THE FLYFISHER NEWSLETTER

January 2023

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PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Dave is having a well-earned holiday this month.

FISHING REPORT

Auckland / Waikato

In between the storms, Josh and Bree managed to get down to one of the Waipa tributaries and they had a great day, managing to land some very nice fish and all on a public holiday when you might have expected things to be very busy. Both nymphs and Dries were working, and, due to the low fishing pressure brought on by almost constant crappy weather, the fish were not as spooky as you might expect for this time of year. Flies of choice, Pheasant Tail nymphs and Cicada dies.

One good benefit of the rain has been that a number of waterways that might be so hot as to stress the fish have remained much cooler and so the fish are feeding well and putting on condition.

Rotorua

I have been fortunate to have two trips to Rotorua this month and am pleased to say that the condition and size of the fish has been good. No Big Browns seen yet, but my Nephew spotted one that looked big enough to eat slow moving lambs…

The Waiteti is still giving up some superb looking Rainbows and as usual is generally running clearer than the Ngongotaha. There has been a major slip upriver in the Ngongotaha, taking out half of the road, and consequently anytime it rains the river can get coloured up quite quickly. Naturally, as this is repaired and time passes things will improve. For those who know the river well there have been some major changes to a number of pools, and most of them have been improvements. Best flies for me, Hare and Copper and Prince nymphs as well as the trusty old Glo Bug.

Taupo

Anyway, back to the fishing, a lot of fishers are finding it tough at the moment and many of the go to pools are not producing as some would like. This is not uncommon for this time of year but there are some ideas you might want to think about and have worked for me in recent days. Consider fishing some areas that you would not normally fish like fast shallow water or even hard to get at areas or areas that are not easy to fish (e.g. little or no back cast). Practice and perfect your roll casting (or at least improve it).

The trout are still in the river, and this will become more apparent in a few weeks' time when surface activity will be much more prevalent. You will be asking yourself "Where on earth did all these fish come from?" Not a lot of cicadas yet and/ or the lacewing moth but they will come (especially the lacewing moth so be prepared). Surprisingly with all the rain around the country, the Turangi region has missed a fair bit of it and the Tongariro has been steady around 27-33 cumecs throughout the last week. While not obvious as yet I feel

sooner or later, we are going to get longer periods of fine, settled weather. There is still plenty of time.

While we have a lot of visitors in Turangi there is still plenty of vacant space on the rivers so there is no excuse not to get out there and doing it. (Brian Wilson from the ILFF Shop in Turangi).

Out on the Lakes things have been a bit all over the place as well. A report from a Jigging angler today has been that 3 out of 4 fish he has caught have been quite skinny, versus a report from John C. who was trolling shallow water prior to Christmas and was getting some very nice fat good eating fish. He even hooked one of them while talking to me on the phone, talk about rubbing salt into the non-fishing wound, ☺ .

Saltwater
Constant easterly gales and pouring rain make for rubbish fishing. Roll on summer, when it finally arrives…

LAST CLUB NIGHT

Last month we had our Christmas social night. It was a very enjoyable evening.

NEXT CLUB NIGHT – 21st FEBRUARY 7.30 PM

As usual there is **no Meeting in January.** We will be back next month.

WHY WE FISH

...those who know and practice dry-fly-fishing are the epicures amongst anglers...carrying both the skill and pleasure of angling to a height of exquisite refinement.

Lord Edward Grey 1899 – 1984 - Fly-fishing

Mark Norton with a fantastic Lake Otamangakau Rainbow taken on the Club Trip in December. By memory I think this fish was 8pds +. Photo courtesy of Dave Symes.

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 .

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…

Name	Availability	Contact Details
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 ron.blair@xtra.co.nz
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 email-lloyd@skysupply.co.nz
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 gd.bolstad@gmail.com
Derek Robinson	Retired available most times keen to do Waikato streams and most other things.	Ph 4437311 Mob: 0212 595 371 pamanddek@outlook.com

CLUB TROPHIES

Brown Trout Trophy – This is awarded to The Heaviest Brown Trout caught by a Club Member during the year – 1st April to 31st 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 – 1st April to 31st 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

Datin'is a lot like fishin'. Sometimes catch and release is the best method.

Earl Dibbles Jr.

"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 1st to March 31st . 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

CLUB TRIPS 2022 – 2023

February –Ngongotaha River and Rotorua Lakes – 17th 18th 19th 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 17th, Saturday 18th, Sunday 19th 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

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

MARCH CLUB TRIP TO LAKE OTAMANGAKAU

Exact dates TBC *but likely to be the dark of the moon which would be 23rd 24th 25th 26th March.*

While it is predominately a boat fishery, the Te Whaiau (inlet) canal which can be fished from the shore, and particularly the "holding" area immediately above the road bridge, offers a big range of casting positions.

Just be aware that with an altitude of some 2,000 feet above sea level, the conditions can go from warm and pleasant to bleak very quickly!

By March, the Trout are in 'eating' mode, with lots of insect activity, providing some fantastic fishing activity. The fish are in fantastic condition, big, fat and powerful!
Costs will be $50 per person per night.

The Accommodation is your own little room with 2 beds, 1 for sleeping and the other for your gear. There are shared cooking facilities.

I have "penciled in" 8 cabins at Tongariro Holiday Park so if anyone is interested, please let me know ASAP.

Dave Symes - Ph: 09 486-6257 - Email: dssymes@xtra.co.nz

JOKE OF THE MONTH

Two men were walking home after a party and decided to take a shortcut through the cemetery just for laughs.

Right in the middle of the cemetery they were startled by a tap-tap-tapping noise coming from the misty shadows.

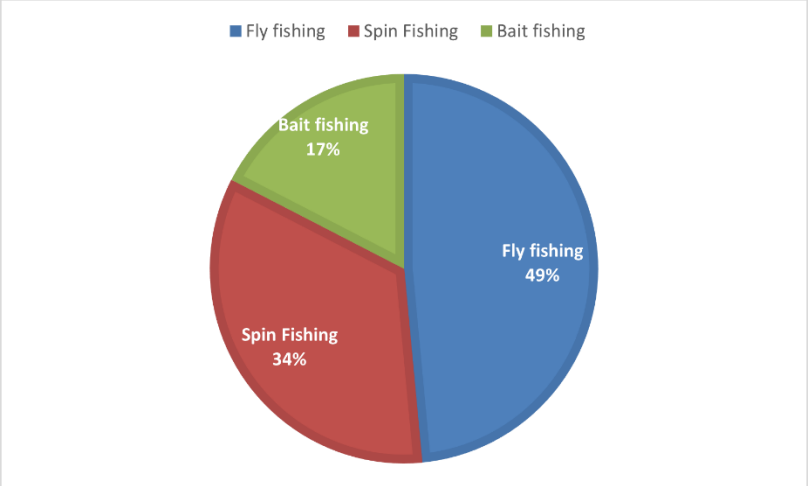
Trembling with fear, they found an old man with a hammer and chisel, chipping away at one of the headstones.

"Holy cow, Mister," one of them said after catching his breath, "You scared us half to death ... we thought you were a ghost! What are you doing working here so late at night?"

"Those fools!" the old man grumbled. **"They misspelled my name!"**

Fishing Report Media Survey We Are Listing

Right: Percentage of time spent spin, bait or fly fishing.

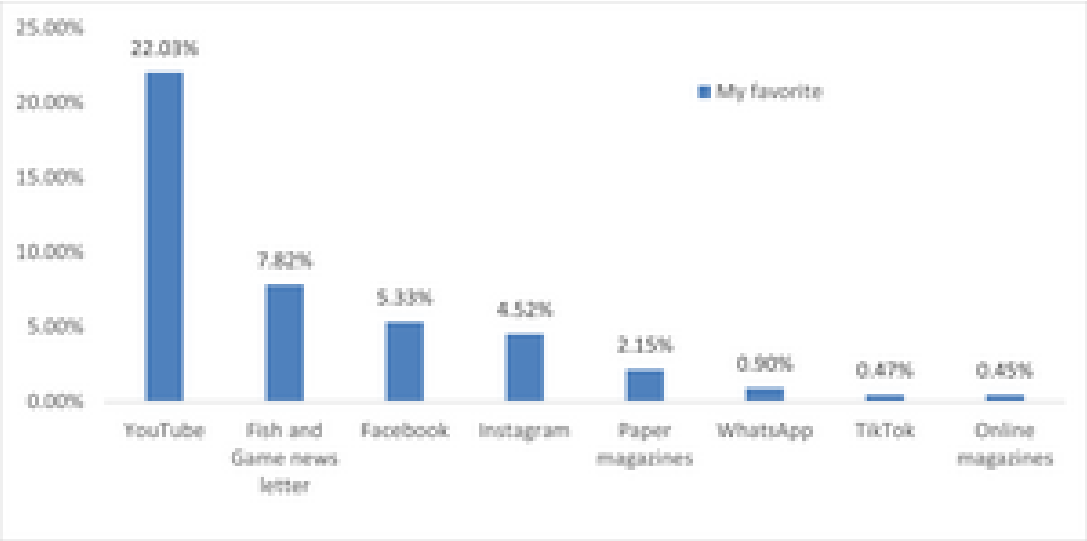


Auckland/Waikato Fish & Game would like to thank all of you who took the time to fill in our media survey.

There were some very interesting findings about how our customers consume their fishing media and how we can better serve you.

It turns out that most of you enjoy spin fishing as well as fly fishing.

Most importantly, it is clear that many of you have traded paper magazines for YouTube when it comes to fishing content.



licence holders "favourite" fishing platform.

In terms of Reel Life, we will do our best to provide up-to-date fishing reports and produce more coarse fishing content.

Staff will be exploring a commercial partner (guide or fishing store) to help with the fishing report content.

We aim to update how we deliver our content over the next year.

Every Brown Trout In The Waikato Will Be Migrating In The Next Month

Waikato Regional Council river monitoring web site

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, and when the Waikato hits 19C° the fish will be on the move.

Whanganui River Float Fishing Adventure Is Open For Business

The Upper Whanganui is one of the best trout fishing rivers in the North Island.

The area upriver of Kakahi is largely private land, and this section of the river is rarely fished.

We published an article on a new commercial trip that will allow anglers to float the upper Whanganui River from Whangaipeke Station to the Pukehou Road Quarry.

There was a delay getting this float trip up and running, but Blazing Adventures (0800BLAZIN) is now taking bookings.

Staff member Adam Daniel recently floated this stunning stretch of river with his daughter and thinks it is a perfect day trip that anyone can enjoy.

Floating is an easy way to enjoy fishing on the upper Wanganui River, and aside from a couple of overhanging trees to avoid, this is a safe trip suitable for anyone that is comfortable in a canoe.

For more information, contact Blazing Adventures 021 991 564.

Matt Daniel on the upper Whanganui River.

Have You Seen Large Aggregations Of Koi Carp?

Department of Conservation staff are continuing to work on Koi carp control measures in the Auckland/Waikato Region and are creating a map of spawning areas.

During October and November Koi carp spawn in shallow lake or river margins in the Waikato area.

There is potential to target large numbers of fish for removal if the spawning areas are known and spawning timing can be predicted.

If you have seen a large spawning aggregation of koi carp, please send a map or the GPS coordinates to adaniel@fishandgame.org.nz.

Tight Lines - Adam Daniel, Auckland Waikato Fish &Game

EASTERN FISH AND GAME DECEMBER REEL LIFE

Arggh – The Weather!

Rain by the Olympic swimming pool load has been testing everyone's tolerance, especially those wanting to fish the streams and rivers of the region.

A look at a few Bay of Plenty waterways this week has revealed recovering conditions and stream beds that have been scoured by persistent high flows. That said, when the sun does come out, and we get a little warmth, the insect activity is high.

The rainy conditions have held water temperatures back, and as we write this a week out from Xmas, some of the region's lakes are still sitting around the 18 Celcius surface temperature. Others peak during the middle of the day and are closing in on 20 degrees. Comparatively cool temperatures will enhance trout growth in the lakes.

The Lake Rotorua tributary streams haven't had a large influx of migrating fish yet because of the reduced temperatures. This does, however, have the effect of creating good fishing at the stream mouths, where browns and rainbows start to congregate and feed before eventually moving upstream. We often say that the trigger temperature is 19 degrees for the browns, so it won't be long now.

The summer Rotorua stream mouth fishing that has become legendary will likely begin to hot up in the New Year. As long as we see long, calm days of heat, we'll see big numbers of fish congregating off the Ngongotaha, Waiteti, Awahou and Hamurana mouths.

On the topic of hot days, it's worth remembering that trout don't do well when stressed in warm conditions so take care if you intend to practice catch and release this summer. Keep fish in the water constantly. If you have to take a photo, make sure it's set up first, then only lift the fish from the water for a second or two. A landing net fitted with a floating rim helps with this, and it gives you a free hand to remove hooks etc. Ultimately, if the water is really hot, don't fish unless you intend to catch and kill.

Our deeper lakes have continued to fish well since the start of the season. Fish are being found about the 20m mark, with some as deep as 35m. Deep trolling, jigging, soft baiting, and downrigging are all producing quality fish.

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

We are reproducing this water safety message from Mercury Energy here as a timely summer reminder:

Safety Message From Mercury

Kia ora

As we head into summer, it's a timely reminder to share some River safety messaging in respect of the Waikato river system and Lake Taupo.

If you haven't already got some messaging planned for your social media and/or newsletters, here are a few key messages which you may find helpful in crafting your messages.

- Rivers change
- Rivers are powerful
- Rivers can be unexpected
- There's a big beautiful river and lakes out there. Stay away from dams and other hazards.

You may also wish to include some messages specific to the Aratiatia Rapids if appropriate for your audience:

- Keep clear of the Aratiatoa Rapids spillway and downstream at all times.
- Never enter, swim, or kayak in this area.
- Stay alert for the signs, siren and safety warnings.
- Spills may happen at any time, even when there is no siren.

RESOURCE MANAGEMENT ACT REWRITE WILL FAIL FUTURE GENERATIONS, SO WHY THE RUSH?

Corina Jordan 05:00, Dec 16 2022 – www.stuff.co.nz

Rhys Adams/Fish & Game

Fish & Game NZ advocates for the health of the country's waterways on behalf of anglers and hunters, and is alarmed at new environmental legislation which threatens to weaken the country's "thin green line".

Corina Jordan is the chief executive of Fish & Game NZ.

OPINION: The Government's rewrite of the Resource Management Act (RMA) should be of concern to all Kiwis, because the environmental protection measures in the proposed bill are absent, diluted, or contradictory and will lead to significant uncertainty.

As it is currently drafted, the Natural and Built Environments Bill (NBEB) is far from an improvement on the original legislation.

It does not have sufficient safeguards for the environment, it does not have a framework that supports sustainable development, and it will subsequently fail future generations.

No one disputes the fact that the RMA was not working, and that an overhaul was desperately needed, especially to allow more homes to be built.

However, the approach that has been taken in drafting the NBEB will leave our precious environment and freshwater even more vulnerable to further degradation than is currently the case.

While the RMA had its challenges, it recognised the wide range of values that communities hold for freshwater, it provided checks and balances for proposed development, and there was recourse to challenge environmentally unsustainable projects.

Yes, the NBEB appropriately identifies cultural values and environmental goals, but it lacks the scaffolding to support them.

ROSS GIBLIN/STUFF
The Resource Management Act needed overhauling, including to remove the roadblocks it created when getting new homes built, says Corina Jordan.

For example, higher level objectives to protect the capacity of the natural environment, to "provide for the wellbeing of present and future generations", are contradicted by other parts of the legislation which give primacy to development.

Further, the bill muddles its way through abstract concepts to the detriment of the environment it seeks to protect, and in doing so fails to provide a foundation for sustainable development.

This essentially means developers will be faced with ongoing business and investment uncertainty as environmental goals continue to shift.

Indeed, one of the most alarming aspects of the new law is that it allows environmental regulatory processes to become heavily influenced by politics.

The minister of the day gets to decide and set environmental bottom lines, and can make exemptions to these. They are then implemented by regional planning committees which are also open to politicisation.

Instead of embedding limits to provide for community values for freshwater – including life-supporting capacity of our freshwater ecosystems – the bill says freshwater should be protected to retain "ecological integrity". This is an arbitrary phrase left to the given minister to define.

This legislation further weakens the thin green line which has sought to provide a healthy environment for all New Zealanders to enjoy, through enabling unsustainable development and removing the ability of affected people to have input into the process, including recourse for appeals to specialist courts.

For three decades, Fish & Game has been at the forefront of advocating for freshwater and challenging unsustainable development.

The new law will jeopardise the ability of the organisation to continue to advocate for healthy freshwater environments that communities can enjoy for recreation and safely harvest food from.

The proposed NBEB also effectively consigns 30 years of case law for waterway protection to the scrapheap, undoing all our hard work to hold the line on over-abstraction of freshwater and pollution in some of New Zealand's waterways.

More widely it risks harming the country's global reputation.

Our environment and the health of our waterways has underpinned our clean green image and trading advantage in international markets. The RMA rewrite directly threatens that.

The 800-page draft bill is scheduled to be fast-tracked through before the end of next year with an incredibly tight timeframe for submissions.

SUPPLIED

Corina Jordan is the chief executive of Fish & Game NZ.

The Resource Management Law Association – representing over 900 resource management practitioners from landscape architects and engineers, to planners, lawyers, commissioners and judges – recently sent a letter to the Environment Committee, stating that it is "critical" to get the new legislation right.

However, they expressed "extreme disappointment… in the short timeframe for submissions".

Fish & Game agrees.

Rushed legislation is poor legislation, and poor legislation will impact generations to come. This is an incredibly important piece of legislation.

Fish & Game is willing to work collaboratively with Government, iwi and stakeholders to ensure we get it right.

SUMMER TROUT LOVE CICADAS

By Tony Orman – Taken from the NZFFA Newsletter

Cicadas are staple summer diet for trout in wilderness streams

The words of George Gershwin's song Summertime from Porgy and Bess go like this: Summertime, and the livin' is easy, fish are jumping.

Summertime is great for trout because of summer insects such as cicadas that can send trout into a feeding frenzy – something to keep in mind during fishing.

The insects start to emerge from the ground after New Year and trout are quick to seize the opportunity to grab the big bite-sized meal that fall into the water.

Mid to late summer is the time to put on a fly that imitates a cicada that has fallen in the water.

Cicadas are a big meal compared to small aquatic insects. One cicada must equate to a hundred or more mayfly nymphs. So who can blame the trout for homing in on a cicada meal?

A cicada is a juicy mouthful for a trout.

Many years ago when fishing a South Island backcountry river, I found a fish steadily feeding. I tried nymph fly after nymph but the fish ignored all.

Then I found a big bulky nymph - a size 8 Hare and Copper - in my fly box and tossed that. It took straight away.

I needed a trout for dinner so I killed it and examined its stomach. It was full of cicadas, about 15 big juicy morsels.

The big bulky nymph had passed for a cicada tumbling down in the current.

You will find many cicada imitation flies in tackle shops. It is always advisable to carry one or two.

As Norman Marsh wrote in his wonderful book *Trout Stream Insects* in New Zealand, "May the backcountry angler tread in peril of fishless days who does not include in his repertoire of trout flies one that at least looks something like a cicada."

If you tie up your own flies, you can fashion a cicada imitation; something like a Muddler Minnow. The imitation fly does not have to be exact. An approximation will do just fine.

Or if you do not know where to start, search a tying recipe on Google. If you do not tie your own flies, there are some very life-like imitation flies in almost every tackle shop.

You can fish a cicada pattern blind by just prospecting water or you can look for feeding fish and then cast your cicada imitation to it. If it is focused on cicadas, it will almost certainly take the fly.

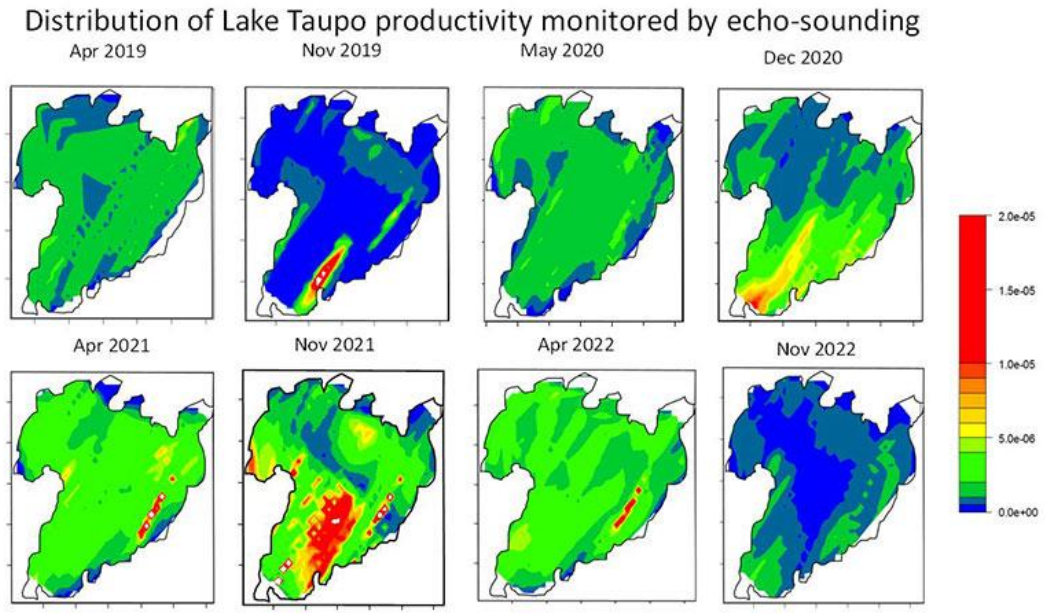
LAKE TAUPŌ: PRODUCTIVITY SURVEY SPRING 2022

Introduction

Initial analysis of data collected in November suggests Lake conditions are similar to 2019.

The condition and number of trout witnessed during the 2022 winter season was exceptional, reflecting the high productivity that existed in the lake throughout 2020 and 2021. However, the productivity this spring, especially in the northern part Lake Taupō, was relatively poor. This marks a return to the levels recorded in 2019, suggesting similar conditions for growing trout.

The illustration below shows the distribution and density of 'back-scattering data' which offers a highly visual representation of lake productivity information over time.



Graphs of Lake Taupō's productivity between April 2019 to November 2022.

Impact On Trout

The reduced productivity witnessed this spring could affect trout at four distinct stages of their lifecycle.

For young trout entering the lake this summer, the low productivity may have a strong impact. It may increase natural mortality, so reducing the size of the cohort that will migrate up rivers to spawn in 3 years' time.

For 2-year-old fish spending their first full year in the lake, growth rates may be reduced but natural mortality is unlikely to reduce their number.

Fish in their third year, may experience reduced growth rates and low productivity levels could affect the timing of their spawning run next winter. Trout fertility may also be impacted, and we may see a reduction in both the number and size of their eggs. These in turn may affect the recruitment of juveniles in 3-years' time.

Finally, trout that are recovering from spawning will be negatively impacted. Lower productivity levels will make it harder for these fish to find food, which means it will take longer for them to regain condition. We can expect a higher mortality rate among these fish compared to recent years – next seasons trapping data should confirm.

Summary

The good news is this research provides both fishery managers and anglers with a valuable insight into how this wild fishery functions. We know now how quickly productivity in Lake Taupō can change. It is interesting to note, declines in productivity occur much quicker than increases.

A cautious prediction suggests the quality and numbers of trout in 2023 will be similar to 2019. They are unlikely to be as big or numerous as they were last winter.

Data Collection

Collecting lake productivity data involves towing a large specialist transducer behind a boat and recording the stream of information on a computer – a very sensitive, advanced fish-finder! The operation takes three days to complete and covers approximately 110kms. The data is collected along seven paths or transects across the lake, which remain constant from year to year - allowing scientists to make meaningful comparisons over time. A filter is then applied to the raw data which enables the team to differentiate trout, smelt and plankton.

FISHING THE DRY FLY WITH BRIAN

By Brian Wilson - From the ILFF Turangi Shop

The Royal Wulff imitates nothing in particular but can be extremely effective in all waters.

FISHING THE DRY FLY.

Fishing the dry fly is one of the most rewarding methods of fly fishing but strangely not practiced as often as you would think in the Taupo area. I personally used to think that dry fly was better suited to small streams elsewhere in the country whereas Taupo rivers

reigned supreme with the wet fly and nymph. I suppose because Taupo is so highly regarded as one of the premium winter fisheries in the world it is often overlooked as a fine dry fly fishery in the summer and autumn months. As we are now approaching this period here are a few hints that may make a few more trout come to your net after taking the dry fly.

1: Have a good selection of dry flies. Trout feasting during this period are normally very selective and unlike the streamers or nymphs, a few different patterns will not cut the mustard when you are fishing with the dry fly.

2: Ensure that you also have a variety of different sizes with plenty of small flies as often the trout will only take a size 16 or even smaller.

3: Fish with long tapered leaders, especially if the river is low and clear. Add to this leader a short section of tippet of about 2-3’ (600-900mm) with as light as breaking strain as you dare. For the Tongariro I like a 2X leader of about 12’ (3.6m), and I add about 600-900mm of 4X chameleon mono onto the end of this as a norm. If the trout are smashing cicadas I may delete this tippet altogether as the hits can be quite ferocious when this happens and presentation does not have to be so precise.

4: When the trout are on cicadas you can, in fact, hit the water quite hard and to all sides and even behind a trout. When they are in this mood, the more irregular you are with your casting, the better.

5: When the trout are on say the Lacewing Moth try and match your artificial as close as possible. Remember the trout sees its prey from underneath and that is what you should be trying to replicate. I don't believe the wings are as important as the under body because, quite simply, they can't see them.

6: Consider fishing one small fly. Why? Quieter presentation. How can I see it? If the fly is hard to pick up once landed pick out a foam bubble near to wear you have adjudged your fly to have landed. Follow that bubble and as if magic your fly will come into view along the drift. If it doesn't, no bother, if a rise occurs near your bubble you can strike.

7: When you do strike, unlike the nymph, you must delay the strike by a couple of seconds. The trout will not close its mouth until it re enters the water. "God save the King" works pretty well.

8: You don't always have to "match the hatch". The very popular Royal Wulff fly resembles nothing but is very successful at different times. The brownies especially love them in a size 10 or 12.

9: Consider fishing tandem dry flies if you are really having trouble picking a single dry fly up. A big fly at the front (your indicator and possible trout catcher), and a small fly at the rear.

10: Sometimes the trout are not rising to the surface film at all, rather they are taking emerges and breaking the surface as they are doing so. Consider a dry dropper rig with an emerger pattern on the bottom or even a standard nymph like Hare and Copper or Pheasant Tail.

11: If the trout are rising you can fish a specific area thoroughly. Don't be in too big a hurry to move to another spot if they are not taking. Spend time to sort out the methodology. Once you do that your success rate will increase.

Dry fly fishing can be pleasantly frustrating when many fish will rise to your offerings only to reject it at the last split second. It is also one of the most rewarding and visual ways to fish capturing your undivided attention at all times. If a trout is showing some interest but not taking it could be something simple like too much hackle on the fly or wrong size. Keep trying until you crack it. My main method of fishing in the summer/autumn time in Taupo is with the dry fly. Believe me, once you have caught a few trout using this method, you will be hooked for life.

Johan with a beautiful back country Brownie taken last summer. Photo courtesy of Johan Kok.

SOME THOUGHTS ON TROUT FISHING MANAGEMENT

By Tony Orman – From the NZFFA Website

One winter morning quite a few decades ago, I took three trout on a Hawkes Bay river. Winter fishing had just been introduced.

It was June and after using a deeply sunk nymph I had killed two of those three trout. As I landed the third – a fine jack rainbow – milt came from it. It seemed right to return it. Catch and release was unheard of in those days too!

Thoughtful I moved to the next pool upstream. I spied a hen fish vigorously digging her redd and there was an attendant male.

That was enough. I left the two trout. I packed up and with mixed feelings returned home. There I gutted the fish and found the two hen fish ripe with eggs.

I was fishing legally for the upstream limit was many kilometres upstream at a state highway bridge. But as I stood by the kitchen bench looking at those trout, there was a niggling thought that I had just literally killed "the goose that lays the golden egg."
The point was those trout would have produced wild fry and fingerlings, which unless the periodic major floods occurred, were better equipped and suited to survival than hatchery reared liberated stock.

Winter fishing particularly in estuarine and lower reaches of big rivers has merit. But much further upstream, there seems little sense in catching trout that are about to spawn.

In recent decades, fish and game councils, formerly known as acclimatisation societies, have increasingly adopted liberal policies. Winter fishing is now common. Method restrictions such as "fly fishing only" waters has been removed. In Nelson-Marlborough for example there are now no "fly fishing only" waters. And liberations have been non-existent for decades now, with most hatcheries closed. The theory is it is better to rely on a fishery to be self-sustaining through natural spawning.

Excessive Liberations

On liberations of trout it would be fair comment to say that in the years of acclimatisation societies back in the 1940s, 50s and 60s, management was arguably guilty of carrying out excessive liberations of eyed ova, fry and fingerlings.
In some cases societies were accused of being political in merely trying to appease licence holders.

But it can equally be said that a blanket policy of "no liberations" as has applied since the 1980s and which was first proposed in a series of trout fishery reports by the then Agriculture and Fisheries Department, is just as meaningless and simply theory or ideology – dogmatically just too rigid.

Those department reports were based on a paucity of trout fishing diary returns and of a number of years previously when environmental conditions may have been much different to today. How can you base today's management on yesteryear's results? How can you base management on such a small random sample?

In addition those reports consisted of very basic field work.There was little or no investigation of trout food such as bottom fauna samples and only a few drift diving samples which in themselves are not regarded in some quarters as accurate.

From this limited data, some far-reaching ideas were proposed by departmental officers sitting in their capital city centrally heated offices. Their message was clear – liberalise method restrictions and don't liberate.

Such hasty thoughts are dangerous. I find it amazing that so-called experts would stake their credibility and reputation on such an insecure base and shaky data. But then, in fish and game history in New Zealand there has been more than one case of where experts were wrong and the layman sportsman correct.

Equally surprising was that fish and game councils accepted the liberal viewpoint towards methods and the laisse-faire (a philosophy of "don't worry, leave it to look after itself") policies.

Fisheries management is not a dogmatic exercise. It should not be a blanket policy of liberate everywhere or don't liberate at all.

Ecosystems

Each river is an ecosystem in its own right and may need individual management. Each season is different and brings with it different and sometimes extreme happenings such as floods or drought.

Therefore management should be flexible enough to consider each river's character and needs and each season's peculiarities. After all, you don't farm on the West Coast as you would in Canterbury unless you compensate for the lower rainfall by sucking large amounts of water from public rivers. Usually, management is quite different reflecting the contrasting natural environment and climates.

I remember many years ago talking to the late Alex Gilchrist in Hawkes Bay. Alex was a trout fishermen of immense experience and thoughtful and analytical. Consequently he was a very accomplished angler. His knowledge of trout fishing and trout fisheries although that of a layman, was based on solid experience and a mind not clutttered by theory or ideology unlike some expert bureaucrats who laid down dogma.

Alex explained about liberations and trout in New Zealand. The trout's natural habitat in Europe or the UK is one of severe winters. Now this can mean frozen lakes and ponds,

snow falls and because there is little immediate run-off from the frozen countryside, streams run clear during spawning. Certainly they are usually not flooded and full of sediment like New Zealand ones can be.

“Here lies the crunch,” Alex said and went on to explain, “In New Zealand the winter floods hamper the natural spawning cycle, often washing out the redds or burying them under a metre or more of shingle.

“For that reason, we need to liberate some years. But it should be regulated and liberation requirements assessed and modified to meet the toll of winter floods.”

Nevertheless habitat is a key factor too. A strong role should be adopted to protect and enhance rivers and streams as trout habitat. Particularly today with threats like watershed monoculture of pines with their insatiable thirst, nitrate levels toxic to aquatic life and irrigation draw-offs.

Yet often fish and game councils and previously acclimatisation societies have turned a blind eye, or have simply been too short-sighted, to see threats to habitat. True the “dirty dairying campaign” by Fish and Game NZ although arguably ham-fisted and therefore provocative and unnecessarily confrontational in its approach, did rightfully focus on the detrimental effects from intensified dairy farming, water abstraction and the insensitive ruthless exploitation nature of corporate dairy farms.

Pine Monocultures

But what of forestry? Take the mono-culture of pine trees for example. This has been allowed to cover whole watersheds with a massive and visible effect on trout streams. Pines require a massive amount of water at the expense of the natural flow in streams.

In one Marlborough stream which I fished in the 70s and caught good fish up to 3kgs in, I returned 20 years later to be stunned by the lack of water. The stream was an estimated one third of its size, its water depleted by the acres and acres of pine forests. Today it is dry riverbed.

There is also a downside to pines in the establishment of exotic forests. The natural vegetation was cleared and the earth bared. Sometimes fires was used to clear. With the first rain came a runoff of water, soil and ash into feeder streams, often valuable spawning streams. Then 25 years later with the milling of the forests comes another bared earth phase and more runoff and deposition of debris into creeks and rivers downstream

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A once flowing trout stream – and spawning one -is now dry due to monoculture of pines

Why not mill a pine forest in a succession of alternating strips along the contour leaving a succession of unmilled pines which can then be logged in 12 months time after vegetation has stabilised the cut sections?

Why not zone land use to avoid monocultures of pines or vineyards?

Where were the vigilant fish and game councillors who should have been insisting on environmental controls and substantial buffer zones along important streams, as is common overseas?

From my observations of about four decades in total of serving on acclimatisation societies and latterly fish and game councils, too often, too little attention was (and still is) focused on the threats to the habitat of free flowing rivers.

I recall one meeting – some years ago – where councillors spent more time debating whether to allow smoking at a meeting than to the effects of a monoculture of pines, a proposed hydro-electricity scheme or other development.

In one bizarre case councillors debated long and hard that the firewood for a pot belly stove in a council duck shooting hut was to big for the stove's opening but when I raised the threat of hydro-electricity development on trout rivers because of the Bradford power reforms and the issue of ill-conceived anti-firearm laws, while they did nod in agreement, there was no real interest, enthusiasm or concern.

But firewood and pot belly stoves! That debate reached a height of dizzy vigour!

Meanwhile today, the monoculture of pines, a major threat to the flow and well being of public trout rivers, continues apace particularly with the ludicrous rort of carbon trading under the government's Emissions Trading Scheme.

Increased Acidic

The existence of pine forests apparently also induces a chemical change in the water tending to turn it acidic. Now the healthier trout streams in terms of trout food such as nymphs (termed invertebrates) are alkaline. That's why in the UK the chalk-streams running from limestone country are prolific trout streams because of the abundant food in the form of invertebrates.

The relationship of trout and trout food to alkaline or acid character suggests trout stream ecosystems can highly differ and usually cannot be reduced to single factors and simple blanket policy. A blanket policy whether it be pouring trout liberations into all waters – or eliminating all liberations – cannot cover all shades of trout fisheries ecosystems.
The advocates of a no-liberation policy argue that returns from tagged or fin clipped fish are poor, about 1 percent it is said. That may be true or it may' be that returns are poor because anglers cannot be bothered to notify of marked fish or do not notice them? Or are the number of surviving fish poor for just that water? Are eyed ova which cannot be marked, the better form of liberations? One very experienced and very respected angler-administrator the late Squadron Leader A G "Smithy" Smith of Nelson believed eyed ova to be the most effective of all forms of liberations.
In the 1950s the Wellington Acclimatisation Society poured hundreds of thousands of rainbow fingerlings into the Otaki River. They failed to establish. The society's ranger the late Tom Andrews told me that when he liberated the juvenile rainbows at the Otaki Forks area in the mountains, he reckoned that by the time he drove back 25 kms to the state highway, the freshly released fish had beaten him downstream!

He explained that the stock from Taupo was a waste of time as the progeny of lake-living, river running fish had the instinct to disperse rapidly downstream. In the case of the Otaki the rainbows disappeared into the sea.
That suggests there is a futility in liberating fish which are not suited to the particular environment. In other words, trout of river-dwelling and not lake dwelling character, should be released in a river.
Similarly there may be a danger of undermining a genetic stock that has been derived over 100 years, by liberating juveniles from stock from another river.
If liberations are necessary, commonsense, logic and knowledge may be necessary to decide for a particular river if (a) liberations are needed and (b) if so, then it's of the right stock.

Vibert Boxes?

I will dwell on Hawkes Bay because it is an area I fished over a number of decades particularly the 1960s, 70s and spasmodically through the 80s and 90s. When I went there in 1961 the trout fishing was simply superb. The Hawkes Bay Acclimatisation Society liberated heavily, admittedly not necessarily from wisdom but because it was the policy of decades before. But, inadvertently, they were on the right track in the case of the Tukituki, Maretotara and other alkaline-character rivers.

The superb fishing may have also been due to another form of liberation by way of vibert boxes where eyed ova is planted in little plastic cases in shingle. A project involving the local deerstalkers planted these boxes way up the backcountry in little feeder streams of major rivers.

The fishing for the next decade was magnificent. Was that due to those vibert boxes or was it just coincidence?

And on liberations it was interesting one time to hear the then NZ Professional Fishing Guides' president Frank Murphy in an address to a conference say, "I'm glad no one told the European settlers, liberating trout was a waste of time."

DAVID COGGINS MAKES A CASE FOR THE ANGLER'S LIFESTYLE
From the NZFFA Newsletter - (abridged)

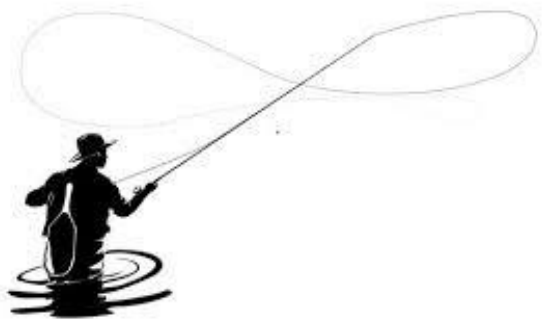
Moving water thrills me. I can't drive over a bridge without looking down at the river and wondering whether trout live there. I speculate about where they might be hiding and how I'd try to catch them. If I've decided the river's promising, I privately plot a return. It's like discovering a secret hidden in plain sight.

I'm still trying to understand the rivers in my life beyond the most basic familiarity. Beneath the surface are mysteries we can barely make out, so we study and speculate and remember every detail we can. This is fishing.

By fishing, I mean fly fishing. Angling is about anticipation and planning trips far in the future, but it also has a storied history. Fly fishing has been practiced since Izaak Walton's Compleat Angler was published in 1653. Fishing in the modern world, I've come to realise, is a contrary act. While it might improve one's moral character (a possibly dubious theory), to fish with purpose and intensity, to seek sporting opportunities in far-flung places, strikes many as decadent.

Decadent?

Perhaps fishing is decadent, but it didn't always seem that way. I began fishing as a boy not because I thought it was morally redeeming, but because I loved it. If anything, it felt natural. I still do it for the sheer joy of being outside, of concentrating, of the doubts and rewards of being connected to a fish, of landing and releasing it. Fishing offers an internal reward, and that personal satisfaction is enough.



Waiting

Fishing is waiting. When I'm on the water, I'm out of time and the world recedes. Even when nothing seems to be happening, something is happening. And yet even waiting on the water I'm more engaged than I am anywhere else. An angler is sensitive to changes in the weather, to shade and sun, to any movement on the stream. There are clues everywhere lightly hidden: which insects are appearing that a trout might eat, the speed of the current, shadows faintly moving under the water. When this knowledge converges with enough skill and conspires with luck, I might catch a fish.

Invisible Success

But more often I don't catch a fish. That's why fishing requires coming to terms with the fact that you can do everything exactly the way you want to and still fail. Are you comfortable with that? I hope so. Fishing measures success in an invisible way.

When people ask me about the attraction to fishing, which they often do because they genuinely want to know or are mildly exasperated that I do it, I tell them that it's an outdoor sport. This is obvious of course, but it's the basic truth. You're in the natural world, usually in a beautiful place.

Snobs

There are codes which exist in any intense pursuit. There are outright snobs, reverse snobs, and people so isolated they can't be considered either.

That's why anglers are like spies. We keep our motives to ourselves, the details and schemes can't be shared with anybody who's not a fellow traveler in this world of secret obsession.

I admit my fishing desire can be so intense I don't like to describe it to the unafflicted. I don't want other people to know, and perhaps I don't want to admit to myself, just how much I think about fishing. There's something slightly suspicious about this devotion, like a weakness for absinthe, an eccentric habit that should be tempered before it turns into a depraved addiction.

Innocence

One thing that always surprises me whenever I arrive at streams is how harmless they feel, innocent of my intentions. Tall grasses and low willow trees blow sleepily along the bank. It's just another day, with only slight variations of countless other days here.

What's different is that on this day I'm here, I want to intersect with everything that's unfolding on its own. The seeming sense of peace on the water gives way, under observation, to furious activity that's nearly invisible to those not attuned to it.

Looking closely reveals signs of life, trout coming up and feeding near the surface. Tactically, that means fishing a dry fly—one that floats—which remains the platonic ideal of the sport. If all goes well, you see the fish break the water and take your fly, an eternal thrill. This makes me excited and a little nervous, now I have to make decisions.

The fish are doing their part, I have to do mine.

Everything

The drift is the goal. The drift is everything. When the fly floats seamlessly in the current over a feeding fish, the anticipation is real. I'm waiting, praying, it will come up and take the fly. These moments when the fly passes above the head of a trout are wonderful and excruciating.

This is the same rush of excitement gamblers feel when they scratch off a lottery ticket. They don't really think they're going to win—they know better—it's the chance of winning they're addicted to. That's the same when you fish. The possibility keeps you making one more cast.

Then suddenly it's not at all possible. The fly was rejected, ignored. Was it the drift, was it the fly? The fish are still out there, they're still feeding. The water is clear—they

definitely saw it. They just didn't like it. I take stock, get technical and tie on an emerger pattern. This imitates an insect evolving from a larva to an adult; it sits in the film of water and is harder to see. I take my time, which is difficult when the fish are feeding right in front of me.

A Tiny Triumph

I make the cast where I want to, a small triumph, and the fly floats over the trout's head. Or at least where it was a few seconds ago. Then - a minor hiccup in the surface, like a small pebble fell into the water. The trout.

No matter how many times this happens the action still feels abrupt. The fish took the fly, but until I raise my rod it's impossible to know if the trout's hooked. When the line tightens and I feel the pressure, that steady weight, a sideways movement of its head, only then do I know for sure. That's the vital moment. The fish is on.avoiding mistakes or bad luck.

Catching a fish brings the simple satisfaction and absolute fact of everything unfolding as planned. The presentation of a fly, managing the drift, the physical action of fighting a fish and successfully landing it. This never feels like I'm taming nature, more like being in alignment, and understanding it better, at least for a short time.

Fishing is a search for the fleeting connection to something alive that can never be fully known. Once the fish is gone, it's just me on the bank. There are mountains in the distance.

Nobody knows where I am. Sometimes you get lucky.

EDITORS NOTE

I had been feeling quite miserable on it all, crap weather, constant work required around the house, a world that sometimes seems intent on tearing itself apart and a myriad of other issues. Then I went fishing yesterday and somehow the world is a better place and so many issues are so much less than they were.

There is a lesson there, hopefully I can learn it.

FISHING FUNNIES

(Opinions expressed in this Newsletter are those of the individual contributors and not neccessarillary 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 3rd 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	dssymes@xtra.co.nz
Secretary -	Mike Martindale	489 1082	Takapuna	miketmartindale@gmail.com
Treasurer -	Barrie Barnes	021 925 006	Glenfield	barrie@iloveflyfishing.kiwi
Magazine -	Duncan Frew	021 648 956	Torbay	iconpromote@gmail.com
Committee -	Simon Hoole	021 037 6047	Northcote	hoolesimon@yahoo.co.nz
Members	Pawel Mikolajczyk	021 960 806		pawel_mikolajczyk@yahoo.co.nz
	Maurice Parlane	021 650 692	Northcote	maurice.p@newwayz.co.nz
	Neil Smit	021 274 5625	West Harbour	neil.smit@sew-eurodrive.co.nz