



# DEVERON FLYER



[www.deveron.org](http://www.deveron.org)

The Deveron, Bogie and Isla Rivers Charitable Trust



# 39

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

## ← 2020 catches

**1743 salmon and sea trout landed on the Deveron in 2020 but rod effort was down 40%.** During the season, Deveron anglers landed 1483 salmon & grilse (95% returned), 260 sea trout (97% returned) and 14 out of 52 beats reported 1308 brown trout (91% returned). Due to the COVID-19 restrictions, angling effort between Feb and end of May was insignificant and the season only commenced from June onwards. June, July, and October were the most productive months for rods with catches in August and September being curtailed due to prolonged low water. There was a notable increase in large salmon reported during the season with several fish over 20lbs being landed up and down the river. The 10th winner of the Morison Trophy for 2020 was Mr Michael McDonald. The salmon was caught on the fly and witnessed at Forglen. The salmon was accurately measured at 112cm (44.09 inches) long with 62cm (24.4 inches) girth and was estimated at 35lbs by using length to weight formulae.

## Malcolm Hay retires

'Malcolm Hay has retired as Chairman of the Deveron Fishery Board after 15 momentous years. He was also a founding member of our now well-established Trust. We thank you Malcolm for all your hard work, your care, and efforts in many ways large and small means that the river is in good shape.'

*Andrew Allwood, Chairman RDevDSFB*





‘Our fantastic volunteers and stakeholders put in over 800 hours of hogweed control in very challenging circumstances’

## Scottish Invasive Species Initiative update

Since 2018, we have been part of the Scottish Invasive Species Initiative (SISI), a 4-year partnership project which aims to work with local organisations and volunteers to control invasive non-native species along riversides in Northern Scotland, for the benefit of our native wildlife and communities. SISI is led by NatureScot and is funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund, NatureScot and by in-kind support from project partners and volunteers.

2020 was our third year of Giant hogweed, Himalayan balsam, Japanese knotweed and American mink control across the Deveron catchment, as part of SISI. In April, we said farewell to our project officer Al Reeve, with his position being taken over by Karen Muller, who was later joined by Jack Farge, in the seasonal role, in June.

In March, COVID-19 brought the world to a grinding halt, just as Giant hogweed started to rear its ugly head. SISI officer Karen spent two months in home office, focusing on the ‘Alien Detectives’ online education pack ([www.invasivespecies.scot/alien-detectives](http://www.invasivespecies.scot/alien-detectives)), featuring engaging activities, games and crafts about invasive species and river ecosystems.

Land managers and ghillies, stepped in to start tackling hogweed and in June our project officers Karen and Jack were finally able to head out with a more limited number of volunteers under social distancing measures, and our contractors also got the green light. Altogether, our fantastic

volunteers and stakeholders put in over 800 hours of hogweed control in very challenging circumstances and the dedication of everybody who has contributed to invasive species control this year deserves a big THANK YOU!

Another year of the Rosy burn landowner partnership to control hogweed, as well as our sheep trials at Auldtown and Macduff also went ahead successfully. We are very proud to say that all Giant hogweed control was completed once again, this year. Himalayan balsam unfortunately took a bit of a backseat in 2020 and was focused on priority areas, while Japanese knotweed control was completed catchment wide and is really showing success.

American mink control was continued by our volunteers, with catches predominantly from along the coast line and the middle Deveron. Mink appear to be on the rise in the Ythan catchment, which is a concern considering the close proximity to the Deveron and the nature of juvenile mink travelling potentially large distances in search of territory. We would ask everyone to keep their eyes peeled and report sightings.

We have adapted to continue our public outreach, delivering talks and presentations via video conference, with good success and the added benefit that we are able to reach people much further afield than usual.

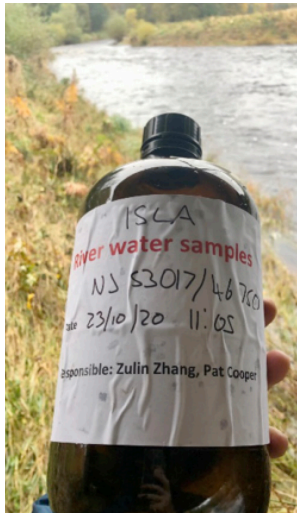
**Please report sightings of our target species to [karenmuller@deveron.org](mailto:karenmuller@deveron.org), 07483 319448.**

# Pesticides in the Deveron

Since June 2017, the Trust has been working with the James Hutton Institute (JHI) to monitor water quality in the River Deveron catchment.

Water samples were initially collected at the 3 sites on the Deveron Mainstem (upper, middle and lower) but this has now been increased to 8 sites to include the 5 major tributaries (Bogie, Isla, Fogue, Turriff and King Edward). The samples are collected when surface run off is high (after heavy rain) and the risk of contaminants entering the river is considered to be at its highest. The samples are analysed by the JHI for: dissolved nutrients (nitrate, ammonium, phosphate), acidity, suspended sediment, dissolved oxygen and a range of pesticides including Metaldehyde (slug control). Most of the parameters investigated are within expected values but we are concerned by the range of pesticides that have been detected in many of the samples and appear to be routinely entering the river during high rainfall events. Although this data needs to be viewed with the caveat that it is from a limited number of samples, it is still concerning that these chemicals are being routinely detected even if in very low concentrations.

	Chlorpyrifos (pesticide)	Epoxiconazole (fungicide)	Permethrin (insecticide)	Cypermethrin (insecticide)
Jun-17 (3 Sites)	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Medium
Oct-18 (3 Sites)	Medium	na	Medium	HIGH
Apr-19 (3 Sites)	Medium	na	Medium	Medium
October-19 (8 sites)	Medium	Low	Medium	Low or better



*Highest Observed Eco-toxicology assessment using a Risk Quotient analysis by JHI. (The risk quotient RQ is determined as the observed concentration / PNEC (Predicted no-effect concentration) as explained in Zhang et al. 2016)*

A longer-term study is required to fully understand seasonal fluctuations and potential sources. Using methods developed from a longer-term study on the River Ugie, the James Hutton Institute have compared the Deveron data to a system of ecotoxicological thresholds and applied categories of risk (Low, Medium and High) (see table above). Despite being banned

since 2016, Chlorpyrifos has routinely shown up in our samples at Medium Risk levels, Epoxiconazole at low levels, Permethrin at low to medium levels and of most concern, Cypermethrin, which has been detected frequently at medium levels and in October 2018 at High Risk levels.

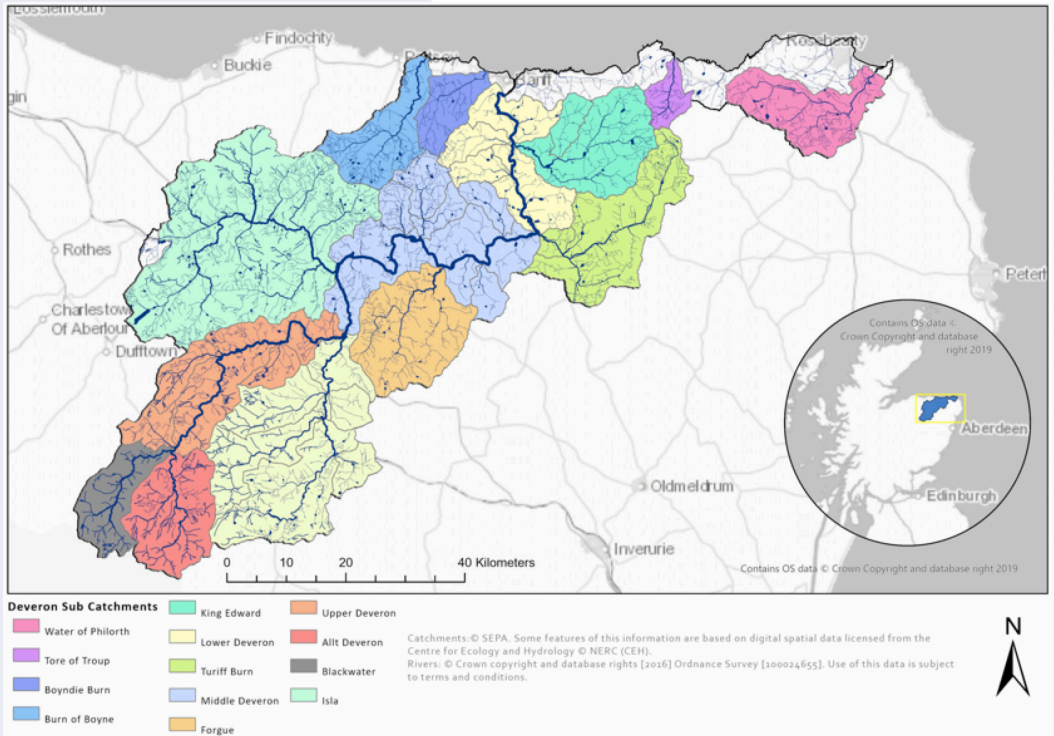


## How you can help...

We are working with the Atlantic Salmon Trust on projects that will contribute to their Likely Suspects Framework. This Framework focuses on the declines in wild stocks of Atlantic salmon and provides science-based initiatives identifying vital actions needed to ensure the future abundance of this iconic species. You can contribute in two ways:

1. Let us know about any known roosting sites for goosanders, heron, and cormorants so that we can come and collect scat samples (faeces) that can be used to tell us about the diet of these piscivorous birds.

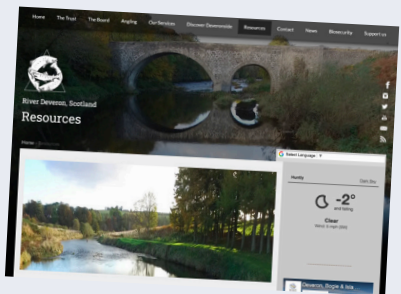
2. Inform us if you find any salmon or sea trout carcasses. After spawning most salmon will die and can be found on the riverbank or river margins. If you find a carcass or the remains of one please inform us ASAP. The eye lenses and otolith bones can help us understand what migratory behaviours and feeding habits make for a successful returning salmon.



# New Deveron Fishery Management plan 2020-23

To help manage the local fisheries district in a broad and structured manner the Deveron, Bogie and Isla Rivers Charitable Trust (DBIRT), in consultation with the River Deveron District Salmon Fishery Board (RDeVDSFB), Deveron Scientific Advisory Board, Fisheries Management Scotland (FMS) and stakeholders, have written a new Deveron Fisheries District Management Plan (DFDMP).

The DFDMP will be delivered by the DBIRT on behalf of the RDeVDSFB, which is the statutory body originated by the Salmon Fisheries Act of the 19th century and has management responsibility between Cowhythe Head and the Water of Philorth. The strategy of this plan is to establish a framework for sustainable management of the districts fish stocks and to



maintain and enhance the quality, extent, and status of its riverine habitats. The new plan can be viewed online at [www.deveron.org](http://www.deveron.org) under the Resources tab.

**For further information please contact**  
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