



Salmon Conservation Newsletter

The Shannon Regional Fisheries Board

- Protecting our National Fisheries Resource

Shannon Regional Fisheries Board

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Our species are threatened by pollution, habitat damage and poaching....

Please report any illegal activity to us at 061-300238

Weather Provides Mixed Fortune for Anglers

The 2008 season was the second salmon season since the Government decision to ban mixed-stock salmon fisheries. The effect of this ban was very apparent in the increased salmon runs last year and a steady influx of salmon to our rivers this year.

The record rainfall levels of June, July and August combined with the coolest summer since 2002 made angling difficult with rivers in flood for much of the season.

Construction of an access road for a wind farm development combined with heavy rainfall led to a bog slide that occurred during August at Stack's Mountain, Co. Kerry. Large numbers of juvenile and adult salmon and trout were killed and spawning grounds were damaged by the large influx of peat silt. The Shannon Regional Fisheries Board in conjunction with the Local Authority continue to carry out investigations and remediation work in the area.



Enforcement

Enforcement of the fisheries laws is vital for the conservation of fish species. The regulations are there to protect fish and the co-operation of the majority of anglers is welcomed.

Those in contravention of angling regulations and by-laws were issued with an 'On the Spot Fine'. For more serious offences prosecutions were initiated and several are pending at the moment. A strong coastal presence continued with our RIBs supported by the LPV Bradán Beatha. Staff also served aboard with the Navy

vessel the L.E. Ciara. In addition, several patrols of the region were carried out in conjunction with the Air Corp.

Inshore nets and traps were confiscated from rivers and estuaries during RIB, estuary and foot patrols, particularly the Shannon estuary and in West Clare. For the second year the Shannon Regional Fisheries Board were contracted to carry out protection on the ESB waters in Limerick area. Overall compliance was good and a number of court cases are pending.





Lower Shannon and River Mulkear

Following a submission to the Department by ShRFB, the 'Long Shore' fishery reopened this year for bank fishing.

In general fishing was slow in the area with some spring fish caught at Plassey and a late run of fish through the Long Shore towards the season end. Anglers are permitted to catch hatchery fish only in this section of the River Shannon. Compliance was good and the Board is

confident that the current salmon management regime will continue for 2009.

Angling on the Mulkear was severely impacted by the floods that persisted through the end of season. Salmon appeared to run straight through and few held up in the known fishing pools. Most fish were caught in the Long Field, the Meetings and at Abington. Initial analysis of logbook returns show that catches are slightly up on

last year.

The Mulkear Fishery Partnership continued to manage the Mulkear fishery. To date stiles and bridges have been repaired and replaced. Plans for 2009 include improved signage and the production of a brochure.

A radio-tracking study of salmon took place through the winter of 07/08 to track fish movement through the system.



River Feale

Angling on the River Feale got off to a slow start this year with no fish caught on the opening day of the season. Weather conditions also hampered fishing on the Feale with too little water early in the season and flood conditions through the later end.

Mid-July through August was the most productive period with most fish caught at the end of August.

Some good fishing was had by anglers spinning in dropping floods in early September followed by good fly conditions through to the end of season.

Draft netmen had a poor season this year. Despite an extension to the season of 2 weeks, they failed to reach their allocated quota. Flood conditions were also to blame for the poor net season.



Did you fish catch and release in 2008?

A specially commissioned badge is available to all anglers who released salmon in the Shannon region during the fishing season.

Shannon Salmon Restoration Plan

A group has been established to look into a strategy to restore salmon to the Upper Shannon. A draft management plan is available for download from our website. Two public consultation meetings are planned for Wed 3rd Dec at 7pm in the Lakeside Hotel, Killaloe and Thurs 4th Dec at 7pm in the Landmark Hotel, Carrick-on-Shannon.

Anglers are reminded that the deadline for return of completed logbooks and unused tags was the 19th of October. Non-return can be subject to a fine.

Several studies took place over the season including surveys of many of our rivers and lakes as part of monitoring programmes for the Water Framework Directive.

Other News

A detailed design plan for the proposed fish counting weir on the River Fergus is complete after a lengthy public consultation process. This has now been submitted for planning permission. It is hoped works will commence in 2009.

As part of a scheme, in conjunction with the OPW, to restore river channels

drained during flood relief schemes several baselines studies were completed. This will feed into enhancement works to take place on sections of the River Maigue in 2009.

A fish counter was also installed on the Maigue during 2008.