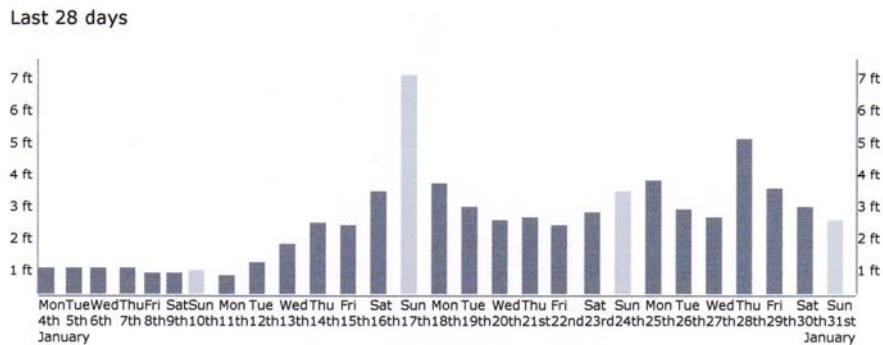


THE DON DISTRICT SALMON FISHERY BOARD
MONTHLY REPORT FOR JANUARY 2010

State of River

It has been another unsettled month for river levels on the Don catchment, from the beginning of the month until the 11th levels were holding at 1ft above normal flows. A slow snow melt beginning on the 12th started to increase the river levels which peaked on the 17th, when the river reached an overall height of 7ft which put the river into full flood. The flood conditions did not last long as on the next day the 18th, levels dropped by 3ft. The high river flow conditions continued right through January due to the hard winter weather experienced so far this year on the Don catchment. The graph below shows the river flows for January



Fish in River

For the first quarter of the month Kelts were evident splashing around in the salmon pools from Alford down to the lower part of the river at upper and lower Parkhill waters at Dyce. After the 13th of the month once the river started to increase in height and eventually went into flood conditions on the 17th, the river has been too big to get any indication of the fresh spring fish which may have entered the river during January. The early spring salmon that did enter the river in late December should be well spread through the system, with the increased river flows that the Don has seen during the month.

River Policing

Daily patrols on the middle to lower Don have been kept up during the month when it has been safe to do so, due to the severe winter conditions. There has been very little sign of any illegal activity on the river this month, most probably due to the increased river levels.

Angling and Coastal Netting

Season Closed

Hatchery

The hatchery has been monitored very closely on a daily basis this month because of the fear of frozen pipes, as at times during the month the air temperature went down to -15 to minus 20, arctic conditions. It was not unusual to dig your way to the hatchery door where at times the snow was 3-4 ft deep especially after the snowplough had scraped the main Strathdon road which in turn blocked the access road to the hatchery building. At this time all the hatchery stock are progressing well and are now all at the eyed stage. Now all I need is for the river level to drop at the top of the system and some of the snow to thin out, I will then get the salmon eggs planted out into artificial Redds next month.

Salmon in the Classroom

The salmon in the classroom will start again next month with the Don Trust running the programme of education with assistance from board staff when required. Jamie will be setting up the tanks in the schools in early February and in the middle of February the salmon eggs will be placed in the aquarium tanks. The 5 schools involved this year are as follows, Craigievar Primary, Monymusk Primary, Midmar Primary, Lumsden Primary, and Towie Primary.

3 of the schools out of the 5 have never done salmon in the classroom before so it will be a good experience for the young children.

The (IAA) Inverurie angling association will be doing Trout in the classroom again this year; last year Inverurie secondary school did this project, this year Strathburn Primary are going to take on the project and in the middle of next month I will put 50-60 Trout eggs into their aquarium.

Jim Kerr

River Superintendent