

Education

# Casting and Fishing Courses



# Wye

# Salmon

# Association

SNR Ponds

## SNR Ponds

Semi Natural Rearing of Atlantic Salmon to assist the recovery of the once great river Wye. This year in 2013 49,000 parr will be put in a semi natural environment before release into the main river in May 2014. There to begin their fantastic voyage to the Atlantic where they will grow rapidly and return as adults in future years to breed and repopulate the river.

Nant Gwynne

Bigsweir

Hardwick

Cross Gates

Redbrook Farm

Birchfield Farm

Caradoc 1

Caradoc 2

## Review of the Salmon Season 2013

More Rods Fishing

### Get More Rods on the River Campaign

Upper Bigsweir

Letton Court

Lower Wye Fishing

Caemawr



## The Salmon Year 2013

### January

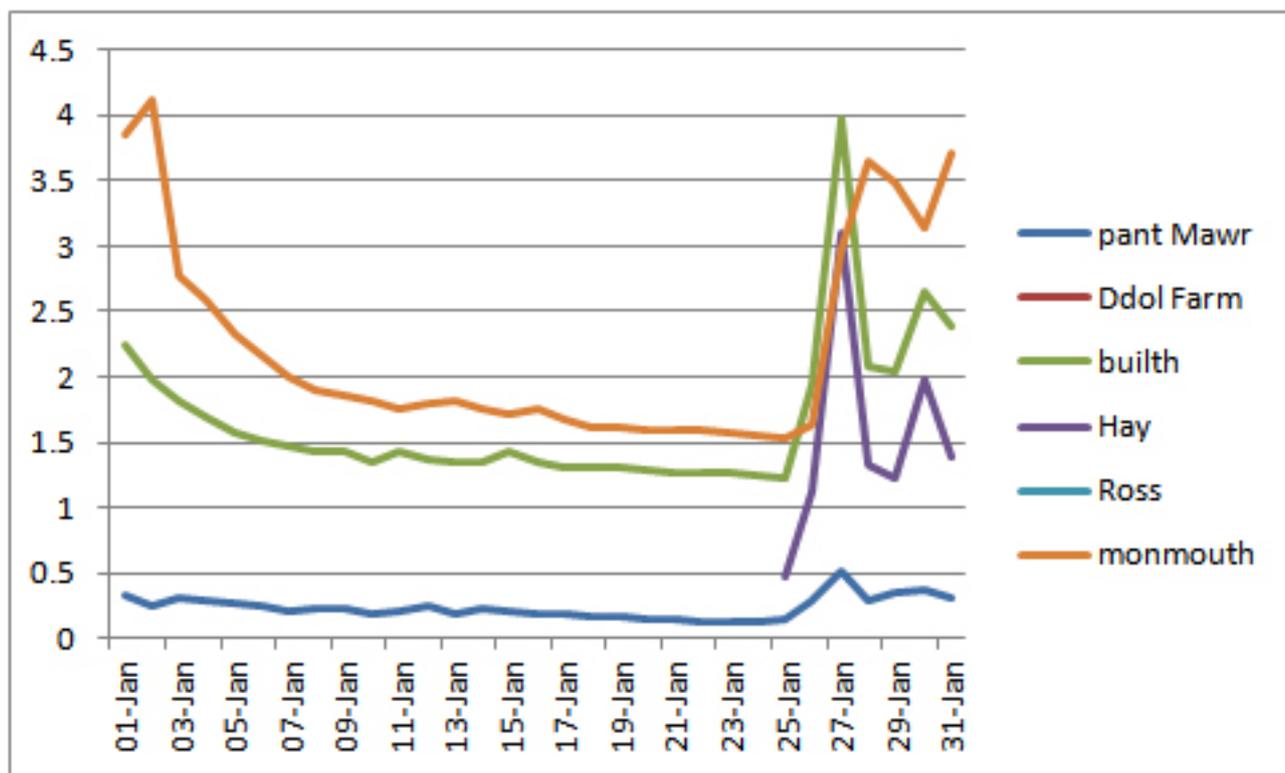
The month began with a spell of mild weather, with little rain, though it remained mostly cloudy. By 11th it had turned significantly colder, with some wintry precipitation at times between 14th and 23rd. The month approached its end with a mild but wet and windy theme.

The mean temperature was 0.4 °C below the 1981-2010 average. It was slightly drier than normal for most areas away from the southern fringe, with 89% of the long-term average for Wales overall.

The month was relatively dull with 76% of the normal sunshine hours, especially towards the north.



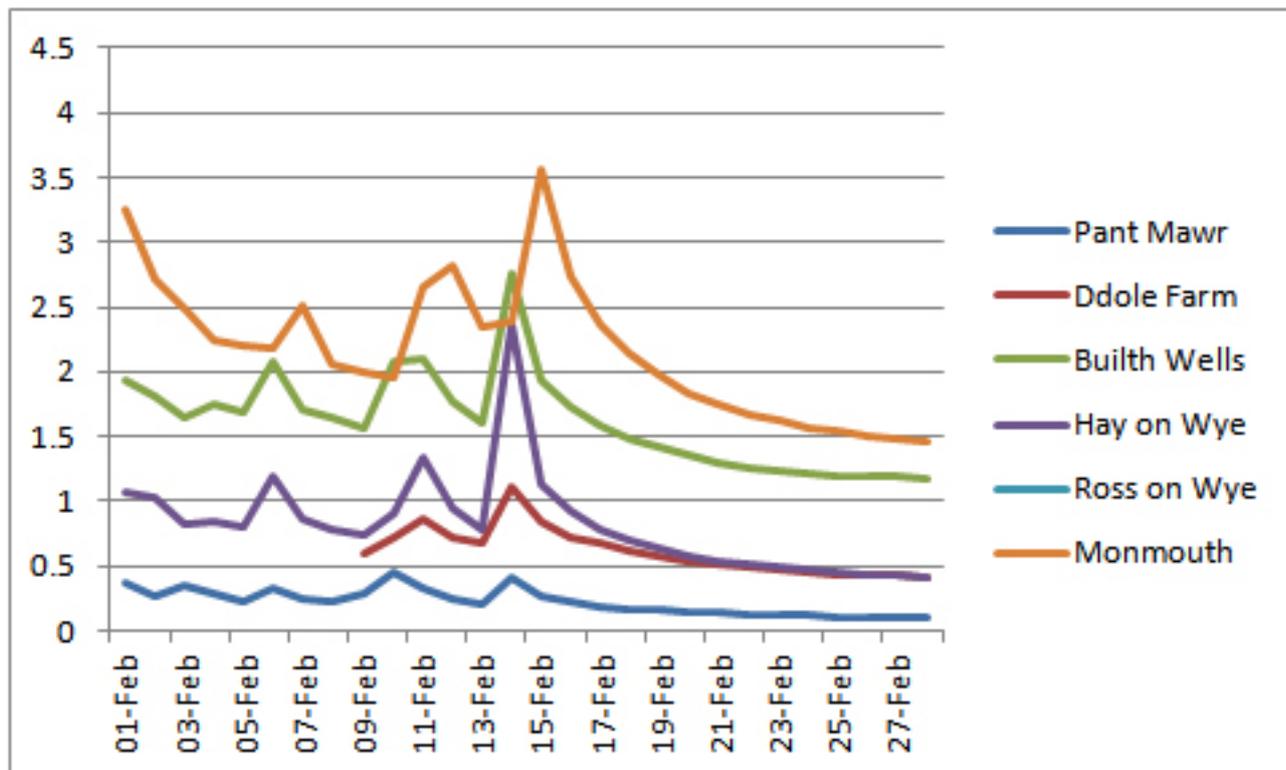
Bulth Wells January 27th



### February

The first half of the month was mostly unsettled, with periods of rain and showers, and becoming windy but mild for a time. From mid-month it became more settled as high pressure took over, with little further rain and spells of sunshine, but much lower temperatures.

The mean temperature was 1.0 °C below the 1981-2010 average. It was rather drier than normal for most areas, with 68% of the long-term average rainfall. Monthly sunshine totals were near normal with exactly 100% of the long-term average for Wales overall.



## March

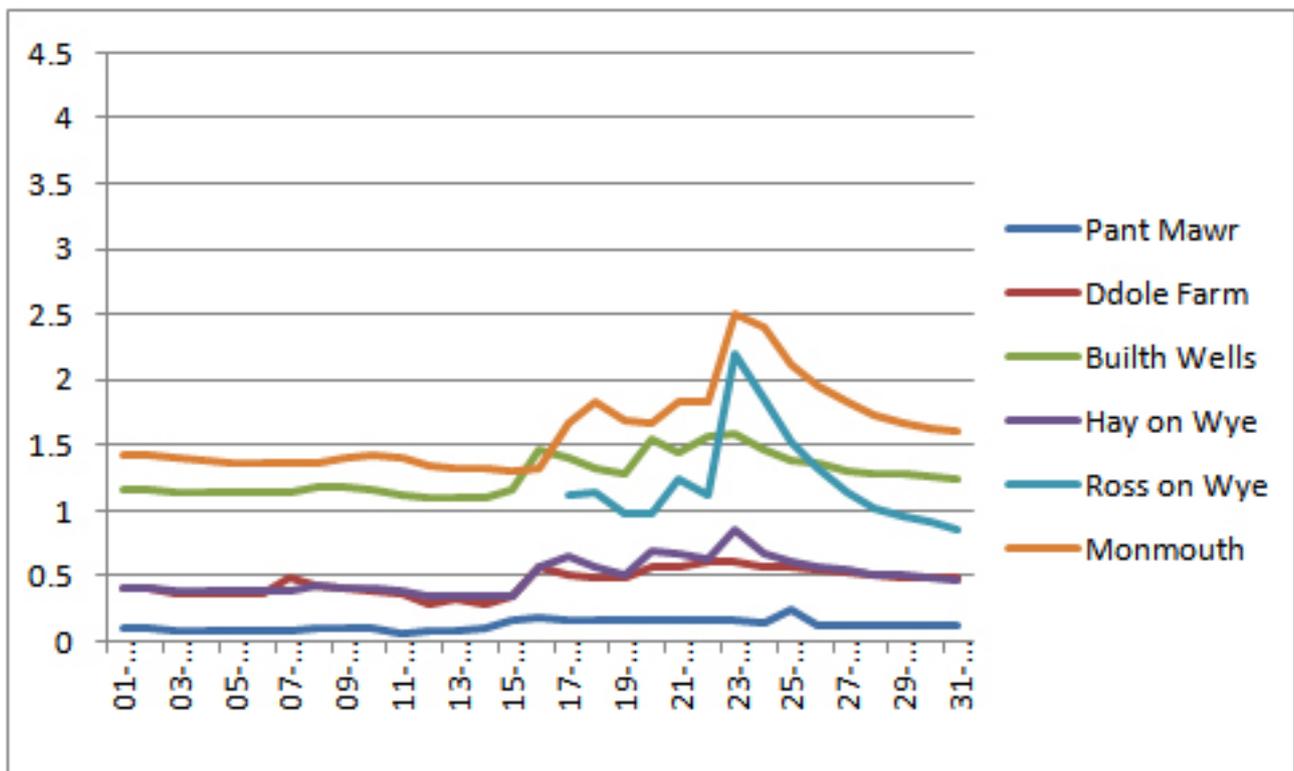
The month began fine and settled, but after a few days it turned more unsettled and colder. There was heavy rain for a time after mid-month, with significant snow in the north. The last part of the month was mainly dry but with bitterly cold easterly winds.

The mean temperature was 3.4 °C below the 1981-2010 average, and this was the coldest March since 1962 and the second coldest in the series from 1910. It was rather drier than normal in most areas, with 76% of the long-term average rainfall. Western parts enjoyed some sunny days, and overall there was exactly 100% of the long-term average sunshine.

The season began with air temperatures dropping and the river holding a greenish tinge from the last of the snows. Cold nights had kept river temperatures down and best chances for an early salmon were middle and lower river beats. First fish of 19.5lb was reported by Hylton Pearce at Garnons on a spinner. This was followed by a 12lber to Charles Davies on a Flying C at HDAA Luggs Mouth water. A few kelts were reported being caught around Bredwardine and Goodrich/Lydbrook. More fish reports followed, Dave Roberts catching his first ever salmon, a cock fish of 13lb at HDAA Holme Lacey beat on a small Toby, Clive Peglar at Wyebank with a 10lb fish on spinner, Steve Boswell with an 18lber at Wyesham again on a spinner and Oliver Burch at Goodrich Court with an 11lb fish on a Black & Gold Flying C.

The river was quiet with upper reaches gin clear and low there were few reports of anglers about, those fishing reported little or no activity. Five fish were reported for Wyesham including a fin clipped fish taken on 6th by gillie Joe Cobley. A fresh fish in prime condition and weighing 21lb it was almost certainly from stocking of clipped smolts, from Cynrig Hatchery that took place at Cadora during 2010. A fine springer from Ingeston for Gillie Lyn Cobley estimated at 25lbs taken on a red & black Flying C. He also took a magnificent kelt, 44" long in superb condition which many may have taken for a clean fish.

Don Macer Wright celebrated acquiring a new beat at Craig y Haul, Lydbrook by landing a 38.5" cock fish weighing in at 22lb from the Waterscross pool on yellow and green devon. During mid month river coloured up from rain showers both over mid Wales and Monnow catchments. Weather was bitter and wind chill discouraged rod effort with frequent snow showers. Fish of 10lb for Dr John Watkinson at Lower Balingham, and 24lb for Tony Richardson at Holme Lacey. Numerous reports of kelts from the Balingham area plus a 17lb salmon for Matt Randall at Carrots. Plenty of rod effort now, particularly in middle river, water still a little high below Monmouth although a rod at Upper Bigsweir reported a couple of pulls. The total of 25 for month was worryingly low compared with 5 yr average of 41 and last year's 107. In days gone by water temperature, weather conditions etc didn't stop anglers catching in big numbers, has other events at sea decimated migration or are they waiting patiently in estuary for more water?



## April

The first week saw cold nights but sunny days before it turned more unsettled but milder. The 17th and 8th were stormy with high winds. From 19th it turned generally more settled with patchy rain and some bright spells. The mean temperature was 1.2 °C below the 1981-2010 average, so the coldest April since 1989. It was drier than average in most areas with 60% of average rainfall. Sunshine was close to average with 105% of the long-term average.

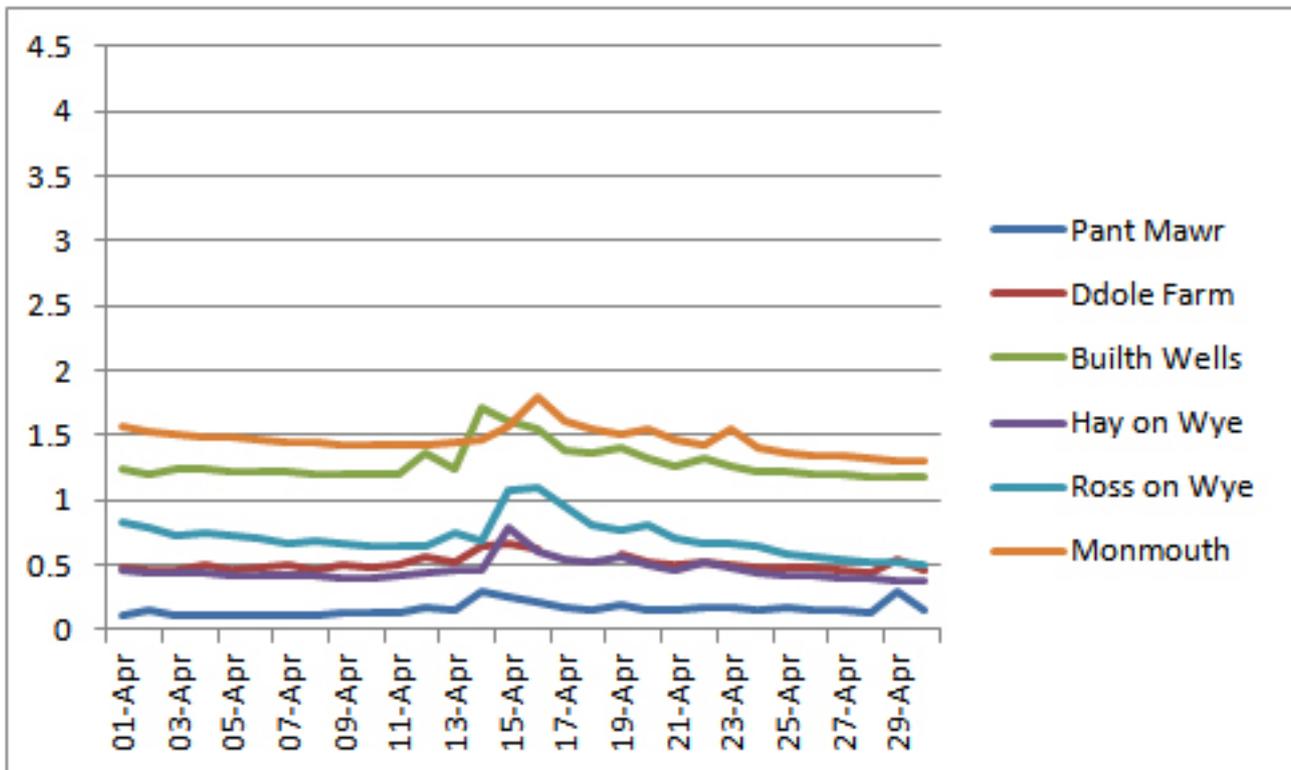
The month opened with the Black Mountains and the Beacons covered in snow. The river received a daily influx of cold water with the freezing spell looking set to last. This must be one of the latest springs ever. A number of salmon were taken in the Hereford to Ross section; seven amazingly from Lower Balingham to Andrew & Nick Monahan and Mike Clapham along with a treble to Dr John Watkinson on a Flying C plus one from Caradoc and another at Goodrich Court. A number had lice showing they had arrived on the tide very recently. Downstream Bigsweir and Wyesham were catching a few and hoping that the water continued to drop away.



Finally at the end of first week in April Wye river temperatures rose above the estuary and salmon entered the beats below Hereford. Father and son Wye gillies Joe and Lyn Cobley netted thirty pounders for their anglers, Lyn netting the larger for Mike Pritchard at Ingeston, a super fish measured at 46" long and weight for length gave this at around 33lb. However it was an exceptionally deep thick fish and could well have weighed more. A hasty photo as the fish was being returned unfortunately failed. Joe netted the 30lber at Wyesham for Barry Odger. One lucky fisher Lawrence Birkin hooked five on a Sunday at Aramstone, landing four of them the largest 30lbs and 25lbs. River below Monmouth still on high side for many regulars but couple winkled out, again on a Flying C, by guide John Symonds. There were also big fish at Wyesham for owner Mike Timmis [25lb] and George Adams [25lb]. Charlie Poole had a 30lber at Bigsweir whilst spinning, Tim Edmunds had a double at Caradoc on a yellow and black tube and sink tip. Plenty of brave souls fished the beats above Bredwardine to Hay with little to show but frostbite although four were caught at Winforton including a treble for Mike Judge of 25, 18 & 10lb. Charles Davies took a 10lb fish from the Vineyard on the HDAA waters on a Flying C. Don Macer Wright had a fresh 15lbs fish from Courtfield and Ian Spalding reported a 17lbs fish from Letton on a Mepps.



Sheepwash produced this 17lb fish on a cascade for Nigel Smith



Conditions in mid month remained excellent on the lower river though the water is still only around 41 deg with just a little snowmelt, and still incidentally colder than the sea temperature of 45 deg. Upper river by now was pretty low and nothing much was



being seen let alone caught. Fish from middle river included a 22lb fish from Courtfield by Rene Alleyne, a 19lb fish from Old Harp water by Jerry Lewis and an 11lb fish for Wayne Little at Wyesham, his first apparently. Tony Mobley recorded the first fish of 21.5lbs from the Golden Mile and from the adjacent Sheepwash beat a fish of 14.5lbs to Nigel Slater. Later that same day Nigel had a few casts at Whitehouse and promptly took a fish of 19lbs. All these fish were taken spinning.

By 18th river levels were dropping very slowly with conditions getting close to ideal for most sections of the river. Fish were taken at Letton by Malcolm Edward at 20lbs and Ian Spalding 15lbs and 23lbs plus another of 14lbs from Backney by Keith Maddox. Dave Palmer had a double of 17 & 24lb at Golden Mile and John Bailey returned a super sea liced salmon estimated at 19lbs also at Letton Court. Spinning with a blue and silver devon minnow it was the first Wye salmon for the long time Severn fisherman.

**Programme of WSA Fly Fishing Events for 2014 will be published early in the new year with courses for both youngsters and adults. If you are interested contact Dave Smith on 07969300422 or Stuart Smith on 07789133263.**

Fish were beginning to push through well and just for once this season a fish could come from almost

anywhere. With showers fast moving the upper river around Builth Wells rising mainly from the Irfon although it ran off quickly and did not affected lower beats. Fish were reported at 23lb from Seven Sisters, first one off the Spreadeagle at 19.5lbs and another from Ingeston. Two fifteen pound fish were reported off Whitney Court and Wayne Tyler reported a 12lb from his Caemawr beat on a spindle fly. Most fish were still being caught spinning it seemed. These were then topped by a 37lbs fish from Seven Sisters, taken by Adam Fisher, his second ever salmon and a fish that was to be biggest of the season for the river!

Total catch for April was 178 three times the 5 year average.

## May

May began with a spell of mainly dry and sunny weather, but after a week it became cooler and much more unsettled; the 14th was a particularly cold, wet day. The second half of the month was brighter for the most part, but only began to warm up at the end. The mean temperature was 1.3 °C below the 1981-2010 average, making it the coldest May since 1996. Some parts of the country were rather wet, and the overall rainfall total was 131% of average. The sunshine total was exactly equal to the long-term average.

At the start of May it hadn't rained for several weeks and low flows were bad news. After a very encouraging April, it seemed as though salmon had vanished, with just the odd one being taken during the first week. A 1.5lb rainbow trout was caught at Bigsweir and there were also a few small shoals, probably smolts, seen in this area but surprisingly few adult salmon. No reports of any shad yet though it is still early and the strange lull in activity seemed to continue despite big fishing effort on the lower beats. A 34" hard fighting fish from Aramstone to WUF guide Oliver Burch. There was also a fish of 12lb for Brian James on a Pot belly Pig amongst eight for Bigsweir, a four timer for Martin Bowler amongst a doz-

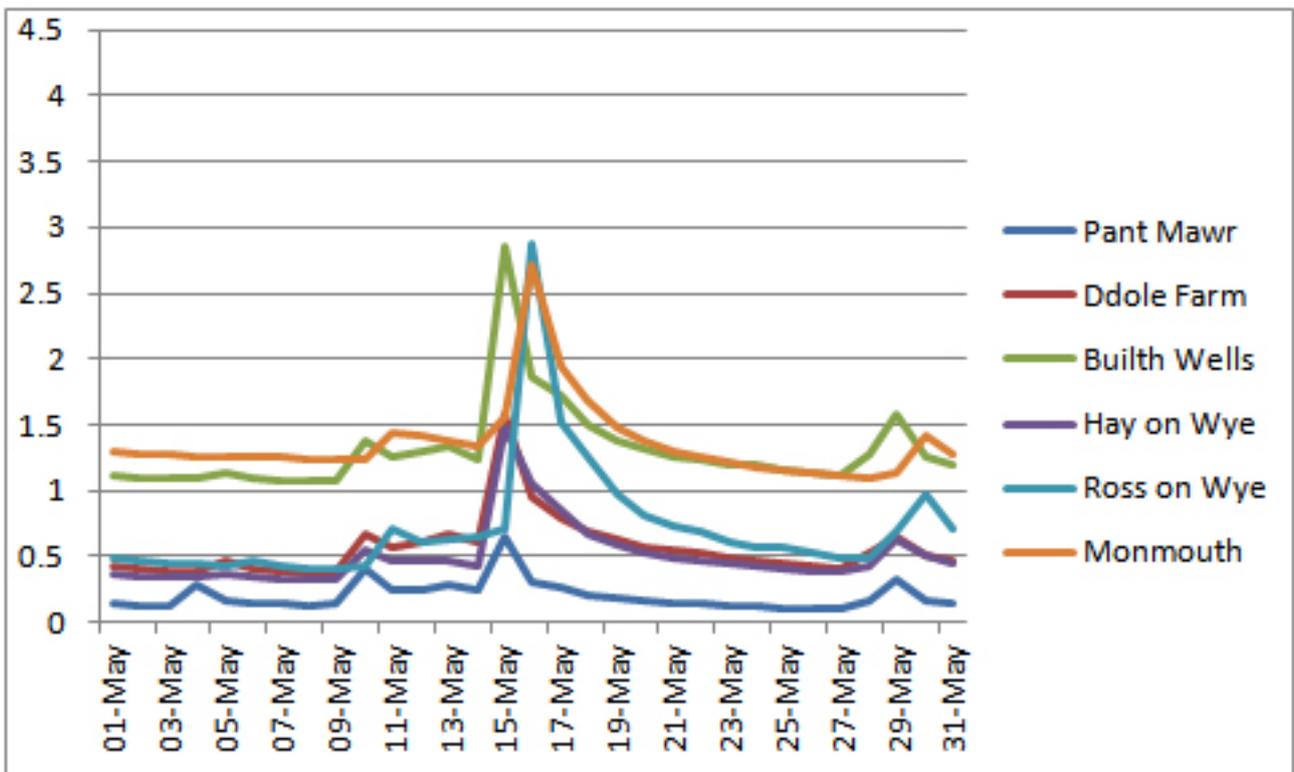


Roy Cartwright's super fly caught fish from Sheepwash



en more for Wyesham and further fish at Old Harp, where Matt Horton had an 18lb fish on a Willie Gunn, Seven Sisters, Wyebank, Redbrook and Ross where Darren Bell had an 18lb double on the fly. The top was desperately low and the middle river going that way too. Some rain forecast and it was hoped the 2sw fish would arrive in numbers soon and fill in the lower beats below Monmouth. Ranunculus was starting to grow well on the lower beats and would cause problems later. Conditions improved quickly however and fish were reported from many of the popular middle and lower river beats. A 25lb fish reported for Chris Major from Redbrook and two from the Maddox, Goodrich for Mark Purvis 15lb and Mark Phillips 12lb on a yellow shrimp fly. Rain on 14th

lifted the river several feet and there was enough water to fill the Elan dams and over top, holding the river height for a while longer. By the 20th the excellent water conditions above Bredwardine saw catches improve with an 11lb fish on a Bann Special for Simon Evans of WUF at Rectory, followed by a fish of 12lb at Whitney Court to a syndicate rod. Ross Fullerton took an 18lber at Red Lion and Spreadeagle joined in with a 16lber for Paul Stafford. Ingeston had a couple and there were another 2 from Redbrook of 12lbs and 19lbs plus a 14lber from Courtfield. The first of the Shad was caught today at Bredwardine and numbers would build up from now on. Anglers were reminded that these fish must be returned and should not be specifically targeted by any method. Conditions still looked good for the weekend though there did seem



a distinct shortage of fish despite reports of running fish. Plenty of anglers out above Hereford with rods at Garnons, Red Lion, Letton Court, Caemawr but they hardly had a sighting between them.

Water all through from Bredwardine to Builth Wells falling slowly supported with water from Elan Valley improved prospects significantly. And fish were being reported all



through middle and upper river, some to traditional Wye flies. Ken Powell reported taking a fresh 12lber on an Usk Grub off HDAA waters, Stuart Smith took a 14lb hen one evening from Barlings at Letton Court on a Wye Thunder, Gerry Thomas caught 12lber at The Nyth on a Cascade. Ricky Reno had a double on Mepps at Garnons

By last week of May rods were out everywhere with little change in conditions and water in perfect condition. Nigel Smith had a nice 10lb fish from the Corner Pool on the Nyth on a flamethrower fly. There was a 16lb fish for Whitney Court on a devon minnow Wyesham also scored heavily with 14 fish reported on



Monks Hole at Letton Court produced this fine 21lb fish for Jeff Morgan on a spinner

the 23rd, mostly 2sw fish as would be expected in the 8-12lb range. With a big run a fish reported going through gillie Ray Morris had five, Michael Morris 4 and regular rod Tim Risedale 3. Levels were dropping on the upper river and Shad were reported taking anglers salmon flies from Symonds Yat to Bredwardine. Good catches continued right up to end of month with one report of the capture late one evening from the Sheepwash beat below Hereford of a 15lb salmon taken on a Toby, caught by 78 year old Brian Morris, his first Wye salmon for 20 years. Owner Ian Thorpe took a 10lb fish from The Ripples on Sheepwash on a Cascade. More fish reported with two from Whitney by P Suter on a fly and Dr Spence to a Toby, a fish from Letton to Stuart Smith and one for David Rance from the Spreadeagle. Another fish from The Sheepwash beat below Hereford, a 12.5lb fish taken spinning with a black and gold devon minnow by Brian Betts. Pwll-y-faemma scored with a fine fish of 25lb for Brian Skinner and Paul Craven Smith took a 43" long fish of 28lb on a fly at Spreadeagle.

More fish reported with the emphasis shifting to the lower river beats. Conditions remained good although lowest beats were still on the high side.

One from Holme Lacy 3 and another from Lower Carrots and Luggs Mouth by Colin and Tony Richardson. A 9lb fish from Caradoc and two more fish came from Sheepwash today, gillie Tony Mobley taking a fish of 16lbs spinning. Don Macer Wright reported three fly caught fish from Wyebank. Charles Davies fishing the HDAA water had a fish of 20lbs on a black and yellow flying C. Bigsweir began to weigh in and had a couple including a 20lb fish. 6 more were also reported from Wyesham. May ended on 191 fish 73 up on last season and the season total so far of 394 up 103 on last season and 190 up on 5 year average. There were a number of fish late in month on good water at Wyesham. Ingeston and a few sneaking into middle and upper beats at Eardisley, Letton, The Nyth, Rectory and even as high as Rhosferig and Llysdinam.

Smolts were released successfully from the Nant Gwyn SNR pond and all went well with a good flow and colour in the tributary and main river. Congratulations to all those involved, mainly the EA and WSA members who put in a lot of time and effort.

## June

The first part of the month was dry and fine with plenty of sunshine, then there was a more unsettled spell toward mid-month. The second half brought a mixture of fine weather at times, briefly warm around 19th, interspersed with rain or showers.

Temperatures for the month were generally close to average, but a little below towards the east. The overall mean temperature was provisionally 0.4 °C below the 1981-2010

average. Rainfall was somewhat below average, with provisionally 66% of the long-term average for Wales overall. Sunshine totals were rather above average with 115%.

June opened warmer, rain had disappeared from the forecasts and the rivers settled after previous week's rainfall. This warmer weather brought the old problem on the lower river of algal bloom within the water column to the fore. Anglers noticed that during the day, the river appeared to colour up confining salmon catches to the morning. The problems were high levels of phosphates in the river although there was some debate as to whether the colour is in fact algae or still some stain from the lthon but it seemed not to put the fish off completely. Month started with four fish taken by Mike Pritchard from Ingeston, three for Wyesham, two fish from Goodrich and one from the Carrots, 18lbs by Chris Adams on fly. Andy Fenner had two nice fish at Cadora 12lbs -spinning. An 8lb fish from the Nyth to Mike Timmis and a 25lb fish for Maurice Hudson at Cadora Backs plus a fish from Seven Sisters.



First WSA Fly Fishing course of season took place on June 8th in brilliant weather at Whitney Court. The beat donated by Whitney Court Estates and syndicate leader Terry Ward was in perfect condition to entertain the 17 anglers, the more experienced of whom spent the day honing their casting

skills with the beginners learning to handle double handed rods under the guidance of instructors Leigh Davies and Justin Connolly. The conditions did not favour catches although one angler managed to hook and lose a fish and a number of Shad were inadvertently taken. Dave Smith, WSA Leader of the event remarked 'it was a brilliant day with everybody making the most of the conditions, the beat and the expertise of the instructors'.



As the month progressed cloudier and hot conditions prevailed and whilst things got progressively more difficult particularly further upriver middle and particularly lower beats were scoring heavily. There were 24 fish in first week at Wyesham including half

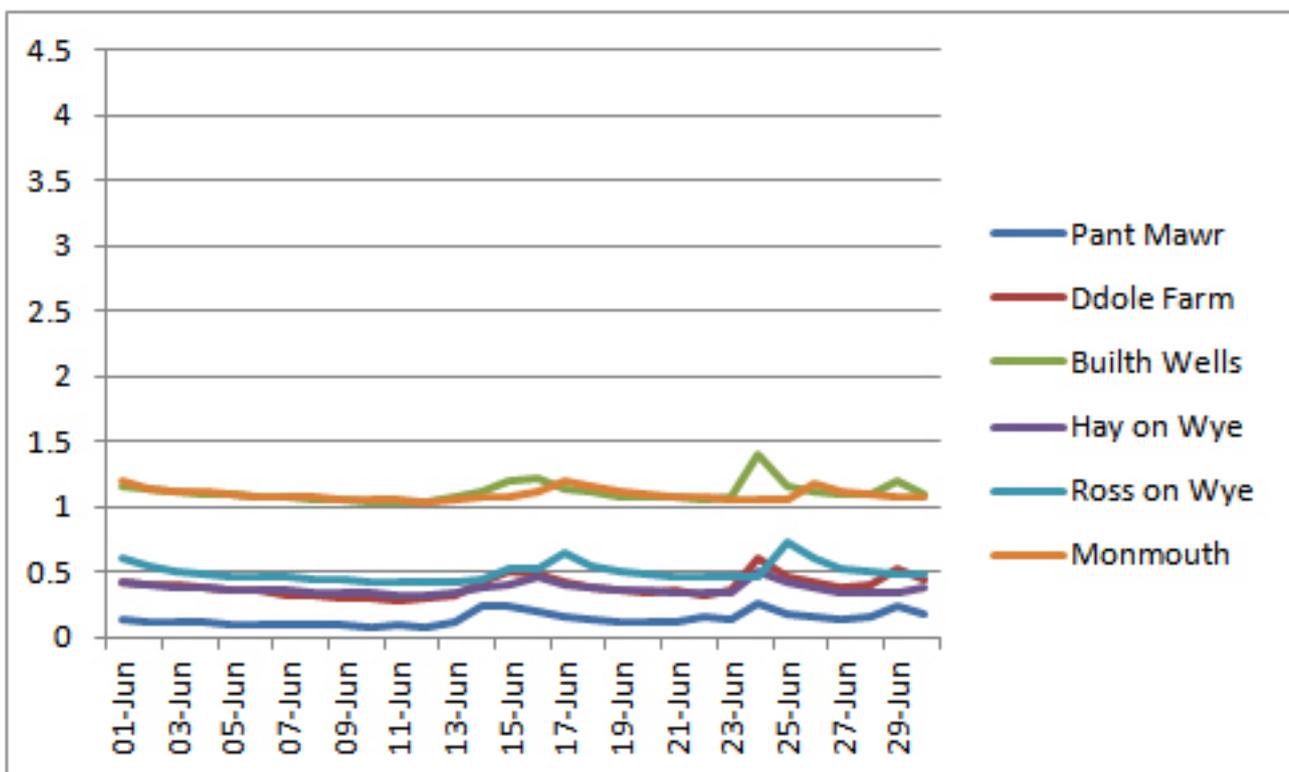
a dozen fish on 5th with a treble for George Adams and two for David Solomon, one from Tyr Celyn's Turn pool by Alfred Pope, 17lbs on fly, one for Allan Shufflebotham at Goodrich Courts Vanstone Pool of 10lb on a 1" Cascade Tube, John Holden had his second of the season from Sheepwash, a 10lb on a green and yellow wooden Devon minnow. The bright overhead and warm conditions saw Shad spawning and at Wyesham and Cadora Tim Risedale and Steve Dawes respectively took fish spinning.

By mid month the river was low and clear on the upper beats, shad and sea lampreys could be seen spawning but for salmon anglers early and late fishing was best. A 15lb fish was taken at Redbrook and a further three from Wyesham, two of them to regular George Adams. Fish were also reported on the spinner to Shane Stanley at Cadora 18lbs plus one from Rock Cottage Balingham at 28lbs. Conditions began to very much suit the lower river now and Ingeston keep on picking away at a few fish, they had 8 in a week, some sealed and including a 25lb fish to Glyn Slade. Their total had by now reached 32

Canoes began to show strongly now and the reaches from Glasbury to Whitney were being inundated over weekends and bank holidays. Sport slowed considerably under the bright conditions and fish were beginning to stop in the lower beats, upriver apart from the odd very low water beat fish were be difficult to tempt. Maurice Hudson took the odd fish at Cadora Backs and Andrew Monaghan took a fish of 8lb at Lower Balingham. Lee Davies took a nice fish on

Fly at Wyeastone Leys. There was still some slight colour in the water and big tides soon prompted a new run of fish. Bigsweir report 3 in a morning, fish in 10-12lb class. Their total had now reached 43. Mrs S Moore took a 13lber spinning at Wyesham and there were fish of 14lbs to Andy Fenner, hooked on the flats in fast water and 12lbs to Clive Snell at Cadora. Lower Ballingham reported an 8lbs salmon to Andrew Monaghan, spinning. Lower river was by now the place to be with Wyesham taking 6 fish in a day and Cadora adding another, although Malcolm Edwards had a fish of around 20lbs spinning from the Wall at Letton Court and Stuart Smith had another of 9lb from Monks Run on the same beat on a Wye Thunder. Fish too off Courtfield where Don Macer Wright took a 19lb fish from Thomas Wood crib. Lots of Shad still being reported caught on salmon flies.

A few showers added a little water to the upper river, 4/5" mainly from the Irfon so not much colour, just a little peaty but it freshened a few of the upper and middle river residents without provoking much fish movement. By now the coarse fishing season had started with many beats booked solid with barbel men of course so space was at a premium in many areas on the middle river.



Conditions were good though water clarity on the bottom river tended to vary from day to day and indeed during the day. Showers had very little effect. Charles Davies had a small 7lb fish on the HDAA water at Luggs Mouth on a small Devon minnow. Two fish from Sheepwash, the Larder Pool gave Dave Palmer a 10lb fish on a self tied fly and less than half an hour later his brother Jonathon, fishing 50 yards upstream followed up with a 9lb fish. Towards the end of the month Wyesham reported 11 fish in a day to go with their 24 of the previous day, more were expected. A fish from Cadora 10lbs and Bigsweir also recorded a few fish with two 11 and 25lbs spinning and three on the fly. Couple for Andrew Holloway at Redbrook plus two for Clive Pegler at Wyestone. Peter Huntingdon also had a fish of 8lb at Wyestone on a 1" Gold Bodied Plastic Garry Dog Tube. at It looked like another run of fish had entered the river. These last weeks of June had seen some of the best catches on the lower Wye for some time. Wyesham lead the way chalking 90 in a week. The June total has moved on to 275 and the season's total for the Wye is recorded as 669.

The catches of June have brought into focus the relationship between spinning and the

need for conservation on a river that is fully C&R. Mike Timmis set an example at Wyesham reserving six pools to fly only save during spate conditions and spinning can only take place in the afternoon. All spinners were to have single hooks. A number of other beat owners were to follow.

### July

The month began with a little rain in places, but from 5th onwards there was a spell of very warm and settled weather with plenty of sunshine. Temperatures exceeded 28 °C widely on several days and reached 30 °C for the first time in Wales since July 2006. The latter part of the month was rather more unsettled but still generally warm.

Temperatures for the month were well above average everywhere, especially daytime maxima. The mean temperature for Wales was provisionally 2.0 °C above the 1981-2010 average, the third warmest July in a series since 1910 (behind 1983 and 2006). Rainfall totals for the month were well below normal in the south but near normal in the north, with an overall figure 63% of average. Sunshine was well above average, with an overall total of 161% of the month's long-term average, provisionally the second sunniest July in a series since 1929 (1955 was sunnier).



Bob Mason took this 11lb fish from Golden Mile whilst spinning

July began as June had ended with 32 fish in the first 5 days almost exclusively to beats below Monmouth, a dozen of which were at Bigsweir. Maurice Hudson had a 12lb fish on a fly from his Cadora Backs beat, Charlie Harman had an 11lber at Redbrooks Bulls Back on a #9 Dinnets Shrimp, Stuart Purves caught a 15lber on fly from the flats at Wyesham and Stuart Reid at 10lb fish on fly from the rapids again at Redbrook. However one fish in the next six days was indicative of the effect

temperature and water levels were having on catches. Fishing effort was now in significant decline as well with most anglers recognising the effects on fish if caught under those hot and dry circumstances. Dave Palmer caught a 9lb fish spinning. Dave was barbel fishing when gillie Tony saw a fish show and persuaded Dave to get his spinning rod out, two casts later.....bingo. Easy isn't it, especially with a good gillie!!!

The newly formed National Resource Wales [NRW] received a number of reports of dead or dying salmon and some swimming in circles spotted with fungal growth.

Although there was a significant degree of uncertainty in the longer term forecast, Met Office the computer models indicated that a change in weather conditions was unlikely to come into play early in August. By the 19th a high pressure system that had dominating July and early August weather started to retract to the southwest opening the door to cooler and more unsettled weather. However forecast thunderstorms did little or nothing apart from watering the garden plants. Weather was very warm and humid, with sunny spells and isolated heavy showers and thunderstorms. Fishing with no water and temperatures reaching 23 deg C in many parts was at a standstill and many owners conscious of the risk to fish had closed their beats.



Reported in mid July Anglers and fishery managers have welcomed the decision by the Natural Environment and Fisheries Minister Richard Benyon to replace the current bureaucratic and wholly inadequate system of licensing the control of cormorants with a

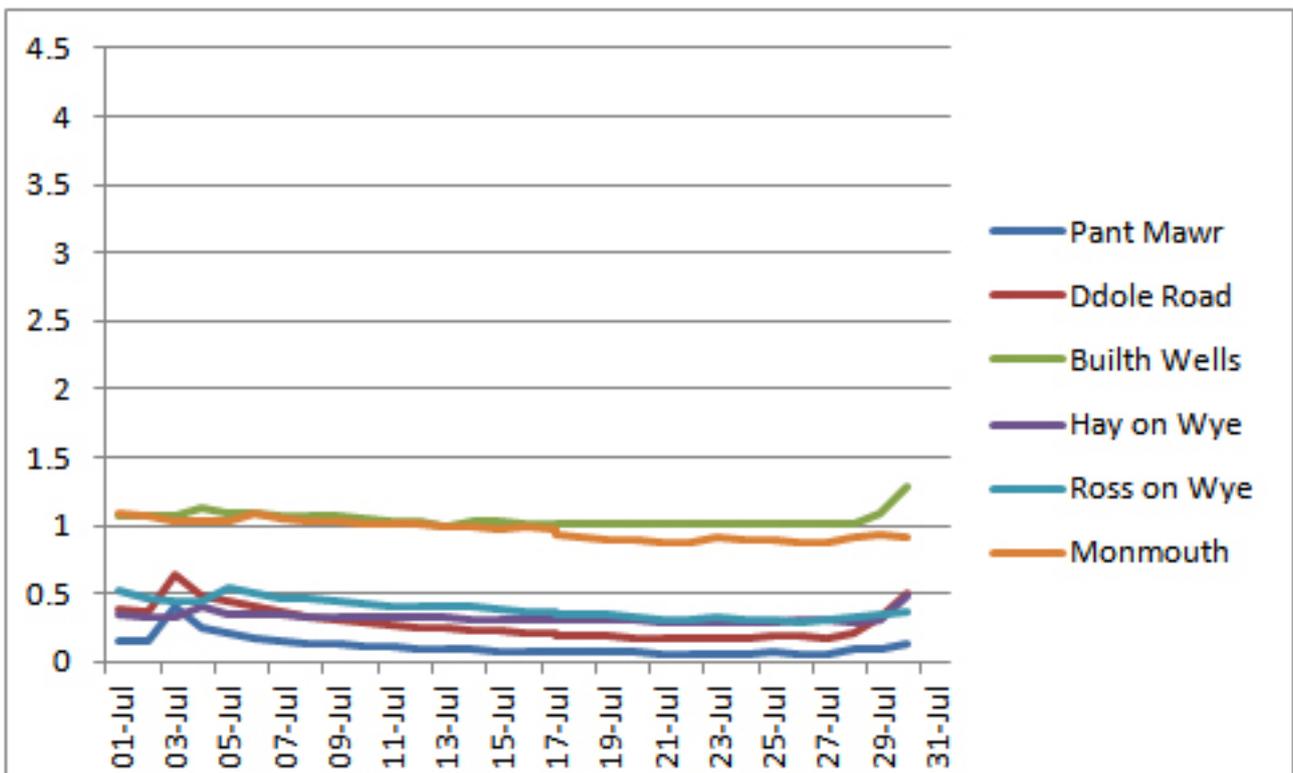


new catchment-based approach which will allow for predator control based on local needs rather than arbitrary national limits.

Thunderstorms over last two days of the month came too little in terms of river flow. Some heavy downpours were experienced around Monmouth but higher up in catchment it was quite sporadic, with rain doing little more than watering gardens.

The river at Glasbury was up a couple of inches and water temps fell to 15C. Run off was heavily coloured and a small rise made its way downriver. A couple of salmon were seen going back down the weir at Codithiel apparently heading for the estuary. Probably many more went the same way with river conditions so uncomfortable for them. Two fish were also reported from Coedithiel, five from Bigsweir and one 6lb reported from Lady Stream at Glanwye for Charles Tweedy. Month of July ended with 45 fish compared with a five year average of 117 and 2012 at 199. Season so far 714 compared with five year average of 491.

## August



The month began warm and dry before turning wet and unsettled on 4th and 5th, with heavy rain at times. It was generally drier from 6th to 11th, then turning somewhat more unsettled again mid-month with rain and showers. There were some warm and sunny spells towards the end of the month.

Temperatures for the month were slightly above average. The mean temperature for Wales was provisionally 0.5 °C above the 1981-2010 average, similar to August 2012. Rainfall totals for the month were close to average with 103%. Sunshine was slightly below average with 92%.

Things began to look up with the start of August with another small slug of water passing down from the hills. Not enough to get fish running to the upper beats but perked up a few residents as the water passes through ang Grilse were beginning to appear in reported catches. Chaz Davies reported river levels in middle reaches had risen 6/8" and Steven Orledge took the first fish of August, a 10lb fresh hen on fly from Redbrook. Water levels on the upper and middle river

quickly reverted to low levels again, tiny summer spates really make little difference to any fish movement. More, intermittent rain, quite heavy at times on the 4th put the mainstem up 8" at Glasbury and local streams along with Irfon and Llynfi up 4 to 6" and carrying some colour. It needed quite a lot though to make any real difference, not just a flash spate. Predictably with water affecting upper river but not quite reaching lower river a dozen or so fish were taken in opening days at Wyesham, Bigsweir and Cadora many



Dave Palmer with 9lb salmon from Golden Mile

of which were Grilse. By the 6th there were signs of a decent spate at last, water rising couple of feet at Built and Erwood. Not much fell over river source so most came from the Irfon and Ithon and lower tributaries as far as the Llynffi. Two early fish from Cadora to Danny Price, 13 and 14lbs on fly. Quite a few fish observed in the Cadora Pool but the arrival of a good summer spate slowed sport again. Bigsweir managed two fish just before the rise taking them to 98 for the season. By 7th colour was fining down and rise falling away fast in all areas. Rectory reported a fish of about 12lb hen and another lost for Simon Evans on a #8 Bann Shrimp. Couple more fish reported on upper river which began taking off. Oliver Burch took a magnificent and beautifully coloured hen fish on a Rapala fished from the Boat pool at Pwyl -y-faeeda. Lower down at Spreadeagle three fish including a 12lb fish to David Rance

who lost another and caught a barbel to boot all on a fly.

Several more coloured fish were taken from the upper river. 15lbs for Wayne Tyler at Caemaewr, another from the Rectory and one from Abernant plus two from Whitney Court of 10 and 12lbs to syndicate rods. Alfie Pope took a super 23lber at The Nyth he described as 'surprisingly fresh, plus another of 12lb. Stuart Smith had a coloured fish from Monks run, Letton Court evening of 10th on an Usk Grub. Two fish from came from Wyesham who reported lots of grilse running through but not getting caught as usual. Fishing remained slow, a 5lb grilse was reported on fly from Lyn Em so one at least made it to the upper river and Bigsweir had just four fish in a week, things strangely quiet on the lower beats. Two fish from either end of the river, one from Wyesham of 10lbs and one from Llysdinam of 8lbs broke the silence and were joined by two fish reported from the Red Lion by Ken Powell over the weekend 10 and 15lbs. Bigsweir picked up a few of those hard to catch grilse plus a coloured 25lb fish raising their total to fifteen this month.

Some really significant rain in the upper catchment at the start of the third week of August caused a good rise in levels mainly on the river as far as Newbridge and turned into a Substantial spate affecting the river



as far downstream as Moccas with around 3 feet of extra water. River began dropping and clearing amazingly quickly on the upper river and down as far as Hay on Wye resulted in three fish from the Rocks, their first of the season. Ian Spalding also reported a 7lb grilse from Monks Run, Letton Court. Air temperature began to warm again on 21st and one coloured 7lb fish was reported from the Nyth plus two small grilse from Caradoc by Gerry Lewis and one also from Wyesham despite a lot of colour. Seems a fish reported from Kerne Bridge was caught by a coarse angler!

In super weather conditions at Letton Court on the 21st the latest WSA adult and junior fly casting courses were deemed a great success with 25 anglers taking part. The appearance of a number of salmon along

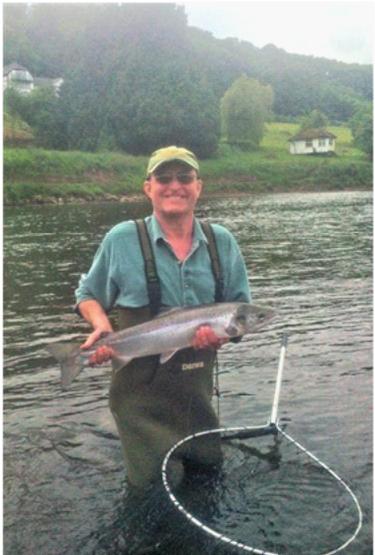


the Letton Court beat during the day increased the enthusiasm of those present and once they had ironed out a few kinks in technique a number of rods attempted to hook up, unsuccessfully on this occasion

Conditions continued to look pretty good in most areas but things seem fairly quiet on the whole with only the odd grilse and stale fish in recent days, an 8lb fish from Cadora backs and a 10lb fish from Wyesham on a fly spoon plus a 9lb fish on a devon minnow for Steve Joseph at Cadora. Wyesham reported as being 'stuffed' with fish following recent high tides but they were not taking and are not moving through?

With few fish being caught more attention was being paid to the behaviour of canoeists, particularly over bank holiday. One angler reported seeing canoeists in hire company boats drinking alcohol, losing control of their canoes, playing tennis with their beer cans, having a party on the water and showing no respect for other river users! So bad he decided not to fish because of all the disruption.

Fishing by the end of the month was virtually at a standstill apart from Bigsweir who have picked up the odd fish as one would expect under low water conditions. Slightly cooler temperatures have made little difference elsewhere and only 7 fish reported in last 10 days. August is usually a very poor month and it lived up to its reputation.....bit different from 2012 when last 10 days resulted in 80 fish. Month ended on 77 fish against a 5 year average of 117. Season to date was 791 against five year average of 608.



Jonathon Palmer with a 9lb fish from Sheepwash

### September

The month opened with a few days of summery weather, but it became more unsettled and much cooler during the second week. An active autumn depression brought wind and rain around 15th, but the latter part of the month was more typical for early autumn. Temperatures for the month were slightly above average, with the provisional mean temperature for Wales 0.3 °C above the 1981-2010 average. It was a rather dry month, especially in the northern half of Wales, with an overall figure of 68% of the long-term average rainfall. Sunshine totals were mostly below normal, with 81% of average overall, provisionally the dullest September in Wales since 1994.



September began brightly for Londoner Geoff Maynard who moved to Hay two years ago and bought Llanthomas Fishery. He caught a 10.7lb hen salmon on a flying C, his first Wye salmon and the first recorded from the beat at Llanthomas for 20 years. Geoff's fish was followed by one from the Nyth, a coloured fish of 13lbs, on fly of course as its now fly only, and a dozen or so from Wyesham. The weather was set fair and getting warmer again with the prospect of heavy rain which failed to materialise though it did get cooler. There were reports again of lots of small grilse 2/3lbs at Bigsweir but seemingly uncatchable, though there were fish of 6lb to Martin Ostergaard and a coloured fish of 15lbs to Derrick

Maud. Some good work was done on the Nant Gwyn SNR pond where volunteers cleared the ponds surrounding area, strimming the banks and removing weed ready for the arrival



of the new batch of parr sometime in November. Five more ponds are scheduled to be on line this year containing approx 49,000 parr/smolts.

Things remained pretty quiet in middle of September. River levels were the same after insignificant rain, 4 reported from Wyesham, 7 to 11lbs. A small rise was now affecting the river as far as Moccas with some peaty colour and another small rise at Llangurig followed the earlier showers. A 13lb hen fish on a size 8 cascade to was reported from the Larder pool, Sheepwash to Roy Cartwright, first fish off the beat for 10 weeks. A further small rise saw eight fish in two days from Wyesham, a 20lb coloured fish from Cadora Backs by Maurice Hudson, 6lb fish to Andy Fenner on an Usk grub at Cadora and half a dozen over the weekend at Coed-ithiel.

Boosted by a rise late on 18th in the Irfon catchment a handy little spate on the main stem below Builth Wells cleared reasonably quickly as the Irfon generally does. With conditions now cooler and a few fish back on the take there were 5 more from Wyesham plus 2 from Cadora Backs. Fish from 5-15lbs. Stale 15lb fish from The Nyth. With the Rectory weighing in with two plus one from Glanwye all in the teens of pounds it looked like some of the residents were perking up. There was a small grilse from the Carrots too and Caradoc, Ross, Boatside(Hay), Goodrich, Glanwye and Llanthomas all caught fish from 7 to 17lbs. There were also fish for Wayne Tyler at



Geoff Burton with a 21lb cock fish caught on his last cast of season at Golden Mile



Geoff Maynard with his first Wye salmon from Llanthomas

Caemawr of 14lbs and 17lb fish for Robert Morley at Spreadeagle. An 18lb fish for Albert Chatterley from Eardisley, the first fish for the new owners Mr and Mrs Blackley. A 12lb fish by a visitor to Whitney Court where quite a few fish were seen and Geoff Maynard with his second 10lb fish from Llanthomas, his first on the fly I think. There was also a fish from Sheepwash a 21lb cock to Nigel Smith.

Conditions were fine and settled for most of the final week. Under the low water conditions there were two fish from Wyebank of 10 and 5lbs for Don Macer Wright and a 10lb fish from Cadora for John Stannard.

As levels dropped away there was an 11lb fish from Wyesham, a 6lb fish from

Redbrook to Robin Stewart and a dozen reported from Bigsweir including a 20lber for Geoff Handley.

All SNR ponds were by now ready for receiving this year's parr thanks to volunteers, some of whom helped fin clip the 49,000 parr due to be planted out this year at the NRW Cynrig Hatchery under the guidance of John Taylor and his staff. A good effort by all concerned.



As the month ended a little rain was forecast. Ray Oakley took a 5lb grilse from Eardisley and there was an 11lb fish from Upper Bigsweir to Spencer John. September ended on 123 compared to five year average of 116 and season total was 914 compared with five year average of 724.

## October

October and its final 17 days of season began with 7 more fish reported from Bigsweir and one from Wyesham yesterday. WUF report a 36" fish from the Shrubbery by a trout angler fishing 'Tenkara' style. Some heavy showers had little effect other than preparation for more rain forecast. Upper river rose a little with water from the Irfon and further down the Llynfi levels were up about 10" with some colour. As the river cleared there was a fish for Bert Williams from the Built Club water plus three from the Spreadeagle, two of 18lbs and one of 10lb. There was also a 25lb hen fish from Abernant and a 13lb fish for Ian Spalding at Letton Court.



By 8th river levels had reverted back to normal although more rain in the upper catchment hills raised levels at Llangurig by about a foot. This made its way down but with no back up from the tributaries its effect was minimal. There was another fish from Whitney Court at 13lbs and one for Ken Powell from the Red Lion water 25lb on a single size 6 Garry Dog. There were half a dozen fish for Built Wells Club plus a fish from Wyesham of 14 1/2lbs.

The last week of the season opened with no change in cold and low conditions. Ken Powell was in action again with a fish of 12lb from the Red Lion for Ken Powell 12lbs and 7 fish reported from Wyesham of 5 to 21lbs. A number of fish were now being reported by trout and grayling anglers including one of 18lb at Shrubbery for Roger Smith on a PT Nymph.

Great news as Wyesham reported a fin clipped grilse of 5.5lbs and most likely from the first SNR pond at Nant Gwyn. Fantastic news for all those who put in the time and effort into the project and in particular John Taylor at the hatchery and Wayne Tyler who pushed through and financed the first pond. Joe Cobley, gillie at Wyesham later confirmed the catch by a Mr Milne. As the season drew to a close Ian Spalding reported two fish from Letton Court of 11 and 18lbs. Another 10lb fish from Built Town Club Water, a 14lb fish from Goodrich and an 11lb fish from the Carrots, three from just below Hay on Wye at Boatside of 9, 11& 12lbs. A fish at Cadora backs of 10lb to Hylton Preece, Redbrook 2 fish both about 12lbs to Barry Odger and Phillip Mcwalter. One from The Irfon at 8lbs for Peter Wood and two more from Wyesham 18 and 5lbs.



Mary Bradbury with a 7lb fish taken on a #14 Nymph!

Monday, 14 October brought a 14lb fish for Arthur Knight, Red Lion. Also a report of one from Letton. A 7.5lb fish from The Nyth. Wyesham reported 13 fish, mainly caught for hatchery broodstock, plus one more from Boatside. Conditions remained good in most areas with just a hint of fresh water and there were late reports of two fish at Eardisley, a 20lb fish to Will Adams and a 15lb fish for Ray Oakly.

Season total was by now over a 1,000 with 5 fish for Wyesham plus further from Pwyl-y-Faeeda and Cadora. Fish from Caemawr to Barry Odger Half a dozen from Bigsweir over the last week and a couple more from Ingeston. Arthur Knight had fish of 14/15lbs off the Red Lion water and a 17lb fish from Doldowlod. Some heavy rain on 1th meant a low key season end on the main river but continues on the very upper beats above Llanwrthwl bridge and the tributaries until 25th. River Up about 6" or so at Llangurig and Rhayader. Small rise in Irfon and Llynfi so a little extra water expected.

20th brought just a little lift otherwise conditions remain good on the upper river and a fish reported from the lower Irfon on the Built Town water. River well up in the headwa-

ters, rising and coloured. Spawners should be safe get to where they want to be for at least the next couple of days with more rain forecast . Main stem and some tributaries still rising, up 5 feet or so at present. The salmon season finished quietly. Mary Bradbury landing a 7lbs fish on a No 14 Nymph! Mary was the first lady angler recorded catching a salmon at Builth Wells GPIAC water. Season total ended at 1069 and the largest fish was 37lb.

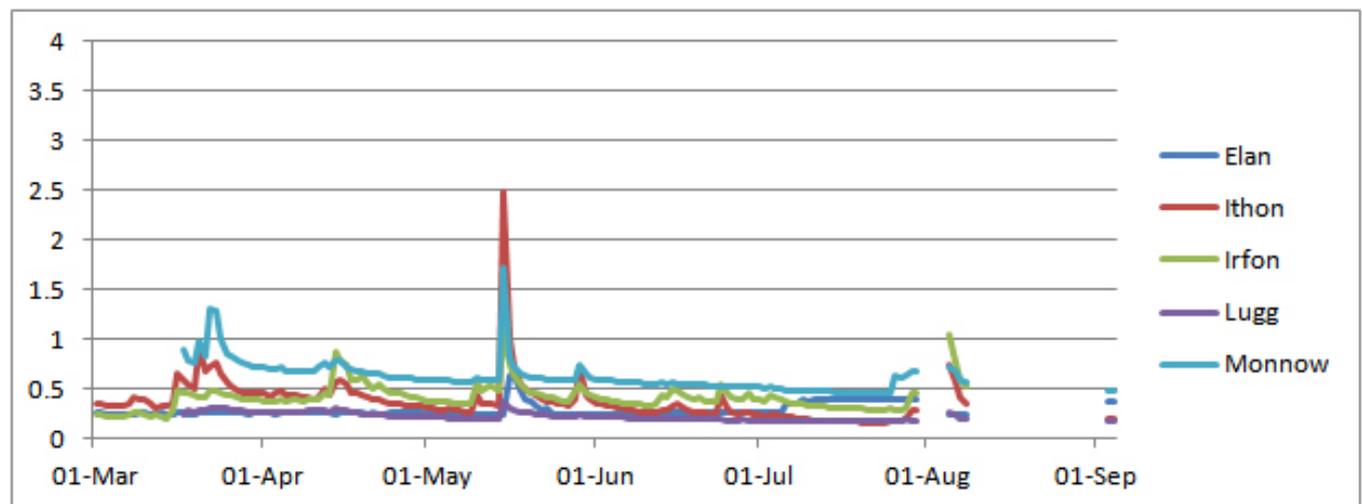
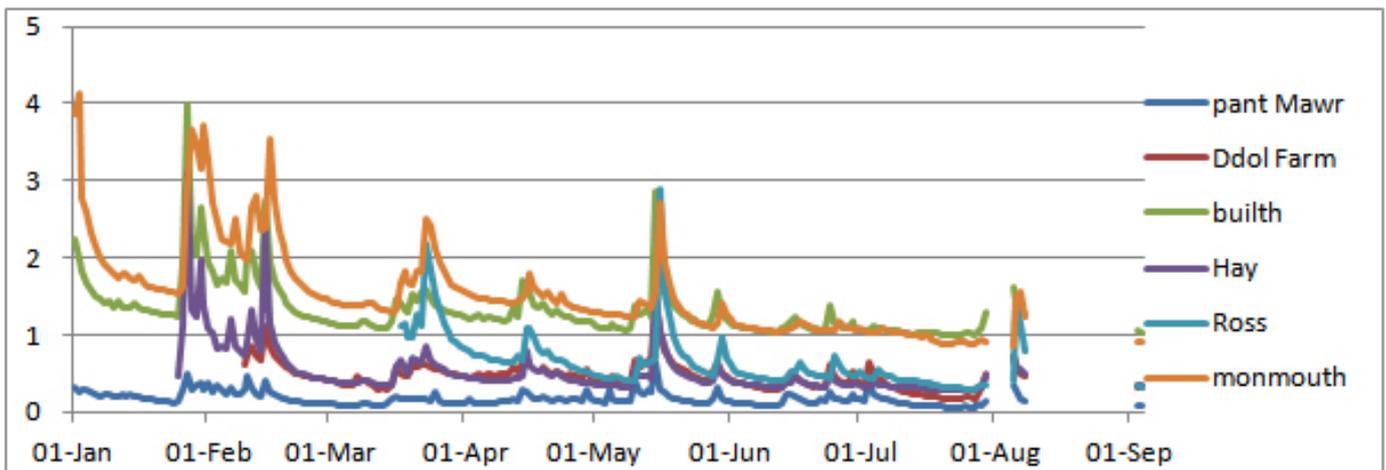
This review was compiled using WSA and RWGA records and other similar sources. Thank you to all.

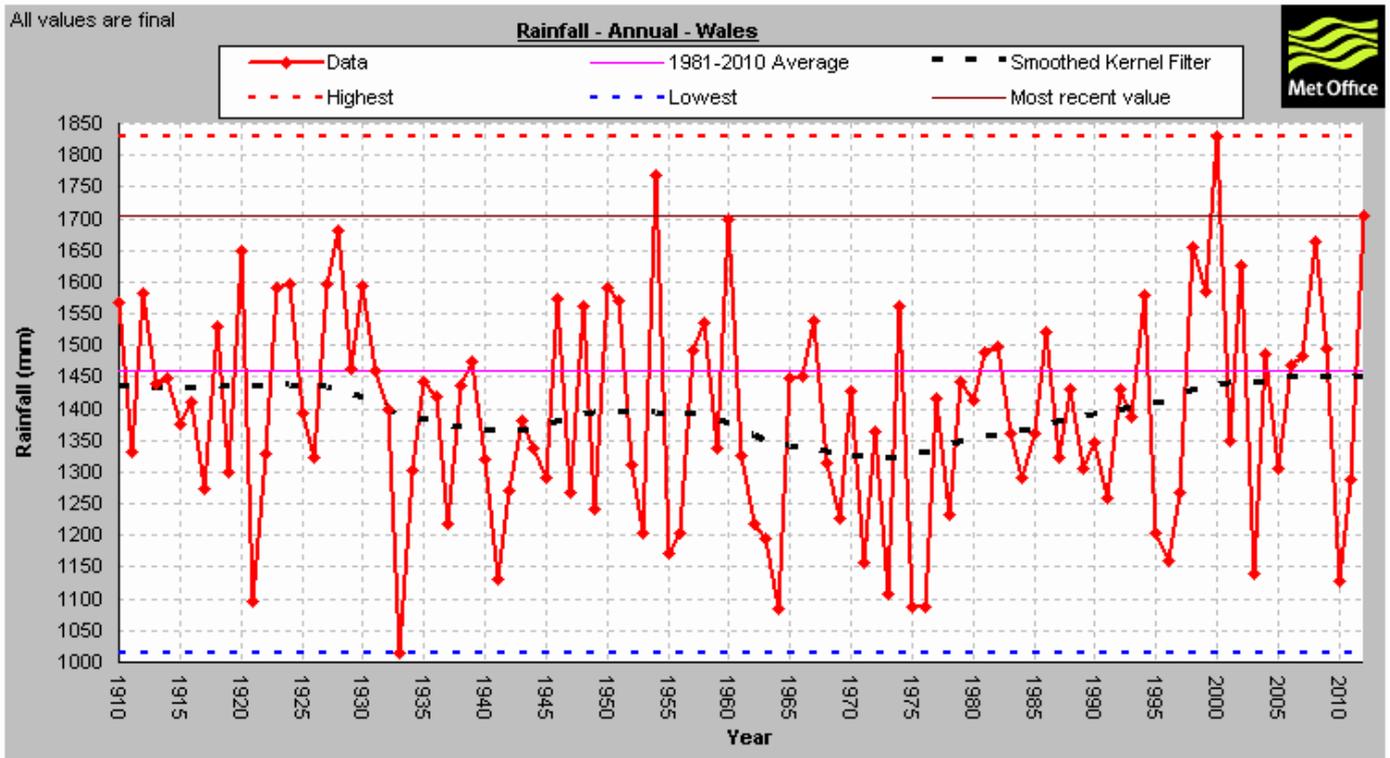
### Editors Note

We wish to point out research has shown exposing a salmon to air for even a short period, for example to take a photograph, can significantly reduce its chances of survival. We would not recommend some of the practises demonstrated by the photographs in this document.

We encourage anglers when photographing a fish to keep it in, or briefly above the water, Support it gently under the belly and loosely hold the tail. Never lift your salmon from the water by its tail, or gill cover. Avoid weighing the fish, take a tape measure or mark up your wading staff or rod as an easy indicator, weight can be estimated from length.

Fish should be played quickly and as firmly as possible so that they can be released before becoming too exhausted. Avoid taking them onto the bank or dragging them over stones or gravel.





## Global average temperature anomaly (1850-2012)

