

BRIEFLY...**Obstacle removal**

With the assistance of two enthusiasts we have removed trees and other blockages from the River Isla (see right) and Craigston burn. We also trimmed 100 metres of large conifer trees which were over-shading the burn.

**Hogweed control**

We have walked the entire length of the Isla and some areas of the Deveron spraying hogweed. We are still hoping to receive funding over a 3 year period to continue this programme and extend it to the River Bogie system. It is envisaged that funding will be in place for next spring.

**Springer convention**

Congratulations to local angler, Richard Breakell (right) who was the first to claim a side of smoked salmon when he caught and safely returned a 6lb fish which he caught at Carnousie on 28th May. He also returned a 10lb fish on the 30th May which was caught from Upper Netherdale. The Deveron system produces approximately 100 rod-caught Spring salmon annually, despite the temptation after a long hard winter to "take" Spring fish your board urges restraint on this very special resource. The Deveron board intends to continue the side of smoked salmon reward scheme next year.



- Special thanks to Ron Wilson who provided his expertise in willow spilling. It was tested to the full during the Isla installation when we were forced off the river with a 5 foot spate. Even though work was not complete it stood up to the forces of nature until we returned a week later.

Parasite control still our highest priority

The DBI TRust has made a call for local water sport enthusiasts to take action to stop the introduction of a deadly salmon parasite.

Biologist for the Deveron Richard Miller, recently attended Kinnairdy Castle to highlight the importance of stopping the killer salmon parasite from entering local rivers.

The Gyrodactylus Salaris parasite is highly contagious and has devastated freshwater salmon stocks in a number of countries including Norway.

A fishing party arrived at the Deveron recently – from Germany and Norway. To promote best practice in stopping the Gyrodactylus Salaris parasite from reaching our river, Richard Miller explained to the visitors the importance of carrying out all precautionary measures possible before fishing. River keepers Jim and Lorna Smith then helped to disinfect the anglers' equipment, waders and jackets.

It is not only fishermen who have to be careful not to introduce this deadly parasite but also water sports enthusiasts and visitors to the river who come for for work or pleasure.

All fishing beats and water sports clubs which are receiving visiting guests are encouraged to fill in the declaration form (available at www.deveron.org/wb/pages/current.php or from the DBI Trust office) and take precautionary measures.

www.deveron.org• **Board report**Working for you [See centre pages](#)

- **Hatchery latest**
275,000 salmon fry under starters orders [See centre pages](#)
- **Action on the Isla** [See back page](#)

THE DEVERON FLYER

The Deveron, Bogie and Isla Rivers Charitable Trust

Newsletter 12, Summer 2007

Welcome to the twelfth 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'

Spilling the willow

The Trust has received £7,900 from the Lottery Fund 'Awards For All' to raise awareness of the benefits of 'environmentally friendly' bank repairs and fencing.

After spates have damaged the river bank, leading to loss of land and essential bank-face vegetation landowners and farmers have tended to rely on removing the substrate (rocks and gravel) from the river bed to place on the river banks which invariably is washed away by subsequent spates. This is not only a waste of resources but is a contributory factor to loss of spawning and juvenile habitat for fish – one of the reasons the Trust was set up to protect and preserve.

After seeing willow work that the Tweed Forum had carried out on the Gala Water it was decided to set up 'Pioneer sites' on the Rivers Bogie and Isla to demonstrate that there are alternative methods of bank repair with longer term benefits for both sectors (agriculture and angling).

The woven willow panels are 'planted' in the river bank or bed



Ron Wilson and Richie Miller erecting willow panels on the Bogie



Willow bank repair on the Isla

and tied into the bank with live willow stakes. With the correct growing conditions, the willow will produce shoots and in time will cover the bank with willow trees, stabilising the bank with its extensive root system and provide cover for fish and other wildlife such as the endangered water-vole. The longer term benefit is the reduction of silt loading of the area which should provide cleaner spawning gravels. This is the first element of our

project with 1200 metres of stock fencing and 2 hard standing cattle waterings with flood gates to follow during the summer.

Once complete we intend to promote this alternative to those who jump into their digger first with the resultant loss of biodiversity for wildlife.

For further information please contact The Project Officer at
The Offices, Avochie, Rothiemay, Huntly, Aberdeenshire AB54 7YY Telephone/fax: 01466 711388;
email: robinvasey@deveron.org or visit the Trust's website www.deveron.org
The Deveron, Bogie and Isla Rivers Charitable Trust is a registered charity. No. SC 032131

Hatching plans for 2007/8

All this year's hatchery stock have now successfully emerged from their hatching units and are all feeding well. Modification to the hatchery water supply at the end of last year has improved the water quality immensely thus the hatchery stock is consistently receiving a good quality, highly oxygenated supply

At present Loch Park hatchery

contains approximately 275,000 salmon fry, with a planned release date of August as (0+) parr. A small initial release of around 10,000 fed fry is planned mid-July (weather permitting) to reduce the stocking density of a number of tanks. In line with FRS's guidelines, all fish will be stocked out close to the areas of the catchment that broodstock

originated from. It is planned that stocking will take place in areas that are proven to be underpopulated along with areas above man-made obstructions. Most of the 2006/07-season broodstock originated from the upper Deveron. The Trust is planning to rear a number of local sea trout ova during the coming hatchery season along with the usual

salmon programme. By using the hatchery programme along with various habitat enhancement works it is hoped that sea trout-smolt production in the Deveron will increase.

The DBI Trust would like to appeal for the donation of rod caught sea trout from mid-September to be used for the hatchery programme. For each



fish donated your name will be entered into a draw for various prizes including bottles of 25-year-old Deveronside whisky (50% proof) from the Banff

distillery. All rod caught fish for donation must be handled carefully, preferably with the fish remaining in the water during unhooking. To arrange for broodstock collection please call Richie Miller on: 07730554170 or 01466711388. Please note all visitors are welcome to the Loch Park hatchery, to arrange a tour please call 01542 810727.

Board report

Your Board met on June 8th, and prior to the formal meeting, Trust chairman Robert Shields introduced Richard Miller, our new Biologist. Richard gave an account of his impressive career to date, as well as an update on the hatchery. This was all good news with some 275,000 to 280,000 fry being made ready for release at the end of July, targeted at areas where the electro-fishing surveys had shown up population deficiencies, or those previously sterile areas the Trust had opened up with its program of removing in-stream obstructions. Richard indicated that he thought the tanks a little over crowded, and intimated he might wish to free up space by releasing some fish as early as the end of June. The hatchery is in sparkling condition, kept beautifully tidy by Evelyn, and with the excellent interpretation boards, has become a great educational facility as well. There are plans to improve sections of the Drumhendry Burn which runs along side to



'Canoeists should be warned of the deadly danger posed by placing boats in the river'

illustrate "ideal" spawning/juvenile fish habitat so visitors may see at first hand how they can improve their own streams in a practical and useful manner.

Top of the Agenda was the immensely serious threat presented to our river by *Gyrodactylus salaris*. Posters, leaflets, and declaration forms confirming angler compliance with the disinfectant code have been issued to all proprietors, fishing clubs, and as many fishermen as possible. However, it is not only fishermen who need to be vigilant – any river user with any kit that has been used overseas could unwittingly

introduce this deadly parasite. As a result, the Board is investigating the use of fencepost signs for access points used by canoeists and others to warn of the

deadly danger posed by placing pieces of equipment, boats etc in the river which have been used overseas and which have not been properly cleaned and disinfected.

It is extremely depressing that reports continue to dribble in about dredging and canalisation of streams, and the seemingly incessant desire to dig ponds and fill them with rainbow trout. It is very difficult for the Board to police, let alone prevent these disastrous activities and your vigilance and support is much needed in educating the perpetrators and helping them see the error of their ways. Often, the Board only finds out when it is already too late, and little can be done to alleviate the damage.

Your Chairman attended several on site meetings on the Water of Philorth. The Fraserburgh Angling Association had been suffering severe problems in accessing their fishings owing to encroachment of a massive reed bed that had established alongside the river, exacerbated by the silting up of the estuary and continuing bank erosion. Happily, representatives of Aberdeenshire Council, who own the nature reserve running along the north bank, could understand the fishermen's plight and plans are in hand to create access to the river by cutting the reeds in strategic locations. The Council has even agreed to a limited amount of bank revetment which both should help the erosion issue as well as increase the flow levels and hence avoid some of



the build up of sediment.

This timely action by Aberdeenshire Council is to be applauded, and any help from any quarter is always gratefully received. While we do all we can to ease the passage of migratory fish, there has never been a more critical time for anglers to show restraint in terms of the level of exploitation of our salmonids. We, on the Deveron, have an excellent record in terms of our actual catch and release statistics and I would encourage you all to continue to play your part. We have a fairly generous voluntary policy on catch and release, and we are able to continue that way because most of our fishermen are extremely responsible and care for the future of their sport by returning almost everything they catch.

Like any other organisation, your Board is plagued by continually rising costs. However, despite this, it is gratifying to be able to announce that the assessments payable by proprietors can be marginally reduced for this coming year to 57p in the pound.

Finally, I appeal to all riparian owners to tackle the increasing threat from giant hogweed. This is a particularly pernicious pest and it is soul destroying for those who take responsibility and deal with it to find that others, upstream of them, have done nothing and so rendered futile their efforts. The Trust carries out a lot of hogweed control, so, if you don't know what to do, please give them a call.

by Malcolm Hay, Board Chairman