

# “Ripples”

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

October 2026

[www.southlandflyfishingclub.org.nz](http://www.southlandflyfishingclub.org.nz)



Next Club Meeting - October 27th - 7:30pm Fish & Game Office, 17 Eye Street



## Southland Fly Fishing Club

## President's Report by Dave

After a busy September with two fly tying demonstrations, casting day and a two week holiday in Australia, October looked to be just as busy.

Both the second fly tying day and the casting day went well with some interest in the Club so both were worthwhile. After having a number of younger boys coming to the casting we decided we should purchase a child's rod so we now have a Primal Wild rod for such occasions.

It doesn't seem that anyone went on the Club Trip on October 11<sup>th</sup>. Both Chris and I were away in Christchurch that weekend. I suspect we will both be on the Lodge Trip on November 8<sup>th</sup> but that doesn't stop some of you getting together and going fishing.

I hadn't really got ready for opening day but managed to sort out gear the night before so was ready to go on October 1<sup>st</sup>. Unfortunately, the weather had been wet and the rivers were above normal. The weather forecast wasn't great for fly fishing - lots of cloud and strong winds. Julie decided to come with me but we didn't plan an early start. We were away at 8am and headed for the Hamilton Burn.

There was no-one there when we got there and the river looked a bit coloured (very dark) but had enough visibility for fishing. Early on I spotted a fish but it moved off without looking at my fly. A bit further up I spotted another but didn't get to cast to it as I struggled to get sorted out in the wind. Not much further up I spooked one where I didn't expect there to be a fish. That was our action over as far as fish were concerned. The wind was really strong and at times it was hard to stand and by lunchtime we had had enough so headed back to the car and home.

With other activity the first two weekends in October there hadn't been much chance of me getting out. On the third Saturday I went back to the Hamilton Burn. The river still had a bit of dark colour in the water and with the very dark algae on the bottom spotting was very difficult. I had other things to do later in the day so it was a short day and I only saw a few fish, most towards the end of the day. No hook ups so that meant two blank days to start the season. I was out again on the Sunday and had a better day.

Now that we are into the season, we have our usual fishing competition (see details in last month's Ripples) so get your catch cards in to be in the draw for a Hunting & Fishing gift card.

We have our next Lodge Trip the first full weekend of November (7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup>). If you are keen to go give me a call on 027 201 6722.

## November Lodge Trip

Our second Lodge Trip of the season will be held on the weekend of 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> November. Normal procedure for a Lodge Trip is to go up after tea on the Friday and then fish Saturday and Sunday. Normally we try to share transport as much as possible, both going to and from the Lodge and also for each day's fishing. Someone organises all the food for breakfasts and lunches and we usually go to the Mossburn Hotel for tea on the Saturday evening. If you want to come on the November Lodge Trip give Dave a call on 027 201 6722

If you can't make it for the whole weekend you could just come for one day. This is a great opportunity to get out with more experienced members and to fish rivers that are a bit further away from home.

## Cover Photo by Dave

Five year old Fern having a go at fly casting on casting day.

## Fly Tying Demonstration by Dave

We had our second fly tying demonstration at Hunting & Fishing on September 26<sup>th</sup>. I was still setting up (and Chris hadn't arrived) when our first keen potential fly tyers arrived. Two young boys who seemed pretty keen to see how it was done. They were followed by several other people including ex Club members, a lady from this year's course and others. There was some interest in both the casting day the following day and our course in January. Well worth the effort and I now have a better stock of green stonefly nymphs.

## Casting Day by Dave

The weather forecast for the casting didn't look good with strong winds predicted. However, the Queens Park cricket ground is reasonably well sheltered by trees.

As we had the day before we had people there before we were really set up. This included the two boys who were early to the fly tying demonstration the day before.

Not many Club members but we had a good number of members of the public. Chris was pretty busy setting up rods while Julie and I were helping people out with their casting. Many had never cast a fly rod before but some made good progress.

It got quiet quite early and I set up my #5 fibreglass rod for Chris to have cast with. Once that was packed up we were getting ready to leave when a lady arrived with four boys aged from 5 to 11 or 12. All had a try at casting and the lady herself looked like she would pick it up very quickly. She made really good progress after a couple of demonstrations. She suggested that her husband and the oldest boy should attend our course in January.

A pretty good day with a total 17 members of the public along to have a go at fly casting.



## Subscriptions

Subscriptions are now due. \$30 for adult members, \$10 for juniors and \$40 for family. Please pay into our bank account ANZ #06-0925-0947474-00. Payee is Southland Fly Fishing Club Inc. Use initial & surname as reference.

## Opening Day by Chris

Over my working life if opening day was during the work week I never took it off to go fishing. This was my first opening day since retiring so I got to go fishing.

No one else was keen for a night at the lodge followed by a very early morning start to get to one of the beats first. I was hoping for the Upper Oreti but the forecast said 13m/s winds so I looked for other options. The Upper Mataura was forecast for 5m/s winds so that's where I went.

I left the lodge at 5am. I got to the top beat carpark at 5.45am. The next car went past me at 6.11am. By 6.30am six had gone past. There was enough daylight to set up my rod and be on the water at 7.30am. Just as I started to cross the bridge car number seven parked beside my car.

I saw the first fish in the run above the bridge. The first casts of the season were not pretty and fairly soon the fish moved off. The river was almost clear but carrying a lot of water. I moved about three hundred metres upstream before the next fish saw me before I saw it. It waved goodbye.

I then saw a car pull up at the side of the road and a couple of anglers got out, set up and started walking downstream towards me. So much for the beat system. I continued to fish towards them. They saw me and headed back to their car and drove off. But only about out three hundred metres further upstream then they got out again and started fishing again. I fished up to where they had walked down to without seeing another fish. I continued up to the next corner which used to have a nice pool. It wasn't there anymore.

By this time, I was almost up to the other anglers' car and they were walking back to it. I waited for them and informed them I wasn't impressed with their interpretation of the beat system. They advised they were part of a "family group who usually fished this area" and were surprised that other people had gotten to the river before them. They advised a number of their group were fishing the rest of the beat above me.

I gave the rest of the beat away as a lost cause and walked down the road back to the bridge. I crossed it again and looked for the first fish I had spooked. It was back in the run and a few casts later was attached to my gold bead version of Dave's hare and peacock from the fly tying competition. I managed to land it. 3½lb and 21 inches. A nice fish to start the season.

The wind had got up so I decided to drive downstream a couple of beats in search of unfished water. I relocated and just as I was leaving the car again a farm hand on a four wheeler raced across the bridge, opened the gate into the paddock I was about to walk past, raced to the other end of the paddock opened another gate then raced back towards me. The first gate had almost swung shut so I opened it enough for him to get back through it. After closing the gate, he asked which way I was going and I said upstream. He told me they were bringing a mob of deer down the road and across the river. If I wanted to watch them cross the river I could sit upstream of him and his dogs.

About 2 minutes later over a hundred deer came down the road and crossed the river as though they did it every day. While it was the first time I had seen them cross the river I am sure Les Ladbrook had told me about seeing it some years ago.

I fished up a short way without seeing any fish and as the wind was now blowing fairly strong downstream, I decided to relocate again. Downstream to my favourite beat. As it was now after 11 o'clock I was not the first one to this beat. While no one was there I saw plenty of foot prints. The first fish was where it should be but a couple of casts had it waving good bye. The next fish was not far upstream but was right against the shallow edge. One cast and it waved as well.

*(Continued on page 5)*

## Opening Day (cont)

*(Continued from page 4)*

I decided that I had had enough for the morning. Back in the car and down to Athol to get some hot chips to add to my lunch. Then it was on to another beat that I had enjoyed fishing several years ago. This one required a walk of a couple of hundred metres to the river. What hardship.

The river had started to change colour a bit and it wasn't as easy to spot fish. I managed to spot several and landed a nice fish of 3lb. Again on the hare and peacock. I continued to fish upstream for a while and was reminded of why I liked fishing this beat. I had enough opportunities to keep me interested for the rest of the day without landing anything else. I headed home happy with my two fish for the day.

## October Lodge Trip by Chris

I was on my own for the first lodge trip of the season so I explored. Up to the lodge on Friday night. In Te Anau by 8am Saturday morning so I could do the Lake2Lake Parkrun then go fishing. Stocked up lunch and tea at Fresh Choice then off to the Oreti.

First beat was taken. Second beat was into the wind and a walk from the car so I kept going downstream. I thought I might have a look at the small streams on the road from Mossburn to Five Rivers. I decided they looked too willow bound from the bridges so I continued on to one of the Mataura beats I had fished on opening day.

The corner fish was there again and no matter what I cast at him nothing was good enough to eat. I had several follows but that was it. Around the corner and this time a fish was midstream rather than on the edge. A Sawyers PTN did the trick. A bit of a tussle resulted in the catch and release of a 4.25lb jack of 23 inches. A nice fish.

Well I had a fish and feeling a bit tired from the run I called it a day early.

Back to the lodge and I spent the evening going through a couple of the books there. Norman Marsh's NZ Trout Steam Insects and Ian Pullar's Mataura River: A Fishing and Access Guide kept me entertained.

I continued to explore on Sunday. Back to the Mataura to the lower beat I had fished on opening. The river was lower but there were less fish about. I fished further up the beat than I had previously and the only reward I got was to spot a NZ falcon. It wouldn't let me close enough for a decent photo and flew to a large willow further upstream. This really annoyed a couple of oyster catchers that obviously had a nest on the gravel bank opposite the falcon. I don't think flying at the falcon and trying to intimidate it was the best policy.

Back to the car and I headed downstream to Riverview. This was more entertaining. The local farmer was trying to move a mob of cattle and his dog was not responding to the number of swear words he was using.

Again I got to see the beat system not being used. I was at the beat car park which is over the bridge on the east side of the river. A car pulled up on the west side before the bridge, two fishermen got out and proceeded to gear up. I crossed the bridge and advised them of the car park and the beat. They relocated their car.

I had some time so I thought I would head down to Nokomai and see if those beats were occupied. Most of them were. Anglers from the huts were all over the place. I had a quick look at one beat but didn't see a fish.

I called it a day. Headed back to the lodge and then home. I was happy with my weekend.



The weather was good for the Lodge Trip

## Day Three by Dave

My season has been off to a slow start. With a combination of other things on and poor weather or river conditions I had only been out twice and hadn't caught anything. Day three was a Sunday and the forecast was for lots of sunshine but a bit of wind. I decided to head to the Aparima and go well up to get above the dark water coming from the Hamilton Burn.

I wasn't away early and the weather wasn't great in Invercargill but it looked like clear skies to the north. I arrived at the access I intended to fish from and there was no-one there so it looked good. Once changed and setup I headed to the river. It was clear and looked to be at a normal level so I expected it to be a good day.

I spotted a fish in the first pool but it was close to my side of the river, the surface was smooth and there was no shelter of any sort to get close to the fish. I had a cast anyway and as expected the fish moved off. At least I had spotted something. I fished the rest of the pool without success. The next pool looked good but the sun was too low for spotting so I fished it blind. Towards the top of the pool the indicator disappeared and there was tension when I lifted the rod. I was into a good brown trout and after a long battle finely got it to the net. I was finally on the board for the season.

I crossed the river to look at a backwater and to avoid a black billed gull colony a bit further up the river. The gulls weren't pleased to see me and there were a few flying above. I saw something on the water in the back water and at first thought it was caused by one of the gulls. However, I soon spotted a fish and it had risen to something. It moved further up the backwater so I put out my flies to try and ambush it. Before long it came back down the pool and swam straight past my flies. It did a couple of circles and that was the last I saw of it.

I moved up the river, staying away from the gulls but was soon being harassed by black fronted terns. I was on an island and clearly, they were nesting on the island. I wanted to cross the island to look at the run down the other side so did so very carefully looking out for nests. I didn't see anything as I crossed the island but just a bit further up I spotted an egg in what a tern would call a nest.

I was still having difficulty spotting but a bit further up I had another take and a 4lb brown came to the net. This was followed a few pools later by another hook up but that one came off. After lunch I spotted a fish across the other side but there was far too much current between me and the fish to have any chance of getting a fly near it so I continued up the river.

It was starting to be time to head home and I could see a much bigger gull colony up ahead when I spotted what I thought was a fish in relatively fast water. I put a cast over it but it wasn't keen and moved off. I decided to fish one more pool and was on a bank above the river when I spotted a fish on the other side. I dropped back down to where I could cross the river and then had to try and spot the fish from river level. It wasn't too hard to find and was pretty keen on my nymph. It was 3 ½ lbs.

Time to head back to the car but that didn't go as well as it should have. I was not far into the walk when I had a sharp pain in my right calf. Not sure what is wrong but it made for a tough and painful walk for about 3km back to the car.



First fish of the season - 3 1/2 lb Aparima brown

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

|                       |         |                                                          |
|-----------------------|---------|----------------------------------------------------------|
| 27 <sup>th</sup> Oct  | MM      |                                                          |
| 1 <sup>st</sup> Nov   |         | High Country Opening (Sunday)                            |
| 3 <sup>rd</sup> Nov   | CM      | Fly Tying                                                |
| 7/8 <sup>th</sup> Nov |         | Lodge Trip [Weekend at the Lodge] - High Country Opening |
| 8 <sup>th</sup> Nov   | Fishing | <b>Club Day Trip</b> meet at Fish & Game – 8am           |
| 18 <sup>th</sup> Nov  | Fishing | Mid-week trip - Dave Harris 027 201 6722                 |
| 24 <sup>th</sup> Nov  | MM      |                                                          |
| 1 <sup>st</sup> Dec   | CM      | Fly Tying                                                |
| 13 <sup>th</sup> Dec  | Fishing | <b>Club Trip</b> , Catlins – Meet at Fish & Game 8:00am  |
| 16 <sup>th</sup> Dec  | Fishing | Mid-week Trip – Dave Harris 027 201 6722                 |

## Club Contacts

|                   |                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|-------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
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| • Website         | <a href="http://www.southlandflyfishingclub.org.nz">www.southlandflyfishingclub.org.nz</a>                                                                                       |
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| • Editor          | Dave Harris <a href="mailto:daveharris823@gmail.com">daveharris823@gmail.com</a><br><i>Items for publication must be submitted to the editor, prior to the 10th of the month</i> |
| • Librarian       | Kim Jansen (027 723 2305) <a href="mailto:kim@xunil.co.nz">kim@xunil.co.nz</a>                                                                                                   |
| • Lodge Custodian | Isaac Coburn, Marama Ave Nth, Invercargill 0204 1205 855<br><a href="mailto:isaaccoburn72@gmail.com">isaaccoburn72@gmail.com</a>                                                 |

## 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:**

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