

“Ripples”

The Official publication of the Southland Fly Fishing Club. The club was founded in 1974

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www.southlandflyfishingclub.org.nz



Southland Fly Fishing Club

President's Report by Dave

Well its been a pretty trying couple of months. Rain, wind and high river levels have made fishing pretty tough. As usual at the end of November I had just over a week in Te Anau and had the second worst trip, fish numbers wise, in 28 years. That really says something about the condition because 28 years ago I was a raw beginner as far as fly fishing goes. It wasn't as if we didn't make an effort, we travelled far and wide but just couldn't find fish even when we found reasonable water. We only actually fished two days in the Te Anau basin, fishing the Upukerora but on both days it was above normal with enough colour to make spotting difficult.

Due to the conditions most of the Club outings for the season so far have been a no go but we have had a couple of midweek trips and Sunday trips that have seen reasonable numbers of members out, even if we had to go to the Mavora Lakes for the December midweek trip as everything else was too high.

Finally, it looks like the conditions have improved and I have had some outings with good weather and water conditions, even the wind staying away for most of the day and I have caught some good fish. However, I also seem to have had difficulty landing what I have hooked with fish just dropping off or breaking off. Still if you don't hook them you can't lose them so I am doing at least part of it right. There is one thing that has surprised me a bit, in the difficult conditions I had fish rise well to a dry fly, including one day when everything I hooked was on a dry, while in the good conditions I have been hooking just about everything on a nymph in the same river.

One trip that was interesting involved Tim from Wyndham and three of his friends from the North Island. Two were experienced fly fishermen but they fished in very different ways to what we are used to down here. Conditions on the river were poor for spotting and they tended to use heavy nymphs and huge indicators to fish deep. One did pull a nice fish out of a deep run but only after a lot of casts, whereas for me, trying to spot I landed nothing. When we went to Mavora they tended to wade out and fish blind whereas I walked along the shore and fished to spotted fish. Two out of three fish spotted came to my net. One of the others had a hook up but lost the fish. It was interesting to see what they were actually doing.

We have our fly fishing course coming up on January 25th & 26th. Unfortunately, we don't have many registrations this year but we may need some helpers, both for the casting on Saturday afternoon and on the river on Sunday. If you can help out give Chris a call on 0274237016.

Hopefully now it looks like summer has arrived and you will be able to get to your favourite rivers and finally catch some fish. If you head up country it is possible that you may be able to catch some of the large mouse eating fish that are reported to be around this season, although I have heard reports of them having eaten so much, they are not feeding so are really difficult to catch. I expect to see some big fish entered in the Club competitions this year so if you are keen to win you need to get out after these fish.



Dave with a nice brown taken with a green stonefly nymph on bright sunny day.

Cover Photo by Dave

Chris Cowie with a nice brown on a lovely summer day.

Mid Week Fishing Trip with Julie by Chris Cowie

Wow what a day out with the Club! What an introduction for three newbies. Four fish landed between four fishermen and women. A perfect day out at Coal Pit Road.

We arrived to fish jumping all around us on the gravel shore. Amy and I had parked just a little close to the action but the fish didn't seem to mind and continued to jump outside our driver's seat window. After loading on the gear (a small dun and mayfly nymph below) we hit the water heading downstream. Seeing the fish rising was exciting and added to the day.

After some break thorough warm up casting (aka terrible) a tiny brown trout rose to my dry and I lifted the rod and brought it home. My first fish on a dry fly! I was stoked. But quickly returned the wee darling before Julie arrived with the camera. Some more cries went off upstream and another fish was caught!

I snuck downstream and fished between some willows and saw a fish rise off the bottom (spectacular to see) and then open its mouth. Now I thought - this is the time. I tightened and the fight was on. "Amy, Amy, Amy" I screamed, as it's always better with some help I thought to land the fish. This was my first fish this season that I felt I could maybe keep. "Amy, Amy, Amy!" Still no response. Heck I thought, I've gotta do this myself. And attempted one handed to detach the net from my backpack. Amy arrived and the rod was passed to her and I stumbled into the water full of anticipation. The fish was netted successfully and bbq'd in tinfoil and herb butter with lemon that night. It was extremely tasty.

Julie had also had some luck from some nice water upstream and so four from four is not a bad start I say!



Gerda, Amy, Julie & Chris at Coal Pit Road



Gerda's Story: First fish on the fly. What a great day we had at Coal Pit Road thanks to Julie who helped me with rod and kitting it up which helped me land my first fly caught fish. A little perch. There were certainly a lot of fish about with 3 out of the 4 of us striking it lucky. Truly a beautiful spot will definitely be going back.

Slip Sliding Around No More by Dave

Ever since felt soles were banned by Fish & Game in 2008 it has been difficult at times to wade in some rivers with the danger of slipping and falling over. Mind you the felt was pretty treacherous in some conditions out of the river. Over the years I have had a number of different wading boots with different “sticky” rubber soles, some with some form of stud and some without. Probably the best I have used up to now was a set of Korkers soles with screw in (into threaded metal inserts) tungsten studs. Korkers boots have changeable soles and they also came with “Kling-on” soles, with and without permanent tungsten studs. Unfortunately, these boots are quite expensive and not particularly durable (although customer service from Korkers in the US was excellent when I had problems). I have also had Sierra boots with steel and tungsten studs. The Sierra boots with steel studs were actually the most durable wading boots I have owned but those with tungsten studs (a newer model) were returned after one fishing trip forced the built-in tungsten studs up into the boot (and my feet). I have also tried a couple of types of screw in studs, Grip Studs and Kold Cutters. The Grip Studs looked good as they had a coarse auger-like thread and tungsten tips but they failed to stay in place in the soles, tending to tip over in the soles. The Kold Cutters are steel and wear quite quickly but they are very low cost. In the boots I have used them in, they also tend to fall out (that could be the fault of the sole material).

In the last few years I had seen aluminium bars being suggested as useful on rock and were available on Patagonia boots. I had always assumed that they meant rock as in large rock ledges etc. However, a post on the New Zealand Fly Fishing Forum about another product called Rock Treads by David from Ranfurly got me interested and I did some research on the internet. As well as the two brands above Simms also had aluminium cleats available and Korkers have soles with either aluminium bars or aluminium buttons. Reports on all of these were great so I decided it was time to look at what I could do. This was hastened by actually slipping over on the Oreti, only the second time I had actually fallen over after slipping on stones. Fortunately, it was right at the edge so I didn't get wet and there was no real harm done.

I liked the look of the Rock Treads but they looked expensive and required $\frac{1}{4}$ inch (6.4mm) holes to be drilled right through the soles of the boots to attach each aluminium pad and I didn't want to do this to good boots for a test run. I had a rummage around at home and found all the old Korkers boots (2 pairs) and soles. I have no idea why I hadn't tossed them out but there they were. Everything looked pretty worn but still able to be used. I grabbed the soles with the screw in studs and removed the studs. This gave me an ideal sole for a test of the idea. I also found some aluminium round bar in two sizes, $\frac{3}{4}$ inch (19mm) and 1 inch (25.4mm) so all I needed was some screws that would screw into the threaded inserts in the soles. Once I had the screws, I put one of the bits of aluminium in the lathe and machined up some aluminium pads. I made these half the thickness of the Rock Treads as I didn't have much material and also felt, at $\frac{1}{4}$ inch (6.4mm), the Rock Treads were pretty thick. I finished up with 26 pads which left just one unused threaded insert on each sole. This is a lot more than David had on his boots in the photos on the forum but my pads were smaller.

On the January Club Trip, I tried this setup out on the Upper Mataura. It all felt pretty good and I deliberately walked into areas where the stones looked to have a lot of algae on them. The grip was good and they weren't bad to walk in along the bank and on the track home. Then a couple of days later I was back on the Oreti, fishing the same beat I had slipped over on the week before. What a difference. I walked into the river in places where there were a lot of brown rocks and didn't notice any loss of grip at all. I walked over 11km for the day and the soles felt pretty good although they were a bit crunchy when I was walking along the cycle track. The only down side is that I now only have 12 pads on each boot as two have fallen out. The Rock Treads come with some thread locking compound to stop this happening.

My plan from here is to install aluminium pads on a new pair of boots and see how long they last. I will continue to use thinner pads than the Rock Treads and will make sure I have a method of holding the nut inside the boot so I can get them off if they wear out.



Korkers sole with aluminium discs instead of tungsten studs. This is an after shot with 12 discs instead of the original 13.

As far as I can see the Rock Treads are a great solution to slipping on algae covered

Slip Sliding Around No More (cont)



Aluminium disc, tee nut and screws.
The tee nut sits inside your boot.



Rock Treads. Note three different size discs.

stones in our rivers. How they will fare in the long term I don't know. There are a huge number of different aluminium alloys and I have no idea what alloys I used (I know the two sizes were different alloys) or what the Rock Treads are. They claim to have walked long distances in them without wearing out so they should last the distance. Being cynical, in my experience they won't need to be very durable to outlast wading boots.

Kits are available from <http://www.flyfishinginxs.kiwi/>. They have two different kits available and also individual discs with screw and tee nut. Note that I have not actually tried Rock Treads, only my home made equivalent but I don't see any reason they will perform differently.

Club Trips by Dave

There should have been 4 Club Trips since the last Ripples but unfortunately the December Sunday Trip was cancelled due to river and weather conditions.

The November mid-week trip sounds to have been great fun with 4 members out including three novices (see report page 3) and some fish being caught.

The December mid-week trip saw four of us head off to Mavora Lakes as all the rivers were in poor condition. The South Lake was up quite a bit but was clear so we had a chance to catch fish although spotting conditions were difficult with only a few fish spotted. Only one fish was landed when I hooked a rainbow while fishing to a brown I could see. Still it was good to get out for a day to take a break from the mad Christmas Rush.

The January Sunday Trip saw five anglers head off to the top of the Mataura as it looked to have the best weather. Initially we were going to fish further down but the river, while not above normal, was quite coloured and would make spotting fish difficult. We split into two groups with an agreement to meet back at my car for lunch and that would allow us to drive down and get Amy's car. Julie and I fished up from my car while Amy, Chris C and Chris M fished below. There were plenty of fish to spot for both groups, mainly taking willow grubs but not taking the imitations we all threw at them. Chris M managed to land one just before lunch. After lunch we all moved up. I took Julie up to the next access while the others fished where we had fished in the morning. We hadn't been far up so there was plenty of untouched water for them. There were a lot less fish further up and none of us hooked into anything in the afternoon. It was good to actually see good numbers of fish for a change but it would have been nice to catch something.

It has been great to have more than the usual number out on these trips and even better that it includes some novice fly fishers. They will reap the benefits of getting out with the experienced members.

February Executive Meeting Date Change.

Due to a change of date for the Fish & Game Council Meeting to February 4th our Executive Meeting and fly tying will be held on February 11th at the Fish & Game Office.

January "After work" Outing by Dave

As is normal in January, we had an "after work" trip to Coal Pit Road on January 14th. There was a good turnout of eight people with Amy, Chris C, Chris M, Gerda, Julie, Tim, Josh and myself. The conditions looked good with the river in good condition and no wind (wish I could say that a lot more this season). I was pretty late getting there as I had been out up country for the day and walked quite a long way. Unfortunately, there didn't seem to be a lot of surface action taking place.

Tim and Josh (who live across the road and know the area well) headed off into the bushes and Tim managed to spot and hook a couple of fish on a nymph but lost them both. No-one else was getting much action. I didn't even get my rod out as I had been up country all day and had had a good day landing some nice fish and losing a few more. Everyone gradually headed away home as it started to get dark except for Chris M who did manage to land a fish after everyone else had gone.



Mataura at Coal Pit Road. Clear calm and undisturbed by rising fish.

A Good Day by Dave



Just a couple of photos from my day before the after work trip. Beautiful conditions in great surroundings and some great fish. This one pulled the scales to 6¹/₄lb and was 25" long. It took a green stonefly nymph.



Coming Events (MM=Monthly Meeting, CM = Committee Meeting)

25/26 th Jan		Fly Fishing course run by Mike Weddell from Mosgiel.
28 th Jan	MM	Monthly Meeting
29 th Jan		Mid-week trip – Dave Harris 027 201 6722
9 th Feb		Club Day Trip, meet at Fish & Game - 7am
11 th Feb	CM	Fly Tying
25 th Feb	MM	This meeting is “On the river” --- BBQ Tea about 6pm
26 th Feb		Mid-week Trip – Dave Harris 027 201 6722
3 th Mar	CM	Fly Tying
8 th Mar		Club Day Trip, meet at Fish & Game 7am
25 th Mar		Mid-week Trip – Dave Harris 027 201 6722

Club Contacts

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- Editor Dave Harris dcharris@southnet.co.nz
Items for publication must be submitted to the editor, prior to the 10th of the month
- Librarian Simon Budd
- Lodge Custodian Dave Murphy, 35 Brown Road, Invercargill dmurphy@southnet.co.nz (03 230 4698) or (0276752324)

Club items for sale

Metal Badges \$15 ea.



Cloth Patches \$12 ea.



Club Meetings

The club meets at 7:30pm on the last Tuesday of each month (except December) at the Fish & Game building, 17 Eye St, West Invercargill, Invercargill 9810. [The February meeting is on the river.](#)

Executive Committee meets on the first Tuesday of the month following the general meeting, except for Dec/Jan, includes fly tying, so come along and bring your gear if you want help with a fly—all members welcome.

Club Resources

The club has an extensive library of Books and Videos, contact the Librarian

A blow up Rubber Boat and a set of five Radio's, which can be borrowed by club members, contact Chris McDonald.

Club Sponsors



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