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# THE DEVERON FLYER

**The Deveron, Bogie and Isla Rivers Charitable Trust**

**Newsletter 38, spring 2020**

**Welcome to the 38th newsletter of the Deveron, Bogie & Isla Rivers Charitable Trust.**

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

## Casting off!

The River Deveron District Salmon Fishery Board (RDevDSFB) and The Deveron, Bogie and Isla Rivers Charitable Trust (DBIT) are delighted to announce the opening of the Deveron salmon season in association with The Deveron (Single Malt). The Morison Trophy will be presented at the opening ceremony on the 11th February (10am) at Turriff Angling Association lodge (by kind permission of Turriff Angling Association) and the opening ceremony will follow thereafter.

Special guest, Marina Gibson (right) will present the Morison Trophy and officially open the salmon season with a dram of 18 y/o Deveron malt. Marina is a passionate angler who was lucky enough to spend much of her childhood chasing salmon and trout. She is a certified Fly Fishers International casting instructor and 1st4Sport Level 2 Coach. Marina is sponsored by Orvis and is an ambassador for the Atlantic Salmon Trust & the Angling Trust. She recently launched The Northern Fishing School at Swinton Estate in the hope of teaching as many people the art of fly fishing and connect them with the great outdoors.



Mr Ronald Ewen (left), winner of the Morison Trophy (right) for 2019 will make the first cast of the season. Mr Ewen secured the trophy by landing a 25lbs spring salmon from Lower Netherdale. Thanks goes to Henderson's Country Sports (Turriff) for sponsoring the salmon rod that will be presented to Ronald for carefully releasing the winning salmon.



# Making Salmon Conservation a 'National Priority'

On the 7th of January, representatives from the Deveron Board/Trust attended a seminar organised by Fisheries Management Scotland and Scottish Land and Estates in the Scottish Parliament. The event was held to address a looming crisis in wild Atlantic salmon stocks. Environmental change, and a range of human impacts across the Northern Hemisphere are placing salmon at risk across their natural range and the event explored what can be done to reverse this trend and ensure a healthy future for Scotland's iconic salmon.

MSPs, fisheries managers, NGOs, ghillies, anglers and a range of national stakeholders participated in the event, which was sponsored by Michelle Ballantyne MSP, the species champion for Atlantic salmon.

The opening address was given by Environment Secretary Roseanna Cunningham, who announced £750,000 for a major project between the Scottish Government, Atlantic

Salmon Trust and Fisheries Management Scotland. The project will track salmon smolts from a number of rivers on the west coast of Scotland with a view to improving our understanding of migration routes.

Dr Alan Wells, Chief Executive of Fisheries Management Scotland said, "We welcome the announcement of this funding and are very grateful for the support for this important work. Understanding the migratory pathways used by our juvenile Atlantic salmon smolts has been recognised for many years as an important knowledge gap in our management of this iconic species.

"This programme of work will complement the work we are doing through the Salmon Interactions Working Group, to deliver a reformed regulatory regime for salmon aquaculture, in line with the recommendations of the Scottish Parliament Rural Economy and Connectivity Committee.

## The Crooksmill Burn Project – River Isla

Typical of many agricultural rivers in Scotland, the Crooksmill Burn has undergone significant change over recent decades such as channel dredging, embankment raising and channel straightening. The river also has a naturally high sediment load which has resulted in extensive gravel deposits throughout the river system. We are currently working with CBEC, local landowners and all key stakeholders to explore opportunities to take forward restoration proposals originally developed in 2013. We recently held a workshop in Keith with SEPA, CBEC, Moray Council and Bear Scotland to discuss proposals.



The current state of the burn now requires to be re-assessed (fluvial audit) for changes since 2013. We will then meet with the individual landowners and identify options to take forward and hopefully begin to restore this vital habitat for salmon and trout.



### Help us find the Northern February red

The Northern February red stonefly (*Brachyptera putata*) is found only in Scottish rivers. We need your help to map which rivers it lives in. It's easy to get involved by following the three steps below:

#### Step 1

Look at fenceposts alongside the river in February and March to see if they have stoneflies on them.



#### Step 2

Take a picture of the stoneflies on the post.



#### Step 3

Send your photographs to: [scotland@buglife.org.uk](mailto:scotland@buglife.org.uk)

Please use the subject 'STONEFLY' and include the following information:

- Your name
- Photograph date
- River name
- Location (grid reference if possible)

You can also tweet your photo and information to @BuglifeScotland

Photo credits: Gus Jones and Stewart Taylor

## Conservation Status Assessment for the 2020 Angling Season

Following significant changes to the Scottish Governments salmon conservation assessment model, the River Deveron has been reclassified as Category 2 for the 2020 season. The new classification states that management action is necessary to reduce exploitation: catch and release should be promoted strongly in the first instance. The need for mandatory catch and release will be reviewed annually. In line with the new categorisation, the RDevDSFB has reviewed the Deveron Angling Code for salmon and trout and have recommended the code remain unchanged.

It is again important to highlight that it is illegal to take any salmon from 11th February to 31st March (inclusive). Anglers should use appropriate tackle to ensure the quick and safe release of any salmon caught, e.g. spinning lures used should have one single set of hooks with a maximum size 4 crimped or barbless.

The Water of Philorth (coastal) has again been classified as a Category 3 river, which requires all salmon to be returned by law throughout the 2020 season.



## 2019 Catches

The total salmon rod catch of 1502 was up considerably from 475 the previous year, but is still down on the long term average (1952-2019) of 2397. Of the 1502 salmon and grilse caught, 88% were returned. Spring salmon catches (to the end of May) totalled 90 of which 93% were returned. The sea trout catch was 286, an increase of 39% from the 206 caught in 2018 with a commendable 97% returned by rods in line with the Deveron Angling Code. 10 beats recorded brown trout totalling 1167.



# DEVERON ANGLING CODE FOR SALMON & TROUT 2020

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

## **Salmon & Grilse**

1. From 11th February to 31st May (inclusive) all salmon to be returned. It is illegal to take any salmon (dead or alive) from 11th February to 31st March (inclusive) each year.

The River Deveron District Salmon Fishery Board will donate one bottle of Scotch Whisky per angler, for safely returning a spring salmon between the 1st April and 31st May.

(Follow set claim procedure and Call 01466 711 388 to claim - strictly over 18s only.)

2. From 1st June to 31st October (Inclusive), weekly rods may retain one salmon or grilse per rod per day with a maximum of one per rod per week. Day rods to return all salmon.

Anglers are asked to observe the Board's aspiration that all hen fish, and any cock salmon over 10lbs be returned. Therefore, the Board requests that only male fish under 10lbs be retained.

## **Sea Trout**

3. All sea trout to be returned throughout the season

The guidance on sea trout will be in place until stocks recover to sustainable levels.

## **Brown Trout**

4. From 15th March to 6th October (Inclusive), all Brown Trout under 10 inches in length to be returned. No more than 2 brown trout per rod per week to be retained.

It is illegal to fish without legal right or written permission from the beat owner or representative.

It is illegal to kill unclean or unseasonable fish (baggots, gravid fish, kelts).

It is illegal to sell or buy wild salmon roe.

It is illegal to attempt to deliberately foul-hook fish.

Only knotless landing nets to be used – it is illegal to use gaffs or tailers.

It is illegal to fish with prawns, shrimps or salmon roe throughout the catchment and throughout the year.

Fishing for salmon and/or sea trout on a Sunday is prohibited.

Spinning lures should have only one single set of hooks with a maximum sized 4 crimped or barbless.

Anglers are reminded that it is illegal to sell rod caught salmon or sea trout.

Injured or damaged fish out with the above limits must be handed to the proprietor.

All farmed salmon and pink salmon (*Oncorhynchus gorbusha*) must be retained and notified to the RDevDSFB.

All visiting anglers must read, act upon and sign a *Gyrodactylus salaris* declaration form immediately prior to going fishing.

If disinfectant is required, please contact RDevDSFB Office (01466 711 388) or your beat Ghillie/Manager/Agent.

For further information please contact:

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**Telephone: 01466 711388**

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