



# *THE FLYFISHER NEWSLETTER*

---

December 2022

---

## **IN THIS ISSUE**

Page 1 -	Presidents Report
Page 2 -	Fishing Report
Page 5 -	What's Happening – Club Nights / Events
Page 8 -	Club Trips
Page 10 -	Auckland / Waikato Fish And Game November Reel Life
Page 12 -	Eastern Fish And Game November Reel Life
Page 14 -	Northland Reel Life November Reel Life
Page 15 -	Don't Forget Wee Wet Flies And Kate McLaren
Page 18 -	The Predator Phobia Is Misplaced
Page 23 -	Editor's Note
Page 24 -	General Club Information Plus Committee Members Contact Details

## **PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

My last article for 2022 and finally, a nice hot, calm day after all the rain and thunder. I missed the last club meeting because I was finally able to spend a couple of weeks in Rarotonga having had to cancel in June as a result of catching covid-19. I took my 7 piece travelling rod, floating line, etc and a box of my shrimp flies which proved to be quite enticing to the many and varied tropical fish in the lagoon. I was even able to finally catch a mullet on a fly after many years of vain attempts at home. None of the Bonefish or GT's of Aitutaki but a lot of fun, nonetheless.

More recently, nine of us spent a few days at Lake Otamangakau and like similar trips at the end of the year, things were a bit challenging. Sitting at an altitude of around 2,000ft,

the wind was a nuisance to say the least but most of us were still able to bring some good fish to the net. A number were in the 3 to 4kg range and Hans Sabrowski weighed and released a rainbow hen of 5.1kg's. After so much rain over recent months, the lake was reasonably high creating a shallow margin between the weed beds and the shoreline where brown trout could be seen regularly on their beats looking for errant damsel flies. Being part of a planned hydro storage system where levels are managed by Genesis Energy in response to market demands, there was a very good flow of water through the lake which continually re-oxygenates the water and generally creates more fish activity.

As most of you probably know, in order to preserve the quality of this recognised trophy fishery, DOC have introduced new regulations which will, hopefully, pay dividends well into the future. The lake is now closed to fishing for the whole of February, historically the hottest month of the year and the take limit is now 2 fish only. Further, all fish over 55cm, must be returned to the lake. As a trade-off, the season now opens on September 1<sup>st</sup> and closes on June 30<sup>th</sup>. Previously, the season went from October 1<sup>st</sup> to May 31<sup>st</sup>. This also means that the new opening date coincides with the nearby Lake Rotoaira so providing anglers have the requisite additional licence, an early season trip can include both venues.

In order to familiarise club members with the rationale behind these changes, I have arranged for the recently retired DOC fisheries scientist, Michel Dedual, to speak to us at our first 2023 meeting on February 21<sup>st</sup>. Michel essentially, "lead the charge" on the changes which were based on his long experience as both a scientist and Ranger together with his passionate desire to protect the resource for future generations of anglers. For those of you who love the Big O as much as I do or especially for those who are yet to partake equally of its pleasures and challenges, I would certainly encourage you to come along to listen to Michel's words of wisdom.

In the meantime, I look forward to catching up at our end of year function on the 20<sup>th</sup> of this month and for those of you who can't make it, a safe and enjoyable holiday season to you and your families.

Dave Symes - President.

## **FISHING REPORT**

### **Auckland / Waikato**

Rain, flooded rivers, just starting to look good again and, yes, you guessed it, rain and flooded rivers. From past experience when it gets like this, don't be afraid to put a little bling out there with your nymphs. Flashback nymphs, Gold Beadhead nymphs, and Hot Spot nymphs will all increase your chances in coloured water.

## **Rotorua**

First report from the Ngongotaha for the season was from Kerry, who nipped across for an after breakfast session from his base in Tauranga. Naturally, being less than a week since opening day it was quite busy, with lots of 'bunny hopping' by other fishers. Still, despite this, Kerry managed to get into a few, with the fish varying in size and freshness. A few to the net, a few mid-stream releases, a good explore of all the winter flood caused changes to the pools and still back home in time to pick the grandkids up from school.

The jigging on Lake Rotoiti is extremely variable with two different trips out recently by one exceptionally experienced angler a good example. Trip one, 10 fish landed. Trip two, 60 fish landed.

## **Taupo**

I hope everyone is fit and well and prepared for the silly season which is almost upon us. The year has gone fast and the older I get, the faster the years seem to go so much fishing needs to be done in the upcoming years ahead. This week has basically been quite fine weather wise despite having many forecasts of bad weather. As I am writing it is raining, however, and this should get the fish moving as they have been a bit sluggish this week. The fish are there though and with a bit of patience a few fish will come to the net. My nymphs of choice this week have been small patterns like Copper John, Hare and Copper and Pheasant Tail and variants of these in size say 14. The Cleardrift Egg is still catching fish but is not as dominant as it has been a month or two ago.

I have been quite busy guiding this week and have had to pull out all the tricks to try and get the trout to bite. Not always easy when the clients have limited technique and the trout are not being as receptive as I would like. Still, the seasoned angler will have their share of hook ups while the inexperienced angler may have to be a bit more patient. Positivity is the key.

The fish are a mixed bag at the moment with several recovering fish around but still some fresh run beauties turning up. A lot of the fish, while recovering, are well on the way and will give the fisherman a great scrap when hooked. *(Copied from Brian Wilsons, of the Turangi ILFF Store, weekly report.)*

The Club had its December Trip to Lake Otamangakau at the beginning of the month and overall it was pretty hard fishing, due in main to the fresh cold winds blowing off the mountains, but the fish that were caught were quite spectacular with Hans topping the bill when he landed an 11.25pd Rainbow Hen.

Hans, was the quickest to adapt to the conditions and reaped the rewards in a big way. A big thank you to Dave Symes for organising this Trip again! Keep an eye out for the dates of the next Trip here, it will be in March and around the dark of the moon.



*Dave with a great Big O Rainbow. There weren't big numbers of fish landed but those that came to the net were in fantastic condition. Photo courtesy of Dave Symes.*

### **Saltwater**

Simon was out again last weekend and he and his mate made absolute pigs of themselves with a bunch of rat Kings. They landed 24 between them, yes, that's 24, it's not a typo. This was only a few hundred metres off shore so heading to your favourite shore based spot could be a good idea right now!

## **BEHAVIOUR IN THE RSA**

Just a reminder re behaviour in the RSA. We are guests here and as such we need to ensure that our behaviour is excellent at all times and above reproach. Especially when at the bar.

## **LAST CLUB NIGHT**

Last month we had Johan, Simon and myself talking about our experiences with local Salt Water Fly Fishing. Thank you again to Simon and Johan.

## **NEXT CLUB NIGHT – 20<sup>th</sup> DECEMBER 7.30 PM**

This month we will be having our regular Christmas get together. Things will kick off with a 'Bring and Buy', so if you have anything you are keen to sell bring it along and if you don't then bring along some cash, you just might find that item you have been searching for. At the conclusion of the 'Bring and Buy' we will be enjoying a repast of delicious finger food as well as a few door prizes to award. This is sure to be an enjoyable night and we hope to see you there.

## **WHY WE FISH**

*Fly fishing is not for everyone - it's only for people who have a taste for adventure, love the outdoors, and want to feel alive.*

*U.N. Known.*

## **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 with 60hp etec Evenrude for serious fishing Salt or Fresh	home 09 834 8841 mobile 0275 006 336 <a href="mailto:ron.blair@xtra.co.nz">ron.blair@xtra.co.nz</a>
Les Rose	Retired and is happy to take another person fishing during the week.	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>
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>
Derek Robinson	Retired available most times keen to do Waikato streams and most other things.	Ph 4437311 Mob: 0212 595 371 <a href="mailto:pamanddek@outlook.com">pamanddek@outlook.com</a>

## **CLUB TROPHIES**

**Brown Trout Trophy** – This is awarded to The Heaviest Brown Trout caught by a Club Member during the year – 1<sup>st</sup> April to 31<sup>st</sup> March. Current holder is **Fikrit Chinassi**.

**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. Current Holder is **Russell Nelson!**

**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> April to 31<sup>st</sup> March. Current holder is **Johan Kok**.

**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 **Johan Kok**.

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

### **QUOTABLE QUOTES**

*"How can you need so many rods and reels to catch a fish?", she asked, her lips pulled into that weaned on a gherkin look, as she watched me prepare for a fishing trip.*

*"Probably for much the same reason that you seem to need 30 pairs of shoes for one pair of feet," I nearly said, but decided to live for another day.*

*Tony Bishop - NZ Fisherman Magazine*

### **“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 April 1<sup>st</sup> to March 31<sup>st</sup>. Prize awarded at AGM in April.

Winner's name and weight of fish to be published in May club newsletter.

### **NSFF 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 April in one year to 31st March 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)





*Leon into a nice fish hooked from his breakfast spot. Photo courtesy of Simon Hoole.*

### **CLUB TRIPS 2022 – 2023**

February – Ngongotaha River and Rotorua Lakes – 17<sup>th</sup> 18<sup>th</sup> 19<sup>th</sup> FEB 2023

March – Lake Otamangakau – MAR 2023

May – Ngongotaha River and Rotorua Lakes – MAY 2023

June – Tongariro – Club River Fishing Competition – JUN 2023

July – Tongariro and Tauranga Taupo – JUL 2023

November – Lake based Club Competition Trip – NOV 2023

December / January – Tuition weekend (Held if enough 'novice' anglers are interested)

December – Lake Otamangakau – DEC 2023

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.



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

This February Trip to fish the Ngongotaha River and the Rotorua region is on the weekend of Friday 17<sup>th</sup>, Saturday 18<sup>th</sup>, Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> February. We will again be staying at the Paradise Valley Lodge. Costs will be \$115.00 each, which will cover 2 nights' accommodation in the lodge and a BBQ on Saturday evening. If you want to come down on the Thursday, as many of us do, then simply add \$50 to make it \$165.00.

Also, a variety of private rooms are available as well.

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);
- Or by Cash on the November, December or February Club Nights

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



*I'm waiting for you, in the easy part of the Ngongotaha....you know where.*

## **JOKE OF THE MONTH**

There was a big game fisherman who was out in the ocean fishing solo when his boat sank.

He was lucky enough to make it to a deserted island where he had to survive for weeks on what he could find.

When the Coastguard search party eventually found him, the leader noticed there was a fire pit with Kiwi feathers all around.

He went over to the fisherman and said, "You know, it's illegal to kill a Kiwi, I'm afraid I'm going to have to arrest you."

The fisherman protested for some time saying that he killed it only because he was going to starve, but eventually he calmed down.

"Out of curiosity," the coastguard asked, "What did it taste like?"

The fisherman thoughtfully replied, "Well, it was kind of a mix between a Kakapo and a Hectors Dolphin."

## **AUCKLAND / WAIKATO FISH AND GAME NOVEMBER REEL LIFE**

### **Fishing Report**

Every brown trout in the Waikato River will be migrating in the next month

The Waikato River is nearing the maximum temperature most trout will tolerate, so it is time to shift your focus from the Waikato to Waipa tributaries, as nearly all of the brown trout in the lower Waikato will be on the move in the next couple of weeks.

Targeting the mouth of cool Pirongia tributaries should be productive starting this week.

Fish will soon move to cooler water provided by streams with bush cover like the Kaniwhaniwha, upper Waipa, Mangatutu and Puniu.

The best way to predict the timing of the brown trout migration is to watch the council [river monitoring site](#); when the Waikato hits 19C°, the fish will be on the move.

*Right: Waikato Regional Council river monitoring website.*



### **Be ready to measure fish on the Mangatutu before you go**



*Tagged rainbow being measured.*

Our dedicated tagging team has been working hard to get some data on the Mangatutu Stream.

If you are fishing the Mangatutu, please be prepared to measure a fish.

All we need is the tag number and the length of the fish from the nose to the fork in the tail.

If you don't have a tape measure to bring, just place a piece of electrical tape on your rod to mark the fish length and then measure it when you get home.

If you do kill the fish or have a net with a scale, we would also like the weight.

With that in mind, if anyone happens to find my net on the Whanganui near the gravel pits, please let me know [adaniel@fishandgame.org.nz](mailto:adaniel@fishandgame.org.nz).

### **Finally, Fly fishing classes on the North Island!**

Auckland/Waikato Fish & Game staff have been looking for a pathway for anglers to learn fly fishing for a long time, and we are excited to announce there is now a beginner fly fishing course in the Central North Island.

Former South Island Guide Chappie Chapman has relocated to Motuoapa (near Turangi) and is now teaching two-day fly fishing classes for beginners.

With over 30 years of experience guiding and teaching, Chappie is well-qualified to help anglers navigate the learning process.

The course includes two X two-and-a-half-hour casting lessons using quality gear and even covers basic insect identification so students can learn to match the hatch.

*Chappie Chapman teaching casting.*

The courses are quite comprehensive and also include instruction on:

- how to select a fly rod
- Fly line selection
- Landing nets
- Wading gear
- Polarised glasses
- Leaders and tippet materials
- How to use a wading staff

Beginner classes are limited to five students and cost \$300.

For more information, send Chappie an email at [fishinchappie@xtra.co.nz](mailto:fishinchappie@xtra.co.nz).

Tight Lines - Adam Daniel, Auckland Waikato Fish & Game.



## **EASTERN FISH AND GAME NOVEMBER REEL LIFE**

Classic spring weather in the Eastern region has dominated the scene for several weeks with waves of heavy rainfall. Bay of Plenty streams have been running high and coloured and would benefit from some settled weather.

The region's lakes don't suffer from issues brought about by rainfall, and the fishing has been good, with smelting fish providing exciting action from the shore or with shallow trolling methods and spinning.



Hatchery released two-year-old rainbows (now approaching two and a half) are in excellent condition on all of the main lakes, which looks promising for the summer ahead. Stomach contents show fish are in a phase where they forage for a variety of prey items, including smelt, bullies, koura and some insects. A good eclectic selection of smelt flies, with some darker and larger options, are a must at this time of year.

*A good range of flies helps in spring when the fish forage for food*

November and December traditionally see brown trout moving into the Lake Rotorua shallows and entering the tributary streams. The best and most exciting river mouth fishing is sighted, so it requires clear water, polaroid glasses and a keen eye. An onshore breeze will churn up sediment, reducing visibility, so check the wind directions on one of the many apps, such as [Windfinder](#), before you head out. Floating lines and a smelt or bully pattern work well.

Lake Rotorua also fishes well at this time of year using shallow trolling methods. Most areas of the lake will produce rainbows of around 1.5 kg, and mono on a spin outfit and a Tassie Devil and smelt fly combination is all you need. Get yourself to a depth of 2 m or slightly more and troll at between 2.5 and 4.5 km/hr for success. Lake Rotorua has the highest catch rate of all the lakes in the region.

If you are new to boat fishing for trout or are having difficulty with your success rate, why not come along to our tuition morning here at Fish & Game? This year it will be held on Saturday, January 7. It's free, and there's no need to book. More information will be posted in the Reel Life and on the [Eastern Fish & Game Facebook](#). Contact us here for more information: [msherburn@fishandgame.org.nz](mailto:msherburn@fishandgame.org.nz)

### **Datawatch Tagged Trout**

Tagged trout can now be entered online. Entries go into the draw to win one of 20 free whole-season fishing licences: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/QCH5ZR6>



## Eastern Region Fishing Diaries – All Lakes And Streams

Fill in your fishing diaries here to help us manage the Eastern Fish & Game region. Participants go in the draw to win a \$100 voucher from Kilwell: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/QRSD7D3>

## Have You Seen A Dead Eel In The Whanganui Or Whakapapa?

The Auckland/Waikato Fish & Game Region has asked us to post this important message regarding the Whanganui and Whakapapa Rivers because a number of Eastern-based anglers fish these waters:

There have been several unexplained mass eel deaths in the Whanganui catchment during the last decade. The deaths have become an almost annual event but determining the cause is difficult unless fresh samples are taken. A mass death of eels on the Whakapapa in 2021 resembled a fish kill caused by water contamination like an effluent or chemical spill, but past events have looked more like fungal infections from poor water quality like the eel pictured below. Although mass deaths of eels in the Waikato are not uncommon due to poor water quality caused by intensive farming, the Wanganui River is comparatively clean, and eels should not be suffering the same fate.

The recurring deaths have prompted DOC, Horizons Regional Council, MPI, Fish & Game and local iwi to create a plan to attempt to solve the mystery. We are asking the public to keep an eye out for dead and dying eels and to please report them on the Horizons Regional Council Pollution Hotline. Collecting fresh samples for analysis is critical to determine if the deaths are caused by pollution or disease. A drop-off point will be set up to courier the samples for analysis. If you see multiple dead or dying fish in the Whanganui or Whakapapa Rivers, please call 0508 800 800. If you have time, please send us an email to report the incident so our staff can follow up [adaniel@fishandgame.org.nz](mailto:adaniel@fishandgame.org.nz).

Tight Lines

Mark Sherburn, Eastern Fish & Game

## **NORTHLAND REEL LIFE NOVEMBER 2022**

The persistent large rainfall events have made fishing in our river systems challenging.

There have been very few fishing days available recently.

Hopefully, more settled weather will eventuate going into the summer months.



## Lake Manuwai

Northland Fish and Game staff conducted a trout survey in Lake Manuwai recently to check the growth rates of the stocked trout.

Three age classes were caught, with the biggest fish weighing around 2kg.

The fish were caught on the margins of the lake near reed beds and underwater structures.

Non-motorised watercraft are able to be used on the lake, so this makes it ideal for kayak fishing.

Lake Maunwai is a large man-made reservoir within 10 minutes of Kerikeri Township.

The deepest part of the lake is around 18m.

Rainbows are released annually and can grow in excess of 2.5kg.

This is a great place to take children fishing. All methods are permitted.

Black and zebra tobys work well if you are spinning.

The use of bait in summer is useful when the fish are down deep due to warmer water.

For those fly-fishing, cicada and green beetle patterns work well in summer, and wet flies such as Woolly Bugger, Mrs Simpson, Red Setter, and Parson's Glory are reliable performers.

Tight Lines - Graham Gallaghan, Northland Fish & Game.



## **DON'T FORGET WEE WET FLIES AND KATE MCLAREN**

*by Ben Hope – Taken from the NZFFA Newsletter*

You may be too young to remember the little wet flies that were all the vogue in trout fishing prior to the advent of nymph fishing in the 1970s. My early teenage years trout fishing with a fly rod in the early 1950s were based around wet flies such as the Peveril of the Peak, Hardies Favourite, Red Tip Governor and March Brown.

They are patterns that many will not have heard of. And don't be fooled by the loose terminology of "wet fly." It's applied today to Taupo fly lures but in imitating a small fish such as whitebait (Grey Ghost) or cockabully (Mrs Simpson) they are quite different from the traditional English wet fly patterns such as March Brown and Hardies Favourite which generally imitate a hatching aquatic insect or nymph. The Taupo type lures should be known as 'wet fly lures' to avoid confusion.

Today you will rarely see in tackle shops, a little wet fly of the patterns I've recalled.

Yet they are a most effective fly to use particularly in the evenings.

The other evening, on the Wairau River I tied on a little wet fly called Kate McLaren. I hooked into three browns one after another. Kate has become my "first choice" little wet fly.

I came across the pattern when visiting Scotland some years ago. Ferreting around in fascinating Scottish tackle shops I was told of Kate McLaren. "I always make sure I have a few Kate McLaren's in my fly box as I know I can fish confidently if I have a Kate on my cast," one chap told me. That comment is oft repeated.

Google Kate McLaren and you'll find comments like this about Kate McLaren, "For me this is the classic Scottish wet fly. Not to have a Kate in your box when chasing brownies is criminal. My all time favourite top dropper fly. While deadly for sea trout I think it is at its best for brownies."

And another glowing testimonial - "An essential brown trout pattern." First tied in the 1930s, by William Robertson for John McLaren, and named after his wife, it was brought to fame by their son, Charles, the long term proprietor of a famous Scottish angling retreat.

I purchased a couple of Kate McLarens in Scotland but heaven knows where the originals are now. It doesn't matter because the pattern is easy to tie. It is;-

Hook: standard 12 or 14.

Thread: Black

Body: Black seals fur

Rib: Thin silver tinsel

Tail: Golden pheasant crest

Body hackle: Black Cock hackle

Collar hackle: Red game hen hackle.

I put Kate McLaren to the test and she immediately responded in line with the testimonials. And the beauty is, even I can tie up a Kate.

But if you feel your flytying is not up to tying a few Kate McLarens then there's much simpler patterns such as the soft-hackled wet flies that noted author Sylvester Nemes wrote about in his little classic "The Soft Hackled Fly." His patterns were basically just a silk body and a soft hen hackle. Even in early colonial New Zealand Captain G D Hamilton in "Trout and Other Sport in Maoriland" published in 1904 suggested just five flies with his top choice being a "spider" pattern of, brown partridge hackle, hares ear body (sparse) put together with yellow silk. "Very killing when the water is clear and low, among high conditioned and shy trout. Used as a tail fly, this is perhaps the most reliable -- particularly among large trout---."

Tie wet flies sparsely. A general failing with shop-bought ones is over-dressing. Wet fly fishing works best early or late in the summer season but that's no reason not to fish it mid-season especially just on dark and into the night.

### **A Few Pointers.**

Cast across the current, and for orthodox right handers hold the rod in the right with forefinger gently trapping the line against the rod. The left hand holds the line. Let the fly swing with the current. Browns are likely to take in the first few metres of the swing. "Takes" are usually very gentle, almost imperceptible. With practice and experience you will tighten into a fish on more instinct than feeling a take. The take can be so soft it is like a small piece of weed dragging the line. Rainbows may take more strongly. You need to tighten immediately, holding the line with the left hand and raising the rod. Bright moonlit nights are unproductive not so much for sea-run browns near the surf but especially for resident river fish. Take care not to slap the fly or line on the water even although it's near dark or night. Wear waders otherwise the human scent drifts down putting trout off. Move quietly and softly between casts avoiding crunching stones underwater.\

Evening rises are often disappointing now, compared to my teenage years when I recall in the 1950s, dozens and indeed scores of trout rising on a long pool in the Manawatu River by Palmerston North. But there will be trout there. So despite no rising fish, try the little wet fly, especially a Kate McLaren.

Fish wee wets "across and down" during the day too especially on riffles. Even fish it upstream instead of the usual nymph pattern, but in nymphing style. Wee wet fly fishing is subtle, successful and yet a forgotten way.



© The famed Scottish fly - Kate McLaren

## **THE PREDATOR PHOBIA IS MISPLACED**

*Opinion by Tony Orman – Taken from the NZFFA Newsletter*

New Zealand has for many decades waged a war against predators. Currently there are a number of anti-predator campaigns, often using public money in big spend-ups on futile aerial poisoning exercises. In addition, in the end, the blanket operations run counter to the impassioned aim of exterminating predators (e.g. rats) and instead cause major disruption to food chains and serious damage to the ecosystem.

Invariably anti-predator campaigns have as foundation, an “anti-introduced species phobia” which ideologically decree that anything introduced such as trout and even salmon, are invasive pests.

## **Trout Invasive?**

Trout are often labelled as invasive pests by agencies as Forest and Bird and the Department of Conservation while farming spokesmen seek a scapegoat for water contamination or excessive abstraction for irrigation.

Nature knows best. Trout were introduced and after an initial upsurge, populations stabilised to fit the “carrying capacity” of the habitat and merged into ecological niches and relationships with other species. “Introduced” trout may prey on whitebait but then native shags and native eels prey on juvenile trout. Aren’t humans an introduced species by way of a Polynesian migration about the 13th century and European migration starting in the 19th century?

Currently the obsessive hatred about predators is seen in campaigns such as Predator Free 2050 and Zero Invasive Predators, the latter jazzily known by the acronym of ZIP. The zealous programmes have earned international recognition such as when “Time” magazine proclaimed “Rats, Possums and Stoats Beware! New Zealand Goes to War Against Invasive Pests.”

But the programmes are like the 1837 Hans Christian Andersen fairy tale “The Emperor’s New Clothes”. At one stage in the fable, the wise man serving the Emperor thinks “What!” “Is it possible that I am a fool? I have never thought so myself. No one must know it now if I am so. Can it be, that I am unfit for my job?”

## **Questions Needed**

Those questions should be asked of those who champion Predator Free 2050 and ZIP - people from Prime Ministers to central and local government politicians, local bodies, naive unquestioning media whoop as investigative journalists, extreme green groups and even unprincipled “scientists” following the money trail of funding, all pursue the dream of exterminating New Zealand’s predators.

However the reality is the dreams are running against the way Nature behaves.

Wildlife managers overseas are increasingly regarding predators as an important part of a healthy ecosystem. In 2014 Al S Glen of New Zealand’s Landcare Research and Christopher Dickman of Sydney University co-authored a book on “Carnivores of Australia” and in a chapter “The Importance of Predators” said “to maintain or restore functioning ecosystems, wildlife managers must consider the ecological importance of predators.”



*Haast Eagle preyed on moa.*

Predators tend to remove vulnerable prey, such as the old, injured, sick, or very young, leaving more food for the survival and success of healthy prey species. Also, by controlling the size of prey populations, predators help slow down the spread of disease. Predators will catch healthy prey when they can, but catching sick or injured or unwary prey is far more likely and helps in the formation of healthier prey populations because only the fittest animals survive and are able to reproduce.

In addition, predators help to reduce the negative impacts that their prey may have on the ecosystem if they become too abundant or if they stayed in one area for too long. Anglers broadly speaking, are a predator of trout and salmon as are eels and shags and even seals when they ascend rivers...

Caroline Fraser writing for the US Yale School of the Environment said experts “beginning with aquatic experiments, have amassed considerable evidence of damage done to food chains by predator removal and have extended such studies to land.”



## **Predators Natural**

Predators are simply mostly a part of any ecosystem's food chain functioning. New Zealand's native falcon prey on other native birds such as tuis and bellbirds. Blue duck (whio) prey almost entirely on aquatic invertebrates, mostly caddisfly larvae. Kiwi prey on worms.

When animals of a predatory nature are introduced such as rats and stoats were to New Zealand, they go through a "boom and bust" phase before their populations settle down to a relatively static state. Unfortunately, sometimes prey species can become drastically reduced or even extinct as a result of the predator "boom". The critical aspect of managing this situation is avoiding predator "booms". Consequently, the fervour and haste which the Department of Conservation and local councils applies with toxins is mismanagement, reckless and fraught with ecological danger.

## **Disastrous Outcomes**

Large scale poisoning with eco-toxins such as 1080 and brodifacoum may heavily reduce predator numbers initially but with a few short years, the outcome is disastrous. The science is there to show the resurgence in predator numbers and subsequent wrecking of the food chain.

Wendy Ruscoe in a study published in Landcare Research's publication 2008 showed aerial dropping of 1080 will temporarily knock back a rat population but due to the rodent's amazing reproductive capacity, the surviving rats recover rapidly and within three years, are likely to be two to three times greater than before poisoning began. A 2007 study by Landcare scientists Graham Nugent and Peter Sweetapple showed rat numbers recovered pre-poison levels within 18 months and at the two to three year mark, rat abundance could be four times greater than before poisoning.

## **Ecological Damage**

That is not counting the birds and insects and other invertebrate organisms killed by 1080 as research demonstrated, by DSIR scientist Mike Meads, in the 1980's. 1080 was originally patented as an insecticide in 1927.

Examples are many of human interference directly or indirectly into Nature's food chains resulting in profound consequences. In a classic 1966 experiment, biologist Robert Paine removed the purple seastar, *Pisaster ochraceus* — a voracious mussel-feeder — from an area of coastline in Washington state. The predator gone, mussels exploded in numbers, crowding out biodiverse kelp communities with monoculture.

Less than a decade after Pisaster, marine ecologists James Estes and John Palmisano reached the astonishing and widely reported conclusion that hunting of sea otters had caused the collapse of kelp forests around the Aleutian Islands. With otters reduced to low levels, the prey (sea urchins) stripped the kelp forests.

### **Playing God**

The concept of being "predator free" or "zero predators" has no ecological justification, except in limited circumstances on smaller offshore islands and "mainland islands". Even in islands where predators may have been eliminated e.g. Secretary Island in Fiordland, the success is short-lived and temporary as animals can and do swim from the mainland to recolonise.

It seem incomprehensible that an agency such as the Department of Conservation and the concepts of Predator Free 2050 and ZIP should go unquestioned in the light of the understanding internationally of the dangers of playing God with predators..

But the 'fly in the ointment' is human nature. For example a scientist in DOC working on predator work, arguably has a vested interest by way of employment and a handsome salary. Similarly with any consultant scientist attached to Predator Free 2050 and ZIP. For others of zealous ideological nature, as some humans are wont to be, it becomes the pursuit of "The Impossible Dream."

For politicians it's good P.R. to declare war on the baddies, no matter how pointless and damaging that might be.

The sad outcomes are the gross misuse of public funds and more tragically the profound ecological damage that often occurs in the pursuit of that "Impossible Dream."

Footnote: Tony Orman has spent a lifetime in the outdoors observing and reading about it and Nature. He has had some two dozen books published, mainly on fishing, deerstalking, conservation and rural life.

*Aren't anglers really predators of trout?*



## EDITORS NOTE

MERRY CHRISTMAS to all, and may all your fishy wishes come true.

## FISHING FUNNIES

Not everyday you are  
lucky enough to find a  
free fly rod laying  
around!



(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.

---

**Meetings held the 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of each month at 7.30pm:**  
Birkenhead RSA, Recreation Drive, Birkenhead, North Shore City

---

## **NORTH SHORE FLYFISHERS EXECUTIVE**

**Club Patron** – Dave McLellan

**President** - Dave Symes                      486-6257    Takapuna

**Secretary** - Mike Martindale    489 1082       Takapuna

**Treasurer** - Barrie Barnes       021 925 006    Glenfield

**Magazine** - Duncan Frew       021 648 956    Torbay

**Committee** - Simon Hoole       021 037 6047   Northcote

**Members**    Pawel Mikolajczyk    021 960 806

                 Maurice Parlane    021 650 692    Northcote

                 Neil Smit    021 274 5625    West Harbour

[dssymes@xtra.co.nz](mailto:dssymes@xtra.co.nz)

[miketmartindale@gmail.com](mailto:miketmartindale@gmail.com)

[barrie@iloveflyfishing.kiwi](mailto:barrie@iloveflyfishing.kiwi)

[iconpromote@gmail.com](mailto:iconpromote@gmail.com)

[hoolesimon@yahoo.co.nz](mailto:hoolesimon@yahoo.co.nz)

[pawel\\_mikolajczyk@yahoo.co.nz](mailto:pawel_mikolajczyk@yahoo.co.nz)

[maurice.p@newwayz.co.nz](mailto:maurice.p@newwayz.co.nz)

[neil.smit@sew-eurodrive.co.nz](mailto:neil.smit@sew-eurodrive.co.nz)

**North Shore Flyfishers Incorporated**