

“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

Presidents Report by Dave

Well my fishing has been curtailed this month as I headed off to Australia on the 7th. I had only been out a couple of times since the BBQ, with a day on the Upper Oreti and an hour or so on the Mataura with the Menzies College Club.

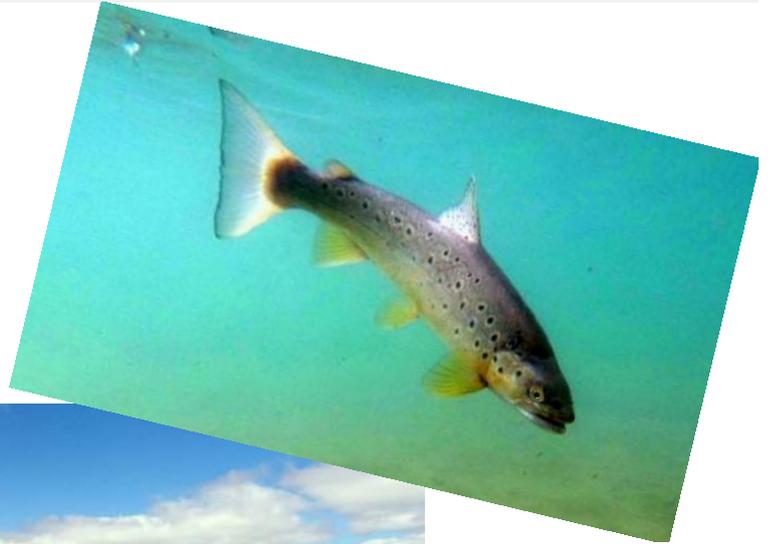


The Upper Oreti (above photo) was not kind as I arrived early (for me) at about 8:00am. However, with some downstream wind and the sun still low in the sky spotting was very difficult until about 10:00am. When I did finally start to spot fish, several were very dark in colour and not doing anything. Others were in the fast water and by the time you spotted them they were on their way. I only spotted one feeding well at the head of a pool. Unfortunately, the light conditions made it difficult for me to spot my dry fly and I was still searching for it when up comes the fish and takes something. Yep that was my fly and I was hooked up, but only briefly. On the way back to the car I saw two other anglers fishing up the beat. Thinking they would have followed the Fish & Game instructions to leave your licence on the dashboard of your car when fishing the Upper Oreti I didn't go over to check their licences. I was surprised when I got back to my car not to see another car there. Once packed up I went looking for their car and found they had driven down the cycle way (I was at the Gravel Pit) and parked by the river rather than where the beat signs are. Of course, they hadn't seen the sign with regard to leaving their licences on the dashboard so would have had been carrying them. The reason Fish & Game want people to leave their licences on the dashboard on the Upper Oreti is to help with surveying who is using the river. (So far about 70% are overseas anglers.) Leaving your licence on your dashboard only applies to the Upper Oreti.

The afternoon with Menzies College was not likely to see many fish as it was very warm and the river was low. Water temperature would have been fairly high as well. There was a reasonable turnout of students and staff and guide Mike Dennis was helping out as well. I did see one swirly rise but that was the only sign of action. It was good to see a couple of girls amongst the group of students. As we get into autumn, they will have more chance of catching something.

I will need to get out pretty quickly once I get back from Australia, I don't have a fish for the month yet and need to get something for the competitions.

Fishing Report by Redtag



Fishing has improved remarkably over the past month. Best of the season so far by far. Stable weather and less rain bringing the river and streams down to acceptable levels for fishable conditions overall. Hatches have been pretty constant with the odd full on mayfly hatch and pods of rising trout especially in the evenings providing excellent dry fly fishing.

Willow grubbing has been off and on like the wind. Sometimes it happens sometimes not. However it is always essential to be prepared for these grubbing fish and well worth taking the time to observe any activity under the willow line. I even found fish grubbing in a small stream in mid current on the foam line taking grubs that had been blown off the willows some 100 metres above their position.

Autumn is now upon us and the fishing will improve as the hatches become more prolific. Even in inclement weather the mayfly will hatch if the wind suits. The trout will be hungry to build up sustenance for the coming winter and spawning. A great time to be on the river.

Cover Photo by Johnny Mauchline

Gore 'on the fly' Festival by Dave Harris

The Gore District Council decided that on February 23rd they should hold a festival beside the Mataura River to celebrate their fly fishing fame. We were asked to go along and provide a fly tying demonstration and the opportunity for others to have a go. I had told the organisers we needed to be out of the wind and would require electricity to run our lights.



Gore District Council events and promotions coordinator Emma Carle (left) proudly displays the new festival booklets for the community while Gore District Councillor parks and recreation manager Ian Soper shows what it on offer at the new Mataura River Day festival on February 23. PHOTO: GORE DISTRICT COUNCIL.

Chris and I headed up early in the afternoon to set. We found the tent was ready for us with a good table and a few chairs but there was no electricity. I had a new rechargeable light with me but it was light enough in the tent to tie without a light so everything was good. We both decided that in the circumstances tying nymphs was the best option. Chris set about tying hare & coppers to be given away at next year's fly fishing course (no harm in starting early) while I was trying to build up my stocks of #16 beadhead hare & coppers I use on the Mataura. Chris stuck to his nymphs all day but I soon changed when asked about fish rising and not taking an angler's fly. I tied him a CDC emerger and gave him a parachute adams from the flies I had brought up to display. At this point I decided to change to tying parachute adams and managed a few of these.

Julie eventually turned up but didn't actually tie any flies. She was there to link up with the Casting for Recovery group to offer her assistance.

Fish & Game were there with a load of give aways and a tanker trailer full of rainbow trout about 50 – 60mm long. Surprisingly there were two staff from Otago on their stand and only Erin from Southland. Bill from Te Anau arrived later in the day to take the rainbows away for release into Lake Thomas.

Menzies College were also there with their fly rods allowing the public to have a go at casting with a couple of locals helping out with the casting. The Gore DC display had a filleting demonstration and trout smoking and Environment Southland also had a display along with a lot of other stalls.

The festival started at 3:00pm and finished at 6:00pm. In fact, it had cleared out before this with just about no public left by 6:00pm. An earlier start may have been better, but it was very good for a first attempt.

Mavora Trip by Dave Harris



It had been three years (far too long) since I had been to Carey's Hut near the top of North Mavora Lake for a few days fishing so I planned a trip for the third week of February. My friend Cole was keen to join me for the three days. Things were a bit rushed and I hadn't had any time to prepare for this trip with the only thing I had managed to do was to put the battery for the boat on charge. The first job was a wof for the boat trailer, then check the motor would run, load the car and on the way before 11:00am. First stop was the supermarket for supplies, then the petrol station for boat fuel. We arrived at Mavora to find it fine warm but a bit windy from the North. We had a slight delay getting the boat in the water as a school group was learning to use kayaks near the ramp. Once we got the boat down into the water getting it off the trailer was a bit difficult due the depth (or lack of depth) of the water. I finally managed to drive it off and Cole parked the car once he figured out how to get the handbrake off. The lake was a little bumpy but we planed across the top okay. Near the hut we spotted two dinghies in the water, each with two people on board so expected to find their gear in the hut. However, our luck was in and the hut was empty. Once unpacked we walked across to the river mouth. Unfortunately, the river was up and had quite a lot of colour. We wouldn't be able to cross it in that state. However, there were trout rising in the lake so there was plenty of fishing to be had around the edge to spotted fish. We both managed to land fish (and miss a heap as well) in the lake on dry flies. I also had a short walk up the river and managed to spot 6 fish along the first high bank. Casting was difficult as I was trying to land the fly within inches of the bank while casting straight into a strong wind. The second of these fish inspected the fly closely before slipping into the depths while the third engulfed it and came to the net. The final one also had a go at the fly but I missed it on the strike. Back at the hut we had been joined by four Te Araroa walkers so the hut looked to be full although two of the walkers opted to sleep in their tent rather than the hut (at least until the rain started when one came back into the hut). The second day was not so good weather wise. It was still blowing and it was raining as well. Eventually the rain stopped and we headed back to the river mouth, this time in the boat so we could land on the other side. Conditions were not great and we tried both the lake and the river, which by this time was a bit clearer and had dropped a bit. We only saw one fish in the river and it moved off before my fly even hit the water. However, fishing blind, three little rainbows took a dry fly. On our final day we still had wind (stronger than before) but the sun was back out some of the time. We decided to fish the lake and managed some more fish, some spotted, some by just drifting the fly out near the drop off. We looked at a couple of different spots around the lake and there looks to be a lot more places to explore yet. Normally when I go to Carey's Hut, I fish the river almost exclusively so it was interesting to actually spend most of the time fishing the lake. It was also interesting to walk the last high bank on the river three days in a row. Six fish spotted the first day when the river was quite coloured and none on the other two days.

Mid Week Trip—February 19th by Dave Harris

Unfortunately the weather forecast wasn't great for this trip but it looked best in Eastern Southland so Dave, Julie and David set off for Wyndham to fish behind the racecourse.

The river looked good but there didn't seem to be much action although there was the occasional rise to what looked like spinners but nothing rising enough to bother chasing. With little action in the stiller water Dave decided to cross the river and try the fast water opposite where the Mimihau flows in. With two nymphs on to get down in the fast water he was into instant action but managed to drop or break off several fish before landing a couple.

After lunch it was decided that we should look for some faster water so we headed up to Given Road. Still not a lot of action but Dave did manage to land a couple more before it was time to head.

Not a bad day and the weather was better than forecast.

BBQ evening on the river by Chris Mc Donald



Nine members attended the February meeting on the river at Coal Pit Road. Chris and Tim did the barbequing. Steak, sausages and salads.

After tea some people headed home while others went fishing. Chris and Joel had success but there was not a lot of action. The river was in good condition and the weather was good as well despite the forecast so it was still a good evening. Everyone was away home by 10pm.

Trout ova introduction to New Zealand : a Nordic connection

by Rolf Steinar Bjørnstad (Translation reviewed by Roy Sinclair)

Rolf Steinar Bjørnstad, lives in a small valley near Geilo in Norway and regularly visits New Zealand to fish for trout. He has made seven trips over the past 26 years. In this article he explores an intriguing connection between his country and New Zealand and shows how Norway has contributed to the great fishing that we in New Zealand experience today.

The beginnings of the quest: Ever since 1985 when I celebrated my fortieth birthday by fishing for a week during the wonderful month of May on the famous rivers Test and Itchen in England's Hampshire, I have become curious about where the ice came from that made the successful voyage of trout ova possible to Melbourne and Tasmania and finally on to New Zealand.

The Nordic connection: The first Scandinavians arrived in New Zealand on September 13, 1872 arriving in Napier. Their sailing ship *Høvding* of Tønsberg carried 413 adults and children. Most were Norwegians. The voyage lasted 114 days.

The first experiments: Some years previously James Arndell Youl (1811-1904), an Australian pastoralist, did a lot of research in an effort to safely transport trout eggs to the southern regions. In February 1860 the *Sarah Curling* sailed from an English harbour with 30.000 eggs packed in pine boxes. Under deck was an ice compartment with two adjacent rooms covered with graphite. The space between the rooms was filled up with charcoal dust. A full water tank above the icehouse with a hose into the tanks contained sufficient water to keep the eggs alive.

But this effort failed after 15 tonnes of ice melted. On the 68th day of the voyage the last eggs died. A further attempt two years later aboard *Beautiful Star* similarly ended in failure.

Youl was up against the obvious obstacles of a long voyage, weather conditions, and the necessity to sail through tropical regions. But he was a man not easily deterred from a mission.

A New Experiment: January 21, 1864 heralded another attempt by Youl, aboard the *Norfolk* carrying a gift of trout eggs from Frank Buckland, and Francis Francis who was editor of the magazine *The Field* – Francis arrived in Melbourne, Australia, on 15 April 1864. Trout eggs from the rivers Itchen, Whycombe and Wey, were involved in the *Norfolk* experiment. They were packed in boxes of inch-thick pine. The boxes measured 12x8x5 inches, with top and bottom sides perforated. At the bottom was a layer of fine charcoal covered with a layer of ice and on top of that a nest of washed moss.

On this springy bed of moss the eggs were placed. Over the eggs was another layer of moss and on top of that, a layer of crushed ice. The whole thing was in a trough perforated with water vents and locked with screws. One hundred and eighty nine such boxes containing 100,000 salmon eggs and 3000 trout eggs were packed in the icehouse and on the top were three meters of ice in large blocks

Success at last: The Australian State of Victoria received 4000 salmon eggs. Of them 400 had hatched. The remaining eggs were sent to Tasmania onboard a government steam ship. The ova was shipped to the Derwent River (to New Norfolk) and placed in a well prepared hatchery. An estimated 30,000 salmon eggs and 500 trout eggs were still living.

On May 4 the first ova hatched to become trout fry and by May 25, 300 trout and 700 salmon eggs had transformed into fry. At the end of 1865 the surviving salmon were transferred to the ocean. Youl had achieved something others had for a long time suggested. He was later honored with a knighthood in Australia and a silver cup from New Zealand. Curiously, his achievement was recognized in France when, in 1866, he was awarded a gold medal from La Société d'Aclimatisation. Several more successful attempts at transporting ova to Australia were made from 1865 until 1870. Francis and Buckland shipped ova from the same rivers in Hampshire. All of them were introduced via Tasmania.

The Ice – From where?: This has long been a curiosity for me. It is clear that England did not produce any ice from 1860 to 1880. The coldest month was in January 1862 with minus 0.5 for just a few days according to Norwegian meteorologists.

Göte Gothes author of *With Ice and Logs Cross the North Sea* presents a great documentary for this transportation. From Norway, sailing ships went to most of the countries in Europe to keep the ice solid. The ice was taken from Oslofjord and from lakes down the coast from Oslo.

Ice for export was also taken from the Folgefonna Glacier. Initially Norway did not trade ice with Britain because of high cost. But a limited ice export became a reality with the developing British food industry and continued until technology (after the turn of the century) enabled artificial ice production. Norway's early ice export to all countries was around 400-500 000 tonnes annually. The ice blocks were large – 0.3m cubed. Extracting them was a dangerous operation. Men died and ships were crushed in the cold sea.

Norwegian ice from the Oslofjord region and down the coasts (as far as Drøbak on the east and Kragerø on the west) was necessary for those pioneer Southern Hemisphere shipments until Tasmania and New Zealand became self-reliant in ova.

Years 1880 to 1921: In this period, 28 hatcheries were established throughout New Zealand, which produced 64 million fry. These hatcheries were fundamental for the excellent organizing of the trout fisheries in New Zealand these days. Many fishermen around the world have asked themselves: "Why do trout grow so big in New Zealand?" It is all about food, and catch and release. I am presently at my home in Geilo Norway. Outside it is minus 16 deg. Celsius and lots of snow. In my mind I relive my seven journeys to New Zealand's wonderful rivers and lakes.

Visiting New Zealand's South Island: The first time I visited New Zealand was in January 1998. On the very important first cast in a nice late evening, almost under the bank on the other side of the Ahuriri river, a 2 kg brown eating a late supper made a mistake. The menu included an artificial fly. A caddis fly No 14 did the job. After releasing the trout I felt such a great satisfaction and I decided to return every year if I could. It was, however, more than two years before my second visit and you can imagine how my life has changed, lost into a new dimension of the fly-fishing sport, thanks to New Zealand.

But these beautiful waters need to be taken care of. New Zealand has an enviable reputation as a great fly fishing country with big trout. I am sure, far into the future, farmers and fishermen will work together for the ongoing good of the environment and waterways. It gives us a very good feeling when we look at the 100 per cent Pure New Zealand commercials.

It is such a beautiful country: But it has to be kept up to 100 per cent. That must be the vision. To run a big station or even a smaller farm is always a challenge. Mother Earth deserves to be taken care of. Please work hard to keep the waterways in pristine condition – seek advice if you need to. Didymo is a bad case of waterway pollution. Fishermen have brought it from somewhere. That is devastating. I plead for a better understanding so we care more, and can enjoy the outdoors with our rods and flies for a long, long, time.

Tight Lines and heavy nets!



Does this brown trout owe its existence in New Zealand to Nordic glacial ice? (Photograph: Akemi Hironaka Bjørnstad)

Sources:

Gordon Mackie, *Fly leaves and Waterside Sketches*
Norman Marsh, *Trout fishing*
Meteorological institute (Norway)
Wilse Collection Norwegian Folk Museum.

Coming Events

(MM=Monthly Meeting, CM = Committee Meeting)

26 th Mar	MM	
2 nd April	CM	Fly Tying
14 th April	Trip	Club Day Trip , meet at Fish & Game 8am
23 rd April	Trip	Mid-week Trip – Dave Harris 027 201 6722
27/28 th Apr	Trip	Lodge Trip (End of Season)
30 th April	MM	Guest Speaker - Nick Reygaert, Gin-Clear Media
7 th May	(CM)	Fly Tying
12 th May	Trip	Club Day Trip , meet at Fish & Game 10am, to the lower Mataura
21 nd May	Trip	Mid-week Trip – Dave Harris 027 201 6722

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 (03 215 6068) dcharris@southnet.co.nz
- Secretary Chris McDonald, 334 Racecourse Road, Invercargill (03 217 3733)
mcdonald.ccnd@kinect.co.nz
- Editor Vacant - Send articles to 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)

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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