

“Ripples”

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

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www.southlandflyfishingclub.org.nz



Southland Fly Fishing Club

President's Report by Dave

At our September meeting we had a presentation from Ben Febery from Fish & Game. He spoke about the beats on the Mataura and Waikaia Rivers and then gave us an insight into the other activities that Fish & Game do.

What a terrible start to the season with nasty weather and high and discoloured rivers.

Gerda and I went for a look on September 30 and the only clear water we saw was in a small stream in an area that I know is popular on opening day and is a long way from home. We had difficulty on one bridge over an Oreti tributary where it was hard to stand because of the wind (downstream of course).

I wasn't away early on opening day and left home in light drizzle. This just got heavier and heavier as I travelled to my preferred start. I was sitting in the car on the roadside waiting for the rain to stop when another vehicle went down the access to the river. Because of this I moved further up the river to another access and again waited for the rain to stop. Whilst stopped Gerda came past and stopped for a chat. She was heading further up. Finally, the rain eased and I decided it was time to go fishing.

I got set up and headed to the river. Much to my surprise it was quite a bit clearer than the previous day and actually looked pretty good although there was a lot of water. Initially I fished the main river before heading up a side stream that I had caught two fish in on opening day last season. Although the light was poor for spotting, I spotted a couple of fish but they were moving away further up the stream and I lost sight of them. Next time I saw them they had clearly seen me were heading back down at high speed so it was back to the main stream of the river. No way I was going to be able to spot fish so I had to fish blind. I did eventually catch a couple of fish (both nice fish at 3¾lb) before I headed back home.

We had a Lodge Trip scheduled for the first weekend in October and it looked like there would be five of us going. However, more rain during the week meant it was unlikely to be any fishable water so I cancelled the trip.

It was two weeks into the season before I got out again when Gerda and I headed away, still in not very good conditions and the rivers still looking a bit high. Another tough cold day. With one very cold shower coming through. We fished two rivers and on the second I walked down a short distance and found some fish rising. I had a couple of takes on a CDC emerger and the second one came to the net. I then headed back to where Gerda was and told her to come down and have a go at the rising fish. They weren't rising as well when we got back but I did manage to hook another one but it came off close to the net. Gerda had no luck.

(Continued on page 3)



Opening Day fish

Presidents Report (cont)

(Continued from page 2)

I have had one other trip out. The main reason for this trip was to check out an access on the Mataura. The access was unlocked and gave good access to the river. Unfortunately, the river had more colour than I like so I decided to have a look elsewhere. However, in spite of the colour in the water and no polaroids on, I did see one fish right in the edge water. I had no luck on the second river, failing to spot any fish before lunch (light conditions were poor) and only spotting a few after lunch. The first of these wasn't doing anything, totally ignoring any offerings, the next four were in the same pool and I only saw them when they moved away from me, the next one took my fly but didn't stay attached and the final one came out from under a willow when I was much too close to it. The willow was right down to the water so I had no chance of seeing it until it came out from under the willow.

I also had the opportunity to attend the Environment Southland Community Environment Awards with Fish & Game. Fish & Game sponsor one of the awards so have a table at the dinner. The award the Fish & Game sponsor is for improving water quality. It was good to see the effort some people are putting in to try and improve the condition of the environment. One of the more impressive groups was the senior pupils (up to year 8) from Heddon Bush School who won an award for improving a stand of native forest with plantings and predator and weed control. It is good to see such a group working to improve the environment and is great for the future.

Fish & Game Council Elections by Dave

You might not have noticed but we have had Fish & Game Council elections this year.

The reason you might not have noticed is that there was no election in Southland as the number of candidates was less than the number on the council.

You don't have to be nominated for these elections, you just have to put your name forward. To be eligible for election you must have held either a 2024 game bird licence or a 2023-24 full season fishing licence. You also need to be on the electoral roll. To get on the electoral roll you needed to have ticked the box when you purchased your licence. This year only eight people put their names forward for the council, which has a maximum size of nine (plus a Ngai Tahu representative who is appointed by Ngai Tahu).

The size of the council is decided by the previous council before the election and is up to 12 people. There was some discussion about the size of the Southland council prior to the elections and it was decided to stick with nine but there were some who wanted it to be reduced. We were actually running with seven councillors as two had resigned at the end of 2023.

Six of the current seven put their names forward. The are:

Lindsay Withington, Michael Hartstonge, Dave Harris, David Linklater, Lyndon Norman and Mike Turner.

There are two new councillors, Bruce Diprose and Kristina Placko. Kristina is a fishing guide from Northern Southland.

The new council takes office on October 31st and will have its first meeting on November 14th. At the first meeting the council needs to elect a chairman (present chairman is Lindsay Withington) and a New Zealand Council appointee. I am the present NZ Council appointee but will not be continuing with that role.

Cover Photo by Dave

Gerda fishing the Aparima River.

River Access by Dave

You will all have seen the fuss Federated Farmers are kicking up about Fish & Game and saying they will close access to rivers.

What is this about? For the last eight years Environment Southland have been working on the Southland Water and Land Plan. While that seems an incredible length of time that is how long it has been going on (and that doesn't include however long their staff were working on the plan before the initial version came out for consultation). This plan has set of rules designed to control activities that could cause damage to the environment. Most of the plan is now in effect but there were a couple of rules that were still being debated and had been taken to the environment court and then appealed to higher courts. The issue that really upset Federated Farmers was with regard to diffuse discharges. These are discharges that come from seepages, water flow over land etc and are by far the most difficult discharges to manage. The courts found that our water bodies (rivers, ground water etc) are polluted to such an extent that it was having a significant adverse effect on aquatic life. Don't just think fish here, this also includes aquatic insects. The Resource Management Act requires these discharges to be controlled.

Because Fish & Game were involved in taking this to the Environment Court, Federated Farmers are blaming Fish & Game for this court decision. Their reaction is to try and discredit Fish & Game, limit Fish & Games powers and upset Fish & Game's licence holders. This seems to be fairly typical of Southland Federated Farmers.

Most access points to rivers in Southland are along unformed legal roads. There are hundreds of these unformed legal roads in Southland and most of them are no use to anyone but some provide access to rivers or other places that the public may wish to go. There are a lot of rules relating to these unformed legal roads, most of which are not followed. Some are not practical while others are important in some cases. It is illegal to block these roads with a fence or locked gate and this is the one really important rule that needs to be followed. In fact, if there is a gate across an unformed legal road it must have a sign on both sides saying "Public Access". Federated Farmers members can't block these accesses or stop you using them.

I have followed this up with the Southland District mayor (unformed legal roads are owned and control by the local body) and discussed one access in particular where the farmer had put a post on facebook showing him removing a Fish & Game access sign. The actual place this sign was did give access via the farmers land but it was on to his land because he had the nearby unformed legal road locked off. The mayor had been speaking to the farmer and he was assured this had not been locked for years. When I was last there, I entered via the signed access and didn't check if the gate was locked but there were three electric fence wires across the road effectively blocking it anyway. After talking with the mayor, I went and checked this access out (a good excuse to go fishing) and access was clear to the river. Unfortunately, the river wasn't clear so I had to go elsewhere to fish.

If you come across an unformed legal road that would provide access to the river but it is blocked, let me know and I will follow it up. How do you know if a track etc is an unformed legal road? This information is available on the Herenga a Nuku Aotearoa website. Roads are shown in purple on these maps. The maps also shows a lot of other areas that are actually allowed to be accessed by the public including marginal strips (Queen's chain).

<https://maps.herengaanuku.govt.nz/Gallery/>



From the Herenga a Nuku Aotearoa website showing roads in purple and hydro areas in blue. You have free access to both.

Casting Day - 29th September by Dave

We held our annual casting day on the last Sunday in September at Queens Park. We had promoted this at our Hunting & Fishing demonstrations and had advertised on Facebook and the radio. The staff at Hunting & Fishing had also recommended it to some of their customers. We had Mike Weddell down to help out with tuition. Conditions were pretty good with the trees stopping the worst of the wind.

There was already a gentleman there when we arrived and he had been put on to the day by a guide but didn't know who the guide was. Thanks to the unknown guide. He had a fly rod but just like we had last year, this was an old fibreglass #8 rod. Chris soon had one of the club #6 rods in his hands and made arrangements to get a membership card to him if he signed up for the course and this would enable him to get club discount on a new rod at Invercargill Hunting & Fishing. He has signed up for the course.

Another gentleman arrived who had been sent by the staff at Hunting & Fishing. He had recently arrived in Southland and was keen to make the most of the region. Chris also gave him a club rod to start with and then went and found the man's wife who was waiting in the car with their baby. She too had a go at casting. This gentleman has also signed up for the course and wants to use one of the club's rods on the course.

There were other members of the club present and at least one other member of the public. Another good casting day.

Competitions by Gerda

Fly Tying Competition.

September was the last month of our fly tying competition and the fly was Chris's koura. There were just 4 flies entered and I came away the winner with three votes to all the other flies getting two. Dave won the draw for the Hunting & Fishing gift voucher.

Fishing Competition

October is the first month of the fishing competition. Get your card in for your biggest fish of the month at (or before) the October meeting to go in the draw for the Hunting & Fishing Gift voucher. If you can't get your October card in by meeting night you can still put it in any time up to the finish of the competition, it just won't be in the October draw.



September flies

November Lodge Trip by Dave

We have our high country opening Lodge Trip on the 2nd and 3rd of November. Hopefully after having to cancel the October trip, this one will go ahead. I plan to head up a day early to get out on the high country opening day (November 1st) so will spend three nights at the Lodge.

Normal procedure for a Lodge Trip is to share transport and food as much as possible. Generally, I organise the food for breakfasts and lunches and we go to the Mossburn Hotel for Saturday dinner. This trip I will have to sort out my Friday dinner.

The rivers that open on the November 1st include the Eglinton, Upukerora, the top of the Whitestone and the Von. All these have rainbows as well as browns and those that are lake tributaries could have lake rainbows that have moved up the rivers to spawn and have not returned to the lake. The Von has in the past sometimes had really good numbers of rainbows but in the last few seasons there haven't been many. At times it has also been extremely popular. These rainbows are normally nothing special but on odd occasions something really special is caught.

If you are keen on coming on the November Lodge Trip give me a call on 027 201 6722.

A Lesson Too Late For The Learner by Anon

Someone once said we have not got time on this earth to learn by making all the mistakes ourselves we need to learn from others. Wise words.

Names, date and specific location have been changed in this article for obvious reasons. Also, some of the words have been left out. In these places you will seeand can use your imagination.

After a few text messages three senior, experienced anglers set off to a well-known location for a few hours fishing in the TeAnau local area.

The day started like most other recent fishing days, cloudy and a threat of rain. There had been a great deal of rain in the area the previous few days. Relevant as the story goes on.

On arrival we checked the water. A very nice gravel bar was sitting a couple of metres out from the shore catching the eye of angler 3. This angler had fished here previously off this bar with good success.

Angler 1- "This looks promising I'm heading down the shore."

Angler 2- "I will fish the shore edge here."

Angler 3- "I will see if I can get to the gravel bar."

Everyone sets off. Angler 3 checks how to get to this inviting bar. Close by there was a 2-metre section of water one might have been able to cross. Although it was clear at the top, the bottom had that greenie tinge that says, I'm too deep to cross.

So angler then walks up the river, looking for a nice shallow place to cross to the mud flats and get across to the gravel. Would be about 20-30 metres across the mud flats.

Angler was using a branch as a wading stick to get through the tussock and mud paddock. Once there the branch was left at the waters edge for returning (mistake). Needs to be said this angler had crossed these mud-flats many times before without problems (mistake).

One good jump and angler was across. Opps the landing was into quite soft mud. (Warning) With great care the angler continues to pick out black solid gritty sand on the mudflats with one eye on the enticing gravel bar. Angler was very aware of soft silt, sand and mud but had been on much worse safely. However used a few not to be repeated critical words at self for leaving the wading stick on the bank. A few metres later angler stepped on a patch of very soft sticky sand that felt like the devil himself was sucking this angler into the ground. Stuck fast and sinking the angler thinks logically through the options. Pulling, wriggling, and looking for a stick consumed some time. Using hands to dig down to boots was useless. The holes just refilled with water from the braids that were nearby. Signalled to angler 1. He was in sight and angler frantically waved. Angler 1 acknowledges wave and gives a return wave then turns his back and carry's on fishing.

Back in the quicksand things are not getting any better. Angler 2 can be heard out of sight but in yelling distance. This gentleman had left his hearing aids behind. Fortunately the stuck angler had quite a loud voice by this time. Angler responded "are you ok" response No, Can you bring me a stick? Angler quickly joins stuck angler. Jez..... Now I'm getting stuck. Hurriedly moved back to safety. Stick thrown, just out of reach. Wriggling and extensive stretching got the stick. No amount of digging was going to free the angler out of the devils grip. So plan 2. Plant the stick at an angle under the boots to slow sinkage. This worked. By this time both anglers realised that further external help was needed. A very muddy cell phone was retrieved, cleaned and used to ring 111. "What is your emergency"

"Fire please" situation described. Call centre: "Checked where you are- not tidal so your not going to have to worry about that. But, I need you to lie down on your back"

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A Lesson Too late For The Learner (cont)

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“REALLY” thought the angler. I am 3/4s above water, but the vision of lying in it and continuing to sink did not appeal. Call centre sternly “ Do you want to get out of there, if so do it” Once lying down the operator explained that spreading weight meant less sinkage. Made a lot of sense.

Angler 2 is still busy gathering wood. Call centre continued to talk. “What is your car and rego? Can you move your feet? Keep moving your feet in circles inside your boots, as this will let a little air in. Call centre then advised the fire siren has been set off. Angler was well aware of this, the noise was deafening.

A few minutes later call centre advised fire engines on the way. Plural? Next thing angler 2 shouts..... They will get stuck! Two fire engines had left the road and headed sirens blasting to the scene through a very muddy paddock of tussock and trees. Both anglers exclaimed my goodness..... and a few other words as about 16 firemen leapt off the trucks. One young fella carrying a very heavy looking ladder to the edge of the river and mud-flats.

One of them seems to only take seconds to be at the angler’s side. A second one was close behind. First one “You certainly are stuck fast” as he tried a fireman’s brute force. Second one yells “ I’m sinking” “What and you are only 40kgs?” By this time the stuck angler is visualising one fireman after another being stuck in the mud?

Fortunately these men are well trained and experienced at what is thrown at them. In a very short time the Angler was rescued and back on the bank.

“You were really stuck fast, this quicksand is shifting all the time” One lightened the mood by offering to hose the angler down, who was coated thickly in mud. “How long have you been here? Do we need to take you to hospital?” This was declined. “What are you going to do now they asked?” The angler replied “GO FISHING” that's what I came for. Well, they looked at each other. Two of them then said I can tell you our secret places that is much safer and easier to get to! Well that was a great positive to come out of all of this.

Firemen were thanked and they said it was a new experience for them. One said in over 40 years he had never pulled a person out of quicksand before. The anglers felt sorry for the fireman who had to lug the ladder back to the truck. It looked very heavy.

Any offer of reward was declined and they said it’s all in a days work. Many; many; thanks to the kind brave firemen of the TeAnau volunteer fire brigade. They do amazing community work and they’re there when you need them most.

The other two anglers said what now? Rescued angler said “it’s a clean up and off to try these new secret spots!”

Lessons learned:

- Just because you got away with something once doesn't mean you will get away with it again.
- Remember your hearing aids
- Remember to fish with friends.
- Always keep your wading stick with you.
- Make sure you have your location beacon or cell phone on you.
- Have a rubber mat in your car and a rope.
- Remember rivers and mudflats /sinking sand is treacherous and moves and changes all the time.
- Remember if two mistakes are made do not hang about for the 3rd. It's the one that bites you.

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

23 rd Oct		Mid-week trip – Dave Harris 027 201 6722
29 th Oct	MM	
1 st Nov		High Country Opening (Friday)
2/3 rd Nov		Club Trip [Weekend at the Lodge]
5 th Nov	CM	Fly Tying
10 th Nov		Club Day Trip meet at Fish & Game – 7am
20 th Nov		Mid-week trip - Dave Harris 027 201 6722
26 th Nov	MM	
3 rd Dec	CM	Fly Tying
8 th Dec		Club Trip , Catlins – Meet at Fish & Game 7:00am

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 (027 201 6722) daveharris823@gmail.com
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- Editor Dave Harris daveharris823@gmail.com
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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