



Ecological Appraisal

Monitoring ecosystems; identifying pollution causes & impacts

Major issues over the last 3 months:

- Arctic Charr monitoring in Llyn Padarn
- Seine netting in North Wales' estuaries

Llyn Padarn Fishery Surveys

Llyn Padarn is one of the very few lakes in the UK that holds Arctic Charr. In 2007 we monitored their migration up the Afon y Bala using fyke nets and caught very low numbers. Hundreds had been caught in previous surveys, therefore further investigation was needed.

This December we have used a Dual-frequency Identification Sonar (DIDSON) to monitor the number of charr migrating up the Afon y Bala. So far results look a lot more positive than in 2007 and in future this method may be beneficial helping us estimate better the number of spawning adults.

Thank you to Pete Clabburns Technical Fisheries Team for their assistance.



Arctic Charr from Llyn Padarn



Anchovy in action

WFD Estuary Netting

Ecological Appraisal and Technical Fisheries teams have been seine netting on the Conwy, Gwyrfai and Dee estuaries in North Wales.

As expected, we caught Sand Eels, Flounders, Sea Bass and Gobis. More obscurely an Anchovy was caught in one survey on the Conwy estuary. This came as a surprise to everyone involved as they are usually only found around the coast of Devon and Cornwall in the UK. Could this be linked to climate change? All of the fish caught were recorded and measured and added to the EA national database. In future these data will be used to help measure the status of these transitional water bodies for the Water Framework Directive.

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Environmental Crime

Reducing illegal fisheries and waste activities in North Wales.

Major issues over the last 3 months:

- **Court result**
- **Fishermen banned for two years**

No licence angler fined £435

In December a Buckley man was fined £350 and ordered to pay £85 costs at Llandudno magistrates for fishing without a license at Tany-Mynydd Trout Fishery in Abergele.

The man was fishing for non-migratory trout when he was stopped by an Environmental Crime officer carrying out spot checks. He told the officer he didn't know where his fishing licence was and was given seven days to produce it but never did. It later emerged his previous licence had long expired.



Officers on patrol



Dee cockle checks

Banned from fishing for two years

Two men, who have a history of fishing without a rod licence, have been banned from fishing in Wales or England for two years. They were among 10 offenders prosecuted for fisheries offences by Environment Agency Wales in Chester Magistrates' Court in October. The two men, both of Halewood, Liverpool, will also have to pay over £700 in fines and costs between them.

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Technical Fisheries

Maintaining and improving fisheries

Major issues over the last three months:

- **Artro logjam removed**
- **New car park for anglers**
- **Emral habitat scheme**
- **Rod licence sales increase again**

Artro logjam removed

A major logjam on the River Artro which had been accumulating piles of woody debris for the past two years was cleared by agency contractors this month. This blockage had become so severe it was obstructing the passage of salmon and sea trout migrating to spawning grounds above Llyn Cwm Bychan.



Before blockage removed

New car park for anglers

Sustainable Fisheries have contributed to works undertaken by Traws Newid to create a car park at the south eastern corner of Llyn Trawsfynydd. The lake, a huge resource to the local community and North Wales, is at present underutilised. Provision of these improved parking facilities will, hopefully, increase the numbers of anglers visiting the lake.



Swing gate and crossing point

Emral habitat scheme

Recently over 2kms of habitat on the Emral Brook was fenced off as part of the Sustainable Fisheries project. Also as part of the scheme approx 50 tonnes of locally sourced boulders were placed in stream to provide cover for fish and to create a pool riffle habitat. This scheme was very challenging to deliver as the land was designated as Historical Park Land and it was in the Tir Gofal scheme.

Rod licence sales increase again

Sales of all rod licences in Wales have increased for the third year running. Children 9.7%, women 20.4% and overall a 9.8% increase. Good news for the future.

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Technical Fisheries

Maintaining and improving fisheries

Major issues over the last three months:

- **Habitat restoration project on upper Clwyd**
- **Existing habitat site maintenance update**
- **Habitat schemes on the Prysor**
- **Bontuchel fishpass improvements**

Habitat restoration project on upper Clwyd

Sustainable Fisheries has completed 0.8km of habitat restoration on the upper Clwyd. Works have included riparian fencing with access gates and creation of formalised drinking points to improve the habitat adjacent to the river. These buffer strips allow vegetation to establish and create cover for fish and corridors for wildlife.

Existing habitat site maintenance update

Field visits to existing habitat sites across North Wales itemising problems are close to being completed. Forty-one sites have been visited with a few left to see on the Seiont, Llyfni and Gwyrfa catchments. Further discussions with angling clubs and rivers trusts to help maintain sites will start in early 2009.



Upper Clwyd tributary



Habitat improvements on tributary of Prysor

Habitat schemes on the Prysor

Sustainable Fisheries has completed two schemes on tributaries of the Prysor. Works have included riparian fencing with access gates, provision of water troughs or creation of formalised drinking points. In-river habitat has also been restored to provide cover for fish and aquatic wildlife. It is important to provide buffer strips, allowing vegetation to establish and improving the habitat for fish and wildlife.

Bontuchel fishpass improvements

During the summer some changes were made to the fishpass. Even though minor, they have made the operation and maintenance of the pass easier and safer.

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Technical Fisheries

Maintaining and improving fisheries

Major issues over the last three months:

- **Three new angling clubs in North Wales**
- **Brown trout improve at Cefni Reservoir**
- **Changes to stocking**

Three new angling clubs in North Wales

Through Angling Participation work, three new angling clubs have formed. Ruthin Community Angling Club by local residents to get Cae Ddôl Park lake, Ruthin, developed as a fishery. A club was formed at Pensarn Youth Club on Anglesey following an AP course. Philippino people taken sea fishing, part of National Fishing Week, formed Sea Angling club.

Brown trout improve at Cefni Reservoir

The 2008 Fishing season at Cefni Reservoir has been enhanced by improved Wild Brown Trout. Habitat work on the tributaries has increased the spawning and juvenile recruitment that is now benefiting angling catches. Catch and release is operated to ensure stocks increase.



Fly-tying at Pensarn Youth Club



Brown trout

Changes to stocking

In the future all trout stocked into rivers are going to have to be 'triploid' (infertile). This has been decided because it is thought that farmed trout cross breeding with wild fish will weaken the wild strains; but as triploid fish are more expensive angling clubs have been given talks to explain the reasons behind the decision. This will be brought in gradually with total compliance aimed for by 2015.

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Fish Culture

Conserving and improving fisheries

Major issues over the last three months:

- **Broodstock collection for Dee mitigation**
- **Mawddach and Conwy Autumn broodstock collection**

Broodstock Collection for Dee mitigation

This Autumn, hatchery staff and the Fisheries Technical Team have been busy collecting adult salmon and sea trout for the rearing schemes, currently ongoing at the two North Wales Fish Culture Units.

At Maerdy, salmon have to be collected for the Dee mitigation scheme. Each year a target number of 250,000 ova is set. To achieve this goal, approximately 45 hen salmon and 45 cock salmon have to be collected. So far this year 15% of the salmon collected have been finclipped, i.e. hatchery reared fish, released as smolts in 2006/2007. It is estimated that 200,000 salmon ova will be laid down at Maerdy this year.



Stripping ova from a fin clipped salmon caught at the Celyn trap



Fin-clipped salmon captured on the Lledr

Mawddach & Conwy Autumn broodstock collection

At the Mawddach Fish Culture Unit, salmon and sea trout are collected for the Mawddach, Lledr, and Llugwy fish rearing schemes.

On the Conwy, over 30% of the salmon collected were fin-clipped, indicating a substantial proportion of returning adult hatchery reared fish. This scheme is funded by the Conwy Valley Fisheries Association and this year approximately 50,000 ova will be laid down.

On the Mawddach, salmon and sea trout are collected for stripping. To date 45,000 sea trout ova have been laid down, and a similar number is expected from the salmon. This year 10% of the salmon are returning hatchery fish. These schemes are part funded by Dolgellau Anglers and Prince Albert.

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