

Wye Salmon Association

Newsletter 16



Wye Salmon Association

www.wyesalmon.com



July 2016

Season to Date

March

Season open quietly and with conditions on the high side, the upper river favourite for an early fish it duly came on the 9th March from Llangoed pool, caught by WUF Director Stephen Marsh Smith whilst spinning from a boat. Fish measured at 47" with a 27" girth. Aramstone produced fish on successive days including a 20lb to Stan Turner, followed by a fish of 25lb from Holme Lacy to Colin Richardson and at Courtfield a 20lb fish to Don Macer Wright, all spinning.

First fly caught fish of the season came to Nathan Jubb from Caemawr at 12lb followed by another to owner Wayne Tyler.

As levels fell Wyesham got off the mark with Japanese visitor Mr Washiya taking a 15lb fish on a Monkey tube fly. There was a 20lb fish from Legg Meadow to Ross James where a few days later he took another around 20lbs on fly. Ingeston caught their first, with a fish for Keith Gabriel, on the same day 10 year old Henry Sayer, spinning with a Toby took a fresh 8lb fish. Congratulations to him and let's hope it's the first of many. Ross AC scored for Jon Daniels with three fish to 20lb on fly. Colin Richardson had another from Holme Lacy at 18lbs, Wyesham continued with fish of 17lbs to Mike Timmis 18lbs to Richard Godsall and a middle Wye beat produced a 40" fish to Andrew Hepworth Smith on fly.

The Tunnel beat produced a fish for Andy Mills, Wyesham reported its first fish to Mr Ernest Colman a fish of 25lbs and Glanwey recorded its first with an 18lb fish from Duhonw pool on fly to Christopher Morley.

Nothing reported on the upper river above Glanwey so far which is disappointing given the good water we have had all winter and spring.

April

Nothing too dramatic weatherwise on the Wye in April, a couple of small spates, a little snow on the hilltops and generally cold, however river levels held up well with the lower river waiting to get in on the action. Many fish pushed through these bottom beats and the area from just below Ross to Hereford was doing OK with still some fish getting as far as Hay on Wye.

Less than a handful of fish were caught above Hay despite consistent running water. Jim Fisher had one off the Newbridge water spinning as did Richard Thomas from the Rocks and Steve Boswell had a lovely fish from Lyn Em at 18lbs and another fish of 27lb was recorded at Llangoed, Spredaegle reported two crackers of 25lbs on fly to Ed Brown and 20lbs to John Watkinson. Further down at Caemawr Nathan Jubb had several fish on fly topped by a superb fish of around 27lbs. Andrew Holloway had a 10lb fish on fly from the same beat.



Ross James with a 20lb fish from Courtfield



Nathan Jubb with a 27lb Springer from Caemawr

Just above Whitney Ernest Colman was having some fine sport off his water spinning an FC with five fish, a couple around the 25lb mark. Lower down still Whitney recorded several fish with two to Simon Sprinter on fly best around 20lbs and Martin Lydon who fished several beats over four days for seven fish spinning with FC including 3 in a day from Wye Lea. A couple of good fish came off the Red Lion with Kenny Powell taking a 25lb fish and Tiger Williams weighing in with one just over 23lbs. Ricky Reno also had a 20lb fish from Garnons spinning.

The quality of the fish being caught was really excellent, the fish seeming to have found some good feeding grounds the last couple of years for they were fat and in immaculate condition. As things fined down Dave Roberts got to work on the Carrots recording six fish including three fish in a day. Golden Mile/Sheephouse had fish with another for Nigel Smith at 15lbs and Tim Mcfarlane at 13lbs.

Stan Turner at Aramstone recorded several fish to his own rod. Ingeston picked up fish when conditions were right with regulars Mike Pritchard and David Slade having multiple fish as did ghillie Lyn Cobley.

Courtfield/Wyebank had fish for Don Macer Wright, Peter Simms and Ross James. Ross AC anglers were catching fish, at least Jon Daniels was as he recorded his sixth fish of the season while Richard Woodhouse weighed in with a 15lb fish on the FC again.

At this stage the Wye weight average was around 15lbs and despite the arrival of some smaller springers or 2SW fish it only fell slightly.

Don Macer Wright reported a fish estimated at around 30lb on fly which he brought to the bank after a prolonged fight but was unable to land and had to cut the trace. One of the fish at Upper Bigsweir was reported as fin clipped. On the down side several anglers had problems with badly hooked fish and a salmon caught at Ross had disease on its head.

As levels fell off the upper beats produced very little though Spreadeagle reported a 24lb fish on fly to Alistair Thompson. Symonds Yat produced a few fish and Martin Bowler had fish of 19 and 14lbs spinning.

Catches continued during the latter part of the month with a mix again of smaller fish and the odd one in the high teens such as fish of 19lbs to George Adams from Wyesham, 19lbs to Saul Roberts at Ingeston and 19 1/2lbs to Joe Cobley on fly from Wyesham. Ed Brown had another fish of 18 1/2lbs from Bigsweir. Total for April reported so far was around 161 and apart from 2012 (174) the best for many a year and fish quality has been excellent, the Wye fish having obviously found good sea feeding conditions somewhere for sure.

May

An early Wye springer, a fish estimated at 25lbs caught by Ernest Colman near Whitney and recorded by him as 25lbs may well have been seriously underestimated. He recorded the length of his fish at 49 1/2". If this was so then for sure it was a superb fish well into the high thirties or more. He was fishing alone when landing all of the 4 fish he has taken this season and he's 87 years old.

Superb catch also at Wyesham on 2nd by George Adams with his FC 10lbs, 13lbs 16lbs and 32lbs. A report of a one day catch to Mr H Morshead, he had a wonderful morning commencing with a 42" fish from the Legg meadow pool, Courtfield. A fish estimated at 27 lb before breakfast on a Toby followed by an 18.5lb and 14lb mid morning on Wooden Devon. Fish of 18lb at Wyesham for Peter Godsal[2], and one at Ingeston for Nick Brett.

Massive salmon seen at upper Bigsweir on 5th. Fish covered in fungal patches of some sort did not appear in distress and was seen swimming in several places before disappearing. A couple of people saw it and described it as a truly massive fish, much bigger than anything they had ever seen. An architect scaled a photo and arrived at a figure for length of 50".

Further fish from Wyesham for Malcolm Bastard on fly, Two from Symonds Yat to Andrew Allsop. Another fish, or Stan Turner at Aramstone and a nice fish from Sheepwash to Peter Miles on a Cascade.

Considerable rainfall fell later in the month, the downpours localised with some areas escaping. River levels rose, not a massive spate but water very coloured. Good chances for the upper and middle beats to get some action and there were fish on fly from Caermawr for Wayne Tyler and Alistair Thompson from Spreadeagle. There were also reports of running fish seen in considerable numbers below Ross and Bob Rudd took advantage with an 11.5lb fish from Luggs Mouth to FC along with a 12lber for Darren Bell at Ross.

Stan Turner had yet another of 20lb at Aramstone on a FC. Taken on a 50 year old cane rod won in a Angling Time 'Fish of the week' competition by Malcolm Bishop whom some of you



Peter Miles with Sheepwash 10lber

and

may remember. Stan had another later that week from the Bridge Pool. First fish reported from Eardisley 15lbs to Malcolm Hawkes on fly.

Overnight heavy showers on 16th did not affect river and Spencer John took advantage returning two fish at Caemawr on a Silver Shrimp.

There were more for Wyesham, a double for owner Mike Timmis including one of 25lbs on FC and Simon Sprinter continued his good form spinning at Whitney Court. There was a 16lb fish from the Red Lion for Tim Hughes on fly, a 20lber from Pwll-y-Faedd a 20lber for Brian Skinner on a Rapala and four for George Adams 10,10,12 & 18lb.

With runs of 2sw and larger fish entering the river on good tides Bigsweir had twelve fish on Sat 21st to Ken Powell 16lbs & 22lbs spinning, Steve Brady 8lbs & 14lbs fly, Mike Humphreys 15lbs fly, John Madell 15lbs fly, Tim Bevan 15lbs fly, Peter Chilton 9lbs spin, Reg Lawton 15lbs fly and Peter Hickman two at 14lbs. A couple of fish were lost including a very big fish to Peter Hickman who saw the fish momentarily before it snagged and broke the 29lb braid.

The continuing high tides were bringing more fish in and there were 12 from Wyesham next few days including a 20lbs fish to Johnathon Wright.

As water dropped back the middle and upper beats at Ingeston, Glanwye, Wyestone Lea, Llangoed and Redbrook produced a fish.

There were two fish for Matt Oliver on a Cascade from The Nyth including one of 23.5lb

Late at the month's end another small but very dirty spate went through and disrupted catches for a few days. It seems to have done little for any upstream fish movement and as usual despite continue reports of 'running' fish on the beats below Monmouth they seem to disappear into black hole that is the middle river. The dearth of fish on the upper and much of the middle river looks set to continue and as so often in the summer most of the action will be on the lower beats, at least for the time being.

Picture right of 10 year old Henry Sayer with his second fish of the season from Ingeston. Nice one Henry, Trust there will be many more to come in the future.

By the end of May the total reached 539 fish with May's total 331 exceeding that of last May's score 271 fish. So the best spring return on the Wye for many years is most welcome, whatever the reasons and there are various views on why that might be, a whole debate in itself no doubt.

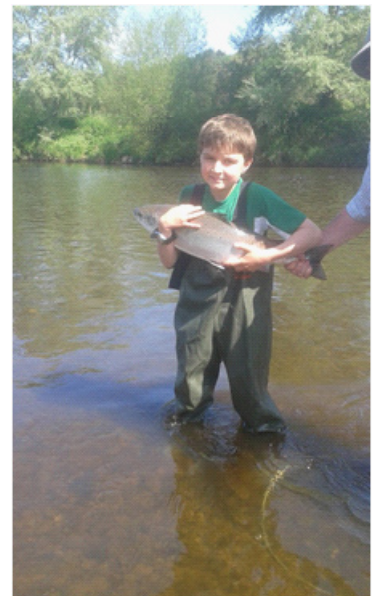
June

Month opened with the sad news from the Usk Valley that Stuart Jarvis a great guy and doyen of Usk anglers had passed away suddenly.

Conditions were stable with fine sunny warm days and there were early fish for Jerry Odie from Sheepwash, Andrew Cuthbert at Aramstone, Ross James at Wyebanks a red letter day for Simon McLucas at Redbrook with fish of 12lb, 16lb and 30lb, all on fly, a brace of 13lb and 14lb reported from Glanwye and a couple from Wyesham to Joe Copley on F/C. Seven fish were reported in a day from Bigsweir for Peter Holborn [2], Steve Locke [2], Peter Chilton, Derrick Maund and Arthur Knight.



One of Spencer John Caemawr fish



10 year old Henry Sayer with his second fish of the season from Ingeston.



Matt Oliver with 23.5lb fish from The Nyth

salmon. Wyesham began to build on its catches with with 6 fish in a day and four the following day.

Anglers report sewage discharge into the River Wye at Redbrook below Monmouth. These discharges had been taking place each morning for 7 days. One angler reported seeing sewage and a very bad smell along with dead fry and dead adult salmon. Another angler reported seeing dead fry and a rash appearing on his hands when removing debris from the river. The owner of one beat reported a release of pollutants as soon as it started to rain last Friday. This pollution was foaming and smelt bad.

We are advised an EA response team is now investigating, At present it is understood the EA monitor water quality upstream of the outlet, which may explain why this discharge has been allowed to rise to such appalling levels.

The middle weeks heavy showers affected the river around Hay, the colour was now very poor with only a little extra height. As river levels started to fall again

Don Macer Wright reported a fish of 12lb from Wyebank. With the upper river clearing considerably there were reports salmon from Caemawr, Glanwey and Builth Town water.

At the end of the third week overnight rain in the upper catchment saw levels rise by over 2ft. As this spate fell away steadily a 20lb fish caught by Richard Perrett at Upper Bigsweir was reported with no adipose fin, a product of our SNR project?

There must be more of these around as survey reveals that not many people, keen to get their fish back, are really paying much attention to it.

It was heartening to see more mostly fly caught fish on the upper beats with six reported from the Rectory including a 20lb fish from Glanwey Lady pool to Steve Harbison and John Jones later in the day... one from Caemawr to Roger Rayner 15/16lbs on fly. Rod broke bottom of the middle section during fight. Fish was successfully hand lined to the net.

One from the Rectory to Robert Markland 15lb on fly. One from Gromain to Steve Barnes on fly -upper teens from the Heirag. Many of these fish reported as very fresh.

Still some colour on the middle and bottom river and clearing slowly. Good conditions on upper

Rain forecast failed to materialise and higher water temperatures were inevitably now having effect on catches with most fish tending to lie doggo during these conditions. Despite the short lived surge of dam water the new flow regime was having little effect and water was dirty on the lower beats with brown algae showing its ugly face in many areas. As we entered third week river was low on upper beats with numbers of now somewhat stale fish showing. A rather tatty fish taken at Aramstone was reported as seemingly caught before? Some heavy showers eventually materialised but little in the upper catchment and levels were not been affected to any degree. Lower temperatures helped alleviate the increasing algae problem and improved water clarity There were reports of fish from Glanwey despite the low water showing the gutters of the upper river can still supply the odd surprise. Fish of 8 and 16lbs to Harry Chatfield Roberts on fly, his first



Grant Turtle 13lb fish from Bigsweir

and middle beats. Although Bigsweir and Upper Bigsweir were now reporting fish on high tides again. Unlike last season few smolts seen migrating.

Golden Mile saw three fish to Dave Palmer and Richard Knowles with a double.

Another good day on the Wye with fish from many areas including another two fin clipped fish this time from Ingeston, the fifth of the season.

There were reports of fish from the Red Lion: fish for Ken Powell, a pristine 5lbs sealiced grilse from Neck of Rectory for Garry Turner, a 10lber to Alex Davies from Llangoed, from three from Spreadeagle, Whitney Court and Glanwye. Fish were now being taken throughout the upper river from Bredwardine to below Builth Wells.

The river slowly dropped and cleared and more fish were caught especially on the middle and upper middle river. The month finished on a good total of 251 for June which was often the best month, it was 277 in 2015..

SNR update



Our final permitted stocking of 37500 parr was made to our ponds in October 2014. During May 2015 these fish were released into the river Wye to travel to sea and hopefully return to continue the recovery of our salmon stocks.

We continue to seek evidence of returning fin clipped salmon from the project. Five fin clipped fish have been reported so far this season, with a few other maybe.

However we fully understand in the excitement of the catch checking for fin clipping would be the last thing on angler's minds. In order to bring it to anglers attention a small sticky plastic label has been produced and circulated by WSA.

This can be stuck to rod butt or landing net handle as a reminder. Anglers need to provide as many details as possible; date and time of capture, where caught [beat and pool if possible], length of fish from nose to fork of tail, bait used, water conditions and most importantly a photo showing clearly fin clipping. Data collected will be passed to SNR Team and NRW Scientists for analysis. If you have not received a label contact us by email to enquiries@wesalmon.com and we will post to you free of charge.

I am sure you all understand the importance of catch data collection in establishing results for our project.

Adult Coaching Courses



For the second year we held a Salmon Skills course at Red Lion [Moccas], Bredwardine. This year on Sat 14th May for 21 anglers and well supported by RWGA Gillies, GAIA Instructors and WSA Volunteers. Objective was to provide fly fishing coaching, river craft and experience to anglers including newcomers to the river and or salmon angling. Participants enjoyed breakfast and lunch provided by the Red Lion and a raffle in aid of WSA funds included number of prizes donated by Sportfish, Tanners and Geoff Franks. It was a lovely day by the river with

a little bit of extra water and the chance of a fish. New friendships were formed and simple but often overlooked advice was received with a smile. Feedback from all participants, some from as far away as Hampshire and some of whom stayed overnight at Red Lion thus adding to local economy, was excellent.



Schools Coaching Courses



Six schools courses run so far this season with the latest for Sutton St. Nicholas Junior Academy who fished at Rocklands by kind permission of owner John Pearson. more planned. Stretton Sugwas School who attended a three day course earlier in season are using course as part of school curriculum. One day courses include a classroom session introducing fly fishing, the fish we catch, their life cycles, the food they eat and the river they live in. This is followed by a fly tying demo and casting instruction. The courses are completed with a visit to a local river beat, generously donated by an owner, for an afternoon 'kick sampling' to demonstrate the food availability in the river followed by a session fly fishing. Each child is given

a booklet containing information on the course plus details on local clubs and GAIA Instructors. The courses are led by a GAIA Instructor and staffed by WSA Volunteer [trained by GAIA] Assistant Coaches. Course materials are available if anyone wishes.



To support these schools courses WSA ran an Assistant Coaches course during February aimed at teaching volunteers methods of teaching fly fishing, along with Information on DBS [Disclosure and Barring Service] checking. DBS replaces the old CRB system. Each volunteer holds a current DBS Certificate and is provided with training by Angling Cymru to help safeguard vulnerable groups and children whilst working or volunteer with them. This is a mandatory requirement.

Get More Rods on River Scheme

Our scheme, with generous support of some owners offers some 440 days free fishing on 6 beats to anglers. 21 anglers, many new to the sport or river have so far taken up the offer this season catching 7 fish in the process.

WSA Shop

Can be found on the WSA website at www.wyesalmon.com. Here, as well as other odds and bits of tackle both new and previously used and donated to WSA, you can purchase online hand tied Salmon Flies tied by ex Wye Ghillie and RWGA chairman Geoff Franks. Geoff can also tie specials to your pattern if you get in touch.

Navigation

We are working with an Powys CC and local owners on the thorny issue of navigation controls on the Wye between Glasbury and Hay. Feedback from some of the owners, attendees of the Wye and Usk Steering Group and from the Powys Local Access Forum about the principle of a detailed code of conduct, permit scheme and signage has been broadly supportive and more detailed discussions, led by Sian Barnes and Steve Butcher of Powys CC, have taken place towards developing a scheme which once finalised will be used to manage navigation in this 'non navigable'



stretch, including the production of a simplified 'handout' sheet with a map on one side and the key points to note on the other, for commercial operators to give to clients, to take with them on their trip down the river.

We have a number of other ideas for monitoring the impact of canoes on angling activity and are looking for volunteers to support our efforts.

Future projects

In conjunction with a Welsh University, we are outlining a proposal for a project to investigate the distribution of spawning activity of different salmon run groups in the River Wye using genetic methods. The project is prompted by our belief in the need to research the recovery of Wye salmon stocks. We hope, if funding and approvals are forthcoming, the study could be used to inform future management decisions on the restoration and conservation of salmon stocks and fisheries in the River Wye. Speculation about the spatial distribution of spawners from different run groups is long standing; but to date has not been studied in the Wye and the methods to be proposed are likely to be applicable to other catchments. The project would be 20 months duration and if we decide to proceed will, in the next few months, open discussions with NRW and EA.



If you are interested in supporting or joining any of these activities contact us at enquiries@wyesalmon.com

Pollution Watch

Dead salmon and juvenile fish reported in River Wye

Anglers report sewage discharge into the River Wye at Redbrook below Monmouth. These discharges have been taking place each morning over the last 7 days. One angler reported seeing sewage and a very bad smell along with dead fry and dead adult salmon. Another angler reported seeing dead fry and a rash appearing on his hands when removing debris from the river. The owner of one boat reported a release of pollutants as soon as it started to rain last Friday. This pollution was foaming and smelt bad.

The discharges occur in the morning, which would seem to imply that partially treated sewage is being stored and then released, possibly to coincide with high tides.

Migration of adult salmon is being seriously hindered by these discharges, the pollutants causing fish to drop back to the tide. A period of low water and hot weather could result in high mortality and a serious fish kill as a result.

One fishery owner suggested discharges to be a growing problem. In previous years he reports juvenile flounders and coarse fish, were regularly seen in his stretch of the river. Now this is a rarity. It seems a problem that can only be solved by Dwr Cymru/Welsh Water cleaning up the Redbrook plant.

The Wye is a special Area of Conservation (SAC), and in an area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. These discharges would not be permissible if they were pumping out off a swimming beach, but are being allowed in an SAC, regularly used by canoeists with young children.



Newland Sewage Treatment Works at Redbrook is owned and operated by Dwr Cymru/Welsh Water. It is hoped Welsh Water will upgrade this facility in the current investment period, and stop polluting a river that forms the border between England and Wales.

We are advised an EA response team is now investigating, At present it is understood the EA monitor water quality upstream of the outlet, which may explain why this discharge has been allowed to rise to such appalling levels.



Late News

Dr Stephen Marsh-Smith OBE has led the Wye & Usk Foundation as Executive Director from its inception in 1996.

On 1st July, Stephen took up the position of Executive Director at Afonydd Cymru, whilst also moving into an Advisory Director role within WUF. Simon Evans, previously Deputy Director, has taken up the position of Chief Executive at the Foundation.



Simon Evans

Stephen commented: "Today I retire from the role of Executive Director of The Wye and Usk Foundation at a time when I feel confident that the Wye's recovery will be in the safe hands of the new Chief Executive, Simon Evans, and the Trustees of the Foundation. Simon has been with the Foundation for over 12 years, latterly as Deputy Director, and has been instrumental in much of our work."

"I am delighted to accept the role of Advisory Director and Company Secretary of The Wye and Usk Foundation, and to continue my support of The Foundation and its work"

"Together with my ongoing support of The Wye and Usk Foundation, I shall be taking up the role of Executive Director of Afonydd Cymru, the umbrella trust for Wales' river trusts, of which The Wye and Usk Foundation is also a member."

All the best from the Wye Salmon Association.

Stuart Smith- Editor
Peter Chilton- Design and Production

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