

South West Regional Fisheries

Cornwall Fisheries Report

Enforcement

We've had a number of high profile enforcement successes, several of which have led to widespread media coverage. In June, a Wadebridge man was found guilty of the illegal capture of a salmon from the River Camel. A fishmonger was also found guilty of the illegal purchase and sale of the same fish.

In July, three men were found guilty of setting illegal gill nets between Rock and Polzeath. In August, a Padstow man was found guilty of setting an illegal net in the estuary near Little Petherick. Three illegal nets have been seized and destroyed from Plymouth Sound, Polhawn and Millendreath.

Monitoring

Data from the River Tamar trap and fish counter suggest that, although there have been reasonable numbers of multi-sea winter salmon returning, grilse numbers have been unusually low.



Lamprey caught in Gunnislake trap



Alan Cole with salmon from Tamar trap

7% of the salmon caught in the trap have had 'red vent' syndrome, a condition linked to a parasitic worm *Anisakis sp.* The condition causes necrosis of the flesh around the vent which opens the fish up to secondary bacterial infections and may potentially affect spawning success.

The fish counter and trap at Gunnislake also recorded large numbers of sea lamprey (*Petromyzon marinus*) returning to spawn in 2009 with more than 300 counted between April and August. As well as recording biological information, fin clips were taken from some of the sea lamprey as part of a genetic study. The study is investigating the genetic distinctness of European sea lamprey populations to see if each country, region or river has its own genetically distinct population. This would have important implications for their conservation and management.

Fish runs on the Fowey have shown a 13% decrease in salmon/large sea trout numbers and a 48% increase in sea trout numbers compared to this time last year.

Angling participation events

We have had another great year with seven junior events, five adult events and a hugely successful family day. In total, we've coached around 300 people. Alongside the routine angling participation events, we also ran some collaborative projects that increase angling participation and also improve access to fisheries.

Projects

Kerrier Pupil Referral Unit

This project was a collaboration with SW Lakes Trust who gave us free use of Stithians. We were able to run five days for pupils from the school. This enabled 80 students a chance to try a days fishing.



One for the net...

Cornwall Blind Association

We have funded this charity to enable them to run six introduction days for five people. A lower ratio of students to teachers was obviously required but, even so, 30 people have been given the chance to try fishing. This did prove a challenge to our coaches Bob and Jerry, one that they wholeheartedly embraced and the feedback has been excellent. We hope to continue to work with them.

Echo Physical Disability Centre

With a free venue provided by SW Lakes Trust, we were able to run five days of fishing using the wheelyboat at Siblyback, coaching 45 people.



Having fun at one of our angling days

Trophy Partnership

(Torpoint Rame Outdoor Pastimes & Hobbies for Youth)

This project seeks to involve young people in outdoor pursuits in an effort to divert them from anti social behaviour. We were delighted to work with Police Community Support Officer John Riggall and coach Bob Tetley to sponsor two days of fishing. The uptake was great and saw 30 people receiving coaching.

The Zone - Youth Enquiry Service

Working with the Plymouth based youth group, we enabled 80 children to sample coarse fishing over five days.



Look what I caught!



Combebow Pipe Bridge - migration blocker

Bere Alston & 29th Plymouth Scout Groups

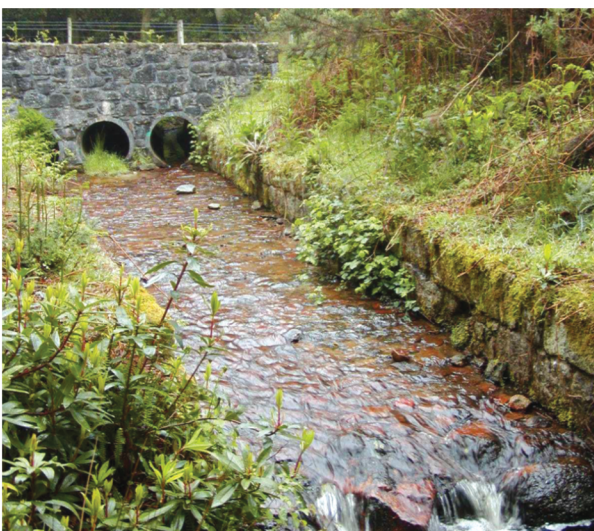
Our contribution to these groups enabled them each to run five days of fishing for 160 people. The scouts were tremendously well organised and the days ran like clockwork.

South West Prisons Angling Association

We have recently made contact with this new club and are planning to fund them in the near future.

Club Brunel

Access to Sillaton Lakes for the less able members will be improved by stabilising the access paths using better surface drainage. Also, improvements will be carried out to the fishing pegs to enable people of all abilities to fish.



Restoration work on the River Piall

Combebow Fish Pass (Tamar catchment)

A tributary of the River Lew is affected by a pipe bridge as the pipes are too small to allow easy migration of fish through them. Access to significant salmon and sea-trout spawning upstream will be improved. We will be replacing three smaller pipes with a large culvert. The culvert has been ordered and installation is expected to start in the next few weeks.

Trenant Stream Gravel work (Fowey catchment)

The Fowey River Association are key partners in a project with SWW funding to improve spawning gravels in the Trenant Stream near Park Pit. The work will start in the next few weeks.



Gravel cleaning at Luffincott

Tamar gravel work

The cleaning and creation of 14 gravel spawning areas has been completed at Tetcott and Luffincott on the River Tamar using the gravel cleaning bucket. The cleaning of natural gravels is considered better than importing stone, a method previously used.

Piall restoration (River Yealm)

Agreement has been reached with Imerys over the works to be carried out including: reinstatement of 250m of natural channel, creation of in-stream habitat to improve biodiversity and fish passage improvements. The work will be carried out this Autumn.



Whalesborough fish pass

Whalesborough Fish Pass Project (Stat and Neet)

An Alaskan A fish pass has been installed at Whalesborough. The project was funded by Environment Agency regional money and by North Cornwall District Council. The fish pass will enable sea trout and eels to gain access to over 25km of the Rivers Neet and Strat. These rivers are currently classed as 'Poor' for fish populations under the Water Framework Directive. This is great news, as Whalesborough weir has been a barrier to sea trout and eels for years.

Sky Tips erosion control

We now have agreement with the landowner to trial straw bales to prevent sand run off from old china clay tips into the River Warleggan.



Sky Tips

Hill Bridge, River Tavy - fish screen and fish pass

Work is now complete on this large environmental improvement project, including the placing of boulders for a secondary migration route in high flows. A new fish pass and intake screens have been installed by South West Hydro to make their hydrogeneration stations more sustainable.

Evans Weir

Interim improvements have been made to the existing fish pass where timbers had been lost and leaks had made the pool fish pass impassable in most flows. We have secured Defra funding for design work for a new Larinier fish pass, hopefully to be installed next summer.

Evans Weir



Cotehele (Tamar Catchment)

Through negotiation with the National Trust we have secured agreement for significant improvement of the Cotehele fish pass on the Morden Stream.

Knotweed control (River Tavy)

Roger Round from Tavy Walkham and Plym Fishing Club is again tackling knotweed on the Tavy with the assistance of Environment Agency funding and landowners.

Salmon Tributary Project (Tamar, Tavy, Lynher, Yealm, Plym)

Over 6,112 metres of fencing has been installed with more lined up to do (2,900 metres). This has been done in partnership with local farmers in order to protect the riverbanks from erosion and to encourage riparian growth.