

# “Ripples”

The Official publication of the Southland Fly Fishing Club. The club was founded in 1974

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[www.southlandflyfishingclub.org.nz](http://www.southlandflyfishingclub.org.nz)



# Southland Fly Fishing Club



Minister of Conservation

Minita mō Te Papa Atawhai

Minister for Land Information

Minita mō Toitū Te Whenua

Associate Minister for the Environment

Minita Tuarua mō Te Taiao

18 October 2018

Tēnā koe

Thank you for your email regarding the Conservation (Indigenous Freshwater Fish) Amendment Bill.

This Bill is a technical bill that makes minor amendments to the current law, the Conservation Act 1987, in relation to indigenous freshwater fish. It aims to fix some provisions so they work better, so there is an adequate toolkit to improve indigenous fish management in future, to remove some old regulations that aren't being used, and to clarify when indigenous fish can be taken.

Because it is only a small technical bill, stakeholder and public consultation is being done through the select committee, and any necessary changes made at that stage.

As the Minister responsible for Fish and Game, I value highly the work of Fish and Game councils in managing sports fisheries in the interests of licence holders, and advocating for freshwater. Sports fisheries such as trout are an important recreational and tourism resource, and the current arrangements are important in safeguarding the fishery. I can assure you that the Bill does not in any way change the ability of Fish and Game to manage sports fish, or remove fundamental controls such as the prohibition on sale of trout and trout farming.

The Bill was not intended to have any negative effects on fish and game management so Fish and Game councils were not involved in its preparation. The Bill does remove some legal risks for fish and game management. It improves the ability to manage threats to indigenous fish that also affect sports fish (e.g. noxious fish). But it does not otherwise affect sports fisheries. Any future use of regulations about indigenous fish will be subject to public consultation.

I am aware that there has been some confusion about the bill and its intentions, and this may have caused concern among anglers. Let me assure you that the Bill does not do many of the things that have been mentioned in social media – it does not allow the sale of trout, it does not allow trout farming to occur, it does not give DOC greater powers to remove sports fish from waterbodies, change the relative hierarchy of fisheries and conservation plans, or create new Treaty settlement arrangements, nor does it transfer any fisheries revenue from fish and game to DOC, or remove any currently implemented consultation requirements.

That doesn't, of course, mean that the Bill is perfect. Legislation can always be improved at the select committee stage and I welcome public input into this process. In particular, Sir Geoffrey Palmer has raised, in his advice to the New Zealand Fish and Game Council, some technical points that I would expect the Select Committee to consider. Where there are different interpretations of a bill's provisions the select committee can recommend changes to clarify their meaning.

If you wish to make a submission, the information on how to do that is on the Parliament website - [https://www.parliament.nz/en/pb/bills-and-laws/bills-proposed-laws/document/BILL\\_79000/conservation-indigenous-freshwater-fish-amendment-bill](https://www.parliament.nz/en/pb/bills-and-laws/bills-proposed-laws/document/BILL_79000/conservation-indigenous-freshwater-fish-amendment-bill)

Yours sincerely

Hon. Eugenie Sage

**Minister of Conservation**

The above letter is a standard letter that was received in response to an email to the Minister of Conservation. It indicates one of two things, either the bill was poorly drafted by someone and they didn't actually mean to include sports fish in the bill or the Minister is trying to pull the wool over our eyes. It will be interesting to see what comes back from the Select Committee.

## Fishing Report by Hare & Copper

Fishing has been really tough. The rivers would just start to drop and there would be another rain event and up they would go again. The Mataura has been the worst although there were times it was fishable in the upper reaches. The Oreti and the Aparima have been much the same, with only the top end being suitable for fly fishing. Even though reasonably clear they have still had a lot of water making wading and spotting fish difficult. There has also been a fair bit of wind so that hasn't helped. With the Oreti in particular there have been a lot of people on the beats in the upper reaches and I guess this isn't surprising with much of the Mataura out of action.

Some of the smaller streams have been a bit better but there are not many of these.

With the high flows there haven't been many good hatches although the birds have been seen taking quite a few insects without much interest from the trout.



One of Johnny's small streams in good fishing condition.

## November Club Trip by Dave

With the continuing high flows in the rivers and a windy day forecast I was surprised there were four of us at Fish & Game for the November Club Trip. The only place that looked suitable for the group, Dave, Sarah, Noel and Julie, and considering the river levels, was the top of the Aparima so that is where we headed.

On arrival at Jacob's Bridge we all set off to look at the river. Noel and I headed down a bit while the ladies stayed relatively close to the cars. Unfortunately the river was being discoloured a bit by the water flowing in from the Hamilton Burn and this restricted how far we could go down. No fish were spotted initially but a lot of likely looking water was fished with no takes. Finally I spotted a fish in a swirly back wash. It was only visible from time to time and the drag was challenging to say the least but finally I got a take and a good hookup. It was soon in the net. Shortly after this we met up with Sarah on the river and after some discussion decided to head further up. The ladies were going to go above the bridge while Noel and I headed further up river.

Once back on the river we found spotting conditions to be very challenging so we had to fish the likely looking water where there should have been fish. Unfortunately there didn't seem to be any about and we finally decided to head back along the road to the car. We were a little surprised to find Sarah's car parked next to ours. Julie had decided this looked a bit challenging for her so was sitting in the car reading about how to catch trout and Sarah was soon spotted heading back down river to the cars. She hadn't had any more joy than us.

From here we made a quick detour to show Sarah and Noel the Lodge before heading home.

It was good to have four people out on a Club trip but it was a little unfortunate that conditions were a bit challenging.

## Presidents Report by Dave

As I sit here writing this, it is cold and wet outside. Nothing unusual about that this season and I suspect there is going to be enough rain to bring the rivers up again. Some of them haven't dropped from the last rain event, especially in the lower reaches.

I have managed a few days out and actually found fishable water but fishing has been hard work. I have been to the Aparima at Wreys Bush a couple of times this season and have bumped into a lady from Dunedin twice and she is conducting a survey of the bird life on the river bed for DoC. The second time I talked to her she had Grant McGregor from Wreys Bush Concrete with her. I think he is helping out with the funding of the research. They were looking at a black bill gull colony and most of the chicks in this colony were fully feathered and about to leave the area but there were still some that were not at this stage. There was another colony just up the river and she said this colony was a bit later than the first. We also discussed tern colonies as she said she hadn't found any the first time we met. I had since found one further up the river and when I mentioned this she said she knew about it but it was outside the area she was studying. If you bump into any of these colonies give them a wide berth. Be especially careful if there are terns around as their colonies have a lot less birds and tend to be a bit spread out. While they may seem quite common on our rivers the black billed gulls are listed as nationally critical and the black fronted terns are listed as nationally endangered so we need to give their colonies some peace. She also mentioned the pied stilts and said they hadn't started breeding yet as they wait until the river levels stabilise before breeding.



Two black fronted tern chicks in their nest. They don't get a fancy nest.

I have had a few other days out but the high river flows and coloured waters have been a bit restrictive. I am off to Te Anau for the last week of the month so hopefully things will be better up there.

I am also getting involved with teaching students (and teachers) at Menzies College about fly fishing. They have a keen group there and have managed to get a grant that has allowed them to buy some fly rods etc. The group has also been involved in studying brown trout in the Mimiha Stream and have won an environmental award for this work so they are pretty keen. There is not much time to do too much this year but I am sure this will continue next year.

Get out there, find some clean water, defy the wind and catch some fish.

## Ripples Editor

### **Wanted - Ripples Editor**

We require a new Ripples editor. If you are keen to edit Ripples or even help let me know. Assistance is available as required and in fact Les and myself have helped Johnny out with this over his period as editor. Even just writing a few articles would be helpful.

If you can help or want to know what is involved contact Dave. 027 201 6722 or [dcharris@southnet.co.nz](mailto:dcharris@southnet.co.nz)

## November Club Meeting

We will have speakers from Environment Southland at our November meeting on 27th November. Councillor Grant Hubber will be along with two staff members. They will speak at the start of the meeting so please be there on time.

## Lake Alexandrina Trip February 1<sup>st</sup>—6<sup>th</sup>

I need to know who is planning on coming to Lake Alexandrina for our February trip so I can sort out the hut. We are planning to stay in one of the South Canterbury Anglers Club huts, probably the South End hut if it is available.

If you are planning to come contact Dave 027 201 6722 Or 03 215 6068

## November Lodge Weekend by Chris

The gods aligned. 1 November was a Thursday so I could get 4 days fishing through to the Sunday. Unfortunately that was the last of the aligning. As I was going to be away the kids decided Carolyn should go and see them, so she headed off to Sydney. The weather, river levels and uncooperative fish then made it a tough weekend.

### Day 1

Traditional opening in the Von. Only 5 parties in there this year and by 1pm, 4 of them had given up. That says it all. First time in 20 years that we landed no fish for the day.

### Day 2

Upuk. Buzzer, “gone upstream” card on the road gate. At least we hadn’t driven all the way. So quick hop over to the Whitestone. Dave was soon into a fish but with high water and cloud spotting was very difficult. Get up almost to the third fence and there is a car parked on the track. Very annoying that the farm manager only lets some people on his roads (others can’t even walk on them) and then, despite miles of river available to them, they fish within the area that we can fish to in a day. Dave had landed a second fish and I had finally landed one, so it was time to turn around and go back to the car.



### Day 3

Julie had joined us. It rained overnight, was blowing a gale with heavy rain forecast for the afternoon. Off to the Matura to make use of the willows as windbreaks. We spread out over about 500 yards around a bend. Saw a few but weren’t cooperating with Julie or I. Dave landed two nice fish around the 4lb mark before he ran out of willows and was blown off the water. Back downstream to where Julie was “thrashing the water to a froth” to use a term from last month’s meeting. There were several fish lined up along a big drop-off and for over an hour they refused to take anything. The forecast rain arrived in a big way and finally, while getting wet I hooked a nice fish. While I cleaned it Dave & Julie got back to the car to try and stay dry. Didn’t work as it was pelting down. Back to the lodge to dry out, have lunch & tie flies for the afternoon. Mossburn pub for tea. Julie didn’t believe us when we said she didn’t need to get dressed up and would have to dodge the gumboots to get in.

### Day 4

Rained all night & still blowing a gale so off to Lake Mavora. I was into a small rainbow early but that was it. The lake was up and there was a fair bit of water going down the river. Dave walked between the two lakes but caught nothing.

Started raining again so back to the lodge to tidy up and away home.

For some strange reason we didn’t see anyone else fishing on the Saturday & Sunday.

We did however prove that despite high water, rain and howling winds you can find fish if you look hard enough.

## One of Those Days by Dave

The river levels had dropped a bit so I decided to have a day on the Upper Oreti. As it was only mid-November I decided an early start wasn't really needed as there are a number of options available. I set off heading for the top of the river with the intention of fishing one of the top two beats, but expecting the Ashton Burn beat to be taken while not expecting anyone to be on the Mount Nicholas Bridge beat.

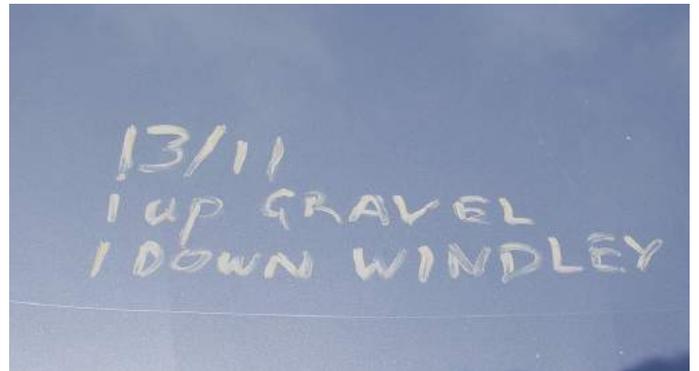
The journey was off to a slow start. First I needed to get petrol and then was delayed for quite a long time at road works just before Winton. I don't think the temporary traffic lights were set right and this was causing additional delays. Once clear of these, all the traffic in front of me disappeared in Winton and I had a clear run from there.

As I drove past the accesses which I could see, I noted that there was no-one at So Big and only one car at the Gravel Pit so there were some options if I was stuck for somewhere to go. When I finally got to the bridge there were actually three cars at the car park for the Ashton Burn and Upper Oreti Hut beats as well as a car at the Mount Nicholas Bridge beat sign. I could see the anglers on the Mount Nicholas Bridge beat and they hadn't been there long as they weren't far from the bridge. I decided to head back to the Gravel Pit and have a look at the Windley beat.

As I turned off the road I could see there was still only one car down there and it was at the Gravel Pit beat sign so I headed down with the intention of fishing the Windley beat. I didn't feel like a long walk so the Windley River beat was out. Unfortunately when I got out of my car I noticed writing in mud on the bonnet of the rental car stating "13/11 1 up Gravel 1 down Windley". This did not improve my mood at all.

I then headed off back to So Big hoping no-one had arrived there in the time it had taken me to drive to the Mount Nicholas Bridge and back. Fortunately there was no-one there so it was time to go fishing.

The sun was shining but the wind was a bit stronger than forecast and was downstream as forecast. I decided I could cope with this so off I went. Once by the river I immediately spotted a fish but before I could cast to it the sun decided to hide behind about the only cloud in the sky. It came and went a couple of times and finally I could see the fish long enough to cast to it. After a few attempts I finally got the fly in the right place and the fish took it. It stayed on about 3 seconds.



I continued up the river spotting a few fish here and there and had a few more takes. The second one that took stayed on a little longer, the next I felt but it didn't hook up at all and then I had a good hook up on a very active fish but again the line went slack. This time the hook had broken at the end of the shank. I think this is the first time I have had this happen. I had the fly back but with nothing sticking out the end of the body. It wasn't an old rusty fly, it was one I had tied at the Lodge during a rain break on the November trip. It was a Tiemco TMC 200R #12 hook.

Finally I spotted a fish close to the bank and as I was about to cast to it, it drifted down past me. I was on a bank a bit above the water but stayed as still as possible. Once it was below me I offered it the fly and it took it without hesitation. Not much of a fight and finally I had something in the net. Time for lunch.

After lunch I continued up the river. I had another fish drop off, then had my knot unravel on a strike. From here on the fish seemed a little less co-operative with some ignoring the fly, some having a look but not taking and some disappearing at the sight of the fly. I stayed longer than I should have and that meant a longer walk back to the car and a later than planned arrival home.

I don't fish the Upper Oreti very often as it can be hard to find an unoccupied beat but I didn't expect to have that issue in mid-November. I guess the good bit about this is that Fish and Game are talking about making this area a controlled fishery for next season but there has not been any discussion yet about how much of the season it will be a controlled fishery or the system that will be used to get a beat.

## Coming Events

(MM=Monthly Meeting, CM = Committee Meeting)

27 <sup>th</sup> Nov	Meeting	Monthly Meeting - Fish & Game 7:30pm Speakers from Environment Southland
4 <sup>th</sup> Dec	Meeting	Executive Meeting & Fly Tying
9 <sup>th</sup> Dec	Trip	<b>Club Trip</b> , Catlins – Meet at Fish & Game 7:00am
18 <sup>th</sup> Dec	Trip	Mid-week Trip – Dave Harris 027 201 6722
13 <sup>th</sup> Jan	Trip	<b>Club Day Trip</b> , meet at Fish & Game – 7am
15 <sup>th</sup> Jan	Trip	On the River, Tuesday straight after work, Coal Pit Rd
22 <sup>nd</sup> Jan	Trip	Mid-week trip – Dave Harris 027 201 6722
26/27 <sup>th</sup> Jan	Course	Fly Fishing course run by Mike Weddell from Mosgiel.
29 <sup>th</sup> Jan	Meeting	Monthly Meeting - Fish & Game 7:30pm
1-6 <sup>th</sup> Feb	Trip	Lake Alexandrina Trip - Dave Harris 027 201 6722

## Club Contacts

- Address **Southland Fly Fishing Club, PO Box 1689, Invercargill, New Zealand**
- Website [www.southlandflyfishingclub.org.nz](http://www.southlandflyfishingclub.org.nz)
- President Dave Harris, 30 Baxter Street Invercargill (03 215 6068) [dcharris@southnet.co.nz](mailto:dcharris@southnet.co.nz)
- Secretary Chris McDonald, 334 Racecourse Road, Invercargill (03 217 3733) [mcdonald.ccmd@kinect.co.nz](mailto:mcdonald.ccmd@kinect.co.nz)
- Editor Vacant - Send articles to Dave Harris [dcharris@southnet.co.nz](mailto:dcharris@southnet.co.nz)  
*Items for publication must be submitted to the editor, prior to the 10th of the month*
- Librarian Simon Budd
- Lodge Custodian Dave Murphy, 35 Brown Road, Invercargill [dmurphy@southnet.co.nz](mailto:dmurphy@southnet.co.nz) (03 230 4698) or (0276752324)

## Club items for sale

Metal Badges \$15 ea.



Cloth Patches \$12 ea.



## Club Meetings

The club meets at 7:30pm on the last Tuesday of each month (except December) at the Fish & Game building, 17 Eye St, West Invercargill, Invercargill 9810. [The February meeting is on the river.](#)

Executive Committee meets on the first Tuesday of the month following the general meeting, except for Dec/Jan, includes fly tying, so come along and bring your gear if you want help with a fly—all members welcome.

## Club Resources

The club has an extensive library of Books and Videos, contact the Librarian

A blow up Rubber Boat and a set of five Radio's, which can be borrowed by club members, contact Chris McDonald.

## Club Sponsors



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