

“Ripples”

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

April 2022



www.southlandflyfishingclub.org.nz



*Southland Fly
Fishing Club*

President's Report by Dave

Almost the end of April already. That means the fishing season is almost over in most of the rivers although there are a few that are open until the end of May and then we are restricted to tidal waters and lakes.

I have had another month with not really enough fly fishing. The mid-week trip at the end of March didn't happen when Julie pulled out at the last minute due to not feeling well. No-one else was coming and I had plenty of other things to do so stayed home. I did manage to get away to the Lodge for a few days early in the month and made it out on the Club trip on the 10th.

However, I haven't managed to catch many fish. Fish have been a bit hard to find and have then either been very spooky or just ignored the flies I have offered them. I think part of the difficulty in spotting the fish is the condition of the rivers. With the low flows there has been a lot of dark algae on the stones and this means that the fish don't stand out like they normally would. I think the other issue is the low flows resulting in shallow ripples and the nymphs may be sinking too deep for the fish to see them. I did get around to tying some lighter nymphs to alleviate this problem but I haven't been out since to try them. I have been out looking for afternoon mayfly hatches but haven't found many mayflies coming off other than tiny ones in the Mataura. There were no fish taking them maybe due to being too small. I did find a few fish rising on the lower Mataura one afternoon but they were out in the middle out of casting range and were only rising once in a while.

We have our April Lodge Trip on Anzac weekend. This will be a three-day trip, going up on the Friday evening and returning on Monday evening. When I was at the Lodge at the start of the month, we had an issue with the water supply. This was due to the farmer's bore being dry and he was having to buy water for his stock. Hopefully the rain we have had since will have helped out with this problem and we will have water for the weekend. I will check before we go so we know where we stand. The monthly mid-week trip is scheduled for Wednesday 27th. If you intend to come on this let me know.

We will have another Lodge Trip at the end of May (28th & 29th) so mark that one in your calendar. This is also early warning for the Fly Tying Day and Club Dinner on June 18th. Put this one in your calendar as well.

Our Fly Tying Competition starts at the May meeting so it is time to get out your fly tying gear, stock up on supplies and have a go at the competition flies. The fly for May is a black spider wet and the tying instructions are included in this edition of Ripples. It is a simple fly so I expect a lot of people to tie it.

A trip to the Lodge by Dave

It was getting towards the time that Cole would have to head back to Canada. He was booked to fly out on the second weekend of April but this left just enough time for us to fit in a trip to the Lodge.

We headed away early on the Saturday morning, grabbed our groceries in Winton as we could also get essentials (beer and wine) that we couldn't get at a supermarket in Invercargill. We stopped at Lumsden as I was looking for some fly tying supplies but unfortunately the shop there doesn't sell fly tying supplies.

The Lodge hadn't been used since the beginning of November so we didn't know quite what to expect when we arrived. After turning on the power, I turned on the supply valve at the tank and could hear water flowing into the tank so I was happy with that. When we opened the door, we found plenty of flies in the kitchen and lounge. These took a while to clean up but things looked good when we finished.

With everything cleaned up it was time to have lunch and head away for an afternoon fish. The Oreti is right there so that is where we decided to go. There wasn't much water but it was clear. There was quite a bit of dark algae on the stones and this would make spotting fish difficult. Of course the sun was also low in the sky so looking into the water towards the sun was a waste of time. With the low water level we were easily able to

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A trip to the Lodge (cont)

walk up a section of river I have always had to get past by going around the willows but the only fish we saw in the area were quite small.

Eventually we found some water that looked promising (and where I had caught fish before) but couldn't see any fish. The water was quite deep so it was possible that there were fish lying deep in the water. I soon hooked a small fish but it didn't want to come to the net and came off. Cole also hooked a small fish and he landed his. We continued up a bit but didn't find any fish so decided it was time to head back down to the car and back to the Lodge for dinner. We had more flies to clean up when we got back.

The second day we headed to Nokomai. Conditions were good but the river was low. Early on we seemed to only be able to spook fish. There was a bit of insect activity but mostly what looked like very small mayflies that the fish weren't taking. As we walked up the river we spotted more fish. I finally spotted a fish sitting out in the middle with willows behind making it easy to see. It wasn't moving about and I was a bit surprised when it rose to my dry fly expecting it to take the nymph that was trailing behind it. A bit further up, I did see a couple that were taking mayflies in a ripple but they didn't like my parachute adams. Fishing improved as we went on and we both landed fish on both dry flies and nymphs. Not a bad day at all. It was then back to the car, back to the Lodge and more flies to clean up.



Some of the fish on the Upper Waiau were not very big

With the very low flows I wanted to have a look at the Upper Waiau and with the weekend over we headed that way on the Monday morning. We headed across the control structure and down the track on the true right before following a trail through the trees to a large gravel bank left exposed by the low water level. We walked down as far as we could before we started fishing. At the bottom of the boulder bank the stones were very big and this made for very hard going. I had a look at this region and decided to head up a bit where it was much easier. Cole stuck it out and went a little distance down from where I had been. He was rewarded with a nice rainbow. In the sandy areas there was a surprising number of footprints, indicating this area had been well fished recently, most likely by people coming ashore from jet boats.

As I moved up, I saw a few fish but mostly they saw me first. I finally got a take by a nice brown and that came to the net. I could see rises but they didn't seem to have a fish to go with them, or at least I couldn't see the fish. I found out why when I struggled to lift the fly out of the water at the end of a drift. There was a tiny fish attached. I hooked two more here. These were the fish that were rising and they were just too small to see. Once we reached the top of the gravel bank it was time to head back to the car. I was a bit disappointed with the number of fish we saw.

Once back to the car we decided to head to Queens Reach. With the water being very low this was completely different to the way it usually is. We were able to get out to the island without any trouble at all. Unfortunately, there was a lot of didymo and this meant you had to make sure your nymph didn't sink into it. There were fish around but they didn't seem to want to co-operate except for another the size of the tiny fish I had caught earlier. Back to the Lodge and a few more flies to clean up.

Just before he went to bed Cole said he thought he had seen a mouse run into the corner under the TV. Later I was sitting reading and the mouse decided it wanted to go into the kitchen. Unfortunately for the mouse, the door was closed and that seemed to confuse it. I sat watching it for a while but didn't have anything to throw at

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A trip to the Lodge (cont)

it. I went across and got my shoes but that frightened the mouse enough so that it didn't reappear. I had put out mouse bait in the kitchen when we arrived on the Saturday, so hopefully, the mouse found that eventually.

Tuesday morning and we decided to head back to the Matuara above Riversdale. Pretty much as at Nokomai. The river was low, the fish were hard to find and some were quite spooky. There was a lot of shallow water with willows on the other side. If you looked closely there were a few fish in under the willows. At one point there was a bit of water that was deeper and Cole spotted a fish there. After a lot of casts, he finally managed to land it. We picked up a couple more fish before it was time to walk back to the car. Back to the Lodge and this time no flies to clean up. Unfortunately, last thing that night we ran out of water.

Wednesday morning it was time to clean up and head back to Invercargill. For Cole, it was then off to Kakanui to pack up, put the car into storage and head back to Canada.

Club Trip April 10th by Dave

There were just three of us on the April Club trip, Gerda, Chris and myself.

After a quick discussion we decided to head to the middle Mataura, but not to the same place as the previous two monthly trips had been to. In fact, we headed a bit downstream from there. We decided to go in Chris's new car, with his trusty Nissan having been replaced by a shiny black Honda.

When we arrived, conditions looked pretty good although there wasn't a lot of water in the river. We decided to head down and fish back up to the car. While Gerda and I were able to stay clear of the river on the way down, Chris had to cast to some fish in a couple of places so he fell well behind.

Once we had reached the turn around spot I got set up and Chris finally arrived, not having caught anything at his stops on the way down. Chris had not been to this spot previously this season and was quite surprised at the changes. One of our favourite pools (that always had rising fish) was dry and no longer part of the river.

We fished around this area for a while but fish seemed to be few and far between (or at least we couldn't see them).

We headed slowly up the river and Chris indicated where he wanted to stop for lunch. He had seen a fish here on the way down (and that told how far off a direct route he had gone). There was no sign of the fish. We then got to a spot where Chris had seen several fish on the way down and sure enough there were a number swimming around in a pool. Chris managed to hook one and get it to the bank.

As we got further up the river, we started to spot a few more fish but most either ignored the nymph or spooked immediately. I had one that spooked before the line even hit the water and I suspect he had seen the line in the sunlight. I did eventually manage to hook and land one that I hadn't spotted (or spooked) and Chris managed to land another.

At one long ripple, Chris crossed and walked along the high bank while Gerda and I stayed on the low side. Chris said he spotted 14 fish in this ripple but we saw none from the low side. Unfortunately for Chris they were all across the fast water on his side of the river.

We got back to the car and packed up. Gerda suggested an icecream on the way home and Chris was keen. Unfortunately, the dairy in Riversdale wasn't open so no icecreams. A good day out in spite of the small numbers of fish.



Chris with a nice brown

Teviot Angling competition- 6th March 2021 by Rose

A day of fishing on the Teviot River the flyer said, to provide baseline fisheries data for the Teviot River hydro scheme resource consent monitoring. That sounded interesting so I mentioned it to my family. 2 sons and a grandson were pretty keen. We had all been through the fly-fishing course with Mike Weddell so were interested to try out new spots and rivers. We headed to Millars Flat, then on toward the Teviot River about 20 minutes north. The weather was perfect and the river was narrow with easy access. We set up camp and enjoyed a picturesque sunset over the surrounding hills (and a wee wine). Research scientist Ross from Wanaka was there to welcome us and say hi and to give us some pointers on the river and the game plan for the next day. It was a catch, measure and release and we all had varying degrees of success but we all thoroughly enjoyed ourselves, fishing and socialising with other anglers, sharing stories and yarns. Well worth the drive and a great family day out and even better if you camp out.

Teviot Angling competition (2) by Julie

As Rose wrote it was a great family day with fun and fishing for all. Newcomers were made to feel very welcome and I was pleased to see both the Southland Fly Fishing Club and Fish N Friday club represented.

Ross Dungey reported around 133 fish were caught for the day and the average size was 190mm. This was larger than previous survey days. I am sure if anyone was interested in the full report Ross could make this available.

For me it was a steep learning curve as this year, with consultation from an expert, I approached it with a different style using a wet fly and nymph. I was happy with my catch of 9 trout. I did find this method worked well on this river and the conditions on the day. However, I did get a lot of nudges that did not take. Apparently this happens quite a bit using this technique. According to my measurements I had the largest and the smallest trout caught, I will not mention the size of either.

I was highly amused at finding a beautiful italic written notice on the gate where I intended to fish reserving 300 meters of water for me. Maybe a benefit of being the oldest and least mobile there. While one angler took offence at the notice most took it in a generous and humorous way and left me to enjoy my solitude and fishing on an untouched stretch of river.

The camping and the company was superb. These events are well worth attending as the knowledge from these very experienced anglers, and their willingness to share is beyond price.



Mataura at Nokomai in early April

Competitions by Dave

May is the first month of our annual fly tying competition. As has been the practice in the past, we will tie a specific pattern each month and it will be judged at the monthly meeting by the members. Once again, we will publish each pattern in the previous month's Ripples and this will give people time to find suitable materials if they don't already have them.

May Competition Fly - Black Spider

The fly for May is a wet fly. Julie (and Cole who supplied the initial sample) called it a black spider but my understanding is that a spider is a wet fly with no wings or tail. This one has a tail but we are still going to call it a black spider. I understand the fly was used successfully on the Teviot River during the Teviot Fishing Competition in March.

I didn't have any of the black hen hackle required and had to purchase a hen cape from Mike Weddell Fly Fishing (www.mikeweddellflyfishing.co.nz/). If you have hen hackles that are too long there are a number of ways to use a longer hackle. Google is your friend.



The original as used on the Teviot

Materials:

Hook	Black Magic E12
Thread	Black Unithread 6/0
Tail	Black hen hackle fibres
Dubbing	Hareline dubbing black
Hackle	Black hen hackle

The dubbing is not important. Any black dubbing that is not too spiky will be suitable. I believe the original in the photo used black wool.

Tying:



Run the thread down the hook to the bend.



Tie in the tail.



Dub the body. Tapered and reasonably bulky.



Tie in hackle.



Wind hackle around 2 or 3 times and tie off.



Whip finish and trim thread.

Cover Photo by Linz Withington

Dave with a nice Mararoa rainbow.

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

23/24/25 th April	Fishing	Lodge Trip (End of Season)
26 th April	MM	
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
31 st May	MM	First fly tying competition
7 th June	CM	Fly Tying
18 th June	Fly tying	Fly Tying for club members by club members - Meal at night, (\$5 funny gift)

Club Contacts

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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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