



The River Don Trust

Newsletter 3 April 2011

The River Don Trust is a charitable organisation established: To advance for public benefit environmental protection and improvement by conserving and enhancing the natural biodiversity associated with the freshwater environments of the River.

Bio-Security Plan actions underway

After several months of consultation the Trust is pleased to announce the completion of the River Don's biosecurity plan. A number of its elements are already underway with Sarah Atkinson, one of the Scottish Mink Initiative officer's is now based at our Cluny offices work has begun on the River Don. We are also very pleased to announce we have been successful in securing funding from SEPA's River Restoration fund, along with several other Trust's in partnership with the Cairngorm National Park. This will allow us to start tackling our invasive plant species problem in a top down approach. We are looking for volunteers to assist with control please contact the biologist if you are interested.

Scale sampling

Two successful scale sampling workshop evenings have been held with enthusiastic anglers from the Don. The workshop illustrates how to collect scales from fish with the minimum of distress and informs the participants of the information that has been collected and how it informs management practices on the catchment. The evening was hosted by the Trust biologist. A video of the process will be available on line soon.

Putting the River into the Picture

Over the last few months Bernard Martin has been taking a photographic record of salmon eggs hatching in a specially built aquarium at our Cluny offices with a view to a film being made to be part of the Trust's Salmon in the Classroom project. Having seen some screen grabs the images are of superb quality and well worth waiting for, watch this space!

The Trust is also engaged in negotiating the potential siting of real time cameras at strategic points on the river so visitors and anglers alike can see water heights etc. It is hoped these will be installed later in the year.



**Is this the River Don's biggest salmon ever?
54 Lbs caught in 1939 in the lower Don by Mr. W Hendry**

Angling Report

The Don has been continuing fishing very well with salmon numbers well up on last season. Grandhome, the ADAA and the Inverurie Council waters in particular are fishing very well. It is great to hear that the majority of the salmon to date have been caught on the fly, and have been returned, in line with the conservation code.

The Brown Trout fishing has been underway for the past month now and what a great start to the season. Several fish in the 6-8lb mark were caught and released within the first week with good numbers of fish in the 3-5lb mark have been reported regularly. Visiting anglers have been enjoying the good sport and conditions with steady hatches of March Browns and Olives have been witnessed across the catchment. Tight lines DG

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iaian@riverdon.org.uk**



Fishery Board Stocking Report 2011

The DDSFB have completed the planting out of this year's of approximately 311,000 salmon eggs and 36,000 sea trout eggs. Recommendations by the River Don Trust were followed in the stocking procedure. Areas were identified by means of electro fishing during 2010, which showed the areas void of salmon and therefore ideal for restocking.

A report on the process has been prepared by the DDSFB and will be published shortly. The Trust has also released its report on the recommended stocking locations both are available at www.riverdon.org.uk

The Trust has also enlisted Bernard Martin's help to film the process of artificial redd planting. A short film on this is to be available later this year.

Goval Burn Obstacle Removal

The Trust has been involved in discussions with the owners of an obstacle which impedes the progress of migratory fish beyond the obstacle for some time along with SEPA and the local Council's planning officers. We are pleased to advise that planning permission for the obstacle has now been applied for and funding for its removal is being provided by SEPA.

The removal of the obstacle will allow approx 20km of suitable habitat to be accessed by all types of migratory fish improving a often overlooked area of the lower catchment. The site also has also been earmarked for a micro hydro scheme. The Trust is working closely with the developers to ensure that the best outcome for all is reached and that the micro hydro scheme will not adversely impact the flora and fauna associated with the site.

More to follow.

Action Plan Preparation

Trust and Board staff has just completed the preparation of a joint action plan to implement and monitor the requirements of the River Don Fishery Management Plan for this year.

Overseeing the action plan is the JMG (Joint Management Group) comprising members of the DDSFB and Trust Boards.

Salmon in the Classroom

All five Aberdeenshire Schools are progressing well with the salmon now at the fry stage. The schools are feeding the fry now until they are ready to be returned to the river in the next month. The programme delivers great benefits focused on the River each year. This year we have expanded the programme to include a litter pick at each release site illustrating man's impacts upon the environment and how this impacts upon freshwater fish such as salmon and trout.

The project is always looking for support and should you individually or your company wish to support the project please visit this link or contact the biologist for more details. www.riverdon.org.uk



Salmon fry in one of this year's Classroom hatcheries.

Please help us fund these initiatives

Visit the website to donate or contact the Trust directly on the details below to discuss.