

2001 Upper Shin News 2002



The 2000 season on the Upper Shin was a story of mixed fortunes. Some weeks saw good catches of salmon and grilse whilst others were leaner and lead us to believe that fish were travelling on through the system. Salmon were in evidence in early June and were moved to a skated Sunray Shadow in the Dam pool. There was also excitement in the Ladies pool and Frying Pan in that first week of June - although no fish were actually landed. Are these early fish moving on upstream through the Borland lift, now that the Dam pool is more suitable for holding fish?

The first salmon of the year fell to John Geddes on the 16th June in Eleanors to a Tadpole. This fish was very sportingly returned as it weighed in at 15lb.

The Shin has yet again provided many people with their first fish.

On the 22nd June Sue Yandle caught her first salmon and what a fish it turned out to be, 15lbs.

9th August, Charlotte Martin (aged 12) caught a 5lb grilse in Eleanors on a ¾" yellow tube.

14th August, Camilla Clarkson caught an 8lb salmon in the Ladies pool on a hitched Hazel.

17th August, Clare Reid Scott caught a 6½lb grilse in the Aquarium on a hitched Stoats Tail.

21st August, Dendy Barker caught a lovely 15lb hen salmon in Field on a Maxi Fiddler. She showed great restraint and released her to spawn.

21st August, Hugo Dalton caught a 6lb grilse in Meadow on "A Black Thing".

22nd August, Susan Stirling caught hers in Eleanors on a Maxi Fiddler weighing 6lbs.

28th August, Jonathan Muir (aged 12) caught a 14lb hen salmon in Meadow; this salmon was tagged with no 48 and released.

29th August, Adelaide Greenwood enticed a 6lb grilse out of Broad on a fly she had tied herself, a small hitched orange tube, called a Spad Special.

16th September, Anne Moore in Middle took out a 6lb cock grilse.

27th September, Grace Everett in Mill on a Sunray Shadow, a 4lb hen grilse, tagged and returned no 67. She went on to catch

two more that day, all tagged and returned. Her poor long suffering husband Tim, manfully tried to be delighted for her every time she announced another capture, unfortunately he was not as successful, loosing two fish in the week.

Catch and Release.

Firstly can I say a huge thank you to all those of you who managed to release fish this season. The magnificent total of the Upper

Shin's returns came to 147 fish, or 54% well done. Of this total, 42 fish are swimming around with Shin tags in them. I hope very

much that when the netting takes place in November we shall see some of them again. If we do find any of the tagged fish, then I

will inform the fishermen who caught them.

Some of you may be aware that Robert Douglas Miller and I have finally decided that the salmon holding facilities on the bottom loch were totally inadequate. So reaching deeply into our pockets we have purpose built a new facility on the Grudie Burn. This will be used to hold the brood fish until they are ready to be stripped in Nov/Dec. It will also give us the possibility to start a spring enhancement program in the future.

Trebles Vs barb less Hooks Etc.

I noticed some comments in the fishing books where people had trouble extracting trebles. I wasn't on the spot for any of these mishaps, so I cannot really comment. However I fished for two weeks with a single hook and tube, and ended up with 9 fish and released every one with no trouble at all. Some of them were released whilst still in the water, as it was possible to extract the single hook with relative ease. Therefore, I would urge all those people who still have a sense of adventure, to throw away all those trebles, or if you cannot bear to see them go just snip off two of the barbs. Better still try the Carp/ crab hooks (available from most coarse fishing shops) which have a kink in the shaft. I found that size 4 was about perfect. After all, my Grandparents fished with nothing but single hooks.

Stripping.

Strangely we did not net a single tagged fish this year. Perhaps all the fish we tagged went on up to the headwaters. I have asked



David to walk down the Tirry to see if he can find any dead fish that have spawned naturally. The Grudie smolt trap produced 4768 smolts, approx 4000 were fin clipped before being released into the river. In November 154 hen fish were netted (two thirds large multi sea winter fish) and 90 cocks (two thirds large multi sea winter fish). There were no tagged fish captured, but there were 15 fin clipped fish netted in Meadow, of these 10 were large multi sea

winter fish. 153 hens were stripped producing 735,000 ova to the hatchery.

The overall average was 4804 ova per fish including grilse; the average excluding grilse was 5400. Up until the 27 October 259 fish were recorded through the diversion dam fish pass, the majority between the end of July to the end of September (no figures yet for the main dam). All these figures were given to me

The new tanks in action Dec 2000

by Charles Menzies the headwater bailiff for the Kyle

Rivers. He is very sadly

moving on to take up the position of head administrator at Uppingham School. I would like to thank him for all his tireless work and

enthusiasm for the conservation of the salmon, especially in the Shin.

The River.

The banks have been so well tended by David and Jamie that we must congratulate them for getting them to such a high standard as to almost allow wheelchair access! This was much appreciated by Robin Finch-Hatton who is making extremely good progress after his stroke.

I have for the first time produced a pool [analysis](#). Why was Beech so poor (perhaps people don't fish it as they are hurrying to Frying Pan)?

Contrary to our despairing thoughts about the state of Grudie after the big flood last winter, it continued to hold fish, and when we visited

the pool during December there were a lot of fish spawning in the gravel below the main pool.

One or two things that happened this year seem to stick in the mind. Over lunch in the Lodge a very well known and famous fisherman

regaled us with a story rather against himself. He had caught a fish, and having been given one of the new tagging guns that morning he

decided to tag it. All went well until he suddenly realized that he had been told to report the tag number. He looked at the tag in the fishes

back and to his horror he saw he had to remember an 11-digit number 01549402336. So he started to repeat it over and over again whilst

searching for something to write it down with. He then realized that the numbers were probably sequential so to check he looked at the

remaining tags in the gun, only to discover he had been trying to remember David's telephone number!

Another incident happened when David had a young boy on work experience helping out on the river. He was ghilling for one of the lodge

guests on Frying Pan. When he took one step too far and disappeared over his head into the water. The guest managed to haul him onto

dry land, and after recovering from the shock, he seemed much more concerned about the state of his mobile phone than the fact he was

a non-swimmer!

Congratulations to Sue Yandle and Mark Simpson, who have announced their engagement, and are getting married in February.

I have to report on a sad note that George Raikes died towards the end of last season. George was the main reason my Mother bought

the Lairg Estate, and all of us who are lucky enough to fish the Shin owe him a great debt of gratitude. We shall be erecting a bench by

Lady Herbert in his memory.

STOP PRESS

The latest news on the stripping and spawning is that it went very well indeed. The new tanks up on the Grudie performed above

expectations and all the fish bar one survived to be stripped. The overall size of the salmon netted was well up on last year, and

consequently the number of eggs per fish increased.

On the accommodation front, we are currently renovating the cottage on the drive to the Lodge called Reid's cottage.

This will sleep 4 and should be ready in time for the 2001 season.

Tight lines and have a Happy New Year.



James Greenwood.

