

“Ripples”

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

March 2023



www.southlandflyfishingclub.org.nz



Southland Fly Fishing Club

President's Report by Dave

Another busy month for me but at least I managed a bit more fishing.

Straight after preparing the last Ripples it was off to Lake Alexandrina along with five other Club members. I took my kayak but couldn't take it out at first because the weather was a bit rough. I landed a couple of fish from the kayak and Gerda should have also landed a couple but she had to be happy with one as the second one broke off with the poly leader breaking at the loop when the fish jumped.

The day after returning from Alexandrina was the Club barbeque. This was the last day of February and I hadn't caught a fish for the Club competitions for February, as the fish caught at Alexandrina don't count. I headed away early to the Mataura to ensure I had something for the competitions. When I arrived at the spot I was keen to fish there seemed to be people everywhere so it was plan B. No sign of anyone and the river had some colour but was clear enough to spot fish. I found fish pretty quickly but they weren't interested in my offerings. I hadn't gone far when I spotted another car and two anglers leaving it. They had come to the river by a different track and started fishing not far ahead of me. A bit annoyed I headed back to the car, changed my sign from gone upstream to gone downstream and set off down the river. After a good walk I arrived at a favourite pool that always has fish in it. Nothing. I fished back up the river finally finding a small fish that was keen on my willow grub so at least I had a fish. A bit further up the river I came across two more anglers who had parked well back from the river as it was a bit risky trying to take their camper over the flood bank. They said there was another camper there with a gone upstream sign so they headed downstream without seeing my car. I was bit frustrated with the number of people out. I didn't fish at Coal Pit Road at the barbeque as there was nothing rising.

I had another outing to the Aparima on the following Sunday and caught a couple of nice fish and followed this up with a midweek trip to the Mataura where I found a few fish rising, mostly to willow grubs but I did land one of my three fish on a parachute adams. I was out again on the Sunday for the Club Trip.

The following Monday evening I headed up to the Lodge to meet up with Cole for a few days. Unfortunately there had been rain overnight on the Sunday and the rivers were all up a bit. On the Tuesday we decided to go to the Mararoa as it was most likely to be clear. Where we decided to go we walked downstream away from the river for a while and when we finally got to the river found there was a lot of didymo being carried in the current. I tried fishing but I just kept getting didymo on the fly. We headed back to the car and went looking for better water. The Aparima didn't look good and we finished up on the Hamilton Burn. I spotted a rising fish immediately but when I got close enough it had stopped rising. I then found a small fish that rose to my dry but didn't stick. We walked quite a way before we found more fish but they were moving around a lot and you would only see them once in a while and mostly under the willows where you couldn't cast to them. Eventually I did have a small brown take the willow grub and hook up. On the Wednesday we headed to the Aparima. It still had a little bit of colour but we did see fish. I landed the first I hooked and then dropped the second. Broke of the third before landing two more, both nice fish. Cole managed to land a couple. The following day we fished the Oreti near Lumsden. We spotted a good number of fish but they were so spooky. One cast and they were gone. I suspect they have had a fair bit of fishing pressure. I did find one that would take a fly but that was our lot for the day.

I also went to the Gore "On the Fly" festival on March 19th along with Chris and Julie where we put on a fly tying demonstration. We all managed a few flies and there was some interest from the public.

It is getting close to the end of the season so you need to make the most of the time left and get out there and catch some fish. We have a Club Trip on April 9th, meeting at Fish & Game at 8:00am, a mid-week trip on April 26th (let me know on 0272016722 if you are coming) and the end of season Lodge Trip on April 29th & 30th. Once again let me know if you are coming.

Lake Alexandrina Trip by Dave

This year we had six members on our annual trip to Lake Alexandrina. The plan was for Julie to take Gerda and Jim up with her, for Roger to join me and Cole to meet us there. This all came unstuck when Julie had a major issue with her car just before the trip so she went up with Jim while Gerda took her own car.

I picked up Roger and then came back to put the kayak on the roof rack. This is much easier with two people and you can't open the tailgate with the kayak on top. We had most of the food, the rest of the kayak gear as well as several life jackets so the back of the Jeep was pretty full. We met up with Gerda and she followed us all the way.

On the way up we had a couple of stops in Roxburgh, firstly a comfort stop and then a stop to get Jimmy's pies for lunch. Next stop was Twizel where Gerda was looking for some lures in case she got to fish the canals. When we arrived, the weather was pretty poor. No fishing that afternoon and the next morning we could see fresh snow on the hills.

The next morning was not great but some did get out in the South Canterbury Anglers Club boat and Roger returned with a nice fish. In the afternoon some headed for the Tekapo canal while the rest of us stayed back at the hut and tried to copy Mike Weddell's diving beetle fly pattern. Those that headed to the canal didn't have any luck and those of us tying the beetle struggled as well.

The weather came right on the third day and we were able to get the kayak out as well as the club boat. The problem was that there were six of us and we could only get five out on the water so some had to take turns at staying ashore. The other problem was that the wind would come up in the afternoon so I was only taking the kayak out in the mornings. Fish were being caught from both boats although not very many. They were all good sized rainbows.

We were joined by Serena from Timaru for one night. She managed to catch a rainbow from the shore on a fly so was happy with that.

On the last full day Jim and Julie decided to go over to Lake McGregor and try their luck there using the other South Canterbury Anglers Club boat. There are different rules on Lake McGregor and the boat has to be moored if you are fishing from it. Unfortunately, no luck there and they were told that McGregor was not fishing well.

There was time for some to get out on the final morning and Jim returned with a nice fish. Then it was time to pack up and head home.

I think we managed about 9 fish for the trip, not spectacular but it was enough to keep the interest up. Thanks to the South Canterbury Anglers Club for the use of their hut.



First morning - looking across Lake McGregor to Lake Tekapo.
Note the fresh snow on the hills.



Jim, Cole (rowing as always) and Julie in the South Canterbury Anglers Club boat on Lake Alexandrina

Barbeque by Chris

Numbers were low. Several had already been fishing for the day so there wasn't a lot of after tea fishing. The river was significantly lower than usual which made the amount of bank washed away from the usual carpark hard to believe. Instead of a gentle slope to the water there is now a 3 foot drop.

Julie headed downstream for a fish and departed before dark. I fished in front of the car park where there were some small rises during tea. I quickly had a hook up that turned out to be a perch about the size of my hand. Fished the same lie again and managed to catch a trout that became my card entry for the month. Yet another month where I had to catch something on the last day to have an entry.

Crossed over for the first time this season but there were few fish working the far bank this year. None were friendly.

March Club Trip by Chris

Five on the trip so we took two cars. Daniel and I headed to MF as we had done for the last two March trips.

Fish were rising as we arrived. Daniel landed a nice fish in the first pool and I dropped one. Unfortunately, they were the last cooperative fish for the day. We saw plenty, fished to plenty but no takes.

Turned around early due to the wind increasing substantially as forecast and to a farmer's burn off putting smoke across and down the river.

Got back to the car with a plan of heading downstream but three fish were rising near the car park. One hour or more later they still rising and we had been through our fly boxes and hadn't got a take. An ice cream on the way home didn't make up for it.

March Club Trip by Dave

As Chris mentioned above, there were five of us on the March Club Trip. Julie and I were joined for the first time by Isaac, one of those from this year's Fly Fishing Course. He was dropped off at Fish & Game by his father and I promised to get him home after the trip (not too difficult as he lives just down the road from Julie).

The weather forecast was not great with some wind and rain forecast and for this reason I didn't want to go too far. The forecast was better for Eastern Southland so Isaac, Julie and I also headed to the Mataura but some distance downstream from where the others were.

We got to the river and got setup. At this stage there was no sign of the bad weather forecast. The river wasn't completely clear but clear enough to fish. Julie headed downstream while Isaac and I crossed the river to head upstream. Spotting conditions weren't great so we were fishing the ripples with nymphs. I crossed to a drop off where I spotted three fish, two of which came to the net. Just after this I started to notice mayflies in the air. After watching them for a while, I realised they were spinners coming back to the river to mate and lay eggs. Not a lot of trout activity but there were one or two rising across the river from where we were. We crossed back and I found a couple of spinners in my fly box and we both put these on. I soon had a take and landed a fish and shortly afterwards, Isaac was also hooked up. He was delighted to land his first fish on a fly. The spinner fall didn't last long although we found a few more small fish a bit further up that were taking them in a backwash. I did make contact with a couple more fish but they didn't stay on.

We had agreed to meet Julie back at the car for lunch so headed back down the river. Before we got to the car the wind started to become noticeable. We meet Julie at the car and she had landed three fish on dry flies, making a total of seven for our group so we were pretty happy. By the time we had finished lunch the wind was quite strong, too strong for easy fly fishing, so we decided to pack up for the day and head home.

Teviot Angling Competition by Julie

This took place on Sunday 5th March with a very successful outcome.

I headed up to Teviot River Saturday night after I borrowed a 4 wheel drive (as mine has blown a bearing in the crankshaft. Ouch)

I also borrowed a small but very nice little tent. (Thank you, John and Suzanne, for both)

With help got it set up before the very heavy rain on Saturday night. A kindly neighbouring camper loaned me the most awesome extra down blanket to ensure I was warm enough - very kind and appreciated. After preparing my rod and gear for an early morning start and having the traditional night cap with the other anglers, we all retired early ready for the fishing day.

A lovely night was spent very toasty in my little tent listening at times to the heavy rain on the roof of the tent. Fortunately, it did not penetrate and I remained nice and dry.

Maybe 4° overnight. A message had been sent dress warm... Fortunately, we all knew how to do that.

Next morning only six were on the river by 8.30.

It was initially cold and damp but cleared and warmed a little to a mild pleasant, but overcast day. Some more arrived through from Roxburgh and reported the road was very dangerous with all the dust and clay and the rain on top making it very greasy. Only 4WD vehicles could get through via the Lake Onslow route.

By the end of the day 14 were taking part. Southland Fly Fishing Club and Fish n Friday's group as well as the Teviot angling club attended.

I had set myself a target of contributing 12 fish to the survey count, being more fish than I had ever caught in a day.

I fished for 3¾ hrs and caught 13 fish. So I was pretty happy. The range of numbers depended mostly on knowing the piece of river you were fishing and knowing how best to fish it. Having had the same piece of river for a few years now I felt very comfortable fishing it and last year had the benefit of Cole teaching me the tricks of the trade on that piece of water.

Some caught zero and the best catch of the day was by Laurie, a very good angler from the Teviot Fishing Club who caught 30.

Some of the data follows courtesy of Pioneer:

“In total 148 fish were caught and the average length was 202 mm. On average one fish was caught every half hour fishing by the 14 anglers. The smallest fish was 80 mm and the longest fish was 470 mm. 80 fish were caught fly fishing and 68 fish were caught spin fishing. Spin fishermen did not catch more fish or at a faster rate than the fly fisherman, but their fish were slightly larger than the fish caught by the fly fishermen.”

One fish of 420mm had 3 fresh water crawlies in its gullet. 2 were complete and 1 partly digested. Such a small fish to have such large food inside it amazed me. At the end of the day, we all enjoyed a chin wag about our respective fishing and headed on our way. Once again everyone agreed it was an awesome fishing and fun day. Mine were all in the 160-230 mm category. Definitely the most fun fishing I've had this year.

Cover Photo by Dave

Club members at the barbeque at Coal Pit Road

Peter Morse Casting Tuition May 6th by Julie

Fly fishing legend Peter Morse has most generously agreed to give a presentation/teaching afternoon at Donovan Park at 1pm Saturday the 6th May.

Just in case you've not read any fly-fishing magazines for the past 40 years here's a quick rundown on "Morsie".

Peter Morse, fly fisherman, writer and photographer is also a Master Casting Instructor (MCI) with the International Federation of Fly Fishers, is a brand ambassador for Sage rods, Rio fly lines, and JM Gillies. He has been fly-fishing for 40 years and has fished many corners of the world, racking up a tally of 306 species on fly in fresh and saltwater. He is a widely experienced and respected teacher of many different aspects of the complex sport of fly fishing and fly casting. A regular contributor to a variety of magazines including FlyLife, he is also a front man for television and DVD productions specializing in fly fishing.

My apologies that this date coincides with the opening of duck shooting but this is the only date that works in with Peter's timetable while in Southern NZ.

I got to spend a day in Leura, NSW with Peter last December and found him to be excellent. He introduced me to the IFFA programme for the International Casting Certificate and I found him to be a great teacher.

Anyone attending I am sure will learn lots and Peter is very good at answering questions and observing ways we can improve our casting. This afternoon is geared for anyone interested in learning to fly fish from beginners to experienced anglers.

Peter has kindly offered his services to the Southland Fly Fishing Club and to the Fish n Friday Group free but we are asking for a donation to help with overheads.

April Lodge Trip by Dave

The April Lodge Trip is on April 29th & 30th. We will head up to the Lodge at Castlerock after dinner on Friday and return on Sunday evening. Normally I look after the breakfasts and lunches and we go to the Mossburn Hotel for dinner on Saturday. If you are keen to come contact me on 027 201 6722.

Isaac with his first fish on a fly, caught on a spinner dry during the March Club Trip.



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

28 th Mar	MM	
4 th April	CM	Fly Tying
9 th April		Club Day Trip, meet at Fish & Game 8am
25 th April	MM	
26 th April		Mid-week Trip – Dave Harris 027 201 6722
29/30 th		Lodge Trip (End of Season) – Dave Harris 027 201 6722
2 rd May	CM	Fly Tying
6 th May		Fly Casting with Peter Morse—Donovan Park

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
- Secretary Chris McDonald, 334 Racecourse Road, Invercargill (03 217 3733) mcdonald.ccnd@kinect.co.nz
- 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



Disclaimer:

The opinions or views expressed in this newsletter, are those of the respective authors, and not necessarily those of the Editor or the Southland Fly Fishing Club. The Editor takes no responsibility for the factual content of this publication.