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The Trust in full swing

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# THE DEVERON FLYER

**The Deveron, Bogie and Isla Rivers Charitable Trust**

**Newsletter 25, winter 2013**

## Welcome to the 25th newsletter of the Deveron, Bogie & Isla Rivers Charitable Trust.

The Trust's objectives are to 'conserve, protect and rehabilitate salmon, sea trout and trout and other indigenous species of animal, bird, insect and plant life and more generally to promote the ecological cycle for the benefit of the inhabitants of the Deveron'.

## Funding secured for 2013



**Scottish Natural Heritage**  
All of nature for all of Scotland

We are delighted to announce that grant aid of £62,116 has been secured from Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) to extend the DBIT's successful biosecurity programme until October 2013. The award-winning first phase of the project included the enlistment of 'River Champions' which were instrumental in the removal of 212 American Mink, the injection of 27 Japanese knotweed sites, removal of 30+ rainbow trout, the treatment of many kilometres of Giant Hogweed and two fishing festivals. Alastair Fenn, the original project officer, has taken up a role in Northern Ireland. The DBIT wish Alastair and his family well – his hard work and enthusiasm will be missed. Phase two of the project will continue and extend the control programme of all INNS (invasive non-

**Continued on back page**



**Catch at the Wrack: Deveron Fishing Festival 2012**

## Keeping the rivers accessible

DBIT staff have been clearing debris, restoring riverbanks and removing obstacles all year to allow easier access for juvenile fish as they travel up-stream to spawn.

Work has been carried out on the Chapel burn to modify a hanging culvert. The removal of an old weir at

the Glendronach burn means the river is now passable. Concrete removal at the Linn Pott has been aided by the Rivers and Fisheries Trusts of Scotland and SEPA. There is on-going restoration project on the Fishrie burn which will be completed in 2013.

**Full coverage of these projects inside**

# Burns and bridges

**2012 has been a bumper year for Trust restoration and fish access projects. Here are a few highlights...**

**BEFORE**



**AFTER**



## GLENDRONACH BURN, FORGUE ↑

Whilst existing works were on-going to repair the flood banks of the Glendronach burn, the DBIT negotiated with the distillery for the old weir to be removed. Happily, they agreed without hesitation for which we are grateful. Autumn 2011 did not produce high water levels during the spawning season. We did not find juvenile salmon upstream of the weir during our 2012 surveys – all a strong indication that the weir was proving to be an obstacle at certain water heights.



## CHAPEL BURN, GLASS ↑

Modification to this 'hanging-culver' was completed during the summer. By raising the water level downstream using boulder placement, fish can now pass through the culvert unrestricted. Primarily a trout stream, the Chapel burn should now sustain larger juvenile stocks for years to come. Thanks go to all trust members who contributed to this project.

## BLOCKAGE REMOVALS

DBIT staff along with Fishery Board bailiff (James Minty), removed 13 tree/flood debris obstructions during the summer. The obstructions were discovered during hogweed control carried out in the Isla catchment. Our thanks to Mr Harvey Grant of Lower Netherdale for also removing numerous blockages from the Meagie burn this autumn.



## ISLA (LINN POT), KEITH ↑

Modifications have been undertaken on an historic obstacle within the Isla catchment. The project was undertaken with financial assistance from the Rivers and Fisheries Trusts of Scotland (RAFTS) and SEPA's Water Environment Fund. We are grateful for all the assistance given.



**BEFORE**



## FISHRIE BURN ←

These photos show the result of an extensive bank restoration project on the Fishrie burn (King Edward). The project has stopped the acute silting of important spawning gravels, allowed mixed riparian vegetation to grow providing fish shade/cover, and now the vertical larch logs will protect over 370 metres of valuable arable land. The two-stage channel has been formed to allow the burn to 'spill' up to the larch logs but no further. A continuation of the project on the opposite bank is planned for 2013, subject to landowner approval and further funding from SEPA's Water Environment Fund.

# Tight lines for 2013!

**With the new season upon us, all eyes are on conservation and reward**



## Opening Ceremony of the River Deveron

We are delighted to announce the opening of the river Deveron fishing season 2013 and the presentation of the Morison Trophy. The trophy is being presented for the second time at the opening ceremony on the 11th February at 10am, Turriff AA lodge. The trophy presentation will be followed by the opening ceremony in association with William Lawson's who will be providing refreshments for all guests. The Morison Trophy is to be officially presented by Mr Paul Young. Mr Young is a Scottish television actor and some of his credits include The Tales of Para Handy, No Job for a Lady, Coronation Street and Still Game. Paul has gone on to find long-lasting fame among the fishing community, fronting a series of fishing TV shows, which began with 'Hooked On Scotland' on the BBC in 1991. Paul Young has this year been given the honour of blessing the Deveron with a dram of Glen Deveron Whisky. All are Welcome.



**Paul Young, above, will bless the Deveron with a dram, thereafter, the first cast of the season will be taken by Mr Craig Wyness, winner of the 2012 Morison Trophy**



## Rod-catch stats

Preliminary figures for 2012 show that more than 3,182 salmon and grilse were caught last year which is an increase on the previous year's total of 2,755, and well above the long-term average. Spring catches increased by 66 per cent to 255 salmon by end of May, with 188 (74 per cent) returned to the river. The sea trout catch decreased from 592 to a total of 521, ranging from 3lb to 8lb of which 73 per cent were returned safely.

## Festival award

The DBIT were thrilled to be recognised by the Scottish Thistle Awards. The Deveron Fishing Festival received the award for Best Nature Based Tourism Experience. We would like to thank our sponsors (William Lawson's and Trout & Salmon Magazine), beat proprietors, Turriff Tackle, David Burgess, anglers and all the trades involved with the festival which proved to be a great success.

## River Deveron Conservation Code for salmon and trout 2013

The River Deveron Salmon Fisheries Board remains extremely concerned over fragile levels of fish stocks in the river and in particular spring salmon and sea trout. As a result some amendments have been made to the conservation code for the coming season:

- All salmon are to be returned up to the end of May.
- From June 1st to October 31st, anglers may retain one salmon or grilse per rod per day with a maximum of two fish per rod per week. Anglers are asked to observe the Board's aspiration that all hen fish, and any cock salmon over 10lbs be returned.
- All sea trout to be returned throughout the season. The guidance on sea trout will be in place for a minimum of three years or until stocks recover to acceptable levels.
- Brown Trout from 15th March to 30th September – all Brown Trout under 10 inches in length to be returned. No more than 2 brown trout per rod per week to be retained.
- Injured or damaged fish outwith the above limits should be handed to the proprietor.
- All visiting anglers or local anglers returning from outside Britain must read, act upon and sign a *Cyprinodon salaris* declaration form immediately prior to going fishing. Please contact the DBIT or your beat Gillie/Manager/Agent.

## Spring salmon reward scheme



Chivas Brothers Ltd have again very generously sponsored our spring salmon reward scheme for 2013. Any angler safely returning a salmon caught between 11th Feb and the 31st May, can follow the set claim procedure below and receive a bottle of Chivas Regal 12 year old Scotch whisky (70CL). Strictly Over 18s Only.

### Claim Procedure

1. Take a scale sample (6-10 scales from behind and below dorsal fin) from salmon, place in scale packet/dry envelope and record details of fish to allow fish to be verified.
2. Take photo of fish (if possible)
3. Return salmon to river unharmed.



**Chivas Brothers**  
Pernod Ricard



native species) within the catchment.

Robin Vasey, who has worked with the Trust since its formation has many years' experience in the control of INNS, will take over from Alastair. Assistance will also be given by Roger Polson (DBIT Director).

The principal project is the grazing control trial at Auldtown of Netherdale. This site is a juvenile forestry plantation with severe infestation of Giant Hogweed, which has proved very difficult to curtail using normal methods. After much consideration, research and collaboration between a diverse range of stakeholders, it has been decided to implement grazing as the main control method.

Studies show that grazing with domestic livestock is an effective method of control for large stands of hogweed. Evidence for the effects of grazing came mostly from the use of sheep, but Giant Hogweed is also very palatable to cattle and goats. These grazers eat most above ground plants, thus greatly reducing photosynthesis, depleting energy and eventually the



### **Grazing Giant Hogweed should see the plant eradicated**

seed banks. The most efficient control is obtained by commencing grazing in the spring when the plants are small. Giant Hogweed contains toxins (furanocoumarins) whose toxicity is enhanced in the presence of ultraviolet light. These cause inflammation of the skin and mucus-secreting membranes (lips and nostrils), when exposed to light. Bare and unpigmented skin is particularly susceptible whereas darker and hairy skin is resistant. For this reason

the DBIT have chosen to use black face sheep as the grazers. Evidence indicates that over time (several years), grazing removes the juvenile hogweed plants, promotes a dense sward of grazing-tolerant species, which limits the amount of suitable substrate in which hogweed seeds can germinate and establish.

**If you would like to become a volunteer please call the Trust office on 01466 711388**

## **IN BRIEF**

### **Ghillies evening**

**The RDevDSFB/DBIT held a ghillies evening in early October. Many interesting topics were covered and an action plan was drawn up by Richie Miller (The Trust's Senior Biologist) to address many of the river issues raised.**

**Mr Neil Stephen has kindly agreed to act as the ghillie's representative on the Trust Board for the coming three seasons. Please contact him on 07801 658324@neilmuiresk@gmail.com. Our thanks to James Minty (RDevDSFB) for helping to organise the evening and also to Turriff AA for the venue. The gathering will now be repeated annually.**

### **Bridge alterations**

**On the 8th January Miller Plant Hire removed three sections of boulders directly downstream of Banff Bridge on behalf of Aberdeenshire Council. The boulders were removed after concerns were raised about the potential of the boulders to obstruct migratory fish passage in extreme low river flows and low tides events.**

**For further information please contact The Senior Biologist, Richie Miller, at The Offices, Avochie, Rothiemay, Huntly, Aberdeenshire AB54 7YY Telephone/fax: 01466 711388; email: richiemiller@deveron.org or visit the Trust's website [www.deveron.org](http://www.deveron.org)**

**The Deveron, Bogie and Isla Rivers Charitable Trust is a registered charity. No. SC 032131**