

The image shows two trout swimming in a clear stream. The water is shallow, revealing a bed of small, light-colored rocks and fallen autumn leaves. The trout in the foreground is larger and has a mottled pattern of dark spots on its greenish-brown body. The trout in the background is smaller and has a more uniform, silvery-grey color. The overall scene is peaceful and natural.

TARGET TAUPO

A newsletter for Taupo Anglers

AUGUST 2006, ISSUE 52



Department of Conservation
Te Papa Atawhai



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A newsletter for Taupo Anglers

AUGUST 2006, ISSUE 52

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Tongariro/Taupo Conservancy
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Front cover: *A rainbow (top) and brown trout, happily
feeding in the Tokaanu stream.
Taken by Dave Conley of Turangi*

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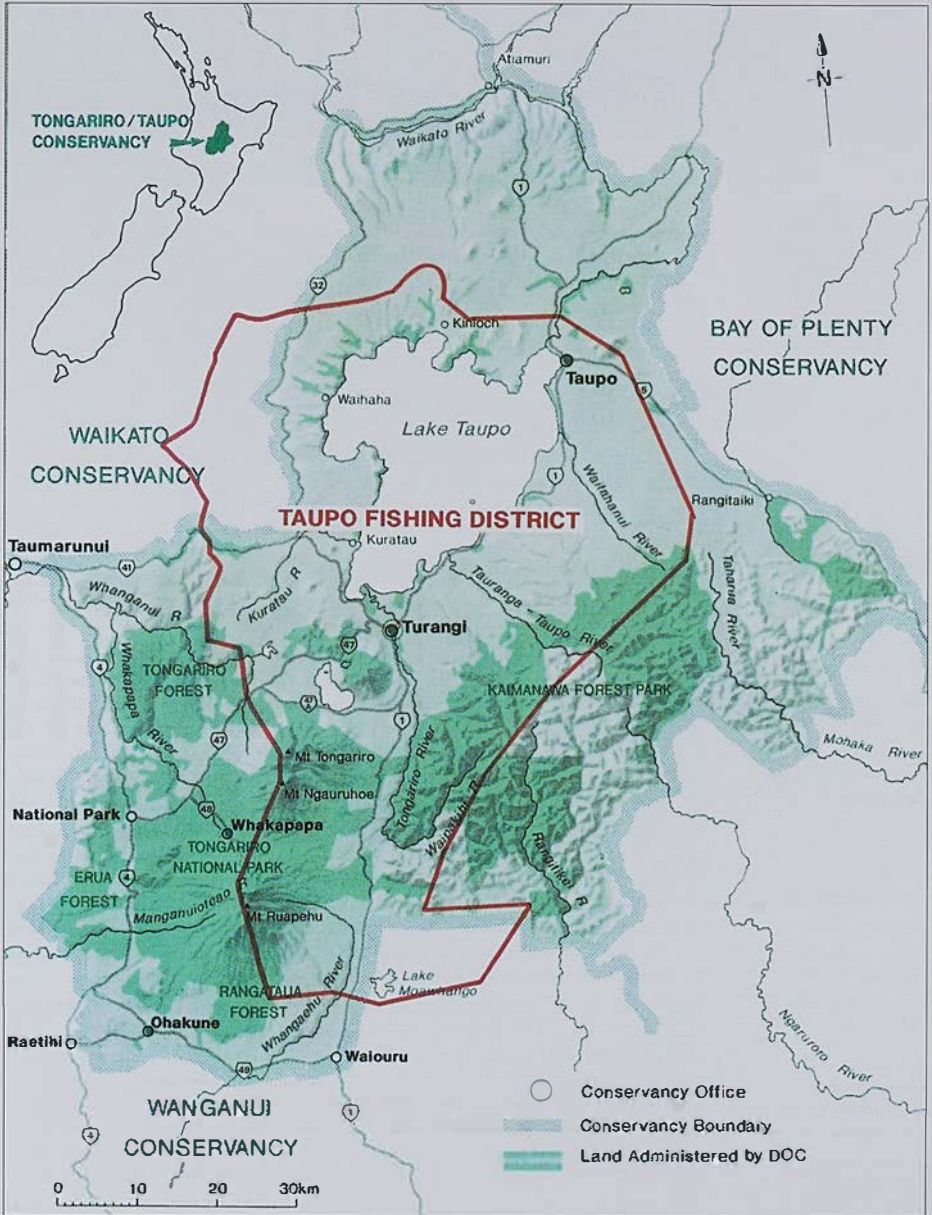
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The views expressed in Target Taupo are those of the contributors and do not necessarily reflect Department of Conservation policy

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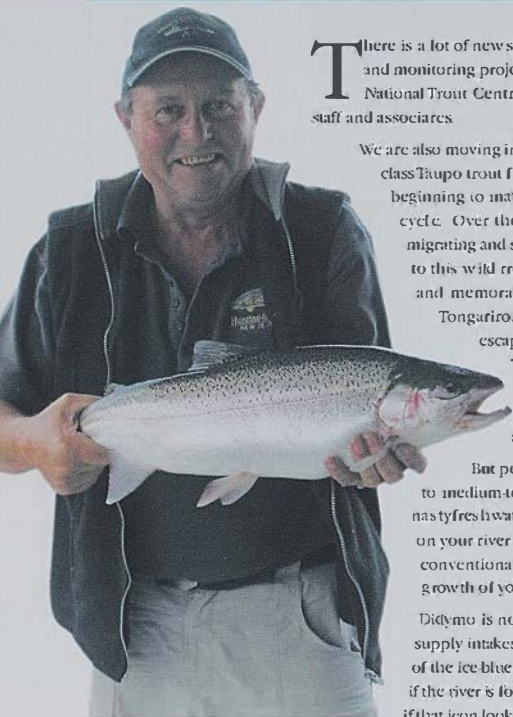


Tongariro/Taupo Conservancy



FISHERY FORWARD

GREETINGS FROM THE TAUPO FISHERY TEAM



By John Gibbs
Taupo Fishery Area
Manager
Photo: Tony Ravburn

There is a lot of news in this issue of *Target Trout*, ranging from progress with research and monitoring projects and the education programme, to developments at the Taungaro National Trout Centre, fishing prospects, advances with anglers' access and news about staff and associates.

We are also moving into the winter season, which adds a unique dimension to the world-class Taupo trout fishery. Tens of thousands of brown and especially rainbow trout are beginning to mature and move out of the lake into the rivers to start their breeding cycle. Over the next 5 months the rivers and small streams will be packed with migrating and spawning fish as they complete the final stages of their contribution to this wild trout fishery. These spawning runs provide one of the most exciting and memorable fishing opportunities for Taupo anglers in the likes of the Tongariro, Taumanga, Taupo, Waitahanui and other rivers. Ensuring enough trout escape the gannet to breed and maintain the future fishery is essential.

This requires careful control through a mix of fishing method restrictions, catch limits, closed waters and law enforcement, all informed by robust monitoring of fishing pressure, trout numbers and habitat quality.

But perhaps the most important issue facing the Taupo fishery in the short to medium-term is described in Glenn Maclean's article about didymo. If this nasty freshwater alga establishes in the Taupo catchment it will dramatically impact on your river fishing. But don't think of this as just a river problem. Not only will conventional fly fishing methods be limited by dense mats of algae, but the growth of young trout may also suffer, leading to fewer fish for lake anglers also.

Didymo is not just an angling issue either. It may have direct impacts on water supply intakes and certainly on the visual attractiveness of rivers. The classic image of the ice-blue waters of the Waikato River plunging over Huka Falls will be no more if the river is fouled with didymo. How will tourists perceive our clean, green country if that icon looks like a huge sewage channel? All of these impacts will have direct and significant consequences for our economy. Tourism is the single largest contributor to the economy of the Taupo district. Angling alone generates some \$80M a year. Imagine the effects if the fishery was diminished by as little as a quarter due to the impact of didymo.

There is some hope. Effective border controls at Cook Strait and hygiene measures by all river users could ensure didymo stays in the South Island. At least, delaying its arrival will buy time which may lead to the development of control methods. It is not unknown for some invasive plants to inexplicably lose vigour after a period of aggressive colonisation. Remember the waternet algae that used to be the scourge of the Rotorua lakes and has now disappeared? Whatever the outcome it can only be possible if the community at large understands the consequences and accepts responsibility for the solutions. It is in every angler's interest to take ownership of the problem and make proper gear cleaning a routine part of every fishing trip.

Long-time readers will remember Shirley Oates who spent 10 years with the Taupo Fishery team until she retired. For much of that time she was responsible for the production of this magazine. Sadly Shirley passed away in April and she is missed greatly by her friends and former colleagues.

Enjoy your read and especially, enjoy your winter fishing.



POOR HANDLING AFFECTS RELEASED TROUT

*By Michel Dedual & John Shortland
Shortland
Michel is our Fisher,
Area Scientist and an
enthusiastic angler. John
is also a keen angler and
a photographer who
specialises in forensic
and conservation related
photography.*

*Above: How not to
handle a fish during
unhooking
Photo: John Shortland*

When we catch a fish and then release it either because we have to or because we want to, we may be filled with satisfaction and pride, especially when other anglers are watching. For most anglers as long as the fish swims away and out of sight, out of mind, then it's all good. But is it?

The survival rate of released trout depends on several variables. It can vary from season to season, with water temperature, and/or oxygen concentration, the physical condition of the fish and it can even vary from one place to another. However, there is nothing much we can do to change these variables. The location and severity of the hooking injury, and the degree of physiological stress that a trout is subjected to are other factors that also affect survival rate. As anglers we do have some control over these. We can reduce the time the fish spends on the hook by

using stronger gear that will allow a quick landing. We can also use circle or larger hooks that will not get caught in the deeper parts of the mouth near fragile organs.

However, there is one overriding variable that has a critical role in whether the fish will survive or not. That is how the fish is handled and this is something we have almost complete control over. There is no point of using adequate fishing gear to reduce stress and exhaustion if the fish is roughly handled during the unhooking and release.

There are right and wrong handling techniques to return fish to the water. When handling a fish, its welfare must be our only concern. If the proper procedures are followed a large percentage of returned fish will survive to spawn or grow bigger. Fish which have lost a lot of mucus or scales, have been hooked in the eye or gills, or are bleeding heavily will probably not survive. In

this case the fish should be quickly killed preferably by ikihijime as explained in issue 31 of *Tararua Taupo*, rather than returned. If the fish is not in a prime condition it will still make a tasty soup. Don't smoke it! Only the best fish should be smoked.

A key point to remember when handling fish is that just like us they need to breathe. Fish respiration is exactly the same as ours, oxygen in and carbon dioxide out. However, fish have a different way of doing it and the ability to breathe underwater is one of the most interesting adaptations of fish. Most fish are unable to utilize oxygen from the air and need to obtain it from within the water. Water cannot hold as much oxygen as air. Under normal conditions a litre of air holds about 30 times more oxygen than a litre of water at 10°C, so fish must be good at extracting what oxygen there is from the water.

The way that fish accomplish this is through their gills. Water is constantly pumped over the gills through a combination of opening and closing the mouth and the opercula (gill flap) that forces water over the gills. Water is much denser and viscous than air and it is much harder for a fish to force water over its gills than it is for us to force air in and out of our lungs. If we examine gill tissue under the microscope, we see feather-like structures called lamellae. These lamellae provide a large surface area across which to exchange oxygen and carbon dioxide. On closer inspection we see that the gill tissue is very thin; only one or two cells thick. Here the

oxygen dissolved in water can pass through and enter directly into the fish's bloodstream. Most fish cannot breathe out of the water because gills are designed to be supported by water and when out of water they collapse. This will make it impossible for oxygen to be absorbed. Gill tissue is the most permeable of the tissues and because of this the gills are very susceptible to damage by squeezing or by the impact of thrashing on hard surfaces. We will illustrate later the damage to the gills that can occur from poor handling.

Furthermore, the oxygen content of water varies with temperature. Warm water holds less oxygen than cold water. As a result it is harder for trout to breathe in warm water and the fish will be even more stressed when it is pulled out of warmer water. So it becomes even more important to handle fish confidently and quickly during summer.

Gills perform another function necessary for the health of fish. This function is excretion, the process of eliminating wastes which are mostly in the form of nitrogen compounds. These are produced in the liver during the breakdown of proteins that the fish has consumed. The most important of these waste products is ammonia, a toxic substance to fish even at very low concentrations. In other animals, it is the kidneys that excrete nitrogenous wastes in the form of urine.

When we catch a fish we may have pushed it to complete exhaustion while it was desperately attempting to escape. That extensive exercise has resulted in an oxygen deficit and a buildup

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A good example of how to release a fish
Photo: Jared Goetzbart,
Sporting Life

of lactic acid in its circulatory and muscular systems. The cells in its body that have been doing all the work need more oxygen than ever and quickly. The only way the fish can get that oxygen is from the water. It should be obvious that the best way to maximize the survival of caught and released trout is to keep them in the water during handling associated with release! Try to put yourself in a situation where you have been fighting to complete exhaustion to free yourself from a threatening situation, only to have your head put under water as you are gasping for breath at the end of the fight. Holding a trout up with the rod gripped between your teeth may make a nice photo but it's tough on the fish.

By keeping the fish in the water while you release it, you will not only minimize the recovery time required for that fish to return

its body chemistry to equilibrium levels but also avoid injuring the gills. You will also impress other anglers witnessing your actions. And if you want to show a good photo of a trout take it with the fish still in water! This will be in harmony with the practice of someone concerned with and putting the fish's welfare first. This aspect of fish welfare has already been raised elsewhere by anti fishing activists and several fishing magazines in the United States have responded by not publishing pictures of live fish out of water anymore.

At certain periods of the year fish may be found washed up on the beaches around the lake or along the banks of the rivers. In some cases a simple visual observation will be sufficient to reveal the causes of death. For example male trout that have spent exten-



sive periods without eating during spawning often lose condition beyond repair. However, if the fish has died from suffocation because it was held out of the water for too long, it will be difficult to ascertain the causes of death by simple visual inspection. More detailed post-mortem analysis would have to be done. In other cases, it is possible to determine exactly where the fish has been firmly held and how the angler's hands were oriented by viewing the bruising of tissue resulting from haematomata from ruptured blood vessels.

Sometimes it is not possible to unhook a fish without holding it and there are three areas where anglers commonly attempt to grasp a fish to unhook it. We can hold the fish by the tail peduncle where the body is at the thinnest but also the most solid, by the gills (with all the damage that does), and fortunately less commonly, by the eye sockets,ouch! Other fish species can be held by the lips, but not trout as they have very sharp teeth. Contact with these generally results in painful cuts that take a long time to heal.

If you must handle the fish, hold it gently by the tail peduncle and turn it on its side or ideally upside down where it will usually become immobile. Then you can remove the hook by using pointed pliers or forceps. If the fish is not completely revived, hold it head-upstream in gently flowing water before releasing it. Large fish will require some time to revive because they only give up the fight after being completely exhausted. Watch the fish pumping water through its gills. If the gill action is weak, or non-existent you may have to glide it gently back and forth to force water through its gills. As the fish revives, its gills will work more energetically until it is able to remain upright on its own and then finally swims away. A friend showed me another good way to release a fish by placing it upright between rocks in gently flowing water and leaving it alone other than checking its recovery progress from time to time. You will be surprised to see how quickly fish will recover, probably as they don't have to endure the extra stress caused by the completely strange feeling of being in contact with our hands that are much warmer than their body. Try

to imagine a situation where you are held by something that is much colder than your body temperature of 37°C. Don't try to revive the fish in fast current. If it slips away, it will begin spinning and turn upside down and you won't be able to save it. Small fish often don't need to be revived at all because they are on the line for only a short time and therefore are usually less physically stressed by the event.

Many times we see fish handled roughly by anglers who take the view that because there is no obvious injury from this then the fish will be fine. To highlight the mechanical injuries that result from poor handling we ventured outside the visible world and applied ground breaking forensic science to trout.

Forensic departments are common parts of many fish and game agencies in North America. For example identification of fish and wildlife remains is important evidence of an offence. Often perpetrators try to conceal they have harvested protected species by saying that a particular piece of meat came from a non-protected species. However well established biological identification techniques can be used to identify the meat in question. Forensic techniques can link offenders to a certain location, illegally harvested fish and wildlife, and to firearms, knives, fishing tackle, boats, and other items used during an illegal activity. Techniques used to identify biological remains, fingerprints, bullets, gunshot residues, tool marks, tyre tracks, footprints and other pieces of evidence have been in use by forensic experts for many years. However forensic science can be applied to many areas of conservation, not just law enforcement. For example it can be used to explain predation of nests of endangered species by looking for protein (egg stage) and haemoglobin (hatched stage) left behind in the nest fibres. Some animals like bees can see ultra violet (UV) wavelengths and UV photography can help us see what other animal species see and to better understand their behaviour.

Remember the days at school of passing a beam of light through a prism and seeing the visible colours of red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo and violet projected onto a piece of paper? When we examine a fish with the naked eye we also see lots of interesting colours, possible physical damage to fins etc and other natural long



By leaving the fish in the water during release you minimize the recovery time required for the fish to return its body chemistry to equilibrium levels and avoid potential injury to the gills
Photo: Mark Kemman

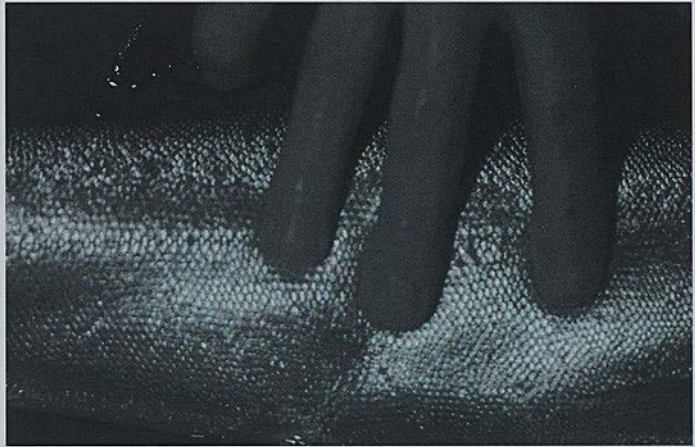
term wear and tear. However, this is the limit of what the human eye/brain is able to perceive.

By using special photographic techniques we can investigate the electromagnetic spectrum outside the visible range by producing images that the human eye can't otherwise see. With the development of a special sensor (Charged-Coupled Device or CCD) and filters on some digital cameras it is possible to record the light below the violet end of the visible spectrum (ultraviolet or UV) and above the red end (infrared or IR). When light is reflected or absorbed from an object the digital CCD records colours not only within

the visible region but also in the UV and IR region. Ultraviolet photography has an established role in clinical forensic medicine and is beginning to be used in domestic violence and child abuse assessments. Bruises on a face will be still visible to UV and IR cameras many weeks after the abuse occurred.

We used this photographic technique to explore if holding a fish by the tail during unhooking and subsequent release results in any detectable bruises on the body of the trout. In this experiment we caught a trout by fly-fishing in the Tongariro River. The fish was unhooked still in water by restraining it by the tail peduncle. Then, it was quickly

Infra red photography of a trout held by the tail peduncle during release. The black spots below the fingers indicate the previous position of the fingers and suggest bruising.
Photo: John Sborland



transferred to a solution of anaesthetic until unconscious and UV and IR photos taken. No sign of bruises could be detected in the UV spectrum but shadows in the IR light indicated bruising.

Another forensic tool is the use of chemicals that produce visible light when they react with an invisible substance. An example is Luminol which produces a faint blue glow on contact with the haemoglobin in blood. At a crime scene it is common for the criminal to try to destroy the evidence by desperately washing down the scene and cleaning away blood if present. However, this is generally in vain since Luminol works better with old and diluted (washed) blood.

The use of Luminol to show if a trout is bleeding has to our knowledge never been tried before and our first attempts to highlight blood traces produced poor results. We discovered that something on the bleeding fish was inhibiting Luminol, but when we removed blood from the trout with a syringe Luminol worked fine! After some soul searching and testing another piece of the puzzle was found: the mucus on the skin of the fish creates a barrier between the blood and Luminol, so that the blood cannot be highlighted. We conclude that Luminol would not work if applied directly on the skin of the fish and that mucus would have to be removed to test. If rough handling causes bleeding Mucous serves as a sun screen to protect fish from damaging UV rays. It can absorb, lock, and shed toxic metals like lead. It also provides a protection against infection by quickly sealing any

open wound appearing on the skin. Mucous is very effective at trapping and immobilizing bacteria and viruses and even contains antibacterial-like agents that will help kill the trapped bacteria. Another important trait of mucus is to reduce friction and allow the fish to move through the water more easily. Mucous can easily be removed when in contact with abrasive material like a net or sand. The skin will produce more mucous when needed but that will add stress to the fish. Therefore, it's a good idea to avoid using a net or landing a fish on the sand if it is to be released. Mucous occurs naturally on the skin of fish so by removing it to do our experiment we would use an experimental protocol that doesn't occur in nature and therefore that wouldn't prove anything.

If water is free of pollution the gills won't produce mucous but if water quality diminishes through contamination with heavy metals or ammonia then the gills will produce mucous to prevent intoxication. However, when gills produce mucous their respiratory efficiency will decrease. Fortunately the water in Taupo is still largely free of contaminants and the gills of Taupo trout are free of mucous. Therefore for our experiment we concluded that the most obvious part of the body to highlight blood loss caused by rough handling would be the gills. In a second experiment we hooked a fish in the Tongariro, played it normally, and unhooked it out of the water by holding it under the gill plate. The fish was then quickly killed in a solution of anaesthetic. The operculum was then removed and Luminol was sprayed on the fish, especially on the gills.

Bleeding of the gills following rough handling during unhooking. The location of bleeding is highlighted in fluorescent blue by luminol. Photo: John Shortland



The results were clear. Restraining a fish during unhooking by holding it under the opercula results in bleeding. The photo also reveals some bleeding around the mouth in the vicinity of the hook location. More interestingly, there is also some bleeding occurring along the edge of the pectoral fin. It is not possible to ascertain what the cause of this bleeding was but it may be the result of the fish rubbing against the mesh of the net when we landed it. Alternatively, the bleeding may have been caused during spawning by the rubbing of the fin on the gravel when the fish probes the substrate to select a suitable ground spawning.

Bleeding along the edges of the pectoral fins and around the mouth. Photo: John Shortland

Remember that as anglers we would not have seen any sign of bleeding at all and as a result would probably conclude that we did nothing wrong. However, as previous studies

have clearly shown, a fish bleeding from the gills is unlikely to survive. The lesson: keep your fingers away from the gills!

CONCLUSION

As anglers, many of us could do significantly better when it comes to our fish handling techniques. If we really care about these fish, then let's do it right. When releasing a fish, try not to lift the fish out of the water, even for a photograph, and take special care not to handle it anywhere around the gills.

The authors wish to thank Stephen Cordiner at Environmental Scientific Research (ESR) for his support throughout the experiment.

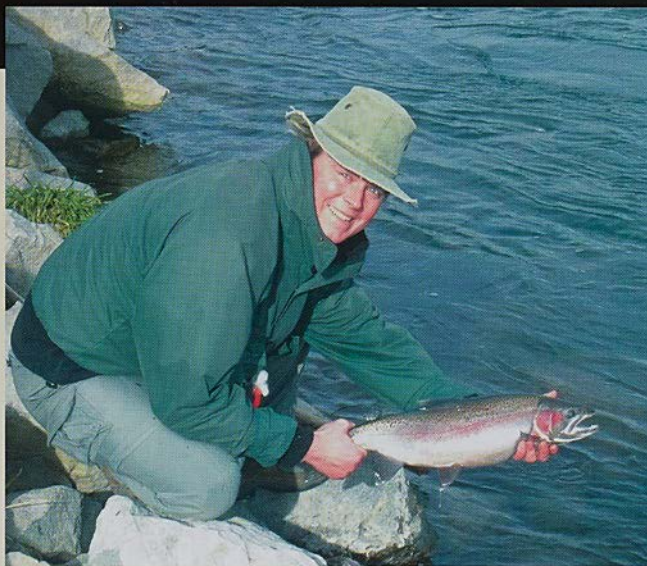


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SPAWNING RUNS SHIFT TO SPRING

*By Glenn Maclean
Glenn is our Programme
Manager Technical
Support, and manages
the research and
monitoring work done
in the area.*

Despite favourable conditions brought about by an unsettled autumn and early winter trout spawning runs have again been slow to get underway, consistent with the pattern of recent years. This further confirms that the timing of the spawning runs has shifted to late in the year, independent of the weather conditions which may occur through early winter.

We had wondered whether the late runs were simply a symptom of the weather conditions which have prevailed over recent winters. Certainly the factor which first pushed the runs later was a series of very dry and settled winters the fish holding off

running until they absolutely had to spawn. Typically Taupo rainbows would run somewhere around June or July but not actually spawn until September. In fact in the early days of the fishery they ran considerably earlier than this as evidenced by the stories recorded in the early angling texts about the quality of the fishing at Easter and the like. However in recent winters when low, stable flows have prevailed through to August then the bulk of the trout have run after this. For example last year 64% or two thirds of the run through the Waipa trap occurred after 1 September. An obvious consequence of this pattern has been to delay spawning by several months with the result that the

*Judges Pool on the
Tongariro River, June
2006. Photo: Jared
Goedhart, Sporting Life*

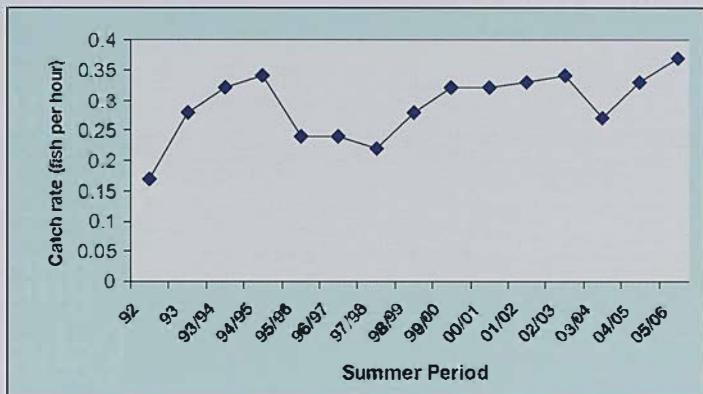


Figure 1. Summer catch rates for guided & non-guided anglers on Lake Taupo since 1992

progeny are several months younger at any particular time of the year than a decade ago. This has several implications. Firstly the fish are slightly smaller when they are in the lake over summer meaning a greater proportion is under the legal size limit. Similarly, as is apparent this year, they are several months later in reaching maturity and thinking about making their spawning migration. Taupo rainbows have always tended to be spring spawners but whereas they would run in autumn the majority are now very definitely spring runners.

This is not to say that there has not been some good fishing on the Tongariro but it has been patchy and generally anglers have found it hard going as reflected by a recorded catch rate of 0.19 fish per hour (1 fish every 5 hours) over May and June. The Tauranga-Taupo River has fished better with a catch rate estimate of 0.35 fish per hour (1 fish every 2.9 hours) over June, while the Hinemaitia and Waitahanui rivers have been the pick of the bunch. Interestingly the runs in these two rivers are influenced much more

by strong onshore winds than rainfall and so have been less affected by the recent dry winters. It is probably no coincidence that these runs have retained a more typical seasonal timing. The angling success on the rivers is consistent with our counts of spawning fish in a number of the eastern tributaries over June which have been around or just under the 5 year June average.

The other possible explanation for the slow start to the winter fishing is that there is only a small population of spawning fish. However this is not consistent with our November acoustic estimate of the number of trout in the lake, or our catch data. The average catch rate recorded over 2300 interviews on the lake last summer was 0.37 fish per hour which is the highest recorded in 15 years (figure 1).

Despite this high average catch rate and the fact that some anglers clearly did very well, other anglers reported the fishing was hard. A fairly typical scenario, but a clue as to one of the key reasons why, can be found in the

Table 1 Average estimated catch rates by method for Lake Taupo anglers between November 2005 & March 2006

Method	Catch rate (fish/hour)	Number of interviews
Downrigger	0.63	282
Leadline	0.18	746
Wireline	0.29	47
Jigging	0.47	555
Shallow trolling	0.38	579

catch rate estimates for the different boat fishing methods as shown in table 1.

The downrigger data is dominated by guides who use this method almost exclusively which in itself says a lot. Similarly jigging which is another deep fishing method also proved very successful. Wire lining was slightly less productive but the number of interviews is low. Conversely there are a large number of interviews for anglers using lead lines who overall experienced a very low catch rate. This reflects that a third of all anglers interviewed were using this method despite the fact that after Christmas most trout in the lake tend to be at depths where they are out of reach of lead lines.

Interestingly by mid June anglers were once again reporting good success using this method. Typically this would not occur for another month but probably reflects the unusually cold June combined with very strong winds which are likely to have been sufficient to once again mix the lake after the summer stratification (the development of a warm surface layer sitting on top of the denser, cooler bottom waters). When the lake is fully mixed water temper-

ature has less influence on the distribution of trout and many will once again be in reach of lead lines.

So there appears to be a large number of adult trout in the lake which should make their spawning migration later this year. The other feature of these fish is that they are in great condition. All in all it is shaping up to be a great spring but again, as in recent years, concentrate your effort from now on rather than the traditional period of April to early August.

In one way this change to a spring run is not a bad thing. For many New Zealanders autumn was a very busy time. Now we can concentrate on the roar, then duck shooting and then look forward to some great river fishing over the spring months.

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Tony Entwistle - Principal Guide - Strike Adventure

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- Extremely supple, even in cold conditions
- Cortland's new DuraSlik coating, Dyna-Tip shoots through the guides for great Castability.
- Line control has never been better as Dyna-Tip floats high on top, making it more visible to you and less visible to the fish.
- Dyna-Tip's no memory means longer straighter casts.
- All new technology gives the Dyna-Tip's tip section three times the floatation of other floating lines fly lines.



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The Real Deal.

ANGLING TRACKS CLEARED FOR WINTER

By Errol Cudby
Errol is Programme
Manager Visitor Assets,
responsible for angler
facilities.

Autumn we contracted Taunanga firm Adstar BOP Ltd to clear angling access tracks along the Waitahanui, Hinemaiaia, Tauanga-Tau po, Waimarino, Waiotaka and Tongariro rivers. Their crew of Murray Watkin, Russell Brown and Matthew Smith began work on 24 March. By 21 April, 29,827 metres of track and five wasp nests later, the contract was complete. The *modus operandi* of the contractors was something to see. Lightweight scotch bars made quick work of the track sides and then Murray mowed down the verges with his "pram", a much modified Bachtold self propelled mower. With chains on its large diameter wheels there were few places "the pram" could not reach. It traversed steps, mudholes, boulders and slippery logs and has even been floated across rivers on inner tubes. The only handicap is the fitness of its operator but Murray was well up to the task, having competed with the machine for years. Murray and Russell have cleared the Taupo tracks before and say that they always enjoy the experience. This was Matt's first trip and he vowed to return if possible. They appre-

ciated the favourable comments on their work from passing anglers one even gave them a trout for tea.

Being behind the leader when a wasp nest was disturbed was the least enjoyable part of the job, as it was usually those following who copped the punishment. For Matt it was most uncomfortable for a time when he was stung and we discovered that he was allergic and without his medication. Fortunately he recovered enough to be assisted out and back to camp and made a full recovery by the next day.

Cleaning the tracks has been an annual autumn job for the past few years so that they are ready for the winter river fishing, but there are indications that some are being increasingly used by anglers during summer and may need to be cleared twice a year. Given that this track maintenance is funded directly from fishing licence revenue we would only consider clearing the tracks if there is a benefit to anglers as opposed to other users. Feedback from anglers on this issue would be appreciated.

Murray Watkin makes
some adjustments to his
"pram" - the Bachtold
mower.
Photo: Errol Cudby





An extensive track network allows anglers to access prime fishing spots like the Cliff Pool on the Waitabanti. Photo: Kim Alexander-Turia

CHILDREN'S FISHING DAYS

By Kim Alexander-Turia

Tongariro National Trout Centre Society
Volunteer Graham Hamilton and
Arokatara Turia (aged 6)
Photo: Kim Alexander-Turia



The highly enjoyable children's fishing days have begun with four days held so far this year at the Tongariro National Trout Centre, under the guidance of the Tongariro National Trout Centre Society volunteers. Close to 1000 children have had a wonderful time, and caught their first trout from the pond. Rain or shine the children have come from all corners of New Zealand and enjoyed the thrill and joy of using a fly rod to catch a trout. They particularly enjoy striking when a fish bites and revel in the challenge of controlling the rod through the antics of a hooked trout until it can be safely netted. Each trout is weighed and measured before being carried home by their triumphant young captors. The pond holds fish of all sizes from 200g to larger fish weighing close to 1kg. These larger fish require more skill to land and have proved to be particularly challenging to catch.

REMAINING DATES FOR THE CHILDREN'S FISHING DATES:

Sunday 20 August

Sunday 24 September (School Holiday)

Sunday 22 October (Labour Weekend)

Bookings can be made by telephoning the trout centre volunteers at the River Walk visitor centre on (07) 386 8085 between 10am and 3pm daily, by email troutcentre@real.org.nz by website: www.troutcentre.org.nz or by fax: (07) 386 8490

Mastering the Tongariro roll cast

By Herb Spannagl

Herb has fished the Tongariro River for 36 years a highly innovative angler and the author of many articles on fishing and casting. Herb is been at the forefront of introducing the Tongariro Roll Cast to Tuiho anglers.
Photo: Brendon Mattheys



The Tongariro River has been the birthplace of many fly-fishing innovations and the gateway for quite a few introductions from other parts of the fly-fishing world. Just think of the shooting head, Red Setter wet fly, Globug, Tongariro bomb, and all the adaptations to upstream nymphing for migrating rainbow trout. All these can be traced to this famous river and all of them during the thirty-six years that I have fished there.

The Tongariro Roll Cast (TRC for short) is the latest contribution to fly-fishing that has come from this illustrious water. You may wonder how this cast got its name. After exhaustive research into the roll casting family, which includes all the so-called Spey casts, I have come to the conclusion that this roll cast as it is practiced on the Tongariro River, is sufficiently different from other roll casts that it fully justifies its own name. The cast itself has been attributed to Turangis Jamie Davies, who told me that he chanced upon it during an attempt to recover a failed conventional roll cast. Sounds reasonable to me.

Before I introduce you to the actual mechanics of the Tongariro Roll Cast let me highlight its significant attributes.

- Only minimal back casting room is required, hence you can fish places others can't.
- You will never get hit by a "bomb".
- Say goodbye to the dreaded tailwind (and collapsed back casts)
- Your nymphs spend less time in the air and more time in the water than with conventional overhead casting.
- The cast is also less tiring and not so hard on your flyline.
- Leader length and bomb weight is less critical.
- You can get excellent results with gear of a lighter AFTMA rating (i.e. ≠ 6 or =7)

As you might expect there are also downsides (I hope you didn't expect a free lunch).

- The cast is not easy to learn
- The cast gets more difficult the deeper your wade
- It does not penetrate a headwind as well as an overhead cast
- You will get lots of folk asking you for a lesson which is great for the ego but seriously curs into your fishing time

The Essence of a Roll Cast

Every roll cast breaks down into two parts. The setup and the forward cast. Because advanced roll casting is relatively new to this country you ought to know that the difference between all roll casts is purely in the set-up stages. That is everything you do "before" you launch into the delivery. The delivery cast (or forward cast) remains identical with all of them.

Lets Get Down to Practice

To begin with there are two terms you will need to remember. They are fundamental to all roll casting.

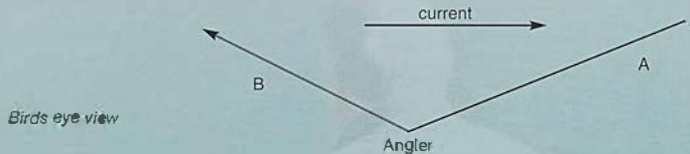
Anchor - Is the temporary resting position of the indicator, a little bit of line and the terminal rig.

D-Loop - Is the dynamic loop, which forms between the anchor and the rod tip. Its shape resembles the letter D. It doubles as a back cast.

The Tongariki Roll Cast is easiest to learn if it is broken down into five phases.

Phase One - upstream line repositioning

Reposition the line from the downstream fished out position A to the new upstream target B.



Phase Two - setting the anchor

With a horizontal rod sweep backwards pulling B straight and towards you so that the indicator comes to rest about two-rod lengths in front of you. Final distance depends on how much anchorage you need. Ensure that the line and leader are straight.

Winter Fishing

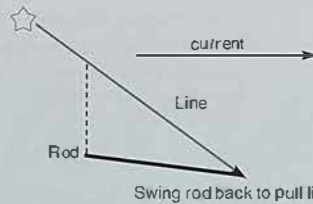
- Sharp Deals on Kilwell, CD and G Loomis flyrods.
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Anchor position of indicator and leader

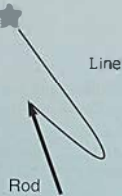


Phase Three – decreasing line

Still with a horizontal rod, sweep rod forward whilst releasing about 1-2 meters of previously retrieved line back onto the water surface directly beside you. Use water tension to pull line through the guides.

Do not disturb the anchor

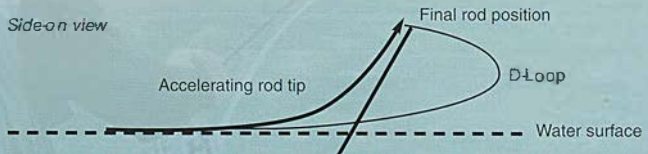
Swing rod forward to fold line



Phase Four – D-loop

This phase forms the D-loop. Begin by sweeping the rod tip back from its horizontal position on a backward curving path to end almost vertical. Throughout the sweep speed up and finish with a small upward kick to ensure the D-Loop is airborne. Wait a fraction. While you are waiting pull the casting arm down and in so that the elbow is close to your hip. During this pause all the spare line on the water is taken up and becomes part of a bigger D-Loop.

Side-on view



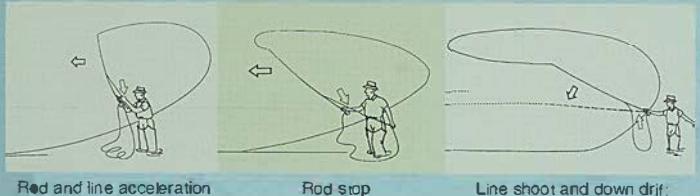
Phase Five – forward cast

During the very brief pause (while the D-Loop bellies out behind you) watch the indicator and the slack line on the water.

Do not look at the target or anywhere else. Only look at the line in front of you!!!!

As soon as all is straight, tight and almost off the water (and the indicator is beginning to move towards you) the D-Loop is fully formed. This is the precise moment to start the forward cast. Don't forget to raise the line-hand during the D-Loop forming pause so that you can complete the cast with a brisk down haul of the line. Finish the cast with a hard rod stop.

Side-On Views of the Forward Cast



During this final phase the D-Loop will roll forward and eventually lift the "Anchor". After that it becomes a conventional narrow forward casting loop.

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Its unique ridged design dramatically reduces the line's surface area on the rod rings while at the same time, thanks to its grooved structure, Ridge Line also offers phenomenal water retention. The combined effect means that no other fly-line in the world can compete with Ridge Line for sheer casting capability.

AVAILABLE IN DISTANCE TAPER 6 - 9
WITH A NON STRETCH POWER CORE IN
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Thanks to vastly reduced friction on rod guides

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Larger surface area dramatically improves floatation

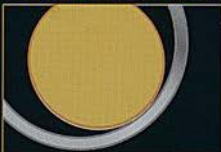
• FANTASTIC FLEXIBILITY

Braided core to cope with cold conditions

• LONGER LASTING

Ridge line is guaranteed for 5 years from cracking

REGULAR FLYLINE



Regular line has up to 200% greater contact with rod ring

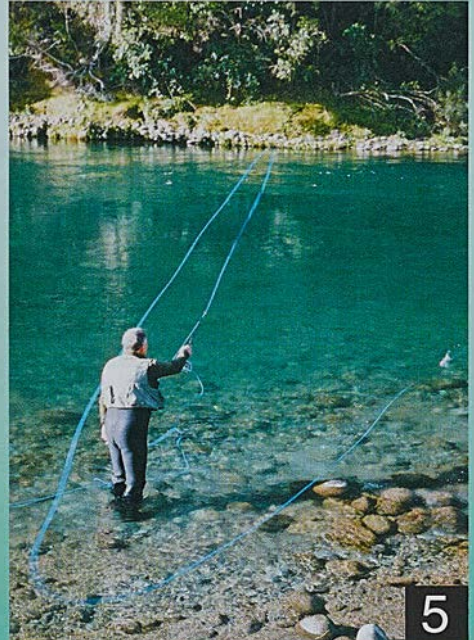
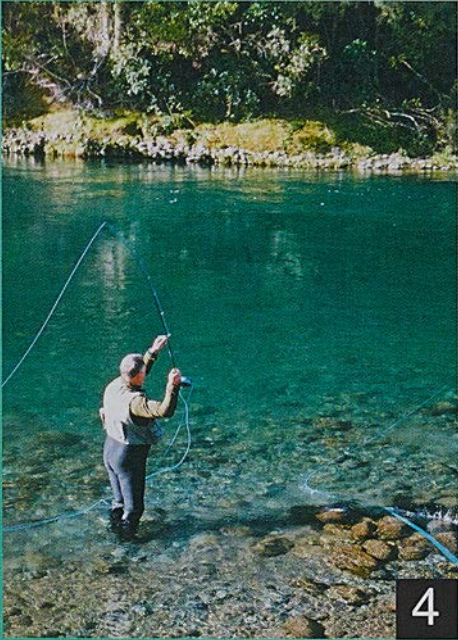
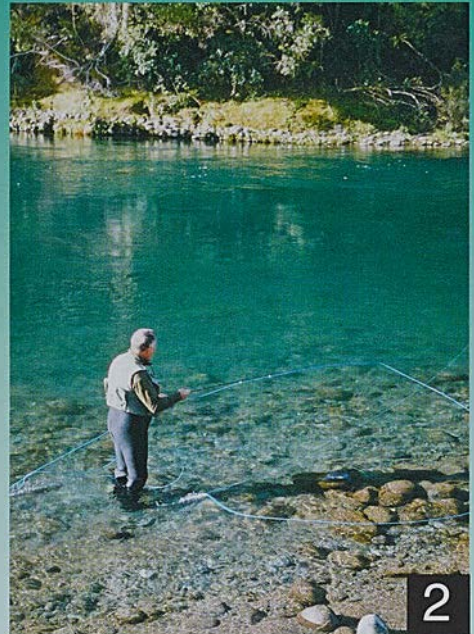
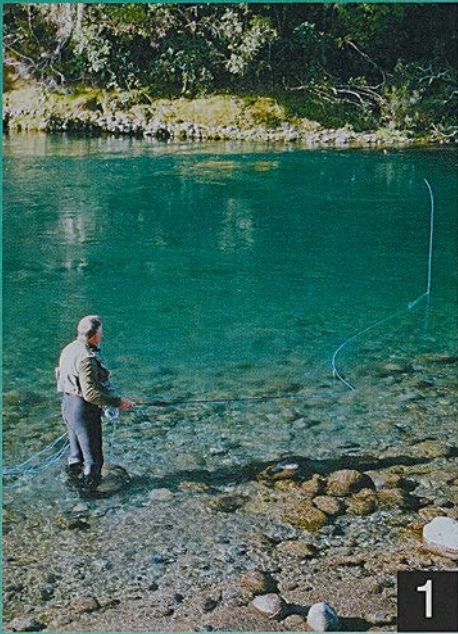
RIDGE FLYLINE



Reduced surface area for minimal friction

...a real revolution in fly-line technology!





Photos: Brendon Matthews



Important points

- Always position the anchor outside of your rod tip to avoid the D-Loop and fly coming up under the rod or into your body.
- Pull line and leader straight as you plant the anchor
- A short line haul in phase four will speed up and deepen the D-Loop.
- Do not start the forward cast until all the line on the water has straightened and lifted into the D-Loop.
- Make sure that some of the thick belly of the line is still inside your tip ring at the start of the forward cast
- Keep your elbow close to your body during the start of the forward cast.
- Drive the rod tip on a straight and slightly rising path to ensure a tight loop.
- Never raise the casting hand above your ear.
- Do not move rod tip in a downward curve.
- If you hear your line/indicator "popping" beside your ear than your anchor has not held and the cast is lost.
- Match the anchor position to your casting ability. For example even a small globog provides more anchorage than a Hare and Copper nymph. With more anchorage it follows that prior to the forward cast you either have to leave less line on the water or you must drive the rod harder. Only time on the water will teach you the right combination between anchorage and rod power to get good lift off.
- A long belly WF floating line is the best compromise for this cast.
- It is always easier to perform this cast when the river is on the side of your rod hand.
- The deeper you wade the harder it is to produce a fully aericalised D-Loop. In practice it is more sensible to come back into shallower water where you can make up the extra distance with very little effort.
- On some casts the forward line energy is insufficient to fully turn the leader over. Do not re-cast, as the slack leader will help your nymphs to plunge freely to the bottom.
- It is not recommended that you use a power stick of a rod. On the contrary use a rod that you can feel loading against the energised D-Loop.
- With a well-balanced rod/line combination and by applying the right technique, very little effort is needed to roll cast heavy bombs in excess of 20 meters
- The Tongariro Roll Cast is not just useful on the Tongariro. It is an invaluable casting aid for light line/short rod summer fishing as well.

Learning the roll cast

Because the Tongariro Roll Cast is both a very dynamic and also a precision exercise it is a bad mistake to try to perfect all five phases at once. Start with phase one. Hone it until you can do it on autopilot. Only then go to the next phase. When you can link both together and perform them well, add the third... and so on. Each phase relies on the previous phase to be perfect. Generally speaking there is no such thing as a bad roll cast. It either flies or it does not. It is that serious or that funny depending on your outlook in life.

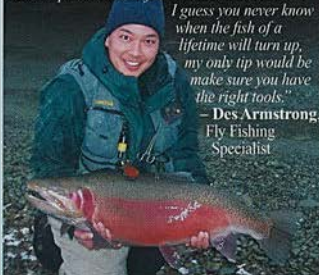
You need water to practice this cast. Wade in up to your ankles. The ideal training venue is the shallows of a slow running river. The ideal position for a right hander is to have the river on the rod hand side when facing downstream. The slow current keeps the line always straight and tight and allows you to pull slip line from a D-Loop and shoot. With no need to reposition the line you can repeat from phase two onwards over and over again.

XLS

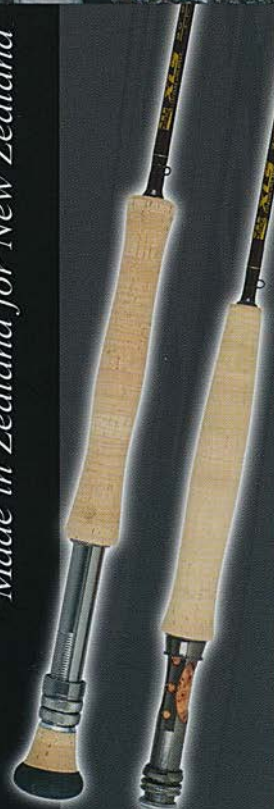
"I've learnt to be very unemotional about my fishing tackle, simply put they are a tool to do a job. The new XLS series from CD are the finest tools I've ever used. They have the smoothness to cast accurately at any distance, even the 5 weight had the power to land fish like this 25lb rainbow."

"I guess you never know when the fish of a lifetime will turn up, my only tip would be to make sure you have the right tools."

— Des Armstrong,
Fly Fishing
Specialist



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The Tongariro Roll Cast looks deceptively easy when done by an expert practitioner but, as you will find out, that is an illusion. Take heart though, I cracked it at the genetic age of 67. It took me three years, largely because I had no instructions or help other than the chance to briefly observe a guy doing it in mirror image on the other side of the Hydro Pool. The rest was practice, experimentation, practice and more practice. Looking back I would have given my eye teeth for an article such as this. You will still need to put in the hard yards though. Biomechanics tell us that it takes 5000 repeats to imprint an action into muscle memory. I am convinced I needed at least triple that number. I also discovered emotions I never thought I had (everything from throwing infantile tantrums to slumping into deep depressions). But hey, all that is distant history, now that I have got there.

After the demise of the earth bank that provided a narrow existing platform on the true right of the Hydro Pool, the boulder wall of the Bridge Pool is now the home of the Tongariro Roll Casting academy. Here you will have more chance to see a master blaster of this graceful cast than anywhere else on the Tongariro River. Just watching is a feast for sore eyes for some or an incitement to commit suicide for others.

I believe this is the fly cast of the future for Tongariro style nymphing. Similarly those anglers who have mastered it will not just catch more fish, more easily; they will also have passed an important personal milestone on their fly-fishing road to perfection. Now, that should be enough to get you cracking.

LEARN THE TONGARIRO ROLL CAST FROM HERB SPANNAGL IN PERSON

IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE TONGARIRO NATIONAL TROUT CENTRE SOCIETY, HERB SPANNAGL WILL UNDERTAKE A CASTING CLINIC ON THE 26 AUGUST 2006 (BACK UP DATE 27 AUGUST FOR BAD WEATHER).

Herb has kindly donated his time to conduct this clinic under the expectation that participants will donate \$50 per person to the Society. Herb supports the aims of the Society which are to develop, promote and expand the Tongariro National Trout Centre, in partnership with the Department of Conservation to enlighten and inform children and educate all visitors about trout, the Taupo fishery, New Zealand freshwater ecology; to see and enjoy trout in their natural habitat to collect, preserve, maintain and display freshwater fishing memorabilia and artefacts and to encourage participation in recreational fishing as a healthy and pleasurable activity. All proceeds from the day will go to the Society.

TIMING OF DAY:

- Meet at the Whakapumautanga Downs Learning Centre (Classroom), Tongariro National Trout Centre at 10.30 am (4kms South of Hurui).
- Introduction and Video
- Demonstration of cast at the Upper Birdi Pool
- Lunch at 12 noon at the Classroom (BBQ sausages, coffee and tea will be available at a small cost or you can bring your own lunch).
- Depart for the Tongariro River for instruction 1pm (location for instruction will be decided on the day as it will depend on the wind direction & a location that will least interfere with other anglers)

CONDITIONS:

- Limited to 20 Anglers (on a first in first serve basis)
- Making a donation will secure your booking
- For cancellations, refunds will be given up to 19 August 2006 (No refunds after this date).
- Anglers must supply all their own gear, waders, typical Tongariro rod with a "long belly" WF or Double Tipper floating line and "small" well treated indicators (No flies or bombs are needed as this cast is difficult enough to learn without the handicap of weighted flies).
- For bookings please contact the Society on 07 386 8085 or e-mail: troutcentre@rcap.org.nz.

Note: the clinic is not suitable for fly casting beginners. It is an advanced cast, which is a lot easier to learn if the double haul is already part of an angler's casting routine.

THANK YOU FOR SUPPORTING THE TONGARIRO NATIONAL TROUT CENTRE SOCIETY

Tongariro River RECREATIONAL FLOW RELEASES

By Jarrod Bowler

Jarrod is the
Environmental Manager
- Renewable Energy, for
Genesis Energy

On the 2 June Genesis Energy released water from Poutu Intake into the Tongariro River to test a gate on the Poutu Canal to meet resource consent requirements. The release was undertaken with the best of intentions in that it was to provide an opportunity of increased flows for rafters and kayakers. However the release unfortunately created safety concerns for anglers. Feedback following this event highlighted a number of areas for improvement and Genesis Energy has been working with the Department of Conservation to look at safety and awareness of anglers throughout the Tongariro River.

The Tongariro River is an integral part of the Tongariro Power Scheme. The river has two structures associated with the power scheme on it: Rangipo Dam (the intake for Rangipo power station) and Poutu Intake. Poutu Intake is situated immediately downstream of the outfall from Rangipo power station. Minimum flows of 0.6 and 16 cubic meters per second are released continuously from these structures, respectively.

It should be noted that both the Rangipo Dam and Poutu Intake have limited capacity to divert water from the Tongariro River and any flow in excess of this capacity simply passes over the structures and down its natural course. During moderate to large sized floods the scheme is shut down and no water is taken which is not only for operational purposes but is also a requirement of resource consent conditions.

Increased flows and changes in water levels downstream of these structures can occur at any time, both as a result of power scheme operations and natural flood events. Power scheme operations that may result in increased flows downstream are maintenance activities such as faults or unplanned outages, and compliance with resource consent conditions. Planned recreational releases, which are a resource consent requirement, occur on the Tongariro River three weekends every year. Natural floods on the Tongariro River tend to be very "peaky", that is they rise and fall very quickly which can produce very large flow changes over relatively short periods of time. This is because the Tongariro catchment is large, located at high altitude and subject to high intensity rainfall events. The river is also steep and fast flowing with a large flow capacity.

In consultation with the DOC, Genesis Energy has designed new warning signage to be erected at key entry points along the fishable reaches of the Tongariro River aimed at informing visitors to the area about the power scheme and the likelihood of flow changes occurring at anytime. Genesis Energy is also modifying its operational procedures to ensure that any planned maintenance activities either occur at night, thereby limiting any effects on anglers, or are well publicised before an event occurs. However, it should be recognised that not all events can be planned for and that unplanned scheme outages, emergency situations or requirements of resource consent conditions may dictate that flow changes occur with little or no warning.

Rivers are active and ever changing environments and so understanding and awareness of these rapid changes is key to personal safety while enjoying this and any other rivers in our area. Please check weather forecasts before venturing into the river and ensure you have safe passage to exit points in case of emergency. Most importantly if in doubt, do not attempt a crossing.

WARNING

HYDRO POWER SCHEME OPERATING UPSTREAM



Water level and river flows in the Tongariro River may change rapidly without warning

Recreational Releases 35 cubic metres per second for 6 hours are planned from Poutu Intake on:

- Saturday 29th April 2006
- Saturday 17th June 2006
- Saturday 16th September 2006

Rapid flow changes may also occur at anytime due to natural floods
For further information please visit www.hydro.genesisenergy.co.nz



River flow and rainfall
information for the
Tongariro River is available at:
www.hydro.genesisenergy.co.nz

NEW RESEARCH

By Glenn Mackenzie

As our very successful study into tracking the movements of rainbow trout in Lake Taupo (*Target Taupo* #50, 51) comes to an end, this has provided an opportunity to move into a series of new investigations.

Survival of juvenile trout

In recent issues we have discussed our plan to try and unlock the key to juvenile trout survival when they migrate to the lake at about 18 months of age. This is the major bottleneck controlling the size of the subsequent adult population. The size of individual fish at emigration is clearly important but survival is also likely to be influenced by the timing, perhaps river flow conditions, currents and food availability in the lake and so on. Funding from Genesis Energy as part of the Tongariro Enhancement Fund provides the opportunity to tackle this issue on the required scale. There are several ways we can approach this project using different types of tags and recorders, each of which has advantages and disadvantages.

To establish which method we should use for the full project we are trialling the two

options on a small scale this season.

As reported in the last issue of *Target Taupo*, in the first trial we have set up a project to track juvenile trout in the Waipa Stream using passive integrated transponder (PIT) tags. As the fish move downstream they are detected as they pass past the Waipa fish trap and age in hopefully when they return to spawn in three years time. These tags, which are much like those proposed for micro-chipping dogs, are relatively cheap and easy to use. However they can only be detected when they pass within a few centimetres of the aerial and it is building an effective aerial which is the challenge. In the Waipa Stream the aerial is built into the trap and this was promising but whether it is transferable to the Tongariro Delta, which will be necessary for the full project, is much less certain.

Initially, our plan was to routinely tag juvenile

Super glue is used rather than stitches to close the cut made to insert the tag because of the small size of the fish.

Photo: Mark Venman



PROJECTS

trout in the Waipa Stream over the next few years and follow their progress. In April we obtained animal ethics committee approval for the tagging technique and in May we tagged the first 50 small trout. However two issues arose; firstly at this time of year it takes considerable effort to catch sufficient fish for tagging and secondly and more importantly, the most effective way to catch these fish was using electric fishing which may harm the adult spawning trout also in the stream. In simple terms the larger the fish in the electric field the greater the potential difference that it is exposed to and the harder it is hit. For example research overseas shows that electric fishing can affect the future development of the eggs in the female fish.

As a consequence of this we have modified our approach to concentrate tagging over the summer months when more young fish are likely to be present and similarly many fewer spawning fish. Hand in hand with this we will

attempt to build an effective aerial at the Delta next summer to see if this is a practical option. The other trial planned for late this year is to tag juvenile trout in the lower Tongariro River using acoustic tags much like we put in the adult trout in Lake Taupo, only much smaller. These tags are bulky to use and very expensive but can be detected by automatic loggers from hundreds of metres away which is a big advantage.

Depending on the results of these two trials we will embark on a major project in the 2007/08 season to track the progress of juvenile trout as they enter the lake and then determine which of them survive and what the characteristics are of these successful fish. If we use PIT tags this requires we track the tagged fish as they pass out over the Delta and then again when they return to spawn, but if we use acoustic tags then we need to follow their progress in the lake until the batteries die.



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Comparing juvenile monitoring results with the Waipa Stream run

We have been operating the Waipa fish trap to estimate the size of the Waipa stream spawning run since 1998. Similarly we have been monitoring the size and numbers of juvenile trout in the Tongariro and Whaikau rivers on a monthly basis since 1996. Now that these programmes have been running for a number of years we have enough data to undertake a desktop investigation into whether there is any obvious link between aspects of the juvenile population we have measured and the subsequent spawning migration 2 or 3 years later. For example, there are some hints that the number of large juvenile fish is an indication of future adult numbers.

Genetics of spawning trout

As reported in issue 51 of *Target Taupo* a comparison of spawning fish in the Waipa Stream (Tongariro River) and Te Whaikau Stream at Lake Otamangakau using microsatellite analysis revealed significant genetic differences between these two strains of fish, despite the relatively short period of isolation. This result while significant in itself, opened up the opportunity to test whether there are differences between the fish spawning in different Taupo tributaries, and between early and late run fish in the same stream. If there are differences this could have major management implications in terms of the need to manage individual spawning runs or components of the same spawning run quite separately. For example it might be necessary to provide greater protection for early run fish so as to protect this trait.

The analysis requires collecting a fingernail sized piece of the anal fin from 50 fish for each stream or part of the run being studied. Samples will be collected from 9 streams, either when the fish pass through our traps, from angler caught fish or by catching the fish by a variety of methods ourselves. Taking the sample in this way does not harm the fish but the logistics of getting sufficient samples from some of the streams is certainly a challenge. We will collect many of the samples this winter and the remaining samples next winter before sending them to a lab for analysis.

Monitoring growth and survival in Lake Otamangakau

In recent years we have been puzzled by

the lack of trophy trout (10lb or 4.5kg and bigger) in Lake Otamangakau despite large numbers of fish just under this size and in excellent condition in the trap runs. In general trout do not grow particularly quickly in Lake Otamangakau but continue to grow after each spawning. Therefore trophy fish tend to be relatively old and we would expect some of these slightly smaller trout to become trophies the following season. Last winter was no exception with 14% of rainbows trapped 3.6kg (8lb) or larger yet this summer very few trophy fish were reported. It will be interesting to see what we trap this winter but so far there have been few very big fish. If the trophy fish don't show up it raises the question - have the slightly smaller fish in the run last winter died or are they still present but just didn't grow anymore? To answer this we need to be able to follow the progress of individual fish and the PIT tags that we have been trialling on the Waipa Stream in conjunction with the operation of the Te Whaikau trap provide an excellent opportunity to do this.

As soon as we have animal ethics committee approval we plan to tag a number of rainbow and brown trout as they pass through the trap to spawn this winter. It's a very simple procedure in fish of this size and we intend to repeat the tagging next winter. If these fish return to spawn the following year they will most likely be caught again in the Te Whaikau Trap and a detector in the measuring board will read the tag and identify the fish. If it reappears the fish has obviously survived and by comparing its length and weight with the previous year an accurate estimate of growth can be obtained.

Side scanning sonar to count trout in shallow water.

One of the outcomes of our project to track the movement of trout in Lake Taupo was a realisation that trout spend the vast majority of their time within 20 metres of the surface. While this is comforting for anglers in that the fish are generally in reach, this also has major implications for our ability to accurately count the trout population in the lake using standard echosounding techniques. These rely on a downward looking beam which spreads out as it gets deeper. While it provides excellent coverage at depth, by its



*Fish like this brown trout held by Mark Venman will be Piffigged as they pass through the Te Whakam trap.
Photo: Spar Joyce*

very narrow close to the boat. Similarly any fish close to the surface are likely to be spooked by the boat passing directly overhead before they are counted. As a result this technique underestimates the population in the surface waters, the very zone so favoured by taupo trout.

To overcome this problem we are exploring the use of side scanning sonar which still utilises a vertical beam to count the depth zone, but also a horizontal beam to scan the surface zone. Sending a beam sideways is much more complex as there is no bottom to detect and so it is difficult to determine the extent of the area scanned. Similarly, interference can be caused by the beam deflecting off the surface or the bottom in shallow water. Practically, it is more difficult to use if for no other reason than it is essential to avoid rocking the boat

and causing the beam to tilt up and down. Nevertheless this area of acoustics has developed considerably in recent years and there are now machines available which could effectively count the surface zone of Lake Taupo. However these have generally been used on much smaller lakes and the biggest challenge is to adapt their use to the exposed expanse of Lake Taupo.

Over the next few months we are exploring the options to use this technology on the lake. This technique certainly poses some technical and practical challenges but if we can overcome these it is capable of producing an accurate estimate of the size of the trout population. Ultimately this is an absolutely fundamental piece of information we need to manage the fishery.

IT'S NOW OR NEVER NO TO DIDYMO

By Glenn Maclean

The invasive alga didymo has continued to spread through the South Island and in recent weeks has been confirmed in the Gowan River off the Buller's Bay River (Cathā), Upukeroa River near Te Anau and Ohau and 'Fv'izel rivers in the Waitaki catchment. Fortunately at this stage didymo does not appear to be in the North Island but this highlights that once didymo crosses Cook Strait there is likely to be little that can be done to check its spread and impact here.

There is a fair degree of apathy amongst anglers and other river users over this issue. Far too often I have heard the comment "it's coming anyway so what is the point of doing anything". Well let's put it in simple terms. If didymo gets to this area and forms nuisance blooms then you won't be fishing the Tongariro River or any other infected river

because your gear will be continuously clogged, you won't catch as many fish in the lake because almost certainly the recruitment of young fish into the lake will be reduced, and finally a lot of people in this area who are dependant on the \$80 million dollars spent every year by Taupo anglers are going to take a big hit. Yes there are some "ifs" in this scenario but there is no good reason not to think that this will be the likely outcome. Furthermore once didymo is here there is no obvious fix. Maybe science will come up with a solution, let's hope so, but it doesn't look promising at the moment. So it comes down to stopping it getting here in the first place. It is as simple as that. This means taking action now! There is no knight in shining armour who is going to solve this problem for us. We are all in this together and it is up to each of us individually

Some of the local didymo team trying to collectively make a difference. Left to Right, Jarrod Bowler (Genesis), Glenn Maclean (DOC), Steve Smith (Fish & Game), Mike Birch (NZ Recreational Canoeing Association). Photo: Kim Alexander-Tarla



In May a conference was held in Montana to review the current knowledge of didymo and the management implications. Key points to come out of this were that one or more strains have changed and now produce excessive amounts of stalks. This is the strain found in new Zealand and parts of western USA and Canada. Furthermore the single most likely vector to transfer didymo is felt soled wading boots. Didymo can survive on moist, dark felt for greater than a week.

to take responsibility to keep didymo out. Yes, some agencies and groups are undertaking special initiatives but the key is that each of us clean our gear as a matter of routine and encourage those around us to do the same. For all the signs, brochures, posters and the like it is very clear that the most effective way of getting the message across to date has been one on one contact.

The message is very simple: take 5 minutes to clean your gear each time you use it and encourage your friends to do the same. We do it as a matter of course when we fish in

saltwater to protect our gear so why not when we fish in freshwater to protect the rivers and lakes we treasure. Don't think about it, just do it - whether or not you think there is any likelihood of your gear being infected. Remember that while didymo is the focus of attention at present there are any number of other nasties that we would hate to see introduced and cleaning your gear is also guarding against these. Spray your gear with 5% detergent or better still dunk it in a bin of detergent solution and then spread it out so it dries thoroughly. Pay special atten-

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*Glen Maclean
Programme Manager
Technical Support and
Nicola Ethoridge,
Community Relations
and Technical Support
Manager demonstrate
how to clean your gear
at a public meeting in
Tuarangi.
Photo: Kim Alexander,
Turiu*

tion to felt-soled wading boots.

If you are a kayaker then 5% household disinfectant is just as effective but won't leave your seat slippery. It is not possible to completely remove the risk of accidentally transferring didymo but by the same token practicing the check, clean and dry routine will very significantly reduce the likelihood. Locally the Taupo Fishery Area is part of a group also comprising DOC in its wider role, Eastern Fish and Game, Genesis Energy, NZ Recreational Canoeing Association and Tuwharetoa Maori Trust Board. This group has no statutory responsibility for this issue but is simply an alliance of concerned organisations who believe that if we are serious about keeping didymo out of the central North Island then we need to take action ourselves. Our goal is to get a practical and effective campaign up and rolling, which other agencies can then build upon.

WE HAVE ADOPTED A 2 PRONGED STRATEGY:

- 1. Promoting more intensive border control by Biosecurity NZ at departure points from the South Island.**
- 2. Implementing a regional campaign to encourage people to clean their gear.**

It is never going to be possible to ensure that everyone has cleaned their gear. However if the majority of highest risk users practise

good cleanliness then this will make a significant difference to the magnitude of the risk.

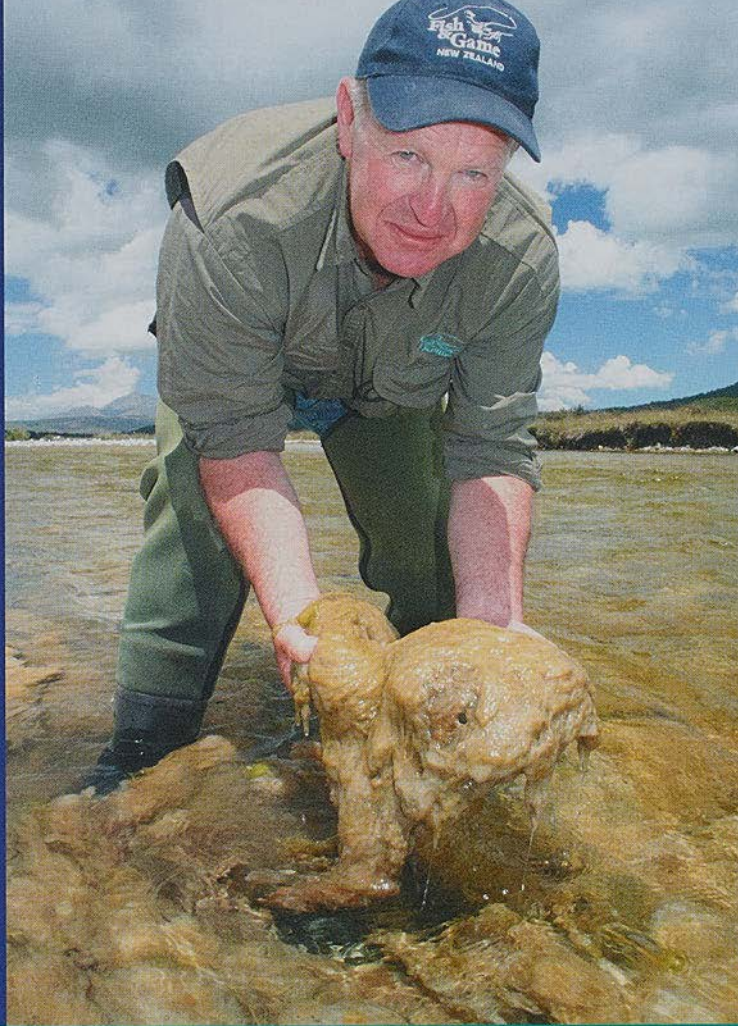
The local campaign comprises the following:

- 10,000 1 litre spray bottles containing 50mls of detergent and labelled. These are supplied free to local sports shops and licence agents. Shop staff will be encouraged to actively demonstrate how to clean fishing gear with each licence they sell and to give away a bottle to reinforce the message. These bottles cost our group \$1 each, reflecting very generous assistance from Premier Plastics (bottle supplier) and Eco Store (detergent company)
- Larger wash bins and detergent personally supplied to motels and aircraft operators for their clients to wash their gear in.
- Major wash stations in Tuarangi and Taupo. These will be high profile sites which highlight the issue to anglers and the general public.
- Signs and posters at road ends, shops and motels
- Bumper stickers.
- Banners in prominent locations.
- Signage and/or displays at Taupo and Rotorua airports.
- Putting the "clean your gear message" on the new season Taupo fishing licence.
- A prominent hands on display at the Tongariro National Trout Centre demonstrating how to clean fishing gear.
- A programme and competition in local schools to highlight the issue and actions to take.
- Stories and publicity in the angling press and TV fishing shows.

Implementation of these actions is well advanced. It is planned to have the majority of these in place by early to mid August. Ultimately though, the success of the campaign will come down to each of us doing our part and adopting good practice as a matter of routine.

SO WASH YOUR GEAR!

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Check: Remove all obvious material from all items that have been in contact with the water.

Clean: Soak or scrub all items for at least one minute with:

A 5% solution of dishwashing detergent, or a 5% solution of household disinfectant.
A 5% solution is 500ml (two large cups) with water added to make 10 litres.

Dry: If cleaning is not practical, dry the item to the touch then leave for at least 48 hours before using in another waterway.



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WHANGAMATA STREAM CLEARANCE

By Errol Cudby

Chemical control of the muskweed (*Mimulus luteus*) will resume in the Autumn*, trumpeted the March issue of *Tuget Taupo*, implying that the weed clogging this small but important, northern spawning stream would magically disappear with the waving of a wand - knapsack sprayer wand, that is.

The spraying resumed but with not quite magical results. Die back was slow because the plant growth had slowed in the autumn but a good clearance was eventually achieved. As the plants had had all summer to develop, their root systems were extensive and the stream still required some tinkering to clear it, so that trout can use it. The area between Island bridge and the mouth is now cleared of muskweed but several areas overgrown with sedges require hand

clearing to open it right up.

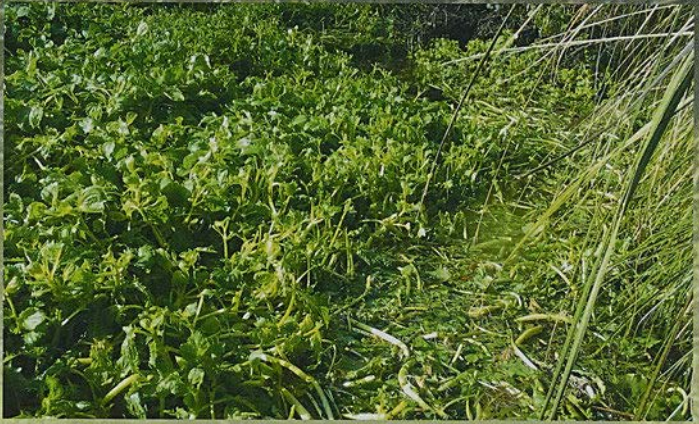
Herbicide application early in the next growing season should ease the control measures required later for next year's spawning run.

Wind fallen logs causing further blockages were recently cleared by fishery staff. Poplars and willows in and across the stream in the lower reaches were trapping debris and causing blockages, while in the upper reaches, above Whangamata Road a large pine tree and massed branches almost completely blocked the stream in two places. As soon as the unimpeded flow resumed, trout were scintling through on their quest to reach their spawning grounds.

Callan Bourke sawing sections from a pine log blocking the stream while Harry Hamilton galbers strength for the next one.


Photo: Errol Cudby





*Top: A section of the stream
two weeks after spraying
with herbicide - not much
sign of magic
Photo: Errol Cudby*




*Above: The same section
three plus weeks after
spraying
Photo: Errol Cudby*




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TONGARIRO NATIONAL

New Administration Manager for Society



Tongariro
National Trout
Centre Society



Ken Kimmins
Photo: Kim Alexander
Turia

When Ken Kimmins recently moved to Turangi, he never thought he would be fortunate enough to land a job that would involve working with one of the world's top wild trout fisheries. Having been a keen trout angler all his life, "this was a dream come true" says Ken. "I have had many years of pleasure fishing the Taupo area, particularly the Tongariro where I continue today to enjoy its splendour with friends and family. To have the opportunity to help promote and foster public interest in the Taupo fishery and to work alongside the Department of Conservation is very exciting".

Ken has spent most of his life in Wellington where he worked for the Reserve Bank of New Zealand. He was a ledger clerk in 1968, the year the Wahine sank in Wellington Harbour and progressed to hold a variety of positions over subsequent years. In 1996 Ken was transferred to Christchurch to manage the Reserve Bank's Christchurch branch.

Four and a half years later and following the closure of the branch, Ken joined the Department of Conservation in Christchurch. There he managed the visitor information centre for four years. "This job gave me a good insight into the tourist industry and the work of DOC. I was lucky to be given the opportunity to help with field work" says Ken. Each year Ken would spend a few weeks during the winter months doing predator monitoring work in Lake Sumner Forest Park. This gave him an appreciation of some of the conservation issues facing the country.

After his two daughters' weddings in the same year, Ken and his wife returned from the "Mainland" to live permanently at Motuoaia with their two cats. "It's great living in a relatively clean environment and having so many outdoor recreational choices at one's door step. As a result we get frequent

visitors, including our son, who is also a keen angler" says Ken.

Ken says, "I'm looking forward to the many challenges of my new role as Administration Manager of the Tongariro National Trout Centre Society. I will bring to the society management skills and experience which I believe will help the society progress into the future. I am especially looking forward to working with the dedicated team of volunteers of the society".



TROUT CENTRE SOCIETY

Volunteers Needed for Society

By Ken Kimmins

Ken is the
Administration Manager
for the Tongariro
National Trout Centre
Society.

The Tongariro National Trout Centre Society is looking for more volunteers to help with the children's fishing Days, look after The River Walk visitor centre and to help with other activities at the centre.

The Tongariro National Trout Centre Society is an incorporated society. Its role is to promote and foster public interest and understanding of the Taupo trout fishery, other freshwater fisheries and freshwater ecology.

Volunteers assist
children to catch trout
at the latest fishing day.
Photo: Kim Alexander-Turila



Tongariro
National Trout
Centre Society

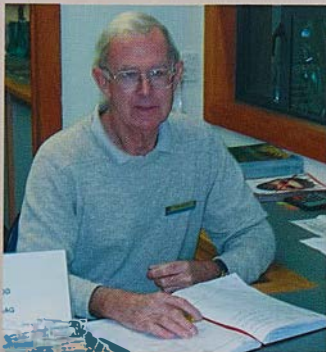
The society achieves this by working with the Department of Conservation in the development of the Tongariro National Trout Centre and associated education programme.

The society relies on donations, sponsorship and membership to fund much of what it does and so the help of volunteers is essential to its activities.

If you fish or have an interest in helping the younger generation in the art of fishing please call the society as they would very much like to hear from you, or come along to one of the children's fishing days at the trout centre to see the volunteers in action.

Volunteering is a rewarding experience and an opportunity to take part in creating a legacy for the future. The options are endless, native tree planting, possum control, fishing demonstrations, TNTC tours, working with the *Taupo for Tomorrow* education programme and others yet to be discovered.

If you would like to find out more about becoming a volunteer or wish to become a financial member of the society please phone Ken Kimmins on 07 3868095 or E-mail troutcentre@rcap.org.nz or visit the web site on www.troutcentre.org.nz.



Mike Sadler, Volunteer at River Walk
visitor Centre. Photo: Kim Alexander-Turila

FISHERY HARVEST SURVEY ENDS

By Rob Hood

Rob is a kanger and part of the team that carries out our field operators work

The survey is to estimate the total angling catch over the 2005/06 Taupo fishing season has ended. To obtain the necessary data required considerable financial resources, organisation, and a huge team effort from staff. For instance it was essential that survey days included the high use public holidays and weekends, and as can be imagined at times this required considerable compromise from their families.

To give an example of the scale of the survey, over 2000 anglers were interviewed on the Waikareto and the Tauranga Taupo rivers during 28 survey days. At Lake Taupo boat ramps over 3500 angler interviews were conducted. Almost all were done by our contract survey staff, Peter Wilton, David Lehtola, David Gade and Brendon Matthews. Without their assistance and patience (especially on the quieter days) we simply would not have been able to collect the information required. Lake Taupo charter boat operators also assisted with the survey by allowing us to place an identification sticker on their boats which enabled us to count them separately during the boat counts. They then had to put up with us ringing them later for their catch details which for the busier operators added up to a lot of phone

calls over the year. However they were great to work with and in total we obtained catch information relating to over 425 guided trips. While sometimes flying conditions were fine and pleasant during the 240 aerial counts, too often this season it was windy, wet and downright miserable on survey days. These days proved challenging for staff (some more than others!), but not so for the pilots of Taupo Air Services. They were contracted to provide a pilot and plane and whenever the weather allowed they ensured flights were successfully and safely completed, even when changes to the survey schedule were made at short notice.

We will now analyse the data to produce an estimate of the number of trout caught and taken from the Taupo Fishery during the 2005/06 season. In simple terms to calculate the harvest we obtain the average number of fish that anglers caught (and kept) per hour spent fishing from angler interview data. We also calculate how much effort anglers put into fishing from the aerial counts of boats on the lake and anglers in the rivers. By multiplying the total angling effort by the average catch rate of those fishing the total catch and harvest can be calculated. In practice we also need to split the year into different time periods and areas and calculate the catch and harvest for each so as to improve the precision of the final estimate. Other useful information will also be collected including where anglers were from, if they were guided, and how experienced they were.

We would like to acknowledge and thank all those that contributed to the success of the survey. Each of you who supported the survey by giving a few minutes of your time to answer our questions has contributed to the management of the fishery. By comparing the results with past surveys, we are able to assess those factors and trends that affect the sustainability of the Taupo fishery and manage any impacts accordingly. The full results will be reported in the next issue of *Target Taupo*.

Harvest Survey Staff: Left to right (David Lehtola, Brendon Matthews, David Gade and Peter Wilton).

Photo: Jodie Greaves



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HOTSPOTS FOR SUMMER CATFISH

By Mark Venman

Mark is our Technical Support Officer and part of the research and monitoring team.



Michel Dedual, Fishery Scientist.

Photo: The Dominion Post

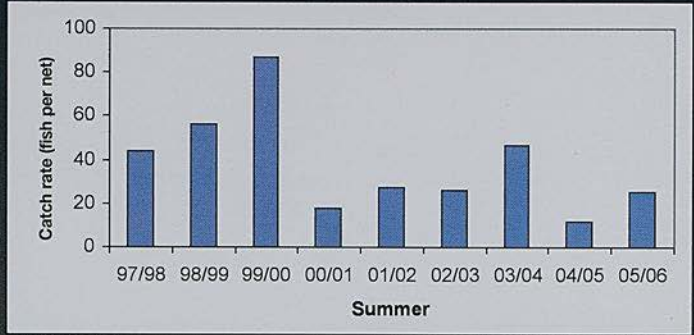
During summer 2005/06, we completed our tenth consecutive summer of monitoring catfish (*Ameiurus nebulosus*) in Lake Taupo. Monitoring reverted back to cover just the summer months (November to March) last year, as catch rates are consistently higher during this period when the catfish are more active. Although the annual catch (winter & summer) would provide a larger sample, the winter data is swamped by the summer numbers and it is the trends observed over the summer months that are important. Additional fyke nets (as are used by eel fish-

ermen) were set this summer to obtain a larger sample size that would allow a more statistically robust catch rate to be calculated. Following on from my last article in *Target Taupo* (Issue 49), this article summarises the summer catch rates and discusses the trends in catfish distribution, size and age in Lake Taupo over the last decade.

Monitoring results

A total of 1693 catfish were caught last summer from 67 nets equating to an overall catch rate of 25.3 catfish per night, per fyke net. In comparison to previous summers, this sum-

Figure 1 Summer catch rates of catfish between late 1997 and early 2006



mer produced the third lowest catch rate since monitoring began and was on par with summers 2001/02 & 2002/03. The summer of 1999/00 produced the highest summer catch rate of 87 catfish per net with summer catch rates generally being higher during the late 90's when monitoring was in its early stages. The lowest catch rate of 11.8 catfish per night was observed two years ago (Figure 1).

Where have they been hiding?

The distribution of catfish caught around the lake over the last ten summers was examined to identify any trends in the population. Of the three sites monitored Waihi has been more favourable for catfish over recent years producing almost 60% of the total catch last summer. Waihi peaked during the summer of 1998/99 at 84% but dropped considerably in the three summers that followed.

During this period it was the turn of Motuoapa to dominate, producing between 60 and 80% of the total summer catch. Since then, the overall percentage caught at Motuoapa has remained between 20 and 40%. The third sample site at Whakaipo Bay at the northern end of Lake Taupo has only ever produced a small percentage of the total catch (between 1 and 11%). This sample site is as good catfish habitat as is found in this part of the lake and the low catch reflects that numbers are generally very low in the northern half of the lake. This is likely a reflection of a lack of suitable habitat.

How big do they get?

The heaviest catfish we have caught was in September 2002 at Waihi, a male weighing an impressive 875g (1.9lb) and measuring 380mm (15") in length. The second heaviest

catfish (also male) was caught a year later at Motuoapa weighing 868g and measuring 365mm in length. The longest catfish to be caught was a male measuring 430mm (17") from Motuoapa in the summer of 2001/02. These figures are insignificant when compared with the Giant Mekong catfish (*Pangasius gigas*) from South East Asia which can reach up to 150-200kg in weight and measure up to 3 metres in length!

Interestingly, the majority of large fish caught in Lake Taupo are males. Research carried out on catfish in America found that survival was greater amongst male catfish than females which was thought to be related to a higher reproductive effort in females. Thus, males may grow bigger by simply because they live longer than females.

Given that catfish greater than 370mm in length are rare in Lake Taupo, it is likely that conditions are not suitable to allow them to grow larger, unlike in the lower reaches of the nearby Waikato River. Under favourable conditions, these catfish have the potential to reach lengths of up to 500mm.

Despite the low number of catfish caught at Whakaipo Bay (2% of the total catch) many of the largest specimens we have caught have come from here. It may be that the low numbers of catfish result in reduced competition for food and those few individuals grow larger. This fact combined with the small maximum size of catfish in Lake Taupo suggests that the population may generally be limited by the amount of available food.

Female catfish caught last summer averaged 227mm and 183g and were similar in terms of length and weight to the last 6 summers, but were considerably longer than those caught during the first three

summers of sampling. Similarly, males averaged 243mm and 218g (Figures 2 & 3). It appears that there was a trend in early years (1996-99) for large numbers of small fish which came through as larger and presumably older fish in later years (2000-03) but have now passed through the population. Combined with reduced catch rates, this would suggest that recruitment has declined over the past 5 summers and that the population has peaked and may even be declining.

The fact that the population is aging is further supported by the male:female sex ratio of 2: 1 calculated for last summer which is

the highest since monitoring began. As discussed earlier, males are likely to live longer than females because spawning takes more out of the females.

The condition factor of larger catfish caught over the last ten summers has varied little so we examined whether there were any differences between catfish caught at different locations. No difference in condition was observed between catfish from Waihi and Motuoaapa but the condition factor of catfish from Whakaipo was slightly higher, consistent with the hypothesis that the growth of these fish is not as limited by the available food, perhaps due to their low numbers in this area.

While the trend has been a declining population, the results this summer may reflect the start of a possible change. Overall, length distributions of catfish caught during last summer showed that there were few large fish in the top range (>250mm) but there were reasonable numbers of small and medium sized catfish in comparison to recent years. It will be interesting to see what develops next summer.

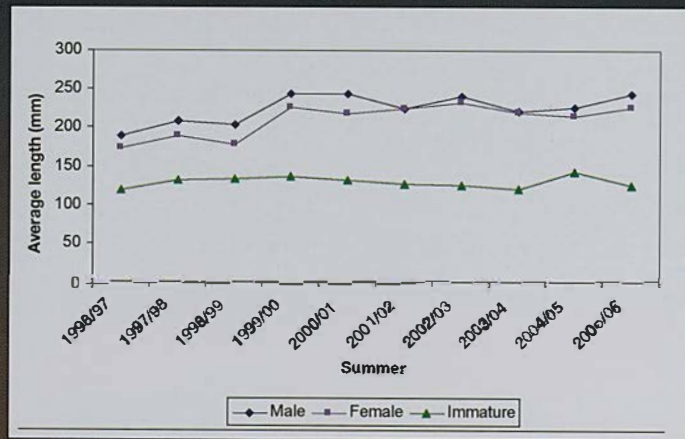


Figure 2: Average lengths of catfish caught over the last ten summers

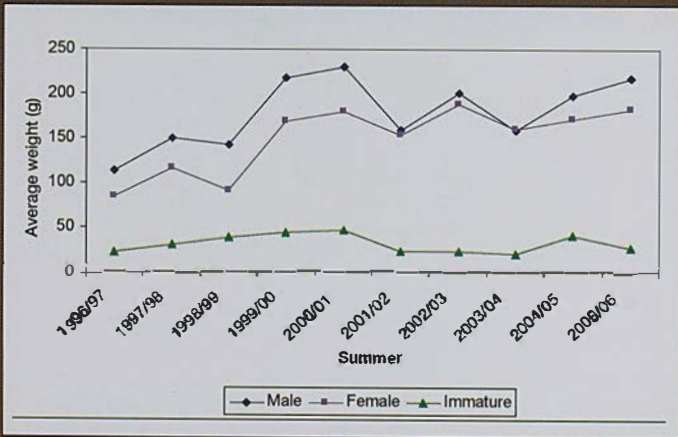


Figure 3: Average weights of catfish caught over the last ten summers

Monsters of the deep?

Ultrasonic telemetry used by fishery staff during 1999 to track tagged catfish around Motuoaapa Bay found that catfish were most mobile during spring as they moved towards their spawning grounds within the bay. The extensive weed beds and shallow waters within the bay provide favourable habitat for spawning which occurs mainly between September and December. However over the whole study period which included winter, catfish generally remained within 10 metres of the surface and never went deeper than 17 metres. Thus, although Lake Taupo averages 90 metres in depth and covers an area of 616km²,

catfish do not utilise the vast depths and it is very unlikely that there are "monster" catfish lurking somewhere deep in the lake!

How old do they get?

Determining the growth rates of catfish in Lake Taupo is not easy, as research in Canada has shown that bullheads within all age groups consisted of both slow and fast growing individuals. This means catfish of the same length may be different ages, making the determination of age groups from length frequencies alone not practical. We came across the same problem when we analysed mark-recapture data of tagged catfish that we initially tagged and measured and subsequently recaptured and measured again while conducting routine monitoring. Despite similarities of growth amongst some individuals, other individuals displayed large variations in growth.

Growth can also be calculated by counting the growth rings on the 5th vertebrae and relating these to the length of the catfish. This is time consuming and is best done at

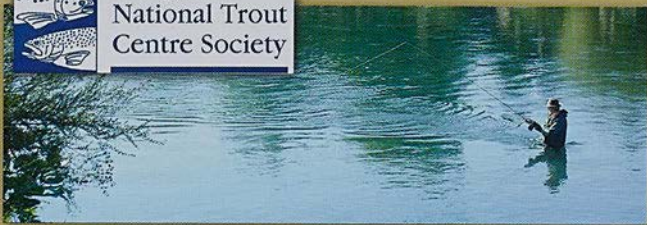
the end of winter when the rings can be viewed more clearly. Crude estimates from what data we have suggests catfish average 80mm in length after one year, 160mm after two years, 280mm after five years and 315mm after 8 years with growth rates being most rapid during the first two years. Thus these larger fish caught each summer are either older than 8 years old or simply grew at a faster rate than the majority of the population. It would be good to investigate this further at some stage in the future to obtain more accurate estimates of age and help us determine growth rates for Taupo catfish.

Summary

The catfish population is currently small in comparison to earlier years due to relatively poor recruitment over recent summers. The low catch rates at Whakaipo Bay highlight that a large percentage of Lake Taupo is actually unsuitable habitat for catfish. The small maximum size of catfish in Lake Taupo reflects that their growth is likely to be limited by food availability.



Tongariro
National Trout
Centre Society



The Society encourages and promotes public interest in trout fishing, an understanding of the Taupo fishery and trout habitat. 'The River Walk' Visitor Centre has been developed to provide a modern learning experience about trout for visitors of all ages. Throughout the year Society volunteers publicise and conduct children's fishing days at the Centre to teach children to fish for trout and to encourage respect for our environment.

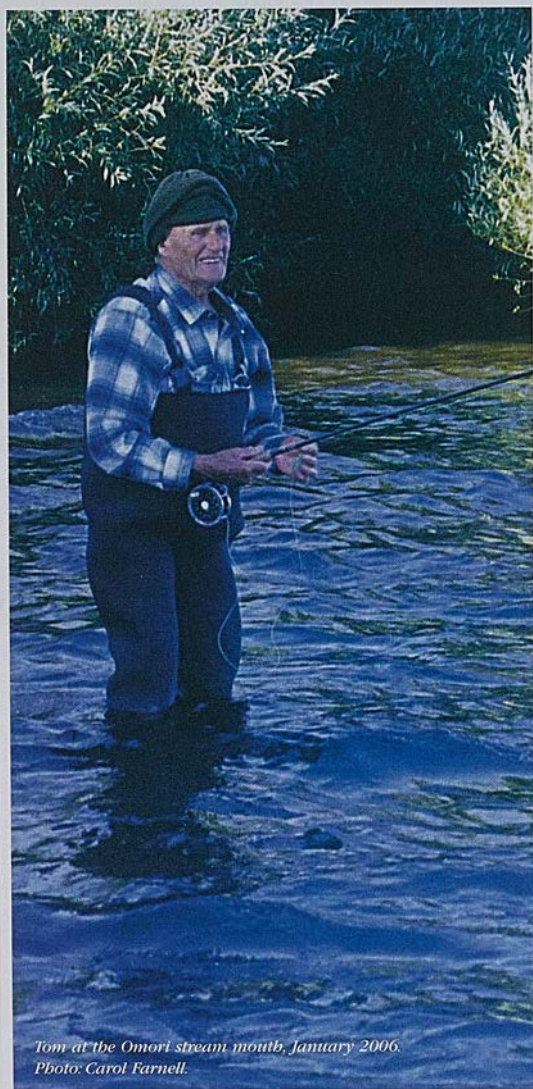
To join the Society please fill in the form and include the annual subscription of \$25

Name: _____

Address: _____

Post to: Tongariro National Trout Centre Society, P.O. Box 73, Turangi

When I'm



*Tom at the Omori stream mouth, January 2006.
Photo: Carol Farnell.*

By Carol Farnell

While passing through the Tongariro National Trout Centre on his way to the Tongariro River Tom Griner got talking to fishery ranger Rob Hood about his day out on the river Tom has fished in the Taupo area for over 90 years which is a huge achievement in itself.

This is a story from Tom's daughter Carol about his experiences over the years.

His passion has been fishing, especially for trout in Lake Taupo. In his younger days he loved to go deer stalking as well and Tom is a life member of the Waikato Branch of the NZ Deerstalker's Association.

Tom was introduced to fishing at the age of four. As a 14-year-old his father Tom Senior, along with his father's brothers who owned quarries and were road contractors (Günther Bros.), gathered up young Tom to drive steam rollers for them. When ever a contract was completed they would celebrate by all going to Acacia Bay, where they enjoyed fishing for trout from a launch.

In 1953, Tom and his wife Melva discovered a track into the Kuraupou river mouth. There they spent a pleasant summer holiday, camping with the late Jack Etege and family and the late Cyril Maule and family from Ōamaru. All keen fishermen they would go out in boats by day (barling or lead lining) and then fly-fish at the Kuraupou river mouth, the Kuraupou spit or the Omori stream by night.

Between 1960 and 1984 people camped along the cliff edge on Maori land at the end of what is now Te Ara Huri Street. Tom and Melva usually placed their caravan in the same spot for three months over summer each year. Cyril and Rose Maule placed their caravan along-

94!

THOMAS EDWARD GRINTER – BORN TE KUITI 1912

Top right: Boiling trout beside the lake edge at Kuititau in the 1970's. Photo: Carol Farnell.

Below: Anoushka (6) benefits from Tom's years of experience (Feb 1998). Photo: Carol Farnell.

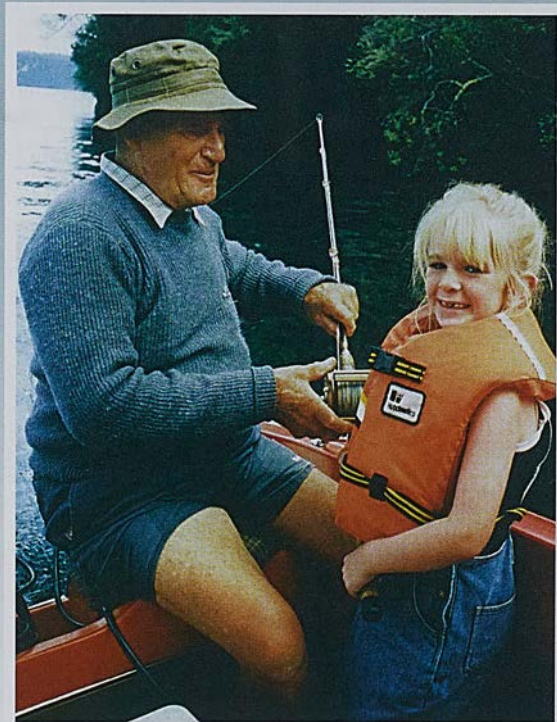
side. What fun friends would have fishing from their boats from early morning until 2pm or so then going ashore to eat a picnic lunch on one of the beaches, perhaps Scenic Bay or Cherry Bay. In late afternoon they would prepare the trout they had caught for either smoking or bottling. This would be shared around family and friends. The limit was 20, then later down to 12 and it was very common to get their limit. Now the limit is 3 and you feel very fortunate to even get that many.



Each night Tom and Cyril and at times Tom's son-in-law Brian made up a happy trio, fishing until midnight, usually at Omori. They made their own flies. Tom still has an amazing collection of feathers and hair. Over the years Tom had great success with stainless steel lures he made for himself and friends. He put a type of silver checked cello tape on them. Around the Western Bays and the southern end of the lake, there must be many of them lying on the bottom from the odd one that got away over the years.

Tom lost his wife Melva (his favourite fishing companion) in October 1986. From 1985 he stayed in a cottage rather than a caravan and drove from Auckland to Kurarau towing his Sea Nymph boat behind his beloved green and black Chrysler Valiant until 2003.

Tom has so much enjoyed teaching young ones to cast, tie flies and fish the lake. Many a pleasant hour was spent teaching his grandsons Andrew and John to tie flies and now his great grandsons, Christopher and Matthew are very keen (at 5 and 10 years of age) to fish for trout. The last 2 years the young ones have brought him to the lake for a few days fishing and this New Year period, he was overjoyed to be at the baeh again. Tom even managed 3 nights fishing at Omori, not dad, for 94!



PAUL GREEN QSM

Kim Alexander-Turia

Kim has recently started with us and is Programme Manager, Community Relations.

Paul Green (left), Paramount Chief Tumu te Heuenu & General Manager, Maori Trust Office John Pakei in Lithuania at the World Heritage Committee Photo: Joe Harawira

It was a surprise to Paul Green but not to many others when he was recognised with the Queen's Service Medal for public services in the 2006 New Years Honours list.

Paul started his career with Lands and Survey Department in 1974 as a ranger in the Tongariro National Park at Ohakune. During the next 13 years he worked in a range of locations within New Zealand and overseas including Fiordland National Park, the Hauraki Gulf Maritime Park and was an exchange ranger at Australia's Kosiosko National Park. These wide ranging experiences culminated in his appointment as Conservator in 1989 of the Tongariro Taupo Conservancy of the Department of Conservation.

Paul has an absolute passion for the outdoors; his interest sparked as a teenager by

weekends spent tramping the rugged Tararua Ranges, often with the Wellington Tramping and Mountaineering Club. In 1968 he and friends spent four months exploring and climbing in the Peruvian Andes, an adventure which remains a highlight in his life.

While Paul is not an angler himself, when it comes to supporting the fishery you can't find a better advocate. He provides very strong support to the Taupo Fishery Area and is actively involved in the Tongariro National Trout Centre and the society that runs The River Walk visitor centre. The President of the Tongariro National Trout Centre Society, Eddie Tonks says "Paul's contribution to the affairs of the society since its inception has been enormous with his willingness to share his knowledge and expertise being invaluable. I personally believe Paul's ongoing com-



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- Rene Vaz, MSc (Hons), General Manager CD-Rods - Chief Rod Designer, STANIC Fly and Spey Casting Instructor, NZ Fly Fishing Champion 2000, World Bronze Medalist 1999, Commonwealth Silver Medalist 1999



mitment has been a major factor in the society's successful development over the last few years." Paul was integral in Tongariro National Park becoming the first World Heritage Area in the world to gain Associative Cultural Heritage status. Working with Ngati Tuwharetoa is a gratifying part of his job and Paul has enjoyed his role in developing and strengthening relationships with local iwi. He actively supports Ngati Tuwharetoa Paramount Chief Tumu te Heuheu as head of New Zealand's delegation to the World Heritage Committee, says Tumu te Heuheu, "Paul's facilitation between tangata whenua and the department has produced positive results for all parties beyond expectations"

As part of the New Zealand delegation Paul attended the 30th session of the World Heritage Committee of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) which took place in Vilnius, Lithuania from 8-16 July 2006. New Zealand attended the meeting as a member of the committee and, Tumu te Heuheu took over the role of chair for the next year at the end of the session.

As well as his work with DOC, Paul is a member of the Central North Island Blue Duck Charitable Trust, the Waikato River Enhancement Trust and the Tongariro Natural History Society. He has been a trustee of the Sir Edmund Hillary Outdoor Pursuits Centre for 15 years and works with the Tongariro Whanau Support Roopu.

These days Paul still tramps as often as time allows and enjoys fine wine and good friends. Paul considers it a privilege to have worked towards the management of New Zealand's natural and cultural environment and to have shared the experience with such dedicated staff and committed communities.

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REVIEW OF LICENCE ADMINISTRATION

By Storm Bester

Storm is Ranger, Service responsible for the day to day administration of our fishing licence system and management of licence agents

I have recently joined the Taupo Fishery Area to take over administration of the Taupo fishing licence system. It's a big job as approximately 52,000 licences are issued each year by 115 agents, and more than \$1.5 million of revenue needs to be accounted for. This revenue is the sole source of funds for the management of the fishery and it is imperative that the system is effective and efficient so that we can undertake all the other tasks necessary to protect the quality of this resource. One of the first things I did after learning the current licensing system was to go out and meet local Taupo agents with Programme Manager Carolyn Poots. It was a pity we couldn't get to the agents further away but it was very useful day all the same, meeting people that play a huge role as the front line between us and the angler.


We had a lot of positive feedback, as well as numerous questions regarding aspects of the Taupo Fishery Regulations. Very worthwhile discussions were their views on fee increases. Most agents agreed that slight annual increases which kept up with the rate of inflation were preferable to big increases every few years.

With the new season we are undertaking a review of our current system to see if it is still the best way of doing things. If nothing else, technology has advanced so much in recent years that this may have created new opportunities. For example at the moment the tracking of individual licences has to be done separately to the financial administration which creates considerable double handling. As a consequence we are looking into computerising a lot more of the system with the support of agents; we've had numerous requests for bar coding, discs versus paper, and so on. So any brain busting ideas or suggestions are most welcome. In the end we want a system that works for us all.

One aspect which is not up for debate (though) is the requirement to have a separate licence to fish in the Taupo District. The reason for this was due to an agreement between the Crown and Ngati-Tuwharetoa to ensure public access to Lake Taupo and surrounding rivers. This agreement was established under the Maori Land Amendment and Maori Land Claims Adjustment Act 1926 and also requires that only special Taupo licences can be used in the district. This is because the payment to Ngati Tuwharetoa by central government for the access to Lake Taupo and the rivers which is so enjoyed by anglers and others is indexed in part to the sale of Taupo fishing licences, hence the need to keep them separate.

Post Codes Please

When you buy your Adult Season licence the carbon copy is returned to us and your details entered into a database. This database is updated throughout the season as licences



TAUPO DISTRICT
LICENCE TO FISH FOR TROUT 2006-2007 SEASON
(1 JULY 2006 - 30 JUNE 2007)
NOT TRANSFERABLE

Department of Conservation
Te Papa Ataturu

Under the Conservation Act 1987, the Taupo Fishery Regulations 2004, the Maori Land Amendment and Maori Land Claims Adjustment Act 1926

ADULT WHOLE SEASON
705005
\$75.50

The holder of this licence Trout **MALE**

Surname

Todd Edward **FEMALE**

Given Names in full

at 92 Redd Way

TURANGI 3334 DOB. 9/9/03

Full Postal Address

Date of Issue 18/7/06 Time of Issue 3 pm/pm

Available from 18/7/06 to 30 June 2007 (both days inclusive)

is hereby authorised to take trout within any part of the Taupo District, between the dates shown hereon, subject to the above Acts and to the regulations made hereunder for the time being in force in the said district.

S. Bester

Name and Address of Issuing Office

Todd Trout

Signature of Licence Holder
(Licence not valid until signed)



*Storm and Jarred
Goebart from Sporting
Life discuss the format
of the current Taupo
licence*

*Photo: Kim Alexander
Turia*

are sold so that by the end of the season it is complete. It is then used as the mailing list to distribute three issues of this magazine, *Target Taupo*, over the following season. Therefore if you buy an adult season licence for this season (2006/07) you will receive *Target Taupo* over the 2007/08 season.

NZ Post is currently introducing post codes and it will certainly make life easier for us and more certain that you will receive *Target Taupo* next season if you write your post code as part of your address on your licence. Also please try and write legibly and use your permanent home address rather than holiday address to ensure the mail successfully gets through.

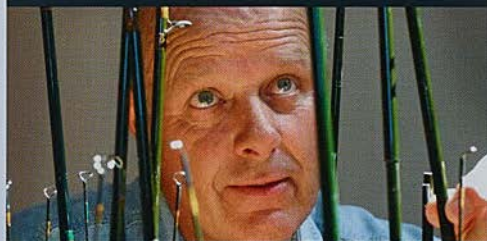
The database also has other uses such as checking up for people who have been asked to produce their licence by our rangers on the rivers and lake and who then can't find their licence. So there is real benefit to you to take care as you write your details down and please remember to include your post code if you know it.

A final reminder, 1 July has passed, and a new 2006 licence is now necessary if you are coming to fish in the Taupo Fishing District.

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stopping an ELEPHANT

By Julie Greaves

Julie has recently started with us working as a ranger in our field operations programme.

"A cubic metre of water weighs about a tonne so that means seven tonnes per second. This is the weight of about four elephants".

It's that time of year again where thousands of anglers hit the Taupo rivers, streams and river mouths. Every day anglers wade in and out of the water without any difficulty, but what happens if things don't quite go as planned? Losing your footing when wading in the Tongariro River for example, can be potentially hazardous; injury or death a very likely outcome.

Whether it's crossing the Tongariro or simply walking out to the river mouth, are we aware of the hazards and where they are? Too often we see anglers taking unnecessary risks in hope of getting to that perfect fishing spot. Or they are not wearing the appropriate clothing or simply not wearing a wading belt.

According to ACC in the ten years to 2005, 372 people drowned in New Zealand rivers, streams and creeks, a third of all drownings. New Zealand has almost double the drowning rate per head of population of Australia and over four times the drowning rate of Great Britain. (ACC Riversafe Facts)

An accident in late July 2003 highlights just how easily things can go wrong. An angler had been fishing just above the Silly Pool on the Tongariro when he decided to take his chances and wade deeper into the river than usual. He suddenly lost his footing and was swept downstream by the current through a boisterous rapid. On the way through he hit his head and started to lose consciousness. Thermal shock set in as the icy cold water filled his waders and pulled him down under the surface. Luckily ranger Roy Baker was in the right place at the right time and saw the man floating face down in the rapid below the upper Birch Pool. Roy called for help and jumped in to rescue the angler with the help of ranger Rob Hood who had been nearby. Once on shore the angler didn't respond at first, but after 30 seconds regained consciousness and vomited the water he had swallowed. Ambulance personnel gave him medical assistance and a few days later he was back fishing again. It was estimated that he had been swept down the river half a kilometre and at the time of the accident this angler was not wearing a wading belt. The fact is that if he had taken this simple precaution he may have been able to save himself. (*Target Taupo*, issue 44 page 20)

Every season the fishery team takes the time to up-skill and train new team members about



Michel Dedual demonstrates excellent technique to ride out the fast water
Photo: Carolyn Poots

Below: Wet and cold, but the Fisbery team are fine after their swim down the Tongariro River
Photo: Kim Alexander-Turia

wader safety. Part of the training includes taking a dip in the tropical (not!) Tongariro River to experience first hand the dangers of wading, and the skills we need to adopt for a safe recovery. The main safety issue that highlighted is the importance of wearing a wading belt.

HERE ARE A FEW POINTS TO REMEMBER FOR A SAFE DAY'S FISHING

Before heading out tell someone where you intend to fish and how long you intend to be.

Is it necessary to wade the river? It's human nature to think the best fishing is always just out of reach or on the other side but it's often not the case.

Be sure of your wading ability. If you are not confident in water don't wade out deep (more than thigh height) or in fast flowing water. Look for suitable pools that can be accessed from the bank or side of the river. Never overestimate your ability to walk further out into the river or underestimate the power of water. However some excellent fishing spots can only be accessed by wading so when you have to, here are a few tips to consider.

BEFORE ENTERING THE WATER

What to wear

Wading Belt – I can't put enough emphasis on the importance of wearing a wading belt. This is a life saver. You wouldn't go out on the lake without a life jacket, or drive without a seatbelt. So don't fish the river without a wading belt!

A wading belt is worn around your midriff and prevents water from entering the lower half of you waders and assists you to float. It is made out of polyester webbing with a quick release buckle and can be purchased from sports stores for a reasonable price. Not only can it save your life but helps keep you dry if you inadvertently slip a bit of water over your waders.

Waders – Your waders should be the right shoe size, not too long or short in the leg and the correct torso size. It's hard enough to move in the water anyway without the additional handicap of ill-fitting waders.

Clothing – layering is the key. Multiple layers are effective in keeping your body warm especially if you end up taking a dip. This decreases the chance of developing hypothermia. Polypropylene





*Programme Manager
Carolyn Poots (right)
and Ranger Storm Bester
demonstrate how to use
a buddy to cross a river.
Photo: Kim Alexander
Turia*

and polar fleece are light and fast drying and merino wool also keeps the heat in. Wearing a jacket acts as a wind breaker and will help stop water entry if by chance you do fall in.

Wading Stick – Wading sticks are a useful aid and can be as simple as a piece of wood found along the side of the river or a metal pole with a grip handle similar to a ski pole. A wading stick will provide stability when held upstream during river crossings, and is absolutely essential if you are less than an expert wader.

Polaroid Sunglass – Wearing Polaroids allows you to see obstacles under the water and secure footholds on the river bed.

SO YOU HAVE DECIDED ON A FISHING SPOT

Become familiar with your surroundings

- What is the depth and speed of the water?
- Can you safely wade there?
- What is the safest entry point?
- Can you back out if it becomes too swift?
- Identify any downstream hazards such as rocks, overhangs, trees, rapids, waterfalls. Look at what is underneath the surface of the water.
- What is your nearest exit point if you get into trouble?

CROSSING THE RIVER AND WHAT TO LOOK OUT FOR.

Crossing a river, especially the Tongariro requires extreme caution.

- Avoid crossing where you can't see the bottom.
- Sand on the bottom indicates low water velocity and makes good footing.
- Look at the depth of the water, if it is too deep you will likely begin to float and lose your footing.
- Crossing diagonally downstream in shallow riffles is best. But remember that to cross back you may have to use a different route.
- Keep your body side on to the current to brace yourself and reduce water pressure. Watch out for slippery rocks and take your time.
- Be prepared to turn back at any time.
- Cross with a buddy to provide greater stability (only one person should move at any time so that if they slip they are supported by their buddy)

AS YOU ARE ABOUT TO CROSS THE RIVER KEEP THIS IN MIND

If you are standing next to a knee deep river 10 metres wide flowing at walking pace about

seven cubic metres of water will be flowing past you each second. A cubic metre of water weighs about a tonne so that means seven tonnes per second. This is the weight of about four elephants. Imagine trying to stop that! (ACC Riversafe Facts)

What happens if I fall in?

If you do happen to fall in try to remember these points. You have a better chance if you are wearing a wading belt although you can still use this technique without a belt.

- Let go of your fish/equipment etc. (It can all be replaced, and is not worth dying for)
- Stay calm.
- Roll over onto your back.
- Keep your feet downstream of your body (its better to hit something with your feet than your head)
- Keep your toes out the water.
- Use your arms in a sculling motion and kick your feet to propel yourself towards the edge.
- Focus on an exit point.
- Avoid being swept into obstructions like trees where you risk being pinned under water.
- Go with the flow until you come to a suitable place to get out.

Wading at stream and river mouths or the lake edge

- Have a good look at the area you will be walking out to during the day if planning on heading out during the night. Take a tall stick and place it in the sand at the drop off point, this will give you an indication on how far to walk out.
- Always wear your wading belt.
- The flow at stream and river mouths can change very quickly and also the bottom can change to soft boggy sand after heavy rain.
- Use a wading stick to prod the sand to check for any drop offs. Check with other anglers for the exact location of the drop-off. Remember that if you are standing right on top of the drop-off the sand is very soft and could give way.
- If you go over the drop-off don't try and swim against the current to get back. Adopt the same position as you would if you were to fall in a river and scull to the side of the current so you can reach the shore.

Although wading rivers, river mouths and streams can be potentially dangerous, knowing the basic wading skills, using good judgement and wearing a wading belt will help keep you safe while fishing this winter.

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"As a guide and a competition fly fisherman I expect a lot from my rods. The ability to cast short, long and accurately. The softness to play fish on light tippets, along with the power to lean into big Taupo Rainbows. A lot to ask, maybe. That's why I fish CD's XLS fly rods." - Craig Farrar, Taupo Fishing Guide, New Zealand Fly Fishing Team Member



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FISHERY ACCESS ROADS

By John Gibbs

Taupo anglers enjoy access facilities better than those available in any other major New Zealand trout fishery. This is because much of the land adjacent to Lake Taupo and its rivers is Maori owned and so subject to the right-of-way provisions of the 1926 Maori Land Amendment and Maori Land Claims Adjustment Act. This provides for a unique right of way on foot for licensed anglers over a 20m wide strip of most river banks. A similar right of way exists over the lake shore, except it is for all public users and is not restricted to foot access. Another reason for ready access is because most of the remaining river bank and lake shore land is in some form of public ownership with all the rights that entails.

A network of walking tracks, roads, carparks, bridges and other structures has been developed to facilitate access over the sections of way and reserves and minimise impacts on this land. Most of these are funded from anglers' licence fees.

There are a several roads used by anglers to get access to favourite sites in the fishery. Some of these are on land managed by DOC, some are on land owned or managed by other public agencies, some are public road and others are on private land.

In many cases, DOC, through the Taupo Fishery Area or the Tuurangi/Taupo Area offices, manages and maintains these roads. The provision of fishing access roads and the standards to which they are maintained have been agreed with the Taupo Fishery Advisory Committee.

This fishing access road to the Taunanga-Taupo River was built to replace an old track that was frequently flood-damaged.

Photo: John Gibbs



The key points for vehicle access are:

- Roads are to be maintained to a suitable level to allow 2-wheel drive vehicle access. No access will be maintained that excludes anglers in 2-wheel drive vehicles.
- Providing vehicle access or not will be considered in light of existing roads and tracks. Access to a particular section of river will not be duplicated or over-provided.
- Subject to the previous conditions, vehicle access will only be provided if there is demand for it.

While the basic standard is for 2-wheel drive access, it is not necessarily to the standard you might expect of a public road intended for traffic speeds up to 100 km/h. The original construction and terrain crossed by these roads, as well as their short length, means that they are only intended for low-speed use. Thus surfacing standards and widths are not the same as would be found on a normal unsealed public road and more care is needed by drivers.



Some "roads" are not roads at all, but have been created by people taking vehicles onto either formed walking tracks or unformed routes on river beds. We actively discourage this and, where it occurs on conservation land, will physically block these tracks to protect river banks from erosion and vegetation damage.

Other roads which have been informally used by anglers in the past are no longer available as the wishes of the private land owners have changed. Upper Blake Road at Waitahanui and Hingapo Road on the Tauianga-Taupo River are 2 examples.

Most roads are maintained once a year in normal circumstances, and this is usually just before their peak use season which, for river accesses, is the winter. So don't be surprised to find some of these roads overgrown and potholed in the summer months.

Money for road construction and maintenance usually comes from the Taupo Fishery budget, but there are a few exceptions. The Taupo District Council maintains public roads; TrustPower Ltd and King Country Energy Ltd respectively maintain the Hinemaiaia access road to the HIB power station and the road to the Kumatau power station; Genesis Energy maintains a number of roads around the Tongariro power scheme which are used by anglers, and private interests also contribute to the costs of some roads.

This year, the Fishery Area combined resources with local resident Peter Sperry for the work on the Tongariro and Waimarino rivers. In total, the fishery spent approximately \$15,750 on road and carpark maintenance. A somewhat larger sum goes on maintenance of walking tracks and structures. Over the years the locations of roads have changed, usually due to changes in the river channel, but also where environmental impacts of vehicle use have become excessive or unmanageable. For example, a vehicle track on the Wharekawa scenic reserve linked the public roads to the Waitahanui River. However its route ran over sections of private property which were being damaged by traffic and the owners' representatives asked that vehicle access be blocked. New carparks were formed at road ends and the river bank access is now maintained for walking only. Other examples are on the Tamnanga-Taupo River where repairs to continual erosion of the vehicle track in the Toki Street reserve became unsustainable. This was closed off and a new road and carpark formed on a nearby piece of grazing land administered by DOC. When the new anglers' carpark was built at the Tongariro National Trust Centre and a walking track formed along the river north to the Waikari reserve, the rough vehicle track a few hundred metres away in the Paurini scenic reserve was closed to protect its natural values.

The locations of anglers' access roads and tracks are usually shown on the fishing information signs on the major rivers. However, these routes may sometimes be out of date as the cost of replacing the signs when a small change occurs is not warranted. To try and overcome this and similar problems, we are compiling an access register in the coming year. This will use modern GIS tools and will be able to be readily updated to reflect changes. As well as hard copy, it should be available on line through the DOC website when completed.



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WHAKAPUMAUTANGA DOWNS

learning centre



Dean Carroll (left) (General Manager Generation & Trading - Genesis Energy), Kore Downs (wife of the late Whakapumautanga (Darkie) Downs), Rob Lester (Tongariro National Trout Centre Society Deputy Chairman), Clayton Sient (Mayor of Taupo), Paul Green (Conservator) Photo: Kim Alexander-Turia

by Kim Alexander-Turia

On 18 April 2006 the rains poured as the "Whakapumautanga Downs" learning centre was opened at the Tongariro National Trout Centre in Utuanga; a sign Maori believe bodes well for the future of this initiative. The learning centre was named after the late Whakapumautanga (Darkie) Downs. The Downs whanau have a special affiliation with the land where the trout centre is sited, and members of the Downs whanau were involved with the hatchery in its early developmental stages.

Master carver Mark Kahu was commissioned to complete a carving dedicated to the memory of Darkie Downs to acknowledge his work with conservation and his people of Ngati Tuharetoa. The carving depicts Horomatangi the kaitiaki (guardian) of Lake Taupo-nui-a-Tia. The carving has been placed on the front of the classroom, to stand guard over all those who enter.



The learning centre was established to support the new education programme, "Taupo for Tomorrow". The programme is an opportunity for students to explore the concept of sustainability of natural resources by learning about the Taupo fishery and the importance of freshwater conservation. At the opening Department of Conservation Educator Thea De Petris said "it was an accumulation of many months of hard work by a number of people who contributed to the establishment of this programme and I am very proud to be involved with the project".

Children from St Patrick's School, Room 11 in Taupo also attended the opening and gave a presentation on what they had learnt about water quality since their visit and participation in the programme "Taupo for Tomorrow". Their teacher Tim Fletcher said that since their visit the class had continued to study and investigate local water quality issues.

Thea De Petris also noted this could not have been completed without the special partnership between Genesis Energy, The Tangaroa National Trout Centre Society and the Department of Conservation and we extend our thanks also to the many volunteers who gave up their time to help bring the project to life.

Members of the Downs
abandon. Photo: Kim
Alexander-Turta



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WHAT'S UP?

*By Greg Robinson
Ranger Community
Relations, Tongariro
National Trout Centre*

Water is well and truly here bringing with it the cooler temperatures and a noteworthy increase in fish numbers in the Wāhukahuka Stream at the Tongariro National Trout Centre.

On your next visit to the trout centre see these fish which have escaped the anglers in the Tongariro River, or just take a walk around the grounds and make use of the improved path access to various displays.

You may notice we also now have signs identifying significant tree species. Come and bring the kids to search for the mighty totara or rimu. Who knew there are two types of cabbage trees? There are also many other trees to view. Around the centre you will notice new lighting set high in the trees and we are also in the process of installing extra carpark security cameras to provide more peace of mind for our visitors. The lighting has been an initiative a long time in the making, the lights shining against the canopy of the trees is not only effective at lighting the path at night but creates a great effect.

During June we had a young couple from Germany doing volunteer work at the trout centre. Daniel and Elke were rescued from heavy snow in the Tongariro National Park.

*Daniel & Elke
with Ranger Greg
Robinson (right)
Photo: Kim
Alexander-Turia*



New lights allow the use of the Trout Centre grounds at night
 Photo: Kim Alexander-Turia



Greg Robinson (right) and Nick Singers (Technical Support Officer) identify trees for the new tree species signs.

near the Chateau in the midst of the blizzard that hit the Central North Island. Lion Foundation rescue helicopter pilot Dan Harcourt said it was just before dark before they got the call and they only had one shot at getting them out, the winds being very turbulent over the saddle. Elke was in her sleeping bag partially buried in the snow when the helicopter flew over her so they called to her on her cellphone to get up and wave to find her. Elke was reluctant to get

into the helicopter and was confused from hypothermia setting in. Daniel was found a short distance away by the ground team. They are very lucky indeed to be found alive. In gratitude, they wanted to contribute back to the community as a measure of their appreciation. As a consequence they have been clearing ivy, chopping wood and cleaning fish troughs.

Search and rescue do a wonderful job helping people in the region and it is fantastic to see Daniel and Elke's willingness to say thanks for their efforts. Dan Harcourt says "Special credit must be given to the search and rescue communication team and crewman Barry Sheppard". In situations such as this, every minute counts.

Finally, even though it's cold, dress up warm and come visit us at the trout centre. It's the perfect time to see the fish spawning and view the latest happening.

The Tongariro National Trout Centre Society runs The River Walk Visitor Centre within the site and are always looking for volunteer help or new society members. If you are interested please contact Ken Kimmins at 07 386 8085.

TE PUKENGA ATAWHAI

NGA MIHI ATU KIA KOUTOU KATOA

By Michael Hill

Michael is working as a ranger in our field operations programme

The Pukenga Atawhai is a training program designed for the Department of Conservation to enable staff to build and maintain effective working relations with tangata whenua. Māori beliefs about creation have a marked influence on the way they behave in context to conservation. Te Pukenga Atawhai was created out of the recognition of the importance for DOC staff to understand what these beliefs are.

Three new staff members from the Tempo Fishery Area attended the four day program that commenced on 4 April at Waitetoko Marae. The marae is situated along the eastern lake shore at Te Rangi-ita approximately 14 km north of Turangi on SH1. Waitetoko Marae is the home of Ngāti Te Rangi-ita hapu (sub-tribe of Ngāti Tūwharetoa).

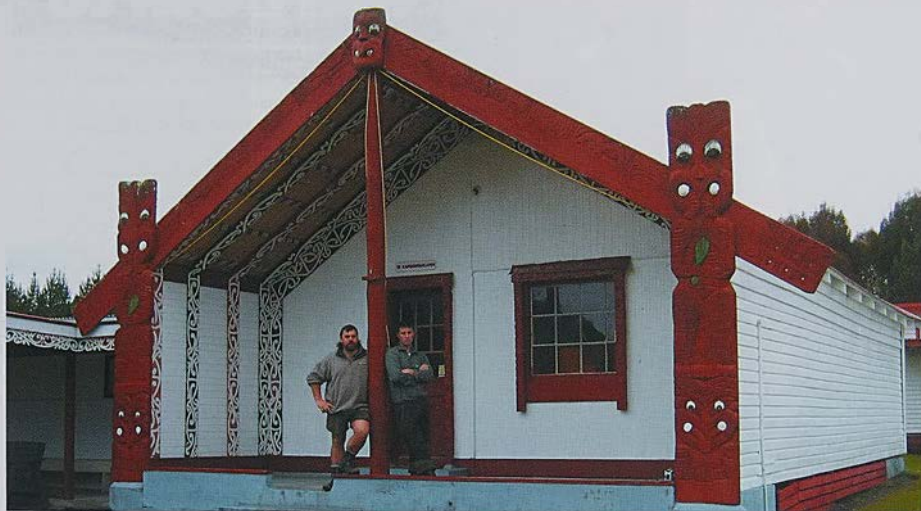
Upon arrival the DOC staff who were from various conservancies gathered and were given a briefing on tikanga/kawa (protocol) for the powhiri or whākaeke (walk on ceremony). The powhiri was a great way to get the morning started with whaikorero (speakers)

waiata (song) and ha reru/hongi (pressing of noses or an embrace). A koha (gift) of trees was given from the manuhiri (visitors) which were planted on the marae.

After the powhiri we mingled over a cuppa and got settled in. The classes began with the blessing of the books followed by the first kawai (topic), interacting with Māori, covered by Jim Maniapoto, Kaipapa Atawhai Manager, Tongariro Taupo Conservancy. This kawai was an in-depth introduction into tikanga/kawa or tika (behaviour on the marae, the do's and don'ts). It also provides an understanding of the different locations on a marae, their names and significance. A mihi (greeting/introduction) gave all a chance to give thanks, say who they were and where they come from in te reo (Māori language). Organising a hui (meeting) and the use of whaikorero were also outlined. Whaikorero is a ceremony spoken during a powhiri which gives acknowledgement to the whare tupuna (literally house of ancestors). This ceremony pays tribute to its cen-

Rangers, Michael Hill and Greg Robinson who attended the 3 day course in front of Waitetoko Marae.

Photo: Kim Alexander-Turia



relatives to rise and descend down through the generations until the present and it also gives thanks to Mother Earth and pays tribute to the dead. A waiata follows whakorero and this is an opportunity for the group to lend support to what has been said. It also gives mana (prestige/respect) to the speaker. Our facilitator, Whetu Tipiwi presented a kawai developing an understanding of Maori beliefs and values. This was a look at creation according to Maori, based on the relationship between the spiritual and natural world.

Evaan Aramakutu then presented a synopsis of the Treaty of Waitangi outlining the history, relevant issues, principles and content of the Treaty. The final kawai was presented by Anaru Luke on understanding Maori tribal systems and structures. The aim of this kawai was to help manage working relations with iwi and to look at roles, relationships and functions of social and political structures. Knowing these links, processes and protocols will enable better and appropriate contact between DOC and local Maori.

We also completed a roleplay hui on 1080 poisoning. Participants were divided in to two groups with one side from DOC who were intending to spread bait by aerial drop. The second group represented the iwi, owners of the land. This was a chance to get a feel



of what sort of questions would be asked and how best they can be answered. The hui went well although DOC were grilled from a sceptical and concerned iwi.

On the final evening we had a haka (feast) and on the menu was a beautiful hangi (food cooked in earth oven). We had entertainment from our individual groups with many waiata from all.

Many thanks must go out to all the tangawera (workers behind the scenes) for their mahi (work) and their yunghy kai (food). Also to Jim and all the tutors involved. The program covered a great deal of knowledge and the kawai we learned will be of great benefit in the future. All who attended developed a sense for life on the marae and we will have a greater awareness when working with Maori.

Harcourts

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HINEMAIAIA TRAP AND TRANSFER

Ranger Callum Bourke releases the first trout for this winter into HB lake.
Photo: Rob Hood



By Callum Bourke

Callum is a ranger involved in all our field operations. He is an enthusiastic angler with a very strong affinity for Lake Taupo

Prior to the construction of the HB dam as part of the Hinemaiaia hydro scheme, the Pahikohuru and Kakapo Streams (located approx 1km upstream) contained valuable spawning areas within the Hinemaiaia river. The last spawning run to these tributaries occurred in 1965. The Pahikohuru Stream was trapped by the then-young John Gibbs and Norrie Ewing, which estimated the run to be 1350 fish.

With the introduction of the Resource Management Act in 1991, all existing water users had to apply for new operating consents within 10 years. At a hearing in October 2001, the Department of Conservation challenged certain aspects of the consent application submitted by the generation company, TrustPower Limited, for operation of the Hinemaiaia Power Scheme. Fish passage for spawning trout above the dam and downstream passage for juveniles along with a more natural flow regime in the lower river, were the main concerns of the Taupo Fishery Area. Although the hearing found in favour of DOC, TrustPower appealed the decision, but in the ensuing discussion the two parties reached agreement. The outcome required TrustPower to adopt a more natural flow regime in the lower river and to ensure effective fish passage for adult trout upstream past the dam and for juveniles back downstream. However rather than

specify exactly how TrustPower would meet the fish passage objectives it made provision for TrustPower to undertake trials to determine the best way to achieve this.

Downstream passage for juvenile trout was resolved when a trial undertaken by DOC for TrustPower revealed that the vast proportion of young fish passing through the turbine as part of the normal operation of the power station survived this apparently hazardous route. This simplified life considerably.

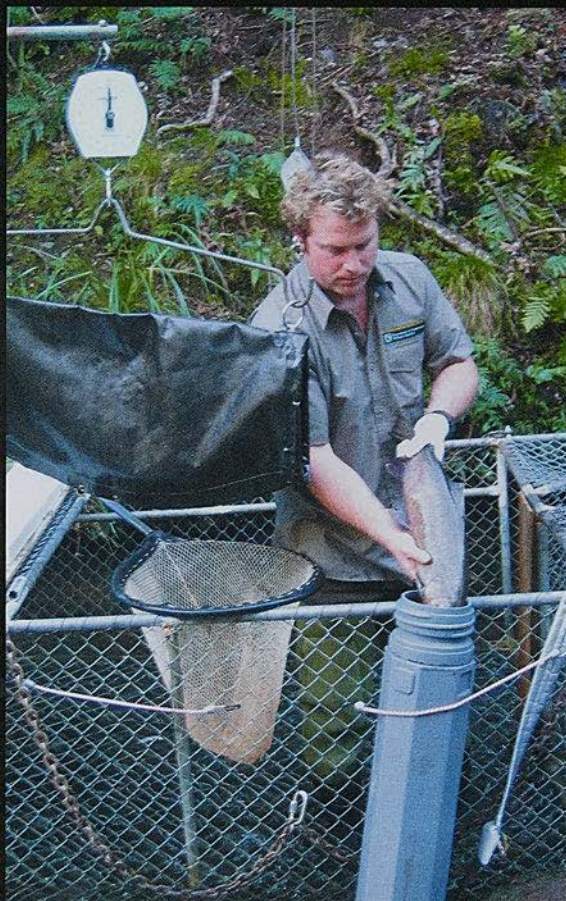
A number of possible solutions to facilitate upstream fish passage were suggested. These options included fish ladders, fish lifts and trapping and transferring fish by hand. TrustPower decided to trial the trap and transfer technique. The benefits of this technique was that it provided certainty as to what fish were actually lifted above the dam whilst avoiding the large capital costs associated with the other options. An agreement was reached that DOC would undertake this trial on contract to TrustPower.

During the first 2 years of operations in 2004 and 2005, the objective of "an average of at least five rainbow trout are transferred for a minimum of forty days during the months of July to October inclusive" (approximately 200 fish) were successfully met. It proved the trap and transfer program worked well

although some operational changes have occurred as a result of what was learnt.

After the first season the trap site was moved upstream nearer the dam. This was because the original trap site was at the downstream end of the bypass channel. While some of the fish trapped were likely to have been spawned upstream of the dam other fish were likely to have been spawned in the channel itself. When we lifted these fish above the dam some attempted to return back downstream to their parental spawning grounds rather than continue on to the Pahikohuru and Kakapo Streams. Now, by situating the trap immediately below the dam we can be confident the fish being trapped are those attempting to move further upstream.

*Callum Bourke places a trout into the transfer tube ready to be carried up to HB lake.
Photo: Rob Hood*



During the first year the trap operated for 2 week periods on 4 occasions between the months of June and September. In 2005 the trap operated over 3 periods of up to 38 days. The regular installation and removal of the trap and associated equipment and accommodation proved inefficient and time consuming requiring several staff and vehicles each time. Furthermore the first period of trapping in June, yielded on average only 1 fish per day which was not worth the effort required. Therefore this year, rather than install the trap in June, we will install it in mid-July. The trap will still operate for 8 weeks until mid-September, but over a single continuous period which simplifies the operation and reduces the setup and dismantling costs. It is interesting to note, as with the results from the trapping operations, that escapement counts (drift dives) we have been undertaking in the bypass since 1990 also indicate peak densities of fish occur mid August.

In addition to the trout transferred into the dam, a number of ripe fish will again be stripped to provide 20,000 eggs. As occurred last year, these eggs will be hatched at the Tongariro National Trout Centre and the fry then released into the Pahikohuru and Kakapo streams later in the year. By releasing these fry direct into these streams they should hopefully try to return here as spawning adults in three years time, further stimulating the spawning run. This is the second year we have done this and it will be repeated again in 2007. Given that most trout are three years old when they spawn, stocking the stream with fry for 3 years will hasten the increase in subsequent years.

Next winter will be the first to benefit from the initial transfer. However in 2004 only a very few adult trout found their way into the Pahikohuru and Kakapo Streams and, with no fry release that year, the effect on the spawning run may not be significant. It is likely to take a few years for a noticeable effect to become evident but hopefully at that point the runs will be sufficiently strong that we can look at options to increase the angling opportunity in this special river. Possibilities include closing the upper river later or extending the winter limit further upstream. This opportunity is still a few years off but at this stage the project is progressing well.

TAUPO TAILS

Readers photos and stories



Caught by Richard Knight of Auckland at the Tongariro delta in Jan 2006. Just on dark, this brown weighed just under 9 pounds. Photo Sent in by Brenden Knight



Rainbow Jack caught by Margaret Proffitt in June this year in Whangamata Bay. Killed on a downrigger set at 92 feet. The rainbow weighed in at 4kg, and was 67cm long with a girth of 42cm. Photo Sent in by Janet Piper



Got away once but not twice!
Photo: Sent in by David of Turangi.



Harley Lowes and Fred Smith, from Taradale, trolling out from Acacia Bay early May when the locals ducked in and told Harley and Fred where the fish were. Photo: Sent in by Harley Lowes, Taradale, Napier



As Chris Williams from Christchurch, UK, had never fished the Tongariro River before, he was not too sure of exactly where he was. From his report it appears he hooked up in the head of the Kamahi pool using a size 14 mayfly gold bead. Six weeks and a six weight rod. This brown took over 30 minutes to land. After several failed attempts to land it he found a nice circle of stones some other angler had kindly left to guide the fish into. After gutting it weighed over 4 kg. Caught in February 2006. Photo: Sent in by Tongariro River Motel



Rainbow trout caught by Nathan Usberwood of Pahiataua, July 2005. Caught at Cabbage tree point at Manuapa. Live insect was a traffic light, weight: seven pounds, length: 60cm, condition factor: 56. Photo: Sent in by Nathan Usberwood

If you would like to make contributions to Taupo Tails (letters, photos, anything of interest) please write to Kim Alexander-Turia, Department of Conservation, Taupo Fishery, Private Bag, Turangi or email Kim your contributions to kturia@doc.govt.nz.

New faces in the fishery team

Kim Alexander-Turia

Kim was born in Auckland and with her father in the RNZAF she lived first in Bulls before moving to Hobsonville, Auckland. Of Ngāi Tuwharetoa descent Kim regularly returned to the hāmoa area to visit home and of course the whānau.

In Auckland she worked in government for 10 years, primarily as a Customer Service Advisor with the Department of Inland Revenue, before deciding to return home to live in 2001 with her family and two young children. Kim began working at a local fly-fishing lodge which is where her passion for fly-fishing began. "I spent so much time listening to the guests about their fly-fishing adventures for the day and seeing their excitement or disappointment on their return that I decided that there was something in this and I had to learn myself. As I had a birthday due, I asked all the family for 'fishy' presents and ended up with a fly-rod, tackle, waders and of course a licence".

"The pressure was on to deliver trout on the table and Kim admits it took a little while to actually deliver. "Fly-fishing is definitely an art and it has taken me a few years to master some sort of skill" says Kim. After leaving the lodge, Kim worked briefly for the Ministry of Social Development before joining the Tuwharetoa Māori Trust Board where she worked for 3 years in a number of roles but primarily as Personal Assistant to the Board Secretary and Board Chairman.

When the opportunity arose to work for the Taupo Fishery team "it was too good to pass up as it combined my love of fly-fishing, the environment and being able to be part of a team that is committed to the sustainability of Lake Taupo", says Kim.

Kim's role is Programmatic Manager, Community Relations and her primary responsibility is to manage the Taupo Fishery Area's advocacy portfolio, media relations and the operation and management of the Tangariro National Trout Centre.

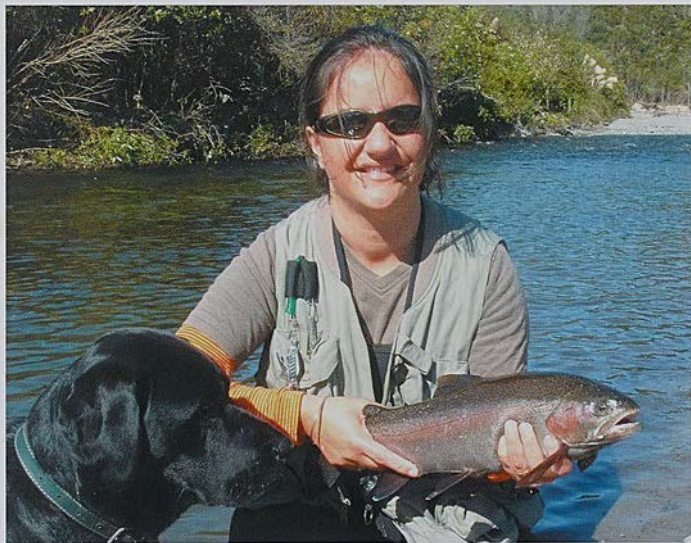


Photo:
Kim Alexander-Turika



Storm Bester

Born and raised in Zimbabwe, I came to New Zealand in November 2004 with my fiancé and son. In Africa I worked in the tourism industry guiding overland safaris, filling my time in between doing massage and reflexology in my home town of Bulawayo. I love fishing although I'm not yet very experienced at fly fishing. Back home we put worms on our hooks, or swam out in a dam or lake (with hopefully no crocodiles) and went spear fishing, mostly for bream or bass. Sometimes for more of a challenge we chased tiger fish in Lake Kariba. I have travelled Africa, Europe and Australia. We finally landed in Turangi in January 2005, and love the adventures the area has to offer! I am currently working with the Fishery as a Ranger Service. I am undertaking the fishing licence administration and having just received New Zealand residency. I am looking forward to making the department and Turangi my new home.



Photo:
Kim Alexander-Turika

Jill Welsh


Jill was born in Taupo and grew up in Turangi. "Over the years I have worked away from the area for short periods but always seemed to be drawn back home" comments Jill.

"I have come to the Department of Conservation from the Department of Corrections where I spent several years in a crime prevention role. I was based in Turangi but worked at most prison sites around New Zealand. This experience developed my skills within the law enforcement environment which is valuable in my new role as Compliance and Law Enforcement Coordinator at DoC".

In her spare time Jill enjoys fishing, boating on the lake and the outdoors in general. "As a consequence I feel pretty lucky to have the opportunity to work in the Taupo Fishery and with such a great team of dedicated people" says Jill.

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For the latest fly fishing updates for
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 Go to: tongaririvermotel.co.nz

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