

Merthyr Tydfil Angling Alliance Page 1

January 2019

Salmon Fishing

I do not need to say that 2018 was the worse year we have experienced in the Associations history, since we purchased our first Usk Fishery in 1979.

Excellent river conditions through April into May did not produce any more than two Salmon from our beats. The total for 2018 was Kemeys considered the best beat we have three, The Mardy until now the beat that comes second three, the Ysbyty four. This was also reflected on the river Taff where trapping takes place at Radyr weir Cardiff. The trap is closed for three days per week, Tuesday Wednesday, Thursday from the 1st of April and until week 51 that took us up to the weekend before Christmas only ten Salmon had been caught in the trap. I am showing below the catch at Radyr since 2006.

The data for 2015 and 2016 are not comparable with other years due to the construction of Radyr hydropower facility. Trapping ceased on 23 September 2015 and recommenced using the new trapping facility on 3 November 2016.

Radyr Cumulative Catch

Year:	Total hours	SL Catch	SL CPUE	ST Catch	ST CPUE
2006	3083.54	98 <u>2</u>	0.032	23	0.007
2007	3327.57	121 <u>11</u>	0.036	43	0.013
2008	3401.15	157 <u>24</u>	0.046	48	0.014
2009	3172.20	99 <u>19</u>	0.031	38	0.012
2010	3254.16	320 <u>3</u>	0.098	29	0.009
2011	3016.69	376 <u>1</u>	0.125	64	0.021
2012	3252.45	220 <u>0</u>	0.068	59	0.018
2013	3258.66	341 <u>0</u>	0.105	27	0.008
2014	2479.80	129 <u>0</u>	0.052	23	0.009
2015	1632.18	81 <u>0</u>	0.050	10	0.006
2016	392.83	22 <u>0</u>	0.056	0	0.000
2017	2502.38	43 <u>0</u>	0.017	4	0.002
2018	2560.00	10 <u>0</u>	0.004	2	0.001

Note: Bold underlined SL catch = Coded Wire Tagged fish

From 2013 the hatcheries were closed and the catch since then has just gone down hill. There are others factors not helping such as fish eating birds and this aspect is now subject to a committee having been set up to look at the issue. This has only come about by the pressure the anglers have brought on Natural Resources Wales due to the new bylaw proposals. We cannot see how any New proposals other than to make it look Natural Resources Wales are doing something will increase our runs of Salmon. The National Spring Bylaws have been in since 1988 with catch and release on all rivers until the 16th June each year. This was extended until 31st December this year and the above table just goes to show that when you consider that the Taff is Total catch and release what a nonsense the introduction of any new bylaws without tackling the other problems is.

The Wye faired better but even here the catch was down by two thirds. However we as Anglers have always been inclined to look at the bright side and we are all probably looking forward to the 2019 season saying to ourselves that hopefully it can not get any worse. CAN IT?

Newsletter January 2019

Trout Fishing

The Trout fishing held up well on all our waters. Early season was curtailed somewhat with the high water and the Beast from the East.

The river Taff fished well all through the year and although conditions were trying during the very hot weather those anglers who went out and fished from dawn and those who fished evening into the dark enjoyed much success.

It was a similar pattern on the Usk and tellingly the trout fisherman were not reporting any salmon showing on our waters. Showing it was not worth the effort for the salmon fishermen to go out.

Talybont fished extremely well for most of the year but did tend to tail away from the beginning of August. This was not surprising as by then the lake had gone right down and in some cases some areas had become very dangerous clinging mud.

Cantref fished extremely well from early on and it was not until essential work took place on the dam and it was dropped ten feet or more that the fishing slowed down. We were lucky as once the work had finished the rains came and as the reservoirs in that valley are so small Cantref filled up over night.

The rains however brought a terrible landslide in the valley of the Nant Crew and this coloured the lake so much that fishing was impossible for several weeks. A similar landslip on the Nant Ddu brook several years ago caused the same problem at Llwynon.



Pictures of the land slip on the Nant Du giving an idea of the magnitude of the problem for Welsh Water when they have land slip in these very inaccessible valleys

Coarse Fishing

Contrary to the normal pattern at this time of Year our lakes are still fishing quite well. The mild weather is probably helping, but blank or very quiet days are still possible. However those who have decided to blow away the Holiday excess have had some success on our ponds. In one respect out Junior Anglers can take all the glory.



Rocco with his six Carp from Cyfarthfa lake this week. Left David Davies with one of Seven Bream. A mixed bag from Top Pond Mark Sweeney



Coarse Fishing :Cont



Martin Ebbatson
Fishing
Pontsticill on the
27th Dec above
and left.

Gareth Winstone
braving
Pontsticill 30th
Dec below a cold
over cast day . I
suppose this is
what angling is
about



Our thanks to those who have given us permission to use their photos in this News letter.

We can do with more in2019.



Matters of importance that need a mention

Most of those who fish for salmon are aware of the new bylaws proposed by Natural Resources Wales and opposed by many anglers across a large spectrum even on those rivers that already, Wye, Taff, are full catch and release.

Natural Resources Wales went ahead hoping the Bylaws would have been accepted. However the Environment Minister had been under so much pressure she decided to give to coin a rugby phrase one of her classic reverse passes and called a Public Inquiry. We call it passing the buck. This left Natural Resources Wales in a dilemma as the old National Salmon Bylaws that had been running for Twenty years were ending on the 31st December 2018. The Public Inquiry will not report until at least May so this left no rules governing Salmon Catches.

We cannot remember exactly when but during the period of the old NRA in Wales problems were arising that required an instant need to curtail or reduce fishing effort, due we think at the time were many Salmon showing disease. There was no legal mechanism in Wales or indeed in England that allowed anything other than a long drawn out consultation. Regional Advisory Committee at the time pushed for a quicker way to pass a temporary bylaw for such circumstances and it is this that is being used now as a short term fix. We do not disagree. The inquiry will start on the 15th January 2019. We will keep you informed as to how it is going