



# *THE FLYFISHER NEWSLETTER*

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June - 2020

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## **PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

Dave is having a well-earned break so no Presidents report this week.

## **FISHING REPORT**

### **Auckland / Waikato**

Again, no reports on our closest water unfortunately, but Johan Kok was down the Whanganui and did very well, with numerous fish coming to the net up to 6.5pds. All caught on the flies he has been demonstrating for us at the Club Fly Tying instruction nights.

## Rotorua

On a recent visit to Rotorua the tributary it was low and clear, but with plenty of fish in all the likely spots. I had thought with the low conditions that they would be keen on naturals but every fish took a small Glo Bug. Most had been in the river a while but the rain we have been having recently will no doubt have caused a good run of fresh fish to enter all the tributaries.

Russell made a run down to Rotoiti earlier this week for a jigging session. The photos below speak for themselves.



*Fat, prime condition Rainbows. Roll out the smoker! Photo courtesy of Russell Nelson*

## Taupo Region

By every account, and backed up with video evidence, the rain last week has brought in a run of fantastic fish. Fat, fresh run, orange fleshed, and averaging over 4pds. Time to get down there, now!

Every river has had a run, with big numbers heading up the Hatepe and the Tauranga Taupo Rivers. The Tongariro and the other tributaries have all had solid runs as well.

For a while now reports from the river mouths have been saying that the fish were in great condition and come winter there would be some great fishing. Well, winter has come.

Don't forget, the Club has a Trip organized for mid / late July to Turangi. Book now.

### **Saltwater**

The Kaipara is fishing very well for the Fly Fishers, with some cracking Snapper being landed.

### **Fishy Tales**

- If you do have a report, success story, or anecdote to share then just send it to [iconpromote@gmail.com](mailto:iconpromote@gmail.com) . Happy Fishing and Tight Lines – Freddy Da Fish.

### **NSFF SUBS ARE NOW DUE FOR 2020~21 YEAR**

The annual subs for the year, 2020 ~ 21, for the North Shore Flyfishers Inc are now due. Please pay to:

North Shore Flyfishers Incorporated - A/c: 12-3209-0190179-00.

**Please ensure your surname is in the Payment Details.**

**The subs are as below and discounted if paid by 31st July 2020.**

**Adult** \$80.00 discounted to \$40.00 if paid by 31st July 2020  
**Family** \$90.00 discounted to \$70.00 if paid by 31st July 2020  
**Junior** \$30.00 discounted to \$20.00 of paid by 31st July 2020

### **REMEMBER**

**To get the discount the subs must be paid by the 31st July 2020**

### **LAST CLUB NIGHT**

Last month we our AGM. Thank you to everyone who attended.

## **NEXT CLUB NIGHT – 16<sup>th</sup> JUNE 7.30 PM**

This month we are once more having a physical Meeting at the Birkenhead RSA.

We have Bruce Stuart from Lost Arts NZ talking to us about knife making. Bruce has been making knives since he was a teenager and is still making them today at his workshop in Clevedon where he runs 1 day courses in how to make a knife from scratch.

Also there will be a Jumble Sale and Members are encouraged to bring items for sale. So if you have something that you are no longer using or you are looking for that special extra piece of kit then come along. As per normal, all sales will be cash unless otherwise accepted by the seller. There will be an option to donate proceeds to the Club if you are feeling particularly generous.

It is sure to be an interesting night and we look forward to seeing you there.

## **QUOTABLE QUOTES**

*You know when they have a fishing show on TV? They catch the fish and then let it go.*

*They don't want to eat the fish, they just want to make it late for something*

*Mitch Hedberg*

## **CHANGES TO CONTACT DETAILS**

Committee members organising club trips and similar events are finding that the phone and email information that we hold for some members has become out of date. If you have changed your address, landline number, mobile number or email address in the last year or so and have not passed the new details on to NSFF, could you please advise Barrie Barnes by email, his email address is [barrie@flyfishinginxs.kiwi](mailto:barrie@flyfishinginxs.kiwi) .

## **FISHING BUDDIES SOUGHT**

The intention is to display a list of names of Club Members that are keen on finding a 'buddy' to go fishing with, either on a regular basis or just for a day. In essence it's a fly-fishing dating service...

<b>Name</b>	<b>Availability</b>	<b>Contact Details</b>
Ron Blair	Anytime, has a 14.4 Marco	home 09 834 8841

Les Rose	with 60hp etc Evenrude for serious fishing Salt or Fresh Retired and is happy to take another person fishing during the week. Has a small 2 person boat.	mobile 0275 006 336 <a href="mailto:ron.blair@xtra.co.nz">ron.blair@xtra.co.nz</a> home 09 4183634
Graham Carter	Lives in Hamilton, keen on weekday / mid-week trips.	021 026 00437 07 855 1833
Lloyd Altham	Has 12' Pontoon boat /15 HP Honda. Available most time, but prefer weekdays.	Mob. 021 0295 9167 Home 09 420 3120 <a href="mailto:email-lloyd@skysupply.co.nz">email-lloyd@skysupply.co.nz</a>
Matt Meikle	Available both week days and Weekends	09 908 1909 027 285 7521
John Gausden	Time limited - weekends / arrange trips only. 5m aussie barra boat / 70 yamaha / minn kota - serious fishing manly lake / saltwater but keen to learn more on the rivers	021704373 <a href="mailto:john@st-classic.com">john@st-classic.com</a>
John Rust	Anytime. Keen to give it a crack.	021 648 991 09 415 4919
Barry Schultz	Has a 551 MacLay with a 90hp merc used mostly for SW fishing. Also a 6.5 mtr motorhome that provides transport, accommodation & meals etc. whilst camped riverside or beach front, plus is currently being fitted out to carry a three person inflatable with a 4 hp motor. Prefer weekdays or multi day trips away in the motorhome.	09 4159692 e-mail <a href="mailto:bardot@xtra.co.nz">bardot@xtra.co.nz</a>
Gary Bolstad	Keen to get out Stream, Lake or even Saltwater fly-fishing. Has both Fish & Game and Taupo season licences so keen to go almost anywhere. Retired so free to go most of the time.	Mobile 022 379 3070 <a href="mailto:gd.bolstad@gmail.com">gd.bolstad@gmail.com</a>

So, if you are keen to find someone to share the cost and the fun of a fishing expedition with, then send in your details and we will get it all started. Send details to [iconpromote@gmail.com](mailto:iconpromote@gmail.com)

022-379-3070, and my best email address is [gd.bolstad@gmail.com](mailto:gd.bolstad@gmail.com).

## **CLUB TROPHIES**

**Brown Trout Trophy** – This is awarded to The Heaviest Brown Trout caught by a Club Member during the year – May 1<sup>st</sup> to 30<sup>th</sup> April. Current holder is **Roy Richardson**.

**Chain Snore Trophy** – A fun award given immediately after any Club Trip to the person who has done the ‘funniest’ thing over the weekend. If nobody has had anything like this happen it may be awarded to the worst snorer.

**Ian Hunt Memorial Trophy** – Heaviest Trout caught fly-fishing by a Club Member during the Pupuke Challenge Competition. A competition run every year to promote the Lake Pupuke fishery. This was not held this year due to Covid lock down. Current holder is **Lucas Bathurst**.

**I Love Flyfishing Trophy** – Awarded to the Club Member who has caught the most species of Saltwater fish fly-fishing over the year – 1<sup>st</sup> May to 30<sup>th</sup> April. Current holder is **Russell Nelson**.

**Rodd And Gunn Trophy** – This is the Club Competition which takes place over two days. One Day on a Lake and one day on a River. Current holder is **Simon Hoole**.

The Lake part of the competition has its own Trophy, the **I Love Flyfishing Stillwater Trophy**. Current holder is **Simon Hoole**.

## **“BROWN TROUT TROPHY” COMPETITION RULES**

Winning fish will be determined by weight.

Verification by partner where possible and/or by photograph.

Details to be provided to any committee member.

Competition period May 1st to April 30th. Prize awarded at AGM in May. Winner’s name and weight of fish to be published in June club newsletter.

## **NORTH SHORE FLY FISHERS CLUB SALT WATER FLY FISHING COMPETITION RULES**

The “essence” of the competition is to encourage club member participation and in the process, to award a winner’s trophy to the individual who catches the greatest number of salt water species. It will run from 1st May in one year to 31st April in the next year with the trophy awarded at the following AGM.

For the full rules please refer to the Club Website [www.nsff.org.nz](http://www.nsff.org.nz)

## **WHY WE FISH**

*Fly fishing is a healthy antisocial sport, and many of us have an emotional investment in being misunderstood because it makes us feel strange and brilliant, like Van Gogh.*

*John Gierach*



*Never rule out the joys of night fishing. No crowds, fish that are less easily spooked, and are willing to bite. Leon with a prime fat Rainbow. Photo courtesy of Simon Hoole.*

## **FLY TYING INSTRUCTION**

This month's Fly Tying instruction will be an online event again and will commence at 7.30pm on Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> June. For full details on how to log in and what Fly will be tied please see the email sent out to you by Barrie last week.

We have had two sessions of Fly Tying instruction now and they are going well. As a watcher rather than a tyer I found them excellent. Easy to follow, easy to connect, and easy to hear. Reports from the Members receiving the interactive instruction were equally positive.

A big credit and thank you to Johan Kok, our instructor, and to Barrie Barnes for setting it all up.

If you would like to see the videos of the Flies being tied just click go to <http://www.nsff.org.nz/>.

### **CLUB TRIPS 2020**

February – Ngongotaha River and Rotorua Lakes

March – Whanganui River – Club Competition Trip 2020

March – Lake Otamangakau

May – Ngongotaha River and Rotorua Lakes JUNE 2020 – 19<sup>th</sup> 20<sup>th</sup> 21<sup>st</sup>

July – Tongariro and Tauranga Taupo JULY 2020

November – Lake based Club Competition Trip – NOV 2020

November – Tuition weekend (Held if enough ‘novice’ anglers are interested)

December – Lake Otamangakau – DEC 2020

The NSF committee arrange various Club Trips over the year to different parts of the country. If you would like to be involved, or have an idea for a trip please let one of your committee know.

### **JUNE CLUB TRIP TO NGONGOTAHA AND ROTORUA AREA**

This year’s May Club Trip to Rotorua / Ngongotaha will be on **the weekend of Thursday 18<sup>th</sup>, Friday 19<sup>th</sup>, Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> and Sunday the 21<sup>st</sup> of June. All dependent on the Alert Levels.** We will again be staying at the Paradise Valley Lodge. Costs will be \$90.00 each, which will cover 2 nights’ accommodation in the lodge. **The regular Saturday night BBQ will not take place as this involves shared preparation of food.**

If you want to come down on the Thursday, as many of us do, then simply add \$45 to make it \$135.00.

This is always a fun Trip and even if the weather turns to absolute rubbish there is a plethora of Lakes to fish and you can always find somewhere out of the wind.

If you are keen just let me know which nights you can make ASAP and then pay your money to the Club in any of the normal ways.

- internet banking to the Club's bank account: North Shore Flyfishers Incorporated ASB A/c #: 12-3209-0190179-00 (please include your name and the word Ngonga as a reference);
- by cheque made out to North Shore Flyfishers Inc and posted to the Club's mailing address (PO Box 31387 Milford, Auckland 0741); or

Duncan – 021 648 956 – [iconpromote@gmail.com](mailto:iconpromote@gmail.com)

### **JULY CLUB TRIP TO TURANGI**

This year's Turangi Club Trip is again being organized by Maurice Parlane and will take place on Friday 24<sup>th</sup>, Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> and return on Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> July. The Club has booked out several units at Tongariro River Motel and costs will be \$105 per person. This will include 2 nights accommodation on a shared unit basis and a slap up BBQ dinner on the Saturday night. There are fish cleaning facilities, an electric overnight smoker, multiple BBQ's and a quick hot smoker.

Also, a number of people choose to come down on the Thursday night as well. If you do this just add \$45 to the cost.

If you are interested in going on this please contact Maurice ASAP as this is always a popular Trip. Maurice's contact details are as follows: mobile 021 650 692, or e-mail to: [maurice.p@newwayz.co.nz](mailto:maurice.p@newwayz.co.nz)

### **QUOTABLE QUOTES**

*The fishing was so bad even liars didn't catch anything.*

*U N Known*

## **JOKE OF THE MONTH**

A Mafia Godfather finds out that his bookkeeper has cheated him out of ten million bucks. His bookkeeper is deaf. That was the reason he got the job in the first place. It was assumed that a deaf bookkeeper would not hear anything that he might have to testify about in court.

When the Godfather goes to confront the bookkeeper about his missing \$10 million, he brings along his attorney, who knows sign language.

The Godfather tells the lawyer, "Ask him where the 10 million bucks he embezzled from me is." The attorney, using sign language, asks the bookkeeper where the money is.

The bookkeeper signs back: "I don't know what you are talking about."

The attorney tells the Godfather: "He says he doesn't know what you're talking about."

The Godfather pulls out a pistol, puts it to the bookkeeper's temple and says, "Ask him again!"

The attorney signs to the bookkeeper: "He'll kill you if you don't tell him!"

The bookkeeper signs back: "OK! You win! The money is in a brown briefcase, buried behind the shed in my cousin Enzo's backyard in Queens!"

The Godfather asks the attorney: "Well, what'd he say?"

The attorney replies: "He says you don't have the balls to pull the trigger."

## **SPECIAL ORDER 48**

*Article generously allowed to be republished here by Dave McLellan*

It was one of the oldest shops in Glasgow, certainly the oldest Gun and Fishing Tackle store that had catered for the needs of a very loyal clientele for the best part of 100 years. In that time little had been done to modernise the store which remained as Dickensian as it had been when gas light had struggled to illuminate the dark recesses. Apart from the badly scratched heavy glass top on the counter, which ran the full length of the shop, everything else was made of wood. The floor, which had originally been tongue and groove polished oak was now grey and worn with large cracks where fishhooks and the occasional trout fly could find refuge. Then there was the smell, not unpleasant, a musty old church aroma, mixed with pine tar and just a hint of ammonia, the latter given off by the live bait in the form of maggots that were held in the basement.

The shop had a reputation for catering to the working classes. This reputation was gained largely because they sold bait, a fact that was treated with disdain by the self-appointed higher class tackle stores in town which primarily stocked fly fishing equipment. Each Thursday the boy would walk to the central rail station to collect four large cans of bait, two with brandling worms and two with maggots that had travelled overnight from bait farms in England.

Each pair of tins was tied together with rough hairy string that left deep marks in the boy's hands as he trudged back to the shop. There was little natural light in the shop and even less in the gloomy basement where the worms were divided up into dozens of old jam jars in readiness for the weekends anglers who would form an orderly queue on Saturday morning, each clutching an assortment of bait containers.

The only natural light in the basement filtered through small panes of thick opaque glass that formed part of the pavement in front of the shop's only display window. A crusty old bad-tempered gunsmith worked down here and the highlight of his day was looking up through a small hole in the glass at the under-garments of any woman who stood long enough to afford him a peek. He could have been wrong but the boy suspected that the hole was slowly becoming larger with the passage of time.

Although he was only 15, the boy and the gunsmith had developed a grudging friendship, this despite the fact that the gunsmith had on one occasion shot the boy in the back. To be fair the boy had been particularly cheeky that day, and was making his escape up the stairs from the basement at some speed, when the point 22 air pistol slug caught him between the shoulder blades, leaving him with a penny sized bruise that took some weeks to fade.

On another occasion the gunsmith's prowess with firearms was demonstrated when a shot rang out from the far end of the basement as the boy was washing his wormy hands, and a large rat with half its head missing landed in the sink in front of him.

The boy's father and grandfather had been regular customers at the store for as long as the boy could remember, and it was not surprising to anyone but the boy himself when he was offered a job there after he left school. It was during his first stock-taking that he encountered Special Order 48.

He was counting artificial trout flies that were kept in small wooden drawers, each drawer labelled with the names of the flies in alphabetical order. He enjoyed this job, as it gave him a chance to inspect the shop's stock of trout flies in every size. The flies were kept in small cardboard boxes and the last drawer contained only one box, marked Special Order 48, size 14.

He had never come across this box before. In fact he had never opened this particular drawer since there was no label on it to indicate that there was anything inside.

For some strange reason he felt a twinge of excitement as he opened the box and spilled the contents onto the counter. He saw before him three small black spider flies with peacock herl down two-thirds of the hook, then bright red floss with an oval gold tinsel ribbing and a golden pheasant tippet tail.

These were not the usual black spider flies, which tended to have dull soft feathers. The hackles on these flies were springy and shiny, which reflected the red, green, and gold of the other parts of the dressing. The boy stared at the flies for a long time, mesmerised by their simple beauty, little knowing what a large part they would play in his progression towards becoming a fly-fisher.

No one in the shop could remember who had ordered these flies or why there were three left. Even the boss who had been with the company for almost 50 years could not recall their origin. On Friday when he was paid, the boy offered to purchase the unusual flies and was surprised when the boss, not given to fits of generosity, said he could have them. That night, after they had been shown to his father and given due approval, they were carefully fixed into the small metal clips of his Loch Leven fly box.

Truth be told, he rarely fished with an artificial fly, although he was quite capable of doing so, but his fly rod usually ended up with a spinning reel on it, casting out a worm to hang expectantly below a small cork float.

A few weeks later his father's angling club had its annual bus trip to the Rannoch Moor where three small Lochs provided more than enough bank fishing for the forty or so anglers. The fish were exclusively wild brown trout averaging about three to the pound, but what they lacked in size they made up for in quantity and aggressiveness.



*Rannoch Moor. For those of you familiar with Scottish history the A82 road crosses through Rannoch Moor on its way to Glen Coe and Fort William. Photo copied from the [www.trekearth.com](http://www.trekearth.com) website.*

It was a barren windswept place of low heather tussock and bogs, that the unwary could sink in up to their waist, but the boy loved it. He felt clean here after the dusty back streets of the city, and a sense of freedom and belonging as though he was somehow coming home after some long arduous journey. The Lochs themselves were very irregular in shape, and in some places it was difficult to know where the land stopped and the loch started and it would have taken several hours of hard walking to try and follow the bank back to where you started.

There was an air of excitement as the bus stopped at the side of the road but it soon turned to dismay as the bus continued to sway from side to side buffeted by a strong wind.

They all clambered out jostling for position, a seething mass of canvas bags, rods, thigh boots and raincoats, but eventually the chaos subsided as anglers, reunited with their tackle set off across the moor to stake claim to their favourite stretch of shoreline. The boy's father also set off, but his was more a search for somewhere to get out of the biting wind, where he could find shelter for his small brass primus stove that made strong dark sweet tea, which he would enhance with a dash of Johnny Walker. The boy was invited to join him, but he refused preferring to be alone where he could enjoy a cigarette from his secret stash, without the disapproving comments from his non-smoking father.

There was a long narrow bay at the head of one of the Lochs where a small stream had carved its way through the bog exposing shiny granite boulders that stood out in stark contrast to the dark cloggy peat.

So with head and shoulders bent into the wind the boy set off in the direction of the bay which he had fished before and on his last visit had taken several fish on the fly. This day was a special occasion because he had refused to bring bait on this trip and intended to rely totally on fly fishing, something he had never done before.

There was no defined path across the moor so it was heavy going, sinking into the bog one minute and tripping over the springy heather the next. During one of his more spectacular falls he almost landed on a wild grouse, which sped off with the wind up its tail, its startled cry mocking his discomfort.

The distance was no more than a mile but it took him almost an hour to reach the bay. He had hoped for some shelter from the wind but it was blowing straight down the long bay creating white caps and frothy cream coloured foam that flew off the top of the waves and piled up along the shore at the far end of the bay. He huddled behind the largest of the boulders to assemble his fly rod and attached three flies to his nylon leader.

There was no way to cast a line properly in these conditions, but he managed a sort of roll cast which at least put his flies on the water. The line was caught by the wind forming a belly between the end of the rod and where it entered the water which quickly swung the flies back to the shore and the cast had to be repeated almost immediately.

He persisted with this technique as he worked his way slowly along the shore but he was wishing that he had brought some bait which he could have cast out without a float, leaving the rod on a forked stick while he sheltered behind the rock. That was the trouble with fly fishing: you had to keep doing it. At least with bait fishing the rod could be left for a few moments while other things took priority, like talking to a friendly dog, or climbing an inviting tree.

After a fruitless hour he returned to the sanctuary behind the big rock to eat a thick cheese and pickle sandwich and contemplate his options.

From their hiding place deep in a pocket of his fishing bag he extracted a packet containing five Players cigarettes, one of which he lit with some difficulty, cold hands cupped around the erratic flame of a Swan Vestas match.

He enjoyed this particular cigarette, the one that helps you think while you're looking in your fly box for inspiration. That was when he saw his Special Order 48 sitting in their

clips in the corner of his fly box like small boys standing before their soccer coach crying, "Pick me! Pick me!" His top fly was removed and replaced with one of the small black spiders which was less than half the size of the other two flies on the cast.

When the cigarette was half finished he removed the glowing end with a practiced squeeze between thumb and forefinger and returned what was left to the packet. This time, when he cast his flies back into the waves, he held the tip of the rod only a few inches above the water to lessen the effect of the wind.

He concentrated on the small piece of line between the water and the tip of the rod and started to slowly retrieve the line through his cold fingers. The line gave a small jerk but he was not sure enough to strike, but when it happened again on the next cast he struck quickly.

There was a sharp tug on the line then everything went slack, and when he retrieved his flies he discovered to his dismay that the top fly was missing. The boy was not happy having been broken by his first fish, a fish that he had wanted so badly because he needed to prove to his father that he was now a fully fledged fly fisherman. He made up a new cast with stronger nylon and tied on another special order 48 fly.

On the very next cast the line again gave a small tweak and when he struck there came a reassuring wriggle on the line to indicate a hooked trout. He played it very carefully, and eventually it came up out of the dark, peat stained water and slid onto the fine granite gravel, where he quickly despatched the fish as he had been taught. He was thrilled to discover that it had taken the black spider, which he carefully removed from the top jaw. It was a large trout for this lake, almost three-quarters of a pound which was the largest fish he had ever caught on a fly, but as he looked at it he realised that it was also a thing of great beauty.

The trout's back was almost black, but changed quickly to a deep copper and then a burnished gold along the flank and there were big red and black spots each with a narrow circle of pale blue that made them stand out like jewels, and for the first time in his life he felt a twinge of sadness that it had to die.

The boy lost count of the fish he caught that day. Most were released and a few were killed, but all of them were taken on the special order 48 fly, and as he trudged back to the bus he realised that he would never again have to rely on bait for his fishing pleasure.

In the corner of the small Loch Leven fly box, Special Order 48 (minus one) lay content in the knowledge that their pattern would not lie forgotten in an unlabeled drawer. Special Order 48 was destined for survival.



*What did you make during the lockdown? Photo courtesy of Barrie Barnes, supplied from one of Barrie's ILFF customers some time ago.*

## **FISH AND GAME HAS STRENGTH AND ENDURING RELEVANCE**

By Dave Witherow – NZFFA Website – 26/05/2020

An article by a former NZ Fish and Game Councilor Tom O'Connor appeared in some Fairfax papers. O'Connor's article can be seen

at:- <https://www.stuff.co.nz/environment/121437761/time-for-change-for-fish-and-game>

This article is by Dave Witherow, also a former NZ Fish and Game councilor, in response to O'Connor's claims

Recent reports of trouble within Fish and Game conform to a standard script which surfaces about once every decade.

The whole organization is no longer fit for purpose, according to the critics, and it needs to be reviewed and reorganized if confidence is to be restored so it's claimed.

Tom O'Connor, writing on May 9, rehashes most of this familiar terrain, spicing his case with allegations of dysfunction and malfeasance that bear no relation to reality.

He does, however, get one thing right: Fish and Game, in being directly responsible to its stakeholders, is a unique organisation – not just in New Zealand but in the world.

It is in fact a fine example of democracy in action, whereby anglers and hunters elect their own representatives to manage their own resources. It is regionally based, with twelve autonomous Fish and Game Councils, plus a coordinating body in Wellington, each employing professional staff, but with all councilors serving unpaid. Fish and Game is self-funded, making no claims on the public purse, but its work is of great benefit to the natural environment in general. Its record of achievement has often been noted by the present Minister of Conservation.

O'Connor refers to some of this record – the Water Conservation Orders that now protect many of our best surviving rivers. But he fails to acknowledge that it was the regional Fish and Game Councils – not the national office in Wellington – that did the essential work. And his whole perspective is coloured by his excessive focus on the Wellington operation.

### **Strength**

The devolved nature of Fish and Game represents its strength and enduring relevance. Wildlife habitats vary dramatically from one region to another, and the differing

management strategies required are best determined by the people who live in each specific area. Techniques that are appropriate in Northland may make no sense in Southland.

This was well understood by the Acclimatisation Societies – the forerunners of Fish and Game – who operated very effectively for a century or more without the need for a separate presence in Wellington, which dates only from 1990. This body, the New Zealand Fish and Game Council, or NZC, has proved to be a mixed blessing.

“The latest upheaval”, as O’Connor puts it, is really no more than a storm in a teacup – a drive for power and central control by some within the NZC, helped along by a few self-interested external allies. It reflects the perennial bureaucratic urge to expand that has seen the Wellington office increase its staff by over 300% in thirty years. There is no demonstrated need for this top-heavy establishment. The resources are in the regions, where all the vital work is done, yet in Otago and Southland, for example, staffing has remained more or less static during this same period.

### **Dumped chairman**

O’Connor is concerned by recent changes in the composition of the NZ Fish and Game council. Farmers have been appointed to the Council, he says, and a longstanding chairman has been dumped. The Director has simultaneously been muzzled in respect of his comments “on matters to do with farming” – and these “sinister” developments may not be unrelated. Farmers, he thinks, have a fundamental conflict of interest when it comes to many of the activities of Fish and Game, and on account of this they might arguably be unfit to serve as councilors.

This is fanciful and in fact nonsensical. Conflicts of interest are impossible to avoid in a country the size of New Zealand, and if all the potentially conflicted anglers and hunters stood down from Fish and Game Councils there would be very few councilors left. The “dumped chairman”, for example, was a fishing guide – an occupation involving numerous points of conflict with the founding principles of Fish and Game. Yet he served as chairman for years.

The essential function of the NZC is to co-ordinate and audit the regions, according to O’Connor. This is far from the whole case, but even within such restricted terms the NZC’s performance lags behind the organisation as a whole. There is no consensus as to what “co-ordinate” really means, and the audit function has been exercised only sporadically. Four regions were audited between 1990 and 2000, then none till 2018, when three were done in a row.

The biggest problem, according to O'Connor, is that there is insufficient separation between the NZC and the regional Councils. He attributes this to the composition of the NZC, which consists of one appointed councilor from each of the twelve regions. These councilors, as befits a national body, are reasonably expected to take a national perspective on the NZC's business. But they often don't, according to O'Connor. Instead, they remain blinkered by parochial concerns.

To get round this O'Connor proposes that NZC councilors should be elected entirely separately from those in the regions, in the same way as local and central government representatives are independently chosen. We do not allow local bodies to select our MP's, so why is this incestuous system tolerated within Fish and Game? Independence, in O'Connor's view, would preclude any contamination by local "parochial" concerns.

It would be hard to think up a more crippling idea. There are no valid parallels here. Central government has entirely different areas of responsibility from local government – defense, education, policing, welfare, and foreign affairs, to name just a few. But Fish and Game's interests remain the same at all levels, and its NZC office serves primarily as an interface with the government of the day in Wellington. The NZC has no functions that do not arise from regional concerns. It manages no natural resources, and it generates no income – all its funds being supplied by the regions.

To suggest that this body be elected from a separate field of candidates, and to ban regional Fish and Game councilors from eligibility, would be to ensure a chaotic breakdown of the existing structure. All the ecological and managerial knowledge accumulated within the regions, and fed back to the NZC through its regional representatives, would become unavailable. Such a council would be operating in a vacuum, flying blind.

## **Nothing Wrong**

There is nothing fundamentally wrong with the existing Fish and Game structure, and no valid reason for radical change. The NZC's role might usefully be more clearly defined, its surplus staff trimmed, and the recurring tendency to act as a governing body, directing the regions as it sees fit, should be ended. This level of authority was never part the original intention, and its persistence has caused much mischief.

In an era of unprecedented environmental degradation it is inevitable that any voice for the protection of threatened natural resources will attract opposition from those whose interests lie elsewhere. No organisation is beyond criticism or improvement, but to suggest a wholesale rearrangement of Fish and Game on the basis of the current overblown complaints is irresponsible.

Fish and Game has served anglers and hunters well for several generations, and its conservation mandate is of far-reaching benefit to the wider public. Throughout its history it has continually evolved and renewed itself in response to changing circumstances – an adaptability seldom matched by comparable institutions. It a unique example of Kiwi grassroots competence, and if the Minister is of a mind to review it she should say so now, and make it an election issue.

**Note.**

*Dave Witherow served on the Otago Fish and Game Council for 39 years (1979-2018), and was the Otago representative on the New Zealand Fish and Game Council for more than ten years (until 2018).*



*Simon at it again on the Whanganui, and Allen doing the netting of yet another of Simon's competition winning fish. He really was on fire this year, both in the river and on the lake. Photo courtesy of Simon Hoole.*

## **FRESHWATER REFORMS A SIGNIFICANT STEP FORWARD**

*From Fish and Game NZ Website*

The Government's policy announced today is a significant step forward in reducing pollution in our rural and our urban waterways caused by intensive farming and through council's neglect. However, there is still more work to be done in the coming years, Fish & Game New Zealand Chief Executive Martin Taylor says.

"There are two key parts of today's announcement from the Government: the rules and enforcement of the rules.

"The rules, if enforced, will achieve the aim of preventing further decline by establishing for the first time a cap on the use of synthetic nitrogen fertiliser and strengthening the nitrogen toxicity attributes and bottom lines to protect 95 per cent of species.

"However, the postponement for 12 months of a dissolved inorganic nitrogen (DIN) bottom line is a concern considering that 13 out of the 18 scientists wanted it set at ecosystem health levels of 1 or lower. We expect that science will prevail.

"In terms of implementation, there is still a lot of work to be done by regional councils and, if some regional councils operate as they have in the past, then they could scuttle New Zealand's reform agenda as we have seen with Horizons and the One Plan over the last decade.

"The answer to this problem is an independent freshwater commission to provide robust guidance, support and oversight of regional councils and these freshwater reforms. We look forward to discussing this further with the Government.

"The Government's own modelling shows that strong rules for water are a benefit to our economy, despite what polluting industries say.

"The vast majority of farmers will feel little impact from these reforms, especially those who follow good farming practices. The reforms only really impact the heavy dairy areas of Taranaki, Canterbury and Southland.

"The Government's new nitrogen toxicity bottom lines say there will be less than a 1 per cent per annum decline in Canterbury dairy sector profits by 2050. This is a small cost to ensure our children and their children can swim and fish in their local waterway.

"Game bird hunters and anglers support these reforms to save what we have left and hopefully restore some of what we have lost.

"These reforms will be welcomed by three quarters - 76 per cent - of Kiwis who are extremely or very concerned about the pollution of lakes and rivers according to Colmar Brunton.

"This shows that New Zealanders remain concerned about water pollution and how careful political parties need to be in addressing this concern.

"All political parties are on notice that in this year's election Kiwis will expect to be able to swim, fish and gather food from their rivers, lakes and streams."

### **PUBLIC'S RIVERS – A TOXIC LEGACY**

NZFFA – [www.nzffa.com](http://www.nzffa.com) – 31/05/20

The Government's recently announced freshwater reforms are a masterclass in rhetoric over substance, says a trout and salmon fishing advocacy, the New Zealand Federation of Freshwater Anglers.

The widely held view is that while Government listened to the science, acted decisively, and achieved remarkable results on Covid19, government was ignoring the science concerning freshwater management, despite having set up an expert committee to advise said Federation spokesman Ken Sims.

"Not only is this legislation pouring hundreds of millions of taxpayers' dollars into an ambulance at the bottom of the water quality cliff, amounting to a subsidy for polluters, it removes some of the fences at the top of the cliff, and leaves the gates open on others," he said. "Further, its implementation and effectiveness relies on the performance of regional authorities who have manifestly failed at this task for the last 30 years."

"Government by ignoring its own expert advice, failing to address major issues like nitrogen, phosphate and human toxicity, establishing pollution parameters that are wildly excessive and failing to address the causes of water quality degradation rather than the effects, you could be forgiven for thinking it was designed to fail" he added.

The New Zealand Government should be embarrassed that China, who are often disparaged as an environmental polluter, actually had stricter water quality regulations than New Zealand.

"For anglers the vexing questions of over-extracted, superheated, over-polluted and toxic public waterways remain unanswered," said Ken Sims.

Sadly, not only do areas of the country, particularly eastern draining waterways and those running through intensive agricultural lands, have pollution levels high enough to be toxic to trout eggs and fry and a hazard to human health; there is no mechanism to address this. "Indeed, there is the suggestion that some rivers just be left to rot," he added.

Contact: Ken Sims, 06 356 9402

## **FLY SHOPS AND THE CURRENT AND FUTURE ECONOMIC CLIMATE.**

Over past years I have argued quite strongly for supporting your local Fly Shop, be it Fish City, Hunts, Hunting & Fishing, Rod & Reel or Totally Fly. My argument had always been that if you don't support them they will simply stop bothering to stock the fly fishing gear that we all love.

Unfortunately as years have passed Totally Fly has gone and Hunts no longer stocks any fly fishing gear at all, thus reducing our choices and our ability to support local businesses. However on the plus side, our own Barrie Barnes has set up the online store I Love Flyfishing with a wide range of gear available and being based on the North Shore is very much a local business.

I appreciate that things may be tough financially for many of us and for quite some time to come, however, if you can, please support your local store, whichever one or ones that may be rather than buy from an overseas online store. Help keep your money in New Zealand hands and benefitting an economy that will desperately need it.

With that in mind I would like to see if we can get some positive reviews from you about businesses fishing related that you would recommend to other Club Members. Send them in to me at [iconpromote@gmail.com](mailto:iconpromote@gmail.com) and I will put them in the newsletter.

Here are a few that I would recommend:

- 1) All of the above fishing stores, as each has its own qualities.
- 2) Ronnies Café in Matamata. It lacks a little in ambience but has old fashioned good food at a good price and opens very early for the local farmworkers and for fishers on their way south.
- 3) Fez Kebab in Matamata. If you are making an evening / nighttime run this provides superb kebabs at a very reasonable price. Again the décor is rather dated but the food is not.
- 4) Paradise Valley Lodge in Ngongotaha. This is where the Club stays on our Rotorua Club Trips. The location is superb for getting away from it all but still being 10

- minutes from Rotorua. Not to mention that an excellent Trout stream runs past the bottom of the property. The hosts Lyn and Peter are salt of the earth types and will look after you. Remember to let them know you are from the NSFF Club.
- 5) Tongariro River Motel (TRM) in Turangi. Ross and Pip are your hosts and they are a delight. They are very fisher friendly and will really look after you. I have to point out that I do supply Caps to TRM through my business, but I can say, hand on heart, that I would recommend them regardless. Remember to let them know you are from the NSFF Club.
  - 6) The Turangi Bakery. The best pies in the North Island.

*Duncan Frew*

### **EDITORS NOTE**

*Once more unto the breach, dear friends, once more,  
And fill up the freezer with our fishy dead.*

*In summer there is nothing so becomes an angler,  
As the modest stillness and humility of catch and release.*

*But when the icy blast of winter blows in our ears,  
Then imitate the action of the tiger.*

*Stiffen the sinews, summon up the blood,  
Disguise fair nature with hard favoured rage.  
Then lend the eye a terrible aspect and let loose the iki stick.*

**FISHING FUNNIES**



(Opinions expressed in this Newsletter are those of the individual contributors and not necessarily those of North Shore Flyfishers Incorporated)

## **MEMBERS FEEDBACK**

We, your committee, are always trying to give you what you want.

## **But are we??**

In order for us to do our job properly we need to have your feedback, positive or negative. For example, have you been on a club fishing trip? Did you enjoy yourself? What would you change, if anything? Club nights – what would you like to see more of? Less of? In short, talk to us.

The contact details of all your committee members are listed at the end of every newsletter. So if you have something on your mind let us know.

Thank you - Your committee

## **NSFF CLUB MERCHANDISE**

Cap – \$15.00 Inclusive of GST

Green or Beige, one size fits all, with embroidered badge.

Embroidered Cloth Badge - \$7.50 Inclusive of GST

Brushed Brass Metal Pin Badge - \$12.50 Inclusive of GST

If anyone is interested in purchasing these products please either place an order at Club Nights or at Hunts Sports.

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**Meetings held the 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of each month at 7.30pm:**  
Milford Cruising Club, 24 Craig Road, Milford, North Shore City

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## **NORTH SHORE FLYFISHERS EXECUTIVE**

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