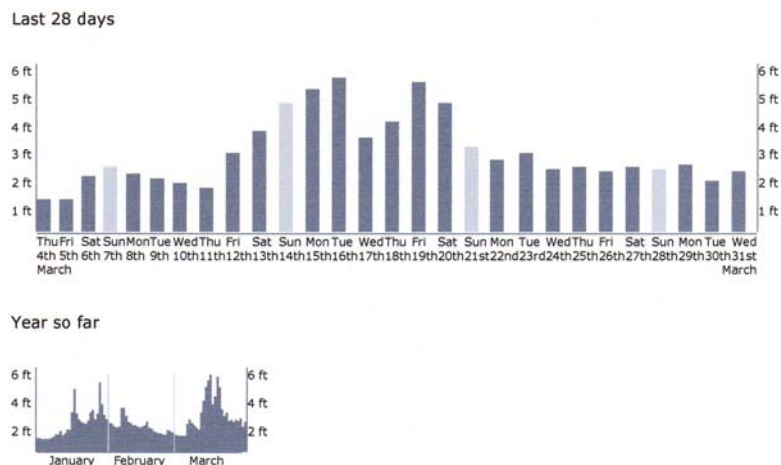


## THE DON DISTRICT SALMON FISHERY BOARD MARCH MONTHLY REPORT 2010

### River Conditions

It has been another month of high river levels on the Don catchment. Winter conditions had a firm grip on the catchment until the 12<sup>th</sup> of the month, when a warm front moved over the north east bringing on a snow melt. River levels slowly started to increase and by the 16<sup>th</sup> the river peaked to a height of 6ft, which put the river into flood conditions. Over the next couple of days the level dropped by 2ft only to go back up on the 19<sup>th</sup> by 2ft, a snow melt right at the top of the river system caused flood conditions. As the days passed levels subsided and the river started to run clear, allowing excellent angling conditions. This did not continue as on the last day of the month a large snow storm hit the north east and the river catchment went back to winter conditions. In the head waters over two feet of snow fell, which if a slow melt occurs will keep river levels up through April. Graph below shows the river levels for the month of March.



### Fish in River

As you can see by the Graph above angling conditions have not been great due to the winter conditions at the beginning of March, and the increased water levels in the middle of March due to snow melt. However over 40 spring fish were landed mostly on the last 7 days of the month, once the river level had dropped to a more suitable height. On the lower Don at Grandhome fishing's approximately 14 fish were landed in the last week of the month, Muggiemoss landed 1, Stoneywood Mill fishing's landed 5, largest fish 24lb, Parkhill 6, Kintore 1, Inverurie 2, Manar 2, Fettennear 1, ADAA Kemnay 6, Ardmurdo 2. Whilst speaking to anglers a few of them have said its been the best spring fishing since 1996, some of the fish that have been caught on the Inverurie and Kemnay stretch have been sea liced fresh run fish. This confirms what anglers have reported as seeing on the lower Don on a daily basis, fresh fish heading and tailing at the ends of the pools just

running straight through and not being able to stop them. Although there are good numbers of spring fish seen, fishing effort is still below par on a lot of the beats. Above Kemnay no rods have ventured out in any number as yet, but Castle Forbes has some parties booked on for April and May. A lot of the Kelts have now moved out of the middle reaches and are collecting from Kemnay down to the lower Don, these fish have been in excellent condition and at times some anglers have found it hard to differentiate between a fresh spring fish and a Kelt, but as they all have to go back this has not been a problem, just good sport.

### **Coastal Fishing's**

Due to winter storms and rough seas very little progress has been made to date.

### **Hatchery**

All the eggs in the hatchery are now just about hatched and progressing well at this time;



the sudden cold snap at the end of the month will hold up development a little but will do no harm. The picture shows the amount of snow fall on the last day of the month in the upper reaches of the system, that's me digging a path to the hatchery door.

### **Salmon and Trout in the Classroom**

All eggs in the schools have now hatched and are progressing well; the Brown Trout in Strathburn Primary School will be put on feed next month.

## **Jim Kerr**

River Superintendent