

September 2014

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## Salmon Return to the Glenbeg Burn

In our Briefing for April 2013, we reported on the installation of baffles at the Glenbeg Burn culvert near Grantown to improve fish passage.

Following recent electrofishing surveys on the Glenbeg Burn, we are pleased to report there are now naturally-spawned salmon fry above the culvert. Brian Shaw, SFB Biologist said, "The middle site was more typical of the Glenbeg Burn; a deep entrenched channel with pebbly substrate."

*Right: Steel Baffles at Glenbeg Burn Culvert*

"Previously only trout had been found at this site, but amongst the 70 or so trout fry were 6 salmon fry. A nice find and irrefutable evidence that at least two salmon had made it past the baffles last autumn".



## 2014 Finclipping and Stocking

At the Spey Fishery Board's Stocking Sub-Committee it was decided that some of the hatchery's fish would have their adipose fin removed to facilitate identification, either during monitoring, or if caught in the future. The tremendous effort by the 23 Ghillies surpassed expectations and almost all of the fish were clipped at the Board's Sandbank Hatchery.

SFB Chairman, Brian Doran, who also helped to fin clip at the hatchery, said, "I am extremely grateful to all the Ghillies for giving up their spare time to contribute towards this project and for their continued support and passion for the fish and for the river."

Credit must also go to the Hatchery Manager, Jimmy Woods, who produced fry in excellent condition, thus assuring them the best possible start to their long and hazardous journey to the feeding grounds in the far North Atlantic.

The hatchery produced 207,000 fed fry, of which 180,000 had their adipose fin clipped. The fin clipped fry are subsequently being released into the following burns: Tommore, Rothes, Batten, Corrie, Mackalea, Cromdale and the lower mainstem. The stocking was all done as mitigation; either for man-made obstacles, losses due to pollution incidents and the loss of fish during the recent large spate.



*Above: Ghillies busy clipping at the Hatchery*



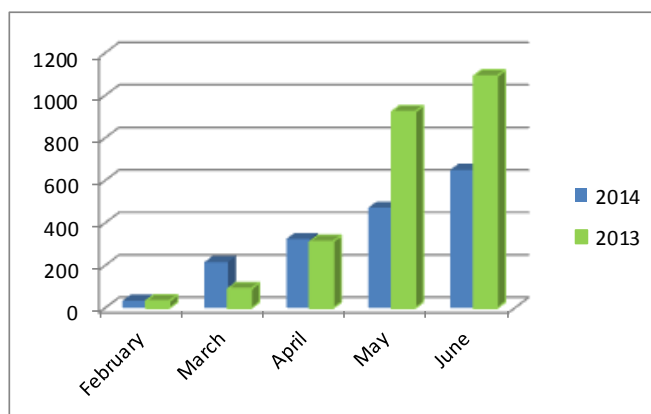
*Left: Ghillies Josh Walker and Jim Lowe carefully decant the fry into containers ready for planting out. Above: Introducing fry to their new habitat. (Photos courtesy of Steve Brand and Dave Buley)*

# BRIEFING - September 2014

## Salmon and Grilse Catches February - June 2014

Reported rod catches for the period February to June 2014 amounted to 1,683 Salmon and Grilse caught compared with 2,451 for the same period last year. However, the early part of the 2014 season (between 11th February and 30th April) produced a Spring Catch of 576, which was above the 437 Spring fish caught in 2013. The graph to the right shows the monthly Salmon and Grilse catch for February—June 2014, compared to that from 2013.

Anglers have continued to show increasing support for the Board's Conservation Policy. By the 30th June, 91% had been released (an increase on the 88% for the same period in 2013). Meanwhile, the rod catch for Sea Trout from February to June 2014 was reported to be 634, compared to 528 for last year. The release rate for Sea Trout had also risen to 80% this year, compared to 71% for 2013.

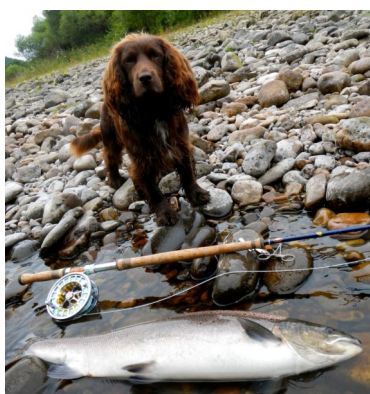


**Above:** Declared monthly rod catch of Wild Salmon and Grilse from the River Spey, calculated from returns made to the Spey Fishery Board.

SFB Director Roger Knight said, "Having got off to what looked like a promising start, fishing conditions on the Spey since mid-May have proved to be particularly challenging. This is a picture that has been replicated on many other rivers across Scotland.

Anglers have responded positively, though, by releasing over 90% of the fish they have caught. We are most grateful to all of the Ghillies and Anglers for their continued and enhanced support for the Board's Conservation Policy."

**Below:** 2014 Spring Salmon photos courtesy of Delfur Head Ghillie, Mark Melville.



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## Ranunculus Trials Get Underway

A joint working group involving the Spey, Dee and Don Boards, together with representatives from SNH and SEPA, put together a project to conduct an experimental trial of Round-up Pro-Biactive and Topfilm on the River Don, which is a non-SAC river on 18th July. The aims of the trial were: to determine if the chemical could control the ranunculus; to see how long the chemical remains in the area; and what impact this might have on other life, such as the endangered freshwater pearl mussels.



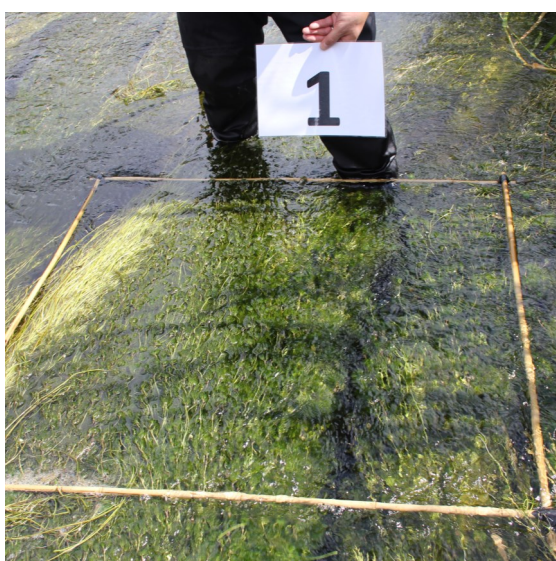
Biologists spray Ranunculus on the River Don



SFB Biologist, Polly Burns collecting water samples

The trial involved spraying two small areas of Ranunculus with herbicide, then taking water samples over the following 24 hours. Numerous water samples were taken and are now being analysed to determine the residual glyphosate content within the water following the application of this herbicide mixture. The amount of Ranunculus is also being monitored, both before and after the trials, using 'quadrant' samples, (see picture below).

We are now waiting to see whether the mixture has been effective in controlling the plant and whether it has had any subsequent effects. We will report more on both of these issues in due course.



Recording Ranunculus in quadrants



Recording water sample data



### Allt a'Mharcaidh Restoration Project

The Allt A'Mharcaidh is a tributary of the River Feshie which lies within the Invereshie and Inshriach National Nature Reserve (NNR), 10km southwest of Aviemore. Over 200 years ago 1.2km of its lower reaches were straightened for forestry purposes.

During this period many of the in-stream features, such as pools, riffles and associated habitat diversity that are important to juvenile salmon have been morphologically affected and diminished.



*Left:* The Allt A'Mharcaidh

Duncan Ferguson, Operations Manager for the Spey Fishery Board and Liz Henderson, Project Officer for the Spey Catchment Initiative have been working on a project to improve the condition of this section of canalised burn, similar to the project carried out two years ago on the Allt Lorgy. The aim is to restore and improve the river functions



*Above:* Google Earth view of the straightened section of the Allt a'Mharcaidh

by lowering embankments, exposing sediment and introducing carefully placed large woody structures. In time, this will lead to increased wetted area, more varied in-stream features and an improved habitat for juvenile salmon. The ground works are expected to commence towards the end of September 2014.



*Above:* The Allt Lorgy, 2 years following restoration work to re-meander the burn.



### Dates for the Diary

#### Spey Fishery Board Meeting

**Friday 21st November at 9:00am at the Craigellachie Hotel, Victoria Street, Craigellachie, AB38 9SR**

Members of the public are invited to attend as observers, but are requested to give notice to the Board's Administrator, Sally Worsdall, by telephone on 01340-810841, or by email at [admin@speyfisheryboard.com](mailto:admin@speyfisheryboard.com)

#### Spey Fishery Board Public Meetings

**Tuesday 28th October at 7:00pm. Venue: Fleming Hall, Queen's Road, Aberlour, AB38 9QB**

**Thursday 30th October at 6:30pm. Venue: Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors, 12 Great George Street, London SW1 3AD**

Due to limited places, booking is essential. Please advise the Spey Fishery Board's Administrator, by 13th October if you wish to attend either of the public meetings.