

Meikleour Fishings

Newsletter Winter 2016



Ready for another season!

November is well on its way, and while marvelling at the spawning activity above the bridge, I have been reflecting on the 2016 salmon fishing season. The exceptionally dry spring didn't suit us and despite our guests' enthusiasm and persistence catches were disappointing. However, our autumn catches improved from 2015, and indeed some of you enjoyed some really good sport in October.

One of the noticeable aspects of our summer and autumn fishing was a significantly higher proportion of grilse caught compared to last year, but interestingly salmon landed were on average 10% bigger than in 2015 (the size of salmon lost is debatable, but this is an analysis better conducted by a roaring fire, in agreeable company, with a wee dram). Those of you who were with us in September will have noticed the remarkable accumulation of small grilse in the castle pool, but these fish had been in the river for a while

and were extremely hard to tempt. This lack of fresh running autumn fish has been observed on all East coast rivers and while some anglers are already announcing the end of the autumn run, it is interesting to remind us – and our facebook site is a great way of doing so - that only 2 years ago we were catching bars of silver at the end of October.

While the overall 2016 catches on the Tay were not champagne popping material, the few fish counters in the district have told a different story. For example, the latest corrected count for Pitlochry Dam was about 5300 compared to a five-year average of around 4600. As all fish counters on our system are spring counters (autumn counters are practically impossible to implement on the lower parts of the river) it is difficult to assess actual autumn runs. As to why spring runs seem to be strong while autumn runs seem to come later strengthens the idea that marine factors in the North Atlantic are at work. If our guests can't do much about the melting

of the ice in Greenland, they certainly do their share to support the River Tay conservation code, and more than ever we would like to thank you for returning almost all of your fish this season or for having informed our ghillies when your equipment had been used abroad.

We have been extremely busy this year with the farm, the fishing and the hotel working together to the benefit of each other. Like salmon, country estates need to adapt to climatic fluctuations and last winter's floods made us rethink the way we farm. We are now sowing green winter cover near waterways to reduce surface run-off, benefit the soil and insect life. We have also started the work on a rather substantial winter vegetable storage facility which will allow us to be less dependent on the weather while farming more responsibly... carrots running down the Isla is not something we want to see ever again!



Carrot Fly

The Carrot Fly, a pattern sometimes seen during winter flood on the Isla. Considered unsporty in some circles.

While most of our efforts have been to repair flood damage, the right bank above the Tunnel Hole has been cleared and will be managed as a wild meadow. We are now hoping to be granted permission to consolidate the bank in that section of attractive fast water.

Our commitment to introduce more women and youngsters to the river and to our sport have been very rewarding this year. Our popular guided ladies days continue to raise

significant funds for our local charity Angling For Youth Development and our flytying Sunday school at the boathouse enables any young ones to learn this great hobby. We have also been working with biology teachers from Perth High School to integrate salmon conservation in their environmental study curriculum. A couple of weeks ago, we welcomed a group of 40 students from Canada, Finland, France, Germany, Greenland, Scotland and the USA. They were introduced to Spey casting, river management and the importance of angling in our local economy. This is a fascinating project that we are hoping to bring forward next year.

Betty, Calum, John, myself and also all the other employees on the estate are looking forward to welcoming you next year, this being Greg and his team at the pub, Lindsay the gardener or Ian our tree specialist. We all take pride in making your stay a unique experience. You will find enclosed our pricing for summer and autumn 2017. Thanks to all of you who have rebooked their dates already, and if you are thinking of booking a fishing trip, do let Betty know.

We wish you a wonderful festive season.
Tight Lines,
Claire
Claire Mercer Nairne



Nov 2016. Students and biology teachers gathering at Meikleour for the Atlantic Salmon Conservation School Network. 7 countries represented.

2017 FISHING PRICE

Meikleour House & Upper Islamouth Beat
2 Boats (each with 2 Rods) and 4 Wading / Bank Rods
£ per day INCLUDING VAT

Week Commencing	Mon-Fri		Sat	
	£	£	£	£
	Boat	Bank	Boat	Bank
16 January	139	36	153	40
23 January	139	36	153	40
30 January	139	36	153	40
06 February	139	36	153	40
13 February	139	36	153	40
20 February	139	36	153	40
27 February	139	36	153	40
06 March	156	36	172	40
13 March	187	48	206	53
20 March	187	48	206	53
27 March	187	48	206	53
03 April	228	60	251	66
10 April	240	60	264	66
17 April	240	60	264	66
24 April	240	60	264	66
01 May	240	60	264	66
08 May	240	60	264	66
15 May	240	60	264	66
22 May	240	60	264	66
29 May	240	60	264	66
05 June	199	60	219	66
12 June	199	60	219	66
19 June	199	60	219	66
26 June	199	60	219	66
03 July	199	60	219	66
10 July	211	60	232	66
17 July	235	60	259	66
24 July	235	60	259	66
31 July	235	60	259	66
07 August	300	90	330	99
14 August	300	90	330	99
21 August	300	90	330	99
28 August	300	90	330	99
04 September	300	90	330	99
11 September	360	120	396	132
18 September	360	120	396	132
25 September	384	132	422	145
02 October	384	132	422	145
09 October	384	132	422	145

If you require a personal ghillie for your bank rods please let Betty know with reasonable notice.
 Price for a personal bank ghillie: from £110 + VAT a day.

Meet the team



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