



# *THE FLYFISHER NEWSLETTER*

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October 2021

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## **PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

Dave is having a break this month.

## **FISHING REPORT**

### **Auckland / Waikato**

Several Club Members have headed out to the Waiuku Lakes with mixed results, the best of which was Ryan Schierhout with 3 nice Rainbows, all taken nymphing with a Damsel Fly pattern. Parkinson's Lake is extremely high at present and as clear as I have seen it, but it is getting a lot of fishing pressure, as you would expect given our inability to travel.

The Wairoa River in Clevedon has been running fairly high following all the rain we have had, but give it a few days of nice dry weather and no doubt it will fish a bit better.

### **Rotorua**

As we can't go there, a picture from another time...



*Fikrit with a 12pd monster from a previous opening day on the Ohau Chanel. Photo courtesy of Fikrit Chinassi.*

## Taupo Region



*Pawel having a ball with a hard fighting Rainbow in the Hatepe, pre lock down. Photo courtesy of Pawel Mikolajczyk.*

## Saltwater

Kayakers have been doing well off Browns Bay reef and some good catches have come from the Whangaparoa surfcasting spots. So if you don't have a boat then heading to good reef structure along the east coast bays and whangaparoa would be a good start for a bit of shore based swoffing.

If you have a boat then the western coasts of Rangitoto, all the Whangaparoa peninsula and around to Motuora Island is well worth a visit. Johan did particularly well in his recent trip launching from Hatfields Beach.





*A great eating Snapper taken by Johan on Monday. Photo courtesy of Johan Kok.*

### **Fishy Tales**

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

### **SUBS FOR THE YEAR 2021 ~ 22 ARE NOW OVERDUE.**

Adult \$80.00 discounted to \$60.00\*\*  
Family \$90.00 discounted to \$70.00\*\*  
Junior \$30.00 discounted to \$20.00\*\*

**\*\* Please note that to pay the discounted subscription rate for prompt payment your sub must be paid by the close of banking on the 30th June 2021. After that date the full subscription rate, not discounted for prompt payment, will be due.**

Please pay to:  
12-3209-0190179-00  
North Shore Flyfishers Inc

**Please make sure your surname is in the details.**

### **LAST CLUB NIGHT**

Last month we had an online Meeting with a short video presentation by Johan Kok of some back country fishing pre lockdown. Thank you once again Johan.

### **NEXT CLUB NIGHT – 19<sup>th</sup> OCTOBER 7.30 PM**

Due to the ongoing lock down this month's Club Meeting will be an online affair, as we were forced to do during last year's lock downs.

Full details of the Meeting, including a link and a password will be emailed out to everyone soon.

### **VIDEO CONFERENCE MEETING**

The club meeting for 19OCT21 will be by video conference if you would like to participate. The meeting will start at 1930hrs, joining info below - note PIN change. Very informal and will include the latest 23 minute video by member Johan Kok and his solo salt water fly fishing expedition out into the Mahurangi area. It's an interesting video of what's on our doorstep even if you're not into salt water fly fishing - yet! (E & O E)

Login URL: <https://myconference.nz/?room=092420455>

PIN: NSFMEET

### **WHY WE FISH**

*Now we have the confidence of tested friendship to indulge each other's enthusiasms, to be fishing bores without boring each other; and our wives sensibly left us to it.*

*J R Hartley - J R Hartley Casts Again*

## **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 – May 1<sup>st</sup> to 30<sup>th</sup> April. 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.

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

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

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

*The trip to a day of fishing is invariable a great pleasure, but in some ways the trip back after some successful sport is greater still.*

*Robert Deindorfer*

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

Winning fish will be determined by weight.

Verification by partner where possible and/or by photograph.

Details to be provided to any committee member.

Competition period May 1st to April 30th. Prize awarded at AGM in April.

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





*Even very murky brown water can hold a fish or three. Dave MacLellan giving a spot of Carp fishing a go. Photo courtesy of Roy Richardson.*

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

The “essence” of the competition is to encourage club member participation and in the process, to award a winner’s trophy to the individual who catches the greatest number of salt water species. It will run from 1st May in one year to 31st April in the next year with the trophy awarded at the following AGM. For the full rules please refer to the Club Website [www.nsff.org.nz](http://www.nsff.org.nz)



## **CLUB TRIPS 2021**

February – Ngongotaha River and Rotorua Lakes 25<sup>th</sup> 26<sup>th</sup> 27<sup>th</sup> FEBRUARY 2022  
March – Lake Otamangakau MARCH 2022  
April – Whanganui River – Club Competition Trip – April 2022  
May – Ngongotaha River and Rotorua Lakes MAY 2022  
July – Tongariro and Tauranga Taupo JULY 2022  
November – Lake based Club Competition Trip – NOV 2021  
December / January – Tuition weekend (Held if enough ‘novice’ anglers are interested)  
December – Lake Otamangakau – 3<sup>rd</sup> 4<sup>th</sup> 5<sup>th</sup> DEC 2021

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.

## **CLUB STILLWATER COMPETITION ON LAKE REREWHAKAAITU**

Obviously, with the ongoing lock down status of Auckland this competition can only be given a provisional date and that is the weekend of 20th and 21st November.

Over the past few years this has been a well attended and very enjoyable Trip, with solid numbers of fish being caught and in a lovely location.

If you are interested in this Club Trip / Competition then please let Simon know as soon as possible.

Simon Hoole - 021 037 6047 - [hoolesimon@yahoo.co.nz](mailto:hoolesimon@yahoo.co.nz)

## **DECEMBER CLUB TRIP TO LAKE OTAMANGAKAU**

I am proposing the weekend of 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, and 5<sup>th</sup> December (Friday, Saturday and Sunday) with some of us arriving on Thursday the 2<sup>nd</sup>.

While it is predominately a boat fishery, the Te Whaiu (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!

The last 2 December Trips have seen some fantastic fishing, and by December the fish are well over the rigours of the winter spawning season and are in great 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](mailto:dssymes@xtra.co.nz)



*Garry with a lovely  
5.5pd Rainbow taken  
on a lovely summerlike  
day at the Big O.*

## **CASTING TUITION – SEEKING EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST**

Your Committee is trying to find the best way to continue the Casting Tuition that we once ran when we were based at the Milford Marina.

If you would be interested in receiving some Casting Tuition please let us know as soon as possible. This is for all ability levels. Also, please try and give us an idea of what you would expect that Tuition to look like.

As a Committee we have discussed a variety of options, from running Instruction on Club Nights before the Meetings through to heading to a park with water such as Onepoto Domain at the foot of Onepoto Road in Northcote, or Sylvan Park at Lake Pupuke in Milford.

So please contact us as soon as possible if you are interested.

Simon - 021 037 6047 - [hoolesimon@yahoo.co.nz](mailto:hoolesimon@yahoo.co.nz)

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

## **A CALL TO CLUB MEMBERS TO SUPPORT THE PEOPLE THAT SUPPORT OUR CLUB**

A lot of people in Auckland have been doing it hard. Reduced wages, lost jobs, businesses damaged beyond repair. But eventually we will come out of this and we will be able to travel domestically again.

I would like to recommend a few places for Club Members to stay. These are people that look after us fantastically on our Club Trips away, over and above what you could reasonably expect, and being tourist businesses they have suffered more than most with constant booking cancellations.

So if you are able to travel give these fantastic supporters of our Club a try.

Moving North to South:

**PARADISE VALLEY LODGE** - <https://www.paradisevalleylodge.co.nz/>  
1099 Paradise Valley Road, Rotorua.

The owners here are Heather and Damon, Heathers mob: 027 564 9581, Heather has gone out of her way to make her accommodation even more fisher friendly, putting in hanging and drying racks for waders, boots, jackets and rods, as well as a large freezer and has even bought a brand new hot smoker to smoke up your freshly caught Trout.

The location is fantastic, with the peaceful lifestyle property backing onto the Ngongotaha Stream and only 5 minutes from Ngongotaha or 15 minutes from Rotorua. It is where we stay on the Club Trips to Ngongotaha / Rotorua.

Check out the website and you will see a large range of accommodation options, from the bunk rooms of the Lodge to the very comfortable Private rooms or even the superbly appointed house itself. There is even plenty of room to park your boat if you want.

This is a fantastic place to go fishing with a group of friends, have a family gathering or just take your partner for a weekend away.

I have stayed there with my wife and it was perfect. A couple of hours fishing for me in the morning and the evening, with the rest of the day spent doing all the touristy things available in Rotorua.

Give Heather a call as I know she has had covid cancellations and so times of the year normally booked out well in advance may still be available.



*Jaime Woon with his first  
Ngongotaha Rainbow, taken just  
100 metres from the Lodge. Photo  
courtesy of Tony Russell.*



## **TONGARIRO RIVER MOTEL - (TRM)**

Corner of Link Road and Taupehi Road, Tirangi

The owners here are Pip and Ross, phone number 0800 1TROUT – (0800 187 688)

<https://www.tongarirorivermotel.co.nz/>

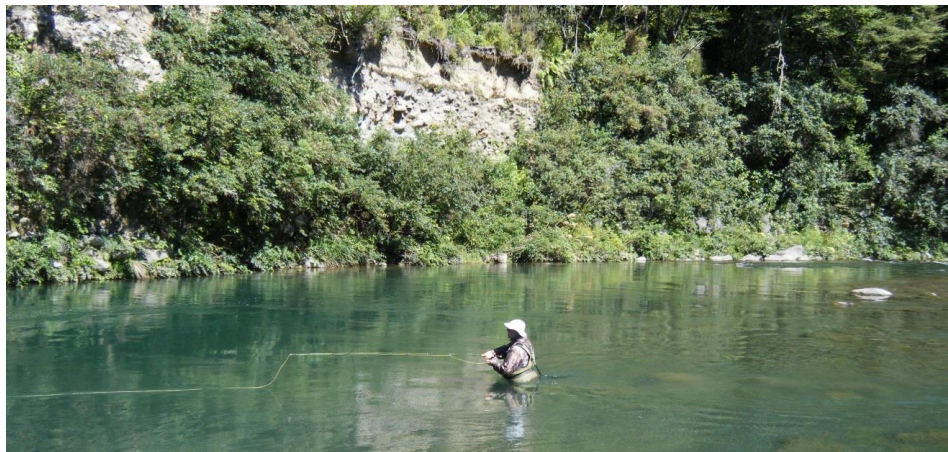
Ross and Pip are ex Jafa's, (just another fantastic Aucklander), who upon reaching retirement age moved to Turangi and bought the motel with Club Member Wayne Godkin and his wife Wendy. Obviously a thinly veiled excuse for Ross to go fly fishing whenever he wanted to. Little did he know that the motel would become so popular with fishos that he would only get to go fishing when it was quiet.

They go out of their way to make sure that you are looked after. If you are arriving late after a long drive down from Auckland, the key will be in the door, the heaters turned on and the milk for your morning tea already in your fridge.

There are several BBQ's, a portable hot smoker as well as a large electric cold smoker, a designated fish cleaning area, and every unit has rod racks set on the inside walls and drying hooks for wet gear abound on the exterior walls.

With the Tongariro River only a couple of hundred metres walk from your unit and a myriad of other rivers and lakes just a short drive away, TRM is perfectly placed for an outdoors adventure. If you are into skiing it is only under 40 minutes to the Chateau at Whakapapa. As Ross says they are 'half way to everywhere'.

And if you want to know what's working on the river, Ross is always right up to date with the latest fishing info.



*The Tongariro River can produce some spectacular places to fish.*

## TONGARIRO HOLIDAY PARK

State Highway 47, 100 metres south of Highway 47 and highway 45 intersection.

The owners here are Greg and Donna, phone number (07) 386 8062.

<https://www.thp.co.nz/>

They have been hosting the Club Trips to Lake Otamangakau since the Club began and Dave Symes, our President, has been on every one of these Trips (he organizes them). Throughout this time Greg and Donna, and the previous owners as well, have looked after the Club superbly.

They are well located for quick access to the ski fields, the Tongariro crossing, Lakes Otamangakau and Rotoaira, as well as a number of excellent walks.

The accommodation ranges from cabins through to self-contained units as well as powered camping sites, and there are separate shower, toilet, and cooking blocks for the non self-contained cabins.



*Leon hooked up in shallow water on a December Club Trip to Lake Otamangakau. Photo courtesy of Simon Hoole.*

## **JOKE OF THE MONTH**

Sean the bartender notices that Paddy has a broken nose, his face is cut and he's walking with a limp.

"What happened to you" asks Sean.

"Jamie O'Connor and me had a fight" says Paddy.

"That little \*\*\*\* O'Connor" says Sean, "he couldn't do that to you, he must have had something in his hand",

"That he did", a shovel is what he had, and a terrible licking he gave me with it".

"Well" says Sean "you should have defended yourself didn't you have something in your hand",

"that I did" said Paddy, "Mrs O'Connors breast, and a thing of beauty it was, but useless in a fight".

## **AUCKLAND / WAIKATO REEL LIFE OCTOBER**

### **Celebrate The Opener**

The excitement of hooking a fish on opening morning never gets old; that rewarding feeling of taking the hook out to watch them swim away can change your entire mindset.

Not all of us will be able to go out on opening day but planning something to look forward to (when travel restrictions ease) is a great way to keep positive for when you can hook your first fish of the season.



*Above Right: Harry Malcolm releasing his first trout of the season.*

You have all year to enjoy your licence so that that opening day could be October 1st or November 1st; the river and your first fish of the season will still be there.

If you are at home on opening day, this is a great time to prepare for the season ahead by getting your gear together, planning your bucket list of fishing trips and buying a licence.

If you need help planning your trip, remember your licence is a free pass to talk to our staff, consider them your own private fishing consultants.

Make sure you take some time for yourself on October 1st, and at the very least, you can watch a fishing movie.

### **Fishing Is All In Your Head.**



Fishing is a great mind-body experience for people who would prefer hiking up a stream instead of sitting on a stinky yoga mat.

We don't talk about it much, but fishing encompasses most of the beneficial experiences of mind-body activities without the lycra stretch pants.

Nothing against yoga and meditation, but the value of “nature therapy” is an enormous benefit of angling most of us take for granted.

Having a hobby you do daily is extremely good for you and likely to extend your life; unplugging from technology, getting some exercise, and spending time outside is the next level in terms of improving your overall wellbeing.

Ideally, lockdowns provide us with the opportunity to rethink how we spend our free time so we can focus on purpose instead of productivity.

Unfortunately, far too many of us have been wasting our time listening to the news and thinking about what we can't do instead of what we will soon be able to do.

After months of restricted movements and a good stretch at home, a breakout is probably more front of your mind than a good break.

The lockdown is coming to an end, and the weather is improving, so make sure you make time for yourself this spring to do the things you enjoy, it may be more important this year than ever.

*Tight Lines - Dr Adam Daniel, Auckland Waikato Fish & Game*

### **EASTERN REEL LIFE - OCTOBER**

*Due to the vagaries of timing this month's info from Eastern F&G is obviously outdated, however many of the tips and fly / lure suggestions are still very much applicable – ed.*

With the new trout fishing season just around the corner, anglers all around the country are busy preparing for a big day out.

Boats and all manner of fishing tackle are being readied for what many trout anglers consider the ‘Christmas Day’ of fishing!



The Rotorua lakes are a hot destination, especially Rotoiti, Okataina and Tarawera, where traditionally hundreds of people descend to spend time with friends and family and pursue trout.



*Above: Joshua Spalding with a 4.2kg Lake Rotoiti rainbow.*

This season comes with a change in the start date for Rotoiti, Okataina and Tarawera.

The Eastern Fish & Game Council has opted to commence the season on the first Saturday in October - Saturday, October 2<sup>nd</sup>.

The council hopes this will enable people to fish the opening who wouldn't usually get that opportunity when the opening falls during the week and create a carnival atmosphere of the day.

Other waters will open as usual on the 1<sup>st</sup> of October, so anglers are recommended to check their regulation guides.

“On the lakes, shallow trolling with a ‘Tassie’ and a smelt fly is often a successful way of beginning the day”, suggests Fish & Game’s Mark Sherburn.

“If it’s sunny and there’s lots of boat traffic, expect the fish to move a little deeper in the morning but initially begin in the shallows with mono or spin fishing gear and over the sandy areas where smelt can be found.



*Marcus Riefler on the Opato River.*

A calm dawn can be an advantage because you can see the fish ‘smelting’ at the surface.”

Later in the day, adopt a deep fishing method such as lead line, wireline or a downrigger.

It’s hard to beat orange as a lure colour early in the season or something with a touch of red, and don’t forget to try the ‘old faithful’ black and gold toby!

Jigging too can work well early in the season with three flies- something darker on the bottom with two smelt flies above it is ideal.

Successful anglers are often those that try a few different methods and locations,

maintains Mr Sherburn.

“Don’t spend a long time doing the same thing if you aren’t successful; try another location, method or even simply another lure.

Change things around until you find what’s working at any time, and that applies to fishing right through the season.”

Eastern rivers and streams have been rested nicely, and spawning is mostly over.

Winter conditions have been mild, and we haven’t had a lot of habitat damaging floods again this year, so expect fish populations to be excellent.

Nymphs and wee wets should be productive for a few months until terrestrial activity enables us all to get the dry flies out.

Fish & Game remind anglers that it’s worth investing time in some pre-trip maintenance.

Checking the boat and trailer is all ship-shape, life jackets are ready, perhaps a Personal Locator Beacon if you are going backcountry (they are becoming more affordable).

Don't forget to pick up your new season fishing licences, which can be purchased online or from a local retailer.

Anglers and other lake users also need to think about the Check, Clean and Dry message as we roll into summer.

Ensuring we keep waterways pest-free is critical to our continued enjoyment of the resource, and everyone needs to do their part.

**Datawatch** 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>

*Tight Lines - Mark Sherburn, Eastern Fish & Game.*

## **IF YOU'RE NOT LOOKING FOR TROUT, YOU'RE MISSING OUT**

### **One Of The Things I Always Stress To My Clients Is The Importance Of Always Keeping An Eye Out For Trout On The Water.**

The first thing I do when I walk up to a prime piece of trout water, is take a minute or two to scan the water for dark shapes, shadows and subtle movements. I do it before I wet my fly or even my boots for that matter, because I know, if I can spot a trout, I'll immediately double my chances at getting my rod bent. I also look for trout when I'm wading from one spot to the next. This is where many anglers mess up and get distracted by all the great looking water upstream of them, and then end up missing opportunities to spot and catch trout in transit. I used to spook a ton of trout myself moving from one fishing spot to the next. It still happens but not nearly as much because these days, when I'm on the move, I'm not in a hurry and I take plenty of time to look for trout as I wade.

You have to look for trout to spot them. They don't shout, "hey, I'm over here", or wave a white flag at you. It takes time to train your eyes and become proficient at spotting trout.

They're experts at camouflage and often hold out of sight to stay off the radar. If you're trout eyes are lacking in talent, the only way you're going to change that, is to start spending twice as much time looking for them when you're out fly fishing. Don't tell yourself it's a waste of time because you're not good at it. Make a pact with yourself to put more time doing it and push yourself to get better. I often boost my clients sight-fishing confidence by spotting a fish and then asking them to point it out to me. It usually takes a while, but when they finally do spot the fish, it shows them it's not impossible and they can do it. Just remember that every time you spot a trout on your own, your skills improve. I've got a buddy that I is so good at spotting trout, he can walk up to a piece of water, and if there's a trout around, he'll have a bead on it in five to ten seconds. He's also one of the most consistent trout fisherman I know. Seeing fish and catching fish, go hand and hand.

### **As Much As I've Gone On A Tangent About Always Looking For Trout, It's Impossible To Spot Every Fish In A Stream.**

The majority of us catch most of our fish blind casting, but it's the really smart trout, where getting a visual on them really pays off. On water with lots of educated trout you can't always afford to blind cast your flies or you'll risk putting them down. The big the one's often watch the small fish risk their lives for food and instead hold back and wait for food to enter their safety zone. To catch these trophies, you often have to spot them and make a well planned approach and accurate cast.

The last suggestion I'd like to give everyone trying to get better at spotting trout, is to not get down when you walk up to a hole that you know has fish in it and you fail to spot a single trout. Scan the areas where you can clearly see the bottom first. If you see no signs of life, no worries, because in the process of scanning for fish you've just eliminated a great deal of dead water. You now can focus your attention on drifting your flies through the areas where the bottom is blurry and the fish are probably holding anyways. It's not always about spotting fish, half the battle is identifying where the fish aren't holding, and not wasting your time drifting your flies there.

Keep it Reel, Kent Klewein  
Gink & Gasoline - [www.ginkandgasoline.com](http://www.ginkandgasoline.com)



## **HOW TO SEE TROUT**

### **A New Zealand Fly-Fishing Guide Applies His Skills To The American West.**

October 02, 2021 By Derek Grzelewski

*This article was originally titled "How to Spot Trout" in the 2021 Fly Fishing Made Easy special publication of Fly Fisherman magazine, and was copied from the [www.flyfisherman.com](http://www.flyfisherman.com) website.*

We had barely gotten out of the car when Jennifer pointed to the river and said: “There, a fish just rose! There. Another one. See it?”

How could I not? When you spend a good part of your life walking riverbanks and lakeshores, staring into waters both moving and still in search of feeding fish, when even at night when you close your eyes you see the afterburn of river currents replaying against the backs of your eyelids, the sight of rising trout attracts your vision like red flashing neons.

And these fish, porpoising to intercept tiny Blue-winged Olives on Colorado’s Fryingpan River, were indeed flashing red, their camouflage cued off the brick-red basalt rocks that framed the river and studded its bottom.

“There’s another fish just out from where you are, 4 feet out, 2 o’clock, not rising but nymphing,” I said. “And another one 3 feet above it, too. See them?”

She looked at me first to check if this was some kind of a practical joke. It wasn’t, and she studied the river more closely.

“Ah, yes, now I see them,” she said, and her face lit up with a smile. Since we’ve put our lives and our fishing together, commuting between Colorado and New Zealand following the seasons of trout, Jennifer has easily converted to the idea that sometimes just finding and seeing a feeding fish is as rewarding as catching it. And I, after some 30 years of fly fishing in New Zealand—half of that guiding—have found great delight in transplanting Kiwi angling techniques to the American West and seeing just how well they worked here. This was especially true with the art of sighting fish.

New Zealand has an unsurpassed reputation for sight fishing: spotting the fish before it sees you and sneaking into position to make that all-important first cast. Both anglers and guides in New Zealand have to become experts at spotting trout, out of necessity and by choice. It’s a necessity, since you wouldn’t just blind-fish a blue-ribbon water that may hold one large fish every few hundred yards. And it’s a choice, because this kind of

interaction with the fish is intensely visual, intimate, and electrifying, perhaps the most pure and satisfying way to engage with the trout.

Yet most anglers new to this style of fishing, or unaccustomed to the clarity of water that makes it possible, frequently struggle to see all but the most obvious fish. And, when you point out to them one of the hard-to-see, perfectly camouflaged trout, they think you're playing a prank on them. And keep in mind that the easier the fish are to see, the harder they are to catch, not just because they can see you as well, but because the easy-spotting water—glassy and slow—makes a stealthy presentation tough if not impossible. Ideally, then, you want to start spotting those hard-to-see trout—they are more likely to be deceived, because the broken surface that hides them also disguises any casting faux pas, drag, and approach errors.

Sometimes, especially when visibility is less than ideal, finding feeding fish may seem like an almost supernatural ability. But there is a method to the magic, and strategies to follow, and you certainly do not need an osprey's eyes to find trout and create enough opportunities for a good day's fishing. So let's see if we can demystify the art of spotting trout.

## **Where To Look**

Before you even start spotting fish, trying to x-ray the water and willing the trout to appear, you need to know where to look. Otherwise you may end up straining your eyes through a lot of dead water, losing focus and enthusiasm, then spooking the fish when you finally get to where they were feeding all along. Trout are not distributed evenly in a river. They prefer certain features and places, and identifying this prime trout real estate is the first skill to learn. The best way to do that is to begin looking at a river with the eyes of a paddler.

Notice how the river runs, how it turns from side to side, how the outside corner is always the deeper one, how there is usually a distinct staircase profile to the flow—pool, riffle, pool—and how the current speed varies both along and across the river. These speed differences are the key features for a trout hunter. What you're looking for are current lines and shears—places where fast and slow water meet.

Trout are top predators, and they do not needlessly exert themselves. Their preferred feeding spots are places where they can rest in slower water while feeding from a faster current. Brown trout are notorious for this, often parking in totally slack water with just their noses edging into the current. Rainbows tend to favor faster flows, but they still adhere to the same principles and behavior. That is why you rarely find trout feeding in strong, featureless current. It takes too much of their energy just to stay in one place.

So look for any features and disturbances in the river flow: corners and bank protrusions, rocks and trees, current lines and seams. You'll soon see and realize that, because of the

ways the river flows, how pools funnel into riffles and turn left and right, the current lines are places where most of the food gets concentrated. These are the feed lines, and the edges of those are where you'll find the most fish.

Of course, the river is a complex, three-dimensional environment, even though, looking down from above, we perceive it in only two dimensions. The features we see on the surface—cushions and lee spots, split currents and eddies, pockets of turbulence and calm—also occur in the vertical plane. And the trout are likely to take advantage of those because the water's depth also affords shelter and camouflage.

So pay particular attention to changes in depth—drop-offs, lips, channels, and seams—because they are trout hot spots. Even a single rock is enough to create a holding place for a fish, so let your eyes travel down the edge of a feed line, from a rock to rock, and see if any of those rocks have tails.

After you are able to identify the various edges of currents, both on the surface and along the bottom, you begin to stack them up because the trout like to maximize their feeding opportunities. Basically they need two things: food and shelter. Food comes down the current lines, shelter is found in depth, and under overhanging vegetation, usually both. Understanding this, putting all the habitat clues together, you're well on your way in developing your "fish brain," which is an essential attribute for a trout hunter. You ask yourself, "If I was a fish, where would I be in this piece of water?" Then you look there. With time and practice, you develop an ability to read water as if the trout hideouts were mapped out for you. This is also one of the most satisfying aspects of sight fishing: figuring out where the fish could be, then finding them there.

## **What To Look For**

Forgive me for stating the obvious, but in moving water, trout always face into the current (to feed and to breathe) and they are streamlined into it, so any shape at an odd angle to the flow is unlikely to be a fish. Unless it swims off when you approach, which sometimes happens too.

One summer day in western New Zealand, my friend Jamie and I were staring at a log that almost barred the river, and a massive branch that protruded upstream from the log, just below the surface. The branch seemed almost too thick and long to be a trout, but the light was terrible, with drizzly overcast and metallic glare, so we could not tell for sure. We were down on our knees, peering through clumps of tall grass, and the cicadas were too loud for us to hear ourselves think.



*Shape, orientation, shadows, and colors are clues that you may be looking at a fish, but movement will confirm when you have spotted a trout. Feeding fish move from side to side and up and down in the current. If you don't watch for movement, you may waste your time casting at weeds, sticks, or logs on the bottom. (Dave and Amelia Jensen photo)*

“Have a cast,” Jamie offered.

“Naw, it’s not a fish,” I said, and stood up.

The “branch” swam off at speed. It was easily a double-digit trophy.

When in doubt, always cast, but fear not, as you become an adept at the trout-spotting game, you’ll be spooking a lot of fish, too. This is a good thing, because along the way, you can learn not only where they are and how to approach them but also what they look like. Truth is, with those tough-to-spot trout, you rarely see the whole fish clearly. You see hints, visual clues that what you’re looking at might just possibly be a fish.

Shape and orientation are primary clues, as are shadows and color, but what you really want to see is movement. Feeding fish move a lot. Sometimes, to take an insect close to the bottom, the fish will briefly turn side-on and you’ll see a silvery flash from its flank.



Blink and you'll miss it, so spend time watching any likely candidate closely, looking for signs of activity. You will still end up casting to sticks, rocks, or fish that are resting and will not eat no matter what you throw at them. It's all part of the game.

Weeds can be especially deceptive. Sometimes they check all the boxes—they're in the right spot, they have the right shape and color, cast the right shadow, and yes, show a lot of movement. But like the nonmoving fish, they don't eat, either. It may take you a number of casts and fly changes to figure this out.

One of the key skills for successful sight fishing is the ability to slow down to the pace of water. There is also a contrary school of thought on this, suggesting that you should go fast and cover as much water as you can. But if you do that you'll see only the obvious fish, and you'll spook most of the trout in the river and won't even know that you have.

## **How To Look**

Your eyes are essentially round lenses whose shapes are controlled by several pairs of tiny muscles. Good vision is not the matter of their strength but precision, coordination, and balance. So, when looking for fish, avoid staring hard into the water. This is counterproductive, as it will fatigue your eyes, lock out your peripheral vision (which is good at picking out movement), and may even give you a headache.

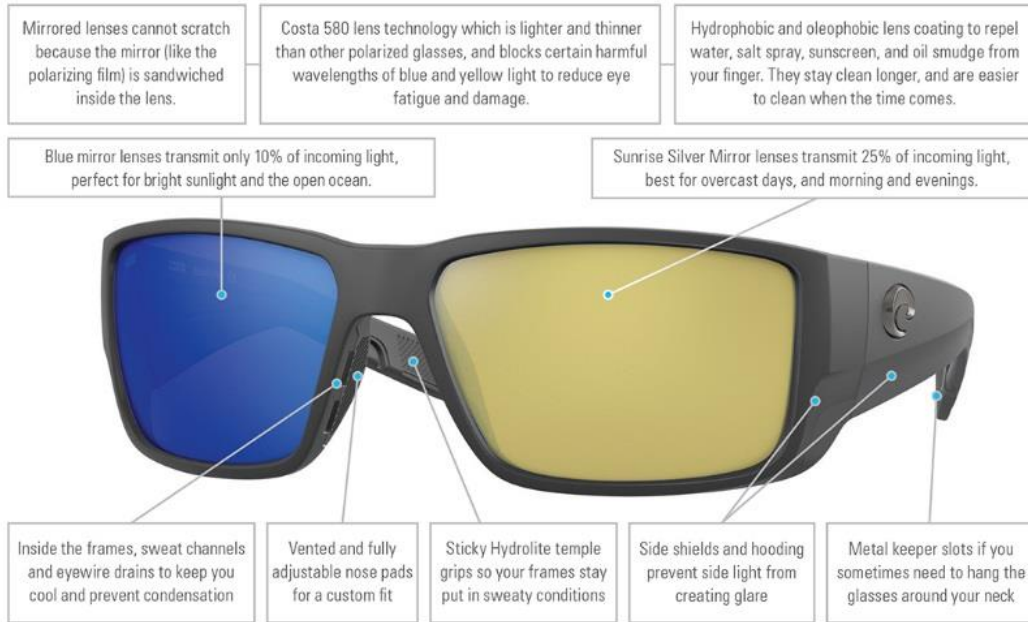
Eyes work best when they are continually moving, so let them travel lightly over the water and through it, exploring it as if it were a giant painting. Relaxed, happy eyes will see more than those trying to bore a hole through the water.

Ideal spotting conditions would have clear blue sky, strong overhead sun, little or no wind, a good high backdrop of trees, cliffs, or distant mountains, and perhaps some extra elevation to look down from. But of course, ideal conditions are rare. Most of the time we have to deal with the prevailing conditions and have strategies to work around them.

Flat, overcast light puts an opaque sheen on the river's surface. Wind can make it look as if it's frozen, lack of backdrop causes glare, and in all these scenarios you will find yourself squinting, staring, tilting your head from side to side, and generally seeing a lot fewer fish. A well-timed hatch can often save a day like that, but otherwise you need to make the most of the sighting opportunities that you do have. So go more slowly—the fish can see you much better in overcast conditions because there is a lot less contrast between below and above, and they are not looking into the sun. Remember, this is a situation of one top predator hunting another, so, with the odds favoring the trout, you really need to lift your game just to stay in it.

Seek any elevation you can find, any backdrop to look against, even if you're looking down the river. When you are moving slowly and stealthily, as a hunter should, it's not uncommon to see a fish downstream of your position, backtrack quietly, and still get an opportunity to cast to it. It's in tough light conditions that having best-quality glasses becomes critical. Skimp on other gear when you must, but if you're serious about sight fishing, you need the best polarized glasses you can afford.

## PERFORMANCE FISHING GLASSES VERSUS FASHION SUNGLASSES



This illustration shows Costa Blackfin Pro frames with a 580 blue mirrored polarized lens on one side, and Sunrise Silver Mirror lens on the other. It's for illustrative purposes only. Costa does not sell frames with mismatched lenses.

*This illustration shows Costa Blackfin Pro frames with a 580 blue mirrored polarized lens on one side, and Sunrise Silver Mirror lens on the other. It's for illustrative purposes only. Costa does not sell frames with mismatched lenses.*

My friend Dean Bell has been considered one of the best—if not the best—trout guides in New Zealand. Though such accolades are highly subjective, one sure thing I can tell you about him is that he's got the best eyes of anyone I've ever fished with.

"My polarized glasses are the most important piece of fishing equipment I own," he says, "and when your reputation as a guide is on the line every day, you cannot afford to use anything but the best. This allows me to find trout most anglers simply walk past. I especially favor the Smith's low-light Ignitor lenses, which transmit 32% of the incoming while still polarizing it. Kind of makes an overcast day sunny again."

The first time I used the Ignitors on a dark, overcast day, I remember thinking to myself, “Man, I can see! I can see again!” Costa Sunrise Silver Mirror 580P lenses are another option for cloudy days, and they have a 25% light transmission rate. Regular fishing lenses commonly have a 12% or 14% light transmission rate, which is perfect for bright, sunny days. As you’re parting with your hard-earned cash, keep in mind that you are not buying just another gadget, but the most essential tool in your fishing kit.

In the end—when you’ve put in plenty of riverside mileage, spooked enough fish and learned from that, when you can read the water and pick out its clues—seeing trout becomes almost a sixth sense. You can’t even explain how or why, but you know that the shape you’re looking at is a fish, even if your companions suspect you’re hallucinating. Sometimes, you’ll still cast to rocks and sticks, and weeds especially, though less and less frequently. There is a particular softness and fluid grace to the shape of trout, which other river features do not have, and you learn to recognize it. It’ll draw your eyes in as if by magic.

How do you know you’re there? When you start doubting yourself, when what your mind dismissed as “not a fish” swims off at speed just as you take another step. So, when in doubt, always cast. Some rocks and weeds I’ve seen have been known to even come up and take a dry fly, and put up a good fight afterwards.

After you’ve learned to spot trout, you can apply your fish-finding skills to other species and environments, including salt water. The visual clues may be slightly different—the colors, shapes, and patterns of movement—but the principles are the same, and so is the thrill.

Be forewarned though: Fly fishing at this level is addictive in its intensity. It refines both skills and expectations, and the way you want to engage with the fish. It’s like developing a taste for expensive single malts—after you have, it’s no longer satisfying to go back to the cheap stuff.

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*Derek Grzelewski is a former professional fly-fishing guide and the founder of Wanaka Flyfishing Academy. He is the author of three books about fly fishing in New Zealand: The Trout Bohemia, The Trout Dreams, and The Trout Diaries.*

**YESTERDAY'S WORLD RIVERS' DAY IS NZ'S RIVERS SHAME DAY**  
NZFFA Press release September 27, 2021

World Rivers Day designated for Sunday 26 September, should be renamed 'Rivers' Shame Day' according to the New Zealand Federation of Freshwater Anglers.

Federation secretary David Haynes of Nelson, said in New Zealand, politicians, regional councils, so-called expert witnesses, independent hearing commissioners and courts, past and present, have all colluded to prioritise industrial scale abstraction and pollution of the public's freshwater resources, over their protection and restoration.

"The current government's 2017 manifesto committed it to '*Take the first steps to clean up rivers and lakes*'" he said.

Labour's 2020 election pledge was to '*continue to improve the health of New Zealand's freshwater and coastal areas. (We) will focus on stopping further degradation, making immediate improvements, and reversing past damage to bring our freshwater resources, waterways and ecosystems to a healthy state within a generation.*'

"Well, none of that has happened and it is business as usual with large scale irrigation schemes, such as the Mayfield-Hinds-Valette scheme being given renewed consents, despite the evidence that they have been spewing nitrates into our rivers and groundwater for a decade."

The whole freshwater mismanagement debacle has, and continues to be, founded on the principle of commercial interests purchasing 'independent' experts to declare no harm will arise from their proposed dam, irrigation scheme or pollution discharge proposal.

"We have spent nearly fifty years in these David and Goliath battles where those who seek to profit from taking and polluting New Zealand's freshwater resource pay lawyers and expert witnesses to support their schemes whilst non-government organisations (NGO's), such as ourselves have no equivalent funds to counter in a fair and equitable way," said David Haynes.

Proposals such as the Three Waters Reform fail to address root cause and will simply add layers of unaccountable bureaucrats to establish and manage an infrastructure company that will be ripe for privatisation in the near future.

Planting trees and fencing waterways is an equally unrealistic response to restore New Zealand's rivers whose flows have been over abstracted for irrigation, whose source aquifers have been grossly polluted by industrial farming, whose channels are choked with



slash and sediment from plantation forestry, and whose braided beds face ecocide from councils' annual aerial applications of glyphosate.

“Until New Zealand understands the value and the limitations of ecosystem services provided by freshwater, further degradation of our rivers is inevitable,” said David Haynes.



*Protest billboards at Canterbury's Selwyn River. The Selwyn was once rated as one of the country's best dry fly streams.*

## **FIVE WAYS TO IMPROVE YOUR NYMPHING**

### **Distilled Advice From A World Champion Fly Angler.**

Howard Croston

From the [www.flyfisherman.com](http://www.flyfisherman.com) website.

### **Thin To Win.**

It's an often-used phrase, but using thinner flies, tippets, and leaders will reduce interference, improve your presentation, and boost your success.

## **Master The Single Fly.**

Sometimes fishing with two or three flies is the way to go, but in other cases this is a lot like shooting at a flock instead of picking out a single bird. More and more in pressured situations, I rely on the single-fly approach—it reduces interference, improves the drift, improves take detection, and drives you to cover your water more effectively and accurately.

## **Distill Your Confidence Flies.**

Boil down your fly boxes to include only your top-producing flies, and carry them in more weights and more sizes. If a Perdigon Nymph is your favorite fly, that's fine. You should have four different sizes, and within each size, six different weights. A simple fly of the correct weight fished properly often outperforms a flawless imitation of an inappropriate weight or size. If you're scared to lose it, it shouldn't be in your box.

## **Fish Where Others Don't.**

Push the boundaries of where you are willing to throw a fly, from tiny pockets in a raging torrent to the skinniest edge riffle, or under the deepest cover. If you carry lots of your confidence flies and master the skill of choosing the right weight for the water depth, you'll have the nerve to push the limits on where you can fish—and you'll catch fish that other people passed by. As an extra bonus, these are often the same spots where big fish hide in pressured waters.

## **Become A Neurotic Striker.**

Even with the most refined setups and the best line control, you will see or feel only a small percentage of the strikes you generate. The old adage, "Find an excuse to strike!" is as relevant with modern Euro-nymphing tactics as it ever has been in fly fishing. I know one former world champion who, in a difficult final session, successfully "blind struck" a large percentage of his fish by setting the hook where he expected a take to come, rather than waiting for the sighter to register a strike. Too often, by the time the sighter registers a hittable strike, it's too late. Strike whenever you think a trout might have that fly in its mouth—even if you don't see anything out of the ordinary.

One last piece of advice I'd like to offer is that—although there is absolutely no doubt that some of the modern Euro-nymphing techniques are truly deadly—they are like all other methods. Each method has a time and a place—fly fishing demands more than a one-size-fits-all approach.

I coach and mentor many fly fishers who are looking to improve their fishing for pleasure or competition. It's surprising how many of them rely too heavily on Euro nymphing in one form or another. Dry-fly, dry/dropper, classic upstream nymphing, and even true soft-hackle (aka North Country spider) fishing can all upstage even the best Euro nymph on the right day. The best fly fisher is ultimately a well-rounded angler who has mastered the fundamentals of many techniques, and knows when and where to implement them.

## **"MATCHING THE HATCH" FOR KAHAWAI**

By Tony Orman

It's an old adage in fly fishing for trout that you must "match the hatch" - i.e. work out not only the particular insect the trout are taking but also the particular phase of the hatching. After several seasons chasing kahawai with the fly rod, I've had several experiences that make "match the hatch" applicable to the saltwater situation and therefore make it imperative to carry a variety of flies.

You see kahawai are not always a push-over. Some days they can be as fussy as trout, just following a fly or lure in and not taking. To appreciate this it's necessary to understand fish are of low intelligence rating. You might say the parallel in is trout fishing with "matching the hatch." The "selective feeding" by trout has nothing to do with cunning but is a reflection of a fish's low intelligence. You might liken it to female derision at husbands' inability to multi-task. Male homo sapiens and fish can only focus on one thing at a time!

So the fish, be it trout or kahawai, home in on one prey available at the time and focus on only that and are therefore oblivious to anything else. Basically it shows up with the comparative effectiveness between spinning and fly fishing for kahawai. Apart from the odd exception, the fly far out fishes the spinner.

One evening a few years ago was a graphic example. A friend and I headed down to the mouth, he toted a spinning rod and I the fly rod. We arrived at the mouth and there were six other chaps there - spinning.

In about an hour and a half's fishing, on a small fly tied on a Black Magic saltwater hook I caught 20 kahawai with several good-sized, chunky fish ideal for the smoker, while my friends - an adept spin fisherman - just three metres away had no kahawai takes. Nor did the other six spin fishers catch any.

On gutting the kahawai, I found they'd been homing in on very small bait fish, just two centimetres or so long. The typical kahawai spinner just didn't measure up as an imitation

but a small size 2 saltwater fly did. Other times the kahawai may be concentrating on yellow-eyed mullet so a large fly is needed.

Sure, that evening's contrast between success rates was exceptional. However other times I've mathematically worked it out tossing the number spinning into the equation and worked out the fly rod's catch rate is often 600 or 700 percent better!

It goes further than that.

In my book "Trout With Nymph" (1974) I told of the super normal releaser factor. Many years ago a Nelson friend who by profession was a scientist plus a very skilled angler on both trout and saltwater fish, told me animal behaviourists like Lorenz and Tinbergen researched this aspect and concluded basically animals such as fish do not look at the whole object. Instead they see some special feature called the "releaser". When this is exaggerated such as in a fly design it's termed "the super-normal releaser."

Not always do trout feed selectively so on those days a fly with the "super-normal releaser" isn't so necessary. The same with kahawai. Some days they will take almost anything. Other days they can be fussy and finicky.

I usually wear polaroid glasses when kahawai fishing. At times, kahawai will flash at the fly and not take, or they will just follow in, as trout are inclined to do, after the swinging fly. You can see the same with spinners at times - just a big grey shape or two following the lure and not taking. When that happens, it's a signal to make a change, perhaps to a smaller size or a different colour in a bid to incorporate the "supernormal releaser."

Some days when kahawai are fastidious, I've found a change to a blue fly works.

Fly size comes into it too. I normally tie up kahawai flies on a 2/0 but with whitebait runs happening in spring and early summer and the likelihood of kahawai focusing on the tiny fish, I'll have some slim, pale patterns on a size 2 or even 4 saltwater hook.

I like to incorporate eyes on my flies. I figure that a fleeing fish is wide eyed in its panic and you want to ensure your pattern is as life like as possible. Is a duo of prominent eyes on a fly also a "super normal releaser"?





*Johan with a very nice Kahawai taken on the fly. These fish are fantastic fun on a fly rod and well worth chasing from either a boat or the shore. Photo courtesy of Johan Kok.*

## **WHEN WE CAN LEAVE AUCKLAND AGAIN**

### **Don't Be Kind, Be Polite!**

Eventually we will be able to travel around our country again, and no doubt many of us will be going fishing on rivers that run through farmland and require crossing a farmer's property to get to the water.

Just remember the one Golden Rule in asking permission to cross someone's land, BE POLITE.

There have been some disturbing reports recently of fly fishing anglers walking over private farmland assuming they have that right because they purchased a licence and when confronted by the land owner being quite obstreperous if not downright offensive.

Doubtless these anglers were new to fly fishing and as such can be forgiven somewhat for their mistake, but not for their rude behavior.

The good thing to come out of this is that we know they weren't Aucklanders as we are still stuck at home.

Make an effort to find the Farmer, or if they are not there a farm worker with some authority, and ask their permission.

Over the years farmers have given me some great tips on best spots, best flies and best time of day to fish a particular river, all as a result of simply being polite.

## **EDITORS NOTE**

I hope you are all doing ok and staying safe amongst this ongoing lock down.

Last month I wrote that we 'may even miss opening day'. Well that has been and gone and October is quickly following it. At this rate December is looking optimistic. So, with that in mind, why not give salt water fly a go, it really can be great fun. Even if you don't catch anything you are still out, away from the house and having fun.

You can use your freshwater gear too but just remember to thoroughly clean it in fresh water as soon as you get back. And by thoroughly I mean taking your reel and spool apart and dropping them both in a bucket of fresh water.

## FISHING FUNNIES



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

## **MEMBERS FEEDBACK**

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

## **But are we??**

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

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

Thank you - Your committee

## **NSFF CLUB MERCHANDISE**

Cap – \$15.00 Inclusive of GST

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

Embroidered Cloth Badge - \$7.50 Inclusive of GST

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

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

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

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## **NORTH SHORE FLYFISHERS EXECUTIVE**

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