

UPPER SHIN NEWS



Fish had been seen and lost throughout the first two weeks of June, but none were landed. The first fish, for once was not caught by John Geddis, but by Peter Tyser, on the 20th June. A lovely fresh fish of 11lbs in Eleanors on a Sunray Shadow at 10:15am. Fifteen minutes later he had another, a hen of 15lbs which he returned. Three more fish were caught on the 20th and then two on the 21st, then another on the 22nd.

The prize for the top rod of the season goes to Ian Muir with 17 fish to his name, 12 returned. He caught 3 in July, 6 in August and 8 in September, the biggest, an 18lb+ salmon in Meadow on a 1" silver stoat. Ian Muir was twice by fish taken from Grudie all the way to Meadow. His son Jonathon Muir had a fish run up the Grudie twice whilst playing it. Jonathon was also the first person to catch a fish in the newly renamed Cinda's pool.



Above L to R. Ian, jonathan, Shona & James Muir.

An early surprise happened when Harry McNeil was clearing the alder trees at Pandora's box. It was a very hot day and Harry happened to have his trout rod with him so decided to have a flick down during his lunch break. He was fishing with a small dry fly when suddenly a fish took it, and the moment he tightened the salmon leaped out of the water and shot of down the pool straight into Miltons. Poor Harry could only stand there and watch his line fly off the reel. The fish ultimately broke the very light leader.

I was staying at Reid's Cottage during that week, and a couple of days later I was fishing for trout in Eleanors, when a fish attacked the wet fly I was using so hard it nearly took the small 6'6" rod out of my hand. The fish, had taken when the fly was on the dangle tight in to the bank

by the classic salmon taking place. It shot across the pool creating a huge bow wave, I immediately thought I had a salmon on and shouted to Annie for help. After a few moments it soon became clear that it was only a trout, but how big we still had no idea. After a very good fight we managed to land it without a net. It was a great fish at 3.5lb, this must be one of the biggest trout landed on the river.



I would thoroughly recommend the trout fishing from April to June. The fishing is free when you book Reid's or Twinners, and you can fish for trout on Sunday.

The 2005 season was consistently steady throughout, the compensation water helping when the other Kyle rivers were struggling with the severe drought.

The Grilse were not seen in great numbers and reports from the rods all showed the same theme – they were small. They either went out late and came back early, thus not having long enough on the feeding grounds, or which is a matter for concern, there were slim pickings for them once they made it out to their usual feeding areas.

The river compensated by showing larger numbers of bigger fish than in the last few years. There were great tales of gargantuan battles and fish being lost after 45 minutes etc, leaving pools and taking poor unsuspecting anglers on rides of

their lives storming through pools to later break the line - Oh, the agony of that feeling when the fly pings back in your face, or you are left on weed or the leader simply snaps.

The banks have been smartened up to such a high standard now by Alick and Harry. We are particularly grateful to them for their sterling work on Cliff and Pandora's box.

The new walkways and boulder paths springing up where once only the very light or agile dared to tread!



I don't suppose many of you came across Martin, who was also responsible for a large part of the strimming that went on. Lairg Estate welcomed it's first Polish students this year, in the form of Martin and Agnes – they were a great success and everyone who met them commented on what a lovely couple they were – we are very grateful to them for all their help and hard work and we hope that they will return again next season.



Above, Martin & Agnes.

It is good to see Hamish McNab from Twinners with his second new hip. I was fishing in Suspension very early one morning when a man came walking down from the Wood Pool, it was about 6.15am! He wished me Good Morning and I realised it was Hamish out doing his exercises and making his leg stronger after his hip replacement. I am sure his surgeon would have been proud and thrilled to see him doing so well. As always the Twinners garden looks immaculate and we have received lots of positive noises about the new kitchen. We stayed there ourselves in September this year and have vowed to do something about the rather too firm beds!!! There will be other minor improvements such as heated towel rails and more hooks on doors to hang things on.


I expect you wondered what the UFO on the front of the fishing book was this year. It is a mobile smolt trap from America and is part of an ongoing 3 year project to research into what happens to the Tirry smolts when they migrate through Loch Shin on their way out to sea. The project traps them in the Tirry, then they are micro-chipped, like your dogs, and then released on their way. If they make it through the dam they are tracked by a bar code reader and this will indicate how many smolts make it past the dams. The worry is that the current in the Loch is now not strong enough for them to follow and that they get lost and swim past the outflow pipe. Then they run out of steam and possibly get eaten by the large ferrox trout that live in Loch Shin. This project is being funded by the Shin proprietors and the Hydro Board and comes under the auspices of the newly form Kyle of Sutherland District Fisheries Board Trust. This has been set up to fund research projects into migratory fish and their impact on the local economy and other wild life. The Trust is mainly educational and it will fund and tackle many other environmental issues which are deemed to be politically correct in the eyes of the Scottish Executive. We hope that it will be self funding from anglers, business and charitable foundations and ensure that vital research continues to be performed without having to rely on funding from the existing District Fishery Boards. This should free them up to carry on making sure that the rivers are managed in the best possible way for the whole economy of the region.

The seasons total was a just above the 10 year average at 278. Please try to mark down the sex of each fish caught, especially those that are killed. The % of fish returned was slightly down on last year, although this is a move in the wrong direction the total is still a commendable effort by you all.

	Returned	Killed	Total
Cock Salmon	40	15	55
Hen Salmon	23	4	27
Cock Grilse	59	35	94
Hen Grilse	53	15	68
Unknown Sex	23	13	36
Total	193	82	278

There were, as usual quite a lot of first fish. This years lucky anglers were; Freddie Preston, William Sheridan, Jerry Wharton, Arthur Crutchley, Mary Bell, Anthony Trace, Glen Wilkinson, Will Grace, Edward Collins, and Melissa Clarkson. (later she caught and returned a fish estimated to be over 20lbs).

Tight lines for 2006, and have a very Happy Christmas and New Year.



Upper Shin 2005 Totals.							
Pools	Lodge Book	Returned	Twinners Book	Returned	Total Caught	Total Returned	Total Killed
Dam		4			4	4	
Wall		2			2	2	
Ladies	2	5	1	2	10	7	3
Aquarium		2			2	2	
Phill's		2			2	2	
Wood				1	1	1	
Suspension		1			1	1	
Station	1			1	2	1	1
Middle	1	9	3	2	15	11	4
Mill	2	9	2	3	16	12	4
Ruin		3			3	3	
Cottage 1	1	4	1	2	8	6	2
Cottage 2	1	2		2	5	4	1
Cottage 3	2	1		4	7	5	2
Cottage 4	2	8	1	7	18	15	3
Pandoras Box	1	2	2		5	2	3
Miltons	2	9		5	15	13	2
Clif		1	1	1	3	2	1
Upper Eleanors	1	7	4	5	17	12	5
Eleanors	2	17	3	5	27	22	5
Grudie	3	7	2	10	22	17	5
Meadow	7	10	5	9	31	19	12
Fir	1	2	3	1	7	3	4
Field		1	2	5	8	6	2
Cinda's				1	1	1	
Lady Herbert	2	6	1	4	13	10	3
Gate							
Beech			1	1	2	1	1
Frying Pan	5	3	3	2	13	5	8
Rocky	3			4	7	4	3
Broad	3	5	2	1	10	6	4
Grief		1			1	1	
Totals	41	123	37	77	278	200	78
% Returned/Killed	25%	76%	35.5%	74%		71.9%	28%