

# *The Scottish Flyfisher* *Quarterly Magazine*

*July 2022*

Fishing Loch Awe

Fishing the River Leven

Trout Fishing St Mary's Loch

Fly Tying for Beginners Part 2





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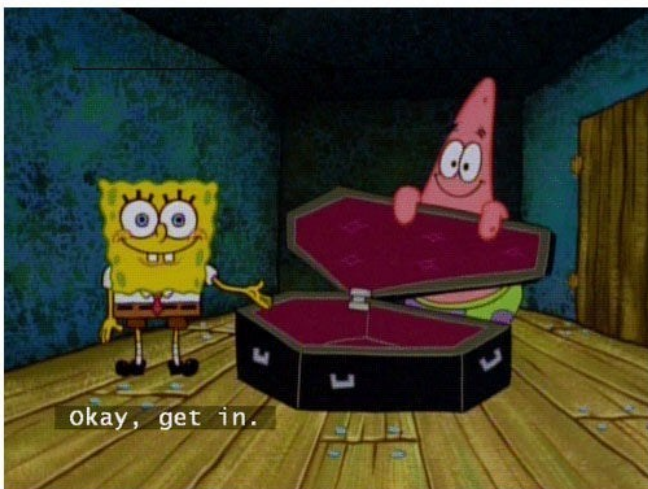
Welcome to the Scottish Flyfisher Magazine's quarterly July 2022 issue.

If you would like to let other people know about your flyfishing day out, or want to say something or ask a question about the fly-fishing in Scotland then email in to me at [editor.scottishflyfisher@gmail.com](mailto:editor.scottishflyfisher@gmail.com) and I will add them to the magazine or to the "Have Your Say" page.

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when I'm fishing and i  
see another person not  
picking up their trash



Do you know any fly-fishing clubs within Scotland who are looking for new members?

Then ask them to email me their details and information on the club and I will start adding them to my magazine and the parent website.

Apologies for the smaller magazine this issue, it is due to illness and other commitments which had stopped me from getting out as much as I hoped for.

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## The Editors Bit (BITE)

As I've said before there is nothing that pisses me off more than the mishandling of trout when releasing them back into the water.

I was at one of my favourite trout fisheries Burnhouse Lochan up at Allandale just outside Bonnybridge, to enjoy a wee 6 hours catch and release.

The fishery is a barbless hook only one and you have to use the fisheries landing nets which are nice and large for netting the bigger fish they have up to 16lb.

Whilst there I noticed a very large rainbow struggling to swim and kept bellying up in the water, so I decided to try and foul hook it, which I managed to do after about 20 minutes trying.

When I did manage to net it, it was in a very poor state, you could see the fungal growth on its sides and back where the fishes natural protective lair had been rubbed away. I took it up to Maisy May the fishery manager we weighed it and it was just over 9lb 6oz and got her permission to take it home for my dog Jura who absolutely loves his cooked trout.

When I got it home and had a better look at it, I could also see damage to the mouth area where the hook was forcibly removed and damage to the fish's gill area. Typical damage of mishandling of a fish and not using barbless hooks.

Another couple of fisheries I was at I saw one bloke actually kick the fish back into the water after taking the hook out, and at another one a bloke throwing the fish back in like as if it was a rugby ball, he was next to me and I had a few choice words with him, which nearly got me banned from the fishery as I was ready to throw him in the water to see how he liked it. Lucky the fishery manager had seen it also and it was the other bloke who got banned.

### **FOLLOW THOSE 9 SIMPLE RULES FOR RELEASING FISH: -**

#### **1. Keep the Fish in The Water**

Quite simply, you've got to make sure the trout is submerged as much as possible if you plan to release it. This might seem a bit obvious, but since trout will suffocate when held outside the water for too long, minimizing air exposure is key to keeping the fish alive and healthy.

Additionally, when you have a fish in your net, it is best to hold it underwater. This will allow the trout to breath while you set your rod down. Just don't let your net dip too far below the surface of the water. You want the fish to breath, not escape.

#### **2. Avoid Over-Playing the Fish**

When a fish is hooked, it's going to do everything it can to survive. It will thrash around and tire itself out — remember, it doesn't know that you intend to put it right back. The best way to avoid overplaying your catch is to be prepared.

For example, if you know that you will be fishing in an area rich with large trout, use a heavier weight rod. Also, opt for the strongest possible leader you can use without spooking the fish. This added strength will allow you to bring the fish in a little quicker, and therefore, reduce its risk of over-exhaustion.



#### **3. Wet Your Hands Before Handling the Fish**

Whenever you are handling a trout (or pretty much any other species of fish) it is best to wet your hands before picking it up.

##### **Why?**

Because dry hands are known to remove the protective, slimy coating that keeps trout safe from bacteria and other fungal infections. So, while picking up a trout with dry hands might not cause much immediate harm, it can cause irreparable, long-term damage to the trout's skin after you release it back into the water.

#### **4. Crimp the Barbs on Your Hooks**

If you plan to release your trout after catching it, it's important to make the hook extraction process as minimally invasive as possible.

The best way to do this is to crimp your barbs while you're setting up your rod and leader. This is really, quite simple.

Using a pair of long-nose pliers, or your forceps, press down on the barb so that your hook can be extracted from the fish's mouth as easily as possible. Once caught, this will allow you to remove the hook from the fish's mouth quickly, and release it without putting much stress on the fish.

#### **5. Use A Rubberized Net**

Like wetting your hands before picking up a fish, using a rubberized net will protect the fish's slimy coating, and therefore, will not leave them vulnerable to parasites, fungal infections and dangerous bacteria.

Beyond that, with a rubber net, you don't have to worry about your hooks getting caught and tangled like they would in a more traditional net. This, in turn, reduces the amount of time it takes to unhook and release a fish once you've netted it.

#### **6. Don't Touch the Gills**

Again, fish out of water are particularly delicate—so, if you are planning to release your catch, you want to ensure that you are very careful in how you handle it. Don't hold heavy fish by the mouth as this may damage the jaw and vertebrae. And more than anything, steer clear of their gills.

The gills of a fish allow them to breathe underwater. So, if you damage this essential organ, there is little chance that the trout will survive.

#### **7. Revive the Trout If It's Tired**

One of the most common reasons some fish die once they are released is exhaustion. After a tough struggle, and receiving too much exposure to the open air, their blood can lose significant levels of vital oxygen and it will have little energy left to swim away—even after they are returned to the water.

If your catch needs reviving after tiring itself out, hold it upright in the water with both hands under its belly. Gently move the fish back and forth just below the water's surface. This allows the oxygen in the water to flow through its gills, thus bringing it back to life. Release your grip once it decides for itself that it is ready to swim away (you'll know it's time when it starts wriggling again).

#### **8. Be Gentle (Don't Squeeze the Fish)**

It's very easy to underestimate your strength when handling a fish (even a large trout). Therefore, it's important to remember that their bodies (and internal organs) are extremely delicate and fragile.

So, whether you're holding a fish for a photo, removing your fly from a trout's mouth, or attempting to revive an overexerted catch before releasing back into the water, be sure to not apply too much pressure to the body.

#### **9. Keep the fish calm by turning it upside down**

It might sound strange, but holding a fish upside down is actually the best way to keep it calm when outside of the water.

Since the inverted motion prevents excessive flailing, it makes the process of removing the hook much easier, and will allow you to release the fish quicker.

And as I mentioned earlier, the quicker you release a fish back into the water, the less harm you will cause it.

If I'm on a catch and release ticket then I follow the above rules, as I'm out to enjoy my day's fishing even if it's only getting nips and tugs or losing the fish coming to the net due to the barbless hook coming out, so be it I've enjoyed my days fishing, chatting to the friendly staff and other fly fishers on the water, that's what it's all about in helping to relax and clear my head. When you follow the above rules, it's not just for the benefit of the fish in recovering from being caught. But also, it benefits the fishery as well, they have invested money and extremely hard work over time to offer you an excellent fishing location and don't like to see all that effort going to waste because some ignorant gits out there won't follow basic rules, because all their interested in is seeing how many fish they can catch and to hell with everything else.



# Fishing Loch Awe



Loch Awe is 25 miles long and up to 1 mile wide and has depths of more than 300ft in places.

Set in spectacular scenery the loch attracts many visiting anglers throughout the year for both the wild trout and coarse fishing, and in recent years has become something of a mecca for anglers pursuing the loch's famous large predatory ferox trout and pike.

Loch Awe currently holds the British record Brown trout of 31lb 12oz which was caught in 2001, whilst this season already there have been several double figure fish recorded with one coming close to the record at 30lb 10oz.

There is a public slipway situated between Cruachan power station and Lochawe village on the A85, although it is in a very poor condition and, as such, is suitable for launching small boats only.

Boats can be hired from a few places around the loch, the most popular being Loch Awe Boats at Ardbrecknish which also has an area suitable for launching your own boat.

There is a petrol station at Crunachy/Inverawe (near the barrage), which also has a camp site and there are pubs at Lochawe, Kilchrenan, Portsonachan and Ford.

Most of the brown trout average 6oz/8oz in weight. Rainbow trout 'escapees' are also caught in numbers, especially near the fish farm at the Pass of Brander. Sea trout enter the loch but soon disperse into the vast water system. Salmon average 5-10lb but fish over 20lb are occasionally taken. There are a large number of perch in the loch, many of them over 1lb in weight.

There is a good population of arctic char which, like other populations in Scottish lochs, have benefited from excess food from fish farms. Fish up to 6lb have been taken.

Pike of over 35lb have been caught and there are loads of big doubles to be had. Popular marks for pike fishing include Kilchurn Castle, Ford and Dalavich. Perch are commonplace in summer and fish over 1lb are not uncommon. A few eels are also taken but they are mostly of the 'bootlace' variety.

The loch has a Protection Order in force and fishing is by permit only. There are separate tickets for trout, salmon, pike and coarse fish. Permits are available from various outlets around the Loch and from tackle shops in Oban.

The trout fishing season on Loch Awe runs from March 15th to October 15th. The best fly fishing for wild brown trout is to be had during the first few months of the season before fish move into deeper water and at the back end of the season when the fish move back into shallower water.

Traditional drift fishing over shallower water during these times can still produce nice baskets of hard fighting brown trout averaging 3/4lb with fish of 1-2lb not uncommon. Spinning can also be very effective in the right areas.

Trolling for Ferox trout is a very successful and popular fishing method used on Loch Awe. Ferox trout are large predatory Brown trout which spend most of their time in the depths feeding on the loch's abundant population of Arctic char and Roach.

Again, best times for this type of fishing is early and late season though large double figure fish are caught throughout the season. It is widely believed that Loch Awe is easily capable of producing more 30lb+ fish.





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<http://www.lochter.co.uk/fishery.php>

Call us: 01651 872787/ 872000

Email us: [info@lochter.co.uk](mailto:info@lochter.co.uk)



Lochter Fishery consists of 3 Fly Fishing Lochs over some 14 acres of water and two Bait Fishing Ponds. One of the fisheries lochs is the unique Muckle Trout Loch which is in the shape of a big leaping trout!

The fishery has recently increased the stocking of double sized trout (over 10lb) to test your skills. These trout are stocked over and above the normal stocking levels and are bonus fish for catch and release only. This has proved very popular with anglers eager to land one.

Whether you are fishing the dry fly or pulling a lure, novice or expert alike you are sure to enjoy the surroundings and the challenge of landing one of the prize-winning tagged trout!

Lochter also has two bait ponds stocked with 1 1/2-4lb Rainbow Trout. It's ideal for groups, parties and younger children to try their hand at fishing. All bait catches must be kept and paid for

The fishery has a very nice bothy where you can relax and reflect on your days fishing. You are able to order any of the delicious food from their restaurant menu but enjoy it in more informal comfort of the bothy or outside on the picnic tables.

There is also free tea and coffee making facilities available. The bothy also has a licensed bar, so after a hard day fishing you can unwind with a cold beer or a nice warming dram.

The fishery is open from 8am to dusk all year round, 7 days a week and there is no necessity to book as there is always ample space.

Top Patterns: Bloodworm, Buzzer, Diawl Bach

Top Lines: Intermediate

Best Areas: All

<p>Catch &amp; Release: -</p> <p>3hr C&amp;R      £12          4hr C&amp;R.      £14          6hr C&amp;R.      £16          8hr C&amp;R.      £18</p> <p>All day summer ticket. £20</p> <p>Strictly barbless hooks only &amp; fish not to be removed from the water.</p>	<p>Keep Fish Tickets: -</p> <p>1 - Fish up to 4hrs      £20          2 - Fish up to 6hrs      £24          3 - Fish up to 8hrs      £28</p> <p>No selective fishing, first fish you catch up to your limit is to be kept.</p> <p>Once your limit is reached you can continue fishing with barbless hooks only.</p>
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## Fishing the River Leven



The Leven Catchment is the largest in Fife with 292km of classified water courses, a large proportion of which are upstream of the various lochs on the system and are not accessible to migratory fish.

The flow of the River Leven is controlled by the sluices at Loch Leven and for the first 5km downstream of the loch the river is canalised. Migratory fish cannot at present reach this part of the system due to a number of obstructions between Markinch and Leslie. There are two main tributaries which drain the north side of the catchment, the Lothrie Burn which enters at Glenrothes, and the Kennoway Burn with its tributary the Back Burn which enter at Windygates, 3km from the sea.

These burns drain a mixture of farmland and surveys carried out by Freshwater Fisheries Laboratory staff in 1990 indicated that these are important spawning burns for salmon and sea trout.

Access for migratory fish is barred to the Lothrie Burn.

The River Ore drains a large catchment to the south and west of the River Leven and rises in Blairadam Forest at a height of some 300 m. It flows down into Loch Ore which is of good quality and now hosts an important and well-used recreational facility. Downstream of Loch Ore the river is joined by the Lochfitty Burn which drains a substantial area of farm land and is reported to be of good quality.

Downstream of this point the river receives a number of ferruginous discharges which reduce the water quality.

Locally these discharges can have quite a severe effect on invertebrate fauna and fish populations are low. The other main tributaries of the Ore are the Lochgelly Burn and the Lochty Burn.

The Lochty Burn has historically been of very poor quality but has improved slightly over the years and in 1987 sticklebacks were found after an absence of more than 20 years. The River Ore joins the Leven just upstream of Cameron Bridge Distillery and the water quality of the main river is somewhat reduced from that point downstream.

Improvements have now been made to various obstructions at Markinch and Balgonie where fish passes have been installed. However, the power station at Balgonie takes a high proportion of the available water except at very high river levels.

The majority of the fishing on the river is leased by the River Leven Angling Club. The River Leven Angling Club offers approximately 16 miles of (mostly) double bank fishing on the River Leven. There is good access to most parts of the river, but if you fancy something a bit more challenging there is also the River Ore which is included with your permits.

River Leven – Main species are Brown Trout and Sea Trout. Salmon have also been caught although in small number. “Catch and Release” especially for salmon is highly recommended. (Please refer to the clubs recommendations regarding their catch and release policy.)

River Ore – Main species Brown Trout, Pike and Perch.

### Permit Prices

Season ticket (adult) £60 purchased after the 15th March

OAP/ Junior ticket (16 and under) £30

Day ticket £10. Buy six day tickets and qualify for a season ticket

Please be aware that day permits do not go on sale until the 15th March.

Season Permits are now available in the first instance from the Treasurer as noted below, from Committee Members, from the outlets listed or via PayPal by sending a stamped addressed envelope to Robert McKenzie, 10 Primmer Place, Cowdenbeath. KY4 8LY. Please make cheques payable to River Leven Angling Club

### Outlets

Deals on Reels – High Street Cowdenbeath

OGT (behind Asda) Kirkcaldy



## Trout Fishing St Mary's Loch



St Mary's Loch is located only 35 miles from Smailholm, on the A708, and provides a fantastic day of fishing. The loch is home to the St Mary's Loch Angling club who manages boat and bank permits for both St Mary's Loch and Loch O'Lowes in Selkirkshire. Both lochs are interconnected by The Little Yarrow River and it is an easy walk between the two.

St Mary's Loch Angling Club lease both Trout and Coarse Fishing rights for St Mary's Loch and for Loch O'Lowes. The loch keeper is Ian Fernyhough, and can be contacted on 07724 523777 or by emailing [lochkeeper@stmarysanglingclub.org.uk](mailto:lochkeeper@stmarysanglingclub.org.uk)

It is useful to save this information, so that you can contact Ian if you encounter any issues while on the Loch.

The loch is over 150ft deep in some areas and is over a half mile from bank to bank. St Mary's has an area of 640 acres, and offers a challenge for fishermen of any skill set. The Loch's are close to 800ft above sea level, and have a prevailing south-westerly wind. Even on a warm day at

Smailholm the air at the Loch's is still cool and therefore fish will still rise in most conditions. The lochs are home to a wide variety of fish including Salmon, Sea Trout, Brown Trout, Pike, Perch, Eel, and 3 Spined Sticklebacks.

The Lochs run a fairly relaxed set of rules, so you are welcome to enjoy yourself at your own leisure, but the Loch keeper requests that you follow basic etiquette when fishing on the loch. There is, however, a zero-tolerance policy with regards to littering. The Loch keeper also requests that if you catch a fish that you are not explicitly fishing for if you could return it to the water, to preserve the natural stock.

Fishing is available on the lochs through the St Mary's Loch Angling Club. Day tickets are available for £8.00. These are available from the Loch Keeper – 07724 523777, or at the Glen Cafe or Tibbie Shiels Inn. Boats can be hired through the loch keeper.

For more information visit the website: <http://sites.google.com/site/stmarysloch>. The latest news from the loch can be found on their news blog <http://viewsfromtheloch.blogspot.co.uk/>

The St Mary's Angling Club is also undertaking environmental and conservation work on the lochs. They are in the process of trying to raise money for the re-introduction of Arctic Char and improving the banks of the burns to reduce erosion and provide a better environment for spawning fish.

Best flies are traditional wets seem to always do well on the water are Kate McLaren, Black Peacock spider, Invicta etc.

It can be quite a tough/dour place to fish at times but can also give you good sport on the right day...i.e windy and overcast. Dark traditional flies as already mentioned on a floating line Kate McLaren a must, palmered coch, clan chief.

More importantly, keep on the move, cast and step. It's typical to cover 50 yards of bank without an offer then hit five or six fish in succession.

**Haddockston Trout Fishery**  
**West Glen Road, Houston, Johnstone PA6 7BU**  
**Tel: 07960 415092**



I visited Haddockston Trout Fishery on Monday 2 May 2022 as I had heard a few good reports from other fly fishers about the venue, and fancied giving it a go.

The fishery is only 3 acres but set in a cracking location.

It was taken over 2 years ago, and the place was in a right mess when they first arrived but the management team spent the first year getting it to how it is today, from landscaping the grounds and building new platforms and stocking the fishery with some cracking Rainbow, Brown and Blue trout from Invicta Trout Trossachs. There is also resident Carp up to 20lb+ in the water, and they love taking

the flies as much as the trout do, so hang on tight if you manage to get one.

Must say they have done a cracking job of getting the fishery to how it is and the management team are really friendly and helpful.

The fishery depth is 3 feet at the weed beds and going down to 14 feet around the island on the right-hand side.



When I arrived, the fish were rising all over the place, so I set my rod up with a floating line and just a Parasol Buzzer on the point of a 15-foot leader which I had tied the night before especially for the trip.

The fish were drowning the fly but not coming back for it, however I persevered with the fly and eventually managing to get my first fish on it.



I then changed my leader to a size 12 olive damsel on the point and 2 size 14 buzzers on the droppers. The fish were more interested in the buzzers as they kept nipping and tugging at them, but not really taking them, so I moved down a few pegs and managed to get another 2 to the net, and lost another one just coming to the net. Plus, I really got hit hard and lost my point fly, and as luck would have it, I never had another damsel fly of the same colour, only darker ones.

There are two resident swans on the water and when I stopped to have my lunch, they came straight over to me and started squawking at me to share my sandwiches with them.

The manager Stuart Campbell said that two of the regular anglers to the venue keep feeding the swans so they are now in the habit of begging for food. Stewart is asking that any anglers stopping for lunch at the water's edge to not encourage the swans. Not just that they would start hanging around the platforms so hindering the areas you can cast to. In fact, one of them even tried to take my Parasol Buzzer off the surface of the water thinking it was food.



Whilst I was there the other anglers were having a good day's fishing, some of them like me only managing to get 3 to the net, however others were having a great catch, all being caught on damsels or buzzers. The fishery is definitely worth another visit or two.



## Scottish Ladies International Competition



The Scottish Ladies fly fishing team held an international competition at the Lake of Menteith Fishery on Thursday 26 May 2022.

I was honoured to be a boatman for the event. Along with the other boatmen, I had to use all my skills and knowledge during the day to ensure that the ladies in the boat were safe as the weather was absolutely atrocious.

There were times during the day and some locations and sheltered areas you could use the drogue safely, other times it was incredibly dangerous as the waves were that big at times you thought you were in the North Sea.

Plus, the wind made it even harder to steer the boat with either the drogue out or using an oar either by itself or along with the drogue.

I had the Scottish Captain, Liz McLellan and a Welsh lady Elnir Wyn Thomas in the boat, and I must admit they managed to handle the situation nicely, despite at times

having to strip their lines back really fast as the boat was threatening to overtake it due to the speed we were drifting at times.



The Ladies and Boatmen awaiting to go out

It was a hard-fought event with everyone trying their best to catch and land the fish.

The overall results were: -

- 1<sup>st</sup> Place England with 42 fish for 1936 points
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> Place Wales also with 42 fish for 1911 points
  - 3<sup>rd</sup> Place Ireland with 29 fish for 1365 points
  - 4<sup>th</sup> Place Scotland with 22 fish for 1037 points.
- The total fish caught on the day was 135
- The rod average was 2.8
- Average length of fish caught was 46cm



### Best Individuals

	Name	No of Fish	Best Bag
Longest Fish	Kathleen Sheppard - Scotland		65cm
Top Overall Bag	Ann Kerrin - Ireland	9	411
Top Welsh Bag	Debbie Morgan	8	387
Top England Bag	Louise Callow	7	319
Top Ireland Bag	Ann Kerrin	9	411
Top Scotland Bag	Jane Wright	5	248

### Results By Team



#### Wales

Placing	Name	No Fish	Fish Length	Longest Fish	Points
1	Debbie Morgan	8	387	54	387
2	Alice Davies	8	375	50	375
3	Barbara Thorne	5	221	49	221
4	Elnir Wyn Thomas	5	216	47	216
5	Marian Davies	3	140	48	140
5	Gayle Marsh	3	140	50	140
7	Enid Edwards	3	137	48	137
8	Cheryl Bulman	3	131	46	131
9	Sloned Davis	3	123	45	123
10	Sally Perkins	1	41	41	41
11	Maggie Davis	0			
11	Sally-Ann Lles	0			



**England**

Placing	Name	No Fish	Fish Length	Longest Fish	Points
1	Louise Callow	7	319	51	319
2	Samantha Edmunds	5	236	53	236
3	Mary Miller	5	235	54	235
4	Lianne Frost	4	196	56	196
5	Rosemary Gunn	4	192	51	192
6	Gwyneth Mooney	4	185	49	185
7	Sheena Goode	3	138	55	138
7	Maggie Curtis	3	138	52	138
9	Heather Larnacraft	3	134	48	134
10	Janice Sharp	2	84	42	84
11	Sue Potts	2	79	41	79
12	Jane Robinson	0			

**Ireland**

Placing	Name	No Fish	Fish Length	Longest Fish	Points
1	Ann Kerrin	9	411	51	411
2	Ruth Mettler	4	221	64	221
3	Ruth Arrell	3	141	48	141
4	Julie Gerry	3	138	54	138
5	Linda Straghan	3	137	49	137
6	Debbie Connolly	3	136	47	136
7	Madeleine Kelly	2	92	49	92
8	Almha McDonnell	1	50	50	50
9	Liz Dermott	1	39	39	39
10	Rebecca McGinn	0			
10	Julie McGeever	0			
10	Lady Decies	0			

Scotland



Placing	Name	No Fish	Fish Length	Longest Fish	Points
1	Jane Wright	5	248	55	248
2	Jean Ferguson	5	237	51	237
3	Deidre Dunbar	2	93	49	93
4	Sandra McTear	2	92	48	92
5	Helen Philip	2	86	47	86
6	Dione Roberts	2	78	40	78
7	Kathleen Sheppard	1	65	65	65
8	Liz McLellan	1	46	46	46
8	Lana Taylor	1	46	46	46
8	Joy Penrose-Stupart	1	46	46	46
11	Nikki Wood	0			
11	Sheila Mannion	0			



Jane Wright receiving trophy from Liz McLellan for Scotland's top rod.





## Fly Tying for Beginners Part 2

There is no better feeling than catching a fish on a fly, which is a big reason why we all love to fly fish.

Catching a fish on a fly that you tied yourself makes those moments even more special.

Learning to tie flies for the first time can be a daunting task and visiting any fly shop or looking on line at fly tying sections can be overwhelming—with all the various feathers, furs, fabrics, etc, it can be hard to know where to start.

The first things you will need are hooks. Without the hook, you will not have the necessary base for attaching materials.

Selecting the right hook can be confusing enough as there are a variety of makes, styles and sizes to choose from.

For the beginner learning to tie some of these basic flies, I would recommend using size 10, 12, or 14, nymph hooks until you are more confident and experienced to go even further from size 16 to 20.

The hooks I like to use for all my wet flies and nymphs are the Glasgow Angling Centres own brand called Stillwater Spiker Wet Fly and Nymph Hooks. They are a really good quality hook and at £3.99 for 100 hooks it doesn't break the bank account when starting out. You can get the hooks in sizes 8 to 14. They also have Buzzer hooks from size 10 to 16 and Dry Fly hooks from size 10 to 14, all at the same price for 100 hooks.

Thread is used to affix all of the materials to the hook.

Thread comes in a variety of colours and widths. The standard thread width is measured 6/0. For smaller flies a thread size of 8/0 is preferred.

Thread comes in just about any colour you can think of, but fly tying for beginners—let's stick with black, brown/tan, and red thread in size 6/0. This is enough to get you started.



There are hundreds of various thread manufacturers out there from the well-known expensive ones to the (sorry to say) cheap and nasty ones, whereby you think you are saving money but are actually losing it in the long run, having to purchase even more threads until you get the ones you like. The threads I have been using for well over 20 years has been Uni-Thread which are great threads to use and comes in a multitude of colours, thickness and styles for all the various flies and lures you will eventually start tying up. So, I recommend that you go for quality first even if it is slightly dearer.

Wire is often used in tying up a fly to create the appearance of a segmented or ribbed abdomen that many nymphs possess. It also provides useful weight and flashes of shine to the fly. Like thread, the wire comes in a variety of colours and sizes— fine copper wire will be enough to start off with and as you progress you can add more colours to your fly-tying drawer/cabinet.

Dubbing is the main material in many flies. It is usually made up of synthetic nylon fibres but does come in natural blends, such as hare's ear.

Dubbing varies in texture from smooth to coarse depending on the fly you are tying up. The smoother the dubbing, the flatter and more level the dubbing will lie on the hook. Coarser dubbing will provide less uniform application and a "fuzzier" look.

Dubbing comes yet again in many colours and can be mixed with other colours providing a unique look. To get started, grey hare's ear, tan, and caddis green dubbing will be a good enough start for anyone.

One of the most popular flies, the pheasant tail nymph, lends its name to the pheasant tail used in the majority of the fly. Pheasant tails are often used to create tails, bodies, and wing cases.

Pheasant tail remains a staple fly-tying material as its tiny fibres give the fly a natural look and subtle movement to mimic aquatic insects. Most fly-tying shops will sell the individual feathers or packs of cut pieces and they're not too expensive to buy either.

Peacock herl is one of the favourite materials to use. It is a vibrant green that shines and fish can't resist. Peacock herl is most often used to create the body and abdomen of certain flies. However, it can be very fragile when being used.





When you take up fly tying for the first time, I would recommend that you get a fly/buzzer/nymph and take only 6 hooks size 10 and try to make clones of the fly you want to tie.

What I mean by cloning, is to replicate the fly in everyone you make. If they all don't look the same, then don't throw them aside, strip them back down to the bare hook again and start all over.

Once mastered then you can start to make them in smaller sizes doing the exact same thing as you did in the larger fly.

I would suggest that you get a fly that would look easy to tie up and without too much materials in it, for example the Matchstick Buzzer on the left.

The matchstick buzzer is simplicity in itself and an awesome fly for both reservoirs and still waters. The pattern is a very basic buzzer and gets its name from looking like a match with slim body and rounded head.

There are numerous colour combinations for this fly but the most common are black or claret body and heads in fluo green, fluo orange, red, pink or yellow.

This is a very simple fly to tie and only has 4 components to it: -

Black thread for the body.

Fine red wire for the ribbing.

Thread of your choice for the head.

In fact, with this pattern, you can get two different flies by missing out the extra head thread and just using the black thread to build a small neat and even head, you end up with an anorexic buzzer, long and slim and still very attractive to the trout.

Hook: Stillwater Spiker Wet Fly/Nymph Sizes 10 to 16

Body Thread: - Uni-Thread 6/0W in Black

Rib: Fine Red Wire

Head: Uni-Thread 6/0W colour of your choice for the head

And of course, you need to give the fly a good protective cover, plus it also gives the fly some added shine, I always use Sally Hanson Hard as Nails Varnish as it goes rock hard once dry. I've lost some great flies over the years due to the fly not having a proper coating and the trout making a right mess of it after a few catches.

### Method:

- 1: Take the black thread and start just behind the eye of the hook and in touching turns proceed up to just the start of the bend of the hook, remember to snip off any excess thread on the way up.
- 2: Now tie in the fine red wire, try to tie it in under the hook body as this helps to make it look smoother on top (this is the part the trout see)
- 3: Return the black thread all the way up to the eye again in touching turns.
- 4: Now bring the red wire up the body in the opposite direction as the black thread in an evenly spaced manner. Snap off the excess wire with your thumb and finger. (Never use your scissors to cut the wire as these damages them)
- 5: Tie in the wire with the black thread in a small even way. Now tie off the thread.
- 6: Using the colour of your choice for the head, proceed to build a nice even head over the black thread, snipping off any excess thread as you go along, then tie off once complete.
- 7: Give the full fly 2 or 3 of coats of varnish, not too heavy as your applying each coat as this can cause big blobs of varnish to show.

Another simple lure to tie up is the Cormorant.

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. It can be fished using many methods, under a bung, on a sinking line, using the washing line method. It can be used as a lure or nymph, from a retrieve that is static to one that is very fast. If you fish large or small fisheries or even some of the large lochs then you must have some of these in your fly box.

A great website for fly patterns and instructions on how to tie them is Diptera <https://www.diptera.co.uk/> The website has some cracking fly patterns from dries to lures and easy steps to follow in tying each one up.



## Dry Fly Issues

You finally made it out to get some fishing done. You are glad to see a great hatch coming off the water and rising trout.

Using your fly-fishing knowledge and skills, you have identified that they are small mayflies. The problem is, you've tried all the flies in your fly box that imitate that insect and the fish are still refusing your offerings.

This can be really frustrating at times. Even with matching the hatch correctly, you can be left fish-less and frustrated.

Often times where you can't get them to eat, they are spooked by the hook on the fly or the fly is just too big. Going one or even two sizes smaller will help the trout be more comfortable with your fly. Trout are cautious but they are always more comfortable eating something smaller than bigger so when in doubt, go down a size or two on the exact same pattern.

If you struggle to see it in two sizes smaller, just fish the bigger fly on the point and tie a smaller pattern behind it

I always fish with two dry flies and if you're confident the fish are eating that insect, then two different sizes of the same fly are a great way to help you catch.

We all want to fish bigger flies cause it's easier and they float better etc. However, when the situation calls for it and the fish are refusing your fly, go smaller or you may be going home frustrated.

When you're fishing somewhere and the fish keep refusing your perfect fly, and you've gone down a few sizes until you're as natural as the insects on the water and they still refuse your offerings, it's probably down to your presentation.

You'd be amazed how little your fly has to "skate" or move unnaturally to turn the fish off and put them down.

The main issue is down to how you retrieve your leader, or the drag on it when drifting on a ripple on the water. In order to create a drag free drift, you need to allow enough slack in your line to let the currents move the line, not your fly. At the same time, you can't cast 15ft of leader out there and just let it sit there because you'll never be able to set the hook. The best trick is to do some aerial or roll casts to mend the line.

Another good tip is to add 12-24 inches of a smaller tippet to your leader.

So, if you're fishing 12ft of 8lb leader, add 12-24 inches of 6lb before tying on your fly. This creates a more delicate presentation and creates 6-12 inches of slack in your cast because the energy transfer fails from when you cast making your fly land softly on the water with just a hint of slack. This helps with the natural movement of the flies when drifting over the surface.

You'll need to quicken up your reactions when trying to set the hook if you see the fish taking your fly due to the added slack.

For those of you who don't know what CDC is, it's a fly-tying material that stands for Cul de Canard and is the soft, buoyant, water-resistant feathers straight from the butt of the duck.

It comes in a variety of colours now in fly shops as they dye it and it just creates a soft profile on the water that fish seem to be unable to resist. It's simple and effective and often tied messy on the fly to have it just imitate everything.

If your imitation of the natural fly isn't working, this is a perfect time to try a CDC pattern. These patterns work well because they are forgiving.



The CDC (Cul De Canard) feather has wonderful floating capabilities, one of its best uses is in the CDC buzzer. A deadly pattern wherever buzzers are hatching. Used on a floating line, the fly is cast out and then either wait for the trout to take the fly, cover a rise with the fly or pull the CDC under the surface of the water and allow it to resurface with the buoyancy of the CDC feathers, the latter method can have dramatic catching effects.

Well, you're in luck cause with an olive CDC pattern, you'll probably imitate them both and in a small enough pattern the fish won't be able to tell the difference.





## Recipe of the Month

### PANCETTA WRAPPED TROUT

#### Ingredients:

- 1 lemon
- 2 small trout, rainbow or brown, cleaned
- 1 large bunch thyme
- 1 garlic clove chopped
- 4 slices pancetta or rashers of smoked streaky bacon
- 4 tbsp olive oil
- 100g fine green beans
- 2 tbsp toasted flaked almonds

#### Method:

Heat oven 220C/fan 200C/gas 7.

Cut half the lemon into 4 thin slices and juice the other half. Score each fish 3 times on one side.

Place the fish on a baking tray, scored side up, and season liberally inside and out with salt and pepper.

Stuff each fish cavity with thyme, a sprinkling of garlic and a lemon slice. Lay the rest of the thyme on top of the fish and top with a lemon slice.

Wrap the pancetta around, holding the lemon and thyme in place.

Drizzle with 1 tbsp of olive oil and bake for 20 mins until the pancetta is golden and the fish is cooked.

While the fish is cooking, boil the beans in a pan of salted water for 4-5 mins until just cooked and still vibrant. Drain and toss with the lemon juice, olive oil and almonds. Serve the fish with the beans on the side.





# Fly Tying Time

## Black CDC Emerger



**Hook:** Spiker Dry Fly Hook sizes 10, 12, 14, 16

**Thread:** Black

**Body:** Black Flexifloss

**Rib:** Fine Silver Wire

**Wing:** CDC Feathers

The CDC (Cul De Canard) feather has wonderful floating capabilities, one of its best uses is in the CDC buzzer. A deadly pattern wherever buzzers are hatching.

Used on a floating line, the fly is cast out and then either wait for the trout to take the fly, cover a rise with the fly or pull the CDC under the surface of the water and allow it to resurface with the buoyancy of the CDC feathers, the latter method can have dramatic catching effects.

## Tying Method

1. Wind the thread down the hook shank to a point part way around the hook bend, catching in some fine silver wire as you go.
2. Tie in some black flexifloss, return thread to about 1/3 behind the hook eye.
3. Wind the black flexifloss up the body in neat touching turns and secure with the thread.
4. Wind the fine silver wire to the hook eye and ensure it is evenly spaced out, tie in with the thread and snap off any excess wire with thumb and finger.
5. Tie in a bunch of CDC feathers with the stripped ends towards the bend.
6. Build up a neat head around the feathers and tie off.
7. Give the head a couple of fine coats of varnish to secure the thread.

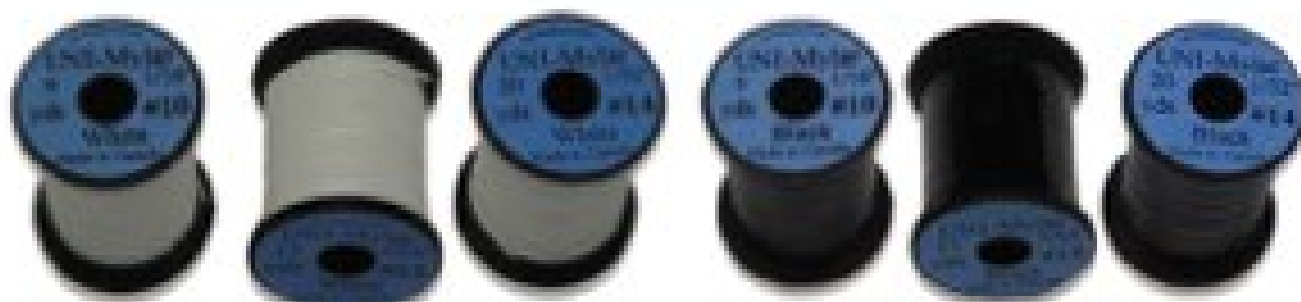
Simple fly to tie and in the right conditions can be very deadly.



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## Tackle Reviews

All tackle 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](mailto:editor.scottishflyfisher@gmail.com)



## Stillwater Fly-Tying Hooks

The Glasgow Angling Centre has their own brand of fly-tying hooks, the Spiker range.

I use them now for all my fly-tying from buzzers, nymphs wet and dry flies right up to lures.

I find that they are a great quality hook to use and at only £3.99 for a hundred hooks per pack great value as well.

You can get them in the following ranges of hooks: -

Buzzer/Shrimp/Caddis sizes 10 to 16  
Dry/Nymph sizes 8 to 14  
Nymph/Streamer sizes 8 to 12  
Wet Fly/Nymph sizes 8 to 14



## Airflo Starter Fly Kit 2.0 Complete Combos

Airflo's ready-to-go fly fishing starter kits had been revamped in 2021

Each kit contains every essential piece of equipment beginners or returning anglers need when coming back to the fine art of fly fishing.

Comprising of a 4-piece mid-tip action fly rod with a quality protective tube. High impact graphite reel that is pre-loaded with premium quality Airflo Velocity floating line and backing. A tapered mono leader, flies, small fly box, and sunglasses complete this outstanding value for money starter kit.

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Preloaded graphite fly reel, floating line and backing  
Protective rod tube  
Tapered mono leader  
Fly box & 3 flies  
Sunglasses

The rods come in the following sizes and weights depending on if your fishing rivers or reservoirs, they are a great rod to use.

The sizes and weights are: -  
8ft 6in - 4/5 weight  
9ft - 5/6; 6/7 or 8/9 weight  
10ft - 7/8 weight

At only £79.99 it's great value for when you're just starting out, available from any good angling centre or from Airflo directly.







## Fish of The Week Competition



At Fishing Megastore, we are passionate about fishing, and we are always interested in what our customers are getting up to. We want to know what you are catching, and we'd love to see a picture of you and your catch.



For your chance to win £150 worth of [Daiwa Fishing Gear](#), simply send us a photograph of you and your catch with a little description. You can also enter in store - just ask a member of staff for assistance. The winner will be chosen by a panel of judges in our Glasgow store and will feature in the Scottish Daily Record newspaper on the Friday of each week. The winner will be announced on our [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#) social media pages.

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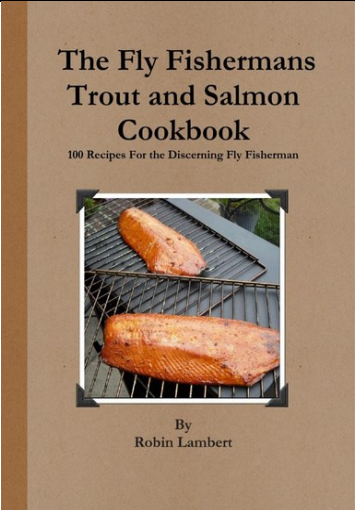
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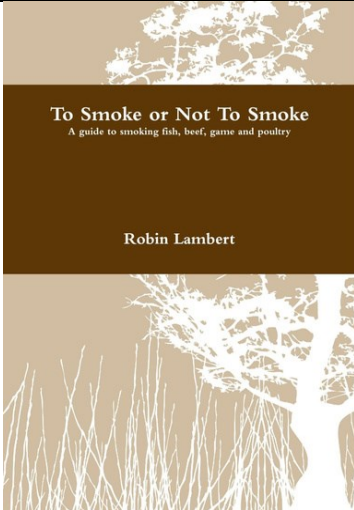



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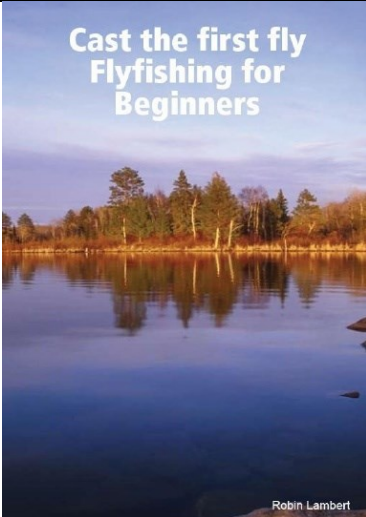


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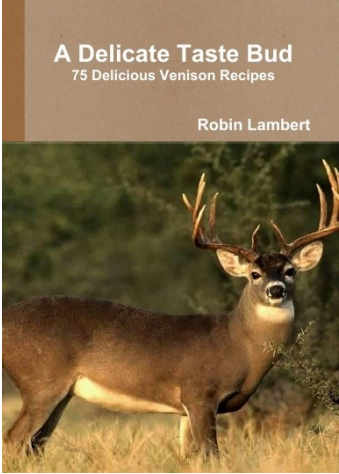


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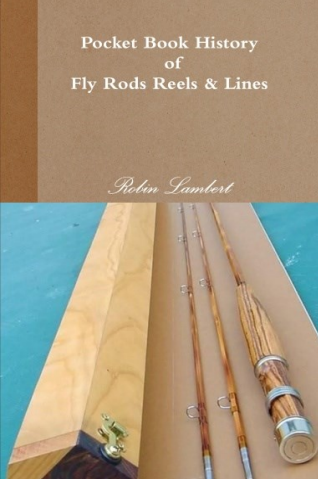


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## Fishing Reports

### FAFA - Linlithgow Loch Fishery

There have been 34 boats out in the past week. There were 198 rods, 91 fish were kept, weighing 281 lbs, and 122 fish were returned.

It's been quieter this week with Tuesday being closed for Linlithgow Marches Day.

Monday's catches were by Mr Graham returning 6, Brian Brogan 2 fish for 4 lbs 14oz and returned 4, Douglas Dowling managed to net 1 trout weighing 3 lbs 8oz using the same fast sinking line and black/green lures as Mr Brogan. Alan McGregor with his partner returned 10 fish caught on buzzers and fabs, and Mr Graham returned 6 trout using a DI 3 line and black/green snakes.

Wednesday saw Grangemouth AC out with 4 anglers keeping 5 fish for 16 lbs and returning 21 caught mostly on buzzers and fabs. Linlithgow Angling Club were also out with 4 anglers who kept 10 trout weighing 35 lbs 12oz. We had another 14 anglers out who kept 10 fish weighing 29 lbs 10oz and returned 18 into the loch.

On Thursday, Ron Thomson kept 2 for 8 lbs 5oz while Ian Dobbie returned 13 fish caught on dries and fabs.



Ian was out again on Friday, returning 9 fish taken on bloodworm patterns in 25 feet of water.

Linlithgow Rose AC was out on Saturday with 4 anglers, they didn't do too well returning only 2 fish. IBM fared better with their 6 anglers keeping 5 fish for 21 lbs and putting 13 back. Stewart Hepburn returned 3 rainbows.

Sunday saw Ian Dobbie out again, having a good day's fishing with Jimmy Russell returning 21 fish caught on buzzers and fabs.

George Pollini out on his own returned 10 trout into the loch, again, caught on buzzers. In the evening Mr Gray returned 1 trout with his 4-hour session, while Mr McGinlay kept 1 fish weighing 6 lbs 2oz caught on a daddy longlegs – see photo on left

We still continue to stock on a regular basis as seen on our Facebook page

Boats are available on most days for a full day or 4-hour sessions but to avoid disappointment please call 01506 671753 or book online

## Lochter Fishery

Down Lochter way the old saying that “to lose a fish is to learn a lesson” was to the fore.

We therefore had an abundance of learned fisherman who had increased the breaking strain or double checked their knots, the unfortunate result of being “broken” in the past week.

Shouts, groans, moans or silent staring at a broken cast was much evident as our home grown Lochter trout lived up to their reputation as hard fighting fish.

However, it was not all doom and gloom as the fishing has been very encouraging with lots of fish showing themselves on the surface to tease the onlooking anglers.

Albert Trail sussed out that the suspender buzzer or fab would do the trick and he had 19 fish for his session, Derek Collie used a shipmans buzzer or parachute CDC during his evening session and he landed 17 fish as did Bill Wood who instead used fab and buzzers.

S. McInnes solely used buzzers of various size and colour for his 16 fish, Jamie Brown stuck with a yellow fab for 15 fish and Rod Bell used a yellow owl and diawl bachs for 14 fish.

Stuart Howie had 12 fish on small nymphs, Mike McLennen used damsels and dry sedges for 11 fish and Graham Rodger had 10 on hot head lures and the famous WSW.

Other returns were Graeme Gauld with 9 fish on buzzer, Colin Henderson with 9 on cormorants and floating fry, Paul Weir with 8 on bibio double humpy' s, Sandy Scobie with 8 on apps bloodworm and Craig Scott with 8 on black bow tie buzzers.

Quite a mixture of flies working at present so why not pop down to Lochter and try the assortment of flies from your box.

We are open from 8am – 10pm at present so no excuse.

# Find a Fishery – Quick Links

A full listing of all trout fisheries can be found on the parent website

<p><a href="#">Alandale Tarn Fishery</a> Gavieside, West Calder, West Lothian. Scotland. <a href="#">EH55 8PT.</a> Tel:01506 873073 <a href="mailto:allandaletarnfisheries@gmail.com">allandaletarnfisheries@gmail.com</a></p>	<p><a href="#">Bangour Trout Fishery</a> Bangour Reservoir Near Dechmont West Lothian <a href="#">EH52 6GU</a> Tel:01506 811 335 Mobile: 07711384308 <a href="mailto:info@bangourtroutfishery.com">info@bangourtroutfishery.com</a></p>	<p><a href="#">Bowden Springs</a> Carribber Reservoir Linlithgow West Lothian <a href="#">EH49 6QE</a> Tel: 01506 847269 /07824 332368 <a href="mailto:enquiries@bowdensprings.co.uk">enquiries@bowdensprings.co.uk</a></p>
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<p><a href="#">Inverawe Fishery</a> Inverawe Fisheries &amp; Country Park, Taynuilt, Ar- gyll <a href="#">PA35 1HU</a> Tel: 01866 822 808 (Easter – December) or 01866 822 777 (January – Easter) <a href="http://shop@iverawe.co.uk">shop@iverawe.co.uk</a></p>	<p><a href="#">Kinross Trout Fishery</a> Hetheryford Kinross KY13 0NQ Tel: 01577 864212 Mobile: 07376762057 Email: <a href="mailto:huntersofkinrossfishery@hotmail.com">huntersofkinrossfishery@hotmail.com</a></p>	<p><a href="#">Lake of Menteith</a> Lake of Menteith Fisheries, Port of Menteith, FK8 3RA. Bookings Tel: 01877 385664 <a href="mailto:booking@menteith-fisheries.co.uk">book- ing@menteith-fisheries.co.uk</a></p>
<p><a href="#">Ledyatt Loch</a> Ledyatt Loch Trout Fishery Ledyatt Loch Coupar Angus Road Lundie By Dundee <a href="#">DD2 5PD</a> Tel: 07530 592724 or 07891 896848 <a href="mailto:ledyatt@btinternet.com">ledyatt@btinternet.com</a></p>	<p><a href="#">Linlithgow Loch</a> 212A High Street (at Loch Side) Lilithgow EH49 7ES 01506 671753 <a href="mailto:linlithgowlochlodge@hotmail.com">linlithgowlochlodge@hotmail.com</a></p>	<p><a href="#">Loch Fad Fishery</a> Loch Fad Isle of Bute <a href="#">PA20 9PA</a> Tel : 01700 504871 Mob: 07712 534511 <a href="mailto:info@lochfad.co.uk">info@lochfad.co.uk</a></p>
<p><a href="#">Lochmill Fishery</a> Antermony Road, Glasgow, <a href="#">G66 8AD</a>, Glasgow City 0141 776 1903 or 07803 171402 <a href="mailto:ted@lochmillfishery.co.uk">ted@lochmillfishery.co.uk</a></p>	<p><a href="#">Markle Fisheries</a> Markle Fisheries, Markle, East Linton, East Lothian. <a href="#">EH40 3EB</a> Tel: 01620 861213 <a href="mailto:jon@marklefisheries.co.uk">jon@marklefisheries.co.uk</a></p>	<p><a href="#">Mill of Kellas Trout Fishery</a> Mill of Kellas Kellas Elgin IV30 8TS Tel: 01343 890777 Email: <a href="mailto:info@kellasestate.com">info@kellasestate.com</a></p>
<p><a href="#">New Haylie Fishery</a> The Haylie Brae, Dalry Road, Largs <a href="#">KA30 8JA</a> Tel: 01475 676 005</p>	<p><a href="#">Newmill Trout Fishery</a> Newmill Fishing Ltd. Cleghorn Lanark South Lanarkshire <a href="#">ML11 7SL</a> Tel: 01555870730</p>	<p><a href="#">Orchill Loch Trout Fishery</a> South Lodge, Orchill, Braco, Dunblane, <a href="#">FK15 9LF</a> Tel: 01764 682287</p>
<p><a href="#">Rothiemurchus Elate</a> Rothiemurchus By Aviemore Inver- ness-shire <a href="#">PH22 1QH</a> Tel: 01479812345</p>	<p><a href="#">Stoneyfield Loch Fishery</a> Stoneyfield House Newmore Invergordon <a href="#">IV18 0PG</a> Tel: 01349 852632</p>	<p><a href="#">Swanswater Fishery</a> Sauchieburn, Stirling <a href="#">FK7 9QB</a> Tel : 01786 814805 <a href="mailto:swanswater@aol.com">swanswater@aol.com</a></p>
<p><a href="#">Whinney Loch Fishery</a> Whinney Farm, West Loch Road, Coldingham, Berwickshire, <a href="#">TD14 5QE</a> Tel: 01890 771838 <a href="mailto:huskie@spinfish.co.uk">huskie@spinfish.co.uk</a></p>	<p><a href="#">Woodburn Fishery</a> Antermony Road Milton of Campsie Glasgow <a href="#">G66 8AB</a> Tel: 01360 313086 Mbl: 078 8875 8709</p>	