

“Ripples”

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

October 2022



www.southlandflyfishingclub.org.nz



Southland Fly Fishing Club

President's Report by Dave

Well its been a pretty busy month and it is great to have the season open and be able to get out on the river again.

We had our Casting Day at Queens Park on the last Sunday of September. There were about eight members along as well as a member of the public who happened to see the sign and came to see what was going on. He has been keen to learn how to fly fish but didn't have anyone to show him how to do it.

Of course, the following weekend was Opening Weekend and I know plenty of members were out trying their luck. The rivers weren't too bad this year – pretty good in the headwaters but some were a bit coloured in the lower reaches (and every man and his dog were out). I was on the Lodge Trip and while there were only 2 of us there Friday night another three joined us Saturday night. All five of us caught fish so that was pretty good.

The first week of October saw a cold spell come through which didn't do the rivers any good. I am told there was 23cm of snow at Athol and the snow melt kept the rivers a bit coloured for a while. The conditions were still pretty poor for the Club Trip on the 8th but a couple of members decided to try their luck without a lot of success. I was away in Christchurch for the weekend and managed to catch up with the President of the Canterbury Anglers Club while I was there.

The following week I was fishing for two days with John from Rangiora. The first day it was forecast to be cloudy so I took him to a river where I usually have some success blind fishing. The river stones had a lot of algae on them which made wading a bit tricky and there was no way you were going to spot fish in the river. I did spot fish in a back water but they had already spotted me first. We had a great day with 12 fish coming to the net so we were pretty happy when we headed home. Following day the forecast was for sun and that is what we got. We headed up country to a river that really requires spotting fish. I caught a fish in a backwater straight away but that was my lot for the day. John caught one later but I didn't actually see the fish as it took him about 500m downstream before he landed it. He thought it was foul hooked but it was just tangled in the line. Most of the fish we saw were just sitting on the bottom but towards the end of the day we did see some that were feeding. A couple of these seemed to have taken our nymphs but didn't hook up.

Coming up we have Tony Harvey speaking at our October Meeting on fishing the canals. Tony has guided on the canals so knows a lot about how to catch fish there.

We also have our November Lodge Trip on the first weekend of November. If you are keen to come on this give me a ring (027 201 6722).



Members practicing their casting during our Casting Day

October Monthly Meeting

The October Monthly Meeting will be held at the Fish & Game Offices, 17 Eye Street (use back door) as normal, starting at 7:30pm. We will have a presentation on fishing the canals by Tony Harvey. Tony recently moved to Invercargill from Twizel and was both a keen fisher of the canals and worked as a fishing guide on the canals.

Cover Photo

Jacob with a nice brown from Opening Weekend.

Opening Weekend Lodge Trip by Dave

With the 1st of October falling on a Saturday this year, the October Lodge Trip included Opening Day. This meant the rivers were likely to be very busy.

I picked Chris up on Friday evening and we headed to the Lodge. All seemed to be in order when we arrived.

With a lot of other anglers expected to be out we decided to set off early on Saturday morning. To help us get away early we made our lunches on Friday night and set the alarms for 5:00 am.

Just after we went to bed the alarms went off and we were up, had breakfast and were away. As we headed down the track to the river we suddenly had a ute behind us at the gate. Chris spoke to the driver and he indicated he was going to fish a different beat of the river to what we planned. We got down to the beat signs and there was no-one there so we got to pick the beat we wanted. The ute didn't stop at the signs but headed on down the track. Almost immediately a camper arrived with three anglers from Queenstown. They set up beside the other beat sign and started to cook breakfast. The ute that had headed down the track came back out and headed back up to the road. We found out why later.

It was way too dark to even think about fishing so we talked to the other anglers for quite a while before heading on the long walk down the track to fish back to the car. Not far down we came across another two anglers, still setting up and they indicated that they were going to fish the beat that the ute driver was keen on (and this is why he had left). I spoke to these anglers about parking by the beat sign but all they said was Fish & Game had put the beat sign in the wrong place. What they didn't think of was that they had driven down the cycle track where they were not supposed to drive.

After about an hours walk it was time to start fishing so we headed across to the river to set up. Weather was perfect with lots of sunshine and no wind, but it wasn't very warm. There was a nice looking back water close to where we set up and in here I spotted my first three fish of the season. One of them was keen on my stonefly and I soon had my first fish in the net.

To get better visibility I crossed the river but Chris decided to stay on the true right as it looked like quite a tricky crossing to him. It actually wasn't too bad. As I expected with the sun behind me I had better visibility and started to spot fish. I hooked and landed one where there was a high bank and fast water and that was quite a challenge having to get down the bank and then get the fish to the edge in the fast water. A bit further up I found what looked like a good spot and before I started searching for fish, looked over to see Chris with his rod bent as he played a fish, so we were both on the board. At the top of the good looking water I spotted, hooked and landed another fish. Back to the top of the run and there was another, and it too came to the net. Followed by a third from the same place.

When we stopped for lunch our tally was 7 (or maybe 8 - I had lost count) for the morning so it was a good start to the season. Biggest so far was Chris's 6¼ lb brown while my biggest was 5¼ lb.

After lunch a cold breeze came up and that made spotting a bit more difficult. We spotted a few fish but the only one that came to the net was one that Chris spotted on my side while I was busy taking photos of the pollen blowing out of the pine forest up a side valley. It was keen and took the same stonefly I had been using all morning. By now the fly had been well and truly beaten up by the fish I had caught and it was definitely time to put on a new fly.

We arrived back at the car pretty early and decided we should stop somewhere to fish on the way to the Hotel as it was still a bit early for dinner. We stopped at another access and once again spotted fish in a backwater but they weren't keen. We headed up the river a bit but spotting was pretty difficult. Finally, Chris landed a fish, fishing blind to likely looking water. We had walked plenty far enough for the day so it was off to the pub.

We were well settled in by the time Simon arrived. He had been for a training run but did manage to fit in time to catch one fish for the day. Then Jacob and Thomas arrived. They had managed three fish but Thomas had broken his rod.

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Opening Weekend Lodge Trip (cont)

(Continued from page 3)

While we were dining former Club sponsor Selwyn Shanks spotted us from the bar and came to have a chat. It was good to see Selwyn and he was out enjoying himself. When we left he was drinking with the group we had met on the river early in the morning.

Again on Sunday we made our lunches the night before and set our alarms early. Mine didn't go off but the others were up at 5:30 and I wasn't long after them. Chris and I headed off to a tributary stream well north while Simon, Jacob and Thomas headed to a river close to the Lodge. Chris and I found there was no-one where we were planning to fish so it all looked good. Once again, no rush to start fishing. Chris headed quite a way down before starting to fish up. I just moved slowly up allowing him to catch up. We were not spotting many fish and those that we were spotting didn't seem to be keen to come and see us. Finally, I hooked one, but it was obvious that it was foul hooked as it tore line off the reel and went way down the river. I finally got it to the net and it was hooked in a pectoral fin.

After quite a walk we decided to head back to the car and look elsewhere. On the way back down we passed a couple of other anglers fishing up where we had already fished. We drove a short distance down to the main river and set off up stream. Not a lot of action here (it had probably already been fished earlier in the day) so we decided to head back to the Lodge, pack up and head home.

Back at the Lodge we found a note from Simon to say they had all managed to catch fish.

All in all a pretty good opening weekend with a few fish coming to the net.

October Club Trip by Chris

Met Daniel at F & G just before 7. Loaded up my vehicle and we were off. Due to snow melt most low land rivers were high so we headed north. Unfortunately, that meant we headed into a gale.

The further north we went the stronger the winds got. Eventually we did a tiki tour to the lodge and the Oreti Back County beats as Daniel didn't know where they were. Despite the wind there was a car at the Gravel Pit Access and one at the Oreti Hut Access. The upper Oreti was fishable except for the gale.

There were even 3 anglers at the top of South Mavora Lake who were fighting a losing battle in the wind. One spent most of their time untangling their line from around themselves and their rod.

We had a quick explore of the backwater in the river between the lakes. We saw one uncooperative fish and then broke for lunch. The other anglers had packed up so after lunch we checked South Mavora drop off and the gutters. Saw nothing but the thanks to the wind didn't have a cast. We cast at the morning fish again on our way to and from the lake but it remained uncooperative. Had a look at some of the bays on the way out but saw nothing. Headed home early.

No fish, hardly any fishing but Daniel got to see a lot of river he was not familiar with.

Fish N Fridays by Julie

The Fish N Friday's group are up and running for the 2022 season again. If you want to join us it's my place 9am Friday mornings leaving from 11 Ruru Ave, Otatara. You can check on the Facebook page of the same name to confirm or give myself, Gerda or Jim a ring Thursday night to see what's happening. If it is unfishable, we sometimes move it to the Thursday or the Saturday. Alternatively, it's Fly-tying, or a fishing video Friday morning.

We focus on easy access and short distance walking. Beginners, intermediate or advanced all welcome. Women especially welcome, as we would like to see more female anglers enjoying the sport. If you need a fly rod to have a go this can be arranged.

Opening Day by Julie

Saturday 1st Oct 2022 finally arrived. The much-awaited opening of the 2022-23 Fishing season.

Temp 0 degrees at 9.30, forecast northeast wind swinging to southeast at lunchtime. Thought it looked doable.

So Roger, Jim, Gerda and I wrapped up in multiple layers of clothing and headed off full of enthusiasm.

There had certainly been enough rain to freshen up the system.



Roger, Jim and Gerda checking out the river on opening morning

First, we went to Oreti and it was high and unfishable for fly fishing. Next, we went to the Aparima and were delighted to find how fishable it looked. Gerda and Roger headed downstream while Jim and I headed upstream. There were some good-sized fish landed for the day. Roger had a lovely fish on after the 2nd cast and Gerda wasn't far behind hooking another nice fish. Jim and I headed upstream and we too had great fun. As the day warmed up it became even more enjoyable. There was snow on the mountains and it was so picturesque. I was super pleased to spot the biggest fish of the day and to guide Jim onto it. Jim did keep me very busy assisting with camera and netting duties. All of us had fish on at some point. In total ten were netted and 3 or 4 on long release.

We all had the expectation that being a fine warm opening day, and being on a Saturday we would be battling it out with other anglers but no, one angler in a car turned up and retreated. One other arrived mid-afternoon as we were leaving.

It was a fantastic day and we all reluctantly headed home tired but happy with grins from ear to ear. To my memory I think it was the best weather on an opening day for many a year.



Jim with one of his opening day browns

Competitions by Julie

Fly Tying

September saw the final round of the fly tying competition for this year. The fly was Gerda's highland dun variant. We had five flies entered with Chris topping the score with five points from Dave on four.

Fish Competition

October Meeting sees the first month of the fish competition. Put in your best fish for the month to go forward to the annual fish competitions and to go in the draw for the Hunting & Fishing voucher. Remember it doesn't matter how big your fish is it has the same chance to win the \$20 voucher as any other.



Chris's fly (left) and Dave's fly (right)

Opening Weekend by Simon

After all the anticipation and hype leading up to opening weekend and with it landing on a Saturday, I knew there would be a lot of pressure to be able to find somewhere to fish without being disturbed by other anglers. So I decided to go for a run instead.

Although I still thought I would fish once I had finished my run. The top of Mavora Lakes had no pressure from other anglers at all. No anglers when I arrived in the morning and still no one in the afternoon when it was time to set up the rod.

A few were spotted further out, I had a couple of takes and landed a 4.25 lb on a Damsel Fly which was chased and hammered. I was happy considering the time I was out.

The next day I decided to take 2 young fisherman out and try to help give them some more experience on the water. They had been out the previous day and caught some nice fish. We had to be out early due to the amount of anglers about. We had cars arriving and leaving not long after we arrived at our access to fish. The day didn't start well with 1 rod broken but still close to the vehicle to change the tip.

My goal for the day was to help Jake & Thomas catch at least 1 fish. We ended up hooking 9 and landing 7. Goal accomplished with all 3 of us on the board. A great day for learning by us all.



Thomas with a nice brown

Simon with an opening weekend brown



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

25 th Oct	MM	Tony Harvey will speak about fishing the canals
26 th Oct	Fishing	Mid-week trip – Dave Harris 027 201 6722
1 st Nov		High Country Opening (Tuesday)
5/6 th Nov	Fishing	Club Trip [Weekend at the Lodge] - High Country Opening
8 th Nov	CM	Fly Tying
13 th Nov	Fishing	Club Day Trip - meet at Fish & Game – 7am
23 th Nov	Fishing	Mid-week trip - Dave Harris 027 201 6722
29 th Nov	MM	

Club Contacts

- Address **Southland Fly Fishing Club, PO Box 1689, Invercargill, New Zealand**
- Website www.southlandflyfishingclub.org.nz
- President Dave Harris, 30 Baxter Street Invercargill (027 201 6722) dcharris@southnet.co.nz
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- Vice-President Julie Cook, 11 Ruru Ave, Otatara (027 630 2949) juliecook@actrix.co.nz
- Editor Dave Harris dcharris@southnet.co.nz
Items for publication must be submitted to the editor, prior to the 10th of the month
- Librarian Chris Cowie (027 236 9576)
- 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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