

Trout and Salmon Report

River Tay

25 September 2024

“Ben Lui”

Following the last two very encouraging months, September has been a bit harder, albeit not generally a bad month for recent times. A problem has been that, although the month started with the Tay running around four feet, followed by a rise to around 6 feet three days in, there has not been a proper rise since. It also feels we have had most of what summer we have had in September! The Tay has basically dropped away almost continuously, barring a few small checks, to just over a foot as I write on the 25th. The fish are there in good numbers in some beats, but we would now benefit with stirring them up a bit before the end of the season sneaks up.

That all said, with another 6 days of September to go, as I write, many beats will comfortably smash their recent month's average. So, starting from the bottom, Waulkmill is already well ahead with 61. Luncarty likewise with 11. Upper Redgorton has had 20, again already above its average, while Fishponds has had 17. But those particular beats could all now do with some water.

Benchil has already had its best September in over five years with 16, which included a first ever salmon for Paul Cottie, while Pitlochrie has had four. Upper Scone, on the other side, has already had 25 and should end up well above average by month's end. Catholes has had two, and Burnmouth which really needs water, has had one so far.

The beats immediately above, which have done well this year, continued to have a reasonable month despite the weather as the month went on. Stobhall, for example, has had 48 to the 25th which is already just above average. But with 84, Taymount has already smashed its average, and that's with more to go! Ballathie has continued its better run too, with 42 so far, while Cargill has had 68. In an unusual reversal of fortunes, Islamouth has only had 32 so far. But, as I say, this could all change.

The Meikleour and Upper Islamouth beat has also reported 32, making this already its best September in over five years. That included an 18 pounder for young Callan Stewart. Not bad for his first ever salmon! Kercock has also had a really good September, so far, with 40.

The lack of water later in the month probably hasn't done some middle Tay beats many favours. Burnbane, for example, has only reported one so far. Glendelvine has had five but Stenton's 14 is actually already its best September for some years. Murthly 1 has had 15, which is already above its average, and with 19 so far, Murthly 2 should end up with its best September in over five years by the month's end. Newtyle have had 10 so far, and should end well.

Dunkeld House, on the other hand, has had three so far, including a first ever salmon for John Pilkington, but Dalmarnock has had 14, again already its best September for several years. Dalguise then has had four, Lower Kinnaird a better 19, and Upper Kinnaird three.

The upper Tay, however, has been relatively quiet. Findyate, for example has reported two, Edradynate one, Lower Farleyer three and Upper Farleyer 7. Further up on the Lyon, South Chesthill has reported three.

The Tummel also has had a quiet month. Pitlochry AC has reported nothing so far from its beats, while East Haugh has had a couple. A couple have also been reported from Loch Faskally. With 3,659 fish counted through the Pitlochry Dam fish counter to 20 September, I understand there is a head of fish upstream, but water is again needed to get things moving there too. On that, I wish to correct something I said in my last report. There was not actually a week when 500 fish ascended the counter in late August. I understand from SSE, that the video evidence of some non registered "partial counts" had been reviewed and that confirmed fish from earlier in the season had been added to the count total. It wasn't then that the count was wrong, it's just that they were counted earlier in the year.

So, that's it for September. My next report will see the season ended once again. But before then we hope for a last great burst of action. The wind has now swung to the north and temperatures fallen in the last few days, so that should help putting fish in a taking mood until we get some water.

Tight lines

Ben Lui