

## Summary River Report for 2008 Season

The season drew to a close on The Tyne with many anglers both resident and visiting reflecting on what turned out to be a successful season for many. The river was frequently flowing in spate with record levels of rainfall falling at various times throughout the year. The season opened with gale force winds and blizzards, but despite this there were hardy anglers to be found out on the riverbanks eagerly wetting their lines in the hope of landing a first fish of the season. As is usual for the Tyne early catches tend to be from downstream of Hexham to Wylam on the main Tyne; some early club reports in 2008 suggested that although slow to start their anglers were enjoying the best spring in over fifty years.

Anglers observed springers in pools on Chesters in early May even though most of the beats were running too high for guests fishing the waters. River levels did fall and by Saturday 3 May the river was in good fly fishing order; evidenced by two fine springers from the Chesters water. Regular hotel guest, Alex Chard produced the first, Alex is no stranger to Chesters having enjoyed many successful seasons fishing with us on the North Tyne. Alex's fish, a salmon was estimated to weigh between 17-18lb, caught off the large rock at Middle Island on the Upper Beat. The killing fly pattern was one which Alex has used many times before and enjoyed success with – a small orange conehead Pot Belly Pig.

Chester's owner, George Benson fished the same day and landed a second fish for the day; a salmon estimated to weigh 10lb. George's fish was also landed on fly but from the Beeches pool on the Lower beat. A catch I must mention was a superb catch for Frank Shaw, on his first ever visit to fish the North Tyne, Frank fished Chesters lower beat from the South bank and was rewarded with a beautiful silver salmon, estimated to weigh between 21-22lb. Frank caught his salmon using a sink tip line armed with a pot belly pig in the Boat pool stream.

The first fish landed on Riverdale waters fell to Harry Davidson on 16 May 2008, Harry fished low water conditions at Redesdale Junction on Redesmouth, Harry's salmon was a superb 16lb taken on a Flying C.

Early in the season the hotel completed building works, adding nine new rooms which anglers and their families have taken advantage of over the year. The hotel continues

to go from strength to strength, with staff taking the time to get to know the guests and their family's, as a result the hotel enjoys an enviable reputation with many returning year on year, enjoying what is reputed to be the best food in the north. The hotel is situated in rural Northumberland, an area which boasts outstanding scenery which undoubtedly compliments the fishing on offer.

As I've indicated river levels throughout the whole of the Tyne system have fluctuated significantly throughout the season; said to be one of the wettest seasons on record with many fishing days lost due to spate conditions. Beats on the lower reaches of the main Tyne at times found angling difficult, however on a more positive note the plentiful water supplies ensured that at times good numbers of fish were able to enter and continue to move through the river system, and guests fishing further upstream on the North and South Tyne's have enjoyed the best of the sport.

In terms of catches, by mid June most beats had produced fish, and in the month of July when water levels allowed sport was superb with some cracking fresh salmon and sea-trout landed. The fish counter at Riding Mill indicated that most of the upstream fish movement at that time were sea-trout with odd pods of salmon heading upstream. As you will note from the catch return tables below, when compared to the previous seasons, sea-trout catches have increased which can only be another bit of good news for the Tyne.

In early August, kind water conditions were present; steady runs of sea-trout with pods of salmon were still running hard up to the headwaters with guests at Riverdale taking advantage. Using small flies on floating and sinking lines excellent catches were reported and enjoyed (and some good fish were lost too!). Sea-trout seemed to be more prevalent in the river, however reports of large salmon landed and lost did feature too – one angler fishing a private beat on the upper North Tyne took a salmon that weighed in at 26½lb! Mid August saw anglers flooded off Chesters however, hotel beats were fishable; the hotel's beats are located above the River Rede which is the North Tyne's main tributary and after heavy rain the North Tyne floods rendering all beats downstream of The Rede un-fishable.

Dominik Posorski, a regular guest at the hotel fished fly at Redeswood landing twelve sea-trout and lost a salmon which was well over 20lb in weight. By the end of August,

the Tyne had been subjected to constant torrential downpours and a 50 cubic meter release from Kielder (necessary to reduce reservoir levels) making fishing impossible as the river flowed six feet above normal summer level. Kielder reservoir continued to release 15.3 cumec of compensation water, such a long release period is unusual however it was in response to the quantity of rainfall which had resulted in the reservoir being "full to the brim."

The benefits of such prolific water flow over a sustained period of time were evident in the fish that ran on the flows to reach the headwaters, upriver beats on the North and South Tyne's by end of August/ early September held large quantities of migratory fish with the North Tyne reputed to be have had the best runs of fish than has been had for many years, certainly catch returns are up on last year.

September arrived, torrential rainstorms wreaked havoc on the river and its banks with fishing huts damaged and/ or washed away! Unfortunately rods found themselves washed off the river for days at a time, there were anglers able to wade and effectively cover the swollen pools, albeit predominantly using spinning tactics; the best conditions and catches were had by those fishing the North Tyne beats.

One party of determined anglers were Simon Evans & Co. battling difficult conditions at Chesters on the Lower North Tyne they successfully landed nine salmon and eight sea-trout for their week; which was an excellent return for their impressive efforts having been flooded off for a considerable part of the week.

The final month of the season arrived, the hotel was busy with anglers arriving in numbers; to prevent disappointment the hotel again secured additional fishing on Hesleyside beat for the last few weeks of the season and I have to say the atmosphere was upbeat with anglers in good spirits, enjoying steady sport. Whereas the summer months had seen Sea-trout present in numbers, October saw mostly salmon landed with fly and spinning tactics used, dependent on river conditions.

Despite the difficult river conditions which have featured throughout the season, overall the reports from our guests and the anglers I have the pleasure of working with over the course of the year are positive. The environment agency fish counter at

Riding Mill on the main Tyne which records the combined salmon and sea-trout upstream fish counts recorded 26845 salmon and sea-trout to the end of October (2118 down on the same period last year) although the hotel and Chesters catch return show an increase compared to last year with some excellent specimens landed (and no doubt lost too!)

### Bookings for 2009 Season

The successes of this year should encourage anglers to book early for 2009, so, to avoid disappointment anglers are advised to contact Nicole Johnstone, Fishing coordinator on 01434 220661 or email [Nicole@riverdalehallhotel.co.uk](mailto:Nicole@riverdalehallhotel.co.uk) to secure desired choice of beat etc for the next season. Those of you are unfamiliar with the water or would like to book my Ghillie and/or guiding services can contact me for a discussion on 07901 506454 between 9am – 7pm. For more details on Ghillie services offered please take the time to have a look at the website and follow the links.

The catch returns are detailed below which I invite you to have a look at, and all that remains is for me to wish you and your families a Merry Christmas and we look forward to welcoming you to fish the North Tyne in 2009.

### Riverdale Hall Hotel Catch Return (Upper North Tyne)

Beat	Salmon	Sea-Trout	Trout
Newton	27	18	18
Redeswood	61	60	1
Carritheth	19	18	1
Tarset	31	18	1
Hotel Beat	5	6	0
Mill Beat	3	1	0
Hesleyside	1	0	0
Snabdough	1	1	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>148</b>	<b>122</b>	<b>18</b>

Please Note: Minimal availability for Hotel guests on Mill Beat and Hesleyside.

### Chesters Catch Return (Lower North Tyne)

	Salmon	Sea-Trout
Chesters(Upper and Lower)	131	65

Record of Total catches (by year) from 2005 Onwards

	2005	2006	2007	2008
Salmon Return for Riverdale Hall Hotel Beats	125	172	129	148
Sea-Trout Return for Riverdale Hall Hotel Beats	71	118	78	122
Salmon Return for Chesters	182	172	129	131
Sea-Trout Return for Chesters	34	34	37	65