

Inland Fisheries Service *Report to anglers*



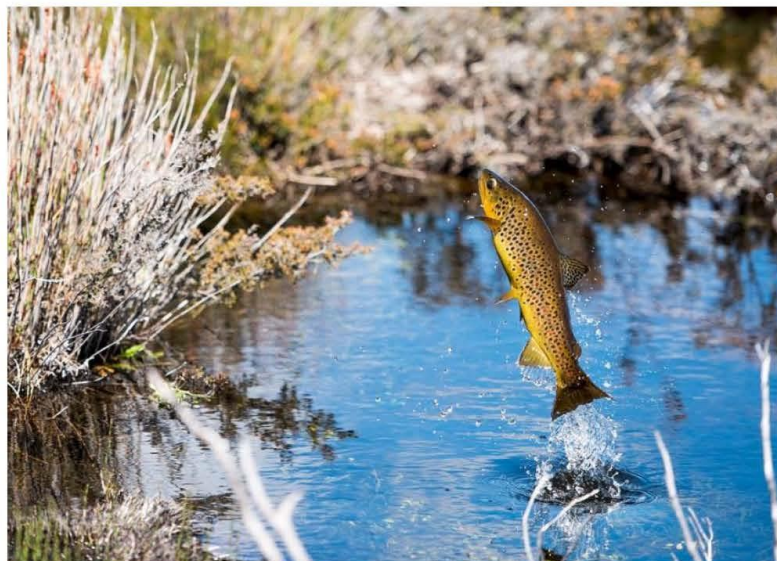
December to February



2017-18 Inland Fisheries Service Tasmanian Trout Fishing Photography Competition.

The new season is well underway so think about saving your best photos of Tasmanian lakes, rivers, angling experiences and send them in.

Photos can include fish, anglers, a favourite fishing spot, artfully placed gear, fishing with family, friends, a mate or others enjoying Tasmanian inland waters.



"Western Lakes"

Winning photo 2016-17 taken by Steven Ooi

Go to the www.ifs.tas.gov.au for details on how to enter.

There are great prizes to be won.



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Hot topics

Mersey River Fish Deaths

On Monday 31 January, we received reports of dead brown trout from the Mersey River. Staff from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Inland Fisheries Service (IFS) followed up on the report and found significant numbers of dead trout in the Merseylea area. More dead trout were found upstream and as far downstream as Lovetts Flat.

The EPA, with assistance from the IFS, collected samples of the dead fish. The results of examinations showed the fish had a bacterial infection of the gills, likely caused by clogging from sediments and algae. This condition, in conjunction with very high water temperatures, caused high levels of stress in the fish, resulting in death.

Two consecutive weeks (18-30 January) of air temperatures over 25°C (recorded at Sheffield) and consistent high overnight temperatures around 20°C, resulted in water temperatures in the Mersey River reaching very high levels. Several sites recorded water temperatures in excess of 27°C. The highest recorded temperature of 28.5°C was on the evening of 29 January. These high water temperatures coincided with low flows in the Mersey River. The critical maximum water temperature for brown trout is typically in the range of 24-27 degrees.

The sites most affected were around Merseylea. Much of the bank lacks overhanging vegetation and in stream structure because of the June 2016 floods. This likely resulted in higher water temperatures through this section.

During this period, the river was being managed consistent with the Mersey River Water Management Plan with environmental release from Parangana Dam and water restrictions in place.

Following this incident, the Department of Primary Industries, Parks, Water and Environment (DPIPWE) requested that Hydro Tasmania commence an emergency release of water to mitigate any further deaths relating to low flows and high water temperatures. Hydro Tasmania supported the request with a 2 cumec release for the period when higher temperatures were again forecast. No further fish deaths were reported and the IFS continues to monitor the situation.

Australia Day award for Trout Weekend

Trout Weekend recently received the 2018 Central Highland Community Event Australia Day Award. Trout Weekend has been running for 30 years in the Central Highlands.

Central Highland Council and Community members celebrated the Australia Day Awards with a BBQ at the Bothwell Swimming Pool.

Trout Weekend returns in 2018. We hope to see you up at our Liawenee field station over Saturday 19 and Sunday 20 May.



Back row L to R: Lyn Eyles, General Manager, Councillor Allwright, Councillor Poore.
Front row L to R: Mayor Loueen Triffitt, Raylee Parsons, Councillor McRae, Neil Morrow

Gambusia found in Queechy Park Pond

Responding to a report, we undertook a survey and confirmed the presence of the pest fish *Gambusia* (*Gambusia holbrooki*) in Queechy Park in the lower North Esk River, above where it enters the kanamaluka/ River Tamar.

The previous upstream limit of the distribution was Trailrace Park, in the kanamaluka/River Tamar.

Distribution surveys indicate that this unwanted pest is isolated to one dam in this area and was most likely transferred by people.



IFS manager Hatchery and Stocking surveying Queechy Park Pond for *Gambusia*

Gambusia are found in the Tamar Island wetlands. They have been eradicated using rotenone fish poison from dams at Exeter in the north, and Snug and Kingston in the south.

We are considering control options to limit the spread.

Tasmanian Inland Recreational Fishery Management Plan 2018-28

The IFS released the *Draft Tasmanian Inland Recreational Fishery Management Plan 2018 – 28 (Draft Plan 2018-28)* on 19 October 2017. The public comment period opened on Thursday 19 October and closed Monday 18 December 2017.

Nineteen submissions were received, eight from clubs and associations, one from Hydro Tasmania, nine from individuals and one from a political party. The overall response for the proposals was supportive.

The proposal that elicited the greatest response was the change to the minimum size limit for Wild and Overpopulated Fisheries to 300 mm with requests to keep the minimum size at 220 mm.

In addition, following input from the Inland Fisheries Advisory Council and IFS staff, the *Plan 2018-28* will reflect a commitment to undertake a review of the yingina/Great Lake Management Plan, the Western Lakes Management Plan and the conservation status of estuary perch.

The finalisation of the *Plan 2018-28* is on hold pending the upcoming State election.

Anglers Access

Four Springs Lake weed control

AAT and IFS have collaborated to control a number of Cumbungi (bullrush) infestations at Four Springs Lake.

In January, AAT volunteers slashed the Cumbungi under water using a specially modified brush cutter. The remaining sites were sprayed with a frog and fauna friendly bi-active herbicide on 7 February.

We will undertake follow up treatment as required.



AAT cumbungi (bullrush) volunteers

River Access

IFS and Derwent Catchment NRM have met with the owners of Lanoma Estate at Westerway to plan a willow control project on the Tyenna River. This site is a highly regarded anglers access location and willow removal will enhance the river and angler amenity. It is hoped to provide an opportunity for volunteer participation in the project.

Recreational Boating Fund (RBF)

The project to maintain navigation light and replace batteries has commenced. This project, jointly funded by MAST RBF and IFS will be completed by the end of June 2018.

We recently met with Hydro Tasmania to prioritise RBF applications for 2018.

Projects are being considered for Lake Rowallan, Lake Binney and Tungatinah Lagoon.

MAST and Hydro Tasmania are undertaking an assessment of Darwin Dam ramp and the landing at Thureau Hills at Lake Burbury for potential future projects.



IFS Manager of Anglers Access, Neil Morrow, changing navigation light batteries

Accessible angling platform at Four Springs Lake

A project to construct a dedicated fishing platform at Four Springs Lake as commenced. The platform is designed to enable universal access which means cater for anglers with limited mobility and is located at the southern end of the car park.

Construction should be completed in February.



Accessible angling platform under construction at Four Springs Lake

River Derwent Trap – Lake King William

High water levels in Lake King William inundated the fish trap on the River Derwent at Derwent Bridge during late winter and spring 2017. Due to limited site options, the fish trap was constructed just below the full supply level of the lake. Knowing the trap would flood was built into the design.

With the level in Lake King William falling over summer, we took the opportunity to undertake an inspection of the trap. It was found that the levee bank, separating the trap from the river, needed further protection. Bluestone spalls, with an underlay of geo-fabric, were locked into the bank. This should provide greater protection of the infrastructure during high water events. The trap is now ready for the brown trout spawning run.



The River Derwent Fish Trap – Lake King William

Native Fish Conservation

Swan galaxias

During January 2018, we carried out a check for the presence of trout and redfin perch at Floods Creek, on behalf of Tasmanian Irrigation. Floods Creek has a small population of the threatened freshwater fish, Swan galaxias.

Unfortunately, no Swan galaxias were located. This is the third consecutive survey where the Swan galaxias has not been found. Importantly, no predatory trout or redfin perch were found in the section of the creek above the dam wall.

Further work will be carried out to examine its absence of Swan galaxias.

Dwarf galaxias

The Dwarf galaxias is a very small freshwater fish found in the far NW and NE coastal areas of Tasmania. The species is listed as threatened under State and Commonwealth legislation.

During December 2017, eight sites that previously held this species were surveyed. Dwarf galaxias were confirmed from only two sites. A small population of the Tasmanian mudfish was found at one coastal lagoon. One site contained a range of species such as the common galaxias, eels, trout and pygmy perch.

Salmon Ponds

The brown trout ova collected in April and May 2017 from yingina/Great Lake hatched and grew quickly into 1.5g fry. The fry were stocked into public waters in December 2017.

Unseasonably record warm weather during January, particularly over the Australia Day long weekend, created stress on the display fish within the grounds of the Salmon Ponds. This event caused high mortality and at least half our stock of rainbow trout from the long pond, albino pond and brook trout pond was lost. Deaths were attributed to water temperatures exceeding critical maximums for the survival of trout combined with low oxygen levels. The maximum water temperature recorded at the Salmon Ponds was 28 degrees. Additional oxygen will be added and stocking levels reduced to minimise the risk of a repeat occurrence next summer.



The Salmon Ponds

Elver and Lamprey

On 1 February we turned off the migratory fish trap at Meadowbank Dam. Over the harvest period 813 kg of lamprey and 1073 kg of elver were trapped. These numbers represent a good migration and harvest.



Lamprey

Briseis Hole

Following an approach from Dorset Council, we recently traveled to the States north east to investigate Briseis Hole as a potential fishery. Briseis Hole is a deep, abandoned tin mine that sits on the northern side of the Ringarooma River at Derby. We have stocked the lake in the past with the last stocking occurring in the early 1980's.

It is planned to develop a fishery that caters for anglers of various ages and skill levels. Dorset Council is working to improve the access around Briseis Hole and we will assist the fishery by stocking with rainbow trout.



IFS and Dorset Council staff at Briseis Hole

We are hopeful that the fishery will be up and running by early next season.

Carp Management Program



IFS Technical Officer Chris Boon with a recently caught carp

Fishing effort from October to December 2017 resulted in the removal of 71 carp from Lake Sorell. This is in comparison to 289 carp removed during the same quarter in 2016.

Gillnetting effort occurred over a wide area of the lake. We targeted areas of structure and habitat as a priority. Most of the nets were set around the shallow regions of the lake in response to rising water temperatures and lake levels. Nets were set at right angles to the shoreline to target fish moving around the margins. They were also set in deeper water over rocky reef hot spots.

In addition to gillnets, we used a wide range of other fishing methods. These included fyke nets (stitched into barrier nets), the boat electro-shocker and backpack electro-shockers. No juvenile carp were detected, however a healthy population of golden galaxias, shortfin eels, tadpoles, and aquatic invertebrates were present.

Of note was the high catch rate of current and expired radio transmitter carp. Eight of the 71 captured carp caught were expired transmitter carp.

The ratio of carp with deformed gonads has continued to increase since the 2016-17 season. The ratio of affected carp to healthy males was 1.5:1, compared to 1:1 in January-March 2017

Compliance

Compliance statistics from 1 July 2017 to 15 Feb 2018

- 3 436 angling licences inspected.
- 241 whitebait licences inspected.
- 21 whitebait nets, 1 gill net, 1 opera house net and 1 bait trap seized.
- 46.9 kilograms of whitebait seized.
- 1 vessel seized.
- 6 search warrants executed and 2 searches by consent of residential premises.
- 5 vehicles searched.
- 469 vessels inspected under Marine and Safety legislation.
- Summonses served on 13 defendants comprising 48 charges for court attendance.
- Court file to be submitted for complaint and summons alleging multiple offences dealing with Giant Freshwater Crayfish.
- Infringement and conditional cautions issued for 153 offences.
- \$3 244 in court fines
- \$24 168 in infringement notice fines.
- Ten notices of disqualification are current, preventing offenders from holding a recreational whitebait licence for 30 years.
- Of the 153 offences dealt with during this reporting period 108 were committed under the *Inland Fisheries Act 1995*, 45 offences were committed under the *Marine and Safety Authority Act 1997*.

Sixty offences of fishing without an angling licence or being in possession of an assembled rod and line without an angling licence accounted for 39% of all infringement notice offences. The wearing

of PFD's continues to be an issue, with 36 infringement notices issued for this offence representing 23% of offences.

Prosecutions matters to date

- Dion Melvin HOUSE of Smithton was convicted on 25/9/17 in the Smithton Magistrates Court of Possess net other than landing net or seine net at inland waters. The defendant was fined \$477 and court costs of \$82.15.
- Dale Lester LAMBERT of Smithton was convicted on 25/9/17 in the Smithton Magistrates Court of Possess whitebait without a whitebait licence and Possess net other than landing net or seine net at inland waters. The defendant was fined \$1 113 and court costs of \$164.30.
- Peter Leslie COVENTRY of Devonport was convicted on 7/11/17 in the Devonport Magistrates Court of 1 count of Take whitebait without a whitebait licence, 1 count of Fail to comply with a Ministerial order under the *Inland Fisheries Act 1995* relating to the taking of whitebait and 1 count of Use net other than landing net or seine net at inland waters. The defendant was fined \$1 654 and court costs of \$82.15.

Magistrates Court Offence Convictions

Prosecution Offences (Magistrates Court)	Number
Possess or use net other than landing net or seine net at inland waters	3
Possess whitebait without a whitebait licence	1
Take whitebait without a whitebait licence	1
Fail to comply with a Ministerial order relating to the taking of whitebait	1
Total	6

Inland Fisheries Service

Report to anglers

Dec 2017 – Feb 2018

Infringement notice offences	Infringement Notices	Infringement notices endorsed as Conditional Cautions	Formal Cautions	Total	Non-Compliance rate (total/number of licence checks undertaken)
Taking acclimatised or indigenous fish without an angling licence	23	8		31	0.84%
Possessing assembled rod, reel and line without an angling licence	15	14		29	0.79%
Possess or use net other than landing net or seine net at inland waters	1	1		2	0.05%
Not complying with Ministerial order about taking fish-closed water	8	3		11	0.30%
Not complying with Ministerial order about taking whitebait-closed water		1		1	0.03%
Take / possess whitebait without a whitebait licence	2	1		3	0.08%
Use whitebait net without tag bearing licence no	1	3		4	0.11%
Using bottle jar, can or similar object to indicate movement in the rod and line	1	2		3	0.08%
Fishing with more rods and lines than endorsed on licence	3	3		6	0.16%
Taking fish with unattended set rod	8	1		9	0.24%
Use ground bait	1			1	0.03%
Using other than artificial fly in specified waters	1			1	0.03%
Possess assembled rod reel and line when taking fish prohibited		5		5	0.13%

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Infringement notice offences	Infringement Notices	Infringement notices endorsed as Conditional Cautions	Formal Cautions	Total	Non-Compliance rate (total/number of licence checks undertaken)
Fish in inland waters by means other than rod and line.	1			1	0.03%
Take undersized fish-regulation 16(1) and (2)		1		1	0.03%
Fail to wear PFD on vessel under 6 meters while underway	33	1		34	0.92%
Fail to wear PFD on PWC while underway	1			1	0.03%
Master of vessel fail to ensure person under 16 years complies with PFD	1			1	0.03%
Exceed 5 knot speed limit in restricted area		2		2	0.05%
Fail to carry minimum safety equipment	1	2		3	0.08%
Fail to store safety equipment in good order		1		1	0.03%
Fail to register motor boat	1			1	0.03%
Fail to affix registration label		1		1	0.03%
Fail to display registration number		1		1	0.03%
Total	102	51	0	153	

Club events, meetings and dinners

- *Draft Tasmanian Inland Recreational Fishery Management Plan 2018-28* public meeting – 18 November 2017
- Quamby Fly Fishers meeting – 6 December 2018
- Bronte Fly Fishing School presentation – 10 January 2018

Stockings between 17 November 2017 and 21 February 2018

Water	Date	Species	Stock	No	Origin	Type	Weight
Meadowbank Lake	24-Nov-17	Atlantic salmon	domestic	594	Tassal, Karanja	diploid	6000.00
Frombergs Dam	27-Nov-17	rainbow trout	domestic	16	Ulverstone High School Aquaponics program	triploid	500.00
Hiscutt Pond (Penguin)	30-Nov-17	rainbow trout	domestic	130	Huon Aquaculture Company, Bridport	triploid	1500.00
Lamberts Dam - Railton	6-Dec-17	brown trout	wild	5 000	Salmon Ponds	diploid	1.50
South Riana	6-Dec-17	brown trout	wild	35 000	Salmon Ponds	diploid	1.50
Lamberts - Devonport Fly Fishers Dam	6-Dec-17	brown trout	wild	1 000	Salmon Ponds	diploid	1.50
Devonport Anglers	6-Dec-17	brown trout	wild	500	Salmon Ponds	diploid	1.50
Penguin Club Dam #1	6-Dec-17	brown trout	wild	500	Salmon Ponds	diploid	1.50
Penguin Club Dam #2	6-Dec-17	brown trout	wild	500	Salmon Ponds	diploid	1.50
Blackmans Lagoon	7-Dec-17	brown trout	wild	40 000	Salmon Ponds	diploid	1.00
Craigbourne Dam	7-Dec-17	Atlantic salmon	domestic	606	Tassal, Russell Falls	diploid	1500.00
Brushy Lagoon	7-Dec-17	Atlantic salmon	domestic	380	Tassal, Russell Falls	diploid	1500.00
Rostrevor Lagoon	20-Dec-17	brown trout	wild	10 000	Salmon Ponds	diploid	1.50

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