

"We are Deveronside" giving a formal insight to the river. Tuesday evening saw anglers, locals and members of the trade meet at the junction pool at Avochie where the Trust put on a BBQ that was enjoyed by around 80 people. William Lawson's did not falter by rewarding everyone with the chance to have a whisky tasting with the legendary Charles Maclean, supplying a bounty of whisky to give a flavour of the river. The Trust's Gala dinner auction at Aswanley was attended by around 120 guests with Sir Michael Wigan as guest speaker. Andrew Dingwall-Fordyce led the charity auction, built from the kind donations of Trust supporters. A substantial amount was raised to help continue the Trust's habitat improvement and other works.

Over just three days, the river delivered more than 12 salmon and 15 sea trout. The beautiful Eden beat was on top form, producing the most fish to rods. The most notable catch of the week was a 12.5 lb fresh salmon from Mamoch Lodge. Here, the picture captures the special moment, in which the atmosphere of the festival week is caught perfectly.

The Trust believes that all involved



were made aware of just what's on offer here on Deveronside; excellent fishing, a variety of affordable accommodation and plenty of attractions of historical

and national interest. Let's hope the participants spread their positive message to help promote our district as a place that can be enjoyed by all.

• **Plans have been set in motion to make the Deveron Fishing Festival an annual event. The Trust hopes to develop the festival to continue to support fishery development. This project is being part-financed by the Scottish Government and the European Community Rural Aberdeenshire Leader 2007-2013 Programme.**

The Trust would like to thank all Beat Proprietors, Angling Trade, Dewars (William Lawson's), Trout and Salmon, Aberdeenshire LEADER, the Scottish Government, Turriff Tackle and Trophies, Dave Burgess Fishing and the many that enjoyed and made the Deveron Fishing Festival 2011 possible.

• **Everyone is invited to the Trust's Open AGM on the 15th December at 7pm, St Ninian's & Forglan Church of Scotland, Turriff (Gladstone Terrace). The short, formal approval of accounts and re-election of auditors/officers, will be followed by the informal open AGM. This gives all involved, the opportunity to express and discuss their views. We look forward to seeing you there.**

Hatchery Update

236,000 salmon and 44,000 sea trout ova were successfully laid down during late 2010. The resulting fry have been stocked back to where the broodfish originated. The upper catchment locations included the Blackwater tributary, Allt Deveron and Davidston Burn (Isla). The lower river target areas included the Auchinbaddie, Miaggie, Auchintoul and Auchinnina.

Mr John Wilkie

All at the Trust would like to pass on their sincere condolences to the family and friends of Mr John Wilkie, a keen angler and member of Turriff Angling Association, whom sadly passed away earlier this year. He will be remembered fondly by all who knew him.

For further information please contact The Senior Biologist at The Offices, Avochie, Rothiemay, Huntly, Aberdeenshire AB54 7YY Telephone/fax: 01466 711388; email: richiemiller@deveron.org or visit the Trust's website www.deveron.org The Deveron, Bogie and Isla Rivers Charitable Trust is a registered charity. No. SC 032131

Visit our updated website
www.deveron.org

- **To spray or not to spray?**
dealing with non-native species **inside**



CELEBRATING
10 years

THE DEVERON FLYER

The Deveron, Bogie and Isla Rivers Charitable Trust

Newsletter 23, autumn 2011

Welcome to the 23rd newsletter of the Deveron, Bogie & Isla Rivers Charitable Trust.

The Trust's objectives are to 'conserve, protect and rehabilitate salmon, sea trout and trout and other indigenous species of animal, bird, insect and plant life and more generally to promote the ecological cycle for the benefit of the inhabitants of the Deveron'.

And the winner is...

The Morison Family and DBIT board of Directors are delighted to announce the inaugural winner of the Morison Trophy. The Morison Trophy, awarded for the heaviest fly-caught salmon of the season from the Deveron, has been won by visiting angler, Mrs Jean Marshall. Her notable capture which was safely returned, weighed 29 lbs (Length 43 inches / Girth 23.5 inches) and was caught on a 'flamethrower' (size 8) fly, from the glebe pool on the Upper Netherdale beat. The large male salmon was safely landed with the able assistance of Ghille, Mr David Low. Mrs



Marshall will see her name engraved onto the beautiful silver trophy and will receive a G-Loomis Versa

Spey fly-rod as well as a porcelain flagon of Royal Salute by CHIVAS REGAL. The launch of the Morison trophy in February this year has amazingly coincided with a large number of big multi-sea winter salmon returning to the Deveron, up to 40lbs in weight, mirrored too on many other Scottish rivers.



On September 24th, in brilliant sunshine, Rob Sharp had the catch of his life when he married Jo Tutchenor on the banks of the river at Mains of Mayen. The happy couple were rowed across the river by Geoff, the Ghillie, with Pip, the bridesmaid at the helm. Rob is the son of riparian owner, Anthony Sharp and is a keen angler.

Catching the limelight

In May, anglers from all corners of the UK and parts of Europe, enjoyed a week's fishing on 'Scotland Hidden Gem'. The Deveron Fishing Festival 2011 welcomed over 220 anglers who fished a different beat each day with hospitality from Hardy & Greys and G-Loomis to name two. All anglers were greeted at the festival opening at Turriff Angling Association (TAA) lodge on Monday 16th. Everyone received a goody bag of locally produced goods,



information from tourism Scotland and most importantly their festival programme. Midweek, trade exhibitors invited their own guests associated with the game angling industry.

The opening night of entertainment was hosted by Buckley's of Turriff with an evening of talks focusing on the theme

To spray or not to spray?

Biosecurity Project update by Alastair Fenn

During the project's first year our main objective has been to identify all invasive non-native plant species locations and set up effective control, eradication and prevention methods.

Japanese knotweed is the most pernicious terrestrial weed in Britain, causing a huge amount of economic and environmental harm. We have identified, and are treating, all known Japanese knotweed locations within the Deveron district using last year's successful 'stem-injection' method.

There are 19 sites of Japanese knotweed within the district. This year 15 sites have been injected. The remaining sites, having stems too small for injection, have been controlled by knapsack spraying. The plants tend to die back during September allowing a one month time frame to get around all sites. By applying pesticide directly into the base of the plant during this period, it is drawn directly into the root system. The 'Stem-injection' trial proved so successful during 2010 it

totally eradicated the plants within one growing season

We have continued our work to control **Giant Hogweed**. A total of 32 locations have been targeted. With the mopping up of plants dispersed sporadically through all sectors (excluding Bogie sector that is controlled by Huntly Fishings). A total of 9.5 litres of pesticide was used to treat these key areas in 2010 and early indications are that this has been dramatically reduced. This should give us a good indication on

exactly how well the control methods are working and that we are making a difference to our riparian habitats. Of the 32 sites surveyed, there is an estimated 60% decrease in plants across a majority of infested burns. For example the Idoch water (Turiff burn system) was severely infested during summer 2010. After the 2011 treatments there has been a significant decrease in plants.

This year we have noticed an explosion in **Himalayan Balsam**. I must urge anybody who sees Himalayan Balsam to simply uproot it and ensure it is destroyed. Ideally, for large infestations, strimming the plant before it flowers will greatly assist in its



control and prevent its further spread.

The **American Mink** control programme continues to be a success with many 'River Champions': Ghillies and Trust personnel are all working together to control these voracious

predators. A total of 157 American mink have been dispatched and removed from the district, allowing salmonid fish stocks and species, such as the water vole to flourish more easily.

Finally, a fast action response was launched in June this year after reports of the non-native fish species **Rainbow Trout** (*O. Mykiss*) were spotted in a middle river beat. Over 100 were caught (a selection is pictured left). The source of the rainbow trout introduction was located and remedial measures were instructed by the RDevDSFB. The majority of the remaining escapees were removed by Trust personnel and dispatched.

The River Deveron District Salmon Fishery Board Report

by Chairman, Malcolm Hay

At the Board's AGM in September, Andrew Wallace, Chairman of the Rivers & Fisheries Trusts of Scotland, gave an informative overview of how District Salmon Fishery Boards and River Trusts are encouraged to work together to improve our salmon rivers – a topic which is often the cause of much confusion.

Boards were founded in the late 19th century and given statutory powers covering salmon and sea trout only. Boards are run by salmon fishing owners and angler representatives. The Deveron Board also includes representatives from all three angling associations on the river. The Boards raise money to look after their rivers by taxing the owners (NB not the anglers) of the fishing beats. Currently, this averages £40 per fish caught across Scotland.

Boards are empowered to protect fish from poaching (some 250 water bailiffs are employed in Scotland) and to ensure the free passage of migratory fish. They control fishing methods and seasons and can impose conservation measures – e.g. catch and release. Boards are charged also with protecting spawning grounds.

Boards have served Scotland's salmon rivers extremely well over the years. They are local, completely self funded, un-bureaucratic and flexible. They achieve, at zero cost to the public purse, a massive conservation gain

which government agencies could only dream of attaining and only at vast expense to the tax payer.

However, there are weaknesses in the structure. The legal remit of Boards covers only salmon and sea trout; they are hugely reliant on volunteers (no Board members are paid for attending meetings and expenses are not recoverable). Despite the fact that Board members are looking after something that they actually own, they are, nevertheless, open to criticism, mostly politically driven, that they are not "representative".

Partly to address these perceived weaknesses, a network of Fisheries' Trusts has sprung up across Scotland. In contrast to Boards, the Trusts' remit covers all species of fish and their work extends to controlling bank side vegetation (such as giant hogweed) and removal of non-native invasive species (such as the North American mink). Unlike Boards, the Trusts' fund raising is not constrained by what they can squeeze out of their existing members. Trusts are able to tap multiple sources including other environmental charities, lottery funds, land fill tax funds, fees for contract work for neighbouring fishery boards and subscriptions from anglers and members of the general public.

The impact on salmon fisheries' management has been phenomenal; last year, our Board's relatively modest contribution to our own Trust of £20,000 (£5 per fish

caught) was leveraged into £160,000 (£40 per fish caught) worth of improvement works to the river. These ranged from habitat enhancement and control of invasive non-native species to the provision of hatchery services and an educational programme for our Primary Schools.

Our Trust is part of a national network of 25 Rivers & Fisheries Trusts in Scotland, employing a network of 60 fisheries biologists and managers, and with a combined turnover of £2.5 million per annum. We are able, therefore, to tap into an extraordinarily broad network of research and monitoring work, educational programmes and management advice. This access to leading edge science and best practice is critical in developing our understanding of our own catchment and assisting the development of our own fisheries management plan. Knowledge of the factors affecting wild fish stocks at a national level can only improve our own fisheries management at the local level.

Importantly, we are able also to address that politically charged imputation that salmon fishery managers are "unrepresentative". The "Strategic Framework for Scottish Freshwater Fisheries" paper produced by the Scottish Government encourages a move towards "all species" and catchment management and the creation of co-ordinated structures for management that are flexible to local needs. The management structure of Boards and Trusts effectively allows anyone with a serious interest in our rivers to have

their say.

As the world of species conservation grows ever more complex, increasing demands are made on fishery managers, whether from pressure from continuing development, or sporadic leaps in scientific understanding, or new government aspirations. Boards, with their de facto part time structures, would really begin to struggle if left on their own. We are extremely fortunate to have one of the best and most professionally run Trusts in Scotland and one which is continually at the leading edge of science and best practice, often running pilot schemes for other Trusts to emulate. We have been able to take advantage of this and create an almost seamless river management structure between the Board and Trust - different and separate legal entities, but both working together for the mutual benefit of our river.

It may be that the fresh water fisheries management structure is not so half baked after all, as Boards bring a wealth of experience, common sense and local knowledge to balance the Trusts' scientific expertise and technical knowhow. Our record on the Deveron speaks for itself, and I would encourage you all to look at the tremendous achievements we have made over the past 10 years and the enormous investment we continue to make in improving our river for the future.