

“Ripples”

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

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www.southlandflyfishingclub.org.nz



Next Club Meeting - April 28th - 7:30pm Fish & Game Office, 17 Eye Street



Southland Fly Fishing Club

President's Report by Dave

The season is nearly over for most of our rivers. You only have a few days to get out and catch your last few fish for the season. Of course, the rivers flowing into the lakes will still be open until the end of May as will the Mataura from Gore down except for May 2nd and 3rd. However, those rivers up around Te Anau are a long way away and the price of petrol makes trips up there a little costly, although as I write this the price looks to be coming down a bit but I am not sure how long that will last.

There were a couple of Club outings since the last Ripples, with the mid-week trip that I did on my own and the April Club trip. For a change both went ahead in pretty good conditions. Coming up we have the April mid-week April 22nd, the April Lodge Trip April 25th – 27th), a three day trip this year as the Monday is a public holiday and the May Club trip to the lower Mataura (May 9th). If you want to come on the mid-week trip or the Lodge trip let me know on 027 201 6722.

I went on the March mid-week trip on my own as no one else was keen to go and I had my eight day trip to the Lodge with Cole. Both were good trips and we had no rain on the Lodge trip (which is just as well as I forgot to take my raincoat). Fish numbers landed were not high but I caught some and it was good to be out on the river.

March Mid-week Trip by Dave

With no-one else keen I headed out for the March mid-week trip on my own. With the high petrol prices, I decided not to go too far and headed up to the middle Oreti. I went to an access I had fished once before but this time went upstream rather than downstream.

Weather conditions were good, no wind and warm enough for me to set off without a jersey but wearing a light nylon jacket. There was little cloud to start with but it soon clouded over. Later in the day it cleared again.

I spotted fish immediately but they seemed to know I was there and were soon heading under the willows. Finally, while fishing blind I had a fish rise to my dry fly (a parachute adams) but when I lifted to strike, I had tension for short time, then no tension and tension again. I knew that the dry had failed to hook up and the fish was hooked on my nymph. It soon came off and a scale on the hook tells me it was foul hooked. Not long after another take fishing blind in likely looking water and a small fish (1lb) came to the net. This was followed by an even smaller fish that didn't stay attached. Then another hookup, this time a good sized fish but it leapt into the air and came off. All the time I was spotting fish but most were in smooth water so they could see me easily.

After lunch I spotted a fish in faster water. It was pretty keen on my nymph and a 2lber came to the net. A bit further up I spotted the odd rise but they were few and far between. I could see the fish that were rising. They were quite small and moving rapidly around. They didn't seem to be interested in my flies on the odd occasion I managed to drift a fly past them.

At the end of the day I found a nice drop-off and there were a couple of fish in the fast water above the drop-off. The first followed my fast moving fly into the deeper water but didn't take. The second was moving around all over the place and finally it too followed my nymph into the fast water but this one took the fly and the biggest fish of the day came to the net.

Time to head back down the river and head home. An interesting stretch of river with a lot of willows over pools. I should have visited the spot while the fish were feeding on willow grubs as I am sure it would have been great fun. I will keep that in the memory for next season.

April Adventure by Dave

Having been busy doing other things and not fishing I decided a trip to the Lodge was in order. Cole was keen to join me so we set off the day after the March Club meeting. First stop was the supermarket for the required supplies, then up to the Lodge. Once everything was unloaded, we prepared dinner and put it in the slow cooker so it would be ready when we arrived home from fishing, then had lunch and headed out to try our luck.

We headed down towards Dipton and found an access to the Oreti. The track was a bit rougher than I remembered it and we stopped a little short of the river. Conditions were pretty good although the sun was trying to hide behind some clouds. We had sun on and off all afternoon. The river was in good condition but maybe up a bit. We found fish but most were a bit unco-operative but we had some hookups on nymphs, most of which came off. There were some deep crossings and I had to back track well down the river to cross at one stage. Cole just waded through the deep stuff.

The second day we were away as soon as we had dinner in the slow cooker and lunches made. We decided to head across to the Waikaia and fish a beat I had not fished before. There was no car at the beat sign so all looked good. Once again conditions were pretty good, both weather and river conditions. However, the fish were really spooky, you could hardly get a cast to them. Clearly they had seen a lot of anglers and flies through the season. I finally found one that stuck around. It was immediately above a willow that had partly fallen into the water. It took my nymph, leapt out of the water and then headed straight under the willow. No show of getting it out and both flies gone. That was the total action we had for the day.

The third day we headed to the Mataura near Riversdale but there was a car at our planned access so we headed a bit further up. While getting changed and set up, Cole saw a car on the other side of the river and decided it was Julie. We knew she was staying in the area but weren't quite sure where. She moved up the river a bit but was still in view. Cole sent her a text and she seemed a bit surprised we were there. We joined her and the three of us fished together for most of the day. There were a few fish rising and I soon had a small fish take my CDC emerger. When we stopped for lunch Julie asked if she could have the next fish I caught, to take home in case she didn't catch anything. After eating lunch (including Julie's muffins) and having a cup of coffee I dropped back down the river a bit, crossed over and cast to a fish almost right below where Julie and Cole were. It was rising occasionally and with a bit of guidance from Cole I got my CDC over to it and it came up and took the fly. It was about 2lbs and was just what Julie was after so for the first time this season I actually took a fish. Julie was happy. We spotted a few more fish but I didn't have anything come to the net.

Day four and we were away a bit quicker as we had decided to head to the Mossburn Pub for dinner. Isaac had indicated he was going to join us for the night and then come with us fishing the next day. We stopped in Lumsden on the way to the Mataura as Cole had forgotten to fill his water bottle and he knew where there was a suitable supply. When we pulled out of the carpark we spotted Isaac and two friends walking along the footpath. We stopped to say hello and then headed across to the Mataura planning to fish where we had wanted to go the day before. Once again there was a car there so we headed a bit further upstream. Another good day with dry but cloudy weather. There were a few fish rising and some were keen on my CDC but others refused everything we offered them. I have no idea what they were taking as we couldn't see anything on the water. Isaac joined us for dinner at the Mossburn Pub and there were a few other anglers there.

Day five and we headed for a beat I had not fished before but still below the Nokomai Gorge. Conditions were similar to the previous days. Once again a few fish rising until I came across a group of fish rising very keenly just below a willow. Isaac and I managed to hook four of these fish on our emergers. Once again there were others that wouldn't take anything we offered them. As we were arriving back at the Lodge my phone rang and it was Nigel from the Waikato and he and his son Leo were in Lumsden and were keen to come to the Lodge to stay. Nigel had work in the area a few days later so wanted to stay three nights. Plenty of room so all good. Isaac had to get home so he headed away.

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April Adventure (cont)

(Continued from page 3)

Next morning Cole and I headed to the beat we had tried to fish previously and there was no one there this time, so the beat was ours for the day. Another similar day with a few fish rising but most not taking what we offered.

Day seven and we decided to head to the Matura further up for a change. We weren't far up the road when I realised I hadn't turned on the slow cooker. A quick phone call to Nigel and he was still at the Lodge so he was able to turn it on for us. I stopped along the way to check some licences and found it was a North Island guide and his two Australian clients. We stopped at the next beat as there was no one there. Man were these fish spooky. Most were off even before the line was on the water. I had one of those days. I managed to hook everything around the river except for fish losing five flies in the process. When I finally had a fish take my fly it didn't hook up. When we got out to the road I left Cole behind and walked back to the car. There was a camper van parked there and I think they were fishing the beat behind us. After heading back up to pick up Cole and getting out of my wet gear we headed back past the beat sign and there was yet another van there.

The final day we headed back to the Matura again. We went to a beat I hadn't fished much of before, just a quick look last season when I didn't go far. It was a pretty tough beat with a lot of high banks, willows and long grass. There weren't many tracks in the long grass indicating it was not a popular beat. We saw more fish on this beat than any other day. That doesn't mean they were easy to catch. Once again we had fish rising to something that we couldn't identify and most weren't keen on what we offered them. We eventually got back to the road and I started walking back to the car. A couple of local ladies picked me up and dropped me at the car, saving a couple of kilometres of walking. From here it was back to the Lodge, pack up and clean up and then head for home.

I try to measure how far I walk each day using a GPS. For this trip I walked a total of 57km, with the shortest day being the day on the Waikaia when I only walked 4.5km but I seemed to be exhausted after that when I was okay on all the other days most of which were about 8km. Another good trip even if the fish were a bit picky.

Competitions by Gerda

Fish Competition

April is the last month that we will have a fish competition draw for the Hunting & Fishing gift card. If you have a card for a fish for this season and haven't put it in yet get it to me, Dave or Chris before the meeting and you will be in the draw. I will still accept cards for the competition up to the June meeting but those put in after the April meeting will not go in a draw for a Hunting & Fishing gift card.

Fly Tying Competition

The fly tying competition starts at the May meeting. We haven't sorted out the flies for this season but Dave has put forward his black beetle dry fly as the fly for May. Full details follow. We still have to sort out the other four flies for the competition so if there is something you tie that you think is suitable or there is something that you would like to know how to tie let me, Dave or Chris know. Remember if you put a fly in for the competition you go in the draw for a Hunting & Fishing gift card.

Cover Photo by Dave

It's fly tying competition time again. The black beetle is the first fly for this year.

April Club Trip by Chris

I met Daniel at Fish & Game at 8am. The luxury start due to the change in day light saving. Thought we would try the Mataura at Riversdale and head down to the junction with the Waikaia. I was looking forward to it as I hadn't been there for a while.

The weather was cool and cloudy. The river was quite low and was showing the effects of some Environment Southland willow works. No willow was allowed to encroach onto the river bed let alone touch the water. So much for the wonderful willow lined pools I remembered from previous trips.

As I hadn't been there for a while I didn't know that the mouth of the Waikaia had moved a couple of hundred metres west removing my favourite pools on both the Mataura and Waikaia. So no rising fish in the first pool of the day. No fish at all for some time until Daniel spotted a couple of smudges moving across the bottom of the only pool in the river that had any cover in it. He had to go down stream and approach them from the other side. The fish didn't cooperate. Nor did the one that started rising slightly further upstream.

Eventually we found some active fish. Daniel had a go at them while I headed towards one rising some distance ahead. I bush bashed behind some willows and then dropped down to the waters edge. The last step was one to far and I ended up stumbling into the water. No more fish.

We came to a run I wanted to fish. Daniel spent some time casting to a fish rising at the lower end of it while I had a late lunch at the top. I was soon being entertained by a couple of risers on the other side of the river. Daniel caught up with me and told me about the one he had been fishing for. I said like that one over there. I finished lunch stood up and cast to its next rise. The fish took first cast. Unfortunately, I eventually put too much pressure on and the fly pulled out.

We were about to cross over to the car when the sun finally came out. I saw a couple of fish swim onto the gravel fan in front of us. One kept chasing the other away and when it settled down, I put several casts over it. No joy so I changed my fly to a smaller nymph. As often happens when you do this the fish moved away while I was still changing flies. I put some casts into the deeper water and the fish obliged by hooking up. A short time later I had a 2lb fish in the net.

Daniel had fished above the car without success so we packed up and headed home.

Not a great day and it will be some time before I fish there again. The cutting of the willows meant there was no cover for the fish. Almost all of the gravel banks had been flattened by digger tracks. Most of the crossing had digger tracks through them and you had to watch that you didn't step into a rut.



Daniel on the Mataura

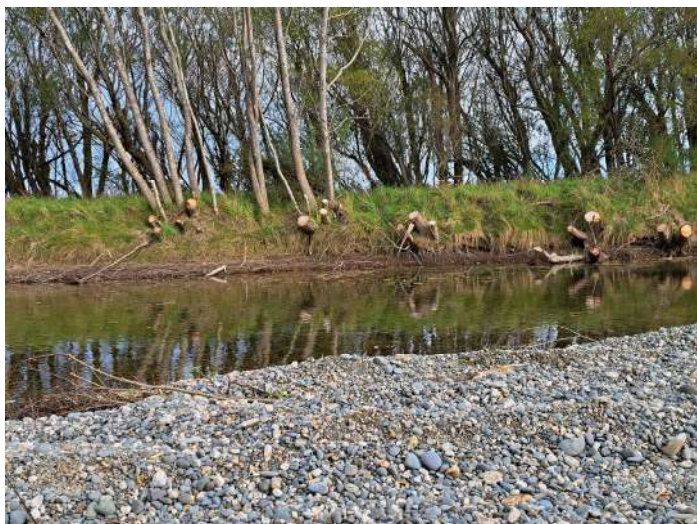
April Lodge Trip by Dave

We have our April Lodge Trip scheduled for April 25th - 27th. It is a three day trip this year as this is a long weekend with the ANZAC holiday on the Monday. Plan is to go to the Lodge Friday evening and fish for three days, returning Monday evening. Saturday dinner will be at the Mossburn Hotel but we will cook something on Sunday.

If you are keen on coming let me know (027 201 6722). I will organise the food but any drinks you want are your responsibility. We will share cars as much as possible to save on petrol costs. If you haven't been to the Lodge before it has electricity, hot & cold water and a flush toilet. There is only one bunk room with nine bunks.

Devastation on the Mataura by Dave

During my April Adventure, I spent most of the time on the Mataura and three of those days were near Riversdale. There was devastation on the river. For long sections virtually any willow hanging over the river had been cut and this had been carried out using a large excavator. The excavator had clearly spent a lot of time actually in the river and the river bottom had been well and truly stirred up in many places. In some places there were deep ruts in the water and this made crossing some of the deeper places quite difficult as you had to make sure you didn't fall into the holes created by the excavator. In places the dry parts of the river bed were also well and truly messed up by the excavator. The Resource Management Act 1991 section 7(h) requires protection of the habitat of trout and salmon. These overhanging willows are an important part of the habitat for the trout in the river. Trout like the protection they provide and they also help keep the water temperature low during periods of low flows in warm summer conditions. Clearly Environment Southland are not looking after our rivers as they are required to do by the act. I will be writing to them to express my concerns.



Willows cut on the Mataura near Riversdale



May Competition Fly by Dave

This is a repeat fly for our competition but it a good fly to tie and not too difficult. I tied the first of them during the covid lock down after receiving a request from my Canadian mate Cole. He asked for a black beetle like my brown beetle but with a white post “so I can see it”, so that is almost what I tied. The brown beetle used a round piece of foam for the body but this beetle uses a standard piece of flat foam. It is a great fly to use as the top fly in a dry and dropper set up with the combination of white and black making it easy to see. I will demonstrate tying the fly at the April Club meeting

Materials:

Hook: Black Magic E12
Thread: Unithread black 6/0
Abdomen: Peacock herl
Wing: Black 2mm foam
Post: White poly yarn
Hackle: Black saddle hackle.



Run the thread to the bend of the hook and then back two thirds of the way to the eye.



Put a small amount of tying cement on the hook and tie a 5mm wide strip of the foam over the thread and out the back of the hook. Tie down tightly.



Tie in two strands of peacock herl and wind forward to cover the tied down foam



Dab a little cement at the front of the peacock and pull the foam back over the peacock herl and tie off. Trim the foam so it sticks out just past the eye of the hook and wind a few turns under the loose piece of foam to lift it off the eye.



Tie in the poly yarn where the foam is tied down and run the thread up the poly yarn to form a post.



Tie the hackle on to the post sticking straight up.

Wind three or four turns of the hackle down the post and tie off. Whip finish around the post under the hackle and trim thread and hackle.
Finally put a drop of fly tying cement on the whip finish.



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

22 nd April	Fishing	Mid-week Trip – Dave Harris 027 201 6722
25-27 th April	Fishing	Lodge Trip (End of Season)
28 th April	MM	
5 th May	CM	Fly Tying
10 th May	Fishing	Club Day Trip, meet at Fish & Game 10am, to the lower Mataura
26 th May	MM	
27 th May	Fishing	Mid-week Trip – Dave Harris 027 201 6722
30/31 st May	Fishing	Lodge Trip – End of high country season, close Lodge
2 nd June	CM	Fly Tying
14 th June		Fly Tying day

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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Items for publication must be submitted to the editor, prior to the 10th of the month
- Librarian Chris Cowie (027 236 9576)
- Lodge Custodian Isaac Coburn, Marama Ave Nth, Invercargill 0204 1205 855
isaaccoburn72@gmail.com

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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