

THE ATLANTIC SALMON RESEARCH TRUST



NEWSLETTER No.8 – January, 1975

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SECTION 1 – GENERAL.

Drift Netting.

At the Annual Meeting of the Trust's International Advisory Group which was held in Dublin on 16th October and was attended by the Group's European Members from England and Wales, Scotland, Ireland and Iceland, confirmation was obtained of the then current report that drift netting for salmon existed on a large scale off the N.W. coast of Ireland extending to well outside national fishery limits; this was a clear contravention of those N.E. Atlantic Fisheries Commission regulations which provide for a complete ban on all fishing for salmon outside national fishery limits within a 'box' around the British Isles; the Group agreed that action was urgently needed to stop this fishing which threatens particularly the United Kingdom and Irish salmon and grilse stocks, (in contrast to the Greenland fishery which affects only salmon), and that the Governments concerned be urged to take the necessary measures.

The matter was subsequently discussed and the same need for action agreed at a meeting later in October arranged by the Salmon & Trout Association with officials of the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food; it also featured in the course of a wide ranging debate in the House of Lords on 11th December on the need for more positive measures than are enforced at present to conserve stocks of salmon and prevent further deterioration in the number entering our rivers.

The International Advisory Group were also informed that in the summer of 1974 there had been exploratory drift netting by a Danish vessel in the IRMINGER sea between S.W. Iceland and S.E. Greenland: while results obtained had not indicated the same density of salmon as off the West coast of Greenland, nevertheless there were concentrations of salmon in certain areas and the fact that this experimental fishing had taken place at all is viewed as clear evidence of Denmark's aim to continue exploitation of salmon on the high seas.

'Hang' Netting and Monofilament.

The introduction of monofilament net has increased very significantly the effectiveness of drift netting (e.g. off the Northumberland coast and in the Greenland fishery); it has correspondingly been foreseen that the use of monofilament in other methods of catching salmon by net, whether legal or illegal, could pose a much wider threat to salmon stocks. We are now faced with the actuality of this around the coasts of Scotland, where lengths of monofilament nets operating on the drift net principle but moored to the shore or anchored in comparatively shallow water (known as 'hang' nets in Scotland) are being more and more extensively used - apparently with devastating effect. Unless firm action is taken to control, or preferably ban, this new form of exploitation the whole balanced system of culling our salmon stocks by legalised methods of commercial netting which has existed, by and large satisfactorily, for 100 years will be completely thrown out of gear; additionally, it is already known that monofilament injures large numbers of salmon

which get entangled but manage finally to escape. Imagination boggles at the scale of damage that may be inflicted on our stocks of salmon through numbers caught or injured, by an explosive expansion of monofilament 'hang' nets set across migratory routes around our coasts and in the approaches to rivers.

As long ago as 1970 the North East Atlantic Fisheries Commission agreed a resolution that pelagic trawls and monofilament nets be banned throughout the whole region of the Commission; in the same year the International Commission for the Northwest Atlantic Fisheries passed a similar resolution, except that it would not apply to certain specified Danish boats then equipped with monofilament which could continue to use these nets until worn out. Certain countries (Ireland, Canada) have introduced measures to implement these NEAFC and ICNAF resolutions: it seems pertinent to ask why the United Kingdom has not yet done likewise and taken action in support of resolutions passed by two international Commissions of both of which it is a member and to which resolutions it has raised no formal objections.

Law of the Sea Conference.

The 1974 United Nations Law of the Sea Conference which assembled in June at Caracas, Venezuela, was adjourned at the end of August, to meet again at Geneva in the spring of this year. Not much has hit the headlines to indicate any positive achievements - in fact popular belief would seem to be that it was a flop - and perhaps this is not surprising in view of the vast scope of the Conference, covering every conceivable subject related to the oceans and seas of the world - exploitation of their resources, on, over or under the sea-bed, sovereignty, national territorial waters, economic zones, fisheries, safety, navigation, and a host of others; all this coupled to the great number of nations involved, many of whom have no geographical connection with the sea.

It is all the more remarkable, therefore, that by the time the 1974 session closed it was indeed possible to discern some progress towards acceptance of the principle that anadromous fish, such as salmon, require special treatment; there was, however, opposition from Denmark and Japan to the specific initial proposals put forward by Canada, the United States and United Kingdom that each individual salmon-producing country should retain over-riding control of the catching of its salmon stock, this extending beyond its territorial waters through the proposed economic zone (which may possibly go out to 200 miles) to the high seas. The United States subsequently moved from this position, advocating more simply a ban on fishing for salmon outside territorial waters except as authorised by the country of origin.

The next session of the Conference will be crucial to further progress; if the salmon-producing countries do not speak with one voice on the measures needed to control salmon fishing at sea so as to ensure that stocks are not dissipated by over exploitation such progress as has already been made on agreement for special treatment of anadromous fish will be wasted and the whole issue for salmon may be lost. It seems essential that in the intervening months before the Conference reconvenes the governments of the salmon-producing countries co-ordinate and agree through diplomatic channels their approach to the problem so that a combined view can be put forward with maximum effect at the next session.

Research and Education - Work sponsored by the Trust.

The last Newsletter (July, 1974) gave details of the specific projects on which the Trust had authorised expenditure of its funds for the current financial year 74/75: two of these projects are major additions to the programme compared to 1973/74: a Research Fellowship to investigate diseases of young salmon, being carried out in association with the Unit of Aquatic Pathobiology of the University of Stirling and at the Salmon Research Trust of Ireland's Rearing station and Laboratory in Co. Mayo, and a Research Assistantship with Liverpool University to complete a study of rearing young salmon in mountain tarns are both now well under way. Other items in the current programme are a continuation of projects previously approved for preceding years, such as the new laboratory for the Salmon Research Trust of Ireland, the latter's investigation of rearing young salmon in warmed water, and the training courses in salmon culture and hatchery management which are run by S.R.T.I.

The construction of the new laboratory at Furnace, Co. Mayo, started in September, 1973 and it was completed in June, 1974, being now in full occupation and use; its capital cost (£8,000) is being met by A.S.R.T. in grants spread over a 5 year period.

Initial teething troubles with the warmed water equipment vitiated its effectiveness during the winter months of 72/73 and the major fuel crisis and shortages of December, 1973, prevented its full benefit being felt in that winter over the period when it is most needed (i.e. the colder months of the year). Nevertheless, by each mid-year there was a noticeable difference in size between fry reared at ambient water temperatures and those subjected to the warmed water treatment, the latter being on average nearly 25% greater in length; from the 1974 hatch it is hoped to produce 10,000 1 year old smolts.

Two students, one from England and one from Scotland selected through the Institute of Fishery Management, attended the 1973/74 S.R.T.I. training course consisting of periods at Furnace, Co. Mayo, of 2 weeks in December, 1973, and March, 1974, followed by 4 weeks each in May and August/September. The Syllabus included stripping of brood fish and early incubation of ova, kelt tagging, branding of reared smolts, early feeding of fry and release of smolts, monitoring of upstream and downstream movements during main run of salmon, handling of fish, selective breeding, diseases; the students also paid visits to other salmon rearing establishments in Ireland. Both students reported that the courses had been of great benefit.

A major grant was made in 73/74 to the Unit of Aquatic Pathobiology of the University of Stirling to ensure the continuation of a Fellowship investigating the pathophysiology of salmon smolt tagging; the work showed that the lesion from standard tagging is not a severe constraint to the newly tagged fish, but in the higher temperature ranges it can after approximately 15 days cause complete loss of condition or death, with massive degeneration of the tag wound if the fish swims for any length of time. This does not occur at low temperatures, which may be a major factor in explaining discrepancies between tagging results from different rivers.

Grants have also been made to the Unit towards an investigation of the effects of freeze branding on salmon parr and towards the preparation of an advisory leaflet describing this method of marking fish, for the use of fishery biologists, angling clubs and associations and so on; a descriptive article was also produced for and published in the lay press. The Trust has also supported two short winter vacation courses organised and run by the Unit for bailiffs and fishery managers and for practising fish farmers; both courses essentially cover problems of disease and consist of lectures, demonstrations and practical laboratory instruction, given by University Staff and visiting lecturers: places on the courses have been oversubscribed, indicating their value and the interest aroused. Relevant to the subject of disease, the Unit of Aquatic Pathobiology has also produced a comprehensive 'Handbook of Salmon and Trout Diseases', recently published by Fishing News (Books).

Restoration of Salmon.

The capture last autumn of a hen salmon of 8 lbs weight in the intake of a power station in the Thames estuary received much publicity; deservedly so, for along with the return in the past 2 or 3 years of other fish to the tidal waters of the Thames this is an indication of the degree to which its waters have been purified; but it would be unwise to think that all is yet clear for a run of salmon to ascend the Thames, or perhaps more importantly, for young salmon if successfully reared in its upper reaches to accomplish successfully their migration as smolts to the open sea through an estuary which can still present a barrier of pollution. Much may still be necessary to guarantee clear conditions but nevertheless the progress made by the Thames Water Authority (lately Thames Conservancy) towards the aim of once again having salmon in the Thames is very encouraging; may it not be long before the river and its tidal waters are sufficiently pure for the Authority to accept with confidence the offer of a supply of salmon alevins from the River Thurso, which Viscount Thurso stated in the recent House of Lords debate on salmon that he had made to them.

Across the Atlantic there is even more encouraging news of the return of salmon to a great river, the Connecticut, in which long ago they were prolific but have been extinct for years. As with the Thames pollution has been dramatically reduced and over the past several years half a million young salmon have been introduced into tributaries of the Connecticut: but with no tangible result until last July when a dead salmon, 30 inches long, was found by a man walking along the river bank. Scale examination and a brand identified it as a fish which had been released at the pre-smolt stage into the Salmon River, a Connecticut tributary, in March 1972; it had migrated to sea later that year and after two winters at sea had returned to near where it had been originally released. Further confirmation that young salmon are now successfully migrating from the Connecticut River Basin has been given by the return of 24 tags from smolts released into the river in April, 1974. The tags were from fish subsequently caught off:-

the coast of Rhode Island, May 8 - 14
the seaward shores of Nova Scotia, June 18 - 19
the coast of Newfoundland, July 16 - Aug. 20
and within the Bay of Fundy, July 2 - Aug. 21

The fish were taken by such methods as trap nets, herring weirs, sardine nets and by rod and line. Those taken off Nova Scotia and Newfoundland were the first fish originating from the Connecticut River to be reported in those areas since the smolt stocking programme began. The fish showed good growth during their short time at sea, some being 19 inches in length and 2¼lbs weight at time of capture.

That the Connecticut River is evidently now on the verge of once more being classed as a salmon river is a measure of the determined work carried out in the New England States to improve their rivers by the eradication of sources of pollution and the removal or by-passing of dams and obstructions, behind which lies much effort by the Trust's kindred organisation in N. America, the International Atlantic Salmon Foundation. In continuation of this the Foundation has organised and sponsored a large scale conference on the restoration of salmon in New England, being held in Boston, Massachusetts, on 14th, 15th and 16th January. The conference will be attended by representatives from all organisations, private and governmental, dealing with every aspect of the Atlantic Salmon restoration effort in New England and it will assess progress to date and discuss ways and means of improving and accelerating future action.

Definition of Grilse.

Correspondence in The Field in recent months has drawn attention to the uncertainties that arise in the interpretation of statistics of salmon catches, particularly those which specify an element classed as 'grilse'; confusing and misleading conclusions can be drawn from such statistics if the meaning of this word is not precisely understood.

The importance of distinguishing between grilse and salmon in the compilation of catch statistics is that it ensures that like is compared with like when assessing the effects on national stocks of any fishing for salmon outside national fishery limits (e.g. the Greenland fishery, where the catch is composed entirely of fish spending two or more winters at sea).

The authoritative definition of a grilse used throughout the salmon producing countries of the N. Atlantic is that it is a salmon which after migrating to sea in one calendar year as a smolt returns to fresh water as an adult fish in the late spring, summer or autumn of the next calendar year, i.e. after an absence at sea which includes one winter but does not extend to a second. The only certain method of establishing whether a fish is a grilse or a salmon (the latter in this context being a fish that has spent two or more winters at sea) is by scale reading; criteria of weight and appearance do not suffice with fish exceeding 4 - 5 lbs in weight.

The Salmon's History.

Anthony Netboy, author of that classic 'The Atlantic Salmon - A vanishing species?', has now produced 'The Salmon - Their fight for Survival'; this very comprehensive study traces the evolution and life history of the Pacific and the

Atlantic salmon and their fate in every country where found. Dedicated, amongst others, to the memory of W.J.M. Menzies and to Mr. John Olin and Mr. Peter Liddell for their efforts to save the Atlantic Salmon, it is at present only published in the United States of America, by Houghton Mifflin Co., 2, Park Street, Boston, Massachusetts.

SECTION II – RESEARCH

The following notes and abstracts are based on recent information contained in journals and other publications of scientific interest.

Water Research Centre.

With the reorganisation of the water industry of England and Wales on 1st April, 1974, existing water research bodies were grouped together to form a Water Research Centre (W.R.C.); this absorbed the former Water Pollution Research Laboratory, Water Research Association and part of the Technology Division, Water Resources Board. The W.R.C. as a research organisation is supported by subscriptions from its voluntary members and also by the Government through the Department of the Environment; it provides co-ordinated technical and scientific advisory services, with Technical Liaison Officers for work on site, and library and information services; its two research stations are at Stevenage and at Medmenham, near Marlow on the Thames.

Movements of salmon (*Salmo Salar L.*) to and from Irish Waters - A.E.J. Went.

Fish tagged as kelts at a number of Irish Stations have been recaptured outside Irish waters along the coasts of Great Britain, Norway and West Greenland. Salmon tagged as smolts in three Irish rivers have been recaptured off the West Coast of Greenland and one off the Faeroes. Sixteen fish tagged as smolts in Denmark, Great Britain and Sweden were recaptured in Irish rivers or on the coastline of Ireland. Clean salmon tagged in the open sea have travelled to the coasts of Great Britain and a single fish travelled to southern Sweden. Feeding salmon tagged off West Greenland, in the Labrador sea and off the Faeroes have been recaptured in Irish waters. (Journal of Fish Biology, Vol. 5, No.6, Nov. 1973).

The upstream migratory behaviour of salmonids in the River Frome, Dorset - J.M. Hellawell, H. Leatham and G.I. Williams.

Data on the migratory behaviour of salmonids were collected at a gauging weir by means of a resistivity fish-counter which triggered a motor-driven 35 mm still camera to provide photographic records of passing fish. A clear bimodal seasonal pattern of movement was observed in three consecutive years with peaks during June - August and October - December. Daily variations in the rate of movement could not be correlated with changes in discharge or temperature. Salmonids tended to move at discharges lower than those generally available. This contrasts with other published work and was attributed to the more equitable flow-pattern of chalk rivers. There was no optimal temperature associated with movements. Some evidence suggested that the largest fish moved earlier in the year but this was not marked. In clear water most movement occurred during the hours of darkness but during floods, when the river was turbid, the diurnal pattern tended to be reversed with greatest movement during the hours of daylight. Most fish negotiated the weir close to the bottom, well below mean velocity, and took a central path through the flume. Although analysis of upstream migratory behaviour was hindered by the lack of data on the numbers of fish available below the counting point it was concluded that the basic pattern of migration is established by time (season). Changes in discharge, light intensity and other parameters may then play a secondary role in

modifying the details of the pattern but attention is drawn to records of movements in regulated flows where a remarkably constant pattern is shown from year to year. (Journal of Fish Biology, Vol.6, No.6, Nov. 1974).

Effects of the Greenland Fishery for Atlantic Salmon on Canadian Stocks - J.E. Paloheimo and P.F. Elson.

An assessment of the effect of the Greenland fisheries on homewater salmon stocks by an examination of the changes in Canadian catches since the beginning of the fishery. It appears that the most important effect of the Greenland fisheries is not, as the ICES/ICNAF Joint Working Party felt, the immediate loss to homewater fisheries, but the reduction in spawning stocks and long term production of salmon. (Special Publication Series, Vol.5, No.1 of the International Atlantic Salmon Foundation, Oct. 1974).

Foyle Fisheries Commission.

The following papers have been reprinted from the Commission's Annual Report:-

Salmon of the Foyle System (1971) - A.E.J. Went.

A comparison between the Salmon and Grilse of the Foyle and Bann Systems (1971) - A.E.J. Went and K.U. Vickers.

Salmon of the Rivers Roe and Finn (1972) - A.E.J. Went.

Freshwater Fisheries Laboratory, Pitlochry.

Costs and printing difficulties have brought to an end the series of Annual Reports of the Freshwater Fisheries Laboratory, Pitlochry, issued originally as 'Salmon and Freshwater Fisheries Research', an extract from 'Fisheries of Scotland', and from 1971 as 'Report of the Freshwater Fisheries Laboratory, Pitlochry', published by the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries for Scotland; the last Report, for 1971, was published last year. It is hoped in future to publish a series of Triennial Reviews of Fisheries Research in Scotland beginning in 1976 and covering the period 1973-75.

SECTION III – PROGRESS OF APPEAL.

During the period since the last Newsletter there has been a falling off in the number of new subscriptions despite the ever widening spread of our nets. The prevailing financial circumstances account for this in no small measure, nevertheless the response has been most disappointing.

While the Trust is doing ever more and more to help ensure the future of salmon support for our cause is not forthcoming as readily as one would hope if we are to enlarge the scope of our work.

The gross monthly receipts were as follows:-

| | |
|-----------|------------------|
| 1974 | |
| July | £168.51 |
| August | 249.09 |
| September | 667.02 |
| October | 217.69 |
| November | 69.95 |
| December | 48.00 |
| | <u>£1,420.26</u> |

During the same period due to the decease of certain donors of Deeds of Covenants and Pledges there was a loss to the gross total of the Appeal Fund of £268.28, but a further adjustment of tax recoverable gave a gain of £921.96.

An analysis of all subscriptions received to date is given on the final page. The state of the fund at the end of 1974 is as follows:-

| | Gross Value |
|---------------------------|--------------------|
| 772 Single Donations | £34,743.41 |
| 526 Deeds of Covenant | 74,870.53 |
| 56 Pledges/Bankers Orders | <u>10,156.30</u> |
| Total | <u>£119,550.24</u> |

The Trust now has a Gross Annual Income from Deeds of Covenant, Pledges, Bankers Orders plus interest from Securities and Deposit Account of approximately £12,653.

From the foregoing in light of the ever increasing cost of our work, despite our continuing to keep running costs to a minimum, we need all the support we can get. Those subscribers who have made only a single donation are urged to consider furthering their support with either an annual donation or preferably a Deed of Covenant or Bankers Order. A detachable form for use if required is included at the end of this Newsletter.

CONTRIBUTIONS RECEIVED to 31st DECEMBER, 1974.

| COUNTIES. | | RIVERS. | |
|---------------------------|----------------|-------------------------------|-----------------|
| Beds | £1,544 | Argyll Rivers | £1,805 |
| Berks | 189 | Beaully | 175 |
| Bucks | 1,019 | Brora | 1,118 |
| Cheshire | 700 | Conon | 1,285 |
| Cornwall | 73 | Dee | 5,650 |
| Cumberland | 7,926 | Deveron | 555 |
| Derby & Staffs | 573 | Forss | 71 |
| Devon | 1,562 | Findhorn | 1,000 |
| Dorset | 253 | Eire | 229 |
| Essex | 931 | Helmsdale | 833 |
| Glos | 2,066 | Lochy | 3,008 |
| Hants | 2,884 | Naver | 1,628 |
| Hunts & Cambs | 882 | Oykel) | |
| Kent | 370 | Shin) | 1,952 |
| Lanes | 344 | Cassley) | |
| Leics | 400 | S. Esk | 336 |
| Lincs | 1,858 | Spey | 2,228 |
| London & Middlesex | 913 | S.W. Wales Rivers | 85 |
| Notts | 1,516 | Tay | 1,700 |
| Norfolk | 3,865 | Thurso | 297 |
| Northumberland | 934 | Tweed | 2,353 |
| Northants | 100 | Wye | 2,237 |
| Oxon | 6 | Usk | 209 |
| Somerset | 801 | Ulster | 219 |
| Suffolk | 1,036 | | |
| Surrey | 2,988 | Total Rivers | £28,973 |
| Sussex | 1,700 | Total Counties | 49,325 |
| Warks | 136 | Business | 33,035 |
| Wilts | 1,328 | Miscellaneous | 10,650 |
| Westmorland | 7,997 | | |
| Worcs | 319 | | £121,983 |
| Yorks | 2,112 | Less loss on Cov. Inc. | 2,213 |
| | | | |
| Total Counties | <u>£49,325</u> | Gross Total | <u>£119,770</u> |

Banker's Order

To
Name and address of donor's bank

On please pay the sum of £
Date on which first payment is to be made. This must be on or after the date of signing the Deed below The periodic sum in figures

(.....)
The periodic sum in words: to agree with the amount in the Deed below.

to Midland Bank Ltd. (40-04-32) of Monument Branch, 47 King William Street, London E.C.4, for the credit of the Atlantic Salmon Research Trust Ltd's Account and thereafter make like payments on the day of in each of the following 6 years making 7 payments in all
Yearly payments (the periodic payment.)

▷ Signature of donor

Name Date
Please use block letters and state Mr/Mrs/Miss/Title

Deed of Covenant

I of
Your name and address. In the case of a firm the names of all partners must be entered and "I" should be altered to "We" as appropriate

..... hereby covenant with Atlantic Salmon Research Trust Limited (hereinafter called the Trust) that for a period of seven years from the day of 19..... or during my life whichever period shall be the shorter* I will pay each year to the said Trust such a sum as will after deduction of income tax at the standard rate for the time being in force leave in the hands of the said Trust a net sum of
Date on which first payment to be made; must be on or after the date of signing this Deed See footnote The periodic sum in figures The periodic sum in words: to agree with the amount specified above in the Banker's Order

such sum to be paid from my general fund of taxed income so that I shall receive no personal or private benefit in either of the said periods from the said sum or any part thereof

In witness whereof I have hereunto set my hand and seal this day of 19.....
To be on or earlier than the dates entered above

Signed sealed and delivered by the said
Your name in block letters. In the case of a firm the full names of all partners must be entered in capitals, additional names being entered on the lower half of the reverse side on this form

▷ Signature
In the case of a firm all partners must sign, additional names, addresses and signatures being entered on the lower half of the reverse side of this form

in the presence of

Signature of witness Occupation
The witness should not be the spouse of the covenantor. Two witnesses are required in Scotland

Address

This complete form should be sent to Appeal Director, Atlantic Salmon Research Trust, Morley House, 29 South Street, Farnham, Surrey, It should NOT be sent to your bankers.

*Donors wishing the charity to continue to benefit in the event of their death are asked kindly to delete and initial the italicized passage.

