

INLAND FISHERIES COMMISSION NEWSLETTER

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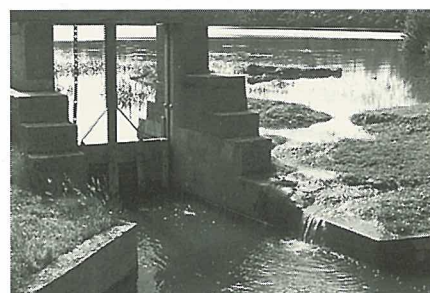
Lakes Sorell & Crescent Management Plan

All anglers would be aware that lakes Sorell and Crescent are two of the most important angling locations in Tasmania. They would also be aware that there has been a certain level of conflict in the area recently between State and local government departments, private landholders and recreational users. The Minister for Inland Fisheries, John Cleary (who is also Minister for Environment and Land Management and Local Government), has taken a personal interest in the resolution of some of these conflicts. A successful outcome has been achieved in the case of the Silver Plains caravan park and camping area which now offers good facilities to both long term and short term users of the site while protecting the major asset of the area - the lake environment.

However, Mr Cleary's commitment to sustainable long-term management of the area extends beyond single issue problems like the Silver Plains camping issue. He has initiated the preparation of a Management Plan for the lakes Sorell and Crescent area and this is being coordinated by the Planning Division of the Department of Environment and Land Management (DELM). It is intended

*The health of the marshes
may well be the key to the
survival of the ecosystem
of these lakes*

Lake Crescent marshes



Lake Sorell gate showing both lakes almost at the same level

that the plan will provide a framework for continued sustainable and compatible development of the recreational, agricultural and water resource potential of the lakes Sorell and Crescent catchment. Inland Fisheries Commission staff are closely involved at all levels of the planning process which is explained briefly below.

The first objective in the plan development process was to identify what the important issues were. A public meeting at Bothwell in May this year attended by anglers, shack owners, caravan park tenants, duck shooters, local residents and other stakeholders identified many of the

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Fishing competitions

On soon (or just on a week or so ago) are the following fishing competitions.

- 22-23 October
Tasmanian Fly Fishing Championships
Little Pine Lagoon/Bronte Lagoon
Prize is a shot at the Australian championship in December.
- 23-25 October
Lake Burbury
Two tagged fish at \$5000 each – other prizes to at least \$4000.
- 5-6 November
Tasmanian Trout Fishing Championships
All waters around the State with weigh-in at Great Lake
Two tagged fish at \$5000 each in Great Lake and Arthurs Lake.

Many other prizes including a return trip for two to New Zealand and at least \$23 000 worth of other prizes in about 120 lots.

- 10-11 December
Australian Fly Fishing Championships
Venue to be announced
State championship winners will compete for a place in the next Australian team.



Summary of brown trout spawning runs, 1994

Surveys were recently conducted of brown trout spawning runs in the Central Highlands. Summary statistics of weights and lengths are provided below for brown trout spawners from Penstock Lagoon, Lagoon of Islands, Lake Sorell, Great Lake and Arthurs Lake.

PENSTOCK LAGOON AT INFLOWING CANAL - 1 JUNE 1994			
	Males	Females	Combined
Range of weight (g)	450 - 2450	600 - 2550	450 - 2550
Average weight (g)	1404	1614	1513
Range of length (mm)	317 - 603	340 - 583	317 - 603
Average length (mm)	464	489	477
Number sampled	23	25	48

'Sang' signs up

The position of Senior Scientific Officer with the IFC was recently vacated by Dr Peter Davies. In May 1994 the Commission appointed Dr Andrew Sanger to this position which is effectively the position of second in charge.

"Sang" as he is locally known, grew up in Wangaratta and played a season with the Rovers as a centre half forward. He completed his PhD at the University of Melbourne in 1986 working on freshwater blackfish. He worked at Adelaide University before joining the IFC in 1987 to work on endangered species of Tasmanian native fish. On moving to Tassie he trained with Kingston a time or two but broke down too often.

Andrew's background with the IFC includes responsibility for the Hydro-Electric Commission consultancy. Of particular relevance to anglers from this work are his achievements in rehabilitating the Lagoon of Islands trout fishery and in negotiating water level agreements with the HEC for Bronte Lagoon and Arthurs Lake.

Andrew offers a well organised and practical approach to fisheries management that should be of considerable benefit to all anglers.

Andrew lives at Kingston with wife Debbie and two daughters. He is a keen angler with a preference for fishing the Western Lakes. The photo shows that he has hooked at least one in the Julians.



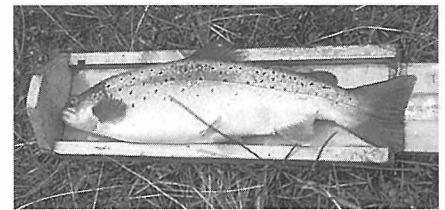
This run of brown trout at Penstock Lagoon was very encouraging because there has been some concern that the quality of fish in the lagoon may have been affected by deteriorating water quality. However, as these figures demonstrate, the average and maximum weights of the Penstock spawners was very good and comparable to the limited data available on spawning runs from previous years.

RIPPLE CREEK, LAGOON OF ISLANDS - 3 JUNE 1994			
	Males	Females	Combined
Range of weight (g)	350 - 3900	1750 - 3550	350 - 3900
Average weight (g)	2857	2641	2754
Range of length (mm)	304 - 695	548 - 688	304 - 695
Average length (mm)	624	626	625
Number sampled	58	53	111

The brown trout run at Lagoon of Islands was very similar to last years excellent run. Average and maximum weights were about 200g lighter this year, however the condition of the fish was again excellent.

MOUNTAIN CREEK, LAKE SORELL - 6 JULY 1994			
	Males	Females	Combined
Range of weight (g)	147 - 1810	447 - 1790	147 - 1810
Average weight (g)	714	917	816
Range of length (mm)	154 - 568	333 - 552	154 - 568
Average length (mm)	384	427	405
Number sampled	100	100	200

The average weight of the sample of brown trout examined at Mountain Creek was slightly up on the sample from last year.



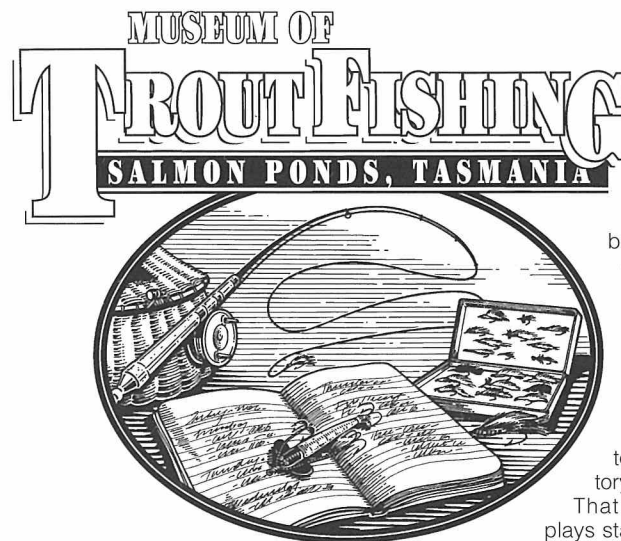
A Penstock brown, June 1994

Very poor rains in the Mountain Creek catchment during the brown trout spawning season once again limited the number of fish which successfully spawned. Hopefully, we will get a more typical rainfall pattern next year and the normal large spawning run at Mountain Creek will resume.

LIAWENE CANAL, GREAT LAKE - 30 MAY 1994			
	Males	Females	Combined
Range of weight (g)	650 - 1650	650 - 1450	650 - 1650
Average weight (g)	1154	1030	1091
Range of length (mm)	384 - 547	372 - 515	372 - 547
Average length (mm)	481	453	467
Number sampled	100	103	203

HYDRO CREEK, ARTHURS LAKE - 15 JUNE 1994			
	Males	Females	Combined
Range of weight (g)	200 - 1700	320 - 1290	200 - 1700
Average weight (g)	961	740	850
Range of length (mm)	254 - 550	316 - 495	304 - 695
Average length (mm)	439	404	422
Number of trout	100	100	200

The weights of the samples of fish from the Great Lake and Arthurs Lake spawning runs were virtually identical to those from last year.



IT'S OFFICIAL!

The Museum of Trout Fishing will be opened by the Honourable John Cleary MHA at 10.30am on Friday 25 November 1994.

To avoid a crush at the opening, invitations will be sent to all donors and representatives of various organisations to attend the formal event. However, following this, we would hope that every angler will take the opportunity to have a look at the site, the objective of which is to preserve your heritage and pass on this history to succeeding generations.

Work is now well advanced on putting the displays together. Gabrielle Balon has engaged Julie Eijdenberg of Eijdenberg Graphics and Tim Williams of Cotech Pty Ltd to do the graphic design and display preparation aspects respectively for the museum.

Objects have been selected and texts prepared for these specialists to work on.

As with all museums, the problem is not so much what items to put in but what to leave out. Museums generally only display about 5-10% of the material they have available - ours is no different. What we have had to do is look at our audience, which is at least 80% non-angling, and ask what message we need to convey to these people about the history of angling in this country.

That is where the museum displays start and from there it is intended in the future to develop a great deal more depth in our interpretation of Tasmania's angling history. This will of course require more time, more information, more items, more space and inevitably more money, but it will be achieved with the support of anglers and the general public.

Stannards Room built in 1870's. During...



OTHER THAN TROUT

A regular article on animals of interest to the angler

Conoesucid Caddis-Flies

by Dr Jean Jackson, Technical Officer / Inland Fisheries Commission

There is no common name for caddisflies belonging to the family Conoesucidae (con-oh-soo-kid-ay). However, this family has more species in Australia than any other case-making caddis family with the exception of the Leptoceridae (long-horned caddis, see IFC Newsletter Vol. 22 No. 3 December 1993). Most of the species are found in Tasmania.

Species and Distribution

Species belonging to Conoesucidae occur only in eastern Australia, Tasmania and New Zealand. Seventeen species have been described from Tasmania, out of a total of 21 Australian species. Fourteen species occur only in Tasmania. The family is not very well known taxonomically in Australia, and there are several undescribed species.

Conoesucids are widespread in Tasmania, although most species are restricted to the western part of the state.

Over the next few months the Commission will be promoting Salmon Ponds quite extensively. Its continued operation and expansion of visitor attractions depends upon income from the site. In short, it must be self funding and there is every indication that it can be just that.

We look forward to seeing you there this summer.

Salmon Ponds tearooms

The Salmon Ponds kiosk/tea rooms are now under new management. The new lessees, Gary Hamer and Judith Moore of Upper Plenty, have given the place a new, fresh lease of life and are looking to expand and develop the business.

Gary has a background of 23 years in the catering industry with experience as a chef both in Tasmania and overseas. Judith is a graphic artist and this experience will be most valuable in promotional work.

Functions outside normal hours can be catered for so next time think of the "Ponds Restaurant" for that small gathering. Phone 61 1614 for information or bookings.

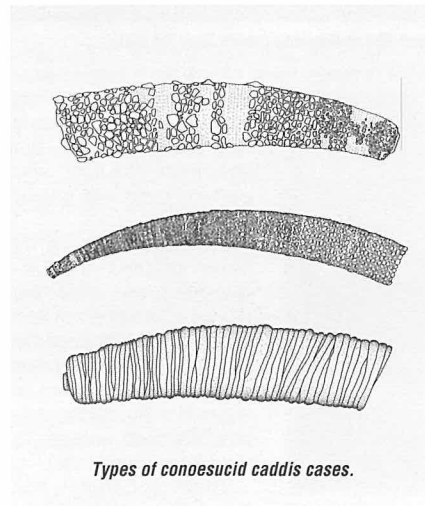
...and after reconstruction in 1993. (photos K.Lange)



Larval Stage

Conoesucid larvae are medium-sized for caddisflies, ranging from about 5-18mm in length (including the case) when fully grown. Larvae are present in most running waters and may be abundant. They have not been found in lakes. They are generally found in cool, fast-flowing streams and rivers although some species also live in the warmer rivers of the east. Within the stream, larvae may be found on rocks (often where the water flows rapidly over a smooth rock surface), amongst moss or algae growing on rocks, on water-plants, or amongst mats of willow or black-berry roots. They feed on algae and other green plant matter. Larvae do not swim, but if swept from their substrate they usually remain attached by an invisible line of silk produced from the mouth.

In spring, pupal cases of one species (*Matasia satana*) can be seen attached to river boulders in large numbers (e.g. in the Tyenna River upstream from Westerway).



They are sometimes exposed by falling water levels but it is not known whether they can survive this.

All species in this family make larval cases. The cases are cylindrical tubes which taper to varying degrees so they may be straight and blunt, or long and horn-shaped. They are made from sandgrains or spirally arranged plant material glued together with silk, or just of silk produced from the mouth of the larva. Cases made from silk alone are rigid, golden coloured and transparent. Case shape and material doesn't vary much within a species.

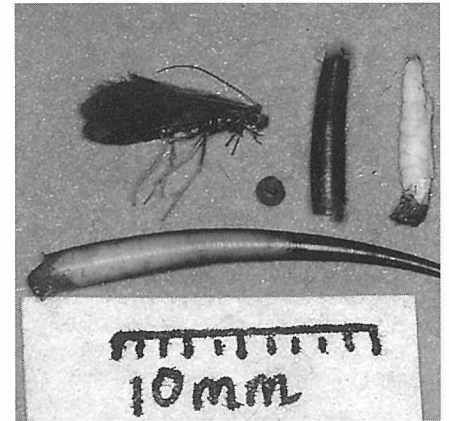
Colouration of the head, legs and hard parts of the thorax of larvae is generally uniform golden to dark brown, without distinct patterning. The body may be greenish, orange or cream coloured.

The larval stage is known for nearly all of the Tasmanian species. Some species can be recognised by the type of case alone,

but most must be examined under a microscope for identification.

Adult Stage

Like most caddisflies, conoesucids spend most of their life cycle as larvae. Eggs are laid by adults in the summer and larvae



Adult, pupal case and larva of *Costora delora*

grow, moulting four to five times, until they pupate in spring and summer. The pupal stage lasts about a month, and they emerge as adults from late spring to late summer.

Adults are small to medium sized (wings 5-10mm long) and are generally inconspicuous. They are mostly black or brown in colour and may have a gold stripe along the back when resting. One species (*Lingora aurata* females) has a distinct gold band across the wings. Adults of a few species are sometimes seen in large numbers, resting in, or flying near riverside vegetation (such as tea tree) during the day. Adults feed on nectar which they dab up with a broad "tongue". Although little data are available, they are thought to live for several weeks.

Egg-masses have been laid by captive adults of six species. Adults can mate and lay within 12 hours of emergence from the pupa. In one species where the egg-laying was observed, eggs were extruded from the abdomen, forming a ball which was deposited by the female dipping her abdomen in the water. In some caddis families the female crawls under water to lay the eggs. The conoesucid egg-masses observed were spherical blobs of clear jelly about 3mm across, containing a coiled ball of green eggs. Eggs took about four weeks to hatch at 15°C.

Fish Food

Conoesucids have not been recorded from trout guts, but few studies have examined guts of river fish. As a common element of stream fauna and with adults that dip into the water to lay eggs, trout are likely to feed on both larvae and adults.

A few thoughts of a Tasmanian fly fisher touring Scotland

Tony Ritchie

My wife and I spent only the first third of last July in Scotland but we did cover much ground touring Skye and driving a hired car all along the mainland coastline.

It seems that, like Tasmania, Britain as a whole has suffered of late from changes to patterns of rainfall, and indeed from the lack of any. Quite a few locals were complaining about a drought lasting many months and famous rivers we saw, ranging from the Welsh Teifi, the Nith in the "Rabbie Burns" territory of south western Scotland and the Helmsdale clear across on the other side of the country, seemed to be running very low. Although it was in fact summer, and a hot one at that, they seemed to be showing much more of their "bones" than they should have been.

Apparently even some of the large lochs also were affected adversely. In the far north west at Kinlochewe, I spoke to several sea-trout anglers who had been fishing Loch Maree from a boat. They said that even though it was the best time of year for sea-trout and the day had been quite suitable, during it they had taken only one fish each to their small, dark wet flies cast at the mouths of burns entering the loch.

"There hasn't been near enough rain these two years past", one observed forlornly.

Not at all sad had been the anglers socialising a few days earlier in the "Rod and Reel" bar at the hamlet of Crianiarich, in the Scottish mid west. After an exhausting and thirsty day trying to hook "coarse" fish and still in their waders, they were relaxing

ated by our very own Barry Lodge, I had four nips almost immediately, caught a little brown which I released and then hooked into a better fish which fought very hard indeed. It was a hard-muscled brownie and I was surprised that it weighed only a pound, but kept it for the ranger.

She jumped back when it was plumped down in front of her and recovered in time to

On top of local charges, there's also now a national Rod Fishing Licence needed by all anglers going after "non migratory trout and coarse fish". It reads: "This licence gives you the right to use a fishing rod and line but does not give you the right to fish. You must always check that you have the permission of the owner or tenant of the fishing rights".



Loch Maree Scotland (photo Tony Ritchie)



Tony Ritchie on the Macquarie (photo Viv Spencer)

assure my departing back that she had only been joking earlier. But she soon fell silent, and certainly did not chase after me.

This was the only "free" water I encountered and the other two remote little Scottish lagoons I fished cost me two pounds and three pounds a day, or part of a day (for Australian dollars, it's near enough to double each amount).

There apparently still is a strong local sentiment that anglers fishing

solely for brown trout can do so without charge, but on the back of one permission form is printed: "Contrary to a widely held belief, there is no public right of fishing in inland waters for brown trout or any other species in Scotland". It goes on to read: "The use of rod rests for trout fishing is illegal in Scotland. An angler must keep his rod in his hands when fishing".

Right up in the north of the country I fished several of the hundreds of beautiful little lochs set among grassy, rolling hills, mostly unfenced and remote. But each one apparently is "spoken for", and quite frankly for a touring angler with not much time and a non-fishing wife, it's a nuisance to have to find out where to apply for permission and then to get it. And though most of these waters are not expensive, others are, the Tiefs River costs £10 (\$A20) per day, or any part thereof, and was just too dear for someone like me who only wanted an hour or so on it.

It's cost? There are one day and eight day licences but since I was in the country for a month, for flexibility I took out a full annual licence and was rather staggered to find that on top of the local costs this was priced at £15 – close enough to \$A30. Incidentally, these licences are available only from post offices and petitions sponsored by irate owners of tackleshops opposing this restrictions were circulating in some areas.

In weather conditions unexpectedly calm, I enjoyed interesting fishing along the very top of Scotland, seasoned once by a jet fighter which out of the blue made a staffing run up a nearby gully. Loch Torrie near Poolewe is the size of Shannon Lagoon and is another of those clear little waters where I had quite a few nips at wet and dry flies from trout either hesitant or more likely very small. Also, in Lochan Hackel, near Tongue, which was only the size of Brushy Lagoon but, according to the only other angler on it at the time, had good fish – and the huge mayflies had been hatching! On his advice, I "put up" the largest fly in my box and took a fish the very first cast. The fly was a bushy Brown Dun which I'd last used on a windy day at Little Pine Lagoon.

The fish was a dark little brownie of half a pound and after virtuously returning it, I was looking forward to tangling with some of the bigger fish just starting to slash here and there at the gigantic, light-green mayflies beginning to dot the water when down came heavy, steady rain which drove me back to the car, and off – in due course – to the Mediterranean and Hong Kong.

Tasmanian anglers would find a few things quite different in Scotland, but others would make them feel very much at home!

with pints of foaming ale and "tatties" in the form of fried chips, before boarding their mini-bus for the long run back to Glasgow.

Displaying the good humour which seems to distinguish anglers world-wide, they made us welcome and I'm sure we would have had plenty to report if only we could have understood more than one word in every three!

Jovial also was the ranger at the Donald Visitor's Centre on the Isle of Skye who gave me permission to fish Loch Duagrigh in the south west of this large island. With a smile, she warned me that she expected a share of any trout caught.

Dodging the shaggy sheep which with some justification consider the warm tarn as theirs, I came upon a delightful, isolated little lake in a fold in the hills. It held water just faintly stained with peat over a rocky bottom and was about the size of Penstock Lagoon.

Using the red and black wet Seeker cre-

Internal fish tags

David Crook, Scientific Officer / Inland Fisheries Commission

Although it isn't certain when and where fish were first tagged, Isaac Walton reported in *The Compleat Angler*, first published in 1653, that wealthy European landowners used to tag juvenile Atlantic salmon by tying ribbons to their tails. By marking the fish in this way, they were able to demonstrate that the salmon returned from the sea to the same part of their natal river to spawn. Nowadays, studies of tagged fish are used extensively as a management tool for recreational and commercial fisheries, providing information regarding movements, abundance, mortality, stocking success, age, growth and recruitment of fish.

Most anglers would be familiar with the external types of tags used by many fisheries agencies to mark fish. In fact, anyone who caught one of the brown trout tagged by the IFC at Great Lake in the 1980s has first hand knowledge of these tags and how they work. However, as useful as external tags can be, there are some inherent problems. For example, the attachment of an external tag requires the maintenance of a puncture wound through the fish's skin. This interrupts the fish's protective slime layer and can lead to chronic skin irritation or infection. External tags also create drag in the water which can affect swimming and general behaviour, especially if the tag is large relative to the size of the fish. To overcome some of these problems, tags that can be implanted beneath the skin have been developed. These internal tags don't require the maintenance of puncture wounds because the entry wound heals over once the tag is in place.

Implantable tags were first developed in California in the 1950's for marking rainbow trout. Originally, they were made from vinyl and were about 20 mm long. They were surgically implanted beneath the surface of the light coloured belly of the fish so that the tag

code could be read through the skin. The current version (the visual implant tag) consists of a much smaller (2-5 mm) piece of polyester labelled with a printed code that is implanted using a syringe style injector. These tags are usually implanted in the transparent tissue surrounding the eyes of many fishes. Visual implant tags have been used to tag galaxiids and sandies in Tasmania.

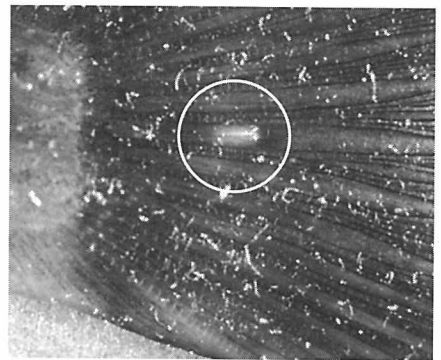
The coded wire tag (CWT) was adapted in the 1960's as a means of quickly individually marking large numbers of fish and is now the most commonly used internal tag. In 1988, 42 million trout and salmon were tagged with CWTs in North America. CWTs are tiny pieces of stainless steel marked with notches that form a binary code. They are usually implanted deeply into the snout cartilage of trout and salmon or into the cheek muscles of other species. When deeply implanted, CWTs cannot be seen and must be detected using specialised metal detectors. When a tagged fish is detected, the fish is sacrificed and the tag is removed for decoding under a microscope. Alternatively, CWTs may be implanted into transparent fin tissue so that they are visible and can be removed for decoding without sacrificing recaptured fish. In Australia, CWTs have been used to tag barramundi in Queensland, golden and silver perch in NSW and galaxiids and sandies in Tasmania.

Another type of internal tag that has been used consists of a small glass capsule containing a microchip. This is known as a passive integrated transponder (PIT). When these tags pass through an appropriate detector, the microchip is activated and transmits a coded signal that is picked up and recorded by the detector. These tags allow a fish's identity to be established without any need for handling. PITs are larger, about 12 mm long, and more expensive than visual implant tags and CWTs, and they

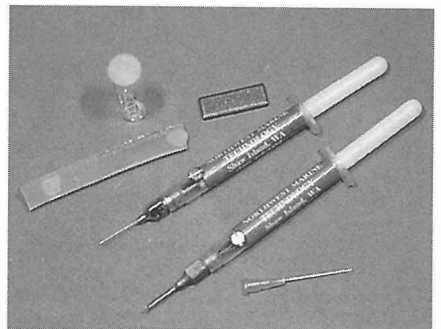
have found only limited application overseas so far.

Some internal tags are able to do more than simply identify fish. Transmitter tags that allow researchers to track the movements of fish have been in use since the 1960s. These tags are surgically implanted into the gut cavities of fish with a small antenna protruding. However, transmitter tags are expensive and large compared to other tag types and this often limits their use to correspondingly large fish species. Despite this, researchers at the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources in Victoria are successfully using transmitter tags to track the movements of Murray cod and other species in the Murray and Ovens rivers.

As microchip technology advances further, even more high-tech tags are being developed for use on fish. For example, an internal tag containing a microchip that measures and records internal and external temperature, light levels and depth is currently being trialled by workers at CSIRO in Hobart. These

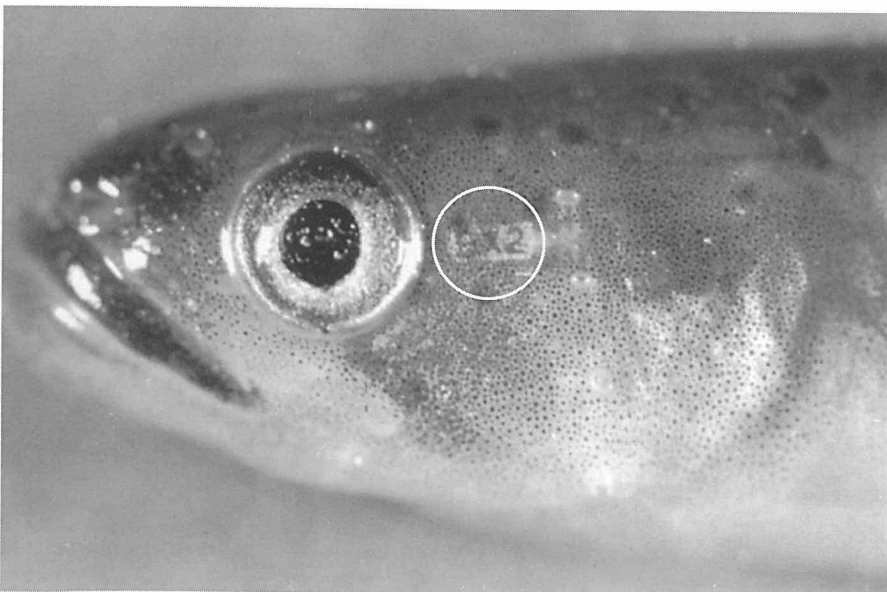


Coded wire tag in tail fin (photo David Crook)



Gear used for implant tagging (photo David Crook)

Visual implant tag in a Tasmanian galaxiid (photo David Crook)



tags are recovered after recapture of the fish, and the data stored on the microchip can be used to determine amazingly complex information about the metabolism, behaviour and movements of the fish.

With development of internal tags continuing, a variety of potential uses are opening up. The IFC is watching the progress of this technology to assess whether new techniques will help in the management of Tasmania's fish populations. In some cases the cost needs to come down a lot to bring the technology within our reach. Visual implant tags have so far been trialled as a means of tagging several of the state's endangered galaxiids and the practicality of the CWT system is being assessed as a possible option for future tagging studies of trout. To learn more about what makes fish tick, internal tags may be the way to go.

New river research program begins

A federally funded program aimed at assessing the environmental health of the State's streams is under way. The Land and Water Resources Division of the Department of Primary Industry and Fisheries has been granted \$320 000 over the next three years to implement the program. The purpose of the program is to evaluate the impacts of various land uses on our river systems and to develop monitoring programs to assess the effectiveness of water and catchment actions.

The program will be implemented in three phases:

- monitoring;
- statistical analysis;
- model development and testing.

Two scientists will be employed full-time on the program, and additional staff will be engaged to assist with certain aspects of the work.

Monitoring

The monitoring section of the program will run over the next two years and involve sampling and monitoring around 120 sites across 70 rivers statewide for water chemistry, aquatic invertebrates and aquatic plants during spring and autumn.

Rivers of interest to anglers which will be assessed in the study include the Hatfield

and Arthur on the west coast, the Montagu, Minnow, Wilmot, Forth, Meander and Mersey in the north west, and the Liffey, South Esk, Nile, St Patricks and Great Forester in the north and north east. The data collected by the study may be of use to the IFC in assessing the current suitability of rivers for maintaining trout populations.

Data will be collected from a range of impacted and unimpacted sites, from upland streams on the west coast to lowland rivers in the north east. It will be added to databases of stream flow and water quality data already being collected by the DPIF and other government agencies.

Statistical Analysis

The data will be analysed by advanced statistical techniques to search for patterns in aquatic community distribution which change with altitude, stream geometry, water chemistry and flow. These patterns will assist land and water resource managers in distinguishing between changes caused by land use and those due to normal variation exhibited by the natural environment.

Model Development and Testing

The statistical groupings defined during sampling will allow the data to be incorpo-

rated into models of riverine ecology versus land use previously developed in Great Britain. These models will allow managers to estimate the effect of changing land use on aquatic ecosystems and help avoid irreversible damage to our rivers. In combination with trout population surveys to be carried out by the Inland Fisheries Commission, these models may also assist the IFC to manage our trout fisheries.

Staff

The DPIF has recruited a group of scientists with experience in aquatic ecology and water quality analysis. Two former staff of the Inland Fisheries Commission are in the group. Aquatic ecologist, Mark Nelson, held several scientific and technical positions with the IFC between about 1987 and 1993. Projects Mark worked on at IFC included a study of the invertebrates, fish and water quality of the King River area prior to Lake Burbury being created; an examination of the impact of forestry operations on streams, and assistance with the *Galaxias pedderensis* project. Water quality scientist, Chris Bobbi, was employed by the Commission as a Scientific Officer between 1991 and 1994. Chris worked on the Lake Burbury pollution monitoring program, the Lagoon of Islands study, and the commercial eel fishery program. Both Mark and Chris are keen anglers, so if you see a DPIF vehicle parked beside a bridge somewhere around the State, check to see if there is scientific sampling, or some more relaxing pastime being pursued in the stream below.

Where to fish?

Chris Wisniewski

Fisheries Inspector, Liawenee

Try "The Jack"

When thinking of places to enjoy some fishing time, Laughing Jack Lagoon would not be high on many anglers list. As you drive into the dam and poke your nose up over it you never know what to expect. Early in the season it could be that bitterly cold wind that blows over Mount Charles from Mount Rufus and beyond. This makes the water dirty and uninviting especially with half metre waves breaking on the rocky shores. Around February it could be large areas of exposed mudflats but calm as a millpond, with fish rising systematically and very enticing.

The water is tannin coloured and somewhat hard to see into, although it is not as dark as the lakes further west. At lower levels it becomes dirty from disturbance of the mud that covers most of the bottom. As an Hydro-Electric Commission storage the lagoon suffers from large fluctuations in water level which, to some anglers, makes it unattractive. To those who have taken the time to get to know it the continually changing level produces some very exciting fishing.

At the start of the season with normal winter rains, the lagoon can be anything up to three parts full, and with the rough weather mentioned earlier, can be a bit daunting. From early season through to Christmas the angler using worm, grub and especially a frog worked along the top, is in his element. Around October and November as the water level slowly rises over the mudflats and creeps back into the grassy edges at the top

end, the brown trout, the only species of trout found in this water, cruise the gutters and inlets looking for food. A frog fished in these areas is usually accepted greedily as is a wet fly imitation but, be warned, these fish are generally moving quietly hard in on



Laughing Jack on a good day (photo Chris Wisniewski)

the edge, and they are difficult to see.

When the lagoon fills, usually somewhere around November to December, access along the rocky shore, which extends about one third up either side from the dam, becomes difficult because of the thick scrub along the edges. Something to look out for around November is the beautiful red flowers of the waratah that grows in the area. The dam area and rocky shore produce some good polaroiding conditions on sunny days and also some good rises to midges and gum beetles that are funnelled down the lagoon.

A few campsites are available at the dam but they are open and exposed to any rough conditions. Further up the lagoon more camping areas become available as the thick scrub opens into sparse eucalypts and further into button grass. Access is best gained by boat although a Forestry track runs partly

up the left hand side of the lagoon. This track has two spurs that run near to the water's edge. Walking down these is advised.

Trolling is popular as is drift spinning amongst the dead trees. The normal cobra style lures are usually successful. One regular swears by a bright pink Devon style lure which he uses with great success.

After Christmas as other storages in the Bronte system generally become low, the valve is opened on Laughing Jack and from here to late March early April the water level is lowered over nine metres from full supply. At this time of year the IFC is generally called upon to salvage fish from below the dam just after the gates close. Several hundred fish are usually returned to the lake during this operation with help from local anglers.

The sight of large areas of exposed mudflat is enough to turn most anglers away but to those fly fishermen in the know, this can be the most exciting time of the fishing season. Large concentrations of shrimps (phreatoicids) can be found at the waters edge retreating with the water level. This brings the trout into the shallow margins at daylight and dark and sometimes well into the day for a feast they can't resist, their tails and backs out of the water as they move along slowly picking up these tiny ancient creatures.

There is a dun hatch here also but the fish rarely get interested in them. What they do rise to with gusto are jassids. Wherever these insects are found, usually around April, the fish love them. Unfortunately they are rarely consistent from year to year. Combine a morning fishing to the shrimp feeders and an afternoon chasing those jassid lovers and you have a good days fishing.

So why don't you get to know "The Jack" as it certainly has something to offer all styles of angling.

IN BRIEF

Pine Lake closed to fishing

Anglers would by now be aware that Pine Lake has been closed to fishing as a temporary measure to try to combat the spread of a root rot fungus that is killing some of the native vegetation. The area is also closed to all visitors including walkers as it could be devastating to alpine vegetation in other areas should the fungus get a hold and spread further.

Please observe this restriction to assist in the treatment of this problem.

Daiwa sponsorship continued

The Commission is pleased to again record that Daiwa has decided to support the activities of the IFC in Tasmania for the 1994-95 season.

This is an unconditional support and shows that this company is prepared to support the industry upon which its livelihood depends. Anglers may also wish to show that this support is appreciated by them when they are contemplating renewing their gear.

Boat ramps

Over last summer the IFC improved access to a number of boat ramps and this will be an area of further commitment in the future.

Anglers are asked to show some courtesy to other users of ramps by observing a few rules:

- do not leave vehicles parked on ramps or in a way that makes access for others difficult;
- try and limit your time on the ramp by preparing your boat elsewhere, either before launching or after reloading;
- avoid cleaning fish at or near boat ramps as large amounts of fish gut becomes unpleasant after a while.

Everyone can then have more time for fishing and enjoy it more as well.

Research grants

The Commission has received further funding from the federal government's Endangered Species Program and the Feral Pests Program to continue the important work of conserving and protecting our native freshwater fish and crayfish species. The Pedder galaxias recovery plan has received an additional \$45 330 to fund a thorough sampling program at Lake Pedder. The Swan galaxias recovery plan has been funded for the next five years with \$12 650 allocated for 1994-95. A small grant of \$3780 has also been received to fund preparation of recovery plans for the Clarence, saddled and swamp galaxias. Additional research into the distribution and impacts of the mainland yabbie (*Cherax* spp) will also be possible following receipt of a grant of \$27 142.

Recreational fishing workshop

The Australian Society for Fish Biology recently held a workshop in Canberra entitled 'Recreational Fishing: What's the Catch'. Commission staff in attendance were able to catch up on recent develop-

Lakes Sorell and Crescent Management Plan ...continued from page 1

topics of concern to users of the area. These included concerns about:

- the environment of the lakes area;
- the facilities available to recreational users;
- the access rights and responsibilities of recreational users;
- the water management procedures for the lakes.

A plan preparation working group within DELM is attempting to address all of these concerns in drafting of the plan. This group is being assisted by several committees:

- A steering committee comprising representatives from all of the major State and local Government authorities who have an interest in the area is overseeing the work of the plan preparation working group. The Inland Fisheries Commission is represented on this committee by the Commissioner, Wayne Fulton.
- As there are a lot of technical issues (eg water quality management) which are important in this process, a technical sub-group has been formed which is compiling all of the available technical information on the area. The IFC is represented on the technical sub-group by the Senior Scientific Officer, Dr Andrew Sanger who is convener of the group.
- The information compiled by the technical sub-group will be used by a reference group comprising representatives from all of the major stakeholders in the area. These stakeholders include anglers, hunters, shack owners, caravan users, landowners, water managers and local

ments in the research into and management of recreational fisheries in Australia and overseas. The value of the Commission's annual questionnaire program was explained in a talk given by former employee, Dr Peter Davies, and an outline of the Commission's current management structure was explained in a talk written by Wayne Fulton and presented by Dr Andrew Sanger. The reaction to the work of the Commission was generally favourable.

Commission staff also attended the ASFB conference which followed the workshop and presented talks on the recreational whitebait fishery and the mercury study outlined in the last newsletter.

FRDC eel research

The Victorian Department of Conservation and Natural Resources was recently awarded a Fisheries Research and Development Corporation grant to study the aquaculture potential of eels in Southeastern Australia. As part of the study, the glass eel migrations in the Tamar and Rubicon estuaries will be examined this year in conjunction with Commission staff. Further reports on the Commission's eel research program will appear in future newsletters.

Ouse River study

A major study of the water quality and biology of the Ouse River catchment is to be undertaken by the Commission as part of the

and State governments. The reference group is intended to provide an initial filter for draft decisions by the plan preparation group. It is hoped that feedback from the reference group will limit any unnecessary disagreement or delays about the draft planning decisions when public comment is called for. Dr Andrew Sanger will provide the IFC viewpoint on angling and environmental matters in discussions by the reference group which also has an angler representative.

A draft plan will be released for public comment early in 1995. Another public meeting will be held at this time to discuss any problems with the draft plan. It is intended that the plan be completed by about the middle of next year.

When completed, the plan will address all of the issues of concern by instituting both statutory and voluntary management agreements which will, hopefully, unite all stakeholders in a common goal of ensuring that the lakes Sorell and Crescent area remains one of the State's successful multi-use recreational, agricultural and water supply catchments.

Anglers should support the planning process by involving themselves through representative organisations such as the Freshwater Anglers Council of Tasmania (FACT) or the IFC, or directly at the public comment stage of the process. Hopefully there will also be opportunities for anglers to contribute to the long-term sustainable development of the area by participating in local groups formed to implement the management agreements. These groups may be modelled on the successful Landcare and Neighbourhood Watch community programs, both of which could easily be adapted to meet the needs of the Lakes Sorell and Crescent catchment.

HEC consultancy. The study aims to quantify the impacts of flow regulation and land-use practices on the proliferation of nuisance algal growths (green slime) in the Ouse River and its tributaries. This project will be of great significance to fishermen, as there have been many important fisheries which have been impacted by nuisance algal growths throughout the State, and it is hoped that some of the management recommendations which result from this study will be generally applicable to degraded streams across the State. A report on a more wide-ranging study of rivers across the State appears elsewhere in this newsletter.

Scotts Peak Road resurfaced

Meetings between the Hydro-Electric Commission and Inland Fisheries Commission have clarified a number of issues relating to access to and maintenance of roads constructed by the HEC. The HEC has confirmed that they will not proceed with further road closures without consultation with users.

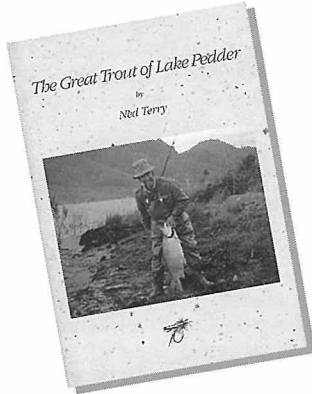
The condition of the Scotts Peak road to the southern side of Lake Pedder was also of concern to the IFC, and the HEC has come to the party by resurfacing the road at a cost of approximately \$60 000.

The IFC would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the continuing cooperation of the HEC in helping to provide the opportunity for all anglers to get to their favourite fishing spots.

Book Reviews

The Great Trout of Lake Pedder

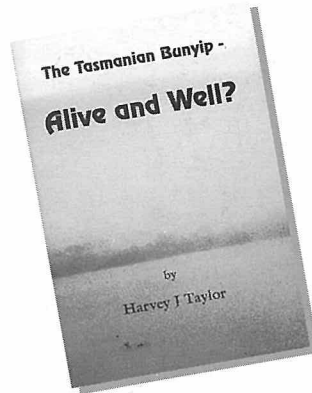
by Ned Terry
Retail Price around \$35.00



Ned Terry and his angling companions were immensely successful, pioneer anglers during the peak of the Lake Pedder trout fishery. In his first book, Ned reveals some of his fishing secrets which permitted him to catch more than his fair share of those Lake Pedder monsters. The book is well worth a read for those Lake Pedder anglers of past years and for the many others who never had the opportunity to experience this lake during the monster era.

The Tasmanian Bunyip - Alive and Well?

by Harvey J Taylor
Retail Price around \$9-50



Few Tasmanian's would know that some of our lakes and waterways may well harbour the mythical Tasmanian bunyip. Trout anglers through the ages have been prominent amongst those reporting sightings of strange, unexplained creatures disturbing the waters of our lakes. This book draws together historical accounts of observations and sightings from many witnesses.

An ideal book to accompany a whisky on a cold, highland night; perhaps the author had downed an extra one or two when he wrote it. In any case, the story had to be told and you should know about your native freshwater fauna.

Bad luck, Brett!

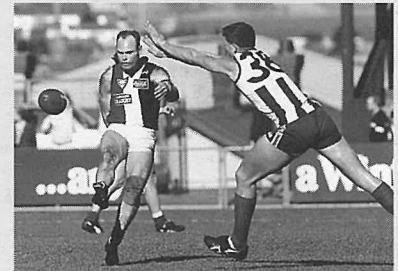
Another big one got away for IFC Technical Officer, Brett Mawbey, when New Norfolk went down to Clarence in the TFL grand final a few weeks ago.

Mawbs, who has occasionally been seen running along Liawenee Moor during the football season, had a good day in the final but not quite good enough unfortunately.

Better luck next year Brett.



Brett wins one battle... (photo W. Fulton)



... but loses another (photo courtesy The Mercury)

PROSECUTIONS

Court proceedings

Offences that were proceeded with by summons are listed below.

Infringement notices

During the six months from 1 January 1994 to 30 June 1994 the following 'on the spot fines' were issued.

Offence	Number
Fish without a licence	4
Fish with more than one rod and line	4
Use strike indicator	1
Fish with unattended set rod	6
Possess assembled rod	2
Possess or use a net	2

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Inland Fisheries Commission
127 Davey Street
Hobart Tasmania 7000

Offender	Location	Offences Summary	Total fine + costs (\$)
Marcus Geoffrey MUNDAY, Penguin	Great Lake	Other than rod & line	132 spec pen: 50
Peter James COONEY, East Devonport	MERSEY RIVER	Unlicensed/More than one rod & line	332
Anthony Charles DOUGLAS, East Devonport	MERSEY RIVER	Unlicensed/More than one rod & line	332
Gerrard David CASTLES, Latrobe	MERSEY RIVER	Possess net/Take whitebait	432
Robert John STEWARD, Devonport	DON RIVER	Possess& use of net/Take whitebat	432
Paul Victor HAMILTON, East Devonport	FORTH RIVER	Impair fish pass/Possess net/Take whitebait/Possess whitebat	1 032
Garry Charles LATHAM, East Devonport	FORTH RIVER	Possess net/Take whitebait/Possess whitebait	1 232
Andrew Eric PAULDURO, Parattah	LAKE REPULSE	Unlicensed/Falsely represent to be licensed/Unattended set rod	432
Peter Warren LAMBERT, Irish Town	DUCK RIVER - DEEP CREEK	Breach of conditions	4 132
Patrick John LEE, Wynyard	INGLIS RIVER	Take whitebait	232
Patrick John LEE, Wynyard	INGLIS RIVER	Take whitebait/Possess net	532
Gerrard Stephen BEST	MERSEY RIVER	Unlicensed	232
Shane Joseph Benson MUNDY,Bothwell	LAKE CRESCENT	Unattended set rod	332
Nicholas Edwin SWARD, Triabunna	LAKE LEAKE	Other than rod & line/Possess natural bait	100
Glen Ivan KEAN, Triabunna	LAKE LEAKE	Other than rod & line/Possess natural bait	100
Graeme Maxwell FAWKNER, Latrobe	LAKE CRESCENT	Unattended set rod	100