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2013 Season Review

2013 was one of the driest summers on record, while the year before had been one of the wettest. Maybe one year we'll get a season when the weather's just right and then all we would have to talk about would be the fishing!

Permit sales in 2013 were 375, similar to the figure for 2012, and a total of 81 catch return cards showed 1,216 brown trout caught with 1,086 being released. The biggest individual tally was 164 fish. Twenty-two sea trout were caught (19 released) and a 5lb salmon was also caught and released. ELAA encourages catch-and-release and the use of barbless hooks, particularly in the wild fishery above Haddington. The most popular places to fish were Clerkington, Abbey Bridge and White Bridge, in that order, and 9 otters were reported between Nisbet and Tynningame Bridge.

The Association was involved in a number of activities and events in 2013. As well as the traditional and essential tasks of administering the permit system and stocking the river, Committee members also lent their support to the ongoing electro fishing project which aims to build a long-term picture of fish populations in the Tyne. They represented the ELAA at Haddington show, worked with Friends of the River Tyne on a river clean-up day and co-sponsored the Trout in the Classroom project run by the Forth Fisheries Trust..

2014 AGM

Monday

**January 20th
7:30 PM**

**The Town House
Haddington**

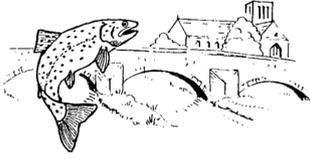
Guest Speaker

**Will Shaw
Casting Instructor**



Photo: Steven Dora

Not bad for low water! Wild brownie, 1¼ lb, caught and released at Sandy's Mill.



How to Fish the Tyne in a Dry Year - Adam Love-Rodgers

The Tyne is a spate river. Once the summer comes many of us wait for rain before going the river. What do you do if, like this year, the rain does not come?

To find trout in bright, hot weather look for the places where shade, oxygenated water and food come together:

- Overhanging branches can seem like an obstacle, but fish will be under them for both shade and the terrestrial insects that fall into the water.
- Weed grows more strongly in a hot year but the trout will be using it for cover, float a fly around the edge of it.
- You may know the stretch of the river you go to really well but the fish will move when the water is low. A fish that usually occupies a lie behind a rock may have moved deeper into a pool for example.
- Many of the really successful Tyne anglers wait for dusk.

Your tackle can also help:

- Tenkara tackle can be perfect for fishing pocket water.
- Flies should be dropped to size 16 unless there are larger flies hatching
- A lighter tippet might help but remember that there will be more weed for fish to bury themselves in.
- Dry flies, or unweighted spiders that do not sink more than a couple of inches into the water will avoid weed and be more visible to the fish.



Photo: David Elder

Fishing low water at Clerkington

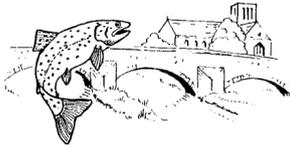
Committee Update

John Proctor stepped down as President (due to a family move to Edinburgh) after 5 years in the post. John organised the stocking of the river and we wish him all the best for the future. John also consistently reported the biggest catch returns of any angler on the Tyne, so we fear for the trout in whichever river he adopts in his new home! **Scott McIntosh**, Vice President, will stand in for John until the AGM.

Tony Hawkins remains on the Committee, but has handed his responsibility for collating catch return data to new member **Steven Dora**. Tony has been an active member of the Committee for an astonishing, and much appreciated, 30 years.

John Knox remains on the Committee, but after 9 years he has handed on his responsibility for liaising with riparian owners to **Tom Robertson**. This is a very important job, without it there would be no fishing.

Thanks to all three for their dedication and effort.



Five Tips for Better Casting – Will Shaw

Will has been angling for over 40 years. He is AAPGAI, SGAIC and FFF qualified and has fished all over the world. He lives locally, giving casting instruction and demonstrations across Scotland, and has provided a casting clinic for visitors to the ELAA stand at Haddington Show. Will is Guest Speaker at our AGM, Monday January 20th, 7:30 PM The Town House Haddington.

1. Know what you're aiming for: you want smooth narrow loops that turn over the leader and present the fly nicely.
2. Watch the rod! Be conscious of what the rod is doing: A narrow loop comes from getting the rod tip to travel in a straight line. Most people have no idea what's happening to the rod when they cast.
3. Use less power. Most people use way too much power. If it feels like hard work, you're doing it wrong! Just make sure you stop the rod at the end of the stroke.
4. Minimise slack. It's really hard to make a good cast if you have a bunch of slack line in the water. Start the cast with the rod tip on the water, and with no slack between the tip and the fly.
5. Finally and most importantly, PRACTISE! To get good at anything you need to practise regularly. If you don't practise between fishing trips you'll be precisely as good as you were last time out. A couple of hours a week

standing in a field practising can work wonders. Obviously you need to practise the right things, and that's where a good instructor can help. A good instructor will give you practice routines tailored to your needs and circumstances.

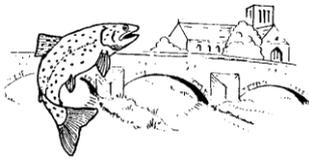
You can find out more at:

www.lineslinger.com



Photo Tony Hawkins

Will giving casting advice at Haddington Show



Haddington Show - it's back!

New Venue

Haddington Show has been cancelled several times in recent years through wet weather: but now it's back, having moved from the riverside showground in Haddington to a more suitable venue at East Fortune racing circuit. The new site has tarmac access roads and permanent parking facilities so we hope it's pretty much weatherproof.

ELAA Aims

As in previous years the aims of the ELAA in attending the Show were to represent angling and the Association to the East Lothian public; to raise awareness and appreciation of angling and river conservation; to meet anglers, potential anglers and riparian owners, and to demonstrate angling skills like fly tying and casting. The consensus was that these aims were definitely met on the day.

Invertebrate Tank

Once again the invertebrate tank proved to be a popular attraction. It's always encouraging, and often surprising, to see just how interested people are in what's living in the river. Obviously you would expect anglers to take an interest, but young children and their parents also seem to be fascinated by the nymphs and other bugs on display. With indicator species such as yellow mayflies, blue winged olives, caddis and stoneflies, the tank provides an opportunity to emphasize how healthy the Tyne is and how important it is for it to stay healthy - for everyone who appreciates the river and its wildlife.

Casting Lessons

We were fortunate to have Will Shaw, AAPGI-qualified instructor, and local angler Stuart McLean providing casting lessons (much needed in many cases - and we know who we are!)

New Anglers

We also met several new or potential anglers, so the Show provides a useful opportunity to offer advice about the Tyne, to sell permits and to recruit new members.



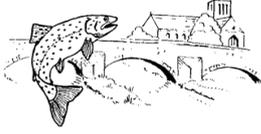
Photo: Tony Hawkins

ELAA stand at Haddington Show.

Thanks

Many thanks to all those Committee members who helped out at Haddington Show and made the ELAA stand a great success.

Particular thanks go to Adam Love Rodgers for overseeing the organisation of the stand, acquiring the marquee and insurance, liaising with the Show Committee and the fly tying demonstrations and to Will and Stuart for the casting lessons.



Friends of the River Tyne

Similar Aims

ELAA and Friends of the River Tyne have worked together on two projects since last year's AGM: a River Clean-up Day and the Fish in the Classroom project (in conjunction with Forth Fisheries Trust).

Clean-up Day

The Clean-up Day was held on July 27th and around 30 people participated, including a number of ELAA members. The work took place along the Haddington town section of the river and involved the removal of natural and man-made debris.

Fish in the Classroom

This project was co-sponsored by ELAA and involved Jo Girvan, River Forth Fisheries Trust Biologist, and ELAA members going into Pencaitland Primary School with trout eggs to explain to the children the life cycle of the trout and the importance of having clean water for it to live in. The children look after the eggs and when they hatch the fry are released into the river.



Photo: David Elder

Electrofishing



Ongoing Project

ELAA has been carrying out regular electrofishing throughout the Tyne catchment over the past 9 years as part of an ongoing project to build an accurate picture of fish populations.

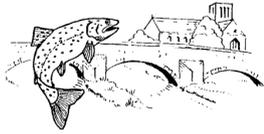
Jo Girvan, Forth Fisheries Trust Biologist, led the electrofishing sessions, assisted by several Committee members. You can read her full survey report on the ELAA website www.elaa.co.uk.

Conclusions

Jo's conclusions in the report are interesting, and two points in particular stand out: firstly, that the weirs along the river affect fish breeding capability (ELAA has been working for some time now with various organisations to address this problem); secondly Jo refers to the negative impact on fish populations of silting in the Bearford Burn.

Cooperation

This issue was raised at a recent Committee meeting and it was agreed to look into ways of dealing with silting through cooperation with other organizations such as SEPA, Forth Fisheries Trust and East Lothian Council.



Poaching – a message from PC Gavin Ross

Unfortunately we have to include this topic in the ELAA Newsletter every year because sadly poaching is always with us. Every adult female sea trout taken by poachers represents a future loss to the river of dozens, possibly hundreds, of fish, so it's important that we anglers do our bit to prevent it.

Police Scotland and the Forth District Salmon Fisheries Board bailiffs continue to fight poaching and the support of the public is vital, particularly anglers, since they generally spend more time on the river than most people.

PC Gavin Ross, Wildlife Crime Officer, reports:

“It's been a reasonably busy year. A number of nets were removed by the bailiffs and myself. One charge report was submitted. Knowes has again been the main area of activity, but there have also been reports of poaching at the Rat Trap, Sandy's Mill, Cascades and Clerkington.

The main poacher spent the summer working on the Tweed rather than the Tyne and he was caught and charged at least three times.

He is now disqualified from driving so I expect he will concentrate on the local area next year.

We had a successful prosecution regarding snaring. The witnesses were the bailiffs and this shows the strong working relationship between police and bailiffs.”

Please report any suspicious activity or any information relating to poaching (in confidence) to:

Gavin Ross

Dunbar Police

01368 862718

gavin.ross@lbp.pnn.police.uk

or

Bill Cunningham

Forth District Salmon Fisheries
Board Bailiff

07887835549.

Thank you for buying a permit in 2013 and for supporting angling and river conservation on the Tyne.

