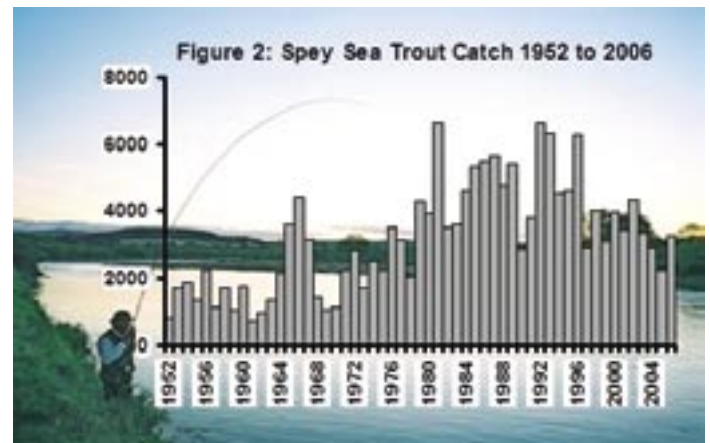
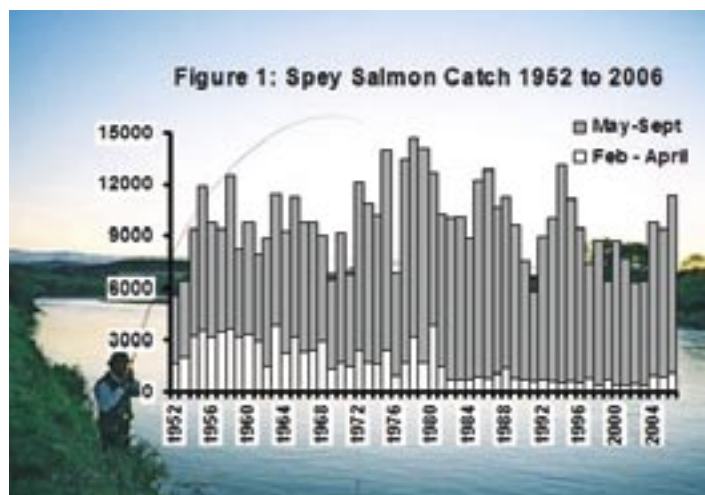


Spey Salmon and Sea Trout Catch 2006

Preliminary rod catch figures for 2006 season show another improvement in the Spey catch, with 11,378 salmon and grilse caught between February and September. This is an improvement on the 2005 catch of 9,700. (Figure 1).

Similar to the last two years, the season began with an above average catch of spring salmon. From February to April 1186 spring fish were caught, which improves on last years spring catch of 930 salmon. (Figure 1). However this season differed from previous ones with reports of significant numbers of small grilse being caught throughout the river. This was also observed on other East Coast rivers and scale collections were undertaken on several rivers. These may shed some light on the matter in due course.

Release rates of salmon and grilse rose slightly to 71% compared with 68% in 2005. This was achieved by the continuing support of anglers, ghillies and proprietors



for the Spey Salmon Conservation Policy. This has resulted in an additional 8,078 salmon and grilse released to spawn during 2006.

The Board reviews the Salmon Conservation Policy annually, and at its most recent meeting on 17th November 2006 decided to maintain the policy until at least 2008 (see overleaf).

Sea trout catches were still low but did show some improvement with 3,286 captured compared with only 2,100 last year (Figure 2). This is still below the 10 year average of 3,700. It is not known why sea trout stocks are declining, but to afford the fish some protection the Board introduced a Sea Trout Conservation Policy in 2004, which aimed to increase the numbers of mature fish released to spawn. The policy has resulted in an increase in the release rate of fish to 40% in 2005, and in 2006 a further improvement on release rates to 49% was recorded. Having reviewed the situation, the Board has decided to maintain the existing policy for 2007.

SPEY FISHERY BOARD RESEARCH OFFICE

I NETHER BORLUM COTTAGE, KNOCKANDO, MORAYSHIRE, AB38 7SD

TEL: 01340 810841 FAX: 01340 810842 E-MAIL: research@speyfisheryboard.com

SEA TROUT CONSERVATION POLICY 2007



Photo: Ian Neale

1. FINNOCK: Release all fish of 10 oz. / 25 cm / 10 " *or less.*

2. SEA TROUT: Release all fish of 3 lb. / 50 cm / 20 " *or more.*

3. BAG LIMIT: 2 sea trout or finnock of takeable size per calendar day.

4. UNSEASONABLE FISH: Release all unseasonable fish (smolts, stale fish, kelts, over-wintered finnock).

SALMON CONSERVATION POLICY 2007



Photo: Ian Neale

1. CATCH & RELEASE

- Until 30th June each angler must release the 1st, 3rd, 5th etc. salmon and grilse caught.
- After 30th June all hen salmon and hen grilse must be released.
- Throughout the season all stale or gravid fish must be released.
- Escaped farm salmon must be retained.

2. METHOD

- Where possible anglers should be encouraged to fish with a fly.
- All hooks should be pinched or barbless.
- Where spinning is allowed only one set of barbless hooks may be used on a lure.

3. FISHING EFFORT

- Where possible the numbers of hours and rods fished should be limited.