

# ***1. LOCH ACHONACHIE ANGLING CLUB***

NEWSLETTER No 2 2015

## **1. WELCOME**

1.1 Welcome to the second Newsletter of the year for LAAC.

## **2. OVERVIEW**



(A nice brown trout from Loch Meig – courtesy of Jim Fisher)

2.1 Loch Meig has fished really well with a lot of fish over the 2lbs mark being caught. The above trout (caught by the author) was one of a number of good fish caught that day with Jim Fisher. Thanks for the photo Jim! Levels have been up and down quite a lot and the cold north and east winds have made catching difficult. However, the right flies have been working well. Suggest muddlers and dabblers for good results.

### 3. CATCHES REPORTED



#### *Salmon*

- 3.1 Quite a number of salmon were reported caught up to the end of June and grilse have been reported in increasing numbers during the last month. Our thanks go to those anglers who returned fish – particularly the hen salmon as they are the foundation for future stocks.
- 3.2 Numbers have improved substantially since last year's disastrous slump. Please carry out catch and release as much as possible to preserve future numbers.
- 3.3 One point for members to note – some of the grilse, (not all by any means) are displaying signs of red vent disease. Please exercise care if you decide to keep these fish for the table and ***ensure they are thoroughly cooked. (See later article).***

#### *Trout*

- 3.3 Loch Scardroy has fished well with a range of flies being successful. One post on our new **Facebook** \* page by David Sutherland read “Great morning’s fishing on Loch Scardroy today. Six nice trout up to 12 ozs all on the fly. Had a wee spin but they weren’t interested. Black Zulu, KE He, Heather Fly and Kate Maclaren doing the damage. Most memorable moment came when dispatching one of the trout a 2 inch minnow shot out of its mouth and started wriggling about on the floor of the boat. It’s now back in the loch.”
- 3.5 Loch Meig has fished exceptionally well again this year with some big bags of trout – up to 25 + some days. Stocks of wild trout are showing more and more and wild fish of over 1 ½ lbs are being taken.

- 3.6 Loch Achonachie continues to give excellent sport with good trout and sea trout.

*Summary*

- 3.6 The grilse run, although late, has arrived and like previous years, there have been increasing numbers of multi sea wintered salmon arriving earlier in the season..
- 3.7 Trout stocks are holding up very well with excellent numbers of big trout being caught.

**4. LAAC 100 CLUB**



## 100 Club

The 100 Club is the means by which the angling club raises funds and is proving a great success in the capable hands of John Cartlidge, Committee member.

The 100 club provides substantial funds to help with all aspects of the club, from subsidising competitions to maintenance and upkeep of facilities. At only £12 to join this is an excellent opportunity to support **Loch Achonachie Angling Club** with the chance to win cash every month. See the web site [www.highlandfishing.net](http://www.highlandfishing.net) for details on how to join.

**5. FISHING COMPETITIONS – HIGHLIGHTS**



- 5.1 Full details of all the competitions are on the Club website: [www.highlandfishing.net](http://www.highlandfishing.net). A summary of results is set out below:
- **Meig Open** –SGL came first with Dave Macgregor taking 12 fish, the three Ts second and Beaulay AC came third.
  - **Highland Clubs** – Barry Whitford had a beautiful trout of 3 ½ lbs but Dounray AC had the best bag of 9 trout with the biggest weighing in at 3lbs 11ozs.
  - **Danfoss** – A very windy and unpleasant day (weather wise). LAAC took the honours with 29 fish for 17 ½ lbs. Top rod was Lewis Ross with the best bag of 7 fish for 3.85lbs
  - **All Night Challenge at Skye** – A good competition for our team of Derek Williamson and Lewis Ross who came second overall with 10 fish.
- 5.2 Again a reminder, (particularly for new members) that the main adult competition left to go for the season is:
- Loch Achonachie Members competition from boats on Loch Meig on Saturday 3rd October. Start is at 09.00 and finish at 17.00. Two fishing per boat. To cover the cost there is an entry fee of £10.00 per rod. The Hydro Quaich will be presented to the angler with the heaviest bag and the Sports and Model Shop Trophy for the biggest fish, and SGL quaichs for the two anglers in the best boat.
- 5.3 For entry into any of the remaining competitions, or indeed any further information, please contact Lewis Ross, Competition Secretary, on 01997 421293.
- 5.4 Our thanks, once again, go to Lewis Ross, our Competition Secretary, for all his hard work in organising the competitions.

## 6. CROMARTY FIRTH FISHERY BOARD



### **Director's Report July 2015.**

In contrast to last summer's drought, the summer of 2015 has been one of persistent rain, cold temperatures and high flows. July has been particularly wet and river levels have been high through most of the month. After a strong MSW salmon run this spring there was a lull in early July before the grilse arrived towards the end of the month. Grilse have been caught in much better numbers than last year. Most appear in good condition although many show signs of red vent caused by a parasitic worm.

The rebuilt fish pass at Orrin falls appears to be working well, allowing fish to pass upstream with little delay.

The Chairman held our annual staff review in July and staff training priorities for the year were agreed.

The Cromarty Board / Trust contributed to a Dingwall Seashore festival day. Demonstrations of survey netting and sea trout tagging were combined with other coastal and estuary biology events through the day, including a clean-up of the lower reaches of the Peffery.

A number of volunteers were recruited for the Dingwall Environment Group which will be carrying out further conservation works on the River Peffery.

The Wild Fishery Reform process is ongoing, with several parallel consultations taking place through the Institute of Fishery Management, RAFTS / ASFB and the Stakeholder Reference Group. Notes from the June Cromarty DSFB Board meeting have been circulated to Board Members and their feedback will be incorporated into the Board's WFR consultation response in early August.

### ***Projects / research***

The start of fish capture for radio-tracking on the Allt Graad was delayed by high flows through most of the month. Several unsuccessful attempts were made before a few dry days allowed the capture and tagging of 6 fish before the rain returned. Fish

capture and tagging will continue through August and September and the fish will be tracked until spawning is completed in January.

The spraying of giant hogweed was completed on the Balnagown with a further reduction in density. The Trust for Conservation Volunteers are continuing the clearance of Himalayan balsam from river banks around the region.

ASFB organised a meeting with Mark Lloyd of The Angling Trust to discuss how the success of their angling development work in England and Wales could be replicated in Scotland. The Moray Firth Trout Initiative is preparing a bid for an angling project in local schools linked to our existing education programme.

### ***Meetings attended / consultations***

ASFB / RAFTS Wild Fishery Review Joint Working Group  
Scottish Government Wild Fishery Review Stakeholder Reference Group  
IFM Scottish Branch meeting with WFR Civil Service team  
IFM Council meeting  
IFM Training Committee meeting  
ASFB / Angling Trust Angling Development Meeting  
Sgitheach Hydro / SEPA site visit  
SSE Contin Hatchery replacement site visit  
Dingwall Environment Group meeting

## **7. WINTER LEAGUE**



- 7.1 The Club will again be running a winter league commencing at the end of the normal brown trout/salmon season. Full details will be sent out soon. We hope that more members will join us in what has turned out to be a great competition.

## **8. AGM**



- 8.1 Just a reminder to members that the AGM in 2016 will be held on the second Tuesday of January 2016 at the Cottage Bar Restaurant in Maryburgh at 07.30pm.

9. **RUBBISH AND LITTER**



- 9.1 We have once again been very disappointed to see a considerable amount of rubbish and litter being left on the loch and river banks and even in the boats. **PLEASE** take your rubbish and litter home with you. This will make fishing for members and visitors so much more pleasant and ensure that we do not cause the Club any problems with our landlords from whom we lease the lochs.

10. **CONSERVATION**

- 10.1 Congratulation to those of you who caught salmon this year. Please note that all hen fish and coloured fish caught during September should be returned. ***Members are asked to ensure that they abide by the conservation policy of the Club.*** This will help to preserve future stocks of a scarce resource.

11. **RED VENT SYNDROME**

- 11.1 Red Vent Syndrome (RVS) is a condition characterised by swollen and bleeding vents in both male and female salmon. It is now more commonly present in certain runs of grilse and is caused by a nematode worm infestation (Anisakis).
- 11.2 The nematode has a complex life cycle with the adult worms found in seals, whales and other marine mammals. Wild salmon become infected at sea when they ingest prey items which are infected with the nematode larvae. RVS has not been reported in sea trout and seems to be restricted to wild Atlantic salmon. Whilst the parasite can be carried into freshwater by migrating salmon, it is unable to be transmitted between fish in freshwater. It is therefore safe to return infected fish to the river/loch.



11.3 **Health Risk** – Parasites in fish, particularly Anisakis, can if eaten alive, cause serious health problems. The Food Standards Agency has issued new guidance therefore, for anglers who may wish to eat their own catch. These are:

- Inspect the wild salmon to detect and remove parasites. Those fish which remain obviously contaminated should not be eaten.
- If wild salmon is to be eaten raw (sushi), it should be frozen in all parts for at least 24 hours, at a temperature of -20 degrees C or colder. This will ensure that any non-visible parasites or undetectable larvae of nematodes are destroyed.
- This freezing advice also extends to wild salmon that are to undergo a cold smoking process or to be eaten after marinating or salting i.e.as in Gravadlax.
- Parasites will be killed when wild salmon is hot smoked at an internal temperature above 60 degrees C. It will then be safe to eat without freezing first.
- Where it is not possible to carry out adequate freezing, the salmon should be cooked. A temperature of 70 degrees C for two minutes will kill any parasitic contamination present. **As there is no infallible method of detecting and removing larvae**, cooking is advisable.

## 12. FACEBOOK

<p>Social Media Success for LAAC The club has enjoyed really good feedback, and increased visitors to club waters as a result of our high quality website <a href="http://www.highlandfishing.net">www.highlandfishing.net</a> and this season we have been developing Facebook to increase Social Networking for Anglers. We reckon that as well as further publicising our fishings and allowing good interaction across a steadily increasing number of Facebook anglers, that it will also be a good</p>	
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way of increasing the number of young people fishing. A few of the stories that have appeared recently on our Facebook site are included with this newsletter. If you have Facebook why not find our site – search for **Loch Achonachie** within Facebook and “like” us or send in messages about where you’ve been fishing, or exchange tips. Good news about fishing is always welcome online!

“Mystic Meig”, so dubbed by club member Mike MacPherson has been an enigma to him over the last few seasons. But with it fishing well towards the end of July he was persuaded to venture out to slay the dragon, or at least a trout or two. Both wild and stocked brownies have been coming to the usual variety of flies – and that is usually a wide variety on Loch Meig - in the later part of the month. On a coldish day (and unusually dry for July!!) Mike well and truly broke his duck on Meig, and very nicely thank you. This three pounder, taken in the river stretch close to the top end of our beat, fought well before coming to the boat. Cue one very happy Mike MacPherson!  
Stevie Dowds, Club Chairman



**Disability Access Matters**  
Loch Meig Wheely Boat now has a new engine, a Yamaha 5HP two stroke beauty, and they need to be run in carefully before use at high revs. Club Treasurer Davie MacGregor and Alex Marks did the first long day of low rev running on the loch last Wednesday, and Club Secretary, Okain MacLennan and I followed on the next day to complete the run in process. Conditions were probably best of the month by a country mile on the Thursday, and Okain and I had a great day’s sport taking 23 between us - 13-10 to Okain, and best three each over 3lbs. Great fighting wild trout and stockies coming to muddlers and dabblers throughout the day, and in the evening to wee nymphs fished deeper. No sign of fish rising all day after a brief burst at 10am as we got tackled up, but as we drove home down the lochside at 8pm, having completed our running in duties, the loch was erupting with splashy surface feeding. Just to tempt us back another day?  
We were pleased to here from a visitor from Cardiff, Jack Morgan who recently used the



wheelyboat that he had an excellent time on Meig. Jack wrote "Hi Stephen, We had a great time thanks. The Highland hospitality was great too! Ospreys were fishing and caught more fish than us! It was great to see them fish.

We will be back! Jack"

Tight lines Jack and haste ye back!

Stevie Dowds, Club Chairman

The club has been very fortunate to receive funding from Scottish & Southern Electricity (who own Hydro Electric) to buy new boats and outboard motors for use by anglers fishing our waters. Three new boats were launched onto Loch Meig this spring and have been in use regularly throughout the summer. SSE asked the club chairman to be part of a photoshoot for their annual report.

Pictured here on one of the new boats, Stephen Dowds said, "These excellent aluminium boats, easy to control and manoeuvre even on windy days, have teamed up with reliable new outboard motors and are making a real difference to the quality of experience we can offer anglers on Loch Meig. Our Club members and visitors alike are speaking very highly of this important upgrade. In short, thanks to SSE we can make an outstanding contribution to improving angling tourism here in Ross-Shire."



### 13. LOST AND FOUND

- 13.1 Found at the side of Loch Meig by the slipway, a *pair of prescription 'Specsaver' glasses with black flex frame*. If these are yours, please contact the Club Secretary.

### EDITORIAL COMMENT

- 13.1 I hope you have found this second Newsletter for 2015 of interest. As always, if any of you have an interesting story, photograph or article - or indeed any comments - please send them to me.

Okain McLennan  
Secretary