

# *The Scottish Flyfisher*

## *Quarterly Magazine*

### *October 2021*



Tips for Beating the Winter Cold When on the Water

Crunchers - The How and Why!

Invasive Chinese Mitten Crab

The Fly Tier's Guide to Organizing Your Fly-Tying Desk



Robin Lambert editor  
[www.scottishflyfisher.co.uk](http://www.scottishflyfisher.co.uk)

Welcome to the Scottish Flyfisher Magazine's quarterly October 2021 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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If you would like to advertise your fly-fishing business or holiday accommodation within either the magazine or the parent website, please contact me directly at [editor.scottishflyfisher@gmail.com](mailto:editor.scottishflyfisher@gmail.com) for an advertisement rates card.



### Have Your Say Here

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



## The Editors Bit



I think the soul of fly fishing is the concept of simplicity surrounded by the complications of our own life style, especially during the recent pandemic and the various lockdowns and restrictions put in place regarding travelling to your favourite fishing locations.

Too many times we cannot just let our time fly fishing be what it is but make it into something that is less frustrating and confusing and so the goal of fly fishing must be simplicity itself.

I also think it is the oneness with nature being out in the back of nowhere either fishing a river or some out of the place loch.

To set out a perfect cast is truly magical and to have a wily wild brown trout rise to that perfectly placed dry fly is a joy to behold in knowing that you and that trout have made a connection.

For that one moment after all those years fly fishing, it has finally dawned on me that I have put it all together and achieved perfection in the fine art of fly fishing. I'm not sure if other types of angling can accomplish this but I know, at least for myself, I have never felt the elation that I feel when fly fishing.

I know I sound overly sentimental but at my age (knocking on 70) it just makes sense when little else does.

The days have long gone of my youthful endeavours and crazy antics all I feel now is contentment and relaxation when out fly fishing.

There is nothing better than being out there and being transported to another place by the beauty of a river or that wild out of the place loch you've never really fly fished before and the water so clear and a trout so majestic that you are in your element.

It might sound a bit religious to some people, but to me it is like a religion. It is not some man made doctrine of guilt and shame but instead a pilgrimage to a higher ground in the great outdoors.

Yes the soul of fly fishing is within each of us, in that we check out from the reality of our day to day worries in life and do the simple thing of casting a fly or two to a rising trout thereby gaining back some resemblance of sanity and restoring our own soul and piece of mind.





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## DISCARDED LEADER MATERIAL

It's a bloody disgrace that some of today's Flyfishers are being a right load of inconsiderate gits, to put it very mildly.

I help out at Morton Fishings on a Wednesday and Sunday and it's amazing how much discarded leaders there is being just dumped on the ground.

It's not the first and probably the last time my dog has ended up with leaders wrapped around his paws, or a hook stuck in him because some lazy **Arsehole** has just dumped their leaders etc with the hooks attached instead of taking it away with them or putting it in the bins provided.

**As Maisy May from Burnhouse Lochan Fishery has recently informed every one of the following: -**

**I sound like a bit of a broken record here BUT put all of your discarded lines in the bin! I'm not asking nicely anymore! Anyone caught chucking their lines on the ground WILL be off the water and won't be returning!**

**On 29 July 2021 I had to remove a full cast from the throat of the much loved and very popular deer 750. A very uncomfortable and stressful experience for her which could have ended very differently if I hadn't noticed a small bit sticking out of her mouth!**

**We have bins right round the Lochan, you also have bags and pockets you could put them in till you are finished your session!**

**To you that bit of line is nothing, to animals it could cost them their lives!**

**Unfortunately, this is the 2nd animal on our fishery that I know of to be effected by it.**

**What is now our pet pheasant Hamish had line tangled round him that bad it was slowly killing him, I had to coax him in for weeks gradually taming him so I could get close enough to remove it. I reckon he was days away from death. He's now fully recovered; his limp has gone and all of his feathers have regrown.**

**I'm done playing nice about it, 750 would have been a huge loss! She's more popular than me**

I have also heard from various other fisheries regarding this matter about inconsiderate fly fishers dumping the leaders on the ground or in the boats instead of binning it, it's not the responsibility of the fishery managers or other fly fishers coming on after you to clean up your mess, **it's your responsibility.**

So, stop being selfish twats, it takes you about 5 – 10 minutes to get all your gear set up and your leaders tied with your flies etc. But it will only take you about 2 seconds to bin it or pocket it!

**DON'T DROP IT  
CHOP IT UP AND BIN IT**

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At the moment it's nine heats, 2 semi's and a final at Harelaw Trout Fishery on 4th September 2022. Prize money for final winner is £1.000 to winner.

Further information and dates to be published in January 2022

# Scottish Outdoor Access Code

Responsible behaviour by the public: Rivers, Lochs and Reservoirs,

The Access Code says:

Access rights extend to rivers, lochs and reservoirs (but never go close to spillways or water intakes). Care for the interests of other users and for the natural heritage of rivers and lochs by:

not intentionally or recklessly disturbing birds and other animals

not polluting the water as it may be used for a public water supply

making sure that the river, loch or reservoir is appropriate for your activity and the numbers involved

Following the guidance in the Code, and any local byelaws, to ensure that your activity will not interfere unreasonably with the interests of other users, **such as anglers**, or the environment.

Access rights can be exercised along riverbanks and loch shores except where a garden or other curtilage goes right up to the water's edge. Be aware that riverbanks and loch shores are often a refuge for wildlife **and may be used for fishing and related management**.

Show consideration to people fishing and keep a safe distance if an angler is casting a line. Some lochs and reservoirs are used intensively as commercial fisheries and so can be potentially dangerous where a lot of anglers are casting in a small area.

Take care in such areas. If you wish to use a boat and there is a public slipway or launching point you should use it. Take extra care if you are passing by or landing on an island as these can often be a good refuge for wildlife.

Under the SOAC **Access rights do not extend to fishing**.

**Anglers need to be careful when casting lines so be aware of where people are on the water and on the land. If a canoeist or other person on the water is close by wait until they have passed by before casting. If you have a line in the water, allow people on the water to pass at the earliest opportunity. Indicating where you would prefer canoeists or rafters to pass by can help but be aware that it might not always be possible for them to follow the route you suggest.**

The codes should be updated and regulations put in place in regards to the welfare and financial consideration of Scotland's many fisheries that are now being affected by the inconsideration and attitude of many people who think they have the right to swim, canoe and do other activities on the water.

They all leave a lasting impression both on the landscape by lighting fires, damaging property and wildlife sanctuaries and leaving all their rubbish behind them for others to clear up and repair.

There has been too many accidents and deaths from drowning within Scotland since the 2003 SOAC was introduced, due to people thinking they have the right to do what they want on the water due to the access code and without consideration for the land owners and fishery managers.

The fisheries within Scotland pay for the lease of the water, indemnity insurance to cover for any accidents or injury to the fly fishers on the water, but does not cover other users who think they have the right to access the water. They also have the up keep of the land surrounding the fishery at a great expense to themselves.

The fisheries are a business and a main source of income to support both the fishery and the families who run it.

Without the fisheries doing this there would be less venues available for the many thousands of fly fishers within Scotland and the fly fishers coming from further afield within the UK and Internationally, thus losing income and revenue for other businesses within Scotland who rely on the visitors and holiday makers who spend millions of pounds each year and who love to come to Scotland for the fishing.

Help to get the access code changed by joining the Facebook page Standing up for Fly Fishing in Scotland

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/528971445041033>

It is run by Bill Taylor who is trying to get as many people as he can together to raise a petition to Government so that it can be updated in favour of the fly-fishing businesses and fly fishers alike.



## Sad News About Raith Lake Closing

Raith Lake bosses have decided to close the fishery at the end of September due to the works being undertaken **WITHOUT** any prior notice, contractors turned up at the fishery with excavating equipment under instruction from the landowner with instructions to gradually lower the level of the lake by at least 1/2metre with the main sluice already being lowered by 200mm.

This actions by the landowner without any discussions or consultations with the fishery bosses had render the lake not viable as a fishery or a business going forward and therefore, the management team had to make the hard decision to close the fishery at the end of September.

Bosses added: "We have made many new friends in the short time we have run the fishery.



Raith Lake was a great fishery to fish and you always had a great welcome and some good advice on the best places and methods to use on the day if you hadn't fished there before.

We wish the management team all the best for their future and hopefully see them again in the future running another successful fishery.

## Tips for Beating the Winter Cold When on the Water

It's no use going out fly fishing during the winter months wearing the same gear as you do all the year round.

I would highly recommend that you get yourself well organized and prepared for the winter months ahead.

The cold weather can sap your strength faster than running a marathon.

**Starting from the feet upwards: -**



### Invest in Separate Winter Waders, Boots and Socks

The first extremities to get uncomfortable in cold weather is your feet. That's why it's extremely important to make sure you've outfitted yourself properly if you want to beat the cold.

Many people think, the more socks you throw on, the warmer your feet will be.

Unfortunately, that can actually work against you, because every layer you put on, the tighter and more constricting it becomes on your feet due to the boots being too tight.

Thus, cutting the blood circulation to your feet and causing more harm than good.

It's better to get a pair of boots one or twice your normal size and then layer up your socks I prefer the HARDWEAR Faux Leather Winter Boots from the Glasgow Angling Centre\_Which has an additional lined inside with Thermal insoles.

Below is the sock set up that I use. I use two layers if it's cold and three layers if it's extreme cold conditions.

First Layer: Polypropylene Liner Sock which offer great insulation that's thin and is moisture wicking

Second Layer: Above the knee thick woolen socks. Extra-long wool socks are a must to also protect your lower legs from getting cold Third Layer: Good Neoprene Guard Socks which fights heat loss from cold water.

### Bottom Layering:

Call me a Jessie or a Woossie; but I prefer to wear ladies thick footless support tights, then a thin pair of thermal bottoms and then my Simms Cold Weather Trousers. In addition, I also take with me a good pair of Waterproof trousers just in case the weather turns a bit for the worse.

### Top Layering:

Nothing beats a good old fashioned thermal vest for the first layer then on top of that a good quality TFG Under Skin Top this is an essential for anyone fishing in low temperature conditions.

Incorporating the latest fabrics, the under skin will keep you warm and comfortable in the coldest weather. Over this I wear a fleece top then my outer waterproof jacket.





## Wear a good quality cold weather cap:



I love to wear the Eiger Fleece/Thinsulate Balaclava, as the comfortable Balaclava from Eiger is fantastic for helping keep you warm in the coldest of outdoors.

Made from a comfortable, reversible Fleece material with genuine Thinsulate lining for warmth, then on top the obligatory fly-fishing cap to offer your eyes some shade from the winter sun (of course you'll have to get a slightly larger cap to fit over the balaclava)

## Learn to Fly Fish While Wearing Gloves

Your fingers are the second place that will suffer after a short time in the cold.

In extreme cold weather, anglers need to be outfitted with a water-resistant or waterproof glove, and they need to learn how to fly fish while wearing them.

I normally use the Stillwater Neoprene Gloves which are a lightweight, super warm, super quality 2mm neoprene glove made especially for fishing.

Super grip rubber palms with stitched cuts in thumb and fore finger that can be velcroed back to allow changing flies and tying of knots.

Especially in Scotland the weather conditions can change at the drop of a hat and you don't want to be caught out not being protected.

Also remember to let everyone know where you are going and when you are expected to be back home. And don't be like me sometimes forgetting to ensure the mobile phone is fully charged before I go on a long trip, as a backup I always carry a portable mobile charging unit.

Another good tip is to carry a bag in the boot of the car with some dry clothes, a blanket and some emergency snack foods and water. Also, in the bag I have a small cigarette lighter kettle, tea, coffee, sugar and powdered milk for making a hot drink. These have come in handy on many an occasion when the weather turned severe and was stranded for quite a few hours in the car.

**Remember;** you don't have to be the height of fashion as long as your warm and comfortable fishing as the cold can spoil a good day's fishing and make you lethargic, thus leading to accidents and a spoilt day on the river or fishery and especially when in a boat on a reservoir, lake or loch.

I should know this as quite a few years ago when out boat fishing on a reservoir and new to the sport I didn't have the right clothing on for the inclement weather, by the end of the day I was cold miserable and wasn't fully aware of my surrounding due to being a bit lethargic, whereby I ran the boat aground causing me to fall over in the boat breaking my wrist.



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## Annbank Fishery



Privick Mill Road  
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AYR KA6 5JA

01292 521003

email - [andyjess1959@gmail.com](mailto:andyjess1959@gmail.com)

<http://www.annbankfishery.com>

The family business run by Andy and Jackie is set in the owner's smallholding of 25 acres near the banks of the river Ayr. It is situated on the outskirts of the village of Annbank, approximately 4 miles east of the town of Ayr, and around 45 minute's drive from Glasgow.

The fishery opened in April 2006, and with the exception of Christmas Day and New Year's Day, it is open daily from 9am till dusk.

In a peaceful, relaxing setting, Loch Jess is a 2-acre spring and rain fed lochan, which is strictly fly fishing only. With a maximum number of rods set at 25, there is more than ample space for a quiet day's fishing.

The fishery is stocked regularly with Grade "A" Rainbow, Blue and Brown trout, ranging from 1.5lbs into double figures. Beware of the Loch Jess Monster!

The fishery offers a wide choice of ticket types, from a couple of hours of "catch and release", to a full day (8 hours) of fly fishing taking up to 4 fish.

The best tactics for the fishery is either dry fly or small lures; buzzers on a floating line. A good hotspot is casting out to the small island in the middle where some of the bigger fish roam.

### Facilities

Toilets

Disabled access

Car Park for 9 cars maximum Complimentary tea and coffee Snacks and juice for sale

Ticket Prices

2 hours 1 fish then C&R - £8.00

4 hours 2 fish then C&R - £15.00

8 hours 4 fish then C&R - £25.00

2 hours catch & release - £5.00

4 hours catch & release - £8.00

8 hours catch & release - £10.00

Barbless hooks only on catch & release. Try to keep fish in water. No fish to be handled unless necessary.

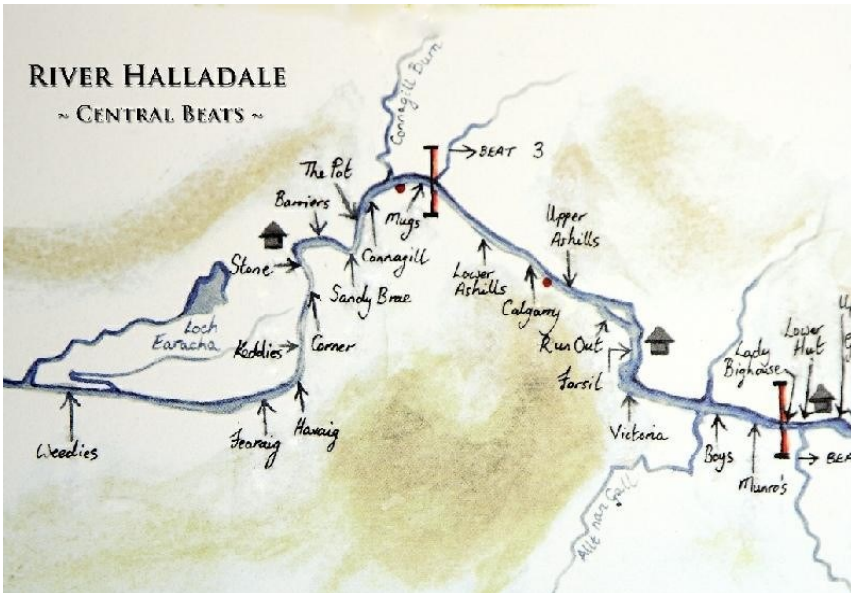
Ticket prices shown are per single adult. Parent & Child or Family tickets can be pre-arranged with Andy and tailored to meet your requirements.

The fishery also has a fantastic quality self-catering accommodation in a modern 3-bedroom static caravan. You can choose a short break, mid-week or weekends, or a longer stay. Sited on their peaceful smallholding, it is just 2-minute stroll from Loch Jess. A 5-minute walk away is the River Ayr, where salmon and trout fishing is also available.

The accommodation is suitable for up to a maximum of 6 people. It comprises of a spacious, comfortable living area with gas fire and TV. There are 2 twin bedrooms and 1 double bedroom. The kitchen / dining area is well equipped with everything you'll need for a self-catering holiday. There is a shower room and 2 separate toilets. Bed linen, towels and tea towels are also provided. The caravan is available to rent from the 1st March until 30th September. You can choose a short break, mid-week or weekends, a 1 week stay, or longer. A deposit of £50 is required to confirm your reservation, the balance due no later than 28 days prior to your arrival. The deposit is non-refundable if you cancel your booking.



## Fishing the River Halladale



Strath Halladale Partnership  
Estate Office; The Kennels  
Forsinard  
Sutherland KW13 6YT

<http://www.strathhalladale.com/>  
Email [info@strathhalladale.com](mailto:info@strathhalladale.com)  
Tel 01641 571271

Apart from in its upper course, in the Forsinard area, the River Halladale is, for most of its twenty-mile length, a rather sluggish salmon river.

Nevertheless, this northern Sutherland River can provide excellent salmon fly fishing. Very much a spate river, the Halladale relies very much on rain to give good sport, and the rule, as on most other northern rivers, is fly only.

The Halladale River rises in the hills to the south east of Forsinard and flows northwards to enter the sea at Melvich. Salmon can be taken in April but the best months are from June to September. Overall, the average size of fish is about 7 pounds but, given rain, there can be a lot of them. The earlier run of Spring fish average 9 to 10 pounds, while the grilse, which may appear from June onwards, will be in the 4-to-5-pound range, with some larger summer salmon running throughout the latter part of the season.

The river is divided into six beats, the lower four beats, with three rods on each, fished in rotation. In a normal year the eight miles of the four lower beats would traditionally produce in the region of 300 fish, while the upper two beats might have 50. Recent years, however, have seen an improvement in the salmon catch, with the five-year average for the season rising to around 600 fish. The fishing is usually let in conjunction with holiday cottage accommodation.

The Halladale River is a productive salmon fishery with a five-year average catch of 759 salmon and grilse.

The fishable river is about 15 miles in length and flows through beautiful wilderness scenery into the Pentland Firth. It comprises 6 beats and over 50 named pools.

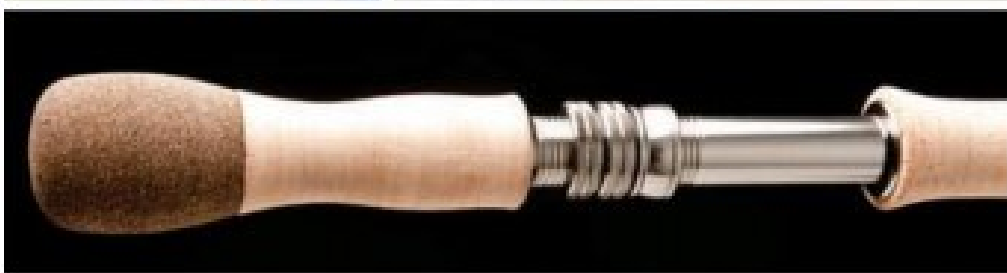
Fishing is usually let with one, or a combination, of three comfortably appointed cottages. Accommodation is also sometimes available at the magnificent Bighouse Lodge. There is excellent loch fishing for wild brown trout, a fine local 18-hole golf course and stunning sandy beaches for those who want to engage in other activities.

Bookings are usually made in November for the following season but it is always worth checking availability for cancellations. Rods and some accommodations have become available for weeks 20th and 27th of June

At the time of publishing; Strath Halladale has a beat on the Halladale and the Netstore available for the weeks starting the 6th of June and the 20th June.

And for the week of 27th June, they have two beats and Fishery Cottage.

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## Crunchers - The How and Why!

The trout cruncher fly, or cruncher, is a great imitator of nymphs for rainbow and brown trout. They do look similar to spiders with a hot spot behind the hackles, but its these that help throw them outwards.

### Fly Fishing with the Crunchers

When a buzzer hatch is on, these cruncher flies come in to their own. It is best fished on the top dropper of a droppered leader where the hackle gives a better disturbance on the water.

Try using a nymph on the point and a Diawl Bach on the middle dropper – this can be a great set up at times catching some cracking fish.

The cruncher is usually fishing on an intermediate or floating line using a figure of eight retrieve. You will actually find a lot of anglers using the cruncher fly around still waters and on the competition scene for rainbow trout in particular.

### General Nymph Fishing Advice

Most trout feeding is below surface where they forage on Nymphs. Insects drop their eggs on the surface and these drift to the bottom of streams and rivers where they stay until hatch and the newly developed nymphs are prime food for hungry trout.

There are hundreds of nymph patterns available with Hare's Ear nymphs and Pheasant Tail nymphs being the most popular nymph patterns used.

If you follow the life cycle of a fly there are 3 usual phases of flies; eggs, nymphs and then the flies whose life cycle may be as little as 1 day!

Nymphs represent insects in their sub-surface and emerger stages of aquatic life.

This stage comes before the adult stage where the insects emerge out of the water and fly away.

The final stage is the dry fly where the fly mates and lays their eggs and the cycle repeats itself.

The term 'Nymph' is commonly used to refer to any insect in its aquatic life stage. Nymphs are, perhaps one of the deadliest ways of taking trout because most of the trout feed sub-surface.

Sometimes nymphs are weighted in order for them to achieve the proper depth. This additional weight makes them a little harder to cast but the good news is that there is almost no wind resistance.

Generally, fish nymph flies along the bottom, move them slowly and smoothly.

Every now and then dart the fly forward as if it is attacking its prey or trying to escape from the advances of a predatory large fish.

Such movements hopefully may induce a following trout to take your fly.

## Tying the Cruncher



Hook: Kamasan B175 Size 10 or 12  
Thread: Black or Brown  
Body: 2 x Pheasant tail Fibres  
Thorax: Peacock Herl  
Rib: Fine Red Wire  
Hackle: Hen Hackle Fibres  
Tail: Hen Hackle Fibres

### Step 1:

Catch in some hen hackle fibres along the hook shank to form a tail.

### Step 2:

Catch in a length of Fine Red wire and two pheasant tail fibres. Try to keep the 'bulk' to a minimum and return the thread to about 1/3 of the hook shank from the eye.

### Step 3

Wind the pheasant tail fibres up the hook shank and tie off with thread, trim waste.

Make sure that the pheasant tail fibres when wound are kept straight and don't cross each other.

### Step 4

Now wind the red wire up the hook shank, in the opposite direction to the pheasant tail fibres. Secure with thread and trim waste.

### Step 5

Catch in two peacock herl (Tip first). If tying the ostrich herl versions of the cruncher, just catch in an ostrich herl plume instead of the peacock herl.

### Step 6

Wind the herl 2-4 times until a nice thorax is created. Tie off with thread and trim waste.

### Step 7

Catch in a Greenwell or Furnace hen hackle (The fibres should be just over the total length of the body).

### Step 8

Perform 2-3 windings of the hackle, tie off, trim waste and build a neat head. Then varnish the head.

This is a fluo headed cruncher, very successful in either fluo orange or Fluo Chartreuse. You can even substitute the herl for some Ostrich Herl in bright fluo colours as hot spots on the cruncher.



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## Fishing the Fairy Lochs

The Fairy Lochs is a recent English name for Na Lochan Sgeireach and are a small group of freshwater lochans approximately 2 miles (3 km) south-east of the village of Badachro near Gairloch in Wester Ross, Scottish Highlands. The lochans have become known as the 'FairyLochs' due to their proximity to 'Sìthean Mòr' which translates as 'Big Fairy Hill'.

The lochans are close to Loch Bràigh Horrisdale, which flows into the Badachro River (Scots Gaelic: Abhainn Bad a' Chrodha). There are several large waterfalls in the area, and Sìthean Mor overlooks the Lochan Sgeireach and the bay of Loch Gairloch.

The lochs are remote and are accessed over farmland and along paths through marshy ground. A fairly easy walk on a rough, and sometimes very boggy footpath over moorland to the Fairy Lochs. The only noise to be heard in this serene place are the calls of the Great throated divers which inhabit the Lochs. It provides wonderful views of Loch Gairloch.

The Fairy Lochs are also a memorial area to the crew and passengers of flight B24H Liberator Bomber USAAF which crashed on June 13th 1945 while returning to the USA after the end of the war. Large areas of wreckage from the plane still remain visible today (and which must not be removed), and a memorial plaque has been set in the side of the rock, listing those who lost their lives.

No-one knows the reasons why the Liberator was off course and over the mainland, as their flight route should have taken them over Stornoway. But whatever the reason was, it appears the aircraft struck the top of Slioch and lost some bomb bay door parts. The plane continued to descend and circled once round Gairloch, possibly looking for a place to ditch, and may have decided on the sea loch itself. The aircraft was on the run in for an emergency landing when they just failed to clear the rocky spurs by the Fairy Lochs. All on board died.

The walk starts just up the road from the Shildaig Hotel on the B8056 and there are several parking spaces available. A public footpath sign marks the start of the walk, but after following the track for a short distance the path forks. Take the fork to the left, which should have a small memorial sign indicating the route. At the next cairn follow the left fork again, and then continue to follow the path which continues to climb across boggy and rough ground. The trickiest part here is keeping to the path and not venturing to far from it to avoid the boggiest parts. The number of cairns on this section of the route have slowly increased over the years so they do help to guide you on your way.

The large Fairy Loch has some excellent fishing, in and among the bays and islands; fish of 3lb have been caught. The rest of the lochs among the hills contain fish to 1 lb. The fishing here is ever a surprise, especially when on the dry fly during a rise; even the small 1/2lb brownies give you some fight, it must be something in the water.

Small flies and buzzers from sizes 16/18 especially in black with green hotspots on the tail work really well.

The ones I like to use are small black floating foam bodied beetles on the point and a size 18 buzzer on the droppers.

Fly fishing is available for brown trout from the following contact:

The Shildaig Lodge Hotel, Badachro, Gairloch, Ross-Shire, IV21 2AN.

Tel: 01445 741250

Fax: 01445 741305

Email: [enquiries@shildaiglodge.com](mailto:enquiries@shildaiglodge.com)

The Lodge has fishing rights in nine major and numerous smaller lochans, with boats on six of these lochs.

Beginners are welcome from any age.

Fly fishing lessons typically start on the lawn of the Lodge and once you have mastered the cast you will progress onto a loch with a personal instructor.



## Working out which set up to use?

No matter what stage you are at in your fly-fishing journey, you can always try something new.

### Double Fly Set Up

If fish are feeding on very small flies, then you can also tie on a big, bushy fly for example a Klinkhammer, and then have the smaller fly on a 24- to 30-inch dropper. The big fly serves as a locator and a strike indicator! As a fish hits the tiny fly, as expected the big old Wulff will disappear as well. It is possible to have the Wulff hit occasionally also by the greedy trout. Once you know the exact pattern you can use two of the same flies, increasing the odds of getting a fish - simply watch the line and rough area the flies are floating in.

You can test twice as many patterns this way to find what is being taken when trying out a water to find out what they are taking. It also allows you to vary sizes to see which size of a fly is being taken!

### Dry Fly & Emerger Set Up

When there is a hatch on, fish will focus on a specific stage of the hatch cycle - say the dry.

So, when uncertain you should be casting a dun or an emerger, or fish both! That way you can see which one works.

When trout are preoccupied eating duns, greedy trout can't pass up a crippled-looking emerger. It is still food and easy pickings for them.

### Attractor Dry Fly and Nymph

When you have no idea what the fish are eating and you want to cover a lot of water, try out this set up. Use a large attractor-pattern dry fly (either use a Klinkhammer or a Muddler) with a real attractor nymph — such as a BH GRHE on a dropper. You can present with two options of flies. The dry fly acts as a strike indicator for the nymph in that this system allows you to fish the nymph at a very specific depth. You can then vary the depth of the nymph

Don't forget you can't go wrong with buzzers and the ever-famous Blank Buster Buzzer range will rarely let you down!

### Washing Line

The Washing Line is a fantastic stillwater set up and will catch trout in still waters when many other options fail.

The team of flies use the buoyancy of a booby to lift the remaining nymphs above the fishery or loch bottom. This is ideal when buzzers on droppers when other tactics are not working. In a reverse to normal trout tactics / rigs the point fly is a booby, buoyant lifting the buzzers in the air.

The heaviest fly is set at the other end of the rig. The effect is that when using an Intermediate or, slow sinking or sinking line that they angle down in the water, off the horizontal leader, just like clothing hanging down from a washing line.

Teams of buzzers on the point are good nymph imitators such as Gold Ribbed Hares Ears or Pheasant Tail Nymphs or Diawl Bach on each dropper. Depending on the type of line used (Intermediate / Sinking). This set up can simulate buzzers that are nearing the surface just before they reach the top and emerge into adults.

When on the fisheries or lochs and normal anglers are fishing deep with three buzzers on droppers tied to a long leader try this this set up, it can account for a much greater catch, even when it is too early for a hatch, nymphs may be getting ready for the hatch and moving up through the water. This is when the 'washing line rig' is at its deadliest.

### Washing Line Rig





## Recipe of the Month



### **GRILLED SPICEY TROUT with SALSA Serves 4**

#### **Ingredients:**

4 x 250g (8oz) trout, cleaned  
2 tablespoons ground cumin  
1 tablespoon ground coriander juice of 1/2 lemon  
1 tablespoon olive oil  
freshly ground black pepper

#### **Salsa:**

2 tablespoons fresh coriander  
chopped 250g (8oz) ripe tomatoes, de-seeded and diced  
1 small red onion, very finely chopped  
juice of 1/2 lemon  
salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste

#### **Method:**

Mix the salsa ingredients together and adjust seasoning to taste. Set aside for the flavours to blend.

Cut 5 diagonal slashes in both sides of each trout.

Mix the ground cumin, ground coriander and salt together and rub the mixture all over the trout and well into the slashes.

Leave in a cool place for about 20 minutes.

In the meantime, prepare the barbecue for grilling.

Season the trout with salt and freshly ground black pepper, drizzle with lemon juice and oil and place on an oiled griddle plate, or grill.

Cook, over medium heat, for about 5 minutes on each side (follow the principle of allowing 10 minutes total cooking time, per 2.5cm (1 inch) of the fish's thickness).

Serve the spicy trout with the salsa



## Fishing The River Esk

The River Esk (Brythonic: Isca (water), Scottish Gaelic: Easg (water)) is a river which flows through Midlothian and East Lothian, Scotland.

It initially runs as two separate rivers, the North Esk and the South Esk.

The North Esk rises in the North Esk Reservoir in the Pentland Hills, in Midlothian, a mile (1½ km) north of the village of Carlops. It flows north-east past Penicuik, Auchendinny, through Roslin Glen and the Penicuik–Dalkeith Walkway, past Hawthornden Castle, Polton, Lasswade and Melville Castle.

The South Esk rises at the southernmost extremity of Midlothian, on the western slopes of Blackhope Scar (The highest of the Moorfoot Hills). It flows north through Gladhouse Reservoir and Rosebery Reservoir, and through the village of Temple, Midlothian, before receiving the Redside Burn close to Arniston House.

It is joined by the Gore Water and then the Dalhousie Burn, just to the west of Newtongrange, before passing Newbattle Abbey and proceeding through Dalkeith.

The rivers converge just about 1 ¼ miles (2.0 km) north-east of Dalkeith at the edge of the grounds of Dalkeith Palace. From here the River Esk continues north for about 4 ⅓ miles (7.0 km), skirting Inveresk, and flowing into the Firth of Forth at Musselburgh, East Lothian.

It proceeds through Dalkeith before merging with the North Esk just north of Dalkeith Palace, on the border of East Lothian, having completed a course of 30km.

Migratory fish can run the river South Esk as far up as Dalkeith where access is barred by a weir.

The permit is around £20-£25 per season and allows Monday to Saturday fishing with fly/worm on a fly rod only. No spinning allowed and no Sunday fishing. This is a bit of a joke as there are more spinner/Sunday fisherman (the local chav wildlife) than there are fly fishermen.

The river used to be stocked with brown trout twice a season but as no-one bothers to buy permits these days the stocking has reduced to once a year and I don't know if it has been stocked at all last year. Depending on your view, this may or may not be a good thing.

There are indeed grayling in the river but nothing that puts much of a bend in your rod. Nevertheless, they are there. There are reasonable runs of sea trout too.

Permits used to be available from Riverside Tackle. I believe one of the Newsagents in Fisherrow is selling permits. Mike's Tackle in Portobello may still sell them too

For fishing permits also contact the Musselburgh A.A. to enquire about getting a yearly permit and information on the best spots on the river to fish.

Musselburgh A.A. 29 Eskside West, Musselburgh, East Lothian EH21 6PP

# Invasive Chinese Mitten Crab Found in Scotland Prompts Salmon Fears.

By the Editor



The Chinese mitten crab, one of the 100 worst alien invaders in the world according to conservationists, appears to have arrived in Scotland.

The Chinese mitten crab, *Eriocheir sinensis* (also known as the big sluice crab and Shanghai hairy crab) is a medium-sized burrowing crab that is named for its furry claws, which resemble mittens, and is native to the coastal estuaries of eastern Asia from Korea in the north to the Fujian province of China in the south. It has also been introduced to Europe and North America where it is considered an invasive species.

Remains of one of the hairy crabs was found in the river Clyde in June. Experts have said it could have a devastating impact on Scotland's salmon, which is a crucial export for the country.

This species' distinguishing features are the dense patches of dark hair on its claws. The crab's body is the size of a human palm. The carapace is 30–100 millimeters (1.2–3.9 in) wide, and the legs are about twice as long as the carapace is wide.

Mitten crabs spend most of their life in fresh water and return to the sea to breed. During their fourth or fifth year in late summer, the crustaceans migrate downstream and attain sexual maturity in the tidal estuaries. After mating, the females continue seaward, overwintering in deeper waters. They return to brackish water in the spring to hatch their eggs. After development as larvae, the juvenile crabs gradually move upstream into fresh water, thus completing the life cycle.

This species has been spread to North America and Europe, raising concerns that it competes with local species, and its burrowing nature damages embankments and clogs drainage systems. The crabs can make significant inland migrations. It was reported in the London Evening Standard in 1995 that the residents of Greenwich saw Chinese mitten crabs coming out of the River Thames and moving towards the High Street, and other reports indicate that the crabs have been known to take up residence in swimming pools. In some places the crabs have been found hundreds of miles from the sea. There is concern in areas with a substantial native crab fishery, such as the Chesapeake Bay in Maryland and the Hudson River in New York (both locations where the crabs were first spotted in 2005), as the impact of the invasion by this species on the native population is unknown.

It is generally illegal to import, transport, or possess live Chinese mitten crabs in the United States, as accidental release or escape risks spreading these crabs to un-infested waters. In addition, some states may have their own restrictions on possession of mitten crabs.

California allows fishing for mitten crabs with some restrictions.

Chinese mitten crabs have also invaded German waters, where they destroy fishing nets, hurt native fish species and damage local dams, causing damage of up to 80 million Euros. These crabs migrated from China to Europe as early as 1900, and were first documented by official German reports in 1922. After investigation by German scientists in 1933, it was thought that the crabs migrated to Europe through ballast water in commercial ships. The crabs are the only freshwater crab species in Germany, and their tendency to dig holes has caused damage to industrial infrastructure and dams.

The crabs (*Eriocheir sinensis*) have already spread across many of England's waterways, including the Thames and as far north as the Tyne, since the first recorded sighting in 1935. They are believed to have arrived via shipping.

Matt Bentley and a team of marine scientists at Newcastle University gathered years of authenticated sightings and mapped how the crabs have colonised territory across the country. Between 1976 and 1999, they spread along the coast at an average speed of 48 miles (78km) per year. But between 1997 and 1999, they colonised the coastline at 278 miles each year. "They're in a phase of rapid expansion, and at this rate, it is likely they will reach all of our major estuaries within a few years," said Dr Bentley. "They could cause serious damage to our native fauna as well as the riverbanks."

The crabs are already well established in the Thames and Essex estuaries, the Humber and Tyne and parts of the North Sea and Channel coasts. Scientists fear that by feeding on native species such as the white-clawed crayfish, salmon eggs and fry, mitten crabs will mirror the environmental damage caused by grey squirrels whose introduction led to a sharp decline in native red squirrels. "We would like to see groups set up to monitor the spread of the crabs and traps laid in rivers so we can keep a track of the numbers and prevent them spreading," said Dr Bentley.

But the discovery by the Clyde River Foundation of a single specimen is the first evidence the invasive species has crossed north of the border. As well as out-competing other marine life, they cause erosion by damaging riverbanks and impact infrastructure such as dykes when they burrow into them. Research by the Natural History Museum has shown they can eat salmon and trout eggs.

Dr Willie Yeomans, catchment manager for the foundation, said: Another invasive, non-native species appears to have arrived in the Clyde.

This chance discovery by an angler poses a potentially significant ecological threat to the Clyde system, the biota of which is recovering from centuries of poor water quality and structural modification.

Dr David Morrith, of the School of Biological Sciences at Royal Holloway, University of London, said: —The occurrence of these Chinese mitten crabs in a Scottish river could have a devastating impact on the famous salmon and trout fishing rivers should they manage to reach parts of the catchments where these fish spawn.

It is not clear yet whether the crab was deliberately released or has naturally colonised the river, and the foundation is appealing for sightings of further specimens.

To protect the fish in our rivers and lochs; if you do happen to sight any Chinese mitten crabs within any Scottish waterways, please contact the Clyde River Foundation or the Freshwater Laboratory immediately and advise the exact location of the sighting.

### **The Clyde River Foundation**

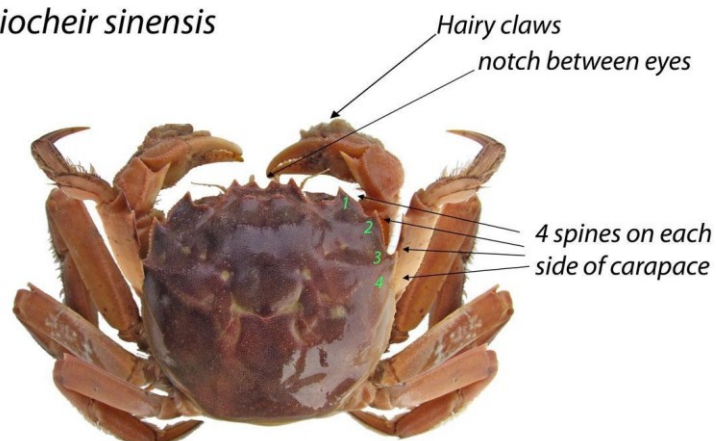
Graham Kerr Building  
Institute of Biodiversity Animal Health and Comparative Medicine University of Glasgow  
G12 8QQ 0141 330 5080  
<http://www.clyderiverfoundation.org>

### **Freshwater Laboratory**

Faskally, Pitlochry, Perthshire,  
PH16 5LB  
[www.scotland.gov.uk/marinescotland](http://www.scotland.gov.uk/marinescotland)

### **Distinctive Markings of the Chinese Mitten Crab**

*Chinese mitten crab*  
*Eriocheir sinensis*



# The Fly Tier's Guide to Organizing Your Fly-Tying Desk

We've all experienced the frustration of not being able to find a material you need while fly tying.

I'm probably one of the least organized people I know, but recently my Scottish Flyfisher website and magazine is getting busier and busier and tying flies is now taking me longer than it should've due to me losing materials in what I used to call my "organized chaos."

We all know what that means.

The main sources of my problems are when I'm not putting materials and tools away when I was finished with them, shoving them in random drawers, or simply never putting them away when I brought them home.

Although I barely own any storage items specifically designed for fly fishing or tying, there are a few I've used to help my problem and recommend to everyone to make your fly tying more fun and less frustrating.

## Hook and bead boxes.

Almost every fly is built up with a combination of a hook and a head, so keeping these base materials well organized provides major time savings.



I prefer the Diamond Painting Storage Box for Bead Storage with Label Diamond Art Container Diamond Painting Accessories 30 Pot from Amazon which are only £9.99

These solidly built boxes have tight-locking lids and dividers that prevent even the smallest hooks from crossing over to the other slots and allow them to travel extremely well.

All my nymph/lure hooks are stored together in one box, dry fly hooks are in one box.

I also have boxes for lead eyes, bead chain eyes, and a separate box for bead heads and cone heads.

Labelling each box and individual compartments within them helps with quickly finding the materials I need.

## Thread rack.

This is one of the few times I actually use an organizational item meant for fly tying

This rack keeps all my thread visible and easy to get to when needed and has the added benefit of being able to store anything else that is spooled on it as well.



## Tubes with removable ends.

PandaHall 100pcs Clear Plastic Test Tubes with Lids Sample Containers Bottles Seed Beads Storage, 7.8x1.3cm are handy for storing krystal flash and flashabou, plus any other items like seals fur etc. their available through Amazon for £13.29. There are more tubes than I need but the granddaughter uses them for all her craft beads.



## Ziploc Bags.

I store all like materials together in Ziploc bags, in their original packaging. This allows me to grab one bag of Marabou (for example) or the various collection of feathers that I have obtained over the years and know that all my colours are there and they are being controlled and confined to the bag.

This also considerably compresses storage and keeps the various items clean and free from any mites that would cause damage the materials especially the feathers.



## Drawers



My dubbing drawers. I use the Ikea MOPPE Mini chest of drawers, birch plywood 42x18x32 cm

I keep my materials in the original bags and then place them in something a little bigger, such as the Ziploc bags or drawers.

My drawers include:

Zonkers and small strips/patches of fur.

Small feather packs (marabou, strung hackle, peacock herl, CDC).

Large pelts (squirrel, hare's mask, buck tails).

Synthetic body material (craft fur, Body Tubing, chenille).

Foam, rubber legs, flash, and eyes (foam and accents). Dubbing. Extra deer hair.

All of these items are bagged individually, and then stored in larger bags with variations of the same type of material (marabou in a marabou bag, etc.).

Also, all the various fly-tying vices, tools etc that I need for tying up.

## Get started!

Now, I know you're thinking, "Man, that's going to take me absolute ages to organise all my stuff."

Yes, it will take a little while to start, but once you tackle it and stay on top of it, your tying will improve, be more enjoyable, and you'll turn out flies even faster.

Plus, you will have a tidier and more relaxing area for your fly tying.

Happy fly tying!



## 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)



## Airflo DC2 Fly Rod



I had the unfortunate accident like everyone else, whereby I had snapped the top part of my previous Airflo Fortyplus 10ft 8wt rod which I had for quite a few years and loved using it for loch style fishing.

When I contacted Airflo, they did not make that model any longer or have spare parts for it. But could do me a deal on a new rod at 50% off.

So, I plumped for the new Airflo DC2 Three Piece Trout Fly Fishing Rod 10ft 6in #7/8 AFTM

The rod when it came was in the smart looking brown corduroy rod case.

**DC2**

Finally, after 13 years Airflo have improved on their best-selling fly rod ever.

The Delta Classic. Having previously sold in thousands and having won so many accolades. Airflo thought it was finally time to give a make-over to one of their tried and trusted icons.

Enter the NEW DC2. You'll be pleased to know they have not messed about too much with the action, it's just as smooth and refined as the original. In fact, I think there is an improvement in the rod action as it is a great rod to cast with and gets a great line out especially when you're in a boat on one of Scotland's great lochs, and want to cover the fish from a distance.

An updated version of an old favourite, the all-new Delta Classic has been rebuilt from scratch to take advantage of major advances in carbon technology.

The lightweight blank is exemplary and combines durability with performance at a price that's hard to believe.

Each rod has a lustrous olive finish, chromed single leg rings and a high quality cut out reel seat with olive insert finishes the rod with style.

### Features:

- Smooth middle to tip action
- Single leg snakes
- Alignment dots for perfect fit
- Durable blank

The rod is only £69.99 from [Airflo](http://Airflo) directly or from your local angling store.

### Star Rating



## Veniard Complete Fly-Tying Kit



I was in the Glasgow Angling Centre buying some fly-tying materials and other bits and pieces for my future fly-fishing trips (as you do).

I saw the Veniard complete fly-tying kit and thought it would be ideal for when I'm away in my caravan and need to tie up some buzzers, nymphs and lures plus the occasional dry fly whilst travelling around Scotland.

The kit has everything I would need without taking up a lot of room in the caravan, and can be stored away all together neatly. Plus, I've added a few of my favourite materials to the kit just to be on the safe side.

There is only one small criticism on the kit, it could do with a slightly better-quality vice as the one supplied looks a bit cheap and not fit for purpose. I have tied a few flies and lures with the vice however, you will have to adjust the clamp a few times to get it to hold the hook whilst tying up the flies.

Apart from the vice it is a very good quality kit for someone who is wanting to take up fly tying for the first time. And it comes with a handy Fly Tying for the Beginner fly tying book giving advise on how to tie the various wings, dubbing the body, and how to whip finish your fly.

Materials	Tools
Cactus Chenile	Midge vice
TT Chenile	Scissors
Super Stretch	Bobbin holder
Copper Wire	Dubbing needle
Gold Wire	Bobbin threader
Oval Silver	Whip finish tool
Olive Uni-thread	Hackle pliers
Black Uni-thread	Storage box
Uni Tinsel	Beginner's Fly-Tying Booklet
Pearl Lurex	
Holo Tinsel	
Mixed marabou	
Mixed Peacock herl	
Cellire Varnish	
Brown partridge	
Jungle cock subs	
Glo-brite floss	
Antron dubbing	
Gold Pheasant tippet	
Lead strip	
Hare's ears	
Multi yarn	
Teal flank	
Mixed floss	
Mixed cock hackle	
Seals fur subs	
Cock & Hen Pheasant tail	
Deer hair	
Mixed beads	
Mixed Kamasan hooks	
Glister	

With the contents of some fly-tying kits remaining unchanged for the last 10 years or so, The Glasgow Angling Centre in collaboration with Veniard decided to create 3 new, modern kits containing material to tie flies which have become popular in the last few years. They are: - Complete Fly-Tying Kit; Salmon Fly-Tying Kit and the Connoisseur Fly-Tying Kit

The kit would be an ideal starter point for anyone wanting to take up fly-tying for the first time, or a nice present for someone to take on their travels.

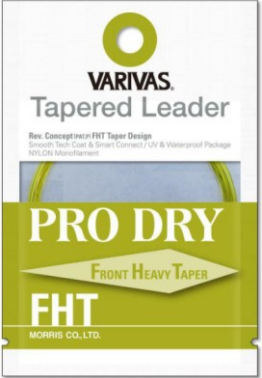

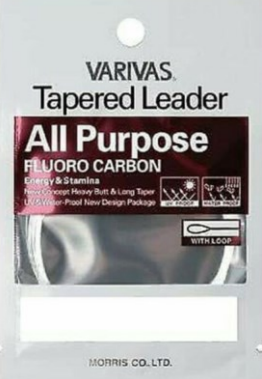

You can get the above Complete Fly-Tying Kit from the [Glasgow Angling Centre](#) for only £59.99

Star Rating:



I was asked by Fishing Matters to try out the below Varivas Tapered Leaders.

I was away on my fishing trip with my brother John (as you will see in the Staycation Article on page) so I thought I would give them a try out and I wasn't disappointed using them.

 <p>Available in 3X (7.6lb) down to 7X (2.5lb)</p>	<p>They had sent me two Pro Dry leaders 7X (2.5lb) 11ft and the 4X (5.1lb) 14ft.</p> <p>I had used the 4X one on the trip, and found it great for accurately presenting my dry flies. The other one I will use on my next river adventure as I feel it would be perfect for presenting a delicate dry fly to the wild and willy Scottish Brown Trout.</p> <p>The new innovative Front Heavy Taper (FHT) design has the most drive force among VARIVAS's reverse taper series. FHT design generates powerful casting with minimum wind resistance and stress reduction for turning over larger dry flies in difficult windy conditions.</p> <p>The Leader colour is Misty Olive with a natural clear Tippet which blends well with the environment.</p>
 <p>Available in 0X (14lb) down to 7X (2.5lb)</p>	<p>The Standard Tapered Leader from Varivas has been revived.</p> <p>Varivas has redesigned a more flexible and durable product by re-evaluating the material from the ground up and merging it with the company's new hi-tech Smooth Tech Coating. Available in 7.5ft, 9ft and 12ft lengths.</p> <p>I had used this one for presenting my mini lures to the fish and due to the smooth coating, the leader performed really well, and turning over beautifully even into the wind.</p> <p>VARIVAS Smooth Tech Coating increases durability by reducing friction and preventing water absorption.</p> <p>VARIVAS Smart Connect thin design creates a smaller profile connection between the fly line and tapered leader.</p>
 <p>Available from 0X (14lb) down to 6X (3.5lb)</p>	<p>This leader new to the Varivas range with its heavy butt and long taper is ideal for fishing with lures and heavy buzzers/nymphs.</p> <p>The taper helps you turn over and present your flies with accuracy and without the leader crinkling up on the water when it lands like some other leaders do.</p>
 <p>Available in 0X (14lb) down to 4x (5.1lb)</p>	<p>The Expert Stillwater leader comes in one length only 14ft and has been designed specifically for improving casting accuracy and turn over in any stillwater situation.</p> <p>The FHT taper aids turnover of large flies and heavyweight nymphs etc even into a headwind with casting accuracy.</p> <p>My brother John used this one whilst we were away and he found it very good for presenting either his dry flies or gold head cat's whiskers, it performed really well using either method and even into a head wind he could still present his flies with accuracy.</p>

I would highly recommend the above leaders to anyone, especially to someone who is just starting out in fly fishing and not quite sure of their casting abilities and setting up their leaders. So, I would give this products Star Rating a



You can get the above leaders from <https://fishingmatters.biz/#> or from your local tackle shop.

## Sunray Proline Float Line with Overhang Marker



I was needing a new floating fly line as my old one was starting to look a bit grim and worse for wear, and I saw the Sunray Proline advert on Facebook and on sale for £29.99.

So, I thought I'd give it a go and purchased one.

I bought it at the end of July and its now the end of August. I have used it three times a week for about 6 – 8 hours at a time on the local fisheries around where I stay, and like the advert video says, you can get a really great cast and a good distance when casting with it even into a head wind.

However, I have started to notice that the line is getting rough like sand-paper. I would understand if it was caused by the eyes on the fly rod if it was an old rod due to wear and tear over the years, but I had used it with the new Airflo DC2 rod.

As you can see from the photos below it was ripping the surface skin off my finger when retrieving the line to cast again, or when bringing it in with a trout on the end.

On looking at the line closely I found that it was starting to have some cracks and roughness to the surface of the line and some major ones at the join between the main line and the overhang.

I have quite a few fly lines in my boat bag, approx. 16 lines from floaters to DI7 and every format in between that I have had for nearly 20 years and even with the constant usage over the years none have caused me this type of injury before.





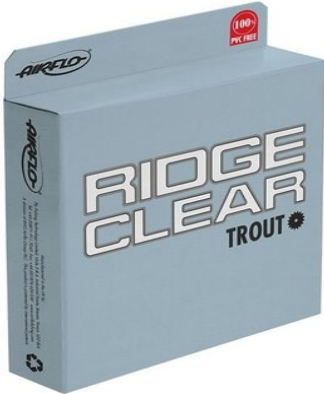
To top it all off, I was fighting a cracking fish I would estimate well over 6lb's by the way it was jumping out of the water and getting it close in to have a really good look at it. When suddenly I lost it, thinking it had snapped my 10lb fluorocarbon leader due to the great fight it had given me for well over 5 minutes, even taking me right down to the backing. **'BUT NO'** the damn loop had split in two which was the reason I had lost the fish.

Sorry to say but no stars for this item, for a new line to go this way after a short period of time I'd give it a minus 5 if I could.



## Tackle Bag Time

Below you will find some nice essential items for your tackle bag

	<p>Hardy Copolymer tippet is the perfect blend of durability and low diameter, designed to feature a medium amount of stretch to cushion smash takes. Hardy Copolymer is supplied on 50m spools with an inbuilt extended cutter and material retaining band. All spools are colour coded for ease of identification. Satin Clear finish.</p> <p>Low diameter high quality Copolymer Medium stretch for improved impact resistance 50m Spool size colour coded for easy identification Built in Cutter and material retaining band</p> <p>I use this line for all my dry flies as it's got just the right amount of stretch for when the trout hit your line hard.</p> <p>Only £3.00 from the <a href="#">Glasgow Angling Centre</a></p>
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	<p>Airflo Ridge Delta Taper Clear Weight Forward Floating Fly Line</p> <p>The ULTIMATE in stealth fly lines The clearest lines for the clearest water High line-speed from low-friction, ultra-slick ridge coating Easy short-range loading</p> <p>I use this line constantly when dry fly fishing on big fisheries and lochs, as it doesn't stand out like other fly lines on the top of the water.</p> <p>You can also get the line in Slow Inter with a sink rate of 0.5" and a Fast inter with a sink rate of 1.5". The lines are 35yds long and come in the Delta Taper profile for the ultimate perfect combination of distance and presentation.</p> <p>Only £49.99 from the <a href="#">Glasgow Angling Centre</a></p>



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I have this with me constantly in my fly vest, as I have found it to be the best out there for repelling the crazy Scottish Midge when either at a fishery or visiting the wild lochs and rivers where the midges are in their millions.

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I use this for when I want to weigh the fish before putting it back, just weigh it in your landing net then take off the weight of your landing net and you have the perfect weight recorded.

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Green/Black, 4 Fish

Waterproof Rubber mesh construction  
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This is a great bag for keeping your fish fresh without stinking out the boot of your car when travelling home.

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There is always one thing every fly fisher needs in their tackle bag is a Combination Trout Priest & Spoon.

The spoon is ideal for finding out what the fish are feeding on and will give you a much better chance of catching when you know what's in their stomach and you can match as close as you can to what their eating.

And of course, the priest if you're going to dispatch the fish for the pot.

Available on Amazon for only £9.99

# Arctic Char in Scotland



## Description

The Arctic Char (*Salvelinus alpinus*) is a typical salmonid, with slender body and a small, rayless adipose fin situated between the rayed dorsal and tail fins. The appearance is highly variable; males often have distinctive red pectoral, pelvic and anal fins with white fore-edges while the dorsal fin is unspotted. It is native to the northern Hemisphere, in Europe, Asia and North America.

## Life History

Like most other salmonids, Arctic Char spawn in autumn or in late winter and early spring, often in gravel areas along loch shores. While they also occasionally spawn in streams flowing into lochs, emerging fry migrate downstream and generally do not form stream populations.

Isolation of populations for long periods of time and differences in diet have led to development of local variants and in some instances two or more forms have evolved within the same loch. Arctic Char are a major prey item in lochs with large fish-eating trout (*ferox*). Few wild Arctic Char reach more than 30 cm in length or 300 g in weight although in the presence of freshwater fish farms, where there is a surplus of fish pellets or escaped fish to exploit, they can reach weights in excess of 3 kg.

## Diet and Behaviour

The diet of Arctic Char is similar to that of Brown trout, although where the two species occur together, Brown trout will tend to favour shallow water insect larvae and freshwater shrimp, while the Arctic Char will feed on zooplankton, small mussels and midge larvae.

## Distribution in Scotland

Arctic Char have the most northerly distribution of any freshwater fish and, in some northern latitudes the freshwater fish community is comprised entirely of this species. Globally there are thought to be around 50,000 populations of Arctic Char, most of these (~30,000) are located in Norway. The distribution of Arctic Char within the British Isles is polarised towards northern upland areas. Scotland is a stronghold for Arctic Char within the British Isles and 258 Scottish lochs are known to contain this species.

They were probably among the first fish to re-enter fresh waters when the last ice age ended. Arctic Char in Scotland have been largely unexploited and until very recently unadulterated, making the Scottish populations unique in Europe. However, in the UK's Biodiversity Action Plan the species is now considered as 'threatened or declining in range' due to such factors as global warming, land use changes and species introductions.

## Char as a Sport Fish

Arctic Char are a major food and recreational resource in many northern countries, especially for remote communities in Arctic and mountain regions.

## **Are they exploited?**

There are no commercial or subsistence fisheries for Scottish Arctic Char populations and it is only rarely exploited for angling, except by a very small number of specialist anglers or where it is a by-catch for other salmonid species. This contrasts significantly with other countries, where there are both significant commercial and sport fisheries. Thus, the evidence suggests that in comparison with other countries the Arctic Char populations of Scotland have not been substantially modified by between-population mixing. This means that, unlike many European populations, most Scottish Arctic Char populations are genetically pristine.

These fish are more visible at the spawning time in the winter between October and March. Adults spend most of their life in deep water in the dark peaty waters of lochs and are not seen.

## **Status in Scotland and Threats**

Potential threats to Arctic Char include climate change, eutrophication, acidification, afforestation, lake engineering, exploitation, aquaculture, non-native species introductions and introductions of char of different race, stock or type. In Scotland in contrast, the number of extinctions of populations in historical times, is relatively low (although it is likely that some populations became extinct before records were available). We know of a number of sites where Arctic Char have been lost, and there may be others where populations are on the brink of extinction. The majority of known extinctions are from south and central Scotland and at least five are thought to be due to acidification.

## **The Arctic char 'complex' and the conservation conundrum**

It has long been recognised that Arctic Char display an unusually high degree of variance in phenotype (i.e. physical characteristics). This variation manifests over a wide range of characteristics including: morphology, size, colouration, behaviour and life history. Considerable variation can take place between (allopatric) and within (sympatric) Arctic charr populations. Arctic Char can differ markedly between water bodies, but in some lochs up to three genetically and morphologically different forms can be found. Each of these may exhibit different patterns of habitat use, spawning location and the timing of reproductive behaviour. These populations are therefore 'reproductively isolated' and this, in turn, leads the way to genetic divergence.

Such is the variation with Arctic Char populations within the British Isles that taxonomists in the early 20th century described the existence of 15 different 'charr' species - seven of which were present in Scotland. It is now accepted that these fish are all variants of one species, the Arctic Char *S. alpinus*. There have been recent moves by some individuals within the scientific community, however, to revise the taxonomy of Arctic charr and 'split' this species into a number of individual species units - based entirely on their morphology. This approach ignores evidence that Arctic Char in northern Europe are currently undergoing a period of very rapid evolutionary change resulting in a very significant adaptive radiation.

If this new taxonomy is accepted, the addition of an 12 new 'species' of Char to Scotland (with many more to come if the same approach is used in future years) will carry with it significant consequences for freshwater fish conservation both nationally, and internationally. It is clear that much further investigation, using genetic approaches, is required before this new, and potentially costly, taxonomy is accepted - not one which is based not only on the morphological characteristics of a rapidly evolving and phenotypically plastic species.

## **Current levels of protection**

Currently, Arctic Char are a conservation feature in five Sites of Special Scientific Interest (Lochs Eck, Insh, Builg, Girlsta and Doon), they are also present in a number of water bodies protected for other purposes, either under the Natura 2000 network or the National Nature Reserve series. The considerable conservation value of Arctic Char within the UK has been further recognised by their addition to the UKBAP Priority Species List in 2007.

Arctic Char can be found in the following Lochs: - Loch Awe; Loch Rannoch; Loch Meallt; Loch Earn; St Mary's Loch; Loch Grannoch; Loch Dugeon; Loch Doon and Talla Reservoir.

Due to the current situation and the estimated low levels of the char within Scotland; it is highly recommended that to preserve the Arctic Char levels within Scotland to undertake extreme caution when landing the fish and to return them safely to the water so that they can reproduce and keep the levels at a sustainable limit.

If you do catch any Char from any loch within Scotland in the future, can you please email the editor at [editor.scottish-flyfisher@gmail.com](mailto:editor.scottish-flyfisher@gmail.com) so that an official record can be kept of their locations throughout Scotland and if you happen to have a photo of the fish before returning to the water even better.



## Staycation Time



Cairnsmill Caravan Park  
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KY16 8NN

<https://www.cairnsmill.co.uk>  
Email: [info@cairnsmill.co.uk](mailto:info@cairnsmill.co.uk)  
Tel: 01334 473604

Reception opening hours: Every day from 9:00am-4:00pm. (5:00pm on Fridays)

Situated on the outskirts of St Andrews, Cairnsmill Caravan Park is the perfect place for your next holiday! Whether it is with the family or just going on a weekend fishing trip and looking for somewhere to park your motorhome, caravan or pitch your tent, then this is the place for you.

The newly refurbished bar onsite offers a wide range of soft drinks and alcoholic beverages, all at reasonable prices. Plus, at weekends there is some great entertainment at night in the bar. It is the ideal place to unwind and enjoy the company of family and friends enjoying a meal, drink and some entertainment, you can't ask for anything better.



After putting this in the July issue of the magazine, my brother John and I decided to have a weekend away at the caravan site to actually see what it was like and have a couple of days relaxation (well a few beers and spirits as you do when on holiday) and get some fishing done.

At Cairnsmill they have a lovely onsite fly-fishing reservoir which they regularly stock with some cracking trout, so you don't have to travel too far for a few hours fishing, just a five-minute stroll from your caravan and you're all set to cast your first fly.

John and I decided to have a 6-hour day on the Saturday and a 6-hour day on the Sunday.

Even though the weather wasn't too great the fish were rising all over the place.

On the Saturday I set up my Airflo DC2 fly rod, with my Greys GRXi fly reel and an Airflo floating line.



To this I had a 15ft 8lb fluorocarbon leader with a size 12 buzzer on the point a size 16 black emerger on the first dropper and a size 16 green emerger on the second dropper. The fish were taking either one of them and I stayed with this set up all day, why change something when it's not broken. I had managed to land 3 fish (for 6lb 8oz) for the pot and released another 4 fish

John had set up his rod with the same set up and was also banging into the fish. John managed to land 3 fish (for 6lb) for the pot and released another 6 fish for the day

On the Sunday we had a more relaxing day's fishing and trying out the Varivas leaders sent to me for a tackle review, (see reviews on page 27) again all set up with buzzers.

Unfortunately, the weather had changed drastically over night and it was a cold southern wind blowing straight into our faces and seemed to have put the fish off, even though they were rising all over the place, they just didn't seem interested. However, we did manage to catch 1 each around the 2lb mark for the pot and I lost 2 coming to the net.



Even though it's a great fishery they have on site, it could do with some ground maintenance, especially around the platforms as the line was constantly being caught either on the wire meshing on the platforms or on the weeds surrounding the platforms. Also, you had to watch in some places as there wasn't much room for your back cast as it would also catch on the overgrown trees or weeds covering the ground behind you.

Despite this we will be arranging another trip to the caravan park next April along with our other 2 brothers for another wee fishing trip.

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Day ticket (8hrs)	£21.00	4		
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(Barbless hooks must be used)				



## 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.

To enter online click [HERE](#)

Good luck and we look forward to seeing the entries

## JEDFOREST ANGLING ASSOCIATION

[HTTP://WWW.JEDFOREST-ANGLING.CO.UK](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 do ask their return.

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



## Smoking Fish Part 2



### Smoking Methods

Smoking fish is something that many of us have never considered before and while you may not have access to say a trout specifically; this method of smoking will work on other fish as well. I usually do not brine trout however; I will cover it in case you want to try it.

#### Preparing the Trout

In cleaning the trout, it is best to cut the fish's head off and then make a shallow incision from the anus to the gills. You can then hold the fish up with one hand and use the other hand to gut the fish making sure to get the bloodline that runs along the length of the fish.

Wash the fish in some salty water to help get rid of any bad flavours and lay the fish aside for brining.

#### Brining a Trout

I use a pretty basic brine that basically consists of the following:

2 Cups Water

2 TBS Kosher Salt

1 TBS Cajun Seasoning

Feel free to add some hot sauce, wine, pepper, low sodium soy sauce, etc.

Let the fish brine completely covered for about an hour making sure the brine is able to get into the inside of the fish as well as the outside.

One of my favourite additives is 2 tablespoons of thick Jack Daniels barbecue sauce to the mix; this gives the smoked fish that little bit extra something special

Once brining has completed, lay the fish on a paper towel and let the skin dry a little while you get the smoker ready.

Three common factors in all hot fish-smoking recipes are salt, smoke, and heat. This guide explains the basic techniques for preparing delicious hot-smoked fish safely. It also recommends refrigerated storage for all smoked fish.

Note that the process described here applies to fish smoked using heat and is distinct from cold-smoked fish. (Cold-smoked fish is cured and smoked at temperatures below a range of 80–90°F during the smoking process, which means it is un-pasteurized and therefore must be handled carefully to avoid illness from harmful bacteria.)

Smoked fish is good, but...Fish smoked without proper salting and cooking can cause food borne illness—it can even be lethal.

Many dangerous bacteria can and will grow under the conditions normally found in the preparation and storage of smoked fish. *Clostridium botulinum* is the most notorious of these bacteria, but there are other harmful ones as well.

Because it is not easy for a producer at home to determine the final salt content of fish, the following parameters for adequate cooking while the fish is being smoked and refrigeration after the fish is smoked are the only ways a consumer can ensure a product will not support the growth of harmful bacteria:

- You must heat the fish until the internal temperature reaches 150°F (preferably 160°F) and is maintained at this temperature for at least 30 minutes.
- You must salt or brine fish long enough to ensure that adequate salt is present throughout the smoked fish (at least 3.5% water phase salt);
- If storing, you must keep smoked fish under refrigeration at 38°F or less.

Higher fat fish absorb smoke faster and have better texture after smoking than lower fat fish. Some of the ideal species for smoking are shad, sturgeon, smelt, herring, steelhead, salmon, mackerel, sablefish, and tuna. You can smoke any fish without worrying about food borne illness if you observe the basic principles explained below for preparation, salting, smoking, cooking, and storage.

### **Preparation:**

Different species of fish require different preparation techniques. Salmon are usually prepared by removing the backbone and splitting.

Bottom fish are filleted. Small fish such as herring and smelt should be headed and gutted before brining

Certain principles apply in all cases. First, use good quality fish. Smoking will not improve fish quality; in fact, it may cover up certain conditions that could create food safety problems later.

Thaw frozen fish in cool ambient air or clean fresh water.

Clean all fish thoroughly to remove blood, slime, and harmful bacteria. Keep fish as cool as possible at all times, but do not refreeze. When you cut fish for smoking, remember that pieces of uniform size and thickness will absorb salt in a similar way, reducing the chance that some pieces of fish will be either under- or over-salted. Do not let fish sit longer than 2 hours at room temperature after cleaning and before smoking.

### **Salting:**

Salt preserves smoked fish by reducing the moisture content. However, without chemical analysis, it is hard to be certain that a fish has absorbed enough salt. That is why proper cooking and refrigerated storage are essential for safety. The following rules of thumb are useful to approximate the proper salt level for smoked fish.

Salt the fish before smoking in a strong salt solution (brine).

Salting fish in a brine that is 1 part table salt (non-iodized and with no anti-caking agent) to 7 parts water by volume for 1 hour will work in most cases. For instance, 1 cup of salt with 7 cups of water will salt 2–3 pounds of fish. (This proportion will read approximately 60° SAL on the scale of a salometer.

By weight, this formulation would be 1.57 pounds of salt per gallon of water.) A salometer is an instrument that can be purchased from a scientific supply store or a salt manufacturer for measuring the salt concentration of brine.

A gutted herring requires about 30 minutes brine time in a refrigerator; large or oily fish (e.g., 2–3 inch chunks or steaks from a 30-pound salmon) require about 2 hours.

Decrease the brine time for low fat and skinned fish. When experimenting with brining time, start with 15 minutes per half inch of fish thickness. Fish pieces should not overlap when they are being brined or salt uptake will not be uniform.

A smoked fish with a definite—but not unpleasantly high—salt flavour probably has absorbed enough salt.

Dry salting techniques are acceptable, and the same general rules apply. However, using a brining solution typically yields a more uniform salt concentration.

Many recipes call for brines with a lower salt concentration than the 1 part table salt to 7 parts water noted above—but for 18–24 hours.

These extended periods offer more opportunity for bacterial growth and possible spoilage later, and probably increase the mess you have to clean up later.

Once the brining period is complete, rinse the fish surface and allow it to air dry meat side up on a greased rack in a cool place until a pellicle forms (i.e., at least 1 hour) before smoking.

A pellicle is a shiny, slightly tacky skin that will form on the meat surface of your fish. If proper drying conditions are not available (cool, dry air), place the fish in a smoker with low heat (80–90°F), no smoke, with the doors to the smoker open so the pellicle can form. Use a low, clean flame if you have a wood heat source.

### **A pellicle will:**

- 1) give the smoke a chance to deposit evenly during smoking
- 2) help prevent surface spoilage during smoking.

## Smoking and cooking

Hot-smoked fish require 2 sequential processes: smoking followed by cooking. The length of smoking time depends on the flavour and moisture level you want.

Smoking first will result in a better-tasting product due to less of a baked fish flavour and curd formation caused by juices boiling out of the fish. Some oily fish (such as sablefish) may never appear to dry out the way salmon or tuna do, but they will still be properly smoked if this procedure is followed.

Smoke your fish for up to 2 hours at around 90°F in a smoker, and then increase the heat until the fish reaches a temperature of at least 150°F (preferably 160°F) and cook for at least 30 minutes.

It is important to measure product temperature because of variations in how warm air circulates inside smokers. A long-stemmed thermometer inserted into the thickest piece of fish through a hole in the smoker wall will allow temperature monitoring without opening the door. Ensuring that the thickest section of meat is at a high enough temperature should be sufficient for the rest of the fish. If the air temperature in your smoker cannot reach 200–225°F, you'll need to cook the fish in your kitchen oven within 2 hours after the smoking process.

Waiting longer presents a danger of spoilage from bacterial growth. As in a smoker, the core temperature in the thickest piece of the fish must be maintained at a minimum 150°F for 30 min.

## Other Fish

This procedure can be used with other fish like salmon, tilapia, catfish, crappie, etc. with varying results depending on what types of fish you and your family like to eat. Chances are good that if you like the fish fried or baked then you will absolutely love it smoked.

## Hot Smoking Fish

This is really a method better thought of as smoke/cooking, rather than the more involved cold smoking process traditionally used to preserve meats. Fish cooked in the smoke/cooker should be eaten straight away.

If kept in a fridge treat as cooked fish!

Start by preparing your fish the moment they are caught by getting them in to ice immediately. Fish flesh goes bad quickly if not kept cool.

I like to remove all the bones from a fillet and leave the skin in place. Sprinkle salt over the fillets and leave for 30 minutes to draw out some of the moisture. Rinse in cold water then pat the surface dry with a paper towel. You can omit this step if you wish but it is essential for watery species such as red cod.

Place the two metal dishes filled with mentholated spirit on the ground. Light the spirits and place the smoker over them.

Resist lifting the lid until the mentholated spirits has all burnt off. This should take about fifteen minutes.

A smoke/cooker is very portable and great taken on your trip to the lake. Fresh fish cooked on the spot. You just can't beat it for taste!

Rub brown sugar into the flesh. Put heaps on. This acts as a buffer to the smoke and improves the taste. Too much will simply run off so there is no danger of over sweet fish. You can add a drop of whisky, pepper, herbs and the like at this stage.

Line the smoker with foil. This makes it easier to clean. You only want a handful or two of oak sawdust - too much gives a bitter taste.

The Stillwater telescopic smoker: ideal for all larger fish like salmon and large pieces of game and venison.

Place the two metal dishes filled with mentholated spirit on the ground. Light the spirits and place the smoker over them.

Resist lifting the lid until the mentholated spirits has all burnt off. This should take about fifteen minutes.

A smoke/cooker is very portable and great taken on your trip to the lake. Fresh fish cooked on the spot. You just can't beat it for taste!

Timescale for Smoking Fish Brining Times

The type of fish, the weight of the pieces and whether the skin has been left on or removed establish the brining time. Following are general guidelines for time of brining.

Adjustments to the general guidelines for type of fish and whether the skin is left on or removed are discussed below.

#### Weight of Each Piece of Fish Time for Brining

Under ¼ lb. 30 minutes  
¼ lb. To ½ lb. 45 minutes  
½ lb. To 1 lb. 1 hour  
1 lb. To 2 lbs. 2 hours  
2 lbs. To 3 lbs. 3 hours  
3 lbs. To 4 lbs. 4 hours

#### Weight of Each Piece of Fish Approximate Smoking Time

¼ lb. To ½ lb. 1¼ hour to 1½ hour  
½ lb. To 1 lb. 1½ hour to 2 hours  
1 lb. To 2 lbs. 2 hours to 2½ hour  
3 lbs. To 4 lbs. 2½ hour to 3 hours  
4 lbs. To 5 lbs. 5 hours

There are many different versions so feel free to experiment, however I have included some brine recipes on the following pages for you to try out.

Like everything you will either like the taste or you won't it is all down to trial and error until your taste buds like what they taste.

#### **Brine Mix 1**

This makes a lot but you can keep unused brine in the fridge for a few weeks for use later, or simply scale down proportionally.

Take 4 litres of water and add 500ml salt,  
250mL brown sugar,  
75mL lemon juice,  
1 tablespoon garlic powder,  
1 tablespoon onion powder,  
1 tablespoon allspice,  
2 teaspoons white pepper.

Mix until the sugar and salt are dissolved.

Place the fish fillets in a non-metallic bowl and pour in enough brine to cover. Swish them about to make sure they are wet, and leave for 30 minutes in a cool place. Make sure no four-legged creatures can steal them!

After 30 minutes, remove the fillets and dry on kitchen towel. For the really best results, you need to air-dry the fillets so they get a good texture in the smoker.

I have a fan oven which has a fan-only setting (no heat). This is ideal, and will dry the fillets sufficiently in an hour. Alternatively let them dry in a cool draughty place if possible.

The dried sugar/salt crust is called a pellicle.

#### **Brine Mix 2**

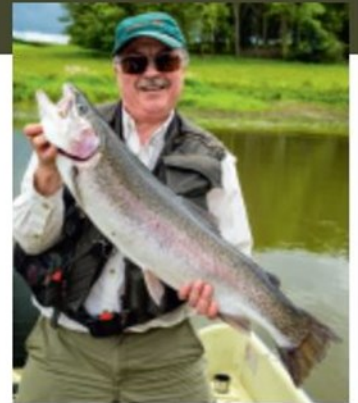
1/3 cup brown sugar  
1/4 cup non-iodized salt  
2 cups soy sauce (1 cup soy and 1 cup Yoshidas original gourmet sauce really improves things!!)  
1 cup water  
1/2 tsp onion powder  
1/2 tsp garlic powder  
1/2 tsp pepper (black)  
1/2 tsp Tabasco  
1 cup dry white wine  
and here is the kick....1/2 tsp dry mustard

Mix dry ingredients then add liquids. Cover fish with brine. I like to brine my fish for 48 hours overhauling the fish twice during that period. I also use a tight sealing Tupperware container (1.5 gal) and brine in the fridge.



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Annie Margarita creates wonderful original artwork in Leather. Fly fishing is her main interest in leisure and it is reflected in her enthusiasm for creating beautiful utilitarian cases. She researches aquatic life and fish, artificial flies, and three-dimensional techniques to bring each case to life in its own unique way. Each case is designed individually and never repeated. Her cases are always named and have an antique finish to them to convey history and patina.



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[www.dianemichelin.com/](http://www.dianemichelin.com/)

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Diane is anxious to capture the essence of fly fishing and record those memories that bring us back to the river. Her art is currently on display in museums, fly shops, lodges and private collections. Browse through the gallery, and contact Diane Michelin directly to discuss your purchase of fly-fishing fine art.

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# Fishing Reports



## Lochter Report – Autumn Equinox

Down Lochter way, this week heralds in the arrival of the Autumn Equinox when the sun crosses the celestial equator and we have equal amount of daylight and darkness.

This is normally the time when the fish acutely sense the change and they start to feed greedily to stock up for the long drab dreary despondent and desolate winter ahead.

On a happier note, it has meant that there has been some great sport to be had.

Our recent re-stocking with our 'growthy' home grown trout ensured some highly enjoyable rod bending action for those who ventured out.

Lots of anglers in high double figures including Alan Paterson on lures, Norman Fletcher on wotsits, fabs and damsels and George Reid on yellow dancers and cat's whiskers.

Ronnie Ewen fished all three lochs in his session and he brought 15 fish to the net on his home-tied small black cormorants.

Peter Wilson had a great day getting 14 fish mainly on the black bunny leech; Steve Frost stuck to the WSW lure and had 14 fish with black and olive ones.

Mike McLennan stayed on top of the water and an assortment of dry flies got him 13 fish and Chris Westland used black ants or a foam beetle to get his 11 fish.

Other returns were James West on 12 fish using black and olive lures, Fred McCally on 11 with small nymphs, Albert Cowie on 9 using small lures and Mike Stewart on 7 using minkies and snatchers.

So, all in all a good time to be out fishing in delightful weather. Roll on the Vernal Equinox!



It was a mostly dry and bright week with cooler nights, especially midweek. A slight drop in water temperature in the middle of the week led to an increase in the water oxygen level and resulted in the fish being much more active than they have been. There was also more breeze than there has been for most of the summer, and this meant it was ideal conditions to cut some of the weed on Swanswater – a job that needs some wind to help shift the debris. As a result, a lot of fish were caught in the Far Bay which has benefited from the work done. The area between the Dam and the Big Tree was also fishing well. For most of the week the fish were in the top 3 feet of the water and were taking the usual wide variety of flies. Favourite patterns included Daddy, Hopper, Muddler, Spider, Bibio, Kate McLaren, Viva, Diawl Bach, Buzzer, Damsel, Dancer and Cat's Whisker. On the bait pond spinners, worms and power bait were all working well, with the fish often just below the surface. The Fishery is open 8.00am-7.30pm every day except Thursday when we close at 2.30pm.

Some of the best bags taken on the fly included Sean Bell 5 for 22lb from the Millpond including 7lb Gold, and Rainbows at 5lb 4oz and 5lb, Danny Doherty 5 for 16lb 4oz including 7lb 4oz Blue, plus 5 C&R including 5lb Brown, George Johnson 5 for 9lb from the Meadow Pond, Robert Watt 4 for 13lb 8oz, biggest at 4lb, Robert Park 4 for 12lb including a Brown, plus 2 C&R and Willie Nyquist 4 for 11lb and 3 for 6lb 8oz including 2 Golds from the Millpond. Tam Baillie 4 for 10lb 8oz, Keiran Lydon 3 for 9lb, plus 7 C&R including 7lb 8oz Gold, Greg Muir 3 for 8lb 8oz including a Brown, plus 1 C&R, Lee Marowski 3 for 8lb, Barry Hamilton 3 for 7lb 12oz, Nan Morrison 3lb 4oz Brown and Peter Collins caught and released 7. Ian Whitfield caught and released 6, Alan Kirkham caught and released 4, Stephen Smith caught and released 4, Ian Whitfield jnr caught and released 4 including 7lb Gold and Michael Tierney caught and released 3 including 6lb Rainbow and a Gold.

Some of those catching fish on the bait pond included Lewis Miller 3 for 6lb including a Gold, Lewis Watson 2 for 3lb 8oz including a Gold, John McCafferty 5 for 10lb, Jamie McLaughlin 2 Golds for 5lb 12oz and McKenzie Greener 2 for 4lb. Michael Walker 3 for 9lb including 4lb Rainbow, Chris Elder 5 for 9lb including 2 Golds, Brian Newson 2 for 4lb, Colin Flaws 2 for 4lb and PJ Morgan 2 for 4lb including a Gold.



The 128th Scottish National Championship Final was held on the lake on Saturday 18th Sept (Paul Barr)

The start of the competition saw cloudy flat calm conditions with plenty of fish rising on the surface. As the day went on the cloud burned away and the conditions got trickier, albeit the fish kept rising.

Most boats opted to head to Gateside and Malling with some other anglers trying their luck at Lochend and the Road Shore.

The top rod on the day and 2021 National Champion, Derek Pozzi, representing Thalassa AC made the bold move to stay away from the crowd at International Bay and Road Shore. This paid off with him landing 17 fish for a total weight of 35lbs 3.10ozs. Derek previously was National Champion in 2018 and was runner up in 2019 when the event was last held. This shows amazing consistency and angling skill. Derek was fishing a 3-foot midge tip with the killing fly being a Cormorant Booby.

2nd place went to Robert Maxwell of Clatto & Stratheden AC. He landed 16 fish for a total of 33lbs 4.60ozs.

3rd place went to Gregor Fleming of Bridge of Weir Loch AC. Gregor landed 13 fish for 26lbs 1.50ozs.

The 52 anglers landed a total of 278 fish giving a rod average of 5.34.

Well, done to Derek and thanks to all of the anglers who competed throughout the year and to the officials whose hard work made it possible.



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