

On the Rise



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New era for Inland Fisheries management and staff

It's a new era for the Inland Fisheries Commission, marked by the implementation of the Inland Fisheries Review which will see changes made to inland fisheries legislation as well as to administration, like the name change to 'Inland Fisheries Service' which will soon become official.

Management changes resulting from the Review are already underway, with the Commissioner and the Minister, David Llewellyn, now being advised on fisheries management policy by an Inland Fisheries Advisory Council, chaired by Professor Nigel Forteach. The current Associate Commissioners, Jim Ferrier, Les Monson and Bob Ward are members of the Council, along with representatives of professional trout guides and commercial fishers, and a native fauna conservation advisor.

Greg McCrossen was appointed Commissioner of Inland Fisheries in July 1999, although he had been acting in that capacity

for the past year. The position title will change to Director, with the renaming of the Service, once the enabling legislation for the required structural changes is passed.

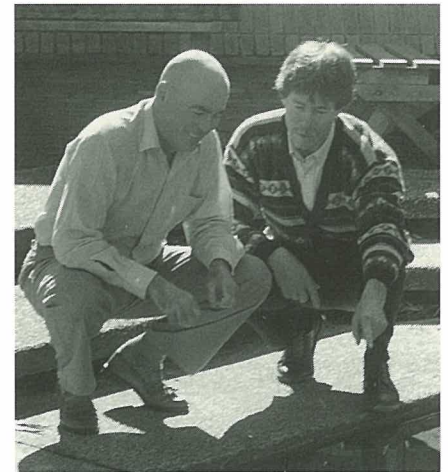
Greg is a highly experienced senior administrator and was formerly General Manager Corporate Support in the Department of Primary Industries, Water and Environment. His strong background in financial and resource management, which has already brought financial benefits to the IFC, will almost certainly place the Commission on a strong business footing in the future.

Warwick Nash was appointed as Deputy Director and commenced work in August 1999. Warwick is a scientist with a proven record in fisheries management, education and administration. He will add greatly to the research potential of the Commission and the IFC's ability to commence planning and implementation of the fisheries management aspects of the Review.

The staff of the IFC have a big challenge

ahead in the development and implementation of a Strategic Plan for the new Service as well as a range of specific management plans for individual fisheries. The plans will ensure that all environmental factors and stakeholder values are considered, and that stakeholders are consulted and kept informed of management decisions.

Commissioner, Greg McCrossen with Deputy Director, Warwick Nash



Meet the man with the job

As the new Boss, Greg McCrossen is quietly confident about the job ahead, namely to lead the Commission, through the changes resulting from the Review and into the new millennium as the Inland Fisheries Service.

Aside from the benefits of his well developed skills in corporate management, the IFC has a leader who is enthusiastic about the job and keen to promote its role in managing the inland fisheries resource.

"I believe that our role is critical for ensuring that the world-renowned inland

fisheries resource in Tasmania is maintained for future generations," Greg said.

Greg has already brought new life to the Commission, by improving staff conditions, upgrading computer technology, fitting out a new laboratory at Head Office and building a much needed workshed at the Salmon Ponds.

He's also been extremely busy searching for additional funds for a range of projects, including the restoration of Lake Sorell which is now underway, and research into the viability of a new commercial glass eel fishery in the State. And there are still other projects in the pipe-line or waiting on the outcome of funding applications.

"I'd like to bring a more commercial focus to the operations of the Commission and I'm aiming to harness greater government support and funding for operations and projects," he said.

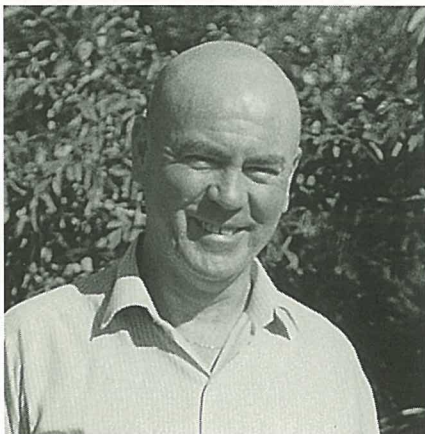
"I see the future for the Service in building partnerships with stakeholders and other management bodies, and providing opportunities for industry development, in tourism as well as the recreational and commercial fisheries.

"I also believe that the research potential of the Service needs to be prioritised and strengthened as the basis of ensuring best practice sustainable management.

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The Commission's position on salmon imports

The Inland Fisheries Commission made a submission to AQIS strongly opposing the importation of raw salmon, marine finfish products, and exotic fish because of the threat posed to Tasmania's pristine wild trout fishery, native freshwater fauna including already endangered species, and freshwater fish farming.

The Commission contended that the primary underlying assumption of AQIS's draft Import Risk Analysis (IRA) was that whilst the probability of disease importation exists, the risk posed is acceptable. The Inland Fisheries Commission does not agree and submitted that the level of risk is unacceptable to the community.

The Commission also objected to not having the full or final AQIS report for comment before the decision was made.

The following summarises the Commission's submission to AQIS. The full text is on the IFC internet site, <www.ifc.tas.gov.au>.

Declining world fisheries

The deteriorating world disease situation reinforces the need for caution. Disease has caused extensive damage to commercial, recreational and native fisheries in the Northern Hemisphere.

Despite high levels of expenditure the problem appears to be out of control.

Little true wild recreational fishing remains in North America. Whirling disease is responsible for devastating several of North America's major recreational wild rainbow trout streams.

Current Industry Status

The value of angling product to Tasmania is estimated at \$34-\$40 million annually with the potential to grow to approximately \$50 million in five years.

Tasmania has world-class wild trout fisheries and one of very few wilderness-fishing experiences remaining in the world. These fisheries are considered by many international devotees as being in the "must fish" category.

Whilst infections in commercial fish culture situations can be treated by vaccination, etc., this is simply not possible in relation to wild fish.

Angling has enormous potential for growth in Tasmania and Tourism Tasmania, in conjunction with its Federal counterparts, is currently undertaking and encouraging a specific marketing strategy to attract more international visitors on trout fishing alone.

As world population increases Tasmania's wild trout fishery and wilderness fishing experience will only increase in value and popularity.

These industries are an extremely important Tasmanian and Australian asset with major growth potential that should be recognised and protected.

Confidence for investment in related industries flows from the Commonwealth's December 1996 decision to maintain the ban on raw fish imports. This decision was sensible and resulted from lengthy and careful consideration.

Native Freshwater Fish

Six native fish species found in Tasmania belong to the Order Salmoniformes and are vulnerable, endangered and/or rare. They are therefore particularly susceptible to disease carried by salmonids.

Quarantine Issues

AQIS was urged to adopt standards acceptable to the community to maintain socio-economic values as it did in December 1996.

The only changes to circumstances since then indicate that the 1996 decision should stand or that quarantine protection should be tightened further.

AQIS recognised the risk to Tasmania, at least in one pathway of exposure, but then considered that there is negligible risk overall to Australia. The Commission suggested that a significant probability of risk in Tasmania would establish a similar risk to Australia as a whole. It was asserted that local risks should not be ignored when risks are examined from a national perspective.

Tasmania's stance

IFC, on behalf of the Minister for Inland Fisheries, commercial freshwater fish farms, and all freshwater anglers remains strongly opposed to the importation of fish and raw fish products from countries with existing disease problems that have already seriously degraded the scale and status of the fish culture and recreational fishery industries, and native fish species. Action is now being considered at the "whole of Government" level and IFC continues to monitor the situation. The Commission stands ready to contribute to the recently approved Senate Inquiry into the issue.

Lake Sorell remediation work begins

Work has commenced on the two-year Lake Sorell and Crescent remediation project with the construction of additional European Carp containment screens at Lake Crescent.

The Project is aimed at restoring the once prominent Lake Sorell trout fishery as well as maintaining important ecological values of the two lakes' system.

Improving the outlet structures at Lake Crescent will allow greater flexibility in the management of water levels in both lakes. This increase in the ability to manipulate and control water levels is critical for meeting the competing demands for the water resource and for improving the health of the ecosystems in lakes Sorell and Crescent.

The resulting increase in water release capacity will also enable improved response to seasonal fluctuations in rainfall without compromising the containment strategies for the noxious unwanted fish species European Carp, the habitat needs of the Golden Galaxias, an endemic native fish of international significance, or the provision of a reliable water supply for downstream domestic and irrigation use.

The Government has already committed \$450 000 towards the Project from the State Budget and is waiting on the outcome of the Inland Fisheries Commission's submission to the Commonwealth for additional funding through the Natural Heritage Trust.

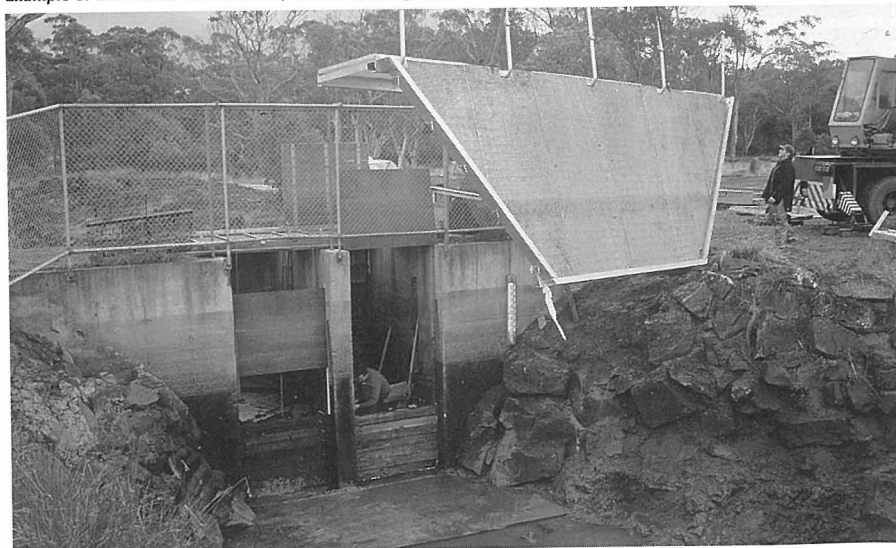
The Project embraces built works,

together with scientific investigations and community consultation. The latter is important to ensure that the outcomes of the Project address the interests of all stakeholders, including state government agencies, local government and private interests such as the Clyde River Water Trust, angling and other recreational user groups, Tourism, Forestry, Police, Aboriginal

Land Council, and landowners.

The five main elements of the Project include the review and improvement of the water operation model for Lakes Sorell and Crescent; Mountain Creek Earth Works and Fish Traps designed to correct stream flows into Lake Sorell, restore its viability as a trout spawning habitat, and help control the turbidity problem in Lake Sorell; Lake Crescent Screen Duplication, enabling much improved control of water levels in both lakes; a water management plan; and overall Project management.

Example of the containment screens, which are being duplicated at Lake Crescent



New regulations for the start of the 1999 Whitebait Season

Tougher restrictions on illegal whitebait fishing aimed at deterring poaching are being introduced for the start of the 1999 Season for recreational whitebait, which opens on Saturday 18 September until Sunday 17 October with fishing confined to the daily hours between sunrise and sunset.

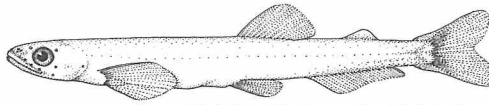
The term 'whitebait' is a collective name for small transparent schooling fishes that migrate into estuaries and up rivers in Tasmania during spring and summer and form what is known as 'whitebait runs'.

Six species of fish are commonly found in the runs, with the most significant of these being the Tasmanian whitebait, *Lovettia sealii*, which is found only in Tasmania. This species is also most at risk from over-fishing, partly because it is the pre-spawning adult that migrates upstream, whereas in the other species it is the juvenile phases that form the runs.

As the authority responsible for management of the whitebait fishery, the Inland Fisheries Commission's first priority is to ensure the survival of whitebait species. Regulations governing the fishery, therefore, are deliberately restrictive in order to protect whitebait from over-fishing, while still allowing a recreational catch.

It is an offence for a person to have a whitebait net at or on an inland water, unless the person has a licence to take whitebait and the particular water is open to whitebait fishing at the time.

The waters open to whitebait fishing this season include: the Pieman River, Duck River



Lovettia sealii, Tasmanian Whitebait

(except within 50m below the weir), Deep Creek, Black River, Inglis River, Franklin Rivulet, Tamar River, Great Forester River, Derwent River, Huon River, Don River, Big Henty River and the Forth River (except within 100m below the weir). The Mersey River will remain closed to protect stocks of *Lovettia*, as well as to cater for angling use of the river and assist in environmental studies currently being undertaken in the Mersey.

A specific licence, not an angling licence, is required for whitebait at a cost of \$20 and this does not permit the sale of whitebait. New regulations introduced this year restrict the number of nets per license to one, require a tag with license number attached to each net and for a licensee to be no more than 20 metres from a set net.

In addition, the net should have an opening no wider than 120cm in circumference, nor any fitted structure that diverts fish into the net, and it should not be used from a boat (except in the Pieman, Derwent, Henty and Huon rivers).

The maximum daily catch by a licensee is 1kg (which would fill a 1 litre milk carton), the maximum catch per licence for the season is 10kg and the maximum quantity that can be held at any one time is also 10kg.

Heavy poaching in the north west of the State poses a significant risk to the long-

term survival of some whitebait species and severely hampers the Commission's ability to ensure the sustainable management of the whitebait fishery. Persistent poachers, who are well organised and continue to challenge authority, not only threaten the future of whitebait, but also disrupt legitimate fishers who are often discouraged from accessing favourite fishing sites.

Surveillance has been stepped up this year, with officers from the Parks and Wildlife Service and Tasmania Police joining a dedicated team of Inland Fisheries Inspectors in a combined effort to deter the poaching. A recent operation in the upper reaches of the Mersey and Forth Rivers, involving eleven police officers and two fisheries inspectors, for instance, led to the arrest of seven people on a total of 22 charges.

Besides the fact that the sale of whitebait is illegal, purchasers must understand that they are supporting the black market for whitebait, and are also responsible for risking the viability of the fishery and the survival of whitebait species.

The Inland Fisheries Commission is determined to protect the fishery and is currently investigating further regulatory, enforcement and educational means of discouraging poaching in the future and implementing strategies that will ensure the sustainable management of whitebait.

Licenses for whitebait are available from select fishing tackle outlets throughout the State and from the Inland Fisheries Commission, Derwent Park.

Animal Welfare Committee releases recreational fishing guide

The National Consultative Committee on Animal Welfare (NCCAW) recently released a position statement, *Animal Welfare Aspects of Recreational Fishing*, which provides a guide for recreational fishers on fishing responsibly and humanely.

NCCAW liaised with recreational fishing bodies, State fishing departments and the AFFA to produce the statement, which complements the *National Code of Practice for Recreational and Sport Fishing* published by Australia's recreational fishing bodies.

NCCAW has representatives of the State and Territory animal welfare units, the National Farmers' Federation, the RSPCA, Animals Australia, the Australian Veterinary Association, the National Health and Medical Research Council and Environment Australia.

Information is provided on fishing tackle and how different types of hooks and line affect the fish. It also contains information on appropriate landing, tethering and tagging techniques to minimise the damage to fish.

The following is a summary of specific practices related to recreational fishing:

Fishing Tackle:

- The selection of hooks and their arrangement should be made on the basis of minimising damage to the fish. Barbless hoods inflict less damage to fish, so their use is encouraged, particularly if fish are to be released.
- Hooks which rust and breakdown quickly are preferable to long lasting hooks if fish are to be released, particularly in fresh water species.
- The use of excessively light line is discouraged as it is likely to result in longer landing times and more frequent break-offs. Fish which break-off may be compromised by attached line.

Landing:

- If fish are to be returned to the water, handling and time out of water should be minimised. Where practical, fish should be released without removal from the water.
- Fish should be landed quickly in order to minimise damage.
- Where a fish is damaged, such as by excessive bleeding, eye injury, or prolapse of the swim bladder, the fish should be killed immediately and not released.
- Soft knotless landing mesh net should be used where appropriate rather than gaffs if it is expected that the fish will be released.
- The handling of live fish should be minimised. In particular, fish should not be picked up by the tail or in the gills. Generally fish over 1 kg should have their belly supported to prevent damage to the spinal column.
- Wet cotton gloves (if available) or wet hands should be used to minimise damage to the fish.
- Care should be taken when removing hooks. If internal damage may result from

hook removal, e.g. in the gills or the gut, the hook should be left in place and the line cut as short as possible.

- Captured fish which are to be kept must be killed as soon as possible, either by a blow to the head or by using the sharp end of a knife to destroy the brain. Prompt killing protects the welfare of the fish and improves the quality of the product.

Tethering of Fish:

- Tethering through the gills or mouth of live fish for any purpose is unacceptable and should be phased out.

Live Baiting (the use of live fish):

- Live baiting is to be discouraged on animal welfare grounds. While live baiting continues, it should be carried out in a way which minimises damage to the bait fish.

Fishing Competitions (temporary stocking):

- Fishing competitions involving the temporary stocking of fish in an unsuitable environment (e.g. public swimming pools contaminated with chlorine), and/or which involve excessive handling, inappropriate transportation, repetitive capture and/or overcrowding, should be avoided.

Commercial "fish-out" recreational activities:

- Commercial "fish-out" operators are encouraged to provide unskilled fishers with instructions on humane handling and killing of captured fish. A program of instruction and monitoring is desirable.

Fish Tagging:

- Only identification methods which are humane and cause minimal disruption to fish should be adopted.

NATIVE FISH NEWS

Jean Jackson, Scientific Officer,
Native Fish Conservation

Native fish staff have been in the office more than usual during winter, collating results from last summer and planning some new activities for conservation of threatened native fish. We hope to make good progress on increasing the security of some populations this summer.

*Clarence galaxias habitat in the central highlands.
Photo: B. Mawbey*



New Clarence galaxias population discovered

Surveys in April in an isolated area on the central plateau hit the jackpot with the discovery of a good population of the endangered Clarence galaxias. There are still further areas to be explored with potential for the species to be present and maps are being closely scrutinised! The site is free of brown trout or any other introduced fish, which are apparently kept out by a section of steep stream. If trout were to become established there, the Clarence galaxias would be eliminated and the chances of the long-term survival of the species would not look so promising.

The situation of this population shows how vital it is that trout (or any other fish, animal or plant) are not moved around and introduced to any other waters. Such activities are illegal and threaten all our native aquatic plants and animals. A major activity of the native fish team is checking populations of threatened fish for invasion of introduced species. No such invasions have been found in recent years although they have been observed in the past to have devastating consequences. For example, brown trout were illegally introduced to the Swan River above Hardings Falls in the 1980s and have eliminated the endangered Swan galaxias from all of this river except small refuge reaches.

Student to work on saddled galaxias genetics wanted

Preparations are being made for a new genetic study of the saddled galaxias, *G. tanycephalus*. The species lives only in Woods and Arthurs lakes. A preliminary study by Andrew Sanger and Nick Elliott from CSIRO showed that there might be two distinct spawning groups in Woods Lake, with most fish spawning in spring and a smaller number spawning in autumn. This is interesting because other lake-dwelling galaxias species spawn only in spring, whereas stream-dwelling galaxias spawn in autumn. The saddled galaxias may be showing its evolution from an original stream-dwelling population of spotted galaxias (*G. truttaceus*) that has become landlocked and evolved into a different species.

Galaxias tanycephalus, which is thought to have evolved from a landlocked population of G. truttaceus. Photo B. Mawbey



The new study, in cooperation with Nick Elliott and Jon Waters in New Zealand, aims to confirm whether there are two genetically distinct spawning populations and determine whether the population in Woods Lake is genetically distinct from that in Arthurs Lake. Fin clip samples are being collected ready for DNA analysis, some DNA markers have been trialed by Jon, and all we need is a student interested in undertaking the project, probably for Honours. Anyone interested should contact Nick Elliott at CSIRO marine labs, Robert White at the University of Tasmania, or Jean Jackson at IFC.



Giant freshwater lobster in the north east. Photo B. Mawbey

Revision of the Astacopsis recovery plan

A recovery plan for the giant freshwater lobster *Astacopsis gouldi* was prepared by David Blühdorn as part of a Regional Forest Agreement project in 1997. The species is listed as vulnerable on both Tasmanian and Commonwealth threatened species legislation. The plan describes actions needed to improve the species' conservation status; the major actions aim to reduce fishing pressure and protect habitat. The recovery plan is now being revised and updated by Jean Jackson and the Astacopsis recovery team, so that it can be submitted to the Threatened Species Unit for state government approval. The approval process includes advertising the plan for public comment. After State approval it will be submitted to Environment Australia for 'adoption' by the Federal government.

A new IFC staff member, Todd Walsh, is working from Smithton to increase public awareness of the lobster and its needs. Todd is also regularly monitoring some populations in the north west to keep an eye on numbers, movements and breeding.

New Native Fish technical officer

After many years with native fish, Brett Mawbey has moved on to new horizons to work on the glass eel project with Frances Ruwald, Henry Maxwell and Phil Boxall. He has just been replaced by Alastair Morton. Alastair previously worked with the Hydro consultancy at IFC and has worked with native fish at the University of Tasmania.

OTHER THAN TROUT

A regular article on animals of interest to the angler

River Blackfish

by Brett Mawbey, Technical Officer, Inland Fisheries Commission

River blackfish (*Gadopsis marmoratus*) is Tasmania's largest native freshwater fish naturally occurring in rivers and streams in the north of the State draining into Bass Strait, similar to that of the giant freshwater crayfish. Blackfish also occur naturally on the mainland of South-eastern Australia.

Its natural range in Tasmania was probably from the Arthur River in the north west to the Ringarooma system in the north east, but excluding the Tamar River and its tributaries.

As a result of introductions, blackfish now inhabit the North and South Esk rivers, Derwent and Huon rivers in the south and numerous farm dams and some lakes especially in the north of the State. They are regarded as common and widespread in Tasmania.

Conservation status

Although river blackfish are regarded as common and widespread, they are also susceptible to land and habitat degradation. Along with other aquatic species, they are especially affected when our rivers are exposed to disturbance, such as the removal of riparian vegetation, bank erosion, de-snagging, channelisation, siltation and chemical pollution. Farming practices and forestry operations are also contributing factors. Eggs and juveniles are particularly vulnerable to being smothered by silt. All this may have an effect on abundance and recruitment. If we manage land with preservation in mind the river blackfish will continue to thrive, along with many of our other aquatic species.

Habitat requirement

Blackfish prefer to inhabit pools and slow flowing sections of rivers and streams with abundant cover, such as overhanging debris, submerged logs, log jams and boulders. Blackfish are mainly active at night, cryptic and secretive rather than shy and won't show themselves easily, mostly sticking to the dark, cool and well sheltered areas. They are seldom seen with the naked eye.

Reproduction

Blackfish generally spawn in spring or early summer when water temperatures are higher, around 14-16°C. Eggs are large (up to 4mm in diameter), and deposited in submerged hollow logs as well as other possible sites in their preferred habitat. Females may carry up to 500 eggs or more, depending on fish size. Prior to spawning the fish will form pairs and become very territorial, staying in the general vicinity of their chosen site. Once laid, eggs will stick and are carefully guarded by the adults until they hatch about 16 days later. Newly hatched larvae are about 6-8mm long and live off their egg sac for about a month.

Diet

River blackfish are opportunistic feeders eating a variety of aquatic invertebrates, crustaceans, terrestrial insects. They will occasionally predate on other fish in an ambush fashion.

Adult River Blackfish. Photo: G.Edgar.

Size

Blackfish grow up to 600mm and 5.5kg but are usually smaller, commonly found up to 300mm.

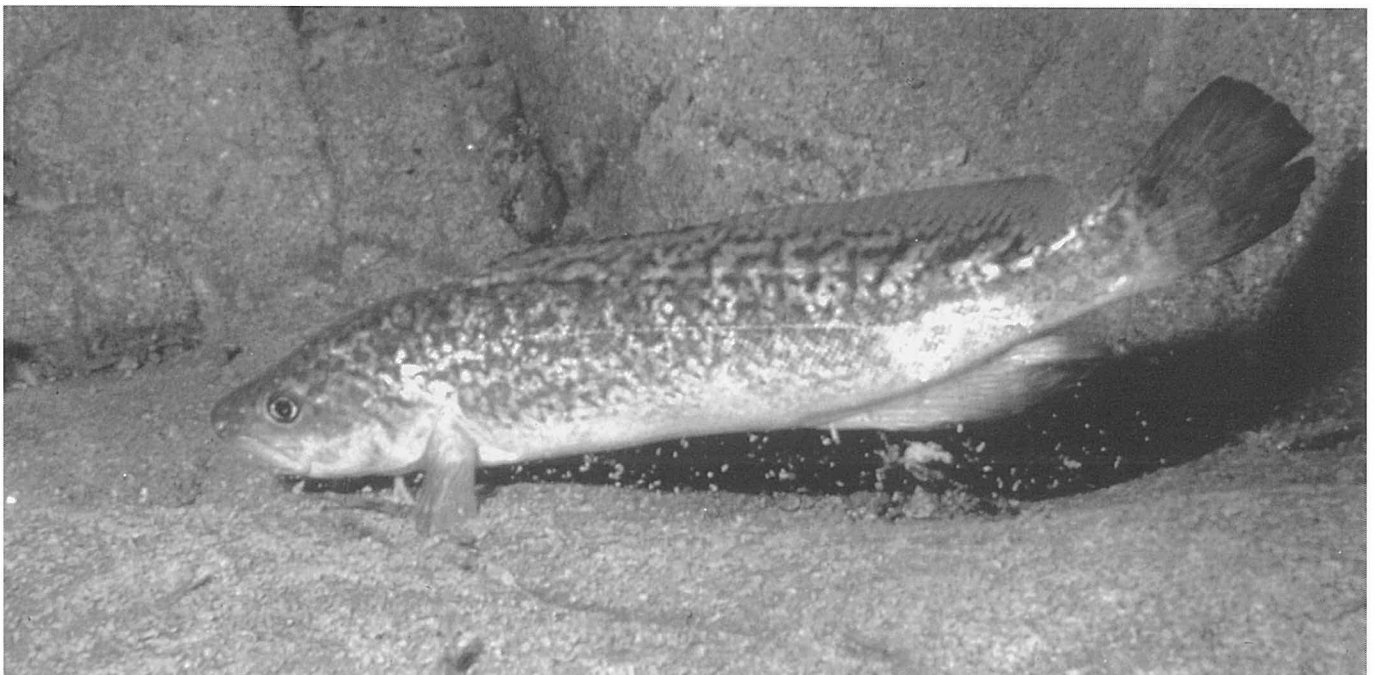
Angling

River blackfish are often overlooked as an angling species but may provide fine sport on lighter equipment. They will readily take live bait such as worms and grubs. Some anglers have reported fishing success with small lures and wet flies close to the river bank, although great skill is required for this method to avoid repeated snagging around dense cover where they live. Suspended bait is the preferred option.

Anyone wanting to fish for blackfish in Tasmania, must hold a current Inland Fisheries Commission angling licence. However, anyone may take native fish using a bush pole, no less than one metre in length and must be without a reel and running line. A person under 14 years does not require a licence.

On the table

An excellent eating fish with soft white flesh as good as any of our freshwater species, blackfish require delicate treatment when cooking. Fillets from bigger fish may be poached, fried in butter or wrapped in foil with butter and added spices and then baked, or just simply cooked on the barbie. Smaller fish are best cooked whole. They are renowned for having numerous small thin bones, so be careful when consuming. Number one rule, never over-cook.



The Four Springs Story

by Jim Ferrier, Associate Commissioner, Northern Tasmanian Fisheries Association

To coincide with the start of the trout fishing season, Four Springs Lake was officially opened to anglers on Saturday 31 July 1999.

The story to this point has been long and complicated but on a glorious day of little wind, the assembled anglers and members of the public could finally appreciate the vision which had driven a small dedicated band, the Four Springs Recreational Committee to build a fishery of great beauty and potential.

Trout even "rose to the occasion" and put on a show in the shallows.

Noel Green officiated and asked Professor Nigel Forteath to declare the Four Springs Lake fishery officially open and to unveil a plaque commemorating the occasion. Professor Forteath remarked on the beauty of the area and of its fragility and recommended that it would require careful looking after to maintain its potential.

Greg McCrossen, Commissioner of Inland Fisheries, commented on the long period of dedicated work by local anglers which has made this project possible.

The Four Springs saga started early in the 70's when a block of land called Four Springs Plain was bought with the view of making a prime trout fishery. This was the grand vision of local anglers such as the late Ron Stephenson, Stuart Scott and Don Gilmour who lobbied and cajoled politicians of all parties to support the idea. The result



The Four Springs Recreational Committee members from left, Jim Ferrier, Norm Scott, Ian French, Peter Shrosbree (kneeling), Malcolm French, Noel Green, Graeme Chappell and Don Gilmour

was that the Commonwealth and State governments jointly funded the purchase and initial engineering of this project.

During the mid 70's, engineering design, geological surveys, hydrological assessment and material calculations, were undertaken to prove that the project was feasible but capital funding proved much more difficult to procure. The project stalled and, while lobbying intensified, little progress was made. A frustrating time indeed.

In the early 1980's the project received a boost when it was proposed that a rowing course of international standard be constructed at Four Springs and again engineering estimates were produced. This project was on a much grander scale with large capital works, massive earth works and construction. The result was the same – achievable but at an astronomical cost.

The idea of Four Springs Lake lay dormant for some time until anglers from the north were jolted out of their complacency by the announcement that the government of the day was contemplating selling the asset.

In 1992, a "new" Four Spring Recreational Committee was formed representing members from the Northern Tasmanian Fisheries Association, the North Western Fisheries Association and the Fly-fisher's Club of Tasmania. Funding to operate this committee was committed entirely by the anglers from these groups. Lobbying was further intensified and covered all aspects of Federal, State and local government as well as potential users, schools, disabled groups and the general public.

An engineering consultant was employed and engineering estimates were reviewed, geology and hydrology re-examined and less flamboyant specifications drawn up. Estimates for the building of the dam were received and the committee was gratified to note that the costs were significantly less than the original costs of 1976.

A small angler committee was formed and, using the expertise of the Meander Valley Enterprise Centre, funding was sought to build the dam with the result that the Meander Valley Council, the State Government and the Commonwealth, were successfully approached. The contract to build the dam was let, construction began but was delayed by the weather. Eventually, the valve was closed and this coincided very nicely with a particularly heavy rain storm. As predicted by the engineer, in two winters the lake was spilling and the full beauty of Four Springs could be appreciated.

As the lake filled over the two years, the IFC monitored the situation and stockings of both adult trout and fry were added. To date, since January 1998, 960 adult brown trout have been released and these have been augmented with 43,000 brown trout fry. A further 7,000 rainbow fry were released simultaneously and the fish which we see being caught today are the result of these stockings.

Throughout the negotiations of the 90's,

Four Springs Lake – the vision of a few, now for many to behold



Sheryl Templar, Historian NWFA, embracing regulations governing the fishery

Boral Timber Tasmania Limited and our surrounding landowner and neighbour, have been totally supportive of the project and without their assistance 'in kind', Four Springs would not have been possible.

What of the future?

Four Springs Lake will be a fully managed brown trout water and a fisheries management plan is now in place. There is no spawning potential and the IFC will monitor and adjust fish numbers to maintain a satisfactory fish size as a premier brown trout fishery. It won't be "an easy" water to fish with average browns feeding in weedy conditions.

Four Springs will be operated in conjunction with Brushy Lagoon. Brushy will be run as a rainbow trout water and regular heavy stockings will continue to maintain a large head of fish and the opportunity for, and probability of, a reasonable catch at all times.

Four Springs will be an "early" water. A water to fish when the weather in the highlands deters all but the most dedicated angler. It will be a quiet retreat for the angler who likes to stalk fish and who feels that a single fish caught in difficult conditions is reward enough.

It's now up to anglers to ensure that the vision and hard work of the original few is maintained and that Four Springs Lake receives the potential it deserves.

The Carp Report

by John Diggle, Fisheries Biologist,
Carp Management

Monitoring of the carp populations in lakes Sorell and Crescent has continued over the winter months, the most notable development being the location of another aggregation of carp in Lake Sorell.

The aggregation was located using radio tracked carp and fished down using a combination of netting and electrofishing. A total of five carp were removed bringing the total catch from this lake to 45 since 1995. This result strengthens the theory that the carp population in Lake Sorell is very small, and it is also encouraging that there has been no evidence of carp spawning in this lake for the last two years.

The carp in Lake Crescent have largely failed to aggregate this winter and subsequently little effort has been put into fishing other than to supplement the number of radiotracked fish. It is expected that over the next few months as the lake water temperature rises that carp will again be vulnerable to targeted fishing.

Two 500m nets (in 125mm and 150mm mesh) were purchased to enable a doubling of fishing effort this summer. Given the knowledge gained so far on the size of carp in both lakes, it is hoped that

the nets will enable catch rates to continue at a high level despite a rapidly declining population.

A new method will be trialed this summer involving the use of ground bait to attract and aggregate carp. This method has the advantage of forming aggregations rather than waiting for them to form naturally. If it works at low carp densities then the next phase is to test the feasibility of a poison

bait system selective for carp which may be a longterm strategy if eradication by targeted fishing is unsuccessful.

The coming summer season will be one of the most critical for the Carp program so far, depending on what eventuates in terms of spawning and catches. This will determine the prospects for eradication as well as the feasibility of reopening Lake Crescent next season.

European Carp – part of the catch from Lake Crescent last summer



Open Weekend 1999

The Commission's Open Day in May took on a new image this year with the inclusion for the first time of trade exhibits and extension to a full-weekend.

Although the weather was less than cooperative, the weekend turned out to be a great success.

The two hired marquees were erected but blew down and it was decided they could not be used in the prevailing conditions. IFC staff completely re-organised the site plan on Friday to accommodate all exhibitors in the available facilities.

Chris Wisby of ABC Radio broadcast his program live from Liawenee on the Sunday morning.

No count was made on Saturday but attendance is estimated at 2,500. Sunday's count was 3525. Total attendance was therefore approximately 6,000.

Feedback at the event was generally very positive with the only area of criticism relating to the relatively small number of fish on display in the canal. This resulted from installation of an anti-jump screen downstream of Liawenee, requiring fish for the display to be captured and manually transferred from below the anti-jump screen. It is proposed that some works be undertaken prior to next year's event to improve the display of fish at the site.



Stripping the fish eggs – is wet, cold and fun!

Whether you're an expert or not, flytipping is serious business



ABC Radio's Chris Wisby conducting a live-to-air interview with Viv Spencer from the site



Lagoon of Islands, 1999

By David Andrews, Scientific Officer, IFC Biological Consultancy

Background

Lagoon of Islands was dammed in 1964 to provide an alternative source of irrigation water to riparian users on the Shannon and Ouse Rivers. The impounding of the lagoon reduced the need for riparian releases from Great Lake, and enabled the IFC to develop the lagoon as a recreational trout fishery. Initial yields from the lagoon were low and unreliable, and so the Ripple Creek Diversion was constructed in 1984, increasing the Lagoon's catchment area by approximately 140 percent.

A marked deterioration of the lagoon's water quality and trout fishery became evident in the late 1980's. The environmental decline of the lagoon prompted the IFC and Hydro-Electric Corporation to investigate the lagoon's biological status, using the scientific expertise of the IFC's Biological Consultancy section. These studies recommended a series of management strategies, focussing on reducing internal and external nutrient inputs into the lagoon while minimising nutrient retention times and stabilising the lagoon's sediments.

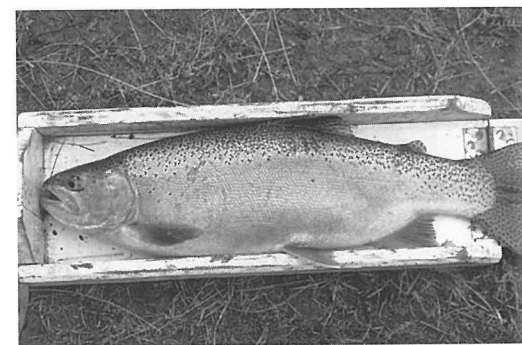
Current situation

Following the completion of the initial investi-

gative studies in 1991, the IFC Biological Consultancy has monitored the lagoon on a regular basis. The management strategies and modified operating regime that were adopted subsequent to these studies proved effective in reducing the nutrient and algal activity in the lagoon throughout the early and mid 1990's. Despite this, algae and nutrient levels have increased in recent years.

Chlorophyll-a is a useful indicator of algal activity, which is generally related to the nutrient status of the lagoon. Figure 1 shows trends in chlorophyll-a levels during 1997, 1998 and 1999. Chlorophyll-a has increased significantly over the last three years, but the mechanisms that are responsible for this annual increase are poorly understood (see Figure 1).

Ammonia levels within the lagoon have also increased during the latter 1990's. In addition to being a bio-available nitrogen source and therefore a contributor to algal blooms, ammonia can be toxic to aquatic organisms and needs to be carefully monitored. Figure 2 shows the periodic fluctuations in ammonia levels in the lagoon during 1997, 1998 and 1999. It is likely that the periodic elevation of ammonia levels is linked to the seasonal die back of the



Above Top: Release valves have been fitted to the Arthur's Lake flume

Above: A rainbow spawner from Lagoon of Islands

lagoon's aquatic plants, particularly the prolific strapweed beds found throughout the lagoon.

Ammonia levels recorded during autumn and winter 1999 have been significantly lower than those recorded during 1998 and 1997. However, current understanding of ammonia dynamics in the lagoon is limited, and so the implications of reduced ammonia levels during autumn and winter 1999 are not clear and cannot presently be used to determine long-term trends in the lagoon (see Figure 2).

Remediation strategies

The Hydro will continue to fund regular monitoring of Lagoon of Islands, and has dedicated \$60 000 for Lagoon of Islands water quality assessment in 1999/2000. Monitoring, conducted by the IFC Biological Consultancy, will continue on a weekly basis extending the weekly monitoring program initiated in 1998, while assessment of nutrient inputs from Ripple Canal will continue on a monthly basis. Long-term strategies including investigative work on nutrient cycling within the lagoon will be implemented this year.

In addition to long-term strategies, short-term remediation measures focussed on reducing nutrient retention times in the lagoon were initiated in 1999. Fitting of two

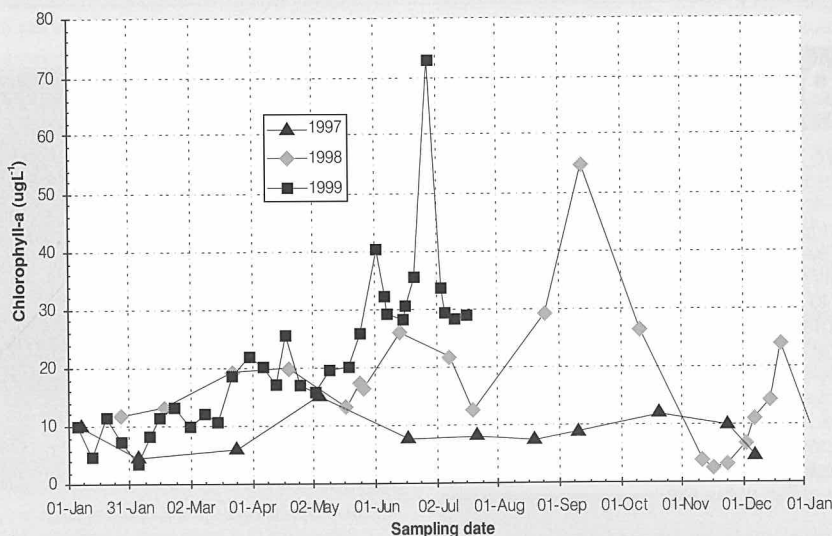


Figure 1. Chlorophyll-a values recorded from the middle lagoon site during 1997, 1998 and 1999.

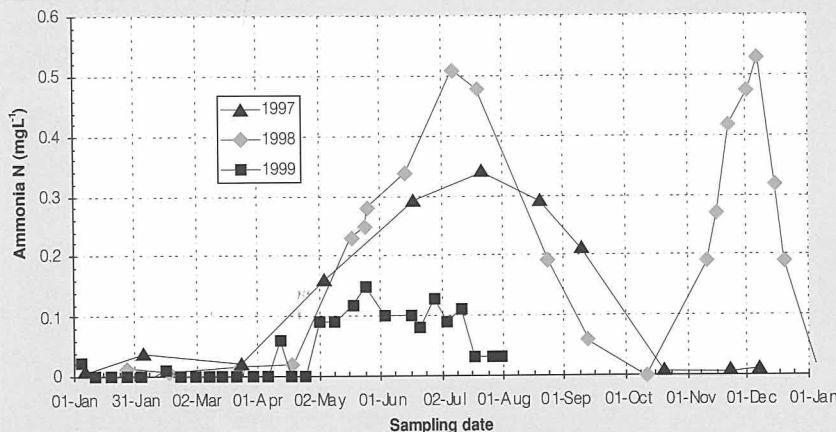


Figure 2. Ammonia values recorded from the middle of Lagoon of Islands during 1997, 1998 and 1999.

Meet the man for the job

...continued from front page

Greg's arrival at the Commission, which is perfectly timed for the implementation of the Review, signifies a new direction in inland fisheries management with the emphasis on holistic and sustainable management.

"It means caring for the whole environmental system, native fish as well as acclimatised fish populations, and ensuring that the natural resources for both the recreational fishery and commercial industries, are maintained," he said.

"The IFC is now entering a planning phase, so we'll be preparing a Strategic Plan to define the corporate vision, goals and strategies of the new Service.

"There is also a need for fishery management planning, from a broad management framework down to individual management plans for specific fisheries or regions.

"The planning process will enable input from all major fishery stakeholders, involving consultation with industry and direct communication with angling communities.

"I'm personally committed to involving stakeholders in all aspects of fishery management and maximising the involvement of anglers in recreational fishery management decisions.

Greg has a big picture view of the IFC and a fresh appreciation of its operations. His short term goal is to bring structure and direction to operations of the new Service, and his long term goal is to ensure that the natural resources of the inland fisheries are improved and maintained for future generations.



Flume excavations, allowing the release of water into the Ripple Creek catchment

release valves to the Arthurs Lake flume was completed by the Hydro in June 1999, permitting the release of water from the flume into the Ripple Creek catchment. In the event of an algal bloom condition or adversely high levels of chlorophyll or nutrient levels, flume water can be diverted into Lagoon of Islands via Ripple Creek, providing the ability to control algal activity using coordinated management of inflows and outflows.

The Hydro also constructed culverts and tracks on the adjacent landholders' property to allow efficient delivery of this water to the Lagoon of Islands, at a cost of approximately \$30 000. The performance of these modifications will be assessed during a test release during late August, in preparation for the 1999/2000 spring and summer.

Conclusion

Lagoon of Islands continues to perform as an exceptional rainbow fishery. The 1999 spawning run for the lagoon was promising, with approximately 300 rainbows observed in Ripple Canal during assessment of the run in August. The Recreational Fisheries Section reported that numbers were higher than preceding years. These fish were in good condition, but average weight was slightly lower than recorded in previous years.

The Hydro and the IFC are committed to ensuring that the water quality and angling performance of the lagoon are maintained or improved where possible, and have resourced both short-term and long-term strategies focussed on achieving these aims.

Saltas releases 300 trophy fish into Meadowbank Dam

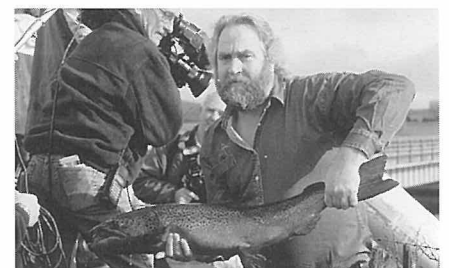
A crowd of anglers, dignitaries, media, family groups and local lads, watched on in awe as Saltas Pty Ltd released 250 'trophy fish' into Meadowbank Dam, in the lead-up to the opening of the 1999 fishing season. This is the third season that Saltas has stocked Meadowbank with the prize fish from the Company's surplus brood stock.

General Manager of Saltas, Graham Martin, said that the fish were weighed and tagged prior to their release this year.

"Saltas will use information on fish weight and gut content, returned with the tags by anglers, to investigate the potential survival of wild populations of salmon in Tasmanian inland waters," he said.

To encourage anglers to return the required information along with the tags, the Fishing Tackle Industry is assisting Saltas in providing prizes for anglers in a drawing of lucky tags at the end of the year.

Graham Martin, General Manager Saltas, with one of the trophy fish



New season open dates for 1999-2000

Welcome to the 1999 Trout Fishing Season which opened on 31 July. The good news is that Brushy Lagoon has been reopened and the new fishery at Four Springs Lake, which has been stocked with adults from the highland lakes, is now open for business. The following list provides detail on the open dates for specific waters for fishing by licensed anglers during the 1999-2000 season.

31 July 1999 - 30 April 2000

- Most Tasmanian inland waters except those that are closed at all times. This also includes the section of the Derwent River below its seaward limit to an imaginary line between the extremities of Dowsings Point and Store Point.

31 July 1999 - 28 May 2000

- Great Lake, except Canal Bay (which opens 30 October 1999 to 2 April 2000), Lake Mackintosh, Lake Rosebery, and Lake Burbury.

2 October 1999 - 28 May 2000

- Dee Lagoon, Lake Rowallan, Lagoon of Islands, and Lake Skinner.

30 October 1999 - 2 April 2000

- That part of the Bronte Lagoon-to-Bradys Lake canal between the control gates on the Bronte-Tarraleah Road and where the water from the canal enters Bradys Lake.

- That part of the Pine Pier Dam-to-Bronte Lagoon Canal between the Marlborough Highway bridge and the mouth of the canal where it enters Bronte Lagoon as defined by two white posts on opposite banks of the canal.

- That part of the De Lagoon-to-Bradys Lake canal between the mouth of the tunnel and Bradys Lake, as defined by two white posts on each side of the canal at that point.

- The Derwent River between the Lyell Highway road bridge at Derwent Bridge and the HEC radial gate at Lake St Clair.

- That part of Great Lake known as Canal Bay.

30 October 1999 - 30 April 2000

- The Mersey River above Lake Rowallan, above two white posts, one on each bank of the river.

Clarence Lagoon Brook Trout

In May, Inland Fisheries Commission staff captured adult brook trout from Clarence Lagoon which, when stripped, produced about 10,000 wild eggs to supplement ova obtained from hatchery reared brook trout at the Salmon Ponds.



An adult Brook Trout captured from Clarence Lagoon

Rob Cordwell and Phil Adams stripping eggs from wild Brook Trout for the Salmon Ponds hatchery



Eggs from wild fish have, in the past, proved to be more viable than hatchery reared brook trout eggs. These eggs will be hatched out at the Salmon Ponds and used to restock Clarence Lagoon later this year.

Positive start to Ulverstone Young Angling Program

by David Clarke, Chairman of the Young Anglers Development Program



Some of the satisfied fishers at the Ulverstone Club's young anglers open day

Restocking of the Waterhouse group of lakes

by Rob Freeman, Recreational Fisheries Section

In April of this year, the Commission stocked the Waterhouse group of lakes using adult fish relocated from several streams in the Scottsdale area.

The rationale behind the use of adult brown trout as opposed to fry or fingerlings, was to increase survival rates so that fish could reach the traditional trophy size that these lakes normally produce. Several streams were electrofished to collect fish in preference to on-growing fish at the Salmon Ponds Hatchery, as the capacity of the hatchery is limited.

Over a period of three days, almost 1,600 adult and yearling brown trout were collected from the following streams and transported to one of the three lakes below.

- Mackenzie Rivulet, 607 brown trout captured and transferred to Blackmans Lagoon;
- Brid River, 579 brown trout captured and transferred to Big Waterhouse Lagoon;

Volunteers assisting with electrofishing in Brid River



- Hogarth Rivulet, 408 brown trout captured and transferred to Little Waterhouse Lagoon.

Two of the sites selected (Brid River & Mackenzie Rivulet) were previously electrofished in 1996 with 1000 brown trout being transferred to Blackmans and Little Waterhouse Lagoons (refer article: *On The Rise* vol 25, no 3, Jan 1997). The size and abundance of fish at these sites appeared not to have been affected with a good head of reasonable size stream fish being captured (see below).

MACKENZIE RIVULET

Average Weight (g).....	71
Range (g).....	3 - 343
Average Length (mm).....	164
Range (mm).....	65 - 325

BRID RIVER

Average Weight (g).....	178
Range (g).....	20 - 650
Average Length (mm).....	222
Range (mm).....	110 - 410

Fish captured were from an estimated four or five different year classes with most fish being 1-3 years old. No data was collected for Hogarth Rivulet.

Generally, the time involved in catching and transporting fish in this way is considerable and normally it would prohibit such a program. However, with the very enthusiastic support given by the large group of volunteers from the Scottsdale branch of the NTFA, the work was completed successfully with a minimum of fuss. A big 'thankyou' goes to all those members who assisted. Hopefully your efforts will be rewarded next time you fish one of these waters!

The Ulverstone Anglers Club commenced its highly successful Young Anglers Development Program on the opening day of the Trout season this year, when 92 young anglers caught 105 fish at Fromberg Dam. The second open day on the 14 August saw 84 young anglers participate, travelling from as far as Devonport, Sheffield and Wynyard.

The Young Anglers Development Committee which was established to promote angling to juniors, raised money through raffles and public displays so as to purchase 600 rainbow trout which were released into Fromberg Dam in May this year.

Even though the Junior angling facility had been promoted extensively, the Ulverstone Anglers Club had not expected such a huge response. Members were kept very busy on both open days untangling lines and offering assistance to novice anglers.

Whilst most of the fish caught were not large, it was a relief and delight for some parents who commented that they had taken their children fishing elsewhere and caught nothing at all.

The growing list of parents and interested adults who offered to assist with supervision at future events, demonstrates the strong support for the Program and will guarantee its future for the Ulverstone Anglers Club.

Anglers are reminded that there is a two fish limit, and angling is only permitted on designated fishing days.

The Late Merv Duncan

by Viv Spencer, Senior Inspector

An old time story from the late Mervyn Frederick Duncan, Senior Inspector of the Inland Fisheries Commission from 1963 to 1981.

Merv attended Avoca State School until he was 13 years of age. He was then forced to leave because his father had been crippled in an accident and Merv had to assist with the upkeep of his parents, three sisters and one brother.

He worked in the local mines for nine years and then joined the Tasmanian Police Force where he was employed for 12 years, six with the Criminal Investigation Branch in Launceston and then at Burnie and Deloraine as a uniformed officer.

Merv also assisted in the naming of many of the Western Lakes back in the 1960's. He spent a short time farming then joined the Inland Fisheries Commission in 1963 as an inspector. In about 1971 he was promoted to field supervisor and held that position until he retired through ill-health in 1981.

Merv was a well known and liked lake-country man, he was a very interesting character. During the summer of 1993, Viv Spencer had a long chat with him. Here's what Merv had to say.

When I started with the Commission in 1963, Arthur Fleming was Senior Inspector. He used to live down the Nile; he didn't do much patrol work those days as he was an old man. Derisley Hobbs was Commissioner, Hector Jones was Secretary, Mrs Nightingale was the office lady, Scotty Jones the hatchery manager, Dave Menzies the hatchery assistant and the inspectors were Ray Haslock, Burnie Champion, Jim Berry, Dave Randall and Bill Larkham. Normy Martindale was the technical officer for research and the Associate Commissioners were Peter Wallace from the north, Max Johnston from the north west and Redfus Terry from the south.

Those days there were still quite a few trappers, trapping game in the lake country, such as Freddy Sharman, Rex Sharman, Brum Temple, Friday Medhurst, George Medhurst, all of Bob Monk's family, Les Brumby and the Hansch family from Stone Hut.

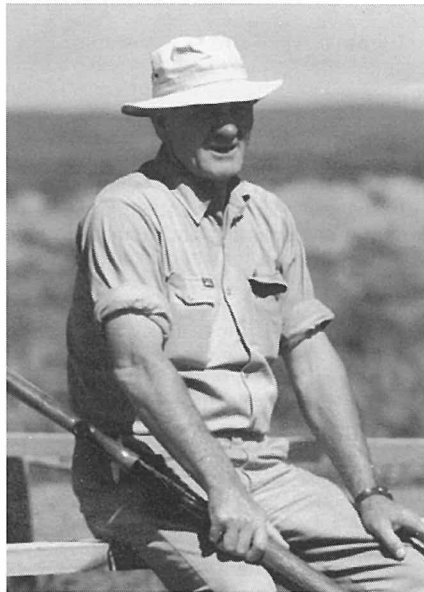
We used to get a lot more snow in the highlands back in those days. Three or four good falls each winter. I remember being snowed in at Liawenee for three weeks. It would have been longer only for the Department of Main Roads sending a grader up to clear the road.

The DMR boys would do a few jobs for us and we would give them a few fish. I suppose to get the same job done these days would take months of paperwork.

I can remember the snow blowing through the cracks in the walls of the old Liawenee shack. The pipes were always frozen in winter. We would bring in a bucket of water for next morning's wash and coffee, often by the next morning it was frozen over. I cut myself shaving at Liawenee one Monday morning and I didn't bleed until I got home on Friday evening.

One weekend, after a heavy snowfall, we towed 24 vehicles out. They were very lucky someone didn't die. It's funny, the snow seems to draw people out but they never know when to turn back.

I mentioned earlier about trappers, they



were a tough breed and, in my opinion, one of the best men in the mountain country was Fred Sharman. He was a tough man who never wore socks and often had the toes out of his boots but he knew the country like the back of his hand. Those days they would put their snare poles up at a least a fortnight before the possum season opened and work them for three to four months. Often their families would camp with them in the highlands, whilst other families lived in the highlands full time. I remember back in the 50's, the Sharmans found the remains of an Italian chap in the Big Pine Valley. He had been a Hydro worker from Bronte who had lost his way while hunting and perished.

George Medhurst, now there was a character. He bought a mare from old Mrs Monks. He used to ride around to the old Miena pub from his camp at Smithtops down towards Lake Echo. Anyway, this day he stayed at the pub all day and when riding home he fell off. He tried to climb back on by hanging onto the horse's tail when she hauled off and kicked him in the chest. When I arrived he was just getting his wind back, when he pulled his shirt back there was a horseshoe print. The horse had bolted so I gave George a lift home to Smithtops, and the horse was there when we arrived.

When I first started with the Commission, I used to patrol the Western Lakes on horseback. Anglers got the shock of their lives. We had no uniforms and anglers wouldn't believe I was an inspector. I would do day trips only. I'd pick up my horse from Skittleballs and go out past Lake Fergus and up over the hill. The only gear we were supplied with from memory was waders, that was it.

Back then the old Commission house was still at Miena and the Shannon Rise was in full swing. There was a phone at the old house and when the Shannon Rise got close, people from all over the world would phone asking when it was due to start. The old Miena pub would be full and, along the Shannon River, there would be standing room only. One person would catch a fish and move out and another angler would move in, the moths were just like snow.

The bottom trap at Liawenee was built about 1962 with only a rough track to it. Those days we were tagging every fish that

came up and we transferred about 12 000 brown each year. If you got to and from the bottom trap without getting bogged you were lucky. Some days we transferred two loads and got bogged twice.

We had very little gear and money. I can remember phoning head office and asking for permission to purchase some timber only to be told to check at the Hydro work sites as they may have some left over. I also remember the first order book I was given. There was a message from the Secretary, "There is one condition with this order book, DON'T USE IT".

I patrolled Arthurs Lake just after it was flooded. It was common then to catch fish up to 8lb; but Lake Crescent was the place for big fish. I've seen fish there that when dressed out looked the size of a lamb. Getting back to patrol duties, we were patrolling Tea Tree Point, Lake Crescent, one night when we found two unattended set rods and an upturned canoe on the bank. We thought the owners may have gone to the Bothwell pub so we decided to wait awhile. I sat on the canoe and then heard a fellow say, "There's someone out there". Then another said, "I reckon it's a possum". I realised then that they were camped under the canoe. I said, "Yes, it's a possum, a bloody big one. Have you fellows got rods set?" One of them then said, "It's the bloody bailliff, we've been sprung".

In my time I have seen people taking fish by many varied means such as snaring, shooting, tickling, spearing, gaffing, blowing with carbide, sticks, stones, nets both graball and landing, and netting wire. Some people are not fussy how they catch their fish, plus the big problem those days was the fines. They were very low, not like today.

Back in the old days, poachers very seldom bragged about getting fish. They used to poach only with very close friends that would keep their mouths shut, otherwise it was their last trip.

Old Arthur Fleming and Doug MacIntyre used to work Fisheries and Fauna back in the 50's. They were in the police force at the time. Anyway, old Doug said he really had it whacked over him one day when patrolling the highlands. A couple of old fellows from Meander were up over the mountain after possum several weeks before the season opened. Doug heard about it and walked up over Dixons Kingdom. When he got near their camp, one of the occupants came running out with a bag over his back and went for his life so Doug took chase. After a fair chase Doug caught him, only to find the bag was full of newspaper. Doug then returned to the camp and yes, you guessed it, it was clean, not a skin to be found. No doubt while Doug took chase, the fellow back in the camp had hidden the skins. Old Doug said, "You win a few and you lose a few" and laughed.

I was in the old Miena pub late one night. Dan Tubb and Darcy Honner were there. Dan went outside for a minute and came running back inside and said, "I've just seen him, quick, come outside now". Dan said, "there's a fellow on a horse going across the dam with his head under his arm". I don't know what they were drinking but it must have been powerful.

We used to play a few practical jokes. I remember it was Van's (Brian Vanderfeen) birthday so I decided to give him a cake. I went outside and found a cowpat and then covered it with icing. Anyway, on his birthday I gave him this cake. Just at the last minute, when he was going to bite it, I stopped him. We had a good laugh over that.

Illegal things sometimes happen in the Central Highlands

by Noel Maroney, Inspector

Inland Fisheries inspectors sometimes encounter illegal activities when on patrol duty in the Central Highlands. One such incident happened not so long ago, about the time "Furphy" the stray fox escaped from a boat somewhere along the north west coast, never to be seen again.

Prosecutions

Infringement notices

During the six months from 1 January 1999 to 30 June 1999 the following 'on the spot fines' were issued.

Offence	Number
Fish without a licence	5
Fish with unattended set rod	1
Possession of net other than a landing net	2
Take whitebait without permit	1
Take fish from closed waters	2
Take fish from juvenile angling water	1
Use more than 1 rod and line	1
Use strike indicator	1

Court proceedings

Offences that were proceeded with by summons are listed below.

I was driving the IFC vehicle in an easterly direction on the Poatina Highway at a rather high altitude not far from Hydro Creek when I saw one of many large cement trucks approaching from the west and delivering cement for Hydro towers at Arthurs Lake. As the truck went past my vehicle I saw a large bird attempt to take off from the embankment and, unable to gain sufficient altitude, crashed into the side of the truck which continued on, the driver apparently unaware of this happening. I thought the bird must surely have been killed or at least seriously injured.

I turned around and drove back to where I saw a poor unfortunate wedgetailed eagle lying on its back on the side of the road and showing no signs of life. I radioed the inspector at Liawenee and requested advice as to what to do with this apparently dead bird. I was advised that the Parks and Wildlife ranger, who was returning from fox hunting on the north west coast, would meet me at the Poatina and Great Lake Highway intersection and collect the dead eagle. I carefully picked up the bird and put it in the rear compartment of my vehicle then drove back towards the rendezvous area.

I had gone not more than a kilometre down the road when I looked in the rear view mirror and saw a large wing rise above the rear seat. I continued on and there was

a large flap of wings. I felt sure that there were some illegal goings on in the back of the vehicle.

Finally I arrived at the rendezvous area, stopped the vehicle and got out very quickly. The frantic, and now very much alive, raptor was attempting to demolish the interior of the car. I was left wondering how to explain the damage. Shortly, another fisheries inspector and the wildlife ranger arrived.

"Don't look dead to me," the wildlife ranger said. "Let it out of the car."

I gladly did as requested. Out wobbled the eagle and stood for a moment taking us in with its big raptor eyes. Then flapping its wings slowly, it gained altitude and landed on a limb high up in a tree near the lake and the highway.

"All the best eagle," I said, and as I returned to survey the inside of my vehicle I thought, am I glad to see the last of you!

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Any comments, suggestions, contributions or ideas for articles would be most welcome and should be addressed to:

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or on the Internet at www.ifc.tas.gov.au

Offender	Location	Offences Summary	Total fine + costs (\$)
Peter William DONNELLY, Devonport	Mersey River	Possess net	535
David Maxwell BLYTH, Wynyard	Seabrook Creek	Take whitebait, possess net	835
Jason Kenneth DEVERELL, Wynyard	Inglis River	Take whitebait	835
Peter Warren LAMBERT, Forest	Duck River	Possess net	1 035
Roger James LAMBERT, Smithton	Duck River	Take whitebait, possess net	2 035
Roger James LAMBERT, Smithton	Duck River	Take whitebait, possess net	2 035
Garry Charles LATHAM, Wynyard	Mersey River	Possess net	535
Patrick John LEE, Wynyard	Inglis River	Take whitebait, possess net	1 285
Patrick John LEE, Wynyard	Inglis River	Take whitebait, possess net	1 285
John Terrence SMITH, Latrobe	Mersey River	Take whitebait, possess net	835
Paul Lawrence SMITH, Devonport	Forth River	Possess net	335
Simon Paul SMITH, Devonport	Forth River	Possess net	535
Roger James LAMBERT, Smithton	Black River	Possess net, take whitebait	1 035
Peter Warren LAMBERT, Forest	Black River	Possess whitebait, possess net	835
David Lindsay JONES, Launceston	Pipers Brook	Unlicensed	235
Steven Douglas COKER	Duck River	Take whitebait, possess net	535
Ian Joseph CLARKE	Forth River	Take whitebait, possess net	635
Jamie Dennis SAGGERS	Mersey River	Take whitebait, possess net	1 035
Simon Paul SMITH, Devonport	Forth River	Possess net	835
Damien Darren MAYNARD, Wynyard	Inglis River	Unlicensed	235
Phillip George THOW, East Devonport	Mersey River	Possess net, take whitebait	535
Ian Joseph CLARKE, Devonport	Mersey River	Use net, take whitebait	635
Mark Raymond WALL, Devonport	Mersey River	Use net	785
Simon Paul SMITH, Devonport	Mersey River	Possess net, possess whitebait	785
Leigh Arthur TUTHILL, Spreyton	Bishtons Creek, Mersey River	Possess net, possess whitebait	635
Jamie Dennis SAGGERS, Devonport	Mersey River	Take whitebait, use net	785
Jamie Dennis SAGGERS, Devonport	Mersey River	Possess net	235
Jamie Lee BUTLER, Heybridge	Forth River	Unlicensed	235
Scott Andrew SMITH, Devonport	Mersey River	Take whitebait, possess net	1 035
Lyndon Robert James BROWN, Bridport	Hurst Creek	Take whitebait, possess net	538
Haydon John MILLER, Bridport	Great Forester River	Take more than 1kg whitebait per day	165
James Charles HANKEY, Huonville	Huon River	Unlicensed, unattended set rod	335
Scott Andrew SMITH, Devonport	Latrobe	Threaten an officer, abuse an officer	518