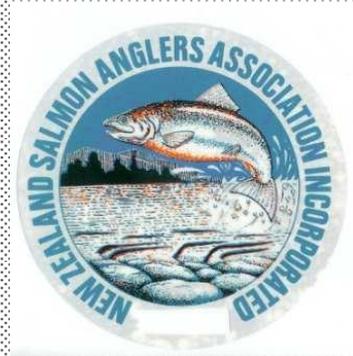


NZ Salmon Anglers Newsletter

August 2011 Number 108



Electronic NZSAA Newsletter

This issue of the Newsletter will be sent by email to 130 NZSAA members. The printed version will continue to be sent to members who are not on email and to those who have chosen to receive the paper copy. This will result in a big cost saving in printing costs. If we don't have your email address and you would like to receive future newsletters in this format, please inform Secretary Heather Saunders at ianandh.s@ihug.co.nz

**Send on the newsletter to a friend -
Promote NZ Salmon Anglers Association**

NZSAA Website
www.nzsalmonanglers.co.nz

Changes have been made to make the site easier to access. The site has been opened up so that it is no longer necessary to log in to see some sections.

**Official Newsletter of the New Zealand Salmon Anglers Association Incorporated
P.O. Box 1113, Christchurch 8140
www.nzsalmonanglers.co.nz**

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Committee Meetings

The Committee meets on the first Monday each month (except January) at 7.30 pm in the Fish & Game premises, 3 Horatio Street, Christchurch. Members and supporters are welcome to attend these meetings.

Life Members

Lindsay Dell, Pam Ellis, Tim Ellis, Brian Foley, Trevor Hayes, John Healy, John Hodgson, Ken Hughey, Ross Lightfoot, Dennis Long, Athol Price, Doug Roy, Stephen Sparrow

Disclaimer:

The opinions expressed in any letters and articles in this newsletter are the authors' own and are not necessarily those of the New Zealand Salmon Anglers Association (Inc) or the Editor.



PRESIDENT'S EDITORIAL

July-August 2011

I am bringing this to you from Australia where Elaine and I have escaped for some sun and fun on our mid-winter holiday.

We've come through the exciting time of salmon stripping, ova raising, ova planting, fry release and fin clipping. For our Rakaia and Waimakariri regions, we've planted approximately 400,000 ova in pristine high country streams and released around 120,000 50gm fry. What a magnificent boost to our fishery thanks to the dedication of Fish & Game staff, volunteers' direct support to F&G, Rakaia River Promotions volunteers and our NZ Salmon Angler volunteers. It's really encouraging to have this nucleus of support and the add-on value derived by this loyalty and ambition to preserve the fishery. We owe much to all these people.

NZSAA members' involvement took in One Tree Swamp, Porters Stream and Hacketts Stream on the Mehrtens property. The methods used were the Instream Incubator, barrel and Alevinator.

We did not use the Scotty boxes this season as time organisation opted for the lesser manpower methods. I was impressed with the barrel planting as the sophistication of this method closely replicates a salmon redd and requires less maintenance and choice options of location on the day.

One important factor that we have maintained is the consistency of our enhancement programme. For any of you that have not been involved in these activities, you are missing an important phase in your life as a salmon angler.

Our duty involvement with maintenance at Isaacs Peacock Springs Hatchery is coming to an end for the season. This provided a great insight into fish care and it was great to see the development over the period of our involvement.

There were similar regular volunteer activities at Montrose. Top compliments go to F&G Hatchery Manager Dirk Barr for his energetic management and personal commitment to the pride of his life. (Perhaps that's why he was rewarded with one of the largest salmon caught for the season. He tagged and released this salmon which made its way to Montrose and fertilised 1000's of hen eggs.)

F&G 2010-11 Salmon Management Report is just to hand and an abbreviated version is included later in this newsletter. It shows an increase over last season in salmon returns to the high country spawning streams and other indications show good percentage hatch rates in the stream incubators.

From the Annual General Meeting, we have two new committee members, Maurice Ward and Dave Leigh, and this is adding good depth to the process of our objectives.

Sadly Richard Chettle has resigned from the Committee because he is fully committed with earthquake recovery work. We look forward to seeing Richard back when Christchurch drainage utilities resume some normality.

At our last Committee meeting we commenced revision of the Constitution, a

job well overdue, and the outcome will be a better working document and timely opportunity to review our rules and objectives. Members will be required to approve the final version in due course.

Secretary Heather Saunders and husband Ian, repeatedly bashed by the earthquakes, serious liquefaction and red zoning, have enjoyed a much deserved overseas holiday. Heather has been a real brick keeping our affairs in order and not once flinched from the responsibility of her portfolio. We are lucky having such a fantastic lady in the camp.

Our Association funds received a boost from the generosity of Fish & Game to pay a bounty for fin clipping. This was welcome income and assisted a funding shortfall from cancellation of the Waimak competition. This has provided us with the ability to pay members' vehicle fuel costs associated with the enhancement activities, as this is no longer a sustainable personal funding cost.

The Stakeholders meetings for submission to the Angler Licensing Review was completed at a recent F&G Council meeting and, from my perspective, a major amount of effort, debating and discussion resulted in some changes but continued ongoing stability for our rules.

The principal change affecting salmon, was a recommendation to allow seasonal fishing in high country streams for trout as didymo is not now seen as a serious threat of becoming established. I was pleased with this outcome as the more trout caught means not so many salmon fry getting gobbled up - (not that this is such a serious matter).

Much discussion and a number of options relating to daily and seasonal salmon bag limits took place and the end result, wisely in my opinion, retained the status quo.

My objective now is to see the practice of catch and release once an angler has caught a reasonable number of fish for the season.

I see this as a number between 5 to 10 fish, as any more means the larder is full and surplus are being given away. A salmon released will deliver up to 3000 more natural fry into the river system at spawning. Meat hunters are selfish and do not contribute to the fishery welfare, so do your bit and encourage a more generous attitude of personal contribution and apply peer pressure on other anglers who you know are already up there. Then you can skite more about the one played, gently landed and released in good condition. Only real anglers do this !!

Thank you all for your contribution by being a member, by the giving of your time and supporting the fishery from becoming degraded through poor water quality and quantity. We've still got much to do and the best start is through each individual's efforts.

We had initiated a meeting with politicians to get their party policy on water/river quality, quantity and environment for salmon and trout welfare. All fishing clubs were contacted and only one indicated or replied that they would support such a meeting - how disappointing when we represent around 12,000 licensed anglers.

Anyway, choose well at the Election Polls this year, make your views heard and ensure we're getting the best bang for our buck.

Ron Stuart
President





Fish & Game Hatchery Manager Dirk Barr with the 30lb salmon he caught at the Rakaia Gorge in April. He was pleased to see that it was one of the Montrose hatchery fish that had been fin clipped by volunteers four years prior. Fin clipping helps Fish & Game to monitor the effectiveness of their hatchery operations. Past phone surveys have indicated that around 10% of salmon caught come from the hatchery; however at certain times of the year it can be up to 50%. Dirk tagged the fish and released it back into the river, as part of a study that he is conducting into the effect of catch and release on salmon.

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38th Annual General Meeting

The evening on 24 May 2011 was a great success, with excellent attendance, a good financial report, lavished with interesting speakers, a super supper and very generous contributions for a comprehensive range of prizes for the raffle.

Ric Cullinane and Geoff Holgate of the Walking Access Commission spoke of the purpose of this organisation to provide access to the outdoors around lakes rivers on or around public or private land. Another very strong feature of this organisation is their website giving detailed maps of all sorts of terrain throughout New Zealand. A great feature of in depth topography is available for any given location. A great facility for all outdoor recreations.

Alan Brooks addressed the meeting on the progress of the Rangitata Hatchery and how it had successfully developed so that they have adequate salmon returns for their fishery and the ability to support other regions should the need arise. It is a tribute to all involved in this project particularly over such a relatively short period.

A panel of four from Fish & Game - Steve Terry, Martin Clements, Paul Farrow and Tony Hawker - fronted a Q & A session drawing some interesting questions and comments from the meeting with explanations of F&G's attitude, progress and vision for the future.

Ron Stuart was returned unopposed as President of NZSAA for a further year, as also were Athol Price (Patron), Tim Ellis (Vice President), Heather Saunders (Secretary and Treasurer).

Committee members re-elected were Phil Ball, Pam Ellis, Gene Klein, Dennis Long, Warren Mackie, Bruce Moody, James Parbery and Warren Windelburn.

Welcomed to the Committee for the first time were Dave Leigh and Maurice Ward.

Floral presentations were made to Pam Ellis and Heather Saunders as acknowledgement of their outstanding service and contribution. A further floral presentation was made to Jean Hodgson for her support to husband John for the dedication he makes to our Association. Behind any great man is often a better woman.

Life membership awards were presented to John Hodgson and Dennis Long and it takes little to recount the valued contribution and personal sacrifice these two make to the salmon fishery and our Association.

We are certainly grateful for the generosity of our raffle sponsors: Richard Chettle, Olive Tinker, Rangiora Sports World, Blackwells Kaiapoi, Smiths City Market Belfast & City, Hamills Rangiora, Mike's Fishing, Ballingers Hunting & Fishing, Fisherman's Loft, New Brighton Sports, Wondercast and Jules Snoyink.

They really topped off a great evening.

Supper was served by Adrienne Dougherty and daughter Sarah. A function of support to the meeting over many years and a well presented range of tasty food.

Life Membership Awards



*John and Jean Hodgson receiving John's Life Membership award
from Secretary Heather Saunders*



*"Uncle Dennis" Long receiving his Life Membership award from niece
Heather Saunders*

2010-11 Salmon Fishing Competition Results

NZSAA'S Annual Salmon Fishing Competition attracted 11 entries, one down on last year. Disappointingly, again this year, there were no entries for the Rakaia trophy but the two other major winners had fine catches from the Waimak. The trophies and \$50 vouchers from Fisherman's Loft were presented to the winners at the AGM on 24 May 2011, as follows:

Heaviest Salmon Overall - Aquarius Trophy

Colin Eaton: 8.045 kg salmon from the Waimakariri River Mouth on 9.3.11

Heaviest Salmon Waimakariri - Fisherman's Loft Trophy

Dianne Eaton: 7.645 kg salmon from the Waimakariri (McIntoshs) on 14.2.10

Heaviest Salmon Rakaia - Alty Roscoe Memorial Trophy

Not awarded - no entries.

Lucky Draw

Warren Mackie: 7.635kg salmon from the Waimakariri River Mouth on 15.12.10



*His 8 kg Salmon was something to smile about .
Colin Eaton at the AGM
receiving the Aquarius Trophy for Heaviest Salmon Overall*

Athol Price Plaque

This Plaque was instigated by our Patron Athol Price in 1977. It is a symbol to recognise exceptional effort in helping to maintain the recreational salmon fishery.

This year's recipient, Rodger Tobin, is a volunteer of outstanding commitment to the salmon fishery. He always responds to the calls for assistance and has spent many hundreds of hours in maintaining hatchery facilities.

Busy at what he loves doing, Rodger is shown in the photograph receiving the award from Athol Price at Isaacs Peacock Springs Hatchery.



Hatchery Electronics/Electrical

Fish & Game require the services of a handyman technician to undertake activities associated with hooking up and maintaining the “sparkie” type of activities around their hatcheries at Montrose and Isaacs, as the facilities and breeding programmes are expanding.

As an example, there are 16 more feeders to be installed with automation through stored or supplied energy. At times there will be a commitment to deadline requirements but most of the time it will be a more casual approach and working alongside a great bunch of F&G staff or volunteers. All costs will be met by F&G and remuneration can be discussed with them.

If you've got the criteria to be involved, its going to be really important in the scheme of things and you will be a front line contributor to the hatchery and enhancement programmes.

Give Steve Terry a call at Fish &Game: Phone 3669191 or Mobile 0212218327.



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Fish in Schools

by **John Crawley**

I have been coordinating the Fish in Schools programme this year, after Allan Dale has taken a well deserved step back after looking after the programme for around 7 years. Allan, Rusty, Bob and many others who I don't know deserve a lot of credit for working tirelessly to set up and promote the programme over many years. Emily Arthur's (F&G) involvement and assistance has also been invaluable, as has been a dedicated group of teachers in the core schools.

What is Fish In Schools?

Essentially Fish in Schools is run under the auspices of Fish & Game and involves placing a number of fish tanks in schools throughout Christchurch and Canterbury, and stocking them with either eggs or small salmon to grow through until just before Christmas each year. The programme is a tremendous project for the kids giving them the opportunity to be first hand involved as both a formal learning experience, but also giving them a great insight into life cycles (unfortunately including the inevitable casualties!). There is a lot of anecdotal evidence each year of how the classes go on a field trip to liberate their charges, and to many it's one of the highlights of the school year.

2011 - A year of challenge

No doubt many of you have been affected in some way by our spate of earthquakes. Fish in Schools is no different. We have recently placed eggs in 10 of the 25 tanks for the season, predominantly in the west of the city, plus Hurunui, Selwyn and Waimak district schools. Some central and eastern Christchurch schools have been badly affected, plus there are ongoing issues around water chlorination in those areas preventing us from using the tanks safely. (Understandably, the kids get upset if the whole population of fish gets wiped out overnight because of water issues). Further quakes also disrupted the eggs and we lost quite a lot of them pre hatch. We will replace these either with more eggs or live fish. Fish & Game HQ in Horatio Street has also been impacted by the quakes with limited access to storage facilities, although hopefully this is only short term.

For this year, it's unlikely we'll be able to get any more tanks up and running so, apart from supporting the tanks underway, some of the focus will shift to being well prepared for next year (touch wood a little more shake free?).

Would you like to be involved?

Even with only 10 tanks underway, there is still a bit of work involved to support the schools and ideally each school gets a hands-on helper. The work is not onerous or time consuming, just a matter of being available to assist, and maybe calling in now and then to ensure all is ok. If you'd like to assist in any way, I'd love to hear from you. Even some short term assistance would be very much appreciated - perhaps even just keeping an eye on a tank at a school in your neighbourhood?

John Crawley can be contacted on 029 6300970.

Boost Up for Salmon

Emily Arthur, Fish & Game Field Officer, recently published the following:

Members of the Salmon Anglers Association are going the extra mile to support their sport by inventing a method to help the fish population grow. They have raised ova or salmon eggs in a fridge they have adapted. It has a steady flow of water from Hacketts Creek, which flows into the upper Waimakariri, through the eggs to sustain them. They call this the Alevinator (a play on the Kelvinator brand of fridges).

Alevins are the first stage of the salmon life cycle when they have just hatched from their eggs. Once hatched the alevins will stay in the Alevinator until they have used up their egg sac and then are sucked into a pipe that flows into Hacketts Creek and into the Waimakariri, just below the gorge.



Above:
NZSAA members Maurice Ward (left) and Bruce Moody (right) with the Alevinator at Hacketts Creek.

Right:
The original Alevinator set up with Scotty Boxes and stones



The Alevinator - a Record of 3 Years' Activity & Development

Compiled by Peter Robinson and Bruce Moody, July 2011

2009

Last week of April: Placed Alevinator Mk 1 in lower Montrose downstream of the salmon trap. Flood in Rakaia swept it away later that week.

In May: Mk2 version set up in Hacketts creek below the water wheel.

June 7: Planted 5000 ova, 2000 in stones, 3000 in Scotty boxes.

Bruce Moody checked on 14 June - slight silt film on surfaces.

Rocks need to be placed in bottom of Alevinator under Scotty boxes or trays as this assists them to keep horizontal. pH should be 7.0 dissolved CO₂ 20mg/l or less, temperature greater than 4.00c, suspended solids max 3mg/l, 12 lpm recommended minimum flow, O₂ greater than 2mg/l) "Principles of Salmonid Culture" by W.Pennel, B Barton.

4 July:

Alevins hatched and started to leave as swim-up fry on 19 July peaking on August 9 - all gone by 23 August. (35 days exit period). 85% success estimated 4.25k fry released.

At return of 0.001% should see 4 adults return in 2012 (3rd year).



2010

8 May: Set up two new Alevinators below the waterfall on Hacketts.

6 June: Ova planted - 3000 in Scotty boxes in original Alevinator, none in stones, all in Scotty boxes. Second Alevinator with upweller 4500 on trays. Third Alevinator 3000 over stones. (Some apparent water flow issues in this one due to lack of head.)

More extensive silting was apparent. Guess this is due to no stones in the filter barrels this year. Need to rectify silt problem next season.

Estimated 80% hatch rate overall. Bruce observed 12 redds in creek on 6 June (none observed on 8 May-creek was low)

10,500 planted. 80% hatch = 8000 fry

12 redds @ 4000 per redd = 48,000. 50% hatch = 24,000 fry.

32,000 in total, 25% from Alevinators.

0.001% of 8000 = 8 adults return in 2013



The second and third Alevinators below the waterfall at Hacketts Creek

2011

31 May: Set up all three Alevinators and removed upwellers from bottom two units because they were blocked. Now spilling water into units from pipe just above the water level to help aerate and disperse silt. Waterwheel Alevinator left the same as previous season as control. Placed stones in filter barrels, about half full, to control silt problem experienced last season. (Silt particularly harmful during egg phase as it chokes the eggs and fungus develops, spreading a mat over both healthy and dead ova, starting within 10 days and spreading quickly).

Tried the bottom intake bucket on its side with intake hose tucked up into opening on downstream side. This allows pipe to be on bottom of stream and may help to eliminate blocking of holes in intake bucket restricting the flow.

Walked the mouth of creek and braid of Waimak - no sign of any fish yet.

June 4: Loaded three Alevinators: 3000 in Scotty boxes (1000 each) plus 2000 on stones, total 5000 in each Alevinator. Have ceased using the tray method with upweller as we had flow and blockage problems the previous year. $3 \times 5 = 15,000$.

11 June: Checked water wheel Alevinator - some silt, drained filter barrel and flushed. Very silty in dam. Walked lower creek from bridge by irrigation pump to the mouth. Seven redds, maybe 1 double, 6 fish in residence, 3 carcasses. Fish and redds also seen below double Alevinator site.

25 June: Tried new galvanised Alevinator at bottom terrace. Not enough head.

Walked from Scotty box flat up to waterwheel Alevinator - 6 redds, possibly 7, all in 50 metre stretch just below double Alevinator to cabbage tree. Bevan Mehrrens had seen 14 fish in this area. Only stretch with suitable shingle, very silty from there down to Scotty box flat, although some good stream cover, deep sections with weed but silty bottom. Good shingle stretch below water wheel for about 100 metres but no salmon spawning here. (Bevan has seen 100 salmon here in the mid 90s).

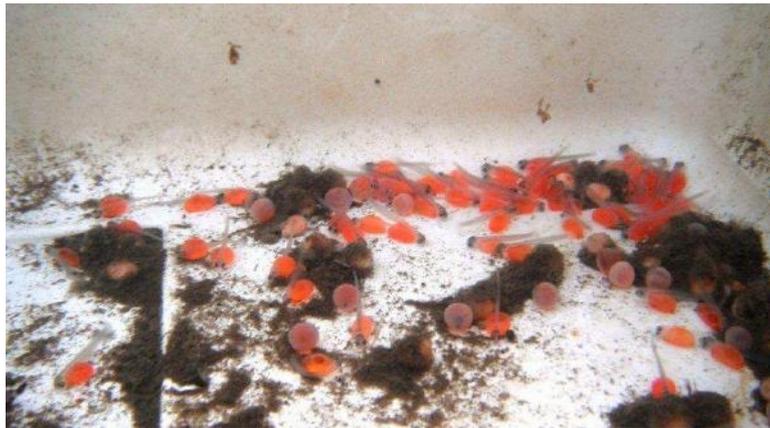
Bevan claimed 3 pairs of fish had been seen on the lower redd, just above the mouth. It seems that some multiple use has been occurring. He also noticed redds moving location over subsequent visits indicating new arrivals spawning over existing spawned redds.

All fish spawning at two sites.

Lower site, 7 redd sites from just above the mouth to the ford corner approx 200 metres shingle patches interspersed with silty areas. Bevan is of the opinion that this water is influenced by seepage from the Kowhai and, since earthworks were carried out some years ago to make the Kowhai flow to the Waimak, less salmon have been coming into Hacketts and more have been using the Kowhai

Upper site, 6 redds just below double Alevinators to cabbage tree approx 30-50 metres. (14 fish seen by Bevan). 3 carcasses on the bank on the day of this visit. Bevan believes the water from upstream from here is not influenced by the Kowhai seepage and is true Hacketts water.

Great hatch rate 90-95% in sample Scotty box in one of the double Alevinators. Still a few unhatched ova and alevins in Scotty boxes. Good hatch on stones too. Temperature in lower Alevinators 8.7 deg at 10.00am; in waterwheel Alevinator 10 deg at 11.00am.



Top photo: Alevins on 25 June from ova planted 4 June 2011. Dark stuff is silt.

Lower photo: Alevins seeking dark corners among the stones in the Alevinator



Great ova this year. Not much silt as warm dry winter so far. More silt in the waterwheel Alevinator than the waterfall Alevinators. Silt washed into the dam above the waterwheel is the culprit. Bevan has since removed a green feed paddock adjacent to the stream just above the pond as this introduced a lot of silt runoff during winter rain events. Bevan recalls salmon in the creek above the site of the waterwheel before it was installed in the late 80s. However he claims they never spawned up there as it was always too silty. The highest they have spawned is on the 70m gravel stretch just below the waterwheel.

Visit 11 July: Bruce removed all nine Scotty boxes from the Alevinators. Checked dead ova in trays - 76 per 1000 in one box = 93% hatch (8370 alevins from Scotty boxes) plus unknown from 6000 ova on stones. Guesstimate 80% of 6000 = 4800 Total 13170 alevins. 0.001% of 13170 = 13 adults return in 2014.

If You Want to Protect Our Waterways, Pick Up Your Pen....

By Grant Dyson NZ Fish & Game Public Awareness Advisor

When did you last see anglers on the steps of Parliament staging a protest?

It may never happen but perhaps it should: all freshwater anglers need to get up and fight harder for the resources – clean rivers and lakes – they claim to hold so dear.

In today's world, recreational resources and access to them have never been under such extreme pressure. In recent years we've seen an accelerating trend in the conversion of land to dairying, powerful corporate forces driving the trend. Add in the 'normal' urbanisation patterns – city sprawl – and the result is even semi-wild places for fishing and hunting are under threat and in some cases disappearing.

What can you do? The answer in a word is lobby, and actively. Consider the steps taken by sea anglers and their lobby group a year or two ago. The normally indifferent recreational sea fishers went into action when catch limits were under review. The group lobbied hard, and effectively, using the media to defend recreational fishing practices which were under attack from the fishing industry and they hammered away at government.

But you don't need to join a group to have a say. With tools like email it's never been easier to have your voice heard. Letters to editors of mainstream newspapers and current affairs magazines are an effective approach to lobbying issues into the public arena. MPs and other decision-makers take note of such correspondence, especially when a number of people voice the same concern. While, it's all very well writing to *Fish & Game Magazine* or your other favourite fishing media, essentially you're speaking to the converted so target your efforts at local daily and community news outlets.

An additional approach is to write directly to your local MP – tell your mates to do the same. The more people pushing the same issue, the more our elected representatives take notice. Speak up for continued access to recreational resources in your area – be they rivers, lakes or forests.

You could also pick up the phone to your local daily newspaper, community paper or radio station. You'd be surprised at how grateful the media can be if you make their life easier by offering good fresh quotes from someone affected by an issue.

'People power' in the form of social media like *Facebook* and *Twitter*, and blogs, can pack a real punch too.

The key message is, if we don't become better at speaking out we'll have to accept dwindling opportunities to go fishing and hunting. That would be a sad thing to resign ourselves to.

Take a Kid Fishing 2011

The annual Take a Kid Fishing (TAKF) day this year will be October 16 at the Groynes, Johns Road, Christchurch.

As in the past, Isaac Salmon will be donating salmon, ensuring that each of the lakes is stocked for the various age groups that will be fishing on the day.

In conjunction with the event, Fish and Game is organising a Fishing Expo where fishing organisations, including NZSAA, will be displaying and promoting their activities.

The lakes will be stocked a few days before the event to give the fish time to settle into their new habitat. To deter premature angling and to ensure the optimum fishing experience for the Kids, security will be in place every night prior to Sunday 16 October. NZSAA members who might be in the vicinity of the Groynes during the daytime could also assist by taking a look around the lakes as a check on unauthorised angling.

This is the highlight of the junior fishing year - make a note on the calendar now.

Run by the **Kids Fishing Charitable Trust**

Enquiries to Dave Denton

Phone 03 318 2762, fax 03 318 2760



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Salmon Memory Imprinting

A view by John Hodgson

In one of the Hurunui-Waiiau water take submissions I mentioned the importance of complete memory imprinting. An example of this is at Hacketts Stream: on 12 June 2007, we hastily gathered a team (some took the day off work to help) and placed Scotty boxes in this section of the Stream which is just below the second terrace and about 400-500 metres further upstream from where we usually place the Scotty boxes.

This 2011 season at least 12 salmon returned to this section, creating redds just where the Scotty boxes had been placed in 2007. Doug Roy and I visited the area on 23 May 2011 and were excited at seeing large salmon creating their redds. We walked about 200 metres downstream and did not sight any other redd building but did count at least 10 fish carcasses.

As the photos show, the stream is quite narrow and shallow where the salmon are. They have passed many suitable shingle areas on their way. The salmon had to get over five of the previous years' weirs that we had formed across the stream, through the pipe culvert, past the nozzle of the irrigation pump, then through a small section of the weed-laden fence next to the culvert, and then another 400-500 metres to get to where their imprinting tells them they are home.

NZSAA volunteers did put Scotty boxes some distance upstream below the waterwheel up to 2005, so the salmon we now see are a result of the 2007 placement.

These small streams and natural spawning areas may appear insignificant but, collectively, they are part of the whole equation for the preservation of the wild salmon fishery.



Hacketts Stream 2007 Ova Planting



A completed redd

On guard upstream of the redd.

Note the narrow width of the stream



Hacketts Stream Ova Planting 2011.

The pipe is in the background behind

Monster Salmon?

Reprint of an article by Chris Santella, Adventure Fishing magazine

Sometime soon, there could be monster salmon swimming in waters near you - a product of the laboratory, namely, genetically modified Atlantic salmon. The fish, called AquaAdvantage salmon (and dubbed 'frankenfish' by some), was created by a Massachusetts (USA) company called Aqua Bounty. Technically speaking, it's an Atlantic salmon that's had two genes introduced: a growth hormone gene from Chinook salmon and a gene that encourages year-round growth from ocean pout fish. The resulting creature grows twice as fast as salmon raised in a traditional pen environment and requires ten per cent less feed. (The AquaAdvantage salmon is part of AquaBounty's Blue Revolution - a mission to "bring together biological sciences and molecular technology to enable an aquaculture industry capable of large-scale, efficient and environmentally sustainable production of high-quality seafood".)

Of course, AquaBounty also hopes to profit from a niche that's been created by the catastrophic decline of wild, naturally reproducing stocks of Atlantic salmon...and a desire for salmon fillets that results in the importation of more than one billion dollars worth of salmon - mostly farmed - into the United States alone.

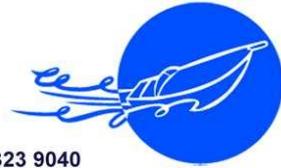
Despite reports that the fish taste quite comparable to other Atlantic salmon options available, there are some health and safety concerns about the consumption of AquaAdvantage salmon - fuelled in part by an oddly short public review period of testimony provided by the Food and Drug Administration, the government agency that oversees food safety in the United States. These concerns are dwarfed by concerns in environmental communities concerning the possible spread of disease and, worse yet, the potential destruction of the gene pool of wild fish should these hybrids ever escape into the Atlantic.

In all fairness, AquaBounty's initial plan seems to have safeguards in place to ensure that their spawn stay out of the world's cold oceans. Eggs will be raised on Prince Edward Island (one of Canada's Maritime Provinces) where, company officials say, there's not enough fresh water for eggs to survive. Fish will be raised in inland tanks in Panama where ocean water temperatures are too warm for the fish to survive if they were ever to make their way from the tanks to the Pacific or Caribbean. Company officials emphasize that AquaAdvantage salmon are sterile.

Still, the emergence of genetically modified salmon (and other fish in the works) raises many questions - some that extend beyond the sportsman's domain: Will the fish really be kept out of the wild? Are they really sterile? In a world where nearly one billion people go hungry and some 16,000 children die each day of malnutrition-related causes, can we off-handedly dismiss a technological breakthrough that could efficiently feed millions? Likewise, can we afford to dismiss a viable alternative to salmon farms, which have been documented to have deleterious effects on wild salmon stocks?

The FDA has yet to yield a decision. One thing is nearly certain: if the AquaAdvantage salmon is approved in the US, it's likely to gain approval elsewhere. Atlantic salmon may soon be popping up in places far removed from the Atlantic.

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Fish Transfer to Clutha River

Contributed by John Hodgson

On Monday 8 August NZSAA received an SOS from Fish & Game for volunteers to come and help at the Isaacs raceways to load salmon onto the large fish transporter destined for the Clutha River on Wednesday 10th Friday 12th and Monday 15th August.

On the Wednesday there were nine members in the team, including myself. The job involved lots of bucket carrying - not a task for an octogenarian! The job would be easier if there were 12 people. The weight of a bucket of smolt depended on what was netted and this varied between 5 to 8.5 kgs.

On this occasion, because of the distance to the Clutha River, the load weight of each of two tanks was 300kg amounting to approximately 20,000-25,000 salmon for the whole load.

Emily Moore from fish and Game was the tally clerk. Monday's planned effort was cancelled by the snow.



The scene at 7:30am. The fog is starting to lift



F&G Officer,
Steve Terry,
weighing a bucket of
fish



The Bucket Line

Tony Hawker (F&G) on
the tanker,
an employee of PF
Transport,
NZSAA members Colin
Eaton & Bob Stanton,
and Brian Ross (F&G)

Continued page 24



NZSAA member, Peter Morgan, with the next net full.



From net to bucket

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You need to supply all disposable items including wood and coal for the Yunka fire (except Kaniere, electric heating), sheets, pillowcases, sleeping bags, etc. On leaving, a clean and tidy bach would be appreciated for the next people.

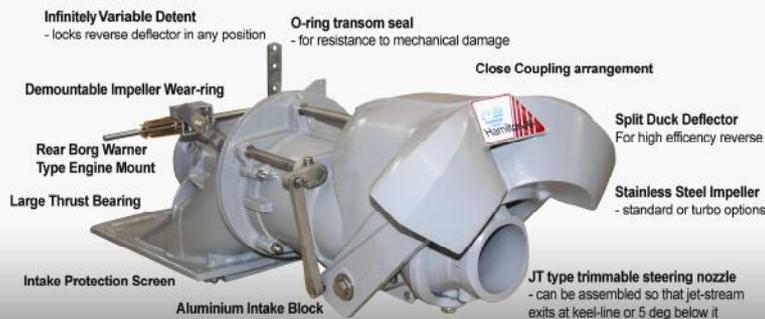
Rates: **Kaniere:** \$70 per night up to 4 people. \$20 per person above this.

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2010-11 Salmon Management Report

North Canterbury Region

by Steve Terry, Fish & Game Officer

Last season, North Canterbury salmon anglers experienced another year of low salmon returns. Both the angler catch and total run were well down on the previous season, similar to the 2000/01 and 2006/07 runs which were years with very poor returns. Other North Canterbury rivers showed similar trends. In the on-going effort to minimise variables that may influence salmon survival in freshwater, North Canterbury Fish & Game have focused their efforts to habitat protection and restoration projects.

In recent years, angler harvest rates have been approaching levels regarded as concerning by North American Fisheries Managers and Scientists. The North Canterbury Fish & Game Council have assessed this concern and believe harvest levels are within levels thought to be internationally safe and that other issues such as oceanic conditions are more likely to be having a significant influence on returning salmon number .

Rakaia River

The total run in the Rakaia continued its downwards trend to that of the previous few seasons. Angler catch and spawning escapement showed similar declines. The total catch was given a healthy boost by the Montrose hatchery returns, with the hatchery accounting for around 14% of the returns to the river last season.

Rakaia Tributaries

Year	Hydra Waters RT=14.67	Manuka Pt RT=16.7*	Double Hill RT=13.95	Glenariffe RT=18.5	Mellish Strm & Goat Hill Strm	Montrose Trap Census	Natural Spawning Excluding Montrose	Spawning Numbers	Angler Catch	Total Run	% of Run Montrose
1993	1113	209	704	<u>713</u>	-		2739	2739	1116	3855	
1994	4021	467	2491	<u>4497</u>	-		11476	11476	7861	19337	
1995	3689	386	1185	<u>3026</u>	-		8286	8286	3120	11406	
1996	4653	811	1985	<u>5442</u>	-		12891	12891	9008	21899	
1997	2998	966	2401	<u>3630</u>	-		9995	9995	8531	18526	
1998	1559	216	857	<u>912</u>	-		3544	3544	2567	6111	
1999	1510	302	377	<u>1528</u>	-		3717	3717	2567	6284	
2000	812	175	604	<u>271</u>	-		1862	1862	2975	4837	
2001	476	43	103	<u>100</u>	-		722	722	829	1551	
2002	1382	193	258	<u>93</u>	-		1926	1926	585	2511	
2003	674	196	284	<u>89</u>	-	120	1243	1363	1714	3077	8.8
2004	1456	298	303	<u>649</u>	-	110	2706	2816	1195	4011	3.9
2005	898	289	306	<u>325</u>	-	850	1818	2668	1958	4626	31.9
2006	357	87	132	<u>147</u>	400	110	1123	1233	994	2227	8.9
2007	1471	286	243	<u>583</u>	90	180	2673	2853	1110	3963	6.3
2008	1499	990	463	<u>811</u>	550	250	4313	4563	3149	7712	5.5
2009	1372	618	647	<u>958</u>	350	450	3945	4395	2639	7034	10.2
2010	497	377	289	<u>504</u>	150	112	1817	1929	1550	3479	5.8
2011	748	169	98	173	350	257	1538	1795	1066	2861	14.3

Waimakariri River

Waimakariri angler catch numbers were down on the previous four years and close to record lows, and the percent of salmon caught by anglers dropped to 41 percent. Spawning numbers however rose slightly on the previous two seasons to 1,670 salmon (hatchery numbers included). Returns to the Silverstream hatchery were again the lowest on record with only 60 salmon returning to the trap.

Waimakariri Tributaries

Year	Poulter RT=21*	Winding Crk RT=15.42	Cass Hill RT=16.7	Cora Lynn RT=16.7	Hacketts Crk & One Tree Swamp	Silverstream Trap Census	Nat. Spawning excl. Silverstream	Spawning Numbers	Angler Catch	Total Run	% of Run Silverstream
1993	304	327	213	186			1030	1030	1116	2146	
1994	363	236	438	285		855	1322	2177	1597	3774	39.27
1995	1225	1011	817	337		1230	3390	4620	4372	8992	26.62
1996	1559	2336	1045	508		818	5448	6266	6033	12299	13.05
1997	726	824	1362	491		830	3403	4233	3893	8126	19.61
1998	505	417	840	389		260	2151	2411	2778	5189	10.78
1999	593	417	302	289		500	1601	2101	4748	6849	23.80
2000	166	86	185	80		347	517	864	2553	3417	40.16
2001	63	27	117	28		547	235	782	1075	1857	69.95
2002	878	313	148	69		250	1408	1658	1128	2786	15.08
2003	414	183	342	Not Counted ^		600	939	1539	1764	3303	38.99
2004	480	278	251	312		205	1321	1526	1475	3001	13.43
2005	960	689	320	381		300	2350	2650	2234	4884	11.32
2006	89	88	131	101	80	170	489	659	1022	1681	25.80
2007	521	433	532	788	110	275	2384	2659	1373	4032	10.34
2008	1601	443	386	355	320	360	3105	3465	3991	7456	10.39
2009	537	109	244	127	100	360	1117	1477	2256	3733	24.37
2010	468	318	473	109	40	60	1408	1468	1902	3370	4.09
2011	577	354	281	333	65	60	1610	1370	1175	2845	3.59

Angler Catch in Rakaia & Waimakariri Rivers

Both these rivers had a decrease in angler catch over the previous season which was considered a poor season, sitting close to long term low levels of angler catch for each river. The angler catch as a percentage of the total run was 37% in the Rakaia and 41% in the Waimakariri River.

Natural Spawning

Wild returns to the Rakaia headwaters continued to drop below numbers seen in the previous four years and they were close to the record lows seen in the last ten years. However, the Waimakariri spawning numbers increased slightly to 1,610 on last years numbers.

Enhancement

Last season was the ninth year salmon have returned to the Montrose hatchery from the release of 60,000 x 50g salmon smolt in July annually, with the exception of 2003, which was from a release in 2001, of 14,000 smolt, that were inherited when Fish & Game were initially given the use of the hatchery.

Releases from the Silverstream hatchery vary annually but Fish & Game have paid for the release of 30,000 smolt annually with an unknown number of salmon surplus to the hatchery requirements also released at varying sizes annually.

It can be assumed that the proportion of hatchery released salmon caught each season will be the same as for wild run salmon. Therefore 37 percent of the Montrose salmon returning to the Rakaia River will also have been captured. This brings the angler catch of Montrose salmon to 151 and the total return of Montrose salmon to the Rakaia River to around 0.7% percent, or 408 salmon (257 hatchery and 151 caught) of the initial 60,000 released. Given the relative strength of other spawning streams in the Rakaia catchment, this is a reasonably good return.

A significant percent of Montrose salmon are likely to have been caught further south in the Rangitata and Opihi Rivers as experienced before the McKinnons Creek hatchery began their release program. However with the McKinnon's Creek hatchery also releasing fin-clipped salmon, all released salmon are indistinguishable and are assumed to be from their hatchery of origin for management purposes.

Hurunui / Waiau River Salmon Returns

The annual aerial peak spawning trend count of these rivers was not carried out in 2011 as a result of continuous freshes in the main stem of these two rivers where a bulk of the spawning takes place, for much of the season. Angler reports indicate these rivers showed similar declining trends to the other east coast rivers. The angler catch survey shows 220 salmon were caught in the Hurunui River and only 11 in the Waiau River.

Central South Island Region Salmon Returns

Salmon returns for the Rangitata and Waitaki rivers showed very similar characteristics to the North Canterbury rivers with below average returns last season. The exception to this is the hatchery at McKinnon's Creek in the lower Rangitata which had around 800 salmon return from a release of 60,000 smolt two years ago.

The North Canterbury angler catch survey calculated that North Canterbury anglers caught an estimated 231 salmon in the Rangitata River and 107 in the Waitaki River.

Angler Catch in North Canterbury Rivers by Central South Island Licence Holders

At the time this report was written, Central South Island (CSI) Fish & Game staff had yet to analyse their salmon angler harvest survey data. However the average percentage of salmon caught each year by CSI anglers has been analysed for the past seven years and this has been averaged to show anglers with CSI licences catch 18% of the salmon caught in the Rakaia River annually and 1% in the Waimakariri River.

Using these average percentages, catch records from Central South Island Fish & Game phone surveys show CSI anglers caught 163 salmon in the Rakaia River, 12 in the Waimakariri River, and were unlikely to have caught salmon in the Hurunui or Waiau Rivers.

Discussion

There is continuing strong volunteer support for the hatchery at Montrose and enhancement of secondary spawning streams in both the upper Rakaia and Waimakariri Rivers through ova planting.

The recent addition of raceways at Peacock Springs Salmon and Trout Enhancement Facility to the North Canterbury Fish & Game enhancement program has further increased enhancement opportunity for the Waimakariri River, with an additional 30,000 salmon smolt released from this hatchery into the South Branch of the Waimakariri River in July. The September earthquake caused considerable damage to the raceways at Montrose, with many salmon lost as a result. However due to the procedure of always carrying surplus stock, adequate numbers survived to complete the budgeted enhancement programs. All salmon stocks were transferred to Isaacs while repairs were carried out.

North Canterbury Fish & Game Council have been concerned that the percent of salmon caught by anglers may be unsustainably high, especially for the Waimakariri River, where angler catch often accounts for 60% of the returning salmon. However last season saw a large reduction in the percentage of salmon caught by anglers in both the Rakaia and Waimakariri rivers. This has been the topic of much debate amongst salmon anglers for some time, however the North Canterbury Fish & Game Council have decided to leave regulations as they are without introducing any seasonal harvest restrictions which had been extensively discussed.

The high average annual angler harvest in the Waimakariri River is likely to be largely due to persistent angling pressure in the lower reaches of the river due to its proximity to Christchurch and relatively few freshes which limit the timing for salmon to head upstream. These prolonged periods with low flows force the salmon to congregate in the lower reaches of the river for long periods of time allowing anglers plenty of opportunity to catch them, and with the increasing pressure by users to abstract even more water from the river, this problem is likely to get worse in the future.

The marked reduction in the angler harvest percentage last season can be explained by a number of reasons. The earthquake on 4th September 2010 and the devastating February 22nd 2011 earthquake had a significant impact on regional anglers. Licence sales are well down on previous seasons and angler activity from licence holders also dropped due to the devastation caused by these earthquakes. ECan also issued warnings to avoid recreational activities in the lower river due to health risks from water quality issues as a result of raw sewage discharges in the area. A large number of floods during March and April also led to restricted opportunity for those anglers that wished to fish for salmon.

Recommendations

The North Canterbury Fish & Game Council put substantial effort into sourcing additional funds to continue riparian enhancement programs currently underway.

Steve Terry

Fish & Game Officer

August 2011



Other Fish & Game News

Fish & Game air concerns over Porter Height's Ski Field development

Fish & Game recently approached the owners of the Porter Heights Ski Field who are seeking to develop a 3,500 bed resort at the ski field. Although not opposed in principle to the scheme staff had concerns around the effects of the building works and wastewater discharge on fish populations both in Porters Stream and Broken River which the Porters Stream flows into. The developers have now agreed to not do any works in the water during fish spawning season and have agreed to limits for Nitrogen in the Porters Stream.

Hurunui water planning

As a member of the Hurunui Waiau Zone Committee F&G's Tony Hawker has spent many hours negotiating with the varied parties on water issues. They have now come to an agreement on the Zone Implementation Plan (ZIP). F&G support some of the key items in the ZIP including a two year deferment on any water storage schemes in the upper catchment of the Hurunui to incentivise irrigators to investigate the Waitohi option (which is likely to have much less effects on the fishery than the Hurunui Water Project Scheme). Also F&G support the ZIP's limits on Nitrogen and Phosphorus loads in the Hurunui which will require new irrigators to meet strict nutrient budgets.

Counting salmon

A cameraman from the Winnemem Wintu Tribe came on one of the recent aerial spawning counts of the Glenariffe Stream to gather footage for a documentary they are making about bringing their genetic strain of salmon back to America.

Staff and Councillors Peter Robinson and Steve McNeill walked the historic salmon spawning reach of Winding Creek and noted salmon utilising identical reaches as those used over 30 years ago.

Advocating for angler access

Staff investigated two access complaints on the Rakaia River. One was easily solved by installing another access sign on Burns Road. The second is an issue at an access point that runs off the North Rakaia Road where an irrigation race has been hindering access. Staff would like to hear from others that have been having trouble accessing the river at this location to ascertain how big a problem it is during the salmon fishing season.

Protecting salmon spawning habitat

Staff have continued landowner visits to negotiate fencing of high country spawning streams. Fencing a large section of the true left of the Glenariffe has been completed and plans to fence the true right are underway. Fencing much of Winding Creek, Craigieburn Stream and part of the southern end of Lake Pearson is also underway. Staff have also been working with landowners in the Otukaikino on a fencing project.

Staff have met with The Whitcombe Landcare Group in the upper Rakaia catchment to discuss fencing of salmon spawning streams now that the NRRP requirements to restrict cattle damage from streams has become operative. Fish & Game have been advocating for a rule in relation to this for a long time and are pleased that one is now in place.

News from NZ Walking Access Commission

The Commission is now fully established and continuing its work of promoting free, certain, enduring and practical walking access to the outdoors.

This year the Commission will focus on three broad areas: the Walking Access Mapping System, the Outdoor Access Code which explains responsible behaviour when accessing outdoors, and the Enhanced Access Fund. The Enhanced Access Fund provided financial support for 30 access-enhancing projects over the past two years. Applications for funding increased from 29 in 2010 to 44 in 2011, and with further promotion the Commission anticipates another leap in interest in 2012. The Commission's regional field staff will continue to work collaboratively with recreationalists and landholders to create new access and resolve access cases around the country.

Walking Access Mapping System open for public use

The Commission's Walking Access Mapping System (WAMS) is now open for wide public use. Found online at www.wams.org.nz the system uses geographic information system (GIS) technology to identify public and private land across New Zealand. A new Tracks and Access Points map layer allows people to find information about physical tracks and other access points to rivers, mountains, lakes, forests, beaches and legal roads.



www.wams.org.nz

Walking Access Commission Chief Executive Mark Neeson said the system provided clear benefits to both recreationalists and landowners. “The benefits of the mapping system to groups like walkers, anglers and hunters are huge, but these maps are also vitally important for landholders. Detailed maps that inform the public about land that is publically accessible and land that is privately owned are essential if people are to know the extent and limits of their legal access.”

The Walking Access Mapping system would continue to evolve and improve based on user feedback and as more organisations provided access point information to the Tracks and Access Points layer of the mapping system. Users can view, at no cost, all of New Zealand's land parcels with contextual aerial, topographic and public access information from one website. Other functions available through WAMS include an ‘Information Tool’ that can be used to view information about different access classifications or identify publically accessible land within up to 3km of any chosen location. Users can also make enquiries directly to the Commission about public access, use a ‘Draw’ tool to measure distances between various points, and print maps.



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