

“Ripples”

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

March 2022



www.southlandflyfishingclub.org.nz



*Southland Fly
Fishing Club*

President's Report by Dave

It seems to have been a long time since the last Ripples (an extra week in fact) and I have been quite busy, both with fishing and other activities.

We have had a Club BBQ at Coal Pit Road and a mid-week trip that I went to but I was away for the Club Day trip on the 13th, heading to Maruia to look at some rivers up that way. The BBQ was a bit different this year as Chris was away and we had no-one to cook the food for us or a BBQ to cook it on, so it was a bring your own. I headed out with my gas cooker and some sausages to find Dave Murphy there. Dave had come out earlier in the day and fished at the Wyndham Racecourse. He had brought a ready prepared meal. I set up and cooked my sausages and onions on the gas cooker and they weren't too bad either. No-one else showed.

The following day was the mid-week trip and I was joined by Daniel and Julie. We decided to head to the Upper Oreti. Unfortunately, it was cloudy and that made spotting a bit difficult and when we did find fish they were not co-operative in any way. Still at least we were out there doing it.

I had a trip to the Aparima with Derek (who was on the Fly Fishing Course this year). We didn't find as many fish as I expected but I did get a couple to the net. This was in contrast to two solo trips to the Aparima when I managed to land 9 fish for the two trips. I also had a couple of other trips to the Oreti which were not as successful as I expected. One of these trips was to where the Benmore bridge used to be. I had not fished there before and it was very windy. I did find some fish taking willow grubs and one of these came to the net, another came off.

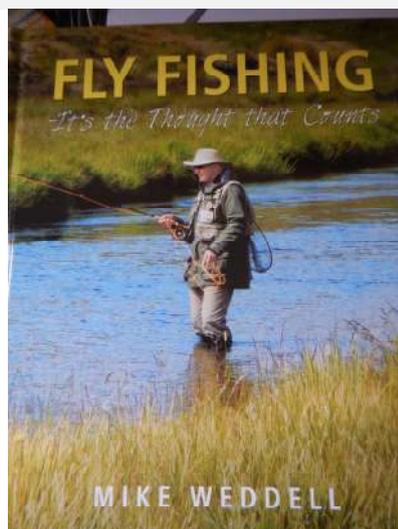
I was talking to Southland F&G Chairman (and ex Southland Fly Fishing Club President) Lindsay one night and he mentioned he might head out fishing a couple of days later so I suggested we should go together. It was a long time since I had been fishing with Lindsay but it was good to get out together again. After a bit of discussion, we headed to the lower part of the Mararoa. When we arrived there was another car there and it looked like it had been slept in over night and that the occupant was still there. By the Stu's Fly Shop sticker on the back, it was clearly another angler. He emerged shortly after we arrived and said he had fished there the day before and was heading elsewhere for the day so the river was ours. We went up the river and eventually Linz spotted a fish that looked to be feeding. For a long time it refused to take a nymph but eventually it came to the net. This was the first of 8 fish we landed for the day. We also dropped or broke some off. I crossed a fast bit of water to look at a pool and saw fish in it. The first one took off across the river and downstream after flirting with a snag in the middle of the river. It turned out to be the biggest fish of the day. Another fish that I hooked in the same pool tried the same trick but I was determined it was not going to get into the fast water and this resulted in a break-off. We hooked eight fish in that one pool.

My final outing for the past month was a major expedition to the Buller area and this is covered elsewhere in this Ripples. Let's just say here it was tough going.

The season is starting to wind down but we still have two Lodge Trips. We have a three day trip at ANZAC weekend and a two day trip at the end of May. Start planning to come on these now.

Fly Fishing—It's the Thought That Counts

Mike Weddell has released another book – *Fly Fishing - It's the Thought That Counts*. This is available in either paperback or hard cover from Mike at www.mikeweddellflyfishing.co.nz/



Club Trip March 2022

Met Daniel at F & G just before 7. Loaded up my vehicle and we were off. Apologies to any latecomers as we were gone right on 7am. Asked Daniel where he wanted to go. Ruled out Oreti as he had recently fished there unsuccessfully with Dave. Asked where was his favourite spot on the Matura. Said he didn't have one but knew where mine was. So that's where we went. Same place as we went on the same trip last year.

Nice sunny day with a heavy dew. Arrived set up and fished for first couple of hours only seeing a couple of tiddlers. Then it all changed. We started spotting some good fish. The best policy was for me to follow one pool behind Daniel. The fish would hide from him then come out from behind the willows to say hello to me.

By a slightly late lunch I had 2 and Daniel 3. All were tricky fish that we had to work for. The morning's highlight was a double hook up and Daniel landing his first fish on a willow grub. Lunch was slightly late as we spotted a rising fish that just wouldn't take Daniel's fly. Eventually it took a breather, Daniel had his lunch the fish started rising again and Daniel proceeded to catch it.

Further upstream a couple of fish started willow grubbing in a small gap under a line of willows. The first one would look at my willow grub then ignore it. The second fish 10 feet further up was right behind the overhanging willow and didn't have as long to look at my fly. Eventually fly and fish were in the same place and it came to the net.

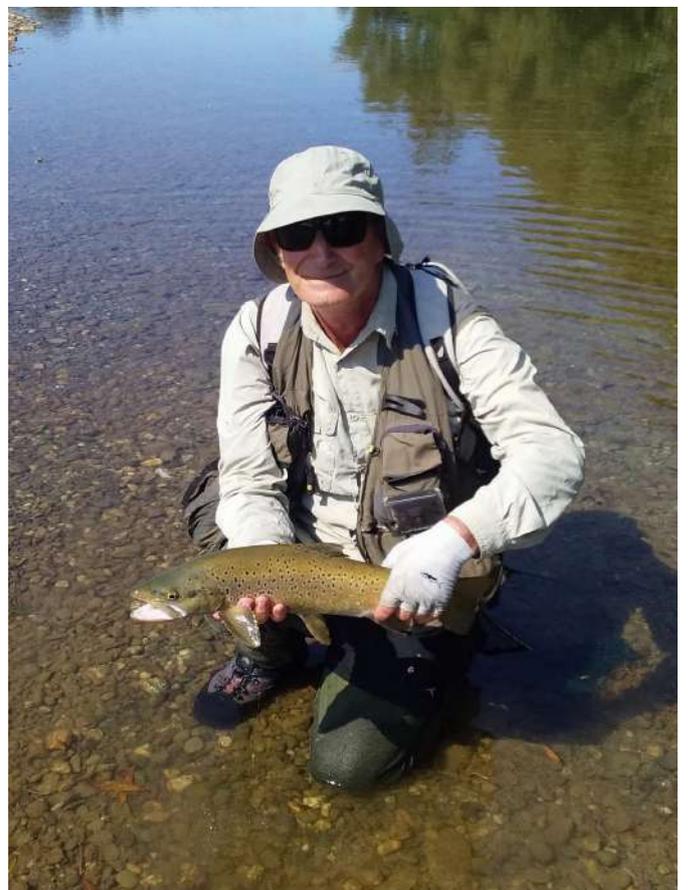
I fished for another fish that was hard against the front of a branch that went halfway across the river. No joy so we went up to the next pool which had a nice fish on the top of a drop off. Daniel threw the kitchen sink at it for some time but it kept on feeding. Got him to change his rig so he had a dry fly indicator to show about where his nymph was.

I left him to it while I went back to the fish in front of the branch. Lots of noise and splashing as Daniel proceeded to hook his fish and land it in the top of the pool I was fishing. Once it was landed and released it was back to the fish in front of the branch. It made a mistake and among lots more splashing and a jumping fish I absolutely hauled it upstream away from the branch and proceeded to land it.

Not long later we called it a day and walked back downstream hopping to spot some fish in the water that was fishless in the morning. No such luck.

Daniel landed 5 for the day I got 4. 5 were between 3 and 3.25 lb. 3 were 2-2.5 lb and the smallest was just under 2lb. 2 fell to a willow grub, 2 to a small bead head pheasant tail, 1 to an Adams, 2 to a small brown nymph and I don't know what Daniel's other 3 took. All of the fish were in good condition and were not happy to be hooked.

On the same trip last year Daniel and Joel landed 11 between them and this year we got 9. If it's not Daniel's favourite spot on the Matura by now then the sooner he takes me there the better.



Chris on the March Club Trip

Maruia Trip by Dave

While we were at Lake Alexandrina, Cole mentioned the Upper Grey River as somewhere we should have a look at. Neither of us had been to it before so there was a bit of research to do. After a few email exchanges I booked us into the Maruia Motel for 5 nights but we had to delay the trip almost a week to get the accommodation. Price looked pretty good and the owner Ashley was also a Fly Fishing Guide so hopefully we could get some good information from him.

I set off from Invercargill on the Saturday afternoon in quite windy conditions, trying not to think of the cost of the petrol we were going to use. My Jeep's fuel consumption is quite sensitive to wind conditions and with a strong sou'wester behind me I was soon seeing economy figures like I had never seen before. By being a bit less aggressive with my driving I was able to keep the fuel consumption good for the whole trip.

I arrived at Kakanui where Cole was staying in plenty of time for dinner and spent the night there. Sunday, we set off for Maruia. We stopped for supplies in Timaru as we could easily find a supermarket on the main road there. Next stop was for petrol and a bite to eat in Christchurch, then on over the Lewis Pass to Maruia. We pulled into the motel to be greeted by Amber, "you must be Dave". We were shown to our room, no signing in registration etc.

First job was to sort out a rod for Cole as he had broken another and I had taken a couple up for him to try. He decided that my Kilwell Presentation #7 was suitable. We had had a chat to Ashley by this stage and discussed where to go fishing.

Monday morning we decided to fish the Maruia River not far from the motel. First introduction to the river was a deep crossing, almost up to our waists but not flowing much. We crossed back to an island which had a deep pool almost at the downstream end. I could see a fish deep down in the pool but after a couple of casts decided I was never going to get a fly down that far. However, just above the pool I spotted a fish in reasonably fast water and it took a nymph on the first cast. I was on the board.

A bit further up the river I was blind fishing some likely looking water and hooked into another fish. What surprised us was that even though we knew where the fish was on the end of the line it was extremely difficult to see as it blended in perfectly with the stones on the bottom. I landed this fish and another from the same run.

Next it was Cole's turn and he too was on the board. Finally, we spotted some fish that looked likely targets. I spooked a couple and then Cole hooked one and landed it. We continued up the river and I was starting to think about heading back to the car when Cole mentioned Ashley had told him he would run me back to the car if we fished back up to the motel, so on we went. There



Cole with a Maruia brown

were places where we had to take to the bush to get up the river and this included trying to get through blackberry bushes. In one place we finished up in a paddock but couldn't get back to the river further up so had to go back the way we came. Navigating with Cole's phone we finally made it back to the motel. By this time I could feel something digging into my left foot and realized I had broken one of my alloy bars on the bottom of my boot. I didn't have any way of fixing it and Ashley didn't have the tools required. I called at the garage in

(Continued on page 5)

Maruía Trip (cont)

Springs Junction the next morning and they were able to grind the head off the screw and cut off part of the bar so it would be good for the rest of the trip.

We had some further discussions with Ashley and he offered to try and get us access through one of the farms on the Upper Grey River. Was soon back to report that Tuesday was out but Wednesday would be okay. We would have to meet the farmer at his gate at 9:00am and leave a note to tell other anglers of our intention as some access the same rivers by taking the DOC track around the farm.



Tuesday, we decided to go and have a look at a different access to the Upper Grey River. Access was down Palmer Road, a narrow gravel road off the road from Springs Junction to Reefton. The first river you come across is the Brown Grey River, then the Upper Grey River. At both these bridges the rivers are too small to carry fish so we continued on. The next bridge is the Blue Grey River and this is big enough to carry fish and flows into the Upper Grey about 1km below the bridge. We stopped for a look and then continued on until we came upon an angler's access sign at Hospital Flat. We decided that we would fish here. Getting down to the river was a bit of a struggle and what we found at the bottom showed us we were going to have to work hard to walk up the river. Lots of big rocks and fast flowing water. Spotting fish was not easy but I suspect that there were not many fish to be spotted. I had Cole fishing to a fish in a deep pool but it wasn't playing ball so I decided to have a couple of casts into the fast water on my side of the river. A head came out of the water and took my dry fly. Later in the day I spotted another in a good spot and it too was keen on the dry. Eventually we got to a section of river that didn't look easy so headed back down the river and made our way back out to the road. I walked back to the car, picked Cole up and we headed back to the Blue Grey River bridge. From here we went up the river a short distance before spotting a couple of fish. Both disappeared as soon as the line hit the water. They had seen it all before.

Some of the stones on the Upper Grey River were quite large

Thursday morning and it was back down Palmer Road, right to the end where we met Miguel at his gate and he led us across his farm to where we could access the river from. This gave us access to the Robinson River and the Upper Grey River. We walked down the Robinson and some distance down the Upper Grey before starting to fish. The Upper Grey was a bit easier going here without the big rocks. We spotted a couple of fish in the Upper Grey and I hooked one. I managed to get it almost to the net but it took off again and then broke off. We stopped for lunch at the confluence and then looked in a big pool in the Upper Grey just above. We could see a number of fish but they were on the other side of a fast bit of water so drag was going to be a problem. I did have one come up to the dry but didn't take it and another chased it when it dragged downstream. We then set off up the Robinson River. Once again, we didn't see many fish but I finally spotted a couple that looked like they were feeding. The first disappeared quickly but the second took the woolly caddis nymph and came to the net. By this time, we had walked up to where the DOC track came to the river so decided to head back to the car.

The final day we decided to fish the Blue Grey River below the bridge and the Upper Grey in the vicinity. We parked the car at the bridge and walked down the river to the Upper Grey. We then realized there were other

(Continued on page 6)

Maruia Trip (cont)

anglers in the area (they had accessed the river across private land but we didn't see their car until we were almost at the confluence of the two rivers. We fished the Upper Grey at the confluence where we saw a couple of fish before fishing back up the Blue Grey. Once again, we didn't see any fish until Cole spooked one from under a bank. After we had eaten lunch, I stood up, took one pace and spotted a fish we should have seen while we were sitting eating. It just lay there ignoring everything we offered it. A bit further up I spooked another one. We continued past the bridge and had a look at the water we had fished a couple of days before but the fish we had seen then were nowhere to be seen. It was still relatively early so we decided to look at another stream that Ashley had mentioned that was a tributary of the Maruia. We found the bridge was missing but followed a track down to a ford. I put the front wheels in the water before deciding the rocks were too big and I should not cross. We parked there and walked down to the Maruia (only a few metres) before deciding this wasn't the place for us. We headed back to a bridge across the Maruia and headed down to the river. Here we found Ashley and another guest at the motel prospecting (unsuccessfully) for gold. We had a quick chat and headed up the river. We immediately spotted five fish. They were in a position that made casting hard work and spooked as soon as a line hit the water. We went some way without seeing another fish. I finally spotted one. Unfortunately, Cole didn't get his fly in the right place and the fish departed. Cole decided to cut across a farm to the road and that involved getting around and through some blackberry while I headed back down to the car and went and picked him up.

Friday morning and it was time to head home. It was a pretty quiet trip and as we were nearing Kakanui I decided it was early enough to continue all the way home. I dropped Cole off and headed south arriving home a little tired after 10 hours on the road.

While we didn't catch many fish it was a good trip and we met some nice friendly people. If you are going that way I can recommend the Maruia Motel as a place to stay.



Dave casting at stones in the Upper Grey River

Club Donation

A huge thank you goes out to Mark Salisbury from cheaptrailersqueensland.com.au

Mark donated a series of fly tying vices, dvd's, fly tying gear, lures and some other fishing gear also.

The Club really appreciates the generosity and will put the gear to good use.

We are now able to update all the club vices for our members to use.

Please check out his website if you are in Australia and looking for a trailer.

Cover Photo by Dave

Fish & Game Southland Chairman Lindsay Withington with a nice Mararoa rainbow.

Coming Events (MM=Monthly Meeting, CM = Committee Meeting)

| | | |
|------------------------------|---------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 23 rd Mar | Fishing | Mid-week Trip – Dave Harris 027 201 6722 |
| 29 th Mar | MM | |
| 5 th April | CM | Fly Tying |
| 10 th April | Fishing | Club Day Trip , meet at Fish & Game 8am |
| 23/24/25 th April | Fishing | Lodge Trip (End of Season) |
| 27 th April | Fishing | Mid-week Trip – Dave Harris 027 201 6722 |
| 3 rd May | CM | Fly Tying |
| 8 th May | Fishing | Club Day Trip , meet at Fish & Game 10am, to the lower Mataura |
| 25 th May | Fishing | Mid-week Trip – Dave Harris 027 201 6722 |
| 28/29 th May | Fishing | Lodge Trip – End of Season run, close Lodge |

Club Contacts

- Address **Southland Fly Fishing Club, PO Box 1689, Invercargill, New Zealand**
- Website www.southlandflyfishingclub.org.nz
- President Dave Harris, 30 Baxter Street Invercargill (927 201 6722) dcharris@southnet.co.nz
- Secretary Chris McDonald, 334 Racecourse Road, Invercargill (03 217 3733) mcdonald.ccnd@kinect.co.nz
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- Editor Dave Harris dcharris@southnet.co.nz
Items for publication must be submitted to the editor, prior to the 10th of the month
- Librarian Chris Cowie (027 236 9576)
- Lodge Custodian Dave Murphy, 35 Brown Road, Invercargill 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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