

# DEVON ANGLING REVIEW

The Newsletter of the Devon Angling Association

## Hon. Secretary comments - The Devon Year 2018

For many years the River Devon has been stocked with brown trout most years before and since the formation of the DAA in 1905. Over the years fish for stocking have come from various river catchments and due to interbreeding, trout in the Devon no longer have a unique genetic fingerprint. It is well known that trout introduced from fish farms do not generally breed particularly well in a new environment in competition with the "native" fish. Rules are now being applied by Marine Scotland arising from new legislation. These rules require that any brown trout introduced into Scottish rivers have to be sterile (triploid rather than diploid) except where a fishery has its own hatchery, rearing indigenous fish. It is the opinion of the Wild Trout Trust and the DAA committee that these 'sterile fish' do not spawn and will continue to feed more or less all year, probably taking considerable toll on juvenile trout and salmon along with eggs.

Due to the demise of the Howietoun Fishery no stocking took place on the Devon in 2018. However there is evidence of larger numbers of juvenile trout and salmon in the river during the 2018 season, is this a result of not stocking the larger sterile fish? It will take time to properly gauge the impact of the new stocking rules so the Committee has decided not to carry out stocking in the 2019 season and will review this strategy at the end of 2019. Currently the DAA remains committed to a Wild Trout Policy and hopes that members will understand that the Committee is acting responsibly in the light of the new legislation.



## Glenquey Reservoir 2018 season:

The average weight of trout at above half a pound was good considering the number of small fish caught that are included in the total catch number. It should also be noted that given the very hot weather occurring during the summer months angler numbers were well down, but this was counter-acted by an increase in anglers during September / October. Summary statistics for 2018 are as recorded below:

Number of angler visits during 2018 season **316**  
 Number of fish caught during 2018 season **1209**  
 Average weight per fish caught (oz.) **8.76**

The Reservoir remains an important and very popular part of the DAA's Fishery.

## River Devon Fishing 2018 season:

There has been considerable evidence of larger numbers of juvenile trout and salmon in the river during the 2018 season. Whether or not this is related to the absence of stocking with triploid fish is a matter of conjecture at this time. Fishing conditions had been poor during the prolonged summer drought and the absence of any significant amounts of compensation water from the Castlehill Reservoir. Conditions did however improve towards the backend of the season with positive comments being received from anglers over September and October. Permit numbers for the river for 2018 were as below and are generally down on 2017:

Trout (adult season) **328** Trout (daily) **29**  
 Salmon (Season) **32** Salmon (daily) **4**  
 Junior (season) **38**

## Monitoring fish population upstream in Dollar Burn

From a newspaper article by DAA Committee member Keith Broomfield:

Fishery biologists from the Forth Rivers Trust carried out annual electro-fishing of the Dollar Burn. The DAA along with the Trust monitor fish population changes and related problems in the Dollar Burn and other locations in the river and other burns within the Devon catchment. The Trust was especially keen to electro-fish in this part of the Dollar Burn upstream of the new fish pass that had been installed there a few years ago by the Ochils Landscape Partnership to encourage salmon to spawn in the higher reaches. The Forth Rivers Trust had then renovated and improved the existing fish ladder on the weir at Rackmill.

Electro-fishing is a technique that temporarily stuns the fish in a small area of the water, enabling them to be removed, examined, measured and recorded before being returned unharmed to the water. The activity verified that a good number of juvenile trout are present and an increase in the number of salmon parr from previous sampling was recorded.



Forth Rivers Trust Biologists electro-fishing on the burn  
(Photos by Keith Broomfield)



Showing difference between juvenile trout and salmon parr (the lower of the two images)

## DAA Management Policy and Management Action Plan has been updated. Our policy is summarized as follows

'We will seek to manage our fishery co-operatively, sensitively and sustainably in compliance with the regulatory framework. (continued)

By virtue of lease arrangements the Association is custodian of the fisheries of the River Devon. We will ensure that we discharge our responsibility for the conservation and improvement and care of the river for now and the future.

We will care for and support all initiatives to sustain and improve biodiversity across the catchment by improving both habitats and access for migratory species. In managing to optimize salmonid numbers we will pay regard to both angler and ecological pressures.

We will aim to increase the knowledge and skills of our Committee Members and Volunteers.

We will carry out work as may be required in the river and on the riverbank safely, paying due regard to the assessment and reduction of risk, for legal compliance and the safety of anglers, the public in general and the interests of land owners their livestock and property'



DAA weekly working party is ready for action every Wednesday

Initial projects from the 3 year Management Action Plan will be commencing during 2019.

## Non-native invasive plants – Giant Hogweed:

Giant hogweed is a close relative of cow parsley, the flowers are white and held in umbels, (flat-topped clusters, like those of carrots or cow parsley), with all the flowers in the umbel facing upwards. The heads can be as large as 60cm (2ft) across. Giant Hogweed is subject of specific environmental legislation which landowners must comply with. It can reach a height of 3.5m (11.5ft), is very invasive and the sap can cause severe skin burns. Its first presence in Clackmannanshire was reported in 2018. If when out along the river during the year you see it, please report its location to the Hon. Secretary ASAP. **Do not touch or handle it!**

**Devon Angling Association Website**  
[www.devonanglingassociation.org.uk](http://www.devonanglingassociation.org.uk)