



THE RIVER DON TRUST- *“River in harmony”*

River Don Trust Scale Sampling Programme

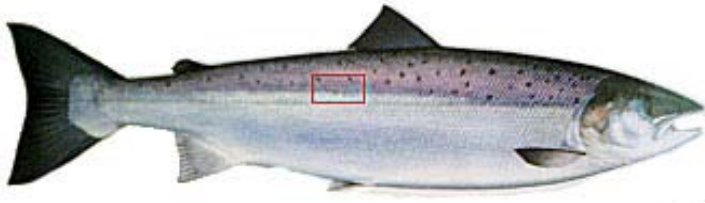
The purpose of this programme is to determine the age composition of salmonids in the Don’s rod fishery. This will enable the Trust to gain insights into, growth rates in fresh and salt water, smolt ages and repeat spawning incidences. In line with the Fisheries Management Plan and established fisheries research the River Don Trust has resolved to create a scale sampling programme to complement the scales already collected by the Don DSFB.

It is important that we can collect these samples from anglers throughout the year to give true representation of the salmonid stocks. Over time these samples can be stored and the data analysed year on year to identify any changes in stock compositions, growth rates and identify issues during life stages at sea.

With this angling season drawing to a close it would be beneficial to get some scales samples from anglers before the end of the season. This will enable the Trust biologist to establish a database and validate the methods used for analysis. The Trust aims to be able to feedback information on these sampled fish if the angler requests (There may be a short time delay between the receipt of scales and analysis, until a suitable number has been collected to start the project.)

What can you do to help? The next time you catch a fish (salmon, sea or brown trout) take some scale samples, but follow the protocol below to ensure that the most suitable scales are collected and that their condition is maintained.

1. Collect scales (10-15) from the preferred area illustrated below, if not from this spot then from the opposite flank or just in front of this location.



2. The scales can be collected by firstly cleaning the skin of mucus with the back of a knife, then carefully scraping the scales off onto the knife blade. The scales can then be transferred to a scale envelope (available from the Trust or from participating tackle shops details below) or alternatively folded in a piece of clean white paper and left to dry.
3. Alongside the scale sample information such as the species, sex, weight(estimate) length to fork of tail(estimate) date, location and any other remarks such as condition or coloration.
4. The samples can either be posted to the Trust offices (address below) passed to the Don Bailiffs or left at either Bain’s or Somers(Aberdeen), Sloans(Inverurie)or Orvis(Banchory) fishing tackle shops to be collected.

Remember salmon, sea trout and brown trout scales are required, also it is not necessary to kill the fish in order to take scale samples, the fish can be released without harm if handled carefully during this procedure.

Please feel free to contact the Trust Biologist Jamie Urquhart for more information: biologist@riverdon.org.uk or 07860 846 999/01330 830 080. River Don Trust, Old Estate Office, Cluny Castle, Sauchen, Inverurie AB51 7RT

