

# “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

## President's Report by Dave

First the really good news. Secretary/treasurer Chris has had his heart surgery and is just about ready to go fishing again. A week after the operation he called me to pick him up and take him to the Executive Meeting so he was recovering well.

The other good news is that we have had some good fishing weather and the rivers have been at suitable levels some of the time.

I have had a number of outings, with those that stick in my mind being two trips to the Upper Oreti. The first is reported elsewhere in this Ripples. The second was just after Christmas and clearly there had been significant rain in the Eyre Mountains as the Mataura and Irthing were very high. However the Oreti at Three Kings showed normal levels although it was definitely high and dirty when we crossed it at Dipton. We fished the Windley beat and that has the Windley River flowing in part way down the beat. When we first saw the river as we were walking down the cycleway it looked really good but when we reached the bottom of the beat to start fishing there was a bit of colour in the water. I could still spot fish and hooked one in the first pool (and it broke off) so it was all good. Of course, the Windley comes from the same area as the Irthing so clearly there had been quite a bit of rain there. Once we got above the Windley the water was clear.

We hadn't been fishing long when a F&G Ranger turned up to check our licences. He spoke to Cole for quite a while and I crossed back over to see who was talking to Cole. It was Dwight and he had come 5km down the cycleway to find us.

We spotted a number of fish and landed enough to keep us happy. I spotted a couple that were across some fast water and decided to cast to them even though I would quickly get drag. With the first fish it took off down the river chasing the dragging fly but never caught it and we never saw it again. The second took the fly as soon as it landed and I had a merry chase down the river to find somewhere to net it.

I have been on some Club trips as well. Gerda and I had a mid-week outing in December and fished three different waters without a lot of success. We started on the mid-Oreti but couldn't get very far up stream as there was too much water to cross. We did have a lot fun chasing some fish in a side stream and both missed takes on our dry flies. We then went to a small stream that only seemed have one fish in it. The fish was rising and once again I missed it on the take. We finally headed to the lower Aparima and I managed to break one off. On the January Club Trip I was joined by Isaac and Zanda and we headed to the Mararoa where I had had a really good day the previous Sunday. We walked down a bit further before we started and I spotted a fish straight away. It was keen and rose to my dry but broke off immediately. We saw a few fish as we walked back up the river and after lunch Zanda headed up a side stream where he spotted a few fish and landed one. Isaac and I came to a pool where I had had five rainbows rise to my dry the previous Sunday but there was no sign of any fish. Finally Zanda and I went to Coal Pit Road for the after work trip. We both managed to land something but it was a bit frustrating watching fish rise next to my dry and them ignoring my fly. I have no idea what they were taking.

I also had my annual trip to Te Anau with Cole and although based in Te Anau we only fished rivers in the Te Anau basin on two days. We went far and wide and had some interesting fishing. On the final day I did manage to persuade Cole we should fish the Upukerora in spite of only seeing two fish in it the previous trip. Turned out to be our most successful day of the expedition.

You may have noticed this Ripples is on the web site a couple of days early and that is because I am heading away to Mavora with Cole and Julie so have to have this out of the way before we go. Looking at the weather forecast it looks like we should have gone a week earlier as the weather has been really good but doesn't look as good for next week. Still, I have been too busy with other activities as well as getting the boat ready so this week would have been difficult. Hopefully things will get a bit quieter in the future although I have only one weekend day in February that is free at this stage.

Club events coming up include our monthly meeting on January 28<sup>th</sup>, the Club Trip on February 9<sup>th</sup>, the Lake Alexandrina trip on February 11<sup>th</sup> to 16<sup>th</sup>, the Gore "On the Fly Festival" on February 23<sup>rd</sup>, the Club barbeque on February 25<sup>nd</sup> and the mid-week trip on 26<sup>th</sup> February. There will be no mid-week trip this month as I will be away at Mavora.

## It Had to Happen by Dave

Well it had to happen. A day with a weather forecast for fine, sunny and reasonably calm conditions on the Upper Oreti with the river level looking good. I just had to go.

Up earlyish and away before seven. The weather forecast suggested some cloud but as I headed up the road there wasn't any sign of any. Couldn't be better. I decided to head to the Gravel Pit access and fish the Windley beat if it was available. From the road I couldn't see any cars by the signs but when I got down there, there was a ute parked by the Gravel Pit sign and a note on the Windley River beat sign saying two anglers were on the beat. There was no-one parked by the Windley beat sign so I was in luck.

I quickly got changed, stowed my rod and net on the sides of my pack and set off down the river. As I neared the Windley confluence I could see two utes parked on the river bank and two anglers fishing right at the bottom of the Windley River. A bit further down and in the distance I spotted someone on the river. This was bad news as I had already walked for 45 minutes and didn't want to have to abandon the beat and go back to the car. The angler was the owner of one of the utes that was parked by the Windley confluence and had come down the Windley River to park there. He was unaware of the beat system. When I explained it to him he offered to leave the beat for me and we all left happy. He was spin fishing and looked to be only fishing from the true right bank and I usually fish this beat from the true left as the light is better that way.

I finally got to the bottom of the beat, removed my jersey, got set up and crossed the river. As soon as I was on the other side I spotted two fish in the tail of the pool. One left after the first cast and the other had one look at the nymph but that was it. Well at least I had seen fish. Further up the pool I spotted another fish. It liked the nymph (a green stonefly) and was soon in the net. 4 ½ lbs - what a great way to start the day. A little further up I had to cross back across the river as access was not possible up the other side due to a high bank and vegetation. The river is quite wide here but I could see a fish moving around close to the far side. It was a bit deep close to my bank but looked shallower in the middle and by dropping down I could get out on to the shallower bit. It was still quite a long cast and first cast I thought I was a bit short. However the fish had other ideas and came across and took the nymph. I had to wade down to land it and it was the same size as the first.

Next fish I spotted wasn't so keen but the one after that came to the net. It was a little smaller but had somehow bent the hook quite badly so I had to tie on a new nymph. I was feeling pretty good, having spotted six fish and landed three of them. It didn't continue with more spotted but not hooked and one hooked and lost. There was also a bit of breeze starting to blow up the river and it was rippling the surface a bit making spotting a bit more difficult but not impossible. I spotted a fish sitting just below a very shallow ridge in a place that looked just about impossible to get a drift to without getting drag. I had several casts to it and finally dropped the nymph right in front of it. It didn't give the nymph a chance to sink and I saw it's mouth open and close. It struck straight away and it was on. Turned out to be the best fish of the day at 5 ½ lbs. I spotted and failed to hook a couple more then stopped for lunch. By this time the wind had got quite cool so it was time to put my jersey back on.

With the sun high in the sky I was spotting fish in deeper water more easily. I cast to one I wasn't sure if it was a fish or a stone. It hit the nymph and flashed across the river so fast I didn't get time to let go of the line and it broke off. I have never seen a stone move so fast! I was seeing a reasonable number of fish but most would either completely ignore the nymph or just take one look at it. While walking along a high bank I spotted a fish not far ahead and it turned out to be the only fish that I saw and spooked without casting to it. A bit further up I saw one rise but it was next to a big tree lying on the bank. Casting was quite a challenge and my first cast was just short. However, the fish saw it and chased it way down the river but didn't take it. I dropped another one before hooking and landing my final fish of the day, a nice 5lber. I saw a couple more but they weren't keen and finally arrived back at the car.

That was it. I was feeling a bit puffed and it turns out I had walked 11.5km for the day. A great day on the river in really good conditions and easily my best day of the season so far. It is just great to get out when conditions are right.

## January Club Trip by Zanda

The day started off with a little drive, then as Dave said “A little bit of walking.” Which to me seemed like a good sized walk. When we got to the parking spot, we all put gear on but Isaac and Dave never set up their rods which I thought was odd, so of course I proceeded to put my rod together and tie a custom made woolly bugger on (a red hotspot black flash woolly bugger). We proceeded to the gate to begin our walk, once we had got to the trees I had realised why they never set up their rods, as matter of fact I was regretting putting mine together, fast forward to the end of the walk, while Isaac and Dave put their rods together I went ahead and started fishing. Once I was in the river I thought I saw a log and I said to myself “wonder if there is a fish beside that” so I proceeded to fish it, turns out it wasn't a log and was actually an eel. We moved to fish up the river, me being me I wanted to go first so I could “catch all the fish”. Nothing was really happening, so I crossed the river and went fishing on the other side to the others. I got tangled so by the time I finished untangling my leader, Dave and Isaac had caught up. Got to around lunchtime and the others were way ahead of me so I was walking up the middle of the river seeing if I could bag a fish. (My luck ran out.) I sat down for lunch down the river from Dave and Isaac while they had lunch then preceded to fish after lunch. It got to about 2pm and we all stopped (I think Dave saw something). After Dave was done trying to catch a fish I split off from the others and went up a wee side river (or a big back wash), this side stream was way bigger than I thought. I saw a nice brown trout sitting in the greying line but not rising. At this time I had two dry flies on, so I switched to old faithful (my custom woolly bugger) and threw that at him. Turns out he was HUNGRY!!!! (FISH ON!!!). After about a two minute fight I had this fish in my net. I was surprised by its weight 4½ lb. That's massive (well compared to the fish Isaac catches) so I proceeded up this wee river and spooked another three fish. Once I had got to the end, Isaac and Dave were right there so I talked to Isaac then hooked into a nice wee rainbow trout and sadly lost it.

We moved up the river a bit and I was “spotting fish for Dave while I had a break”. So I did what anyone would do, say there's a fish (rock) and give him directions on where it is. Dave bought it. He fished there for a bit trying to catch the rock while I headed up stream, Dave wasn't too far behind. We came to a calm piece before the rapids and I saw a “massive fish” (about 6-7 lbs) but sadly I spooked it.

Dave carried on ahead with me and Isaac fell behind, we came to a nice calm and deep piece of water with Isaac spotting for me. I just hooked my fly on the eye of my fly rod and Isaac screams “massive fish like at least 10lb” so I threw a few casts in there. Then Isaac says “what's that behind you?” I thought it was a fish, I turned around really slowly thinking it was a fish but no it wasn't, it was the sole of my gum boot (I had wet feet), so I grabbed it and threw it in my bag. By the time we finished laughing it was time to go. We walked out to road and a couple of kms back to the car. We had walked about 10km for the day.

## Fly Fishing Course

Our annual Fly Fishing Course is being held on January 25<sup>th</sup> & 26<sup>th</sup>. If you are able to help with the casting on the Saturday afternoon or the fishing on Sunday, please let Chris know (027 423 7016). We will definitely need some more helpers for Sunday afternoon. At this stage we have 10 registrations for the course.

## Cover Photo by Dave

Cole hooked into a good fish on the Upper Oreti..



## Te Anau Revisited by Dave

In November 1992 three of us headed off for 8 days fishing in Te Anau. Two of us were quite new to fly fishing. I had only caught my first fish on a fly earlier that year. I had a nice new boat so some of the time was spent trolling from the boat and some was spent fly fishing. I have returned to Te Anau for a similar period every year since, having various different fishing companions with me. Over the last few years, it has been Cole that has been with me. We haven't limited our fishing to the Te Anau Basin and travel all over the place to fish, depending on weather and river conditions.

This year we headed up early December and I had eight nights booked in one of our usual houses. I decided not to take the boat as we would not fish any of the Te Anau tributaries so that only left the Mararoa above North Mavora and I was trying to avoid too many days where Cole would have to walk back to the car due to the condition of his knees.

We don't get access to the house until 2:00pm so not much time on the day we headed up. I had arranged to meet Dean from Westport (who was staying at the Lodge) and his fishing buddy at the Mossburn Pub for Dinner so we headed down to the Hamilton Burn. Not much action here, nothing rising and we only spotted a few and it was back to the Pub where we also joined Chris Dore for dinner.

The second day we headed up to the Eglinton and fished off the Milford Highway. First job for the day was to rescue a couple of tourists whose car had a flat battery. Not a problem as I had put my jump start battery in the car before we left on the trip. We finally decided to fish a stretch of the river we had fished on previous trips. We couldn't find any fish and I finally decided to walk back to get the car and then walk down to meet up with Cole. I found him not too far from the car and we continued up the river. I finally spotted a fish below a



Eglinton brown, released and ready to swim away



Eglinton River. There are less scenic places to fish.

high bank. A couple of casts and now where do I land this thing. Walked back down to where I could get down to the river and the fish was soon in the net. Nothing more was spotted so it was back to the car and away.

The following day we decided to head down to the Wairaki even though that would require a long walk back for Cole. (He had a few of these this trip.) It is a few years since I fished the Wairaki and there were a few changes to the river but it fished pretty much the same.

Continuing our travels we went across to the Matura at Nokomai the following day. We fished a couple of beats and saw quite a few fish. This was good for Cole because you are never far from the river so he could wait on the side of the road while I went and got the car. Beat system seemed to work well but the beats are quite short and that means you can fish two in a day with the expectation that the second one has already been fished that day.

When discussing where to go the next day Cole mentioned he had fished the Orauea many years ago and we decided to have a look at it. I hadn't fished it for many years and last time had gone in through a private access. We looked at quite a few accesses and got a bit confused because we miss read where we were. Feldwick Road crosses the river twice and you have to figure out which bridge you are at. Anyway, we found a good looking spot and walked down the

*(Continued on page 6)*

## Te Anau Revisited (cont)

*(Continued from page 5)*

river. We had used up a fair bit of time finding the spot and we had lunch before starting to fish. We found fish and caught some so that made for a good day.

The second to last day we were looking for somewhere with plenty of fish and decided to head all the way across to the Waikaia. There should be a beat system on the Waikaia but all the beat signs have been stolen as a result of Federated Farmers actions. We started fishing and the river was a lot dirtier than I expected. We finally found the cause of this as there was a digger placing rocks into the river to try and control erosion. Once past this it was clear. We spotted plenty of fish but they weren't eating what we were offering for quite a while.

We had a long discussion about where to go on the final day. I was keen on fishing the Upukerora but Cole wasn't as we had only seen two fish when we fished it the previous year. I said we should fish a different bit of the river but he would have to walk both ways, no easy out at the end of the day. He agreed in the end. We saw a reasonable number of fish (nowhere near as many as the day before though) and caught more than we had caught on any other day of the trip.

Following morning it was time to pack up, clean up the house and head home. Will we be back up there next year. I am not sure as we could go to the Lodge instead and still fish most of the same places. Time will tell.

## Evening On the River by Dave

It was just Zanda and myself for the evening trip to Coal Pit Road on the Mataura. The river has changed again but it looked okay for fishing where we usually stop although, as we found out later, the locals were fishing further downstream.

I fished by the car and Zanda headed upstream a bit. I landed a small brown and Zanda managed to land a better example. It was his first fish on a dry fly so he was pretty happy. We did have some rising close in but I couldn't figure out what they were taking, certainly wasn't what I was offering them. At one stage I had a fish rise between my two dry flies so it would have seen them. Zanda wasn't well dressed for the conditions and was starting to get cold so we headed away.



## Lake Alexandrina Trip - February 11<sup>th</sup> to 16<sup>th</sup> by Julie

The South Canterbury Anglers Hut at Lake Alexandrina is again available for our club trip. The confirmed dates are the 11<sup>th</sup> to the 16<sup>th</sup> February. For those that are not familiar with this accommodation, it is the Outlet hut and it is midway up the lake in the camping ground. Contains a bathroom, shower, toilet and 2 bedrooms. Hot and cold running water. \$75 per night.

There is one dinghy available and this holds one rower and two anglers. Can go twice a day ensuring 4 people get a fish on the lake each day. Other fishing is available on the lake edge, or at Lake Fraser close by. Further options, if lake is unsuitable, are the canals or rivers nearby. The club group have been known to go four wheel driving through fords to look for fish and for exploration of the area. Grebes are a fascinating watch as is a trip up to the Mount John observatory to learn about the Dark Sky project up that way. Tekapo and the hot pools are also close by as are eating houses for those with a discerning palate.

Food plan and what to bring will be sorted once we have a definite number.

Sometimes club members pool cars. We do need to limit numbers this year to five unless we have a second rower and boat.

Contact Julie on 0276302949 to confirm your place.

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

25/26 <sup>th</sup> Jan		Fly Fishing course run by Mike Weddell from Mosgiel
28 <sup>th</sup> Jan	<b>MM</b>	
4 <sup>th</sup> Feb	<b>CM</b>	Fly Tying
9 <sup>th</sup> Feb	Fishing	<b>Club Day Trip</b> , meet at Fish & Game - 7am
11 <sup>th</sup> - 16 <sup>th</sup> Feb	Fishing	Lake Alexandrina Trip
23 <sup>rd</sup> Feb	Demo	On the Fly Festival – Gore
25 <sup>th</sup> Feb	<b>MM</b>	This meeting is “On the river” --- BBQ Tea about 6pm
26 <sup>th</sup> Feb	Fishing	Mid-week Trip – Dave Harris 027 201 6722
2 <sup>nd</sup> March		Teviot Fishing Competition
4 <sup>th</sup> Mar	<b>CM</b>	Fly Tying

## Club Contacts

- Address **Southland Fly Fishing Club, PO Box 1689, Invercargill, New Zealand**
- Website [www.southlandflyfishingclub.org.nz](http://www.southlandflyfishingclub.org.nz)
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- Editor Dave Harris [daveharris823@gmail.com](mailto: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](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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