

January 2021 Issue

*The Scottish Flyfisher
Quarterly Magazine*

Edinburgh's Best Kept Secret



Welcome to the January 2021 edition of the **Scottish Flyfisher**, the quarterly magazine by fly fishers for fly fishers covering all aspects of fly fishing within Scotland whether it is river, loch or a local fly fishery.

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If you would like to contribute a free story or a fishing report along with Photographs; please email those to editor.scottishflyfisher@gmail.com
Please include a bio about yourself so that it can be added to your article.

Cover photo Loch Doon

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Loch Bach

Editors Notes:

As everyone now knows. Scotland is in full lockdown again! It is now causing a lot of concern and upset within the fly-fishing world especially between the various trout fisheries here in Scotland.

There is a number of fishery owners/managers causing upset by name calling and downing the various fisheries that are staying open during the lockdown.

As a keen and avid fly fisher myself, I appreciate that there are concerns regarding the speed and spread of the new variant strain of the virus. There are some absolutely crazy arseholes out there who don't give a monkey about other people as long as they get what they want. Whether it is, 100's of bog rolls to wipe their arse with for the next 100 years or don't follow the governments guidelines regarding keeping themselves safe, as well as everyone else.

As a keen angler I am always keen to get out on the water for sanity reasons. I lost my wife of 40 years in July 2019 and went through a really tough time of it being on my own, even though I had a son and daughter and grandkids along with some really close friends. Then in March 2020, I ended up catching the bloody Covid-19 virus and went into self-isolation as instructed. Then later on due to the virus, I had complications and ended up in hospital on oxygen for 4 days. To be honest it was that bad I even thought of ending it all myself a couple of times. However, with the help of my family, friends and fishing buddies I managed to pull through but not everyone has the comfort of family and friends to support them.

If it wasn't for being able to get out and about to various venues to cast a line or two and speak to my fishing buddies, I think I would either be in a mental hospital or dead from an overdose. That's how important it is to me to be able to get out there on the water, and I believe it is the same for many more like me.

The government guidelines state that all outdoor non-contact sports, despite the various restrictions, such as golf and tennis (as well as fly fishing) are permitted for all age groups provided this is within a single household group, or the group contains no more than 2 people from 2 different households.

I accept that everyone has their own opinion and have freedom of speech, but I feel it is bloody ridiculous for the various fly fishery owners/managers to call other fishery owners etc. names and cause a lot of trouble due to them staying open, which by law they are entitled to do.

If the fishery managers and fly fishers stick by both the government guidelines and the fishery rules, then the fisheries keeping open are a benefit for everyone especially people like me that need to get out and about for sanity reasons and to keep the fisheries afloat and help to put food on the tables of their families through these trying times, as not every fishery will survive through another major lockdown if they are forced to close.

So support each other instead of back stabbing and name calling as you may not know the circumstances the other fishery owners are in, mentally or financially and most importantly as you know what goes around comes around and you may need their support one day.



Have Your Say Here

If you have any questions or issues regarding fishing within Scotland, then why not have your say here and see what advice you can get from the fly-fishing community.

Fly Fishing in Scotland's Lochs and Lakes



Amongst the heather clad hills and valleys of Scotland there are some very nice Fly Fisheries that offer a great choice of waters for the discerning fly fisherman/woman from natural brown trout waters to large Lochs like Loch Leven for that wild brown trout experience and Lakes, like the Lake of Menteith on the left who can offer you 700 acres of pure fishing pleasure for both brown and rainbow trout. As they say there is nothing better than a —Guid Auld Scots Welcomell.

All the fishery managers, whether they are a small or large fishery will give you a great Scottish welcome and the best advice for your days fishing on their water.

Nowhere in the world can offer such a wide variety of fishing for wild brown trout than Scotland.

There are well over 30.000 lochs and lochans throughout Scotland including hundreds of major rivers, streams and burns in beautiful stunning countryside to wet the keen fly fisherman/woman's appetite.

If you take a look at a map of Scotland you will find a location not too far away from where you want to base yourself when travelling through this lovely land. From late spring and early summer, the rivers, streams and burns offer a challenge to the dry fly aficionado.

The wily Scottish Brownie is extremely educated and demanding. You will require all your skills, cunning and precision casting to present your dry fly or wet fly to the fish.

Even if you do present your fly absolutely perfectly, the wee wily brownie will sometimes just swim up look at your offerings and if you look hard enough you will see it shake its head as if to say not good enough and swim away again.

There is a Trout Protection Order on several of Scotland's better rivers in the interests of conservation. Whilst the fish populations of the majority of the lochs in Scotland are dominated by brown trout of 8oz or less, they are usually free rising and free taking; such places are ideal for a family day out whereby the children can have their first introduction to fly fishing.

There are some lochs that offer the occasional trophy fish between 2lb and 6lb. Some of the deeper lochs usually contain small populations of ferox trout, a strain of slow growing heavy brown trout often with cannibalistic tendencies, which can grow to great weights (up to 20lb or more).

Loch Awe: - Loch Awe is one of Scotland's largest fresh water lochs with Brown & Rainbow Trout, Salmon, Sea Trout and Char and coarse angling for Pike, Perch and Roach. Loch Awe is famous for its British Record for a wild Brownie of 31lb 11oz. Some 24 miles long and quite narrow, Loch Awe forms a considerable catchment area for the many feeder burns flowing from the surrounding mountains. Water quality is high and the fish population thrive in this rich, natural feeding area. The many bays vary in size and depth and each has its own particular attraction – shallow, sandy, rocky, reedy.

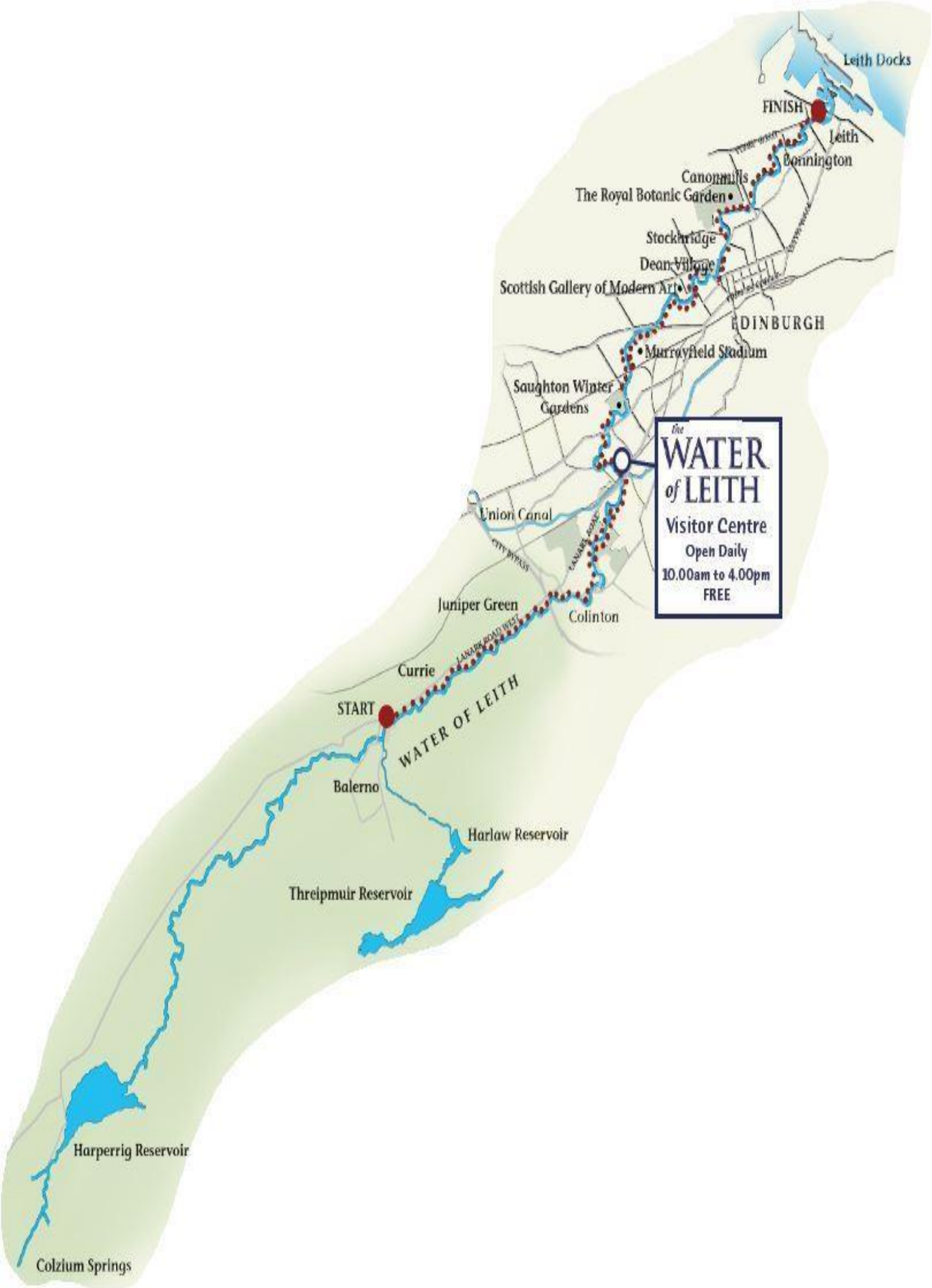
Loch Awe has always been famous for its wild brown trout, having broken the British rod-caught record four times over the last decade. It is, however, its reputation for good mixed bags of 8oz - 3lb trout that still attracts the majority of anglers. Whether novice or purist, young or old;

Loch Awe has a great deal to offer both game and coarse fishermen.

Fishing permits are available at several outlets throughout Central Scotland. Local outlets are Loch Awe Stores in Lochawe, Loch Awe Boats at Ardbrecknish, and Awe Service Station at Bridge of Awe.

There are many more lochs and lochans that are not even mentioned in fishing books, on the web or in magazines as they are owned by private landlords or consortiums.

Also, some are well kept secrets due to how good they are at fishing. However, if you investigate hard enough you will be able to glean the information from local's and other fishermen/women that you know who have fished the areas, plus contacting the private landowners for access to their private lochs and lochans.



Leith Docks

FINISH

Leith
Bonnington

Canonmills

The Royal Botanic Garden

Stockbridge

Dean Village

Scottish Gallery of Modern Art

EDINBURGH

Murrayfield Stadium

Saughton Winter
Gardens

the
WATER
of **LEITH**
Visitor Centre
Open Daily
10.00am to 4.00pm
FREE

Union Canal

Juniper Green

Colinton

Currie

START

WATER OF LEITH

Balerno

Harlaw Reservoir

Threipmuir Reservoir

Harperrig Reservoir

Colzium Springs

Edinburgh's Best Kept Secret

Few British cities offer citizens and visitors alike stream fishing for brown trout, but Edinburgh's Water of Leith passes just half a mile north of the shoppers on Princes Street.

When I was a spotty faced kid; my favorite place to fly fish then was the Water of Leith in Edinburgh. I used to fish it from Balerno down to Gorgie and then from Dean Village down to behind the then Powderhall Dog Stadium.

On my holidays I used to load up my Raleigh bicycle with my fishing rod and gear and cycle to Balerno to start a good days fishing on the water, mind you looking back it was quite a task fishing a stretch of water then getting the bike before moving on to the next stretch; having to climb over various walls and through bushes etc to get a clear area to move on to and fish.

The river rises way out West in the Pentland Hills and rushes and gurgles it's way at first through open moorland, then fields of sheep and cattle, and reaches the outer suburbs of Balerno in it's wooded and secluded valley.

It emerges at Slateford and becomes a city river, darting and twisting round sharp bends, over weirs and under many bridges to slide into the Forth estuary at Leith after a journey of 24 miles (38 km) and a fall of 1000 feet (305 m). It is accompanied from Balerno by the newly-completed Water of Leith Walkway, which provides better access for much of the fishing along the way.

The river is usually home to thousands of brown trout. As a consequence of CoEC funding pressures and decisions made, the river has not been stocked for around three years. There is no expectation that it will be stocked any time soon. Grayling have appeared in the last 10 years and have spread throughout the lower river.

The best parts to fish were at Balerno where the Water of Leith starts as you used to get the rainbow and wild brownie escapees from Harlaw Reservoir, if you were lucky you could get yourself a nice fat 2-3 pounder for the pot. There is no figures to accurately gauge the current stock of trout in the river, and informative permit returns showing anglers' successes have been in very short supply as no one seems to bother lately to return the forms; so it has been difficult to accurately judge the annual catch numbers and specimen profile.

Fishing on the Water of Leith from Balerno Bridge to Bonnington is free at the moment but you do need a permit. The river is managed now by City of Edinburgh Council (CoEC) with the assistance of Fishing Advisers who deal with the distribution of Permits to the issuing outlets such as Water of Leith Heritage Centre, local fishing tackle shops and local post offices, also a couple of CoEC offices.

The season opens on 1st April and runs until 30th September.

Permits are essential to ensure that you know the regulation and comply with these; they are available from a number of outlets.

New Rules to fish the water

Catch and Release Only; all fish must be returned

Barbless Hooks to be used at all times

Permits are non transferable and must be carried at all times and produced on request of Honorary Bailiffs, Police Officers and Fisheries Officers

Methods of Fishing

Balerno to Bogs Bridge in the Dells - Fly Fishing Only

Bogs Bridge to Leith - fly or bait fishing

Spinning is Prohibited

Fixed Line is Prohibited

Please remove all discarded line and tackle and **all rubbish** from the river banks

What type of Fishing can you do?

Fly fishing - for the length of the river we recommend wet flies size 14/18 nymphs with lines of 3lb breaking strain. Dry fly fishing is recommended in summer only as there is a prolific hatch throughout the season

Bait fishing - from Slateford down to West Bowling Green Street bridge in Bonnington only. Maggots or small worms are best, fishing with a 3lb breaking strain and small hook.

What will you catch?

Brown Trout, Grayling, Eels, Stone loach, Minnow, 3 Spined Stickleback and Flounder. Please note Salmon and Sea Trout fishing is Not Allowed and that River Lamprey and Bullheads are rare and protected so it is illegal to disturb them.

Get your free fishing permit from: Post Offices at Juniper Green, Currie and Balerno; Fishing Tackle Shops across the city and the Water of Leith Visitor Centre.

So get a permit, fish safe and enjoy the river!



Free Wild Loch Fishing



There is a body of thought that there is free loch fishing for wild brown trout in Scotland, in some cases there is.

However, be prepared for the full force of the law to be taken against you by the riparian land owner bordering onto the lochs.

Unlike other countries (including England and Wales) Scotland at the present moment in time has no State licensing system for fishing.

It is however a criminal offence to fish for salmon without legal right or written permission and generally it is a civil offence to fish for other fishes.

Details of the most significant statutes that apply are given below.

Much of this information was derived from "The Law of Game, Salmon & Freshwater Fishing in Scotland" by Stanley Scott Robinson*. It is not to be taken as a definitive description of the laws.

Relevant Acts should instead be consulted.

* The Law of Game, Salmon & Freshwater Fishing in Scotland. Stanley Scott Robinson. Published by Butterworths and the Law Society of Scotland, 1990.

Salmon

Definition:

Section 24(1) of the Salmon and Freshwater Fisheries (Protection) (Scotland) Act 1951 defines salmon as:

"Salmon" includes all migratory fish of the species *Salmo salar* and *Salmo trutta* and commonly known as salmon and sea trout respectively or any part of any such fish"

Ownership of and access to salmon fishing

Ownership:

Until captured, salmon are wild animals. Once captured, the salmon belongs at common law to the captor. However, numerous statutes forbidding the taking of salmon without right or written permission, and forfeitures imposed by statute, have made possession of salmon safe only where they have been taken by lawful means. Nevertheless, the basic position is that it is not the salmon but the right to fish for them that is owned.

Thus, nobody may fish for salmon in rivers or estuaries or in the sea within territorial limits without permission of the Crown or the party vested in the Crown rights. In many cases in rivers, estuaries and in the sea, the rights have been granted to private individuals, companies, local authorities and others. Salmon fishing rights are heritable titles and may be held separately from ownership of the land or may have been given along with ownership of the land. Where the right is held separately from the land, the proprietor of the right has an implied right of access for the purpose of exercising his right to fish for salmon. The fishing right must be exercised in such a way that it causes the least prejudice to the rights of the riparian owner.

The right to fish for salmon carries with it the inferior right to fish for trout but this right must not be exercised in a way that will interfere with the rights of the riparian owner.

Access:

Section 1 of the 1951 Act (as amended by the Salmon Act 1986) states:

"1. If any person without legal right, or without written permission from a person having such right, fishes for or takes salmon in any waters including any part of the sea within one mile of mean low water springs, he shall be guilty of an offence "

Thus, access to salmon fishing is available only to the owner of a salmon fishery or with the express, written permission of the owner. The owner may attach conditions to the permission, such as method, location, times available etc. The owner may not, however, give permission to do anything that is unlawful. No rod licence is required.

Access to rod fisheries for those without right is thus by private agreement with the owner. Access is widely available throughout Scotland but costs involved depend on a number of factors, including catch expectations, whether accommodation is attached, whether a ghillie is provided and so on.

Regulations

Weekly Close Times:

The prohibition of fishing for salmon during the weekly close time is contained in section 13 of the 1951 Act, as amended by the Freshwater and Salmon Fisheries (Scotland) Act 1976 (section 7 and Schedule 3) and the Salmon (Weekly Close Time) (Scotland) Regulations 1988 (SI 1988/390) made under the terms of section 3(3) of the 1986 Act.

Angling - the weekly close time for rods is Sunday.

Annual Close Times:

Section 6(1) of the 1986 Act requires that the annual close time shall be a continuous period of not less than 168 days and is to apply to every mode of fishing for or taking salmon except during periods within the close time when it is permitted to fish by rod and line. The annual close time for the River Tweed is a continuous period of not less than 153 days.

The exact dates of annual close times vary between Salmon Fishery Districts but are generally from about the end of August to mid- February.

The close seasons for most Salmon Fishery Districts date from byelaws of 1864 and 1865 made under section 6(5) of the Salmon Fisheries (Scotland) Act 1862. That Act was repealed by the 1986 Act but the byelaws were preserved. Close seasons for other Districts have been defined in Statutory Instruments relating to the Districts concerned.

Under the terms of section 6 of the 1986 Act, the Scottish Ministers may prescribe for any district the dates and times of the annual close time (although it may not be made less than 168 days), and the periods within that close time when it is permitted to take salmon by rod and line, and may make different provisions for different parts of the district.

Fishing by rod and line:

Section 24(1) of the 1951 Act, as amended by section 8(6) of the 1986 Act, defines rod and line as: "single rod and line with such bait or lure as is lawful at the passing of this Act and, in the case of fishing for salmon in an area to which and at a time during which regulations made under section 8 of the Salmon Act 1986 apply, is not specified in such regulations in respect of that area and time".

This definition has been taken to preclude the use of double rod fishing, cross line fishing, set lines, otter fishing, burning the water etc as proscribed in the Trout (Scotland) Act 1860, which was repealed by the 1951 Act.

Application may be made by a District salmon Fishery Board to Scottish Ministers to make regulations specifying baits and lures that may not be used in its district. The proposal may apply for different times when and areas where the regulations take effect. Eighteen Orders specifying baits and lures have been made, usually to prohibit the use of shrimps, prawns or worms as bait and the use of lures bearing multiple sets of hooks.

Freshwater Fish

Definition:

Section 24(1) of the 1951 Act defines freshwater fish as:

"Freshwater fish" means any fish living in fresh water, including trout, and eels and the fry of eels, but exclusive of salmon and of any kind of fish which migrate between the open sea and tidal waters;"

Section 24(1) of the 1951 Act defines trout as:

"Trout" means non-migratory trout of the species *Salmo trutta* living in fresh waters or estuaries;"

Ownership:

Private waters

Until captured, freshwater fish are wild animals. Once captured, the fish belongs at common law to the captor. However, the legal right to take such fish as can be captured belongs to the proprietor of the land which is contiguous to the river, stream or loch in which the fish are to be found. Thus, although there is no right of property in the fish before capture, only the proprietor of the lands or those authorised by him, have the right of fishing for them. Except in the case of waters subject to a Protection Order and in the waters entering the Solway, protection of the fishing right depends upon the common law of trespass. The remedy of a proprietor or occupier against an unauthorised fisherman is to order him from the locus, and, in the event of refusal or threatened repetition, to initiate an action of interdict.

The broad principles involved are:

No one has any right to trespass upon the lands of another for the purpose of fishing;

No one, even if he is lawfully on the bank of a river or loch under a right of access, has the right to fish in the river or loch;

Members of the public, having neither title nor right, cannot establish a right by any usage of fishing for however long a period, as against a proprietor having title to the land over which the stream flows.

These are principles of civil law and can be enforced only in civil proceedings.

Apart from in the Solway and where Protection Orders are in force, there is only one case where unauthorised fishing by a trespasser can be made the subject of criminal proceedings, and this is under the Theft Act 1607. The Act applies to an ordinary fish pond, or "stank", enclosed all round where the fish may no longer be said to be feeding in a state of nature. It applies to any artificial pond or reservoir which has been stocked by the owner and which has neither inlet nor outlet. Any person removing trout from a stank without authority from the owner or occupier of the land surrounding it is guilty of theft. It is open to question whether anyone taking fish from an ordinary river or stream which has been stocked is guilty of theft.

In the case of a loch acquired by a Water Authority, a previous owner may reserve rights of fishing but the fishing must not be done in such a way that it will interfere with the purity of the water.

Public waters

Public waters are those which are both navigable and tidal. The tide must ebb and flow at the point where the right is claimed and the right extends up rivers as far as ordinary spring tides.

Fishing for freshwater fish

In general, the only permitted method of fishing for freshwater fish is by rod and line as defined in Section 24(1) of the 1951 Act, as amended by section 8(6) of the 1986 Act. However, under section 2(2) of the 1951 Act, in any pond or loch, where all proprietors agree, a right of fishing for trout by net may be exercised, and in any inland water, a proprietor or occupier having a right of freshwater fishing may take any freshwater fish other than trout by means of a net or trap.

Access

In general, it is not a criminal offence to fish for or take trout in Scotland. However, this does not imply that there is, as some would assert, a free right to fish anywhere. The rights of riparian owners are protected by principles of civil law and permission should be sought before fishing.

There are some differences in relation to waters flowing into the Solway Firth. Section 9 of the Solway Act 1804 (this section is still in force) makes it an offence to fish for salmon or other fish without permission. However, this no longer applies to the River Annan and Border Esk. The 1951 Act is usually used in the case of salmon.

Protection Orders

Protection Orders may be made under the 1976 Act. Section 1 of this Act states that:

"Where Scottish Ministers are satisfied that, if proposals submitted under this section were implemented, there would be a significant increase in the availability of fishing for freshwater fish in inland waters to the which the proposals relate, they may, subject to subsection (3) below, make an order (in this Act referred to as a "Protection Order");"

Thirteen Protection Orders are currently in force. The locations of the areas covered are shown on the map. Principal statutory offences relating to fishing for freshwater fish

Where a Protection Order is in operation, it is an offence to fish for or take fish from inland waters in the prescribed area without legal right or written permission from the person having such right. (Freshwater and Salmon Fisheries (Scotland) Act 1976)

Where a Protection Order is in operation, it is an offence to contravene any prohibition contained in that order or to attempt to commit such an offence or do any act preparatory to the commission thereof. (Freshwater and Salmon Fisheries (Scotland) Act 1976)

Where a Protection Order is in operation, it is an offence to wilfully obstruct or refuse to allow a warden or other authorised person to exercise his statutory powers of enquiry, entry and seizure. (Freshwater and Salmon Fisheries (Scotland) Act 1976)

It is an offence to fish for or take freshwater fish in inland waters other than by rod and line. The use of double rod fishing is unlawful. (Salmon and Freshwater Fisheries (Protection) (Scotland) Act 1951)

It is an offence to fish for trout during the annual close time, which is between 7 October and 14 March. This offence and the offence of having trout in possession during the annual close time does not apply to the owner, occupier or lessee of any water where trout are kept in captivity or artificially reared and fed, or any employee there for that purpose, or to any person to whom such fish have been consigned for e.g. stocking. (Freshwater Fisheries (Scotland) Act 1902, amended by Trout (Scotland) Act 1933)

Subject to the above, having trout in possession during the annual close time is an offence. (Freshwater Fisheries (Scotland) Act 1902, amended by Trout (Scotland) Act 1933)

It is an offence to possess non-migratory trout or instruments, poisons or explosives which could be used for taking trout, in circumstances which afford reasonable grounds for suspecting that the accused had obtained possession of such trout or the instruments etc as a result or for the purpose of committing an offence against sections 1-4 of the Salmon and Freshwater Fisheries (Protection) (Scotland) Act 1951

It is an offence for any owner, occupier or lessee of water where trout are kept in captivity and artificially reared and fed to take any trout during the annual close time except for scientific or breeding purposes or for removal to other waters. (Freshwater Fisheries (Scotland) Act 1902, and Trout (Scotland) Act 1933)

So if you want to take a chance on some free wild brown trout fishing, the following page gives a couple of locations that is meant to be free. Or investigate on the net for Lochs within Scotland and see who owns the land around the loch. If it is riparian land owners then seek their permission before you fish, if it belongs to the Scottish Land Agency it is normally free to fish.

Fishing Loch Doon

Loch Doon is a body of water, in Carrick, Scotland. The River Doon issues from its northern end, while the loch itself receives waters from Loch Enoch (in the Galloway Hills) via Eglin Lane.

In the 13th century, it was a site of a castle owned by the Earls of Carrick. During the Scottish Wars of Independence it was held by one Gille Brighde, Sir Gilbert de Carrick, a native Carrick nobleman who surrendered it to the English. It was soon recovered by the Scots. In the 15th century, it was frequently in the hands of the Kennedy Clan, although it was briefly in the hands of the Maclellans (backed by William Douglas, 8th Earl of Douglas) after a siege in 1446. The castle was destroyed in the 16th century by King James V as part of a general policy of reducing the power of the barons.

The loch was dammed in the 1930s, raising the water some 27 feet, in order to provide seasonal storage for the Galloway hydro-electric power scheme.

As a reservoir, Loch Doon has an effective capacity of over 82 million cubic metres. When rainfall is plentiful, water is diverted to the loch from the Water of Deugh via a tunnel system. When water is required for power generation, water is released at Drumjohn to feed Kendoon power reservoir, the first in a series of generating stations and reservoirs on the Water of Ken.

During the construction of the scheme, the ruins of the castle were moved from an island in the Loch to the shore to avoid the rising water.

The largest loch in Galloway, Loch Doon is 6 miles long, when fishing Loch Doon there are plenty of brown trout, arctic charr and perch to be caught. Currently it is free to fish the loch

Loch Ba offers free fishing for wild brown trout in spectacular surroundings. Located on the A82 just a few miles south of Glencoe, Loch Ba is part of a group of lochs that straddle the road with Ba to the west of the road and Lochan na Stainge and Lochan na Ashlaise to the west. The trout are not big on average but they are plentiful, take well and fight hard.

You can fly fish, spin or use bait, traditional fly patterns do well including black pannel, Greenwells, March brown, iron blue dun and olives or anything that looks like a sedge, heather moth or daddy when in season can catch you a few cracking wee brownies.



Brown Trout at Loch Leven



Facilities for anglers on Loch Leven were greatly enhanced in May 2001 with the opening of the Loch Leven Angling Centre. Not only are there toilets and changing facilities available but the Boathouse Bistro (operated as part of the Green Hotel Golf & Leisure Resort) beside the harbour at Kinross provides a large range of hot & cold food and drink as well as a licenced bar. During the season, it is open from 8am (serving amongst other things the full Fisherman's cooked breakfast) until the evening.

All fishing on the loch is -fly onlyl and must be done from a boat as there is no bank fishing permitted. The fishing is under the management of Loch Leven Fisheries which has a well-maintained fleet of 20 boats most of which are still 18 foot clinker built boats dating back over 100 years – but there have been some recent additions of 16 Coulam boats made from glass-reinforced plastic.

All of the boats are equipped with outboard motors and life jackets.

Here you will fly fishing in Scotland for something truly unique. Only Loch Leven has its very own strain of brown trout - *salmo levenensis*. Although this renowned fish has been introduced to waters across the world, it interbreeds freely with native trout and its uniqueness is lost. So if you want to catch the genuine article, you have to visit Loch Leven which remains one of the world's most famous brown trout fisheries.

Although Loch Leven has, in the past, been stocked with the indigenous brown trout reared from eggs stripped from trout running its burns, and indeed for a relatively short period of a few years with rainbow trout, it has reverted to being a natural brown trout fishery which makes it extra special for anglers.

The boats are all moored in the harbour adjacent to the Kirkgate Park at the south end of Kinross - as indicated by the Boathouse in the map above at the western end of the loch.

The Pier there also serves as the departure point for the boat trips out to Loch Leven Castle which is operated by Historic Scotland. The loch in the past did not produce big trout in quantity and anything over 5lbs used to be considered exceptional throughout most of the 1900s.

The record still stands as Colonel Scott's fish of 9lbs. 13oz, caught on 8 September 1911 which to this day it still resides in a glass case in the Boathouse Bistro in the Angling Centre at Kinross.

The recent improvement in water quality has resulted in the loch producing an abundance of food for trout and brown trout in excess of 5lbs have become relatively commonplace. In May 2013, Alan Campbell caught the largest brownie ever taken on Loch Leven at just over 11lbs 5ozs, beating the previous record which had stood for over 100 years.

All fish under 11 inches in size must be returned to the loch. There is no limit to the number of brown trout that can be landed by anglers but the fishery management would ask that anglers respect the fact that Loch Leven is a wild brown trout fishery and that they keep what they would like 'for the pot' but otherwise practice catch & release.

The pink fleshed wild Loch Leven brown trout is delicious to eat and anglers should have no concerns about taking some home with them to enjoy

The fishing season on Loch Leven lasts from mid-April through to early October.

For recent reports on how the loch is fishing visit Willie the Ghillie's Blog at <https://lochlevenfisheries.wordpress.com/>

Review Time

This month's review is on the Chris Clemes Symphony 7ft 3wt Bamboo Rod

All reviews are impartial and honest reviews undertaken by the editor.

If you want an honest and frank review of your fly fishing tackle please email me at editor.scottishflyfisher@gmail.com and I will be happy to review your products.



When I first started fly fishing about 50 years ago my first rod was made of bamboo as I managed to get it cheap along with all the fly fishing gear I needed from an old neighbour; and it was some rod to handle as a small thin spotted faced stick of a kid at 12 years old.

The last time I had used it was about 40 years ago (where does time go too so quickly) due to it getting a wee bit worse for wear and the tip of the rod breaking off.

When Chris Clemes asked me to take one of his bamboo rods out for a wee trial for the tackle review page; I still had the mentality of when I was a kid, fishing with a bamboo rod was a nightmare and a bit hard to get used too due to it's action.

Boy how wrong I was!!



When I first received the Symphony range 7ft 3wt rod it looked absolutely amazing. From the top traditional Red Agate and Black Nickel Snake Rings to the downlocking Premium Nickel Silver sliding band; you could see it was finished off to a very high standard; here was one of Chris Clemes beautiful rods of honey coloured cane with red and black whippings, the cane impregnated and everything about it looking so delicate. The Symphony rod comes with an extra tip section from the same culm of bamboo and with identical node spacing along the blank and made to a Black Beauty taper.

The rod and bag look simple and purposeful. Even the metal rod case looked special. Somehow the ceremony of unscrewing the silver coloured cap and lifting the heavy cap end off seems appropriate with a cane rod, I suspect I would find it all a little too much, too ostentatious, for a normal bloke like me. Maybe that's because I knew cane rods are hand-made, that someone spent years learning the craftsmanship required to make such a beautiful rod.

I couldn't wait to get out on the water and give the rod a good try out.



I suppose I should have gotten myself a silk line for the rod, but I tried the rod out with two floating lines to match the rod weight: a 3 weight forward floating and a tapered floating line.

I found that the tapered floating line was a lot better and smoother running through the snake rings for delicate presentation of the size 18/20 dry flies I was using on the Peebles beat of the River Tweed and the River Clyde at Abbingon.

You could feel the rod loading really smoothly and casting a line out on to the water to present the fly was a lot smoother than when using a normal modern carbon fly rod, I think this was due to the well balanced layout and make of the rod.

When fighting a fish the rod handled it extremely well and you could control the fish a lot better without using too much force like you would with a modern rod.

When using the rod I found that I had slowed down my casting quite a bit due to the slower action of the rod, but it didn't put me off. In fact it was such a pleasure for a change to relax and really enjoy my days fishing and the surroundings I was in. For an old man I've never felt so alive and relaxed after a good days fishing. What a brilliant rod to fish with.

For the bamboo rod aficionado; this would be a great rod to add to their collection and would have great pleasure for years to come when out on the water casting to some rising wild brownies.



Whether it's a custom finishing one of the Chris Clemes celebrated bamboo fly rods or commissioning a bespoke build from the start they promise to deliver expert guidance and an exceptional fly rod that will not only serve your own current fishing requirements but those of generations to come. Each fly rod is unique, and the result of cooperation between the customer and their workshop in order to meet your exact requirements. Chris can make their rods to resemble the actions of a carbon rod with more power in the butt section.

Starting at £1,500.00 the rods might be expensive for some people; however once held, a Chris Cleme fly rod will be the rod for the true fly fishing enthusiast, as they will immediately understand their pure quality; the balanced weight; the smooth casting action; even their smell. These qualities give these beautifully refined fly rods a substance and character that can only improve the overall fly fishing experience.

If you want to order one of these magnificent rods from Chris Clemes, mention the magazine and you can get a free silk line worth £135.00 specially made to suit your rod, see advert page for details.



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ProLogic HighGrade Thermo Suit



I was needing a new thermal fishing suit as my old one was getting a wee bit worn out and not keeping me dry or warm after the abuse, I've given it over the years.

I searched high and low on all the relevant websites and finally chose this one. When it arrived, it was all it said it was meant to be. I've worn it a couple of times that I've managed to get out on the water, but also for taking my dog for a walk. It's extremely comfortable and keeps you warm when the temperature drops below freezing.

The suit includes a jacket and bib and brace.

Both garments are made from a 100% polyester peach shell fabric that is durable with a water-repellent finish. Each garment is waterproof to 8.000mm and includes taped seams throughout for additional protection.

For maximum thermal comfort and warmth, the inner lining is made from soft 100% polyester micro fleece and taffeta with fully insulated 160gsm polyester wadding. No matter what the weather throws at you, you can fish in confidence knowing you'll be warm and dry.

The jacket offers plenty of storage space with two box pockets, one zipped chest pocket and a zipped inner pocket. There are also fleece-lined hand warmer pockets for keeping cold hands cosy and there is a strong two-way main zipper with a double wind fillet for keeping the cold out.

The hood is insulated, detachable and adjustable with wired peak and the jacket features a soft inner rib cuff with Velcro adjustment on the outer cuff. As for the bib and brace, these include two box pockets and fleece-lined hand warmer pockets behind these.

The knee area is reinforced for added durability and there is a zipped bottom leg gusset with a Velcro adjustment. The elasticated waist ensures the perfect fit and the front includes a two-way zipper and comfortable, elasticated suspenders with strong buckles.

The ProLogic HighGrade Thermo Suit is green in colour with Pro Logic branding throughout and is available in various sizes for you to choose from.

On checking the prices through the various websites, I finally got a good deal through Angling Active in Stirling for only £99.99 instead of the usual £129.99.

Tackle Advice for Newcomers

When I first started out fishing way back in the 60s, money was a little bit tight. I had to save up my paper round and milk round money so that I could afford a second-hand bike for getting around on, a split cane rod, reel and a floating line plus some flies.

What a beast of a rod that was, after a day's casting with it you knew that you had been fishing. Your arm ached but you never complained especially if you had managed to catch a wee wild brown trout or two.

Today's rod manufacturers produce an excellent variety of rods that are a lot lighter and easier to cast with. whether it is a 7ft or a 10ft 6in rod.

The rods come in various line weights from an AFTM 4/5 right up to an AFTM 14/15 weight for salmon fishing.

The 8ft-10ft 6in rods are ideal for fishing stillwater and reservoir fishing and the smaller rods up to 8ft are ideal for river fishing, unless you're on larger rivers then the you'll need the larger rod to easily cover the water.

Rods over the 10ft 6in mark are generally double-handed salmon rods, which require a double handed Spey cast or roll cast to ensure that your fly reaches their destination.

The distance you can cast with a given line weight depends upon your ability to generate maximum line speed within a fairly abbreviated arc of rod movement.

Modern carbon fly rods are very light, so it's the length not rod weight that determines what the angler can manage.

Children and small women will probably find it easier to learn with fly rods of 7.5 – 8.5 feet and line weight weights of 5-6. Normal built people can usually manage rods up to 9.5 feet with a 7-weight line quite comfortably. Rods over 10 feet (especially with heavier line weights) require more strength and can be tiring to use.

When you do decide to take up the fine art of fly fishing for the first time it can be a daunting experience not knowing what to purchase. Hopefully the following information will be helpful in some way.

When you do take up fly fishing, try to get some lessons from a reputable fully qualified AAPGAI fly fishing instructor, that way you won't pick up any bad habits that will cause you to cast badly thereby catch less fish. Some casting coaching is good as it helps to iron out any small faults that you may have picked up in the short time that you have started fly fishing.

The fishing instructor will have a good idea of the type of rod, reel and line that will be best suited to your casting technique because not everyone casts the same way due to many varying factors, like body build, (male or female), left or right-handed, the way that you cast and so on.

However, on the following pages is a basic idea of the rods, fly reels and fly-lines that might give you an idea of what to expect when purchasing your first fly fishing outfit.

Fly Rods:



The fly rod is like an extension of your arm. The movement of your hand/arm is transferred into the rod and produces a longer, quicker motion at the tip of the rod. The quicker you can move the rod tip, the quicker it can move the fly-line and the further you can cast. This is also determined by the rod's action, of which there are three types.

Fast Action: - a fast action rod is not very flexible. In fact, it's almost entirely stiff throughout most of its length; with the only real flexibility occurring near the tip. When you're casting, only the end of the rod will bend in any appreciable way. The rest of the rod remains stiff and basically straight as a poker.

Medium Action: - this has a fair amount of flexibility but is still a bit stiff. The fly rod bends much more than a fast action rod but not as nearly as a slow action fly rod. When casting, the rod will bend moderately for about half its length, from the middle upwards to the tip. The lower part of the rod near the fly reel, will remain stiff. This is known as a mid-action rod.

Slow Action: - the rod is very flexible. The difference in flexibility between a slow action rod and one with a fast action is very significant. A slow action rod will bend significantly for most of its length. Slow action rods, as they do not generate high line speeds due to their flexibility are designed for short, very accurate and gentle casts. As such, slow action fly rods are ideal for fly fishing smaller rivers and other areas that require anglers to make short and accurate casts.

Fly Reels:



The definition of a fly reel has changed in the last 20 years. Reels have evolved into a highly specialised piece of equipment.

A reel does more than just hold line. A poor-quality fly reel is a wonderful way to lose large fish, especially when fishing on light leaders and tippets. Also, selecting the wrong fly reel for a particular fly rod can unbalance the outfit.

When looking for the right reel, a newcomer will get a big surprise. There are as many fly reels in the world as there is spin fishing reels.

There are two types of drag systems on a fly reel that trout and salmon anglers need to be aware of. The drag of a fly reel is what provides tension on the line. In other words, it's what regulates how easy or difficult it is for a fish to strip liner off the fly reel.

If all you ever catch are tiny brook trout the type of drag on your fly reel is not as important, as it is unlikely the fish will ever pull-out line from the fly reel.

On the other hand, if you hook a good-sized salmon, trout or grayling, then that's a different kettle of fish. Once a big fish starts pulling out line from your fly reel, the reel suddenly becomes the most important piece of equipment you have.

Fly Lines:



Why are fly lines important?

Just like fly rods and fly reels, fly lines need to match the types of fly fishing that you do. This match should be made precisely, too. If you have a 5wt rod and a 5wt reel, it is important to have a 5wt line. By not having a properly “balanced” outfit (which is where the fly rod, fly reel and fly line match in weight), the angler is likely to have extreme difficulty in casting. For example, using too light a line for a particular rod will present severe casting challenges.

Remember, in fly fishing, the weight of the fly line – not the fly itself – is what allows the angler to cast. The rod, as it is essential to casting, will not properly cast the wrong weight of fly line.

So, where the rod is “heavier than the line, the rod will never be fully loaded (will not bend properly), since the weight of the line is not enough to properly bend the rod during the cast. Likewise, should the line be heavier than the rod, the rod will bend excessively during the cast, making control difficult.

In an ideal world, follow this formula: fly rod weight = fly reel weight = fly line weight.

To ensure that your fly will be presented at the proper depth, match the fly lines sinking rate to the depth of the submerged weed beds.

Sinking lines are available in the following densities: Intermediate, sink tip, slow glass, fast glass; Di-1, Di-2, Di-3, Di-4, Di-5, Di-6 and Di-7. Each line sinks at a faster rate as the number increases.

Good luck and I hope you enjoy the fine art of fly fishing.

The Art of Casting

The ability to be able to cast well is fundamental to the success and enjoyment of fly fishing.

It would seem that many anglers particularly those new to the sport want to be able to cast a full line every cast. And some will use enormous amounts of wasted effort and energy to try to achieve this.

A good understanding of the basic principles will help you to cast better and with less effort. It is worth pointing out that more effort does not translate into better or longer casts. Trying to put more effort into a cast does not produce more distance. The two T's are the main key to successful casting -

Technique and Timing.

To be able to cast a fly you have to put a bend into your rod by smooth and gradual acceleration of the rod so that it pulls against the weight of the fly line. This action flexes, or loads, the rod. This applies to both the back cast and the forward cast. Increasing the acceleration and then stopping allows the rod tip to straighten which sends the fly line, as it unrolls, either backwards, or forwards to the target.

There is no essential difference between a back cast and a forward cast. (This can be demonstrated by turning round and making your "back" cast the forward or presentation cast. This is a technique that works very well if, for example, you are fishing a tree-lined river bank where there is no or little room for a traditional back cast.)

You must remove all slack from you fly line before you can load a rod. To load a rod properly requires tension between the top ring and the line so that the weight of the line makes the rod bend as you start the back cast. If you move the tip of your rod and not the line as well, then you are wasting energy. So start your back cast with the tip of your rod close to the water, eliminate any slack and then, when the line is moving, you can start your back cast. Using part of a back cast to take slack out of the line is inefficient.

The only way to load your rod is through a continuous movement of your casting arm, starting slowly and building speed before coming to an abrupt stop. This speed increase and abrupt stop is critical. A fast and short speed up and stop movement will result in high line speed and a tight loop.

Conversely, a lack of acceleration or an abrupt stop will cause the rod to lose part of the load and the line will end up in a heap on the water.

Care must be taken when casting to lift only the right amount of line of the water: enough to load the rod but not so much that you risk over-loading it.

This point is more important with both weights forward lines and sinking lines.

When fishing sinking lines - and particularly fast sinking or deeply-sunk lines - it may be necessary to role cast the line to the surface before lifting-off and making a back cast.

The False Cast: -

The false cast can be used for two different operations in fly fishing. First it is used to help in changing directions between casts. It also helps us to set and determine the desistance of the cast to a given point. The false cast is repeated three or four times to help us move to the right or left, not letting it lay on the water until our final cast. The false cast is also a great way to help to dry out a water-logged dry fly.

- 1 - Lift the fly line off the water as in any normal cast.
- 2 - Let the back cast unroll behind you until you feel a slight pull backwards on the rod. Your line should make a small loop.
- 3 - Bring your fly rod forward but do not let the line settle on the water. Wait until the line is out in front forming a small loop.

Repeat all movement until you are ready to make your final cast.

The Overhand Cast: -

The overhand cast is used to pick your fly line up off the water and reposition your fly on a different target. This cast will be used many times over to get you into the spot where you might encounter a fish.

- 1 - Face your target and point your rod tip at the target. Lower your rod tip to let all the slack out of your line.
- 2 - Raise your rod tip and begin to accelerate your lift slowly but steadily to get your fly line off the water.
- 3 - Apply some speed to your backstroke. This will load your fly rod with energy to propel your line into the back cast.
- 4 - Stop the rod quickly to form a tight loop as it passes overhead. The shorter the stroke and a good straight plane will make a smaller loop.
- 5 - Stop as the back cast unrolls behind you. You will start to feel the slightest pull. This will start to be the signal to begin your forward acceleration.
- 6 - A short forward speed stroke and aim your cast at the target. Stop. Let your line settle on the water. To make your next cast repeat.

To practice you're casting skills it is best to find a field near to you so that you can hone your skills and get a better feel for your rod and line and how the rod loads during the casting process. Or book some professional coaching to assist you in the art of casting and to iron out any faults that you may have picked up along the way.

The Retrieve: -

- The fly fisherman has a broad range of retrieves at his disposal to simulate the natural motions of the aquatic life within the trout's food chain.

Insects possess a variety of means of locomotion. Some move slowly while others are much faster. Likewise, aquatic insects display a wide variance in their motions. A fish is fooled when a fly both looks and acts lifelike. The importance of using both the correct retrieve and fly/lure matching colour, size, shape, and silhouette of the insect will be deadly.

Most of the time in lake fishing the goal is to present the fly just above the bottom. This is achieved by taking into account the line's sink rate, suspension depth, and allotted sinking time. Adjust these factors to place the fly precisely at the optimal depth.

The retrieve is accomplished by a combination of rod and line hand movements. The basic hand position prepares you to both properly retrieve the fly and to set the hook during the retrieve.

The basic rod hand position when rod movement is not part of the retrieve is as follows: The rod hand grasps the cork grip in the normal casting position with the thumb extended on top of the cork and the index finger directly below it. The index finger controls the line by acting as a guide and a brake that can pinch off the line against the cork.

By applying slight finger pressure, a line drag can be instantly applied and adjusted. The line finger plays a role in both fighting a fish and making the retrieve. With practice this line finger can become proficient as an instant judge of drag tension.

A retrieve's basic rod position is to point the rod downwards toward the line and the fly.

By varying the speed and style of retrieve you can change the action or movement of your fly/flyes as well as change and adjust the depth at which they fish. If you are fishing in an area where you can see that fish are feeding and your fly is being ignored, a change of retrieve speed or style could well make a difference. Stillwater and reservoir anglers in particular - it can happen on rivers as well - must always be alert for the fish that has followed a fly or team of flies right to the end of the cast and retrieve sequence. Trout will often grab a static or semi-static fly just as you are about to lift off to cast again.

The basic retrieves are the strip and figure of eight:

Strip Retrieve: -

The line is grasped between the thumb and first finger of the line hand and stripped in a down and backward motion. Next, release the grasp on the line and return the line hand back to its original position. The length and speed of this strip can be varied; by using a slow long strip can sometimes produce a take during hot spells where the fish are lethargic due to the temperatures of the water. The faster strip retrieves or pulling the lure fast through the water columns can produce some savage takes when the fish are actively feeding.

The rod hand's line finger acts as a line guide and as a brake for a sudden stop in the retrieve or in firmly striking a fish. This retrieve is most commonly used to imitate a wide variety of prey.

Fast retrieves: -

In contrast to the strictly imitative static or slow retrieve is the fast continuous retrieve, sometimes known as the roly poly. Fast retrieves are appropriate if fishing fish or fry imitations or perhaps a caddis. Also a fast retrieve can inject life into fish on a dour day.

To achieve a fast and continuous retrieve you need to tuck the butt of your rod under your arm, so that both hands are free to retrieve the line in fast steady and continuous pulls, one after the other.

Figure of eight Retrieve: -

One of the best-known retrieves is the figure of eight. This retrieve is ideal when you want a slow, steady and continuous retrieve. Line is retrieved through a combination of pulling with your thumb and forefinger and rotating your line hand. Start by holding the line with the thumb and forefinger of your line hand, close to your rod handle. Rotate your wrist backwards, towards you body, and then put your little finger over the line and rotate your wrist in the opposite direction.

Now, holding the line in the palm of your hand, having released your thumb and forefinger, take hold of the line again and repeat both rotations. The line that has been retrieved will start to form a figure of eight in your hand.

The Sink Draw Retrieve: -

The sink-and- draw retrieve is accomplished by allowing the fly to sink to the desired depth and then by retrieving upwards toward the surface. Hatching insects naturally migrate toward the surface so this sink-and-draw retrieve simulates this action.

Take into account the bottom's contour by casting from the shallows toward the depths, or this retrieve can be used by casting parallel to the bottom's general contours. The speed of the retrieve is matched to suspend the fly within a foot of the bottom.

The retrieve is accelerated to raise the fly to the surface, and stopped or slowed to sink back down again. Both the line's sink rate and the retrieve rates are the factors that suspend the fly at the desired depths.

When the sink-and- draw retrieve is used with a floating line and an increased retrieve rate, the fly will rise toward the surface. Emerging insects move in this same manner. When using a floating line and a long leader, the fly is allowed to sink to the bottom. As the retrieve starts, the fly rises from the bottom and becomes readily visible to the fish. Its pathway to the surface simulates an emerging insect.

The fly needs to be optimally weighted; that is, heavy enough to sink it and the long leader to the bottom but still light enough to move upwards toward the surface when retrieved. A fly tied on a heavy wet fly hook with sparse webby hackles and a fur dubbing will usually suffice. Sometimes a few turns of fine lead wire may be needed to weight the fly enough for it to sink. Fluorocarbon leaders are denser and easier to sink than monofilament ones. The emerging motion of the midge or caddis pupa is well mimicked by the sink-and-draw retrieve.

The rise-and-fall retrieve differs from the lift- off-and-settle in that the rise-and-fall "s" motion is of less magnitude. It is best used to imitate insects that tire and settle back down to rest. A damselfly's vigorous abdominal motions are energy consuming and tiring. These nymphs need frequent rest stops and during these pauses the nymphs sink. Also, scud's and water boatmen's motions are well mimicked by this rise and fall retrieve.

A slightly weighted fly paired with either a floating or a short sinking tip line is used depending upon water depth. A floating line is used for the shallower waters while sinking lines are used for deeper waters. Simply allow the fly to sink and retrieve it toward the surface with a slow strip retrieve. Next, stop the retrieve and allow it to sink back again.

Perhaps the countdown retrieve is the most valuable still water technique. This retrieve purposefully presents your fly at the desired depth for the longest time.

Fishing just above submerged weed beds is perhaps the most effective still water technique.

Brown Trout 'A Debate' By Steve Cullen



I think that it's a good thing that those small water fisheries, which are brave enough to stock with brown trout, are reaping the rewards thanks to the laws that came in a few years back.

These brown trout - which are stocked into 'Fully Enclosed Stillwater's' in other words, nothing can swim in or out of - can now be taken by any angler that's fortunate enough to catch one!

Small waters have been stocking with brown trout for decades yet before June 2010 they still had to abide by a draconian law, which stated that any brown trout caught, 'in the close season' must be returned. Please be aware that most of these fish are Triploids and have no way of reproducing.

These brown trout, the bigger the better, in the case of small water fishery owners, attract anglers. Show me a fly fisher that would rather catch a big rainbow over a big brown?

There's not a fly fisher in the UK that would take a big rainbow trout to a big brownie, it's something which is inherit in us, goodness knows why!

The problem with brown trout is that during the summer months, they tend to do a disappearing act and are never caught; this is not the ideal situation for those that have gone to the expense of stocking with them. If you're paying top dollar putting fish into your water then you want anglers to catch them! It's this 'turnaround' which ensures that fish come out and new fish go in which keeps a healthy balance of resident and stock fish, it's a juggling act, but it's this balance that keeps the paying punter happy!

From now until December large browns feature highly in catches from the majority of our reservoirs 'out of season'.

If you're lucky enough to catch that fish of a lifetime, you have to put it back.

I'm not saying that all these big brown trout should be killed, far from it in fact, but how many of us have actually been fortunate to catch one of these magnificent fish? Not many I'd wager.

There are still many large waters out there, which are 'Fully Enclosed Stillwater's' yet they still have a close season for brown trout... why? I'm all for keeping it real; it's the best way to be.

There's nothing I enjoy more than targeting wild fish.

It doesn't matter what I'm after or whether or not it swims in still or running water, I love the challenge of trying to fool wild fish.

However, when I'm fishing in a Stillwater, one that's been stocked, whether it be rainbows or brown trout, I don't want to catch and release all the time. I may want to take a trout or two; after all, that's why they were put in there in the first place, surely that's up to the individual



Nymph Fishing

Mostly all fly fishers use the term nymph or nymphing to cover all forms of underwater insect life.

This ranges from true water bred insects that live within the silt and gravel areas of the river, loch or lake until they start to migrate to the surface to hatch into the various flies throughout the seasons.

Also don't forget the various types of water beetles; shrimps, leeches and snails which spend their whole life in the water.

Due to the various underwater life that are always present, the trout are more often or not pre occupied in feeding beneath the surface and ignore what is happening on the surface.

The trout may be lying in the shallow areas or weed beds feeding on corixa, snails or shrimps or the pupae that are trying to reach the surface where they will hatch.

In the event of absence of fish feeding on the surface is a good indication that they are fishing elsewhere. If there is no sign of fish anywhere, the best possible solution is to change from dry/wet flies to nymphs.

During certain times of the day, particularly in the early morning or late evening you may see the trout bulging or swirling as it is possible the fish are taking the nymphs as they are making their way to the surface. It is essential to determine the depth that the trout are feeding as they could be feeding on the nymphs anywhere between the bottom and the surface. When fishing with nymphs, they can be fished as a single fly or within a team of various stages of the nymph's life cycle coming up through the water levels.

Nymphs can be fished on a floating or sinking line and consideration must be given on how your going to fish them as well.

There is a good choice within the fly fisher's armoury when it comes to using nymphs, you can use olives, browns, blacks and greys. If none of these works then you may have to resort to changing the various nymphs until you find the right one for that time of day and month.

If for example there is a large quantity of sedge flies present on the surface of the water and no trout are present taking them, then using a sedge pupa imitation would be your best bet in getting a take.

The exact principle works for the other various flies throughout the season: midges; olives and of course the beloved mayfly.

If there are no flies hatching and the water is undisturbed then a good fly to start with would be an imitation of a shrimp, corixa or a snail. It is best to use weighted versions and a longer than normal leader or a sink line to get down to where the trout are feeding. When fishing nymphs on or near the bottom around weed beds etc and you can see a clear area, it is best to try and get your nymph in the clear area and bring it back slowly along the bottom which can cause the trout to dart out and take your offering.

One of the best nymphs I use in my armoury is a Pheasant Tail nymph with a coloured thorax so that it is more visible to the trout. You can tie this nymph from a size 24 up to a size 8 depending on what you're fishing for.

Tying the Pheasant Tail Nymph



Hook: Kamasan size 12 to 20

Thread: Uni-Thread 6/0 - Brown Thread

Tail: Pheasant Tail Fibres, depending on the size of the nymph being tied,

I would use 6 fibres for a size 12 and a size 20; 2 fibres split.

Body: Pheasant Tail Fibres

Wing Case: Pheasant Tail Fibres

Ribbing: Copper Wire

Thorax: Peacock Herl

Legs: Pheasant Tail Fibres

Tying Method:

Place the hook in the vise and secure the thread behind the eye. Form an even under body along the shank of the hook, position the thread at the start of the bend.

Snip 5 to 6 pheasant tail fibres and align the fibre tips. Secure the fibres to form a tail the length of one hook gap with 2-3 wraps but do not advance the thread.

Fold the fibres back and secure by wrapping in the same location. Tie in the ribbing material at the start of the bend and cover its tag end with thread to the midpoint of the shank. If the ribbing material extends beyond the midpoint of the shank, trim the excess.

Wrap the pheasant tail fibres along the shank to form the body, secure at the midpoint of the shank. Wrap the ribbing material forward in the opposite direction that the feather fibres were wrapped. Secure the ribbing material and trim any excess.

If the remaining feather fibres are too short to form the wing case, snip 5 to 6 pheasant tail fibres and tie in directly in front of the body, otherwise fold back the feather fibres and secure similar to how the tail was done.

Tie in 2 or 3 strands of peacock herl in front of the body for the thorax. You can also tie in a length of thread if you have any issues with the herl breaking while trying to wrap.

Twist the herl to form a rope and then form a thorax. Leave room to secure the wing case and form a head with thread. Secure and trim any excess herl.

Fold the wing case over the thorax and secure it, clip off the excess.

Tie in 3 pheasant tail barbs on each side of the thorax to form the legs, the tips of the barbs should extend just past the thorax. Snip off the excess.

Form a small head with thread covering any remaining tag ends, whip finish and apply head cement.

N.B: You can use fluorescent green floss or 5mm green UV micro straggle fritz (which I love to use) to form the thorax, which can be a great trigger point for the fish to see and hit your nymph.

Understanding the Trout's Feeding Behaviour

The Trout's Menu:

When considering trout fishing it is important to understand what they eat and when in order to choose the appropriate fly.

Aquatic Insects are insects that live in the water. They have a lifecycle that includes an aquatic nymph stage and then they grow into a winged adult. The adults, who only live for a few hours or days, then return to the water to mate and lay their eggs.

They include mayflies, stone flies, caddis flies, damsel flies, and dragon flies.

Terrestrial Insects are insects that live on the land and become fish food by falling in the water or are gobbled up from low lying growth.

They include ants, beetles, grasshoppers, leafhoppers, crickets, wasps and bees, spiders, and worms.

Crustaceans are an important part of the trout food chain. They generally crawl along the bottom of the water. Freshwater crustaceans include scuds, sow bugs, and crayfish.

Various aquatic bugs are only available or in season at certain times. Fly fishers should try to imitate bugs during their prime periods.

This isn't essential since almost any fly can catch a fish at almost any time.

However, the truly excellent fly fishing occurs when the trout are taking a certain bug and the fly in use represents that bug.

Knowing when to expect those bugs and using a fly to match can significantly improve your odds for some really great fishing.

The behavioural patterns of trout vary significantly between the species, the size and the circumstances in which they are found.

The trout's habits also change at different times of the day, and again this is dependent on the weather conditions.

Feeding habits and behaviours also change between faster and slower waters of the rivers, and within the lochs and lakes.

Below are only a few of the major aquatic bugs that you will find throughout the fly-fishing season, it is not the full catalogue of the larva, nymphs and flies found in fly fishing. To list the full spectrum of them all, it would take another full book of information.

To learn more about the life cycle and lifespan of the aquatic insects, why not buy one of the great entomology or fly-tying books from either the internet or from your local tackle shop.

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Caddis flies, (or called Caddis, Caddis fly, Sedge) Caddis flies go through the egg, larva, pupa and adult stages.

The first Caddis hatches of the year will vary with elevation but normally start hatching about the last week of May. The numbers and frequency increase until about the last week of June or first week in July and then steadily decrease for the remainder of the season.

Chironomids, (or called Blood Worm, Midge, Gnat) the eggs hatch into larva and form mud tubes from bottom material and mucous. A few species have free swimming larva such as the Bloodworm. Various species of Chironomids hatch whenever there is water free of ice.

Seasonal peaks occur from the third week in May to the second week in June and then steadily decline into the fall months.

Damselflies, (or called Damselfly, Damsel) The adult has four wings that fold over the back.

The male of the most common variety is blue while the female is more of a slate colour. For the nymph, a fairly large and bulbous head sits on a tubular shaped body.

The eyes of the damsel are fairly pronounced but not as large or pronounced as the eyes of a dragonfly nymph.

Not to be mistaken for its cousin the damselfly, the adult dragonfly cannot fold its wings along its back. Dragonflies are usually much bigger and thicker bodied than damselflies. Both are very predacious in both the nymph and adult stage. Nymphs will feed on almost any creature in the lake including very small fish.

If fishing is slow, and you see some rises in the shallows, and you have seen some Mayflies, and you are willing to catch the smaller fish, try a dry Mayfly pattern in the shallows. It will often provide some excitement on what could otherwise be a slow day. On occasion, even that larger fish may be taking the dry May.

I have found that instead of studying dozens, even hundreds or more, of insects and the flies designed to imitate them, I've found that in nearly all circumstances, you need only a few fly patterns, each designed to do a specific job in the varying circumstances found on the stretch of water you're fishing.

Trout Flies are used to induce fish to take by the use of recognised food patterns rather than by intended imitation. For this method then, local knowledge becomes relevant in the way the fish are feeding and what is currently on their menu, in this way you can match your imitation fly to the current fly hatch.

Flies can be tied to take advantage of, various aspects of trout behaviour. This opens up possibilities for us to incorporate the use of innovative strategies, tactics and trout fly construction and to give ourselves a far greater edge than previously thought possible.

Normally it takes years of studying these fish, trial and error with different fly patterns, different fishing techniques, different innovative designs and methods with the right focus to get to a place where you understand these creatures adequately for the outstanding results, we normally only see the Pro's achieving.



Staycation Time

Well with all the new restrictions and travel bans for going abroad, it's time to start thinking about having a staycation at home, once all the latest travelling restrictions are lifted and we can go further afield to cast a line or two.

Below is two I would highly recommend as I've stayed at both locations and with the Lake of Menteith on your doorstep you're not too far to travel to cast a fly or two on the water.



[Lochend Chalets](#)

Port of Menteith
Stirling
FK8 3JZ
SCOTLAND – UK

TEL: +44(0)1877 385 268
FAX: +44(0)1877 385 240
EMAIL: info@lochend-chalets.com

Lochend is a beautiful, 38-acre estate at the heart of Loch Lomond and The Trossachs National Park, an area steeped in history and striking natural beauty. Hidden away on a tranquil corner of the Lake of Menteith, with spectacular views across the water to Ben Lomond, our waterfront self-catering chalets, log cabins, lodges and cottages have free WiFi throughout.

A perfect place to relax and unwind, Lochend also has a tennis court and games room, a bike park and rowing boats, and is home to the Nick Nairn Cook School as well as wildlife in abundance, sorry we don't take pets. Only an hour from Glasgow and Edinburgh, we lie almost right in the middle of Scotland, so it's a great base if you're looking to tour the wonderful Scottish countryside or to fish the various lochs and rivers within the area, with the Highlands and Islands, St Andrew's and Cairngorms all just a daytrip away.

They have two boats (and tackle) at Lochend that can be booked in advance through Chris (07712 596604), or you can rent boats and tackle just a mile up the road at [Menteith Fisheries](#).

Unfortunately shore-fishing is prohibited on the Lake of Menteith, but wannabe Tom Sawyers can fish in the Goodie burn, which snakes around the back of the chalets close to the [Cook School](#) and [bike park](#).



[The Lake of Menteith Hotel](#)

Port of Menteith
Perthshire
Scotland
FK8 3RA

T:01877 385258
F:01877 385671
Email: enquiries@lake-hotel.com

The Lake of Menteith is a unique and special place, Scotland's only natural Lake and an environmental oasis. On the banks is the delightful hamlet of Port of Menteith, so named as for centuries boats have made their way between the Lakeside and the Priory on the Isle of Inchmahome carrying Mary Queen of Scots, esteemed Priory visitors, munitions and in more recent years generations of visiting families. In the Port and on the banks, you will find The Lake of Menteith Hotel, once the manse for the church and now a fine and popular hotel in the style of a New England Waterfront Inn.

No matter the weather nature plays out ever changing and exciting scenes: fishermen attempt to outwit wily trout, Osprey dive from great heights onto unsuspecting fish, Herons patrol the lakeside and in the late evening you can hear the splashing of the otters playing in the shallows and geese returning to roost.

In such a wonderful setting this hotel is very much of the place as well as in it, unobtrusive, complimentary and unassuming. The food is honest, tasty and plentiful. Sourced as locally as possible and served without fuss and pretension.

Club Time

If you're wanting your fishing club listed on this page, please email me full details of the club and any interesting facts and I will add them to the page.

Railway Inn Fly Fishing Club

They are a small club who run from a pub in Juniper Green and have around 13 members and are looking for a few new faces to join their club.

The club normally have 15 outings a year between March and October ranging from both Bank and boat venues.

Outings: Burnhouse, Millhall, Newton Farm, Glencorse, Glenbervie, Allandale Tarn, Raith Lake, Coldingham Loch, Loganlea, Lake of menteith, Orchill, Black Loch, Bangour, Drumtasie.

If you wish to join their club then please contact their secretary below for further information.

Contact details:

Name, David Hartington

Phone, 07934252245

Email, hrrngt123@gmail.com

Jedforest Angling Association

<http://www.jedforest-angling.co.uk>

Jedforest Angling Association is a thriving club based in the picturesque and historic town of Jedburgh. Over the many years which the club has been in existence, the dedicated and enthusiastic committee has managed to secure lucrative fishing rights for prime areas of the River Teviot.

More recently the association has invested in the purchase of two five-acre lochs just a few miles south of Jedburgh.

The Hass Lochs sit amongst rolling hills with spectacular views of the Cheviot Valley. These well stocked waters offer excellent sport with rainbow trout in excess of 10lb in residence. There is also a head of brownies but the association asks that they be returned. The Hass Lochs also have the advantage of being suitable for the disabled angler. The Hass Lochs are open all year with evening sessions starting 1st May £15.00 per session per rod (2 fish limit) £5.00 for supervised junior(1 fish limit)

Hass Lochs permits available from Taylors Newsagent, High St, Jedburgh, 01835 863936 and Abbey Bridge Tollhouse Cafe (last building on right before leaving Jedburgh south) 01835 869679

The association also offers fantastic fishing on around 5 Miles of the River Teviot, one of the major tributaries of the famous River Tweed, is available for salmon, sea-trout, brown trout and grayling angling.

They offer excellent fishing all year round. The River Teviot has good early season salmon runs with occasional fish into double figures. Grilse can be taken in the summer months.

However, it is the autumn runs which provide the best returns with fish in excess of 20 lb. Grayling are particularly abundant on the Teviot and can be fished for all year. Fish well in excess of 3lb are regularly taken and stories of "monsters" are common amongst the regular visitors who frequent the water



Devon Angling Association

The DAA was formed in 1905 to provide affordable fishing for the local community while acting to protect and improve the river environment.

The Association now offers fishing on approximately 15 miles of the River Devon from below Castlehill Reservoir in Glendevon to the Tullibody to Menstrie road, In addition the Association is able to provide members and visitors bank fishing on Glenquey Reservoir in the heart of the Ochil Hills.

Both the River Devon and Glenquey are Wild Brown trout fisheries with the season running from 15th March to 6th October. Season permits for an Adult are £20 per year with day tickets for visitors costing £8 - Glenquey Reservoir costs members £8 per day with visitors paying £12. Both fisheries encourage catch and release. Glenquey is strictly FLY ONLY while the river is any method as this helps to encourage younger people to take up fishing especially where the river runs through the Hillfoot towns.

The River also offers the opportunity to fish for Salmon and Sea Trout mainly in September and October provide we get Rain !!! The River is a Grade 3 listing which means all migratory fish MUST be returned.

The Association offers a Combined permit for Trout, Salmon and Sea Trout at £50 per year with day tickets costing £25.

Further details are available at [www. https://devonanglingassociation.org.uk](https://devonanglingassociation.org.uk)



Trout Recipes For Your Enjoyment



PECAN TROUT

Serves 2

Preparation - 15

minutes 1 trout fillet

(7 ounces)

1 tbsp whole wheat or all-purpose flour

1 tsp each vegetable oil and margarine 1/2 ounce

chopped pecans 1/4 cup dry white table wine 1 tbsp

lemon juice

1 tsp chopped fresh parsley 1/2 tsp Worcestershire sauce

On sheet of wax paper dredge trout in flour, coating both sides.

In non-stick frying pan heat oil and margarine until margarine is melted; add trout and cook over medium heat until trout flakes easily when tested with a fork, 2-3 minutes on each side.

Using a spatula, transfer trout to serving platter; keep warm.

To same frying pan add pecans and cook over low heat, stirring, until toasted, 1-2 minutes. Stir in remaining ingredients and cook until thoroughly heated, 1-2 minutes. Pour over trout.

Enjoy!

POACHED RAINBOW TROUT & CITRUS FRUITS

4x Rainbow Trout Fillets 1/2

onion sliced 2 bay leaves

1 tablespoon Black Peppers

Parsley Stalks Salt and Pepper 1/4

Pint wine vinegar

Place Ingredients in a deep dish cover with water and bring to the boil. Simmer for 10 min

For the Sauce

1 pint Double cream

half onion finely chopped

1 tablespoon chopped parsley 1/2 ounce butter

1/4 pint white wine

1 orange segmented

1 grapefruit segmented Salt and

pepper A little cornflower to

thicken

Method

1. Melt butter in pan and cook onion soft
2. Add wine and reduce by 2/3
3. Add cream and lemon juice. Bring to the boil and thicken slightly with cornflower and season. Add chopped parsley
4. Lift Trout fillets out of cooking liquid and dry gently
5. Place fruit segments on top and pour sauce over

A Hidden Jewel in the Crown



Linlithgow Loch is well known to many as the big pond that lies just below the picturesque Linlithgow Palace.

Most people don't realise it's also a fantastic trout fishery.

A large and famous stretch of water in Central Scotland, Linlithgow Loch is about half a mile wide at the widest point by almost one mile long and mainly shallow, depth range to about 10 feet but there is a notable deep hole in front of the lodge area which is down to 30+ feet.

Rowing in the main section out front of the lodge is fine but if you intend to explore the further reaches of the water, then an engine would be advisable as it's a long haul! . In fact I'd recommend you bring an electric motor or a petrol one up to 5hp with you as it can be a wee bit tiring rowing and casting all day. The fishery has barrows for moving heavy gear like engines, seats and batteries from the car park should you bring one.

The fishing at the loch is first class and stocked every week with hard fighting fish; some up into double figures. Due to its nature and weed beds; Linlithgow Loch has some great buzzer fishing throughout the season.

Best method due to the depth of the water and the weed beds up on the right is either a floating line or a sink tip. However; during very high heat waves and long sunny days the best area is the deep hole straight out from the jetty and in front of the palace where the fish will be deep down to cool off. You will need a very fast sink line to get down amongst them and just let your buzzers do all the work for you, if you have the patience fish the buzzers static and just give them a wee tweak now and then to part some sort of motion and let them sink again just like the real thing.

Best methods from the bank is floating line with 3-4 buzzers/nymphs; look for the breaks in between the weed beds and cast your line out in the clear area and slowly bring it back using a figure of eight retrieve, this should entice the fish in hiding to dart out and grab your offering.

Facilities: A Wooden Anglers Lodge is stationed on the South shore of the loch, with a payment facility, seating and tables; along with ladies and gents toilets. The fishery is staffed on a voluntary basis by members of the Forth Area Federation of Anglers. The Fishery has both bank and boat fishing on offer; so if you can't get a boat don't be downhearted as fishing from the bank can be very productive especially among the weed beds leading from the palace towards the playground area.

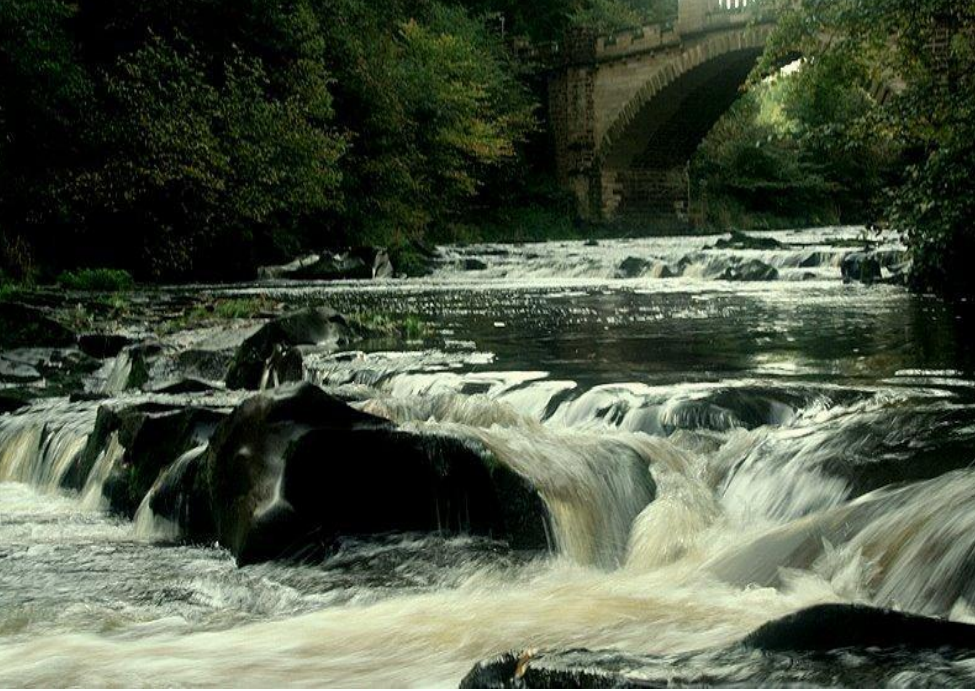
There are nineteen boats with oars available to hire for either one or two anglers, it can be a busy location so if planning a special visit, best to book well ahead.

Full Day Boat 9am to Dusk 2 Anglers Mon to Thursday is £55.00 for a 7 bag limit and 6 catch and release after limit has been reached.

I was fishing Linlithgow Loch in June with my fishing buddy Gordon Inglis and even though it was overcast all day the fishing was really good. My set up was a Stillwater SFX2 10ft with an Airflo Super Dri 12 foot intermediate tip fly line plus 12 foot of 10lb fluorocarbon with the dropper's spaced 4ft apart.

Top dropper a dark green size 12 Blakestone emerger; middle dropper was a size 12 dark brown Blakestone and on the point size 10 anorexic black and silver buzzer. All fish taken on either one but mostly on the black and silver buzzer.

To book your boat call the fishing lodge on 01506 671 753 or you can book online <http://fafa-linlithgowloch.org.uk/booking-form/>



Fishing the River Almond

The River Almond is a river on the outskirts of Edinburgh. It is 28 miles (45 km) long, rising at Hirst Hill in Lanarkshire near Shotts and running through West Lothian, draining into the Firth of Forth at Cramond, Edinburgh. The name Almond/Amon is simply old Celtic for "river". The river has a good example of an ox-bow lake near Almondvale West at Livingston.

Running through what were, for much of the 20th century, areas dominated by heavy industry and shale and coal mining, the River Almond has been notorious for its high levels of pollution. With the demise of mining and heavy industry in Central Scotland the river is now relatively clean and is being actively repopulated by wildlife, including a healthy population of brown trout and improving runs of both Atlantic salmon and sea trout

There is a good array of birds to be seen around the river banks, including dippers, kingfishers and grey herons, with increasing numbers of otters being reported. The river is still the primary means of transporting southern West Lothian's waste water to the sea. While the introduction of a number of water treatment plants have helped to mitigate the effects of pollution, the river still suffers from high levels of detergent pollution along with run-off from agricultural land. This has led to the river often having a distinct "chemical odour". This is most noticeable within Almondell and Calderwood Country Park, where there is a major outfall from the nearby East Calder treatment plant.

The river runs through the centre of Livingston before travelling through Almondell and Calderwood Country Park where it picks up the Calder and Murieston Waters. It then passes over a weir which supplies a feeder culvert which carries water into the Union Canal. Due to the height difference where the river passes under the canal, this feeder must run for many miles eastwards before reaching the canal. By following paths through the country park and along private land to the east it is possible to follow the river and feeder all the way to the Union Canal. The river then flows east under the Union Canal before turning northwards towards the Firth of Forth.

Fishing on the lower Almond is leased from the Crown Estate by Cramond Angling Club, with both Day and Season Tickets available.

The Cramond Angling Club offers 4 beats, 8 miles of (mostly) double bank fishing for Season Ticket and Day Tickets on the River Almond between just south of Newbridge and Cramond. There is good access to most parts of the river.

Main species are Brown Trout and Sea Trout. Salmon have also been caught although in a very small number.

Atlantic Salmon (*Salmo salar*)- lives in fresh water for one to four years before the migration to the North Atlantic to grow for another few years. Atlantic Salmon will return to its native river to spawn. They will enter the Almond all year round but best times for fishing are around late August, September and October.

The most popular method of fishing for salmon is using the spinner. Although there have been a small number of fish caught using fly fishing method. The River Almond is blessed with all types of water features from fast flowing to a deep pool that will suit both fly fishing and spinning.

Recently SEPA have recorded Salmon Parr, while Electro-fishing within the mainstream of the River, which confirms that salmon are spawning within the River Almond.

The Cramond Angling Club has 4 great beats from Kirkliston to the river mouth at the Forth. For full map details see their club website <http://www.fishalmond.co.uk/angling/maps/>

Best flies to use on the Almond is:

Brown Trout: Green Olive, Iron Blue, C.D.C.Olive; Grey Duster; Pearl Thorax Cruncher, G.R.H.E, P.T.N, Green Halo D/Bach Jersey Herd ,Pearly Invicta, Partridge and Orange, Silver March Brown

Sea Trout: Teal Blue and Silver, Grey Squirrel, Silver Doctor, Medecine, Silver Stoats Tail

The River Almond is now **"Catch and Release"** for all species.



Women in Fly Fishing By Iona Allan

I'm Iona Allan (aka The Fly Lady), I've been fly fishing for around 20 years, tying fishing flies commercially for about 18 years and been the managing partner of Allandale Tarn Fisheries for 16 years now.

My first instinct when Robin Lambert asked me to write something on women in fishing was, 'What's there to write about?'

Badly fitting clothes, needing the loo during a boat fishing competition? At the end of the day it's the wee flea that tempts the quarry,

Herculean attributes never caught any fly fisherman more fish and for some unknown reason, historically women have held many of the records for capturing the largest specimen Salmon on various beats!

Women have probably been fly fishing for pretty much as long as men, needs must after all if you've mouths to feed. A number of the big estates in Britain have old records on some of the Lady such & such who have partook of this fine sport for leisure too though and a few women have been given recognition for their skills as fly tiers.

However fly fishing has traditionally been viewed as a man's past time, even though there is no great physical prerequisite to cast out a line.

Never mind the ill-fitting clothing, facilities in general never exactly catered for woman.

Commercial fisheries have gradually saw the benefits of the introduction of basic facilities like the 'Port a loo', although haven't always concerned themselves with the upkeep of it. I recall the malodorous welcome of one particular chemical toilet many years past. It was squeezed into a tiny, donated rickety shed, with one sizeable window for light that faced out towards the path leading up to it. Luckily the years of spider web production had produced a make shift curtain to save a lady's blushes. On this particular outing, we were there fishing in a friendly Winter League match mid-December, so a half time break for a coffee & trip to 'the wee hoose' is always welcome. As Mum headed up the path, fellow team mate Trapper Paton was just exiting the facilities, at which point he warned 'for f###k sake, whatever ye dae, dinnae smoke near that!'

I think that on large, aside from the lack of access to equipment, woman throughout the ages had simply too many other things to be getting on with in their already full days; dealing with bringing up kids, running a household, making money working elsewhere & of course making sure the tea was on the table for when he got home after work or even his days fishing adventures!. Also, the knowledge & personal experience of fly fishing used to be shared from father to son, but rarely to daughter. However I believe this chain of expectation was broken a couple of generations ago because of the 24 hours, 7 days a week work ethos of many a business in our economic times.

Parents were simply too busy working all the hours going to take time to teach the next generation of anglers at weekends! It's sad to say, but the result is that angling has on large skipped a generation and it's been left to the fisheries themselves to try & fill this gap. As a result, learning the art of fly fishing has become more readily accessible to everyone.

The increase of put & take fisheries has not only made fishing far more accessible for all, but there's a sense of security using these fishing venues; with safe & easy access as well as the knowledge that someone is always keeping an eye out. These venues have also made it easier to get the right advice on starting out, with most fellow anglers willing to share their top tips for the day. The general standards of facilities have improved. At Allandale Tarn, we not only offer fly fishing coaching with Paul Buchanan, we also run various other related courses throughout the year from fly tying to short courses on entomology & more. We have two women amongst the group attending the current fly tying course and they do fly fish too!

Nowadays I'm seeing an increase in the number of woman taking a serious interest in the sport for leisure and competition fishing.

The companies that produce the purpose made fishing clothing ranges have also realised there's a female market for their wears that's nothing to do with fashion trends, simply that the number of woman taking up our sport is on the increase.

As for myself, I got into fly fishing by association. Although I had a few wee goes at bait fishing growing up, I didn't take to squeezing a hook through the live bait. I never really caught anything and after one summer down Linlithgow canal when most of my pocket money ended up as bubble float tree decorations, I pretty much lost interest in fishing. As I said, I came in to fly fishing by association.

Originally dug out during the reign of Queen Victoria, Allandale Tarn was used to hold water for the steam trains used in the shale oil industry that founded the site of the now Allandale Tarn Fisheries where I currently live and have lived for 23 years now!. For the past 20 years, this water has been used as a Stillwater Fishery, established by my family. I originally worked in another industry before managing The Tarn, but my parents, dreaming of retirement, asked me to come and work at the fishery and the rest is history. Although my parents are still dreaming of that retirement!

Would I have taken up fly fishing or fly tying if it weren't for my family? Possibly not, but I'm glad I did.

Regardless of whether I'm talking about fishing to men or women, I give the same reasons why they should give it a try. It's a great way to mentally switch off & relax and you even get a bit of exercise whilst out in the fresh air. You can pick & chose times, weather & venues to suit your lifestyle as it is so accessible. You don't have to spend a fortune to get started; and it can be a lifetime of learning, from which you can learn as little or as much as you want. It can also be a greatly social activity or you can escape to wet a line in solitude if that's the mood you're in. We're not lady & gentlemen fisherman, we are fellow anglers! So fill you flask, wrap up warm & tight lines wherever you manage to wet a line, whoever you are!

Tight lines!..

Iona @ The Tarn www.allandaletarn.co.uk
www.allandaletarn.com

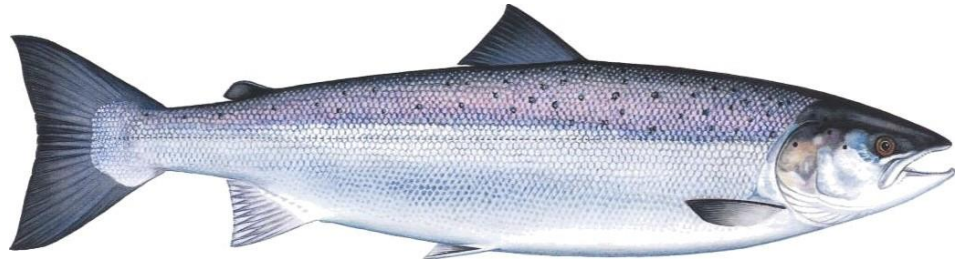
Allandale Tarn Fisheries; Gavieside, West Calder, West Lothian, Scotland EH55 8PT (01506)-873073

SALMON RECOGNITION

a fisherman's guide 

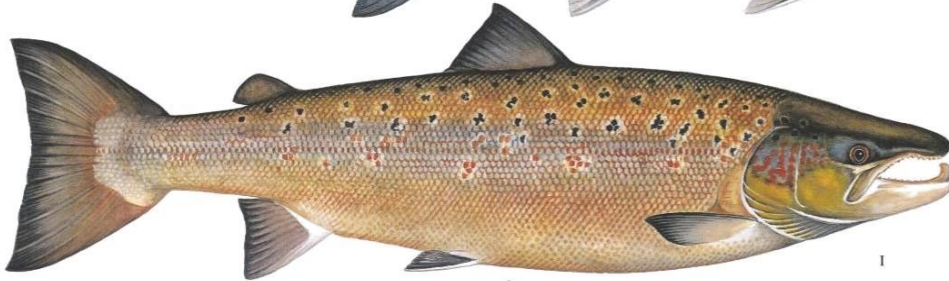
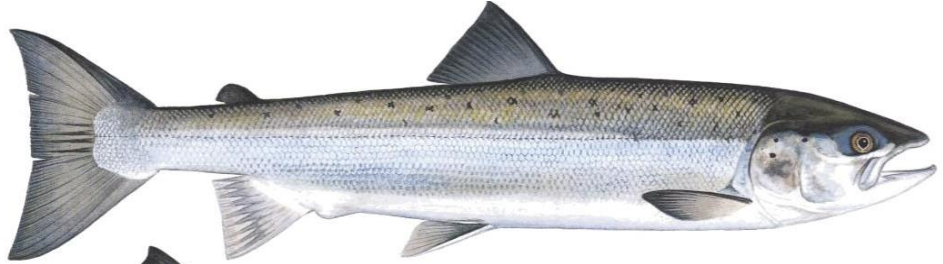
FRESH RUN SALMON

Recognised by the pristine condition and bright silver banks. Fish straight from salt water have loose, easily detached scales and many carry sea lice which drop off within a few days. Hen salmon (illustrated) have a tiny kype on the lower jaw but unlike cocks they retain normal head proportions while in the river. Fresh run salmon make the best eating.



KELT

Kelts are salmon which have spawned. Usually identified by the thin shape, distended vent and presence of "gill maggots" on the red gill filaments, they are often encountered by anglers in spring when they regain a silvery appearance and can be mistaken for fresh run Springers. Kelts must be returned unharmed to the water.



MATURING COCK & HEN

- I. **Cock.** Recognised by the enlarged jaws, cocks often become coloured soon after leaving salt water. This one shows typical appearance after a few weeks in fresh or brackish water; some are more reddish, others less so but all will have the partially developed kype. At this stage cocks are still good to eat.
- II. **Hen.** These are usually less coloured than cocks of similar river age and they never have enlarged jaws. This one will have spent a few weeks in river or estuary – note the coloured head and lack of true silver flanks. Hens should not be killed on the basis of colour alone – autumn fish are closest to spawning regardless of colour. For conservation purposes hens are the most important.



COCK & HEN IN BREEDING DRESS

- I. **Cock.** The combination of "tartan" colours is typical although shades vary – the fully developed kype, used in fighting rivals, is the most consistent indicator of maturity. Condition can be gauged by viewing from above (fig.1) – if the back is still thick a fish is in better condition (and more likely to be edible) than a thin "kipper" which, unless it is a first salmon, is better returned.

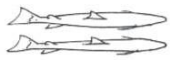


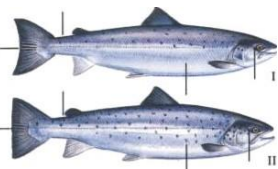
Fig. 1.



- II. **Hen.** This is a summer fish – Springers are often darker by spawning time while late entrants may still be silver flanked. Fully mature hens have soft, swollen bellies and spawning is imminent if they also have protruding vents.



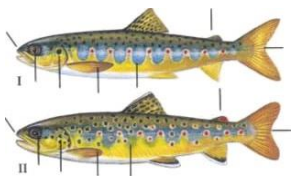
ROBIN ADEPT



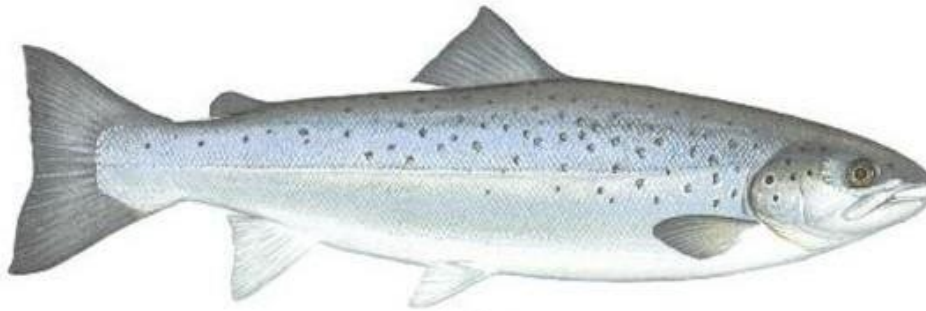
SALMON IN SEATROUT
 Firmly it can be distinguished from large sea trout by a more slender body, less developed kype, and a more slender tail. The upper jaw reaching; no further than the rear eye, few if any black spots below lateral line. (1-13) scales counted below forward trunk; dipnet in lateral line; true have 11-16".

GRILSE & SALMON
 Grilse or sea winter salmon, which comprise most of the annual catch, are often indistinguishable from multi-year winter salmon except for six or seven entering rivers in September or October and in October 12-14lb. (1-13) scales counted below forward trunk; dipnet in lateral line; true have 11-16".

SALMON & JOURNAL
 Salmon (1) can normally be distinguished from young trout/sea trout (2) by the more slender body, less developed kype, and a more slender tail. The upper jaw reaching; no further than the rear eye, few if any black spots below lateral line. (1-13) scales counted below forward trunk; dipnet in lateral line; true have 11-16".



SEA TROUT RECOGNITION



FRESH RUN SEA TROUT

Easily recognised by bright silver sides, white lower fins and loose, easily detached scales. Some carry sea lice which drop-off in fresh water within a few days. After 2 or 3 weeks they lose the silver and appear like dull coloured brown trout, lacking true red spots.

Mature sea trout vary widely in size depending on marine growth and longevity. Typically, at first spawning return they may be about 350-450 mm in body length and weigh around 0.5-1.5kg. Older specimens, which may have spawned several times, can range in excess of 10kg, while maiden sea trout of this very large size can be found in the southern North Sea and the Baltic Sea.

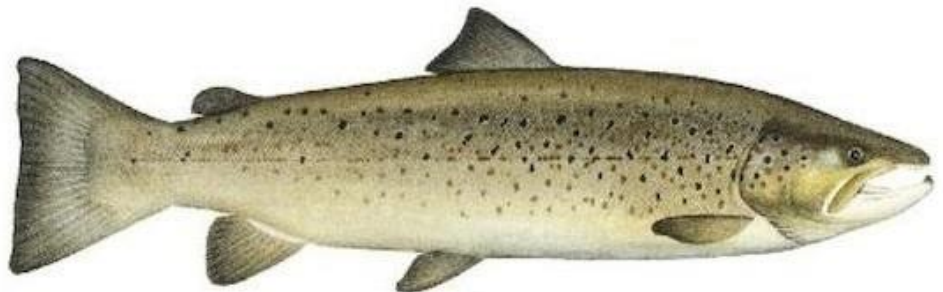


KELT

Encountered in Springtime, well-mended kelts are silvery and can be mistaken for fresh run sea trout. They are normally slimmer in shape and can often be distinguished by whitish-silver flanks which lack the iridescent colours of fresh-run fish.

BREEDING COCK

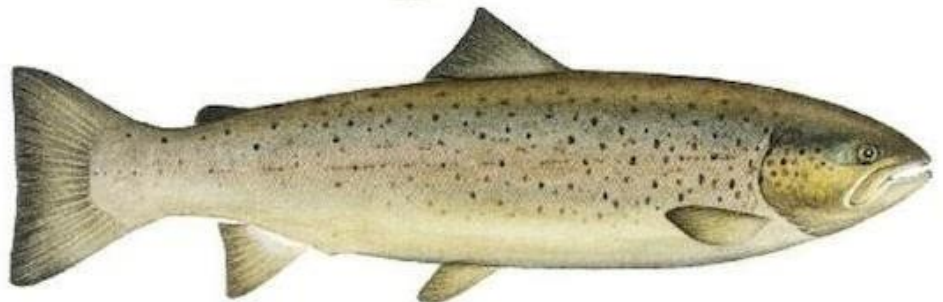
Coloured male sea trout can be indistinguishable from male brown trout which also spawn with sea trout hens. Males develop enlarged snouts and an obvious kype on the lower jaw – females retain normal head proportions at all life stages.



BREEDING HEN

Sea trout/brown trout breed in autumn when river temperatures reach about 6 degrees, usually in October/November.

Most are coloured (illustrated) but late-running fish may still be silver-sided.



HERLING, FINNOCK, WHITLING, PEAL, SEWIN ETC

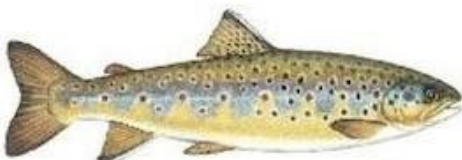
These are young sea trout returning to their home rivers in the same year as their first migration. They depart as smolts in April/May and return from July onwards typically averaging around a half pound or ten inches long – those over 13 inches are usually mature one sea winter sea trout.

Unlike salmon grilse many of these small sea trout are sexually immature. They should not be killed in excess – they are the large sea trout of the future.



Sea trout are sea-going brown trout – their young (below) are indistinguishable until those about to migrate to sea become silvery smolts (above).

Most British sea trout are females, their male partners often remaining behind in the rivers as resident brown trout.



LIFE HISTORY & CONSERVATION

The Eurasian Trout *Salmo Trutta* L., comprises a great number of local races which over time have adapted to particular habitats. Even small tributary streams can produce a variety of life options, some trout remaining as freshwater residents, especially males, while others migrate to richer feeding grounds downstream in rivers, lakes, estuaries – or to the open sea where they become silver sea trout.

The migratory tendency varies widely. Trout above impassable falls lose it almost completely while rivers with good breeding habitat but limited feeding have a strong tendency to produce sea trout.

Enhancement and conservation of sea trout is usually concentrated on three fronts –

Monitoring of trout at different life stages to determine their success and to educate the public and those responsible for river management on enhancement.

Improving the freshwater habitat to increase the numbers of trout going to sea.

Using local trout for any stocking as these are most likely to be best adapted to local river and sea conditions.

It is useful for fishermen to recognise that on sea trout rivers the resident brown trout, both large and small, are likely to have genetic tendencies to migrate and become sea trout - and should be conserved accordingly.

The Lady of the Stream



The Grayling *Thymallus thymallus* belongs in a cold-water fish family of 6 species distributed across parts of the Northern hemisphere (notably absent from Ireland).

The presence of an adipose fin; a small fleshy protrusion between the dorsal fin and tail, places them firmly in the salmonid family - subfamily Thymallinae.

They are typically smaller than trout with the largest specimens falling around the 2 kg mark. The largest species is the Mongolian grayling – thought to grow up to 4 kgs.

Grayling are familiar to many brown trout anglers; they are a well-known and easily recognizable species and because they often feature in anglers catches, there is a perception that grayling have the same habitat requirements as trout.

On the face of it, grayling habitat; rivers and streams with strong flows and flow diversity and requirements; cool, clean well oxygenated water, resemble those of trout. There are subtle differences however for example: microhabitat use (time spent by grayling in different in stream habitat during the course of the day), a lower pollution tolerance and slightly gentler river gradient. Even diets show a degree of segregation, partly due to differences in mouth shapes.

Why conserve grayling stocks? Increasingly, across Europe as well as Britain, the perceived value of grayling as a sporting fish has grown. Grayling culling as a valid fisheries management practice is no longer supported (Policy 11 EA NTGS). Wholesale removal of one species, an almost impossible task, might (as yet uncorroborated by the literature) benefit the other species by freeing up habitat previously restricted to them.

The benefits of a mixed fish population however outweigh removal as: – A mixed fish population allows more efficient use of available resources because of the different

preferences displayed by both (See Table Above). Therefore, a mixed fishery is ultimately more productive. – The habitat partitioning displayed by both species is likely to minimize competition.

Grayling are more active than trout during the colder winter months and their different spawning season extends the fishing season after the close of the brown trout season.

Fishing for Grayling on the River Tweed

Like most of the larger channels within the Tweed catchment, the water within the Peeblesshire TFA permit holds a healthy Grayling population and although numbers naturally vary from year to year based on conditions for survival, there's always Grayling there to be fished for.

Grayling within the Tweed system appear to prefer the larger, wider channels and as the river gets narrower upstream the numbers of Grayling get smaller and more spread out. However, in these areas the average size of the Grayling is slightly bigger and although there's a chance of a specimen Grayling anywhere within the Tweed where Grayling are found, there's a greater chance in these smaller waters.

As the Peeblesshire TFA has well over 20 miles of fishable water this begs the question – do I fish the lower reaches of the Association water and try to catch as many as I can, or do I fish the upper reaches around/above Peebles and try to catch "a monster" Grayling?

The current Scottish record Grayling, which actually came from the Upper Tweed, is just over 3lb. Grayling up to 3½lb are caught each year and there's even some local whispers of 4lb'ers. Unfortunately, the criteria needed to register a new record Grayling is difficult to meet on the riverbank as Grayling are classed as coarse fish for records. As a rough guide, a Grayling of around 50cm fork length has a 50/50 chance of being a 3lb'er, while one of around 55cm will be pushing 4lb.

Fishing for Grayling, especially in winter, is dependent on one major factor – keeping your flies hard on the bottom of the river for as long as possible. Grayling are bottom feeders and although they will occasionally rise for flies at the surface, at least 95% of their feeding is on the bottom of the river.

Techniques such as Czech and French Nymphing have been designed specifically for fishing flies on the bottom and both are perfect for Grayling. Search for either on Youtube, or a similar website, and you'll find examples of both.

Nymph patterns are generally best for Grayling, although they really need to be weighted and a size 12 should be considered quite a big fly, by Grayling standards. Most anglers return the Grayling they catch and although there's nothing wrong with taking the odd fish for the pot, tagging work on the River Tweed has shown that there can be multiple recaptures of individual Grayling in places where there's any reasonable angling pressure.

Grayling differ from trout in their feeding behaviour and reactions to fly patterns. Their habitat is generally similar to trout, as is their diet. However, whereas trout operate at most levels in the river system, the grayling tends to favour nymphs, caddis larvae and shrimps before surface feeding.

As one of nature's sublime contradictions, however, you can bet your boots that on a day when there is not a trout rise in sight the grayling will be pushing their nebs up to take surface fly like there was no tomorrow.

Grayling often glide up from considerable depths to intercept a floating fly. Because they come from so deep and their mouth is much lower down the jaw than that of a trout, a surface fly is taken by the grayling in a near vertical position, quite unlike the trout which generally just raises its position in the stream without changing its orientation.

Releasing Grayling can therefore improve the catches of the fishery and increase the average size of the fish caught as a single Grayling can potentially contribute to the catches of several anglers.

Although Grayling are fairly sturdy, due care should be taken whilst releasing them:- the fish should spend as little time out of the water as possible (ideally they should be un-hooked in the water although that's not always possible) and care should be taken not to handle with dry hands and to avoid any type of squeezing, particularly of the soft belly, as this can result in internal damage and a slow and painful death for the released fish.

Please note that winter grayling fishing is only permitted on certain stretches of the river so anglers are requested to consult the beat map prior to commencing fishing.

Combined Season Ticket

Peeblesshire Trout Fishing Association now offers a combined season ticket which runs from 1st January until 30th September.

This ticket allows the angler to fish for winter grayling between 1st January and 31st March and for trout and grayling between 1st April and 30th September.

Day tickets for winter grayling are also available from the usual outlets.

Where to Fish for Grayling in Scotland

River Annan Annan Estates, Kirkwood, Hoddam. Permits £8 per day, £45 per week; contact the Fishery Manager at Newbie on 01461 202608.

Upper Annan Angling Association, Upperannan and Applegarth beats, call 01683 300592 for information and permits.

River Ayr: Ayr Angling Club offers fishing for grayling on the river Ayr, call 01292 268833 for permits.

River Avon (Clyde) 18 miles of fishing for salmon, sea trout, trout and grayling. £31 per year for visitors or £20 for locals for salmon (allowing fishing for trout and grayling) and £17 for trout and grayling. Call 01698 791436 for information and permits.

River Clyde The Clyde rises in the borders hills near Moffat and offers exceptional trout and grayling fishing in gin clear water. The ongoing rehabilitation of the lower Clyde, which was until recently deplorably polluted, has made it possible for salmon and sea trout to re-establish themselves in this once prolific river. As with all major rivers in Scotland the Clyde is covered by a Protection Order under the Freshwater and Fisheries Act. Because of the pollution problem salmon had been excluded from the Clyde for over two centuries, as a result the Clyde became renowned as a trout and grayling water and the effect of the Protection Order has been to enhance access to fishing as there were no conflicts with salmon interests. Fishing permits are available along the length of the river from Angling Clubs, Post Offices, shops and hotels. Lamington and District Angling Improvement Association. 9 miles of mostly double bank from Boat Bridge, Thankerton to Bower Pool, Robertson. Stocked annually. Log on to www.lamingtonfishing.co.uk for full details of this quality value for money water. United Clyde Angling Protection Association, permits are available to The Secretary, UCAPA, c/o Civic Square Post Office and Newspaper, 39, Civic Square, Motherwell, Lanarkshire, ML1 1TP.

River Earn Crief Angling Club. Day permits for wild brown trout £5, Grayling £5, from Boyds Newsagents, Crief, call 0176465387 or from office of the Perthshire Tourist Board in Crief, call 01764 65278.

River Ericht Blairgowrie, there a several trout and grayling fishing opportunities on the Ericht detailed out on an excellent web site, www.anglingintayside.co.uk/fishingcentres.asp click on the Blairgowrie and Coupar Angus button.

River Gryfe Strathgryfe AA, salmon, Sea Trout, Brown trout and Grayling. Permits from Blackwood Butchers, 15 St James Terrace, Kilmacolm, The Cross Cafe, The Cross, Kilmacolm. £3 per day. Bridge of Weir AC, salmon, brown trout, grayling, call 01505 703808.

River Isla Aberbothrie, call 01250 873990. Blairgowrie, there a several salmon, trout and grayling fishing opportunities on the Isla detailed out on an excellent web site, www.anglingintayside.co.uk/fishingcentres.asp click on the Blairgowrie and Coupar Angus button. Keithick Angling Club, call 01250 873990. Strathmore Angling Improvement Association, grayling £10 per season, call 01382 667711.

River Leader Earlston Angling Association have 5 miles of fishing for trout and grayling on the lower 5 miles of the river which is a tributary of the Tweed, Permit cost £2 from local shops, contact Andrew Foggin on 01896 848183.

River Nith Nith Fishing Improvement Association have 62% of all fishing available on the river offering excellent access to the river for fishing. Log on to www.rivernithfishings.co.uk

River Tay There a several salmon, trout and grayling fishing opportunities on the Tay detailed out on an excellent web site, www.anglingintayside.co.uk/fishingcentres.asp click on the Blairgowrie and Coupar Angus. Aberfeldy Angling Club, permits from Wade Newsagent, call 01887 820397. Perth & District Angling Association offer permits for course fishing on several stretches of the river, permits from Mallochs in Perth, Ballinluig Inn, Kettles in Dunkeld.

River Teviot Jedforest AA, 5 miles of fishing, 2 miles left bank 3 miles right bank between Jedburgh and Kelso, excellent fly water for grayling with fish of over 3lbs taken every year and reports of much bigger fish lurking in the pools, all grayling should be returned safely, permits from Shaws Newsagents, call 01835 863245 or Sanford Country Sport call 01835 863019, both are in the Cannongate in Jedburgh or go to their web site on www.jedforest-angling.co.uk Permits cost £7 per day or £20 per week. Hawick AC, have extensive fishing for salmon, sea trout, brown trout and grayling as well as fishing for brown and rainbow trout on nearby lochs. The river fishing includes the Ale ale Slitrig although the salmon fishing is on the 10 miles of the Teviot over 3 beats of double bank fishing. Fishing on Acreknowe and Akermoor loch. Contact E.J. Stewart, 24, Borthaugh Rd, Hawick, TD9 0BZ, call 01450 376272 River Till Tiptoe Beat, two rods on 1.5 miles right bank, sea trout, salmon, brown trout and grayling. Day tickets available at £20 per day in Feb to £35 in Sept / Oct. Grayling £7 per day. Call 01890 882177.

River Tummel Lower Tummel : - Pitlochry, permits for trout and grayling fishing from Pitlochry down to Ballinluig from the Pitlochry Tourist Office, 22, Athol Pl, Pitlochry, call 01796472215 also Ballinluig Filling Station and Ballinluig PO. Upper Tummel: - Clunie Dam Down to Faskally, trout and grayling. permits from the Pitlochry Tourist Office.

River Tweed Coldstream & District AA, have fishing on the Tweed between Carham and Milne Garden, brown trout and grayling, permits from Moffats Newsagents and the Village PO in Cornhill. Gala Angling Association, have 13 miles of fishing on the Tweed and 5 miles on the Gala Water. Permits from J & A Turnbull, Kingsknowes Hotel, Borders Angling Centre, and Clovensford Hotel. Contact the club secretary on 01896 755712. Kelso and District AC have fishing for trout and grayling on the Tweed and Teviot, permits from: Forrest & Sons, 1 Bridge St, Kelso; Tweedside Tackle, 36, Bridge St, Kelso; Intersport, 43, The Square, Kelso; Borders Hotel, Woodmarket, Kelso and Springwood Caravan Park, Kelso. Call 01673 226810. Ladykirk and Norham AA have two miles of double bank, permits from the Victoria Hotel, call 01289 382437, or the Mason Arms, call 01280 382326. Peebles-shire Trout Fly Angling Association have a limited number of tickets available each day for visitors to their fishing on 23 miles of the Tweed and 5 miles of the Lyne Water. There are trout and grayling, catch and release for wild brownies but there are dye marked stocked fish that can be taken, Contact the Treasurer / Secretary, Peter Reith, Minchgate, Traquir, call 08701317128.



Better Use of Caddis Flies for Fly Fishing

Caddis is a big meal for trout and at present an important part of the food chain and consequently a crucial fly for the fly fisherman to use.

Caddis flies in pupa and dry fly form should be in every fly fisherman's box on outings to rivers and lakes today.

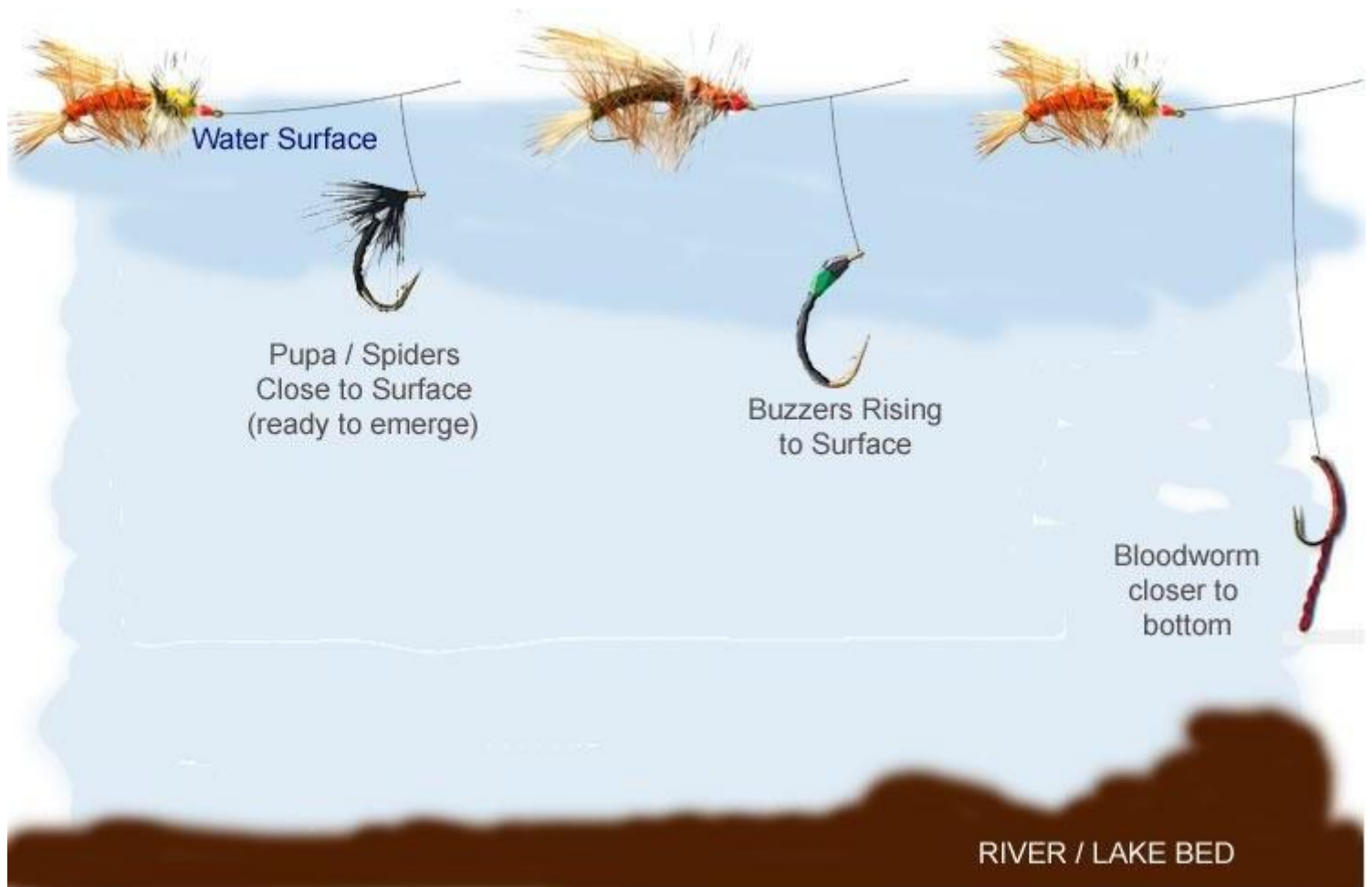
Don't just use caddis as a dry fly; there are different rigs that you can use that make this a deadly pattern in your fishing armoury.

Other Caddis / Sedge Flies

There are many variations of the deadly sedge flies, my personal favourite the Stimulator, deadly and great for supporting rigs (see later in this email), Sedge hogs great for imitating sedges low in the water, Elk Hair Caddis and Goddards Caddis to name just a few. With dull coloured bodies in grey, browns, oranges and greens they are an required fly in any fly box from April to October!



Hatching often in the evenings sedges are still an important part of the trout's diet as they are eaten as both pupa and the adult flies, providing a substantial meal for trout on rivers and on Stillwater's. Many anglers forget the importance of this fly as they fish it at night as light is fading. They range from very small flies to the huge large red sedge. Often trout will be zooming below the surface hitting the pupa as they come to the surface to emerge and we will be trying buzzers forgetting that there are many other flies that emerge, caddis being one of the important flies to consider and imitate.



Caddis flies are deadly twitched on the river surface on rivers and stillwaters; however there are stunning rigs that **MUST** be considered by fly fishermen due to the high buoyancy and movement pattern of the sedge! Enjoy using this stunning technique below for rivers and lakes, we often call this the Banker Rig, a technique that you really can bank on to catch fish.

Be a devil, try a caddis as a suspender on a rig and hit trout hard!

Fishing Techniques Using Caddis flies

From mid-April to the end of October this fly is frequently one of the first flies I use on rivers and on lakes.



Using a large Stimulator on top dropper with one or two buzzers or nymphs suspended below is one of my most used rigs.

and round all obstacles.

On rivers I use Stimulators, Balloon Caddis, Elk Hair Caddis and Goddard Caddis patterns on the top dropper with 12 to 48 inch long leaders with one or two droppers depending on the depth of the water with pheasant tails, grhe or endrick buzzers suspended below, especially with small tungsten beads to get down quick as a team which I use to hunt and work the water, running through all of the riffles and over and round rocks this team proves deadly each time. This is a tremendous search team which trout will hit hard on nymphs and on the Sedge fly letting the river propel the team over

On Stillwaters I will use a Caddis again I inevitably start with the Stimulator on my top dropper with a leader anything from 12" to 6 feet with one or two droppers below supporting buzzers and spiders. With 8 or 10 feet (or more) from the end of the fly line to the first dropper to avoid spooking trout I will cast and allow the team to settle to working depth. I will then alternate twitching the team 6 inches towards me making the Caddis move like the natural while simultaneously lifting the buzzers so they look like they are emerging. Every 4th or 5th twitch I will move the like anything from 2 to 5 feet to lift the buzzers high in the water and start again. Trout will hammer the buzzers as they rise and fall and absolutely kill the caddis as it twitches looking like the natural.

Tying the Goddard Caddis



The Goddard Caddis is an adult sedge imitation. Fish it singly on a long fine leader either static or twitched across the surface.

Hook

Kamasan B170 Size 12-18

Thread

Brown

Body

Natural Deer Hair, Spun and Trimmed.

Hackle

Red Game Hackle

Antennae

Pheasant Tail Fibres or Hackle Stems

Step 1: Run the thread to a position opposite the barb.

Step 2: Catch some deer hair onto the hook shank and pull the thread tight causing it to spin

Step 3: Catch some more deer hair onto the hooks hank, trying to lay the hair over the top of the last tying and pull tight causing it to spin again and pack tight with the packing tool.

Step 4: Catch some more deer hair onto the hook shank and pull tight causing it to spin again. Now pack the deer hair together very tight again using a packing tool.

Step 5: Catch some more deer hair onto the hook shank and pull tight causing it to spin again. Now pack the deer hair together very tight using a packing tool.

Step 6: Continue spinning and packing the deer hair up the hook shank until about 1/3 of the hook shank length from the eye.

Step 7: Now for the fun bit, trim the deer hair with sharp scissors or scalpel until the desired shape is obtained.

Step 8: Catch in a Red Game Hackle at the end of the body. (Don't start winding it yet)

Step 9: Catch in two pheasant tail fibres angled at around 30 degrees away from the eye. (These are going to act as the antennae) and trim waste ends.

Step 10: Wind the hackle towards the eye, secure with thread and trim waste.

Step 11: Build a neat head, whip finish and varnish the head.

Tying the Mini Cats Whisker



This is one of those all-round lures, fish it on a floating, intermediate or sinking line at various rates of retrieve and it will still catch.

The cats whisker works superbly even when fished very slowly or even on the drop. Try the washing line method, this fly works both as a lure and nymph or even under a bung.

The pattern shown is tied to international rules and is a great fish catcher.

You must have one of these in your box, don't let the size deceive you, and it's very effective.

Hook

Hayabusa 761 Size 10

Thread

White

Body

Hot Olive Fritz (6mm)

Tail

White Marabou

Wing

White Marabou with 2 Strands of Krystal Flash

Head

Globrite Floss No4 (Scarlet)

Step 1: Run the thread down to a place opposite the barb and catch in a bunch of white marabou. This is a small slim fly so the bulk on the hook shank needs to be kept at a minimum. Run the thread back and forth along the hook shank to produce a neat level body.

Tip: When preparing the marabou, place the marabou tips in your left hand between index finger and thumb and with the right hand move your thumb and index finger nails down the marabou stripping the webby marabou bulk off the stems. This will result in a slimmer body when tied in.

Step 2: Now dub the Hot Olive Dubbing onto the thread. Notice I started slightly up from a position where the tail was tied in. I find this makes a neater look to the fly where the body and tail meet.

Step 3: Wind the dubbing back to the where the tail is tied in and then dub forwards to about 1/4 of the body length from the eye. At this point use a dubbing teaser to tease the fibres out making a 'buggy' body.

Step 4: Now take a bunch of Marabou for the wing. I use the fine tips found at the top of the Marabou feather, the same principal as that used in the Cormorant lure. Tie in the bunch of Marabou just behind the eye of the hook and trim the waste feather. Whip Finish the thread.

Step 5: Take the scarlet floss and produce a neat head. Secure, Whip Finish and Trim.

Final: Now varnish the head with a couple of coats of Sally Hansen hard as nails varnish.

This version is tied with Krystal flash. Just tie in the Krystal flash before Step 5 (Creating a head with the scarlet floss)



There are many variants of the so called "Buzzer", but this is one of my favourites for fishing Linlithgow Loch on a bright sunny day. The fly can be fished like many buzzers on either an intermediate or floating line using a very slow figure of eight retrieve. I have had many takes sitting this buzzer 2-4 feet below a dry fly used as an indicator and fished close to weed beds in shallow water.

Wind the thread down the hook shank, catching in a piece of flexi floss and gold holographic tinsel to the base of the hook. Return the thread only to the eye of the hook, making a slim and equal body as you go.

Wind the piece of flexi floss up the hook shank to the eye and secure.

Wind the thread back to the start of the thorax.

Wind the gold tinsel around the base of the hook shank a few times and then up towards the eye in equal spaced turns. Secure the tinsel and trim waste.

Catch in two lengths of gold tinsel facing towards the hook bend which will act as wing buds

Create a neat thorax by running the flexi floss back and forth, tie off the flexi floss at the eye and trim waste.

Pull both pieces of gold tinsel forward and secure at the eye. Create a small head to cover the tinsel's ends that are visible.

Varnish the whole body with Hard as Nails varnish. For best results the body should be varnished at least 3 times to produce a good solid finish.

Hook

Kamasan B110 Shrimp, Buzzer Size 10 - 18

Thread

Black

Body

Black Flexifloss

Rib and Wing Buds

Gold Holographic Tinsel

Final Buzzer Coating

Varnish x 3+ Coats

Fly Rod Action Explained



EXTRA FAST
FAST
MODERATE
SLOW

Fly rod action describes the flex in the rod, and how long it takes to recover after the rod is loaded.

Which action is best will depend on the type of fishing you plan on doing?

Delicate small river fishing will require a slow action, and fishing for the larger fish on larger rivers will call for a stiffer, fast-action fly rod.

Trout fly rods of the same weight can have different actions. However, the lighter weight fly rods tend to have a slow action, and the heavier rods tend to have a fast action.

Slow-action rods will bend throughout the length of the rod and is most often used with the lighter weight fly rods.

They are used on smaller rivers where casting in close range with a delicate presentation is needed. As the name implies, a slow-action fly rod loads slower, allowing more time to feel the weight of the line. This extra time allows the caster to present the fly in a delicate manner to a wary trout.

Slow-action rods can be helpful in playing the fish because rod flex will help protect light tippets. These lighter rods are harder to cast when there is a strong wind.

Medium-action rods will load faster and will flex the most in the top 1 / 3 to 1 / 2 of the rod. It is a good action that will meet the needs of the average caster. It is good for casting longer distances.

When you are trout fishing with nymphs you can feel the strike on a medium-action fly rod a lot better than you can with a stiffer, fast-action fly rod.

Fast-action rods flex mostly in the top 1 / 4 to 1 / 3 of the rod. Most 5- to 10-weight fly rods are offered with a fast action.

It is a stiff rod with a strong backbone. This stiffness will put more strain on a light tippet, making it easy to lose a large fish if you are impatient. The stiffer rod will help lift a larger trout out of a deep hole, assuming your tippet can handle the pressure.

You can cast farther and with greater line speed with this fly rod action. This makes it good for those windy days.

Fast-action rods load fast and require better control and timing. This is why time spent working on your casting skills is important as I wouldn't recommend that you go for a fast action rod when you take up fly fishing for the first time.

For someone new to fly fishing, the action of the rod will not be an important issue. A manufacturer of a rod in the lower to middle price range may not even tell you what the rod action is anyway. Focus on the weight and length of the rod that you're going to use and where you will be fishing with it and don't worry about the action for your first rod.

Fly Rod Weight

This is the weight of the line the rod is designed for, not the weight of the rod itself.

000 to 3 weight rods are commonly known as ultra-light fly rods and are good for the smaller rivers. These work well when you need to make a delicate dry fly presentation.

And 5 weight fly rods are more common and better for casting for distance on small to medium-size rivers.

And 6 weight rods are good for the most varied conditions and good in windy conditions. They can throw most of the flies used for trout: nymphs, larger dry flies and small streamers.

7 and 8 weight rods are best suited for larger rivers, lochs and fisheries. These rods can cast heavier flies and lines against the wind.

How to Handle Trout and Release Safely?



**FLY
FISHING
ONLY
CATCH
&
RELEASE**

People often ask questions about how to handle trout correctly, so they can release them with the goal in mind of their survival.

Trout are well known for not doing very well after a fight when using fly tackle. The larger fish are especially difficult to release...

A lot of anglers who practice the art of fly fishing prefer to release their prized catch, especially the larger one. However not many anglers know how to release the fish properly, although they have an idea.

Below will show you and tell you exactly how to handle and safely revive and release the fish back into the water.

First of all, it is important to use barbless hooks and to fight the fish properly. Once the fight is over then the difficult part starts.

Fighting the fish on the fly can be quite tricky at times, especially with larger fish. And especially for the inexperienced fly fisherman/woman.

Hooking and landing a fish on the fly is the second most difficult aspect of fly fishing, after learning how to fly cast.

Listed below are some tips on the best ways to land fish on fly: -

1. First of all when setting the hook or striking, not a lot of force needs to be put into the rod in order to hook the fish, unlike saltwater fishing. A short and fairly gently but quick strike will set the hook.
2. Once the fish has been hooked the tricky part comes into play. You have to always keep your line as tight as possible but the fish must be able to take line when it wants to. If this is not done the fish can shake the hook or your leader can break.

3. The Fly rod tip must always be kept up high in order to control and fight the fish.
4. Once the fish is close to the bank it is often difficult to land as it will get another sudden burst of energy and swim off again, be aware of this and follow the steps above.
5. Once the fish has been tired out, guide it into a landing net and there you have it!

When you are getting ready to land the fish it is important to have a net if you are planning on releasing the fish.

Guide the fish into the open net while it is in the water, rather than scooping it up or trying to net it, this minimises any damage to the fish and also minimises the chance of the leader snapping or the fish shaking the fly.

Once the fish is in the net, wet your hands thoroughly and try not to touch the fish.

I sometimes however, like to get a photo of the fish especially if it is a great fish caught. So, I wet my hands and hold it gently underneath, supporting its weight but not squeezing it too hard as this can cause damage to the fish's internal organs, just hard enough to ensure the fish does not jump out of my hands.

I normally will hold the fish a few centimetres above the water in case it does slip out. Remove the hook, not by force, but by pulling the hook out the exact direction it went in. Barbless hooks are a lot easier to remove and more fish friendly.

There is a lot of confusion about reviving and releasing the fish back into the water, but many people revive the fish in the wrong way, by pulling it back and forth through the water, yes this does supply oxygen to the gills but will often drown the fish as the water goes into the gills, so it might swim off strongly but the chances are that it might 'drown' a bit later on.

The best way to revive the fish is to place it in the water and gently rub both your fingers down the side of the fish over its gills. This gets the gills moving and allows the fish to get oxygen, they swim off strongly after this. Make sure the fish pushes its way out of your hands.



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Morton Fishings Sunday League Rules and Regulations

Fishing in the Morton Fishings Fly Fishing and Bait Fishing Sunday Leagues will be carried out in the spirit of, and with respect for, the traditions of the respective sports.

The two leagues will run from March until October and will be held on the 1st and 3rd Sunday of each month.

Betting

Competitors are not permitted to engage in any form of betting, including sweepstakes, connected with their relevant league table.

Disputes and Complaints

Any dispute or complaint must be reported to an official within 30 minutes of the end of the days fishing.

A sub-committee is to be formed of the organiser and a minimum of two officials of the fishery responsible. They shall adjudicate within one hour. If the sub-committee considers that a competitor has not complied with the rules, it may disqualify. It may also refer the matter for further disciplinary action. In that case, a full report must be made to the appropriate management within 7 days. A competitor may appeal against a decision in writing, within 7 days of being informed of any penalty. Any review must be concluded within 28 days.

Fishing within the two respective leagues will be from the bank only.

Start time will be 9am, finishing time will be 5pm, or earlier when later in the season.

Cost of entry is £35.00 per person for each respective league; this will go towards the overall prizes in each league. Plus, the relevant cost of the days fishing on each day will be £25.00 for that days fishing permit.

There will be a bag limit of 4 fish per person for each day's fishing for both leagues.

Fly Fishing League Rules

Flies & Hooks

The league shall be fished with artificial fly only. Flies must be dressed on single hook; tandem flies are not permitted. No more than 3 flies, may be mounted on a cast and flies must be at least 20 inches apart. Hooks may not measure more than five-eighths of an inch overall, including the eye. The overall length of the fly may not exceed fifteen-sixteenths of an inch. Attractor chemicals and light emitters may not be used on flies

Lines & Leaders

Lines, casts and leaders shall not be additionally weighted. No form of shooting line, metal core line or metal core braided leaders is permitted.

Rods

A competitor may use one rod not exceeding 12 feet in length and may have a spare rod of the same maximum length. But only one rod may be mounted. A rod is considered mounted if any two sections are joined or if a reel or line is attached. A competitor's rod, when working flies or retrieving casts must be hand held and must be above water level.

Bait Fishing League Rules

Bait Fishing only

One Rod per Angler as per Fly Fishing Rules.

No ground baiting.

No treble hooks, swim feeders, bubble with fly.

Natural bait only.

Points System for Both Fly and Bait Leagues

Weighing-In

If a league member reaches their individual bag limits early, they may leave the water and hand in their bags to an official. The fish should be collected from the official and presented at the weigh-in. All league members must report directly to the weigh-in immediately after the finish time. Nil returns are required. Anyone not reporting within 30 minutes of the end of the day will be deemed to have a nil return.

1 point will be given per pound of weight caught.

Placings

League results will be decided by the bag-weight of the fish caught on each visit, (i.e., 4 fish caught for 8lb 6oz, this will be rounded up to nearest point for example 8.5 points or 8lb 10oz will be 9 points).

At the end of the season the trophy and other prizes will be given to the 1st, 2nd and 3rd places.

If there is a tie for each place either within the fly or bait leagues, a fish off will be undertaken to determine the final winners of each section of the leagues.

If anyone is interested in entering the Sunday Leagues, please email mortonfishings@yahoo.com with your contact details.

Fishing Permits – Scotland Rod Licences:

Unlike in England, Wales or Ireland; in Scotland you do not need to have a fishing licence from the Government.

The only exception to this is the Border Esk which flows into England and is therefore considered to be an English river for legal purposes, hence you need a current rod licence for it. The opposite is true on the Tweed, where the English part is considered to be Scottish for legal purposes, so even there you do not need a licence.

However, when fly fishing in Scotland it can be a bit of a daunting experience but the main points to be aware of are as follows:

Permission to fish:

Please be sure to get the correct permissions before you go fishing, as otherwise you may be committing an offence. For salmon & sea trout, it is a criminal offence (the state can prosecute you) to fish without written permission from the owner of the fishing rights, or his agent.

For trout, it is a criminal offence to fish without permission where there is a Protection order in place, or where a loch is in single ownership. In all other cases, it is still a civil offence (the owner can prosecute you).

For other types of freshwater fishing, it is a criminal offence to fish without permission on a single ownership loch and a civil offence in all other cases.

For more details see the Salmon and Freshwater Fisheries (Consolidation) (Scotland) Act 2003.

For fishing in the sea, by boat or from the shore, no permission is required.

Closed seasons:

Salmon and trout fishing on rivers are subject to a close season during which it is illegal to fish. These vary from river to river.

The earliest Salmon River to open is the Helmsdale on January 11th and the latest to close is the Tweed on 30th November. However most salmon rivers open on 1st February and close sometime in October.

River trout fishing dates are 15th March to 6th October but many fisheries do not let outside the period from 1st April to 30th September.

There is no legal close season for rainbow trout, grayling, coarse or sea fishing, although some fisheries do not operate in the winter.

Sundays

For salmon or sea trout fishing in Scotland, Sunday is a closed time and it is illegal to fish then. For other fishing, it is not illegal and most commercial Stillwater fisheries operate on Sundays, although many river fisheries do not.

Keeping fish:

In Scotland it has recently been made a criminal offence to sell a salmon or sea trout, so always put your fish back unless you intend to eat it yourself and then only do so if the conservation rules of the river allow it; which some don't! There are no legal restrictions on keeping other fish types although many fisheries will impose limits.

Tackle:

The requirements vary according to species being fished for and the area of Scotland in which you are fishing. Fishing is legally restricted to rod and line only, but many rivers have extra legal restrictions, such as the Tweed where you can only fish by fly for much of the season.

Other rivers have conservation codes which mean that fishery owners will ban the use of spinners, prawns, worms etc for all or part of the season

It Could Only Happen to a Fisherman

Mother to daughter advice: Cook a man a fish and you feed him for a day. But teach a man to fish and you get rid of him for the whole weekend.

A guy rings his boss and says "I can't come to work today. The boss asks why and the guy says "it's my eyes." "What's wrong with your eyes?" asks the boss. "I just can't see myself coming to work, so I'm going fishing instead..."

Retired colonel, talking of the good old days: Have you ever hunted bear? His grandson's teacher: No, but I've been fishing in shorts.

How much fishing tackle can a man accumulate before his wife throws him out? I don't know the answer but I think I'm nearly there.

Two guys go on a fishing trip. They rent all the equipment: the reels, the rods, the wading suits, the rowboat, the car, and even a cabin in the woods. They spend a fortune. The first day they go fishing they don't catch a thing. The same thing happens on the second day, and on the third day. It goes on like this until finally, on the last day of their vacation, one of the men finally catches a fish.

As they're driving home, they're really depressed. One guy turns to the other and says, "Do you realise that this one lousy fish we caught cost us fifteen hundred dollars?" "Wow!" says the other guy "It's a good job we didn't catch anymore!"

What's the biggest fish you ever caught? "That would be the one that measured fourteen inches..." "That's not so big!" "Between the eyes?"

Two guys are talking about fishing. One says to the other, "I am NEVER going to take my wife fishing with me, ever again!"

"That bad, huh"

"She did everything wrong! She did everything wrong! She talked too much, made the boat rock constantly, tried to stand up in the boat, baited the hook wrong, used the wrong lures and WORST of all she caught more fish than me!"

I think the only reason my husband likes to go fishing so much is that it's the only time he hears someone tell him, "Wow, that's a big one!"

A woman is in bed with her lover who also happens to be her husband's best friend. They make love for hours, and afterwards, while they're just lying there, the phone rings. Since it is the woman's house, she picks up the receiver. Her lover looks over at her and listens, only hearing her side of the conversation...

(She is speaking in a cheery voice) "Hello? Oh, hi. I'm so glad that you called. Really? That's wonderful. I am so happy for you. That sounds terrific. Great! Thanks. Okay. Bye bye."

She hangs up the telephone and her lover asks "Who was that?" "Oh" she replies, "that was my husband telling me all about the wonderful time he's having on his fishing trip with you."

What do dirty fish read? Prawno Magazines!

A father and son went fishing one day. While they were out in the boat, the boy suddenly became curious about the world around him. He asked his father, "How does this boat float? The father replied, "Don't rightly know son." A little later, the boy looked at his father and asked, "How do fish breath underwater?" Once again, the father replied, "Don't rightly know son." A little later the boy asked his father, "Why is the sky blue?" Again, the father replied, "Don't rightly know son." Finally, the boy asked his father, "Dad, do you mind my asking you all of these questions?" The father replied, "Of course not; you don't ask questions, you never learn nothing'.

One day a rather inebriated ice fisherman drilled a hole in the ice and peered into the hole and a loud voice said, "There are no fish downthere."

He walked several yards away and drilled another hole and peered into the hole and again the voice said, there's no fish down there."

He then walked about 50 yards away and drilled another hole and again the voice said, "There's no fish down there."

He looked up into the sky and asked, "God, is that you?" "No, you idiot," the voice said, "It's the rink manager."



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