

## Association News Edition 9 August 2021

### **1. The New Website**

A small team of “website-knowledgeable” members of the ADAA Management Committee, comprising Association Secretary/ Treasurer Paul Toseland, Committee member Matt Hart and Vice President Kenny Riddell, has been heavily involved with the designers in the preparation of our new image to the world. The work on that initiative is now well advanced, and the website will be launched in the near future. An update from Paul follows here:

#### **ADAA NEW WEBSITE!**

As previously notified, following feedback from members in a website survey carried out in 2020, the Association has invested in the development of a brand-new website.

Since late 2020 a small number of Management Committee members were tasked with working with the preferred supplier (MTC: Web Design Scotland from mtc, Professional Web Designers in Edinburgh, Dundee & Aberdeen ) to develop the site.

It is now ready to go live (or may already be so dependent on when this newsletter is distributed) and I am sure that members and prospective members alike will find the site much more modern looking and far easier to navigate no matter what device is being used to access it.

The proposed “go live” date is 11 August 2021.

The address remains as [www.adaa.org.uk](http://www.adaa.org.uk)

If anyone spots any links missing or wishes to just provide feedback and comments about the new site, please contact Matt Hart at [matth@adaasales.co.uk](mailto:matth@adaasales.co.uk) or me at [secretary@adaasales.co.uk](mailto:secretary@adaasales.co.uk)

Paul Toseland, Secretary/ Treasurer

### **2. The season since May**

#### **Salmon**

It did not take long for our watercourses to drop well back to levels not overly conducive to running salmon, especially when the heatwave so beloved of non-anglers took hold. Despite that, occasional fish were accounted for over the period, from Nether Don just above the tide right up to our topmost beat at Kemnay.

A welcome late July deluge, resulting in the gauge at Alford registering 3.5 ft above summer level at its peak, brought a welcome freshness to both Don and Dee and encouraged a run of grilse and small summer salmon in from the sea. Typically, these tend to be fast runners and luck, of course, plays its part in being in the right place at the right time.

An example of that is member Bill Wright’s 12 pounder from just adjacent to the burn mouth on the Goval Pool on Upper Parkhill on fly fished off a full floater this first week in August.

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Just because fish are not showing does not mean they are not there. I recently had such an illustration of that myself during a late evening session after sea trout on Lower Parkhill when I hooked, on a size 12 double, a bonny silver fish of about 8 lbs at the tail of the Mausoleum Pool. On light trout tackle it took some time to land, but, with some careful support, was safely returned.

August, September, and October are the months when we expect sport to pick up and we can now look forward with anticipation to the rest of the season.



## Sea Trout

These sporting fish can normally be relied on to run our rivers whatever the water levels are, and that has proved to be the case again this season. While our Dee beats have suffered somewhat as the sea trout have passed through quickly, numbers recorded from our Don beats are up on last year, the fly again being the most successful method, with almost all fish returned safely.

Again, to cite personal experience. I landed, over 3 evening sessions in mid July, 3 fresh sea trout, all in the 2-3 lb bracket on fly. I also lost a few more which did not stay attached. Sport indeed!

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A few sea trout have also been landed from the Ythan, particularly on the tidal Machar Pool, while not forgetting the aforementioned 5 pounder from Schivas. Again, the Ythan's peak months are ahead of us.

## **Brown trout**

In the eyes of some, our resident brownies are the jewels in the crown of our fishings portfolio, and it is hard to argue against that assessment, particularly regarding our River Don fishings. The season to date has again afforded us excellent sport to dry fly, wet fly and nymphing with several notable specimens among the returns.

August can be a difficult month as trout become sated after months of good feeding, but for those prepared to fish late into the evening or early in the morning, well fed brownies will repay the effort.



## **The Stillwaters**

### **Loch of Loirston:**

From Kenny Riddell, Vice President and Loch Convener:

Loirston Loch

Our volunteers got stuck in early this season with grass cutting, repairing benches, and keeping things tidy, a big thank you from me for all the hard work and commitment.

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Nicky, Lewis, and I put all the straw bales in place to help combat the algae. Nicky went on to cut the grass all round the loch to give our anglers easy access to the fishing.

The weed control contractor arrived as planned at Loirston Loch on Monday 5<sup>th</sup> July, but this time with 2 boats and two experienced operators.

Both boats were in the water just before 9am and cutting began very shortly after 9.30am.

Within 30 minutes we could see the weed cutting process was working as planned, with one boat cutting the weed and the other boat collecting the cut weed and depositing the cutting on the loch bank.

At the end of day one, you could hardly believe your eyes, the impact the contractor had made was unbelievable. Days 2 & 3 were much the same with all the popular fish areas now completely fishable, but will little patches of weed here and there, just to give the fish some cover.

At the moment, we are very pleased with the outcome and dates are already in the diary for the same effort in the season 2022

July 13<sup>th</sup>, 2021, the loch had a further stocking of Westmill Trout, but this time we mixed things up a little, with Brown Trout & Rainbow trout. The committee hope to see further improvements at Loirston Loch this season.

Tight Lines, Kenny Riddell



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## Millpond:

The venue has been fishing steadily, although the extended dry spell has not helped. There is some silting as a result and convener Stewart Horne has been active in pursuing ways to remedy that problem.

As a result of Stewart's endeavours there will be improvements undertaken in the near future and members will be kept informed of progress on the situation.

## **3. General**

### **Beat maintenance**

We are now well into the period of maximum bankside growth and Nicky, assisted by Lewis and other volunteers has been doing a sterling job keeping our beats accessible and fishable, and that includes our recent "re-acquisition", Lower Parkhill (North/Left) Bank. As I write this near the end of July, there is evidence of further impetus to growth following a recent few days of heavy rain. The importance of our volunteer members' assistance in keeping on top of this ongoing situation cannot be overstressed. Their contribution is valued and vital. If you can help, please contact Secretary Paul Toseland at [secretary@adaasales.co.uk](mailto:secretary@adaasales.co.uk) to register your interest.



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## **New Beat Acquisitions**

**Lower Parkhill (North/Left) Bank** was a popular venue for some of our members when we leased it a few years ago and is certain to prove it's worth once again as the season progresses.

While the general lack of rain over the last month or so has not been ideal for the **Schivas** beat on the Ythan, a 5lb seatrout has already been landed, and the quality of the fishing there will become ever more evident over the rest of the season.

To add to our Don fishings Acting President Paul Adderton has negotiated a lease period on **Lower Stoneywood**, a South/Right bank beat just above the Persley road bridge. This stretch will require some maintenance work before it is accessible to us.

Further details on Lower Parkhill (North/Left bank) and initial details on Lower Stoneywood are included here:

### **New beats for 2021:**

Management Committee members are delighted to announce that the Association has secured some additional fishing on the River Don for this season and hopefully future ones for members.

River Don, Lower Parkhill, North Bank.

These fishings were once enjoyed by our members a few years back and it was very popular with both Salmon & trout anglers alike. The beat was very productive back then and it is hoped that it can be again.

Details and rules are as they were before: North bank from Parkhill Road Bridge downstream to the marker post. Access from Parkhill Road Bridge only to north bank fishings. Strictly no dogs allowed. No Sunday fishing. No worming at any time. Trout fishing by fly only.

A map of the beat has been posted on the Associations Website (the map also has ADAA Lower Parkhill South bank Fishings shown on it):

<https://www.adaa.org.uk/river-don-2-of-2>

River Don, Lower Stoneywood, South Bank.

South bank from pipe that crosses river above Persley Bridge downstream to start of Cruives beat. Access from Persley Walled Garden Car Park.

A map of the beat will be posted on the Association's Website once available.

### **The "Buddies" Group**

New members in particular are reminded of our Buddies group, experienced anglers who are available to give help with and advice on any aspect of membership. To contact them just send them an email at [buddies@adaasales.co.uk](mailto:buddies@adaasales.co.uk)

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## The Competition Scene

From Kenny Riddell:

### Scottish National Fly Fishing League (SNFFL)

The Aberdeen & District Angling Association will again host two heats of the qualifying rounds of the SNFFL 2021 League, the 1<sup>st</sup> division event will take place on the Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> August & the Premier League event will take place on the Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> September, both events will run from 10am through until 17.00. Both events will take place on Upper Parkhill, Lower Parkhill & Upper Stoneywood. These waters will be closed to ADAA member from 12 midnight on both Saturdays prior to the event and will be available again to ADAA members from 17.00 immediately after the events.

This would be a great opportunity to see some of the most talented anglers in Scotland, some of whom have represented Scotland at World & European level.

This is an opportunity to get up and close, if you are interested in becoming a controller for the day and is a great chance to see these anglers put their skills to the test.

If you are interested, please send your contact details to me at [donwader@btinternet.com](mailto:donwader@btinternet.com)

The Scottish Anglers National Association (SANA) is recognised by Sportscotland and by FIPS-Mouche (the World body for competitive fly fishing) as the national governing body for Game Angling in Scotland. Anglers wishing to represent Scotland in the World, European and Masters (over 50's) Championship events can compete for places in these teams by becoming members of the Scottish National Fly Fishing League (SNFFL). The SNFFL is a series of events organised by the SANA Competitions Committee which applies fishing rules and arranges venues to reflect, as far as practicable, those adopted for these annual top-level events as staged by FIPS Mouche.

SNFFL also serves to qualify team members for the Five Nations Fly Fishing Championships (see appropriate section below for details of this competition).

The SNFFL currently comprises a Premier League and First Division each accommodating 18 anglers. The two leagues each fish two three-hour sessions at five specified venues in each year. Participants are ranked using a place point system, the lowest scores being gained by the top-performing anglers.

As FIPS-Mouche competition is strictly 'catch and release', for River events League members must be accompanied by another adult (normally an angler) who acts as 'controller' for another competitor. The controller measures, releases and records the other competitor's fish and monitors compliance with the rules. Controllers are not normally required to wade, but suitable footwear and waterproof attire are recommended. (Stillwater events are organised to allow members effectively to control for each other.)

Placements in the leagues are allocated annually by the Competitions Committee. In the event that the number of applicants exceeds the available places, a chronological Waiting List will be maintained.

## Policing our Waters

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The perennial problem of poaching needs constant surveillance, and a recent initiative by the Dee Board to purchase a drone to assist in this endeavour is to be applauded. Our beat of the River Feugh has been earmarked as a suitable location and has been chosen as one of the first to be monitored in this way.

As members, of course, it is in our interests to keep an eye out for any sign of poaching and, while members should never put themselves in any danger at all, we have the right to ask to see fishers' permits and we also have, in our members' booklets, the bailiffs' contact numbers should that be necessary.

## **The Association's Exchange Permit Scheme**

The ADAA's exchange permit scheme with the Loch Achonachie and Beaully Angling clubs gives us access to quality game fishing further North.

While the distance involved makes a day trip quite an undertaking, a planned few days away can be rewarding. My son Stuart and I had a trip to the Loch Achonachie Club waters a few years ago, spending a couple of nights in reasonably priced hotel accommodation. Availing ourselves of the excellent and inexpensive boats and outboards hire we had good sport with rainbow trout in the reservoir and classic wild brown trout angling in the loch further up the glen. I can recommend it for a different angling experience for we "lowland" fishers!

Photographs of 2 of the Loch Achonachie club's waters:





Inverness Angling Club's beat of the River Ness, also available to us through the scheme, is also well worth a visit. I was up there a few weeks ago, and, although not fishing, could not, in typical angler's fashion, resist a walk along the banks. There had been a few days' heavy rain and the river, fining down after the rise, was being well fished. In the short while I was there several fish showed, appearing to be very fresh grilse making their way up the tidal pools. The beat is extensive, with very inviting looking runs and pools and is not in any way overfished.

## **Salmon Farming**

As the ADAA's representative on the SANA Migratory Fish Committee, I am kept updated with general developments affecting our salmon and sea trout, and one encouraging recent communication regarding salmon farming is that at last there is some acknowledgement from the Scottish Government that "closed containment" methods may need to be investigated. This follows adverse press reporting about bad practice in salmon farming. This, of course, is a political "hot potato" for our Holyrood rulers, so, while I don't think we can expect much urgency in that respect, at least they know the angling and environmental worlds are watching.

While rivers on the east coast may not have suffered the same devastating consequences as have west coast river systems, anything which adversely affects our salmon and sea trout population needs to be monitored.

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## **Invasive Species**

“Invasives” such as Giant Hogweed (GH), Himalayan Balsam (HB) and Japanese Knotweed (JK) continue to be a problem in some places along our watercourses. The Dee and Don boards are actively tackling this, but they do need assistance from us, and our beat conveners are invaluable in both monitoring the banks and informing the boards when outbreaks are detected. Once again, assistance from members in dealing with this menace is always welcome. As with general beat maintenance if you can help, please contact Secretary Paul Toseland, at [secretary@adaasales.co.uk](mailto:secretary@adaasales.co.uk)

On the subject of GH, I had occasion recently to be out in Inch, and on the way back to Dyce along the A96, which follows quite closely the course of the Urie in the Pitcaple area, the extent of the problem was most concerning. The riverbank in most places there shows an almost “Day of the Triffids” aspect (for those familiar with that tale!), especially when one considers that the seeds from those myriad plants will be carried downstream towards our beats.

On a broader note, I used to regularly fish the Urie there, with great success, and the banks were never like they are now. Modern farming practices have almost certainly contributed to the current density of bankside vegetation, but the prevalence of GH is undoubtedly the worst feature.

## **Pink Salmon**

A few of these have been landed on our waters on both the Don and the Dee, and guidance on identification and what to do should anyone land one is appended here:

If you catch any, please dispatch and report to us asap or call the river bailiffs 01467 642121 so we can arrange to take samples. Distinctive features include small scales which easily rub off, spotty tail fin and black tongue.

Further guidance, app and topic sheet are available at the link below:

<http://fms.scot/pink-salmon-in-scotland/>

## **Fly Tipping**

There has been a recent instance of rubbish dumped at the car parking layby at the Parkhill Road bridge. This has been reported to Aberdeen City Council and removal of the offending items is scheduled very soon.

Any members encountering similar instances can either let the relevant beat convener know or contact the council by telephone or via the fly tipping connection on the council website.

## **Salmon Fishery Boards**

I often hear many of the members asking what do we pay Salmon Fishery Board assessments for, and quite rightly so? After all the Association, for the last financial year for example paid in excess of £70,000 between the Rivers Dee, Don and Ythan in river assessments and that figure takes into account a COVID 19 reduction as compensation for lost income.

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The Association is fortunate that it has representatives on two of these Salmon Fishery Boards, the River Don Board, and the River Ythan Board. I together with John Stephen sit on the Don Board and I along with Alec Pattison on the Ythan Board. Whilst we have no direct representation on the River Dee Board, I regularly have meetings with Lawrence Ross, the Chairman of the River Dee Board.

At these Board meetings, board members representing proprietors of beats discuss issues effecting the welfare of both the salmon and of course salmon fishing. These would include such issues as poaching, pollution, habitat restoration, fish research to name just a few. A major issue that is being discussed by the River Don Board presently, are NNIS and in particular the proliferation of Giant Hogweed and measures being taken to control its further spread along the river system. This plant is a danger to humans when the sap which is a toxic substance and can cause painful irritation when it comes in contact with Skin. It's pleasing to report that a few of our members have volunteered alongside River Board Staff in spraying this invasive plant and not only on our Don beats, but also on our Dee beats too. There is now a considerable infestation of this modern "Triffid" looking plant reaching up to two meters high that can be seen along the River Urie system. The Board has taken the initiative to approach the wider Donside community in tackling this problem. Another issue of concern on the River Don is poaching. On our Facebook page members were advised that there have been reports of a number of poaching incidences on the River Don and particularly at and around the Lower Parkhill area. The Board are fully aware of this and have now deployed river bailiffs to patrol this area and other areas of the river on the lookout for illegal activity. This policing of the river takes place even during the hours of darkness. Should members see what they consider as suspicious activity when fishing, to contact the bailiffs and advise them accordingly.

Recently I with Alastair Hume MBE, Honorary President, had a meeting with the Chairman of the River Dee Board along with Lorraine Hawkins, the River Director to discuss a number of issues that concerned the Association and in particular Goosanders and the continuing presence of seals in the lower river, with the latter having a serious effect on our catches and the angling experience of members. Many of you will recall the photograph posted on our Facebook page of the seal sunning itself on the riverbank at Banchory Devenick. The obvious effect of this is that all the fish in this lower part of the river would have been pushed further upstream by the presence of this predator making any further fishing effort worthless. So, what then can be done about this, and what is being done? The policy of the Board is to adopt a non-lethal method of control which is understandable not wishing to provoke public opinion. Working closely with the Government organisations, The Seal Mammal Research Unit and Marine Science Unit, both of which recognise the presence of seals in rivers are a nuisance to angling, are engaged with the river board using the river Dee as a trial site in developing a new sonic system to deter seals. Unlike previous devices used which are of the static type constantly sending out an acoustic signal of pings which, sadly the seal becomes accustomed to and then ignores. This new system of deterrent, currently under trial, will only discharge a sonar signal if a seal is detected within the area of the device and hopefully will scare it away. This new system of deterrent has been in operation since the Spring, and it is anticipated that results of this trial will be available shortly.

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The Board equally shares our view on the numbers of Goosanders throughout the river Dee system and that both more should be done to give further protection to young salmon whist in the river system. Fortunately, there is a licence which the Board makes full use of in culling a specific number of these birds each year, though I am sure many of us think this number should be increased. However, before further action is taken regarding these predators, we must await the results and analysis from the stomach contents of these birds, research work which are currently being carried out by the Government.

Our uninvited visitors from the Pacific are once again making their presence known to the river and not just the Dee but other Scottish rivers too. These Pink Salmon, originally introduced to Russian rivers as a potential food source are now seen to be breeding in Scottish waters which recent catches by members show. To some of you catching one of these fish may turn out what would have been a blank day to a successful and pleasant days fishing. However, under the 1981 Wildlife and Countryside Act it is both an offence to fish for and to retain them. Therefore, members are reminded to report their catch to the relevant river authority.

At our meeting with Lawrence Ross and Lorraine Hawkins we discussed the presence of Pink Salmon, and we were pleased to learn that Fisheries Management Scotland, representing Salmon Fishery Boards such as the Dee, are currently involved in actions with Scottish Government departments to remove Pink Salmon under licence. I let the Board know that the Association will be pleased to help the Board with this project.

Regular updates by the Dee and Don River Boards are made available to us and will now be made available to members on our new website enabling all to see what considerable work is undertaken by their staff in managing our salmon fishing.

Paul Adderton, Acting President

## **4. In Conclusion**

As ADAA members we have much to look forward to over the next 3 months, including newly acquired waters to experience, the opportunity to observe top anglers in action on our Don beats and the tantalising prospect offered by the peak salmon months.

Tight lines to everyone!

**John Stephen, Dyce**