

## 2011 Season Review

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Once again it's been a mixed season - and the wettest August on record didn't help! Many anglers reported poor results for 2011 with fewer visits to river than last year and lower catches when they did get to fish. However, some did very well – as the picture below demonstrates.

Chris Thomas, the Association's Vice-President, in his 2011 AGM report said "ELAA is no longer just a fishing club". This means that we now need to consider the Tyne as a complete eco-system of interdependent species of plants, birds, mammals and invertebrates, as well as fish - with each species having a unique role to play in the overall health of the river.

So on the principle that a healthy river makes for a good fishery, the Committee has tried to reflect this approach in its work over the past year. Through the production and implementation of a Management Plan, which in turn has led to various activities such as the creation of wild fishery, electro-fishing to monitor fish populations, and improving spawning habitat on the Bearford Burn (see below), we are confident that this approach will improve the river, and the fishing, in years to come.

476 permits were sold in 2011 and 67 usable catch returns were completed (14.7%). These returns show 1539 brown trout, 27 sea trout (16 returned), and 2 salmon. Brown trout catches per angler varied from 0 – 400, median 7 fish. Median brown trout weight was 1 lb, with 6 brown trout over 2lb. Seven otters were reported by 10 anglers and 2 mink were seen.

### 2012 AGM

**Monday  
January 23<sup>rd</sup>  
7:30 PM**

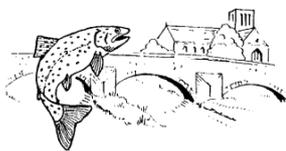
**The Town House  
Haddington**

**Guest Speaker  
Patrick Fotheringham  
Director  
Forth District Salmon  
Fishery Board  
&  
Forth Fishery Trust**



(Photo Adam Benjamin Jones)

Tyne sea trout - this is what the little ones grow into!



## Advice for Beginners

At ELAA's Haddington Show stand this year we met several people who were just starting out as anglers or were thinking of taking up the sport. So if you're new to angling or if you bought your first permit this season and are wondering what's the best way to fish the Tyne - well we asked anglers with years of experience on the river to give us their top tips.

Now they say that if you ask two economists the same question you will get three different answers. Well it's a bit like that with anglers.

Obviously we need more than this short article to explain how to fish, but as a rough guide for the beginner: ***fish to suit the conditions and try to match your fly with the natural flies around you.*** So if fish are rising most people would use a dry fly. If there are no fish rising (and you don't feel you could tempt one up with a dry fly) then a wet fly or nymph might be your best bet and of course advocates of bait fishing would suggest altogether different tactics. But obviously it's not as simple as that.

### Upstream or Downstream?

We also have consider whether to fish up or downstream. Both methods have their time and place, and their supporters, and fortunately, on the Tyne (unlike some rivers) you can do either.

### Downstream

"Across and down" is a very popular downstream method, particularly for beginners, because you don't need pinpoint accuracy in your casting to get started. Cast a wet fly, nymph or spider out in front of you and it will swing across the river as it drifts downstream - let the current do the work. It's a method that catches fish, although some people believe that it limits the amount of water you can cover and the fly does not move naturally in the water. Also, the fish are more likely to see you because they usually face upstream.

### Upstream

If you fish upstream with a dry fly, nymph or spider the fly will drift downstream at a more natural speed making it more attractive to the fish. As your casting improves and as you learn to read the river you will be able to cover all the places where fish are rising or may be lying.

Many people say that upstream requires more skill than downstream fishing. That's a whole debate in itself, but it does enable you to get closer to the fish without spooking them - very important on a wild fishery like the Tyne.

### Further Information

One of the great things about angling is the amount of information available in books, DVDs and online, but the most valuable source of information is probably fellow anglers. So don't be afraid to ask anglers you meet on the bank. Most people are more than happy to share their knowledge - ***but please remember not to rub it in when you catch more fish than your new expert angler friend!***

***See ELAA website for more information on how to fish the Tyne.***

***[www.elaa.co.uk](http://www.elaa.co.uk)***



What it's all about!



## Which baits and methods are allowed on the Tyne?

Not everyone is a flyfisher. Bait fishing is also allowed on most parts of the Tyne and is the method of choice for many anglers.

ELAA rules permit the following baits and methods.

- **Natural baits allowed:**  
worm, maggot, insect grubs
- **Baits not allowed:**
- livebait, minnow (live or dead),  
powerbait, sweetcorn, bread

- **Spinning is not permitted anywhere on the Tyne.**

If you see anyone spinning or find evidence of spinning (empty spinner packets on the bank) you should report it to FSFB Bailiff Bill Cunningham (see "Poaching" below for phone number).

- **Treble hooks are not allowed anywhere on the Tyne**

- **No set lines:**

This means you cannot put a line in the water, lay your rod down on the bank or on a rest then wander off or have a nap.

## Weir and fish pass update

The story of the fish passes continues to run, but unfortunately we seem to have had a bit of a false dawn this season. Several organisations including ELAA, (largely through Committee Member Brian Davidson), the Forth Fisheries Trust, the Rivers and Fisheries Trusts of Scotland and SEPA have all been working hard to take things forward. The aim of the project is of course to make it easier for migratory fish to make their way up the Tyne to spawn.

### Report

Last year all seven weirs were professionally surveyed and a report was produced by fish pass consultant Mike Beach. The funding application to SEPA was successful and tenders were issued to invite

proposals for the work, but the costings that came back were considerably higher than those suggested in the report. (which were unrealistically low). Because of the large differential in costs, it was not possible for the partners involved to raise the necessary funding in the short timescales given.

### Pilot project

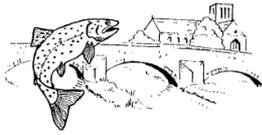
However, through the Forth Fisheries Trust and SEPA further work is underway to map all obstacles in the Tyne catchment which may lead to a potential national pilot project for SEPA to demonstrate to others and we are hopeful that the barrier easement work will still continue in one form or another.

**Many thanks to Brian Davidson for his work on this project.**



Fish pass at the Knowes Weir

Photo Tony Hawkins



## Haddington Show 2011

Encouraged by last year's success, the Association decided once again to have a stand at Haddington Show.

As in 2010 our aim was to raise the profile of the ELAA, to let the wider public know about our angling and conservation activities, and hopefully to attract more people to fish the Tyne. It was also an important opportunity to meet riparian owners.

### Riverbank setting

This year we made more use of the Tyne flowing behind the stand by opening up the back of the marquee to allow access to the riverbank: and this year we were joined on the stand by professional flycasting instructor Will Shaw.

### Professional

Will, who is AAPGAI, SGAIC and FFF qualified has recently moved into the area and kindly offered to give short casting clinics to members of the public, the proceeds from which were donated to the ELAA.

### Invertebrates

Once again the invertebrate aquarium generated a lot of interest, especially among the children, and once again we got to see blue winged olives

hatching in front of our eyes. All in all it was a great opportunity to meet the public and explain what we do.



(Photo Tony Hawkins)

Will Shaw flycasting demonstration. See [www.lineslinger.com](http://www.lineslinger.com)

### Committee members

Committee members Chris Thomas and Adam Love-Rodgers were the main organisers again this year and they were supported by various Committee members who helped out on the day and by FDSFB biologist Jo Givarn who brought some young trout along to show to the public. Many thanks to everyone involved in making the stand a success.



(Photo Tony Hawkins)

Committee members meeting and greeting the public.

## Fish Disease and Invasive Species

A number of invasive alien plant and animal species, including giant hogweed, Himalayan balsam, signal crayfish and mink, as well as Gyrodactylus salaris, a parasitic disease, also known as salmon fluke, pose a serious threat to native UK wildlife and fisheries.

These problems are already the focus of awareness and control campaigns by various government and private agencies. To find out more about what you as an angler can do to prevent these threats see:

[http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/Environmentandgreenerliving/Thewiderenvironment/Protectingwildlife/DG\\_196114](http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/Environmentandgreenerliving/Thewiderenvironment/Protectingwildlife/DG_196114)

and

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/marine/Fish-Shellfish/18364/18610/diseases/notifiableDisease/g-salaris>



## Workdays on the Bearford Burn

The Bearford Burn flows into the Tyne just above Sandy's Mill and has always been considered an important spawning tributary. There are stories from days gone by of large seatrout and salmon making their way up into the headwaters as far as Morham.

In 2004 a Wild Trout Trust, advisory visit emphasised the need to maintain spawning burns in optimum condition for the benefit of fish populations throughout the Tyne system and this advice was incorporated into both the 5-year Plan and the Management Plan. Committee member Adam Love-Rodgers organised workdays on June 4<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup>.

Work has been carried out in the past on the Bearford Burn and Tony Hawkins was able to provide historical information about fish populations, having taken a keen interest in the burn and its wellbeing over several years.

The aim of the work was to ease the passage for migratory fish by improving the flow of the burn, removing debris dams and clearing large areas of butterbur that had grown back since the last work was done.

We were also keen simply to get an idea of the overall condition of the burn as a fish habitat. Plenty of invertebrates (larvae and adults) were seen including upwinged flies (olives), caddis, willow fly and several species of beetle.

Subsequent electro-fishing in the upper reaches of the burn revealed good numbers of fish present, suggesting that overall the Bearford Burn is in good condition.

Many thanks to everyone who took part in the workdays. We hope to have another go at the butterbur in the Spring and any help to do this would be much appreciated. Keep an eye out at the AGM for the volunteer list.

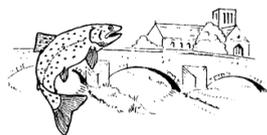


The problem



(Photos Tony Hawkins)

The solution



**Poaching and Wildlife Crime**

Sadly, as in previous years, there have been reports of poaching on the Tyne in 2011. There has even been an unconfirmed report of young otters being killed in a poaching incident.

**• Remember that anglers are the eyes and ears of the river •**

Yes, we say this every year, but it's true to say that nobody spends more time on the river than anglers. So nobody is better placed to keep a watchful eye out for evidence of illegal activities.

If you find any nets, or see anything suspicious or have any intelligence about poaching or wildlife crime, please contact the nearest police station or Superintendent **Bill Cunningham, Head Bailiff** for the Forth District Salmon Fisheries Board immediately. Calls can be made in confidence, and even if the authorities are unable to attend an incident, they still like to receive reports because it allows them to build up a picture of the level of poaching activity and to allocate their resources accordingly.

**Dunbar Police                    01368 8627180**

**Haddington Police        01620 824101**

**Bill Cunningham            07887 835549.**

**Thank you for buying a permit and sending in a catch return.**

**Your support is vital for the future of angling on the Tyne.**

**Tight lines in 2012!**



***[www.elaa.co.uk](http://www.elaa.co.uk)***

***[e-mail: fishing@elaa.co.uk](mailto:fishing@elaa.co.uk)***