

# TARGET TAUPO

**A newsletter for Hunters and Anglers  
in the Tongariro/Taupo Conservancy**

MARCH 2000, ISSUE 33



Department of Conservation  
*Te Papa Atawhai*

# INNOVATION

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the big 'thumbs up'*



**Herb Spannagl,**  
*angling enthusiast, author, says...*

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"Everybody was very impressed how a seemingly stiff rod could be so responsive. While good casting is largely dependant on good technique **this rod made that a much more enjoyable experience.**

**Hugh McDowell, Angling  
Adventures, says...**

"First, a confession: Having been "slinging string" for about half a century I thought myself capable of deciding the best line weight for any fly rod simply by feeling the action in the shop. But I must say I was a bit surprised to find this rod handled the suggested #6 line better than the #7 I'd already decided in my head would be correct one to use..."

"In general I think you are to be congratulated on having such a superb range of fly-rods, not just the "Innovation" alone but also the "Presentation" series. All of them are truly World Class and, I believe, **stand proudly alongside imported brands costing twice the money!**"



**Tony  
Entwhistle,**  
*renowned South  
Island fishing guide  
says...*

"Lightweight" and 'responsive' are the most striking first impressions when you pick up these new rods. In the **Innovation** series, Kilwell have set out to create rods with a stiffer action, but which are responsive and very easy to cast. No question they have succeeded brilliantly.

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**Graham Pyatt, fishing guide says...**

"... their fly rods rank right up with the very best available anywhere - the Presentation series put rod building into a class of its own, the overall performance of these rods produced the ultimate results or so we thought. Now Kilwell have done it again with their **Innovation** series."

"Actual casting under real conditions proved an absolute delight. The rods were extremely responsive and with a somewhat stiffer action than their predecessors, made casting extremely easy once you've made yourself familiar with the rods totally different responsiveness. During casting rod loading is extremely easy to the feel, loops are tighter and relatively easy to control and with all this of course comes accuracy."

"Overall it is my unreserved opinion, that again, Kilwell have come up with a series of rods that are world class - in every respect being equal at the very least to any rod available - **better than most.**"

FISHING



SHOOTING

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# CONTENTS

The Tongariro River – A Charm All Of Its Own <i>by Glenn Maclean</i> .....	3
Waitahanui Angling Tracks .....	8
Kids' Fishing Days, 2000.....	8
Taupo Fishing Licence Review <i>by Shirley Oates &amp; Glenn Maclean</i> .....	9
Pesticide Summary.....	17
Spring Hunter Access to Rangitikei Remote Experience Zone <i>by Cam Speedy</i> .....	18
Who is this Happy Fellow? .....	21
Taupo Fishery Hosts Victorian Fishery Managers .....	21
Angling Seminars .....	22
Summer Fishing Comment <i>by Rob Marshall</i> .....	23
Trout Possession and Storage Regulations .....	26
Winter Angling Prospects.....	27
Waipa Trap Summary <i>by Rob Marshall</i> .....	28
Fishing Access on the Tauranga-Taupo River .....	31
Illegal Activities Information .....	31
Target Taupo Mailout .....	31
What Does This Autumn Hold for Deer Hunters? <i>by Cam Speedy</i> .....	32
The New Millennium on the Chatham Islands <i>by Sid Puia</i> .....	35
Catfish Tagging Update .....	37
River Angling Sign Update .....	37
1999 Spawning Summary <i>by Rob Marshall</i> .....	38
Hinemaiaia River Resource Consents .....	40
The Living Delta.....	41
Waiotaka River Changes in Place .....	41
Free River Fly Fishing Seminars .....	41
Keith Draper .....	42
"Women in Conservation" Group .....	42
Joint Limnological Societies Conference .....	44
Underwater Viewing Chamber Re-Opens .....	44
Introducing Kathleen Hubay .....	45
Bovine Tb in Local Deer Herds .....	45
The Taupo Fishery Area Team.....	48

*The views expressed in Target Taupo are those of the contributors and do not necessarily reflect Department of Conservation policy*



# The Tongariro River - A Charm All Of Its Own

by Glenn Maclean

*Glenn is the manager of the research and monitoring programme in the Taupo Fishery Area. He is also responsible for fishery advocacy and is the editor of Target Taupo.*

*Too crowded or part of the Tongariro experience?*

The Tongariro River is the most quoted example of a New Zealand river which suffers from crowding. Intuitively standing shoulder to shoulder with other anglers must reflect a crowd. However when we explore the issue a bit deeper then suddenly it is not so clear cut.

We all know the situation. Waiting patiently on the bank watching a line of our fellow anglers lucky enough to already have a spot in the pool, we inwardly groan when yet another car pulls into the car park. The anglers ahead of us cast and take a step and finally we too have the opportunity to drift our flies through the pool. A couple of fish later it has been a good morning but if only

there were fewer anglers it would be so much better. But would it really?

## **Crowding - what do we really mean?**

For a lot of us the issue of crowding on the Tongariro boils down to the fact that sharing the river with lots of other anglers restricts our ability to catch fish. The Tongariro River is about catching big prime spawning rainbows, often in large numbers. We expect to see other anglers. Indeed, I remember fishing the upper river one winter's morning only a couple of years ago when after not seeing a single angler over several hours I began to seriously wonder if I should actually be there. I felt some relief when finally another angler arrived. This is a totally different situation from fishing a wilderness river. Recent research by Cawthron Institute in association with Fish and Game New Zealand found the experience of back country anglers was diminished if they encountered more than one or two other anglers on a particular day.

As a youngster growing up in Northland, my only knowledge of trout fishing was gleaned from reading books and magazines. I learnt that trout were wary fish and to catch them required stealth and careful casting. When in 1984 I finally stood on the banks of the mighty Tongariro I was surprised to see people standing little more than a rod length apart trying to catch fish almost at the feet of the next angler. I was even more surprised when these anglers proceeded to haul out fish after fish. Seemingly all the anglers didn't affect the trout at all. This wasn't trout fishing as I had read about. And that is the key. The Tongariro experience is like no other, at least within our fair shores.

On the Tongariro our fellow anglers only become an issue when they are actually standing where we want to fish. Ultimately for most of us where we want to fish on the Tongariro comes down to where we think we have the best chance of catching lots of fish. Simple as that.

## **How silly are these fish?**

Our research following the movement of radio-tagged trout as they migrated up the



Tongariro shows that in fact anglers do affect the distribution of trout in the river. Over a period of days the fish move into inaccessible holes and under the far bank where they are out of reach. Under the cover of darkness or following a flood the trout move out into more vulnerable positions. That is why the first anglers through a pool each morning often have the best fishing of the day. Needing to be on the river at daylight is quite foreign to anglers used to chasing summer trout actively feeding on emerging nymphs and dry flies. But these are not summer trout. Early starts are nothing new in the Taupo fishery; old texts detail the thrill of the strike of a trout on a wet fly in the pre-dawn dark. As a sea fisherman, for me the concept of being on the water at dawn is entirely natural, it is not the only time to catch fish but it is the best time.

That said, the fish are still extremely tolerant to the intrusion of anglers in a way rarely repeated anywhere else. This tolerance is fortunate for a lot of us. Many New Zealanders became enthusiastic anglers through catching a Tongariro trout. It didn't matter that we couldn't cast very far or that the line crashed down on the water. Inevitably a trout took the fly and was excitedly landed. And what a trout it was. As our skills improved, more and more trout were caught. For some anglers the time comes when new angling challenges become more appealing and they move elsewhere. Sometimes they can be quite disparaging about the Tongariro, forgetting the role it played in their formative angling days. That it is time to move on isn't a bad thing. The Tongariro has played her part in starting another angling career and a space is created for someone new.

### **Who is right?**

For the most part trout fishing is a solitary sport or to be shared only with a close friend. However a big part of fishing the Tongariro is the interaction with other anglers. A good example is a friend who spent 10 years guiding on the wilderness rivers of the South Island, the sort of rivers that represent the pinnacle of river angling to most of us. Each winter year he would arrive to spend a week on the Tongariro. The

simple fact was he enjoyed the chance to fish and talk with others and to cast a big line as far as he possibly could. Comradeship and discussion on the riverbank between strangers is a big part of fishing the river.

In amongst all these anglers there is an occasional person whose selfish actions detract from the enjoyment of everyone else. It is

very easy to associate bad manners as an inevitable outcome when numerous anglers share the river. However lots of anglers and poor behaviour are not the same thing. A poorly behaved angler has the same effect whether they share the pool with one other angler or 10.

Such incidents can and do occur anywhere; the feature of the Tongariro is that the actions of a single person tend to impact on numerous other anglers rather than just one and so attract a lot more comment.

Fortunately only a tiny minority of people set out to be deliberately antagonistic. The vast proportion of incidents on the Tongariro arise from misunderstandings or different interpretations over what is acceptable behaviour. A frequent cause of consternation arises over what is sufficient space to leave another angler. With the best of intentions anglers have different perceptions about whether a pool is crowded or not. For someone used to continually rubbing shoulders on a city street sharing a pool with 10 other people may be a very pleasant and relaxing setting. Someone else used to not seeing another angler on their home rivers may feel the pool is overcrowded with half this number of people and resent the intruding angler. Who is right? Is there a right answer? In many cases there is probably more than one right answer. There is also one very definite wrong response. If you feel aggrieved but just stand and stew then don't complain later on. The vast proportion of Tongariro anglers approach a pool with the intention of doing the right thing by their fellow anglers. If you don't want to say anything that is perfectly okay but you can't expect the situation to change. Make a pleasant approach and usually the other angler is only too happy to reach an amicable solution. If you are unlucky and they are totally unhelpful then at least you have tried and it is their actions that are

*On the Tongariro our fellow anglers only become an issue when they are actually standing where we want to fish.*



# I Said...



as a member of the New Zealand Fly-Fishing Team, Sage sponsored me with a 696-3SP three-piece fly rod, which in my books is arguably the ultimate in fly rods. This comment I make with the experience of having purchased my first Sage nearly 17 years ago, and having been in the position to try out a range of rods since.

This particular rod has the power for distance casting, the sensitivity to pick up the lightest of takes, which is an absolute necessity in competition fishing. When conditions require casting full or short length lines, the 696 performs with the ultimate of ease. It handles small flies with long leaders, and the reverse being weighted flies with a short leader. For me it is a top performer: from its aesthetic value through to performance, and an absolute delight to use. Thank you Sage. I treasure this rod and appreciate your support, and I am proud to be associated with such a fine product.

**Pat O'Keefe**

Placed Third, 1999 World Fly Fishing Championships. Professional Guide and specialist fishing tackle store owner



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clearly not in the spirit of fishing the Tongariro.

Another example which can cause some unintentional ill feeling is the traditional practice of asking an angler already fishing a pool if they mind if you join them. In reality you have put them in an awkward spot. Few people like saying "no" outright and possibly giving offence and so tend to reply in the affirmative even if they are not very happy about the idea. Instead give them an option such as "Do you mind if I come in below you or would you prefer I wait a few minutes?".

That way it is easy for them to ask you to wait if they do feel you would be too close but equally there is now an onus on them to move on through the pool.

In general, if the pool is already full then move on somewhere else. Waiting on the bank just causes those already in the pool to stop moving because they are no keener to wait on the bank than you. Similarly if you are sharing a pool with others, keep moving so that everyone gets several opportunities to fish the best lies.

For all the publicity, conflicts are uncommon and most Tongariro anglers are a pleasure to share a pool with.

### Angling utopia

When I stood on the banks of the river in the early 1980s there certainly were a lot of anglers on the river. In fact as many as or more than last winter. Anglers talk about the good old days when you had the river largely to yourself but in all likelihood that situation hasn't existed for 50 or 60 years. Sure these days anglers tend to have a greater disposable income and travel is better and faster but for all that crowds have always been part of the Tongariro. Issues

of *New Zealand Fishing and Shooting Gazette* printed in the 1930s and 1940s contain repeated references to the problems of crowding on the river. If you didn't know the date of these articles you could easily assume they had been written about the situation in the 1990s.

We dream of those red-letter days on the Tongariro when fish after fish comes to the bank. For most of us such days are few and far between but it is that hope that brings us back again and again. And just sometimes the river delivers. To be able to make such catches more regularly might just be angling utopia and if only there were fewer anglers it would be possible.

Maybe but maybe not. Crowding on the Tongariro is a "catch 22" situation, for the better the fishing the more anglers are attracted. Our data clearly shows that crowding is only an issue when the fishery is performing. For example in annual creel surveys following the low point in the fishery in the late 1980s less than one angler in 10 raised crowding as an issue. However, in 1993 when catch rates were the highest recorded for a number of years, one in three people interviewed raised crowding as a detraction. We all want the chance to be able to fish the river and enjoy the spoils but are upset

*Few people like saying "no" outright and possibly giving offence and so tend to reply in the affirmative even if they are not very happy about the idea.*



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*A bankside chat with other anglers is an enjoyable aspect of fishing the Tongariro River*

that so does everyone else. Under the current regime the only way there is likely to be many fewer anglers is if the fishery declines to the point where many anglers give up on the river. Sure you may have it to yourself, but your catch will be poor.

The other option is some form of control of the number of anglers. There are various options which have been raised at different times. These include forms of balloting, fishing the river on odd or even dates only and restrictions on the number of days per season each person can fish. Each measure raises its own issues, but the bottom line is that to be effective, the restriction would have to cause all of us to spend less time on the river than we currently do. If we miss out on the ballot or the river is in flood on our allotted days we might well prefer to put up with a few

anglers on our shoulder to be at least able to fish the river. Ultimately it is an issue for anglers to decide but at present there is little support for any form of restriction.

There are avenues available for anglers seeking to escape the worst of the crowds.

Anglers tend to be concentrated around a few popular pools so if your favourite pool is full don't be afraid to try elsewhere. It is an instinctive behaviour for anglers to gravitate to wherever other anglers are already fishing yet often there is no good reason. On the morning referred to earlier when I didn't see another angler on the upper river there were 30 or so anglers around the main road bridge. The fishing in the upper river was exceptional. By exploring the river you may well discover new lies overlooked by other anglers which will produce just as

***The bottom line is that to be effective, the restriction would have to cause all of us to spend less time on the river than we currently do.***

many fish. Often in our creel surveys we come across anglers tucked away on their own, who have caught as many fish as all the anglers put together in a nearby pool.

Most of us tend to be on the river at daylight and by mid-morning it is time for breakfast and a sleep. If you are prepared to forgo being first through the pool and fish the river later in the morning there will often be many fewer anglers. Likewise most anglers at the start of each winter are fired up with enthusiasm and fishing the river at every opportunity. By August many have satiated their appetite for a few months at least and put their rod away. Yet the runs are still in full swing and good numbers of fish will be in the river through September and into October. Chase the deer in April, ducks in May and leave the river until later in the winter if you want to avoid the peak crowds. Taupo rivers are high-use fisheries with an

innate ability to produce lots of fish. Many of us aspire to fish the premier wilderness streams and can be quite critical of the Tongariro experience. However in reality most of us will be content to stay with the Tongariro. The ease of access, the companionship and above all the numbers of big prime rainbows draw us back. Thank goodness, because the back country rivers simply couldn't stand the pressure if every Tongariro angler were to target these.

To have a popular pool to yourself when it is full of fish is a wonderful experience but it is an unrealistic expectation. The Tongariro River is people, big rods and heavy lines and flies and prime hard fighting rainbows. It is a unique experience and while not everyone's cup of tea the Tongariro quite rightly holds a special attraction for many New Zealand anglers.

## WAITAHANUI ANGLING TRACKS

Over recent weeks we have carried out work to fishing access tracks at the Cliff Pool area on the Waitahanui River and to Blake Road. Further repairs are also planned.

The Cliff Pool section is a popular area with anglers and access had been affected by stream bank erosion and the ponding of water in low lying areas. We re-cut the track and filled the large boggy areas with compacted pumice to create a defined track to the main fishing spots. This will allow anglers to use a single track and the surrounding vegetation to recover from the trampling which occurred last winter as anglers negotiated their way to the water's edge. Similar areas occur further upstream and these are currently being repaired along with erosion at the Schoolmaster's Pool. The remaining walking tracks will be cleared by the end of April.

Maintenance has also been carried out to the car park tracks and storm water culverts. Blake Road has been graded and several water holes drained and filled.

There was a spate of fires lit in the middle section of the river last winter, including a deliberately lit

fire on Flat Bridge. This fortunately caused no major structural damage. If you see any suspicious activity in the area please advise the Police as soon as possible.

## KIDS' FISHING DAYS, 2000

The fishing pond at the Tongariro National Trout Centre will be open for children to catch a trout on the following days this year:

Sunday, 7 May  
Sunday, 11 June  
Sunday, 9 July  
Sunday, 13 August  
Sunday, 1 October

Numbers are restricted to 30 children per hour from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Bookings are essential and can be made by telephoning Shirley Oates on (07) 386 9243 between 1 p.m. and 3 p.m. on any week day. Tuition is given by volunteers and DOC staff, to children aged six to 14 years (inclusive) who can hold and control a fly rod. There is no charge for this. However, a fishing licence is required and a Child's Day licence can be purchased on site for \$3.00 or children may bring their own Taupo District fishing licence.

# Taupo Fishing Licence Review

by Glenn Maclean and  
Sbirley Oates

*Sbirley is responsible for the licence administration and providing executive support for the Taupo Fishery Area. She also types and organises the printing and publication of Target Taupo.*

## Introduction

During 1998, Rachel Harris, a Waikato University Master of Management Studies student, carried out a review of the Taupo District fishing licence administration system. She provided recommendations to the Department of Conservation on the fee structure, licence categories and licence sales' infrastructure.

Rachel's paper was reviewed by Fishery Area staff who developed some of the recommendations. The amended recommendations have in turn been put to the Tuwharetoa Maori Trust Board and Taupo Fishery Advisory Committee for further discussion. The full report is too long to be reprinted in *Target Taupo*. However, many of the recommendations, particularly with regard to licence administration, are similar to what is currently practised. This reflects the fact that the administration has evolved over a number of years and already undergone

many changes to improve its effectiveness. Instead this article will concentrate on the recommendations about the licence categories.

## Existing licence categories

Currently six categories of licence are available. These are presented in table 1 along with sales figures for each for the fishing seasons 1994/95 to 1998/99.

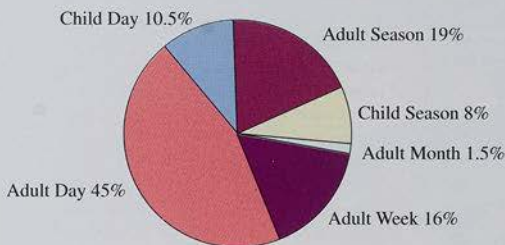
The distribution of sales and revenue across the categories is presented in graph 1 for the 1998/99 fishing season.

## A review of possible licence categories

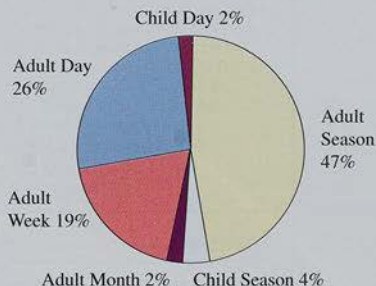
Historically the fees set for each category of licence have been largely independent of the fees set for any other category. However, this is unlikely to maximise either angling opportunity or licence revenue because adjustments to the price of one category are not

Table 1: Taupo fishing licence categories and sales for the seasons 1994/95 to 1998/99

Category	1994/95	1995/96	1996/97	1997/98	1998/99
Adult Season	11,587	11,552	11,848	11,843	12,571
Adult Month	936	892	912	857	970
Adult Week	10,135	9146	9651	10,069	11,051
Adult Day	35,437	33,559	33,380	27,832	30,394
Child Season	5929	5728	6045	5067	5,369
Child Day	6681	5967	6479	6922	6,819
<b>Total sales</b>	<b>70,705</b>	<b>66,844</b>	<b>68,295</b>	<b>62,590</b>	<b>67,174</b>



Graph 1: Distribution of licence sales by category for the 1998/99 fishing season



The distribution of revenue by category for the 1998/99 fishing season

considered in light of overall sales. Instead, we suggest a pricing formula so that it is cost effective to buy two licences of a particular category rather than the next category up, but not three licences. This requires a licence to cost approximately 40% of the next category up, or in other words, the next category to cost two and a half times that of a shorter term licence. One outcome of this approach is that only a limited number of categories can be offered unless the long-term licences become much more expensive relative to short-term licences.

As an overriding strategy when considering licence categories and administration, we suggest:

*That all other aspects being equal our objective should be to minimise the number of licence categories and keep licence administration as simple as possible.*

**Adult Season** - This licence is valid from 1 July to the following 30 June, and currently represents approximately half the revenue received.

Sales figures (table 1) indicate that the number of Adult Season licences sold has

increased slightly over the last five years. Rachel Harris (1998) notes that anglers interviewed recognised this category as the licence that provides most value for money. Her report indicates this licence has high support from both anglers and licence agents. The angling opportunities created by this licence cannot be effectively recreated using any other form of licence other than with a 12-month licence beginning from the date of issue. However only 3% of agents and 10% of anglers interviewed by Harris suggested a 12-month licence would be an improvement. From our point of view there are both practical and equity issues which arise with this category. One advantage of a defined start to the season is that any new regulations can be drafted to come into effect on this day. These changes can be highlighted on the new licence and with publicity about the new season to ensure anglers are aware of them. It would be much more difficult to ensure an angler holding a 12-month licence issued several months previously was aware of the changes. A lack of a clearly defined start and finish to the season would also make budgeting more uncertain and make financial management more difficult. Currently the fishing season (1 July to 30 June) is aligned with the financial year of the Department of Conservation.

There is also an equity issue should the licence fee increase at some point. An angler purchasing a 12-month licence a day before an increase will be paying less than an angler buying the same licence a day later.

***Both anglers hold the same licence and receive the same angling opportunities yet one has paid less than the other has.***

For these reasons we support continuing with an Adult Season licence category based on a 1 July to 30 June year.

**Adult Month** - Available for one calendar month from the date of purchase except that the licence ends on 30 June where the licence is purchased less than one month from the end of the season (30 June).

Over recent years the sales have remained static (table 1) for this licence and represent only 1.4% of total licences sold. This level of sales suggests the demand is limited. Removal of this category would reduce the time and cost of administration and offer the opportunity to up-sell the licence to the whole season category.



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**AA HOST**  
ACCOMMODATION

This licence class has no support from licence agents and support is minimal from anglers. We recommend that this category be deleted.

**Three Month or Six Month Categories** - A variety of long-term licences have been suggested which would fill the gap between the Adult Week and Adult Season licences. These include a three month licence, six month licence and licences covering just the winter or summer fishing seasons. Rachel Harris found limited support for such licences from the licence agents (8% in favour) but greater support amongst anglers (25% support).

Sales data for the existing Adult Month category would indicate that demand for such categories is unlikely to be high unless there is a significant price differential with the Adult Season category. This would most likely necessitate a much higher Adult Season price than currently. Given that for many anglers a six month licence in particular may well cover all of their angling activity then it is likely they would switch to one of these categories. Unless such a licence were a similar price to the existing Adult Season licence, such a switch would represent a significant threat to the total revenue generated. However if the fee were similar then the total revenue would potentially increase as anglers who still required a licence for the whole year would be forced to buy a much more expensive licence. If the

price of the Adult Season licence were too high they would possibly choose to limit their fishing activity to a shorter period or not to buy a licence at all, which is not in keeping with our statutory requirement to maximise angling opportunity. Any additional categories would also incur extra administrative costs and inconvenience for the licence agents.

Given that three out of four anglers are comfortable with the existing options of purchasing either a month or a season licence, as well as the additional costs and risks from introducing a medium-term licence, it is our view that a medium-term licence is an unnecessary complication. We believe that the best strategy is to keep the options simple so that if a short-term licence does not meet the angler needs they simply upgrade to an Adult Season licence. Rather than the person feeling the need to attempt to obtain the minimum licence necessary

***anglers should feel the Adult Season category is good value for money and the most sensible purchase.***

**Adult Week** - Currently an Adult Week licence is available for seven days from date of issue. Many anglers making a weekend trip to Taupo use this licence. If the classes of licences remain the same then there is a significant demand for this class as demonstrated in table 1.

*A small charge for a children's fishing licence attributes some value to the licence. Daniel Hall of Te Awamutu with his first trout*



Given the significant sales for the Week category there is clearly a strong demand for a licence of this sort of duration. If the Month category is deleted then the Week category is currently the next category down from the Season category. We have raised the concept that it should be practical to buy two shorter-term licences rather than the next category up but not three. In this case it would mean an angler fishing for less than a fortnight would be better off with two Week licences but if their activity covers any longer period then it is best to purchase a Season licence. We recommend that the Adult Week category be retained.

**Multiple Day** - Other short-term options to cover multiple days including a Weekend licence (covers Saturday and Sunday), 48-hour licence (covers 48 hours from time of issue) and 72-hour licence have been suggested. Rachel Harris found 25% of licence agents and 33% of anglers interviewed supported such a licence. Much of this support was because of the perceived convenience of issuing one licence rather than multiple day licences to anglers visiting for the weekend. However this aspect can

be overcome in other ways than by adding an extra category with the additional costs and confusion which would arise. Using a fee relativity of 40% of the next category up means a Week licence is cost effective as soon as the angler wishes to fish for more than two days, i.e. the Week licence is the multiple day option.

**Adult Day** - The Adult Day licence at present is only valid for one calendar day, i.e. from 5 a.m. to 12 midnight on any day. For example, if the licence is purchased at 3 p.m. for use that afternoon then it remains valid only until 12 midnight. One advantage of this is that it reinforces that fishing is not permitted between midnight and 5 a.m. The disadvantage is the fact that an angler may be paying \$12.00 for only a couple of hours of opportunity and therefore may often choose instead either not to go fishing or not to buy a licence. Furthermore over 80% of anglers are visitors to the area, often visiting for a weekend at a time. Anglers arriving Friday afternoon and wishing to fish on arrival need to buy three-day licences to cover what is usually a 48-hour period.

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The Adult Day licence represents approximately 26% of the total licence revenue and is the second highest revenue earner. This reflects the very strong demand for this type of licence and the financial implications of any changes need to be carefully considered. As reflected in table 1 sales were relatively constant until the 1997/98 season when there was a significant decline (16.7%). This decline coincided with a 33% increase in the licence price, suggesting the price increase may have had a significant bearing on sales. This licence creates some confusion with the Fish and Game Council's day licence, which is for a 24-hour period. Many anglers perceive that a Taupo Adult Day licence should also have a 24-hour entitlement. Twenty-four hour licences cover a 24-hour period starting from a designated time. Forty-five percent of anglers interviewed by Rachel Harris favoured such a licence. One issue which arises though, is that it may be tempting for an angler once on the lake or river to fish past the designated finishing time if the fishing is good.

There is significant overlap between the current day licence and a 24-hour licence and it is not sensible to have both. A 24-hour licence at the same price as the day licence will reduce revenue in that many anglers who currently buy two day licences to fish an afternoon and the following morning would then only need one licence. On the other hand this is likely to be countered by increased sales to anglers who previously found the cost of two day licences prohibitive and chose instead not to go fishing. It is expected anglers will intuitively feel a 24-hour licence is better value for money because they get a full 24 hours of opportunity. In our view we expect the revenue from 24-hour licences to at least match that from the existing Day category. On this basis a 24-hour licence is favoured in that it is more consistent with our underlying objective to maximise angling opportunity. This licence would also alleviate the confusion that exists at present with the 24-hour Fish and Game licence.

Licence agents would need to take care when issuing this type of licence to ensure that the time of purchase and expiry time were recorded correctly. It would need to be made clear to the purchaser that fishing is prohibited between the hours of midnight and 5 a.m. but this could be clearly spelled out on the licence.

**Child Season and Child Day** - These two categories of licence play an important role in providing opportunity for young people to be introduced to the sport.

The fees should be kept low to encourage participation. A small charge rather than providing the licence free attributes some value to the licence and reinforces the lesson that they need a licence to go fishing. If we adopt the same relativity between categories (40%) then the step up from a Day licence to a full Season licence is very small and there is little point in providing additional categories in between. For the same reasons and to be consistent with the Adult 24-hour licence it is suggested that the Child Day licence be replaced with a 24-hour licence.

**Overseas Visitor/Tourist Licence** - Overseas visitors comprise approximately 7% of the total Taupo anglers. In many places throughout the world, visiting anglers are charged more for their fishing than "locals" on the basis that visitors enjoy benefits in the fisheries that are paid for through the taxes and efforts of the residents. When this issue was canvassed during preparation of the Taupo Sports Fishery Management Plan there was little support among anglers for this concept at Taupo. Fishery management is totally funded through angling licence revenue with no input from the general public purse and therefore

***the scenario of residents or New Zealanders subsidising the fishery for overseas anglers does not apply.***

At present, overseas anglers have no more or less impact on the fishery than other licence holders and so do not create any special management effort that might require additional funding specific to them. The Conservation Act 1987 requires that licence fees be set to recover the costs of management only and therefore there does not appear at present any opportunity for charging overseas anglers a premium price. For these same reasons Treasury has also signalled its opposition to any premium being charged.

Previously a special Tourist Licence issued by the former Tourist and Publicity Department was available to overseas visitors under regulation 6A of the Freshwater Fisheries Regulations 1983. This licence allowed the angler to fish anywhere in New Zealand for a month. However when the Conservation Act was amended in 1997 to allow Fish and



Game Councils to set licence fees by Gazette Notice, this regulation was inadvertently revoked. The tourist licence is now out of print and unless the regulation is reinstated is no longer available.

A variation to the Tourist Licence has been suggested. Rather than a licence administered by the Department of Internal Affairs, which has taken over the residual functions of the Tourist and Publicity Department, it is proposed Fish and Game New Zealand and the Department of Conservation institute a joint licence by Gazette Notice. The fee for this licence would be set by adding the cost of a Fish and Game Whole Season licence and a DOC Whole Season licence together with a charge to cover the costs of administration. The revenue received would be apportioned on the same basis. It has been suggested that the licence would be voluntary and valid for a period of one month but given that, as discussed, it is not possible to charge overseas anglers a premium it appears to us that it would have to be valid for one year.

The legality of such a licence for use at Taupo still needs to be confirmed.

This would be an additional licence category which does not offer any advantage to a Taupo angler, and as such it is not consistent with our overall strategy to minimise the

number of licence categories. Our stance will be guided by the response of Tuwharetoa Maori Trust Board and Taupo Fishery Advisory Committee as to the appropriateness or not of the revised tourist licence proposal.

**Charter Boat Licence** - This class of licence would be issued to a specific boat and cover all the anglers fishing from the boat over the course of the season. It would enable charter operators and guides to take people on fishing trips without individual anglers having to purchase a licence. However, if the operator was to go fishing on another vessel or the river bank they would require their own personal licence.

Currently charter boat operators and guides are not permitted to carry licence books on board their boats. This is because in the past when books were permitted on board unscrupulous operators would not issue licences unless they saw a ranger approaching. The disadvantage which now arises for operators is that the clients are required to make a definite decision as to whether they want to fish before embarking on their trip, as they are unable to change their minds once out on the water.

It is a legal requirement that whenever unattended rods set in rod holders are used that everyone on board is licensed. This is

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*Downriggers require the use of rod holders. Unless the angler remains in contact with their rod, everyone on board must be licensed. For large parties on commercial boats a boat licence would simplify the issuing of licences and ensure everyone on board was licensed and entitled to fish*

because when the rod is in a holder it can be very difficult to establish just who is using it and therefore whether they are licensed or not. The use of downriggers is widespread amongst charter operators and requires the use of rod holders. If the rods are unattended it is necessary to issue licences to everyone on board which in some circumstances may involve 50 or 60 licences. Not surprisingly the operators find this a time-consuming and frustrating task, hence the support for a boat licence.

Obviously it is essential that any new licence does not diminish the revenue derived from guided anglers. Several options exist including developing a fee or range of fees based on historical use or a fee which is independent of use but which is likely to be greater than if each angler bought their own licence. Each operator would need to have the choice of continuing with the status quo or having the boat licence. Several operators have indicated they would opt for the boat licence even if it cost more because of the much greater convenience, and would factor the cost into their charges.

There is a lot of discussion necessary to resolve the details and ensure that revenue is not diminished. However there are a number of advantages from such a licence for the

fishery management and users if a suitable format can be established. While it ensures that everyone on board is licensed it is still necessary to ensure other regulations are complied with.

While initially it was suggested that the option for a boat licence should also be available to private boat owners we believe that as long as there is no form of documented ownership and identification of private vessels the system would be too susceptible to abuse. Restricting the licence to a vessel licensed for commercial hire under the Lake Taupo Regulations is likely to overcome any potential problems.

There is obviously a lot of discussion necessary to come up with a suitable system. However the Department is of the view that as long as revenue is not jeopardised and a practical system can be developed then the boat licence would be a desirable outcome.

*New Zealand-wide Licence* - An option which receives a lot of support amongst anglers is a single licence which covers the whole of New Zealand.

Currently the Maori Land Amendment and Maori Land Claims Adjustment Act 1926 requires that only a special Taupo licence is legal in the Taupo fishery and that no licence issued by or on behalf of a Fish and Game

Council is valid.

The Act enshrines an agreement between the Crown and Ngati Tuwharetoa. It guarantees a licensed angler foot access to fish the streams and lake and the general public access to the lake. The Tuwharetoa Maori Trust Board is paid a sum equivalent to half of the revenue from Taupo District fishing licences, licensing of commercial boats, mooring, berthing and launching fees and fishing and boating fines. Today the cost is borne by taxpayers and not anglers, in recognition of the benefits to all New Zealanders of this agreement.

The issuing of a fishing licence which is specific to the Taupo Fishery is fundamental to the operation of the Act. Any change to this provision would require agreement between the Crown and Ngati Tuwharetoa at a political level and is clearly outside the scope of the review. Therefore the option of a New Zealand-wide licence is not considered further.

## The next step

The Department is currently discussing these recommendations with the Taupo Fishery Advisory Committee and Tuwharetoa Maori Trust Board.

It is planned to have any changes coming out of this process in place for the start of the 2001/02 season. Some recommendations will simply need a change in operational procedure but others, such as changes in licence categories, will require amendment by Gazette Notice under the Maori Land Amendment and Maori Land Claims Adjustment Act 1926.

## References

- Harris, R (1998). *An Economic Review of the Taupo District Fishing Licences*, Master of Management Studies, University of Waikato, 101pp.
- Taupo Sports Fishery Management Plan* (1994), Fisheries Section, Tongariro-Taupo Conservancy, Department of Conservation.

## PESTICIDE SUMMARY

Toxins are used on conservation land for a variety of reasons. Animal pests impact on conservation values, spread disease and are sought after for their fur and skins. Any toxin used on conservation land must be in accordance with strict protocols set down by the Department of Conservation. Our new Quality Conservation Management (QCM): Animal Pest System also requires each conservancy to produce, every four months, a summary of all pesticides used on land administered by the Department. This is called a Pesticide Summary. The summary is too large and in the wrong format to publish in Target Taupo, but it is sent to all game packing houses, aerial wild animal recovery operation concession holders and hunting organisations, and is available wherever hunting permits are issued. If you hunt or take dogs onto any of the areas listed below you should ensure you first read the latest Pesticide Summary.

Southern shores of Lake Whakamaru  
Tirohanga Scenic Reserve

Lake Taupo Lakeshore Reserves  
Opepe Scenic Reserve  
Lower Tauranga-Taupo River  
Mount Pihanga,  
Tongariro National Park  
Waituhi/Kuratau Scenic Reserve  
Tongariro Forest and adjoining reserves  
Erua Forest and adjoining reserves  
Whakapapa Village in  
Tongariro National Park  
Ohakune Mountain Road in  
Tongariro National Park  
Karioi Lakes/Rangataua Forest  
Ohakune Lakes Scenic Reserve  
Rangatikei River/Otamateanui  
Stream Confluence in  
Kaimanawa Forest Park  
There may be other areas where private possum hunters have also laid cyanide for skin/fur recovery operations. These areas are *not listed* in the Pesticide Summary. Please take note of any poison signs when hunting and do not tamper with or remove any such signs.

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When you pay too much you lose a little  
money, that is all.*

*When you pay too little,  
you sometimes lose everything,  
because the thing you bought  
was incapable of doing  
the thing you bought it to do.*

*The common law of business balance  
prohibits paying a little and getting a lot.  
It can't be done.  
If you deal with the lowest bidder,  
it's well to add something  
to the risk you run.*

*And if you do that,  
you will have enough  
to pay for something better."*

John Ruskin (1819 - 1900)



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# Spring Hunter Access to Rangitikei Remote Experience Zone (REZ)

*Table 1: Hunting statistics for Rangitikei Remote Experience Zone, Spring 1999*

Three helicopter landing sites were again available to recreational hunters within the Rangitikei Remote Experience Zone (REZ) of Kaimanawa Forest Park during the period 24 October to 19 December 1999. Helicopter landings are not generally permitted but this special access is to allow recreational hunters the opportunity to reduce the area's

mixed red and sika deer herd. In turn this will reduce the impact of the deer on the habitat within the REZ.

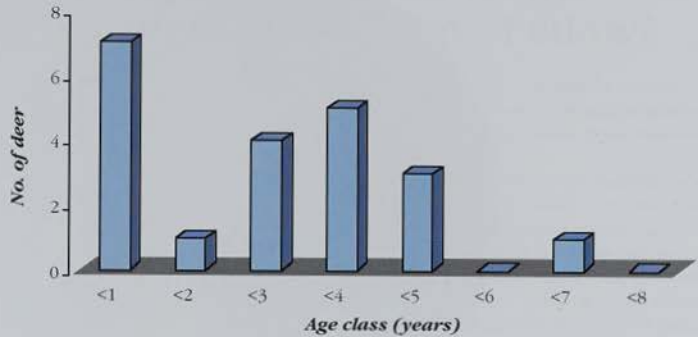
A total of 13 parties involving 39 hunters utilised the access opportunity. The results of the hunting efforts of the 12 parties that returned data are summarised in table 1. In total, 40 deer were reported killed, an

Landing site	No. of parties	No. of hunters	Days hunting	Sika deer seen	Red deer seen	Sika stags killed	Sika hinds killed	Red stags killed	Red hinds killed
Ecology Stream Enclosure	3	10	26	8	1	-	2*	-	-
Whakamarumaru Tops	6	17	50	16	56	3	1	11	13
Otamateanui Tops	3	9	36	2	22	1*	-	1	8
<b>Totals</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>112</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>21</b>

\* = hybrids (identified by hunter and/or jaw length)



*Graph 1: Age profile of the Rangitikei Remote Experience Zone spring deer harvest, 1999*



average of three per party. As is usually the case, a few parties got no deer and others did very well. Success is related in part to the timing of a trip as the spring flush does not occur at the same time each year. It is also influenced by the weather patterns as it is hard to find and hunt deer during cool, wet and/or windy weather. Hunter skill and knowledge of the blocks also influence success rates.

The harvest this year included 21 red hinds, 12 red stags, four sika stags and three sika hinds, although at least three of the sika may have been hybrids. A total of 21 deer jaws were provided from the 40 deer reported killed. An age profile of this harvest appears in graph 1. All deer, regardless of species or sex, have been lumped together to obtain this age profile due to the small sample size.

One of the main points to note is that sika deer continue to make up only a small proportion of the harvest, despite there being plenty of them available to hunt in this part of the park. This is because their preferred habitat is the heavy bush and/or scrub cover where they are much more difficult to hunt. In contrast, red deer spend much of their time out in the open where hunters are able to get at them.

The other notable point is the age profile of the harvest. The high proportion of older deer typical in past profiles from the REZ is not evident this year. This suggests a decreasing age structure in the population which in turn suggests hunting is starting to have an impact. However, the high proportion of very young deer (less than one year) suggests reproductive success has also increased and this will need to be watched over the next few years. Clearly fawn survival during 1999 was high with the dry winter. Interestingly, the lack of yearlings (less than two years) suggests the very wet winter of 1998 had a negative impact on



*Rob Marsball enjoys the morning views down the Mangamairi Valley within the Rangitikei Remote Experience Zone*



*The morning sun catches Glenn Maclean with a prime November sika stag high in the Rangitikei Remote Experience Zone*

fawn survival.

Most parties left the camp sites in a clean and tidy condition, and because there were no access points close to the Rangitikei River this year, the access period would not have had any impact on the Rangitikei trout fishery.

It will be interesting to see how much interest

there is in these blocks next year after the central Kaimanawas are opened to helicopter harvest in June of this year. Hunters wishing to book a block for this year can book through the Turangi office from 1 October 2000.



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*Director-General of Conservation Hugh Logan experiences the Taupo fishery first hand*

## Who is this Happy Fellow?

It is pretty obvious why Director-General of Conservation Hugh Logan is looking so pleased after landing a prime maiden Taupo rainbow trout.

As part of his oversight of the Department's activity Hugh makes a practice of visiting all Conservancy and Area offices once a year. This provides an opportunity to see first hand much of the work being undertaken in the field and behind the scenes. Staff also appreciate meeting and talking with the boss in a more relaxed setting.

During his visit to the Taupo Fishery Area last November Hugh saw acoustic surveys of trout on Lake Taupo, latest developments at the Tongariro National Trout Centre and operations at the Waipa fish trap. He also made an early-morning fishing excursion on the lake and was rewarded with this catch. No stranger to trout fishing, Hugh was introduced to the sport at an early age by his father who is still a keen angler on back country Canterbury waters.

## Taupo Fishery hosts Victorian Fishery Managers

Recently we hosted Richard McLoughlin and Wayne Fulton, the Director and Deputy Director of Fisheries Victoria in Australia. They spent three days with us as part of a 10 day visit to view the management of New Zealand trout fisheries. Of particular interest to them at Taupo was the use we make of acoustic equipment to estimate trout abundance, our applications and use of radio tracking and the development of the Tongariro National Trout Centre.

The visit also provided a valuable opportunity

for us to discuss issues and management approaches with them. They are responsible for marine fisheries as well as trout fisheries in Victoria and operate on a much larger scale than us. However, our two organisations face many of the same issues and it was surprising just how often that, independently, we have come up with very similar solutions.

## Angling Seminars

Two very successful fishing seminars were held on the shores of Lake Taupo in January. Taupo Fishery Area staff organised the seminars to give visiting anglers the opportunity to pick up a few tips on lake fishing techniques and improve their fishing success and enjoyment. Nearly 250 people attended and feedback indicates the sessions were very well received with several requests for similar presentations in the future. Although directed at less experienced anglers it seems that even a few experts

*Fisbery Manager John Gibbs explains the intricacies of deep trolling to bis audience at Wharewaka Point*

picked up some ideas. Venues were the Omori boat ramp reserve and the Wharewaka Point reserve.

The seminars were organised by Ranger David Moate and presented by David and Area Manager John Gibbs assisted by Ranger Rob Hood. Topics and demonstrations included suitable fishing gear, trolling and jigging techniques, downriggers, getting the best from your echosounder, where trout feed and why they gather in certain places. We also showed the best methods for landing

and releasing trout, killing and caring for your catch and covered aspects of boat handling and some relevant fishing regulations.

Given the interest in these sessions they will become a permanent feature of our summer activities. Venues will be varied each year to spread the opportunities and a simple handout listing the key points will be prepared. The venues and times for the seminars next summer will be listed in the November 2000 issue of *Target Taupo*.

*Below: Over 180 people attended the seminar held at Omori.*





# Summer Fishing Comment

by Rob Marshall

*Rob is the Fishery Area Ecologist and is responsible for the fishery monitoring programmes. He is also a very keen angler.*

When the weather permitted, the fishing was very good on Lake Taupo this summer. Catch rates over the period leading up to Christmas and New Year were exceptional, with some nice conditioned fish caught. With the onset of the busy boating season in January anglers' success dropped as is typical of this time of year. Overall the size and condition of the fish, and angling success over summer, were an improvement on last year.

During summer we count the number of boats fishing on the lake as part of routine monitoring of the trout harvest. Results this year show that there was less angler activity on the lake than last year with the peak count of 291 boats compared to 450 in summer 1998/99. Nevertheless there were occasions when places like Kuratau Spit and Rangatira Point began to resemble Auckland's northern motorway in rush hour, though no doubt everyone present was pleased to be on the lake catching trout, not sitting in traffic.

We also undertake creel surveys on the lake to assess anglers' catch rates and the size and quality of the fish caught. All of the information presented here is a product of those interviews. Thank you to those who gave a minute of their fishing time to take part in the survey.

Chasing trout around the lakeshore in spring is an enjoyable way to fish Lake Taupo. For the winter fly fisher it is a welcome change, being able to wade in shorts and a tee-shirt, cast unweighted flies and actually see the trout attack your fly. During October and November trout move onto the sandy, shallow beaches in pursuit of spawning smelt. This year the trout remained in the shallows through until late December and people who took advantage of the slightly extended season caught some very good rainbow and brown trout that had been feeding on smelt and gaining condition all spring.

On the lake last year anglers reported catching large numbers of mending kelt throughout the summer. This year two moderately sized floods in late spring and early summer gave kelt the stimulation they needed to return to the lake. Subsequently these fish were able to take

advantage of the spawning smelt around the lake edge and so recover condition quickly. Consequently reports suggest that fewer poorly conditioned kelt have been caught this year. Another feature of last year's fishing was the unusually large number of undersized fish caught throughout the season. These small maiden (immature) fish always make up a large proportion of the population early in the season, so their presence in anglers' catches is not surprising. However, these fish grow at approximately 1mm per day and by January there are normally only a very small percentage of fish shorter than the minimum legal length of 45cm. Results this year were much more in keeping with the typical pattern, with 31% of fish caught in October released as undersized, but only 18% in January.

The overall size and condition of legal-sized trout kept by anglers this summer were similar to those of last year. Table 1 shows the average weight and length of rainbow

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*The smiles say it all*

trout kept by anglers in 1999/2000.

Angler catch rates this year were above average. In November the average catch rate (number of fish caught per hour by the average angler) was very high, at 0.46

success. We will run an article on "Jigging at Taupo" in the November 2000 issue of *Target Taupo*.

The northern and southern ends of the lake usually produce slightly different angling

	October	November	December	January	February
Weight (kg)	1.58	1.41	1.52	1.66	1.69
Length (mm)	506	501	506	513	507

*Table 1: Average length and weight of rainbow trout kept by anglers, October 1999 to January 2000*

or one fish every 2.1 hours. The catch rate remained high in December (0.32) while the effect of increased boating activity and water temperature in January is reflected in the lower catch rate of 0.22 fish/hour (one fish every 4.5 hours). Fish are still available to anglers in late summer but unless you're prepared to get up early in the morning, you need to employ very deep fishing methods such as wirelines or downriggers to have regular success. Jigging can also be a deep fishing method and is beginning to grow in popularity at Taupo. It has taken a while to catch on here but this summer we noticed more anglers giving it a go. These anglers were all enjoying good

results. This year the size of the trout caught didn't vary between location, but it appears that overall success in the northern end (north of a line from Western Bays to Hatepe) was higher than the south. The average catch rate in the north was 0.34 or one fish every 2.9 hours over the summer, while in the south it was 0.29 or one fish every 3.4 hours. Both catch rates are very respectable for Lake Taupo.

Our summer angling survey continues until the end of March. If we approach you on the lake please spare a minute or two of your fishing time to talk to us and tell us how your fishing is going. Your input is very important and it is a good opportunity to have a chat to one of our fishery rangers.

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# Trout Possession and Storage Regulations

The Taupo fishery is the largest freshwater fishery in the country, attracting approximately 45,000 anglers annually. It is primarily a visitor fishery with local anglers making up only 18% of total angler numbers. Visiting anglers staying for a number of days often store their accumulated catches of trout. However, the daily bag limit is only three trout and it is illegal to continue fishing or to have kept more than three trout on any day. Clearly it is necessary if you are storing trout from a previous day, that these are not confused with the current day's catch.

If you are staying at home or at a friend's place this simply means you should clean each day's catch and store it in the freezer. However, if you are camping out in the Western Bays you may well end up with a large number of fish in your possession. In this situation you have to clearly identify

each angler's catch and when it was caught. The simplest way to do this is to process the catch each day, label each fish with the angler's details and store them separately from the following day's catch. This may sound like a hassle but it beats trying to convince a fishery ranger why you are in possession of more than the daily bag limit. Anglers frequently store their trout at places like accommodation facilities, commercial smokehouses and restaurants. In all cases when trout are being stored on behalf of you, the following is required:

***This may sound like a hassle but it beats trying to convince a fishery ranger why you are in possession of more than the daily bag limit.***

## **When you deposit the trout:**

- \* clearly label each trout with your name and address and date of deposit
- \* do not deposit more than the daily bag limit on any one day

- \* do not store more than 23kg of trout
- \* do not gift or exchange trout for full or partial payment for storage, cooking or smoking
- \* have your licence with you so that the number can be recorded in the register

## **When you store trout for someone else:**

- \* keep a register of anglers' details, number of trout and total weight of fish
- \* retain this register for at least six months after the last entry in it

*As a result of a successful overnight trip in the Western Bays you may have more trout than the daily bag limit in your possession. If you are then stopped by a fishery ranger you are in an awkward situation unless you have stored your catch in individual bags which are clearly labelled with your details and the date*



\* permit fishery rangers to enter the premises at reasonable times to inspect fish and records

If you are gifted a trout from an angler and wish to have it smoked, follow the same procedure but provide the angler's details as well as your own. Similarly, if you are depositing a number of trout caught by your angling party, have with you all the details of each angler, including their fishing licence

numbers. Correctly followed and recorded, the trout storage and smoking regulations greatly assist fishery rangers to follow up on reports of anglers breaking bag limit and size regulations and to ensure trout are not being sold. Next time you require your trout stored please make sure you label them and have the details entered into the register provided.

## Winter Angling Prospects

The results of our summer angling survey show that catch rates on the lake are higher than usual, which is likely to carry over into the winter months. Also the average size of trout caught in the lake in late summer was high for this time of year (1.69kg). Given that the fish will continue growing until entering the rivers, winter anglers can expect to catch some very good-sized trout.

Last winter the fishing on the Tongariro River was an improvement on 1998. The catch rate increased from a low in 1998 of around 0.12 or one fish every eight hours, to 0.27 fish per hour (one fish every 3.7 hours). This improvement is likely to continue this year as the negative effects of the 1995/96 volcanic eruptions disappear. All indications point to winter 2000 being a successful and enjoyable time to fish the Taupo rivers. Good luck.

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# Waipa Trap Summary

by Rob Marshall

The Waipa Stream is a small tributary of the Tongariro River. It enters the Tongariro approximately 24km upstream of Lake Taupo. Since January 1998 we have been trapping the run of spawning trout in the stream. The trap operates all year round and is designed to stop the progress of fish migrating upstream and retain them in a holding pen, until they can be processed and released upstream of the trap. We now have two years' worth of data relating to the size of the spawning run, the length, weight and condition of the fish and the overall structure of the trout population.

*Fishery Ranger Gordon McKenzie nets a fish out of the upstream pen.*

Operating a fish trap is rewarding, but can sometimes be arduous for those involved. Many sunny days are spent maintaining the trap and hut facilities while cold, wet nights

are spent processing runs of fish and cleaning the trap bars that get clogged with debris. Fishery rangers operate the trap on a rostered basis, for anywhere up to four nights at a time. While there the trap operator is responsible for:

- maintaining the trap so that it traps effectively
- keeping the trap free of debris
- processing fish frequently and carefully so not to cause them stress
- keeping accurate records of data collected
- maintaining the integrity of the trap structure under flood conditions

A logbook is kept at the trap hut and is filled out by the operator during their time on duty. The following is an excerpt from the 1999 Waipa trap logbook, which shows what fish trapping can involve.

## 3 July 1999

- 2.40 p.m. *Bevan in to trap, Harry out. Unpacked gear and went down to trap for a look. Water level is up to 0.40 Stream is brown. Had 35mm of rain since this morning. Had an early tea and got ready for the night.*
- 4.00 p.m. *Staff gauge on 0.62 now. Need to clean trap every 15 minutes.*
- 4.30 p.m. *Staff gauge on 0.72. River now full with a lot of pumice coming down. Caught 70-80 kelts.*
- 5.30 p.m. *Staff gauge 0.92.*
- 6.00 p.m. *River over the top of the trap. Continually cleaned but couldn't keep up with pumice. Skies clearing hopefully.*
- 6.30 p.m. *Can't get near the river, still too high. Staff gauge 0.99.*
- 8.30 p.m. *Dropping to 0.68 but still very dirty. Caught a tonne more kelts.*
- 9.30 p.m. *Staff gauge 0.55. Dropping. Plenty of debris and kelts.*
- 10.30 p.m. *Staff gauge 0.46. Removed small logs and bushes from front barrier.*
- 11.00 p.m. *Staff gauge 0.38. Still a lot of pumice.*



Looking downstream at the front barrier of the Waipa trap



**4 July 1999**

*Midnight Staff gauge 0.56. Untold pumice. More pumice in stream than water. Where is it coming from?*

*1.45 a.m. Staff gauge 0.45. Had to keep cleaning.*

*2.30 a.m. Staff gauge 0.45.*

*3.30 a.m. Cleaned buge blocks of pumice off front barrier. Had a quick snooze.*

*4.30 a.m. Pumice easing and stream clearing. Little rain now.*

*6.40 a.m. Getting better. Time for a brew and a good clean up of the trap area.*

*8.00 a.m. Norrie in to help with the clean up. Total of 70mm of rain, 121 upstream and 134 downstream trout trapped. Some seen jumping trap when water over the top of the front barrier.*

Fortunately only a few nights each year are like this.

### The fruits of our labour

The number of trout trapped in the Waipa Stream in 1998 and 1999 is shown in table 1. The size of last year's spawning run was high (6259) and substantially greater than 1998 (3669). This reflects the strong year class entering the population in 1999. This year class was identified in Lake Taupo during the spring of 1998, when up to 46% of angler-caught trout were undersize. The true significance of the run size in 1999 is hard to gauge at this stage with only two years' trapping completed. When data from other years is available the size of each spawning run can be evaluated and compared more rigorously. The totals provided in table 1 are adjusted to take into account fish that are able to swim past the trap and so are missed from the count. This occurs when the stream floods over the top of the trap. To be able to make this adjustment we finclip all fish that pass through the fish trap to identify that they have been trapped. When the trout have completed spawning and begin moving back downstream to the lake, we re-trap a sample of these fish. Using the proportion of fish which are clipped we can adjust the actual number trapped to obtain an assessment of the total run size.

To obtain the most accurate estimate of the total run we need to calculate the run on a monthly basis, which requires an estimate of the residence time of each species. In other words, the amount of time fish spent above

Table 1: Number of trout species and sex in the 1998 and 1999 Waipa spawning runs

Species and sex	1998	1999
Rainbow female	1949	3666
Rainbow male	1151	2149
<b>Rainbow total</b>	<b>3100</b>	<b>5815</b>
Brown female	312	287
Brown male	257	157
<b>Brown total</b>	<b>569</b>	<b>444</b>
<b>Overall</b>	<b>3669</b>	<b>6259</b>

Gordon sends another spawning fish on its way upstream after weighing and measuring it. Note the clipped pelvic fin above his left wrist



Table 2: Average length and weight by species and sex of fish in the 1998 and 1999 Waipa spawning runs

Sex and species	1998		1999	
	Length (mm)	Weight (kg)	Length (mm)	Weight (kg)
Rainbow female	581	2.48	525	1.75
Rainbow male	579	2.29	528	1.68
<b>Rainbow total</b>	<b>581</b>	<b>2.4</b>	<b>526</b>	<b>1.72</b>
Brown female	622	3.17	586	2.59
Brown male	647	3.39	591	2.56
<b>Brown total</b>	<b>633</b>	<b>3.26</b>	<b>588</b>	<b>2.58</b>

the trap spawning before returning downstream as kelts. To establish this, plastic coloured tags are inserted in 60 trout per month as they pass the trap on their way upstream. These fish are re-trapped on the way back downstream and the time spent above the trap calculated. The study shows that the average residence time ranges from one to three months. Male rainbow trout spend, on average, three months above the trap, while rainbow females only spend one month. Brown males and females spend two months above the trap. When you consider how long it takes trout to migrate 24km up the Tongariro and how long it takes them to get back to the lake after spawning, it is likely that many Waipa trout spend up to four or five months away from the lake. By knowing the residence times we can adjust the monthly trap total using the proportion of clipped kelts re-trapped at an appropriate period later on. For example, to adjust the

monthly run of rainbow males we use the proportion of clipped rainbow male kelts re-trapped three months later.

Table 2 shows that the size of trout running the Waipa Stream was substantially lower in 1999 than 1998. The average weight of rainbow trout (1.72kg) in 1999 when compared to historic records for Taupo is very typical, but pales in comparison to that of 1998 (2.4kg). It appears as though the positive effects of the 1995/96 Ruapehu volcanic eruptions have waned, and the growth of trout in the lake has returned to pre-eruption levels (*Target Taupo*, issue 27). This isn't to say that natural fluctuations in the size and quality of trout won't occur, but the extreme highs of 1997/98 are unlikely.

The condition of trout trapped in 1999 was slightly down on 1998 but was still very healthy as reflected by condition factors in the mid-40s (table 3).

The trap was removed from the stream over the Christmas and New Year holiday but was back in operation on 11 January 2000. Details of the 2000 spawning run will be presented in a future issue of *Target Taupo*, but so far this year the number and size of trout trapped are up on 1999.

Table 3: Average condition factor of trout trapped in 1998 and 1999 by species and sex

Sex and species	Condition factor	
	1998	1999
Rainbow female	45.30	43.69
Rainbow male	42.08	40.72
Brown female	46.75	46.47
Brown male	44.72	43.84



# Fishing Access on the Tauranga-Taupo River

Legal access for licensed anglers on foot extends 4.8km upstream from the Tauranga-Taupo River mouth. The upper limit is in the vicinity of the Pump Pool, which is the next pool upstream from Maniapoto's Pool. We maintain walking tracks to this area along the true right river bank from State Highway 1 and along the true left river bank from the end of Tuki Road.

The landowners have recently planted pine trees on the farmland at the end of Tuki Road. To prevent ignorant anglers who persist in driving over the plantings, they have had a ditch and bank dug at the

entrance to their pines. Yet within days a wilderness-lover in his 4WD made another track through the willow and blackberry past the ditch and bank and out over the pines again!

We would like to negotiate with the landowners to maintain angling access along the river bank upstream from the legal limit as far as the Rangers Pool, which is the winter upper fishing limit. However, if anglers continue to show such a disrespectful regard for private land we can only anticipate a distinctly unsympathetic hearing.

Information about illegal activities is only of use when it is passed on immediately

If you see such an activity, **whatever the time**, please contact compliance staff

Telephone: (07) 386 8607

After hours, an answerphone message will provide you with the number of the Conservancy Duty Officer. He/she will take your call and pass on your information to the appropriate person.

Note this contact number is also printed on your Taupo District fishing licence.

## Target Taupo Mailout

We have received enquiries as to why some Adult Season licence holders did not receive the latest edition of *Target Taupo*.

When we receive the licence duplicates back from agents, the names and addresses of each adult season licence holder are entered onto a computer database. Approximately 12,000 addresses are entered over the course of each season. This database becomes the address list to mail out three issues of *Target Taupo* over the following season. Therefore someone who purchased a whole season licence for the 1998/99 season will get three copies of the magazine up to and including this issue. Similarly if you have purchased a 1999/2000 licence you will receive three copies of *Target Taupo* starting with the July 2000 issue. This

is the most effective way to manage the mailout system.

Occasionally we are unable to enter a name and address because they are illegible or the address is incomplete. We take a lot of care, including checking street names and suburbs in directories, but particularly where holiday addresses have been used there is not a lot more we can do. Each season approximately 5% of the first mailout is returned by New Zealand Post for various reasons.

There will always be a few glitches in the system, and if you have purchased a licence and do not receive your July issue please telephone Shirley Oates at the Turangi office with your licence number and you will be entered onto the database.

## What Does This Autumn Hold For Deer Hunters?

by Cam Speedy

*Cam co-ordinates animal pest and threatened species management for the Tongariro-Taupo Conservancy. Cam and his team also oversee weed management and habitat monitoring*

As another rutting season draws closer, it is timely to review the summer and to predict what this autumn may bring for hunters.

The weather patterns during the winter of 1999 provided fine crisp days and less rainfall than we have experienced in the central North Island for over a decade. This has had a major influence on forest and mountain ecosystems throughout the region this growing season. These weather patterns on top of the fantastic autumn 1999 production of seed and fruit set this summer up as a cracker for many critters. Most deer came out of the easy winter in good condition and fawn survival in particular appears to have been high. There have been many yearlings about over summer and it is likely most hinds will carry better than average body condition through to their receptive cycles in autumn, motivating the stags into a busy and vocal roar. Regular summer rain, mostly in the form of after-

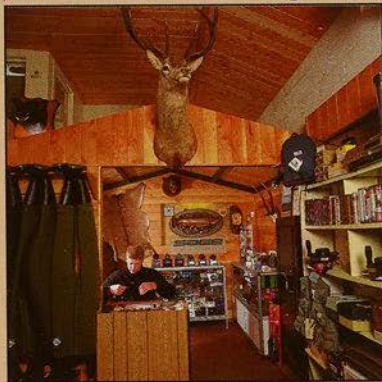
noon build-ups, helped the growing season continue right through January and although temperatures were a little cool at times with late frosts and summer snow falls included, there has been plenty of growth. The huge numbers of seedlings popping up out of the leaf litter all over our beech forests are evidence of an important natural phenomenon which has not been seen for many years. As a result of last autumn's beech mast (fruiting) large numbers of mice have also been a feature of the summer. The increased rodent population has allowed predators like stoats to do well too, so don't be surprised if you see plenty of these animals while hunting rutting stags this year. Once the mice population starts to decrease, predators will be forced to forage longer and harder until winter gets them.

Our survey and monitoring teams have been out over summer establishing and re-measuring forest plots. It will be interesting to see over the next few years how many of the beech seedlings grow into saplings and how many of these make it through the browse tier or get lost along the way. The big seeding year could be just the kick start our high country forests need to get back on track - but not if all the seedlings are eaten by hungry deer.

Red deer numbers have continued to be sparse on the Kaimanawa and Tongariro National Park tops this summer. Tongariro Forest has seen a good harvest of young deer this season as the herd increases following the impacts of 1080 possum control in the winter of 1995. Hunters need to harvest breeding hinds a little harder in this forest if the ecological gains from the possum and goat control are to be maintained in coming years. There is still a misconception among hunters that killing young stags and leaving hinds will help improve the hunting in these places. The reality is that such a harvest approach reduces the quality of the rut hunting by reducing the proportion of mature males in the population and creates greater impact on the habitat from the more sedentary family groups associated with breeding females. If recreational hunting is to

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continue to contribute to forest protection in many areas of the conservancy, hunters must harvest a greater proportion of female deer.

There has been some spectacular early velvet around the sika blocks this summer, and with improved body condition hinds should cycle well, kick starting the stags into gear come April. This may well be a roar to remember so make sure you get out and enjoy it.

**Places worth a look are:**

- The Waipakihi Valley where deer numbers are starting to pick up after the impacts of the Ruapehu ash falls in 1996
- The Waiotaka/Whitikau catchments where the numbers of red deer in particular are now building six years after a highly successful 1080 possum control operation
- The Kaipō River/Oamaru Hut area as deer spill out of the increasingly favourable summer habitat available on Poronui station
- The Mangamaire/Rangitikei catchments which continue to have moderately high deer density due to the heavy scrub and

forest cover. The jaw sample from the Rangitikei Remote Experience Zone last spring (see separate article in this issue) suggests this area is about to go through a period of population increase. Ensuring you shoot plenty of hinds as well as chasing rutting stags in this area will help ensure our forests do not suffer from increased browse pressure.

Don't forget those spots a little closer to home. The

areas east of Kiko Road end and Clements Mill Road are both worth a bit of homework for that once in a lifetime trophy. The upper Tongariro River off the Desert Road shouldn't be overlooked for a handy deer either.

My sika picks for the roar this year are the Te Tiringa Stream headwaters and the mid-Mangamaire River catchments. In terms of red deer, Tongariro Forest will produce a big one this year, despite all the spikers that have been shot there in recent years.

Please remember to provide feedback in the form of hunting diaries, deer jaws, antlers

***"If recreational hunting is to continue to contribute to forest protection in many areas of the conservancy, hunters must harvest a greater proportion of female deer."***

*The dry winter in 1999 appears to have resulted in high fawn survival as evidenced by the large number of yearlings about this summer*





*A late summer sika stag, polished up and ready to go!*

(see the advertisement for this year's sika competition) and wildlife sightings at the end of the autumn hunting period. Take note of your pesticide summaries, and above all, ensure you posi-

tively identify your target before you take a shot. Autumn is a very exciting time to hunt. With a bit of thought for the future wellbeing of the forests in which you hunt and a lot of care in how you use these forests, you can ensure you and your hunting companions continue to enjoy them for years to come.

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# The New Millennium on the Chatham Islands

by Sid Puia

*Sid co-ordinates compliance and law enforcement activity for the Taupo Fishery Area and training of conservancy staff and honorary rangers*

The Chatham Islands "First to see the sun" lie in the South Pacific Ocean, 768km east of mainland New Zealand, and consist of two main islands, both inhabited - Chatham Island and Pitt Island.

Among some 40 other islands are the two Crown-owned islands, Rangatira and Mangere. These islands are nature reserves, managed by the Department of Conservation and are important sanctuaries for threatened species. The highest point in the Chathams' group occurs on Mangere and the third highest point on Rangatira.

The millennium excitement during the year hatched up all kinds of commercial ventures and none more demanding than seeing the first sunrise.

Because of this, the Department had concerns that the visitor numbers would rise to between six or seven thousand, almost 10 times the resident population of the Chathams. With so many visitors predicted the Department's plan was to send two compliance rangers, one to each island. With Clayton Ross from Nelson/Marlborough Conservancy I was fortunate enough to be selected to undertake this role.

On 20 December 1999 at about 1.15 p.m. Chathams' time I arrived at Chathams' Airport

and along with Clayton Ross and Don Merton were met by the Area Manager John Mason. The DOC Area office is at Te One.

We were briefed that afternoon on our tasks and compliance issues which we might encounter. Clayton would go to Mangere and Don and I to Rangatira. Our jobs were to be made easier by the fact that the predicted visitor numbers were now only 700 or so. Nevertheless, the plan was flexible enough to simultaneously integrate our compliance tasks with the threatened species recovery programmes currently underway on both islands.

The following morning we packed our food for the duration of our stay, expecting to return back to the Chathams on 8 January 2000. Unlike any other areas in which I have worked, the food and equipment were packed in rodent-free conditions and sealed in containers before being loaded for the islands. At 9 a.m. we left Owenga by fishing boat for Mangere and Rangatira Islands. There are no jetties on the islands and you rely totally on the skill of the fishing boat operator and your timing amongst the rise and fall of the waves to unload yourself safely on the wave platform. Once safely on land and with all the gear unloaded, we met with Helen Gummer, who

*Sid Puia (left) and Don Merton*



put us through the ropes of local island protocol and a more detailed programme of the tasks relating to the monitoring and recording of:

- Chatham Island Petrel - checking burrows
- Black Robin - checking pairs, offspring and bondings
- NZ Shore Plover - checking pairs and bondings
- Chatham Island Oyster Catcher;
- the island's 30-odd bait stations.

These tasks were to keep us busy all day and every day.

Helen left us on 23 December to join Clayton Ross and Tertia Thurley on Mangere Island.

Christmas Day came and went like a thief in the night. On the afternoon of 31 December, Don and I strolled up to North Summit to set up camp for the night. The view was magnificent coming on to last light. For a moment the birds flying to the

west of us seemed suspended in total animation as the sun's rays reflected off the sea, with a tinge of red, adding delight to every shepherd's and ancient mariner's heart. The forthcoming day, the first of the new millennium, should be a happy one.

We stayed up all night and on the dot of midnight exchanged messages by morse code with our colleagues and everyone else who could see us.

The sunrise was even more spectacular - what a view!

Before long it was time to leave. Every moment on the island had been a new experience, especially the "hands on" work with the different species. It was also pleasing that there were no compliance incidents on either island.

We left Rangatira Island on 8 January 2000, teamed up with Clayton and flew home from the Chathams with the Prime Minister on 10 January.

*Sun setting for the last time on the second millennium*

*(Photographs by Don Merton)*



*First to see the sun in the third millennium*



## Catfish Tagging Update

In December 1999 we tagged another 800 catfish in Waihi Bay by attaching a purple spaghetti-like tag (rather than yellow or orange as in 1998) under the dorsal fin of each fish. Each tag has a unique number so that we can follow the history of individual catfish. Tags from catfish caught by anglers provide valuable information about the growth rate and the movement of these fish. So far a dozen tags have been returned. Most of the tagged fish have been caught in the Tokaanu Power Station tailrace, about 1km away from where they were tagged, but one was caught at Omori, 5 km away.

These returns indicate that catfish roam freely at the southern end of the lake. Further tag returns, accompanied by measurements of the length of the fish, will allow us to assess how catfish grow throughout the summer. Ultimately the tagging experiment will provide us with some estimation of the total number of catfish present at the

southern end of the lake.

Simultaneously, observations of catfish movement have been made in Motuoa Bay where six catfish were equipped with acoustic transmitters (*Target Taupo*, issues 30 and 31). These special transmitters send information about the fish's position and the depth at which it is swimming. Strategically positioned recorders set on the lake bed automatically log this data. We collected 9000 transmissions between May and December 1999. The preliminary analysis of the results indicates that catfish leave their shallow habitat in Motuoa Bay in November to go further offshore using water up to 23 metres deep over summer.

The full picture of the movement of catfish in Lake Taupo will be presented in future issues of *Target Taupo*.

In the meantime thanks again to all those people who have returned catfish tags.

## RIVER ANGLING SIGN UPDATE

In issue 32 of *Target Taupo* we explained the process involved in re-designing the new river angling signs for the Tongariro River. We signed off the final proofs and planned to have the

signs in place by the end of November 1999. Unfortunately though, problems with production of the signs have delayed installation and this is finally occurring as this issue goes to print.

In the meantime we are taking aerial photographs of the other eastern tributaries so that access maps of these rivers can be produced. Once these are collated, a similar design and production process to that used for the Tongariro signs will begin. We will keep you up to date with progress in the next issue of *Target Taupo*.

Have a look at the signs on the Tongariro River this year and feel free to contact us with any comments or suggestions.

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# 1999 Spawning Summary

by Rob Marshall

Spawning is the term used to describe reproduction in fish. For trout in Taupo spawning involves mature fish (aged two to three years or older) migrating from the lake up the many rivers in the district to breed. The trout begin to accumulate at the mouths of tributaries in autumn, feeding and preparing for the winter's migration. The water temperature drops with the onset of winter and the fish begin to head upstream, travelling mostly at night. When heavy rain falls and the rivers become swollen and dirty the trout surge upstream in large numbers. By September, the majority of mature trout have reached the headwater spawning grounds, which can be up to 25km from the lake. The fish pair up and courtship begins in earnest. The number of mature fish running the rivers and the survival of the young produced are key to the sustainability of the Taupo fishery. Spawning must be successful and enough juvenile trout produced to provide for satisfactory angling in the future. Enough trout need to survive to be able to return to the stream and spawn themselves, perpetuating the process.

Because the Taupo trout population is wild and no hatchery-reared fish are released into the lake or rivers, one of our main roles as fishery managers is to ensure natural spawning habitat is available and to assess how successful spawning was. We do this by monitoring the following aspects:

- \* the number of trout reaching the upstream spawning grounds

- \* fish passage and access to these spawning grounds

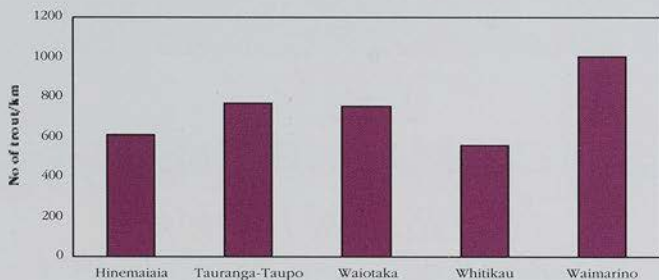
- \* the number of trout fry (<25mm) produced

in the Tongariro River throughout the year \* the number of trout fingerlings (25mm-120mm) that survive in the Tongariro River. A combination of all this information allows us to assess the overall success of a particular spawning season. Based on this year's monitoring results the 1999 spawning season was reasonably successful.

Firstly, the number of trout running the various rivers to spawn was greater than average, except in the Hinemaiaia River. Graph 1 presents the results of the escapement (spawner) monitoring programme which involves counting the number of spawning fish in five streams each month by drift diving or walking. The Waimarino and Tauranga-Taupo rivers received very good numbers of trout, and the Whitikau (a tributary of the Tongariro) had a slightly above average season. As discussed in the last issue of *Target Taupo*, issue 32, the Waiotaka River gorge was blocked. As it held a lot of trout in the survey section of the river, this unfortunately biased the results of our monitoring prior to removing the blockage in early October.

Fish passage this winter was also disrupted in the Whitikau Gorge (the Grotto). If blockages of this size in such important spawning tributaries are left unnoticed all winter the impact on juvenile production can be quite significant. Due to the monitoring project in place both blockages were identified early and in the case of the Waiotaka, removed as soon as possible. The Grotto is unfortunately a natural barrier, which only impacts on migration during low flow conditions. In small floods the fish are able to negotiate the

Peak 1999 monthly count of the number of trout/kilometre in selected spawning streams





Jon Palmer (left), Gordon McKenzie and Harry Hamilton (right) use a back pack electric fishing machine to catch young trout in the Whitiikau Stream



falls, though in consistent periods of low rainfall migration is almost impossible. Last year access to the spawning grounds was restored after spring rain, albeit late in the year. In both cases access was restored before the end of the spawning migration, therefore any negative effect on juvenile production is likely to be insignificant.

Another way of monitoring spawner numbers is through the operation of the Waipa trap on the Tongariro River. The results of last winter's trapping are discussed in the feature article on page 28 in this issue of *Target Taupo* and are consistent with the high counts on the other rivers.

Overall a more than satisfactory number of trout escaped being caught and natural mortality to reach their spawning grounds this year.

The other component in an assessment of spawning success involves monitoring the numbers of young trout produced. We do this using electric fishing machines and baited minnow traps (large metal versions of

the plastic bait catcher). It is obviously impossible to count every juvenile trout produced in the Tongariro River, so we sample numerous stretches of the river with the aim of identifying trends in the number caught over time. In 1999 juvenile production was strong and a definite improvement over 1998. However the results from January 2000 show a drop in the number of fry, which is likely to be due to flooding in October/November 1999. Large spring floods can potentially have an effect on trout production as the scouring of the riverbed destroys eggs and newly hatched fry and the insects the young trout feed on. This year it appears that the flood may have had an effect, the extent of which won't be obvious until the next monitoring in two months' time has been completed.

Overall though the spawning season of 1999 was strong and the prospects for future angling are good. In two years' time the juveniles of 1999 will reach maturity and should be a big part of your catch.

The top fish is a koaro (*Galaxias brevipinnis*) which is a common catch in Taupo streams when sampling juvenile trout numbers. The easiest way to distinguish between the young rainbow trout (middle) and brown trout (bottom) are the orange spots and bright orange adipose fin (the fin just forward of the tail) on the brown trout

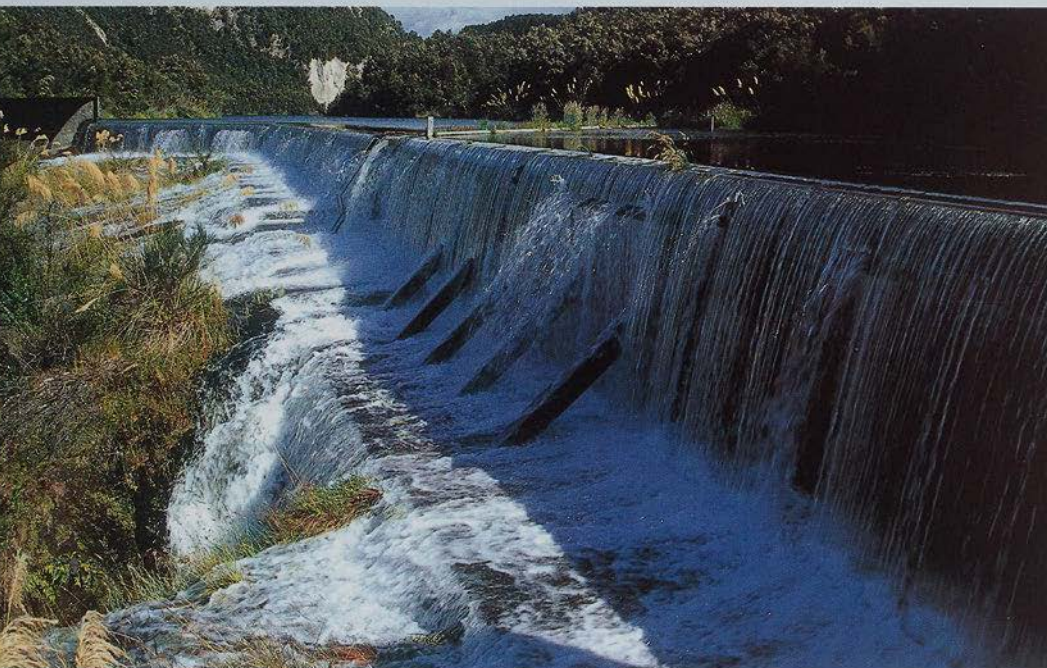


# Hinemaiaia River Resource Consents

TrustPower is currently in the process of seeking new consents for the operation of the three power stations on the Hinemaiaia River. Consents for the top two dams, HA and HC, expired in November 1998 but those for HB are not due until 2001. It seemed most sensible, given the integrated nature of the whole scheme, to consider all of the consents

site with TrustPower and highlighted the fishery issues with them. These are now being addressed as part of a study due to be completed in several months. As a consequence, we are much more optimistic about how the consents process may progress this year.

Another outcome of the discussions is that



*With HB power station shut down the flow over HB dam reflects the natural flow in the Hinemaiaia River*

at the same time and so along with other interested parties we agreed to the consents being held over until 2001.

The process to identify possible issues and concerns of various groups with an interest in the river and its surrounds and to gather information to address these began early last year. We did not, however, see very much progress.

In November the Department had further dealings with TrustPower over flow fluctuations in the lower river. These discussions saw a much more constructive working relationship develop which has carried over into the consents process. In January we met on

TrustPower is installing an automated flow recorder just downstream of HB powerhouse. This will assist with its operation and will also provide an accurate summary of the flow regime in the river. Previously flows in the river have been the subject of debate between the fishery managers and station operators because there were no flow readings available. Instead flows were calculated from the setting of the power station turbine which has been demonstrated to not always be correct.

We will report more fully on the desired outcomes from a fishery perspective in future issues of *Target Taupo*.

# The Living Delta

This unusual aerial photo shows receding floodwaters from the Tongariro River flowing overland into Stump Bay last November.

The main course of the river flows from left to right through the middle of the picture and on to Lake Taupo at the Delta. This flood is estimated to have a return frequency of about seven to eight years and peaked at about 670 cubic metres per second. When the photo was taken two days after the 11 November peak some of the flow was still running into Stump Bay.

Floods of this intensity and larger play an important role in shaping the river channel and the natural growth of the flood plain by depositing sediment and eroding new river courses as the land builds up.



## WAIOTAKA RIVER CHANGES IN PLACE

In the last issue of *Target Taupo* we explained how policy changes by the Department of Corrections over anglers' access had effectively created a private fishery within the Tongariro-Rangipo prison property. As a consequence a 10km reach of the Waiotaka River was closed to all anglers from 1 December 1999.

Signs marking the upstream and downstream boundaries of the closed area are now in place. From the Waiotaka mouth to our sign about 2km upstream from Hautu Ford on Waiotaka Road the river is open to fishing all year round. From there to our next sign about 10km upstream is permanently closed to fishing and there is no public access. Upstream from the prison boundary, within Kaimanawa Forest Park, fishing is permitted from 1 December to 31 May.

## FREE RIVER FLY FISHING SEMINARS

Following on from the successful lake fishing seminars held this summer we are running two seminars for winter river anglers. Seminars cover the basic methods and other information required to be successful on the Tongariro and other Taupo rivers. Each seminar will feature fishery staff explaining trout behaviour, fly fishing techniques and tips to help you catch one of the region's winter run rainbow trout. This is an ideal opportunity for the beginner or holiday anglers.

Both seminars will be at the Tongariro National Trout Centre, State Highway 1, from 10.30 a.m. to 12.30 p.m. on Saturday, 20 May and Saturday, 8 July.

**When:** 10.30 a.m. Saturday, 20 May and Saturday, 8 July

**Where:** Tongariro National Trout Centre, Turangi

## Keith Draper

One of New Zealand's most prolific fishing and hunting authors and knowledgeable anglers, Keith Draper, died last month after a long illness.

Keith had a special affinity for the Taupo fishery and many of his books and articles focussed on his experiences fishing the local lakes and rivers. He also wrote of the history of the fishery and the characters who have made it famous.

A long-time resident of Taupo, Keith set up his well known tackle business here and later retired in the town. Many anglers were introduced to trout fishing through Keith's books and regular magazine and newspaper articles. He had a particular knack for explaining esoteric topics simply and clearly. His instructional writing was often complemented by his own talented drawings. I particularly remember his little book *Tie a Fly*. Nearly 30 years ago I persevered with the sole guidance of this book and proudly "taught myself" to produce passable wet flies, dries and nymphs. Only later did it occur to me that really Keith taught me, even if he wasn't there in person.

With the 1978 publication of *Angling in New Zealand* Keith produced one of the most useful and comprehensive books on trout fishing in this country.

I was fortunate to get to know Keith well in the last 20 years and enjoyed his company as an angler and a stalwart member and patron of the Taupo Fishing Club. However, he put much more than this back into his sport and passion. Keith was an early member of the Federation of

Lake Taupo Fishing and Boating Clubs, later to become the Central North Island Wildlife Conservancy Council and now the Taupo Fishery Advisory Committee, which provided user representation in the management of the fishery in those days. He also gave his time to the national executive of the New Zealand Deerstalkers' Association and only a few years ago transformed his vision into reality as the founder of the Wildfowlers' Association.

While Keith's passing is a great loss to Taupo anglers and indeed the fishery, his writings will live on for future generations of anglers and hunters. I am sure all *Target Taupo* readers join me in offering our condolences to his wife Margaret and his family.

—John Gibbs



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## "WOMEN IN CONSERVATION" GROUP

In August and September of last year the women from the Tongariro-Taupo Conservancy planted 400 trees as part of a revegetation project at the Tongariro National Trout Centre. The trees were planted near and around the electric fish counting chamber near the Tongariro River.

The trees have survived well considering the hot and humid conditions which we have had over recent weeks. However, the chore of a day's weeding was necessary in February so that the blackberry and weeds didn't take over again.

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*The clear, clean qualities of Lake Taupo are under serious threat from increased nitrogen inputs*

## Joint Limnological Societies Conference

Limnology is the study of freshwaters and the plants and animals that live in them. Last November the first joint conference of the Australian and New Zealand Limnological Societies was held at the Wairakei Resort near Taupo.

Several Taupo Fishery Area staff attended the presentations from scientists from both countries and the associated lake managers, workshop which followed the conference. DOC Fishery Scientist Dr Michel Dedual presented a paper to a public forum in the Great Lake Centre in Taupo which addressed the risks to Lake Taupo water quality from future agricultural development.

Scientists and managers from Environment Waikato, the regional council, and National Institute of Water and Atmosphere Research have identified potential conversion of sheep and beef farms to intensive dairying as a major threat to the water quality of Lake Taupo. The effect is expected to be due to

large increases in nitrogen entering the lake and promoting the growth of undesirable algae. This will reduce the amount of light that can penetrate the lake waters and probably also the production of smelt and the feeding ability of trout.

The changes may take 20 years before they become apparent because of the long residence time of water in Lake Taupo and because much of the inflow is from groundwater which may take 10 or more years to reach the lake with its cargo of nitrogen. Realistic scenarios based on the capacity of the catchment and infrastructure to support dairy farming suggest that water clarity may be halved from its present 15 metres in this period.

No doubt this information will be closely studied by the Taupo District Council's consultative groups which are looking at future management and protection of Lake Taupo.

## UNDERWATER VIEWING CHAMBER RE-OPENS

*The changes to the underwater viewing chamber at the Tongariro National Trout Centre are almost complete and the complex is once again open to visitors. Centre Manager Errol Cudby (left) and Conservancy Landscape Architect Herui Scheltus discuss the finishing touches*



Introducing ...

## Kathleen Hubay

The person behind the friendly voice you get when you telephone Tongariro-Taupo Conservancy Office.

Kathleen has been our receptionist for the past 18 months. Previously she worked in Wellington and moved to Turangi in 1995 where she worked for ECNZ at Tokaanu until its re-structuring. Their loss, our gain!

As the first point of contact for most enquiries, Kathleen plays a vital role for all communications in the area, including reception and our radio-telephone network. She has also gained a vast knowledge of the Tongariro National Park area and advises tourists and back-packers on where to go tramping and on track and weather conditions.



## BOVINE Tb IN LOCAL DEER HERDS

Bovine tuberculosis has been confirmed in a sika hind shot this spring in the Okoeke Stream catchment, a major tributary of the Waipunga River. This is the first confirmed report of Tb in wild deer in Hawkes Bay and is a concern, from both a hunting and farming perspective. Ferrets have also been confirmed with the disease in this area and the fact that possum densities are very high amplifies the concern. Meanwhile, a Tb deer survey in the north-western Umukarikari area of Kaimanawa Forest Park this year turned up two diseased deer out of the 18 sampled, both older red hinds.

Hunters who shoot a deer they suspect shows signs of bovine Tb infection should contact their local MAF or regional council office as soon as possible.



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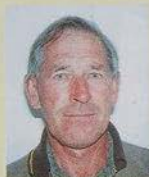


Technical Services  
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Rob Marshall

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Visitor Assets  
Errol Cudby



Visitor Assets  
Ranger  
Gordon McKenzie



Programme Manager  
Fishery Operations  
Rob McLay



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Rob Hood



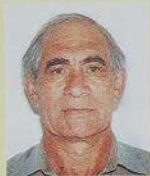
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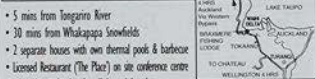
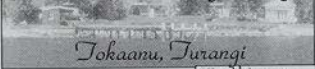
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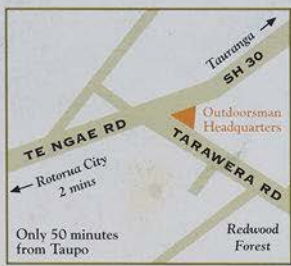
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