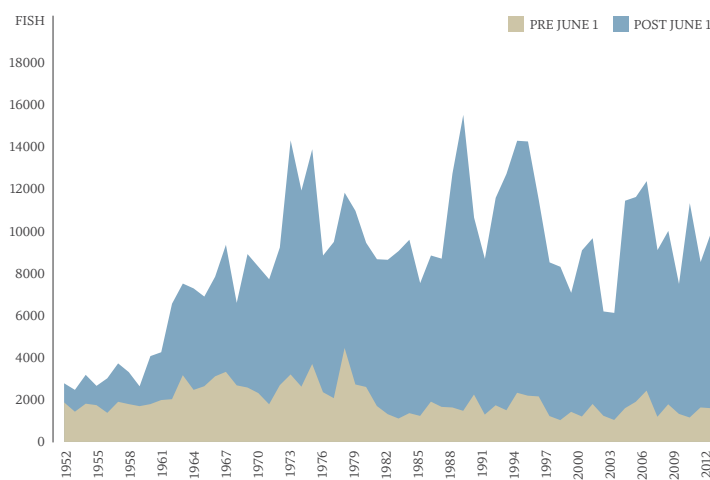
Tay

Dr David Summers - Director, Tay DSFB and Tay Foundation

Numbers of 2SW salmon appeared low initially but picked up later in the spring, while numbers of larger 3SW fish were the highest for some years in the early spring. Thus the average reported weight of salmon to the end of April, at 12.2lb, was the highest since 1987. The 2SW salmon run continued to be relatively strong and the June catch was, in fact, the highest ever reported. The July catch was also the best since 2001, due to continued runs of 2SW fish and an earlier summer grilse run. However, catches in August and September were well below average and October was slightly below, despite the inclusion of the trial season extension figures. The biggest issue for the Board was the renovation of the former Marine Scotland Science fish rearing unit at Almondbank. The TDSFB took over this facility in 2011 and have doubled the capacity to rear reconditioned spring salmon kelts, enabling it to produce up to 1.5 million eggs from the most valuable stocks in the district. 2012 also saw the second year of the trial season extension, where beats between Perth and Dalguise fished from 16 October – 31 October on a catch and release basis.

	2012 total	pre Jun 1	post Jun 1	total nets	10yr average	Release rate	Largest fish
Salmon	10,080	1,594	8,486	n/a	9,872	91%/73%*	37lb
Sea Trout	1,288	n/a	n/a	n/a	1,304	84%	n/a

Season dates: 15 Jan – 15 Oct. * Spring / summer.



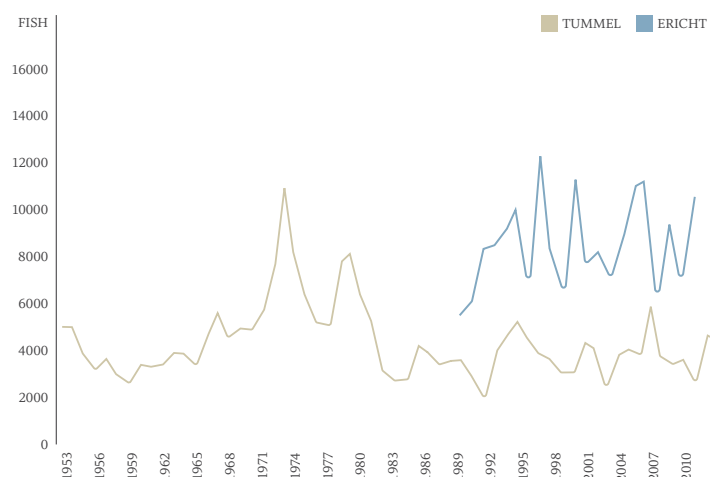
TAY ROD CATCH STATISTICS 1952-2012

SOURCE - TAY DSFB

Tay catchment counters

Dr David Summers - Director, Tay DSFB and Foundation

Though not as good as 2011, 2012 again saw one of the best total counts on the Tummel, at Pitlochry Dam, since the late 1970s. The count was relatively good to the end of May and again to the end of June, mirroring late spring catches. The overall summer count was also reasonable, but it is not known yet whether this was caused by continuing numbers of salmon rather than a good grilse run.



RIVER TUMMEL (PITLOCHRY) UPSTREAM COUNT 1953-2012

SOURCE - SCOTTISH & SOUTHERN ENERGY

RIVER ERICHT UPSTREAM COUNT 1990-2010

SOURCE - TAY DSFB

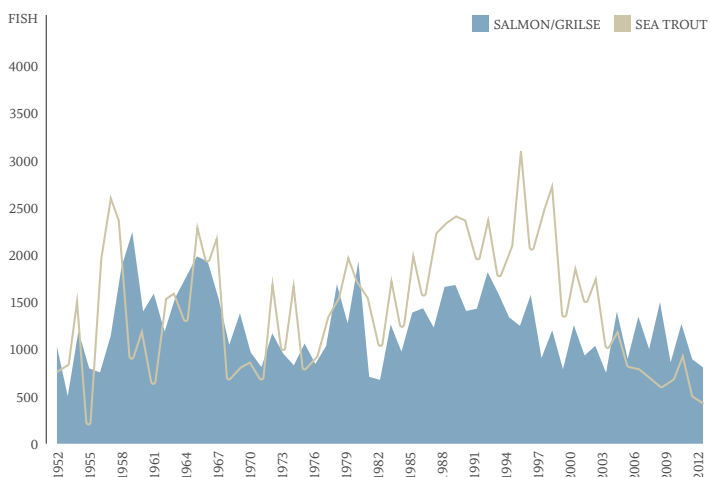
South Esk

Dr Marshall Halliday - Esk Fishery Board and Trust

Conservation measures to protect spring salmon continue, with a voluntary agreement in 2012. All healthy sea trout were released from the nets to try and improve sea trout stocks, while proprietors and anglers have pursued a voluntary catch-and-release policy, focusing especially on spring salmon, although a high percentage of salmon and sea trout were released throughout the season. The Trust has almost completed the restoration of the Rottal Burn and it was especially gratifying to have over 30 salmon and grilse, as well as a number of sea trout, spawning in the new channel this back-end. The Scottish Government's project to track spring salmon continues in 2013 with a plan to try and radio-tag 200 salmon of South Esk origin by trapping in-river. The LIFE project Pearls in Peril has just started and it is hoped that this will encourage farmers to participate in the SRDP scheme and address some of the upper catchment restoration issues.

	2012 total	total nets	10yr average	Release rate	Largest fish
Salmon	810	n/a	1,117	100% / 76%*	n/a
Sea Trout	481	n/a	813	77%	n/a

Season dates: 16 Feb – 31 Oct. * Spring / summer.



SOUTH ESK ROD CATCH STATISTICS 1952-2012

SOURCE - ESK DSFB

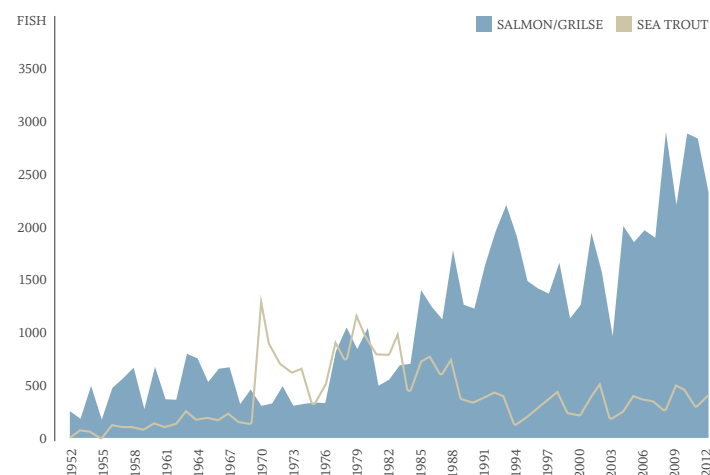
North Esk

Dr Marshall Halliday - Esk Fishery Board and Trust

The Trust has continued to control Japanese Knotweed and Giant Hogweed in the North Esk and Bervie catchments and the Bervie continues to progress with improved access to fishing pools. The Trust has also extended the Scottish Mink Initiative in these catchments and has had a good response from volunteers. North Esk rod catches have remained ahead of the 10-year average, with some beats doing well. There was a noticeable reduction in all runs, however, although sea trout numbers were close to the average.

	2012 total	total nets	10yr average	Release rate	Largest fish
Salmon	2,342	n/a	2,302	82% / 60%*	n/a
Sea Trout	386	n/a	456	77%	n/a

Season dates: 16 Feb – 31 Oct. * Spring / summer.



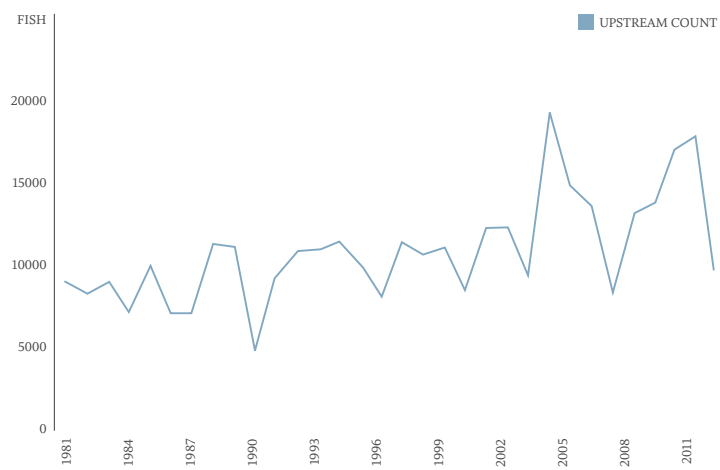
NORTH ESK ROD CATCH STATISTICS 1952-2012

SOURCE - ESK DSFB

Logie counter (North Esk)

Dr Marshall Halliday - Esk Fishery Board and Trust

The numbers of fish ascending Logie in 2012 are down on the record numbers in 2011 and closer to the levels of 2008. The reduction is attributed to low numbers of early-running salmon and a poor back-end. Between January and May only 1,671 salmon were recorded as ascending Logie compared with 6,784 in 2011. In September and October a total of 1,300 salmon ascended compared with 4,179 in 2011. This was despite optimistic statements about the marine conditions off West Greenland. Moreover, much like 2011, it was another not particularly good year for grilse.



NORTH ESK UPSTREAM COUNT 1981-2012
SOURCE - MARINE SCOTLAND SCIENCE

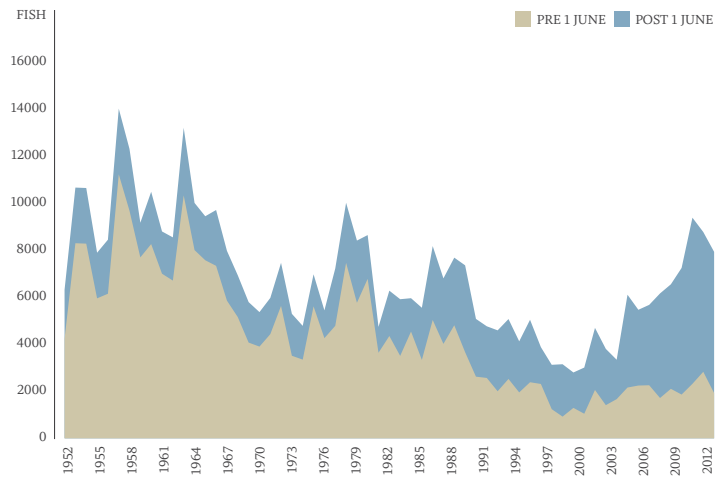
Dee

Mark Bilsby - River Dee Director

Catches of spring salmon were down on recent years, but the early season was subject to very changeable conditions – March alone experienced a drought and temperatures up to 24°C, followed by a foot of snow a week later. The summer catches improved, with the best ever July recorded, aided by a wetter than average summer, while autumn catches were slightly lower than in recent years. Overall the season did not seem to be great but, when all the catch returns were collated, the year came out as much better than average. Pearls in Peril LIFE Plus Project has been initiated and will involve the creation of 1,100 acres of new riparian woodland, 45 km of buffer strip, improved riverbank morphology at ten locations across the catchment and involve 40 schools with the river education programme. Biosecurity measures were improved on the river last year and now all anglers are expected to disinfect landing nets and waders prior to, or on arrival at, the river. A full review of the season can be found at www.riverdee.org.uk

	2012 total	pre Jun 1	post Jun 1	total nets	10yr average	Release rate	Largest fish
Salmon	10,411	1,925	5,929	n/a	6,598	99%	36lb
Sea Trout	1,352	n/a	n/a	n/a	1,817	98%	7lb

Season dates: 1 Feb – 30 Sep



DEE ROD CATCH STATISTICS 1952-2012
SOURCE - DEE DSFB

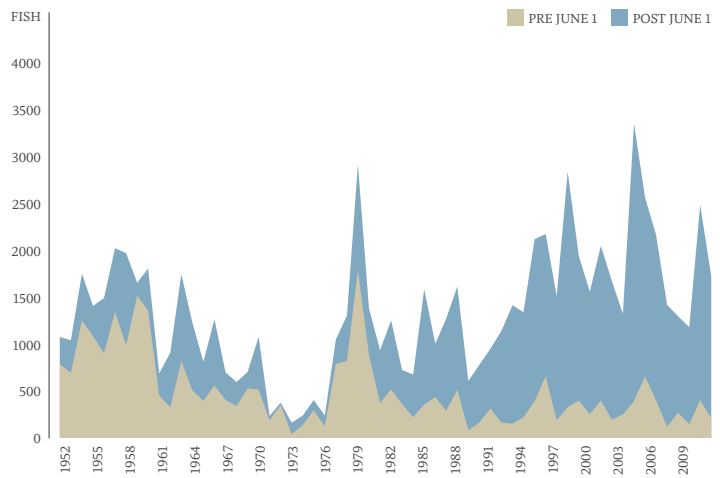
Don

Jon Davison - Chairman, Don DSFB

2012's totals are not available at the time of writing but the season started slowly, with low water levels during February and March. However, April's snowmelt provided good water and several fish of around 25lb were landed. May saw good catches, with fish notably bigger than last year, while June and July saw good conditioned grilse in reasonable numbers but sea trout were scarce. August and September produced some good sport, with fish reported to be in excellent condition. October was not as good as usual, although sea-liced fish were landed in the last two days of the season. The grisly weather throughout the season was the main contributing factor in the catch being lower than last year, while those caught were generally in better condition. The Board has made the decision to close its hatchery this year, as our Fishery Management Plan data has identified areas where we can improve the habitat so that salmon can do it themselves – in 2012 we started the process by installing a fish pass on the Ernan tributary, which opened up 6km of spawning ground. We are striving to reach 90% catch & release levels for 2013.

	2011 total	pre Jun 1	post Jun 1	total nets	10yr average	Release rate	Largest fish
Salmon	1,715	195	1,520	n/a	1,909	93%/77%*	32.5lb
Sea Trout	286	n/a	n/a	n/a	486	87%	7lb

Season dates: 11 Feb – 31 Oct. * Spring / summer.



DON ROD CATCH STATISTICS 1952-2011
SOURCE - DON DSFB

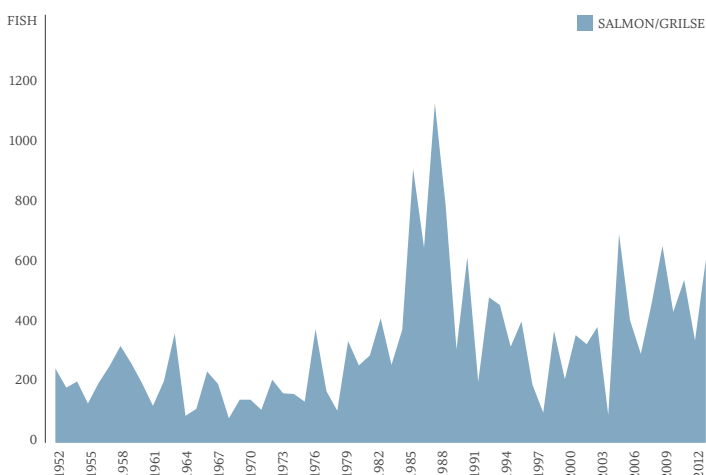
Ythan

Mark Andrew - *Ythan DSFB*

The analysis of catch returns revealed a better year than we had expected, with the number of rod-caught salmon only slightly down on the 5-year average. The number of sea trout caught has also reduced but the number of finnock has increased, particularly in the last month of the season. Although the river level was consistently higher than average, there were quite a number of days when river levels made it unfishable. The Conservation Code remains in place and has been adhered to in the main by anglers, while the Trust has almost completed the river habitat survey of the entire system with the assistance of the biologist of a neighbouring Board. There are a number of obstructions that will be revisited in 2013 to enable fish to ascend to spawn. A full analysis of the survey results is currently taking place.

	2012 total	total nets	5yr average	Release rate	Largest fish
Salmon	603	184	467	62%	n/a
Sea Trout	2,121	45	1,851	75%	n/a

Season dates: 11 Feb – 31 Oct



YTHAN ROD CATCH STATISTICS 1952-2012

SOURCE - YTHAN DSFB

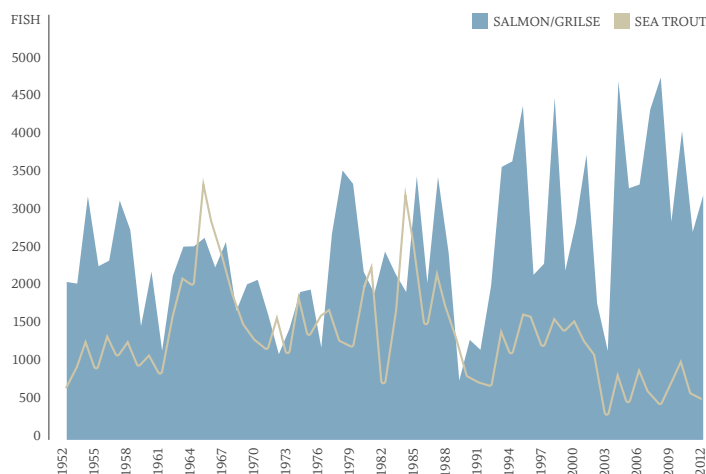
Deveron

Richie Miller - *Senior Biologist, Deveron, Bogie & Isla Rivers Charitable Trust*

The season's total of 3,182 salmon and grilse was an increase on the previous year's total (2,755) and above the rod-catch average. Spring catches increased by 66%, to 255 salmon by end of May, with 188 (74%) returned to the river, aided by the Chivas Regal spring salmon conservation scheme. Summer catches of salmon increased, with consistent rainfall and more suitable angling conditions within the middle and upper beats. During September and October there was not the same visible presence of salmon as in previous years but catches remained steady. A notable salmon of 29lb was successfully caught and returned during October, which ultimately secured the Morison Trophy. The sea trout catch decreased from 592 to a total of 521, ranging from 3 to 7lb, of which 73% were returned. The Board asks that this year all salmon are returned from 11th Feb to 31st May, in order to help conserve spring stocks and also that all sea trout are returned throughout the season. The guidance on sea trout will be in place for a minimum of three years or until stocks recover to acceptable levels.

	2012 total	pre Jun 1	post Jun 1	total nets	10yr average	Release rate	Largest fish
Salmon	3,182	255	2,927	n/a	3,428	61%	29lb
Sea Trout	521	n/a	n/a	n/a	696	73%	7lb

Season dates: 11 Feb – 31 Oct



DEVERON ROD CATCH STATISTICS 1952-2012

SOURCE - DEVERON DSFB

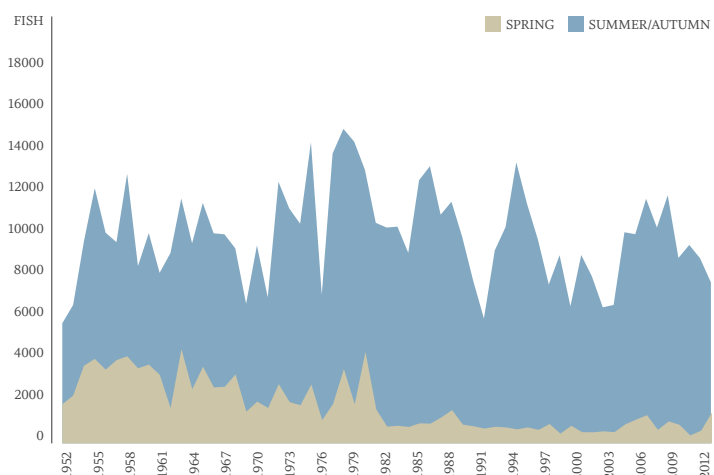
Spey

Roger Knight - *Director, Spey Board and Trust*

441 fish were caught before the end of April, a further 852 in May and 1,312 in June. Catches rose to 2,175 in July, which was the best month of the season. As for the two previous years, the grilse failed to arrive in significant numbers and catches fell back to 1,631 in August and 1,079 in September. Although the lower river produced more fish than usual, 2012 will not be remembered by many as a good season. The Board remains concerned by the levels of water abstraction, particularly in the upper catchment, where Rio Tinto Alcan is licensed to divert water from Spey Dam to Fort William. The Board believes that the compensation flows released at Spey Dam are insufficient to allow adult salmon to migrate up to and above the dam to spawn, or to allow smolts to migrate downriver to sea. Meanwhile Scottish & Southern Energy, which already diverts water from the Rivers Tromie and Truim into the Tay catchment, is proposing to further reduce the flow down these two important spring salmon spawning tributaries of the Spey. The Board believes that taking more water from one SAC catchment (the Spey) in which salmonids are present, in order to re-water a part of a different SAC (the Tay) where fish are absent today, is incongruous.

	2012 total	pre Jun 1	post Jun 1	total nets	10yr average	Release rate	Largest fish
Salmon	7,490	1,293	6,197	n/a	9,258	85%	32lb
Sea Trout	1,680	n/a	n/a	n/a	2,467	73%	n/a

Season dates: 15 Jan – 15 Oct



SPEY ROD CATCH STATISTICS 1952-2012

SOURCE - SPEY DSFB

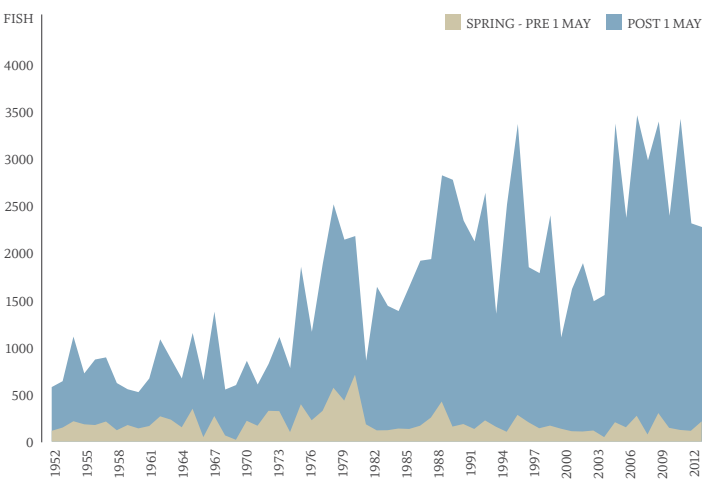
Findhorn

Alasdair Laing - Chairman, Findhorn DSFB

The season was a bit below average, with salmon numbers down, particularly in the spring, while grilse showed some improvement. Long term the spring run has dropped back from the 1980s but the 10-year average is the same today as it was 10 years ago. Given the vagaries of climate, fishing effort and fishing competence – while there is no room for complacency – these numbers are well within the sort of fluctuations one would expect. Meanwhile the control of INNS, particularly giant hogweed, is starting to take effect and monitoring arrangements have been agreed on those windfarm developments under construction. It is likely further windfarm and hydro developments will be treated in a similar way. Our full time River Director is now in place, which is already having a significant impact on environmental survey and monitoring work throughout system.

	2012 total	pre Jun 1	post Jun 1	total nets	10yr average	Release rate	Largest fish
Salmon	2,419	220	2,199	n/a	2,720	73%	37lb
Sea Trout	101	n/a	n/a	n/a	119	n/a	6lb

Season dates: 11 Feb – 30 Oct



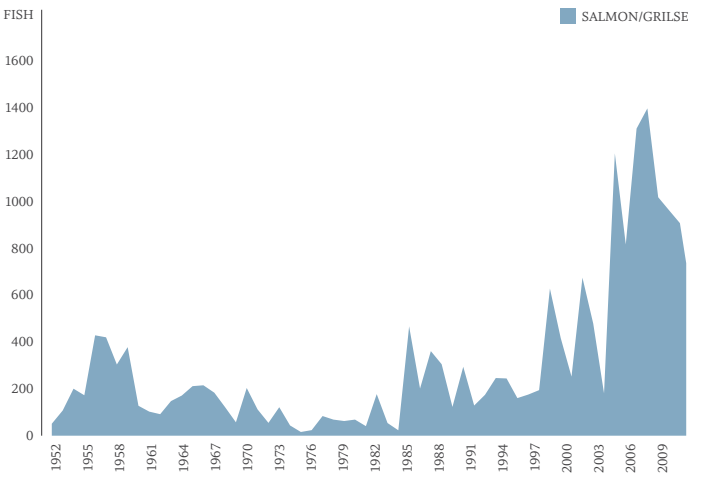
FINDHORN ROD CATCH STATISTICS 1952-2012
SOURCE - FINDHORN DSFB

Nairn

Pete Loutit – Clerk, Nairn DSFB

After a good spring start, catches became sporadic throughout the rest of the summer, with spates few and far between, despite the dreary weather. On the odd occasion when river levels rose, depleted runs of grilse and salmon steamed straight through the system, leaving fewer fish than normal in the lower reaches. Nairn Angling Association, however, reported an upturn in sea trout numbers, which is encouraging, as the river was once noted for its sea trout runs but has been disappointing in recent years. The Board now recommends that all sea trout are returned and this position is under rolling review. The river was without a bailiff until July when Mr Erin Hunter was appointed. In his short tenure, he has proved to be effective and enthusiastic in the exercise of his duties. Nairn AA continue to successfully trap crayfish in their isolated pockets on the lower river and it is encouraging to note that over the years, they have never expanded from their original locations. Eradication does, however, seem a faraway place. Electro fishing activities in the upper regions of the river revealed decent numbers of juvenile salmon which is most encouraging.

Season dates: 11 Feb – 7 Oct



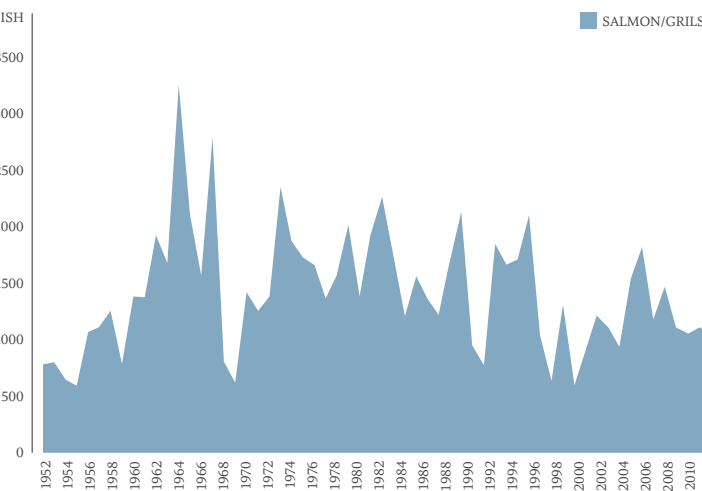
NAIRN ROD CATCH STATISTICS 1952-2011
SOURCE - NAIRN DSFB

Ness

Graham Mackenzie - Ness DSFB

Full catch statistics are not yet available, but the returns received so far confirm that it was not a very good year. Very few salmon were caught early in the season although the Moriston, as always, managed to produce acceptable numbers. A 100% C & R agreement was in place throughout the whole system up to 31st May. Anglers' expectations rose significantly in July, when a very good grilse run materialised, reminiscent of the old days, but throughout August and September salmon arrived in smaller numbers. A rather encouraging feature was the number of good sized fish. Catch statistics for the River Ness itself, which are complete, show that 433 fish were caught (56% grilse) compared to 560 (44% grilse) in 2011 – a fall of 23%. The release rate for the whole of the river was 67% (64% in 2011). The net catch currently stands at 499, with some returns still to come in. This compares with 58 for 2011. While it was clearly a much better year for the nets the figures are not truly comparable as the most productive netting stations had been bought off by the Board for the five years preceding 2012, but operated again in 2012. Adding to this is the fact that the very high river level and east winds made the 2011 season difficult for the netsmen.

Season dates: 1 Feb – 15 Oct



NESS ROD CATCH STATISTICS 1952-2011
SOURCE - NESS DSFB

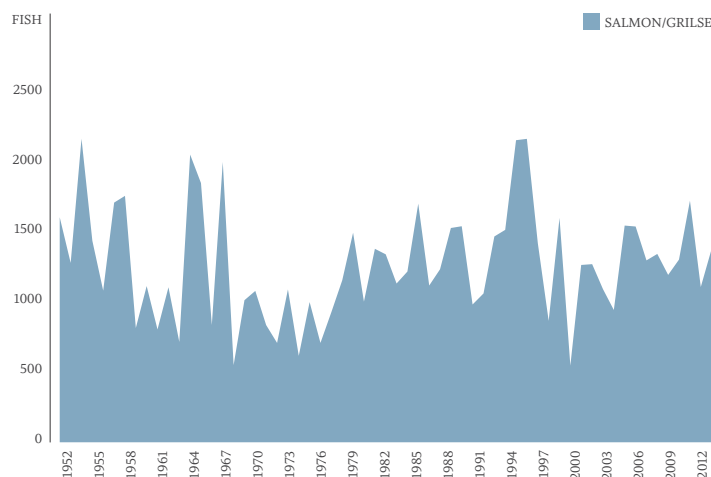
Beauly

Alastair Campbell - Clerk, Beauly DSFB

At the time of writing not all returns have been received from proprietors, but the total catch for 2012 is looking as if it will be very slightly ahead of the 10-year average. The season was characterised by a strong but short grilse run around late July which then fell away quickly. The spring suffered from unusually low water, which was caused by the prolonged easterly airflow. Very little rainfall fell on the western hills at the top of the catchment and the release of water through the dams barely rose above compensation for much of the spring. Lower numbers of fish were seen later in the season. The upper beats started very slowly but picked up good numbers of fish in late summer and early autumn. The Ness & Beauly Fisheries Trust has undertaken non-native plant surveys/man-made barrier identification and an application has been submitted to SEPA for restoration funds to remove these barriers.

	2012 total	total nets	10yr average	Release rate	Largest fish
Salmon	1,370*	0	1,300	75%*	n/a
Sea Trout	351	0	258	90%	n/a

Season dates: 11 Feb – 15 Oct *Provisional



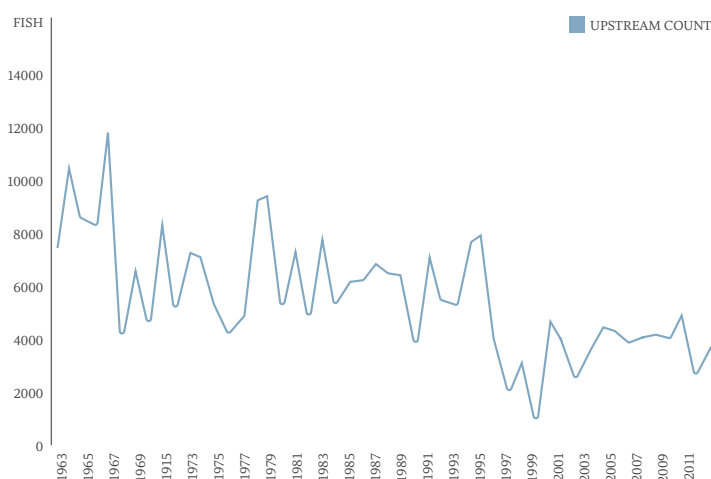
BEAULY ROD CATCH STATISTICS 1952-2012

SOURCE - BEAULY DSFB

Beauly counter

Alastair Campbell - Clerk, Beauly DSFB

Figures received from Scottish and Southern Energy (SSE) for Aigas Dam up to 25 November 2012 indicate a total run through the dam to the upper beats of approximately 3,750 fish. This is a big improvement on the low figures for 2011 (2,800), but remains below the 5-year average of around 4,000.



BEAULY (AIGAS) UPSTREAM COUNT 1963-2012

SOURCE - SCOTTISH AND SOUTHERN ENERGY

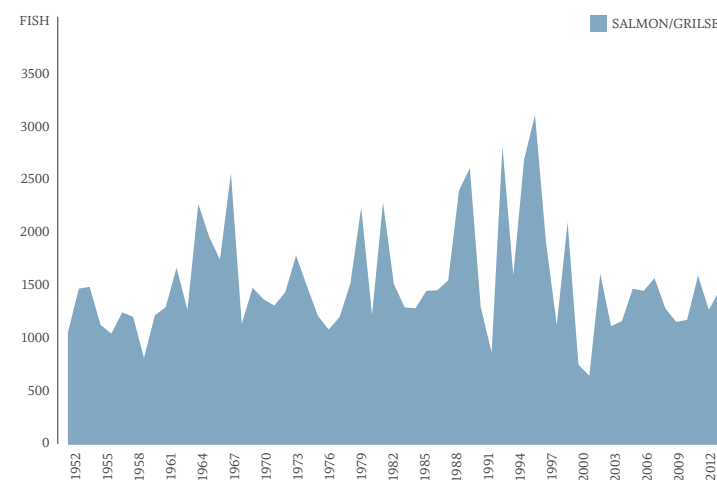
Conon

Simon McKelvey - Cromarty DSFB

The 2012 season saw a reasonable, but smaller, spring run than in 2011 but a much stronger grilse run. Large summer salmon were also caught, although there were many small grilse in poor condition. The catch of salmon and grilse at the fish trap on the Blackwater confirmed this pattern and, although more fish were caught than in 2011, they produced fewer eggs. The number of salmon and grilse counted through the hydro dams was higher than in 2011 and higher than the 5-year average. Electro-fishing surveys showed salmon are colonising and spawning naturally at more sites in the Upper Meig following 2010's restoration of the fish pass at Corrie Feol. Work with SSE to restore salmon access to the Upper Orrin above Orrin Dam is progressing and the Orrin enjoyed its strongest run of salmon and grilse for many years. Habitat work by the Cromarty Firth Fishery Trust, with funding from the SEPA, will complete the removal of rhododendron from the banks of the Orrin by the end of 2013. This has opened up valuable side channels and nursery habitat. To support the Board's conservation policy a trial carcass tagging scheme was introduced for rod caught salmon in 2012 and worked well. The release rate of over 80% is a significant improvement.

	2012 total	total nets	10yr average	Release rate	Largest fish
Salmon	1,466*	n/a	1325	80%	29lb
Sea Trout	521	n/a	n/a	n/a	7lb

Season dates: 10 Feb – 30 Sep *Provisional



CONON ROD CATCH STATISTICS 1952-2012

SOURCE - CONON DSFB

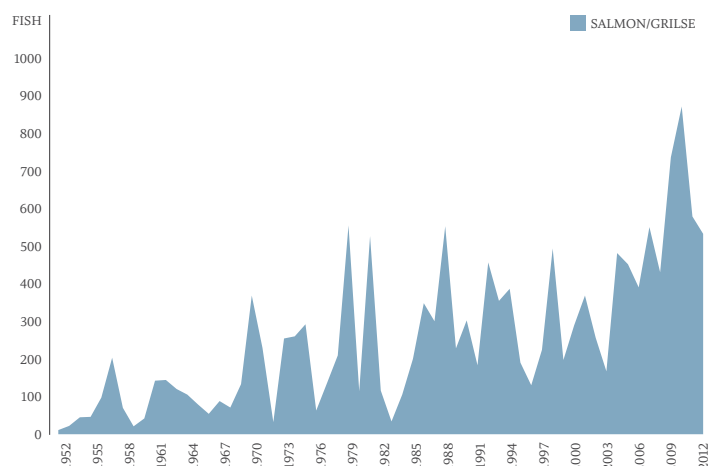
Alness

Roger Dowsett - *Novar Fishings Manager*

After the excellent spring run in the previous year, catches in 2012 were disappointing at only about half of those seen in 2011; low water throughout May and June being a major influence. The timing of the first grilse runs has become completely unpredictable, and although grilse arrived in good numbers in July, there were few visiting anglers to greet them. The main grilse runs in August and September were difficult to assess, as the fishing was generally dour, possibly affected by the continually unsettled and often thundery weather. Catches improved significantly in October, though mainly due to better conditions rather than fresh runs of fish. There was no repeat of the encouraging MSW salmon catches seen in 2011. There is still no salmonid access to the Allt na Seasaigh burn, due to a poorly designed road culvert. To date, there has been no progress by HRC Highways Dept in resolving this issue. A small broodstock programme is in operation as mitigation, and the burn will be stocked with fry this spring.

	2012 total	pre Jun 1	post Jun 1	total nets	10yr average	Release rate	Largest fish
Salmon	532	26	516	n/a	672	96%/62%	16.5lb
Sea Trout	83	n/a	n/a	n/a	77	90%	3.5lb

Season dates: 10 Feb – 31 Oct



ALLNESS ROD CATCH STATISTICS 1952-2012

SOURCE - CROMARTY DSFB

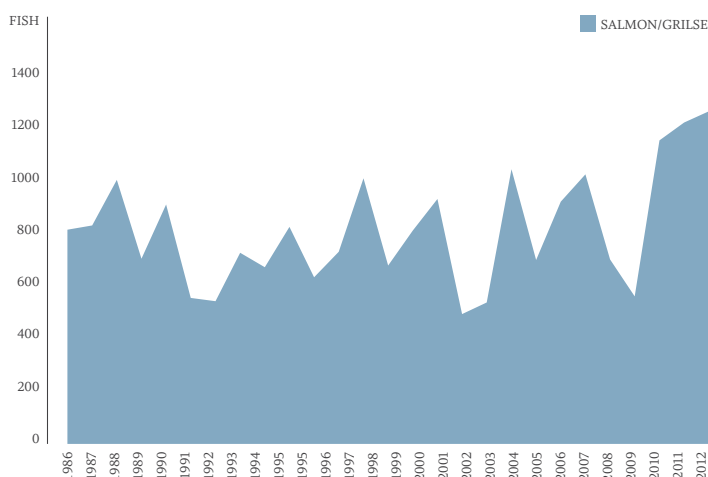
Carron (East Coast)

Nicky Griffiths - *Kyle of Sutherland DSFB*

2012 was a record season for the Carron, with 7 of the 9 estates achieving numbers well over their 9-year average and 2 estates realising all-time records. With the exception of March, conditions were almost perfect throughout and warm water meant that fish were over the Morail Falls by early April. Although there were good steady runs of fish throughout the season it was noted, over the whole length of the river, that there was no apparent build-up of stock, probably due to good water conditions and fluctuating heights. There were not as many large MSW fish as the last few years but overall both salmon and grilse were healthy and well-nourished, with few signs of any disease. It is hoped that restorative work on the Braelangwell Burn might be carried out to re-establish sea trout redds and prevent further erosion of the river banks. In years to come the Carron will hopefully also benefit from easement of the Glen Beag dam, as well as being the main beneficiary of the results of the Kyle Trust planting scheme, which was carried out in 2010.

	2012 total	pre Jun 1	post Jun 1	total nets	9yr average	Release rate	Largest fish
Salmon	1253	271	982	n/a	969	94%/87%*	27lb
Sea Trout	83	n/a	n/a	n/a	19	84%	6lb

Season dates: 11 Jan – 30 Sep. * Spring / summer.



CARRON ROD CATCH STATISTICS 1986-2012

SOURCE - KYLE DSFB

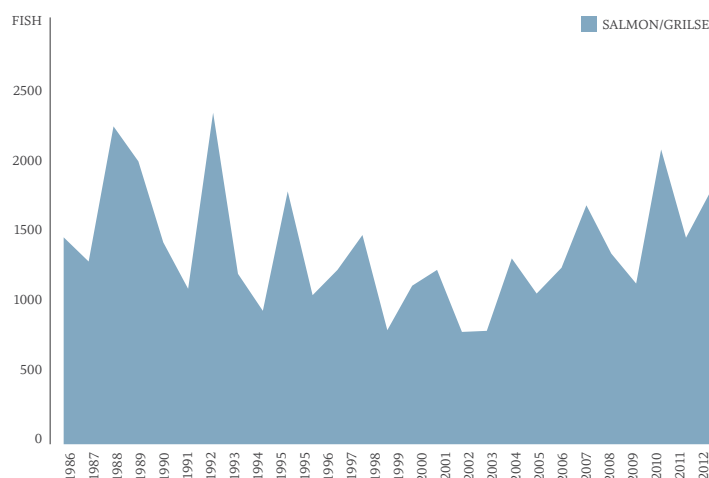
Oykel

Steven Mackenzie - *Head Ghillie & Fishery Manager*

The early spring weather experienced in 2012 was a complete contrast to the previous year. Unseasonably warm temperatures and a general lack of precipitation became the norm throughout January, February and most of March. Water temperature barriers normally hold spring fish in the lower reaches of the river system, but this year the fish were over the falls three weeks earlier than anticipated. There were definite signs of low grade infection throughout most Scottish rivers and we were no exception. One characteristic was the lack of aggressive behaviour during very favourable fishing conditions. Almost 500 fish were caught on the lower river during July, as a substantial run of grilse passed upstream. The Upper Oykel catch numbers struggled during July, due to the low water levels, but caught up at a great pace in late August and September when the rain finally arrived. The new access tracks and paths on the upper river have been a huge success, which is clearly reflected in the catches, especially around the previously less accessible areas. We are all excited about the future of Oykel Bridge Hotel, which has been bought by a group of river proprietors who plan to refurbish the hotel over the next three years. Plans include purchasing a number of new boats and outboards for the fabulous brown trout lochs in the surrounding area.

	2012 total	total nets	10yr average	Release rate	Largest fish
Salmon	1,787	n/a	n/a	90%	26lb
Sea Trout	92	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

Season dates: 11 Jan – 30 Sep



OYKEL ROD CATCH STATISTICS 1986-2012

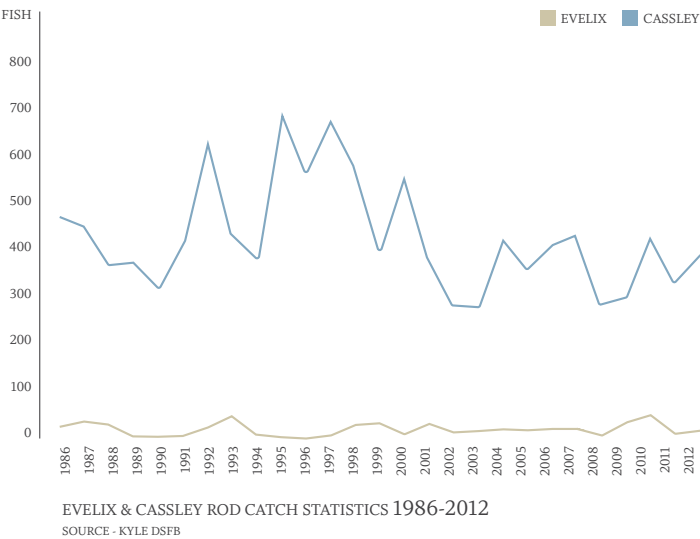
SOURCE - KYLE DSFB

Evelix & Cassley

Iain McMyn - Director, Kyle of Sutherland DSFB
& Harry MacNeil - Gillie, Upper Cassley

Despite every corner of Scotland having a wet summer the Evelix did not have a decent spate until the end of the season. The majority of fish were therefore caught late in the season as normal. The start of the summer fishing on the Cassley coincided with 11 weeks of dry weather, which held the salmon back below the Achness falls, on the lower part of the river. When the rains came, plenty of fish were soon reported on the Glenrossal water, although these appeared keen to head further upriver and were a bit dour responding to flies. As the season wore on the fishing suffered, on occasion, from too much water, before finally settling down and providing spurts of good fishing. This made for quite a fragmented season, although – overall – one that resulted in similar catches to last year.

Season dates: 11 Jan – 30 Sep



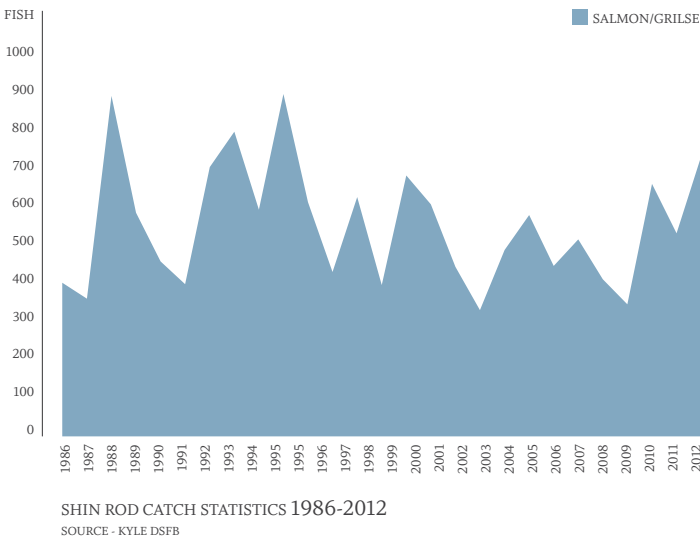
Shin

Robbie Douglas Miller - Chairman, Kyle of Sutherland DSFB

The season saw above average numbers of fish caught, although the spring run continues to appear late, with MSW fish arriving in June. Grilse numbers were better than in the last few years but are still not what they were 5 years ago, and they continue to arrive 2-3 weeks later than normal. The hydro impact creates significant issues to do with free passage of fish and smolts up and down the river, with frustration at the slow rate of action to resolve obvious pinch points. Fish farming activities on Loch Shin continue to spill non-indigenous stock into the fragile breeding grounds of our wild fish, which is completely unacceptable in the current climate and the Board is frustrated by the Scottish Government's reluctance to react positively. Looking ahead to 2013, we're moving to 100% catch and release this season.

	2012 total	pre Jun 1	post Jun 1	total nets	10yr average	Release rate	Largest fish
Salmon	736	26	710	n/a	556	96%/98%	38lb
Sea Trout	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

Season dates: 11 Jan – 30 Sep



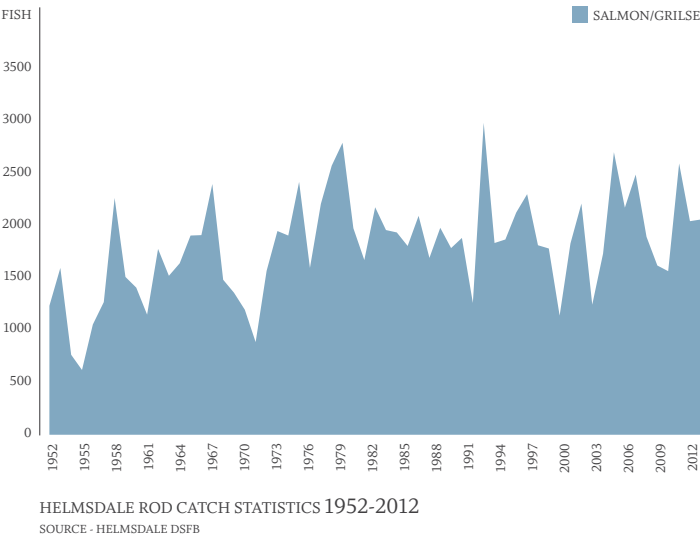
Helmsdale

Michael Wigan - Fishery Manager, Helmsdale DSFB

There were steady catches throughout the season, with no real lulls apart from in April, and the season was also characterised by the appearance of heavier salmon than has been usual in recent years. Perhaps the greatest concern was the appearance of a number of escapees from fish farms, with at least three caught during the season and 6 more at broodstock capture, which will damage the native population should they hybridise. On a more encouraging note the overall release rate was higher than that set for the season.

	2012 total	pre Jun 1	post Jun 1	total nets	10yr average	Release rate	Largest fish
Salmon	2,039	315	1,724	n/a	1,835	84%	27lb
Sea Trout	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

Season dates: 11 Jan – 30 Sep



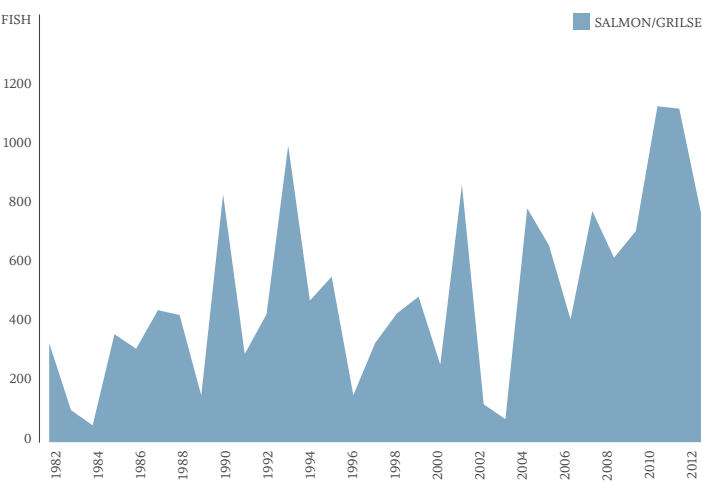
Wick

John Mackay - Secretary, Wick Angling Club

In contrast to the rest of the country the Wick catchment was dry for a large part of the season, but when small spates occurred there were plenty of fish about – as can be seen from our catch numbers. We are a summer spate river and this season 82% of our catch was taken in the 3 months July to September.

	2012 total	pre Jun 1	post Jun 1	total nets	10yr average	Release rate	Largest fish
Salmon	766	24	742	n/a	711	34%	20lb
Sea Trout	31	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	29%	3lb

Season dates: 11 Feb – 31 Oct



WICK ROD CATCH STATISTICS 1982-2012
SOURCE - RIVER WICK

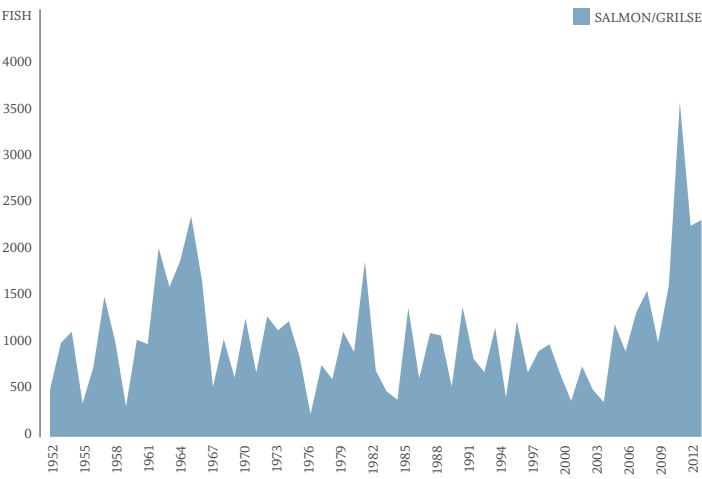
Thurso

Eddie McCarthy - Thurso River Manager

The overall return for the season was above average, with fish running consistently throughout the year. Although the grilse were a little late in arriving they were in good condition. There was no netting in the river's estuary and, as of January 2013, anglers will return all fish caught before 15th June. After that date each angler may keep two fish of 8lb or less per week. The Thurso owners recently bought out a salmon netting station in Dunnet Bay. The use of treble hooks is banned and, as of September 1st, barbless hooks must be used.

	2012 total	pre Jun 1	post Jun 1	total nets	10yr average	Release rate	Largest fish
Salmon	2,269	194	2,075	n/a	1,535	90%/70%*	28lb
Sea Trout	191	n/a	n/a	n/a	89	75%	7.5lb

Season dates: 11 Feb – 31 Oct. * Spring / summer.



THURSO ROD CATCH STATISTICS 1952-2012
SOURCE - THURSO RIVER MANAGEMENT

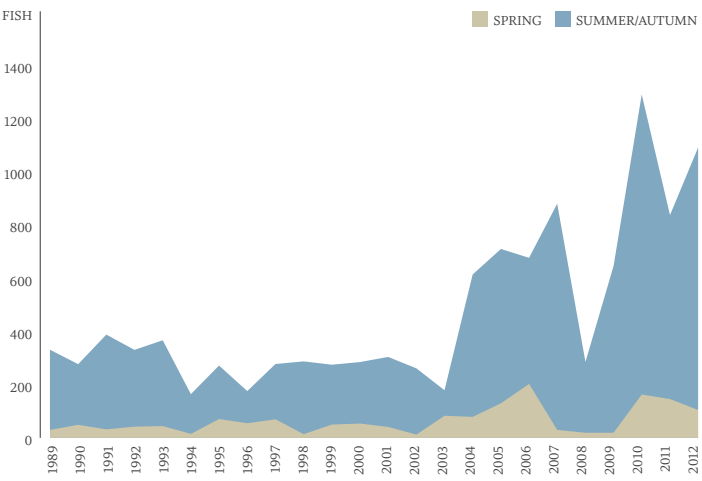
Halladale

John Salkeld - Halladale Partnership

This was the second best season on record and, in fishing terms, it was a very even year, with good numbers of fish being caught in all months from April to September. The grilse returned to their normal timing, arriving in strength by the third week in June, although the run was weaker than usual, while the salmon runs were stronger. All fish were generally in good condition. The system had benefitted in recent years from the gradual natural repair to the damage caused by ploughing and conifer planting in the Flow Country, but plans to extract timber, block drains and fell to waste in large parts of the catchment will inevitably lead to release of nitrates and phosphates and other pollution from subsoil disturbance. Plans to place arrays of subsea turbines in the Pentland Firth and along the North Coast without prior research into their effect on salmon migration could also cause major problems. From 2013 a compulsory conservation code has been introduced to restrict the number and size of fish kept, aimed particularly at preserving spring salmon but also protecting larger salmon during the rest of the year. The use of treble hooks has been banned.

	2012 total	pre Jun 1	post Jun 1	total nets	10yr average	Release rate	Largest fish
Salmon	1,114	105	1,009	n/a	748	78%	20lb
Sea Trout	5	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	12lb

Season dates: 12 Jan – 30 Sep



HALLADALE ROD CATCH STATISTICS 1989-2012
SOURCE - HALLADALE PARTNERSHIP

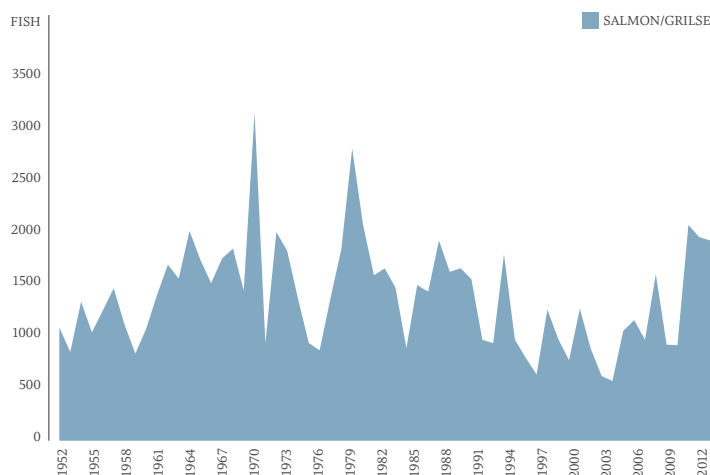
Naver

Chris Conroy - *Superintendent and Biologist, River Naver Fisheries*

The 2012 season was encouraging in many ways, with the total number of salmon and grilse recorded across the catchment the joint third highest for 32 years. The season started with good catches of early spring fish, a number of which were identified as previous spawners via scale reading, but a prolonged dry period between late May and late June resulted in the second lowest river levels on record. Conditions subsequently improved, providing predominantly good fishing conditions for the rest of the season. Grilse arrived earlier than in recent years, with good numbers recorded in June and peak runs in July. Numbers of MSW salmon exceeded that of grilse and averaged 9.6lb. Of particular concern was the unusually high number of farm escapees reported this season. The majority of these fish weighed between 10lb and 13lb and entered the river between July and September.

	2012 total	pre Jun 1	post Jun 1	total nets	10yr average	Release rate	Largest fish
Salmon	1,876	316	1,560	n/a	1,283	88%/80%*	30lb
Sea Trout	604	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	74%	4.5lb

Season dates: 12 Jan – 30 Sep. * Spring / summer.



NAVER ROD CATCH STATISTICS 1952-2012

SOURCE - NAVER MANAGEMENT

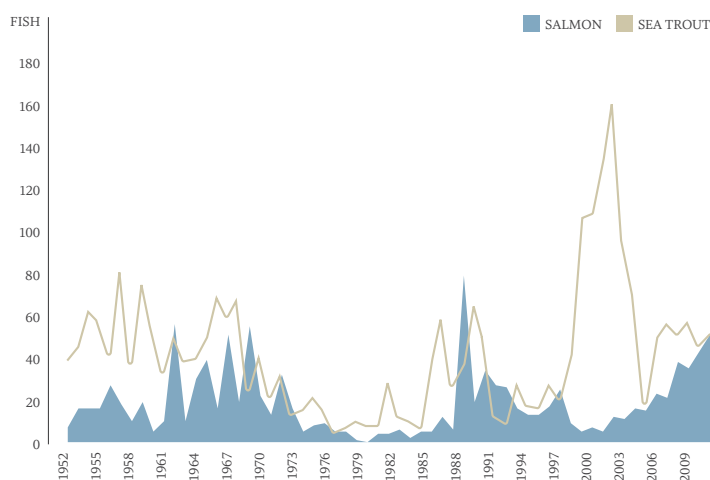
Polla

Charles Marsham - *Chairman, North and West Sutherland Board and Trust*

This was only the third time since records began in 1952 that the salmon and grilse catch was higher than that of sea trout. The former averaged 7.5lb, while the latter averaged 2.25lb, with one taken of 11lb – one of the largest ever recorded on the Polla. The weather was mixed, and unusually dry for much of the early summer, although several spates mid-July and August took place and these were when most of the salmon and grilse were caught.

	2012 total	pre Jun 1	post Jun 1	total nets	10yr average	Release rate	Largest fish
Salmon	52	0	52	n/a	25	70%	16lb
Sea Trout	49	n/a	n/a	n/a	48	70%	11lb

Season dates: 1 Jun – 30 Sep



POLLA ROD CATCH STATISTICS 1952-2012

SOURCE - NORTH AND WEST SUTHERLAND DSFB

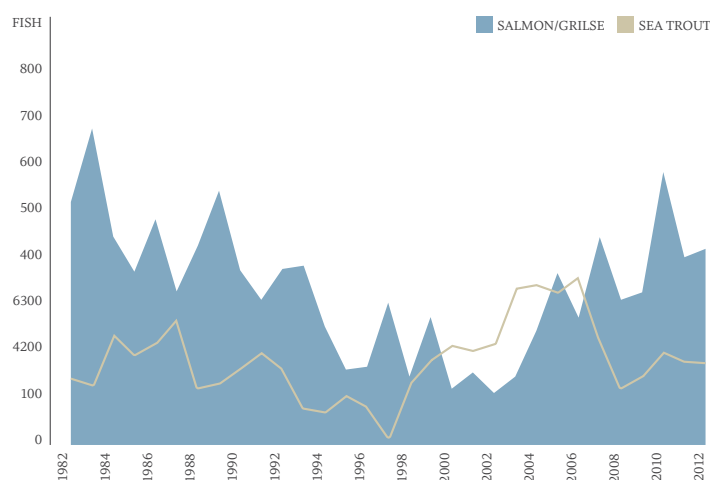
Dionard

Jim Allingham - *North and West DSFB*

This was another fairly successful season, although it started late due to lack of water in June and most of July. Overall, runs of salmon and sea trout would have been regarded as poor before the advent of salmon farming but, in today's context, there were decent runs in late July and from mid-August onwards. A few very small grilse were caught, with the last – a bright silver fish – taken on 20th October. It is now ten years since the Dionard management adopted a voluntary catch and release policy. The number of salmon caught during the last ten years is 70% more than for the previous ten and the equivalent increase in sea trout returns is 41%.

	2012 total	pre Jun 1	post Jun 1	total nets	10yr average	Release rate	Largest fish
Salmon	419	0	419	n/a	353	87%	15lb
Sea Trout	176	n/a	n/a	n/a	208	93%	8lb

Season dates: 11 Feb – 31 Oct



DIONARD ROD CATCH STATISTICS 1982-2012

SOURCE - NORTH AND WEST DSFB

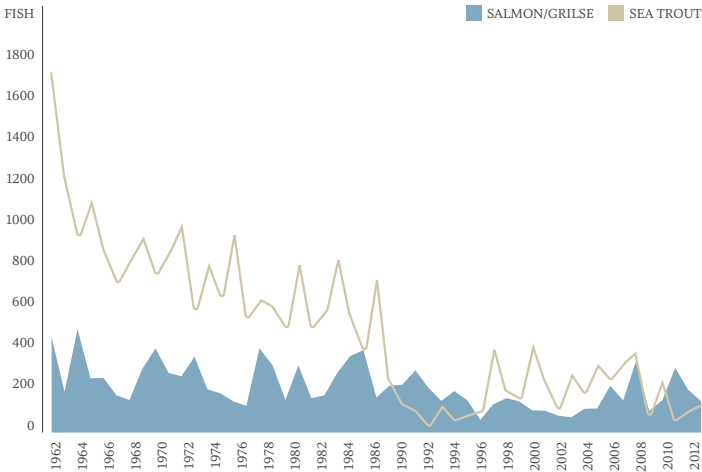
Laxford

Shona Marshall - *Biologist, West Sutherland Fisheries Trust and Reay Forest Estate*

The 2012 season was poor for salmon, with the first fish caught in April. There were fish caught each month, with the greatest catch in September, when the rain finally came. Sea trout numbers also remain poor, although better than 2011, with a total of 135 fish. The largest sea trout was 3lb, but 70% of the overall catch was finnock. Loch Stack was lightly fished in September, affecting the sea trout catches, but the low catches still remain of concern. This year there has been some creation of native woodland at the head of Lochmore, on the southern face of Meall Gille Pheadair, adjacent to the Allt Eas na Maoile burn. The Reay forest forestry plan is in the first five year phase of a 25-year plan, which will address the restructuring of plantations to native woodland after harvesting, in order to increase the resource for further riparian waters benefit.

	2012 total	pre Jun 1	post Jun 1	total nets	10yr average	Release rate	Largest fish
Salmon	151	3	148	n/a	192	74%	20lb
Sea Trout	135	n/a	n/a	n/a	216	99%	3lb

Season dates: 11 Feb – 31 Oct



LAXFORD ROD CATCH STATISTICS 1962-2012
SOURCE - WEST SUTHERLAND FISHERIES TRUST

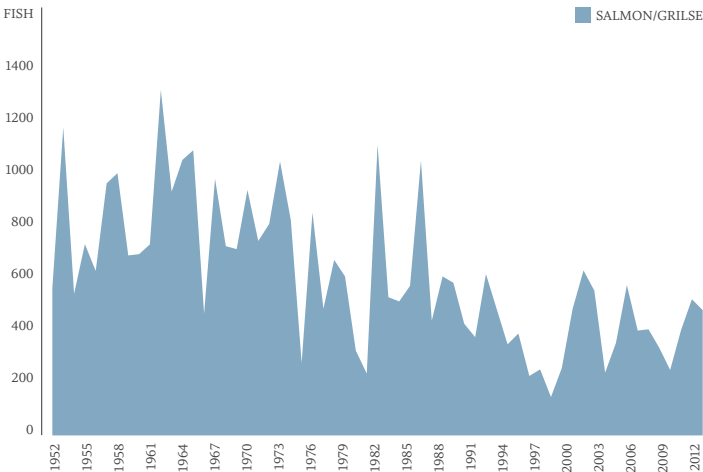
Grimersta

Simon Scott - *Manager, Grimersta Estate*

This was a satisfactory and above average season, despite extremely challenging conditions, with very low water in the first part of the season. Some unusual returns from the river included the Bridge Pool, which produced only 14 fish (10-year average 66); the Kelt Pool produced 84 (25); the Battery produced 50 (11); and Loch Faighail an Tuim produced 100 fish, the second best return in 15 years. Sea trout numbers were slightly down on the previous two years but there are encouraging signs of a continued recovery. Last year we reported on evidence of an improved aquaculture management regime in Loch Roag, but this year's reports of disease and high numbers of sea lice are of concern. There are continued efforts to achieve consensus on fisheries management on Loch Langavat, the headwaters of the Grimersta system, and the Management Plan for the Langavat SAC is soon due for publication. This will include a Code of Good Practice for fishing throughout the catchment and provide a framework to inform future fisheries management planning.

	2012 total	pre Jun 1	post Jun 1	total nets	10yr average	Release rate	Largest fish
Salmon	474	2	472	n/a	394	81%	25lb
Sea Trout	283	n/a	n/a	n/a	165	100%	3lb

Season dates: 3 Jun – 15 Oct



GRIMERSTA ROD CATCH STATISTICS 1952-2012
SOURCE - WESTERN ISLES DSFB

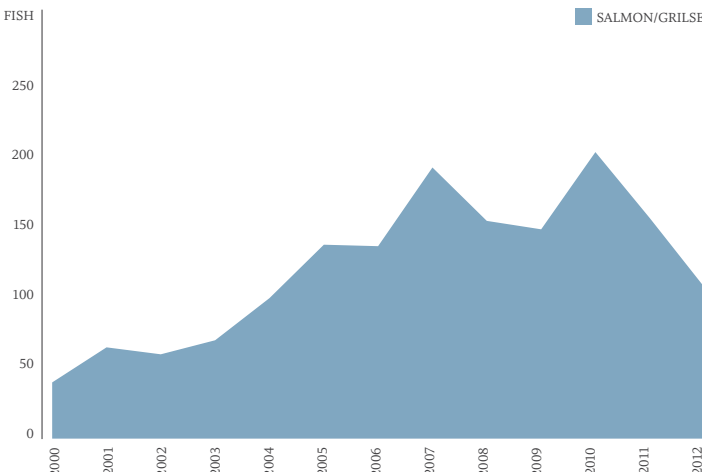
Snizort

Derek Dowsett - *Snizort River Manager*

A historic dry season meant that effective spate conditions were reduced to just 6 weeks, with salmon massing in the sea loch throughout June, July and August. The first real run took place in the last week of August. Despite this, the season's total catch of salmon could have been much worse, and the presence of good quantities of sea trout, in good condition and with little evidence of sea louse predation, was very encouraging. In fact the sea trout total catch was nearly double that of the preceding two seasons and exceeded the 10-year average. The programme of collecting native salmon egg stock and returning fry to the river each spring continues and catch and release has existed on the river for the past 8 years; this season only 3 salmon and 3 sea trout were reported killed.

	2012 total	pre Jun 1	post Jun 1	total nets	10yr average	Release rate	Largest fish
Salmon	108	0	108	n/a	124	95%	16lb
Sea Trout	71	n/a	n/a	n/a	63	93%	2.5lb

Season dates: 11 Feb – 15 Oct



SNIZORT ROD CATCH STATISTICS 2000-2012
SOURCE - SKYE DSFB

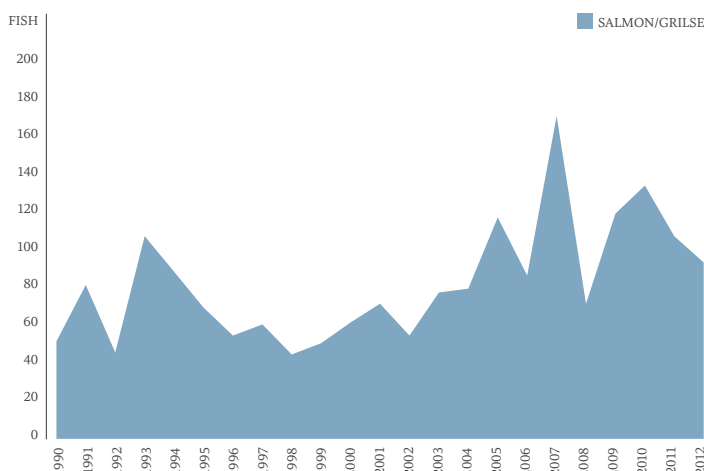
Little Gruinard

Stuart Allison - *Ghillie, Little Gruinard*

2012's season was the same on the Little Gruinard as it was for most west coast rivers – with very low water leading to a very poor start to the season, which was then followed by an excellent spell in mid-July when the rains came, bringing with them a very good run of grilse. As well as making angling difficult, the dry summer also affected the salmon themselves, many of which were damaged in the course of coming up the rockier sections of the river in low water. Despite this, however, it was a successful season overall.

	2012 total	total nets	10yr average	Release rate	Largest fish
Salmon	94	n/a	131	92%	16.5lb
Sea Trout	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

Season dates: 11 Feb – 31 Oct



LITTLE GRUINARD ROD CATCH STATISTICS 1990-2012

SOURCE - LITTLE GRUINARD MANAGEMENT

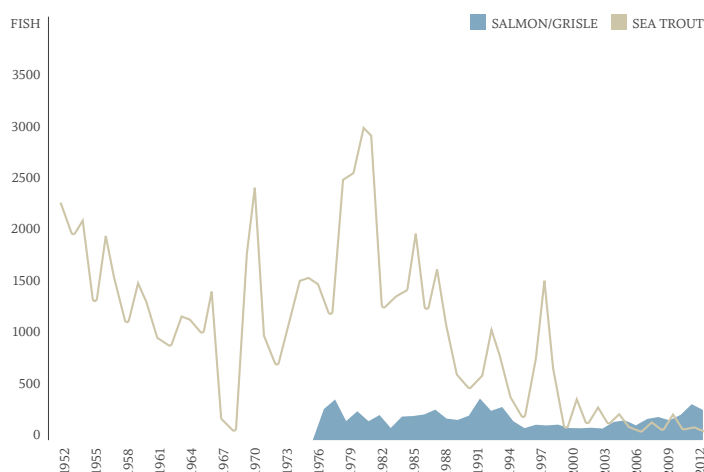
Ewe and Loch Maree

Peter Cunningham - *Biologist, WRFT*

Water levels were generally low until August, so salmon and grilse catches were respectable given the tough angling conditions. Nearby, the Tournaig trap recorded a record catch of 43 salmon (mainly grilse) entering the system. The Loch Maree Hotel remained closed for renovation during the fishing season, with only one local boat fishing a few days. However, elsewhere catches of sea trout were poor, with one of the lowest totals for the Ewe system on record. Only a handful of sea trout were over 2lb and over 90% of finnock in the River Ewe were 'badly damaged by sea lice'. Lice levels on all salmon farms within 30km of Loch Ewe need to be maintained at levels well below CoGP threshold values. On a brighter note, Loch Ewe has been included within a proposed Marine Protected Area, following submission of a local community bid supported by WRASFB & WRFT. By protecting and restoring seabed habitats which have been damaged by scallop dredging, feeding opportunities and prey availability for sea trout may recover. The Bruachaig salmon restoration programme is continuing, with the rearing of captive broodstock.

	2012 total	pre Jun 1	post Jun 1	total nets	10yr average	Release rate	Largest fish
Salmon	286	5	281	n/a	207	100%94%*	28lb
Sea Trout	78	n/a	n/a	n/a	131	100%	4lb

Season dates: 11 Feb – 31 Oct. * Spring / summer.



RIVER EWE ROD CATCH STATISTICS 1978-2012
LOCH MAREE ROD CATCH STATISTICS 1952-2012

SOURCE - WESTER ROSS FISHERIES TRUST

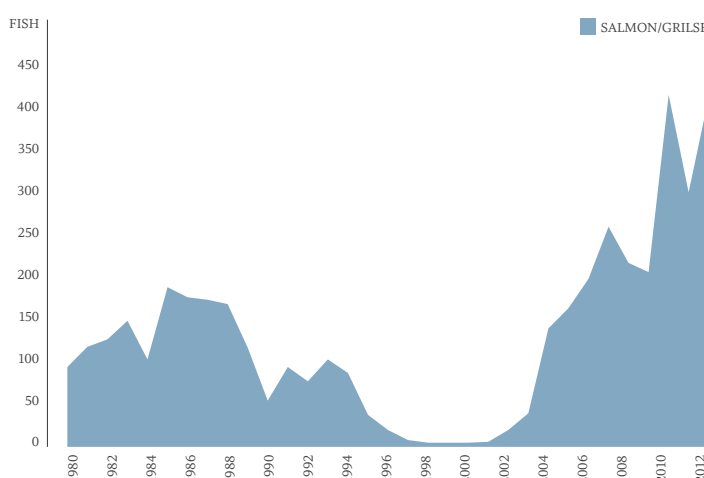
Carron (Wester Ross)

Bob Kindness - *Carron River Manager*

This was another excellent year, especially for grilse, although lack of water in the spring and early part of the summer meant that the season only got going in the third week of July. Salmon and grilse were well spread throughout the river, providing excellent sport from August to the end of October. The Carron is relatively lightly fished, resulting in a figure of close to one salmon per full rod day once the salmon arrived in the river. The condition of the fish was excellent, with only a couple of thin grilse being caught. The sea trout catch was disappointing, although it is partly explained by the fact that, with so many salmon about, anglers were not targeting them. Some boulders were introduced the previous year to create more lies in the lower part of the river and this certainly helped to hold fish in 2012. Spates and moving gravel are still a problem. A 100% catch and release policy exists, with salmon being retained in keep-nets before being panjet marked and released. Of the 110 salmon marked, 23 were caught again. A small number of bleeders died, although some bleeders, having been left in the keep-net to recover, survived and were released. Tagged salmon were killed for tag removal.

	2012 total	pre Jun 1	post Jun 1	total nets	10yr average	Release rate	Largest fish
Salmon	416	1	415	n/a	237	91%	28lb
Sea Trout	53	n/a	n/a	n/a	126	100%	3lb

Season dates: 11 Feb – 31 Oct



CARRON (W.C.OAST) ROD CATCH 1980-2012

SOURCE - RIVER CARRON MANAGEMENT

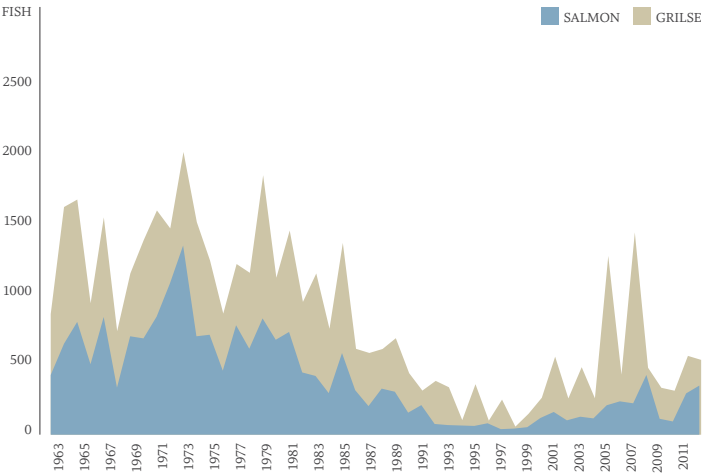
Lochy

John Veitch - Lochy River Manager

An average year, due to the lack of grilse, which only accounted for 30% of our catch – it is quite clear that our catch figures highlight a positive upward trend for MSW salmon versus a downward trend for grilse. Early season fishing was good, and despite the poor fishing conditions, we saw a 35% increase on our 5-year average. The average weight during these months was over 13lb. August through to mid-October was disappointing, with lower than normal grilse numbers and warm water making fishing very tough. With well over 300 MSW fish landed throughout the season, this was our best salmon year since 1988. Our hatchery and restoration programme continues to roll out and 38,500 smolts were released in the main stem of the river during May 2012 and 20,000 fry and parr were distributed into the tributaries. This smolt stocking alone, based on our estimated return rates so far, should boost the long-term restoration of the river and result in an extra 700-800 returning spawning fish and around 2 million extra eggs deposited in the main stem in 2013/14.

	2012 total	total nets	10yr average	Release rate	Largest fish
Salmon	536	n/a	605	95%	30lb
Sea Trout	220	n/a	122	n/a	6lb

Season dates: 15 May – 15 Oct



LOCHY ROD CATCH STATISTICS 1963-2012
SOURCE - LOCHY ASSOCIATION

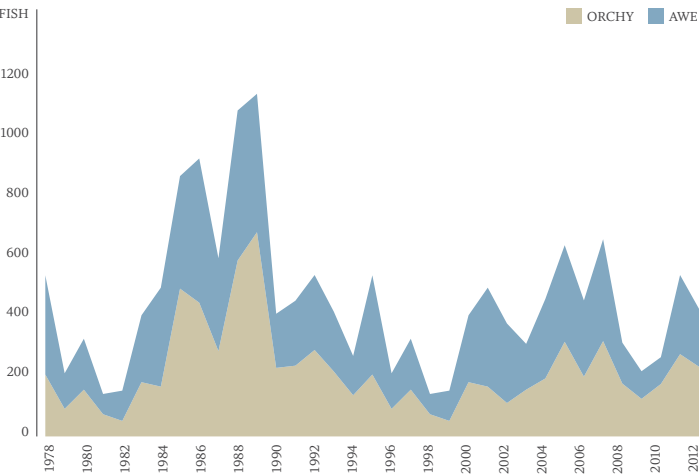
Awe and Orchy

Roger Brook - Chairman, Argyll DSFB

The catch was down 21% on the previous year, but this is largely due to catching a smaller proportion of the run. In 2011 we caught an exceptional 34% of the run, while in 2012 we still caught 27% of the fish going through the Awe counter. There is a significant shift towards salmon rather than grilse. The Awe used to catch mainly grilse but is now about 50/50. The Orchy catches are now 75% salmon and early season (May) catches in the Orchy have increased dramatically over the last 2 years. Flow rates on the hydro-electric controlled Awe have been altered to follow a more natural regime. This is expected help the ecology of the river as well as the spawning and survival of fish.

	2012 total	pre Jun 1	post Jun 1	total nets	10yr average	Release rate	Largest fish
Salmon	419	32	387	n/a	424	100%/92%*	n/a
Sea Trout	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

Season dates: 11 Feb – 15 Oct. * Spring / summer.

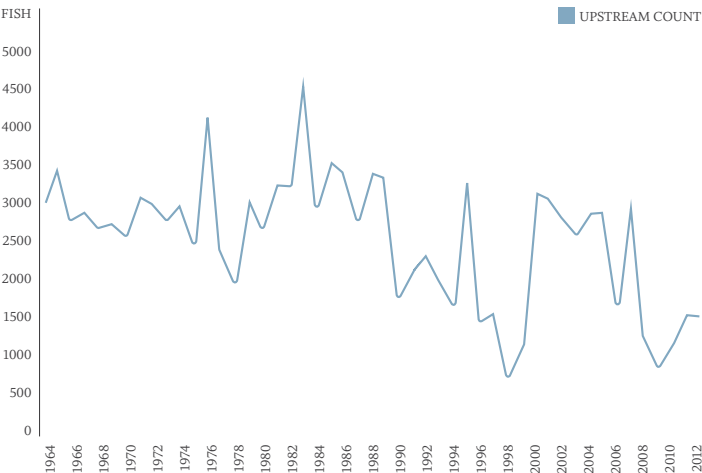


AWE & ORCHY ROD CATCH STATISTICS 1978-2012
SOURCE - ARGYLL DSFB

Awe counter

Roger Brook - Chairman, Argyll DSFB

The total from the Awe fish counter for the season of 1,565 was just 1% down on the previous year (1,583). Neither of these figures are considered to be sustainable; representing just 60% of target minimum of returning fish. The similarity of the last two year's totals masks the fact that the runs were very different in character. The 2011 count was dominated by a short lived peak run of fish in mid-July. The 2012 summer run of fish started on time but peaked early, in late June and early July, then fell away quickly. There were isolated runs of fresh fish in early September and into October. Possibly the later running peaks consisted of grilse which were recorded as salmon. Certainly the pattern of fish returning this year was anomalous with lower peaks and fish returning over a longer period of time.



AWE BARRAGE UPSTREAM COUNT 1964-2012
SOURCE - SCOTTISH AND SOUTHERN ENERGY

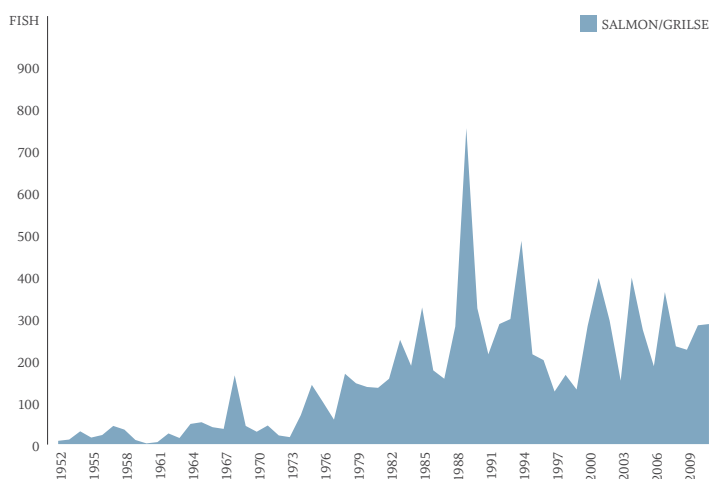
Irvine and Garnock

Stuart Brabbs - Ayrshire Rivers Trust

The 2012 catch returns were not available at the time of writing, but it was a year adversely affected by almost continuous rainfall from mid-July onwards, and Darvel Angling Club closed 2 weeks early to protect stocks. Salmon were viewed at the Blackrocks waterfall, in Kilmarnock, where the new fish passes were completed in 2012. There is great expectation for future productivity and easement of the Dean Ford should open up many kilometres of good spawning habitat. Poaching has again been a problem, but new bailiffs are now in place, so hopefully this situation will improve in 2013. Darvel Dam and three weirs on the Annick Water are planned for removal or at least improvement for fish passage and Ayrshire Rivers Trust is working with SEPA towards this goal. Newmilns Weir on the upper Irvine was removed this year following partial collapse. These improvements within the catchment should allow salmon to reach their spawning grounds unhindered for the first time in over 100 years. A new hatchery has been built in Dean Castle Park in Kilmarnock, while the Galston Hatchery has now closed.

	2011 total	total nets	10yr average	Release rate	Largest fish
Salmon	290	n/a	273	n/a	22lb
Sea Trout	8	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

Season dates: 15 Mar – 15 Nov



IRVINE/GARNOCK - ROD CATCH STATISTICS 1952-2011

SOURCE - AYRSHIRE RIVERS TRUST

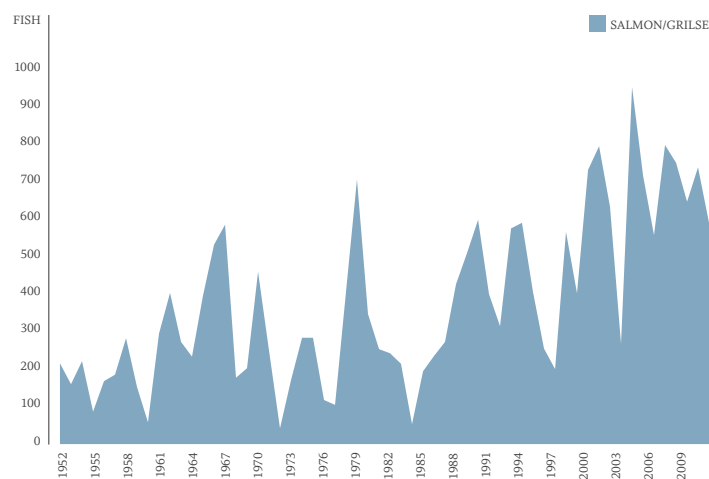
Ayr

Stuart Brabbs - Ayrshire Rivers Trust

At the time of writing the figures for 2012 are still to be collected, but the spring run has recovered slightly in recent years and this is encouraging. Fishing conditions were poor until May when the lower and middle beats reported steady catches of MSW salmon. Grilse were scarce until August but salmon provided good sport between the regular spates. There wasn't a large run of grilse when it did come and was over by mid September. As elsewhere in the region, the Ayr was in spate every few days, due to the second wettest summer on record, which made fishing difficult. Juvenile salmonid stocks appear to be very low on both sides of the upper Ayr and Lugar Water catchments and have been for some years. Research is underway to attempt to pinpoint why. Opencast mining and intensive dairy production are features of both the Ayr and the Lugar Water and inputs from these sources need to be investigated. Other inputs undoubtedly contribute to the overall 'bad' water quality status that SEPA classified the Ayr in 2008. SEPA are actively targeting diffuse pollution sources within the catchment in order to improve water quality by 2015.

	2011 total	total nets	10yr average	Release rate	Largest fish
Salmon	587	n/a	662	18%	20lb
Sea Trout	33	n/a	n/a	60%	6lb

Season dates: 15 Feb – 31 Oct



AYR ROD CATCH STATISTICS 1952-2011

SOURCE - AYRSHIRE RIVERS TRUST

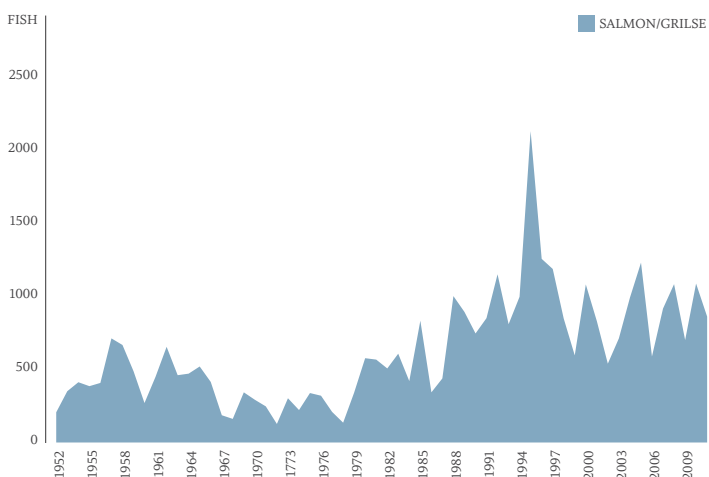
Doon

Stuart Brabbs - Ayrshire Rivers Trust

The first fish of the season was reported from Swallowbraes in March, with others following shortly afterwards in the middle reaches, although it wasn't until May that regular catches materialised. By June the upper reaches were reporting catches and fish in the 10-14lb bracket were not uncommon. The grilse arrived in July but, as elsewhere in Ayrshire, high water encouraged fish to run through the lower reaches. From mid-July to the end of the season, fishing conditions were challenging due to constant rainfall, and consequently catches suffered, particularly in the middle and lower river. Upper beats reported good catches, despite reduced rod effort. 2012 will be memorable for fluctuating water levels and difficult fishing conditions rather than the catches but, despite this, the reported rod catch was a respectable 98.3% of the 10-year average.

	2012 total	pre Jun 1	post Jun 1	total nets	10yr average	Release rate	Largest fish
Salmon	854	n/a	n/a	n/a	868	55%	n/a
Sea Trout	60	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	97%	n/a

Season dates: 11 Feb – 31 Oct



DOON ROD CATCH STATISTICS 1952-2012

SOURCE - AYRSHIRE RIVERS TRUST

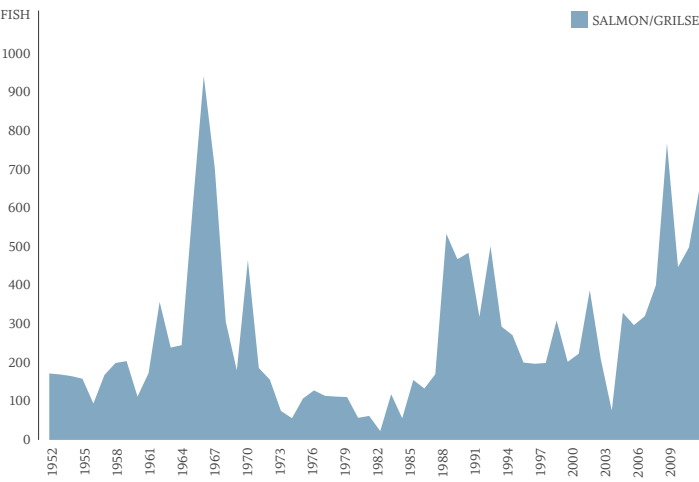
Girvan

Stuart Brabbs - Ayrshire Rivers Trust

The first reported salmon was caught in March, although it wasn't until later in June that most beats reported good sport. Low water in the early season prevented fish from running the river but, as soon as the rain came, beats up and down the river did well. 2012 turned out one of the wettest summers on record and angling conditions were difficult at times, but the Girvan seemed to fare well compared to its larger neighbours. Grilse dominated August catches but in September, several large MSW fish were reported. Fishing remained steady throughout October, with the final tally being 153.8% of the 10-year average on this improving river. Sea trout catches were better than on other Ayrshire rivers but still poor, with only 152 reported. Disappointingly the release rate was only 89% despite the DSFB's recommendation that all are returned. The release rate for salmon was a respectable 57%. The Girvan hatchery hasn't operated for several years but catches continue to improve.

	2012 total	total nets	10yr average	Release rate	Largest fish
Salmon	658	n/a	428	57%	29lb
Sea Trout	152	n/a	n/a	89%	8lb

Season dates: 25 Feb – 31 Oct



GIRVAN ROD CATCH STATISTICS 1952-2012
SOURCE - AYRSHIRE RIVERS TRUST

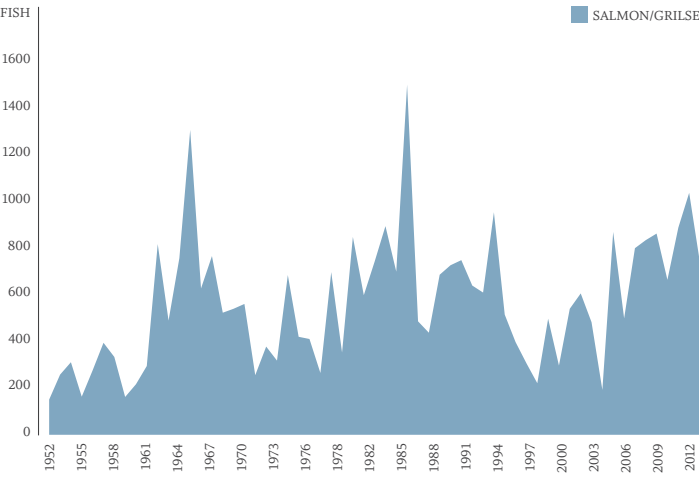
Stinchar

Stuart Brabbs - Biologist, Ayrshire Rivers Trust

Low water prevailed until June, when the first reported salmon was caught in the third week of the month, after the river came into spate. Anglers were out in force and reports of MSW salmon were not uncommon. These were presumably springers that had stayed at sea until the first spate. From July to the end of the season, lower beats reported salmon running through without stopping due to high water but there were notable days; 17 salmon were landed in a single day at Knockdolian in August. The grilse run was steadily good in July and August but MSW salmon were once again a feature. Some very large fish were encountered (and lost) but the largest reported was 20 ¾lb from Laggensarroch. Several others estimated at over 20lb were returned. With the constantly fluctuating water levels, anglers that picked their days carefully did well. As the lower beats struggled, the Wee Stinchar (above the Duisk) had a very good season, with many large fish of around 20lb encountered.

	2012 total	total nets	10yr average	Release rate	Largest fish
Salmon	718	n/a	731	61%	21lb
Sea Trout	54	n/a	n/a	91%	n/a

Season dates: 25 Feb – 31 Oct



STINCHAR ROD CATCH STATISTICS 1952-2012
SOURCE - AYRSHIRE RIVERS TRUST

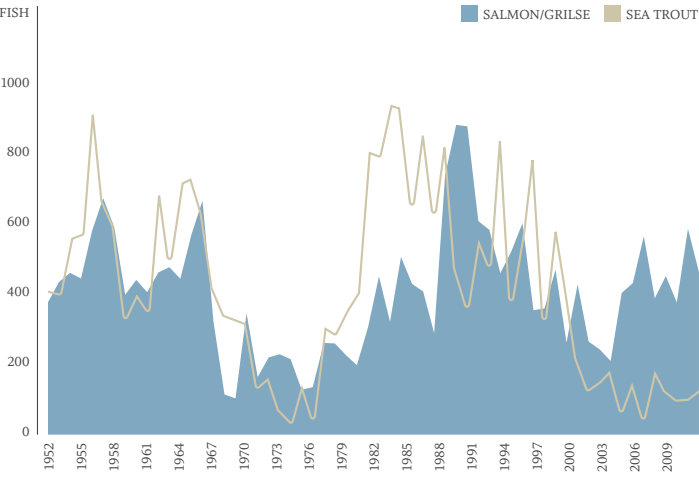
Cree

Galloway Fisheries Trust

Another wet summer meant fish ran quickly through the lowermost beats, but deeper beats mid-river fished well in late summer and early autumn, with September being the best for 5 years. Acidification of the High Cree continues to be a problem, along with other issues – such as siltation and over-shading – associated with large scale Sitka spruce afforestation. Forestry restructuring and GFT trials using limestone gravel addition are working towards addressing this. A programme of bankside fencing, control of INNS plant species and other in-stream and riparian works are being completed annually. The season saw a stronger push to increase catch and release rates, especially targeted at the release of spring fish and all sea trout. Since 2010 there has been a much reduced netting effort and this is reflected in the numbers of fish caught using fixed engines.

	2011 total	pre Jun 1	post Jun 1	total nets	10yr average	Release rate	Largest fish
Salmon	461	46	415	98	423	42%	21lb
Sea Trout	122	n/a	n/a	10	122	84%	n/a

Season dates: 1 Mar – 24 Oct



CREE ROD CATCH STATISTICS 1952-2011
SOURCE - GALLOWAY FISHERIES TRUST

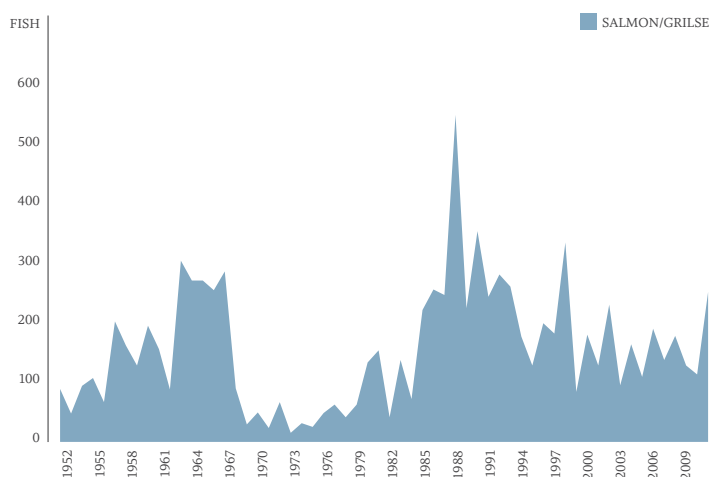
Bladnoch

Galloway Fisheries Trust

Although the final returns are not in at the time of writing, 2012 was one of the river's best seasons. Despite a poor spring run, by the end of the season the middle beats of Clugston and Mochrum Park were recording good numbers of salmon, which were regularly in double figures and included fish of 26lb and 31lb. Some very lightly fished sections of the lower river also caught salmon from early August onwards and, overall, it was an encouraging year in terms of numbers of fish caught. Acidification of the headwaters continues to be a main limiting factor for salmon, however, and work continues to remove conifers from key acidified headwater tributaries. Recently some limited recovery of fish in the headwaters has been identified and this will continue to be monitored. A programme of habitat works continues on key spawning tributaries across the catchment.

	2011 total	pre Jun 1	post Jun 1	total nets	10yr average	Release rate	Largest fish
Salmon	249	38	211	n/a	158	95%/63%*	31lb
Sea Trout	2	n/a	n/a	n/a	2	0%	n/a

Season dates: 11 Feb – 31 Oct. *Spring/summer.



BLADNOCH ROD CATCH STATISTICS 1952-2011

SOURCE - GALLOWAY FISHERIES TRUST

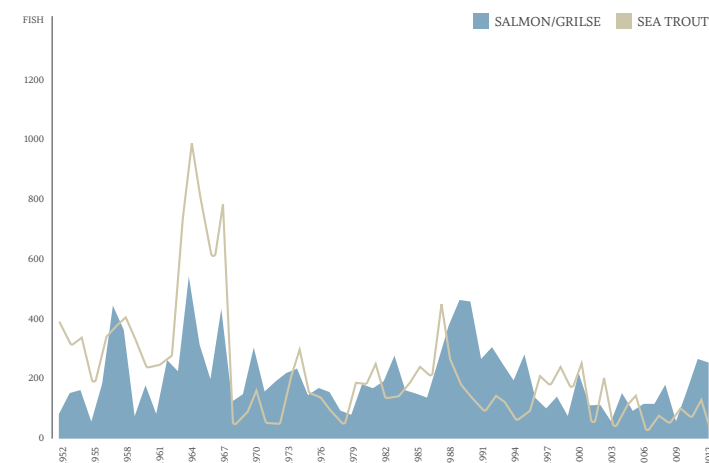
Luce

Galloway Fisheries Trust

A very large flood in June got the season off to an unsettled start. Sea trout catches during this month and up to the end of August were fair and a couple of 6-7lb sea trout were recorded during this period. By August, salmon were being caught regularly and 72 were recorded during the month – by some margin the best salmon catch over the last 5 years. Catches dropped away in September, which is usually the best month on the river, but they picked up again in October, and included some good sized MSW fish of between 15 and 20lb. There are some acidification concerns in the headwaters, particularly the Cross Water of Luce, but this is being helped by large scale coniferous forestry plantation restructuring. A barrier to migratory salmonids, particularly sea trout, was removed with the help of SEPA in 2012 and juvenile trout numbers have now increased substantially. From the 2012 season there has been greater emphasis on catch and release – fish over 10lb should always be released and a daily bag limit has been set: two salmon per day can be taken, or three salmon per week maximum.

	2012 total	pre Jun 1	post Jun 1	total nets	10yr average	Release rate	Largest fish
Salmon	252	0	252	n/a	144	53%	20lb
Sea Trout	203	n/a	n/a	n/a	98	77%	7.5lb

Season dates: 25 Feb – 30 Oct



LUCE ROD CATCH STATISTICS 1952-2012

SOURCE - GALLOWAY FISHERIES TRUST

Urr

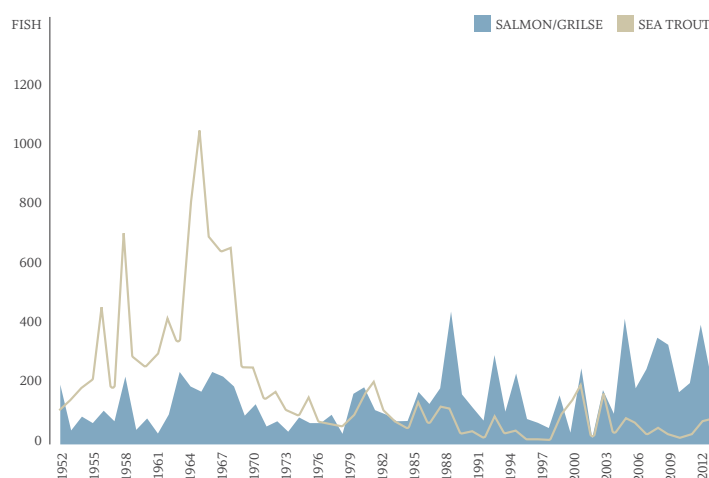
Richard Bellamy - Secretary, Dalbeattie Angling Association

Kenny Irving - Chairman, Castle Douglas Angling Association

The Dalbeattie water saw healthy runs of summer salmon and grilse, but seemingly fewer fish in the autumn. However, the water from mid-September to the end of November was consistently high, so the apparent drop in numbers in the autumn may have been caused by nothing more than fish running hard through the lower reaches. More encouragingly, the number of both sea trout and herling rose significantly. The lower river continues to suffer from significant movement of in-stream gravel, with accumulations in many pools, which results in reduced velocity of flows. At Castle Douglas, the catch was down by a third on 2011, largely due to a shortage of grilse, while fewer salmon showed during October and November.

	2012 total	pre Jun 1	post Jun 1	total nets	10yr average	Release rate	Largest fish
Salmon	209	3	206	n/a	205	100%/50%*	22lb
Sea Trout	82	n/a	n/a	n/a	25	66%	n/a

Season dates: 11 Feb – 30 Nov. *Spring/summer.



URR ROD CATCH STATISTICS 1952-2012

SOURCE - GALLOWAY FISHERIES TRUST

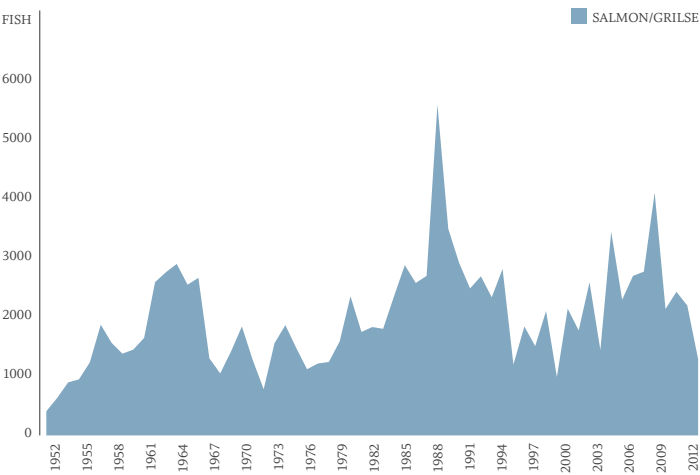
Nith

Jim Henderson - Director, Nith Board and Trust

Spring salmon were larger and more numerous than usual, while summer salmon and grilse were reduced in number and the sea trout run was much better than in 2011. Despite this, however, anglers were hampered by dreadful fishing conditions due to high rainfall. Habitat improvements continue to be conducted, especially on the Crawick water, and other previous schemes are being maintained. Habitat work is focused on sea trout spawning tributaries. High flood episodes may have been detrimental to spawning beds and river banks in general. We continue to encourage the catch and release of salmon and sea trout through the River Nith Catchment Angling Code.

	2012 total	pre Jun 1	post Jun 1	total nets	10yr average	Release rate	Largest fish
Salmon	1,283	18	1,265	352	3,155	40%	35lb
Sea Trout	782	n/a	n/a	162	1,106	55%	14lb

Season dates: 25 Feb – 30 Nov



NITH ROD CATCH STATISTICS 1952-2012
SOURCE - NITH DSFB

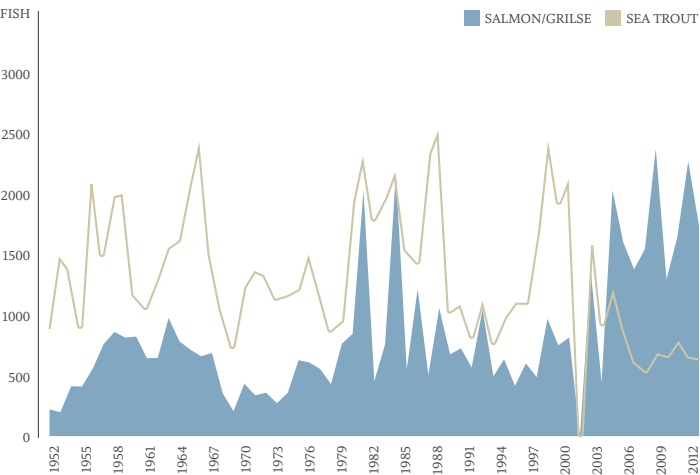
Annan

Nick Chisholm - Director, Annan Board and Trust

2012 was, all in all, a pretty strange year on the Annan. The overall catch was down considerably on the previous exceptional year, but still came in at about the 5-year average. The spring was probably the best we have had for 20 years, with a surprising number of fish caught early on despite very low effort. The summer salmon fishing was probably the best we have had in a generation, with July being a particularly productive month, but September, October and November were poor. This is somewhat ironic as we have a trial season extension to fish for the late November salmon that were very abundant a few years ago and now seem almost absent. Another odd feature of the year was that, despite the high water, the fishery on the upper river was generally poor. The sea trout fishing was again poor, but we never had decent conditions for fishing at night and the effort was extremely low. Probably the biggest success was the continuing improvement in the brown trout fishing, with a lot of fish over 4lb and at least 5 over 8lb, thanks largely to the near 100% release rates of all brown trout over recent years.

	2012 total	pre Jun 1	post Jun 1	total nets	10yr average	Release rate	Largest fish
Salmon	1,724	32	1,692	657	1,625	52%	26lb
Sea Trout	643	n/a	n/a	583	830*	70%	9lb

Season dates: 15 Feb – 15 (30) Nov** *5yr average **3 year season extension trial



ANNAN ROD CATCH STATISTICS 1952-2012
SOURCE - ANNAN DSFB

Total catch figures shown in the tables above include both rod and net catch where a net total is shown.



River Laxford. Image: Andrew Graham-Stewart.

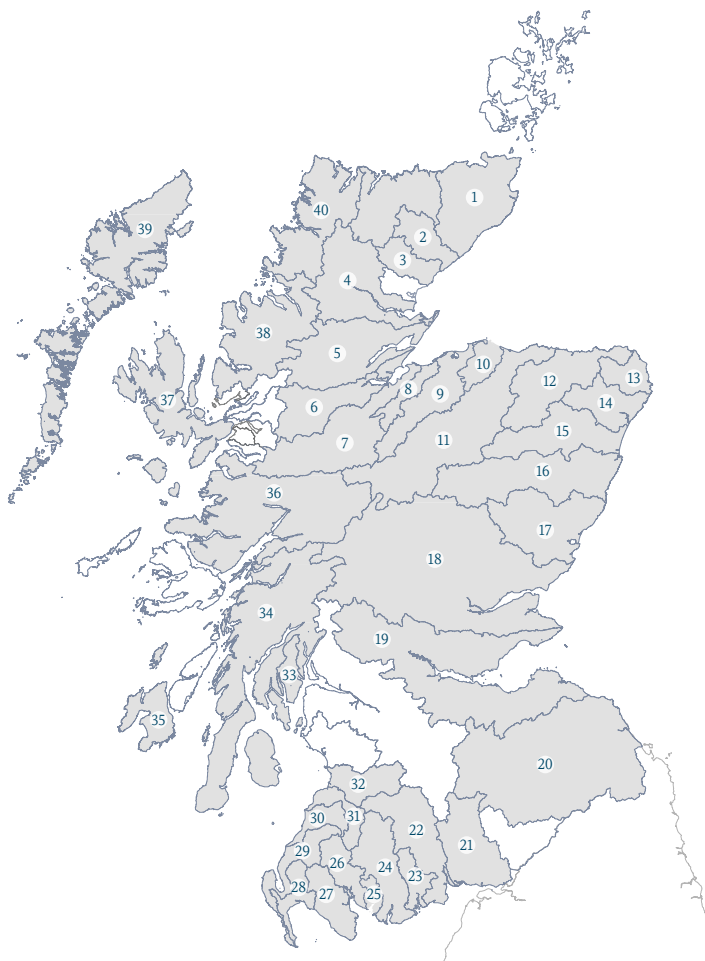
Fisheries management in Scotland – facts and figures

Number of District Salmon Fishery Boards (DSFBs)	41	ASFB management	Chairman: Alan Williams President: Andrew Douglas-Home Executive Committee: Ian Scott (Dee) Andrew Wallace (RAFTS) Sir Edward Mountain (Spey) David Summers (Tay) Roger Brook (Argyll) James Henderson (Nith) Nick Yonge (Tweed) Alasdair Laing (Findhorn) Giles Curtis (Western Isles)
Total revenue generated by DSFBs	£4,150,477		
Income from rod fishery	£3,621,372		
Income from net fishery	£43,437		
Expenditure incurred by DSFBs	£4,371,951		
Financial support provided to trusts by DSFBs	£541,434		
Total rateable value of fisheries	£3,664, 716		
DSFB staff (full time equivalents)	Remunerated - 83, voluntary - 59		
Number of accredited water bailiffs	352	RAFTS management	Chairman: Andrew Wallace Treasurer: Roger Brook Board: Andrew Wallace (Chair) – Co-opted Member from Fishmongers Company Roger Brook – Argyll Fisheries Trust Mary Nicholson – Galloway Fisheries Trust Mark Bilsby – River Dee Trust Colin Adams – Loch Lomond Fisheries Trust Simon Scott – Outer Hebrides Fisheries Trust Patrick Fotheringham – Forth Fisheries Trust Diane Baum (Biologist Representative) – Lochaber Fisheries Trust Shona Marshall (Biologist Representative) – West Sutherland Fisheries Trust Alan Williams – Co-opted Member as Chair of ASFB Ron Woods – Co-opted member, Scottish Federation of Coarse Anglers
Number of ghillies associated with salmon fishings	402		
Number of Scottish charitable Fisheries Trusts	25		
Revenue generated by Trusts	£2,712,486		
Expenditure incurred by Trusts	£2,810,077		
Trust staff (full time equivalents)	Remunerated - 53, Voluntary - 45		
DSFBs & Trusts - Operational data			
Nets seized	129		
Offences reported	89		
Numbers of surveys conducted 2012:			
Habitat	140		
Invertebrate	622		
Electro-fishing	1441		
Invasive species	447	ASFB staff	Policy & Planning Director – Alan Wells Operations Director (with RAFTS) – Brian Davidson Office Manager (with RAFTS) – Stephen Harris Press Officer (with RAFTS) – Andrew Graham-Stewart Legal Adviser – Fishlegal
Number of school projects	170		
Other educational projects	63		
The data below has not been collected previously and therefore we present a cumulative total for works carried out until 31 December 2012.			
	Cumulative to end 2011	2012 only	RAFTS staff
Habitat restored/protected (km)	1020km	82	Director – Callum Sinclair Operations Director (with ASFB) – Brian Davidson Office Manager (with ASFB) – Stephen Harris Press Officer (with ASFB) – Andrew Graham-Stewart Legal Adviser – Fishlegal Invasives & Bio-security Project Manager – Chris Horrill Project Co-ordinator – Rob Mitchell FASMOP Genetics Project – Mark Coulson Scottish Mink Initiative Project Co-ordinator – Hollie Walker Mink Officers Jim Mann Ann-Marie Macmaster Gunnar Scholtz Pearls in Peril LIFE+ Project Project Officers Lorna Wilkie Flora Grigor-Wilson/Steff Ferguson (job share) Aquaculture – Managing Interactions Project Aquaculture Officers Diane Kennedy Donna-Claire Hunter
Riparian trees planted	100,073	13256	
Riparian fencing erected	471km	37km	
Cost of above schemes	£4,006,080	£155,764	
Man made barriers assessed and cost (£)	166 (£165,200)	51 (£66,000)	
Man made barriers eased and cost (£)	97 (£462,505)	9 (£168,500)	
Access gained above eased barriers (km)	2186km	66km	
Length of watercourses treated for invasive species	841Km	414km	
The Representative Bodies ASFB & RAFTS			
ASFB total incoming resources 2011 (2010)	£153,480 (£111,213)		
RAFTS total incoming resources 2011 (2010)	£1,179,330 (£1,099,453)		
National economic data*			
Annual value of salmon fisheries to Scottish economy (Scottish Government statement 2008)	120M		
Jobs supported*	2800 FTE		
Research Report: The Economic Impact of Game and Coarse Angling in Scotland, Alan Radford, Geoff Riddington, John Anderson, Glasgow Caledonian University, Hervey Gibson, Cogentsi Research International Ltd Prepared for Scottish Executive Environment and Rural Affairs Department, 2004.			

	2011				2010			
	Rod catch	Released overall	Released spring	Net catch	Rod catch	Released overall	Released spring	Net catch
Salmon & Grilse	87,915	63,810 (73%)	5,564 (91%)	19,818	110,496	77,784 (70%)	4,281 (86%)	27,315
Sea Trout	23,324	16,255 (70%)	n/a	5,675	27,704	19,861 (72%)	n/a	11,023

Salmon Fishery Districts

- | | |
|----------------------|-------------------------|
| 1 Caithness | 22 Nith |
| 2 Helmsdale | 23 Urr |
| 3 Brora | 24 Dee (Kircudbright) |
| 4 Kyle of Sutherland | 25 Fleet (Kircudbright) |
| 5 Cromarty | 26 Cree |
| 6 Beaully | 27 Bladnoch |
| 7 Ness | 28 Luce |
| 8 Nairn | 29 Stinchar |
| 9 Findhorn | 30 Girvan |
| 10 Lossie | 31 Doon |
| 11 Spey | 32 Ayr |
| 12 Deveron | 33 Eachaig |
| 13 Ugie | 34 Argyll |
| 14 Ythan | 35 Laggan and Sorn |
| 15 Don | 36 Lochaber |
| 16 Dee (Aberdeen) | 37 Skye |
| 17 Esk | 38 Wester Ross |
| 18 Tay | 39 Western Isles |
| 19 Forth | 40 North and West |
| 20 Tweed | 41 Northern |
| 21 Annan | |



Sources:

Salmon Fishery Districts - Scottish Government 2006.

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Scottish Government GI Science & Analysis Team - January 2009, Job 4528sn.

Fisheries Trusts

1. Kyle of Sutherland Fisheries Trust
2. Cromarty Firth Fisheries Trust
3. Ness & Beaully Fisheries Trust
4. Findhorn, Nairn & Lossie Trust
5. Spey Foundation
6. Deveron, Bogie & Isla Rivers Charitable Trust
7. River Ythan Trust
8. River Don Trust
9. River Dee Trust
10. The Esks Rivers Fisheries Trust
11. Tay Foundation
12. Forth Fisheries Trust
13. Tweed Foundaion
14. River Annan Trust
15. Nith Catchment Fisheries Trust
16. Galloway Fisheries Trust
17. Ayrshire Rivers Trust
18. Clyde River Foundation
19. Loch Lomond Fisheries Trust
20. Argyll Fisheries Trust
21. Lochaber Fisheries Trust
22. Skye Fisheries Trust
23. Outer Hebrides Fisheries Trust
24. Wester Ross Fisheries Trust
25. West Sutherland Fisheries Trust



Sources:

Fisheries Trust Boundaries, SG MS and SEPA (2011).

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Scottish Government Marine Scotland GIS team, February 2012, gj0627.

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